



saying goodbye

When Someone Special Dies



Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust

caring supporting improving together

Written by

Dr Elaine Klewchuk and Dr Susie Willis

Paediatric Clinical Psychology Department,
Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children

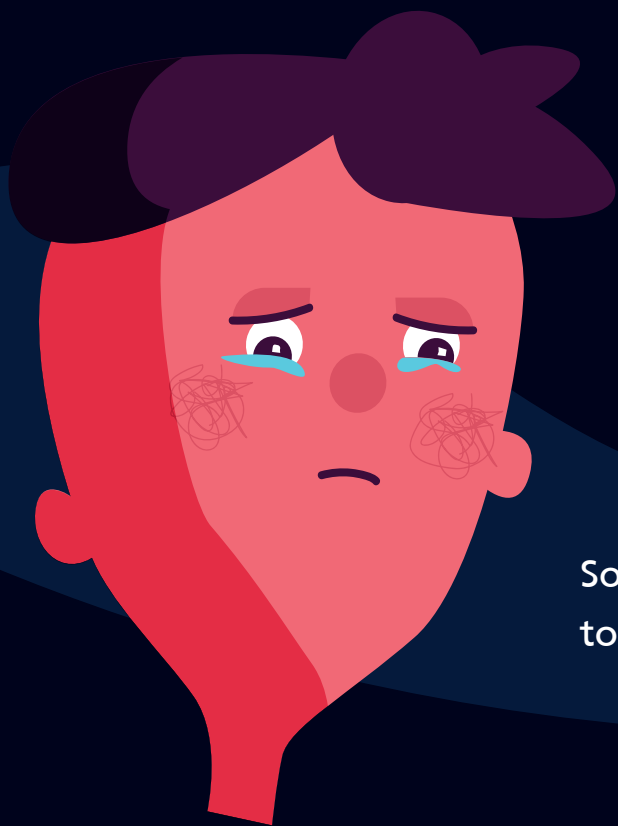
Information

For parents and carers

This booklet has been developed for children when they have had to face the death of someone special to them.

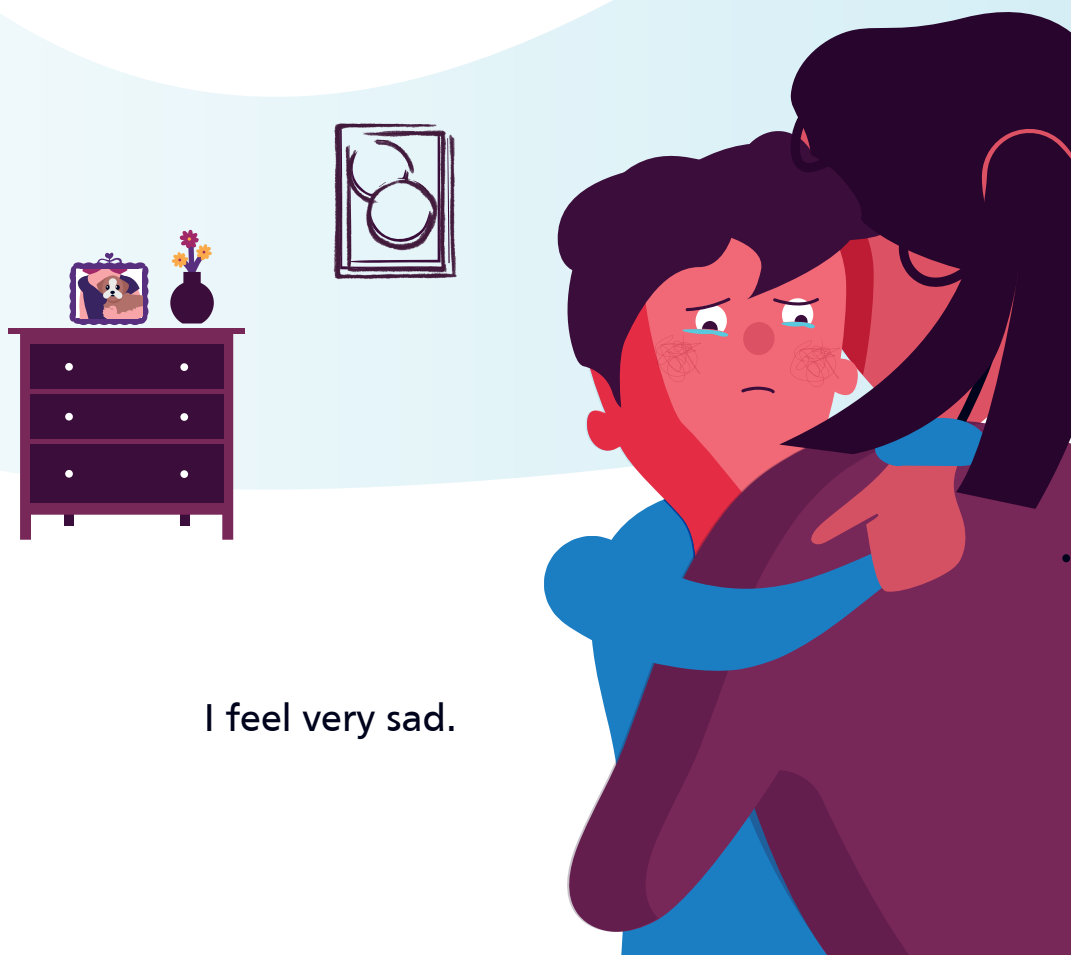
Understandably, many parents and carers find that death is a hard concept to explain and talk about with children. We hope this booklet, which uses simple, clear language will support family members to initiate some of these difficult conversations. It might answer some questions that your child has, or it might help them let you know what they are thinking and feeling.

What often helps children following the death of a loved one, is for them to be involved in opportunities to say goodbye. Children sometimes attend funerals and wakes, and there is evidence that shows that, as long as a child feels comfortable, involving them in these traditions and rituals can help them make sense of the death. But we also know that saying goodbye can be done in lots of different ways, and we hope this booklet supports your child in finding ways for them personally to say goodbye to their special person. We hope this resource provides some comfort and reassurance to you and your family during this difficult time.



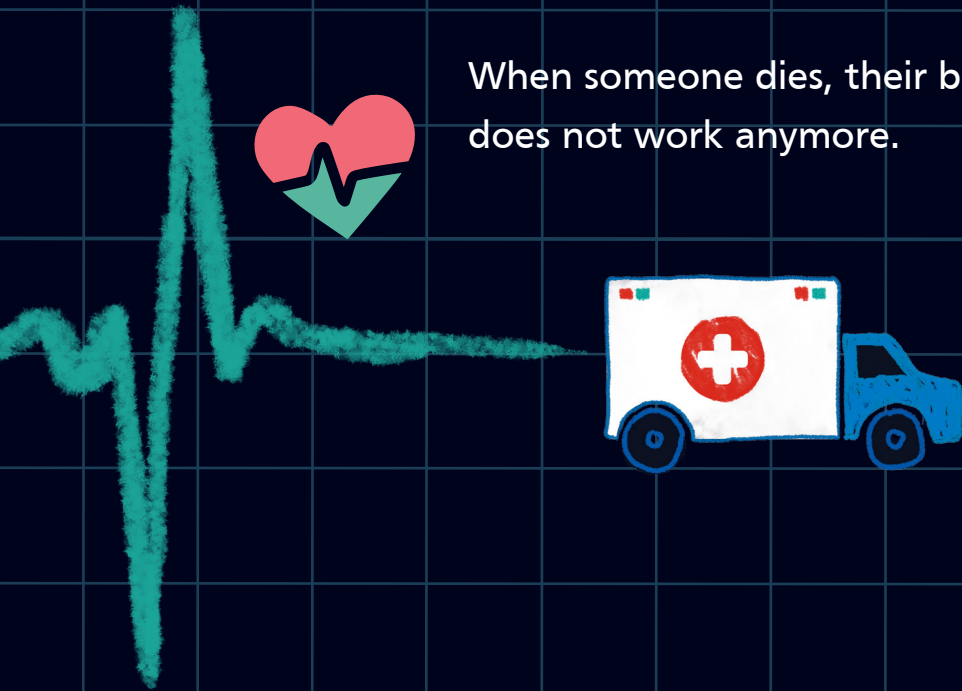
Someone very special
to me has died.

When my family member told me,
they gave me the tightest, longest hug.



I feel very sad.

When someone dies, their body
does not work anymore.

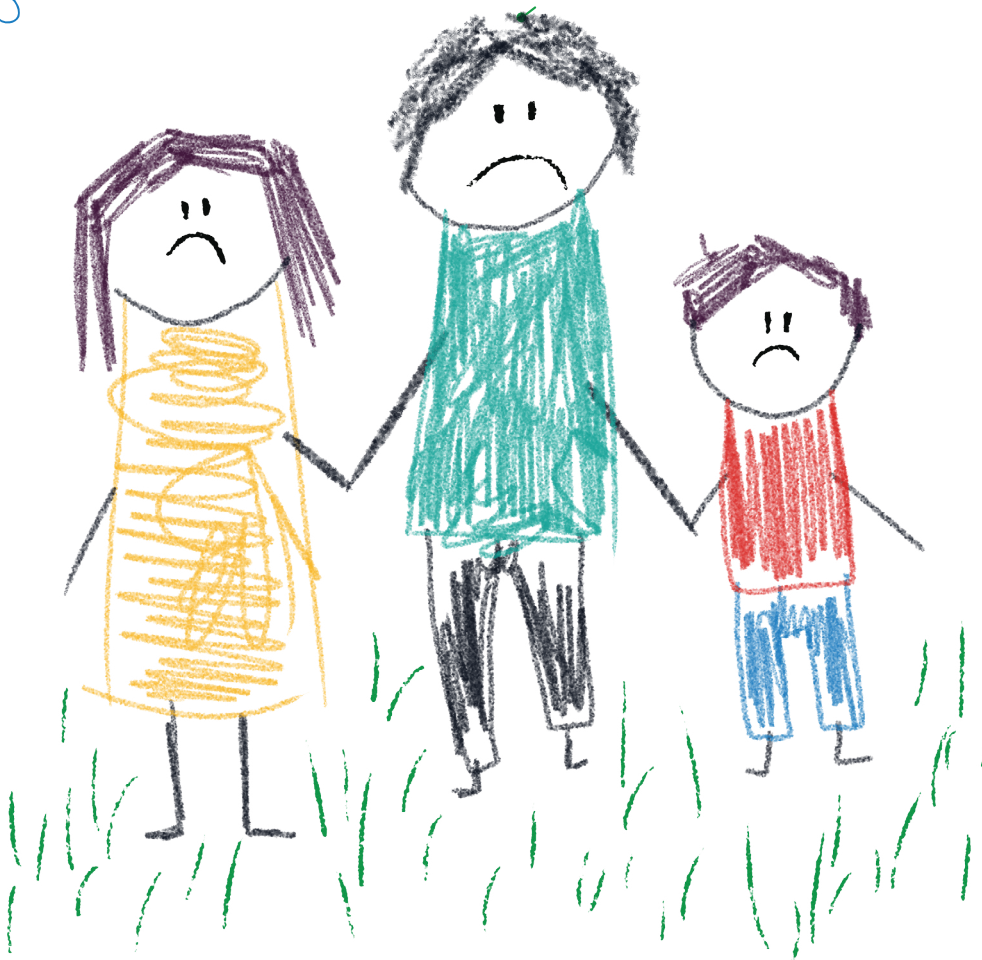


Their heart does not beat and they
stop breathing. They are not asleep.





This person can't come back to visit
and I feel very sad about this. It is
nobody's fault that they died.



My family have said that I can talk about it when I am ready. I might feel lots of different feelings like sad, worry, anger or confused.

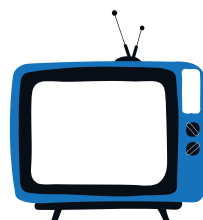


All feelings are okay.

Sometimes I just want to forget that it
has happened and play with my
friends or watch TV.

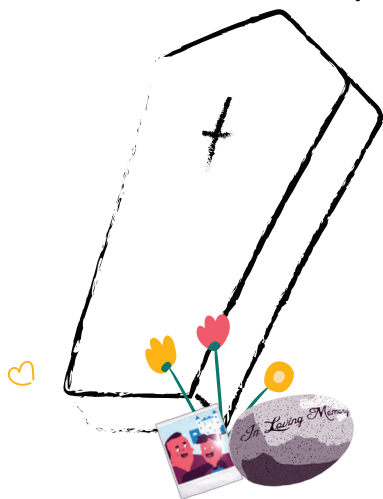


It is okay to still laugh and have fun.



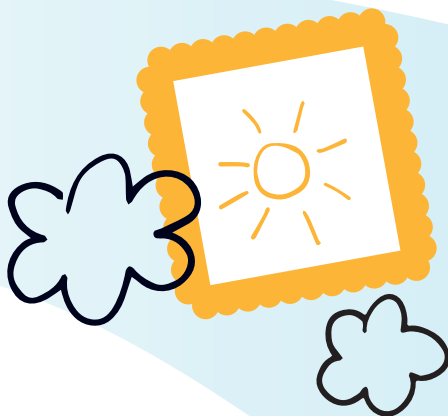


When someone dies there is a funeral.
People go to funerals to say goodbye.

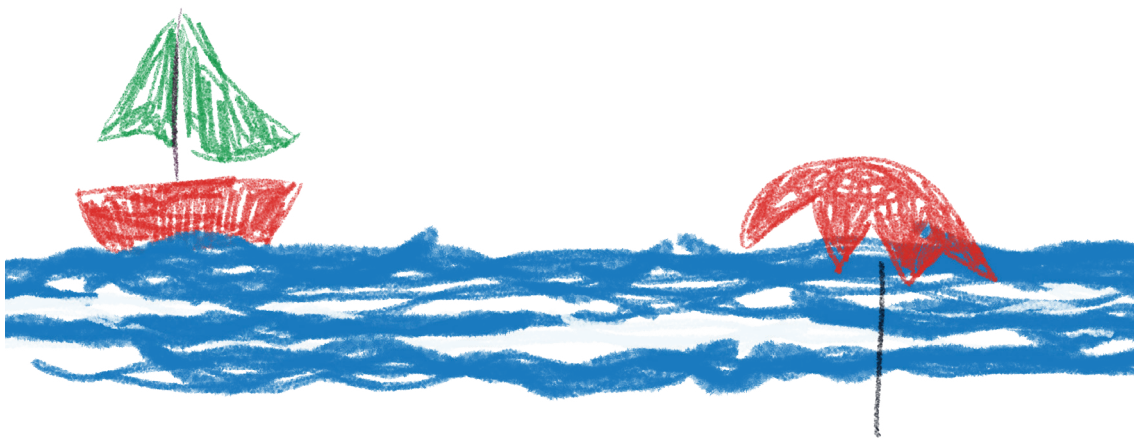


People often cry at funerals
and this is because they miss
the person. It is okay to cry.





We can say goodbye in other ways too. I am going to visit the beach and say goodbye there as this was our favourite place to be together.





I have a memory box and I am going to fill it
with photos, drawings and other special things.



I miss them so much, but I will
never stop loving them.



They will always be very special to
me and will live in my heart forever.



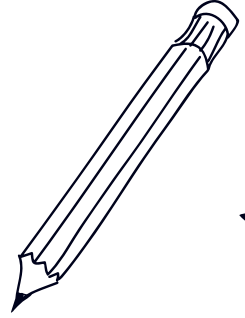
I Love you
XOXO



Questions just for you...

Draw a picture or write your answers below.

Ask a grown up to help you if you want.



Who is your special person?

What are your favourite memories of them?





What did they do that made you laugh?



How are you going to say your goodbyes
to this very special person?

Produced by Psychological Services,
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

In partnership with