

Personal Story

Katie, sister of Matt



BUILDING A JUST SOCIETY

about grief

I still can't believe he's gone. Sometimes I can't even say he's died and that it was suicide. It was last year, just before he turned 19. We're a year apart in age and we've always been close, more like friends. We were closer than our other brother and sister who are a bit older. We're not twins but people used to call us the terrible twins because we'd get up to things together and hang out together at family things but we thought that was stupid. We used to look out for each other, things just aren't the same.

I miss him every day; his birthday is coming up soon and I don't want to think about it, we used to have such a good time. We did have fights but we always made up and knew it would be OK. We could laugh at the same things and whenever Mum or Dad would say stuff we'd look at each other and know what we were thinking. We knew stuff about each other no-one else knew – family stuff.

Mum cries a lot and Dad is quiet, sometimes they fight now and they didn't ever do that much. I hate it. I'm worried about them and I don't know what to do. I want to make it better for them but I don't know how.

Mum and dad either don't seem to notice how I'm going or they're at me. Sometimes I don't want to talk about him because it upsets mum but other times I want to. Then other times they're asking me how I am all the time, worried and I don't want to talk about it; I want them to leave me alone.

I wonder if I should have said something. He mentioned a while before he died that he was having a hard time and I didn't tell anyone, maybe I should have. Maybe he would still be alive if I'd said something.

People say it wasn't my fault but I can't help thinking I should have been able to help him.

I feel lonely now like I've never felt before. Some of my friends are OK to be with and others say stupid things – the ones who didn't know Matt. I've got one friend whose Dad died a couple of years ago, he hanged himself too. We talk sometimes and it helps, it helps a lot. I don't feel so weird or lonely and I can see that he's doing OK so I think that one day I'll be OK again too.

Support

Counselling and Support Services

Support After Suicide (03) 9427 9899 Richmond, Lalor, Ferntree Gully, Dandenong and Lt Collins St, City

Bereavement Counselling and Support Service (03) 9265 2111

The Compassionate Friends (03) 9888 4944

Mercy Western Grief Services (03) 9364 9838

Telephone counselling

Suicide Helpline 24 hours 1300 651 251

Griefline—12pm-3am—9596 7799

Lifeline—24 hours—13 11 14

Parent Help Line 1300 30 1300

Kids Helpline—1800 55 1800

Suggested reading

After Suicide: Help for the Bereaved, Sheila Clark, Hill of Content, 1998.

Healing After the Suicide of a Loved One, Simolin and Quinan, 1993.

After Suicide: a ray of hope for those left behind, Eleanora Ross, 2001.

No Time to Say Goodbye: Surviving the suicide of a loved one, Carla Fine, 2000.

Care and Support Pack: Coping with Grief After Suicide, NSW Health Dept (02) 9816 0452

Support After Suicide

PO Box 79
Richmond VIC 3121

Phone: 9427 9899

Fax: 9427 7119

Email:
aftersuicide@jss.org.au

Web:
supportaftersuicide.org.au

A program of
Jesuit Social Services