



[When Aidan Became a Brother](#) by Kyle Lukoff, illustrated by Kaylani Juanita

Lee & Low Books, an imprint of LEE & LOW BOOKS INC, 2019
ISBN: 9781620148372 (Hardcover)

*Age Range: 4-8 (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: PreS-Gr 2 (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

This sweet and groundbreaking picture book, winner of the 2020 Stonewall Book Award, celebrates the changes in a transgender boy's life, from his initial coming-out to becoming a big brother.

When Aidan was born, everyone thought he was a girl. His parents gave him a pretty name, his room looked like a girl's room, and he wore clothes that other girls liked wearing. After he realized he was a trans boy, Aidan and his parents fixed the parts of life that didn't fit anymore, and he settled happily into his new life.

Then Mom and Dad announce that they're going to have another baby, and Aidan wants to do everything he can to make things right for his new sibling from the beginning—from choosing the perfect name to creating a beautiful room to picking out the cutest onesie. But what does "making things right" actually mean? And what happens if he messes up? With a little help, Aidan comes to understand that mistakes can be fixed with honesty and communication, and that he already knows the most important thing about being a big brother: how to love with his whole self.

When Aidan Became a Brother is a heartwarming book that will resonate with transgender children, reassure any child concerned about becoming an older sibling, and celebrate the many transitions a family can experience.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "A trans man himself, Lukoff writes with authority and a loving spirit. Juanita's cheerful digital illustrations are a nicely harmonious match with the text, expanding it in meaningful ways. Together, the text and pictures create a heartfelt celebration of love that will be an ideal selection for trans children and for any who are expecting a new sibling." —[Booklist](#), **starred review**

★ "Joyful and affirming, Aidan's story is the first of its kind among books for welcoming a new baby." —[Kirkus Reviews](#), **starred review**

★ "Lukoff writes with sensitivity and candor as Aidan takes his first steps toward claiming his identity. . . The creators' exploration of one transgender child's experience emphasizes the importance of learning 'how to love someone for exactly who they are.'" —[Publishers Weekly](#), **starred review**

★ "Nails the nuances of Aidan's conflict, providing believable reassurance through Aidan's mom, who offers support specific to her son's experience and proves universally calming advice...A much-needed and appealing addition to the picture book canon; both emotionally and visually satisfying." —[School Library Journal](#), **starred review**

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“Lukoff’s straightforward approach to his character’s gender transition rings with authenticity, and the acknowledgment that ‘it took everyone some time to adjust’ is honest and supportive. . . Lukoff puts his child-centered story and character ahead of message; the word *transgender* is used only once, and *gender* not at all. Celebrating the family’s close, affirming relationship, Juanita’s vibrant digitally rendered illustrations take their cues from the text, which models how to avoid the male/female binary.” —[The Horn Book](#)

“A thoughtful, delightfully illustrated book about being seen, heard, and loved.” —**Jacqueline Woodson, MacArthur Fellow & award-winning author**

“This is the best of what picture books can be, melding powerful storytelling with an awareness of what quality representation can do for readers.” —**Alex Gino, award-winning author of *Melissa***

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Stonewall Book Award Winner (American Library Association)
- Charlotte Huck Award Honor Book (National Council of Teachers of English)
- Rainbow Book List (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table of the American Library Association)
- Notable Children’s Books List (Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association)
- *Booklist* Editors’ Choice Books for Youth
- *Kirkus Reviews* Best Books
- *School Library Journal* Best Books of the Year
- Bank Street College of Education Best Children’s Books of the Year
- Cooperative Children’s Book Center (CCBC) Choices
- The White Ravens International Children’ and Youth Literature Selection (International Youth Library)
- Great Lakes Great Books Award, Grades 2-3 (Michigan Reading Association)

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Teacher’s Guide](#)
- [Praise Sheet](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Children’s Books: A Conversations with Authors webinar](#)
- [Harper’s Bazaar: Trans Kids Deserve to See Themselves in Children’s Books by Kyle Lukoff](#)
- [Learning To Give’s Literature Guide](#)
- [TeachingBooks’ Meet-the-Author recording](#)

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RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

- [National Council of Teachers of English's Reading When Aidan Became a Brother with Elementary Students Blog Post](#): "As children's books often portray children's lives and their families, more books about transgender and gender-nonconforming characters of color need to be written and published in the future to encourage children to express their gender identities more flexibly. For that reason, picture books such as *When Aidan Became a Brother* become important resources for elementary school teachers. Teachers and librarians may worry about lacking the language to discuss gender-binary and transgender identities with their students when they read certain stories. Fortunately, the [Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias Framework—A Road Map for Anti-bias Education at Every Grade Level](#) offers grade-level appropriate standards and scenarios for teaching diversity and inclusion in the K–12 classrooms and can be a valuable curricular tool."

AUTHOR STATEMENTS

- [PEN America's "Banned in the USA Q&A: Kyle Lukoff on the 'Desperate Importance' of Fighting Book Bans"](#): "When someone is saying that my books are inappropriate, what they are really saying is that the way that I live my life, the kind of person that I am, is someone who is inappropriate to be around children in the first place. And I often feel like it's beneath my dignity to defend my basic right to exist within a society or a family or a community. But if I had to speak to that, I would remind them that people like me have always existed and will continue to exist, regardless of the books that we have access to. So the question is whether we are going to exist in a world where our lives can be lived openly and with pride and joy, or lived in the furtive shadows of the underworld where we have often been relegated. And of course, they would rather us stay in the shadows. But I don't want that to be the future of the kids that I get to meet."
- [We Need Diverse Books' "\(Not\) Proud to be Banned: Reflections from LGBTQ+ Creators of Banned Books"](#): "Where it's like 50% understandable to be proud is for all those people who are getting banned for writing outside of their own lived experiences. Because their goal is to say, 'look how great I am. I am this brave soldier doing this work for these poor voiceless people who can't possibly talk for themselves. And the fact that my book is getting banned means that I am sacrificing myself for these poor people.' Whereas when I am writing a book about myself and someone says, 'Congratulations, you [got banned],' I'm like, yes, but they are also coming for me as a human being and that is what this book is symbolizing. I think maybe the congratulatory tone is mistaking a political manifesto for a novel that draws upon my own experience of humanity. . . Any positive that I'm getting is coming from other people's pain and my own precarity."
- [Harper's Bazaar's "Eight Authors on How It Feels to Have Their Books Banned"](#): "I have never read a book that I was not supposed to. My parents didn't place any restrictions on my reading, and I believe that the experience of not understanding something is just another kind of learning. If I believed that there were books that someone 'wasn't supposed to read,' I would be a fundamentally different person."

*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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