

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CALLING HOURS

Everyone has the experience of uncertainty as they are about to attend a wake for the first time. It is natural to feel uneasy about attending a wake. It is common to worry about doing and saying the right things in these situations.

To help you feel a little more prepared we offer the following:

- If possible, please bring a parent or another adult with you to the wake.
- It is very likely that a large number of people will be attending the wake and that long lines will form outside the funeral home. Please dress accordingly, and be ready to wait patiently and respectfully in this line.
- When you enter the funeral home, you may be invited to sign a *Visitors' Book*.
- You will probably stand in another line to be received by the family. Sometimes this line will form directing you first to the casket (which may be open or closed). You may stand or kneel briefly before the casket, and **silently** express whatever is in your heart.
- The line will probably then move you toward the family. It is appropriate to offer brief condolences to the family members. Such statements as "I'm very sorry for your loss" or "He/She was a very special person to me" are common. Again, briefly say what is in your heart.
- Often, there are photo boards and other items on display that honor the person's life. Take the time to view these items, if it feels appropriate to do so.
- Often people gather with their friends inside or outside the funeral home to share stories about their loved one and to support one another.
- If the funeral home is crowded, you may want to exit the building to make room for others wanting to pay their respects.
- When you feel uncertain about what to do at any point, look to other adults for your cues.
- Drive safely!