

Book Title: Only a Mother Could Love Him**Author: Benjamin Polis****Publisher: Seaview Press****Year: 2001****ISBN: 1-74008-169-2****Type: Autobiography****Book Review by Kelly Raymond****Graduate Student****Southwest Minnesota State University, Marshall, MN**kraymond@eastcentral.k12.mn.us

It was a relief to his entire family when Benjamin Polis was diagnosed with ADHD. He experienced a number of "failures" during his elementary and secondary school career: an inability to read until age 11, failing grades, and numerous suspensions and expulsions in six different schools. Benjamin had many of the same problems faced every day by children with ADHD. He did not like school and his teachers and had problems with certain subjects, organization, and behavior control. He was angry, violent, and often displayed erratic behavior. Benjamin fought with his parents and sister, and discipline was always an issue. Medication was a constant battle. Sound familiar? Benjamin gives us a glance into the life of a student with ADHD.

Although many books are written about ADHD, they are often filled with medical mumbo-jumbo that really does not help with the day-to-day treatment of ADHD. Although this book provides a history lesson on the etiology of ADHD and why it is so widespread in Australia and North America, most of the book provides practical information that educators can use. Benjamin Polis decided to write this book because he could not find a book written from the perspective of a young person who had ADHD. This book will not provide answers to all the problems teachers encounter, but it will help.

Benjamin states that the right or wrong school can be the determining factor in the level of success a child achieves both in school and life. Benjamin also talks about how ADHD students learn, the appropriate way to teach ADHD students in different subject areas, and useful modifications. Homework is one of the most difficult areas for students with ADHD students and Benjamin talks about how to make it more fun and less of a punishment or chore. Lots of encouragement must be used and organization is essential. As a teacher, I found these sections very informative and helpful.

Benjamin also provides an in-depth look into medication. He talks about when to medicate and when not to medicate, the side effects, the problems with overmedication, and how medications should be taken. These are important issues in schools today and ones about which educators must be knowledgeable.

An interesting section of the book is when Benjamin talks about his relationships with teachers, friends, parents, and siblings. He discusses why certain teachers were able to get through to him and how family support was so essential. Benjamin also covers other topics of importance to students with ADHD, including jobs, careers, and sex.

Benjamin Polis passed his final year with excellent grades and now is in college. He achieved this incredible turnaround by using strategies and techniques that he developed over time and shared in this book. For parents, teachers, psychiatrists, general

practitioners, counselors, welfare workers and anyone else working in youth-related fields this book is essential because it explains ADD/ADHD from the perspective of a sufferer and a survivor. As an EBD teacher, I found this book to be very informative and I hope that by using some of these strategies, I will be able to make a difference in the lives of my students and help them become a success story like Benjamin Polis.