

gr'ef encounter

supporting bereaved children & young people



**Bereavement is devastating
at any age, but for a child
it is life changing...**

Our story

Having experienced the death of both of her parents by the age of 9, Dr Shelley Gilbert MBE received no professional help or support. Recognising the need for bereaved children and young people to have a safe space to grieve, Shelley established Grief Encounter in 2004.

Today...

Grief Encounter offers free, ongoing, specialist bereavement support services to children, young people and their families, who have experienced the death of someone close, through support and counselling across the UK.

Additionally, Grief Encounter brings the struggles surrounding childhood grief to the forefront of schools, colleges and workplaces, through raising awareness, education and specialist training.

We understand children grieve differently to adults. We aim to give every child and young person a voice for their grief and access to help when they need it most. Our 100-strong team of qualified bereavement counsellors are passionate about providing individually tailored support, to help work through the grieving process and find ways through what might be some of their darkest moments.

Making sure we are with you, every step of the way, for as long as you need us.



Grief doesn't leave you. Neither will we.

If you, or someone you know, would benefit from any of our services, please get in touch.

Helpline: 0808 802 0111 • Open Weekdays 9am - 9pm

✉ grieffalk@griefencounter.org.uk

🌐 griefencounter.org.uk

Someone to talk to

Our free bereavement support is available to anyone who needs it.

National Griefftalk Helpline
9am - 9pm, Monday - Friday

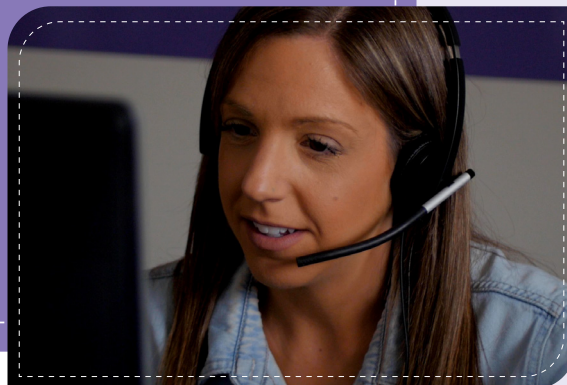
You are not alone in your grief. Whether your bereavement was expected or sudden, happened recently or was some time ago, we understand how difficult it can be - talking to someone can help.

Our helpline offers confidential, emotional support and guidance to anyone affected by grief. If you want to know how to support someone close to you - we are here for you too. You can talk openly about your feelings and how you are coping, with someone who really understands.

Call our Freephone number: **0808 802 0111**
or email us on **griefftalk@griefcounter.org.uk**

Web and email chat

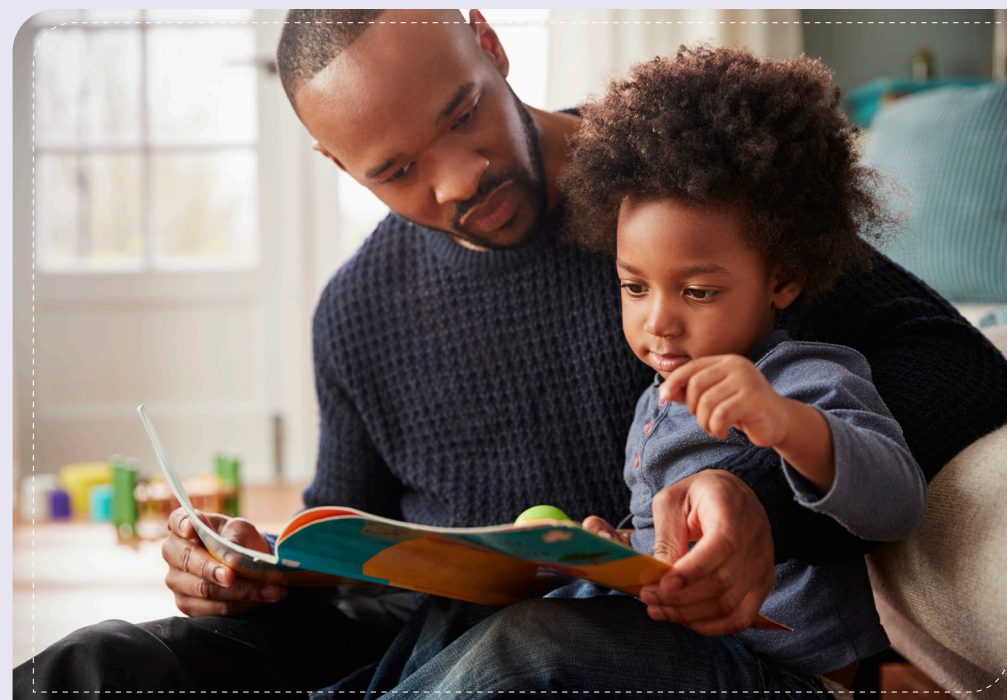
We understand that speaking on the phone isn't for everyone. You may find it easier to discuss your feelings with anonymity in real time, or by email, with one of our trained bereavement volunteers. Please reach out - we are here to support you online.



Family support

Supporting families is at the heart of what we do. Our family liaison team can help you find the right support. This may be by referral to one of our specialist counselling sessions, workshops or programmes, information and advice, or sign posting you to other organisations.

Bereavement can lead to loneliness and isolation at any age. Our family-led events connect bereaved families with others who know what you are going through.



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One-to-one grief counselling

Our free, specialist, one-to-one grief counselling offers a child-centred approach to sensitively and compassionately work through grief with children and young people of all ages. We know a sense of family matters to how children manage their grief and so we also offer support to the adults around them who matter the most. This ensures that children and young people have support at home and within their family.

During your sessions you will be able to share your experience in a safe, accepting environment, and explore emotions and find ways to develop healthy coping skills for dealing with grief.

You will be matched with someone who will remain with you for your entire Grief Encounter journey, looking out for the needs of the whole family. We call these expert staff our Lead Practitioners.

In-person sessions are available at our London, North West and South West Hubs. Online and telephone counselling is available for those living outside of these areas.



Group sessions

Our group sessions offer a safe environment for children and young people to learn from each other, and develop a better understanding of their feelings and have the opportunity to connect with others going through similar situations. Groups are split into age groups; under 7's, 8-10s, 11 plus, teenagers and young adults, giving children and young people the opportunity to meet others of a similar age.

We also run specialist sessions for those who have experienced sudden and traumatic bereavement, for example murder and suicide.

Therapeutic workshops

Our workshops offer the opportunity to come together with others creatively through art, drama, music and play. They provide a safe environment where bereaved children are supported to talk about their experiences, express feelings, resolve difficult issues and learn to cope with grief, supported by people who really understand.



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Family fun days

Our family fun days run throughout the year across the country. These special experiences combine organised activities, events such as bowling, theatre trips and outdoor activities, with the benefit of peer support which enable families to make new memories, in supported environments, whilst remembering old ones.



Residential weekends

Our annual Grief Encounter Residential Weekends provide bereaved families with intensive therapeutic support. These unique experiences are facilitated by our Clinical Team and range of specialist Counsellors. They provide a valued space for children and families, giving them an opportunity to build friendships and understanding from shared mutual experience.

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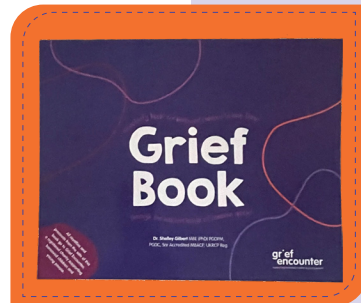
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Grief support and information

We have a range of ways to support children and young people who have experienced the death of someone close, including providing guides, information and books which can help a child and family process and share their feelings. Our age-appropriate books are available on request.

Grief Encounter Grief Book

This award-winning activity book, created by Dr Shelley Gilbert MBE, encourages conversations about death and dying between children and adults, designed to help children through the bereavement process giving them a structured way to understand and process their grief.



Online grief guides

We have a comprehensive range of online grief guides which are free to download and give advice on a range of topics such as:

- How to talk to children about death and dying
- Emotional responses to death
- Sudden and traumatic death
- Whether children should go to funerals

Grief relief kits

Our unique kits are bespoke to each family and are full of age-appropriate resources including storybooks, grief guides, a journal and memory-making games to assist families and professionals to work through feelings and emotions. Some things we provide include:



Chocolate Chipped: A Smelly Book About Grief

This interactive scratch 'n' sniff specialist bereavement storybook helps younger children understand feelings of grief through storytelling.

Forever Journal

This beautifully designed journal is the perfect place to record unique memories of someone close who has died. The journal has been co-created in partnership with the Stephen Okrent Foundation, in loving memory of Stephen.

Mr Good Grief

Our very own Grief Encounter super hero, Mr Good Grief, is a unique comforter toy which can help support younger children. He offers children comfort through both a sensory experience and association. Many children use him as a symbolic object with special meaning. He has a pocket where messages can be put and can also be used like a puppet.

Mr Good Grief Keyrings

Our miniature versions of Mr Good Grief are often used by teachers and other professionals working with children to represent that they are someone who the child can come and speak to about their feelings surrounding their loss.



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Training and support

Grief Encounter trains individuals and organisations on the best ways to support children, young people and families who are bereaved, as well as helping to raise awareness of child and family bereavement and leaving a lasting impact on those close to grief.

Our training for teachers provides the tools and practical skills to acknowledge bereaved children, to provide help and crisis intervention, and to make sure that children are able to express their feelings and ask for help at school.

We can also provide bespoke training for schools, colleges, businesses and organisations both face to face and online.

CPD accredited training for professionals

We offer a range of courses including Drama Therapy and Good Grief Training for people who work with children which is accredited by Middlesex University.

Grief Encounter is entirely funded by donations and receives no government funding. For more information on how you can support us visit griefencounter.org.uk

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London Clinical Centre: Crystal House Daws Lane Mill Hill London NW7 4ST
Bristol Clinical Centre: 27 Lilymead Avenue Bristol BS4 2BY

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