

A Whole Community Approach to Supporting Children and Young People with Loss and Bereavement





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Our Vision

In our communities we strive to be prepared, supportive, informed.



Prepared

- We have policy and procedures in place to support children, young people and staff to deal with bereavement and loss when it presents itself within our communities and during the months and years that follow.

Supportive

- Our communities will work to support children and young people, their families and staff through periods of loss and change, within a caring environment.
- Our communication is open and honest with children, young people and their families. We use age appropriate language.
- Strategies are in place to support bereaved children and young people for as long as they need.
- By offering learning opportunities, we proactively support the development of children and young people's resilience in coping with the impact of loss and change caused by bereavement.
- We are aware of the needs of those supporting children and young people, before, during and after periods of bereavement, loss or change.

Informed

- Our communities have access to appropriate training and resources.
- Our communities are aware of local and national support services.
- Our communities work in partnership with each other to provide support and signpost children and young people, families and staff for further support if required. Parents/carers are aware of the levels of support they can receive.

Purpose and Aim

In 2017 a multi-agency group was established to develop a whole community approach to loss and bereavement that could be adopted throughout West Lothian. The purpose of this document is to empower adults in supporting young people with their bereavement and loss.

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This document was adapted from the Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde resources entitled 'A Whole School approach supporting loss and bereavement'; with thanks also to NHS Lothian Health Promotion Team.

This resource will enhance the guidance contained in Managing Critical Incidents: A Framework for Schools and provides information and advice to assist staff in the day to day support they provide to children and young people coping with bereavement loss and change.

Throughout this document we refer to 'communities' which includes all sectors working with young people such as: education, health and voluntary organisations and the staff within them.

The aim of this resource is to build confidence and community capacity to support bereaved children and young people. This resource has been developed to increase staff knowledge and understanding on the subject of bereavement, loss and change.

In this resource you will find further information on children's understanding of bereavement at different developmental stages, key theories to help normalise grief for young people, and ideas how to support children through grief.

Useful websites and local contact information is provided for further information and support.

The need to support children and young people at a time of bereavement has been highlighted by a number of national and local policy documents:

[!\[\]\(47734e4656765d20df4fdbd5b7aff048_img.jpg\) *The Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009*](#)

[!\[\]\(bd3b31712ad9bab5a241210fa6925cdd_img.jpg\) *Curriculum for Excellence*](#)

[!\[\]\(0fb13ad0bfa3d86868cdd3883e5665b3_img.jpg\) *The Scottish Government Mental Health Strategy 2017 – 2027*](#)

[!\[\]\(799877f5c2f906134441300079881630_img.jpg\) *Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014*](#)

[!\[\]\(41aea2746216b27a6939d696d8e035da_img.jpg\) *Getting It Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)*](#)

Childhood Bereavement – putting it in context

Childhood bereavement network put together data from various sources to estimate the numbers of bereaved children each year. (www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk)

UK

One parent every 22 minutes dies in the UK (2015)



.....
These parents left behind **41,000 children** – that's 112 newly bereaved children every day (2015)

.....
By the age of 16, **1 in 20 young people** will have experienced the death of one or both parents (Parsons, 2011)

WEST LoTHIAN

Around 80 parents' die in this area, leaving around 140 dependent children (aged 0 to 17).



.....
Around 960 children and young people (aged 5 to 16) have been bereaved of a parent or sibling at some point in their childhood

Why is it important to provide bereavement support?

- Young people bereaved of a parent unexpectedly around 9 months earlier were three times more likely than their non-bereaved peers to have developed diagnosable new-onset depression. This held true even when controlling for other risk factors that preceded or accompanied the death (Melham, 2008)
- One year after a death of a parent, 62% of children expressed fear for their surviving parent's safety, and half were still fearful two years afterwards (Worden, 1996)
- 90% of the young people in Polmont Young Offenders Institution had experienced one or more bereavements before the age of 16. Research shows across the UK the incidence of bereavement in the prison population is higher than outwith. (Vashwani, 2014)

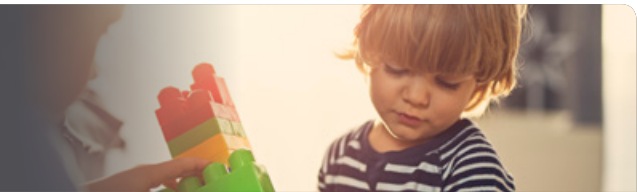
Developmental age and understanding

A child's response to bereavement will depend on their developmental stage and chronological age.

It is important to take in to account the **age at which a person was bereaved** when working with them; a teenager bereaved of Dad when they were 4 may have beliefs associated with that developmental age, i.e. "if I had eaten my breakfast when he told me to, he wouldn't have been late and got into a car crash". It is important to ensure the bereavement

work carried out allows them to move through each developmental stage to give them an appropriate understanding of the death. For example; explaining to them that at age 4 their understanding of death would have been quite different to now and explain how their concept grows and changes as they do, and gently challenge the beliefs that it was 'their fault'.

Infancy to 2 years of age



Concept of death

- Will have an awareness that those they are attached to and experience separation anxiety
- No concept of the absence as being permanent
- Awareness of changes to routines

What you might notice

- Non conscious thinking – or sense of reality
- No language to express their loss – may cry/ scream and develop eating or sleeping problems as well as decreased responsiveness
- Always rule out any possible illness with a doctor, but if they say the child is well, safe to assume that it is a grief reaction

What helps?

- Try to minimise as many disruptions to their care as possible
- Much comfort will be required – which may be difficult if the remaining care givers are also grieving; extra comfort by holding more, rocking, playing calming music softly in background, talking in a softer voice
- Take care of the caregiver and help the caregiver to feel supported and attended to so they can care for the child.

Age 2 to 4



Concept of death

- Naturally egocentric and may see themselves as the cause of the death
- Have not developed cognitive ability to understand death – they think death is reversible and not permanent

What you might notice

- Conflicting statements showing inability to understand finality of death: "I know Mum has died, will she be at my birthday party next week?"

- May ask a lot of questions repetitively
- May regress, change their eating and sleeping patterns, wet the bed, be irritable and confused

What helps?

- Be patient and give factual information – no need for excessive details
- Short, honest interactions
- Comfort and reassurance
- Nurture
- Consistent routine

Age 4 to 6



Concept of death

- As concepts begin to develop, death is seen as a temporary state – some place people can go to & come back from – ‘where did he go?’
- May see the separation as a punishment
- As they continue to develop they will start to realise that death is irreversible

What you might notice

- Egocentric orientation, magical thinking
- Reasonably secure picture of their loved ones inside them
- May not have the language to express their emotions but can repeat a memorised ‘script’
- Pretend play featuring death/dying (e.g. acting out the funeral, killing a toy and bringing it back to life) – is normal and helps the child integrate the reality of the death

What helps?

- Minimise separation from main care givers or provide reliable ‘others’
- Avoid euphemisms & check what they understand
- Be watchful for feelings of guilt, rejection, anger, resentment
- Allow the child to express grief through play & art
- Encourage memories
- Provide terms for some of their feelings such as numb, grief, sadness
- Could join pretend play and offer guidance

Age 6 to 10



Concept of death

- By around 6-8 years, still magical thinkers – ‘was it my fault?’
- By around age 10 they may have developed a more mature understanding about death – recognition that it is universal & irreversible

What you might notice

- May want to know more about death, why & how?
- May make them feel less safe & become more dependant
- May find it difficult to express their feelings

What helps?

- Check what they know & what they want to know
- Be truthful & open
- Provide simple concrete information – so they don’t make inferences from insufficient information
- Maintain access to peers
- Be watchful for feelings of guilt, rejection, anger, resentment & abandonment
- Allow the child to express emotions through creative activities
- Encourage memories
- Give physical outlets

Age 10 to 12



Concept of death

- Death is irreversible, universal and happens to everyone

What you might notice

- Often full of thoughts on the meaning of life and death or caught up in living life to the full
- Can feel like they are the only one to experience grief

What helps?

- Check what they know & what they want to know

- Check understanding of language. Don't assume they understand adult terminology e.g. 'cancer spreading'
- Allow expression of emotions – sadness/ anger
- Be clear, honest, open
- Provide privacy
- Maintain access to peer/social support
- Consider mutual support groups
- Consider impact of emerging independence/ identity

Adolescents



Concept of death

- Understand death cognitively but are only beginning to grapple with it emotionally


What you might notice

- May protest loss by acting out/or withdrawing
- May feel life is unfair to them and act angrily
- May test own mortality by taking risks

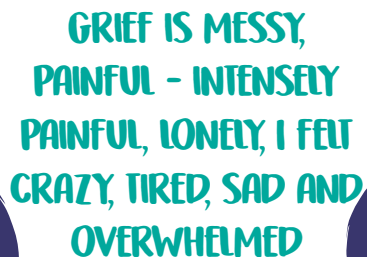
- May express a wish to be with the person that has died – this is a common reaction and doesn't necessarily mean they are suicidal however it is important to clarify with the young person
- Act in a way they think is 'adult' or 'expected' and therefore hide how they are feeling
- Role confusion and feeling responsibility of stepping into a new role within the family

Expression of grief

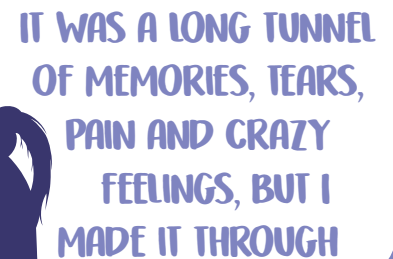
Grief and the pain that comes with it are normal and cannot be avoided; it is through working through the pain of grief that a child is able to find a new 'normal'.




I FEEL VERY ANGRY
AT NO ONE IN
PARTICULAR, JUST
ANGRY



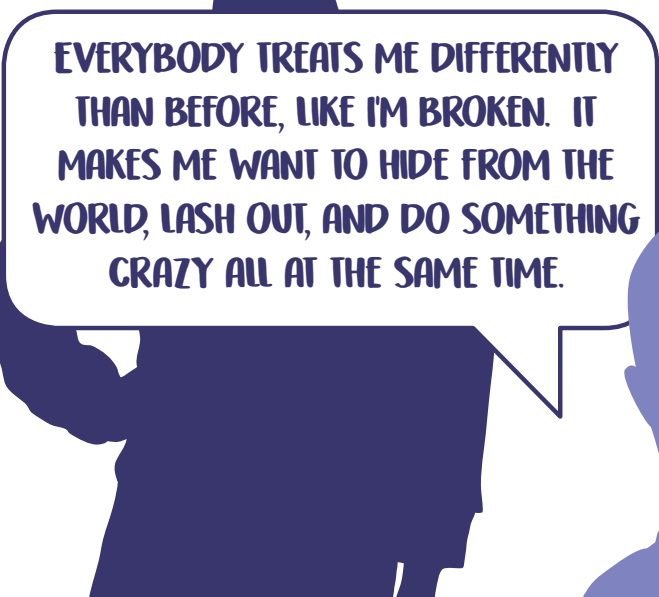
GRIEF IS MESSY,
PAINFUL - INTENSELY
PAINFUL, LONELY, I FELT
CRAZY, TIRED, SAD AND
OVERWHELMED



IT WAS A LONG TUNNEL
OF MEMORIES, TEARS,
PAIN AND CRAZY
FEELINGS, BUT I
MADE IT THROUGH



IT'S HARD TO TALK TO
YOUR PARENTS ABOUT
WHO DIED IN CASE
YOU CRY AND MAKE
THEM CRY



EVERYBODY TREATS ME DIFFERENTLY
THAN BEFORE, LIKE I'M BROKEN. IT
MAKES ME WANT TO HIDE FROM THE
WORLD, LASH OUT, AND DO SOMETHING
CRAZY ALL AT THE SAME TIME.

Provided with the right support, most grieving children and young people will not need professional bereavement support.

It is useful to do some 'watchful waiting'; allow the normal expression of grief to proceed - this can be difficult to witness but it is important the child and young person is allowed to express how they are feeling and what they are thinking.

All of the points below are common expressions of grief:


- Intrusive thoughts
- Images of the deceased person
- Painful yearning for his or her presence.
- Denial of the death
- Imagining that the dead person is alive
- Desperate loneliness and helplessness
- Anger, bitterness, guilt
- Wanting to die

Researchers concluded that if a child or young person was continuing to experience symptoms of grief intensely and over a long period of time then there is a possibility they need further support.

It is normal for children and young people to react strongly to the death of someone close to them. To the adults around them their behaviour can be hard to understand and leave those around them feeling unsure of the best way to support them.

The way in which they react is likely to depend upon some or all of the following:

- the reactions of the significant adults around them
- previous experiences of loss and death
- the child's level of developmental understanding
- the functioning of the surviving parent and his or her ability to parent the child
- characteristics of the child including age, gender, self-perception, self-esteem, and style of coping
- their relationship with the person who has died
- the circumstances of the death and the rituals surrounding it
- the subsequent changes in the child's life
- support from peers and others outside the family



I'VE STAYED HOME FROM SCHOOL THIS YEAR MORE THAN EVER BEFORE. I ALWAYS SEEM TO HAVE A COLD OR STOMACH BUG. MY BODY FEELS LIKE IT IS SHUTTING DOWN ON ME

Models and Theories of Grief for Children and Young People

Models and theories of grief attempt to explain the experience of grief and loss. However, we always remember that each child and young person has their own unique response.

All of the points below are common expressions of grief:

This model demonstrates healthy grieving and is widely used to inform current bereavement practice. This theory of grief describes two different ways of behaving: loss-oriented and restoration-oriented. As you grieve, you will 'oscillate', between these two different modes of being.



Loss-oriented

Things that make you think about your loved one and their death are called loss-oriented stressors; these are thoughts, feelings, actions and events that make you focus on your grief and pain.

- Looking at old photos
- Seeing a parent is not at the school gate
- A birthday or celebration that the person would usually be celebrating with you

Restoration-oriented

Restoration-oriented stressors are things that let you get on with daily life and distract you from your grief for a while. Even for a few minutes, these thoughts and activities will allow you a small break from focusing on your pain.

- Going to school and studying
- Spending time with peers
- Doing house hold jobs – cleaning dishes, Hoovering
- Watching a funny TV show

It is called restoration-oriented because it is behaviour that is trying to restore order and normality.

Oscillation or 'puddle jumping' refers to the way that a grieving person can move back and forth between the two modes of being; loss-oriented and restoration-oriented. Stroebe and Schut say that the bereaved should embrace this oscillation, as you can move in and out of intense grief and tackle the reality of the loss bit by bit.

This might be seen when a child hears a song on the radio that reminds them of Mum and gets upset. A

friend then comes over and they happily play a game together.

This model can be explained simply to a child or young person to help them understand their emotions more fully (why they can experience intense emotion then feel a bit better again), and also give them permission to do things they need to do (school etc.) and things they enjoy (seeing friends).

Tonkin's Model of Grief (2009)

Tonkin's model can be used directly with children and young people to show grief visually.

GROWING AROUND GRIEF

HERE IS A NEW WAY OF THINKING ABOUT GRIEF AND RECOVERY:



THIS CIRCLE REPRESENTS A LIFE THAT IS TOTALLY CONSUMED BY GRIEF.



ONE SHOULD ACCEPT THAT THE GRIEF WILL NEVER ENTIRELY DISAPPEAR, BUT OVER TIME IT WILL BECOME A SMALLER, MORE MANAGEABLE PART OF LIFE.



EVEN THOUGH THE GRIEF IS STILL THERE, A NEW LIFE EXPANDS AROUND IT; ONE IS ABLE TO GROW AROUND GRIEF.

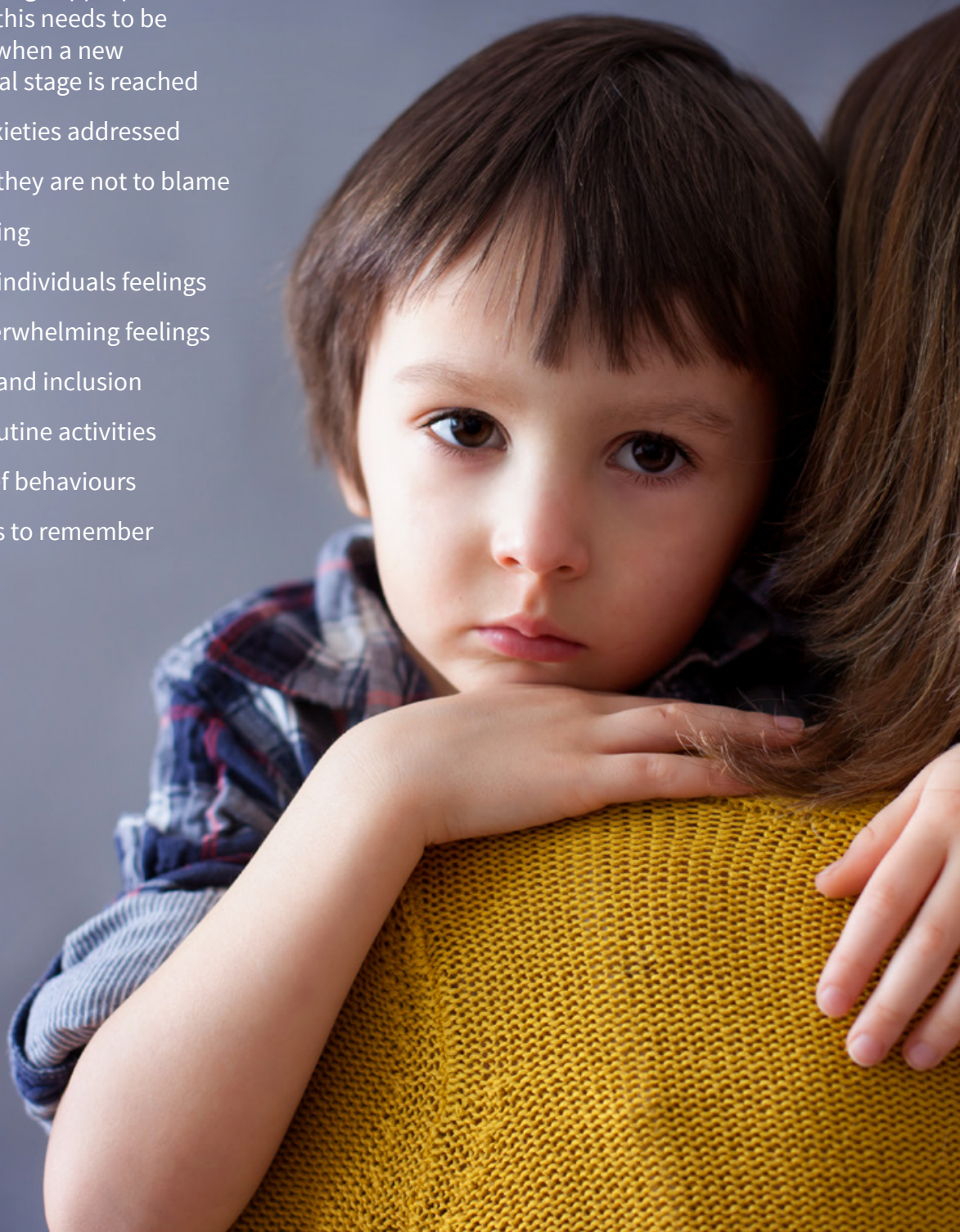
The idea of this model is that the aim of grieving is not to 'get rid' of the feelings; the pain of loss will be with the child but not in the original intensity. They get to a point where they are able to start functioning for the majority of the time.

Grief will 're-emerge' on anniversaries or through something that reminds them of the person, but it is not at the forefront of their mind, stopping them from engaging more fully in life.

What do children and young people need following a bereavement?

In 'Children and Grief', Worden(1996) summarises the findings of a two year long bereavement study, which charted the impact of the death of a parent on children.

- 1 Adequate and age appropriate information; this needs to be readdressed when a new developmental stage is reached
- 2 Fears and anxieties addressed
- 3 Reassurance they are not to blame
- 4 Careful listening
- 5 Validation of individuals feelings
- 6 Help with overwhelming feelings
- 7 Involvement and inclusion
- 8 Continued routine activities
- 9 Modelled grief behaviours
- 10 Opportunities to remember



What can I do to help a bereaved child or young person?

Be honest, open and clear

Give the facts, not every detail but the important ones; the imagination of a child will 'fill in' the details if not given. Often these imagined details are distorted and more horrifying than the actual ones and can interfere with the long-term healing process.

Do not avoid the topic when the child brings it up

Adults need to be available when a child wants to talk. This may mean struggling with difficult questions so don't be surprised if in the middle of an explanation a child returns to play, this shows that the child is unable to tolerate the level of emotional intensity and is coping by avoiding it at that point.

Children try to please and will sense discomfort, often moving on from difficult topics if they sense the adult is uncomfortable. Be aware of your own discomfort and address this with child, it's good to know they are not alone. It's ok to become emotional and for the child to see this. Just explain that you feel "just like you feel sometimes, we need to help each other".

Be prepared to discuss the same details again and again

Patiently repeat clear and honest facts for the child. If you don't know – tell the child. You can explore explanations together and explain that you and others can and, often must live with many unknowns. Remind them that there are things we do understand by bringing positive memories, images and recollections of the loved one into the conversation.

Be available, nurturing, reassuring and predictable

Do your best to be available, loving, supportive and predictable to allow children to feel safe and cared for. Loss changes children's lives forever; they will re-experience this throughout their lives e.g. holidays, family occasions. Supportive people around the child will make this journey easier.

Understand that surviving children often feel guilty

A child surviving when family members die may often feel guilty. Guilt can be expressed in behaviours and emotions that are related to self-hatred and self-destruction however children won't be able to articulate that survivor guilt is related to their sense of worthlessness, self-abusive or destructive behaviours. If those around the child can minimise these potentially escalating and negative ideas, recovery should be easier.

Take advantage of other resources and take care of yourself

Remember that your capacity to help children is related to how well you have been able to regulate and manage your own feelings of loss. If you need help, don't hesitate to reach out to others. Simple activities such as sleep, eating regular and healthy meals, walking and other forms of exercise and staying connected with family, friends and colleagues can be experiences to help you through times of loss. Please also see the 'staff support' section of this document.

Taken from: Perry, B.D & Rosenfelt, J.L (2013) A Child's Loss: Helping Children Exposed to Traumatic Death. CTA Press Caregivers Series

Suggested activities

Making a Memory Box

Bereaved children will benefit from collecting into a special box items that remind them of the person who has died and times shared with them. Examples could be: - cards received, perfume or aftershave, shells from a beach holiday, tickets from an outing, an item of clothing, jewellery or photographs.

Making a Memory Book

This is a scrapbook containing pictures, drawings, tickets, postcards, letters, and certificates – all important keepsakes connected with the person who has died.

Family Record

A family record can help a child or young person gain a sense of where they and the person who has died fits into the family. A family tree can be put together. Family photographs, documents, certificates and mementoes can be included. It can be particularly powerful to include stories about the person's life which can be contributed by family members and friends; this is often a welcome way for them to be involved. For example, what was the funniest thing the person ever did? What was their best subject at school? If you are going to include videos or sound tapes of the person who has died – please consider making a copy – just to be on the safe side.

Blob Bereavement cards or other feelings cards

These provide an introduction into the nature and experience of loss through bereavement. The cards are particularly designed to use with children who may be confronted with bereavement for the first time and have no experience or knowledge of how to understand and cope with their loss and fears.

Grief masks or body

People in bereavement often put up a brave front or pretend that they are fine, when they're not. You might say they are actually putting on a "grief mask" to hide their true feelings from the outside world. Think of a "grief mask" as a creative tool, a sculpture that can help a grieving person express his true feelings or deep emotions. Children and young people can design two sides of a mask, with one side showing true feelings and the other representing hidden feelings and emotions. This can also be done with a body outline to allow the child to show where they feel things or show people how they express them.

Memory jar

It can be difficult for some children to express their thoughts or feelings around a bereavement. A memory jar is a visual way of representing these memories. A jar can be layered with different colours of chalk mixed with salt to represent different memories, you can also add objects to the jar that have significant meanings.



Frequently asked questions

1 *How do I start the conversation with the child when someone has died/ill?*

IT'S REALLY NICE TO SEE YOU BACK, IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT ANYTHING YOU KNOW I AM HERE

I'M SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR MUM BEING ILL/DYING, IF YOU NEED ANYTHING LET ME KNOW

IF YOU ARE HAVING A BAD DAY AND A DIFFICULT TOPIC COMES UP IN CLASS, HERE'S A TIME OUT PASS

Be aware of certain topics being taught and the impact this can have on the young person:

- Modern languages – describing family members
- English/History – discussion of war poetry and grief/world wars and death
- Biology – the discussion of how the body works or fails e.g. heart attack/cancer cells.

2 *Should I talk to the child about the death?*

Children may benefit from knowing there are adults willing to speak to them about the death. It is important to be aware of what details the child already knows and the wishes of the family.

The long-term wellbeing of the child may be improved if they are allowed expression of their grief through various emotions. It is okay if you get upset while speaking to the child, this is a natural response and how children learn to grieve openly.

3 *How do I talk about the death?*

Be available when the child brings up the topic, and aim to be as open and clear as possible with the facts surrounding the death. It is not uncommon for the child to revisit the same conversation over and over or to leave midway through it; the child is attempting to understand and make sense of the event, or the child has taken in as much information that they need at that moment.

Be aware of the language you use when discussing a death. Words are ambiguous and may require further explanation and clarity: for example 'he had a stroke', 'the cancer spread', 'your sister went to sleep'.

You will need to take into account the cultural beliefs and practices of the family. "Different people believe different things happen when someone dies, what do you believe/think happens?"

If you are not sure of something the child asks, it is okay to tell them you don't know; if you can find the answer to it let them know you will get back to them, otherwise open a discussion on what they think.

Frequently asked questions

4 *I don't feel ready or able to work with a bereaved child, what should I do?*

You may not feel able to work with a bereaved child for any number of reasons and this is okay. Please discuss this with your manager who should have alternative supports available in your service. It is important you use your own judgement about whether you feel able to support a distressed child. It is recommended that if you have been recently bereaved yourself you take a step back from working with bereaved children.

5 *Should I share information about the death with others around the child?*

Yes, inform adults and children in the child's world what has happened. Ensure that you are following the child's and family's wishes by allowing them to participate in this process. This might include some key people in the school community, parents of the child's friends, and close peers.

During key transition stages it is imperative that information regarding bereavement is passed to others. E.g. primary to secondary school.

6 *Should I be concerned if a child sees or hears the person who has died?*

After a bereavement it is common to expect unusual sensory experiences which will often include visual, auditory or tactile sensations. For example, thinking you see the person who has died in the street, hearing their voice, or sensing them around you.

At bedtime and awakening these experiences are more common. It is important to normalise this for the child and reassure them.

Staff Support

Looking after your own health and wellbeing is paramount when you are helping to support children and young people experiencing loss, change and/or bereavement. If you have been recently bereaved it is recommended that you do not work directly with a bereaved child or young person until you feel able to. There are a number of safeguarding procedures that can help staff avoid becoming overburdened or distressed.

Policies

Use your organisation policies and protocols to help give you the confidence and support to deal with children and young people experiencing loss, change and/or bereavement, for example managing critical incidents, child protection.

Training

Access training to help you support children and young people experiencing loss, change and/or bereavement. Staff can use support and supervision with line managers to identify training needs: refer to line manager to explore training opportunities.

Line Manager/Supervisor

Staff require support and supervision to work confidently, professionally and effectively with children and young people experiencing loss, change and/or bereavement.

The levels of support required will vary according to the staff member's particular circumstances, for example role, experience. In addition to formal supervision and training staff may find some or all of the following helpful:

Offloading: Opportunities to 'let off steam' and discuss the difficult issues and feelings around working with children and young people experiencing loss, change and/or bereavement.

Recognition: Acknowledgement and appreciation of the challenges of this work and for efforts and progress made.

Sharing ideas: The chance to discuss the work with others, sharing ideas and gaining insights.

Occupational Health

In West Lothian Council Occupational Health (OH) provides specialist advice to support you at work on all matters relating to your health and wellbeing. This includes counselling services, a referral can be made by your line manager or staff can self-refer.

Breathing space

A free, confidential, phone service for anyone in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. Phone 0800 83 85 87

NHS living life

Living Life is a free telephone service available to anyone over the age of 16 who is suffering from low mood, mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety. You can access Living Life either by GP referral or phone free, confidential phone line on 0800 328 9655 (Mon-Fri 1pm to 9pm). You will be asked to provide some details and then an assessment appointment will be arranged to discuss the service and how help can be provided to you. (Note: some mobile phone operators may charge for calls so please ask if you are calling from a mobile and would like us to call you back.

Please look out for other local supports in your area.

Resources

The 'Healthy Reading List' is available in West Lothian and below are some further recommended books grouped in particular bereavement themes:

Death of Sibling

Title	Author	Description
Where's Our Baby?	Valerie Oldfield	A little boy is trying to make sense of the confusion surrounding the death of his baby sister. He must ask questions to the adults around him and find a way to interpret the things they do and say in order to find his own sense of peace. Mum does not bring baby sister home from hospital.
My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece	Annabel Pitcher	Recommended for aged 12+. Novel about one 10 year old boy's struggle to deal with the aftermath of his sister's death in a terrorist attack.
Grieving for the Sibling You Lost: A Teen's Guide to Coping with Grief and Finding Meaning After Loss	Erica Goldblatt Hyatt	Book written by a bereavement counsellor with the voices of teenagers whose sibling died. Helps them understand their grief and strategies for managing difficult emotions and thoughts.

Death of Parent/ Guardian / Carer

Title	Author	Description
Missing Mummy	Rebecca Cobb	Reading level: 3-6 years old. Deals with the loss of a parent from a child's point of view. Explores the many emotions a bereaved child may experience.
Is Daddy Coming Back in a Minute?	Elke and Alex Barber	Recommended for age 3+. Explains sudden death honestly in clear and simple language. The book discusses feelings of sadness but reinforces the message that it's okay to be happy sometimes, too.
The Heart and the Bottle	Oliver Jeffers	Reading level: 5-8 years old. A picture book about grief. Little girl dealing with the death of her Grandparent.

Death by Suicide

Title	Author	Description
Beyond the Rough Rock: Supporting a Child who has been bereaved through suicide	Winston's Wish	This booklet offers practical advice for families in the immediate days and weeks when suicide has been the cause of death. It is aimed at parents and professionals.
Red Chocolate Elephants	Diana Sands	Activity book and DVD resource for children bereaved by suicide. A book to be used by adults to support children of primary age.
After a Suicide: A Workbook for Grieving Kids	Dougy Centre for Grieving Children	Interactive workbook for children exposed to suicide. The workbook includes drawing activities, puzzles, stories, advice from other kids and suggestions on how to deal with grief after a suicide.

General books for Children and Young People

Title	Author	Description
Muddles, puddles and Sunshine	Diana Crossley	This activity book offers practical and sensitive support for bereaved younger children. It aims to help children make sense of their experience by reflecting on the different aspects of their grief.
Someone I Know Has Died	Dianne Leutner	An activity book with many unusual and interactive features, written for bereaved children to help them understand what it means when someone dies and to explore their thoughts and feelings with an adult. Although designed with pre-school and early years age groups in mind, some older children may also enjoy this book.
When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death	Laurie Brown	This factual picture book uses cartoon dinosaurs to illustrate the text and comment on what is said. It covers many issues including 'why does someone die?', 'feelings about death' and 'saying goodbye'.

General books for Professionals

Title	Author	Description
Good Grief – exploring feelings, loss and death with under 11s	Barbara Ward	Very comprehensive, gives information, guidance and full of ideas for classroom activities.
Good Grief – exploring feelings and death with over 11s and adults		
Supporting Children through Grief & Loss	Anna Jacobs	Toolkit of creative arts, story activities and exercises to help children and young people examine and understand their emotions, physical feelings and memories around bereavement.
Supporting Teenagers Through Grief & Loss		

Illness of a family member

Title	Author	Description
My Brother and Me	Sarah Courtyard	The simple story deals with the issues surrounding a sibling's serious illness, and stays in hospital, and how his brother copes with different emotions and feelings.
Ways to Live Forever	Sally Nicholls	If I grow up," 11-year-old Sam informs readers, "I'm going to be a scientist." He says "if" because he has acute lymphoblastic leukaemia and knows he probably won't. With the encouragement of his tutor, he starts to write a bit about himself, then more, until he is using his writing to sort out his death. As his parents wrangle about treatment (he doesn't want it), his little sister grapples with the changes to the household.
Grandma	Jessica Shepherd	Age 2+ Comforting story between a young boy and his Grandma who has dementia.

Websites

Child Bereavement UK

www.childbereavement.org.uk

Child Bereavement Network

www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk

Winston's Wish

www.winstonswish.org.uk

Grief Encounter

www.griefencounter.org.uk

Cruse

www.cruse.org.uk

West Lothian services

How to contact us:

Tel: 01506 430 225

Email: enquiries@wldas.com

Website: www.wldas.com

West Lothian Educational Psychology Service

What we offer: Along with staff from the Early Intervention Team, we run Give Us A Break facilitator training throughout West Lothian. These groups offer support for any young person who has experienced a loss of any kind. The groups run for 8 weeks in or out of school and offer peer support with two experienced and trained facilitators. The groups are appropriate for young people in P6 and above.

Referrals can be made through the young person's school, their social worker if they have one or directly through the contact given at EP services.

How to contact us:

Tel: 01506 283130

Email: ed.psych@westlothian.gov.uk

Web: [www.westlothian.gov.uk/
EducationPsychologyService](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/EducationPsychologyService)

Team Jak Foundation

Who We Are: We support children and young people with cancer and related illnesses and their families and friends on their journey and those bereaved.

What We Offer: We offer counselling and one-to-one support for children and young people, siblings and parents, drop-in sessions, music, play and alternative therapies from Jak's Den- our purpose built haven for our families; and outreach to the hospitals and at home for those unable to attend. Families can contact us directly on the number below or through our website.

How to Contact us:

Telephone: 01506 412302

Email: allison@teamjak.co.uk

Website: www.teamjak.co.uk

Working group members

Jane Kelly, Team Leader NHS Lothian Health Promotions Service

Heather Ferguson, Early Intervention Team

Caroline Allan, Early Intervention Team

Tam Burnett, Bereavement Counsellor, Grief Matters Service

Lisa MacFarlane, Team Manager, Mental Health and Mental Wellbeing Team

Lesley Williams, Educational Psychologist, West Lothian Educational Psychology Service

References

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Stroebe, M. S., & Schut, H. (1999). The Dual Process Model of coping with bereavement: Rationale and description. *Death Studies*, 23, 197-224

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Worden, W. J. (1996) *Children and Grief: When a Parent Dies*, New York: Guilford Press.

A Whole Community
Approach to Supporting Children
and Young People with Loss and
Bereavement

**This document is available in Braille,
Tape, Large Print and Community Languages.**

Please contact 01506 280000

