The Bill of Rights for Youth in Foster Care Who are Grieving

As youth in foster care who are grieving, we have the right to:

• Know the truth about the separation, the person and/or people from whom we’ve been separated, and the circumstances surrounding the loss.
• Ask questions and have them answered honestly.
• Be heard and listened to without receiving unsolicited advice.
• Be silent and not share our thoughts and emotions out loud.
• Disagree with your perceptions and conclusions.
• See the people who we’ve been separated from, if we choose to and if we’re legally allowed to do so.
• Grieve in our own ways — without hurting ourselves or others.
• Feel all the feelings and to think all the thoughts of our own unique grief.
• Not have to the “Stages of Grief” imposed on us. This material is inaccurate and outdated.
• Be angry at being separated from people we care about; the people we’ve been separated from; ourselves; and others.
• Disagree with people who are insensitive, especially those who use everyday expressions to talk about our unique grief.
• Have our own beliefs about family and separation.
• Be involved in the decisions about our visits with family and friends.

#UnderstandGrief

This “Bill of Rights” was adapted for youth in foster care from the document developed by youth participants at Dougy Center: The National Grief Center for Children & Families. ©2022 by Dougy Center: The National Grief Center for Children & Families