

Perhaps you might have taken a few days off from school, so when you return you may find that other kids don't know what to say to you about the death of your parent.

They might not want to hurt your feelings or make you sad, so they will not mention him or her. They might even ignore you.

They are not being mean, but they are just not sure of the right thing to do or say.

You can help them feel more comfortable by letting them know it's okay to mention your Mom or Dad. Once they know it is okay to talk about what happened, they can go back to acting "normal" around you and treating you the same as they always have.

GRIEF is a very puzzling process and not easily understood. Even adults don't understand it, so don't feel bad that you are confused.

Here's what I mean by that. Sometimes you feel perfectly normal and just like your old self, and sometimes you become so sad all you want to do is cry. And you can feel those two different ways at the very same time!

Letting all your emotions out is very healthy. There is no shame in crying -- for boys or girls. Probably after a good cry, you will feel a lot better.

If you don't let your emotions out,
it is called **stuffing**.

Imagine a big pillowcase.
You keep stuffing more and more feathers
into it until it is ready to explode or burst.

Well, if you keep your emotions
inside your body and
never share them with anyone else,
you are "stuffing" your body until it hurts.

You won't really blow up
like the little girl in the picture who looks like
she is about to burst, but it could make you
feel sick inside with
a stomachache or a headache.

It is better to feel sad or
scared or lonely for a little while.

Talk about how you feel, *AND then* try to
think of a way for you to look at the situation
so it doesn't seem so bad.

