

FAMILY MEDIA/BOOKS

Building Bridges: The Best Kids Books About the Power of Community

10+ books for kids about how community makes us stronger

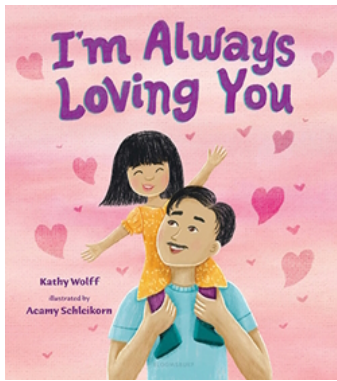
BY GEMMA ALEXANDER (/AUTHOR/GEMMA-ALEXANDER) |

PUBLISHED ON: JANUARY 27, 2025



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No one is an island. Belonging and social community are basic human needs no matter how old you are. Our communities provide us with both practical support and emotional well-being. As society becomes increasingly fragmented, it's more important than ever to teach our kids that community is not about defining in-groups and out-groups; it's about understanding that people are meant to care for each other. Here are a few new books that show the ways our communities make us stronger.



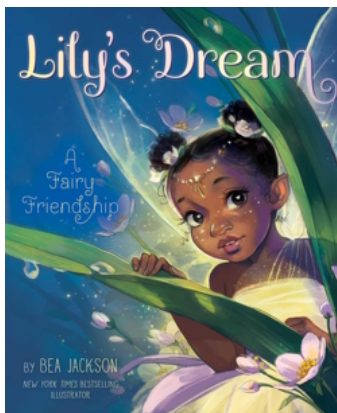
“I’m Always Loving You” by Kathy Wolff is about community on a scale very small children can understand, celebrating the unconditional love of a caregiver for a child in sweet rhymes. \$18.99, ages 3–6.

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“Eli and the Uncles” by Jehan Madhani spends a magical day with Eli as he visits his eight uncles, each with an outsize personality and unique beard. At the end of the day, Eli bids each one good night in a warm, hairy, bedtime countdown. \$18.99, ages 3–7.

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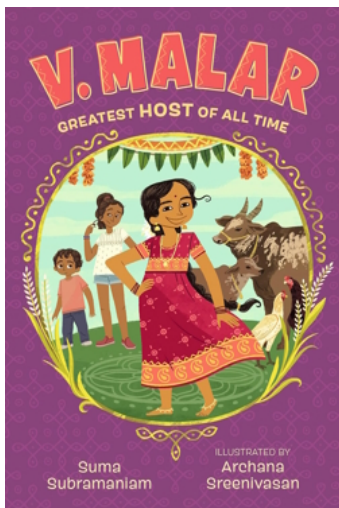
“Lily’s Dream: A Fairy Friendship” by Bea Jackson is a beautifully illustrated picture book about a flightless fairy who finds her own special magic through friendship with a human child. \$18.99, ages 4–8.

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“Alana’s Cupcake Garden” by Coco Simon is the fourth book in the “Cupcake Diaries: The New Batch” series. In this one, Alana Wilson wants to save her grandma’s flower shop, but she’ll have to rely on her own community, uniting her new friends with those from her old school to accomplish it together. \$6.99, ages 5–9.

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“V. Malar: Greatest Host of All Time” by local author Suma Subramaniam gives farm girl Malar a chance to host her cousins from far-off Seattle for the festival of Pongal. But they get off on the wrong foot when her cousins aren’t impressed with farm life. \$6.99, ages 7–10.

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“Black Girl Power: 15 Stories Celebrating Black Girlhood” edited by Leah Johnson (author of [“You Should See Me in a Crown](https://www.amazon.com/You-Should-See-Me-Crown/dp/133850326X/?ie=UTF8&tag=parentmap-20) (<https://www.amazon.com/You-Should-See-Me-Crown/dp/133850326X/?ie=UTF8&tag=parentmap-20>.”) is a collection of 15 stories and poems by Black women authors that celebrate the power and joy to be found in the everyday experience of Black girlhood. \$18.99, ages 8–12.

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“Operation Sisterhood: Stealing the Show!” by Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich is the second book in a series about four sisters from a patchwork family. In this book, the girls overcome writer’s block and go exploring to learn about New York City communities past and present to stage an original musical. \$17.99, ages 8–12.

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“Kareem Between” by Shifa Saltagi Safadi is about a seventh-grade Syrian American boy figuring out where he belongs – with the football team or with the new Syrian refugee – and what it takes to stay true to himself. \$16.99, ages 8–12.

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“The Ribbon Skirt” by Cameron Mukwa is a debut graphic novel from an Indigenous cartoonist featuring Anang, a nonbinary, two-spirit 10-year-old member of the Anishinaabe whose family and friends help them make a ribbon skirt, traditional for girls, for a powwow ceremony. \$11.95, ages 9–12.

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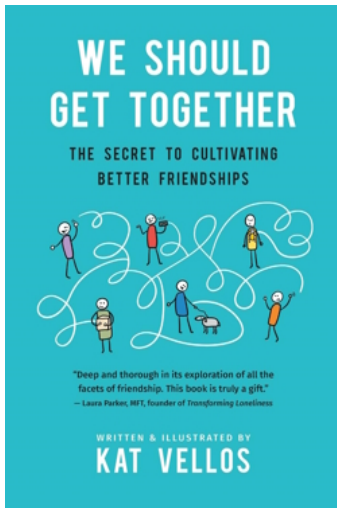
“Weirdo” by Tony Weaver Jr. is a graphic novel memoir about a geeky, awkward tween struggling to be comfortable in his own skin and find his community. \$14.23, ages 10–14.

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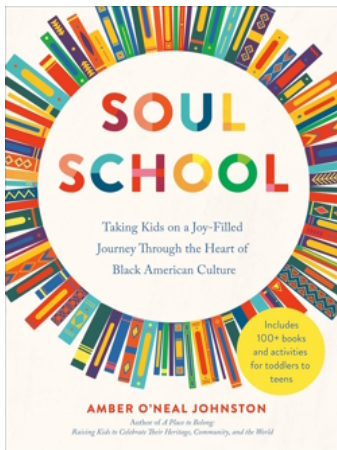
“Oathbound” by Tracy Deonn is the third book in the YA “Legenborn Cycle” series, which blends Southern Black girl magic with the legend of King Arthur. Bree Matthews has cut herself off from her community in an effort to keep them safe from her powers, but now she has to face the repercussions alone. \$19.79, ages 14 and older.

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“We Should Get Together: The Secret to Cultivating Better Friendships” by Kat Vellos is not a new release but it’s timely for adults who are seeking their own community. Vellos combines research and case studies to tackle the most common challenges of adult friendship in this handbook for making and maintaining friends as a grown-up. \$15.99.

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“Soul School: Taking Kids on a Joy-Filled Journey Through the Heart of Black American Culture” by Amber O’Neal Johnston is a must-read, no matter what community you belong to. Johnston has curated more than 100 essential books into lists sorted by age, providing context to teach families about literature that celebrates and explores the fullness of the African American cultural experience. \$20.

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[18 Books for Kids That Feature LGBTQ Characters \(https://www.parentmap.com/article/lgbtq-books-kid-family-friendly\)](https://www.parentmap.com/article/lgbtq-books-kid-family-friendly)

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About the Author



BY GEMMA ALEXANDER (/AUTHOR/GEMMA-ALEXANDER)

Seattle-based freelance writer Gemma Alexander focuses on the intersection of parenting and the arts. When she's not writing for ParentMap, she blogs at gemmadeealexander.com (<https://gemmadeealexander.com/>), and tweets at @gemmadeetweet.

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