



Hey, Kiddo

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Hey, Kiddo is the graphic memoir of author-illustrator Jarrett J. Krosoczka. Raised by his colorful grandparents, who adopted him because his mother was an incarcerated heroin addict, Krosoczka didn't know his father's name until he saw his birth certificate when registering for a school ski trip. *Hey, Kiddo* traces Krosoczka's search for his father, his difficult interactions with his mother, his day-to-day life with his grandparents, and his path to becoming an artist.

To date, nearly one million people have viewed Krosoczka's TED Talk about his experience. Artwork from his childhood and teen years will be incorporated into the original illustrations for the book.

Hey, Kiddo Details

Date : Expected publication: September 25th 2018 by Graphix

ISBN :

Author : Jarrett J. Krosoczka

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Genre : Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Autobiography, Memoir, Nonfiction

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From Reader Review Hey, Kiddo for online ebook

Matthew Noe says

I received an advance copy of this at ALA 2018.

Hey, Kiddo is an incredibly timely comic about addiction, family, and resilience. Drawn in an almost hazy style with purposeful use of burnt colors, the artwork makes you FEEL the story rather than reading-from-above. Jarrett is honest - at times unflatteringly so - and that honesty gives weight to the story, even if in the moment it might feel too much.

If no one else takes it up, I may write a more in-depth review for graphic medicine. But for now, I have two claims to make.

First, this is going to be one of my picks of the year for the field. Few comics targeted to young adults are this honest and open about addiction. And as the "opioid crisis" and long overdue national attention to addiction ramps up, we need honest stories. There's already enough fearmongering, misinformation, and downright ill-will toward addiction. Maybe stories like Hey, Kiddo can bring some humanity back into the conversation. I hope.

Second, because the comic doesn't shy away from drug use, teenage misadventures, and includes cursing, I'm expecting this book will face serious challenges from parents who think kids should be sheltered. I hope I'm wrong but given how much more appealing a banned book becomes maybe I want to be right - then it's sure to be read.

Full disclosure: I live in Worcester and seeing the place depicted in comics positively is certainly making me enjoy this even more.

Jen Petro-Roy says

Utterly phenomenal. Krosoczka takes his talent to a whole new and utterly personal level.

Stacy Fetter says

Hey, Kiddo is a deeply moving and intimate look at how addiction can affect families. Usually you see how the addiction affects the abuser but this gives you a closer look at how it tears apart a family.

Jarrett digs deep and holds nothing back. Every little devastating and disappointing moment is shared through these pages and it's heartbreakingly honest. He also shares the goodness that has happened in his life. You don't need biological parents to survive life, you just need a really good support system.

I really wish more people would tell their stories with graphic novels. It lets you get a better understanding of certain situations that could be tough to describe with words. But it also may get reluctant non-fiction readers interested.

This book is going to change the way people look at graphic novels. And I hope this leads others to follow in this direction.

Kim says

Wow! This book will hit you right in the feels. There was so much attention put forth into this book, every single detail. A profound, raw, important book that must be read.

Alicia says

A heartfelt reflection on his own life, author/illustrator Krosoczka decided after a TED talk gone viral to share his life's story in a graphic novel biography because the story makes anyone feel like their life could be understood when oftentimes there was tragic, scary, uncomfortable, or unfortunate events to happen in their life. For Krosoczka, his mother had him very young and was addicted at a very young age to drugs, notably, heroin which eventually took her life as he was writing *Hey, Kiddo*. He was raised by his grandparents who were as loving as they were sometimes aggressive with words (his grandmother) or alcohol (both of them). There was always family around. But the situations he experienced are those that kids are growing up in. He did have his art to work toward and was encouraged, eventually making a living at it and settling with his own family, but this is the snapshot of that time growing up that will connect him with a different set of readers and shares the pain but hopefulness that existed in his life, notably around addiction.

In addition, I liked the messages in the back as he ends the story but shares a bit more that can only really be accomplished with a few letters to readers in the back that complete the portrait. Thank you, Jarrett Krosoczka for allowing readers into this world and encouraging a whole new set of conversations with students.

Cassie Thomas says

I understand that when others read this book they may only focus on the fact that there is so much darkness, but from someone who experienced similar circumstances as a child and into adulthood - there was brightness in the fact that grandparents raised us, but the negative light that shone of biological parents was just that, negative. As someone who could relate to a lot of scenes in *Hey, Kiddo*, I am thankful to know that my experiences are who shaped me, just like Jarrett, I'm also thankful to know that the emotions I felt/feel are completely justified and "normal". There will be teenagers and adults who will NEED this book and there will be others who don't understand, and that's OK. It doesn't take away from the fact that Jarrett shared what shaped him in a beautiful memoir for others to read.

Scott Fillner says

It's really hard to put into words how amazing this book is...for now all I can say is you're just going to have to read it for yourself. The story, the back matter...all of it is just phenomenal.

Jamie-leigh Haughn says

*4.5

This was such an amazing way to tell a life story, the drawings were fantastic and fit so perfectly with the feel of the story. This book reminded me of a draw my life video and sucked me in totally. I don't typically read memoirs of people I don't know but I'm so glad I read this one. Definitely recommend you pick it up, but be warned this isn't a warm and fuzzy family story! It's real and it's harsh and heartbreaking, but also has silver linings and moments of warmth!

Lauren says

I received an ARC for free from the publisher.

Hey Kiddo is a graphic memoir following Jarrett, or "Ja", through his teen years being raised by his maternal grandparents because he never knew his father and, as he eventually finds out, his mother has been addicted to heroin since before he was born when she was a teen herself. Jarrett discovered art at a young age and basically used it as his lifeline. In one "panel" he tells the reader he used art as a child to get attention from his parents, in middle school as a way to impress his friends, but as a teen used it to survive.

One aspect that makes this story really special is all of the art (with the exception of two pieces he discusses in the back) are copies of his real art he's made through his life. When he's depicting himself as a child making art for school the picture we see him working on is an actual picture he made as a kid copied into the book. He wrote letters back and forth to his mom as she grew older and he includes those real letters from her. The chapter openers feature pineapples and it's literally the wallpaper from the house he grew up in: he found a roll of the wallpaper as they were cleaning it out one day and held on to it. These additions make it feel like the reader is having an even more personal interaction with the author and an authentic experience. It's like we've gone into the Pensieve in Harry Potter and are literally walking around in Jarrett's world.

Many teens will be able to relate to Jarrett's story and while it's depressing, there are many moments of hope. His overarching theme is "you have the power to make your family" whether it's your grandparents as your parents, your best friends as your siblings, etc. Its strength is his willingness to show the flaws in his family's behavior, including his own, and his choice in many cases to let his art speak for itself.

There are no page numbers, but some artistic moments that stick out to me are:

1. A scene taking place after the grandmother found out she'd had a miscarriage: it's all black with the glow of a TV screen as the source of lighting.
2. A scene where he discovers a letter from his father.
3. A scene as a child where he thinks he's visiting his mother at Christmastime to take her home with them but he's torn away from her when he finds out she isn't coming home. (My goodness, the crying face he gives himself as a kid RIPS ME APART)
4. The scenes where he recreates his recurring nightmares.

Scott Robins says

Emotionally raw and honest. I admire the courage of Krosoczka in sharing his story and Graphix for publishing such a daring book.

Heather says

Thank you, Jarrett, for writing an honest portrayal of your upbringing. Your honesty about having an addict for a mother. About being raided by your grandparents.

I'm sending this to my nephew.

Lola says

I only realized I have read this author before (five times, actually) when I read the author's note and realized that he's the creator of Lunch Lady.

No wonder I didn't figure it out. This is not humorous, or light, or action-packed like Lunch Lady is.

Because this is a memoir—the author's. And a very honest one at that. It's never easy to share your truth with the world, because what if your words are not well-received, what if you're judged, what if you didn't carry your message across?

But it's still important you try. I'm glad this author tried, despite his initial reluctance. He mentioned becoming motivated to create this graphic novel after giving a TED talk and receiving an overwhelmingly positive response, and I'm so glad he did.

In this book, we follow Jarrett from childhood to adolescence to graduating high school. We see him interact with his mother, who was a heroin addict, his grandparents, who raised him after witnesses their daughter's decline into darkness, and later on his father.

It's not an easy story to read, definitely darker than most YA graphic memoirs that get published. Actually, graphic memoirs to begin with aren't very popular, but those that I have read were nothing like this.

I'm not trying to say it's a depressive story. On the contrary, it is hopeful, family-focused, and will motivate you to do everything possible to accomplish your own dreams. But the child neglect, of course, affected me.

The author wrote this book in hope that readers will be able to understand and perhaps connect. I say he has achieved his goal. I can't wait for this book to come out and see it skyrocket to NYT bestselling status.

Kelli Gleiner says

Incredibly moving graphic novel memoir. The artwork does, as intended, look like a memory or dream sequence, and JJK's style has evolved deeply much from his earlier graphic novels.

I can see this book being very helpful for teens struggling with addicted parents or family members through its honest voice.

Ms. Yingling says

E ARC from Edelweiss Plus

In this graphic novel style memoir, Krosoczka describes the difficulties he faced growing up in the 1980s and 90s. His mother was not married and did not even list his father on his birth certificate, and struggled with addiction, mainly to heroin. After the age of three, Krosoczka was cared for by his grandparents and learned not to rely on seeing his mother, who was in and out of residential programs. His two aunts were still at home, and his basic needs were met, but his grandparents had problems of their own. Both alcoholics, they bordered on verbally abusive on occasion. Still, they were generally supportive and encouraged Krosoczka to pursue his art, which was something that helped him cope throughout his school career. In notes at the end, we learn a little about the way the book was written, and also that Krosoczka lost his mother in 2017 to a final heroin overdose.

Strengths: In the current climate where openness and frank discussion of issues is encouraged, this will be popular. Krosoczka tells his story in a compelling way and rolls up his sleeves rather than wrings his hands, and the artwork is excellent as always. I particularly liked the way he worked in some wallpaper from his childhood home.

Weaknesses: This is very frank, covering issues such as unmarried parents and drug and alcohol abuse, and has some vulgar language. The digital ARC was hard to read at spots, and the grandmother usually uses "fecking", but there was at least one full octane version of that word.

What I really think: I really don't want to buy this, because I think it will be hard for the book to find the right audience. Fans of graphic novels who pick this up expecting a light, fun read will be surprised. That being said, I do have students who are being raised by their grandparents because their parents are unfit, imprisoned, or deceased. Not that I'm going to push this book on those students, but other students might be more understanding if they read this, and all students should be able to see their experiences reflected in literature.

Laura Petrie says

Thanks to the @kidlitexchange network for the review copy of this book- All opinions are my own.--- When I saw that this ARC was available for review, I couldn't have been more excited. As a teacher, I have noticed my students picking up graphic novels more and more, so I never turn down the chance to find new titles for my library. I finished this graphic novel in one sitting, and I couldn't wait to share my thoughts on it.

Hey, Kiddo is a memoir written and illustrated by Jarrett J. Krosoczka in which he tells the story of his childhood dealing with the effects addiction had on his family. Because of heroin addiction, Jarrett's mother was unable to care for him, and his grandparents became his caretakers. This novel takes the reader on

Jarrett's journey all the way from his earliest memories up until his high school graduation. I loved this graphic novel for so many reasons. First, the art is phenomenal. Everything from the color schemes to the layout is well thought out. The emotion and message that is conveyed through picture is incredible. In some scenes, words simply weren't needed. Second, at each stage this story, the perceptions and observations of what is happening in Jarrett's life are so age appropriate. The narration provided for each memory has the perfect balance of being seen through eyes of whatever age the author was and hindsight commentary.

Ultimately, I loved this book for its message. I believe that many kids can identify with the concept of family being more than biological. Jarrett Krosoczka instills in his readers that although there are so many things in that are not in their control, they are indeed in control of their dreams and destiny. I urge anyone who works with young adults to add this to their libraries!
