Tough Topics: Inspiring Conversations in Difficult Times

Resources for Adults

Books

Building Resilience in Students Impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences: A Whole-Staff Approach
By Victoria E. Bremner, 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 Sofia, Elaine Czernick, and Buff Kuhn

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.

After #Metoo: Educators Seek Strategies To Teach Students About Consent
By Dara Hemmjsen

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

Talking to Cyberbullied Kids—And to Bullies
By Hori Cendall, 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/how-to-teach-kids-about-consent?_cvid=5005649

A list of parenting action items (aimed toward kids ages 1-12), created in the hope of raising a generation of children who have less rage and sexual assault in their lives.

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”—SAMHPSA.gov
• “Listen, Protect, Connect—Psychological First Aid for Teacher & Students”—Ready.gov
• “Tips for Talking with and Helping Children and Youth After a Disaster or Traumatic Event”—A Guide for Parents, Caregivers, and Teachers”—SAMHPSA.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.imyournetworkbooks.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-safetalking-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

The Education of Ivy Blake
By Ellen Argus

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, Hils 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 Kate Messner

Eleven year old Flora, her younger brother Charlie devises a fantasy to help her cope with family upheaval caused by her sister’s addiction to heroin.

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 home.

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.

Body Safety

Sex is a Funny Word
By Cory Sheppard, Hils by Fiona Smyth
Triangle Square, 2015. 400p.

A graphic novel instructional to sex education that emphasizes body self-respect and gender inclusion featuring a group of 4-friends-Zaï, Cooper, Mimi and Omar—who respond in different ways to the lessons in the book.

When the Crickets Stopped Singing
By Marjory Cram-Douhal
Calkins Creek, 2018. 288p.

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 Mary Calkin

Twelve-year-old Carlene 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.

This listbook 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
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 Brown
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.

Miscellaneous

Divorce/Single Parent

Big and Little Questions (According to Wren Jo Byrd)
By Julie Brown
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.

Miscellaneous

Divorce/Single Parent

Big and Little Questions (According to Wren Jo Byrd)
By Julie Brown
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.

Miscellaneous

Divorce/Single Parent

Big and Little Questions (According to Wren Jo Byrd)
By Julie Brown
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.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous