



CGC offers peer support programs for children, youth and families who have experienced the death of someone they love.



**Family Night** begins with therapy dogs to greet you before sitting down to a meal here at the BGClub. Join your small group for kid activities, stories and conversation about you and your loved one. Parents have a group of their own. Gym and closing candle ceremony.

Family Night

6 - 8 pm

December 13

BGClub Fox Valley



	Monday	Tuesday			
	5				
	12	<b>13</b>			
	19				
	23	NO MEETING			

Holidays Can be a  
Stressful Time for Families...



**under the best of circumstances.** If this is the first or second year after a loss, the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day can be a challenging time for you and your kids; routines are different, expectations run high, and past holiday memories emerge.

**Acknowledge your feelings.** It is OK to have mixed feelings about the upcoming holidays. Identify what will be most challenging for you this year. Begin by minimizing your own expectations for yourself. Stop and think now about what you are NOT going to try and do this year. Keep it simple.

**Encourage plans that include both self and others.** You may not feel like doing anything but ties to a single family tradition... and to others helps to create continuity in your life and the life of your children. Think about what is right for you and your kids and then communicate those choices to every one else. Let others help you at every opportunity.

**Be prepared for triggers** like the unexpected waves of sadness when hearing a favorite song, or smelling a favorite cookie baking. Just go with it. Like a wave, it will ebb and flow. Children experience this too and they are often surprised by it as well.

**Affirm the importance of self care.** Getting adequate rest, exercise, and healthy food is especially important when you are vulnerable. Holidays often bring excesses of all types.

**Identify one thing you want to receive.** It could as simple as 'getting through', or one peaceful night, or one heart felt communication with a friend. In this time of 'holiday cheer' watch for one precious memory, one quiet moment, one blessing that you can take into your heart.



It's OK to be sad.  
It's OK to be mad.  
It's OK to be happy.  
It's OK to be ME!!  
For the inner child in all of us!



### Time for a Family Conference

It's going to be different this year. Let everyone express how they would like it to go. As a family, chart your own course, and do what feels right.

-It's OK to talk about it. Ask the kids what is important to them.

-Give a gift to a cause in your loved one's memory, tell stories about holidays past.

- be gentle with yourself and your family members.

-Everyone experiences grief differently, even in the same family. The holidays will be over before you know it. You are moving into a new normal.



Ring the bells that still can ring.  
Forget your perfect offering.  
There is a crack in everything—  
That's how the light gets in.  
-Leonard Cohen



### Blue Christmas Worship Service

The constant refrain on the radio and television, in shopping malls and churches about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. All this can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and spending. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern; we need to know that we are not alone.

### First Congregational United Church of Christ in Appleton

offers a special Blue Christmas service on  
Thursday, December 15 at 7:00 PM.  
724 E. South River Street., 54915

### St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Oshkosh

Wednesday, December 21 at 7 pm  
a light fellowship meal before (6 to 7 pm) and pie for dessert  
after. We welcome  
anyone who would like to attend:  
1100 E Murdock Ave, 54901

**OPENTOHOPE.com** is a web site dedicated to finding hope after a loss.  
It features Resources, Community Forums, TV, Books, Events, and Special Topics

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**Center for Grieving Children  
Boys and Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley**

