



The Lost Children

Mary MacCracken

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First published in 1974 as *A Circle of Children* this is the first of four books from learning disabilities specialist Mary MacCracken.

This is a book about children so emotionally disturbed they cannot fit into society; it is also the story of a woman whose involvement with these children changed the shape of their lives forever.

When Mary MacCracken joined a school for emotionally disturbed children as a volunteer, she quickly found herself rocked to the core by the strong, loving people who taught there, the hard-pressed and bewildered parents, and the damaged children. On the outside most of the children looked healthy. But the reality was far sadder. Locked away from love and any human contact, these children struggled with life every day.

It soon became evident that Mary MacCracken was a natural, gifted teacher. Using her instincts, observations and common sense, Mary was able to establish a rapport with even the most difficult children. Over time, Mary taught her class to eat and to drink; she decoded their mutterings, and taught them to talk and to read. But most important of all she helped them to take the first steps towards feeling love and trust.

There are no miracle-workers in this story, only a remarkable woman who refused to give up. Heartfelt, moving and incredibly inspiring, this is an amazing story about the astonishing human capacity for growth and change, even in those whom society regards as beyond help.

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