

# 5 THINGS THAT PARENTS CAN DO TO LOOK AFTER THEMSELVES AND SUPPORT THEIR GRIEVING CHILDREN



1

## Soothe yourself and your child will follow

Children take their lead from you. If they see you doing things that are good for you, they will notice and are more likely to follow your example.

2

## Physical exercise

You may not feel like it, but being physically active can help us to feel different. Even a small thing can make a difference. Choose something that you can enjoy, by yourself or with others. It is better to aim low and succeed than to aim high and fail.

3

## Compassionate exercise

Having the courage to feel what is hard to feel and expressing it, can help your grief to change. This may come about in conversation or quietly, by yourself. Practising this honesty, recognising all of your feelings, can help you and give you the ability to calmly help your child to turn towards their more painful feelings and understand them with you by their side.

4

## Who can help?

Work out who can help you, whether this is someone who can listen without trying to end your grief. Grief does not end, it changes at its own pace. Friends, relatives, and your GP might help, or online sites and forums (including the Samaritans self-help app). Please click on the logos below:



5

## Pay attention to your own grief

Don't think that your child's feelings come first. It may seem like a strange idea to put yourself first, but unless you do, you won't be as able to help your child with their feelings. Some feelings may be the same as your child, some different. You may need times on your own. If there is a way that you can have time to be by yourself or with another adult, it might mean that you feel more able to respond to your child's needs.

