Adoption

Gaston
By Kelly DiPuccio, Illus. by Christian Robinson
Gaston is a bulldog puppy who doesn’t look quite right in his poodle pack, but learns that love is what makes a family.

Home at Last
By Vera B. Williams, Illus. by Chris Raschka and Vera B. Williams
Lester is happy when he is adopted by Daddy Albert and Daddy Rich, however at night he finds he cannot fall asleep because he is alone and wonders when he will feel truly at “home.”

Just Right Family: An Adoption Story
By Silvia Lopez, Illus. by Ziyue Chen
Meili thinks that getting a puppy would be better than a little sister. The whole family prepares for the new baby to arrive, and when she does, she’s just right—like their family.

A Most Unusual Day
By Sydra Mallery, Illus. by E.B. Goodale
Everything is just a bit off for Caroline as she anxiously makes her way through an important day, the day her new adopted sister arrives.

Anxiety and Depression

The Color Thief: A Family’s Story of Depression
By Andrew & Polly Peters, Illus. by Karin Littlewood
A child describes the black and white world his father experiences when he falls into depression and the color that returns gradually as he undergoes counseling.

Emily’s Blue Period
By Cathleen Daly, Illus. by Lisa Brown
Roaring Brook Press. 2014. 56p.
Emily struggles with the depression and sadness she feels after her parents separate, making a connection between this difficult moment in her life and Picasso’s Blue Period.

I Used to Be Afraid
By Laura Vaccaro Seeger
A little girl describes all the things she used to be afraid of, but is not anymore. A relatable look at the fears young children have and how to face them.

Me and My Fear
By Francesca Sanna
Fear follows us everywhere. Sometimes it grows so big it gets in the way of everyday things. When we share our feelings, they grow smaller and more manageable.

Body Image/Self Esteem

Giraffe Problems
By Jory John, Illus. by Lane Smith
Giraffe doesn’t feel good about his neck. It’s too long, too bendy, too patterned, and everyone stares at it. Then he meets an admiring turtle who shows him how great differences can be.

My Hair is a Garden
By Cozbi A. Cabrera
After being teased by her classmates about her unruly hair, a young girl learns that the best way to care for her hair and keep it beautiful and healthy is to treat it like a garden.

One of a Kind Like Me/Único como yo
By Lauren Mayeno Illus. by Robert Liu-Trujillo
Danny is determined to create the perfect purple princess costume for himself with Mama’s help and despite the criticism of doubters.

Bullying

Eddie the Bully
By Henry Cole
This young bully gets a second chance at making friends when the new student Carla shows him some kindness.

Lila and the Crow
By Gabrielle Grimard
Lila has just moved to a new town where she is teased about the color of her hair and skin. An encounter with a crow helps her to embrace her true self.
I Walk with Vanessa: A Story About a Simple Act of Kindness
By Kerascoet
Troubled after seeing a classmate being bullied, a young girl takes simple but courageous action in this inspiring, wordless picture book.

Divorce/Single Parent

I Love You More Than...
By Taye Diggs. Illus. by Shane W. Evans
Portraying the separation of a child from a parent, the story reinforces the message of love and reassurance.

Monday, Wednesday, and Every Other Weekend
By Karen Stanton
Traveling between his mother’s house and his father’s house causes confusion for Henry Cooper and his dog, Pomegranate. Which is “home”?

Walk With Me
By Jairo Buitrago. Illus. by Rafael Yockteng
Although her father no longer lives at her home, a little girl moves about her day encouraged by his enduring presence.

Weekends with Max and His Dad
By Linda Urban. Illus. by Katie Kath
Third-grader Max adapts to his parents’ recent divorce. During their visits, Max and his loving and humorous father play spies, work on homework, sing, and eat lots of pizza together.

Grief

Blue
By Laura Vaccaro Seeger
This story celebrates the bond of friendship between a boy and his dog, and sensitively portrays the difficult emotions of dealing with the dog’s death.

Death is Stupid
By Anastasia Higginbotham
The Feminist Press at CUNY. 2016. 64p.
In a candid look at death, this book acknowledges the anger, fear and confusion that we all feel when confronted with the fragility of life.

The Pond
By Nicola Davies. Illus. by Cathy Fisher
Told from the perspective of a young boy dealing with the loss of his father, this story communicates the experience of grief in a touching and loving manner while centering on the evolution of a small pond.

The Rabbit Listened
By Cori Doerrfeld
A young boy deals with loss by talking to all of the stuffed animals in his house. Each of the animals tries to “fix” the problem for him, but in the end, the rabbit just listens, and helps the boy most of all.

A Stone for Sascha
By Aaron Becker
A beloved family dog passes away and through a stone of grief cast by a little girl, travels through the cosmos to time immortal.

Where Do They Go?
By Julia Alvarez. Illus. by Sabra Field
Triangle Square. 2016. 20p.
In poetic form, this book provides answers to many tough questions children have about death.

Home Situation Change

Far Apart, Close in Heart: Being a Family When a Loved One is Incarcerated
By Becky Birtha. Illus. by Maja Kastelic
With a diverse cast of characters, the story validates the complex emotions of children who have a parent in jail, ultimately sharing the message of parental love.

Mabel and Sam at Home
By Linda Urban. Illus. by Hadley Hooper
This book celebrates imaginative play as two children adjust to a move to a new home. The collection of three stories follows the children as they explore their new home through imagination and play.

Still a Family: A Story about Homelessness
By Brenda Reeves Sturgis. Illus. by Jo-Shin Lee
Even though they are separated into different homeless shelters, a girl and her parents maintain their loving bond.
TOUGH TOPICS: Inspiring Conversations in Difficult Times

Yard Sale
By Eve Bunting. Illus. by Lauren Castillo
Candlewick. 2015. 32p.
With her family downsizing from a house to a small apartment, a young girl reminisces about the items she is saying goodbye to at their yard sale.

A Piece of Home
By Jeri Watts. Illus. by Hyewon Yum
Hee Jun and his family are slowly adjusting to their new home in America but it is difficult when everything is different and new. Learning that a Rose of Sharon is the same as a Korean mugunghwa blossom ties their two lives together and helps to make things just a little bit easier.

The Breaking News
By Sarah Lynne Reul
Roaring Brook. 2018. 48p.
When bad news leaves her parents scared and worried, a little girl finds that small acts of kindness can help in a big way.

Cancer Hates Kisses
By Jessica Reid Sliwerski. Illus. by Mika Song
A child sees her Mama fight cancer like a superhero, and joins in the fight with kisses, hugs and love.

The Invisible Boy
By Trudy Ludwig. Illus. by Patrice Barton.
A shy young boy who feels invisible uses art and drawing to keep from feeling lonely, until a new student to class befriends him.

The Remember Balloons
By Jessie Oliveros. Illus. by Dana Wulfekotte
Through metaphor, this sensitive picture book explains memory loss associated with aging and diseases such as Alzheimer’s.

Flood
By Alvaro F. Villa
This wordless picture book shows the devastation caused by a natural disaster, as well as the resilience and hopefulness of a family whose home has been destroyed.

Hurricane Heroes in Texas (Magic Tree House Series)
By Mary Pope Osborne. Illus. by AG Ford
Jack and Annie are transported back in time to the 1900 hurricane in Galveston, Texas where wind, rain and flooding threaten the city.

The Day War Came
By Nicola Davies. Illus. by Rebecca Cobb
The war that comes to a young girl’s town not only leaves it in rubble, but leaves her trying to find a place and people that war hasn’t reached - both physically and emotionally.

Two Bobbies: A True Story of Hurricane Katrina, Friendship, and Survival
By Kirby Larson and Mary Nethery. Illus. by Jean Cassels
The story of a dog and a cat left behind during the evacuation of New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina ravaged the city. The amazing friendship of the two animals provides a hopeful perspective to a devastating natural disaster.

The Forgiveness Garden
By Laura Thompson. Illus. by Christy Hale
Two children, weary of generations of fighting and violence between their villages, take a courageous step toward peace by building a garden together. Inspired by the Garden of Forgiveness in Beirut, Lebanon.

Resilience

After the Fall
By Dan Santat
Humpty Dumpty’s traumatic fall from the wall won’t stop him from pursuing his passion although he must find a way to conquer his fears.
### TOUGH TOPICS: Inspiring Conversations in Difficult Times

#### Resources for Adults

**Books**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Publisher/Year</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Resilience in Students Impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences: A Whole-Staff Approach</td>
<td>Victoria E. Romero, Ricky Robertson, and Amber Warner</td>
<td>Corwin, 2018</td>
<td>248p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender Topics: Picture Books About Childhood Challenges</td>
<td>Dorothy Stoltz, Elaine Czarnecki, and Buff Kahn</td>
<td>Huron Street Press/ALA, 2013</td>
<td>176 p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Covering topics including poverty, divorce, neglect, homelessness, substance abuse, domestic violence and parent incarceration, this workbook style resource for K-12 educators shows how the school community can work together to assist children impacted by these issues.

**Articles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Publication Details</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This Is How You Teach Kids About Consent</td>
<td>The Good Men Project</td>
<td>Huffington Post/Life, Accessed November 28, 2018</td>
<td><a href="http://www.huffpost.com/entry/this-is-how-you-teach-kids-about-consent_b_10360296">www.huffpost.com/entry/this-is-how-you-teach-kids-about-consent_b_10360296</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender Topics: Exploring Sensitive Issues with Pre-K through First Grade Children</td>
<td>Sue Mankiw and Janis Strasser</td>
<td>Young Children 68, no. 5 (Mar. 2013)</td>
<td>84-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Explain the Me Too Movement To Their Kids In Emotional Video</td>
<td>Alanna Vagianos</td>
<td>Huffington Post/Life, Accessed December 17, 2018</td>
<td><a href="http://www.huffpost.com/entry/parents-explain-the-me-too-movement-to-their-kids-in-emotional-video_n_5a5c51d16e4b09ef3b24309b6">www.huffpost.com/entry/parents-explain-the-me-too-movement-to-their-kids-in-emotional-video_n_5a5c51d16e4b09ef3b24309b6</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Websites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How to Talk to Children about Difficult News and Tragedies</td>
<td>A brief overview of how to proceed after a tragedy, which includes the following downloads and weblinks:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/talking-to-children.aspx">www.apa.org/helpcenter/talking-to-children.aspx</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm Your Neighbor website</td>
<td>Resources for teachers and parents to promote using children's literature to connect “new arrivals” to “long term communities”.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.imyourneighborbooks.org">www.imyourneighborbooks.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking about Difficult Topics with Children</td>
<td>Suggestions for parents about how to open and carry on a discussion about a sensitive topic.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/talking-about-difficult-topics">www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/talking-about-difficult-topics</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Tolerance website</td>
<td>A project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Teaching Tolerance has classroom resources like films and lesson plans on topics such as bullying, immigration, equality, and more.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tolerance.org">www.tolerance.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This list was created by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), through funds from the Friends of ALSC. Titles on this list were selected by members of ALSC’s Quicklists Consulting Committee. For more booklists, please visit www.ala.org/alsc/booklists. © 2019 American Library Association
**Addiction/Substance Abuse**

**The Education of Ivy Blake**  
By Ellen Airgood  
The companion to Prairie Evers, Ivy’s world is turned upside down when she is reunited with her alcoholic mother and moves back to the city where they must start a new life together.

**The Seventh Wish**  
By Kate Messner  
Charlie devises a fantasy to help her cope with family upheaval caused by her sister’s addiction to heroin.

**Sunny Side Up**  
By Jennifer L. Holm, Illus. by Matthew Holm  
A new friend, some comic books, and a loving, supportive Gramps help Sunny find the strength to be able to work through her feelings surrounding her older brother’s substance abuse problems.

**Adoption**

**Forever or a Long, Long Time**  
By Caela Carter  
Eleven year old Flora, her younger brother Julian, and their adopted mom delve into the siblings’ past to find out more about the foster families they lived with, and to accept their new, forever home.

**Greenglass House**  
By Kate Milford, Illus. by Matthew Holm  
Milo lives with his adopted parents in Greenglass House, a smugglers inn atop an isolated cliff. Winter break is usually family time, but Milo is annoyed and then suspicious when a series of unusual guests arrive at the house.

**Patina**  
By Jason Reynolds  
Living with aunt and uncle because of her mother’s debilitating diabetes, Patina joins the track team and struggles to help with her younger sisters, while keeping her grades up at a new school full of rich kids.

**Soar**  
By Joan Bauer  
Viking, 2016. 296p.  
Jeremiah’s dreams of playing baseball are put on hold not only because he learns he has a heart condition but also because he and his adoptive father must relocate for a temporary job for his father.

**Three Pennies**  
By Melanie Crowder  
Marin risks the chance she has at a forever family in order to find the birth mother who abandoned her years ago.

**Body Image/Self Esteem**

**El Deafo**  
By Cece Bell  
In order to keep from being isolated, Cece must wear an external hearing device in order to hear. Being different in this way makes her lonely until she discovers a true friend.

**Short**  
By Holly Goldberg Sloan  
Julia is so self-conscious about her height that she won’t even say the word “short,” but being cast as a Munchkin in a summer production of The Wizard of Oz helps her learn to embrace her stature as one of the things that makes her unique.

**Body Safety**

**Sex is a Funny Word**  
By Cory Silverberg, Illus. by Fiona Smyth  
A graphic novel introduction to sex education that emphasizes body safety, respect and gender inclusion featuring a group of 4 friends—Zai, Cooper, Mimi and Omar—who respond in different ways to the lessons in the book.

**When the Crickets Stopped Singing**  
By Marilyn Cram-Donahue  
Calkins Creek, 2018. 276p.  
When the adults in her small town turn a blind eye to a popular citizen’s predatory behavior, young Angie finds the courage to stand up for a friend and tell the truth.

**Bullying**

**Hurricane Child**  
By Kheryn Callender  
Twelve-year-old Caroline is bullied and hated by everyone in the island community of St. Thomas for having been born during a hurricane. When she befriends Kalinda, her luck begins to turn around.
Rhyme Schemer
By K.A. Holt
This novel in verse explores bullying from the bully’s point of view, as the bully is caught and comes to terms with what he’s done wrong and how to make amends.

Divorce/Single Parent

Big and Little Questions (According to Wren Jo Byrd)
By Julie Bowe.
Wren doesn’t want her friends to think she’s weird. She just wants everything the way it was before the summer, and that means not telling anyone that her parents are getting divorced. She can’t even tell her best friend, who seems to like the mean, new girl better.

Dragons in a Bag
By Zetta Elliott.  Illus. by Geneva B.
In this urban fantasy, Mama has to go to court to fight their apartment eviction notice, so she leaves Jax with Ma, an enigmatic old woman who turns out to be a witch. As Jax and Ma travel through space and time to save three dragons, Jax meets his grandfather for the first time and learns more about his mother’s childhood.

Raymie Nightingale
By Kate DiCamillo
In order to draw her father who abandoned the family back home, Raymie enters a beauty contest. In order to do this, she has to do many good deeds and along the way befriends two other contestants in the contest who have also lost someone close to them.

Grief

Clayton Byrd Goes Underground
By Rita Williams-Garcia
Clayton loves nothing more than playing jazz with his grandpa, Cool Papa Byrd, and his band. After Cool Papa’s sudden death, Clayton goes on a journey to Manhattan looking for his grandfather’s friends and the peace he once had playing the blues.

Cry, Heart, But Never Break
By Glenn Ringtved
Death personified comes to the home of four children and their ailing grandmother; throughout his visit, Death explains why sorrow and grief are as essential to life as delight and happiness.

The Distance to Home
By Jenn Bishop
Her beloved older sister’s death changed everything about baseball-fanatic Quinnen’s life. In a story that goes back and forth between last summer and present day, the reader finds out what happened on that terrible day and why Quinnen quit baseball.

Finding Langston
By Lesa Cline-Ransome
Still grieving over his mother’s death, eleven-year-old Langston deals with moving from Alabama to Chicago with his dad, and trying to avoid being bullied in school. But he finds solace in the library, the poetry of another Langston, and a secret that he learns about his mom.

My Father’s Words
By Patricia MacLachlan
A terrible accident leaves Fiona and Finn O’Brien without a father, but his memory and his words remain to guide them through their grief.

Illness (Catastrophic)

Just My Luck
By Cammie McGovern
Fourth grader Benn is struggling. His father is ill, his best friend moved away, and school isn’t going well at all. He is doing his best to be a good person, student and brother, but no one seems to be noticing.

Love Like Sky
By Leslie C Youngblood
Hyperion. 2018. 296p.
Eleven-year-old Georgie worries about losing her best friend to a bully, about how to get close to a step sister, and how to help make things right when her little sister is diagnosed with bacterial meningitis.

Ms. Bixby’s Last Day
By John David Anderson
Ms. Bixby is the sort of teacher that makes going to school worthwhile. When she is diagnosed with cancer, three boys decide to make sure her last day is perfect.

Crensshaw
By Katherine Applegate
Feiwel and Friends. 2015. 256p.
When Jackson was a little kid he had an imaginary friend; a cat named Crensshaw. Crensshaw appeared about the time that the family lost their house and had to live in their van for a few months. Now it might be happening again and all of a sudden, Crensshaw is back.

The Journey of Little Charlie
By Christopher Paul Curtis
After his father dies, twelve-year-old Charlie is forced to leave his home under the watch of the nefarious Cap’n Buck. In their travels from South Carolina to Canada, in search of stolen property, Charlie experiences firsthand the ugliness of discrimination in pre-Civil War America.

Just Under the Clouds
By Melissa Sarno
Since her dad died, Cora, her younger sister, and her fiercely independent mother have moved from place to place, from friends’ couches to a shelter, searching not just for a place to live, but for a place to belong.

Merci Suarez Changes Gears
By Meg Medina
Everything is changing for eleven-year-old Merci at school and at home, but hardest of all are the changes in her beloved grandfather who has started forgetting important things, falling from his bike, and getting angry over nothing.

Home Situation Change

Crenshaw
By Katherine Applegate
Feiwel and Friends. 2015. 256p.
When Jackson was a little kid he had an imaginary friend; a cat named Crensshaw. Crensshaw appeared about the time that the family lost their house and had to live in their van for a few months. Now it might be happening again and all of a sudden, Crensshaw is back.

The Journey of Little Charlie
By Christopher Paul Curtis
After his father dies, twelve-year-old Charlie is forced to leave his home under the watch
TOUGH TOPICS: Inspiring Conversations in Difficult Times

Immigration

Front Desk
By Kelly Yang
Mia Tang and her parents expected to work hard when they came to the United States from China, but they had no idea how difficult things would be. After a year or two struggling to make ends meet, they find themselves managing a motel for a cruel and exploitive owner and Mia works the front desk.

Harbor Me
By Jacqueline Woodson
Six kids meet for a weekly chat organized by their school. They discover it’s safe to talk about what’s bothering them from deportation and incarceration to fears of racial profiling.

Nowhere Boy
By Katherine Marsh
After losing his father and fleeing a life of suffering in Aleppo, Syria, 14-year-old Ahmed meets Max, a self-centered American Boy, also newly arrived to Brussels, Belgium.

Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family’s Journey
By Margriet Ruurs
This unique book incorporates both Arabic and English to tell the story of a refugee family’s journey. The artwork highlights a Syrian artist’s work with stones, creating powerful images of the family’s struggles.

We Came to America
By Faith Ringgold
Bold illustrations punctuate the short text in this celebration of the diversity found here in the United States because of immigration.

Natural Disaster

Ivy Aberdeen’s Letter to the World
By Ashley Herring Blake
When a tornado rips through town, Ivy’s family home is destroyed. Ivy deals with the stress of her family’s unstable living situation, along with the devastating loss of her diary and the fear that her crush on a girl will be revealed.

Resilience

Amal Unbound
By Aisha Saeed
Amal’s life is quiet and ordinary in a Pakistani village, but she had no complaints, and besides, she’s busy pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher one day. Her dreams are temporarily dashed when—as the eldest daughter—she must stay home from school to take care of her siblings.

Everlasting Nora
By Marie Miranda Cruz
Life is not easy for Nora whose father has died in a fire that also destroyed the family home, leaving Nora and her mother to live in a shantytown in a Manila cemetery. When Nora’s mother disappears, Nora struggles to fend for herself as she embarks upon a dangerous search.

Suicide

All Three Stooges
By Erica S. Perl
Seventh graders Noah and Dash enjoy their friendship and shared love of comedy, but everything changes when Dash loses his father to suicide.

Friends For Life
By Andrew Norriss
Four young teens, linked by thoughts of suicide and feeling like outsiders, form strong bonds of friendship. The author handles the topic with sensitivity and positive suggestions.

Trauma/Violence/War

Flowers for Sarajevo
By John McCutcheon. Illus. by Kristy Caldwell
In the midst of war, Drasko takes over his father’s job of selling flowers in the market; after a horrible tragedy occurs at the marketplace, Drasko is a witness to the kindness of a stranger.

The Night Diary
By Veera Hiranandani
Through diary entries, twelve-year-old Nisha tells her deceased mother about the family’s search for religious freedom, safety and a new home as India gains its independence from the British in 1947.

Painting for Peace in Ferguson
By Carol Swartout Klein
A community painting project reclaims neighborhoods damaged by rioting in Ferguson, MO in this moving photographic tribute to resilience and hope.
Resources for Adults

Books

Building Resilience in Students Impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences: A Whole-Staff Approach
By Victoria E. Romero, Ricky Robertson, and Amber Warner

Covering topics including poverty, divorce, neglect, homelessness, substance abuse, domestic violence and parent incarceration, this workbook style resource for K-12 educators shows how the school community can work together to assist children impacted by these issues.

Tender Topics: Picture Books About Childhood Challenges
By Dorothy Stoltz, Elaine Czarnecki, and Buff Kahn

Grouped by topics such as life lessons, divorce, and trauma, this listing of more than 300 picture books with annotations are recommended to get adults and children talking about the subjects.

Articles

What Makes a Good Picture Book about Loss?
By Thom Barthelmess
Horn Book Magazine. 89, no. 5 (Sept./Oct. 2013). 56-62

Barthelmess offers solid advice on how librarians can evaluate children’s books about death.

Talking to Cyberbullied Kids—and to Bullies
By Tori Coridiano, PhD

Article includes links to eight websites on coping with cyberbullying.

This Is How You Teach Kids About Consent
By the Good Men Project
www.huffpost.com/entry/this-is-how-you-teach-kids-about-consent_b_10360296

A list of parenting action items (geared toward kids ages 1-21), created in the hope of raising a generation of children who have less rape and sexual assault in their lives.

After #MeToo: Educators Seek Strategies To Teach Students About Consent
By Drew Himmelstein
www.slj.com/?detailStory=after-metoo-educators-seek-strategies-to-teach-students-about-consent

With systemic harassment and assault in the news, educators are teaching age appropriate lessons about boundaries, safety, and sexual assault.

Tender Topics: Exploring Sensitive Issues with Pre-K through First Grade Children
By Sue Mankiw and Janis Strasser
Young Children. 68, no. 5 (Mar. 2013). 84-90
issuu.com/naeyc/docs/tender_topics_mankiw2_0313

A graded, annotated list of books for children about topics such as bullying, death, divorce, tragedy and disaster, with suggestions for how to use books to explore difficult issues with young children.

Parents Explain the Me Too Movement To Their Kids In Emotional Video
by Alanna Vagianos
www.huffpost.com/entry/parents-explain-the-me-too-movement-to-their-kids-in-emotional-video_n_5a5c5d16e4b0f9f3eb24309b4

In this video, three parents discuss the Me Too movement with their children, showing how difficult, but ultimately worthwhile, it can be to talk about sexual assault.

Websites

How to Talk to Children about Difficult News and Tragedies

A brief overview of how to proceed after a tragedy, which includes the following downloads and weblinks:

• “Disaster Distress Hotline”—SAMHSA.gov
• “Listen, Protect, Connect—Psychological First Aid for Teacher & Students”—Ready.gov
• “Tips for Talking with and Helping Children and Youth Cope after a Disaster or Traumatic Event—a Guide for Parents, Caregivers, and Teachers”—SAMHSA.gov
• “Helpful Hints for School Emergency Management: Psychological First Aid for Students and Teachers: Listen, Protect, Connect—Model & Teach”—U.S. Department of Education
• “Explaining the News to Our Kids”—CommonSenseMedia.org
• “Children & Grief: Guidance and Support Resources”—Scholastic.com
• “The Road to Resilience”—APA.org

I’m Your Neighbor website
www.imyourneighborbooks.org

Resources for teachers and parents to promote using children’s literature to connect “new arrivals” to “long term communities”.

Talking about Difficult Topics with Children
www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/talking-about-difficult-topics

Suggestions for parents about how to open and carry on a discussion about a sensitive topic.

Teaching Tolerance website
www.tolerance.org

A project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Teaching Tolerance has classroom resources like films and lesson plans on topics such as bullying, immigration, equality, and more.
Addiction/Substance Abuse

**Hey, Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction**

By Jarrett Krosoczka


In this candid graphic novel memoir, the author shares the realities of his mother's heroin addiction, and the family love and support that guided him as he embarked on the path to becoming an artist.

**Solo**

By Kwame Alexander, with Mary Hess


Blade's story as the son of a washed-up rock star battling addiction brings to light the complex issues of families dealing with addiction.

Adoption

**Beyond the Bright Sea**

By Lauren Wolk


Found as a baby on the shores of the tiny island of Cuttyhunk, Crow dreams of finding her biological family. Her quest involves a secret island community, pirates, and lost treasure, as well as finding out the real meaning of family in this ocean-drenched historical fiction title.

**Half a World Away**

By Cynthia Kadohata


Jaden, who was adopted at age 8, sees himself as an “epic fail” because of his troubled behavior and inability to love his adopted parents. As his parents prepare to adopt a second child, the experience stirs up complicated feelings and worries that he is being replaced.

**Just Like Me**

By Nancy Cavanaugh


Three very different girls who were adopted from the same orphanage in China meet at a summer camp, where they are to journal their bonding experience for the camp counselor.

Anxiety and Depression

**Cicada**

By Shaun Tan


Bullied, ignored, overworked, and underappreciated, Cicada works in a dreary, grey office building. Inspired by the 17-year life cycle of a cicada, as well as a haiku, this picture book for older readers uses brief lines of text and stark oil paintings to depict Cicada’s humiliation, isolation, and persistence.

**Don’t Call Me Crazy**

By Kelly Jensen


Thirty-three authors share their personal stories of mental illness in a variety of comics, short stories, and lists. This reminder that our brains are wired differently, including a section on depression, provide the reader with new opportunities to talk about mental health.

Sheets

By Brenna Thummler


Marjorie must run the family laundromat for her father, who is dealing with a severe depression after her mother’s death. Daily pressures mount, but Marjorie finds support from an unexpected friend.

Body Image/Self Esteem

**Goodbye Stranger**

By Rebecca Stead


Bridge’s friend Emily doesn’t seem to be concerned when her intimate photograph is exposed via social media...

Bullying

**Blackbird Fly**

By Erin Entrada Kelly


Apple, who moved to Louisiana from the Philippines with her mom, has always been aware of her differences from her classmates. But when Apple enters middle school, her name is added to a secret list of the ugliest girls in

---

This booklist was created by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA). Titles on this list were selected by members of ALSC’s Quicklists Consulting Committee. For more booklists, please visit www.ala.org/alsc/booklists. © 2019 American Library Association
TOUGH TOPICS: Inspiring Conversations in Difficult Times

Divorce/Single Parent

Blended
By Sharon M. Draper
Isabella’s identity is split—one week she lives with her white mother and the next with her black father. She wishes her divided life could come together like a magical, musical symphony through the black and white keys on her piano.

See You in the Cosmos
By Jack Cheng
A space-obsessed boy and his dog travel from Colorado to New Mexico, Las Vegas to LA meeting remarkable people along the way. His father is dead. His mom is troubled. His brother isn’t around, and there are secrets to uncover.

The Parker Inheritance
By Varian Johnson
When Candice finds an old letter, she has no idea it will lead her on a puzzling chase through the history of a small town in South Carolina to find a treasure and clear her grandmother’s name. Candice and her new friend Brandon, dig into a past full of racial tensions, hidden identities, and ugly secrets in this page-turning mystery that toggles between past and present.

Twerp
By Mark Goldblatt
This is a funny, poignant story of one middle school boy’s experience as the bully, and the lessons he learns from his mistakes. Told through journal entries written by Julian, the main character, this story will resonate with middle school students struggling with any aspect of bullying.

Grief

The Girl with More Than One Heart
By Laura Geringer Bass
When the death of her father forces her to seek new perspectives, Briana uses her imagination as a coping mechanism.

Rebound
By Kwame Alexander
After the sudden death of his father, twelve-year-old Charlie struggles to find an outlet for his grief, until his mother sends him to spend the summer with his grandparents and he throws himself into basketball.

Summerlost
By Ally Condie
Still reeling from the death of her father and younger brother in a car accident, Cedar and her family move into a quiet summer house to grieve and heal. An unexpected friendship and an intriguing mystery help Cedar move forward through her sadness one day at a time.

Home Situation Change

Dollar Kids
By Jennifer Richard Jacobson, Illus. by Ryan Andrews
Twelve year old Lowen Grover’s family seeks a new beginning in a new town through a “dollar program”, allowing them to purchase a new home for a dollar. This story explores one family’s struggle to process complex emotions such as guilt, grief, and finding themselves in a new community.

Train I Ride
By Paul Mosier
After the death of her mother followed by her grandmother, Ryder is on a train to live with an unknown great uncle in Chicago. Her last chance before entering foster care. Anxious, hungry and lonely, Ryder finds strength from new friends on the train and ultimately within herself too.

Two Roads
By Joseph Bruchac
After months of riding the rails during the Depression, Pop reveals to twelve-year-old Cal that they are part Creek and sends Cal to live at a government school. Although the school’s conditions are harsh, Cal finds a community of boys who help him connect to his heritage and understand his father.

Illness (Catastrophic)

Auma’s Long Run
By Euabeth Odihambo
Set during the 1980s, Auma’s dreams of earning a running scholarship and becoming a doctor are crushed as the HIV/AIDS epidemic ravages Kenya. Auma struggles to decide what to sacrifice, the survival of her siblings or the fulfillment of her dreams.

Echo’s Sister
By Paul Mosier
El’s excitement at starting seventh grade at a new school is derailed when her little sister Echo is diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. El struggles with the fear, stress, and difficult emotions that arise as the family fights to stay strong together for Echo.

Family Game Night and Other Catastrophes
By Mary E. Lambert
Annabelle’s mother suffers from hoarding, a compulsion which affects the whole family’s psychological well-being in different ways, until they realize they need to come together to help mom and each other.

Halfway Normal
By Barbara Dee
After completing two years of treatment for leukemia, Norah is ready to tackle seventh grade, challenging classes, new friends and being honest about her experience.

Immigration

All the Stars Denied
By Guadalupe Garcia McCall
Estrella and her family struggle to contend with the consequences of U.S. government’s unjust and discriminatory repatriation policy during the Great Depression.
It Ain’t So Awful, Falafel
By Firoozeh Dumas
Set in the tumultuous times around America’s Bicentennial and growing anti-Iranian sentiment, Zomorod (Cindy) Yousefzadah finds comfort in family and making new friends.

My Family Divided: One Girl’s Journey of Home, Loss, and Hope
By Diane Guerrero
Diane’s parents thought their luck was finally turning for the better, but instead, 14-year-old Diane comes home from high school to find that both her parents have been picked up by ICE to be deported. Adapted from Diane Guerrero’s memoir, In the Country We Love.

Undocumented: A Worker’s Fight
By Duncan Tonatiuh
Despite the danger of deportation, Juan demands that undocumented workers be treated with dignity and respect.

Natural Disaster

Another Kind of Hurricane
By Tamara Ellis Smith
Two boys, both grieving terrible losses, somehow connect with one another in the chaos after Hurricane Katrina.

Drowned City
By Don Brown
A graphic novel telling the story of Hurricane Katrina and its effects on the city of New Orleans. The graphic novel format will engage readers in understanding the complexities of natural disasters.

Resilience

Be Prepared
By Vera Brogso
Vera is excited for a summer of new friendships and fun activities at Russian summer camp, but nearly goes home early when confronted with mean girls, too much nature, and loneliness. Vera rallies to save the summer and find a place for herself in this graphic novel memoir.

Hunger
By Donna Jo Napoli
Lorraine and her family are tenant farmers in 1846 Ireland, entering the second year of the potato famine that is devastating their community. Lorraine and the other children of the community struggle to keep starvation, illness and death at bay as the wealthy British landowners continue to ignore the problem.

You May Already Be a Winner
By Ann Dee Ellis
Olivia’s father has left her, her mother and her little sister to fend for themselves in their trailer park home. When money gets tight, Olivia has to stay home to take care of her sister since daycare is too expensive, but she finds solace in her daydreams.

Sexual Abuse

Speak: The Graphic Novel
By Laurie Halse Anderson, Illus. by Emily Carroll
Through her work on an art project, Melinda begins to face the terrifying fact that she was raped by an upperclassman at a party days before the start of her freshman year in high school.

Suicide

My Brother’s Shadow
By Tom Avery
Eleven-year-old Kaia isolates herself after her older brother’s suicide. The mute wild boy who mysteriously appears outside her boarding school helps draw Kaia out of her mental funk as she begins to work through her grief.

Nest
By Esther Erlich
Set in the summer of 1972, Naomi "Chirp" Orenstein’s mother is diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis; rather than face the disease and in the throes of depression, Chirp’s mom chooses to end her own life. Chirp and her family must stick together to find a way through this tough time.

Someone Else’s Shoes
By Ellen Wittlinger
This emotion-heavy title paints a picture of how divorce, suicide, and depression can affect a family. There may be a way twelve-year-old Izzy’s can use her comedic skills to lighten and mend the situation, but it will be hard when she’s stuck with her mom’s boyfriend’s on top of taking care of her cousin.

Trauma/Violence/War

A Game for Swallows
By Zeina Abirached
Graphic Universe. 2012. 188p.
A graphic memoir of the author’s childhood in war-torn Beirut shows how amidst the horrors of conflict and fear one can always find solace in the strength of family and the comfort of neighbors.

Illegal
By Eoin Colfer, Illus. by Giovanni Rigano
Ebo leaves his home in Ghana hoping to reunite with his brother and sister and start a new life in Europe.

Long Way Down
By Jason Reynolds
Will’s brother has been shot, and Will is in an elevator on the way down to find his brother’s killer, gun in hand. As the elevator descends, Will is visited by loved ones lost to gun violence from his past.

Refugee
By Alan Gratz
Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are all fleeing war and/or violence in their homes as refugees in this novel that takes place in three different time periods.

The Stars Beneath Our Feet
By David Barclay Moore
Twelve year-old Lolly and his best friend Vega cope with the loss of Lolly’s older brother to gang violence as they resist being dragged into the same cycle of violence themselves through community and creativity.
Resources for Adults

Books

Building Resilience in Students Impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences: A Whole-Staff Approach
By Victoria E. Romero, Ricky Robertson, and Amber Warner

Covering topics including poverty, divorce, neglect, homelessness, substance abuse, domestic violence and parent incarceration, this workbook style resource for K-12 educators shows how the school community can work together to assist children impacted by these issues.

Articles

Talking to Cyberbullied Kids—and to Bullies
By Tori Coridiano, PhD

Article includes links to eight websites on coping with cyberbullying.

This Is How You Teach Kids About Consent
By the Good Men Project
www.huffpost.com/entry/this-is-how-you-teach-kids-about-consent_b_10360296

A list of parenting action items (geared toward kids ages 1-21), created in the hope of raising a generation of children who have less rape and sexual assault in their lives.

After #MeToo: Educators Seek Strategies To Teach Students About Consent
By Drew Himmelstein
www.slj.com/?detailStory=after-metoo-educators-seek-strategies-to-teach-students-about-consent

With systemic harassment and assault in the news, educators are teaching age appropriate lessons about boundaries, safety, and sexual assault.

Parents Explain the Me Too Movement To Their Kids In Emotional Video
by Alanna Vagianos
www.huffpost.com/entry/parents-explain-the-me-too-movement-to-their-kids-in-emotional-video

In this video, three parents discuss the Me Too movement with their children, showing how difficult, but ultimately worthwhile, it can be to talk about sexual assault.

How to Talk to Children about Difficult News and Tragedies

A brief overview of how to proceed after a tragedy, which includes the following downloads and weblinks:

- “Disaster Distress Hotline”—SAMHSA.gov
- “Listen, Protect, Connect—Psychological First Aid for Teacher & Students”—Ready.gov
- “Tips for Talking with and Helping Children and Youth Cope after a Disaster or Traumatic Event—a Guide for Parents, Caregivers, and Teachers”—SAMHSA.gov
- “Helpful Hints for School Emergency Management: Psychological First Aid for Students and Teachers: Listen, Protect, Connect—Model & Teach”—U.S. Department of Education
- “Explaining the News to Our Kids”—CommonSenseMedia.org
- “Children & Grief: Guidance and Support Resources”—Scholastic.com
- “The Road to Resilience”—APA.org

I’m Your Neighbor website
www.imyourneighborbooks.org

Resources for teachers and parents to promote using children’s literature to connect “new arrivals” to “long term communities”.

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Learning to Help Your Child and Your Family, Teens and Young Adults
Accessed April 15, 2019.
www.nami.org/Find-Support/Teens-and-Young-Adults

Warning signs, conversation starters, and resources for how to help teens with mental illness, including but not limited to depression, eating disorders and addiction.

Talking about Difficult Topics with Children
www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/talking-about-difficult-topics

Suggestions for parents about how to open and carry on a discussion about a sensitive topic.

Teaching Tolerance website
www.tolerance.org

A project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Teaching Tolerance has classroom resources like films and lesson plans on topics such as bullying, immigration, equality, and more.