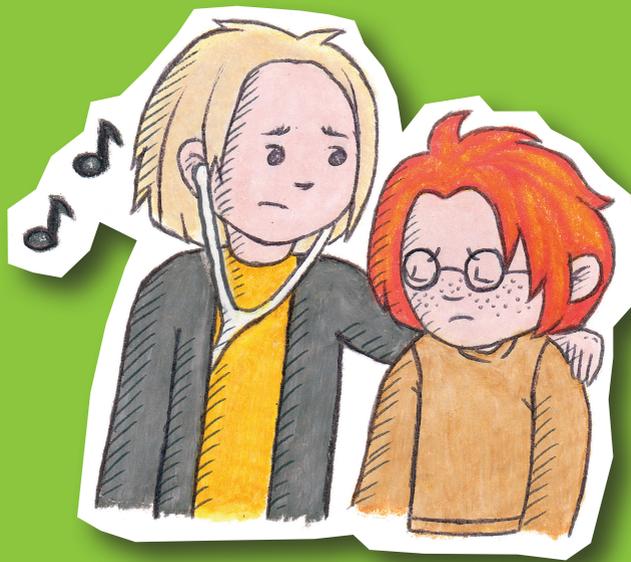




Someone you love has died

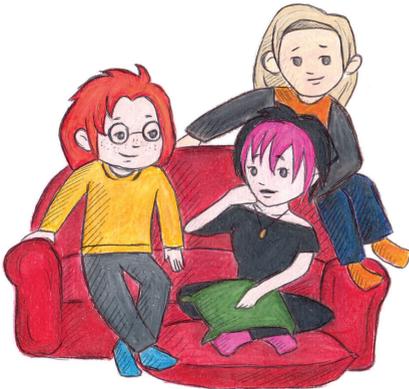


For Young People 12+

What is a bereavement?

A bereavement means someone close to you has died. This could be a parent, grandparent, brother, sister, friend or anyone that you care about and love.

This leaflet has been created to help you make sense of what has happened and help you through a difficult time. As well as coping with your loss, you may be feeling lots of different things. You may be worrying about things that will change and what you can do to help yourself and those around you.



We hope that this leaflet will give you an idea of how many other young people feel in your situation and that what you are feeling is normal. Mostly we hope that it will make you realise that you are not alone.

However you are feeling, there are others who share your feelings and there are people to support and help you.

The funeral



For family and friends, the funeral is a chance to remember the person who has died and to say goodbye. People often take flowers and cards. Family and friends will talk about the person who has died and often read something special or sing to remember them. Many people will be very sad and may cry, this is OK and nothing to worry about. If there is a coffin it may be placed in the ground and people sometimes place things into it such as a letter, a special item or a photo. Perhaps this is something you'd like to do.

Sometimes the body is turned into ashes which are kept in a special pot called an urn or scattered in an important place to the person who has died.

It is a good idea to talk with someone close to you about what to expect at the funeral so that you understand what it will be like. Some find the funeral a good way to say goodbye while some find the idea difficult. It is your choice whether you decide to go or not. Funerals can be very different from each other, ask an adult if you have questions.

Your feelings

People have many different feelings and moods when someone they love has died. This is perfectly normal. Most people have good days and bad days. Here are some of the things you might feel:

“Why Me...?”

Hurting

Guilty

Fine

Sad/Depressed

Numb/Feeling
Nothing

Relieved

Lonely

Tired

Angry

Lonely

Worried

Frightened

Embarrassed

Shocked

“I wish I had/hadn’t...”



The most important thing is to know that you are not alone. There are lots of people and places that can help. You may find you need to talk to an adult either at school or at an appropriate place that can offer you experienced advice. There are also groups that you may like to join where you can meet other young people who have experienced something similar.

Is it normal to feel this way

When someone close and special to us dies we have many feelings that can be called grief. These feelings can be very different from anyone else's and there is no right or wrong way to feel. These can include, sadness, guilt, shock, fear, relief, anger, depression, disbelief and many others. Sometimes you may feel that you are not feeling anything, just numb. This is not unusual at all.

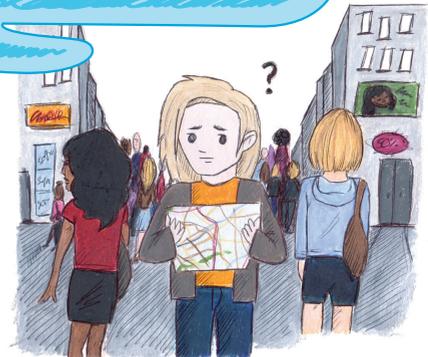
Even though I knew she was ill, my sadness has now turned to anger.

My mum has just died and I feel so shocked that I feel sick.

When I talk about my feelings it really helps.

I feel so lost without my brother, what am I supposed to do without him?

It's OK to cry, it makes me feel better.



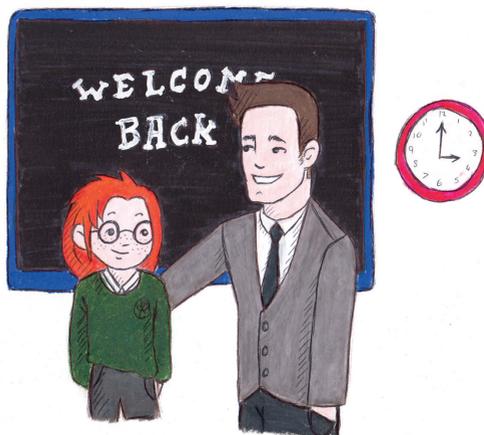
Going back to school or college



You may feel anxious about going back to school or college. On the other hand, it may be a relief to do some normal things and see friends again.

Think about whether you would like your class to be told about what has happened before you go in or whether you would like to be there. Perhaps you would rather tell a few people at a time.

Ask to have someone in school, maybe a member of staff, that you can talk to when you need to. Talk with your teacher about things that your school can do to help you settle in. You may find having a quiet place to go if you need it provides comfort or perhaps not starting back full time straight away may help.



Remembering

Talking about the person you loved is a good idea whether it is with friends, family or support groups. Although they have died they are still alive in your memories and will always be important to you. It is okay to cry or laugh. Don't worry about upsetting other people, you may find that they are relieved to be able to show their feelings and talk as well. Often people want to help but are not sure how.

There are many other things you can do to help you remember the person who has died. Here are a few suggestions:

You could write something, a story or poem remembering a special time you had together.

You could draw or paint a picture to remind you of them.

You could ask to keep something that belonged to them.

You could make a memory book full of photos and special things, such as cards and letters.

You could put a collection of things into a memory box (special item, photo, letter).

There may also be a special place you can visit such as a grave, memory bench or tree to remember the person you loved.

If you would like any further information,
advice or would like to make a referral
please contact us.



Illustrated by Gabby Armstrong aged 16

An age related book list is available on our website

Children's Bereavement Centre

The charity that supports local children and their families

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