



**Edward's
Trust**

Christmas and the grieving process for parents

The death of a baby or a child, is devastatingly heart breaking. Facing up to the many occasions, such as a birthday or anniversary that happen after loss can be extremely challenging. Christmas is one such occasion.

Parents and families may feel that Christmas is an occasion they may never be able to celebrate again, particularly if this is the first Christmas after their loss.

Each parent and family must do what feels right for them, and be under no pressure to do it any differently

We hope the following will provide some help on how to manage a difficult time of year.

Grieving Parents and Families

Give yourself a choice....

- If staying at home feels too challenging, choose to take a break away somewhere where there won't be reminders, and where Christmas can be kept at bay.
- Put up Christmas decorations if you feel you want to. Perhaps make a special tree for your baby or child.
- Buy the ingredients for a Christmas dinner, keep them in the freezer. If you want it it's there. If not, cook something else or have a take away.
- If you feel you want to send Christmas cards, then do. Include your baby or child's name, if that feels right for you. Or draw a star or heart to represent them, if that feels easier.
- If invited to spend time with other family members, and you feel able to go, then do. But consider that you may not be able to stay as long as others would like you to. Chat to family and let them know that you may not be able to stay for as long as they'd like you to.
- If you have other children, but can't face shopping for presents, ask other family members or friends to buy things on your behalf.

Supporting family or friends in their grief over the Christmas period

- Reach out to them, and let them know you're there for them.
- Support families in whatever they decide they want to do over the festive period.
- Offer to cook food and deliver it to them.
- Send food parcels or takeaways as they may not have the energy to shop or cook.
- If you receive a card from the bereaved parents and they have included their baby or child's name, don't be shocked. Be accepting that that is what they need to do. Consider doing the same on any cards you send to them.
- Offer to do any shopping they may need, food-wise or presents for other children.
- If inviting bereaved parents to come and spend time with you, then be understanding if they decline or cannot stay for as long as you would like them to, as they may not have the energy to be around other people.

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