

**Escape. Connect. Relate.**

# Relationships - Family

Families can, but don't always, live in the same house, share the same surname, or share genetic relationships. Family members can feel a need to provide emotional, physical, and financial stability to other family members. Families can take many forms, including but not limited to: adoption, single parents, foster care (including care-experienced children), break-up (including divorce and separation), step and blended families. Young carers, often from an early age, need to take on regular or ongoing care for another family member, assuming a level of responsibility that would normally only be asked of an adult.

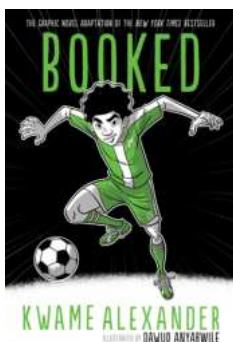
Emotional connections formed in families can often bring happiness, security, and support, but can also be confusing and stressful. Support and resources are available to help.





# ECR Suggested Reads

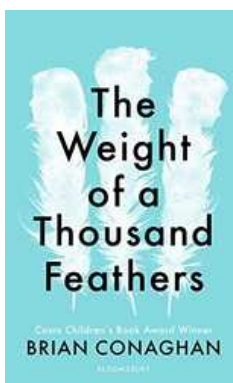
Many of our suggested reads are available from your school library and from [Edinburgh Libraries](#). Some books may contain triggering or upsetting content. Please use the age ratings as guidance and ask your school librarian for help. Books are listed in alphabetical order by author's surname.



## **Booked, by Kwame Alexander**

Nick is a star on the football pitch, but at home he's stuck with his father's "dictionary" that he has to read every day, and he hates it... until his prowess with words starts to win over the girl of his dreams. But he still has to deal with his parents' separation, school bullies and an injury. Soon, Nick is spending more time with books and his rapping school librarian as he makes his way through a rollercoaster year.

**S1+, Family Break-Up, Graphic Novel**



## **The Weight of a Thousand Feathers, by Brian Conaghan**

Who is Bobby Seed? He's an average 16-year-old - same wants, fears, hang-ups. Dull. But then there's the Bobby Seed who's a world away from average. The Bobby Seed who has to wipe his mum's backside, sponge her clean, try to soothe her pain. The Bobby Seed whose job it is to provide for his younger brother, Danny, to rub his back when he's stressed and can only groan and rock instead of speak. That's Bobby Seed. Same, yet different...

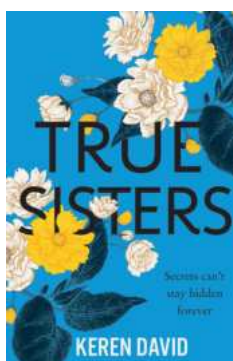
**S3+, Young Carers**



## **What The World Doesn't See, by Mel Darbon**

Maudie and Jake's family is falling apart - their mum's been struggling with her grief since they lost Dad and one night she vanishes. When Jake is put into care, Maudie comes up with a wild plan to kidnap him back. On the run in Cornwall, Jake and Maudie each find something they hadn't expected - freedom and love. But can they find Mum and a way to heal together?

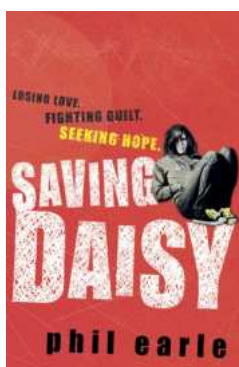
**S3+, Young Carers**



## **True Sisters, by Keren David**

Thoughtful, funny Ruby has had a lot of foster siblings over the years, but none of them have been anything like quiet, distrustful Clara. After growing up in almost complete isolation, Clara is distraught at being separated from her mother and overwhelmed by life in a world she doesn't understand. Ruby is determined to help her, but the more Ruby tries to help Clara fit in, the more she realises she has to face up to some struggles of her own.

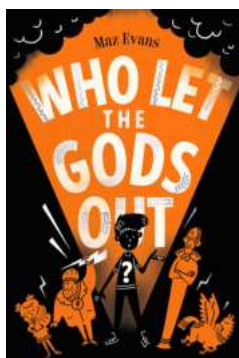
**S1+, Care Experience, Dyslexia-Friendly**



### **Saving Daisy, by Phil Earle**

Daisy's mum is gone. Her dad refuses to talk about it. As far as Daisy's concerned, it's all her fault. As her life starts to spiral out of control, panic leads to tragedy and Daisy's left alone. But sometimes the kindness of a stranger can turn things around. A stranger who desperately wants to save Daisy - if she'll only let herself be saved...A powerful and moving story linked to Phil Earle's critically acclaimed debut book, Being Billy.

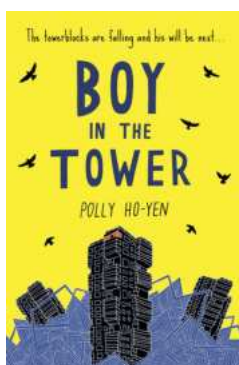
**S3+, Care Experience**



### **Who Let the Gods Out?, by Maz Evans**

Elliot's mum is ill and his home is under threat, but a shooting star crashes to earth and changes his life forever. The star is Virgo - a young Zodiac goddess on a mission. But the pair accidentally release Thanatos, a wicked death daemon imprisoned beneath Stonehenge, and must then ask the old Olympian gods for help. After centuries of retirement on earth, are Zeus and his crew up to the task of saving the world - and solving Elliot's problems too?

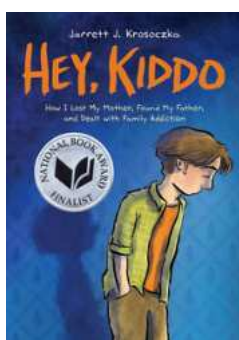
**S1+, Young Carers, Series**



### **The Boy in the Tower, by Polly Ho-Yen**

Ade loves living at the top of a tower block. From his window, he feels like he can see the whole world. His mum doesn't really like looking outside, but it's going outside that she hates. She's happier sleeping all day inside, where it's safe. But one day, other tower blocks on the estate start falling down and strange, menacing plants begin to appear. Now their tower isn't safe anymore. Ade and his mum are trapped and there's no way out . . .

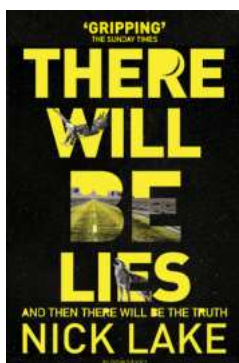
**S1+, Young Carers**



### **Hey, Kiddo, by Jarrett J. Krosoczka**

Raised by his colorful grandparents, who adopted him because his mother was an incarcerated heroin addict, Krosoczka didn't know his father's name until he saw his birth certificate when registering for a school ski trip. *Hey, Kiddo* traces Krosoczka's search for his father, his difficult interactions with his mother, his day-to-day life with his grandparents, and his path to becoming an artist.

**S3+, Care Experience, Graphic Memoir**



### **There Will Be Lies, by Nick Lake**

Shelby is seventeen and quiet. It's just her and her mom, who likes to keep Shelby safe. So safe she doesn't go to school. Because anything could happen, to a girl like Shelby. When Shelby gets knocked down by a car, her mom collects her and drives off into the night, like they are two criminals on the run. And somehow, everywhere she looks, there's a coyote watching her, telling her not to believe. Who is Shelby? If the person who keeps you safe also tells you lies, who can you trust?

**S3+**



### **Needle, by Patrice Lawrence**

Charlene loves knitting. The only thing she loves more than knitting is her little sister, Kandi, whom she hasn't seen since their mum died. When the special blanket she's knitting for Kandi is destroyed by her foster mum's son, Charlene loses it. She stabs him in the hand with her knitting needle and finds herself sitting in a police cell. Can she find a way to say sorry when her freedom and her future are at stake?

**S1+, Care Experience, Dyslexia-Friendly**



### **Rat, by Patrice Lawrence**

When his mum is sent back to prison, Al knows exactly who's to blame. Mr Brayker, who lives downstairs, has been making trouble for Al's mum ever since they moved in, and Al's determined to get his revenge. Ignoring advice from his gran and sister, Plum, Al takes things into his own hands with a plan that involves the only two creatures he can rely on: his pet rats, Venom and Vulture. But things don't turn out exactly as he'd imagined...

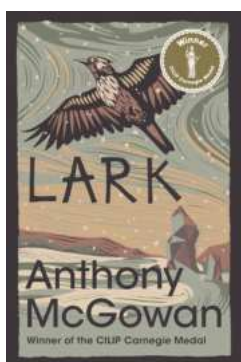
**S1+, Care Experience, Dyslexia-Friendly**



### **When We Collided, by Emery Lord**

"We are seventeen and shattered and still dancing. We have messy, throbbing hearts, and we are stronger than anyone could ever know..." Jonah never thought a girl like Vivi would come along. Vivi didn't know Jonah would light up her world. Neither of them expected a summer like this...a summer that would rewrite their futures. In a story about new love and old wounds, two teens find that when you collide with the right person at just the right time, it will change you forever.

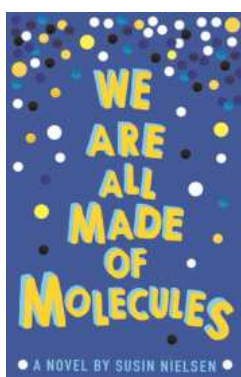
**S3+, Young Carers**



### **Lark, by Anthony McGowan**

Things are tense at home for Nicky and Kenny as they wait for a visit from their estranged mum. To escape, they go for a walk on the moors, taking their little Jack Russell terrier with them. But what should have been a laugh, a lark, turns deadly when the weather changes and they are caught in a blizzard. Nothing will ever be quite the same again... This is the final book in The Truth of Things series (books 1 - 3 are Brock, Pike, and Rook), but can be read as a stand alone story.

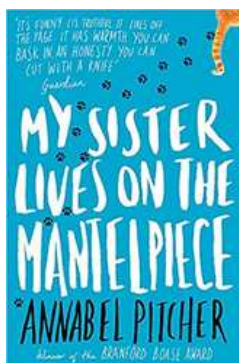
**S1+, Family Break-Up, Dyslexia-Friendly, Series**



### **We Are All Made of Molecules, by Susin Nielsen**

Stewart is geeky, gifted and sees things a bit differently to most people. His mum has died and he and Dad have moved in with Ashley and her mum. Ashley is popular, cool and sees things very differently to her new family. Her dad has come out and moved out, and now she has to live with a freakazoid step-brother. Things get a whole lot more mixed up when these two very different people attract the attention of school hunk Jared...

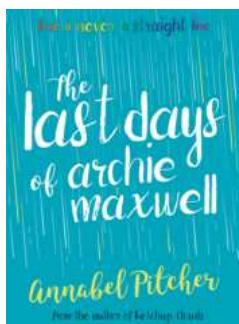
**S1+, Family Break-Up**



### **My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece, by Annabel Pitcher**

Jamie hasn't cried since it happened. He knows he should have—Jasmine cried, Mum cried, Dad still cries. Roger didn't, but then he is just a cat and didn't know Rose that well, really. Everyone kept saying it would get better with time, but that's just one of those lies that grown-ups tell in awkward situations. Five years on, it's worse than ever: Dad drinks, Mum's gone and Jamie's left with questions that he must answer for himself.

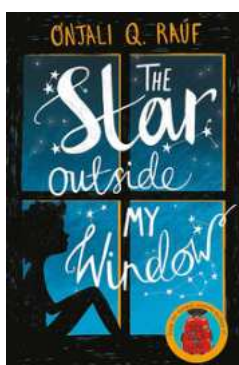
**S1+, Family Break-Up**



### **The Last Days of Archie Maxwell, by Annabel Pitcher**

Dads leave home all the time. It's not that unusual, really. Jack's dad ran off with another woman. So did Mo's. But Archie's? That's a different story - a story Archie must keep to himself. If Tia found out, let alone his mates, his life would be over. But other people are guarding much deeper secrets of their own, secrets that will change the course of Archie's days for ever...

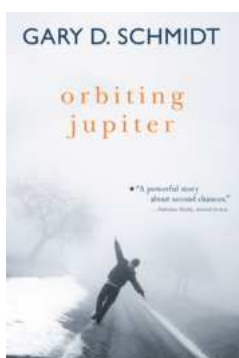
**S3+, Family Break-Up, Dyslexia-Friendly**



### **The Star Outside My Window, by Onjali Q. Rauf**

Aniyah and Noah have been put into care. They're not exactly sure what has happened to Mum, only that she has disappeared. Aniyah also doesn't know where Dad is, though she doesn't miss having to be quiet to avoid setting off his "triggers". When Aniyah learns about a new star that has been behaving strangely, she assumes it must be Mum, who told her that the brightest hearts become stars. All Aniyah needs to do is convince people that the star is her mother - and find Mum again.

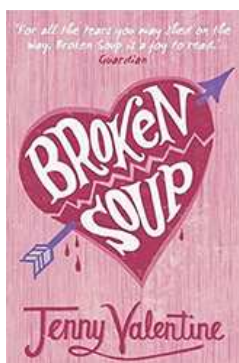
**S1+, Care Experience**



### **Orbiting Jupiter, by Gary D. Schmidt**

When Jack meets his new foster brother, he already knows three things about him: Joseph almost killed a teacher, he was incarcerated at a place called Stone Mountain, and he has a daughter named Jupiter, who he has never seen. What Jack doesn't know, is how desperate Joseph is to find his baby girl. Or how urgently he, Jack, will want to help. But the past can't be shaken off. Even as new bonds form, old wounds reopen. The search for Jupiter demands more from Jack than he can imagine.

**S3+, Care Experience**



### **Broken Soup, by Jenny Valentine**

When the cute boy presses the dropped negative into Rowan's hand, she's sure it's a mistake. But then he's gone, and she can't lose her place in the grocery queue. She looks after her little sister, which doesn't leave much time for fun. Who was the stranger, so insistent that the negative belonged to Rowan? Bee saw the whole thing and helps Rowan make a print of the negative. And the face that appears in the photo is that of Rowan's dead brother Jack...

**S3+, Young Carers**



# Resources

Disclaimer: the ECR team does not take credit for these links, which are all offered and maintained by external providers

## **Who Cares Scotland**

Works with care experienced young people and care leavers across Scotland

<https://www.whocarescotland.org/>

## **Edinburgh Young Carers Project**

Provides support to Edinburgh young carers aged 5 - 25

<https://www.youngcarers.org.uk/>

## **Carers Trust Scotland**

Provides carer support services to Scottish carers

<https://carers.org/our-work-in-scotland/our-work-in-scotland>

## **Family Journeys**

Provides support to Scottish families experiencing separation and conflict

<https://www.familyjourneys.scot/>

## **Multi-cultural Family Base**

Provides support to minority ethnic children and families in Edinburgh

<http://www.mcfb.org.uk/>