

Views from Our Shoes:
Growing Up with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs
Reviewed by
Elizabeth Overholt, MSW
eoverholt@comcast.net

Meyer, Donald (editor), (1997) Views from Our Shoes: Growing Up with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs. Woodbine House, Bethesda, MD.

Mr. Meyer's started sibling workshop or Sibshops out in Seattle, WA. Working with children, Mr. Meyer's discovered a huge need for the brothers and sisters to come to a place to honestly express their feelings about living with someone with special needs. These children wrote funny, sad and very real essays on what life is like for them. Writing became their outlet for expressing some of the anger of being overlooked or coping with the tantrums of a 9 year old sister with autism.

While you would think this book would be depressing and dark, it is quite the opposite. The siblings wrote about empathy, patience, and understanding for their brother or sister with special needs. These children found so much love and hope. These families do not want pity. The advice is to stop staring and to stop making fun of children with disabilities. These essays are about having compassion for each other.

Seeing through the eyes of a child is a gift for adults. These stories are funny and sad. These stories are real and that is what makes them so powerful. Pick this book up and page through it. You will be rewarded.