

Do you know kids who deal with loneliness, bullies, illness, or differentness?

Do you know kids who need help understanding how someone else feels?



“This book celebrates difference and inclusion in an accessible, friendly way. It is a perfect way to teach advocacy and empathy to kids and adults alike.”

– Cindy Lafon, Family Liaison,
Parents Reaching Out, Albuquerque

“Every dog wants to be tough—big, strong, fearless—but in this illustrated debut picture book, Jimmy finds toughness on the inside.

“Jimmy is a shelter dog. Not only has he never known the love of a family, but he has also never known what it is to run and play. He was born with only three legs, so the people at the shelter have always regarded him as ‘special’ and kept him apart from the other dogs for his own safety....

“... There are big ideas here, too, including what it means to be special and what it means to be tough and how there are good and bad things about both....

“... A great classroom book full of lessons about language and life.”

-Kirkus Reviews

“A great read aloud.”

2nd graders at Helen Cordero E.S. on what they learned from reading “Jimmy.”



- When you stick up for your friend, it makes your friend better.
- Stand up for people.
- Don't be mean to your little brother or sister.
- When Arrow first saw Jimmy, he thought that he was not fast and he was weird, but once Arrow got to know him better, he did not think he was weird any more.
- When friends stick up for you it makes you feel better.
- That a dog can be born with three legs and you can lose an eye and you should look before you leap.
- Don't get too close to a snake.
- You can do something.

(see other side)

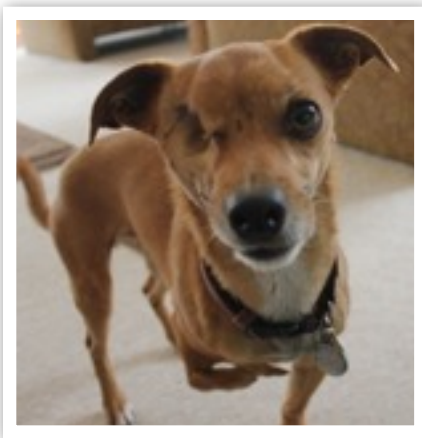
Visit toughestdogever.com to order the book (also available on Amazon).

Visit toughestdogever.com to get ideas about using “Jimmy” to start conversations or prompt writing.

Email toughestdog@gmail.com to book the author for a school visit.

“... I work with young at-risk children and I do a lot of animal rescue, so this little book rings all my bells. Jimmy teaches children and grown-ups that everyone ... deserves a safe and loving home, and that if you have that as the backdrop for your life you can overcome enormous challenges. ... I intend to use it extensively with my clients (kids) and give it as a gift to young and old.”

– Nancy Ferguson, children’s therapist, Dallas



based on the real dog

**It’s not the way you look that makes life good,
but the way you feel when you belong.**

“A children’s book needs a positive tone, especially when it deals with loneliness, being different, the challenge of an illness, and dealing with bullies,” says Sally Hill Mills, the book’s author. “I not only wanted kids to understand how runty, three-legged Jimmy feels as he’s faced with some of life’s hardest challenges, I wanted them to laugh. I wanted them to experience, along with Jimmy, the joy of running for the first time. And the relief that comes when someone understands your fears and accepts you despite your flaws.”

Jimmy, aka Djembe, belongs to Sally, a former APS classroom teacher. She now teaches creative writing to elementary school children. She uses the book to launch kids into writing their own stories: about their pets, their pesky siblings, about their challenges, and about their heroes. “When I tell them I wrote this story about my dog, they realize they have stories from their own lives they could tell.

Sally will be happy to visit your school -- with or without her dog -- to read the book, or get kids writing in a one-day or longer writer’s workshop.