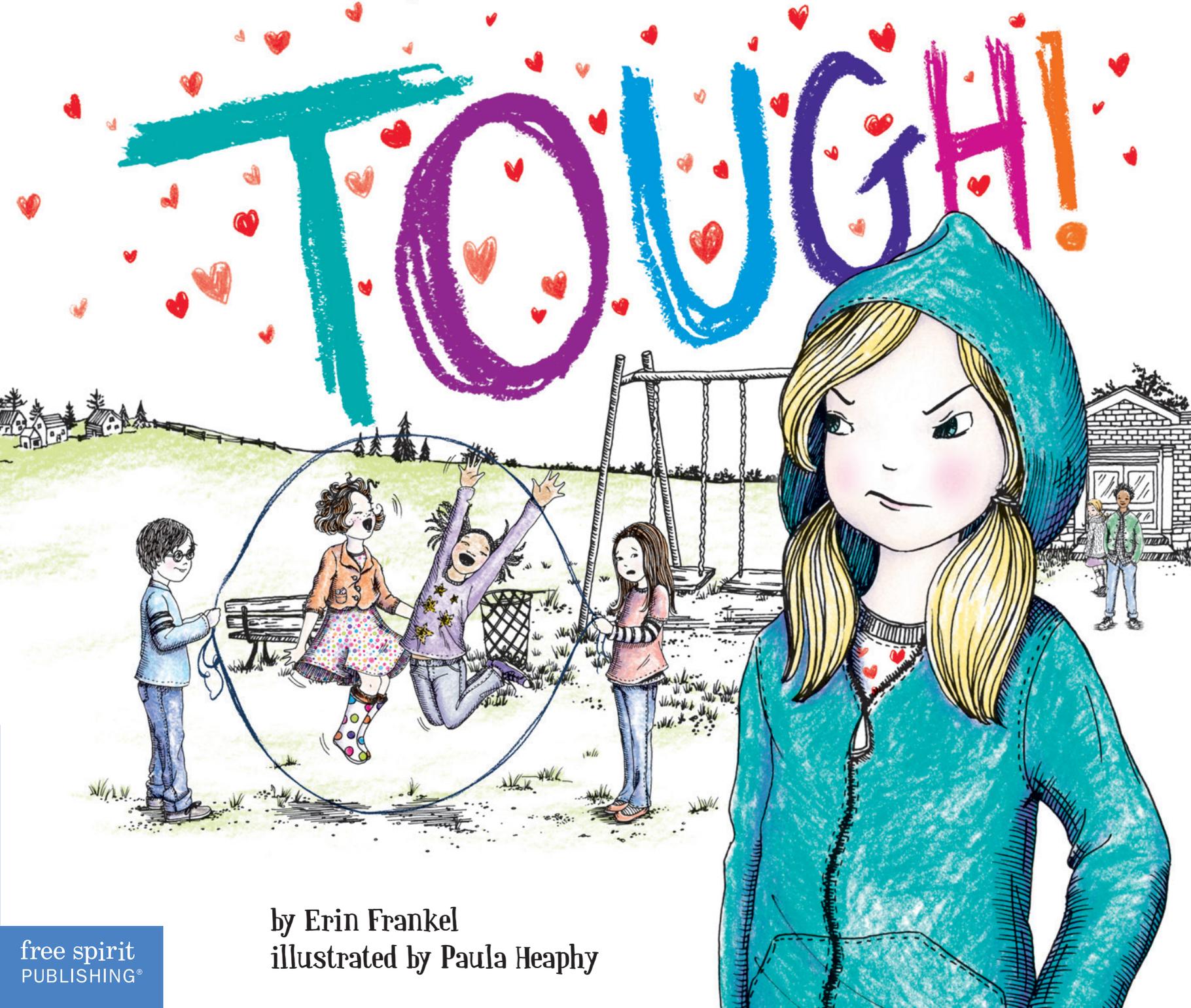


TOUGH!



by Erin Frankel
illustrated by Paula Heaphy

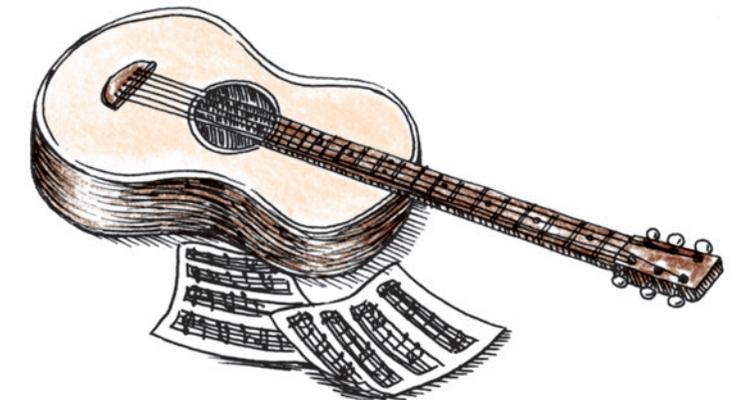
TOUGH!

A Story About How to
Stop Bullying in Schools

by Erin Frankel

illustrated by Paula Heaphy

free spirit
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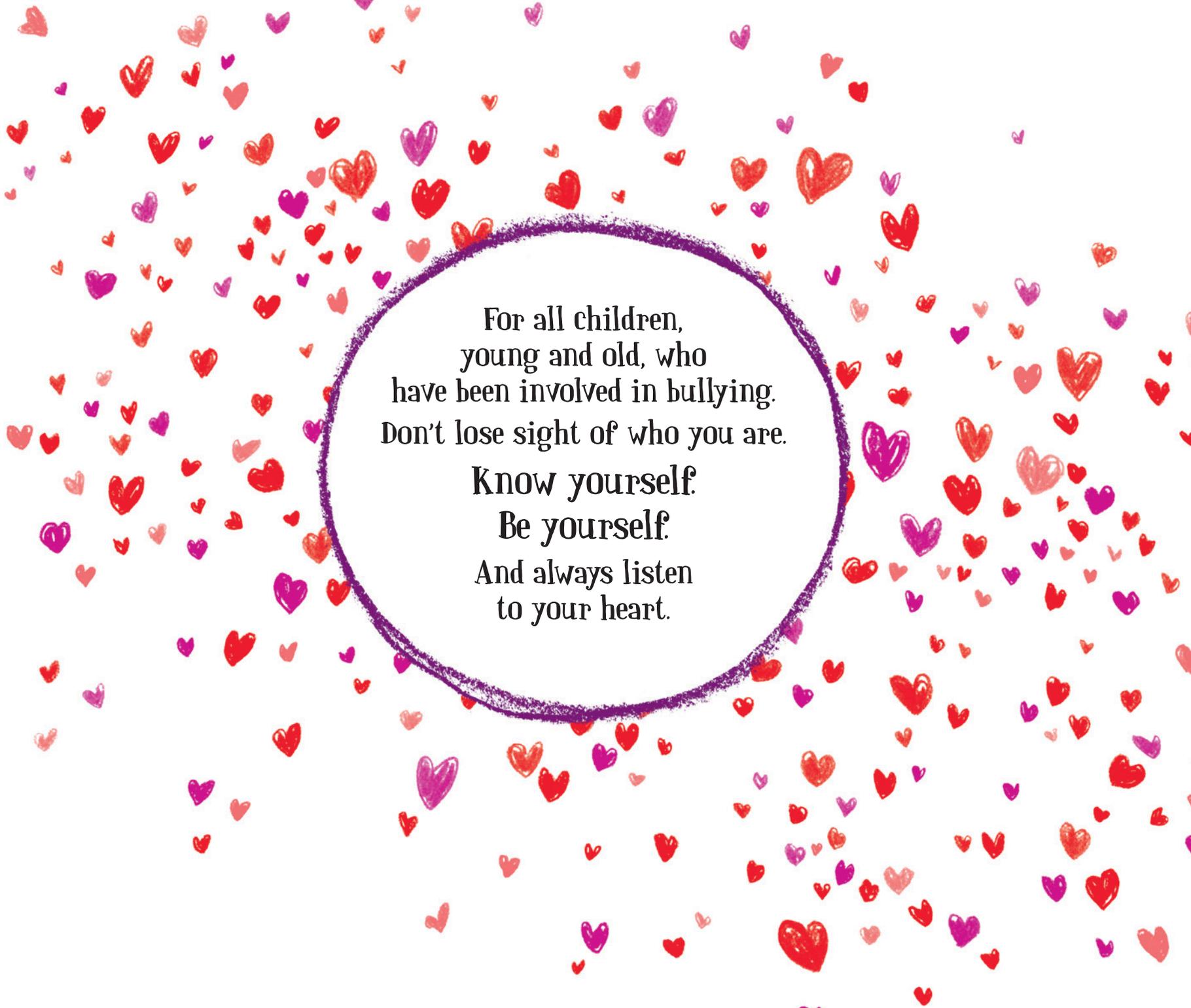
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For all children,
young and old, who
have been involved in bullying.
Don't lose sight of who you are.

Know yourself.
Be yourself.
And always listen
to your heart.



What are you staring at?
I'm not the weird one.
My name is Sam and I'm

TOUGH!

That's Luisa. She's weird.
She dresses weird.

SAM
EMILY
JAYLA
LUIZA
THOMAS



She acts weird.



She talks weird.

"¿Qué pasa,
Luisa?"

"Nada."



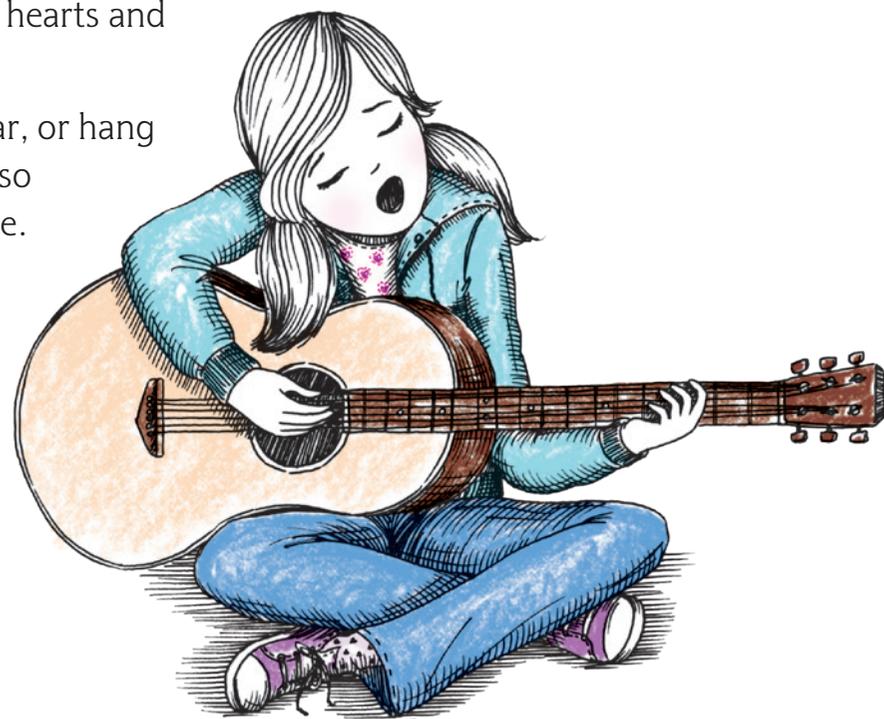
Someone has
to tell her,
so I do.

Kindness Club: Sticking to Caring

I figured no one cared about my feelings, so I chose not to care about others' feelings. But then I found out that people *do* care, and I want to be one of those people. I'm done with being tough and I'm sticking to caring! Want to help me decorate a guitar with stickers?

1. Cut out a large guitar shape from a piece of cardboard. Tape six pieces of string on the cardboard—these are your guitar strings.
2. Cut out heart shapes from a sheet of paper. These are your stickers.
3. In the center of each heart, write words to describe what happens when you stick to caring. *Examples:* I am respectful. I feel happy. I make friends. I'm not lonely.
4. Place tape on the back of your hearts and stick them to your guitar.
5. Pretend to play your new guitar, or hang it in your bedroom. You can also teach a friend how to make one.

Can you think of more activities to do in our Kindness Club? Share them with your classmates and friends. Someone who's kind is *tough* to resist!



A Note to Parents, Teachers, and Other Caring Adults

Every day, millions of children are subjected to bullying in the form of name-calling, threats, insults, belittling, taunting, rumors, and racist slurs—and still more are witnesses to it. Verbal bullying, which can begin as early as preschool, accounts for 70 percent of reported bullying and is often a stepping stone to other types of aggression, including physical, relational, and online bullying. As caring adults, how can we help children feel safe, respected, and confident in who they are? How can we help children who initiate bullying make choices they can feel proud of and end the cycle of violence?

We can start by holding children who bully others accountable for their behavior, while modeling and encouraging positive choices. We can provide kids who are targets of bullying with practical coping tools for positive thinking and confidence building. We can help bystanders

explore safe and effective ways to stand up for those who are being bullied. And through stories such as *Tough!*, we can help children develop awareness and perspective-taking skills to help prevent and change bullying behavior. We can help children like Sam understand that by hurting others they are also hurting themselves, and that kindness breeds kindness. We can explore practical strategies to help children act on what they know is right, while providing a trusting environment to support their efforts.

Reflection Questions for *Tough!*

The story told in *Tough!* illustrates a fictional situation, but it is one that many kids will likely relate to even if their experiences have been different. Following are some questions and activities to encourage reflection and dialogue as you read *Tough!* Referring to the main characters by name will help children make connections: *Sam*

Important: Online bullying (called *cyberbullying*) is a real threat among elementary-age children, given the increased use of smartphones and computers in school and at home. It's also the most difficult type of bullying to stop, because it's less apparent to onlookers. Be sure to include cyberbullying in all of your discussions about bullying with kids.