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## Summer Newsletter

The Mental Health & Wellbeing Newsletter

For Parents, Carers and Professionals



**This quarter, our children's services have been busy with therapy, delivering workshops and training, meeting with schools and lots more!**

15th – 21st May was Mental Health Awareness Week. Our teams in Manchester and York took part in 'wear it green day' to support raising awareness of mental health difficulties and reducing stigma. We also shared tips and ways to look after your mental health on our social media channels which you can find on Facebook and Instagram [@theretreatclinics](#).

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We had a wonderful time at Strensall Carnival in York, it was great to take part and also raise money for the local Primary School's wellbeing hubs.

Monday 3rd July was National Bereaved Parents Day, and so, in this newsletter we have included a blog post on how to support a parent who has lost a child, as well as book reviews for children and a video on supporting children with understanding and managing grief.

Our services remain open over the Summer, offering therapy to children and young people, families and parents as well as running our free workshops and training so please get in touch if there is anything you think we can support with.

We would like to wish all of our young people, their families and our colleagues working in the education sector a restful Summer holiday. We look forward to seeing you in September!

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### Anne Webster

Psychotherapist

Our experienced therapist Anne has provided a helpful visual representation to help a young person in understanding the impact of grief. This could also be used as an activity to help a young person think about what they might need as they move through their grief.



[Watch Now](#)

## Bereaved Parents | Blog

**How to care for someone following the loss of a child.**

This blog contains emotionally sensitive information, please take care.

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them. Each person's grief experience is unique, and finding the right words can be hard. Often, we worry about saying the wrong thing or upsetting the person which can lead to us not saying anything at all or becoming distant from them.

This blog contains some ideas on how best to support someone who has been through the devastating loss of a child.

There are also some fantastic sources of support available from organisations such as 'The Good Grief Trust', SANDS, SUDC UK and Citizens Advice Bureau.

[Read More](#)

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## How can storybooks help children understand and talk about death and loss?

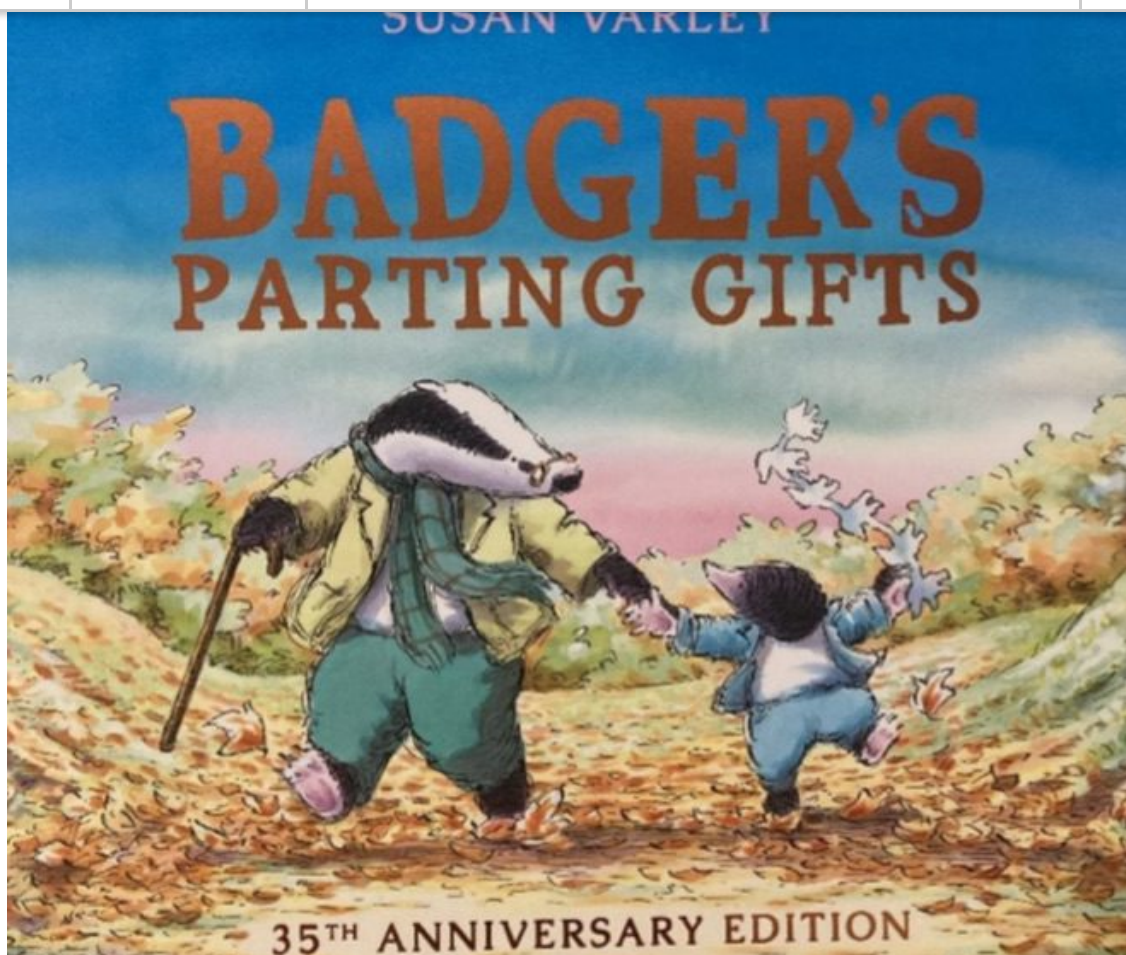
Explaining death and loss to a young child can be very difficult. Using a storybook can help difficult topics more accessible.

Seeing characters facing similar challenges of emotions they can relate to helps them make sense of their own emotions and can offer validation and reassurance.

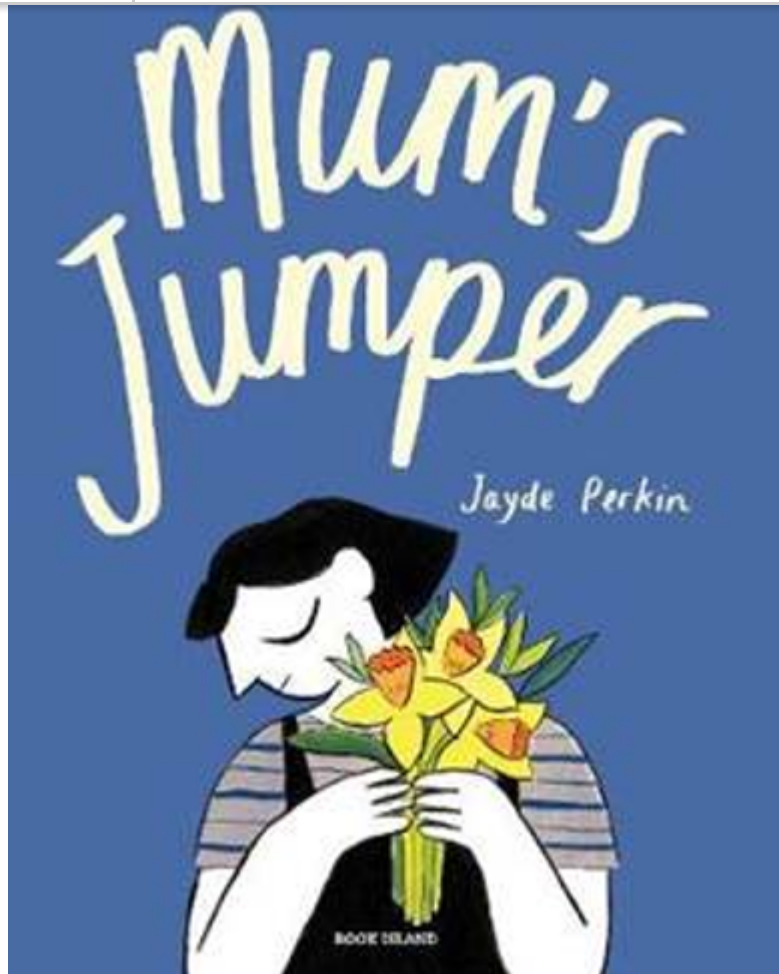
Storybooks also help children explore different perspectives, appreciate diversity, develop problem-solving skills and a sense of empathy and kindness towards those experiencing difficult situations. One of the most powerful benefits is that storybooks can encourage communication and dialogue between children and adults.

Incorporating storybooks as a tool to explain difficult concepts and emotions provides children with a valuable resource for understanding, processing, and navigating challenging experiences.

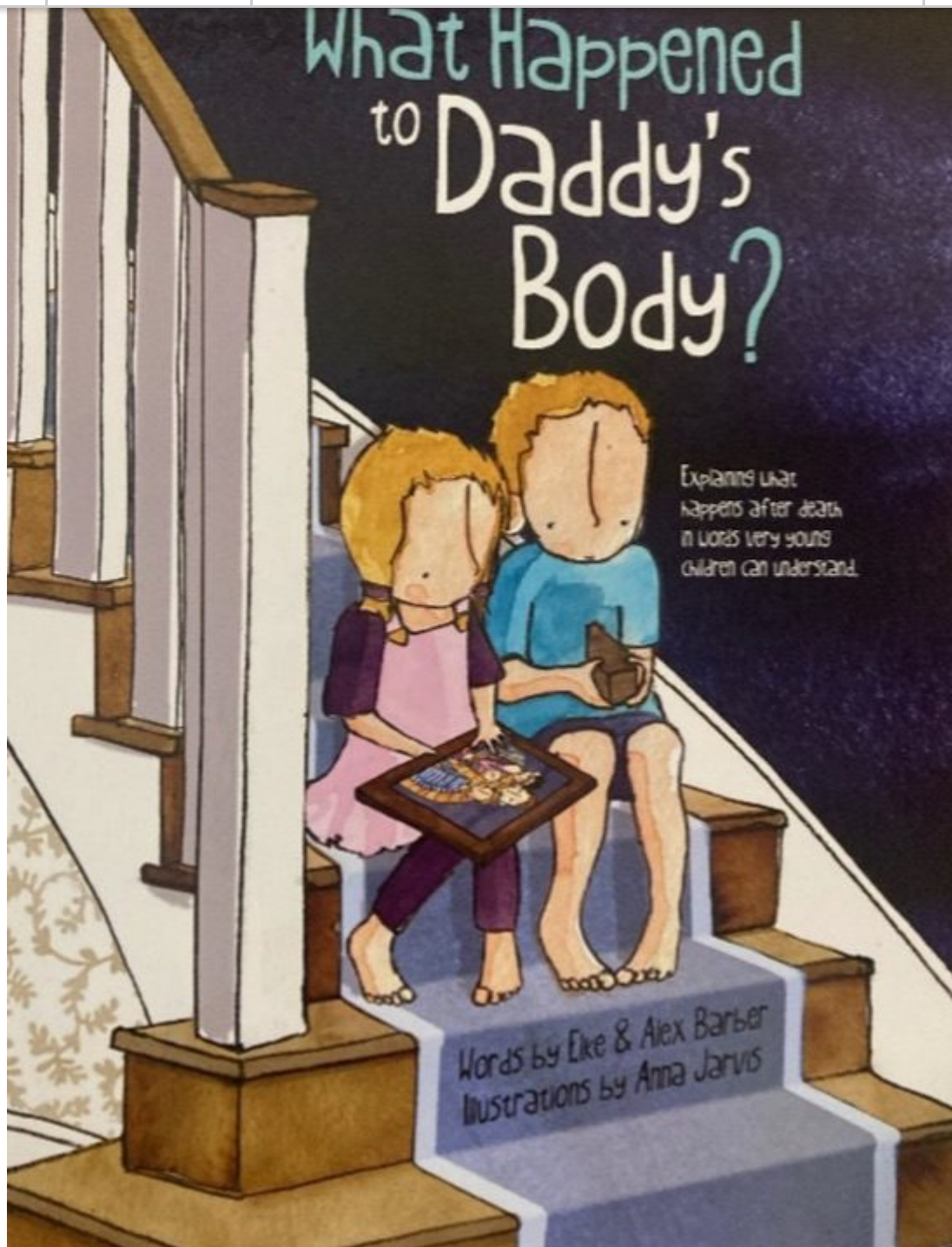
Please see below some of our favourite storybooks for talking specifically around grief and loss with young children.

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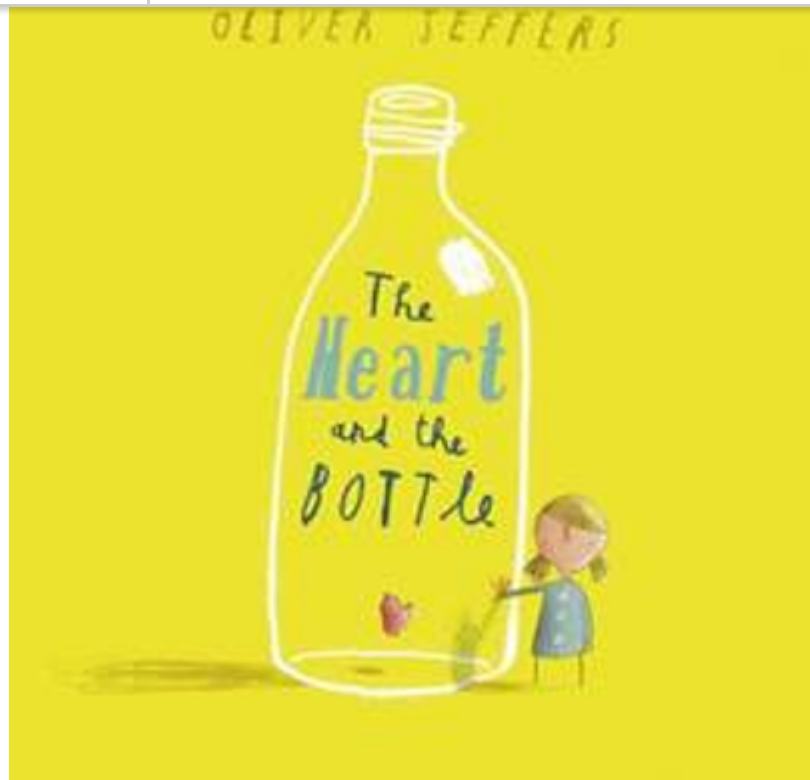
An old Badger that he knows he will soon die tries to prepare his friends for this event, but when he does die, they are still very sad. But one by one, they recall the special things he gave them during his lifetime, and how he still lives on inside them.

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A little girl loses her mother, and after the funeral, a dark shadow seems to develop around the little girl. When she and her Dad are sorting out Mum's things, she finds a jumper that Mum loved. When she wears it, it smells of Mum but over time, it loses Mum's smell and she learns that perhaps grief never really goes away, but, like the jumper, you grow into it.

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This is a story told by a little boy called Alex, whose daddy died suddenly when he was three. Alex often thinks about his Dad, and sometimes he asks questions which his mother answers. This book answers clearly the questions a lot of young children will often have about the processes of cremation and burial.



This storybook is about an inquisitive little girl, who when she loses someone she loves, she retreats into herself. As she grows up, she stops noticing the stars and the sea, which she had previously delighted in. She puts her heart away in a bottle, so that it can't be hurt again.

One day she meets a little girl reminds her of who she once was, and her heart is released and her sense of wonder restored. A lovely storybook that explores the impact grief can have.

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This beautiful picture book uses a metaphor of the regeneration of an overgrown garden to reflect how a family begins to regain hope after the pain and shock of losing a loved one.



This story of two siblings, Lizzy ('Friz') and Benny. Friz adores her older brother and their life changes immeasurably when he becomes ill, and he isn't going to get better.



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A beautiful, sensitively written book that could be used to support and comfort children who have a seriously ill sibling or friend.

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### **Managing the Menopause 12th July 2023 6:00pm**

Join Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist and Menopause Specialist Kavita Verma in conversation with The Retreat psychotherapist Laura Timm as they discuss the mental and physical impact of menopause.

### **Responding to the impact of a difficult pregnancy or birth experience 17th July 2023 10:00am**

Within this session, we will explore the different ways in which women and families can be affected and identify ways of responding that have the potential to help you.

[Book Your Free Places Here](#)

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### **Diagnostic Assessments:**

We are now accepting private referrals for formal autism diagnostic assessments for children and young people. We appreciate waiting lists can be long and how difficult it can be to wait for diagnostic assessments. Our experienced team can help – we follow NICE guidelines to provide our assessment service and offer a multidisciplinary team approach to every young person and family.

### **Therapy:**

If autism, ADHD or another neurodivergent diagnosis has been made, and you'd like some additional support, we may be able to help. We have a highly experienced and friendly team of Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists – and we can help you to figure out which one of these people would be best suited to support you and your child. Once we receive your self-referral, our team will be in touch to discuss what we maybe able to offer.

We can help you to explore things such as sensory differences, communication and social interaction, anxiety and other mental health difficulties, issues around schooling, understanding of autism/ADHD and what a diagnosis means to you and your family, and many more things.

### **School Consultation:**

Did you know that we can offer consultation to schools, to help with understanding around autism, ADHD and ways of adapting to ensure neurodivergent children and young people are well supported in the school setting.

We can offer group consultations and psychoeducation sessions for SENCOs and class teachers. We also offer 1:1 consultations, and a range of specific topic sessions (about the sensory environment at school, how to teach in the classroom, and many more). If you work in a school and are interested in finding out more, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. For more information call 01904 412 551 option 3. or click below to email.

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