Not Every Hurt is Visible.

Isaac's back at school after being in the hospital, but unlike Mia, he doesn't have a cast or crutches- he doesn't even look sick. An honest chat about their anxiety, worries, and pain- both visible and invisible- reveals that whether your body or your mind is hurting, sharing you feelings is part of the healing.

Different Kinds of Hurt: Isaac's Story

Written by Leigh Hallisey  Illustrated by Christina Kelly

www.mass.gov/isaacsstory
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Hey, Isaac!

Hey, Mia! What happened to your leg? Ugh, that looks painful!

I was in the hospital for a few days, so I'm staying after for math help.

But wait... I haven't seen you in, like, two weeks. Where've you been?

I broke it skateboarding and had surgery.

Actually, I was in the hospital, too. I was feeling pretty bad, so my Dad took me in.

The doctors said I should stay for awhile so they could help me feel better.
And they didn't give you one of these AWESOME leg casts?

It's a different kind of hospital. They help people who aren't feeling good, but it's more like your mind—

—your thoughts and feelings— that need to get healthy.

When I landed the wrong way, my leg bent at a weird angle. The pain felt like fire!

My friend called 911. How’d you know you needed to go to the hospital?
Sometimes I get stressed and nervous, about taking tests, or the news. But this was different.

I was shaking and I couldn’t breathe. I wouldn’t leave my room because I was afraid that I wouldn’t be safe.
It was scary.

They understood how I was feeling and listened—without judging me.

I'm glad my Dad took me to the hospital to get help.

My doctor, my therapist, and all the adults were awesome!

I see my physical therapist every week...
...to exercise my leg and make it stronger.

But the doctors said it might still hurt when I'm older, or even need another operation.

I asked my therapist the same thing.

He said that I won't always feel this way,

What if it never gets better?

...because I'm learning all of these ways to take control of my anxiety.
I worry about things, too...

Same!

...Like all the work and pressure to fit in at school.

I can’t wait to be a firefighter!

Yeah, sometimes I do wish I could skip over this ‘being a kid’ stuff, and be an adult now!
I have to be able to run and climb—

—what if my stupid leg gets in the way?

Okay, now I'm super anxious!

I want to be a teacher, but when I was in the hospital, I thought I'd never be able to.

What would the kids do if I stood there, shaking and sweating?

What if I missed classes because I was afraid to leave my house?
And... what are you thinking now?

That **nothing** is gonna get in **MY** way!

Everyone is going through something...

...and we shouldn't be afraid to be real with our friends.

I thought people just wouldn't want to deal with it.

But instead, they helped me feel better!
It's funny... everyone asks me how my leg feels, but I haven't talked to anyone about how I feel. It's really... nice!

Maybe we could text sometimes, just to, you know, check in about this "being a kid" stuff?

Sure! Hey, can I sign your cast?
20 YEARS LATER...