



balloons
Bereavement And Loss LOoking ONwards

Working in Exeter, Mid and East Devon to support bereaved children
and young people and their families.

Thank you for wanting to support a small and local charity.

Working in partnership with corporate sponsors really matters to us and helps us to achieve our objectives of supporting children and young people affected by bereavement.

Every penny you raise will make a massive positive difference.

Dear Supporter

By opening this Balloons Corporate Supporters Pack, you have taken the first step towards creating a more positive future for bereaved children and young people in Exeter, Mid and East Devon.

Balloons is a small, local charity that has been working across our geographical area for over 14 years. We provide 1:1 pre- and post-bereavement support to children and young people aged 5-25. We also support their families by providing our telephone helpline and family events, and we deliver childhood grief training to local agencies.

Bereavement changes the lives of children and young people forever. We help them to cope with the impact by providing support that is short-term, focussed and specific.

Every penny you raise will make a real difference to those children and their families. Without the generous support of local companies such as yours, we shall not be able to continue our invaluable work.

We look forward to working with you so that together we can reach out to all the bereaved children and young people who need our support.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,

Nicola Clarke

Balloons CEO

CONTENTS

Summary	Page 4
Our Vision	Page 5
Our Mission	Page 5
Our Values	Page 5
Our Activities	Page 6
How you can help	Page 8
What's next	Page 10

Summary

Bereavement affects everyone at some point, and UK statistics set the context for our work:

-1 in 29 schoolchildren have been bereaved of a parent or sibling – that's one pupil in every class

-Approximately 111 children are bereaved of a parent every day

-Children and young people who suffer bereavement are ten times more likely to commit offenses than those who have not

With the right support at the right time, bereaved children and young people (C&YP) can become resilient adults.

Our aspiration is that all children and young people who need us will be able to access our services.

Balloons was first conceived by a small group of healthcare professionals who didn't have anywhere to refer bereaved children for specialist support. Start-up funding was secured from the Big Lottery in February 2007.

Balloons services are open to all pre- and post-bereaved C&YP in Exeter, Mid and East Devon. They have experienced the death, or will experience the imminent death of someone significant in their lives. Volunteer Grief Support Workers (GSWs) support the C&YP through their grieving and healing process.

Research clearly indicates that the death of a significant loved one has a profoundly negative impact on C&YP. Those who are not supported to process their grief have:

- poorer health and educational outcomes
- are more likely to engage in anti-social behaviour
- have higher teenage pregnancy rates
- are more prone to depression and suicide

Balloons is well respected for the positive impact that our work has. We work directly with over 150 children and young people each year through our 1:1 Grief Support work, and support many more through our helpline, care packages, training and activity days.

We want to continue to provide high quality services and your support will make a huge difference to us.

Our Vision

That bereaved children and young people have somewhere to turn when someone significant in their lives dies.

Our Mission

To support bereaved children and young people in our area when someone significant in their life dies. To work alongside their families and the professionals who provide care to them to further enhance the support they receive.

Our Values

1. **Open, reflective and responsive:** delivering a service which centrally positions the needs and concerns of bereaved C&YP and creates a safe space for them to process grief, remaining dynamic and responsive and building a bespoke and creative support package
2. **Compassionate:** ensuring that bereaved C&YP are treated with dignity and respect and listened to without judgement
3. **Supportive:** supporting the professional and family communities within which C&YP live so that they in turn can provide support to bereaved C&YP
4. **Innovative:** willing to engage with new developments in the field of childhood grief and ensure that our practice is relevant and forward thinking
5. **Trustworthy:** building relationships that are open, honest, collaborative and C&YP centred

Our Activities



1. **1:1 Support to Bereaved C&YP** - we work with C&YP when they have experienced the death of a loved one, including circumstances where the loss is catastrophic, for example as a result of murder, suicide or a fatal accident. We also work closely with C&YP when a parent or sibling has a terminal diagnosis, supporting them to face a very difficult future in the run up to and the aftermath of the death. Over 50% of our work is where a parent dies. We also support C&YP when a sibling is dying or has died. Our 1:1 support work is bespoke, responding to the unique circumstances of each individual C&YP. Volunteer Grief Support Workers support the C&YP through their grieving and healing process, resulting in a range of positive outcomes including the ability of the C&YP to maintain emotional and social health and to stay positively engaged in family and school life.
2. **Activity Days** – after 1:1 support many C&YP attend our Activity Days, participating in a range of activities to enhance their personal sense of wellbeing in a safe environment with others who have had similar bereavement experiences. This reduces feelings of isolation and enables the bereaved C&YP to physically challenge themselves in a supported environment. Physical activity forms part of their stress reduction, developing confidence and self-belief. The varied nature of each Activity Day ensures that the C&YP enhance emotional, physical and social wellbeing. Many bereaved C&YP experience feelings of exclusion in group situations and suffer from a loss of confidence when tackling new or challenging situations. The Activity Days act as a springboard in lessening those feelings. Feedback from the C&YP is very positive, and caregivers report that the C&YP are happier and able to sleep better.
3. **Telephone Helpline** – provides vital comfort, advice, information and coping ideas for families facing bereavement or already trying to manage the impact of bereavement. Caregivers contact us to seek advice on how to tell their children when a parent is terminally ill, how to help their children to cope and what they

might do together as a family to manage the very distressing situation they have to face.

4. **Practitioner Training** - we provide childhood grief training for schools, GP surgeries, police, youth offending teams, hospices etc., equipping those agencies with the skills and knowledge to better support grieving C&YP and their families. We are building and enabling a strong network of child-centred agencies that can work in partnership to minimise the damage that unprocessed childhood grief can cause.
5. **Care Packages** - we often send comfort packages to families who have experienced a traumatic bereavement. Packages includes items such as – snuggle objects, anxiety reduction toys, journals, story books and mindfulness wellbeing activities, as well as 'kits' for families to create precious memories together e.g. memory boxes, planting a memory garden. Left alone, grieving families find it very difficult to get these resources together. As one caregiver said – “When my husband died, I couldn't think straight and was really struggling to support the children. Receiving a care package from Balloons made all the difference to us and brought us together as a family as we built precious memories. Thank you so much”.

How you can help

We welcome new partnerships with corporate sponsors. We are always open to building a bespoke relationship so that every partner gains the maximum benefit from working alongside us.

1. Let's talk!

Ideally we want to start by meeting with you face-to-face. Then we can get to know each other and understand what we each hope to achieve from the partnership. This helps to ensure that our partnership is strong and clear from the outset.

2. Charity of the Year / Staff Fundraising

Does your company nominate a Charity of the Year? If so we would love to hear from you! We run a calendar of events that your staff can get involved with, and we will work with you to produce a tailored plan for the next year to meet your needs and objectives. Just let us know how you prefer to choose your charity - we can chat over the phone, produce a written proposal or come and present in person.

Alternatively, if your company doesn't formally choose a charity each year then why not arrange some staff fundraising? We can help with ideas and provide leaflets and information. Whether it's a bake off, a dress down day, a company away day or a 'dine in' event, every little helps!

3. Sponsorship

We are well established and respected in our local area. We can help raise your brand awareness when you sponsor one of our events, while also demonstrating your company's commitment to supporting the local community. Increasingly companies are interested in supporting one of our Activity Days for bereaved children and young people, or sponsoring the training of a volunteer.

4. Volunteering

We mainly have volunteers to provide grief support to bereaved children and young people. To become a Grief Support Worker volunteer, you need to undertake our 10-week training course, and be able to give a minimum of half a day each week (Mon – Fri) to volunteering. We periodically use volunteers for one-off events and activities as well.

5. Payroll Giving

Giving directly from your pay is tax efficient and your regular support in providing a reliable income is invaluable to Balloons. Anyone can give if his or her pay or pension is taxed through PAYE and the employer offers a Payroll Giving Scheme. The increase in value is even greater if you pay higher rate tax.

6. Donations / Gifts in Kind

Donations and gifts in kind or expert support are extremely valuable to us. Whether it's through allowing us the use of your meeting rooms for free, giving professional advice or donating unwanted IT and office equipment and stationery, this support helps us to channel our funding directly towards our work with bereaved children and young people. If you have a resource that you think could be useful for us and you would be willing to donate it, then we would love to hear from you.

7. What your money can buy

The table below gives ideas of the ways in which we spend the money generously donated to us by local companies:

- £5 can pay for a Memory Box for a child to fill with treasured memories of the loved one that they have lost. We use over 120 of these boxes each year
- £10 can pay for arts and crafts materials to support a child to work creatively to process their grief. We work with over 120 children each year, so £1,250 covers the costs of arts and crafts materials for the full year
- £15 can buy a book for our resource library to support our volunteer Grief Support Workers to find new ways of supporting bereaved children. Our library is a vital resource for them and we aim to keep it current and well stocked at all times. On average we spend £400 - £500 on the library each year. We need to purchase multiple copies of some of the resources as we have so many Grief Support Workers using them
- £50 can cover the costs of travel for a volunteer Grief Support Worker for one month as they travel round our geographical area providing grief support to children. We currently 35 Grief Support Workers, on average volunteering for 10 months in the year
- £500 covers the costs of training a new Grief Support Worker, from recruitment, through to selection, screening, DBS checking and training
- £1,000 covers the costs of our children and families Christmas activity. This is a very special event and often marks the first Christmas that children face without their loved one
- £2,000 covers the annual costs for a volunteer providing 1:1 Grief Support Work. This includes running team meetings, covering all of their supervision needs in line with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy guidelines, providing training and Continuing Professional Development opportunities, travel and resource expenses.

- £6,000 covers the costs of our Activity Day programme for bereaved children to meet others in similar circumstances for one year. Our Activity Days are very special. Children who have completed their 1:1 support with us are invited to days where they meet other children who are also bereaved, so that their sense of isolation is broken down and they get to have a fun day away from the stress of their bereavement

What's next

To discuss working in partnership with Balloons further, please contact us on

01392 826065

admin@balloonscharity.co.uk

THANK YOU