



## Referral Information for Professionals

In order to ensure our Grief Support Services are in the best interests of all the children and young people (CYP) referred to us, and to assist agencies and individuals when signposting a CYP to Balloons, we have devised our own referral criteria. In light of this progression, we no longer accept referrals when we have not had the opportunity to make our own assessment before making contact. We hope this information sheet will assist you to assess whether or not we are the appropriate service to be providing support.

The Balloons team consists of highly skilled and motivated Grief Support Workers. These workers are trained and experienced in the field of grief but are **not** generic counsellors or psychotherapists.

There will always be a certain amount of emotional response to the death of someone significant. This is completely normal. However, sometimes a CYP may struggle with understanding or accepting their grief, and the chain of events that surrounds it.

It is always preferable for a loved one to assist CYP and Balloons are happy to support parents and carers via the telephone or email to do this. However, Balloons understand that this is not always possible. Sometimes CYP require a neutral person in assisting them to express what it is that they are really feeling, thinking and believing.

When this is perceived to be the case, we then require whoever is making the referral to call the Family Support Worker to discuss the presenting details in more depth.

### **What we offer CYP on a one-to-one basis**

Approximately 6-8 grief-focussed sessions, using CYP-friendly communication tools, either at home (providing there is an appropriate space in which to do so), or within the educational environment.

### **We are unable to support CYP...**

- Under the age of three, although we may be able to advise carers and workers about how to work with this age group.
- Who do not wish to explore their grief.
- Who are receiving another form of therapeutic support.
- **When grief is not the dominant concern but is a component of multiple issues.**
- Who do not have anyone outside of Balloons who can be generally supportive whilst they are exploring their grief.

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(Teachers, etc, extended and close family, as well as organisations such as young carers are completely acceptable as 'general support'.)

- Who are experiencing abuse and neglect.
- Who have life-threatening coping mechanisms.
- Who are suicidal.

We hope this information assists you in assessing whether or not Balloons is the appropriate service for the CYP you are requiring support for.

If you are left in any doubt, please contact the Family Support Worker on 01392 826064