

## How do I care for a child after the death of someone close?

Do not idealise the person, but mourn them for who they were. In the same way the children are loved for who they are

Communicate that they are not alone. Remind them that you and others are here for them.

Remember and mark important dates, and be prepared for the child to act differently. Accept that there isn't a time limit when they will 'get over it'

Take care of yourself and obtain any support that you might need, eg.

- find somebody else to talk to
- schedule support so that you can have 5 minutes to gather your thoughts after intense conversations.

You need to care for your emotions to do the best job you can.

Their confidence may be knocked and need extra boosting

Do not be shocked by what they say. They need to know that they can be totally honest and open about their feelings without fear of judgement of causing

Listen, and let their feelings take Precedence - avoid interruptions, or anything that could be seen to be making the conversation about someone else

Maintain routine as far as possible

Do not dismiss it if the child feels the presence of the dead person

Encourage them to talk about their feelings and share yours

Do not be shocked if regression occurs, and allow it when suitable

Avoid statements that could seem to be telling them how to feel (eg. 'Don't be sad'). Instead, help them to accept strong feelings and know that however they feel is ok—there is no right or wrong way to grieve,