



COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR PERINATAL LOSS



What should I say?

- Use an ice breaker
- Call baby by name
- Follow the parent's lead
- Use the same words the parents use
- Never make assumptions – always ask
- Offer as many choices as possible – don't pressure
- Avoid medical terminology
- Don't rush
- Use terms such as "I worry," "I wish," "I hope," or "I care"

Listen, allow silence, validate emotions, reserve judgement



What should I NOT say?

- "At least..."
- "God's plan," "Nature's way," or "In a better place now"
- "You can try again" or "You're young..."
- "I understand" or "I know how you feel"
- "It" when referring to baby
- "You need to be strong for..."
- "If I were you..."



Please remember...

- Go easy on yourself
- We are all in this together
- Ask for help
- Be present, not perfect
- Be honest with your feelings
- Support your peers
 - o Acknowledge the difficulty
 - o Offer help, support, and listen
 - o Debrief
 - o Consider employee assistance programs
- Take time to take care of yourself



AWHONN

PROMOTING THE HEALTH OF
WOMEN AND NEWBORNS

awhonn.org