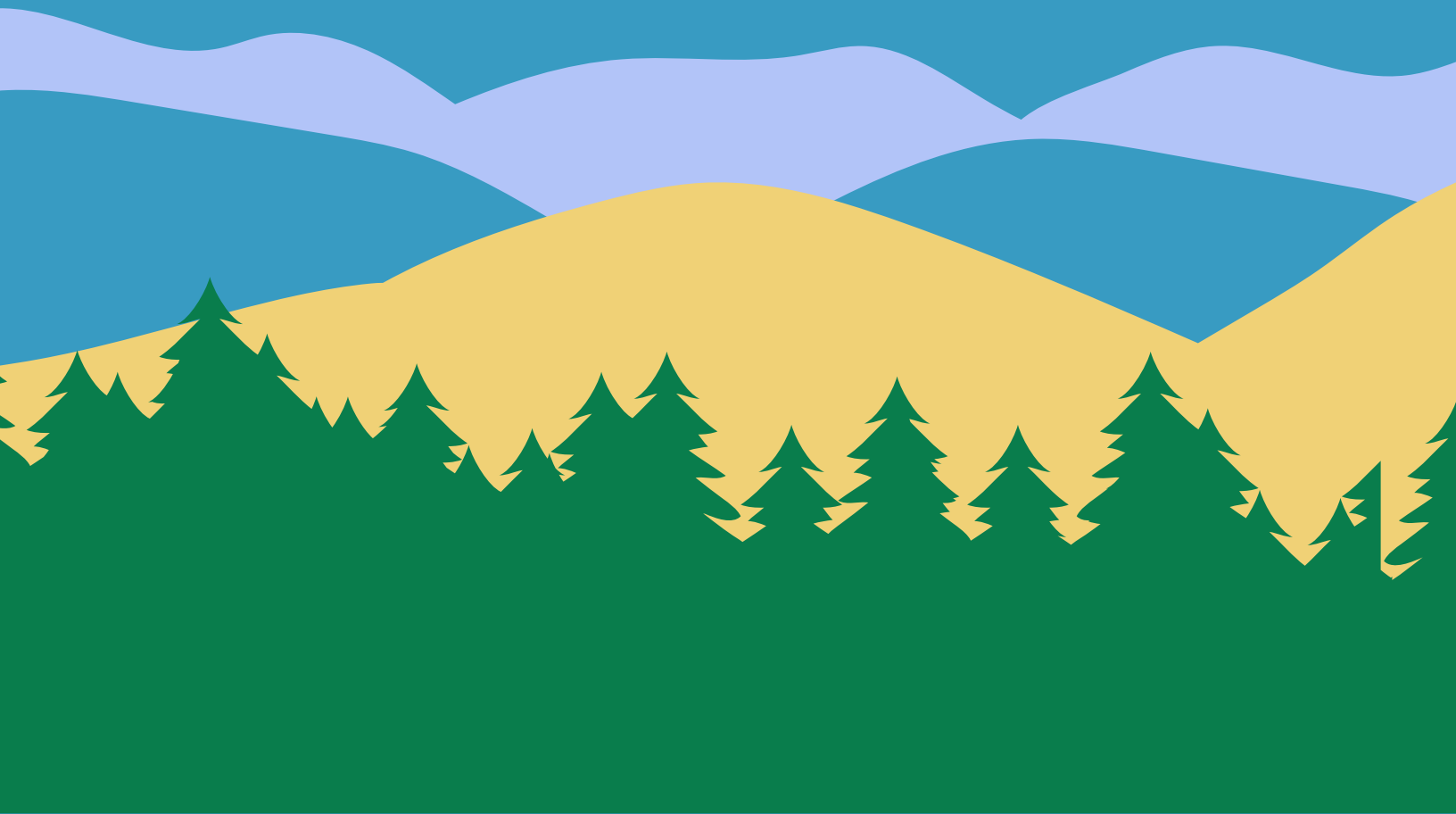




Supporting Each Other After Tragedy

A simple resource for holding the grief of the Tumbler Ridge tragedy



This resource includes two sections:

1.

A step-by-step guide on **how to talk to youth** about what happened

2.

Three actionable tips for **supporting each other** through grief

Is this resource for me?

If you are looking for ways to support yourself, your community or anyone impacted by this news, this is for you.

If you are a young person, parent, school teacher, or community member; welcome. **You're in the right place.**

Why was this resource was created?

The Tumbler Ridge tragedy is profoundly painful for the families and community directly impacted, and it can also feel overwhelming for many others as they process the news and its impact.

In a society that often struggles to make space for grief, many of us don't know how to hold a moment like this.

We cannot take away the pain. But there is meaningful support we can offer, and it begins with understanding how to navigate the grief that may be showing up right now.

Talking to Youth About What Happened

1. Listen first

This is a chance to discover potential misunderstandings and learn their perspective. You could say:

- “Did you learn about what happened at Tumbler Ridge?”
- “What have you’ve learned so far?”

2. Share the facts

Youth are smart and resourceful. Being honest about what happened builds trust and lets them know they can talk to you.

- “This is what happened...”
- “It makes sense if this is hard news to hear.”

3. Make space for feelings

They might feel scared, angry, numb, overwhelmed, or not affected at all. Validating that all of these feelings are normal can help someone move through them.

- “How are you feeling about this?”
- “Everyone reacts differently to events like this, and there is no right way to feel.”

Talking to Youth About What Happened

4. Hold uncertainty

It's natural to wonder why this happened. Questions like these don't have clear answers, and we can't provide them. But behind these questions is usually a desire to manage the uncertainty of life. We can help by facing uncertainty with them:

- *"There is no way to know exactly why this happened."*
- *"Something that helps me process uncertainty is...."*

5. Establish safety

Grief related to community violence is also about a loss of feelings of safety. It can leave us feeling deeply unmoored. The answer is not to make false promises ("this will never happen again") but to ground in what is true:

- *"Let's look at ways we can help you feel safe in this moment."*

6. Keep the door open

Whether or not they were interested in talking now, making it clear that they can come to you in the future is meaningful:

- *"I'm here whenever you want to talk"*
- *"You don't have to feel this alone."*

Supporting Each Other

1. Let the grief take space

Because we care, we may want to help take away someone's grief. But it's not possible, and it's not helpful. **What helps is to witness, validate and hold the grief.** To not push it away, minimize, or ignore it. The grief is there, and in the brilliant words of author John Green: *"pain demands to be felt."*

2. Offer tangible support

When offering support, replace 'how can I help?', with '**here are some things I can do for you**'. This offer releases someone from the challenges they might face asking for help.

Specific things you could offer help with include:

- **Practical support:** babysitting, dog walking, making dinner
- **Emotional presence:** listening, daily check-ins
- **Comforting company:** watching a movie, going for a walk

3. Name the tragedy

After a tragedy, many people hesitate to bring it up. They may worry about making someone upset or reminding them of what happened. But the truth is: **people who are grieving are already thinking about it every day.**

Checking in with others and asking how they're feeling can be exactly what helps someone feel less alone.

Helpful tip: Set a calendar reminder to check in weekly/monthly. Regularly checking in can make a big difference.

We need to care for each other
now more than ever.

Reading this means you're
already part of the solution.
Thank you for being here.

We're here to help:

✉ info@learningthroughloss.org

🌐 www.learningthroughloss.org

📍 theDock - Centre for Social Impact
100-722 Cormorant St
Victoria, BC V8W 1P8

☎ 1-250-413-3114



INCLUSIVITY MATTERS

Learning Through Loss is built on a foundation of accessibility. We respect and serve all peoples, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, ability, socio-economic status and LGBTQ2s+ identity

THE LAND WE'RE ON

Learning Through Loss would like to acknowledge the land on which we work is within the traditional territories of the Lkwungen (Esquimalt, and Songhees), Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke and WSÁNEĆ (Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout, Tseycum) peoples.

