

Helping Kids Cope with Pet Deaths

Author offers advice for parents on coming to terms with a beloved dog's death.

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Dealing with the death of a dog or puppy is challenging enough, but communicating that loss to young children can be daunting. Seeing this, one mother and dog lover turned that difficult situation around by writing a children's book.

The book, "Angel Dog Austin," by Teri Bennett was written, Bennett says, to help children and families come to terms with their loss.

And since writing the book, Bennett said, she's often asked her advice for dealing with the loss of a pet. She offers the following tips for parents when explaining a loss of a family dog: Honesty is the best policy, but don't give too many details on the pet's death. Keep the explanation short. It's OK to be sad. Parents should let their children know that they're sad, too. It's important to reassure children that the pet is OK and had a fulfilling life. Create a memorial scrapbook. Help the child express their feelings and honor the beloved pet. A creative memorial is something a child can take pride in and treasure.

For more information on Bennett or "Angel Dog Austin," visit <http://www.teribennett.com>