

- ☒ You may like to have the funeral videoed or have photos taken at the funeral. Both of these ideas are quite acceptable and are good for you to have afterwards – as hard as you try, you will not remember everything this day.
- ☒ You can have a photo board either in the church or chapel or at the after-function including photos of your child and his/her family and friends.
- ☒ You can include your child's favourite songs or music into the service (suitable music would need to be chosen if the service is in a church) or songs that you feel are particularly appropriate for that day. If this is not allowed in the church, it can be done at the cemetery.
- ☒ You can include appropriate poems or statements from family and friends in the service as well as, or in place of, some of the readings.
- ☒ You may like all your child's friends to sign the coffin with quick messages etc. You can also have a blank book at the after-function and encourage others to write their feelings on the day.
- ☒ You can have balloons either in the church or at the cemetery – releasing the balloons and watching them float away gives a sense of a spirit set free.
- ☒ If you would like some private time with your child to say your last goodbye, arrange for some personal time and space at the cemetery or crematorium.
- ☒ If you have an advocate (a special person- either friend or family) allow them to help you. You will not be thinking clearly so accept their help (that does not mean that they take over all the decision making – just care for you and help you).
- ☒ Depending on age, allow siblings to be involved in decision making for the funeral. Keep them informed about everything that is going on – they are going to hear it anyway! They will most likely feel very neglected and 'left-out' so try to include them as much as possible.

# HELP KIT WHEN YOU LOSE A CHILD

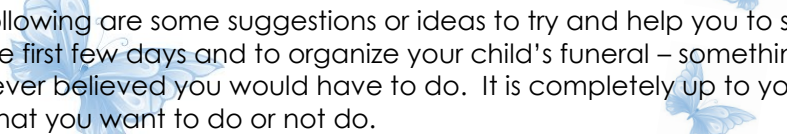


## Contact Us The Compassionate Friends NSW Inc

PO Box 1303 Sydney NSW 2001  
Suite 603, 6th Floor 109 Pitt Street, Sydney

Ph: 02 9290 2355 or 1800 671 621

[www.thecompassionatefriendsnsw.org.au](http://www.thecompassionatefriendsnsw.org.au)  
[admin@tcfnsw.org.au](mailto:admin@tcfnsw.org.au)



Following are some suggestions or ideas to try and help you to survive the first few days and to organize your child's funeral – something you never believed you would have to do. It is completely up to you as to what you want to do or not do.

These are just some suggestions that you may not be aware are available to you. Obviously you will have to work in with your church or organization but most of us try to personalize the funeral as much as possible because that is so important to us – especially when it is for one of our children!

- ☐ You have the right to view your child in their coffin. This is personal choice. If your child has been badly injured in some way, other people may try to talk you out of the viewing. This is still your choice – you decide if you want to do this. This is the last time you will be able to physically say goodbye to your child.
- ☐ You can have your child dressed in clothes of your choice. This does not have to be their “best” outfit. It can be anything that reflects your child's life, e.g. cricket clothes.
- ☐ You can take photos of your child in the coffin.
- ☐ You can make handprints or footprints from your child. Over the years, this will be a reminder of their size and are very personal.
- ☐ You can put special things in the coffin with your child, e.g. letters, pocket money, caps, photos, etc.
- ☐ You can take some locks of your child's hair to keep.

## ORGANISING THE FUNERAL

- ☐ You can make booklets for the service. These can include photos of your child, your family, their life, etc. Photos can be coloured or black and white. You can photocopy the booklets or have them printed.
- ☐ In the booklet you can include special poems that you feel comfortable with. You can also include a copy of the eulogy or a story about your child that you or someone else has written.
- ☐ The pall bearers do not have to be men. Your family may like to be the pall bearers for your child or a sister/brother or an aunt/uncle etc can be included.
- ☐ If someone in your family is musically talented they may like to play or sing at the funeral. You can put together a special CD of your child's favourite music for the funeral.
- ☐ You can do a power point presentation at the funeral, showing all the aspects of your child's life. Many people find this helps to remember the child as they were before they died.
- ☐ You may like to have memory sheets so people can write down their memories of your child and return them to you. These only need to be fairly simple but it is amazing the stories you get back. They can be put inside the booklets at the funeral, handed out afterwards or sent out with return thanks to people.
- ☐ You may like to have a memorabilia table at the funeral including personal things from his/her life e.g. sporting equipment, hobbies, favourite footy team Guernsey, trophies etc. These can be introduced as part of the service or just placed in the church.
- ☐ You may like to have a framed photo of your child put on the coffin.
- ☐ You may like to walk in from the back of the church or chapel following the coffin – signifying that you are still a family all together.