

Billy Had To Move

Theresa Ann Fraser, CYW, B.A.

Loving Healing Press (2009)

ISBN 9781932690873

Reviewed by Ben Weldon (age 11) for Reader Views (3/09)

“Billy Had To Move” by Theresa Ann Fraser is the story of seven-year-old Billy who lives with his grandmother because his mother can’t care for him and now cannot be found. When his grandmother dies, Billy is heartbroken, and there is no one to care for him. Mr. Murphy, the social worker from Child Protection Services, places him in a foster home. Even though Billy likes his foster family, he misses his cat and his grandma and lots of things from his old life. All the sadness and anxiety are causing him to have stomachaches and headaches. Will Billy be able to become a happy child again?

It’s a pretty short book, twenty-five pages including several full-page pictures, but it does give some insight into what it might be like to be a foster child. It also lets kids know what play therapy is. When Mr. Murphy the social worker first introduces Billy to Mrs. Woods, the “feelings doctor,” Billy is afraid that he is going to get a shot. He comes to realize that the play therapist is very nice and that she has all kinds of neat things to play with in her office. When Billy left Mrs. Woods’ office he felt a lot better and more relaxed. He even thought that the play therapist might be able to help him get rid of his sick feelings.

I think this book would be useful to foster kids, so they don’t feel so alone and so they know there are people like social workers and foster parents and play therapists who want to help them. This book would also help other kids to understand the hard things that foster children have to endure.

Note from Mother:

The preceding review was written by my eleven-year-old son. As a mother, I wanted to add a few additional comments about the book. “Billy Had To Move” is a very thoughtfully-written book that has an uplifting message for children in sad situations. I enjoyed how the author was able to share the genuinely child-like thoughts that were zipping through Billy’s mind. When the social worker pulled Billy out of class to tell him something “really sad,” Billy wonders if he is in trouble because “you never knew what grown ups would think is wrong.” He looks at the social workers shoes, wonders when he learned to tie his shoes, and compares them to the shiny red shoes of his previous social worker. The book is valuable in reminding adults that a child’s response and questions to a death or a move may be very different from that of an adult.

I also read “Billy Had To Move” to my four- and seven-year-old sons. They thought that Billy had a sad life but were happy at the end of the book because they thought Billy would get better. I suspect they would have been even more attentive to the book had there been a few more illustrations.