



February 2010

THE KID ZONE

It's that time of year again ~ Valentine's Day! Some kids will be very happy on Valentine's Day but other kids may feel a little sad. Maybe a Valentine wasn't given to them. Maybe they really like someone but that person doesn't feel the same way. Bummer!

We all feel sad sometimes.

- You studied for the math test but didn't do so hot. You may think, "*I can't do this. I'm not smart enough.*" Is that true? No, but sometimes we allow a mistake to really bring us down.
- When a relative is very ill or has died, you may feel like things will never get better. You may feel the same way if your pet dies. "*I don't want to go to school. I just want to be alone. I don't feel like smiling.*" It may take weeks or even months, but eventually the good memories will make you smile. Of course you'll be sad when you think of how much you miss your relative or pet, but you will understand that both would want you to be happy.
- Change can make us feel left-out. Changing schools, moving to a new town or welcoming a new brother or sister into your home can make you feel alone. When you feel like you're facing something alone, sadness can take over. You may feel like no one notices you or cares about your feelings.
- A friend you've known since first grade no longer wants to hang out with you. You feel upset, mad and eventually sad that you can no longer hang out. Friendship troubles are stressful!

Peer pressure, teasing, bullying, losing a game, and not being invited to a party are all things that can make you feel sad. When you're sad, you may cry and want to be alone. You may feel like things will never get better but by the next day or week, you know you were wrong ~ you just had a "bad day" or a "bad week."

WHAT IF... the sadness does not go away?

You really want to feel better but something is wrong. You can't seem to "snap out" of your sadness. The days are getting worse, not better.

The sadness stays with you. You're not feeling better. You don't feel like smiling. You may feel empty or invisible. You may feel like your life is hopeless. You may feel guilty about something or really angry. Things that you used to enjoy now make you mad. The people you once enjoyed hanging out with get on your nerves. You may feel like no one likes, or even loves you. You may have a hard time getting out of bed. You may sleep a lot or you may have trouble sleeping at all. You often find yourself crying but don't know why (you can't help it). You may eat more than you used to or you may not feel like eating. You may not like yourself anymore and feel like no one would miss you if you were gone.

WHAT THEN? WHERE DO I TURN? WHAT DO I DO?

If you feel that you are sad and it's not getting better, find someone you can talk to right away. You may trust your parents, the school counselor, your teacher, the coach, or a relative but you need to talk to an adult as soon as possible. There's no reason why you should continue feeling alone because YOU'RE NOT. Did you hear that? YOU ARE NOT ALONE. In fact, you may be surprised to discover that someone close to you was deeply saddened in their life.

Remember: We all experience sadness ~ It's okay!

