

CAMPUS RESOURCES

If you believe your child is in need of extra support or guidance, the following resources are available.

STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling may be helpful if your child is fixated on the loss, if over time your child has difficulty engaging in daily activities, if your child does not have a support system, or if your child is having thoughts of suicide, self-harm, or harming others.

To get started with counseling or other SCS services, please call 515-294-5056 during SCS business hours to schedule an initial appointment.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

This office is helpful if your child needs academic-related assistance (*reaching out to professors, discussing taking a break from school if needed*)

Academic Year Hours: 8AM – 5PM
Summer & Break Hours: 7:30AM – 4PM
studentassistance@iastate.edu
Student Services Building, 1st Floor

OTHER RESOURCES

“Understanding Your Grief: Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart”
Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

“We Get It: Voices of Grieving College Students and Young Adults”

Heather L. Servaty-Seib & David C. Fajgenbaum with Contributions by 33 Inspirational Young Adults

Actively Moving Forward

<https://healgrief.org/actively-moving-forward/>



2505 UNION DRIVE

Student Services Building, 3rd Floor

STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES

To get started with counseling or other SCS services, please call during SCS business hours to schedule an initial appointment.

MONDAY - FRIDAY: 8AM - 5PM

CRISIS HOURS

MONDAY - FRIDAY: 8AM - 5PM

515-294-5056

SUICIDE AND CRISIS LIFELINE

Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

TEXT “ISU” TO 741741

Accredited by:



International Association of Counseling Services, Inc.



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Student Counseling Services

HOW TO SUPPORT GRIEVING STUDENTS

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



CycloneHealth.org

A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

Supporting a grieving child can be difficult. If your child is away at college, providing in-person support may not be possible, which may make it more difficult to know exactly how to help. Regardless of distance, you can provide support and guidance to your grieving child.

WHAT IS GRIEF?

Grief is the inner response to loss. It is what we think and feel in response to losing something or someone we are close to (Wolfelt, 2018). Although each individual's response to loss is unique, there are common reactions to grief that many individuals experience. Not every grieving person will experience the same reactions, or all of the reactions listed below.

PHYSICAL REACTIONS: rapid heartbeat, sleep disturbances, headaches, muscle tension, fatigue, weight and appetite changes, nausea.

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS: sadness, confusion, feeling numb, hopelessness, anger, irritability, guilt, helplessness, anxiety, shock.

BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS: concentration difficulties, crying, feeling detached from surroundings, withdrawn from friends and activities.

SPIRITUAL REACTIONS: confusion, anger toward God, loss of faith, questioning the meaning of life.

HOW CAN I HELP?

ALLOW SPACE TO TALK & LISTEN

To support your grieving college student, it's important to provide a safe, comfortable environment in which they can talk about their experience and feelings. Try to refrain from interrupting while your child is talking. You may have the urge to "solve" your child's worries or concerns or rationalize their grief. Simply providing an open ear, without offering advice, is beneficial.

HELPFUL RESPONSES

Aim to use phrases that validate your child's feelings and reactions. For example:

"I am sorry for your loss."

"I wish I had the right words, just know that I care."

"I don't know how you feel, but I am here to help in whatever way you need me."

"I am just a phone call away."

"My favorite memory of your loved one is..."

Providing a hug or saying nothing and simply being there for your child are also helpful ways to show support.



AVOID SAYING

Avoid saying the following phrases below. Although they may be well-intended, they can be minimizing and hurtful.

"Be strong."

"They're in a better place."

"Everything happens for a reason."

"You need to put this behind you."

"They wouldn't want you to be so upset."

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO ENGAGE IN SELF-CARE

Check in with your child to see if and how they are getting their physical, emotional, and mental needs met. Gently encourage them to get an adequate amount of sleep, eat nutrient-dense foods, and engage in exercise or physical activities that are enjoyable to them. Practicing self-care by deep breathing, taking a long bath, or spending time with friends is also beneficial.

BE PATIENT

Be patient with your child and respect their boundaries if they are not ready to share. It is also helpful to be patient if your child is grieving in a different manner than you or other members of the family. Remember, everyone grieves in a unique way.

KNOW THE RESOURCES

Become familiar with resources that could benefit your child. Refer to the resources listed in this brochure for more information.