

Selecting a Funeral Director

A funeral is a time to honour your child and celebrate all the wonderful things about them. It is a time to share their story, your memories and sorrow and an opportunity to say goodbye with family and friends.

A funeral director needs to be contacted to make funeral arrangements. You may wish to speak with a number of funeral directors before deciding on the one you feel most comfortable with. You are able to meet with them at your home, at their office or at a location where you feel comfortable.

There is no need for funeral arrangements to be rushed. It is important to take your time and make decisions when you are ready. Your social worker or support team can support you through this process.

Below is a list of questions that may be helpful when you are choosing a funeral director.

- › If I want to see my child, can we have as many viewings as our family needs? Do we need to make appointments?
- › Can we have our child's body at home?
- › If I want to, can I be involved in washing, dressing and caring for my child's body prior to their body being placed in the coffin?
- › What do you charge and which services are optional? Funeral costs vary considerably. It is important to know what services you will receive and how much each part will cost. You might want to contact a number of funeral directors to obtain written itemised quotes. Ask if they have a payment plan.
- › What is embalming? Is it necessary? What's involved? How much does it cost? Why would I need to think about that?
- › Do you routinely use makeup? Some parents have been unhappy that makeup has been used on their child without their permission.
- › What styles of coffins are available? Can I choose a special colour or decorate the coffin?
- › What about flowers, balloons, or doves? Are we able to organise these if we want?
- › I have some cultural and religious beliefs I would like taken into consideration—is the funeral director able to respect my needs?
- › What's involved with either burial or cremation?
- › How soon can I have my child's ashes at home with me?
- › Should we involve our other children? How might we involve them?

For more information see Red Nose Grief and Loss: rednosegriefandloss.com.au/support/article/arranging-your-childs-funeral

Adapted from: Drew, D. 2005, Paediatric palliative care: Caring for your child at home, Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick.