

Advice for Parents/Carers dealing with Grief

Here are ways that you may find helpful and comforting:-

- Acknowledging this awful event and the impact it is having on your child/children (and on yourself as an adult/parent/carer);
- Reassuring children (and your partners/yourselves) that there may be a variety of emotions that can be felt and that these emotions can change rapidly over time such as sadness, sorrow, anger, irritation, worries, anxiety and so on. There is no one way to feel when something so shocking happens;
- Feelings can be shown or not shown and there is no right or wrong thing to feel or do. Some people cry and it is ok to cry with or in front of children – it is helpful in a way for them to see how you manage this, to cry and to recover, to feel a little better afterwards and how to move on to doing something else;
- Children (and adults) sometimes need to lean on or return to things that help them feel safe or secure, perhaps extra hugs, checking in more, a favourite toy or bedtime routine. This is because shocking events like this make us feel a little wobbly and so it is helpful to do things that make us feel safe and secure and be reassured by things we know well;
- Spending time doing fun things, either alone, with friends or as a family. It is ok to enjoy life and to feel sad at the same time;
- Reminding children about 'regular things' like eating, sleeping, clubs and favourite TV shows. Sometimes big feelings can make people forget about their usual routines. Trying to live life alongside big feelings helps us to manage day by day. One parent told us 'today we will deal with today; we can think about tomorrow then';
- Talking about our memories of the person who has died can be helpful, sometimes doing things you liked to do together or going to places that remind you of them over time can make you feel a mixture of happiness and sadness but this is acceptable;
- Talking with other people about how they are doing is helpful to connect with each other and support one another.