

Lessons from the Literature

Suggestions by paediatricians of books illustrating children's experience of illness and health care

| Title and author | Author | Any comments given | Who suggested it |
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| Disability | | | |
| Skallagrigg | <i>William Horwood</i> | 1980's story about resettling disabled adults from institutions | Janet Hislop/Diane Collett |
| Heidi | <i>Johanna Spyri</i> | Clara in a wheelchair | Margaret Fletcher / Bob Phillips / Lizzy Dierckx |
| Chapter 2. Biography of Emperor Claudius | <i>Suetonius</i> | Claudius' chronic illness as a child with resulting physical (and mental?) disability clearly CP | David Levene |
| The raging quiet | <i>Sherryl Jordan</i> | Deafness and resulting exclusion | Jenefer Sargent |
| Planet of the Blind | <i>Stephen Kuusisto</i> | Visual impairment | Jenefer Sargent |
| The Poisonwood Bible | <i>Barbara Kingsolver</i> | Hemiplegia with speech impairment. Diane has a copy. | Jenefer Sargent |
| The Secret Garden | <i>Frances Hodgson-Burnett</i> | Boy shut away afraid of becoming a hunchback | Lizzy Dierckx |
| Spellhorn | <i>Berlie Doherty</i> | Blindness and seeing | Jenefer Sargent |
| Damburst of dreams | <i>Christopher Nolan</i> | The feelings of a child with athetoid CP | Harvey Marcovitch |
| The boy who went away | <i>Eli Gottlieb</i> | A teenager's relationship with his autistic brother | Linda Hutchinson |

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| The clematis tree | <i>Anne Widdecombe</i> | Sensitive story of a boy disabled by an RTA and the effect this has on the family | Janet Anderson |
| Warrior Scarlet | <i>Rosemary Sutcliff</i> | A disabled celtic child (?Erb's palsy) who eventually slays a wolf and is accepted | Stella Imong |
| Helen Keller's teacher | <i>Mickie Davidson</i> | Teacher overcomes abuse and obstacles and teaches the deaf blind Helen Keller | Rollo Clifford |
| What was wrong with Tiny Tim? | <i>Am Jnl Dis Child 1992 or 93</i> | Was renal tubular acidosis and rickets underlying Tiny Tim's name and appearance | Malcolm Battin |
| Injury/ trauma/ acute illness | | | |
| Hidden Lives | <i>Margaret Foster</i> | Description of fingers being lanced in 1930/40. | Sharon Bowring |
| Face | <i>Benjamin Zephaniah</i> | Boy coping with facial burns | Kath Price |
| Dead kidsongs | <i>Toby Litt</i> | A child's account of having meningitis | Bob Phillips |
| The peppermint pig | <i>Nina Bawden</i> | Polly has scarlet fever | Neville Belton |
| Boy | <i>Rouald Dahl</i> | A traumatic tonsillectomy at the doctor's | Vidya Krishnan/ Mary Rudolf |
| The Land of the Counterpane from a Child's Garden of Verse | <i>Robert Louis Stevenson</i> | Verse on being confined to bed | Lesley Price |
| Treasures of the Snow | <i>Patricia St John</i> | Child deliberately causes another an accident, ending with child in calipers | Diane Collett |
| Child abuse/protection | | | |
| Harry Potter | <i>J. K. Rowling</i> | Bereavement, bullying, foster care. | Cliona Ni Bhrolchain / Liza Boyle |
| Once in a house on fire | <i>Andrea Ashworth</i> | Biography about growing up in an abusive household | Linda Hutchinson |
| The Bone People | <i>Ken Hulme</i> | Deeply disturbing account of physical abuse | Tony O'Sullivan/ Stella Imong |
| A boy called 'It' | <i>Dave Pelzer</i> | Boy rescued from severe physical and emotional abuse inflicted by mother | David Vickers |
| 'Tis a pity she's a whore | <i>John Ford</i> | 16 th century, genetic sexual attraction and incest between siblings | Heather Payne |

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| A series of unfortunate events | <i>Lemony Snicket</i> | Bereavement, emotional abuse, neglect, a sibling who can't talk | Anna Sharma |
| The bean trees | <i>Barbara Kingsolver</i> | Post abuse trauma and adoption | Jenefer Sargent |
| 1.3.14-18 Book 6 of "Institutio Oratoria" | <i>Quintilian</i> | Attack on corporal punishment and how it may lead to a child accepting sexual exploitation | David Levene |
| Oliver Twist | <i>Charles Dickens</i> | Neglect, residential care, adoption, child abuse | Heather Payne / Tony Waterston |
| Harry and the Wrinklies | <i>Alan Temperley</i> | Child abuse, being in care, neglect, criminal involvement | Lorraine Lambert |
| Goodnight Mr Tom | <i>Michelle Magorian</i> | Surviving bereavement, child abuse, mental illness, separation etc | Lorraine Lambert/ Paul Carter |
| Angela's Ashes | <i>Frank McCourt</i> | An abusive household with young children dealing with alcohol abuse (father) and depression (mother) | Cliona Ni Bhrolchain |
| Angel eyes | <i>David Almond</i> | Children in care having lost parents for various reasons | Lorraine Lambert |
| Death and dying | | | |
| Tom Brown's School Days | <i>Thomas Hughes</i> | Death of a friend / lack of information | |
| Red Sky in the Morning | <i>Elizabeth Laird</i> | Girl who's brother has hydrocephalus and dies. Written for teenagers. | Jean Bowyer |
| Spoon Face Sternberg | <i>TV and radio play</i> | A child facing terminal illness | Margaret Fletcher/ Janet Hislop/ Steve Cronin |
| Two weeks with the Queen | <i>Morris Gleitzman</i> | Boy whose brother has a terminal illness and gets sent away | Jenefer Sargent |
| Preface to Book 6 of Institutio Oratoria | <i>Quintilian</i> | Talks of sons' deaths and movingly about the illness of one of them | David Levene |
| Letters 5.16 | <i>Pliny</i> | Moving description of the illness and death of the 13 yr old daughter of a friend | David Levene |
| Little Women | <i>Louisa M Alcott</i> | Beth is frail and dies in Good Wives | Mary Rudolf/Cliona Ni Bhrolchain |

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| Bleak House | <i>Charles Dickens</i> | The heroine contracts smallpox from a poor cottager | Barbara Lewis |
| Narratives of love and loss | <i>Michael & Margaret Rustin</i> | A survey of depictions of bereavement in children's literature | Graham Sleight |
| Charlotte's web | <i>EB White</i> | Moving book about birth and death | Graham Sleight |
| Through a glass darkly | <i>Jostein Gaarder</i> | | Sharon Bowring/ Lizzie Dierckx |
| Health care | | | |
| Nicholas Nickleby | <i>Charles Dickens</i> | Medicine given as a punishment | Lizzy Dierckx |
| The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe | <i>C S Lewis</i> | Lucy's magic cordial fixes all | Lizzy Dierckx |
| Hard Times | <i>Charles Dickens</i> | The son is sent to the seaside as he is "wasting" | |
| Miss Molly had a dolly Christopher Robin had wheezles | <i>AA Milne</i> | Young children's poems about illness | Bob Phillips/ Mary Rudolf |
| Doctor Dog Bad Habits | <i>Babette Cole</i> | Young children's book on acute illness and prevention | Gill Robinson |
| Relationships | | | |
| Koala Lou | <i>Mem Fox</i> | Australian story for coping with younger siblings getting in the way | Paul Carter |
| Bad girls, The illustrated mum, Dustbin baby | <i>Jacqueline Wilson</i> | Stories relating to fostering and adoption | Heather Payne |
| Huckleberry Finn | <i>Mark Twain</i> | Child observing father going through cold turkey | Ruth Skelton |
| The Railway Children | <i>E Nesbitt</i> | Mother's illness; local GP as friend and supporter | Lizzy Dierckx |
| About a boy | <i>Nick Hornby</i> | Adolescent's relationship with an adult | Tony Waterston |

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| The subtle knife | <i>Philip Pullman</i> | Will's mother has mental health problems and he is the carer | Neville Belton Graham Sleight |
| The summer house loon | <i>Anne Fine</i> | The father of the main character is blind | Neville Belton |
| The other darker Ned | | | |
| Oedipus the King | <i>Sophocles</i> | Problems encountered when child is not told they are adopted | Heather Payne |
| Charlotte's Webb | <i>E.B.White</i> | Wonderfully moving book about birth and death as inevitable processes | Graham Sleight |
| Two Weeks with the Queen | <i>Morris Gleitzman</i> | A boy's reaction to his brother's leukaemia | Emma Storr |
| Sellig | <i>David Almond</i> | About an older brother coping with the birth of a premature sibling | Emma Curtis |
| Other | | | |
| What Katy did | <i>Susan Coolidge</i> | | Margaret Fletcher |
| The magician's Nephew | <i>CS Lewis</i> | Diggory brings magic cure to his dying mother | |
| The other side of truth | <i>Beverley Naidoo</i> | West African children illegally smuggled into UK with an imposter 'mother'. Experience of refugee children. | Tony O'Sullivan |
| Innocent blood, Death in Holy Order | <i>P D James</i> | Adoption theme in both | Heather Payne |
| Nature of the Child | <i>Hippocrates</i> | Medical writings about children's physiology and illnesses | David Levene |
| Sneaky Poo, go home | | | Lizzy Dierckx |
| Books for children about illness/hospital | | | |
| A lot of Topsy and Tims | <i>Jean Adamson</i> | | |
| Curious George at the Hospital | <i>HE Meys</i> | | Sarah Gilead |
| Various titles | <i>MY Bees</i> | Issue related picture books for preschool and early years | |
| Living with (various illnesses) | <i>Published by Wayland</i> | Nonfiction titles for 8 years up | |
| The fact about (various | <i>Published by Belitha</i> | Nonfiction titles for 8 years up | |

illnesses)

Press

Other resources

Narratives of Love and Loss

*Michael and Margaret
Rustin*

Survey of depictions of bereavement in
children's fiction
Centre for Language in Primary Education

Graham Sleight

Contact for children's books

Contact Olivia O'Sullivan:
olivia@clpe.co.uk

Contact for adoption themes

Adoption UK, summarise literature with
adoption theme

Heather Payne

www.scottishbooktrust.com

www.booktrust.org.uk

www.clinpharm.ox.ac.uk/JKA/

Tales.htm

www.dipex.org

List of autopathographies-patients' stories,
mainly adult, but some childhood
experiences

List of patient experiences which is being
collected for reference. Adult only at present
