

YOUR LEGACY THEIR FUTURE

*Leave a gift in your Will
and make a difference to
the lives of grieving children*



Balloons

Supporting bereaved children
and young people

www.balloonscharity.co.uk

Together, we can help children through grief

YOUR LEGACY OF HOPE BEGINS TODAY

We all want children to be happy, healthy and thriving and to experience all the joys that growing up brings.

But, sadly, life can also bring us experiences of pain and tragedy. The truth is that one in 29 children and young people will experience the death of a parent or sibling – that's one in every classroom. When a loved one dies, the impact on a young person can echo throughout their life.

Balloons is here for children and young people who find themselves in this tragic situation. Although we can never take away the pain of loss, we can help children find the tools to cope and find their way back to hope and joy.

Over 200 children and young people, from Exeter to East and Mid Devon, will come to us each year – and the need for our specialist support has never been greater. You can help us to be there for children, their parents and teachers, to create a safe space that leads them onto a more secure path.



EVERY YEAR WE:

Support over
200
bereaved children
and young people,
delivering more than
600 one-to-one and
group Grief Support
Sessions, across
60 schools

Provide a
listening ear and
advice to parents,
carers and school
staff helping
100's
of children

Recruit, train and
support a team of
45 volunteer
Grief Support Workers
from the community,
giving over
2000 hours
a year to supporting
grieving children

Run at least
5
Activity Days,
bringing bereaved
families together
doing fun and
positive activities

Send out over
150
care packages
each year
to bereaved
children

READ ON TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THOSE WE SUPPORT AND HOW
YOUR GENEROSITY CAN CHANGE LIVES FOR THE BETTER.

"I'm so glad this kind of support exists now for my girls. I wish it had been there for me as a child."

When I was 17, my dad died suddenly.

I remember that 'I'll see you, Dad,' was the last thing I said to him. My Mum did her best for me, my brother and my sister, but there was no support available. In those days, we just had to 'crack on'.

Then, tragically, my wife died when my girls were young. It was about this time that Balloons was just setting up; we attended an event and met other families in similar situations. It was amazing and really helped all of us – not just the girls, but me too.

You often think, as a 'normal' person, that this would never happen to you. I know firsthand that it does – but that for people who are bereaved, having support can make a world of difference.

Because I know how much Balloons impacted our lives, I wanted to give something back – and I've been involved ever since. I've seen it grow and develop and keep doing wonderful things to help children, a positive light in dark, troubling times.

You can ensure this support can continue for many years to come – and to reach even more children and young people in the future. If you can, consider a gift in your Will to Balloons; your kindness today could change lives in the future.

With gratitude,

Mike Betts

Dad and Trustee of Balloons



Train local professionals to develop the skills and confidence to support children through grief





When mum died, I was just about to start my GCSEs.

Mum was ill for a very long time. Her death wasn't a shock, but still, you can't really prepare yourself. Because this person you adore is, one day, just gone.

My mum was fabulous – she went to art college and did every single artistic career you could think of, fashion design, silk making. And then she became an art teacher; she liked working with kids who were struggling in school, she connected with them. She really wanted to be a mum, so she fostered children and when she was 43, she had me. We both shared a love of art, of creating things.

While she was ill, I wasn't doing very well in school. I remember her saying 'You really need to get your act together.' But after she died, my dad was depressed and angry and my 13-year-old brain said I had to look after him. There was no space to grieve, no time for me to dwell on things. Adults tried to get me to talk to all these professional people, but I just felt like I was being belittled. 'They just don't get it,' I thought. I stopped drawing and painting and threw myself into school. I thought I would do it for her.

Fast forward five years and I was on my own for the first time. That feeling of starting something huge – University. It's in those times that you just want the most important person in your life, you know? To talk to them, to be like,

'Wow, this is a lot. What do I do now?'

I felt, finally, like I was ready to grieve. That's when the University put me in touch with Balloons. From the first visit, it was so different to seeing the counsellor in hospital when I was 13. Everyone at Balloons was so warm and welcoming. But it still felt strange that it had taken me so long to get here.

I remember saying to Kate, my Grief Support Worker,

If I could speak to 13-year-old me, I'd tell her it's ok to talk to someone. But I'm glad Balloons was there when I was finally ready.

'I shouldn't feel this bad – it's been five years. There are so many people who are in the depths of their grief. I'm just now unravelling mine.'

But she was quick to tell me that grief is different for everyone; it doesn't matter how long it's been. Each session would be a conversation, a way to learn about my feelings, to try different coping mechanisms when they'd pop up.

Grief often makes you feel like you have zero control over all these feelings. It sounds so simple, but Kate helped me to put these on a piece of paper, which I still have now. Recognising them, naming them, seeing them there – they all helped me make sense of my emotions.

Now, I'm in my second year of University, reading art history and slowly making art myself again. There are so many things I've taken from my time with Kate to help move forward in my life.

There's no right or wrong way to grieve. But if I could speak to 13-year-old me, I'd tell her it's ok to talk to someone. To feel what you're feeling. There's no reason to be scared, there are people who really want to help you.

You don't need to do this alone. Although things will never be the same, there's a safe space you can go to start to make things better.

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A GIFT THAT WILL MAKE A LASTING IMPACT ON A CHILD'S LIFE

The generosity of a gift in a Will changes the lives of children and young people. A legacy gift of £6,610 would enable us to fund many different important initiatives, such as...

£3,360

would cover the cost of ten children to complete a six-week Grief Support programme with Balloons.



£1,350

could train one new Grief Support Worker – from recruitment, screening, DBS and a ten-week training course. Each will work with 4-6 students a year.

£1,020

is enough to pay for ten children to attend an Activity Day with their family to the Christmas Pantomime.



£490

enables us to create care packages to post to bereaved children and young people for an entire year; each contains journals, plushies, fidget toys, books and care items.



£390

could pay for the crafts and resources for fifteen children, working creatively through their grief during their Grief Support Sessions.



Whether large or small, every gift makes an enormous difference to the children and young people we work with each year.

YOUR LEGACY YOUR CHOICE

Some helpful information all about Wills

Making a Will is a significant milestone in people's lives. It's your chance to make sure that your hopes and wishes for those you love – and the causes you care about – are taken care of. Below are some of the most common questions about Wills to help you make the right choice for you and your loved ones.

HOW DO I MAKE A WILL?

You can create a new Will with a legal professional. After you've ensured your wishes for your loved ones are met, you can consider leaving a gift to a cause or organisation you care about.

Utilising a solicitor or professional Will writer will ensure your wishes are captured correctly – whether writing your first Will or amending your current one. A solicitor can give professional advice and support, including information about inheritance tax. Find a solicitor by contacting the Law Society at lawsociety.org.uk or calling 0207 242 1222.

HOW DO I INCLUDE A CHARITY IN MY WILL?

There are several ways you can do this:

- A residuary gift, or share of your estate (after debts are settled and other gifts made),
- A pecuniary gift – a fixed sum of money from your estate
- A specific gift – this could be an asset such as property, a piece of artwork or an investment of shares
- A reversionary gift – this allows you to provide for a loved one during their lifetime, for example, giving them the use of a home. After their death, the assets are passed to another specified beneficiary, like a charity.

CAN MY GIFT HELP TO FUND A SPECIFIC PART OF BALLOONS?

Your gift is your choice and we will be most grateful for anything you're able to give. However, an unrestricted gift allows us to channel the funds where they are most needed, now and in the future.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TELL BALLOONS I'M PLEDGING A GIFT?

If you intend to leave a gift to Balloons, or already have made a pledge, letting us know is enormously helpful in enabling us to plan for the charity's future. It also means we can thank you properly and keep you informed about developments the charity makes over the years. However, there is no obligation to tell us if you intend to leave a gift.



INCLUDING BALLOONS IN YOUR WILL

If you would like to leave a gift to Balloons, please provide a solicitor with the following information:

Charity Name: Balloons (Devon)
Address: First Floor, 6 Providence Court, Pynes Hill, Exeter, EX2 5JL
Registered charity number:
1158666

Hello there,

My name is Nicky and I'm the proud Chief Executive Officer of Balloons. It's an honour to share our charity's mission with you.

The truth is that each day we see the enormous need for what we do – for children, who show us in little – and big – ways throughout their Grief Support Sessions and after. For parents, who turn to us, desperately seeking to alleviate their child's anxiety, sadness and anger. For teachers and lecturers, who see a young person, once engaged and thriving, now struggling.

Balloons is a small but mighty charity – and I can tell you that every penny works exceptionally hard to keep reaching everyone who needs us, today and into the future.

We understand that leaving a gift to charity in your Will must be carefully considered. If leaving a gift to Balloons is something you'd like to discuss, or, if you've already mentioned us in your Will, I would love to speak with you.

Please get in touch with me at nicolaclarke@balloonscharity.co.uk or call me on 01392 982570. I would be delighted to tell you more about how your gift will make an impact and answer any questions you may have.

For now, we're so grateful for your consideration – thank you for your belief in what we do.

Nicola Clarke

CEO of Balloons



It was really hard when Nana and Granddad died, within six months of each other. I didn't want to make anyone, especially my dad, more upset, so I kept my feelings to myself. That's why going to Balloons helped so much. My Grief Support Worker never pressured me to talk. We made things together, like memory boxes and jars filled with coloured glitter to remind me of Nana and Granddad. After a while, I felt braver talking about them and though I still miss them, when we talk about them, we laugh more than we cry.'

Martha, Year 6, Exeter



I can't even begin to tell you how life changing your input is to our little people. We can't change the tragic events some have to go through, but YOU DO change how they come out the other side.'

Jo, Family Support Worker, Stoke Hill Junior School

'Balloons has greatly impacted my child's confidence, her ability to process grief and made her look at what she can do when she gets angry and sad about the situation. She's really grown, the staff at school have also commented on this. I can't thank Balloons enough for giving her this opportunity to express her feelings in a safe space with what she describes as a wonderful lady.'

Parent of M., Exmouth

