



BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES
THROUGH BEREAVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY DURING SOCIAL
DISTANCING

1. GIVE THEM OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES

Children and young people should be encouraged to contribute to funerals and remembrance. Ask them to write prayers or something to be read out. Support them to work together towards a creative project remembering the person they have lost. Give them a voice and listen to them.



2. WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

The family must be at the centre of any response. Work with the family, the school and any other relevant agencies. Consider what your role is and what level of involvement will be most helpful.



3. ONGOING REMEMBRANCE

Remembrance can be immediate and ongoing. During social distancing, anniversaries and memorials will be particularly significant. Remember that when schools and gatherings return, remembrance may be needed.



4. SAFE SPACES AND PEOPLE

Children and young people will likely already have places and people with whom they feel safe. Encourage them to continue to access those people and places where possible.



5. LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

This is going to be challenging. Ensure that you are maintaining healthy boundaries, seeking support and acknowledging your own wellbeing.



For practical resources, visit:

<https://www.elydiocese.org/church-in-action/life-events/funerals/resources-for-bereavement.php>

BE AWARE OF RELEVANT POLICIES

- If the bereavement occurred within a school community, check if they have an existing bereavement policy. Read the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board Document: Supporting Schools and Colleges in responding to suicides in teenagers: A multi-agency guide for practitioners
- Ensure that you have an appropriate safeguarding policy and online risk assessment in place

SEEK TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- You, or others in your team, may feel ill equipped to deal with the situation in your community
- Seek training and support to enable you to engage effectively and appropriately
- Contact the Development Department in the first instance for information on mentoring, support and online training opportunities

CONSIDER WHO IS MOST APPROPRIATE

- Community bereavement can lead to large number of people offering support
- Be aware that it will not be appropriate for everyone to be involved and look for people who can exercise personal boundaries and discretion

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Be aware that there may be discussion of the incident on social media that is beyond your control
- Ensure that any social media engagement is conducted with the prior consent of the family
- Be particularly careful about how you engage online and review the online working guidelines available on the Diocesan website

GRIEF IS INDIVIDUAL

- Remember that each person and community experiences grief in a unique way
- There is no one size fits all response
- Children and young people should be reminded that their grief experience may be different to that of their peers, and that this is okay

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