

COPING WITH MOTHER'S DAY

Mother's Day can be a very difficult time for children whose Mum has died. What matters is that they are supported to remember Mum in whatever way feels right for them at this special time.

Some children will want to remember Mum in a celebratory way, and will want to talk about her lots. Other children will want to be quieter in their reflections, and may be missing Mum and finding it hard to be positive.

What's crucial is to always follow the lead of the child. Try to build a picture in advance of how they want to mark the day. Schools can be supportive by talking to pupils, and families as relevant, before the day – so that the child feels safe and in control of things so that it is as stress-free as possible.

Children whose Mum's have died can find the lead up to the day painful, as they are surrounded by cards, television adverts and posters about Mother's Day. These painful reminders can cause a great deal of sadness, but it can also be painful to not have the opportunity to remember Mum. **As one child said – "I still have a Mum – she's just not alive any more".**

Talking about Mum

If the child wants to talk about Mum, then be prepared for this and make sure that you can get support for yourself, especially if you are also grieving for her. It can be helpful to have some prompt questions such as:

- When I think about Mum I feel...
- When I picture Mum I see...
- Mum was special because...
- When I remember Mum it makes me feel...

Mother's Day is an opportunity to remember all the special things that Mum did, and even though she is not alive any more, her legacy lives on in her children and their memories of her.



Top tips for remembering Mum on Mother's Day

- Visit a special place to remember her – this might be her grave or where her ashes are scattered, but it could also be a place which has special significance for other reasons
- Write a special message or make a special card for Mum, and add it to your memory box if you have one
- Start a memory box if you haven't already done so, and fill it with special and significant mementos
- Plant bulbs, flowers or a shrub in memory of Mum
- Blow bubbles and send Mum your love on the wind
- Bake a cake and decorate it in a way which symbolises your love for Mum
- Make a picture frame and frame a special photo of her, or a drawing that you have done about her
- Talk to someone who knew Mum well – listen to their stories about her
- Write a story, a poem or a song about your Mum and why she was special to you
- Prepare and eat her favourite meal – was it curry, a roast dinner, a healthy salad?
- Play Mum's favourite music and dance
- Make a scrapbook of all your special memories of Mum
- Write down all the things you'd like to tell Mum – all the achievements you have made since she died so that you can feel proud and strong of how you are coping