

Mental Health and Well-Being: Exploring Neurological Diversity Through the Reading of Picture Books (Primary)

Note:

The interest levels listed in this bibliography are those given by the publishers. Each teacher, however, needs to decide the age suitability for their own students.

The summaries are from the publishers as well and have been included to give you a quick overview of the main themes of each title. In this way you can quickly select the titles that suit the particular social and emotional needs of your students. Some of the titles fit the theme loosely and others more tightly. The titles also range from "light-hearted" to more serious in tone.

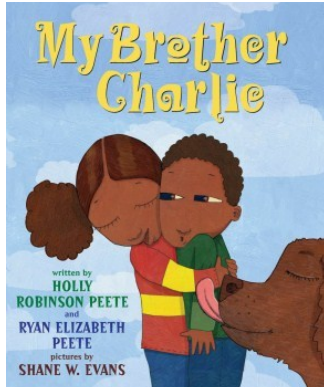
Your school counsellor is an excellent source for suggestions on how to support students when teaching more sensitive subjects.

Joan Pearce, April 2024

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Picture Book Format

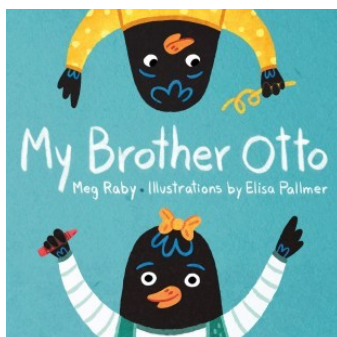
Compiled by Joan Pearce



My Brother Charlie

by Holly Robinson Peete, c2010 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.2)

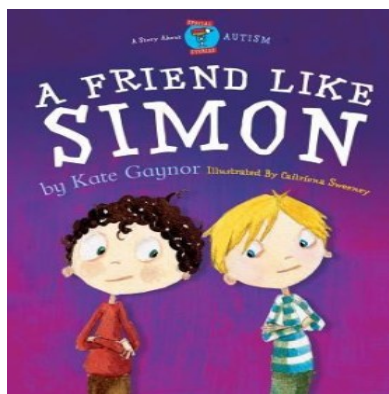
"A girl tells what it is like living with her twin brother who has autism and sometimes finds it hard to communicate with words, but who, in most ways, is just like any other boy. Includes authors' note about autism." - Follett



My Brother Otto

by Meg Raby. c2019 (IL: K-3, RL:3.1)

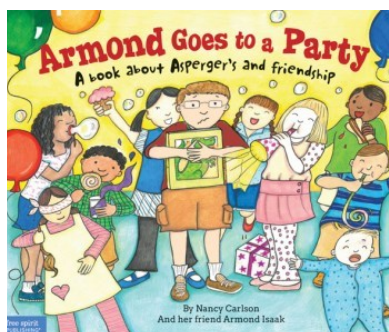
"A picture book for children about the love, acceptance, and understanding a sister, Piper, has for her little brother Otto, who is on the autism spectrum. The book provides explanations for Otto's differences and quirks in an easy-to-understand language, and highlights Otto's desires for adventure and love-just like his peers." - Pub.



A Friend Like Simon

by Kate Gaynor, c2009 (IL: K-3, RL; 2.1)

"A story about a young boy with autism who joins a new school." - Follett



Armond Goes to a Party: A Book About Asperger's and Friendship

by Nancy Carlson, c2014 (IL: K-3, RL; 2.8)

"A boy with Asperger's overcomes his social challenges to help a friend celebrate her birthday." - Pub.

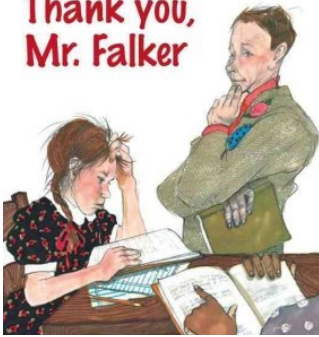
Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Picture Book Format

Compiled by Joan Pearce

PATRICIA POLACCO

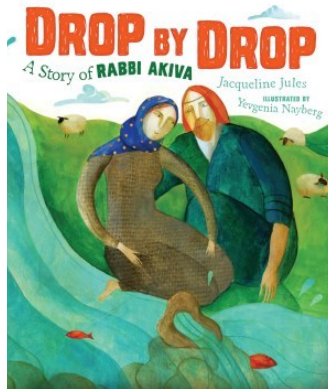
Thank you, Mr. Falker



Thank You, Mr. Falker

by Patricia Polacco, c1998, 2012 (IL: K-3, RL: 4.1)

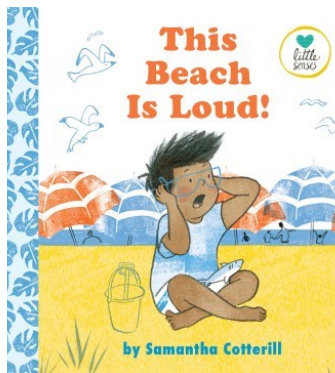
"At first, Trisha loves school, but her difficulty learning to read makes her feel dumb, until, in the fifth grade, a new teacher helps her understand and overcome her problem." - Follett



Drop By Drop: A Story of Rabbi Akiva

by Jacqueline Jules, c2017 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.1)

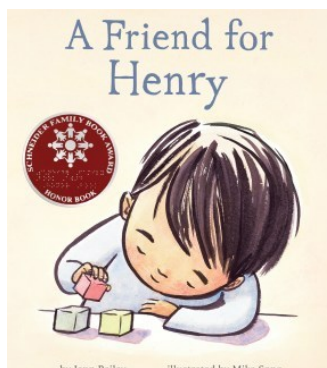
"With his wife's encouragement, a shepherd learns to read at age 40 and eventually becomes one of the greatest sages in Jewish history." - Pub.



This Beach Is Loud!

by Samantha Cotterill, c2019 (IL: K-3, RL: 0.8)

"A sensitive boy gets overwhelmed by all the sights, sounds, and sensations at the beach, but his dad has a trick to help his son face these unexpected obstacles." - Pub.



A Friend for Henry

by Jenn Bailey, c2019 (IL: K-3, RL: 1.8)

"Henry would like to find a friend at school, but for a boy on the autism spectrum, making friends can be difficult, as his efforts are sometimes misinterpreted, or things just go wrong--but Henry keeps trying, and in the end he finds a friend he can play with." - Pub.

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Picture Book Format

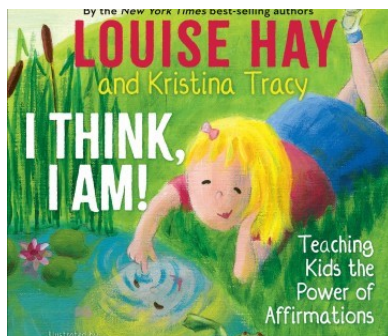
Compiled by Joan Pearce



I Talk Like a River

by Jordan Scott, c2020 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.4)

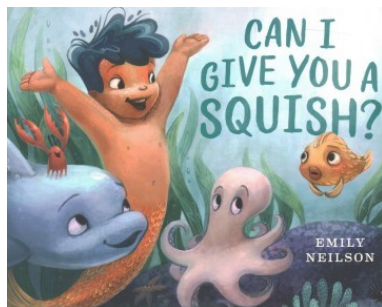
"When a child has a "bad speech day" at school, his father gives him a new perspective on his stuttering."
-Follett



I Think, I Am! Teaching Kids the Power of Affirmations

by Louise L. Hay c2008 (IL: K-3)

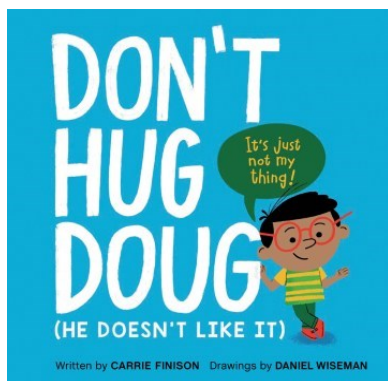
"Within the pages of I Think, I Am! kids will find out the difference between negative thoughts and positive affirmations. Fun illustrations and simple text demonstrate how to make the change from negative thoughts and words to those that are positive. The happiness and confidence that come from this ability is something children will carry with them their entire lives!"- Amazon.ca



Can I Give You a Squish?

by Emily Neilson, c2020 (IL: K-3)

"Kai, a merboy, loves to share hugs with his mother, but learns that some friends prefer fin bumps, tail claps, tentacle shakes, or claw pinches." - Follett



Don't Hug Doug (He Doesn't Like It)

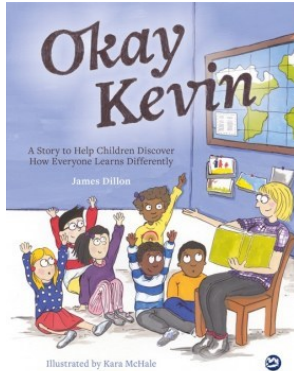
by Carrie Finison, c2021 (IL: K-3, RL: 1.7)

"Doug prefers not to be hugged, but there are a variety of other ways his loved ones can show him affection."- Pub.

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Picture Book Format

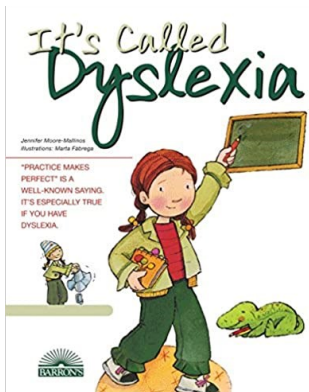
Compiled by Joan Pearce



Okay Kevin: A Story to Help Children Discover How Everyone Learns Differently

by James Dillon, c2017 (IL: K-3, RL: 3.4)

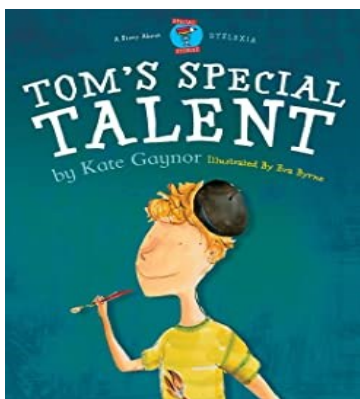
"Struggling with reading, Kevin discovers that everyone learns at different speeds and excels in different areas." -Follett



It's Called Dyslexia

by Jennifer Moore-Mallinos, c2007 (IL: K-3)

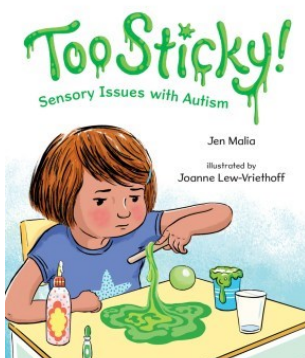
"Whoever said that learning to read and write is easy? The little girl in this story is unhappy and she no longer enjoys school. When learning to read and write, she tries to remember which way the letters go but she often gets them all mixed up. After she discovers that dyslexia is the reason for her trouble, she begins to understand that with extra practice and help from others, she will begin to read and write correctly. At the same time, she also discovers a hidden talent she never knew existed!" -Pub.



Tom's Special Talent

by Kate Gaynor, c2013 (IL: K-3)

"Tom isn 't sure if he has any talents at all when he sees how good his friends are at writing and reading. But a school competition soon helps him to find his own very special talent!" - Amazon.ca



Too Sticky! Sensory Issues with Autism

by Jen Malia, c2020 (IL: K-3)

"Holly loves doing experiments and learning new things in science class! But when she finds out the next experience is making slime, she's worried. Slime is made with glue, and glue is sticky. Holly has sensory issues because of her autism and doesn't like anything sticky! With help from family and her teacher, Holly receives the accommodations and encouragement she needs to give slime a try." - Pub.

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Picture Book Format

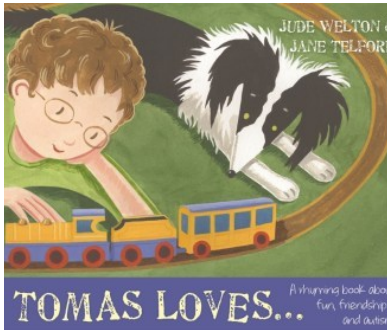
Compiled by Joan Pearce



Sometimes Noise is Big

by Angela Coelho, c2018 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.6)

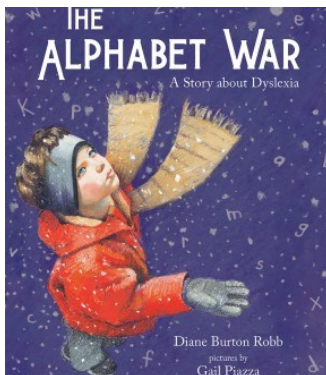
"Flipping the perspective for neurotypicals, this picture book explains in simple terms some of the sensory and social issues experienced by children with autism. Raising awareness for autism, this book helps all children aged 5+ to better understand these issues." - *back of book*



Tomas Loves... A Rhyming Book About Fun, Friendship and Autism

by Jude Welton, c2015 (IL: K-3, RL: 1.6)

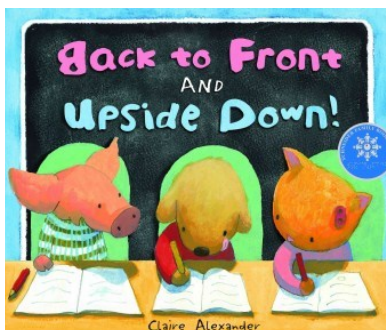
"Tomas is a little boy who loves trains, trampolines and his dog Flynn. He hates sudden noise, surprises and changes in routine. There are many things about Tomas that make him special and unique, but despite his differences he loves fun and friendship" - *Pub.*



The Alphabet War: A Story About Dyslexia

by Diane Burton Robb, c2004 (IL: K-3)

"Learning to read is a great struggle for Adam, but with expert help, hard work, and belief in himself, he wins "The Alphabet War." Includes information about dyslexia." - *Follett*



Back to Front and Upside Down!

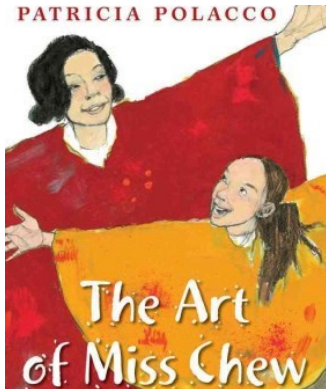
by Claire Alexander, c2012 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.2)

"It's the principal Mr. Slipper's birthday, and while the rest of the class gets busy writing cards for the occasion, Stan becomes frustrated when his letters come out all in a muddle. Stan is afraid to ask for help, until a friend assures him that nobody's good at everything. And after lots and lots of practice, Stan's letters come out the right way round and the right way up." - *Pub.*

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Picture Book Format

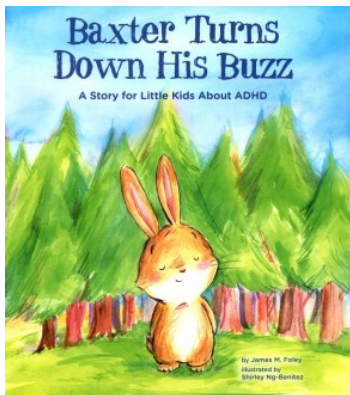
Compiled by Joan Pearce



The Art of Miss Chew

by Patricia Polacco, c2012 (IL: K-3, RL: 3.4)

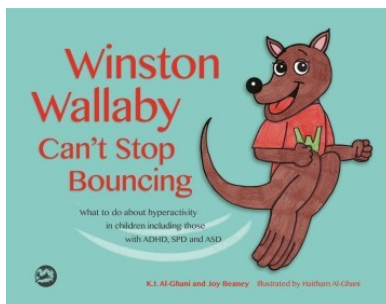
"Describes how a teacher named Miss Chew encouraged individuality, and accepted learning differences, and helped a young student with academic difficulties get extra time to take tests and permission to be in advanced art classes. Inspired by the author's memories of her art teacher." - Follett



Baxter Turns Down His Buzz: A Story for Little Kids About ADHD

by James M. Foley, c2016 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.0)

"Written for children struggling with ADHD and impulsiveness, Baxter Turns Down His Buzz is the story of a high-energy rabbit who learns to control his activity level. His uncle Barnaby guides Baxter through the steps necessary to 'turn down his buzz' through behavioural strategies like mindfulness, progressive relaxation and visualisation, rather than medication." - Pub.



Winston Wallaby Can't Stop Bouncing: What to Do About Hyperactivity in Children including Those with ADHD, SPD and ASD

by K.I. Al-Ghani, c2018 (IL: K-3, RL: 1.6)

"Winston Wallaby, like most wallabies, loves to bounce. However, Winston can't seem to ever sit still and when he starts school he needs help to concentrate . . . Luckily his teacher Mrs. Calm shows Winston how to settle down and focus his mind in class, and he learns new ways to help him with touch, feel, attention and awareness." - Book



Charlotte and the Quiet Place

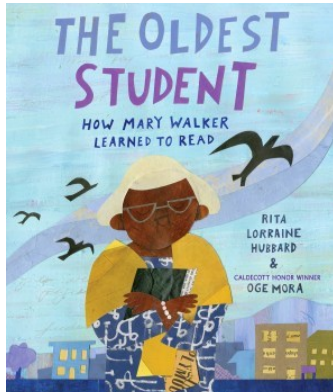
by Deborah Sosin, c2015 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.2)

"Sometimes children need a break from our noisy, over-stimulating world. *Charlotte and the Quiet Place* shows how a child learns and practices mindful breathing on her own and experiences the beauty of silence. All children will relate to the unfolding adventure and message of self-discovery and empowerment. Parents, teachers, and caretakers of highly active or sensitive children will find this story especially useful." - Pub.

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

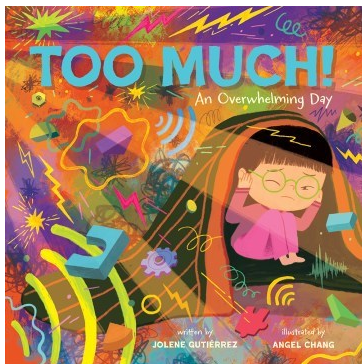
Picture Book Format

Compiled by Joan Pearce



The Oldest Student: How Mary Walker Learned to Read

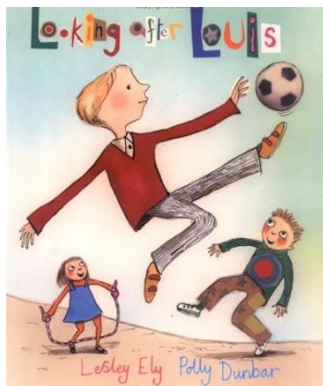
by Rita Lorraine Hubbard, c2020 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.5)
"n 1848, Mary Walker was born into slavery. At age 15, she was freed, and by age 20, she was married and had her first child. By age 68, she had worked numerous jobs, including cooking, cleaning, babysitting, and selling sandwiches to raise money for her church. At 114, she was the last remaining member of her family. And at 116, she learned to read." - Pub.



Too Much! An Overwhelming Day

by Jolene Gutierrez, c2023 (IL: K-2, RL: 2.8)

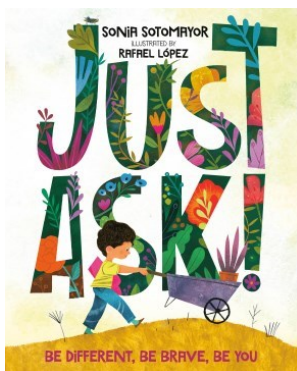
"Sometimes everything is too much! Too loud, too bright, and all too overwhelming. Writing from her own experience with sensory processing disorder, award-winning teacher-librarian Jolene Gutierrez's compassionate picture book explores the struggles of a sensorily sensitive child and how they settle themselves. Joined by Angel Chang's beautiful color illustrations, young readers will learn that it's OK if some days are too much." - Pub.



Looking After Louis

by Lesley Ely, c 2005 (IL: K-3, RL: ?)

"This introduction to the issue of autism shows how - through imagination, kindness and a special game of football - Louis's classmates find a way to join him in his world. Then they can include Louis in theirs." - Amazon



Just Ask! : Be Different, Be Brave, Be You

by Sonia Sotomayor, c2019 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.9)

"In *Just Ask*, United States Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor celebrates the different abilities kids (and people of all ages) have. Using her own experience as a child who was diagnosed with diabetes, Justice Sotomayor writes about children with all sorts of challenges--and looks at the special powers those kids have as well. As the kids work together to build a community garden, asking questions of each other along the way, this book encourages readers to do the same: When we come across someone who is different from us but we're not sure why, all we have to do is *Just Ask*." - Pub.

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Picture Book Format

Compiled by Joan Pearce



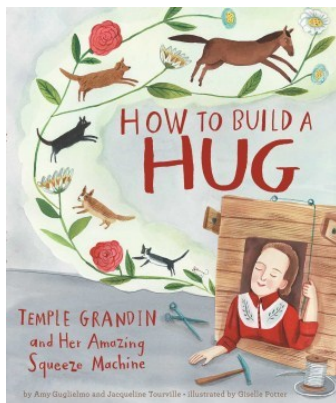
My Brain is Magic : A Sensory-Seeking Celebration by Prasha Sooful, c2023 (IL: K-3, RL: ?)

"A sensory-seeking child describes her sensational life. Whether your brain buzzes around the room like a bee or tells you to be loud and roar like a lion, celebrate the many things that it can be! This sensory-seeking celebration shines a light on sensory processing and neurodiversity." - Follett



Different : A Great Thing to Be! by Heather Avis, c2021 (IL: K-2, RL: ?)

"Macy is a girl who's a lot like you and me, but she's also quite different, which is a great thing to be. With kindness, grace, and bravery, Macy finds her place in the world, bringing beauty and laughter wherever she goes and leading others to find delight in the unique design of every person. Children are naturally aware of the differences they encounter at school, in their neighborhood, and in other everyday relationships. They just need to be given tools to understand and appreciate what makes us "different," permission to ask questions about it, and eyes to see and celebrate it in themselves as well as in those around them." - Pub.



How to Build a Hug : Temple Grandin and Her Amazing Squeeze Machine by Amy Guglielmo, c2018 (IL: K-3, RL: 4.6)

"As a young girl, Temple Grandin loved folding paper kites, making obstacle courses, and building lean-tos. But she *really* didn't like hugs. Temple wanted to be held--but to her, hugs felt like being stuffed inside the scratchiest sock in the world; like a tidal wave of dentist drills, sandpaper, and awful cologne, coming at her all at once. Would she ever get to enjoy the comfort of a hug? Then one day, Temple had an idea. If she couldn't receive a hug, she would make one...she would build a hug machine!" - Pub.

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Non-fiction

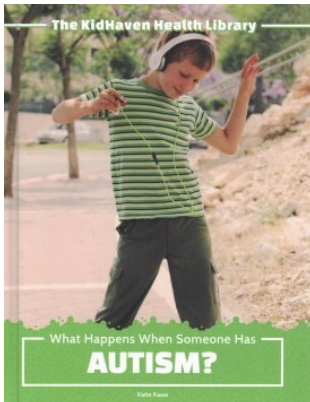
Compiled by Joan Pearce

My Friend Has Autism

Series: All Kinds of Friends

by Kaitlyn Duling, c2020 (IL: K-3, RL: 0.8)

"Text and illustrations show young readers how to be a good friend to people with autism." - *Follett*

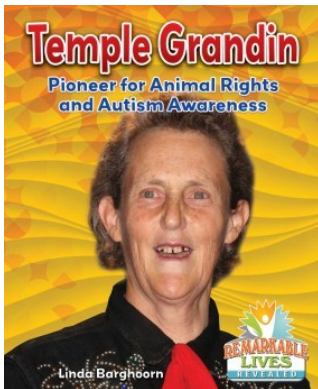


What Happens When Someone Has Autism?

Series: The Kid Haven Health Library

by Katie Kawa, c2020 (IL: 3-6, RL: 6.6)

"Many young people know someone with autism or are personally living with autism spectrum disorder, and they can benefit in important ways from this comprehensive look at life with autism." - *Pub.*



Temple Grandin: Pioneer for Animal Rights and Autism Awareness

Series: Remarkable Lives Revealed

by Linda Barghoorn, c2017 (IL:3-6, RL:6.7)

"Temple Grandin is a renowned scientist, champion for animal rights, and an advocate for people with autism. This book highlights the achievements of this inspirational woman who lives with high-functioning autism." - *Pub.*



The Incredible 5-Point Scale: Assisting Students With Autism Spectrum Disorders in Understanding Social Interactions and Controlling Their Emotional Responses

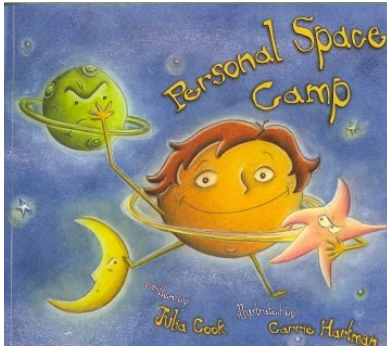
by Kari Dunn Buron, Mitzi Curtis c2012 (IL: PF)

"The authors emphasize the importance of self-management and self-regulation, two evidence-based practices." - *Amazon.ca*

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Non-fiction

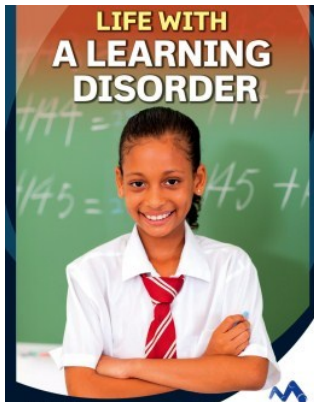
Compiled by Joan Pearce



Personal Space Camp

by Julia Cook, c2007 (IL: K-3, RL: 3.0)

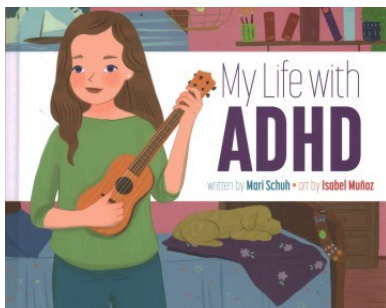
"Written with style, wit, and rhythm, personal space camp addresses the complex issue of respect for another person's physical boundaries. Told from Louis perspective, this story is a must-have resource for parents, teachers, and counselors who want to communicate the idea of personal space in a manner that connects with kids." - Pub.



Life With a Learning Disorder (Everyday Heroes)

by James Bow, IL: 3-6, RL: 4.5)

"Millions of people around the world live with disorders and health conditions that affect their day-to-day lives. This series tells the stories of people living with chronic conditions. Readers will learn about the gifts and abilities these people have that allow them to overcome the challenges they face." - Pub.

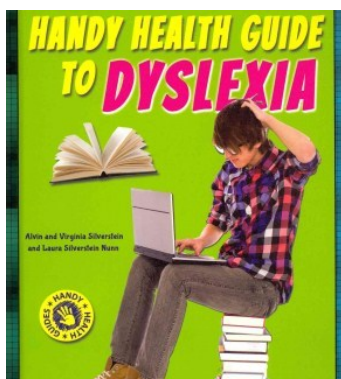


Series: My Life With

by Mari Schuh, c2021 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.2)

"Through the personal stories of kids with disabilities and disorders, young readers will gain a greater appreciation of the challenges these children face and learn that they are not defined by their conditions." - Pub. *Titles:*

*My Life With ADHD, My Life With Autism,
My Life With Autism*



Handy Health Guide to Dyslexia

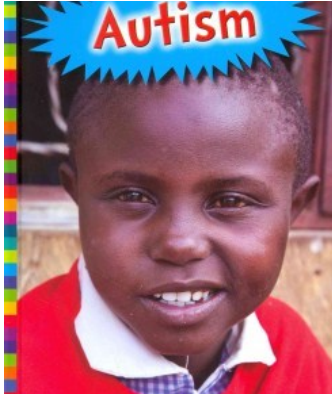
by Alvin Silverstein, c2014 (IL: 5-8, RL: 6.0)

"This series explains the science behind common illnesses and injuries and also emphasizes the importance of maintaining personal health." - Pub.

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Non-fiction

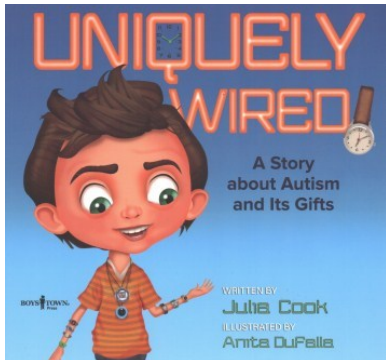
Compiled by Joan Pearce



Autism (Series: Living With)

by Michelle Levine, c2015 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.9)

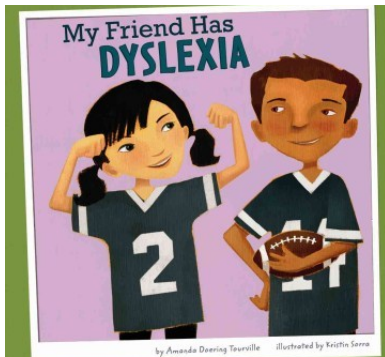
"What's it like to live with health conditions that don't go away? How does it affect daily life? This series explains health matters to children in an easily accessible way. They will learn about symptoms, treatments, and how to live with these conditions or help a family member or friend who has them." - Pub.



Uniquely Wired: A Story about Autism and Its Gifts

by Julia Cook, c2018 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.9)

"Zak has autism, so he sometimes responds to the world around him in unconventional ways. As he describes his point of view, young readers gain a better understanding of his behaviors and learn valuable lessons about patience, tolerance, and understanding." - Follett



Series: Friends With Disabilities

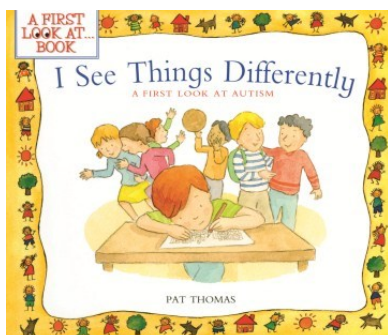
by Amanda Tourville, c2010 (IL: K-3)

"Celebrating tolerance and acceptance, each title focuses on the rewards and challenges of having a friend with a disability. Everyday situations are accompanied by informative sidebars that provide details about the highlighted disability." - Follett

*My Friend Has Dyslexia

*My Friend Has ADHD

*My Friend Has Autism



I See Things Differently: A First Look at Autism

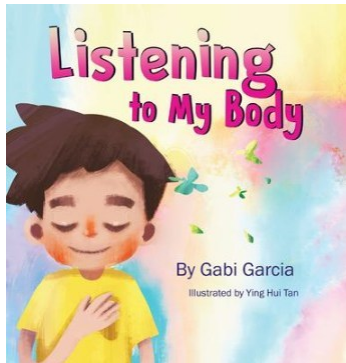
by Pat Thomas, c2014 (IL: K-3, RL: 3.4)

"Explores emotional issues and discusses the questions such difficulties raise among children of preschool through early school age. Written by a psychotherapist and child counselor, each title promotes positive interaction among children, parents, and teachers." - Pub.

Mental Health and Well-Being: Neurological Diversity

Non-fiction

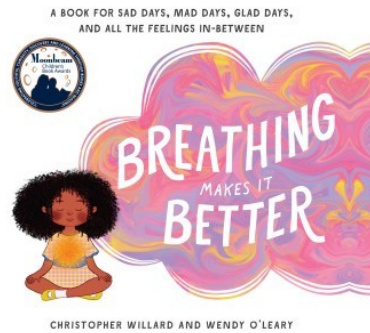
Compiled by Joan Pearce



Listening to My Body

by Gabi Garcia, c2017 (IL: 3-6)

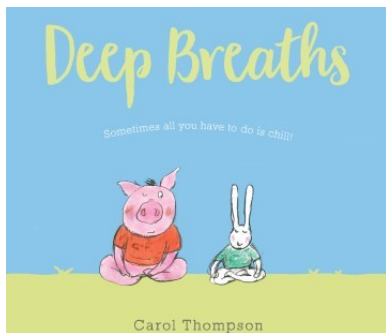
"A guide to helping kids understand the connection between sensations (what the heck are those?) and feelings so that they can get better at figuring out what they need." ". . . guides children through the practice of naming their feelings and the physical sensations that accompany them. From wiggly and squirmy to rested and still, 'Listening to My Body' helps children develop a sensations vocabulary so that they can express what they are experiencing." - *Follett*



Breathing Makes It Better

by Christopher Willard, c2019 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.3)

"Read aloud and breathe along with this sweet story teaching children how to navigate powerful emotions like anger, fear, sadness, confusion, anxiety, and loneliness. With rhythmic writing and engaging illustrations, *Breathing Makes It Better* guides children to breathe through their feelings and find calm with recurring cues to stop and take a breath." - *Pub.*



Deep Breaths

by Carol Thompson, c2019 (IL: K-3, RL: 2.0)

"Both hilarious and instructive, *Deep Breaths* is a refreshing picture-book portrait of real friendship, and sets an example of how to manage strong emotions and resolve differences through simple mindfulness and meditation techniques." - *Pub.*