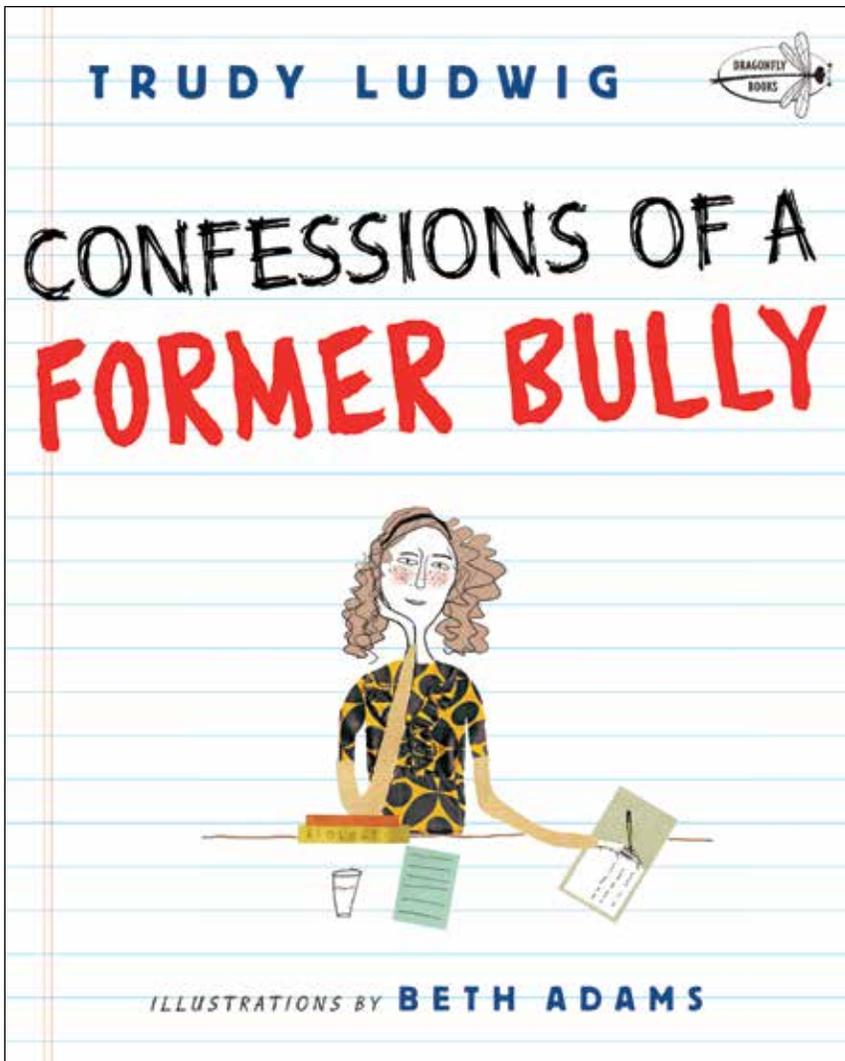


**SENSORY-  
FRIENDLY  
PERFORMANCE**



**PARENT'S  
GUIDE**

**Sunday, Jan 15 at 4 PM**



# Confessions of a Former Bully

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY MICHELLE HOPPE-LONG  
BASED ON THE BOOKS CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER BULLY BY TRUDY LUDWIG, ILLUSTRATED BY BETH ADAMS; AND MY SECRET BULLY BY TRUDY LUDWIG, ILLUSTRATED BY ABIGAIL MARBLE

## About the show

When Katie, who never considered herself a bully, repeatedly teases classmate Monica, it pushes their friendship to a tipping point. Katie's hurtful words and behavior lead her to the principal's office to deal with the consequence of her actions with a counselor. Will she be able to salvage a friendship and regain the trust of her peers? Told from the perspective of the bully and the bullied, this story makes everyone consider how they treat others and want to be treated themselves.

## Show support

### 2022-23 SEASON

Presented by:

**BANK OF AMERICA** 

Today's celebration is brought to life, in part, by:

Rob & Caryn Craige  
Arrington & Burch Mixon  
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## Special thanks



to Julie Higginbotham of Precious Developments. Julie has worked as our consultant in the creation and preparation of our sensory-friendly performances. We're grateful for this valued partnership.

## What to expect at a sensory-friendly performance

Sensory-friendly theatre is an approach to the audience experience that “softens” the environment. What does that mean exactly? In general, we make the theatre available to everyone, including those who may need more flexibility to help manage all of the sensory experiences that come along with attending a performance. Below are some of the adjustments Children’s Theatre of Charlotte is making to create a more sensory-friendly environment tailored to each show:

- Lights in the theatre will stay low during the show, instead of turning all the way off.
- We will lower the sound levels when needed.
- We sell fewer tickets for the sensory-friendly performances so families have more room to move as needed.
- We provide fidgets, headphones and weighted toys to help children feel more organized and settled.
- Someone will be at the front of the stage with glow sticks to help give families a warning when sensory-rich moments are nearing. Raising one light means there’s a smaller sensory moment coming up (like a loud sound or a change in lighting). Raising two lights means a more intense sensory-rich moment is about to occur.
- We provide a quiet room if children need to leave the theatre to feel more settled or regroup during the show.

## Support materials for you

We provide several guides to help prepare your family for your visit:

The visit guide that walks your family through our facility.

The child guide goes with each performance.

The parent guide like this one helps parents support their children’s learning and experience in the theatre.

We want you to have the opportunity to enjoy the theatre with your family, so with that, please enjoy the show!

## Learning opportunities and sensory-rich moments in *Confessions of a Former Bully*



Meet Monica and Katie! They have known each other for a long time, but their friendship hasn't always been easy.....

*How do we define true friendship to kids?*

### **Sensory-rich moments:**

This show contains only soft music, soft environmental sounds/dings, and soft lighting shifts unless otherwise indicated in this guide. All will still be cued live throughout the show. There are also multiple opportunities for the audience to be part of the show! But remember, the stage is just for the cast - thank you for keeping everyone safe! :)



Uh-oh, Katie is in trouble with the principal, Mr. Sanders! Do you think Katie understands what she did wrong?

*How do we define bullying to children to help them really understand how their behavior impacts others?*

### **Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene contains door sound effects and a spotlight moment. There is also a school bell sound to transition into the next scene.



Take a look at Monica's side of the story. Do you think Katie will remember it the same way?

*It's important to listen when other people tell us how our actions made them feel - that's how we learn and grow!*

### **Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene introduces sound effects that move in and out of memories, and there is some audience engagement here. It also reenacts unkind bullying behavior to tell the story.



## Learning opportunities and sensory-rich moments continued



It's time for a check-in with Mr. Sanders.....

*How do we continue to walk alongside children after we've identified a problem?*

**Sensory-rich moments:**

There is a brief school bell sound in this scene.



Let's take a look at what happened with Katie's brother - how do you think this affected Katie's behavior at school?

*It is always important to consider the reason behind behaviors, especially when someone seems to be struggling!*

**Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene is more stimulating with some soft, consistent lighting shifts in the background and video game sounds. It is also more intense emotionally with a louder argument and an "oops" moment.



Monica is starting to understand Katie's behavior, but is Katie seeing the connections?

*We don't always realize how our world impacts our emotions and behavior.*

**Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene contains a brief chase moment and the conflict increases.



## Learning opportunities and sensory-rich moments continued



Monica shares how much worse things got between her and Katie. Is Katie starting to understand now?

*Stressful situations can cause physical symptoms - addressing them can help in more than one way!*

### **Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene contains escalated bullying behaviors, including physical aggression and threatening statements. There is also another audience engagement moment.



Monica tells her father what happened. Do you think he helped her feel better?

*How do we validate children's feelings and help them process through tough situations?*

### **Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene contains lighting shifts and a phone ringing briefly.



Katie is struggling, but she has a lot of people trying to help her understand how to change her behavior!

*Growing through change usually isn't easy, but it's worth the hard work!*

### **Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene contains soft lighting shifts.



## Learning opportunities and sensory-rich moments continued



Monica's dad tries again to help her work through her issues with Katie....

*Working through tough situations takes time, and our support is always adjusting along the way!*

**Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene transitions into the next with a longer school bell sound.



Monica takes a stand and sticks up for herself - do you think she was still kind to Katie?

*It's so important to talk about how we respond to bullying so we don't encourage the same behavior!*

**Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene transitions into the next with music.



Katie checks in with Mr. Sanders again. What changes do you see in her understanding of her behavior?

*Staying engaged and checking in with children over time is important to help build their resilience!*



## Learning opportunities and sensory-rich moments continued



The girls describe themselves to try to see how others might see them. How would you describe yourself to someone else?

*Listening to how children describe themselves can be so powerful, both for them and for you!*

**Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene contains lighting shifts and soft music.



Katie is finally able to express her emotions and motivation!

*The “why” behind actions is the most important thing when trying to make a change in behavior!*

**Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene escalates emotionally and contains some shouting, then transitions into the next scene with music and a school bell sound.



Katie meets with Mr. Sanders one more time. How do you think she has changed?

*We can only control our behavior, and we have to understand that we can never control someone else's reactions and responses.*



## Learning opportunities and sensory-rich moments continued



Katie and Monica have worked through a lot together. What do you think will happen with their relationship?

*Growing and changing for the better doesn't always mean that things go back to the way they were, and that's OK.*

### **Sensory-rich moments:**

This scene contains more bouncy ball play and transitions to the end of the story with lighting shifts and music.



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