



Cruse Bereavement Care



Resilient Children

Promoting continuing bonds and curious conversations that can help when a parent is seriously ill or has died.

Julie Stokes

“a resilient child is not a child in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a child with a certain set of **attitudes...**

...a resilient mindset paves the way forward so a child who has been bereaved can grow into adulthood, **empowered with choices, opportunities and personal resources** that enable them to live a satisfying and successful life in which they have realised their **full potential.**”

Resilience in Palliative Care – Achievement in Adversity,
Oxford University Press, 2007



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the charity for bereaved children

Meaningful Memories

Memory boxes help a child to create meaningful stories. These stories then become the threads that weave secure attachments with people they love.



Who Do You Think You Are?

Autobiographical Stories



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“Georgia – Britain's Fattest Teenager”



*“I was 5 when my dad died....
I was over eating for comfort”*

“It was as if we had swallowed an apple”

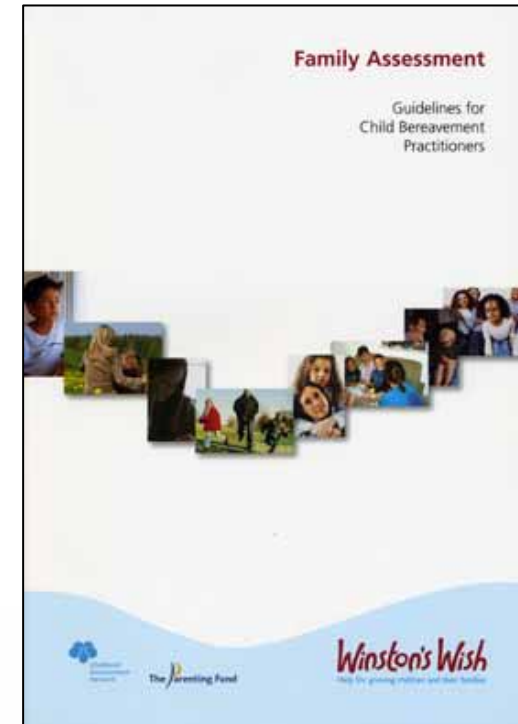


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Family Assessment

What is the meaning for this family, at this particular time, living in this community?

How have they responded to previous losses and challenges?



4 key objectives for support with anticipatory grief

(1) To give the child a sense of
control



(2) To facilitate a meaningful and positive relationship with a dying parent and the surviving main carer



(3) To help them to have a **confident life story** that they can share with people they trust



(4) Enable a dying parent to leave meaningful message and memory prompts that will promote resilience and help maintain a **secure attachment**



What are the consequences of **not** doing this work?



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The Mummy Diaries

www.winstonswish.org.uk/mummydiaries



**The strength and spirit of family life
can be stronger than any illness.**

Balancing **hope and honesty**
a delicate balance for
the sick parent?



“If I tell Sarah I’ve got this, that means I really do. How can I fight this thing and keep a positive attitude, if I tell the very person who could make me cry?” Pete

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Travelling a Parallel Path

“I’m not writing these wishes because I’m dying. I’m alive and I want my kids to know I love them and don’t want to leave them! It was hard at first as I didn’t want to tempt fate, but now I feel relieved that they are there should the cancer come back”



“We are making these memory boxes, writing notes etc. NOT because you are dying but because you want your children to know how much they are loved”

Writing into the future



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Parental warmth

Sandler, I.N, Wolchik, S.A, & Ayers, T.S 2008

Resilience rather than recovery: A contextual framework for adaptation following bereavement. *Death Studies*, 32, 59-73.



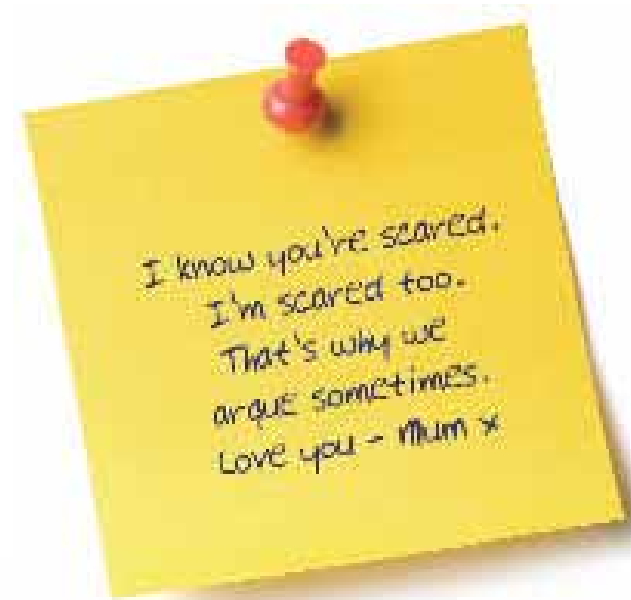
Healthy schools or the constant carer?

‘We are not here to meet the emotional needs of bereaved children?’



Strong feelings

I love you, I hate you, I love you, I hate you.....



Too **young** to grieve?



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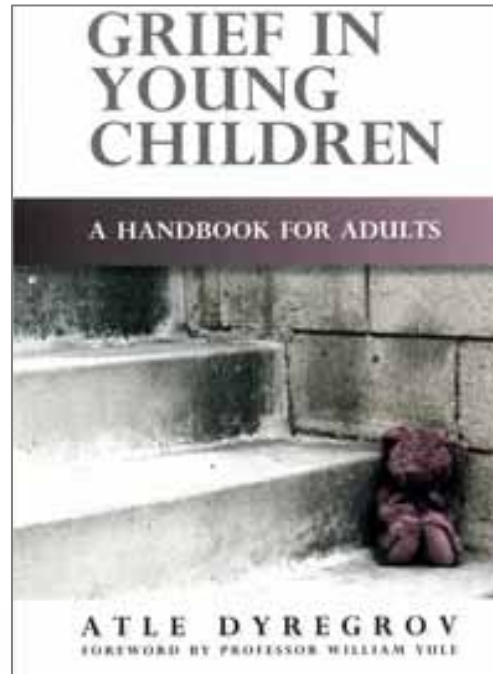
Magical Thinking

"Daddy goes to play with Alice"

Facts alone are not enough
need to check meaning

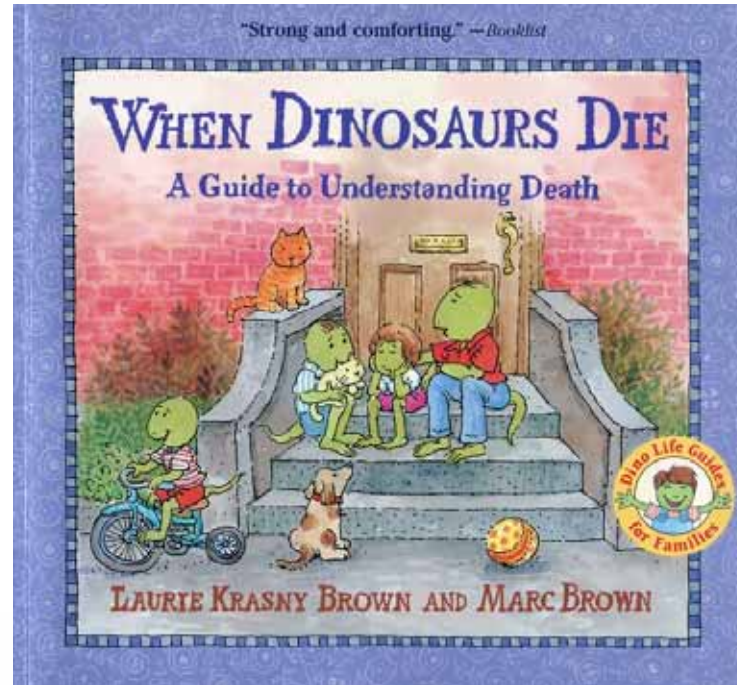


Death education



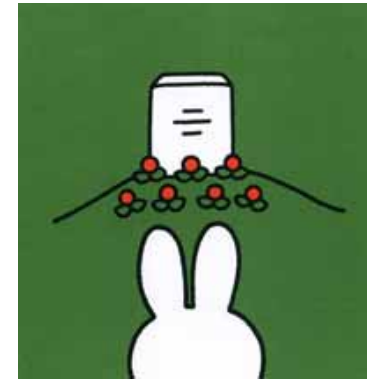
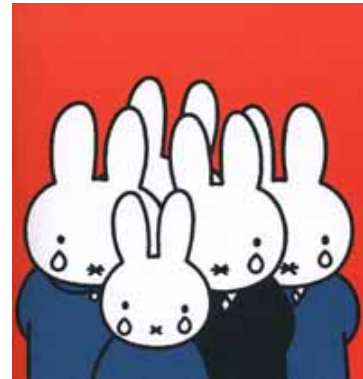
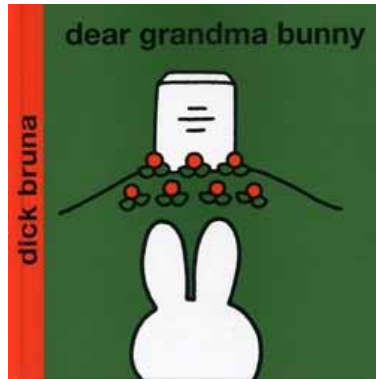
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The Role of Grandparents

“I could see a glow of pride come over her face as she lifted the lid – so excited to talk about her relationship with her mother, my daughter. They are so alike in many ways.”

Grandfather of Felicity, aged 10



Memory box



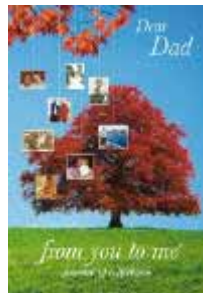
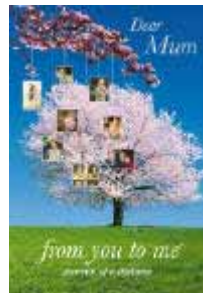


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online.com



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life matters . . . pass it on



www.fromyoutome.com

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What is your **EMOTIONAL PAIN**
threshold when listening
to a child ?



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Little box of big thoughts

- *Thank you.....*
- *A favourite memory I have is.....*
- *When we are not together what I miss about you most is....*
- *Remember when.....*
- *I am proud of you because.....*



'I Wish'

I wish....that you will always remember just how much dad and I love you. Love mum x

I wish....that you will learn to have great confidence in yourself. I have great confidence in you and always will. Love dad x

I wish....that you will always feel OK about showing your feelings when you want to, with people you trust. Love mum x

I wish....that you can grow up to be both strong and gentle, sensitive and tough, calm and emotional, serious and playful. Love dad x

I wish....that you can forget the times we argued. I am so very proud of you and always will be. Love dad x



CONFIDENT – they are the experts you don't need to be

CURIOS – listen, listen, clarify and listen

CONNECTED – empathy – feeling your pain in my heart

Helpline

08452 03 04 05

Help for families and professionals
at the end of a telephone

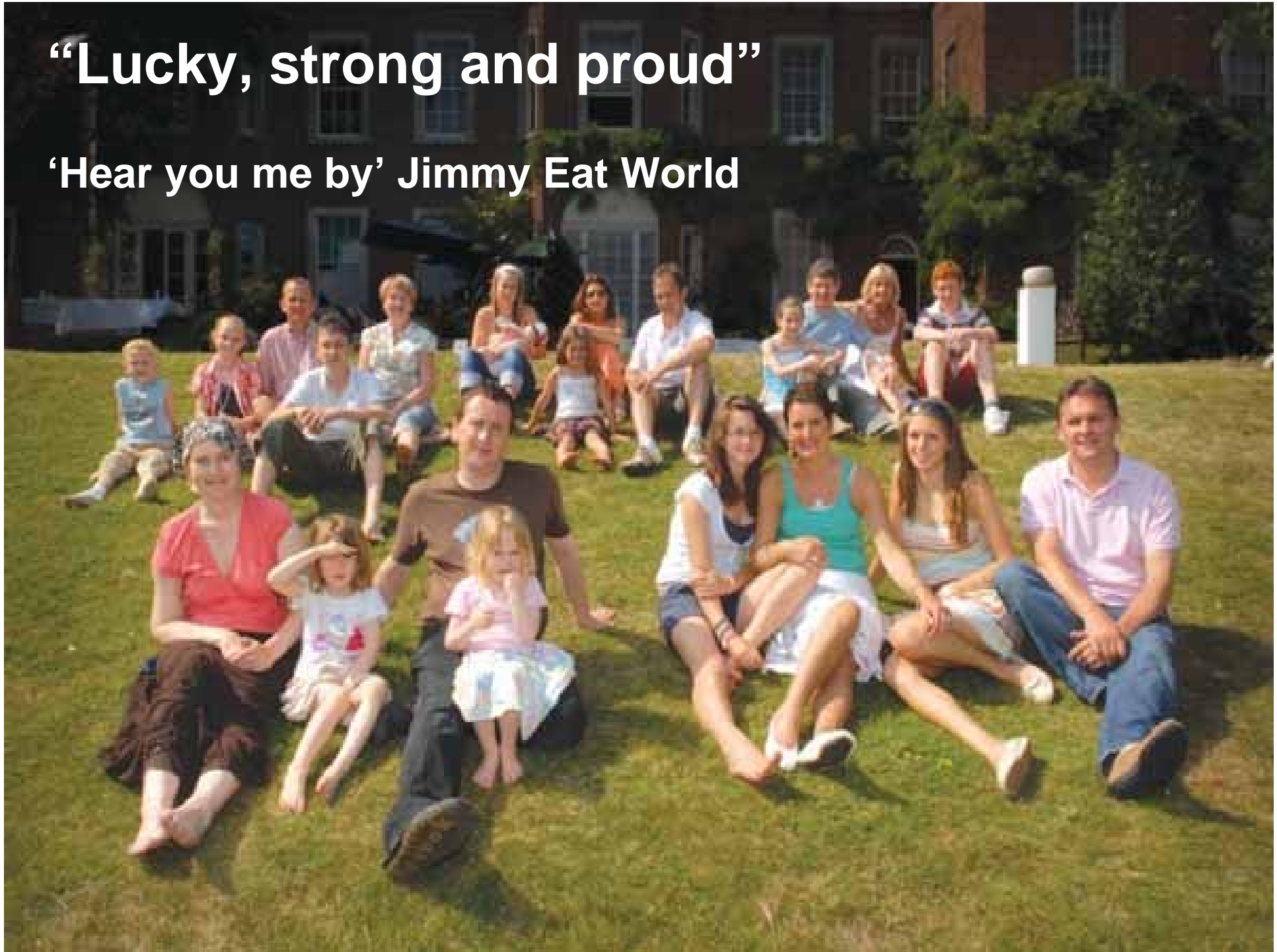
In 2007 we spoke to 4,000 people reaching 8,000 children

www.winstonswish.org.uk

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“Lucky, strong and proud”

‘Hear you me by’ Jimmy Eat World





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