



How to Talk About **MISCARRIAGE** and **PREGNANCY LOSS** with Your Child

Give straightforward, age-appropriate information.

You might say that the baby wasn't growing and so it died. Avoid statements like, 'the baby went to sleep and did not wake up' or 'was sick and went to a better place' or 'I lost the baby,' which can cause more questions and anxiety. A young mind might become fearful of going to sleep or getting sick or worry whether you would try to find them if they were lost.

Make it clear this was no one's fault. Sometimes a child, no matter their age, may worry that something they did, said, or thought is to blame. Emphasize that it was nobody's fault, just something sad that happened. Be clear that you are upset because you miss the baby, not because of anything they did or did not do. Reassure them the miscarriage does not mean you are sick or something is wrong with you.

Talk about feelings. It is okay to let your children know you are sad or to cry in front of them. Tell them you are upset about what happened, but you will be okay, and invite them to share their feelings. Young children may not have the language to express emotions – it is hard enough for adults to process this loss – but may be able to draw a picture that shows their feelings.

Notice changes in behavior. If young children are more upset or clingy than usual, they may be picking up on emotions of adults around them. Older kids might appear withdrawn or even angry. No matter their age, give them a little extra attention along with reassurance that you love them.

Encourage Family Activity. Consider doing something together to say goodbye. You might read a story together about miscarriage, plant a tree, create a memorial garden, or use a tradition that is meaningful to your family. Since young children can have a difficult time sitting through services or gatherings, activities like these may help them cope with their grief.

Take care of yourself. Remember, parents set the mood for the family. One of the most important tasks for parents is to help their children identify and express their thoughts and feelings. Modeling good self-care and creating a safe space for your children to process what has happened will help them cope with loss and other hard life experiences in a healthy way.

Don't hesitate to reach out to a professional if your child exhibits persistent regressive behaviors, nightmares, refusal to go to school or activities. You know your child best. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to JCS at **410-466-9200**.

For more information on grief support, contact

Donna Kane
Grief Clinician

Jewish COMMUNITY SERVICES

at dkane@jcsbaltimore.org or **410-843-7394**.

To learn more about grief support and resources or to access video programs for children, visit jcsbalt.org/grief.

