

Understood

for learning & attention issues

NEW BOOK THAT FEATURES YOUTH WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IS ONE-OF-A-KIND

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state that roughly 1 in 7 American children have a developmental disability—over 3 million kids nationwide. Because of that number, one would think that there would be many books prominently featuring youth with disabilities. But according to author and award-winning transition educator Mike Kelly, that's not the case.

“While there are many books written by parents or teachers on how to raise or teach a child with autism—or children’s books featuring a single character with a disability—I could not find a single book featuring multiple kids with various types of disabilities all in one book,” Kelly said. “The publishing industry said ‘we don’t publish books like that.’ So, I did.”

Kelly’s recently-published nonfiction work, *“SPECIAL STORIES: Short Stories On Youth With Disabilities And My Adventures Working In The Disabilities Field,”* (2017, Vendue Books) is a heartfelt account of what he describes as his “life’s work.”

These thought-provoking and heartwarming stories showcase the many abilities individuals with disabilities have — regardless of their challenges—while entertaining, educating, and dispelling societal stereotypes. Aside from stories on many of the students Kelly’s worked with

over the years—mostly between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one—the book also features accounts on famous professional athletes headlining fundraisers, ordinary folk generosity, celebrity greed, and social musings—all part of Kelly’s experiences in his field.

Over the last fifteen years, Kelly has worked with hundreds of youth with a wide range of disabilities living in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. During that time he has served as an employment specialist, job coach, event organizer and promoter, fundraiser, grant writer, instructor, mentor, award-winning transition educator and nonprofit business owner.

“I’ve come across some incredible young people with disabilities who have achieved measurable success in their lives, yet whose efforts go largely unnoticed. I wrote this book because I felt it was time for their untold stories to finally be shared to help inspire others to think outside the box and reach for the stars,” Kelly said.

When asked what types of disabilities his book features, Kelly said: “ADD/ADHD, Learning Disabilities, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome, Intellectual Disabilities, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Spina Bifida, Tourette syndrome, Visual Impairment, and Williams syndrome, to name just a few.”

“Now, with *SPECIAL STORIES...*, there’s finally a book about individuals with all different types of disabilities for individuals with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, special educators, workers in the disabilities field... and everyone else.”

Kelly hopes *SPECIAL STORIES...* gains support from the disability community and parents of children with disabilities. If not, he’ll remain satisfied. “I feel like I’m already doing my life’s work empowering young people, many of whom are life’s underdogs. Any book sales would be considered icing on top of that cake.”

SPECIAL STORIES... has already gained some positive reviews from a variety of notable sources, including from one NBA Hall of Fame legend named by the NBA as One of the 50 Greatest Players of All-Time.

The book is available in hardcover, paperback, and in e-book through online booksellers Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Apple iBooks and KOBO.

For information on how to purchase your copy of *SPECIAL STORIES...*, visit www.specialstoriesbook.com.