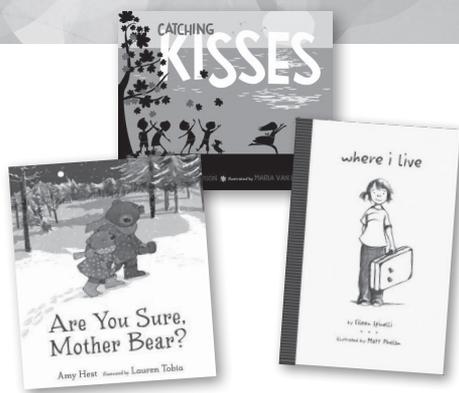


Neufeld Institute

Children's Book List



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Symbol Guide



Our favourite selections for intuitively reflecting the necessity of safe adult attachments, for recognizing that the motivator for a child's maturation and caring is emotional (not cognitive), and for being developmental in nature (e.g. separation isn't used as a discipline technique). More details of our criteria are in the descriptions of the individual books.



Books that are new on this year's list.



Books widely considered classic literature.



Out-of-print books (oops!) not to be forgotten and possibly available through your local library.



Books that reflect our conference theme of resilience.

Connections to Parents (often once removed as animal parents)

A Lot of Otters

by Barbara Helen Berger
Putnam Books for Young Readers, 1997

Holding on to a child when apart and unwavering parental attachment.



Alexander, Who's Not (Do You Hear Me? I Mean It!) Going to Move

by Judith Viorst and Ray Cruz, illus by Robin Preiss Glasser
Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1998

Change, separation from the familiar and facing futility sympathetically and humorously told.

And If the Moon Could Talk

by Kate Banks, illus by Georg Hallensleben
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005

A story of a child's bedtime routine with the parents but also told from the position of the moon. If the moon could talk, imagine all the different stories it could share about animals, children all over the world, etc.



Are You Sure, Mother Bear?

by Amy Hest, illus by Lauren Tobia
Candlewick, 2016

A wonderful book to help bridge nighttime separation, as Mama Bear lovingly support her cub's separation anxiety through bridging and play.

Bear Hug

by Katharine McEwen
Templar Books, 2014

Generations of bears raising their cubs, passing along their knowledge and rituals. Striking art in earth-tone collage.

Favourite!

Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?

by Martin Waddell, illus by Barbara Firth
Candlewick, 1992

Big Bear lovingly soothes Little Bear's fear of the dark with cuddles.

Daddy Hugs

by Nancy Tafuri
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2014

Animal daddies and their little ones staying close. Attachment polarization is wonderfully portrayed—great read with a three-year-old.

Favourite!

Fine Dessert: Four Centuries, Four Families, One Delicious Treat, A

by Emily Jenkins, illustrated by Sophie Blackall
Schwartz & Wade, 2015

Parents and children baking together in vignettes that span four centuries, showing how recipes, togetherness, and cooking tools change—or not—over time.

Favourite!

How to Heal a Broken Wing

by Bob Graham
Candlewick, 2008

Lovely evocation of the alpha in taking care of some creature in need; powerfully expressive illustrations.



I Heart You

by Meg Fleming, illus by Sarah Jane Wright
Beach Lane Books, 2016

Animal mothers soft-heartedly demonstrate the ways they pursue, love, and know their children. ("I see you. I miss you. / I lift you. I grow you. / I know you. I get you.")

I Will Keep You Safe and Sound

by Lori Haskins Houran, illus by Petra Brown
Cartwheel Books, 2013

An array of animal parents reassure their children that they will be there for them always.



I Wish You More

by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, illus by Tom Lichtenheld
Chronicle Books, 2015

This book is a collection of beautiful wishes for a loved one.

If I Wrote a Book About You

by Stephany Aulenback, illus by Denise Holmes
Simply Read Books, 2014

Mother narrates this story to her child, touching on attaching through significance and providing her child with a rich vocabulary of words to describe who she is, not what she does.

OOP

If You Listen

by Charlotte Zolotow, illus by Stefano Vitale
Running Press Kids, 2002

Holding on to someone who is away.

In a Blue Room

by Jim Averbeck, illus by Tricia Tusa
Harcourt Children's Books, 2008

Loving mother getting ahead of her child's needs to help her sleep.

Favourite!

Invisible String, The

by Patrice Karst, illus by Geoff Stevenson
Devorss & Co., 2000

Making concrete the important attachments in a child's life.

Kiss Box, The

by Bonnie Verburg, illus by Henry Cole
Orchard Books, 2011

A place to put imaginary kisses in order to hold on to a parent.

Favourite!

Kissing Hand, The

by Audrey Penn, illus by Ruth E. Harper and Nancy M. Leak
Tanglewood Press, 2006

Holding on to a parent when apart.

Favourite!

OOP

Let's Go Home, Little Bear

by Martin Waddell, illus by Barbara Firth
Candlewick, 1995

Big bear looking after little bear – parent in alpha role.

Little Treasures: Endearments from Around the World

by Jacqueline Ogburn, illus by Chris Raschka
Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 2012

Love expressed by parents and grandparents across cultures.

NEW

Love Matters Most

by Mij Kelly, illus by Gerry Turley
Little, Brown, 2016

A polar bear mother searches for her lost cub.

Love Waves

by Rosemary Wells
Candlewick, 2011

A mom sends love waves to help her child to hold on when apart.



Favourite!

Lucky Ducklings

by Eva Moore, illus by Nancy Carpenter
Scholastic, 2013

A true story of five ducklings who fall into a storm drain and a mama duck in the lead who fiercely protects her baby ducklings.



Make Way for Ducklings

by Robert McCloskey
Puffin Books, 2010 (first published in 1941)

Parent in the lead.

Mama Built a Little Nest

by Jennifer Ward
Beach Lane Books, 2014

A poetic nonfiction book showing different kinds of birds preparing safe, cozy nests for their babies.

Mama, Do You Love Me?

by Barbara Joose, illus by Barbara Lavallee
Chronicle Books, 1991

These are wonderfully illustrated books based on stories of the Inuit culture (Mama) and Massai culture (Papa) that convey the message of unconditional love and of the parent being the child's best bet.

OOP

Mama's Saris

by Pooja Makhijani, illus by Elena Gomez
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2007

Wonderful attachment by sameness. Also evokes the sensuality of beautiful fabrics.

Favourite!

Miss Maple's Seeds

by Eliza Wheeler
Nancy Paulsen Books, 2013

Enchanting illustrations accompany this metaphorical story of a woman who nurtures orphaned seeds, trusting in the developmental process as she provides the conditions they need to grow into whatever they are meant to be. *Also recommended for Transplanting Children section.*

Favourite!

Mitchell Goes Bowling

by Hallie Durand, illus by Tony Fucile
Candlewick, 2013

In this book filled with charming illustrations, an in-charge father takes his son on a bowling adventure, both to embrace the boy's need to throw things and to create a scenario where his son must depend.

Monday is One Day

by Arthur A. Levine, illus by Julian Hector
Scholastic, 2011

A bridging book about parents holding on to their children when apart.

Morning to Polish and Keep, A

by Julie Lawson and Sheena Lott
Red Deer Press, 2015 (first published in 1992)

A sweet book about family togetherness, beautifully depicting caring adults in the lead. Set off the coast of British Columbia.

My Mom is Trying to Ruin My Life

by Kate Feiffer, illus by Diane Goode
Paula Wiseman Books (S&S), 2009

Competing attachments (external norms) lightly and humorously treated with a child's fantasy separation from parents.

Nest

by Jorey Hurley
Paula Wiseman Books (S&S), 2014

A couple of birds wait at their nest for their egg to hatch, then raise their baby to maturity. Beautiful nonfiction told with one word on each spread.

Favourite!

Owl Babies

by Martin Waddell, illus by Patrick Benson
Candlewick, 2010 (first published in 1992)

A good one for separation fears.

Favourite!

Pocket Full of Kisses, A

by Audrey Penn, illus by Barbara Leonard Gibson
Tanglewood Press, 2006

Holding on to a parent when away from them.

Rock-A-Bye Room

by Susan Meyers, illus by Amy Bates
Harry M Abrams, 2013

A mother saying goodnight to her child, bridging nighttime separation.

Classic

Runaway Bunny, The

by Margaret Wise Brown, illus by Clement Hurd
HarperCollins (first published in 1942)

Parent in the alpha role.

Runaway Hug, The

by Nick Bland, illus by Freya Blackwood
Scholastic, 2011

Turns the notion of only one hug into an expression of warmth that can be passed around infinitely – outstanding illustrator.

Sam and His Dad

by Serge Bloch
Wilkins Farago, 2012

A warm and fun dad in the lead parenting his son.

OOP

Ten Best Things About My Dad, The

by Christine Loomis, illus by Jackie Urbanovic
Cartwheel Books, 2004

Simple little book about a dad who is, on top of being everything a boy would want, okay with tears.

That's Me Loving You

by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, illus by Teagan White
Random House Books for Young Readers, 2016

A parent helps a child stay close when apart by describing how the things they see in the natural world are “me loving you.”

We're Going on a Bear Hunt

by Michael Rosen, illus by Helen Oxenbury
Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2009

Family enjoying being together – joyous quality of a joint adventure.



When Papa Comes Home Tonight

by Eileen Spinelli, illus by David McPhail
Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2009

Separation bridging, looking forward to all of the joyous things a father and son will do together after being apart.

Why Do You Love Me?

by Laura C. Schlessinger with Martha L. Lambert, illus by Daniel McFeeley
HarperCollins, 2001

Unconditional love for a young child.



You Nest Here with Me

by Jane Yolen and Heidi Stemple, illus by Melissa Sweet

A mother tells her sleepy child where different birds sleep, emphasizing belonging with the refrain, “You nest here with me.”

Grandparents, Extended Family, Village of Attachment

Favourite!

Alfie series

by Shirley Hughes
Red Fox Books

Village of attachment with Alfie being one of the youngest.

- **Alfie and the Big Boys (2009):** About a big boy that Alfie admires; as in all of these stories, Alfie's family seems embedded in a village of attachment.

Favourite!

All About Grandmas

by Roni Schotter, illus by Janice Nadeau
Dial Books for Young Readers, 2012

A fun portrayal of all the different kinds of caring grandmas. Includes a glossary with all of the names for grandma around the world. A great Mother's Day present or gift for a new grandmother.

Favourite!

All the Places to Love

by Patricia MacLachlan, illus by Michael Wimmer
Harper Collins, 1994

A young boy introduces spots around his farm, each tied to a different family member and his attachment-filled memories about them. The book culminates with his favourite place, shared after his baby sister is born.

All the World

by Liz Garton Scanlon, illus by Marla Frazee
Beach Lane Books, 2009

An attachment village in a world of mixed experiences: old and new, hot and cold.

Amazing Grace

by Mary Hoffman, illus by Caroline Binch
Dial Books for Young Readers, 1991

Grace wants to be Peter Pan in spite of being a black girl – her grandmothers are her support team.

Aunt Claire's Yellow Beehive Hair

by Deborah Blumenthal, illus by Mary GrandPré
Pelican Publishing, 2007

Stories of family traditions and strange relatives.

Favourite!

Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear

by Lindsay Mattick, illus by Sophie Blackall
Little, Brown, 2015

The true story of Winnie-the-Pooh, complete with family connection, attachment, separation bridging, tears of futility, soft hearts, and love.

Fiona's Lace

by Patricia Polacco
Simon & Schuster, 2014

Strong attachment village portrayed in this story that uses the metaphor of lace to portray generations connected together. Theme of displacement could be traumatic.

Frank Show, The

by David Mackintosh
Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2012

Hilarious book about a surprising grandfather.

Hana Hashimoto Sixth Violin

by Chieri Uegaki, illus by Qin Leng
Kids Can Press, 2014

A child's strong attachment to her grandfather gives her the courage she needs to play the violin at a talent show – and find her own style. *Also recommended for Inspiring or Portraying Play section.*

Harry and Walter

by Kathy Stinson, illus by Qin Leng
Annick Press, 2016

Loving bond between a 4¾-year-old and his 92½-year-old neighbor and best friend. *Also recommended for Inspiring or Portraying Play section.*

I Already Know I Love You

by Billy Crystal, illus by Elizabeth Sayles
HarperCollins, 2007

Grandfather anticipates the birth of a grandchild.

Favourite!

Island Morning

by Rachna Gilmore, illus by Brenda Jones
Acorn Pres, 2016

A grandfather and granddchild see the world through each other's eyes.

Joe on the Go

by Peggy Perry Anderson
Sandpiper Books, 2012

Joe, the emergent frog, and Grandma share a special connection at a family reunion.

Favourite!

OOP

Katie Morag series

by Mairi Hedderwick
Red Fox Books

Amazing images and stories of literally a village of attachment on an island with grandparents and cousins and the village folks.

Keeping Quilt, The

by Patricia Polacco
Aladdin Books, 2001

Family heirlooms and traditions – intergenerational attachments and belonging.

Favourite!

Kisses on the Wind

by Lisa Moser, illus by Kathryn Brown
Candlewick, 2009

Pioneer parents are leaving and the daughter is saying goodbye to grandma – on how to hold close someone far away.

Last Stop on Market Street

by Matt de la Peña, illus by Christian Robinson
G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2015

A wise, alpha grandmother matchmakes her grandson to people in their attachment village during a bus ride on the way to help in a soup kitchen.

Favourite!

Matchbox Diary, The

by Paul Fleischman, illus by Bagram Ibatoulline
Candlewick, 2013

A grandpa meeting his granddaughter for the first time shows her his culture through items he has stored in matchboxes.

Meerkat Mail

by Emily Gravett
Simon & Schuster, 2007

Young meerkat goes to visit various cousins.

Miss Rumphius

by Barbara Cooney
Puffin Books, 1982

A grandfather passes along wisdom to his grandchild. A classic book about holding on.

My Grandfather's Coat

by Jim Aylesworth, illus by Barbara McClintock
Scholastic, 2014

A coat is passed down through the generations, as coat, vest, tie toy. A Jewish folktale about love and adaptation.

Oma's Quilt

by Paulette Bourgeois, illus by Stephane Jorisch
Kids Can Press, 2001

Grandmother moving into a retirement home – loss and change and creative adaptation.



Party, The

by Barbara Reid
Scholastic Canada, 2012

Two sisters enjoy a big backyard party with their extended family in this book, which is beautifully illustrated with plasticine pictures.



Path of Stars, A

by Anne Sibley O'Brien
Charlesbridge, 2012

Despite the child briefly taking care of her grandmother, this book beautifully portrays cultural rituals, food and attachment, tender family relationships, and futility as a grandmother reflects on her history from Cambodia.

Relatives Came, The

by Cynthia Rylant, illus by Stephen Gammell
Live Oak Media, 2003

Large group of relatives of all shapes and forms visit one summer.

Silver Button, The

by Bob Graham
Candlewick, 2013

A story about a child taking his first steps, flashing to the wider perspective of the attachment village, and then back to the child's steps.

Something From Nothing

by Phoebe Gilman
Scholastic, 1993

Similar to *My Grandfather's Coat*, an adaptation of a favourite Jewish folktale as a blanket passed down by a grandfather transforms through the generations.

So Much!

by Trish Cooke, illus by Helen Oxenbury
Candlewick, 2008

A sweet story about significance, showing all the aunts and uncles who come over to hug and kiss the child SO MUCH. Child at rest, full of emergent energy, after all the love from his village of attachment.

Favourite!

This is Our House

by Hyewon Yum
Frances Foster Books, 2013

A child narrates photographs of her life story as passed down to her, beginning with her grandparents, her parents preparing for her arrival, and then her birth. Village of attachment, connection to parents, extended family, attaching via significance.

Those Shoes

by Maribeth Boelts, illus by Noah Z. Jones
Candlewick, 2009

An alpha grandmother helps her grandson adapt when he doesn't have the same shoes as his peers.

NEW

Too Many Mangos

by Tammy Zaikai, illus by Don Robinson
Island Heritage, 2009

Two Hawaiian children pick mangoes with their grandfather to share with family and friends in their village of attachment.

Favourite!

Willie and Uncle Bill

by Amy Schwartz
Holiday House, 2012

Here is an uncle like no other uncle! What a character he is!

Woolbur

by Leslie Helakoski, illus by Lee Harper
HarperCollins, 2008

Addressing the special one who does not fit in to the norm and a wise grandfather who sees the big picture.

Yetsa's Sweater

by Sylvia Olsen, illus by Joan Larson
Sono Nis Press, 2006

Aboriginal cultures with grandparent. The topic is a local Cowichan traditional sweater.

Sibling Relationships



Alice & Lucy Will Work for Bunk Beds

by Jaime Temairik
Disney-Hyperion, 2016

Little adult involvement, but a loving and silly portrayal of two emergent sisters with different temperaments caught between play and work modes as they earn money for a bunk bed.

OOP

Back into Mommy's Tummy

by Thierry Robberecht, illus by Philippe Goossens
Clarion Books, 2005

Rivalry with the new baby.

Big Sister, Little Sister

by LeUyen Pham
Hyperion, 2005

Strong sibling hierarchy.



Hello in There!: A Big Sister's Book of Waiting (Growing Hearts)

by Jo Witek, illus by Christine Roussey
Harry N. Abrams

A little girl is so excited about becoming a big sister that she talks and sings to her new sibling even before her sibling is born.



Little Miss, Big Sis

by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, illus by Peter H. Reynolds
HarperCollins, 2015

A big sister loves and teaches her new little sister in this book that focuses on the wonderful parts of having a younger sibling.

Maple

by Lori Nichols

Nancy Paulsen Books, 2014

When Maple is a baby, a tree is planted in her honor, and as she grows is a tool to invite Maple's loudness. A sweet story that includes attaching at significance and alpha-caring toward a new sibling.

My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother

by Patricia Polacco

Paula Wiseman Books (S&S), 1998

Sibling problems with a wise grandma in the mix.

Language of Feelings

Favourite!

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

by Judith Viorst, illus by Ray Cruz
Atheneum, 2009

Sympathetic and humorous look at frustrations in life alongside the child.



Favourite!

OOP

Angry Dragon

by Thierry Robberecht, illus by Philippe Goossens
Clarion Books, 2004

Outstanding intuitions of frustration and the role of tears in draining feelings.



Favourite!

Chocolate-Covered Cookie Tantrum, The

by Deborah Blumenthal, illus by Harvey Stevenson
Sandpiper Books, 1999

How it feels on the inside of a tantrum. The parent stays to hold the child in futility.

Favourite!

In My Heart: A Book of Feelings

by Jo Witek, illus by Christine Roussey
Harry N. Abrams, 2014

This beautiful exploration of a child's feelings stands out as unique, not just listing emotions, but portraying how they feel inside, too.

Happy

by Mies Van Hout
Lemniscaat, 2011

Despite the title, a range of emotion is portrayed with an equal balance of 'good' and 'bad' emotions. Leaves room for parents to have conversations about how it's okay to have each of these emotions.

Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears

by Emily Gravett
Simon & Schuster, 2008

The scary things for a mouse who is small.

Llama Llama Mad at Mama

by Anna Dewdney
Viking Juvenile, 2007

Another frustration/aggression story.



Mean Soup

by Betsy Everitt
Sandpiper Books, 1995

When frustration is too much, a mama finds a way to get it out.

See a Heart, Share a Heart

by Eric Telchin
Dial Books, 2012

Seeing hearts and love in the world.

Tough Boris

by Mem Fox, illus by Kathryn Brown
Sandpiper Books, 1998

Even someone who acts tough has tender feelings.

Favourite!

Way I Feel, The

by Janan Cain
Parenting Press, 2004

Developing a language of emotions.

Wild Feelings

by David Milgrim
Henry Holt, 2015

A great book for normalizing a range of big feelings.

Inspiring or Portraying Play



Ada Twist, Scientist

by Andrea Beatty, illus by David Roberts
Harry N. Abrams, 2016

Ada has a lot of emergent energy and is curious about everything. Her parents offer lots of support.

Favourite!

Art's Supplies

by Chris Tougas
Orca Book Publishers, 2008

A boy describes how he lost control of his art supplies, recounting the story using clever puns and fun phrases with double meanings.

Bloom

by Doreen Cronin, illus by David Small
Atheneum, 2016

An emergent and unexpectedly messy fairy helps an ordinary girl find her courage, as together they save the kingdom. Whimsical and fun.

Book with No Pictures, The

by B.J. Novak
Dial Books for Young Readers, 2014

A playful book that's fun as a read-aloud. It intentionally flips the alpha as if the adult cannot control the words being read to the child.

Druthers

by Matt Phelan
Candlewick, 2014

Emergent play after Dad's invitation. Alpha roles are flipped, but the emphasis is on pretend, so this works well.

King Jack and the Dragon

by Peter Bently, illus by Helen Oxenbury
Dial Books for Young Readers, 2011

Three emergent boys build a fort and fight dragons, and then get tucked in for the night by their parents.



Man with the Violin, The

by Kathy Stinson, illus by Dušan Petričić
Annick Press, 2014

Dylan loves the music the man with the violin is playing in the subway station as most people rush past.

Mitchell's License

by Hallie Durand, illus by Tony Fucile
Candlewick, 2011

Mitchell never wants to go to bed... so his dad finds a creative and playful way to hide his parental agenda to get him there.

Night Gardener, The

by Terry Fan, illus by Eric Fan
Simon & Schuster, 2016

A celebration of emergence and play breathing life into a community.

Niño Wrestles the World

by Yuyi Morales
Roaring Brook Press, 2013

An emergent child conquers his formidable opponents... until his sisters wake up from their naps.

Not a Box

by Antoinette Portis
HarperCollins, 2006

A rabbit responds to questions about the box he is playing with to reveal the many things the box really is – a fire truck, robot, race car, and more.

Not a Stick

by Antoinette Portis
HarperCollins, 2007

Fun follow-up to *Not a Box*.

Plaidypus Lost

by Janet Stevens, illus by Susan Stevens Crummel
Holiday House, 2013

An emergent child gets absorbed in play and keeps forgetting her beloved Plaidypus, a stuffie made by grandma out of a plaid shirt.

Sam and Dave Dig a Hole

by Mac Barnett, illus by Jon Klassen
Candlewick, 2014

This fun story follows two boys on a journey of emergent play, leaving plenty of room for interpretation and conversation.

This is Sadie

by Sara O’Leary, illus by Julie Morstad
Tundra Books, 2015

A playful look at an emergent childhood, through the delightful imagination of a girl named Sadie.

Violin for Elva, A

by Mary Lyn Ray, illus by Tricia Tusa
HMH Books for Young Readers, 2015

When told she can’t play the violin, this emergent girl pretends to play one – first with a tennis racket and then with her toothbrush. Years pass, and finally Elva finds the courage to follow her dreams.

Relationships with Special Teachers

Albert's Old Shoes

by Stephen, illus by Mary Jane Muir
Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1996

A child who doesn't have what the other children have.

Art of Miss Chew, The

by Patricia Polacco
G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2012

An autobiographical account of how a special teacher can make a huge difference for a child.

Carmen Learns English

by Judy Cox, illus by Angela Dominguez
Holiday House, 2010

A child from Mexico attaches to her teacher. Uses intuitive language about vulnerable feelings and shows a nice sibling hierarchical relationship.

First Day Jitters

by Julie Danneberg, illus by Judith Dufour Love
Whispering Coyote Press, 2000

Children are not alone in feeling anxious about the first day of school. Humorously dealt with.



Ming Goes to School

by Dierdre Sullivan, illus by Maja Löfdahl
Sky Pony, 2016

Ming's first experience of school models mixed feelings, futilities, and a place "where all things ... are worth waiting for."

Favourite!

Miss Little's Gift

by Douglas Wood, illus by Jim Burke
Candlewick, 2009

A teacher gives extra help and encouragement to special needs child.

Miss Tutu's Star

by Leslea Newman, illus by Carey Armstrong-Ellis
Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2010

Teacher encourages a child to face fears.

Mrs. Mack

by Patricia Polacco
Puffin Books, 2001

Special summer with a rough-and-ready horseback riding teacher.

Favourite!

Mrs. Spitzer's Garden

by Edith Pattou, illus by Tricia Tusa
Harcourt Children's Books, 2007

A teacher sees how each child is like a special plant to grow, and like plants they grow in different ways.

My Three Best Friends and Me, Zulay

by Cari Best, illus by Vanessa Brantley-Newton
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015

A caring and supportive teacher helps a blind student in achieving a big goal. Peer dynamic at play, though children are orienting to the adults in charge so this works well.

Favourite!

Perfect Man

by Troy Wilson, illus by Dean Griffiths
Orca Book Publishers, 2005

Boys identifying with superheroes and finding something special they can do.

Favourite!

When I Grow Up

by Al Yankovic, illus by Wes Hargis
HarperCollins, 2011

One of the most pure examples of emergence in a child and a teacher not squashing this.

Wonder, The

by Faye Hanson
Templar Books, 2015

Despite other adults telling a young boy to get his dreamer's head out of the clouds, an art teacher is struck by the child's wonders and helps facilitate their expression.

Transplanting Children

Picture Books & Read-a-Loud Novels



Great Gilly Hopkins, The

by Katherine Paterson

HarperCollins, 2004 (first published in 1978)

Middle-Grade Novel—An 11-year-old child who's on her way to her third foster home in less than three years. Beautifully captures the essence of the alpha child who finally finds home through the alpha-caring love of her new foster mother.

OOP

I See the Moon

by C.B. Christiansen

Atheneum, 1992

Middle-Grade Novel—The coming-of-age story of a 12-year-old girl, who is writing the book to the unborn baby that her older, teen sister Kari is expecting. A tender story of significance for the adopted child that honours first attachments.

Moccasins, The

by Earl Einarson

Theytus Books, 2004

Picture Book—A foster mother honouring first attachments. Understated; not preachy.

Mother for Choco, A

by Keiko Kasza

Puffin Books, 1996

Picture Book—A mother holding on to her adopted child, not needing to be the same when attaching at a deep level.

Motherbridge of Love

by anonymous, illus by Josee Masse
Barefoot Books, 2007

Picture Book—The anonymous adoption poem written by an adoptive mother, brought to life with illustrations depicting adoption of a Chinese girl. Honouring of both attachments.

Penguin and Pinecone

by Salina Yoon
Walker & Company, 2012

Picture Book—A penguin attaches to a pinecone, and upon the advice of Grandpa, takes Pinecone to the forest, but the two forever remain in each other's hearts.

Tell Me Again About the Night I Was Born

by Jamie Lee Curtis, illus by Laura Cornell
HarperCollins, 2000 (first published in 1997)

Picture Book—A story of significance, as a child asks to hear her cherished adoption tale once again.

OOP

Sweet Moon Baby

by Karen Henry Clark, illus by Patrice Barton
Alfred A. Knopf, 2010

Picture Book—A tender tale that portrays birth and adoptive parents' mixed feelings. An adult may need to help interpret the baby's journey on the river as fantasy, to ease potential alarm.

Special Difficulties

Not for Every Child

Allergies

Peanut-Free Café, The

by Gloria Koster, illus by Maryann Cocca-Leffler
Albert Whitman, 2006

Creative approach to allergy problem.

Cancer

Goodbye Cancer Garden, The

by Janna Matthies, illus by Kristi Valiant
Albert Whitman & Company, 2011

Mom has cancer and the whole family rallies around the time of her treatment. Excellent in that it goes through all the things that are done to support mom's treatment and sets an optimistic tone that the family can find its way through. More than any other books dealing with cancer, this book would help to reduce alarm in a child.

Lemonade Club, The

by Patricia Polacco
Philomel, 2007

A child and a teacher who both have cancer.

Death

Favourite!

Heart and the Bottle, The

by Oliver Jeffers
Philomel, 2010

Concrete description of the defenses against the pain of missing someone.

Junkyard Wonders, The

by Patricia Polacco
Philomel, 2010

Teacher's support for children faced with challenges and handling the death of one of them.

Kayak Girl

by Monica Devine, illus by Mindy Dwyer
University of Alaska Press, 2012

After her mother dies, a young girl's grandfather presents his granddaughter with a special gift and the grace of time, which together help her adapt to her huge loss and find a way to hold on.

Favourite!

Memory String, The

by Eve Bunting, illus by Ted Rand
HMH Books for Young Readers, 2015

A young, grieving girl holds onto her mother's memory through a string of buttons. When the string breaks, the girl's new stepmother honours the first attachment, finding a way through to softening the child's heart. *Also recommended for Transplanting Children section.*

OOP

Michael Rosen's Sad Book

by Michael Rosen, illus by Quentin Blake
Candlewick, 2008

For a big loss of parent or child. Not for young children – perhaps age 8.

Wishes for One More Day

by Melanie Joy Pastor, illus by Jacqui Gantford
Flashlight Press, 2006

Death of a grandpa, showing the children's sense of connection to him.

Depending

Mole's Sunrise

by Jeanne Willis, illus by Sarah Fox-Davies
Candlewick, 2012

How can blind mole see the sunrise? It is lovely and tender to see how his friends can share the experience in a way that he can be part of it – another book where someone vulnerable is taken care of.

Divorce

Favourite!

Emily's Blue Period

by Cathleen Daly, illus by Lisa Brown
Roaring Brook Press, 2014

A non-didactic and touching portrait of a family emerging through the emotional complications of divorce.

Finding the Right Spot: When Kids Can't Live with Their Parents

by Janice Levy, illus by Whitney Martin
Magination Press, 2004

Title says it.

Living with Mom and Living with Dad

by Melanie Walsh
Candlewick, 2012

A child of divorce shares the similarities and differences at each parent's house with the help of fun lift-the-flaps.

Learning Disabilities

Favourite!

Thank You, Mr. Falker

by Patricia Polacco
Philomel, 2001

Teacher helping a dyslexic child.

Moving

Augustine

by Melanie Watt
Kids Can Press, 2008

A young penguin misses her grandparents after a move, and finds her sense of home through art.

My Name is Yoon

by Helen Recorvits, illus by Gabi Swiatkowska
Candlewick, 2012

A young girl adapts to her move to another country, and in the process finds herself.

Sensitivity & Giftedness

Fancy Nancy series

by Jane O'Connor, illus by Robin Preiss Glasser
HarperFestival

Good examples of the challenges of the sensitive gifted girl in action.

Wink: The Ninja Who Wanted to be Noticed

by J.C. Phillipps
Viking Juvenile, 2009

A sensitive, gifted boy who can't conform and with the support of granny finds a place.

Others We Like

Bear and Bunny

by Daniel Pinkwater, illus by Will Hillenbrand
Candlewick, 2015

A supportive, unexpected cross-species attachment between a bear and a bunny, who search for a smaller pet to care for and love.

Big Bear Hug

by Nicholas Oldland
Kids Can Press, 2009

A huggy bear finds a peaceful solution to a disagreement.



Catching Kisses

by Amy Gibson, illus by Maria van Lieshout
Feiwel & Friends, 2013

Kisses travel around the United States in this poetic book.

Daniel Finds a Poem

by Micha Archer
Nancy Paulsen Books, 2016

A child listens to the animals as he grasps the meaning of poetry.



Ella and Penguin: A Perfect Match

by Megan Maynor, illus by Rosalinde Bonnet
HarperCollins, 2017

Ella and Penguin learn they don't need to be exactly alike to be best friends.



Enemy Pie

by Derek Munson, illus by Tara Calahan King
Chronicle Books, 2000

Dad taking the lead, helping his child work through being rejected.



Fabulous Friend Machine, The

by Nick Bland
Scholastic, 2017

A chicken discovers the problems with forming superficial attachments online, and the importance of the friends around her.



Fraidyzo

by Thyra Heder
Harry N. Abrams, 2013

A fantastic children's book about playing with the alarm that a child feels about going to the zoo.



If I Had a Little Dream

by Nina Laden, illus by Melissa Castrillon
Simon & Schuster, 2017

Nature and wonder, as seen through a child's eyes, celebrate the possibility and love of the world. Builds to a tender bedtime scene with a loving parent, making this book a nice choice to help bridge nighttime separation.

If You Hold a Seed

by Elly MacKay
Running Press Kids, 2013

A boy nurtures a seed to maturity, a metaphor that speaks to patience and trusting in the developmental process.



Hooway for Wodney Wat

by Helen Lester, illus by Lynn Munsinger
Sandpiper Books, 2011

Shy rat who can't say his R's takes on a bully.

Hachiko: The True Story of a Dog

by Pamela S. Turner, illus by Yan Nascimbene
Houghton Mifflin Children's Books, 2004

Great story, sure to help your child find his or her tears.

Favourite!

OOP

Kidogo

by Anik McGrory
Bloomsbury, 2005

Discomfort from being in the dependent position (smaller than).

OOP

Monster Mama

by Liz Rosenberg, illus by Stephen Gammell
Puffin Books, 1997

A mother steps up to the alpha position to protect her son from bullies.

Never Too Little to Love

by Jeanne Willis and Jan Fearnley
Candlewick, 2013

This fun, lift-the-flap and pop-up book stars a little mouse who creatively finds all kinds of objects to make himself taller so he can profess his love to a lovely lady who's "way up there."

Oh No, George!

by Chris Haughton
Candlewick, 2012

An untempered dog struggles with his actions, which don't match his good intentions.

Old Bear and His Cub, The

by Olivier Dunrea
Philomel, 2010

An alpha taking care – it seems that most bear books are good!

Once Upon A Memory

by Nina Laden, illus by Renata Liwska
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2013

Thought-provoking, poetic text and poignant illustrations for soft, quiet moments reading with children. Can help to prime mixed feelings.

Sick Day for Amos McGee

by Philip C. Stead, illus by Erin Stead
Roaring Brook Press, 2010

He doesn't show up at the zoo so the animals go to visit him.

Spare Dog Parts

by Alison Hughes, illus by Ashley Spires
Orca Book Publishers, 2016

A girl muses on the mismatched parts that make her endearing mutt unique and loved. Attachment, one-step removed – a metaphor of a parent's love of a child.

Favourite!

Where the Wellies Take Me

by Clare and Michael Morpurgo, illus by Olivia Lomench Gill
Templar Books, 2013

A book that's truly a work of art. Traditions, village of attachment.

Whoever You Are

by Mem Fox, illus by Leslie Staub
HMH Books for Young Readers, 2006

A beautiful book bridging diversity with a message of sameness and normalising. Shows how all children from all over the world love, smile, laugh and cry, as well as experience joy and pain.

Why Do I Have to Make My Bed?

by Wade Bradford, illus by Johnanna van der Sterre
Tricycle Press, 2011

Normalizing and humour without a consequence – it is just something you have to do.

Why Do You Cry? Not a Sob Story

by Kate Klise, illus by M. Sarah Klise
Henry Holt & Company, 2006

Normalizing of tears.

Zero Kisses for Me

by Manuela Monari, illus by Virginie Soumagnac
Tundra Books, 2010

Another unconditional love tale.

Mixed Feelings

It is with mixed feelings that we include this category. We often start a book with great enthusiasm – it has a good theme, good feelings, etc. – and then disappoints as the story unfolds by some element the author has really missed or gone astray on. Frequently that element is clever children who solve problems they shouldn't have to, such as getting divorcing parents back together, making adults happy who are grumpy, solving their interpersonal problems with other children, or looking after ineffectual adults.

There are lots of books with no adult in sight, and some see children dealing with quite painful existential situations on their own.

Sometimes a book just misses it by a bit, and a parent reading the book could give a spin on a story and add in the missing element, for example. These are the books we have included in this category, and invite you to see with new eyes.

Bus Called Heaven

by Bob Graham
Candlewick, 2012

Gardener, The

by Sarah Stewart, illus by David Small
Square Fish, 2007

Library, The

by Sarah Stewart, illus by David Small
Square Fish, 2008

Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children

by Bryan Mellonie, illus by Robert Ingpen
Bantam Books, 1983

Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch

by Eileen Spinelli, illus by Paul Yalowitz
Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1996

Tear Thief, The

by Carol Ann Duffy, illus by Nicoletta Ceccoli
Barefoot Books, 2007

There, There

by Sam McBratney, illus by Ivan Bates
Templar Books, 2013



What Matters

by Alison Hughes, illus by Holly Hatam
Orca, 2016

You Were the First

by Patricia MacLachlan, illus by Stephanie Graegin
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2013

Books for the Very Young

Forever

by Emma Dodd
Templar Books, 2013

A polar bear's unwavering parental love. Accented with striking foil art.

Great Big Cuddle: Poems for the Very Young, A

by Michael Rosen, illus by Chris Riddell
Candlewick, 2014

A collection of poems that epitomize the preschooler personality, such as "Let Me Do It," "I Don't Want," and "I Am Angry."

Hands Say Love

by George Shannon, illus by Taeun Yoo
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2014

Attachment by senses. All the ways adult hands nurture their children and show their love.

I Am Small

by Emma Dodd
Cartwheel Books, 2011

Being protected under parent. Primes conversations about scale and mixed feelings.

I Love You, One to Ten

by Caroline Adderson, illus by Christina Leist
Groundwood Books, 2015

A mother expresses love for her child, while playfully hiding her agenda of getting ready for bed.

Little Poems for Tiny Ears

by Lin Oliver, illus by Tomie dePaola
Nancy Paulsen Books, 2014

A book for a parent to play all the games of the senses.

Only You

by Robin Cruise, illus by Margaret Chodos-Irvine
Harcourt Children's Books, 2007

A celebration of parental love. Illustrations portray characteristic, endearing counterwill.



Shout! Shout It Out!

by Denise Fleming
Henry Holt and Co., 2011

This bright, exuberant book normalises the loud, enthusiastic sounds (shouts) of preschoolers.

Wait! Wait!

by Hatsue Nakawaki, illus by Komako Sakai
Enchanted Lion Books, 2013

A beautifully illustrated book that shows a child's natural curiosity about the world (feeling safe to emerge), with a caring adult.

Whose Nest?

by Lynette Evans and Guy Troughton
Insight Kids, 2013

A lift-the-flap book full of surprises as young readers guess which animals belong to the cozy homes (nests) illustrated in stunning watercolors.

Wonderful Things You Will Be, The

by Emily Winfield Martin
Random House Books for Young Readers, 2015

Expresses all of the potential in childhood, with encouragement to take care of the small, and to help things grow.

You Are One

by Sara O'Leary, illus by Karen Klassen
Owlkids Books, 2016

Celebrating and expressing love for developmental milestones that take place in a child's first year of life.

Early Readers & Chapter Books

Favourite!

Henry and Mudge series

by Cynthia Rylant, illus by Sucie Stevenson
Simon & Schuster, 1987-2007

Tender stories of a boy and his dog. These stories feature caring parents in the lead, a village of attachment, and true play. Favourites include:

- **Henry and Mudge and Annie's Good Move:** Attachment village and alpha caring when cousin Annie and her dad move next door.
- **Henry and Mudge and the Funny Lunch:** Henry and his dad play with food to make a clever gift for Mother's Day.
- **Henry and Mudge and the Great Grandpas:** Henry and Mudge visit Great-Grandpa Bill in the house where he lives with lots of other grandpas for a lively swimming adventure together.
- **Henry and Mudge in the Green Time:** Henry has a moment of tender tears after a bee sting, and later enjoys some emergent play as a king with his dragon outdoors.
- **Henry and Mudge and the Starry Night:** Henry's family goes on a camping trip. Henry's mother, a former Camp Fire Girl, is in the lead, along with Henry's dad with his guitar.

Lighthouse Family, The series

by Cynthia Rylant, illus by Preston McDaniels
Simon & Schuster, 2002-2005

Stories of an unusual family living in a lighthouse together, with a remote fairy-tale feel. A favourite includes:

- **The Storm:** All about alpha in response to alarm. It is all so tender one doesn't mind how silly it is.



Little Bear

by Else Holmelund Minarik, illus by Maurice Sendak
Harper Trophy, 1978 (first published in 1957)

In the four classic stories in this book, Little Bear's mother lovingly attends to her child's needs; Little Bear needlessly worries whether his mom forgot his birthday; Little Bear playfully embarks on an adventure to the moon; and his mother tells Little Bear stories of significance and reassures him of her constant love.

Pearl and Wagner: Five Days Till Summer

by Kate McMullan, illus by R.W. Alley
Penguin Young Readers, 2012

As the end of the school year approaches, Ms. Star matchmakes her students to their teacher for next year and bridges the separation of summer vacation and the transition to their new teacher.

Sparkle Stories - Martin & Sylvia Series

by David Sewell McCann and Lisabeth Sewell McCann
www.sparklestories.com

Subscription audio stories geared to children ages 3-8, without alarming content and so well suited to sensitive children. Many rich themes such as mixed feelings, attachment villages, outdoor play, alpha-caring parents, homeschooling, normalizing tears and other vulnerable feelings, village of attachment, passing along of traditions and rituals.

Middle-Grade Books



Favourite!

Because of Winn-Dixie

by Kate DiCamillo
Candlewick, 2000

The story of a girl and her father who are trying to move on with life after her mother leaves. It's a tender story of 're-attachment' as a whole community is able to come to their tears and move towards life again.

Brendan Buckley's Universe and Everything in It

by Sundee Frazier
Delacorte, 2007

Attachment village and a grandfather's important role in the life of a mixed-race boy.



Counting by 7s

Holly Goldberg Sloan
Puffin Books, 2014

An endearing girl finds a surrogate family after losing her adoptive parents, the only people she's ever found it easy to attach to.

Favourite!

Dumpling Days

by Grace Lin
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2012

Attachment village, cultural traditions, sibling relations.

Favourite!

Flora and Ulysses

by Kate DiCamillo
Candlewick, 2013

Underneath the novel's hilarity lies a lot of substance – a sensitive, eccentric, and gifted young pre-adolescent struggling with parental divorce... safe adult attachments and their power to shield... as well as obsessions, defendedness, the counterwill dynamic, and more.

Handful of Stars, A

by Cynthia Lord
Scholastic, 2015

Attachment village, family, friendship, futility, and adaptation dynamics are at play in this poignant story about a girl and her dog, Lucky, who is her strongest connection to her deceased mother.

If a Tree Falls at Lunch Period

by Gennifer Choldenko
Sandpiper Books, 2009

The teen years, girl peer orientation at its strongest. Kirsten yearns to find her way through the maze, great expression of mixed feelings, futility, discovering one's self and competing attachments.



Inside Out and Back Again

by Thanhha Lai
HarperCollins, 2011

A strong alpha mother leads her gifted ten-year-old daughter through big struggles: understanding war, coming to terms with the death of her father, moving to a new country, and adjusting to a new culture while experiencing religious pressures, racism, and bullying.

Love, Ruby Lavender

by Deborah Wiles
Sandpiper Books, 2005

Attachment village, grandparents, unconditional love.



Sarah, Plain and Tall

by Patricia MacLachlan
HarperCollins, 2004

In this historical novel, a family adjusts to their new mother, coming to terms with the loss of their first mother. A wonderful story of vulnerable feelings and loss, with an example of loving adult attachments.

What You Know First

by Patricia MacLachlan, illus by Barry Moser
HarperCollins, 1998

Great book about leaving your birth place and moving to another area. The importance of being connected as a family and knowing that you're bringing with you that which is most precious – your family.



Where I Live

By Eileen Spinelli, illus by Matt Phelan
Dial, 2007

Diana struggles with leaving the home she loves but finds she can also enjoy living somewhere new. This book has caring parents who really see their daughter, strong connections to a grandparent, a loving teacher who draws out Diana's feelings through poetry, a beautiful portrayal of sibling hierarchy, and a realistic and healthy mix of feelings around Diana's younger sibling and her mad-sad adjustment to moving. *Also recommended for Difficulties: Moving section.*



When We Were Very Young

by A.A. Milne
Dutton Juvenile, 2009 (first published in 1924)

Classic poems by the creator of Winnie the Pooh, so perfectly depicting childhood. The poem "Disobedience" humorously captures the essence of the alpha child.

Year of the Dog, The

by Grace Lin
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2005

A coming-of-age novel of a young American girl of Taiwanese heritage struggling to integrate her two cultures, helped along by the personal experiences of her parents' that parallel her own.

Young-Adult Books



Anne of Green Gables

by L.M. Montgomery
Modern Library, 2008 (first published in 1908)

Marilla and Matthew walk the maze with Anne in different ways.

Eleanor and Park

by Rainbow Rowell
St. Martin's, 2013

A first-love story starring a highly sensitive, red-headed teen. Dynamics of defensive detachment and parents who come through to support their son and his girlfriend.



Feynman

by Jim Ottaviani, illus by Leland Myrick
First Second Books, 2013

A graphic novel biography about the life of Nobel-winning quantum physicist.

Honey, Baby, Sweetheart

by Deb Caletti
Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2004

A shy teenager makes a series of mistakes as she walks the maze, but is helped along by the Casserole Queens, her librarian mom's senior citizen book club.



Red Pencil, The

by Andrea Davis Pinkney, illus by Shane W. Evans
Little, Brown, 2015

A heartfelt story of a young Sudanese refugee who, despite incredibly difficult life circumstances, is surrounded by a loving family in a traditional attachment village. Caring adults, tears, and true play help the main character adapt and grow.



Speak

by Laurie Halse Anderson
Penguin, 1999

A young freshman has been raped at a party and is caught calling the police by her peers, and shunned for doing so. She loses her voice and is unable to speak, until a compassionate teacher in her art class helps her reach out and eventually find her voice again.

Stargirl

by Jerry Spinelli
Alfred A. Knopf, 2000

An adolescent on the less traveled road toward individuation draws the attention of the peers at her high school before they turn against her. But her continued lack of conformity captures the heart of Leo Borlock, changing his life and pointing him to a path toward maturity.

Favourite!

What the Heart Knows

by Joyce Sidman, illus by Pamela Zagarenski
Houghton Mifflin, 2013

A good collection of poems for the melancholy of early adolescence. Depending on the adolescent, might poise them into reflective thought.



Waiting for Unicorns

by Beth Hautala
Philomel Books, 2015

A 13-year-old girl reeling from the death of her mother finds her way toward adaptation after a local Inuit woman helps bridge ties to the girl's mother through traditional storytelling.

Year We Were Famous, The

by Carole Etsby Dagg
Clarion Books, 2011

A historical account of a remarkable mother-daughter journey walking together across the United States.

Books to Enjoy as a Family (stories to read together)



Charlotte's Web

by E.B. White

Penguin Books, 2004 (first published in 1952)

Widely considered a classic of children's literature, this book follows the journey of Wilbur. Themes of change, loss, and adaptation throughout, tenderly handled and moving. For children whose tears are stuck, this book may help draw vulnerable feelings out and soften their hearts.



My Family and Other Animals

by Gerald Durrell

Penguin Books, 2004 (first published in 1956)

An autobiographical account of five years in the childhood of naturalist Gerald Durrell, age 10 at the start of the saga, describing his family, pets, and life during a sojourn on the island of Corfu.

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