

# Khululeka

## Grief Support for Children and Youth

### Information on Grief for Funeral Directors

If you are a funeral director you have a lot to do with families who have lost someone. You may be surprised by how much difference you can make to a child's life by keeping them in mind.

#### **How you can help**

Encourage parents and others to involve the children and explain to the children what is happening.

It is best if the children can choose whether they want to come to the funeral or not.

If you notice that no-one is paying attention to the children and (if it is culturally appropriate) approach the children yourself. It is best if you get down on the same level. Explain to the children what is happening and also what is expected of them.

At your funeral home have some pens and papers so children can draw pictures for the person.

#### **Understanding about children's grief**

Children go through different phases and are often confused about that is happening with them. They often feel isolated and end up isolating themselves even more by being angry and rude or withdrawn.

To begin with the child will probably feel shock and numbness, not feel anything at or and not believe what has happened.

They might not sleep at night and wet their beds, act out and be explosive and angry. They might more often be ill, have tummy aches, headaches and rashes and not like to eat their food. The body's immune system is usually weaker at the time of a loss that is why they are more susceptible to viruses and have colds and flu.

They might not be able to concentrate at school and find it hard to do their homework.

They often feel empty inside, sad and tearful and then suddenly seem to be quite happy and normal. These mood swings are natural.

They might feel guilty about the death (children often do) thinking they have somehow caused it.

All this is normal.

More information on [www.khululeka.org](http://www.khululeka.org)

