

## Managing Grief During the Holidays

- The holiday season can be especially challenging for those who are bereaved. Memories of loved ones who have died will likely arise and can be painful reminders of the loss.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the deaths of many family members over the past two years and those losses have often been complicated by a sense of isolation and an inability to mourn in traditional ways.
- The holiday season can also be difficult for children, who grieve in their own ways, depending upon their developmental age, but are also likely to feel an amplified sense of loss. As a result, bereaved children will benefit from the love, attention, and connection to the trusted adults in their lives during the holidays.

### *Some tips for coping*

- Although the holidays can be filled with expectations of things that one should do (e.g., sending greetings, attending social functions) or how one should feel (e.g., happy and joyful), bereaved persons should never feel pressured to comply with such expectations.
- The holiday season also offers opportunities to move forward in one's grief. For example, bereaved persons can memorialize their loved ones by honoring their favorite holiday traditions, food, holiday music, or movies. They can also start new traditions, recognizing the holidays in new ways.