Supporting a Bereaved Young Person Parent/Carer Pack

Useful Websites and links:

Winston's Wish: https://www.winstonswish.org

Child Breavement UK: https://www.childbereavementuk.org/

Young Minds A parent's guide to grief and loss <u>https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/grief-and-loss/</u>

Making a memory box video: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hep96IZyL_E</u>

Help is at hand – Support After Suicide NHS booklet https://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Suicide/Documents/Help%20is%20at%20Hand.pdf

Helpline and email support

For advice and guidance on supporting children and young people affected by all types of bereavement. Helplines can be a useful place for you to talk though your thoughts and feelings about supporting your child.



Winston's Wish: 08088 020 021. 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday. Free to call. ask@winstonswish.org Ring helpline for relevant publications sent to you free of charge.



Child Bereavement UK: 0800 02 888 40. 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays. helpline@childbereavementuk.org and live webchat on website.

Support for you

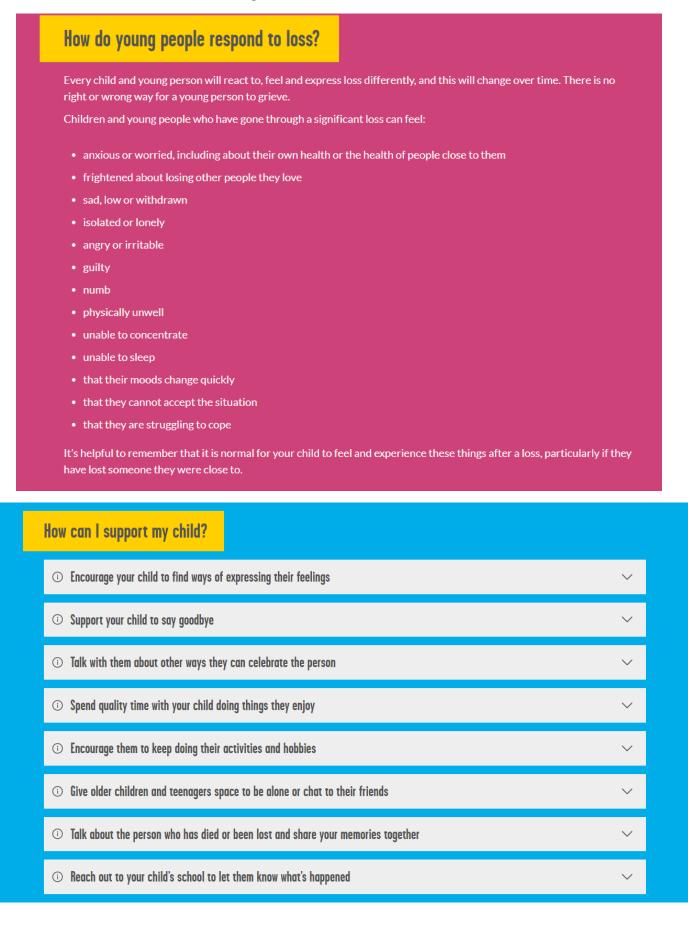
If you're affected by the bereavement, it is important that you also look after yourself. These are places where you can find support for yourself.

Cruse Bereavement support: <u>https://www.cruse.org.uk/</u> Helpline 0808 808 1677.

At a loss: Bereavement signposting service <u>https://www.ataloss.org/</u>.

WAY: Peer to peer support network for anyone who loses a partner before their 51st birthday. <u>https://www.widowedandyoung.org.uk/</u>

Taken from Young Minds: A Guide for Parents: Grief and Loss



How can I talk to my child about loss?

Q Explain what's happened and discuss what it means

Explain to your child in an age-appropriate way what's happened, and offer opportunities to think together about what it means.

Use clear language

Use clear language if you're talking about death. We can find it difficult to say the words 'died' or 'dead' and might want to use softer expressions such as 'gone to sleep' or 'passed on'. These expressions can be confusing for younger children, as they may believe the person will come back or become fearful of falling asleep themselves.

It's okay not to have all the answers

Remember that it's okay not to have all the answers and to say you don't know. Be guided by your child's questions – these will let you know what they are curious or uncertain about.

Validate their feelings

Let them know that it's okay to feel however they feel, whether that's sad, overwhelmed, angry, worried or something else – and that there's no right or wrong way to grieve. Whatever their emotional response, try not to take it personally.

Listen to how they're feeling

 \wedge

Be curious, empathetic and non-judgmental about how they're feeling, focusing on listening and providing emotional support. You won't be able to make it all better, but being there makes a huge difference.

🔉 Reassure them that you love them

Reassure them that you love them, they're not alone and they can talk to you whenever they need to.

Solution State And A the series of the se

If your child lets you know that they're blaming themselves, or you're worried they might be, reassure them that guilt is a common thing to feel after a loss – but that it is in no way their fault or responsibility.

Tips for starting a difficult conversation

If your child finds it difficult to talk, it might help to start a conversation while doing an activity. You can find our activity ideas <u>here</u>.

Especially with older children and teenagers, it's okay to give them some space if they don't want to talk. Sometimes it helps to just sit together quietly, or to offer a hand squeeze or gentle hug. Make sure they know you are there for them, and that it's okay for them to open up to a relative, family friend or someone else they trust if they want to.

Alongside talking to your child, it might help for you to speak to someone you trust about your own feelings of grief and the impact the situation is having on you. This can help to create the head space you need to be there for your child.

Tips for starting a conversation with your child