Death and Grief

Books available at the Columbus Metropolitan Library

PICTURE BOOKS

A Stone for Sascha by Aaron Becker, 2018. Picture Book BECKER
A young girl reeling from her dog’s death, finds solace while picking up stones on the beach during her family’s vacation. (K-4)

My Old Pal, Oscar by Amy Hest, 2016. Picture Book HEST
A little boy finds a puppy on the beach all on his own. However, the boy does not want the puppy to follow him. He is missing his dog, Oscar, who died recently. When a storm comes, the little boy feels bad for the puppy and ends up taking him home to keep him safe. (PreK-1)

Life is Like the Wind by Shona Innes, 2014. Picture Book INNES
This book gently introduces the concept of death to young readers by likening life to the ever-moving wind. Explores the feelings we have, how to cope and how we can celebrate our loved one’s memory. (PreK-2)

The Funeral by Matt James, 2018. Picture Book JAMES
While attending her great-uncle Frank’s funeral, Norma is confronted with rituals and ideas that have never occurred to her before. This sensitive and life-affirming story leads young readers to ask their own questions about life and death. (K-2)

The Heart and the Bottle by Oliver Jeffers, 2010. Picture Book JEFFERS
A story of a young girl who safeguards her heart in a bottle hung around her neck. A poignant and moving story about love and loss. (PreK-3)

Ida, Always by Caron Levis, 2016. Picture Book Levis
Gus the polar bear grieves over the loss of his companion, Ida. This story is inspired by the real-life Gus and Ida of New York’s Central Park Zoo. (PreK-3)

Always Remember by Cece Meng, 2016. Picture Book MENG
When Old Turtle dies and is taken back by the sea, his friends remember that he was a wonderful teacher and friend who made his world a better place. (PreK-2)

The Goodbye Book by Todd Parr, 2015. Picture Book PARR
A fish is sad that his friend died. This is a very simple colorful book for young children to learn basic feelings about grief. (PreK-2)

Bear and Bird by James Skofield, 2014. Picture Book SKOFIELD
Bear and Bird become friends when Bird is a young bird. Every year they spend time together but one spring, Bird comes back to find that Bear is nowhere to be found. When she realizes what happened, she remembers all of the great times they had together. (PreK-3)
JUVENILE FICTION

My Father's Words by Patricia Maclachlan, 2018. Juvenile Fiction MACLACHLAN
Two children are left without their father after a terrible accident. Their father's words guide them through overwhelming grief and give them hope for the future. (Grades 3-7)

A boy must rescue his sister after she finds--and wants to stay--in an almost-world beneath her bed, where their mother is still alive. (Grades 3-7)

Clayton is devastated when his grandfather dies and his mother forbids him from playing music. His losses compel him to run away and join bluesmen on the road. (Grades 3-7)

NONFICTION

My Mixed Emotions by Elinor Greenwood, 2018. J152.4 G816n
Feelings can be complicated and learning to express them is a skill that must be developed. This book coaches children through a variety of emotions and situations, including grief. It explores the reasons why we feel emotions and the science behind them. (Grades 1-5)

Death Is Stupid by Anastasia Higginbotham, 2016. J155.937 H635d
This forthright exploration of grief and mourning recognizes the anger, confusion, and fear that we feel about death. This book is an invaluable tool for discussing death, but also the possibilities for celebrating life and love. (Grades K-3)

What Does Dead Mean? By Caroline Jay, 2013. J155.937 J42w
Death is a big concept and can be confusing or distressing to explain to young children. This simple guide presents questions children might ask and answers them simply. (PreK-2)