

### **Kids grieve differently**

After losing a loved one, a boy may go from crying one minute to playing the next. His changeable moods do not mean that he isn't sad or that he has finished grieving; children cope differently than adults, and playing can be a defense mechanism to prevent a child from becoming overwhelmed. It is also normal to feel depressed, guilty, anxious, or angry at the person who has died, or at someone else entirely.

Very young children may regress and start wetting the bed again, or slip back into baby talk.

### **Encourage kids to express feelings**

It's good for kids to express whatever emotions they are feeling. There are many good children's books about death, and reading these books together can be a great way to start a conversation with your child. Since many children aren't able to express their emotions through words, other helpful outlets include drawing pictures, building a scrapbook, looking at photo albums, or telling stories.

### **Be developmentally appropriate**

It is hard to know how a child will react to death, or even if he can grasp the concept. Don't volunteer too much information, as this may be overwhelming. Instead, try to answer his questions. Very young children often don't realize that death is permanent, and they may think that a dead loved one will come back if they do their chores and eat their vegetables. As psychiatrist Gail Saltz explains, "Children understand that death is bad, and they don't like separation, but the concept of 'forever' is just not present."

Older, school-age children understand the permanence of death, but they may still have many questions. Do your best to answer honestly and clearly. It's okay if you can't answer everything; being available to your child is what matters.

### **Be direct**

When discussing death, never use euphemisms. Kids are extremely literal, and hearing that a loved one "went to sleep" can be scary. Besides making your child afraid of bedtime, euphemisms interfere with his opportunity to develop healthy coping skills that he will need in the future.

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### **Attending the funeral**

Whether or not to attend the funeral is a personal decision that depends entirely on you and your child. Funerals can be helpful for providing closure, but some children simply aren't ready for such an intense experience. Never force a child to attend a funeral. If your child wants to go, make sure that you prepare him for what he will see. Explain that funerals are very sad occasions, and some people will probably be crying. If there will be a casket you should prepare him for that, too. **For more information, go to: <http://childmind.org/article/helping-children-deal-grief/>**



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[www.benbrooklibrary.org](http://www.benbrooklibrary.org)



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# Benbrook Public Library

## Book Lists for Dealing with Grief



Tel: 817-249-6632

## Lists of Books

### Dealing with Grief

**Death Without Denial, Grief without Apology: A Guide for Facing Death and Loss** By Barbara Roberts (155.937 Rob)

**About Grief: Insights, Setbacks, Grace Notes, Taboos** by Ron Marasco (155.937 Mar)

**Saying Goodbye to Uncle Joe: What to Expect When Someone You Love Dies** by Nancy Loewen (J 155.937 Loe)

**Facing the Ultimate Loss: Coping With the Death of a Child** by Robert J. Marx (155.937 Mar)

**The Truth About Death and Dying** by Karen Meyers (306.903 Mey)

**The Hickory Chair** by Lisa Rowe Fraustino (E Fra)

**One More Wednesday** by Malika Doray (E Dor)

**Flamingo Dream** by Donna Jo Napoli (E Nap)

**What is Death?** by Etan Boritzer (E 155.92 Bor)

**Mother Poems** by Hope Anita Smith (J 811 Smi)

**Aunt Mary's Rose** by Douglas Wood (E Woo)

**When Someone Dies: a Practical Guide to the Logistics of Death** by Scott Taylor Smith (306.9 Smi)

**When Aunt Mattie Got Her Wings** by Petra Mathers (E Mat)

**The Fall of Freddie the Leaf** by Leo Buscaglia (E Bus)

### Dealing with Grief in Children

**Let's Talk About Going to a Funeral** by Marianne Johnson (J 393.9 Joh)

**What a Children Need to Know When They Grieve: The Four Essentials: Routine, Love, Honesty and Security** by Julia Wilcox Rathkey (155.973 Rat)

**Always Remember** by Cece Meng (E Men)

**Anna's Heaven** by Stain Hole (E Hol)

**The Dead Bird** by Margaret Wise Brown (E Bro)

**Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children** by Bryan Mellonie (J 306.9 Mel)

**I Miss You: A First Look at Death,** by Pat Thomas (E 155.937 Tho)

**My Many Colored Days,** by Dr. Seuss (E Seu)

**Wherever You Are: My Love Will Find You,** by Nancy Tillman (E Til)

**Water Bugs and Dragonflies: Explaining Death to Young Children** by Doris Stickney (J 306.9 Sti)

**No Matter What,** by Debi Gliori (E Gli)

**The Next Place** by Warren Hanson

**Death Is Stupid (Ordinary Terrible Things)** by Anastasia Higginbotham (Illustrator) (E 155.937 Hig)

**What's Heaven?,** by Maria Shriver and Sandra Speidel (E Shi)

### Dealing with Grief After the Loss of a Pet

**When a Pet Dies** by Fred Rogers (J 155.937 Rog)

**I Will See You in Heaven** by Jack Wintz (231.7 Win)

**Dog Heaven** by Cynthia Rylant (E Ryl)

**The Goodbye Book** by Todd Parr (E Par)

**Dogs Don't Die Dogs Stay** by Chris Shea (155.937 She)

**Stay: Lessons my Dog Taught me About Life, Loss and Grace** by Dave Burchett (248.4 Bur)

**Harry & Hopper** by Margaret Wild (E Will)

**Goodbye Jeepers: What to Expect When Your Pet Dies** by Nancy Loewen (J 155.937 Loe)

