

AACAP Resources on How to Talk to Your Children about Sick Adults

Submitted April 5, 2020.

Research Articles:

- Arruda-Colli, Weaver & Wiener (2017) Communication about Dying, Death and Bereavement: A Systematic Review of Children's Literature. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*. Published Online: 1 May 2017 <https://doi.org/10.1089/jpm.2016.0494>

Activities in the Home:

- Create a memory book or box together – include pictures, items, and other things that remind you of the deceased individual. This can be used to help children look to when they are feeling down or thinking about the person.

Books for Children:

- "The Gift of Gerbert's Feathers" by Lori Wiener and Meaghann Weaver
 - o Online resources available for parents, grandparents, teachers (<https://www.maginationpressfamily.org/stress-anxiety-in-kids/talking-about-feelings-with-children-experiencing-serious-illness/>)
- "Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing after Loss" by Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyen
- "Gran-Gran's Best Trick: A Story for Children who Have Lost Someone They Love" by L. Dwight Holden, MD
- "Samantha Jane's Missing Smile: A Story About Coping with the Loss of a Parent" by Julie Kaplow, Donna Pincus, Beth Spiegel
- "Help Me Say Goodbye: Activities for Helping Kids Cope When a Special Person Dies" by Janis Silverman
- "Why Did You Die? Activities to Help Children Cope with Grief and Loss" by Erika Leeuwenburgh
- "When Someone Very Special Dies: Children Can Learn to Cope with Grief" by [Marge Heegaard](#)
 - o Recommended for use with an adult the child has a close relationship.
- "What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?" by [Trevor Romain](#)
- "I Miss You: A First Look At Death" by [Pat Thomas](#) (Author), [Leslie Harker](#) (Illustrator)
- "The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: 20th Anniversary Edition" by [Leo Buscaglia](#)
 - o This book uses the metaphor of seasonal changes to discuss life transitions and does not include literal language about death.
- "The Saddest Time" (An Albert Whitman Prairie Book) by [Norma Simon](#) (Author), [Jacqueline Rogers](#) (Illustrator)
- "How Do We Tell the Children: A Step by Step Guide for Helping Children 2 to Teen Cope When Someone Dies" by Dan Schaefer and Christine Lyons
- "How to Help Children Through a Parent's Serious Illness" by Kathleen McCue
- "Cry, Heart, But Never Break" by Glenn Ringtved

Books/Guides for Parents/Adults:

- “Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child When a Parent is Sick” by Anna C. Muriel and Paula K. Rauch (a Harvard Medical School Book)
- “Community Crises and Disasters: A Parent’s Guide to Talking with Children of All Ages” by Cynthia W. Moore and Paula K. Rausha
- “Helping Children Cope with Death” by The Dougy Center
- “Healing a Child’s Grieving Heart: 100 Practical ideas for Families, Friends, and Caregivers” by Alan D Wolfelt
- “Great Answers to Difficult Questions about Death” by Linda Goldman
- “Bereaved Children and Teens” by Earl Grollman
- “Talking with Children About Loss” (Paperback) by Maria Trozzi

Websites:

- Crisis Guidance from the Cancer Center at Massachusetts General Hospital - <https://www.mghpact.org/covid-19-resources-for-parents>
- How to Talk to Your Child About the Coronavirus (MassGeneral Hospital for Children)
- <https://www.massgeneral.org/children/infectious-diseases/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-coronavirus>
- Parenting Through Community Crises & Disasters – Handbook and Video (MGH PACT) - <https://www.mghpact.org/for-parents/parenting-through-community-crises/>
- Talking to Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus): A Parent Resource (Nat’l Association of School Psychologists) - [https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)
- Taking Care of Your Mental Health in the Face of Uncertainty (AFSP) - <https://afsp.org/taking-care-of-your-mental-health-in-the-face-of-uncertainty/>
- What Parents Can Do: Promoting Mental Wellness in Children (AFSP) - <http://bit.ly/2nu2Ob0>
- 7 Ways to Support Kids and Teens Through the Coronavirus Pandemic (MGH Clay Center)
 - o In English - <http://bit.ly/CC-COVID-19>
 - o In Spanish - <http://bit.ly/CC-COVID-19-ESP>
- 10 Self-Care Tips for Parents (MGH Clay Center) - http://bit.ly/SelfCare_Parents
- Self-Care for Resilience - Videos, Toolkit & Resources for the Whole Family (MGH Clay Center) - http://bit.ly/CC_Self-Care
- Illuminated Collage Home Activity – Interactive art activity to open conversations about mental health with kids (MGH Clay Center) - <https://www.mghclaycenter.org/illuminating-mental-health/>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network site - <http://nctsn.org/trauma-types/traumatic-grief/what-childhood-traumatic-grief>

- Resource page for parents - <http://www.nctsn.net.org/trauma-types/traumatic-grief/parents-caregivers>
- *Ready to Remember: Jeremy's Journey of Hope and Healing* downloadable PDF book for children about traumatic grief
http://nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/ctg_book_09_09_11a.pdf
- Guide for parents when the death is sudden
http://nctsn.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/reports/parents_package1-15-04.pdf
- School guide
http://nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/schools_package.pdf)
- Books for parents, professionals, and children by age
http://nctsn.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=typ_tg3_add&Type=tg3&navPid=typ_tg3_intro
- NY Life Foundation -
<http://www.newyorklife.com/nyl/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=9b20f59594442310VgnVCM10000ac841cacRCRD>
- Sesame Street specific to children's grief (resources, video, materials to view/order, etc.)
- <http://www.sesameworkshop.org/grief>
- Scholastic information on grief; resources for educators
- <http://www.scholastic.com/childrenandgrief/>
- Trauma and Grief Center, Texas Children's
- <https://www.texaschildrens.org/departments/trauma-and-grief-center>