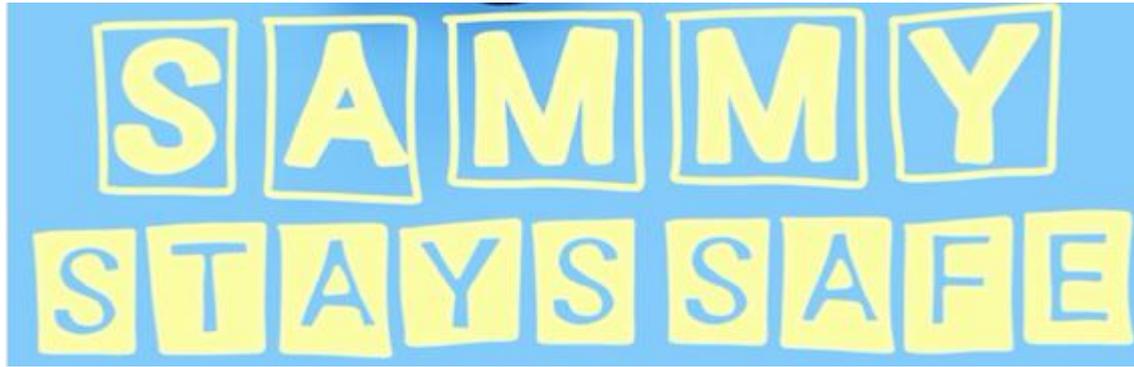


**BREAKING NEWS**

**COVID-19 STAYING SAFE**



**SAMMY  
STAYS SAFE**



Written by: Nicole Battaglioli, Anna Yaffee & Kathryn Yaffee

Illustrations by: Rahel Gizaw

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When Sammy was four years old, he thought there was a monster hiding under the bed. He imagined it was purple with green spots and he made sure to check under the bed each night before falling asleep.

**"I know you are afraid,"  
Mama would say, "But I will  
help keep you safe."**



**When Sammy got older he started going to school. He made so many new friends and was learning his ABCs and numbers.**





**He stopped thinking  
about the monster under  
the bed, and he wasn't  
afraid anymore!**

**One morning, Mama told him that school had been canceled that day. "Why aren't we going to school today?" Sammy asked.**

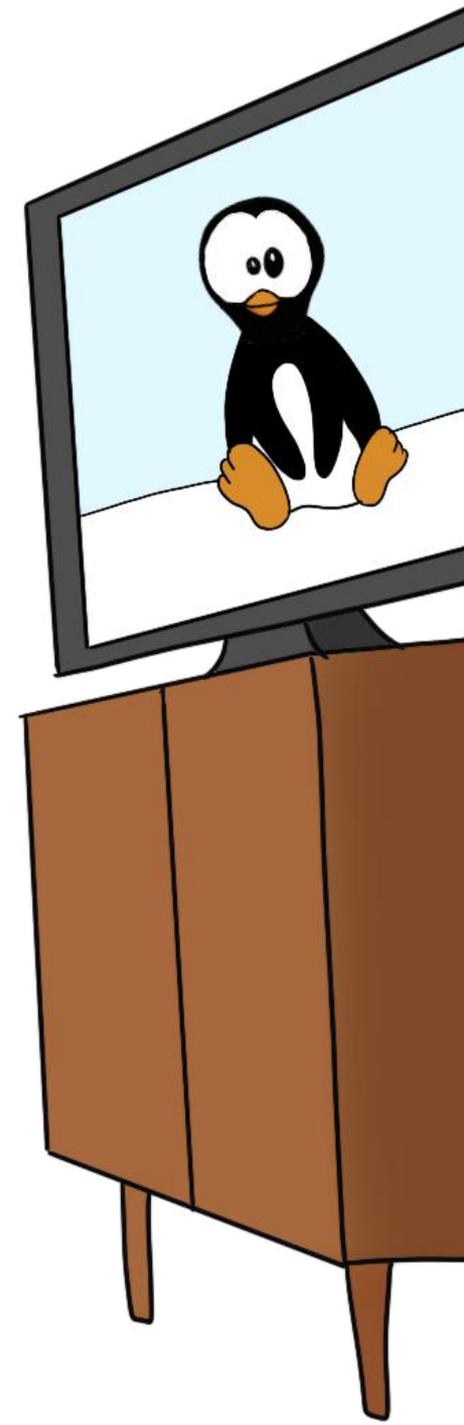


**Mama explained that there were many people who were sick with a virus called COVID-19, and that they had to stay home to help stop the virus from spreading.**



**At first, Sammy was so excited!**

**Even though it was warm outside, it felt just like a snow day.**



**He loved watching his favorite shows on TV and loved to play in the yard with his sister! They played basketball, looked for outdoor treasures, and used their roller skates!**

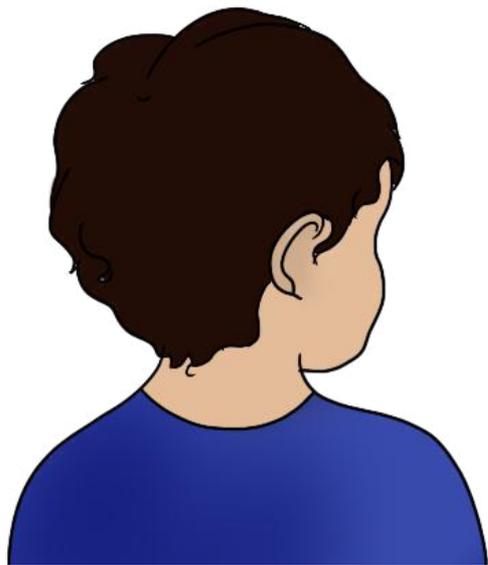


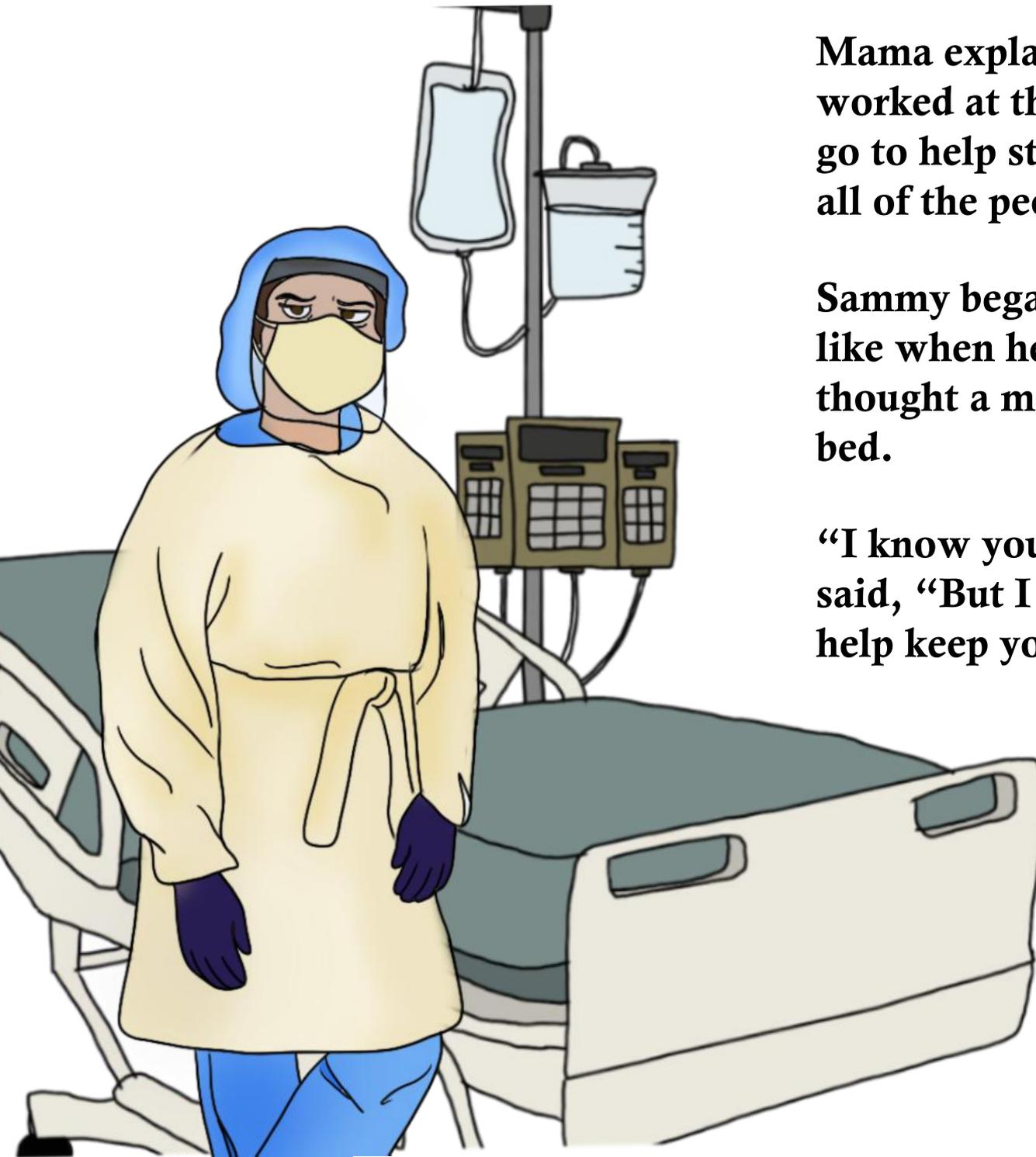
**But after a few days of staying at home, Sammy started to miss his friends, his teacher, and most of all... the class guinea pig, Tony.**



**One morning when Mama was getting ready to leave for work. Sammy felt confused.**

**"Aren't we supposed to stay home?" he asked.**





**Mama explained that since she worked at the hospital, she had to go to help stop the virus and help all of the people who were sick.**

**Sammy began to feel afraid, just like when he was younger and thought a monster was under his bed.**

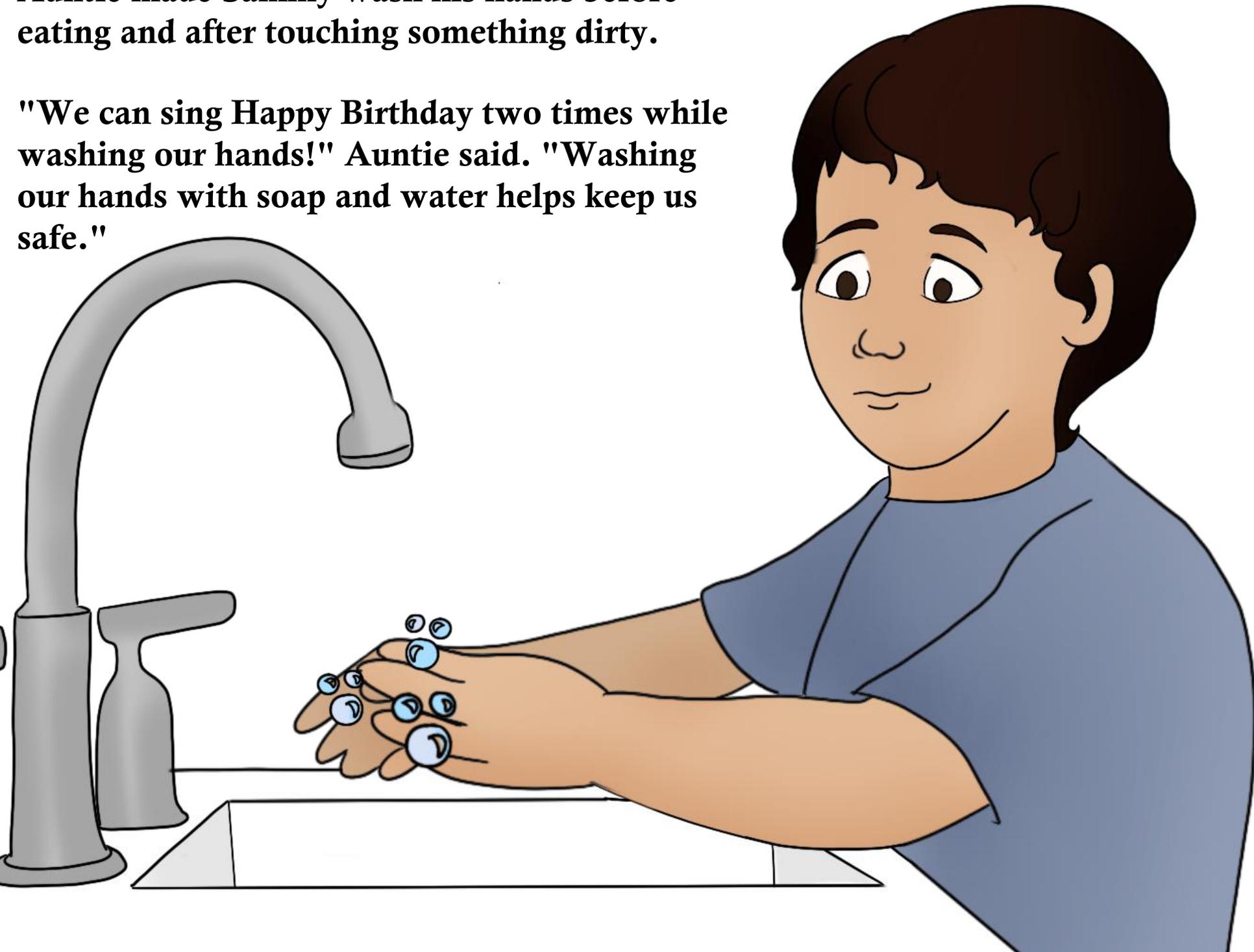
**“I know you are afraid,” Mama said, “But I am going to work to help keep you safe.”**

**Auntie came to stay with Sammy and his sister while Mama was at work. Auntie and Mama discussed daily routines of exercise, healthy food, and sleep and how they are important. Each day Auntie would try to teach them their daily lesson, but Auntie didn't always do things the same way his teacher did.**

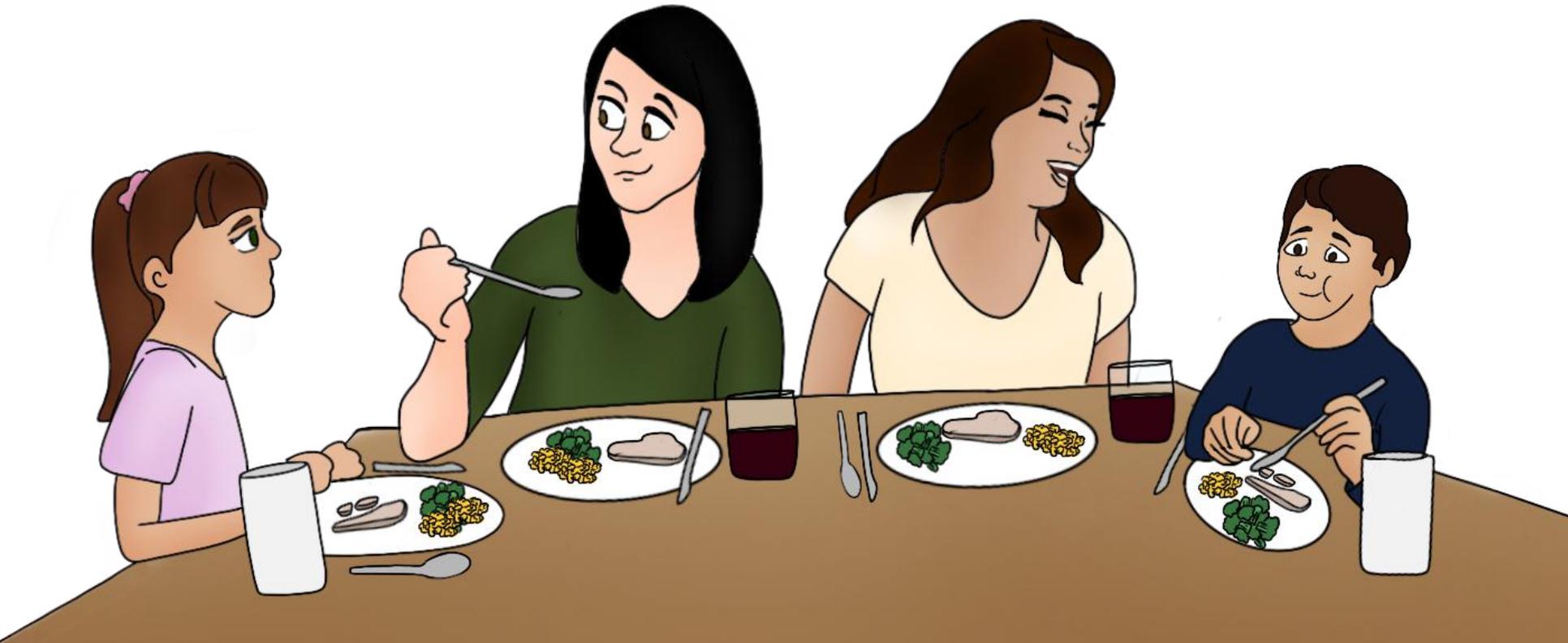


**Auntie made Sammy wash his hands before eating and after touching something dirty.**

**"We can sing Happy Birthday two times while washing our hands!" Auntie said. "Washing our hands with soap and water helps keep us safe."**



**Over dinner one night, Mama told him that he wasn't going back to school for the rest of the school year. She explained how staying home was working to keep everyone safe. We need to stay home a little bit longer to continue to help the virus go away.**



After dinner, Sammy was sitting in the living room playing with his favorite toy when he began to think about school. What about field day and the end of the year party? "Will I be ready for next year?" Sammy wondered.



Sammy's sister was loudly singing and dancing nearby. Sammy couldn't take it anymore! He threw his toy as hard as he could onto the ground and ran to his room.



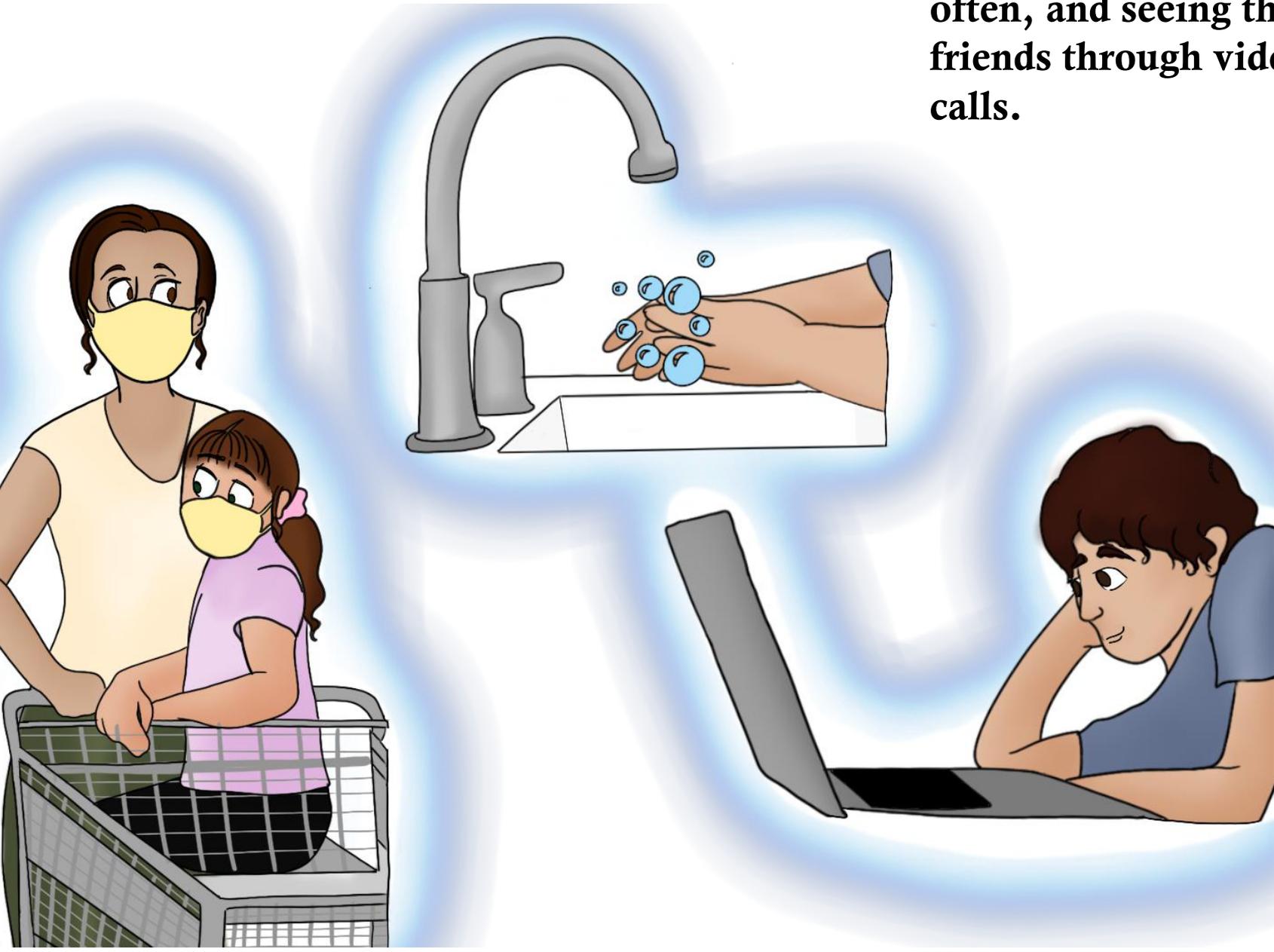


**Mama followed Sammy into his room and sat next to him on the floor. Mama listened while Sammy shared about how he missed his friends and teacher.**

**"Is this virus going to hurt us?" he asked. Mama told Sammy that a lot of people were feeling worried, scared and mad too. She explained to him that COVID-19 is a virus that can make people very sick, but doctors and nurses were working very hard to make those people feel better.**

**She reminded him how they have been doing things to help keep themselves safe like...**

**...wearing masks when they are out shopping, washing their hands often, and seeing their friends through video calls.**



**Then Mama taught him how to take deep breaths to help him feel calm. Sammy practiced taking a deep breath in through his nose and then slowly out through his mouth pretending he was blowing out his birthday candles.**



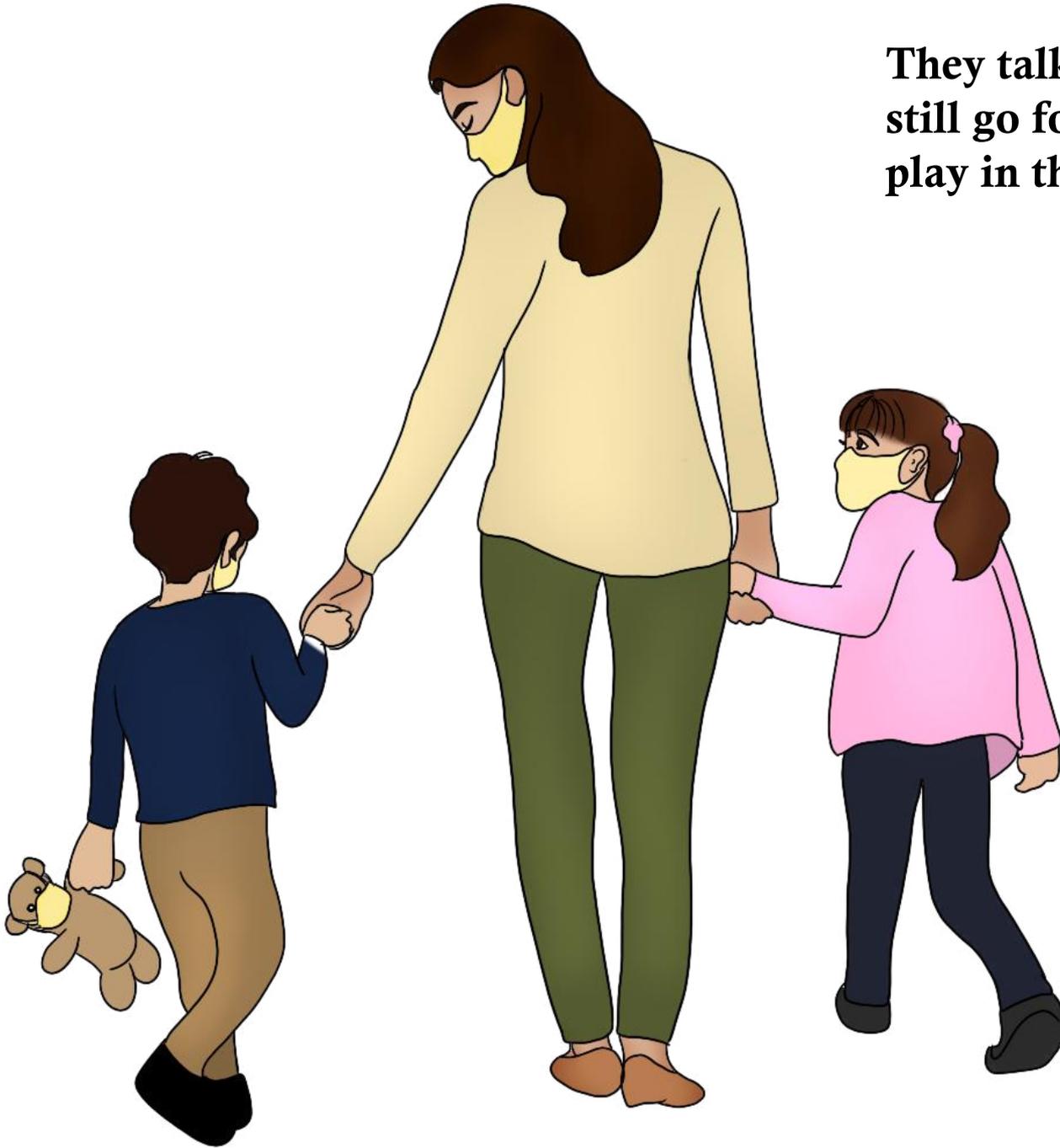


**Mama and Sammy talked about all of the things he could do to calm his worries, like picturing a relaxing place in his mind.**

**Sammy thought about his favorite tree in the park. In his mind, he saw the colors of the leaves, felt the cool breeze and heard the birds above. His worries about the virus began to feel far away.**



**They talked about how they can still go for walks as a family and play in the yard.**



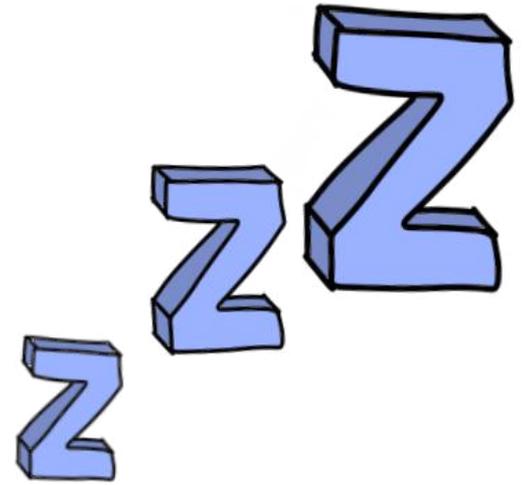
**Mama invited Sammy to practice yoga together in their living room. Sammy's sister joined them. Soon enough, they were all laughing together as Sammy toppled over onto the floor.**



**Before bed that night, Mama told Sammy that he could think about the happy memories he has and the new adventures they will have together. While Sammy was falling asleep, he thought about all of the things he would do when the virus went away.**

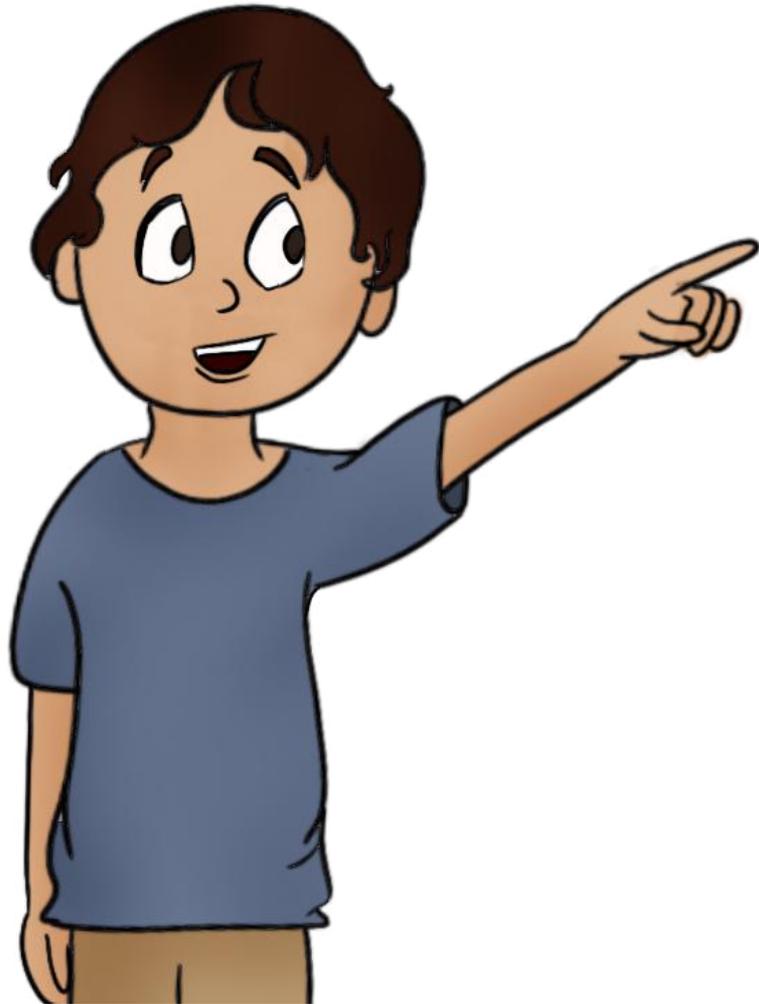


He pictured running with his friends at recess, going to his best friend's birthday party, and checking out books at the library. This made Sammy feel happy and excited! He smiled as he thought about petting Tony the guinea pig once again. Sammy felt safe as he drifted off to sleep.



## Sammy's Tips for Staying Safe

- Cover coughs and sneezes using the inside of your elbow, and wash your hands afterwards.
- Wash your hands often and especially after touching something dirty, for at least 20 seconds (you can count this time by singing Happy Birthday twice!)
- Try not to touch your mouth, eyes or nose with dirty hands.
- When you go outside, you can follow “social distancing” by staying at least six feet (the length of a big kid bed) apart from other people.
- If you are more than 2 years old, you can also wear a cloth mask over your nose and mouth when out in public to protect yourself and others.
- Ask an adult to help you clean things that are touched often like doorknobs and the bathroom sink.



# Mama Explains COVID-19



**Virus** - a tiny germ (too small to see!) that can make you sick.

**Pandemic** - when one type of sickness spreads to many parts of the world.

**COVID-19** - a new virus that was discovered in 2019 and has caused a pandemic in the year 2020.

## How can you catch COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spread between people by coughs and sneezes, or by touching something that someone sick also touched.

## What happens if you catch COVID-19?

Some people with COVID-19 don't feel sick at all, but many others feel a little sick with a cough, headache, sore throat, aches, or fever. A few people feel very sick and have to see a doctor, but this does not happen often for kids.

## How do doctors treat COVID-19?

Doctors may give someone sick medicine or special air to help them breathe. Your body is amazing and has its own system made of special cells to help you fight a virus. This is called the "immune system." The treatments that doctors give for COVID-19 will help your immune system have time to fight the virus.

## Tony's Relaxation Techniques



- Take deep breaths: Breathe in through your nose and slowly out through your mouth.
- Picture a relaxing place in your mind. Use your five senses (touch, taste, smell, sound, sight) to help you visualize it.
- Engage in “Progressive Muscle Relaxation:” Squeeze and relax your muscles one part of your body at a time. Search online for “relaxation videos for kids” and practice along.
- Get exercise: Do yoga, go for a walk, ride a bike, play your favorite sport, etc.
- Talk about your feelings: Share them with your family, friends, pets, or stuffed animals.



**Nicole Battaglioli** is an emergency medicine physician in Atlanta, Georgia. She has a special interest in diversity, inclusion and physician wellness. She loves walks outside with her husband and energetic toddler.



**Anna Yaffee** is an emergency medicine physician and epidemiologist in Atlanta, Georgia. She has a special interest in emerging infectious disease, global health, and emergency response. She enjoys exploring the world through travel and food.



**Rahel Gizaw** is an emergency medicine resident with a special interest in medical education through visual illustration. She is a proud Georgia bulldog and avid Jeopardy! fan.



**Kathryn Yaffee** is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Nashville, Tennessee. She enjoys teaching the children she works with coping skills similar to the ones Sammy learns in the story. She lives with her dog Oliver.