



Reaching IN...Reaching OUT (RIRO)

Children's Storybooks that Promote Resilience through Cultural Competence

Most of these books are available in public libraries or through online booksellers.

Letters in parentheses, after the author's name, indicate which of the seven resiliency abilities are highlighted in the book.

Key: (ER) = emotional regulation
(IC) = impulse control
(CA) = analyzing cause of a problem
(SE) = self-efficacy
(E) = empathy
(O) = optimism
(RO) = reaching out

Andrew, J.

Very Last First Time (ER) (SE) (RO)

Douglas & McIntyre Ltd., 1985

A young Inuit girl keeps her head about her as she accomplishes her first solo mussel gathering walk on the ocean floor during low tide.

Angelou, M.

My Painted House, My Friendly Chicken and Me. (SE) (RO)

Crown Publishers, 1994

A young girl named Thandi, (which means "hope"), proudly tells about daily life in South Africa's Ndebele tribe.

Ashley, B.

Cleversticks (E) (SE) (RO)

Harper Collins, 1992

Ling Sung feels clumsy and downhearted when he can't manage to print his name, tie his shoes and button his jacket properly like other children in his kindergarten class. Then, inadvertently Ling Sung experiences his own competence when he demonstrates his dexterity by using two paint brushes as chopsticks during snack time.

Baylor, B.

The Table Where Rich People Sit (O) (E) (RO)

Aladdin Paperbacks, 1998

“Mountain –girl” is resentful that her family doesn’t have enough money to live in a fancy house and buy many things. But with her parent’s encouragement, she recognizes the value of the beautiful nature surrounding her simple home and sees that there are many ways to be rich.

Beeler, S. B.

Throw Your Tooth from the Roof: Tooth Traditions from Around the World (O)

Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998

Children from around the world tell what happens when they lose a tooth.

Binch, C.

Silver Shoes (IC) (O) (SE)

Frances Lincoln Children’s Books, 2005

Molly longs to wear a pair of silver dance shoes like all the other girls in her new dance class. Mom says the shoes are expensive and she must see how she likes the class first. Molly finds that waiting for the shoes isn’t that hard, if she concentrates instead on dancing, dancing, dancing! Before she knows it Molly has her own silver shoes and an enhanced belief in her abilities.

Collier, B.

Uptown (E)

Henry Holt & Company, 2000

A young boy takes the reader on a tour of Harlem, where they see the city through his eyes – the arts, sport, architecture and community people.

Cowan-Fletcher, J.

Mamma Zooms (E) (O)

Scholastic, 1993

Mamma’s wheel chair is a “zoom machine” transporting parent and child together through their active day.

Coy, J.

Strong to the Hoop (ER) (SE) (RO)

Lee & Low Books, Inc., 1999

An exciting story of a young boy who overcomes his self-doubt and rises to the occasion by taking a sudden opportunity to join the older boys on the basket ball court.

Cunnane, K

For You are a Kenyan Child (E)

Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2006

A young Kalenjin boy is suppose to be looking after his grandfather's cows, but it is so easy to get distracted by the sights, sounds and people in his small village... A glossary is included to help the reader pronounce the Swahili words used in the story.

Dennis Wyeth, S.

Something Beautiful (O)

Dragonfly Books, 1998

Despite the conditions of despair so evident in her neighbourhood, a young girl actively searches for "something beautiful" and finds it abundant in the hearts and actions of the community people.

Eyvindson, P.

The Yesterday Stone (E) (O) (RO)

Pemmican Publications Inc., 1992

Anna spends special times with her grandmother using the elder's "yesterday stone," an ordinary looking pebble that, when rubbed to a high polish, reveals stories of the past and visions for the future. When Anna finds her very own "yesterday stone", she must decide if she can trust her good friend Molly to *believe* with her so they can enjoy the stone's story telling powers together.

Eyvindson, P.

Kyle's Bath (CA) (SE)

Pemmican Publications Inc., 2000

One day Kyle forgoes his favorite activities - playing in the mud, looking for frogs and slurping his spaghetti noodles - believing he can avoid his dreaded evening bath if he "stays clean as a whistle ." But Mom interprets this change in behaviour as an indicator that he is not well and decides he'll feel better if he soaks in a nice warm bath. The next day, Kyle jumps full-heartedly into the messy pleasures of his day, figuring if he has to take a bath each night, he may as well make it worthwhile.

Eyvindson, P.

Red Parka Mary (E) (RO)

Pemmican Publications Inc., 1996

A young boy overcomes his unfounded fear of an elderly neighbour and they develop a relationship that allows each of them to benefit from the generosity of the other.

Gallant, L.

Bread and Cheese (IC) (E) (O) (RO)

L.L. Gallant, 2003

The author wrote this story in response to her daughter's query, "What was it like growing up on the reserve?" The story, told from the perspective of six-year-old Lorrie, describes the excitement and satisfaction shared by community at the annual homecoming that draws Six Nations people from near and far to celebrate their heritage.

Gilmore, R.

A Screaming Kind of Day (ER) (E)

Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1999

Poetically written glimpse into the rich inner world of a young, nature-loving girl, with a hearing impairment.

Grimes, N.

Welcome Precious (O)

Orchard Books, Scholastic, 2006

A world full of sensory delights awaits a much wanted and loved new born child.

Hamanaka, S.

All the Colors of the Earth (E) (O)

Morrow Junior Books, 1994

Beautifully illustrated and poetically written – a celebration of ethnic diversity.

Havill, J.

Jamaica and Brianna (ER) (CA) (E) (RO)

Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993

Jamaica, a young girl who has to wear her brother's old winter boots, feels envious of her friend's beautiful new pink ones. When Jamaica gets new cowboy boots, a misunderstanding between the two girls is resolved as the friends talk about what caused the falling out.

Hoberman, M.A.

And to Think We Thought That We'd Never Be Friends (E) (O) (RO)

Crown Publishers Inc. 1999

A brother and two sisters discover how quickly an argument can end when you are willing to let go of your complaint and appreciate another's idea. They carry this viewpoint through with a problem in the neighbourhood and eventually spread the message around the world.

Hooks, B.

Skin Again (E) (O)

Hyperion Books for Children, 2004

Skin is just a covering - it's who we are inside that really matters.

Joose, B.M.

Papa, Do You Love Me? (E) (O)

Scholastic, 2005

A child who lives on the Serengeti Plains finds out how much his father loves him.

Khan, R.

Ruler of the Courtyard (ER) (CA) (SE)

Penguin Group, 2003

Set in Pakistan, the story tells of a young girl who harnesses her courage and jubilantly conquers her fear of the courtyard animals.

Lin, G.

The Ugly Vegetables (ER) (CA) (E) (RO)

Charlesbridge, 1999

A young girl of Chinese descent hates that her family's garden is full of vegetables, instead of the beautiful flowers in the neighbouring gardens. Her perspective changes when the aroma from her mom's vegetable soup is so enticing that the neighbours drop by with bouquets of flowers in exchange for a taste.

Loewen, I.

My Kokum Called Today (O) (SE)

Pemmican Publications Inc., 1993

A young girl tells of her special relationship with her Kokum (grandmother) and anticipates a wonderful time with family and friends when she and her mother travel to attend the round dance at her Kokum's reserve.

McCain, B.R.

Grandmother's Dreamcatcher (ER) (O) (SE) (RO)

Albert Whitman & Company, 1998

Kimmy is nervous about being without her parents for a week while they look for a new place to live, but will be staying with her grandmother while they are gone. Grandmother helps Kimmy make a dreamcatcher to conquer her fears and bring her sweet dreams.

Monk, I.

Hope (E) (O) (RO)

Carolrhoda Books, 1999

A young girl feels proud of her biracial heritage when her aunt tells her the story of how she got her name.

Munsch, R.

Zoom (SE) (O)

Scholastic, 2003

Lauretta is in trouble when she drives her new wheel chair so fast that the police give her a one hundred dollar speeding ticket. However, the ticket is forgotten when she zooms her injured brother to the hospital when the family car won't start.

Newman, L.

Heather Has Two Mommies (E) (O)

Alyson Publications, 2000

A sensitive daycare provider validates each child's unique family situation.

Parry Heide F. & Heide Gilliland, J.

The Day of Ahmed's Secret (IC) (SE)

Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1990

A young boy has a wonderful secret to tell his family, but must wait until he has completed his work for the day. The reader gets a glimpse of Ahmed's life as they travel with him through the busy Cairo city streets and witness his conversations with community people.

Richardson, J., & Parnell, P.

And Tango Makes Three (E) (O) (RO)

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2005

A true story of two male penguins in New York's Central Park zoo who become a couple and with the help of their zoo keeper, hatch and raise a baby named Tango. Tango becomes the first penguin in the zoo to have two daddies.

Rice, L.

Because Brian Hugged His Mother (CA) (E) (RO)

Dawn Publications, 1999

Expressing appreciation and showing kindness goes a long way to making the world a better place.

Seskin, S., & Shamblin, A.

A Chance to Shine (SE) (E) (O) (RO)

Tricycle Press, 2006

A young boy describes how he sees the world differently when he has the opportunity to witness the life changing effects kindness and a "chance to shine" have on a homeless person.

Settingington, K.

Mom and Mum are Getting Married (ER) (CA) (SE)

Second Story Press, 2004

A young girl demonstrates that she can do some creative problem solving and carry out her duties as a flower girl when her Mom and Mum celebrate their love with a formal wedding ceremony.

Simon, N.

Why Am I Different? (E) (SE)

Albert Whitman & Company, 1976

Explores how children feel as they compare themselves to others, note the differences, and feel good about accepting themselves for who they are.

Skutch, R.

Who's in a Family? (E)

Tricycle Press, 1995

Different human and animal family compositions are explored and valued.

Willhoite, M.

Daddy's Roommate (E) (O)

Alyson Publications, 1990

A young boy describes the regular life activities and feelings of nurturance he experiences during his visits with his gay father and his partner.

Youme, A

Haitian Story of Hope: SéLavi – That is Life: (O) (SE) (RO)

Cinco Puntos Press, 2004

The real life experience of homeless children in Haiti who work together, with the help of many people, to build a home for orphan children in Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital.

Zolotow, C.

Do You Know What I'll Do? (E) (O)

Harper Collins, 2000

A young girl tells her smaller brother how she will keep him in mind with every adventure she takes.