

## BOOK CORNER

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# What Works with Teens: A Professional's Guide to Engaging Authentically with Adolescents to Achieve Lasting Change

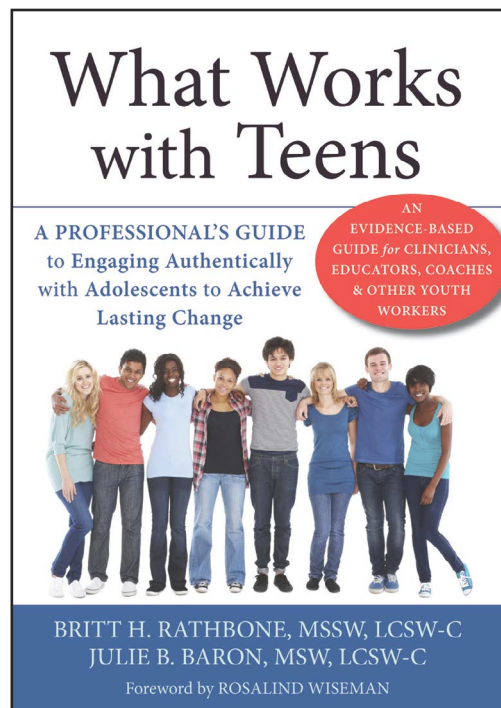
**Britt Rathbone, LCSW-C and Julie Baron, LCSW-C**

*Reviewed by: Emily Hershenson*

GWSCSW member Britt Rathbone is acutely aware of the challenges and the rewards of working with teenagers. In his most recent book, Mr. Rathbone and his colleague Julie Baron have carefully charted what's effective and what's not effective when encountering this population. In addition to psychotherapists, the co-authors have sought to target coaches, educators and other professionals who are regularly involved with adolescents as an audience for this publication. Mr. Rathbone hopes that *What Works with Teenagers: A Professional's Guide to Engaging Authentically with Adolescents to Achieve Lasting Change* (2015, New Harbinger Publications, Inc.) will fill the void that, until now, existed for practitioners searching for a comprehensive text on the subject matter. In a recent interview with *News & Views* Mr. Rathbone stated, "We felt that there was nothing out there that addresses work with this population in this way."

Mr. Rathbone and Ms. Baron approach this goal by conceding that engagement with adolescents, regardless of your professional role, can be both exhausting and humbling. The book, separated into two distinct parts, begins with a review of the neurobiology of the ever-evolving teenage brain. It includes recognition that these biological changes substantially impact psychosocial development and that the intersection of these two factors can be perplexing, if not exasperating, to the helping professional. This part also emphasizes how crucial the nature of the relationship with teens is to successfully fostering change. Under no illusions, the authors acknowledge that the relatively straightforward components of a strong professional relationship with adolescents (respect, acceptance and awareness to name a few) are actually quite complex in application.

This book also attempts to help readers with the direct application of these principles, a process that in its implementation at times can seem so daunting. Mr.



Rathbone said, "In writing the book, we tried to be evocative emotionally and get our readers to really buy into what we're saying. If they think about their own lives, they can apply the things we discuss more readily." He and Ms. Baron seek to achieve this by directly asking readers to examine their own adolescence and how it may impact their work.

Even in the second part of this book, this type of self-reflection and cultivation of self-awareness for the reader is encouraged. Additionally, in the latter part of the book, the authors detail the nature and approach of what can help bring about lasting change. They continue from earlier sections of the book to share clinical vignettes, checklists, graphic representations of concepts, and concise summaries at the end of each chapter. Readers will also find that the authors consistently advocate for eliciting feedback from teens, something Mr. Rathbone says can be remarkably useful. He and Ms. Baron provide forms that can be used to navigate the evaluation process. "This book will hopefully motivate professionals to influence change one adolescent at a time," Mr. Rathbone further reflected. "What stands out for me, after working with adolescents for many years is how resilient teenagers are--and how much they actually do want our help." The book is available electronically and in paperback form at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com). ❖

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