

CLIMATE
CHANGE

ADDICTION

GRIEF

GUN
VIOLENCE

FINANCIAL
INSTABILITY

LET'S TALK

GRADES K-12

RACISM

INCARCERATION

DISABILITY
VISIBILITY

Topics like these can be challenging or even uncomfortable to discuss with readers. You can open lines of communication with the help of the fiction and nonfiction books included in this brochure. Some students will identify with the experiences and information contained in these books; others will gain empathy and understanding.

TALK ABOUT

ADDICTION

Isaiah Dunn Is My Hero

GRADES 3–5

A coming-of-age tale about a boy who proves that with superhero courage—and a few great sidekicks—you can take on even the toughest of circumstances. After his father's death, Isaiah's little sister, Charlie, asks too many questions and Mama's gone totally silent. On top of that, his mother's struggle with alcoholism leads Isaiah and Charlie to a period of homelessness before Mama gets the help she needs. Kelly J. Baptist's debut novel explores the indomitable spirit of a ten-year-old boy and the superhero strength and self-helpful tools it takes to grow up.

Lo & Behold

GRADES 5–9

Introducing an unforgettable graphic novel about connection, friendship, and the wonder all around us from *New York Times* bestselling author Wendy Mass and debut illustrator Gabi Mendez. This graphic novel takes on difficult themes, including opioid addiction and parent separation.

Something Like Home

GRADES 5–9

From the Newbery Honor–winning author of *Iveliz Explains It All* comes a moving novel in verse in which a lost dog helps a lonely girl in foster care while her parents are in rehab. This story normalizes open communication, asking for help, and most of all, being kind.

The Tenth Mistake of Hank Hooperman

GRADE 5 & UP

Everyone will be rooting for a happy ending for Hank, a boy struggling to hold his family together when his mom doesn't come home. Newbery Honor winner Gennifer Choldenko has written a heart-wrenching, healing, and hopeful story about how complicated family can be.

The Glass Girl

GRADE 9 & UP

From the critically acclaimed author of *Girl in Pieces* comes a raw, heart-wrenching novel about a teenager facing down her struggles with alcohol—and the journey she must take to heal. Everyone in fifteen-year-old Bella's life needs something from her, except her grandmother, and now she's gone. There's only one thing that dulls the pressure—alcohol. But after a blackout lands her in the

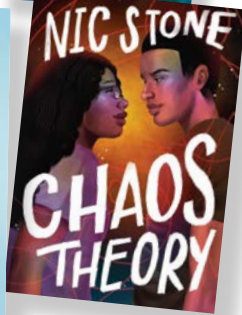
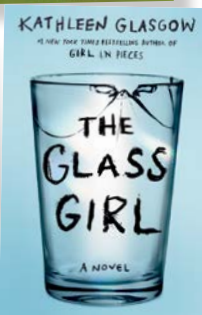
hospital, it's time to face reality. And for Bella, reality means rehab.

Chaos Theory

GRADE 9 & UP

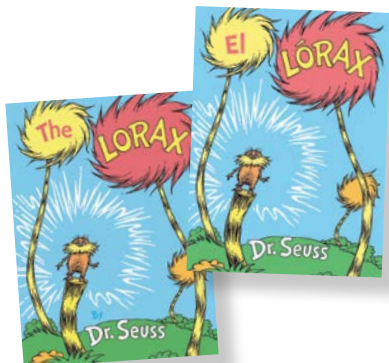
A powerful story about two teens: a certified genius living with a diagnosed mental disorder and a politician's son running from his own grief and addiction. This novel from YA powerhouse author Nic Stone features characters prioritizing mental health and learning how to accept the past. With its deep emotional core, it

models learning to live and love with mental illness.





TALK ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE



The Lorax GRADES 1–4

Dr. Seuss's beloved story teaches kids to speak up and stand up for those who can't. *The Lorax* allows young readers to experience the danger of taking our earth for granted in a story that is timely, whimsical, and hopeful. The book's final pages teach us that just one small seed, or one small child, can make a difference.



The Wild GRADES PRE-K–2

An exquisitely illustrated modern fable about protecting our planet in which Earth is imagined as a beautiful, precious, and vulnerable creature called the Wild. Yuval Zommer shares a hopeful and powerful message of healing, well-being, and humanity's precious and precarious relationship with nature. The magical artwork and sensitively told story allow for meaningful conversations with young children about the urgency of protecting Earth.



Climate Is Just the Start GRADES 3–7

Climate activist Mikaela Loach offers her urgent and inspiring message for kids who want to STOP the climate crisis and START building a better world for everyone. Using her own personal stories, she explains the climate crisis and its broader social implications through her activism journey. Her approach is one of hope and bighearted optimism, inspiring kids and making them feel truly empowered to change the world.

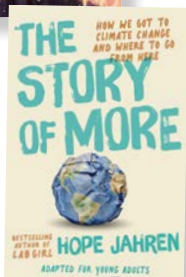


When Tomorrow Burns GRADE 5 & UP

As kids, best friends Nomi, Vi, and Arthur found a book of prophecies that made the future feel certain. They forgot about it until the final prophecy begins coming true. Now, as seventh grade strains their friendship and wildfires threaten Seattle, the last prediction warns of fire and destruction. With secrets spreading and tensions rising, fate and friendship collide. Together, Nomi, Vi, and Arthur must face the future, especially when it's so uncertain.

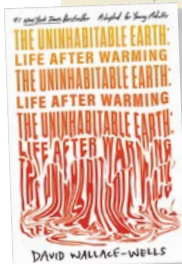
The Story of More (Adapted for Young Adults) GRADE 7 & UP

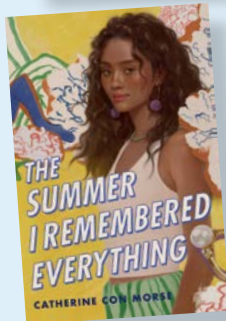
This young adult adaptation of acclaimed geochemist and geobiologist Hope Jahren's highly respected nonfiction work is the perfect book for those interested in learning about climate change and how they can contribute to creating a more sustainable future. She assures us that, if we act now, we can enjoy a bright future.



The Uninhabitable Earth (Adapted for Young Adults) GRADE 7 & UP

An exploration of the devastating effects of global warming—current and future—adapted for young adults from the #1 *New York Times* bestseller. This is not only an assessment of how the future will look to those living through it but also a dire overview and an impassioned and hopeful call to action to change our trajectory while there is still time.





Calling the Wind

GRADES PRE-K-3

Inspired by Itaru Sasaki's *Wind Telephone*, which brought healing to the people of Japan in the wake of an earthquake and tsunami, this story explores grief and loss and how we move forward by finding meaningful ways to connect with the family and friends we've lost, as well as those who are still with us.

Mister in the Stars

GRADES PRE-K-2

Melanie names everything she sees, thinks, and feels. She calls her big brother Mister and her least favorite dinner No Thanks. Most of all, Melanie loves coming up with names that make Mister, who is sick, laugh. But then, one day, Mister dies. How do you name a feeling like that? Over time, Melanie begins to sense that her brother is still with her—in the breeze, the stars, and her dreams.

Next Stop

GRADES 3-7

Pia is a soft-spoken middle schooler whose life is turned upside down after the loss of her younger brother, followed by her parents' decision to move to a new town. In an effort to get her mind off of the troubles at home, Pia goes on a bus tour with a family friend, stopping at weird and wacky roadside attractions.

When You Trap a Tiger

GRADES 3-7

This uplifting story brings Korean folklore to life as a girl goes on a quest to unlock the power of stories and save her dying grandmother. This book speaks to the power of family, tradition, and stories—especially the stories that remain with us even after a loved one dies.

The Summer I Remembered Everything

GRADE 9 & UP

In search of a summer escape from her overbearing family, an Asian Latine teenager becomes the mentee to a chic elderly woman. But as her mentor's memory starts to fade, the teenager is confronted with a choice that may jeopardize their friendship. *The Summer I Remembered Everything* is a story of longing for an escape, finding yourself, caring for someone with an illness, and learning that sometimes the right decision is the hardest.

How to Make Friends with the Dark

GRADE 9 & UP

Tiger's life changed with a simple phone call: Her mother died. Tiger's mother never talked about her father, and with no grandparents or aunts or uncles, her world is packed into a suitcase and moved to a foster home. And another. And another. Until hope surfaces in the shape of . . . a sister? A story about survival and healing, this powerful tale offers self-help tools for anyone who has lost someone.



RACISM



Standing in the Need of Prayer

GRADES 1–4

Starting from 1619 and stretching more than four hundred years, this book features such pivotal moments in history as the arrival of enslaved people in Jamestown, Virginia; Nat Turner's rebellion; the integration of the US military; the Selma-to-Montgomery marches; and peaceful present-day protests. It also celebrates the feats of African American musicians and athletes, such as Duke Ellington and Florence Griffith Joyner. At the end of the book, readers will find descriptions of the people, places, and events that are featured. This book reckons with a painful history while serving as a testament to the human ability to persevere in even the most hopeless of circumstances.

The Reckoning

GRADES 3–7

A powerful contemporary novel about an aspiring twelve-year-old filmmaker whose world is turned upside down when his grandfather is slain in a senseless and racist act of violence. From the critically acclaimed author Wade Hudson comes a riveting, timely, and deeply moving story about a young Black filmmaker whose eyes are opened to racial injustice, leading him to follow in his grandfather's activist footsteps.



Boarding Schools and the Indigenous Story

GRADE 5 & UP

Education helps us understand the world—but it can also be used to mislead and control. For nearly a century, the U.S. Government forced Indigenous children into boarding schools to strip them of their families, languages, and cultures, to attempt to replace their culture with white, European cultures. This painful history, and the resilience of Indigenous communities who endured it, reveals how far the government was willing to go to assert power. Only by confronting this truth can we fully understand history of our country.

The Sum of Us (Adapted for Young Readers)

GRADE 5 & UP

Heather C. McGhee examines how damaging racism is, not only to people of color but also to white people. She offers hope and real solutions so we can all prosper. An expert in economic policy, she proves how the stories we tell ourselves about race and belonging influence the policies that determine our shared economic future. *The Sum of Us* provides hope that with understanding and open-mindedness, the world can be more united and equitable than it is today.



Caste

(Adapted for Young Readers)

GRADE 7 & UP

Readers will be fascinated by this young adult adaptation of the *New York Times* bestselling nonfiction work as they follow masterful narratives about real people that reveal an insidious phenomenon in the United States: a hidden caste system. *Caste* is not only about race or class; it is about power—which groups have it and which do not. Once we learn the reasons behind caste systems and see the heartbreaking effects, Wilkerson says, we can bridge the divides and make way for an inclusive future where we are all equal.

The Color of a Lie

GRADE 7 & UP

In 1955, a Black family passes for white and moves to a “Whites Only” town in the suburbs. Caught between two worlds, a teen boy puts his family at risk as he uncovers racist secrets about his suburb. A new social justice thriller from the acclaimed author Kim Johnson.

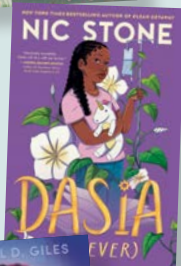




My Brother Is Away

GRADES K-3

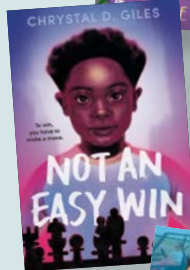
In this moving picture book, a young girl reflects on the emotions and challenges of growing up with a brother who is incarcerated. This touching story is filled with vivid illustrations and is based on the author's childhood experiences. It is also available in Spanish.



Dasia (Forever)

GRADES 3-7

The first time Dasia Monae Riley saw an IV bag, she was half-conscious in an ambulance, burning with a life-threatening fever. Soon after, she was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Now Dasia is going through chemotherapy alone in her hospital room until one night, a mysterious cancer patient named Jimmy appears at her bedside. Despite their differences, the two girls discover shared struggles, including incarcerated family members, distant parents, and lonely hospital nights. As they trade stories and Dasia reflects on letters to her older brother in prison, she begins to feel less alone and finds a renewed reason to fight.



Not an Easy Win

GRADE 5 & UP

Like the main character, Chrystal D. Giles grew up with an incarcerated parent. She speaks of that experience through this powerful novel about family, forgiveness, and figuring out who you are when you don't make the rules. This story empowers kids who are feeling misunderstood and will speak to kids growing up with an incarcerated parent—which Chrystal directly addresses in the author's note.

Nothing's gone right for Lawrence since he had to move to live with his granny. When Lawrence ends up in one too many fights at his new school, he gets expelled. The fight wasn't his fault,

but since his pop has been in prison, it feels like no one listens to what Lawrence has to say. Instead of going to school, Lawrence starts spending his days at the rec center, helping out a neighbor who runs a chess program.

Coming Home (Adapted for Young Adults)

GRADE 7 & UP

On February 17, 2022, Brittney Griner arrived in Moscow to play basketball, but was instead arrested for mistakenly carrying a small amount of an illegal substance. Her life was suddenly upended by a crisis that captured national attention. In this powerful young adult adaptation, Brittney shares her harrowing story of courage and strength while recalling her teenage years, when she found meaning and empowerment through sports. Young readers will connect with her journey of resilience, self-discovery, and survival, as well as the love and bonds that ultimately led her home—to her family and herself.

This Is My America

GRADE 7 & UP

Every week, seventeen-year-old Tracy Beaumont writes letters to Innocence X, asking the organization to help her father, an innocent Black man on death row. After seven years, Tracy is running out of time—her dad has only 267 days left. Then the unthinkable happens. The police arrive in the night, and Tracy's older brother, Jamal, goes from being a bright, promising track star to a "thug" on the run accused of killing a white girl. Determined to save her brother, Tracy investigates what really happened between Jamal and Angela. This is an unflinching yet uplifting novel that explores the injustices of the American justice system.



TALK ABOUT

YOUR BODY, CONSENT & HEALTHY BOUNDARIES



Ritu in the Sun

GRADE PRE-K-3

Ritu loves the sun. She loves it in the morning when it slants in through the kitchen window; in the afternoon when it makes the pool sparkle; and in the evening when it lights up the sky with splashes of orange and pink. But her Nani is worried the sun will give Ritu a tan. Can Ritu convince her that all skin colors are beautiful—including Nani's own? This lyrical picture book invites meaningful conversations about colorism and self-acceptance.

Listen to the Girls

GRADE 5 & UP

Calla has always had smart-girl energy. So it feels special

when someone sees her beyond that. But what if that someone is a grown-up who may not be as trustworthy as Calla thought? On the last day of seventh grade, Calla learns her favorite teacher has been accused of inappropriate conduct at his former school. Calla doesn't know what really happened. She does know that people are saying mean things about the girls who have spoken out—and that can't be right . . . can it?

Let's Talk About It

GRADE 9 & UP

An inclusive, accessible, and honest graphic novel guide to growing up, from gender and sexuality to consent and safe sex. Perfect for any teen starting to ask: Is what I'm

feeling normal? Is what my body is doing normal? How do I know the right choices to make?

Eve

(Adapted for Young Readers)
GRADE 9 & UP

This young adult adaptation is a friendly, funny, and engaging read. It explores teen related topics such as mental health and the biology behind it, including insights on how adolescent brains are going through all kinds of changes, and shifting hormones. Filled with amazing stories of both past and present, Eve will delight any young reader looking to understand the body.

TALK ABOUT

FINANCIAL INSTABILITY & CLASS INEQUALITY

The Brunch Shift

GRADES PRE-K-3

The lazy sun peeks out from the clouds as Mama and her daughter wait for their crosstown bus. Saturdays aren't for sleeping in. Saturdays are for the egg crackin', pancake flippin', orange juicin' brunch shift—a shift Mama can't afford to miss. To pass the time, Mama and her daughter tell stories about brave knights and digging for gold. Sometimes, though, the girl wishes she had someone else's Saturday.

Emilia Wishing

GRADES PRE-K-3

Emilia wakes wishing she had her own bed and a big house in a tree-lined street. And when she gets to the rundown strip mall where the thrift shop is—and not the fancy mall across the street—she models clothes for her mama and sisters, wishing they could all be hers. But money is tight, and mama works hard, and so they wait. And when they finally make the last layaway payment, Emilia realizes that the clothes don't matter—her Mama's love and joy and radiance is what does.

Hattie Mae Begins Again

GRADES 3-7

Hattie Mae is from Seed County, North Carolina. She knows hard work: milking cows, plucking chickens, minding the garden. Her hands are made for manual labor, her feet for dirt—or so Lisa and some of the girls at Miss Abigail's School for Exceptional Young Ladies believe. Though she sticks out like a sore thumb, Hattie Mae knows she belongs. She just has to prove it to the rest of the girls—and maybe even to herself.



TALK ABOUT

GUN VIOLENCE



Not Like Every Day

GRADES PRE-K-3

For Henry, lockdown drills can be scary. Staying quiet and still is tough, but with the support of his teacher, he's able to keep calm. With poetic prose and gentle artwork, this accessible picture book serves as an ideal starting point for discussions about lockdown drills and includes helpful resources from a school psychologist and safety expert.



Parkland Speaks

GRADE 9 & UP

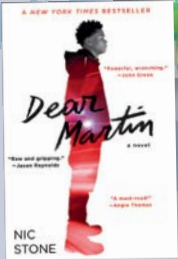
The students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School share their emotional journeys that began on February 14, 2018, and continue today. This revealing and unfiltered look at teens living in the wake of tragedy is a poignant representation of grief,

anger, determination, healing, and hope. Featuring art and writing from the students of the Parkland tragedy, this is a raw look at the events of February 14, and a poignant representation of grief, healing, and hope.

Dear Martin

GRADE 9 & UP

Raw, captivating, and undeniably real, author Nic Stone tackles American race relations. Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates. Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore?



TALK ABOUT

DISABILITY VISIBILITY

I Hear the Snow, I Smell the Sea

GRADES PRE-K-3

Neveah is blind, but that doesn't mean she can't enjoy each of the four wondrous seasons of the year. Join Neveah in this poetic story with art by a two-time Caldecott Medalist as she uses her senses of touch, taste, hearing, and smell to vividly describe the changing seasons and the unique delights they offer.

A Glimmer of Change

GRADES 3-7

Thirteen-year-old Keedie Darrow is used to bullies. Growing up neurodivergent makes you an easy target. But when her friends fall victim, Keedie launches an anti-

bullying agency—and business is booming. Yet Keedie will have to be careful. It's a fine line between speaking up for what you believe in and becoming a bully yourself.

Oh Brother

GRADES 5-7

Gina Chadderton faces big changes—a move, middle school, and her brother Rob escaping to a neighbor's house. This coming-of-age memoir explores the lives of Gina and her brother Rob, who is a nonverbal autistic boy with an intellectual disability. Their family is grounded in love and kindness, but as Gina navigates puberty and questions about her changing body, she struggles with how hard it is to take care of her

brother while also taking care of herself.

Ariel Crashes a Train

GRADE 9 & UP

Exploring the harsh reality of OCD and violent intrusive thoughts in stunning, lyrical writing, this novel in verse conjures a haunting yet hopeful portrait of a girl on the edge. Ariel is afraid of her own mind. And as violent fantasies she can't control take over every aspect of her life, she is convinced something much deeper is wrong with her. With help and support, Ariel discovers a future where she can be at home in her mind and body and learns there's a name for what she struggles with—obsessive compulsive disorder.

