

## Books and resources for children (and the adults who care for them)

*We've split this into sections (pre-school, primary school, secondary school and neurodivergent children) as a general guide. You know your children best though, so please do look across the sections, in case there's something that could be helpful from another section.*

### PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### BOOKS

*Please also see the pre-school suggestions as many primary-aged children may prefer picture or cartoon books.*

#### Cancer

*Cancer party!* by Sara Olsher (Ages 4-10).

Explaining cancer, chemo, and radiotherapy to children in a non-scary way.

*The secret c – straight talking about cancer* by Julie A Stokes (Ages 7-10).

A book to support parents or carers with talking to children about cancer, encouraging open communication and questions about cancer within the family.

*What happens when someone I love has cancer* by Sara S Olsher (Ages 4-10).

Explains the science of cancer and how a loved one's diagnosis and treatment affects a child's day-to-day life.

*Chemotherapy 101* by Chelsea Gomez (Ages 3-9).

Explaining chemotherapy in a way that children can understand. It emphasises that cancer is not the child's fault and encourages them to ask questions.

*A dragon in your heart* by Sophie LeBlanc (Ages 5+).

A picture book following the author's own experiences of explaining cancer to her very young daughter. It includes details about cancer and how chemotherapy works.

*I know someone with cancer* (series of on-line booklets with information and activities) by BUPA.

Includes booklets on the following topics:

What does it mean?

Visiting hospital

Life at home

Activity book

<https://www.bupa.co.uk/bupa-cancer-promise/i-know-someone-with-cancer>

#### Haematological Cancer

*Kelsey and the yellow kite* by Myeloma UK.

For children to understand myeloma.

Available to read online/download here - <https://www.fruitflycollective.com/s/Myeloma-UK-Kelsey-and-the-Yellow-Kite.pdf>

#### Separation/bereavement

*The invisible string* by Patrice Karst (Ages 4-8).

For helping children with separations in general, including death. It explains that even when people are not physically there, you remain connected to them by holding them in your heart and mind.

*Always and forever* by Allan Durant (Ages 5-10).

A story about the death of a fox that explains death gently to younger children.

*When dinosaurs die* by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown (Ages 4-8).

A comprehensive guide for families dealing with the loss of loved ones. Helps children understand what death means and how best to cope with their feelings.

*Badger's parting gifts* by Susan Varley (Ages 4-8).

Badger's friends learn to come to terms with his death.

*Flamingo Dreams* by Jo Napoli (Ages 6-10).

This book tells the story of a child's experience of their father's serious illness (including a final holiday together) until his death.

*Michael Rosen's sad book* by Michael Rosen (Ages 8+).

About a father who has lost his son. The feelings he experiences and how he copes with them.

*The heart and the bottle* by Oliver Jeffers (Ages 5+).

About a girl who suffers a bereavement and copes by trying to protect herself, until she meets someone who can help her find her heart again.

## ACTIVITY BOOKS

### Serious Illness

*When someone has a very serious illness –children can learn to cope with loss and change* by Marge Heegaard (Ages 6-10).

A workbook to help children cope with feelings about serious illness.

### Cancer

*The dot method* by Kelsey Mora (Ages 4-12).

A workbook that uses activities to make cancer less scary, less confusing, and more approachable for children.

*Arthur: When someone you know has cancer* by Livestrong (Ages 3-10).

A story about a cook at a school gets cancer. Includes advice and resources about talking to children about cancer at different ages and stages.

Available here - [https://cms-tc.pbskids.org/arthurwebsite/resources/pdfs/arthur\\_cancer\\_english.pdf](https://cms-tc.pbskids.org/arthurwebsite/resources/pdfs/arthur_cancer_english.pdf)

### Pre-bereavement

*Little elephant visits the hospice* by Joe Cavalli-Price, Jake Abrams and Georgina Potier

A children's activity, information and emotional processing book to guide children through the unfamiliar emotional and sometimes confusing experience of visiting a hospice.

### Loss/bereavement

*When someone very special dies: Children can learn to cope with grief* by Marge Heegaard. (Ages 6-12).

A creative, interactive book that helps children understand death, express their emotions, and develop coping skills by illustrating their own personal story.

A downloadable version is available here - <https://www.tameside.gov.uk/getmedia/9b82a031-c6bc-4c59-af0e-383e59bd31b6/when-someone-very-special-dies- full-book.pdf>

*Ollie the octopus: Loss and bereavement activity book* by Karen Treisman (Ages 5-10).

An activity book with a story followed by creative activities and colourful photocopiable worksheets to help children explore aspects of loss and bereavement, and find ways to understand and cope with them.

*Help me say goodbye* by Janis Silverman (Aged 5+).

Activities to help children cope when a special person dies. Helps them express in pictures what might be difficult to express in words.

*Muddles, puddles and sunshine* by Diana Crossley (Aged 5+).

An activity workbook for children when someone has died, offering an outlet for the different feelings they may have. It aims to help children make sense of their experience while finding a balance between remembering the person who has died and having fun.

A downloadable version is available here - <https://www.rockinghamji.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Muddles-Puddles-Sunshine.pdf>

*Remembering* by Dianne Leutner (Aged 4-10).

A memory book for children when someone special in their life has died. It's part-book, part-scrapbook and was created to help keep a child's memories alive.

## VIDEOS

*Talking to kids about cancer* by Rethink Breast Cancer.

A series of short videos by an American organisation called Rethink Breast Cancer (though relevant to any type of cancer). They explain different aspects of cancer using space-themed animation and the voices of children with parents with cancer, as below:

The Discovery (cancer diagnosis) - <https://youtu.be/WXMKRuUnviw>

Operation Rescue (cancer treatment) - <https://youtu.be/fLuCUeGadxg>

The Black Dot Returns (recurrence) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvo1gFjgZI>

H.E.L.P Squad (how to help) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvo1gFjgZI>

Transmission Feelings (coping with difficult feelings) - <https://youtu.be/8cXHoLB08c4>

*Someone in my family has cancer: A video for kids and parents* (Aged 4+).

Explains cancer in everyday language that is clear and easy to understand, what it is, what (doesn't) cause it, effects on relationships, what happens while being treated.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1erqxA\\_Ouk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1erqxA_Ouk)

## APPS

*A kids' guide to cancer* by Camp Quality charity (Aged up to 15).

A tool to help navigate the difficult and emotional conversations about cancer together, as a family. Answering the most common questions children have about cancer in a safe, interactive and educational way. The app can be used by children independently (if age-appropriate), but also encourages them to speak to adults they trust.

<https://www.campquality.org.au/resources/kids-guide-to-cancer-app/>