



Author Meggan Hill and Photographer Susan M. Graunke answer questions about their new children's book

Nico & Lola

Kindness shared between a boy and a dog

MEGGAN, WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO WRITE THIS BOOK?

I'm a mom. I love to read to my kids. It's especially exciting to see my kids' faces light up when I read something they love. I wanted to do that, write to that excitement level while at the same time writing about a character trait. The trait I chose was kindness.

MEGGAN, HOW DID YOU CHOOSE KINDNESS? DID YOU SEE THIS ACTUALLY DEVELOP BETWEEN NICO AND LOLA?

We all want our children to be kind. But when we say "be kind" or "be nice" to children, what does that mean? I wanted to write a book that would explain that giant concept to children.

SUSAN, WHY CHOOSE TO USE PHOTOGRAPHS? IS IT BENEFICIAL TO THE MESSAGE?

The photographs really make this book unique. They are vivid, bright and detailed. Kindness is such an abstract concept. Through the photographs you can actually see what kindness is: sharing, smiling, taking turns. Children can really identify with and learn from these two real characters in the story.

MEGGAN, HOW ARE CHILDREN RESPONDING TO *NICO AND LOLA*?

Children seem to love the story. It is thrilling when parents say their children asked for it again and again. We have had the opportunity to read this story to thousands of children throughout the country. They asked questions about this subject and it has provided us with many teachable moments about kindness and what it means to children.

SUSAN, HOW WAS IT PHOTOGRAPHING *NICO AND LOLA*?

It was very challenging. Nico and Lola had their own agenda and I was just along for the ride. I had to be in the right place at the right time. When I let them just interact, that is when I got the best pictures.

MEGGAN, WHAT DO YOU HOPE YOUR READERS GET OUT OF THIS STORY?

I really hope that after a reader closes the book; a child may turn to a parent and say, "Was I kind today?" Or maybe one can hope a parent or teacher will close the book and think to themselves, "I could have been kinder today." We hope *Nico and Lola* is passed on for many years to come.

Author
Meggan Hill



Photographer
Susan M. Graunke and "Lola"



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