

Preparing Children and Youth for Funerals, Memorials and Rituals



- **Ask what they know and understand :** Talk to them about funerals in a way they can understand, and encourage them to ask any questions they might have.
- **Acknowledge and support their emotions:** Reassure the child that all feelings are okay.
- **Prepare for what they may see:** Explain the possible elements of the service and order of events. Prepare the child for what they may see: ex. casket (open or closed), urn, flowers, visitors and the various emotions they may witness etc.
- **Offer choice:** Let the child choose what aspects of the service they are comfortable participating in and observing. Discuss ways they can participate ex. speaking, singing, lighting a candle etc.
- **Offer guidance on how to respond:** Provide support and coaching for how to respond to common words of condolence.
- **Provide options for comfort:** With the child, identify a trusted adult they can go to for support during the services.



How do I explain a funeral to a bereaved child?



Explaining funerals to children: What happens at a burial?



Explaining funerals to children: What happens at a cremation?