

Grief Reads 2025/26

Books for Children, Teens, Families and
Professionals Navigating Grief



Curated by Dr Shelley Gilbert, The Grief Doctor

THE GRIEF
DOCTOR

www.thegriefdoctor.co.uk

This guide is a companion for those supporting children and young people through the death of a parent, sibling or loved one.

Books can offer comfort, validation and a way into difficult conversations.

These recommendations have been carefully chosen by Dr Shelley Gilbert, MBE, a psychotherapist and grief educator with over 25 years of experience working with bereaved families.



Spotlight Books

Is Daddy Coming back in a Minute? & What happened to Daddy's body?

Elke Barber (2012)

Outstanding cartoon story that explains (sudden) death in words that very young children can understand.

No Longer Alone

Joseph Coelho (2019)

Amazing picture book about mother-death and how a child deals with emotions, including the forever loss.

Paper Dolls

Julia Donaldson (2013)

Gruffalo's author provides us with the message that nothing is truly destroyed once it becomes a memory.

Always & Forever

Debi Gliori & Alan Durant (2004)

A book which handles the illness and death of Fox touchingly and sensitively. Explains death gently and gives children positive insight into grief and how to cope.

Chocolate Chipped

Gilbert and Baruch (2012)

Delightful SMELLY(!) book, concerning what happens to a family after their Dad dies, with fantastic scratch and sniff stickers. A difficult subject addresses in a cute, original and fun way.

Grief Book

Dr Shelley Gilbert (2024)

Simply the best interactive book supporting children through grief's journey by using creative activities. A Bible of all grief knowledge for children, young people and their families.
www.thegriefdoctor.org.uk

Memory Book

Dr Shelley Gilbert (2025)

Interactive book helping children record past, present and future memories. Facilitates continuing bonds with their loved one who has died.

Teen Guide to Getting on with Life after Death

Dr Shelley Gilbert (2024)

For teens, excellent booklet which does : guides young people through grief. Based on the lived experience of hundreds of bereaved young people, the guide simply, empathically and beautifully captures grief's unwanted journey.

www.thegriefdoctor.org.uk

The Coat I Wear

Mel Maxwell (2014)

Outstanding book based on the loss of the author's sister using metaphor of a coat for grief. Everyone should have this book.

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse & Always Remember

Charlie Macksey (2019 & 2025)

The sharing of life lessons in this book is a great example of how young people battling with existential issues, following their tragic losses, can find meaning in life.

The Scar

Charlotte Moundlic and Olivier Tallec (2012)

A deeply moving story leavened by glimmers of humour and captivating illustrations to convey the boy's progression from anger and fear to sadness and acceptance.

Sad Book

Michael Rosen (2004)

Brilliant and poetic book, talking simply about the sad feelings following death, informed by his own experience of the loss of his son. Genius-for all ages.

About Hedgehog

Dani Seatter (2025)

Beautifully written, this book captures the grieving process. The focus is on the searching, pining and missing your loved one, using animal illustrations. An invaluable book for bereaved children.

Books for Little Ones (Ages 2-6)

Dads

See Spotlight Books for additional recommendations.

My Daddy is my Superhero

Michaelagh Broadbent. (2018)

Shares the message that positive memories remain even after death.

Mums

See Spotlight Books for additional recommendations.

Missing Mummy

Rebecca Cobb. (2011)

Beautifully illustrated and poignant book about a child with her dad after Mum dies.

A Tiny Step Forward

Charlotte Khagan & Jill Starishevsky (2020)

Delightful cartoon style story/poem told by a little boy whose Mum has died,. It highlights grief's complex issues and paradoxes such as the tensions of being happy yet sad. Highly recommended.

Mum's Jumper

Jade Perkin(2019)

Empathic book about a Mum's death.

Only One of Me

Wells & Robinson (2018)

Poignant books written for children by a dying Mum as her legacy. Wonderful.

Siblings

We Were Gonne Have a Baby but we had an Angel Instead

Pat Schwiebert (2007)

Beautifully illustrated story of loss for a child who has lost a younger sibling. Strongly recommend.

Someone Came Before You

Pat Schwiebert (2007)

A companion title to We Were Gonna Have a Baby but We Had an Angel Instead.

General

See Spotlight Books for additional recommendations.

Shelter for Sadness

Anne Booth & David Litchfield (2022)

How a little boy lives with sadness; profoundly moving and full of depth.

When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to understanding death

Laurie and Marc Brown (1998)

Cartoon style using dinosaurs to explain death. Delightful.

Up In Heaven

Emma Chichester Clark (2004)

Comforting way of talking about where people go when they die. A favourite.

The Hare-Shaped Hole

Doherty & Doherty (2022)

Addresses the loss of a friend through animals. A colourful and moving story that deals with rediscovering happiness.

Rabbityness

Jo Empson (2012)

Addresses loss through a rabbit. A colourful and moving story for that deals with the idea of loss and rediscovering happiness. Highly recommended.

The Lonely Tree

Nicholas Halliday (2005)

Beautifully written and illustrated. Uses the death of a tree to show how death is an inevitable part of ageing and life continues after the sadness of bereavement.

Why do things die?

Suzie Harrison (2020)

A lift the flap book to help talk about what happens when someone dies.

Books for Little Ones (Ages 2-6)

General

When Someone Dies (Questions and Feelings About)

Dawn Hewitt (2017)

Delightful and informative book to read to children about grief.

The Heart and the Bottle

Oliver Jeffers (2010)

With beautiful illustrations, Jeffers presents us with a moving story of how a little girl's life is changed by the death of someone special, what happens and how we can make some sense of a loss.

What Does Dead Mean?

Caroline Jay & Jenni Thomas (2012)

Beautifully illustrated book that gently guides children through the 'big' questions they often ask about death and dying.

Lost for Words e-book

Jackson & Ben Brookes-Dutton (2019)

Most of us find ourselves lost for words when someone dies: this is a collection of personal insights and advice for bereaved children by bereaved children.

The Invisible String

Patrice Karst (2018)

A best-selling picture book about the unbreakable connections between loved ones. Another list topper.

Saying Goodbye to Hare

Carol Lee (2012)

An uplifting story full of honesty and warmth. Sensitively written to give a positive, thoughtful message and explores feelings and questions children have after the death of a friend. (Includes guidance notes for adults supporting the child).

The Thing at 52

Ross Montgomery (2023)

Beautifully written using a metaphor of "The Thing" to illustrate finding and losing an imaginary friend.

The Copper Tree

Hilary Robinson (2012)

This beautifully written and illustrated book aims to help young children come to terms with the death of somebody close. It lets children know it's okay not to be okay and also offers a message of hope that things will get easier.

Fred

Posy Simmonds (2014)

Classic with humour cartoon book about a cat that dies.

The Day the Sea Went Out & Never Came Back

Margot Sutherland (2003)

Delightful, classy books; whole series recommended.

The Memory Tree

Britta Teckentrup (2013)

A lovely story with animals, focusing on memory making after the death of Fox.

Death: I Miss You (A First Look At)

Pat Thomas (2009)

Clear and well-illustrated explanation of death.

The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark

Jill Tomlinson (1973)

A heart-warming classic containing an imaginative story about overcoming fears. Filled with gentle humour and comfort.

Badger's Parting Gift

Susan Varley (1984)

Mentioned as a introduction to death, but not so popular with bereaved kids.

The Velveteen Rabbit

Margery Williams (1922)

A timeless classic story about identity, love and loss. The rabbit reminds us that true value comes from love.

Books for Medium Ones (Ages 6-10)

Dads

Mr Toppit

Charles Elton (2009)

Unusual book telling Luke's story following his dad's death. Worth a read.

Crossing the Line

Tia Fisher (2023)

Award winning story about what could happen after Erik's Dad dies. Highlights how vulnerable bereaved kids can be.

The Land of Never-endings

Kate Saunders (2018)

A rip-roaring adventure that gives an honest portrayal of grief.

Mums

Forever

Beatrice Alemagna (2020)

Amazing book with the message that a Mother's love lasts forever.

Love, Lucie

Marita Conlon McKenna (2012)

A book for 9-11 year olds loss of a mother.

The Shock of the Fall

Nathan Filer (2013)

An account of mental health and also an insightful book on the death of a Mum and the subsequent grief over time.

Moon Pie

Simon Mason (2015)

Terrific story about children coping after their mother's death and their Dad turning to alcohol for support.

Mimi

John Newman (2010)

The ripple effects of a mum's death told in a fictional way. Excellent and poignant read.

The Star Outside my Window

Onjali Q. Rauf (2019)

Incredible story of meaning making after the death of her mother and loss of her home and friends whilst escaping from an abusive father. Highly recommended.

Milo and the Restart Button

Alan Silberg (2011)

The author writes from his own experience about 13 year old Milo and the premature death of his Mum. One of the best.

Harmony Dances On

Mandy Woolf (2023)

A delightful book for about the death of a mother, told through a child's eyes.

Mum & Dad

James and the Giant Peach

Roald Dahl (1967)

James faces the world following the death of his parents.

The Little Prince

Antoine De Saint-Exupery (1971)

Classic tale, with themes of death, loss and meaning of life ready to be explored through the story.

The Chronicles of Narnia (and film)

C S Lewis (1939)

Exploring themes of endings, death and meaning of life in these stories can help children. It is well informed, as Lewis himself experienced the early death of his mother.

Bridge to Terabithia (and film)

K Patterson (1977)

Wonderful true to life story.

His Dark Materials (A trilogy)

Phillip Pullman (1995)

Legendary stories of Lyra and her demons, laced with the themes of loss and death. Unmissable.

Books for Medium Ones (Ages 6-10)

Harry Potter (series)

J.K. Rowling (1997)

The stories of Harry Potter experiencing the traumatic death of his parents needs no introduction, except to the importance of using the exceptional insights and themes of death when interacting with bereaved kids. Sheer genius.

A Series of Unfortunate Events

Lemony Snicket (1999)

Lemony experiences parental death very young; the whole series is influenced by these critical losses.

Siblings

See Spotlight Books for additional recommendations.

After Iris: The Diaries of Bluebell Gads

Natasha Farrart (2015)

A tender, poignant, funny and heart-warming book about losing a sibling.

Two Weeks with the Queen

Morris Gleitzman (1989)

Fictional story about losing a brother. One of the best books ever.

The Thing with Finn

Tom Kelly (2007)

Poignant fictional story about a boy losing his twin brother and finding his way through grief. A must.

Wenny has Wings

Janet Lee Carey (2005)

Beautiful novel about Will's near death experience, his sister Winny who did die and survivor guilt.. Highly recommended.

Charlie and Me

Mark Lowery (2018)

Story of a brother dying and of Martin's very special way of letting go yet keeping Charlie in his mind, in his way in his time. A special, very well written book.

The Truth About Martians

Melissa Savage (2020)

Mylo is desperate to be as brave as his older brother, who died a year ago. It includes science fiction and aliens.

Isaac & The Red Jumper

Amanda Seyderhelm (2012)

Charming book about the loss of a friend.

Friends or Special People

Bob's Blue Period

Marion Deuchars (2018)

Sadness at the sudden absence of a friend addressed by acclaimed author.

Remembering Lucy

Sarah Helton (2017)

A story of loss of a friend

Gaby's Angel

Janet Hogarth (2013)

A story of sadness and hope about losing a friend.

Pre-bereavement

Who Will Love Me When You're Gone?

Anna Friend and Jake Biggin (2021)

Little Heart series to support families through traumatic events.

Before I Die

Jenny Downham (2007)

Teen fiction book about a young girl facing her death, reminding us to seize the moment

The Gentle Willow

Joyce C. Mills (1993)

A gentle story for children about a tree dying.

Oscar and the Lady in Pink

Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt (2008)

Brilliant book about a teen and the last days of his life.

Books for Medium Ones (Ages 6-10)

General

Laura's Star

Klaus Baumgart (2000)

Lovely to encourage imagination, fantastic illustrations. This book is a lovely way to share discussions whilst teaching about the struggle of letting go.

Belonging

Jeannie Baker (2008)

Illustrates the passage of time by a child looking through her window, seeing herself grow through the years. Fantastic.

Bear Shaped

Dawn Coulter-Cruttenden (2020)

An exceptionally written, deeply insightful and beautifully illustrated story of a child's reflects and highlight the child's deep sadness, darkness and isolation caused by the loss.

Choose Love

Nicola Davies and Petr Horacek (2022)

An exceptional book created by children's author which use real-life experiences poems and art about child refugees from Syria. Useful to inspire creative ideas.

How are you Peeling?

Freymaann & Elffers (2019)

Fun way to understand the complex world of feelings, including those associated with loss, from the NYTimes best illustrators of the year.

How Do You See It?

Vera Galindo (2020)

Great kids book about an artist's way of seeing the world which could be used creatively to "talk" (paint/colour!) about death and dying.

Here and There

Kim Gregory (2020)

Great cartoon style book which poignantly demonstrates about being faraway, apart, better together and alone.

General

I See I See

Robert Henderson (2020)

Great young kids book about an artistic way of allowing us permission to see the world differently which could be used creatively to "talk" (paint/colour!) about death and dying.

A Terrible Thing Happened.

Margaret Holmes and Cary Pillo (2000)

Great cartoon style book which explains the shock and aftermath when a tragedy occurs for children.

The Tiger Who Came to Tea

Judith Kerr (1970)

A children's book with hidden deeper messages about living with abject terror and survival from 2nd World War survivor, the late Judith Kerr. Simply genius.

The Huge Bag of Worries

Virginia Ironside (1996)

Helps a child address their worries in a delightful way.

The Rock From The Sky

Jon Klassen (2021)

Hard to describe but unmissable book about a "spot".

Guess How Much I Love You

Sam McBratney (2014)

Modern classic which helps to say how much you love someone.

Winnie-The Pooh series

A. A. Milne (1926)

The Dragonfly Story

Kelly Owen (2018)

A beautifully created story explains death and the concept of heaven to children in simple terms using an adaptation of the popular fable of how brown bugs transform into beautiful dragonflies.

Books for Medium Ones (Ages 6-10)

General

The See Saw

Tom Percival (2019)

Range of books. Wonderfully telling of losing a teddy.

Love

Matt De La Pena & Loren Long (2018)

Wonderfully book about LOVE which could be read to a child not only to value the love lost but also the love in our lives that is all around.

The Boy who Built a Wall Around Himself

Ali Redford (2016)

One of the best books ever about how a child can use help to break through the barriers they've built up following adverse childhood experiences.

The Dot and Ish

Peter Reynolds (2005)

Ever a favourite to encourage a child to share through art. Joining the dots is a great way to make sense of a child's story of loss. Using 'ish' to find a middle balance is a great concept.

What on Earth do you do when someone dies?

Trevor Romain (1999)

Brilliant small cartoon book addressing some of the questions children have after a death. Comforting and compassionate.

Where The Wild Things Are

Maurice Sendak (2000)

Genius writer; this is a story of a little boy's escape into fantasy to manage the bad thoughts in his head. Directly related to the experience of trauma and loss.

The Giving Tree

Shel Silverstein (2010)

Classic tale of giving and the pain of loss from having loved something.

General

Stone Soup

Jess Stockham (2006)

Wonderfully re-telling of an old tale about coming together as a community.

Wherever You Are My Love Will Find You

Nancy Tillman (2010)

New York Times bestseller; wonderful for a parent or grandparent to leave their legacy.

Are You Sad Little Bear? and Can't You Sleep Little Bear?

Martin Waddell (2020)

Ever wonderful, needing no introduction will help young children in times of bereavement, loss or change, gently exploring the reasons for saying goodbye and giving reassurance that goodbye doesn't mean the end of things.

Knuffle Bunny

Mo Williams (2004)

Story of a lost boo-boo bunny. This one is found, but such a stunning book that could address the what ifs.

In My Heart: A Book of Feelings

Jo Witek (2014)

Literally explains what an emotion feels like physically in your heart adding new vocabulary. Another exceptional book.

Charlotte's Web

E B White (1963)

"Even in the face of death, life continues and ultimate goodness wins out." Infused novel with happy movements of friendship, whilst also communicating sad lessons about sacrifice, growing up and the idea of death as a necessary, normal part of life.

Books for Older Ones & Teens (Ages 11+)

Dads

Tiger Eyes

Judy Blume (2011)

Moving story of Davey following her father's death by murder. She's met by Wolf, whose father is also dying, when he recognises the sadness in her eyes. The book ends on an optimistic note that they are going to be alright.

The Dead Fathers Club

Matthew Haig (2018)

A recent find, which fills the gap for teen story about experiencing the death of a Dad. As with all Matt Haig's writing - truly exceptional.

The Blackwater Lightship

Colm Toibin (1999)

Exceptionally writing from the front rank of modern fiction writer; an intelligent and insightful story about the deep and long-lasting impact of a father's death on a family. Short listed for Booker Prize.

Mums

Millions

Frank Cottrell Boyce (2004)

Moving, funny, brilliantly clever book about what two boys got up to after their Mum's death. Now, a major film directed by Danny Boyle.

Lucas

Kevin Brooks (2014)

Brilliant fictional account of life following the death of a mother and falling in love. Deeply insightful. A must read.

Solace of the Road

Siobhan Dowd (2010)

A poignant fictional story of a young girl left bereft and in care. Excellently written by author who since died young.

The Lost Boy's Appreciation Society

Alan Gibbons (2004)

Quality writing which addresses difficult issues with care and understanding.

Monster Calls

Patrick Ness (2012)

Incredible book and major film written by Patrick Ness, based on an idea by the late Siobhan Dowd. 13yr old Connor devastated and isolated finds no-one wants to talk openly about his mother dying, until the monster appears in his life and he is able to find the courage, encourage the adults to face the truth and say goodbye to his mother. Unmissable.

Grief Is The Thing With Feathers

Max Porter (2015)

Through the narrative of Dad and two brothers and Crow, the story of Mum's sudden death and how they create their new family of three is masterfully and intelligently told. Max's Dad died when he was 6, which allows the book its deep insights into the complex and paradoxical world of grief.

Siblings

My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece

Annabel Pitcher (2013)

Moving, sad, yet uplifting story of the death of a twin sister and brother following a terrorist attack.

Long Way Down

Jason Reynolds (2018)

Revenge after the murder of a brother, written for teen boys who hate reading. Outstanding.

Friends and Special People

Vicky Angel

Jaqueline Wilson (2000)

Famous author addresses the difficult issues of a friend's death in her usual competent way. Excellent.

Books for Older Ones & Teens (Ages 11+)

General

Teenage Guide to Life & Death

Dr Shelley Gilbert (2025)

Guide for teens on how to cope with life after someone special dies.

See www.thegriefdoctor.co.uk & www.griefencounter.org.uk

My Grief Handbook

David Trickey, Beck Ferrari and Olivia Clark-Tate (2023)

For teens, user-friendly and full of informed ideas to help young people through their journey of grief. Highly recommended.

The Fault in Our Stars

John Green (2013)

An insightful, bold, sometimes irreverent raw story of young people facing death, life and loss. Now, a film.

Ostrich

Matt Greene (2013)

Truly engaging humorous take on facing own life-limiting illness. Difficult read, adult themes.

The Great Blue Yonder

Alex Shearer (2002)

Brilliant story for 11-15yr olds about a boy in limbo following his fatal road accident and how he finishes his unfinished business on earth. Unmissable.

The Goodbye Book

Tod Parr (2015)

Stunning book about saying goodbye to someone you love. Adult messages using child cartoons.

The Lovely Bones

Alice Sebold (2002)

A more adult version of the Deep Blue Yonder, with 14 year old Susie telling her story after her death. A major film.

Grandparent Loss

Little Ones

Saying Goodbye

Ifeoma Onyefulu (2001)

Beautiful book about death in a Nigerian community through the eyes of a small boy and his great grandmother's funeral.

Medium Ones

Artichoke Hearts

Sita Brahmachari (2017)

A first experience of grief, dealing with the loss of a grandparent and the delicate balance between life and death.

Goodnight, Mr Tom

Michelle Magorian (2014)

Beautiful story of a young boy's relationship with an older person.

When Your Grandparent Dies

Victoria Ryan (2002)

Explaining what happens from a child's-eye view, the elves depict the difficult days before, after and beyond a grandparent's death.

I Lost Something Very Special

Husna Rahman (2021)

Beautiful book, after and beyond a grandparent's death.

Grandpas

Tell Me About Heaven, Grandpa Rabbit!

Jenny Album (2014)

Talking with Grandpa before he dies about death and heaven. The best.

Granpa

John Burningham (1984)

Classic picture book about a child's relationship with her Grandpa and when he's gone. Remains one of the best.

Grandad's Island

Benji Davies (2015)

Grandpa's death explained as an adventure. Wonderful.

Remembering Grandad

Sheila and Kate Isherwood (1999)

Story about a child remembering Grandad.

The Day Poppa Turned Into A Star

Tracey Lawrence (2016)

Lovely tool for discussion about where Grandpa is now.

Grandmas

Dear Grandma Bunny

Dick Bruna (2020)

Miffy addresses death, cartoon style.

A Little Piece Inside of Me Is Missing

Martine Hammer (2025)

Martine conveys a heartfelt understanding and empathy about what the death of a grandparent means to a child, enabling the child to have conversations.

Talking To My Gran About Dying: My School Project

Gina Leveté (2010)

Young voice speaking to gran about dying and what is to come. Delightful.

Goodbye Grandma

Melanie Walsh (2014)

Comforting way of telling young children about death-good illustrations.

Grandmas Shoes

Libby Hatharon (1994)

Cute, but little dated; the grandmas look too old!

The Little Owl

Tim Brown (2019)

Story of grandma's death, with owls.

Come back Grandma

Sue Limb (1995)

Touching story of missing grandma.

Pet Loss

Little Ones

I Will Always Love You

Hans Wilhelm (1985)

Hard to find but the best book ever about a boy who loses his pet daschund.

Medium Ones

Lucy Lets Go

Linda Goldman (2014)

(and her other work)

Fred

Posy Simmonds (2014)

Classic with humour cartoon book about a cat that dies.

Matchstick Mini and Grief

Edel Malone (2020)

Stick cartoon about Matchstick Mini's cat who died. And, part of Edel's delightful series.

Grief Reads for Grown Ups

General

Tuesdays with Morrie

Mitch Albion (1997)

Moving account of Morrie's last days as told to his former student. Morrie mentions that you grieve for your mother until your last days. So true.

Language of Loss

Sacha Bates (2020)

Beyond sad yet truly comforting account of psychotherapist's grief journey.

Levels of Life

Julian Barnes (2014)

A poignant insight into the reality of grief from his heart by one of the UK's greatest writers; anyone who has suffered loss should read it. Often searching for the language of grief, it can be discovered here.

Fun Home

Alison Bechdel (2006)

Premature death told cartoon style; brilliant.

The Grief Survival Guide

Jeff Brazier's (2017)

A bible for different kinds of bereavement. Jeff encourages responses with his reflective questions. He leads discussions on all things grief. Accessible, insightful, intelligent and unmissable.

It's Raining and It's Happy

Ben Brookes Dutton (2014)

Unmissable and amazing book about the loss of his wife Des and bringing up his son Jackson as the unexpected and unwanted role as a widower. The book is based on Ben's fantastic life as a widower blog.

Hyperbole and a Half

Allie Brosh (2013)

Another cartoon style (about depression); brilliant.

With You Every Step (and Subsequent)

Rob Burrow & Kevin Sinfield (2023)

Wonderful writings about "big men don't cry" of losing true male friendship.

Your Child Year by Year – 3 - 14

Tanya Byron (2008)

Interesting book by experts on child development.

The Boys are Back

Simon Carr (2009) & major Clive Owen Film

Autobiographical well-written story of wife/mum loss.

Veronika decides to Die

Paulo Coelho (2014) and his collection.
Exceptional.

The Owner's Manual for Driving your Adolescent Brain

Deak and Deak (2017)

Great explanations and brilliantly illustrated by Freya Harrison.

Snake Oil

John Diamond (2001)

Husband of Nigella Lawson's account of facing his death, leaving his children.

Inside The Wave

Helen Dunmore (2017)

Poet facing her own death. Exceptional.

Motherless Daughters

Hope Edelman (1994)

Ground-breaking, empathic, insightful work.

Outstanding; simply one of the best.

The Incredible Teenage Brain

Hohnen, Gilmour & Murphy (2002)

New insights into how the teen brains works and ideas of support strategies for parents. Not grief focused, but a useful read.

Grief Reads for Grown Ups

General

Thinking Out Loud

Rio Ferdinand (2018)

Lacerating but necessary account of the loss of his wife and being a single parent from international footballer.

Being Mortal

Atul Gawande (2015)

Clear look at death and dying in our society. Highly recommended.

Sweet Dreams, Little One

Massimo Gramellini (2012)

Autobiographical well-written story of loss of Mum from a child's perspective.

Living when a Loved One has Died

Earl Grollman (2002)

Oft sent to a widow/widower.

Reasons To Stay Alive

Matthew Haig (2015)

Autobiographical amazing true story of his battle with depression and near death.

A Fan for All Seasons

Jon Harvey (2023)

Inspiring writing following a sportsmans loss of his brother: the day it all changed.

Mummydaddy

Jeremy Howe (2011)

Autobiographical well-written story of wife/mum loss.

When Breath Becomes Air

Paul Kalanithi (2008)

Astounding account written by a dying neuroscientist

When Bad Things Happen to Good People

Harold Kushner (1982)

Some find this a comforting book, with his wisdom following the death of his son.

I Had a Black Dog

Matthew Johnstone (2007)

Exceptional, illuminating and moving book about depression, which can be used to describe how grief feels. One of my absolute favourites.

A Grief Observed

C S Lewis (2015)

Deeply moving, oft quoted, account of Narnia author's grief.

Sister

Rosamund Lipton (2010)

Fictional account of sibling death is insightful, accurate and well-written.

Life of Pi

Yan Martel (2002) (also film)

Martel's writing offer us deep insights into what it is like to experience the death of your parents and sibling, left living with the fear of death as your constant companion. How caught in exhausting opposites, you find happiness where you can. Exceptional novel, that stays with you long after the final page.

And, Finally

Henry Marsh (2007)

Exceptional, illuminating and moving book by a neurologist facing his own death and the death of his patients. One of my absolute favourite writers.

In the Blood

Andrew Motion (2006)

Autobiographical story about the day his childhood ended following the tragic death of his mother. Beautifully written by one of our great Poet Laureates. Wonderful.

Living on the Seabed

Lindsay Nicholson (2005)

Autobiographical well-written story of husband/dad loss.

Grief Reads for Grown Ups

When its Darkest

Rory O'Connor (2021)

Fantastic guide for facing suicide and surviving.

My Wife said you may want to Marry Me

Jason Rosenthal (2020)

An inspiring memoir of life, love, loss and new beginnings.

Grief Works

Julia Samuels (2018)

Grief stories by a leading expert psychotherapist and CBUK's ground rock.

Option B

Sheryl Sandberg (2017)

An iconic figure as Facebook CCO, she tells her widow's story; fabulously motivational.

The Book of Nuggets

Compiled by Juliet Solomon (2023)

Wisdom quotes from many, including Shelley Gilbert (P122).

Wave: A Memoir of Life After the Tsunami

Deraniyagala Sonali (2013)

What it says on the tin-moving, accurate and interesting.

Toast

Nigel Slater (2004)

Award winning memoir of his childhood experience included losing his mother. All told through food, by Britain's best loved food writer and laced with humour. Now, a major film. It is truly insightful and helpful.

Billy, Me & You

Nicola Streeten (2011)

Cartoon style about the loss of a child.

Blue Sky of Autumn

Elizabeth Turner (2011)

Amazing story of her traumatic grief after her British husband was killed in the 9/11 attack. Her way through grief, from being pregnant with their son William to being able to help others.

How Dare the Sun Rise?

Sandra Uwiringiyimana (2017)

Is an exceptional account of love and loss of her sibling through her experience of genocide, being a refugee as a young child, and growing up with sibling loss in the USA.

How Not To Be a Boy

Robert Webb (2017)

Simply brilliant and entertaining memoir of his childhood, highlighting the impact of the loss of a sibling and a dying and dead mother.

Goodbye, Dearest Holly

Kevin Wells (2005)

Tears on every page for this inspirational book about the Wells' family recovery following the murder of their beloved daughter Holly in Soham. Absolutely remarkable eloquent writing, depth, and honesty from an ordinary family propelled into extraordinary circumstances.

Helping Your Kids With Growing Up

Ed Robert Winston (2017)

Interesting, well-illustrated, up-to-date, fact based holistic explanations to teens and how they grow up. Not trauma focused, but recommended.

Losing Young

Rachel Wilson (2023)

Inspiring writing based on her lived experience of the death of her mother when she was in her twenties, and how it reshapes your life.

For Professionals

It's Not Fair

Foulkes & Picken (2018)

Touching accounts which may resonate with bereaved kids.

Healing with Stories

George W. Burns (2007)

Packed full of stories to use therapeutically.

Grief Book

Dr Shelley Gilbert (2025)

The best interactive book supporting children through grief's journey by using creative activities. A Bible of all grief knowledge.

See thegriefdoctor.co.uk

Teen Guide to Getting on with Life after Death

Dr Shelley Gilbert (2025)

Guide for teens on how to cope with life after someone special dies.

See www.thegriefdoctor.co.uk & www.griefencounter.org.uk

Feeling Like Crap

Nick Luxmoore (2008)

Shares his work with teens in a group.

Working with Bereaved Children and Young People

Brenda Mallon (2010)

Expert in her field, Brenda shares much of her knowledge.

The Snowdrop Tree

Emma Lou Rowe (2025)

Fantastic new interactive book supporting children by using the outside.

Available from SlideAway/Wild Wellies

Love Will Never Die

Clare Shaw (2017)

One of our most used interactive resources for the under-5s. Delightful.

cskidsbooks.com

You Will Be Okay

Julie Stokes (2021)

Insights into how grief feels for teens and support strategies. Based on her work with bereaved young people having founded Winston's Wish, it is truly insightful.

The Day the Sea Went Out & Never Came Back

Margot Sutherland (2003)

Delightful, classy books; whole series recommended.

A Therapeutic Treasure Box

Karen Treisman (2018)

Full of creative techniques and Activities & therapeutic toys with accompanying books designed by Dr Karen Treisman. Available from Treisman Treasures www.safehandsthinkingminds.co.uk

My Grief Handbook

David Trickey, Beck Ferrari and Olivia Clark-Tate (2023)

For teens, user-friendly and full of informed ideas to help young people through their journey of grief. Highly recommended.

The Art of Making Memories

Meik Wiking (2019)

The Hygge happiness campaigner gives us wisdom.

Grief Interactive

Interactive Books

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Touching accounts which may resonate with bereaved kids.

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Grief Book

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Interactive book supporting children through grief's journey by using creative activities. A Bible of all grief knowledge.

See thegriefdoctor.co.uk

Memory Book

Dr Shelley Gilbert (2025)

Interactive book helping children record past, present and future memories.

Facilitates continuing bonds with their loved one who has died.

Teen Guide to Getting on with Life after Death

Dr Shelley Gilbert (2025)

Guide for teens on how to cope with life after someone special dies.

See www.thegriefdoctor.co.uk &

www.griefencounter.org.uk

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Working with Bereaved Children and Young People & Building Continuing Bonds for Grieving and Bereaved Children

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Sesame Street Workshop

When Families grieve:

<https://sesameworkshop.org/topics/grief/>

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Meik Wiking (2019)

Hygge happiness campaigner wisdom.

Muddles, Puddles & Sunshine

Diana Crossley (2001)

Activities from Winston's Wish charity.

Grief Games

Facing Feelings

Jessie Ellinor

A creative game that helps kids to explore feelings in a fun & creative way. Fantastic resource: www.facingfeelings.co.uk Therapyfairground.org; a fantastic therapy playground online.

Grief Digital Resources

Grief Apps

Apart of Me

An amazing adventure.

Smiles & Tears

For ages 0-17 who have experienced loss. It offers features like recording memories, virtual gifts and managing emotions.

Grief Podcasts

Griefcast

Cariad Lloyd

A gathering of grief and loss podcasts, particularly Shelley Gilbert on Ep 41.

Grief Out Loud

The Dougy Center

This podcast features children and adult guests who are navigating bereavement.

If She Can, I Can

Olivia Brafman

S1, Ep 10 Dr Shelley Gilbert From Tragedy to Changing Thousands of Lives.

Living With Loss

Joe Bellman

Encourages sharing stories and destigmatising vulnerability.

Real Women

Lisa Quait

Listen to Dr Shelley Gilbert's episode.

Grief Websites

Avatars and Virtual Reality: can provide a unique space for reflection and connection.

Child Bereavement UK

childbereavementuk.org

Digital regeneration, AI, Interactive Holograms and 4D Films:

immersive experiences that can evoke powerful memories, providing a different way to connect with the past.

Grief Encounter

griefencounter.org.uk

Tribute Sites: can be a place to share stories, photos and messages of support.

The Grief Doctor

thegriefdoctor.co.uk

Memes and Emojis: These visual tools sometimes convey complex feelings more easily than words and can be a powerful way to express yourself.

Virtual Memory Boxes: These allow you to store photos, videos, letters and other mementos in a way that's easily accessible and shareable with others.

What's Your Grief

wonderful, sharing website.

www.whatsyourgrief.com

Winston's Wish

winstonswish.org.uk

Grief Social Media

Facebook

Share memories, photos and thoughts.

Instagram

@griefdoctoruk

Learn about grief in short reels.

I follow: @jeffbrazier, @thedougycenter,

@sara_rian_books, @spokengrief

Snapchat and Tik Tok: Short videos can capture moments of joy or remembrance, offering a creative outlet for emotions.

Youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/@griefdoctor>

Learnings from the Grief Book broken down into easy to follow videos.

X

I follow: @griefencounter @Talkaboutloss @spokengrief @jeffbrazier

About the Curator

I'm Dr Shelley Gilbert, MBE, an independent consultant psychotherapist focusing on child bereavement.

I offer personal advice to the bereaved and their families, and personal training and mentoring to grief professionals.

Having lost my parents at a young age I have dedicated my career to helping those experiencing similar circumstances.

I founded Grief Encounter, one of the leading bereavement charities in the UK and, as their clinical director, I developed grief-coping programmes and resources, including the award-winning Grief Book.



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