



How Long Will My Child Need Therapy?

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We're often asked, "How long do kids stay in therapy at Lee's Place?" There's never a short answer and we always end up saying, "We'll it depends..." It usually depends on what the child needs and what outside support is available to that child and family. Our average number of sessions is approximately 8, but some kids stay much longer because of the individual circumstances that brought them to Lee's Place. From our experience, children whose mothers have died, have much greater need for longer term therapy than other deaths. This seems to be a reflection of the more emotionally intimate relationship that often exists between a mother and child. However, the death of a sibling or a father is also very significant and therapy for those losses can be equally as long. Therapy with children often starts with once a week sessions and then transition to every other week, and finally once a month. Periodic parent or family sessions are a critical component to children's therapy in order to assist the parent to better meet the child's needs and to facilitate communication between the child and parent. It is not uncommon for a child to come back for a "check up" months after "termination" due to a new "grief wave" or perhaps other life event that has created a stumbling block.

Keep in mind that children come to Lee's Place for reasons other than death. Divorce, adoption, and abandonment (foster care, parental imprisonment) are losses that may require help and support. In fact, about half of our clients, come to Lee's Place because of divorce. These children usually receive between four and twelve sessions, with parent sessions sprinkled in between.

Overall, it is our philosophy that children's therapy should be short term and that it is our goal to not only assist the child but the overall family. The losses mentioned above can turn any family upside down. We work to help the child and the family find their equilibrium and develop a "new normal."

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