

# 44 Children's Books About Mental Health

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[childmind.org/article/best-childrens-books-about-mental-health](https://childmind.org/article/best-childrens-books-about-mental-health)

Best books for helping kids understand emotional and learning challenges

Karen Cicero

From a hedgehog too anxious to go ice skating to a puppy who can't make his letters come out right, children's books address many emotional, behavioral and learning challenges kids face. These books help kids name and understand feelings and experiences they may be struggling with. At the Child Mind Institute we've contacted publishers all over to call in books that address mental health and learning disorders and other common challenges, like dealing with painful experiences and coping with strong emotions. We included books for kids up to 12, from picture books to be read with preschoolers to chapter books for independent reading by older children. Our clinicians read them all and picked the best in each category, based on how helpful they found them. Here you will see descriptions of 44 books we like, and we hope you will find useful.

**Jump to books about:** [Abuse](#) | [ADHD](#) | [Anxiety](#) | [Autism](#) | [Bullying](#) | [Depression](#) | [Dyslexia](#) | [Feelings](#) | [Grief and Loss](#) | [Identity](#) | [Neglect](#) | [OCD](#) | [Self-Esteem](#) | [Selective Mutism](#) | [Sensory Processing](#) | [Tourette's Syndrome](#) | [Trauma](#)

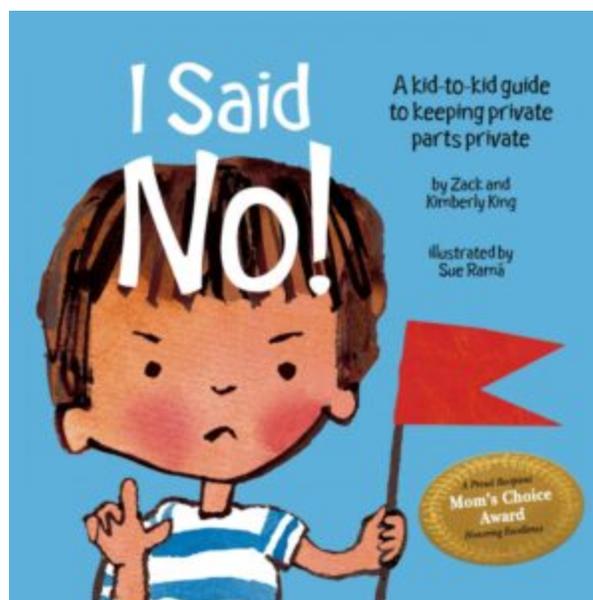
## Abuse

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### **I Said No! A Kid-to-Kid Guide to Keeping Private Parts Private**

*Written by Zach and Kimberly King,  
illustrated by Sue Rama*

This clever book helps kids understand boundaries, using “red flag” and “green flag” terminology. “It reviews a lot of classic scenarios in simple language,” says an expert from the Child Mind Institute. Ages 4-8. Published by [Boulden Publishing](#).



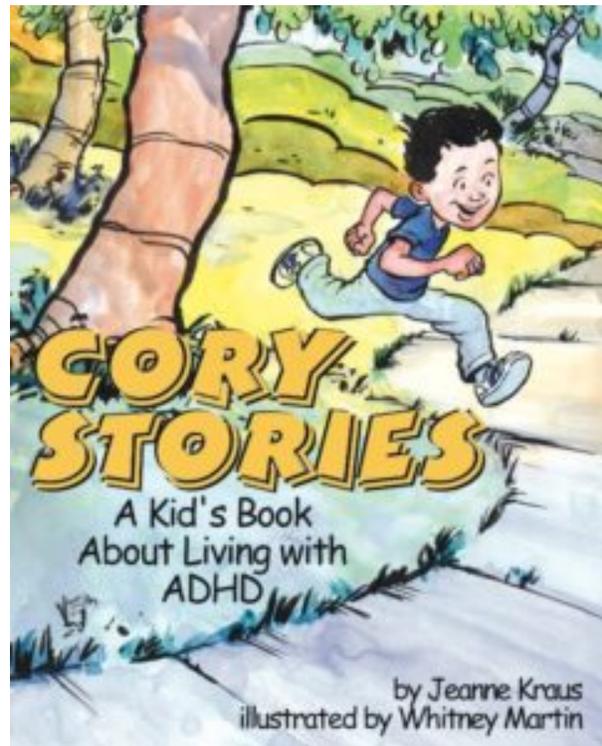
## ADHD

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## **Cory Stories: A Kid's Book About Living With ADHD**

*Written by Jeanne Kraus, illustrated by Whitney Martin*

Cory tells readers about himself in this picture book with black-and-white illustrations. Cory says that sometimes kids make fun of him and he isn't sure why. "Sometimes my whole body falls off the chair!" But readers also learn that Cory has persevered, concentrating in karate class, making friends at bowling club, and helping other kids with math. The important parting message: "Nobody needs to be good at everything. But I found out that I am good at a lot of things." Ages 6-11. Published by Magination Press.



## **I Can't Sit Still! Living With ADHD**

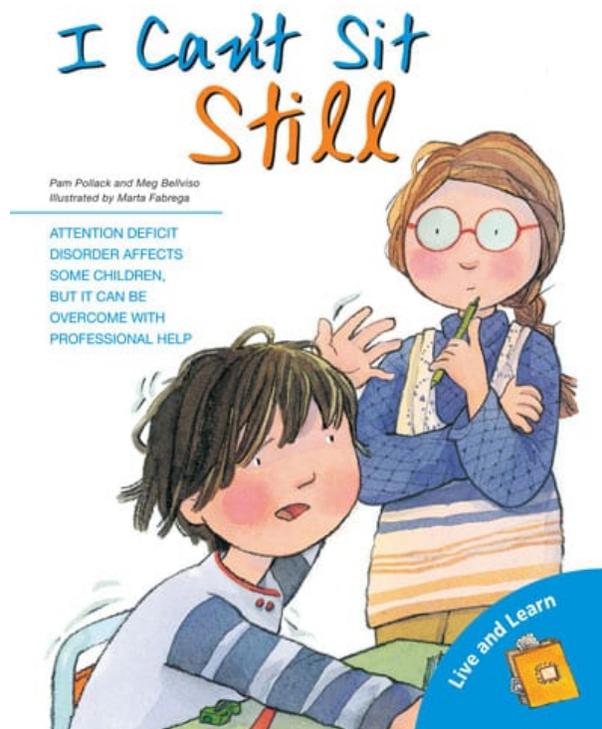
*Written by Pam Pollack and Meg Belviso, illustrated by Marta Fabrega*

In this picture book's first-person account, Lucas learns that **ADHD**

### **ADHD**

see attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder

is the reason he shouts out the answer to math problems in class and has a hard time following the rules in kickball. His doctor gives him medicine and strategies that help him improve. "It provides a clear explanation of common symptoms and interventions in kid-friendly terms," says an expert from the Child Mind Institute. You'll also appreciate the parent's guide at the end of the book. Ages 5-9. Published by B.E.S. Publishing.



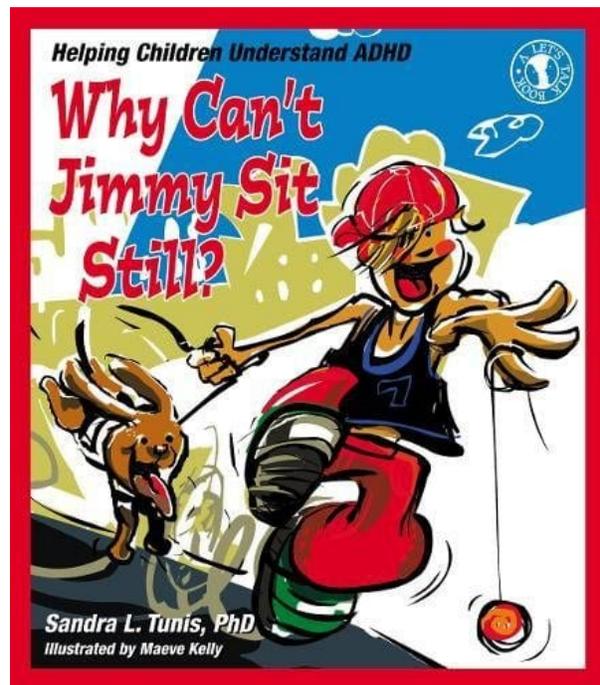
## Why Can't Jimmy Sit Still?

Written by Sandra L. Tunis, PhD,  
illustrated by Maeve Kelly

Seven-year-old Jimmy shouts out answers at school, gets carried away at recess, and is distracted when he's doing homework. He doesn't understand why he can't settle down until his parents take him to the doctor and he finds out he has ADHD. This book is written by *apsychologist*

### psychologist

Someone with a PhD or PsyD, trained in the study and/or treatment of psychiatric disorders.



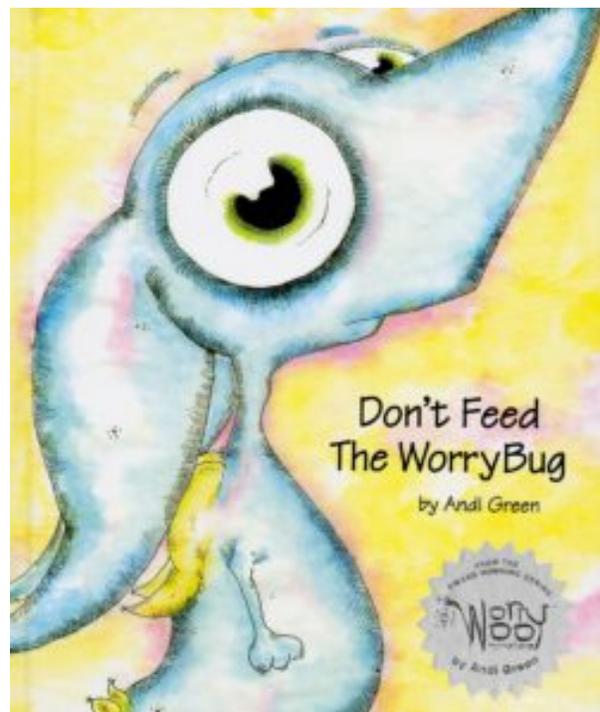
who discusses common symptoms in an age-appropriate way and makes it clear that ADHD isn't a child's fault. Ages 4-8. Published by New Horizon Press.

## Anxiety

### Don't Feed the WorryBug

Written and illustrated by Andi Green

In this whimsical rhyming book, Wince, the monster of worries, learns that the more he worries, the more the pesky WorryBug grows. Eventually the WorryBug grows so big that it can't be ignored, and Wince knows he needs to do something. The book does a good job of illustrating how anxiety can become overwhelming and teaches kids how they can take charge of their anxiety. Ages 3-8. Published by Monsters in My Head.



### The Fix-It Friends: Have No Fear!

Written by Nicole C. Kear, illustrated by  
Tracy Dockray

Seven-year-old Veronica wants to help her classmate Maya conquer her fear of bugs, which is preventing her from playing at recess. Veronica comes up with a step-by-step plan that starts with drawing a spider. “Showing gradual exposure to anxieties is a great approach,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 7-10. Published by [Imprint](#).

### **Hector’s Favorite Place**

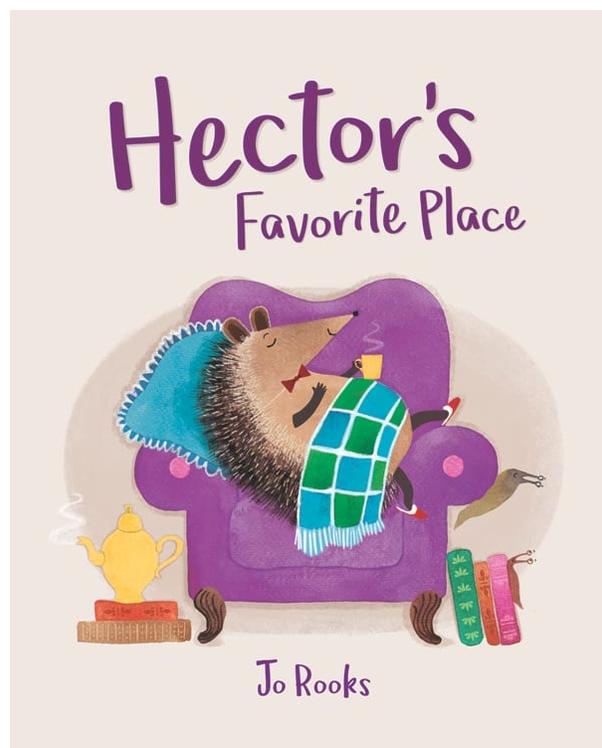
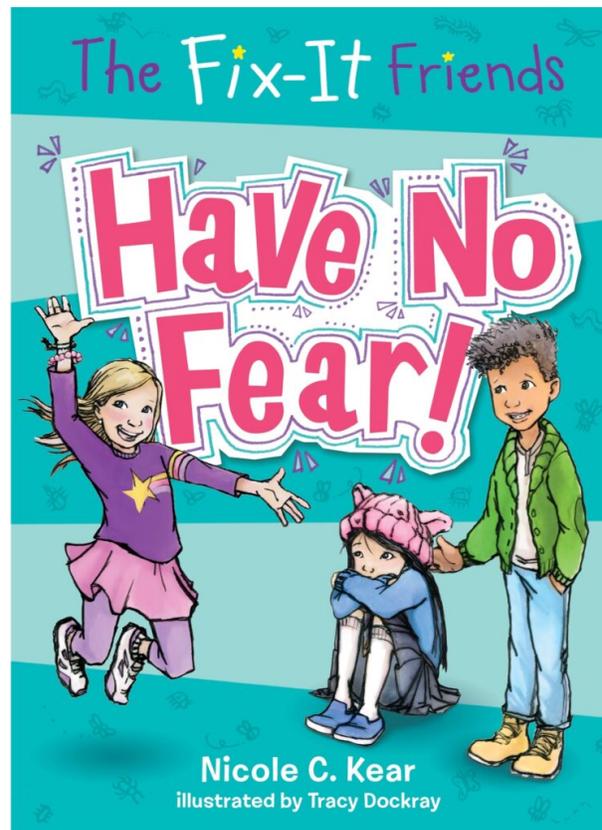
*Written and illustrated by Jo Rooks*

A cute hedgehog turns down ice-skating and playing in the snow with his animal friends because of his worries. “What if he had forgotten how to skate? He could fall and hurt himself.” When Hector receives a fun invitation to the Winter Forest Party, he hesitates for a while, and then realizes that he has to be brave. “It’s an adorable story,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. “I like that Hector does a little more, and then a little more, and so on.” Ages 4-8. Published by [Magination Press](#).

### **How Big Are Your Worries Little Bear?**

*By Jayneen Sanders, illustrated by Stephanie Fizer Coleman*

Anxious about school, soccer practice, and monsters under his bed, baby bear worried day and night, despite his family telling him to stop worrying. But when his mom began encouraging him to talk about and even draw out his worries, the feelings began to subside. “I like that the book emphasizes the importance of sharing your thoughts and feelings,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Another plus: The book suggests questions that you can ask your child as you’re reading together. Ages 6-10. Published by [Educate2Empower Publishing](#).



## **Pilar's Worries**

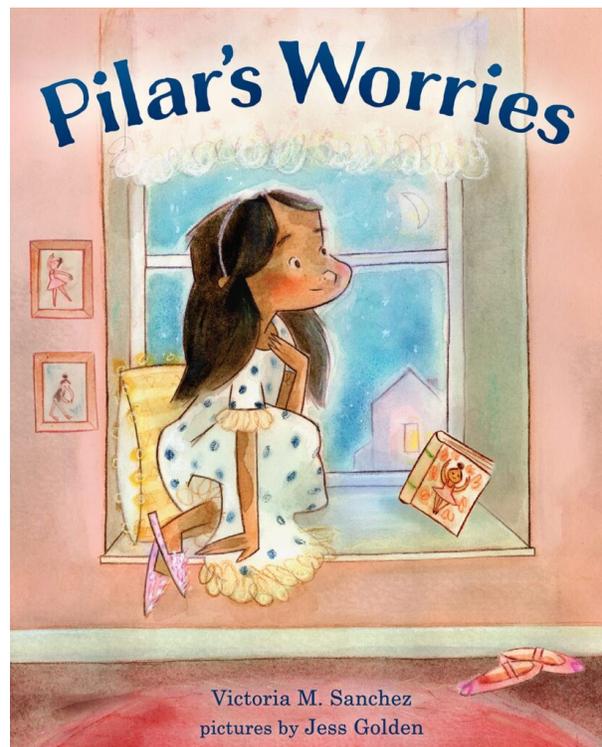
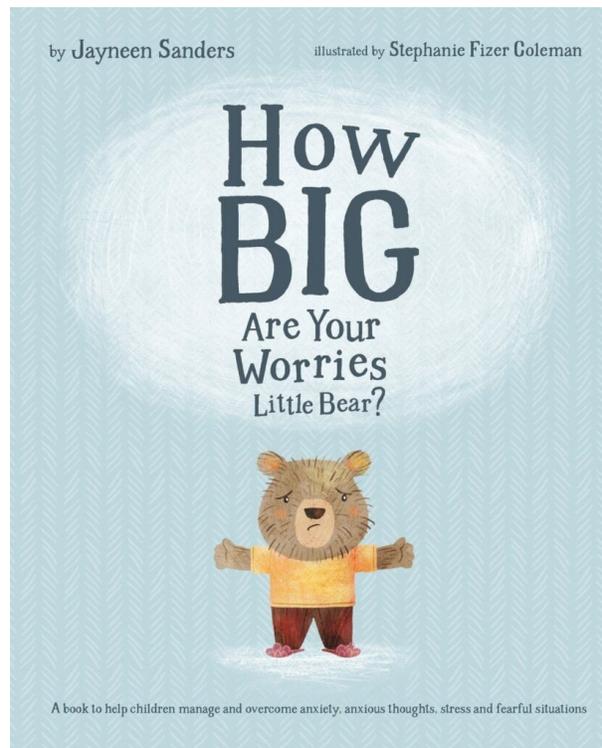
*Written by Victoria M. Sanchez,  
illustrated by Jess Golden*

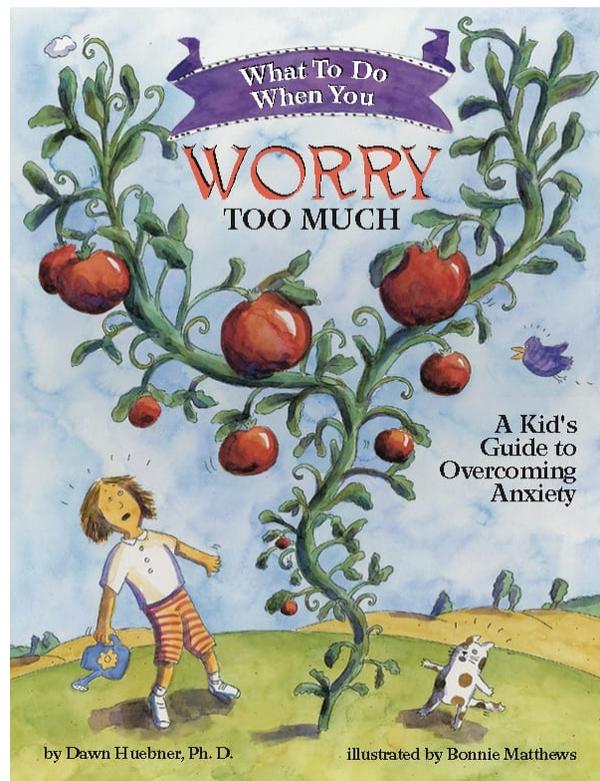
In this new picture book, Pilar lives and breathes ballet — she even does pliés while brushing her teeth. But auditioning for the winter ballet performance makes her feel scared, and she almost doesn't go. By using smart coping techniques, like positive thinking and talking with her friends, she's able to overcome her fears. Bravo! Ages 4-8. Published by Albert Whitman & Company.

## **What to Do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Anxiety**

*Written by Dawn Huebner, illustrated by  
Bonnie Matthews*

Designed for kids and parents to read together, this nine-chapter behavior therapy workbook covers topics like "How Do Worries Get Started?" and "Keeping Worries Away." Suggestions include relaxation exercises and setting up a designated "Worry Time." Several pages encourage kids to draw or write about their worries. The brilliant final page requests that kids draw a picture of themselves without worries. Ages 6-12. Published by Magination Press.

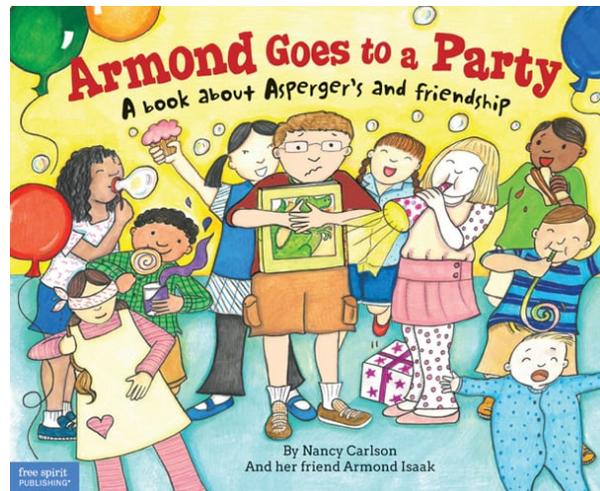




## Autism

**Armond Goes to a Party: A Book About Asperger's and Friendship**  
*Written by Nancy Carlson and Armond Isaak, illustrated by Nancy Carlson*

Co-written by a boy with Asperger's, this picture book "gives a simple understanding of why children with Asperger's struggle to attend parties, and talks about the importance of learning flexibility," says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Readers may relate to Armond's fear of balloons popping and not being able to think of anything to say. In the end, Armond admits to his mom that the party was hard, but he's glad he went. Ages 4-8. Published by [Free Spirit Publishing](#).



### **A Boy Called Bat**

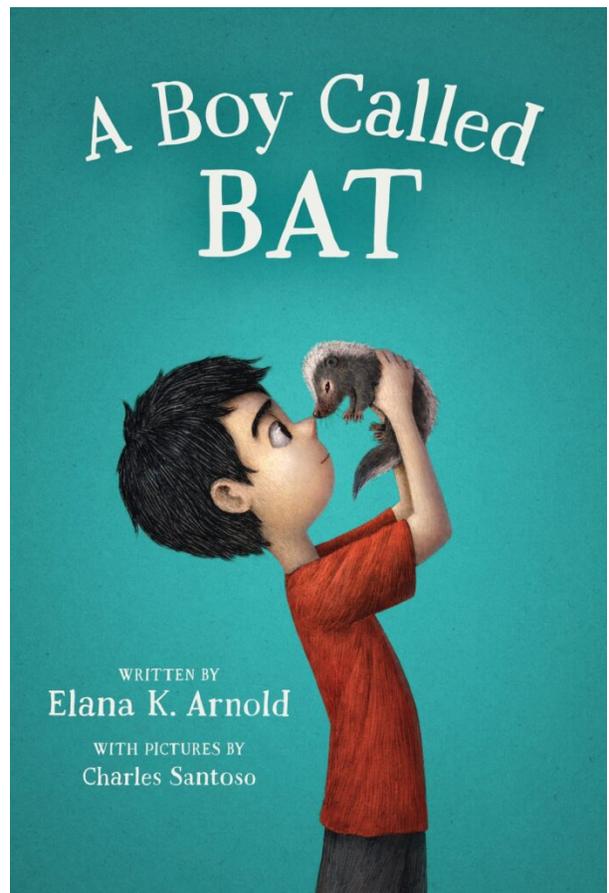
*Written by Elana K. Arnold, illustrated by Charles Santoso*

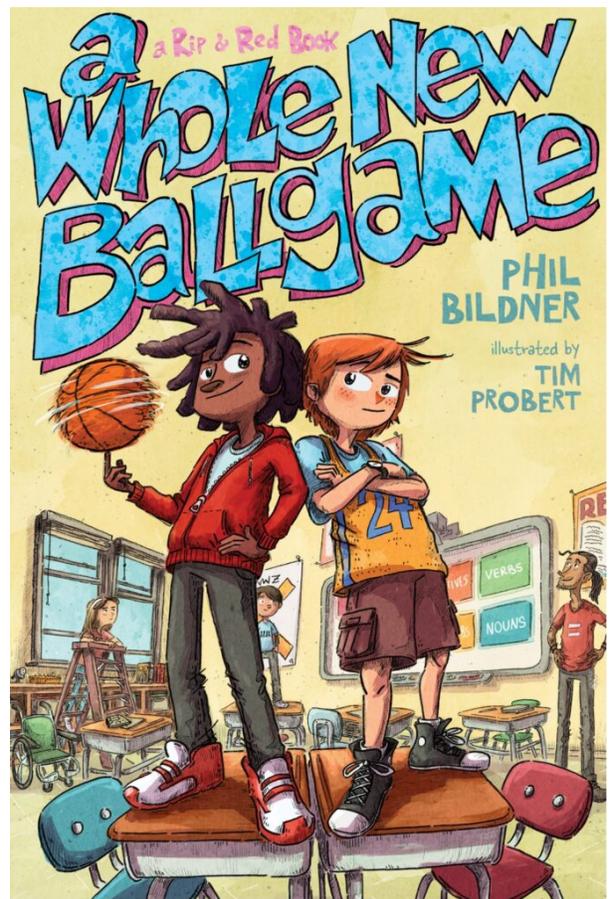
On the surface, it's a sweet boy-wants-pet story. Bixby's (aka Bat's) mom is a veterinarian, and she brings home a baby skunk that he desperately wants to keep. But readers with autism may relate to chatter about itchy and uncomfortable clothes, sticking with routines, and only having friends who are grown-ups. "It does a wonderful job of describing the day-to-day experience of high-functioning children with ASD," says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 6-10. Published by [Walden Pond Press](#).

**A Whole New Ballgame: A Rip and Red Book**

*Written by Phil Bildner, illustrated by Tim Probert*

In the first book of a series, best friends Rip and Red have just started fifth grade. Red has autism, and Rip doesn't. Their common passion: basketball. Many chapters like "Hoops Madness" and "Bulldozed and Blitzed" focus on their adventures on the school's b-ball team. "It's not a book that's obviously about autism," says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. "It's a fun, lighthearted story with characters that will seem very relatable to tweens." Ages 8-12. Published by [Square Fish](#).





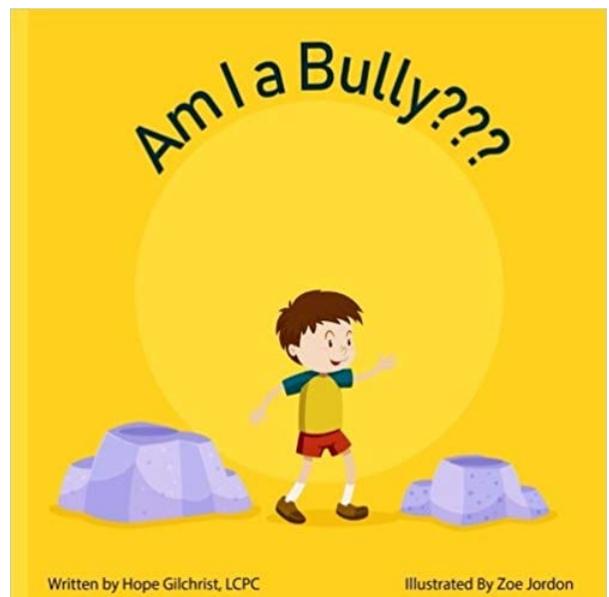
## Bullying

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### **Am I a Bully?**

*Written by Hope Gilchrist, illustrated by Zoe Jordan*

Toby makes his friends laugh when he teases a classmate over his weird clothes. He's just trying to be funny and he isn't beating anyone up, so he can't be a bully — can he? This independently published paperback helps children recognize when teasing crosses the line into bullying. Ages 6-9. Published by [CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform](#).



### **Chrysanthemum**

*Written and illustrated by Kevin Henkes*

This sweet story prepares kids for how short-lived teasing can be. On the first day of school, Victoria picks on Chrysanthemum because she has the same name as a flower, and Chrysanthemum wilts under the ridicule. Then the students learn that a teacher has a similar name, and all of a sudden Chrysanthemum is cool. Ages 4-8. Published by Mulberry Books.

**Tease Monster: A Book About Teasing vs. Bullying**

*Written by Julia Cook, illustrated by Anita DuFalla*

Particularly good for an anxious or literal child, this rhyming book helps distinguish between teasing and bullying. “There are two types of teasing: the nice and the mean,” Cook writes. “You think that everyone’s against you, but it’s not like it seems.” Readers will learn strategies for responding to both good-natured teasing and bullying. Ages 5-10. Published by Boys Town Press.

**Warp Speed**

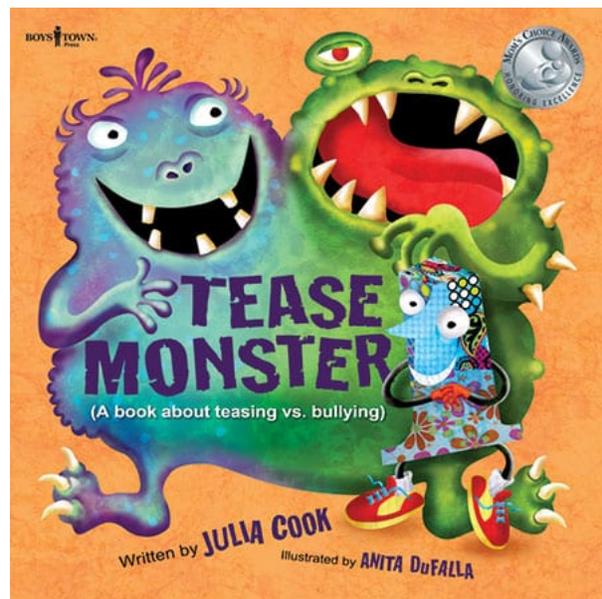
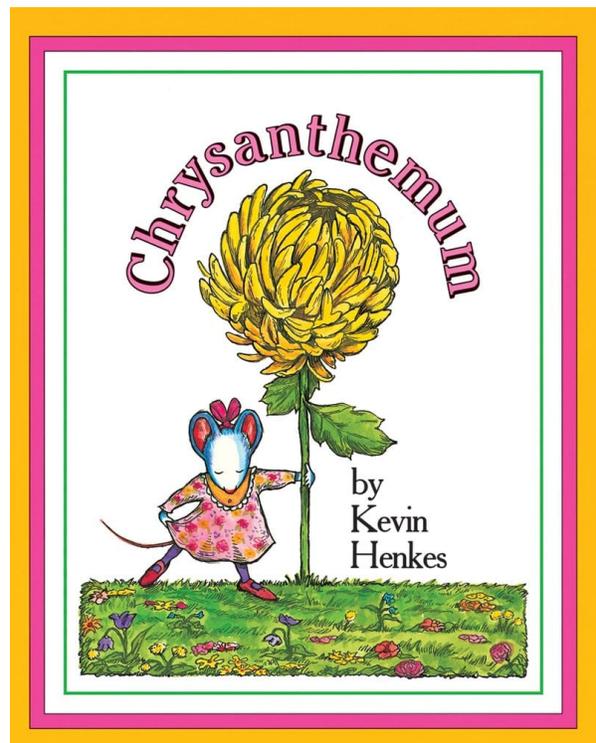
*Written by Lisa Yee*

In a fast-paced chapter book that will appeal to reluctant readers, Marley thinks seventh grade will be boring until he draws attention from the school bully.

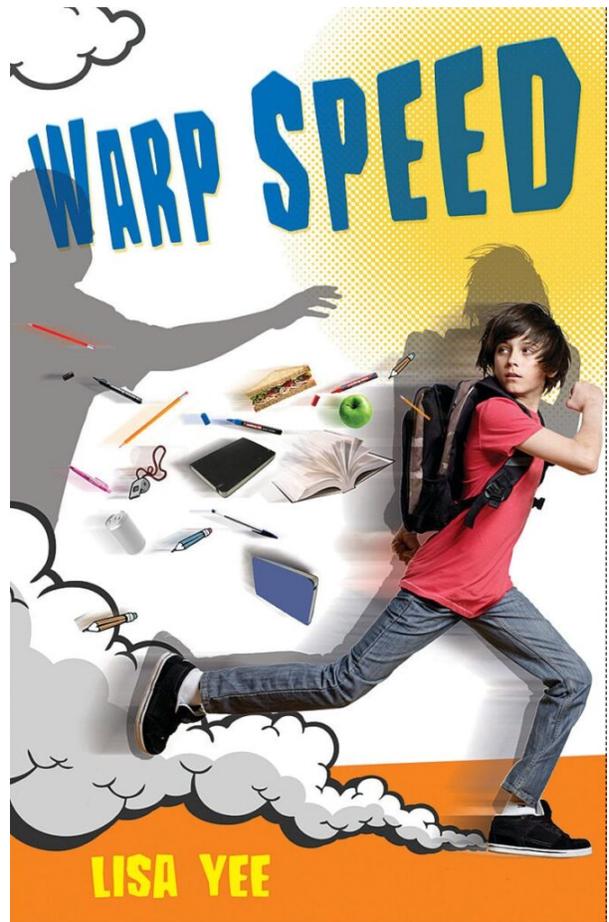
Digger pushes Marley down in the hallway, and the drama unfolds. “It’s a very relatable story for kids who feel like outsiders,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Bonus: If your child is a fan of Star Wars, there are loads of references. Ages 8-12. Published by Arthur A. Levine Books.

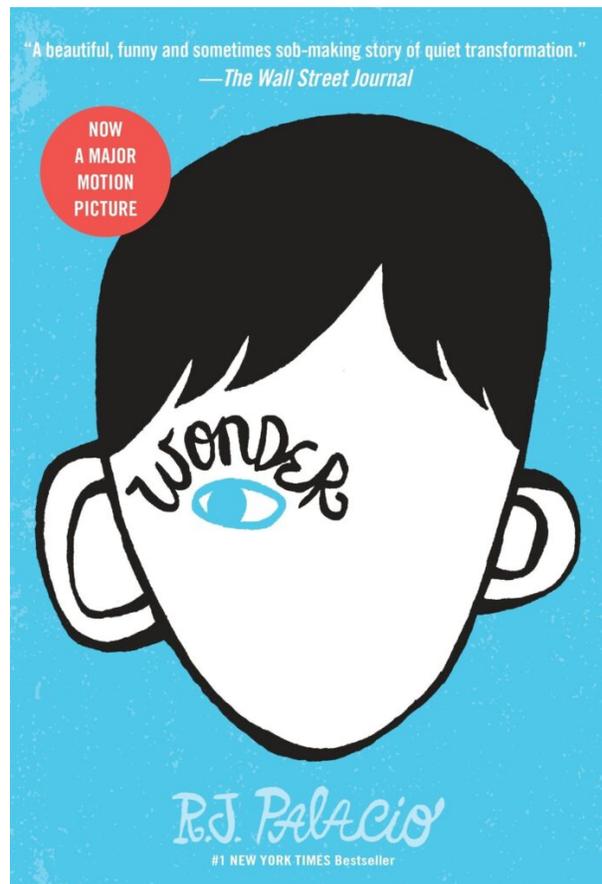
**Wonder**

*Written by R.J. Palacio*



In this popular chapter book that spurred the “Choose Kind” movement in classrooms, a boy with a facial deformity switches to a mainstream school for the fifth grade and is bullied. “But he has a strong network of family and friends to help him overcome bullying,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. “Ultimately, the readers will see how differences should be celebrated.” Ages 8+. Published by Knopf Books for Young Readers.



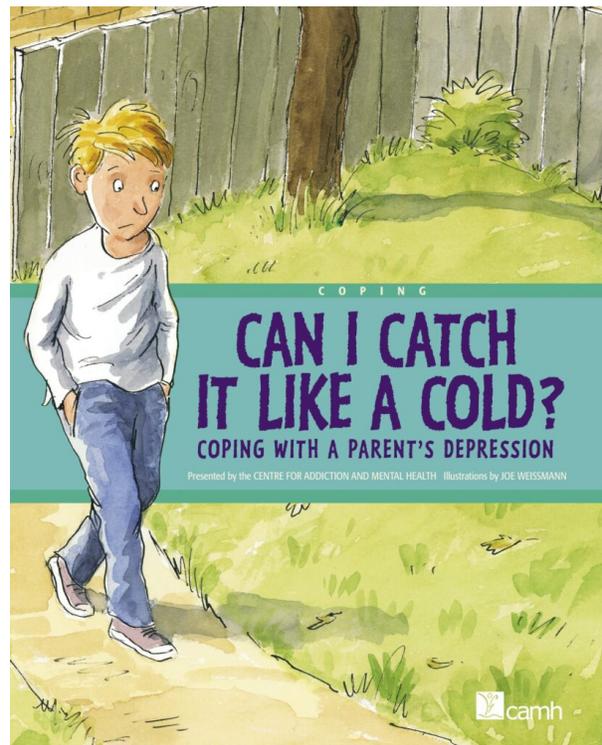


## Depression

### Can I Catch It Like a Cold? Coping With a Parent's Depression

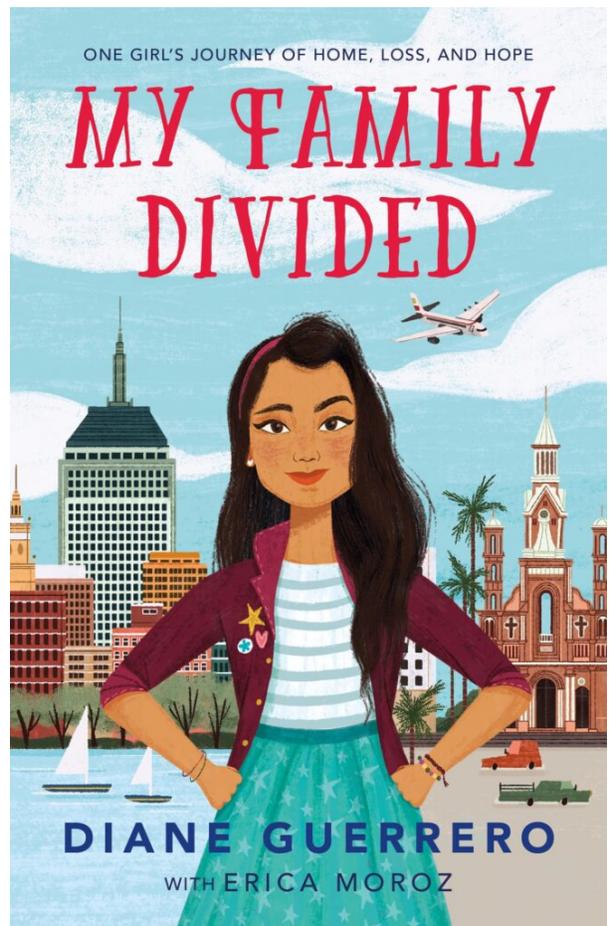
*Written by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, illustrated by Joe Weissmann*

Alex's dad doesn't work anymore and just wants to sleep all the time. When Alex finds out why — that he's suffering from depression — he confides in his friend Anna. She tells him that her mom has depression too, and she sees a therapist to help her feel better. "I like that it promotes the benefits of therapy for the entire family," says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 7-12. Published by [Tundra Books](#).



**My Family Divided: One Girl's Journey of Home, Loss, and Hope**  
*Written by Diane Guerrero with Erica Moroz*

An actress on TV shows such as *Orange Is the New Black*, Guerrero shares the heartbreaking story of her Colombian parents being deported when she was 14. She also reveals how she battled depression, and had suicidal thoughts in her early 20s. "I wanted so badly to prove that I could take care of myself. That I didn't need anyone. That I was grown-up," she writes. "By the time I admitted to myself that I did still need others, I had pushed away the people I loved." Ages 12+. Published by Henry Holt and Co.

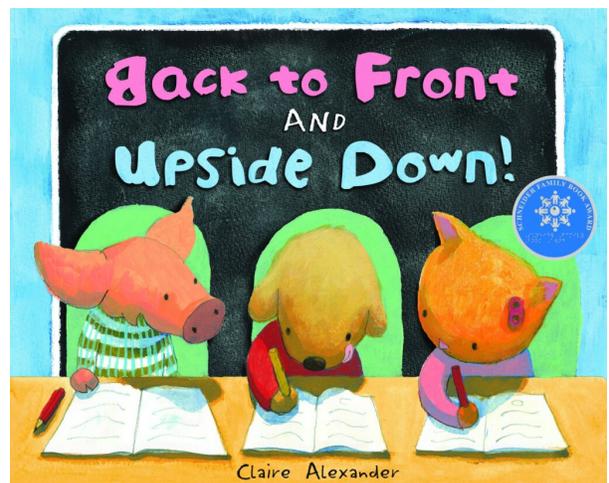


## Dyslexia

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**Back to Front and Upside Down!**  
*Written and illustrated by Claire Alexander*

This sweet picture book follows Stan, a puppy, and his animal classmates. Stan's letters come out "back to front and upside down, and some didn't look like letters at all," but he's afraid to ask his teacher for help because he thinks the other kids will laugh at him. When he finally does, he learns that with help — and lots of practice — he can succeed. "The book sends the positive message that things will get better with a bit of hard work," says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 4-8. Published by Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.



## Fish in a Tree

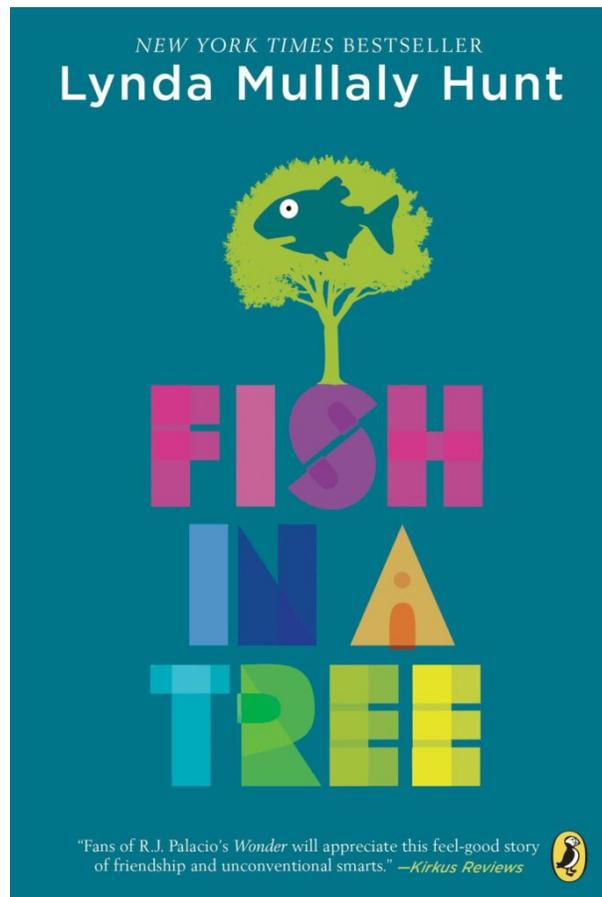
Written by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

This inspirational chapter book captures the challenges students with *dyslexia*

### **dyslexia**

A learning disorder that interferes with an individual's ability to read.

face daily, not just in reading but in self-esteem. The main character, Ally, has been able to hide her inability to read in every school — until now. “The arc of the story changes when Ally makes friends and finally finds a teacher who recognizes her struggles and how smart she is,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 8-12. Published by Puffin Books.

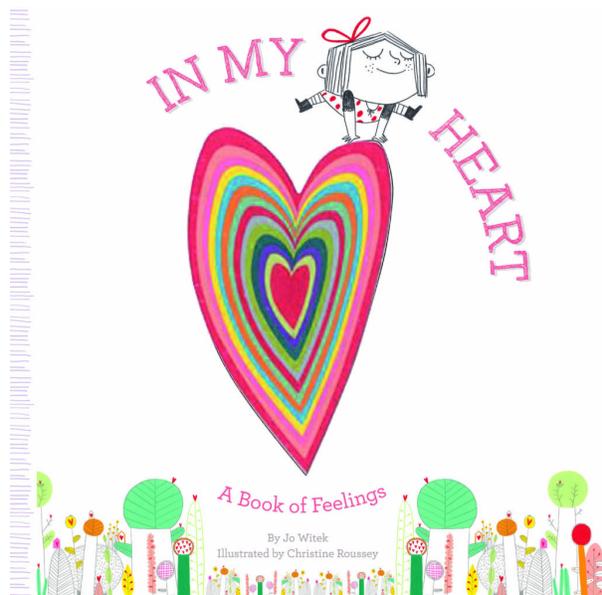


## Feelings

### **In My Heart: A Book of Feelings**

Written by Jo Witek, illustrated by Christine Roussey

In this sturdy book with beautiful heart-shaped cutouts, a girl explains that her heart is full of feelings. Each spread focuses on a different emotion, such as happiness, bravery, and fear. The descriptions of the feelings are particularly engaging: “Some days my heart feels as heavy as an elephant. There’s a dark cloud over my head and tears fall like rain. This is when my heart is sad.” Ages 3-6. Published by Harry N. Abrams.



### **My Many Colored Days**

Written by Dr. Seuss, illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher

This little-known Dr. Seuss story gives young kids a groundwork for describing their feelings, normalizing the experience of having multiple emotions. Bonus: It will also help toddlers and preschoolers learn colors. Ages 3-5. Published by [Knopf Books for Young Readers](#).

### **Tough Guys (Have Feelings Too)**

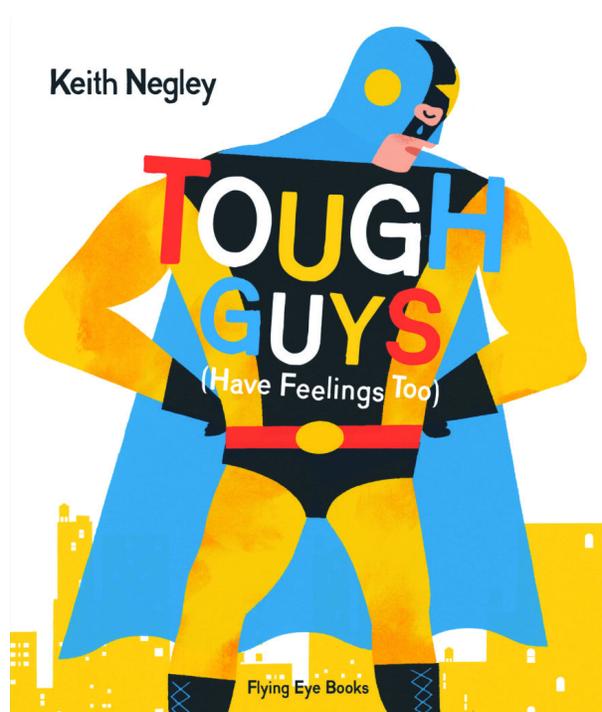
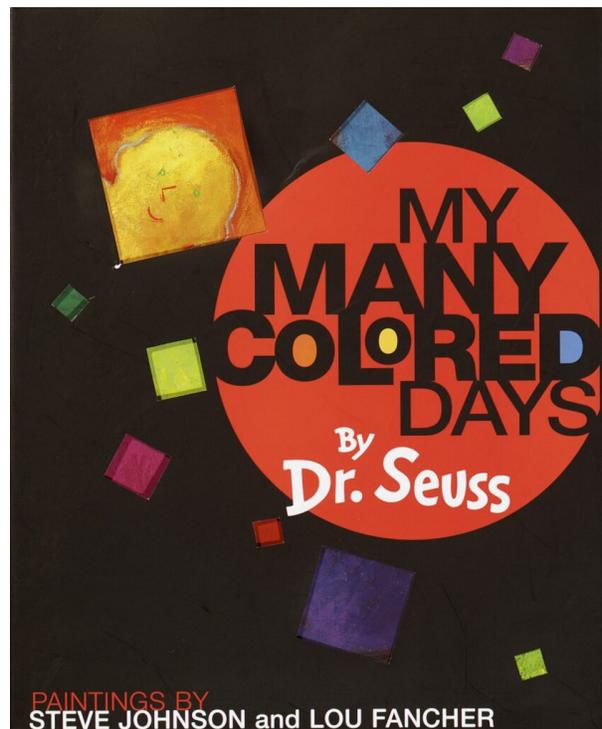
*Written and illustrated by Keith Negley*

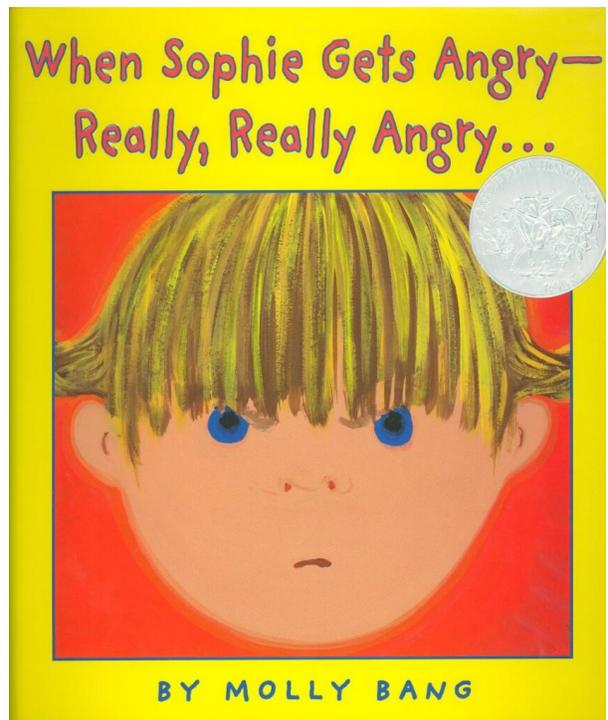
The witty illustrations in this book may be even more powerful than the text. Kids will see various “tough guys” showing emotion. An astronaut in space holds a picture of his family. A wrestler cries in the locker room. A tattooed biker regrets running over a squirrel. The final image of a father and son is particularly heartwarming. Ages 3-6. Published by [Flying Eye Books](#).

### **When Sophie Gets Angry — Really, Really Angry...**

*Written and illustrated by Molly Bang*

When Sophie’s sister swipes her stuffed animal, she feels ready to explode “like a volcano.” Vibrant illustrations depict Sophie kicking, screaming, and even roaring. But then the color palette of the illustrations changes as Sophie cries a little and lets the outdoors comfort her. “This book normalizes anger and shows that it doesn’t last forever,” says an expert from the Child Mind Institute. Ages 4-8. Published by [Scholastic Paperbacks](#).





## Grief and Loss

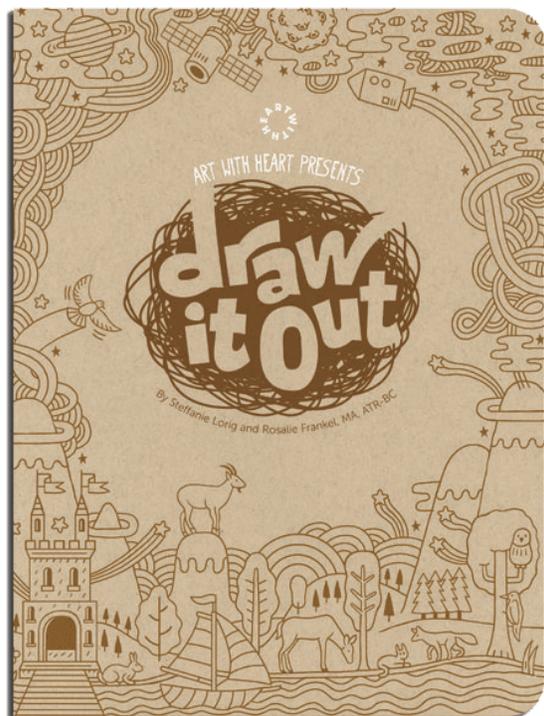
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### **Art With Heart Presents: Draw It Out** *Written by Steffanie Lorig and Rosalie Frankel*

This 40-plus-page activity book uses writing and drawing to help kids work through their emotions. Activities include creating a “Circle of Strength” and using a calendar to express feelings on different days. “I use this book in therapy for grieving children and find it to be extremely effective,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 6-10. Published by [Art With Heart](#).

### **I Miss You: A First Look at Death** *Written by Pat Thomas, illustrated by Lesley Harker*

This book explains, in realistic but reassuring language, why people die and how hard it can be to say goodbye. The real genius: “What About You?” boxes scattered throughout the book that contain questions you can ask children. “I particularly like



that it normalizes the sad feelings around death,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 4-8. Published by B.E.S. Publishing.

### **The Invisible String**

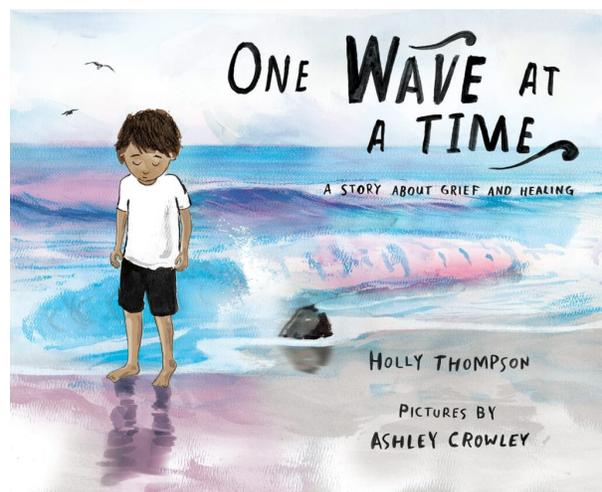
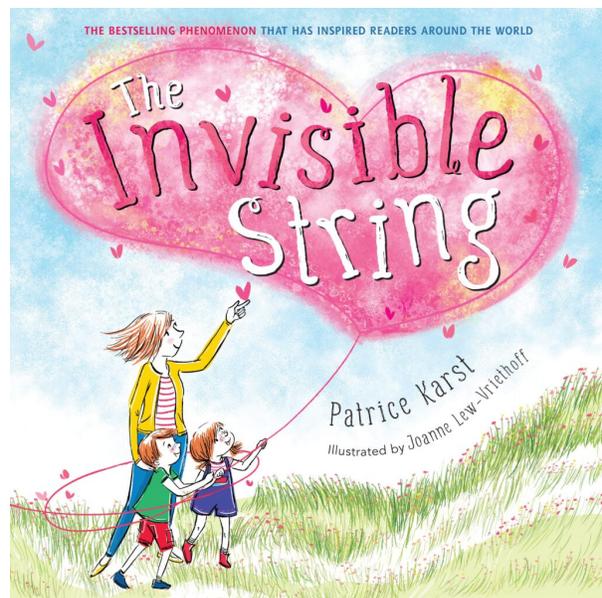
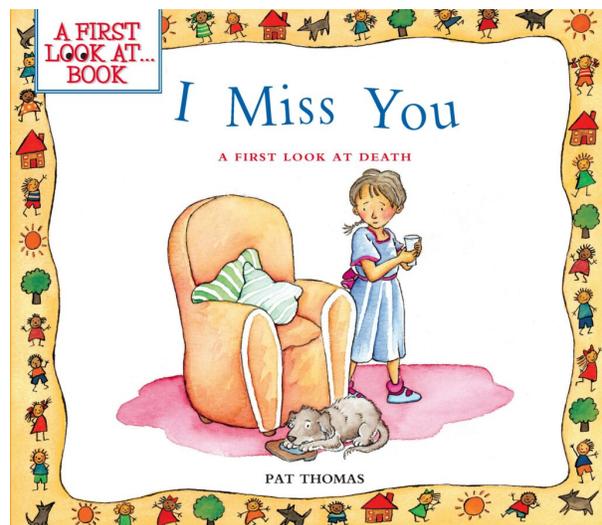
*Written by Patrice Karst, illustrated by Joanne Lew-Vriethoff*

This bestselling picture book introduces little ones to the concept of an invisible link between people, even when they're separated. In the story, a mom explains to her children that there is a “very special string made of love” that connects them to everyone they love. “When you're at school and you miss me, your love travels all the way along the string until I feel a tug on my heart,” Karst writes. The story continues with explaining how far the string reaches — to a submarine captain in the ocean, a dancer in France, and even to a beloved relative in heaven. Ages 3-8. Published by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.

### **One Wave at a Time: A Story About Grief and Healing**

*Written by Holly Thompson, illustrated by Ashley Crowley*

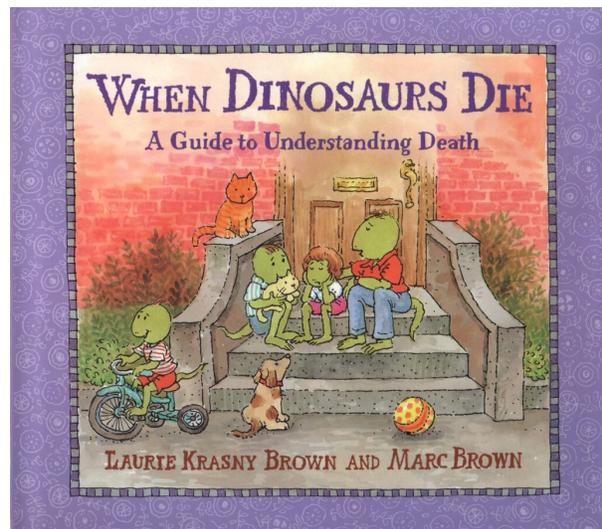
After Kai's dad died, the boy's grief manifests itself in many ways, from crying to throwing a fit to feeling flat and robotic. “The story line shows the change from struggling to recovering, and emphasizes using support networks,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 4-8. Published by Albert Whitman & Company.



## When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death

*Written and illustrated by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown*

With simple language and sweet drawings that aren't too graphic, this picture book addresses many questions children have about death, how people say goodbye, and how we remember people we've lost. The best section focuses on feelings about death and encourages kids to talk about them, says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 5-9. Published by [Little, Brown Books for Young Readers](#).



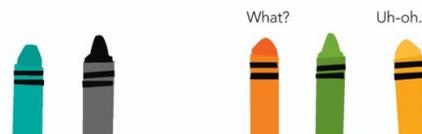
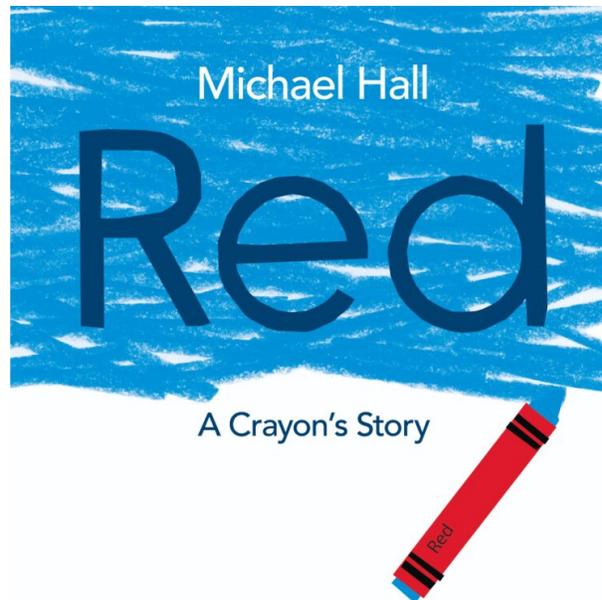
## Identity

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### Red: A Crayon's Story

*Written and illustrated by Michael Hall*

Your child will pick up on the problem right away: A blue crayon is mistakenly labeled red. He can't do what everyone expects of him (and other crayons give him all kinds of advice about how to be a better red) until one day he meets a purple crayon who sees his true color. Then he soars. "The message about identity is great," says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 5-10. Published by [Greenwillow Books](#).



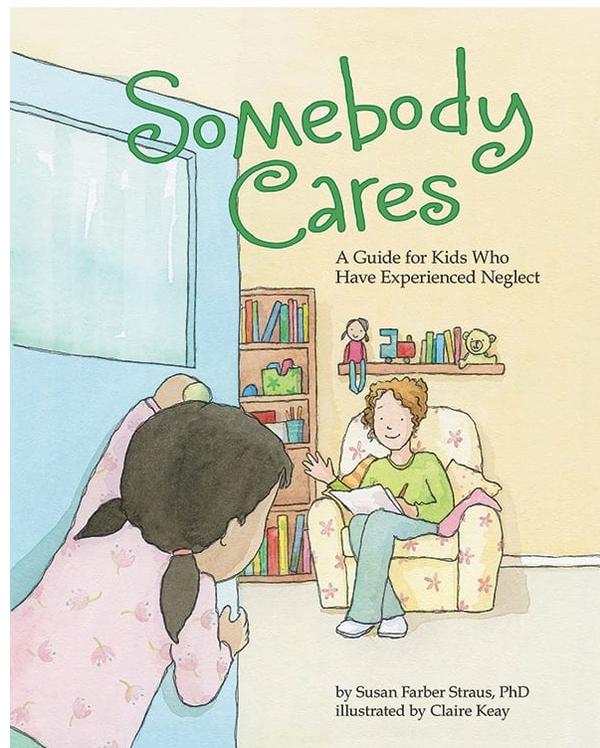
## Neglect

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### Somebody Cares: A Guide for Kids Who Have Experienced Neglect

*Written by Susan Farber Straus, PhD, illustrated by Claire Keay*

This book puts into words a lot of what kids who experienced neglect feel but have a hard time expressing. A particularly poignant passage: “I tried to be strong and brave, but often I was worried and scared. I tried to do the best with what I had, but sometimes I needed more.” Eventually, a social worker and therapist intervene, and the story ends sweetly. “It’s great that the illustrations show diverse families,” adds an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 6-12. Published by Magination Press.



## OCD

### Finding Perfect

Written by *Elly Swartz*

In this moving chapter book, 12-year-old Molly Nathan struggles with undiagnosed *obsessive-compulsive disorder*

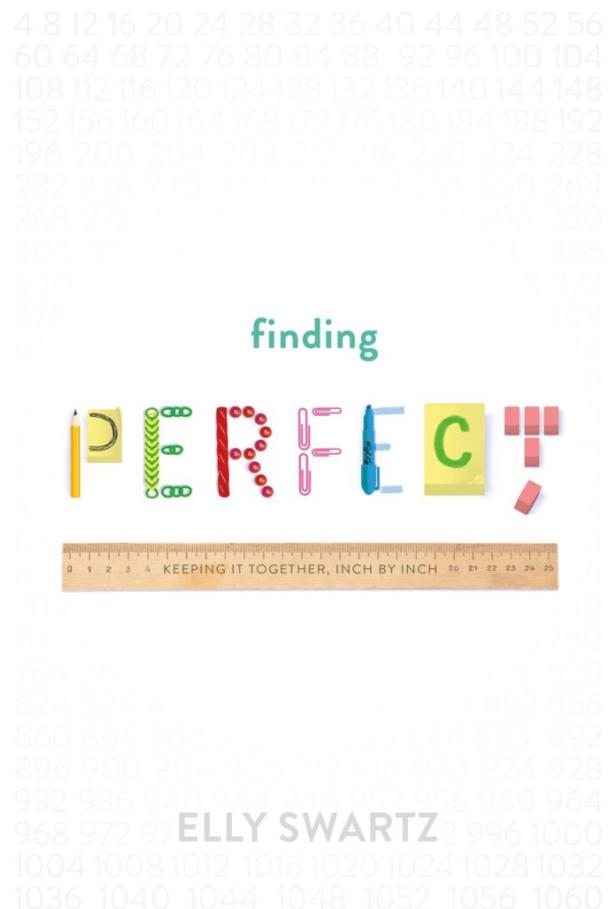
#### **obsessive-compulsive disorder**

A disorder characterized by intrusive, persistent thoughts or fears (obsessions) that are temporarily relieved by the performance of repetitive behaviors (compulsions) that may bear no particular relationship to the thought or perception.

as she navigates middle school friendships and life without her mom, who has temporarily relocated for a job. Early on, many of Molly’s *OCD*

#### **OCD**

see *obsessive-compulsive disorder*



tendencies — like organizing takeout menus alphabetically and looking for the patterns in phone numbers — are casually woven into a story line that focuses on her desire to win the poetry slam so her mom will come home for the banquet. But, as time passes, her OCD worsens: “I used to just wash my hands, and then I started washing my hands a lot, and now I scrub them raw,” Swartz writes. When Molly becomes fixated on counting, her dad takes her to a doctor who provides her *diagnosis*.

### **diagnosis**

*A specific set of signs and symptoms that together define a disorder. For psychiatric disorders, the criteria are based on standards established in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM).*

Ages 9-14. Published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

### **Mr. Worry: A Story About OCD**

*Written by Holly L. Niner, illustrated by Greg Swearingen*

Before he goes to sleep, Kevin asks his mom the same questions over and over and lines things up neatly so “his mind doesn’t get sweaty.” By the end of the story, Kevin’s OCD has improved thanks to therapy and medication. Ages 7-12. Published by Albert Whitman & Company.

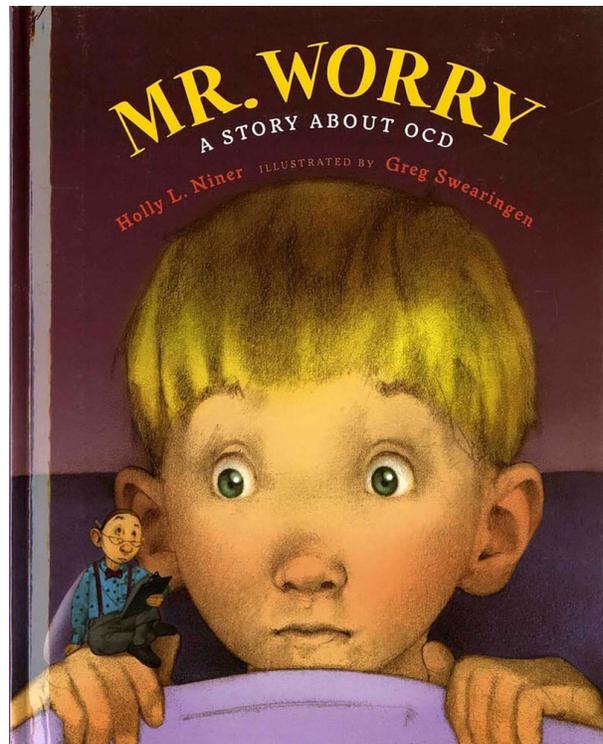
### **OCDaniel**

*Written by Wesley King*

This YA book combines a coming-of-age tale with a mystery novel. The protagonist is 13-year-old Daniel, who hides his “zaps” — rearranging cups into geometric patterns, tying his shoes a lot, and counting things — from other kids at school and at football practice. Written in the first person, “this book does an excellent job of describing the stigma and has a very accurate description of how obsessions and compulsions take hold,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Eventually, Daniel discovers that he has OCD, moves toward self-acceptance, and helps a friend solve a mystery. Ages 12+. Published by Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman Books.

### **Up and Down the Worry Hill: A Children’s Book About Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Its Treatment**

*Written by Aureen Pinto Wagner, PhD, illustrated by Paul A. Jutton*

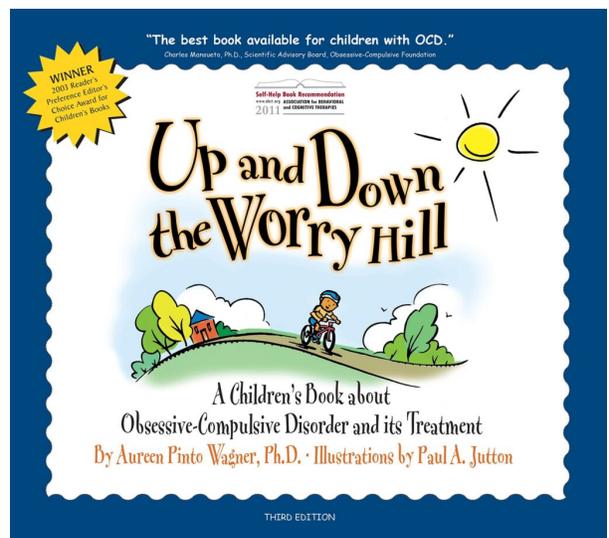
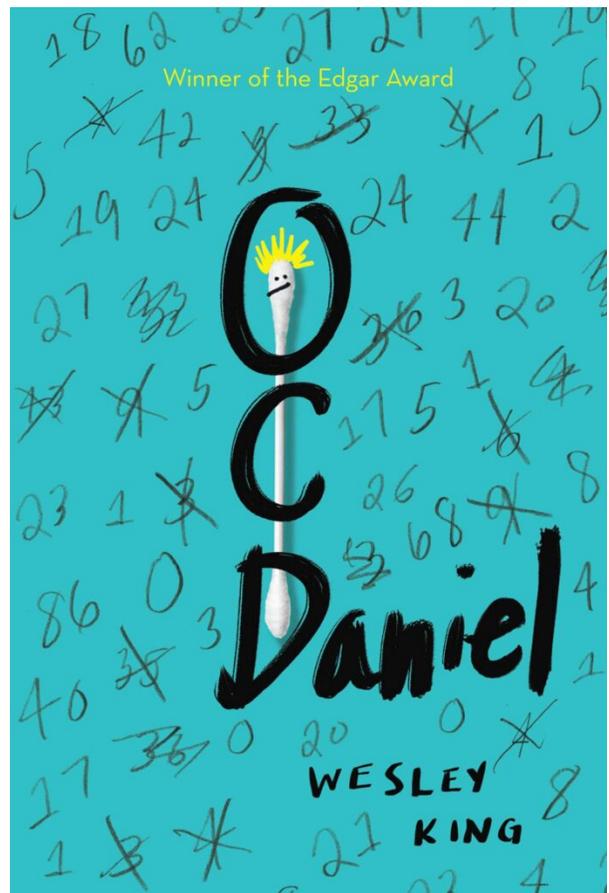


This story about a young boy with OCD explains, in child-friendly language, not only what the disorder is and how it interferes with his life, but how treatment with *cognitive*

### **cognitive**

Relating to conscious intellectual activity such as intellectual capacity, perception, judgment, memory, and reasoning.

behavior therapy works to help kids escape it. It's best read with your child. Ages 7-10. Published by Lighthouse Press.



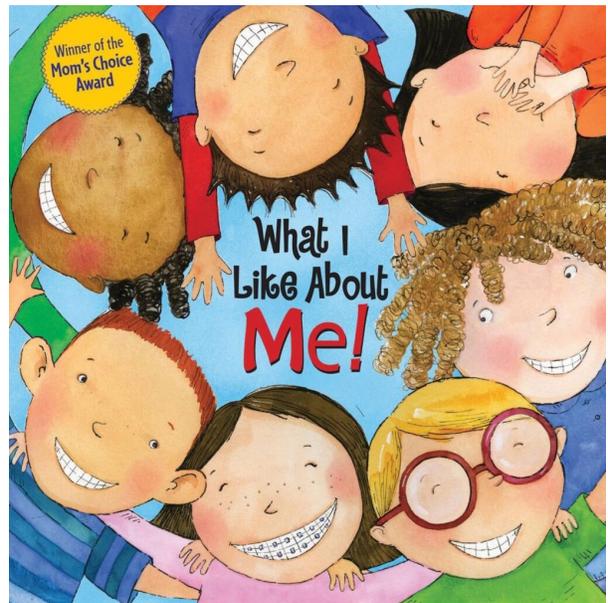
## **Self-Esteem**

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### **What I Like About Me!**

*Written by Allia Zobel Nolan, illustrated by Miki Sakamoto*

In this simple book for young children, students at school celebrate their diversity — from braces to glasses, curly hair to big feet. “It provides a very positive message about the benefit of those differences,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 3-7. Published by [Studio Fun International](#).



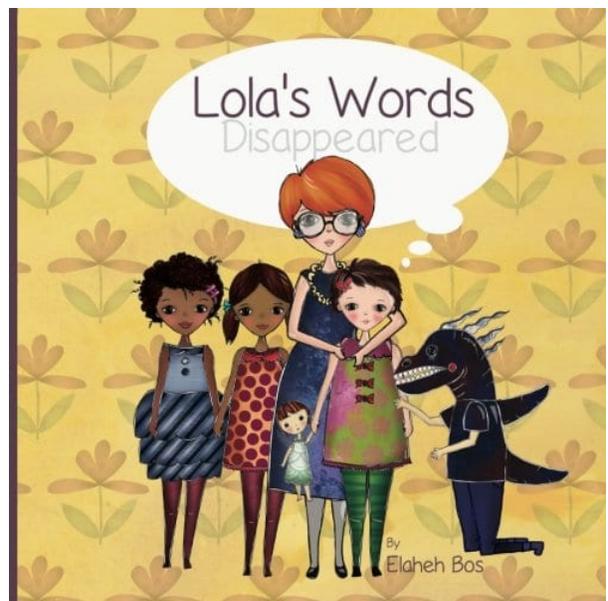
## Selective Mutism

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### **Lola's Words Disappeared**

*Written and illustrated by Elaheh Bos*

This book helps readers understand that kids can be super verbal at home, but, in public, words seem to get stuck. Lola, the main character, couldn't say a word at school. But a gradual approach, starting by practicing with a school friend at home, enabled her to find her voice. Ages 5-8. Published by [CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform](#).



## Sensory Processing

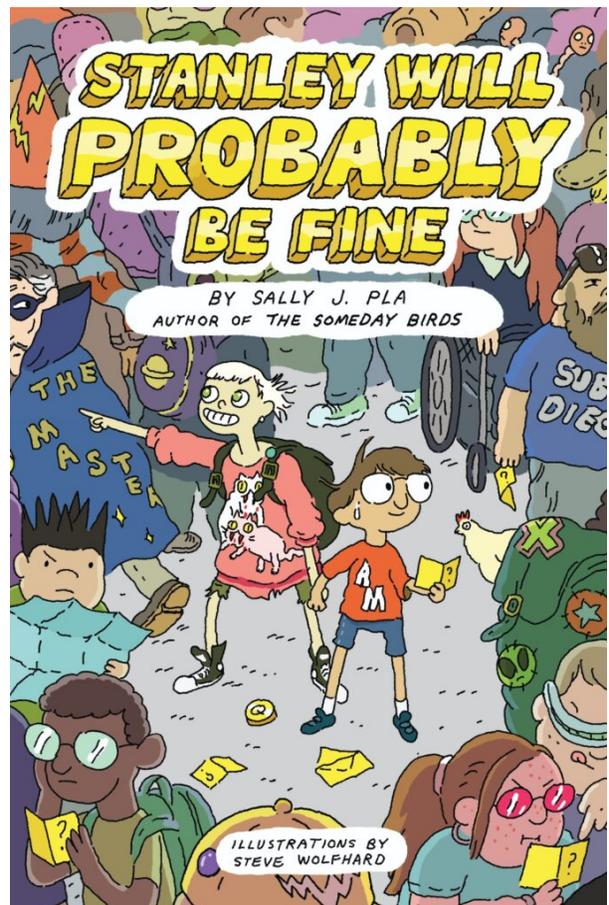
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### **Stanley Will Probably Be Fine**

*Written by Sally J. Pla, illustrated by Steve Wolfhard*

In this funny chapter book, middle-schooler Stanley is on a mission to get VIP passes to Comic Fest, which means he has to win the Trivia Quest treasure hunt happening downtown. He's great with comic trivia, but his sensory sensitivities and anxiety can sometimes get in the way. With the help of a brave new neighbor and a superhero that he invents, Stanley finds the courage he needs. “By the end of the book, Stanley is

more socially involved and braver than ever before,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 8-12. Published by [HarperCollins](#).



## Tourette's Syndrome

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### **Forget Me Not**

*Written by Ellie Terry*

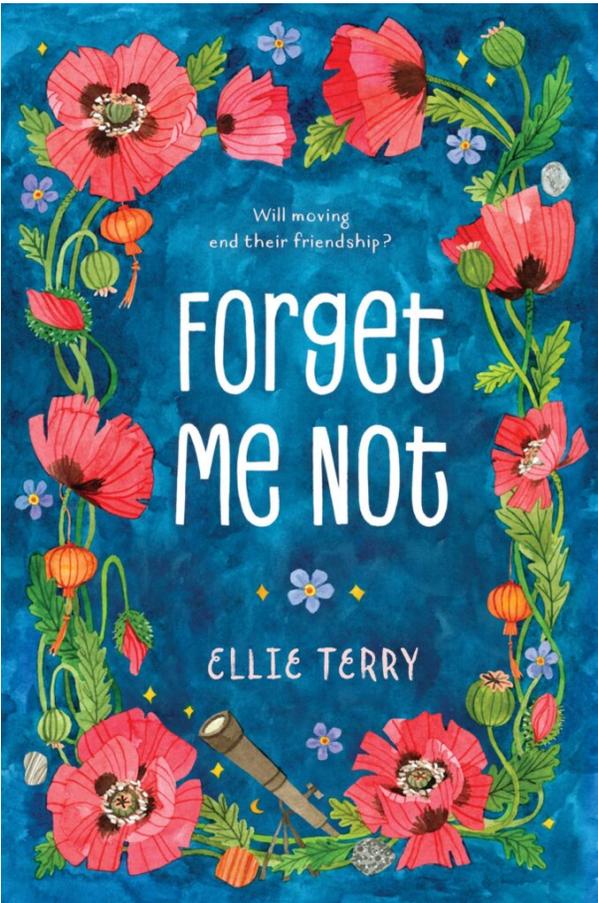
Toggling between verse and prose, this book is written from the points of view of two students: Calli, who has Tourette's Syndrome, and her classmate Jinsong. Most students tease and reject Calli because of her tics. "I walk into the boys' locker room, and all I hear is: 'The new girl wears old clothes. The new girl rolls her eyes. The new girl makes creepy sounds with her throat,'" says Jinsong. "It's all true. But somehow it feels wrong to hear them say it." Readers will be satisfied by the end of the story when Calli begins to stand up for herself and find confidence, says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 8-12. Published by [Square Fish](#).

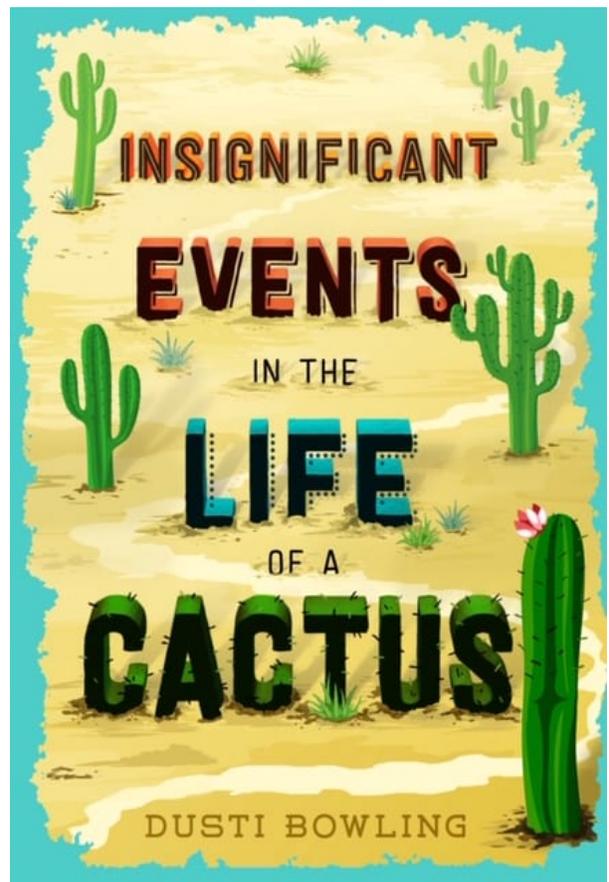
### **Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus**

*Written by Dusti Bowling*

Born without arms, the main character, Aven, makes friends with Conner, a classmate who has Tourette's Syndrome. Their relationship gives readers a window into life with a disability through honest (and sometimes funny) dialogue. One example: "Conner had gone to two support group meetings, and I got the feeling he was actually starting

to enjoy them, even though he gave Dexter the stink eye.” Overall, the book does a good job of explaining Tourette’s Syndrome and the types of treatment, notes an expert at the Child Mind Institute. Ages 12+. Published by Sterling Children’s Books.





## Trauma

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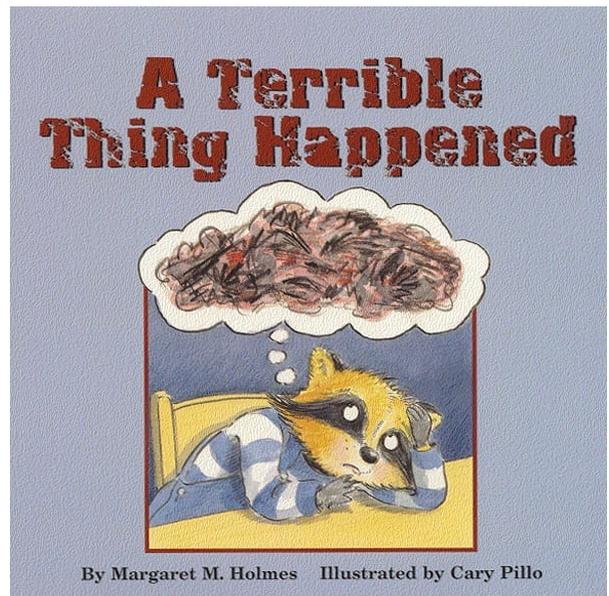
### **A Terrible Thing Happened**

*Written by Margaret M. Holmes,  
illustrated by Cary Pillo*

When Sherman, a raccoon, saw something that upset him, he became nervous, didn't sleep well, and felt sad. "Through Sherman, the book explains the symptoms of *post-traumatic stress disorder*

#### **post-traumatic stress disorder**

An anxiety disorder that is initiated by exposure to an overwhelming event that seriously threatens an individual's safety or life. It is a chronic condition that continues long after what would be a developmentally appropriate response to such an event.



in simple terms that young children can understand,” says an expert at the Child Mind Institute. “The book also covers the importance of talking about traumatic things to help feel better.” Another plus: The story doesn’t specify exactly what happened to Sherman, so the book could be useful in many situations. Ages 5-9. Published by Magination Press.

### **The War That Saved My Life**

By *Kimberly Brubaker Bradley*

During World War II, 10-year-old Ava escapes her traumatic life with her mom and goes to the countryside, where she learns to ride a pony and read. But in the country she is still struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder; for instance, going into a bomb shelter reminds her of being locked in a kitchen cabinet in her mom’s apartment. Because of some mature language and themes, it’s better read with your child. Ages 9-12. Published by Puffin Books.

