



formerly HospiceCare of Boulder & Broomfield Counties

COMMUNITYCARE

Hospice | Supportive Services

Explaining Cremation to Children

- Keep your explanations straight forward and truthful but age appropriate.
- “The body goes in a container or casket where it goes through a special process that makes the body into grey-like chunky sand called “remains.” which is what is left of the body.
- “When the body has died it cannot feel pain, so cremation doesn’t hurt the body. The body doesn’t work because the heart stopped, it doesn’t breathe, it can’t see or hear, the body doesn’t feel anything.”
- The remains are put in a container called an urn, or it may be a container that you have picked out like a special box or vase.
- It is best to use “soft words” and say the body heats up. Avoid words like burn and do not use the word fire. Others choose to say “there is no smell or smoke when a body is cremated, the body gets very hot, about 3 times hotter than your oven. The high heat allows the body to disappear into ashes or remains which is kind of like chunky sand.”
- Sometimes after your special person is cremated the remains are buried in the ground. Sometimes people keep them, and sometimes people scatter the remains onto the ground or in the water or air. Typically people choose a place that was special to the loved one that has died.
- Remember, kids are naturally curious and kids do better knowing things because the unknown can be scarier than reality.

Compiled from Alan Wolfelt “Helping Children Understand Cremation” and from cremationassociation.org/docs/child.pdf