



Grief and Loss for Children

Growing Up With ACEs
Session 3
Jessica Cantin, MS, ECMAP

Special Guest:

Christine Phillips

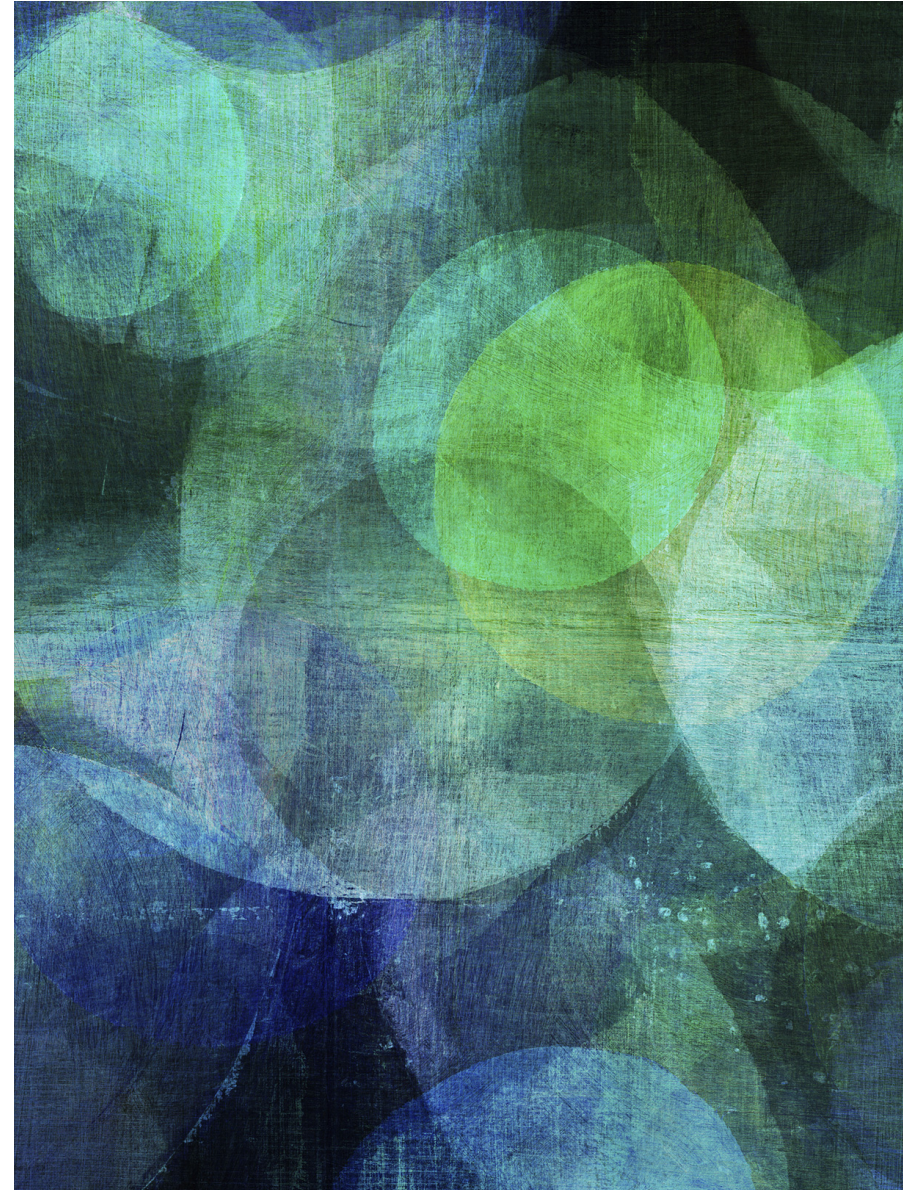
Co-Founder & Executive Director

Friends of Aine



- Understanding the five stages of grief
- Defining the many forms of death, loss and separation
- Exploring tools and resources for children and families
- Connecting to our values and beliefs about grief and loss
- Understanding how experiences take shape in grief

Opening Circle



HOW ARE SOME WAYS CHILDREN CAN EXPERIENCE GRIEF AND LOSS?

- Divorce and/or separation
- Sudden separation due to acute crisis
- Trauma
- Sudden or expected loss of a parent or loved one
- Military Deployment
- Loss of pet
- Terminal illness
- Miscarriage/still birth
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

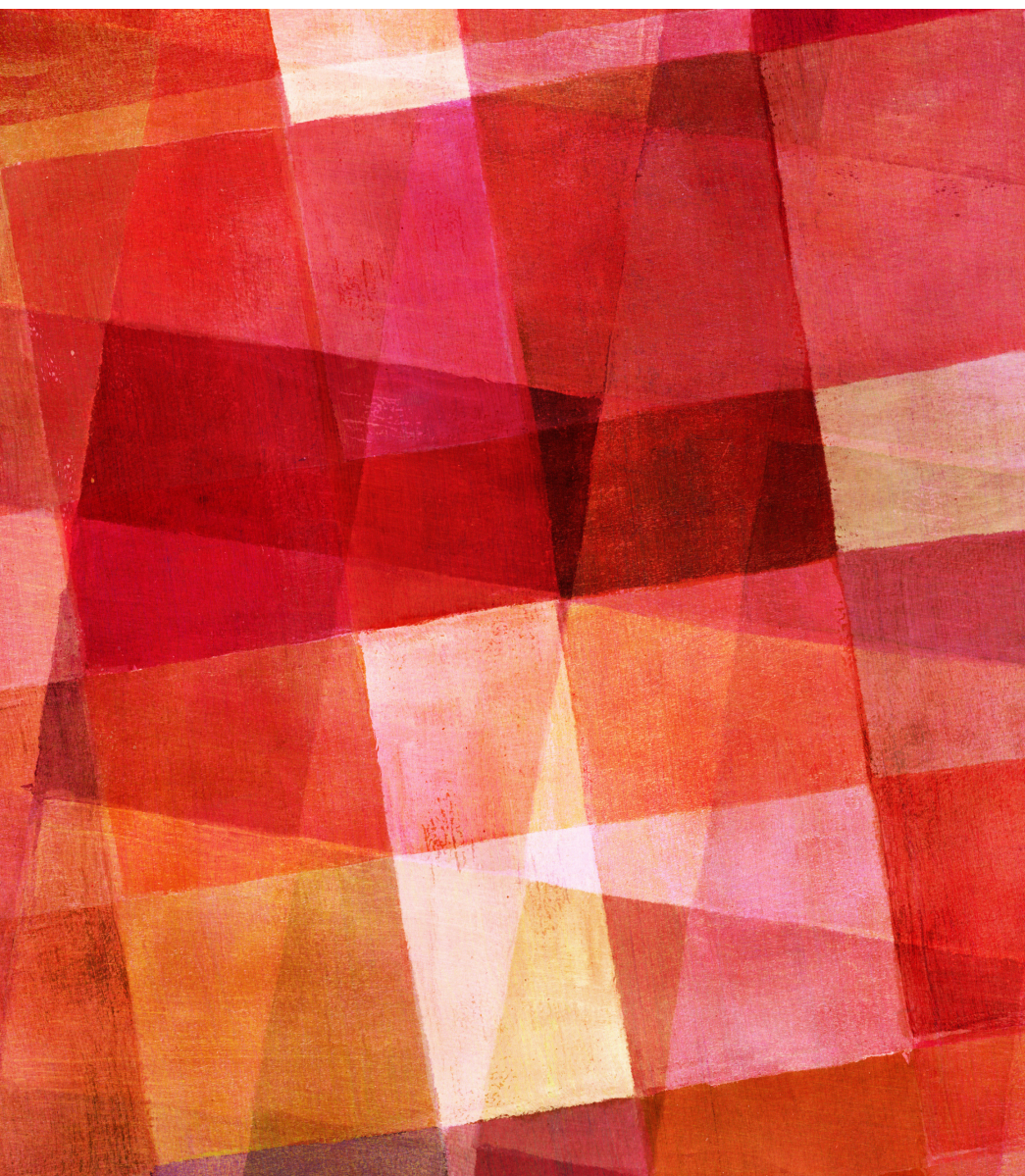




GRIEF AND CHILDREN

Grief





FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF

➤ Denial

Children may want to continue to believe that everything is okay and that nothing bad has actually happened. Due to limited experiences, it may take them processing it through at times that adults find less than ideal.

➤ Bargaining

Child may work to behave and show more positive behaviors both at home and at school. School work may improve dramatically. The child may believe that doing everything “just right” will fix the situation.

➤ Depression

During this stage of grief, intense sadness, decreased sleep, reduced appetite, and loss of motivation are common.

➤ Acceptance

Once initial grief emotions are process, children are able to accept that the loss has occurred and cannot be undone, and are once again able to plan for their futures and re-engage in daily life.

The stages are not sequential, children, like adults can move in and out of them-back and forward.

(Kubler-Ross, 1969)

UNPACKING SHAME AND GUILT

➤ Best understood in two ways for most children:

“I am bad”-Shame

“I did something bad”-Guilt

Allowing this to grow, can cultivate:

Self-loathing

Low self esteem



“

Grief is a process that reshapes our inner world following loss. It involves a set of emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physical reactions that vary depending on the nature of the loss

-Perry, 2006

PROCESSING & COPING

Two Central Challenges



COPING WITH BIG FEELINGS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcIbOc_5hT8





TRAUMATIC SEPARATION

- Fear of unknown
- Comes and goes, as with regular grief
- May experience a range of emotions

What can we do?

Soothing support

Stay grounded in reality

Provide a safe space

Minimize playfulness (teasing, sarcasm)



THINGS THAT HELP & SUPPORT



FRIENDS OF AINE

*Special Presentation and Guest
Christine Phillips
Co-Founder and Executive Director*

EXPLAINING WHAT HAPPENED

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2D9Ezh9sUE>





SHARING AS A FAMILY

- Talk
- Provide Space
- Share memories and stories

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7pg0x-Ml5g>

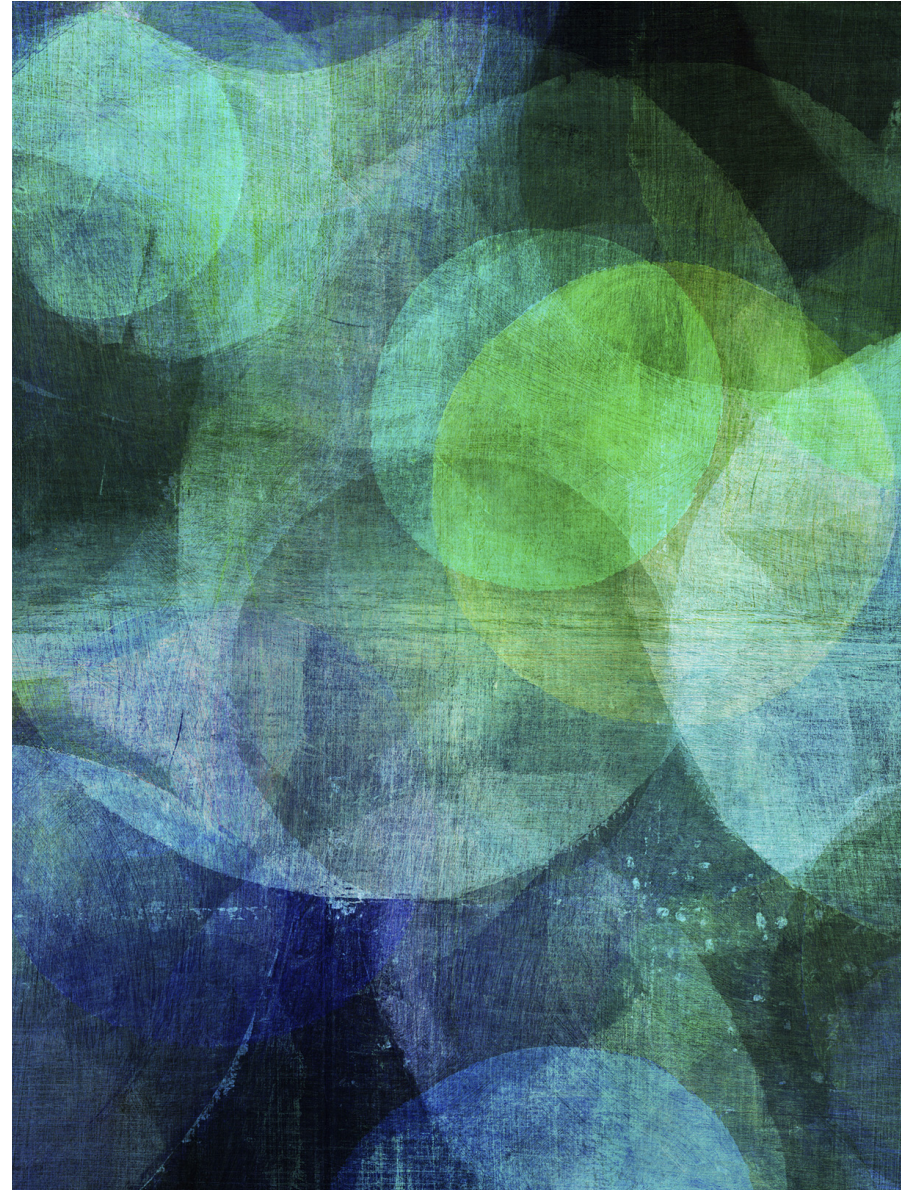
CREATING A SAFE SPACE

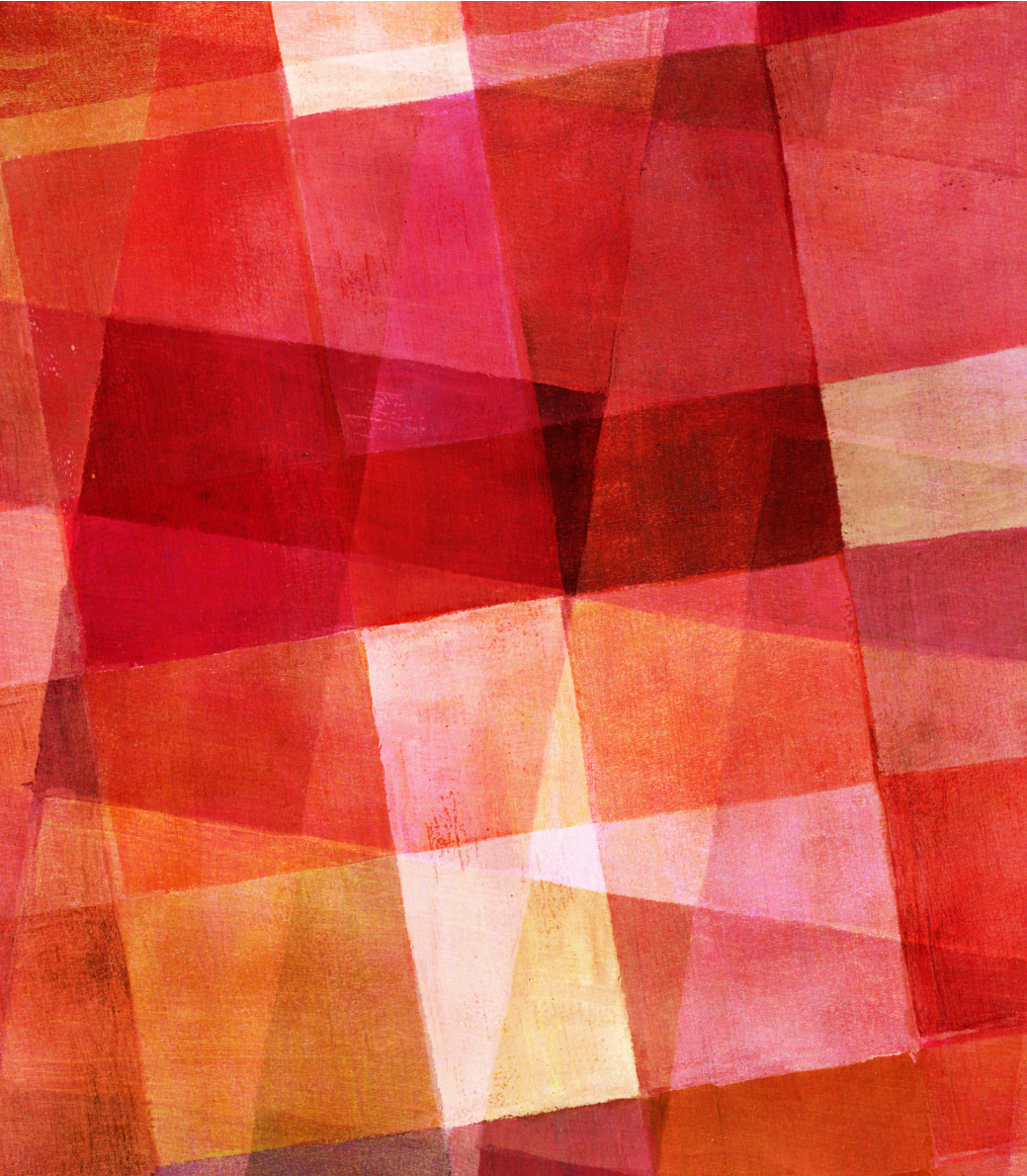
- Offer opportunities to engage in literature activities that include books, self expression an dramatic play
- Creative expression-art and music
- Physical activity
- Be consistent, keep routine
- extra reassurance



DEMONSTRATE GOOD PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS
ENCOURAGE SEEKING HELP
SHOW HOW TO MANAGE EMOTIONS IN A HEALTHY MANNER
PROVIDE SOCIAL SUPPORT
CONNECT!

Cultivating Resilience





PROVIDE TIME

- Time to heal
- Time to grow
- Time to breathe
- Time to learn
- Time for grace
- Time for love
- Time to laugh
- Time to accept

HOW ARE EXPERIENCES SHAPE GRIEF

- Shaped by our culture
- Viewed as a “problem to overcome”
- Management of our own grief
- Our differences in grieving
- Were we allowed to grieve?
- How was loss handled for us as children?



GOT QUESTIONS ?

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