With many thanks to the students, staff and professionals whose voices, stories and time made this project possible!

Thankyou!
I can't sleep

My stomach feels tight

What's going to happen...

I'm so nervous
Lee goes to School
Lee mouse, year 7 - First week of secondary school

It's so CROWDED

How does everyone know where to Stand and who to walk to class with?

It's really hard to focus...

OHH NO!

which way is my classroom??
Did I go up the stairs yesterday?

I can't remember

Oof

Hey!

Oh no

Oh no....
Hey... are you OK?

you look stressed out.

Do you need somewhere to go and calm down?
Ok, follow me

I get overwhelmed at school too sometimes especially when my timetable changes

But Mrs R lets us come to her office when we really need to
Mrs R?

The Art Teacher!

........

.......

Relieved.

Sigh...
use the quiet
to collect your
thoughts then go
to your lesson
when you feel
calm

OK?

OK.

Oh! my classroom is upstairs
I remember now

End.
OK Class! Did everyone get that last point?

I didn't...

There are so many new people around me I can't focus...

I really need a break... but I don't know the teacher...

What if they get angry and think I'm not trying...
I wish Alex was here... They'd know what to do.

We didn't talk a bit about teachers... what was it they said?

Most of them are OK once you explain you're struggling. With the nicer teachers we work out silent signals to let them know I need a break from class.
Sometimes when it's hard

Like sending up a Flare

you need a way to let people know you need help
Alex would probably tell me to say something now....

but I'd rather stay quiet...

RESOLVE

Please Miss!
I'm struggling, I think I need some time out of class.
Of course Lee! Take 10 minutes and try to carry on your work in a quiet place....

We can talk after class.

Thanks!

Wow, they actually listened.

I finished my work in the library, thanks Miss.

I’m glad you told me you were having trouble. Lee, not many 4th graders would be brave enough.

Brave, me? That’s a new thought.
The Art Room—Lunchtime

That squirrel's reading *Winters Claw*

I want to tell them I've read it too!

INSTANT ANXIETY
Alex, I need some advice.

What's up Lee?

How do I talk to someone I don't know?

If I want to start a conversation?

Well...

Oh! That's easy!

Pick a random thing about them and tell them you like it!

Random?!
Uhh....

I'm not sure that's—

You should pick something about them and tell them it's stupid.

That REALLY gets their attention.

I'm pretty sure that wouldn't—

No No!

Obviously the best way is to pointedly ignore them.

Then they'll find you fascinating.
Why do you want to talk to them Lee?

That's the silliest idea I ever heard.

It works!

Oh, well I saw them reading a book I really like and would like to chat about it.

Then just be honest and tell them that!

Really? Just like that?

It's worth a go.
Umm excuse me! I **LOVE** that book— who's your favourite **Character**??

? GASP

**OH MY GOSH** it's so good! My favourite is **Bitterfrost** who's yours?

I love Bitterfrost! She's so brave and she has the best backstory

My way still would have worked better.
What's going to happen...

It might be fun!
Silvi
New message
Hi! How ru--

......and I'll get to see my friends
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