

The book is carefully researched, providing a tough-minded critique of the injustices and bureaucratic maze faced by parents of disabled children. Edelson criticizes the Canadian “top-down” medical model of health care and suggests alternatives. In Chapter 12, “The Ethic of Care,” Edelson raises tough bio-ethical questions: Is it ethical for science to save an infant’s life if it cannot equip him to live fully and independently? Under what circumstances is it preferable to provide only comfort care (and not intervention) to an infant who has no hope of a quality life? Who should decide—parents or doctors? She writes, “If we possess the power, as doctors and citizens, to keep vulnerable little ones alive then we must also exercise our judicious ability to maintain them in conditions which promote their dignity and well-being” (153).

The book concludes with a seven-page appendix called “Resources for Parents” that features recommended reading, suggestions on how to get information and help, tips on “how to be most helpful to someone who learns their child is seriously disabled or may die,” and “advice to professionals.” The last two lists should be required reading for anyone in the helping professions. A sample suggestion for professionals: “Do not imagine for a second that you know what these families are going through.... Give full explanations of diagnosis, treatment options, and relevant therapies ... (197).

*My Journey with Jake* is fascinating, enlightening reading for anyone who cares about children or the disabled. Policy makers, ethicists, and health care practitioners will learn from Edelson. (Edelson sits on the advisory board of the Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering.)

## **Pregnant with Meaning: Teen Mothers and the Politics of Inclusive Schooling**

Kelly, D. M.  
New York: Peter Lang, 2000.

### **Reviewed by Sylvia Moore**

In *Pregnant With Meaning*, D. M. Kelly studies inclusive schooling of teen mothers. She analyzes inclusive schooling from a critical feminist stance, probing both the needs of the mothers and the stigma they encounter. The stories she tells come from two schools in British Columbia which attempt to integrate teen mothers. Kelly asks the reader to consider what “inclusion” means for these young women and in what way their best interests might be served.

One approach to inclusion is the “real-world microcosm” where mothers are placed in regular classrooms. Here they are not considered different from other students, they are exposed to the public, and the orientation of the

curriculum is towards the workplace. Conversely, the “safe haven” approach places mothers in separate classes. This keeps them protected but supports and encourages their independence. Kelly concludes that aspects of both approaches best serve the mothers’ needs.

Kelly’s examination of the political construct of teen motherhood provides an understanding of the background on which the two approaches are based. We hear the mothers talking, their voices woven amongst the framework of authoritative and marginal discourses on teen pregnancy. Lack of public support for teen mothers is linked to the perceived public need to deter teen motherhood and the notion that teen pregnancy is linked to a cycle of poverty. Teen mothers are not seen as “good mothers”; they are not lauded for accepting responsibility for their children; and their decisions, even appropriate ones, are challenged constantly. Schools use teen mothers as role models for other students, both as “shining stars” and as “reality communicators.” Thus, the individual mother is made to shoulder the burden of change while the larger society is left unchanged.

Kelly juxtaposes media stories and statements from bureaucrats with stories of teen mothers. The individual stories describe challenges, frustrations, and successes and they push the boundaries of what “inclusion” might mean for all involved. As Kelly concludes, “an inclusive school is impossible to separate from an inclusive society.”

## **KidStress**

Witkin, Georgia.  
New York, Penguin, 1999.

### **Reviewed by Ruthe Thompson**

*KidStress* struck several vital chords in me. As the mother of a 17-year-old who announced shortly after transferring from a rural to an urban high school that she would have to start drinking coffee to sustain homework and extracurricular activities in her faster-paced city life, the book’s suggestions for helping children deal with daily stresses were enlightening. And as a parent living in the metropolitan United States amid daily news of anthrax deaths and exposures, the war in Afghanistan, and investigations of the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, this slim handbook has reminded me to take numerous deep breaths while helping my daughter complete college applications and prepare to launch into an increasingly stressful world.

Written by Georgia Witkin, a Clinical Psychologist at the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in New York City and author of eight books on women’s health, *KidStress* offers a compendium of useful strategies for teaching children