

The Irish Childhood Bereavement Care Pyramid

Authors: Anne Marie Jones, Children's University Hospital Temple Street (Chair); Celine Deane, Beaumont Hospital; Orla Keegan, Irish Hospice Foundation; Anne Staunton; Rainbows Ireland; Ann D'Arcy, Our Lady's Hospice and Care Services

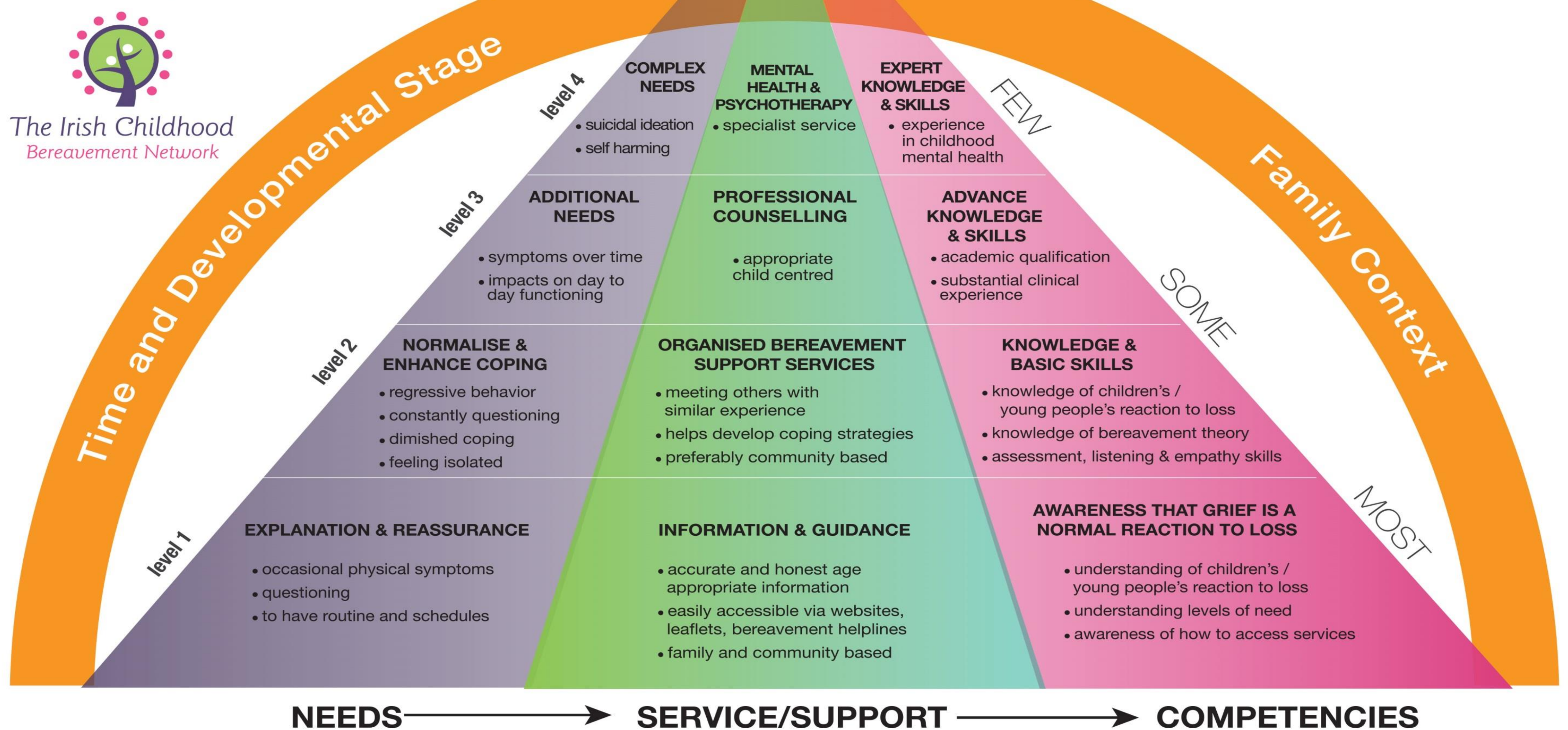
Aim:

In the absence of a national approach to childhood bereavement care in Ireland, the Irish Childhood Bereavement Network (ICBN) sought to design a childhood bereavement framework to guide professionals and concerned adults in identifying and responding to the needs of children and young people who have experienced a loss.

Design, methods and approach taken:

An expert group working in the area of childhood bereavement was convened to review the adult and child bereavement literature and pertinent local and international policies, in order to establish existing models of bereavement care and core dimensions of best practice. From this review and building on practice experience, a framework was created and piloted with medical, social work, educational professionals and parents.

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www.childhoodbereavement.ie/pyramid

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Results:

Three key components of childhood bereavement were identified. They are: **the needs** of a bereaved child or young person, the appropriate **supports and services** that are required and the **competencies** needed to deliver an appropriate response. Further, each component was described relative to a four level model reflecting increased complexity. The framework is placed within the context of the child or young person's developmental stage and family context. All were mapped into a three dimensional 'Childhood Bereavement Care Pyramid'. A pilot testing of the Pyramid found the model to be a concise and accessible visual guide in an area that families and practitioners find most complex.

Conclusion / lessons learned:

For the first time, a set of complex information was brought together in a user friendly way. The Pyramid developed a national pathway to guide families and practitioners to appropriate support and services for vulnerable children and young people who are bereaved. Further, the competencies identified allows for the development of appropriate training curricula needed at each level.