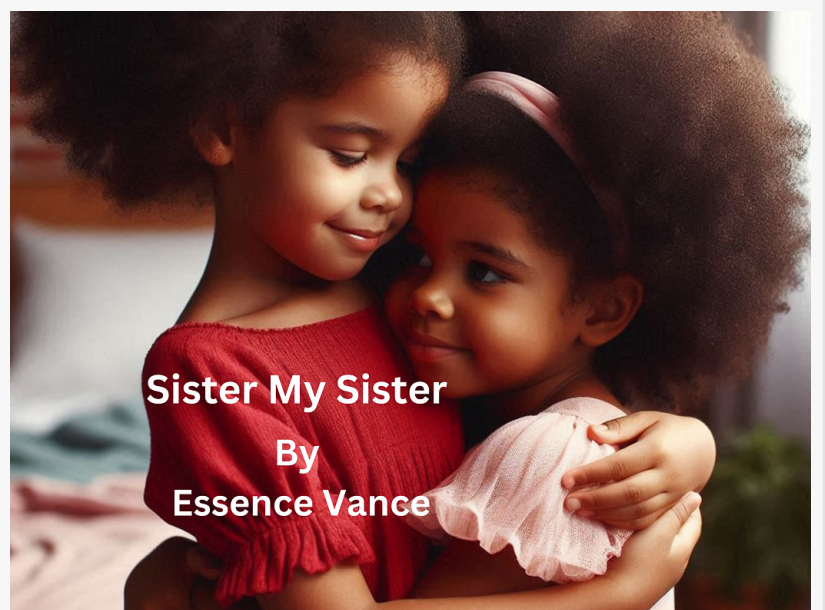


Children's Author Nadiyah 'Essence' Vance Raises Awareness of Childhood Grief Ahead of National Grief Awareness Day

Drawing on personal loss and more than 15 years in human services, Essence encourages families to give children space to process bereavement in their own ways

PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, July 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As National Grief Awareness Day approaches on August 30, author and trauma-informed human-services professional Nadiyah "Essence" Vance is encouraging parents and caregivers to recognize that children may not always express grief in ways adults expect.



"Sister My Sister" by Essence Vance

Children facing the death of a sibling or another loved one may move between sadness, questions, play and imagination as they begin to understand what the loss means. For adults who are grieving as well, knowing what to say — or whether to say anything at all — can be difficult.

“

Children deserve to know that their feelings are welcome, that remembering someone is healthy and that they do not have to carry their grief alone. They always can turn to God.”

Nadiyah "Essence" Vance

“Adults often feel pressure to find the perfect words when a child loses someone they love, but children may need something simpler: patience, reassurance and permission to express grief in their own way,” said Essence. “Ahead of National Grief Awareness Day, I hope families will make room for those conversations, even when they feel difficult.”

Essence explores that experience in her poetry-format children's book, "Sister My Sister." The story follows a young girl who retreats into her playful

imagination after losing her sister. With support from her parents and her faith, she gradually comes to understand that although her sister is no longer physically present, their love and memories remain part of her life forever.

The book was inspired by Essence's own grief following the death of her sister, Ms. Aliya "Unique" Vance, in 2021 at age 46. Essence describes her sister as her mirror and best friend, and dedicated the book to her memory.

"Losing my sister changed the way I understood grief, both personally and as a parent," Essence said. "I also knew from my work with children and families that parents do not always know how to begin these conversations. I wrote 'Sister My Sister' to offer a gentle starting point — a story families can read together and use to talk about love, loss and remembrance."



Nadiyah "Essence" Vance, author of "Sister My Sister"

The love of God and the devotion to her work in human services inform her writing, educational programs and workshops for children and families, which use age-appropriate, trauma-informed activities to help participants identify emotions, communicate their feelings and develop healthy coping practices. Essence's programs also incorporate creative expression, group exercises, grief and loss support, self-reflection, resource sharing and discussions about healing.

She advises parents and caregivers to listen without rushing a child toward closure, allow questions to be revisited over time and avoid assuming that moments of play or laughter mean the child has stopped grieving. Books, drawing, poetry and other creative activities can also provide children with ways to express emotions they may not yet be able to explain directly.

"Grief does not follow the same schedule for every person, and it does not disappear because an anniversary has passed," Essence said. "Children deserve to know that their feelings are welcome, that remembering someone is healthy and that they do not have to carry their grief alone. They always can turn to God."

National Grief Awareness Day is observed each year on August 30 to encourage greater understanding of grief and the different ways people respond to loss.

More information about "Sister My Sister," Essence's workshops and her other educational programs are available at www.everythingessencewix.org.

ABOUT NADIYAH "ESSENCE" VANCE

Nadiyah "Essence" Vance is an author, motivational speaker and trauma-informed facilitator based in Philadelphia. Drawing on more than 15 years of experience in human services, she develops workshops and educational programs addressing grief, trauma, parenting, resilience, self-awareness and emotional well-being. Her books include "Sister My Sister," "Layers of a Single Mother ... My Past Is Not My Present" and "Believe in Yourself."

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