

CHUMS Magazine

Bereavement support for children aged
between 5 and 18 in Bedfordshire

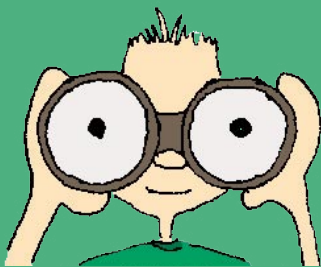
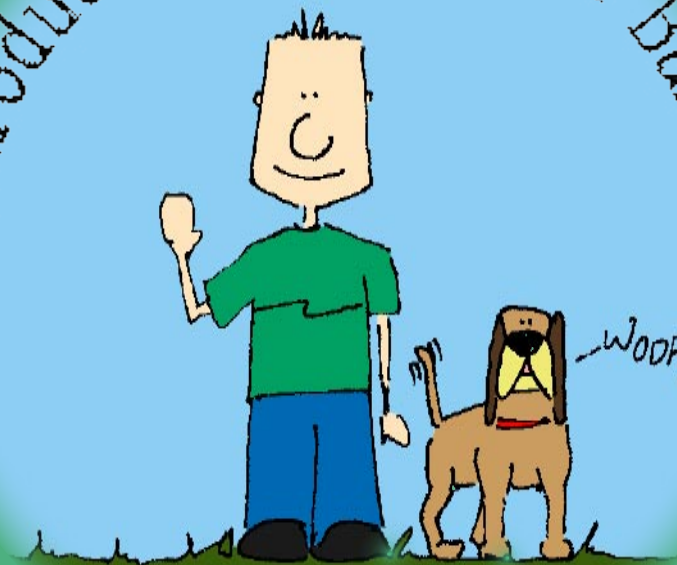


Barneys

Introducing Charlie and Barney

Free!

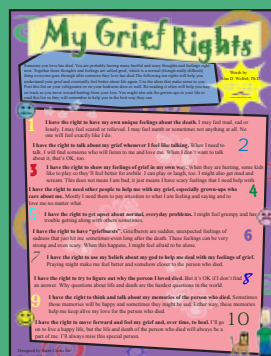
Issue 1
May 2003



WHAT'S INSIDE

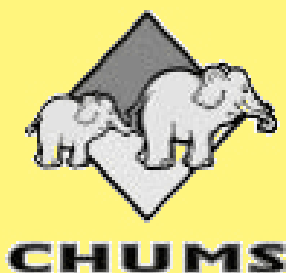


YOUR SPECIAL THOUGHTS AND
FEELINGS
COMPETITION WINNERS
HOW TO MAKE A MEMORY BOOK



STORY TIME WITH CHARLIE AND
BARNEY
NEWS OF DELL FARM
BOOK AND WEBSITE REVIEWS

Free poster for your wall!



WHO ARE CHUMS?

Bereavement support for children aged
between 5 and 18 in Bedfordshire



Although it is a natural part of life, the death of someone close can be an overwhelming experience for anyone.

Children experience the pain of loss just as much as adults, although their reactions will depend on their age, maturity and understanding of events.

Adults often try to protect their children from the facts of death, perhaps feeling that they are too young to understand, or that talking about the loss will be too distressing.

Experience has shown us that children can gain a great deal from meeting others of their own age who have had similar experiences and, if given the chance to understand events and to express their own feelings, they can learn to adjust to their loss.

I think CHUMS offer a very supportive network to young people and provide opportunities to express the emotions and feelings they are dealing with.

Jen Green

I've found CHUMS to be a real rock of support. They turn the pain and anger into something constructive.

Morag and David Troughton

People at CHUMS are wonderful. They taught my son, Ashley, how to express his feelings and taught him that it was OK to feel sad or angry.

Teresa Vincent

CHUMS has been a lot of help to myself and my son. Knowing that there are people going through the same thing as us and talking to some of the other parents. At first, it is very hard to open up, but once you've done that you feel much better about things and yourself.

Michele Mulhollan

The Child Bereavement Service is run by experienced, trained professionals and volunteers throughout Bedfordshire. It includes Barneys for children aged up to 12 and CHUMS for older children and young people.

CHUMS were created to meet the needs of children and their families following the death of someone close.

The service offers help in a variety of ways:

- * Individual support for children by a trained volunteer.
- * Workshops for groups of children, enabling them to meet those of a similar age with similar experiences.
(Children may decide that they need a bit of both ~ and that's OK.)
- * Parent/carer support groups.
- * Social events throughout the year.

Through activities and group discussion in a safe, non-threatening and supportive environment, the children are helped to explore what has happened to them, to understand the feelings they are experiencing and to find ways of coping. The service is FREE and CONFIDENTIAL.

If you think we may be able to help, please contact us at the address below, either by letter or telephone and ask for further details. We can also advise you about other organisations that may be able to help.



Dawn Hewitt, Child Bereavement Service Manager,
CHUMS, Sundon Park Health Centre,
Tenth Avenue, Luton, Beds LU3 3EP.

Tel: (01582) 707469 Fax: (01582) 707452

E-mail: info@chums.info Website: www.chums.info

Please call between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday



Hi Everyone!

Welcome to the first issue of CHUMS Magazine! It's been such fun and a real privilege for me to do this for you. Thanks for all your help - I couldn't have done it without you!

I want this magazine to help and encourage you all at this difficult time in your life. And remember - you're NEVER alone. We're all here to help and support each other so please feel free to contact any of us at any time.

We are hoping to produce two issues of the magazine a year and it is for YOU so please keep in touch and help us to give you what you want!

*Take care,
Sarah Cooke
(Editor)*



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Thank You

Thanks to all of you who have helped and supported me during this project - you know who you are! I would especially like to thank the following people:

- Andrew Woodruff - for designing and drawing all the cartoons of Charlie and Barney. I think everyone will agree that they are excellent and add so much to the magazine.
- Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt - for allowing me to use the words from his poster 'My Grief Rights'. I encourage all of you to have a look at his wonderful books and website on bereavement. You will see some of them mentioned in the magazine!
- 'Bereavement Magazine' - for allowing me to publish Terry Kettering's lovely poem on the back page.
- Page Press - for producing the magazine so quickly and at the lowest possible cost!
- Dawn and Ian - for trusting me and allowing me the opportunity to put this magazine together.
- Finally I would like to thank all of you who have sent me your thoughts, poems and pictures, because without your work, this would have been a very empty magazine!

MEET THE TEAM

DAWN HEWITT, CHILD BEREAVEMENT FACILITATOR



I am delighted to be introducing you to our new magazine for those families, children and teenagers who have been a part of our service. I hope that many of you will find some comfort in reading it and remembering the special person who has died in your family.

I came to be involved in CHUMS at the beginning of 1997 when a Macmillan nurse, Jackie Tritton, who helped to set up CHUMS in Luton, asked Meg Cleghorn and myself if we would like to help her. It has been an incredible journey with some amazing achievements, since those days of just a few of us as volunteers.

After supporting the service as a volunteer I was delighted to be offered the job of managing the service in October 2000 and the last 2½ years has seen great developments within the service. In April 2001 CHUMS and Barneys merged to offer a countywide service funded by the three Primary Care Trust's of Bedfordshire and Macmillan Cancer Relief. We now have 65 wonderful volunteers and have had 278 referrals in the last year. I know the service is going to continue to grow and develop and I am proud to be a part of such an excellent team.

IAN WINSTANLEY, DIRECTOR FOR LUTON PATIENT SERVICES (PCT)

In my role I like to spend time with each of the services that Luton PCT provide. Dawn suggested that I should come along to Dell Farm for the reunion weekend. In that way I would be able to meet the volunteers and get a feel for the service. I arrived fully intending to spend an hour or so and ended up staying the whole day! It was a real eye-opener, a roller coaster of deep emotion and tremendous fun for both the volunteers and the children. Particularly poignant was the music therapy session during which the children were moved through their experiences of bereavement, both good and difficult, and shared within a fun and safe environment.

The service I believe is unique. The role of the volunteers is, I think, genuinely unique. Their dedication to not only the service and the children but also their willingness to train and update their skills is commendable. The service itself is not a counselling service but it is a way of helping these children come to terms with their bereavement — not completely but as much as they can and the results are truly very impressive. If it were in a hospital, this kind of service would be shouted about from the rooftops!

Having now trained as a volunteer and been able to participate as a volunteer at two workshops, this has been a powerful and humbling experience. To see so many children of such a broad age range, going through the process together is desperately moving. But perhaps the most incredible thing is getting to the end of the three weekends and seeing the difference it has actually made to them and their families. They leave with a shared experience that nurtures the support and openness that families need to move forward from their tragic experiences.

The future of the service is also looking bright. Although at the moment there is an awful lot of work for Dawn and her team to do we will be appointing another post who will join her in a few months time. But there is still a need to recruit more volunteers, particularly male volunteers. Also, considering that children going through bereavement often have a very unsettling time in school, Dawn has been training teachers and other



professionals in schools to be able to identify and support the affected children. This is an area that we need to do more work in, in the future.

Most of our children's services deal with the wellness and illness of children, but here we have a group of children who are not ill or suffering in the way that we would normally expect in the health service. Grief can last decades and can blight their future — it certainly can damage their educational potential and then obviously their life chances. This service offers a cutting edge approach to helping our children become the fully rounded individuals that we need them to be. There are thousands of children a year who are going through a bereavement in Bedfordshire and if it wasn't for the work of the volunteers and staff at CHUMS, they would be totally unsupported through that process. It is in every way as important as dealing with 'sick' children.

I know that like me The Chairs and Chief Executives of the supporting Primary Care Trusts are immensely proud of the work that Dawn and the volunteers have done to make this service the standard by which other child bereavement services measure themselves. It certainly is one of the jewels in the crown of local health services.

DEMISE ASPINALL, FUNERAL DIRECTOR

The Team

My involvement with CHUMS started a number of years ago; I've actually lost count of how many. When CHUMS first started my husband Peter used to attend to answer the children's questions about funerals and death. Then one Saturday he couldn't make it and I stepped into the breach – and I've been going ever since. Barneys was a slightly different story. When Barneys was formed I was the chairperson of Bedford CRUSE and was involved at the inception. Because I answered questions at CHUMS it seemed a natural thing to be involved in the same way with Barneys.

So what happens when I attend? Firstly, the children write their questions on a slip of paper, which goes into the question box. Then I read the questions out and give the children the answer. I have found it is important to let the children expand on the question and sometimes get clarification of what the question actually is – as once or twice I've gone off on a track which, it becomes obvious, was not the one the questioner had in mind. One of the major changes in the last couple of years is that I now go on, along with the doctor to answer any questions that the parents and carers might have.

I feel immensely privileged to be involved in the workshops. Children have a different take on the world, which is sometimes quite literal. One of the questions I will always remember was 'Does cremation make you shrink?'. I was completely stumped by this question and had to ask the boy to explain what he meant and with the disdain

that only a six-year-old can muster, he repeated his question. I must have looked suitably perplexed because his older sister came to my rescue and said 'Well when we went to my grandads funeral he was in a big coffin and when we went to the burial of ashes he was in a little box – so he thinks cremation makes you shrink!' Which of course it does, but not in quite the way the little boy imagined.

Experience has taught me to tell the absolute truth. Firstly because if I dress the answer up when the question discomforts me, the children know and secondly because I have learnt, both from my own experience and what the children say, that imagination is usually worse than the real thing.



Denise Aspinall qualified as a funeral director twenty years ago. For the last seventeen years she has worked for Neville Funeral Service in Luton

IVAN WATSON, DOCTOR



Ivan Watson worked as a doctor for a number of years, but he is now the Pastor of Dunstable Baptist Church.

1. What do you think of the CHUMS service?

It is a very good organisation that meets a great need among children and young people who have been bereaved. This is something that has been missing from what the Health Service has to offer for some time so this has really filled a gap.

2. What is your job within CHUMS?

I'm involved as a volunteer on an occasional basis, about 4 or 5 times a year on a Saturday morning. I go along and help out at the workshops.

3. What age are the children who go to the workshops?

The children range from about 5 to 11 or 12. There is also a teenage group that meets in the evening.

4. So what do you do at these workshops?

Everyone has the opportunity to ask questions if they feel they are able to, but they can submit them beforehand too. Everything is geared towards encouraging the children to talk. We sit on the floor on mats and they hold cuddly toys and things and the leaders are beside them.

5. What is your role in the workshops?

Basically to answer their questions as a doctor. I go along with Denise Aspinall. The children are split into a younger and older group and we swap around the groups. There is also a parents' group running at the same time.

6. How do you contribute to the service?

By trying to provide some medical answers. It helps them to come to terms with the loss of their loved one if they can understand a little more about their death.

7. How do you answer their questions?

With children and young people there is the challenge for me to try and make things as simple as possible. To help me do this I have a little model of the human body which helps me explain different illnesses.

8. Do people only come to you if their loved one has died from an illness?

No, they can come with all sorts of ways of being bereaved - this may be by suicide, accident, illness etc.

9. Can people still ask questions if their loved one hasn't died from an illness?

Yes, they can. I sometimes get questions about fumes or something. But sometimes the children don't know the whole circumstances of their loved ones death which can be difficult, but you just have to be more sensitive to this.

Next issue find out the most common questions that Dr. Ivan is asked.

SHOW AND TELL

Thank you so much to all of you who have written to us. We really appreciate your honesty and willingness to share such personal thoughts and poems with us. This 'Show and Tell' section is your place to do this. Please keep sending us your work so that we can put it into our next issue.

It is so important that we all help and support each other and these pages are a great way to do this – particularly if you find it difficult to express things verbally. This is your opportunity to say exactly what you want and share a little bit about your special person with us all.

I am sending you two poems, one which I wrote myself on the night my father died. The second one was by my son Ashley who is 12. He found a poem and re-vamped it to show his own feelings. Both poems were read at the funeral and everyone was deeply touched.

My dad died suddenly after having a stroke at the age of 61. This devastated both myself and the rest of the family. My doctor put me in touch with CHUMS and both myself and Ashley had counselling plus we took part in the workshop.

People at CHUMS are wonderful. They taught Ashley how to express his feelings and taught him that it was OK to feel sad or angry.

They also made me feel relieved that I was not going mad, that what I was feeling was normal and that we have to go through all sorts of emotions to get through the grieving period.

We still miss my dad greatly but he will always be with us in spirit.

I hope the poems and this letter help people who are going through a grieving stage.

Teresa Vincent

To Grandad, Love Ashley

I said a prayer for you today
And know God must have heard

I felt the answer in my heart
Although he spoke no word

I didn't ask for wealth or fame
I knew you wouldn't mind

I asked him to send treasures
Of a far more lasting kind

I asked that he be near you
In all things great and small

But it was for his loving care
I prayed the most of all

To Dad

My heart is now missing a beat
As I walk along this lonely street
A street where all the lamps have gone out
And I just want to scream and shout

I know I have memories to treasure
And they will always bring me pleasure
The good ones and the bad ones too
I will keep them near and never forget you

You gave me life now yours has gone
If I could have taken your pain I would have done
You gave me joy and lots of laughter
And I will love you for ever after

My children you will not see in their prime
But I will keep you informed all the time
I'll send you a prayer each and every day
To tell you what they do and say

So good night dad and sleep tight
Your candle will always be burning bright
A place in my heart you will always be
We'll be together again someday, you'll see.

Love Teresa



This is a photo of us all sending balloons up to the sky with written tags of messages for Dad. This was on Dad's birthday last year, it was our day of celebrating his life.

This is a poem written by a friend for my daughter Melissa following the death of her father.

Ruth and Melissa Robinson

For Melissa

The angels came
Now Daddy's gone
He's on his way to heaven
They took him to Jesus
To stop his pain
His body was tired of living

Where ever you are
For all of your life
He'll be right by your side
Even if you can't see him
He's always there
Your guardian and your guide

Throughout the day and night
Every day of the year
Through the good times and the bad
he'll be there
When you wake in a fright
From bad dreams in the night, you
might feel him
He's beside you stroking your hair

And in his heart, he has locked
The most precious gift
A Daddy could ever store
The image of his daughter
And her beautiful face
To treasure for ever more

Don't be scared for him
He isn't afraid
He took some special things with
him
He filled his pockets
With all your love
And the happy memories you've
given

He'll be with you
When you walk to school
Hold your hand to cross the road
Then as you get older
He'll be there to make sure
You meet a prince and not a toad!

He knows your safe
He's left you with
The love of a wonderful mum
Lots of people who care
And will always be there
For each day of your life still to come

Our Dad

Damn!
What did we do
What did we say
To make mum and dad
Split up that way?

How did he feel
As he was pushed away
We're sure he didn't want to go
We wished he could stay.

He lived with someone else
We hoped he was happy
When we think of our lives
They seem very gappy.

His birthday rolled round
So we took him a cake,
We sung Happy Birthday
That was a mistake.
He put it in the fridge
And walked out the door
He was going down the pub
For a pint or four.

So we decided after that
To leave it a while
Before we went to see him
To try to make him smile.

We both really loved him
He didn't seem to love us
After all he was our father
We just wanted him to make a fuss.

Then one day we were sat in class
We were being picked up early
But we didn't know why...?
It must be something harsh.

When we got home me and my brother
were told
"Your dad died today...
But he wasn't that old"
We really loved him
And miss him like mad
But we'd given up hope
And didn't see him... We felt bad.

The day was getting nearer
The day of the funeral
Was going to be sad...

People made speeches,
Read passages, played songs.
After the roses were placed
On the coffin lid.
The curtains were drawn
That's it ... he's dead

Your Work

I think CHUMS offer a very supportive network to young people and provide opportunities to express emotions and feelings they are dealing with. It is an area of personal and professional interest to me as I wish to support students emotionally and academically through a difficult transitional stage in their lives. I have enclosed two poems from a student who lost her father. She would like to remain anonymous. I believe her poems articulate her feelings strongly at times when she cannot communicate verbally. One was written when she was 12. The other in March on the fifth anniversary. I hope you find them as touching as I.

Jen Green

Daddy

When my Dad died
I was hurt inside
When my Dad died
I laid and cried

When my Dad went
He wasn't content
His death was not heaven sent
Just a very sad event

I couldn't do anything
I couldn't think
I couldn't drink
I didn't get to sleep a wink

When my Dad died I was devastated
When my Dad died he was cremated
His life was very complicated
With cards I was inundated

Now I look back over the years
It still brings me to floods of tears
In my head its me he hears
The memories I have are still quite clear

In my heart he'll never leave
To me he will always breathe
His death will always make me grieve
I've got him now he'll never leave

Your Work

Death is a tragic thing. Some people die of old age, some of disease, some of accidents and others die by suicide. My Dad died seven years ago. It was Mother's Day 1996, I still remember the day like it was yesterday. When I found out he had died, I had all these feelings that I can't explain. It felt like someone was stabbing me with knives over and over again. All I could do was cry.

But then I found out he had committed suicide - he had chosen to die. I felt nothing, pure emptiness. I didn't know what to feel, I just had thoughts - Was it me? Did I kill him? If I didn't shout at him, would he still be here? I kept going through the last week of him being alive, just to see if I did anything else that would have made him want to die and leave me.

As time went on I buried all the thoughts at the back of my head. I never really let them come out, but they were sitting on my shoulders. Time went by and through everything you learn in life, I knew that it wasn't me. I wasn't the reason he died but still to this day I don't know the reason and I never will. I guess the only one who will ever know is him.

Last year, my Mum suggested that we go to CHUMS. I didn't want to go - I thought it would be a waste of time as it had been seven years since he died. But I went, to give it a chance and I'm glad I did. My last words to my Dad were, "Go home, it's late" - I've carried these words on my shoulder for seven years, thinking that my Dad thought I hated him.

CHUMS helped me a lot. It helped me bring back all the thoughts and feelings I had of that tragic day. It also brought back memories of my Dad that I had forgotten. I'm so thankful for this because all I have now are memories. I know my Dad loved me and I now know that he knew I loved him too. CHUMS made me realise that and I'm not carrying around the guilt and pain of the last words my Dad heard me say.

To everyone at CHUMS, I'm really glad I came. You helped me a lot and I will be forever thankful. I hope we stay in touch - it's the least I can do for all your help. And I just want to say I will never forget you - ever.

Thanks,
Emma x x x

Our son was killed by a hit and run on 11th October 2002. It has had a devastating effect on all the family. My youngest daughter has written a little piece about her feelings for Adam. The other letter is from Emily, Adam's girlfriend of 2½ years.

Wendy Bodsworth

I lost my 18 year old brother. I find life hard without him. I get tearful easily. I'm upset and angry at the same time. I wish I could turn back time and not let him go on his motorbike. I have memories, photos, items of him. I know he is safe where he is.

I LOVE YOU ADAM
Emma Bodsworth, 12

(my Daddy.)

I used to appreciate simple things.
A walk in the park seeing flowers in spring.
We all had our happiness.

Together as a family
Times can be hard there is no ~~no~~ doubt
but most of all you were there.

My dearest daddy one of the best.
One in a million above the rest.

You never thought of yourself.
Only of me there is no doubt.

You were so kind in all you did.

Nothing ever too much trouble for you.

You never had to give

Except for yourself as long as you lived.

If I could only turn back the first year,
still we have to carry on in spite the tears.

You were my daddy

The best I could ever have had.

by Leanne Jones -weller age 9

My boyfriend's death has devastated my life and a lot of other people's. Over 300 people came to his funeral. I wrote my feelings down a few days after it happened as sort of a dedication to him.

Adam,

I love you so much. You were my first love and I miss you so much. I can't say he will be my last because I know that won't be the case. But I can say that I won't love anyone as much as you. You loved, cared and protected me from everything and from everyone. I can't believe that you have gone. Why did it have to happen to you. So young, so full of life. Such a wonderful boyfriend. I have lost my best friend. I remember when we met I was at Ben's with Emma and you came up. We both knew it was love at first sight. I know that you've gone from our world but you're still alive to me. Everywhere I go, I know you're there.

I love you so much Adam,

Your girlfriend forever,

Emily Plater

We lost our son Andrew aged 13 years, 15 months ago from a rare genetic condition. We felt very alone and because we were grieving for our own loss we found it hard to cope with how our own children were feeling and their grief.

I was given a Cruse leaflet but just put it away in the drawer thinking I could cope.

I was told about CHUMS by a Hospice nurse. I was keen for the children - Adam, 11, Aidan, 7, Abigail, 5 - to have support so followed it up. To my surprise on the first meeting I found it was not just for the children so it in a way forced my hand, but I'm so glad it did because I found it to be a real rock of support.

The children found it helped them, meeting other children who had loved and lost and they were not alone.

CHUMS do not give up on anyone. They listen no matter what and they do not say, like everyone else, that you will get over it in time. Time heals some of the pain but you don't want to forget your loss.

CHUMS turns the pain and anger into something constructive.

Morag and David Troughton

Aidan has written a poem about his brother which can be seen on page 16.

In 2001 my brother Andrew was shot dead in his flat with his half brother Alex and even now I find it very difficult to actually believe that it has happened. It was an extremely hard time for me and my family and we will never get over the loss of my beloved brother. This poem was written by my sister, brother and I and was read at the boys' funeral.

*No goodbyes, no tomorrows,
All that is left, is pain and sorrow.*

*Words unsaid, calls unmade,
Rewind the clock, for just a day.*

*His gentle smile, his big blue eyes,
Why was he, chosen to die?*

*It doesn't make sense, we don't know why,
In our hearts, we will always cry.*

*We pray he can hear, and take to his grave,
The words that express, the love that he gave.*

*Resting together, two brothers forever,
We will miss them so, why did they go?*

Stephanie Walker, 16

I think that CHUMS has been a lot of help to myself and my son. Knowing that there are people going through the same thing as us and talking to some of the other parents. Also, sharing our thoughts and being able to talk frankly about the person that has died and how we want them back.

Children make new friends and do lots of activities with each other. It is helpful to be able to go to the parents group in the evening, once a month, to see other parents again and have a chat with them. It is very hard at first to open up, but once you've done that you feel much better about things and yourself.

Michelle Mulholland

Jake's Dad Colin died on the 6th February 2002. We miss him so very much.

Jake has drawn a picture in memory of his Dad which can be seen on page 16.



COLIN PARKINS 1st Anniversary

*To some you may be forgotten,
To others a part of the past,
To us who loved and lost you
Your memories will always last.*

*There is a corner in our hearts
Especially kept for you
As long as life and memories last
we shall remember you.*

Love from Michelle, Jake & Kelly

Write to us

If you would like to send in a few words, thoughts, or poems, then please do one of the following:

give it to Dawn

email it to dawn.hewitt@luton-pct.nhs.uk

send it to

CHUMS Magazine,

CHUMS, Sundon Park Health Centre,

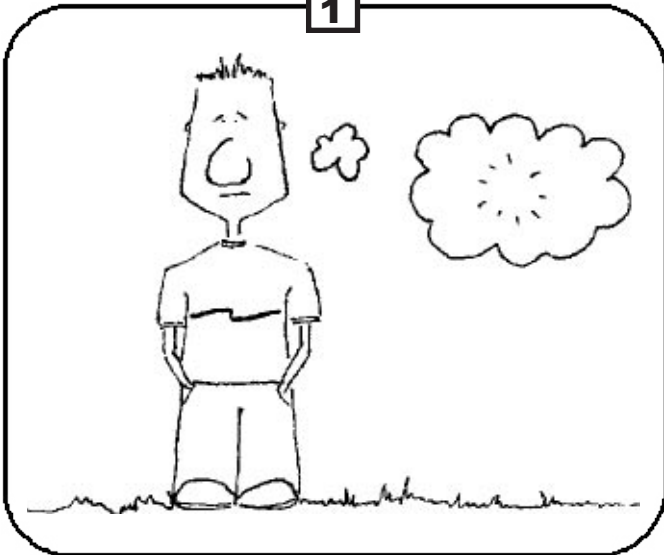
Tenth Avenue, Luton, Beds LU3 3EP

REMEMBERING

Note to parents: You may wish to read this story aloud with your child to help them understand and answer any questions they may have.

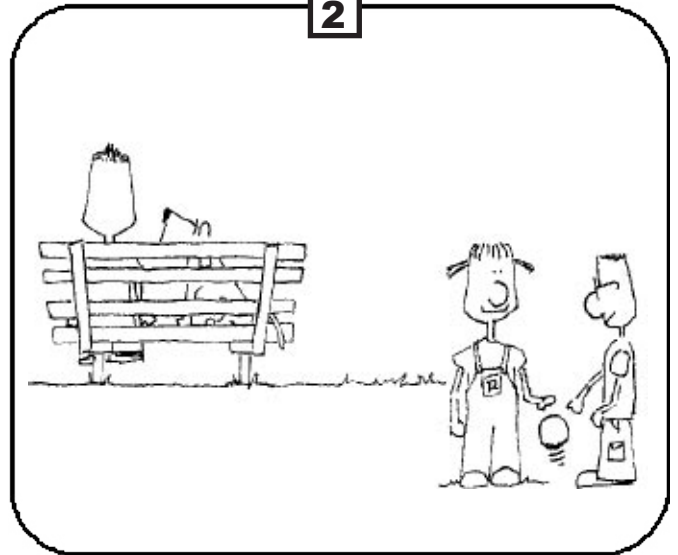


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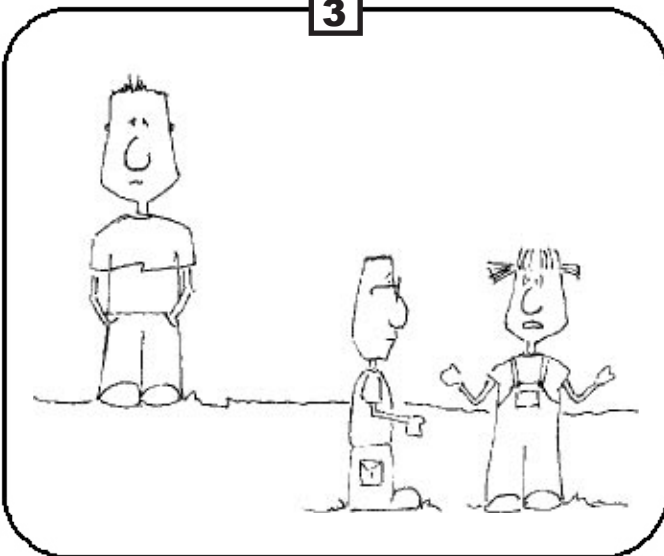
Charlie's brother Matthew has died. He is very sad and misses him like crazy. They didn't always get along, but Charlie still loved him very much.

2



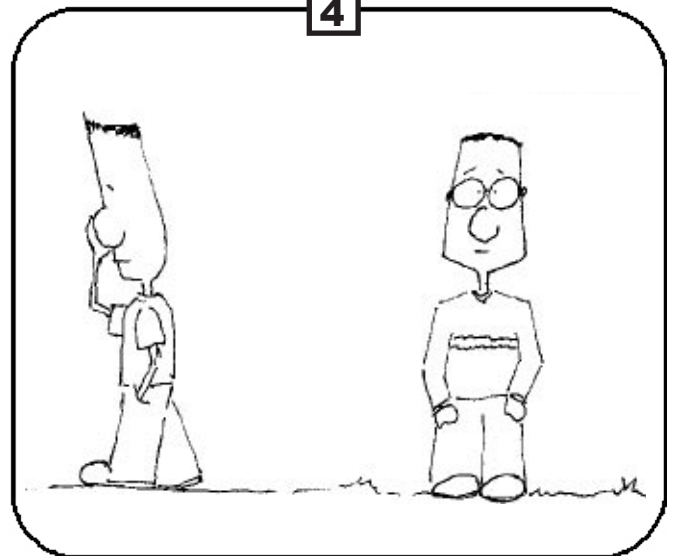
Charlie feels very alone. He does not feel like playing with his friends. But he is glad when Barney comes to cuddle up to him.

3



Charlie's friends find it hard to talk to him. They still care for him, but don't know how to help.

4



Charlie's friend Timmy is trying to help. He tells Charlie to forget about Matthew and get on with his life. This makes Charlie feel sad and angry and he runs home to find Barney. Timmy is sad too because he thought he was helping.

MATTHEW

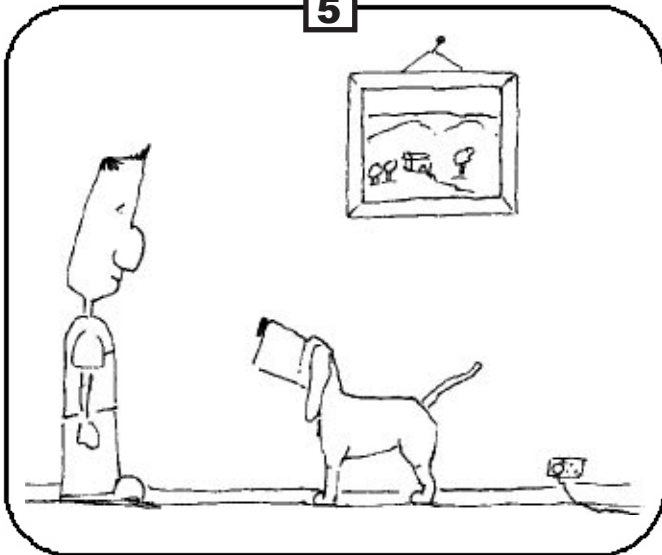
Story Time

Note to kids: When you've read the story, why not colour in each of the boxes!



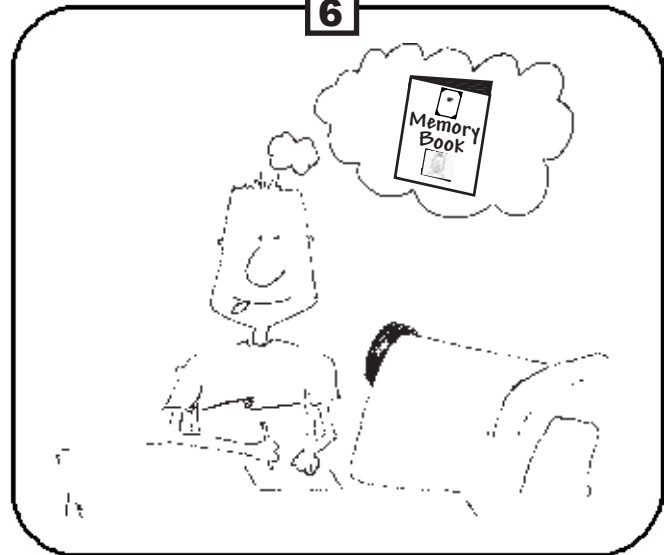
For tips on how to make a memory book turn to page 14.

5



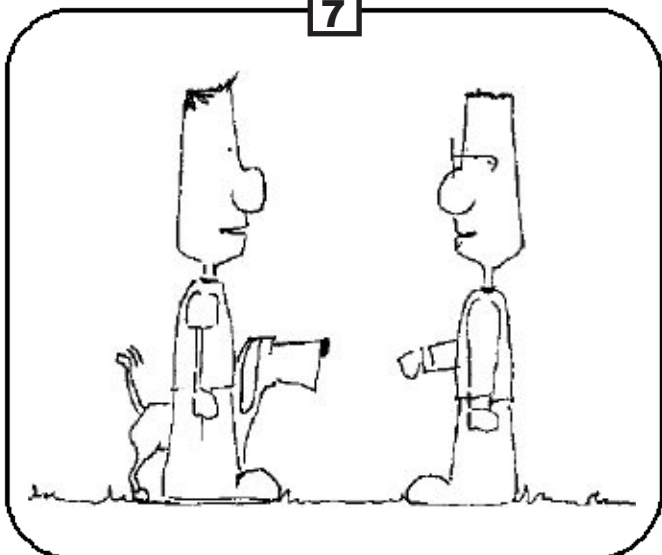
Charlie tells Barney what Timmy said to him. Barney says that Charlie does not need to forget about Matthew at all. In fact, he should remember all the fun times they had together.

6



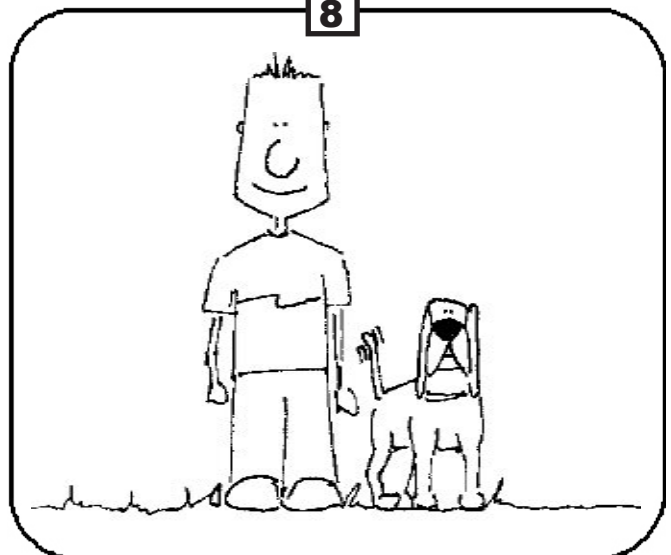
Charlie and Barney write poems and draw pictures together and put them in a memory book to help them remember Matthew. They laugh about all the mischief they used to get into.

7



When they finish, Charlie finds Timmy and tells him that he doesn't want to forget about Matthew. He wants to remember him and all the good times they had together. Timmy is sorry that he gave Charlie bad advice and wants to help Charlie remember his brother.

8



Charlie has realised that although his brother is not physically there anymore, he will always be a part of him and he will remember him forever.

More adventures with Charlie and Barney next issue!

My Grief Rights

Someone you love has died. You are probably having many hurtful and scary thoughts and feelings right now. Together those thoughts and feelings are called grief, which is a normal (though really difficult) thing everyone goes through after someone they love has died. The following ten rights will help you understand your grief and eventually feel better about life again. Use the ideas that make sense to you. Post this list on your refrigerator or on your bedroom door or wall. Re-reading it often will help you stay on track as you move toward healing from your loss. You might also ask the grown-ups in your life to read this list so they will remember to help you in the best way they can.

Words by
Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.
Center for Loss
& Life Transition
www.centerforloss.com



1

I have the right to have my own unique feelings about the death. I may feel mad, sad or lonely. I may feel scared or relieved. I may feel numb or sometimes not anything at all. No one will feel exactly like I do.

I have the right to talk about my grief whenever I feel like talking. When I need to talk, I will find someone who will listen to me and love me. When I don't want to talk about it, that's OK, too.

2

I have the right to show my feelings of grief in my own way. When they are hurting, some kids like to play so they'll feel better for awhile. I can play or laugh, too. I might also get mad and scream. This does not mean I am bad, it just means I have scary feelings that I need help with.

I have the right to need other people to help me with my grief, especially grown-ups who care about me. Mostly I need them to pay attention to what I am feeling and saying and to love me no matter what.

4

I have the right to get upset about normal, everyday problems. I might feel grumpy and have trouble getting along with others sometimes.

5

I have the right to have "griefbursts". Griefbursts are sudden, unexpected feelings of sadness that just hit me sometimes - even long after the death. These feelings can be very strong and even scary. When this happens, I might feel afraid to be alone.

6

I have the right to use my beliefs about my god to help me deal with my feelings of grief. Praying might make me feel better and somehow closer to the person who died.

7

I have the right to try to figure out why the person I loved died. But it's OK if I don't find an answer. Why questions about life and death are the hardest questions in the world.

8

I have the right to think and talk about my memories of the person who died. Sometimes those memories will be happy and sometimes they might be sad. Either way, these memories help me keep alive my love for the person who died.

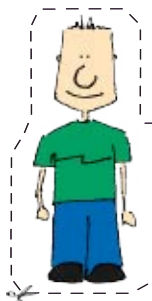
9

I have the right to move forward and feel my grief and, over time, to heal. I'll go on to live a happy life, but the life and death of the person who died will always be a part of me. I'll always miss this special person.

10



Designed by Sarah Cooke for
CHUMS Magazine



Cut out these two pictures of Charlie and Barney and each day you could point them at your feelings. This will help the people around you to know how best to help you. Please ask an adult to help you cut them out!



ACTIVITY TIME!



Often we think that activities are just for kids – especially simple things like colouring and drawing. But why should they be? We can all use these methods of expressing ourselves.

So please complete these activities as you wish – regardless of your age. You may want to do them by yourself, or with a friend or member of your family – however you prefer. Younger children may need some help though. But don't be afraid to express yourselves!

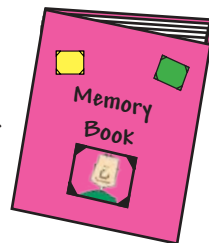
ACTIVITY 1 - MEMORY BOOK

WHAT TO PUT IN IT:

One of the things we all do when we come back from a holiday is put our memories into a scrap-book or photo album. And why do we do this? Because we want to remember every detail so that we'll never forget it! If we are prepared to do this for a holiday, how much more exciting and meaningful it would be to do it about a special person!

WHAT TO DO:

Firstly you need to get a notepad or scrap-book. You may like to decorate the outside of it with pictures, or stickers.



Here are some ideas of what you may like to put in it:

- * **photos** of your special person
- * **poems or lyrics** – that you have written, or that you have read or heard elsewhere but remind you of your special person
- * **memories** – such as the times you spent together, special words or advice they gave to you etc.
- * **diary** – write down all the thoughts and feelings you have right after their death and continue to update this every week, month or year, or just write in it when you feel like it
- * **letters** – writing letters to your special person may help you to feel like they are still with you – sharing in your good times and comforting you during difficult days.

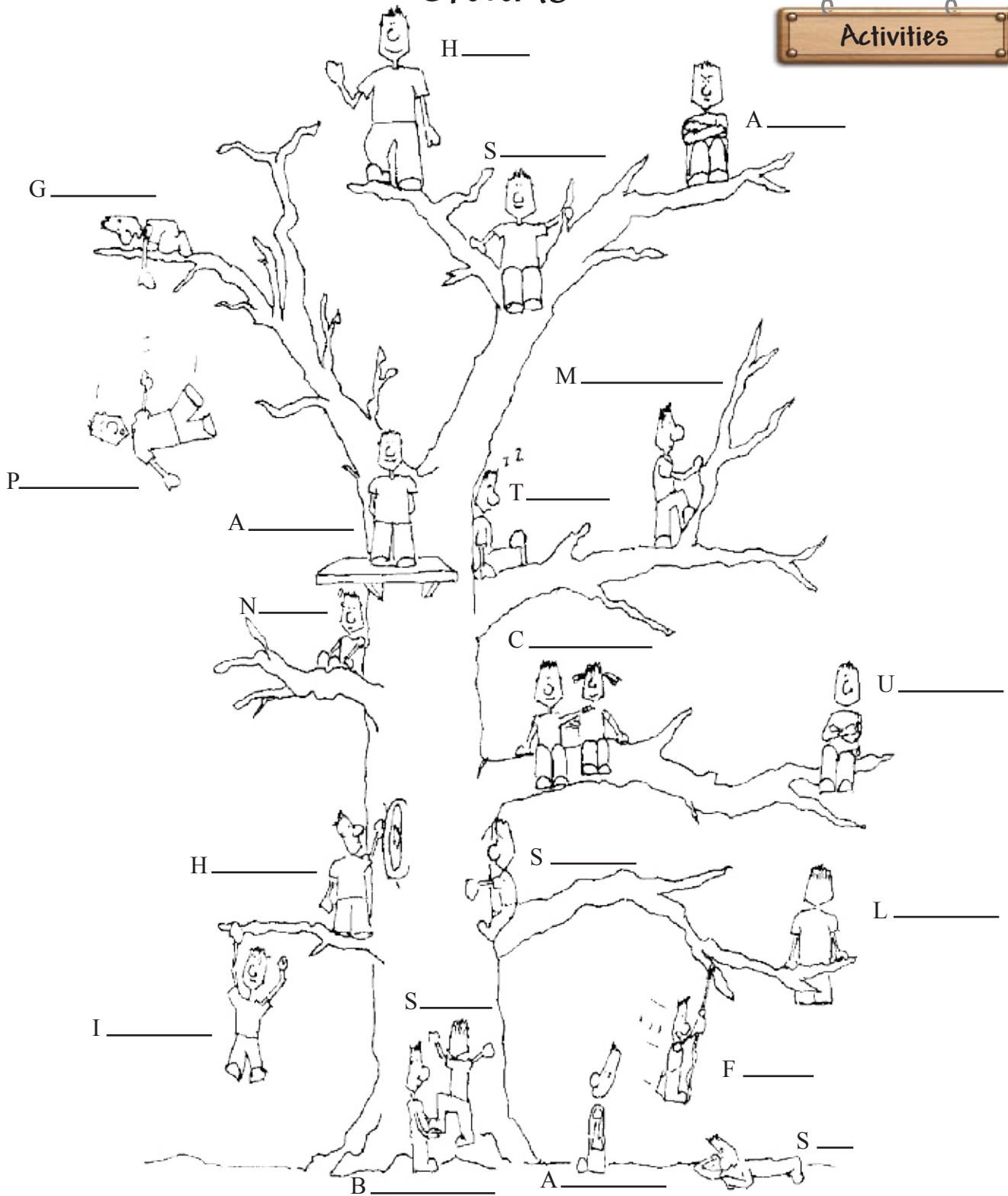
But remember, this is YOUR memory book. You can keep it secret for your own private thoughts, or you may like to share it with your best friend or a member of your family. Hopefully this will be a useful activity that will help you to remember your special person always.

ACTIVITY 2 - WORDSEARCH

Complete this wordsearch using the list of words on the right. The words express some of the emotions that you may have felt before, or may even be feeling right now. The words can be found horizontally (-), vertically (I) or diagonally (/or\). The answers can be found on page 23.

S	T	A	P	P	R	E	H	E	N	S	I	V	E	M	S	J
E	A	P	R	I	D	W	T	R	U	Y	O	K	X	C	F	O
C	V	D	H	P	Q	K	Q	P	O	W	E	R	L	E	S	S
U	Y	N	L	B	U	R	D	E	N	E	D	Y	F	L	G	C
R	P	X	N	G	R	W	O	H	T	I	U	J	A	Z	E	A
E	M	O	G	B	A	N	G	R	Y	P	R	B	N	M	H	R
I	Z	F	U	T	R	L	D	M	H	L	N	E	X	W	P	E
S	K	C	I	V	S	Z	A	F	S	O	B	Z	I	R	G	D
H	U	N	L	O	V	E	D	U	K	N	V	K	O	C	C	G
F	L	M	T	W	I	J	R	L	T	E	O	C	U	O	D	X
R	J	U	Y	R	G	H	O	P	E	L	E	S	S	M	U	N
E	A	M	X	F	K	S	A	Q	N	Y	Z	T	H	F	Q	U
E	Y	T	R	D	M	E	C	P	F	G	I	R	C	O	T	M
Z	W	L	E	P	K	I	X	Y	P	R	V	O	P	R	Z	B
F	Q	R	O	S	B	H	B	U	J	Y	Q	N	L	T	D	J
S	I	N	J	Y	Q	G	S	D	M	K	H	G	N	E	A	W
T	V	M	I	S	U	N	D	E	R	S	T	O	O	D	V	O

ANGRY
ANXIOUS
APPREHENSIVE
BURDENED
COMFORTED
FREE
GUILTY
HAPPY
HOPELESS
INSECURE
LONELY
MISUNDERSTOOD
NUMB
POWERLESS
SAD
SCARED
SECURE
STRONG
TIRED
UNLOVED



ACTIVITY 3 - FILL IN THE BLANKS

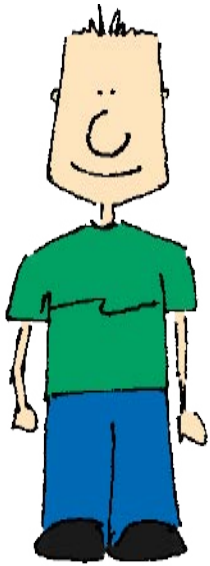
The words from the wordsearch are all related to this tree picture. You may recognize it as an updated version of the 'jelly man tree' as we like to call it. With each 'Charlie' you will notice a line and this is where you can write the missing word. The beginning letter is there to help you, but there is not really any right or wrong answer - just put the word where you think it is most appropriate.

ACTIVITY 4 - COLOUR THE TREE

Now is your chance to express the feelings that you are having right now. Colour in the picture that is above the word you would use to describe your feeling. You may want to colour in more than one and that is fine. You could also tear this picture out and stick it on your wall. Then every so often you could colour in the different feelings you are having. You can use this to see how your feelings are changing and also show the people around you how you are feeling. You can also colour in the rest of the tree, sky and grass.

Competition Time

DRAWING COMPETITION!



Thanks to everyone who entered our drawing competition! We were planning to have one winner, but Barney and I had so much trouble choosing that we have decided to send you all a prize! These will be on their way to you very soon!

The competition is staying open until our next issue so please continue to send us any drawings that you have done. Not only will you get a chance to share with us a little bit about your loved one, but you may also win a prize!!!



My two daughters, Emma, 5½ and Jodie, 9, have done this drawing. Their Dad sadly died. Jodie did this drawing and Emma one day looked up at the sky as the stars were coming out and said

"The stars are the windows for the people in Heaven."

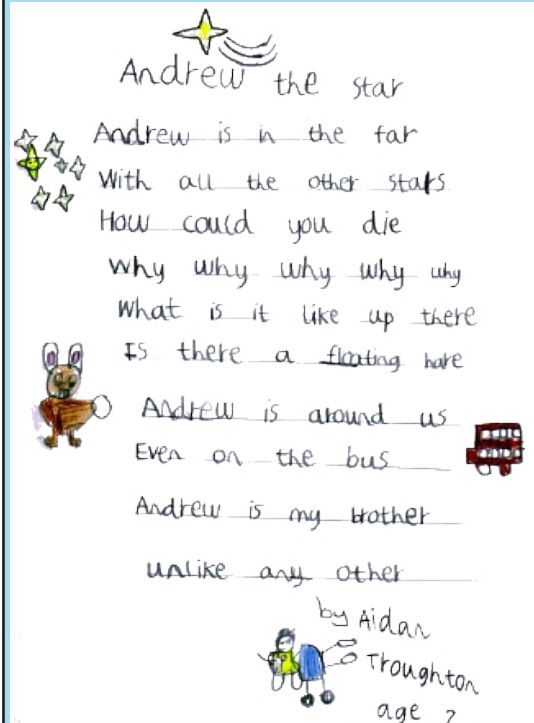
It was and is just so lovely and wonderful.

Christina Costin



Jake has done this drawing in memory of his Dad, Colin.

Although this isn't technically a drawing, we liked the little pictures around the poem so much that we are going to give Aidan a prize too!



Aidan has written this poem and drawn these pictures in memory of his older brother, Andrew, who sadly died from a rare genetic condition.

COPING WITH GRIEF

When someone you love has died the pain is overwhelming, you will experience lots of scary and difficult feelings that can be all jumbled up.

You may feel sad, angry, confused, scared, lonely, guilty, disbelief, pain and many other feelings. It is **NORMAL** to feel like this when someone we love has died.

You may also have physical symptoms such as exhaustion and tiredness and have no energy. You may lose your appetite and be unable to sleep properly. Concentration may be difficult and everyday things like going to school or out with friends can be just too much.

There may seem little point in bothering with anything any more and you may wonder how life is going to be in the future. You miss your special person so much.

This is called grief and it is hard. It is good to share with someone how you feel. It may seem really difficult to talk to someone in your family but doing this can be very helpful. Often families try to protect each other as they do not want to upset each other, but sharing your feelings can make life easier at home. You may prefer to find a friend or another adult you can talk to, someone you know you can trust and who will listen to you.

Talking may be just too difficult and if so perhaps you could try writing your feelings down, writing a letter to your special person or drawing a picture. Expressing our feelings in this way may help. Keeping all your worries and fears inside won't make them go away.

Grief can last for a very long time but gradually the pain will ease. Whilst you will always miss your special person you will eventually adjust to a different way of living.

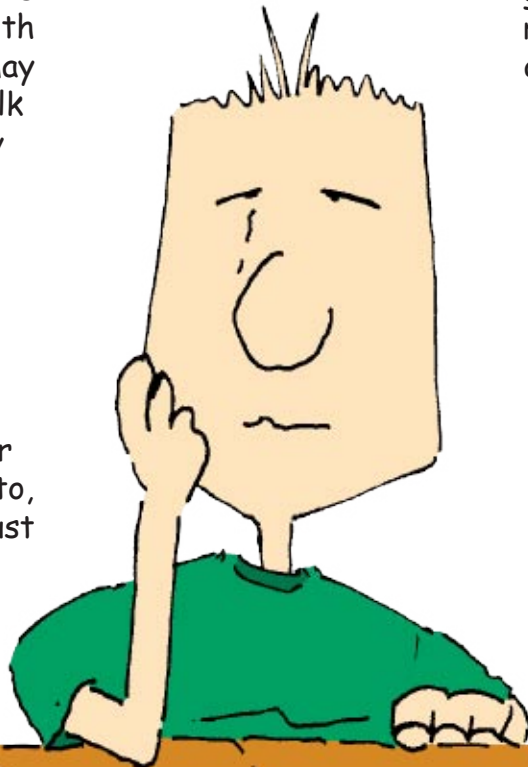
It is important that you find ways of remembering your special person for the rest of your life. You can do this by:

- ➔ Talking about them.
- ➔ Looking at photos.
- ➔ Keeping special belongings.
- ➔ Acknowledging special days.

It is important whilst you are grieving to have some normal routines and you should still allow yourself to have some fun. It doesn't mean that you don't care.

If you would like to talk more about your feelings please do call us and we can arrange for you to have some support.

Dawn



CHUMS REUNION WEEKEND AT DELL FARM



Dell farm is an activity centre which was taken over by CHUMS and Barneys for the weekend. It is set on a farm with all kinds of animals, such as rabbits, horses, sheep and pigs, which the young people were able to feed and stroke.

This weekend was for children who have experienced the death of a parent, close relative or friend. It gives the young people, who have attended the workshops, the opportunity to meet others of a similar age and have been through similar experiences. Many have met each other before.

The weekend was split into a wide range of different activities. Some of these were art and craft, games, drama, music and small group sessions. For one of the art and craft sessions the young people made pictures of things that reminded them of the special person they had lost or feelings they have about them. At another session they made Mother's Day cards, which was on the Sunday, and issues that this brought up were discussed in the small group sessions, and they also painted flower pots and put small plants in them to take home.

Games provided the opportunity for football or nail painting. Some of the girls joined in the football and some boys had their nails painted! All part of the fun!

The girls enjoy some pampering ...



... but the boys are hard as nails!



Drama sessions were on the agenda for Saturday and music on Sunday. Drama was about sharing feelings and acting things out. The young people, although shy to start with, really got into it and seemed to enjoy the session. Music involved making as much noise as possible on an instrument of their choice, and then giving the young people the chance to control the noise.

Near Dell Farm is a tree cathedral, so on Saturday evening we set out on a walk in the dark to find it. When we got there we sat in a circle and spent time just being quiet and thinking about the special person who had died.

The weekend went so quickly that it was time for the adults to come and collect the children and head up to Whipsnade Zoo. It was a lovely sunny day and ideal for a picnic lunch in the garden and then to go and see the animals.

The young people got on really well together and were able to talk to each other about their lives and things that affect them. But they were also able to have a laugh and make new friends.

Report by Deborah Upchurch, Volunteer

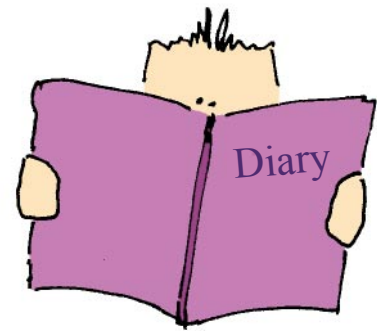


DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

July 5th 2003 - Special Day



This is a special day that is being organised for families and children whose brother or sister has died. If you would be interested in attending or would like more information please phone Dawn.



December 14th 2003 - Remembrance Service

Last year we held our first Remembrance Service. Christmas is often the most difficult time after the death of loved one. This is a wonderful day when we can celebrate Christmas, but also grieve together and understand each other's pain. The service includes readings, singing and a short talk. Afterwards there are refreshments and an opportunity for the children to create a special Christmas memory with the help of the volunteers. This year the service will take place on December 14th. You will receive more information nearer the time, but make sure you keep the date free!



NEWS

NEWS

NEWS

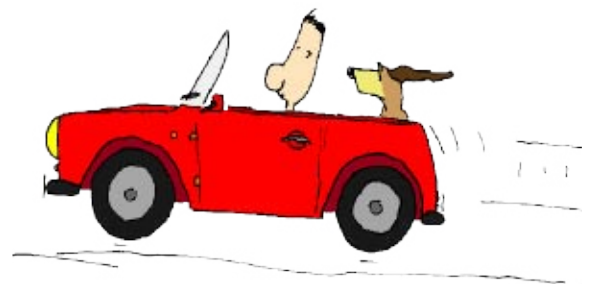
Christmas cards for sale!



Last year for the first time we had our own Christmas Cards made. Our Christmas card design competition was won by Emily Payne, aged 7, and her lovely snowman design can be seen here. We still have some left, so if you would like to stock up before Christmas they are available from Dawn at £3.50 for 10. Be sure to get your hands on them before they sell out!!! The message inside the card is 'Thinking of you this Christmas'.

Volunteers and volunteer drivers

With a growing number of referrals to the service, we are always on the lookout for volunteers and volunteer drivers. If you are interested in either of these roles or would like to know more about what they entail, please call Dawn on 01582 707469.



Raising money for CHUMS

We are so excited that CHUMS has grown so much over the past few years and that we have been able to support so many people in a number of different ways. But, as with everything else in life, we would always like to do more.



A group of volunteers have recently set themselves up as a fundraising group to help us out further.

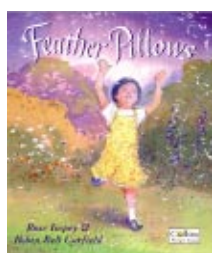
They are known as 'Friends of CHUMS and Barneys' and no doubt you will hear about their various fundraising events in the near future! If you are interested in joining the team, or would just like to make a donation to the service, please call Pat Isger on 01582 841030.

Thanks for your support and keep up the good work everyone!

BRILLIANT BOOKS THAT

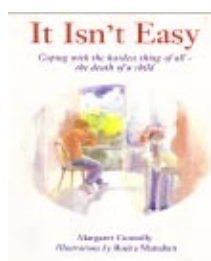
There are many books available on the subject of death, whether related to child bereavement or adult loss. They may be reading books or practical activity books. Here are just a selection of the books we recommend, with a brief description about each one. We have split them into three age groups, but remember that older children may benefit from the simplicity of books written for younger children. There is also a separate section for professionals working with the bereaved.

~~~~~ Books for Children ~~~~~



Feather Pillows by Rose Impey and Robin Bell Corfield

When Sarah finds a white feather she remembers a wonderful day she spent with Grandma. Although she is sad that Grandma died, she learns that it is OK to laugh and cry at the same time.



It Isn't Easy by Margaret Connolly

When a young boy's brother is killed in an accident he is very upset and confused. This story follows how he and his family deal with their emotions and begin to come to terms with the tragedy.

Help Me Say Goodbye by Janis Silverman



Children need help to cope when someone close to them dies. This book encourages children to remember their special person and how to express their feelings with words and pictures.

Water bugs and Dragonflies by Doris Strickney

This is the story of a colony of water bugs who live happily in a pond. But they are confused when, every so often, one of them climbs up a lily stalk and disappears. When this happens they turn into a dragonfly, but being unable to touch water anymore they cannot tell their friends. They must wait patiently for each water bug to make the climb for himself and join their new world in the sky.



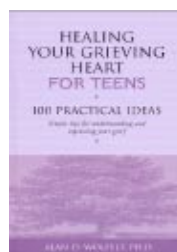
~~~~~ Books for Teenagers ~~~~~



Something I've Never Felt Before By Doris Zagdanski

In this book young people aged between 12 and 21 share their experiences with death, loss and grief, in the hope that teenagers will know that they are not alone in their sadness. There is also a section for parents, teachers and friends where the author discusses coping styles and helping strategies.

Healing Your Grieving Heart - For Teens by Alan D. Wolfelt, PH.D.



"Being a teen is hard enough; being a grieving teen can feel completely overwhelming." This is the basis for Dr. Alan Wolfelt writing this book. It is designed specifically to help teenagers understand and deal with their grief by offering 100 practical ideas and activities.

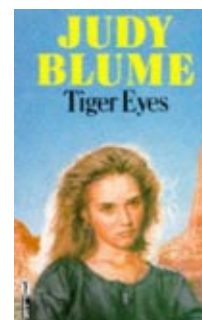
Finding a Way Through When Someone Close Has Died By Pat Mood and Lesley Whittaker

This is a workbook written and illustrated by young people who have experienced the death of someone close to them. They describe their often confusing thoughts and emotions and offer advice as to how to cope with them. It is written especially for children and teenagers and offers a valuable source of help and encouragement.



Tiger Eyes by Judy Blume

Davey is just an average 15-year-old girl until her father's shop is robbed and he is shot dead. She and her mother and younger brother move to New Mexico to rebuild their lives. But Davey is finding it difficult to cope and feels all alone in her sorrow ... until she meets a mysterious guy called Wolf.



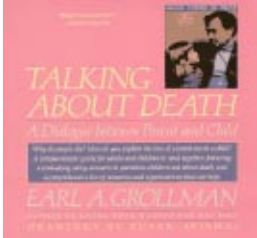
MAY HELP YOU

Book Reviews



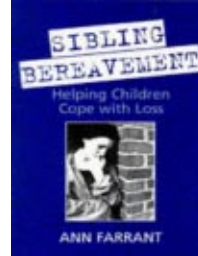
~~~~~ Books for Parents ~~~~~

Talking About Death by Earl A. Grollman



This book is designed to help parents and children talk about death and share the emotions they are experiencing. Children often bottle up their feelings, but this book may be the help they need to express themselves.

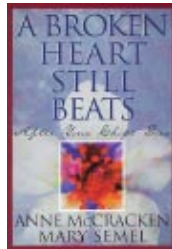
Sibling Bereavement by Ann Farrant



The main focus of this book is that there is no 'right' way to behave towards bereaved children. Each case is different and each child will react in a different way. The book shares the stories of siblings who have been bereaved - including adults who lost a brother or sister during their childhood.

A Broken Heart Still Beats
by Anne McCracken and Mary Semel

This book is written especially for those grieving the death of a child, by two authors who have both experienced this themselves. Through a compilation of poetry, essays and fictional excerpts, it discusses the feelings and emotions that follow the death of a child. It offers helpful ways to begin the coping and healing process.

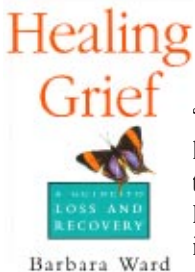


The Single Symphony by Suzy Marta

This booklet has been written specifically for a single parent or step parent who may be experiencing a particularly overwhelming and lonely time. It includes information about the impact that grief can have on children. It also offers helpful suggestions of ways to support them during this difficult time.



~~~~~ Books for Professionals ~~~~~

Healing Grief
by Barbara Ward

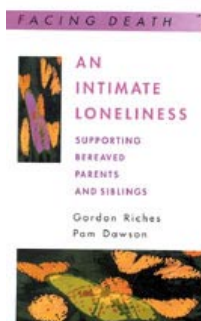
"You cannot stop the birds of sorrow from landing on your shoulder; but you can prevent them from resting in your hair." This Chinese Proverb is the basis for *Healing Grief* which introduces us to the positive side of grief and offers compassionate and practical advice.

Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy
by J. William Worden

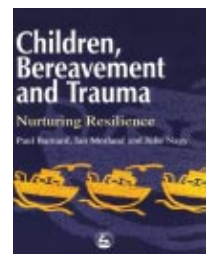
This well-known book amongst professionals has recently been updated. It now includes a number of new counselling techniques as well as new areas of treatment. These are important to know when supporting people who are grieving.

An Intimate Loneliness
by Gordon Riches and Pamela Dawson

This book discusses how bereaved parents and siblings cope with the death of a child in a modern society. Even when surrounded by a large number of family, bereaved parents and siblings can feel completely alone. This book explains many of the emotions that are experienced after the loss and the different ways that support can be given.

Children, Bereavement and Trauma
by Paul Barnard, Ian Morland and Julie Nagy

This book was written from the authors' experience of working with bereaved children after the Hillsborough disaster. It focuses its attention on the needs of bereaved children and combines both the views of children themselves as well as the professional expertise of the authors.



News News News News

CHUMS have started their own library service!!!

The books are available to everyone involved with the service, but you must remember to sign them out when you get them. All the books shown here are available, plus a whole lot more! Please see Dawn if you would like a full book list or would like to borrow any books.

Website Reviews



WORTHWHILE WEBSITES

Browsing the net can be an overwhelming experience. It can take a long time to find what you are looking for and often you don't know whether the information on them is reliable or not. We have browsed the web and have selected a few of the best websites that we found and we hope they will be of use to you.

Cruse Bereavement Care

www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

"Cruse Bereavement Care exists to promote the well-being of bereaved people and to enable anyone suffering a bereavement caused by death to understand their grief and cope with their loss."



This website offers some excellent advice as to how to cope after the death of someone close. It also includes a very good article entitled 'How to help children' and it has some information written especially for schools. It also offers contact names and information about their own bereavement service and what it has to offer.

Winston's Wish

www.winstonswish.org.uk



"Winston's Wish is a charity which supports bereaved children and young people. We also offer guidance and information to their families and to anyone concerned about a child after a bereavement."

This website tells you more about the service in general and also includes an excellent activity centre. This currently offers children the chance to ask questions but it is being updated to also offer the chance to talk to other bereaved people on-line, as well as publishing your own work and seeing other people's work. This site is ideal for young people.

The Child Bereavement Trust

www.childbereavement.org.uk

"The charity provides specialised training and support for professionals to improve the response to the needs of bereaved families."



This service has produced a number of resources and useful information for young people, families, schools and hospitals. Many of these can be read on-line. They also offer a number of contacts and training.

It is great to be in contact with those going through the same things as us, in other parts of the world. Here are two websites of services, similar to ours, that we have been in contact with in America.

Center for Loss and Life Transition

www.centerforloss.com

"Though grief is a natural and necessary process, it's also an extraordinarily difficult one. We're here to help mourners and those who care for them." Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D., Director



This website offers more information about the centre which is based in Colorado. There are also a number of wonderful books, brochures, videotapes, audiocassettes and posters on offer that are definitely worth looking at. They have helpfully been split into three categories: adults, children and teenagers and bereavement caregivers. You may also like to sign up to receive their newsletter.

Bereavement Magazine

www.bereavementmag.com



You may like to sign up to this American magazine whose aim is to be a "support group in print".

They also have 2 particularly good services on their website that you may be interested in taking a look at. The first is called 'e-memorials' which gives you the chance to view and submit a memorial of a loved one. The second is called 'e-sympathy' which is a free email card that you can send to someone experiencing grief.

News News

Don't forget to look at our very own brand new website at:
www.chums.info



SO, WHAT DID YOU THINK?

Did you enjoy the first issue of CHUMS Magazine? Please write in and let us know so that we can make the next issue EVEN BETTER!!! You can write to us on the form below, or on a separate sheet of paper and give it to Dawn or send it to:

CHUMS Magazine, CHUMS,
Sundon Park Health Centre,
Tenth Avenue, Luton, Beds LU3 3EP

Which bits did you like the most?

What would you like to see more of?

What would you like to see less of?

To CHUMS Magazine,



From

Address

.....

COMING UP NEXT ISSUE:

Here are the answers to the wordsearch. Did you manage to find them all?

We get to know more about the volunteers and...

We'll have a brand new poster for your wall

Plus our regular features:

Updates on our latest events

News of coming events

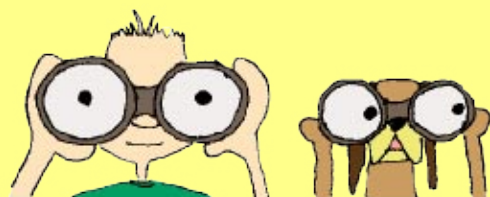
Reviews of more books and websites

New activities to try

More adventures with Charlie and Barney

And of course, more of your thoughts, poems and pictures - so keep them coming in!

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LOOK OUT FOR IT!

The Elephant in the Room

By Terry Kettering

There's an elephant in the room.

It is large and squatting, so it is hard to get around it.
Yet we squeeze by with, "How are you?" and "I'm fine," and a thousand other
forms of trivial chatter. We talk about the weather. We talk about work.
We talk about everything else, except the elephant in the room.

There's an elephant in the room.
We all know it's there. We are thinking about the elephant as we talk together.
It is constantly on our minds. For, you see, it is a very large elephant.
It has hurt us all.

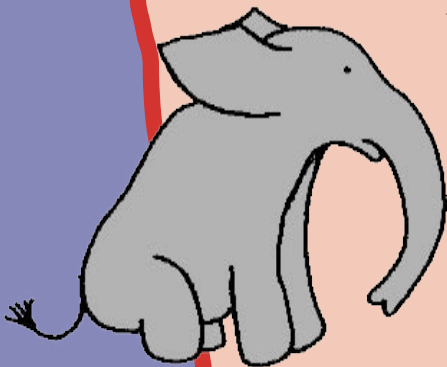
But we don't talk about the elephant in the room.
Oh, please say his (her) name.
Oh, please say his (her) name again.
Oh, please, let's talk about the elephant in the room.

For if we talk about his (her) death, perhaps we can talk about his (her) life.
Can I say his (her) name to you and not have you look away?
For if I cannot, then you are leaving me....

alone....

in a room....

with an elephant.



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