

Managing Anniversaries and Other Special Days

Anniversary dates and other special days can bring about great uncertainty, anticipation and shifts in the grief experience. It can often be hard to know what to do, who to include and how you will feel when the day comes. Some families have found that planning an activity that supports the grief can be a helpful way to face the day.

Some of the suggestions from families include:

- ✘ Write or share a happy memory with each other
- ✘ Create a memory box and fill it with meaningful items to you and/or your child
- ✘ Write a letter to your child and find a special place to keep it
- ✘ Do a balloon release
- ✘ Do something that your child enjoyed—share a favorite meal, watch a favorite movie together, engage in a favorite game or activity
- ✘ Light a candle
- ✘ Visit the cemetery or other special place
- ✘ Make the day a celebration of the life of your child
- ✘ Discuss with siblings and/or other family members and friends how they would like to spend the day
- ✘ Honor and recognize the ways that you have managed the grief so far—think about what has been helpful. What has been most difficult? It can be healing to acknowledge all that you have done.
- ✘ Give yourself permission to do what is best for you and your family
- ✘ Do gentle things to take care of yourself and your family, such as go for a walk, relax, read a book, take a bath, etc.