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 Piya Huss
2016. 400p.
Blade’s story as the son of a washed-up rock star battling addiction brings light to the complex issues of families dealing with addiction.

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 haku, this picture book for older readers uses brief lines of text and stark oil paintings to depict Cicada’s humiliation, isolation, and perseverance.

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 Kowena Thuener
Lion Forge, 2018. 238p.
Marjorie must run the family laundromat for her father, who is dealing with a severe depression. Her mother finds support from an unexpected friend.

Body Image/Self Esteem

Goodbye Stranger
By Rebecca Stead
Bridge’s friend Emily doesn’t seem to be 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 her school community can work together to assist children impacted by these issues.

Talking to Cyberbullied Kids—and to Bullies
By Tara Constable, PhD
This article includes links to eight websites on coping with cyberbullying.

This Is How You Teach Kids About Consent
By the Good Men Project
A list of parenting action items (geared toward kids ages 1-21), www.huffpost.com/entry/this-is-how-you-teach-kids-about-consent_b_10360296

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

Teaching Tolerance
By Cynthia Kadohata
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.

Adoption

Beyond the Bright Sea
By Lauren Weik
Found as a baby on the shores of the tiny island of Curtylhyne, 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 tangled 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.

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

By Varian Johnson


When Candice finds an old letter, she has no idea it will lead her on a puzzle-chasing 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 tug between past and present.

The Truth as Told By Mason Buttle

By Louise Conrad


Mason Buttle, large for his age and dyslexic, is plagued by bullies. He finds new joy in his friendship with the equally-bullied Calvin, but when Calvin goes missing, Mason searches for the truth about his disappearance as well as the death of his friend Benny fifteen months ago.

Trauma/Violence/War

A Game for Swallows

By Zena Alabaree


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.

Financial Responsibility

Suicide

My Brother’s Shadow

By Tom Avery


Ebo leaves his home in Ghana hoping to reunite with his brother and sister and start a new life in Europe. Will’s brother is shot, and Will is in an elevator on the way down to find his brother’s killers can end in hand. As the elevator descends, Will is visited by loved ones lost to gun violence from his past.

Refugee

The Stars Beneath Our Feet

By Alan Gratz

Scholastic, 2017. 352p.

A Game for Swallows: Inspiring Conversations in Difficult Times

No one is immune to the horrors of conflict, and few can afford to look away. A Game for Swallows is a timely graphic novel that takes place in three different time periods.

The stars beneath our feet

By David Barclay Moore

Yardworks 2017. 304p.

Twelve-year-old Lobby and his best friend Vera cope with the loss of Lobby’s older brother to gang violence as they resist being dragged into the cycle of violence themselves through community and creativity.