

In Bookstores Now

Recent Children's Books

by Linda Pfiffner, Ph.D., and Kara McBurnett

Equine Therapy

Written by children's book author Gayle Grass and illustrated by Linda Crockett, *Lucky Horseshoes: A Tale from the Iris the Dragon Series* (Iris the Dragon, Inc., 2007, 40 pages) is a delightful story about a little girl named Skippy, who finds success and happiness after overcoming repeated problems at school and at home.

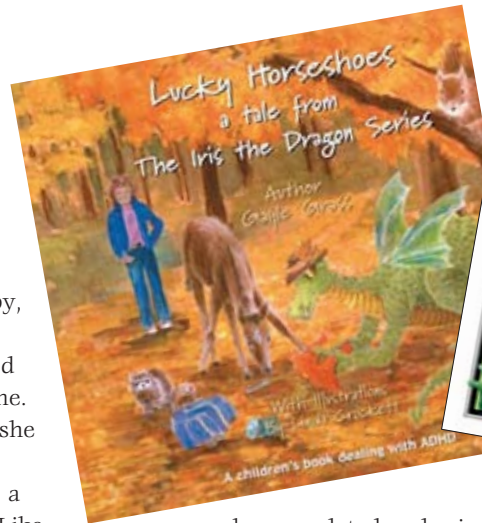
Skippy's story begins when she befriends Iris, a green swamp dragon, who introduces her to a young colt named Little Ben. Like Skippy, Little Ben is also having problems learning to do what he is supposed to do. The story sensitively describes, in parallel, the challenges faced by Skippy and Little Ben.

Skippy helps Little Ben to overcome his strength and coordination difficulties, while at the same time, Skippy's parents and teachers help her to overcome her attention and behavioral challenges. There are many creative touches in the story: For example, both Skippy and Ben have IEPs, although for Ben, IEP stands for Individual Exercise and Eating Plan. Skippy's pivotal role in Little Ben's success is inspiring and empowering. The story provides a clear message of hope and the value of perseverance as well as the value of both giving to and receiving help from others.

My six-year-old daughter really liked *Lucky Horseshoes*—she liked the characters and enjoyed the writing style. A book portraying a girl with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD) is a needed addition to all of the books about boys. The book also seems like a good fit for those in the elementary age group. The epilogue is accurate and informative, and nicely links Skippy's experiences with details about the diagnostic and treatment process for AD/HD.

Return of a Classic

Shelley, the Hyperactive Turtle, one of the first children's books to explain attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD), has



been updated and reissued with new illustrations (Woodbine House, 2007, 20 pages).

Author Deborah Moss depicts Shelley as a hyperactive turtle who gets into trouble for being jumpy, wiggly and misbehaving, despite his best intentions to do the right thing and be a good boy. Simple, descriptive language describes Shelley's problems, which are those characteristic of AD/HD: trouble staying seated at his desk, impulsively breaking things or being disruptive, being too noisy, and not having many friends.

Shelley is a very likeable turtle in spite of all of his problems. The story ends on a very positive note: after Shelley goes to the doctor and receives treatment, his behavior improves, and he makes many friends. This is a charming story with lots of appeal for younger audiences—preschool through early elementary grades. Carol Schwartz's cartoon-like illustrations are wonderful!

My six-year-old daughter said this is a fun story because it's silly (why would turtles have doctors?) and has really good pictures. She liked that Shelley "learned not to do such bad things." *Shelley, the Hyperactive Turtle* is a warm and upbeat book. Children will easily relate to Shelley, and it is just the right length for young readers. ■

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