When someone has died
An easy read guide for teenagers
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Introduction

Hertfordshire County Council and the NHS have written this information together.

This information is a guide for teenagers when someone has died.

If someone you know has died during the Coronavirus outbreak, this information will help to explain:

- your feelings
- how to cope with your feelings
- the support that is available to you.

Coronavirus is a new illness that affects your lungs and breathing.

Outbreak means it is spreading around the world.
Grief

What is grief?

Grief is the experience you have after someone has died.

It is all the feelings and emotions you go through when you are dealing with losing someone.

People experience grief in different ways. There is no right or wrong way.

However you are feeling, it is OK.

Feelings in the beginning

The feelings you have when you find out that someone has died can be very different to the way you feel later on.
These are some of the ways you may feel when you find out someone has died:

- shocked and in panic
- like your heart is racing and you might pass out
- numb - like you have no feelings at all
- very strong emotions
- like you can’t sleep properly
- like you can’t concentrate on anything
- scared.

All of these feelings are normal.

Your feelings will change a lot over the first few days.
Feelings after the first few days

These are some of the feelings you may have after the first few days:

- loneliness
- worry
- fear
- regret
- hope
- numbness - having no feelings at all
- anxiety
- sadness
- pain
- confusion.

All of these feelings are normal.

Your feelings will change over the first few weeks.
These are some of the ways you may feel after the first few weeks:

- really missing the person who has died
- worried that you won’t be able to remember the person
- difficulty dealing with strong emotions
- feeling more scared and worried.

Some of these feelings may go away and then come back again.

But over time, these feelings will become easier to cope with.
Things that can affect your grief

There are lots of things that can affect your grief when someone has died. For example:

- how close you were to the person
- your religion or beliefs
- whether you have been involved in arrangements after the person has died.

It was expected

You might have known that someone was going to die because they have been unwell.

You may already have been through some feelings of grief, before they died.
When you know that someone is going to die, you may feel:

- guilty
- helpless
- anxious
- scared
- angry.

It was unexpected

When someone dies suddenly, it can be a big shock.

You won’t have had time to prepare or say goodbye to the person.

You may have strong physical feelings if someone has died suddenly.

This can be scary but the physical feelings will go away.
Coronavirus COVID-19

Coronavirus is a new illness that is spreading very quickly.

Some people will be OK if they catch it, but some people will be seriously ill.

Unfortunately, some people die from Coronavirus.

If someone you know has died from Coronavirus, it will seem sudden.

You probably haven’t had enough time to prepare or say goodbye properly.

You may have been told that someone has died over the phone, instead of face-to-face.
We have all had to do things differently to help stop the spread of Coronavirus.

This includes doing things differently in hospital where:

- staff have had to wear special protective clothing called PPE
- patients haven’t been allowed to have visitors.

If someone you know has died in hospital, it may be more difficult because:

- you weren’t allowed to visit them
- you were not allowed to see them after they died.
**Difficulties**

It will be more difficult to get support from your friends and family at the moment, because of Coronavirus.

You may not be allowed to get close to your friends and any family that you don’t live with.

It will be difficult to arrange an event after someone has died, like a funeral.

If there is a funeral, you may not be allowed to go.

You may want to think about other things you can do to mark the end of someone’s life.

There are some good suggestions in this information called ‘Down to Earth’: [www.quakersocialaction.org.uk/we-can-help/helping-funerals/down-earth](http://www.quakersocialaction.org.uk/we-can-help/helping-funerals/down-earth)
It is important to remember that there is no right or wrong way to go through grief.

But there are some things you can do to help you cope.

**Routines and activities**

It is good to carry on with any regular routines or activities.

Doing these things will help you to stay in touch with other people and take your mind off what has happened.

**Support from people around you**

One of the best ways to cope with grief is to have support from people around you. This can be your family, friends or other people that you trust.
Questions

You may have lots of questions when someone dies.

It is a good idea to keep a record of any questions you think of.

This will help you to talk to people about what has happened.

Some questions might not have an answer but talking to someone will help you to understand why not.
Talking

It is helpful to talk to people about:

- your feelings
- how you have been affected
- your memories of the person who has died.

If you don’t talk about things, they can become a bigger problem in your head.

Understanding your feelings

It is good to understand that you will have new and different feelings when someone has died.

It will help you to remember that this is just a normal part of grief.
Keeping good memories

You may worry that you will start to forget someone after they have died.

It is a good idea to start keeping good memories of someone.

You could keep special photos and things that remind you of the person inside a container.

Or you could write memories down.

These things will help you to still feel connected to the person after they have died.
Accepting what has happened

Losing someone will always be an important part of your life.

At first it will be difficult to feel good about other things in your life when someone has died.

But over time you will start think differently.

You will start to think about what has happened and be able to carry on with the rest of you life.
Looking forwards to the future

It might help you to think about the good things the person did in their lifetime, and how those things could be helpful to you.

You could think about how proud the person would be to see you doing well in your life.

This can help you to feel more positive and confident.
Support

As well as your friends and family, you may be able to get some support from your school or college.

There are also organisations that can help you when someone has died.

Here are some organisations that are available to support you:

**Cruse Bereavement Care** - young people’s website and helpline.
Website: [www.hopeagain.org.uk](http://www.hopeagain.org.uk)

**Winston’s Wish** - support for young people, helpline and Crisis Messenger.
Website: [www.help2makesense.org](http://www.help2makesense.org)
Grief Encounter - helpline support for young people.
Website: www.griefencounter.org.uk/young-people/

Hope Support Services - help for young people after Coronavirus.
Website: www.hopesupport.org.uk

Other helpful sites that have specially trained people you can talk to:

KOOTH - free, confidential online support for all your worries.
Website: www.kooth.com

Childline
Website: www.childline.org.uk
Phone: 0800 1111
Emergency Support

It is important to get help if you are worried about yourself in any way or thinking about hurting yourself.

These organisations can help you at anytime of the day or night, all year round:

**Winston’s Wish Crisis Messenger**

Website: [www.winstonswish.org/crisis-messenger](http://www.winstonswish.org/crisis-messenger)

TEXT WW to: **85258**

**Young Minds Crisis Messenger Service**


TEXT YM to: **85258**
For more information

If you need any more information about this guide contact us by email: hertsjct@nhs.net