

How to support a child coping with

LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Useful Apps:

Unless stated otherwise, apps are not supplied by the NHS and the NHS is not liable for their use.



Smiles and Tears



Grief: Support for
Young People



Apart of Me



Fabulous - Daily
Routine Planner

WHAT IT MIGHT LOOK LIKE

Everyone processes grief differently. However you may notice the following;

- A range of emotions from sadness, anger, fear, relief or even nothing at all.
- Difficulties accepting the loss.
- A sense of guilt, regret or responsibility.
- Difficulties concentrating and poor motivation; you may notice a decline in academic performance.
- Withdrawing from social situations OR wanting to connect more.
- Fears about their own or others mortality.



Mental health and wellbeing cards

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk>

WHAT IT MIGHT LOOK LIKE

- Feeling hopeless or helpless.
- Expressing thoughts or urges about wanting to end their own life to be with the loved one they have lost.
- Preoccupation with what has happened to the loved one they have lost.
- Change in attitude or behaviour; or more changeable shifts in mood.
- Disinterest and loss of enjoyment in hobbies and interests.
- Difficulty sleeping (nightmares, difficulties getting to or staying asleep, early morning waking).
- Bed wetting.
- Misusing substances.

WHEN SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?

There is no right or wrong way to feel, think or behave; everyone processes grief differently.

Some days a young person may feel more able to cope than other days.

When to be concerned;

- If the degree to which a young person feels low appears out of context or disproportionate to the reason why they might be feeling low.
- If episodes are more frequent or prolonged and cause the young person distress.
- If it impacts on their ability to cope with everyday life such as going to school, seeing friends or taking part in leisure activities.

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD?

- Normalise that feeling a range of emotions is a natural response to a life changing event.
- Be compassionate by validating how a young person is feeling.
- Understand, empathise and allow a young person time and space to grieve; this could take weeks or months.
- Let your child's school or college know so that they can provide support and help.
- Try to answer questions truthfully yet appropriately, without causing additional fear.
- Try to keep normal routines going as much as possible and encourage them to keep doing activities they enjoy.
- Reassure them that it's okay to feel happy, and that this does not take away from how much they care about the person they've lost.
- Support your child to say goodbye when they are ready. If your child finds it difficult to talk, it might help to start a conversation while doing an activity. You might want to create a memory box full of pictures and items that remind them of the person.

There is a lot of information on the Hampshire CAMHS website

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/help/young-people/bereavement-loss/>