

Providing evidence-based information about palliative care for everyone because death and dying will affect all of us.

The books in this list have all won awards and received positive reader ratings on Amazon and/or Goodreads. You can use them as starting point when talking to children about death and dying, how to cope with grief, and the importance of remembering loved ones who have died.

Babies and Toddlers (0 - 4 years)

City Dog, Country Frog (2010). Mo Willems

An energetic city dog visits the countryside and makes friends with a gentle frog, sharing fun-filled adventures through the seasons. As time passes, the frog grows older, and the dog learns to cherish their memories, discovering that friendship lasts even as life changes.



Ida, Always (2016). Caron Levis

This is a touching story of death and the importance of remembering as told through the eyes of Gus and Ida, two polar bears living in a city zoo.

If All The World Were (2019). Joseph Coelho

A moving, lyrical picture book about the love between a grandfather and child. The uplifting text is a good way to introduce the concept of death and dying to kids, particularly for those who have lost a grandparent.



[Sesame Street in Communities - Helping Kids Grieve](#)

This website is full of interactive activities and videos specifically designed for children aged 2-6 to help explore and express their emotions after someone has died. Resources include a Grief Toolkit providing tips, stories and guides to help families to move forward through stages of grief.

Little kids (5 - 7 years)

Badger's Parting Gifts (2013). Susan Varley

A wise old Badger who senses his time coming to an end, shares his knowledge and gifts with his friends to gently prepare them for his death. When Badger dies, his friends share their memories of the special things he taught them and learn that he lives on through them.

Bird is Dead (2024). Tiny Fisscher

In a community of birds, when a loved one dies, the others process their emotions honestly and openly. With honest and compassionate storytelling, and gentle humour, this book shows children that it is natural to feel sad, cry, and share memories, as a part of coping with loss.



Charlotte's Web (2025). E.B. White

A classic tale of friendship, love, death and the connections that make us human. Charlotte's Web tells of the firm friendship between a girl, rescued pig and a spider. This timeless story highlights the importance of friendship and the acceptance of death as part of living.

Cry, Heart, But Never Break (2016). Glenn Ringtved & Charlotte Pardi

A tender story about four siblings who try to stop death from taking away their beloved grandmother, who was gravely ill. Death gently helps them understand that grief and joy, life and death, are all part of a natural balance, and that while we must cry, we must also allow life to go on.



Michael Rosen's Sad Book (2008). Michael Rosen

A moving and honest account of the author's grief and sadness following the loss of his son. Through simple, heartfelt language and illustrations, the book helps readers understand that feeling sad is natural and a part of coping with loss.

Rabbityness (2021). Jo Empson

Joyful and creative Rabbit fills his world with music and art. When he unexpectedly vanishes, his friends grieve but later discover that he has left them materials to make music and paint themselves, and eventually celebrate his legacy by embracing the "rabbityness" he left behind.

The Boy and the Gorilla (2020). Jackie Azua Kramer

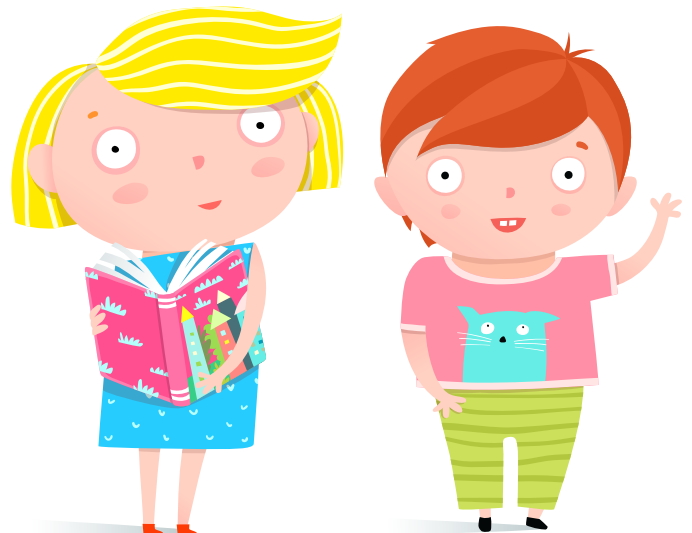
A young boy coping with the loss of his mother conjures a gentle and wise gorilla on the day of her funeral, who stays by his side and answers his heart-heavy questions and guiding him through his grief. Through their quiet companionship, the boy learns that feeling sad is natural and that sharing his feelings with others who care can help him heal.

The Heart and The Bottle (2020). Oliver Jeffers

A curious girl, while grieving the loss of a loved one, hides her heart in a bottle to shield herself from sadness. As she grows older and her sense of wonder fades, she begins to understand that to truly live and feel joy again, she needs to free her heart.

The Tenth Good Thing About Barney (2009). Judith Viorst

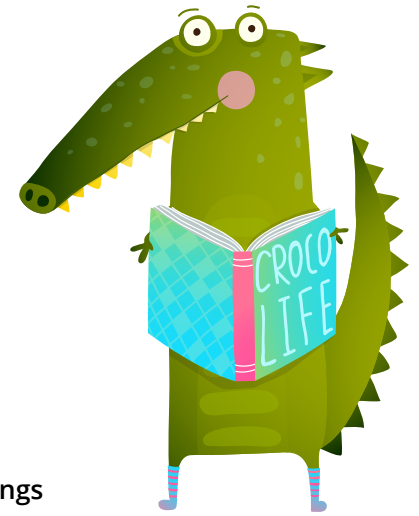
As a young boy mourns the death of his cat, Barney, he tries to think of ten good things to say at Barney's funeral but can only think of nine. Later, while speaking with his father, he discovers the tenth, and gradually comes to understand loss, love, and the importance of remembering those we have lost.



Big Kids (8 – 12 years)

A Monster Calls (2021). Patrick Ness

A dark but amusing fantasy tale of Connor and his ancient, wild backyard truth-seeking monster who has materialised from his subconscious as a result of dealing with the fear and anticipated grief of losing his mother to cancer. This story describes the impact that overwhelming feelings can have and the importance of taking these seriously.



Bridge to Terabithia (2006). Katherine Paterson

Terabithia is a magical kingdom ruled by two close friends, Leslie and Jess, but when Leslie unexpectedly dies by accident, Jess is faced with dealing with feelings of guilt, sadness and loss. This story presents first-hand narratives of coping with death and experiencing grief from a child's point of view.



Milo: Sticky Notes and Brain Freeze (2010). Alan Silberberg

A novel about Milo, a witty and creative 13-year-old boy, as he navigates life after the loss of his mother. Between a crush on the girl he sneezed on, a neighbour who just would not leave him alone, and the challenge of being the new kid again, Milo faces a school year filled with reminders of how his world used to be.

[Apart of Me \[App - Game\]](#)

This interactive game has been designed by grief experts in collaboration with young people experiencing grief. Children move through magical worlds guiding them through dark periods after death of a loved one. By working through real-world 'quests', kids can validate feelings or emotions whilst building to help to move on. The Apart of Me app is available for download in both the Apple App Store and Google Play stores.

[Winston's Wish Childhood Bereavement Podcast Series](#)

A UK based not-for-profit organisation, Winston's Wish, supports children and young people after the death of a parent or sibling. They have produced a series of podcasts discussing practical after death support for children, including returning to school and the importance of talking about their feelings. These are all freely available on Soundcloud (website that provides free audio downloads to listen to and share).



Teenagers (13 – 16 years)

Cures for Heartbreak (2016). Margo Rabb

Sixteen-year-old Mia, along with her sister and father, find themselves facing life without Mia's mother after she passes on from cancer. Facing this loss, Mia struggles to process her own grief, but eventually finds a way through the tough times by remembering her mother and rediscovering enjoyment and excitement in her own life.

Still Here With Me: Teenagers and Children on Losing a Parent (2006). Suzanne Sjoqvist

A compilation of heartfelt stories from children and teenagers who have lost a parent, offering honest insights into their grief and healing journeys. This book provides solace and understanding for young readers going through similar challenges, while also serving as a valuable guide for adults supporting grieving children.



The Boy in the Black Suit (2019). Jason Reynolds

Matt wears a black suit, partly because his mother died but mostly because he works part-time at a funeral home. Matt's story explores the importance of finding someone who can support you, showing you a way through the sad times and understand what you are going through.

The Fault in Our Stars (2012). John Green

Hazel Grace, a sixteen-year-old girl with cancer falls in love with Augustus Waters, a charismatic and witty cancer survivor. Together, they navigate the challenges of illness, mortality, and young love, and find hope and meaning amidst their uncertain futures.

The Year Of The Rat (2017). Clare Furniss

Fifteen-year-old Pearl is overwhelmed with grief after her mother dies following childbirth, and feels isolated and bitter towards her new born sister, whom she nicknames "the Rat". As Pearl navigates the complexities of loss, family tension, and teenage life, she gradually confronts her emotions and discovers a way to move forward.



Visit [caresearch.com.au/Dying2Learn](https://www.caresearch.com.au/Dying2Learn) for more information and resources.

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