

It is no secret that many people find it hard to express their grief.

For children it can be even more difficult, as they do not always have the language to put their pain into words, or may find in times of crisis parents and other adults are unable to assist them effectively while they are dealing with their own grief.

Even when children outwardly appear to be coping well they may be struggling with many different conflicting emotions.

Recognising that children who suffer emotional pain need people they can trust to guide them through the process of loss Dongara District High School is offering the Rainbow Greif and Loss program as a service to hurting children and families in our community.

The program is especially effective for young people who have experienced a significant life altering crisis or loss, such as death, divorce, separation, living in foster care, parents working away or a community crisis.

How it will help?

Rainbows will help your child to:

- * Develop and strengthen problem-solving skills and appropriate behavior and anger management
- * Improve school attendance and academic performance
- * Alleviate depression and anxiety
- * Reduce emotional pain and suffering
- * Improve communication in their families
- * Reduce the likelihood of destructive behavior such as involvement with gangs, alcohol and substance abuse

For further information on the Rainbows Program, contact our:

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GRIEF AND SUPPORT PROGRAM



What is "Rainbows"?

Rainbows is an international not-for-profit organisation that was founded in 1983.

It is a peer support, harm prevention program for young people who are experiencing a significant loss, life altering crisis or painful transition, resulting in grief. If your child is part of a single parent family, a stepfamily, has experienced the death of a family member or close friend or parents work away than rainbows can help.

The aim of the program is to assist young people to see change and loss as a normal part of life, to put feelings into words, to work through their grief whilst building a stronger sense of self, resilience, acceptance, belonging and hope.

While it is not counselling, it is therapeutic in nature by helping children through peer support with nurturing adult facilitators in a safe environment.



How we do it?

Children can be referred from their Parents or from a Teacher or School Chaplain with parent permission. Children that are referred to participate in the program meet weekly during school hours for 12 weeks in small peer support groups (2-5 members) with a trained facilitator. The program has a Pre-School level called Sunbeams, 3 Primary age levels (Junior, Middle, Upper) and a Secondary level called "Spectrum".



In a confidential and safe environment students are given the opportunity to share, laugh, cry, listen, participate in games and other activities, finding ways to deal with their grief. They receive a journal and a folder with lots of useful information to take home at the end of the 12 weeks.

The service is offered at no charge to families.

What do we talk about?

Over the 12 week sessions we cover the following topics:

- * Self
- * Inside Out (Feelings)
- * Death /Divorce (2 sessions)
- * Anger and Hurt
- * Fears & Worries
- * Family
- * Belonging
- * Endings and Beginnings
- * Weathering the Storm (Coping Tools)
- * Reaching Out
- * Celebrate Me

