



Suicide Bereavement Resource Guide

*For parents, carers and professionals supporting
children and young people bereaved by suicide*



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In this guide we share a range of useful resources to help you support children and young people impacted by suicide bereavement in Greater Manchester.

We have included a range of books for different ages, situations and needs, along with short descriptions and recommendations, to help you work out which ones would be most appropriate. This is not an exhaustive list and there are many others available on The Hub at teamluna.org

The age recommendations are suggestions only. Different children will benefit from different resources. Some older children may take refuge in simpler stories, finding they help facilitate conversation. Some younger children may prefer to work through the interactive resources with a parent. You may wish to buy or borrow a few different titles.

All the books should be available to buy online or to loan from your library service (if your local library doesn't have the book you want, you can ask them to request it from elsewhere).

Luna Foundation guides

Luna's own suicide bereavement guides produced for families and people working with children and young people in Greater Manchester are a useful starting point.

The guides provide a summary of evidence-based best practice written in a simple accessible way. The recommendations are illustrated with quotes from members of the Luna Lived Experience Network, all of whom lost a parent to suicide during childhood. The leaflets also contain links to specialist support services.

Available online from greater-manchester-bereavement-service.org.uk/useful-info/

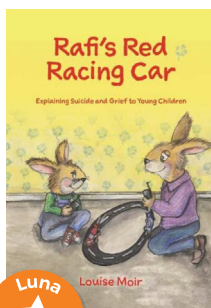


Illustrated stories about parental suicide to read with young children

Rafi's Red Racing Car

Louise Moir

Published in the UK
by Jessica Kingsley Publishers
ISBN-13 978-1785922008



An illustrated story about Rafi, a rabbit who loses his dad to suicide. Explores Rafi's relationship with his dad, Rafi's feelings and worries after his dad's death and how he slowly starts to heal. Written and illustrated by Louise Moir, who lost her husband to

suicide and supported her two sons, the book uses a lot of pictures and simple metaphors to help children make sense of what has happened and facilitate further discussion.

Rafi loses his dad to suicide and the pictures reflect this to some degree. The story could be adjusted to talk about the death of a mum or one of two male parents, but the surviving parent is illustrated as slightly more feminine.

Includes a section on helping children heal with some advice specific to children under 6 and children aged 7 and above.

Guide age: 8 and under.

Available online.

The Little Flower Bulb

Eleanor Gormally

Published in Ireland by Veritas
Publications
ISBN-13 978-1847302601

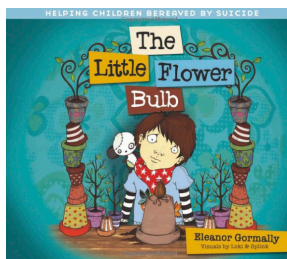
An illustrated story about Jamie, his mum and his twin sisters. It explores how Jamie is feeling, his questions and worries and how he slowly starts to come to terms with his Dad's suicide.

The book is about a child who loses their dad to suicide. The story could be adjusted to talk about the death of a mum or one of two male parents, but the illustrations of the surviving parent are more feminine.

Does not contain a guide for parents or additional support in talking to children about suicide but could be read alongside another guide.

Guide age: 3 to 8.

Available in most bookshops or online.



Luna's Red Hat

Emmi Smid

Published in the UK by Jessica
Kingsley Publishers
ISBN-13 978-1849056298



An illustrated story about Luna, who lost her mum to suicide a year before the story takes place. It explores the emotions Luna felt at the time and how she feels now. The dad in the book offers

explanations and reassurance and helps Luna feel a little better.

The book is about a girl who loses her mum to suicide. The story could be adjusted to talk about the death of a dad or one of two female parents. The illustrations of the surviving parent are more masculine and the illustrations of the parent who died by suicide are more feminine.

Includes a brief guide for parents on talking to and supporting children from a bereavement specialist.

Guide age: 6+ but could be read with younger children too.

Available in most bookshops or online.

Everything changed – a book for children affected by suicide

Mia, Robin and Jasper Scally

Independently published in the UK
ISBN-13 979-8450066110

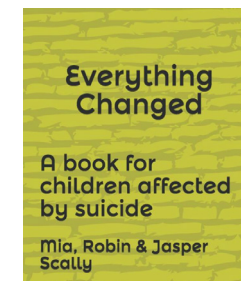
Told in the words of two siblings, Robin and Jasper who lost their dad to suicide aged 6 and 3, this book was written to help other children feel less alone. It describes their experiences and how they are starting to heal. It uses photos and illustrations as well as simple quotes.

We hear the thoughts and feelings of Robin who remembers something of what happened and Jasper who remembers less.

It's worth being aware that one of the children writes, 'It was daddy's choice'. We would recommend avoiding using the word 'choice' when talking to children about a parent's death by suicide as it can reinforce feelings of rejection and abandonment, but in this context these are this child's own words and understanding. It could be something to talk about with your own child/the child you are supporting to help them understand that suicide is not a choice according to our normal understanding of the word.

Guide age: 4 to 8.

Available online with a minimum of 50% of profits going to Child Bereavement UK.



Illustrated stories about related issues to read with young children

Missing Mummy

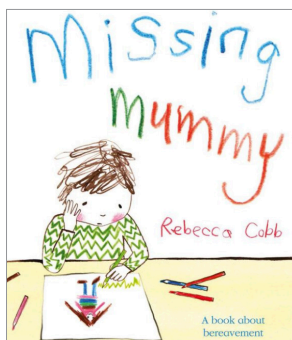
Rebecca Cobb

Published in the UK by Pan Macmillan

ISBN-13 978-0230749511

Not suicide specific but a touching picture book for young children covering some of the potential worries, concerns and misunderstandings that children faced by the death of a parent might experience and ending with reassurance and hope.

The child in the story loses their mum, but the story could be adjusted to talk about the death of a dad.



Guide age: approx. 3 to 6.

Available in most bookshops and online.

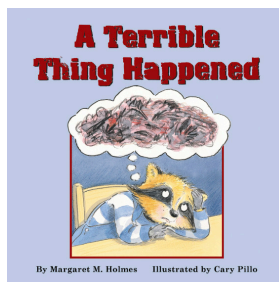
A Terrible Thing Happened

Margaret M Holmes & Cary Pillo

Published in the USA by the American Psychological Association

ISBN-13 978-1557987013

An illustrated short story about Sherman, a raccoon who witnesses something terrible. It is not specific to suicide but refers to the 'terrible thing' Sherman saw, how he feels afterwards and the support he finally receives. Includes a detailed note to parents and caregivers about how to open the channels of communication with children who have witnessed something traumatic.



Guide ages: 4 to 8 years.

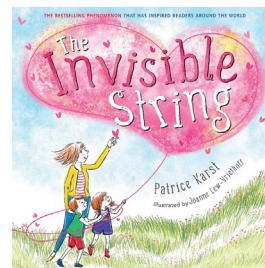
Available in most bookshops and online.

The Invisible String

Patrice Karst

Published in the UK by Little, Brown Book Group

ISBN-13 978-0316486231



A picture book to help children deal with anxiety, loss and grief, The Invisible String explores the intangible yet unbreakable connections

between us, created by love. In this story, a mum explains to her worried children that they, and everyone they love, are connected by an invisible string of love. The story does not focus on grief or mention suicide, but one child asks if the string reaches to heaven as a way of connecting to people who have died. There are no other specific religious elements within the book. It could be phrased differently if you prefer not to talk about the concept of heaven at all. It can be used as a conversation starter and a way to reassure children who are experiencing separation anxiety in the wake of a suicide bereavement. An Invisible String Workbook is also available.

Guide age: 3 to 7.

Available in most bookshops and online.

Beyond the Rough Rock also has some practical suggestions and advice to help families support children experiencing separation anxiety (see page 12).

A Jumble of Knotted Thoughts

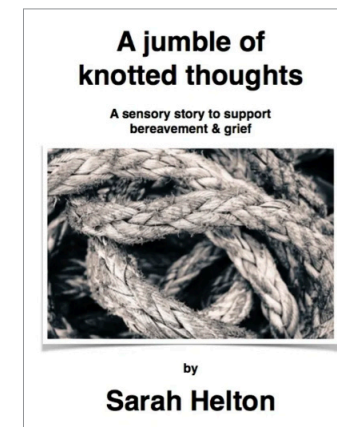
Sarah Helton

Published in the UK

Independently produced booklet (no ISBN).

Written for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or for younger children, this is a simple story to help children process a death and manage the emotions of bereavement and grief. Each line of the story is supported with a sensory activity or action, using everyday objects (not included with the book). It is not specific to suicide bereavement

Available online at backpocketteacher.co.uk.



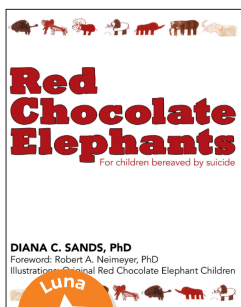
Workbooks and activity books for primary aged children

Red Chocolate Elephants

Dr Diana C Sands, with contributions and illustrations by children bereaved by suicide.

Published in Australia by Karridale Pty Ltd Sydney

ISBN-13 978-0646542379



This book explores thoughts, feelings and worries that bereaved children might experience through supportive text, illustrations, quotes and individual experiences. It gives ideas for activities children might like to do to explore

their emotions, grief and memories. One of its key aims is to help children feel less alone.

The children who have contributed to this booklet have all lost their dad to suicide, however the support is also relevant to children who have lost their mum.

Guide age: primary school children.
Recommended to read with an adult, dipping into relevant pages and sections.
Available from Child Bereavement UK and online.

After a Suicide Death – An Activity Book for Grieving Kids

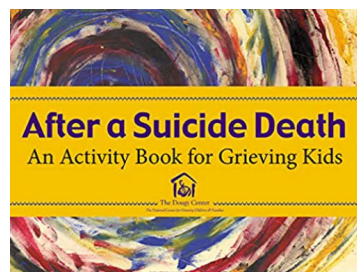
The Dougy Center, USA

Published in the USA by the Dougy Center.

ISBN-13 978-1890534189

An activity book containing information and support, suggestions from other children and lots of activities and puzzles to help children navigate the grief process. There is space to draw, doodle, record memories and stick photographs. Some references are specific to the USA but the book could still be helpful to children in other parts of the world.

Guide age: designed for primary school and early secondary school age children.
Available online.



Finding Your Own Way To Grieve – A Creative Activity Workbook for Kids and Teens on the Autism Spectrum

Karla Helbert

Published in the UK by Jessica Kingsley Publishers

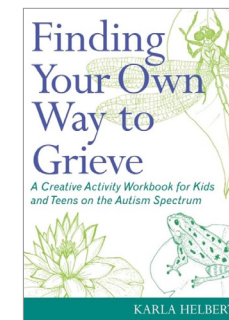
ISBN-13 978-1849059220

This book contains useful and accessible information and activities to help children and young people on the autism spectrum understand

their feelings, and the feelings of those around them.

It is not specific to suicide but may be useful to help some children and young people understand more about death and individual grief.

Guide age: 8+.
Available at most bookshops and online.



Support and activity books for older children and young people

You Will Be Okay – find strength, stay hopeful and get to grips with grief.

Julie Stokes

Published in the UK by Wren and Rook
ISBN-13 978-1526363893

You Will Be Okay is written by clinical psychologist and founder of Winston's Wish, Julie Stokes (who also co-authored Beyond the Rough Rock – see page 12). It's an accessible and comforting mix of stories, suggestions, support and activities to help young people understand and work through their grief. It is nicely designed with lots of doodle-style illustrations and interesting typefaces.

The book is not specific to suicide bereavement, but it acknowledges that this kind of loss can be particularly traumatic and encourages young people to seek

specialist support. Page 100 has a section on how some of the suggestions in the book might apply to someone bereaved by suicide and shares two experiences of suicide loss. Page 143 has a section on dealing with particularly traumatic memories.

The book uses examples of famous people that young people are likely to recognise. It shares part of their stories to help young people recognise that grief is everywhere and can be made part of life.

Guide age: 10+ (aimed at 12-16 but younger children may benefit from reading with you and older children and adults may also find useful perspectives and suggestions).
Available in most bookshops and online.

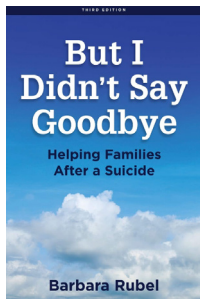


But I Didn't Say Goodbye: Helping Families After a Suicide

Barbara Rubel

Published in the USA

ISBN-13 978-1892906021



This book is told through the eyes of Alex, an 11-year-old boy whose father has died by suicide. This story is a glimpse into his traumatic and life changing personal experience.

The book introduces you to a bereaved family immediately after a suicide and ends a year later. It starts with the loss itself and the immediate aftermath and continues to deal with issues Alex and his family face when coping with their grief over the following year. The third edition adds an additional perspective to each chapter, ten years on. Each chapter ends with questions to help young people think and talk about the issues in that chapter and how they might relate to them.

The dialogue in each chapter will show you what honest, open communication between children and the people in their lives might look like.

Guide age: 10+ (parents may wish to read with their children).

Available in most bookshops and online.

I Love You Sunshine

Addy Farmer and Darren Gate

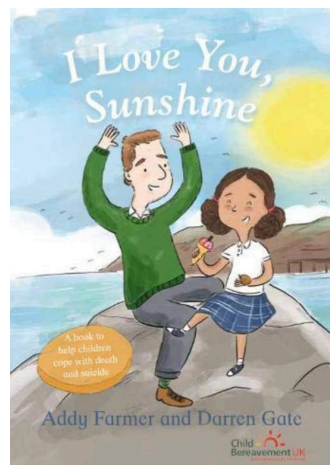
Published in the UK

ISBN-13 978-0995606852

A chapter book to read with children, or for children to read themselves. The book tells the story of Milly, a primary school age child who loses her much loved dad to suicide. It follows her story as she navigates her grief with help from her mum, her granny, her school and her friends. The book contains guidance for parents from Child Bereavement UK and 5% of all profits go to the charity.

Guide age: 7+.

Available online.



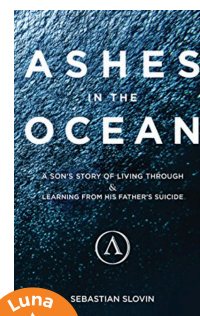
Autobiographies and personal experiences of parental suicide

Ashes in the Ocean

Sebastian Slovin

Published in the USA by Nature Unplugged

ISBN-13 978-0692051191



Sebastian lost his father to suicide at a young age. In this relatable and honest memoir, Sebastian writes about his memories of his dad as a champion open water swimmer, his experience of growing up and living in the shadow of his father's death. He describes becoming a

world champion bodyboarder himself and travelling to Australia and South Africa in an attempt to understand the secrets surrounding his dad's death.

Guide age: 14+.

Available in most bookshops and online.

Still Here with Me – teenagers and children on losing a parent

Suzanne Sjoqvist, translated by Margaret Myers

Published in the UK by Jessica Kingsley Publishers

ISBN-13 978-1843105015

In this anthology, 31 children and young people tell their stories of losing a parent. Some young people (Julia, Saga, Norah) don't make it clear how their parent died but focus

Lucky

Professor Green

Published by Blink Publishing in the UK

ISBN-13 978-1910536728

Professor Green (aka Stephen Manderson) lost his father to suicide when he was 24. In this autobiography he reflects on how his upbringing and experiences have shaped the person and musician he is today. He talks about his dad's suicide in chapter six 'If I Ever See You Again' and reflects on it further in the last chapter 'Full Circle'.



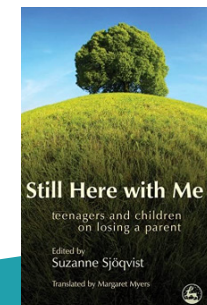
Guide age: 16+. Discusses drug use and violence.

Available in most bookshops and online.

on the feelings they experienced at the time and now. Some (Sten, Tove and Sara) talk specifically about suicide bereavement. The other 25 children were bereaved in other ways, but elements of their experience may still be relevant and helpful.

Guide age: 12+.

Available online.



Resources for parents, carers and professionals supporting children and young people bereaved by suicide

Beyond the rough rock – supporting a child who has been bereaved through suicide

Di Stubbs and Julie Stokes at Winston's Wish

Published in the UK

ISBN-13 978-0953912377

This booklet is written for adults about supporting children but it also has support for grieving parents.

It contains detailed information and suggestions on talking about suicide bereavement

with children, including stages of explanation depending on the child's age and understanding.

The book includes a lot of example phrases parents might want to use or adjust to talk to their children about what happened. It also includes suggestions for practical activities to help with conversations and working with feelings (for example, using memory stones or making a memory box) and ideas to help support children with separation anxiety and nighttime worries.

Available online from Winston's Wish shop.winstonswish.org/collections/books/products/beyond-the-rough-rock

Help is at Hand – Support after someone may have died by suicide

National Suicide Prevention Alliance

Published in the UK

Independently published booklet (no ISBN).

Designed to dip in and out of rather than read cover to cover, this guide covers both practical and emotional aspects of a suicide bereavement – how you are feeling and what might be happening. It also provides template letters and formats for record keeping.

It provides support immediately after the death and further down the line, giving signposts to additional support at each stage.

There are sections for partners of the person who has died and for their children.

Guide age: older children and adults.

Available as a booklet or a PDF to download from the Support After Suicide Partnership – supportaftersuicide.org.uk/resource/help-is-at-hand/



Supporting children after a suicide loss – a guide for parents and caregivers

Sarah S Montgomery and Susan M Coale

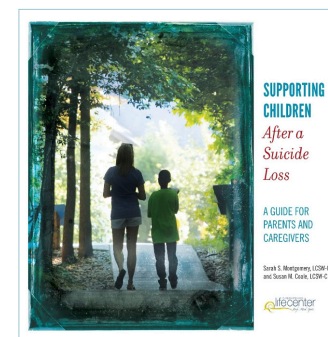
Published in the USA by Chesapeake Life Center

ISBN-13 978-1508412991

This book is written for parents, caregivers and teachers. It has a lot of small text and slightly more complex language than some of the other booklets and, as a result, may be hard for someone who is grieving to take in. It's worth persevering as there are a lot of useful suggestions and support, new perspectives, age-appropriate phrases and responses and answers to frequently asked questions.

It also includes information for teachers and school administrators specifically for addressing suicide in a school setting.

Available online.



We All Grieve – supporting bereaved children who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)

Winston's Wish

Published in the UK

ISBN-13 978-0955953996

We all Grieve explores how children with SEND are affected by bereavement and how those around them

can support them and develop their understanding of death and loss. It is not written specifically for suicide bereavement but may be helpful to look at alongside other books when supporting children with SEND who have been bereaved by suicide.

This book is designed for parents, carers, educational professionals and other adults supporting children and young adults with SEND who have experienced the death of someone close to them. It offers information, practical suggestions and ideas for activities as well as where to find other support.

Available online from Winston's Wish – shop.winstonswish.org/products/we-all-grieve



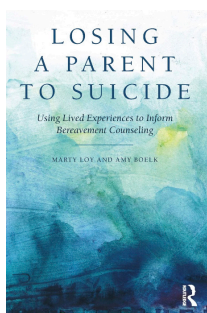
Longer reads for parents and professionals

Losing a Parent to Suicide – Using Lived Experience to Inform Bereavement Counselling

Marty Loy and Amy Boelk

Published in the UK by Routledge

ISBN-13 978-0415816182



This book combines personal accounts of losing a parent to suicide with reviews of existing literature and research. It aims to give counsellors and other professionals a better understanding of this kind of loss, along with evidence

based support strategies for those supporting a bereaved child.

This introduction suggests the personal experiences may act as peer support for bereaved people. Some of these contain detailed descriptions of method. Because of this, we would not recommend it for children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Available in most bookshops and online.

After a Parent's Suicide – Helping Children Heal

Margo Requarth

Published in the USA by Healing Hearts Press

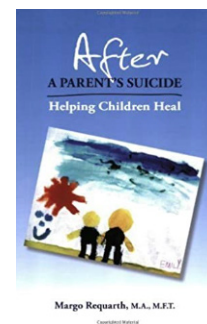
ISBN-13 978-0977746804

Written by a psychotherapist who lost her mum to suicide at a young age, this book gives detailed suggestions for supporting bereaved children, both immediately and in the long term.

It has chapters on *How Could This Happen? Telling Your Child*, *How Young Children Grieve* (age 0-12) and *Teen Grief*. The following chapters cover *Grieving Responses*, *Funeral Rituals*, *Religious and Spiritual Perspectives* and then moves on to *Back to School*, *Memory Building*, *Special Events and Anniversaries* and *Support Groups*. The chapters towards the end are for parents themselves – *When Your Spouse Carries Out Suicide*, *A Divorced Partner's Perspective* and *Taking Care of Yourself*. It also covers complicated suicides and mourning and mental illness in children. It finishes with a chapter called *Grieving and Growing over Time: The Wonder of Human Resilience*.

Although much longer than some of the other booklets and guides we have listed, this book covers a huge range of topics in helpful detail with suggested approaches and phrasing wherever possible. It includes personal stories to illustrate the recommendations made.

Available online.



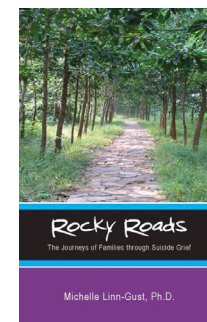
Rocky Roads – The Journeys of Families Through Suicide Grief

Michelle Linn-Gust Ph.D

Published in the USA

ISBN-13 978-0972331814

This book was written to help families and individuals find their way through their own grief and ultimately find hope and strengthen family bonds, even after a suicide loss. It explores the grief experience of the family unit and how this can affect family relationships. It also contains notes for caregivers, professionals and friends.



Available online.

About Luna Foundation

Luna Foundation was founded in March 2022 by Anna Wardley. We aim to transform the way children and young people are supported after suicide bereavement, particularly after the death of a parent or primary caregiver. Every child or young person who loses a parent to suicide deserves timely support to help them navigate their complicated grief and reduce the risks they face to their own mental health and wellbeing.

We offer evidence-informed suicide bereavement training for people who work with children and young people. In addition to campaigning work, we share resources, best practice and guidance to help improve the way children left behind after suicide are cared for.

Visit teamluna.org for more information.



hello@teamluna.org
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