

# LET'S TALK ABOUT IT: BEING FRIENDS AND STAYING SAFE



# INTRODUCTION

This book has been written for you by other children and young people. They wanted to share some messages about the importance of friendship. They also understand that sometimes children are not kind to each other and can even hurt each other. This might be because of bad things they say or even by hitting and fighting each other. This is called peer on peer violence. So this book also contains some ideas about things children might do when they are being hurt.

The children and young people who wrote these stories and drew the pictures wanted to share the following messages:

- Children and young people in Spain wrote story 1. This story explains why it is important to understand what peer on peer violence is.
- Children and young people in Italy wrote story 2. This story is about the importance of friendship especially when you might be feeling afraid or worried because of the way other children are treating you.
- Children and young people in Spain also wrote story 3. This story helps us understand that although we might all be different, we are all equally important. The children who wrote this story want us to understand how important it is to respect each other and to value our differences.
- Children and young people in Romania wrote story 4. This story is about respecting each other's personal space.
- Children and young people in Romania also wrote story 5. This story explains how feeling good about yourself can also help you feel positive about others.
- Children and young people in France and Belgium wrote story 6. In this story you will think about how children are able to turn to adults if they are being hurt.

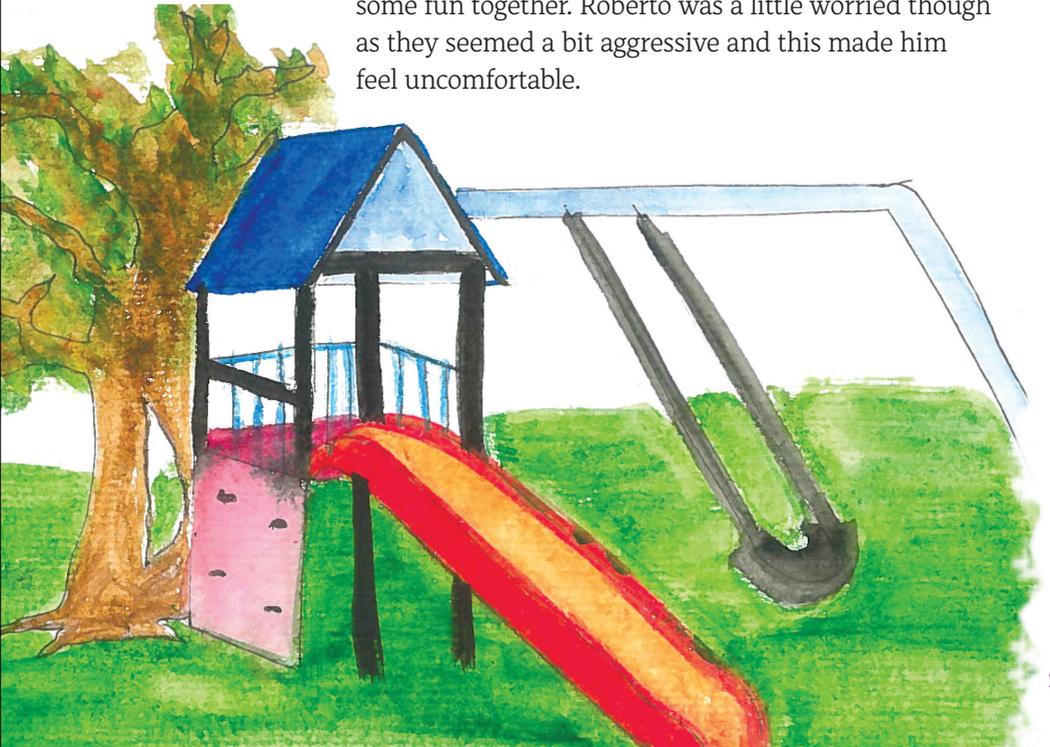
If someone is hurting you it is important for you to tell an adult you know and trust so that they can help you. If you are hurting someone else, it is also important for you to find an adult you can speak to. This might be a parent or someone else who is looking after you. It might be a teacher or another adult you know and trust. You might also want to talk to an adult about what you have read in this book. Do not be worried but do reach out to someone.

# STORY 1

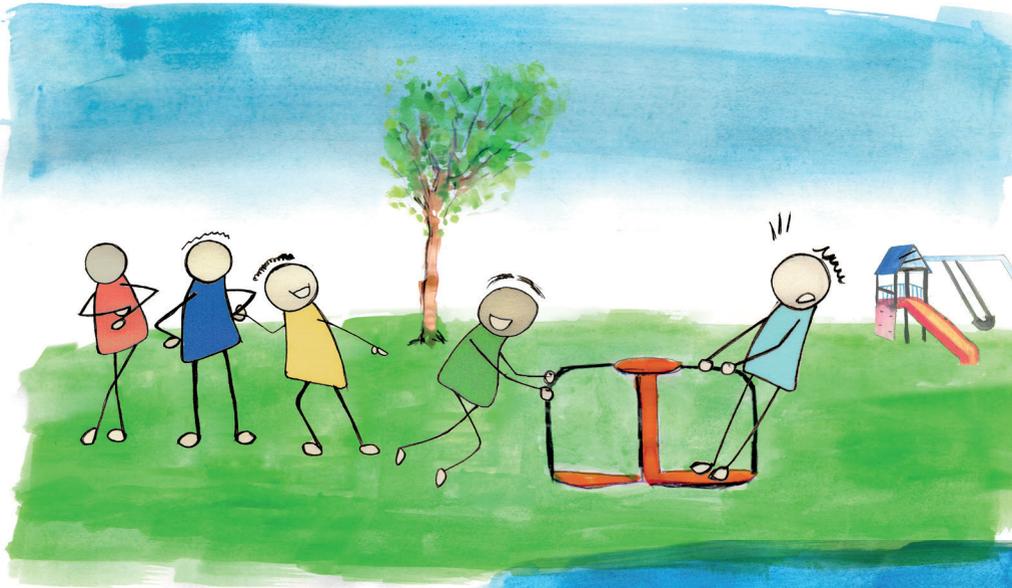
( WRITTEN BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPAIN )

## Being aware of different forms of peer on peer violence.

Roberto is a shy and insecure 9 year old boy. Because he loves being active, he goes to the park every day after school. One day, he sees four other children in the park about the same age as him. Roberto decided to say hello as perhaps they could be friends and have some fun together. Roberto was a little worried though as they seemed a bit aggressive and this made him feel uncomfortable.



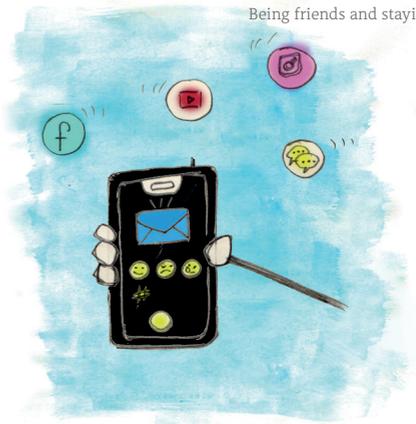
Roberto was on the swing but the other children told him to get off so they could use it. He was worried they might hurt him and decided to move away from the group. He went on the little merry-go-round instead. However, the children followed him and started to spin the merry-go-round with a lot of force. Roberto had to hold on very tight to stop himself falling off. He asked them to stop because he was getting dizzy, but they just laughed and said, "Hold on scared little chicken," and made the sound of a chicken.



After this, Roberto decided to go home. The other children called after him and said, "Hey, come back tomorrow. We had a great time together!" He felt confused because he didn't know if they actually wanted to play or if they were being horrible to him. He really wanted to have friends and perhaps this was the way friendships worked?



Roberto did go back to the park the next day to see if the children would be there again and if they would be nicer to him. But the children treated him the same way. It left him confused and sad. But he thought to himself, at least he wasn't alone anymore.

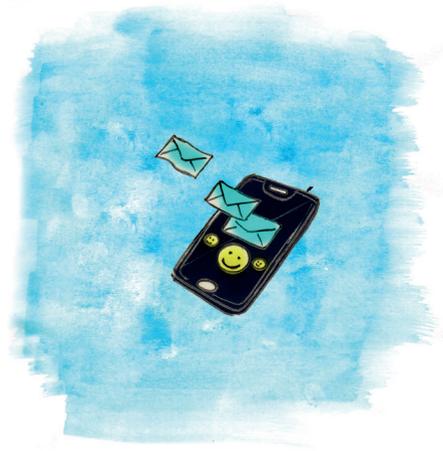


The children also asked him to share his contact on any social media sites he used. They showed him their pages and because he thought it was a sign of friendship, he shared his details. That night Roberto received some messages that he was worried about. They weren't very nice and said nasty things about him.



Roberto kept going back to the park, always hoping that things might change and the other children might finally accept him as part of their group. Although they let him join in playing with them, they were still not very nice to him.

Then the school had a workshop that Roberto attended. The workshop was about children's rights and different forms of violence that children and young people might experience. During the workshop they talked about things like being bullied, physically hurt, and attacked over the internet.



After the workshop Roberto thought about how he had felt in the park and because of the messages about him that had been posted online. He then realised that what he had experienced was peer on peer violence. He had not been sure if it had been part of a game, even though what had happened had made him feel upset and frightened at times. He also felt ashamed that he had let this happen and had not gone to an adult for help. After the workshop Roberto realised how important it was to learn and know about peer on peer violence and to be able to speak openly about it. He then decided to go and speak to a trusted adult about what had happened and to ask them for help.



# AN ACTIVITY FOR YOU TO COMPLETE

When Roberto was feeling hurt and confused, he could have acted in three ways.

From the three options on the next page, can you help Roberto choose the best option?



<p><b>OPTION 1</b></p> <p>To be quiet and say nothing</p>	<p><b>OPTION 2</b></p> <p>Talk to someone who can help you and other children speak about their problem</p>	<p><b>OPTION 3</b></p> <p>Engage in violence</p>
<p><b>THIS OPTION IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO:</b></p>	<p><b>THIS OPTION CAN LEAD TO:</b></p>	<p><b>THIS OPTION MAY LEAD TO:</b></p>
<p>Feeling sad/lonely/alone/guilty</p>	<p>Stopping the violence</p> <p>Helping other children identify what violence is</p> <p>Helping the person who has started violence to understand what they are doing</p> <p>Creating a healthy, safe and protective environment</p>	<p>Negative effects such as feeling sad or angry. Hurting other people does not solve the situation</p>

You can now check your answer if you turn this page upside down.

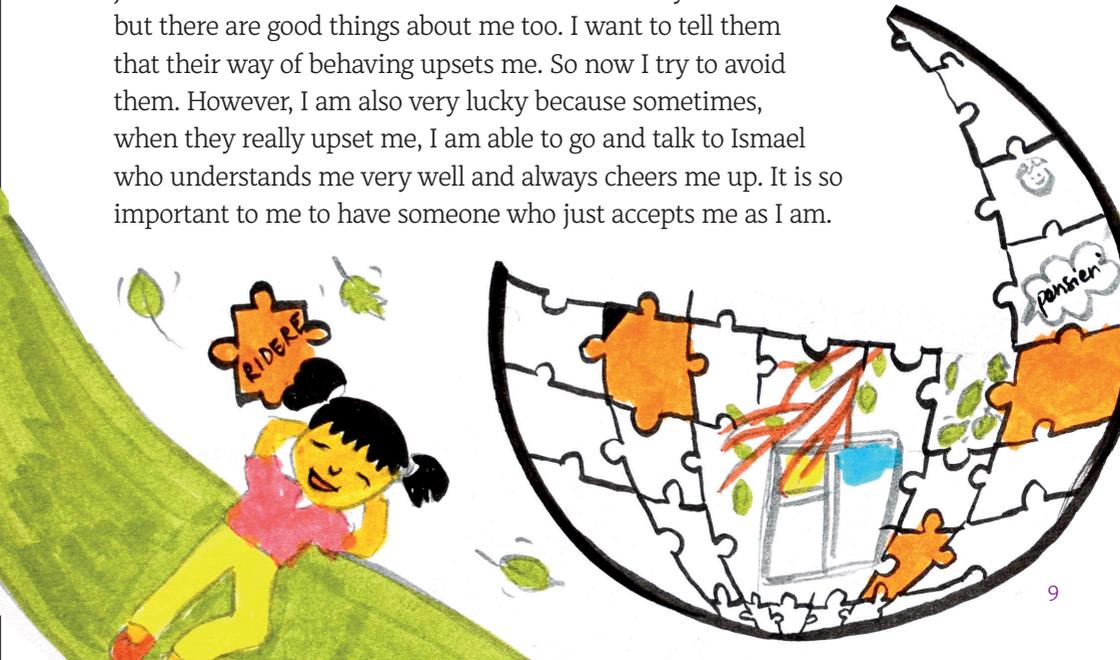
**OPTION 2** would be the best thing for Roberto to do. If he speaks to someone he knows and trusts, this could help stop the violence he is experiencing as well as prevent it happening to other children.

# STORY 2

(WRITTEN BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN ITALY)

## Positive, respectful, healthy relationships with peers.

Hi, I'm **Aurora Chen** and my world is full of my thoughts and ideas. Sometimes when I am in class I get distracted. Like when I look out of the window to see the autumn leaves falling and I feel like dangling in the air just like them. Before the teacher notices that I'm not paying attention, my friend Ismael helps pulls me back to reality by whispering, "What are you thinking about?" and we smile. I also have a small group of friends but sometimes they give me strange nicknames because I get distracted a lot of the time. I don't like this very much. I would like to tell them that this is just how I am. That I have flaws the same as everyone else but there are good things about me too. I want to tell them that their way of behaving upsets me. So now I try to avoid them. However, I am also very lucky because sometimes, when they really upset me, I am able to go and talk to Ismael who understands me very well and always cheers me up. It is so important to me to have someone who just accepts me as I am.

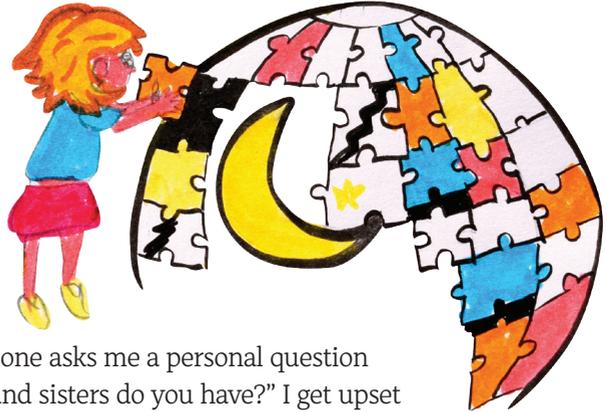




Hi I'm **Brandon** and I'm always kept busy. I do lots and lots of activities like karate and drama classes but mostly because my mom makes me do all these things. She believes I'm interested in them but actually, I'm not. My dad is often away from home for work and never has time for me. How I wish one day he would come to see me at one of my sports competitions! I also really envy other children in the neighbourhood who are out having lots of fun with each other. I don't have fun, and I'm angry with myself and with others! At school I often fight with my classmates. Sometimes I hit them or say offensive things to them. Other times I just stay away from everyone. Recently I confided in my aunt who understood the situation. She helped me think about what was happening to me. She also suggested I go play in the park with my cousins every Saturday afternoon. It was a super idea. It has helped me express my emotions in a different way as well as understanding the importance of being good friends with other children rather than hurting them. And when I want to be alone, I know that is ok too and I can devote time to my new passion which is reading.

Hi I'm **Kate**, and I live in a different house and a different country from the rest of my family. I live in what's called alternative care with a foster family. My life feels like a jigsaw puzzle with a lot of little pieces. Some fit together more easily but others are harder to fit together and some are a little broken. Sometimes I look at the moon and think how different my world might be if

I lived with my parents. In my puzzle there are so many dads and so many moms and sisters and brothers who love me and I love them. But it is a complicated situation and I don't feel comfortable

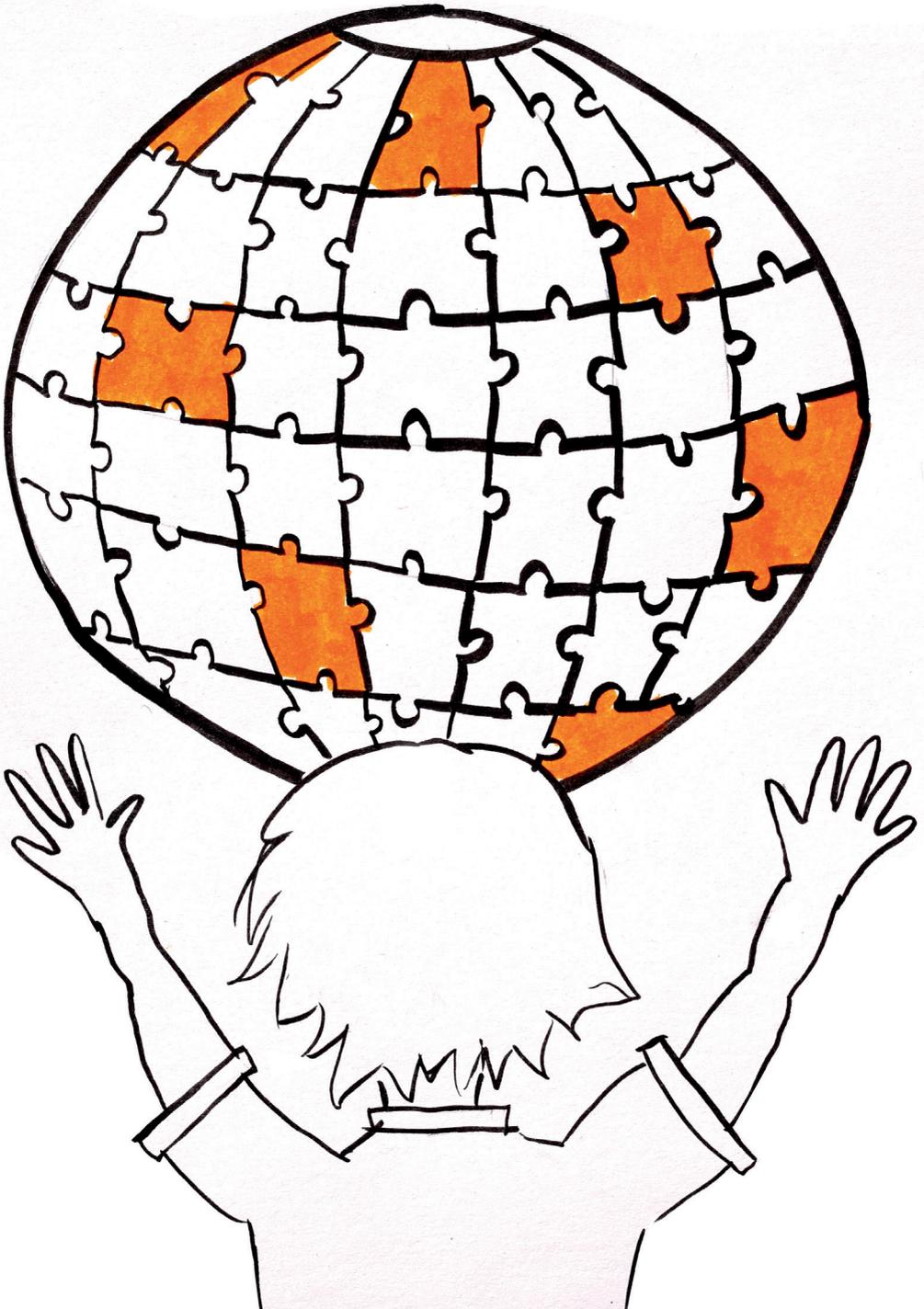


talking about it. So when someone asks me a personal question such as, "How many brothers and sisters do you have?" I get upset and even angry with them because I don't know how to answer them. Fortunately when this happens, Chiara, who is a good friend to me, comes up and distracts me by asking me to play with her. She knows my story and I don't feel embarrassed to tell her about how I feel because she is attentive, curious, and always listens to me with great interest. This means I have someone to turn to when I feel upset. It also helps me understand what good friendships are. She says I am special in my own way and we should all respect and value each other's differences. I know she will always support me. I think I will dedicate a colourful puzzle piece to Chiara because she is always cheerful and always knows how to make me smile!

## AN ACTIVITY FOR YOU TO COMPLETE

**Tell your story by colouring the jigsaw puzzle of your world.**

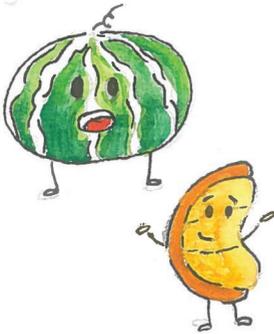
Just like Aurora Chen, Brandon and Kate, try to think about your relationship with people your own age. What are the important things about your relationships that make your world happy and colourful? Now colour in the puzzle pieces and in each puzzle piece add one word or a small drawing that describes what it is about your relationships that are important to you and that make you happy. Enjoy!



# STORY 3

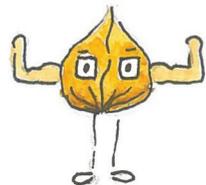
( WRITTEN BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPAIN )

## Respecting differences and strengthening acceptance between each other.

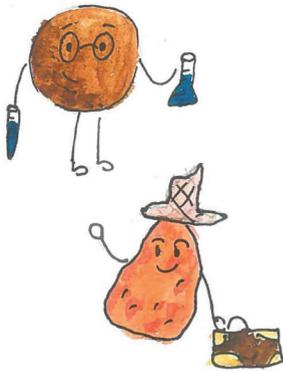
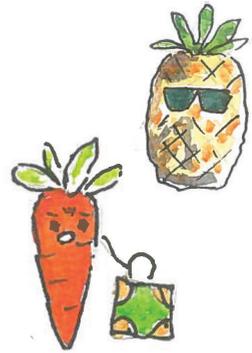


In Orchard Village, all the fruits and vegetables, even though they all look and taste different from one another, are trying their best to live alongside each other in a harmonious way. Although sometimes this doesn't always work out, and sometimes there are small disagreements between different fruits and vegetables.

The recent arrival of two new vegetables, Potato and Carrot, has put some additional strain on relationships in the Orchard Village. These two new members of the Orchard Village are thought to be taking away space and water from the others. In addition, the farmer now devotes almost all his time to them.

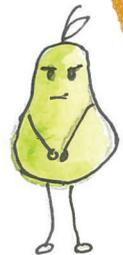


This fight against the “outsiders” brings up old disagreements. For example, Lemons and Oranges no longer want to play with the Red Fruits anymore. Coconut and Walnut ask some other fruits for help with their homework, but then ignore them during school break. Some fruits write offensive comments to Watermelons on their TikTok videos. Tomatoes have even started fighting with Pineapples.



Apple and Pear, who have always been united, decide that they have to do something to put an end to this situation. They can't stand the fact that they are all being separated into groups and that in order to get along with some of them they have to be against others. So they decide to ask Almond for help as she is considered to be very wise. They tell her about the situation.

Almond decides to go to Orchard Village Neighbourhood Council and asks them to think carefully about the current situation. She suggests they get all the fruits and vegetables to sit and talk to each other. They should learn to understand that we are all different and that this is the richness of Orchard Village. It is differences that make us special. Differences are not a weakness; they are a strength. They offer a rich variety of different tastes and colours and all fruits and vegetables are good to eat.



# AN ACTIVITY FOR YOU TO COMPLETE



Next to the drawing of each fruit or vegetable, write what you think it is that makes them different from the others and write what is good about them.



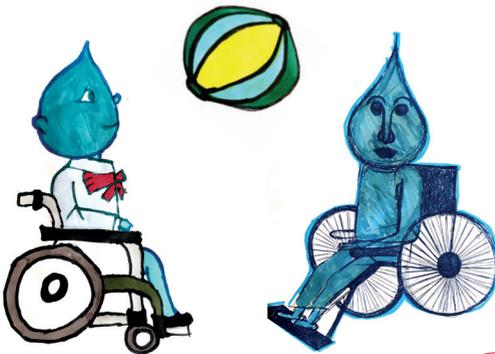
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES	WHAT IS GOOD ABOUT EACH OF THESE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES? WHAT MAKES THEM DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS?
 <i>Pineapples</i>	
 <i>Oranges</i>	
 <i>Watermelons</i>	
 <i>Coconuts</i>	
 <i>Lettuce</i>	
 <i>Potatoes</i>	
 <i>Carrots</i>	
 <i>Strawberries</i>	
 <i>Tomatoes</i>	
 <i>Pomegranates</i>	
 <i>Pears</i>	
 <i>Almonds</i>	

# STORY 4

( WRITTEN BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN ROMANIA )

## Respecting boundaries and personal space.

*This is FIRE. He is very angry and frustrated all the time. He does not know why – it is just his character. One summers day, FIRE was at the swimming pool where he saw DROPY and his FRIEND playing ball together.*



**They had the most beautiful ball. They looked so happy!  
I also wanted to play with them, but they did not  
welcome me into their game.  
I WANTED THEIR BALL JUST FOR MYSELF!  
Then, suddenly, the ball flew right next to my feet!**

DROPY said:

Could you please give us our ball back?



I wondered if I should give them the ball back. But I didn't want to. I wanted to play with it. It was not my ball, but I did decide to take it. I then tried to get away. But then something happened. DROPY tried to get the ball back and I accidentally pushed him into the water. Luckily another person in the pool managed to catch DROPY and stop him from going under the water.



FIRE was glad that help arrived in time. He felt sorry for what happened. He told DROPY:

I am very sorry for what happened. I realize I should not have taken your ball without permission. I just wanted to have your ball so badly. I am so sorry and realize that things could have gone very wrong when you fell in the water. Could we play together?



DROPY said:

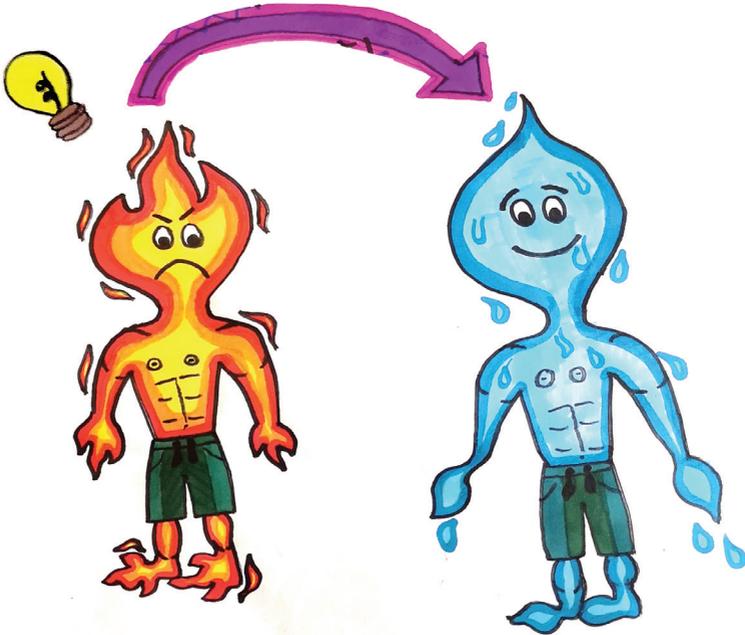
Yes, sure!  
Let's play all together.



*FIRE now understands that anger and jealousy led to trying to take something that belonged to another child without asking for permission and almost ended in a terrible accident. Also you have to respect boundaries and cannot force yourself into someone else's space or just take their things.*

**You should ask permission in a nice way.**

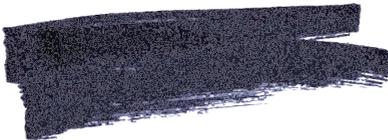
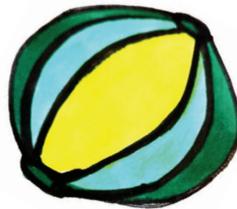
**AFTER REALIZING THE MISTAKE AND APOLOGIZING,  
FIRE SUDDENLY BECAME CALMER AND  
TURNED INTO COOLER WATER.**

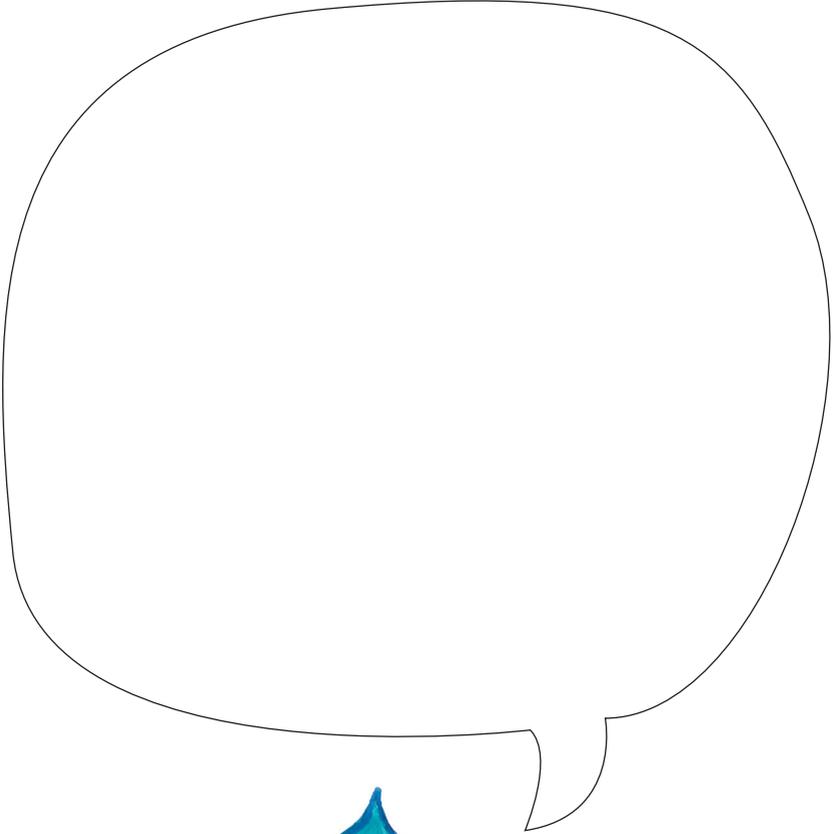


I now understand that not everything belongs to me!  
I have to think more about people around me! I should  
only play with the things that belong to other people if  
they allow me to! "NO" means "NO"!

# AN ACTIVITY FOR YOU TO COMPLETE

It is ok to say 'no' when you don't want to share something with someone else. At first DROPY didn't want FIRE to take the ball and was worried because FIRE seemed to be someone who was frightening to play with. There are different ways to say 'no'. Can you think of some ways DROPY might have said 'no' to FIRE whilst still feeling safe? Write in the speech bubble what you think DROPY might say.



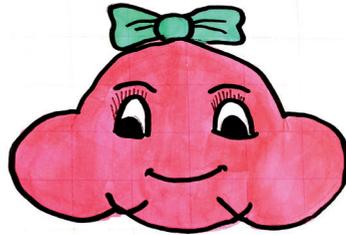


# STORY 5

(WRITTEN BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN ROMANIA)

## The importance of self-esteem.

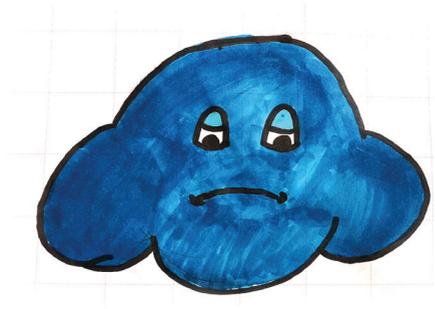
Desiree is a little cloud who lives in The Upper Realm. Desiree believed she was the most beautiful and powerful girl in the entire world.



One day, Desiree starts to travel because she wanted to find out if there were things in the world that were more valuable than anything she already owned. On the way she met The Moon who was considered the wisest person in the Sky.

Moon asked her a question: “What is more important to you: being rich or happiness?” Desiree answered, “I always believed that having money would make me very happy. But if I really think about it, what is making me unhappy is not having any real friends.”

Moon was happy with Desiree's answer. He told her to continue on her journey and find out more about what is really important in life.



Suddenly a storm approaches and Desiree is carried away by the wind. She ends up on the edge of a beautiful lake. Here she meets another cloud called Will, and they become friends.

Desiree tells Will the story of her life and they realize they have similar experiences. Will tells Desiree about The Little Realm. This is the place where he felt that he was not good at anything. So he decided to start a journey to find out about himself.

During his journey he met the Shooting Star. Shooting Star asked him why he felt he was lacking in self-esteem and thought he was not good at anything.



Will answered, "In the past, all the children I played with were laughing at me all the time because I was not good at games. Because of that I didn't want to play anymore." After hearing the story, the Shooting Star granted Will a wish. Will wished to have more self-confidence so he would not be affected so much when other children made fun of him.



The two journeys brought Will and Desiree together and they both concluded that having self-esteem is important when trying to build happy friendships.

# AN ACTIVITY FOR YOU TO COMPLETE

Can you identify the words in the word search puzzle to fill in the gaps in the sentences? This is how you will find out what Will and Desiree learned in their life journeys.

A **H\_\_Y** (1) child that is **C\_\_F\_\_E\_\_T** (2) and **AW\_\_E** (3) of themselves and their own **L\_\_M\_\_T\_\_** (4) will be less likely to **H\_\_M** (5) others.



You can now check your answer if you turn this page upside down.

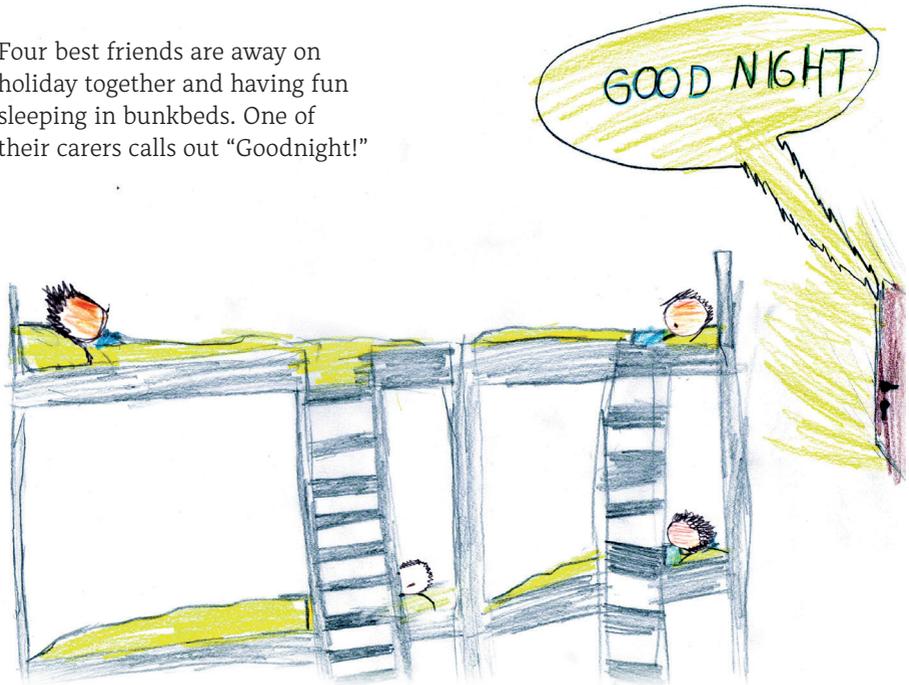
(1) HAPPY; (2) CONFIDENT; (3) AWARE; (4) LIMITS; (5) HARM.

# STORY 6

( WRITTEN BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM )

## Who can children and young people turn to?

Four best friends are away on holiday together and having fun sleeping in bunkbeds. One of their carers calls out "Goodnight!"



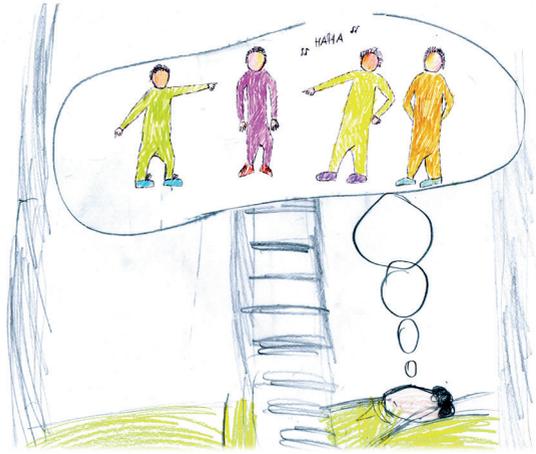


One of the friends has been having some problems with other children in their class. They have been teased a lot. Now they are dreaming about this. In their dream, another child is making fun of them and saying, "Oh you're so fat!"

Another of the friends is also having a bad dream. In their dream they are in the park. They are hiding behind a wall watching two other children. He hears the boy say, "We are boyfriend and girlfriend so we must kiss!" But the girl replies, "No I don't want to!" However, the boy ignores her and starts to try and kiss her. The child having the dream doesn't understand if this is bad behaviour or not?



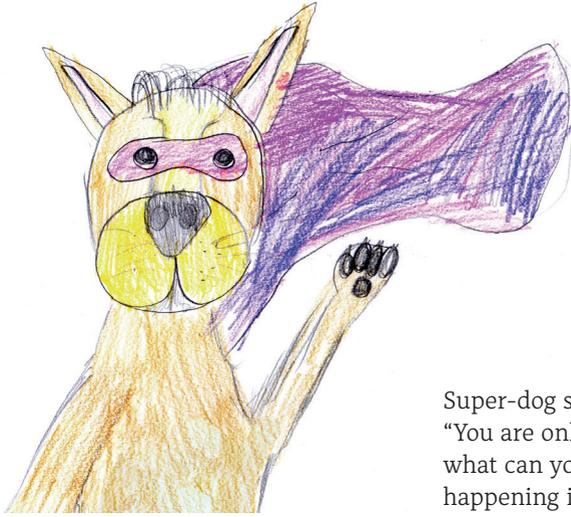
The third friend is also having an unhappy dream. They are dreaming they are surrounded by other children who are calling out names because they come from a different country. Everyone is laughing and singing horrible songs about foreigners. They don't know how to make this stop.



The fourth friend is having a very different type of dream. They are chasing a much smaller child and trying to steal their bag of sweets.



On the door of the wardrobe in the bedroom is a picture of a Super-dog. All of a sudden Super-dog comes alive and steps out of the picture frame.



Super-dog says to the children:  
“You are only dreaming. But  
what can you do to stop what is  
happening in your dreams?”

The four children wake up and think about how to answer Super-dog.



The first friend answers  
Super-dog. They say it  
is important not to keep  
what is happening inside  
you. They say they would  
write a letter explaining  
what they have been  
experiencing and then  
share it with someone  
who can help them.



The second friend tells Super-dog that they would go and find an adult they trust and ask them for advice. They would ask the adult, "Is it normal to force someone to kiss you?" They want to understand what is right and what is wrong behaviour.



The third friend tells Super-dog that next time they see the sports coach who they like and trust, they would say, "Can I talk to you about something?" and then tell them about what is happening to them.

The fourth friend tells Super-dog they would go and find the child they were chasing and ask them to forgive them. They realize it is wrong to bully and intimidate other children.



# AN ACTIVITY FOR YOU TO COMPLETE

## True or False:

What is a person of trust?

<i>Someone that doesn't judge you</i>	<i>Someone that makes you feel uncomfortable</i>
<i>Someone that tells all your secrets to others</i>	<i>Someone that respects your limits</i>

You can now check your answers on the next page.

**TRUE**

*A person of trust does not judge your actions or what you tell them*

**FALSE**

*A person of trust makes you feel good*

**FALSE**

*A person of trust is supposed to keep your secrets. In some cases, they may have to tell only those who must know about the situation in order to help you*

**TRUE**

*A person of trust never forces you to talk about or do something that you don't want to do*



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VILLAGES**



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# Applying Safe Behaviours

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING  
TO PEER VIOLENCE