

Supporting Children Who are Refusing to Attend School



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Children may refuse to go to school for many different reasons following a bereavement. They may not want to go to school as they don't want to leave you as they are anxious; they may feel tearful or not want to be around their peers.

To reassure your child that you will return to pick them up you could leave a special possession with them, this should help to reduce anxiety that they may have about you not returning.

Younger children may not understand that you will return for them as you have said you will, but they will know that if they have one of your possessions you will need to go back for that.

Children may not tell you that they do not want to attend school; instead they may complain of a stomach or headache in hope that this will stop them from having to go. You may find that you will get your child to school and then they will say they feel unwell in order to get sent back home. It may be helpful to keep a log of when your child complains of an ailment or is sent home from school as this will enable you to see any patterns emerging.

- Try to talk with your child about school. Find out what they enjoy when they are there:
Do they have a favourite subject? A favourite teacher?
Friends that they can rely on? Identifying the positive aspects can help the child to remember the things that they used to enjoy about school prior to their bereavement.
- You could use the Blob Tree to help aid discussion. Ask your child which blob they feel like right now and which blob they feel like when they are in school. You can then ask them what this blob feels like? Do they always feel like this blob?
- Maybe talk with your child about how they would feel if you arranged to have a meeting or phone conversation with their school to tell them about how your child feels.
- The 'I wish my teacher knew' card may be useful for your child to use, this will enable them to write down what they would like their teacher to know about how they are feeling.
- It may be that a key adult in the school can be identified and your child can find them if they are

Blob Tree

Where can I get further support for my child and myself?

KOOTH

Offer support to young people in Cornwall through online or one-to-one counselling and mentoring support.
Visit: Kooth.com



Young Minds

Offer advice on common issues affecting young people's emotional health and wellbeing.

Visit: www.youngminds.org.uk
Parents Helpline:
08088025544



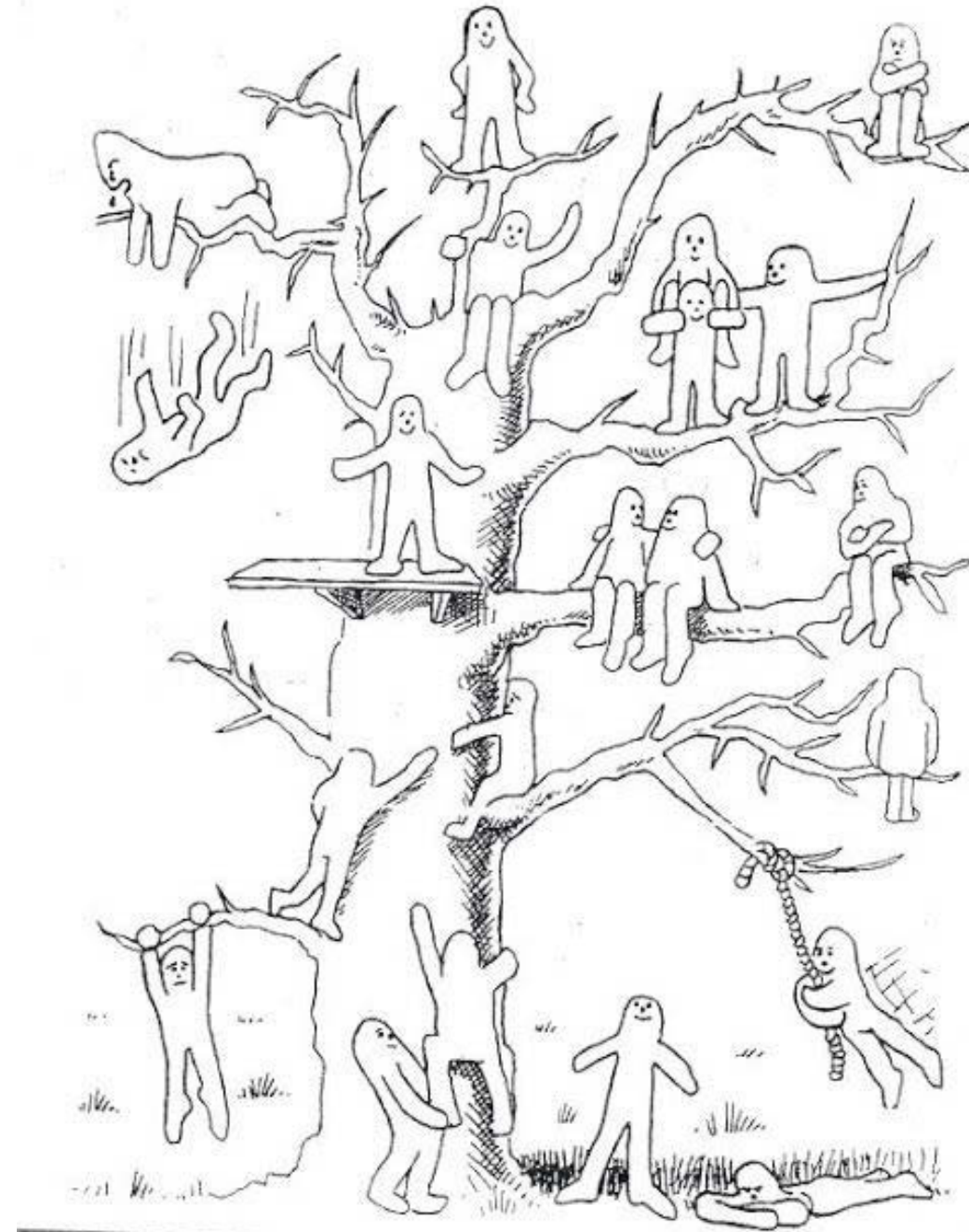
Cruse Bereavement Care

Supports people after the death of someone close; they offer a wide range of support services.
Contact: 0844 477 9400 or visit www.cruse.org.uk



Outlook SouthWest

Provide information, practical support and guidance to adults who are bereaved. They aim to contact you within 72 hours of referral.
Contact: 01208 871 905



struggling in class.

- Remind your child that their teachers will not know why they do not want to be in school unless you have permission to tell them or they are happy to do so themselves.
- Reassure your child that it is understandable that they feel anxious but that school is a safe place to be, remind them that the staff are there to look after them,
- Reward your child when they do go to school, maybe plan to do something fun together at the weekend.

I wish my teacher knew...

Iceberg activity

This activity may be helpful to use with your child when discussing how they are feeling. If your child is happy to share this with their teacher this may be helpful as their teacher will be more aware of their feelings and resultantly may be able to offer them targeted support.

