

# RESPONDING TO A CHILD'S QUESTIONS ABOUT DEATH



# Responding to a child's questions about death



Bereavement is a complicated process; it is helpful to talk to our children and young people about the process of grief to ensure that they know how to access support when they might need it.



Children may ask practical questions instead of talking about their feelings. Sometimes these might sound strange.

“What’s it like inside a coffin?”

“Will I be a ghost when I die?”

These are normal things to wonder, and it can be reassuring to a child if you discuss this with them.



Listen carefully so you know exactly what they mean.

Don't worry if you think you've answered the question badly - it's more important to the child that you've paid attention.



Be clear and direct in your language.

Using phrases such as 'passed away' rather than 'died' can leave them confused.

Children understand words very literally, and you may need to check they haven't misunderstood.



Try not to seem uncomfortable answering questions.

It may create the impression that talking about these things is not allowed.

Try and answer their question at the time they've asked it - children's attention span is limited.



There is no harm in a child seeing that you are sad or crying if someone has died. It may help them to know their own grief is acceptable.



Everyone grieves in their own way,  
and will move in and out of  
different emotions and feelings in  
their own time.

Don't feel like you're 'doing it  
wrong' - we all experience our  
grief and emotions differently.

If you need further information  
and support, please do get in  
touch with us.

