

Books about bereavement

- **What Does Dead Mean?** by **Caroline Jay & Jenni Thomas** A Book for Young Children to Help Explain Death and Dying: What Does Dead Mean? is a beautifully illustrated book that guides children gently through 17 of the 'big' questions they often ask about death and dying. Questions such as 'Is being dead like sleeping?', 'Why do people have to die?' and 'Where do dead people go?' are answered simply, truthfully and clearly to help adults explain to children what happens when someone dies. Prompts encourage children to explore the concepts by talking about, drawing or painting what they think or feel about the questions and answers. Suitable for children aged 4+, this is an ideal book for parents and carers to read with their children, as well as teachers, therapists and counsellors working with young children.
- **Duck, Death and the Tulip** by **Wolf Erlbruch**: making peace with death: Duck is a little unsettled when he first notices Death creeping along behind him, but over the course of time they become friends, even sharing a joke or two. When Duck finally does die, it is a peaceful and reconciled death, without fear but full of love and care. Erlbruch's illustrations are delightful – uncluttered yet packed full of acute observation, particularly in the facial expressions of Duck and Death.
- **What Happened to Daddy's Body?** by Elke and Alex Barber with Anna Jarvis.: This book gently, sensitively and honestly explains cremation and burial, and follows on from our first book "Is Daddy Coming Back in a Minute?", and we share what we did with Martin's ashes - and the kids were very much involved in this. Just as the first book, it is based on the actual conversations I had with my children, written in their own words. Once again, my children's questions pushed my explanations beyond what I might previously have thought of as 'acceptable', but I was guided by their curiosity and merely tried to make sense of the muddles in their heads. They weren't scared, but grateful to understand. It further reassures the reader that it is okay to be sad, but that it is okay to be happy, too
- **Missing Mummy** by Rebecca Cobb: Honest and straightforward, this touching story explores the many emotions a bereaved child may experience, from anger and guilt to sadness and bewilderment. Ultimately, Missing Mommy focuses on the positive—the recognition that the child is not alone but still part of a family that loves and supports him.

- **Goodbye Mog** by Judith Kerr.: Mog was tired. She was dead tired...Mog thought, 'I want to sleep for ever.' And so she did. But a little bit of her stayed awake to see what would happen next.Mog keeps watch over the upset Thomas family, who miss her terribly, and she wonders how they will ever manage without her.
- **A Place in My Heart** by Annette Aubrey, Patrice Barton: These charming illustrated storybooks in this series allow small children to get to grips with upsetting and bewildering situations that might be affecting them or people around them.
- **I Miss You: a First Look at Death** by Pat Thomas: When a close friend or family member dies, it can be difficult for children to express their feelings. 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. Titles in this sensitively presented series explore the dynamics of various relationships experienced by children of preschool through early school age. Kids are encouraged to understand personal feelings and social problems as a first step in dealing with them. Written by psychologist and counselor Pat Thomas, these books promote positive interaction among children, parents, and teachers. The story lines are simple and direct--easily accessible to younger children. There are full-color illustrations on every page.
- **The Invisible String** by Patrice Karst: When Liza and Jeremy run to their mother during a scary storm, she comforts them by telling them about the Invisible String, which connects people who love each other no matter where they are and means that they are never alone.
- **I'll Always Love You** by Hans Wilhelm: In this gentle, moving story, Elfie, a dachshund, and her special boy progress happily through life together. One morning Elfie does not wake up. The family grieves and buries her. The watercolor illustrations, tender and warm in color and mood, suit the simple text perfectly
- **Help Me Say Goodbye: Activities for Helping Kids Cope When a Special Person Dies** by Janis Silverman: An art therapy and activity book for children coping with death. Sensitive exercises address all the questions children may have during this emotional and troubling crisis. Children are encouraged to express in pictures what they are often incapable of expressing in words.
- **Badger's Parting Gifts** by Susan Varley: Providing comfort to children who have been bereaved. Explaining that grief can eventually give way to happy memories.

- **When Your Grandparent Dies: A Child's Guide to Good Grief** by Victoria Ryan: Losing a grandparent is often a child's first experience of grief—and, as such, it can be bewildering and painful. Let the elves in this book gently take the hand of your child to lead him or her through the grief experience. Explaining what happens from a child's-eye view, the book covers the difficult days before, after, and beyond a grandparent's death.
- **Fred** by Posy Simmonds: A story of the double life of the laziest cat in the world. Fred is an adored family cat (now deceased) who slept all the time -- on the ironing board, on the laundry, on top of the fridge, on cars, and particularly on beds -- although he took a little time off to sit on laps and to eat. Only after his death do Sophie and Nick discover that, by night, he was the Elvis of the cat-world -- Famous Fred -- with hordes of devoted fans.
- **Rabbityness** by Jo Empson: Celebrates individuality, encourages creativity in everyone and positively introduces children to dealing with loss of any kind.