



Book Review

The Original Foster Care Survival Guide **Author: Paul E. Knowlton**

The *Original Foster Care Survival Guide* is a one-of-a-kind book packed full of advice for the teenager in foster care. This book takes the reader on a journey down the rough road of foster care through the eyes of the main characters, Peter, a blind teenager who is presently in foster care, and his mentor, Sage, who has successfully made it through the foster care system. The story is told in a creative nonfiction format set in Atlanta during the late '80s. Peter and Sage form a mentoring relationship using tandem bicycle riding as a metaphor. This book was written by Paul E. Knowlton and published in 2005. Mr. Knowlton is an attorney who entered the foster care system as a child in 1965, and experienced first-hand the need for a guide to help him as he grew up in foster care.

Overall, the book imparts the wisdom of one who has gone through foster care to one who is presently in foster care. The 137 page book is a quick read. I would most recommend this book be used with a foster teen group as material for discussion. There is a discussion guide for each chapter in the form of Socratic questions located in the back of the book. Used in a discussion group format, the questions would allow the reader to focus on each chapter and process their own thoughts about how the content relates to their personal experience.

I recommend the reading of this book by older teens (15-19). I suggest more caution with the younger teen reader because of the writer's use of profanity in an attempt to keep the content true to life. The parent/adult may want to read the book with their teen. This book would be helpful to teenagers in foster care, foster parents, and professionals who desire to help teens transition into adulthood.

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