

Milford Care Centre Social Work Department

The Social Work Department at Milford can be contacted for guidance and help to support bereaved children. The department offer parenting programmes for parents or guardians who are caring for children who are bereaved. In addition to this they offer individual and group support for children and adults who are grieving the death of someone close.

When to Access the Service

The full impact of the bereavement may occur at any time, even years after a death. Contact can be made with the service as and when the need arises.

The Cost of the Bereavement Support Service

There is no charge for any of the services offered by the Bereavement Support Service.

Donations are gratefully received.

The services outlined are offered at:
**Milford Care Centre,
Castletroy, Limerick.**

For further information call:
**Social Work Department
Milford Care Centre**

Tel: 061 485800

Fax: 061 331181

Web: www.milfordcarecentre.ie

E-mail: info@milfordcarecentre.ie



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Guidelines for supporting bereaved children



Bereavement Support Service

Grief and loss are a normal part of life. How children and their families react to death will vary from one family to another. Whilst we cannot take away a child's pain when someone close has died, the following guidelines may help.

Bereaved Children need:

- An honest explanation of how the person died. The amount of information given will depend on the age of the child and their ability to understand what has happened
- To hear difficult information from their parent or guardian rather than from someone outside the family. This information may need to be given gradually, in little pieces
- Clear information that does not confuse them, e.g. saying that someone has 'gone to sleep' could be confusing for children
- To be able to ask questions in their own time
- To have a chance to say goodbye to the person who has died in a way that matters to them
- Their grief to be respected, that their sense of loss is valued in the family
- To be included in decisions about the family
- Chances to remember the person who has died with others in the family
- Not to feel that they are alone in their grief
- To be shown how to grieve by their carers, that it's ok to feel sad and angry

- To heal themselves through crying laughing, raging and playing
- Help to understand the range of emotions they are experiencing and help to be able to express what they are feeling
- To revisit the loss as they grow up. Their grief will need to grow up with them so they may need to go back over aspects of the loss that seemed to be dealt with already
- Help to understand that death is permanent, that when someone dies they can't come back
- To be listened to; in what they say, in what they don't say and in how they behave

Ways to support bereaved children:

- Listen
- Explain what has happened
- Use clear language ("dead/died")
- Be honest but gentle
- Be patient
- Talk about the deceased
- Be mindful of allowing children to cry. Do not repress their tears by distracting them or asking questions when they are crying
- Be aware that children of different ages will need different explanations and support
- Have a routine at home for meals, homework, childcare
- Keep changes to a minimum
- Involve children in changes that affect the family
- Share some of your grief with them
- Get support for yourself
- Find out about children's Bereavement Support Services in your area