



---

## Children and Grief websites

[Children's Bereavement Center](#)

[The Dougy Center](#)

[National Alliance for Children's Grief Family Resource Portal](#)

## Autistic Children and Grief articles

[Ask Dr. Emily – Grief and Bereavement](#)

Suggestions from two clinical psychologists for families with autistic children, as well as links to other articles and to a site addressing how children at different developmental levels experience and express grief.

[Bereavement – a guide for parents and carers](#)

A short article with bulleted suggestions from the Autism Society in the UK.

[Helping Autistic Children Understand Death and Dying](#)

An excellent article on The Thinking Person's Guide to Autism website summarizing responses to a survey of autistic adults seeking their advice on helping autistic children understand death and dying. Therefore it is also helpful in understanding autistic adults and their reflections on their own experiences related to death and dying.

[How to Talk With Children With Autism About Death and Grief](#)

Helpful strategies and suggestions using examples from a family who experienced a sudden loss. Directed towards dealing with children, but each of the strategies is easily adaptable to supporting adults.

[Pathfinders for Autism: Death and Grieving](#)

Thirteen brief strategies for parents to help their autistic children. Links to a beautiful social story written for a young man whose direct support professional died; this can serve as a model for parents and caregivers.

[Supporting a Child with Autism in Their Grief](#)

Six suggestions from a bereavement counselor, including a reminder that “we need to tease out what is autism from what is actually grief. Social withdrawal, distractibility, fear of separation from others, anger, and anxiety, and an increase in challenging behaviors can all simply be behaviors associated with autism.”

[Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder Through Grief and Loss](#)

A nine-page article from the journal *Teaching Exceptional Children*, helpfully organized

# **Autism & Grief Project**

## **Resources for Parents, Caregivers, and Professionals**

### **Autism, Grief & Children**



---

around a case story of how a high school team responded to the unexpected death of a favorite special education teacher, and the many ways in which staff supported her autistic students and their families.

#### [Talking to your child about tragedy: Six tips for the autism community](#)

Short article on AutismSpeaks.org with six suggestions from a school psychologist on helping autistic children deal with a tragic event in their community or on the news.

### **Losing a Pet article**

#### [Parents with Nonverbal Child Seek Advice on Preparing for Pet's Death](#)

Suggestions on AutismSpeaks.org for a family to help a 7-year-old girl deal with the impending death of their pet cat.

### **Children and Teens — Books and Workbooks**

#### [The Dead Bird](#) by Margaret Wise Brown (ages 4 – 7)

A story about children who find a dead bird in the park and what they do about it, by the author of *Goodnight Moon* and *The Runaway Bunny*.

[Finding Your Own Way to Grieve Workbook Edition](#) by Karla Helbert (ages 5 – 18)  
*From the Amazon description:* “Children and teenagers with autism can struggle to cope with the loss of a loved one, and the complicated and painful emotions of bereavement. This book explains death in concrete terms that the child with autism will understand, explores feelings that the child may encounter as a part of bereavement, and offers creative and expressive activities that facilitate healing. Can be used by an individual or with a support person.”

#### [I Have a Question about Death: Clear Answers for All Kids, Including Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder](#) by Arlan Grad Gaines and Meredith Englander Polsky (ages 5 – 11)

Designed for children who learn best through visual cues and stories, and for parents to read and work through with their kids.

#### [I Have a Question about Cancer: Clear Answers for All Kids, including Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder or other Special Needs](#) by Arlan Grad Gaines and Meredith Englander Polsky (ages 5 – 11)

In the same series as above this book is designed to help kids, including children with autism spectrum disorder, to understand what it means when someone in their life has cancer.

#### [I Have a Question about Divorce: A Book for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder or Other Special Needs](#) by Arlan Grad Gaines and Meredith Englander Polsky (age 5 – 11)

The third book in the “*I Have a Question*” series, designed so a child can look and read as often as they wish, or for a child and parent to discuss together.



---

[It's Ok to Feel This Way: Validating a Child's Swirl of Emotions Amid Trauma: A Healing Art Coloring Book](#) by Susan M. Funk

From the Amazon description: "...deals exclusively with children's swirl of emotions through trauma. While children may recognize themselves through some of the drawings, adults will also have a tool for reaching out to a troubled child. This book is a vehicle for discussion, for children to see that life happens without it being their fault."

[Sad Isn't Bad: A Good-Grief Guidebook for Kids Dealing With Loss](#) by Michaelene Mundy (ages 4 – 8)

From Amazon: "Sad Isn't Bad offers children of all ages a comforting, realistic look at loss—loaded with positive, life-affirming helps for coping with loss as a child. It's a book that promotes honest and healthy grief—and growth."