



Understanding and coping with the death of a loved one or friend can be very difficult at the best of times. Having to inform children of sad news such as this can be equally difficult.

The Learn to Live's Loss & Bereavement Support Group, with advice from outside agencies, has devised some guidelines for this type of conversation.

It is not a set script you should strictly follow, just an example of the language you could choose to use. We strongly recommend however, that:

- You keep your language simple.
- You do not use phrases such as "gone to sleep" or "passed away". Please use 'concrete' language wherever possible.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

I have/We have something very sad* to tell you.

Your Dad/Mother/Brother/Sister/friend has died.

S/He died yesterday/today.

S/He died at home/in hospital/(somewhere else).

You will not see him/her again.

It is very sad.

We will look after you and help you. *[Pause, allow time for the child to take it in].*

Do you understand?

Dad/Mother/Brother/Sister/friend has died.

It is very sad. *[Pause, allow time for the child to take it in].*

Mum/Aunty/Whoever is coming today/tomorrow.

Someone will stay with you.

We will talk with you again soon/when you want to.

** Don't assume it will be sad, it may not be. If appropriate, omit the words "very sad".*

If you would like more information on this subject, we recommend you visit:

www.balloonscharity.co.uk

www.winstonswish.org.uk