



Elson Junior School Bereavement Support Pack

By Rebecca Hull - HSLW / ELSA

We are extremely sorry to hear of your loss and we hope some of the following information can support you and your child at this difficult time, and moving forwards.

Remember that we are here to support you and your family.

*Little by little,
we let go of loss...
but never
of love. ♡ ♡*

In my experience, both personally and professionally, I have found this to be the most helpful, reassuring and realistic model for grief.

GROWING AROUND GRIEF

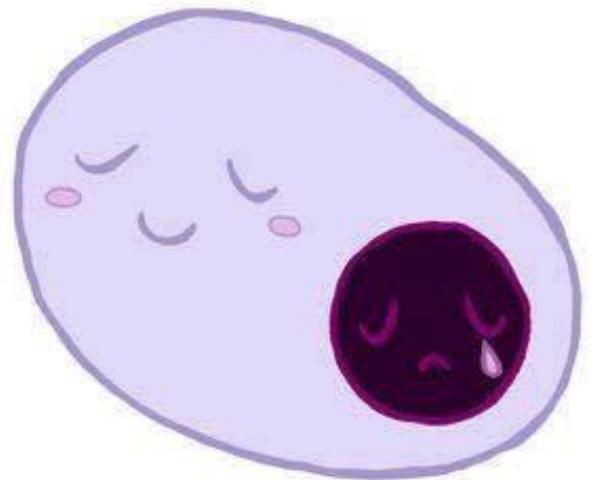
HERE IS A NEW WAY OF THINKING ABOUT GRIEF AND RECOVERY:



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



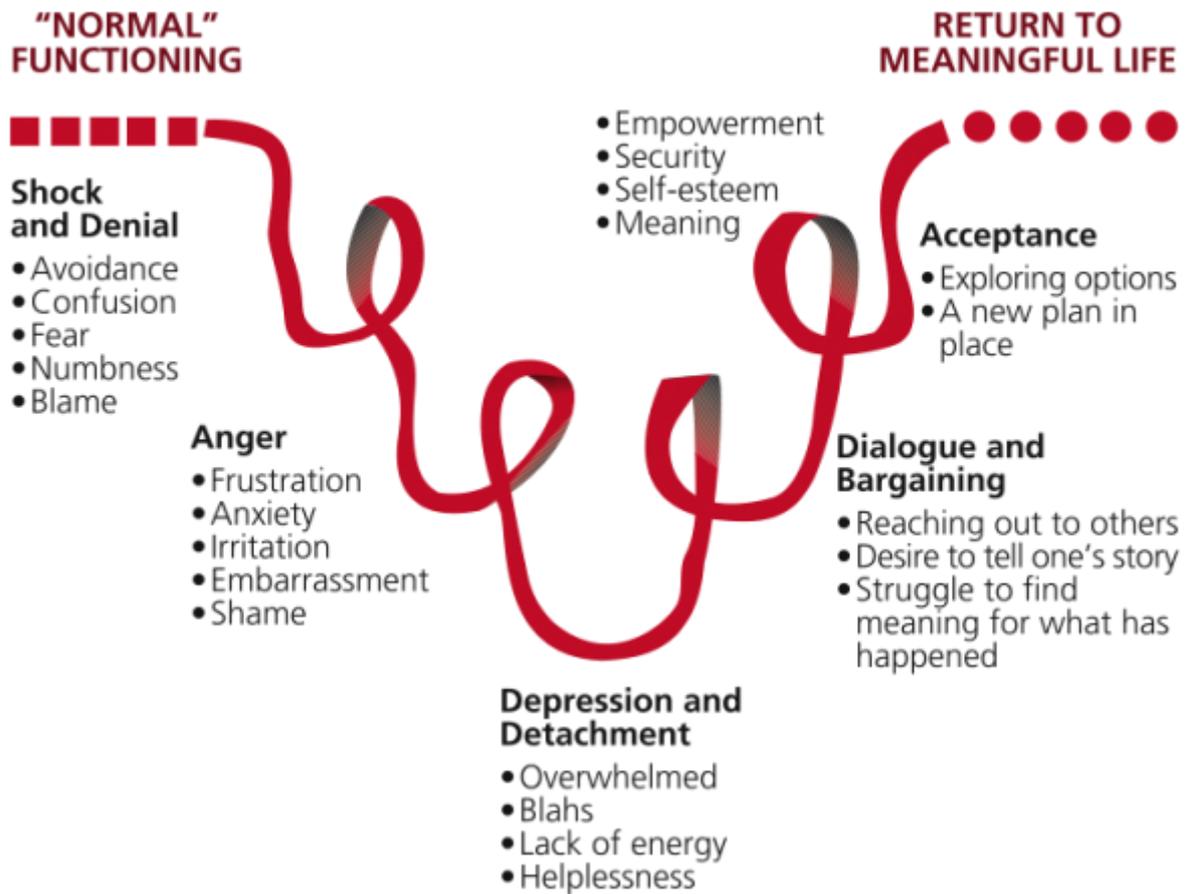
ONE SHOULD ACCEPT THAT THE GRIEF WILL NEVER ENTIRELY DISAPPEAR, BUT OVER TIME IT WILL BECOME A SMALLER, MORE MANAGEABLE PART OF LIFE.



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

Supporting children with grief

Stages of the Grief Cycle



Children will experience all of these feelings at some point and in some order. Reassure children that all the feelings they are having are normal. Answer their questions in a 'child friendly' way. Comfort them and allow them to comfort you.

Allow children to use soothing tools such as carrying a cuddly toy, item of clothing, fiddle toy.

It is ok to do activities to take everyone's mind off the situation and no guilt should be felt for moments of happiness at this time.

It can be very helpful for the child to write a letter to, or draw a picture for, the person who has died, this can be put in the coffin. It can help children to pour out feelings that they are holding inside.

Some Activities to Support A Child Through Their Grief

These are some activities I use when supporting a child through grief.

Do these activities when the child is feeling calm, if a child is very upset then a hug and a favourite story will be more helpful.

1. Ask the child to draw a picture of the person who has died in the middle of a piece of paper. Around the outside write/draw all the happy memories they have of this person. Encourage them to display this somewhere. This can be helpful to look at before bed, and at times when the grief is overwhelming.
2. Decorate a plant pot and plant a seed for the person who has died. They can care for the seed and watch it grow to remind them of their love for the person they have lost.
3. Find a smooth stone and ask them to paint it to remind them of the person they have lost. Children often like to carry this stone with them to keep the person close and as a soothing tool.
4. Make a memory box together. Choose / decorate a suitable box and fill it with memories of the person who has died. This can be photos, cards, letters, favourite items, clothing. The child has this box to look at whenever they need to.



Organisations That Can Help



Simon Says are a local charity who hold monthly support groups.

There are a number of services across the country which support adults and/or children who have experienced bereavement.

For face to face support, you could contact:

- **Cruse** – provides advice, information, and other support services to bereaved adults and children including people bereaved by suicide. Services are available by telephone, email and face-to-face. A group support service for people bereaved by suicide is delivered in partnership with the Samaritans.
- **Counselling Directory** – Counselling Directory have developed a service that brings together all of the information needed to help connect people with the right counsellor or professional support for them.

For over the phone advice and online support, there is:

- **Bereavement Trust Helpline** – provides the opportunity to talk to a trained volunteer about a bereavement of any kind.
- **Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide** – support for adults who have been bereaved by suicide.
- **Grief Encounter** – provider of support services for bereaved children and their families throughout the UK in order to help children find ways out of the abyss of grief. Their site has sections for children and young adults.
- **Brake** – provide victim support for those involved in road traffic accidents
- **Papyrus** – the national UK charity dedicated to the prevention of young suicide. They have a confidential helpline (0800 068 41 41) or you can text them 07786 209697
- **Child Bereavement UK** – supports families and educates professionals when a child dies or is dying or when a child is facing bereavement. Young people can contact them confidentially by phone on 0800 02 888 40 or email them.
- **Drugfam** – offers support when bereaved through drug or alcohol misuse
- **SAMM** – offers support after manslaughter or murder
- **Hope Again** – A Cruse Bereavement Care site that was set up by young people. Young people can email for support, and the site also makes suggestions about helpful activities/strategies that young people who are bereaved may find helpful.
- **Winston's Wish** – the leading childhood bereavement charity and the largest provider of services to bereaved families in the UK. They have specialist expertise in supporting children bereaved by suicide and they also have a site for **young people**.

- **Samaritans** – if you are under 18, you can still talk confidentially to the Samaritans . They won't tell you what to do, they will listen and try to understand what you're going through. Their number is 116 123 (UK) or look at their site for other ways to contact them.
- **Childline** – a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of nineteen. You can contact a Childline counsellor about anything – no problem is too big or too small. Call them free on 0800 1111, have a 1-2-1 chat online or send an email.
- **Childhood Bereavement Network** – aims to improve the quality and range of bereavement support for children, young people, their families and other caregivers. Offers information about support services.
- **SupportLine** – offer confidential emotional support
- **Teen Issues** – discussing the problems that teens face, including emotional support
- **Blue Cross** – offering support when a pet has died
- **Funeral Guide** – offers information about bereavement and funeral planning.

For *parents whose partner has died*, there is:

- **WAY (Widowed and Young) Foundation** – self-help, social support network for men and women under 50 who have been widowed

For *parents whose child has died*, there is:

- **The Compassionate Friends** – a helpline for bereaved parents. All calls answered by trained people who have lost a child themselves.
- **Care for the Family Bereaved Parent Support** – a helpline for bereaved parents. All calls answered by trained people who have lost a child themselves.
- **Child Death Helpline** – supporting people after the death of a child of any age, no matter how long ago it happened.

For *more local support* in Hampshire and the surrounding areas, you could try:

- **The Red Lipstick Foundation** – offer services to families in Hampshire who have been bereaved by suicide or immediate family members following a person's sudden death.
- **Help-in-bereavement.co.uk** – email or at home support for adults that have been bereaved in Portsmouth, Gosport, Fareham, Havant, Emsworth, Waterlooville and surrounding areas of Hampshire

Books that can help

The libraries are always happy to help you to find these books or they can be ordered from book shops or Amazon.

Bereavement Books for Children and Books that Help with Explaining Death to a Child

- Badger's Parting Gifts by Susan Varley
- Always and Forever by Alan Durant
- Michael Rosen's Sad Book by Michael Rosen
- I Miss You: A First Look at Death by Pat Thomas
- Muddles, Puddles and Sunshine by Winston's Wish
- Vicky Angel by Jacqueline Wilson
- Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson
- Goodnight Mister Tom by Michelle Magorian
- My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece by Annabel Pitcher
- A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness

Local author Clare Shaw has written a lovely interactive book on bereavement for children called 'Love Never Dies'. It takes the children through their bereavement journey with activities and comforting words. School has a supply of these books so please ask.

cskidsbooks.com

Clare's books can also be bought from Amazon.

