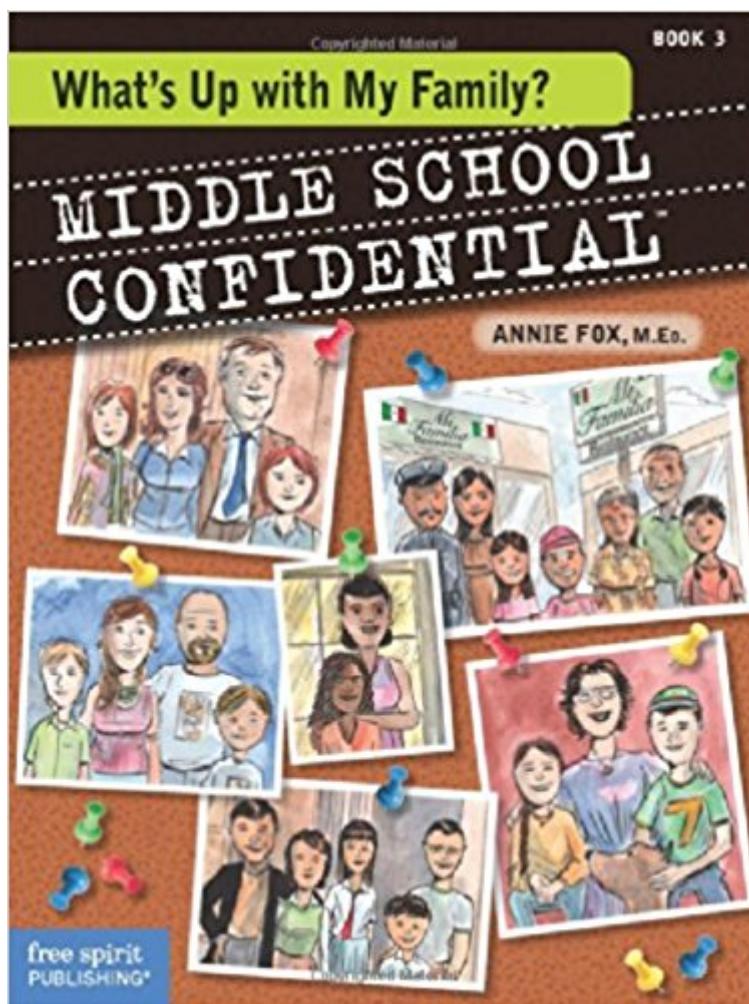


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# What's Up With My Family? (Middle School Confidential)



## Synopsis

“We were all hanging out at Jack’s house waiting for Jen. That’s when Mateo’s phone rang . . .” So begins the third book in the Middle School Confidential series. This time around it’s family life that Jack, Jen, Chris, Abby, Mateo, and Michelle are trying hard to figure out—for example, how to negotiate family rules, routines, and responsibilities. Like previous books in the series, *What’s Up with My Family?* is packed with tips, tools, quotes, quizzes, and other fun features that complement the character narratives. The book offers expert information for getting along with parents and handling common concerns that come up at home. Readers will find advice for dealing with sibling conflicts, coping with divorce and life in a blended family, and being assertive when adults are genuinely unfair. The result? Teen and tween readers are able to strengthen relationships at home even as they become more independent.

## Book Information

Series: Middle School Confidential (Book 3)

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 6–9  
In a conversational text that includes page-length illustrated scenarios, bulleted tips, and sidebar-length sections of advice, Fox imparts solid information about family relationships. Chapters titled "I'm Not a Little Kid Anymore!" "Fuel-ish Thinking," and "Moods and Attitudes," among others, tackle issues such as understanding protective parents, learning how to stop the kind of thinking that "fuels" confrontation, adjusting to change, battling a bad mood, and connecting with family history. Throughout the book the author uses quotes from real teens that

send a clear message that many young adults are dealing with these same problems. Readers will easily relate to the situations posed and perhaps take to heart some of Fox's suggestions and tips. Several "Need to Know" entries list resources—books and Web sites—and practical ideas such as using a yoga pose to de-stress are found throughout the volume. The layouts, fonts, and background colors vary from page to page, adding to the book's appeal. Joanne K. Cecere, Monroe-Woodbury High School, Central Valley, NY (c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

"Gr 6—In a conversational text that includes page-length illustrated scenarios, bulleted tips, and sidebar-length sections of advice, Fox imparts solid information about family relationships. Chapters titled "I'm Not a Little Kid Anymore!"—"Fuel-ish Thinking," and "Moods and Attitudes," among others, tackle issues such as understanding protective parents, learning how to stop the kind of thinking that "fuels" confrontation, adjusting to change, battling a bad mood, and connecting with family history. Throughout the book the author uses quotes from real teens that send a clear message that many young adults are dealing with these same problems. Readers will easily relate to the situations posed and perhaps take to heart some of Fox's suggestions and tips. Several "Need to Know" entries list resources—books and Web sites—and practical ideas such as using a yoga pose to de-stress are found throughout the volume. The layouts, fonts, and background colors vary from page to page, adding to the book's appeal." School Library Journal "Using a magazine-style format that is part graphic novel and part nonfiction advice, Fox helps teens work out family problems like sibling rivalry, blended families, over-protective parents, and dealing with loss. The graphic novel follows the six teens in the previous *Middle School Confidential* books, using their stories to illustrate the problems discussed and giving examples of how to handle them. The book is full of tips on strengthening family relationships while working through the challenges every family faces. Throughout are comments from teens sharing their feelings on the topics, while "Need to Know?" sidebars in each chapter give a few Web sites and books that teens can read for more information. Quizzes help readers think through their own situations and relate the information in the chapter to individual needs. This short, readable book will attract even reluctant readers with the format and give practical advice for all teens on improving family life. The author is an educator and an online advisor for a teen Web site. Although the information would be useful for older teens as well, the series title limits the appeal to middle schoolers. It would be a useful book in a school

library or for counselors and their teen clients. [What's Up with My Family?] incorporates a magazine-like design and beautiful graphic-novel-style illustrations. . . . Annie Fox delivers valuable, practical advice on family relationships with real-life examples that tug at the heartstrings. I highly recommend this book to children, families, and educators. • Once Upon a Book "What's Up with My Family?" tackles real-life challenges, from daily drama with parents and siblings to life-changing issues like divorce or the loss of a parent. The book blends the best of ready-to-use strategies with stories from the Middle School Confidential cast of characters. Another brilliant addition to the series! • Joe Buzzese, author of A Parent's Guide to the Middle School Years "The third in the fantastic series of must-have middle school backpack stuffers . . . this [book] looks at how kids relate with their families. • Reach and Teach "Annie Fox does a nice job of showing both sides of how both children and parents feel. • Amy Barseghian, M.S.E., Parent Coach "In her latest book, Annie Fox tackles the universal problem of conflict between tweens, teens, and parents. Families that use this book just might miss out on a lot of the relationship challenges that seem like a rite of passage. • Tina Nocera, founder, Parental Wisdom "What makes this book so unique is that not just girls will want to read it! Boys will dig it, too. • Special Needs Kids Examiner

Was excited to get this book for my young nephew starting middle school. He was given the book for Christmas. He wasn't as excited as his aunt was. I am confident that one day of his young years that he will pick the book up and find answers to his young life. The multicultural and the different issues of today's families is a wonderful way to embrace the young mind and finish the book. Good writing. Thank you.

this was cute. it didn't focus much on what I was hoping but its still a good book for children in and from broken homes

Purchased for my daughters summer reading. It arrived in excellent condition and she really enjoyed it.

Good book however questions to author at the end of book are PG13. Our 10 year old son loves this series.

My son needed this for summer reading. It was a cute, quick read for him.

I own the whole middle school series. I work as a school counselor and our 5th graders love it! These are helpful books that will support kids as they transition to middle school. Just bringing up this topic can raise anxiety in the room. So wouldn't it be nice to have a hip, relevant, contemporary book series to help students transition from elementary to middle school? Done and done! Series found. And how do I know Middle School Confidential is doing wonders for future middle schoolers? Because kids are asking me for the fourth book (publication pending)! Since the moment I introduced the books, I've barely seen them since. A steady stream of 5th graders have been checking them out from my bookshelf. When asking kids how they like the series and how it's helping them - I was delighted by their responses. Students are taking skills they've learned from Middle School Confidential and utilizing them in their daily lives. One student recommended I share with 5th graders an activity called "Who Are Your Real Friends?" from Real Friends vs the Other Kind because it helped her evaluate her own friendships. A book that decreases friendship drama? Love it. The students who have read the series have had a noticeably improved attitude about entering middle school. That shift in perspective is allowing kids to not dread but embrace their middle grade years. I encourage teachers, school librarians, and parents to get these on your bookshelves. They won't be sitting idle for long. Looking forward to the fourth book!

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