



2006

Call Me Hope

Holly Dickman

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Dickman, Holly (2006) "Call Me Hope," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 27 : Iss. 5 , Article 18.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol27/iss5/18>

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Olson, Gretchen. *Call Me Hope*. Little, Brown, 2007. ISBN 9780316012362. \$15.99. 288 p.

Reviewer: Holly Dickman

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Contemporary Realistic Fiction;

Subject: Child abuse--Juvenile fiction; Mothers and daughters--Juvenile fiction; Schools--Juvenile fiction; Books—Reviews

Hope is battered by her mother's abusive words. Despite the eleven-year-old's desperate attempts to please her mother, her efforts often evoke anger as her mother yells abusive phrases such as "stupid" and "hopeless". Hope does all she can to escape her mother's verbal abuse, but it never seems to be enough. Fortunately, Hope is not alone. She has the support of two women who run a second-hand store, one particular classmate, her caring older brother, and the story of Holocaust survivor, Anne Frank. Through these relationships, Hope's resilience to withstand her mother strengthens. As the most important event of the sixth grade approaches (a week long camping trip), conflict mounts when Hope decides she must take a stand against her mother's angry words.

Hope's story gives a realistic and painful depiction of the negative effect verbal abuse can have on a child. At the end of the book, a list of "Hope Notes" provides helpful ideas on how readers can deal with verbal abuse in their own lives. Although sprinkled with slight profanity, *Call Me Hope* would be a useful addition to middle and high school libraries.