

A Parent's Experience

Two years ago, on holiday in Greece my husband was taken ill. On our return home he was admitted to hospital and was diagnosed with terminal cancer. He died 3 months later. Our world was shattered and telling our 10 year old son James, was the hardest thing I have ever done. We felt it was important for James to have support in place before the inevitable happened and so we met Wendy our Mosaic counsellor. My husband died at home 2 days before James's 11th birthday. On Wendy's initial visit, we went for a walk in the local woods; and talked about what had happened including plans for the funeral. James was planning to do a speech.

On the residential 'Mosaic' weekend, we met other families and although it was painful and tearful, it was also a time for healing. Wendy has been there every step of the way and her warmth and humour have been a source of stability through a painful and uncertain time. She is always flexible to James's needs and expects the unexpected! Together they worked through his feelings about losing his daddy and seeing him die; his fears, anger, sadness as well as his hopes and dreams.



Supported by



Our contact details

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Supporting bereaved children & young people throughout Dorset

Parents & Guardians



Who we are

Mosaic is a child-centred service offering support to bereaved children, young people and their families. We also provide pre-bereavement support for those young people facing the death of a loved one.

Who can refer?

Children and young people are usually referred by their schools. Parents and teachers may have seen a change in behaviour, a drop in academic levels, low attendance and reluctance to take part in activities.

How we help

Our trained counsellors, staff and volunteers offer:

- ✓ Individual support
- ✓ Family group support
- ✓ A Residential Weekend Programme
- ✓ Family Activity Days/Social events

Residential Weekends

Our Residential Weekends give bereaved children and young people the opportunity to meet others, share their experiences, remember their special person and most importantly 'HAVE FUN'.

To be around others who are going through similar difficulties helped us all to not feel so alone in everything. It also reminded us that we still need to have fun and that when we do it's OK – and it doesn't mean we have forgotten daddy.

How your child may be feeling

- Children, like adults, experience many, often overwhelming, emotions when someone they love dies.
- Children's feelings will change suddenly – one minute they will be very sad and tearful the next they will be wanting to play.
- To adults, it may seem like they don't care. They do - it is a child's way of managing their emotions.
- Young people often feel angry and isolated. This can affect their school work and attendance. Explain what has happened to school and see how they can help.



Mosaic... supporting bereaved children...

Supporting your child

- When talking to your child, be honest about what has happened using words they can understand.
- Take time to listen to their fears and worries. You may not have all the answers – you can say 'I don't know'.
- Try to keep boundaries and routine as much as possible; this will help your child to understand that their daily routine will continue.
- Involve them in decisions about the funeral. Explain to them what will happen and where it will be.
- Talk about the person and the memories you share.
- Take time to look after yourself – you are grieving too.

Ways you can help

- ✓ Make a memory box with special items – photos, cards etc.
- ✓ Visit their favourite place
- ✓ Look at family photographs
- ✓ Talk about the person who has died
- ✓ Remember anniversaries/birthdays and do something special together
- ✓ Make a memory jar

The greatest help you can give your child is to listen to them.

and young people throughout Dorset.