



Paschal Sherman Indian School

Office of Superintendent
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"The vision of Paschal Sherman Indian School is to prepare our children to be the speakers of our language, guardians of our culture and leaders of our future."



November 25, 2018

Dear Paschal Sherman Indian School Parents, Families and Community,

On Behalf of PSIS, we are saddened to inform you that Mr. Albert Miller, Teacher, Coach, Counselor and Administrator passed away last week. Mr. Miller's school family is broken hearted, some staff and students are returning to school to learn of this sad news. There were many of us able to participate and attend Mr. Miller's funeral services. His family scheduled a public rosary on Friday, November 23rd and Funeral services on Saturday November, 24th 2018.

PSIS had two emergency staff meetings on Friday, and today. We just want to ensure you that we have a Crises-Response Plan to provide support services to students. This crises plan is to provide immediate student engagement upon arrival; staff will be available beginning at 7:00 am. Tomorrow's schedule will consist of students in their homeroom, we cancelled SFA and other specialists; teachers are prepared to guide classroom discussion and activities to support student's social-emotional needs. PSIS announced that our Student Services Team will be available for counseling support as needed. Each classroom will have another adult/specialist to work alongside teachers.

PSIS will make every effort to communicate with parents/families. Tomorrow at 2:00 we will end the day with a small ceremony (student drummers) honoring Mr. Miller and his service. On Wednesday, PSIS plans to have a small memorial at the church and invite the Miller family. Students may ask to make cards, draw pictures or write notes to the family. We encourage such activities, the value of generosity through acts of giving, the sharing of kind words or tokens of appreciation are what we as Tribal peoples know and understand.

Paschal Sherman Indian School would like to thank Mr. Albert Miller's wife, Sally, his sons Bryan, Mike and Sam, his daughter Jennifer and his many loving grandchildren for sharing Coach Miller with us for so many years. RIP Coach Miller, you will be missed but not forgotten!

Please find attached a few ideas from Scholastics Children and Grief website to help families deal with a child's loss. <http://www.scholastic.com/childrenandgrief/>

***After a Loved One Dies— How Children Grieve And how parents and other adults can support them.* NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOOL CRISES & BEREAVEMENT (2009).**

How Children Respond to Death

Children's reactions to a death may communicate their thoughts, feelings and fears. Sometimes these reactions are confusing to adults. But, when adults understand what children are communicating, everything makes more sense. Here are some common reactions children may have.

Children may become upset by these discussions. Keep in mind that it isn't the conversation causing distress, but the very painful loss felt from the death of a loved one. Talking with your children provides a chance for them to show you their feelings. When you understand their feelings, it's easier to help them cope with the experience.

What to Do

Pause the conversation if that seems best. Provide support and comfort. Plan to continue the talk another time soon. Let your children know it's OK to show their feelings. Otherwise, they might try to hide their feelings and deal with them without your support. Let them know it's OK to cry. Crying may help them feel better. Show them your own feelings. Demonstrate how you are coping. Let your children see you crying, talking with friends, seeking spiritual comfort or remembering good things about the person who has died.

Children may be reluctant to talk about a recent death. Often this happens because they see that the adults around them are uncomfortable talking about the death. Children may withhold their own comments or questions to avoid upsetting family members. They may believe it's wrong to talk about such things. Older children and teens may turn to peers to discuss the death. They may tell adults close to them that they don't want or need to talk about it.

What to Do

Avoid forcing the issue or getting into power struggles about it. Continue to invite your children to talk on several occasions over time. Acknowledge that these conversations can be difficult. Let your children know you find talking helpful. Help older children and teens identify other adults in their lives with whom they can talk. Look for people who are not as directly affected by the death, such as a teacher, chaplain, school counselor, mental health professional, or a pediatrician or other health care provider.

Maintain an emotional and physical presence with your children. Hug them. Talk about your feelings. Ask about theirs. Even older children and teens need your support and assistance as they cope with the loss. Children may express their feelings in ways other than talking. Children may use play or creative activities such as drawing or writing to express their grief. Often, they come to a better understanding of grief through play and creativity. These expressions can give you some important clues about what children are thinking, but be careful not to jump to conclusions. For example, very happy drawings after a traumatic death might give adults the idea that a child is not affected by the death when, in fact, this is more likely a sign that the child is not yet ready to deal with the grieving process.

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What to Do

Offer your children opportunities to play, write, draw, paint, dance, make up songs or do other creative activities. Ask them to tell you about their artwork. For example, you might say, "Tell me what's happening in this picture you drew." If there are people in the drawing, ask who they are, what they're feeling, whether anyone is missing from the picture, and so on.

Under stress, children may behave as they did at a younger age. For example, children who have recently mastered toilet training may start to have accidents. Children who have been acting with greater independence may become clingy or have difficulty with separation. Children and teens can also act less mature socially. They may become demanding, refuse to share, or pick fights with family members. They may respond to the death in ways that seem cold or selfish: "Does this mean I can't have my birthday party this weekend?" "Am I still going to be able to go to the college I want?"

Expect your children to think more about themselves when they are grieving, at least at first. Once they feel their needs are being met, they will be able to think more about the needs of others.

What to Do

Continue to show caring and concern for your children.
Remember that your children are still grieving, even when they behave in these ways.
Set appropriate limits on behavior, but resist the temptation to accuse children of being selfish or uncaring.

For more information, please contact:

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