

Someone has died suddenly

A vital new book to help suddenly bereaved children - **order today!**



Amy & Tom

Supporting suddenly bereaved families

For children and adults to read together
Someone has died suddenly



Author Mary Williams OBE
Illustrator Steve Fraser



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A sudden death in the family is devastating for children. One of the hardest challenges that a bereaved child may have to face is going back to school while still suffering from deep grief. *'Someone has died suddenly'* is a 40-page book by the charitable Amy & Tom project* for bereaved children of all ages to help them cope and recover and go on to lead full and happy lives.

The book is a brilliant tool to help teachers, parents, guardians and other adult carers talk with children about their emotions, needs and concerns at a bleak time.

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educators

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The book, written in plain English, is narrated by Amy and Tom, two children who have been suddenly bereaved themselves. It includes:

- information about strong feelings and how to cope
- information about what happens after a sudden death and why
- questions to stimulate discussion, such as 'Did they feel any pain?' and 'What's going to happen to their body?'
- beautiful, warm illustrations that children want to look at, and interesting fact boxes
- work book activities, including writing a poem and collecting memories
- advice for adults on how to use the book effectively

The book is based on the findings of academic studies on how to help suddenly bereaved children and has been prepared in partnership with suddenly bereaved families.

*The Amy & Tom project is a not-for-profit initiative by Brake, the road safety charity, and aims to help children bereaved suddenly by any means, such as road crashes, heart attacks (or other sudden medical conditions such as meningitis), murder, suicide, or any kind of accident or other cause of sudden death.

What does it feel like to die?

Everyone knows what it feels like to be hurt. When you fall over and hurt your knee, or bring your head on a table, it's painful and can make you cry. It might carry on hurting for a long time.

When someone dies suddenly it's very different. They might feel pain to begin with, but when they die their brain switches off and they can't feel pain any more.



Dying in a hospital



When someone who is dying arrives at hospital they go straight to a special bit of the hospital called the Accident and Emergency Department.

Doctors try their best to stop the person from dying. This includes trying to help them to breathe and trying to stop any bleeding. But if someone's body is too badly injured or poorly the doctors sadly can't save their life, and they die.

Sometimes the person doesn't even know they're dying.



Common feeling 1 I WANT TO CRY

It's good to cry. Crying is the most natural thing to do when you feel really sad. Some people think it's silly or pathetic. It isn't. I cried heaps and tears when my dad died. I cried at the funeral, I cried at school and I cried at bed time. I even cried in the shower - that's a good place to cry because you don't need a towel!

Amy's top tip: Cry on someone's shoulder when you have a hug. Sometimes getting some fresh air, doing some exercise or playing your favourite music can help as well.



Sometimes I would try not to cry. I would bottle up my feelings and pretend I was OK. But it never made me feel better. It was much better to blub! You can cry any time you like, wherever you like. Sometimes I don't feel like crying, and that was OK too.

Amy's top tip: After you stop crying have a big glass of your favourite drink to replace the liquid you have lost and maybe a biscuit or chocolate to give you some energy. It will make you feel a bit better.

Common feeling 2 I'M REALLY ANGRY

Sometimes I would feel really grumpy. I was really cross that they weren't there any more. They couldn't play with me. Why hadn't they? They couldn't talk to me. Why hadn't they?

One day when I felt really angry I beat up my favourite toy. Luckily it could be mended afterwards! After that I used to hit a cushion. The cushion got a bit squishy but it didn't matter and it made me feel better.



When I felt angry I would jump up and down and shout and scream. But that was OK. Everyone knew it was because I was very sad and I was letting out my feelings. I felt tired afterwards, but it felt better.

Amy's top tip: Cussing up is more sensible than hitting another person or hitting something hard or even letting yourself. If you ever think you want to do those things, take it out on a cushion or a pillow instead, and tell someone you trust how angry you feel. Cussing can help you feel better too.

What do you want to do when you feel angry?



Visit amyandtom.org for more images of the book

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