REVIEWS

This video challenges many commonly held assumptions about professional conduct at such times and emphasises the importance of multi-disciplinary team work, which will meet the needs of professionals as well as parents and their surviving children.

It makes no attempt to analyse in depth the complex psychological consequences that can occur and should be regarded only as an introduction to the topic. It will be of great value to nurses, doctors and other professionals working in obstetric and neo-natal care, but psychologists and psychiatrists will expect something more sophisticated. No mention is made of the scientific and theoretical work that has been done in the field. A reading list is provided but is too short to be comprehensive.

Colin Murray Parkes
Consultant Child Psychiatrist

* Available from Child Bereavement Trust, 1 Millside, Riversdale, Bourne End, Bucks SL8 5EB

ABSTRACTS

Do You Mean That Mummy is Going to Die? Caring for Bereaved Children

Couldrick A. *Professional Nurse* 1993; **9**(3): 186–189.

A practical and clearly written article dealing with the fears and uncertainties a child might experience during the final illness and after the death of a parent. It discusses the help and support health professionals can give to the child as well as to parents and teachers who are involved with the child's welfare.

Among the measures recommended are the involvement of the child in the care of the parent, open discussion of the patient's illness, play therapy, and as much contact with the parent as the child wants.

There is a useful reading list for adults, young and older children.

The Inner Representation of the Dead Child and the Worldviews of Bereaved Parents.

Klass D. *Omega* 1992–93; **26**(4): 255–72.

Solace and Immortality: Bereaved Parents' Continuing Bond with Their Children.

Klass D, *Death Studies* 1993; **17**(4): 343–68.

The death of a child is often experienced by parents as the worst thing that can happen to them. These two thoughtful and interesting articles, based on a 10-year study of a self-help group of parents who have suffered such a bereavement, show how the sense of irreparable loss can be mitigated through continuing interaction with the inner representation of the dead child.

The first article describes how the death of a child challenges the parents' worldview – that is, their basic assumptions about how the universe functions and about their place and power within this universe.

The second article shows how the inner representation of the child can be cherished through linking objects, religious ideas and devotion, and memories. Any or all of these can bring solace and resolution of parental grief.

An understanding of these aspects of grieving could be of value to those who care for the bereaved.

Bereavement and Mourning in Paediatric Rehabilitation Settings

Donders J. *Death Studies* 1993; **17**(6): 517–527.

This useful article discusses ways in which children with acquired brain damage (sustained, for example in a car accident or a fire) can be helped to deal with bereavement and with their fears and anxieties, within the paediatric setting. Pragmatic issues such as when and how to tell them of parental or sibling death are reviewed, as are the special responsibilities faced by the rehabilitation professionals who must deal with these issues.

Sheila Hodges and John Bush

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