

SELECTING A FUNERAL DIRECTOR

A funeral director is there to help carry out your wishes. Below is a list of questions to ask when choosing a funeral director.

- If I want to see my child ('viewings'), can we have as many viewings as our family needs? Do we need to make appointments?
- If I want to, can I be involved in washing, dressing and caring for my child's body prior to being placed in the coffin?
- What kinds of expenses are involved? (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.)
- I have heard people talk about embalming — is that necessary? — What's involved? — Why would I need to think about that?
- Do you routinely use makeup? (Many 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 paint the coffin?
- What about flowers, balloons, 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?

*Source: 'Paediatric Palliative Care — Caring for your child at home',
Donna Drew, Sydney Children's Hospital Randwick, 2005*