

#TalkingAboutDyingMatters



Dying
Matters

Awareness Week

4 - 10 May 2026

How your library can get involved

hospiceuk.org/dyingmatters

In partnership with



**Libraries
Connected**

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Image: Libraries Connected / Nicola Tree



Introduction

Thank you for supporting Dying Matters Awareness Week 2026.

Every year, people around the UK use Dying Matters Awareness Week as a moment to encourage all communities to get talking in whatever way, shape or form works for them.

In 2026, Dying Matters Awareness Week will take place from Monday 4 to Sunday 10 May. The theme this year is: Talking about Dying Matters.

Why Talking about Dying Matters

The mission of Dying Matters is to break down the stigma and taboo of talking about death and dying. But sometimes, it's hard to know where to start.

27% of people find it hard to talk about death with family or friends, and 30% bottle their feelings up. If we don't talk about death and dying and bereavement, it can be harder to cope when we experience it.*

Death, dying and bereavement affect us all. This Dying Matters Awareness Week we're focusing on the importance of conversations about death and dying – with family, friends, employers, anyone in your life – helping you to get the conversation started.

Because Talking about Dying Matters.

About Dying Matters

The Dying Matters campaign, run by Hospice UK, aims to open up conversations about death, dying and grief.

With our community partners across the country, we help people talk about death in a way that works for them, start conversations they might have been avoiding, and get over their worries about saying the wrong thing.

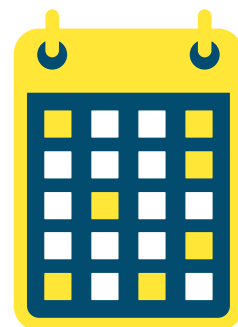
*This research is from polling commissioned by Celebration Day in 2025.

How your library can get involved

Make a display or host an event

Libraries are a great place to get people reading, talking and thinking. To encourage your visitors to think about Dying Matters, your library could:

- Display a poster from this pack
- Create a display of books on death and grief in the library
- Search for what's on in your area and advertise them at the library
- Host a virtual or in-person event.



Planning an event? → [Make sure you register your event now](#)

What to see what's on? → [Check out the event listings](#)

Contact your local hospice

Use our Hospice Care Finder to find your local hospice and ask if they'd like to share any resources or support with library visitors during the week. Many hospices have outreach workers who may be interested in attending the library and chatting to community groups.

→ [Find your local hospice](#)



Spread the word

We can't do any of this alone, and we'd love your library to help spread the word.

If you're getting involved in Dying Matters Awareness Week, share updates or photos and make sure to tag us: → [Facebook](#) → [Instagram](#)

Join our Dying Matters community: → [Register today](#)



Image: Libraries Connected / Nicola Tice

What have other libraries done?

Kirklees Libraries in Huddersfield shared what they did for Dying Matters Awareness Week in 2024. Maybe your library could take some inspiration?

Kirklees Libraries

“Our libraries provided opportunities for people to come together and share their personal stories while also providing an effective first step towards more specialist support.”

We curated a collection of ‘Death Positive’ books for our libraries, and shared them on social media and with partner organisations. Titles included fiction and non-fiction, for adults, families and children.

Library staff worked with their local hospice, The Kirkwood, to support a discussion and information morning for the public.

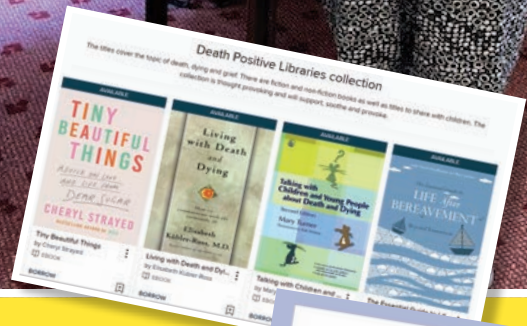
We promoted the morning sensitively, making sure that all attendees knew what the discussion session involved. They could decide if it was suitable, or if they’d prefer to simply pick up information.

Staff from The Kirkwood set up a stand offering advice and information. They then facilitated a session talking about Dying Matters Awareness Week and the hospice’s work, encouraging people to join in, and share their stories.

Library staff introduced the session with a selection of books to support with bereavement. The collection included people’s real stories and books for families and children.

The Kirkwood told us that they enjoyed answering questions and listening to people’s stories, in such a relaxed atmosphere. Talking about the books helped break the ice and got people talking openly – the library’s informal atmosphere helped people feel relaxed.”

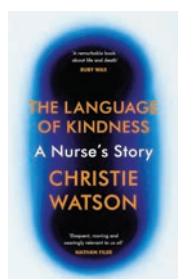
Judith Robinson, Kirklees Libraries



Books (and more) to help you explore conversations around death and dying

Death, dying and grief occur repeatedly in fiction, allowing us to explore them through the mind's eye of characters; non-fiction offers us a variety of insights into living and dying, grief and mourning, written by individuals describing their own experiences and by experts offering a summary of current wisdom.

Our recommendations this year come from contributors including Dying Matters supporters, hospice professionals and academics.



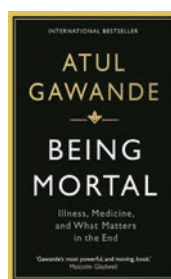
The Language of Kindness

by Christie Watson

“I had the pleasure of working with Christie during the pandemic and was bowled over by this honest account of her experiences as a professional and a daughter. I hope that this book will help you to reflect on personal experiences and losses, fuelling

conversations just like it did for me.”

Dr Lucy Pain, Palliative Medicine Consultant



Being Mortal

by Atul Gawande

“Being Mortal is a beautiful philosophical exploration of modern medicine's loss of focus on 'what matters in the end,' and a plea to his fellow American doctors to discuss dying honestly and prioritise comfort when death can no longer be postponed.”

Dr Kathryn Mannix, former palliative care doctor and author of *With the End in Mind*



Living with the Dead

by Professor Laura King

“The dead are everywhere in family life. From a great-grandmother's recipe, and an old photo of a family on a beach, to a much-told story of fleeing a home, families are made by their pasts. This book charts the way families create afterlives for their ancestors, asking who and what gets to be remembered, and why.”

Chris, Dying Matters Supporter



Podcast:

Part of Life

“A positive and honest space to discuss all things relating to death and dying. From the latest in scientific research and professional resources, to wellbeing support and compassionate conversations, Part of Life aims to destigmatise death to make the most of life.”

Molly, Dying Matters Supporter

[→ Listen Here](#)



Granpa

by John Burningham

“A picture book for younger children (and all of us) remembering happy times with Granpa, now that he has died and his chair is empty. A great way to engage in family discussion about the death of a person we love.”

Natalie, Dying Matters Supporter

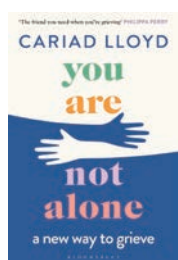


Film:

The Book of Life, & Coco

These films focus on the *Day of the Dead* (Día De Los Muertos), a Mexican holiday reuniting the living and dead. They spark conversations about talking openly about death, remembering others through shared stories; and becoming more at ease with dying.

Dr Jane Lavery, Associate Professor in Latin American Studies at the University of Southampton



You are not alone

by Cariad Lloyd

“Cariad shares her learnings over the 20+ years she's been grieving. Parts of the book have you ferociously nodding! It really makes you feel exactly what the title says, that you are not alone.”

Amber Jeffrey, podcast host at *The Grief Gang*

[→ Download this poster in printable format](#)

Materials to support your event

Printable resources

Use our printable resources at your event to help get conversations about death and dying started.



Let people know about your event

Print and fill out this poster to let people know about your Dying Matters Awareness Week event.

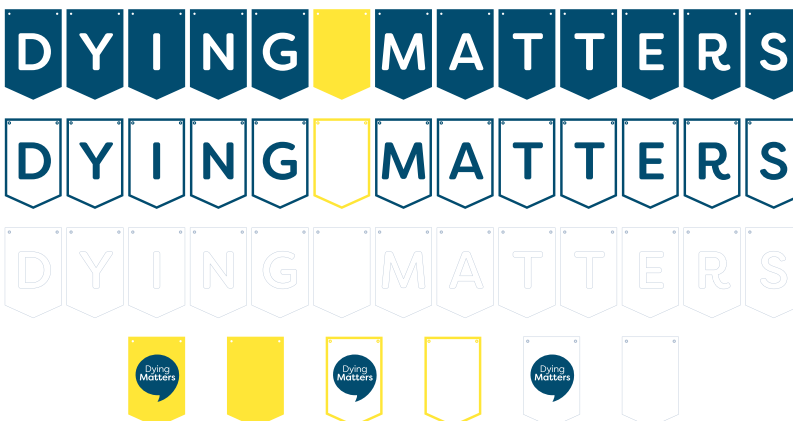
→ [Download here](#)



Dying Matters leaflets

From talking about dying with children, to understanding how to support someone through a bereavement, our leaflets are designed to help you deal with different aspects of dying, death and bereavement.

→ [Download the leaflets](#)



Make it an occasion

Here's a template for print-at-home bunting. Besides a printer and paper, all you'll need is a hole punch and some string.

→ [Download here](#)

Materials to support your event

These resources will help you talk about Dying Matters Awareness Week online.
All resources can be downloaded here.

You will also find them on the **Dying Matters website** →

→ Social media graphics



→ Social media images



→ Social headers



→ Dying Matters logos



→ Template press release



→ Social posts



Don't forget to tag **@DyingMatters** and use the hashtags **#TalkingAboutDyingMatters** or **#DMAW26**

Support & Advice

Ataloss offers a national signposting service to help bereaved people find local, specialist and national support.

ataloss.org

Child Bereavement UK provides information and support (including a helpline) when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, and when a child is facing bereavement.

childbereavementuk.org

Compassionate Employers is Hospice UK's workplace support programme, helping organisations and their employees to build an open, compassionate culture to support staff through grief, caring responsibilities, or a life-limiting illness

www.hospiceuk.org/compassionate-employers

Cruse Bereavement Support is a national bereavement charity, which provides support, advice and information to children, young people and adults when someone dies.

cruse.org.uk

The Good Grief Festival is a community of people talking about grief in a refreshing and honest way, with virtual talks, workshops and webinars held at online festivals through the year.

goodgrieffest.com

The Planning Ahead tool leads you, step by step, to think about your own values and the things that matter most to you in life and in dying. It will explain some of the treatment decisions that may lie ahead and ask you to think about whether the length of your life, or the quality of the way you live, matters more to you:

hospiceuk.org/planning-ahead

Hospice UK's guide to end of life care provides clear and concise guidance about what to expect, what to ask and where you can get support when you or a loved one are facing the end of life and bereavement.

hospiceuk.org/information-and-support/your-guide-hospice-and-end-life-care





Dying Matters

hospiceuk.org/dyingmatters



Dying Matters is a campaign run by Hospice UK.

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