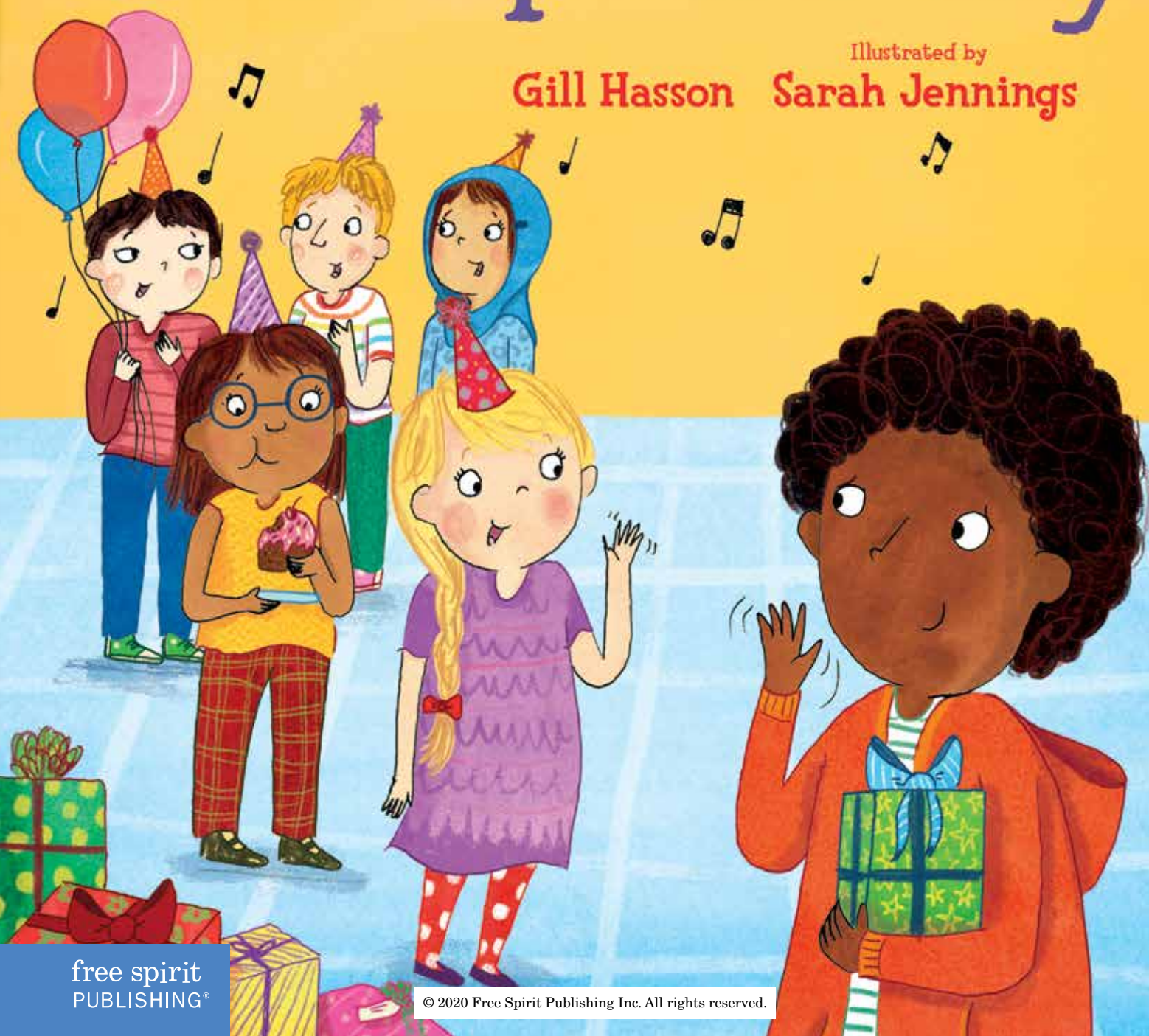


KIDS CAN COPE

Say Hi When You're Shy

Illustrated by
Gill Hasson Sarah Jennings



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Turn the page to read about
ways to feel more confident
with other people.

Feeling shy?



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What does it mean to be shy?

Do you ever get shy? It's not just you!

Everyone feels shy sometimes—even grown-ups.

We feel shy when we're not sure what to say or do around other people. We can feel nervous when we try something new, or until we get used to doing something.

What if I do it wrong and they all laugh at me?



2

Sometimes being shy can also mean we are good at paying attention and thinking things through.



I just want to play here by myself!

3

I'm not sure what to do!



I don't know what to say!

How do you feel when you're shy?

When you're feeling shy, you might get worried or even scared. You might feel embarrassed and uncomfortable.

You might worry about looking silly to other people.

Maybe your face gets hot and your heart starts thumping.

Your legs go all shaky and your stomach feels fluttery.

Sometimes you might feel sad or lonely because you want to join in with other children but your shyness holds you back.

Other times, you might just want to be on your own but worry that this will upset other people or that they won't invite you to join in next time.



Say Hi When You're Shy

We feel shy when we're not sure what to say or do around other people. It might take a little while for you to warm up and feel comfortable in new situations and with new people. And sometimes you might just prefer to be on your own. That's fine! But when you do want to join in and talk to other people, you can learn to be more confident and comfortable. Here are some reminders:

- Ask a grown-up or a friend to help you plan a few simple things you could say in situations where you feel shy. Practice together until it feels easier for you.
- Try inviting a new friend to your home. Make them feel welcome and do some things together that you'll both enjoy.
- Think of an activity you really like doing, and find ways that you could join in with other children who are doing it. Ask a friend if they'd like to go with you.
- When you need to speak up, tell yourself, "I can do this." Take a big breath, look at the other person, and, in a voice the other person can hear, say what you do or don't want.

And remember, you can always start by saying hi!



Activities

- Draw or write about something you feel shy about joining in with.
- Draw your shy face. Then draw your friendly face.
- Kira is worried about feeling shy when she goes to her friend's picnic. What do you think Kira could do to help her feel less worried about it? Write Kira a letter with some ideas about what she can do or say at the picnic.
- Anton is worried about standing up in class next week when it's his turn to do show-and-tell. Write him a letter with an idea for what he could do to feel more prepared and less shy.
- Think of a situation where you often feel shy. Draw a picture of yourself in that situation, looking confident and happy.
- Ask a grown-up what they were shy about when they were a kid. Ask them what happened that helped them feel less shy. Draw a picture or write a story about it.
- Write down some things you can say to yourself to help you have courage when you need to speak up about what you do or don't want.

Notes for teachers, parents, and other adults

It's natural to want the children you care for to feel at ease with others and to have confidence in social situations, so it's also natural to feel frustrated when some children feel shy, are slower to warm up, or get worried about joining in with other children or talking to adults. If you are concerned that a child is very shy, it's important that you avoid labeling that child as shy or nervous, either directly to them or when talking about them to others. Labels can stick and may become self-fulfilling prophecies. If you label a child as shy, you give them permission to stay in their shell, and their anxiety about social situations may grow. Instead, give them other ways to think about themselves. You could say, for example, "It's fine if it takes a little while for you to feel comfortable with new people." "You like to listen to others and watch what's happening first before you join in." "It's good that you talk easily with people you know well. People like Principal Navarro and . . ." Also try not to step in too much when a child is feeling shy. Resist, for example, the urge to respond to a question another adult asks the child; instead, encourage the child to look at the adult and answer the question themselves.

Children also benefit from knowing effective techniques to help them take control of their feelings and worries. *Say Hi When You're Shy* explains ways children can cope with feeling shy. You can help them learn and practice some of these strategies. For example, you could help a child rehearse ahead of time for a situation that makes them nervous, like going to a birthday party or meeting new people. You can also help them come up with ideas for activities they'd feel at ease with doing with other children.

Although children can read this book by themselves, it will be more helpful if you read it together. You could talk about situations that you find daunting and how you manage them. For example, "Sometimes I feel worried about speaking up at a meeting, but then I take a deep breath and say something and I feel good about sharing my thoughts." As you read the book, ask children questions such as: "Have you felt like that?" "What do you think of that idea?" "How could that work for you?" "How do you think the people in this picture are feeling?"

After reading the book and helping children identify some strategies that could work for them, give them the opportunity to manage situations at their own pace and with your support. With time, patience, and encouragement from you, children can learn to cope with feeling shy and learn to be more confident around others. However, if their shyness, worries, and fears are frequently causing them distress and leading them to avoid everyday situations and miss out, it's worth seeking more advice. Reach out to a healthcare provider, a counselor, or another expert and ask for help.