

Cruse Bereavement Support



Dealing with grief as a young person

Here to listen, here to help.

cruse.org.uk
[@crusesupport](https://twitter.com/crusesupport)

Visit the Cruse website for links to other charities, Instagram pages, podcasts and more which can help when someone dies:
cruse.org.uk/organisations/signposting

Additional support

There are many different ways to get extra help. Here are some examples:

Winston's Wish winstonswish.org

Winstons wish have plenty of resources and support to help those up to the age of 25 cope with their grief.

The Mix themix.org.uk

The Mix are a digital charity for under 25's offering free support – via website, phone, social media or text support.

YoungMinds youngminds.org.uk

If you are struggling with your feelings YoungMinds have lots of information and advice.

Childline childline.org.uk (0800 1111)

Free telephone or online advice from a counsellor for under 19s.

Grief Encounter griefencounter.org.uk (0808 802 0111)

Grief encounter provide resources, a helpline, residential events and fun activities for under 25's.

About this leaflet

It's natural to grieve.

Grief affects everyone differently. This leaflet explains more about bereavement and lists different ways to get help when you want to.

Young people produced this leaflet to help others like them who have lost someone.

“ I was so fed up with hearing cliches like I'm sorry for your loss. ”

Cruse bereavement support is a national organisation here to help anyone experiencing grief and bereavement.

We're here for you when it feels like everything has turned upside down.

Mia's story

"I lived with my grandma since I was 5, so we were really close. It's hard to explain unless you've grown up with someone like that."

"When she suddenly died, I was devastated. I knew she was old, but I still wasn't ready when it actually happened."

“ I needed someone to talk to but wasn't sure who. ”

"At first, I found it hard to go back to school. But when I talked to my form teacher, he was so helpful. He made sure all my teachers knew what had happened so I could have flexible deadlines for homework."

"The first year, I found it really difficult and I couldn't see how that would change. Now, although I still miss my grandma, I'm able to enjoy things again. I tell her all about them."



School, college and uni

Who can listen and help? Is there a specific member of staff who you feel comfortable with, who you can ask for support when you need it?

Staying on top of study. You might want to ask for extra time to complete homework or sit tests later on.

Breaks and workspaces. Is there somewhere else you can work or go to if you need some time out.

If you're not in education or employment, could you speak to a mentor, career coach, social worker, or family friend?



Work

Ask your HR team if your workplace offers bereavement leave. There's no legal standard or right to this, but some employers do offer paid time off.

“ I carried on working for two months before I even knew you could take bereavement leave... ”

No 'right way' to grieve

“ Grief isn't always smooth sailing. Sometimes it's more like riding waves and not always being exactly sure what's next. ”

Grief can come out of nowhere, especially on particular days like anniversaries, or the first time doing things without them. You might feel any range of emotions, or nothing at all. Sometimes, small things can catch you when you're not expecting it.

Planning what you'll do and where you'll be can help, but it's natural to be surprised by how you actually respond, however much you've planned. You might like to tell a close friend ahead of a big day, or ask them if they'll be around to message if you need support.

Check in with yourself...

Are you eating?

It's normal not to have much appetite for a while, or to snack through the day. Try and include healthy items, as eating lots of sugar can make you feel worse.

Are you depressed?

Whether you're feeling sad, angry, or nothing at all – this is all part of the grief rollercoaster. Every journey is unique. But if you're not getting out of bed, or not seeing people, and it's been over two weeks, ask yourself if you might be depressed.

Young people said...

"Making a memory box really helped me. Seeing all the photos around the house was making me feel worse, so it was a way of dealing with that as well as preserving the good times."

"Everyone told me to get out in the fresh air, when I just wanted to hide. Talking to me about how I was feeling and actually listening would have helped."

"I thought there was something wrong with me because I didn't feel anything. Then it all hit later. I was so confused, but apparently that's normal."

"You're allowed to take that time to stay home and be in your feelings for a while. It was really valuable to me to have that time so I was ready to face going back to college."

"My circumstances were a bit complicated and I was really nervous that other people would react badly or judge me for it. Don't overthink, just let the grief happen."



“ I hadn't realised I wasn't okay until someone actually asked me. ”

Navigating social settings

You don't have to feel guilty for doing normal things after someone dies. Don't miss out on things you enjoy, like going out with friends, because you're worried if that's 'right'.

It's ok to set boundaries with family. You might want to ask for space. Sometimes, it can be helpful to share memories and feelings together.

Everyone tells people differently. You don't have to tell everyone everything. It can help when people know what's happened so that you get the key support and space you need, but don't feel you need to share more than you're comfortable with.

“ I heard all this 100 times in counselling, but it took me a long time to really realise it myself. ”

What keeps you going?

Listening to music, going for a walk, spending time with others, or getting your favourite food can bring sparks of joy when you need them. Make a list and challenge yourself to tick items off gradually.

If you've had thoughts of self-harm or suicide, you must get immediate help. Tell someone you trust or call the Samaritans 116 123.

Keep yourself safe.