

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT EUTHANASIA



Helpful Tips:

Be honest

If a pet needs to be euthanized, it is best to let the child know as soon as possible.

Show your own feelings

Let the child see that it is okay to be sad or cry. Let them know they are not alone in their grief.

Make their attendance a choice

Witnessing a euthanasia could be traumatic for a child. Offer them a choice to attend, or alternatively to say their goodbyes before or after the event takes place.

Update their teacher

Inform the teacher of the recent loss so they can better understand any changes in mood or behavior.

Use clear, direct language

Use words like "death" and "dying", as euphemisms could be confusing.

Memorialize the pet

Consider dedicating a spot in your home where memories and pictures can be shared.

What to Avoid:

Confusing euphemisms

Example: "We are putting Fluffy to sleep".

Example: "Max went to a better place".

These terms may leave the child scared to go to sleep themselves, or look for their beloved pet "someplace else".

Avoiding the truth

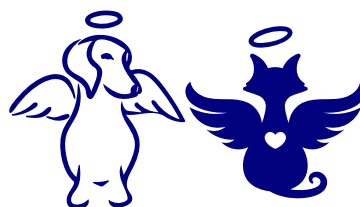
Example: "Sammy ran away".

Example: "Buster went on vacation".

Avoiding the reality of the situation will likely not ease the sadness of the absent pet, and discovering the truth later may cause greater sadness.

Blame the veterinarian

This is unfair to the veterinary team, as well as may cause future distrust of medical professionals.



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Children's Books on Pet Loss:

The Rainbow Bridge: A Visit to Pet Paradise

By Adrian Raeside

The Forever Dog

By Bill Cochran

Saying Goodbye to Lulu

By Corrine Demas

Goodbye, Bella: A Pet Loss Story

By Katherine Pendergast & Lacie Brueckner

The Invisible Leash

By Patrice Karst



What I love most about you is...

My favorite memory of you is...



What I love most about you is...

My favorite memory of you is...

