

# Family Sunday Book List

## April 2021 Theme: Our Diverse City

---

### FOR CHILDREN

#### **Salma the Syrian Chef**

By Danny Ramadan

All Salma wants is to make her mama smile again. Between English classes, job interviews, and missing Papa back in Syria, Mama always seems busy or sad. A homemade Syrian meal might cheer her up, but Salma doesn't know the recipe, or what to call the vegetables in English, or where to find the right spices! Luckily, the staff and other newcomers in her Welcome Home are happy to lend a hand—and a sprinkle of sumac. Syrian culture is beautifully represented through the meal Salma prepares and Anna Bron's vibrant illustrations, while the diverse cast of characters speaks to the power of cultivating community in challenging circumstances.

#### **Fast Friends**

By Heather O'Connor

Every child has a voice—if we take the time to listen. Tyson does everything fast—so fast he often disrupts the class. His teacher is always saying, “Too fast, Tyson!” And often he ends up playing all alone. Suze, the new girl, is nonverbal with special needs. Sometimes her classmates don't know what those needs are. But Tyson understands. Taking the time to interpret her cues, Tyson forms a special friendship with Suze and teaches his classmates what it means to listen and understand others.

#### **Bling Blaine: Throw Glitter, Not Shade**

By Rob Sanders

Blaine's a boy who loves to shine... well actually, he loves to *sparkle*. Whether it's his uniform, his book bag, or even his baseball cap, Blaine's all about the bling. But when his bling rubs some people the wrong way, and the bullying begins, Blaine—along with the entire school—starts to lose his shine. Can Blaine's friends bring back his glimmer and gleam by glittering up their wardrobes? This delightful story proves that anyone can love bling, and that happiness comes when allies band together to throw glitter—not shade.

### FOR TWEENS

#### **The Barren Grounds**

By David A. Robertson

Morgan and Eli, two Indigenous children forced away from their families and communities, are brought together in a foster home in Winnipeg, Manitoba. They each feel disconnected from their culture and each other, and struggle to fit in at school and their new home until they find a secret portal to another reality. They meet Ocheq, the only hunter supporting his starving community who teaches the kids traditional ways to survive. But as the need for food becomes desperate, they embark on a dangerous mission. Accompanied by Arik, a sassy squirrel they catch stealing from the trapline, they try to save Misewa before the icy grip of winter freezes everything—including them.

#### **Dog Driven**

By Terry Lynn Johnson

From the author of *Ice Dogs* comes a riveting adventure about a musher who sets out to prove her impaired vision won't hold her back from competing in a rigorous sled race through the Canadian wilderness. McKenna Barney is trying to hide her worsening eyesight and has been isolating herself for the last year. But at the request of her little sister, she signs up for a commemorative mail run race in the Canadian wilderness—a race she doesn't know if she can even see to run. A page-turning adventure about living with disability and surviving the wilderness, *Dog Driven* is the story of one girl's self-determination and the courage it takes to trust in others.

# Family Sunday Book List

## April 2021 Theme: Our Diverse City

---

### FOR TWEENS (Continued)

#### **Genius Jolene**

By Sara Cassidy

On her annual trip in her father's 18-wheeler, eight-year-old Jolene is headed to Los Angeles on a six-day road trip to deliver some newsprint with her dad. Just like last year, they tell each other stories and listen to music. They also keep up their favourite tradition: critiquing one type of food at every stop. This time it's onion rings. But this year is also different. Unlike last year, Jolene's parents are no longer together. They split up when her father came out as gay. These are big changes for Jolene, but she is spunky and smart and has a good heart. She's ready for new adventures and to stand up for what's right—both on and off the road.

### FOR TEENS

#### **Break in Case of Emergency**

By Brian Francis

Dads can be such a drag. Life has been a struggle for Toby Goodman. But after learning the news that her father is coming home and finally wants to meet her, Toby must face the truth of her family's story. Not only is her father gay, but he's also a world-famous female impersonator—and a self-absorbed, temperamental man-child who is ill-prepared to be a real parent.

When Toby's careful plans go awry, she is forced to rebuild the life she thought she knew from the ground up. While she may not follow an expected path, through the support of a quirky but lovable circle of friends and family, Toby may finally be able to put together the many different pieces that make up her past, her present and her future.

### FOR TEENS (Continued)

#### **Hunted by the Sky**

By Tanaz Bhathena

A riveting story of discovery, forbidden romance and idealism against all odds, set in a fantasy world inspired in part by Indian history and myth. Gul has spent her life running. She has a star-shaped birthmark on her arm, and in the kingdom of Ambar, girls with such birthmarks have been disappearing for years. Cavas lives in the tenements, and he's just about ready to sign his life over to the king's army. His father is terminally ill, and Cavas will do anything to save him. But sparks fly when he meets a mysterious girl—Gul—in the capital's bazaar, and as the chemistry between them undeniably grows, he becomes entangled in a mission of vengeance—and discovers a magic he never expected to find.

#### **Love Is a Revolution**

By Renée Watson

When Nala Robertson reluctantly agrees to attend an open mic night for her cousin-sister-friend Imani's birthday, she finds herself falling in instant love with Tye Brown, the MC. He's perfect, except... Tye is an activist and is spending the summer putting on events for the community when Nala would rather watch movies and try out the new seasonal flavors at the local creamery. In *Love Is a Revolution*, plus size girls are beautiful and get the attention of the hot guys, the popular girl clique is not shallow but has strong convictions and substance, and the ultimate love story is not only about romance but about how to show radical love to the people in your life, including to yourself.