



Divorce and Separation

Recommended Book List

Infant–Preschool

Families Can- Dan Saks

This charmingly heartfelt board book is for families: families who cook together and families who sing together, families with lots of members and families with a special few, families who live together and families who live separately--for all families. Celebrate the differences that make each family unique and the similarities and love that connect us all together. (Ages 1-3)

The I LOVE YOU Book- Todd Parr

I love you when you need hugs...Most of all, I love you just the way you are. Todd Parr celebrates the unconditional love between parent and child. From the heartfelt ("I love you when you need hugs") to the lighthearted ("I love you when you hide my keys") and with many moments in between that are sure to make readers smile and reminisce, this is the perfect book for families to share together to remind children how much they are loved, each and every day.

Living with Mom and Living with Dad- Melanie Walsh

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 whose parents live apart, but whose love and involvement remain as constant as ever. (Ages 3-5)

Why Do Families Change?: Our First Talk about Separation and Divorce-Dr. Jillian Roberts

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. (Ages 3-5)

Two is Enough- Janna Matthies

From playing in the snow to a rainy-day ride, to double-scoop treats and crash-landing in leaves, two can be the perfect number for creating life's memories. And two can definitely be enough for a warm family, full of the love, support, and comfort that every child needs. (Ages 3-6)

Early Elementary

Emily's Blue Period- Cathleen Daly

Emily wants to be an artist. She likes painting and loves the way artists like Pablo Picasso mixed things up. Emily's life is a little mixed up right now. Her dad doesn't live at home anymore, and it feels like everything around her is changing. "When Picasso was sad for a while," says Emily, "he only painted in blue. And now I am in my blue period." It might last quite some time. (Ages 4-7)

A Family Is a Family Is a Family- Sara O'Leary

When a teacher asks the children in her class to think about what makes their families special, the answers are all different in many ways — but the same in the one way that matters most of all. One child is worried that her family is just too different to explain, but listens as her classmates talk about what makes their families special. One is raised by a grandmother, and another has two dads. One is full of step siblings, and another has a new baby. As one by one, her classmates describe who they live with and who loves them — family of every shape, size and every kind of relation — the child realizes that as long as her family is full of caring people, her family is special. (Ages 4-7)

The Invisible String- Patrice Karst

In this relatable and reassuring contemporary classic, a mother tells her two children that they're all connected by an invisible string. "That's impossible!" the children insist, but still they want to know more: "What kind of string?" The answer is the simple truth that binds us all: An Invisible String made of love. Even though you can't see it with your eyes, you can feel it deep in your heart, and know that you are always connected to the ones you love. Does everybody have an Invisible String? How far does it reach? Does it ever go away? This heartwarming picture book for all ages explores questions about the intangible yet unbreakable connections between us, and opens up deeper conversations about love. (Ages 4-8)





Early Elementary Continued

I Have a Stepmom/Stepdad- Colleen LeMaire

Stepdads and Stepmomms play an important role in their unique family, and this story details the positive qualities they contribute to a blended household. This book helps define the relationship between a Steparent and their stepkids, and teaches children that LOVE is what makes someone family. (Ages 6-9)

My Family's Changing- Pat Thomas

My Family's Changing is a unique picture book for younger children and explores the issue of divorce. The author of this book is a psychotherapist and counselor and helps children to face their fears, worries and questions when their family is going through a break-up. "What About You?" sidebars appear frequently with questions directed at the child reading the book. (Ages 4-7)

Here and There- Tamara Ellis Smith

A young boy, Ivan, experiences the early stages of his parents' separation and finds hope in the beauty and music of nature. This tale of personal growth will provide a much-needed mirror for children in times of change -- and an important reminder for all that there's beauty everywhere you look. (Ages 5-8)

Upper Elementary/Middle School

Dear Mr. Henshaw- Beverly Cleary

After his parents separate, Leigh Botts moves to a new town with his mother. Struggling to make friends and deal with his anger toward his absent father, Leigh loses himself in a class assignment in which he must write to his favorite author. When Mr. Henshaw responds, the two form an unexpected friendship that will change Leigh's life forever. (Ages 8-12)

Blended- Sharon Draper

Eleven-year-old Isabella's parents are divorced, so she has to switch lives every week: One week she's Isabella with her dad, his girlfriend Anastasia, and her son Darren living in a fancy house where they are one of the only black families in the neighborhood. The next week she's Izzy with her mom and her boyfriend John-Mark in a small, not-so-fancy house that she loves. (Ages 8-12)

I, Cosmo- Carlie Sorosiak

Ever since Cosmo became a big brother to Max ten years ago, he's known what his job was: to protect his boy and make him happy. Cosmo senses a tougher challenge ahead. When Max gets a crazy idea to teach them both a dance routine for a contest, how can Cosmo refuse, stiff hips or no? Max wants to remind his folks of all the great times they've had together dancing — and make them forget about the "d" word that's making them all cry. Told in the open, optimistic, unintentionally humorous voice of a golden retriever, I, Cosmo will grab readers from the first page — and remind them that love and loyalty transcend whatever life throws your way. (Ages 8-12)

The Lost Boy's Gift- Kimberly Willis Holt

Nine-year-old Daniel must move across the county with his mom after his parents' divorce. He's leaving behind his whole life—everything—and he's taking a suitcase of anger with him. But Daniel is in for a surprise when he settles into While-a-Way Lane and meets his new neighbors—the Lemonade Girl, the hopscotching mailman, the tiny creatures, and especially Tilda Butter. Tilda knows how to look and listen closely, and it's that gift that helps Daniel find his way in that curious placed called While-a-Way Lane. (Ages 8-11)

How Tia Lola Came to (Visit) Stay- Julia Alvarez

Moving to Vermont after his parents split, Miguel has plenty to worry about! Tía Lola, his quirky, carismática, and maybe magical aunt makes his life even more unpredictable when she arrives from the Dominican Republic to help out his Mami. Like her stories for adults, Julia Alvarez's first middle-grade book sparkles with magic as it illuminates a child's experiences living in two cultures. (Ages 8-12)

The List of Things That Will Not Change- Rebecca Stead

After her parents' divorce, Bea's life became different in many ways. But she can always look back at the list she keeps in her green notebook to remember the things that will stay the same. The first and most important: Mom and Dad will always love Bea, and each other. When Dad tells Bea that he and his boyfriend, Jesse, are getting married, Bea is thrilled. Bea loves Jesse, and when he and Dad get married, she'll finally (finally!) have what she's always wanted--a sister. (Ages 8-12)

A Boy Called Bat- Elana K. Arnold

Bat is a young boy on the autism spectrum who has divorced parents. His mom is a vet who one day, brings home an orphaned baby skunk. Bat falls in love with the skunk, hoping to keep it as a pet. The author skillfully shows Bat's unique perspective on the skunk situation, his sister, and his weekend visits with his dad. (Ages 6-10)

Some Kind of Happiness- Claire Legrand

Everwood is an imaginary kingdom, a place Finley finds in the back of her grandparent's house. She's written about it forever. Now she has it. Will it help her heal? Will it help her discover why her father left? Some Kind of Happiness is a multi-layered, thought-provoking, and an exquisite story that addresses the big topics of divorce, secrets, and depression. (Ages 8-12)