



Siblings of Children with Special Needs

Booklist and Resources

You can check out many of these books from Seattle Children's Family Resource Center Library (level 7, River zone).

There are a number of books written for the siblings of children with special needs. Age-appropriate books can be a great way for parents to invite children to ask questions or share their feelings about their brother or sister. Many of the books below may be available at your local library or in Seattle Children's Family Resource Center, and all are available to buy online. This is not a complete list, but it is a great place to start.

Work Book or Coloring Book

Our New Baby Needs Special Help

Gail Klayman. Centering Corp., 1996

This coloring book is for the young siblings of hospitalized infants.

The Other Kid: A Draw It Out Workbook for Kids Dealing With a Special Needs Sibling

Lorraine Donlon. Llumina Kids, 2011

This workbook can help young siblings express some of their feelings and concerns about their brother or sister with special needs through reading, drawing and talking.

Books for Young Children

Hi, My Name Is Jack

Christina Beall-Sullivan. Bopar Books, 2000

A book for healthy siblings of children with chronic illnesses or disabilities that is not diagnosis-specific and may be useful to families facing a variety of medical situations.

What About Me? When Brothers and Sisters Get Sick

Allan Peterkin. Magination Press, 1992

This story deals with the many complicated feelings the well sibling experiences when their brother or sister becomes ill, including guilt, fear, anger, anxiety and longing.

When Molly Was in the Hospital: A Book for the Brothers and Sisters of Hospitalized Children

Debbie Duncan. Rayve Productions Inc., 1994

Children whose siblings have spent time in the hospital may be comforted by a story similar to their own, told from the point of view of young Anna after her sister Molly is hospitalized.

Books for School-Aged Children

Living With a Brother or Sister With Special Needs

Donald Meyer and Patricia Vadasy. University of Washington Press, 1996

This book talks about the “good and not-so-good” parts of having a brother or sister with special needs, and the hard questions some siblings may ask themselves and their parents.

Special Brothers and Sisters: Stories and Tips for Siblings of Children With a Disability or Serious Illness

Annette Hames and Monica McCaffray. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2005

This collection shares real-life accounts from the brothers and sisters of children with special needs, disabilities or serious illness, ranging in age from 3 to 18 years.

Views From Our Shoes: Growing Up With a Brother or Sister With Special Needs

Donald Meyer. Woodbine House, 1997

This collection of personal stories is written by 45 siblings ranging in age from 4 to 18. It introduces young siblings to others who have brothers and sisters similar to their own. A glossary of disabilities provides easy-to-understand definitions of many conditions.

Books for Teenagers or Young Adults

Being the Other One: Growing Up With A Brother or Sister With Special Needs

Kate Strohm. Shambhala Publications, 2005

The author shares her own experience of growing up with a sister with a disability, draws on numerous interviews with siblings of all ages, explores the many feelings siblings often face, and offers strategies for coping.

The Sibling Slam Book: What It’s Really Like to Have a Brother or Sister With Special Needs

Don Meyer and David Gallagher. Woodbine House, 2005

This book doesn’t “slam” in the traditional sense of the word, but rather gives teenagers a chance to share the wide variety of experiences that can come with having a sibling with special needs. It is written by 80 teenage siblings from the United States and abroad.

Thicker Than Water: Essays by Adult Siblings of People With Disabilities

Don Meyer. Woodbine House, 2014

A collection of essays in which adult siblings share the highs and lows of growing up with a brother or sister with disabilities, as well as the ways their siblings have shaped their adult lives.

Articles

Caring for Siblings of Seriously Ill Children

KidsHealth, 2015

Guidelines to support parents and caregivers in caring for the siblings of seriously ill children. Available at:

www.kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/sibling_care.html

Siblings of Children With Chronic Illnesses

American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015

This article helps parents understand how siblings might feel and what they can do to help. Available at: www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chronic/Pages/Siblings-of-Children-with-Chronic-Illnesses.aspx

Websites

Band-Aides and Blackboards

www.lehman.cuny.edu/faculty/jfleitas/bandaides/sibteens.html

Includes stories from siblings of children with special needs and links to other sibling support resources.

Hand to Hold

www.handtohold.org/support/sibling-support/

Hand to Hold is a Texas-based organization that offers support for families who have experienced the premature birth or loss of an infant. Its website includes some excellent sibling support resources, including books about prematurity, hospitalization and specific diagnoses as well as other resources.

Medical Home Portal

www.medicalhomeportal.org/living-with-child/taking-care-of-yourself-and-your-family/caring-for-your-other-children

This organization, whose goal is to support parents of children with chronic and complex conditions, features information about siblings of children with special health care needs.

Sibling Support Project

www.siblingsupport.org

The Sibling Support Project provides web-based resources and education for siblings of all ages. You can find information about Sibshops and a great collection of books and other resources that you can order at their Amazon aStore, which donates a portion of its proceeds back to the project.

The Sibling Support Project has several online groups to help siblings connect and stay in touch with one another. SibNet and SibTeen are Yahoo and Facebook groups for adult and teen siblings. Sib20 is a Facebook group for young adult siblings in their twenties. Find out more at: www.siblingsupport.org/connect-with-others-sibs.

To Learn More

- Social Work
206-987-2760
- Family Resource
Center 206-987-2201
- Ask your child's
healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask
your child's nurse.
- From outside the
hospital, call the
toll-free Family
Interpreting Line
1-866-583-1527. Tell
the interpreter the
name or extension you
need.

Siblings Australia

www.siblingsaustralia.org.au/

This site offers numerous great resources including information designed to help parents and teachers better understand sibling concerns. The website also features a great, age-appropriate book list.

Sibshops

www.siblingsupport.org/sibshops

Sibshops are fun workshops that bring the siblings of children with special needs together. Sibshops usually include a mix of games, discussion, information and special guests.

To learn more or register for Sibshops at Seattle Children's:

www.seattlechildrens.org/classes-community/current-class-offerings/sibshops/

To find a Sibshop near you: <https://www.siblingsupport.org/about-sibshops/find-a-sibshop-near-you>

SuperSibs

www.alexslimonade.org/campaign/supersibs

SuperSibs' focus is supporting siblings of children with cancer. Families of children with other serious illnesses may also find some of these resources helpful. The website features many great resources, including materials for siblings of different age groups, parents, grandparents, friends and neighbors, healthcare providers, teachers, and religious and spiritual leaders.