P-240 CAN PRE-BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT FOLLOW MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS? A CASE STUDY

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10.1136/bmjspcare-2019-HUKNC.262

Background and aims Abraham Maslow (1943) proposed that motivation is a result of a person's attempt to fulfil five basic needs. This five-tier model suggests that needs lower in the hierarchy need to be met before you can move up the ladder. This motivation theory is person-centred and I have looked at how it can be transferred to working with children pre- and post- bereavement to achieve a positive outcome.

Pre-bereavement work with children and families takes on a similar trajectory beginning with basic needs/information about the illness and its effects, leading to self-actualisation/realisation of death and dying with memories and treasures to keep in place. The aim is to support children step-by-step through bereavement. In my case study the aim was to create treasures to keep, make memories and understand about death and dying.

Case study/methods (see table 1 below).

Abstract P-240 Table 1 Case study/method

Maslow's needs	Pre-bereavement needs
Physiological need	Family reads books and chat with child. Including child in the journey.
Safety needs	Introduction of Project Linus blankets. Child feels safe, secure and comforted.
Belonging and love needs	Love and Laughter making lipstick kisses to keep. Feeling of belonging to the family unit.
Esteem needs	Prior to last visit to say goodbye to mum; discussed with child about giving mum a note and fabric heart to hold. Following visit, feeling of accomplishment as she achieved what she set out to do.
Self-actualisation	Child wrote a message on a helium balloon and released into the sky to remember mum whilst the funeral was on. Recognition that mum no longer here. Creative activity and acceptance as mum popped out from behind the cloud to say thank you.

Conclusion Using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory enables a step-by-step pre-bereavement method that supports both the child and the family.

P-241 GEMS – A GROUP-BASED APPROACH TO SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH BEREAVEMENT

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10.1136/bmjspcare-2019-HUKNC.263

Background The provision of hospice-based support and services to children and young people should be integral to the delivery of holistic care in an adult setting. Opportunities for remembrance, social connection and communication with others are important areas of bereavement support. Evaluation of service provision, feedback from users and staff identified the need for dedicated support available to children.

Coordinated and delivered by counsellors, music and play therapists, our GEMS (Grief Every Memory Special) group was established in 2016.

Aims To comprehensively evaluate our GEMS group programme, establishing a better understanding of a) those using the service and how to make it more accessible, b) children's feelings regarding support that is more therapeutically focused and/or fun-based, c) the role of peer support.

Methods Since 2016, 10 GEMS events have been held in a range of settings. This paper focusses on service evaluation, feedback analysis, internal and external consultation with both children and their guardians. We routinely gauged the number of referrals, visits and recurrence of attendance, feedback of children and families, conducted cost analysis and sought additional financial support to evolve the scope of provision available.

Results Of the 42 children supported: 67% had suffered bereavement of a parent, 21% a sibling and 12% a grandparent. Responses to each GEMS' event suggested children felt supported and engaged, valuing both fun/leisure activities and those with a therapeutic focus. Written and verbal feedback indicated children frequently engaged better in mixed-age groups and suggested GEMS' days worked best when following a theme.

Conclusion Evaluation of GEMS demonstrates children of all ages benefit greatly from the provision of activity-based bereavement support from teams of creative therapists and counsellors. This is a relatively inexpensive means of engaging a 'hard-to-reach' group, which all hospices should be encouraged to develop. Further focused research will enhance the GEMS programme.

P-242 GRANDMA ON THE MOON – SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH BEREAVEMENT

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10.1136/bmjspcare-2019-HUKNC.264

In partnership with Huddersfield Grammar School and AZtoB theatre company, a performance of 'Grandma on the Moon' was held in May 2019.

'Grandma On the Moon' is a performance exploring a child's understanding of loss and bereavement. Timmy aged 10, understands death means 'you don't come back', however, Poppy, age 5 doesn't. She wants to find her grandma to 'tell her something really important'. Using the imaginative play of children, they go on adventures through lands magical and familiar to try and 'find grandma'.

'Grandma in the Moon' aims to support young people and families through the bereavement process, encouraging us to have open, honest conversations around death. It shows how children grieve differently to adults and raises awareness of different support strategies to help manage conflicting emotions.

The play was performed twice, to two groups of children, with time in between for discussion. 160 children in total took part and feedback and reaction was wide ranging, with tears and laughter: 'I liked that they told everyone that it's ok to cry, get angry, or talk about when you lose someone'.

What made this collaboration unique was exploring the intergenerational element, raising awareness of local services and providing a Kirkwood presence in a school setting. This involved a true multidisciplinary team approach, with input across various disciplines within the hospice. A presentation delivered before the performance was designed to be child-friendly, to prompt questions and discussions as well as raise awareness. Children were supported to share their feelings and reactions and chose to share stories of bereavements they had experienced and memories of loved ones. Many wished to be involved in fundraising for Kirkwood.

We are keen to build on the success of the event, through development of a school young ambassador role, exploring ways of linking in with school as community hubs and supporting the theatre company in research for future performances.

P-243 DRAGONFLY – GROUP WORK WITH GRIEVING FAMILIES

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10.1136/bmjspcare-2019-HUKNC.265

Background Dragonfly group is a St Richard's Hospice bereavement group. It supports groups of families over six evenings, two weeks apart. It is run by a small team of staff and volunteers.

Over a number of years, the group has developed an effective way of helping families work through their grief. The core principles are:

- The most basic requirement is to give everyone a safe environment where they can express, articulate, and discuss their grief;
- Initially, allowing children to freely discuss their grief is easier if they are separated from their adult family members;
- Once children feel comfortable expressing their grief, bringing the children and adults together and continuing to provide a safe environment for them to articulate their grief together is beneficial for the whole family;
- Taking time doing too little is better than rushing to do too much.

We have learnt that initially both children and adults are reluctant to discuss or express their grief for fear of upsetting the other. Also, we believe that children learn from others that hiding their grief is a correct response to their feelings, following the death of a loved one.

To address this reluctance the following schedule of evening sessions has developed:

- Week 1 – An initial ice breaker where the families make pizzas together;
- Weeks 2 – 4 Groups are split into child and adult sessions. Exercises around craft and fun are used to allow the children to describe and discuss their feelings. The adults discuss their feeling within their group with some simple exercises being used to encourage discussion;
- Weeks 5 – 6 The families are brought back together, where they express and discuss their feelings of grief together in an environment where they feel safe to do so.

P-244 MINDCRAFT: EXPLORING, CREATING AND RE-BUILDING INTERNAL WORLDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH LOSS

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10.1136/bmjspcare-2019-HUKNC.266

Background Mortality statistics and census information suggests approximately 370 parents die in Hertfordshire annually, leaving approximately 650 dependent children. Peer support is widely held to be an important way of helping children manage bereavement. Mindcraft is a group psychosocial programme (through medium of art making and creative activities, games and group support) to empower and support children through grief/loss with high level of emotional well-being. The group format is also more cost-effective, reaches wider beneficiaries and is good vehicle for involving parents/carers simultaneously.

Aims

- To support parents, resourcing them to be available and responsive to their child's grief needs thus minimising the potential long-term health manifestations (Gonclaves Soares, Howe, Matijasevich, Wehrmeister, et al., 2016; Cuervo Tilson, 2018; World Health Organization, 2015);
- To give children the opportunity to express their feelings within an informal group setting, meeting children with similar experiences and networking.

Method Four weekly sessions, followed by a 'catch up session' - primary school age group, secondary school age group and parent/carer group. Parents/carers completed pre- and post-programme questionnaires.

Results Nineteen parents/carers and children enrolled.

Results from evaluation:

- 73% of parents reported increase in their confidence levels and felt able to support their children more;
- 80% of parents reported feeling supported with the bereavement by attending the workshop;
- 73% of families felt decrease in isolation from attending the workshops.

Quotes:

'I changed my status on Facebook to 'widow'. Seems like a small thing, but it was a big thing for me and now I have strength to acknowledge my situation.'

'P... is on his second week in his own room since my husband died. Just to be able to spread out in your own bed is amazing. The programme has been a major thing for us.'

Conclusion Time-limited sessions can have significant impact on a child's ability to process their grief and lead to positive outcomes. Further programmes are recommended.

P-245 CARE AFTER CARING: SUPPORTING FAMILY CARERS FACING AND FOLLOWING BEREAVEMENT

Alison Penny. *National Bereavement Alliance, London, UK*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2019-HUKNC.267

This presentation will share findings and good practice case studies from a recent report from the National Bereavement Alliance and Hospice UK, commissioned by NHS England's Commitment to Carers programme.