

# Bereavement, loss and grief

... some things to think about



Losing someone important to you is one of the hardest things to experience in life. If you're young, bereavement can be even more difficult.

Your teenage years can be a lot of fun, but they are also often an emotional time. If someone close to you dies, it can be incredibly hard. Your world may feel as though it has crashed down around you.

It can make you feel very alone, especially as a young person, because you might find that none of your friends have gone through anything similar and won't understand or know what to say.

We are going to explore the impact of grief on young people. We'll share tips for finding support after a bereavement and ways to look after yourself too.



# What is grief?

Grief is your body's natural response when someone important has died. Grieving is a natural part of recovering from a bereavement, and everyone's experience of grief is different. There are no rules about what we should feel, and for how long.



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# Here's how you may feel grief



sadness



guilt and regret



shock, particularly if the death was unexpected



anger



despair



anxiety



depression



relief, if the death followed a long period of illness

These feelings may be very intense, particularly in the early days and weeks. Time eventually helps these intense emotions subside, and there's no need to feel guilty about starting to feel better. It doesn't mean you're not respecting the person's memory or forgetting about them.

Your family may all react differently to a bereavement. You may find it difficult to see your parents or other adults grieving and not know what to say to them. You could try just letting them know you're there for them too while you get support yourself.

There are several things that can help you start to feel better. Looking after your health and talking to someone will help you get through this difficult time.

# Finding support

Talking about your grief is an important part of getting through a bereavement. Choosing who to talk to about your feelings is a very personal decision. Sometimes the most unlikely person can actually offer the most support.

If you've lost a family member, someone else in your family may also be good to open up to because they're likely to understand how you're feeling.

A close friend can be a good listener and a source of comfort and support, even if they haven't gone through this themselves.



# Finding support



08000 288 840



Giving hope to grieving children

08088 020 021



Talk to your GP, especially if you're concerned you're not coping, might be depressed or are having trouble eating or sleeping. Talk to your teacher or tutor as you may be distracted or find it hard to concentrate at school or college.

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# Looking after yourself

During a time of grief you may not feel like looking after yourself, but it's important to help you cope with the extreme emotions that come with bereavement.

Swipe to follow the simple things that can make a big difference...



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**Eating** – you may lose your appetite, but try to keep eating as normally as possible: your body needs food, even if you don't want it; ideally, go for healthy, well-balanced meals.

**Sleeping** – it can be hard to sleep when you're very upset, but there are some things that can help: read more about insomnia.

**Socialising** – seeing your friends and keeping up a normal social life may help take your mind off things and allow you to talk about how you're doing, if you want to; but don't feel guilty about not thinking about the person you've lost or having a good laugh with friends.

**Exercising** – regular exercise can make you feel good and help you sleep (but avoid doing vigorous exercise close to bedtime); it can also be a relief to focus on something physical when you're going through an emotional time.

# Don't



do not try to do everything at once - set small targets that you can easily achieve.



do not focus on the things you cannot change - focus your time and energy into helping yourself feel better.



try not to tell yourself that you're alone - most people feel grief after a loss and support is available.