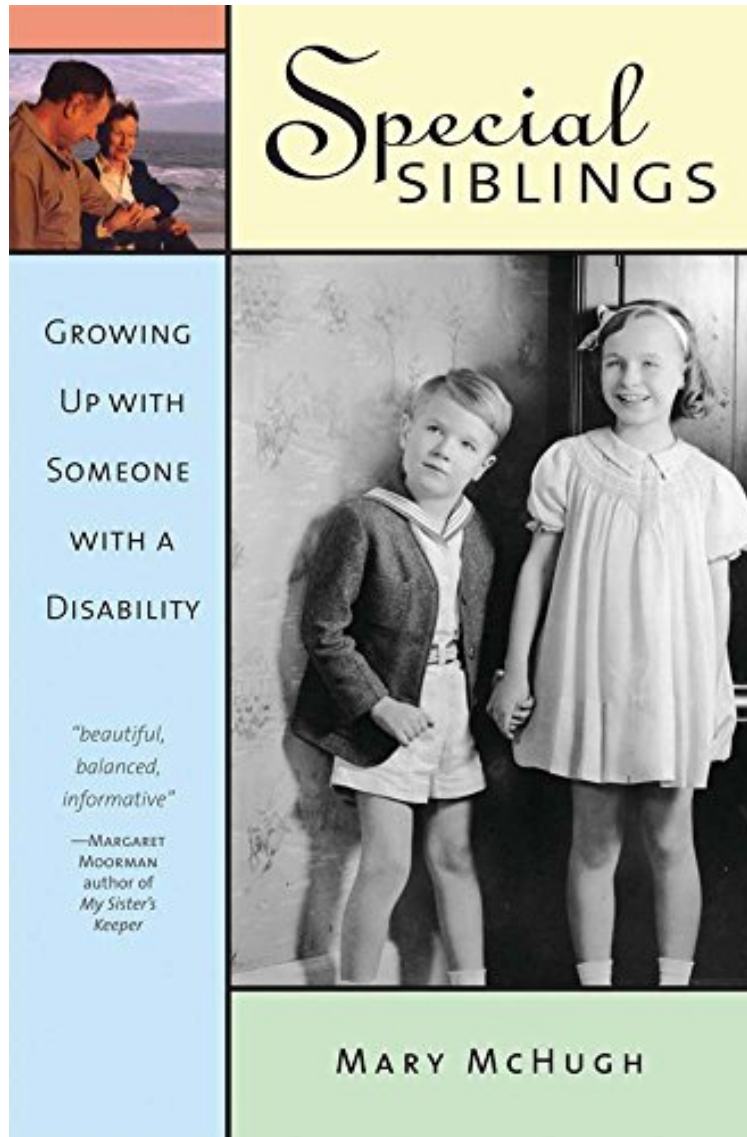


Special Siblings: Growing Up with Someone with a Disability, Revised Edition

Mary McHugh

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Mary McHugh : Special Siblings: Growing Up with Someone with a Disability, Revised Edition before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Special Siblings: Growing Up with Someone with a Disability, Revised Edition:

20 of 21 people found the following review helpful. A must read for anyone with a disabled sibling. By Reader from

Philadelphia First of all, I really wish that people who have not grown up with a disabled sibling would not write negative reviews of this book because they just don't know what it is like. My sister had polio and her illness and subsequent operations took all of my families' resources both financial and emotional. I grew up thinking that I was unimportant and that maybe if I was sick too, I would get attention. My earliest thoughts were those of wishing that I would just die so I didn't have to feel so bad/guilty all the time. Kids that grow up with disabled siblings often feel that they did something wrong to cause the disability. My middle sister and I both felt that way, yet we weren't even born when it happened. Ms. McHugh has written an incredibly honest book that will be greatly appreciated by anyone else in this situation. We live in a world of silence and isolation, how can you ever complain when you can walk, talk, hear, etc. You would be considered extremely selfish. The life of a sibling of a disabled person is very distorted. Thank you, Ms. McHugh for your courage. 11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Mary McHugh knows how to personally touch people. By Linda Moran I bought this book because I have a child with a disability, and I wanted to do what I can to be helpful to my three other children. It was a wonderful read! It reassured me, which is something all mothers need a lot of. It also reminded me that vigilance about sibling excesses is in order. After reading it, I reminded my children that they don't have to grow up to be superstars in some kind of effort to compensate for what my one child lacks. I enjoyed the author's willingness to be so honest about her feelings, yet even when revealing negative feelings, she asserted a positive spin by contrasting her feelings with more positive feelings of others. It's clear that much of her difficulty had to do with being raised in a different time -- when there was little help, and when disability was considered shameful and secret. My favorite section of this book is the discussion of the common phenomenon of siblings entering the helping professions as adults. She has a fresh and interesting take on this topic. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Approachable and Helpful. By S. Soper McHugh's book puts a new perspective out there for siblings of the disabled to come to grips with many of the endemic problems that this population of people (myself being one of them) deals with. Great for adults in understanding where they are coming from and really great for kids in understanding why they feel differently about siblings than their friends might. While there are other books out there, this one puts a bit of a "feel-good spin" on having siblings with disabilities, particularly in the last chapter. Sometimes you need to wallow in the frustration for a while and understand the negative consequences and their impact before you can see the positives, which is the only reason that this book gets four of five stars - aside from that, this is an excellent, helpful book that does a fantastic job of explaining the dilemma of having a sibling with a disability.

In this absorbing and candid book, Mary McHugh reveals what she experienced as the sister of a man with cerebral palsy and mental retardation and shares what others have learned about being and having a special sibling. Weaving a lifetime of memories and reflections with relevant research and interviews with more than 100 other siblings and experts, McHugh explores a spectrum of feelings from anger and guilt to love and pride and helps readers understand the issues siblings may encounter in childhoods such as dealing with their own needs for attention and information, identifying with their parents' grief, understanding their siblings' disability, and coping with their own feelings. In adolescences such as participating in family discussions, fitting in with peers, searching for their own identity, and talking to a counselor or therapist. In adulthood such as building a support system, navigating adult relationships, deciding whether to have children, and planning for their siblings' future care. Emotional and enlightening, this book is a must-read for teen and adult siblings and all professionals who support people with disabilities and their families.

From School Library Journal YA-A look at what it is like to be a sibling of someone with a physical, mental, or emotional disability. McHugh's brother has both cerebral palsy and mental retardation, a fact that has shaped every aspect of her life. In the course of writing this book, she spoke to siblings ranging in age from 6 to 76 years of age who expressed feelings that ran the gamut from compassion to resentment. She writes with painful honesty and includes information about research studies, interviews with experts, and the experiences and stories of many siblings. The book covers important topics such as coping with anger, embarrassment with new friends, and dealing with the long-term care of the disabled sibling. McHugh concludes with a resource section that includes videotapes, newsletters, support groups, and organizations. This title could be of great interest, help, and comfort to readers who are looking for both information and encouragement from people who understand how they might be feeling. Peggy Bercher, Fairfax County Public Library, VA Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus s For siblings of those with physical, mental, or emotional disabilities, here is helpful advice, comfort, and the company of others who've been there. McHugh (formerly an editor at *Woman's World* and *Cosmopolitan*, and a frequent *New York Times* contributor) grew up with a mentally disabled brother for whom she became responsible as an adult after their mother died. McHugh doesn't shrink from the tough issues, even when looking at her own actions. Mostly, she reports, she blocked her brother and his problems out of her life as much as possible. So on one level, this is about McHugh's own journey one viewed wrenchingly from another angle when one of her own children becomes blind and has a leg amputated as a result of complications from diabetes. But moving on from her own experience, McHugh offers information, understanding, and resources for others, on a wide range of issues: from childhood fears about the parents

marriage, to troubles in ones own marriage caused by caring for a disabled sibling, to the urge to somehow make it all better ("For a sibling, there is nothing more painful than watching your mother's heart break because one of her children is wounded"). McHugh considers needs and problems for each age and developmental group, from childhood on. Real help, real comfort for those personally affected. -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. "A poignant mosaic of experiences that are unique to siblings of persons with chronic illness or disability." "This beautiful balanced, informative book will touch a chord in anyone whose brother or sister has a disability." "This beautiful, balanced, informative book will touch a chord in anyone whose brother or sister has a disability." "In her remarkably wise book, Mary McHugh masterfully blends her experiences and the experiences of others with insights from clinical research. Although McHugh doesn't shy away from the troublesome aspects of sibling relationships, *Special Siblings* also describes the remarkable attributes seen in many brothers and sisters of people with special needs." --Don Meyer "Director, Sibling Support Project, Children's Hospital, Seattle" (01/01/2004) "In her book of compelling insights into the sibling experience, Mary McHugh writes about the life-altering legacy of he relationship with her brother, Jack, who suffers from mental retardation. Augmented by the voices of other adult siblings and the expertise of professionals, McHugh combines her insights into a poignant mosaic of experiences that are unique to siblings of persons with chronic illness or disability." --Milton Seligman, Ph.D. "University of Pittsburgh" (01/01/2004) "An informative, even passionate book, one that will clearly help many siblings of individuals with disabilities." --Robert M. Hodapp, Ph.D.