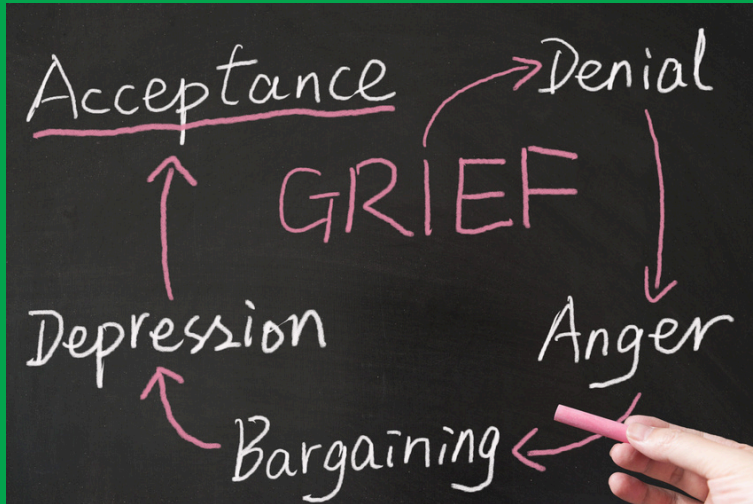


SAFEGUARDING BULLETIN

June 2024



In this edition of the Safeguarding Bulletin, we are going to be exploring the themes of grief and the support services available. This could be upsetting for some people, but please remember your Safeguarding Team are hand to support you and your child/children should you need to talk to us about this further.

What is grief?

Grief is how you react to losing someone or something in your life, it's not just about death. Experiencing a loss can be incredibly tough, no matter who or what it is, or your relationship to them. But it's not a mental health condition. It's something that most people will experience at some point in life.

We all grieve differently.

Grieving is a personal thing. You might feel a mix of emotions, or you might feel numb. There's no right or wrong way to do it. Whatever you're feeling is okay.

Everyone's journey with grief is different. That means you might feel the loss differently to the people around you. Your culture, beliefs and community can all shape how you cope. Sometimes you might feel a pressure to grieve a certain way, but know that whatever feels right to you is valid.

Taking care of yourself and grieving your own way is important. But also try to be mindful of how others are grieving, as their process might look different to yours. They might not be ready to talk about it, even if you are. Neither of you is doing anything wrong; you're just on different journeys.

Grief can hit you at any time. You might think it'll happen at a certain moment, like your first holiday without the person you've lost. But it can also catch you off guard. Sometimes you might not feel anything for a while, and then it hits you much later – you might hear this called 'delayed grief'.

How grieving might make you feel

Grief can bring up a bunch of emotions. Some people find it overwhelming. Others experience it as a physical pain. Some people find that they just feel numb.

There's no right way to feel when you experience a loss. Your reaction is valid, whatever it looks like. And if you don't feel much at all, that's fine too. It doesn't mean you're made of stone, or that you didn't care about the person you lost.

It's also common for your feelings to change with time. Try to feel your feelings without judging yourself. Grief is hard, so try to go easy on yourself.

Feelings of guilt and anger

When someone you care about dies or isn't in your life anymore, it's normal to feel guilty or like it's somehow your fault. But it's important to remember that you are not to blame at all.

Your emotions might shift and change, and that's normal. But feeling less pain or sadness over time doesn't mean you've stopped caring about the person you've lost. Finding happiness in the things you enjoy doesn't mean you've forgotten them or stopped loving them.

Feeling anger is a normal response to loss as well. Especially if you didn't get to say goodbye or had no control over how things were left. It's okay to feel angry, but it's important to understand that what you feel is valid.

Working through your grief

Grieving takes time and being with the people you love can help you through it. You might suddenly feel sad when you're not expecting it or feel on edge about your health or other people's. This is just your body and mind are reacting to the loss, and that's okay.

You might never stop grieving, but opening up to your family and friends and figuring out what support you need can help you get on top of it.

Losing someone close to you can really shake up your life. If you're struggling to accept their death, finding it hard to handle everyday things or feeling stuck, reach out to someone you trust. Talk to a friend, a sibling, a teacher or someone you trust about how you're feeling. We all need help from time to time.

Stages of grief

Grief is personal but there are five common steps that people go through - the 'five stages of grief'. These can help you make sense of what's happened and what you're feeling. But they might not happen in order, or you might not go through them all. Sometimes, you might feel like you're moving backwards – that's completely normal. Take things at your own pace. Grief doesn't have a timeline.

Denial

When it's hard to accept what's happened and you're feeling confused and can't understand it.

Anger

You might feel really angry, blame yourself or others for what happened or feel like things are out of control.

Depression

Feeling sad and lost after the loss, like everything just feels heavy.

Bargaining

You might feel guilty, thinking you could have done more or wishing things had turned out differently.

Acceptance

Starting to accept what happened, understand it, and feeling ready to take steps forward.

Common physical symptoms of grief

These are some of the physical symptoms of grief that you may experience:

- a hollow feeling in your stomach
- tightness, or heaviness, in your chest or throat
- oversensitivity to noise
- difficulty breathing
- feeling very tired and weak
- a lack of energy
- dry mouth
- an increase or decrease in appetite
- finding it hard to sleep or fear of sleeping
- aches and pains.

Things that may help you to feel better

We all experience grief differently. There's no guide to what to do when you've just been bereaved that can work for everyone.

But you may find it helps to think about small things that make you feel a little better – and then try to build time for them in your day.

People have told us that the following things have helped them:

- getting out for a walk in the morning or evening
- leaving the house, even if it's just to go for a coffee
- doing something creative, like colouring or drawing
- spending time with a pet or animal
- spending time in a place that feels comforting, or perhaps has special meaning for you and the person who has died
- being in nature
- meditation or breathing exercises.



TAKE CARE
— of —
YOURSELF



Sleep
Well



EXERCISE



EAT
healthy

Getting help with grief

It's normal to feel down and a bit hopeless when you lose someone. But if you find that these feelings don't go away, that you get physical symptoms, or you start thinking about hurting yourself, then it might be time to get help. A good first step is to see your GP. They can discuss things like counselling and medication.

It can be hard to reach out to your GP and talk about your mental health. But we have tips to help.



<https://www.guysgift.co.uk/>

Guy's Gift provides bereavement support for children, young people and their families across Coventry and Warwickshire.

Supporting someone who is going through the grieving process.

[Click here to go to Sue Ryder support page](#)



Grief Encounters

Supporting someone who is going through the grieving process. Support for children who have experienced loss.

Supporting someone who is going through the grieving process.

Stay connected

Regularly check in with them, especially if there is a funeral. That can be a really lonely time for them. You could send them a message or ask them to hang out – whatever feels right.

Listen if they want to talk

You don't have all the answers. Just being there to listen to what they're going through can be a real comfort.

Share your memories

If it feels right, sharing your favourite memories of the person who passed away can be comforting. It keeps their memory alive and lets them know they're not alone in missing that person.

Don't take it personally if they need space

It can be hard, especially if your relationship changes while they're grieving. They might need different things from different people or stop messaging for a bit. Understanding and respecting what they need is really important.

SUPPORTING A CHILD WHEN LOSING A PET

Help your child cope with the death of a pet

Follow these top tips for how to talk to your child when a family pet dies, and help them to cope with loss and bereavement.

Pets are part of the family, and when a beloved pet dies it can be incredibly emotional and upsetting for everyone. Losing a pet is often a child's first experience of bereavement. As difficult as this is, it's an important learning moment. Here are some tips to keep in mind when you're helping a child to cope with their pet dying.

Use clear, simple language

Children will need a clear explanation to help them make sense of what's happened.

Keep the information you give simple and truthful, and use words they can understand. Avoid using euphemisms like 'gone to sleep' or 'lost, instead say 'dead' or 'died'. This helps to stop children becoming confused.

Talk about what 'dying' means

Explain to your child that all living things die – leaves, plants, trees and our pets. This is an important step in their eventual understanding of death. It also can be helpful to explain that when an animal dies it's no longer hungry, thirsty, tired or cold and that it won't feel any pain. This is a tricky subject, and it's worth trying to make it a general topic of conversation before a death occurs.

Label your feelings

Make sure your little one understands that they may feel sad, worried or even angry about what's happened. Explain that it's important to remember these are all normal emotions to experience when someone has died. Younger children will need your help to label how they're feeling – so saying things like 'I think you're feeling sad because Pickles died' can be useful.

Focus on happy times


It can take time to feel less sad about a pet that's died, but focusing on the happiness you shared and doing activities that your child enjoys can help them to start feeling better. Reassure them that it will get easier to remember good times with their pet, and that feeling better is okay.


Keep talking


By discussing the death of your pet as a family and listening to your child's feelings, you're laying the foundations for how they'll deal with loss throughout their lives.

You could encourage little ones to express how they feel through talking, writing, drawing or even making a memory box filled with special things that remind them of their pet to help them to process the experience.

Support networks available

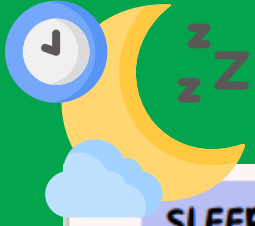
Talk to friends and family to share cherished memories you have with your pet. The Blue Cross offers a [pet bereavement service](#) , providing **free, confidential support** to anyone affected by losing a pet.

Cats Protection has a confidential phone line called [Paws to Listen](#) , a service for any cat owner suffering grief or bereavement for a beloved pet.

For equine support, The British Horse Society's '[Friends at the End](#)'  is designed to make sure that no horse owner faces losing their companion alone.

For more online support, the [World Horse Welfare](#)  shares good advice on saying goodbye, too.

There are many support systems available for you to access. For more support services and helplines, click on the picture to take you to the relevant information about support providers who will be able to help you.



Sleep Well 

SLEEP IS REALLY GOOD FOR CHILDREN. IT HELPS THEIR MENTAL, PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SLEEP HELPS US FOCUS. CHILDREN WHO GET ENOUGH SLEEP ARE ABLE TO PROBLEM SOLVE BETTER, ARE MORE CREATIVE AND ARE MORE SOCIABLE.

SLEEP WILL HELPS YOU REMEMBER THINGS. IT HELPS CHILDREN LEARN AS THEIR BRAINS PROCESS MEMORIES WHILE THEY SLEEP.

SLEEP HELPS BODIES GROW. IT IS NECESSARY FOR MUSCLE GROWTH AND TO HELP LITTLE BODIES GROW AND REPAIR.

POOR SLEEP CAN CAUSE PROBLEMS IN LATER LIFE AND IS OFTEN LINKED WITH OBESITY.

SLEEP HELPS OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM. WE CATCH MORE COLDS AND FLUS WHEN WE ARE SLEEP DEPRIVED

LACK OF SEEP CAN MAKE CHILDREN MOODY AND CROSS!



Talk to your child's teacher or health visitor if you need further advice.



SLEEP ADVICE FOR TEENAGERS

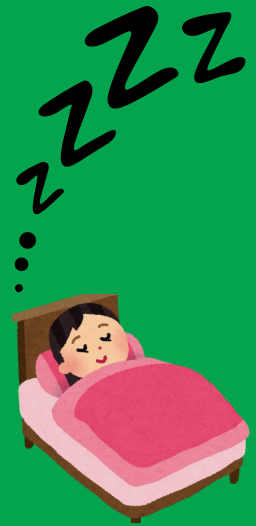
There is a great deal of emphasis on teaching teens about healthy eating and exercise but not enough on the importance of a good night's sleep. Sleep problems can be a very serious issue and lack of sleep has been linked to obesity, depression and impaired learning.

If you're having trouble getting your teenager out of bed in a morning, then there are several practical hints and tips that may help. Talking over worries may well help to put them into perspective.

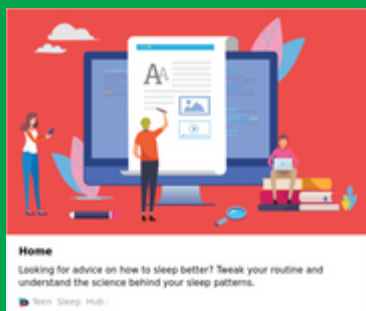
- Emphasise the importance of sleep and that it improves memory and performance. Teens need at least eight hours' sleep on school nights.
- Encourage regular exercise – 20 minutes three times a week will help.
- Suggest they drink less caffeine (in cola and energy drinks as well as tea and coffee). Too much caffeine stops them falling asleep and prevents deep sleep.
- Point out that eating too much or too little close to bedtime – an over full or empty stomach – may prevent sleep onset, or cause discomfort throughout the night.
- Try and get your teen into a good bed routine – suggest that doing the same things in the same order before going to sleep can help.
- Avoid using electronic devices (TVs, gaming machines and more importantly, tablets and smartphones) in the hour before bedtime. Blue light emitting from these gadgets stimulates the brain and may inhibit melatonin production – the hormone you need to sleep.
- Eliminate electronic devices from the bedroom. If this isn't possible, try to zone areas of the room for work, leisure and sleep.
- Ensure a good sleep environment – a room that is dark, cool, quiet, safe and comfortable.
- Make sure your teenager has a comfortable bed. It may be time to get a new one – and encourage him or her to choose it themselves.
- Don't give teenagers hand-me-down beds. A good rule of thumb: if the bed's no longer good for its first user it's not good enough for them either.
- Remember, habits learned in adolescence often become lifetime habits – so make sure good sleep habits are learned early.

Our Teen Sleep Hub is aimed at young people and can be found at teensleephub.org.uk

For more information and advice, visit The Sleep Charity at thesleepcharity.org.uk or contact us on info@thesleepcharity.org.uk



Sleep Well



Support for parents and careers to help your child sleep better.

<https://teensleephub.org.uk/parents-carers/>

Before the Exam: Get a Good Night's Sleep

It's important to be well-rested before your exam as it helps you to feel calm and alert. Try meditating before going to sleep or listening to ambient sounds. This will help you to unwind and sleep better.

Before the Exam: Meditate

Meditation is a great way to calm your mind and reduce your anxiety. You can listen to guided meditations anywhere and they can last anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes. Try to find a quiet space on your own while waiting to go into your exam and spend 5 minutes quietly meditating.

Before the Exam: Exercise

Exercise is a great way to release stress and anxiety if you can take a short walk before your exam, or even walk to your exam. Alternatively, try some relaxing yoga moves first thing in the morning.

Before the Exam: Eat

You can often feel too nervous to eat before an exam but try to eat something small. Certain foods can help reduce stress and anxiety. For example, oranges, oats, bananas and even dark chocolate can help to bring relief.



There are many ways you can support your child as they navigate the exam process. Give them these helpful tips to remain calm before and during their exams.

We are very proud of the way the young people have managed themselves during this exam process. Please congratulate your young person on their determination and thank them for their hard work.

Be Your Best Self



During the Exam: Breathing

Once you get into the exam, if you begin to feel anxious, close your eyes and take a deep breath through your nose, hold that breath for a count of 3, then breathe out slowly through your mouth. Repeat 5 times.

During the Exam: Drink

You will be able to take a drink into the exam, take some water and add some drops of a relaxing herbal tincture. This can help you to feel calm during the exam.

During the Exam: Focus on the Questions You Can Answer

Anxiety can often occur if we read a question that we don't know the answer to. Take the time at the start of the test to read all the questions. Make a note of all the questions you confidently know the answers to and start by answering those, then move on to the ones you're less sure of. Save the ones you're really struggling with until last.

DREAM BIG,
WORK HARD,
— MAKE IT —
happen.



EXHALL GRANGE

SPECIALIST SCHOOL

Be your best self

Designated Safeguarding Team



Andy Commander
Deputy Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Helen Seickell
Headteacher
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Helen Hughes
Assistant
Headteacher
Primary



Geoff Goode
Assistant
Headteacher
Year 7, 8 & 9



Janet Bacon
Assistant
Headteacher
Year 10 & 11



Caroline
Parkhouse
Assistant
Headteacher



Fiona Holliland
Family / Pupil
Support



Julija Andrejeva
Family / Pupil
Support



Lauren Pinfield
Pupil Wellbeing
Lead



Roy Owen
Emotional Wellbeing
Key Worker



Faye Commander
Lead Consultant Teacher
Warwickshire Vision Support Service



Alicia Pegg
Learning Pod Manager

Pupils: All staff have a responsibility to keep you safe and you can talk to any staff member if you are concerned or worried about anything. The 12 staff members above can give you extra help and support.
Staff: If you have concern for a pupils safety and welfare, report immediately to a member of the Designated Safeguarding Team.

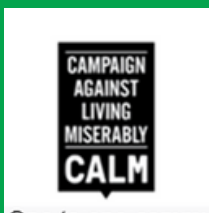
Useful mental health services



- 24/7 text helpline for mental health and suicide
- Machine learning - detects suicide intent/thoughts
- Machine learning - informed prioritisation protocol (the system can prioritise certain behaviours to receive support)



- Free to use 24/7 access to phone line
- One to one communication
- 24 hour response time on email access
- Confidential - no contact details are displayed to volunteers



- Helpline - 0800 58 58 58,
- Webchat <https://www.thecalmzone.net/help/webchat/>
- Instant response between 5pm - midnight phone and web chat helplines
- Free offer practical support and vital intervention for those in crisis
- One to one communication



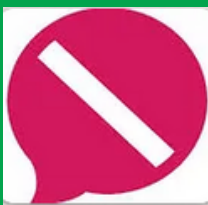
- Free, safe and anonymous online chat and wellbeing service
- Support for 11-25 year olds
- Friendly counsellors who can help you talk through your problems
- They are there for you to talk to when you need someone
- Qwell is Kooth for adults over the age of 25 who need some support.



- Calm - free app to download.
- Can access lots of things to support mental health and wellbeing, however there is a subscription charge for access to the whole app.
- Meditation and other techniques to support mental health and wellbeing



- Calm Harm - free app to download.
- Support for young people who are self-harming
- Helps reduce the urges to harm and offers practical solutions and distractions
- Comfort, Distract, Express Yourself, Release, and Random.



- notOK App® is a free digital panic button to get you immediate support via text,, phone call, or GPS location when you're struggling to reach out.
- Pre-crisis tool
- Other resources available online too.



- Combined Minds is an app to help parents, family, friends support a young person who is in distress
- Share plans and guidance amongst support system to ensure the young person can access the right support at the right time.