

# Bereavement and Loss

## Children with Special Educational Needs



# Rainbows Bereavement Support GB

- Structured age related programmes
- Facilitated by trained adults in a safe setting
- Support to write bereavement policy and procedures
- Support for those experiencing a significant LOSS in their lives



# Sudden death

Grief is a universal emotion and applies to all human beings regardless of their abilities or disabilities

It is difficult to predict anyone's reaction to a sudden death

Children with special/additional needs are no different

Each person's reaction will be unique to them

# The Challenges

- Understanding and expressing feelings
- Making 'wrong connections'
- Abstract thinking
- Change
- Practical needs being met



# ALL children need to:

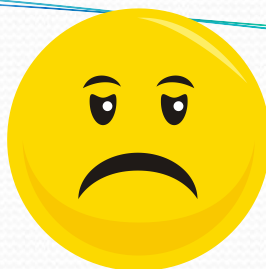
- ❖ Have their questions answered
- ❖ Be listened to
- ❖ Be given appropriate information
- ❖ Be in a safe situation
- ❖ Have people that they trust



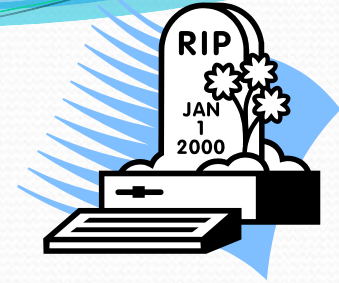
trust

# Children with Additional Needs:

- ❖ All the previous points plus particular attention to their individual needs and understanding
- ❖ Clear language - 'gone to sleep'
- ❖ Developmentally appropriate involvement- not age
- ❖ Explanation of death words – funeral, dead, coffin
- ❖ Pen portrait of child – what will help and what will hinder understanding



- ❖ Be prepared to repeat an explanation until it is processed and understood
- ❖ Routines help all children feel safe
- ❖ Practical arrangements – will there be a change in living arrangements, who will cook tea
- ❖ Their emotions maybe difficult for them to understand



- ❖ Need to know that it is ok to be happy
- ❖ Acceptance of unfamiliar displays of grief
- ❖ Help to express their grief – visual support where necessary
- ❖ Help to understand that death is not like on TV or computer games



# Support over time

- ❖ Schools , agencies and social settings accessing training in bereavement and loss
- ❖ Being prepared for ‘When Somebody Dies’
- ❖ Having support programmes in place, Rainbows
- ❖ Grief has no time scale; anniversaries, special days may always be difficult



# SunRise

A new programme developed to assist those with learning disability access bereavement support

- 12/13 week programme
- Rainbows structure
- Additional resources and ideas
- For use in mainstream and special schools



# SunRise

- Available for the school year 2016/17
- Allows all children, young people and adults to receive the support they need
- Uses the skills, knowledge and resources that support staff, tutors, cares and teachers already have

