

Communication

Talk to children and young people about death in an open and honest way. Give them the opportunity to feel listened to and ask questions. Value children's rights (UNCRC):

Article 12: Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Article 13: Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.



Social/Peer Support

Encourage children to share experiences with their peers. Show children that they are 'not alone'. Strategies can include: social groups, circle time, drop-in sessions, Seasons for Growth, Group Support etc. Teach children how to support a bereaved friend or classmate.



"I feel safe when I am with my friends and when I can learn about death and dying in a group. My friends help me through it. I need them" (Child, Aged 11).

Managing and Expressing Emotion

Explore emotions felt when bereaved. Facilitate creative activities for children to express emotion. Provide a safe space for children to be emotional and help them manage this appropriately. Teach and model coping strategies. Encourage acceptance: everyone deals with death differently.



Role of the Adult

Adults should acknowledge bereavements. Listen, be available, be present and help to reduce anxiety. Children's response to grief can be described as 'puddle jumping' - jumping in and out of overwhelming emotions.

Be compassionate. Use clear language.

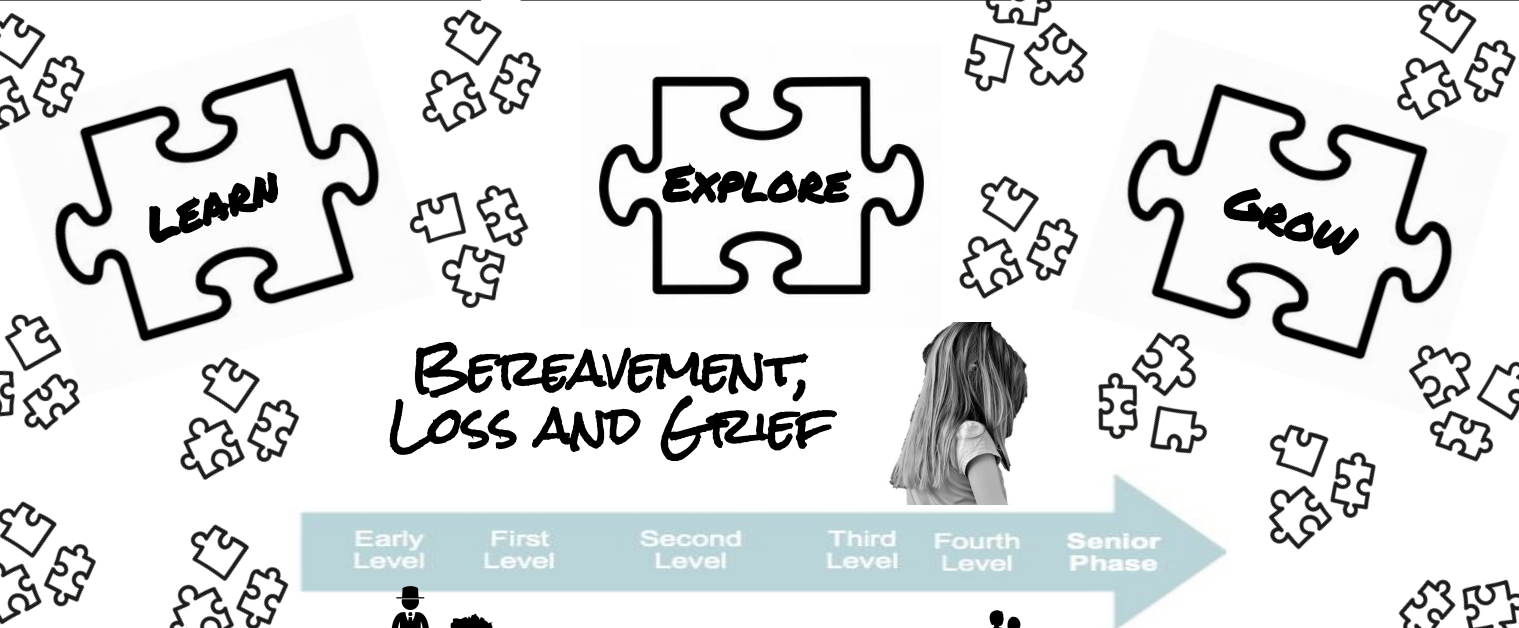


Conceptualising Bereavement

Help children to make sense of death and dying:

- Understanding
- Grieving
- Commemorating
- Moving On (Goldman, 2002)

Teach the life cycle and grief terminology. Explain that death is final. Explore the different beliefs people may have about what happens after death.



Finding Comfort

Support children in reflecting through their beliefs, religion, culture and faith. Encourage children to continue a relationship with the deceased through photographs and memories. Teach children about how people celebrate someone's life, including: rituals, funerals, burial, scattering ashes.



Stress and Trauma

Help children to manage their fear of losing a loved one through connection, nurture and positive relationships. Support the mental health and wellbeing of all children and young people by using proactive approaches and encouraging open discussions about mental health. Reach out to services that can help and connect with families.



Experiences and Outcomes

HWB 0-02a/1-02a/2-02a/3-02a/4-02a
 HWB 0-03a/1-03a/2-03a/3-03a/4-03a
 HWB 0-04a/1-04a/2-04a/3-04a/4-04a
 HWB 0-06a/1-06a/2-06a/3-06a/4-06a
 HWB 0-07a/1-07a/2-07a/3-07a/4-07a
 HWB 0-08a/1-08a/2-08a/3-08a/4-08a

RERC 0-07a/1-07a/2-07a/3-07a/4-07a
 RERC 1-25a/2-25a/3-25a/4-25a

RERC 1-27a/2-27a/3-27a/4-27a

SCN H4a/2-14a/3-14a/4-14a
 (HWB 0-47a)

Looking to the Future

Teach children how to make positive changes. Explore an appreciation of life and how to move forwards. Think of bereavement as a journey - we never 'get over it' or 'move on' but learn to live with death. Be optimistic!



Knowledge

I can recognise different losses, new beginnings and endings.

Skills

I have explored ways to handle emotions, including sadness and anger.

Attitudes

I feel positive about dealing with death and am aware it is natural.

