



## **Connell Co-op College**

# **Bereavement policy Supporting young people and families & responding to the death of a young person**

**Section 1:** Supporting young people and families through bereavement

**Section 2:** Responding to the death of a young person at college or off-site

### **Aim of the policy**

- To enable staff members to feel more confident when working with bereaved students in order to be able to support them more efficiently
- Provide staff with guidelines for those supporting a bereaved young person and help and support staff to deal with a sensitive and often difficult subject
- To provide the support necessary for bereaved young people and safeguard their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of their students
- Provide a clear framework for responding to the death of a student or staff member in college or off-site

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## **Section 1**

### **1. Introduction and context**

Many young people under the age of 18 years will be bereaved of a parent and many more will experience the death of someone else special in their life. In addition to these individual pupils, colleges may also experience the death of a young person at college or a staff member. It is almost inevitable, therefore, that at some time all colleges will have to deal with a death that affects the college community.

As children spend the vast majority of their time at school/college, teachers and staff members are the primary source of care and support. Bereaved young people will see college as a safe haven away from the turmoil of emotions at home and will look to trusted staff members for help.

Death is something that most people choose not to think about so when faced with it we often find ourselves ill-prepared. The purpose of this bereavement policy is to help and guide everyone involved at a time when there may be shock, upset and confusion, ensure that there is an effective response plan in place, clear lines of communication and each member of the college community is supported to help them through a difficult time.

### **2. Impact on young people**

While it is true that their understanding of death develops over a prolonged period of time, it is clear that:

- Young people can suffer deeply as a result of the death of a member of the family
- This suffering is more intense when they do not have the opportunities to talk or to grieve openly, and do not feel that those close to them recognise their feelings - even though they themselves may not yet have the words to express them.
- In particular, for teenagers, there is sometimes a tendency not to talk about how they feel as they do not wish to place an extra burden on for example the remaining parent if their mother or father has died. They in effect try to manage on their own, which can be very difficult for them.

## **2.1 An expected bereavement**

In addition, the death of a terminally ill student or member of staff can be planned for with full support being given before the actual event. Often students will want to create a memory board to allow their emotions to be shared with others. Open discussion and realistic language are often the best way to deal with issues that arise. Once the pupil or member of staff dies then it is important that all emotional support is given and the need to mourn is recognised.

## **2.2 COVID 19/unexpected death**

If someone dies of coronavirus, complications resulting from the virus, or for other reasons, a number of things may be particularly hard for the family and friends to deal with.

Infection controls mean that family members do not have an opportunity to spend time with someone who is dying or to say goodbye in person.

Depending on the person, the illness may have progressed and become serious very quickly, which can lead to feelings of shock. If they were not able to be present for the death and cannot view the body, it may be difficult to accept the reality of bereavement.

At times of considerable trauma, people tend to look for certainty, however, at the moment, that certainty is not there. This can amplify any feelings of angst and distress.

Bereaved people may be exposed to stories in the media that highlight the traumatic nature of death in these circumstances, or they may have witnessed distressing scenes directly.

People may become disturbed by mental images, which in a severe form can become post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

If the health services become stretched, friends or family may also have concerns about the care the person received before they died. This, in turn, can lead to feelings of anger and guilt.

## **2.3 The impact of the death of a pet or loved animal**

The college should also be aware of the emotional impact the death of a family pet or, for example, a horse or farm animal might have on a student or a member of staff. Whilst much of the bereavement policy deals with the death of people we should not underestimate how important the death of a pet can be to students and staff.

## **3 Raising awareness - College response**

It is important that the college has raised awareness of this topic and prepared staff as much as possible to respond to young people who have experienced a bereavement. We are not expecting all staff to become expert bereavement counsellors but the initial response and identification is vital to a young person's recovery and overall well-being. It is important for children to know they can speak to any member of staff within the college, however, Ali Grady, Rhian Brady, Josh Cammiss are our designated, named members of the college staff who will provide support to bereaved young people in the event of a death and will advise colleagues in responding to a young person who has experienced a bereavement.

If a young person has died whilst on college site or away from the site on a college activity (off-site), please follow the guidelines for responding to this in Section 2.

### **3.1 Designated staff for bereavement**

Staff members appointed to provide support to bereaved children and young people have received the appropriate training beforehand and are supported by senior colleagues when offering such support. DSL/DDSL's in the college have all received appropriate training June 2020.

Teachers should be made aware of young people impacted by a loss so they can welcome them back to college appropriately when the time comes.

Families should know what you can do e.g identify a key person to maintain contact with the family/send the young person a letter/card/let other members of the college community know who might be impacted or want to support the grieving young person or family.

### **3.2 Informing students and staff about a death**

The Principal or the member of staff designated for bereavement should speak with the family to get an accurate understanding of the circumstances and agree on how much information can and should be shared with staff, parents and students.

Only explain the details/circumstances that the family has consented to make public.

Deliver the facts in a sensitive and truthful way and encourage pupils and staff to ask questions as this will help to dispel any current or potential rumours or misinformation from circulating within the college.

When someone dies, use the words dead or died, not euphemisms like 'passed away'.

#### **Students**

- Inform the students as soon as possible about the death
- If breaking the news to a group of students, wherever possible this should be done with a number of colleagues in the room at the time so that they can take distressed students into a quiet room and can look out for any students who look particularly anxious or unsettled.
- Identify those students who had a long term and or close relationship with the person who has died so they can be told separately.
- It may be useful to allow a class/college discussion whereby all students can communicate their feelings and be reassured. Ground rules such as 'no talking over' or 'no interrupting someone when they are speaking', 'no making fun of others comments or questions'; are helpful as they encourage students to speak without fear of recrimination.
- It is acknowledged that some students may laugh or make inappropriate comments, this is how shock can sometimes manifest. Likewise, some young people may burst into tears.
- Ensure that all young people who are upset or feel uneasy are supported to talk (in private if necessary) about how they are feeling.
- Reassure them that not all people who fall ill or have had an accident will die and that many people get better.
- Put an appropriate time limit on the discussion. It is preferable to resume normal college activities as soon as possible thus ensuring minimal disruption within the college.
- Conclude the discussion with a prayer or special poem to remember the person who has died and their family.
- If appropriate, a special assembly could be held at a later time in the day to remember the person who has died.
- Let families know what you will then do e.g identify a key person to maintain contact with the family/send the young person a letter/card/let other members of the college community know who might be impacted or want to support the grieving young person or family.

#### **Staff**

- Arrange a staff meeting which should take place as soon as possible. Where possible consider that this should be at the end of the college day, when support can

be offered and peer support given. At the very least colleagues can get support from their families.

- Impart factual information. Never make assumptions or repeat what has been said by rumour.
- Give news sensitively and empathetically, being aware that people may react in different ways.
- Be cognisant of the relationships of staff may have had with the person who has died.
- Ensure that there is someone responsible for telling people who are unable to attend the staff meeting i.e part-time staff, peripatetic staff, lunchtime supervisors, colleagues on maternity or long term sick leave.
- Consider the best way of imparting the information to those absent e.g by doing a home visit, by telephone, text or email, etc.
- Identify individual members of staff who feel able to:
  - a) support members of staff
  - b) support groups of students
 Often the most appropriate person to support young people should be well known to them and trusted.
- Identify a member of staff who will liaise with the individual's family, to deal with staff condolences and any funeral arrangements (if necessary)
- Identify an appropriate member of staff who will take phone calls and or direct them as appropriate
- Identify a member of staff who will provide a newsletter for parents (see examples of letters appendix 2) which should be sent the same day
- Arrange a staff meeting at the end of the day to ensure staff are coping with the situation
- Identify any unresolved problems or ongoing issues
- Ensure that those staff that live alone have contact numbers of friends in case of need
- Identify sources of advice and support to access for help in coming to terms with the bereavement (See Trust Bereavement Support for staff)

#### **4. Responding and supporting students and staff**

For many young people, the death of a parent, caregiver, sibling or grandparent is an experience they are faced with early in life. Sometimes people think a young person who is bereaved at a young age will not be greatly affected as they are too young to understand the full implications of death. This is untrue and unhelpful. Even babies are able to experience loss. A baby cannot cognitively process the implications of the bereavement but that does not mean that they do not feel the loss. The death of a student can be traumatic for both college staff and students. It can unnerve other students and challenge any feelings of security they might have felt prior to the death.

Young people need to be given the opportunity to grieve as an adult would. Trying to ignore or avert the young person's grief is not protective and can be damaging. Young people regardless of their age need to be encouraged to talk about how they are feeling and supported to understand their emotions.

Discussing death and bereavement can prove a difficult subject for teachers and students alike, therefore, questions and debates that arise pertaining to this topic should be encouraged, as and when they occur. It will be particularly important for parents/carers to make the college aware of any bereavements the student has experienced in order to

support the student appropriately and to establish what and how they have spoken to their son/daughter about the death. A college staff member able to recognise some of the potential behaviours that a bereaved young person may exhibit is in a better position to support the young person as they grieve. As the nature of grief is individual it is essential to remember that no two young people will grieve in the same way and exhibit the same behaviours.

Bereaved young people require time, patience and compassion from college staff. The familiarity of college surroundings and existing rapport with teachers, lunchtime supervisors, etc. can be a useful vehicle to encourage communication and to allow the young person to convey their feelings.

It is not uncommon for some bereaved young people to feel like they are going mad as the process of grieving takes its toll. It is essential for college staff to reassure the bereaved young person that they are not going mad and that the feelings they are experiencing are a very normal and natural reaction to the death of someone close.

It is likely that many of the young people will have questions and will want to know details relating to the death.

College staff should endeavour to answer all questions in an open and honest manner, using language that is appropriate to the young person's age and level of understanding.

A young person may identify themselves as in need of support.

Some young people need a retreat when grief overtakes them, and it helps if the college accepts a young person's need to express their grief, providing a 'safe place' and a trusted adult to be with them.

Once the bereaved young person returns to college routine, it is helpful to share concerns with parents so that they know how they are coping in college.

Be prepared to create exceptional circumstances for particular young people who need particular help.

Set up clear boundaries and make it clear that you have allowed certain behaviours to happen. When the young person is ready you can reverse these arrangements. A bereaved young person for example may well need to be allowed to behave in a special way according to how they are dealing with the situation. The key is to try to create a normal environment for them by asking what they want to do. Talking, sharing with a counsellor, writing or drawing are very common forms of expression which can help.

## **5. Whole college response following the death of a child or staff member**

- During lockdown or a holiday period - organise a virtual book of condolences for relevant school community members to sign and write about the young person that has died and include pictures and poetry.
- It is important to consider any cultural or religious implications and seek advice if necessary
- Ensure nominated staff with responsibilities for supporting staff and young people are available to do so
- It may be necessary temporarily to provide staff cover for their normal activities
- Identify an allocated quiet place where young people and staff can go if necessary
- It is preferable for there to be minimum disruption to the timetable but some flexibility may be required

- Try to engender an awareness of when people need help and support, particularly those who worked closely with the person who has died and secretaries/administrative staff who are taking phone calls, dealing with parents etc
- Through the nominated staff member who has responsibilities for liaising with the individuals family ascertain their wishes and feelings about the schools involvement in the funeral if any
- Putting an obituary in the paper, sending flowers to the home or to the funeral, making a collection etc
- Who will attend the funeral
- Cover for any staff who may be going to the funeral
- Transport to and from the funeral
- Informing the parents of those students who will be involved
- Ensure any student attending the funeral is supported by a family member or trusted adult
- Possible closure of the college. If this is the case remember to tell appropriate staff in advance
- Resume normal college routine as it is appropriate to do so as this will help to promote feelings of security and normality amongst the young people.

### **5.1 Young person dies away from college**

If a young person dies during the holidays and away from college, the relevant points in (section1-3.2 Informing young people and staff about a death should be followed). The member of SLT on duty at the time should contact the Principal, senior leadership team as well as CEo. All staff should be made aware and recognise they may need support. Close friends of the young person should also be contacted and support offered. A letter from the college to the rest of the college community should be sent as soon as possible. Appendix 2

- Plan a memorial assembly for when the young people are back in college to remember lost loved ones

## **6. Recognising and responding to common symptoms and behaviours associated with grief**

### **6.1 Symptoms**

- Becoming extremely tired, to the point of exhaustion, as so much emotional energy goes into dealing with the loss and the stress of the changes in the family
- Fear of sleep; if the death has been referred as 'falling asleep' or 'being taken'
- Afraid of losing other family members; words 'loss' or 'lost' can put fear into a young person's mind
- Young people can become particularly clingy and attached to the members of the family who remain

### **Behaviour**

- Disrupt classes
- Observed becoming restless and unable to concentrate
- Increase in behaviour difficulties
- Academic grades may deteriorate
- If the death occurred on college premises some students may not want to return to college for fear of dying in a similar way or in the same place where their classmate died.

Either way staff must remain vigilant and aware of the signs of a young person who may be grieving and respond by informing the designated staff members for bereavement.

Should the college believe any student would benefit from additional support from within or external to the college, the designated staff for bereavement will discuss this with the young person and family before any support is offered or a referral is made.

## **6.2 Examples of additional support available**

### **Support within the academy**

Student Support room as a quiet space  
College Counsellor's room as an alternative quiet space  
Designated staff offices for quiet time  
Student Services  
42nd Street Counsellor

### **External support (examples)**

[Mindmate](#)

[Cruse Bereavement Care](#)

[Cruse Bereavement Care\(Hope again\)](#)

[Child Bereavement UK](#)

[Winstons Wish](#)

GP referral

The college will try to retain bereavement resource packs containing information for young people of all ages to use when they have been bereaved.

(Cruse Bereavement Care stock a large catalogue of leaflets, books and other resources designed to help support bereaved young people through the grieving process).

## **7. Advising parents supporting their children who have lost a loved one due to COVID 19**

Advising parents on how best to support their child will be an important part of the whole process. Parents themselves may be experiencing grief and not know how best they can help their child. The organisations above will be helpful for parents and young people and professionals alike.

See appendix 3

## **8. Curriculum**

As we are only too well aware of, death of a loved one is something we shall all experience at some point in our life. Like many other topics this can be something that can be addressed within the curriculum as a method of preparing young people for the future. This should be delivered in a sensitive and age appropriate way. Considerations should be made for any young person that may struggle through this topic and adaptations made where necessary.

Reading/resource examples -

[Co-op funeral care - Support for children](#)

Series of films can also be found by click on the Co-op link above

Other material

The Cat Mummy by Jacqueline Wilson for children age 5-8

Badgers parting gifts by Susan Varley

Huge bag of worries by Virginia Ironside

Water bugs and dragonflies by Doris Stickney



When someone you know dies by Marge Eaton Heegaard  
Feelings by Alike Branderberg  
Good Grief by B Ward and Associates - ( primary/secondary resources) as a colleague of mine I'm sure Barbara would allow you photocopyable rights - could always write and ask her . One wonderful colleague who I've worked with for years.  
Healing grief by Barbara Ward  
The Elephant Tea Party resources and training  
The Invisible String, Someone I loved Died and the My Wish book.

### **Training for staff available from**

- Local authority
- Child Bereavement UK
- Pam Gartland Safeguarding first Ltd  
Www. Safeguardingfirst.com [info@safeguardingfirst.com](mailto:info@safeguardingfirst.com)

Please note when sourcing training the following quality assurance principles should be applied; Taken from safeguarding training standards for Co-operative Academies

#### Quality assurance

We will endeavour to verify that any external trainers or speakers are suitable; for example, by seeking recommendations or feedback from other schools that have used the same trainer, by agreeing the content of the session beforehand, by checking company websites, by consulting where necessary with the trust designated safeguarding and child protection lead etc. This helps us to ensure staff training is appropriate, up to date and valuable to participants and also to meet our responsibilities within Prevent.

## **Section 2**

### **Responding to the death of a young person at college or off-site**

#### **Specific advice following a death - working with the police, parents, students at college, teachers and the media**

Occasionally an accident or crisis can occur either on the college premises or on a college trip. A rapid response from college staff will be needed in such situations to ensure relevant information is communicated, to safeguard the young people and to prevent further disaster occurring.

If a young person dies at college or on a college trip the following should be put into operation immediately. All staff should be issued with the appropriate sections. Depending on the cause of death you may need to contact Public Health England eg hepatitis  
[Public Health England Chapter 4: What to do if you suspect an outbreak of infection.](#)

#### **2a) Immediate action**

On discovery of a possible death, the member of staff should:

1. Call the emergency services at once, including paramedics and police
2. Summon a First aider and the Principal to activate the following aspects of this policy.
3. Secure the scene and remain with the body until help arrives

#### **2b) Death at college**

In responding to an emergency during normal college activities, it will be the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding leads/deputies to ensure that:

1. The building, if appropriate has been evacuated
2. The necessary emergency services have been called
3. A roll call has been taken to ascertain that all pupils, staff and visitors are safe.

#### **2c) Death at off-site activity**

It is the responsibility of the Teacher in Charge of the group, or where necessary, by delegation to another member of staff or responsible adult to:

1. Make sure that all members of the party are accounted for and that they are safe.
2. If there are injuries immediately establish their extent and administer appropriate first aid
3. Call emergency service if required
4. Ensure that the remainder of the party is adequately supervised throughout and make arrangements for their return to base, either at college or field trip base.
5. Arrange for at least one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with the emergency services and to ensure that all staff and pupils are accounted for.
6. Control access to the telephones until contact is made with the Principal, emergency contact point or designated senior member of staff and until they have had time to contact any parent whose children are directly involved.
7. If an accident or crisis occurs try to establish what has happened, what needs to be done to safeguard young people and staff and what the consequences are likely to be. Once you have clear and accurate information you will need to contact the Principal or DTH. Parents, families and other college staff should be notified as soon as possible that there has been an accident.
8. It is worth while having a special telephone line within college designated for dialing out. You may also want to consider using the text messaging service, this is because as soon as news of the accident or crisis spreads many of the usual reception lines are likely to become engaged with people phoning in to find out what has happened.

## **2d) Working with the police**

Very soon after the death is announced the police should visit as they will have an investigation to carry out into the circumstances.

You will need to clear rooms and spaces for them to work in. They may want to collect evidence. The police will normally tell the young person's next of kin and will want to speak at once to the member of staff who was with the young person or first on the scene. The member of staff will possibly be very upset, will need someone with them and stay at college until they have spoken to the police.

The police will almost certainly tell you that you must not speculate on the cause of death, but remember the media are under no such restrictions.

## **2e) Telling Students**

Where a student collapses during the college day when other students are present, is rushed to hospital and subsequently dies, those students will need to know what has happened before they leave at the end of the college day. The college will consult with the family regarding their wishes in sharing the information with the college community. It is important to agree with the police the timings and content of the information that you give to students so as to meet the needs of the pupils whilst not impeding any police investigation. Are there any siblings, close relatives, or boy/girlfriend who needs to know first? Advise them first, but only when parents are ready to collect them.

Gather the year group together at an appropriate time. The students will listen until you tell them that the student has died, then they stop hearing. If the student has died as a result of an accident you may want to ask not to speculate about the causes and not to spread rumours. Getting them to hear this is very difficult. Allow them ten minutes to just be together as a year group. They will need to cry. Expect that some students will contact the local press.

Additional considerations are in Section 1(3.2) of this policy

## **2f) Telling teachers**

This may have to be after you have told the key students. You will need to tell the teachers who were nearest to what happened first. Depending on who that teacher is, they will probably need someone with them. If you want teachers to tell other pupils for you, have a statement ready for them to read out before you advise them.

Additional considerations are in Section 1 (3.2) of this policy

## **2g) Telling parents**

The police will tell the parents of the student that has died. Getting a letter to other parents which both expresses sympathy and gives factual information about the death is very important. It saves rumours, which can be intensely hurtful to students, parents and staff. For other parents it may be more appropriate that where possible they should be asked to come to college so that the latest information can be received immediately as it is relayed to the Principal and other staff.

Ensure that those people answering communications have the latest upto date and accurate information and if there is an occasion where a student or staff member dies as a result of the accident or crisis, the communication handlers are aware that they don't inadvertently tell the parents/family of the death.

## **2h) Dealing with the media**

The Head of Brand and Engagement should be informed at the earliest opportunity to consider the potential media implications surrounding the death and to put together a statement that can be shared as necessary.

The press and local TV channels may contact the parents and may speculate about the cause of death. This is a very hard thing to deal with, especially if a TV crew has filmed this speculation by distraught parents.

The Brand and Engagement team will guide you through any press/media interest and statements that are required. Where possible appoint a member of college staff to deal with any press or television crews. This member of staff should be briefed by the Brand and Engagement team.

Prevent the media from entering the school premises or bothering students and families. If there is a post-mortem, this may happen very quickly, possibly within 24hrs of the death. Ensure you are advised of the results of any post-mortem as soon as possible. The best way to stop speculation is to give facts.

## **2i) Assistance from others**

The Principal should alert the Chief Education Officer (CEdO) for their area as soon as possible. If it relates to the death of a member of staff, the Hub HR Manager should also be notified by the Principal or CEdO.

## **2j) Monitoring and evaluation**

When an individual case arises, the policy is adhered to and therefore is monitored through this process and adjusted as required. The policy is evaluated in accordance with the policy monitoring and evaluation cycle and the date of renewal is stated on the front of this policy. Following any critical incident, a review of the action taken, the decisions made, considerations of any lessons to be learned and changes to the policy should be led by

CEdO and include the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead, Trust Health and Safety Lead and appropriate members of the college staff.

This policy was put together using the following sources and reading material:

Co-op Funeral Care

Cruse Bereavement Care

Felsted School - Bereavement Policy

Supplements from the TES Feb 2019

i Matter - A guide to managing critical incidents in school.

LA Guidance for Education settings Salford/Tameside Metropolitan Borough

Www. Safeguardingfirst.com

## RESPONSIBILITY

<b>Responsible Staff</b>	Mrs Ali Grady / Ms Emma Soper
<b>Policy administrator</b>	Mrs Christine Butterfield.
<b>Approving body</b>	Governors
<b>Review date</b>	May 2022
<i>All policies are available to stakeholders either on the College website or upon request from the College Office.</i>	

**Appendix 1**  
**TEMPLATE OF A LETTER INFORMING PARENTS OF THE DEATH OF A MEMBER OF STAFF**

Connell Co-op  
College

<Date>

Dear Parents

I have had the sad task of informing the students of the tragic death of <Name> who has been a teacher at this college for a number of years.

Our thoughts are with <Name .....>'s family at this time. All the students have been informed. Many will have known <Name....> for many years and have been taught by him / her. They will have different memories, but will share the common bond that one of their teachers has passed away. He / she has given so much to the college and will be sadly missed

When someone dies it is normal for family and friends to experience many different feelings such as sadness, anger and confusion, and young people can sometimes become quiet or withdrawn, angry, seek the company of their immediate friends, or ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life, and the nature of death.

The students have been told that their Progress tutor, or any member of the teaching staff, will provide support and help if they wish to discuss their feelings. The college can offer counselling support for those most deeply affected.

We will of course keep you informed as to the funeral arrangements and the date and time of any memorial service. I am very sorry to have to write to you in this way.

Yours sincerely

**XXXXXXXX**  
**Principal**

**APPENDIX 2:**

**TEMPLATE OF LETTER INFORMING PARENTS OF DEATH OF A STUDENT**

***Before sending a letter home to parents about the death of a student, permission must be gained from the young person's parents. The contents of the letter and the distribution list must be agreed by the parents and college.***

Connell Co-op College

<Date>

Dear Parents

Your son/daughter's class teacher/progress tutor/had the sad task of informing the students of the death of <Name>, a student in <Year>.

<Name> died from the illness we know as cancer. As you may be aware, many young people who have cancer get better but sadly <Name> had been ill for a long time and died peacefully at home yesterday.

He/She was a very popular student and will be missed by everyone who knew him/her.

When someone dies it is normal for their friends and family to experience lots of different feelings like sadness, anger and confusion. The students have been told that their teachers are willing to try to answer their questions at college but if there is anything more that you or your son/daughter needs to know, please do not hesitate to ring the college reception and we would be more than happy to help you.

We will be arranging a memorial service in the college in the next few months as a means of celebrating <Name>'s life.

Yours sincerely

XXXXXXXXXX

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Advising parents supporting their son/daughter who have lost a loved one due to COVID 19**

- Try to stay in contact with bereaved friends and family (even if you cannot visit in person if you or they are isolating).
- Let them talk about how they are feeling and about the person who has died - talking can be one of the most helpful things after someone dies.
- Talk honestly with your son/daughter about both facts and emotions
- As what they know- they may be getting information that is incorrect or distorted from friends or social media.
- Don't overload young people and consider their age and understanding. With a younger child, you may need to give information in small chunks.
- Talking about the situation and about the possibility of death and dying is an ongoing conversation.
- Ask what they want to know and be reassuring. Explain that illness is often mild and most people recover, but be honest about the fact that, very sadly, some people will die.
- It's okay to let them know if you don't know the answers to some of their questions.

- Don't make promises (Grandma will be fine) but reassure them that they are loved and supported.
- Let them know about any plans for what might happen if one of the family gets ill.
- Focus on what you are doing to stay safe.
- An important way to reassure children and young people is to emphasise the safety precautions that you are taking. Young people feel empowered when they know what to do to keep safe, so explain about the importance of washing their hands.
- It can help to keep a routine, especially when everything has been disrupted.
- Structured days with regular mealtimes, college work, breaks, and bedtime can help younger children stay happy and healthy.
- Help them to get some exercise even if they can't leave the house.
- Help them keep in contact with friends and relatives over the phone or internet.
- At the same time don't be hard on yourself or set unrealistic goals about what you can do under exceptional circumstances.
- Try to make sure you all get some time apart and time to relax.
- Wherever possible, let young people make some choices about what they are doing, as this may help give them some sense of control over their lives.
- Remember grief is personal and people may need different things and feel differently at different times. There is no single pathway for healing.
- Here is a range of ideas
  - Plant a tree/seeds/bulbs
  - Write a poem
  - Write about a fun time you had with the person
  - Draw a picture to describe a fun time
  - Write them a letter
  - Make a photo collage
  - Talk to a friend about them and how you are feeling
  - Talk to a trusted adult about them and how you are feeling
  - Call a helpline to talk to someone about how you are feeling
  - Listen to music
  - Go for a walk
- If you are worried they are experiencing very severe symptoms or flashbacks you can contact your GP services and or one of the organisations above for further advice and support.
- Don't do this alone.

Which organisations can help

<https://hardshipfund.coop.co.uk/>

The Coop hardship

fund has been set up so we can support families through the coronavirus pandemic. If a family member has died as a result of coronavirus and they were an active key worker you may be eligible for a grant of £250 from the fund. To apply for a grant please follow the link above.

<https://www.coop.co.uk/funeralcare/what-to-do-when-someone-dies/bereavement-support-for-children>

[Cruse National Freephone Helpline](#) for adults

[Cruse \(HopeUK\) for children and young people](#)

[Child line - When someone dies](#) for young people

[Winstons Wish](#) for adults