



*"For when two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them..." (Matt 18:20)*

## WHEN TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT DEATH

### THE DO'S OF EXPLAINING:

All children will react to death in different ways – some may become sad and depressed while others may just want to get on with life. Please be there for your children should they need you. They may have fears that the same thing will happen to their loved ones or to themselves.

- Do **be honest** but careful in explanations – only tell them what they need to know – not great detailed information.
- Do accept all questions that the children ask about death– if you are not sure say so and tell them you will find out the answer for them.
- Do speak of death as part of the circle of life – it happens to all living things and is permanent.
- Do speak of heaven as a new way of being.
- Do face and admit your own feelings of sadness.
- Do tell children it is OK to feel sad and to cry if they feel like it.
- Do tell them it is OK to laugh and get on with life also.
- Do pray together for the family – this helps them to feel they are doing something positive and constructive.
- Do re-establish routines as soon as possible – this provides a feeling of security and normality.

### THE DON'TS OF EXPLAINING:

- Don't say that God **'took'** the person – children may then develop a resentment of God. You can say they died and is now safely at peace with God.
- Don't say he/she has just gone to sleep or that death is the same as sleep – children may be afraid to go to sleep at night.
- Don't say they just **went away** – children may think they have just gone away and may come back or that people who go away may not come back.

### SOME THINGS TO DO:

- Draw a picture or make a card for the family.
- Pray together as a family each night for the family.