

**8th International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in
Contemporary Society
July 15-18 2008**

Abstract for Individual Paper session: Bereaved siblings group work

BERRY, Madeleine. (Very Special Kids) mberry@vsk.org.au

Very Special Kids supports families throughout their experience of caring for children with life-threatening illnesses, from diagnosis through to recovery or bereavement. Sibling support is an important component of our work.

This paper aims to describe and explain the day and weekend activities run by the Family Support team and volunteers for primary school-age bereaved siblings. The presentation will include rationale for group activities, the differences between siblings and bereaved siblings groups and activities and make suggestions why these differences might be.

The presentation will describe the structure of a bereaved sibling day and sleepover. This will include a rationale of why we have an over all theme, warm ups, a ritual, physical and creative activities as well as some integrated therapeutic time. Some of the activities will be described in more detail. Examples will be used to illustrate how children find these events helpful. Information on how we evaluate each event will be included and how we use this to design future activities.