

Responses of different age groups

Pre-school children

Whilst babies are too young to understand what is happening, they will:

- Pick up on the emotional distress and moods of those around them
- Be aware of, and be unsettled by, changes to their routine

Toddlers & small children may:

- Ask very direct questions
- Keep asking the same questions to try to make sense of their confusion
- Have disrupted eating & sleeping patterns
- Regress in their behaviour for a period of time
- Express their feelings through their play

Primary School children

Children in this age group may:

- Not want to be separated from their main carer
- Think that something they said or did caused the person to become ill
- Regress in their behaviour for a period of time
- Find it hard to concentrate at school
- Fall out with friends
- Have difficulty getting to sleep / have interrupted sleep or nightmares
- Develop physical complaints e.g. tummy-aches and headaches

Secondary School children

Teenagers may:

- Find it difficult to talk about their feelings
- Want to deal with things on their own or with their friends
- Think they need to appear strong for others
- Want to stay at home more so they know what is happening
- Want to stay out more to forget what is happening
- Feel the pressure to take on an adult role
- Regress in their behaviour
- Become very angry
- Develop school-related difficulties e.g. find it hard to concentrate, become disruptive