

# SAFEGUARDING ADOLESCENTS

## STRATEGY GUIDE

### Theme: Bereavement

#### Introduction

Bereavement and loss can be experienced in a variety of ways by children during adolescence. This could include separation from loved ones due to death, divorce, imprisonment, family breakdown or coming into care.

Bereavement and loss can affect children in different ways and produce a whole range of feelings and emotions from sadness to anger. It can be very difficult for a parent, carer, close relative or friend to help a bereaved child when they are grieving too.

The death of someone important can have a traumatic effect on a child and can impact on their psychological, physical and cognitive development. However, with appropriate support and information, children can understand what has happened and are able to rebuild their lives.

#### What is the impact on safeguarding adolescents?

Bereavement is a common life experience for many children, including those in adolescence. A study in 2001 found that 92% of children in the UK will experience bereavement of what was defined as a 'close or significant' relationship (including pets) before the age of 16 (L Harrison and R Harrington, 2001).



Every child, and their wider context, is unique. Whilst a bereavement or loss may be upsetting, not all outcomes are necessarily negative depending on the context and the support a child receives.

During adolescence, life is full of very complicated feelings and transitions. Additional bereavement(s) and losses can add to this and increases vulnerabilities into adult life. This is particularly the case for those that experience multiple bereavements or have additional vulnerabilities.

When adolescents are trying to cope with a death, risk taking behaviour **may** become more pronounced, such as those associated with substance misuse, self-harm and going missing.

## Additional Resources and Information

A number of services are available for children and young people who are struggling with bereavement and loss and who might need additional help through the grieving process:

### Local organisations

[Hampshire: Services to support children and young people experiencing bereavement and loss](#)

[Hampshire & IOW Education Psychologists](#) - Support, guidance, and resources for education professionals working with children and young people.

North (Basingstoke): 01252 814 835

South (Havant): 02392 441 497

East (Rushmoor): 01252 814 729

West (Winchester): 01962 876 239

Isle of Wight: 02392 441 497

[Simon Says](#) - Advice and support for children and young people, parents and carers and professionals. Variety of support available.

Support line: 023 8064 7550 [Simon Says information for schools](#)

[The Red Lipstick Foundation](#) - Support for families bereaved by suicide, targeted support available for children and young people.

[Hampshire Connect to Support](#) - Signposting to local resources for death and bereavement.

[CAMHS](#) - Advice, support and guidance for children and young people, parent and carers and professionals. Variety of support available including specialist mental health support where appropriate.

[Kissy Puppy](#) - Provides support to children on the Isle of Wight suffering from life-shortening conditions.

### National organisations

[Child Bereavement UK](#) - Advice and support for children and young people, parents and carers and professionals. Variety of support available.

Helpline: 0800 02 88840

[Hope Again](#) (youth website of Cruse) - Advice and support for children and young people, parents and carers and professionals. Variety of support available.

[Winston's Wish](#) - Advice and support for children, young people, parents, carers and professionals. Variety of support available.

Helpline: 08088 020 021

[Winston's Wish Online Bereavement Training for Schools](#)

[Childhood Bereavement Network](#) - National hub for those supporting bereaved children. Advice, resources and signposting for children and young people, parents and carers and professionals.

[Grief Encounter](#) - Advice and support for children and young people, parents and carers and professionals. Variety of support available including support through social media.

Helpline: 0808 802 0111

[Young Minds](#) - Advice and support for teenagers, parents and carers. Signposting to above organisations for direct support.

[NHS](#) - Advice and signposting.

[RADE Resource Centre](#) (Hampshire only) - Books and resources to support staff to discuss death with children and young people for education professionals, KS1-3

[ELSA Support](#) - Books and workbooks EY-KS2.

[HCC Postvention Protocol for Schools and Colleges](#) - How to support the School/College community in the case of a death by (suspected) suicide and information which may help prevent suicides.

[Samaritans: Step-by-Step](#) - Advice, guidance and support for teachers and other education professionals when a student has been affected by suicide.

Helpline: 0808 168 2528

### **Apps**

[Grief support for young people](#) - Created by Child Bereavement UK and bereaved young people. This app is suitable for 11–25-year-olds who have been bereaved. It can also be used by friends, teachers, parents and professionals who would like to know how to support bereaved young people.

### **References**

L Harrison and R Harrington, Adolescent's Bereavement experiences. *Journal of Adolescence* 24(2): 159-169