

Sources of help

Many people find the strength and resources within themselves to cope with the death of a loved one.

When suicide occurs peoples normal coping mechanisms are stretched and they will require the support of family, friends and neighbours.

Some will require a higher level of support. In todays society with increasing suicide rates there is a much greater need to provide support for people bereaved by suicide.

General Practitioners, Clergy, Gardai and Health Services can advise you on what is available.

Your G.P. can refer you to specialist services if necessary.



Reaching out with hope!



*Living Links provides
practical help
and support to people
bereaved by suicide*

A SUICIDE OUTREACH
SUPPORT PERSON IS
AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU!

Contact: Midlands Living Links
at 086 1600641

You are Not Alone



**SUPPORTING THOSE
BEREAVED
BY SUICIDE IN THE MIDLANDS**



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Suicide Bereavement

Death by suicide is a tragedy for everyone concerned. The grief and sense of loss experienced is very personal and can be overwhelming. Families, relatives and friends feel confused and helpless.

As well as the normal distressing experience of grief, those bereaved by suicide can experience a sense of stigma, shame, loneliness and rejection. Many are preoccupied with the unanswerable question, **WHY?** Those bereaved by suicide need to talk about what has happened.

Needs of Survivors: What has helped others?

The experience of loss through suicide is often sudden and always traumatic. You may experience shock; you may initially deny what has happened to you and your family. You may be confused and you may be very angry.

- It may help to talk honestly and openly about what has happened. Sometimes it's easier to do this with someone outside your own circle of friends or family, simply because they are also experiencing this loss.
- Telling the story of the person who has died is important at this time. You need to talk about their life and not just the way in which they died, even though this is something you might need to talk about as well.
- Talking about it brings a realisation of what has happened which may not be there immediately following the death.
- Spend time with reminders of the person whom you have lost, looking at photos and enjoying memories of times you had together.
- Speaking with others who have had a similar experience may help.
- Following the death you may also need factual information about entitlements and supports. You may need some information about the inquest which will happen later. The "You are Not Alone Booklet" has some practical advice on these matters.

Talking about Suicide:

Suicide is a difficult subject to talk about. Friends and neighbours may not know what to say to you or your family, or how to react towards you after what has happened. But you need to talk about what you have experienced and maybe you need to bring the subject up with them. People will mean well but may feel uncomfortable, yet they want to give support but don't know how.

They may be afraid that they will upset you by talking about your loss, but most likely will be glad to help if you allow them.

Talking to Children about Suicide:

Any death is difficult to discuss with children as there are always questions which we cannot answer. When the death is by suicide there are more unanswered questions. Children need information and this is best given by the person they know and trust most. Yet this person may be living with the same loss and is also very vulnerable.

Have someone with you whom they also know and trust and tell them the truth in as much detail as they can understand. You may need to repeat the story a number of times following the death as they will only take in so much at any given time, depending on their age.

While children do not need to know every detail of the death, do tell them facts that they can build on as they ask more or their understanding grows over time. Be careful of the language you use, do not use terms like "gone to sleep" or "on a journey" as this may confuse the child.

You will have to tell them the truth at some stage and they may distrust what you tell them if you have lied previously - even for their sake.

Using the words "dead" and "death" may seem harsh but are less likely to be misleading in the long term.

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