THIS IS OUR CHILD

A. Cooper and V. Harpin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991. £7.50 pb.

This book is a collection of contributions written by parents, and two teenagers, describing their experiences of illness and treatment. The experiences described include giving birth to a child that has died, the births of a premature child, a child with congenital heart disease, a child with Down's syndrome, the experiences of a child developing severe handicap, leukaemia, aplastic anaemia, or a neuroblastoma, or having cystic fibrosis. The two teenagers describe their experience of leukaemia.

I found this book so readable that I read it through in one sitting. The accounts are movingly written. Each of them reminds us of how illness in one family member affects the whole family. The devastating effects of learning that a hospital admission or treatment has had to be postponed due to lack of beds is described. We are reminded how depressing it is for anyone (but, perhaps, especially for a child) when they find themselves being treated in a dark, cold, unwelcoming room.

My main criticism of the book is that, by aiming to be 'helpful to all health professionals working with children and their families', as well as 'of help and support to parents and children', it may fall between two stools. The title and cover are, I would suggest, more likely to appeal to the non-professional reader. Having said that, this book would be a good focus for initial discussion in a parent and/or staff group. It is sensibly priced and can be recommended for all those who are working with children and their families.

MARTIN NEWMAN

Senior Registrar in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

DODGER

Libby Gleeson. London: Puffin Books, 1992. £2.99 pb.

Mick, a 13-year-old Australian schoolboy, is a 'dodger' in two senses. On the one hand he finds it difficult to settle to school discipline, and on the other hand he is perfect for the part of the Artful Dodger in the school production of 'Oliver'. The book tells the story of his struggles to decide whether to take the part and his new teacher's strong belief in him, against all the evidence. Some of it is told through the letters written by his teacher to her friend. This is a clever device, which will be appreciated by young readers in spite of the use of some adult phrases like 'moral dilemma' and 'self-image'.

The underlying poignant theme is Mick's unresolved grief over his mother's death three years earlier. His sadness and anger are triggered at various points as we gradually learn what happened. Mick was left to 'take care' of his mother when his father was away working as a long-distance lorry driver. He had not been told how ill she was. She became worse and went to hospital and died. Mick felt let down, lied to and responsible for what happened. He was not allowed to see her body, or to go to the funeral and shut himself away, refusing to talk about it. Afterwards he was sent to live with Nan because his father was so often away.

All this gradually emerges through the events surrounding 'Oliver'. In the most dramatic incident Mick overhears the hated sports master running him down in a staff meeting. He goes back to the classroom and hurls furniture about, smashing a model made by the class. His teacher never stops believing in him and sensing his great need of help. In the end the Artful Dodger is a huge success the teacher wins Mick's confidence and he is helped to 'let it all out'.

The school background is convincing, the characters well drawn and the ups and downs of a school production well described. This book may well 'ring bells' for bereaved young teenagers, particularly because it is a good school story and not all about grief.

MARY BENDING

Cruse Counsellor, Bucks

INDEX TO BEREAVEMENT CARE
Volume 11 Spring 1992 - Winter 1992

Key: A = article
R = review
No 1 = Spring issue
No 2 = Summer issue
No 3 = Winter issue

Andrews M (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 36

Bass J (R) 1992: **11**, No. 1: 15
Billings A (A) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 14

Children Who Don't Want to Live (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15
Chronic Illness During Childhood and Adolescence (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15
Cooley J (A) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 11-13
Cooper A (R) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 40
Counselling HIV-positive young people with thalassaemia and haemophilia and their families (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 30-34

Dodger (R) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 40
Dyregrov A (R) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 39

Experiences of Death: an Anthropological Account (R) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 27

Freegard M (A) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 25-26

Garrison W T (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15
Gersie A (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15
Gibson M (A) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 23-24
Give Sorrow Words: working with a dying child (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15
Gleeson L (R) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 40
Good Grief 2. Exploring feelings, loss and death with under 11s. A companion to Good Grief 1 for older children (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15
Grief and trauma in children and adolescents (A) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 2-10
Grief in Children: a Handbook for Adults (R) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 39
Grief, loss of meaning and society (A) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 18-22
Grief work with a Vietnamese family (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 36

Hansen A S (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 37-39
Harpin V (R) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 40
Helping children to confront death (A) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 14
Hockey J (R) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 27
Hockey J (R) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 27-28
Holding on to my better half: in memoriam Bernard Bennington, 1931-1991 (A) 1991; **11**, No. 2: 25-26

Information and support to parents who lose a baby perinatally (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 37-39

Judd D (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15

Last Things: Social Work with the Dying and Bereaved (R) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 28
Learning from disasters (A) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 23-24
Loss (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 34-35
Lund D A (ed) (R) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 28

McQuiston S (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15
Making the Most of a Funeral (R) **11**, No. 2: 27
Marris P (A) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 18-22
Meyer M (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 30-34

Older Bereaved Spouses: Research with Practical Implications (R) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 28
Orbach J (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15

Philpott T (R) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 28
Pynoos R S (A) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 2-10

Shannon P (A) 1992; **11**, No. 2: 23-24
Storymaking in Bereavement: Dragons Fight in the Meadow (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15
Searchment for a way through : an account of bereavement work with a seven-year-old boy (A): 1992; **11**, No. 1: 11-13
Shindler A (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 34-35
Shindler D (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 35
Sutton (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 35

This Is Our Child (R) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 34
Tsiantis J (A) 1992; **11**, No. 3: 30-34

Ward B and associates (R) 1992; **11**, No. 1: 15

Please remember Cruse when you make your Will. We want to go on caring for the life that's left.

BEREAVEMENT CARE

is for bereavement counsellors and all who wish to deepen their understanding of bereavement. It is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be lent, resold, reproduced in part or in entirety, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's consent.

The editors welcome advertisements and inserts, but do not necessarily associate themselves with the views of the advertisers, or books advertised.

Editors: Colin Murray Parkes
MD DPM FRCPsych
Dora Black
MB ChB FRCPsych DPM

Managing Editor: Patricia Scowen
MA SRN HV

Editorial Office and Advertisements: Cruse—
Bereavement Care
126 Sheen Road,
Richmond,
Surrey TW9 1UR
(Tel. 081-940 4818)

Breveavement Care Journal—Subscription Rate 1993

U.K.: Individual Subscribers (i.e. paid for by individual subscriber for personal use) £10.00. Libraries and organisations (e.g. paid for by organisations and/or for multiple readership): £18.00. Cruse Branches: £7.50. Postage included.

Overseas Rate: Europe. Individual Subscribers (as defined above) £13.00. Libraries and Organisations (as defined above £19.00.

Countries Outside Europe: Individual Subscribers (as defined above) £18.00. Libraries and Institutions (as defined above) £25.00. All prices inclusive of air mail. Kindly remit by sterling draft payable in London.

Bereavement Care Journal is published three times a year in Spring, Summer and Winter. Payment may be made by cheque, money order or credit card (Mastercard, Eurocard, Visa, Access). Some back numbers available at £3.00 plus 35p postage (inland)

Copyright Cruse—Bereavement Care 1992

Printed by E. H. Baker & Co. Ltd., 86 Lower Mortlake Road, Richmond Surrey TW9 2JH.

Ref. 92199