



Coping with Grief & Loss

When you experience a loss in your life, it's important to allow enough time to grieve for as long as it takes to work through the loss. Others in our lives can help us through the grief process, and it's important to both accept and seek their help. Here are a few suggestions to consider as you move through your grief process:

- **Recognize your loss** by putting your grief into words. Write in a journal, write a letter to yourself or to the person who has died, talk to a close friend or family member, or talk to your spiritual leader or a professional counselor.
- **Everyone experiences grief differently.** Remember that there is no one or "right" way to grieve. Take care of yourself and allow others to process their grief differently than you.
- **Join a support group.** This is a safe environment where you can express your grief openly and talk with others who are experiencing similar feelings. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP), local mental health center, hospital, or crisis line can connect you to groups in your area.
- **Control the urge to make life-changing decisions.** A loss can cause a major disruption in our life and feelings of being "lost at sea" are common. Avoid making a major life decision immediately after a loss. Be patient and make small decisions or identify tasks that can be easily accomplished – this can help you feel confident and in control of your life.
- **Plan activities** that give you something to look forward to and that bring comfort and enjoyment, such as a walk with a friend, going out to eat, a trip or vacation, or learning a new hobby. If a holiday or anniversary is an especially difficult time, plan activities or ask a friend to plan activities that you find supportive.
- **Let your family, coworkers, and friends know what you need from them.** They may feel hesitant to talk about your loss and worry about upsetting you. If talking about your loss gives you comfort, let others know this. Ask for help with responsibilities if you need help or would simply enjoy their company.
- **Contact MCPS Employee and Retiree Service Center** at 301-517-8100 to talk about bereavement leave available to you.
- **Take care of yourself.** Keep a regular schedule, eat a balanced diet, get adequate rest, and exercise moderately. Avoid taking on new or extra responsibilities that may add stress to your life.

When You Need Help

Your Employee Assistance Program provides access to free, confidential counseling services and a variety of resources to help you cope during this difficult time.



Your Employee Assistance Program

MCPS in partnership with Kepro, offers a hybrid EAP to assist in the management of workforce issues or personal challenges that may impact your wellbeing. The in-house EAP is available 8:30AM-5PM year-round and Kepro EAP is available 24/7/365.



IN-HOUSE EAP
1.240.314.1040

IN-HOUSE EAP WEBSITE:
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/eap/

EXTERNAL EAP - KEPRO TOLL-FREE:
1.866.496.9599

KEPRO WEBSITE:
EAPHelplink.com

CODE:
MCPS