

Why representation matters: the importance of family diversity in Australian children's picture books.

A Bibliography

September 2019



FAMILY DIVERSITY in AUSTRALIAN PICTURE BOOKS A BIBLIOGRAPHY

Australia today is one of the most culturally and socially diverse countries in the world. There are over 200 different languages spoken in Australia and that's without including the hundreds of Aboriginal languages present on our continent for many tens of thousands of years.

Whilst the nuclear family still exists today, so do many other types of families, single parents, foster parents, extended family carers, families with disabled members, same sex parents to name a few. Yet this diversity has generally not been reflected in Australian children's literature particularly picture books. This experience is not just confined to Australia, both the UK and the USA are slowly acknowledging a similar issue in their children's literature.

In the UK, a 2017 report from the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education¹ reported, that of the 9,115 children's books published in the UK that year only 391 or 4% contained Black or minority ethnic (BAME) characters and only 1% have BAME main characters. One interesting outcome of this was the opening of a pop-up bookshop #ReadTheOnePercent² selling books aimed at the BAME in the community. The shop sold out in two days!

So regardless of societal and demographic needs, it just makes sense from an economic and commercial perspective to provide wanted goods to those clearly craving them. It is hoped that all those involved in the Australian children's literature industry will recognise this and move to fill it soon with quality Australian children's books.

This need has been recognised by one business in Sydney. Lost in Books³, an initiative of the Think+Do Foundation, is a multilingual, multicultural children's bookshop in the south-western Sydney suburb of Fairfield with programs and services that reach out to the local multicultural community. They state on their website that "Lost in Books is proving a scalable model to guide Australia's best practice in harnessing cultural and linguistic diversity as a national asset; and creating economically, socially, culturally productive communities that are inclusive of all community members."

The benefits of diversity and inclusion are increasingly being recognised by economists. Professor Ian Harper, Dean of the Melbourne Business School believes that diversity stimulates and challenges one another to greater heights of imagination and creativity. "But for diversity to work its magic there must also be inclusion. No matter how diverse we are, without inclusion we remain separated by physical, social, cultural and emotional barriers and the creative spark is quenched by sameness and group think"⁴

¹ https://clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/research/reflecting-realities-survey-ethnic-representation-within-uk-children

² https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/dec/14/readtheonepercent-brixton-bookshop-knights-of

³ https://www.lostinbooks.com.au/

⁴ https://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/one-of-the-most-exciting-discoveries-in-economics-pays-a-happiness-dividend-20190827-p52l6d.html

What does this have to do with picture books? A lot, for that is where inclusion starts, where a recognition and acceptance of the diverse demography of Australian society begins. By reflecting the diverse nature of Australian society in our literature especially picture books we are demonstrating that everyone is an equally important member of our society.

The following bibliography has been developed over several months to both complement, and extend the lecture on "Why representation matters: the importance of family diversity in Australian children's picture books." Title selection was restricted to picture books and the subject areas searched for were family diversity, extended families, single parents, same-sex parents, grandparents, adoption, fostering, gender issues and disability.

Books covering these areas varied greatly in style and quality. It was difficult to find books in some subject areas, particularly disability that were actually stories rather than "issue" books. Although "issue" books may be written with the best of intentions the question needs to be asked whether they don't further isolate individuals or even families by defining them by an issue such as a disability rather than weaving the issue into an imaginative story. Animals or anthropomorphic forms are also used creatively in a number of titles providing a very effective way to show diversity in its many forms and the challenges that can arise.

The bibliography was compiled from a number of sources including the National Centre for Australian Children's Literature (NCACL), the National Library of Australia, the AustLit database, ACT public libraries, recommendations from people, the shelves of local Canberra bookshops, lots of Google searching and following links in reviews and on-line book shop sites. I am even grateful to the useful, but incredibly annoying pop-ups that appeared randomly on my computer, their powerful algorithms led to a few gems.

Each title has a short annotation and has been given broad subject headings to reflect the subject matter. All titles have been sighted, and the majority of the titles are held by NCACL. A small number were only available at the National Library of Australia (NLA). The holding location is indicated on each entry.

Subject headings for the books are

Adoption, Aging, Alzheimer's, Asperger's Syndrome, Autism, Cultural Diversity, Disability, Diversity, Extended Families, Family Diversity, Family Dynamics, Fostering, Friendship, Gender, Grandparents, Grief, Historical Perspectives, Loss, Mental Illness, Memories, Physical Differences, Racism, Same-Sex Parents, Separation, Single Parents, Stepfamilies

The compilation of this bibliography has been a valuable educational exercise, eye-opening in its impact. Very few Australian picture books published today present a genuine representation of Australia's current diverse society and if we wish to continue to be seen as a truly multicultural society then this needs to be reflected in the material we create for our future generations.

Ruth Nitschke

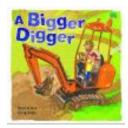
September 2019

Ruth Nitschke has been passionate about children's literature for well over 40 years and has studied children's literature both at university, and as part of her long ago library studies. She has worked in a variety of libraries, including schools and public libraries and before retiring in 2016, worked for the State Library of Western Australia selecting materials for the state wide public library service. She has been a member of the Children's Book Council of Australia for some 20 years and since moving to Canberra has been a volunteer at the National Centre for Australian Children's Literature. She's also sure she keeps a number of Canberra bookshops in business.

FAMILY DIVERSITY in AUSTRALIA Bibliography (Alphabetical by Author)

AVISON, Brett. Illustrated by Craig Smith

NCACL



A Bigger Digger. Five Mile Press, 2011

Right there in the backyard Oscar and Bryn struck something hard. When, with the help of many friends and family, they dig deeper and what they find surprises everyone.

Stepfamilies

AVISON, Brett. Illustrated by Craig Smith

NCACL



Stuck in the Muck. Five Mile Press, 2011

On Mum and Ted's farm there's a very large barn, where Milky the cow was a pet. But no-one could guess how she got herself stuck in the mud on a rain-sodden night.

Stepfamilies

BAKER, Jeanie NCACL



Mirror. Walker Books, 2010

Two diverse cultures, countries and families are linked with warmth and charm in this two-in-one picture book. Page by page we experience a day in the lives of two boys and their families, one from inner- city Sydney and the other from a small, remote village in Morocco, North Africa.

Cultural diversity, Family diversity

BAUER, Catherine. Illustrated by Kathleen O'Hagan

NLA



Colourful Memories. Wombat Books, 2018

Opa adds lively colour to his black-and-white photographs when Charlie comes to visit. From yellow ribbons, to green pine trees and blue over-sized jumpers. Charlie and Opa share colourful memories. This is a tender story between a grandchild and grandparent as they explore memories and family stories together.

Aging, Grandparents, Memories

BEER, Sophie NCACL



Love makes a Family. Hardie Grant Egmont, 2018

Whether you have one parent, two moms, two dads, a mom and a dad, or another wonderful caregiver, there's one thing that makes a family a family ... and that's love.

Family diversity, Extended families, Fostering



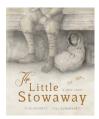
Under the Love Umbrella. Scribble, 2017

No matter what you do or where you are from, no matter what happens in life, you are always safe under the love umbrella. A lyrical meditation on the power of love within families to help everyone feel safe and supported.

Family diversity

BENNETT, Vicki. Illustrated by Tull Suwannakit

NCACL

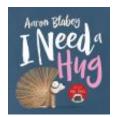


The Little Stowaway: a true story. Scholastic Press, 2018

1918. The First World War is over. A brave and determined little French orphan, Honore, is wandering through the snow, cold and hungry and lost. When he stumbles on the Australian Flying Corps and meets airman, Tim Tovell, his life is changed forever. The story of a remarkable little stowaway and his journey to a new home in Australia.

Adoption, Friendship, Historical perspectives

BLABEY, Aaron NCACL



I Need a Hug. Scholastic Australia, 2015

Hedgehog really wants a hug but the response from the other animals is no way not with those spikes. All the animals run away from the little hedgehog, refusing to give her a hug that is, until along comes a snake who wants a kiss. The story embraces difference and highlights every person's need for affection.

Diversity, Physical differences

BROOKE, Cori. Illustrated by Fiona Burrows

NCACL



Twelve Days of Kindness. New Frontier Publishing, 2019

Nabila is new to school, every day she eats her lunch alone. She was always by herself and she looked different and the other girls teased her even when she showed her soccer skills. Holly didn't like that, she thought the new girl looked lonely. So together they come up with a plan to win at soccer and at friendship.

Cultural diversity, Friendship

CARNAVAS, Peter NCACL



The Important Things. New Frontier Publishing, 2010

Christopher comes to terms with an absent father by discovering the important things in his life. His mother however has a different way to cope with the loss. An insightful and perceptive story about grief and loss and remembering a father.

Grief, Loss, Memories, Single parents



Just the Two of Us. Little Steps Publishing, 2019

All families are different -- and this one is just the two of us -- a heart-warming story of family love and a special bond between mother and son.

Family diversity, Single parents

CHEN, Justina. Illustrated by Mitch Vane

NCACL



The Patch. Black Dog Books, 2007

Becca has to wear glasses and an eye patch and she hates it. At school, all of Becca's friends want to know what's up with her patch. Instead of telling the truth, Becca leads her classmates on imaginative adventures to explain her fabulous fashion choice. But when the questions persist, it's time for Becca to come clean about her problem

Disability, Physical differences

CHENG, Chris. Illustrated by Bruce Whatley

NCACL



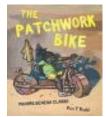
One Tree. Penguin Random House Australia, 2019

One tall tree on the mountain once marked Grandfather's farm. Now there is a busy city and Grandfather lives with us in our apartment. Once he told stories but now he stays silent. One day in the city market I find something precious, something that brings Grandfather's memories alive again and something that we learn to share with others

Aging, Grandparents, Grief, Memories

CLARKE, Maxine Beneba. Illustrated by Van T Rudd

NCACL



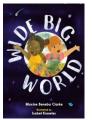
The Patchwork Bike. Lothian, 2016

In the village at the edge of the No-Go Desert you need to make your own fun. That's when you and your brothers get inventive and build a bike from scratch, using everyday items like an old milk pot (maybe mum is still using it, maybe not) and a used flour sack. The end result is a spectacular bike, perfect for going bumpity-bump over sand hills, past your fed-up mum and right through your mudfor-walls home. A book that overflows with joy and exuberance for life and freedom from the struggles the adults may have.

Cultural diversity, Family diversity

CLARKE, Maxine Beneba. Illustrated by Isobel Knowles

NCACL



Wide Big World. Lothian 2018

In our whole big wide world difference is everywhere and you don't have to look very hard to see it. *Wide Big World* is a cheerful and direct celebration of difference that uses the natural wonders of the world to highlight the diversity of experiences around us. A great starting point to talk about fostering positive relationships with others and taking the initiative to practice inclusivity, both at home and at school.

Cultural diversity, Equality, Family diversity



Is It the Way You Giggle? New Frontier Publishing, 2018

Everyone is special in their own way. What makes you special? Is it the way you giggle or the way you wiggle? A heart-warming picture book that celebrates our differences.

Diversity

CRABB, Jocelyn. Illustrated by Danny Snell

NCACL



Ozzie goes to school. Working Title Press, 2019

Ozzie lives with his dad in a shipping container by the sea in the top end of Australia. Ozzie isn't afraid of much. Not the cool dark of the container when the door is closed at night. Not snakes. Not even the crocodiles that he and his dad watch out for on the beach during the day. But there is something that Ozzie is a afraid of and that's starting school!

Single parents

CREW, Gary. Illustrated by Bruce Whatley

NCACL



Quetta. Lothian, 2002.

A magistrate decides who should adopt a three-year old girl orphaned in the wreck of RMS Quetta; should it be Mutassa Clark, the 19 year old ship steward who rescued her, or 63 year old Captain Edmund Brown? A fictionalised account of a survivor of the sinking of RMS Quetta off the Far North Queensland coast on 28th February 1890.

Adoption, Historical perspectives, Racism

CRUMBLE, P. Illustrated by Jonathan Bentley

NCACL



We are All Equal. Omnibus, 2018

No matter who you are, where you come from, where you live, what you look like this book celebrates the richness of our world to be found in our differences and the joy in knowing we are all equal. This book uses familiar animals and simple rhyming text to provide an easily accessible introduction to the concept of equality in all its forms.

Cultural diversity, Equality, Family diversity, Gender

CUMMINGS, Phil. Illustrated by Shane Devries

NCACL



Boy. Scholastic Australia, 2017

The King's battles with the dragon were always mighty and loud. Boy lived in silence and couldn't hear the fighting. But he could *see* the fear around him and how everyone would be much happier without it. A tale of how one small boy's hearing loss solved a war and made the kingdom a better place for all involved.

Disability

DELL, Gaye NCACL



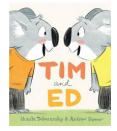
Bidge's Mob. Interrelate Family Centres, 2009

Bidge used to think his family was broken but he learned that now it just lives in different places! Coping with family separation is hard on most family members however it is often children who find it the most confusing and difficult. This tale shows that though the family is spread far and wide their love is still very strong.

Extended families, Separation

DUBOSARSKY, Ursula. Illustrated by Andrew Joyner

NCACL



Tim and Ed. Penguin/Viking, 2014

Here is Tim. Here is Ed, same ears, same eyes, same feet, same head. A story about two cheeky bouncy koalas who think they are exactly the same. When their exhausted Dad organises time apart they are shocked. Luckily Tim and Ed discover that they enjoy their separate time with Dad and Auntie Pim, and that they can be brothers from the same egg, and still enjoy their independence and individuality.

Single parents, Extended families

DUNSTAN, Kylie NCACL



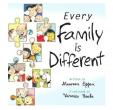
Same but a little bit diff'rent. Windy Hollow Books, 2012

Right up the very top of Australia there is a special place and my friend Normie comes from there. He says that things are really different to what you might see in the city. A lovely way to contrast the way families are different but yet the same.

Family diversity, Friendship

EPPEN, Maureen. Illustrated by Veronica Rooke

NCACL



Every Family is Different. Serenity Press, 2018

Who's in your family? Some children live with their mum and dad, others live with their grandparents or foster parents. Some live in a big house, others live in a tiny apartment. With captivating illustrations, *Every Family is Different* celebrates what it means to be part of a family and reminds us that there's something that's always the same in every family.

Extended families, Family diversity

FLOWERS, Tony NCACL



Hello! NLA Publishing, 2016

Across Australian homes many different languages are spoken reflecting the diversity that exists in our families and the community at large however there are 12 languages that are spoken more than any other. The book uses counting, greetings, play, food, hobbies, clothes and cultural practices to introduce these 12 languages as well as three of the languages spoken by Australia's Aboriginals. Illustrated in a cartoon style the book uses a child character to introduce each language and culture. The pictures add humour and fun to language learning.

Cultural diversity



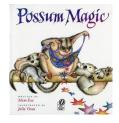
I'm Australian Too. Scholastic, 2017

From countries near and far, many have made their home in Australia, sharing it with the original inhabitants and living in peace beneath the Southern Cross. Australia is a successful multicultural country and more than 28% of the population were born overseas. This book recognises and promotes the diversity that exists in Australia today.

Cultural diversity, Family diversity

FOX, Mem. Illustrated by Julie Vivas

NCACL



Possum Magic. Omnibus Books, 1987

Grandma Poss uses her best bush magic to make Hush invisible. But when Hush longs to be able to see herself again, the two possums must make their way across Australia to find the magic food that will make Hush visible once more. An iconic Australian book that shows not only aspects of Australia but also the beautiful loving relationship between Grandma Poss and her granddaughter, Hush.

Grandparents

FRENCH, Simon. Illustrated by Donna Rawlins

NCACL



Guess the Baby. ABC Books, 2002

When Sam brings his baby brother to school for Show and Tell, it provides Mr. Judd with an opportunity to teach the class some things about babies, including that even grown-ups were babies once.

Family diversity

GALLAGHER, Heather. Illustrated by Liz McGrath

NCACL



Happy Pants - Why is Mummy so sad? Wombat Books, 2014

When Mummy wears her happy pants we build sandcastles, go out for baby cinos and have lots and lot of cuddles. But when she comes home with baby Darcy, her happy pants stay in her wardrobe. *Happy Pants* is a way to help older children know that their mum's postnatal depression is not because of them, that dads are loving and caring, families can support each other and that mum will get better with help.

Mental Illness

GERMEIN, Katrina. Illustrated by Danny Snell

NCACL



Let's Go Strolling. Raising Literacy Australia, 2018

This simple, charming tale captures the simple joys of a family walk. Filled with the things that delight small children, young readers will love finding familiar objects on every page. A rhyming book that promotes language development and outdoor fun and also shows both family and community diversity.

Family diversity



Mum goes to work. Walker Books, 2015

It's early morning and everyone is arriving at the noisy childcare centre. Mum is going to work. "Bye, Mum." What do mums do at work? Are the children as busy as their mums? A book showing the diversity in families and what they do.

Family diversity

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL



A bus called heaven. Walker Books, 2011

Could one old, broken-down bus really bring a whole city neighbourhood together? They say it takes it a village to raise a child but perhaps sometimes it takes it takes just one child, "so pale you could almost see through her" and old broken-down bus to bring a whole neighbourhood together creating a wonderful extended and diverse family.

Cultural diversity, Extended families, Family diversity

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL

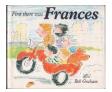


Crusher is coming. Lothian, 1987

When Peter invites his friend Crusher to tea, he is out to impress. He certainly does not want to be embarrassed by a soppy mum and silly baby sister. But how surprisingly different the visit becomes. An excellent look at gender stereotypes.

Gender

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL



First there came Frances. Lothian, 1985

Frances lives alone in plenty of space at the edge of the city, but is joined, one at a time, by so many other people and animals that they all move to the country.

Extended families

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL



Home in the Rain. Walker Books, 2016

Francie's going to have a new baby sister very soon. But what will her name be? Francie has so many ideas. On a long drive home with Mum, in the pouring rain, maybe they'll find one that's just right. When, stopped for fuel Mum is struck by inspiration, hugs Francie and tells her the baby's name will be Grace. It's a name befitting the quiet solemnity of a story that highlights the everyday wonders of human experience.

Extended families, Family diversity

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL

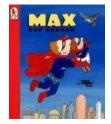


How the Sun Got to Coco's House. Walker Books, 2008

The sun rises up behind a snowy peak and casts its mellow dawn light for the wandering polar bears. It skims across the icy water, touching a fisherman's hat and catching for a moment in the eye of a whale. The sun races through the countryside, greeting snow cats and bears. High over a desert it meets the rain in a halo of colours...The sun leaps whole countries, chasing the night, before bursting at last in a fanfare of warm golden light through Coco's window. A cleverly designed book that reflects, through a simple daily event that, regardless of where we live we are all still part of the same world.

Cultural diversity

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL

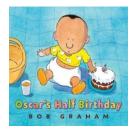


Max. Walker Books 2000.

It's not easy being the son and grandson of flying superheroes - you're supposed to hover... and hurtle... and swoop like a bird. Max, it seems, is just an ordinary boy from an extraordinary family. Will he ever be ready to fly?

Extended Families, Diversity

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL

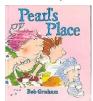


Oscar's Half Birthday. Walker Books, 2015

Oscar is six months old today, but no one can wait for his whole birthday. So there's nothing else for it but to pack some sandwiches and head off to the "half country" of their urban park for a half-birthday party. As always in the warm, quirky world of Bob Graham, the joy is in the details — a stop in a graffitied tunnel as the train rushes overhead; the expressions on Oscar's face as he watches a single leaf fall; the little half candle on his cake. The gently humorous text and colourful watercolours celebrates not only a half-birthday, but also an endearing, unconventional diverse family.

Family diversity

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL



Pearl's Place. Lothian, 1983

Arthur and his mother lived in a tall block of flats where strict rules and unsympathetic neighbours keep Arthur from having much fun or having a pet. When shopping one Saturday they met the larger-than-life Pearl and her daughter, Jessica and are invited back to Pearl's old and rambling house full of birds and animals. The visit surprises and delights Arthur and presents an interesting twist.

Family diversity, Single parents

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL



Silver Buttons. Walker Books, 2013

At 9.59 on Thursday morning, Jodie draws a duck. Just as she is about to add one final silver button to the duck's boots, her little brother takes his first step. At this exact same moment, a man buys bread, a soldier leaves home, a baby is being born...people the world over are engaged in diverse activities simultaneously. Sensitively and poetically and through both the smallest details and the sweeping vistas we are shown that we are both alone and yet as one in our humanity.

Cultural diversity, Family diversity

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL

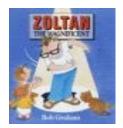


Vanilla Ice Cream. Walker Books, 2014

A young sparrow rises from the dust outside an Indian food stall. He flies off just where he pleases following the food. He journeys south through the lush rice paddies and across the rough sea and all the way into a bright new day where, just for a moment, the sparrow's world collides with little Edie's. So it is that little Edie discovers the taste of vanilla ice cream in the most curious way! The story of a traveller free to go where he pleases and of how life and the world can intersect in some diverse and curious ways.

Cultural diversity

GRAHAM, Bob NCACL



Zoltan the Magnificent. Lothian, 1994

Most of the time all young Jack sees of his Dad is a teabag left on the kitchen sink in the morning. However when a holiday reveals his father in an unexpected light Jack thinks he might be as much fun as Mum after all. Jack's dad had always seemed absent and unfunny but a family holiday presents Jack with a completely different picture of him and a positive outcome for the family.

Family dynamics

GRAY, Nigel. Illustrated by Anna Pignataro

NCACL



Delightful Delilah. Lothian, 2002

How important is a name? Ewan decides to change his, and his family plays along. Each day of the week he has a new name, until one day he chooses one that causes a problem.

Family dynamics, Gender



The Dress-Up Box. Hardie Grant Egmont, 2018

The Frolleys love their rented home at 32 Sunshine Avenue. There was a bird bath, a frog pond, horses on one side and their best friends, the Choong family on the other. They played many marvellous games but the best one was when Mr Frolley came home from work and they dragged out the dress-up box. But sadly their house was sold and the Frolleys' had to move to a new house, one with dripping taps, stinky carpets and ants and a long way from their friends the Choongs. But they have brought something with them, something that can turn any house into a home.

Family diversity, Friendship

HATHORN, Libby. Illustrated by Anna Pignataro

NCACL



The Big Animal Ask. Lothian, 2005

So many animals have great big questions to ask. But who can give them a great big answer? Based on the tale of Noah's Ark it features themes of tolerance and acceptance.

Diversity

HATHORN, Libby. Illustrated by Phil Lesnie

NCACL



The Soldier, a Dog and a Boy. Lothian Children's Books, 2016

A young Australian soldier in the battle of the Somme. Walking through the fields away from the front, he finds what he thinks is a stray dog, and decides to adopt it as a mascot for his company. Then he meets Jacques, the homeless orphan boy who owns the dog. The soldier realises that Jacques needs the dog more - and perhaps needs his help as well. A deeply moving celebration of friendship in times of war.

Adoption, Friendship

HATHORN, Libby. Illustrated by Melissa Webb

NCACL



Stuntumble Monday. Collins Dove, 1989

Metra can't wait for her birthday so she weaves excitedly through a whole seven days of adventures on the lookout for her birthday. But something makes her come back home and just as well - for she has the best birthday ever! Birthdays are a universal reason for celebration and the story's exotic and colourful illustrations are clear evidence of this.

Extended families, Family diversity

HERRICK, Steven. Illustrated by Annmarie Scott

NCACL



The Place Where the Planes Take Off. University of Queensland Press, 1995 When it's their weekend to spend together, Dad always asks Joe where he would like to go. Joe's favourite place is where the planes take off. As they watch the planes take off they imagine where they are flying - faraway destinations such as Brisbane, Darwin, Singapore, and Canada.

Single parents

HILTON, Nette. Illustrated by Vincent Agostino



My Silent World. Lothian, 2009

A sensitive yet strongly effective insight into the world of the deaf. Its lyrical descriptions of how a deaf child treasures her silent world are accompanied by illustrations that make use of bright colours, bold shapes and strong outlines mixed with a veritable whirlwind of sights that help us to visualise the busyness of the world despite its lack of sound. This world is changed by a cochlear implant, "an intruder". Acceptance comes eventually however of a world of sound but still it is never as "loud as my silent world"

Disability, Physical differences

HIRST, Jo. Illustrated by Libby Wirt

NCACL



The Gender Fairy. Oban Road Publishing, 2015

The Gender Fairy is a simple story about two children who find relief in finally being heard. It is a tale of two children who are taking their first joyful steps toward living as their true selves. It is an educational resource for all children and adults to understand what it might feel like to be a transgender child.

Family diversity, Gender

HOBSON, Kathleen and FINN, Ann-Marie

NLA



Gus the Asparagus. Yellow Brick Books, 2017

Meet Gus! Gus might be the only asparagus in his family, but he is happy. However, when he goes to school he starts to realise that he doesn't always fit in. Gus is here to help kids understand that it's okay to be different. He will soon become a favourite with anyone who has ever felt a little bit out of place.

Asperger's Syndrome, Disability

HOPE, Charles. Illustrated by Jess Racklyeft

NCACL



The Year of the Pig. Wild Dog, 2019

Pig had never been a winner. He was last to finish tests. He was last picked for games. He was even the last to have his birthday. It seemed his destiny was to always finish last. When the school race came around, nobody gave Pig any chance of winning. But Pig remained optimistic. Perhaps this would be his year. A heart-warming story about never giving up hope, looking out for others and remaining true to oneself, featuring a loveable central character that is sure to strike a chord with both children and parents alike.

Diversity

HOPKINS, Roz and WINTER, Natalie. Illustrated by Cara King

NCACL



Mummy and Muma get Married. Captain Honey Pty Ltd, 2015

Phoebe wants to know why her Mummy and Mumma aren't married. She's mighty confused when Mumma tells her that the Prime Minister won't let them - but she's not going to let that stop her. Phoebe gets busy organising a surprise wedding and everyone is invited, even the PM! But will he make it to the party on time?

Family diversity, Same-sex parents



Bipolar Bears. Sue Hueston, 2011

The Polar Bear family were living happily until one day Daddy Bear started behaving very strangely. The two bear cubs Arty and Sporty were very confused and Mummy Bear very worried. After a visit to the hospital where he was given some medicine to help him, Daddy Bear was much better.

Family dynamics, Mental illness

HUTCHINS, Elizabeth. Illustrated by Margaret Power

NCACL



Brat Cat Omnibus Books, 1994

A stray cat adopts a family and causes chaos in the house such that Mum feels they should get rid of the cat. However adoptee Jae-Li begins to fear that she, like the Brat cat, will also be sent away. An interesting story that provides insight into the thoughts and fears of adoptees.

Adoption, Family diversity

KANE, Kim. Illustrated by Lucia Masciullo

NCACL



Family Forest. Hardie Grant Egmont, 2010

While some kids have a family tree, we have a family forest! Do you have half-sisters, big brothers, step-parents? The modern family comes in all shapes and sizes. This gentle and witty picture book looks at one such family.

Extended families, Family diversity

KELLY, Deborah. Illustrated by Gwynneth Jones

NCACL



The Chalk Rainbow. Exisle Publishing, 2017

Zane is different from other kids. He lines things up and he's frightened of things that don't seem to bother other people - like the colour black. Things are looking pretty bleak for him and his family, until his sister starts to draw a chalk rainbow on the front steps. A heart-warming story of love, trust and learning to look at the world through the eyes of others.

Autism, Disability, Diversity

KELLY, Deborah. Illustrated by Karen Blair

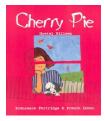
NCACL



me and you. Penguin Viking, 2017

A rhyming picture book that celebrates all the special relationships and fun-filled activities in a child's life, their special bonds with parents, grandparents, cousins, neighbours and pets, as well as all the wonderful fun-filled days they enjoy together.

Extended families



Cherry Pie. Random House, 1998

"There's a new girl who's moved next door and she looks just like me." The story of two girls, they look just like each other and they even have the same pet name. But the new girl walks and talks differently so they can't talk and play together until with the help of one small puppy and a bit of magic dust, they become best friends.

Disability, Friendship

KITZELMAN, Kerry. Illustrated by Steve Parish

NCACL



The Truth about Horrie. Steve Parish Publishing, 2007

When Horrie learns the secret from Chester he is devastated. Suddenly his secure little world is turned upside down and nothing is the same as it used to be. It is a wombat's perspective on growing up inside a very special family.

Adoption, Extended families

KOBALD, Irena. Illustrated by Freya Blackwood

NCACL



My Two Blankets. Little Hare Books, 2014

Cartwheel has arrived in a new country, and feels the loss of all she's ever known. She creates a safe place for herself under an old blanket made out of memories, thoughts and sounds of home. When a young girl shows her friendship and begins to teach her new words and sounds Cartwheel begins to weave a new blanket from the words and sounds she hears, one of friendship and a renewed sense of belonging. This multicultural story of friendship is about leaving home, moving to a foreign and strange place, and finding a new friend. It's a story for all who have experienced change. It is an emotional and heart-warming story about two children from diverse backgrounds coming together to become new friends.

Cultural diversity, Family diversity, Friendship

KWAYMULLINA, Ambelin. Illustrated by Leanne Tobin

NCACL



The Lost Girl Walker Books, 2014

The girl has wandered away from camp and has become lost. She is alone and does not know how to get home. When she becomes thirsty, she finds water. When she becomes hungry, she finds food. When she becomes cold, she finds warmth in the rocks around her and then she finds a crow who leads her back to camp and back to her family. A lovely and creative story showing the unique relationship Australian Aboriginal people have with Country.

Extended families, Family diversity

LANE, Victoria. Illustrated by Kayleen West

NCACL



Celia and Nonna. Ford St Publishing, 2014

Celia loves sleepovers at her grandmother's house - there are so many fun things to do. But everything changes when Celia's grandmother moves to a new home. Celia misses Nonna's old home and the things they did together. So Celia decides to help make the move easier for them both. A heart-warming picture book about family and change.

Aging, Grandparents

LESTER, Alison NCACL



Hello little babies. Harper Collins, 2016

Hello little babies and welcome to the world. From the precious early days of a baby's life to those first tentative steps, so much changes over a year. In showcasing a multicultural view of babyhood Alison Lester demonstrates that families are the same wherever they are in the world.

Family diversity

LOH, Morag. Illustrated by Xiangyi Mo

NLA



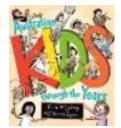
Grandpa and Ah Gong. Hyland House, 1995

When Mandy's Chinese grandfather comes from Malaysia for a visit she is afraid that he and her Aussie grandpa will not get on. Fortunately they discover they have an interest in common - making kites for Mandy.

Family diversity, Grandparents

McCARTNEY, Tania. Illustrated by Andrew Joyner

NCACL



Australian Kids through the Years. NLA Publishing, 2015

Australian Kids through the Years takes a look at children's lives, from the time of the first children, to the colonial era and Federation, and through the decades of the twentieth century to the present day. For each period, the book introduces a particular girl and a boy who then feature in the following spread. The children represent the changes that have occurred in the cultural demographics of Australia particularly in the last 230 years.

Diversity, Family diversity, Historical perspectives

McKENZIE, Heath **NCACL**



How to Build the Perfect Cubby House. Scholastic Australia, 2019 Ollie is building THE PERFECT CUBBY HOUSE! Everyone in Ollie's diverse family has some great ideas, and pretty soon, the whole family is involved and the result ...! A fun and funny story about the importance of family and togetherness and always having a plan.

Family diversity

McKIMMIE, Chris NCACL

Lara of Newtown. Allen & Unwin, 2015



Nana Banana called me Misty, until she couldn't look after me anymore. Noni Nice of Pymble called me Nigella, but I was only Nigella for a day. When the Kafoops family found me on the streets of Newtown and they called me Lara. I knew I had found my home at last. A clever, witty tale that works as a metaphor for the difficulties involved in fostering and adoption.

Adoption, Fostering

MILLER, David NCACL



Big and Me. Ford Street Publishing, 2018

Big and Small are machines that work together as a team. "But some days Big goes a bit wobbly, and I get a lot worried." Big malfunctions in a variety of ways and Small tries to help with the assistance of The Boss and Mechanic. Dramatically illustrated with David Miller's trademark paper sculptures the story is a metaphor for a child living with an adult who suffers from mental illness.

Mental illness

MITHEN, Sara. Illustrated by Natalie Stone

NCACL



One Day in Our World. Brolga Publishing, 2013

Discover how Joshua from Australia, Ann from Vietnam and Kwasi from Kenya spend a typical day in 'One Day in Our World.' Our world is wonderful and diverse, so let's find out more about it through the eyes of these three children as they interact with their families and communities in their home countries.

Diversity, Family diversity

MORGAN, Sally and KWAYMULLINA, Ezekiel. Illustrated by Matt Ottley

NCACL



Me and My Dad. Little Hare, 2010

During an action-filled day at the beach, a boy recounts everything his father isn't afraid of. Matt Ottley's illustrations provide a cartoonish sense of playfulness through a dynamic use of perspective and scale right up to the final scene where the father's sole and improbable fear is revealed giving the boy the chance to be the brave one. A humorous colourful story about the bond between an Aboriginal father and son.

Single parents

MORGAN, Sally. Illustrated by Ambelin Kwaymullina

NCACL



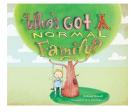
The Perfect Thing. Omnibus Scholastic, 2017

Lily's grandpa can solve any problem. He always knows the perfect thing. Grandpa suggests a walk in the park, but Lily has other ideas - and lots of weird and wonderful objections. But no problem is too great for grandpa - he has weird and wonderful solutions. Grandpa always knows the perfect thing!

Extended families, Grandparents

NOWELL, Belinda. Illustrated by Misa Alexander

NCACL



Who's got a normal Family? Little Steps Publishing, 2016

"Are we normal?" he asked. Mum gave Alex her brightest smile. "Absolutely NOT ...but why don't we find out who is?" A celebration of all the different types of families - adoption, fostering, single parents, same sex parents and more; all the variations of what makes up a family in today's world.

Adoption, Extended families, Family diversity, Fostering, Same-sex families, Step-families



Arabella. Angus & Robertson, 1998

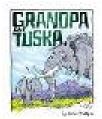
Matthew looked at the Arabella. She had tall slim masts and sails set to catch the wind, a polished wooden deck that shone like glass and a painted Lady carved on her bow. She perched on Grandpa's windowsill as if she was ready to fly - a small, perfect ship. Enhanced by Kim Gamble's beautiful illustrations Wendy Orr gently

tells a story of flight and love and the relationship between a boy and his grandfather.

Disability, Grandparents

PHILLIPS, John

NCACL



Grandpa and Tuska. Big Sky Publishing, 2018

Tuska is a young elephant who loves spending time with his grandfather. And Grandpa loves spending time with him. Tuska never grows tired of Grandpa's thrilling stories about being a young elephant and thinks Grandpa is the wisest elephant he knows. But Grandpa is getting old, and what's more, he's getting forgetful and he's acting rather strangely these days!? His stories are not making sense and sometimes he doesn't even recognise the other animals. Grandpa's behaviour is making Tuska feel scared. But who will save whom? Grandpa and Tuska share one last adventure together with a surprising outcome.

Aging, Grandparents

PREWETT, Melanie. Illustrated by Maggie Prewett

NCACL



Two Mates. Magabala Books, 2012

Two Mates is the true story of the special mateship between two young boys who have grown up together in the coastal town of Broome in Australia's northwest. Jack is Indigenous and Raf is a non-Indigenous boy who has spina bifida. Jack and Raf take the reader on a journey of their daily life growing up in Broome. Together they search for hermit crabs, go hunting for barni, fish for salmon, explore the markets, eat satays and dress up as superheros.

Disability, Friendship, Physical Differences

PRINEAS, Eleni. Illustrated by Kath Deighton

NCACL



My 2 Mums & Me. Lex & Lucy Publications, 2015

Two mums, one kid just how much mess could they possibly make? Join this happy trio in picture book style domestic bliss and chaos. The joyful colour illustrations and rhyming text make this is a lovely portrait of family life that will be enjoyed by children and adults alike.

Same-sex parents

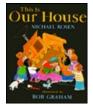
RIPPIN, Sally NCACL



Fang Fang's Chinese New Year. Omnibus Books, 1996

Fang Fang's fears that her friend Lisa won't enjoy the Chinese New Year celebrations are put to rest as Lisa has a wonderful time tasting the different foods and watching the Dragon Dance.

Cultural Diversity, Family diversity, Friendship



This is Our House. Walker Books, 1996

George won't let any of the children into the cardboard box house telling the other children they can't come in because they are twins or they have red hair or glasses. But when the tables are turned, he finds out how it feels to be excluded.

Diversity, Friendship

RUSSELL, Elaine NCACL



The Shack that Dad Built. Little Hare Books, 2004

When Elaine Russell was five, her dad built the family a shack just outside the Aboriginal mission at La Perouse in Sydney. Elaine illustrates what life was like for an indigenous kid on the urban fringes. Her recollections range from the happy memories of hide-and-seek in the sand dunes and hunting for bush tucker to more bittersweet memories, such as her "Saddest Christmas Ever". Elaine's colourful, painterly illustrations vividly recreate these childhood experiences.

Family diversity, Historical perspectives

RUSSELL, Paul Illustrated by Nicky Johnston

NCACL

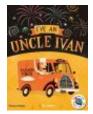


Grandma Forgets. EK Books, 2017

Grandma is a little more forgetful than she used to be. She can't remember how the family used to gather for Sunday lunch or how she used to drive to the beach in her sky-blue car. She makes up new rules for old games and often hides Dad's keys. But that's okay--it just means her family has to make new memories for her! An uplifting story about a family bound by love no matter what else might be forgotten.

Aging, Extended families, Grandparents

SANDERS, Ben NCACL



I've an Uncle Ivan. Thames & Hudson, 2013

I've an Uncle Ivan is a free-wheeling rhyme illustrated in a nostalgic 1950s style that introduces readers to Uncle Ivan, his extended family and 14 different modes of transport. Ivan has a niece on skates, who has two hitchhiking brothers. They have a cousin on a scooter, whose sister drives a Mini and so it goes until we meet the whole family, who are travelling to a secret destination on every form of transport from unicycles to bi-planes to trams.

Extended families

SAXBY, Claire. Illustrated by Janine Dawson

NCACL



Christmas at Grandad's Farm. Five Mile Press, 2013

The sun is shining, the barbecue is fired up and the family is all together. It's Christmas time at Grandad's farm! The lovely illustrations and fun rhyming text bring us all the fun and the family in a typical hot Aussie summer Christmas celebration.

Extended families



Christmas at Grandma's Beach House. Five Mile Press, 2015

It's Christmas in Australia and what better way to celebrate than to gather at Grandma's beach house! It's the twelve days of Christmas, Aussie style. 'On the fourth day of Christmas, we went down to the sea, four beaming aunts, three best friends, two Uncle Bobs, and my grandma, my family and me. A perfect vision of an Australian Christmas celebrating sand, surf and sun and diversity in families.

Extended families, Family diversity

SEDEN, Paul NCACL



Crabbing with Dad. Magabala Books, 2016

Set in the Top End *Crabbing with Dad* tells the adventures of two small children as they go out in the boat with Dad to set crab pots in their secret spot. Sunscreen and life jackets on, they zoom off into the creek, passing a diverse range of people in other boats and fishing along the way. It's a good time to be on the water and they even come across Cousin Dan throwing his net as far as he can. The adventure really begins when they pull up a big, angry crab! The colourful illustrations show both the diversity of people and the diversity of fish life in the Top End.

Diversity, Extended families

SHELBERG, Rebecka Sharpe. Illustrated by Andrea Edmonds

NCACL



Visiting You: A Journey of Love. Exisle Publishing, 2018

Setting out to visit their loved one, a child curiously asks a fellow commuter, 'Who are you going to visit?', and in answer to this simple question, the child learns about the love and loss in the life of a stranger. A father who lives apart from his small daughter, a husband who has lost his wife, a granddaughter who is forgotten by her grandfather, and a mother who fears for her son's recovery. The child understands that the other commuter has someone in their life that they love 'as much as I love you' and the child begins to understand and explore the power of love in the many different forms that it can take.

Diversity, Extended families, Loss, Grief

SHIRVINGTON, Jessica and ROBERTSON, Claire

NCACL



Just the Way We Are. ABC Books 2015

A celebration of families of every kind! Meet Anna, Chiara, Henry, Izzy and Jack. Their families might not look like your family, but that's okay, they're perfect just the way they are! A lovely book that shows, in joyous fashion, families of every shape and size.

Family diversity



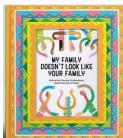
Enid and her two Mums. Aly's Books. 2016

Young Enid is on her usual walk to school one day, when she notices that her family looks slightly different to the other families she sees on the street. Enid has two mums, and she begins to wonder just what makes up a normal family. The day brings her many opportunities to see the diverse nature of modern families, and Enid makes a very important discovery along the way - family is love!

Same-sex parents

STOLTENKAMP, Tenielle. Illustrated by Go Suga

NCACL



My Family doesn't look like your Family. There Co, 2019 Single parent, blended families, same sex couples, fostered, live-in grandparents, carers, families today are increasingly diverse. This diversity is not necessarily reflected in today's children's picture books. This book blends counting and inclusive questions with bold stylised illustrations to represent the diversity of contemporary families in all their shapes and forms. The book aims to allow every child to see their own family reflected on the page acknowledging that although every family looks different and does things differently – we all have a place we belong.

Disability, Extended families, Family diversity, Gender

STOTT, Ann. Illustrated by Bob Graham

NCACL



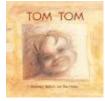
Want to Play Trucks? Walker Books, 2018

A story of friendship, perfect for any child who does not conform to traditional gender stereotypes. Jack and Alex meet almost every morning in the sandbox at the playground. Jack likes trucks — big ones. Alex likes dolls — pink ones, with sparkles. And tutus. But Jack doesn't want to play dolls, and Alex doesn't want to play trucks. Luckily for Jack and Alex, the day is saved with a little bit of compromise and the easy acceptance that characterises true friendship.

Friendship, Gender

SULLIVAN, Rosemary. Illustrated by Dee Huxley

NCACL



Tom Tom . Working Title Press, 2008

A warm, simple story about a small boy, Tom Tom, who lives with his large extended family in an Aboriginal community in the Top End of the Northern Territory. The story follows Tom Tom as he plays and swims and dives with his sisters and brothers and cousins. We see the warmth and security of Tom Tom's world and the importance of family and interconnectedness in Aboriginal life.

Extended families

TYRELL, Karen. Illustrated by Aaron Pocock

NLA



Ready. Set. Discover Logan. Digital Future Press, 2018

Yana, a refugee, arrives in the City of Logan with her family, feeling alone. She's not sure what children can do in Logan. Yana meets Bunji, an Aboriginal boy at a Logan City library. Bunji shows Yana the best places for kids to explore and play. Join Yana as she discovers Logan for the first time.

Cultural diversity, Friendship



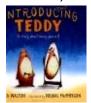
Grandma's Treasured Shoes. NLA Publishing, 2019

Grandma has oodles and oodles of shoes. Walking shoes, dancing shoes, fancy and plain shoes. But there is one really old pair of shoes that are worn, scratched and dirty but Grandma refuses to part with them as they were all she had when she escaped from Vietnam.

Grandparents, Historical perspectives, Refugees

WALTON, Jessica. Illustrated by Dougal MacPherson

NCACL



Introducing Teddy. A story about being yourself. Bloomsbury, 2016 Errol and Thomas the teddy play together every day. But when Thomas feels sad one morning - and not even the swings cheer him up - Errol is worried. Thomas has a secret to share, and it's something that is difficult to say out loud. Will Errol understand that Thomas would rather be called Tilly? And can they still be friends?

Friendship, Gender

WATKINS, Ross. Illustrated by Liz Anelli

NCACL



One Photo. Penguin Books, 2016

Dad came home with one of those old cameras, the kind that use film. But Dad didn't take photos of regular things people photograph, he took photos to remember things because Dad didn't always remember. A poignant story about love, loss and legacy: one son, one family, one photo. A beautiful reflection on the loss of a parent to Alzheimers.

Family dynamics, Grief, Loss, Memories

WHEATLEY, Nadia and RAWLINS, Donna

NCACL



My Place is a time machine, it shows the history of one particular piece of land in Sydney from 1788 to 1988 through the stories of the various children who have lived there. Each child's story covers a decade in time, showing their particular dress, customs and family life. The book features maps that the successive generations of children have 'drawn' showing that while some things have changed other things have remained constant through time. 'My Place' ultimately aims to show 'that everyone is part of History' and that 'every place has a story as old as the earth'. Originally published in 1987, this 20th anniversary edition has been updated to include reference to more recent significant events such as the Mabo and Wik judgements, and the 2008 Apology to the Stolen Generations.

Cultural diversity, Family diversity, Historical perspectives



Reena's Rainbow. EK Books, 2017

Reena is deaf and Dog is homeless, but they are also so much more than that. At first Reena and Dog feel like they don't belong, but when they form a unique bond with each other and become friends with the hearing children in the park. They discover that everyone is different and special in their own way. *Reena's Rainbow* is about friendship, diversity and acceptance. It sends the message that true friends will always accept your differences and love you just the way you are.

Disability, Diversity, Friendship

WILD, Margaret. Illustrated by Terry Denton

NCACL



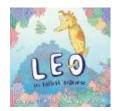
Big Red Hen and the Little Lost Egg. Penguin Viking, 2008

Big Red Hen is everyone's baby-sitter. She loves everyone's babies and they love her. One day Big Red Hen finds a mysterious egg on her doorstep. Whose egg is it? Who will look after it? Is Big Red Hen ready for the biggest surprise of her life?

Adoption, Diversity, Fostering

WILD, Margaret. Illustrated by Terry Denton

NCACL



Leo the Littlest Seahorse. Puffin Books, 2010

A delightful tale of a baby seahorse who is different to his 100 twins. Not only is he the smallest, but he cannot master basic survival tasks as quickly as his siblings. His eyes will not swivel to enable him to watch for enemies and his fin will not flutter to help him swim. But Leo has one important survival skill that he can teach to his brothers and sisters. The lyrical language and engaging illustrations add to the books appeal.

Diversity, Extended families

WILD, Margaret. Illustrated by Ron Brooks

NCACL



Old Pig. A Little Ark Book (Allen & Unwin), 1995

Old Pig and Granddaughter have lived together for a long time, but one day Old Pig doesn't get up for breakfast as usual. Sadly and slowly she takes Granddaughter on one long, last walk, to say goodbye to each other in the best way they know.

Aging, Grandparents, Grief, Loss

WILD, Margaret. Illustrated by Julie Vivas

NCACL



Our Granny. Omnibus Books, 1993

Two children describe their grandmother, and their relationship with her, emphasizing that not all grandmothers are alike and that they vary in appearance, lifestyle and interests.

Family dynamics, Grandparents



Remember Me. Margaret Hamilton, 1990

Ellie is afraid her Grandma will forget her just as she forgets other things like where her keys are or where her house is and sometimes it seems she not quite sure who Ellie is. But she tries and she does remember – the fat baby Ellie, Ellie at the beach and the time Ellie ran away from home. Ellie's Grandma remembers all the special times the two of them have shared and hopes she will never forget.

Alzheimer's, Grandparents, Memories

WILD, Margaret. Illustrated by Sally Rippin

NCACL



Too Many Monkeys. Omnibus (Scholastic), 2004

Five monkeys live in a tree that's just the right size for their family - until one day there's a knock-knock on the tree trunk. Surprise! Granny and Grandpa have come to stay. Now the monkeys are bunched up like bananas! They need a bigger home. "We'll have to move," says Mum. And they do. But soon there's another knock-knock!

Extended family, Family dynamics