

Seasons for Growth



Parent program

Seasons for Growth provides an opportunity for parents to better understand the experience of death, separation and divorce from a child's perspective, and to explore ideas and strategies to consider as they support their children's transition through family change.

There are two components within the program, to enable parents and carers to focus on issues specific to a particular kind of change or loss their family is facing:

- 1. Supporting your child following separation and divorce**
- 2. Supporting your child following the death of someone they love**



Who is it for?

Parents and carers looking to support their children through family change and loss.

Change affects everyone differently, as does grief. It's the impact of the change, not the event itself that Seasons for Growth focuses on.

The program builds on the philosophy and strengths of other Seasons for Growth programs - small group, grief and loss education programs for children, young people and adults that use the imagery of the seasons to illustrate the experience of grief.

How does it work?

Seasons for Growth assists parents to understand the experience of death or separation and divorce from a child's perspective, and to learn about the most effective ways to support their child/ren.

This distinctive child-centred approach provides emotional space and a non-judgmental environment for parents to wonder, share, discuss and learn how to care for and nurture their children after separation, divorce or the death of someone they love.

The program offers a range of activities that allow parents and carers to learn about:

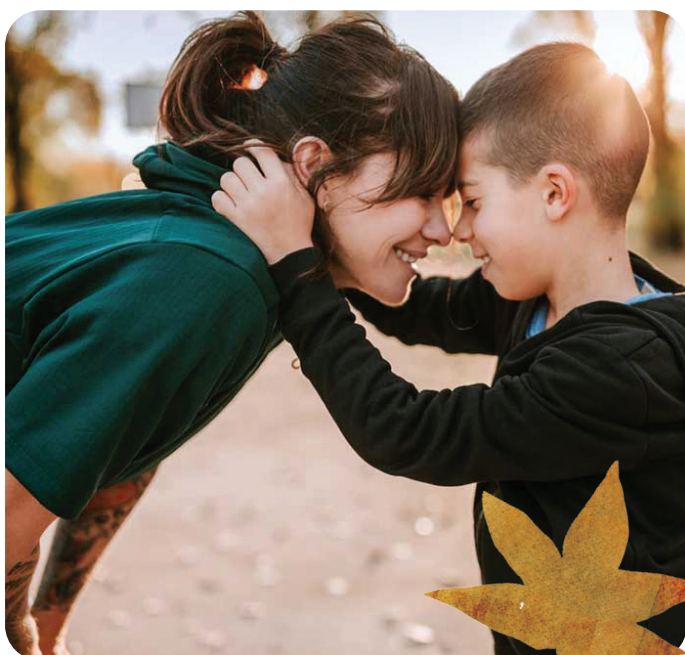
- how children react to change and loss
- what parents can do to help their child
- communicating with their child
- understanding and managing, change loss and grief
- caring for themselves as a parent and a person

"Seasons for Growth challenged me with aspects of forgiveness and letting go ..."

- Participant

This program is great to help parents realise that children are passing through the seasons of grief at similar or even later times.

- Participant



MacKillop Family Services acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their Elders in each of the communities where we work.



MacKillop celebrates and draws strength from diversity and respects the dignity of all people. We value an inclusive culture where lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, gender diverse, intersex and asexual people (LGBTIQ+) have the right to be safe.

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How is it delivered?

Teachers, counsellors, psychologists, social workers, chaplains and health professionals are endorsed by their school or organisation to undertake a training workshop to implement the program and to qualify to be a Companion.

There are two components within the program:

1. Supporting your child following separation and divorce

2 x 2 hour sessions or 1 x 4 hour session

Parents and carers will learn about:

- Why separation/divorce can be a challenge for children
- How to talk to children about the separation/divorce
- What reactions they may expect from their children
- What children need and how they can best support their children
- The importance of caring for themselves
- What changes they can make as a result of their learnings

2. Supporting your child following the death of someone they love

1 x 2.5 hour session

Parents and carers will learn about:

- Why loss and grief can be a challenge for children and how bereavement impacts children
- How to talk to children about what's happened
- What reactions they may expect from their children
- What children need and how they can best support their children
- The importance of self-care
- What changes they can make as a result of their learnings

Outcomes

The programs provides the support and space to:

- **Learn** how children and young people respond to change, loss and grief
- **Understand** that it is normal to experience a range of grief reactions
- **Explore** new approaches to dealing with change, loss and grief in the lives of their children
- **Build** communication, decision making and problem solving skills
- **Participate** in a supportive network of adults
- **Integrate** new learning into their relationships with their family

The Seasons for Growth adult program may be an appropriate next step for parents who wish to spend time exploring their own change and loss experience and learn coping skills to manage and continue moving forward.

“Pausing to consider the situation from my children’s perspective when considering how to support them.”

- Participant

