

Heart-Mind Reading List

Picture Books for Children

Heart-Mind Well-Being



The books on this list will provide you with thoughtful and fun stories to share with children of all ages.

Each list has a coloured heart with it to indicate the Heart-Mind quality present in the story.

Use the stories to teach social and emotional skills, but also let the stories take you and your audience to new adventurous places!



Secure and calm describes the ability to take part in daily activities and approach new situations without being overwhelmed with worries, sadness, or anxiety. To be secure and calm also means being able to cope with stress and pressure, and to bounce back from difficulties.



Being **compassionate and kind** is closely related to empathy. While empathy refers more generally to the ability to take the perspective of and to feel the emotions of another person, compassion goes one step further. Compassion includes the desire to take actions that will alleviate another person's distress.



Getting along with others is the ability to form positive and healthy relationships with peers and adults. Children with better abilities to regulate their emotions and behaviours have more friends and experience more positive playtime with their peers.



Solving problems peacefully is about creating an atmosphere where violence and aggression are not likely. To resolve conflict means using empathy, problem-solving skills, understanding other points of view and coming up with ways to make things right in a fair way. Peace is more than the absence of conflict and violence. It is recognizing and acting on the worth of self, others, and the interconnectedness of humans.



Being **alert and engaged** is the ability to manage and direct one's own feelings, thoughts, and emotions. In general, it is the ability to be 'present' and to exercise self-control.



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Secure and Calm



SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A FOX
Danielle Daniel

Sometimes I Feel Like a Fox (2017) by Danielle Daniel

We all feel different depending on the day. Danielle Daniel introduces us to the Anishinaabe tradition of totem animals which we can tap into as we experience new things. No matter what we encounter, there is something inside us that can help us take it on.



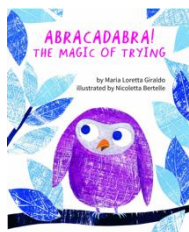
Sulwe (2019) by Lupita Nyong'o and Vashti Harrison

Sulwe does not look like the other members of her family and stands out at school too. She can't appreciate her own beauty because she does not know how to see it. Sulwe is an inspiring story that brings us on a magical journey through the night sky to help us see beauty in different ways.



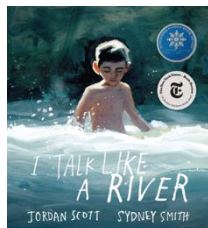
The Many Colors of Harpreet Singh (2019) by Supriya Kelkar and Alea Marley

There are so many colours in the world and Harpreet Singh loves to use his Patka to display his moods. However, when there is a big change in his life Harpreet no longer wants to display his feelings. This story presents a heart-warming story of how we can deal with change and present ourselves to the world.



Abracadabra! The Magic of Trying (2018) by Maria Loretta Giraldo and Nicoletta Bertelle

Owl desperately wants to learn to fly but can't get the hang of it. Every time Owl wants to give up his friends are there to encourage him. Problems can be solved as long as we don't give up!



I Talk Like a River (2020) by Jordan Scott and Sydney Smith

This stirring story of a boy who suffers from a speech impediment will leave you uplifted. When the boy feels like he can't communicate with the world around him, his father helps him find his voice. There will be many times we feel down, but how we bounce back is the most important thing and this book shows us how.



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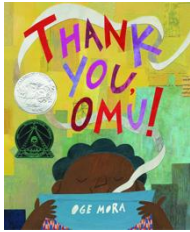


Compassionate and Kind



Swift Fox All Along (2020) by Rebecca Lea Thomas and Maya McKibbin

Swift Fox is taken to meet members of her community and learn how to be Mi'kmaq. Swift Fox is very nervous and doesn't understand why she has to meet so many people or what they want from her. She begins to come around when she feels the love and support from everyone around her.



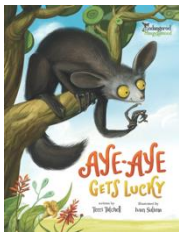
Thank You, Omu (2018) by Oge Mora

Omu is making a thick red stew that smells so delicious that everyone who passes by stops and asks for some. Omu gives stew to everyone who asks, but she soon realizes that she gave it all away and has no dinner. Luckily, everyone who enjoyed Omu's stew throughout the day knows they should also be kind and offer her food.



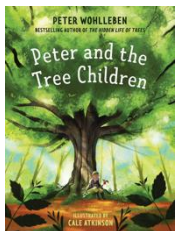
Be Kind (2018) by Pat Zietlow Miller and Jen Hill

In this thoughtful book, we learn what it means to be kind. We join a young student as they recount all the ways they can show kindness. We learn that small things can make a big difference!



Aye-Aye Gets Lucky (2019) by Terri Tatchell and Ivan Sulima

Aye-Aye is a lemur who loves to pull pranks and eat the yummy food that people have prepared. But Aye-Aye goes too far and gets banned from the village. Aye-Aye meets a flying fox who helps Aye-Aye get a second chance to earn the trust of the village.



Peter and the Tree Children (2020) by Peter Wohlleben and Cale Atkinson

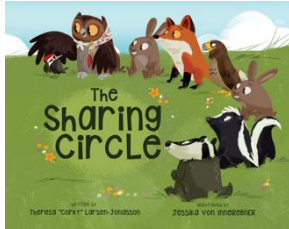
Piet the Squirrel feels sad and alone, so Peter the Forester has a plan to help Piet feel better and learn about where he lives. They walk through the forest looking for tree children to show Piet that he is surrounded by friends! Being kind and compassionate means appreciating *all* the living things around us.



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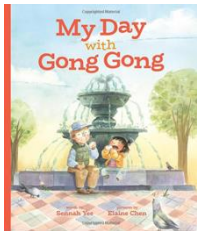


Gets Along with Others



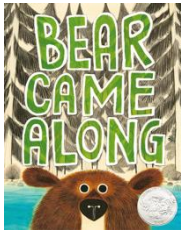
The Sharing Circle (2016) by Theresa “Corky” Larsen-Jonasson and Jessika Von Innerebner

Morning Star and River are two red fox friends, but they get into an argument after some rough play. To help the friends resolve their issue, an elder organizes a sharing circle for the community. The circle is a very important step to help everyone talk, learn, and understand how to share their feelings and get along with others.



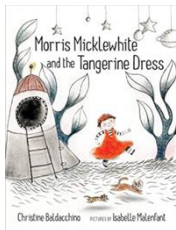
My Day with Gong Gong (2020) by Sennah Yee and Elaine Chen

May is not excited to spend the day with her grandfather who doesn't speak English. As they walk around town, she doesn't think he is paying attention to her and gets upset. After she gets upset, her Gong Gong comforts her, and May begins to see that he had been paying attention all along and trying to help her connect with the community and her heritage.



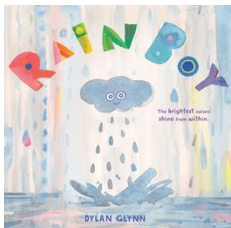
Bear Came Along (2019) by Richard T. Morris

Curious Bear is exploring and finds himself on an adventure. He meets multiple friends along the way who help him learn. In this story, you can see how everyone has something they can add to an adventure!



Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress (2014) by Christine Baldacchino and Isabelle Malenfant

Morris Micklewhite likes a lot of things about school, but especially dressing up in a tangerine dress. Morris tries to enjoy school, but some students say mean things about him. Morris gets sad but overcomes his feelings by staying true to himself which helps others see how fun he really is!



Rain Boy (2020) by Dylan Glynn

When Rain Boy gets invited to Sun Girl's birthday party, things end terribly. Rain Boy and Sun Girl both get upset when their friends are not respectful towards them. After a while, everyone realizes how important Rain Boy and Sun Girl both are and that makes life better!

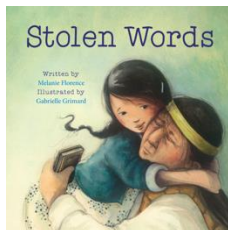


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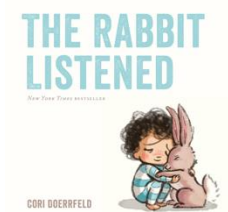


Solves Problems Peacefully



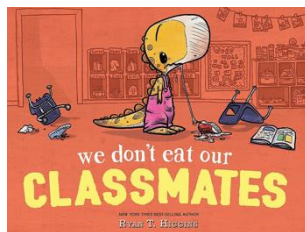
Stolen Words (2017) by Melanie Florence and Gabrielle Grimard

This powerful book focuses on a small girl and her grandfather. When her grandfather can't remember his language, she does what she can to help him. This sweet tale shows how different generations can support each other and learn together



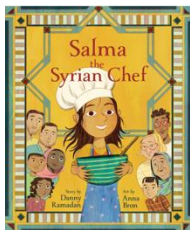
The Rabbit Listened (2018) by Cori Doerrfeld

Taylor is making something amazing! But when it all comes crashing down Taylor doesn't know how to feel. Many animals come by and try to tell Taylor how to feel and solve the problem, but Taylor just needs someone to listen.



We Don't Eat Our Classmates (2018) by Ryan T. Higgins

Penelope Rex is at a new school and life as a dinosaur hasn't helped prepare her to be a part of the class. As Penelope struggles to make friends she begins to learn what she should change. This is a wonderful story to learn how to consider others' feelings.



Salma the Syrian Chef (2020) by Danny Ramadan and Anna Bron

When Salma and her family must start life in a new country, there are many hardships to overcome. Salma sees that her mom is very busy, and notices that she doesn't smile anymore. Salma sets out to help her mom be happy again and doesn't let anything stop her.



The Barnabus Project (2020) by Eric, Devin, and Terry Fan

This quirky story follows a group of genetically engineered pets who have been labelled as "failed" projects. Barnabus, who is half mouse, half elephant, and his friends realize they are about to be destroyed and so they must escape! As individuals and as a group their challenge is how they can escape and if they even want to.



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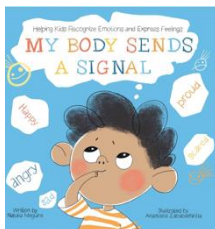


Alert and Engaged



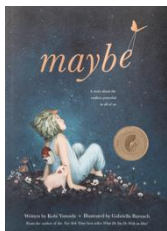
When We Were Alone (2016) by David A. Robertson and Julie Flett

A young girl and her grandmother have a conversation to answer all the girl's questions. As the grandmother answers the questions, she shares how she found happiness even when she couldn't make her own decisions. When we are alert and engaged, we can be happy and manage our feelings, even when we have limited opportunities.



My Body Sends a Signal (2020) by Natalia Maguire and Anastasia Zababashkina

In this educational book, we look at all the signals our body sends us. What causes us to feel all of these things? This book acts as a resource that includes a story, calming activities, and more to show us that our experiences will cause different feelings, but we can be in control of them.



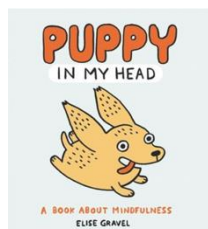
Maybe (2019) by Kobi Yamada and Gabriella Barouch

This uplifting book helps us realize just how amazing we are! This book takes us on a visual journey to help us realize how much we can overcome and accomplish. Kobi Yamada gives us an amazing resource to help us manage our feelings and stay focused on what we can do if we continue through adversity.



The Most Magnificent Thing (2014) by Ashley Spires

When a girl and her best friend set out to make the most magnificent thing, she knows just what it will look like and work like. But as she tries to make it, she learns it isn't as easy as she thought and after failing multiple times, she gets upset. After taking time away from the project and calming herself she looks at her projects with a new attitude and ends up getting things just right.



Puppy in My Mind (2021) by Elise Gravel

There are so many things that go on in our heads! Ollie the puppy lives inside the narrator's head and when Ollie gets too scared, excited, or upset the narrator needs to find ways to control Ollie. This amazing book helps us understand what is going on in our heads and how to get control our emotions.



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