

# Parenting Positively

Helping teenagers to cope with

# Death



Family Support Agency



Barnardos



© Family Support Agency, 2009.

This series was produced by the Family Support Agency and Barnardos' Training and Resource Service.

The Family Support Agency provides support to families through locally based Family Resource Centres, through supporting organisations providing Marriage, Relationship, Child and Bereavement Counselling Services and by directly providing Family Mediation through its 16 family mediation centres to couples going through a separation or divorce. It carries out research, provides information and advises the Minister on family related matters. The Family Support Agency was established as a statutory agency in 2003.

Barnardos supports children whose well-being is under threat, by working with them, their families and communities and by campaigning for the rights of children. Barnardos was established in Ireland in 1962 and is Ireland's leading independent children's charity.

Written by Barnardos' Bereavement Counselling Service for Children.

# Introduction

Every person has some experience of death at some point in their lives and teenagers are no exception. They can come into contact with death in their family, in their school and in their community. In addition to experiencing death as a result of illnesses like cancer and heart disease, teenagers are often directly affected by sudden and traumatic deaths like suicide and those resulting from road traffic accidents and fights.

Parents cannot shield young people from the reality of these deaths or from the pain of loss but they can help and guide their teenager on their journey through grief with support, information and encouragement.

This booklet provides guidance to parents in helping their teenage children.

There is information for teenagers on coping with death on [www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp](http://www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp)

# The teenage years - a time of change

The teenage years are a time of transition between childhood and adulthood and a time of great physical and emotional change such as the loss of a familiar body, change of voice, and more responsibility (see Parenting Positively Teenage Well-being). Strong (family/adult) relationships and the support and understanding of parents provide a secure foundation from which teenagers can make these changes.

Teenagers seek increased independence and try to take charge in many areas of their own lives. This drive towards increased independence may be stopped or even reversed with bereavement and the young person and family may need help to think again about their hopes and dreams for themselves and for each other.

The death of anyone to whom the teenager was attached means having to cope, not only with all of the normal teenage changes, but also with the additional challenges of bereavement. It is often difficult, both for the young person themselves and for their parents, to separate grief reactions from normal teenage behaviour.



## Teenage reactions to death

Teenagers generally have a full understanding of death. They realise that death happens to everyone and that it can happen to them, their family and their friends.

The way in which a teenager grieves depends on a number of factors, such as:

- The nature and strength of the relationship with the deceased
- The circumstances of the death
- The time since death
- Individual personality
- Gender
- The responses of family
- Community responses

## Parenting a bereaved teenager

Parenting a bereaved teenager is a challenging and complex task, particularly if you are also going through your own bereavement. Teenagers often have words and concepts to describe experiences but they do not have the life experience to trust that their own life can be good again. They can complain of being treated 'differently' while also showing anger at being expected to be the 'same'.

Teenagers often deny needing support while inside they hunger for this support, comfort and nurturing. They need adults to take a lead in providing this.

Parents also need to show their teenagers that they are prepared to talk about the deceased and that there are no taboo subjects, no matter how the death happened.

Parents need to show trust and respect for their child's own style and pace of grieving while staying involved with them. This experience of being trusted can help a young person to find good ways of handling their difficulties. It can also increase their confidence that they will survive their grief and move on to a new place in their lives.

Being fearful around bereaved teenagers does not help them as it can confirm their fear that there is something 'wrong' with them and their fear that people will no longer want to be around them.

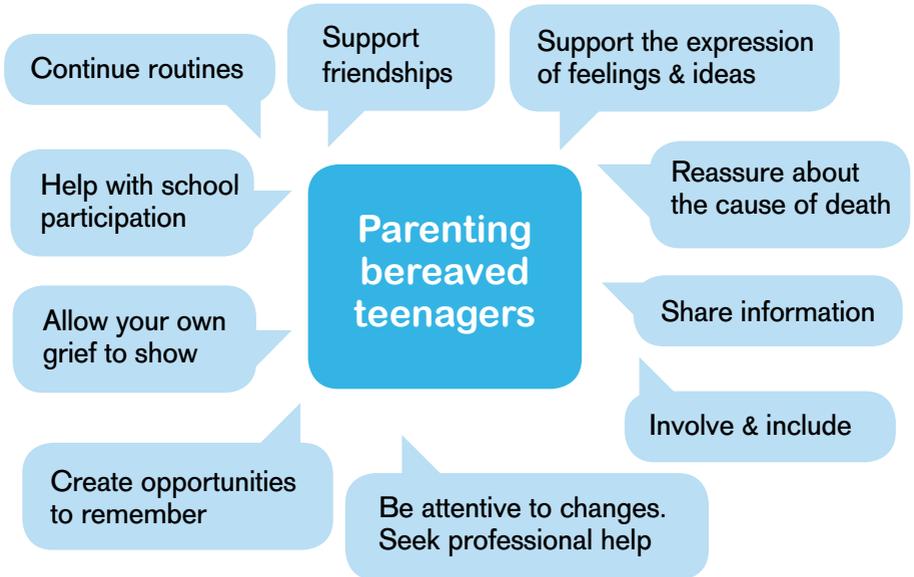
They sometimes behave badly as a way of challenging their parents/guardians to take charge and to set limits for them. Knowing that their parents still act as parents can help create security.

Involving teenagers, talking to them and allowing them to express their thoughts and feelings concerning death will help them to understand and work through their fears.

Parents and carers need support too. You can ask for the support you need either from family, friends, relatives, a local bereavement support group or by contacting the professional services available (see details of support services at the back of this booklet).



# My teenager has been bereaved: What can I do to help?



There is information for teenagers on coping with death on [www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp](http://www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp)

## 1. SHARE INFORMATION

- While teenagers understand many aspects of illness, accidents and death, they still need clear information about the unique aspects of their loved one's particular situation. For example, while some forms of cancer are not painful for the person with cancer at the start, they can become extremely painful at a later stage. Their loved one's medical treatment can be the cause of their sleepiness or irritability rather than the illness itself. The decision to choose this medical treatment often shows the strength of their efforts to get better and to continue to live.

- 
- If you do not have particular information, let them know this and outline the steps you will take to find this information. A Garda who attended the scene of a car accident can be contacted later to answer particular questions. The inquest will help piece together all the seemingly contradictory stories of an accident.
  - If you are not ready to share information let the teenager know that you are not ready to share it but that you will talk to them more at another time. This gives you time to gather your own thoughts and to get support if necessary.

Remember that you will need to return to aspects of the bereavement at different times as your teenager develops.

- If it becomes clear that a family member is seriously ill and unlikely to recover, it is important to share this information. Medical terms may need to be explained and you may need the support of your G.P. or a hospital social worker with this. It is also helpful if you can give your teenager a prior sense of what physical changes may happen as an illness develops.
- If the terminally ill person is being cared for at home, find ways to ensure the inclusion of the teenager in the ill person's life up to the time of death.
- If hospice services are used, prepare teenagers for the presence of caring staff in their home.
- When the death has occurred by suicide, homicide or in other situations where there is public, media or court involvement, prepare your child for the next steps in the process and make a decision together about their involvement and family involvement in it.
- Young people may worry about the practical implications of bereavement and how the family will cope afterwards. For example, they may benefit from some clear information about the family's financial positions, particularly if a parent has died.

Honesty and re-assurance helps as unnecessary worries and stress could cause a teenager to try to opt out of school or to restrict their ambitions for their future.

## 2. RE-ASSURE ABOUT THE CAUSE OF DEATH

- Young people often need help in separating the actual cause of death from their emotional response to it. For example, if a school friend dies by suicide, the actual cause of this death is likely to have been an unrecognised depression. While your daughter may have strong feelings of guilt about not having gone to the school debts with this friend, she will need support in separating her decision from the cause of death.
- Although teenagers can intellectually understand the cause of death they may still feel some sense of responsibility for it. Increasing their knowledge and on-going discussion can help with this. While your husband's death may have happened the same week as conflict with your son about coming home late, his death was caused by a disease of the heart rather than by the conflict.
- Facts can be clarified in one conversation but the feelings of responsibility often take longer to diminish and checking in about such feelings over time can help.
- If there was tension, conflict, cut-off or a stormy relationship with the deceased before the death, strong feelings of guilt may need to be addressed by allowing these feelings to be spoken about.
- Sharing stories about the relationship, like activities done together or hopes and dreams for the future, can help your teenager hold a fuller sense of the relationship and can lessen the focus on one event or incident.

## 3. INVOLVE AND INCLUDE

- Young people can be encouraged to create their own special way of saying goodbye to their loved one, for example by saying a poem or a special reading at the funeral service or anniversary or by choosing a piece of music.

- 
- When discussing changes that may occur in the family, ask and include, if possible, the wishes and ideas of the young person.
  - Changes after a death can include the involvement of other family members, like grand-parents, aunts or uncles in a family. A teenager who is struggling with adult authority can feel that they now have numerous adults 'in charge of them'.
  - It helps to talk with all of the adults involved about who is now 'in charge' so that a teenager is not trying to negotiate with all of them at emotional, practical and decision making levels. If a mother has died, a teenager may feel supported and cared for by an aunt who helps with food shopping but the same teenager could resent it if this aunt tries to get her to tidy her bedroom. Talking about this can help.
  - Sometimes teenagers may try to take on a parental role in the family and as their brothers and sisters often resent 'being bossed around', conflict can ensue. Parents need to acknowledge their teenagers attempts to help and to create realistic ways for them to do so.

Being able to take appropriate responsibility can give a young person a realistic sense of their own power in a world where everything seems to be out of control.

#### **4. SUPPORT THE EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS AND IDEAS**

- Encourage your teenager to talk about their thoughts and feelings about the death, their memories of the person and about the current situation.
- If a teenager prefers to write down their thoughts and feelings talk to them about whether or not they find writing helpful. Remember that while some teenagers find writing a great release, for others writing can increase a sense of secrecy, shame or isolation and talking with a parent or trusted adult can help them with this.
- Emotions felt can include shock, disbelief, despair, depression, loneliness, anger, fear, guilt and anxiety. Most of these feelings are temporary and usually diminish over time with support from adults and friends.

- While death is shocking and upsetting, it is important that teenagers be reassured that they will survive this grief, as will the adults around them.
- The young person may return to more childlike behaviour in an attempt to regain some security.

Teenagers need caring adults around and nurturing activities like eating together or watching a film can help to increase security.

- Some young people take on a more adult behaviour by appearing in control and claiming to be able to manage alone. Let them know that you are still there for them and that you know that times may get tough in the future.
- Previously placid teenagers may show aggression and hostility. Those closest to them may feel the brunt of their anger. They need to know that you can understand their anger and they may need help in finding safe ways of expressing it.
- Teenagers may express their grief in criticism of their parents or other adults' handling of the bereavement. They need to know that you understand the feelings behind the criticism and you love them and will continue to do your best.
- Be available to the teenager even though at times they may rubbish your attempts to be supportive of them. Try not to react or to take personally some of the hurtful things that are said in very stressful times.
- A teenager may feel quite depressed as they try to come to terms with the finality of a death.

If a teenager's behaviour undergoes a dramatic change such as isolating totally from friends, becoming quite unmanageable or continuing to complain about bodily symptoms, like stomach pains or headaches, it can be helpful to seek professional advice.

- Alcohol and drugs may also be used as a means of dulling the pain of loss and this behaviour needs to be addressed.
- Parents need to explain that intense feelings of yearning and isolation can occur many months or even years after the bereavement and when other people seem to have forgotten.

Grief is unique and each person has their own pace of grieving.

## 5. SUPPORT TEENAGE FRIENDSHIPS

- Being part of a group and having friends is a great source of support and self esteem for young people. Bereaved teenagers frequently talk about how much their friends help them cope with feelings of loneliness and of 'being different' as well as being company when engaging in sport and social activities.
- Acknowledge friendships and the general support that young people give each other.
- Bereaved teenagers can feel particularly upset when they fight with a close friend or when they break up with a boyfriend or girlfriend. They need additional nurturing and support during these vulnerable times.

## 6. CONTINUE ROUTINES AND HELP WITH SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

- Schools can provide the continuity and security that a grieving student may need in a world which otherwise seems turned upside down.
- Teachers usually recognise that teenagers do not like being singled out and provide support in more discrete ways.
- Contact between parent/carers and school staff ensures that key school staff have appropriate information. The level of information shared should be discussed with your child as for many young people a sense of privacy and a separation between home and school is also important.

- Help your child to anticipate the possible reactions of other pupils and give them strategies to respond to these situations. These can include a response like 'Thanks for asking about Dad but I do not want to talk about his death right now' or 'If you want to know more about my mother's illness you can ask my Dad when he collects me today'. Permission to go to a specific room, like a library, if they feel overwhelmed can also help.
- Expect inconsistency and unreliability in the bereaved student's participation in class, with friends and with homework for a time, but do not lower your expectations of their achievements in the long term.

## 7. ALLOW YOUR OWN GRIEF TO SHOW

- A surviving parent/carer does not need to hide their own emotions. If you are able to cry and talk about your feeling of loss it can give the young person the message that expressions of grief can be understood and supported by others.
- Talk about the changes you experience and the range of emotions you feel including strong, 'unacceptable' feelings of anger, rage or revenge fantasies.



- Talk about some of the ways you cope with these feelings – perhaps by talking with a trusted friend or counsellor, doing some physical activity like walking or swimming, writing down your feelings or spending time with friends.
- Teenagers find it more helpful when adults are honest rather than 'pretending' to be more positive than they actually feel.
- Be mindful, however, of not over-burdening them with the difficulties you are facing.

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

## **8. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO REMEMBER**

- Young people like to be given the option of remembering the deceased by doing things with their family, like visiting a grave or memorial. However, some prefer to visit a grave with friends.
- Young people like to be consulted about anniversary events and to choose their own level of involvement in such events.
- Some teenagers who appear to be coping well may still be in shock and active grieving may take months to appear. The belief that everyone else has forgotten the deceased can be difficult for a teenager and creating opportunities to remember, like at anniversaries, can help them with this.

## **9. BE ATTENTIVE TO CHANGES AND SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP**

Sometimes, a young person may need additional support such as counselling.

- Many teenagers are reluctant to go to counselling, feeling it labels them as 'different' or unable to cope. However, when they attend, they often find it very helpful.
- Young people need to know that they can attend counselling on a short-term basis.
- Peer group support can also help.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### When should I seek professional help for my teenager?

- If a teenager's behaviour undergoes a dramatic change such as isolating totally from friends, staying in their bedroom, and/or are complaining about aches and pains which have no medical cause.
- If a teenager witnessed or survived an event which resulted in another person's death, like being in a car when an accident occurred or seeing the fight which resulted in someone's death.
- If a teenager is still reacting in a way that indicates they are troubled by memories and thoughts (nightmares, sleep disturbances, restlessness and excessive activity, for example), withdrawing from others, avoiding anything that may remind them of what happened, or showing reactions which indicate an almost constant sense of danger (they are always on guard, are excitable, irritable and so on).
- If strong or overwhelming feelings continue with the same intensity over time.
- A complete absence of feeling or emotion or a strong sense of 'going blank/ blanking out' can also indicate a traumatic response which a teenager may need professional help to understand and manage.

- 
- If you are worried that a teenager may be at risk of self harm or suicide, let him/her know that you are concerned about them and talk to them about your worries. Talking does not increase the risk but does reassure the young person of your care and concern.
  - Let your teenager know that you will help them and make a plan together to get help by contacting your local G.P. and accessing your local adolescent mental health service.
  - In a crisis, your G.P.'s out-of-hour's service or the accident and emergency unit in your local hospital should be used.

Express confidence in the teenager's ability to get through the pain they are feeling and encourage hope for their future.

## My child has died. How do I support my other children?

The death of a child is particularly difficult for families. The devastation that the death of a child causes in a family can make it hard for parents to function. Relatives can be very supportive but will also be grieving.

- Teenagers often try to protect parents and other family members by masking their own feelings and being 'strong', when actually they need to find appropriate ways of expressing their own grief. A family friend can help to give the support and encouragement that your teenager now finds hard to look for from you. Teenagers can seem to be doing well and will often resist accepting support when it is offered.
- You will often feel emotionally drained and understandably will have very little energy. You may need support from family and friends in responding to what can now seem like trivial demands from your teenage children. You may need additional support from your family and friends to manage things.

- Looking for help and letting your teenager know that adults also need help and support can be reassuring to them.
- You will feel strongly protective of your other children, which can result in arguments about how much freedom they are allowed. You need to talk to them about your own anxieties and together plan ways of reducing concerns about what you see as risks.
- It is important that teenagers know that when their parents cry it is not because they have made them sad but because they are missing their child.



## What do I do if the death was traumatic?

- In the event of a particularly traumatic/sudden death, such as suicide, murder or a road traffic accident, you should be extra vigilant about your teenager's grief reaction.
- Notice any marked changes in behaviour such as becoming very withdrawn or isolated from others, staying in their bedroom or sleeping excessively. This may be a young person's way of trying to deny or block out the situation. If concerned, seek professional help. The first point of contact is your family G.P.



# How can I help my teenager cope with death by suicide?

There is seldom one cause for someone taking their own life. Often suicide is not a desire to die but is seen as a way out of a problem or crisis which the person felt to be unsolvable. Death by suicide causes great pain for the people left behind.

## TALKING TO TEENAGERS ABOUT SUICIDE IN YOUR FAMILY

- Telling a young person that a family member has died by suicide is difficult. It is important that young people are told by a parent or guardian so that they are given accurate and truthful information in a way that is appropriate to their needs. Parents also need to talk to their child honestly so that the on-going support they provide addresses their child's real needs.
- Teenagers frequently know more about the death than adults realise as they may have been told by someone else, overheard conversations or may have guessed it from the responses of others.

Remember, 'information' in the public domain is not always accurate and talking gives the opportunity to clarify things.

- Sometimes teenagers are present at the time of death or when the body is discovered. Talking to them can help them to make sense of what they saw or heard and can help them to understand their own reactions as well as the reactions of others.
- Talking to a teenager needs to be handled with care, encouraging the teenager to say how they are feeling and giving them a chance to clarify what you have said.

- Ask your son or daughter if they want to know more details and be guided by their response while showing that you are prepared to talk more. If your son or daughter says that they don't want to hear more now, they need to know that they can come back to you for more information when they are ready. Over time a more detailed account of the persons' death can be given.
- Help your child to understand that coming to terms with the reality of the death by suicide may take years. While a young person may need to be told of a suicide very close to the event, exploring why the person died by suicide will need to be returned to again and again.
- Explore possible reasons why the person at the time of their death felt that they had no other option but to end their own life and explain to your child that there are always other options.
- Talk to the young person about the feelings they have for the person who died and about the feelings the person who died had for them. It is important to let young people know that nothing they did or said caused the suicide.



- 
- It often takes time to establish if the death was by suicide or if it occurred by other means and there are times when the cause of death can never be fully established. Teenagers need to have whatever information is available so that they can dispel mistruths or speculation.

## How might a teenager react to suicide and what can I do to help?

- In the aftermath of a suicide, a teenager may show intense feelings of shock, sadness, loneliness, anger and rage.
- Feelings of abandonment and rejection are also common following a suicide, especially if it is a parent who has died.
- Feeling guilty and responsible about a suicide is very troubling for teenagers. Giving accurate information about stress, mental health and depression can be helpful in clarifying that there are many causes for suicide and that there are many other ways of overcoming problems.
- A teenager may have questions like 'How could he have done it to me/us?', 'Why?' or 'How could I have not noticed she was feeling so bad?' These are normal responses but teenagers need to be able to explore them with caring adults.

Speaking about the deceased and how they died is often difficult following a suicide, but not talking about it can deprive teenagers of adult support and guidance.

- It is hard to make sense of suicide when you don't know the facts and you might find it difficult to ask questions. Talking and sharing your own family stories and memories of the deceased person can help family members to stay connected to one another. This sharing can help to limit the effect of rumours and speculation by others.

- Sometimes teenagers are overwhelmed by the facts of a suicidal death. They may repeatedly re-enact an actual or imagined picture of the person's death in their own mind. These images are distressing and professional help is often necessary to help reduce and manage the intrusive and frightening impact of them.
- When a suicide occurs, people connected to the deceased are often more vulnerable to thoughts and feelings about suicide. A teenager may worry that they too might take their own life. They will need support to manage these distressing thoughts and feelings.
- One way to help with this is for a young person to be open with someone they trust about the feelings of great pain and grief that they are experiencing, for example with a counsellor in school or in the community. Educate your child about stress, depression and mental health and help them to develop self awareness and skills in problem solving. Help them to identify people who will help them when they feel distressed.

## Do social networking sites help bereaved teenagers?

- Using websites may help teenagers to share their grief and their questions. However, information or advice from peers, no matter how well intentioned, is not always accurate.
- It can be very helpful to teenagers if parents/carers talk to them about the information they receive on social networking sites such as Bebo and Facebook. This will give the young person a sounding board to explore and make sense of what they are hearing, reading and seeing.
- Similarly, talking about their use of Memorial Websites and the feelings expressed and evoked in developing and maintaining these sites can be re-assuring for young people.
- If use of the internet is not balanced with actually spending time with friends and engaging in activities, or talking with a person they trust about their feelings and worries, then this needs to be addressed. The internet, while it can be an important tool for bereaved young people, should add to their resources rather than replace them.



# Do boys and girls grieve differently?

## TEENAGE BOYS

While there are many individual ways to express emotions, young men sometimes express their grief through anger and their sadness only shows in the aftermath of an angry outburst. It is important to talk through the whole sequence of an angry outburst so that the young person can understand their own responses and their own behaviour. Without this understanding, anger can feel frightening and shameful to them.

Comments about being 'the man of the house' only puts more pressure on them and parents can ask others not to do this.

It is also important to be attentive to desires for revenge or retribution, particularly in the case of traumatic death or when another person was in some way implicated in the death.

## TEENAGE GIRLS

Young women more readily show sadness but often mask their grief through being helpful to everyone else, particularly if it is a mother who has died. They may need support to continue with their friendships and activities.

Their anger or pain can sometimes be directed at themselves and all self-destructive behaviours need to be taken seriously.

## SHOWING AFFECTION

Fathers can sometimes feel unsure about showing affection to their teenage daughter in the context of a mother's death. Mothers and teenage sons can also be self-conscious about showing affection when a father has died.

Bereaved teenagers need affection and nurturing, and parents need to help them with this. Sometimes gestures like putting an arm around a shoulder or playfully tossing their hair may be the only signs of affection that a teenager will allow.

## How do I help with spiritual questions?

All bereavements raise questions about identity, relationships and the purpose of life. For young people struggling with these questions, it is helpful to encourage as much exploration and discussion as possible so that they have ways of expanding their range of ideas.

- Talk about the many ways that people throughout time and across cultures have struggled with issues of death and mortality. Sharing stories like these can give young people a range of ways of thinking about their own life and options other than thinking that nothing can ever make sense. So even if beliefs about Heaven are rejected, for example, Buddhist thinking about re-incarnation may turn out to be comforting.
- Express your own spiritual beliefs and questions honestly but do not expect your teenager to also have to follow those.
- It is more important that they have 'someone to talk to' rather than having to pretend to struggle to understand or to share your beliefs or those of your family's religious tradition or culture. Forcing them to attend religious services may result in conflict and your teenage child distancing themselves from you.
- Some teenagers talk about the death in an intellectual way as a means of distancing from their feelings. It can help to link their intellectual ideas to their deeply personal experience by asking directly about these links.



## AIMS OF BARNARDOS BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING SERVICE FOR CHILDREN

- To provide information, advice, counselling and therapy to bereaved children and young people and their families.
- To provide information, advice and training to parents, carers, volunteers and professional staff who are in direct contact with children who experience childhood bereavement.
- To develop family and group work suitable for bereaved families or specific groups of children as appropriate to their needs.
- To provide resource materials relevant to working with bereaved children.
- To promote research in the area of childhood bereavement.

For contact details of Barnardos Bereavement Counselling Service for Children see page 24.

## THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (which Ireland signed up to in 1992) provides many rights to all children and young people in order to protect them, promote their well-being and help them to develop their unique potential. These include the right:

- To be safe.
- To be protected and live free from violence, abuse or harm (this includes witnessing violence and abuse).
- To be brought up by their parents in a family, unless it is not in their interests.
- To express their views and to have them taken into account in matters that affect them.
- To have decisions that will affect them made in their best interests.
- To be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
- To be free from discrimination, bullying and harassment of any kind.

# Finding Help

## **Barnardos**

Barnardos supports children whose well-being is under threat, by working with them, their families and communities and by campaigning for the rights of children. Barnardos was established in Ireland in 1962 and is Ireland's leading independent children's charity.

Christchurch Square, Dublin 8  
Tel: 01 453 0355  
Email: [info@barnardos.ie](mailto:info@barnardos.ie)  
[www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)

## **Family Support Agency**

Government Agency which supports Family Resource Centres, organisations providing marriage/ relationship, bereavement & child counselling services and operates the Family Mediation Service. Also funds research and provides information on family related issues.

4th Floor, St Stephen's Green House,  
Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2  
Tel: 01 6114100  
Email: [info@fsa.ie](mailto:info@fsa.ie)  
[www.fsa.ie](http://www.fsa.ie)

## **Family Mediation Service**

The Family Mediation Service is a free mediation service, operated by the Family Support Agency, to assist couples to negotiate the terms of their separation, located in 16 offices around Ireland.

1st Floor, St Stephen's Green House,  
Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2  
Tel: 01 634 4320  
Email: [info@fsa.ie](mailto:info@fsa.ie)  
[www.fsa.ie](http://www.fsa.ie)

## **Family Resource Centre National Forum**

A support network working with the Family Resource Centres (FRCs) located in communities throughout Ireland.

Email: [info@familyresource.ie](mailto:info@familyresource.ie)  
[www.familyresource.ie](http://www.familyresource.ie)

# Support

Barnardos and the Family Support Agency have support and information on parenting programmes all over Ireland available online. Check out [www.barnardos.ie/training\\_and\\_resources/parenting](http://www.barnardos.ie/training_and_resources/parenting)

There is information for teenagers on well-being and on coping with death, separation and domestic abuse on [www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp](http://www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp)

## **Barnardos Bereavement Counselling for Children**

Dublin  
Hyde Square, 654 South Circular Road,  
Dublin 8,  
Tel: 01 453 0355  
Email: [bereavement@barnardos.ie](mailto:bereavement@barnardos.ie)

Cork  
The Bowling Green, White Street, Cork  
Tel: 021 431 0591  
Email: [bereavement@cork.barnardos.ie](mailto:bereavement@cork.barnardos.ie)

Barnardos Bereavement Helpline  
Tel: 01 4732110  
(Monday–Friday 10am–12noon)

## **The Bereavement Counselling Service**

Administration Office,  
Dublin Street, Baldoyle, Dublin 13  
Tel: 01 8391766

## **FIND A PSYCHOTHERAPIST**

### **Irish Council for Psychotherapy**

Tel: 01 2722105  
[www.psychotherapy-ireland.com](http://www.psychotherapy-ireland.com)

### **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

Contact your G.P.  
Contact your local Health Board.

### **Console: Living with Suicide**

Tel: 01 8685232  
Helpline: 1800 201 890  
Email: [info@console.ie](mailto:info@console.ie) [www.console.ie](http://www.console.ie)

### **Teen Counselling**

[www.crosscare.ie](http://www.crosscare.ie)

## **OTHER SERVICES**

### **Rainbows**

Tel: 01 4734175 Fax: 01 4734177  
Email: [ask@rainbowsireland.com](mailto:ask@rainbowsireland.com)  
[www.rainbowsireland.com](http://www.rainbowsireland.com)

### **Parentline**

Tel: 1890 927 277  
Email: [info@parentline.ie](mailto:info@parentline.ie)  
[www.parentline.ie](http://www.parentline.ie)

### **Samaritans**

Tel: 1850 60 90 90

### **Teenline**

Tel: 1800 83 36 34  
[www.teenline.ie](http://www.teenline.ie)

**OTHER USEFUL WEBSITES**

Barnardos has support and information for teenagers on well-being and on domestic abuse on [www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp](http://www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp).

[www.headstrong](http://www.headstrong)  
[www.spunout.ie](http://www.spunout.ie)  
[www.anamcara.ie](http://www.anamcara.ie)  
[www.rd4u.org.uk](http://www.rd4u.org.uk)  
[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)  
[www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk)  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

**Useful Reading**

Available from [www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)

**Death: helping children understand**  
 Barnardos (2008)

**Death: helping teenagers**  
 Barnardos (2008)

**Someone To Talk To: A Handbook on Childhood Bereavement**  
 Pat Donnelly 2001, Barnardos

Available on [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)  
**Grief in Children A Handbook for Adults**  
 Atle Dyregrov (2008) 2nd Ed, Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Every care has been taken in preparing the content of this booklet, however Barnardos and the Family Support Agency do not assume legal or other liability for inaccuracy, mistake or other errors. Information in this booklet is general information only and is not intended to be used as a substitute for advice and treatment from a qualified professional. Organisation contact details are shown for the convenience of the user and do not mean that Barnardos or The Family Support Agency endorse these organisations. All photos posed by models.

This booklet is one in a series on Parenting Positively. Parenting is a very rewarding job but one which can be difficult at times, especially when parents are faced with challenging situations. The aim of this series is to provide information and guidance to you, as a parent of a teenager, to help create a positive, loving and supportive relationship between you and your child.

The series covers teenage well-being as well as the complex life issues of death, separation and domestic abuse. The booklets outline teenager's understanding of the particular issue and how you can support them through this difficult time. Each booklet also gives further resources that you can follow up for more information and help on the issue covered.

There is also information for teenagers on these issues on [www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp](http://www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp)

Also in the series: Parenting Positively for parents of children aged 6–12. Booklets in this range cover a range of topics including death, bullying, separation and domestic abuse. For more information see [www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)

Family Support Agency, St. Stephen's Green House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2  
T: 01 611 4100 E: [info@fsa.ie](mailto:info@fsa.ie) [www.fsa.ie](http://www.fsa.ie)

Barnardos' Training and Resource Service, Christchurch Square, Dublin 8  
T: 01 454 9699 E: [resources@barnardos.ie](mailto:resources@barnardos.ie) or [training@barnardos.ie](mailto:training@barnardos.ie) [www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)



**Family Support Agency**



**Barnardos**