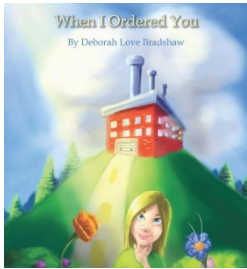


Books to Share with Children and Youth with Special Needs

A great book can help your child make sense of having special needs and the complex emotions they're feeling. It also opens the door for questions that your child might not otherwise be comfortable bringing up and give you the opportunity to reassure them that what they are feeling is normal. Here are some beautifully written and illustrated books and novels for youth on various topics including chronically, seriously or terminally-ill children, blindness, learning self-control, how to cope when you are being bullied and more.

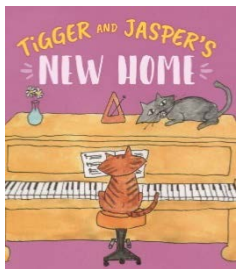


When I Ordered You, by *Deborah Bradshaw* and illustrated by *Paul Riddle*

This heartwarming book should be enjoyed by readers of all ages and all abilities. It is especially meaningful to people with differing needs and parents of kids with special needs. The book transcends any particular age and has something to offer to all. Excerpt: "When I imagined our life, I imagined a life filled with Saturdays at the baseball game and walks in the park. We've had those, but it did take you a little longer to walk so we used a stroller instead of our feet."

White Bear's Big Adventure, by *Marie Cheine* and illustrated by *Jeanine Henning*

A beautifully written book created for young readers, particularly chronically, seriously or terminally ill children, their siblings, family and friends. This is the story of three multi-racial siblings and a stuffed bear named White Bear. The youngest sibling, Angel, has a rare medical condition called VATER Syndrome. When she is admitted to the hospital for a kidney transplant, her best friend, White Bear gets lost in hospital linens.

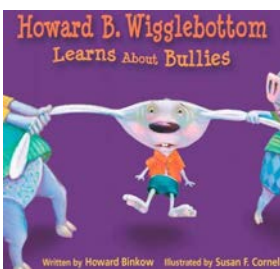
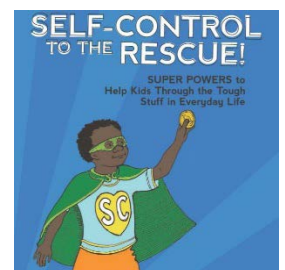


Tigger And Jasper's New Home, by *Cheryl Gillespie* and illustrated by *Michael Allison LeBlanc*

Ms. Gillespie, blind from early childhood, writes a touching story about her two adorable, curious kittens. It is a story of two kittens living on a farm, which are waiting for their forever home. Soon they are adopted by a young woman named Christie. Following a few amusing misadventures, the kittens come to realize that Christie, their new guardian, is blind. Other themes in this story: acceptance of differences and the importance of caring, respect, and support for each other as shown by the characters.

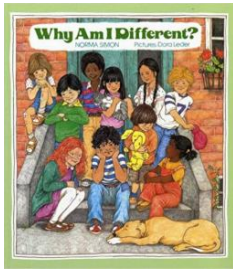
Self-Control to the Rescue! by *Lauren Brukner* and illustrated by *Apsley*

This book is divided into two parts, one for kids and one for adults. The first part teaches simple strategies to tackle the difficult emotions and challenges of everyday life. From the morning routine to making friends at recess, paying attention in class and getting a good night's sleep. Suitable for all children, but especially those with sensory and emotional regulation difficulties.



Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns About Bullies, By *Howard Binkow* and illustrated by *Susan F. Cornelson*

Howard, the rabbit, has so many bullying problems, he cannot fall asleep. A little voice in his head keeps repeating: "Be Brave, Be Bold, a teacher must be told." But he is afraid that if he were to tell, he would be called a tattletale or a snitch. This is Book 3 of 15 in the award-winning Howard B. Wigglebottom series.

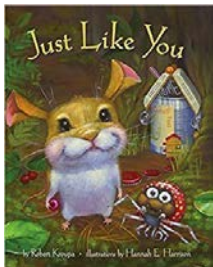


Why Am I Different? by Norma Simon

This book portrays everyday situations in which children see themselves as "different" in family life, preferences, and aptitudes, and yet, feel that being different is all right. Children are shown with different skills, different family units, and different foods they eat. Many ethnic groups are depicted, and adoption is one of the differences discussed. A very touching book about differences.

The Rhino Who Swallowed a Storm, by LeVar Burton

A happy little rhinoceros is overwhelmed by a storm that sweeps away everything he loves. Swallowing the storm just makes him feel worse, so Rhino sets off on a whimsical journey toward healing. Along the way, he meets many friends, including a kind spider, a brave kangaroo, a wise tortoise, and an uplifting whale. This book offers an engaging resource to help children express their feelings and navigate through difficult experiences. The "Take a Deeper Look" page at the end even provides discussion questions to facilitate a healing dialogue.

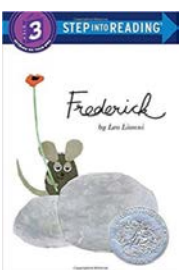
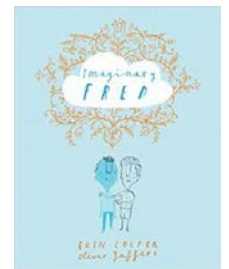


Just Like You, by Robert Kroupa

This book tells the story of the sweet friendship of a deaf mouse and a spider who is missing a leg. They are both teased because they are different, but when they warn their community about a forest fire that they sense before anyone else, they are appreciated for their differences. Beautifully illustrated with rhyming couplets. Perfect for little ones!

Imaginary Fred, by Eoin Colfer

Imaginary Fred is a friend to lonely children. He laments that the children who need him inevitably stop needing him and he longs for the day he will meet a child who never grows tired of him or stops needing him. His wish comes true and he meets a boy named Sam who introduces him to a new way of being appreciated. The perfect chemistry between Eoin Colfer's text and Oliver Jeffers's artwork makes for a dazzlingly original picture book.

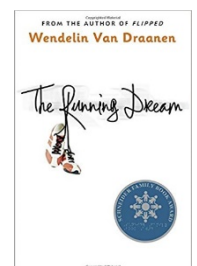


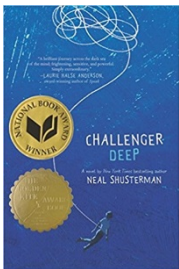
Frederick, by Leo Lionni

Winter is coming, and all the mice are gathering food . . . except for Frederick. But when the days grow short and the snow begins to fall, it's Frederick's stories that warm the hearts and spirits of his fellow field mice. Winner of a 1967 Caldecott Honor, Frederick has been cherished by generations of readers. It tells the tale of a mouse who operates differently than the other's and is celebrated and loved for being different.

The Running Dream, by Wendelin Van Draanen

When Jessica is told she'll never run again, she puts herself back together, and learns to dream bigger than ever before. This book delivers a powerful and healing story. Jessica thinks her life is over when she loses a leg in a car accident. She's not comforted by the news that she'll be able to walk with the help of a prosthetic leg. Who cares about walking when you live to run? Winner of the Schneider Family Book Award.



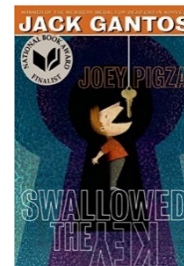


Challenger Deep, by Neal Shusterman

A captivating novel about mental illness. Caden Bosch is on a ship that's headed for the deepest point on Earth: Challenger Deep, the southern part of the Marianas Trench. *He* is a brilliant high school student whose friends are starting to notice his odd behavior. Caden Bosch is designated the ship's artist in residence to document the journey with images. Caden Bosch pretends to join the school track team but spends his days walking for miles, absorbed by the thoughts in his head. Caden Bosch is split between his allegiance to the captain and the allure of mutiny. National Book Award and Golden Kite Award Winner.

Swallowed the Key, by Jack Gantos

Joey Pigza's got heart, he's got a mom who loves him, and he's got "dud meds," which is what he calls the Ritalin pills that are supposed to even out his wild mood swings. Sometimes Joey makes bad choices. He learns the hard way that he shouldn't stick his finger in the pencil sharpener, or swallow his house key, or run with scissors. Joey ends up bouncing around a lot, and eventually he bounces himself all the way downtown, into the district special-ed program, which could be the end of the line. As Joey knows, if he keeps making bad choices, he could just fall between the cracks for good. This was a 1998 National Book Award Finalist for Young People's Literature.

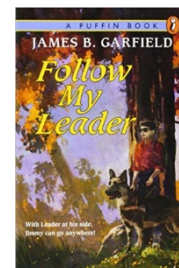


A Mango-Shaped Space, by Wendy Mass

Mia Winchell has synesthesia, the mingling of perceptions whereby a person can see sounds, smell colors, or taste shapes. When trouble in the school finally convinces Mia to reveal her secret, she feels like a freak; and as she embarks on an intense journey of self-discovery, her family and friends have trouble relating to her. By the time she realizes she has isolated herself from all the people who care about her, it is almost too late. Forced to reveal her condition, she must look to herself to develop an understanding and appreciation of her gift in this coming-of-age novel. Winner of the Schneider Family Book Award.

Follow My Leader, by James B. Garfield

A heartwarming story about a boy and his guide dog. After Jimmy is blinded in an accident with a firecracker, he has to relearn all the things he used to know - how to get dressed, how to find his way around the house, even how to eat. With the help of a determined therapist, he learns to read Braille and use a cane. Then he's given the chance to have a guide dog. Learning to work with Leader is not easy, but Jimmy tries harder than he ever has before. Can Leader really give him the ability and the confidence he needs?



Bluefish, by Pat Schmatz

Thirteen-year-old Travis has a secret: he can't read. He's at a new school and cramped by the dreaded routine of passing when he's called on to read out loud. But that's before Travis meets Mr. McQueen, who doesn't take "pass" for an answer - a rare teacher whose savvy persistence has Travis slowly unlocking a book on the natural world. And it's before Travis is noticed by Velveeta, a girl whose wry banter and colorful scarves belie some hard secrets of her own. With sympathy, humor, and disarming honesty, the author brings to life a cast of utterly believable characters—and captures the moments of trust and connection that make all the difference.