

Module 2: Grief and Loss in Adolescents

Adolescent grief may not appear linear

Grief and trauma may overlap, making presentation complicated

Expect a wide range of responses

Grief vs. Trauma

Grief:

- Centered on loss
- Deep sadness and longing
- Difficulty adjusting to current life

Trauma:

- Centered on fear and danger
- Hyperarousal
- Avoidance
- Intrusive thoughts or memories

Topics to Engage or Avoid

Engage:

Emotional expression

Students' immediate needs

Loss-related questions

Avoid:

Forcing disclosure

Pushing for details

Premature reassurance

Mixed Emotional Responses



Role-Play Instructions

- **Scenario A:** student openly expressing grief
- Focus on listening, engagement, and developmentally sensitive response
- **Scenario B:** student avoiding discussion
- Focus on how to respond without forcing disclosure or shutting down the interaction
- **Roles**
- Clinician
- Student
- Observer

Observer Feedback



What clinician responses seemed to support the conversation?



What responses appeared to shut down dialogue or reduce engagement?



Was the clinician appropriately responsive to grief, avoidance, or emotional ambiguity?

Day 1 Summary

- Understanding common adolescent trauma responses
- Recognizing high-risk factors that may increase concern
- Distinguishing grief from trauma
- Practicing initial grief-related clinical responses

Reflection Question:

- What felt most difficult today?

Day 2 Preview: Trauma-Informed Care

Tomorrow's focus:

- Trauma-Informed Care as a broader clinical framework
- Brief intervention skills for early support
- Practice with grounding, psychoeducation, and safety-related concerns