

Recommended Readings For Children

Dog Heaven by Cynthia Rylant, Scholastic Trade; ISBN: 0590417010 (September 1995) Ages 4-8

In this joyfully imagined place, God is a smiling, white-haired gentleman who watches the goings-on as dogs run and bark, play with kids, eat dog biscuits in cat shapes, and sleep on fluffy clouds. It's also a place where dogs patiently wait for old friends: "They will be there at the door. Angel dogs." Rylant's kindergarten concept of the hereafter is cheerful but not humorous or glib. A book for parent-child sharing and discussion. From Booklist (Stephanie Zvirin)



Cat Heaven by Cynthia Rylant, Scholastic Trade; ISBN: 0590100548 (September 1997) Ages 4-8

Writing in rhyme, Rylant assures readers that all cats already know the way to heaven's yellow door, and once past it will never want for laps, toys, or full kitty dishes. Heaven is a place with trees and clouds to perch on, fields to leap through--and a garden full of tall flowers, where God walks "with a good black book and a kitty asleep on His head." Comforting and amiable, this is tinged with gentle humor. From Kirkus Reviews



I'll Always Love You by Hans Wilhelm, Crown Pub; ISBN: 0517572656 (May 1989) Ages 4-8

This is a wonderful book about healing and bonding. It is the story of a young boy and his dog Elfie. When Elfie gets old and dies the boy sadly buries Elfie after openly sharing his grief. He vows that he will tell every pet he ever has that he will always love him. The book helps young children understand death and provides a valuable lesson that it is always good to tell a loved one, human or pet, that you will always love them.

A Special Place for Charlee: A Child's Companion Through Pet Loss by Debra Morehead, Partners in Publishing LLC,

ISBN 0965404900 (1996) Ages 4-12

This is tender, touching story will help parents guide their children through the emotions of pet loss. The story shares the experience of a young boy as he deals with the loss of his beloved dog. Readers will learn that it is normal to have a variety of emotions when a pet dies and that it takes time to work through the pain of pet loss.



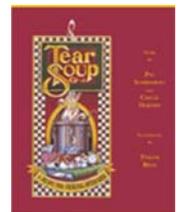
A Gift From Rex by Jim Kramer, DVM, Beaver's Pond Press, Inc.; ISBN 1890676632 (2001) All ages

In this book, Rex, the German Shepherd, talks to parents and children heart to heart, about their sadness, grief, anger, guilt and recovery from loss. As parents, teachers, counselors, relatives and friends, we can help young children, to prepare for challenges we know they will have to face. Take a pro-active approach to loss. Everyone has the opportunity to do a profound amount of good. For more information or to order visit www.drjimkramer.com.



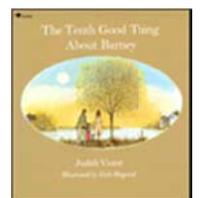
Tear Soup by Pat Schweibert and Chuck DeKlyen, Perinatal Loss, ISBN 0961519762 (2001) All ages

This book is a great book for anyone dealing with any kind of loss. The story focuses on one woman's unspecified loss. It tells the tale of making "tear soup" as you grieve your loss. Each person's soup will turn out differently and in different time. The illustrations are very detailed. Anyone from a young child to an older adult will appreciate this book.



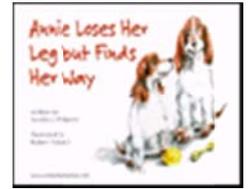
The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Viorst, Simon and Schuster Children's, ISBN 0689712030 (1975) Ages 4-8

Because the life cycle of animals is so short, it's usually the first death a child experiences. Fortunately, there are good children's books to help in many difficult situations. This book works better than any other book on the subject. It is the story of a small boy who is trying to understand and recover from his cat's death. The author is honest and authentic in her approach. (Review by Susie Wilde of Children's Literature)



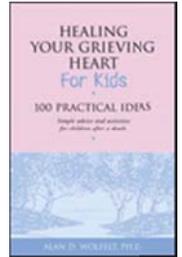
Annie Loses Her Leg But Finds Her Way by Sandra J. Philipson, Chagrin River Publishing Company, ISBN 192982100X (1999) All ages

Based on an actual incident, this is both a poignant and funny story of a nine year old English Springer Spaniel who loses her front leg to cancer. Annie and her high-spirited brother Max experience her illness and recovery in very different ways. Max is in denial and Annie is in a state of sad acceptance. It isn't until they meet Samantha, a three legged Golden Retriever, that they both begin to heal. This is a book about love, loss, friendship and optimism that is appropriate for children of all ages and the young in spirit.



Healing Your Grieving Heart for Kids by Alan Wolfelt, PhD, Companion Press, ISBN 1879651270 (2001)

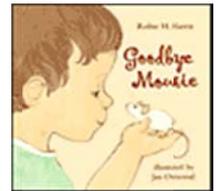
Offered are suggestions for healing activities that can help survivors learn to express their grief and mourn naturally and age-appropriate activities that teach younger people that their thoughts are not only normal but necessary. Acknowledging that death is a painful, ongoing part of life, they explain how people need to slow down, turn inward, embrace their feelings of loss, and seek and accept support when a loved one dies. For more information or to order visit www.centerforloss.com.



Goodbye Mousie by Robie Harris, Simon and Schuster Children's, ISBN 0689832176 (2001) Ages 5-8

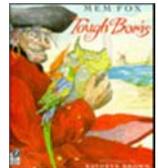
"When I woke up this morning, I tickled Mousie's tummy. But Mousie didn't wake up."

When a child learns that his pet mouse has died, at first he can't believe it. "Mousie is NOT dead!" he insists. "He's just...very...very sleepy this morning." But it takes time for the young narrator to understand that Mousie IS dead and he's not coming back. With the help of his family, the child finds out that it's perfectly okay to feel angry and sad when his pet mouse - whom he loves - dies. By voicing his feelings and asking questions, he finally begins to accept Mousie's death.



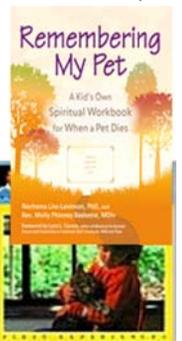
Tough Boris by Mem Fox, Harcourt, ISBN 0152018913 (1998) Ages 5-8

Boris von der Borch is a mean, greedy old pirate - tough as nails, through and through, like all pirates. Or is he? When a young boy sneaks onto Boris' ship, he discovers that Boris and his mates aren't quite what he expected. When Boris' parrot dies, he mourns and cries like everyone else.



Remembering My Pet by Nechama Liss-Levinson, PhD and Rev. Molly Phinney Baskette, MDiv, ISBN 978-1-59473-221-8 (2007) Ages 7-13

The death of a pet is often a child's first encounter with grief. How your child learns to cope through this experience may affect his or her attitude into adulthood. Drawing on concepts from psychology and a broad multifaith perspective, this supportive workbook provides a sensitive and practical resource that will help children ages 7 to 13 cope with the death of a beloved animal. Children can write, draw, read, create and express feelings via concrete, hands-on activities.



When a Pet Dies by Fred Rogers, Putnam, ISBN 0399215042 (1988) Ages 4-8

In this useful book from the First Experience series, the affable star of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* helps children share feelings of the loss of a pet while offering reassurance that grieving is a natural, healing thing to do. A sensitive and sensible first book about death.