

My Friend Suhana

Praise and Endorsements

"*My Friend Suhana* is a delightful read for a children's book. Very well illustrated with respect, a friendship, and advocacy all in mind at the same time. This precious book is so well written, in which it shares love, compassion, being a helper, and also explains to a child of respecting the differences with a disability. As a leader in advocating for the "most overlooked" disabilities, which sometimes include nonverbal communication, this was outstanding in providing these differences. I look forward to sharing this book! Thank you for your love shared!"
-DAWN CRUZAN, PRESIDENT, CAMP CRAIG ALLEN FOR ALL ABILITIES

"Shaila Abdullah's *My Friend Suhana*, co-authored by Abdullah's daughter, Aanyah, now age ten, is a children's book that challenges every reader of every ability. What would inspire such a powerful, yet eloquently stated and illustrated book, but the honesty and clarity of a child? The book is beautifully written and expressed with artistic, whimsical flare that these two children are brought off the pages and into your lap. Acceptance and the desire to be understood are the resounding cries that I have witnessed over so many years, and Abdullah's book, *My Friend Suhana*, nails it. Well over 52 million Americans live with some level of disability, presenting unique struggles on all fronts, and the population is growing. It is more important than ever to learn the powerful message that *My Friend Suhana* brings to light. What an honor it is to know and share *My Friend Suhana*."
-DEBORAH M. OVELAND, FOUNDER SPECIALIVES AND A SPECIAL NEEDS MOM

"A special ribbon threads the thoughtful and multi-faceted reflections reported by this book's seven-year old narrator—her expressions are grounded in the unconditional acceptance and caring she has for her same-age friend, Suhana, who is challenged by cerebral palsy. The charming and appealing illustrations that accompany this narrative written by Shaila and Aanyah, a mother-daughter team, add to the truthful but very upbeat story. This book makes a significant contribution to children's literature and to the ethical and moral development of children. Its "everyday" tone and word usage neither sugarcoats nor diminishes reality, but demonstrates children's compassion to others by giving respect and love to those different from us."
-SHIRLEY M. HORD, AUTHOR AND SCHOLAR LAUREATE AT LEARNING FORWARD

"Suhana isn't the easiest friend for a 7-year-old girl. She can't run around or ride a bike. And she expresses joy, anger, sadness in exactly the same way: She screams. Suhana has cerebral palsy, and in this poignant children's book, Shaila Abdullah and her daughter Aanyah write about the challenges - and the rewards that outweigh them - of befriending a special needs child. With its charming illustrations by Abdullah, and its affecting message, this book will strike a chord with children and adults like."
-GWEN FLORIO, AUTHOR OF MONTANA

"*My Friend Suhana* is a charming and perceptive book that will draw its readers into empathy while allowing them to enjoy this heartwarming story of two uncommon friends."
-CHITRA DIVAKARUNI, AUTHOR OF GRANDMA AND THE GREAT GOURD

"*My Friend Suhana* is the story of a seven-year-old's first attempt at unconditional love. Tough but tender, painful yet full of laughter, inspirational yet utterly real, this is a small gem of tale. Highly recommended for anyone in the position of mentoring a beloved child through the hard places of life."
-PAULA HUSTON, AUTHOR OF A SEASON OF MYSTERY AND A LAND WITHOUT SIN

"*My Friend Suhana* is a compassionate story of a unique friendship between a girl who volunteers at a special needs class and seven year-old Suhana who has cerebral palsy. The eye-catching illustrations that animate Suhana's story will enchant young readers. When read aloud, the clearly spoken words will captivate the hearts of younger children. I recommend that every child should have the opportunity to read this charming and informative book to learn the pleasure embodied in selfless love and service."
-BAPSI SIDHWA, PLAYWRIGHT, AUTHOR OF CRACKING INDIA