## Grief Resources

**Barr Harris Children’s Grief Center**

Riverdale Resource Center
13725 Wabash
Riverdale, IL  60827

(312) 922-7474, Ext. 301

[www.barrharris.org](http://www.barrharris.org)

**Center for New Beginnings**

*Grief counseling*

10300 W 131st St.

Palos Park, IL

(708) 923-1116

**Recommended Books about Death and Grief
For Children and Adolescents**

**Reviewed by Nancy Cap, LCSW, Benjamin Garber, M.D.,
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**For Pre-school and Early Elementary School Children**

**Brown, Laurie Krasny and Marc Brown. *When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death*.**

This book explains death in a way that pre-school children can understand.

You can see sample pages from this book on the Internet. Go to www.amazon.com. Under Search, put Books in the first box and When Dinosaurs Die in the second box. The search will take you to the title. Click on the title to go to the page for the book. Toward the bottom of the page, under Explore This Book, click on Search Inside. (Of course, you can look at the sample pages without ordering the book.)

**Bunting, E. *The Happy Funeral*. New York: Harper and Row.**

This is an exceptionally interesting book about a little girl who participates in the rituals of her grandfather's funeral.

**Clifton, Lucille (1988).  *Everett Anderson's Goodbye*. Reading Rainbow.**

An African-American boy copes with the death of his father.

**Grollman, Earl A. (1990). *Talking About Death.*  Boston: Beacon Press.**

This is a  most practical guide for parents and other adults who are faced with explaining death to a child while at  the same time often struggling with their own feelings about death. It addresses many questions children may ask and provides suggestions for responding, keeping in mind the developmental age of the child and the unique circumstances of the individual loss. It provides read-along passages for children whose parents who may need some help finding the words to express their responses.

This book would be most helpful if read by parents first, before using the read along passages, as the author is sensitive to the grief process of the adults as they help their children cope with their own thoughts and feelings about death.

Earl A. Grollman has written many excellent books about death.

**Hickman, M.W. (1984). *Last Week My Brother Anthony Died*. Abington Press.**

A poignant, touching story told through the eyes of a girl whose infant brother died of congenital heart disease. The family minister is sensitive and helpful and the story ends on an upbeat note.

# Mellonie, Bryan and Robert Ingpen (1983). *Lifetimes*. Bantum Books.

This is a simply written and informative book about the life cycles of all living things. It tells about beginnings (birth) and endings (death) with living in between as natural and inevitable. It is a beautiful book for parents and young children to read and discuss together. It describes different lifetimes for different living things as well as lifetimes that are shortened due to unusual circumstances.

**Parker, Marjorie Blain. Illustrator: Janet Wilson (2002). *Jasper's Day.* Tonawanda, NY:Kids Can Press*.***

This is a beautiful book about a terminally ill dog who has been part of a
loving family. As the dog's pain becomes less amenable to medication, the
family makes a difficult decision and plans how they will spend Jasper's
last day before bringing him to the vet.

The unity of the family and its relationship to the pet who has given them
such pleasure is told poignantly but straightforwardly as they are brought
together at the final goodbye.

**Powell, E. Sandy (1990). *Geranium Morning*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.**

This is a rather confusing story about a little boy whose father dies in a car accident while going to buy geraniums to grow on his porch. While the boy is dealing with his loss, he befriends a girl whose mother is dying. After some initial difficulties they become good friends and help each other to deal with loss.

I found this story to be contrived and complicated. The language was far more sophisticated than one would expect from children ages 10-11. The story's only saving grace was the message that we need the help of others in dealing with loss.

**Shook-Hazen, B. (1985). *Why Did Grandpa Die?* Racine, WI: Western Publishing**

A little girl's reaction to the death of her grandfather makes for a compelling story. There is age appropriate confusion, bewilderment and boredom with the mourning rituals. This book is good because there is a consistent honesty in the child's feelings.

**Tiffault, B. (1992). *A Quilt for Elizabeth*. Omaha, NE: Centering Corporation.**

This is a beautiful story about a little girl whose father gets sick and dies. After a while the girl and her grandmother decide to make a quilt from her father's garments. This book is highly recommended because it deals with the loss and mourning in a highly creative manner.

**Vigna, Judith (1991). *Saying Goodbye to Daddy*. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Co.**

This is an excellent book about a kindergarten girl whose father dies in a car accident. She has a difficult time coming to terms with the loss. She uses denial and avoidance to diminish the pain of the loss. However, the reality of the funeral confronts her with what she is missing. Her mother and grandfather are there to help her with the confusion and denial. Because she goes through a range of emotions, this books is highly recommended.