



# **CORNWALL EDUCATION**

## LEARNING TRUST

### **Bereavement Policy**

***“Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”***

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all Trustees, Governors, staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

**Adopted by (body):** CELT Trustees

**Review date:** July 2023

## **Rationale**

We understand that members of our school community face bereavement at different times. No matter how prepared we think we are, death is often traumatic and unexpected.

When the loss is of a member of our school community, such as a child or staff member, it can be particularly difficult. Pupils and staff need to be supported when they experience family bereavements and other significant losses in the course of their lives while they are part of our school communities.

This policy will provide guidelines to be followed after a bereavement, it is not intended to replace the need to respond to each situation based on the needs of the bereaved individual. It aims to be supportive to both pupils and adults, and for staff to have greater confidence and be better equipped to cope when bereavement happens. Every death and the circumstances in which it occurs is different and this policy has been constructed to guide us on how to deal professionally, sensitively, compassionately and with regard to staff's own wellbeing with difficult matters in upsetting circumstances.

Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) is committed to the emotional health and well-being of all staff and pupils. We are dedicated to the continual development of 'healthy schools'. We wish to work towards this in all aspects of school life, and to provide an ethos, environment and curriculum that support and prepare pupils for coping with separation or loss of a loved one, through either death or divorce.

## **Schools should provide:**

- an environment that is sensitive and compassionate to the needs of those wishing to grieve, whatever their cultural or religious beliefs.
- a commitment to an education about death and the associated rituals and traditions of mourning.
- opportunities for discussion that help lessen the stigma attached to death, reducing its status as a taboo subject.

## **Following a Bereavement:**

We believe that children, young people and adults alike have the right to:

- be given space and time to grieve
- be told sensitively by the most appropriate person
- be given support from whichever source is deemed the most appropriate – if possible, of their own choice.

## **We recognise that:**

- grief may not always be apparent to the onlooker, but its invisibility makes it no less real.
- differing religions/cultures view death and bereavement from different perspectives and all viewpoints should be taken into consideration and given equal value.
- the death of any member of our school community has a huge emotional impact

### **Cornwall Education Learning Trust will**

- provide additional support to schools to support them in their grief.
- the death of a child has huge repercussions beyond the immediate teaching/care team of that child and we will inform and deal sensitively with the far-reaching contacts.

### **The Management of Bereavement in School**

Each bereavement is unique. This policy provides guidelines for those supporting when a bereavement occurs, to help staff deal with a sensitive and often difficult subject. It is a framework on which to build, with the practicalities of death and bereavement. One of our main concerns must be the immediate family of the deceased and we are committed to providing any practical, emotional and ongoing support they require.

### **Supporting a pupil whom has been bereaved**

The school will provide designated members of staff to provide support to the bereaved pupil, this should be a member of the school team who are familiar with the pupil and their family.

The school will access appropriate external support and resources from specialist agencies who provide bereavement support to safeguard both staff and pupils.

### **Transition**

It is vitally important to ensure that if a child has experienced bereavement that this information is passed on to the relevant persons when they move on to a new class or school.

### **Death of a pupil**

The death of a pupil can be traumatic for the school community; it can unnerve other pupils and challenge feelings of security. Pupils will want to know details and will have questions that staff should try to answer in an open, clear and honest way. Staff may notice disruption in lessons as pupils can become restless and unable to concentrate.

Pupils may need to be referred for specialist bereavement support.

## **Sharing Information**

If you have to inform pupils, first ensure that you have the permission of the family and only explain the details/circumstances of the death that they have consented to be made public. Inform in a sensitive, truthful way and encourage pupils to ask questions as this will help to dispel rumours and misinformation. Ensure that pupils who are upset or feel uneasy are supported to talk (in private). It can be useful to have one or two colleagues present when you break the news so they can care for distressed pupils. It is a good idea to allow group discussion so that pupils can communicate their feelings and feel reassured.

For staff of our EAP can provide specific support to staff affected by bereavement and they can also provide critical incident support to the whole school community if needed.

### **When sharing information, the following people should be considered:**

- All School Staff
- Previous school staff who worked closely with the child
- Social Work team if applicable
- Chair of the LGB
- Chair of Trustees
- Other professionals who work with the child – Ed Psych
- Other parents – if children have been informed, the school needs to inform all parents the loss, as they may need to support or comfort their children.
- Some parents may need to be telephoned if their relationship is closer but whom the family may not have informed.

## **Funerals and celebrating the life of a deceased pupil.**

If pupils wish to attend the funeral, their wishes should be respected. If the family consents to it, explain about funerals/cremations and what to expect. Discuss with the school community a memorial service, planting a tree or erecting a plaque in memory of the deceased pupil. Involve those pupils who want to participate and invite the pupil's bereaved family. The school could open a dedicated book of remembrance where the community can write and put pictures, poetry, memories etc. This can be cathartic for bereaved pupils, who may decide to give the completed book to the deceased student's family. Reassure pupils that staff members are there to listen to them and support them while they grieve.

## **The Death of a Member of Staff**

All of the principles and procedures listed above apply to the death of a staff member.

- There are likely to be pupils with a special relationship with the staff member, and the head teacher/ trained member of staff should liaise with the family to support and monitor these children for any signs of distress.
- Members of staff are likely to be grieving and mourning the loss of their colleague too, and they also may require support, understanding and/or time off.
- If the staff member taught a particular class, another teacher with whom the pupils are familiar may wish to introduce any new teacher when appointed to the class.
- Consideration should be given to how best to support staff and pupils particularly affected by the death, and support may be needed for the new teacher taking over.
- Open a book of remembrance or hold a memorial service, so the community can remember the person who has died.

## **Responding to the death of a member of the school community**

Families are likely to contact whoever they know best in the school community. In that instance the member of staff who takes the call should immediately contact the Headteacher / Head of School and they will assume responsibility for the dissemination of the information and provision of support for the school community.

## **Sharing information**

Before the school can take on the role of informing concerned parties within, or outside, the school community, first ensure that you have the permission of the family and only explain the details/circumstances of the death that they have consented to be made public. Inform in a sensitive, truthful way and encourage pupils, where possible, to ask questions as this will help to dispel rumours and misinformation. There can be no definitive list of people to contact and, therefore, it will be different for each bereavement. The school needs to ensure it does not add to the sorrow by leaving people feeling marginalised.

The Headteacher / Head of School can access support from CELT in determining the appropriate wording to parents with advice as to how they might want to discuss death with their child. Resources to support this communication are available.

## **The Funeral**

In usual circumstances the family would be asked what involvement they would like the school to have in the funeral. If for any reason government guidance restrict numbers at

funerals are limited it should be assumed that no one from the school community can attend. This should be communicated widely and sensitively to the wider school community so that families are not given the burden of enforcing government guidelines.

- A donation from the school or trust should be considered in memory of the child to a charity of the family's choosing.
- If the funeral is to be live-streamed, the family will be asked if the link can be shared with the wider community.
- If the parents or family members wish to visit the school at any time before or after the funeral, we will support them with this visit. Past experience has shown that this can be helpful in their grieving.

### **Memory Assemblies**

It may be appropriate for there to be some sort of act of remembrance and celebration of the staff member or child's life. This should depend on the wishes of the family and is best decided by the Headteacher/ Head of School.

### **Responding to the media**

Some deaths, particularly those in sudden or traumatic circumstances, attract media attention. All members of staff are asked not to respond to journalists and to refer all enquiries to the Headteacher, who will make a considered response after seeking assistance from our media advisers.

### **On-Going Support**

#### **For Staff:**

Following bereavement, it is only to be expected that some members of staff will be emotionally affected and would benefit from the provision of some time for reflection. The following support may be helpful:

- virtual , phone or in contact contact with local clergy
- the chance to meet with other staff (CELT can provide support to assist with debriefing following a traumatic incident or bereavement)
- availability of information about accessing bereavement support outside of school, for example: CRUSE, or the confidential counselling available via the CELT's Employee Assistance programme.

#### **For Pupils:**

Teaching staff should make themselves available to talk (in person, virtually or on the phone) to children who are particularly struggling and require extra support. Where this is creating additional vulnerability for a family or pupil this should be discussed with the DSL so that we can provide additional support to families /signpost to support that is available to families who may be very overwhelmed.

School staff should be aware of potential separation anxiety that may lead to feelings of anxiety when the pupil leaves those they are close to on return to school.

### **For the Family:**

Communicate with the family straight away and offer support. Send a letter of condolence from the school. **If you need support with this contact the designated members of the Trust bereavement support team.**

- give parents and family the opportunity to collect any personal belongings of the person who has died, the designated member of staff should be available to offer support with this.
- hold a collection /flowers to be sent as appropriate.
- invite parents/family to any commemorative events held by the school in the future.
- if the parents wish to visit the school at any time after the funeral, this will be agreed.

Parents and family members will always be told that they are welcome in the school and will be encouraged to come and visit. Past experience has shown that this can be helpful in their grieving. The first visit to the school is often difficult and will be arranged sensitively in accordance with the parent and family members' wishes. It will then be for the parents to decide if they wish to maintain on going links. Each family will be different, with differing needs. Therefore, the school will always be there to act as a source of support and information.

### **Responsibilities**

**The designated person** within the school who has overall responsibility for support and liaison in event of a death or traumatic loss is the Headteacher /Head of School. In the event that this person is absent then the Trust Deputy Lead or Trust Safeguarding lead will take responsibility in liaison with the Senior leadership team at the school.

### **Their responsibilities are:**

- identifying designated members of staff within school to support bereavement
- implementing the policy and reflecting on its effectiveness in practice
- using the expertise within the school and sharing the responsibilities
- establishing and co-ordinating links with external agencies
- cross-phase liaison with other primary or secondary school
- accessing and co-ordinating training and support for staff

**The nominated members of the ELT with responsibility for bereavement support is**  
Clare Ridehalgh Deputy Trust Lead

**The nominated member of the CELT central team with responsibility for bereavement support is:** Amy Daniels Trust Safeguarding Lead

**Their responsibilities are:**

- to contribute to generating and updating the policy.
- to ensure support for staff debriefing
- to support the Headteacher in their community role in supporting the school and Trust response to bereavement.
- to review practice, provide resources and developed CPD and awareness training to support staff.



## Resources

### **a. informing staff and governors**

### **b. informing pupils**

### **c. informing parents**

#### **a) Informing staff and governors of a death within the school community**

A death can affect the school community in different ways and depends on:

- the role that the deceased person had in school.
- how well known they were in the local community.
- circumstances surrounding the death, particularly suicide, or other violent or sudden deaths.

**Adults** and children benefit from being kept informed of a death. Rumour and gossip can be very damaging and can lead to both young and old developing the attitude that the death is not a topic to talk about. Children and young people have a healthy curiosity and if they are not informed of the circumstances, or feel they are unable to ask questions, their normal grief process can be affected.

The following guidelines may help when informing staff and governors:

- arrange a staff meeting as soon as practicable. Identify absent staff.
- if a death has occurred in a holiday period make sure that all staff are informed.
- tell the story of what happened leading up to the death.
- give a factual explanation of how the death occurred.
- be prepared for obvious upset and feelings of anger/guilt. People may connect the incident to their own personal experience of bereavement, so feelings about past bereavements may need to be discussed. This is perfectly natural.
- to enable absent staff to feel part of a caring team, arrangements should be made to inform them over the telephone if a personal visit is impractical. Consider the relationship between the absent colleague and deceased.
- for a death that may attract media coverage (e.g. if the member of staff was a well-known personality or died tragically), identify a nominated spokesperson (e.g. Head Teacher, Chair of Governors) to provide a 'news statement' at an agreed time, as a way of dealing with media intrusion. Liaison with the individual's family is essential, prior to reporting information to the media, in order to respect their privacy and wishes.
- establish good lines of communication with all relevant parties, this will always include family and staff, in other cases it may involve communication with emergency services, health, the Educational Psychology service, Social Care, and other support services.

- provide details of someone who can be available to talk things through with a member of staff, parent or child if they are finding the situation particularly hard. This person could advise the family of support services available if required.
- nominate staff to prepare a letter to parents and carers, example letters are in the 'informing parents' section at the end of this document.
- provide staff with a script about what has happened so that consistent information is given to all of the pupils. Include where possible some answers to difficult questions that staff may be asked by the children, to prevent them needing to think of appropriate responses on the spot.
- encourage everyone to consider how to meet their own support needs and take care of themselves, this may be from friends, family, support services and/or buddying up with other members of staff. Provide contact details for support in your local area.
- we recognise that speed and chaos may be a major factor on a day when a critical incident has happened – the speed and chaos meaning that constantly referring to plans and lists is not possible. DONT WORRY! Be confident enough to go with your gut instinct. Remember that keeping people as informed as possible is always helpful, and don't bear all the responsibility yourself, share it round.
- local Help [Home - Cornwall Bereavement Network](#)

## **b) Informing children and young people**

People often think that children do not grieve, but even very young children will want to know what happened, how it happened, why it happened and perhaps most importantly of all, what happens next?

The following guidelines will help you to inform children of the death of a teacher or other member of staff:

- identify those children who had a long-term and/or close relationship with the deceased to be told together as a separate group. Where possible inform all the pupils in the smallest group practicable. Class or tutor groups are ideal.
- take account of pupils with specific needs including: pupils with past history of loss; pupils with a learning disability and pupils who have difficulty managing their emotions or behaviour.
- experience has shown that it is more beneficial if all pupils are informed.
- it is always a shock when a death occurs in a school even if it may have been anticipated. In the eyes of the pupils, teachers are part of the fittings and fixtures in school and are not expected to die. Children expect to live forever, and so a fellow pupil dying whilst still young enough to attend school can also feel quite shocking. Provide staff with guidelines on how to inform children. For example:
  - "I've got some really sad news to tell you today that might upset you. I know most of you will have heard of cancer, and know that sometimes people with cancer get better, but other times people die from it. Mrs Smith, the Geography teacher and Year 11 tutor, has been ill with cancer for a long time. I have to tell you that Mrs Smith died yesterday in hospital".
  - "Sometimes people have accidents at work, at home, at school or on the road. People may be hurt or injured in the accident and they may have to go to hospital for treatment. Sadly, there are some accidents that cause people to die. I have some really sad news to tell you that might upset you. Yesterday, Stephen, who is in Year 4, was in an accident and he was so badly injured that he died".
  - Refer to the person's name naturally, "Mrs Smith died from cancer".
- children and young people will appreciate time to verbalise their feelings and fears. Allow space for "If only's..." to be acknowledged.
- discussion – allow pupils to share their own experiences of death, eg. "When my pet/my gran died" etc.
- be honest about your own feelings and experiences, and talk openly about the relationship that you had with the person.
- answer pupil's questions factually. Avoid using euphemisms like 'passed away', or 'lost' etc. Use the words dead, died and death to avoid confusion for children.

- be prepared for children to say or do the unexpected, experience has shown some responses or apparent lack of response may be upsetting for adults. No apparent response does not mean that a child does not care.
- plan and arrange how the school will collectively acknowledge the loss and remember the person, for instance with an assembly, memory book, and maybe in time a permanent memorial (garden, tree, bench, award...). Our Guide to supporting grieving children and young people in education has some notes on school assemblies.
- it is natural that children may be upset and/or need time to process information, make sure there is a quiet space for them to go to, support available for them both immediately afterwards and in the days that follow.

### **c) informing parents of the death of a pupil**

It is vital that parents and carers are provided with information as soon as possible so that they can support their children and help them make sense of what has happened. These are two examples of a letter to parents. Please feel free to change them according to the needs of the situation.

Most schools have text and email systems for informing parents, so you may want to combine these methods, for instance texting parents to let them know that they have been sent a letter by email and/or that there is an important letter for them to pick up when they collect their child from school.

Template letter to be adapted to local circumstances and remember that the **specific details** may only be shared with consent.

#### **When sharing information, the following people should be considered:**

- All School Staff
- CELT Trust Lead
- Previous school staff who worked closely with the child
- Social Work team if applicable
- Chair of the LGB
- Chair of Trustees
- Other professionals who work with the child – Ed Psych
- Other parents – if children have been informed, the school needs to inform all parents of the loss, as they may need to support or comfort their children.
- Some parents may need to be telephoned if their relationship is closer but whom the family may not have informed.

Dear Parents

Your child's class teacher had the sad task of informing the children of the tragic death of <Name>, who has been a teacher at this school for years.

Our thoughts are with <Name's> family at this time and in an effort to try and respond to his/her death in a positive manner, all children have been informed.

The children were told that <Name> died from an asthma attack on <Date>. A number of pupils have been identified as being asthmatic and <Name>, the School Nurse has today reassured them that it is unusual for a person to die from asthma.

When someone dies, their family and friends have lots of feelings - sadness, anger, and confusion - which are all normal.

The children have been told that their teachers are willing to try and answer their questions at school, but I have made available some information which may help you to answer your child's questions as they arise. You can obtain this from the school office.

Yours sincerely

Dear Parents

Your child's tutor had the sad task of informing the children of the death of <Name>, a pupil in <Year>.

They were told that <name> died from an illness called cancer. Sometimes people who have cancer can get better, but other times people die from it. <Name> had been ill with cancer for a long time and died at home yesterday.

When someone dies, their family and friends have lots of feelings of sadness, anger, and confusion - these are all normal. The children have been told that their teachers are willing to try and answer their questions at school, but I have made available some information which may help you to answer your child's questions as they arise. You can obtain this from the school office.

Yours sincerely  
Head teacher

## Cornwall Bereavement Network

Our goal is to make support easily accessible to those experiencing bereavement, whether that is through end-of-life care, funeral planning, legal services, counselling, or support groups. However you have been bereaved, and whatever your age or relationship to the deceased, there is assistance out there and we hope that this resource helps you to find what is right for you.

A Cornish charity supporting bereaved children, young people, parents and carers throughout the county.

**[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)** A useful website offering practical ideas for helping those bereaved in the family and school community.

**[www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk)**      A bereavement support service for children who have suffered a loss

**[www.bhf.org.uk/smallcreature](http://www.bhf.org.uk/smallcreature)** British Heart Foundation site to help children come to terms with loss using cartoon creatures. An animated film and we have a printed pack to go with it.

[www.bbc.co.uk/.../bereavement/bereavement\\_helpchildren.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/.../bereavement/bereavement_helpchildren.shtml) Information on the way bereavement affects children

<http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk> An organisation offering local bereavement support to both adults and children

<http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/index.htm> Federation of organisations

## **Appendix B - Books on Bereavement**

### **Primary**

#### **GRANPA**

John Burningham (Puffin, 1998, ISBN 0099-43408-3)

Designed to stimulate discussion rather than to tell a story, the book has a series of scenes of a little girl and her grandad, with comments from each or both of them. At the end, she is shown staring at his empty chair, without comments. The book allows the adult to direct discussion about not only the good things that the child remembers, but also the not so happy memories.

#### **WHEN DINOSAURS DIE**

L & M Brown (Little, Brown, 1996, hb, ISBN 0-316-10197-7)

Charming busy anthropomorphic pictures of dinosaurs illustrate topics, questions, and a range of answers about death: Saying Goodbye; Customs and beliefs about death; why do people die. What does "dead" mean?. It is also quite acute psychologically, acknowledging that disbelief, anger, fear, and sadness are common feelings when someone dies. Expensive, but attractive and appealing to children.

#### **REMEMBERING GRANDAD**

Sheila and Kate Isherwood (Oxford, ISBN 0-19-272368-5)

A girl's grandfather has died and looking back over the happy times they enjoyed together helps her to cope with the loss. Very specific episodes and illustrations give it a life-like feel. Sensible and sound if a little stereotyped in its pictures of family life, it could help children to think about how to remember someone.

#### **FRED**

Posy Simmons (Jonathan Cape, 1987, ISBN 0-2240-2448-5)

When Fred the cat dies, his owners Nick and Sophie attend his funeral and learn about his secret life as a famous singer. The story raises the idea of celebrating a life in a good-humoured and touching way, with entertaining pictures and not much text.

#### **GRANDAD, I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOU**

De Bode and Broere (Evans / Helping Hands, 1997, ISBN 0237-51755-8)

A picture book about loss and memories, and potentially a good stimulus to talk about a bereavement.

#### **LIFETIMES**

Beginnings and endings with lifetimes in between – a beautiful way to explain life and death to children Bryan Mellonie and Robert Ingpen (Belitha Press, 1997, ISBN 1-85561-760-9).

places human life and death firmly in the natural world, and the tone is quietly reflective: "All around us everywhere, beginnings and endings are going on all the time. It may be sad, but it is the way of all things. For plants; for people; and for birds".

### BADGER'S PARTING GIFTS

Susan Varley (Collins Picture Lions, pb, 1992)

An old favourite, a charming illustrated book in which a very old and much loved badger dies. The forest animals gather and reminisce about the important part Badger played in their lives, and as time passes memories of Badger make them smile. These memories were different for each of them, including very recognisable things like a favourite recipe or showing someone how to knot a tie - Badger's "parting gifts"

### WE LOVE THEM

Martin Waddell (Walker Books, 1990, ISBN 0-7445-7256-8)

Death is seen very much as part of life in this nicely illustrated story of life in the country, which conveys the idea that life goes on and that old creature's give way to young ones. But it is a bit too matter of fact about loss - barely is the old dog dead than the children have found a new one, is there an implicit message that dead pets (and people?) are easily replaced.

### GRANDMA'S BILL

Martin Waddell (Macdonald Young Books, pb, ISBN 0- 7500-0307-3)

Bill's grandma is a widow, and he learns about her "other Bill" by looking through her photo album with her. A bit too stereotypically suburban and middle class for general appeal perhaps. Some like its ordinariness, gentleness and factual accuracy, and could not fault what it had to say about death and living on in memories and in the family.

### I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU

H Wilhelm (Hodder & Stoughton, 1985)

A touching story of the love between a little boy and his dog, who have grown up together. When the dog dies, the boy says that, although he is very sad, it helps that he used to tell the dog "I'll always love you" every night. An opportunity to discuss the importance of telling how you feel. Aimed at 4 to 7 year olds and delightfully illustrated.

### A BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR DANIEL

Juliet Rothman (Prometheus Books, ISBN 1-57392-054-1)

This story of a little girl whose brother has died is intended for children aged 8-12. "A difficult subject handled very well and movingly".





## Books and resources

# Books and resources - KS3 & 4 / S1- 4 / 11-18yrs

The suggestions below are suitable to use with young people, looking at the life cycle including the end of life, or to use when someone they know has died. Young people can find reading about others in similar situations reassuring and sometimes easier to do than talking about their loss. The books, films and resources below will help with this.

**General books** (some have been made into films)

*Sad Book*

Michael Rosen

Michael Rosen talks about his sadness after the death of his son. A simple, personal story that speaks to everyone, adult or young person.

*Sometimes Life Sucks: When someone you love dies* Molly Carlile

Teenagers can experience death in all kinds of ways. Full of tips and stories, this will help them to make some sense of their shock and grief.

*Still Here With Me: Teenagers and Children on Losing a Parent*

Suzanne Sjoqvist

In their own words, children and young people of a variety of ages talk openly and honestly about the death of their mother or father. They describe feelings of pain, loss and anger, the struggle to cope with the embarrassed reactions of others and the difficulties involved in rebuilding their lives.

*The Grieving Teen*

Helen Fitzgerald

Written about, but also for teenagers, this book covers the entire range of situations in which grieving teens and their friends may find themselves. It offers explanations and guidance in a very accessible format.

*What On Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?* Trevor Romain

Written by Trevor Romain after his father died, this book suggests ways of coping with grief and offers answers to questions such as 'Why do people have to die?' and 'How can I say goodbye?' Friendly, accessible text and illustrations aimed at ages 8-14.

*The Year Of The Rat*

Clare Furniss

Grappling with grief is hard enough without repeat visits from the deceased. Pearl deals with death, life, and family in this haunting, humorous, and poignant debut. The world can tip at any moment, a fact that fifteen-year-old Pearl is all too aware of when her mum dies after giving birth to her baby sister.

Author: Child Bereavement UK  
Version: 01  
Reviewed: 2017

*The Thing About Jellyfish*

Ali Benjamin

After her best friend dies in a drowning accident, Suzy is convinced that the true cause of the tragedy was a rare jellyfish sting.

*The Lie Tree*

Frances Hardinge

Faith's father has been found dead under mysterious circumstances, and as she is searching through his belongings for clues, she discovers a strange tree. The tree only grows healthily and bears fruit if you whisper a lie to it. The fruit of the tree, when eaten, will deliver a hidden truth to the person who consumes it.

*My Sister Lives On The Mantelpiece*

Annabel Pitcher

To ten-year-old Jamie, his family has fallen apart because of the loss of someone he barely remembers: his sister Rose, who died five years ago in a terrorist bombing.

*The Savage*

David Almond

Blue's father has died suddenly, and finding that the school's counselling increases his anguish, he turns to writing a story instead. Recommended 8+.

*Out Of The Blue*

[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)

This book has been written and designed specifically for adolescents and teenagers with the aim of supporting them through their bereavement using a range of activities.

## Leaflets

*A Teenage Guide To Coping With Bereavement* by Sarah Darwen. Available from Child Bereavement UK's online shop

This pocket-sized leaflet contains practical advice and guidance for a young person managing confusing emotions when someone important in their life dies. Devised by teenager Sarah Darwen following her father's death.

*When Your Mum Or Dad Has Cancer*

Ann Couldrick

Available from Child Bereavement UK's online shop

This is a useful booklet for younger children (7+) to teenage children. It has an introduction for parents but then explains cancer in a simple way children can relate to. It also covers many questions children ask such as whether the person will die and what exactly happens, but tackles the answers with insight and honesty.

**General books** (some have been made into films)

*Us Minus Mum*

Heather Butler

The boys think Mum is invincible. But they're wrong. Because Mum is ill. Really ill. It's up to George and Theo to keep Mum (and everyone else) smiling – which will almost probably definitely involve willies, shepherd's pie and Goffo's victory at the pet talent show. This book is both funny and sad.

*The Fault In Our Stars*

John Green

(Book and film)

The story follows the main character, Hazel Grace Lancaster, as she battles cancer. Not only is Hazel trying to live the normal life of a 16-year-old girl, but she is also struggling with what it will be like for her parents after she dies.

*Ways To Live Forever*

I have leukemia.

Sally Nicholls

(Book and film)

A boy's last months with leukemia. 1. My name is Sam. 2. I am eleven years old. 3. I collect stories and fantastic facts.

*If Only*

Carole Geithner

### Free app for Apple and Android

*'Grief: Support for Young People'*

An app designed by bereaved young people for bereaved young people. Can also be used by friends, parents and professionals supporting bereaved young people.

Includes:

- Information about bereavement, grief, feelings
- Stories from bereaved young people and short films that they have written and made
- Links to search for local support organisations



The app enables you to get the support that you want in your own space and your own time

Charlie, aged 17

Download on the  
App Store

GET IT ON  
Google Play

*A Monster Calls*

Patrick Ness and Siobhan Dowd

Connor's mum has cancer and life is irrevocably, disturbingly changing. First there is the nightmare, filled with screaming and falling; then there is school, where people avoid him (not knowing what to say), or persecute him.

Corinna's world is crushed after her mother dies of cancer. How does she get through the funeral, trays of ziti, a father who can't communicate, the first day of school, Mother's Day, people who don't know what to say, and the entire eighthgrade year?

## Websites

Cruse [www.hopeagain.org.uk](http://www.hopeagain.org.uk)

A safe and moderated website run by CRUSE Bereavement Care. Has a message board, fun zone, ask a question, lads only, and an interactive section.

Winston's Wish [www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)

A safe and well moderated section on the Winston's Wish website. It includes a graffiti wall, ask a question, leave a message, and fun activities.

Grief Encounter [www.griefencounter.org.uk](http://www.griefencounter.org.uk)

A dedicated section for young people with good videos.

## Short films

Several films created and made by Child Bereavement UK's Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG)

including *A Message for bereaved young people* and *A Message For Friends*.

Other topics include: What is grief?

Stories from other young people.

How to find help. Contributed to and created by bereaved adolescents and teenagers. On Child Bereavement UK's website [www.childbereavementuk.org](http://www.childbereavementuk.org)

*LAD – A Yorkshire Story*

A film by Dan Hartley

When 13 year-old Tom Proctor's dad dies his world falls apart; his brother joins the army, his mum is threatened with eviction and Tom gets into trouble with the police. Tom comes to terms with the loss of his dad through the friendship he forms with national park warden, Al Thorpe. This enchanting coming-of- age story is set in the stunning Yorkshire Dales.