

Let's Tell Each Other How We Feel

When you have experienced the death of someone, it can be very difficult for you and your child to talk on a day-to-day basis about your emotions and how you feel. Some days, you may feel you are able to manage and you feel in control of your life. Other days, you may wake up and feel that you are struggling to do even the simple things.

As the parent or carer of a child, it is important that you are able to know when your child is having a difficult day and be able to talk about it. It can be hard for a young person to come right out and say, 'I am struggling today'. Try and agree on a way that your child can tell you they are having a difficult day without actually having to say the words. Once you build up this relationship, they may find it easier to express themselves and tell you in words how they are feeling.

As adults, we know that the hardest part of a difficult day is telling the people you love that you are finding things difficult. Using a way that does not involve words can help children get the support they need.

Here is just one idea that can be used to help begin the process of talking.

Instructions:

1. Stick the question mark somewhere that you and your child can see it every day, e.g. on the fridge.
2. Cut out the pictures of the children's faces and put them next to the question mark - you can attach them using sticky tack so they can be moved as needed.
3. Explain to your child what they need to do and attach the instructions nearby as a reminder.

If your child is reluctant to start using this method, it might help if you use it first. You could choose a face that describes your feelings. Explain to your child how you are feeling, why you are feeling like that and talk about what you are going to do to feel better during the day.

Children are more likely to use the method and see it as a valuable way of helping them manage their emotions if they see you using it consistently.

