

When you have
been through a
shattering experience

age
12-18



This booklet was prepared by the interdisciplinary Danish Research Centre for Patient Support and Empowerment as part of a project on Crisis and Trauma-informed Support for Children and Young People in Hospital. It is one of three booklets prepared for children aged 6 – 11, young people aged 12 – 18 and for parents and other relatives. The text was written by project leader and psychologist Ditte Bruun Eriksen.

The three booklets have been translated into the following languages: English, Arabic, Dari, Somali and Kurdish, and they are available from the Danish Research Centre for Patient Support and Empowerment: www.regionh.dk/patientstøtte

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You can read more at: www.børnogkriser på hospitalet.dk

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You may have had an accident,
or perhaps you have lost
someone you loved, or been
seriously ill.

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If you have had a shock or something made you very frightened or unhappy, it is quite normal if you:

Often feel as if you are 'boiling over' with feelings, or find that you easily get angry, unhappy or frightened without knowing why.

You feel empty inside.

You feel lonely.

Wonder if you are going crazy.

Think a lot about what happened.

Feel different from how you used to feel.

Sometimes can't sleep at night, have nightmares, and are more nervous than usual.

Find it difficult to concentrate on anything.

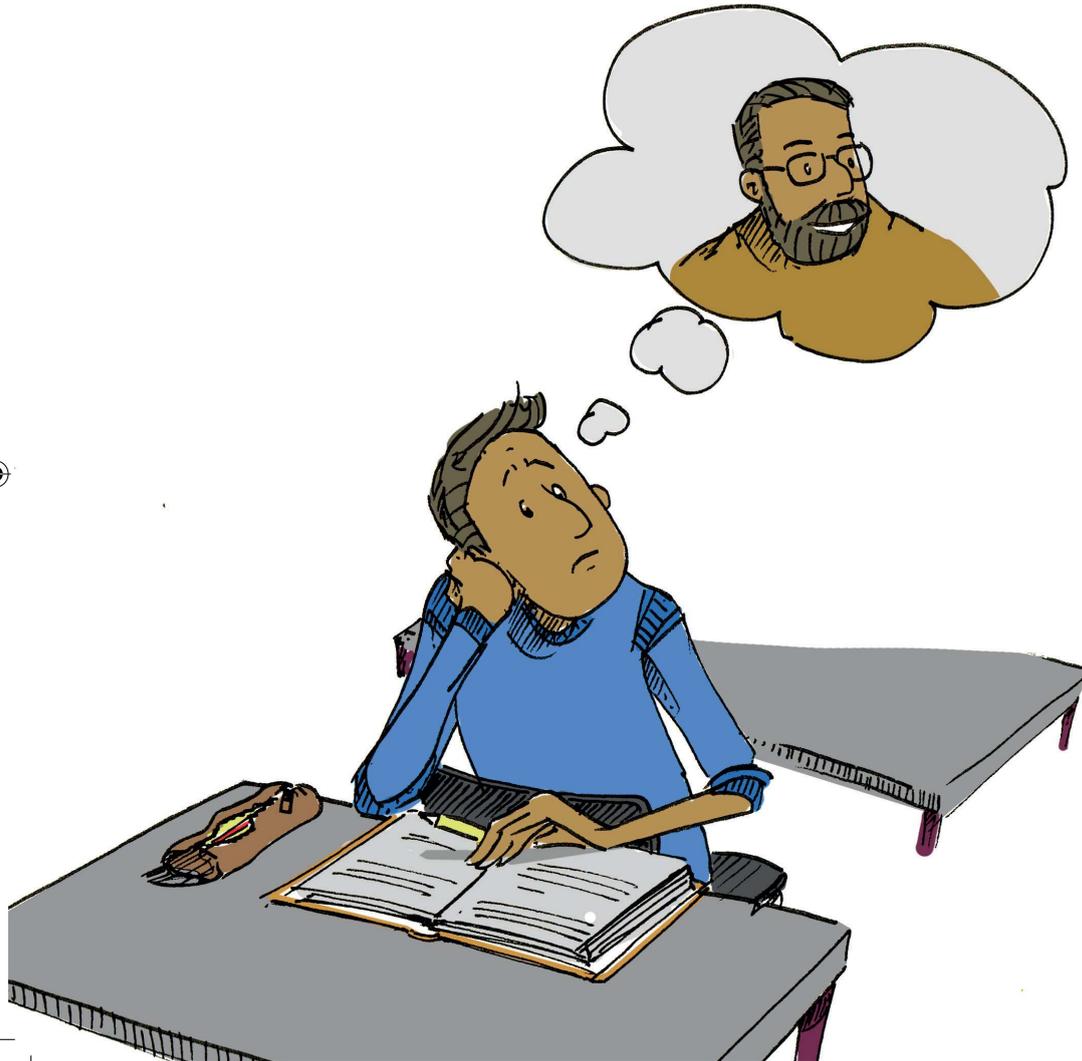
Are afraid of being alone.

Don't want to be together with others as usual.

Are worried about what others think about you.

Perhaps you are neither frightened, unhappy nor angry, and that is OK too.





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Young people who have been through the same sort of thing as you say the loneliness is the worst. That you can feel as if suddenly you are very different from your friends.

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Many say they worry about how one of their parents feels. They also say that they sometimes feel as if what happened was their fault. Even though it is normal to feel like that, you must remind yourself: it is not your fault! You must also remember that the grown-ups are responsible for looking after themselves, and it is not your job.

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Remind yourself that there are
no feelings that are not normal
when you have been through
a terrible experience.

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One minute you may be happy with your friends – and suddenly, as if something hit you, you are miserable or angry and do not know why.



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Imagine that feelings are
like waves in the sea:
they come and go
– and when there is a storm,
they can be very big.

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It takes time
– but one day you will find
that you and your family feel
confident and strong again.

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Here is some helpful advice! What do you need to remember?

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Don't forget, there are no feelings that are wrong when you have had a violent shock.

Talk to an adult or a good friend whom you can trust about how you feel.

Never be embarrassed about how you feel.

Never be afraid to say what you need.

It is not certain that you will be unhappy all the time – and you are also allowed to be happy and have a laugh.

Remind yourself when you are really miserable that it won't last for ever, and that in time things will get better.

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Here is some helpful advice! What can you do?

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Talk to a teacher you can trust at school, and tell him or her how you feel.

If you are very worried about how your Mum or Dad is feeling, tell them, and remember, the adults are responsible for looking after themselves; it is not your job.

If your friends don't talk to you as much as they used to, perhaps they don't know what to say. They are probably afraid of hurting you even more.

Write your thoughts and feelings down.

Play games and sports, and look after your body well.

Do things you like and be good to yourself.

Where can you get more help?



Børn, Unge og Sorg

Free advice for you.

Read more at www.bornungesorg.dk

Børnetelefonen

Free advice when you need someone to talk to.
Call 116 111 or chat on www.børnetelefonen.dk

www.cyberhus.dk

Free advice