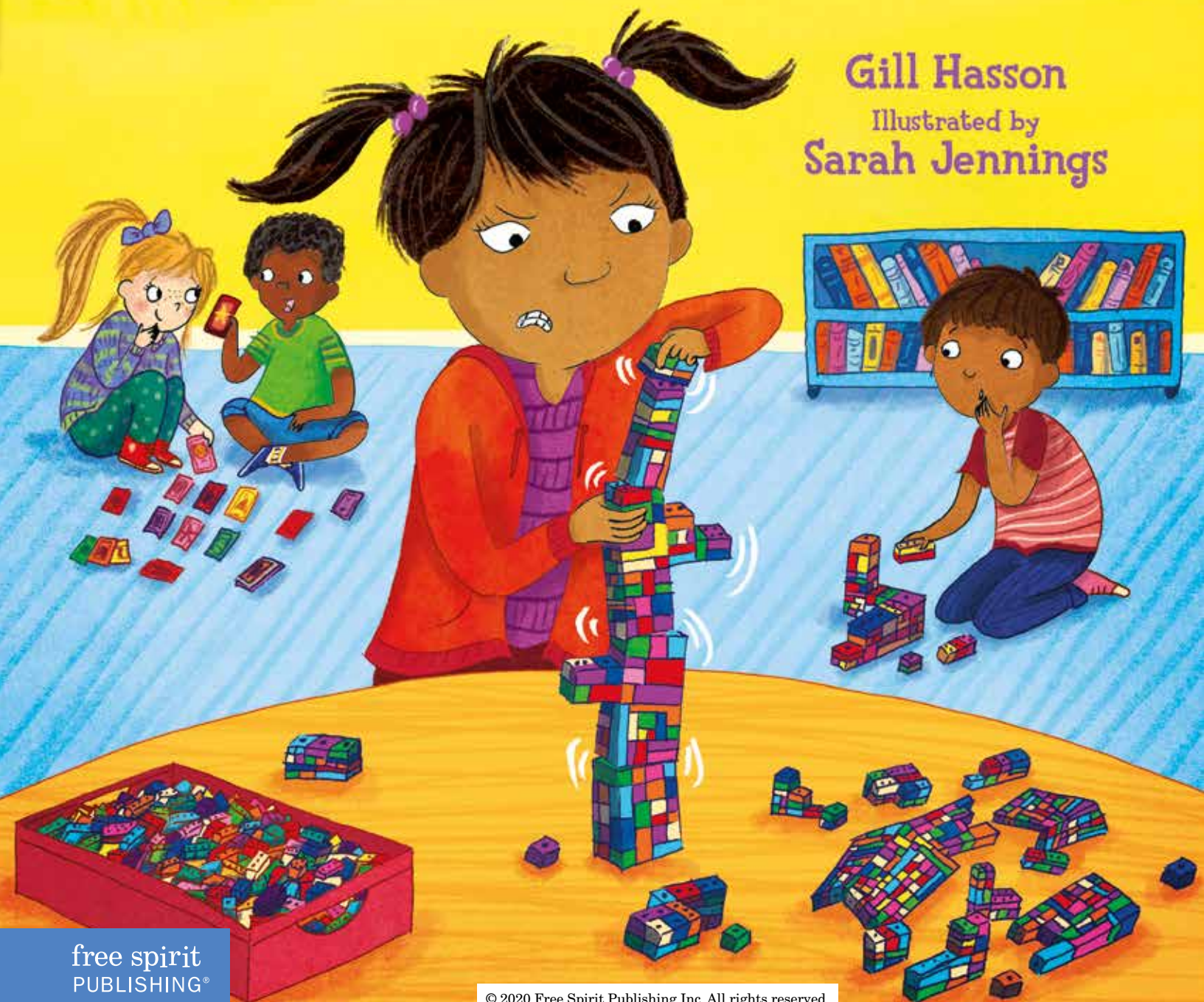


KIDS CAN COPE

# Step Back from Frustration

Gill Hasson

Illustrated by  
Sarah Jennings



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#### Free Spirit Publishing Inc.

6325 Sandburg Road, Suite 100

Minneapolis, MN 55427-3674

(612) 338-2068

[help4kids@freespirit.com](mailto:help4kids@freespirit.com)

[freespirit.com](https://freespirit.com)

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# What is frustration?

Frustration happens when you can't do something or can't have something you want.

You may feel frustrated when you have to wait, when you don't understand, when someone doesn't listen to you, or when you keep trying to do something but can't quite make it work.



You might get frustrated when things don't happen the way you expected them to. Or when you can't find or reach something you're looking for.



It's like you're on the right road to where you want to go, but things are blocking the way. You get close—maybe you can see where you want to be—but you just can't get there.



# How do you feel when you're frustrated?

When you're frustrated you might feel like you are getting more and more wound up or angry. You may feel tense and hot. You might grit your teeth and clench your fists.



Frustration can also lead to feeling helpless. You might get discouraged and feel stuck, like it's not worth trying anymore.

# Step back from frustration

You've learned that you can get frustrated when things don't happen the way you expected. It's like something is in the way of what you want to do or have. You get close, but it's just out of reach. But there's good news: you can learn to manage frustration.

Here are some reminders:

- Learn to spot the warning signs of frustration.
- Think about what your frustration is telling you.
- Take a step back and do things that can help you let the frustration out and calm down, like breathe deeply or squeeze a pillow.
- Find a different way to do something. Break it down into small steps.
- Ask someone to help you.
- When you can't change the situation, try to let go of frustration and do something else.

If your frustration feels too big to handle, ask a grown-up for help. If you don't feel you can ask anyone you know, you can call 1-800-448-3000, text **CONNECT** to 741741, or go to [yourlifeyourvoice.org](http://yourlifeyourvoice.org) to talk with a counselor. They will listen to you and give you some help and advice about what to do if you're frustrated about something.



# Activities

These drawing and writing activities can help you think more about how to manage feeling frustrated. You could keep your pictures and writing with this book so that you have your own ideas about how to cope when you're frustrated by something.

- Look in the mirror and make a frustrated face. Draw a picture of your frustrated face. Then add a thought bubble to your picture with a way to cope with your frustration.
- Think of a time when you felt frustrated. What was it that you couldn't do or that didn't happen? How did you feel? What did you do? Draw a picture or write a story about what happened.
- What are some warning signs that you're getting frustrated? Draw a picture of what happens in your body when you're frustrated.
- Write about or draw a picture of some of the things you could do to turn your mind away from frustration and make room for calmer, more helpful thoughts.
- India is getting frustrated because she just can't get to the next level in her video game. What do you think India could do about it? Write a letter to India with your advice for what she could do next time she's struggling to reach the next level in the game.
- Sometimes when Tom plays with his older brother and sister, they don't listen to his ideas for things they could do together. Tom gets frustrated and upset with them. Then they tease him and he gets even more frustrated and upset. What ideas do you have for Tom? Write down the advice you would give him.