



Getting help, when a child or young person is bereaved

This information offers ways of finding help from health professionals, local services, national organisations or books, when helping a child or young person who has lost a loved one. It is not intended to replace medical advice given to you by your GP (family doctor).

It can seem difficult to talk to a child about death. Often we try to protect them by shielding them from the pain. However, children need the help of trusted adults to make sense of what happens when someone close to them dies. Macmillan Cancer Support's booklet '**Preparing a Child for Loss**' may be helpful. Ask at the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre for a free copy.

Please note that many schools offer counselling for pupils who have lost a loved one. It is important to let staff at the school know so they can support a pupil before and after a death.

There is a lot of help available, more than we have listed here, but unless you or a carer asks for it, people may assume that you are managing quite well on your own. We all need support and help at times, so don't be afraid to ask, it could make all the difference to you.

Local organisations		
Contact	What they provide	How to contact
Bereavement Care Covers London boroughs of Harrow, Hillingdon and surrounding areas	Provides 1:1 opportunity for children and adults to share their feelings after the death of a relative or friend. Drop-in support groups.	Tel: 020 8427 5720 www.bereavementcareandsupport.co.uk
Child and Teenage Support Isabel Hospice Welwyn Garden City	For ages 5–16 years. Support groups for bereaved children and young people and their families in east Hertfordshire.	Tel: 01707 382500 www.isabelhospice.org.uk
CHUMS Luton, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	For ages 3–18. Child bereavement, trauma and emotional wellbeing service offering support to children, young people and their parents or carers.	Tel: 01525 863924 www.chums.uk.com
Daisy's Dream Berkshire and surrounding areas	For children and young people up to 19 years who live in Berkshire, and for their families and carers. Also has a pre-bereavement service.	Tel: 01189 342604 www.daisysdream.org.uk
Halo Children's Foundation Hillingdon	Supporting children (up to 18 years) and their families with bereavement.	Tel: 07903 709622 www.halochildrensfoundation.org.uk
Harlington Hospice Children's and Adolescent Counselling and Art Therapy Service (London Borough of Hillingdon)	Counselling for children and young people, aged 4–17 who have experienced bereavement or are experiencing someone close to them suffering with a life limiting illness.	Tel: 020 8759 0453 www.harlingtonhospice.org
Hospice of St Francis Berkhamsted	For ages 2–18. Support and counselling for children and young people and their parents.	Tel: 01442 869550 www.stfrancis.org.uk

Local organisations		
Contact	What they provide	How to contact
Link Fountains Mill (1st floor) 81 High Street, Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1JR	Information and counselling for people aged 13–25 years who live, work or study in Hillingdon. Self-referral: ring for appointment.	Tel: 01895 277222
Rennie Grove Hospice Care Waverley Rd, Grove House, St.Albans AL3 5QX (Buckinghamshire and west Hertfordshire)	Bereavement support for children and young people (family and close friends of patients) through listening and play.	Tel: 01727 731000 www.renniegrove.org
Signpost Watford and Hemel Hempstead	Confidential counselling for young people aged 10–25 years in south and west Hertfordshire.	Tel: 01923 239495 www.signpostcounselling.co.uk
Peace Hospice care Peace Drive, Watford WD17 3PH	Bereavement counselling for people over 16 years. Bereavement workshops for children aged 5–16 years. Cover south west hertfordshire and surrounding areas.	Tel: 01923 330330 www.peacehospicecare.org.uk
Youth Talk St Albans District (Harpenden, London Colney, Redbourn, St Albans, Sandridge and Wheathampstead)	Counselling services are available to young people aged between 13 and 25 who live, work or attend school/college in St Albans and surrounding areas.	Tel: 01727 868684 www.youthtalk.org.uk
National organisations		
Contact	What they provide	How to contact
Child Bereavement UK	Helps children and young people (up to the age of 25) to rebuild their lives when a child grieves or when a child dies. Produces its own resources and trains professionals too.	Tel: 0800 028 8840 www.childbereavementuk.org
Childhood Bereavement Network	Helpline and website that supports professionals working with bereaved children and young people, with information updates.	www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk
Cruse Bereavement Care	Supporting parents, carers and people working with bereaved children and young people. Hope Again is the Cruse website for young people.	Tel: 0808 808 1677 www.hopeagain.org.uk
Dying Matters	Website only. Aims to help people talk more openly about dying.	www.dyingmatters.org
Grief Encounter	Offers ongoing support for bereaved children and young people. Services are free and include fundays, support groups and counselling.	Tel: 0808 802 0111 www.griefencounter.org.uk
HOPE	Provides support to young people, aged 11–25, when a family member is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness or has died.	Tel: 01989 566317 www.hopesupport.org.uk

Contact	What they provide	How to contact
Jewish Bereavement Counselling Service	Offers support and help to the whole Jewish community from childhood to old age.	Tel: 020 8951 3881 www.jbcs.org.uk
Riprap	For teenagers who have a parent with cancer. Also advice on bereavement. Stories of others' experiences and a chance to explore emotions. You can ask questions or ask for advice through the website.	www.riprap.org.uk
Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide	Offers emotional support, help and information for people over 18 years by telephone helpline, email, support groups, support days and residential events.	Tel: 0300 111 5065 www.uksobs.org
The Compassionate Friends	Bereaved parents provide support for other parents and siblings after the death of a child.	Helpline: 0345 123 2304 www.tcf.org.uk
Winston's Wish	Offers practical support and guidance to bereaved children and young people. Also to anyone concerned about a grieving child.	Helpline: 0808 802 0021 Office: 01242 515157 www.winstonswish.org

The following table shows a small selection of DVDs, online resources and books available which are designed for use with children and teenagers affected by bereavement. Some books give guidance to adults on what to say and do, and some can be read with the child. Further information and some reference copies are available at the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre (LJMC).

DVD and online resource	
It's Like This... (copies only available at LJMC)	DVD for teenagers with chapters on what life can be like when a parent or sibling is ill or dies.
Working with Children Pre-bereavement Macmillan Cancer Support Toolkit learnzone.org.uk	For those working to support children/teenagers pre-bereavement. Offers information, resources, case studies and interviews and has links to related resources. Has two sections written for schools.

Books for children and young people	
Badger's Parting Gifts Susan Varley	For ages 4–10 years, a comforting fictional story about how Badger prepares his friends for his death and the legacy he leaves after he has died.
Beginnings & Endings with Lifetimes In Between Bryan Mellonie & Robert Ingpen	Suitable for all ages. Illustrated book detailing a variety of animal and plant lives. It finishes with humans - some of whom have a lifespan of more years, others with fewer.
Emma Says Goodbye Carolyn Nystrom	For a more mature child of 10 or 11 years. Has a Christian context. Story of Emma and her aunt who has cancer.
Healing Your Grieving Heart for Teens: 100 practical ideas Alan D. Wolfelt	Helping teenagers to understand and learn how to manage living with their grief.
I Feel Sad (Your Emotions) Brian Moses	This book describes what it is like to feel sad, as experienced by young children.
Muddles, Puddles and Sunshine Diana Crossley	This book aims to help children make sense of their experience by reflecting on the different aspects of their grief, whilst finding a balance between remembering and having fun.
Nurse Ted: A Children's Guide to Cancer Ffion Jones	This book aims to help explain cancer, gives useful advice to children, parents and their families.
Remembering Mum Ginny Perkins & Leon Morris	For pre-school ages, a picture book showing a day in the life of two boys whose mum has died, describing everyday things that happen eg. getting hugs when feeling sad, looking at photos and sharing memories with dad.

Straight Talk about Death for Teenagers: How to Cope with Losing Someone You Love Earl A. Grollman	For teenagers who have lost a parent or friend, or for those helping them.
Water Bugs & Dragonflies: Explaining Death to Young Children by Doris Stickney	For ages 4–10 years, explains concept of death in terms of going on to an afterlife using story of how water bugs leave the lily pond to become dragonflies. Has quotes from the Bible at end of book.
When Someone Very Special Dies Marge Heegaard.	For ages 6–12 years, helps child understand the concept of death and to develop coping skills by working through book with an adult using their own drawings.
When Uncle Bob Died Althea	A young boy talks about death and about Uncle Bob who died from an illness. It clearly explains some basic facts such as what 'dead' means and what a funeral is. It also talks about feelings and memories. This small picture book would be a good starting point for very young children. It offers the chance for more discussion.

Books for adults	
A Monster Calls Patrick Ness	This book is the story of an adolescent's journey to cope with the impending death of his mother who has cancer. Provides an insight into a child's emotions pre-bereavement.
As Big as it Gets by Winston's Wish	For parents or carers supporting a child when someone is seriously ill.
Communicating with Children When a Parent is at the End of Life Rachel Fearnley	This book shows how to support children when a parent is nearing the end of life, through effective and sensitive communication, covering types of communication, language, information sharing, and overcoming common barriers.
Grief in Children: A Handbook for Adults Atle Dyregrov	Explains children's understanding of death at different ages and gives a detailed outline of exactly how the adults around them can best help them cope.
Healing Children's Grief: Surviving a Parent's Death from Cancer Grace H Christ	Provides practical guidance and direction for adults to help children and teenagers, through the moving stories of families coping with illness and bereavement.
Helping Children Cope with Grief Rosemary Wells	For adults helping a child through bereavement.
Helping Your Children Cope With Your Cancer Peter Van Dernoot	Stories and experiences of over twenty parents who share deepest fears and highest hopes, giving invaluable advice, guidance and inspiration. Also advice from professional counsellors.
Never too young to grieve by Winston's Wish	For parents, carers and other adults supporting children under 5 after the death of a parent or carer.
Someone Very Important has Just Died Mary Turner	This book gives practical and detailed guidance on what adults might say and do to help children and teenagers who have experienced the death of someone close to them.
When a Parent has Cancer: A Guide to Caring for Your Children Wendy Schlessel Harpham	This has a companion illustrated children's book: "Becky and the Worry Cup" and shows parents living with cancer how to help their children understand and cope with their illness.
When Parents Die Rebecca Abrams	Learning to live with the loss of a parent, including the ways in which this loss continues to affect the lives of children of all ages, sometimes unexpectedly.
When Someone You Love has Cancer: A Guide to Help Kids Cope Alaric Lewis	A book to help young children cope with the presence of cancer in their lives.