

## **Children's Grief – Helpful Books**

### **Can You Hear Me Smiling? A Child Grieves a Sister**

*Aariane Jackson and Leigh Lawhon*

A girl tells how, after she had a fight with her sister and said something mean, her sister got sick with pneumonia and died, and she describes her feelings of grief, anger, and loss.

### **Healing Your Grieving Heart for Kids: 100 Practical Ideas**

*Alan D. Wolfelt*

Healing Your Grieving Heart for Kids is for young and middle readers (6-12 years) grieving the death of someone loved. The text is simple and straightforward, teaching children about grief and affirming that their thoughts and feelings are not only normal, but necessary.

### **I Miss You: A First Look at Death**

*Pat Thomas*

This book helps boys and girls understand that death is a natural complement to life, and that grief and a sense of loss are normal feelings for them to have following a loved one's death. Kids are encouraged to understand personal feelings and social problems as a first step in dealing with them. Written by psychotherapist and counselor Pat Thomas, these books promote positive interaction among children, parents, and teachers.

### **Samantha Jane's Missing Smile: A Story About Coping With the Loss of a Parent"**

*Julie Kaplow and Donna Pincus*

The loss of a parent is a profound event for a child. In the aftermath of the death, children face great emotional vulnerability and distress and need help from their surviving parent and other supportive adults around them. Reassurance and support, as well as practical coping tools, are key to the child's ability to recover and lead a full and happy life. *Samantha Jane's Missing Smile* is the story of one child's loss.

### **Since My Brother Died: Desde que Murio Mi Hermano (English and Spanish Edition)**

*Marisol Munoz-Kiehne*

Includes both English and Spanish translation of a Caregiver's Section, Teacher's Section, and a story for children. In this book, the child talks about how things are different since his brother died. 'It was like a nightmare! There are so many feelings. Sometimes you feel sad and sometimes you feel normal. Mostly, you feel all mixed up.' In the end, the child realizes his brother is still alive in his heart.

### **Someone I love Died**

*Christine Harder Tangvald*

First published in 1988, *Someone I Love Died* has long comforted the hearts of children 4 to 8 who have lost someone close. It gently leads children through grief with age-appropriate words and solid biblical truth that understands a child's hurting heart. The added interactive resources ensure this book will become a treasured keepsake. Once complete, children create a memory book of the loved one's life. And it offers grown-ups a tool that turns what could be a difficult season into a meaningful time of healing.

### **Someone I Love Died by Suicide: A Story for Child Survivors and Those Who Care for Them**

*Doreen T. Cammarata*

This newly revised edition of the book is designed for adult caregivers to read to surviving youngsters following a suicidal death. The story allows individuals an opportunity to recognize normal grieving symptoms and to identify various interventions to promote healthy ways of coping with the death of a special person. Although the language used in the book is simplistic enough to be read along with children and ultimately stimulating family discussion, it can be beneficial to all who have been tragically devastated by suicide. It is recommended for this book to be utilized in conjunction with therapy.

### **Someone I Love Died from a Drug Overdose**

*Melody Ray*

Accidental substance overdoses continue to rise across our country, leaving families at a loss as to how to tell and assist the children that are grieving. This story is an excellent tool for parents and caregivers. Includes a workbook, definitions, some facts and a note to the adult reading the story.

### **Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing After Loss**

*Pat Schwiebert and Chuck Deklyen*

This book will validate your grief experience, and you can share it with your children. You can leave it on the coffee table so others will pick it up, read it, and then better appreciate your grieving time. Grand's Cooking Tips section at the back of the book is rich with wisdom and concrete recommendations. Better than a casserole!

### **The Elephant in the Room: A Children's Book for Grief and Loss**

*Amanda Edwards and Leslie Ponciano*

The Elephant in the Room is a children's storybook with whimsical illustrations and rhyming verses of positive strategies for coping with grief and loss. The gender-neutral elephant character demonstrates the potential emotions that children may experience when faced with any type of loss such as death of a pet or a relative, a friend moving away, foster care, hospitalization, etc. This book can serve to initiate a discussion or to provide unconscious messages of love, power, and healing.

### **The Goodbye Book**

*Todd Parr*

Through the lens of a pet fish who has lost his companion, Todd Parr tells a moving and wholly accessible story about saying goodbye. Touching upon the host of emotions children experience, Todd reminds readers that it's okay not to know all the answers, and that someone will always be there to support them. An invaluable resource for life's toughest moments.

### **The Invisible String**

*Patrice Karst*

The Invisible String is a very simple approach to overcoming the fear of loneliness or separation with an imaginative flair that children can easily identify with and remember. Here is a warm and delightful lesson teaching young and old that we aren't ever really alone and reminding children (and adults!) that when we are loved beyond anything we can imagine.

### **The Memory Box**

*Joanna Rowland*

Heartfelt and comforting, *The Memory Box* will help children and adults talk about this very difficult topic together. The unique point of view allows the reader to imagine the loss of any they have loved - a friend, family member, or even a pet. A parent guide in the back includes information on helping

children manage the complex and difficult emotions they feel when they lose someone they love, as well as suggestions on how to create their own memory box.

### **The Memory String**

*Eve Bunting*

Each button on Laura’s memory string represents a piece of her family history. The buttons Laura cherishes the most belonged to her mother—a button from her prom dress, a white one off her wedding dress, and a single small button from the nightgown she was wearing on the day she died. When the string breaks, Laura’s new stepmother, Jane, is there to comfort Laura and search for a missing button, just as Laura’s mother would have done. But it’s not the same—Jane isn’t Mom. In *Eve Bunting’s* moving story, beautifully illustrated by Ted Rand, Laura discovers that a memory string is not just for remembering the past: it’s also for recording new memories.

### **When Someone Very Special Dies: Children Can Learn to Cope with Grief**

*Marge Heegaard*

A practical format for allowing children to understand the concept of death and develop coping skills for life.

## **Children’s Grief – Helpful Websites**

[childrengrieve.org](http://childrengrieve.org)

“The National Alliance for Grieving Children (NAGC) is a nonprofit organization that raises awareness about the needs of children and teens who are grieving a death and provides education and resources for anyone who supports them. Through the collective voice of our members and partners we educate, advocate and raise awareness about childhood bereavement.”

[dougyc.org](http://dougyc.org)

“The mission of The Dougy Center is to provide support in a safe place where children, teens, young adults and their families grieving a death can share their experiences. Through our *Pathways* Program we provide a safe place for families facing an advanced serious illness.”

[elunanetwork.org](http://elunanetwork.org)

“Every year, countless children experience the death of someone they love. Millions more are affected by a family member’s substance abuse. No child should face these struggles alone. Our unique programs give children the chance to cry, laugh, grow, and heal. Kids meet other kids in similar circumstances, and together, they grow stronger.”

[kidsgrief.ca](http://kidsgrief.ca)

“KidsGrief.ca is a free online resource that helps parents support their children when someone in their life is dying or has died. It equips parents with the words and confidence needed to help children grieve life’s losses in healthy ways.”

[sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/grief](https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/grief)

“Coping with the death of a loved one brings enormous challenges for the whole family. Grieving may never completely end, but working through the difficult feelings can become easier with time. Through support, open conversations, and finding ways to keep the person’s memory alive, families can begin healing together.”

[whatsyourgrief.com](https://whatsyourgrief.com)

“Our mission is to promote grief education, exploration, and expression in both practical and creative ways. We aim to provide the public with...

- Education that reaches beyond generalization
- Practical and specific suggestions for moving forward
- Modes of self-exploration and self-expression that suit all types of thinkers and doers
- Ways to honor and remember deceased loved ones.
- A supportive community”