

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



**Will and Sophie have radiotherapy.
A children's guide to radiotherapy
(March 2017)**

Leicester: Children's Cancer and
Leukaemia Group, March 2017.
18pp. Free.

Average star rating 4.3 (out of 5)

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This is an excellent book for a child having radiotherapy. It explains the process in a very simple way that is easy for a child to understand. It would be good to have after diagnosis and throughout treatment.

The story is told very well in a logical order. The two children in the book are having different sorts of radiotherapy; one has a mask and it explains how this will be done. Play is mentioned in the book in the children's waiting room. It is all explained so well but a brief description in the text of what a CT scan is would make it perfect.

It is very easy to understand, and the language is just right for young children. It is very simply and boldly illustrated, just what is needed. The doctors and nurses are illustrated throughout with smiles on their faces and the story is explained so well that it takes the fear away; this gives a very comforting feeling.

I like the fact it is very simple, matter of fact, and explains the process of radiotherapy in a great way. I would like to think that it could be given to every young child who is having radiotherapy. It will take the worry out of the treatment for many children.

Breast cancer patient with six grandchildren (46-55) (December 2017)

This is a very helpful non-specific book about children having radiotherapy. It does not discuss cancer but rather concentrates on what happens when children need a course of radiotherapy. As such, I think good use could be made of this book in school as well where it may well find a place in topics for slightly older children who are studying health and healthy bodies. As it does not refer specifically to cancer, children can be introduced to another part of hospital treatment without having to go in depth into cancer. Certainly, children would be likely to ask why radiotherapy is needed but this could, in the right hands, enable a natural and gentle introduction to this illness. If a child is about to undergo radiotherapy, this book would be appropriate before treatment begins. The medical and technical input is very well presented and included at the appropriate points.

It is well presented, and I like how the two children develop a friendship that goes beyond their initial meeting. It is a very useful book, not just for children needing the treatment, but also to introduce the idea of this treatment to children generally. All knowledge about hospitals is useful to young children if it is introduced carefully and

naturally into the school curriculum. However, this is my opinion and not all teachers will agree. During my time as a head teacher, my school did try to be upfront and open about the more difficult aspects of life. By introducing topics that are less "happy" naturally and carefully in small doses, children become aware of them gradually rather than being presented with them in radical or emergency situations.

I think my "teacher head" has come out in this review. I do really believe in preparing children for the difficulties of life in a well structured and carefully mentored way. In the appropriate hands, books that cover more serious aspects of health and illness can be a useful part of the primary school curriculum, mostly I would suggest at Key Stage 2. In some instances, many of these lovely books would be very helpful additions to teachers with younger children who may find themselves in the difficult position of having a pupil become ill and need such treatment.

Kidney cancer patient and retired primary teacher (66-75) (January 2016)



This book could be read at any time, not just when, or if, someone has cancer. The story is ok but there is little information on possible side effects other than being too tired to go to school.

It is very easy to understand with clear explanations. However, there are a lot of words meaning that an adult will need to read the book to younger children. I didn't find it pleasant to look at, though the font is a good size.

Although the content is clear and easy to understand, the presentation lets in down. The illustrations look like those on leaflets at the doctors and do not invite a child, or anyone really, to look at the book. There must be some way to make it less clinical. Therefore, this is probably a book that an adult would read to a child rather than one that a child would choose. It looks as though it could be handed out by the medical team when a diagnosis is made, or treatment given.

Living with cancer (myelodysplastic syndrome) and former teacher of 3-16-year-olds with SEN (46-55) (January 2018)

Further information

Why does Macmillan Cancer Support review books?

We use reviews to help us compile a list of suggested cancer books, the [Macmillan Core Book List](#). Cancer information centres and public libraries can use this list to select appropriate and relevant books for people affected by cancer.

We add reviews to the [Directory of information materials for people affected by cancer](#) so that people affected by cancer can see what others in a similar situation think about a book. You can also see details of all the books reviewed in the [Book reviews listing](#), which also has links to all the reviews.

We recruit most of our reviewers through the [Volunteering Village](#) and the [Cancer Voices Network](#), people affected by cancer who have signed up to help Macmillan Cancer Support in a number of ways. Volunteers are a vital part of our book review process; since 2007, over 1,500 Macmillan volunteers have written more than 6,000 reviews of over 500 different books.

If you are a health professional who would like to review books for us, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

Information and support for people affected by cancer

If you are looking for support to help you live life with cancer, you may wish to contact one of [Macmillan's cancer information and support services](#). Or you can call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00** (Mon-Fri 9am–8pm). We have an interpreting service in over 200 languages. Just state, in English, the language you wish to use. If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can use textphone no 0808 808 0121 or Text Relay.

You can also email us using the [website enquiry form](#). Alternatively, [visit our website](#).

Feedback

If you have any comments, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

We're here to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support. So whatever cancer throws your way, we're right there with you.

For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit macmillan.org.uk

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