

## **A message to parents or older siblings**

As the brothers and sisters who helped to put together this guide, we felt strongly that it needed to give all children, regardless of their age, the support they need at this difficult time. We developed this section of the guide as a way for kids to actively express themselves. These activities can be used by children who are too young to read or understand our words, children who choose not to read the guide right now, or children who want to engage in some other type of activity.

When a brother or sister is abducted, younger children face many of the same mixed-up feelings and worries that older children do, even if they can't put them into words. Having some activities relating to the experience can help younger kids deal with their feelings. This activities section is divided into three parts – one for very young children, one for children who are learning to read and write, and one for older kids and teenagers.

To ensure that the activities are appropriate for children dealing with grief and loss, the American Hospice Foundation graciously allowed us to use many of their materials and activities. Directions are provided for the activities for younger children. The activity sheets can be torn out of the guide and stapled together so younger kids have ownership and a “book” of their own. The three levels allow children and parents to choose activities that are age appropriate. Answers to puzzles are found on the last page of this section.

Please remember that we have selected activities that would have been helpful to us and our younger siblings at the time our brother or sister was abducted. Ultimately, parents need to decide what would be most helpful and appropriate for their children. Clearly, these suggestions and activities can not take the place of professional help that children may need at a time like this.

These activities include material that is adapted from numerous publications and is used with permission from the American Hospice Foundation.

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