We are entering a time of year when families like to share the joy of reading. As always, we want to help share that joy too. Below is a list of notable recent books written for young people all of which represent a variety of genres, topics, and cultures*. We hope you’ll find something on the list worthy of sharing for whatever your or your family enjoy.

Lynn & Carol
Catlin Gabel MS Library

*Note: All books are recommended for readers of all ages, though some may be more suitable for older audiences.

**Harbor Me** by Jacqueline Woodson

It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat—by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for “A Room to Talk”), they discover it’s safe to talk about what’s bothering them—everything from Esteban’s father’s deportation and Haley’s father’s incarceration to Amari’s fears of racial profiling and Ashton’s adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver and more ready for the rest of their lives.

**Amal Unbound** by Aisha Saeed

Twelve-year-old Amal's dream of becoming a teacher one day is dashed in an instant when she accidentally insults a member of her Pakistani village's ruling family. As punishment for her behavior, she is forced to leave her family behind and work on the ruling family’s estate. Amal summons her courage and begins navigating the complex rules of life as a servant. Amal gains an increasing awareness of the deadly measures the Khan family will go to in order to stay in control. It's clear that their hold over her village will never loosen as long as everyone is too afraid to challenge them—so if Amal is to have any chance of ensuring her loved ones' safety and winning back her freedom, she must find a way to work with the other servants to make it happen.

**A Season of Daring Greatly** by Ellen Emerson White

Jill Cafferty is 6’2” high school senior with a fastball that consistently clocks over 90 mph. She gets drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates and becomes the first woman to enter major league baseball. On the Pirates’ minor league team, some people are welcoming, some hostile, and some want to know first what she can do. Off the field Jill meets sexism that ranges from subtle and stupid to vicious with remarkable presence of mind. The mixture of these responses and how Jill navigates such an environment are at the core of this wonderful story. Will Jill’s stress prevent her from making it to the team, or will she find a way to focus it and be successful as a pro ball player?
You Don’t Know Everything Jilly P! by Alex Gino

Jilly thinks she's figured out how life works. But when her sister, Emma, is born deaf, she realizes how much she still has to learn. The world is going to treat Jilly, who is white and hearing, differently from Emma, just as it will treat them both differently from their Black cousins. Jilly connects online with Derek, a Deaf, Black ASL user, seeks his help with Emma, but she doesn't always know the best way or time to ask for it. She makes mistakes along the way, but comes to understand that it's up to her, not Derek to figure out how to do better next time. A humorous, heart-felt story showing that being open to difference can make you a better person, and being open to change can make you change in the best possible ways.

Gem & Dixie by Sara Zarr

Gem took care of her younger sister Dixie when their parents were addicts, but once Dixie started high school she stopped idolizing Gem. Dixie makes friends easily, whereas Gem is lonely, an outcast. Their mom got sober and kicked their dad out, but she struggles to pay rent and buy food. When the girls’ dad shows up out of the blue with money to burn, Dixie is thrilled, Gem suspicious, their mom furious; she tells him to go again. He leaves behind a hidden backpack full of money that Gem finds. She sees it as a chance for her and Dixie to leave. Dixie, sees their journey as an adventure; for Gem it’s survival. Their dad leaves messages demanding the money, and Gem and Dixie are often at odds. There are many threads of genuine hope here, even though this story doesn’t minimize poverty or despair.

Miles Morales: Spider-Man by Jason Reynolds

Miles is half Black, half Puerto Rican, and comfortable in his own skin. The same can’t be said for how he feels about other aspects of his identity. He’s a scholarship student from a poor Brooklyn neighborhood attending an elite prep school. He wants to do well for himself, his family, and community, but it’s a lot of pressure. Then there’s the fact that he’s Spider-Man, and only one other person knows. Miles was visiting his ex-con Uncle Aaron when he was bitten by the spider that transformed him. For all his superpowers, Miles wonders if he has the same bad blood that made his uncle turn to crime. And worse, being a superhero doesn’t mean Miles can solve the challenges in his neighborhood. Eventually, Miles comes to understand and confront a threat to the world.
Pemmican Wars by Katherena Vermette, Illustrated by Scott B. Henderson

Echo is a 13-year-old Métis girl who just started at a new school. During history class she finds herself transported back to Qu’Appelle Valley in 1814, watching Métis hunt buffalo. Class after class, as they learn about the events leading to the Pemmican Wars in Canada, Echo is witnessing them firsthand. As she travels back in time she learns more about what is happening from a young Métis woman, who pays more attention to Echo than any of her classmates. In the present, Echo dives into research to learn more about this time in history. All of it provides a connection to her Métis heritage, something she’s never learned much about. A wonderful graphic novel that is part history, and part imaginative time travel.

The Marrow Thieves by Cherie Dimaline

In a not-too-distant future when environmental devastation has killed millions, many people no longer dream when they sleep. At the Canadian government’s new residential “schools,” the dreams of Indigenous people are distilled from their marrow for later use by the wealthy and privileged. Sixteen-year-old Frenchie escaped school Recruiters at 11 and has been with his found family ever since. One elder, one middle-aged adult, four teens, and four children from several Nations, they are constantly on the move evading Recruiters as new schools are built further and further north. Although skilled at survival, safety is an unknown destination, and when tragedy strikes at the heart of their group Frenchie decides the time has come to stop running and take a stand.

The Pearl Thief by Elizabeth Wein

No one expected Julia to come home from school for summer break three days early. So no one thinks to worry when an unconscious girl is admitted to the local hospital. It’s Julia, who was hit on the head when she wandered down to the river after arriving home to an empty house. Identified after a few days, she has only spotty memories of the attack. As she struggles to remember, concern mounts over the disappearance of the professor who was cataloging historical items of her family’s estate. And where are the river pearls that once filled the reliquary, a centuries-old wooden cup given to the family by the ancestors of Ellen and Euan McEwan? The McEwans are Travellers. and were the ones who found Julia. But because they’re Travellers, the McEwans are suspect in many people’s minds, a prejudice that infuriates Julia, who finds she likes them a lot. This is a great mystery!
"This Is Just a Test" by Madelyn Rosenberg and Wendy Wan-Long Shang

It is 1983, and a late Cold War, made-for-television movie called The Day After, which imagines what happens in a small U.S. town after a nuclear bomb is dropped, leaves 7th grader David Horowitz upset and unsettled. Until the movie, his greatest worry was his upcoming bar mitzvah. Now it’s the end of the world. Then again, he’s sometimes just as worried about things exploding in his own home, where his Chinese maternal grandmother, Wai Po, who lives with his family, and his Jewish paternal grandmother, who moved from New Jersey to around the corner after Wai Po moved in, are often at odds in quietly cutting ways. David’s also trying to navigate a new friendship with Scott, a boy who teamed up with David and David’s longtime best friend, Hector, for a trivia contest. They won. Now Scott, who also saw The Day After, has invited David to help him dig a fall-out shelter, and has made it patently clear Hector, who is far from being a cool kid, is not included.

"When Dimple Met Rishi" by Sandhya Menon

Teenage Dimple Shah loves coding and wants to be an app designer. She’s not interested in having a boyfriend, let alone thinking about getting married. Rishi Patel embraces traditional Indian values, respects his parents and their opinions, and wants to make them happy. When Dimple and Rishi’s parents decide the two would be a good match, Rishi embraces the idea. He agrees to attend the same summer app development program that Dimple is going to. He doesn’t know Dimple hasn’t learned about the informal arrangements their parents have made for their lives after college. It’s the perfect setup for this romantic comedy with a Bollywood flair (sans singing—although they do dance!) when Dimple, angry and appalled by what Rishi tells her when they meet, finds herself thrown together on a project at the camp.

"When Morning Comes" by Arushi Raina

Set in Johannesburg in 1976, this novel presents four different points of view on the same historical events. Zanele, a Black South African teenage girl, is active in the liberation movement. Meena, an East Indian girl who is just becoming radicalized, wants to be part of the movement. Their lives intertwine with each other’s and those of Thebo, a Black South African teenage boy who is a gang member and not politically active, and Jack, a privileged white boy who falls in love with Zanele. She is charismatic, and all three of the others are drawn to her. As the point of view changes frequently, the pace quickens, building to a resolution that will have readers on the edge of their seats.

* Most of the descriptions here are based on the **CCBC Choices 2018** list from the Cooperative Children’s Book Center at the University of Wisconsin.