









## Helping Children make a Memory Box or Book

-  Making a memory box or book can be a helpful way of giving children permission to talk about the person who died. It gives you the opportunity to tell the child things about the person that they may not know, such as details about their childhood, e.g. where they went to school.
-  The child may like to choose a box for themselves; children we work with have used simple boxes which they decorate, plastic containers with lids, or something that belonged to the person who died such as a jewellery box. If they want to they can decorate it with stickers, drawings or photographs. The memory book can be something like a scrap book or photo album which can also be personalised with decoration.
-  Memory box/book work can be done by parents, other family members, teachers, social workers and so on. They can also be made by someone who is terminally ill and wishes to leave a legacy for their children.
-  The amount of support children will need may vary according to their age, but they are suitable for children of school age and teenagers. If the children are very young you could make one on their behalf for when they're older.
-  It is important that children are able to work at their own pace. Sometimes after initial support older children may want to work on their own. It can be completed in as many sessions as you and the child want. It may take days, weeks, months or even years to complete. It can be open-ended with children adding to it if things come into their mind.
-  Help the child to think of a place to keep their box/book where it will be safe from damage but don't lock it away. Ensure that they can access it freely and privately if they wish. You may wish to keep a separate memory box which contains valuable or breakable things which may be better for the child to have when they are older.
-  You may find that children will be full of enthusiasm initially and then seem to lose interest but this is normal. Children tend to dip in and out of doing the box/book over time.
-  Remember it can be an emotional experience helping a child with this activity so it's important you do it when you feel able to support them properly.