

## NATIONAL CHILDREN'S TRAUMA CLINIC

Dr Dora Black, Consultant Child Psychiatrist and Co-editor of *Bereavement Care*, has been awarded a Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship to study services for children who have been acutely psychologically traumatised as a result of either mass or personal disaster.

She plans to travel around the USA looking at children's trauma clinics and will be setting up a National Trauma Clinic for children at the Royal Free Hospital, London.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

A lecture given by Dr Dora Black recently on childhood grief gave me great insight.

Several months ago, as a new counsellor, I was asked if I would counsel a child of nine years who had lost his grandfather. The grandfather had been something of a father-figure to this little boy. I did some reading on the subject and nervously went along for my first visit.

He told me his 'grandad' had died of stomach cancer and that he kept having visions of how he had looked with all the tubes attached. As we were coming to the end of the session my mind was racing as to how I could help this little boy.

We decided that whenever he got this 'bad picture' in his mind, he would replace it with any 'nice picture' he could remember about his grandad. He chose the

## FORTHCOMING CONFERENCE

**Widowed Persons Service Conference, 20th Year Celebration.** 16-18 October 1993. San Diego, California. Details from American Association of Retired Persons, 601 E Street, NW, Washington DC 20049.

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thought of rolling down a hill. He then asked if he could invent a mental picture. Grandad had been quite a character and his invented thought was of him playing football with an ice-cream.

He also found that his mind wandered when he was at school, so we decided to combat this by pretending he could use a rubber to rub out the bad pictures, starting in one corner and eventually making them disappear completely.

On the second visit he said that he felt better about his thoughts, and on the third, showed me a photograph collection of grandad that he had compiled. He seemed happier for having shared it with me.

There were only three counselling sessions, because the family moved, but I hope I helped him in the short time we had.

JENNY MASON  
Boston, Lincs.

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## "CALL FOR PAPERS"

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- Responsibilities of Society

**Deadline for submission of abstracts is 1st October 1993**

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