

Hot Issues, Cool Choices

Sandra McLeod Humphrey

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Growing up can be difficult and trying at times, especially in school with peers. One major problem society faces is the amount of sheer bullying taking place there. *Hot Issues, Cool Choices* exposes many of the issues left unspoken. The reader looks through a child's perspective and assists in solving the problem at hand. These topics range from peer pressure to popularity, and forces the protagonists to react accordingly. After each scenario plays out, the reader reflects on the decision making and put themselves in the student's shoes. This effective hands on approach preaches the golden rule. To treat others as one wants to be treated.

All young students' curriculum should include *Hot Issues, Cool Choices*. Growing up I was a witness of bullying. I took pride in intervening when I recognized it as hurtful, but wasn't aware of the times others found pain. It was due to a lack of knowledge. Each scenario played out will educate how to recognize situations requiring help. Kids fear going to school because of bullying and that wasn't a concept I comprehended early on. The author does a wonderful job assisting young students grasp that concept by creating real-life situations to walk through step by step. My only critique is it being 9 years old; it doesn't touch on social media and cyber bullying enough. The lessons taught apply to modern day issues though so it isn't a critique with much weight. This book won the Mom's Choice Gold Award in 2008 and it's easy to see why.

The targeted audience is students ages 7-12, though children younger will enjoy reading with an adult. This will make a great gift for children beginning elementary school. I read this aloud with my little cousin and she loved every minute. I highly recommend *Hot Issues, Cool Choices*.

Related Titles:

If You Had to Choose, What Would You Do? - Sandra McLeod Humphrey
What Do You Stand For? For Kids: A Guide to Building Character - Barbara A. Lewis
How to Say No and Keep Your Friends. Peer Pressure Reversal for Teens and Preteens – Sharon Scott