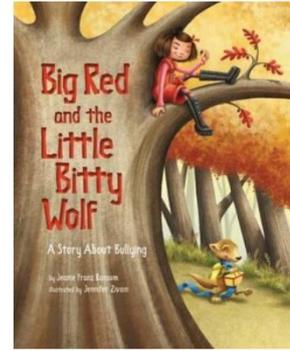




**PINK SHIRT DAY**



## **Big Red and the Little Bitty Wolf: A story about bullying**

**Jeanie Franz Ransom, illustrated by Jennifer Zivoin (2016), Magination Press, US**

*Big Red and the Little Bitty Wolf* is a beautifully illustrated and written story that is an entertaining and thought-provoking read for children and adults alike. It follows the story of Little Bitty Wolf and the daily bullying he receives from Big Red on his walk to school. This tale is a clever twist on the classic Little Red Riding Hood fairy tale and the unexpected casting of the wolf as the victim immediately engages the reader.

Little Bitty Wolf used to love his walk through the woods to Pine Cone Elementary School until Big Red moved into the neighbourhood. His attempts at asking her to stop her bullying are unsuccessful until he follows advice from his school counsellor (Mr. Know-It-Owl). Here the reader gets to see Little Bitty Wolf's satisfaction in feeling empowered and regaining his confidence once the bullying stops. The text is accompanied by insightful illustrations portraying Little Bitty Wolf's different emotions, which are sure to encourage empathy in children.

This story is a great way to initiate a discussion on the issue of bullying and it also encourages children to seek help from their family or school. Bullying is a widespread issue and one that is now more openly discussed in the media, in schools and online. In fact, the increased presence of the online world in our children's lives has provided another avenue for bullying, so the subject is very relevant to all youngsters and their caregivers.

One of the strengths of this book is that by following Little Bitty Wolf's journey, children can learn to recognise some of the behaviours which amount to bullying. The book also includes a very informative note to parents which lists the warning signs of bullying and ways to help your child, whether they are the victim, bystander or perpetrator. This section could be shared with children directly or indirectly depending on their age.

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The Mental Health Foundation's Information Service brings you reviews this Pink Shirt Day on books with bullying prevention themes. To view the full Book Review section go to [www.pinkshirtday.org.nz/good-reads](http://www.pinkshirtday.org.nz/good-reads)





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*Big Red and the Little Bitty Wolf* is a well-informed book, written by parent and school counsellor Jeanie Franz Ransom and published by the American Psychological Association. Although it is recommended for children aged 4–8, both my 3-year-old preschool students and my 11-year-old son enjoyed it, so it could be enjoyed by a wider age group.

This book is an excellent resource to have at home, preschool or school to open up discussion on the issue of bullying and to teach children about taking a stand against it, having empathy and caring for others.

**Reviewed by Charmaine Denney, early childhood teacher and mum to two boys**

