**Initial Guidance Relating to Bereaved Children and Young People for those Providing Pastoral Support for the Bereaved during the Coronavirus Restrictions**

In the current situation where attendance at funerals is very limited it is very probable that many children will not be able to attend funerals of relatives that die during this period. However, families will still need to consider their children’s grief and feel equipped to talk with them and provide the support they need.

Children are not likely to have seen the deceased in person for at least several weeks unless they lived within their own household. This could make it **harder for younger children to understand and also may make some children feel guilty** that they were not able to say goodbye or perhaps did talk for very long last time the family called the deceased. It is therefore really important that we **help the adults in their life to talk with the children** even when they grieving themselves.

Within your conversations you may wish to ask particularly about the ages of children in the family and the part they played in the deceased life. These relationships can then be acknowledged within the funeral service and the children be told about this if appropriate.

If there are children connected to the deceased you could **signpost families to resources** that they can access to support them to talk to their children and for young people to access themselves. We will be collating the best of these in the coming weeks to inform schools and church leaders. In the short term **Winston’s Wish have updated their website with thoughts and guidance for people in response to the current crisis** [**https://www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus/**](https://www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus/) . This would be well worth signposting families to if there are grieving children in the immediate or extended family.

Other resource suggestions can be found on the diocesan website <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/parishes/cypaf/bereavement>

If you or families are particularly worried about children connected to the deceased they can also **access support via their schools.** All schools should still have some way for families to contact them, even in schools holidays. Teachers can then link families with their pastoral and support services. In the coming weeks the Diocesan Board of Education will be providing additional support and guidance to church, schools and church leaders in relation to bereaved children and young people, particularly as we get a greater sense on what the impact on families and communities is likely to be.

**The Board of Education can also offer support to church and school leaders via the Critical Incident helpline** **07788289843 please use this if you need further support or advice**