

What do you do when life's spinning out of control?

A Note From The Author,

It is my great pleasure to introduce my new novel, *Get a Grip, Cooper Jones*, for readers aged 10–14.

Set in an isolated “surfie” town wedged between the sea and the rugged escarpment, during one sizzling summer, *Get a Grip, Cooper Jones* is a story about friendship and families; about fighting fires and facing fears; about growing up and finding where you fit. It's a contemporary story, told through the eyes of thirteen-year-old Cooper Jones with his sometimes humorous and frequently misguided take on things, as he tackles some of life's trickier questions. What makes me, me? What kind of person am I? What if I don't really like the person I think I am?

Adolescence is probably one of the most intense periods of our lives – emotionally charged, with hormones on the rampage and minds and bodies changing. It can be exciting one moment, confusing to the extreme the next. There is a sense that a whole new world is beckoning, but at the same time there are many doubts and insecurities.

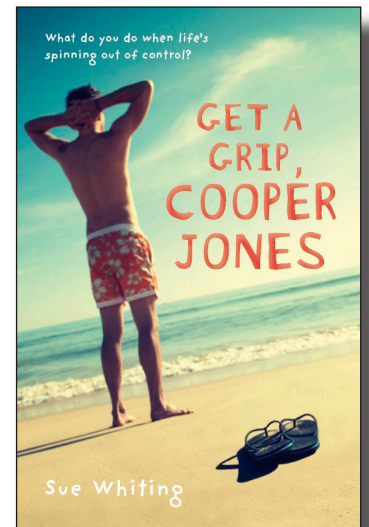
In *Get a Grip, Cooper Jones*, Cooper, and also Abbie, the gorgeous newcomer to Wangaroo Bay, are both trying to navigate through this challenging period. A period made all the more difficult for Cooper and Abbie because of their particular circumstances. For Cooper it is his absent father – a man he knows nothing about; for the adopted Abbie, it is her lack of understanding of her birth culture.

Story is a wonderful escape. It is also a powerful tool. It takes us on a journey: a journey that helps us to understand the human experience; to discover a different reality; a journey that allows us to feel and explore and wonder. It is my sincere hope that readers will find new friends in Cooper and Abbie, and that they will be keen to hang out with them for a while. And as tensions increase and bushfires threaten, and Cooper's life seems to be spinning out of control, they will be there, shouting – yelling – at Cooper, telling him he had better get a grip – and fast. After all, Abbie's survival depends on it.

Thank you for your interest in *Get a Grip, Cooper Jones*. I hope I have enticed you to take a peek ...

Regards

Sue Whiting



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Cooper Jones**
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Themes

- identity
- family
- friendship
- bushfires
- survival
- courage
- beach
- coming-of-age
- adoption
- Australia
- Ethiopia