

For young people

When someone special dies



A leaflet prepared with the help of young people who have been bereaved

When someone special has died...

This leaflet has been given to you because someone important in your life has died.

Right at the moment, there's probably a lot for you to take in.

The information in this leaflet is designed to help you understand how you might be feeling, and to help you take care of yourself while you're finding your way through.

Try to remember that you're not alone - family and friends are there to support you and you can always make contact with other bereaved young people via websites and support groups.



"Grief affects us all in different ways"

The quotes used in this leaflet are from a 15 year old girl called Charlie whose little brother, Lewie, died. They reflect her thoughts and feelings on that day, and afterwards.

When we receive sad and shocking news, it can be hard to take in. You may feel any or all of the following, or you may initially feel nothing at all:



However you feel, the important thing to remember is that you may experience loads of new emotions. This is a natural part of grief.

Understanding why this person has died can help you to accept the reality of the situation. If you have any unanswered questions, ask someone. A family member, or a police family liaison officer may be able to answer your questions.

Going back to school or college



You may find going back to school quite a hard thing to do: part of you may just want to get back to your usual routine of daily life and seeing friends while part of you might just want to hide away.

You might find it helpful to think about how you would like to manage going back - would you like your teacher to tell the class before you return? Maybe you'd prefer to tell the class yourself, or to speak to people individually?

Maybe you wish that you didn't have to tell anyone at all, but if others don't know what you have to manage, they won't have the chance to offer you their care and support.

At first, you might be able to go back on a part time basis to give you a chance to settle in. Ask your class teacher or head of year what options are available to you.



Funeral

The thought of going to the funeral might feel a bit overwhelming, especially if you haven't been to one before.

It might help to talk to friends and relatives about what happens at a funeral so that you feel more prepared. Remember, whether you go or not is your choice.

If you would like to, you might be able to put a letter, a picture, or something else special to you in the coffin before the funeral - whatever feels right for you.

The funeral can be helpful in giving you a chance to say goodbye to the person who has died.

Changes

For many of us, change can be a worry. It might help to sit down with

your parent, carer or someone else you trust and make a list of what things will change now, and what things will stay the same. This can help you to feel more secure at a time when life can seem unpredictable.



What helps?

As we're all different, what helps one person may not help another. But here are some things that bereaved young people have told us helped them:

"I find myself not saying things to my family because it might make them sad"

Talking

Try talking with friends or family about how you are feeling. You could each share your memories of the person who has died; maybe even laugh and cry together. It's ok to show others how you're feeling. If you would rather talk to someone who is not so close, you might like to try talking to a counsellor, or calling a helpline.

Reading

There are lots of books available that offer guidance and support to grieving young people - there is a reading list on our website:

www.childbereavementuk.org

Keeping yourself well

Grief can be exhausting, so try to look after yourself. Eat well, sleep when you can and try to get a little exercise every day, even if it's just as walk around the block.



Connecting with others

Finding out how other young people felt when they were bereaved, and sharing your experiences, can help you to feel less alone.

On the back of this leaflet are details of ways to connect with other young people and how to access our free app ***Grief: Support for Young People***.

"Sometimes all I need is a hug, but other times just to be left alone"

Take each day a step at a time, do what feels right for you, and don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.



If you would like further support and information please contact Child Bereavement UK

National helpline: **0800 02 888 40**
support@childbereavementuk.org
www.childbereavementuk.org

The **For young people** section of our website contains information on grief, managing feelings and returning to school after a bereavement. You can also access films and resources made by other young people and find out about our Young People's Advisory Groups (YPAG) for bereaved young people aged 11-25.

Download our free app! Our free app *Grief: Support for Young People* can be downloaded from Google Play and the Apple App Store. It includes information about grief, stories from bereaved young people and short films that they have written and made.

Other organisations and websites

Hope Again

www.hopeagain.org.uk
Helpline: **0808 808 1677**

Help2MakeSense

www.help2makesense.org
Helpline: **0808 802 0021**

The Mix

www.themix.org.uk (includes a discussion board for young people)
Helpline: **0808 808 4994**

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