

Navigating Tough Topics: Books that Will Help Children Better Understand Life's Challenges

Presented at the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival 2021

Picture Books

Worry/Fear

- *Ruby Finds a Worry* (2018) by Tom Percival. Bloomsbury Children's Books. – Worry, Trauma
- *That Missing Feeling* (2021) by Amy Ludwig VanDerwater, Illus. By Morena Forza. Magination Press.- Worry, Divorced Parents, Feelings of Loss
- *Me and My Fear* (2018) by Francesca Sanna. Flying Eye Books. - Fear, Migrants, Immigration
- *A Place Inside of Me: A Poem to Heal the Heart* (2020) by Zetta Elliott, Illus. by Noa Denmon. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. - Fear, Grief, Anger, BLM
- *The Magical Yet* (2020) by Angela DiTerlizzi, Illus. by Lorenza Alvarez. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. - Fear of failure

COVID Response

- *Sharing a Smile* (2021) by Nicki Kramer, Illus. by Ashley Evans. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. - Pandemic Life, Wearing a Mask to protect against Covid
- *Outside In* (2020) by Deborah Underwood, Illus. By Cindy Derby. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. - Pandemic Life
- *Outside, Inside* (2021) by LeUyen Pham. Roaring Brook Press. – Pandemic Life, Separation
- *While We Can't Hug* (2020) by Eoin McLaughlin, Illus. by Polly Dunbar. Faber & Faber. - Staying in touch with a friend despite distance, Pandemic Life

Change in Domicile

- *A Place to Stay: A Shelter Story* (2019) by Erin Gunti, Illus. by Estelí Meza. Barefoot Books. - Childhood Homelessness
- *A New Kind of Wild* (2020) by Zara González Hoang. Dial Books for Young Readers – Moving, Cross-cultural Friendships, Homesickness, Latinx kids
- *Coqui in the City* (2021) by Nomar Perez. Dial Books - Moving, Puerto Rican kids
- *Evelyn Del Rey is Moving Away* (2020) by Meg Medina, Illus. by Sonia Sanchez. Candlewick Press. - Moving, Latinx
- *Home is In Between* (2021) by Mitali Perkins, Illus. by Lavanya Naidu. Farrar Straus Giroux. - Moving, Immigration, Indian culture
- *A Thousand White Butterflies* (2021) by Jessica Betancourt-Perez and Karen Lynn Williams. Illus. by Gina Maldonado. Charlesbridge - Immigration, Moving, Columbian Kids

Death/Loss/Illness

- *Remembering Ethan* (2020) by Lesléa Newman, Illus. by Tracy Nishimura Bishop. Magination Press. - Death of a Sibling
- *Felix After the Rain* (2020) by Dunja Jogan, Translated by Olivia Hellewell. Tiny Owl Publishing. - Death of a Grandparent, Loss, Coping
- *Cry, Heart, But Never Break* (2016) By Glenn Ringtved, Illus. By Charlotte Pardi, Translated by Robert Moulthrop. Enchanted Lion Books.- Death of a Grandparent, Loss
- *Where Lily Isn't* (2020) by Julie Paschkis, Illus. by Margaret Chodes-Irvine. Henry Holt. - Death of a Pet

- *Things that Go Away* (2020) by Beatrice Alemagna. Abram Books for Young Readers. - Feelings of Loss, Understanding Change
- *Ani's Light* (2020) by Tanu Shree Singh, Illus. by Sandhya Prabhat. Magination Press. – Parents with Cancer, Grief

Understanding Differences

- *Something Happened in Our Town* (2019) by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins, and Ann Hazzard, Illus. by Jennifer Zivoin. Magination Press. - Racial Injustice
- *Rainbow Boy* (2021) by Taylor Rouanzion, Illus. by Stacy Chomiak. Beaming Books. - Understanding Gender
- *Don't Hug Doug: He Doesn't Like It* (2021) by Carrie Finison, Illus. by Daniel Wiseman. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. - Body Autonomy
- *Rissy No Kissies* (2021) by Katey Howes, Illus. by Jess Engle. Carolrhoda Books- Body Autonomy
- *Just Ask!: Be Different, Be Brave, Be You* (2019) by Sonia Sotomayor, Illus. by Rafael López. Philomel Books. – Explaining physical disabilities and healthy conditions
- *Max and the Talent Show* (2019) by Kyle Lukoff, Illus. by Luciano Lozano. Reycraft Books. - Trans Kids; Stage Fright
- *My Maddy* (2020) by Gayle E. Pitman, Illus. by Violet Tobacco. Magination Press. - Trans Parent
- *Lulu the One and Only* (2020) by Lynnette Mawhinney, Illus. by Jennie Poh. Magination Press. - Biracial Children; Answering What are you?, Microaggressions, Identity
- *Where are You From?* (2019) by Yamile Saied Méndez, Illus. by Jaime Kim. HarperCollins - Identity, Belonging, Microaggressions
- *The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family* (2019) by Ibtihaj Muhammad and S.K. Ali, Illus. by Hatem Aly. Little, Brown, & Co. - Muslims; Islamic Clothing; Religious Diversity and Teasing
- *I Talk Like a River* (2020) by Jordan Scott, Illus. by Sydney Smith. Neal Porter Books. - Anxiety, dysfluency.
- *Eyes that Kiss in the Corners* (2021) by Joanna Ho, Illus. by Dung Ho. HarperCollins - Asian Americans, Eye Shape
- *Laxmi's Mooch* (2021) by Shelly Anand, Illus. by Nabi H. Ali. Kokila. – Indian Americans, Body Positivity, Body Hair, Bullying

Novels

- *The Year I Flew Away* (2021) by Marie Arnold. Versify. – Bullying, Xenophobia (Twins)
- *Efrén Divided* (2020) by Ernesto Cisneros. Quill Tree Books. - Deportation (Twins)
- *The Whispers* (2019) by Greg Howard. G. P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. - Bullying, Loss of Parent, Bed-wetting, Gay tween (Twins)
- *Before Ever After* (2020) by Jacqueline Woodson. Nancy Paulsen Books - Grief, Parental Memory Loss, Sport Injuries, Alzheimer's Disease (Twins)
- *Mercy Suárez Changes Gears* (2018) by Meg Medina. Candlewick Press - Grief, Alzheimer's Disease, Grandparents (Twins)
- *Maybe He Just Likes You* (2019) by Barbara Dee. Aladdin. - Bodily Autonomy, Consent, Harassment
- *Other Words for Home* (2019) by Jasmine Warga. Balzer & Bray.- Immigration, Muslims, Bullying
- *Rick* (2020) by Alex Gino. Scholastic. – Asexual Kids, Bullying, Spectrum Alliance, LGBTQ Teachers (Twins)
- *The Greatest Superpower* (2021) by Alex Sanchez. Capstone Editions. - Trans Father, Biracial Identity, Latinx (Twins)
- *Star-Crossed* (2017) by Barbara Dee. Aladdin. - Bisexual kids, Identity. (Twins)

- *Show Me a Sign* (2020) by Ann Clae LeZotte. Scholastic - Deaf children, Ableism, Racism (Towards Native Americans) (Tweens)
- *Front Desk* (2018) by Kelly Yang. Scholastic - Bullying, Race Relations, Racism towards Chinese Americans (Tweens)
- *Refugee* (2017) by Alan Gratz. Scholastic. - Refugees, Immigration, Xenophobia, Cubans, Syrians, Jewish Persons, Political Asylum (Tweens)
- *Get a Grip, Vivy Cohen!* (2020) by Sarah Kapit. Dial Books. - Autism, Bullying, Breaking Gender Roles
- *Forget Me Not* (2017) by Ellie Terry. Feiwel & Friends - Tourette Syndrome, Bullying, Moving, Friendship
- *Starfish* (2021) by Lisa Fipps. Nancy Paulen Books. – Body Positivity, Bullying, Fat-Positive, Mentally-Abusive Parents
- *Indian No More* (2019) by Charlene Willing McManis and Traci Sorell. Tu Books/Lee & Low. – Native Americans; Racism; Native American History; Cross-Cultural Friendships
- *The List of Things That Will Not Change* (2020) by Rebecca Stead. Wendy Lamb Book. - Divorce, Step Family, Homophobia, Gay Parent

Non-Fiction

- *Not So Different: What You Really Want to Ask About Having a Disability* (2017) by Shane Burcaw, Photographs by Matt Carr. Roaring Brook Press - Disabilities
- *We are Still Here: Native American Truths Everyone Should Know* (2021) by Traci Sorell, Illus. by Frané Lessac. Charlesbridge. – Native American History, Hostility towards Native Americans
- *What is a Refugee* (2019) by Elise Gravel. Schwartz & Wade. - Refugees; immigration debate
- *Not My Idea: A Book about Whiteness* (2018) by Anastasia Higginbotham. Dottir Press. - Racism; White Privilege
- *Can I Touch Your Hair?: Poems of Race, Mistakes, and Friendship* (2018) by Irene Latham and Charles Waters, Illus. by Sean Qualls and Selina Alko. Carolrhoda Books. - Racism, Hair, Cross-Cultural Friendships, Poetry (Tweens)
- *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed. Dial Books. - Biographies, Kenyans, Refugees, Siblings with Autism, Graphic Novels (Tween Graphic Novel)
- *Consent (For Kids!) Boundaries, Respect, and Being in Charge of You* (2020) by Rachel Brian. Little, Brown, and Company. – Consent, Body Autonomy, Trust, Friendship (Graphic Novel)
- *Ada's Violin: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay* (2016) by Susan Hood, Illus. by Sally Comport. Simon & Schuster. - Economic Disparities, Impoverished Children in Paraguay
- *We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices* (2018) edited by Wade & Cheryl Hudson, Illus. by multiple illustrators. Crown Books for Young Readers. - Social Activism, Racism, Immigration, Poetry

Selected Professional Resources:

- * ALSC Tough Topics List - <http://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/toughtopics2019>
- * ALSC Embracing Gender Identities List - <http://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/embracinggenderids>
- * ALSC Get Ready Get Safe Book List - <http://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/get-ready-get-safe-book-list>

- * Notable Books for a Global Society - <http://www.clrsig.org/nbgs.html>
- * PBS 10 Books to Help Kids and Grown-Ups Navigate the Pandemic - <https://www.pbssocal.org/education/families/10-books-to-help-kids-and-grown-ups-navigate-the-pandemic>
- * PBS Talking to Young Children About Race and Racism - <https://www.pbs.org/parents/talking-about-racism>
- * NPR Struggling to Discuss Tough Topics With a Kid? Here are Books that Might Help - <https://www.npr.org/2020/12/31/952445588/books-to-share-with-kids-during-tough-times>
- * Jewish Children's Books that Address Difficult Topics - <https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/november-2020/children-s-books-tough-topics>
- * How Books Can Help Parents Tackle Tough Topics with Kids - <https://www.readbrightly.com/books-tackle-tough-topics-with-kids/>
- * How to Talk to Kids About Difficult Subjects - <https://www.common sense media.org/blog/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-difficult-subjects>
- * Today Show How to Teach Children About Disability at Every Age - <https://www.today.com/parents/how-teach-children-about-disability-every-age-t187942>
- * Multnomah County Library's Talking With Kids Blog Series - https://multcolib.org/search/site/%22talking%20with%20kids%22?f%5B0%5D=bundle%3Amultcoliborg_blog_post
- * International Literacy Association Notable Books for a Global Society - <http://www.clrsig.org/nbgs.html>
- * Jane Addams Children's Book Award (Books Promoting Peace & Social Justice) - <https://www.janeaddamschildrensbookaward.org/>
- * Welcoming Schools Gender and LGBTQ Inclusive Resources for Your School - <https://www.welcomingschools.org/resources/>
- * Safe Secure Kids Teaching About Consent - <https://www.safesecurekids.org/teaching-consent>
- * Comic Book Legal Defense Fund Using Comics to Teach Tough Topics - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C73xyux8ovc&t=1394s>
- * BrainPop (Coronavirus) - <https://www.brainpop.com/search/?keyword=Coronavirus>
- * BrainPop (Free Resources for Supporting Antiracist Education) - <https://blog.brainpop.com/antiracist-education-free-resources-kids/>
- * Freedom Reads: Anti-Bias Book Talk Series - <https://socialjusticebooks.org/freedom-reads/>
- * Social Justice Books' Booklists - <https://socialjusticebooks.org/booklists/> and Educational Articles - <https://socialjusticebooks.org/articles/>
- * Learning for Justice Addressing Anti-Asian Bias: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/the-moment/march-15-2021-addressing-antiasian-bias>