

Building your library

Your school or college can help raise awareness of disabilities, mental and physical ill-health and substance misuse and the issues surrounding a caring role through reading material and film. You may find the following list useful.

Adamson, J. & Adamson, G. (2003). *Topsy and Tim Make a New Friend*

Topsy and Tim are delighted to learn that their disabled friend Jenny is going to join their class. Lots of the children have never seen anyone in a wheelchair before but their teacher explains all about it and the class soon discover that Jenny really is no different to them.

Almond, D. (2009). *Skellig*

Michael's new baby sister may have a damaged heart. He feels alone and unsure. When he discovers an angel dying in the garage, Michael enlists the help of his new friend Mina in caring for him.

Anderson, R. (2007). *Big Ben*

Matthew's older brother Ben has Down's Syndrome and Matthew is horrified when Ben turns 16 and has to go off to a special school. Gradually Matthew comes to realise that this is best for Ben and that he will need to find his own friends. When Matthew's teacher decides to focus on Ben for a class project on interesting people in the community the class comes to recognise what an amazing person Ben is.

Bates, D. (2000) *The Shape*

Julia's mum is seriously depressed following the sudden death of her youngest daughter, Katy. As Julia struggles to understand her mother's illness she encounters a supernatural being in her room, at first terrifying but ultimately bringing comfort.

Bette, P. (1992). *Becca's Race*

The story of Digby who has to look after his younger brother when his sister is diagnosed with leukaemia.

Brownjohn, E. (2002). *All Kinds of Bodies*

A lift-the-flap book that explores physical features, abilities and disabilities and confirms that no matter how we look on the outside, under the skin we are all the same.

Cole, H. (1994). *Bring in the Spring*

Sarah is physically disabled. She hears and understands everything at her special school, but they just push her around in her buggy and talk to her as though she were three years old. Then Bel arrives on work experience and recognises Sarah's attempts at communication.

Connolly, M. (1999). *It isn't Easy*

This is the story of a child, after his brother is killed in an accident. It follows him and his parents through their reactions, their feelings of sadness and anger and pain, and shows how they begin to come to terms with what has happened.

Cowen-Fletcher, J. (1996). *Mamazooms*

A boy's wonderful mama takes him zooming everywhere with her, because her wheelchair is a zooming machine.

Cross, G. (2002). *Tightrope*

Ashley is the sole carer of her severely arthritic mother but she has another secret life, as a dare devil graffiti artist who sneaks out at night and risks her life to write her pseudonym in extraordinary places.

Desai, A. (2001). *Village by the Sea*

Set in a small fishing village near Bombay. Lila and Hari, aged 13 and 12, struggle to keep the family, including two young sisters, going when their mother is ill and their father is usually the worse for drink. When Hari goes to Bombay to find work, Lila seems to be responsible for everything.

Dickins, C. (1857). *Little Dorrit*

Set in the mid-nineteenth century. Following the death of her mother Amy, Dorrit takes on the role of supporting her father and becomes 'little mother' to her siblings.

Dickinson, P. (2005). *The Gift Boat*

When his beloved grandfather is struck down with a massive stroke, Gavin is devastated. He is determined to prove the doctors wrong and find a way to reach his real grandfather, trapped inside the paralysed body in the hospital bed.

Elliot, R. (2010). *Just Because*

Clemmie can't do much. She can't walk, talk, move around much, cook macaroni, pilot a plane, juggle or do algebra...but her little brother Toby loves her all the same – just because. In this heartwarming picture book we are painted a picture of Clemmie through Toby's eyes and what we discover is not her severe mental and physical disability, but of what a perfect big sister she truly is.

Feeny, J. (1999). *The Day My Parents Ran Away*

Sarah finds herself looking after her two younger sisters when her father has a nervous breakdown and leaves home. When her mother follows him, she struggles to keep things normal and to keep other adults from finding out.

Fine, A. (2006). *The Granny Project*

Ivan and his brother and sisters cannot believe it when their parents want to put their grandmother into a home for the elderly. They refuse to allow this to happen and find out what it is like to look after someone else.

Fowler, T. (1991). *The Wind is Silver*

When tragedy strikes the Robinson family, it is Jennifer who must take charge and draw on all her reserves of strength in a year that will alter her and the family forever.

Gavin, J. (1991). *I Want to be an Angel*

Four short stories including Little Effie who is responsible for her family.

Green, J. (1999). *I'm Special*

Written for young children, this book focuses on three common types of disability and shows the day-to-day experiences of disabled children. It is intended to help children deal with emotions they experience in their everyday lives and contains notes for parents and teachers, with suggestions of ways to promote an understanding of disability, through discussion and role play.

Haddon, M. (2004). *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*

A story about Christopher, an intelligent youth who lives in the functional hinterland of autism. Every day is an investigation for him because of all the aspects of human life that he does not quite get. When the dog next door is killed, Christopher becomes quietly persistent in his desire to find out what has happened.

Hames, A. & McAffrey, M. (2005). *Special Brothers & Sisters*

A collection of real-life accounts from the brothers and sisters of children with special needs, disability or serious illness, ranging in age from 3 to 18 years. They explain, in their own words, what it's like to live with their siblings.

Hardy, T. (1891). *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Set in the 19th century the young Tess experiences hardship, tragedy and lost innocence whilst feeling responsible for her family and others around her.

Hudson, C. (2005). *In a Little While*

A heart-warming story about a family member who is in hospital, and very much missed. Wobbily Fang brings mummy all the home comforts in hospital until she is all better and smiling again.

John, L. (2010). *My Chair*

I can play tag in my chair, I can dance in my chair, I can play with my friends in my chair!

Laird, E. (2007). *Oranges in No Man's Land*

Since her father left Lebanon to find work and her mother tragically died in a shell attack, ten-year-old Ayesha has been living in the bomb-ravaged city of Beirut with her granny and her two younger brothers. The city has been torn in half by civil war and a desolate, dangerous no man's land divides the two sides. Only militiamen and tanks dare enter this deadly zone, but when Granny falls desperately ill Ayesha sets off on a terrifying journey to reach a doctor living in enemy territory.

Laird, E. (2006). *Red Sky in the Morning*

Twelve-year-old Anna is looking forward to the birth of her baby brother. Ben arrives, but is disabled and will never be like other children. Anna loves him with her whole heart, but she finds herself unable to admit the truth of Ben's condition to her school friends.

Langston, L. (2005). *Mile High Apple Pie*

A moving account of a girl's relationship with her grandma. The little girl grows up and her grandmother grows older. At times it is difficult coming to terms with grandma not remembering things, but there are still some very special things grandma does remember.

LeBlanc, S. (1999). *A Dragon in your Heart*

A book specially written for children to help them understand the meaning of cancer and to allow them to understand what is going on.

Leicester, M. (2006). *Special Stories for Disability Awareness*

A collection of short stories where the heroes and heroines are disabled children who defy the stereotypes associated with being disabled.

Lloyd, C. (1997). *The Charlie Barber Treatment*

This story is about a boy who loses his mother and has difficulty expressing his sadness. It shows this it is all right to cry, and that often you need to cry and let your feelings out instead of letting them build up inside you.

Mahy, M. (1995). *Memory*

Johnny blames himself for his sister's death. He searches for Bonny, who was his sister's best friend. During his search he meets up with Sophie, an elderly lady who has senile dementia. He is horrified to learn she lives alone, and decides to do something about it.

Meyer, D. (1997). *Views from Our Shoes*

Siblings share their experiences as the brother or sister of someone with a disability. Their personal tales introduce young siblings to others like them, perhaps for the first time, and allow them to compare experiences.

Meyers, C. (1999). *Rolling Along with Goldilocks and the Three Bears*

A favourite children's story with a 'special-needs' twist. This story unfolds with many of the familiar scenes of the classic tale. Here, Baby Bear uses a wheelchair, goes to physical therapy, and ultimately makes friends with Goldilocks.

Moore, I. (2001). *Daughter*

The story of 14-year-old Sylvie who lives with her divorced mother. Sylvie arrives home one day to find her mum standing on the balcony of their flat, possibly about to jump. Sylvie struggles to come to terms with what is happening, but the truth of the matter is that her mother has Alzheimer's disease. The roles of parent and child are quickly reversed as Sylvie has to take on the responsibility of looking after her mother.

Moore, G. (2010). *Catherine's Story*

This is a story about a very special girl called Catherine with disabilities. It's a delightful, positive and happy story.

Moore-Malinos, J. (2007). *It's OK to be Me! Just Like You, I Can Do Almost Everything!*

It doesn't matter anymore that I am in a wheelchair. I know I can do almost everything the other kids can, and that makes me happy!

Pielichaty, H. (2002). *Jade's Story*

A moving account of how a teenager copes with the problems of mental illness. Jade's father suffers from schizophrenia and this story relays the ups and downs of their family life as they try to cope.

Pullman, P. (1997) *The Subtle Knife*

The second book in the Dark Materials Trilogy. Will is alone in looking after his mother who has mental health problems.

Roy, J. (1997). *A Daughter Like Me*

The tale of three sisters Ella, 13, Bessie, 11, and Jude, six, who are left to fend for themselves when their father disappears after their mother is killed in a car accident. Too scared to tell an adult and terrified of being taken into care, this story is told through the eyes of Bessie.

Sallis, S. (1994). *No Time at All*

Two disabled children love their new bungalow by the sea. It even has its own spectral steam-train which only they can hear each night. The train holds many mysteries, which will change their lives.

Shriver, M. (2002). *What's Wrong with Timmy?*

This is the story of eight-year-old Kate, who, while at the park with her mother, notices Timmy, a boy who looks and behaves differently from the other children. Kate wonders if there is something "wrong" with Timmy, but when her mother introduces her to Timmy, the seeds of friendship are planted. Soon Kate and Timmy are laughing and playing together, and Kate learns that she and Timmy have a lot in common - that in fact, there is nothing "wrong" with Timmy at all.

Thomas, P. (2005). *Don't Call me Special*

A book to introduce children to disability. It explains that assumptions people sometimes make about those with disabilities can end up hurting feelings. The book encourages children to get to know friends before making guesses about them based on what they look like.

Valentine, J. (2008). *Broken Soup*

This story follows the life of 15-year-old Rowan, whose life changes dramatically when her older brother Jack dies. Rowan finds herself playing mum to her five-year-old sister Stroma, when her dad decides he can't take it any more and moves out, leaving her already fragile mum in an even worse state.

Vlamakis, G. (2004). *What About Me?*

Jamie is initially confused, resentful, jealous and sad when his sister Susie has to go to hospital and his mother spends a lot of time there with her. He acts up to get his parents attention other times withdrawing into silence. Through the love and understanding of his parents he is eventually able to realise he is much loved and appreciated.

Whiteside, S. (1999). *Tears After Dark*

An account of a young boy, growing up in a family torn apart by alcohol and drugs.

Wild, M. (1999). *Jenny Angel*

Jenny Angel believes that she is her brother's guardian angel. He is very ill and she is sure that if she keeps watch over him she can save his life. Their mother knows that nothing can save him and they share his final few days during which Jenny continues to talk to him in her usual way.

Willis, J. (2001). *Susan Laughs*

A story about a girl who uses a wheelchair and the things she enjoys doing each day.

Wilson, J. (2002). *Sleepovers*

New-girl-in-school Daisy is finding her feet with a new group of friends who take it in turns to have sleepover parties. Daisy is faced with telling her new friends about her mentally and physically disabled older sister and she is unsure how they will react.

Wilson, J. (1999). *The Illustrated Mum*

This is the story of Dolphin who lives with her sister Star and their mother Marigold who suffers with depression and misuses alcohol.

Wilson, J. (2008). *The Mum Minder*

Sadie's mum, who is a childminder, gets the flu so all the other mums get together to sort out the childcare arrangements. Sadie often has to take control and also has her mum to look after and calls herself a mum minder.

Zindel, P. (1990). *A Begonia for Miss Applebaum*

Discovering that their beloved former teacher is terminally ill, 15-year-old Henry and his friend Zelda accompany her on her excursions to the colourful parts of New York and join her in confronting death with quiet courage.