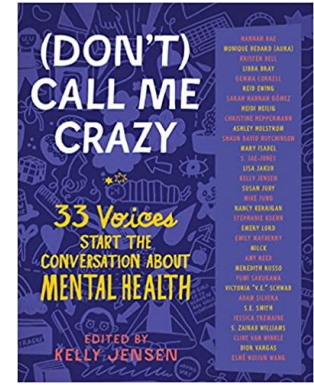




PINK SHIRT DAY



(Don't) Call me crazy: 33 voices start the conversation about mental health
Jensen, K. (2018). Algonquin Young Readers.

(Don't) Call Me Crazy would be a valuable addition to any high school library collection. I'm not sure how many of the contributors—a range of writers, athletes, and artists — students would recognise but there's a wide range of personal stories covering various mental health challenges. Many of them are about the contributors' experiences as a teen or young adult, which is when many mental health issues surface or are diagnosed.

While there are a few comics and pictures, this is text heavy so would be best suited to senior students. Any of the pieces would make for a strong personal response for Level 1 or 2 Reading Responses if you needed an additional short text for students to use. The piece that resonated most with me was Defying Definition by Shaun David Hutchenson, as it serves as a reminder to see the person for who they are, not their illness. It could be the start of an interesting conversation in any classroom. Given the format and denseness of the texts, this is probably a book you'll have to sell to students but it's definitely worth the effort.

If a student can connect with a piece in here then it will help them to feel seen. Regardless, it's never a bad thing for students to get an insight into the experiences of others. There's a big push for empathy at the moment, and having this book on the library shelves or in the classroom definitely supports this goal.

Reviewed by Fiona McDiarmid, Teacher

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

