

Caring for bereaved children and families

after the death of their parent, sibling
or close loved one since 1994

AN INVITATION TO HELP US CARE



The National Centre for Childhood Grief (NCCG) is the leading Australian not-for-profit organisation dedicated to caring for bereaved children aged 3-17 years and their families following the death of a parent, sibling or other close loved one.



1 in 20

Australian children will experience the death of their parent before the age of 18 and many more another close loved one¹.

Close family bereavement is amongst the most traumatic experiences for children, with profound and life-long impacts, particularly if not addressed early with specialist support²:



Significantly increased incidence of anxiety and depression



Diminished sense of personal control or security



More accidents and health problems



Lost education due to trauma and family upheaval



Increased social isolation and disconnection



Their bereaved families are commonly in financial crisis



Bereaved adolescents lose on average one year of formal education compared to non-bereaved students³



Yet childhood bereavement is widely misunderstood, misdiagnosed and given little specialist support. Paid professional counselling for bereavement is expensive, hard to access and rarely a specialist service.

¹ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2010

² Source: Schuurman, *Never the Same*, Dougy Centre, New York, 2003; Elsner et al, *Bereavement and educational outcomes in children and young people: A systematic review*, University of Melbourne, 2022; Cain & LaFreniere, 2015; Dyregrov et al, 2022; McKissock, 2017

³ Elsner et al, op. cit., 2022



Core NCCG
Counselling
team



The NCCG was founded in Sydney in 1994 to fill this critical gap in Australian community health care. Founders Dianne McKissock OAM and Mal McKissock OAM, internationally renowned experts in bereavement care, saw bereaved children were missing out on care and started the NCCG with volunteering professionals.

The NCCG provides a place of safety, nurturing, understanding and learning, where bereaved children and their families learn to live with their grief, build their coping skills and resilience and are empowered to live their own best life.

Many more families approach the NCCG seeking support each year. In the last 4 years alone the number of children cared for has increased by 166%.

 <p>Clients in every Australian State and Territory</p>	 <p>HIGH DEMAND 166% increase in the number of children cared for in the last 4 years</p>
 <p>In-person and online services</p>	 <p>411 children cared for in last 12 months</p>

Our Commitment

The NCCG is committed to maintaining our high quality service to care for many more bereaved Australian children and families who currently receive little or no support with their grief. We invite you help us be there to care.



The Pain of Grief

Children's grief is frequently undetected, denied or misunderstood.

Children, like adults, grieve when they lose anything they are attached to. Their grief is usually most painful, intense and prolonged when someone they love dies.

Children are impacted by many common and damaging misconceptions about grief and bereavement. People around them may commonly believe and say:

"children don't grieve"

"it's better not to dwell or talk about it at all"

"they have had enough time feeling sad, they need to move on"

"a funeral is no place for a child"

"the child is not crying, so they must not be grieving"

These ideas are all not true.

As much as we might wish otherwise, we cannot prevent children and young people from feeling the pain of loss. What we can do is help them learn how to build life around the empty places in their hearts and teach them skills to manage distressing and intrusive thoughts.

The best approach is to provide them with true information, in age-appropriate language, about what has happened and an opportunity to ask questions, and include them in what is happening, be that visiting a dying person in hospital or attending a funeral.



At the NCCG, the bottom line for helping children deal with their grief is truth and inclusion.





Finn's Story

Finn was one of four children under 10 years of age in his family when his father Andy suffered a massive heart attack and suddenly died at an evening social soccer game.

Finn and all of his siblings attended the fortnightly Kids Group program at the NCCG. These sessions are where Finn says he felt understood, and like he wasn't different.

"I think at the NCCG when the spotlight is on you and the other kids around you...it shows you you're not alone," he said.

A common refrain within households where a parent has died is, "we don't talk about it", but the NCCG's counsellors know that approach is not in the best interest of the grieving child. Children are encouraged to be curious, to get to know the parent who has died and to keep any memories alive. They are taught how to grieve.

"It's about remembering them...[the counsellors] show you that it's not all about death, says Finn.

"I don't think every day 'what if Dad was still alive?' I'm more thinking 'what if I didn't go there [to the NCCG]. That's what I really think about if I'm totally honest.

"Because I always know there's a safe place to talk about Dad."



I think at the NCCG when the spotlight is on you and the other kids around you...it shows you you're not alone.



Our Services



Counselling

Professional, client-centred services provided by highly experienced NCCG-trained counsellors. Play and talk-based therapies tailored to each age and client, held in-person or online. Individual counselling for bereaved children 3-17 years and newly bereaved adults. Group programs for children and parents.

Free and unlimited service for children, funded by community donations. Part-subsidised service for adults.



Adventure Camps

Special opportunities for bereaved children and families to meet, share with others with similar experiences, explore their grief, learn new skills and simply have fun. Weekend activity programs for girls, boys and families. A supplement to our individual counselling programs.

The NCCG's Peter Coupland Adventure Program is named after leading NCCG counsellor and Board member Peter Coupland (1965-2015) - a role model who showed how to engage in life, despite living with the pain of early loss.

Program funded by community donations.



Community Support & Outreach

Support for communities and organisations looking after bereaved children and families. Schools, work colleagues, community groups and health professionals can access information and training, including:

- Outreach visits to workplaces, schools and health care organisations
- Staff/team training in the best ways to care
- An outreach email support service for dying and bereaved people by our co-founder, Dianne McKissock OAM – drmckissock@icloud.com

Community funded or fee-based service depending on need.



Professional Education

Over more than 30 years the NCCG has developed an international reputation for excellence in child and family bereavement counselling. We provide a range of training courses for professionals and new students in specialist skills and practical care. Support the NCCG to keep building community skills and understanding in bereavement care.



Publications

THE NCCG publishes a range of books and resources for bereaved children, adults and other caregivers supporting bereaved families. With your support we can provide these helpful resources to people in need.

Community funded or for sale depending on need.





A Camp Story

The NCCG provides camps for bereaved girls, boys and families.

Our Adventure Camps for Bereaved Boys are a special opportunity for boys aged 8-15 years who have been recently bereaved by the death of their parent.

This camp provides an opportunity for the boys to meet others the same age whose parent has died, explore and share their grief experiences, challenge themselves and enjoy some fun outdoors.

Grief can be a very isolating experience for children, who can feel a significant emotional and personal gap from their established friends and community. This camp helps them to see they are not alone, that other children have had a similar extreme experience and allows them to spend time with people who understand what they are going through.



This camp has been helpful by showing ways to deal with grief and know that I'm supported.



Grief can also deeply undermine a bereaved child's self-confidence and resilience. The activities held at the camp, including physical challenges, games and clinical therapeutic programs are professionally designed to help rekindle a child's self-confidence, build a sense of safety and resilience and give them new personal skills to manage the grief.

Boys who attended a recent camp said:

"This camp has been helpful by showing ways to deal with grief and know that I'm supported"

"The camp has made me understand that I'm not alone and I have learnt a lot, made lots of great new friends and had so much fun"

"I've been vulnerable and told other boys and adults about the difficulties of my grief and shared memories of my deceased parent. It has showed me that there are boys who I can talk to and relate to as they are also bereaved. It has also made me aware of the amount of support which surrounds me at the NCCG"

→ **The Adventure Camp for Bereaved Boys is part of the NCCG's Peter Coupland Adventure Program, which provides special opportunities for bereaved girls, boys and families to find new ways to re-engage in the fun challenges of life, enjoy some respite and connection with other people with similar bereavement experiences.**

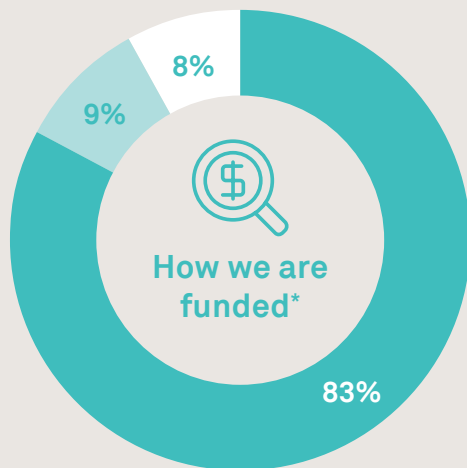


How we are funded

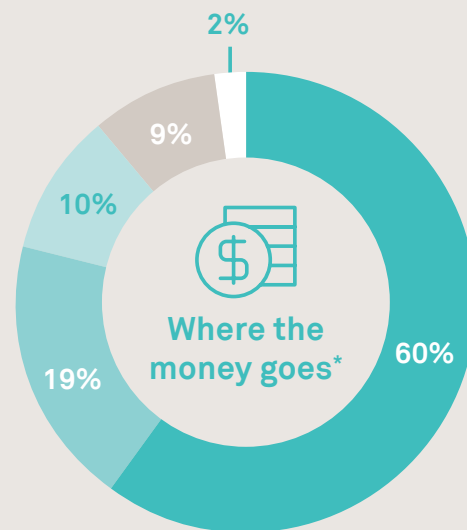
Community donations fund most of the NCCG's services.
We receive minimal government funding.

Your support allows bereaved children to receive free and unlimited care – free because there should be no barrier to their care and unlimited because grief is a changing life-long journey. Services costs for parents and carers are partly subsidised by donations.

Thank you for helping us care for bereaved children and their families at a most traumatic time in their lives.



- Community donations **83%**
- Fees for our services **9%**
- Government funding **8%**



- Counselling services **60%**
- Centre facilities **19%**
- Counselling support **10%**
- Fundraising **9%**
- Other **2%**

*2022-2023 Financial Year

The NCCG is a registered Australian charity with Deductible Gift Recipient status:

- Not-for-profit
- Fully registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC)
- ATO-endorsed Deductible Gift Recipient (DRG1)
- ABN 79 098 60 130



Lucy's Story

Lucy Crowther was four years old when her father Nick died.

Now 12, Lucy's memories from those four precious years will have to last her a lifetime. That is the reality when a child's parent dies.

The NCCG's counsellors have helped Lucy build those precious memories. "At the NCCG, instead of just talking about how I feel ... we did artworks. It's made me realise that I actually know a lot more than I thought I did about dad," Lucy said.

"And that really helped because it has helped Mum and I talk – share little things I didn't know about dad." Her mum Kim said conversations have become "cathartic". "Because I think one of the fears Lucy has is always that she's going to forget her dad", said Kim.

Now, Lucy can tell you her dad was Nick and he was from Scotland. He loved horses and he really was "a gentle giant" at taller than 6 foot. He owned a landscaping business and she wants you to know he was very fun.



At the NCCG, instead of just talking about how I feel ... we did artworks. It's made me realise that I actually know a lot more than I thought I did about dad.



How to donate

You are invited to help the NCCG care for bereaved children and their families.

The NCCG's services are principally funded by community donations, so your support will literally make our specialist services and care possible.

1

NCCG Patrons

\$100,000+

We invite you to join leading philanthropists who have already provided generous gifts to fund the core work of the centre, such as a counsellor position, new program or centre facilities. We would be honoured to **name one of our principal centre spaces** or programs in recognition of your gift.

2

NCCG Champions

\$25,000+

Choose to fund the NCCG service closest to your heart – sponsor our counselling programs, a camp, outreach service, publication or room at the centre. NCCG Champions receive special recognition of their support for their chosen service.

3

NCCG Family

\$1,000+

Every gift makes a difference. Donations at all levels are deeply appreciated. As a proudly community-funded service, the NCCG welcomes you as part of our family of supporters, all deeply committed to being there for bereaved children and families. All donations of \$1,000 or more are recognised on the NCCG's Family of Supporters display at the centre.

Donations at all levels can be made by



childhoodgrief.org.au/donate



1300 654 556



info@childhoodgrief.org.au



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To discuss your interests and any questions you may have, please contact:

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All donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

Donations can be made in full or in instalments and you can schedule them to be made at a future date.

Donations can be made in someone else's name to celebrate their life and relationship to you.



**Supporting bereaved children
and their families since 1994**

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