

# Reading List: Grief Resources for Teachers, Children, and Families

## BOOKS for EDUCATORS

### [The Grieving Student: A Teacher's Guide](#)

By David Schonfeld, M.D., and Marcia Quackenbush, M.S., M.F.T., C.H.E.S.

Death and grief will affect the lives of almost all children at some point, often leading to struggles with academic performance, social relationships, and behavior. This guidebook demonstrates how teachers can provide critical lifelines to grieving students of all ages.

### [Good Grief: Exploring Feelings, Loss and Death With Over Elevens and Adults: A Holistic Approach](#)

By Barbara Ward

With 20 educators contributing ideas piloted with children of different abilities and backgrounds, this text has been designed to explore and demystify the experience of loss in different contexts. Complete with a revised section on the effects on children, it is activity-based, facilitating the use of children's own experiences, thereby encouraging improvisation.

### [Why Did You Die? Activities to Help Children Cope With Grief and Loss](#)

By Erica Leeuwenburgh

When a loved one dies, children are faced with a kaleidoscope of feelings, thoughts, myths, and questions. This workbook offers tools that you can use to help a grieving child in your life deal with these feelings.

### [Creative Interventions for Bereaved Children](#)

By Liana Lowenstein

A uniquely creative compilation of activities to help bereaved children express feelings of grief, diffuse traumatic reminders, address self-blame, commemorate the deceased, and learn coping strategies.

### [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 the death of someone they love. Sensitive exercises address all the questions children may have during this emotional and troubling time.

## BOOKS to SHARE with GRIEVING FAMILIES

### [A Parent's Guide to Raising Grieving Children](#)

By Phyllis R. Silverman and Madelyn Kelly

This book explores children's thoughts and feelings on the subject of death and provides parents and other caring adults with guidance on how to respond to difficult questions.

### [Grief in Children: A Handbook for Adults](#)

By Atle Dyregrov

This practical book explains children's understanding of death at different ages and gives a detailed outline of how adults can best help them cope with death, whether it is a parent, sibling, or other relative,

friend, classmate, or teacher who has died.

[\*ABCs of Healthy Grieving\*](#)

By Harold Ivan Smith

This book offers simple, realistic advice on how to live with grief day to day. Filled with words of comfort, practical support, and guidance, each two-page reflection encourages healthy grieving and new ways of being in the world after experiencing profound loss.

[\*When There Are No Words: Finding Your Way to Cope With Loss and Grief\*](#)

By Charlie Walton

This book carefully addresses the difficult stages of grief. No matter what your background or spiritual outlook, this book is a healing aid.

[\*Angel Catcher: A Journal of Loss and Remembrance\*](#)

By Kathy Eldon and Amy Eldon Turteltaub

This classic work has helped thousands find meaningful ways to overcome the despair of losing a loved one. The tasteful pages of this journal guide the user through the process of mourning and onward to a sense of peace in the face of loss.

## **BOOKS for GRIEVING CHILDREN**

[\*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 the death of someone they love. Sensitive exercises address all the questions children may have during this emotional and troubling time.

[\*The Brightest Star\*](#)

By Kathleen Maresh Hemery

Molly was scared when her mom was in the hospital and angry when her mother died, but she discovers that love never dies and special memories stay with you forever.

[\*Sunflowers and Rainbows for Tia\*](#)

By Alesia Alexander Greene

This story is about a child whose father dies at home. It follows the family from the night of the father's death through the days following the funeral.

[\*Gentle Willow: A Story for Children About Dying\*](#)

By Joyce C. Mills

Written for children who may not survive their illness or for the children who know them, this tale helps address feelings of disbelief, anger, and sadness, along with love and compassion.

[\*Where Are You? A Child's Book About Loss\*](#)

By Laura Olivieri

*A Child's Book About Loss* is a kind and supportive text with beautiful illustrations designed to help children of all ages cope with the loss of a loved one. Even the youngest readers will find comfort during this stressful and difficult time.

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

By Pat Thomas and Leslie Harker

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.

## **BOOKS for TEENS**

### ***Nonfiction***

#### *When Will I Stop Hurting? Teens, Loss, and Grief*

By Kelly Adams

*Teens, Loss, and Grief* is a self-help guide for teenagers who are struggling with loss and the emotional difficulties it presents. This book provides an overview of grief as a painful but normal process, and it offers insights from bereavement experts as well as practical suggestions for coping with loss, including personal accounts from teens.

#### *You Are Not Alone: Teens Talk About Life After the Loss of a Parent*

By Lynne Hughes

Through frank and accessible testimonials, Lynne Hughes and the kids of Comfort Zone Camp share the most difficult parts of their losses and offer their own experiences of what helps, what doesn't, what "stinks," and ways to stay connected to their loved ones.

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

By Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

When teenagers lose loved ones, they often feel confusion as well as heartache. Wolfelt, whose decades of experience in grief work with teens informs his ideas, offers 100 ways to facilitate grieving and come to terms with loss.

#### *Grief Skills for Life: A Personal Journal for Adolescents About Loss*

By Judy Davidson

Dr. Judy Davidson is a national consultant, speaker, counselor, and author who was widowed at the age of 30. She shares her insights as a death educator and trauma specialist with children, parents, and counselors.

#### *When a Friend Dies: A Book for Teens About Grieving and Healing*

By Marilyn E. Gootman, Ed.D.

In this update of a 1994 publication, 16 short chapters deliver helpful information on subjects including: How can I stand the pain? How should I be acting? What is "normal"? What if I can't handle my grief on my own?

### ***Fiction***

#### *Green Angel*

By Alice Hoffman

In this poetic, post-apocalyptic tale, fifteen-year-old Green must struggle to survive in a harsh new world after her family's tragic death.

Purchase it [here](#).

#### *Bridge to Terabithia*

By Katherine Paterson

In this classic novel, fifth grader Jesse Aaron's dreams of becoming the fastest runner in his class are dashed when newcomer Leslie Burke outruns everybody, even him. But Jess and Leslie begin a friendship, and soon they discover a magical kingdom in the forest, where they reign as king and queen. The friendship between young Jess and Leslie grows as they meet in Terabithia - their secret hiding place - and ends with a life-changing loss for Jess.

Purchase it [here](#).

### *Behind the Eyes*

By Francisco X. Stork

The powerful story of sixteen-year-old Hector Robles, growing up in El Paso, Texas whose world changes when his older brother dies in gang violence. Following an outburst of violence, Hector faces the possibility of having to attend a reform school and must figure out for himself the path he wants his life to take.

Purchase it [here](#).

### *Mick Harte Was Here*

By Barbara Park and Sam Llewellyn

How could someone like Mick die? This is the hilarious kid who freaked his mom out by putting a ceramic eye in a defrosted chicken, who did a wild solo dance in front of the whole school because the music got in his pants, and the kid who, if he'd only worn his bicycle helmet, would still be alive now. Phoebe has great memories of her brother, but cannot see how her family will ever pick up the pieces and move on.

Purchase it [here](#).

### *Birdland*

By Tracy Mack

Amidst the sparkle and hum of a New York City winter, Jed and his best friend Flyer are filming a documentary of their neighborhood. All around them are images that Jed's older brother Zeke wrote about: drummers, drunks, dog walkers, and the beautiful water towers that dot the city's skyline. But what Jed is really in search of is Zeke, a poet who loved jazzman Charlie "Bird" Parker and who left behind his CDs, a notebook, and a lot of unanswered questions.

Purchase it [here](#).

### *The Tiger Rising*

By Kate DiCamillo

After Rob's mother dies, and he and his father move to a new town to get a fresh start, he discovers a caged tiger in the woods. An emotionally rich story about a boy caught in the powerful grip of grief.

Purchase it [here](#).

### *The Leanin' Dog*

By K.A. Nuzum

Dessa Dean has been so saddened by the death of her mother, that she can no longer even leave the porch, and has constant nightmares and daymares. More than anything, Dessa Dean needed a friend. Hope had just about run out, but then there came a scratchin' at the door and Dessa Dean's life was forever changed. An injured dog found the cabin and helps Dessa Dean and her father heal.

Purchase it [here](#).

### *Walk Two Moons*

By Sharon Creech

This moving novel for teens follows Salamanca's emotional journey after a loss, from denial to anger and finally to acceptance.

Purchase it [here](#).

### [Grief Girl](#)

By Erin Vincent

In 1983, Vincent, then 14, lost both her parents in a road accident. In this poignant memoir, she chronicles her rocky journey through adolescence as she, her 17-year-old sister, Tracy, and their brother, Trent, learn to cope on their own.

### [The Linden Tree](#)

By Eleanor Mathews

Nine-year-old Katy Sue's world is rocked following the death of her beloved mother. The loss leaves big questions for Katy Sue: Is it OK if she isn't sad all the time, and will she forget her mother's voice? Gavin's interpretation of a wide range of emotions is respectful and clear.

### [Behind You](#)

By Jacqueline Woodson

In this poignant, stand-alone sequel to the wrenching romance, *If You Come Softly*, Woodson's characters are dealing with grief and picking up the pieces of their lives after the death of 15-year-old Jeremiah (Miah) Roselind.

### [If Only](#)

By Carole Geithner

*If Only* follows a year in the life of an 8th-grade girl whose mother has died of cancer. It describes how she deals with alienation from her peers and how she succeeds in finding support for her grief.