

GETTING THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL DAYS

For those who have recently lost a loved one, the holidays/special days can be difficult, when traditions seem inextricably tied to the person you lost.

Here are some ways you can observe the holidays/special days to help you cope. They won't take away the pain completely, but they may give you a place to channel your feelings.

- **Change your traditions.** You don't have to do things the way you did them in the past. For some, changing the place you celebrate the holiday helps. Instead of having dinner at your home, try having dinner at your favorite restaurant. You can also try having it at someone else's house. If you always did the cooking, try letting someone else be in charge of the meal. The more you change about the day, the easier it may be to cope.
- **Make a memory box or scrapbook.** Even if you do not have any pictures of your loved one you can still place special mementos in a keepsake box. You can include things like a letter you or other members of the family wrote or special items like a blanket, a copy of the birth certificate (if you have one), mementos made at the hospital, and artwork.
- **Set aside a special time and space to remember them.** Light a candle in remembrance of your loved one. Plant a tree in your backyard. Some find it meaningful to visit the gravesite or put the cremains in a special place. Create your own ritual to use alone or to share with your family as you miss and celebrate your child together.
- **Donate your time.** Find a cause that you are passionate about and donate your time to it. You will get the satisfaction of doing something good for another person.



Children's Hospital Colorado

