

Film Review: Jenna Fischer Falls Victim to Weak Screenwriting in ‘A Little Help’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on July 29, 2011 - 2:41pm

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Rating: **2.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – Despite the best efforts by Jenna Fischer (“The Office”) playing against type as a smoking, drinking newly-single mother, “A Little Help” is a mess. This dramedy consists of the kind of characters one only sees in a movie theater and usually only in an indie flick that thinks it’s much smarter and has much more to say about the human condition than it actually does.

I can’t stress enough how few of the problems with this deeply-flawed film can be traced back to the lovely Fischer, an actress who never got the credit she deserved for the perfect comic timing she’s displayed on “The Office.” She borders on great here. It’s everything BUT her with which I have a problem – the two-dimensional supporting characters, the clichéd writing, the non-ending, the leaden direction. Fischer is the one who could have used a little help.



[Read Brian Tallerico’s full review of “A Little Help” in our reviews section.](#) [15]

She stars as a New York dental hygienist in 2002 (the date and location will be very important) named Laura, a woman with all the typical problems of an indie dramedy – a cheating husband (Chris O’Donnell), an obnoxious son (Daniel Yelsky), a horrible mother (Lesley Ann Warren), and an even-worse sister (Brooke Smith). Her husband dies unexpectedly very early in the film and the rest is at least somewhat about picking up the pieces after a sudden, shocking tragedy...not unlike 9/11.

The parallel becomes even more clear after Laura’s son Dennis decides not to tell his classmates that his dad died during a sex act but that he passed away a heroic firefighter who saved three people in the towers before going back in one too many times. Laura is somewhat forced to go along with the story or risk her fragile son’s complete destruction by his classmates and teachers, but it’s one of those movie set-ups that one knows is only going to end badly.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico’s full “A Little Help” review.](#) [15]

“A Little Help” stars Jenna Fischer, Rob Benedict, Chris O’Donnell, Brooke Smith, Daniel Yelsky, Lesley Ann Warren, Rob Leibman, and Kim Coates. It was written and directed by Michael J. Weithorn.



A Little Help

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