

Books for Children Experiencing a Loss or Trauma



The Rhino Who Swallowed a Storm

By LeVar Burton, illustrated by Courtenay Fletcher. It's designed to help kids understand their emotions, realize there are helpers all around them and learn coping strategies to let go of the storm of emotions that comes in the wake of trauma and build resilience. There are also discussion questions at the end to facilitate a healing dialogue between parents/caregivers and children.

The Wounded Yellow Butterfly, Linda Diaz-Murphy, 2014, ISBN: 0615761399. Uplifting, spiritual and enchanting tale of a butterfly that survives a perilous storm but is wounded in the process. This precious story offers multiple colorful pages for a child to write and draw their own story of hope and friendship.

The Tree that Survived the Winter, Mary Fahy, Paulist Press. 1989
(All ages through adult)

Take Time to Relax! Nancy Carlson, Puffin Books, 1991.
ISBN # 0-14-054242-6. Ask for soft cover edition.

The Knight Who Was Afraid of the Dark, Barbara Shook Hazen, Dial Books for Young Readers.
ISBN: 0-8037-0667-7. Ask for soft cover.

There's Something in My Attic by Mercer Mayer, Dial Books for Young Readers. ISBN # 0-8037-0414-3. Ask for soft cover edition.

There's a Nightmare in My Closet by Mercer Mayer, Dial Books for Young Readers. ISBN #. 0-8037-8574-7.

I Hear a Noise by Diane Goode, Dutton Children's Books (Puffin Unicorn Book), NY. 1988. ISBN # 0-525-44884-5.

When Someone Very Special Dies, Marge Heegaard. Woodland Press, 1988, ISBN#0-96-20502-0-2.

When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death, Laurie Krasny Brown and Mark Brown, Little Brown and Company, 1996. Ages 4-8. Explains in simple language the feelings people may have regarding the death of a loved one and the ways to honor the memory of someone who has died.

The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A Story for All Ages. Leo Buscaglia, Ph.D. 1982. SLACK Inc. ISBN# 0-943432-89-8, or Henry Holt and Co. ISBN 0-8050-1064-5.

Sunshine: More Meditations for Children, Maureen Garth, Collins Dove, 1994. ISBN 1-86371-406-5.

Part of Me Died, Too – Stories of Creative Survival Among Bereaved Children and Teenagers. Virginia Fry. Ages 8 and up.

True stories of young people reflecting on their experiences with the deaths of pets, family members, or friends.

Death. (Preteen Pressures Series) Barbara Sprung. Ages 8-12. Discusses what it feels like to experience the death of a loved one, outlines the stages of grief and mourning, and describes ways to honor or remember someone who has died.

Coping with Grieving and Loss. Sandra and Owen Giddens. Ages 11 and up. Offers teens and pre-teens strategies for coping -- explaining the stages of grieving, how to deal with friends and family, the funeral, anger, guilt and depression, changing emotions, and where to go for help.

Straight Talk about Death for Teenagers: How to Cope With Losing Someone You Love. Earl Grollman. Ages 11 and up. A poetic and thought-provoking book for teens who have experienced the death of a friend or relative.

Lifetimes: a Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children. Bryan Mellonie. Ages 3-8. This book explains to children that death is a part of life and that, eventually, all living things reach the end of their own special lifetimes.

The Saddest Time. Norma Simon. Ages 5-8.

In these three stories, children come to terms with the death of an uncle, a classmate, and a grandmother. A workbook title which is not available in libraries but may be a worthwhile purchase for families looking for a book where children can process their grieving through art.

Help Me Say Goodbye : Activities for Helping Kids Cope When a Special Person Dies. Janis Silverman.

Picture Books

Badger's Parting Gifts. Susan Varley. Ages 3-8.

After Badger dies, his friends take comfort in the special memories they have of the things they did together.

A Story for Hippo: A Book About Loss. Simon Puttock. Ages 3-7.

Hippo and Monkey are best, best friends and when the wise old Hippo dies, Monkey is very sad until Chameleon helps him remember the stories he and Hippo shared.

What's heaven? Maria Shriver. Ages 4-9.

After her great-grandmother's death, a young girl learns about heaven by asking her mother all kinds of questions.

The Blue Pearls. Elizabeth Stuart Warfel. Ages 5-9.

Elise cannot leave her life on earth and join the angels until they have completed her sapphire-blue dress. The story of the passage through death from the perspective of a small angel.

Parents & Teachers

GENERAL – Death and Dying

The books on this bibliography are designed to help parents and children cope with the death of a loved one. Not every book is appropriate for every child. We strongly urge caregivers to pre-read a book before sharing it with a young person.

General Non-Fiction

155.937 BRO 155.937 KRO **Helping Children Cope with the Loss of a Loved One: a Guide for Grownups.** William Kroen. Age-specific advice detailing what children can understand. Includes a bibliography and resource list.

155.937 SCH **How Do We Tell the Children? A Step by Step Guide for Helping Children Two to Ten Cope When Someone Dies.** Dan Schaeffer and Christine Lyons. A practical guide for anyone who works with children includes a “Crisis Checklist” with scripted answers to children’s frequently-asked questions.

155.93 JAM **When Children Grieve – For Adults to Help Children Deal with Death, Divorce, Pet Loss, Moving and Other Losses.** John W. James and Russell Friedman. Concrete suggestions of things to say and do with a child to help acknowledge the loss and grieve in healthy ways.

155.937 EMS **Guiding your Child through Grief.** Mary Ann Emswiler.
The New England Center for Loss and Transition offers expert advice to help a child grieve the death of a parent or sibling.

155.93 TRO **Talking with Children about Loss -- Words, Strategies, and Wisdom to Help Children Cope with Death, Divorce, and other Difficult Times.** Maria Trozzi.

155.937 THI **35 Ways to Help a Grieving Child. The Dougy Center.**
The Dougy Center for the Grieving Child provides 35 practical suggestions for helping children, teens, and their families cope with the loss of a loved one in this short but valuable book.