

## **SUPPORTING A GRIEVING FAMILY**

### **How to Help:**

1. Be supportive-Visit or call to say, "I care and want to help."
2. Treat the bereaved couple equally. Men need as much support as women.
3. Be available. Parents need direct help providing a meal, doing errands, and baby-sitting their other children.
4. Allow the parents to talk about their child; ask but don't pry.
5. Learn about the grieving process. There are many books available.
6. Don't be afraid of reminding the parents about the child. They have never forgotten. Letting them know you remember is comforting.
7. Be liberal with touching a grieving parent. They often have a need for contact.

### **DO Say:**

1. I'm sorry.
2. I'm so sad for your loss.
3. I know this must be terribly hard for you.
4. How are you managing all of this?
5. What can I do for you?
6. I'm here, and I want to listen.
7. Talk as long as you want. I have plenty of time.

### **DON'T Say:**

1. It's all happened for the best.
2. You're young. You can have others.
3. Now you'll have an angel in heaven.
4. You're better off having this happen now, before you knew the baby.
5. This was God's way of saying something was wrong.
6. You should feel lucky that you are alive.
7. Forget it. Put it behind you and get on with your life.
8. I understand. (If you have not had a similar experience)

Catherine Lammert, National SHARE Office, May 1999