

My name is Sam. You already know me. I sit at the back of the room most of the time, and if there's a window around, I am looking through it. I'm not so good at answering your questions, and sometimes I say silly things when I don't know the answer just to get everybody laughing.

I don't really like to work in groups unless I can just listen and not have to do anything. I really hate to "report" in front of the class. I think the other kids believe that I am just stupid. Sometimes I think that myself.

The truth is, most of the time you can see me in the classroom, but I am not really "there." I have a lot on my mind.

Sometimes I find it hard to concentrate. My head keeps thinking about other things, like how my mom looked sad this morning and whether dad will be home tonight.

I am glad I have some friends, but I wish they would like me more. Sometimes I hear them laughing at what I brought for lunch or make fun of me when I talk. Sometimes I wish I could be more like them. Sometimes I just wish I wasn't me.

Anyway, I am Sam and you know me.



Mental health has become a vital concern in our schools and communities. We understand better than ever that positive mental health is foundational to academic achievement, effective life skills, and overall well-being.

Positive mental health encompasses ALL students and supports the goals of prevention, inclusion, compassionate support, and healthy development.

Introducing...



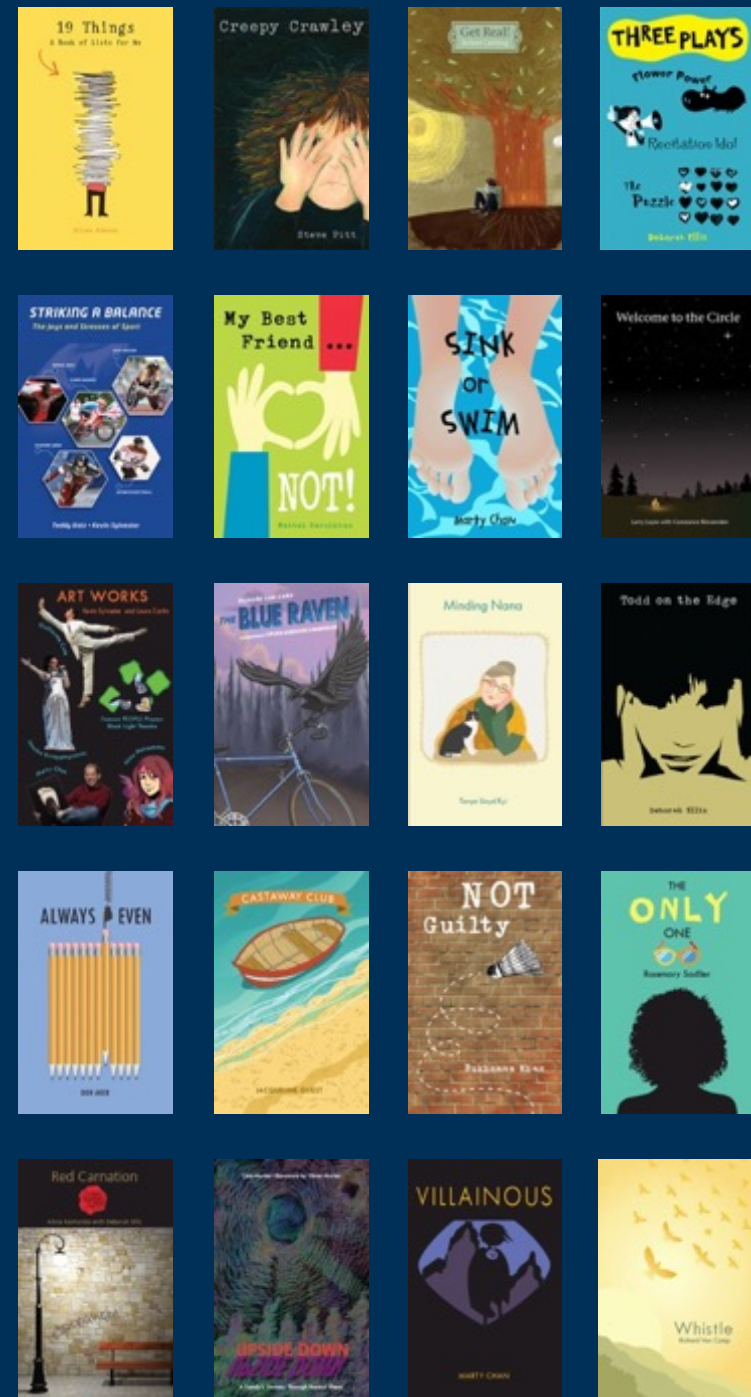
WELL AWARE

Reading, Talking, and Thinking
About Mental Well-Being

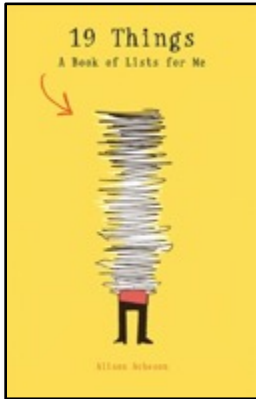


Written by acclaimed Canadian children's authors, *Well Aware* is a series of short books for grades 4–8 that provides an awareness of mental health issues and fosters discussion on a wide variety of topics related to emotional well-being.

Addressing mental well-being in our classrooms can be a sensitive and even a controversial subject. We hope this series will help you feel confident in sharing important positive mental health information, strategies, and skills with your students through powerful literature and information texts.



Grade 4 Titles



Alison Acheson

A child develops mindfulness by creating a variety of lists about favourite and non-favourite things.

(Nonfiction – Report)

Mental Health Focus

- Connecting emotions to actions
- Friendship
- Risk-taking



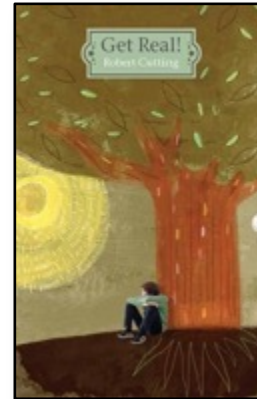
Deborah Ellis

This story features a family coping with the stigma of mental illness, and learning that it's more helpful to talk about their difficulties than to hide them.

(Fiction – Plays)

Mental Health Focus

- Stereotyping and stigma
- Bullying
- Empathy



Robert Cutting

Grandpa teaches Jake how the teachings of their Kanienkeha'ka culture support emotional well-being.

(Informational Fiction)

Mental Health Focus

- Healthy, harmonious balance
- Respect and responsibility



Deborah Ellis

Characters in these plays discuss and learn about dealing with their emotions and consider some coping strategies.

(Realistic Fiction)

Mental Health Focus

- Promoting self-esteem and confidence
- Understanding the signs of stress in ourselves and others
- Collaboration and cooperation

Grade 5 Titles



Mahtab Noursinhan

Rina's friendship with Trish is threatened by Trish's threats and bullying. But Rina has no other friends at school. What can Rina do to survive with her self-esteem intact?

Mental Health Focus

- Self-talk, self-regulation
- Recognizing and addressing stress
- Promoting positive relationships

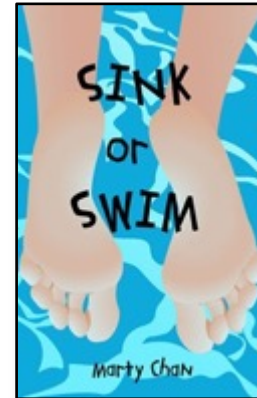


Marty Chan

Canadian athletes discuss how they deal with stress and competition in their chosen sport.

Mental Health Focus

- Life balance
- Self-regulation
- Strengthening resiliency
- Creating positive change



Kevin Sylvester & Teddy Katz

Swim-team member Katrien is obsessed with bettering her swim time. She learns to deal with this stress in an effective manner after helpful discussions with her father and her friend Maya.

Mental Health Focus

- Self-regulation
- Competition vs. cooperation
- Life balance
- Friendship and humour



Larry Loyle & Constance Brissenden

For many Indigenous peoples, the circle is an important symbol, signifying the connection of all things. Within the circle we feel connected to others and have somewhere to turn when we need help.

Mental Health Focus

- Mindful listening
- Connecting to nature
- Celebrating community

Grade 6 Titles



*Richard Van Camp &
Steve Keewatin Sanderson*

Brody shows Trevor how Indigenous traditions and values can help him have respect and appreciation for what he has.

(Fiction – Graphic Novel)

Mental Health Focus

- Dealing with loss and grief
- Importance of friendship, family, and community
- Drawing support from culture and traditions



*Kevin Sylvester & Laura
Carlin*

Profiles of Canadian figures in the arts, outlining how art works for them in various media to find self-expression and balance in their lives.

(Nonfiction – Interview)

Mental Health Focus

- Inspiration and positive role models
- Confidence and perseverance
- Defying labels
- Creative expression



Tanya Lloyd Kyi

A young girl struggles to respond to her grandmother, who is suffering from dementia. Readers come to share the author's empathy for her grandmother and to appreciate her resilience in the face of seclusion.

(Nonfiction – Memoir)

Mental Health Focus

- Dementia and alzheimer's
- Managing emotions
- Coping with loss



Deborah Ellis

Todd and his mother struggle to deal with some difficult changes in their lives. They leave their home because they are afraid of violence from a family member. Both gradually learn to cope with this stressful situation in their own way.

(Realistic Fiction)

Mental Health Focus

- Effects of uncontrolled anger
- Coping with change and stress
- Support systems
- Taking charge of our own happiness

Grade 7 Titles



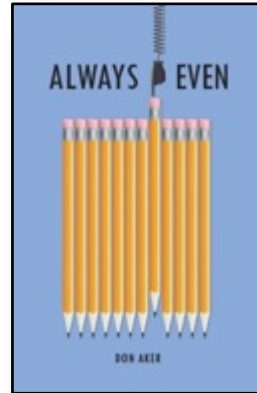
Jacqueline Guest

Changes in Kari's life—a new school, strange city, and an unwell parent—are making her miserable. She makes a new friend, and the pair form a club to provide support for other new or lonely students.

(Realistic Fiction)

Mental Health Focus

- Coping strategies
- Building self-confidence
- Effecting positive change



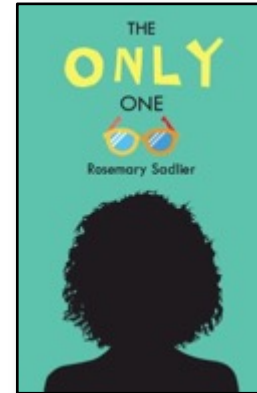
Don Aker

Teri is exhibiting symptoms of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Her father, who also has OCD, lets her know that her symptoms can be managed with professional help.

(Realistic Fiction)

Mental Health Focus

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Dealing with challenging situations
- The stigma of mental illness



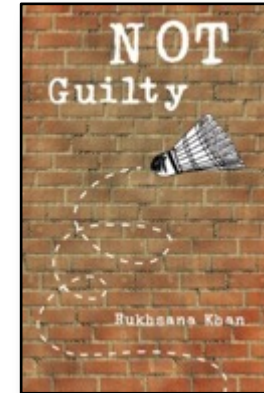
Rosemary Sadlier

In this autobiography, Rosemary Sadlier describes her sense of isolation growing up as the only African Canadian child in her school, and distinguished by being “the only one” in several other ways.

(Nonfiction – Autobiography)

Mental Health Focus

- Identity and Individuality
- Self-confidence
- Self-regulation



Rukhsana Khan

A young Muslim immigrant explores his feeling of exclusion following a series of terrorist attacks and his sense of fulfillment when he realizes that his friends accept him as himself and not as a stereotype.

(Free Verse Poetry)

Mental Health Focus

- Stereotypes and prejudice
- Coping with stress
- The power of creative expression

Grade 8 Titles



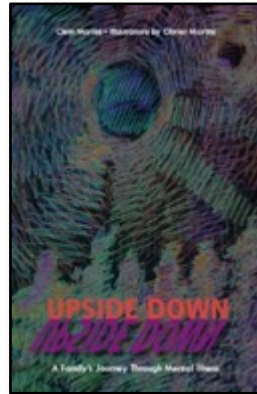
Deborah Ellis & Alicia Raimundo

Alicia Raimundo is a mental health advocate, working mainly with young people. This story traces her experiences in a psychiatric ward after a suicide attempt as she recovers physically and emotionally.

(Nonfiction - Memoir)

Mental Health Focus

- Reducing stigma
- Building resiliency and moving Forward
- Writing to understand your thoughts and feelings



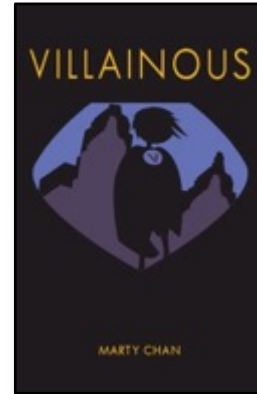
Clem Martini & Oliver Martini

Clem Martini recounts the diagnosis of his brother Olivier as schizophrenic, exploring the difficulties for the whole family and the lessons learned as Olivier found treatment and support.

(Nonfiction – Personal Narrative)

Mental Health Focus

- Schizophrenia and Other Illnesses
- Myths About Mental Illness



Marty Chan

Tanner is in crisis. The son of a super villain, this criminal mastermind-in-training feels isolated at school because he can't reveal the family business nor talk to anyone about his crippling anxiety.

(Fantasy Fiction - Satire)

Mental Health Focus

- Anxiety, Panic, and Stress
- Dealing with Others' Expectations



Richard Van Camp

Darcy writes letters to his victim from a group home. Through his writing, he comes to understand how he can break his cycle of destructive behaviour and bullying.

(Nonfiction – Personal Narrative)

Mental Health Focus

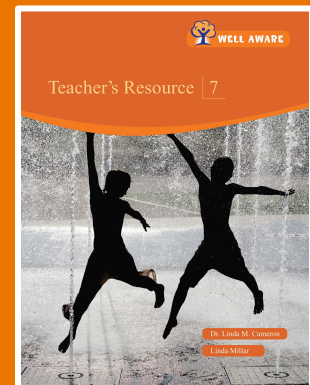
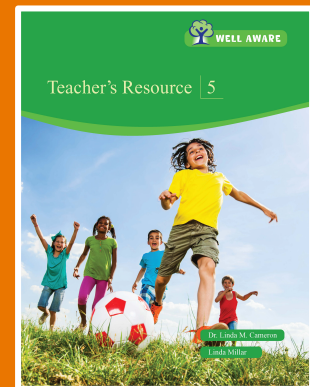
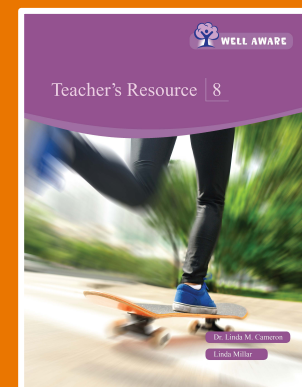
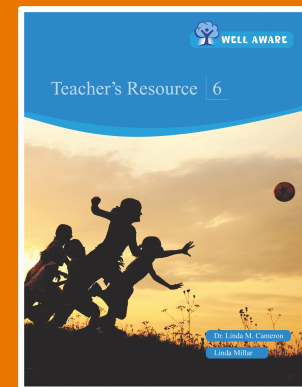
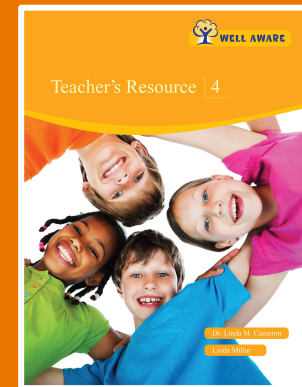
- The HALT Approach
- Exploring Anger
- Restorative Justice and Empathy
- Finding Value in Life and Good Choices

Teacher's Resources

Each teacher's resource features ideas for supporting critical thinking, oral language, and other literacy strategies, with prompts and tips to help teachers feel comfortable facilitating conversations. Each resource also includes information on how to establish an atmosphere of safety in which students feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues.

The goal is to provide:

- ▶ Specific strategies to connect literacy skills to resiliency skills and help students thrive, both academically and emotionally.
- ▶ Enhancements to what you are already teaching without giving you more to do.
- ▶ Clear parameters on what we can and can't do in relation to the mental health and well-being of our students.
- ▶ Suggestions that support an inclusive experience for all learning styles and needs, literacy levels, and cultural norms.



Also available...



Patrick Carney

Dr. Carney is an elected Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association, an honour awarded to him in recognition of his service and contributions to the field of educational psychology. He is a passionate spokesperson and advocate for positive mental health. His dedication and leadership in this field is reflected in his role as President of the Association of Chief Psychologists with Ontario School Boards and two terms as President of the Canadian Association of School Psychologists.

Well Aware

Developing Resilient, Active, and Flourishing Students

It is difficult to overstate the difference a teacher, or a school, can make in a child's or youth's mental health—not through expensive or sophisticated interventions—but through compassion, inclusion, encouragement, and effective instruction.

As educators, we have always been concerned with students' well-being and healthy development. What is new is a recognition that we need to be:

- ▶ more informed about mental health promotion
- ▶ more tactical about promoting healthy habits and addressing problems early
- ▶ more focused when using evidence-based strategies at the classroom, school, and community levels

How can this resource help you? The goal is to provide you with the research-based evidence, tools, and strategies to help create that culture and support students' healthy development in practical and effective ways.

There's so much more to explore!
www.pearsoncanada.ca/wellaware

Videos of *Well Aware* in the Classroom

Virtual Samples

**Downloadable excerpts of student books and
teacher material to try out in your classroom**

[Order Information and Pricing](#)