



Autism; Solvents

Books Reviewed:

[Autism](#) [1]

Books Reviewed:

[Solvents](#) [2]

Issue:

[144](#) [3]

Reviewer:

[Elizabeth Schlenter](#) [4]

News Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

Two further books in the important 'Health Issues' series aimed at teenagers. The amount of textual information is impressive, and the explanations while clear are often complex. Individuals' stories add greatly to the impact of the information, as do photographs and graphics, and parents and carers will find the books of vital interest. **Autism** presents a discussion on whether Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism are the same thing; spectrum disorders and conditions similar to autism are also explained. We learn about the 'triad of impairment': social relationships, verbal and nonverbal communication, and imagination. There are chapters on the causes, therapies (very detailed), and living with the condition at home and at school.

Solvents is equally detailed, and, because it is about substance abuse, is often painful. The pull-no-punches approach is essential, particularly because the section on 'deliberate abuse' gives very exact information about how abusers go about sniffing glue, paints, aerosols, etc. This could be considered a 'how to' manual, and in using the book one must weigh carefully the fact that this information is included. It is certainly true that there is huge emphasis on sudden death, even at the first time of using, and the individuals' accounts of their experiences should put most teenagers off. The fact that so many substances capable of being abused are readily available in the home is a matter for real concern. A history of substance abuse and statistical patterns around the world are included, and there are chapters on the risks of inhalants, addiction, and how family and friends can help. Both books include indexes, glossaries, and lists of resources such as websites, books, and organisations.

Running Order:

1

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[3] <http://mail.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/144>

[4] <http://mail.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/elizabeth-schlenther>