

Section 5 - Grief and Loss Overview

“To spare oneself from grief at all cost can be achieved only at the price of total detachment, which excludes the ability to experience happiness.”

- Erich Fromm, Social Philosopher/Psychoanalyst (1900 – 1980)

Judges and those working with dependent children are encouraged to constantly be on guard for signs of unresolved grief and take the steps necessary to assist in its resolution. Understanding the process of grief and the possible behavior connected to loss can dramatically impact judicial decision-making.

This section contains three primary resources as well as some additional information to educate the judge on the most prevalent grief and loss issues.

- I. An excellent primer on grief and loss in children including the phases of grief and when children need intervention. There is a chart to identify grief and loss through the child’s developmental stages. (See, *Adoption Resources of Wisconsin, n.d.*)
- II. Why do children in care suffer from grief and loss? How does the judge approach children in care with dignity and respect? (See, *Office of Children’s Advocate, Manitoba, n.d.*)
- III. The Pennsylvania State Roundtable’s Trauma Workgroup provides practical resources for judges including educational videos, handouts, and recommendations for best practice. (See, *Office of Children & Families in the Courts: Trauma, 2016*)

