



CHILDREN AGED 10-13

PARENTING THROUGH  
ANNIVERSARIES



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### PARENTING THROUGH THE 'FIRSTS' AFTER THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE

Certain dates, such as the anniversary of the loss, the bereaved loved one's birthday, or even holidays your child(ren) are used to sharing with their lost loved one may heighten your grief, as they are reminders of your loved one's death. Here are some steps to help your child cope with reminders of the loss.

#### 1. PREPARE YOURSELF

Although it is difficult to tell how your child(ren) will feel on an anniversary, birthday, or holiday since everyone grieves differently, it's best to prepare in case they will need extra support and care. Normalize the fact that such dates may evoke powerful memories of the feelings and events surrounding the loved one's death and it is important to anticipate how to cope with them.

#### 2. MAKE PLANS AND CONNECT

Often scheduling social activities and making plans with loved ones during this potentially lonely time will provide support for your child(ren) and remind them they are not alone in their grief. This could take the form of a formal remembrance ceremony or more casual event. You may also invite your child(ren) to write a private note or letter to their loved one to connect on a more personal level.

#### 3. REFLECT AND REMINISCE

Encourage your child(ren) to share fond memories of their lost loved one and the good times you all spent together. They may want to start a memory book or write these memories down somewhere they can refer back to in times when the grief becomes difficult.



#### 4. START A NEW TRADITION

You may want to mark this day with a new tradition that adds to or provides new meaning to the occasion. It could be cooking your loved one's favourite meal, playing one of his or her favourite songs, lighting a candle to symbolise his or her presence, or giving to a cause that was important to the deceased.

#### 5. ALLOW YOUR CHILD(REN) TO FEEL

Dates such as anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays may be particularly bittersweet, as you and your child(ren) experience the painful reminders of the loss, the difficult memories of the death, and the joyful times you shared with your loved one. Ensure there is room in the day for them and yourself to take a break and make space to process these conflicting emotions. Offer to give them one-on-one time to discuss what they are feeling and what they need in those moments.

1 IN EVERY 20 AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN  
WILL EXPERIENCE THE  
DEATH OF A PARENT BEFORE  
THEY REACH THE AGE OF 18.

**PROVIDING GRIEF EDUCATION AND  
SUPPORT FOR BEREAVED CHILDREN  
AND THEIR FAMILIES**



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