

Coping with the death of a loved one

When someone we love dies – a family member, friend or pet – we can have all sorts of difficult feelings. Your child may feel terribly sad. They may feel angry that the person has left them, or guilty and somehow responsible for the death. Or they may not appear very affected by it. All of these are normal reactions, for everybody.

If your child feels angry or guilty, reassure them that the person didn't want to leave them, and it's not their fault that the person or pet died. They cannot bring the loved one back, but there are ways that they and you can help yourselves to feel better. For some people, this may take a long time. Some things will help some people and not others. Some strategies may not help now, but they might help later on.

Divide a sheet of paper into two columns, with these headings:

Helps me feel better now

Doesn't help me feel better now

On the following page, there are ideas for feeling better when a loved one has died. Your child can colour the pictures and cut them out. Tell them to think about each idea and to stick them in one of the columns with Blu-tack or similar.

Your child can look at it again each day or week for as long as they want, and move the pictures around according to how they feel. You might find it helpful too.

For tips on talking to children about death, watch our video at <https://youtu.be/dllE0bJmu7Q>

Tips for talking about death

- Be open to talking about death
- Let your child tell you what they think and know about death
- Correct false ideas and worries
- Don't overload them with information
- Keep the discussion going for as long as your child shows interest

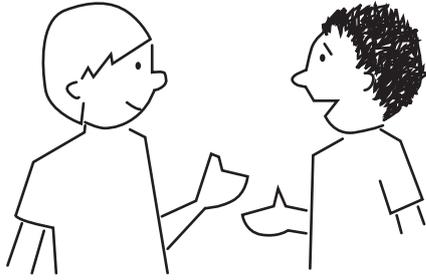
What do you think happens when someone dies?



COVID-19: Talking to children about death



If you are the parent, carer or guardian of a bereaved child and you share the bereavement, it is important that whilst you are supporting your child that you are being supported as well. The death of someone close is extremely painful and therefore you need to safeguard your emotional, mental and physical well being in order to support your bereaved child.



talk to someone

think of
happy
memories



do something
nice

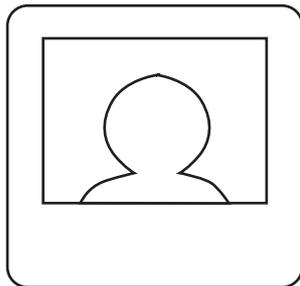
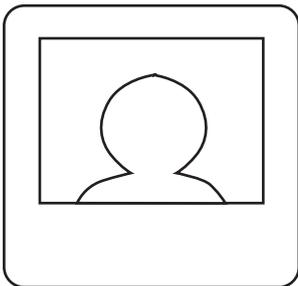
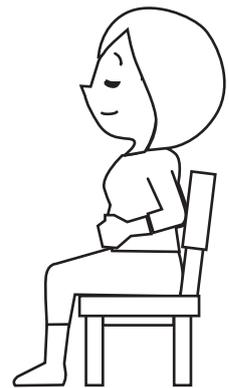


cry

have a hug

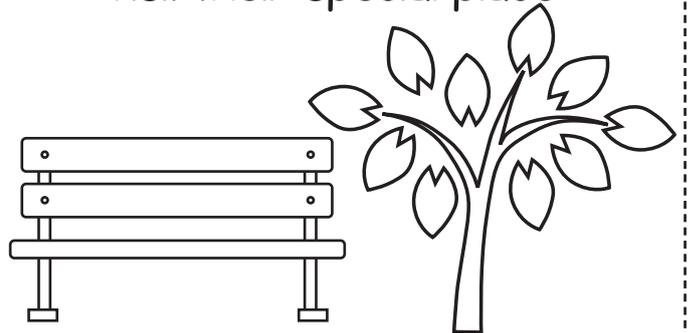


sit quietly by
myself



look at old photos/videos

visit their special place



plant some seeds



help someone
else who is sad

