



# BEREAVEMENT FIRST AID

## How to help when a young person is faced with a bereavement

### TAKE A BREATH

Take a moment and check in with yourself first. Remember, you know the young person or family well, trust your instincts. The worst thing has happened, do what you can when you can.

### WHAT'S IMPORTANT NOW?

Acknowledge the news and validate the young person's feelings. Let them know you understand what the young person or family is going through right now. For now, focus on the real and current needs of the young person and what they want. Is it a hug? a hot drink with a key adult?

Be guided by them and make sure your support feels right for them. It is ok to ask them.

### DON'T ASSUME

Don't second guess or expect how the young person or their family might be feeling. Remember that what you expect is your own interpretations. Check in with them, ask them how they feel.

### KNOW YOUR LIMITS

There is more than one way to help the young person. Do the things you feel most comfortable with, and seek support with the things that you don't feel confident with. It's ok to need support too.

Perhaps consider, Who is the best person to support the child? Who knows them well? It might not be you, and that's ok.

### USE CLEAR STRAIGHT FORWARD LANGUAGE

*"I'm really sorry to hear that your.....has died" "How are you feeling....."*

Avoid any comparisons with other situations, every child's grief is unique. If you are unable to answer questions, feel able to say you're unsure and commit to providing an answer at a later date.

### REMEMBER, THERE'S NO QUICK FIX

There is no quick fix for grief or bereavement, don't try or expect to make things better in a short space of time, be patient, be consistent, be available.

### LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

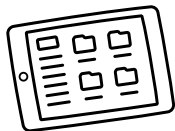
Check in with others who have been supporting the young person. Colleague support is crucial in difficult moments. Come together to plan for the next few days or moments.

Find our contact information on the back of this quick tips guide.

Helpline: 08088 020 021  
winstonswish.org

**WINSTON'S**  
**WISH** **WW**  
Giving hope to grieving children

If you are struggling to know what to do next or would like a bit of advice or support reach out to one of our bereavement practitioners.



## WEBSITES

You'll find a wealth of information and help on our websites, including support guidance and advice following specific types of death, training for professionals and real accounts of bereavement. [winstonswish.org](http://winstonswish.org) and [talkgrief.org](http://talkgrief.org) (for 13–25-year-olds).

## IMMEDIATE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

For immediate, on-demand bereavement advice and support, reach out to our expert team on:

Freephone 08088 020 021

Email [ask@winstonswish.org](mailto:ask@winstonswish.org) (we'll reply within 2 working days)

Live Chat at [winstonswish.org](http://winstonswish.org)

Services are available Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm (excluding bank holidays).



## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

If a child or young person is really struggling with their grief, or has experienced severe, traumatic and/or multiple bereavements, or has complex personal circumstances, one-to-one support with a bereavement support worker or counsellor may help. Not every child or young person will need one-to-one support, instead each referral will be assessed by our expert team.

Enquiries can be made at [winstonswish.org](http://winstonswish.org).

## CRISIS MESSENGER

For confidential support in a crisis, text **WW** to **85258** (available 24 hours a day).

## PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

A range of specialist publications and other helpful resources for professionals, children and parents are available at [shop.winstonswish.org](http://shop.winstonswish.org)

## TRAINING

Bereavement training and consultancy for professionals to help ensure that bereaved children under their care get the support they need.

[winstonswish.org/training](http://winstonswish.org/training)

Helpline: 08088 020 021

Email: [ask@winstonswish.org](mailto:ask@winstonswish.org)

Live Chat: [winstonswish.org](http://winstonswish.org)