

Above It All

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Pre-reading questions:

- What bad **situations** in your life have had positive outcomes?
- How do you talk to **bullies**?



Michael is thirteen years old and lives in Queens, New York, in the United States. This month was a very bad month for him.

First, he broke his **ankle** and had to stay inside the house for a whole week. His mother stayed home from work in order to help him feel better.

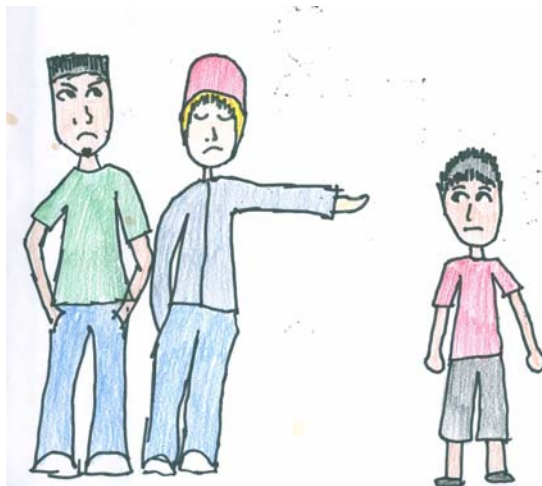


As soon as he felt better and was able to go outside, he became sick and his eye turned pink. Once again his mom stayed home with him.

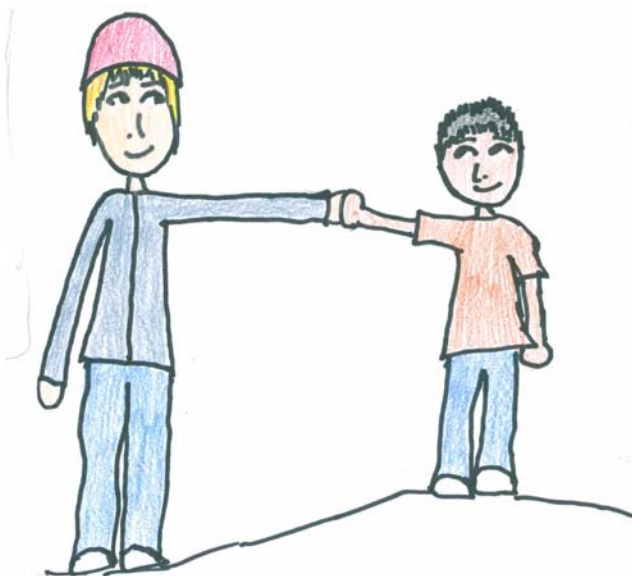
When he felt better, his mother let him go outside again. He was very happy that he was finally able to

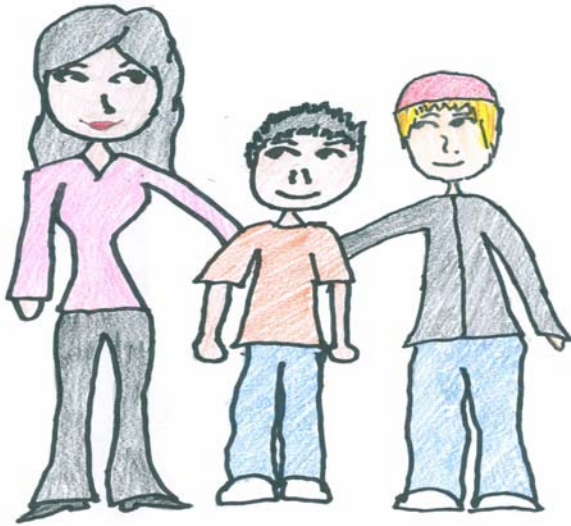


play with his friends. He had not seen them for over two weeks. On the day he finally went outside, a group of older boys **teased** him. Since these boys were bigger than Michael, they wanted to fight him and take his money. He ran home where he was safe.



He talked to his friends about his problem to see what they would say. They told him to go back and talk to the boys about how they **treated** him. Michael found the boys playing on the street corner.



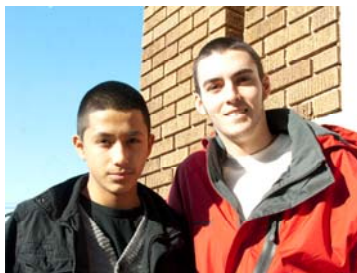


“Hey, I want to talk to you guys about what you did to me last week,” he said. “When you teased me last week, it really hurt my **feelings** and made me feel unhappy.”

After they talked for a few minutes, they came to a friendly solution.

“We thought about what happened, and we realized that we were mean to you. We are sorry. Also, we want to know if you and your friends want to play basketball with us tomorrow,” said the newfound friends.

The next day, Michael went to play basketball with his new and old friends. He saw them all together, and realized that even in the worst of times, there will always be positive outcomes in the future and caring people to learn from. Michael also realized that not all things in his life are negative. He had family and friends that cared about him and who would always support him **no matter what**.



Michael Riera is an eight grader at Rise Academy in Newark, New Jersey. He loves soccer, reading, and spending time with friends.

Tim Murphy is a freshman studying

Environmental Management at Indiana University. He likes sports, music, and photography.



Elle Lindley is a freshman at Indiana University studying French and Russian. She enjoys dancing.