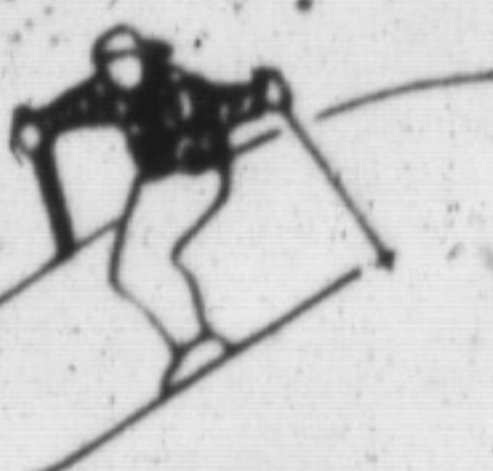


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## Some innovative approaches in children's books

*What Did Mommy Do Before You?*, a new picture book at the Milton Public Library, answered this question in a different way than I had imagined. I thought author Abby Levine would talk about careers that mothers had prior to childbirth, but instead she talks about something that would probably appeal more to a youngster. Levine starts her story when the mother is a baby herself, then a toddler, a teenager and so on until the point at which she gives birth.

### Bookmark

with ESTHER CALDWELL

A mother in *Waiting for Hannah* by Matisabina Russo talks to her daughter Hannah about what her life was like before the girl was born. Rather than focusing on the anatomical aspects of the pregnancy, she describes the passing of time, the wonderful expectations, and the growing of the morning glories whose first blossom bursts forth on the daughter's birth day.

Meanwhile, Anna Grossnickle Hines takes a young boy in *Big Like Me* through the first year of his sibling's life. Month by month, the baby grows and learns, with the brother as its special teacher.

Since we are talking babies, the second edition of *Guide to Baby Products* by Sandy Jones will help you select high-quality products, get the best value for what you spend, and protect a child from hazards of which you may be unaware. This Consumer Reports book covers hundreds of essential items — playpens, toys, cribs, apple juice, hook-on chairs and bottles, to name a few.

Grandmas always hold a special place in a child's heart. In Harriet Ziefert's *With Love from Grandma*, Sarah's grandmother knits her a warm, woolly afghan for her bed. The entire family gathers to sew the strips together.

Jason and Jessica are fed up with their mothers and decide to trade places for a weekend. The mothers are willing but the children soon discover that there's no place like home in Amy Hest's comical *The Mommy Exchange*.

A children's book on interracial adoption and another on cancer are probably most suited to be read to children who are experiencing the same things in their lives. *We Adopted You, Benjamin Koo* by Linda Walvoord Girard deals with a childless couple in America who greet their new Korean baby at the airport. Benjamin Koo is the narrator.

Ben has leukemia in Althea's *I Have Cancer*. Once again, the child narrates. In a matter-of-fact fashion and in simple language, Ben describes his stays in the hospital and explains chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

*I Meant to Clean My Room Today*. Haven't we all heard that one? The little girl in Miriam Nerlove's story thinks up imaginative excuses for not tackling her messy room. She claims a pink monkey drops in to play. She also has to take a break from housework so she and a visiting grey cow can read some of her books.

Dr. Kevin Leman might have something to say to that child. In *Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours*, he introduces reality discipline, where actions speak louder than words. He offers entertaining, real-life situations that prove that his method is successful.

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