



SUPPORTING BEREAVED TEENAGERS

Some practical guidance:

- ★ Encourage young people to help show their adults how to use technology to assist with funerals and memorials at a time of social distancing.
- ★ Let young people be part of planning the arrangements, setting up streaming of the service, choose some readings, music or write part of the eulogy.
- ★ Give them a role (if they wish) in setting up a virtual family gathering after the funeral to share memories, pictures and videos.
- ★ They may want to involve family, friends and neighbours in the funeral. This maybe people standing outside their houses (in accordance with restrictions), all playing a favorite song or lighting a candle. Let them be creative.
- ★ Explore ways together to create a virtual ceremony to mark the life of their loved one, once restrictions permit. Make a plan.
- ★ Respect their views, allow them to express their feelings in their own way, some might want to do this privately others may want to share.
- ★ Friends are of paramount importance to teenagers, and although they cannot physically see friends at present, social media becomes even more important in connecting and sharing their feelings/thoughts. They may prefer to confide in their friends, this is normal and no reflection upon you.
- ★ Young people may prefer to explore websites or podcasts to understand and cope with feelings of grief. Be patient and regularly check in on them.
- ★ Listen to them and support them, remembering we all grieve differently and there is no right way to grieve.

- ★ In these difficult times it is even more important to have some structure in the day, whether that's going for a walk together, doing some household chores or cooking together. Grieving can be exhausting so remember to have some down time too.
- ★ Being together in isolation does allow more time for families to share memories and talk about their special person. Setting up a family memory jar can be a helpful activity that encourages sharing and reflection.
- ★ Acknowledge this is going to be a tough time, dealing with your own grief and that of a young person. Be kind to yourself, there is no map or time frame, but know you are doing the best you can.
- ★ Do ask for help if needed and encourage friends and family to stay in touch with everyone in the family. Teenagers can often feel they have been overlooked, knowing people care and are taking the time to stay in touch directly with them will mean a lot. Remember support will be needed for a long time, not just the first few weeks.
- ★ Help young people find different ways to feel connected to their loved ones, be creative with arts and crafts, music or writing and poetry. This could be hands on or virtually – encourage them to find ways to express their feelings.
- ★ Let them know when restrictions lift they will be able to attend a Simon Says support group where they can meet other children who have been bereaved before AND during the restrictions imposed as a result of Coronavirus. They will be able to meet other children who may have similar stories of their own to tell.
- ★ Register with Simon Says and ask to receive our support @ home newsletters which are full of support, activities and advice for children, young people and adults.

**Remember our FREE telephone helpline is still open as normal and continues to operate
Monday-Friday on 02380 647550**

(please leave a message if we are unable to answer your call and we will get back to you as soon as possible)

