

Ele's Place Activity: **FAMILY GAME NIGHT**

Playing a game, with grief-related questions associated with it, is one way to support grief conversations with your family. This approach not only supports children/teens in sharing about their grief, but oftentimes is fun, too.

You can incorporate a variety of questions into the playing of a game, and most games can be adapted. For example, when playing Jenga, you can ask a question every time a wooden piece is pulled from the tower, or if you want to ask fewer questions, every time a middle piece is pulled from the tower. Another option is with Uno, and you can ask questions every time a certain number or color is selected. For younger children, questions can also be connected to an age-appropriate game, such as Candy Land, Hi-Ho Cheerio, or Memory.

It can be helpful to offer both grief and non-grief-related questions, so children/teens feel they have more control over what they share. Grief-related questions generally focus on feelings and memories, and non-grief-related questions can be about likes, dislikes and other questions that invite children/teens to share about their life (suggested questions are on the following pages).

Children/teens have many feelings about the death, the person who died, and the changes they are experiencing. Exploring their feelings in the context of a game can help them process and make sense of their experience in a more relaxed, fun setting, and it is not uncommon that this leads to more sharing than a direct conversation.

Grief-Related Questions

How do you want the person who died to be remembered?	Describe a favorite or funny memory with the person who died.	How have things changed in your life/family since the person died?	What is one thing you would like us to know about the person who died?	What is the most difficult thing you've experienced since the death?
What is something very few people know about your grief?	If you could talk to the person who died, what would you say?	How has the death changed you (e.g., do you cry more, worry more, appreciate the little things more)?	What words of wisdom would you pass on to another grieving person?	Do you have any regrets or feel guilty about anything?
If you had to pick a type of weather to describe your grief, what weather would you pick and why? (e.g., stormy, mixed, cloudy, sunny, rainy)	Did you like to do something with the person who died? If yes, what? If no, is there something you wish you had done with the person?	Is there a story you always like to hear about the person who died?	Who has been the most influential or helpful person in your life since the death?	Tell me three words that you feel best describe the person who died.
If you had a magic wand, how would you use it?	Grief is _____. Explain.	What/who helps you cope?	Are there things people did or said that you did not like since the death? Explain what and how it made you feel.	Did the death make your family closer, more distant, or stay the same? Explain.
What do you like/don't like about Ele's Place?	**WILD** Is there something you've always wanted to know? Ask a question of your choice.	How do you feel most often since the death? Is that the same or different?	What was the scariest thing that has happened since the death?	If you could travel back in time with the person who died, what would you do and why?
True or False...Sometimes it bothers me when others try to cheer me up.	Since the death, school has been _____.	Where do you feel your grief in your body?	Do you wish we talked about them more or less? Explain.	What is something we could do, or stop doing, to help you, when you're having a hard time?

General Questions (Non-Grief)

If you could travel back in time, to what era would you go? Why?	Describe a favorite or funny holiday memory.	What was your favorite vacation? Tell me some memories of it.	What made you laugh so hard you cried?	What is the most beautiful place you have ever visited? What made it beautiful
WILD Is there something you've always wanted to know? Ask a question of your choice.	If you could have only five possessions, what would they be? Which is your most cherished?	Do you have a favorite book, poem, movie or quote? What about it do you enjoy?	What words of wisdom would you pass on to your childhood self?	For what are you most grateful?
What is something very few people know about you?	Describe the most adventurous thing you have ever done.	Is there a story about yourself you want to share?	What does your perfect day look like?	Tell me three words that you feel best describe you.
What are your favorite family traditions?	Tell me about a time when you were proud of an accomplishment.	What hobby or activity makes you lose track of time?	What is your most special possession? Who gave it to you?	What is your favorite thing to do as a family?
Is there a particular event that you think brought our family closer together?	If you could meet one famous person, who would it be and why?	Who was your favorite teacher? What do you remember about him/her?	What is your most cherished childhood memory?	What is the best lesson you learned from your mom, dad, or other role model?
Do you have a favorite story about a pet?	What personal event(s) have most shaped your life?	Who has been the most influential person in your life?	What is the scariest thing that ever happened to you?	If you could choose your last words, what would they be?
What have you learned from your children or other young people in your life/family?	What is the best/worst/most thoughtful gift you've ever received?	How do you want to be remembered?	If you had to pick an animal to represent you, what would you pick and why?	Who is your hero and why?

Younger Children Questions (Preschool-Early Elementary)

What color was their hair?	What was their favorite color?	What did you like to do with the person who died?	Did you and your person laugh together? What did you laugh about?	Did you play games together? What was your favorite game to play together?
Did you hug your person? How good were the hugs? 1 to 10, 10 being the best.	Who are your friends? Do you talk about the person who died with your friends?	Do you wish we talked about them more or less? Explain.	Do you have a favorite stuffed animal? Who gave it to you?	Who makes you feel safe?
Who do you go to when you are sad and need comforting?	Do you ever get angry or mad that your person died?	Do you ever feel angry? What do you do when you are angry?	Do you ever dream of the person who died?	Do you ever feel sad thinking about the person who died?
Did you get ice cream with the person who died? What flavors did you get?	What is your favorite thing to do in the summer?	What is your favorite movie?	What is your favorite color?	What is your favorite song?
Where is your favorite place to go? Did you go there with the person who died?	What did you like to do with the person who died?	What things do you miss doing with the person who died?	Is it harder to fall asleep since the person died?	If you could talk to the person who died, what would you say?
What superhero powers do you wish you had? Why?	Is it hard to talk about your feelings? Explain.	What is something that makes you grumpy?	What is something you are good at?	Can you tell me something the person who died is good at?

Questions to Discuss After Playing the Game to Further Talk About Everyone's Experience

- What was it like to play a game and talk about _____ as we played? Is this something you would like to do again? Can you tell a little bit more about your answer?
- How difficult or easy was it to answer the questions you were asked?
- Did anyone's answers (including your own) surprise you?
- Did you learn anything new about _____ or other family members?
- Did you find it helpful to talk as a family about _____? If so, in what way?
- Did you like playing this game? Can you tell me a little bit more about your answer (e.g., What did you like or dislike?)