

Reading Matters

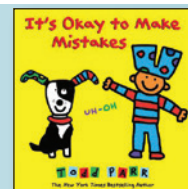
It's Okay to Wear Two Different Socks: Celebrating Risk Taking in Children's Books by Jean Dugan

We all take dozens of risks every day, choices that could lead to disaster or adventure or anything in between. Hoping for the best, we pick up the phone, try a new kind of food, and pull out onto the highway of life. When we take risks, of whatever size or seriousness, we open ourselves up to something new — the choice is ours.

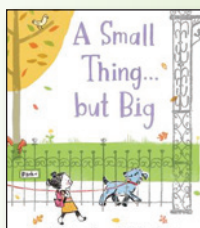
Jean Dugan, a long-time friend of *Exchange*, has been connecting kids with books for over 40 years. She helped establish a library program in the elementary schools of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and later brought her love of children's literature to the public library there. This is one more opportunity for her to share the best new books with children and those who care about them.



Making mistakes can be risky! Todd Parr in his gentle and comforting way, and with his usual wacky and colorful illustrations, reminds us in **It's Okay to Make Mistakes** that the only way to learn is to try. Fall down? You can get right back up. Wardrobe mishap? Maybe you'll start a new trend. Take a wrong turn? You might discover something new. Taking risks can lead to all kinds of good things — new friends and new adventures and new skills.



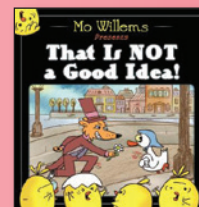
It's Okay to Make Mistakes by Todd Parr (Little, Brown and Company, 2014) Ages 2 – 7.



It's risky to try new things, and to make new friends, but oh how good it feels in the end! Lizzie, in **A Small Thing... but Big**, is terrified of dogs. When she meets scruffy Cecile and her quiet owner in the park, the old man encourages Lizzie to pet his dog. One small brave step leads to another and soon Lizzie is happily walking Cecile around the park on her own. It's indeed a small thing, but a big victory for Lizzie and, we learn, for Cecile's owner as well. Hadley Hooper's soft pastel illustrations accompany Tony Johnston's charming story.

A Small Thing... but Big by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Hadley Hooper (Roaring Brook Press, 2016) Ages 2 – 6.

Mo Willems presents **That is NOT a Good Idea** as still pictures from a silent film, with commentary by a Greek chorus of baby geese. A wide-eyed, motherly, and rather plump goose meets a grinning, shifty-eyed fox on the streets of Paris, and a dinner invitation is issued. You can see where this is going, and so can the audience of horrified goslings and young readers who repeatedly try to warn the pair of the risk. But ultimately all is well, and dinner is delicious.



That is NOT a Good Idea by Mo Willems (HarperCollins, 2013) Ages 2 – 5.



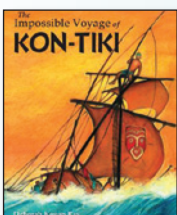
It's risky to confront the monsters in the room, but it's the only way to grow. Chris Hadfield, in **The Darkest Dark**, dreams of becoming an astronaut, but knows he must overcome his paralyzing fear of the dark to pursue that dream. As he watches the 1969 moon landing on his neighbor's television, he suddenly realizes that space is the darkest dark possible — but something he needs to explore. This is a true story of overcoming fear; as an adult, the real Chris Hadfield became the first Canadian commander of the International Space Station.

The Darkest Dark by Chris Hadfield and Kate Fillion, illustrated by the Fan Brothers (Little, Brown and Company, 2016) Ages 5 – 8.

Women have always taken risks when they step outside traditional roles. Kathy Sullivan's glass ceiling was outer space. As a child, she loved exploring, travel, and technology and had no interest in the kinds of careers her friends aspired to. Kathy's story, **To the Stars!**, alternates between her childhood dreams and her adult achievements — including becoming the first American woman to walk in space. Sullivan is co-author of this picture book celebrating her triumphant career.



To the Stars! The First American Woman to Walk in Space by Carmella Van Vleet and Dr. Kathy Sullivan, illustrated by Nicole Wong (Charlesbridge, 2016) Ages 6 – 10.



Explorers take risks. When Thor Heyerdahl set off from Peru on the raft *Kon-Tiki* in 1947, he had minimal equipment and little food on a vessel that would break apart before reaching land. But, there was only one way to prove his theory that Polynesia was settled from the east rather than the west: he and his crew had to take the risk that the Humboldt Current would get them there. In **The Impossible Voyage of Kon-Tiki**, Deborah Kogan Ray brings the danger and excitement of the 4,300-mile voyage alive for young readers.

The Impossible Voyage of Kon-Tiki by Deborah Kogan Ray (Charlesbridge, 2015) Ages 6 – 10.