

*"There is something you must
always remember. You are
braver than you believe,
stronger than you seem and
smarter than you think"*
– Winnie the Pooh

Contact the Jigsaw Project via the Family Support Team on Tel: 0191 374 6183
or email thejigsawproject@stcuthbertshospice.com

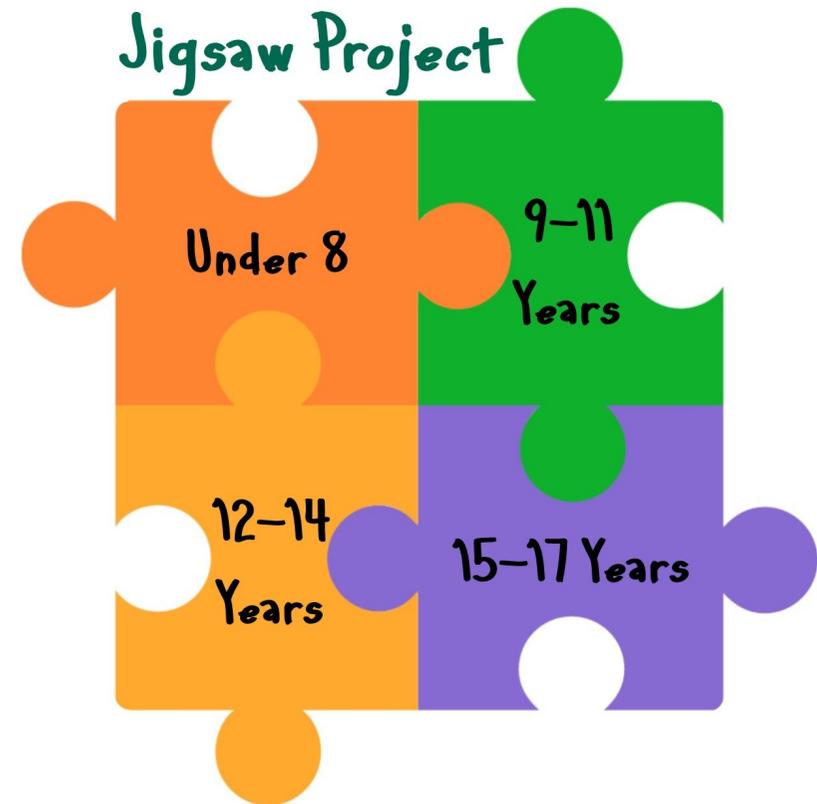
The Jigsaw Project, St Cuthbert's Hospice, Park House Road, Durham, DH1 3QF



www.stcuthbertshospice.com

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Jigsaw Project



Helping children & young people deal
with grief, loss and bereavement

Delivered by The Family Support Team at
St Cuthbert's Hospice

How do children & young people grieve?

Children and young people grieve just as much as adults but they show it in different ways. They learn how to grieve by copying the adults around them, and rely on adults to provide them with what they need to support them in their grief.

Children have a limited ability to put feelings, thoughts and memories into words, they tend to “act out” with behaviours instead of expressing themselves verbally. Showing your grief will encourage them to express theirs. Their behaviour is your guide as to how they are and this is as true for a very young child as it is for a teenager.

Children are naturally good at dipping in and out of their grief. They can be intensely sad one minute, then suddenly switch to playing happily the next, this does not mean they are not affected, it is a type of in-built safety mechanism that prevents them being overwhelmed by powerful feelings.

As children get older, this becomes harder and teenagers may spend long periods of time in one behaviour or another. For a young person, getting on with life might mean a hectic social schedule as their way of shutting out the pain. Or they may withdraw into themselves, rejecting offers of help and being generally very hard to communicate with.

What can I do to help?



Support them to carry on as much as they can with usual routines of home, school, seeing friends, etc. whilst supporting one another when the grief feels all consuming.



Answer questions honestly, and in simple language suitable for the child's age, they need information to make sense of what is happening.



Let them know that their feelings are normal, but also help them find safe ways to express these feelings.



Be a model, not a hero. Share your feelings with your child; children learn to grieve by observing and copying the adults around them.

Info from Child Bereavement Network UK

How do I access more support?

You can contact us directly, using the contact details overleaf, or you can ask a professional such as a G.P, teacher or social worker to refer a child or young person to The Jigsaw Project.