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Open: A Toolkit for how magic and messed up life can be

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New to Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Teenage guides to love, life and everything are not new, but to attract more than a passing glance and avoid being dismissed as worthy, they must strike a chord with the mood of the moment. Gemma Cairney certainly succeeds in this. As a mentor and "agony aunt" she has real credibility. Her approach is chatty and direct; her vocabulary contemporary and colloquial. She draws on her own life experience as well as her expertise in using the interview. The result is engaging and immediate - and authoritative.

Her book is organised under four headings - Heart, Mind, Body and Soul, Your World. Here the young reader will find guidance on every aspect of teenage concern from family and relationships through addiction and, sex to politics and volunteering. The topics are presented in non-threatening way and the whole is designed so the reader can dip in and out (an index helps guide the enquirer to the right page). Further reading is suggested, both factual and fiction while there is a list of websites at the end. Though it will certainly appeal mainly to girls and young women, boys could find it useful, consulting it without embarrassment. The title is deliberately non-specific and eye-catching. Coloured pages, speech bubbles, case histories all combine to create a very attractive package. Though here I have a small caveat - a small font, and a coloured background can make the text difficult to access for some. Nevertheless this is a very welcome addition to the shelves. Recommended indeed.

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