

Supporting a Grieving Co-Worker

When co-workers experience a personal loss, you can:

- Acknowledge the person's grief and empathize with the impact of their loss.
- Expect tears, sadness, and respect the person's need for privacy.
- Show your support by offering assistance if needed.
- Include the person in social plans – give them the option to accept or decline the invitation.
- Practice patience and understand that the grieving process takes time.
- Be available to listen, when that person is ready to share.

When co-workers return to work, you can:

- Let the person grieve in the ways that are appropriate for them.
- Be aware that the person's mood may change.
- Provide a place of solitude for the person to go to when their emotions become too much to deal with.
- Meet the person where they are at emotionally and avoid judgements.
- Be mindful of sharing your own stories and minimizing the person's loss.

When supporting a co-worker, remember:

"Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim."

– Vicki Harrison

Call or visit the Child and Family Services
Employee Assistance Program website for confidential support.

