

Seasons for Growth

Seasons for Growth is a loss and grief education programme aimed at young people aged 6 – 18 years.

- Seasons for Growth promotes the social and emotional wellbeing of young people who have experienced significant loss due to death or family breakdown
- Trained adult 'Companions' support the young people to understand the effects of change, loss and grief
- Groups of 6 – 8 young people meet once a week for a structured 8 week programme
- It is a peer education programme and not counselling, which helps young people to learn from and support each other
- Seasons for Growth is based on the belief that change, loss and grief are a normal and valuable part of life
- The programme aims to develop skills in communication, decision-making and problem-solving
- Seasons for Growth aims to promote resilience, to enhance coping resources and to develop life skills in young people.

West Dunbartonshire's Mental Health Strategy Group set up the Seasons for Growth Advisory Group in August 2007.

- The group is made up of professionals from education, health, social work, Notre Dame Clinic and Choose Life
- It is chaired by Alison Gardner, Senior Educational Psychologist
- The group has developed a sustainable Implementation Plan that aims to support all schools to run Seasons for Growth groups on a regular basis
- 'Companions' from education, social work and health work together with groups of young people, usually in schools but occasionally in other contexts
- A rolling programme of awareness raising about the programme and training of new Companions is underway
- Since the inception of the group, there has been a significant rise in the number of groups that have been run in primary and secondary schools
- Choose Life funding has been instrumental in driving this initiative forward, as people who have experienced loss and separation are at higher risk of self-harm and suicide.

For further information contact Alison Gardner, Senior Educational Psychologist at 01389 800491.