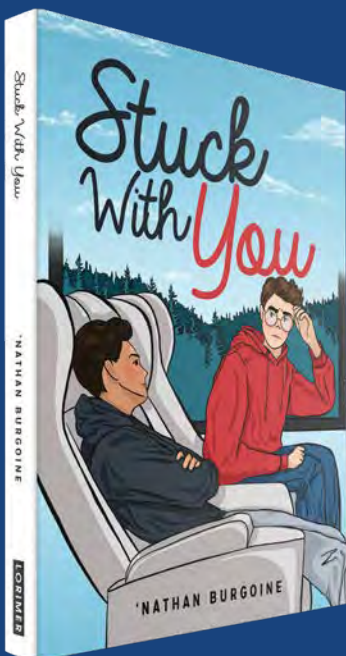
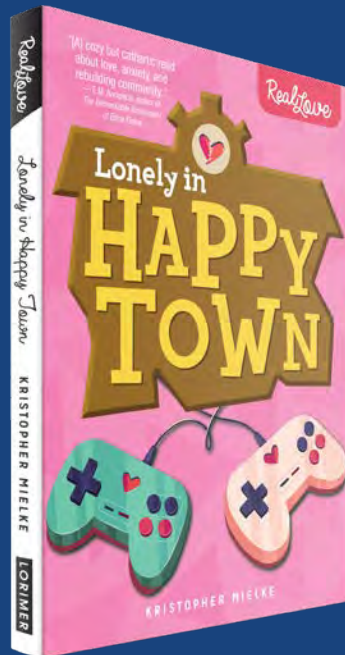
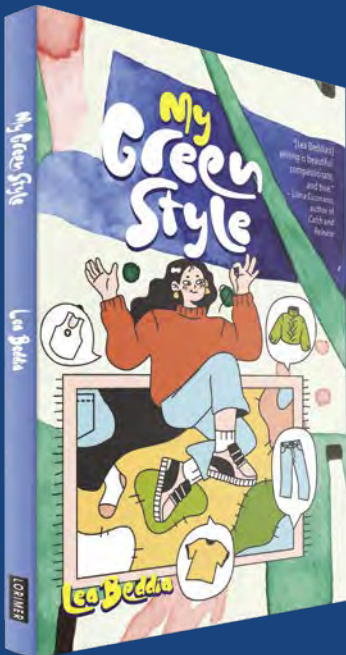
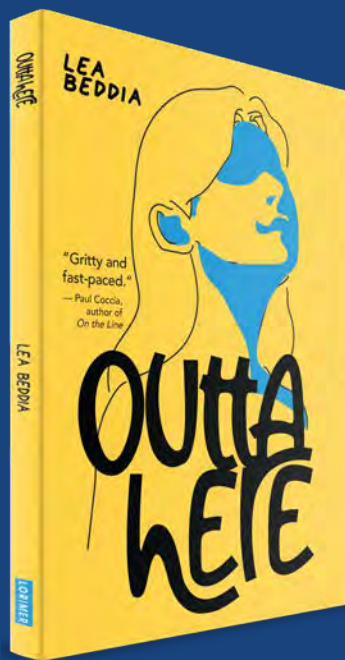
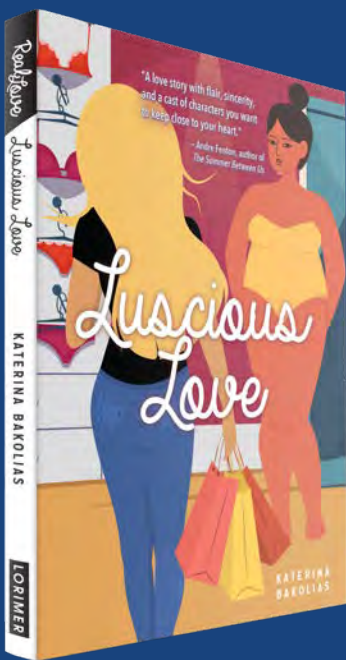


2026 Social and Emotional Learning through stories

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning

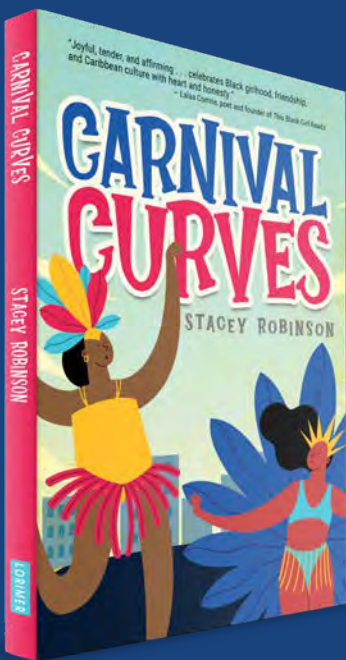


Social and Emotional Learning through stories

Sections

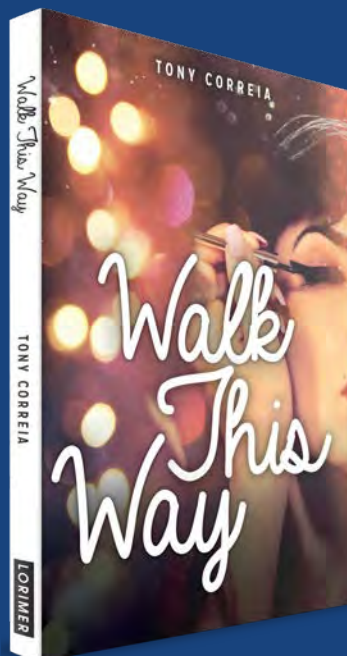
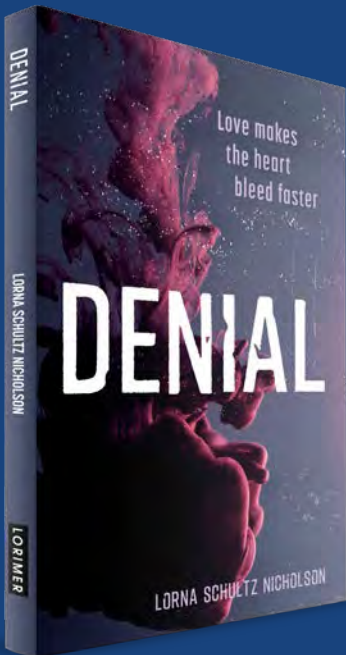
1. Self-Awareness
2. Self Management
3. Responsible Decision Making
4. Relationship Skills
5. Social Awareness

For more titles and information please visit
www.lorimersel.ca



2026 Self-Awareness in stories

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



LORIMER
CHILDREN & TEENS



Self-Awareness in stories

Contents

Middle Grade

Easy Out	4
Half-Court Trap	5
Hoopers	6
Lone Runner	7
Northern Star	8
Not Talking About You	9
Open Ice	10
The Comeback	11
Volleyball Vibe	12

High School

Ace of Hearts	14
Carnival Curves	15
Confessions of a Teenage Drag King	16
Creeboy	17
Denial	18
In a Heartbeat	19
Love IRL	20
No One's Baby	21
Stuck with You	22
The Love Code	23
The Player	24
Walk This Way	25

For more titles and information please visit
www.lorimersel.ca

Middle School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459414884

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-02-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Easy Out

(by Steven Sandor)

A young ballplayer in a small prairie town struggles to compete in a high-level league while stepping out of his legendary father's shadow and building stronger bonds with his teammates.

More about the book:

Westlock is an hour north of Edmonton, a prairie town with a long baseball history. But registrations are down, and there are only enough kids in town to fill one team. So Mo Montpetit's team is entered into the Baseball Alberta AA league. All the kids registered will be playing rep ball. No tryouts needed.

Mo's dad is a baseball legend in Westlock. And that's Mo's problem. Mo isn't very good. He can't hit a rep-level fastball. And as the season starts, the strikeouts and errors mount. The Westlock team loses game after game. How can these kids, not ready for rep ball, compete in a league well above their heads? And how can Mo step out of his dad's long shadow?

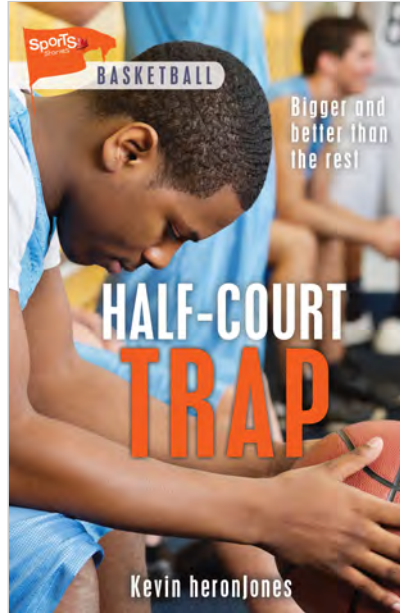


STEVEN SANDOR is an award winning magazine editor, author and sports broadcaster. He edits *Avenue Magazine* in Edmonton. He has written the five Lorimer Sports Stories novels *Called Up*, *Stick Pick*, *Trolled*, *Replay*, and *Playing for Keeps*, and the teen novels *Crack Coach* and *Spin Out*. He lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

Praise

"... the in-depth game play will attract sports fans."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459416444

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-08-24

Social Emotional Skill:

Self Awareness

Half-Court Trap

(by Kevin heronJones)

A thirteen-year-old basketball player struggling with body image and rivalry plots revenge on a teammate, but an unexpected friendship leads him to empathy and self-acceptance.

More about the book:

The issues of male body image and rivalry come together in *Half-Court Trap*. Thirteen-year-old Nigel is teased and belittled at home because of his weight, so an opposing player's trash talk enrages him and he vows revenge. When his enemy becomes a teammate, Nigel plots to make him look bad and get him off the team. As Nigel finds out more about his rival, he not only learns empathy but comes to a new perspective on himself and acceptance of his body shape.



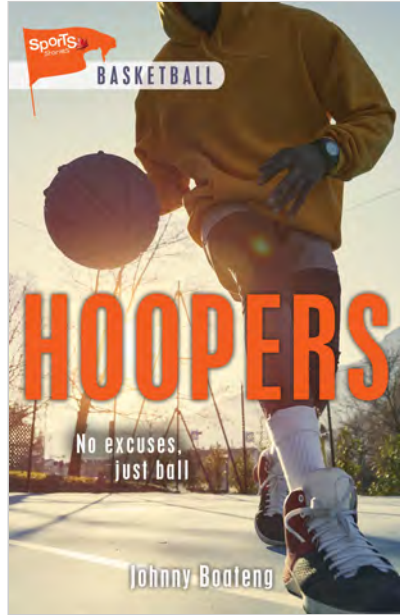
Kevin heronJones is a youth basketball coach, author, journalist, actor, lecturer and award-winning performance poet.

He has numerous spoken word recordings and his poetry book titles include *Vision*, *I AM a Child of the SUN* and *Telephone Love*. He lives in Milton, Ontario.

Praise

"Explores boyhood challenges and the value of teamwork, thoughtfully delivering realism and hope for reluctant readers."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459416352

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-08-24

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

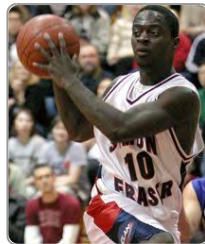
Hoopers

(by Johnny Boateng)

A Black teen in Toronto dreams of basketball glory but must overcome a strict coach's challenges, learning hard work and leadership to become a true team player.

More about the book:

Set in Toronto, *Hoopers* is about a Black youth who wants to live the basketball dream of fame and acclaim. Jojo and his friends know that once they make the Squad, their high-school team, they will have the time of their lives. But their no-nonsense coach is strict, even mean, and seems to repeatedly target Jojo. Emphasizing the real qualities of hard work and dedication, *Hoopers* shows how Jojo learns how to be a skilled player and leader for his team — a real Hooper.



Johnny Boateng played division basketball in Indiana and is the author of the award-winning sports novel *Hustle*. He grew up in North America and is of African descent.

Praise

"The overall themes and lessons of diligence and perseverance are clear and easy to grasp, and the plotlines, pacing, and length make this highly accessible to reluctant readers."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459415928

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-02-16

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Lone Runner

(by Dirk McLean)

A solitary runner from Scarborough, Michaela overcomes discouragement and rivalry to find confidence, connection, and belonging on her diverse school track team.

More about the book:

Set in a diverse neighbourhood in Scarborough, Ontario, this book follows Michaela as she goes from a solitary runner to an athlete who contributes to the success of her cross-country team. Discouraged by an incident at her mostly-white summer camp, Michaela comes into her own as part of her racially diverse school track team. Focusing on themes of persistence, friendship and overcoming rivalries, this book illuminates traits of connection, empathy and forgiveness.

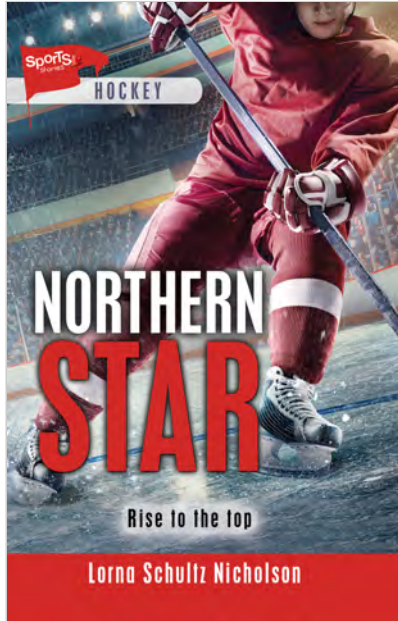


DIRK McLEAN is the author of children's picture books, the Lorimer Sports Stories novel *Not Out*, and *Team Fugee*. He has also written radio drama and stage plays which have toured southern Ontario elementary schools. Dirk was born in Trinidad & Tobago and now lives in Toronto.

Praise

"Middle schoolers at a second grade reading level will root for Michaela as she steps out of her shell."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459414754

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-02-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Northern Star

(by Lorna Schultz Nicholson)

An Indigenous teen hockey star from the Northwest Territories rises to fame but struggles with losing his sense of self as others see only his talent, not the person behind it.

More about the book:

It seems Peter Kuiksak's star just keeps rising. The young hockey hero from the Northwest Territories is the top player in his league, being pursued by agents, and becoming something of a celebrity in his adopted city, Edmonton. But being the centre of attention isn't all it's cracked up to be. It seems no one sees Peter as just Peter anymore — least of all the star himself. Inspired by the career of NHL star Jordin Tootoo, is about one exceptional player's journey toward hockey greatness.

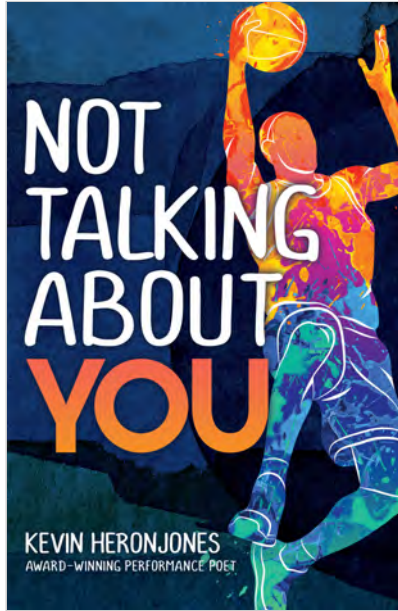


LORNA SCHULTZ NICHOLSON has written picture books, middle grade and YA fiction, and non-fiction. She has also written, produced, and hosted programs for television and radio, and is well known for her sports writing. She lives in Edmonton.

Praise

“Peter Kuiksak is a believable and sympathetic character...”

— CM: Canadian Review of Materials



ISBN:9781459417076

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2022-09- 02

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Not Talking About You

(by Kevin heronJones)

A Black teen navigating a mostly white school struggles with his friend's racist behavior and must decide whether to stay silent or stand up for what's right, confronting the reality of everyday racism.

More about the book:

Part of a well-off middle-class family living in suburban Toronto, Khalil moves for grade eight to a school that does not have many racialized students. He is befriended by school sports star Cameron, who convinces Khalil to play basketball. Khalil is uncomfortable with his friend's racist statements and behaviour, despite Cameron's professed admiration for Black culture. As his discomfort grows, Khalil is left with a choice: accept this as "reality" or take a stand for what's right, even if it costs him friendships.

Not talking About You portrays racism as it occurs amongst young Canadians today. It explores the impact on the target and on bystanders who have to decide how to react when they find a racist youth in their midst.



Kevin heronJones is a youth basketball coach, author, journalist, actor, lecturer and award-winning performance poet. He has numerous spoken word recordings and his poetry book titles include *Vision*, *I AM a Child of the SUN* and *Telephone Love*. He lives in Milton, Ontario.

Praise

"A compelling read for basketball fans with a powerful message about the persistence of racial bigotry."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459415348

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-02-16

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Open Ice

(by David Trifunov)

A teen girl facing sexism in co-ed hockey must navigate team tensions and sports-based pressures, ultimately learning to stand her ground through teamwork and communication.

More about the book:

Set in a co-ed environment, *Open Ice* follows Vancouver, British Columbia, teens Jillian and Jacob, who must attempt to deal with their problems through communication, problem-solving and teamwork, not unlike the typical methods kids see when dealing with challenges. Touching on the sports-based — as opposed to social — pressures that discourage girls from continuing in team sports as they get older, *Open Ice* handles the issue of sexism in sports in a positive way.

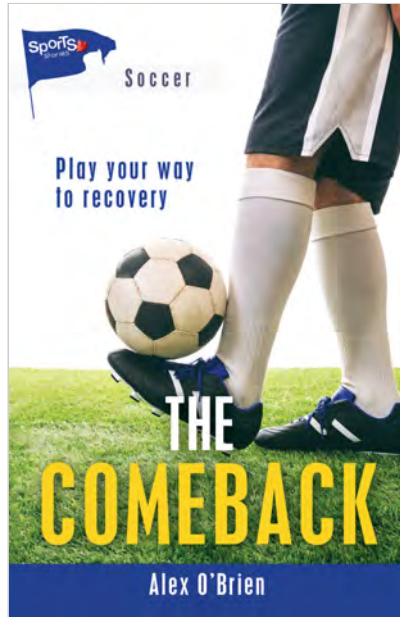


DAVID TRIFUNOV is an award-winning sportswriter whose previous titles for Lorimer Kids and Teens include *Ice Time*, *Snow Soccer* and *Free Runner*. He lives in Kelowna, B.C., with his wife and three daughters.

Praise

"An excellent addition to any school library and would certainly help with dialogue on fairness and equality in recreational sports."

— CM: Canadian Review of Materials



ISBN:9781459414808

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-02-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

The Comeback

(by Alex O'Brien)

A fourteen-year-old boy battling depression finds new motivation through soccer—but hiding his struggles from teammates risks derailing both his recovery and his sense of belonging.

More about the book:

On the surface, fourteen-year-old Chris is pretty average, playing hockey and having friends. But underneath it all, Chris is depressed, full of self-blame and negative thoughts. He quits his hockey team, feeling he has let them down, but his doctor suggests that he should pick up another sport. Chris starts playing soccer, and the positive benefits of sport start to take effect: he is motivated and has fewer self-doubts. But former hockey teammate Trent is on the team, and his suspicions about Chris and his emotional state threaten Chris's acceptance and recovery. When Chris and Trent are chosen for a team to play in a summer tournament, Chris decides to keep his depression a secret. But will rumour and stigma about his condition make him relapse and turn his own team against him?

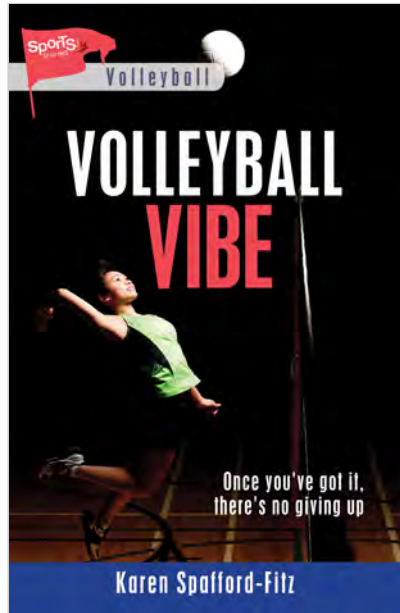


ALEX O'BRIEN left a career in human resources to write novels, scripts and songs. He has been a finalist and winner of several writing competitions. He is the author of the Lorimer sports story *The Playmaker*. Alex lives in Parry Sound, Ontario.

Praise

"A beautiful story that should be read by kids and those adults who work with kids."

— CM: Canadian Review of Materials



ISBN:9781459415508

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-09- 15

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Volleyball Vibe

(by Karen Spafford-Fitz)

A teen obsessed with beauty and fashion faces her mom's challenge to join a sport or get a job, discovering confidence and teamwork through volleyball.

More about the book:

Highlighting girls' volleyball, a sport that has overtaken girls' basketball in popularity, *Volleyball Vibe* shows how engagement in sports can boost self-esteem, confidence, and foster responsibility and teamwork. The main character, Ria, is a teen girl living in Edmonton, Alberta, whose obsession with beauty and fashion leads her mother to insist that she either get a job or join a team sport. At an age when too many girls stop competing athletically, Ria discovers her own capabilities as well as the rewards of challenging herself and connecting with others on a team.



KAREN SPAFFORD-FITZ is the author of five books for children and teens, including the Lorimer SideStreets novels *Push Back* and *Saving Grad*, both named Resource Links' Year's Best. An avid runner, Karen has coached elementary and junior-high students in cross-country running and in track and field. Recently, she participated in a marathon with a differently abled athlete in a pushcart. She lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

Praise

"An excellent story about growing up and the sport of volleyball."

— CM: Canadian Review of Materials

High School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459415003

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-02-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Ace of Hearts

(by Myriad Augustine)

A thoughtful queer teen, uneasy with the pressure around sex, begins exploring his homoromantic asexual identity while navigating friendships and learns to communicate his boundaries in romantic relationships.

More about the book:

Everyone around Alvin seems to be obsessed with one thing — sex. Alvin finds it uncomfortable to think and talk about it and he knows he isn't ready and may never be. His friends, however, think that all Alvin needs is to hook up with the right guy, so they identify three of the most eligible guys in school and start a plan to set Alvin up with each one. First there's Allistair, a boy with strong ambitions to become a gay leader in politics. Second is Rowan, a trans boy who mysteriously misses classes. Third is Jesse, the popular rich kid known for wild parties and breaking hearts. But the closer Alvin gets to being physical with someone, the more he's uncertain that this is for him and he begins to wonder if he's asexual. Can Alvin find the love that's right for him?

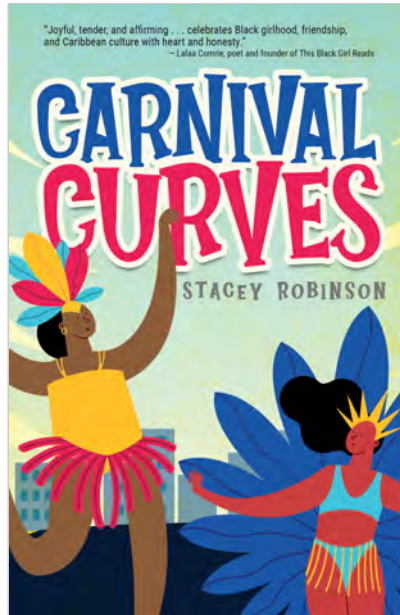


MYRIAD AUGUSTINE is a queer, non binary, intersectional feminist. They founded and co run the Wheelhouse, a nonprofit designed to be a supporting resource for people facing barriers of accessibility. This is their first teen novel. Myriad lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Praise

"A valuable and gentle introduction to the world of homoromantic asexuality and its place in queer culture and community."

— Booklist Online



ISBN:9781459420007

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-10-06

Social Emotional Skill:

Self Awareness

Carnival Curves

(by Stacey Robinson)

Two body-conscious black teens participate in their first Toronto Caribbean Carnival in their last summer of high school, learning to embrace themselves.

More about the book:

In this joyful YA novel about self-acceptance, friendship, and the power of cultural tradition, two teens experience their first Toronto Caribbean Carnival in their last summer of high school.

As the two best friends, one from a conservative Nigerian family and the other a Jamaican-Canadian, prepare costumes to dance for the first time in the Carnival parade, they confront questions of body image, relationships with young men, and the transition to the world beyond high school.

Shortlisted for 2025 Sanofka's Pen Peer Choice Favourite - Young Adult Books



STACEY MARIE ROBINSON is an editor and music enthusiast with a background in communications. Guided by her Jamaican heritage, her creative content showcases contemporary Black Canadian life and Caribbean culture across the diaspora.

Stacey is the author of *Dancehall Rebel* and *Carnival Curves* and lives in Scarborough, Ontario.

Praise

Carnival Curves ...skillfully intertwines themes of cultural pride, self-discovery, and friendship. Stacey Robinson's captivating narrative immerses readers into the experiences of playing mas, and the exhilarating joy, confidence and freedom that the Caribbean carnival offers, especially to women."



ISBN:9781459415584

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-09-15

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Confessions of a Teenage Drag King

(by Markus Harwood-Jones)

A 17-year-old navigating life as both a student and a drag king, faces the emotional challenge of balancing identity and romance while embracing their LGBTQ+ journey.

More about the book:

Full of colourful, authentic characters and set in Toronto, *Confessions of a Teenage Drag King* highlights diversity of race, gender, sexual orientation, and identity. Seventeen-year-old Lauren tries to navigate the tricky waters of teen romance that brings high school to the drag show and back, all while Lauren must keep up their two personas — Ren, a drag king, and Lauri, a typical student — and come to terms with their feelings both for mixed-race student Clover and for their own identity as an LGBTQ+ teen. *Confessions of a Teenage Drag King* is a realistic but light-hearted exploration of gender and identity, making it a fun and topical read for today's teen readers.



MARKUS HARWOOD-JONES is a writer, visual artist and documentary filmmaker. His feature film, *Mosaic*, tells the story of his journey across Canada and the United States to learn more about the trans community. He is author of the Lorimer Real Love teen romances, *Just Julian* and *Romeo for Real*. Markus lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Praise

"A fun and authentic queer teen romance."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459416789

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2022-02-15

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Creeboy

(by Teresa Wouters)

An Indigenous teen living on a reserve faces with pressure to join a gang, while his family challenges him to take another path. He finds ways to successfully navigate these challenges.

More about the book:

Set in the 2000s on the fictional reserve of Nune'chi'win, 16-year-old Josh "Creeboy" navigates the world of Indigenous gang life. Josh's family members are no strangers to gang life. His dad, the leader of one of the gangs on his reserve, is in jail, and his older brother Darion has taken his place. Josh is unsure whether gang life is for him — that is until Darion is killed during a run-in with a rival gang. Angry, hurt and frustrated by systemic racism against Indigenous peoples, Josh, now known as "Creeboy," starts down the path to becoming a full member. Can his family, and his community, save Josh before his fate becomes that of his father and brother?



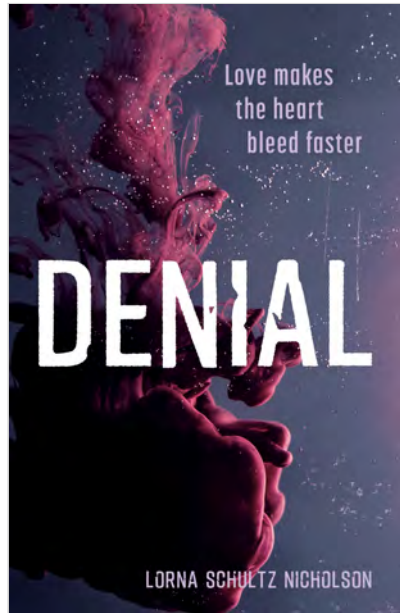
TERESA WOUTERS is a Métis teacher, musician, actress, TV personality, public speaker and writer. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Studies, a Bachelor of Education degree and a Master's in

Creative Writing (MFA). Teresa lives in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

Praise

"...the resentment and redemption narrative is strong and the action consistent. Recommended."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459416710

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2022-02-15

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Denial

(by Lorna Schultz Nicholson)

A high-achieving teen girl struggles with jealousy and emotional instability caused by a stealth pregnancy, and after a surprise labor, faces tough choices she ultimately meets with courage.

More about the book:

It's Nova's final year of high school and everything is on track for an amazing year. She's going to ace all her studies and go on to be a doctor. She's got a spot on the swim team. And she's in love for the first time — with Leo, the captain of the swim team.

But things don't turn out quite like Nova had planned. As her relationship with Leo intensifies, so does her obsession with him and her jealousy over his so-called friendship with another girl. The tighter she tries to hold on to him, the more he seems to pull away. The constant worry about the future of their relationship sends Nova spiralling into depression. Even she can't believe how badly she's handling things now. But could there be another reason for it, one she doesn't even want to admit to herself?



LORNA SCHULTZ NICHOLSON has written picture books, middle grade and YA fiction, and non-fiction. She has also written, produced, and hosted programs for television and radio, and is well known for her sports writing. She lives in Edmonton.

Praise

"...confronts significant contemporary issues in a narrative that never flags. Recommended for high school libraries."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459416277

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-08-24

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

In a Heartbeat

(by Markus Harwood-Jones)

An LGBTQ+ teen leaves his supportive city life for a small town. At first, he struggles to fit in but eventually finds acceptance, romance, and self-love through a creative community.

More about the book:

Set in a small town, this is not a typical LGBTQ+ romance. Seventeen-year-old Lucien has a supportive family and community in Toronto but wants to make a new start somewhere nobody knows him. Going to stay with his aunt in Vernon presents challenges to fitting in — he is not comfortable with his hockey-watching, hard-partying cousins or the other kids at school. Eventually, Lucien finds a community of creative teens and meets the mysterious Alder. As Lucien finds out who Alder really is, he is able to find what is worthy of love in himself. Focusing on romance and speaking one's truth rather than issues of gender identity, this story is a tender, light-hearted tale of finding love in unexpected places.

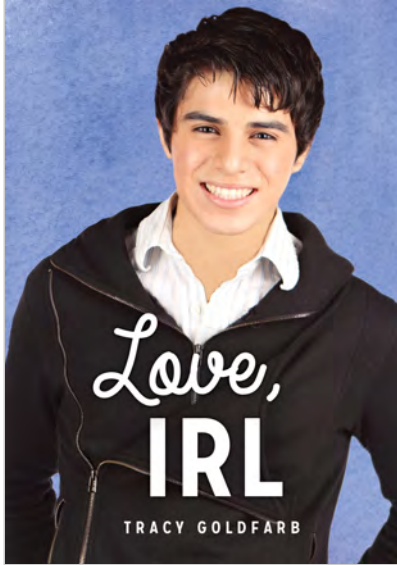


MARKUS HARWOOD-JONES is a writer, visual artist and documentary filmmaker. His feature film, *Mosaic*, tells the story of his journey across Canada and the United States to learn more about the trans community. He is author of the Lorimer Real Love teen romances, *Just Julian* and *Romeo for Real*. Markus lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Praise

This brief read with a simplified style intended for reluctant and struggling teen readers, provides much-needed queer representation for this format.

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459415621

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-09-15

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Love, IRL

(by Tracy Goldfarb)

A Latino, transgender teen in Hamilton juggles feelings for a classmate and an online crush—something that forces him to confront his identity and what love means.

More about the book:

Alex, a Latino transgender teen living in Hamilton, Ontario, struggles to reconcile his feelings with a real-life crush on a boy in his class from the relationship he has with a boy he knows online — only to find that the two were the same all along. Without overly graphic content, important issues youth face surrounding online messaging, social media and sexting are brought to light in a refreshing take on an LGBTQ+ relationship.

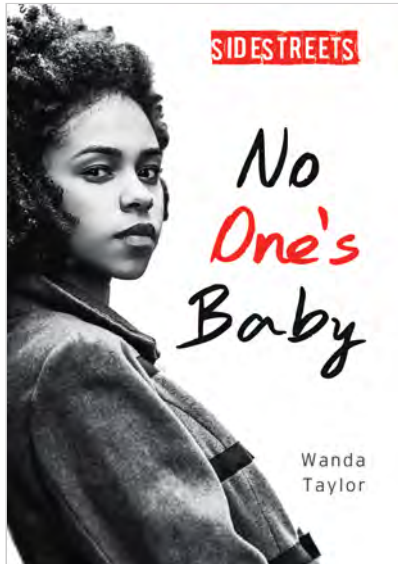


TRACY GOLDFARB is a writer and artist who is involved in the LGBTQ+ community. Tracy attended OCAD for sculpture and currently teaches fabrication skills at Humber College. Love IRL is their first YA novel. Tracy lives in Toronto with their husband and two cats.

Praise

"[An] extremely wholesome depiction of queer teen dialogue A light and fluffy queer romance."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459414969

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-02-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

No One's Baby

(by Wanda Taylor)

A biracial teen adopted by white parents struggles with identity and loss, facing a pregnancy that forces her to confront her past and seek out her birth mother.

More about the book:

Adopted by Caucasian parents, biracial teen Lizzie feels like she never belonged. After the death of her father, Lizzie starts acting out — dating, staying away from home for days and giving up her plans to continue her education. When Lizzie discovers she is pregnant, she is faced with the difficult choice of having a child or getting an abortion. This leads Lizzie to want to find her own birth mother. After running away from home, Lizzie ends up in Kingston, where she tracks down an older woman named Ruth who sheds light on the circumstances surrounding Lizzie's birth.

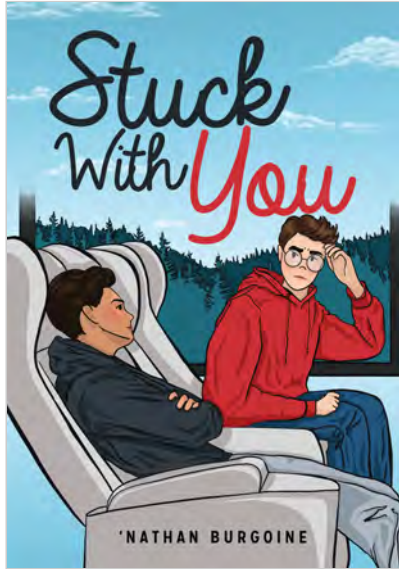


WANDA LAUREN TAYLOR is an author, filmmaker, editor and educator. She is a former CBC TV producer and author of books that include *Birchtown and the Black Loyalists*, which has been listed as one of the top Black history books for young readers by *Today's Parent Magazine* and by the Canadian Children's Book Centre, and the SideStreets novel *Ride or Die*. Wanda lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Praise

"With gritty themes like teen pregnancy, abuse, and discrimination, this title deals with important issues head-on."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459417205

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2023-04-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Stuck with You

(by 'Nathan Burgoine)

A thoughtful teen uncertain about his future faces his feelings while stuck beside a flirty frenemy, discovering a deeper self-awareness and identity.

More about the book:

Stuck With You is a story of Queer joy and a playful teen romance, following two frenemies as they fall for each other while stuck in adjacent seats on a day-long train trip.

Ben is on a train back to Ottawa after a visit with his dad in Toronto when he runs into the last person he wanted to see: Caleb, the handsome, confident boy who recently and accidentally broke Ben's phone. Preoccupied by worrying about whether he should take a gap year, Ben has little time for Caleb's jibes.

But when the two start talking, not only does Ben find himself won over by Caleb's roguish charm, but he also learns his seatmate is also bisexual.



'NATHAN BURGOINE is the author of the queer young adult novel *Exit Plans for Teenage Freaks* (finalist for the Prix Aurora Award for YA Novel) and queer young adult novella *Hope Echoes*, included in the collection *Three Left Turns to Nowhere*. He, his husband, and their rescued husky live in Ottawa, Ontario.

Praise

"...*hilarious and an all-around enjoyable read... Highly recommended...*"

— School Library Journal, starred review



ISBN:9781459415843

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-02-16

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

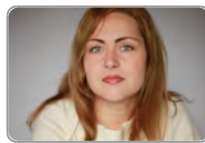
The Love Code

(by Mette Bach)

An LGBTQ+ Vancouver teen reeling from heartbreak and family upheaval joins a robotics club to rebuild her future — navigating emotional loss, personal growth, and unexpectedly discovering new love and direction through STEM.

More about the book:

Astrid is a teen who has lost everything: her girlfriend to a guy and her social status when her parents lose their jobs. Determined to make her way into university, she joins a robotics club hoping to make contacts and win a scholarship but also finds the love of her life. *The Love Code* tells the story of a relatable teen navigating the contemporary world of women working in STEM careers within a changing economy.

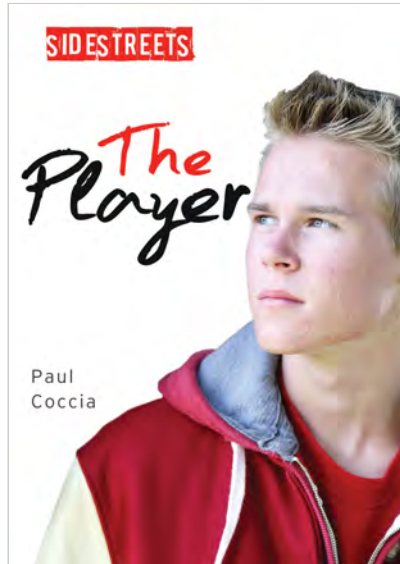


METTE BACH is the author of the Lorimer SideStreets novels *Femme* and *Killer Drop* (named a Best Book for Kids and Teens by the Canadian Children's Book Centre) and the Real Love titles *Love Is Love*, *You're You*, *Cinders* and *Charming*. She has taught ESL to high-school students and currently works at a drop-in resource centre. Mette lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Praise

"A sweet and uplifting novel for reluctant readers."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459415768

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-02-16

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

The Player

(by Paul Coccia)

A gay teen goalie in a homophobic hockey world is outed online by a closeted teammate and secret lover—but ultimately chooses honesty and self-respect over hiding who he is.

More about the book:

Set in the traditionally homophobic world of amateur hockey, this book follows gay goalie Cooper in his struggle with his feelings for a teammate and coming out to his team. Cooper has been hooking up with teammate Pesh in secret, and has to play along when Pesh dates a girl and even tolerate locker-room homophobic talk. When Pesh outs Cooper online, trying to better his own chances at playing pro, Cooper chooses self-esteem and honesty over sex. With a strong and relatable main character, this book is a realistic, positive look at teen relationships — gay or straight.



PAUL COCCIA has a specialist in English from U of T and a Masters in Creative Writing from UBC. He is the author of the YA novel *Cub*. Paul lives in Toronto.

Praise

"The realistic and engaging content, relatable characters and fast-moving plot will be of interest to reluctant readers, beginning readers, and strong readers looking for a quick, interesting read. Highly Recommended."

— CM: Canadian Review of Materials



ISBN:9781459416314

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-08-24

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Awareness

Walk This Way

(by Tony Correia)

A teen passionate about drag faces criticism from his boyfriend, who — like some in the gay community — rejects flamboyant identities. Ultimately, he learns to embrace his authentic self.

More about the book:

Drag has never been so popular, and this LGBTQ+ romance takes a look at how a teen embraces the drag queen dream. Sixteen-year-old Joshua does drag on social media but wants to have the full drag performance experience. Trouble is, he's attracted to guys who don't like drag and want nothing to do with gay men they think are too feminine or flamboyant. Joshua has the chance to live his dream, but only by keeping it secret from the guy he is dating. Grounded by what Joshua learns about how drag continues to be controversial in the gay community, this essential light-hearted story focuses on facing your emotions and finding your authentic self, even if it's by pretending to be someone else.



TONY CORREIA's newspaper column, "Queen's Logic", ran in *Xtra! West* for five years. He is the author of the Lorimer Real Love novels *Same Love* and *True to You*. He lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

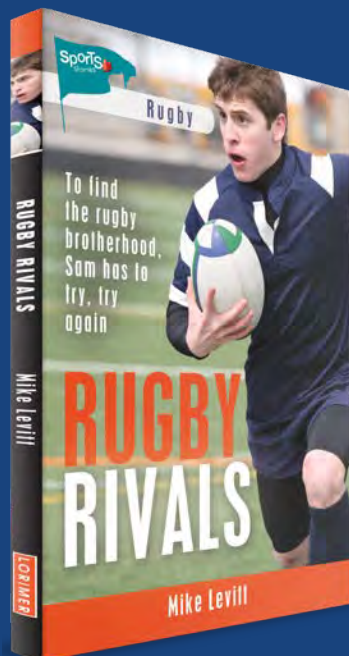
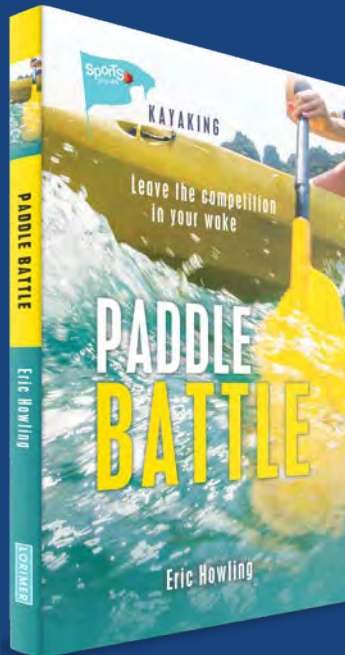
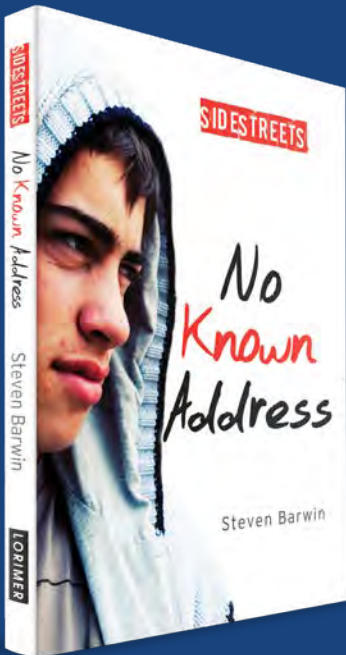
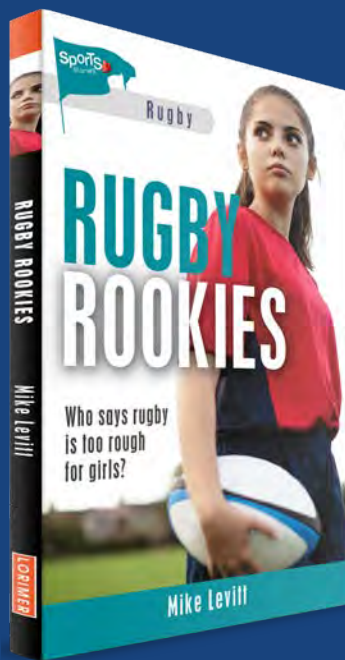
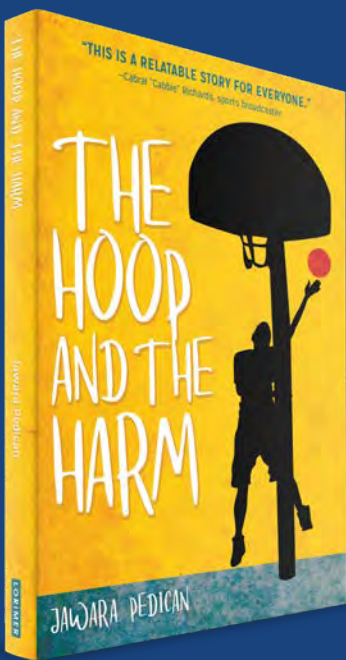
Praise

"The story's lighthearted energy and zinger lines create a sitcom-esque vibe where every character is a little larger than life. There are a few poignant moments that add pathos without ruining the over-the-top vivacity. Readers will have a ball and may learn a little about LGBTQ+ history along the way."

— Kirkus Reviews

2026 Self Management in stories

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



Self Management in stories

Contents

Middle Grade

Paddle Battle	4
Rugby Rivals	5
Rugby Rookies	6

High School

No Known Address	8
The Hoop and the Harm	9

For more titles and information please visit
www.lorimersel.ca

Middle School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459416239

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-08-24

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Management

Paddle Battle

(by Eric Howling)

A 13-year-old kayaker struggles with anger and self-blame after his parents' divorce, but finds emotional strength and renewed focus through his teammates amid wildfire threats.

More about the book:

Set against a backdrop of the threat of wildfires on the West coast, this book looks at the effect changes at home can have on a young athlete's performance and the emotional support a team can provide. Thirteen-year-old kayaker Finn has been angry and resentful since his mother left the family. In a highly charged emotional state, Finn's performance is not only suffering, but he is also taking things out on his teammates. Like the wildfires that threaten Finn's training camp, this book shows how new beginnings arise after a destructive event.

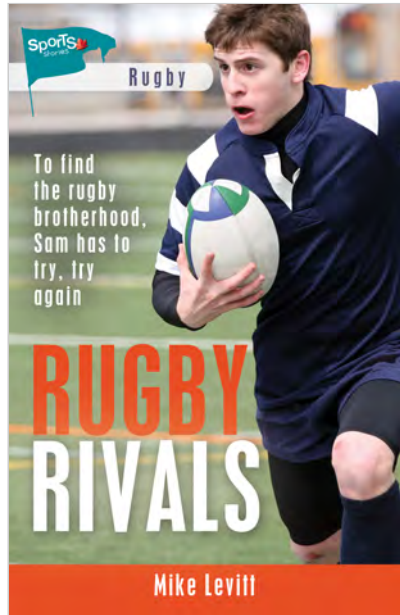


ERIC HOWLING is the author of ten books including *Head Hunter*, *Red Zone Rivals*, *Hoop Magic*, and *Run and Gun* in the Lorimer Sports Stories series. His books have been shortlisted for the Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award, named *Resource Link's* Year's Best and picked as CCBC Best Books selections. Eric lives and plays sports in Calgary, Alberta

Praise

"The author explores what this young teen goes through when faced with the breakdown of his parents' marriage ... Finn's character arc is well rounded. The realities of climate change and wildfires and their impacts on the younger generation are also seamlessly woven into the story."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459414921

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-02-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Management

Rugby Rivals

(by Mike Levitt)

A rugby player has trouble fitting in at his new school, and with his new teammates. After lashing out and hurting a teammate in an unsporting way he struggles to learn valuable lessons about teamwork, and regain his sense of integrity and purpose on the rugby field.

More about the book:

Sam's grandfather, Pops, always taught Sam that the most important aspects of rugby are sportsmanship and teamwork. But that's hard to remember when Sam's school is shut down and he transfers to Rosedale Heights.

Sam feels like he's alone against the world trying to prove himself — and failing. He has trouble fitting in with the snobby Rosedale team. In an act of retaliation, Sam breaks a teammate's nose, and he knows he's lost sight of what rugby is supposed to be about.

All seems lost when Sam gets kicked off the team under suspicion of stealing. Can Sam prove his innocence and get back in play for the highly anticipated England game?

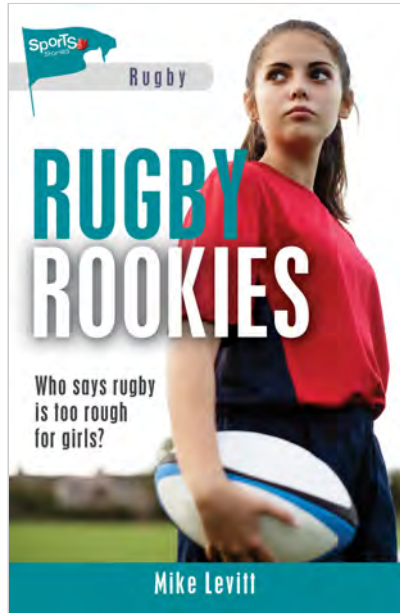


MIKE LEVITT is the award-winning author of *Rugby Rivals* and *Rugby Rookies*. A lifelong rugby player and coach, he works as a mental health clinician with the Xaxli'p people and supports the local 2SLGBTQI+ community through two-spirit youth events and the *Lillooet Life Stylz* newsletter. He lives in Kamloops, BC.

Praise

"... the in-depth game play will attract sports fans."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459415720

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-02-16

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Management

Rugby Rookies

(by Mike Levitt)

A teen girl faces her fears and proves her strength in forming a girls' rugby team, overcoming challenges and defying everyone's expectations of her and her teammates.

More about the book:

Highlighting rugby, the fastest growing sport in America, this book tackles the issue of girls playing full-contact sports. Maddy and her friends are a small town group determined to form a girls' junior rugby team while they navigate learning both the rules of the game and the rules set out by the school board. The adults are concerned about the girls' safety and even Maddy worries that she is too small for the rough game. But the persistence of the diverse group of girls wins the day and the book becomes a celebration of the empowerment and self-esteem young girls get from participating in sports.



MIKE LEVITT is the award-winning author of *Rugby Rivals* and *Rugby Rookies*. A lifelong rugby player and coach, he works as a mental health clinician with the Xaxli'p people and supports the local 2SLGBTQI+ community through two-spirit youth events and the *Lillooet Life Stylz* newsletter. He lives in Kamloops, BC.

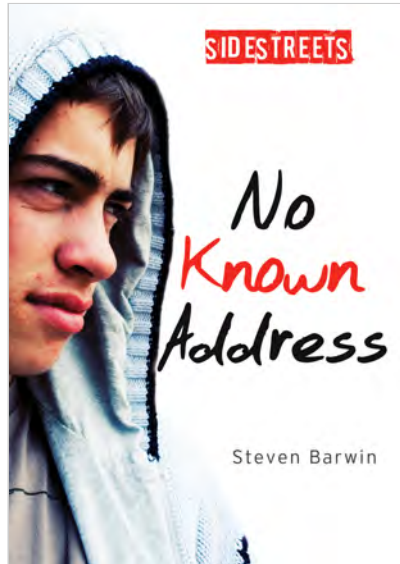
Praise

"Deftly deals with the topic of women in full-contact sports."

— School Library Journal

High School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459415546

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-09-15

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Management

No Known Address

(by Steven Barwin)

A teen from a well-to-do, but abusive Victoria family finds himself homeless after facing false accusations. He navigates family abuse, homelessness, and the search for safety and belonging, eventually finding a supportive situation.

More about the book:

Teen homelessness is not always connected to poverty and crime. Sometimes there's more to the story. *No Known Address* follows a teen named Tyler from a privileged family in Victoria, British Columbia, who is kicked out of his home by his abusive dad after being blamed for bringing prescription narcotics to a party. This novel brings to light the serious nature of verbal and emotional abuse and how difficult it is to be understood and access support in such circumstances.

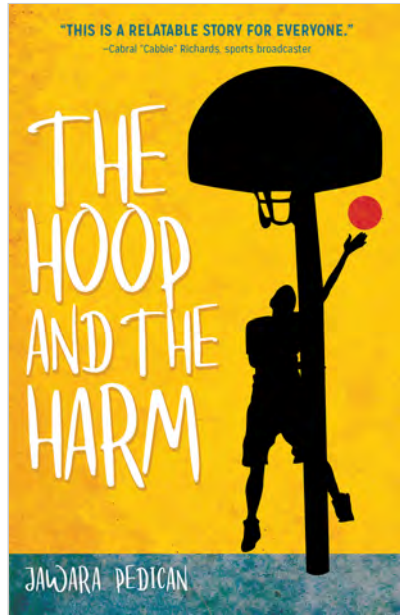


STEVEN BARWIN is a high school teacher. He is the author of several books in the Lorimer Sports Stories series including *Spiked*, which was Resource Links' Year's Best book, *Icebreaker* and *Slam Dunk*, both of which were named Best Books for Kids and Teens by the Canadian Children's Book Centre. He is also the author of the teen novel *Trap Jam*. Steven lives in Thornhill, Ontario.

Praise

"A thought-provoking problem novel about a teen's journey to find a safe place to call home."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459417151

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2023-04-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Self Management

The Hoop and the Harm

(by Jawara Pedican)

A student athlete has to navigate the pressures of family expectations, manage his mental health, and search for his true passion through the transformative power of basketball.

More about the book:

Udoka Clendon is a first-year university student and a product of basketball systems that have produced professional players.

From very young, he's been pushed relentlessly by his family on a troubling pursuit for an athletic scholarship. He is burdened by expectations and self-doubt. Udoka tries to reignite his passion for the game. Now, he's been given a final opportunity at the city-wide tournament to rediscover his confidence and his sense of purpose—all of which he fears he has lost forever.

With clarity and poetic style, drawing on his own time as an elite sports prospect, Jawara Pedican shows the trials and traumas of becoming fixated on a dream of sports stardom.



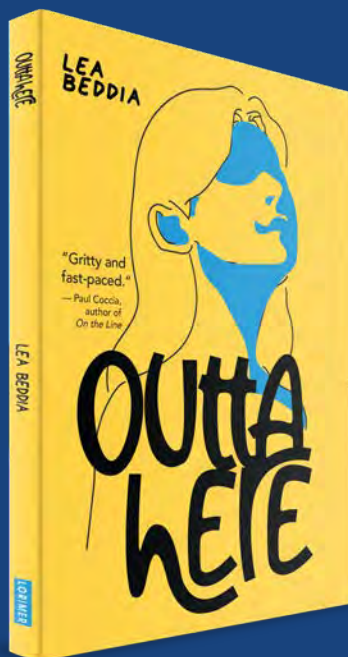
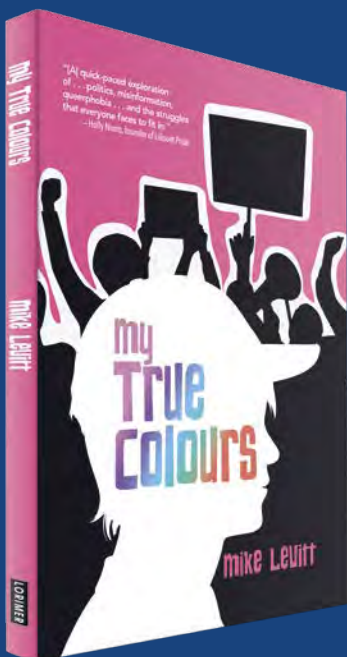
Alliston, ON.

JAWARA PEDICAN played on various university varsity basketball teams in Canada. He is a kinesiologist and more recently a medical editor for a life sciences marketing agency headquartered in Toronto. He lives in

Praise

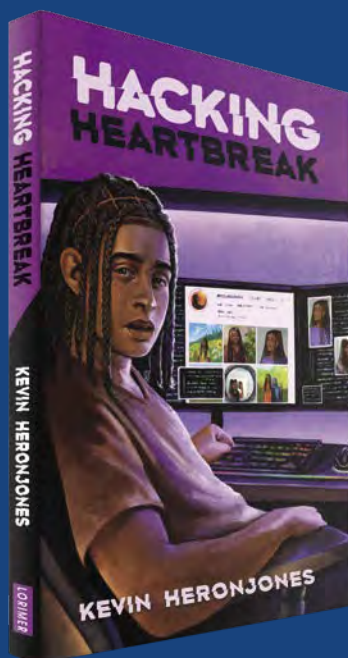
"A sincere, inspiring look at dealing with and overcoming self-doubt..."

— Kirkus Reviews



2026 Stories of Responsible decision making

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



LORIMER
CHILDREN & TEENS

 ONTARIO
CREATES

Stories of Responsible decision making

Contents

Middle Grade

Bank Shot	3
Hacking Heartbreak	5
If I Go Missing	6
My True Colours	7
Outta Here	8

High School

Shades of Black	10
-----------------	----

For more titles and information please visit
www.lorimersel.ca



Middle School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459416390

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-08-24

Social Emotional Skill:

Responsible Decision Making

Bank Shot

(by Valerie Pankratz Froese)

A girl juggling family caregiving and basketball struggles to balance her responsibilities and her passion, learning the cost of secrecy and the value of honesty along the way.

More about the book:

This girls' basketball story deals with the conflict between family caregiving responsibilities and extra-curricular sports that some kids, particularly girls, often face. Jo loves playing basketball in gym class, and she is surprised when she makes the school team. Because she has to babysit her younger brother, she's afraid her mom will make her give up her place on the team, so instead, Jo hatches a plan to have a neighbor secretly babysit so she can play. But the deception and secrets start getting to her after a few close calls. While Jo shows initiative and problem-solving skills both on and off the court, will her mom see it that way when she's found out?

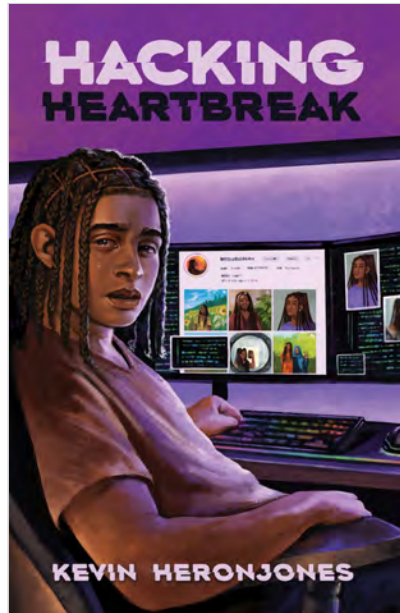


VALERIE PANKRATZ FROESE grew up playing sports and started coaching at a young age. Her love of coaching drew her to a career in teaching, where she taught both elementary and middle school. Valerie lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Praise

"A tidy tale, villain- and (unusually, these days) bully-free, with clear but not heavy-handed game and life coaching."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459419445

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-05-20

Social Emotional Skill:
Responsible Decision Making

Hacking Heartbreak

(by Kevin heronJones)

After hacking the social media accounts of his crush, Baron is in a race against the clock to fix the mess he made and save her from serious consequences.

More about the book:

A Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Book for Kids & Teens, starred selection

Baron is a computer whiz with a passion for hacking and when the girl of his dreams starts taking an interest in him, he all but short circuits. Keyanna sees their dates as more casual than the love-struck Baron, but everything seems to be going well. When he sees her on a date with another guy, Baron hacks her school and social media accounts, angry and hurt.

As jealousy fades and reality sets in, Baron realizes the seriousness of his action. Knowing regret will never be enough, Baron races against the clock to fix his mess. Set in Brampton, *Hacking Heartbreak* is a story about the intensity of first love and learning to live with the consequences of your actions.

2025 Winner of Sanofka's Pen Peer Choice Favourite - Young Adult Books



Kevin heronJones is a youth basketball coach, author, journalist, actor, lecturer and award-winning performance poet. He has numerous spoken word recordings and his poetry book titles include *Vision*, *I AM a Child of the SU N* and *Telephone Love*. He lives in Milton, Ontario.

Praise

"A contemporary and thought-provoking teenage love story, whose dynamic characters provide a refreshing take on love, heartbreak, and redemption for today's modern audience." —Eddie Kawoya, author of Ace



ISBN:9781459414518

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2019-12-03

Social Emotional Skill:

Responsible Decision Making

If I Go Missing

(by Brianna Jonnie)

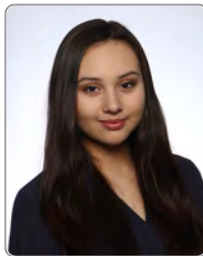
An Indigenous teen's powerful real-life letter demands justice amid the crisis of missing Indigenous people in Canada, brought to life in a compelling graphic novel blending imagined visuals with the reality of her words.

More about the book:

Combining graphic fiction and non-fiction, this young adult graphic novel serves as a window into one of the unique dangers of being an Indigenous teen in Canada today.

The text of the book is derived from excerpts of a letter written to the Winnipeg Chief of Police by fourteen-year-old Brianna Jonnie — a letter that went viral. In her letter, Jonnie calls out the authorities for neglecting to immediately investigate missing Indigenous people and urges them to "not treat me as the Indigenous person I am proud to be," if she were to be reported missing.

The artwork for the book imagines a situation in which a young Indigenous woman does disappear, portraying the reaction of her community, her friends, the police and media. An author's note at the end of the book provides context for young readers about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada.



BRIANNA JONNIE is an Ojibwe. Brianna has been awarded the City of Winnipeg Citizen Equity Committee's Youth Role Model Award, and the Lieutenant Governor's Vice-Regal award. Brianna lives in Winnipeg, MB.

Praise

"...a great addition to a literature circle or introduction to a unit on Indigenous perspectives for any high school classroom or library." —CM: Canadian Review



ISBN:9781459420090

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-05-20

Social Emotional Skill:
Responsible Decision Making

My True Colours

(by Mike Levitt)

An insecure teen in rural BC is forced to confront his own transphobia and how his emotions are affecting others after he participates in violent anti-LGBTQ+ demonstrations.

More about the book:

A Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Book for Kids & Teens

Set against the backdrop of anti-SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) education protests, this story delves into the spread of hate and misinformation within families and communities.

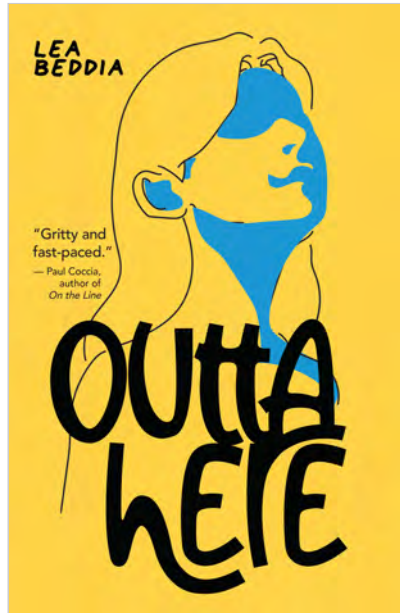
With consequences looming after a violent confrontation with a member from his school's Gender Sexuality Alliance in the aftermath of an anti-SOGI protest, a teen finds himself confronted with his bigotry and prejudices. When he learns that a key figure in his life is transgender, he starts on a journey of questioning his beliefs. He finds that he has more in common with members of the LGBTQ+ community than he ever expected.



MIKE LEVITT is the award-winning author of *Rugby Rivals* and *Rugby Rookies*. A lifelong rugby player and coach, he works as a mental health clinician with the Xaxli'p people and supports the local 2SLGBTQI+ community through two-spirit youth events and the *Lillooet Life Stylz* newsletter. He lives in Kamloops, BC.

Praise

Bigotry challenged when it targets those you care for



ISBN:9781459417298

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2023-09- 26

Social Emotional Skill:

Responsible Decision Making

Outta Here

(by Lea Beddia)

A small-town teen faces the challenges of her mother's opioid addiction and a dangerous home life, striving to escape and build a better future through college despite limited support.

More about the book:

Outta Here is the story of a lively and imaginative small-town teen living with a mom whose pain medication has led to addiction, leaving little money for basics -- like food.

Élise's best friend and her sympathetic teachers offer what help they can, but there's only so much they can do. Élise's situation suddenly turns dangerous when her mother invites a fellow addict into their lives. Élise has to find a way to get out – to get to college, pay for her education, and deal with her mother's lifestyle.

Lea Beddia has written an authentic, hard-hitting novel which captures a reality faced by many teens whose families experience the epidemic of opioid addiction.

Shortlisted for the 2025 Janet Savage Blachford Prize for Children's and Young Adult Literature.



LEA BEDDIA is an author, storyteller and educator. Born and raised in Montreal, she now teaches school in Joliette, Quebec where she lives with her husband and three children.

Praise

"Élise is a powerhouse of a character... A heartbreaking testament to saving oneself."

— Kirkus Reviews

High School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459417199

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2023-04-04

Social Emotional Skill:

Responsible Decision Making

Shades of Black

(by Carlos Anthony)

A sensitive Black teen in Toronto's Etobicoke neighborhood faces suspicion and police scrutiny after a school shooting, navigating the challenges of vulnerability, racial bias, and belonging in an urban school.

More about the book:

Romero, a Guyanese Canadian, is a sensitive kid who is just starting to attend an inner-city-style school with a large racialized population. Romero falls in with a friendly crew but finds himself in trouble when a shot is fired in the school cafeteria — and he gets stuck with the gun. Meanwhile, the police, often using brutal tactics and targeting young Black males, try to find out who the shooter was.

To humanize and critique the Black male experience and dispel the myth that vulnerability and empathy equal weakness, Carlos Anthony draws on his own recent experiences as a teen in school in Etobicoke.



CARLOS ANTHONY is a filmmaker and author who writes about the experiences that Black men have historically avoided talking about. He has been recognized for his video web series, short story series, published essays, and short films. With his wife and children, Carlos lives in Windsor, Ontario.

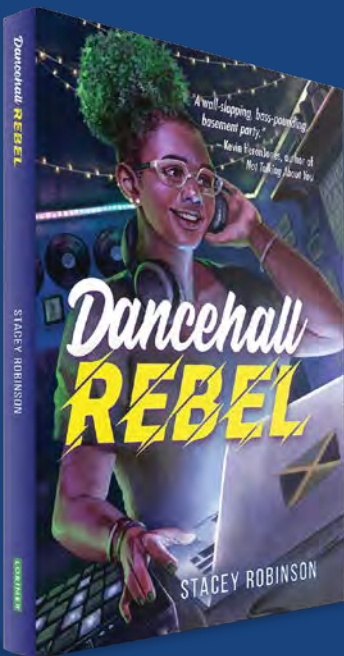
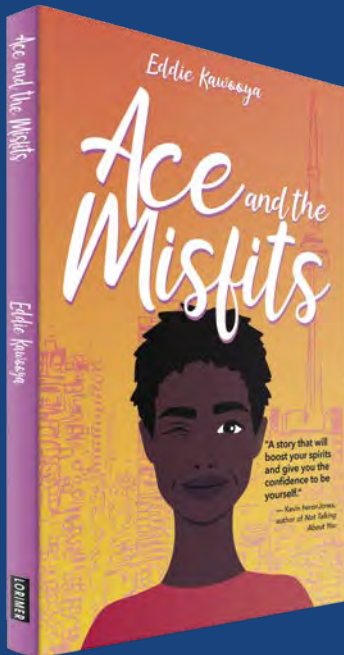
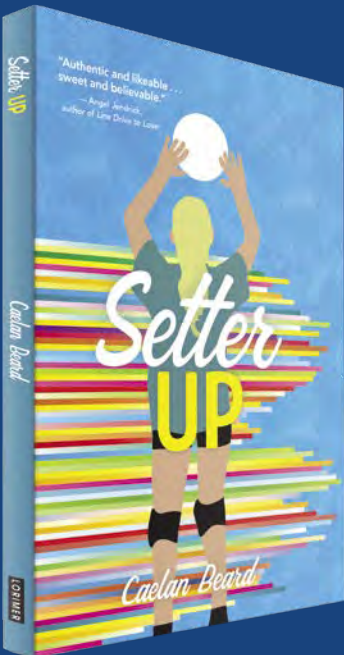
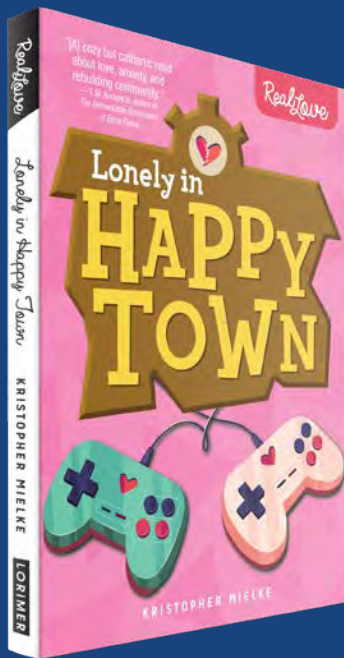
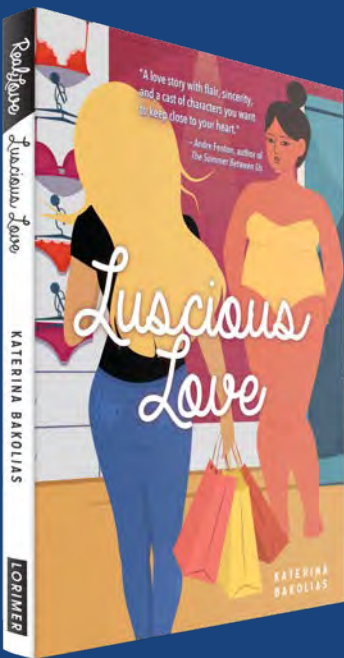
Praise

"Anthony has crafted a fast paced, multifaceted story that brings many heavy issues to the surface including the difficulties with maneuvering adolescence, being Black, school shootings ... Highly Recommended."

— CM: Review of Materials

2026 Relationship Skills in stories

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



LORIMER
CHILDREN & TEENS



Relationship Skills in stories

Contents

Middle Grade

Ace & the Misfits vs The Soccer Knights	4
Ace and the Misfits	5
Love on Planet A	6
Setter Up	7

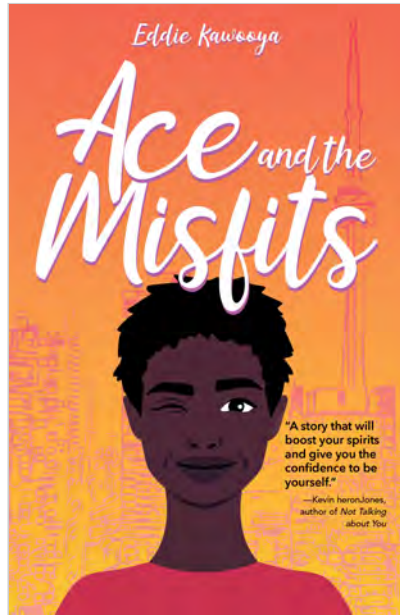
High School

Dancehall Rebel	9
Dogs Don't Break Hearts	10
Line Drive to Love	11
Lonely in Happy Town	12
Losing Hit Points	13
Luscious Love	14
No Limit on Love	15
Not Not Normal	16
One Summer in Vancouver	17
Secret Me	18
Summer with Sunil	19
The Summer Between Us	20

For more titles and information please visit
www.lorimersel.ca

Middle School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459417519

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2024-02-13

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Ace and the Misfits

(by Eddie Kawooya)

A recently arrived Ugandan immigrant feels isolated and struggles with school and self-worth—until finding friendship with fellow outsiders helps him rebuild his confidence and sense of belonging.

More about the book:

In his debut novel, Eddie Kawooya presents a fish-out-of-water story of immigration and the pains and joys of integration into a new and sometimes frightening environment.

Arriving in Canada, Ace finds himself living in a basement apartment, having to integrate into a new community where he is the “African.” Struggling with his grades and his self worth, he finds ignorance and bullying at school until he falls in with a crew of international misfits who understand what he’s going through.

With their support, Ace starts to regain the confidence he lost in the move and his subsequent troubles.



EDDIE KAWOoya was born in Uganda and raised on three different continents before settling in Canada. His love for writing was inspired by his grandmother's oral stories and folklore of Uganda's ancestral past. As an immigrant to Canada, he is passionate about issues related to race, inclusion and diversity. He lives in Toronto.

Praise

“...full of charming personalities... A heartwarming journey.”

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459420373

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-10-06

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Love on Planet A

(by Christina Minaki)

A disabled teen climate activist navigates a protective family and her desire to take action and have more independence, while also experiencing first love.

More about the book:

A compelling coming-of-age novel about disability, activism, and first love.

Lydia has had a passion for climate issues for as long as she can remember. After a fall at school, her well-meaning friends and family are against her getting out on the streets to protest, but Lydia is determined to challenge ableism, promote climate action, and make a statement, no matter the risks.

Love on Planet A explores friendship, first love, and fighting for change. With its authentic representation of disability, a strong-willed protagonist, and a socially conscious narrative, this novel is perfect for teen readers who are passionate about activism and making their voices heard. A must-have for libraries, schools, and bookstores looking to expand their selection of engaging, inclusive fiction.

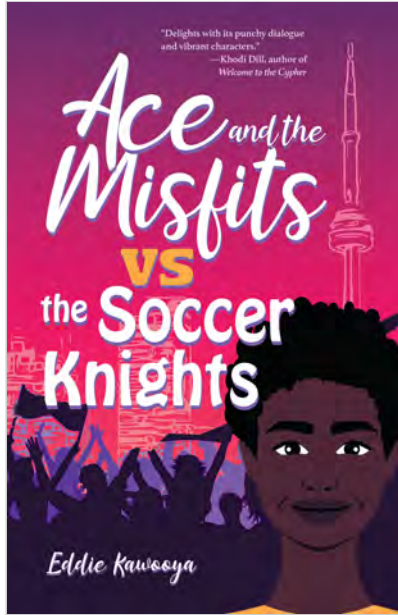


CHRISTINA MINAKI is a librarian, social justice educator, lecturer, editor, and disability rights advocate who considers her disability to be a blessing. She holds two Master's degrees, and has loved trees since childhood. This is her third novel. She lives in Toronto.

Praise

"Christina Minaki writes with heart and insight."

— Allan Stratton, author of *The Way Back Home*



ISBN:9781459420342

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-10-02

Social Emotional Skill:

Relationship Skills

Ace and the Misfits vs. the Soccer Knights

(by Eddie Kawooya)

A recently arrived Ugandan immigrant is desperate to prove himself on the soccer field, at all costs, until his friends and a coach remind him of the value of team play and supporting each other.

More about the book:

When Ace, a recently arrived Ugandan immigrant, joins up with “the Misfits” — other kids at school who share the challenges of life in a new country — to play soccer, the group soon find themselves trying to qualify for a high-stakes tournament. With themes of friendship, self-worth, and finding balance in a new culture, *Ace and the Misfits vs. the Soccer Knights* explores the power and challenges in finding community through sport.

2025 Winner of Sanofka's Pen Peer Choice Favourite - Middle Grade Books

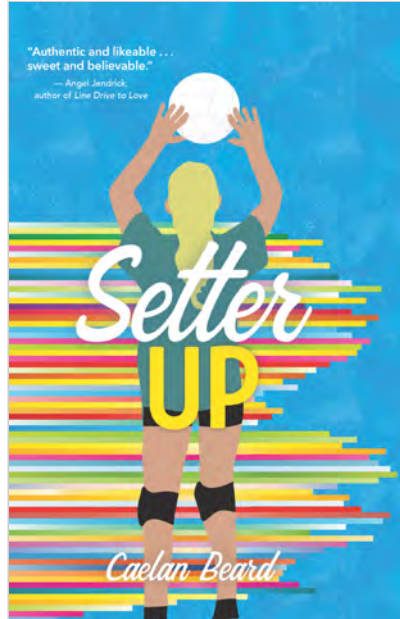


EDDIE KAWOoya was born in Uganda and raised on three different continents before settling in Canada. His love for writing was inspired by his grandmother's oral stories and folklore of Uganda's ancestral past. As an immigrant to Canada, he is passionate about issues related to race, inclusion and diversity. He lives in Toronto.

Praise

"Delights with its punchy dialogue and vibrant characters."

— Khodi Dill, author of *Welcome to the Cypher*



ISBN:9781459419971

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-05- 20

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Setter Up

(by Caelan Beard)

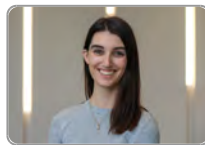
A passionate teen volleyball player confronts anti-gay attitudes at school by creating an inclusive team, learning about activism and community while finding unexpected romance.

More about the book:

A Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Book for Kids & Teens, starred selection

In a volleyball setting, this is a story of an idealistic teen who responds to the anti-gay sentiments of her classmates with a positive initiative to create a welcoming space for diverse kids who love the sport.

When the school pushes back and suggests an awkward name for the team, the group decides to establish the league on their own terms. Through this journey, they discover the realities of activism, the power of community, and the need for inclusivity. As they navigate these challenges, unexpected romance develops, adding another layer to their experience.



Caelan Beard is a freelance journalist whose work has appeared in *The Globe and Mail*, *Cabin Radio*, *The London Free Press*, *This Magazine*, *Horse Sport*, *Verge Travel*, and more. This is her first novel. She lives in southwestern Ontario.

Praise

"Authentic and likeable...sweet and believable."

— Angel Jendrick, author of *Line Drive to Love*

High School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459418141

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2024-02-13

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Dancehall Rebel

(by Stacey Robinson)

A queer Caribbean Canadian teen raised on dancehall music struggles with her family's and culture's homophobia—until a new community helps her find the courage to embrace both her identity and her passion.

More about the book:

Dancehall DJ portrays a Caribbean Canadian teen challenging the ongoing legacy of homophobia in her musical and cultural community.

Denise is a Toronto teen who was raised on Jamaican dancehall music by her dad, a leading local DJ. Denise has aspirations to follow in her dad's footsteps, but there's a problem: Denise identifies as queer, and the music she loves, and her family, are often homophobic. But when she moves to Ottawa for first year university school, she finds a community of like-minded kids who love and cherish both music and diversity.



STACEY MARIE ROBINSON is an editor and music enthusiast with a background in communications. Guided by her Jamaican heritage, her creative content showcases contemporary Black Canadian life and Caribbean culture across the diaspora.

Stacey is the author of *Dancehall Rebel* and *Carnival Curves* and lives in Scarborough, Ontario.

Praise

Robinson's language and descriptions of the dual worlds Denise navigates as a first-generation Canadian are authentic ... An accessible, realistic cross-cultural coming-of-age novel about seeking a balance between tradition and change.

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459420069

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-05-20

Social Emotional Skill:

Relationship Skills

Dogs Don't Break Hearts

(by 'Nathan Burgoine)

A teen recovering from an emotionally manipulative relationship finds healing through volunteering at a pet rescue—where a special dog and a kind new crush help him learn to trust and love again.

More about the book:

A Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Book for Kids & Teens, starred selection

A gentle romance about a teen, gaslit by his former boyfriend, who takes solace in volunteering at pet rescue—where he finds his life brightened both by a special dog and a promising new relationship. With the help of his loyal canine friend, he learns to trust again and open his heart to love.

This gentle romance is a journey of healing, friendship, and the transformative power of connection—both with animals and with someone who sees him for who he truly is.



'NATHAN BURGOINE is the author of the queer young adult novel *Exit Plans for Teenage Freaks* (finalist for the Prix Aurora Award for YA Novel) and queer young adult novella *Hope Echoes*, included in the collection *Three Left Turns to Nowhere*. He, his husband, and their rescued husky live in Ottawa, Ontario.

Praise

"This heartfelt story crackles with authenticity and sparkles with joy."

— Michael Thomas Ford, author of *Suicide Notes* and *Every Star That Falls*



ISBN:9781459419582

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2024-09- 11

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Line Drive to Love

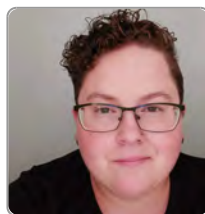
(by Angel Jendrick)

A dedicated LGBTQ+ softball player faces the emotional strain of her father's illness and a new summer romance, learning to balance love, loss, and ambition as she figures out what truly matters most.

More about the book:

Rory is a talented and dedicated softball player. The only distraction in her life is her father's decline due to ALS, but he remains her biggest supporter. But softball plans get a lot more interesting when main-lander Shanti comes to stay with her grandparents for the summer – and the two fall into a fast romance.

Between her pitching aspirations, her father's health, and trying to date Shanti, Rory's focus may be spread too thin. With pressure building on all fronts, will she choose the game or the girl? With support from Shanti and her softball team, Rory learns that sometimes you have to make tough decisions about what you care about most.



ANGEL JENDRICK is the author of gritty contemporary romances. She also dabbles in poetry, from time to time. With her wife, their three children, Ellie their energetic Lab, and a blind cat named Taz, Angel lives on Prince Edward Island.

Praise

"...realistic situations and characters seem universal. Line Drive to Love will appeal to a diverse audience.... Romantics will enjoy the relationship of Rory and Shanti, and sports fans will relate to Rory's ambition as a player as well as to the many team dynamics in the book. Highly Recommended."

— CM: Review of Materials - 5/5 Stars



ISBN:9781459420038

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-05- 20

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Lonely in Happy Town

(by Kristopher Mielke)

A gay teen who escapes into an online game falls for the same girl in both virtual and real life—sparking an LGBTQ+ romance that pushes him to navigate identity, reality, and what it means to truly connect.

More about the book:

A Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Book for Kids & Teens, starred selection

In Kristopher Mielke's romance set in the world of gaming, a lonely teen works nights at a convenience store, only coming alive in the game Happy Town — but he soon finds himself crushing on the same girl in both places.

Juggling the complexities of his feelings, he must confront the blurred lines between fantasy and reality while navigating his own identity. As he embarks on a journey of self-discovery, he faces the challenge of bridging the gap between his two worlds.

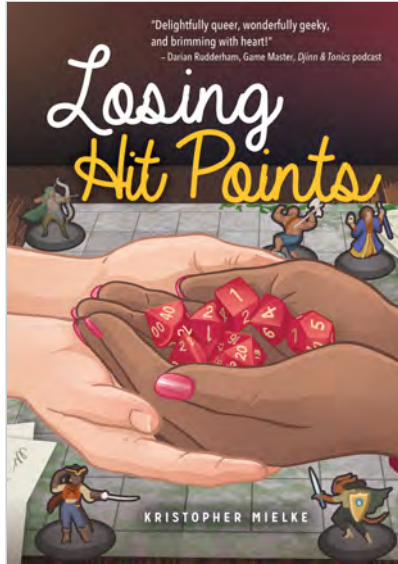


Kristopher Mielke (he/they) is the co-author of Victory Lap with Riley Alexis Wood. They love drinking too much coffee, watching long video essays about philosophy and cartoons, and writing about queer heroes and hungry monsters. They live outside of Erin, Ontario.

Praise

"This accessibly written title will draw in reluctant readers and appeal especially to gamers. Journey and their friends come across as true-to-life nerds... Will engage readers, leaving them alternately cheering and screaming at the cast."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459418080

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2024-02-13

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Losing Hit Points

(by Kristopher Mielke)

A trans teen finds unexpected romance and a shot at redemption during a D&D game, where reconnecting with a former friend means facing past mistakes and fighting for a second chance at love.

More about the book:

Losing Hit Points is a nerdy queer romance book set against the backdrop of a tabletop Dungeons & Dragons game. A romantic and funny story filled with goblins, adventure, and the healing power of admitting our mistakes.

Trans teen Journey has the chance to play an epic game of Dungeons & Dragons. Surprise encounters are common in D&D but what they don't expect is to reconnect with an ex-friend who they still love and have wronged in the past.



Kristopher Mielke (he/they) is the co-author of *Victory Lap* with Riley Alexis Wood. They love drinking too much coffee, watching long video essays about philosophy and cartoons, and writing about queer heroes and hungry monsters. They live outside of Erin, Ontario.

Praise

This accessibly written title will draw in reluctant readers and appeal especially to gamers. Journey and their friends come across as true-to-life nerds... Will engage readers, leaving them alternately cheering and screaming at the cast.

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459418059

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2024-02-13

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Luscious Love

(by Katerina Bakolias)

A teen grapples with body image, low self-worth, and a toxic boss—until she finds the courage to stand up for herself, recognize her worth, and embrace the love she truly deserves.

More about the book:

This romance, set amongst Mina's first summer job, explores new love, body image and the frustrations of working in retail.

Mina is thrilled with her new job at the prestigious Luscious Lingerie Store, known for hiring only the most elegant people. Even better, she meets, Lexi who is beautiful, slender, and smart, everything Mina fails to see in herself, and they start a relationship. But when her manipulative boss asks Mina to submit a picture to a contest, highlighting their commitment to diversity in size, her insecurities creep back in.

Will Mina finally learn to accept the love she deserves, speak up about her feelings, and stand up to her boss?



Katerina Bakolias (she/her) is a queer, Greek-Canadian, playwright, and screenwriter. Recognized for her talents Katerina received the RBC Chrysalis Emerging Artist Award in 2020. She lives in Nova Scotia.

Praise

A lovely story of learning to chart your own course... Mina is a body-positive fat girl who's considering whether she might actually be pansexual. She's a delightful main character, exploring all facets of growing up and becoming one's own person.

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459417175

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2023-04-04

Social Emotional Skill:

Relationship Skills

No Limit on Love

(by Alison Lister)

A nonbinary teen struggling with climate anxiety finds unexpected connection and love with a gender-fluid boy, as they both explore identity beyond labels and grow together.

More about the book:

Dan has an increasingly common problem: climate anxiety. After a storm devastated parts of Ottawa, it's hard to get climate change out of mind. Dan goes to help clean up at the school, but only one other person turns up: Levi, who is handsome, progressive— and shows a strong interest in Dan.

And what's more, Levi is also pondering gender fluidity and the necessity of applying any labels at all.

Dan falls just as hard for Levi, and it's clear they're going to learn and grow together on this journey as Dan embraces their nonbinary true self.



Alison Lister is an enby (non-binary) author who has been writing realistic and romantic adult LGBTQ+ fiction as Elizabeth Lister, and currently as AE Lister, for over ten years. They live in Ottawa, Ontario with their partner and two children.



ISBN:9781459419315

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2024-09- 11

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Not Not Normal

(by Peter E. Fenton)

A queer teen battling anxiety and insecurity gains confidence through a new friend and romance, helping him face bullying and embrace his true self.

More about the book:

Jordan and Nathan couldn't be more different, but when order and chaos collide, opposites attract. Jordan is a bit of an oddball at school. He likes rules, routine, old sci-fi novels, and is often the victim of his bully's torment. When new student Nathan joins the school, he wears down Jordan's walls and, with his love, empowers Jordan to stand up for himself.

Nathan's parents are going through divorce, and at a new school in a new city Jordan provides him with the stability he can't find at home. Through their friendship and eventually their romance, Jordan embraces his newfound self-confidence and proclaims his love for Nathan in front of the school. Each is just what the other needs.



PETER E. FENTON writes LGBTQ2S+ romance and mystery novels that are proudly set in Canada, including *The Woodcarver's Model* and the Declan Hunt Mysteries series. He lives in Toronto, Ontario.

Praise

"...personable characters and their relatable struggles mean that this romance for reluctant readers should find fans both within and outside its intended audience, making it a good choice for any teens who find it challenging to fit in... An engaging opposites-attract queer romance."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459417168

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2023-04-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

One Summer in Vancouver

(by Tony Correia)

A closeted teen from Toronto spends a liberating summer in Vancouver during the 1990 Gay Games, where he confronts his identity and chooses between hiding or living openly.

More about the book:

Tom, a teen struggling to understand his sexual identity, flees Toronto for a summer of freedom in Vancouver, where something exciting is about to happen: the Gay Games.

Living with his “out” Uncle Fred, Tom experiences a new world where being your true self is freeing and fun. He falls in with teen Dwayne, who falls for him, and Gina, a lesbian getting over a relationship with a popular singer. As the Games wrap, Tom has to decide whether to return home back to a closeted life and a father who doesn’t understand, or to make a new life in Vancouver.

The story plays out against the backdrop of the Games, populated with the important organizers and cultural figures who were prominent in this landmark event.



TONY CORREIA's newspaper column, "Queen's Logic", ran in *Xtra! West* for five years. He is the author of the Lorimer Real Love novels *Same Love* and *True to You*. He lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Praise

"Delightful"

— Booklist, starred review



ISBN:9781459417182

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2023-04- 04

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Secret Me

(by Angel Jendrick)

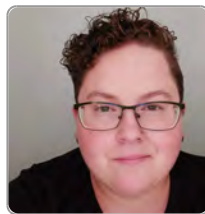
A popular, closeted, teen from Charlottetown struggles with her hidden sexuality and guilt over bullying, but a night with a nonbinary classmate helps her embrace her true self and new love.

More about the book:

Charlottetown teen Tage seems to have it all: she hangs out with the school's most popular clique and has a handsome boyfriend. She's also living a lie about her sexuality.

Wren, a nonbinary schoolmate, has been the victim of bullying by Tage's clique, which leaves Tage racked by guilt because she's always been drawn to Wren. When Tage picks up Wren during a snowstorm and they are forced to spend a night together, their true feelings emerge.

With Wren's support, Tage had to decide whether to come out to celebrate herself and her new relationship.



ANGEL JENDRICK is the author of gritty contemporary romances. She also dabbles in poetry, from time to time. With her wife, their three children, Ellie their energetic Lab, and a blind cat named Taz, Angel lives on Prince Edward Island.



ISBN:9781459419285

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2024-09-11

Social Emotional Skill:
Relationship Skills

Summer with Sunil

(by Alison Lister)

A trans teen stuck on a lonely summer vacation in coastal Nova Scotia finds unexpected connection and self-discovery through a chance romance with another isolated queer youth facing an abusive family situation.

More about the book:

Sometimes love can be found in the most surprising places...

Two kids on holiday, both sure they must be the only queer people for kilometres, find each other and sparks fly.

Dominic, a trans teen, is stuck on vacation in sleepy coastal Nova Scotia with their parents, all summer, with no other company. Sunil is all alone in a rented beach house while their dad is off hanging out with his new girlfriend. A chance encounter with Sunil on the beach catches Dominic by surprise, and all of a sudden, their summer doesn't look so bleak.

What follows is a vivid, romantic story full of self-exploration and the gauzy haze of summer love.

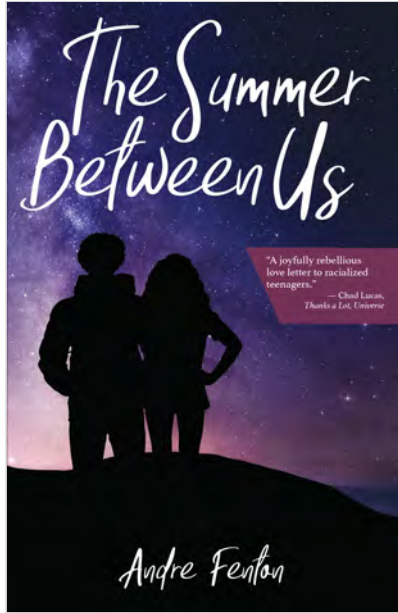


Alison Lister is an enby (non-binary) author who has been writing realistic and romantic adult LGBTQ+ fiction as Elizabeth Lister, and currently as AE Lister, for over ten years. They live in Ottawa, Ontario with their partner and two children.

Praise

"Dominic and Sunil's relationship is gentle and charming, and they are easy to root for."

— Kirkus Reviews



ISBN:9781459506817

Imprint:Formac

Publication Date:2022-04-19

Social Emotional Skill:

Relationship Skills

The Summer Between Us

(by Andre Fenton)

A biracial teen faces pressure to meet others' expectations as he graduates high school, navigates identity and family tensions, and discovers his own path and passion during a pivotal summer.

More about the book:

This coming-of-age story follows 18-year-old Adrian Carter as he graduates from high school and confronts difficult decisions about his future. As Adrian navigates the emotional highs and lows of the summer between graduation and his post-secondary future, he gains awareness of the way his Blackness impacts the way he moves through majority-white spaces and negotiates the difficulties of forging a path in life against others' expectations.

Despite his wish to follow his longtime girlfriend Mel on her cross-country trip and find common ground with his emotionally distant father, Adrian comes to understand that his own passion is grounded in a desire to support a community he's forged on his own.



ANDRE FENTON is an award-winning author, spoken word artist and arts educator. He has represented Halifax at seven national poetry festivals across Canada and has written three novels: *Worthy of Love* (2018), *ANNAKA* (2020) and *The Summer Between Us* (2022). He lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

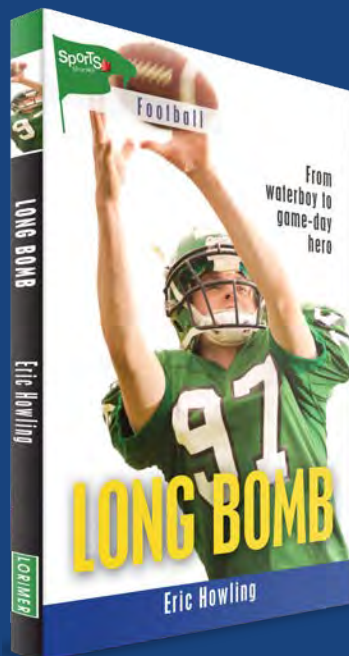
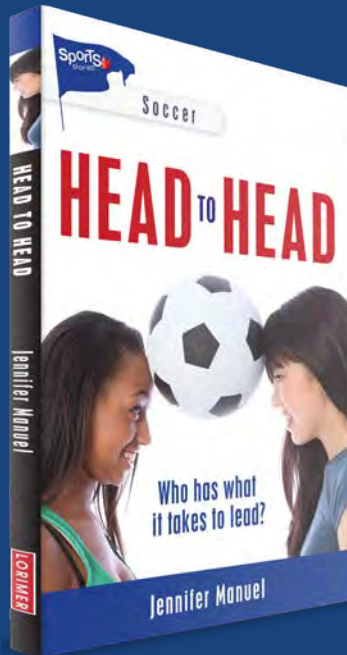
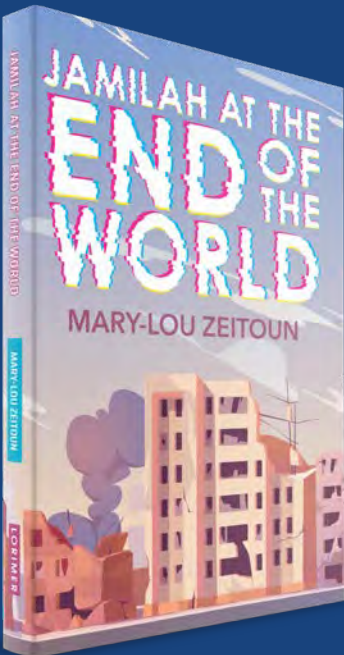
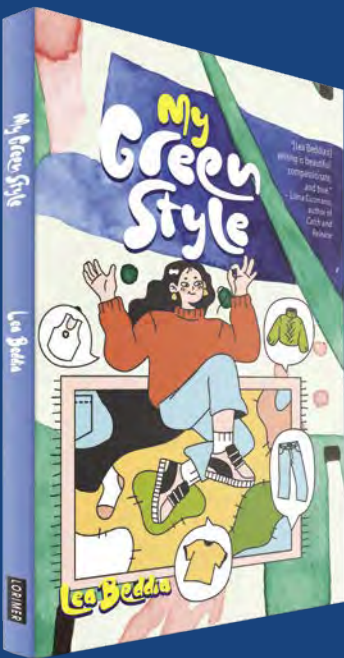
Praise

"An empowering journey of self-actualization and a look at the intimate bonds that shape a person."

— Kirkus Reviews

2026 Social Awareness in stories

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



Social Awareness in stories

Contents

Middle Grade

Head to Head	4
Long Bomb	5
My Green Style	6
School Statue Showdown	7

High School

Jamilah at the End of the World	9
---------------------------------	---

For more titles and information please visit
www.lorimersel.ca



Middle School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459414280

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-09-15

Social Emotional Skill:
Social Awareness

Head to Head

(by Jennifer Manuel)

A teen soccer captain must overcome rivalry with her co-captain, learning empathy and teamwork as they grow into leaders and guide their diverse girls' team in this energetic story about collaboration and growth.

More about the book:

Nominated for the Red Cedar Book Award

With characters who display diversity in ethnicity and leadership style, *Head to Head* is based in Victoria, British Columbia, and focuses on empowering girls to work together and develop leadership qualities. Readers will instantly recognize the struggle of dealing with someone they don't get along with as main character Emika struggles to connect with her co-captain on the soccer team named Maram. Rather than portraying others as inherently difficult and avoidable, *Head to Head* instead illuminates healthy relationships and teamwork, particularly for young girls.

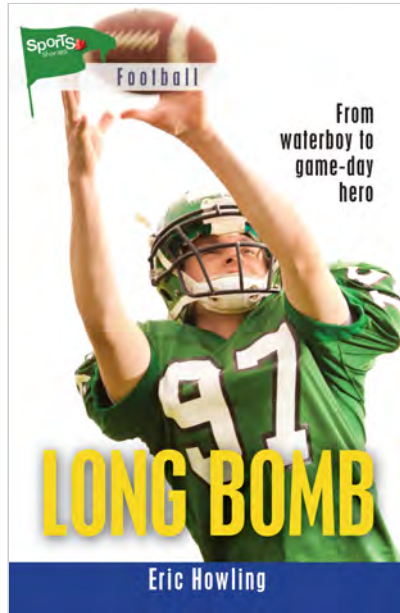


JENNIFER MANUEL was the 2017 winner of the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and was named "A Writer to Watch" by the CBC in 2016. Manuel teaches elementary and high school in the traditional territory of the Nuu-chah-nulth peoples where she coaches the youth basketball team. She lives in Duncan, British Columbia.

Praise

"Features a diverse cast of characters, including one with cerebral palsy, and the book celebrates confident girls in sports."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459414846

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2020-02-04

Social Emotional Skill:
Social Awareness

Long Bomb

(by Eric Howling)

A shy Calgary teen who doubts his abilities steps onto the football field, finding courage as he stands up to bullying, overcomes self-doubt, and learns the value of teamwork and self-belief.

More about the book:

Ed Warnicki used to play football in the park with his dad and dream of being a great receiver. Now fourteen, he secretly hopes to play for the Calgary High Mustangs team, but instead settles for the job of waterboy.

The team's quarterback is constantly bullying Ed and one day at practice throws a ball right at Ed's head. Ed's instincts kick in and he makes a decent catch! So, when the team's top receiver gets injured, Ed joins the team as back-up receiver. Annoyed, Tyrone won't pass to Ed, and even calls a play he knows could get Ed hurt. But the big game against their rival team puts school pride and Ed's confidence on the line. Will Tyrone throw to Ed? Can Ed catch the crucial pass?



ERIC HOWLING is the author of ten books including *Head Hunter*, *Red Zone Rivals*, *Hoop Magic*, and *Run and Gun* in the Lorimer Sports Stories series. His books have been shortlisted for the Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award, named *Resource Link's* Year's Best and picked as CCBC Best Books selections. Eric lives and plays sports in Calgary, Alberta

Praise

"... the in-depth game play will attract sports fans."

— School Library Journal



ISBN:9781459420236

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2025-05-20

Social Emotional Skill:
Social Awareness

My Green Style

(by Lea Beddia)

A passionate Montreal teen channels her love of fashion into environmental activism, challenging fast fashion ideals and navigating friendship tensions as she promotes sustainability through upcycled style.

More about the book:

Montreal teen Pearl is passionate and dedicated both about fashion and the environment. She decides to make a point at her school's fashion event by up-cycling donated, used clothes in exciting styles. But not everyone, not even some of her friends, is on board with ditching fast fashion for thrift-store creativity.

While Pearl wants to showcase up-cycled and secondhand clothing, her best friend is drawn to the appeal of fast fashion. As they navigate these contrasting ideals, a strong desire to raise awareness about the fashion industry's environmental impact sparks a call to activism.

Balancing the excitement of activism with its challenges, the teens realize that change is harder than it seems. But the friends come together to embark on a journey that celebrates the potential of sustainable fashion.



LEA BEDDIA is an author, storyteller and educator. Born and raised in Montreal, she now teaches school in Joliette, Quebec where she lives with her husband and three children.

Praise

"...well-written and very realistic ... I can't say enough great things about this book. Highly recommended."

—CM: Canadian Review of Materials, on [Outta Here](#)



ISBN:9781459417540

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2023-09- 26

Social Emotional Skill:
Social Awareness

School Statue Showdown

(by David Starr)

In a small BC town, a teen's search for the truth behind his grandfather's defaced statue leads to an emotional reckoning with Indigenous history, colonialism, and family legacy.

More about the book:

This mystery/adventure set in a small BC lumber town is a fictional account of an event that is similar to many across the country – a sudden conflict over a school name and the historic figure it recognizes.

In this book, the son of the owners of the town's lumber mill goes to a school named after his grandfather. When his grandfather's statue is splashed with paint as a protest, his best friend from the nearby reserve supports the protest. To defend his grandfather's reputation, he digs into town history to learn more about his family. What he learns about the experience of the nearby First Nation community leads to a whole new understanding of his family's legacy – and the town's troubling past.



DAVID STARR is an author and high school principal. David has authored multiple books, including Lorimer's Soccer United: Team Refugee titles *Golden Goal* and *Golden Game*. David lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

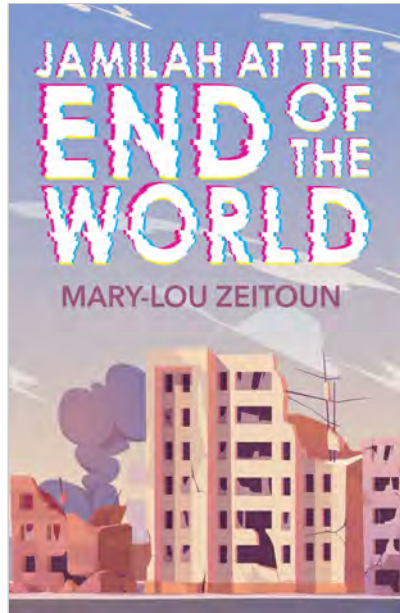
Praise

"A thought-provoking title that explores integrity in the era of truth and reconciliation."

— Kirkus Reviews

High School

Books to support Social
and Emotional Learning



ISBN:9781459416482

Imprint:Lorimer

Publication Date:2021-08-24

Social Emotional Skill:
Social Awareness

Jamilah at the End of the World

(by Mary-Lou Zeitoun)

A passionate Toronto teen overwhelmed by climate anxiety clashes with her family, but through protest and activism she finds solidarity—and begins to reconcile her convictions with her family’s expectations.

More about the book:

Set against the backdrop of a brutal summer heatwave, seventeen-year-old Jamilah Monsour makes plans for what she’s certain is the beginning of the climate change catastrophe that will end the world. Luckily, Jamilah knows what has to be done to save her family: transform the back alley garage into a bunker.

When an electricity blackout strikes, Jamilah’s climate change anxiety kicks into high gear and she ends up staying out all night, infuriating her father. Tension at home erupts and Jamilah runs away and joins a climate change protest where she gains some hope for the future. When she returns home, her parents see just how deep Jamilah’s convictions run and the family discusses her attending university to study environmental science, a plan they can all agree on.



MARY-LOU ZEITOUN is a Palestinian-Canadian author, essayist, arts journalist and activist. Her novel *13* was the YA winner of the 2008 New England Book Festival award. She divides her time between Toronto and Ottawa, Ontario.

Praise

"An appealing title for environmentally minded reluctant readers."

— Kirkus Reviews

2026 Social Emotional Learning Catalogue

Sales and Ordering Information

ORDER DESK

1-800-565-1975

orderdesk@formac.ca

CUSTOMER SERVICE

1-800-565-1975 ext. 21

customerservice@formac.ca

JAMES LORIMER & COMPANY LTD., PUBLISHERS

117 Peter St., Suite 304

Toronto, ON, M5V 0M3

Canada

