

In case of death:

What Teachers can do:

1. **Listen** to what students want to share with you. It may be difficult but just listening can be a powerful healing force.
2. **Protect** students from becoming re-traumatized. Sometimes other students may ridicule or bully students who are highly emotional or cry.
3. **Connect** with students who have suffered a loss by asking how they are doing; checking in with them; let them know that you are available to listen.
4. **Model** adult behavior that shows them how responsible adults react to loss and respond to a crisis. Adults may grieve, but they continue to act with consideration and maintain calm routines at school.
5. **Be honest.** It's ok to say "I don't know."
6. **Be aware** that ANY kind of trauma brings up past memories, good or bad.
7. **Use** positive phrases, like:
 - "I'm here to listen if you want to talk."
 - "I know that you're sad, and it's ok."

What Teachers should NOT do:

1. **Don't use clichés or filler phrases.** Avoid saying things like:
 - *"I know he is smiling down on us."* (Doesn't make the loss better at all. The bereaved would rather have the family member smiling here and now.)
 - *"Don't cry, he/she wouldn't want you to cry."* (Crying is part of grieving, and that's what needs to happen for healing to come.)
 - *"We should be joyful because he/she's in a better place."* (This may be true, but some people use this filler phrase as crutch to avoid the awkward pain of grief.)
 - *"If you think this is bad, I know a family that..."* Minimalizing someone else's loss to draw attention to ourselves is one of the most selfish things we can do when caring for a person in grief.
 - *"Everything happens for a reason."* *"God has a plan."* This does not necessarily bring comfort and may actually be pouring salt in a wound.
2. **Don't speak more than you listen. Don't judge people based on their reaction to the death.**
3. **Don't rush the student through the grieving process.**
4. **Don't fall apart.** The students need to have access to someone strong and steady. It is okay to experience emotion/tear up. It is not helpful to fall apart in front of the students. Let a member of the Crisis Team know if you feel you are struggling.

In case of non-fatal trauma:

What Teachers can do:

1. **Listen** to what students want to share with you. It may be difficult but just listening can be a powerful healing force.
2. **Protect** students from becoming re-traumatized. Sometimes other students may ridicule or bully students who are highly emotional or cry.
3. **Connect** with students who have suffered a loss by asking how they are doing; checking in with them; let them know that you are available to listen.
4. **Model** adult behavior that shows them how responsible adults react to loss and respond to a crisis. Adults may grieve, but they continue to act with consideration and maintain calm routines at school.
5. **Be honest.** It's ok to say "I don't know."
6. **Be aware** that ANY kind of trauma brings up past memories, good or bad.
7. **Use** positive phrases, like:
 - a. "I'm here to listen if you want to talk."
 - b. I can see that you're sad, and it's ok."

What Teachers should NOT do:

1. **Don't add details.** Keep to the script.
2. **Don't try to fill the silence.** Silence is okay.
3. **Don't assume that kids who did not have him or her as a teacher will not be negatively affected.** We never know with whom an individual has interacted.
4. **Don't minimize students' feelings.**