

Funeral Directors

Working with those who have been bereaved

Message to take away

Public Health promote the message that grief is a normal human response to the death of a loved one and most (85%) of people will be able to manage to live well with their grief with the help of family friends, good neighbours and trusted work colleagues. People who require more support such as specialised counselling will still need ongoing care and support from people they are in contact with.

Did you know?

After Family and Friends, Funeral Directors are the third most helpful form of support to those who have been bereaved.¹ The information below will help you to offer additional personalised support to those who have been bereaved (Samar et al 2019).

Aoun S, Lowe J, Kim M. Rumbold C & Rumbold B (2019) Is there a role for the funeral service provider in bereavement support within the context of compassionate communities?, *Death Studies* 43:10 [online], 619-628, Available from: DOI: 10.1080/07481187.2018.1506835

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Simple things which can help are

- Sharing the memories together with others.
- Spending time with someone, making someone a cup of tea and listening to them.
- Using the name of the person who has died is honouring and not upsetting. Upset and hurt occur when we ignore the bereaved and avoid mentioning the person who has died.
- Reminding people they are stronger together.
- Reminding people there is no set time for grief, each person's journey is unique.
- Talk of continuing bonds, we still carry our love for that person in our hearts and very gradually as we continue to live well we will begin to grow a new life around our grief.
- Understand that with grief there may be times when one minute we can cope with our grief and seem to manage everyday life, and the next moment our grief may be overwhelming and we struggle to cope with even the simple tasks of daily living.
- Encourage people to look after their own wellbeing.
- Signpost people to activities or support which might be relevant for them.



Support available for all

Internet

lets-get.com/bereavement local Public Health website, trusted by clinical psychologists. Topics include:

- Self help
- Organisations offering support
- Death of a child & baby loss
- Things we can put in place before we die which will help our loved ones
- For people who don't have internet access – a printable flyer with support services
- Tips for getting through grief
- How to register a death in the Dudley borough
- Support with grief associated with coronavirus
- Supporting people who have been bereaved
- Bereavement affecting people who have dementia
- Miscarriage, stillbirth and neonatal death
- Advanced care planning
- End of life at home

1 page bereavement support leaflets

- This is given out by Dudley's crematoriums. It is designed to help people who don't have internet access. This can also be printed and given out <https://lets-get.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Bereavement-A5-leaflet-Nov-20-OP-final-version-2.pdf>
- There is also a version for people with internet access <https://lets-get.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Bereavement-A5-leaflet-June-21-internet-1.pdf>

When someone dies booklet

- Received by the person who registers the death. Also available at this link <https://www.rns.uk/russells-hall-hospital-38913-2>
Part 1 is what happens after a death
Part 2 is Bereavement Care
This is a rich resource that may be worth printing out for all staff to read and be able to share the information with families.

Visit a Place of Welcome

Places of Welcome are not bereavement specific settings however, they are friendly, sociable and ideal for people who have lost social connections. They are places where anyone can go to see a friendly face, get free cup of tea and biscuit and a conversation if and when they need it.

They are great especially if someone is new to the area or looking to get out and about more, they can help people to make new friends and find out about more things going on locally.

The local Places of Welcome are:

The Priory Pharmacy Community Garden Place of Welcome, 95/97 Priory Road, Dudley, DY1 4EH
- Mondays 14:00 - 16:00

Hope House, Springs Church, 7 Zoar Street, Lower Gornal, Dudley, DY3 2PA - Mondays, Tuesday and Wednesdays 09:30 - 14:30 plus NEW Community Garden

Woodside Internet Centre, Hallchurch Road, Holly Hall, Dudley, DY2 0TQ - Mondays 10:00 - 15:30

Top Church, St Thomas and St Luke's, High Street, Dudley, DY1 1QD - Wednesdays 13:00 - 15:00

Community Hub, 16A Stone Street, Dudley, DY1 1NS - Tuesdays 10:30 - 12:30. *Due to current Covid-19 restrictions, please call 01384 456166 to book, as they are only allowing six people at a time.*

Christ Church, High Street, Lye, Stourbridge, DY9 8LF - Fridays 11:00 - 13:00 outdoors
<https://tctogether.org.uk/initiatives/pow>

Five ways to wellbeing

Simple actions that have a positive impact on day to day wellbeing.

Take Notice

The borough has lots of fascinating things and places to see. Take time to explore the sites, nature and geology all around us.

Keep Learning

Learning can boost our self-esteem. We don't have to achieve a new qualification to enjoy the benefits. Learning to cook a different meal or try out some crafts can be just as good.

Be Active

Being more active doesn't just get us fitter, it's also known to make us happier and feel less stressed. Try being active even if it's just for a short period each day and see how much happier you feel.

Connect

Interacting with others is a need we all share. Good relationships and doing activities with others are beneficial for our wellbeing. Try visiting a Place of Welcome.

Give

You could volunteer your time to help a cause or just do something kind to help a neighbour. Any kind acts can really boost your self-esteem.

<https://lets-get.com/explore/bereavement/five-ways-to-wellbeing-adult/>

Bereavement Information Hubs

Help people experiencing bereavement to meet other people in a safe, compassionate environment for informal chats. When individuals feel ready, the hubs introduce them to other support platforms. They can also signpost in to support services if necessary.

Dudley Bereavement Information Hub

Facilitated by White House Cancer Support the hub aims to support any adult experiencing a bereavement not just bereavements due to cancer.

Where: White House Cancer Support, 10 Ednam Road, Dudley DY1 1JX

When: Second Monday of the month 2pm – 4pm

To attend contact: Telephone 01384 231232

Email enquiries@support4cancer.org.uk

Young People's Bereavement Information Hub

For people age 9 to 18 years.

Where: Online (Zoom)

When: 2-4pm fortnightly on Saturday's

How to join: Telephone The What? Centre 01384 379992

Email thewhatcentre@hotmail.co.uk

For more information click [here](#)

Virtual Bereavement Information Hub

Facilitated by Compton Care the hub aims to support any adult experiencing a bereavement.

When: 10-11.30am Thursday's

Where: Online (Zoom)

To join visit: [Compton Care](#)

<https://lets-get.com/explore/bereavement/bereavement-hubs/>

Mary Stevens Hospice hub drop-in session

Mary Stevens hub drop-in session offers support and the opportunity to meet others who have experienced the loss of losing someone important to them. They understand there is no time scale for grief and have tailored their bereavement support to meet the needs of the local community. They aim to offer a safe and secure environment to help support people irrespective of how long they were bereaved.

The hospice volunteers look forward to welcoming you on the last Thursday of each month:

When: 10.30am-12pm

Where: The Stourbridge Institute Social Club, Market Street, Entrance via Bell Street, Stourbridge, DY8 1AE

Mary Stevens Hospice are planning further hubs elsewhere, so do get in touch if you would like to find out more email supporthub@marystevenshospice.co.uk

Telephone 01384 443010 or alternatively 01384 445417

<https://lets-get.com/explore/bereavement/organisations-offering-support/mary-stevens-hospice/>

Telephone Advice Line

Mary Stevens Hospice telephone service offers timely, practical, and compassionate support including signposting. The telephone information line is available over 7 days a week between the hours of 8am-4pm and can be contacted by calling 01384 445417.

<https://lets-get.com/explore/bereavement/organisations-offering-support/mary-stevens-hospice/>

Additional Local Support

TLC

Bereavement discussion and friendship group, Wednesday's 11am-12pm, Organiser Anita Tollerton

Venue: Chawn Hill Church, Stourbridge DY9 7JD

Telephone: 01384 397287

Email: admin@chawnhillchurch.org.uk

Cherish 'The Biscuit Club'

Bereavement Drop-in, Wednesday's 11am – 12pm

Venue: Parochial Hall, Vicarage Road, Blackheath B62 8HX

Organiser: Lisa Hyde, Counselling Practitioner

Cost: £2.50 per person

Telephone: 07426 170549

Email: lisa123_1972@hotmail.com

A self-funded support group run by a counselling practitioner. Coffee and cake provided. A separate room for sensitive discussions is also available.

Chatterbox action against loneliness

A free, short-term telephone befriending service

For those who would benefit from having someone to talk to they will be matched with a trained, volunteer befriender who will make a weekly telephone call.

Telephone: 01743 245088

Email: chatterbox@omega.uk.net

<https://lets-get.com/explore/bereavement/bereavement-in-community/>

Bereavement Expert Patient Programme – Facilitated by Dudley Council Public Health

Six week course for people who have a long term health condition and are also struggling due to a bereavement.

For more information or to book a place contact 01384 816437 or email smp@dudley.gov.uk
<https://lets-get.com/ageing-well/self-management/>

Listening and Guidance Service

For those who may be struggling with illness or who have suffered a bereavement or loss.
Up to 4 supportive conversations and available through GP referral.

Support after suicide online book from Public Health England and National Suicide Prevention Alliance

<https://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/resource/help-is-at-hand/>

Please do share this resource with the family of someone whose death has been through suicide.

We know that people bereaved by suicide are also at a higher risk of also dying through suicide so we would also like to share these 24/7 helplines:

Samaritans: 116 123

Text: SHOUT to 85258

Black Country Helpline: 0800 008 6516

Mental Health and wellbeing support for Funeral Directors and their staff

All staff who work with those who have been bereaved can benefit by good self-care of their own physical and mental wellbeing and by knowing where to turn to get more expert help if needed.

For those staff who are registered with a Dudley GP, local support for Mental Health and Wellbeing is available from Dudley Talking Therapies who can help with Stress, anxiety, depressions worry and self-esteem.

Call **Dudley Talking Therapies** on 0800 953 0404 for more information or to self-refer for help.

<https://www.dihc.nhs.uk/find-a-service/dudley-talking-therapy-service>

A free online course in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy from Silver Cloud is also available to help anyone experiencing depression and anxiety.

<https://dudleytalkingtherapy.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/>

Specific support for Funeral Directors

Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors 0800 077 8578

National Association of Funeral Directors wellbeing support 0333 242 3103

Training offer

People who have been bereaved by suicide are at higher risk of suicide themselves. The following training is available to help you to recognise when someone may be at risk and guide you in responding.

Zero Suicide Alliance Training - FREE, short online modules to help build skills and confidence to support someone who may be considering suicide. <https://www.zerosuicidealliance.com/training>

Dudley Wise Steps Suicide Prevention Training – commissioned by Public Health but free to participants, goes into greater depth and provides tools to support people who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide. <https://forwardforlife.org/sptdudley>

Please consider participating in one of both opportunities. It may help you to save a life.

Remember you can also provide people with these 24/7 helpline numbers in case any thoughts they may have of suicide become overwhelming.

Samaritans: 116 123

Text: SHOUT to 85258

Black Country Helpline: 0800 008 6516

Support contacts

Name of organisation	Support offered	Contact/visit
Age UK	Information and services for elderly and their carers	0800 678 1602
At a loss	Supporting the bereaved to support	www.ataloss.org
Bereavement Information Hub, Congton Care	Volunteer led local hubs providing information about support services	01902 774 586
Blue Cross	Pet loss support	0300 7909903
Child Bereavement UK	Support for families when a baby or child dies or is dying	0800 028 8840 www.childbereavementuk.org
Citizens Advice Bureau	Free independent and confidential information and advice	0300 3099044
Compassionate Friends	Organisation of bereaved parents and their families offering support	0345 123 2304 www.cfl.org.uk
Cruse	Face-face, telephone, email and website support	0808 808 1677 www.cruse.org.uk
Dudley Community Information Directory	Link to local information	www.dudleyci.co.uk
Dudley Council Plus	Death registration	0300 555 2345 www.dudley.gov.uk
Edwards Trust	Local support to anyone affected by the death of a child (18 or under)	0121 454 1705
Good Grief Trust	Guidance and support	0800 260 0400 www.thegoodgrieftrust.org
Grief Chat	Share experiences, explore feelings and be supported	01524 889 823
Let's get	Supporting you in bereavement and to make healthy lifestyle changes.	www.lets-get.com
Listening and Guidance Service	Up to four supportive phone calls	Referral from your GP
Mary Stevens Hospice	Telephone support line	01384 445417
NHS	Advice, tips and tools to help you make the best choices about your health and wellbeing	www.nhs.uk/live-well
Omega	Charterbox action against loneliness and crisis support programme	01743 245088 www.omega.uk.net
Road Peace	Support and information for those bereaved or injured in a road crash	08454 500 355
Samaritans	Confidential, non-judgemental emotional support	116 123
Silverline	Telephone friendship	08004 708 090
Sudden Bereavement Helpline	Help for those affected by a sudden death	0800 2600 400 https://sudden.org/
Survivors of bereavement by suicide	National helpline	0300 111 5065 www.uksuicids.org
Winston's Wish	Support for children and their families after the death of a parent or sibling	080088 020 021 www.winstonswish.org

If you feel you require further support, then please speak to your GP

Bereavement support

Dudley
The Council

 Let's Get Involved
Dudley

Bereavement support

Grief can seem overwhelming, perhaps especially if the loss or death has been unexpected or traumatic, but grief is a normal human response to the loss of someone that we love. Each of us will experience grief in a different way and how we choose to respond to our grief will also be different for each of us.

We do know that the choices we make can help us to manage our sadness and our grief as well as we can. The following information is there to give you support and information to help you.

Looking after yourself when you are grieving

Coping with the loss of a loved one is always difficult. There is no correct way to act or feel when you experience loss - you feel the way you feel. Everyone is different and feels differently about the loss of a loved one.

Grief can be painful, exhausting and overwhelming but most people find that in time things become easier. As you grieve there are things that you can do to help yourself cope.

These include:

- Learning and understanding more about the process of grief
- Learning strategies to help you stay active
- Making good choices about how you use your time
- Exploring positive lifestyle changes

Grief knocks you off balance. You may find yourself having to cope with a world which feels very different as you go through a process of mourning. Intense feelings including sadness, anger, fear and shame are common, as well as memory and concentration difficulties, exhaustion and lack of motivation.

Whatever your thoughts and feelings it is important to know that powerful feelings are a natural part of the grieving process. Knowing that they are common may help them to seem more normal and not to be feared. It is also important to know that they will pass.

In grief you will experience different kinds of coping and shift back and forth between these two approaches. At times you will face your loss head-on and at others you'll focus on fulfilling practical needs and life tasks.

For many, healing is not a case of 'moving on' from grief, but instead growing around it.

Practical things you can do

Express yourself - Talking is often a good way to soothe painful emotions.

Talking to a friend, family member, trusted work colleague, health professional or counsellor can aid the healing process

Allow yourself to feel sad - It's a healthy part of the grieving process

Maintain a routine - Keeping up simple things like doing the housework can help

Sleep - Emotional strain can make you very tired

Eat healthily - A well balanced diet will help you cope

Looking after yourself - Make sure that you have some time to yourself and do things that you enjoy e.g. meet a friend, go for a walk, visit a nature reserve, have a relaxing bath, etc.

Avoid 'numbing' the pain - Things like alcohol and other substances will make you feel worse once the numbness wears off

Helping ourselves to have better mental wellbeing

There are five simple actions we all can take that have a positive impact on day to day wellbeing.

Take notice

The borough has lots of fascinating things and places to see. Take time to explore the sites, nature and geology all around us.

Keep learning

Learning can boost our self-esteem. We don't have to achieve a new qualification to enjoy the benefits. Learning to cook a different meal or try out some crafts can be just as good.

Be active

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Connect

Interacting with others is a need we all share. Good relationships and doing activities with others are beneficial for our wellbeing. There are lots of ways we can connect more. Try chatting to a neighbour, find a pen friend or join a group.

Give

You could volunteer your time to help a cause or just do something kind to help a neighbour. Any kind acts can really boost your self-esteem.

Supporting someone who is bereaved

Many of us don't have a personal experience of bereavement until we are quite old. We may find that we struggle to know what to say to someone who has been bereaved. We may worry that we may say the wrong thing and add to someone's distress. But saying something like "I'm sorry and I don't know what to say" is far more comforting than saying nothing or avoiding someone.

So, if you know someone who has been bereaved try to:

- Acknowledge the death
- Offer practical support
- Listen if the person wants to talk
- Be honest, open and sympathetic
- Keep in touch