

'WONDER' by R.J. PALACIO

Bestselling Author Supports National Anti-Bullying Campaign in Schools

August Pullman was born with a facial deformity that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting fifth grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid—but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. WONDER by R. J. Palacio begins from Auggie's point of view, but soon switches to include that of his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives converge in a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy and compassion.

In a world where bullying among young people is an epidemic, this is a refreshing new narrative full of heart and hope. R. J. Palacio has called her debut novel "a meditation on kindness"—indeed, every reader will come away with a greater appreciation for the simple courage of friendship. Auggie is a hero to root for, a diamond in the rough who proves that you can't blend in when you were born to stand out.

REVIEW BY MRS RILEY, LITERACY LEADER

"I won't describe what I look like. Whatever you're thinking, it's probably worse."

Wonder is an inspirational tale about a boy with a facial deformity, who starts school at 5th grade. The story is told from a range of viewpoints; about how the main character finds his way in the world, trying to convince people he is just like them and how other people react to him. It is fascinating to see how people's perceptions change throughout the book. Thought provoking, heart-warming and uplifting - a real rollercoaster of human emotions!

Perfect for families of age 8+ children to share and enjoy.

Random House Children's Publishers UK (RHCP UK) in association with the Anti-Bullying Alliance, part of leading children's charity the National Children's Bureau, launched a nationwide anti-bullying campaign in UK schools. Inspired by the international bestselling novel WONDER by R.J. Palacio the initiative aims to stamp-out bullying and inspire students to CHOOSE KIND.

Wonder, the story of Auggie Pullman, a 10 year old boy with a severe facial anomaly and heralded as 'the breakout publishing sensation of 2012' by The Times, has sold over 1 million copies worldwide since its publication in February 2012, winning both the Waterstones Children's Book Prize 5 – 12 fiction category and the Independent Booksellers' Book Award. It was #1 on The New York Times Best Seller list and the UK's biggest children's debut hardback of 2012. Film rights to Wonder have been sold to Lionsgate with a film due for release in 2016.

R.J. Palacio said: 'I have been bowled over by reader's reactions to Wonder, Auggie's story has been life changing not only for me but for millions of readers around the world

who understand this really isn't just a book about a kid with a facial anomaly: it's a celebration of kindness. I am thrilled to see that schools across the globe have really taken Wonder to their hearts, this initiative is truly inspiring and I cannot wait to see how UK schools embrace Auggie and CHOOSE KIND.

The CHOOSE KIND initiative is open to UK primary and secondary schools. Participating schools will receive a free copy of Wonder and resources to help them to promote anti-bullying. They will have the opportunity to enter a competition to win RHCP books, library accessories and a Wonder party. Entries will be judged on how the schools have inspired students to choose kind.

Martha Evans, **Acting National Coordinator and Senior Programme Lead - SEND & Inclusion** at the Anti-Bullying Alliance said: 'We are thrilled to be working with Random House on the CHOOSE KIND project and hope that through Wonder we can educate children to see that bullying in any form is wrong; and that any environment that shows indifference to prejudice and discrimination is unacceptable. We hope that through reading and discussion, children can feel encouraged to celebrate their differences and those of others; inspiring kindness and understanding. This year's national Anti-Bullying Week, November 2014, echoes the aims of the CHOOSE KIND project; celebrating difference and diversity through the theme 'Let's stop bullying for all.'

Follow the CHOOSE KIND campaign at wonderthebook.co.uk

READ PRAISE FOR WONDER . . .

★ "A memorable story of kindness, courage and wonder."

—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred

★ "Kids' books about befriending somebody 'different' could fill a library. But this debut novel rises to the top."

—*Booklist*, Starred

"A beautiful, funny and sometimes sob-making story of quiet transformation."

—*The Wall Street Journal*

"In a wonder of a debut, Palacio has written a crackling page-turner filled with characters you can't help but root for."

—*Entertainment Weekly*, *The Top 10 Things We Love This Week*

"Do yourself a favour and read this book—your life will be better for it."

—Nicholas Sparks, author of *The Notebook*