

Bereavement support for children

Dealing with bereavement is challenging for any family, and it can be especially difficult when supporting a child or teenager through grief. This guide provides details of local and national services available to families with school-age children in Oxfordshire, along with practical tips for parents.

SeeSaw: Grief Support for Children and Young People

A local Oxfordshire charity offering free, tailored support to children, young people, and their families following a bereavement.

<https://www.seesaw.org.uk>

Winston's Wish

A national charity supporting grieving children and young people up to age 25. They provide practical guidance and support in various formats.

<https://www.winstonswish.org>

Child Bereavement UK

A leading charity helping children, young people, and families when a child grieves or dies. They offer confidential support and extensive online resources.

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org>

Cruse Bereavement Support

Cruse provides free support to bereaved people of all ages. They have a national helpline and a local Oxfordshire branch.

<https://www.cruse.org.uk>

Grief Encounter

Offers support for bereaved children, teenagers, and adults. Their interactive website includes resources tailored to different age groups.

<https://www.griefencounter.org.uk>

Tips for Parents Supporting a Bereaved Child

- **Listen Without Judgement** – Let your child express their feelings freely. Avoid trying to 'fix' their emotions—just being present is powerful.
- **Use Clear, Age-Appropriate Language** – Avoid euphemisms like 'gone to sleep.' Be honest and gentle when explaining death.
- **Maintain Routines** – Familiar routines can provide a sense of stability and safety during uncertain times.
- **Encourage Expression** – Children may express grief through play, drawing, or storytelling. Support these outlets.
- **Be Patient** – Grief is not linear. Children may revisit their feelings at different stages of development.
- **Model Healthy Grieving** – It's okay to show your own emotions. This helps children understand that grief is natural.
- **Seek Support When Needed** – Don't hesitate to reach out to professionals. Early support can make a big difference.
- **Watch for Changes** – Be mindful of shifts in behaviour, sleep, or school performance. These may signal a need for extra help.