

# For Families

*A Resource Guide for Survivors*



The “For families” guide was developed in cooperation with Threads of Life, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting families who have lost a loved one due to a workplace tragedy. Our goal is to provide you with information and practical advice that you will need during the first year following the loss of your loved one.

In your time of grief, we at the WSIB care about you and your family. Sometimes during this difficult time of sadness, grieving can be so overwhelming that one needs to reach out to others. We want you to know that support and advice are just a call away.

Families who have also been through a workplace tragedy have reviewed this booklet. They have given us valuable tips and insight on what they felt it should include. We acknowledge and thank them for their guidance and assistance.

The WSIB is part of an Ontario-wide system. This system was designed to help protect workers from injury or illness, and to help them if they do suffer an injury.



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## *A Resource Guide for Survivors*

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## The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board

For families who have lost a loved one, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has a Survivors' Benefits program. Specially trained, professional staff are available to answer your questions and help you with your claim for WSIB benefits.

### Who will contact you?

The WSIB recognizes that a traumatic death can leave family members shocked, overwhelmed and in need of immediate support and practical assistance. WSIB crisis intervention counsellors can offer the emotional and practical support that you need without being intrusive. They will provide whatever help is needed in the days and weeks ahead. This may include:

- helping you through the critical period
- contacting family members for you
- assisting with funeral arrangements
- helping you complete forms
- contacting school counsellors
- setting up ongoing grief counselling

Our crisis intervention counsellors will also explain the WSIB benefits to which you may be entitled.

An adjudicator may also contact you in the weeks ahead. Your adjudicator will manage your claim, arrange for benefits and coordinate WSIB services.

### If a WSIB crisis intervention counsellor has not contacted you yet

Sometimes the WSIB is not notified immediately of a workplace death. This may delay our counsellors making contact with the family. If your family member has died because of an injury at work and you have not heard from us, please call **416-344-2334** or **1-800-387-0750 x 2334**. The person who answers will page the crisis intervention counsellor immediately. The counsellor will call you and offer to come to your home.

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Act states that employers must notify the WSIB within three days of learning about the accident or illness.

## How can the WSIB help?

The WSIB offers a number of benefits to surviving spouses and dependants.

**Burial expenses** – The WSIB pays all funeral and burial expenses reasonably connected to the death. We can arrange to pay these expenses directly. We may also pay the costs to bring the deceased back to his or her community, if the death occurred while working out of town.

**Payments to survivors** – The WSIB pays survivors and/or dependent children a lump-sum payment and a continuing monthly payment. The exact amount of these payments will vary, depending on a number of factors.

**Crisis intervention counselling** – As noted earlier, the WSIB provides a counsellor who offers assistance during this difficult time.

**Bereavement counselling** – Upon request, the WSIB will make grief counselling available to the surviving spouse and children. This service can be requested any time during the first year after the worker's death.

**Re-entering the workforce (Work Transition)** – In some cases, the WSIB offers the surviving spouse help to return to the workforce, if needed. To get this help, the spouse must request it within one year of the worker's death, but the program itself can be delayed until it is appropriate (e.g., when children get older).

Your crisis intervention counsellor can provide more information about WSIB benefits/services and how we calculate the benefits.

### How quickly can you get financial assistance from the WSIB?

If we get all the information we need quickly, we usually begin to pay benefits within several weeks. To make this process easier, your crisis intervention counsellor will help you:

- ❑ complete the WSIB's Dependency Claim form, and
- ❑ explain exactly what documents will be required to support your claim (e.g., birth certificates, marriage certificate, death certificate)

Your counsellor will make copies of the documents for you and take the completed form back to the WSIB so we can process it.

### **What can you do if you disagree with a WSIB decision about entitlement to benefits?**

All WSIB decisions come with a written explanation about the decision, an invitation to contact the adjudicator to discuss your concerns and the time limits for appealing the decision. Your adjudicator is prepared to discuss the reasons for the decision with you.

### **Who can you talk to if you need help dealing with the WSIB?**

The Office of the Worker Adviser (OWA) can help. An agency of the Ministry of Labour, the OWA provides information and advice on workplace insurance or workers' compensation matters to survivors of workplace-related fatalities. This service is free and confidential.

If the deceased was a member of a union, the union will provide assistance.

Please see page 14 for contact information.

## **Will there be an investigation?**

Workplace deaths are investigated by one or more organizations. Your crisis intervention counsellor can help you find out who will be involved.

- ❑ The Ministry of Labour (MOL) investigates all workplace fatalities within its jurisdiction. Charges may be laid based on the findings of its investigation. Fatalities in agriculture, federally regulated organizations or traffic accidents on public roadways are not usually within the MOL's jurisdiction.
- ❑ Human Resources and Skills Development Canada investigates workplace fatalities in federally regulated organizations.
- ❑ The Office of the Chief Coroner also investigates all accidental deaths. In some cases, an inquest may be held.
- ❑ Depending on the circumstances of the death, other agencies, such as the police or fire department, may also investigate.

## The Ministry of Labour

The MOL enforces the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and its Regulations. The purpose of the *Act* is to protect workers from injury and illness in the workplace.

### What is the MOL's role in the event of a work-related death?

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the employer must contact the MOL immediately after a worker is killed or critically injured while at work. An investigation begins right away, but may take up to a year to complete.

Once the investigation is complete, the MOL's Legal Services Branch will assess whether charges are appropriate against workplace parties such as employers, supervisors or workers, or other parties outside the workplace. The MOL has one year from the date of the accident to lay charges under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Prior to the laying of charges, the MOL will not discuss details of its investigation, except as required or permitted by law.

### Does the Ministry of Labour contact the family?

Yes, a representative of the MOL will contact the family by phone, normally within a week. The MOL also sends a letter to the family with contact information shortly after the phone call. While the MOL representative will let the family know about the status of its investigation (e.g., still ongoing), the representative cannot discuss the specifics of its investigation.

If someone from the MOL has not contacted you, your WSIB crisis intervention counsellor can help. The counsellor can contact the MOL for you, and ask that a representative contact the family.

When you speak to someone from the MOL, take note of his or her name and phone number. Ask when you can expect to hear from them again and, if possible, set a date.

### When is the MOL's investigation report available to the family?

The MOL's investigation report is available to the family after the MOL's Legal Services Branch has completed its review and determined that charges are not warranted under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. If charges are laid, the investigation report is available to the family after court proceedings have been completed. To obtain a copy, families should contact the MOL's Freedom of Information and Privacy Office at 416-326-7786.

### If charges are laid, will the MOL advise the family of the court date?

Yes, your MOL representative will let you know when charges are laid and will provide you with the name and telephone number of the prosecutor. You will also be notified when the matter is scheduled to go before the courts.

You may choose to attend the court proceeding. This can be a very difficult time for the family. WSIB crisis intervention counsellors will continue to offer support during this time.

## The Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario

The Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario conducts fatality investigations, which may include ordering autopsies and conducting inquests into fatalities. The inquest jury may make recommendations to help improve public safety and prevent further deaths in similar circumstances. Please see page 12 for contact information.

### **Will there be an autopsy?**

The coroner may require an autopsy to determine cause of death. A pathologist performs the autopsy, if required.

### **How soon would an autopsy be performed?**

Usually, an autopsy is conducted within 24 hours of death. If the circumstances of the death are complex or involve many investigators (police, Ministry of Labour), the autopsy may be delayed by a day or two. Every effort is made not to inconvenience the family or to interfere with the religious or cultural practices of the relatives.

### **Who receives the results of the autopsy (coroner's report)?**

The pathologist will offer an opinion on the cause of death and submit a report to the coroner. The coroner will consider the report and other investigative findings in determining the cause and manner of death.

It may be several months before all of the information is available.

The more complex the circumstances, the more time it takes.

At the end of the investigation, any close relative or personal representative may obtain the following by requesting them in writing and stating their relationship to the deceased:

- a copy of the coroner's information summary
- the toxicology report (if performed)
- the post-mortem report (if an autopsy was done)

The requesting party may ask that the reports be sent directly to a third party, such as a family doctor or a legal or insurance representative.

Usually, the hospital provides the family with the name of the coroner at the time of death. However, your WSIB adjudicator or crisis intervention counsellor will gladly find this information so that you may ask for the report.

In our experience, the coroner is always willing to speak with the family. Prepare your questions prior to making the call. The coroner will verbally give you as much information as is allowed before the written report is released.

**If an insurance company requests a coroner's report from you and it is not yet available, ask if a copy of the WSIB's letter of entitlement would do instead – at times it does.**



### What is a coroner's inquest?

A coroner's inquest is a public hearing held under the authority of the *Coroner's Act*. The purpose of an inquest is to inquire into the circumstances of the death and for the jury (five members of the community) to determine:

- ❑ Who was the deceased?
- ❑ How did the person die?
- ❑ Where did the person die?
- ❑ When did the person die?
- ❑ By what means did the person die?

Based on what they hear, the jury may recommend actions to avoid other deaths in similar circumstances.

Usually, an inquest will not be held until criminal proceedings under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* have been completed. Inquests are mandatory for fatalities in mining or construction workplaces.

The implementation of recommendations is not mandatory. No one is legally bound to respond to them. However, parties to which recommendations are made usually respond.

### Can the family request an inquest?

Yes. Make this request to the investigating coroner. The investigating coroner will consult with his or her supervising coroners and the Office of the Chief Coroner to decide if an inquest should be held.

### Can the family attend the inquest?

You have every right to attend the inquest and to ask to participate.

Anyone interested in participating in the proceedings can apply to the coroner for standing. Standing is usually granted at the start of the inquest, but may be granted any time before the end of the proceedings. The coroner will grant standing to any person whom he/she finds is substantially and directly interested in the inquest. Counsel or agents may represent persons in this application or they can apply on their own. The Office of the Chief Coroner does not provide funding for those participating in an inquest.

### Is support available for the family during the inquest?

Yes, the WSIB crisis intervention counsellor can help by providing emotional support throughout this difficult process. Going through an inquest is not easy for the family. Details that come up may reopen wounds that you may have thought were healed. Feelings of loss and anger may resurface. The loss of your loved one's life may leave you feeling drained and hurt, again.

The inquest may not take place until several years following the death. You can still call the WSIB crisis intervention counsellor to support you throughout this difficult process. In addition, if you received grief counselling in the past and would like to meet with the counsellor again, your crisis intervention counsellor will try to make the arrangements.

## Can the family sue?

The WSIB provides compensation to the families of workers who lost their life at work. The WSIB insurance system is a no-fault insurance system. This means that generally, the worker's family and estate, cannot sue.

However, when a third party is involved, you may be able to sue. A third party generally is a person or company that is not part of the workers' compensation system, who may have contributed to the workplace fatality. Some examples of a third party include: members of the general public, the owner of a private residential property, a physician who treated the worker, the manufacturer of a defective product that fatally injured the worker. If the information received by the WSIB suggests that a third party could be involved, you will receive an Election Form and an information package explaining this process. You will then have the choice of either suing the third party or claiming WSIB benefits. You may also wish to speak to your lawyer before making your decision.

An information sheet on third party actions is available on the WSIB's website to provide more information.

## What if the media call?

When someone dies in a workplace accident, the media usually report on the incident. Members of the media may contact you, your family or friends for a comment about what happened.

The following may be helpful to you:

- ❑ You do not have to speak to the media if you do not want to. Simply tell them that you have no comment.
- ❑ If you choose to speak to the media, you may want to appoint a spokesperson. This may be a family member or a friend of the family.
- ❑ Always ask the name of the journalist and what media outlet he or she represents. Take all contact numbers.
- ❑ Don't bow to pressure. Feel free to tell the reporter that you will call him or her back if you're feeling rushed, you are not ready to talk or if you've changed your mind and no longer want to speak to the media.
- ❑ Be firm about what you do and do not want to discuss with the media. Talk with your family members and be very clear as a family about what is okay to say publicly.
- ❑ Avoid speculation or guessing.
- ❑ If you are not comfortable with the question, don't answer it.
- ❑ You can set boundaries with the media — stick to what you are comfortable with.

## Other financial assistance

### Canada Pension Plan

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) offers protection to those who have contributed to the plan, and to their families. It can provide an income when regular earnings have stopped because of retirement, disability or death.

When someone dies, the CPP pays survivor benefits to a deceased contributor's:

- estate
- surviving spouse or common-law partner
- dependent children

There are three types of benefits available to people who have made contributions to the CPP:

- The death benefit is a one-time payment to, or on behalf of, the estate of a deceased contributor.
- The survivor's pension is a monthly pension paid to the surviving spouse or common-law partner.
- The children's benefit is a monthly benefit for dependent children.

It is important to apply for CPP benefits. If you do not apply, you may miss out on benefits that could be helpful.

### How does the family apply for CPP benefits?

You must complete an application for each type of benefit. Usually, you can get application forms from funeral homes. Funeral directors often offer to help complete these forms in the week following the funeral. The WSIB's crisis intervention counsellor can also assist you in completing these forms. You can also contact the CPP office. The toll-free number is provided in the "Helpful contacts" section of this guide.

### How soon can you receive CPP benefits?

It will take several weeks for the CPP to process your applications. Benefits are payable beginning in the month following the contributor's death. The death benefit for funeral expenses is payable as soon as the application is processed.

## Other practical matters

During this very difficult time, you will be busy. There are many details to attend to, so we have made a list to give you an idea of what you may need to do. It is by no means a complete list, and not all items will apply to your situation.

Your funeral home is also a good source of information. Quite often, funeral homes have a resource centre that can be used by the family.

### Wills

- ❑ Review the will to see if there are any instructions regarding funeral arrangements.
- ❑ If there is no will, the individual is said to have died intestate. The estate will be distributed according to the law. You may want to contact a lawyer to guide you through this process.
- ❑ If there is no will, you (or your lawyer) will have to apply for a Letter of Administration with Will Annexed from the Ontario courts.

### Death Certificate

- ❑ Apply for a certified copy of the death certificate. You may need it for out-of-province pensions, investments, real estate and life insurance. Funeral homes can supply the documentation required for this application.
- ❑ Funeral homes automatically provide proof of death certificates.

### Bank accounts, credit cards and insurance

- ❑ If a joint bank account exists, the spouse has access to the funds without interruption. You will need to change the account into the survivor's name only, or set up a new account. If the deceased had a separate bank account in his or her name only, the bank freezes the funds and they become part of the estate.
- ❑ Cancel credit cards.
- ❑ Contact insurers: home, car, other.
- ❑ Check for mortgage insurance and arrange to change mortgage documents.
- ❑ Determine assets and liabilities. Contact insurance companies, brokers, employers, financial institutions, etc.

### Home and other personal property

- ❑ Obtain title documents for property, mortgages, bonds, debentures and any other investment certificates.

### **Other government offices**

- ❑ If the deceased was receiving benefits from any government agency (e.g., Old Age Security), contact the agency and stop the benefit payments. Check to see if survivor's benefits are available.
- ❑ Obtain prior year's tax returns and file any T1 returns for previous years. This should be done within six months of the date of death.
- ❑ The executor should contact the necessary government offices to cancel documentation such as the deceased's Canadian passport, citizenship card, health card, driver's licence, firearms licence, social insurance number, etc. A list of Web site addresses is provided in the "Helpful contacts" section of this guide.

### **Information for new Canadians**

Recent immigrants to Canada may also want to contact the consulate for their country of birth. This would apply to Canadians with dual citizenship, and landed immigrants (permanent residents of Canada).

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has an easy-to-use Web site that provides the addresses and phone numbers for all of the consulates in Canada (see "Helpful contacts" section).

## Helpful contacts

### Government of Canada

#### Canada Pension Plan

The Canada Pension Plan offers a Survivor Benefit to the spouse or common-law partner (includes same-sex partners) and/or children of a deceased contributor.

**Address:** P.O. Box 5100  
Station D  
Scarborough, ON M1R 5C8

**Toll-free:** 1-800-277-9914 (English)

**Toll-free:** 1-800-277-9915 (French)

**Toll-free:** 1-800-255-4786 (Bilingual TTY service for the hearing impaired)

**Web site:** <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/isp/cpp/cpptoc.shtml/>

#### Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)

An income tax return will have to be filed for the deceased. To find the office nearest you, call the toll-free number listed or visit the CRA Web site.

**Toll-free:** 1-800-959-8281

**Web site:** [www.cra-adrc.gc.ca/menu-e.html](http://www.cra-adrc.gc.ca/menu-e.html)

### Other Canadian government web addresses that may be helpful:

#### Canadian citizenship

**Web site:** [www.immigrationdirect.ca](http://www.immigrationdirect.ca)

#### Canadian passport

**Web site:** [www.ppt.gc.ca/index.aspx?lang=eng](http://www.ppt.gc.ca/index.aspx?lang=eng)

#### Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

**Web site:** [www.hrsdc.gc.ca](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca)

#### Indian Status – Indian Registry System\*

**Web site:** <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng>

\*The Indian Registry System records life events (e.g., birth, death, marriage, adoption, etc.) in the Indian Registry

#### Permanent Resident card (PR card)

**Web site:** [www.immigrationdirect.ca/prcard/permanent-resident-card.jsp](http://www.immigrationdirect.ca/prcard/permanent-resident-card.jsp)

#### Social Insurance Number

**Web site:** [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/topics/sxn-gxr.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/topics/sxn-gxr.shtml)

#### Office of the Chief Coroner, Government of Ontario

The Office of the Chief Coroner conducts fatality investigations, which may include ordering autopsies and conducting inquests.

**Address:** 26 Grenville St.  
Toronto, ON M7A 2G9

**Phone:** 416-314-4000

**Fax:** 416-314-4030

**Toll-free:** 1-877-991-9959

**Web site:** [www.mpss.jus.gov.on.ca/english/pub\\_safety/office\\_coroner/about\\_coroner.html](http://www.mpss.jus.gov.on.ca/english/pub_safety/office_coroner/about_coroner.html)

### Law Society of Upper Canada

The Law Society offers public services. The Lawyer Referral Service matches individuals with local lawyers who have the proper expertise. A member directory, with lawyers' contact information, is also available on-line.

**Address:** The Law Society — Lawyer Referral Service  
Osgoode Hall  
130 Queen St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N6

**Phone:** 416-947-3300

**Toll-free:** 1-800-668-7380

**Web site:** [www.lsuc.on.ca](http://www.lsuc.on.ca)

### Legal Aid Ontario

Legal aid is available to low-income individuals for a variety of legal situations. This includes disability support and family benefits payments.

**Address:** Legal Aid  
375 University Ave.  
Suite 404  
Toronto ON M5G 2G1

**Phone:** 416-979-1446

**Toll-free:** 1-800-668-8258

**Web site:** [www.legalaid.on.ca](http://www.legalaid.on.ca)

### Ministry of the Attorney General, Government of Ontario Ontario Courts — Estate Office

If the deceased did not leave a will, you (or your lawyer) will need to apply for a Letter of Administration with Will Annexed at an Ontario Court Estate Office.

**Address:** 393 University Ave., 10th floor  
Toronto, ON M5G 1E6

**Phone:** 416-326-2940

**Web site:** [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/cadaddr.asp](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/courts/cadaddr.asp)

(This Web site provides contact information for courts throughout Ontario.)

### Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, Government of Ontario

It will be necessary to inform the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care office of the deceased worker's death.

**Phone:** 416-314-5518

**Toll-free:** 1-800-268-1154

**Telephone service for the hearing-impaired (TTY):**  
1-800-387-5559

**Web site:** [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)

### Ministry of Labour, Government of Ontario

The Ministry of Labour investigates all workplace fatalities. Check the provincial listings in the blue pages of your telephone book for the nearest regional office.

**Web site:** [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca)

### Ministry of Transportation, Government of Ontario

It will be necessary to cancel the deceased's driver's licence. Check the provincial listings in the blue pages of your telephone book for the office nearest you.

**Phone:** 416-235-4686

**Toll-free:** 1-800-268-4686

**Website:** [www.mto.gov.on.ca](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca)

## Office of the Worker Adviser, Government of Ontario

The Office of the Worker Adviser (OWA) can help non-unionized workers and survivors by providing information and advice on how to appeal a WSIB decision. The service is free and confidential to the survivors of workplace-related fatalities. Survivors can receive the following services from the OWA:

- ☐ advice and representation in early dispute resolution or appeals
- ☐ advice, written materials and educational services regarding the WSIB and benefits
- ☐ referral to community resources

**Toll-free:** 1-800-435-8980

**Web site:** [www.owa.gov.on.ca](http://www.owa.gov.on.ca)

## Workplace Safety and Insurance Board

The WSIB offers benefits and services to the spouse or dependants of a person who has died due to a work-related injury or disease. The Occupational Disease and Survivor Benefits' programs will support and help you.

**Phone:** 416-344-1000

**Fax:** 416-344-4684

**Toll-free:** 1-800-387-0750

**Telephone service for the hearing-impaired (TTY):**  
1-888-313-7373

**Web site:** [www.wsib.on.ca](http://www.wsib.on.ca)

**E-mail:** [wsibcomm@wsib.on.ca](mailto:wsibcomm@wsib.on.ca)

For a more complete list of practical matters, visit the "Life events" page on the Ontario government's Web site at [www.gov.on.ca/MBS/english/myontarioweb/bereavement.html](http://www.gov.on.ca/MBS/english/myontarioweb/bereavement.html).

## Support organizations

### Threads of Life

Threads of Life is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting families who have been affected by a workplace tragedy. It helps these families work together to protect future generations of Canadian workers. Threads of Life provides families with peer support assistance and referrals to professional support services. It also promotes public awareness and accountability for workplace health and safety.

**Phone:** 519-685-4276

**Toll-free:** 1-888-567-9490

**E-mail:** [contact@threadsoflife.ca](mailto:contact@threadsoflife.ca)

**Web site:** [www.threadsoflife.ca](http://www.threadsoflife.ca)

### Bereaved Families of Ontario

Bereaved Families provides support for people who have lost an immediate family member. It can connect you with someone to talk to. Its Web site lists local resources, books and links to affiliated bereaved family organizations across Ontario. It also coordinates support groups and publishes a newsletter.

**Phone:** 416-440-0290

**E-mail:** [info@bereavedfamilies.net](mailto:info@bereavedfamilies.net)

**Web site:** [www.bereavedfamilies.net](http://www.bereavedfamilies.net)

### Ontario Distress Centres

A Web site providing phone numbers for community distress centres. The centres have volunteers who provide support and crisis intervention.

**Web site:** <http://www.dcontario.org/>



## Ontario Psychological Association

It offers a free, confidential referral service to help you find a psychologist in your area. This site also provides information about services offered and the languages in which service is provided.

**Phone:** 416-961-0069

**Toll-free:** 1-800-268-0069

**Web site:** [www.psych.on.ca](http://www.psych.on.ca)

## Kids Help Phone

Offers counselling in French and English to kids aged 4 to 19 and will help adults aged 20 and over find the counselling services they need. Parents, teachers and any other concerned adults are welcome to call for information and referral services.

**Toll-free:** 1-800-668-6868

## Internet resources

### Life Events, Government of Ontario Web site

The Ontario government Web site includes a section called "Life events." It provides resources and services from several different ministries to help you deal with various happenings in your life. The category "What to do when someone dies" gives information on what to do if there is no will. It tells you the organizations you will need to contact, what to do about health cards, driver's licences and more.

**Web site:** [www.ontario.ca/en/life\\_events/index.htm](http://www.ontario.ca/en/life_events/index.htm)

### The Dougy Centre

This Web site provides children, teens and parents with excellent grief support.

**Website:** [www.dougy.org](http://www.dougy.org)

### Yours, Mine and Our Children's Grief

This site explores children's grief journeys.

**Website:** [www.afsa.ab.ca](http://www.afsa.ab.ca)

### GriefNet.org

This is an Internet community of people dealing with grief, death and major loss with the help of e-mail support groups. It includes an extensive library and bookstore.

**Web site:** [www.griefnet.org](http://www.griefnet.org)

### Compassionate Friends of Canada

This is an international self-help organization offering friendship, understanding and grief education to all families who have experienced the death of a child at any age.

**Web site:** [www.tcfcanada.net](http://www.tcfcanada.net)

## Books that may help

There are many books written on the subject of grief. Our crisis intervention counsellors have selected the following as excellent sources of help. You may find these books and many others at your local library.

### For adults

#### *Now What*

DR. BILL WEBSTER. Dr. Webster writes from personal and professional experience about the emotions and reactions that are part of grieving.

#### *A Time to Grieve: Meditations for Healing after the Death of a Loved One*

CAROL STAUDACHER. A self-help guide through grieving the loss of a loved one.

#### *Beginnings*

BETTY JANE WYLIE. Comfort and advice for widows of all ages. Reliable, relevant and useful.

#### *Life's Losses: Living through Grief, Bereavement & Sudden Change*

BETTY JANE WYLIE

#### *Everywoman's Money Book*

Betty Jane Wylie and Lynne MacFarlane

#### *I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye: Surviving, Coping and Healing after the Sudden Death of a Loved One*

BROOK NOEL AND PAMELA D. BLAIR. An excellent guide to grief after sudden death, for those battling with this issue.

#### *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*

HAROLD KUSHNER. Facing his son's illness and subsequent death, Rabbi Kushner shares his thoughts and feelings about why we humans suffer. Explores the questions of life and faith that can occur after a tragedy.

#### *Grief in Children: A Handbook for Adults*

A. DYREGROV. A handbook for those faced with the task of understanding children dealing with grief and trying to help them.

#### *When Men Grieve: Why Men Grieve Differently and How You Can Help*

ELIZABETH LEVANG. Psychologist Elizabeth Levang explains the special ways that men grieve so those who love them can better understand what they're going through.

### For children

#### *After the Funeral*

J. WINSCH. Offers help for children and families to move forward after a loss.

#### *How It Feels When a Parent Dies*

JILL KREMENTZ. Children aged 7 to 16 talk openly about their experiences in having a parent die.

### For teens

#### *How to Go on Living When Someone You Love Dies*

THERESA RANDO. A helpful and informative book addressing grief and how to work with it.

#### *Teenagers Face to Face with Bereavement*

K. GRAVELLE AND C. HASKINS. Teens talk about their strong emotions of sadness, anger and guilt after the death of a parent, sibling or friend. Honest and insightful.

## Final thoughts

Grieving requires a lot of physical and mental energy. So when you feel tired, rest immediately. Allow yourself to go to bed early and get up late. Eating well will help your healing process. You need to keep eating healthy meals at regular intervals. This will help you to lead a healthy life in spite of your pain.

Grieving also makes it difficult to concentrate. Make lists of things that you have to do. Avoid making major decisions for a while. If you do have to deal with a stressful situation, ask for help. Those friends who said, “Please let me know what I can do” really meant it.

Remember, too, that there is danger in attempting to numb the pain. There is a big difference between seeking comfort from a friend and seeking comfort from artificial substances such as alcohol, drugs, too much coffee or excessive smoking.

It helps to remember situations that you have successfully overcome in the past.

Develop a personal first-aid kit with activities that provide comfort. For example:

- take a warm bath with soothing oils
- go for a long walk out of doors
- have dinner with a friend
- make a hair appointment
- take time to meditate or pray
- listen to a relaxation tape
- play with a child or pet
- cook (and eat) a favourite dish

And when you find yourself unable to sleep at 2:00 a.m., write your loved one a letter. Tell them how much you’re missing them, what they meant to you, describe the pain you feel. And down the road, write to them about the legacy they’ve left you, the ways they expanded who you are, the depth they contributed to your vision, the richness to your hearing, the gentleness to your speaking and the warmth to your touching. Keep a journal. It helps.

