

# Pet Loss Resources

## PET LOSS HOTLINES

Here are some examples of hotlines located around the country. Many of the websites include other resources for grieving, such as articles, reading lists, information about support groups, and lists of other hotlines.



### Arizona

Companion Animal Association of Arizona, 602-995-5885. Staffed by volunteers who have lost a pet and have been trained in bereavement support. All calls are returned collect. (See *website resources* for more information).

[www.caaainc.org](http://www.caaainc.org)

### California

University of California at Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, toll-free 800-565-1526. Staffed by veterinary students. Monday–Friday, 6:30–9:30 pm, Pacific Time.

[www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/petloss/index.htm](http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/petloss/index.htm)

### Massachusetts

Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, 508-839-7966. Staffed by veterinary students who have participated in extensive training sessions with licensed psychologists. Monday–Friday, 6–9 pm, Eastern Time.

[www.tufts.edu/vet/petloss/](http://www.tufts.edu/vet/petloss/)

### Michigan

College of Veterinary Medicine at Michigan State University, 517-432-2696.

Staffed by veterinary students trained by a professional grief counselor.

Tuesday–Thursday, 6:30–9:30 pm, Eastern Time.

<http://cvm.msu.edu/petloss/index.htm>

### New York

College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, 607-253-3932.

Staffed by veterinary students trained by a grief counselor. Tuesday–Thursday, 6–9 pm, Eastern Time. Their site also gives links to additional telephone hotlines.

<http://web.vet.cornell.edu/public/petloss>

### Iowa

Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine, 888-478-7574.

Staffed by veterinary students. September–April: seven days a week, 6–9 pm.

May–August: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 6–9 pm, Central Time.

[www.vetmed.iastate.edu/animals/petloss/](http://www.vetmed.iastate.edu/animals/petloss/)

### Washington

Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine, 509-335-5704.

Staffed by veterinary students. Monday–Thursday, 6:30–9:00 pm, Saturday, 1–3 pm.

[www.vetmed.wsu.edu/PLHL/home/index.asp](http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/PLHL/home/index.asp)

## PET LOSS WEBSITES

**The Association of Pet Loss and Bereavement** is a nonprofit association of concerned people who are experienced and knowledgeable about pet death. The organization provides pet bereavement counseling and public education to those interested in counseling others. Services and online articles are available to members only (for a fee of \$25 per year), but lists of hotlines and support groups are provided free at [www.aplb.org](http://www.aplb.org).

**The Companion Animal Association of Arizona, Inc.**, has a Pet Grief Support Service that provides a telephone helpline, a support group, and a reading list of pet-loss resources. The association is operated entirely by volunteers who receive ongoing support and training from a certified grief counselor who specializes in pet loss. Visit [www.caaainc.org](http://www.caaainc.org).

**The Delta Society** is a nonprofit organization that provides information on the human-animal bond. The organization offers a bibliography of publications on pet loss and a list of pet-loss counselors, helplines, and support groups, available by request at 425-226-7357 or at [www.deltasociety.org](http://www.deltasociety.org) under the health benefits section (pet loss and bereavement).

## ONLINE ARTICLES

**“Getting Through Grief”** by Julie Axelrod of the Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement. Can be found at [www.aldf.org](http://www.aldf.org) (click on “Resources,” then “Legal Information,” then “Losing a Best Friend.”)

**Various articles** by Moira Anderson Allen, M.Ed., on pet loss and bereavement. Can be found at [www.pet-loss.net/](http://www.pet-loss.net/).

**“Supporting People Who Are Grieving”** from Washington State University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. Can be found at this URL:  
[www.vetmed.wsu.edu/plhl/support.asp](http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/plhl/support.asp)

## ONLINE COMMUNITY

Best Friends has a Best Friends Network community for people dealing with pet loss. To join or visit the Prayers, Healing and Support community, go to this web page:  
<http://network.bestfriends.org/PHS>

## BOOKS

### ***Goodbye, Friend* by Gary Kowlaski**

Kowalski's book is full of sound, compassionate advice to get through the loss of a pet. Included are ideas for rituals and ceremonies, spiritual guidance and readings for solace. Kowalski includes advice on how to take care of yourself after the death of a pet and the importance of honesty when talking with children about this event.

### ***Saying Goodbye to the Pet You Love* by Lorri A. Greene, Ph.D.**

Written by a psychologist who is a leader in the field of pet bereavement, this practical but sympathetic guide validates the survivor's often misunderstood feelings, explains the importance of the human/animal bond, and offers strategies for working through the grieving process. Topics include memorializing the pet, recognizing problematic thinking, finding support, dealing with guilt and explaining the pet's death to a child. The special needs of the guardians of working animals are addressed, as are self-help resources for the elderly.

### ***Grieving the Death of a Pet* by Betty Carmack**

Written by a nurse and professional pet-loss counselor, this book draws from her experience of counseling people who have lost a beloved pet, as well as the loss of her own furry friends. Carmack offers pet-loss support to counter "a world that reminds us repeatedly that grief for an animal doesn't count as much as grief for a person." The book is poignant and sometimes heartrending, filled with personal stories of love and loss.

### ***Pet Loss: A Spiritual Guide* by Julia Harris**

This book helps readers to understand the many emotional reactions to the loss of a pet; assist children in coping with and recovering from their loss; and learn how different spiritual belief systems recognize and counsel pet loss. Practical topics include what happens at a pet cemetery burial, cremation or home burial; what legal arrangements are available; how to develop a ceremony to honor the pet; and how to cope with the trauma of a terminally ill or runaway pet.

### ***Cold Noses at the Pearly Gates* by Gary Kurz**

This book can help you cope with the loss of a pet and tries to answer questions about pet afterlife.

### ***When Only the Love Remains* by Emily Margaret Stuparyk**

This book is a collection of poignant poems.

### ***Three Cats, Two Dogs: One Journey Through Multiple Pet Loss* by David Congalton**

The author talks about how he transformed his anguish over the loss of several pets into a commitment to abused and abandoned animals. This down-to-earth book offers solace and practical suggestions for coping with grief. Anyone who has an animal companion will find this story inspirational and hopeful.

**For children and teenagers:*****Dog Heaven* by Cynthia Rylant*****Cat Heaven* by Cynthia Rylant**

These books will appeal to children from preschool to grade two. The simple, colorful illustrations take the child on a journey to Dog Heaven or Cat Heaven, places of warmth and happiness. In Dog Heaven, there are “fields and fields and fields,” and in Cat Heaven, there are thousands of toys and soft angel laps in which to cuddle up. God is depicted as a kindly older man who benevolently watches over his charges.

***Tear Soup* by Pat Schweibert**

This book tells the story of an old woman named Grandy who is making “tear soup.” It’s not specifically about the death of a pet – the reader is not sure what loss Grandy has suffered – so the book is relevant for any grieving process. The full-color illustrations are wonderful. The book is recommended for ages four to eight, but it has been a comfort to people of all ages.

***For Every Dog an Angel* by Christine Davis*****For Every Cat an Angel* by Christine Davis**

These small short books, which tell the story of the Rainbow Bridge, are beautifully illustrated in whimsical watercolors. They are appropriate for a wide range of ages.

**For therapists:*****Pet Loss and Human Emotion: Guiding Clients Through Grief*  
by Cheri Barton Ross and Jane Baron-Sorensen**

This unique guide, written for mental health professionals, serves as a practical introduction to the field of human/animal bonding. The authors feel strongly that pet loss needs to be understood by therapists and others in the helping professions, to better enable them to help clients through this type of grief. Citing several case studies, the book describes various techniques for helping clients cope with the loss of a pet. There are chapters on working with children and the elderly.