



each

East Anglia's
Children's Hospices

Bereavement support at EACH

We know every family's experience of loss is different. Our wellbeing professionals are here to help you and your family through this difficult time, in whatever way feels right for you.

The death of a child affects everyone close to them – not just parents and siblings, but grandparents, wider family, and close friends too. We want to make sure anyone affected has the support they need.

How we can help

Support calls after your child's death

In the early days after your child's death, it's normal to feel a whole mix of emotions – shock, numbness, sadness, anger, fear, or deep pain. For most people, formal bereavement support is not helpful at this very early stage of grieving. During this time, we offer support calls and will check in with you to see if you feel you need them. Even if you don't want support initially, but then change your mind, just contact the hospice and let us know if you'd like someone to get in touch.



One-to-one counselling

Our counsellors can offer a safe and confidential space for you to talk openly about your loss. Every person's experience is unique, and your counsellor will listen and work with you on the things that matter most to you. Many people find it helpful to talk to someone outside their circle of family and friends. Counselling is available for adults, young people and children over the age of five. For very young children, we can support you to help your child with their grief.

Art Therapy and Music Therapy

Sometimes words just aren't enough. Both Art Therapy and Music Therapy can help you express feelings that are too painful or hard to put into words. With the support of an Art or Music Therapist you can use images, creative materials, sound or song to express your feelings and help you explore new ways to cope. Both Art Therapy and Music Therapy are available to adults and children.

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR)

EMDR is a recognised intervention for complex trauma. This is available at EACH for adults assessed as displaying signs of unresolved trauma with regards to their child's health journey, and also in bereavement.

Family support

Some families prefer to have sessions together – as a couple, or as a family group. These can be a space to share, listen, and find ways of coping as a unit. A range of styles can be utilised, for example, a family collage or crafting session alongside talking.

Where support takes place

We can meet with you at your local EACH hospice, at community venues, or online – whichever works best for you. Phone counselling is also available.

Support groups and events

We run a variety of bereavement support groups and events throughout the year. These are a chance to meet other families, share stories, create keepsakes, and find comfort in knowing you're not alone.

You can find more details at: www.each.org.uk/family-zone

Memory days

Every year, we hold Memory Days at each of our hospices. These special days bring bereaved families together to remember and celebrate the children they love. There is no pressure to attend but you are most welcome to come, regardless how long ago your child died. If you would like to discuss what the day looks like beforehand, one of the team will be happy to talk things through with you.

How to get support

If you'd like to access bereavement support, you can refer yourself through our website www.each.org.uk/refer or by calling your local wellbeing team. They'll arrange a wellbeing assessment and help you decide what type of support feels right for you.

Some people find just a few sessions are enough, while others need regular sessions for a longer time – it's all about what works best for you.

What our families say

Kyra attends monthly groups at The Nook, as well as having 'invaluable' counselling sessions, and says EACH has become a pivotal part of her life since son Kaiden was born in June 2013 and sadly died in October 2021.

"Our sessions reassure me I'm not the only one, and I still feel just as strongly about coming to my bereavement group now as I did in the beginning.

"We were nervous and hesitant to start with, and I worried about the prospect of being in a room full of grief. I didn't feel I had the tools to deal with such overwhelming sadness.

"In reality, it's the exact opposite, and although everyone's united by the same pain, we experience it in different ways.

"I try not to bottle up my emotions, but coming here gives me an outlet – an opportunity to talk to people who have experienced a similar thing."

Kyra



Other sources



For other sources of support, both locally and nationally, please see links to other organisations.

- Child Bereavement UK helps families to rebuild their lives when a child grieves or when a child dies www.childbereavementuk.org
- The Compassionate Friends supports bereaved parents and their families www.tcf.org.uk/content/helpline
- The Child Death Helpline has a free helpline for all those affected by the death of a child www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk
- The Good Grief Trust offers a national directory of organisations that can support with different types of bereavement www.thegoodgrieftrust.org
- The Living Grief Bereavement Hub offers information on local and national support for people living in the East Suffolk and Great Yarmouth and Waveney geographical areas www.livinggriefhub.co.uk

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