

What to say (and skip).

When someone is grieving, most of us worry about saying the wrong thing.
Kind, simple words go a long way.

What grieving people often want:

To be seen

Not avoided at school, work, or the store.

Their own way

Every family grieves differently. Ask, don't assume.

No fixing

Someone to listen, not solve it.

Help that lasts

Support months later, not just the first week.

Helpful things to do:

- **Be specific.** "I'm bringing dinner Tuesday" beats "let me know."
- **Share a memory.** A story about their person is a gift.
- **Mark the dates.** Reach out on birthdays and anniversaries.
- **Be okay with quiet.** You don't have to fill every pause.

Things to skip:

- **Silver linings.** Skip "at least." There's no bright side to point out.
- **Timelines.** Grief doesn't follow a schedule or have an end date.
- **Your story first.** Listen first before sharing your own loss.
- **Disappearing.** Awkward is better than absent. Showing up counts.

Words that help:

INSTEAD OF

"It happened for a reason."

TRY

"This is so hard. You don't have to explain it."

INSTEAD OF

"Stay strong."

TRY

"You don't have to be okay right now."

INSTEAD OF

"They're in a better place."

TRY

"I miss them too. Tell me about them."

Know a family who could use support?

Cason's Place offers free peer grief support for kids, teens, and families in Eastern Oregon. Share our name with a family who needs it, or join us as a volunteer or donor at casonspplace.org.

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Twice monthly •
Located in
Pendleton • Always
free • Gas help
available