

## Suggestions to support a child or young person:

- Don't pressure a child or young person to speak about how they feel – they often can't verbalise this. Give them space, time and opportunity.
- Acknowledge that you are aware that they have lost someone important. Always name the person who has died.
- Be sensitive to the changes in their behaviour. They may have difficulty in understanding these; for instance crying one moment and laughing the next.
- Give them opportunities to talk, or to express themselves when they want to. Some children and young people find this easier by drawing, acting out and creative work.
- Tell the truth and the detail about the death in a way that is appropriate to their age. This may need to be done in stages depending on the nature of the death and the age of the child.
- Consider them in decision making and planning the funeral, attendance at the funeral and visiting the grave or a special place to remember the person that they have lost.
- Give them the chance to remember the deceased in whatever way they feel is necessary and is helpful to them.

*There are many good books and resources available to help prepare children for the loss of someone they love, understand what has happened and support their journey through grief.*

## If you would like further information or to access support for a child or young person who has been bereaved then

Telephone our Coordinator on  
01224 5 5 4 1 5 2  
*Our answering machine is available at all times. The telephone is staffed on a part time basis.*

or email  
[gcbn@archie.org](mailto:gcbn@archie.org)

Website  
[www.gcbn.org.uk](http://www.gcbn.org.uk)

Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/grampianchildbereavement](http://www.facebook.com/grampianchildbereavement)

**"Grampian Child Bereavement Network is a dedicated resource offering a range of services to support bereaved children and young people"**

Grampian Child Bereavement Network  
Is part of the ARCHIE Foundation  
Family of funds. A charity registered  
In Scotland SC039521



GRAMPIAN  
CHILD  
BEREAVEMENT  
NETWORK



**Supporting Bereaved Children and  
Young People in Grampian**

**Aims**

## GCBN aims to:

- Assist children and young people to access appropriate bereavement support in Grampian.
- Raise awareness of the impact of bereavement on children and young people.
- Provide opportunities for children and young people to come together to acknowledge their loss and share activities and memory work in a safe and supportive environment.
- Provide resources, information and support to families and carers where a child or young person is bereaved, including suitable books to help the child on their journey through loss.
- Provide opportunities for parents and carers to come together and share in a supportive environment.
- Provide support and information to carers and professionals working with bereaved children and young people.
- Provide opportunities for family support and direct work with children and young people through our Responder service.
- Provide training for schools, organisations and professionals within Grampian

## GCBN believe that:

- Bereavement is a normal part of life.
- Children and Young People who are bereaved should be able to have their loss acknowledged and should be offered the support that they need.
- Children and Young People grieve in their own way and at their own pace. Age and developmental stage will make a difference to how a child or young person manages their grief.
- Whilst Children and Young People are resilient, in their grief, they continue to need space, opportunity and support from adults who they trust
- Every child and young person and their experience is unique. Their reaction to bereavement will also be unique and support should reflect this.
- The relationship the child or young person had with the deceased person will impact on their response and the way they experience their grief.
- The circumstances that led to the death and the impact of this on those close to the child will also affect the way a child or young person manages their grief.

## Common responses to loss in younger children are:

- A higher level of anxiety and clinging
- Sleep disturbance
- A need for reassurance
- Asking questions about death
- Acting out death via play
- Anger
- Regression to an earlier stage of development
- Sore tummies
- Changes in eating patterns
- Tears
- Withdrawal

## Common responses to loss in older children and young people:

- Sleep disturbance
- Changes in eating patterns
- Anger
- Risk taking behaviours
- Challenging behaviour
- Preoccupation about death and dying
- Changes in personality
- Withdrawal