



THE GRIEF BRIEF

Emma's Place – Staten Island Grief Center for Children and Families

September, 2021 | Volume 5 | Issue 3

ENHANCING YOUR CHILD'S RETURN TO SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Many children in our community will either be returning to school for the first time since March 2020, or will be attending school on a full-time schedule since that time. This school year will be a critical time for our children and it will be helpful for us to be there for them as much as possible during this challenging time. The first thing to remember to help both ourselves and our children is to maintain a positive attitude, especially when in the presence of children. While challenging times present their own set of difficulties, they also offer the gifts of developing strength, resilience, courage, independence, and growth, which might not have occurred if the challenges didn't exist. If you see your child struggling, be sure to also point out the ways in which they are also growing and developing. Below are some things to notice regarding your child's return to school:

- After spending more time than usual together during the pandemic, you may notice your child may be anxious about being away from you, or worried that something may happen to you while they are in school. This anxiety can be compounded if your child has experienced a recent loss. Ways you can help your child deal with this anxiety is to:
 - Validate their feelings. For example, if they say I'm going to miss you when I'm in school, you can say, "It's natural to miss people you love when you're not with them, and I'll miss you too." Then you can explain some things you do when you miss them. For example, you can say, "I make sure I hug you in the morning before you leave so I can imagine myself hugging you when I miss you." You can also explain that even though you can't see each other, you can feel each other in our hearts.
 - Let your child know what you will be doing when you are apart from each other. For example, if you are going to work, let them know some specifics about what you do so they can picture you doing these things. You can say, "In the mornings I sit at my computer and type articles. In the afternoon, I take a walk during lunch, and then I teach a class in the afternoon."

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At Emma's Place you will :

- Be supported by those who have journeyed through their own path of grief.
- Find a community of welcoming, caring, and committed individuals who will listen.
- Learn healthy grief processing in a private, safe-setting which facilitates healing while offering the hope and tools to move forward to a meaningful life.

EMMA'S PLACE GROUP SCHEDULE

(The groups are facilitated by Emma's Place Counselors and meet as indicated below)

Every Wednesday at 5:00 p.m.

Tweens Ages 11 -14 | Teens Ages 15 – 17

1st and 3rd Thursday of each month

Children Ages 5-10

Parent and Adult Groups

Call for Times

Emma's Place
Staten Island Grief & Loss
Center for Children and
Families
P.O. Box 10311
Staten Island, NY 10301

Contact us at:
Telephone 347.850.2322
Email:
info@emmasplacesi.org

We Rely on YOU:

Our Center is supported through donations, grants, memorials and bequests; which will allow us to provide grief services, at no cost, to children and families in the community.

If you would like to support Emma's Place and help grieving children and families you can:

- Mail a check, made out to Staten Island Grief Center, to:
Emma's Place
P.O. Box 10311
Staten Island, NY 10301
- Donate online at:
www.emmasplacesi.org/donate

Emma's Place staff members are also available for training and educational presentations. To contact us please call:
347.850.2322
or email:
info@emmasplacesi.org

We greatly appreciate your generosity!

ENHANCING YOUR CHILD'S RETURN TO SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

- Speak honestly with your child in a level they can understand, and answer questions they may ask as truthfully as possible.
- The reduced flexibility that a structured full-time in classroom experience offers when compared to remote learning, may take some getting used to for your child. Be patient with your child as they make this adjustment. To help them with this adjustment it is important to help them get used to routines at home as well.
- Children may also need some time to get used to the social aspect of going back to school. Take cues from your child at the beginning and see what they feel comfortable with. Don't force them to have playdates if they don't seem ready for it, or force them to attend a party they don't want to go to. Instead, keep the lines of communication open with your child. Find out why they may be apprehensive about these things and try to reassure them. If they seem withdrawn, or their issues with socializing persist, it may be time to speak with their teacher and seek other outside help.

It's also important to bear in mind that children are generally resilient and if you are consistent, honest, present, and positive with them, it will make their transition back to school as smooth as possible. Please also know that Emma's Place is here for you as you navigate this uncharted territory with your child.



COMING UP!

Please look out for more information concerning:

- Our October Virtual Fundraiser
- Children's Grief Awareness Day 2021 – Thursday, November 18th