

What Spectrum is *not*

- Not professional counselling or therapy.
- Does not analyse or diagnose emotional or behavioural problems.
- Does not give advice or attempt to solve problems.
- Does not give opinions, pass comment, make judgements, take sides or criticise.
- Does not take notes, write reports, give feedback or evidence, except as laid down by *Child Protection Procedures*.

Office Hours

Mon - Thurs 9.00am - 4.30pm

Friday 9.00am - 1.00pm

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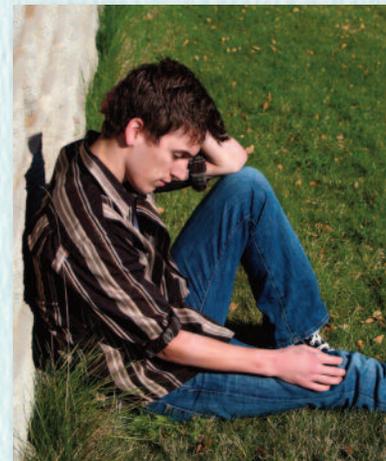
Contact details for local Rainbows Site

Spectrum

offers peer support for adolescents
experiencing grief and loss



“a time of change and
a struggle to cope”



Rainbows is a national voluntary organization offering peer support to adolescents who have experienced a significant loss in their lives (not counselling or therapy).

The aim is to support adolescents in their local communities, as they seek to come to terms with grief and loss.

The training, resources and structure needed to establish peer support groups is provided by Rainbows.

Adolescents and Loss

Adolescents have a mature understanding of death, realising that it is inevitable and universal.

The grief and loss of adolescents often gets over looked and hidden as they take on adult roles.

Peer relationships are fundamental to an adolescent.... loss and grief can make them feel *the odd one out*.

Grief can have a profound impact. Adolescents are in transition between childhood and adulthood. They are experiencing physical and emotional change and development. They are striving to become independent and make sense of an adult world.

Strong relationships of parents and family provide a secure foundation for adolescents. Significant changes in a family through bereavement, separation and divorce can interrupt and regress teenagers.

Frequently, adolescents are not able to express intense feelings and emotions. Rather, it is reflected in changed behaviour, reduced academic performance, physical reactions and a decrease in emotional well - being, self - esteem and confidence. Generally, grief reactions are temporary.

Grief that is ignored can have a destructive effect on an adolescent's life.

What Spectrum offers

- A 12 week structured programme (not counselling or therapy).
- Peer support.... a shared experience that reduces the feeling of isolation, realising you are not the only one or not the only family....
- Adolescents of similar age and loss meeting in groups.
- It is a free support service advertised and offered to communities or second level schools.
- Peer support groups offers a safe confidential environment for sharing feelings (not counselling or therapy)
- Spectrum is part of the Rainbows programme aimed at adolescents.

What Spectrum peer support groups can offer

- Support to reduce feelings of stigmatisation and embarrassment - of feeling *the odd one out*.
- A reduction in isolation and a normalising of strong emotions as adolescents identify and find reassurance with others in similar situations.
- A framework of emotional support at a time when lives may be in turmoil. Adolescents often reject adults in their lives at this time.
- A safe way for adolescents to express overwhelming emotions in their own way and at their own pace.
- "Time out" where adolescents learn that they do not have to protect other grieving family members.
- Support to restore and build self - esteem, confidence and resilience.
- Can offer a model of good grief and a model of coping for the future.