



Suggested Books on Grief for Children

Armagost, A. (2025). *Grieving You and Me: A story about grieving a complicated relationship*. Independently published.

For children 4-12 years of age. Intended for reading with a caring adult. A book that gently explores a child's experience of grieving the death of someone they had a complicated relationship with. Whether impacted by substance, painful memories, or unresolved conflict, this story acknowledges that children can grieve the loss of someone they had mixed emotions about--something often overlooked or unspoken. This book creates space for honest conversations about death, grief, and self-care. It validates children's mixed emotions, encourages healthy emotional expression, and reassures them that it's okay to grieve—even if it's messy.

Bergren, L. T. & Bryant, L. J. (2008). *God Gave Us Heaven*. Water Brook Press.

This gentle story provides satisfying answers to a young child's most difficult questions about what happens after this life, inviting "little cubs" to find comfort in knowing that God gave us heaven.

Buscaglia, L. (1982). *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A life story for all ages*. Slack Inc.

This story by Leo Buscaglia is a warm, wonderfully wise, and straightforward story about a leaf named Freddie. How Freddie and his companions' leaves change with the passing seasons, finally falling to the ground with winter's snow, is an inspiring allegory illustrating the delicate balance between life and death. *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf* is a warm and thought-provoking story; this inspiring book will deeply resonate with both children and adults. This 20th-anniversary edition of this beloved classic has helped thousands of people come to grips with life and death.

Dorn, A. *When Someone Dies: A Children's Mindful How-To Guide on Grief and Loss*. PESI Publishing, Inc.

Navigating the grief and bereavement process can be a challenging and unpredictable experience, especially for children. Whether it's the loss of a family member, friend, pet, or other loved one, children often don't know how to cope with the complicated and complex emotions that accompany death. Written and illustrated by a therapist (and mother), it walks children through the bereavement

process in a simple, concrete, and developmentally appropriate way. Through mindfulness, children will learn how to say goodbye, make space for any emotions that arise, and work through their grief.

Harder-Tangvald, C. (2018). *Someone I Love Died*. David C. Cook.

First published in 1988, *Someone I Love Died* has long comforted the hearts of children aged 4 to 8 who have lost someone close. It gently leads children through grief with age-appropriate words and solid biblical truth that understands a child's hurting heart. The added interactive resources ensure that this book will become a treasured keepsake. Once complete, children create a memory book of their loved one's life. It also offers grown-ups a tool that turns what could be a difficult season into a meaningful healing time.

Helbert, K. (2012). *Finding Your Own Way To Grieve*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Children and teenagers with autism can struggle to cope with the loss of a loved one and the complicated and painful emotions of bereavement. This book explains death in concrete terms that the child with autism will understand, explores feelings that the child may encounter as a part of bereavement, and offers creative and expressive activities that facilitate healing.

Jeffers, O. (2011). *The Heart and the Bottle*. Harper Collins Children's Books

Award-winning picture book star Oliver Jeffers explores themes of love and loss in this life-affirming and uplifting tale. Once, there was a girl whose life was filled with wonder at the world around her...Then, one day, something happened that made the girl take her heart and put it in a safe place. However, after that, the world seemed emptier than before. But would she know how to get her heart back? In this profoundly moving story, Oliver Jeffers deals with the weighty themes of love and loss with an extraordinary lightness of touch and shows us that there is always hope.

Jonas, I. (2022). *My Dear Nuakuluapik*. Strong Nation Publishing.

An Inuit woman fondly reflects on her childhood with her Nuakuluapik. She remembers everything they used to do together and how kind her Nuakuluapik always was. This heartfelt story illuminates the strength of intergenerational relationships and how we hold onto loved ones even after they are gone.

Karst, P., & Lew-Vriethoff, J. (2018). *The invisible string*. DeVorss Publications.

Specifically written to address children's fear of being apart from the ones they love, *The Invisible String* delivers a particularly compelling message in today's uncertain times: Though we may be separated from the ones we care for, whether through anger, distance, or even death, love is the unending connection

that binds us all and, by extension, ultimately binds every person on the planet to everyone else.

Lambert, T. (2020). *Why Do I Feel So Sad? A Grief Book for Children*. Callisto Kids.

The book is an inclusive, age-appropriate, illustrated kids' book to help young children understand their grief. The examples and beautiful illustrations are rooted in real life, exploring the truth of loss and change while remaining comforting and hopeful. Broad enough to encompass many forms of grief, this book reassures kids that they are not alone in their feelings and even suggests simple things they can do to feel better, like drawing, dancing, and talking to friends and family.

Levis, C. & Santoso, C. (2016). *Ida, always*. Athenaeum Books

A beautiful, honest portrait of loss and deep friendship is told through the story of two iconic polar bears. Gus lives in a big park in the middle of an even bigger city and spends his days with Ida. Ida is right there. Always. *Ida Always* is an exquisitely told story of two best friends—inspired by a real bear friendship—and a gentle, moving, needed reminder that loved ones lost will stay in our hearts, always. Then, Gus learns that Ida is sick and will not get better. The friends help each other face the difficult news with whispers, sniffles, cuddles, and even laughs. Slowly, Gus realizes that even after Ida is gone, she will still be with him through the sounds of their city and the memories that live in their favorite spots.

Muller, J. & Cox, C. (2016). *Till We Meet Again: A children's book about death and grieving*. Hummingbird Books.

This is a story about death and grieving for children. This book provides comfort to families when they experience the loss of a loved one. The book is meant to help grieving children remember and share their special memories with those around them and to help them grow to see how they can honor and cherish their loved ones through their actions. It will help young children deal with loss and provide hope that someday, we will all meet again.

Mundy, M., & Alley, R. W. (1998). *Sad isn't bad: A good-grief guidebook for kids dealing with loss*. Abbey Press.

Loaded with positive, life-affirming advice for coping with loss as a child, this guide tells children what they need to know after a loss—that the world is still safe, life is good, and hurting hearts do mend. Written by a school counselor, this book helps comfort children facing the most challenging realities.

Parr, T. (2015). *The Goodbye Book*. Little, Brown and Company.

Through the lens of a pet fish who has lost his companion, Todd Parr tells a moving and wholly accessible story about saying goodbye. Touching upon the host of emotions children experience, Todd reminds readers that it's okay not to know all the answers and that someone will always support them—an invaluable resource for life's most challenging moments.

Quan, B. (2018). *Grandmother's visit*. Groundwood Books Ltd.

In this touching book about love and loss, a young Chinese girl says goodbye to her grandmother. Grandmother lives with Grace's family, and she is taught how to measure water for rice. She also tells her stories about growing up in China, and they savor the flavors of her childhood together. Grandmother says goodbye when she drops Grace off at school every morning and hello when she picks her up at the end of the day. Suddenly, Grandmother stops walking Grace to and from school, and the door to her room stays closed. Father comes home early to make dinner, but the rice bowls remain full. One day, Grandmother's room is empty. And soon after, she is buried. After the funeral, Grace's mom turns on all the outside lights so that Grandmother's spirit can find its way home for one final goodbye.

Rawson-Hill, A. & Lew-vriethoff, J. (2020). *You'll find me*. Imagination Press.

Loss becomes remembrance in this book that offers tender ways to pay tribute to and meaningfully incorporate a loved one's lost presence into present and future life experiences. Whether it's departed friends, family, pets, or more, memories can carry us beyond the precious moments we shared to keep the ones we loved before in mind forever. Throughout the book, the omnipresent narrator encourages thoughtful reflection on the empty spaces left by the loss. The gentle scenes inspire recovery from sadness and honor those absent. This lyrical, heartfelt story provides consent and gently encourages readers to move to a place of peace and acceptance despite the absence.

Rawson-Hill, A. & Lew-vriethoff, J. (2024). *You'll be there*. Imagination Press.

This gentle and affirming story encourages readers to remember a loved one in small and meaningful ways through their life experiences. Our loved ones are always with us, and we can recall them through past experiences and anticipate them in future ones. Whether it's making a snowman just like they used to, watching the fireworks they would love, or simply being thankful for the time spent with them, they will always be there. This companion book to *You'll Find Me* offers gentle and positive ways to incorporate a lost loved one's presence into future life experiences. The soothing narration and soft scenes allow space for loss while encouraging a transition to remembrance and hope.

Romain, T. (2023). *What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?* Free Spirit Publishing.

The book speaks directly to kids about what death means and how to cope. The book explores the questions kids have about death—Why? How? What next? Is it my fault? What's a funeral?—in basic, straightforward terms. Also described and discussed are the overwhelming emotions involved in grieving: sadness, fear, anger, and guilt. The book offers practical strategies for coping with those emotions and suggests meaningful ways to remember and honor the person who has died. *What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?*—a simple, insightful, and heartfelt guide—is for any child who has lost a loved one or another special person. This book, filled with practical advice and engaging illustrations, provides the comfort and reassurance children need during these challenging times.

Rowland, J. (2017). *The Memory Box: The book about grief.* Sparkhouse Family.

A multi-award-winning story about dealing with the loss of a loved one, *The Memory Box* has been an invaluable resource for thousands of families. The main character creates a memory box to store mementos and written memories of her loved one, which helps her with the grieving process. Throughout the narrative, the child's feelings are acknowledged, allowed, and assured that feelings are normal and healthy to express.

Techentrup, B. (2014). *The Memory Tree.* Hachette Children's Group.

Fox has lived a long and happy life in the forest, but now he is tired. He lies down in his favourite clearing and falls asleep forever. Before long, Fox's friends begin to gather in the clearing. One by one, they tell stories of the special moments that they shared with Fox. As they share their memories, a tree grows, becoming stronger and stronger with each memory, sheltering and protecting all the animals in the forest, just as Fox did when he was alive.

Valdali, A. M. (2024). *I'll Be Your Friend Forever: A heartfelt message from across the Rainbow Bridge.*

Written for anyone who has ever lost a pet, *'I'll Be Your Friend Forever'* is a heartwarming message from across the Rainbow Bridge. Join your pet on a beautiful journey of love and loss as you see how some friendships last longer than a lifetime!

Witek, J. & Roussey, C. (2014). *In my Heart: A book of feelings.* Harry N. Abrams

Happiness, sadness, bravery, anger, shyness... our hearts can experience a wide range of emotions! Some make us feel as light as a balloon, while others make us feel as heavy as an elephant. *In My Heart* explores a full range of emotions, describing how they feel physically and inside. With lyrical and direct language, toddlers will be empowered by this new vocabulary and can practice articulating and identifying their emotions. With whimsical illustrations and an

irresistible die-cut heart that extends through each spread, this unique feelings book is gorgeously packaged.

Zucker, B. (2016). *Something Very Sad Happened: A toddler's guide to understanding death*. American Psychological Association.

A story to help two- and three-year-olds understand death. The feelings associated with the loss of a loved one include information for parents and caregivers on answering questions and helping a child cope with grief.