

STAR BEREAVEMENT

End of Year Report

20

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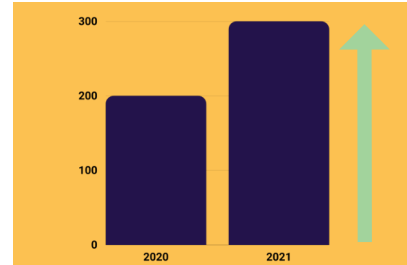
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Introduction

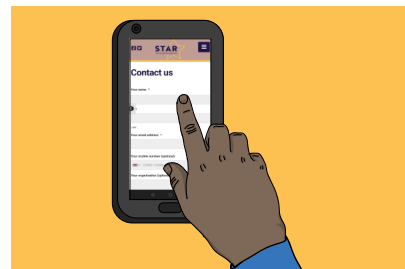
Between January 2021 and the end of December 2021 Star received **300** referrals for bereavement support, this is an increase on previous years referrals of approximately **50%** and an average of **25** referrals per month (**35** were received in December 2021).



Star Bereavement is a small team of dedicated professionals including **volunteer counsellors and group workers, a Peer Support Worker, Bereavement Practitioners, Trustees who volunteer many hours of their time, Admin Support, Sessional workers, a Senior Practitioner and a Coordinator.**

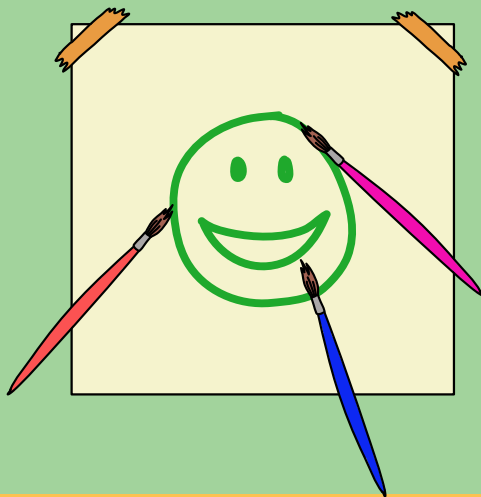
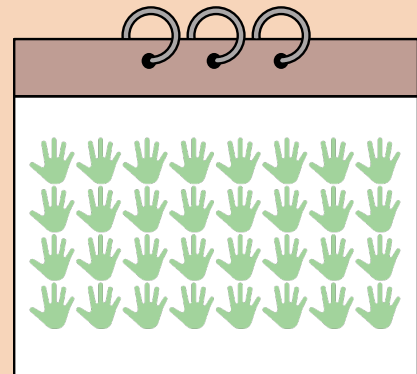


The increase in referrals appears to be caused by a combination of **changing our referral system to ensure there is an easy, mobile phone friendly referral option available to parents, carers and young people; the huge impact the pandemic has had both in terms of, sadly, an increase in deaths and a decrease in resilience caused by isolation, home schooling, social distancing, loneliness, fear, illness and financial pressures and the lack of bereavement support including around suicide and sudden death available for children and young people.**



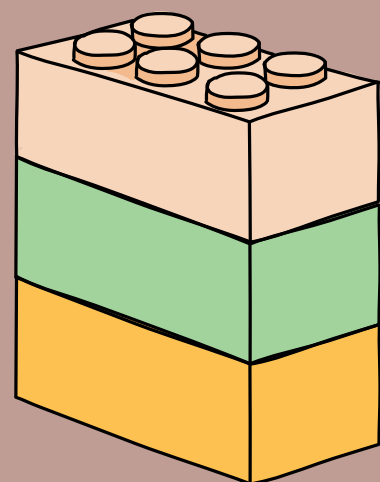
Statistics

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STAR SUPPORTED
CHILDREN IN THERAPEUTIC
GROUPS BETWEEN JANUARY
2021 AND END DECEMBER
2021.



70 CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE
ATTENDED PEER SUPPORT OR
HAPPY HEALTHY HOLIDAYS
ACTIVITIES AND THE
OUTCOMES FOR BOTH TYPES
OF GROUPS HAVE BEEN VERY
POSITIVE.

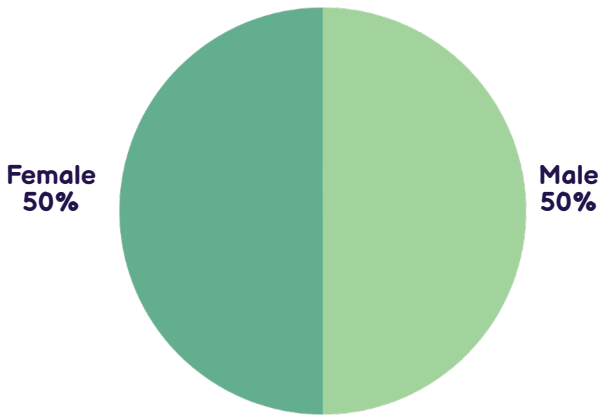
74 CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE HAVE ACCESSED 1:1
THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT FACILITATED
MAINLY BY BEREAVEMENT
PRACTITIONERS WITH ADDITIONAL
SUPPORT FROM PLACEMENT
STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS, A TRAUMA
THERAPIST AND THE SUICIDE
POSTVENTION WORKER.



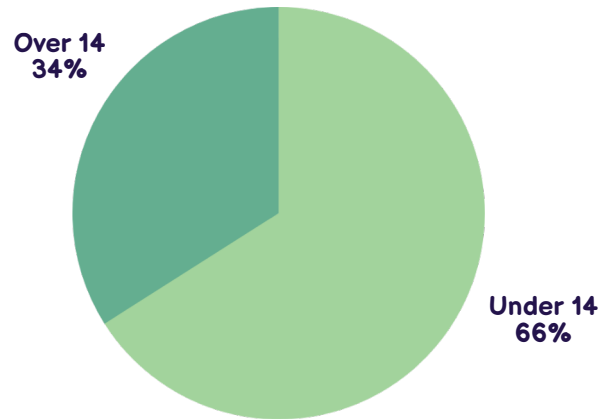
MANY OTHER REFERRALS WERE SUPPORTED WITH EARLY INTERVENTION INCLUDING BACKGROUND CALLS, SUPPORT CALLS, SUPPORT TEXTS AND EMAIL AND DID NOT REQUIRE FURTHER SUPPORT.



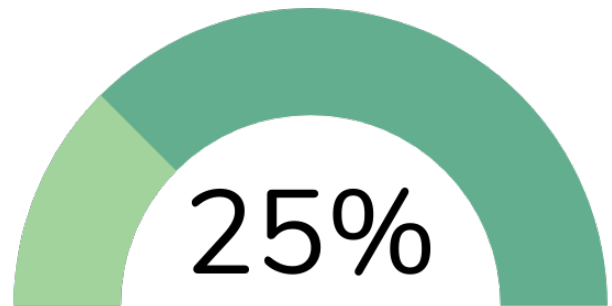
Breakdown



50% of referrals are male and **50%** female; the majority of children and young people are referred or refer themselves because a parent or carer has died.



58% of referrals were self referrals- either a parent or carer has referred where a child is under 14 years old or a young person has referred themselves if they are over 14 years old. **66%** of referrals are for a child under 14 years of age.



25% of referrals have been made where someone important to a child or young person has died through suicide, sudden death and drugs or alcohol related illness. We have worked closely with the Suicide Postvention worker for Wakefield, the Educational Psychology team, Young lives Consortium, local CCG and council commissioners and Public Health to develop pathways, processes and protocols to ensure that the needs of children and young people bereaved by sudden death including suicide are recognised at the earliest possible stage.

Developments

THERE HAVE BEEN **MANY** EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS AT STAR BEREAVEMENT THIS YEAR:

A partnership with the **Wellness in the Woods** project at Eden's Forest, this created a safe, therapeutically informed breathing space in a forest setting where children, young people, parents, carers and families could step away from the pressures of every day life, have fun, take a break, re set. Forests have amazing benefits for our mental and physical health and young people themselves have told us how different they feel in the forest- one young person told us all his anger had gone. At Eden's forest people can choose to be active- on the zip wire, walking, crossing streams; reflective- around the campfire, chatting and cooking or mindful- whittling, creating, even learning the skills of a blacksmith.



Continued our close working with **Camphill Riding for the Disabled** where RDA staff have supported Star Bereavement young people to learn to care for horses.



Partnership working to develop the **Suicide Postvention** role in Wakefield, to evaluate the pilot data and to transition the role into Star Bereavement.

Development of a new **Assessment and Outcomes Framework** which merged the Childhood Bereavement Network Outcomes Framework with the Resilience Framework to create a robust and valuable tool to measure bereavement need and bereavement outcomes with a child and young person centred methodology. The framework recognises that grief is fluid and that young people are developing. It supports Star Bereavements model of fluid, responsive, needs led bereavement support for children and young people.



Connections with **Family Fit** and other sports partners such as **White Rose Boxing Club** and **Leeds Climbing Wall** where young people have learnt new ways to cope with difficult feelings through sport and activity.

Developments

CONTINUED...

The Art House/ Makey Wakey – we are hoping to have our own Makey Wakey space in 2022 and have delivered support in other Makey Wakey spaces, supported by the Art House.

Partnership with the Family Hubs bereavement lead to ensure timely referrals between our services.

Developed the Star Bereavement website and created resources; ensured our referral system was easy and accessible for self referrals including young people.

Offered a professionals referral line once a week to enable professionals to have a designated time to talk to a bereavement practitioner, gain advice and generate a referral where appropriate.

Children and young people accessed Seasons for Growth- a therapeutic group work programme which aims to provide a safe space for children and young people to explore bereavement and loss, using the seasons as a metaphor for life's difficult changes and aiming to increase children and young peoples understanding of their feelings around bereavement and loss and hoping to increase their resilience to future changes and losses in their lives.

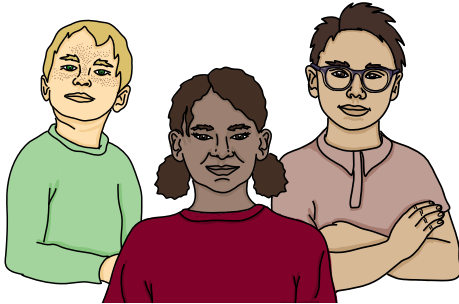
Children and young people have also accessed after school sessions focusing on remembering their important person and creating memory journals with support from bereavement practitioners and the peer support worker. Younger children have often worked together with a parent, carer or older siblings on this.

We have trained 4 new volunteers this year, all of whom have made a great contribution to the delivery of our bereavement support offer and we look forward to recruiting and training more volunteers next year.



Looking Forward

**IN 2022 STAR BEREAVEMENT
WILL BE BUSIER THAN EVER.**



**Continue to get to know
the local communities and
the children and young
people who live within
them.**



**Provide an holistic offer
which is young person
centred, friendly and
warm where young people
feel listened to.**



**Extend our offer to include
home visits to encourage
children and young people
to try group support.**

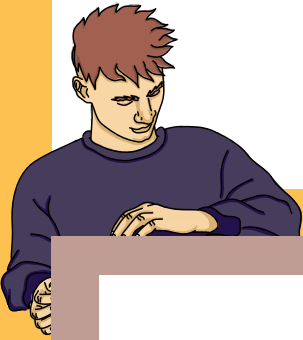
**This years programme will
include one to one
therapeutic bereavement
support, new therapeutic
groups, Seasons for Growth,
peer support activities
including Camphill, walking
and running groups, forest
school, art based activities,
Star Days to reconnect, build
relationships and welcome
new children and young
people to peer support and
much more!**

Keep an eye on our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page for more information.

Case Study

Context:

Young person was referred to Star as they were struggling with the sudden and traumatic nature of their Dad dying. Dad died of complications after recovering from a heart attack. Young person had to spend a month in a hotel room with Mum as Dad was transferred to another hospital far away from home. Young person missed out on college on top of previously missing a lot of school due to Covid-19. A month before Dad died, paternal Auntie, who young person was close to also died. Young person experienced a lot of loss in a short period of time as well as transitioning from high school to college and completing AS levels.



Work and Themes:

I first worked with young person over email. Young person was able to explain clearly how they felt and expressed that they found this helpful to write out their thoughts and the chronology of the deaths helped give them a narrative that they struggled to verbalise. Confidence through relationship via emails gave the young person enough confidence to meet face to face.

I saw young person for six sessions, it was apparent through assessment that they were in a state of shock. Mum was pushing them to "talk" but they feel this didn't help them. The focus of the sessions was for young person to explain what happened and how they felt, it helped them to "relive" through talking about what happened, to help their understanding.

It helped how I, as a practitioner, could put Mum's mind at ease by helping support Mum that there is no "normal" reaction to grief, and they were both going through the process differently because they are different. Mum was mourning the loss of husband and young person the loss of Dad.

Towards the end of the sessions young person was easily talking about grief and how it felt to them, they also talked about Dad and their memories of him. We started a memory book together which young person took home to complete with Mum.

Feedback:

Young person explained that they felt sessions were helpful in giving them space to process the trauma surrounding Dad's death. Young person and Mum could understand they grieved differently which decreased Mums worries. Young person contacted me at the end of our last session to say "Thank you so much for the sessions, I think they have really helped and thank you so much for my lovely memory book". Sessions enabled this young person a chance to process what they had been through and a chance to talk to someone independently with no expectations of how they should be presenting. Young person was able to navigate highly distressing emotions and move towards the reality of their loss.



Thank you to everyone who has supported Star Bereavement this year – we could not do it without you!

