



Children's Healing and Therapeutic Support (CHATS) Team

Confidential emotional support for children and young people.

If you would like to find out more about how the CHATS Team can support you please contact them:

Call: 0121 269 5000

Email: childrenstherapy@birminghamhospice.org.uk

Find out more on our website:

www.birminghamhospice.org.uk



The Children's Healing and Therapeutic Support (CHATS) Team at Birmingham Hospice offer confidential, emotional support for children and young people when a loved one is poorly or if they have died.

What support is available?

We offer one-to-one sessions with children and young people to help them explore and express their feelings. We have a designated Children's Room for the sessions and where appropriate, we also offer home and school visits.

We also run support groups for children, young people and their families whose loved one is receiving care from the charity. This provides an opportunity for both you and your child to experience peer support and talk to others who are in similar situations.

The CHATS team can support and guide you in how and when to talk to children, offering strategies to enable better communication within families. We can also speak to other adults and professionals in the child's life either over the phone or face-to-face.

Much of the work we do is upskilling and supporting school staff to ensure your child is well supported during this difficult time.

We can also help you access support from other teams in the charity if you are struggling.

How do I access the support?

You can ask a member of the team on the Ward, your Clinical Nurse Specialist or any other member of the hospice team that is involved in you or your loved one's care to make a referral to us.

You can also self-refer your child to the service by calling us or visiting the contact page on our website.

What happens during sessions?

The first session will be an informal assessment. This is usually done with both the child/young person and their parent/guardian to gain as much information as possible about what support you are looking for. If it is decided that support from our service would be helpful, we will look at pairing your child with a member of our team for ongoing one-to-one therapeutic sessions.

We then help by listening to their worries and talking through what is happening with them. Recognising it's sometimes difficult for them to explain how they are feeling, we use a range of therapeutic art activities to help them express themselves. We encourage children to share their thoughts and worries with you and also encourage positive memory making.



How many sessions are offered?

When somebody is poorly, we can offer open-ended support. For bereavement support, we initially offer 10 sessions but this is regularly reviewed with the child and family.

If we feel more support is needed, then we are flexible and can accommodate this.

How long are sessions?

Sessions can be anything from 30 minutes up to an hour. It all depends on what you, your child and your worker feels will be most beneficial.

What can these sessions help with?

- Providing a safe space for children and young people to talk about their thoughts and feelings.
- Finding effective coping strategies and emotional/practical tools.
- Promoting and encouraging communication within the family.

- Encouraging positive memory making such as creating special memory boxes, bespoke hand-casting and audio recordings that become items to be treasured.

What if my child isn't ready yet?

That's absolutely fine. We have an open-door policy. It's perfectly normal that a child or young person may not be ready to talk about their feelings but the service will be here for them to access in the future when they are. All you need to do is contact us.

What if my child needs help with other issues that aren't related to grief, loss or bereavement?

CHATS specialise in both pre and post-bereavement support which means we only work with issues related to this. If your child has additional support needs, we will happily signpost and try to refer them to the relevant agency that may be able to provide appropriate support.