

Teenage Grief

Bereavement can be especially challenging for a teenager, occurring during a time when they're dealing with significant changes in their life.

It is often difficult, both for the young person themselves and for their parents, to separate grief reactions from normal teenage behaviour.



Some teenagers who appear to be coping well may still be in shock. Active grieving may take months or even years to emerge. Creating opportunities to remember the deceased, on anniversaries and birthdays can provide time and space to grieve.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Teenagers can find it more helpful when adults are honest about how they really are, rather than pretending to feel better than they actually do.

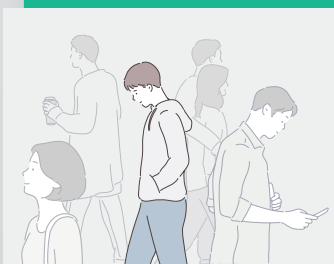
Parents need to show trust and respect for their teens own style and pace of grieving while staying involved with them. Everyone's grieving is unique.

Try to get support for yourself from other adults, and talk with your teen about how this support helps you.

Accept that your child may not want to talk with you about the person who has died, but continue to provide them with subtle opportunities to do so.

WHEN EXTRA HELP IS NEEDED

If a teenager is still reacting in a way that indicates they are troubled by memories and thoughts, withdrawing from family, isolating from friends, avoiding anything that may remind them of what has happened, or if their behaviour undergoes a dramatic change it may be helpful to seek professional help.



For more information please contact:
Barnardos Children's Bereavement Service
www.barnardos.ie / Phone 01 473 2110


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