



I Used to Be Shy

An Illustrated Story with Songs
About Inclusion, Belonging, and Compassion

The Carla Stories
Book 2

WRITTEN BY
**Mike Mirabella
and Lenny Lipton**
ILLUSTRATED BY
Amy O'Hanlon

I Used to Be Shy

An Illustrated Story with Songs About Inclusion, Belong, and Compassion

Author: Mike Mirabella and Lenny Lipton

Illustrator: Amy O'Hanlon

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About the Authors

Mike Mirabella, an established musician and publisher of children's books—and Lenny Lipton, who wrote the folk song "Puff the Magic Dragon"—sat in their living rooms writing songs as they babysat their disabled daughters. The bonus song "Little Brown Pony" includes the lyrics and music notations as does "I Used to Be Shy."

The text of *I Used to Be Shy* mirrors the song lyrics that Mike wrote years ago when Carla was just three years of age. *I Used to Be Shy* is beautifully illustrated by artist Amy O'Hanlon.

The first book of The Carla Stories is entitled *Sister Butterfly* and was published in 2020. The third book, *Special People*, is coming soon.

As a retired public-school teacher living with his wife Pam in the East Bay, Mike still writes poetry, blogs, composes music and publishes children's books. Pam is a former elected public official who served on the Contra County School Board for 28 years. She continues to champion causes that promote the passage of laws that better protect the civil rights for our disabled citizens.

Both Mike and Pam are available to perform their songs and speak publicly at special events. They bring their message of hope for families of intellectually and physically challenged children.

To learn more about Mike and Pam's vision and message of hope, please go to the website:
MirabellaBooksWithSongs.com



About *I Used to Be Shy*

This is Book 2 in The Carla Stories series about inclusion, belonging, and compassion, which includes *Sister Butterfly*, *I Used to Be Shy*, and *Special People* (coming soon).

In *I Used to Be Shy*, you will meet Carla, our self-appointed social committee of one, who makes everyone at summer camp feel welcome. Carla spots a shy new boy who hides from others in his cabin, closing his curtain. Carla follows her heart and gathers a small group of fellow campers to coax him out to play games. With Carla's encouragement, our new camper builds up his self-confidence, loses his fear, and learns to enjoy his new friends.

What people are saying about *I Used to Be Shy*

"A heartfelt story in song that details the experience of kids who behave, look, or do things differently from their peers. Acceptance and inclusion are difficult to gain without support of others and friendships are treasured beyond what we 'abled people' could ever understand."

— Janis Wisherop, RN, Professor at College of San Mateo, California, and mom to Katie (with Noonan's syndrome) and Molly, her sister

"I Used to Be Shy is a sweet story. The main character, Carla, is not just friendly: she shows how to make friends. Carla gives the other children the tools and the confidence to come out of the room and into the world. In my experience as a Special Education teacher, having a younger sister with Down syndrome, and the grandmother of a typical but extremely shy child, I know how much more fun and many more positive opportunities they experience once the shyness barrier is broken."

— Sandy Westlie, Former Early Childhood Education teacher and Administrator for 30 years with a Special Education Credential, El Sobrante, California

"The story of Carla and the beautiful lyrics and music are all very touching and significant for encouraging us all to appreciate the unique gifts each person brings in community."

—Arlene Hatfield, Former Special Education Teacher, Richmond, California

