



# **Recent Child Death - Information for Schools and Community Groups**

As you may be aware there has been a recent tragic child death in South Cumbria. The information below aims to support your school or community group, and young people and parents, at this difficult time.

It is often hard to know what to expect, what to say or do when an event like this takes place and people will react in their own way. This is the case both for children and young people, and the adults who care for them. Feeling sad is a normal response to any loss regardless of how close to an event a person may be, some people may not be affected, whilst some will experience a great deal of sadness. These responses are completely normal.

#### **In the first days and weeks:**

Everyone is unique and will react differently, but typical reactions to such a tragic event can include:

- Shock
- Disbelief
- Stress
- Nervousness, fear or anxiety
- Difficulty sleeping
- Worry
- Low mood
- Irritability
- Anger

#### **These feelings are completely normal reactions.**

For some people who have been bereaved previously, these reactions may be compounded and might lead to feelings of hopelessness or helplessness. We are all individuals and there is no right or wrong way to be coping or feeling. We all have different ways of responding and circumstances can vary greatly, from those with strong extended networks to those who are more isolated or do not have friends and family they can turn to.

#### **In the following weeks and months:**

For most of us, especially if we have never experienced problems with anxiety or low mood before, these psychological effects will gradually disappear over time and with support from our peers and community.

A period of 'watchful waiting' is advised, which means just keeping an eye on yourself and others and checking out how things are going.

Ask - it won't harm. Listen - it might help. Talking about how someone is feeling with someone does not increase the risk but can ensure they get the right support.

#### **What to do and where to get help if you're concerned about your own or someone else's mental wellbeing**

There are things that can help yourself or that you can encourage others to do:

- DO take time to sleep, rest, think, and be with those important to you
- DO try to keep life as normal as possible
- DO understand that memories and feelings may stay for some time to come – this is your mind's way of trying to make sense of it all, to feel in control of it, even if you couldn't control it
- DO say what you need clearly and honestly to family, friends and others
- DO let children talk about their emotions and express themselves in games / drawing
- DO be kind to yourself and others
- DON'T bottle feelings up. Express your emotions and let others share in your worries
- DON'T avoid talking about what's happened
- DON'T let your embarrassment stop you giving others the chance to talk.

If you feel that your reactions, or the reactions of young people in your care, have got stuck, seeking help is sensible and is not a sign of weakness. Contact your GP or Cumbria Health On Call out-of-hours on 111 (free to call), or access support through one of the channels below.

#### **Digital Wellbeing**

The Internet and social media are an amazing resource which enables children and young people to connect, communicate and be creative in a number of different ways, on a range of devices. However, it can also prove a place of challenge to the wellbeing of children and young people. It is vital that parents, carers and professionals are vigilant in their understanding of the digital world in which many children and young people exist.

We can support our children and young people by having open, honest and supportive conversations about their activity on social media, gaming and the Internet to better understand, and prepare them for, an often hidden world.

Resources for parents/carers, schools and those working with young people can be found at: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk/](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/)

The website also has activities and information for children and young people themselves.

Further information and resources are available from the 5-19 Public Health Service [www.cumbria.gov.uk/ph5to19/default.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/ph5to19/default.asp)

For parents/carers there is more information available at Parent guides | Parent Zone [parentzone.org.uk/advice/parent-guides](http://parentzone.org.uk/advice/parent-guides)

## **What help and support is available?**

#### **Support for children and adults in Cumbria**

Further sources of information, advice, and support for children and adults regarding emotional wellbeing and mental health are outlined below.

#### **Support and Services for Families Directory**

The CSCP website can provide information on a range of services including bereavement, mental health as well as other issues. [cumbriasafeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/supportandservicesforfamilies/earlyhelpsupportservicesfamilies.asp](http://cumbriasafeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/supportandservicesforfamilies/earlyhelpsupportservicesfamilies.asp)

#### **Kooth.com**

Children and young people aged 11-18 can access free, safe and anonymous online support at [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com). The website offers information, counselling, advice and support online regarding emotional wellbeing and mental health and other issues. It is staffed by fully trained and qualified counsellors and emotional well-being practitioners. Available Monday – Friday 12pm – 10pm and Saturday – Sunday 6pm – 10pm, 365 days per year.

#### **Mindline Cumbria**

Offers information and support for people experiencing mental health problems, including their families, friends and carers. Call **0300 561 0000** or visit [www.cemind.org/our-services/mindline-cumbria.aspx](http://www.cemind.org/our-services/mindline-cumbria.aspx)

#### **SAFA Cumbria (Self Harm Awareness for All)**

[www.safa-selfharm.com/](http://www.safa-selfharm.com/)  
SAFA is a team of qualified staff committed to making a positive difference to the lives of individuals who self harm and to those who support them.

#### **First Step**

First Step is for over 18s only, and helps people experiencing common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. Ask your GP to refer you, or contact First Step directly on **0300 123 9122** Mon - Fri 8.30am - 5.30pm. Visit [www.firststepcumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.firststepcumbria.nhs.uk) for more information.

#### **QWELL**

[www.qwellcounselling.com/](http://www.qwellcounselling.com/)  
Online counselling and emotional well-being service providing adults with early intervention support.

#### **LGBT hq Cumbria**

Support the LGBT+ community, their family, and friends. If you need information, advice, someone to talk to, or to chill and relax over coffee, visit the website for more information: [www.lgbthq.org.uk/contacts/](http://www.lgbthq.org.uk/contacts/) Also offers free counselling.

#### **Outreach Cumbria**

Supporting the LGBT community, delivering training around LGBT issues and Hate Crime and are currently developing a new service to cater for the Trans\* community in Cumbria. Helpline: **0800 345 7440** (Thursday evenings 19.00 - 21.30)

## **National helplines and support**

**Childline** - Comforts, advises and protects children 24 hours a day and offers free confidential counselling. Call **0800 1111** or chat 1-2-1 with a counsellor online

**Samaritans** - 24 hour confidential listening and support for anyone who needs it. Call **116 113** or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Young Minds** - Help if you are feeling worried or anxious regarding a range of issues including bereavement, self-harm, bullying, eating disorders and exam stress. Visit [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk). Parents and carers can get help and advice around children's mental health from Young Minds free parent helpline on **0808 802 5544** (Monday to Friday, 9.30am-4pm)

**Papyrus** - Confidential support and advice for young people or anyone worried about a young person. 10am-10pm weekdays, 2-10pm weekends. Call 0800 068 4141, text **07786 209697**, email: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org) or visit [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

**B-eat** - The UK's eating disorder charity with online support groups and a helpline for anyone under 18. Call **0345 634 7650** (4pm – 10pm) or email [fyp@b-eat.co.uk](mailto:fyp@b-eat.co.uk)

**Livewell** - Information for parents and carers about when to be concerned and how to get help for teenagers. [www.nhs.uk/Livewell/family-health/Pages/worried-about-your-teenager.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/family-health/Pages/worried-about-your-teenager.aspx)

**Frank** - Confidential information and advice about drugs and substance abuse, whether it's for you or someone else. **0800 7766 00** (24 hours, won't show up on your phone bill)

**Stonewall** - The UK charity for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. Call **0207 593 1850** (Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30) or read their advice on Coming out help for young people.

**Winston's Wish** - Providing specialist child bereavement support services across the UK, including in-depth therapeutic help. There are also a number of resources and publications to help support children and young people. Call **08088 020 021** for free advice and guidance. They also have a young person's page [help2makesense.org/](http://help2makesense.org/) to support children and young people to make sense of bereavement.

**Child Bereavement UK** - [childbereavementuk.org/](http://childbereavementuk.org/)  
Child Bereavement UK supports families and educates professionals when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement.

**The Bluebell Foundation** - [www.bluebell.org.uk/](http://www.bluebell.org.uk/)  
The Bluebell Foundation provides support for people experiencing grief associated with loss during pregnancy, death of a baby, child or young person. They also provide support for children and young people up to the age of 18 who are grieving through the death or anticipated death of someone important to them.

## Further Support

If you have concerns about a child's emotional health:

- Contact their GP, social worker or Senior Practitioner in health (if appropriate)
- Visit your councils Early Help Services or contact the Early Help Team.

If you have serious safeguarding concerns regarding a child please follow your normal procedures or find further information for either Cumberland or Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Hubs by visiting [www.cumbriasafeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/concernsaboutachild.asp](http://www.cumbriasafeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/concernsaboutachild.asp)

If you wish to discuss your concerns first, please call your local authority safeguarding hub: Cumberland **0333 240 1727** or Westmorland and Furness **0800 373 2724**

### CAMHS/My Time

MyTime offers support for children and young people experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues by providing early targeted interventions, usually through around 6-8 sessions. The service also provides advice and support to parents, carers, school staff and others working in children's services across the county. It is a Tier 2 service and part of CAMHS – the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

The specialist Tier 3 part of CAMHS helps children and young people with significant, severe or complex mental health issues, including anxiety disorders, self-harm, psychotic disorders and obsessive compulsive disorder.

Referrals to My Time and CAMHS can be made by education professionals, as well as social services, GPs and other health professionals:

CAMHS South (South Lakes & Furness)  
Tel No: **01229 402696** [camhssouth@nhs.net](mailto:camhssouth@nhs.net)

CAMHS West (Copeland & Allerdale - including Millom)  
Tel No: **01900 705800** [camhs.west1@nhs.net](mailto:camhs.west1@nhs.net)

CAMHS East (Carlisle & Eden)  
Tel No: **01228 603017** [camhs.east1@nhs.net](mailto:camhs.east1@nhs.net)

### Psychological Service

Educational Psychologists work directly with young people in the age range 0 - 25 years on a wide variety of issues relating to their progress and development. They also work with other people who know and work with children and young people.

Further information please contact Sue Sanderson at [Sue.Sanderson@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:Sue.Sanderson@cumbria.gov.uk)  
[www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices/schoolsandlearning/ils/specialeducationalneeds/psychological.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices/schoolsandlearning/ils/specialeducationalneeds/psychological.asp)

## Support for schools and professionals

### Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Guide for Professionals

The **Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Guide for Professionals** is designed to help professionals respond appropriately to and support a child or young person aged 5 - 19 years, who is showing signs of struggling to cope. The guide covers the signs, symptoms and behaviours which may indicate that someone needs help with their emotional and mental wellbeing.  
[www.cumbriasafeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/ewmh/emotionalwellbeingmentalhealthguideforprofessionals.asp](http://www.cumbriasafeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/ewmh/emotionalwellbeingmentalhealthguideforprofessionals.asp)

### 5-19 Public Health Service

Public Health Nurse Practitioners are specialist nurses based within each locality, who work with schools and their communities to identify and address health and wellbeing needs. The service offers support and advice to schools to address health and wellbeing needs, and can offer training for staff and parents/carers regarding emotional wellbeing and mental health. Further information and contact details for the team are available at [www.cumbria.gov.uk/ph5to19/](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/ph5to19/)

### KOOTH.com

For professionals who have day to day contact with young people, building strong relationships with them, it is important that they know about KOOTH.com and understand what it can offer. Training sessions for your staff are available to enable them to feel at ease with discussing the service with children and young people. This could be as part of training days, twilight sessions or even lunchtime sessions as it takes 30 minutes to give a presentation with a Q&A period. The team are also available to do assemblies (presentation available) and support school with some small groups to look at the website and get pupils logged on. A promotional video is also available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=VovtBleDdUY&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VovtBleDdUY&feature=youtu.be) or <https://vimeo.com/198700852>

For further information please contact Jude Leng [jleng@xenzone.com](mailto:jleng@xenzone.com)

### Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing webpage

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing for Schools page on your local authorities website provides a range of information, guidance and resources for support schools  
[www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices/schoolsandlearning/ils/HealthandEmotionalWellbeing/mentalhealth.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices/schoolsandlearning/ils/HealthandEmotionalWellbeing/mentalhealth.asp)

### Papyrus Toolkit for Schools

Papyrus have a toolkit with useful advice for teachers and staff: [www.papyrus-uk.org/repository/documents/editorfiles/toolkitfinal.pdf](http://www.papyrus-uk.org/repository/documents/editorfiles/toolkitfinal.pdf)

### Samaritans Guidance

The Samaritans have some step by step guidance to help schools prepare for, and recover from a suspected or attempted suicide: [www.samaritans.org/your-community/samaritans-education/step-step](http://www.samaritans.org/your-community/samaritans-education/step-step)

