

Fighting Words

By Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

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Blurb:

Della can't work out why her adored older sixteen-year-old sister Suki screams in her sleep. Suki has always been Della's protector, especially after their mother went to prison and her boyfriend took the sisters in. But who has been protecting Suki?

Della is in trouble at school for having a big mouth, but after she stands up to the class bully other girls rally to her cause. When Suki tries to kill herself, Della decides it's time to tell their secrets and speak out about the terrible things that happened to Suki. Bound by love and trauma, these two sisters must find their own voices before they can find their way back to each other.

Based on the author's personal experience, this gripping and essential story explodes the stigma around child sexual abuse. Written from the heart, with tenderness, compassion and humour, *Fighting Words* is about finding the words to talk about the most difficult things in young adults' lives.



Lamont Review:

This is a powerful and confronting novel about the impact of child sexual abuse.

I've read many books over the years that have centred on this truly difficult subject, but this is the first one that I've read that I felt really tackled this subject for teen readers in such a powerful way that it had to be included in our Standing Order selection.

Based on the author's own personal experience, it is written with compassion, love, sensitivity and a deep understanding of young people, and of this issue.

Della is the youngest of the two sisters and it takes her a long time to realise that Suki, her elder sister, has been abused for years. When Suki attempts suicide, Della decides that there will be no more secrets. It is a confronting story, but readers will love Della and Suki and their gruff, but kind-hearted, foster Mum who helps both girls to realise that what happened to them was never their fault, and that they do not need to be defined by it.

It is also a story about the unbreakable bond between two sisters, and how love, hope and a dash of humour can give them the courage to face their future together.

Recommended for those 14 and up, and I would encourage librarians and teachers to read it as well, as it may give one of your students the courage to speak up.

Reviewed by Michelle

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.