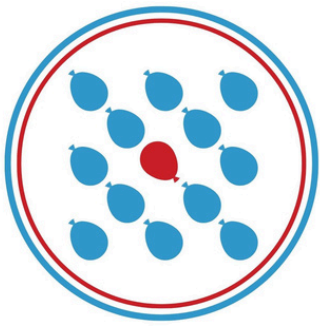




Balloons

Supporting bereaved children and young people in Exeter, East and Mid Devon



20 years of making a difference Pam's story...

“



**“Working with
Balloons is one
of the most
fulfilling things
I have done, and
I feel immensely
proud to be
part of the
Balloons family”**

”

My story with Balloons starts many years ago while I was teaching in a special school.

A special school is a an extremely close family where very close bonds are formed with the students and their families. Our school catered for a range of disabilities, including those with life limiting conditions.

In the space of one term, we were devastated by the death of 6 of our students. As part of the senior management team, I not only had responsibility for supporting my students but also members of staff at this difficult time.

Following the death of these students I felt totally inadequate, not really sure how to support grieving families, how to explain what had happened to my student's, all of whom had severe learning difficulties, how to support staff members and deal with my own feelings.

The school reached out to Balloons who not only supported one of our students but provided a training day for teachers. This day was inspiring and gave me the confidence to work through what was a very dark time.

I went home that evening feeling supported and understood, and vowed that on my retirement I wanted to volunteer for the charity. So, when the time came and I was looking for a cause to occupy my time it was easy!

I applied, did the amazing training and have now been a volunteer Grief Support Worker for 5 years. I feel humbled to think that I have been asked to offer support to children and young people through dark and challenging times in their lives.

This summer term I was privileged to work with a non-verbal student with severe learning difficulties. I always learn from working with the children and young people but this case was at a different level. Although it was challenging it was amazing to watch as this young person moved from signing 'sad' when he talked about his granddad to finally signing 'happy'.

Working with Balloons is one of the most fulfilling things I have done, and I feel immensely proud to be part of the Balloons family.



Pam with fellow volunteer Grief Support Workers

Please remember that we are here for you or someone you know who needs support.

Get in touch on support@balloonscharity.co.uk

Balloons (Devon) | Registered Charity Number: 1158666