

How to evaluate Children's Literature with Abuse

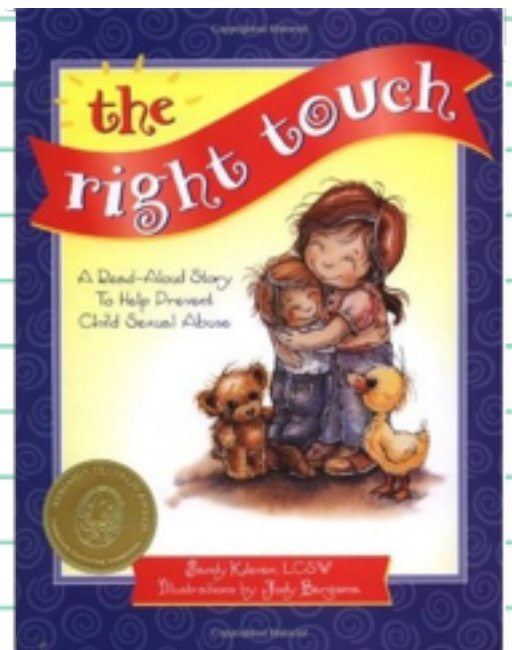
Evaluative Criteria

1. Never blame the victim
2. Be balanced, with at least some books identifying the abuser as someone known to the victim, rather than stranger
3. Reflect the fact that abusers represent all classes, all economic and social backgrounds, and both genders.
4. Be careful to differentiate and other sexual abuse from loving or sexual behavior.

5. Avoid easy solutions, which are not helpful or realistic
6. Include information to help reader recognize whether they are victims of abuse.
7. Teach children to differentiate between secrets that are potentially threatening to their safety and surprises that will eventually be aired to please someone.
8. Suggest alternative ways of getting help.
9. Avoid graphic scenes of abuse or violence.

According to McDaniel this criteria was built by Masha Rudman and she wanted to make sure that Children's Literature that tackled the theme of abuse was beneficial for the child. Rudman said that child abuse is "one of the most difficult topics to present without sensationalism, in either fiction or nonfiction" (McDaniel, p.9,2001) So, this criteria is for adults to make sure they have a right children's book.

Example: The Right Touch Book



This book according to McDaniel is one of the best books that encompass a lot of the criteria and it is a great resource for counselors. "The Right Touch (1998) by Sandy Kleven effectively satisfies several of Rudman's points, depicting a mother tucking her son into bed at night as "they talk about interesting things, silly things, and serious things." Important messages are interwoven with images of playfulness, concern, and tenderness." (McDaniel, p. 11,2001) From the eight criteria, The Right Touch satisfies four out of the nine