



## Information Leaflet for Young Person and Children on Bereavement and Loss

### What's Happening?

After the death of someone special, you might begin to notice some emotions that you haven't felt before. This might leave you confused and questioning how you should act. It is important to know that everybody reacts differently and whatever you're feeling is okay. Below are some questions that people often ask.



### Why does it hurt?

Grief (sadness after a death) is painful. It can affect your body, making you feel achy, ill or tired. It can also cause strong emotions and thoughts that worry you, leaving you feeling overwhelmed. This is common but the pain you are feeling will become easier to manage with time.

### Why am I so angry?

It can feel very unfair when a loved one dies. You might feel angry that people don't understand or that people should have done more to help. Note down some activities that you find relaxing or distract you. Try to switch to these activities when you start to feel angry.

### What if I forget?

Over time you will begin to get used to new routines and the grief you felt might not feel as strong anymore. It's also okay to have fun. It doesn't mean you are 'over it', you don't care or you have forgotten. Try not to think of this as forgetting your loved one but adjusting to the changes in your life. If you are worried about forgetting, collect items and write down things that remind you of your loved one, perhaps photographs, songs or stories they've told. Some people find it useful to keep a memory box to keep these items in one place.



### Do I have to be strong for other people?

No. You might feel that you need to hide your feelings from family because you don't want to make them feel bad. It's okay to show others that you are finding things difficult even though it might make you feel vulnerable. Crying can release tension and help you feel better. Remember, everyone is different, if you don't or can't cry that's okay too.

### Was it my fault?

It was not your fault that your loved one died. It's natural to think that you could have done something more. Try to focus on the nice things that you said or did. Forgiving yourself is important.

## Who can I talk to?

Even if you are keeping busy, grief can make you feel very lonely. There might be other changes happening at home which are affecting how available people seem to be. You might think that you do not want to bother your family because your worries aren't as important. However staying connected and sharing what you're feeling can be a good way to support each other and you might find that they're feeling the same way.

Think about different people you trust who you can share your thoughts with e.g. teachers or friends who have been through grief themselves. It may not be easy, but try not to isolate yourself.



**APART of ME** app A game designed to help young people come to terms with the death of a loved one for ages 11+ but if you are younger ask an adult to play along with you.



**The Headspace** app (free edition) has 10 (10-minute) exercises allowing you to master the essentials of mindfulness.



**MeeTwo** app provides a safe and secure forum for teenagers wanting to discuss any issue affecting their lives. You can anonymously get advice from experts or other teenagers going through similar experiences.

## The organisations below can provide further information and advice:



Winston's Wish provides information, advice and guidance on supporting bereaved children and young people during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

[www.winstonswish.org](http://www.winstonswish.org) - Freephone National Helpline 08088 020 021



Childhood Bereavement UK brings together guidance and information to help support you at this difficult time.

[www.childbereavementuk.org](http://www.childbereavementuk.org) - Helpline 0800 02 888 40



Cruise Bereavement Care: Bereaved people may have to deal with increased trauma, and may be cut off from some of their usual support network. Those who are already struggling with bereavement, or whose relatives or friends die through other causes will also be affected.

[www.cruise.org.uk/](http://www.cruise.org.uk/) - Helpline 0808 808 1677

Further information on supporting Emotional Wellbeing in Fife can be found on the GIRFEC website:

[www.girfec.fife.scot/emotional-health-and-mental-wellbeing/](http://www.girfec.fife.scot/emotional-health-and-mental-wellbeing/)

Alternatively, you can contact the Educational Psychology Service for information and advice:

[www.fife.gov.uk/educationalpsychology](http://www.fife.gov.uk/educationalpsychology)

