

Librarian's Shelf by Brad Hruska

"Fred Stays with Me!" by Nancy Coffelt

In some societies, divorce is a common phenomenon. Unfortunately, a few adults have the misconception that this action does not have long-lasting effects on children. They believe that because these little ones are young, they will be able to easily adapt to the changes; however, this may not always be the case. A few studies have shown that children involved in divorce sometimes harbor guilt regarding their parents' divorce. Some reports also indicate that these children may lack a sense of security and stability, which may result in some youngsters feeling unloved.

Fortunately for families facing divorce, the Columbus Public Library has resources that may help. We offer numerous quality picture books that parents can read with their children to assist them in tackling this tough issue. Books like "Oliver at the Window" by Elizabeth Shreeve, "Mom and Dad Don't Live Together Anymore" by Kathy Stinson, and "On the Day His Daddy Left" by Eric Adams can help parents open dialog between themselves and their children regarding their family's situation. Another book that parents may refer to is "Fred Stays with Me!" by Nancy Coffelt.

In this story, readers meet a young girl whose parents have divorced. The little one tells readers that sometimes she lives with Mom and sometimes she stays with Dad. The girl then explains that though she may have a number of changes in her life due to her parents' split, she does have one constant...her dog Fred.

Fred is a source of stability and comfort for her because no matter where she is or who she's with, her beloved pet is always there. This point is driven home when the youngster tells readers that "Fred is my friend. We walk together. We talk together. When I'm happy, Fred is too. And when I am sad, Fred is there."

The duo's life is going pretty well, but one day Mom becomes frustrated with Fred because the neighbor's poodle will not stop barking at him, and then Dad is angry at Fred because the canine chews up his socks. Mom puts her foot down, stating that "Fred can't stay with me!" Dad agrees saying that Fred can't stay with him either! But the youngster puts her parents' views into perspective, when she says, "Excuse me...Fred doesn't stay with either of you. Fred stays with ME!"

Coffelt's does a wonderful job tackling this sensitive issue. She provides children with examples of what they might experience when their families divorce. But most importantly, Coffelt provides

children with a voice, which she uses to let parents know that their decision to dissolve their marriage may not only affect them.

If you know a child whose life is dealing with divorce, come by the Columbus Public Library and take a look at some of the family resources we have to offer. Divorce may not always be easy, but the library can provide families with resources that can help them make the transition a little better for the children involved. If you have any questions, regarding the books featured, please contact me at (402) 564-7116 opt. 4.