



## **Sample Letter to Parents Following a Death in the School Community**

Dear Parent,

A very sad thing has happened in our school community. This weekend, one of our staff, Mr. Smith, a fifth grade teacher and our baseball coach, was hit by a car on this way home from the lake and he was killed. According to his family, a car crossed over into his lane and hit his car head on. He died at the scene of the accident. We are all profoundly saddened by his death.

We have shared this information with your children today and had discussions with all students in their homeroom. Bereavement counselors, teachers and other support staff have been, and will continue to be, available to students, teachers and parents. Please contact the school if you have any questions or concerns.

As a parent, you may want to talk to your child about death because it impacts each person in different ways. How children will react will depend on the relationship they had with the person who died, their age, and their prior experience with death.

Your child may:

- Appear unaffected
- Ask questions about the death repeatedly
- Be angry or aggressive
- Be withdrawn or moody
- Be sad or depressed
- Become afraid
- Have difficulty sleeping or eating

We suggest that you listen to your children. If they want to talk, answer their questions simply, honestly and be prepared to answer the same questions repeatedly.

(optional) A Parent Informational Night is planned for (date, time, and place). At that time, we can talk further about how to help children in grief.

Our thoughts are with (family name).

Sincerely,