



The impact of a program to help children manage change and loss



Seasons for Growth 2019 Evaluation: Overview

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Seasons for Growth (SfG) is a program for children and young people (aged 6 to 18 years) who have experienced significant change in their lives. It is a peer-based program that aims to provide them with the tools they need to adapt to change and make positive choices in ways that improve their quality of life. The program activities pair the tasks of grief with a seasons metaphor that encourages participants to understand the cyclical, rather than linear, process of working through loss and grief.

In this evaluation, both children and young people who took part in the program and their parents and carers were invited to complete a survey – at the start of the program, at the end, and then three months later. The program facilitators or Companions were also invited to provide feedback about the program.





Seasons for Growth



What do children and young people say?

Their responses to questions about the ability to accept the reality of loss, make the connection between past and future events, process negative emotions, and make positive choices all reflected improvement from the beginning of the *Seasons for Growth* program to the end, with these changes sustained at the time of follow up. Children and young person ratings of their quality of life also improved over time, with these changes also sustained at the time of follow up. There was evidence that *Seasons for Growth* is particularly helpful for those children and young people who identify divorce or parental separation as the reason for their attendance.



What do parent and carers say?

The program was highly valued by parents and carers and, from their perspective, their child completed the program with a greater ability to appreciate that life changes, with more knowledge about emotions and family relationships and how to make good decisions. They expressed greater confidence that their child would be able to adapt to change in the future and reported that, in their view, their child's wellbeing had improved.



What do the Companions say?

The Companions reported a consistently high level of confidence in the program and the theory and logic underpinning program activities. Many regarded *Seasons for Growth* as a program that has profoundly beneficial effects on children and young people and their families.



Results

Overall the results support the suggestion that program attendance is likely to be associated with an improvement in the quality of life of children and young people and that this is maintained after the program has finished. This is a very positive finding; particularly given that many of the children and young people had experienced more than one significant loss or change events. The qualitative feedback provided by young people and parents also clearly showed just how valued the work of the Companion is.

