

Disability-Inclusive Children's Books

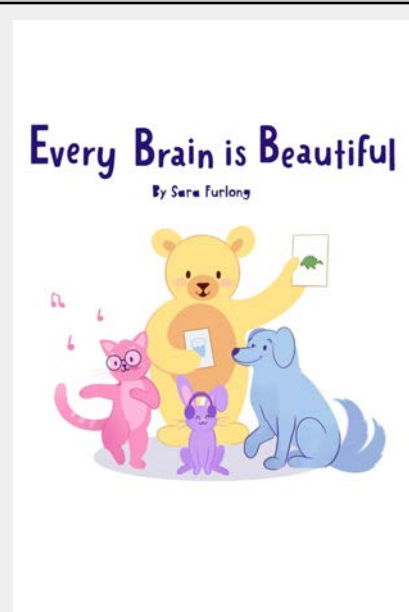


Disability-inclusive children's books

Cognitive/intellectual disabilities

Books on this list represent characters that do not have a specific diagnosis stated, are defined as "neurodiverse", or maybe non-conventional characters such as service dogs

Early grades



[Every Brain Is Beautiful: A Little Kids' Guide to Neurodiversity](#)

Sara Furlong | Age 2-7 | Neurodivergence

Your brain is beautiful!

Did you know that everyone sees the world a little differently? Some like loud noises, while others prefer quiet spaces. Some like playing together, while others prefer doing their own thing. And that's ok!

In this story, you will meet four best friends, Puppy, Kitty, Bunny and Teddy, who have a lot in common and a lot of differences as well. Follow along as we learn about the four friends and all of the qualities that make them unique, just like you!

This book is a great way to explain Neurodiversity to children 3-6 as well as to support inclusion and acceptance among all children. Every kindergarten home, classroom and daycare needs this book as a subtle and gentle way to help kids understand that everyone sees the world differently, and that's ok.

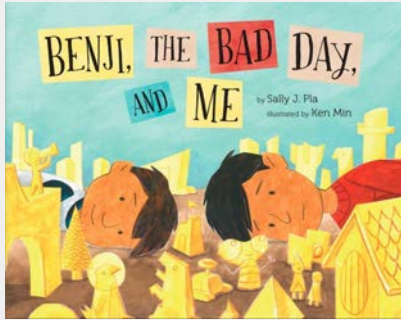
Written with love and sensitivity, "Every Brain is Beautiful" promotes empathy and inclusivity. It gently encourages children to embrace the diverse abilities of their peers, fostering a sense of belonging and respect for all. Through this book, children will gain a deeper understanding of Neurodiversity, while celebrating the strengths and talents that make each individual shine.

More than just a story, "Every Brain is Beautiful" is a valuable educational resource. It includes age-appropriate examples of neurodiversity, ensuring that young minds grasp these important ideas in an engaging and accessible manner.

This book encourages children to ask questions, igniting their curiosity and building a foundation of acceptance and empathy.

Whether shared at home, in schools, or in libraries, "Every Brain is Beautiful" is an essential addition to any child's bookshelf. Its positive message and enchanting illustrations will captivate young readers, leaving a lasting impression that promotes a culture of inclusion and understanding.

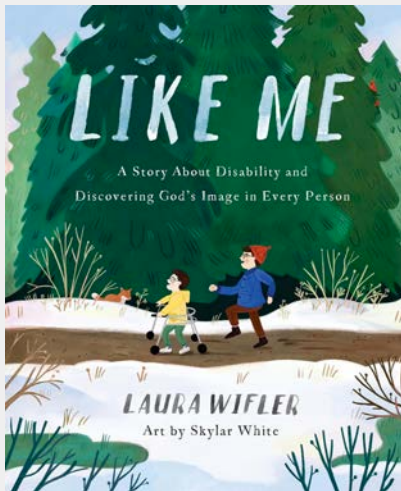
Don't miss out on this inspiring adventure! Order your copy of "Every Brain is Beautiful" today and embark on a journey that will touch hearts, broaden horizons, and ignite the magic of acceptance in every child's heart.



Benji, the Bad Day, and Me

Sally J. Pia, Ken Min (I) | Age 3-6 | Unspecified; neurodiverse main character

In this tender story about siblings, author Sally J. Pia shares her experience of raising sons with different personality traits and needs. Benji, the Bad Day, and Me embraces the philosophy that we are all part of a wide spectrum of neurodiversity. And on those really bad, rotten days, you can always count on family to be there for you.



Like Me: A Story About Disability and Discovering God's Image in Every Person

Laura Wifler, Skylar White (I) | Age 3-7 | Unspecified; use of rear walker

WINNER OF THE 2023 TGC BOOK AWARD IN THE CHILDREN'S CATEGORY

"A delightful book to help our children understand how we are all different and we are also the same."—Trillia Newbell, author of God's Very Good Idea and The Big Wide Welcome

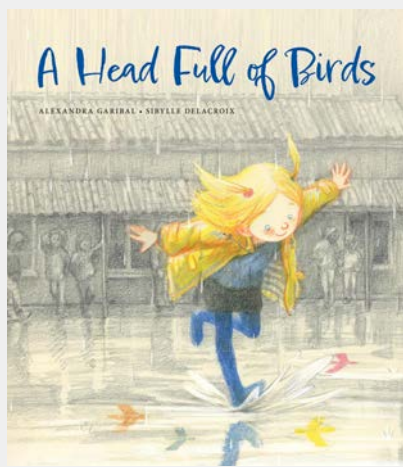
This children's picture book follows a sibling of a child with a disability as they go through their day. A simple story with an important message, Like Me helps kids recognize the many similarities they share with disabled kids and model a loving and understanding approach to the differences.

"God made you, God loves you, God is kind to you."

It can be hard for children to take those three life-changing truths into their hearts and treat others with love and understanding, especially when they encounter those whose needs differ drastically from theirs.

Through a sibling's eyes, young readers will tag along on a day of a child with a disability. As the two siblings play with friends, go to therapy, and spend time with family, relatable comparisons will help children understand a different type of family life, building empathy for children with disabilities along the way.

Like Me opens the door to meaningful talks with your child about empathy, compassion, diversity, and God's love for them and others.



A Head Full of Birds

Alexandra Garibal | Age 4-8 | Neurodiverse friendships

A school story to encourage friendship and understanding among children of all abilities.

When the other kids mock her at recess, Nanette doesn't listen. She'd rather focus on puddles, spider webs, and whatever she can create with her hands. One day a boy named Noah—who'd rather fly paper airplanes than listen to the lesson—starts sitting at Nanette's table. At first, Noah finds Nanette confusing and a little frustrating. But her ideas look like so much fun...

Expressively illustrated in colored pencils, this school story will foster discussions about navigating differences and embracing creativity. *A Head Full of Birds* is a sensitive portrayal of neurodiverse friendships and the joy that comes when we reimagine the world together.



Alice Eloise's Silver Linings: The Story of a Silly Service Dog

Sarah Kathryn Frey, Kit Nacua (I) | Age 4-9 | Main character is a service dog

How can you stay positive in the face of adversity? A service dog in training learns that how we face challenges can be bigger than the challenges themselves. Inspire kids to see the positive side of life with this heartwarming puppy dog tale. If we dream big and believe in ourselves, we can achieve most anything!

Alice Eloise's Silver Linings is the true story of a silly Double Doodle pup named Alice Eloise who dreams of becoming a service dog. Follow Alice Eloise as she overcomes obstacles in her efforts to become a service dog, looking for silver linings along the way.

Author Sarah Kathryn Frey has learned just how life-changing silver linings can be through her struggles with illness and disability. Her journey has inspired her to tell this real-life puppy-love story with important lessons about staying positive, being yourself, and never giving up. This disability-inclusive book can be any child's silver lining on a cloudy day.



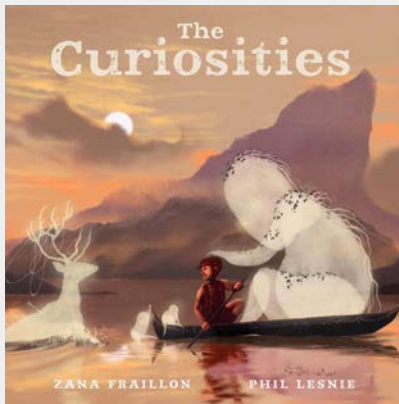
A Dog at the Zoo? A Children's Book about Bringing Joy to Others

Sarah Kathryn Frey, Kit Nacua (I) | Age 4-9 | Main character is a service dog

See the zoo in an entirely new way—through the eyes of a dog.

Join Alice Eloise the silly service dog on a day at the zoo! Will she make unlikely friends, from lions, to tigers, to bears? Oh my, it's sure to be quite the adventure! This heartwarming book holds beautiful animal illustrations kids love, paired with a one-of-a-kind story of sweet friendships between a dog and everybody she meets . . . regardless of species!

In this follow-up story to *Alice Eloise's Silver Linings: The Story of a Silly Service Dog*, Alice Eloise encounters a number of people, all of them in need of a reason to smile—so she steps in and becomes a "silver lining" for them. Follow Alice Eloise on her mission to spread joy everywhere her paws take her. After all, we never know just how much joy a smile—or a tail wag—can bring!



[The Curiosities](#)

Zana Fraillon, Phil Lesnie (I) | Age 5-9 | Neurodiversity

“Winning and wondrous, this picture book is a compelling appreciation of neurodiversity.”

—Kirkus (Starred Review)

A lyrical and moving celebration of neurodiversity and self-discovery, from the award-winning author of *The Bone Sparrow*.

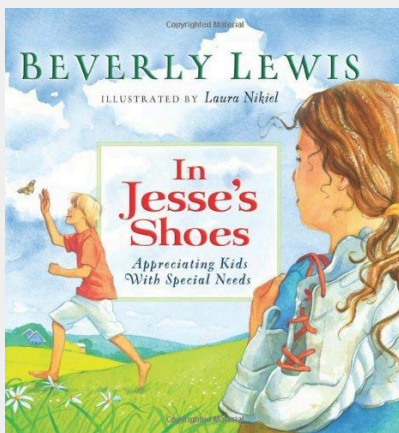
With *The Curiosities*, a whole world of wonder awaits...

One morning, at dawn, the *Curiosities* choose Miro to nest on. At first, he doesn't notice. They blend in, perching on his shoulder and nuzzling into his hair. Over time, Miro discovers that he sees and feels things differently than everyone else around him.

The *Curiosities* show Miro an extraordinary world. He weaves clouds to make stories for the wind, and marvels at the wonders waiting in the shadows where no one else looks. Sometimes, though, the *Curiosities* make Miro feel lost and alone: they shriek and roar, and are so bright and overwhelming that he feels invisible.

But perhaps Miro isn't as alone as he thinks... and maybe the *Curiosities* have chosen other people as well.

This gentle, heart-touching story from award-winning children's book author Zana Fraillon is a nuanced portrait of emotions, self-expression, and empathy. Complete with Phil Lesnie's gorgeous art that draws on legends from his Filipino heritage, *The Curiosities* celebrates the varied perspectives that come with being neurodivergent and contains the triumphant reminder that those who see and experience the world differently have always been here.



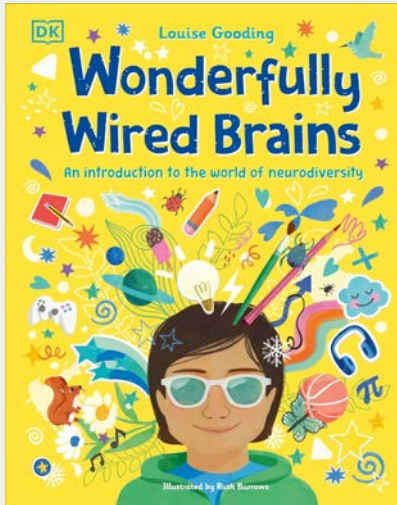
[In Jesse's Shoes: Appreciating Kids With Special Needs](#)

Beverly Lewis, Laura Nikiel (I) | Age 6-8 | Disability unspecified

An Important Picture Book From Beverly Lewis

What parent hasn't urged her son or daughter not to stare or tease a child who is "different" or disabled in some way?

As Jesse's sister struggle to understand her brother--and to deal with the kids who make fun of him--families everywhere will benefit from this sensitive yet realistic story about learning to understand and befriend a child with special needs.



Wonderfully Wired Brains

Louise Gooding, Ruth Burrows (I) | Age 7-9 | Neurodiverse people and people with neurological differences

An informative and inclusive children's guide to neurodiversity for those not in the know and to inspire children who are neurodivergent.

Our brains are unique in the way they function, work, and think. Neurodiversity is still a relatively 'new' concept that can be tricky to understand, but this book is here to help! This inspirational book written by neurodiverse author Louise Gooding challenges misconceptions and shows how neurodivergent brains work a little differently.

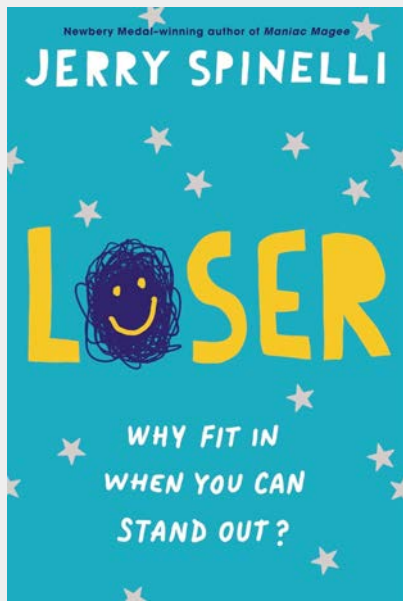
It is common for neurodiverse people and those with neurological differences to feel as though they don't fit in, but their extraordinary differences should be embraced. *Wonderfully Wired Brains* teaches children aged 7-9 all about the awesome abilities that neurodiverse individuals have, introduces them to advocates who are challenging neurodiversity stereotypes, and most importantly gives them a safe space to feel accepted.

This informative and educational book for children features:

- Accurate, understandable explanations of diagnoses that impact the brain, including each area of neurodiversity and what it can or does mean for anyone with that particular neurological difference.
- A positive, friendly look at neurodiverse brains that debunks myths and stereotypes.
- Informative, inclusive text is accompanied by colorful, modern illustrations.
- The font and colors used have been selected to accommodate a range of neurodiverse readers.

Combining neurodiverse experiences with science, history, and brain-bursting facts, *Wonderfully Wired Brains* has something for everyone! Whether your child is neurodiverse or not, this book will inspire inquisitive young readers and show them that no two brains function in the same way and that everyone's differences should be celebrated. There really is no other book like it.

Middle grades



Loser

Jerry Spinelli | Age 9-11 | Neurodiversity

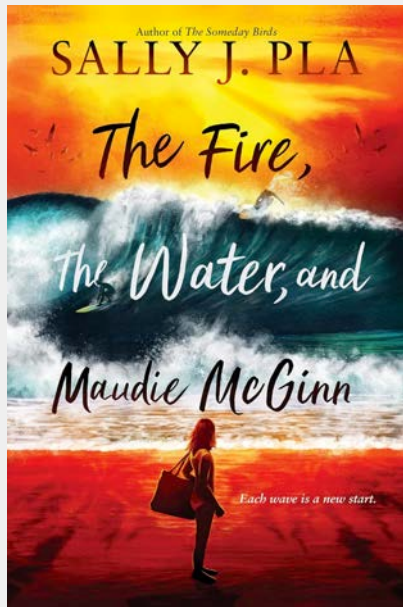
From renowned Newbery-winning author Jerry Spinelli comes a powerful story about how not fitting in just might lead to an incredible life. This classic book is perfect for fans of Gordon Korman and Carl Hiaasen.

Just like other kids, Zinkoff rides his bike, hopes for snow days, and wants to be like his dad when he grows up. But Zinkoff also raises his hand with all the wrong answers, trips over his own feet, and falls down with laughter over a word like "Jabip."

Other kids have their own word to describe him, but Zinkoff is too busy to hear it. He doesn't know he's not like everyone else. And one winter night, Zinkoff's differences show that any name can someday become "hero."

With some of his finest writing to date and great wit and humor, Jerry Spinelli creates a story about a boy's individuality surpassing the need to fit in and the genuine importance of failure. As readers follow Zinkoff from first through sixth grade, it becomes impossible not to identify with and root for him through failures and triumphs.

The perfect classroom read.



The Fire, the Water, and Maudie McGinn

Sally J. Pla | Age 10+ | Neurodivergence

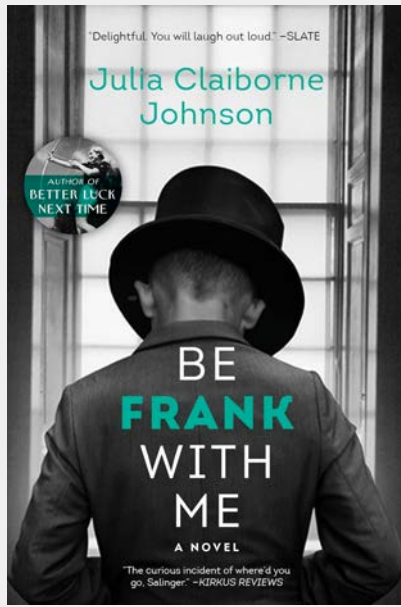
Neurodivergent Maudie is ready to spend an amazing summer with her dad, but will she find the courage to tell him a terrible secret about life with her mom and new stepdad? This contemporary novel is a must-read for fans of Leslie Connor and Ali Standish. A Schneider Family Book Award winner!

Maudie always looks forward to the summers she spends in California with her dad. But this year, she must keep a troubling secret about her home life—one that her mom warned her never to tell. Maudie wants to confide in her dad about her stepdad's anger, but she's scared.

When a wildfire strikes, Maudie and her dad are forced to evacuate to the beach town where he grew up. It's another turbulent wave of change. But now, every morning, from their camper, Maudie can see surfers bobbing in the water. She desperately wants to learn, but could she ever be brave enough?

As Maudie navigates unfamiliar waters, she makes friends—and her autism no longer feels like the big deal her mom makes it out to be. But her secret is still threatening to sink her. Will Maudie find the strength to reveal the awful truth—and maybe even find some way to stay with Dad—before summer is over?

Young adult/high school



Be Frank With Me

Julia Claiborne Johnson | YA | Neurodiversity

AN AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION ADULT DEBUT HONOR BOOK

WINNER OF THE AUDIE AWARD FOR BEST FEMALE NARRATOR

LOS ANGELES TIMES BESTSELLER

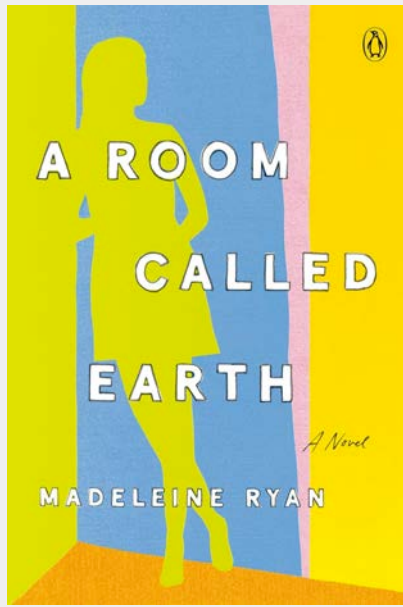
A sparkling talent makes her fiction debut with this infectious novel that combines the charming pluck of *Eloise*, the poignant psychological quirks of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and the page-turning spirit of *Where'd You Go, Bernadette*.

Reclusive literary legend M. M. "Mimi" Banning has been holed up in her Bel Air mansion for years. But after falling prey to a Bernie Madoff-style ponzi scheme, she's flat broke. Now Mimi must write a new book for the first time in decades, and to ensure the timely delivery of her manuscript, her New York publisher sends an assistant to monitor her progress. The prickly Mimi reluctantly complies—with a few stipulations: No Ivy-Leaguers or English majors. Must drive, cook, tidy. Computer whiz. Good with kids. Quiet, discreet, sane.

When Alice Whitley arrives at the Banning mansion, she's put to work right away—as a full-time companion to Frank, the writer's eccentric nine-year-old, a boy with the wit of Noel Coward, the wardrobe of a 1930s movie star, and very little in common with his fellow fourth-graders.

As she slowly gets to know Frank, Alice becomes consumed with finding out who Frank's father is, how his gorgeous "piano teacher and itinerant male role model" Xander fits into the Banning family equation—and whether Mimi will ever finish that book.

Full of heart and countless "only-in-Hollywood" moments, *Be Frank with Me* is a captivating and unconventional story of an unusual mother and son, and the intrepid young woman who finds herself irresistibly pulled into their unforgettable world.



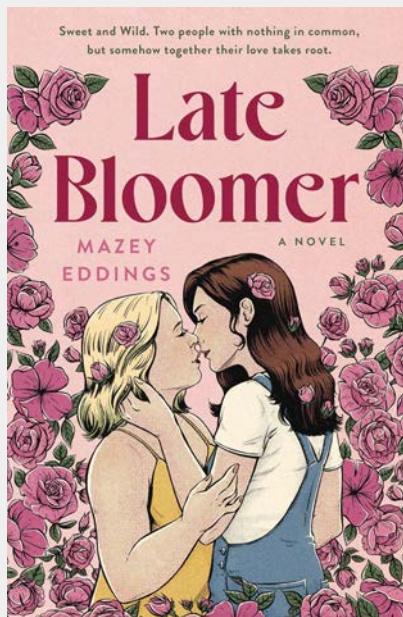
[A Room Called Earth](#)

Madeline Ryan | YA | Unspecified; written from neurodiverse point of view

An unforgettable story of a fiercely original young woman, whose radical perspective illuminates a new way of being in the world

As a full moon rises over Melbourne, Australia, a young woman gets ready for a party. And what appears to be an ordinary night out is—through the prism of her singular perspective—extraordinary. As the evening unfolds, each encounter she has reveals the vast discrepancies between what she is thinking and feeling, and what she is able to say. And there's so much she'd like to say. So when she meets a man and a genuine connection occurs, it's nothing short of a miracle. However, it isn't until she invites him home that we come to appreciate the humanity beneath the labels we cling to, and we can grasp the pleasure of what it means to be alive.

The debut novel from the inimitable Madeleine Ryan, *A Room Called Earth* is a humorous and heartwarming adventure inside the mind of a bright and dynamic woman. This hyper-saturated celebration of love and acceptance, from a neurodiverse writer, is a testament to moving through life without fear, and to opening ourselves up to a new way of relating to one another.



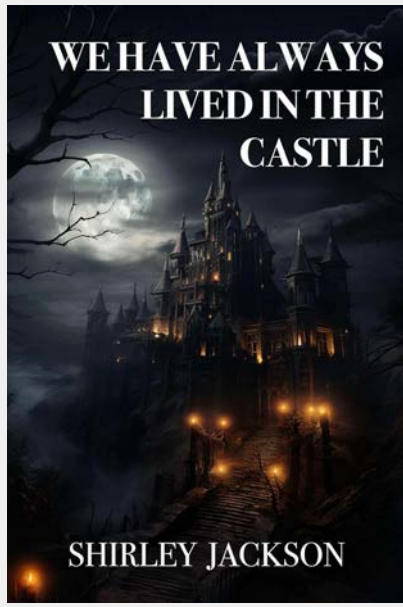
[Late Bloomer](#)

Mazey Eddings | YA | Neurodivergence

Winning the lottery has ruined Opal Devlin's life. After quitting her dead-end job where she'd earned minimum wage and even less respect, she's bombarded by people knocking at her door for a handout the second they found out her bank account was overflowing with cash. And Opal can't seem to stop saying yes.

With her tender heart thoroughly abused, Opal decides to protect herself by any means necessary, which to her translates to putting almost all her new money to buying a failing flower farm in Asheville, North Carolina to let the flowers live out their plant destiny while she uses the cabin on the property to start her painting business.

But her plans for isolation and self-preservation go hopelessly awry when an angry (albeit gorgeous) Pepper Boden is waiting for her at her new farm. Pepper states she's the rightful owner of Thistle and Bloom Farms, and isn't moving out. The unlikely pair strike up an agreement of co-habitation, and butt heads at every turn. Can these opposites both live out their dreams and plant roots? Or will their combustible arguing (and growing attraction) burn the whole place down?



[We Have Always Lived in the Castle](#)

Shirley Jackson | YA | Unspecified: neurodiverse characters; speculated antisocial personality disorder or schizotypal personality disorder

Shirley Jackson's beloved gothic tale of a peculiar girl named Merricat and her family's dark secret

Taking readers deep into a labyrinth of dark neurosis, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* is a deliciously unsettling novel about a perverse, isolated, and possibly murderous family and the struggle that ensues when a cousin arrives at their estate.