

## ● We are here to help

While many bereaved children resolve their grief with the help of family and friends, sometimes it may be necessary to look for support outside the immediate circle. Our team of highly qualified and experienced counsellors provides one to one support for both adults and children either at home, or in our counselling rooms based in Ullswater House at Solihull Hospital.



Children need help in a very different way to adults. SBCS counsellors are trained to use a variety of creative techniques to reach young children. We have built up resources of books and toys to aid the process of talking about loss in a way suitable for the child's age.

## ● About SBCS

SBCS is a Charity and was founded in 1987.

SBCS abides by the BACP Ethical Framework.

SBCS is a confidential service and whatever the child discloses to the counsellor will remain confidential. However, if for any reason a child is at risk of harm to themselves or others we will discuss this with the parents or guardians of the child.

## ● SBCS Funding

SBCS is partly funded by Solihull Social Services and Solihull Care Trust. Other funding comes from fundraising and donations. Donations are always gratefully received.

## ● More Information

**Office Hours**  
Monday to Friday  
9.30am – 4.30pm

**Out of hours:**  
Confidential 24-hours answer machine to take messages

**Ullswater House, Solihull Hospital**  
**Lode Lane, Solihull, B91 2JL**  
Tel: 0121 424 5103  
Fax: 0121 424 5108  
Website: [www.solihullbereavement.org](http://www.solihullbereavement.org)

Registered Charity No. 518753  
Revised and Printed April 2008



Solihull  
Bereavement  
Counselling  
Service

**Grieving in Children  
and Adolescents**

A Guide for Families

0121 424 5103

## ● How children grieve

### **Experience**

Children need to experience and complete the grieving process in much the same way as adults. This process is normal and healthy for people of all ages.

### **Feelings**

Children can experience the same feelings as adults. SBCS counsellors are trained to use play, stories and make believe to reach the children. We have built up resources of books and toys to aid the process of talking about loss, in a way suitable for the child's age.

### **Support**

Adolescents need a very sensitive approach at the best of times and often a person independent of the family is easier to talk to in confidence.

### **Guidance**

SBCS can also offer help to parents, teachers and others who are dealing with a bereaved young person.

## ● How to respond

### **Share**

Be ready to share your own feelings. Trying to hide them can cause a child to feel confused and isolated.

### **Talk**

Be ready to explain and answer questions honestly, over and over again if necessary, in words suitable for the child's age.

### **Understand**

Be aware that children may grieve in ways that are unexpected and baffling. A child who seems to be coping may suddenly become clinging, demanding, angry or aggressive. Bad behaviour may be a sign of distress, rather than naughtiness.

### **Be Involved**

Be ready to involve children and adolescents in planning and attending funeral ceremonies, but ensure that they know what to expect and have support.

### **Listen**

Be ready to listen. Children can suffer irrational fears or guilt, believing that they have done something to cause the death.

### **Comfort**

Be ready to offer lots of reassurance. Children need to know that they are still loved and cared for through this difficult time.

### **Reassure**

Children will often be afraid that someone else is going to die. Try to recognise this feeling and put the fear into proportion. Older children will realise that they will die one day; and feel frightened and anxious or even indulge in reckless behaviour.

### **Be Normal**

Children can lose themselves in play or activities more easily than adults. This does not mean that they have forgotten. Children need to play, have fun and enjoy life. Where possible try to maintain a normal routine for the grieving child, encouraging them to engage in normal activities.

