

Tip of the week #9

Understanding and Talking  
about Death with Children.



## Understanding and Talking about Death with Children

\*\*\*On a personal note, the last year has been an especially difficult one having lost some very special family members. We are now saying goodbye to yet another.

Below are some writings and resources on discussing death with children in a way that is beautiful and easy to understand. Speaking from experience, it is also helpful for adults.

***If you have found something that is comforting to you – please share it with us and we will add it to this post.  
Thank you.***

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## The Dragonfly



Once, in a little pond, in the muddy water under the lily pads, there lived a little water beetle in a Community of water beetles. They lived a simple and comfortable life in the pond with few disturbances and interruptions.

Once in a while, sadness would come to the community when one of their fellow beetles would climb the stem of a lily pad and would never be seen again. They knew when this happened; their friend was dead, gone forever.

Then, one day, one little water beetle felt an irresistible urge to climb up that stem. However, he was determined that he would not leave forever. He would come back and tell his friends what he had found at the top.

When he reached the top and climbed out of the water onto the surface of the lily pad, he was so tired, and the sun felt so warm, that he decided he must take a nap. As he slept, his body changed and when he woke up, he had turned into a beautiful blue-tailed dragonfly with broad wings and a slender body designed for flying.

So, fly he did!

And, as he soared he saw the beauty of a whole new world and a far superior way of life to what he had never known existed.

Then he remembered his beetle friends and how they were thinking by now he was dead. He wanted to go back to tell them, and explain to them that he was now more alive than he had ever been before. His life had been fulfilled rather than ended.

But, his new body would not go down into the water. He could not get back to tell his friends the good news. Then he understood that their time would come, when they, too, would know what he now knew. So, he raised his wings and flew off into his joyous new life!

~Author Unknown~



*One night I dreamed a dream.*

*As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.*

*Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.*

*For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,*

*One belonging to me and one to my Lord.*

*After the last scene of my life flashed before me*

*I looked back at the footprints in the sand.*

*I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,*

*especially at the very lowest and saddest times,*

*there was only one set of footprints.*

*"I don't understand why, when I need You most, You would leave me."*

*He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you,*

*Never, ever, during your trials and testings.*

*When you saw only one set of footprints,*

*It was then that I carried you."*



## 64 Children's Books About Death and Grief

<http://www.whatsyourgrief.com/childrens-books-about-death/>

When grief hits a family, children often become the focus – how to talk to them about death, how to recognize if they are grieving 'normally', how to create open communication and dialogue. etc. When we ask adults what they need in their grief often their first response is what they need for their children. We have number of articles on WYG offering this type of support. We have posts on the [impact of age on understanding](#), on [grief journals and workbooks for kids](#), on the [risks of using euphemisms](#), on [art activities for grieving kids](#), on [art activities for grieving kids and adults](#), on [talking to kids about suicide](#), an [activity book for kids after a suicide](#), on [holiday activities for kids](#), and [more holiday activities for kids](#). We also have an article reminding you why it is important to [take care of yourself in order to better care for the children in your life](#). But one thing that we don't have is a list of kids' books about death and grief, despite the fact that we get asked about this fairly often.

We have talked about [journal, activity and workbooks for kids](#), but sometimes a story is the best way to open a dialogue. Often reading a story can help kids know they are not alone and normalize what they are experiencing. It can offer a safe way to open a dialogue with children about death and grief, in groups, as a family, or one-on-one. So today, here it is! We have a list of 64 children's books about grief. As with all of our '64 things' lists, we know this is not an exhaustive list. Please add your favorites in the comments. The books are primarily for the 10 and under crowd but, rest assured, a list of 64 Young Adult novels about grief is on the horizon.

1. [Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children](#) (kids 5+)
2. [The Invisible String](#) (kids 3+)
3. [Everett Anderson's Goodbye \(Reading Rainbow\)](#) (kids 5-8)
4. [The Tenth Good Thing About Barney](#) (kids 6-9)

5. [I'll Always Love You](#) (kids 3-7)
6. [When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death \(Dino Life Guides for Families\)](#) (kids 4-8)
7. [I Miss You: A First Look at Death \(First Look at Books\)](#) (kids 4+)
8. [The Saddest Time](#) (kids 6-9)
9. [Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing After Loss](#) (kids 8+)
10. [The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A Story of Life for All Ages](#) (kids 4+)
11. [Gentle Willow: A Story for Children About Dying](#) (kids 4+)
12. [Where Are You? A Child's Book About Loss](#) (kids 4-8)
13. [Samantha Jane's Missing Smile: A Story About Coping With the Loss of a Parent](#) (kids 5+)
14. [The Scar](#) (kids 5-9)
15. [A Terrible Thing Happened](#) (kids 4+)
16. [The Elephant in the Room: A Childrens Book for Grief and Loss](#) (kids 4+)
17. [The Boy Who Didn't Want to Be Sad](#) (kids 4+)
18. [I Wish I Could Hold Your Hand...: A Child's Guide to Grief and Loss \(Little Imp Books\)](#) (kids 9+)
19. [Water Bugs and Dragonflies: Explaining Death to Young Children](#) (kids 4+)
20. [When Your Grandparent Dies: A Child's Guide to Good Grief \(Elf-Help Books for Kids\)](#) (kids 5+)
21. [Someone I Love Died](#) (kids 4-8)
22. [What Happened When Grandma Died?](#) (kids 4+)
23. [Always and Forever](#) (kids 4+)
24. [Badger's Parting Gifts](#) (kids 4-8)
25. [Ghost Wings](#) (kids 5+)
26. [Finding Grandpa Everywhere: A Young Child Discovers Memories of a Grandparent](#) (kids 7+)
27. [The Grandpa Tree](#) (kids 3+)
28. [Sad Isn't Bad: A Good-Grief Guidebook for Kids Dealing with Loss \(Elf-Help Books for Kids\)](#) (kids 6+)

29. [Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs \(Picture Puffins\)](#) (kids 4-8)
30. [Daddy, Up and Down: Sisters Grieve the Loss of Their Daddy](#) (kids 4-8)
31. [Saying Goodbye to Daddy](#) (kids 4+)
32. [The Angel with the Golden Glow: A Family's Journey Through Loss and Healing](#) (kids 4+)
33. [Where's Jess: For Children Who Have a Brother or Sister Die](#) (kids 3-6)
34. [A Taste of Blackberries](#) (kids 8-12)
35. [Bridge to Terabithia](#) (kids 8-12)
36. [My Grandson Lew](#) (kids 4-6)
37. [Aarvy Aardvark Finds Hope: A Read Aloud Story for People of All Ages About Loving and Losing, Friendship and Hope](#) (as the title says, people of all ages!)
38. [The Empty Place: A Child's Guide Through Grief \(Let's Talk\)](#) (kids 5-10)
39. [Dancing on the Moon](#) (kids 3+)
40. [Lost and Found: Remembering a Sister](#) (kids 6+)
41. [Stacy Had a Little Sister \(A Concept Book\)](#) (kids 4+)
42. [Ragtail Remembers: A Story That Helps Children Understand Feelings of Grief](#) (kids 4+)
43. [Goodbye Mousie](#) (kids 4-8)
44. [Remembering Crystal](#) (kids 3+)
45. [Rudi's Pond](#) (kids 5-8)
46. [The Memory String](#) (kids 4-8)
47. [Sammy in the Sky](#) (kids 4-8)
48. [Where Do People Go When They Die?](#) (kids 3-8)
49. [Chester Raccoon and the Acorn Full of Memories](#) (kids 3-8)
50. [Her Mother's Face](#) (kids 4-8)
51. [Remembering Mama](#) (kids 4+)
52. [Old Pig \(Picture Puffin\)](#) (kids 3-8)

53. Pearl's Marigolds for Grandpa (kids 3-7)
54. Saying Goodbye to Lulu (kids 3-6)
55. The Mountains of Tibet (kids 7+)
56. Rabbityness (kids 3-7)
57. I Wish I Could Hold Your Hand...: A Child's Guide to Grief and Loss (Little Imp Books) (kids 9+)
58. Can You Hear Me Smiling?: A Child Grieves a Sister (kids 8+)
59. The Copper Tree (kids 5-8)
60. Everybody Feels Sad (kids 4+)
61. Grief is Like a Snowflake (kids 4+)
62. My Baby Big Sister: A Book for Children Born Subsequent to a Pregnancy Loss (kids 4-8)
63. Ladder to the Moon (kids 4-8)
64. Missing Mommy: A Book About Bereavement (kids 3-8).