



Mom, They're Teasing Me: Helping Your Child Solve Social Problems

By Michael Thompson, Lawrence J. Cohen, Catherine O'Neill Grace

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Through vividly written case studies and a reader-friendly question-and-answer format, *Mom, They're Teasing Me* is full of specific, how-to advice for parents to help their children navigate the sometimes harsh terrain of social life—which includes name-calling, after-school fights, esteem-crushing cliques, and malicious exclusion by the popular kids. Through thoughtful discussion and insightful suggestions, parents will discover

- The difference between real risk and normal social pain
- The appropriate time to intervene—and when to step back
- Tips on how to mediate between children—without appearing meddlesome
- The importance of teaching and encouraging leadership
- The redemptive power of friendship

Mom, They're Teasing Me answers key questions about the many manifestations of social cruelty, offers compelling descriptions of prime “teasing” scenarios, and illustrates how to counter them. It is an indispensable book for involved parents who want to make their child’s formative years rich and rewarding.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Childhood angst tends to torment parents as well as children and can erupt into the tragedy of school shootings. These books address such problems from fairly dissimilar perspectives. Psychologists Thompson (coauthor, *Raising Cain*) and Cohen (*Playful Parenting*) collaborate with journalist/ author Grace on a sensitive and straightforward advice manual that focuses on 40 key questions regarding the social life of children. Conversational and upbeat in tone, the book is divided into three sections designed to help readers distinguish "normal" social pain from more lasting trauma. The text covers friendship skills, tattletales, racial bigotry, bullying, and personal hygiene and also suggests techniques for building positive leadership and conflict-resolution skills. The issues addressed are drawn from actual questions raised during their workshop/consulting experience. The answers reflect cumulated wisdom about what matters in the life of children from grade school through adolescence, and the book as a whole similar to but more practical than Charlotte Giannetti's and Margaret Sagarese's recent *Cliques*. In contrast, Garbarino (human development, Cornell Univ.; *Lost Boys*) and de Lara, a researcher and family therapist, focus on the pathology of mainstream high school life in America. Based on interviews and discussions with rural and suburban students from "All-American" communities and published research, the book debunks myths about school safety and discusses multiple aspects of emotional violence in a school setting, including stalking, bullying, dysfunctional adaptations to harassment, and teacher violations. The authors exhibit an insightful understanding of school cliques (e.g., "hicks," jocks, and "Goths") but tend to be alarmist when depicting daily high school life. However, the research is impressive and generates many valuable suggestions for improving the school environment. The book concludes with resources and readings on bullying and violence prevention. Though Garbarino and de Lara's book is more focused on school management issues, both books are recommended for public library parenting collections. [Thompson's book was previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 4/1/02.]—Antoinette Brinkman, M.L.S., Evansville, I.

--Antoinette Brinkman, M.L.S., Evansville, IN

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From [Booklist](#)

Thompson and Laurence Cohen use their experiences as parents and child psychologists to unravel the complex dynamics of social interactions among children. (The third coauthor is writer Catherine Grace.) They note that parents and teachers approach conflicts between children from their own biased perspectives--parents generally viewing their own children as innocent victims, teachers inclined to identify with the underdog or top dog, and both bringing childhood memories to their evaluations. This book is aimed at helping parents put things in perspective, learn about what children often don't reveal, and find the balance between agonizing over every slight and overlooking significant problems. The book is divided into three sections: normal social pain, children at risk, and school and neighborhood problems. Using research and case studies, Thompson and Cohen help parents deal with a range of social problems, including teasing, rejection, fights, bullying, and cruelty. Just as important, they help parents distinguish between the kind of social antagonisms that can traumatize a child and the kind that are just part of growing up. A valuable resource. *Vanessa Bush*

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Review

"Deeply needed advice, reassurance, and good news . . . This much-needed book is a true gem."

—EDWARD M. HALLOWELL, M.D., author of *The Childhood Roots of Adult Happiness*

“A VALUABLE RESOURCE . . . [The authors] help parents deal with a range of social problems. . . . Just as important, they help parents distinguish between the kind of social antagonisms that can traumatize a child and the kind that are just part of growing up.”

—*Booklist*

“Once again Michael Thompson, Lawrence Cohen, and Catherine O’Neill Grace have reached into the hearts and minds of children and parents and given us deeply needed advice, reassurance, and good news. They show us how to deal with some of the most painful moments of childhood and, not only survive them, but thrive. Michael Thompson combines the knowledge and wisdom of a brilliant psychologist with the heart and love of an experienced parent. This much-needed book is a true gem.”

—EDWARD M. HALLOWELL, M.D.

“Few parenting challenges compare to helping a kid cope with teasing or being left out. With empathy and understanding, *Mom, They’re Teasing Me* gives parents age-by-age information and practical advice to guide and comfort kids through every stage of their so-called social lives.”

—FREDDI GREENBERG

Editor in Chief, *Nick Jr.* magazine

“What a wonderful and helpful book. It is right on target dealing with a very difficult issue—one that all parents confront—in a truly sensitive and intelligent manner. Above all, Michael Thompson and Lawrence Cohen give answers—why it happens and what to do about it. I was really impressed by their ability to make helpful sense out of a truly difficult part of child-raising.”

—ANTHONY E. WOLF, Ph.D.

Author of *Get Out of My Life, But First Could You Drive Me and Cheryl to the Mall?*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christopher Hartwick:

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