

BIBLIOTHERAPY



WHAT IS BIBLIOTHERAPY?

Bibliotherapy is an approach to healing through literature. Using picture books, early readers, chapter books, poetry, fiction or non-fiction, we can help students who are experiencing homelessness and/or students who have experienced trauma feel less isolated and promote resiliency. Reading books about families who have experienced a crisis such as divorce, death, alcoholism, an incarcerated parent, or any other traumatic event is a window for children into the lives of others to whom they can connect and learn.

HOW DO WE USE BIBLIOTHERAPY AT OU BOCES WITHIN THE MCKINNEY-VENTO GRANT?

We see reading skills and a love of books as life-long resiliency building tools. Therefore, we have structured lunchtime bibliotherapy sessions (“Lunch Bunch Book Clubs”) for students experiencing homelessness and their friends/classmates. In these sessions, we explore how characters face challenges and build resiliency. As an added bonus, we have documented that participants have improved their reading skills.

HOW CAN YOU USE BIBLIOTHERAPY?

Teachers: Teachers know their students. Books are a way to help students without being intrusive. It is like handing the child a friend to whom they can relate.

Students: Reading books with characters who have been confronted with hardship and have come through successfully can be the key to strength for a child.

Parents: Books can be a way to discuss topics which may be uncomfortable without support. Perhaps it is easier to discuss the character in a book than oneself.

For More Information:

Please contact Elizabeth Russell, OU BOCES, at Elizabeth.russell@ouboces.org

BIBLIOTHERAPY RESOURCES

For Teachers and Support Staff:

- The Novel Cure, From Abandonment to Zesltteness: 751 Books to Cure What Ails You by Ella Berthoud and Susan Elderkin
- “Read a Novel: It is Just What the Doctor Ordered” Sarah Begley
- <http://time.com/4547332/reading-benefits/>
- Learned Optimism by Martin Seligman



Suggested Titles for Students:

- Wonder R.J. Palacio
 - The Running Dream Wendelin Van Draanan
 - A Terrible Thing Happened Margaret Holmes
 - A Day's Work Eve Bunting
 - The Boys in the Boat Daniel James Brown
 - George Alex Gino
 - Simon and the Homosapien Agenda Becky Albertalli
 - The War That Saved My Life Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
 - Maddie's Fridge Lois Brandt
 - Those Shoes Maribeth Boelts
 - Crenshaw Katherine Applegate
 - Maniac McGee Jerry Spinelli
- Physical Deformity
Car Accident/Amputation
Childhood Trauma
Poverty/Immigration
Abandonment
Transgender
Homosexuality
Child Abuse
Hunger
Poverty
Possible Homelessness
Loss of Parents