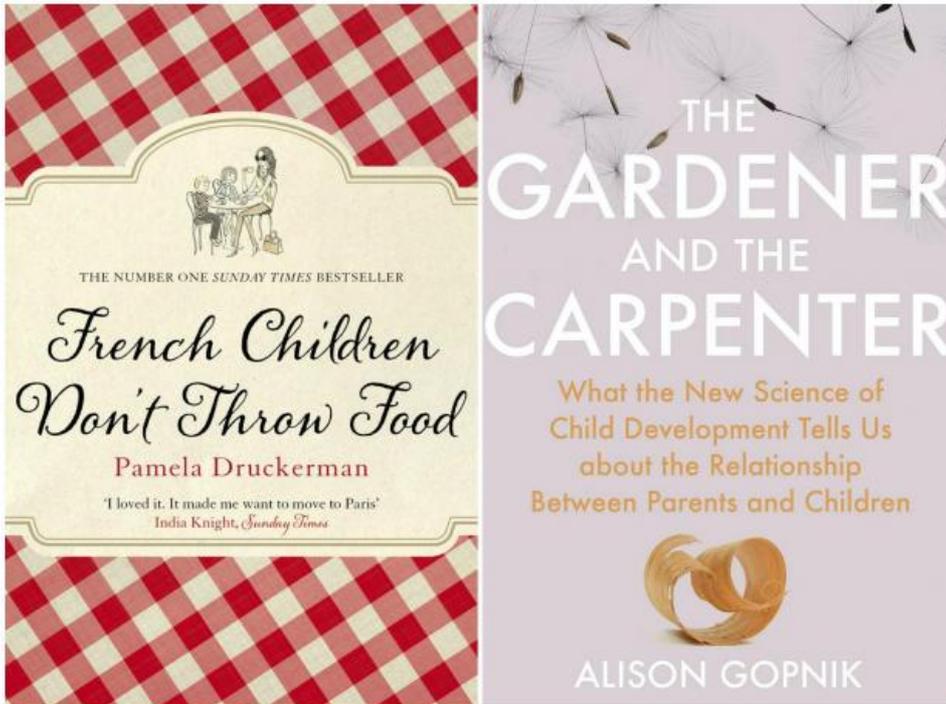


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## 10 best parenting books

Navigate the world of raising kids with an enlightening, entertaining read

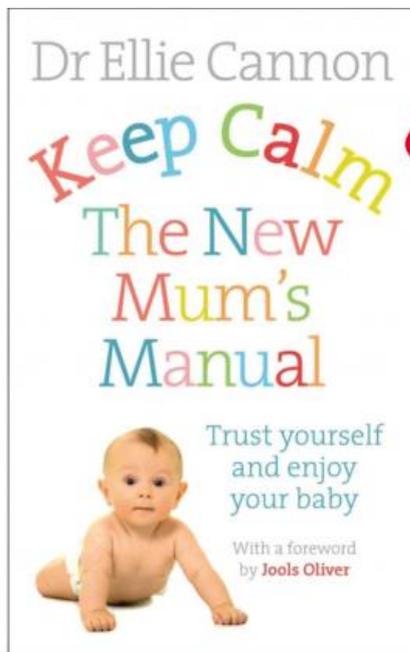
Claire Fox | Tuesday 27 September 2016 |  0 comments



With an apparently endless supply of contradictory parenting books on the market it seems sensible to start by admitting that no one ‘best of’ list is going to be right for everyone. The advice that provides one parent’s salvation will likely create another parent’s hell – it’s what makes Gina Ford such a ‘marmite’ expert.

With that in mind, what we have tried to do is select books that entertain, inform and enlighten without being overly prescriptive, as well as books that will make parents feel calmer - rather than presenting a long list of (usually stressful) ‘to-dos’.

1. **Keep Calm: The New Mum’s Manual** by Dr Ellie Cannon: £10.99, Vermilion



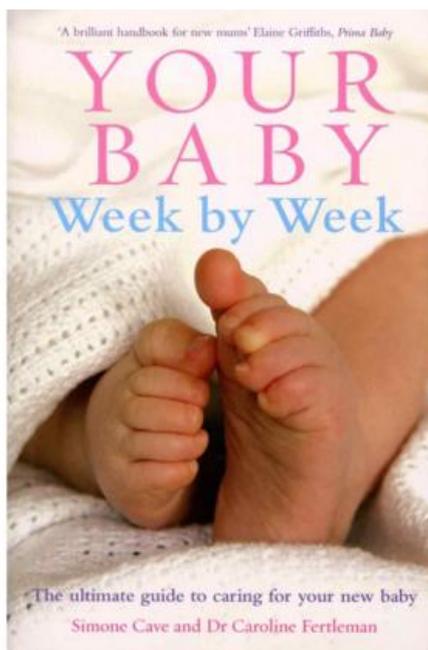
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It's not unusual for parenting books to make new parents feel more, rather than less, anxious. You can come away feeling that if only you were doing x, y and z a bit better, your baby would be sleeping through the night, feeding on schedule, and all the rest. Dr Ellie provides a welcome antidote. She rubbishes the idea that babies are uniform and parents need to learn a complicated set of rules to manage them, encouraging new mums to trust their own instincts while simplifying common worry areas including sleeping, feeding, crying and sickness. Take a breath, make a brew and prepare to feel calmer and more confident.

### **Buy now**

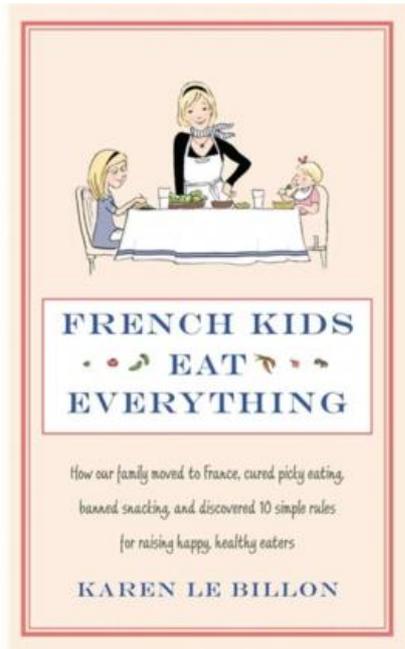
2. **Your Baby Week by Week** by Simone Cave and Dr Caroline Fertleman: £12.99, Vermilion



More 'what to expect' than 'how to', this book comes to us highly recommended by a whole host of new parents. It talks you week by week through the first six months – from how much you can expect a newborn to sleep to how many times a day they are likely to want to feed. There are also sensible tips on early-day issues including nappy rash, cradle cap and burping.

**Buy now**

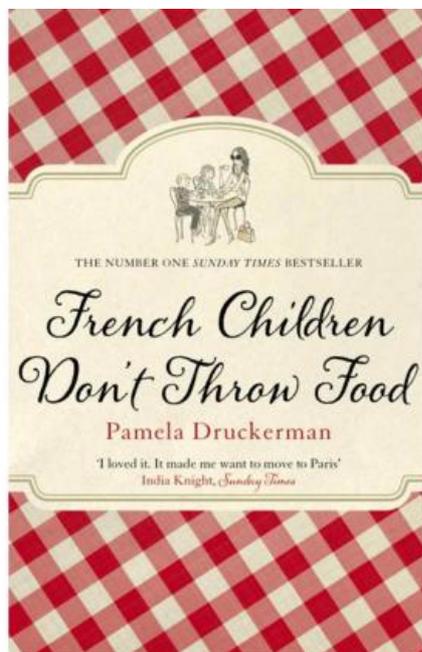
3. **French Kids Eat Everything** by Karen Le Billon: £12.99, Piatkus



For parents of picky eaters this light, entertaining read provides an interesting account of what Le Billon learned from a year of living in France and how she turned her children from fussy to gourmet – with a chapter of recipes thrown in. For a more in depth, thoughtful read on picky eating, [Ellyn Satter's \*Child of Mine: Feeding with Love and Good Sense\*](#) is also recommended.

**Buy now**

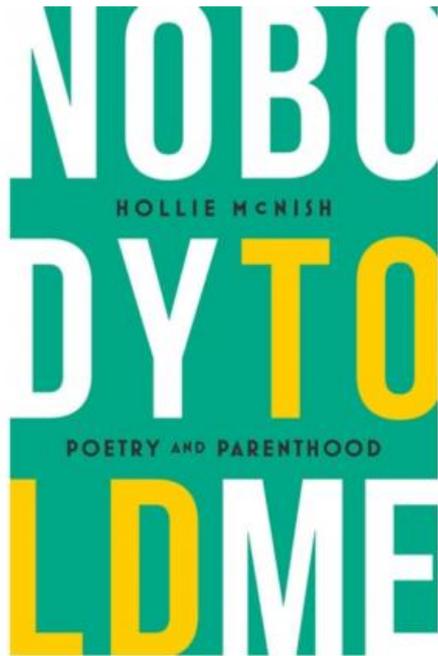
4. **French Children Don't Throw Food** by Pamela Druckerman: £7.99, Black Swan



At the risk of going native, we couldn't resist including a second French themed book, as it's another rare example of an entertaining parenting book. A cross between travel literature and parenting guide, it's easy reading and fun with interesting observations on the (admittedly entirely stereotypical) 'French style of parenting' – from how they avoid 'helicoptering' over their children, to how they get them to sit through long meals – without being a prescriptive 'how to' guide. If the French way doesn't do it for you then [The Danish Way of Parenting](#) by Jessica Joelle Alexander and Iben Dissing Sandahl provides another interesting insight into the way another culture approaches parenting.

**Buy now**

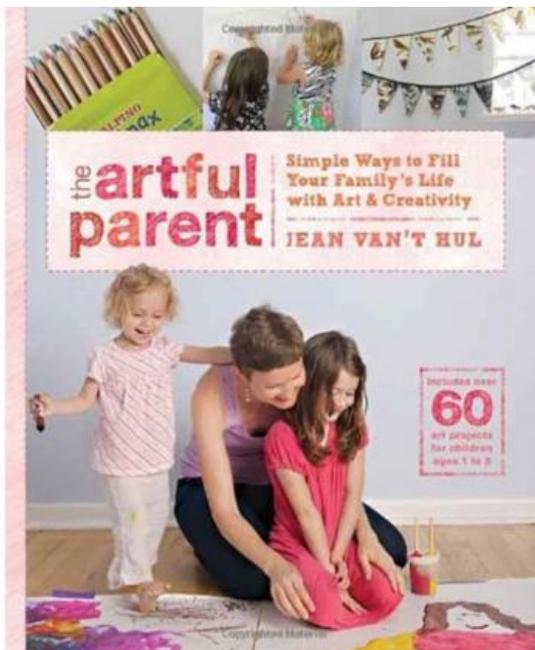
5. Nobody Told Me by Hollie McNish: £13.99, Blackfriars



Instead of advice McNish offers poetry and prose recounting her own experience of pregnancy and parenthood. From a poem about morning sickness to a story about enduring a public toddler tantrum, she provides beautifully written solidarity covering both the trials and the joys of being a parent.

**Buy now**

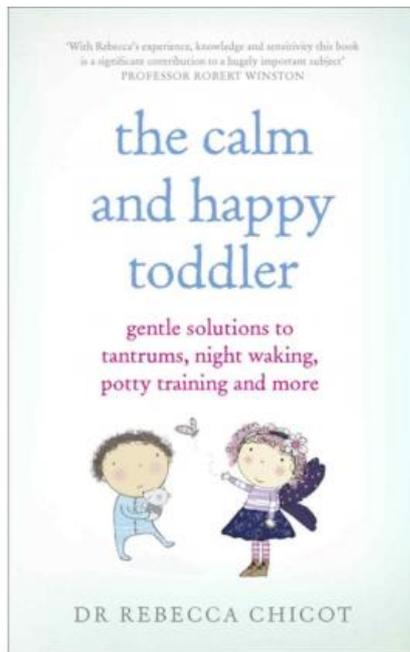
6. The Artful Parent by Jean Van't Hul: £17.99, Roost Books



A gorgeous book from the creator of the eponymous blog ([artfulparent.com](http://artfulparent.com)), Van't Hul argues that encouraging children to enjoy art can promote creativity, problem solving and help them build relationships – as well as providing the obvious rainy day entertainment. She suggests brilliant projects and ideas for children, toddlers and even babies.

**Buy now**

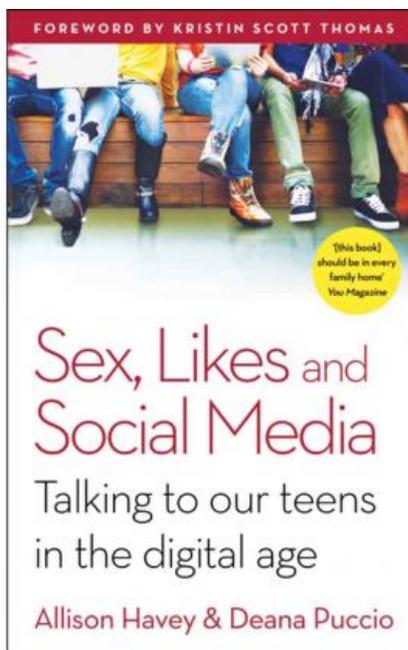
7. **The Calm and Happy Toddler** by Dr Rebecca Chicot:£12.99, Vermilion



Despite the slightly misleading title – which suggests it contains a magic cure for toddler tantrums – this book actually provides a realistic take on what to expect from the toddler years (yes, they are going to tantrum... a lot) and provides sensible, doable strategies to help with classic flash points such as discipline, sharing and independence. The take home message? Being a ‘good enough’ parent is good enough.

**Buy now**

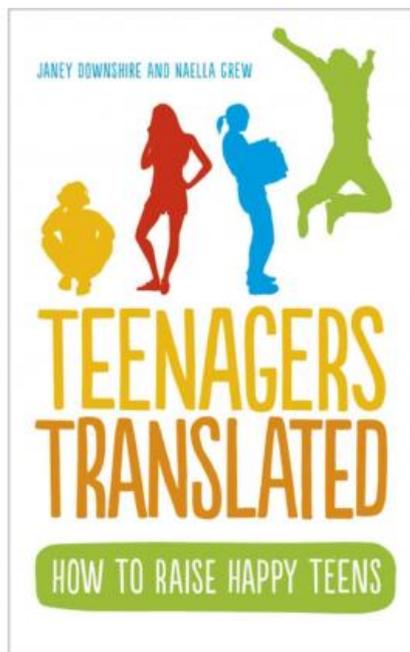
8. **Sex, Likes and Social Media** by Alison Havey and Deana Puccio:£12.99, Vermilion



This is a new book written by the co-founders of The Rap Project, an organisation which promotes awareness for teenagers negotiating social media. Acknowledging that it is simply not possible to monitor every aspect of a teenager’s online world, the book provides insight into what they might be looking at, advice on how to talk to teens about social media to help keep them safe and the warning signs to look out for.

**Buy now**

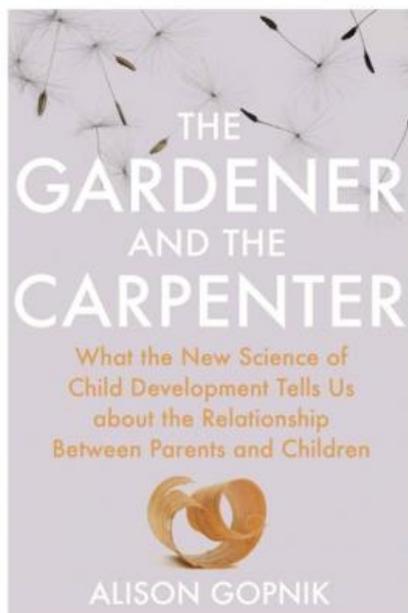
9. **Teenagers Translated** by Janey Downshire and Naella Grew:£11.99, Vermilion



Written by qualified counsellors who specialise in teenage development and emotional literacy (the pair run courses for teenagers, parents and teachers), this book provides a neurologically-based insight into the way teenagers act and feel, suggests helpful parental responses and provides advice on how to spot when something might be wrong.

[Buy now](#)

10. **The Gardener and the Carpenter** by Alison Gopnik: £18.99, Bodley Head



Though not a light read, this book is thought provoking. Gopnik, a developmental psychologist, suggests that by over parenting and trying to ‘carve’ our children into the people we think they should be, we can actually end up limiting the potential we are trying to foster. Gopnik explores the science of human evolution and childhood development, encouraging us to give children space and encouragement to explore life’s possibilities, make their own mistakes and flourish in their own unique way. Like a gardener tending his crop, we can’t control the end product, we can only create the right conditions to support the unique requirements of each individual child.

[Buy now](#)

**Verdict**

For new parents, *Keep Calm* offers a reassuring, confidence-building read. The author of this list tried out *French Kids Eat Everything* on a fussy two-year-old and can attest to its success. For parents of teenagers, *Sex, Likes and Social Media* is a must read.

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