

Book Review

Love is a Family, by Roma Downey

Harper Collins Books 2001

Reviewed by: Jayne Smith, MS

This is a beautiful story about single parent families. Young Lily lives with the wish that her family would have a mother, father, herself, and maybe even siblings. But that is not how it is, a painful fact for Lily. An event common for all school age children, a family night at school, helps Lily come to understand that her family is not so uncommon and that a family is defined by love not just by mother, father, and child.

I've had the opportunity to share this book with several school age children who do not have a father or mother anywhere active in their life. It has not only eased the pain of feeling different but also opened the door for sensitive discussions about the idea of family.

When Eric's Mom Fought Cancer by Judith Vigna

Albert Whitman & Co., 1993

Reviewed by: Jayne Smith

Eric experiences a wide variety of feelings shared by many children who have a parent with cancer. Anger, fear, guilt, sadness are the most prevalent and this story is helpful in decreasing the intensity of overwhelming feelings experienced by children. Eric and his father take a ski trip and the father is able to ease the fear of Eric that possibly he had done something to make his mother sick. The story ends with Eric and his mother talking about skiing in the coming winter.

This book successfully presents children's concerns about an ill parent and the perception for children that fun is okay...even if your mom has cancer. Years ago I had a small group with children whose mothers had cancer. I wish I had been aware of this book at that time. It is illustrated and written for the elementary school age child.