



The Truth About Stacey

Ann M. Martin

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A fresh new look for the beloved series -- set to relaunch just after a brand-new prequel hits stores! The truth about Stacey is that she has diabetes, a fact she keeps secret from everyone except her new friends in the Baby-sitters Club. But Stacey's condition causes a lot of problems, and she has to miss a lot of BSC meetings. Can she find a solution before her new friends get sick of her disease?

The Truth About Stacey Details

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From Reader Review The Truth About Stacey for online ebook

Josette says

My 7 year old daughter recommended this book to me--"mom, it's really good, you've gotta read it"--so I did. One of the joys of sharing books w/ your children--you get to talk about characters/situations together and they can become part of your family's "culture". (Although I'm not sure "Babysitter's Club" books will become part of our family culture--I was thinking more about Chronicles of Narnia, or Winnie the Pooh or James and the Giant Peach)

karen says

stacey's all grewed up!!

but she's still incredibly fashionable!

Maria says

The truth about Stacey is she has diabetes! and a severe case, too, just to make things worse! I like this book because I liked learning about diabetes and how hard it is for Stacey. This book was really good! five stars!

Sass says

The binge continues...

Courtney says

And what, might you ask, is the truth about Stacey? Well, I wouldn't want to give it away...but...

Logan Hughes says

Stacey is threatened by a rival baby-sitting club and a new diabetes doctor.

There are two main conflicts in this book. One is the new baby-sitting club. Eighth-graders Liz Lewis and Michelle Patterson have started their own business, the Baby-sitters Agency, with several key advantages over the BSC. They boast older sitters with later curfews, including boys (OMG), and they don't restrict the

clients to specific meeting times--parents can call anytime. The club isn't sure how to handle this new threat, and they're worried, especially when a few meetings go by with almost no calls. In the midst of this, Mrs. Newton has her baby, Lucy, and at an impromptu "big brother party" the girls throw together for Jamie, Jamie tearfully tells them that they can't be his baby-sitters anymore because Mrs. Newton wants someone older for the newborn.

The baby-sitters try a few different tactics. After seeing the BSA's aggressive membership drive at school, they advertise for older sitters, too (Kristy makes everyone wear sandwich boards in school, and if the BSC didn't already have a nerdy reputation, here's where it officially begins). This is thwarted, though, when the new members turn out to be moles from the agency, sent to do recon on the BSC and ruin their reputation by no-showing on the jobs they signed up for. Kristy also wants to offer lower rates and free housework, but Mary Anne and Claudia reject this as demeaning. Kristy's only successful idea is Kid-Kits, boxes the sitters will take along on their jobs with a rotating selection of toys and games--none of it has to be new, just new to the kids. Kids like the kits (will be referenced in pretty much every BSC book from now on), but this word-of-mouth isn't enough for a serious advantage.

Through their charges, the Baby-sitters begin to hear bad reports about the BSA sitters. They don't spend time with the kids or appear to like them very much. The baby-sitters don't know what to do with this information; they fear if they tattle on their competition, they'll look like poor sports. When they find Jamie wandering around unsupervised in the street without his winter gear, they decide that his safety is more important than their reputation and tell Mrs. Newton. She's appalled that Jamie's sitter was so irresponsible and promises to warn other parents off the agency, although she will continue to use some of the individual older sitters she found through them for Lucy. (Although Lucy doesn't age in any serious way, and neither do our sitters, they'll be taking care of her soon enough.)

Onto conflict #2. Early on, Stacey's parents tell her they want her to see a new doctor in New York. Stacey doesn't want to go, feeling that her parents are looking for an impossible miracle cure when she feels totally fine and has her diabetes under control. She mentions the new doctor to Dr. Johanssen and learns that he isn't very well respected in the medical community. He's not actively harmful; he's flashy but ineffective, kind of the Gilderoy Lockhart of juvenile onset diabetes care. While worrying about the Agency, Stacey dreads this trip, where she'll have to go to this doctor and see her ex-friend Laine for the first time since moving away. Dr. Johanssen wrangles her an appointment with a more traditional doctor, and Stacey promises to go to her parents' doctor if she can also go to her own. They agree, and end up trusting Dr. Johanssen's friend more than the pop-fizz-whang-bang doctor. Stacey also tells Laine about her condition and the two make up.

Stacey's characterization is great here, and sets the stage for my favorite Stacey books. She realizes how much the club and her new friends mean to her when they're threatened, and she's among the more gung-ho fighters in the battle of the clubs, second only to Kristy. She is hardworking and smart. Actually, oth plots show our girls to be more mature and responsible than their elders. (Most of them. Dr. Johanssen proves to be one of the good grown-ups.) One of the central themes of the series seems to be the young heroines' boundless capacity for wisdom and responsibility. I approve, really; they're not perfect, and I like that they set a high standard of normal behavior.

The two plotlines are integrated very well pacing-wise. Stacey has to go to New York at what feels like a key moment in BSA drama, but in fact the events she misses (which the other sitters fill her in on) are pretty boring housecleaning stuff that we didn't need to see up close. All BSC books are about the same length, but this feels like one of the longest, jam-packed with two exciting plotlines, with a birth thrown in for good measure. There's plenty of baby-sitting, but because it all supports the BSC/BSA A-plot, it never feels like doing time.

The two plotlines are never actively compared, and it wasn't until I was writing this review (after many years and many readings) that I consciously realized that they have the same moral: in medical care, as in child care, it's better to go with professionals you trust rather than gamble on something unproven. Flashy fad businesses may pop up here and there, but that dependable quality and conscientiousness will win out in the end. In this book, we see this moral from the point of view both of competitor and a potential client of said flashmongers. It's a good moral and one that I believe people should believe, although I'm not sure it's actually true.

Title Oddity: The title of this book makes everyone misremember as it as the book in which we/the Baby-sitters learn that Stacey has diabetes, but actually that happens in #1. We do get more backstory here. Stacey explains that her old friends in New York were freaked out by her symptoms, particularly her best friend Laine, and that's why she never told them her diagnosis, and everything was left on pretty bad terms. She hints that she and Laine had been having problems anyway, having to do with the new girl, Allison Ritz. It's odd how many details are already in place for the story she'll recount in *The Baby-sitters Remember*.

Business Model Review: Basically, the Baby-sitters Agency is finding service; the two leaders, whose phone numbers are listed on the flier, take calls and then turn around do the legwork of finding a sitter for you. Instead of club dues, the Agency leaders take a cut of whatever their contractors make as a finder's fee. This seems much more convenient for parents than the dumb little call-in window the BSC offers, although it must be hell for Liz and Michelle to be taking calls and playing phone tag at all hours of the day. It must seriously eat into their leisure time. (Maybe that explains why they give up after a few weeks.) And what happens if parents call during the school day? Do Liz and Michelle's parents take messages for them? Do they have an answering machine, as I'm always advising for the BSC?

With dedicated message-takers, and a theoretically infinite network of (what the BSC would call associate) members, it seems like this club could be a lot more efficient and profitable than the BSC, but (as the book successfully conveys) it seems a lot colder and less personal. While there's nothing in this model that inherently encourages bad sitter behavior, there's also no discernable quality control, and when you think about, the meetings do a lot for the BSC besides organizational time: it encourages the baby-sitters to share their joy and interest in the kids they sit for and create a culture of shared information. When Mary Anne trumps Liz in an impromptu trivia session about the clients' allergies and interests, it's not just because the BSC are simply better sitters--it's because they have a hive mind.

Robin says

True story- this was the first BSC book I ever read. I get how and why it propelled me into a huge Baby-Sitters Club obsession, too. Upon rereading this book, it's really clear how Ann M. Martin never initially meant to go past book #4. Her writing style in the first four books is dramatically different from her contributions to the rest of the series. The reading level is a bit higher than future books, meaning that either the target audience was a bit higher than the actual audience, or that, sadly, it needed to be dumbed down a bit to be more accessible. Or maybe a bit of both?

I was surprising to realize how heavily researched this book was. It goes way more in depth about the intricacies of Stacey's diabetes, and does it honestly (i.e Stacey actually says she has to eat sweets, but to do so in moderation and with a greater idea of her diet in mind- none of this bullshit "I could eat an M&M and

die" business from later books). Stacey comes across as highly sympathetic, as a survivor and a bit of a badass. I like to think this book was the root of my childhood Stacey adoration, rather than the embarrassment that is Boy-Crazy Stacey (see my reviews from yesterday for that nightmare).

The other plot (neither is really a B-plot; the book doesn't follow the A-B formula of future books) revolves around the BSC's handling of a competing group, the Baby-Sitters Agency. This was pretty compelling.

All in all? This was a solid BSC effort. I'm finding that as I reread the books, I'm either loving or hating each one that I read. The Truth About Stacey is definitely love-worthy.

Candise says

BSC was instrumental in bringing to the forefront those hard-hitting issues weighing on every upper-middle class goody-two-shoe New England girl. Here, we learn about the horrible secret Stacey (the pretty/popular girl) has been hiding. I won't spill the beans, but *she can't eat sugar!!* I know, I almost fainted, too. But with the BSC, you know we'll all make it through!

Ciara says

the truth about stacey is that she has childhood-onset diabetes. big fucking deal. i mean, i'm sure it sucks for her, having to watch her diet & everything. my dad had diabetes & it was no picnic for him (though he did not have to give himself insulin shots). but the way they build up to it, you'd think she was typhoid mary or something. the way these books were written, i got the idea that diabetes was an STI when i was a kid (cut me some slack, i was seven years old, it was 1986, & we were surrounded by safer sex lectures & STI information everywhere we went, but it was really vague information that only served to make us all completely confused & freaked out). i found it really disturbing that a 12-year-old had an STI & i felt really bad for stacey. eventually i realized that diabetes is not an STI & i felt a lot better because i'd been really worried that stacey had been molested or something. but then i realized that the way diabetes is written in these books is really weird.

this is the first confession that stacey has to give herself daily insulin shots. she refers to them as "gross" & says that she will never allow any of her friends to see her giving herself a shot. i hope she gets over that at some point in her life (not that she is a real person), because it's really not gross & no big deal at all. though i understand what she means when she says that she hates it because it makes her feel for just a minute like a very sick person. & that is hard to deal with.

this whole book is all about stacey's parents wanting to take her to another fancy doctor who claims to have a "cure" for juvenile diabetes. but stacey is happy with her treatments & is in good health & is angry with her parents for uprooting her all the time for doctor appointments & making her feel sicker than she is. she finally stands up for herself & her parents back off.

the B-plot involves some older girls forming a babysitting agency to compete with the babysitters club. they can stay out later & have a wider variety of sitters. they snake a lot of BSC's business before the girls figure out that the agency's sitters are kind of shitty & the charges don't like them. they convince the charges to tell their parents about the bad things the agency sitters do, & the parents go back to using the BSC. there's this ludicrous scene where the club confronts the two girls who run the agency & basically play twenty questions to determine who is a better sitter: "what's nina marshall allergic to?" "what does it mean when eleanor rubs her ears?" etc etc. the agency girls answer all the questions wrong & the BSc is all, "yeah! take that!" & it seems like the most embarrassing victory in the world to me. "yeah, we're better sitters because we spend all our time with small neighborhood children & know their obnoxious little quirks! BOOYAH, MOTHAFUCKA!" not so much, BSC. but i'm sure i thought it was awesome when i was seven.

Cait S says

Great book in a series of great books. Much more female empowered than the last one which I had to rant about so that's awesome.

?Jordan? says

Uh Oh! Looks like there is new competition in Stoney Brook! What happens when a new babysitter club forms? AND all these babysitters are older. The girls start losing jobs and don't know what to do. Can they regain control and beat out this new competition? On a side note: I loved how much information is shared about diabetes in the book.

Sarah says

3 Stars

I think my favorite part of this story was the BSC dealing with the Baby Sitters Agency. I appreciated how Stacey's parents kept searching for something better to deal with her diabetes, but now reading it as an adult I can't help thinking how much money that probably cost :)

Rebecca McNutt says

This book is definitely nostalgic for me, but although I enjoyed it as a kid, reading it now makes me wonder what ever possessed me to like reading this series. Still, despite its choppy sentences and limited vocabulary, this isn't a bad book for elementary school children.

Suzanne says

My all time favourite series as a young girl! I looked forward to Book Club day (Ashton Scholastic) with

anticipation and my \$5.95 in an envelope. When I missed one my mum and I would go to Grace Brothers Parramatta where I could buy a copy. I was in year 5 at public school, the books came out monthly and I discovered them when no. 2 came out, so I wasn't too late and didn't miss a book. It was a monthly publication and I always looked forward to the next. I purchased them until I was 'too old', then continued buying through eBay to complete my collection many years later (I have two daughters). They read them till they were 'too old'. I didn't collect all of the off-shoot series, there were too many, but my oldest daughter decided to collect the Little Sister ones, but didn't complete it as she was again, too old. The thing is this. I read them and loved them, excited to keep reading. This was reading for pleasure, and about wholesome storylines and simple themes. My girls now read a little bit, but they are more interested in their iPhones and communication that way, and instant gratification. It makes me sad. I'll read these again. This book introduced me to New York, and started my little obsession with the city. I'll go there one day! I remember reading this one at Bateau Bay beach, in the summer holidays with my Aunty. I have the sand in the spine stuck to the plastic contact to prove it. Love these book memories <3

Erin Dunlevy says

Great! Not only did it...

Great not only did it educated me about diabetes, but it Was a epic book!
