



Jumping Off Swings

By Jo Knowles

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One pregnancy. Four friends. It all adds up to a profound time of change in this poignant, sensitively written YA novel.

Ellie remembers how the boys kissed her. Touched her. How they begged for more. And when she gave it to them, she felt loved. For a while anyway. So when Josh, an eager virgin with a troubled home life, leads her from a party to the backseat of his van, Ellie follows. But their "one-time thing" is far from perfect: Ellie gets pregnant. Josh reacts with shame and heartbreak, while their confidantes, Caleb and Corinne, deal with their own complex swirl of emotions. No matter what Ellie chooses, all four teenagers will be forced to grow up a little faster as a result. Told alternately from each character's point of view, this deeply insightful novel explores the aftershocks of the biggest decision of one fragile girl's life — and the realities of leaving innocence behind.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—Ellie has sex with boys who make her feel wanted and beautiful and then never call again. Even seemingly decent Josh, a virgin, leaves right after their tryst and never speaks to her again. It turns out the condom "slipped off" (?) and she gets pregnant. The next nine months are narrated by four characters—Ellie, Josh, and their best friends, Corinne and Caleb. Ellie's and Josh's families are filled with stock dysfunction—from Ellie's shrill, uptight mother and perfect-on-the-outside home to Josh's washed-up, hard-drinking father and hapless mother. The plot of this novel is tired, but Corinne and Caleb, at least, are mercifully convincing and thoughtful. Each, of course, comes from a stable family. Caleb's single mother is the novel's moral center. The blaring contrast between stable kids from loving families versus lost kids from dysfunctional families oversimplifies a complex subject. Knowles writes fluidly, and though Caleb's and Corinne's scenes shine, Ellie and Josh never engage enough to set *Jumping Off Swings* apart in the genre.—*Johanna Lewis, New York Public Library*

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Review

Absorbing from first page to last, this sensitively written novel explores how a teenager's crisis rocks her life as well as the lives of others. (starred review) --Publishers Weekly, August 10, 2009

About the Author

Jo Knowles is the author of the young adult novels *Lessons from a Dead Girl*, *Jumping Off Swings*, *Pearl*, and *See You At Harry's*. She has a master's degree in children's literature. Some of her awards include the PEN New England Children's Book Discovery Award, YALSA's Best Fiction for Young Adults, YALSA Quick Picks Top Ten, YALSA's Popular Paperbacks, International Reading Association's Young Adult Choices List, Tayshas List, and Bank Street College's Best Books for Children (Outstanding Merit). Jo lives in Vermont with her husband and son.

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

David Hogan:

Precisely why? Because this *Jumping Off Swings* is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap this but latter it will shock you with the secret that inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who write the book in such incredible way makes the content on the inside easier to understand, entertaining technique but still convey the meaning entirely. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This excellent book will give you a lot of gains than the other book have got such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I had been you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

Aaron Thomsen:

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