

Mental Health and Well-Being: Exploring Families and Family Life Through the Reading of Picture Books (Primary)

Note:

The interest levels listed in this bibliography are those given by the publishers. Each teacher, however, needs to decide the age suitability for their own students.

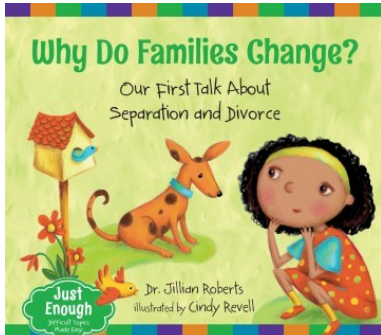
The summaries are from the publishers as well and have been included to give you a quick overview of the main themes of each title. In this way you can quickly select the titles that suit the particular social and emotional needs of your students. Some of the titles fit the theme loosely and others more tightly. The titles also range from "light-hearted" to more serious in tone.

Your school counsellor is an excellent source for suggestions on how to support students when teaching more sensitive subjects.

Joan Pearce, April 2024

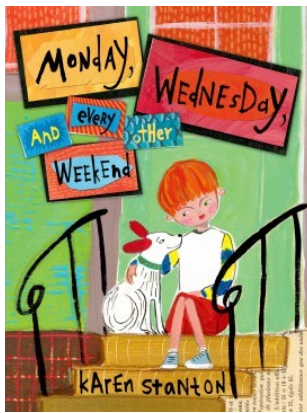
Mental Health-Family Life (Primary)

Compiled by Joan Pearce
Picture Book Format



Why Do Families Change? Our First Talk About Separation and Divorce

by Dr. Jillian Roberts, c2017 (IL: K-3, RL: 4.8)
"Separation and divorce are difficult on the entire family. Often young children blame themselves or are unsure of their place in the family if these events occur. Child psychologist Dr. Jillian Roberts designed the Just Enough series to empower parents/caregivers to start conversations with young ones about difficult or challenging subject matter..." - Pub.



Monday, Wednesday, and Every Other Weekend

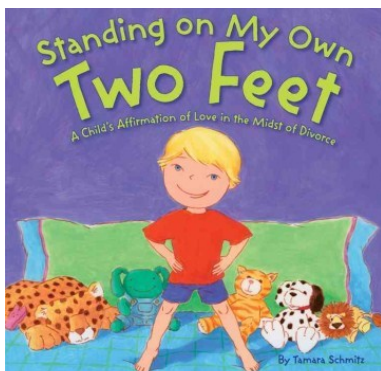
by Karen Stanton, c2014 (IL: K-3, RL: 3.5)
"Henry Cooper and his dog Pomegranate have two houses. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and every other weekend, they live with Mama in her new apartment, but on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and every other weekend, they live with Papa in his new house. Henry and Pomegranate are happy as they dance with Mama and sing with Papa, but Henry knows that sometimes Pomegranate gets confused and just wants to go . . . home..." - Pub.

melanie walsh
living
with mom
and living
with dad



Living With Mom and Living With Dad

by Melanie Walsh, c2012 (IL: K-3, RL: 3.4)
"Her parents don't live together anymore, so sometimes the child in this book lives with her mom and cat, and sometimes with Dad. Her bedroom looks a little different in each house, and she keeps some toys in one place and some in another. But her favorite toys she takes with her wherever she goes. In an inviting lift-the-flap format saturated with colorful illustrations, Melanie Walsh visits the changes in routine that are familiar to many children..." - Pub.

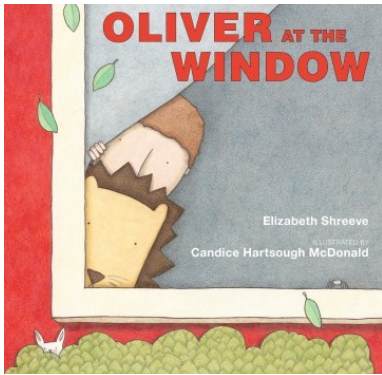


Standing on My Own Two Feet: A Child's Affirmation of Love in the Midst of Divorce

by Tamara Schmitz, c2008 (IL: K-3, RL: 1.4)
"PreS-Gr 1-When Addison's parents get divorced, he ends up with two homes, and he feels safe in both of them. He knows that his mom and dad will always love him. The text uses simple straightforward statements; for example, "Mom and Dad do not always get along. But it's not because of me" and "Even though I wish we could all live together again, that probably won't happen. It's not up to me."..." - SLJ.

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Oliver at the Window

by Elizabeth Shreeve, c2009 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.5)

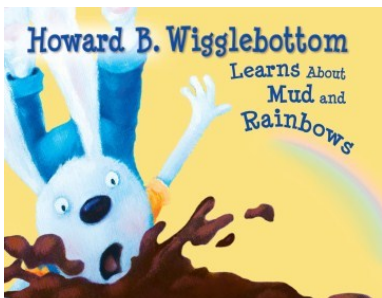
"Making a friend makes all the difference. When Oliver's parents separate, Oliver must brave many new changes. He shuffles back and forth between his parents' homes. And now he goes to preschool everyday. He doesn't know the kids there or his new teacher. Isolated and alone at first, Oliver slowly becomes part of the gang. Eventually, he's able to help the newest student feel welcome at school. Lion stays with Oliver everywhere he goes..." - Pub.



My New Mom and Me

by Renata Galindo, c2016 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.7)

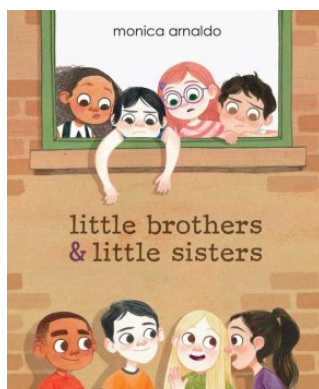
"Here is a heartwarming and completely accessible story about adoption, diversity, and acceptance. Told from the point of view of a puppy who is adopted by a cat, this gentle and reassuring tale is perfect for very young readers and listeners. When the puppy comes to live with his new mom, he is nervous. After all, his mom has stripes and he doesn't. But his mom says she likes that they look different, and soon the puppy likes it, too..." - Pub.



Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns About Mud and Rainbows: When Parents Fight

by Howard Binkow, 2009 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.5)

"Howard learns he can't fix everything, but he can change the way he thinks and feels about things. A simple version of the Serenity Prayer. Tips and lessons included. Resources/support: www.wedolisten.org." - Pub.



Little Brothers & Little Sisters

by Monica Arnaldo, c2018 (IL: K-3, RL: 1.3)

"Little sisters and little brothers all long for the same few things when it comes to their older siblings: a turn to play, a place on the team, a chance to shine. This book starts with four pairs of siblings in and around an apartment complex, each expressing through play and daily life the many gripes and pitfalls of younger siblings. Subtly, the narrative shifts to reflect the good things that come with having an older sibling: a helping hand, a partner in crime, a friend..." - Pub.

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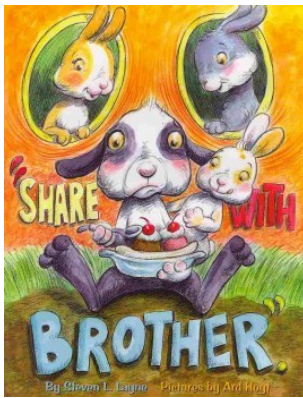
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Maple & Willow Together

by Lori Nichols, c2014 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.7)

"They love playing outside throughout the whole year, welcoming the sun, rain, leaves, and snow. But it's not always sunshine and rainbows, because sometimes big sisters can be bossy - and sometimes little sisters can be frustrating - and even the best of friends need a break from each other . . . at least until they can no longer bear to be apart. *Maple & Willow Together* celebrates imagination and inventive play..." - Pub.



Share With Brother

by Steven L. Layne, c2011 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.9)

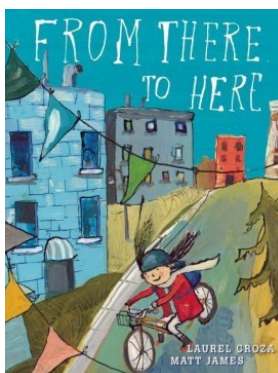
"This delightfully illustrated book for young readers tells of a child getting used to the idea of sharing with his little brother. He doesn't want to! But he soon finds out that if he shares with brother, brother shares with him." - Pub.



I Want to Be the Only Dog: A Story About Sibling Rivalry

by Julia Cook, c2015 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.0)

"Readers will chuckle over the silly antics of these pooches while being reminded that siblings provide lifelong lessons in tolerance, patience, sharing, and conflict resolution." - Pub.



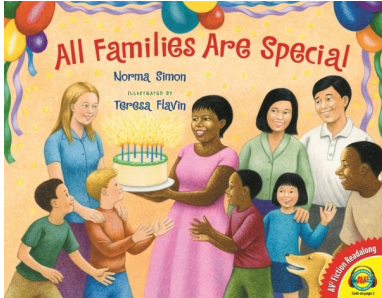
From There to Here

by Laurel Croza, c2014 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.2)

"Map on endpapers. A young girl tries to adjust to moving from northeastern Saskatchewan to Toronto, where she misses her father coming home for lunch and looking at the stars at night with her family, but an eight-year-old girl from next door helps her to feel better." - Follett

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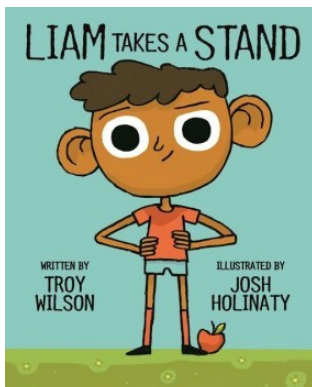
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All Families are Special

by Norma Simon, c2014 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.3)

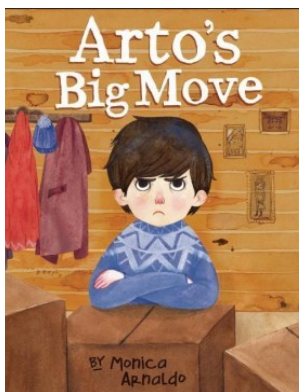
"Students in Mrs. Mack's class describe their families--big or small, living together or apart, with two moms or none--and learn why every family is special and important." - *Follett*



Liam Takes a Stand

by Troy Wilson, c2017 (IL: K-3, RL: 1.8)

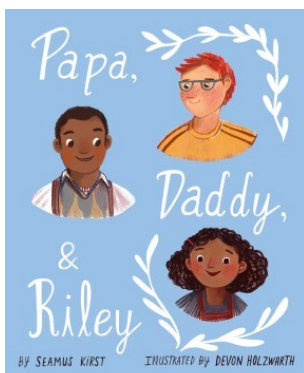
"Lester and Lester are identical twins who do identical things. But their constant striving to outdo each other means their little brother, Liam, is always left out. When Lester's Lemonade Universe and Lester's Lemonade Multiverse open for business, there's no role for Liam. He does odd jobs around the neighborhood while Lester and Lester's competition spirals into overdrive..." - *Pub.*



Arto's Big Move

by Monica Arnoldo, c2014 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.3)

"Arto has lived his *whole* life in the snowy, cold North, and six years is a long time. When his mom gets a new job and the family prepares to spend a year in the South, Arto is not happy at all. He decides that he's just going to act as if he never moved. In the new Southern landscape of prickly plants, strange birds and a big, hot sun, Arto stubbornly dons his winter uniform of boots, mittens, coat, and hat, day after day. It's worth the stuffy, sweaty, overheated feeling..." - *Pub.*



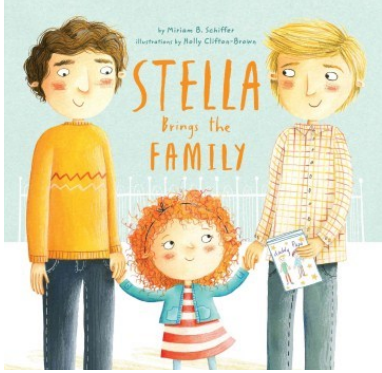
Papa, Daddy & Riley

by Seamus Kirst, c2020 (IL: K-3)

"Riley is Papa's princess and Daddy's dragon. She loves her two fathers. When Riley's classmate asks her which dad is her real one, Riley is confused. She doesn't want to have to pick one or the other. Families are made of love in this heartwarming story that shows there are lots of ways to be part of one." - *Pub.*

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Stella Brings the Family

by Schiffer, Miriam, c2015 (IL: K-3, RL: 3.2)

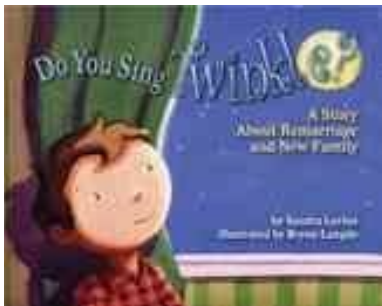
"Stella's class is having a Mother's Day celebration, but what's a girl with two daddies to do? It's not that she doesn't have someone who helps her with her homework, or tucks her in at night. Stella has her Papa and Daddy who take care of her, and a whole gaggle of other loved ones who make her feel special and supported every day. She just doesn't have a mom to invite to the party. Fortunately, Stella finds a unique solution to her party problem in this sweet story about love, acceptance, and the true meaning of family." - Pub.



Just Like Mama

by Alice Faye Duncan, c2020 (IL: K-3, RL: 1.6)

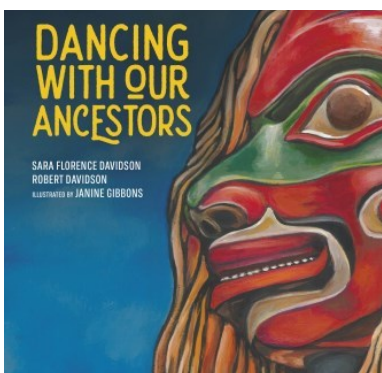
"Carol Olivia Clementine lives with Mama Rose. Mama Rose is everything—tender and sweet. She is also as stern and demanding as any good parent should be. In the midst of their happy home, Carol misses her mother and father. She longs to be with them. But until that time comes around, she learns to surrender to the love that is present. Mama Rose becomes her "home." And Carol Olivia Clementine concludes that she loves Miss Rose, "just like a mama." - Pub.



Do You Sing Twinkle?

by Sandra Levins, c2010 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.5)

"...living apart from a parent can be a hard adjustment for kids. And, when that parent remarries and has stepchildren, things can get really confusing for kids! Told from a young boy's point of view, the book sensitively addresses many questions that children may have while adjusting to remarriage and joint-custody situations. Kids and parents will learn good and easy ways to stay connected all around helping kids to feel special and loved." - Pub.



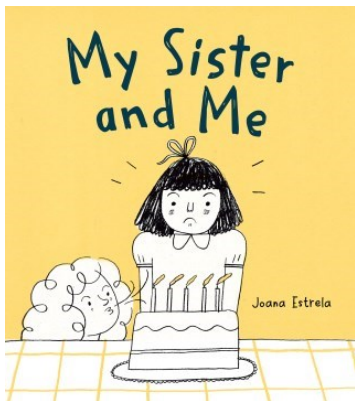
Dancing With Our Ancestors

by Sara Davidson, c2010 (IL: 1-4)

"Learn about the cultural significance of the Haida potlatch through the sights, sounds, and dances of this once-banned ceremony. In this tender picture book, Sara Florence Davidson transports readers to the excitement of a potlatch in Hydaburg, Alaska--her last memory of dancing with her late brother." - Follett

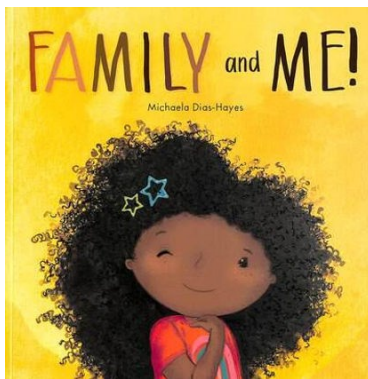
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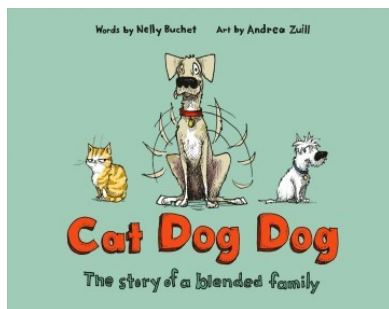
My Sister and Me
by Joana Estrela, c2024 (IL: 1-3)

"In a letter to her younger sister, an older sister narrates a medley of childhood memories, realizing that they share a special bond and have always been there for each other. Playful, childlike illustrations work seamlessly with the text in this tender and humorous exploration of sister dynamics and the universal experience of sibling relationships." - Pub



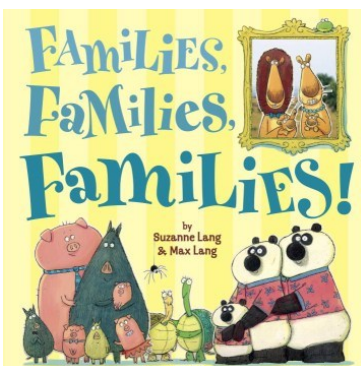
Family and Me!
by Michaela Dias-Hayes

"As a young girl explores the idea of her family tree, she notices all the beautiful physical features she has inherited from her black and south Asian family lines. Not only that, she realises how their love and nurture bring our shared interests, passions and personality traits." - Owlet Press



Cat Dog Dog
by Nelly Buchet, c2020 (IL: K-2)

"Here is the oh-so-hilarious and adorable story of a blended family-- using just a few words in various configurations-- from the pets' point-of-view." - Pub

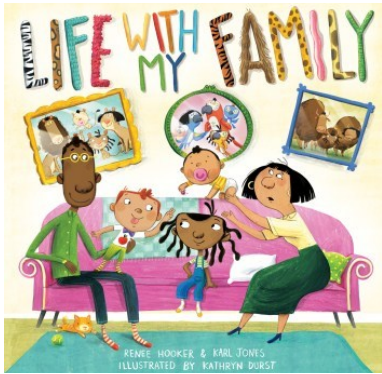


Families, Families, Families!
by Suzanne Lange, c2015 (IL: K-2, RL: 1.7)

"No matter your size, shape, or pedigree--if you love each other, you are a family! Moms, dads, sisters, brothers ' and even Great Aunt Sue ' appear in dozens of combinations, demonstrating all kinds of nontraditional families! Silly animals are cleverly depicted in framed portraits, and offer a warm celebration of family love." - Pub

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Life With My Family

by Renee Hooker, c2018 (IL: K-2, RL: 2.6)

"When a young girl gets frustrated with her chaotic life at home, she imagines what things would be like if her family were animals instead. Would life be better as a pod of pelicans, a pride of lions, or a herd of buffalo? Or is it ultimately a family of humans that she needs?" - Pub

Mental Health-Family Life

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Non-fiction: Primary



Having Two Homes (Series: A Focus On...)
by Holly Duhig, c2018

"In today's world children live with separated parents. This title explores divorce and separation, examines what life can be like after a divorce, and discusses how to see the positives." - Amazon.ca



Series: All Kinds of Families
by PowerKids Press, c2021

Titles:
Families Through Adoption
Families Through Divorce
Families With a Single Parent
Families With a Special Needs
Families With Two Dads
Families With Two Moms