

## CHILDREN'S BOOKS WITH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH THEMES

~Compiled by Behavioral Health Coalition of East Tennessee for the 2012 Children's Festival of Reading~

- Akers, E., & Benicio, A. (2009). *Sarah's waterfall: A healing story about sexual abuse*. Brandon, VT: Safer Society Press. (Age 7 and up; a story in journal format of a young girl's healing from sexual abuse that balances the hard work of healing with the resources of comfort, pleasure, grounding, and safety)
- Black, C. (1979). *My dad loves me, my dad has a disease: A workbook for children of alcoholics* (3rd ed.). Bainbridge Island, WA: MAC. (Age 5 and up; stories and pictures created by children of parents with addiction to alcohol or other drugs to help children work through their loneliness, fear, and frustration by expressing their thoughts and feelings and gaining a better understanding of addiction)
- Bracken, S., & Nash, J. (2009). *Eli the bipolar bear*. Norfolk, VA: Child Heroes. (Age 6 and up; the story of a child struggling with drastic mood swings and how he comes to understand and manage his situation with help from his parents and a wise old bear)
- Brown, S. T. (2006). *Hugging the rock*. Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press. (Grade 5 and up; free-verse poems describing the pain and angst of a young girl whose mother permanently leaves because of her bipolar disorder and the adjustment process for the girl and her father)
- Bunting, E., & Low, W. (2001). *The days of summer*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt. (Age 5 and up; a story about two young sisters dealing with the news that their grandparents are getting a divorce and the discovery that honesty and love can help get through even the most difficult changes)
- Campbell, B. M., & Lewis, E. B. (2003). *Sometimes my mommy gets angry*. New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons. (Age 4 and up; a story about a little girl who learns coping skills with the help of her grandmother, neighbors, and school friends when her mother's mental illness disrupts her daily routine; includes a multicultural cast of characters)
- Carney, K. L. (2002). *Together, we'll get through this! Learning to cope with loss and transition*. Wethersfield, CT: Dragonfly. (All ages; the foundation book in the Barklay and Eve series about two Portuguese water dogs and how they learn to cope with loss and transitions in their lives, showing that love and support can help a person get through anything)
- Clarke, L. A., & Matthews, B. (2006). *Wishing wellness: A workbook for children of parents with mental illness*. Washington, DC: Magination Press. (Age 6 and up; a workbook for children who have a parent with severe, incapacitating disorders or those undergoing in-patient or intensive forms of treatment for mental illness)
- Dinner, S. H. (1989). *Nothing to be ashamed of: Growing up with mental illness in your family*. New York, NY: Lothrop, Lee, & Shepard Books. (Grade 5 and up; information about various mental illnesses and advice for a young person who has a family member with a mental illness)
- Dismondy, M., & Shaw-Peterson, K. (2008). *Spaghetti in a hot dog bun: Having the courage to be who you are*. Northville, MI: Ferne Press. (Age 6 and up; a story with a theme of empowering children to do the right thing and be proud of themselves, even when faced with challenges such as hurtful teasing from peers)
- Fensham, E. (2005). *Helicopter man*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury. (Age 10 and up; a true story of love, illness, and the indomitable spirit of a 15-year-old boy and his father, who has paranoid schizophrenia, as they try to make the most of their life of homelessness after his mother leaves them and doesn't return)

- Hamilton, D., & Owens, G. (1995). *Sad Days, Glad Days: A story about depression*. Morton Grove, IL: Whitman. (Age 4 and up; a bibliotherapeutic picture book about a child whose mother has clinical depression and how she learns to understand and cope with the illness)
- Hastings, J. M., & Typpo, M. H. (1984). *An elephant in the living room. The children's book*. Minneapolis, MN: CompCare. (Age 9 and up; an illustrated story to help children understand and cope with the problem of alcoholism or other drug addiction in the family)
- Ledwon, P., & Mets, M. (2006). *Mia's secret*. Toronto, Canada: Tundra Books. (Age 4 and up; a reassuring story about how a young girl uses her stuffed bear to tell her mother about her secret, which is sexual abuse; appropriate for survivors and for prevention through education)
- Mundy, M., & Alley, R. W. (1998). *Sad isn't bad: A good-grief guidebook for kids dealing with loss*. St. Meinrad, IN: One Caring Place, Abbey Press. (Age 4 and up; fourteen reassuring lessons about grief, with illustrations of a young elf going through the process)
- Pelton, M. L., & Steele, R. G. (2004). *When Dad's at sea*. Morton Grove, IL: Whitman. (Age 6 and up; a story about the child of a Navy pilot and how she deals with the separation of her family when he is deployed)
- Reynolds, P. (2003). *The dot*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press. (Age 5 and up; a fable about self-expression, effort, creativity, and empowerment)
- Simon, N., & Rogers, J. (1986). *The saddest time*. Niles, IL: Albert Whitman. (Grade 1 and up; an explanation of death as the inevitable end of life using three situations in which children experience powerful emotions when someone close has died)
- Stewart, G. B. (2003). *People with mental illness*. San Diego, CA: Thomson/Gale. (Grade 7 and up; the personal stories of four people who have been diagnosed with mental illnesses—bipolar disorder, schizotypal personality disorder, psychotic episodes, and obsessive-compulsive disorder—with a focus on how they handle the demands of daily life, their intelligence, and their strength and courage)
- Stuve-Bodeen, S., Bodeen, S. A., & DeVito, P. (1998). *We'll Paint the Octopus Red*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine. (Age 5 and up; the story of how a father helps his child adjust to the idea of becoming a big sister and then their adjustment to the discovery that her brother has been born with Down syndrome)
- Thomas, P. (1999). *My family's changing: A first look at family break up*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's. (Age 4 and up; a picture book by a psychotherapist to help children face their fears, worries, and questions when their family is going through a break-up)
- Thomas, P., & Harker, L. (2000). *Stop picking on me: A first look at bullying*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's. (Age 4 and up; a picture book by a psychotherapist and counselor to help children accept the normal fears and worries that accompany bullying and to find ways to resolve this upsetting experience)
- Viorst, J., & Blegvad, E. (1971). *The tenth good thing about Barney*. New York: Atheneum. (Age 6 and up; a classic book about the death of a beloved cat that helps children deal with their feelings and questions)
- Wolff, F., Savitz, H. M., & Le Tourneau, M. (2005). *Is a worry worrying you?* Terre Haute, IN: Tanglewood Press. (Age 3 and up; funny scenarios that teach the use of perspective and creative problem solving)

**Note: If you are concerned about your child's mental health, BHAC recommends that you seek an evaluation by a mental health professional.**