

TOP TIPS FOR EYFS EDUCATORS



**STRIDES
PROGRAMME**



scotty's
THE MILITARY BEREAVEMENT CHARITY



Every Single week, 40 children will walk into a classroom for the first time following the death of their parent who served in the UK Armed Forces.

Having a family member die is a known adverse childhood experience (ACE). But schools and school staff can play a vital role in helping a child following a bereavement.

School can be a safe space and an escape, but it can also be somewhere that is hard for a grieving child. Especially if staff or classmates do not know how to support a bereaved child.

Or if they do not understand how grief might impact a child in the classroom. Grief can affect a child's ability to concentrate, it can affect them physically and it can make certain topics at school very difficult.

Knowing who your bereaved children are is an important first step. Being aware of things that might be upsetting for them and planning ahead can really help.

Scotty's has free training, resources and guidance available for schools. Please get in touch.

1 (Pre) school can feel like a safe haven. When there are lots of emotions at home, the structure and routine of (pre)school can be very helpful. Where possible try not to change the pattern of the day, if their teacher is off sick you may find it helpful to talk to them to settle any worries.

2 Grieving is tiring. Children may be more grumpy or sleepy during the day. They may also be less interested in play. Giving them extra quiet time to rest or have a story read to them can help.

3 You may notice that the child's play becomes more focused on illness or death. This is their way of processing what has happened and is completely normal. You can support this way of expressing by being curious and asking questions that expand on their story.

4 Although their concept of death is still developing, children under 5 will still notice the absence of their loved one, and existing care givers may also become less emotionally available due to their own grief.

5 Speak with the parent or primary care giver about what the child understands about what happened to their loved one, what language was used and how much detail they have been told.

6 Be prepared for difficult questions. Young children are still building an understanding of what death means and may ask questions you weren't prepared for. If you don't know the answer say so and agree to talk again when you have the information you need.

7 Grieving children may start to bring toys and objects to (pre)school with them, as a means of comfort or to help them talk about the person who died. Be respectful of the importance of these objects but agree with parents how sharing can be done appropriately.

8 Bereaved young children may see themselves as different to other children by not having a mum or a dad. Reading a book together where the main character has a similar history may help. A list of useful books can be found on our website.

Turn over for more info on how Scotty's can help your school and its pupils

Scotty's Little Soldiers is a charity dedicated to supporting children and young people, 0 to 25 years, who have experienced the death of a family member who served in the British Armed Forces.

When a young person joins Scotty's, they become a member and are supported until their 25th birthday. Whether it be 1:1 bereavement support, a respite break with the family, an opportunity to meet others in a similar situation, or access to extracurricular activities, Scotty's is always there for its members to ensure they don't feel alone.

The **STRIDES** Programme focuses on the education and development needs of bereaved Forces children and young people. This includes removing barriers to learning and providing opportunities to develop life skills.

The **STRIDES** Programme can advocate on behalf of a member in matters related to education, and it also includes access to a range of small educational grants. STRIDES is there to help schools and teachers too. Through this programme, Scotty's can support schools with resources, information, guidance and advice.

For more info contact: strides@scottyslittlesoldiers.co.uk



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