Supporting youth grieving a sudden death

elunanetwork.org/resources

POSTCARD POINTERS
Supporting youth grieving a sudden death
Reassure youth that it isn't their fault & they are not alone
Tell the truth using simple terms & clear up any misconceptions
Pause frequently to check in – grieving begins when first informed
Invite youth to consider writing a goodbye letter to express anything they would have wanted to share with their person
Reestablish youth safety & create a list of safe people & places
Return to healthy routines & activities when possible
Recognize potential for trauma response or prolonged grief
Consider peer support groups & grief camps, such as Camp Erin
Welcome questions & LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN!

Things to avoid:
- Empty reassurances, such as "All things happen for a reason" or "It is going to be OK"
- Rushing the grief process or trying to fix it - It is ok to not be ok
- Telling someone how to feel or cope, such as "Be strong" or "At least...."
- Assuming all sudden grief is the same - let youth share their experiences
- Exposure to graphic content via media & adult conversations
- Imposing controversial viewpoints, placing blame, or trying to make sense of the death