

P-4 **TALKING ABOUT BEREAVEMENT OVER & OVER – ENABLING COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER THROUGH GRIEF**

Ian Leech, Nikki Archer. *St Giles Hospice, Lichfield, UK*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2016-001245.28

Through community engagement we are developing compassionate communities where people understand grief and support each other throughout the grieving process. It is in communities that the taboo of talking about death and dying needs to be tackled.

**We Are**

- working in partnership with like-minded organisations to provide volunteer-led drop-in Bereavement Help Points where members of the community across our catchment area can access support which is client- centric
- facilitating workshops that enable organisations to understand how bereavement may affect their staff and clientele
- working with local college students to help them understand bereavement and in doing so changing the attitudes of a generation.

On average we support over eighty people per month at our help points at a cost of around £1.50 per person.

We evaluate through written/verbal feedback with volunteers and service users. This helps us understand the needs of individuals and organisations we are working with.

**We have**

- enabled people in our communities to access bereavement support through our help points. This has been recognised with a national Bereavement Project of the Year award
- enabled local organisations within our catchment to understand bereavement and therefore better support their employees and clientele
- had our *Understanding Bereavement in the Workplace* workshop used as an integral part of a national Compassionate Employers programme
- currently engaged with over 100 students with our 'Understanding Bereavement' workshops. More have been requested.

**Conclusion** If we want our communities to develop a compassionate mentality toward the bereaved, it is important they understand how grief affects people and how they can offer support. This area of our work is helping them to achieve that. From supporting those grieving to enabling a new generation to understand how grief affects people, we are helping to break the taboo.

P-5 **EXTENDING BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO INCLUDE SUPPORT FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING SUDDEN AND UNEXPECTED DEATH**

Sarah Popplestone-Helm, Sarah Wardell. *St Richard's Hospice, Worcester, UK*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2016-001245.29

The local adult hospice has experience of supporting children and young people experiencing the life- threatening illness and subsequent death of a loved one.

Clear potential for partnership working was identified following the receipt of funding from the local Clinical Commissioning Group. Funding was allocated to develop a bereavement service for individuals bereaved by sudden and unexpected death.

Through this, a bereavement group for children supported by the hospice and the local bereavement service was developed.

Children's workers from both services pooled experience and knowledge to provide eight sessions for bereaved children, young people and their parent/carer. Clients attending the group were extremely supportive of each other and some have gone on to have one-to-one support, visited by a member of the team within school or at home so that they can continue the exploration of their loss that the group initiated.

The hospice team had not worked with clients bereaved by sudden and unexpected death before, and they were challenged to build on their existing skills. Education and support for the team was crucial. De-briefs followed each group meeting enabling facilitators to explore how the session had impacted on them. Supervision was also provided on a regular basis.

The group did not cater for children and young people bereaved by suicide. It was felt that the loss was so different that it might not be constructive for the clients. However, following the success of an adult group which focussed on loss by suicide, the staff are feeling an increase in skill, knowledge and confidence. Therefore in response to the high number of referrals for children, a group is planned for September 2016.

Partnership working has been a positive experience enabling both services to develop their portfolio of services within the local community.

P-6 **INSPIRING YOUNG PEOPLE – TIME 4 YOU PROGRAMME!**

<sup>1</sup>Sarah Bowers, <sup>1</sup>Judith Park, <sup>2</sup>Christie Munley. <sup>1</sup>*St Luke's Hospice, Sheffield, UK;* <sup>2</sup>*Brathay Trust*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2016-001245.30

**Background** The ability to provide holistic support for families is extremely important. As an organisation that looks after adults with terminal illness, their partners, carers and families, we were aware that we did not provide bereavement support to young people under the age of 18 who may have had a relative or loved one supported by hospice care.

To target this gap in service provision we are working with a national youth charity to provide a new support service to young people coping with family long-term illness and bereavement.

**Aim** To support young people to cope with bereavement and look to the future.

**Method** A 12-week programme delivered by youth workers will engage young people in positive activities and provide pre- and post- bereavement support. Through a process of creative therapies and outdoor activities it will give young people a voice, allow them to share their experiences with other young people in similar circumstances, provide decompression time and an outlet with people who understand and care.

**Results** By engaging young people in positive activities during a difficult time in their lives, it is hoped the programme will improve confidence and self-esteem, create positive peer relationships, let them explore and develop aspirations and deliver increased resilience and coping strategies.

Evaluation of the programme will be multi-faceted with a mixture of self-evaluation, using Star Outcome Diagrams, staff evaluation including interviews with journey plans and observational feedback.

A 50:50 funding split has been agreed for the initial programme with a commitment to a second phase being delivered in late 2016.

**Conclusion** Coping with bereavement can be extremely difficult for young people and if successful the programme would extend the level of care being provided to support young people pre- and post- bereavement, expanding the holistic support that can be offered to families.

**P-7 EMPOWERING SCHOOL STAFF TO ENABLE A BALANCED AND HEALTHY VIEW OF DEATH, DYING AND BEREAVEMENT THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

Sarah Popplestone-Helm. *St Richard's Hospice, Worcester, UK*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2016-001245.31

The hospice received funding from the local Clinical Commissioning Group for a schools' project. The aim was to empower school staff to support pupils in their grief whilst enabling a more balanced and healthier view of death, dying and bereavement.

The Family Support team consulted with local schools and bereaved families ascertaining what would help most. A programme of workshops was developed and rolled out to 16 schools. 159 staff attended over a two-year period. A resource pack was developed and given to each school.

Workshops were evaluated by a snap survey, responses were positive and requests for more training resulted in the hospice developing a formalised training day. The 'One Step Beyond' training was rolled out.

An increase in contact from schools was noted; i.e. The head teacher of a local primary school requested advice following the sudden death of a pupil. She described the distress of the pupils, parents, staff and of the wider community. Within 24 hours the hospice team had visited the head teacher. Support meetings were held with the head teacher on a one-to-one basis, group meetings with the parents and the staff, and the school was supported to provide an afternoon for the children where they were able to say goodbye through a variety of activities.

**Feedback from the head teacher**

*When you find yourself supporting staff, pupils and parents who are struggling to understand unexpected events, nothing prepares you. I will be forever grateful for your understanding, compassion and practical suggestions.*

This head teacher has agreed to be filmed talking through these points so that her experience encourages other schools to develop processes enabling staff to support pupils in their grief whilst enabling a more balanced and healthier view of death, dying and bereavement throughout the school environment.

**P-8 BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN – IMPROVING WELL-BEING THROUGH INTERACTION IN CREATIVE ARTS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

Donall Henderson, Michelle Kosky, Yvonne Martin. *Foyle Hospice, Londonderry, UK*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2016-001245.32

Healing Hearts provides bereavement support for any child or young person aged four – 16 years, who have experienced the diagnosis or death of someone close, regardless of the cause. It might also be the first direct contact with a hospice based service.

The project is resourced by one member of staff, ably assisted by a number of committed volunteers and offers services to approximately fifty children per annum. We have found that

since the introduction of additional activities the demand for service is growing. In addition to individual counselling sessions, there are group activities and workshops, as a therapeutic option to improve the general wellbeing of participants. The project is evaluated in terms of its impact on the health and well-being of children, other family members and carers.

Research has shown that bereaved children/adolescents can become disadvantaged in a range of ways including, but not limited to issues such as risk of family problems, poverty, mental health problems, offending and substance abuse, poor school achievement and poor self-care/self-esteem.

Healing Hearts recognises that pre-bereavement services can be a very useful way to address a child's or adolescent's emotional turmoil and therefore assists with the child's progress in accepting the events and can discourage behavioural and emotional problems in the long-term.

By working in partnership with community arts groups, we have created a platform whereby children have the opportunity to express their emotions through art, creativity, physical activities and social events. This enables interaction and allows children to share their stories with peers who have had similar experiences. Feedback suggests that this also enhances their self-esteem and confidence. Our primary focus is to ensure that children do not become withdrawn and feel comfortable expressing their feelings and discussing their own experience.

**P-9 SATURDAY MORNING PICTURES: A CHILDREN'S TEAM INITIATIVE**

<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Wastling, <sup>1</sup>Jo Derry, <sup>2</sup>Jamie Johnstone. <sup>1</sup>*The Hospice of St Francis, Berkhamsted, UK;* <sup>2</sup>*Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2016-001245.33

**Objectives** The idea came from an eight-year old client receiving bereavement support. He knew of our evening films for grown-ups and suggested films on a Saturday morning for children and their families. He thought *Up* would be a good start.

Our community engagement programme now offers a monthly Saturday family event all the year round. We have outdoor activities during Spring and Summer and films in the Autumn and Winter. All family members can participate in the support we give our youngest clients.

**Death literacy** The films screened have themes of loss, ageing, illness and death within stories of love, compassion and care. Films for children do not shirk death and can look at it sensitively with a respectful regard for life. *Up* is a wonderful example.

**Education** It provides a safe environment for families to experience together their feelings and thoughts around loss. Children are always keen to talk about the film afterwards. During a sad part of *Inside Out* a little girl left her comfy chair to have a cuddle with mum seated nearby. She returned to her own seat when the sad moments passed. If empathy is about imagining another person's world from the perspective of your own, then films certainly encourage that regardless of age.

**Outcomes** Attendance and feedback have been extremely encouraging with families suggesting films for future screenings to watch together in a group. One dad said it provided something to do with his young daughter at the weekend.

**Future possibilities** Inspired by our young client, we are now considering asking teenagers at the drop-in service if they would like to watch films together. Experiencing a film in a hospice setting clearly has the potential to help support bereaved people of all ages.