



Since We're Friends: An Autism Picture Book

Celeste Shally , David Harrington (Illustrator)

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Children with autism struggle to make friends and navigate social situations. However, one child can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism by offering compassion, understanding and friendship.

Since We re Friends is about two boys. One has autism, the other does not. The story of their relationship provides practical examples of how to make such a friendship work. It will help children see that their peers with autism can make a fun, genuine contribution to friendship.

From the publisher:

The prevalence of autism has skyrocketed in recent years. One in every 150 children is now living with this pervasive developmental disorder. The handful of autism children s books on the market represents the most severe cases of autism. However, most children with autism are much less severe. These misunderstood children struggle in social situations and have difficulty making friends. Since We re Friends will appeal to family members, friends, teachers, therapists, doctors, neighbors, and anyone who seeks to know and understand more about children with autism.

Since We're Friends: An Autism Picture Book Details

Date : Published February 7th 2012 by Sky Pony Press (first published September 1st 2007)

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Author : Celeste Shally , David Harrington (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Since We're Friends: An Autism Picture Book for online ebook

Suzanne Maley says

I liked that the book dealt with specific behaviors that a friend of someone who has autism might encounter. This can be useful for children. What bothered me about this book is that the child who has autism is African American and there are no other African American children in the illustrations where you can clearly see their faces. The only other characters where you can clearly see their faces appear to be Caucasian. Illustrations are just as important to telling a story as the text. While it is very possible that there would be a real life situation where this happens, I don't think a book that is presenting an introduction to autism should use race as a way of highlighting the character with autism.

Kayla Lazenby says

Genre:

Format: Picture

Awards: None

Summary: This story is a first hand look into how one little boy simply being himself made all the difference in another little boys life who happens to be autistic. It is a great story on the things autistic children deal with and how the General Ed population can handle them. This book is truly inspiring and will help challenge the normally functioning public befriend those with disabilities.

Critique: This book was absolutely astounding!! The illustrations were warm and very expressive! I think that it set up the most appropriate real life illustrations and examples of what children with autism really deal with. For example, the character with autisms name is Matt. It speaks on how he likes to play basketball in the gym. However, he often gets upset and throws tantrums when there are loud noises and he can't understand the coach. I feel the situations in this book are applicable. I think of the autistic students that I work with that are still very involved in a Gen Ed room. That's why I think this book should be read in every classroom and every school!!

Teaching Prompts: I would talk about autism and what exactly that means. I would then read the story and ask my students to respond. I would ask them to respond the following way: "Class, if you had a friend like Matt who panicked when there was a fire drill because it was out of his routine, what is something you could do to comfort him?" or I would ask individual questions such as, "Have you ever had a friend who was different from you and you went out of your way to help them?" or "How can you help someone understand something or how can you be a good friend to someone who has a disability?"

Craft Elements: I would have students draw a self portrait. I would then have them write descriptive words about themselves around their portrait. We would then bring our drawings to the carpet and discuss how we are all different in our own ways. We all prefer some things over another, enjoy sports, don't care for carrots but like Brussel sprouts, and even have different hair types. We are all valuable and significant and it is exciting to be friends with someone who is different than you. We learn things from people who are different than us!

Eileen Schaub says

Generally a good book, although it does little to point out the benefits and positive aspects of having a friend with special needs.

Pam says

An interesting book about a young boy who understands his best friend processes a little differently because he has Autism. The book takes you through days in their life.
Great to start dialogue about accepting and honoring people.

Ousa says

Perfect book for elementary school children to learn about classmates with autism.

Jasmine Jacobs says

This book teaches students to be a friend to students with autism. Sometimes, just having a friend can get you through the worst of times.

Katya Lazukina says

About a boy who has a friend with autism.
Great book that talks about the things they have to do because they have a different kind of friendship.
Working together, solving problems.

Lisa says**5 Huge Stars**

I originally discovered this book when I was on the search for an age appropriate book for my son's kindergarten class. I feel very strongly about spreading awareness when it comes to children and adults on the autism spectrum especially because my five year old son is on the spectrum. Therefore, I wanted a book dealing with autism to be read in my son's class so that the children in his class would better understand my son and other children they may encounter with autism.

Since We're Friends: An Autism Picture Book simply touched my heart. It is a book about a young boy who has a close friend with autism. Both these boys enjoy doing the same types of activities and the message behind this is that Matt (the boy with autism) should not be treated any differently. I have seen many children on the spectrum be mistreated and bullied and this is my greatest fear when it comes to my son. Children with autism are able to take part in community and mainstream activities, sometimes with supports in place. Every individual has value and needs love and care, even those with special needs. I truly loved the message behind this book. It will give children some understanding about autism and about those on the spectrum. One thing I really appreciated is that what is being stated in this book can also be applied to others who may be different whether it be ethnicity, gender, looks, etc.

We are all different.

We should all be treated with the same fairness and equality.

Since We're Friends: An Autism Picture Book is a wonderful book that tells a beautiful story. I can only hope and pray that my son encounters other children like Matt's friend that will love and accept him for who he is.

Kalynda says

Great story about friendship, kindness, and good hearted-ness. The personal understanding, empathy, and social negotiation Matt's friend does, because he values him as a person and friend is such an important story and lesson for students to hear (again and again).

Lana says

This is a book about friendship with kid who has Autism. I can use this book to teach children about inclusion and acceptance. It helps the children to understand their friend who has autism and how to get along with him/her in daily life. This book shows that the behavior of children with Autism sometimes differs from others, but there are many common points that they can play together and share friendships with others.

Alycia Fletcher says

Since we're Friends is an Autism Picture book written by Celeste Shally. This book is intended for children ages four to eight. This picture book is about two friends who do everything together. One of the boys, Matt has Autism but that doesn't stop the two from having a great time together. This book has not won any awards, although I would argue that it should have for its informative nature on a sensitive topic. This book goes over the tough realities of Autism and how it effects peoples emotions and behaviors. The author did a great job of providing was to help refocus Matts attention when he gets upset. Through rich colorful pictures you can visualize all of the fin adventures the two friends went on. I like how the Illustrator, David Harrington took a realistic approach to the pictures while still making them cartoon like. It is more appealing to children to see picture with bright colors that looks realistic with a hint of something extra then to just see a black and white sketch. The pictures help tell the story and how Matt is feeling based on his expressions. Overall I would highly recommend this book to anyone with young children, it is a great way to discuss

Autism with children in a positive way.

Valerie says

Summary: Children with autism struggle to make friends and navigate social situations. However, one child can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism by offering compassion, understanding and friendship. "Since We're Friends" is about two boys. One has autism, the other does not. The story of their relationship provides practical examples of how to make such a friendship work. It will help children see that their peers with autism can make a fun, genuine contribution to friendship.

From the publisher:

The prevalence of autism has skyrocketed in recent years. One in every 150 children is now living with this pervasive developmental disorder. The handful of autism children's books on the market represents the most severe cases of autism. However, most children with autism are much less severe. These misunderstood children struggle in social situations and have difficulty making friends. "Since We're Friends" will appeal to family members, friends, teachers, therapists, doctors, neighbors, and anyone who seeks to know and understand more about children with autism.

Potential Audience (reading level): Transitional

Genre: Realistic fiction

Topic: Autism, friendship

Specific curricular uses: I would use this book for a read aloud and then address any questions children have about autism. We could then talk about ways that the children could help out and be a friend to someone who struggles with it.

Social issues the book addresses: Children with autism, accepting and helping people who are "different"

Specific literary elements: The author uses repetition to establish her main theme in the book, friendship. She repeats the phrase, "Since we're friends," which is also the title of the book, on every other page. This helps readers to understand that the characters in the book will remain friends, even when they are faced with conflicts.

Interactions and counter actions of text and images: The illustrations in the story do an excellent job of conveying the emotions of the boy with autism. It may be hard for some children to understand why a child would react the way that the character in the book does, so seeing these pictures and putting them together with the text can help prepare readers for a potential real-life situation like this.

Quanita says

Since We're Friends, by Celeste Shally is in the genre of realistic fiction. It is recommended for kids in kindergarden through 6th grade. It is told from the point-of-view of a little boy who's best friend has autism.

He is always there for his friend when they play games. This is a great book for the inclusion classroom. I was a co-teacher for a 3rd grade class, where there were several kids with autism and other kids helped and played with them as the characters in the book did. This book can help teach compassion, fairness and how to deal with differences.

Gertrude says

Realistic fiction

Since We're friends is about two boys one has autism, the other does not. Matt act a little dufferent from his friend. He his autistic because his brain work different from other children. Matt think and feels things in a different way than his friend does, but still he always have a great time with him. Both of them love to play sport, such as football, basketball and baseball. Matt is good at scoring, while his friend is good at dribbling and passing. When they are gym, it is difficult for matt to listen and follow directions when it is loud. His friend always show matt what to do. They mostly have fun when they visit the park. They walk around the block together and make up crazy names for the neighbourhood dogs. Then feed the dogs with threats through the fence. Matt and his friend always goes to the pool every day. They mostly take the toys they love best to play with it when they are swimming. Most of the boys who come to the pool take the toys from them without asking. When the pool is closed for repairs, Matt gets furious. He doesn't like it when they plans change. At night, kids from they neighborhood get together to play freeze tag. Matt and his friends comes out to play because they can run as fast as lightubg! Matt and his friend always have so much fun together when it is time for one of them to go home, Matt get stubborn and sad because he doesn't want the fun to stop. This child made a significant difference in the life of a child with autism by offering compassion, understanding and friend. This is an excellent book to read aloud in a classroom. Even if there are no children with autism in the classroom. a lot of children may know someone with autism. I recommend this book for an Intermediate to Advance child. This is very informative book for adult and children. This book really open your eyes to Autism and even may help children understand that some kids are different and it is not bad thing. The book is very colorful, bright and has realistic picture that children can relate to and it would draw a childs attention.

Emmaline MacBeath says

A young boy has a friend name Matt who has Autism. The boy likes to play with Matt because they have a lot in common. When Matt gets frustrated or anxious, the boy helps to smooth things over by distracting Matt with a new activity. When other kids leave Matt out of their play, the boy asks Matt to come play with his friends. The boy does everything he can to make things easier for Matt.

The illustrations appear to be digitally rendered. They have a cartoon quality. They are colorful and not overly busy so young readers can fully enjoy them.

I have a child with Autism and overall enjoyed the story. It was written to share with other kids what Autism is all about and how to help Autistic peers. I wish we all had such a wonderful friend like this boy! He was mature for his age and always knew how to help Matt. I wished that Matt's friend was not the only one helping him. I would have liked to see more kids as a part of his circle. It is also not the boy's responsibility to always smooth things over. This puts a lot of pressure on such a young kid. I would also reword the scene

where it says, "Some kids think Matt is weird because it's hard to understand the way he talks...." This scene puts a negative connotation on things and presents the idea that Autistic kids are weird. But otherwise, this is a lovely story of acceptance and unconditional friendship. I love the boy's attitude and how he doesn't let differences get in his way. Teachers and parents can read selectively as they feel appropriate for each age group. This book would be a wonderful story for grades K-3.
