

Book Review by Ruth, Newbury Hoarding Disorders UK Support Group

An Ordinary House by Tania Reid (Illustrated by Stephen Babic)

Written from a child's perspective, although narrated in the third person, it tells the story of Dawn who becomes overwhelmed and affected by a parent who suffers from hoarding and how they might find support in the wider community.

Perhaps not a book to read to your child as a bedtime story, it is however a good easy to read book with large text and colourful illustrations that reinforce the plot. This book could be invaluable in helping to encourage children, families, therapists, community workers, teachers etc to discuss the hoarding disorder.

The part of the story that struck the most accord with me was the "secrets" aspects that Dawn was feeling. It reminded me of the embarrassment of a family home that was cluttered and the unwillingness I had to invite friends to sleep over as there was very little room.

One limitation of the story is that it only focuses on one trigger of the disorder, whereas in reality there could be many reasons why a family member may begin to hoard. However it should be understood that the hoarding disorder is complex and all aspects can't be discussed in one small book.

Overall this is a great little book and I would encourage adults and children alike to read it. This book really helps to highlight the disorder and how young family members might be feeling about cluttered homes. It also shows how a family could work together to start to overcome some the issues and feelings.