Bereavement Care

for all who help the bereaved

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Violent death and the media:

Cruse and journalists get together

CRUSE'S INVITATION TO the media to discuss the effects of sharing or intruding into the grief of those they write about has been warmly welcomed by Mr. Kenneth Morgan, OBE, Director of The Press Council.

Mr. Morgan told *Bereavement Care:* "Journalists are more likely to be brought into conflict with those bereaved after violence than when grief follows natural causes. In either case, the effect of press and media enquiries is a subject worth careful study. As a group, their involvement is often overlooked."

Along with members of the caring professions, policemen and workers in voluntary organisations, the journalists will be attending Cruse's two-day international conference on Violence Following Bereavement.

It will be held at London University Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London, W.C.1 on Monday and Tuesday, September 5 and 6.

Dr. Colin Murray Parkes, Chairman of Cruse, will lead a group discussion on 'Violent Death and the Media'. It is one of eighteen discussion groups arranged for the conference and, like the conference itself, is believed to be the first of its kind to be held in Britain.

Speakers at the plenary sessions will include Dr. Parkes on individual responses to violent death; Dr. Robert Jay Lifton, MD, Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, Yale University, USA, on "Response of Survivors to Man-made Catastrophies"; Professor Shamai Davidson, FRCPsych, Medical Director, Shalvata Mental Centre, Hod-Hasharon, Israel, on "Families Bereaved by War—the long-term effect"; and Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, MD, DD, on "Modern Man facing Death".

Cruse has aimed to give participants the chance to discuss the consequences of almost every kind of violent death. The latest Home Office figures indicate that the rate of homicides has risen by 45 per cent in the past ten years and other serious crimes of violence have risen by 49 per cent.

Discussion Groups

The groups will discuss murder within the family; bereaved children and violent death; support for staff; grief in Northern Ireland; bereavement as a result of armed conflict; the killer's experience of grief; families bereaved by war—the long term effects; victims of violence—struggles with grief and despair; accidental death involving an individual; children in Northern Ireland; bereavement after industrial accident; community disasters —lessons from Aberfan; threats to the unity of the family following bereavement by violence; the effect of suicide on an institution; bereavement following suicide, religious responses and breaking the news of violent death.

Victim Support Schemes

Victim Support Schemes will be among the voluntary organisations attending the conference. Mrs. Kathy Hobdell, organiser, Islington Victim Support Scheme, writes: "Having been in existence for five years, we are now covering the entire borough of Islington. We are being referred victims of serious violence, including families of murdered victims—hence our interest in your conference."

The conference, which is for those who work professionally with the dying and the bereaved, costs £21. Application forms and details of the conference programme are available from Cruse House, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey (Closing date August 19).

Please teachers, tell us more about bereavement in Schools

The Cruse Schools Pack Committee is hoping that teachers will let them know about their experiences as a result of bereavement within the framework of school.

It is hoped that they will not only want to share their experiences but might also describe the sort of information and advice they lacked at the time. In this way the committee hopes to compile the most useful pack, suitable for a wide range of situations.

The committee, which includes three teachers, educational health experts and counsellors, is exploring child and adult bereavement and group bereavement with a view to featuring these in the pack. It is hoped that all schools will eventually become aware that teaching children about bereavement before it happens is valuable.

Derek Nuttall, Cruse Director, and chairman of the committee said: "There is no doubt many teachers fear the thought of coping with bereavement and some schools fail to prepare staff for coping with it. Indeed, some do not realise that any teacher who is called upon to help a grieving child, or a class affected by the death of one of its members, needs very strong support from colleagues."

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