

Resources for Talking to Little Children About Death

Updated December, 2023



In person resources:

- Reach out to Children's Hospital and see if there is a Certified Child Life Specialist who is willing to talk to the parents/kids: <https://www.childrenscolorado.org/doctors-and-departments/departments/grief-and-loss/>

Online resources:

- The National Alliance for Children's Grief <https://nacg.org/>
 - Key points to remember when talking to children and teens about death and dying: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/215545b9-9378-47e2-be5f-9ff397744d81>
 - Developmental understandings: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/246ac201-44b2-4dd2-b7cb-b53c2094b64b>
 - Preschool series: supporting preschoolers who are grieving: https://drive.google.com/file/d/17zeLpP4ZMce0-Hj-5nZsZz7j7wy_bfkH/view
 - Telling a child or teen someone has died: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/1006d8fd-c2ac-4894-84ea-8d2f392d47eb>
 - Talking to children about death and dying: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/23176ffb-5edf-4640-b906-3318ea8808c0>
 - [Grief - Sesame Workshop](https://sesameworkshop.org) - Get help explaining death to children. Explore our free, bilingual resources for families, providers, and teachers on coping with grief and loss of loved ones. sesameworkshop.org and <https://sesameworkshop.org/topics/grief/>
 - [Coping with Loss: How to Talk to Kids About Death](https://www.childrenscolorado.org) - Find expert tips for supporting children after loss, by age group. www.childrenscolorado.org and <https://www.childrenscolorado.org/conditions-and-advice/parenting/parenting-articles/grief-and-loss/>
 - [Grief Support for Children | Dougy Center](https://www.dougy.org) - Kids, this is just for you. Find activities and information to help you understand and express your grief, or find other kids near you to talk with. - www.dougy.org and <https://www.dougy.org/grief-support-resources/kids>

Annotated Bibliography of Books:

- **A Little Blue Bottle**
(available in hardcover and kindle) – Illustrated, September 17, 2020
by Jennifer Grant (Author), Gillian Whiting (Illustrator)

In this beautiful book for children, a child tells her story of losing a beloved neighbor and friend.

A young girl remembers playing with her neighbor's cat, stories that her neighbor told her, and the special mementos her friend kept on a shelf above her kitchen sink, including a little blue bottle she kept to remind her of Psalm 56:8: "You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book." A Little Blue Bottle doesn't provide pat answers or heavy-handed messages about life or death, but allows the grieving child to articulate her loss and her love for the deceased friend, while wondering how God is near when we suffer.

A gentle and insightful resource for children who are grieving, and for those who care for them.

Age range: 3 - 8 years old

Product details

Publisher : Church Publishing; Illustrated edition (September 17, 2020)

Language : English

Hardcover : 40 pages

ISBN-10 : 1640652892

ISBN-13 : 978-1640652897

Reading age : 3 - 8 years

Grade level : Preschool - 3

- **The Invisible String**

(The Invisible String, 1) (available in audiobook, paperback, and hardback) – Picture Book, October 30, 2018

by Patrice Karst (Author), Joanne Lew-Vriethoff (Illustrator)

Part of: The Invisible String (6 books)

With over 1.5 million copies sold, this accessible, bestselling picture book phenomenon about the unbreakable connections between loved ones has healed generations of children and adults alike. Also available: Spanish edition (El hilo invisible) and a companion workbook (The Invisible String Workbook).

Parents, educators, therapists, and social workers alike have declared The Invisible String the perfect tool for coping with all kinds of separation anxiety, loss, and grief. In this relatable and reassuring contemporary classic, a mother tells her two children that they're all connected by an invisible string. "That's impossible!" the children insist, but still they want to know more: "What kind of string?" The answer is the simple truth that binds us all: An Invisible String made of love. Even though you can't see it with your eyes, you can feel it deep in your heart, and know that you are always connected to the ones you love. Does everybody have an Invisible String? How far does it reach? Does it ever go away? This heartwarming picture book for all ages explores questions about the intangible yet unbreakable connections between us, and opens up deeper conversations about love.

Recommended and adopted by parenting blogs, bereavement support groups, hospice centers, foster care and social service agencies, military library services, church groups, and educators, The Invisible String offers a very simple approach to overcoming loneliness, separation, or loss with an imaginative twist that children easily understand and embrace, and delivers a particularly compelling message in today's uncertain times. This special paperback edition includes vibrant new illustrations and an introduction from the author.

Product details

Publisher : Little, Brown Books for Young Readers; Illustrated edition (October 30, 2018)

Language : English

Paperback : 40 pages

ISBN-10 : 031648623X

ISBN-13 : 978-0316486231

Reading age : 3 - 7 years, from customers

Grade level : Preschool – 3

- **The Dragonfly Story: Explaining the death of a loved one to children and families**

(available in kindle and paperback)– March 29, 2018

by Kelly Owen (Author), Helen Braid (Illustrator)

This beautifully illustrated story is an adaptation of the fable of the transformation of the dragonfly. This fable has been long used to explain death and the hope of heaven. This version opens with two siblings talking about missing their sister and wondering where she had gone now that she had died. The mother

then tells them the dragonfly story. Using the experience of the death of her eldest child, the author, Kelly Owen, has retold the fable in simple terms to encourage children and families to talk about death and what happens when we die. The book does not shy away from the subject of death, but aims to explain it in a real and loving way. The story starts in the family home as the siblings feel sad and confused about their sister's death, so the parents take them to the park where they discover a dragonfly. The dragonfly story is then told and they reflect on how that might explain their loss. It is a useful book to discuss death when you have experienced a loss in the family. The book is ideal for people of all beliefs and none. The Dragonfly Story offers hope and comfort to the bereaved.

Product details

Publisher : Independently published (March 29, 2018)

Language : English

Paperback : 28 pages

ISBN-10 : 1723880191

ISBN-13 : 978-1723880193

- **Always Remember**

(available in kindle and hardcover) Picture Book, February 16, 2016

by Cece Meng (Author), Jago (Illustrator)

A lyrically told, beautifully illustrated book that brings comfort to children--and adults--who have lost someone they love

After Old Turtle swims his last swim and breathes his last breath, and the waves gently take him away, his friends lovingly remember how he impacted each and every one of them. As the sea animals think back on how much better Old Turtle made their lives and their world, they realize that he is not truly gone, because his memory and legacy will last forever.

Jago's gorgeous illustrations accompany Cece Meng's serene text in a book that will help children understand and cope with the death of a loved one.

Product details

Publisher : Philomel Books (February 16, 2016)

Language : English

Hardcover : 32 pages

ISBN-10 : 0399168095

ISBN-13 : 978-0399168093

Reading age : 3 - 7 years

Lexile measure : AD570L

Grade level : Preschool – 2

- **The Kissing Hand** by Audrey Penn, TanglePress1993

(available in kindle, hardback, paperback, audiobook)

by Audrey Penn (Author), Ruth Harper (Illustrator)

Part of: The Kissing Hand (9 books)

School is starting in the forest, but Chester Raccoon does not want to go. To help ease Chester's fears, Mrs. Raccoon shares a family secret called the Kissing Hand to give him the reassurance of her love any time his world feels a little scary. Since its first publication in 1993, this heartwarming book has become a children's classic that has touched the lives of millions of children and their parents, especially at times of separation,

whether starting school, entering daycare, or going to camp. It is widely used by kindergarten teachers on the first day of school. Stickers at the back will help children and their parents keep their Kissing Hand alive.

Product details

ASIN : 1933718005
Publisher : Tanglewood; STK edition (October 15, 1993)
Language : English
Hardcover : 32 pages
ISBN-10 : 9781933718002
ISBN-13 : 978-1933718002
Reading age : 2 - 6 years, from customers
Lexile measure : AD540L
Grade level : Preschool - 3

- **Beyond the Rainbow: A Workbook** for Children in the Advanced Stages of a Very Serious Illness by Marge Eaton Heegaard – Dec. 13, 2002
(available in paperback)
An art therapy book which helps children cope with a life-threatening illness. Children are encouraged to express in pictures what they are often incapable of expressing in words.

Product details

Publisher : Fairview Press (December 13, 2002)
Language : English
Paperback : 40 pages
ISBN-10 : 1577491297
ISBN-13 : 978-1577491293
Reading age : 4 - 8 years

- **I Miss You (A First Look at Death)** by Pat Thomas, Barrons Educational Series 2000
(available in paperback) – January 31, 2001

Product details

ASIN : B008NRESWS
Publisher : TurtlebackBooks (January 31, 2001)
Language : English
Paperback : 0 pages
Best Sellers Rank: #2,451,610 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)

- **Love You Forever** by Robert Munsch, Firefly Press 1987
(available in paperback – Picture Book)
by Robert Munsch (Author), Sheila McGraw (Illustrator)
A young woman holds her newborn son
And looks at him lovingly. Softly she sings to him:
"I'll love you forever
I'll like you for always
As long as I'm living
My baby you'll be."
So begins the story that has touched the hearts of millions worldwide. Since publication in 1986, Love You Forever has sold more than 30 million copies in paperback and the regular hardcover edition (as well as hundreds of thousands of copies in Spanish and French).

Product details

Publisher : Firefly Books (September 1, 1995)
Language : English
Paperback : 32 pages
ISBN-10 : 0920668372
ISBN-13 : 978-0920668375
Reading age : Baby and up, from customers
Lexile measure : AD780L

- **Always and Forever** Paperback – February 7, 2013 by Alan Durant Alan Durant (Author)
Product details
Publisher : Corgi Books; UK ed. edition (February 7, 2013)
Language : English
ISBN-10 : 0552567655
ISBN-13 : 978-0552567657