

Explanations for Terms Relating to Dying and Death

“Adults sometimes have trouble facing death themselves. So open, honest discussions about death with children can be difficult. Yet adults who are able to confront, explore and learn from their own personal fears about death can help children when someone loved dies. As a result, children can form a healthy attitude toward both life and death.” *A. Wolfelt*

DEAD means that a body has stopped working and will never work again. The body cannot move, breathe, think, feel, see, smell, or talk. The body does not feel pain or hunger or fear.

GRIEF is all the different feelings that you feel when someone you care about is dying or has died (sad, mad, confused, worried, abandoned, happy, lonely, etc.).

CREMATION is when the body is placed in a special box and is burned (remember, a dead person doesn't need their body anymore). What is left are ashes that look like sand. The ashes are usually placed in a small box called an urn. Sometimes the urn, with the ashes inside, is buried. Sometimes people scatter the ashes in a place that was special to the dead person.

BURIAL is when a dead body is put into a special box called a coffin (or casket) and is placed into a hole in the ground called a grave. The body is protected by the coffin from dirt and bugs and eventually grass will grow on top of the grave. An urn can be buried or put in another special place.

A **CEMETERY** or graveyard is a place where families can bury their dead family member's body or ashes in the ground, or keep them in another special place, such as a niche.

A **FUNERAL HOME** is a place where a dead body is taken. People can visit, comfort each other, cry, and say goodbye at a "visitation" or at the funeral. Sometimes the coffin is open and people see the body. Sometimes it is closed. If the urn is at the funeral home, it is kept closed.