

Archives from SR2H online support group:

(This person asked me about telling children the truth about the suicide)

This is a real easy one for me, simply because I have been doing this for almost 5 years now and I have seen the devastation that lies cause. Before I expound on that... from time to time I have a mom here that will adamantly disagree with me. One of the moms that got mad at me for even suggesting she did the wrong thing by not being totally honest with her children, stayed upset with me for several months. She said she knew her kids best and knew what was best for them. About 4 months later she emailed me privately and apologized profusely, saying I was right and please never stop insisting that folks be honest.

See, her 13-year-old daughter was told at school by some kid that knew how her dad had died, and she came home and told the mom she hated her. It took her almost 6 months (with counseling) to get this girl to even be civil toward her. But they are still working on trust issues, and it's been almost 2 years. (When she found out it was 2 years after her dad's death)

And that's my #1 complaint here. In time almost all kids find out the truth somehow. And without exception they will tell me, "If they lied to me about something this important, what else have they lied to me about?" They never, *never*, see it as being protected. They feel violated, left out, deceived, and they deeply resent it. Even if they are adults when they find out, they still have those same feelings.

#2 reason honesty is important- because no matter how long it's been since the death, they will have to begin the grieving process all over again. They now have suicide issues to deal with, on top of the trust issues they have with the family members that kept the secret from them. One gal came here as an adult and was 15 years past her dad's death. She went through stages just like a new survivor, but the trust issues made her so angry she couldn't really deal with the suicide for several months. She had to work through the anger towards her mother, grandparents and aunts/uncles first.

I hope you will do what's best for the kids and not let family talk you into something you don't feel a peace about. This is an issue that I find group facilitators and counselors all seem to agree on. Honesty works best. Hope this helps. hugs, Louise

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