

Amber's story

Losing my dad is beyond doubt the worst thing that has ever happened to me. It was a complete shock, as he was fit and well and training for the iron man triathlon. He was more of a best friend than a dad. He was so much fun to be around, and knew everything about anything. I spent a lot of time with my dad, even though my parents were separated and had been since I was 5 years old. He always treated me like an adult and always respected my opinion.

I was 17 when my dad died, in the first year of my A-levels and had just started seeing my now boyfriend. When my dad died I completely lost my way. I went into myself and found that I just couldn't be bothered to do even the simplest of things.

To be honest, I didn't truly believe he was gone for a long time. To make things worse, he had to have an autopsy as his death was so sudden. The doctors never found the cause of his death, despite keeping him for a month. This meant that I couldn't have a proper goodbye until two months after he died, when we finally were able to have his funeral. I spoke to two different people before I found Sue at the Child Bereavement UK. I'm not a religious person, but my mum thought it may help if I spoke to a vicar - it wasn't for me. I then spoke to a woman, who I think needed to find another profession.

After two failures, my mum found the Child Bereavement UK and they have helped me so much. I have read for them at their carol concert and am involved in a group (Young People's Advisory Group) to help other people, predominantly schools and teachers, understand about the loss of close ones and how it affects teenagers. The Child Bereavement UK has been a great help to me and I have to thank Sue for all the help she has given me. My dad's death still upsets me and I miss him every day, but Sue has helped me come to terms with everything, and now I'm using my loss to help others understand what bereaved teenagers go through.