CARVEYTEACH

Anchors in the Storm

Activities for supporting children through grief loss and instability



32 activities | 12 printable supports

Ages 0 to 8 · Developmental adaptations · Guide and printable pages

Carmina Veytia

Training companion · English edition

FREE SAMPLE - 8 selected pages from 64

Start with one child and one routine

Before offering

Speak privately with the authorized caregiver. Confirm what the child knows, words used, welcomed supports and authorized pickup. You do not need to investigate how the loss happened. Choose a brief activity, an unrushed moment and a way to leave without penalty.

One possible sequence

1. Meet physical and safety needs. 2. Connect using few words. 3. Offer two real choices or passing. 4. Follow the child's cues. 5. Close with a familiar routine. An activity may take less time than suggested; finishing early is valid.

If the child declines

Accept the decision and keep providing care. Do not repeat questions to obtain an answer. Watching, different play, augmentative communication or staying nearby are valid participation.

If distress appears

Put the materials aside. Slow down and reduce stimulation; offer a familiar adult and a simple choice. Do not require breathing exercises, closed eyes or physical contact. Use the page 14 response route for danger or warning signs.

A flexible first week

Day 1: chosen welcome. Day 2: first and next. Day 3: support menu. Day 4: repeat what was welcomed. Day 5: review with family. This is a provider planning example, not a child's recovery schedule.

© 2026 CarveyTeach · Educational support · Voluntary participation

FREE SAMPLE - 8 selected pages from 64

The puddles of children's grief

An image for adults

Child Bereavement UK compares shifts in children's grief to moving in and out of a puddle. A child may feel very sad and then play soon afterward. The metaphor explains one way feelings may arrive in brief periods; it is not a clinical classification or a set of puddles to complete.

An everyday example

At snack, a song recalls a grandmother who died. The child cries and seeks company. Minutes later, a tower catches their interest. The provider allows both: acknowledges the memory, stays available and makes room for play. She does not conclude the grandmother has been forgotten.

What to offer

Availability without constant mood monitoring. Permission to approach a memory and step away. An adult who does not need a story to provide care. Use A6 and T4 if the image helps; not every child needs the metaphor.

What not to conclude

Not everyone shows this pattern. No tears do not prove no pain, and tears do not establish a disorder. Play does not rule out difficulties. Observe daily functioning and seek guidance when needed.

Provider reflection

Did I allow play after listening? Did I keep offering care without speech? Am I trying to make the child feel something that reassures me?

Principle sources: S2, S3, S18

© 2026 CarveyTeach · Educational support · Voluntary participation

FREE SAMPLE - 8 selected pages from 64

A01 · ALL TRANSITIONS

A welcome I can choose

Core ages 3 to 5 · Adaptations 0 to 2 and 6 to 8 · 3-5 min

Purpose

Offer one small, real choice at arrival.

Materials

Paper and crayons; T1 cards.

STEP BY STEP

1. Prepare two options you can honor: wave hello or sit nearby.

2. Show the choices without asking what happened at home. Watching or not choosing is allowed.

3. Follow the chosen option for a minute. If both are declined, stay available at a comfortable distance.

4. Name what comes next and accompany the child to a familiar place. Repeat the welcome tomorrow.

Words to try

You can wave or watch. I will stay here while you settle in.

Adaptations

0-2: respond to gaze and gestures; offer holding only when welcomed. 6-8: invite a third workable choice.

Special care

Do not require hugs, eye contact or unsupported separation.

Watching, passing or finishing is allowed. Observe choices and needs, not stages.

My adaptation for this child and routine

No names or identifying family details

Principle sources: S3, S14

© 2026 CarveyTeach · Educational support · Voluntary participation

FREE SAMPLE - 8 selected pages from 64

A06 · GRIEF THAT COMES AND GOES

Between puddles and play

Core ages 3 to 5 · Adaptations 0 to 2 and 6 to 8 · 5-10 min

Purpose

Give permission to feel and to return to play.

Materials

Two large sheets; T4.

STEP BY STEP

1. Explain to the provider that puddles are a metaphor, not stages.

2. With a willing child, offer one sheet for feelings drawings and another for free play.

3. They may move between them, remain with you or ignore the sheets. No physical jumping is required.

4. Follow their pace. If they laugh after crying, allow play without checking whether they are better now.

Words to try

We can remember for a moment and then play. You do not have to stay sad.

Adaptations

0-2: alternate comfort and play by following cues; do not teach the metaphor. 6-8: draw a personal image for feelings that come and go.

Special care

Never provoke sadness to complete the activity or label play as denial.

Watching, passing or finishing is allowed. Observe choices and needs, not stages.

My adaptation for this child and routine

No names or identifying family details

Principle sources: S2, S3

© 2026 CarveyTeach · Educational support · Voluntary participation

FREE SAMPLE - 8 selected pages from 64

T1 · SUPPORTED-USE PRINTABLE

I can ask for support

The child may point draw dictate or pass. This is not a test.

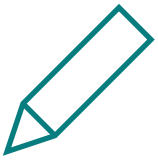
Company



Some space



Draw



A book



Gentle movement



Pass or stop



An adult may cut cards apart. Offer two choices at a time without requiring a response.

© 2026 CarveyTeach · Educational support · Voluntary participation

FREE SAMPLE - 8 selected pages from 64

T4 · SUPPORTED-USE PRINTABLE

My space to feel and play

The child may point draw dictate or pass. This is not a test.

A space for feelings

A space for play

I may move toward or away from these spaces. They are not stages. I do not need to complete both. The puddles metaphor comes from Child Bereavement UK; this page is original CarveyTeach work.

Principle sources: S2

© 2026 CarveyTeach · Educational support · Voluntary participation

FREE SAMPLE - 8 selected pages from 64

SOURCES ACCESSED OCTOBER 18 2026

References and free resources

S1 · Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Foundation
5 Stages of Grief

https://www.ekrfoundation.org/5-stages-grief/

S2 · Child Bereavement UK
Supporting bereaved children and young people

https://www.childbereavementuk.org/supporting-bereaved-children-and-young-people

S3 · Dougy Center
How to Help a Child Who is Grieving

https://www.dougy.org/resource-articles/how-to-help-a-grieving-child-1

S4 · American Academy of Pediatrics
How Children Understand Death What to Say When a Loved One Dies

https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/How-Children-Understand-Death-What-You-Should-Say.aspx

S5 · ZERO TO THREE
Helping Toddlers Cope with Grief and Death

https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/helping-toddlers-cope-with-grief-and-death/

© 2026 CarveyTeach · Educational support · Voluntary participation

FREE SAMPLE - 8 selected pages from 64