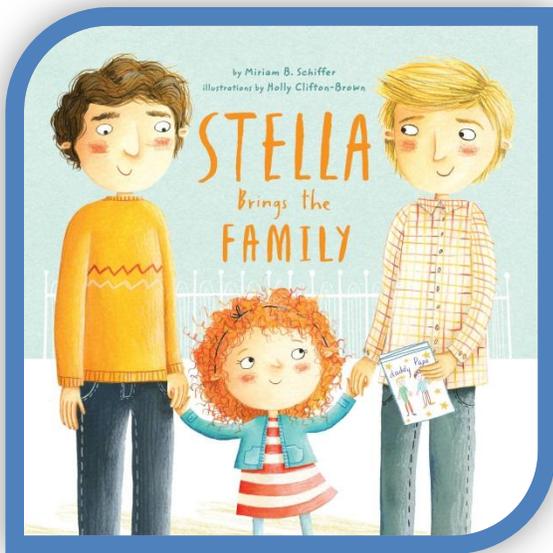




# Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Division

**About the Book of the Month Parent/Family Discussion Guide:** This collection of featured books is from Books Matter: The Best Kid Lit on Bias, Diversity and Social Justice. The books teach about bias and prejudice, promote respect for diversity, encourage social action and reinforce themes addressed in education programs of [A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute](#), ADL's international anti-bias education and diversity training provider. For parents, guardians and family members, reading the books listed on this site with your children and integrating the concepts into your interactions with them is an excellent way to help children grapple with and learn about these important principles.



## Stella Brings the Family

Miriam B. Schiffer (Author), Holly Clifton-Brown (Illustrator)

ISBN: 978-1452111902

Publisher: Chronicle Books

Year Published: 2015

Age Range: 4–8

### Book Themes

Family, LGBT Family and Friends, Feeling Different, Inclusive Holiday Celebrations, Being a Friend

### About the Book

Stella's class is having a Mother's Day celebration, but what's a girl with two daddies to do? It's not that she doesn't have someone who helps her with her homework or tucks her in at night. Stella has her Papa and Daddy who take care of her and a whole group of other loved ones who support her every day. She just doesn't have a mom to invite to the party. Fortunately, Stella finds a unique solution to her party problem. This book portrays not only a girl with two dads but other family configurations that may cause teachers and family members to rethink how they discuss holidays like Mother's Day and Father's Day. It is a story about love, acceptance and the true meaning of family.

### Conversation Starters

Whether you read the book aloud or children read it on their own and you discuss it later, use these open-ended questions to deepen the conversation. Remember not to judge their responses and to listen thoughtfully and engage in a give-and-take that helps them expand upon their understanding of the book and its themes.

- What was the story about?

- How do you think Stella felt when her teacher announced their special Mother's Day celebration?
- How do you think you might feel if you were Stella?
- What advice would you give Stella?
- What could the teacher have done to make everyone feel included?
- Who did Stella bring to the celebration and why?
- How is our family similar to and different than Stella's?
- Do we know people whose families are different than ours? What do we have in common with them?
- Have you ever felt different from the children at school? How so? What did you do?
- What can we do to make sure that kids who feel different in certain situations don't feel left?

### Talking Points

Below are some important considerations to highlight in order to make this a learning opportunity for your child and your family.

#### 1. Kind of Families

Stay away from traditional notions of "family" and be proactive in broadening the concept of family to include many different kinds of families, including structure, size, racial composition, religious observances, etc. Emphasize that most families have some things in common such as: living together in a home, taking care of and loving each other, sharing money and home responsibilities, eating meals together and engaging in family traditions or activities. If relevant, point out the families in your school, community or social circle that are different than your own. If there isn't much diversity within those communities, use books and other media to provide examples for your children of other kinds of families.

#### 2. Noticing Differences

Noticing differences of all types (gender, race, family structure, etc.) is perfectly normal and should not be discouraged or ignored. As early as two or three years old, children become aware of physical aspects of identity like gender, skin color and other physical characteristics. For example, if your child notices that a friend or classmate has a different family structure than your own, affirm that the family may have a different configuration than yours but it is still a family, pointing out that there are many different kinds of families. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that while we notice differences, we should never treat people poorly because of those differences. All children should be treated with fairness, understanding and respect.

#### 3. Building Empathy and Being a Friend or Ally

In the story, Stella was feeling upset and worried because she didn't have a mother to bring to the celebration and everyone else did—she felt different. One of Stella's classmates helps her find a solution to the dilemma and this was a turning point in the book. In conversations with children, it is important to ask questions that help them empathize with others, not only asking them about how Stella felt but also about how they might feel if they were in her shoes. Equally important is to get them to think about how they can help—either as a friend or an ally—asking questions like "what could you do to help or support Stella?" In general, as children talk about someone who might be

different from themselves in some way, use empathic and compassionate language to convey the message that we care and we want to do something to help.

### Other Books You May Like

*And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/and-tango-makes-three.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/and-tango-makes-three.html)

*Donovan's Big Day* by Leslea Newman, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/donovans-big-day.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/donovans-big-day.html)

*In Our Mother's House* by Patricia Polacco, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/in-our-mothers-house.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/in-our-mothers-house.html)

### ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on LGBTQ People and Homophobia/Heterosexism.

#### Curriculum Resources

"What is Marriage Equality?," *Current Events Classroom*, [www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/What-Is-Marriage-Equality.pdf](http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/What-Is-Marriage-Equality.pdf).

*Love Has No Labels Campaign Family/Caregiver Guide and Educator's Guide*, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/love-has-no-labels.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/love-has-no-labels.html).

#### Websites

Parent, Family and Caregiver Resources

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education/c/parent-family-and-caregivers.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education/c/parent-family-and-caregivers.html)

Strategies, tips, guiding principles and resources to help parents, family members and caregivers impart values and principles to the children in their lives.

The Question Corner

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/early-childhood/c/the-question-corner.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/early-childhood/c/the-question-corner.html)

A collection of answers to frequently asked questions about anti-bias issues faced by early childhood professionals and family members interested in promoting respect for diversity among young children.

#### Children's Books

Below are links to lists of recommended anti-bias and multicultural books for the indicated category.

LGBTQ People and Homophobia/Heterosexism, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/lgbtq-people.html?page=1](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/lgbtq-people.html?page=1)