

Hopeful Hearts Library List

Category: Young Children

Aarvy Aardvark Finds Hope by Donna O'Tolle

Our classic Read-Aloud Story for people of all ages about loving & losing, friendship & hope. Aarvy has lost his family and is filled with despair and hopelessness until a true friend helps him learn about the strengths within himself. Beautiful line drawings by Kore Loy McWhirter can be colored in. Aarvy helps us learn that: Grief is a natural healing process; Grief is emotional physical, spiritual; Grief is highly personal; Grief can connect rather than separate when experienced fully; it is OK to remember; Rituals and imagination assist healing; Friends can hold hope, witness sorrow, and assist healing.

All Ages

About Dying by Sara Bonnett Stein

Black and white photographs chronicle the death of a child's pet bird and compares this experience to the death of his grandfather. Tenderly and lovingly written, this work helps parents explain to children what death is.

After Charlotte's Mom Died by Cornelia Spelman

Because her mom's death causes six-year-old Charlotte to feel sad, mad, and scared, she and her dad visit a therapist who helps them acknowledge and express their feelings.

Ages 5 and up

After The Funeral by Jane Loretta Winsch

This book is a positive contribution that will help children and their families move forward towards acceptance, understanding, and hope.

Ages 4 and up

Annie and the Old One by Miska Miles

Annie is a young Navajo girl who refuses to believe that her grandmother, the Old One, will die. Sadly, Annie learns that she cannot change the course of life.

Ages 3-6

Answers to a Child's Questions about Death by Peter Stillman

This booklet is meant to help younger children cope in healthy, intelligent ways with the shock of a loved one's death. The questions and answers it contains are cast in language most youngsters can understand, and the concepts covered are well within most children's grasp.

Badger's Parting Gifts by Susan Varley

Badger's friends are sad when he dies but treasure the memories he left them.

Ages 4 and up

Cat Heaven by Cynthia Rylant

With a gentle, playful rhyme, Newbery Medalist Cynthia Rylant explores all the ways our beloved cats enjoy Cat Heaven. If your child wonders where his or her kitty goes after a happy life on Earth, they can rest assured that all cats "know where the angel cats fly. They'll run past the stars and the moon and the sun . . . to curl up with God in the sky."

Ages 4 and up

Chester Raccoon and the Acorn Full of Memories by Audrey Penn

Chester Raccoon's good friend Skiddel Squirrel has had an accident and will not be returning - ever. Chester is upset that he won't get to play with his friend anymore. Mrs. Raccoon suggests that Chester and his friends create some memories of Skiddel, so that they will have good memories when they miss him. Chester, his brother Ronny, and their friends decide to gather at the pond, where they combine their memories and create a touching celebration of their friend's life. Many young children must face the loss of loved ones or the need to attend a funeral. This sweet story will help children to understand the positive purpose behind memorial services and how "making memories" can provide cheer and comfort when missing an absent loved one. Ages 3-8

Children Also Grieve by Linda Goldman

"Children Also Grieve" is an imaginative resource, fully illustrated with color photographs, that offers support and reassurance to children coming to terms with the loss of a close friend or relative and to adults who are supporting them through their bereavement. The combination of narrative and interactive memory book in the first part of the book is designed to be read and worked through by children. The story tells of the experiences of Henry, the dog of a family whose grandfather has died. During Henry's progress through the different stages of bereavement, he learns strategies for coping with his grief. At various stages of the story, Goldman provides readers with the opportunity to share their own reactions to loss through words and pictures, using specific prompt questions that encourage the exploration of different facets of grief. The second part includes a list of useful vocabulary, to help children express their feelings about bereavement, a bibliography of other useful resources for both children and adults, and a section that will help adults to understand and aid children throughout the grief process. This last section also explains the approach taken in the story, details typical responses to bereavement, and discusses useful ways in which adults can discuss and share grief with children. This book is an invaluable tool for bereaved children and those who care for them.

Chippy Chipmunk: Friends in the Garden by Kathy M. Miller

In this third book of the award-winning Chippy Chipmunk series, Chippy experiences the loss of his best friend Pickle, a meadow vole. Chippy's friends help him both to express his grief and also learn to accept and be at peace with the fate of his pal. While Chippy hibernates, owls appear in magical dreams to offer words of comfort. By springtime, Chippy emerges with a renewed sense of hope and begins to believe that life really does get better. The delicately woven story line is illustrated with beautiful nature photography. An activity page, fun facts, and notes to parents and educators are included.

Ages 4-7

Daddy's Promise by John T. Heiney, Michael J. Gordon, & Cindy Klein Cohen

Daddy's Promise is about a little boy's journey of discovery after the death of his father. Jesse is angry and filled with questions. Why did his daddy have to die? What happens when someone dies? Where do they go? Jesse's questions are answered both by his mother, and in a series of dreams where Jesse visits his father and learns about life, death and life after death.

Daddy's Promise answers common questions children have about death, as well as suggestions for coping. Concrete, simple explanations are given for what happens when someone dies. During dream-like visits with his father, Jesse learns more about death, what happens when we die and where our spirits go.

Dog Heaven by Cynthia Rylant

In Newbery Medalist Cynthia Rylant's classic bestseller, the author comforts readers young and old who have lost a dog. Recommended highly by pet lovers around the world, Dog Heaven not only comforts but also brings a tear to anyone who is devoted to a pet. From expansive fields where dogs can run and run to delicious biscuits no dog can resist, Rylant paints a warm and affectionate picture of the ideal place God would, of course, create for man's best friend. The first picture book illustrated by the author, Dog Heaven is enhanced by Rylant's bright, bold paintings that perfectly capture an afterlife sure to bring solace to anyone who is grieving.

Ages 4 and up

Gentle Willow by Joyce C. Mills

Written for children who may not survive their illness or for the children who know them, this tender and touching tale helps address feelings of disbelief, anger, and sadness, along with love and compassion, addresses how to cope with death and dying. Ages 4 and up

Good-Bye, Daddy by Brigitte Weninger

Daddy lives in a different house now and Tom hates it when he leaves. Then Mom gives Tom a teddy bear that tells a story about a little bear who lives in the forest and has problems just like Tom's. A sensitive story about separation and divorce. Full-color illustrations.

Ages 5 and up

Goodbye Mousie by Robie H. Harris

One morning a boy finds that his pet, Mousie, won't wake up. The truth is Mousie has died. At first the boy doesn't believe it. He gets very mad at Mousie for dying, and then he feels very sad. But talking about Mousie, burying Mousie in a special box, and saying good-bye helps this boy begin to feel better about the loss of his beloved pet.

Ages 4-8

Goodbye to Pumpkin by Pamela Hayes

This playfully illustrated book is about the serious topic of the death of a pet. Follow Cydney through her excitement, joy and grief, and share how she expresses all these feelings through her own art-making. This new book demonstrates how Art Therapy is a unique and effective method of honest communication and self-soothing.

Ages 5 and up

Grandpa Loved by Josephine Nobisso

This is a recollection of the special times a young boy spent with his grandfather in the city, in the forest with the animals, at the beach, and with his family. Although the boy misses his beloved grandpa's presence he feels assured that his passing has brought him to a better place and he knows that his grandpa's love will always be with him.

Gran-Gran's Best Trick: A story for Children Who Have Just Lost Someone They Love by L. Dwight Holden, Michael Chesworth

A poetic story about a young girl whose beloved grandfather battles cancer, becoming very different from the Gran-Gran who loved fishing, grew plants in old ice coolers, and took her on neighborhood "safaris." She decides to keep his memory alive by telling her little sister all about him and the things he taught her, and by doing so, learns that those we love never leave our hearts and that this is "love's best trick."

Ages 4 and up

Healing Your Grieving Heart for Kids: 100 Practical Ideas by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

With sensitivity and insight, this series offers suggestions for healing activities that can help survivors learn to express their grief and mourn naturally. Acknowledging that death is a painful, ongoing part of life, they explain how people need to slow down, turn inward, embrace their feelings of loss, and seek and accept support when a loved one dies. Provides ideas and action-oriented tips that teach the basic principles of grief and healing. These ideas and activities are aimed at reducing the confusion, anxiety, and huge personal void so that the living can begin their lives again.

Ages 5 and up

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.

How Are You Peeling: Food with Moods by Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers

A book about feelings.

Ages 4 and up

I Had a Friend Named Peter: Talking to Children about the Death of a Friend

By Janice Cohn, D.S.W, Gail Ownes

When Betsy learns about the death of a friend, her parents and kindergarten teacher answer questions about dying, funerals, and the burial process.

Ages 5 and up

I Heard Your Daddy Died by Mark Scrivani and Susan Aitken

This book is for children ages 2-6. It is a simple and helpful tool for family members and caregivers to read to the child who has lost a parent. This book lets the child know it is okay for them to cry and be sad as well as be happy and play. The book includes many ideas to help the child to remember their parent.

Ages 2-6

I Heard Your Mommy Died by Mark Scrivani, Susan Aitken

Helps children cope with the death of a mother by examining the feelings they experience and the changes in their lives.

I Know I Made It Happen by Lunn Bennett Blackburn

Gives kids support and understanding during crises.

Ages 5 and up

I'll Always Love You by Hans Wilhelm

Moving story about 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.

Ages 3 and up

I Miss My Brother by Lauren & Randy Taylor

In the weeks and months following Drew's tragic death, author Randy Taylor and co-author, his daughter, Lauren, had many conversations about Drew. Fond memories of Drew, the tragic accident leading to Drew's death and Lauren's thoughts about Drew's new life in heaven were the inspiration for this book. The authors hope that I miss my brother may help other children who are grieving the loss of a sibling.

Ages 5 and up

I Miss You: A First Look at Death by 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. 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 psychotherapist 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.

Ages 4 and up

Inside Out: Driven By Emotions by Elise Allen

This unique chapter book reveals unseen stories from Inside Out. Each chapter offers a different retelling of the film from one of Riley's Emotions: Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger, and Disgust.

Ages 8-12

Inside Out Read-Along by Suzanne Francis

Jump inside Riley's mind and get to know the Emotions who know her best: Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear, and Disgust. Relive all of the adventure from the Disney*Pixar film, Inside Out, with this storybook-and-CD-set. The CD includes word-for-word narration, thrilling sound effects, and original character voices from the movie!

Ages 3-6

I Wish I Could Hold Your Hand...: A Child's Guide to Grief and Loss by Ed.D. Pat Palmer

A best friend has moved away, Dad no longer lives with the family, or a favorite pet has died. This warm, comforting book gently helps grieving children identify their feelings and learn to accept and deal with them. Wonderful heart-warming illustrations and simple, direct writing help children discover that it is normal and natural to feel the pain of loss.

Age 9 and up

Lady Rose by Stephen Cosgrove

After a long journey to discover the source of the water that flows into the sea, a sea otter finds a way to send a message back to her friends.

Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children by Bryan Mellonie

Lifetimes is a moving book for children of all ages, even parents too. It lets us explain life and death in a sensitive, caring, beautiful way. *Lifetimes* tells us about beginnings. And about endings. And about living in between. With large, wonderful illustrations, it tells about plants. About animals. About people. It tells that dying is as much a part of living as being born. It helps us to remember. It helps us to understand.

Ages 5 and up

Lost and Found by Ellen Yeomans

A child's search for understanding after the death of her sister. If someone could be "lost" could they also be "found"? Dealing with her own grief and accepting the emotions of those around her this child finds her way toward healing.

Ages 4 and up

Love You Forever by Robert Munsch

A touching story about the evolving relationship between a boy and his mother.

Age 1 and up

Lucy Lettuce by Patrick Loring and Joy Johnson

A head of lettuce serves to demonstrate what grief feels like. Through being tossed and tumbled, she learns that the lid of sorrow will lift and she can go out and nourish others.

Ages 4-8

Molly's Mom Died: A Child's Book of Hope through Grief by Margaret M. Holmes, Sasha J. Mudlaff, Susan Aitken

A Child's Book of Hope through Grief. After Molly's Mom dies she misses her a lot. It was hard to go back to school and talk to her friends. Molly finds that it's ok to have all these feelings after a parent dies.

Ages 5-9

Mr. Red Ears by Phoebe M. Anderson

Death is a puzzling and sometimes emotionally distressing experience to a 3-yr old. The death of a person close to a child calls for wise and sensitive handling. Amy's turtle dies and her mother must explain what it means to die.

My Grandpa Died Today by Joan Fassler

A little boy tries to understand and accept the death of his grandfather.

Sadiki and the Thousand Paper Cranes by Eleanor Coerr

Born in Hiroshima in 1943, Sadako was the star of her school's running team, until the dizzy spells started and she was forced to face the hardest race of her life-the race against time.

Ages 6 and up

Sam's Dad Died: a child's book of hope through grief by Margaret M. Holmes

It made Sam feel better to talk about the death of his father. He felt better when he did. He even felt better when he would cry, even though it was embarrassing sometimes. Sam realizes that his Dad loved him a lot and gave him many good feelings to remember. This book opens communication between adult and child. Includes a page of suggestions for caregivers.

Ages 5-9

Sargeant's Heaven by Icy Frantz

Intended to help children who are coping with the loss of a loved one, Sargeant's Heaven also appeals to all curious children, who have wondered about heaven.

Ages 4 and up

Saying Goodbye to Daddy by Judith Vigna

Frightened, lonely, and angry after her father is killed in a car accident, Clare is helped through the grieving process by her mother and grandfather.

Ages 4 and up

Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig

Sylvester can't believe his luck when he finds a magic pebble that can make wishes come true. But when a lion jumps out at him on his way home, Sylvester is shocked into making a wish that has unexpected consequences. After overcoming a series of obstacles, Sylvester is eventually reunited with his loving family. Illustrated with William Steig's glowing pictures, this winner of the Caldecott Medal is beloved by children everywhere.

Ages 3-7

Talk to God... I'll get the Message (Protestant Version) by Norman Geller

The purpose of this book is to help young people understand dying and death. The book deals with the relationship between a grandfather and his grandson. In using this book as a teaching and understanding tool, it would be necessary for the adults in the young person's life to help make the transition from this relationship to whichever might apply. In this book, the dying takes place over a period of time. As we all know, there are times when death is immediate, as in a heart attack, or violent, as in an automobile accident. The basic teachings are there and can be adapted as necessary. It is altogether possible that further questions might be raised, and you may feel free to communicate with the author, who would be pleased to respond.

Tell Me, Papa by Joy and Marv Johnson

Answers to questions children ask about death and dying. A gentle explanation for children about death and the funeral. Tells children about what happens when you die, explains the funeral, cremation and answers questions honestly. Useful tool for parents and caregivers searching for the right words to say.

The Accident by Carol Carrick

After his dog Bodger is hit by a truck and killed, Christopher must deal with his feelings of depression and guilt.

The Class in Room 44: When a Classmate Dies by Lynn B. Blackburn

It is an essential tool for teachers who are dealing with a death in the classroom. Explores the many different feelings classmates will have while giving ideas to help remember the student.

Ages 5-10

The Day it Rained Hearts by Felicia Bond

One day it rains hearts, and Cornelia Augusta catches them. Each heart is special in its own way, and Cornelia Augusta knows exactly who to send them to.

Ages 4 and up

The Dead Bird by Margaret Wise Brown

When they find a dead bird, a group of children bury it in the woods, sing a song to it, and put flowers on the grave.

The Emotions' Survival Guide

Disney/Pixar's Inside Out takes you to a place that everyone knows, but no one has ever seen: the world inside the human mind. Girls and boys ages 8 to 12 will love this nonfiction feelings survival guide written just for them by an industry expert. This 64-page hardcover is full-color, features a shiny glitter cover, and will help kids handle joy, sadness, fear, anger—and everything in between—with all the heart and humor of Disney/Pixar's Inside Out!

Ages 8-12

The Empty Place: a child's guide through grief by Roberta Temes

When a nine-year-old boy's beloved big sister dies, he is confused, angry and fearful. For the first time he must face the finality of death and the pain of loss. His parents, also grieving, seem distant, until a counselor teaches them all how to cope and heal.

The Invisible String by Patrice Karst

Specifically written to address children's fear of being apart from the ones they love, *The Invisible String* delivers a particularly compelling message in today's uncertain times that though we may be separated from the ones we care for, whether through anger, or distance or even death, love is the unending connection that binds us all, and, by extension, ultimately binds every person on the planet to everyone else. Parents and children everywhere who are looking for reassurance and reaffirmation of the transcendent power of love, to bind, connect and comfort us through those inevitable times when life challenges us!

Ages 3 and up

The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn

To reassure children upset by separation anxiety.

Ages 3 and up

The Memory String by 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.

The Next Place by Warren Hanson

An inspirational journey of light and hope to a place where earthly hurts are left behind.

Ages 5 and up

The Saddest Time by Norma Simon, Jacqueline Rogers

Norma Simon offers three stories to help children talk about death--an uncle with a terminal illness, a classmate killed in an accident, and a grandparent.

Ages 4 and up

The Star Gift by Flavia and Lisa Weedn

An orphaned little girl gives her scarf, bread, and jacket to people less fortunate than she, and then while she sleeps, the stars guide her to a family that invites her to live with them.

Ages 4 and up

The Tenth Good Thing about Barney by Judith Viorst

My cat Barney died this Friday. I was very sad. My mother said we could have a funeral for him, and I should think of ten good things about Barney so I could tell them...

But the small boy who loved Barney can only think of nine. Later, while talking with his father, he discovers the tenth -- and begins to understand.

Ages 6-9

The Umbrella by Jan Brett

A walk through the Costa Rican cloud forest provides a wonderfully lush setting for Jan Brett's beloved animal illustrations. When Carlos drops his umbrella to climb a tree for a better view of the animals, they all cram into the banana-leaf umbrella as it floats by--from the little tree frog to the baby tapir to the big jaguar and more. It gets so crowded in the umbrella that there isn't even enough room for a little hummingbird! So over the umbrella tumbles, everyone falls out, and poor Carlos comes back wondering why he didn't see any animals all day. In the spirit of Jan Brett's *The Mitten* and *The Hat*, this cheerful tale of escalation will have readers poring over every illustration for the world of details Jan packs in. With its classic story, exotic jungle setting, and brilliantly colorful menagerie, *The Umbrella* is sure to take its place among Jan's many family favorites. Ages 4-8

This Book Is For All Kids, But Especially My Sister Libby. Libby Died by Jack Simon

This book is about a little boy who lost his sister to a rare disorder. When she died, her brother struggled to understand how God could take away his little sister. Afraid to ask questions that might make someone sadder, children often keep their sorrow locked inside. His mom, encouraged her son to talk about his pain, and she insightfully began a diary. *This Book Is for All Kids* is the perfect way to help children and adults begin to deal with loss.

Ages 4 and up

Thunder n' Lightning Explain: What it's like to die by Kevin Lee Weaver

Informing children about death, dying, and spirituality can be difficult. How do you explain to a child what it is like to die? Then along came fifteen-year-old Aron. His understanding of spiritual things was profound. He said "eternal life is a process that never stops... it goes around and around... Heaven is the place where your soul is free." When the manuscript and pencil drawings of *Thunder 'n Lightning* were presented to him, he said "Oh yea!" Aron was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma. He knew he was going to die prematurely. He said "I always wanted to be a nurse so I could help people and kids. Because of my cancer I may never grow up and become a nurse. So I want to help now." *Thunder 'n Lightning Explain What it's Like to Die...* is his story... his journey!

Today I Feel Silly: And Other Moods That Make My Day by Jamie Lee Curtis

Helps kids explore, identify, and, even have fun with their ever-changing moods.

Ages 4 and up

Until We Meet Again by Susan Jones

Treasured memories... come from ordinary moments. Between one winsome grandfather and one lucky little boy are keepsakes of the heart... memories made by the two of them for all time. Most are simple. Checkers and hot chocolate. Hugs and silly songs. A special wink that means we're in this together. But their time together is coming to an end. With insight and tenderness, the author tells the story of what comes next for a little boy who discovers memory-making is a language of love that can be whispered across the years.

Water Bugs & Dragonflies by Doris Stickney

Looking for a meaningful way to explain the death of a five-year-old friend to neighborhood children, Stickney adapted a graceful fable about a water bug that changed into a dragonfly.

Ages 5 and up

We Were Gonna Have A Baby, But We Had an Angel Instead by Pat Schweibert

Helps children cope with prenatal death or stillbirth. The narrator briefly recalls how he had looked forward to having a sibling, imagining the two of them "building a fort and playing tricks on our parents," and recalling how he had loved listening to the baby inside his mother.

Ages 2 and up

What Happened When Grandma Died by Peggy Barker

When her grandmother dies, a young girl feels better after her mother reads Bible verses describing God's plan for everlasting life.

Ages 4 and up

What On Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies by Trevor Romain

When Trevor Romain's father died, Trevor didn't know what to feel, say, or do. Shocked, saddened, and confused, all he could say was . . . wow. As he started understanding what had happened, he began writing about his experiences and feelings. His new book—simple, insightful, and straight from the heart—is for any child who has lost a loved one or other special person.

Age 5-10

When Dinosaurs Die by Laurie Krasny Brown

The authors explain in simple language the feelings people may have regarding the death of a loved one and the ways to honor the memory of someone who has died.

Ages 4 and up

When Families Grieve—Sesame Street

The effort includes two outreach kits in both English and Spanish. One specifically for military families. Through DVDs, family activities, and books included in the kits, Elmo and his friends encourage children to open up about their feelings to help relieve the sadness, anxiety, and confusion they often experience. An accompanying educates parents and caregivers on strategies for discussing death with children and reassuring them that, with love and time, things will get better.

When Your Grandparent Dies: A Child's Guide to Good Grief by Victoria Ryan

Addressing the needs of children and the adults who care for them. Losing a grandparent is often a child's first experience with grief. The ordeal can be as bewildering as it is painful. Explaining what happens from a child's-eye view, the little elves in this book depict the difficult days before, after, and beyond a grandparent's death. They explore the meaning of death and heaven, as well as how to stay close in spirit with a grandparent who has died

Ages 5 and up

Where Are You? By Laura Olivieri

A child's book about Loss is a kind and supportive text designed to help children of all ages cope with the loss of a loved one. It is created with love and care so that even the youngest readers will find comfort during this stressful and difficult time.

Ages 4 and up

Where Do Balloons Go? By Jamie Lee Curtis

When one little boy accidentally lets go of his balloon, his imagination takes him on its journey. Jamie Lee Curtis's gentle and humorous exploration of the joys and perils of a balloon's life is whimsically brought to life by Laura Cornell's illustrations. From the best-selling author-illustrator team of *Today I Feel Silly and Other Moods that Make My Day* comes another delightful mystery about letting go.

Ages 4-8

Where's Jess? By Joy and Marv Johnson

For children who have a brother or sister die.