

Beyond Words with

Disney OUT OF MY MIND



DEAR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS,

Perseverance, self-awareness, and communication — your child has been exploring these important life skills with activities inspired by the new movie from Disney+, *Out of My Mind*. Ask your child to share some of their work with you.

OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

In *Out of My Mind*, Melody experiences many of the typical challenges all children face during the middle school years, struggles of friendship, social acceptance, self-awareness, and personal growth, all compounded by society's view of Melody's disability. Use the movie and the conversation starters below to talk with your child about these kinds of difficult situations.

- What are some alternative ways that Melody is able to express herself?
- Why is communication important, especially if we're having a difficult time with something going on in our lives?
- Tell me about a time that you persevered. (Share an example from your own life — at school, in a sport, or during another activity. Share the outcome and how you felt so that your child sees that it's something we all experience.)
- How can we help each other when we are facing a challenging situation and feel like giving up?

SEE WHAT I MEAN

In *Out of My Mind*, Melody can finally speak for herself when she gets an Augmented and Alternative Communication (AAC) device. With this device, she can finally tell her parents that she loves them — and finally show off her witty personality at school. With her father's help, she programs a special kids-only vocabulary into the AAC device, made up mostly of words her father has never heard and doesn't understand. Sound familiar? Improve communication with your child by exchanging words from each other's vocabulary that you don't understand. You could even create a generation-gap dictionary together!

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Sometimes it's hard to stay positive. In fact, telling someone to look on the bright side when they're having a hard time can even backfire. When your child is in a tough spot, practice showing support with positive affirmations. Let them know that you understand what they're going through and that you're there to help them work things out.

Using positive affirmations about our resilience or seeing obstacles as opportunity to grow can help us persevere as we try to reach goals, like the Whiz Kids in the movie striving to get to the next round in the competition. As a family, brainstorm an affirmation and adopt one as your family's go-to motto.

ABOUT *OUT OF MY MIND*

Melody Brooks, a sixth grader with cerebral palsy, has a quick wit and a sharp mind, but because she is non-verbal and uses a wheelchair, she is not given the same opportunities as her classmates. When a young educator notices her student's untapped potential and Melody starts to participate in mainstream education, Melody shows that what she has to say is more important than how she says it. *Out of My Mind* is available November 22, only on Disney+.

