

## DBP Book Review

<b>Name of Book:</b> The Empty Place: A Child's Guide Through Grief	<b>Author:</b> Roberta Temes and Kim Carlisle
<b>Publisher:</b> New Horizon Press	<b>Date of Publication:</b> October 1992
<b>Name of Reviewer:</b> Vince Faustino	<b>Date of Review:</b> November 2, 2006
<b>Intended Audience</b> (choose from Parents, Children, Professional, Other): Children	
<p><b>Purpose of the book:</b> A third grader describes the emptiness and loneliness he sees and feels after the death of her big sister. He, likewise, experiences different emotions including confusion, fear and guilt as a result of the loss of his sibling. Helping him deal with the death is his babysitter who lost her brother in the past. As he confides in her, she provides him with ways to carry on.</p>	
<p><b>Theoretical Basis:</b> Children have different ways of expressing their grief such as from the death of a sibling. While loneliness and emptiness might be the predominant themes, other emotions not usually seen in adults may be manifested partly because of the child's inability to fully comprehend the event. Confusion, fear and guilt which might seem unfounded to adults may become prominent manifestations. This is greatly influenced by the child's level of development. Despite the differences in the way children grieve, the presence of someone to confide to is important in having a positive outcome from the grieving process. This is especially relevant for children whose parents who are supposed to be the child's source of comfort has to deal with their own grief.</p>	
<p><b>Strengths:</b> Sibling loss is a depressing topic to deal with. It is filled with negative emotions. The book, however, was able to provide a positive outlook on the topic. By giving the story of an older child who also lost a sibling in the past, it provided a model for the third grader of what life can be once he has carried on. This illustrated the importance of having peer support and a good "role model" during this difficult time. Different concrete ways to ease the pain which can be useful when dealing with grieving children were also described in the book. The use of the third grader's point of view gave a personal touch to the story.</p>	
<p><b>Weaknesses:</b> The initial pages of the book were written in short phrases which are very easy for young children to read. However, midway through the book, the sentences became much longer and structured in long paragraphs. Such presentation might make reading a little harder for children.</p>	

**Recommendation of Reviewer** (please choose one and put "X" in box next to selection):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Highly recommend for all parents
<input type="checkbox"/>	Highly recommend for parents with specific problems/issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	May be useful to some parents
<input type="checkbox"/>	Would not recommend

**Additional Comments:** Loneliness and emptiness may always remain after suffering the death of a sibling. However, a positive outcome can be achieved from the grieving process. For people who deal with these children, the resolution of grief hinges on two very important things which are tackled in the book. First is the understanding that children do grieve but maybe in ways different from adults and second is the importance of having someone to guide them during the grieving process.