

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a man with a beard and a young child with a baseball cap. They are in a park with fallen autumn leaves on the ground and trees in the background. A large, semi-transparent watermark with the letters 'J', 'O', 'N', 'E', 'P', 'A', 'C', 'E', 'R', 'T' is overlaid diagonally across the image.

# Journeying With Kids In Grief

Notes for the person facilitating this training are written in blue. It's important to read through all exercises and all blue text instructions when preparing to facilitate this training.

All videos can be previewed prior to the training session but be aware that this course has a two-month limited access. So the training needs to be completed within two months from the date of purchase.

The timing of each exercise is a guide only. For example, a larger group may need more time in sharing ideas from multiple small groups after a brainstorming exercise.

Allocate two hours for this training, with a twenty minute break after Exercise #5. If possible, provide tea and coffee and some light refreshments.

#### Set Up:

- Set up chairs around tables (ideally 6-7 per table)
- Cover tables with paper
- Place coloured markers on each table
- Place wrapped lollies on tables as treats (optional)

#### Need:

- Data projector
- Sound system

#### Introduction:

- Welcome people.
- Indicate timing of breaks and essential information for all in attendance (toilet locations, emergency exits....).
- Begin by committing the time to God in prayer.
- Encourage everyone to introduce themselves to those in their group if appropriate.

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Welcome people and open in prayer.

**EXERCISE #1** (8 minutes, group exercise, use the paper on the tables to write on)

**Option 1**

1. Grief is a loss. List all the things that can cause grief for a child (i.e. all the losses a child can potentially experience).
2. Use a coding system to group the losses: Minor | Medium | Major.

**Option 2**

1. Grief is a loss. In black, list all the things that can cause grief for a child (i.e. all the losses a child or youth can potentially experience).
2. In different colours, add words or cartoons that capture the feelings children experience as a result of these losses.

**Video #1: LET'S BEGIN**

Kids live in a broken world.

No parent or grandparent can shield their child from this brokenness.

No volunteer, kids or youth, can take away the pain they feel.

How do we help kids navigate the brokenness of this world?

We hold out biblical hope in the midst of the darkness.

Hope that is sure and certain.

## EXERCISE #2 (10 minutes, individual exercise, paired exercise)

1. As parents and children's ministry leaders, we need to hold out biblical hope to children. Before we can do this we need to clarify the truths of Scripture in child-friendly language. Read each verse, then write the big idea each verse teaches in a phrase accessible for a child aged 5-7. See the big idea example for the first verse, Romans 8:26.
2. In pairs, share what you wrote for each verse.

**Note:** Examples of a big idea for each verse have been included in this Facilitator's Guide.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

~ Romans 8:26

Big idea: The Spirit feels our pain and talks to God when we don't have the words.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

~ Revelation 21:4

Big idea: Because of Jesus there'll be no more crying or pain or death in God's new heaven.

In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you...

~ 1 Peter 1:3-4

Big idea: Nothing can destroy, steal or spoil our place in God's heaven.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

~ Romans 8:38-39

Big idea: Nothing can ever separate us from God and his love for us in Jesus.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

~ John 11:25-26

Big idea: When Jesus turns up, death loses.

Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

~ Psalm 90:12

Big idea: We will only live a certain number of days and, compared to eternity, our days are few. So live every day as if you will meet God today.

## Video #2: **HOLD OUT BIBLICAL HOPE**

We prepare children for future grief by holding out biblical hope.

We make God's truth visible to children through the telling of stories.

- When Jesus turns up, death loses.
- Everyone who believes in Jesus will be raised to new life.
- There's no coming back from death unless you've met the one who defeated death.

Resource: Goodbye to Goodbyes | Lauren Chandler