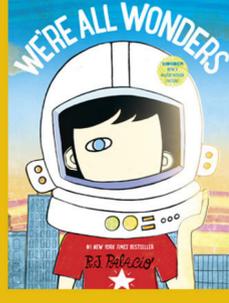
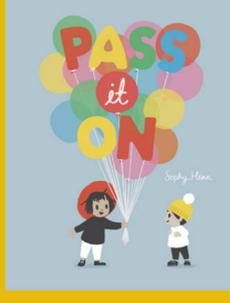
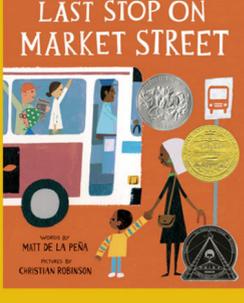
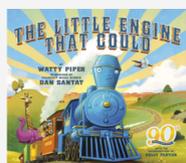


8 Picture Books That Inspire a Positive Outlook

by Denise Schipani



We tend to peg the youngest kids as naturally sunny beings. After all, and barring a few sad examples, most children aren't carrying the weight of the world on their narrow shoulders; that's our job. Yet even the happiest and most hopeful of kids — even your own glass-overflowing, smile-monster of a son or daughter — will sometimes feel less than optimistic. Maybe your own adult worries trickled down to them. Maybe the hamster or goldfish met an untimely end. Or maybe something even more crushing tilted your child's mood and world view. Books to the rescue! These eight picture books can help your child find the rainbow's end again, and reinforce the sense that resilience resides within, always.



The Little Engine That Could

by Watty Piper, illustrated by Dan Santat

No list of books about the pluckiness of the human (or, okay, train) spirit and the power of optimism could possibly be complete without this classic in the mix. We don't have to tell you the story, but maybe there's a tot in your life who needs a reminder that, often, the power we need to overcome an obstacle is right there inside us all along. If you *think* you can? Well, you're half-way there.



Ish

by Peter H. Reynolds

No one can stop Ramon from drawing. With anything. On anything. Creating is his greatest joy. That is, until a stray negative comment from his brother makes him throw in the pencil and quit. It takes hearing unexpected wisdom from his little sister, Marisol, to teach Ramon that being perfect has nothing to do with the pure positive energy that flows from creativity.



Last Stop on Market Street

by Matt de la Peña, illustrated by Christian Robinson

De la Peña piled up an impressive stack of awards for this, his first children's book (a Newbery Medal, a Caldecott Honor, and more) and it's no wonder. *Last Stop on Market Street* is the story of CJ, who rides the city bus with his grandma and wonders aloud why they don't have a car, why he has no iPod, and why their stop isn't in the pretty part of town. Rather than be embarrassed or make excuses, CJ's grandmother helps him see the beauty in their routine and the true wealth of a life full of love.



Because Amelia Smiled

by David Ezra Stein

Remember when a certain mouse was given a cookie? It set off a delightful chain of events. In this charmer, that concept is applied to a smile. Amelia is a little girl whose infectious grin inspires a domino effect of greater and grander outcomes. A grandmother sees the smile and is moved to send cookies to her grandkids in Mexico. Someone who witnesses that sweet gesture gets an idea for his ballet troupe in England ... and so on, until that one beaming smile shines all around the globe.



We're All Wonders

by R. J. Palacio

Older readers and their parents know Auggie Pullman, the hero of the smash bestseller *Wonder*. Now Palacio has written and illustrated a picture book about Auggie — a normal boy on the inside, who looks very different on the outside — for young readers. The original story inspired readers to choose kindness, and what could be more positive than that?



Extraordinary Jane

by Hannah E. Harrison

Got a kid who maybe feels like she's the least interesting, talented, or special member of the family? Then get that child acquainted with this book, stat. Jane is a regular dog — who just happens to be part of a family of spectacular dogs. Spectacular circus dogs. What's so special about *her*? Turns out, the ordinary is really quite extraordinary.



Pass It On

by Sophy Henn

When you feel happy, that's great, right? But how much better is it to share the good feelings you have? Every kid is duly taught the importance of sharing toys or cookies. But what about sharing a laugh, so someone who's feeling a little less sunny has a reason to smile? And unlike toys or cookies, good feelings only multiply when they're passed along. The simple message is sunnily presented in this bright and happy tale.



Spin

by Rebecca Janni, illustrated by George Ermos

With vivid artwork and simple text, this brand-new book is the simple story of one bike ride. That's it: a ride. You start out pedaling, and you *just keep going*, even when the hills get a bit steep and the going gets a bit tough. Parents will get the pun on "spin": You can re-frame any bad day into something positive if you just look at in a different way.

Denise Schipani

Denise Schipani would always rather be reading, but if she must put down the book, she's a writer, editor, author, blogger, and mother to two tween boys, who don't seem quite as obsessed with Laura Ingalls Wilder as their mom. She's written for *The New York Times*, *Better Homes & Gardens*, *Working Mother*, *Parents*, and many others. Her book, *Mean Moms Rule*, is also the title of her popular [parenting blog](#).