

**EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY
TEAM**



Coping with crisis

Helping a bereaved child

Children's Services
0300 123 4043
www.hertsdirect.org



If you would like help and advice about the information in this leaflet, or if you require the information in another format such as large print, Braille or on audiotape, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043.

You can also contact us by email at hertsdirect@hertscc.gov.uk

If you require help to translate this information, please phone 0300 123 4043.

Bengali: বাংলা, ভাষায় তথ্যাবলীর জন্য অথবা আপনার একজন দোভাষী অর্থাৎ ইন্টারপ্রিটরের দরকার হলে, অনুগ্রহ করে উপরে যে সব টেলিফোন নম্বর দেওয়া হয়েছে সেগুলোতে ফোন করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Chinese: 如果需要漢語版本，或需要口譯人員，請用上述號碼聯繫。

Italian: Per informazioni in italiano, o se desidera l'aiuto di un'interprete, contatti i numeri elencati in precedenza.

Portuguese: Para informações em português ou se precisar de uma interprete é favor telefonar para um dos números acima.

Punjabi: ਪੰਜਾਬੀ, ਏ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਏ ਲਈ ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੀਟਰ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਖ਼ੁਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉੱਪਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਨੰਬਰਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Turkish: Sağlanan hizmetlerle ilgili bilgileri Türkçe, istiyorsanız ya da bu dillerden çevirmene gereksinim duyarsanız, lütfen yukarıdaki telefon numaralarını arayınız.

Urdu: اردو میں معلومات کے لئے، یا اگر آپ کو ایک انٹریپرٹیر کی ضرورت ہے، تو براہ مہربانی اوپر دیئے ہوئے نمبروں پر رابطہ کریں۔

How to help children understand what is happening if a relative or a friend is dying

It is difficult to explore ideas and feelings among pupils about death unless you feel at ease yourself; you may need the support of colleagues.

Sharing feelings can help a child to be less isolated in their grief.

Prepare and sensitively inform the class about the different types of feelings that the child may be experiencing.

Be aware of multi-cultural and multi-faith issues.

Use opportunities such as the death of a pet, or a personality on television to discuss death as part of the life cycle.

Remember a child's perception of death changes as they get older.

How do you prepare the class before a bereaved child returns to school?

Be honest and if possible tell the class what has happened before the pupil returns.

Explain how their friend may be very quiet or start crying unexpectedly. Reassure them that they can help just by listening and being with their bereaved friend.

Encourage the class to talk to a key adult in school if concerned.

Encourage them not to worry if their friend wants to be alone.

How do you react to a pupil who has been bereaved?

Teachers and support staff are not counsellors.

Remember, your instinctive reactions are almost certainly appropriate.

- Try to be as natural as possible.
- Do not pretend nothing has happened; have a quiet word with the pupil indicating that you are available if necessary and you are aware of their loss.
- Make sure all adults working with the child know they have experienced a recent bereavement.
- Some children will want to talk about what has happened and this should be allowed.
- Let children know it is natural, normal and acceptable to be upset and cry. Don't be afraid to cry with the child.
- The child may suddenly burst into tears and plans should be made to allow them to withdraw to a safe place and talk quietly with an adult with whom they feel comfortable.



- The bereaved child's behaviour may change and slightly more flexibility should be allowed than would normally be the case. Management of inappropriate behaviour may still be relevant but with sensitivity.
- It may be helpful to provide a quiet place where a child can go for a short period of time, where they can be seen by an adult/s.

Class teachers and other school staff dealing with bereaved children will need support, as may headteachers and senior management. Support from children's services or external agencies may also need to be set-up.

Source:

Wise before the Event: W. Yule and A. Gold

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