



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

A.J. Drexel
Autism Institute

Dornsife School of Public Health

Book Resource List For Families

Teaching Kids About Autism

2026

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Disclaimer

The following guide consists of books and resources that may assist families' individualized journeys navigating an autism diagnosis. This list is a starting point - we encourage families to continue to do their own research to decide what books or resources best fit their needs, culture, and views. It is recommended that caregivers actively participate in reading and discussing these resources with their children.

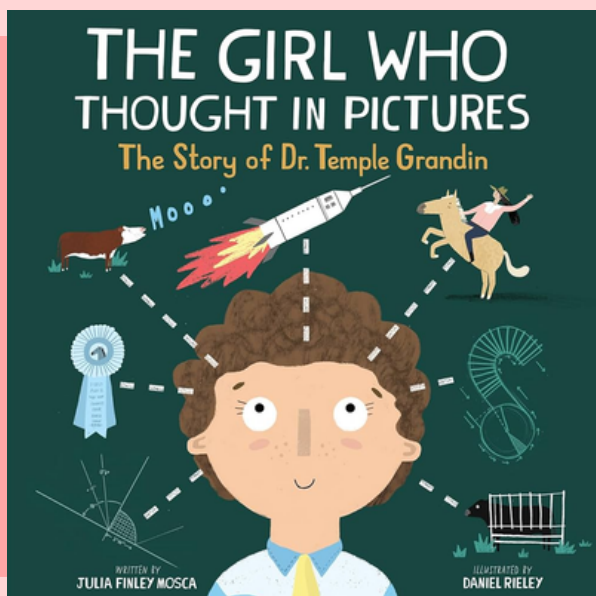
The books and resources highlighted in this packet are not affiliated with the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute. The A.J. Drexel Autism Institute does not benefit monetarily from purchases of these books and resources.



For Children on the **Spectrum**



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The Girl Who Thought In Pictures

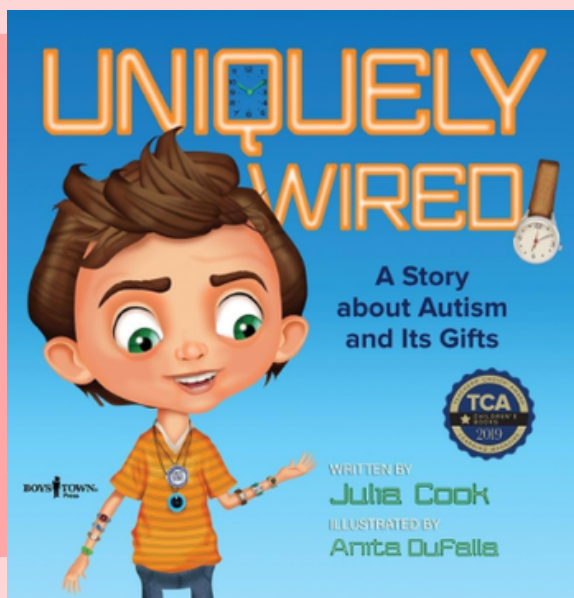
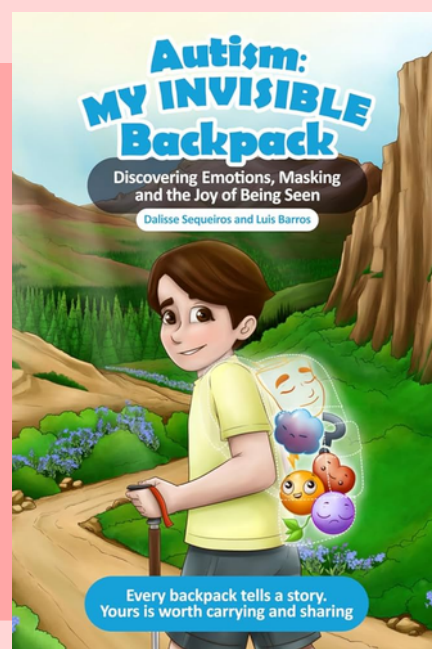
(5-11 Years)

A heartwarming and inspiring piece that tells the story of Dr. Temple Grandin, a renowned animal scientist who has autism. The book illustrates how Temple's unique way of thinking in pictures helped her overcome challenges and achieve great success.

Autism: My Invisible Backpack Discovering Emotions, Masking and the Joy of Being Seen

(6-12 Years)

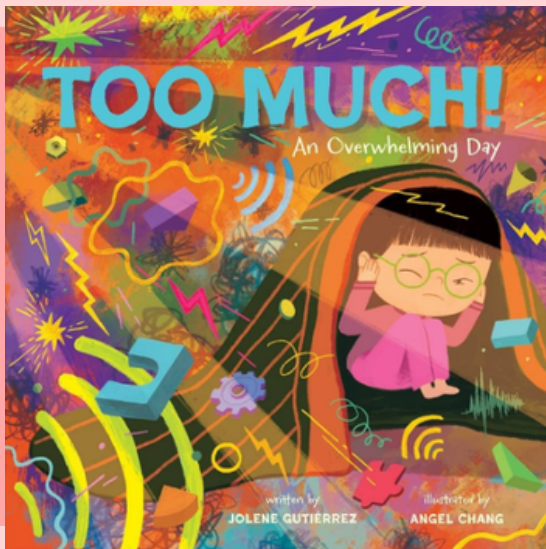
This children's book follows two brothers hiking a mountain as they learn to manage their emotional "backpacks" and embrace their feelings. It offers tools to help children with autism understand emotional overload, masking, and hyper-empathy.



Uniquely Wired: A Story about Autism and Its Gifts

(5-12 Years)

This is a captivating book from the perspective of Zak, a boy with autism, and the unique gifts he possesses. It shows the strengths and abilities that come with autism, encouraging readers to appreciate and celebrate these differences.

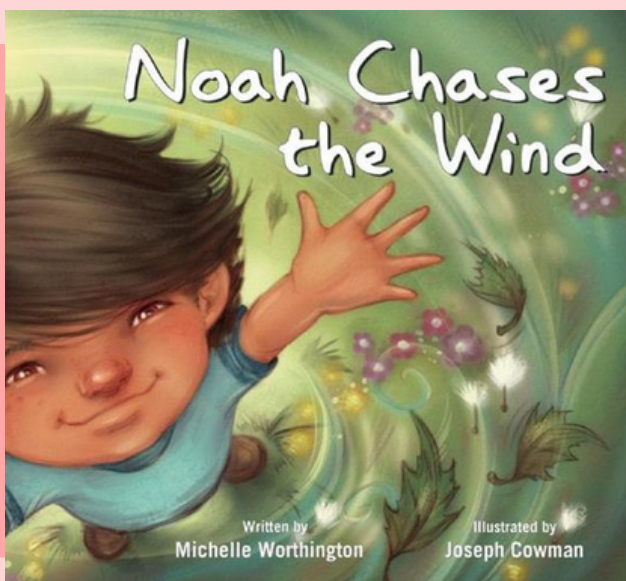
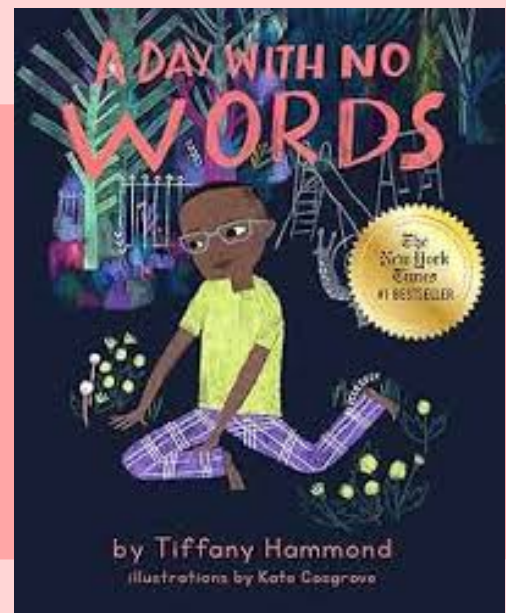


Too Much! An Overwhelming Day (3-5 Years)

This picture book follows a child with autism who feels overwhelmed by everyday sensory experiences, helping readers understand sensory challenges and build empathy.

A Day with No Words (4-8 Years)

A Day With No Words follows an autistic boy and his mother navigating their world and connecting through nonverbal communication, like using a tablet.



Noah Chases The Wind (3-8 Years)

This picture book follows Noah, a young boy with autism, and explores his unique way of experiencing the world and his fascination with the wind. Through his journey, readers gain insight into the sensory experiences and perspectives of individuals with autism.

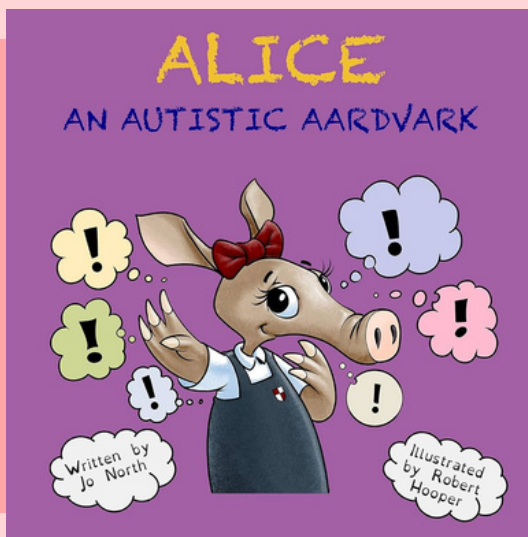


Things That Rhyme With Autism (4-8 Years)

This book brings colorful rhymes to a special education teacher's real life experiences with many different autistic children in the classroom.

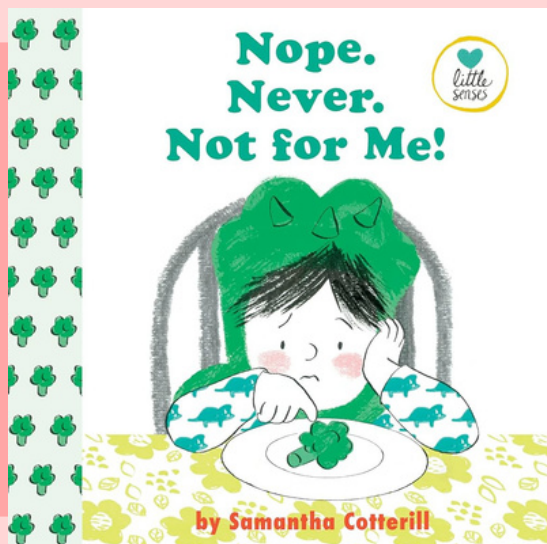
The Abilities in Me: Autism (3-8 Years)

Explore the daily life of a young girl and boy with autism through bright and colorful illustrations. This book helps teach kids to be supportive and kind and helps children celebrate their abilities within their disabilities.



Alice: An Autistic Aardvark (2-9 Years)

Alice is a kind-hearted and caring aardvark who is worried that her autism makes her different from everyone else. Through the story, her friends help her trust that she has nothing to worry about and that she is great just the way she is.



Nope. Never. Not for Me!

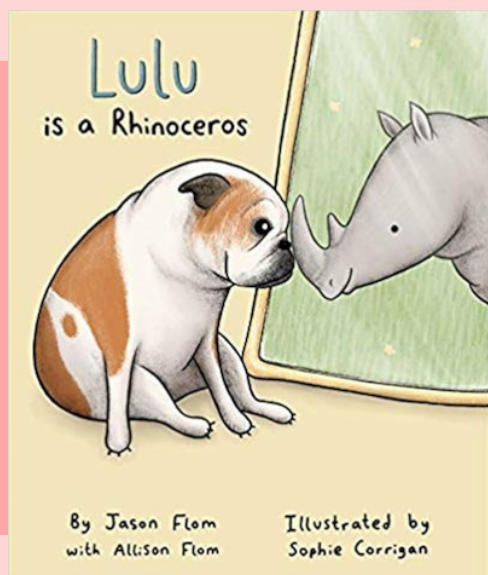
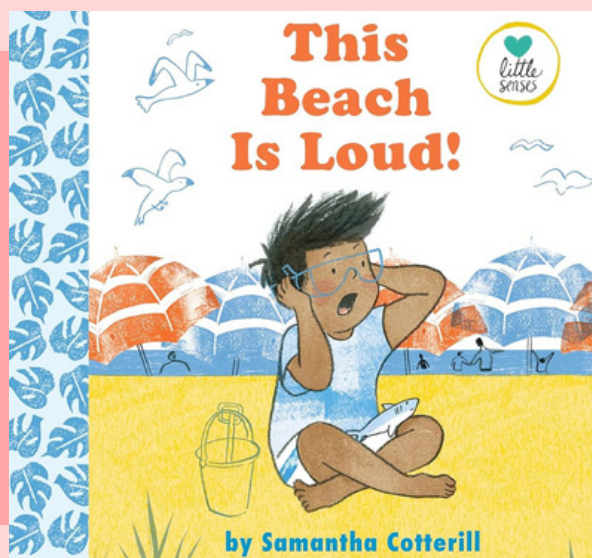
(3-7 Years)

A young child refuses to try a bite of broccoli... until her mom helps her through exploration of new food. She looks, sniffs, then touches, and finally takes a tiny bite. Broccoli isn't that bad after all!

The Beach is Loud!

(3-7 Years)

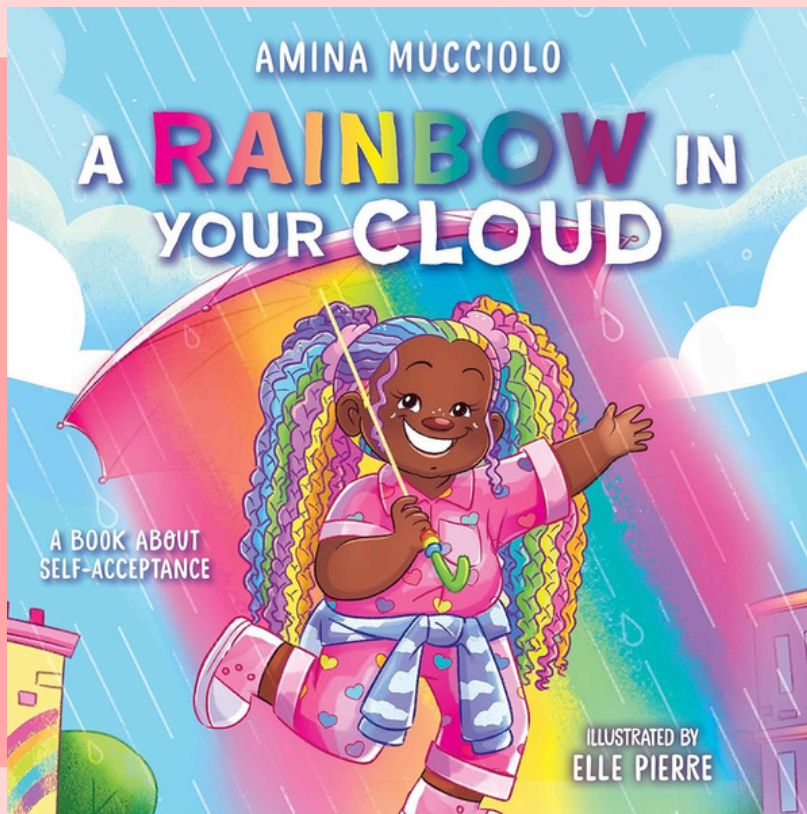
A boy becomes overwhelmed by all the sights, sounds, and sensations on his trip to the beach. His dad steps in with a hidden trick to make this experience much more bearable for the boy.



Lulu is a Rhinoceros

(3-7 Years)

Lulu is a bulldog who identifies as a rhinoceros and goes on an adventure to find her true identity. Through Lulu's journey, she learns self-acceptance, courage, and the meaning of true identity with the help from her friends!



A Rainbow in Your Cloud *(4-8 Years)*

This empowering semi-autobiographical picture book encourages children to embrace their unique qualities and to foster self-acceptance and expression.



For Peers

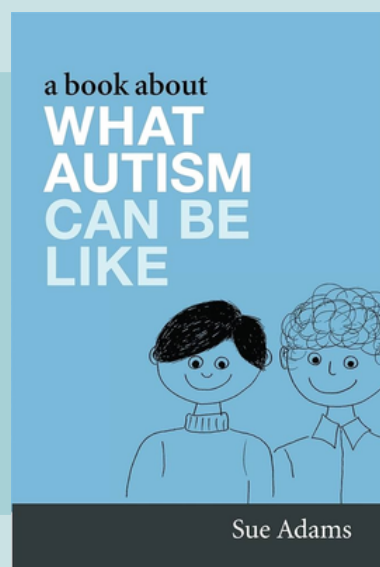
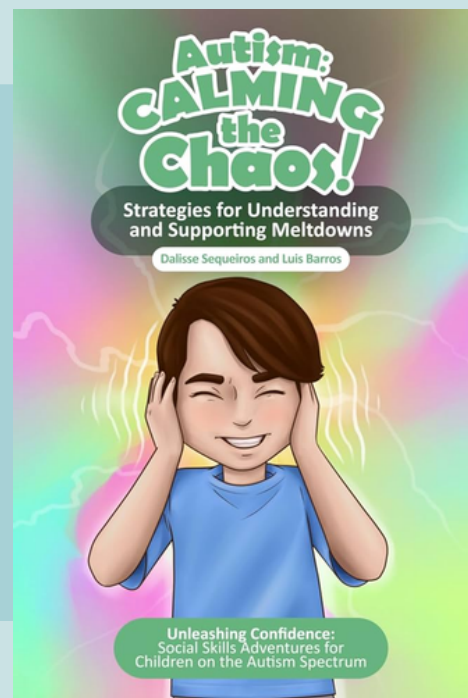


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Autism: Calming the Chaos

(6-12 Years)

This informational book helps peers, children on the spectrum, family, and teachers to learn more about supporting children with autism. It provides practical, step-by-step strategies and insights for managing the sensory and emotional challenges often experienced by individuals with autism.



A Book About What Autism Can Be Like

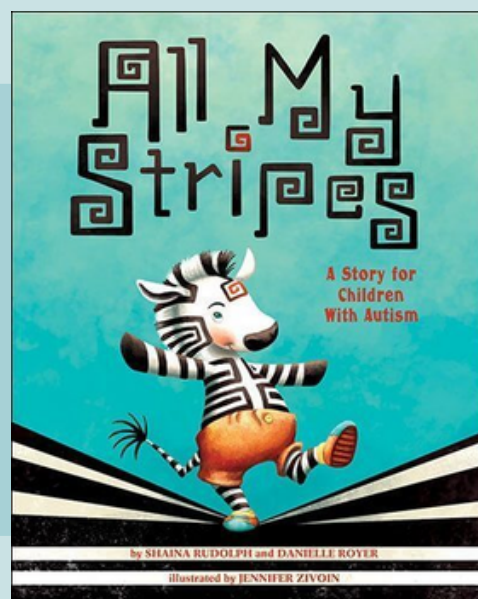
(5-11 Years)

Meet Andrew and Chris, two friends who think about the same things, but sometimes Chris thinks about things in different ways. In simplistic sentences, readers learn how a friend like Andrew can support a friend with autism like Chris.

All My Stripes

(3-8 Years)

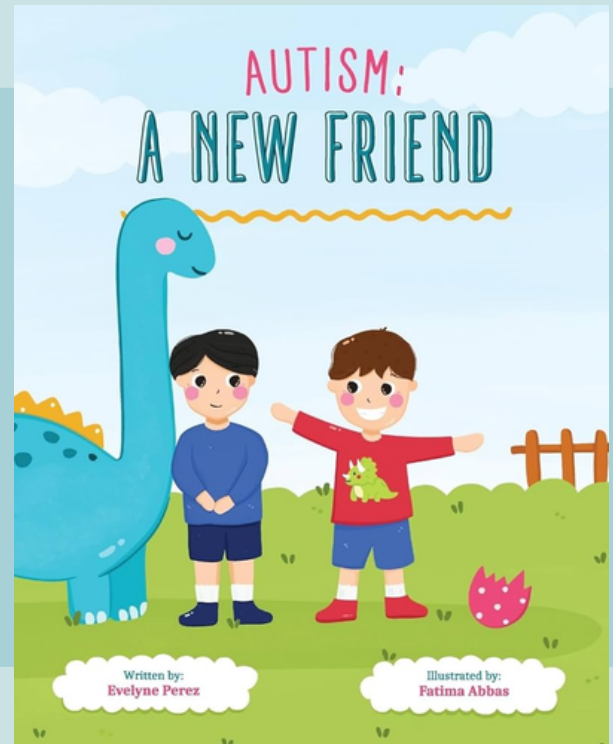
Follow Zane, as he feels different and worried that his classmates only notice his “autism stripe.” With the help of his mom, Zane learns to appreciate all stripes that each represent a different trait, like curiosity and honesty.



Autism: A New Friend

(3-8 Years)

Mateo is a young boy navigating the world with autism, alongside his friend, Aaron. This book shows how they build a bond through patience and kindness.



Artie is Awesome

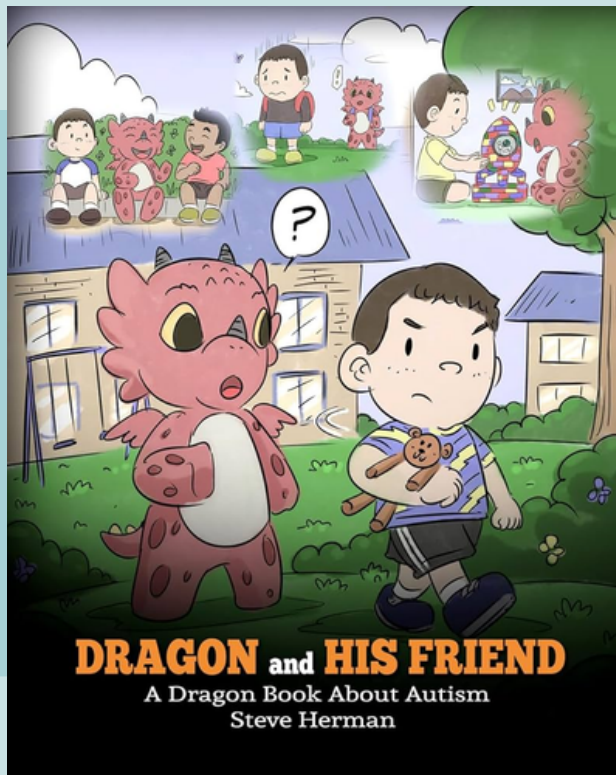
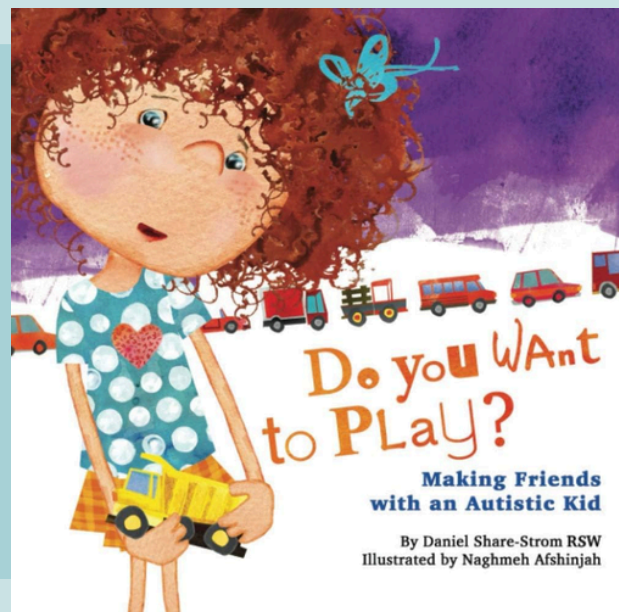
(2-8 Years)

Meet our new friend, Artie: he loves trains, playing chase, and eating pizza. He also has autism. In this book, we learn to appreciate the differences that make each of us special.

Do You Want to Play?

(3-8 Years)

Jamie is trying to connect with a new classmate, Dylan, who is autistic and prefers to line up his cars. Jamie learns to adapt her play style to Dylan's needs.



Dragon and His Friend

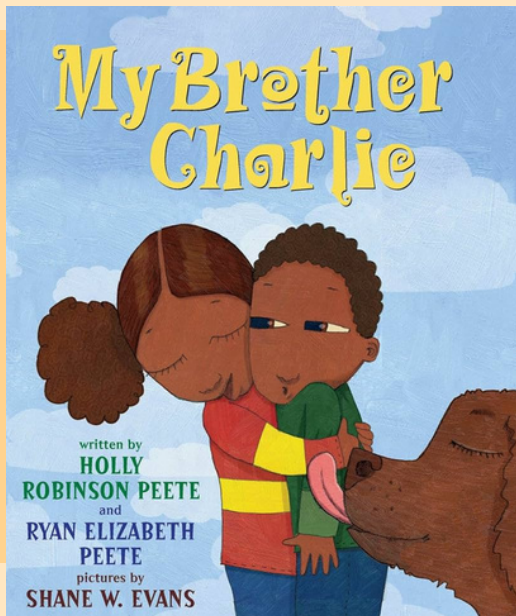
(3-8 Years)

Diggory the Dragon learns patience and empathy for a friend who feels and experiences the world a little differently from him.



For Siblings



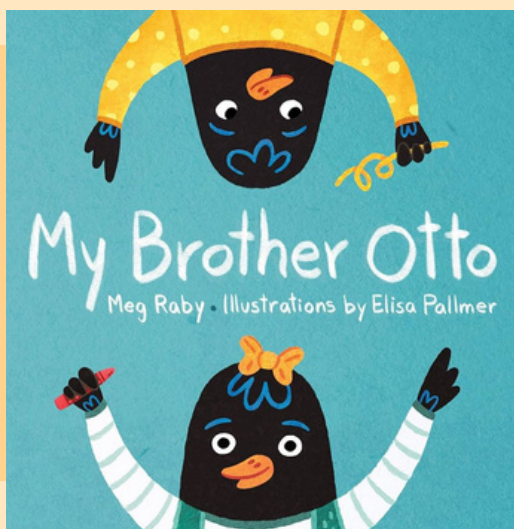


My Brother Charlie (4-9 Years)

This picture book tells the story of Charlie, a young boy with autism, through his sister's perspective, highlighting their bond and the challenges and joys of growing up together. It encourages understanding and acceptance and shows how love is expressed through actions rather than words.

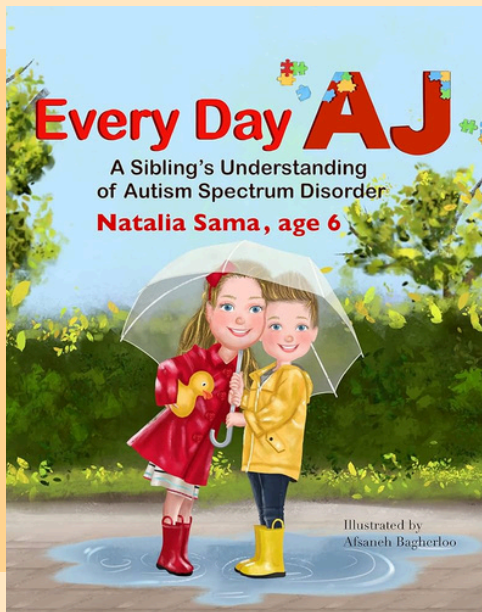
The Abilities in Me: Superstar Siblings (3-12 Years)

This picture book highlights the strengths of children with autism through siblings' perspectives, promoting acceptance and reassurance while celebrating their bond and differences.



My Brother Otto (3-7 Years)

This story, written from the perspective of his older sister, follows Otto, a boy with autism, and his unique traits. This book highlights his personality and their sibling bond.



Every Day AJ: A Sibling's Understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder

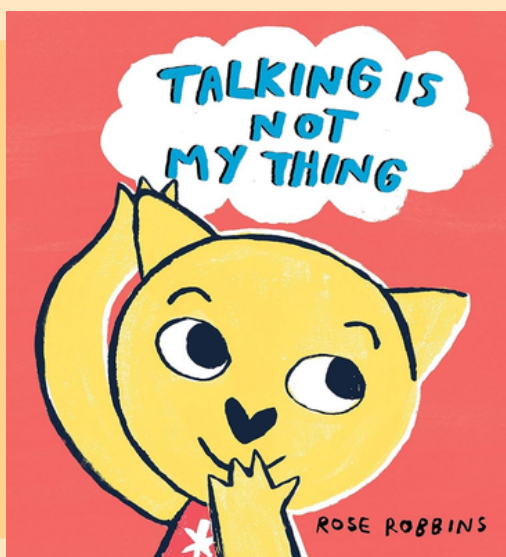
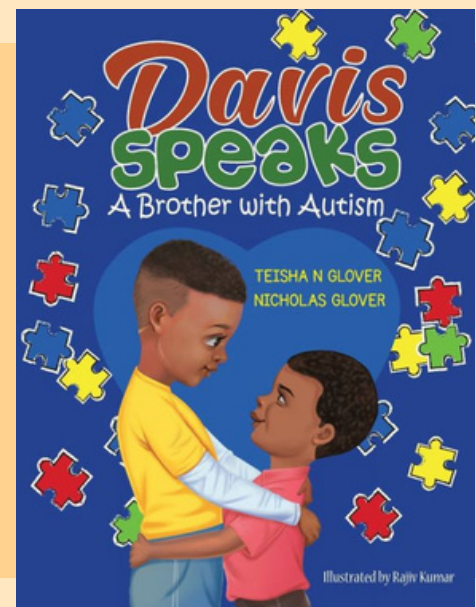
(4-10 Years)

Written from an older sibling's perspective, this story shows a younger brother with autistic traits and explains how their differences shape their relationship.

Davis Speaks: A Brother with Autism

(3-12 Years)

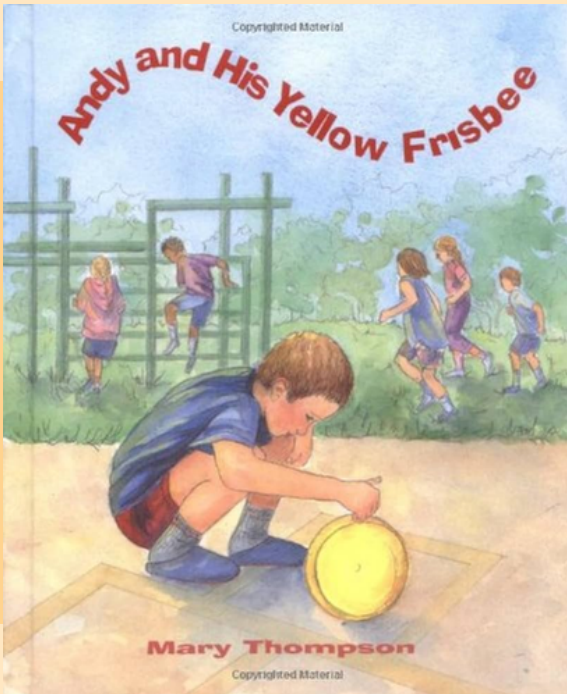
Written by a mother and brother of a child with autism, this story follows a nonverbal child who "speaks" in other ways. Told from a sibling's perspective, it highlights acceptance, understanding, and love despite outside misunderstandings.



Talking Is Not My Thing

(3-8 Years)

This book focuses on a nonverbal autistic girl who communicates through thought bubbles, drawings, and actions with her brother. Through the perspective of the girl with autism, we see how nonverbal communication helps her navigate daily experiences with her family, especially her brother.

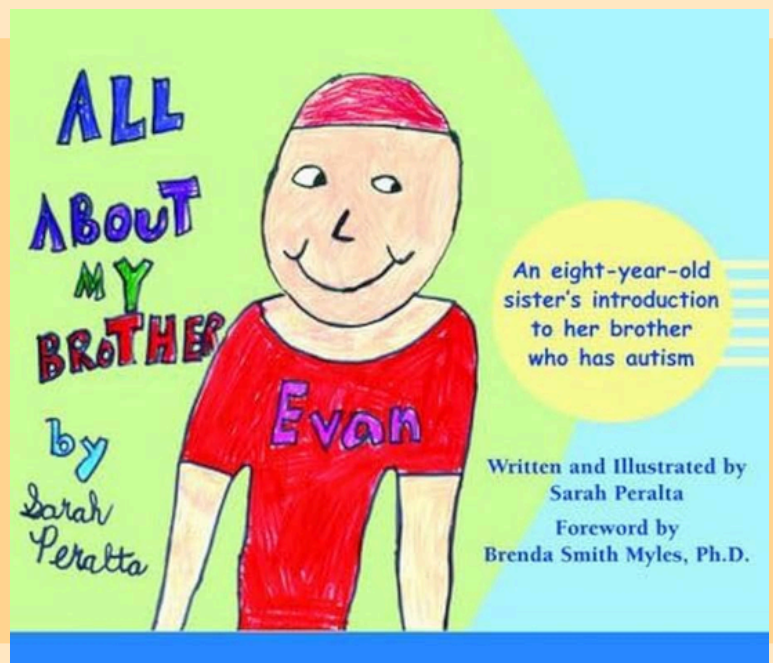


Andy and His Yellow Frisbee (3-8 Years)

Meet Andy, a young boy who enjoys spinning his yellow frisbee around at recess. Rosie, his protective sister, must learn to accept those who try to be Andy's friend.

All About My Brother (3-8 Years)

Sarah is an eight year old girl who has grown up helping her parents with her younger brother who has autism. This book talks about her brother and her experiences being a sibling to someone with autism.

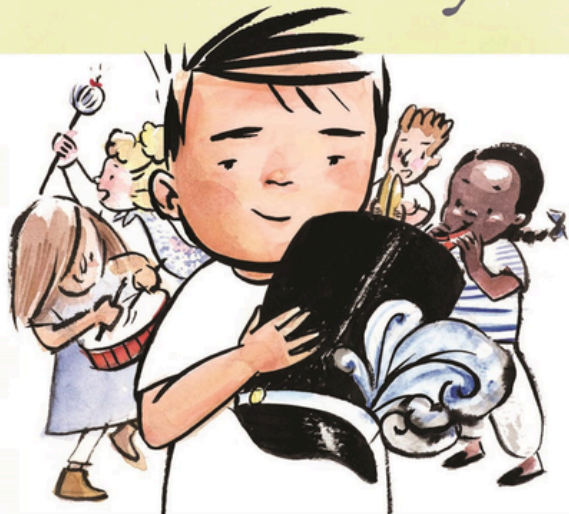




For Older Readers



Henry, Like Always



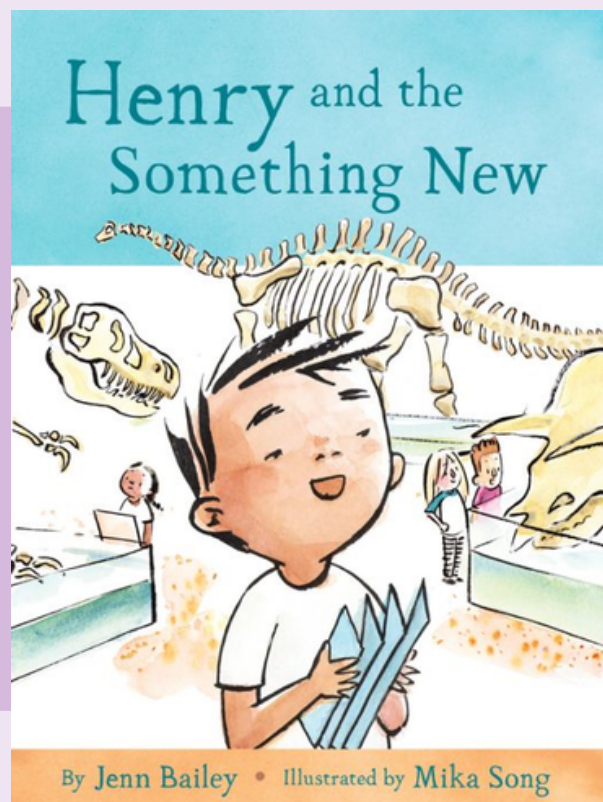
By Jenn Bailey • Illustrated by Mika Song

Henry, Like Always (6-9 Years)

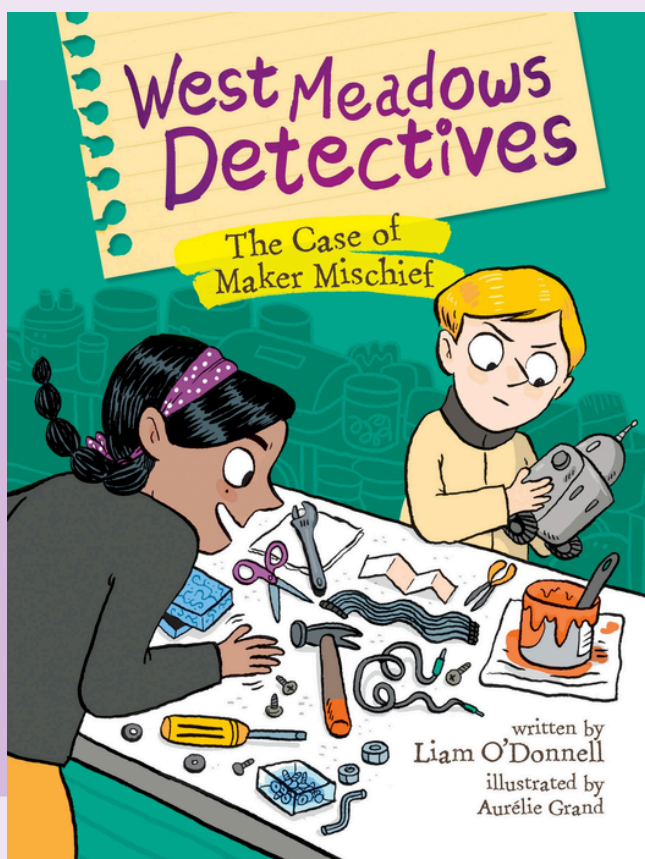
In Book 1 of this award-winning series, we meet Henry, who likes predictability and sameness in his routine. When his school has a parade, Henry has to navigate the struggle of changes in his weekly routine.

Henry and the Something New (6-9 Years)

In this second book in the Henry series, Henry's class is visiting the museum, which means seeing a lot of new (and noisy!) things. This book highlights the potential anxiety that might come with common school experiences, like field trips!



By Jenn Bailey • Illustrated by Mika Song



The West Meadow Detective Series

(7-10 Years)

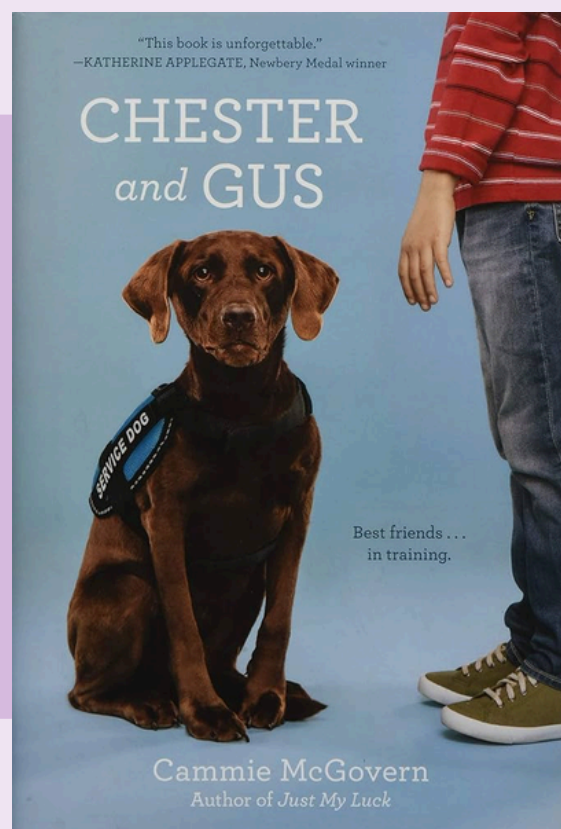
Myron, who has autism, is the 3rd grade sleuth in this detective series, using his attention to detail to help solve mysteries from his peers.

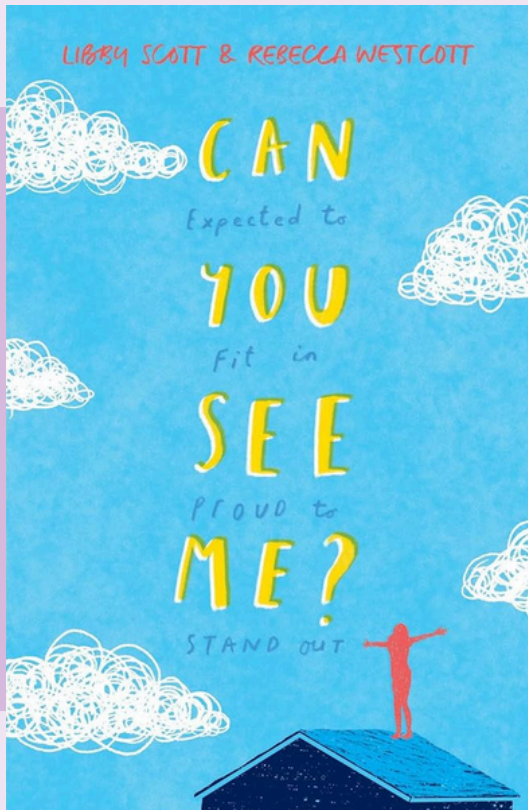
The West Meadow Detective Series includes The Case of the Snack Snatcher, The Case of the Mischief Maker, and The Case of the Berry Burglars.

Gus and Chester

(8-12 Years)

This book tells of a story of an aspiring service dog, Gus, who gets adopted into a family that includes an autistic son named Chester. Through Gus's perspective, we get to experience how he navigates servicing a boy who is very different from any other boy he's met before.





Can You See Me?

(9-11 Years)

Can You See Me? is about an autistic girl, Tally, who provides insight into her difficult social life. This book is based on real journey entries from the 11-year-old author, Libby Scott.

Planet Earth is Blue

(12+ years)

This story follows Nova, an autistic, nonverbal girl, and her older sister, Bridget, who are both in foster care. When Bridget runs away, Nova keeps their shared love for astronomy and the excitement of the launch of the Challenger close, awaiting the day they'll be reunited again.





Get a Grip, Vivvy Cohen! (8-12 Years)

Vivvy, an 11-year old autistic girl, joins a baseball team as a pitcher. As part of her social skills training, she also gains a penpal - a national league pitcher! Though her mom shows concern as she is the only girl and autistic person on the team, Vivvy has her new penpal (and friend) to give her advice.

Slug Days Trilogy (7-10 Years)

Lauren is an autistic girl who experiences the world differently from those around her. As she navigates the ups and downs of school and home life, she relies on routines and coping strategies to manage her anxiety and everyday challenges.

The Slug Days Trilogy includes Slug Days, Penguin Days, and Duck Days.

