

Alex, ten, films a message of hope

'My dad died by suicide. I miss him, but I'm OK'



Growing up: Alex visiting her father's grave



Powerful: Alex Morgan, with her father Andy in the photo, appeared on a video to help children affected by the suicide of a parent

A GIRL aged just ten has told of the heartbreak of losing a parent to suicide – and says families should be open with children about such tragedies.

Alex Morgan's father Andy died more than three years ago, and his family have now produced a film to help distraught youngsters.

In the video, Alex said it was acceptable for parents to tell their children about the loss of a loved one through suicide.

She said she was told that her father had 'died by suicide' about a month after his death.

Alex asked her mother: 'What's wrong, mum? Where's dad?'

'And she told me. I thought she was messing and I went and told my cousins, and then she came

By Eamon Donoghue

over to us and told us that she's not joking,' said Alex.

'We got back into the house and she wasn't as upset, and she was cleaning the bathtub. And I said, "Mum, how did dad really die?"

'She told me that my dad died by suicide.'

Alex said she was 'much happier' now she knew the truth.

The schoolgirl said: 'When I go to the grave I feel happy as it's the closest I get to him.'

'Even when I talk now I don't get sad as I've learned to accept it.'

'After a while, when my mum told me, I was glad as I'd rather have known. If it were me, I'd be furious if she didn't tell me the truth. I didn't want to be growing up living with a lie.'

She has advised other children who have lost loved ones in similar

circumstances to talk about their feelings. In the video, she tells youngsters: 'I know you'll be sad as it's a big thing losing a mum, a dad, or anyone from suicide.'

'But there's always someone there. Don't bottle it up, if you need to cry, cry with someone.'

'My dad died three years ago through suicide. I miss him but I'm OK.'

'It's really powerful stuff'

Her father, a self-employed plumber, died on New Year's Eve 2010.

The 12-minute video – which is gaining popularity on the internet – was produced by The Andy Morgan Foundation, which was founded in 2011 by the family and friends

of the Dublin father-of-three.

They say they have focused their efforts and emotions on trying to ensure that others do not have to go through what they experienced.

The foundation said that Alex had wanted to take part in the video 'as a tribute to her dad and to let other parents know that it's OK to tell your kids the truth'.

The foundation said: 'It's really powerful stuff coming from a small kid. It certainly makes you see how strong kids can be and how they see it. Please share this [video] to let parents know that it's OK to talk and tell them.'

'Alex is such a happy kid and really wise. We have no doubt her dad is feeling really proud of her.'

Alex, her mother Joanne and siblings Leanne and Jamie have raised thousands of euro for the foundation.

reporter@dailymail.ie

At least 367 dead in China quake

AN earthquake killed at least 367 people and injured more than 1,400 in China yesterday.

Approximately 12,000 homes collapsed in the county of Ludian – in Yunnan – when the quake struck at 4.30pm local time.

According to China's official Xinhua News Agency, 181 people were missing last night, while rescuers were trying to reach victims in more remote towns. Electricity and telecommunications were also cut off.

A resident of Zhaotong said the streets looked like a 'battlefield after bombardment'. Photos showed rescuers searching for survivors among flattened buildings.

The magnitude 6.1 quake was the strongest in the region for 14 years.

Now Reynor is a \$1billion hero

JACK Reynor has is now officially Ireland's first billion dollar movie star.

The 22-year-old has become the country's most successful box office star after Transformers: Age of Extinction became the first film this year to pass \$1 billion at the global box office.

The fourth instalment of the robot franchise has become the mega hit of the summer with takings now over \$1 billion, according to Hollywood bible Variety.

Wicklow man Reynor, pictured, is the only Irish actor to have a leading role in a film which passed the mark, beating Liam Neeson (\$983million) for Star Wars: Episode I.



Irish nanny gets pre-trial hearing

A KEY development in the murder case of Irish nanny Aisling McCarthy Brady is anticipated on Wednesday this week at a pre-trial hearing in the US.

Ms McCarthy Brady, 35, from Lavey in Co. Cavan, is facing first degree murder charges over the death of one-year-old Rehma Sabir, who died in her care in Boston in January 2013. Two weeks ago, following an application by Ms McCarthy Brady's defence team, a Massachusetts court gave permission for medical experts to carry out further examinations on baby Rehma's body.

A skeletal survey had revealed 'healing fractures' to the baby's body, with some injuries thought to be two months old.

Sandy and pals come to rescue

COUNTRY singer Sandy Kelly is organising a concert to raise funds for a special needs centre ravaged by arsonist vandals.

Sandy, pictured, has been in touch with other country music stars who have promised to perform to help restock the centre which her 33-year-old daughter Barbara attends five days a week.

The Sligo Resource Centre, which provides services for 33 adults, was trashed at 3.30am last Friday. Damage worth an estimated €40,000 was carried out when vandals started a fire while trying to access a medicine cabinet.



Amid bloodshed, a young boy's life saved



Alive: Rescuers find the wounded boy

TRAPPED in the rubble, a wounded boy cries in pain as Palestinian rescuers fight to free him.

The boy was pulled to safety from the rubble of a house destroyed by an airstrike in Rafah that killed at least nine members of one family.

UN officials said they were powerless to help many of the injured because almost half of Gaza's medics are unable to get to work.

Rafah has been targeted by Israeli strikes from land, sea and air. Palestinians say corpses lie on the streets and casualties have to be treated on the floors of overcrowded hospitals, which have also been hit.

Meanwhile, Angelina Jolie's

Irish Daily Mail Reporter

father has launched an attack on Spanish film stars Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem after they condemned Israel's actions in Gaza. Veteran actor Jon Voight branded the pair 'ignorant' after they wrote an

'Fanning the fire of anti-Semitism'

open letter telling Europe it must try to stop the bombing of the Palestinian territory.

He accused Miss Cruz and Mr Bardem of helping to fan 'the fire of anti-Semitism that is

raging all over the world'.

The couple are the latest celebrities to go public with their views on the conflict in Gaza. They said in the Spanish press: 'Palestinians' homes are being destroyed, they are being denied water, electricity... while the international community does nothing.'

But in his own open letter to The Hollywood Reporter, Mr Voight, 75, wrote: 'I am heart-sick that people like Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem could incite anti-Semitism all over the world and are oblivious to the damage they have caused.'

He added: 'Instead of my peers sticking up for the only democratic country in that region, they go and take out poison letters against them.'

Victim of house fire is identified

A MAN killed in a fire at his family home was identified yesterday.

Retired welder Noel Gunning, 56, died when a blaze broke out at the house in Jordanstown, Ballynacargy, Co. Westmeath, in the early hours of Saturday morning.

His mother Mary, in her 80s, managed to escape the fire and was taken to hospital in Mullingar. Her injuries were not thought to be life-threatening yesterday. A technical examination of the scene indicated that the fire was started accidentally.

Meanwhile, four people escaped from a house fire in an estate on the Headford Road in Galway city on Saturday night.