

HOW CHILDREN DEAL WITH GRIEF

KEY POINTS:

Children experience the same range of emotions as adults.

Children are often unable to verbalise emotions and may express feelings through their behaviour.

Children have levels of understanding and reaction at different ages and stages of development.

Children 0-2 will experience a sense of loss but will not understand the permanence of that loss.

Between the age of 2 and 5 children will have a greater understanding of the concept of death, but will be easily confused by explanations.

Between the ages of 5 and 9 children become more curious about death and the rituals surrounding it. They are also more aware of other people's responses.

Children aged 9 to 12 understand the finality of death and may become frightened by the possibility of their own death.

Adolescence grieve more as adults; they have powerful emotions which may have considerable affect on them.

Children may exhibit feelings typical of a different stage of development. They may re-experience their grief as they enter a new stage of development.