

a very useful medium for communication between a child and the remaining parent or carer in their lives. ●

**References:**

1. White M, Epston D. *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends*. London: Norton, 1990.

2. Silverman PR. *Never Too Young to Know: Death in Children's Lives*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000.

3. Freeman J, Epston D, Lobovitis D. *Playful Approaches to Serious Problems: Narrative Therapy with Children and Their Families*. New York: WW Norton, 1997.

4. Sunderland M. *Using Story Telling as a Therapeutic Tool with Children*. Bicester, Oxon, UK: Winslow Press, 2000.

5. Stokes J. *Winston's Wish. Bereavement Care* 1996; 15(3): 33-34.

6. Stokes J. *Then, Now and Always*. Cheltenham, Glos, UK: Portfolio Publishing, 2004.

7. Dyregov A. *Grief in Children*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1991.

**The film script guidelines: a framework for clinicians**

This intervention can be used in either individual or group work sessions.

**Introduction** Suggest to the children that this is their time to think about and share their story of what happened in their family when their important person died. You may wish to show an example of a child's story drawn on a film script and then talk through the steps described below. You may need to have a discussion about the words everyone uses to talk about death or injury, including some that may seem 'shocking' because they are not often used openly.

**Step 1** The facilitator invites the child to use the blank pages to draw their story in scenes and create their own film script. The facilitator then introduces the idea that many young people have the story of what happened

when their person died 'playing' in their head like a video. By drawing out their film script they are going to press the eject button and begin to be in charge of their film. Emphasise that they can 'rent out' and watch their video when they want to, and do not need to have it playing on remote control whenever it feels like it.

**Step 2** The facilitator describes the stages that their film will take and invites the child to draw some pictures to represent how life was at each stage.

- What was life like before their important person died?
- What happened when they died? What do they know of the story?
- What happened after they died? What was life like after they died?
- What is life like now?

**Step 3** Once everyone has completed their script, help each child tape the pieces together so it looks like one long roll of film. Then go around the group asking each of them to share what they have drawn with the others in their group. Encourage all of them to talk through their film, expressing the details of their story and what is important to them.

**Step 4** Then ask each child to roll their film up and place an elastic band around it. State very clearly that they have now pressed the eject button, and are now in charge of their video. They can choose to show their film to others who they want to know what happened, and their understanding of it. This film is now no longer in charge of them; they can choose when to rent it out and when to press the play button.

- 6 John manages to negotiate the roundabout properly and Dad tells him how well he's cycling
- 7 A car comes along, passing too close to both John and Dad.
- 8 The car knocks John off his bike on to the grass verge and hits the back of Dad's bike. Dad falls off his bike into the middle of the road and the car drives right over him. John said it happened within seconds but seemed not to be real, almost slow motion. He could not believe what he had just seen was real and happening to his Dad.
- 9 John was able to get up and run to his dad. Dad's eyes were closed and John could see a lot of blood. He felt very scared and a sick feeling in his tummy. He remembers the driver calling an ambulance and crying. John

- started to cry too. He still could not believe what had happened and he remembers hoping like crazy that his dad would not die.
- 10 Some other cars stopped to help and they wanted John to wait in their cars so he didn't have to see what was happening. Inside his head John was screaming 'No, no, let me stay with Dad. I want to be with him'. Reluctantly he did what the adults wanted him to do and sat in one of their cars
- 11 When all the police and ambulance people arrive it was quite crazy. The policeman was very kind and offered to take him home in the police car. John quite enjoyed this because he put the siren on.
- 12 When he got home, his mum looked really worried. The policeman told her what had happened.

