

# Pet loss support for children "missing my friend"

Children and young people can become very attached to pets for a variety of reasons. It may be a child or young person's first experience of death or loss, or it may trigger emotions due to a previous loss of a loved one. Creating a safe space for children to come to terms with loss, ensuring we are open and honest about our feelings whilst listening to them can be beneficial in helping them to process their grief.

Children can express their feelings using a variety of methods, whether that be using words, drawing, or crafting. Why not get creative as a family to understand what your pet meant to you and cherish the fantastic memories.



**Children love to feel valued and connected to those around them, helping them to feel safe and secure, this can be important especially in times of grief when losing a pet.**

The Pet Loss Charter below can be a helpful guide when supporting children.

**P** Pets are important –they are family members too

**E** Explain things to me before, during and after they happen

**T** Take time out to help me explore my feelings and fears

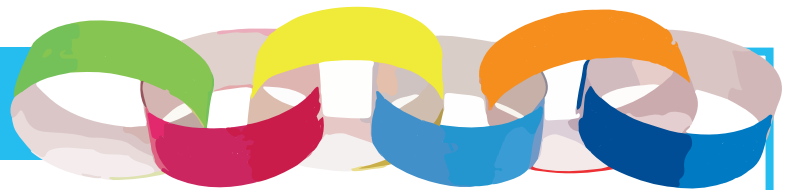
**L** Listen to me – I have feelings and ideas too that I might like to share

**O** Open up, show me and tell me how you are feeling

**S** Speak to me honestly and simply

**S** Support me when I need it and allow me to stop grieving when I'm ready

## Family Activity



### Connecting your thoughts together to make a remembrance chain

**Items needed – paper, glue, scissors, crayons, or pens.**

Working together as a family, make a remembrance chain to connect everyone's thoughts and memories of your lost pet.

**Step 1** Cut up strips of paper and distribute them equally.

**Step 2** Invite everyone to write down or draw one thing they remember about their pet on each strip of paper.

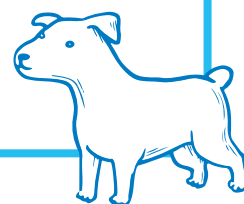
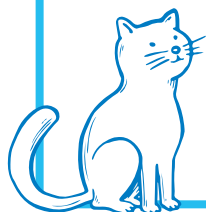
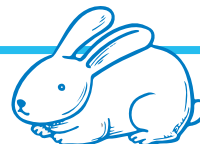
**Step 3** Link each chain together using glue and connect the chain together.

**Step 4** Revisit together and add more memories as you feel able - discuss all the memories written down (remember if the child wants to talk about their pet try to actively listen).



# Activity 1

Can you draw or paint a picture of your pet to show them how special they were.



## Activity 2 - From Me to You

You can write a letter to your pet in the space below. Here are a few ideas of what you could include:

Their favourite food, games/toys, special times you spent together, what they meant to you, say thank you to them.



There may be lots of other things you want to say to them. Tell them whatever you like.

For more info please visit:

[bluecross.org.uk/pet-loss-support-children-missing-my-friend](https://bluecross.org.uk/pet-loss-support-children-missing-my-friend)

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