

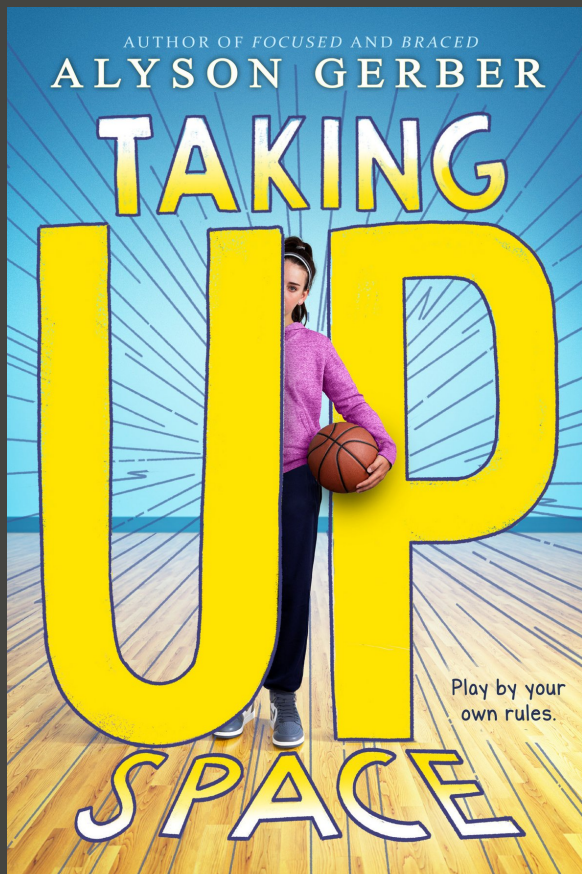
# Community Matters Family Book Club

Discussion Guide

## Monthly Book Pick:

[Taking Up Space](#)

by Alyson Gerber



## Season Dates and Times

Thursday, February 10th @ 6 pm CST

Thursday, April 14th @ 6 pm CST



## This Month's Theme: Healthy Eating

This February we will discuss healthy eating. Use this guide, along with Alyson Gerber's novel [Taking Up Space](#) to explore the ways confusion about healthy eating affects children, families and the community. Like any book club, please navigate these conversations with patience and kindness. Our intent is to better understand ourselves and the world around us.

Sincerely,

Michelle, Jenny, Mary, Tiffany, Christina, Sam

The Community Matters Planning Team

**JOHNSON COUNTY**  
KANSAS

**Library**



Photo of Author Alyson Gerber

# Conversation Starters

What surprised you about this book?

What are some foods you like?

What do you think makes a food healthy or unhealthy?

## Themes

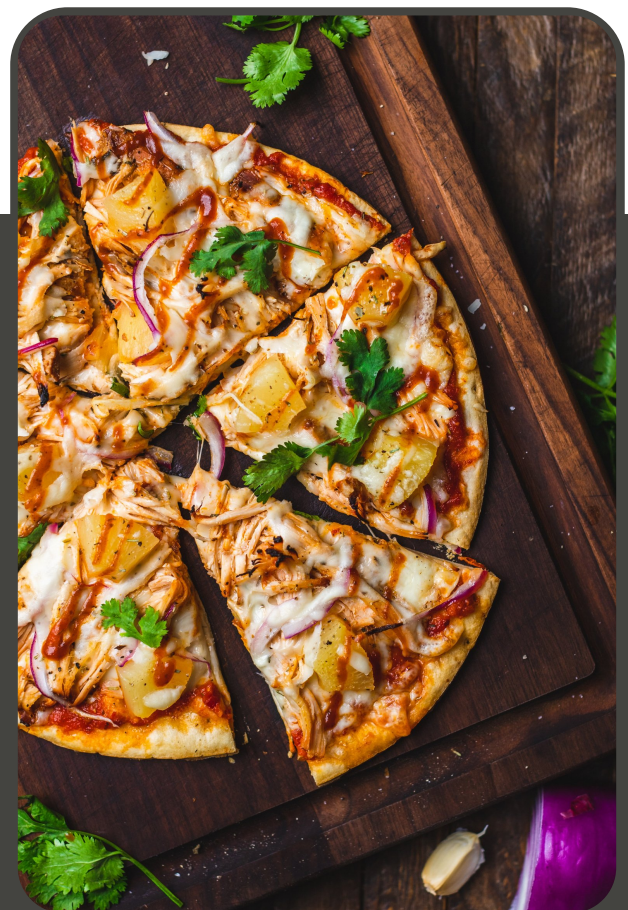
- Impostor Syndrome
- Eating Disorders
- Reliable Sources
- Self Acceptance
- Boundaries
- Listening To Your Body

## Discussion Questions

1. When Sarah's Mom forgets about dinner Sarah thinks "I'm not enough for her to always remember..." Do you think this is true?
2. Sarah thinks her friend Emilia has "...probably never felt awkward or like she didn't fit inside herself..." Who have you admired who seems to have everything figured out? How well do you know them?
3. Sometimes when Sarah asks her Mom for more food her Mom gets upset or makes excuses and Sarah goes hungry to avoid upsetting her. What are some examples of when it is ok to upset someone?

# Discussion Questions: Continued...

4. Sarah's Mom eats a lot of candy but discourages her from eating some types of fruit. Which do you think is healthier, fruit or candy?
5. Sarah values herself when she plays basketball well and follows her Mom's rules about food. Do you think she is less valuable when she plays badly and eats? Why? Why not?
6. The school counselor, Ms. Varna, and Sarah's Mom both talk to her about healthy foods and healthy eating but they have very different advice. How does Sarah know she should listen to Ms. Varna instead of her Mom?
7. When Ryan says Sarah's Mom "...is not someone to look to for healthy eating habits" Sarah is upset. It is hard to accept that someone you love could be wrong. How did Ryan, Coach Lemon, and the school counselor help Sarah see that what she was used to was hurting her?
8. Sarah and her Dad both know her Mom has trouble with food. Why are they both listening to her?
9. When Sarah's Mom tries to convince her to eat cinnamon and Sarah thinks "...it doesn't matter how strong arguments are for eating cinnamon...I don't like the flavor" Sarah is setting a boundary and taking charge of her own body. Why is this important?
10. Sarah tells her Mom she fell because she did not eat enough and her Mom makes it seem like Sarah's opinion instead of a fact. How does this hurt Sarah? What does it mean when someone tries to tell you your experiences are not real?



## Additional Resources

[Sesame Street: Eating Well](https://www.sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/eating/)

[sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/eating/](https://www.sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/eating/)

[Intuitive Eating: Learn to Listen to Your Body](https://www.utmedicalcenter.org/intuitive-eating-learn-to-listen-to-your-body/)

[www.utmedicalcenter.org/intuitive-eating-learn-to-listen-to-your-body/](https://www.utmedicalcenter.org/intuitive-eating-learn-to-listen-to-your-body/)

[PBS: Healthy Me](https://www.pbs.org/parents/healthy-me)

[www.pbs.org/parents/healthy-me](https://www.pbs.org/parents/healthy-me)

[Boston Children's Hospital](https://www.childrenshospital.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions/e/eating-disorder)

[www.childrenshospital.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions/e/eating-disorder](https://www.childrenshospital.org/conditions-and-treatments/conditions/e/eating-disorder)