

Teenagers and Bereavement

Coronavirus: Tips on coping with fear of losing a loved one

Acknowledge your feelings

- It's not unusual to feel worried about the situation and to be concerned for yourself and people you know.
- If you're feeling overwhelmed, you might find it helpful to limit how often you watch or listen to the news or read about it on social media.
- Try to focus on other activities that might make you feel more positive.

Talk about it

- Find someone to talk to about your fears - sometimes just saying them out loud can make you feel a little better, and less alone with your thoughts.
- If you're concerned about someone you know, perhaps an elderly relative or someone who is ill, speak to a trusted adult about your worries and ask them questions that might help you to understand more about their illness.

Look after yourself

- Make time to do something for yourself that helps you to relax and takes your mind off worrying news and information.
- Make sure you connect with your friends and family in any way you can that is safe, such as video chat or by phone.
- Try to create new routines for your day, with regular mealtimes.
- Try to get plenty of sleep, eat healthily and stay active.

Seek support

- If you're struggling with negative thoughts, find a trusted adult to talk to.
- There are plenty of support organisations you can contact with trained professionals who can talk to you in confidence.

Grief and Loss:

Nothing is the same after the death of a friend or family member. At first, it may feel like a storm; you may feel sad, or want to hide away or feel nothing at all – these mixed emotions are normal and all part of your grieving process.

Everyone grieves differently -

- One teen may want to talk about death
- Another may choose to cry
- One might write about their experiences in a journal or chat room
- Some choose to express their grief in creative/artistic ways
- Others are physical in their grief - participating in sports or other big energy activities
- No one way is the right way to grieve - your way of grieving is right for you

If you feel you are using risky behaviours such as using alcohol or drugs in an attempt to manage your grief and its associated emotions, please seek support from a trusted adult.

Unable to attend the funeral:

As the pandemic unfolds there will be the devastating loss of life and loved ones, with the inability to say goodbye and to mourn these losses in ways we usually would.

If you are unable to attend the funeral of a loved one -

- Arrange a virtual meet up with family members and friends where you can share stories and memories together, perhaps think of a theme, maybe wear their favourite colour.
- Share the eulogies and readings from the service.
- Ask people to light a candle (at their home) in memory of the person who has died. You could organise it so everyone lights their candle on an agreed day and time to make it feel more special.
- Set up an online memorial page and encourage people to add their memories and photos.
- Create a memory box.
- Play the person's favourite music and just take time to remember them.
- Arrange a celebration or memorial service for later in the year (perhaps on a significant date) so everyone has the opportunity to say goodbye.
- Consider an online fundraising page to support a charity of that person's choice.
- When the current social distancing guidelines have been relaxed you could arrange to visit the grave.

Resources:

[Young Scot - Coronavirus](#) - information and wellbeing advice specifically around the COVID-19 impact.

[Anna Freud Self Care Ideas](#) - strategies to help you to manage your wellbeing.

[Childhood Bereavement Guide to Keeping in touch](#) - ways that you and your loved one can feel closer together, whether or not there is a hope that they will recover.

[Grief Encounter - Teenagers Guide](#) - full of quotes and advice from bereaved young people which will help you feel less isolated, and know that there is hope to move through all this.

[Hope Again Website](#) - the youth website of Cruse Bereavement Care. It is a safe place where you can learn from other young people, how to cope with grief, and feel less alone.

[Much Loved - online memory dedications](#) – a place to share the messages of love and remembrance that you were unable to say in person.

[Winston's Wish Crisis Messenger](#) :

If you're experiencing a personal crisis and need support, text **WW** to **85258**. A trained volunteer will introduce themselves, reflect on what you've said, and invite you to share how you are feeling.

[Apart of Me App](#) - This game is designed to help you cope with the death of a loved one.

[Child Bereavement UK](#) – App created by a group of bereaved young people working directly with Child Bereavement UK.

