

Young People attending Child Bereavement UK group in Leeds share their experiences and advice:

Leeds City Council and Child Bereavement UK have worked together to create an animation based on this advice. You can watch the animation [here](#).



Other useful links:

- Leeds Bereavement Pathway for Children and Young People – www.lbforum.org.uk/news-and-events/updated-pathway-and-guide-for-professionals-working-with-children-and-young-people-in-leeds-who-have-been-bereaved
- Leeds Bereavement Forum Directory of services in Leeds - www.lbforum.org.uk/services/
- Child Bereavement UK - www.childbereavementuk.org
- Recording of a webinar delivered by professionals in Leeds on 02.02.21, focussing on supporting bereaved children and young people - www.bit.ly/WTKMAWorkingwithbereavedchildrenandyoungpeople

Young People attending Child Bereavement UK group in Leeds share their experiences and advice:

Can you describe what it feels like to be bereaved?

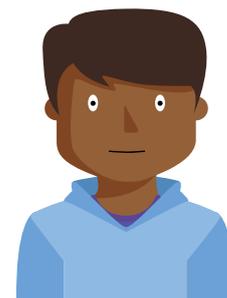
'It feels like life is suddenly against you.'

'It feels like your whole world is caving in on you.'

'It feels like someone has lifted your world upside down and poured it all out into chaos.'

'It feels like being underwater. Everything goes numb and muffled. You can't take in what you are hearing. I could not process it for a long time and felt nothing.'

'It feels like hitting a brick wall. Suddenly everything just stops.'



What are the things you would like workers to know about how to support you?

'Help me meet others that have experiences similar to me. The best help I have found is talking to people my own age about how I feel.'

'Understand that my grief is individual to me, don't presume or tell me how to feel.'

'I know myself the best, I can tell you what I need, so listen to me.'

'Be very careful around me, include me in decisions, be honest and open with me and take it at my speed.'



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What was the most unhelpful thing?

'People not taking notice of me when I do not want to talk.'

'Teachers did not know how to react with me after the death, which made me feel very awkward.'

'Trying to force me to talk when I am not ready. Let me grieve in my own way.'

'School telling everyone my information without asking me who I would want to know and how I would want it to be handled.'

'When people think I should be over it or not be bothered about it anymore as it happened a long time ago. You never get over it, you just learn to live with it.'



'Expecting me to grieve and deal with the death in the way they wanted me to. I will handle the situation how I want to.'

'People not spotting that I needed help, just because I looked like I was coping and not causing anyone any trouble. I was crying out for help inside and falling apart.'

'When people tell us that we will be fine.'

'When people tell us that 'time is a great healer''

'When people say, 'it's been over a year get over it'. It does not hit some of us at first, everyone is different, we need to be seen as individuals.'

'When people told me I would be okay, even though I am not okay.'



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What advice would you give to a bereaved young person?



'Talk to people that you trust and who care about you to relieve stress from any issues that you are having.'

'Do not bottle it all up. Find someone that you can talk to.'

'Speak to someone about how you feel.'

'Listen to music, cook food, go for a walk – anything that can help take your mind off it and stop you always thinking negatively and being overwhelmed by all the big emotions.'

'It is okay to cry. Do not be ashamed of having feelings.'

'Cry and let it all out.'

'You are not weird for feeling how you feel after finding out someone you love has died. It is normal to have lots of mixed up feelings that you cannot deal with or understand. Do not be hard on yourself for feeling.'

'Do not take it personally if people do not know how to talk about death with you, it's because society does not know how to talk about it generally.'

'People do care they just feel uncomfortable about how to talk to you about the death. Help them know what to say to you.'

'Be kind to yourself. You have had a huge thing happen to you. It takes time to get back on track, or even onto a different track that the one you were on before.'



Young People attending Child Bereavement UK group in Leeds share their experiences and advice:

What was the most helpful support/ thing someone gave you/ did for you?

'My young people's bereavement group really helps me as I am with others who are like me, I don't feel alone and they understand how I may feel.'

'Counselling really helped me understand and deal with how I felt.'

'I was given the choice who knew what information about the death and who should be there to support me in school. This helped me to not worry about everyone knowing and approaching me when I did not want them to. It was very clear to me where and who I could get help from.'

'I was able to leave class when I felt upset or triggered and had a room I could go to, to calm down and sort myself out before returning to class. This really helped me not breakdown in front of everyone.'



'Miss took me out of science and told me about a service that could help. That was my first step to getting the support I needed to deal with the death.'

'My classmates were given help and advice on how to support me when I returned to school after a death. Your classmates can really have a massive impact on whether you cope with what has happened or not.'

'Being able to talk privately with a bereavement worker in one-to-one session really helped me sort out how I felt.'

'Being able to get help without my parent there helped me be more open about how I felt.'

