

Jumping Alba



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Illustrated by Lona Stagger

Notes For Grown Up's:

All children with autism are different and this story is based on a child with autism I encountered while doing a classroom observation that was very different from other children with autism that I have had the pleasure of encountering. What made this child so different was his level of energy and his desire to do jumping jacks. This really surprised me because I had never observed a child with autism that had so much energy.

While conducting the observation, I asked the head instructor about this particular child and she stated that the child's desire to do jumping jacks was initially a distraction to the rest of the class. Before observing this child I never envisioned a child with autism having the energy that this particular child had.

My experience observing this child along with my background working with children in foster care has inspired me to write the story of Jumping Alba, a foster kangaroo with autism who jumps around when it's inappropriate. In order to help Alba understand when it is appropriate and inappropriate to jump, the caregiver uses verbal *ques* along with picture *prompts* on an iPad and iPhone. For more information pertaining to this intervention, please refer to the annotated bibliography which can be viewed on the <http://www.sbbh.pitt.edu/> web site.

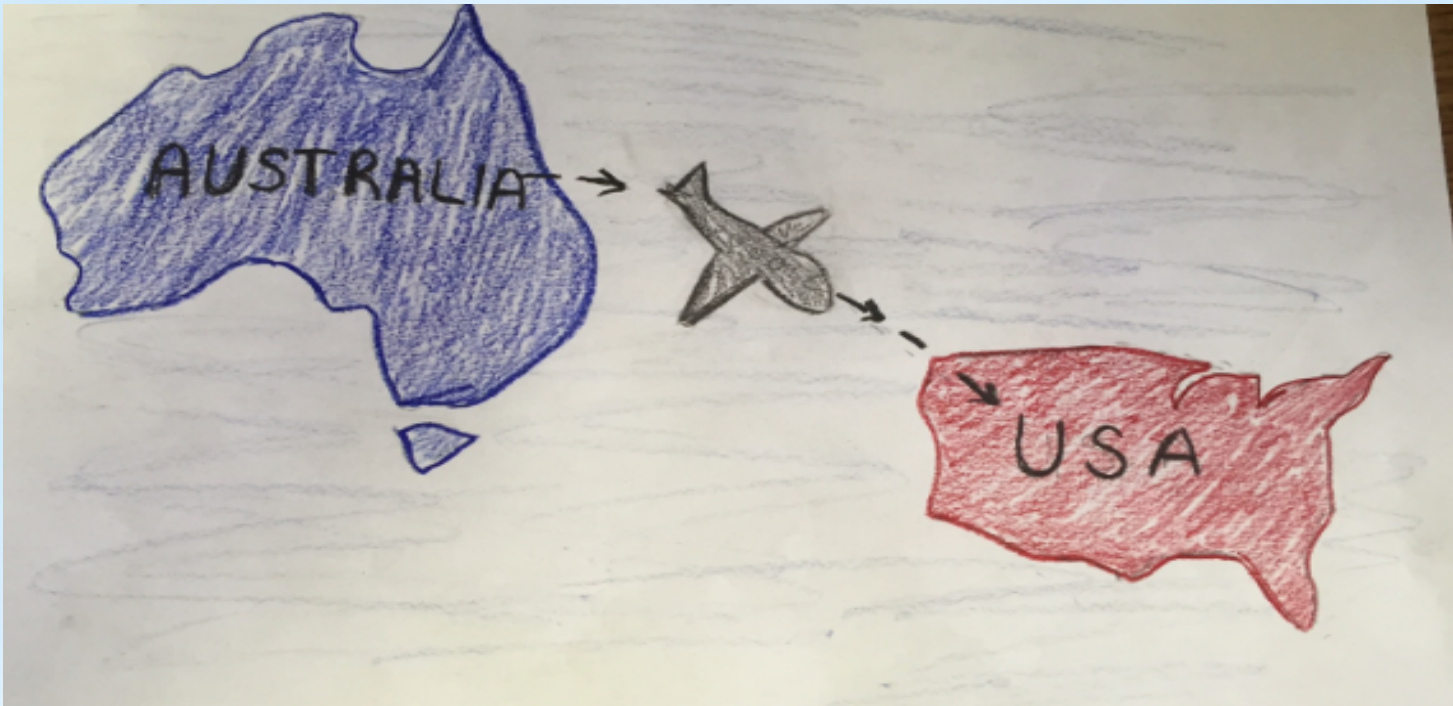
My hope is that this book will help to educate people on some of the difficulties that a foster parent might encounter and to help people truly understand that if you know one child with autism, you know just one child with autism. Children with autism are all special and unique in their own way.



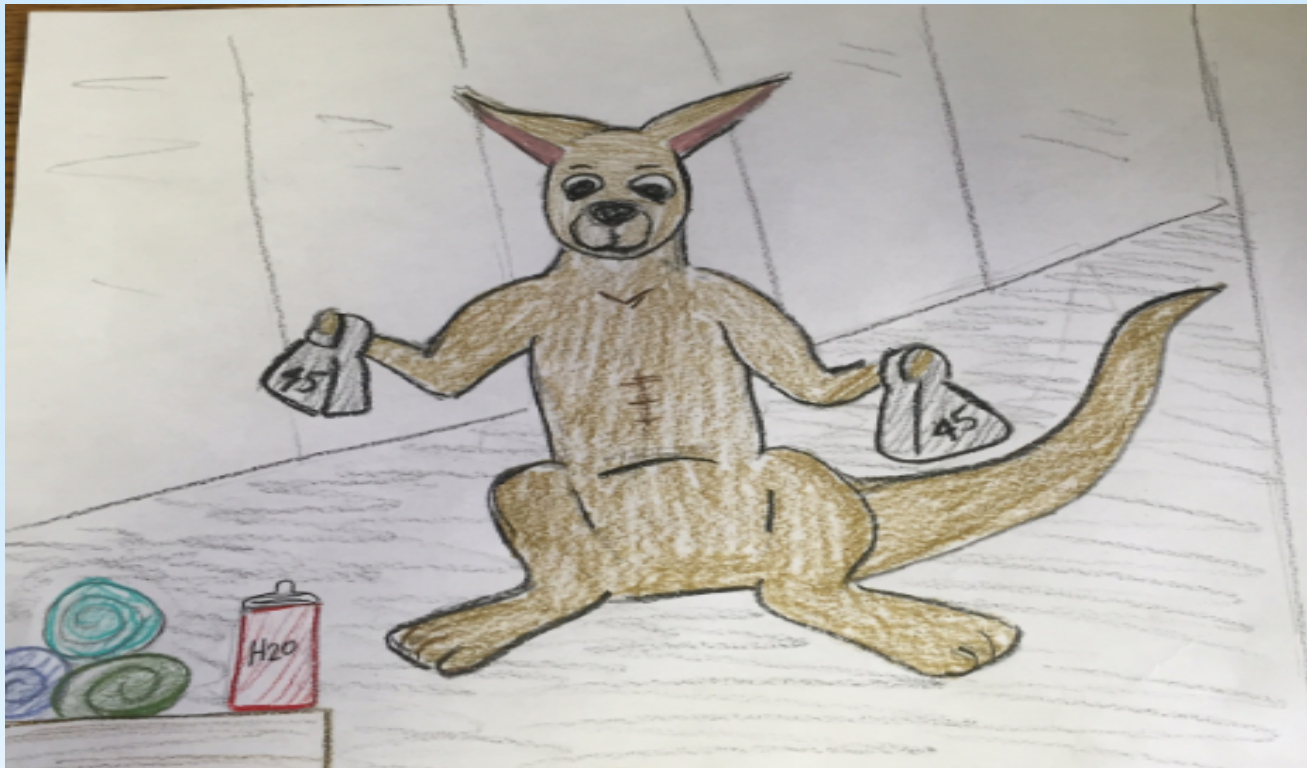
Hi, my name is Alba and I love to jump. I jump when I'm playing. I jump at home. I jump all the time!



Jumping all the time was okay in Australia because I was always outside, but it's not okay where I live now.



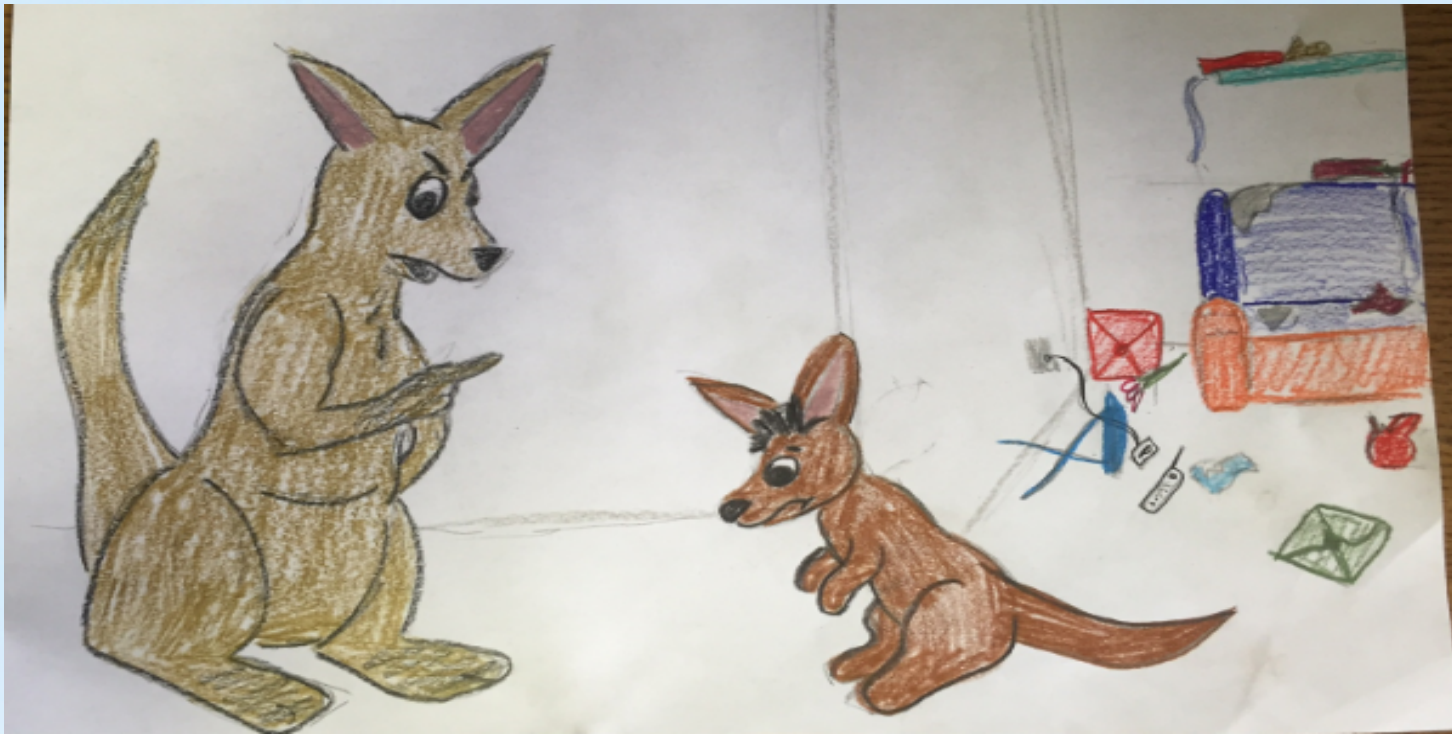
My parents got in trouble so I had to move in with my Uncle Mike in America.



Uncle Mike is so cool. He is really strong and good at sports.



But Uncle Mike doesn't live outside like me and my parents did. He has a house and gets angry when I jump around inside.



I don't know why I'm not allowed to jump in his house. When he yells for me to stop, I jump more and sometimes break stuff.



But Uncle Mike has a trick to help me know when I'm not allowed to jump. His trick is to grab one of his big weights and set it beside me. He will then say "heavy feet."



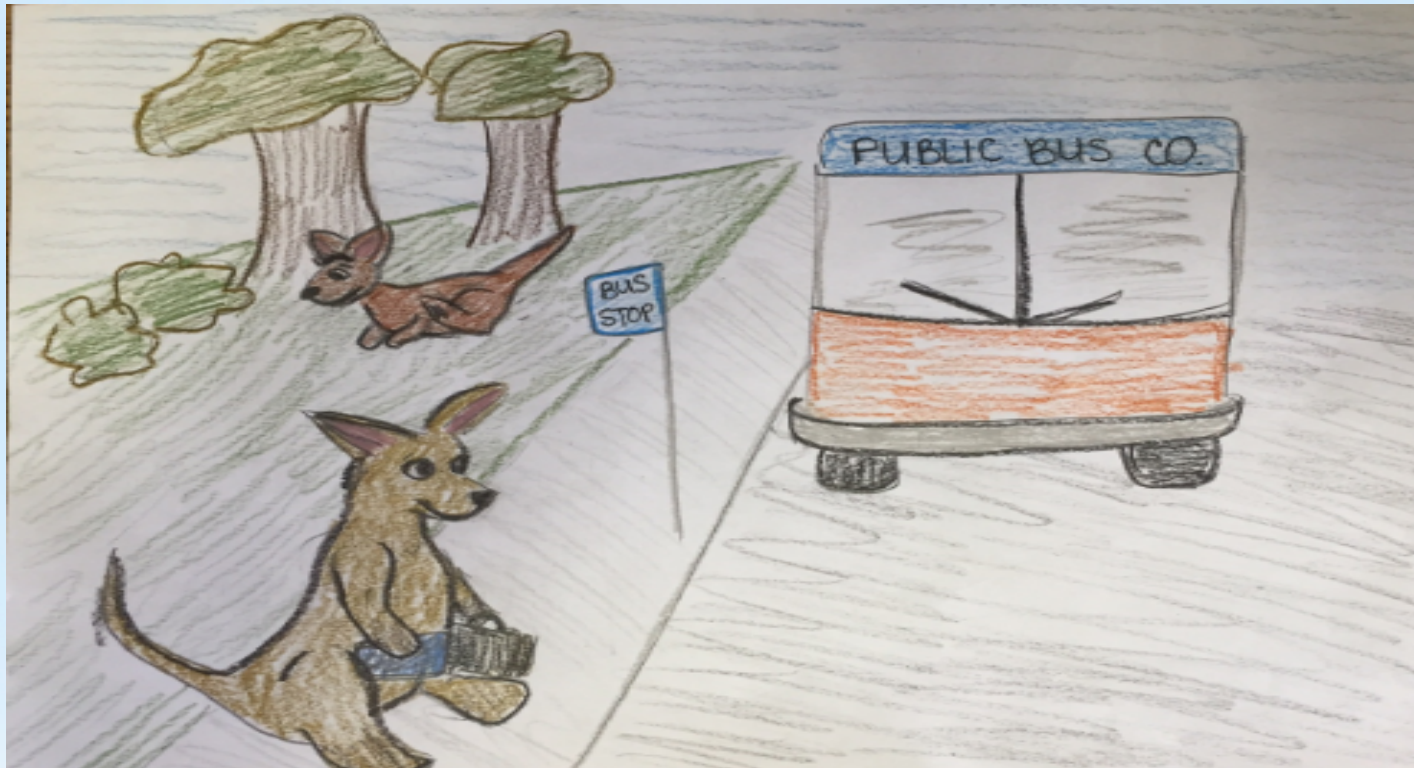
After he says “heavy feet” my feet become heavy weights. I can’t jump anymore when this happens!



But Uncle Mike can't bring his weights everywhere and sometimes I get confused about when I can jump.



I think I can jump when we are outside waiting for the bus to take Uncle Mike to work and me to school. But I still jump when we get on the bus and this makes Uncle Mike upset. He screams “heavy feet” but I forget what that means.



But Uncle Mike is smart and figured out how to help me not be confused. When we wait for the bus I'm allowed to jump while we wait.



When the bus comes, Uncle Mike will say, “heavy feet” and point to a picture of weights on his tablet. When I see the picture, I know it’s time to stop jumping.



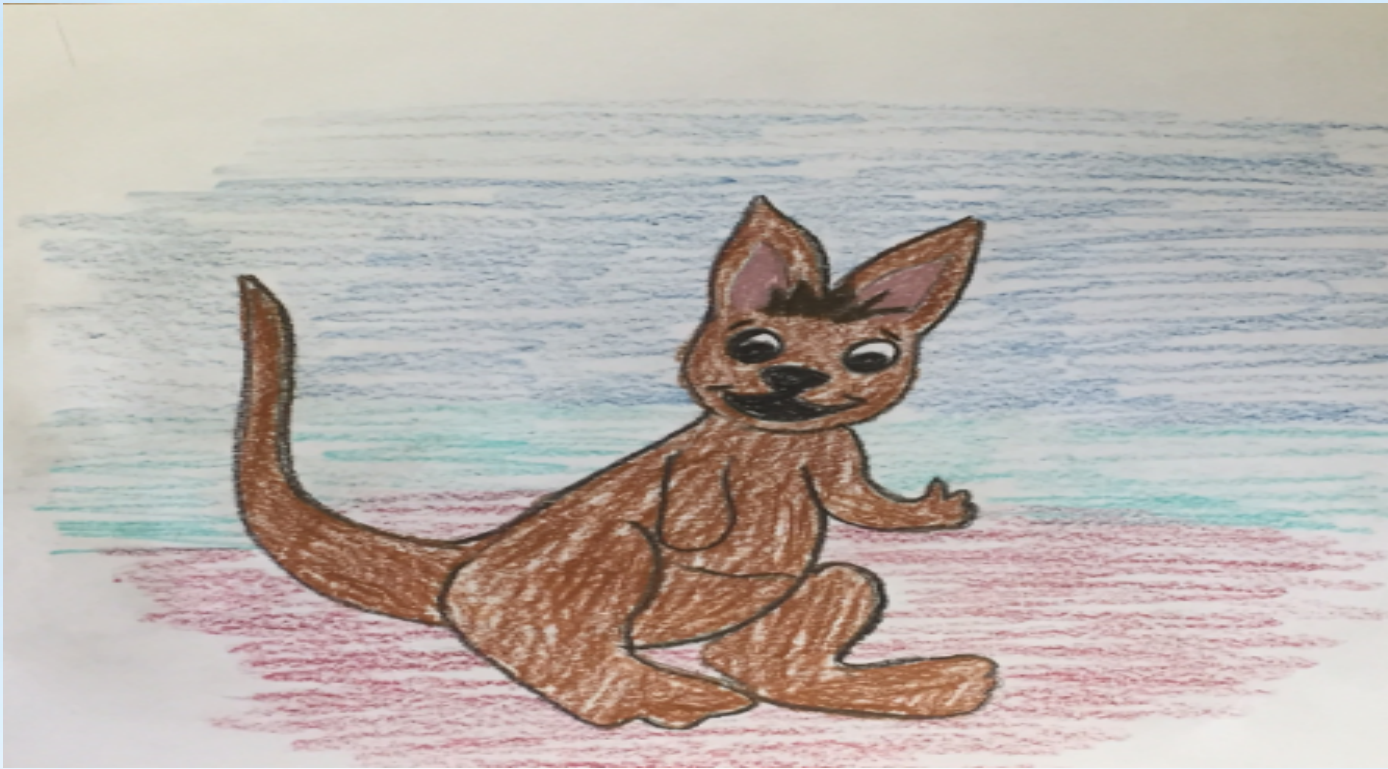
Uncle Mike now brings his tablet everywhere we go. He had it earlier at the grocery store. When we were in the parking lot, we jumped together.



Before we went inside, Uncle Mike took out his tablet and pointed to a picture of weights and said “heavy feet”. I knew right away to stop jumping!



Lately, Uncle Mike doesn't bring his tablet or say "heavy feet" when we go out somewhere. He just points to a picture of weights on his phone and I know not to jump.



I still sometimes jump when I'm not supposed to.
But most of the time I know when I can jump and
when I can't!