

My Secret Bully

Ludwig, T., 2004

Project Prevent and Address Bullying (PPAB)

for students with disabilities

Northern Illinois University | School Psychology Program

COST: \$8 on Amazon

PUBLISHER: Dragonfly Books, New York, 2004

Description of content:

My Secret Bully is told from the perspective of an elementary school girl who is being bullied by her best friend. The main character, Monica, is the narrator of the story, and readers are offered a firsthand look at relational bullying through the eyes of a child being victimized. The story opens with Monica acknowledging she is being treated unfairly, then goes on to the negative feelings she experiences as a result of it. The book ends with her finally finding the courage to speak up to her mom about it, ultimately overcoming the situation.

Although simple enough for an elementary-aged student to read, this book offers insight that parents and educators can find useful as well. It reminds adults how important peer relationships are for children by truly capturing the uncomfortable and painful feelings experienced when one becomes the victim in a bullying situation. It can also serve as a helpful guide for how adults can empower their students to handle bullying situations in a healthy and constructive way. At the end of the book, the author included resources that can help facilitate a conversation about bullying between an adult and a student.

Strengths:

- Short and easy-to-read with an engaging story.
- Effectively puts reader in the shoes of the narrator of the story.
- Demonstrates healthy communication and strategies for students who are bullied.
- Helpful tips and discussion points are provided at the end, including “What Can a Target Do?” and “An Opportunity for Discussion” sections.
- Resources are provided, including anti-bullying organizations and websites, and recommended readings for adults.
- Realistic scenario of relational bullying.
- Emphasizes that even though the two girls in the story are friends, it is no less a case of bullying.

Limitations:

- Portrays both characters in the story as “just the victim” and “just the bully” rather than acknowledging the complex nature of bully roles.
- Focuses exclusively on relational bullying, which may be more relevant to girls than to boys.

Audience:

- Elementary school children.



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