

Family

A family framework is a fragile structure: Individual members are in tune with each other, they feel the commotions and counteract accordingly. Through the death of a person, this unsteady state sways, losing its stability, and requires time to retrieve its balance. No one can take the place of a deceased person, and neither can someone young like you. Your family life will be different than before - different, but not necessarily worse. Give yourself and your family time, until each of you has found a new and stable position within your family.

Adults

Shocked and grieving adults often behave in a way that you are not used to expecting them to. They need time to cope with the situation after a suicide. If you have the feeling that familiar adults are not taking good care of you, try telling them that. They often fail to notice in the middle of their pain and grief how important they are for you and how bad you need them. But then, if you have the feeling they are worried way too much about you, again, talk to them. A dual conversation is a sound basis for a good progress.

Coming of age yourself

Fierce disputes with adults are a part of growing up, and the question of why behind a suicide will be a part of advancing to adulthood as well. You will find yourself pondering on it again and again in various life situations, and notice your views on it changing. Don't be afraid of an intellectual confrontation with this issue – what you have gone through is a part of your life.

Available grief counseling services:

- www.allesistanders.de
For children and young adults
- www.traudichtrauern.de
For children and adolescents
- www.youngwings.de
For children and adolescents 12 – 21 years of age
- www.leuchtturm-on.de
For children and adolescents
- www.johanniter.de
Lacrima – grief counseling for children

Available suicide prevention counseling service

- www.u25-deutschland.de
For adolescents and young adults up to 25 years of age
- www.youth-life-line.de
For adolescents and young adults up to 25 years of age
- www.frnd.de
Plattform for local aid opportunities
- www.nummergegenkummer.de
Hotline for children and adolescents: 0800 – 111 0 333

The texts are based on the AGUS brochure „Suizidtrauer bei Kindern und Jugendlichen angstfrei unterstützen“ by Chris Paul, one of the most renowned grief counselors in Germany. This brochure covers further detailed information and can be obtained from the AGUS office or website (available only in German).



You have taken your life – what will become of me now?

www.agus-selbsthilfe.de

Grief after suicide – points of view for young people



We are grateful to Techniker Krankenkasse for their financial support enabling this publication!

Published by: Bundesgeschäftsstelle AGUS e. V.

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ACCOUNT FOR DONATIONS

AGUS e.V. Bayreuth
VR Bank Bayreuth-Hof
IBAN: DE72 7806 0896 0006 1989 37
BIC: GENODEF1HO1

Issue: June 2021 · www.opus-marketing.de



You are not alone

A member of the family or a friend of yours has taken their life.

As a child or young person you are certainly trying to find ways to cope with it. This flyer provides points of view that could help you out.

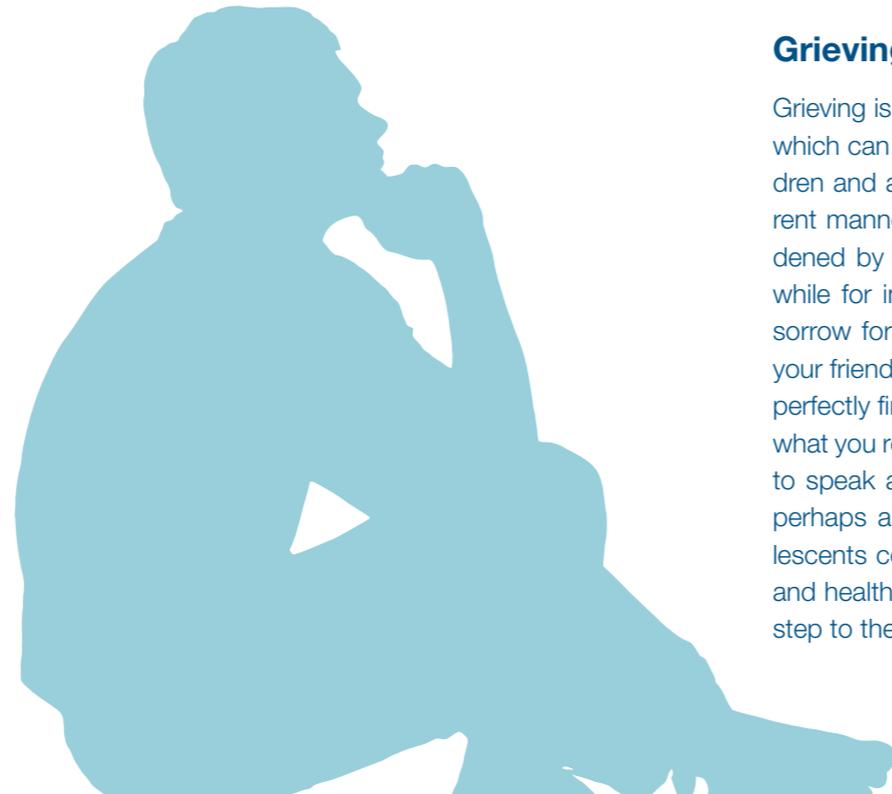


Why?

In the case of a suicide, a good many factors come into play, which are usually not evident from the outside. Some people see their problems as a mountain before them, they just cannot get around. To outsiders, the problems this person is facing may appear rather easy to solve. But for the sufferer themselves it's the end of the world and they have long lost faith in the possibility that there may be something beautiful and good behind. To them, life feels like a very narrow tunnel for instance, restricting the view on both sides. The people they love are still there, but are no longer visible, because the sufferers are so focused on the difficulties. In some cases, this hopelessness is caused or compounded by physical or psychological illnesses. Many people seek help, but when they run out of strength, they see no other way out than suicide.

Is it my fault?

Children and young people often wonder whether it is their fault that a person committed suicide. But it's not. Adults ask themselves the same question after a suicide case as well. Indeed, when a person takes their life, usually it is a lengthy process, which hardly anyone can influence. Therefore it is never just one single nasty remark or a quarrel that has sparked the suicide. You've done nothing wrong!



Let it out

After a suicide, the mind and the heart are usually riddled with diverse feelings, and clear thoughts are rather rare at first. If you want to talk your feelings and thoughts over, you could use a conversational partner who you can confide in. It could be an adult, a relative, a friend, a teacher or a coach. Adults are sometimes reserved because they are trying to avoid making you sad. Just turn to them and ask if you could talk with each other. Your peers are just as valuable if you can talk to them about your sorrow. You can find facilities, chat sessions, grief support groups and creative groups for grieving children and adolescents almost anywhere. If any of that appeals to you, just give it a shot. You'll find a list of websites with pertinent opportunities on the backside of this flyer.

Grieving

Grieving is the natural reaction of the body to a loss, which can actually vary from person to person. Children and adolescents usually grieve in a quite different manner than adults. You could be deeply saddened by the loss of a beloved person for quite a while for instance, and then completely banish the sorrow for hours and simply enjoy the company of your friends, do sports or just feel good. All of that is perfectly fine, for your body and your soul well know what you require to cope with such a loss. If you wish to speak about your grief with people of your age, perhaps a grief support group for children or adolescents could serve the purpose. It is indeed good and healthy to have nice stuff like hobbies or friends step to the fore again.

Fond memories

Fond and tender memories of the deceased person are valuable and significant. In order to make these tangible, you can design beautiful things. A photo album with pictures of the both of you together, a collage with holiday souvenirs and favorite colors, or a memento box with pictures, books and such. This way, you'll have a casket with fond memories at your fingertips at all times.

