

## Accessing support: Bereavement

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Bereavement is the experience of losing someone close to us, and is associated with a range of intense emotions, feelings, and sometimes physical effects, typically referred to as 'grief'. The bereavement period is different for everybody, but people generally go through various processes, which can be in no specific order. These processes can include: trying to accept the loss, experiencing its physical and emotional effects, and adjusting to life without the person(s) you have lost whilst also finding a way to remember them. The process of bereavement might involve reconnecting with the happier memories of the person you have lost and reinvesting in life and relationships.



Below is a list of organisations who may be able to offer you some support, as well as some resources that you may find helpful to read/listen to. The range and quality of services/support available from such organisations may vary. This list has been gathered as signposting only, and The Royal Marsden cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information provided by an organisation listed or the quality of their services.

If you have any questions or would like further advice/guidance about where to seek specialist help in your local area, you can speak with a member of your Royal Marsden treatment team or the Adult Psychological Support Service.

### AtaLoss

A signposting website which you can use to find information on bereavement and the services available to help you. AtaLoss also have a [live chat](#) where you can talk to a bereavement counsellor Mon-Fri 9am-9pm.

Website link: <https://www.ataloss.org/>

### The Brigitte Trust – Bereavement Support Group

Free, structured 8-week bereavement programmes to anyone living in Surrey. The sessions are run by a professional facilitator and focus on mutual support, sharing experiences, and learning new coping strategies.

Website link: <https://www.brigitte-trust.org/bereavement-support-2/>

### Child Bereavement Charity

Child Bereavement UK helps families rebuild their lives when a child grieves or when a child dies. They support children and young people (up to the age of 25) when someone important to them has died or is not expected to live, and parents and the wider family when a baby or child of any age dies or dying. They also provide training to professionals in health and social



care, education, and the voluntary and corporate sectors, equipping them to provide the best possible care to bereaved families.

Website link: <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

Helpline: **0800 02 888 40**

## Cruse Bereavement Care

A bereavement charity aiming to provide individuals with support, advice, and information. Their website includes many information pages discussing grief, our responses to it, and how to cope with death across various circumstances (e.g., parents, siblings, friends, colleagues, traumatic deaths, etc).

Additionally, there is a free, confidential helpline (**0808 808 1677**) staffed by trained volunteers which operates Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9.30 am- 5pm, and on Tuesday from 1pm-8pm.

Local branches often arrange group support sessions (most online via Zoom). For those looking for 1-on-1 support, CRUSE offers up to 6 free bereavement support sessions delivered over the telephone or video with fully trained volunteer counsellors. Please note that these support sessions are in high demand and generally have waiting lists.

Website link: <https://www.cruse.org.uk/>

## Hope Again - Cruse Bereavement Support

Cruse also have a separate service for young people who have been bereaved.

Hope Again, a service for young people, offer advice and support to young individuals aged 12-25 who have lost a loved one. As part of Cruse, a national charity, they provide bereavement support in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Their services include face to face and group support, and support via telephone and email, to help young people process their grief in their own time.

Cruse helpline: 0808 808 1677

Website link: [Hope Again](#)

## Grief Encounters

A charity supporting bereaved children, by offering one-to-one counselling, workshops, Integrative art and drama therapy, dance and movement therapy, and play therapy for young people and families. Their bereavement support also extends to young people or next of kin/carers who want tools and strategies to navigate their grief journey. They also have a dedicated trauma team and support groups for parents who have lost children of any age.

Website link: <https://www.griefencounter.org.uk/>



## The Good Grief Trust

A charity run by people who have experienced bereavement, which offers information about where you can access grief-related support. They list services by your local area ([How do I find help near me? – The Good Grief Trust](#)), including links to information, helplines, advice, and encouraging stories from others.

Website link: <https://www.thegoodgrieftrust.org/>

## Jigsaw South East

A charity which supports children and their families across Surrey, nearby areas of East and West Sussex, Kent and surrounding areas. Jigsaw support children and their families who are preparing for a loss, as well as providing grief support following a bereavement. Their services include information sessions and training for families and professionals, and support resources for children, young people, and families. They also run group activities and events for families facing or coping with bereavement, including the Pieces Programme, an age-specific grief support group for young people and children.

They tailor their support to meet the needs of the family with the help of an allocated support worker. They also have support resources and workbooks for children, young people, families and professionals.

Website link: <https://www.jigsawsoutheast.org.uk/>

## Sue Ryder

Offers information and advice that can help people cope with grief and deal with the practical issues after someone has died. Practically, Sue Ryder can support with registering a death, arranging a funeral, accessing bereavement benefits, and sorting out personal belongings, amongst other things. They answer frequently asked questions for when someone is grieving and provide information about where you may be able to access support in your local area and/or online.

Website link: <https://www.sueryder.org/how-we-can-help/online-bereavement-support>

## The Loss Foundation

A national charity dedicated to supporting those who lost a loved one to cancer. They offer online bereavement [Support Groups](#), [Grief Workshops](#), and supportive social events such as Weekend [Retreats](#), [Walk and Talks](#), and [Connect](#) (Two individuals with similar losses matched together to connect and form meaningful friendships). They also have 12-week [Therapy Groups](#), bereavement therapy, led by clinical psychologists, and online [Grief resources](#) (worksheets, videos, meditation and many more) to support individuals with their grief journey. They aim to provide a space to allow people to meet and support each other experiencing similar grief journeys.

Website link: <https://thelossfoundation.org/#mytop>



## Winston's Wish

A charity that helps children, teenagers and young adults aged 0-25 years who are grieving. They offer information, on-demand services, bereavement support and counselling to young people across the UK. Winston's Wish also support adults who are caring for young grieving people, including parents, schools, and healthcare professionals, through information, resources, training, and on-demand services.

Winston's Wish offer a free, confidential helpline service (**08088 020 021**) which operates Mon-Fri from 8am-8pm. You can also speak to a bereavement specialist by email on [ask@winstonswish.org](mailto:ask@winstonswish.org), live chat on their website and text or WhatsApp on 07418 341 800.

Website link: <https://winstonswish.org/>

## WAY Widowed and Young – Bereavement Support UK

A national charity for individuals aged 50 or under whose partners have died. The service operates with the help of volunteers who have been bereaved at a young age themselves. They run peer to peer support network groups for young, widowed people, irrespective of whether they were married, had children, or their sexual orientation.

The charity also offers the WAY Membership Package (priced at £30 annually), which includes a confidential telephone line service delivered by bereavement trained counsellors. The membership package also includes printed or electronic newsletter, members-only peer groups (bereavement subgroups with similar losses, or child-free groups), providing members a space where they can understand each other.

Website link: [WAY Widowed & Young - Bereavement support UK](http://www.waywidowedandyoung.org.uk/)

## Books about grief for children

### ***"When Someone Very Special Dies: Children Can Learn to Cope with Grief"***

By Marge Heegard

A workbook by Marge Heegard and illustrated by children. The book helps children understand the concept of death and come to terms with their feelings towards it. It encourages children to identify support systems and recognise their personal strengths which can help them cope with bereavement.

Amazon website link: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/WHEN-SOMEONE-VERY-SPECIAL-DIES/dp/0962050202>

### ***"Badger's Parting Gifts"***

By Susan Verley

A children's picture book by Susan Verley aimed at helping young children understand and cope with loss, grief, and death.



Amazon website link: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Badgers-Parting-Gifts-Susan-Varley/dp/0006643175>

### ***"Beginnings and Endings with Lifetimes In Between (A Beautiful Way to Explain Life and Death to Children)"***

By Bryan Mellonie

Unlike other books which may focus on death in a particular circumstance (e.g., after a pet, grandparent, or other family member), this book tries to help children understand loss and death as part of the natural cycle of life where all that is alive has a beginning, an end, and living in between.

Amazon website link: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Beginnings-Endings-Lifetimes-Between-Beautiful/dp/185028038X>

## **Other APSS Information and Resources**

The Adult Psychological Support Service has a range of signposting information sheets on topics such as: coping at different stages of the cancer pathway, supporting your physical and emotional wellbeing, relationships, and information specific to certain types of cancer.

You can view the signposting information sheets on The Royal Marsden's [Patient Information Library](#) and the [Adult Psychological Support Service Website](#) (under 'Further information and resources'). You can also request a copy of these by emailing [Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk) or telephoning **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea) / **020 8661 3006** (Sutton).

## **Additional support services**

### **Cancer Care Map**

An online database of cancer support services. You can search by postcode or by particular themes e.g. cancer type.

Website link: <https://www.cancercaremap.org/>

### **Maggie's Cancer Centres**

Cancer care centres with multiple locations, including The Royal Marsden Hospital, Sutton and Charing Cross Hospital, West London. Workshops, groups, information and one-to-one counselling available.

Website link: <https://www.maggies.org/>

Phone number: **0300 123 1801**

### **NHS Talking Therapies**

NHS website to help you find your local psychological talking therapies service based on your GP address. Your local NHS talking therapies service can be helpful if you would like psychological support for cancer when you are no longer regularly coming in for appointments at The Royal Marsden, as well as for concerns unrelated to cancer or that predated your cancer and have become worse due to it.



Website link: [Find NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression - NHS](#)

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If you need any specialist and personalised advice about your cancer treatment, symptoms or side effects, please contact The Royal Marsden Hotline. This hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on **020 8915 6899**.

The Royal Marsden's Adult Psychological Support Service offers short-term, cancer-specific psychological and psychiatric support. You can either self-refer or ask somebody in your Royal Marsden healthcare team to refer you. For more information, visit [Adult Psychological Support Service | The Royal Marsden](#). Alternatively, contact us directly on **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea), **020 8661 3006** (Sutton), or email [Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk).



If you have ideas for other signposting or information sheets, or if you would like to be involved in working with APSS to improve the service we offer, please scan the QR code to see more about our patient and public involvement, or email [Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk) or telephone **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea) / **020 8661 3006** (Sutton) with your ideas.

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