

Supporting Young People through Bereavement and Loss in Fife

As we recover from the impacts of Covid-19, we may be supporting young people who have been bereaved, or dealing with a range of emotions like anger, anxiety, fear and denial: emotions often associated with loss or grief. Over recent years, restrictions affected our routines and our freedom to connect with family and friends – supports which help us to feel more resilient at times of loss.

This guidance provides further information about different layers of activity/supports/sources of information which might help, starting with universal, recommended practices, which sometimes are all a young person needs, extending to additional and intensive supports which are there as and when needed.



Universal Practices

Broad universal good practices help support most young people through many situations in life where they feel a sense of loss and/or bereavement. Nurturing environments and positive relationships where young people feel valued and cared for allows their loss to be recognised, supports them to explore and work through their feelings, and involves them in any decisions made about their loss or any further changes.

Within our school curriculum, we have an emotional wellbeing curricular resource to support our young people from P7 to S3. The Branch Out programme builds emotional literacy and supports the development of resilience and coping strategies to buffer against traumatic events in a young person's life. Education staff can find further information on this on GLOW (Our Minds Matter tile).

Looking through a trauma informed lens helps us to mitigate the negative impacts of childhood traumas and adverse experiences like bereavement and loss on children and families. You can find further information about this on [Nurture, ACES and Trauma Informed Practice](#)¹, Fife's Trauma E-Learning Module (available from [Our Minds Matter](#) Website) and the "Be That Person" Film and Workshop pack is available on GLOW (OMM tile).

Our Five Ways to Wellbeing – Connect, Be Active, Give, Learn and Take Notice are a key feature when we think about wellbeing. You can get more information on these principles on the [Our Minds Matter](#) Website.

¹ <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/documents/inc83-making-the-links-nurture-aces-and-trauma.pdf>

Additional/Intensive Support and Advice

The way loss and grief affects us depends on various factors: what kind of loss has been suffered, our beliefs, religion, age, relationships and our current physical and mental health. Sometimes circumstances can be more difficult and for a wide range of reasons young people will need additional support.

You can find further advice from a range of sources:

- Fife Educational Psychology provides [Bereavement and Loss Guidance](#) for professionals and [leaflets](#)² for parents and families to provide information on the common reactions to loss and change, developmental understandings of death and loss, communicating with children and families, and signposting to additional useful resources.
- [Child Bereavement UK](#)³ provides staff training and has a very useful website with resources for all professionals and families. From time-to-time CBUK training is promoted for Education staff (e.g. guidance/pastoral teams and PSAs).
- Education Scotland have produced some helpful advice on [Supporting Children and Young People Through Bereavement](#)
- Sometimes specialist listening or counselling might help. **Fife's School Counselling Service** provides support accessed through the Wellbeing Pathway for pupils aged 10 and above.
- [Seasons for Growth](#)⁴ Some young people may benefit at some point from being involved in Seasons for Growth group sessions. You can get further information on these from your area's Seasons for Growth co-ordinator:

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General, helpful resources and websites:

<http://handsonscotland.co.uk/>
<http://www.crusescotland.org.uk/>
<https://www.winstonswish.org/>

For further advice and information please email Our Minds Matter Champion Louise.Stean@fife.gov.uk

² <https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/education2/supporting-children-in-school/educational-psychology-service>

³ <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

⁴ <http://www.seasonsforgrowth.org.uk/>