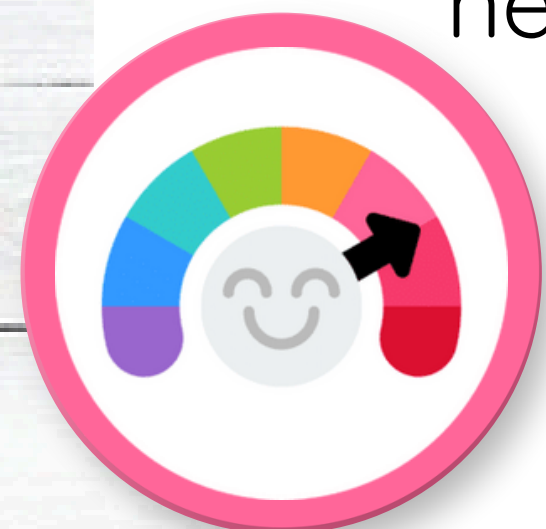


# SOCIAL STORY TO SUPPORT FRIENDSHIP & SOCIAL SKILLS

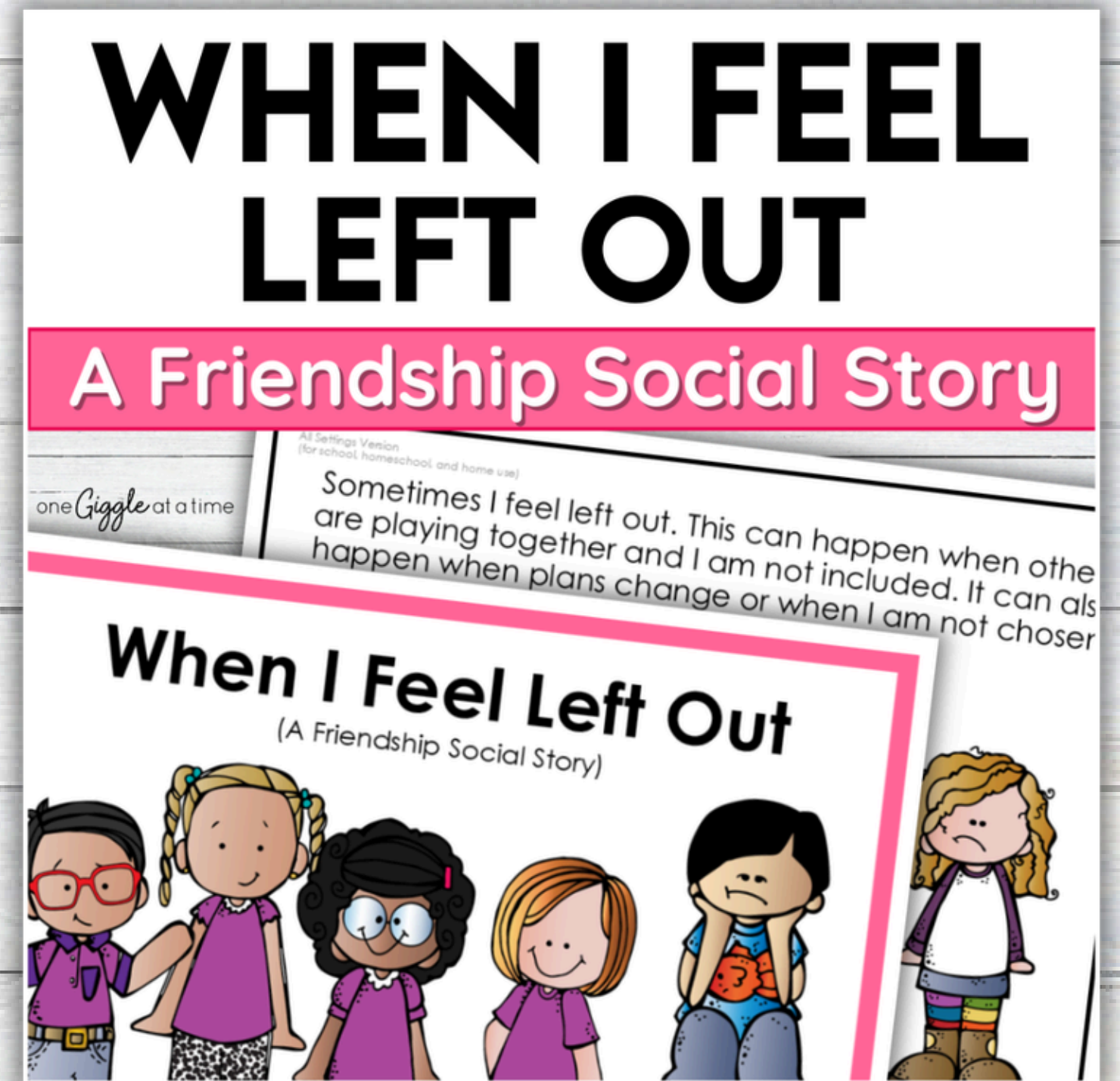
Feeling left out can be confusing and painful for children.

This social story helps children understand why feeling left out happens, how to make sense of their feelings, and what they can do next in a calm, respectful way.

**KEEP SCROLLING TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT'S INSIDE THIS RESOURCE!**



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# WHAT'S INSIDE THIS RESOURCE

**When I Feel Left Out**  
(A Friendship Social Story)



**Child-friendly social story**

All Settings Version  
(For school, homeschool, and home use)

Feeling left out happens to everyone sometimes. It does not mean no one likes me. It does not mean I did something wrong.



**Clear, supportive language**

All Settings Version  
(For school, homeschool, and home use)

Sometimes I feel left out. This can happen when others are playing together and I am not included. It can also happen when plans change or when I am not chosen.



**Real-life friendship situations**

All Settings Version  
(For school, homeschool, and home use)

Feeling left out feels hard. I can be kind to myself when I feel this way. I can keep trying and remember that feelings change. I am learning how to handle hard moments.



**Repair-focused problem solving**

All Settings Version  
(For school, homeschool, and home use)

I can use calm words to share how I feel. I might say, "I feel left out." I might say, "Can I play too?" Using my words helps others understand me.



**Clear examples of what to say**

All Settings Version  
(For school, homeschool, and home use)

When I feel left out, I might feel sad or lonely. I might feel mad, confused, or quiet. Those feelings can feel heavy in my body.



**Emotional validation throughout**

**Story-Specific Adult Notes**  
When I Feel Left Out  
Friendship SEL Kit

page 1

These notes are designed to support adults in using the story *When I Feel Left Out* thoughtfully and effectively. They are meant to be read by adults only and are not read aloud to children.

**Purpose of This Story**  
This story helps children recognize and cope with feelings of loneliness or exclusion without assuming blame or intent.

**When to Use This Story**  
This story is especially helpful when:  
• A child expresses sadness or loneliness around  
• A child watches others play and feels unsure  
• Feelings of exclusion come up repeatedly  
• Adults notice a child withdrawing quietly during play  
This story works well during calm moments, as a

**How to Introduce the Story**  
Introduce this story gently and without assumptions.  
Helpful language may include:  
• "This is a story about a feeling many kids have."  
• "This story helps us understand what we can do."  
• "Let's read this together and see what it reminds us of."  
The goal is validation and reassurance, not fixing.

**What This Story is Teaching**  
This story supports:  
• Feeling left out  
• Feeling sad  
• Feelings of exclusion  
• There are many reasons for feeling left out.  
The focus is on understanding the feeling and using calm words to share it.

**Story-Specific Adult Notes**  
When I Feel Left Out  
Friendship SEL Kit

**How Adults Can Support the Skill**  
While using this story, adults can:  
• Name and validate the feeling before offering suggestions  
• Allow space for quiet reflection or comfort  
• Avoid immediately encouraging joining or problem-solving  
• Check in without pressure or urgency  
Support connection to feelings before action.

**Connection to Skill Building**  
This story supports ongoing skill development in:  
• Emotional awareness  
• Self-compassion  
• Coping with social disappointment  
• Building resilience  
• Asking for connection when ready  
Repeated exposure helps children feel less alone with this feeling.

**Gentle Reflection Prompts**

Pre-K-K Simplified Version  
(For school, homeschool, and home use)

Sometimes I feel left out. That can make me feel sad or confused. Those feelings are okay.








**Simplified PreK-K version included**

Easy to use across school, home, and counseling settings

# HELPS CHILDREN NAVIGATE FEELING LEFT OUT

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-  Feeling hurt when others don't choose them
-  Assuming exclusion is on purpose
-  Big emotional reactions to social disappointment
-  Not knowing what to say or do next
-  Feeling unsure if friendships are still okay

All Settings Version  
(for school, homeschool, and home use)

Sometimes I feel left out. This can happen when others are playing together and I am not included. It can also happen when plans change or when I am not chosen.



All Settings Version  
(for school, homeschool, and home use)

There are some things I can do when I am feeling left out. I can take a breath and slow my body down. I can choose something else to do or play with someone new. I can ask an adult for help if I need it.



This story focuses on understanding, coping, and reassurance- not blame.

# WAYS TO USE THIS SOCIAL STORY

Read during calm moments

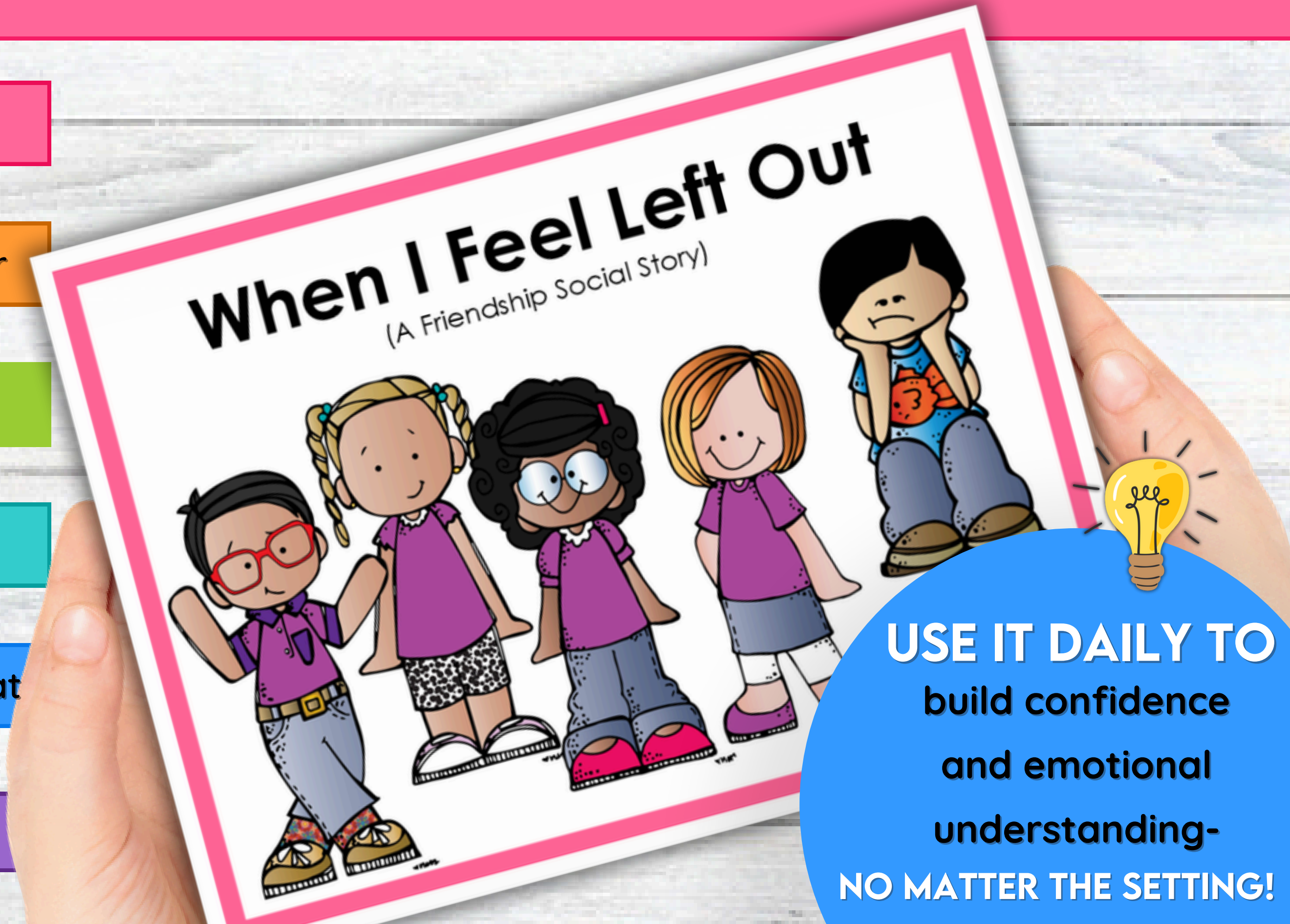
Use after social challenges occur

Support counseling sessions

Share with families for home use

Revisit as similar situations repeat

Include in SEL lessons

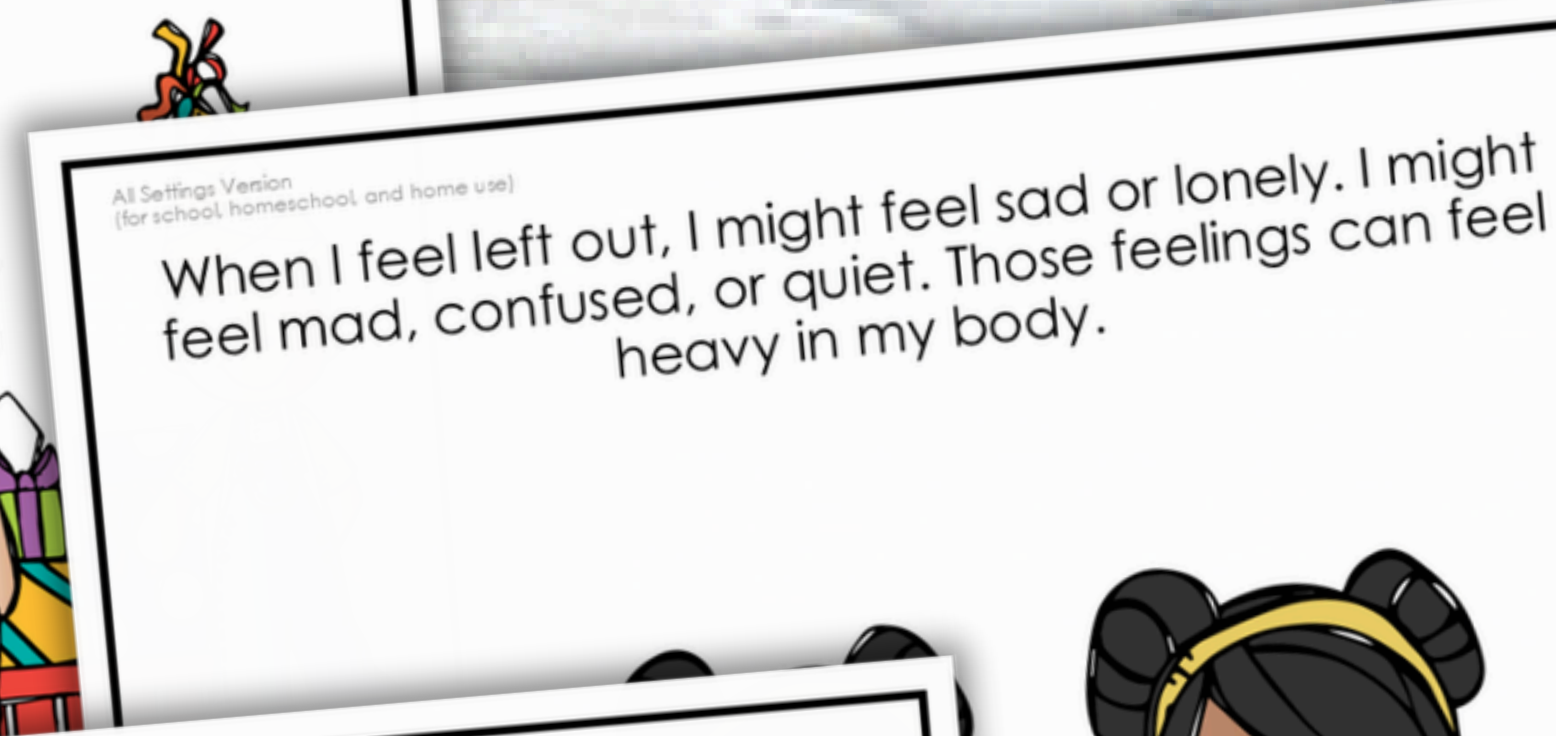
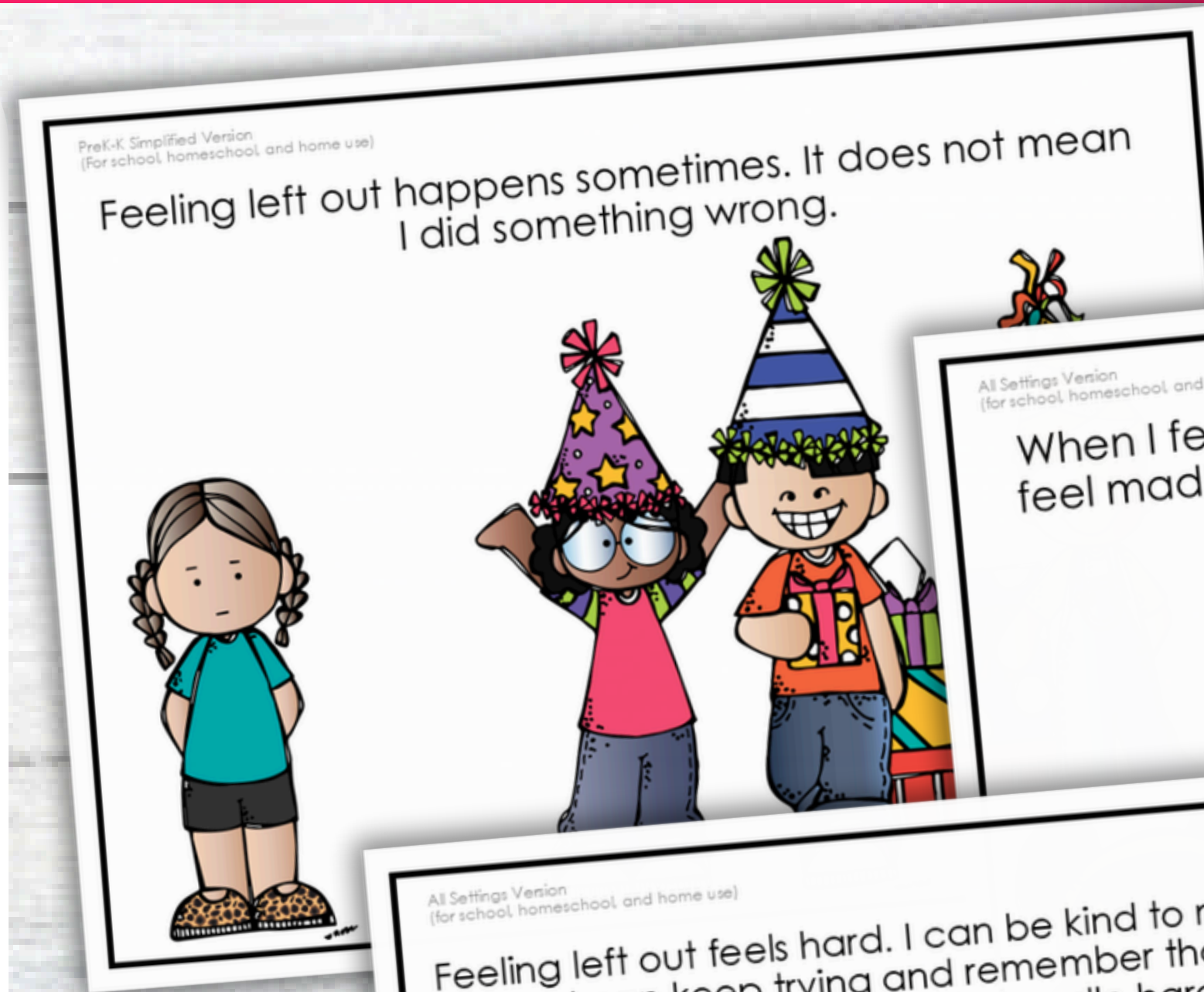


**USE IT DAILY TO  
build confidence  
and emotional  
understanding-  
NO MATTER THE SETTING!**

# SKILLS THIS STORY SUPPORTS



- Identifying & Naming Feelings
- Perspective-taking
- Flexible thinking
- Understanding Social Situations
- Coping with disappointment
- Emotional Regulation
- Friendship Repair



# A CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT'S INCLUDED

Children often feel rejected and don't know how to respond.

Read proactively before recess, playdates, or group work.

Normalize feelings while teaching respectful, realistic responses.

All Settings Version  
(for school, homeschool, and home use)

Sometimes I want to play with someone, but they say no. Sometimes they choose to play with someone else or play by themselves. This can happen during recess, play time, or at home.



Can I play with you?

No


All Settings Version  
(for school, homeschool, and home use)

Sometimes friends don't want to play the same game. A friend might say no because they want to play something different, because they are already playing, or because they want some space. This can happen with friends. It does not mean my friend doesn't like me anymore.



All Settings Version  
(for school, homeschool, and home use)

I can use calm words to share how I feel or to ask a question. I might say, "Can I play with you later?" I might say, "That made me feel sad." Or I might say, "Okay, I will find something else to do." Using calm words helps people understand me.



Can I play with you later?

Yes. I just want to finish this picture first.

one Giggle at a time

Why Social Stories Work  
Research-Informed, Child-Centered Tool for Social & Emotional Growth

Social stories are a powerful and practical tool for supporting children's social and emotional development and predictable explanations of social situations, routines, and expectations that children can manage.

After years of using social stories, I have seen a significant increase in children's social understanding, and confidence is...

Story-Specific Adult Notes  
When Someone Won't Play With Me  
Friendship SEL Kit

These notes are designed to support adults in using the story When Someone Won't Play With Me thoughtfully and effectively. They are not to be read by adults only and are not read aloud to children.

How to Use This Story  
This story helps children understand and cope with moments of exclusion. It is to validate hurt feelings, reduce self-blame, and provide strategies for resolving the situation. It is not a tool for forcing inclusion or quick resolution.

When to Use This Story  
This story is especially helpful when:  
- A child feels left out during play or free time.  
- A peer says "no" to playing together.  
- Hurt feelings arise at recess, center time, or during playdates.

How to Introduce the Story  
Introduce this story in a calm, quiet setting. Share the story with the child and discuss the feelings and actions. Encourage the child to share their own experiences and ideas.

How the Story Supports the Skill  
This story supports the skill of using calm words to share feelings and ask questions. It helps children understand that being rejected does not mean they are not liked, and it provides strategies for resolving the situation.

How to Support the Skill  
Adults can support the skill by:  
- Validating the child's feelings.  
- Offering suggestions for alternative activities.  
- Encouraging the child to use calm words to share feelings and ask questions.  
- Encouraging the child to find alternative activities unless safety is a concern.  
- Encouraging the child to use problem-solving skills.

How to Build Confidence in Handling Situations  
This story helps children build confidence in handling situations by providing them with strategies for resolving the situation. It also helps children understand that being rejected does not mean they are not liked, and it provides strategies for resolving the situation.

How to Encourage the Child to Use Calm Words  
Encourage the child to use calm words to share feelings and ask questions. Encourage the child to use the strategies provided in the story to resolve the situation.

How to Encourage the Child to Find Alternative Activities  
Encourage the child to find alternative activities when they are rejected. Encourage the child to use the strategies provided in the story to resolve the situation.

How to Encourage the Child to Use Problem-Solving Skills  
Encourage the child to use problem-solving skills when they are rejected. Encourage the child to use the strategies provided in the story to resolve the situation.

# DESIGNED TO MEET DIFFERENT NEEDS

## CHOOSE WHAT FITS YOUR CHILD, SETTING & GOALS

### Clear guidance for flexible use in any setting

This social story includes **adult-facing guidance** to help you use it confidently in different environments.

You'll find **story-specific notes** that explain:

- when to introduce the story
- how to read it (proactively vs. reactively)
- what skill the story is building
- how to support follow-up conversations

**These notes are written to be supportive—not prescriptive.**

### School & Classroom Use

- Read aloud during morning meeting, SEL time, or small groups
- Use before predictable problem times (recess, centers, group work)
- Revisit as a neutral support—not a consequence

### Home & Homeschool Use

- Read together during calm moments
- Use the language from the story to support real-life situations
- Re-read as often as needed to build understanding over time

### Counseling & Therapeutic Settings

- Use as a conversation starter or reflection tool
- Pair with regulation strategies or role-play
- Support repair and emotional processing without shame

You do NOT need to use every note or page.



oneGiggle at a time

### BONUS

A standard version for elementary-age children & a simplified PreK-K version are both included. Adults can choose the version that best fits the child's developmental level.

# SUPPORT FRIENDSHIP SKILLS WITH CONFIDENCE

## Part of a Larger Friendship Collection

This social story is part of a growing Friendship SEL series designed to help children navigate real-life social challenges with empathy and confidence.

Use it on its own — or pair it with other stories for deeper skill building.

**FRIENDSHIP SEL KIT**  
Social Stories + SEL Tools for Building & Repairing Friendships

includes **13** social stories + SEL toolkit

**FRIENDSHIP REPAIR MINI BUNDLE**  
Friendship Social Stories for Apologies & Repair  
4 includes social stories

**COOPERATION & FLEXIBILITY MINI BUNDLE**  
Friendship Social Stories for Exclusion & Change  
3 includes social stories

**FEELING LEFT OUT MINI BUNDLE**  
Friendship Social Stories for Exclusion & Change  
4 includes social stories

**BIG FEELINGS & REACTIONS MINI BUNDLE**  
Friendship Social Stories for Managing Big Emotions  
3 includes social stories

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When I Don't Agree With My Friend  
When I Hurt a Friend's Feelings  
When Someone Won't Play With Me  
When I Feel Left Out  
When A Friendship Changes  
When a Friend is Mad at Me  
When Someone Won't Play With Me  
When I Don't Agree With My Friend  
When I Hurt a Friend's Feelings  
When Someone Won't Play With Me

My Body Clues  
My body gives me clues. I might notice...  
loud or quiet voice  
fast or slow breathing  
tight or relaxed muscles  
fast or slow heart

Ways I Can Calm My Body  
When my...  
When my...  
When my...

Feelings Are Messages  
Feelings tell me what is happening inside me  
happy  
sad  
silly  
mad  
excited  
embarrassed

# ABOUT ONE GIGGLE AT A TIME



Diane Romo, creator of One Giggle At A Time, is a veteran first-grade teacher, children's book author, and professional development presenter. Since 2014, her resources have helped teachers and students worldwide create fun, positive classroom communities.



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*one giggle at a time is a passionate supporter of:*

- ♥ Helping teachers create classroom communities that foster positive relationships.
- ♥ Helping students unlock their potential for greatness.
- ♥ Helping parents provide support for young learners to set them up for success.
- ♥ Making learning FUN!

*one Giggle at a time*



social emotional learning



classroom community



parent/family connection



classroom management



teaching ideas



seasonal activities