



# Mental Health Bulletin December 2023

## Bereavement and Loss

Bereavement and loss of a loved one (such as a family member, friend or pet) can be devastating. When someone experiences a bereavement or loss, it can be hard to understand, process, or adjust. They may experience many thoughts and feelings including, sadness, worry, anger, or confusion. There is no right or wrong way to feel, think or behave; everyone processes grief differently.

If someone you know is grieving you may notice the following;

- Difficulties accepting the loss
- A sense of guilt, regret, or responsibility
- Difficulties concentrating and poor motivation;
- Preferring to be by themselves; not wanting to speak to, or spend time with other people, OR not wanting to be by themselves.
- Having worries that bad things might happen to them, or other people they love and care about
- Constant thoughts about what has happened to the loved one they have lost
- Difficulty sleeping (nightmares, difficulties getting to, or staying asleep, early morning waking)
- For some young people they may start to wet the bed at night
- Loss of appetite or comfort eating

Things that might help someone struggling with bereavement or loss:

- Acknowledging and normalising that it is usual to feel a range of emotions from sadness, anger, fear, relief or even nothing at all. Some people find anniversaries and certain days (such as birthdays) harder to deal with, so thinking together about how to manage particularly tough days or dates can be helpful.
- Try to keep normal routines going as much as possible.

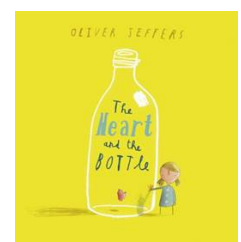
- Encourage your young person to keep doing activities they enjoy and spend time with friends and family. Let them know that it is okay to feel happy, to laugh or to have fun. This does not mean that they don't care about the person they have lost.

- If they are finding it hard to talk about how they feel, they might find it easier to write down how they are feeling, rather than talk.

- Create a memory box full of pictures and items which remind them of good times they had with the person they have lost

- Grieving takes a lot of energy. Make sure they eat, drink and rest regularly. Physical activity and getting outside for fresh air daily can help.

Here are some books that you might find helpful;



Here are some useful websites;

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/help/parents-carers/bereavement-loss/>

<https://www.simonsays.org.uk/>

<https://www.winstonswish.org/>

If you are worried about your child's mental health then please come into school and speak to Miss Newman (Federation SENDCO) or Mrs Allen (Mental Health lead) who can signpost you to the most appropriate support.