

*Information Pack*  
**Bereavement**  
*Created : October 2008*

*Contents:*

Introduction.....	Page 2
Telling the Child.....	Page 3
Children's Understanding of Death.....	Page 4-6
Children's Reaction to Death.....	Page 7
Children and School.....	Page 8-9
Suicide.....	Page 10-11
Books for Children on the Topic of Bereavement/Death.....	Page 12-15
Funerals.....	Page 16
Websites, Contact Details and Resources for Further Information.....	Page 17-18

## Introduction

Bereavement describes the experience of loss, and the term *bereaved* is used to identify those who have suffered a loss. Death is an inevitable part of life, and grief is a universal human process. What we can do is to help children to understand and grieve and so equip them to be better able to cope. All these words have been used by bereaved people to describe their feelings following the death of a loved one:

### Common feelings following bereavement:

- A sense of unreality
- A sense of desolation
- Anger
- Confusion
- Feelings of helplessness
- A feeling of being different
- "Being cast adrift in a foreign country with no map, no anchor" (Rachel, age 16)
- Feeling of ill-preparedness
- Some bereaved people resent being labelled bereaved as it brings home the reality of their loss
- Others accept the label as they feel it gives them public recognition to the feelings they are experiencing
- Feelings of isolation are common even if people offer sympathy. Many bereaved people describe themselves as feeling "cut off" from their feelings
- Physical aches and pains
- Sheer loneliness
- Rejection/abandonment
- Overwhelmed
- Guilt
- Relief
- Fear

The following information pack has been compiled using many resources. These include **Death- Helping Children Understand, Someone to Talk To - A Handbook on Childhood Bereavement** by Pat Donnelly and **Death and Bereavement**, which is part of a series called **Children's Books for Special Needs**, published by Barnardos' NCRC and Fingal County Libraries.

Barnardos offers a Child Bereavement Service called **Barnardos Bereavement Counselling Service for Children**. It is a national service operating out of offices in Dublin and Cork. It provides a number of services, including professional individual and family counselling, a phone-line counselling service staffed by trained volunteers, and training programmes to groups involved with grieving children and young people. There is a specialist library service available including both leaflets and videos on all aspects of bereavement. Since its launch in 1996 the service has responded to almost 2,000 new referrals and has directly counselled approx. 600 children/young people and families.

## Telling the Child

Breaking the news to children of the death of a parent, sibling, close relative or friend can be very difficult. Whether the death is sudden or anticipated, parents and carers want to protect children and themselves from greater distress. However, children need to be told about death and helped to understand the implications of their loss.

- Use simple and practical terms. Try and link the explanation to what children understand already about loss i.e. loss of a pet, change of school, death of a relative.
- Use words like dead and dying. Even though they seem harsh, they are less likely to lead to misunderstandings later.
- Make it clear that when someone dies this means that their body is no longer working, the heart stops beating. They no longer need to eat and sleep and they no longer feel any pain.
- Be careful about using words like 'she's gone to sleep'; 'gone away'; 'we lost grandad'. Children may get confused by these terms and our everyday use of them.
- In the absence of information children will make up their own stories, which can be more frightening than the actual facts.
- When telling the child about a loss, particularly if it is somebody very close to the child, ensure that they are not alone.
- Be prepared to have to repeat the story several times and answer repeated questions. This is the child's way of making sense of what happened.
- Children need to be given permission to express their feelings in their own way. Children may be angry or withdrawn.
- Let the child know that they can talk to important adults, relatives and friends about the death.
- Continue to offer the child reassurance and support in the days, weeks and months ahead as they make their own journey through the grieving process.
- When a child dies the surviving child/children are also grieving. They can often idealise the child who died and feel unable to fill that child's role and feel they may not be good enough for the parent.
- It is really important that children receive the message about their own worth and place in the family.

### Who should tell the child?

- In general the news is best shared by an adult to whom the child feels closest. If a family member is dying the news is best told by a parent, but if at all possible the child should be allowed to talk directly with the dying loved one, in order that they can share their feelings and say loving farewells.
- If a death is sudden, the child probably feels most protected if informed by a familiar close family member, preferably a parent. When this is extremely difficult and the child is told by another adult, try as soon as possible to ensure that the child is reunited with a trusted adult, preferably a parent, who can repeat the news. Otherwise children have greater difficulty in accepting the loss and tend to distance themselves from this reality.

## Children's Understanding of Death

A child's understanding of death depends on their age and stage of development. Their view of the world and their understanding of death changes as they get older. The following are some guidelines regarding children's understanding of death and what you might do to help at each stage.

### Infancy 0-2 years

- Infants have no understanding of death, but react to separation.
- Fear of separation is activated through the physical and emotional absence of the parent or carer.
- Infants are very sensitive to parents' anxieties and they pick up messages and distress signals from them.

### What can you do?

- Good consistent nurturing will help meet the child's needs.
- Keeping to routines of feeding and sleeping is very important for babies and helps them to feel secure.
- Provide as much love and cuddles as you're able to, given all the other demands on you.

### Pre-school Age 3-5 years

- Children will search for the missing parent/carer and repeatedly ask the same questions. At this stage, they tend not to see death as permanent but see it as reversible and temporary.
- They may often become confused by explanations and may need to be told repeatedly about the death.
- Children of this age believe in magic and often link their own thoughts, actions and wishes to outcomes over which they actually have no control. If a child has been angry and wished somebody away or dead then they may feel responsible and guilty about a death.
- Children of this age often regard sleeping and death as being the same. The difference needs to be explained.
- A return to earlier behaviour patterns such as temper tantrums, clinginess, wanting to be picked up and thumb sucking may be experienced by children experiencing loss.
- Experience of death at this age can undermine self confidence and the child's world can become unreliable and insecure. Try to keep routines like mealtimes, bathtimes and bedtimes as regular as possible.

### What can you do?

- It is better for children if they can remain in their own home environment or pre-school.
- Enlist the teacher's help in supporting the child.
- Tell the truth using simple language.
- Reassure and answer questions you are asked.
- Encourage children to express themselves through their play activities.

### School-age Children 6-8 years

- Children at this age finds itself in a wider social network which places more demands on the grieving child. Mixing with peers and adults confronts them with a clearer knowledge of death.
- Children's reaction to death will vary. It can range from denial when the pain of the loss is too difficult, to an understanding that death is real, universal and final.

- They have definite views of what death is about and may become quite pre-occupied with dying, death and practical details – for example, can people breath in coffins? How do they get to heaven? Keep warm and eat? The younger child may be curious about coffins, burial services and see death as reversible. Towards the end of this period they begin to accept the finality of death and that death happens to everybody.
- Peers are important to the child and they may worry or be concerned about the response of their friends to them.
- Some other grief reactions may include inability to concentrate, guilt, loneliness, feelings of rejection or blaming themselves. They are aware of other people's reactions and may feel responsible for minding the surviving family members.

#### What can you do?

- Give the child permission to talk and cry about the dead person.
- Give an honest explanation of the death. If you don't know all the answers to the child's questions it is OK to say so.
- Encourage attendance at funerals, but abide by the child's decision to attend or not to attend.
- Ensure the child does not feel overly responsible for the feelings of others.
- The child may well suppress their own grief at the expense of protecting others to whom they are close.
- The child needs permission to play and get on with life.

#### School-age Children 9-12 years

- Children at that age can begin to understand more fully the finality of death.
- The realisation that death can also include them can be difficult. It may awaken old fears and anxieties about separation and loss.
- They begin to be aware that not all questions can be answered by adults and that there are unknowns about death.
- Many behaviours common among the younger age group can also feature here. Pains and aches and other physical symptoms often appear.
- Any previous behavioural difficulties may re-occur as a reaction to loss.

#### What can you do?

- Allow time to talk, share feelings and experiences.
- Encourage the child to talk about their memories and personal experiences of the deceased.
- Offer appropriate reassurances. Allow for any regression in behaviour.
- Enlist the support of teachers and friends. Help the child to discuss any problems and difficulties they are experiencing.

#### Adolescents 13-18

- Bereavement can be especially difficult for adolescents. This is also the time when they are questioning their identity and are trying to balance independence and dependence within their own family and it can be difficult therefore to cope with loss.
- Stormy relationships with parents or siblings before the death can trigger strong feelings of guilt.
- The adolescent may be critical of their parents' handling of the situation.
- They may also feel responsible for assuming a parental role in the family.
- Realising the universality and finality of death, the young person may feel quite depressed.

### What can you do?

- Encourage the adolescent to talk about their thoughts and feelings about death, memories and about the current situation.
- Include the adolescents in discussions concerning the role changes that may occur in the family. Be prepared to listen and include their wishes and ideas about their lives together.
- Be mindful also of not burdening them with the difficulties you are facing.
- Acknowledge their personal friendships and the general support that peers can offer the young person.

## Children's Reaction to Death

Children of all ages, even infants, can have grief reactions. Children react to death in a variety of ways. Some children will react immediately to loss, other children can have delayed reactions. Some children will have many of the following reactions, some will only respond in a few of these ways.

**Common early responses to loss include:**

- **Shock** – including tears, shivering and sleep disturbances
- **Numbness** – unable to make sense of what happened, withdrawal or clingy behaviour
- **Denial** – it can't be true; therefore attempting to block it out by appearing unconcerned or unaffected
- **Sleep Disturbance** – nightmares, fear of the dark

After the initial reaction to the death, the child may experience all or some of the following reactions:

- **Anxiety** – “I feel sick just like my father before he died”. Fears about leaving parent and going to school.
- **Loneliness** – Rejection, crying and searching: “Why did he leave me?”, “Why did this happen?”, “Where has she gone?”
- **Anger** – “How could she have left me?”, “Why did the doctors not save him?”, Anger with the surviving parent. Anger with teachers/friends.
- **Guilt** – “Maybe I am responsible for the death”, “My bad wishes have come true”, “If only...”
- **Wishful thinking** and reunion wishes with the deceased.

Many of these feelings remain until the end of the first year and can be quite strong at times. You may well find that the child is having difficulty in concentrating and schoolwork may suffer. Be prepared to offer ongoing support with schoolwork.

Between the first and second year after the death, loss is not felt so acutely. The child can begin to settle to new circumstances and there begins to be an acceptance of the death.

**The reactions outlined above may not necessarily happen in any particular order. One reaction may predominate for the child or they may experience these reactions in a repeated cycle.**

## Children and School

An awareness of children's various reactions to death can help create a supportive school atmosphere.

- Children react to death differently. The bereaved child may be extremely sad, lonely and overwhelmed. They may react by over-working as a way of distracting from the pain of the loss. They may appear cut off in a world of their own and may be difficult to reach.
- Some children feel they cannot face school after a bereavement, as this may re-awaken fears of separation. The child also may be uncertain about who knows of the death and what they know. Teachers can help by ensuring that all relevant people are informed of the child's circumstances.
- Certain occasions, for example Father's Day or Mother's Day, are likely to be particularly painful for the bereaved child. Be sensitive when introducing class activities.
- Open discussion in class concerning death and loss can help the child's peers respond in a sensitive manner. It can also dispel the taboo associated with death.

### School Response to a Sudden Death of a Student

Crisis can create a crisis response but a clear framework which is purposeful and co-ordinated is required by schools in the aftermath of a sudden death of a pupil. These structures must be in line with clearly formatted procedures if we are to respond coherently and flexibly to a child/adolescent's death. This has the effect of containing the aftermath of the tragedy for both other pupils and teachers. The response profile suggested here is divided into three sections.

#### Immediate Tasks:

- Convene a staff management meeting. Include people who don't have management roles but who have a relationship with the student.
- Prioritise immediate tasks and responsibilities
- Appoint key people
- Appoint support staff
- Immediate contact with bereaved family-if possible personal contact. It is not necessary that it is the school principal
- Consult with the family regarding appropriate support from the school e.g. funeral service
- Inform staff of facts as known and verified of the family of the family situation and proposals for school response. Prepare staff for student briefing.
- Suspension of normal timetable? Inform parents if this is the decision
- Student briefing. Decide who should be briefed: class; year group, by whom, tutor/chaplain, and what information/facts? Be sensitive to the bereaved family's wishes for privacy.
- Anticipate student questions and responses
- Ensure that a quiet place can be made available for students/staff to have some space.
- Media briefing. Designate a spokesperson. Prepare a brief statement. Protect the family's privacy.

#### Medium-term Tasks:

- Preparation of students attending funeral.
- Involvement of students/staff in liturgy if agreed by bereaved family
- Explanation of funeral ritual
- Monitoring of distressed students during funeral

- Ensuring counselling service is available to identified students and staff. Look at what resources you have: Guidance counsellors, Chaplain, other teachers who may not be trained but have a disposition/willingness to be involved
- What other services do you require/are available
- Ritual within the school. Consider a ceremony/silence/assembly prayers/appropriate music/other activities
- Disposal of the deceased student's possessions. What are the parents' wishes?
- Facilitate the return to school of siblings/close friends
- Close monitoring of students/siblings of the deceased, those involved in the death or witnesses to it.

#### Long-term Tasks:

- Violent deaths may isolate families-from themselves, extended families and communities.
- Be aware of occasions such as Fathers' Day, Christmas etc.
- Plan a school memorial service.
- Review overall school response.

#### Tips for Teachers:

Teachers play an important role in the psycho-social well being of our children. Following the death of a parent, sibling, grandparent, or friend, children report feeling different from their friends. The bereavement experience is unique for each one of us. At a time when peers are really important, the bereaved child often feels isolated and alone and may find it difficult to return to school. Teachers are in a pivotal role to recognise the child/adolescent's grief.

When a child/young person in your school has been bereaved:

- Acknowledge the loss. Use the dead person's name or relationship with the child, i.e. "your mother, your baby brother, Seán"
- Attend the funeral or have the school represented through form of condolence
- Create opportunities for discussion around death where appropriate in the curriculum, e.g. biology, nature talks.
- Expect inconsistency and unreliability in the bereaved students participation – in class, with friends and with homework. Also remember that a child who appears to be coping well may still be in shock and that active grieving may take months to appear
- Familiarise yourself with the grief process
- Small sensitive things you do touch students at significant times in their lives
- Teasing bereaved children is a way some young children deal with their own fears about loss and death. Talking with children about death reduces the possibility of bullying.
- Talking isn't everything for children and adolescents. They often express their emotions through play, music and poetry.
- Communicate with parents. In most situations parents will find it helpful to let teachers know about the impact of death on their child. Partnership between parent and teachers around issues of loss is important to the student

## Suicide

People commit suicide because they are suffering. Suicide is seen as a solution to a perceived crisis, the stopping of unbearable pain. Suicide is never the result of a sudden unpredictable impulse, rather it is the final link in a final chain of internal psychological events. There is no single explanation.

### The impact of suicide on families:

- People who die by suicide may or may not be significantly depressed. They are almost certainly affected however, by a sense of helplessness. This helplessness may or may not have been evident and they may not have spoken about or been able to put words on how they felt.
- They are as ill in their minds as somebody who is ill in their body from a disease that be cured.
- Families of those who kill themselves have similar thoughts feelings and responses as other bereaved people. There are feelings of shock, loneliness, anger, guilt and sometimes stigma.
- In the aftermath of suicide these feelings are likely to be more intense. There may be strong feelings of abandonment linked to the dead person's apparent deliberate wish to die.
- This cannot fail to hurt parents, partners and children who have been linked in this way. Questions ranging from "how could he/she have done this to us?" to "why?" or "how could I have not known that he/she was feeling so bad?" These are normal responses and are part of trying to make sense of the death.
- Speaking about the deceased and how they died is often more difficult following a suicide and may result in secrets in the family. There may be lots of reasons why suicide is difficult to speak about.
- Fears of talking to children are often a common one so parents deny the child the real event. But secrets interfere with the child's ability to make sense of the death. Children, however, often pick up clues about the death and may know more about it than we think they do. They can cope with truths. If there has been a suicide in the family, consider talking to them about it (See *Telling the Child*)
- Families in acute crisis are disorganized and do not experience themselves as a unit. They need to share particular stories in order to live together. It is hard to make sense of suicide when you don't know the facts and you also find it difficult to ask questions. Talking and telling stories helps the family members stay connected to one another.
- The meaning and consequence of any death varies for all of us according to our age, our relationship with the person who has died, and how they died. After a suicide it is important to seek meaning in life.

### Outlined here concentrates on what acts as a protection against suicidal urges:

1. An ability to see value and meaning in life. Interests, friendships, a sense of purpose
2. Self esteem: valuing who you are, helping all children feel good about themselves and their achievements
3. A sense of belonging: feeling connected, family, friends, community
4. Family support. This includes being valued as different.
5. Community support networks
6. Skills in stress management and problem solving
7. Being able to put order on the demands of the day. It also includes having an ability to seek and act on solutions

### Suggestions for helping children bereaved through suicide

- It is best that children are told about the suicide by either a parent or someone very close to them. A parent may need the support of another adult in this phase.
- Emphasise that the illness meant that he/she wasn't thinking clearly. That mum/dad couldn't think of another way out of the pain. Also emphasise that there is always another way. Talking about it helps.
- Talk about how life ended, e.g. "He put gas into the car. This made him go to sleep. Then the gas made him stop breathing. When he couldn't breathe he died."
- Go from known to unknown "Do you remember when I told you..." or "Do you remember how sometimes daddy was very quiet and sad..."
- Allow for a range of emotions and responses. Children often go and play after hearing traumatic news. It is their way of digesting the news.
- Know you can survive - so can your children.

## Books for Children about Bereavement

The following are a list of books on the topic of bereavement for children. They help the child to understand death and loss and provide a guiding hand to tell the story, to confront fears and to allow questions to emerge.

Please note that these books are not available from Barnardos, but should be found in most large booksellers.

### **All Shining in the Spring: The Story of a Baby Who Died**

**Siobhán Parkinson**

**O'Brien 0862783879 p/b 1995 Ages 3-7**

Matthew, an only child, is delighted when he hears that his mother is going to have a baby. Later, he is told that the baby will not live and he and his parents comfort each other.

### **The Carousel**

**Liz Rosenberg**

**Illustrated by Jim LaMarche**

**Orchard 186039213X h/b 1996, 1860393365 p/b 1997 Ages 7-10**

Two sisters remember their mother as they visit the carousel in the park.

### **Chasing Redbird**

**Sharon Creech**

**Macmillan 0330342134 p/b 1997 Ages 12-15**

A moving story about Zinny who is devastated when her beloved Aunt Jessie dies. She escapes from her chaotic family and tries to come to terms with her grief.

### **The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey**

**Susan Wojciechowski**

**Illustrated by P.J Lynch**

**Poolbeg 1853715352 h/b 1995, 185371870X p/b 1997; Walker 0744540070 h/b 1995, 0744554020 p/b 1997 Ages 6-9**

Jonathan Toomey has become old and hard since the death of his wife and baby. As he works on nativity figures ordered by a widow and her son, his heart gradually unfreezes.

### **Come Back, Grandma**

**Sue Limb**

**Bodley Head 0370318072h/b 1993, Red Fox 0099219514 p/b 1995 Ages 4-7**

Bessie loves her grandmother very much. When she dies, Bessie never stops missing her until she grows up and has a daughter who is just like grandma.

### **Death**

**Karen Bryant-Mole**

**Wayland 'What's Happening?' Series 0750203986 h/b 1992, 0750213795 p/b 1994 Ages 6-10**

A simple, accessible book which focuses on the feelings of children when someone they know dies.

### **The Ghost Twin**

**Richard Brown**

**Scholastic 'Hippo Ghost' Series 0590112368 p/b 1998 Ages 10-13**

James and his parents still miss his twin Joe terribly even though he's been dead for three years. After his death, James becomes even more introverted until he meets Joe's ghost.

**Goodbye Pappa**

**Una Leavy**

**Illustrated by Jennifer Eachus**

**Orchard 1852137134 h/b 1996, 1841210838 p/b 1999 Ages 4-7**

Shane and Peter love staying at their grandfather's. After they return home, he dies suddenly and they return for the funeral. Their mother suggests that they should remember all the happy times they shared. A picture book for sharing.

**Heaven**

**Nicholas Allan**

**Hutchinson 00917653374 h/b 1996, Red Fox 0099653419 p/b 1998 Ages 4-8**

A little girl has a conversation about Heaven with her dog.

**I Must Tell You Something**

**Arno Bo**

**Bloomsbury 0747525145 p/b 1996 Ages 9-12**

Nine-year old Rosemary tells the moving story of her family's stay in hospital after a car accident in which they were all badly injured. Her mother dies and they have to come to terms with her death.

**It Isn't Easy**

**Margaret Connelly**

**Oxford University Press 0192799169 h/b 1997, 0192723677 p/b 1999 Ages 6-9**

A gentle story about a boy and his family after his brother is killed in an accident.

**Jenny Angel**

**Margaret Wild**

**Illustrated by Anne Spudvilas**

**Viking 0670845051 h/b 1999 Ages 6-9**

Jenny is convinced that she is a guardian angel who can keep her dying young brother alive if she watches over him. A poignant picture book about coming to terms with death.

**Just Grandpa and Me**

**Sally Grindly**

**Dorling Kindersley 0751370657 h/b 1998 Ages 4-8**

A story about a little boy's day out with his Grandpa as they remember Grandma. A comforting book for sharing with a child who has recently lost a grandparent.

**Karen's Goldfish**

**Ann M. Martin**

**Scholastic 'Babysitter's Little Sister' Series 0590554417 p/b 1994 Ages 7-9**

Karen is very upset when her pet goldfish dies. She feels better after holding a funeral and inviting her friends.

**The Kite and Caitlin**

**Roger McGough**

**Illustrated by John Prater**

**Bodley Head 0370323718 h/b 1996, Red Fox 009956131X p/b 2000 Ages 5-8**

A moving story about a little girl who is terminally ill when she inherits a kite. She keeps it by her bed and dreams of all the places she will fly it.

**Lone Wolf**

**Kristine L. Franklin**

**Walker 074454081X h/b 1997, 0744560462 p/b 1998 Ages 11-14**

After the tragic death of his baby sister, Perry's parents decide to separate. He and his dad move to a cabin in the woods and live in isolation until a new family moves in and Perry is forced to face things he's tried to forget.

**My Granddad (also published as Remembering Granddad)**

**Sheila Isherwood**

**Oxford University Press 0192799746 h/b 1994, 0192723685 p/b 1999 Ages 4-8**

A little girl remembers all the happy times she had with her granddad before he died.

**Old Pig**

**Margaret Wild**

**Illustrated by Ron Brooks**

**Viking 0670867063 h/b 1996, Puffin 0140562117 p/b 1998 Ages 4-8**

A gentle story about an Old Pig who prepares herself and her granddaughter for her imminent death.

**Remembering My Brother**

**Ginny Perkins**

**A & C Black 0713645415 h/b 1996 Ages 4-9**

Greg's older brother Chris died a while ago. He tells us how he and his family miss and remember him.

**Rhythm and Blues**

**Anne Bailey**

**Faber and Faber 057115283X h/b 1990, 0571168396 p/b 1993 Ages 13-16**

Matti is still grieving for her mother when her father announces that his two daughters from another relationship are moving in. Things seem even worse when she learns that one of her half-sisters is dying of cancer.

**River Boy**

**Tim Bowler**

**Oxford University Press 0192717561 p/b 1997, 0192750356 p/b 1999 Ages 12-15**

A poignant novel about 15-year-old Jess and her dying grandfather. They return to his boyhood home where he is determined to finish his last painting.

**Sara Takes Charge**

**Joyce A. Stengel**

**Poolbeg 1853718335 p/b 1998 Ages 9-12**

When Sara and Davey's mother dies, their father buries himself in his work leaving twelve-year-old Sara to worry about everything.

**Scrumpy**

**Elizabeth Dale**

**Illustrated by Frederic Joos**

**Anderson Press 0862645107 h/b 1994, 0862647037 p/b 1996 Ages 6-9**

When Ben's dog dies, he thinks he will never be happy or want another pet again. As time passes, he remembers the happy times they shared and can move on with his life.

**Sink or Swim**

**Ghillian Potts**

**Corgi 055252753X p/b 1993 Ages 7-9**

William has not spoken about his father since he died. One day he rescues a baby from the river using the skills his dad taught him. Only then does he feel that he can talk about his dad to his mum.

**Steve**

**Marjorie Newman**

**Watts 0749632844 p/b 1998 Ages 9-12**

Steve and Gemma's dad is killed in an accident. It takes them time to get over the shock and learn to live without him.

**When People Die**

**Sarah Levene**

**Watts '*How Do I Feel About*' Series 0749628170 h/b 1997 Ages 6-9**

A book for sharing with a child which explains what death is, why people die, what happens afterwards and how to cope with grief.

## Funerals

The funeral is an important family event and a way for relatives, friends and neighbours to gather together and say goodbye. As well as the inevitable sadness there is love and support available to the bereaved.

- Be sure to explain in advance what the funeral is about, what will happen and what they will see. Significant adults who are known to and trusted by the children should support the child through the funeral and attendant services.

The decision to include them at a funeral service, should ideally, depending on age, be a decision shared with the children.

## And finally....

Involving children, talking to them, allowing them to express their thoughts and feelings concerning death will help them to understand and work through their fears. Parents need support too. You can ask for the support you need either from your family, friends, relatives or by contacting the professional services available.

We hope that this information pack has assisted you with information that may be helpful in supporting a child or children who are experiencing the loss of a special person in their lives.

Websites, Contact Details and Resources for further information:

Barnardos' Training and Resource Service:

Christchurch Square, Dublin 8

Tel: 01 4549699

Fax: 01 4530300

Email: [resources@barnardos.ie](mailto:resources@barnardos.ie)

<http://www.barnardos.ie/>

*Someone To Talk To: A Handbook on Childhood Bereavement is a handbook, written by Pat Donnelly and published by Barnardos' NCRC, which provides readily accessible, user-friendly information on a wide range of aspects of grief. Copies are available from Barnardos' Training and Resource Service, priced at €20.00 (+€3.00 P&P).*

**Death Helping Children Understand**

**Death Helping Teenagers Understand** – These free booklets, produced by Barnardos Bereavement Counselling Service can be downloaded from the publications section of the Barnardos website at [www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)

**Barnardos Bereavement Counselling Service for Children**

Barnardos

Hyde Square

654 S.C.R.

Dublin 8.

Tel: (01) 4530355

Helpline No. (01) 4732110 (Monday to Friday 10am to 12pm)

Email: [beeavement@barnardos.ie](mailto:beeavement@barnardos.ie)

**Barnardos Bereavement Counselling Service for Children**

Barnardos

The Bowling Green

White Street

Cork

Tel: (021) 4310591

Email: [beeavement@cork.barnardos.ie](mailto:beeavement@cork.barnardos.ie)

**The Bereavement Counselling Service**

Administration Office

Dublin Street

Baldoye

Dublin 13

Tel: 018391766

**Branches:**

Carlow Tel: 0503 40977 (office hours)

St. Ann's Church, Dawson Street, Dublin 2

Tel: 01 6767727 (Monday and Wednesday 7pm to 9:30pm)

Newbridge Tel: 045 433563 12pm to 2pm (Monday and Wednesday only)

*The Bereavement Counselling Service offers support and counselling to enable people deal with grief. This applies not only to those directly bereaved through death, stillbirth, miscarriage and abortion, but to those whose lives are affected by the losses of those near to them. The basic service consists of one-to-one counselling by appointment. Volunteers may also be available for telephone and emergency counselling sessions. The service also has specially trained personnel to help grieving children.*

**Bethany Bereavement Support Group**

Ardvarna  
13 The Hill  
Monkstown  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: 01 8387638

Tel: 01 4943142 (after 6pm)

*A voluntary parish based ministry which aims to help the bereaved and grieving by providing opportunities for people to talk about their grief.*

**Compassionate Friends**

18 Kilbarrack Ave.

Raheny

Dublin 5

Tel: 01 8324618

*An international organisation of bereaved parents offering friendship and understanding to other bereaved parents. Branches in various parts of the country.*

**Family Ministry**

34 Paul Street

Cork

Tel: 021 4275136

**Seedlings** is a 7 week grief support programme for young people who have suffered a bereavement of a significant person in their lives through death or separation. It is a peer support group facilitated by trained bereavement facilitators.

**Irish Friends of the Suicide Bereaved**

Planning Office

St. Finbarr's Hospital

Douglas

Cork

Tel: 021 4316722

Website: [www.suicidesupport.cjb.net](http://www.suicidesupport.cjb.net)

*Support meetings every Wednesday night. One-to-one counselling, a ten week grief group work course is held on Monday nights, residential workshops and information talk provided. Small library service.*

**Irish Hospice Foundation**

9 Fitzwilliam Place

Dublin 2

Tel: 01 6765599

Fax: 01 6765657

Email: [info@hospice-foundation.ie](mailto:info@hospice-foundation.ie)

Website: [www.hospice-foundation.ie](http://www.hospice-foundation.ie)

*The IHF was established in 1986 to promote hospice care in all its aspects. It funds education and research in hospice and palliative care as well as Ireland's major bereavement training courses. It funds*

*children's hospice home care - a national service – and specialist palliative care nursing services in general hospitals. The Irish Hospice Foundation also acts a national co-ordinator for a number of fundraising events involving the hospice movement.*

**Rainbows Ireland**

**Loreto Centre**

**Crumlin Road**

**Dublin 12 (Office open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)**

**Tel: 01 4734175**

**Fax: 01 4734175**

*Rainbows offers a peer support programme for young people who have experienced loss in their lives through death, separation or any other painful transition.*