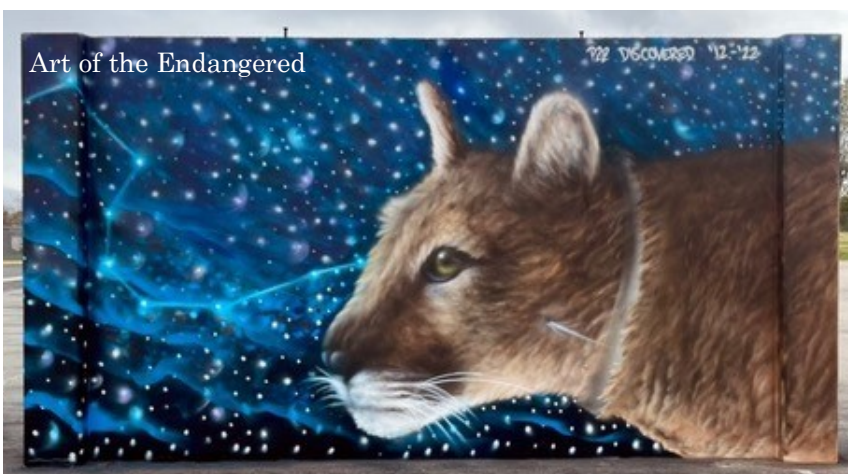


Talking to Youth about the Death of P-22

Many resources suggest when talking with children about the death of an animal it's best to use simple, direct language. Tell them what happened (sparing any graphic details) and allow them to ask questions. Use words like death or dead. Beware of euphemisms. Saying that "they went to sleep" may make children afraid they will die when they fall asleep, for example, and saying "they ran away" may make them feel sad and wonder why the animal left. Children may ask what happens to the animal after it dies, and for this, it's all right to share your beliefs. It's also ok to say, "I don't know," and convey that it's a

mystery. When an animal is euthanized, it's best to explain to a young child that the pet was in pain and was unable to be helped, and that the vet had to help it die. In our [official NWF eulogy](#), where more details can be found, we share that "The decision by veterinarians with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to euthanize P-22 was due to the severe injuries he sustained in a recent car collision and other health conditions they discovered during his health assessment." Children express grief in many ways and in differing intensities. They may seem to play normally, but suddenly see an image or something on television that triggers grief. Let them know it's ok to cry and to express their grief. Older children may ask some morbid questions about what happens to



animals after they die.

They will also observe your grief. It's ok to cry in front of your child; it conveys to them that you loved and miss the animal too. It's important to let kids know that grief will fade, but that the good memories and the lessons learned will be there forever.

Celebrating the Lessons we Learned from P-22

P-22's unique life, crossing major freeways to live in Griffith Park, has taught us how to co-exist with wildlife. His legacy to us, and to his kind will never fade. He ensured a future for the entire population of mountain lions in the Santa Monica Mountains by inspiring us to build the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, which broke ground in spring 2022. We can be a good neighbor to many species by building even more wildlife crossings around the world.

It's often helpful to have a creative memorial for your special animal friend. Planting a tree in their memory, drawing pictures, or making a bulletin board full of the lessons he taught your students are all good ways to celebrate P-22's life. For over 40 activities, coloring pages, and videos about P-22 and his other wild friends and the people working to protect them, please visit these free online resources (from our 2020 P-22 Day) at www.P22Wonderland.org.



We have so many memories of P-22, and we know you do, too. If you'd like to share those memories with us, please email your memories to crossinginfo@nwf.org — and if you'd like to share those memories with others in our community, you can visit our [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#). For more information please visit: www.SaveLACougars.org & www.101wildlifecrossing.org

