



CHRISTMAS IDEAS FROM WILTSHIRE TREEHOUSE – For parents & carers

Christmas can be a very emotionally challenging time after the death of someone special. Families will have different ways of grieving and different ways of getting through the holiday season.

All family members will be grieving in their own way and therefore it's important to try to be sensitive to everyone's needs. It's important to allow children to look forward to, and to enjoy, Christmas day while allowing them space to remember their special person. Keep communication open and have conversations about what everyone would like well in advance.

At Wiltshire Treehouse we have put together some ideas that may help your family enjoy the festive period while remembering the person that has died.

Children/young people, with support from a trusted adult, may like to:

- Light a candle
- Play their special person's favourite music
- Visit somewhere they feel close to that person
- Put an extra plate for their special person at the dinner table
- Make remembrance decorations for the tree
We are selling packs for £5 per child. All money goes towards supporting our work. Please email admin@wiltshiretreehouse.org.uk for more information.
- Have a special small tree for their special person and hang photos or memories on it
- Have a stocking that memories or funny stories of their special person can be written down and popped inside
- Place a Christmas card for their special person on the grave or in a place of memorial

Trusted adults can:

- Start new rituals and routines. After loss children may fear that their treasured rituals will disappear. It is important to explain that the holidays will never be quite the same and that different does not always mean bad. Start making new rituals and routines as well as maintaining old ones.
- Give children space to be sad if that is what they need at that time. Learn to talk about the sad stuff as well.

On Christmas day itself, remember to take time to look after yourself, if things become too much take time for a breather. Give yourself and everyone else permission to not be ok, equally to have fun and to smile.

For further information, advice and support (and information about our Christmas / New Year opening times) please visit our website: www.wiltshiretreehouse.org.uk

If need support during our closed period please see the Helpful Links section of our website for a list of organisations:

<https://www.wiltshiretreehouse.org.uk/resources/useful-links>

