

Children's Books About Grief

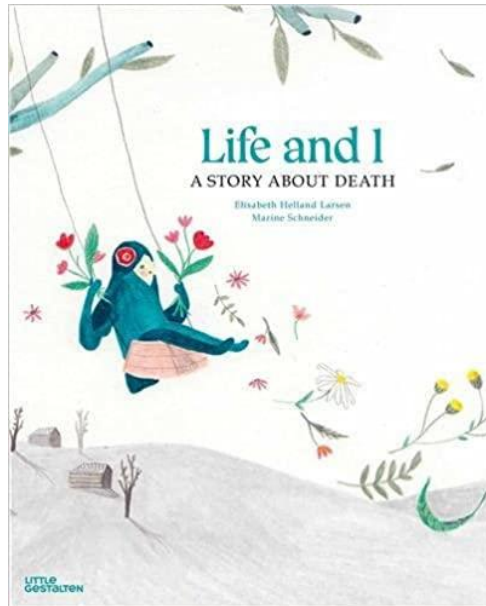


One Thursday Afternoon by Barbara DiLorenzo



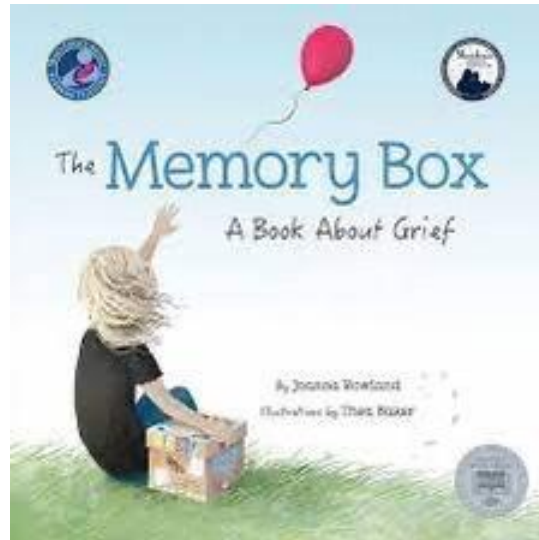
When Granddad picks Ava up from school one Thursday afternoon, she's quiet. She doesn't want to talk about the lockdown drill that has stirred up her worries. How can she be so afraid in a place that has always felt so safe? Granddad doesn't talk much either; he just offers creativity and companionship. And with his gentle encouragement, Ava begins to sense that although the world can be scary, it is still a beautiful place. With tender insight, *One Thursday Afternoon* sheds light on how an unpredictable world can make a child feel, reminding us that big fears can become smaller when we take time together to look, listen, and create. An author's note about the story's real-life inspiration and recommendations for how adults can help children overcome fear is included. **Ages 5 - 7**

Life and I : A Story about Death by Elisabeth Helland
Larsen, illustrated by Marine Schneider



This sensitively-told story for readers of all ages illustrates the inseparability of life and death. Rosy-cheeked and wrapped in blue, with a flower in her hair, Death rides a pink bike. Death, a greeneyed little girl in this pastel world, visits small animals with soft fur and big animals with sharp teeth. She lingers with a kindly grandmother as they knit one last scarf together. She wanders through surroundings of gentle beauty and she tells us who she is. For parents of children facing the loss of a family member, a friend, or a pet, this book finds words to express what is often so difficult to explain. It ends with such a feeling of uplift and acceptance that readers of any age will turn the last page with a smile and a tear. Author Elisabeth Helland Larsen and Illustrated by Marine Schneider weave a tapestry out of direct, poetic words and handdrawn pictures to give voice to emotions that are moving, real, and most of all, honest. **Ages 6-10.**

The Memory Box: A Book About Grief by Janna Rowland, illustrated by Thea Baker



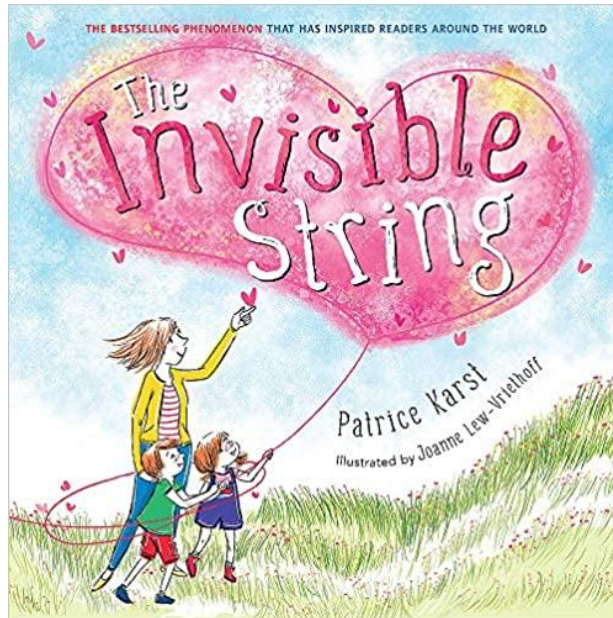
From the perspective of a young child, Joanna Rowland artfully describes what it is like to remember and grieve a loved one who has died. The child in the story creates a memory box to keep mementos and written memories of the loved one, to help in the grieving process. Heartfelt and comforting, *The 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. **Ages 4-8**

Something Very Sad Happened: A Toddler's Guide to Understanding Death by Bonnie Zucker



When a loved one dies, it can be hard to know how to explain it to a young child, particularly if you are grieving the loss yourself. *Something Very Sad Happened* is intended to be read to two- and three-year-old children to help them understand death and process the loss of a loved one. Written at a developmental level that is appropriate for two- and three-year-olds, the story explains death; lets children know that it is okay to feel sad; and reassures children that they can still love the person who died, and the person who died will always love them. Since the two- to three-year-old child cannot read, this story is intended to be personalized; certain words are color-coded in red to cue to you to substitute with the appropriate names and pronouns for the person who died. Includes an extensive Note to Parents and Caregivers with more information about talking to children about death, guidelines for answering a child's questions, advice for attending funerals and visiting cemeteries, and ideas for commemorating the loved one. **Ages 2-4**

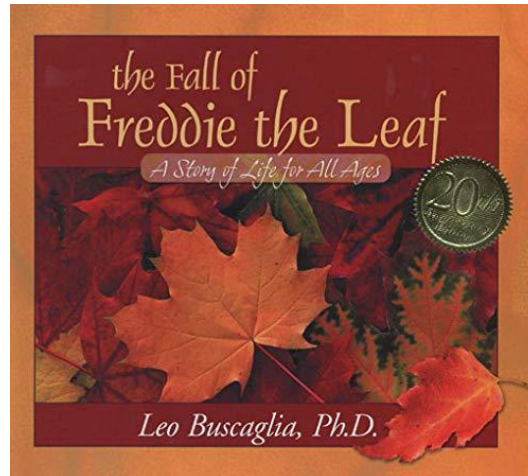
The Invisible String by Patrice Karst, illustrated by
Joanne Lew-Vriethoff



The premise of the book is that we are all connected by an invisible string. Even though it is invisible, you can feel it with your heart. Everyone has an invisible string, and it can reach anywhere, even heaven. The book's message is that no one is ever alone, even when their loved one is not physically present. **Ages 4-8**

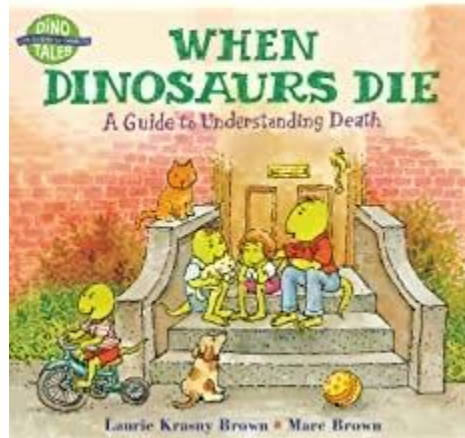
The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A Story of Life for All

Ages by Leo Buscaglia



The Fall of Freddie the Leaf touches children and adults alike, illustrating the delicate balance between life and death. The Fall of Freddie the Leaf is a warm, thought-provoking story about how Freddie and his companion leaves change with the passing seasons and the coming of winter. This beautiful and engaging tale has also been made into a film narrated by Leo Buscaglia. **Ages 4-8**

When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death
(Dino Tales: Life Guides for Families) written by Laurie
Krasny Brown, illustrated by Marc Brown



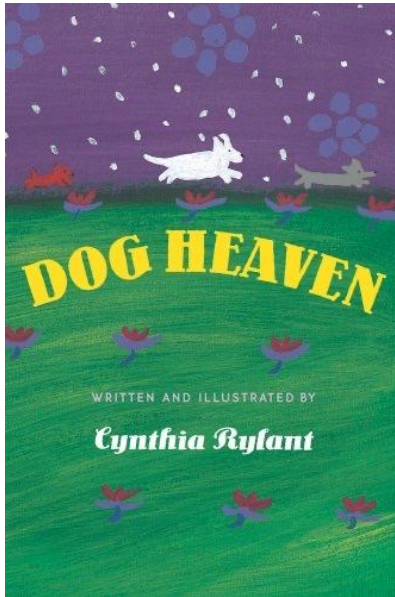
Straightforward and comprehensive, this indispensable book is a comforting aid to help young kids and families through a difficult time in their lives. No one can really understand death, but to children, the passing away of a loved one can be especially perplexing and troublesome. This is true whether the loss is a family member, friend, or pet. Here to offer advice and reassurance are the wise dinosaurs from the bestselling Dino Tale series. This succinct and thorough guide helps dispel the mystery and negative connotations associated with death, providing answers to kids' most-often asked questions. **Ages 4-8**

The Next Place by Warren Hanson



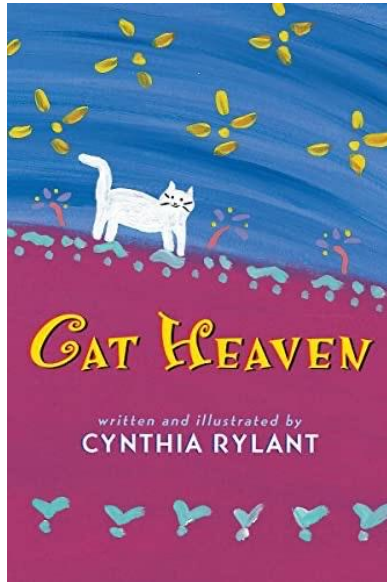
The Next Place is an inspirational journey of light and hope to a place where earthly hurts are left behind. An uncomplicated journey of awe and wonder to a destination without barriers. Lose yourself in the uplifting sense of comfort and serenity. **Ages 5-8**

Dog Heaven by Cynthia Rylant



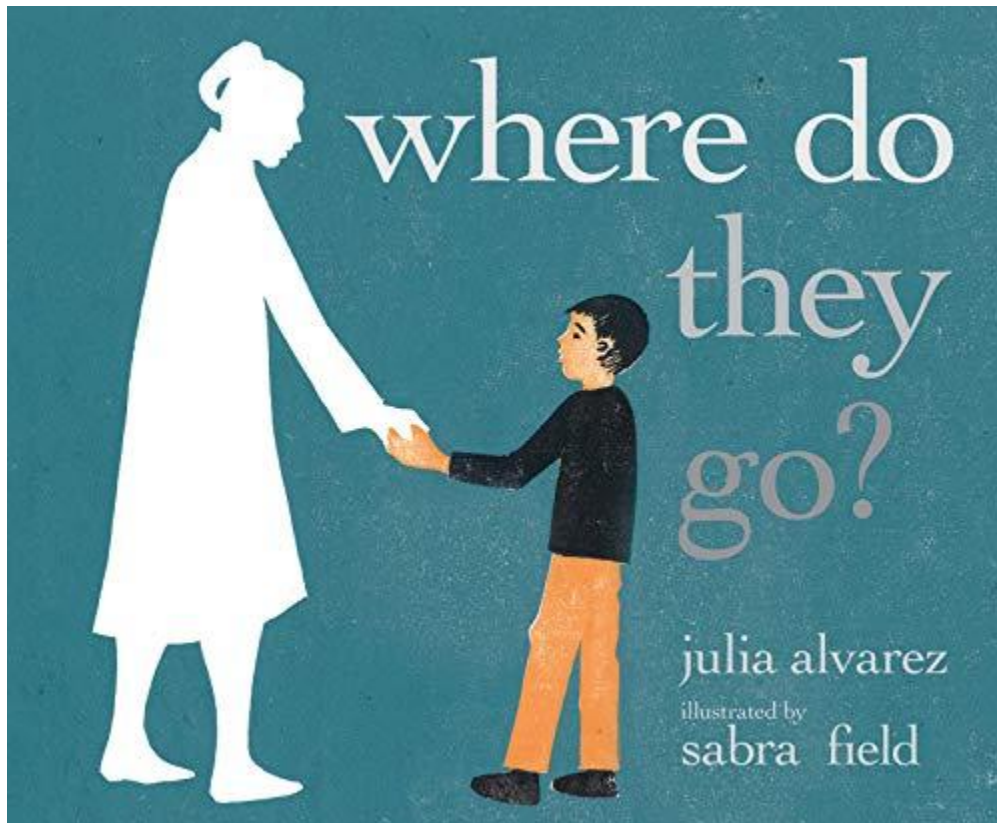
A comforting and playful exploration of a beloved dog's journey after a happy life on Earth. **Ages 1+**

Cat Heaven by Cynthia Rylant



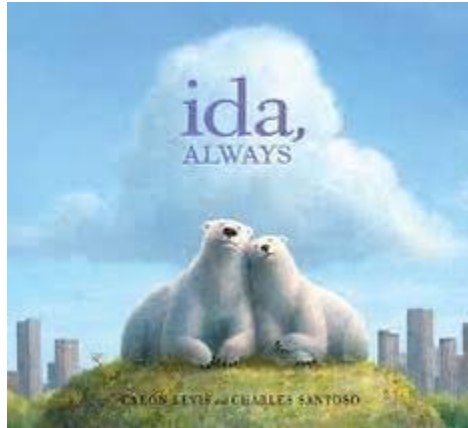
A joyous celebration of a cat's journey after a happy life on Earth. **Ages 4-8**

Where Do They Go? written by Julia Alvarez,
illustrated by Sabra Field



The book asks, "When somebody dies, where do they go? / Do they go where the wind goes when it blows? ... Do they wink back at me when I wish on a star? Do they whisper, 'You're perfect, just as you are'? ..." Illustrated by Vermont woodcut artist, Sabra Field, *Where Do They Go?* is a beautiful and comforting meditation on death, asking questions young readers might have about what happens to those they love after they die. **Ages 3-7**

Ida, Always written by Caron Levis, illustrated by
Charles Santoso



Gus lives in a big park in the middle of an even bigger city, and he spends his days with Ida. Ida is right there. Always. Then one sad day, Gus learns that Ida is very sick, and she isn't going to get better. The friends help each other face the difficult news with whispers, sniffles, cuddles, and even laughs. Slowly Gus realizes that even after Ida is gone, she will still be with him—through the sounds of their city, and the memories that live in their favorite spots. **Ages 4-8**

The Rabbit Listened written by Cori Doerrfeld

THE RABBIT
LISTENED

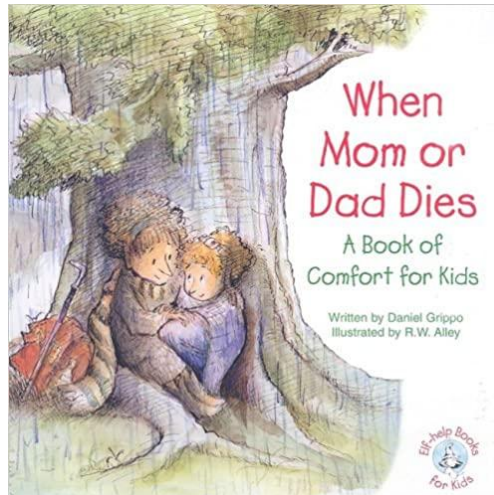
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER



CORI DOERRFELD

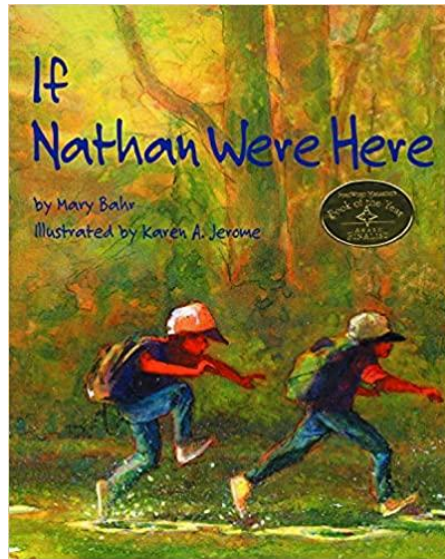
When something sad happens, Taylor doesn't know where to turn. All the animals are sure they have the answer. The chicken wants to talk it out, but Taylor doesn't feel like chatting. The bear thinks Taylor should get angry, but that's not quite right either. One by one, the animals try to tell Taylor how to act, and one by one they fail to offer comfort. Then the rabbit arrives. All the rabbit does is listen . . . which is just what Taylor needs. **Ages 3-5**

When Mom or Dad Dies: A Book of Comfort for Kids
written by Daniel Grippio, illustrated by R.W. Alley



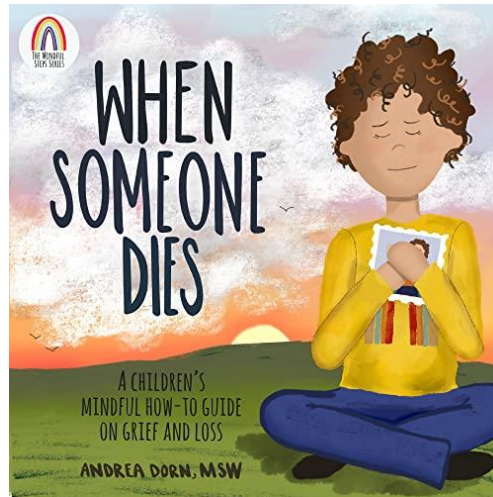
When Mom or Dad dies, children grieve deeply. But we can show our care and love for them by encouraging them to share their feelings of sorrow and loss. We can give them the time and space they need to adjust and listen to—if not answer—their questions. We can let them know that they can heal and live a happy, full life of faith, hope, and love—the kind of life their Mom or Dad would want for them. We can listen to their hurt and respond in a loving and supportive way. **Ages 4-5**

If Nathan Were Here written by Mary Bahr,
illustrated by Karen A. Jarome



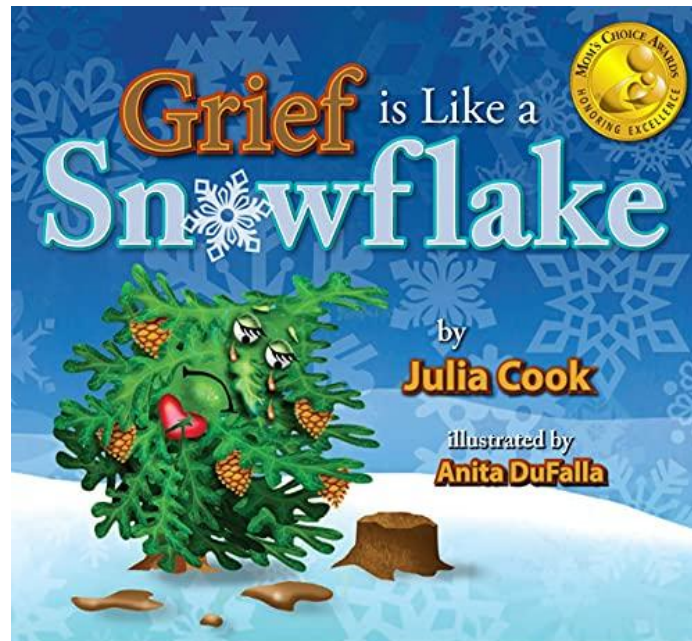
If Nathan were here, we would meet in our tree fort. . . we would take the shortcut through the woods. . . we would try to splash each other in the puddles. . . In *If Nathan Were Here*, author Mary Bahr gently explores the grief of a young boy whose best friend has died. With the help of an understanding teacher, a kind neighbor, and an empathetic parent, the boy finds ways to give expression to his questions and sorrow and to reach out to someone else who needs him. **Ages 5-9**

When Someone Dies: A Children's Mindful How-To Guide on Grief and Loss by Andrea Dorn



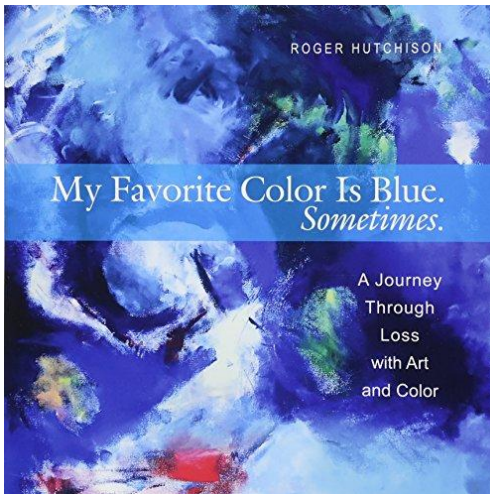
When Someone Dies walks children through the bereavement process in a simple, concrete, and developmentally appropriate way. Through the lens of mindfulness, children will learn how to say goodbye, make space for any emotions that arise, and work through their grief. **Ages 4 - 10**

Grief is like a Snowflakes written by Julia Cook,
illustrated by Anita DuFalla



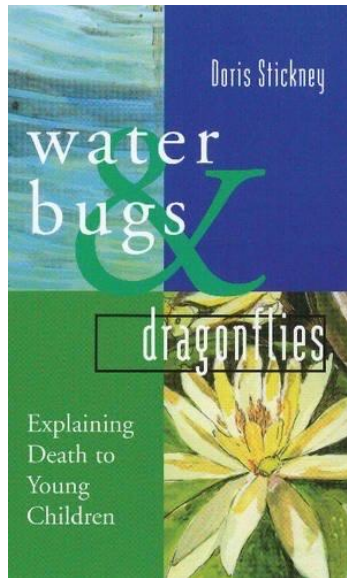
After the death of his father, Little Tree begins to learn how to cope with his feelings and start the healing process. With the help and support of his family and friends, Little Tree learns to cope by discovering what is really important in life, and realizing his father's memory will carry on. Best-selling author, Julia Cook, and a lovable cast of trees, offers a warm approach to the difficult subject of death and dying. **Ages 5-14**

My Favorite Color is Blue by Roger Hutchison



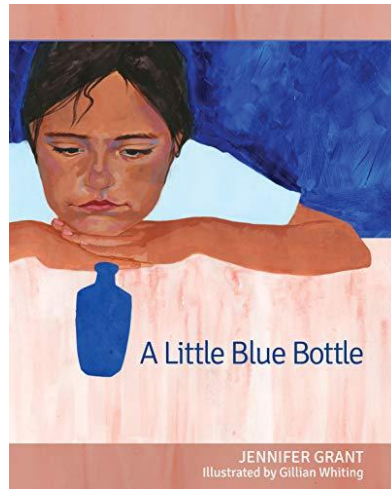
The text and illustrations of this lushly colored picture book guide the reader through different emotions and reactions related to grieving, including shock, tears, anger, and hope. *My Favorite Color is Blue. Sometimes.* is a children's picture book by design, but accessible to people of all ages.

Waterbugs and Dragonflies



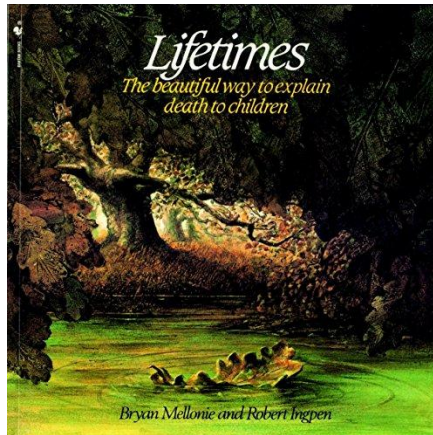
"Water Bugs and Dragonflies" tells the story of a small colony of water bugs living happily below the surface of a quiet pond. Every so often one of them climbs up a lily stalk and disappears from sight, never to return. Those left behind are faced with the mystery of figuring out what has become of them. Revealing the "miracle that makes shiny dragonflies out of ugly bugs", this graceful story reminds us that God has given us the means of transforming our metaphorical selves into dragonflies capable of winging off contentedly into a new world. Recognizing that "the old answers will not satisfy today's children", Stickney presents instead a simple, wise tale that illuminates a difficult reality without pretending to contain all the answers. **Ages 4-8**

A Little Blue Bottle written by Jennifer Grant,
illustrated by Gillian Whiting



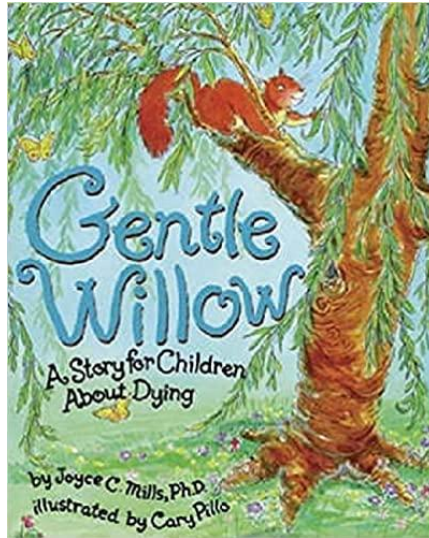
A young girl remembers playing with her neighbor's cat, stories that her neighbor told her, and the special mementos her friend kept on a shelf above her kitchen sink, including a little blue bottle she kept to remind her of Psalm 56:8: "You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears 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. **Ages 3-8**

Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children written by Bryan Mellonie, illustrated by
Robert Ingpen



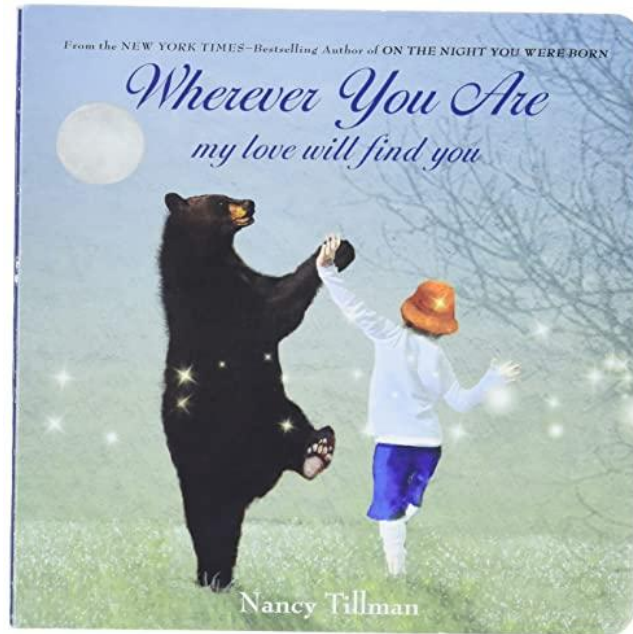
Lifetimes is a moving book for children of all ages, even parents too. It lets us explain life and death in a sensitive, caring, beautiful way. Lifetimes tells us about beginnings. And about endings. And about living in between. With large, wonderful illustrations, it tells about plants. About animals. 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 5-8**

Gentle Willow: A Story for Children About Dying
written by Joyce C. Mills, illustrated by Cary Pillo



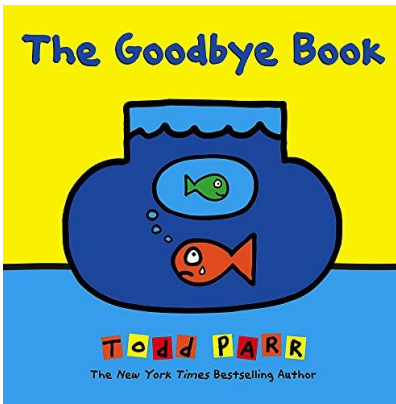
Amanda the squirrel is upset that she is going to lose her friend Gentle Willow, but the tree wizards give advice that help both her and Gentle Willow accept the change that comes with death. **Ages 4 and up**

Wherever You Are, My Love Will Find You by Nancy
Tillman



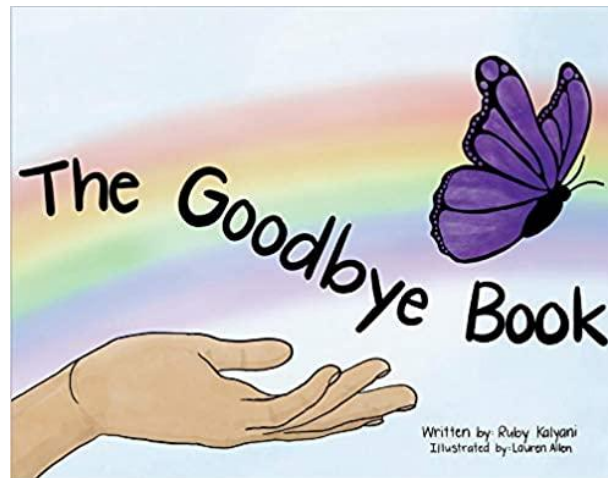
Wherever You Are is a book to share with your loved ones, no matter how near or far, young or old, they are. **Ages 4-8**

The Goodbye Book by Todd Parr



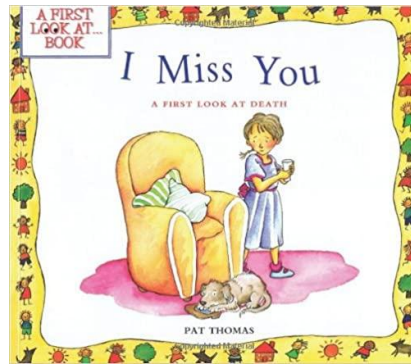
Through the lens of a pet fish who has lost his companion, Todd Parr tells a moving and wholly accessible story about saying goodbye. Touching upon the host of emotions children experience, Todd reminds readers that it's okay not to know all the answers, and that someone will always be there to support them. An invaluable resource for life's toughest moments. **Ages 3-6**

The Goodbye Book written by Ruby Kalyani, illustrated
by Lauren Allen



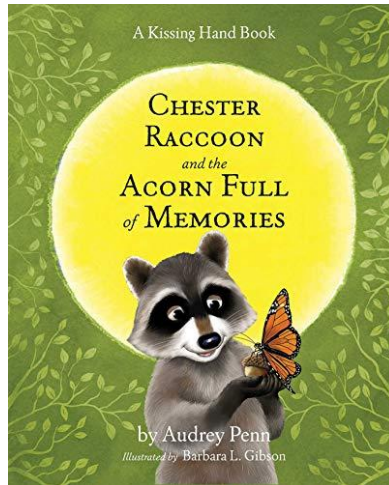
This children's book is about trying to understand the natural feelings that occur after losing someone you love. It is my hope that this book will allow children to explore their feelings and to understand that it is ok to be sad. The story will also provide children with a few skills in what to do when they experience grief and sadness. **Ages 5+**

I Miss You a First Look at Death



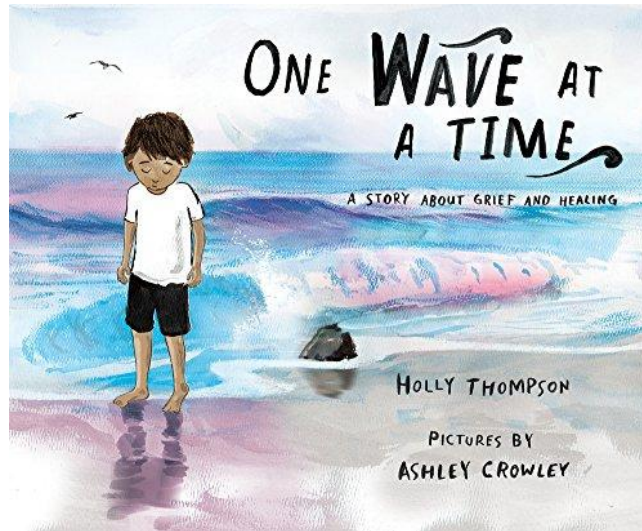
When a close friend or family member dies, it can be difficult for kids to express their feelings. This book will help them understand that death is a natural complement to life, and that grief and a sense of loss are normal feelings for them to have following a loved one's death. **Ages 4-7**

Chester Raccoon and the Acorn Full of Memories
written by Audrey Penn, illustrated by Barbara Gibson



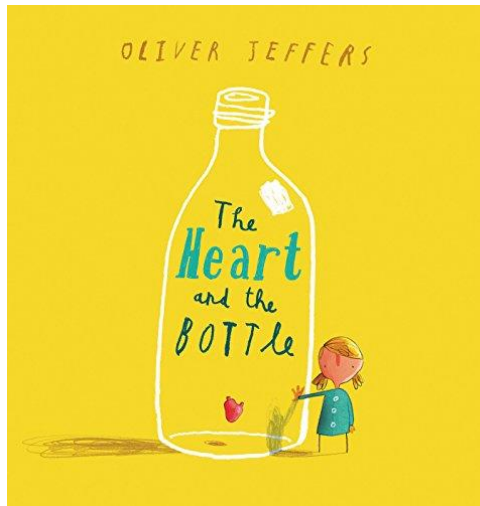
Chester Raccoon's good friend Skiddel Squirrel has had an accident and will not be returning - ever. Chester is upset that he won't get to play with his friend anymore. Mrs. Raccoon suggests that Chester and his friends create some memories of Skiddel, so that they will have good memories when they miss 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 3-7**

One Wave at a Time: A Story About Grief and Healing
written by Holly Thompson, illustrated by Ashely
Crowley



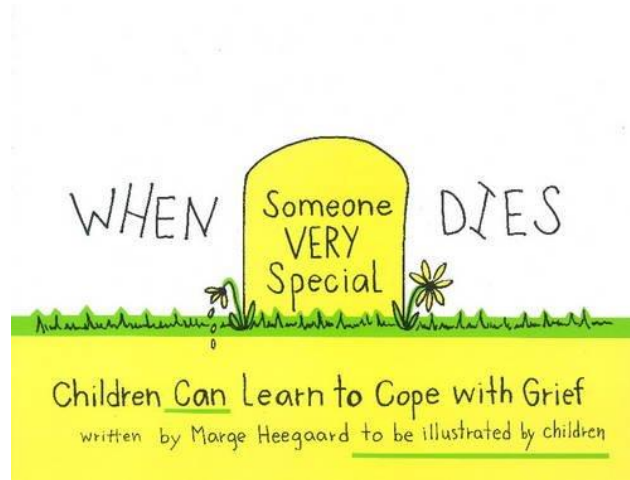
After his father dies, Kai experiences all kinds of emotions: sadness, anger, fear, guilt. Sometimes they crash and mix together. Other times, there are no emotions at all—just flatness. As Kai and his family adjust to life without Dad, the waves still roll in. But with the help of friends and one another, they learn to cope—and, eventually, heal. A lyrical story about grieving for anyone encountering loss. **Ages 5-7**

The Heart and the Bottle by Oliver Jeffers



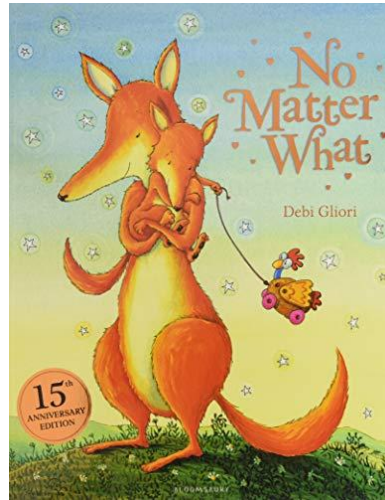
There is a wonder and magic to childhood. We don't realize it at the time, of course . . . yet the adults in our lives do. They encourage us to see things in the stars, to find joy in colors and laughter as we play. But what happens when that special someone who encourages such wonder and magic is no longer around? We can hide, we can place our heart in a bottle and grow up . . . or we can find another special someone who understands the magic. And we can encourage them to see things in the stars, find joy among colors and laughter as they play. **Ages 4-8**

When Someone Very Special Dies: Children Can learn to
Cope with Grief (Drawing Out Feelings) by Marge
Heegaard



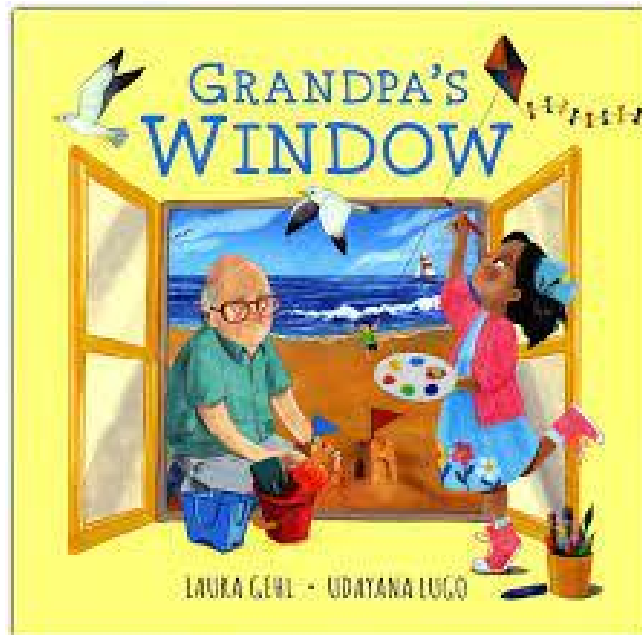
A workbook to help children work out feelings about death. **Ages 9 - 12**

No Matter What written by Debi Gliori



Small is a little fox with big feelings. When Small is feeling down, Small asks Large, "If I turned into a bug, would you still love me and give me a hug?" Large's responses to this question and those that follow are nothing but loving and affirming. With a gentle, rhyming read-aloud text paired with inviting illustrations, this is an essential addition to every little one's library. **Ages** infant - 3

Grandpa's Window by Laura Gehl and Udayana Lugo



Every window at the hospital faces dull, gray buildings—except the one in Grandpa's room. Grandpa can see the ocean every day! When Daria visits, she and Grandpa look out at the beach, hoping they will build sandcastles and fly kites together again. This touching exploration of a child's experience of loss offers an unexpected ending, encouraging creativity and self-expression in the midst of grief. *Grandpa's Window* addresses the grieving process, both as a family member approaches the end of life as well as after death. The book includes a note for adults by Dr. Sharie Coombes (www.drsharie.com), child and family psychotherapist, about how to support children who are grieving the loss of a loved one. **Ages 3 - 7**