

BREAK UPS AND GOODBYES

How to support a child with loss and bereavement

Useful Apps:



Smiles & Tears



Grief: Support for Young People



Fabulous - Daily Routine Planner



Apart of Me

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

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WHEN TO 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 TO DO:

- 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 Sussex CAMHS website: sussexcamhs.nhs.uk/help-support/young-people/bereavement-loss/

WHAT MIGHT IT 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
- Feeling hopeless/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

#Recipes4wellbeing



sussexcamhs.nhs.uk