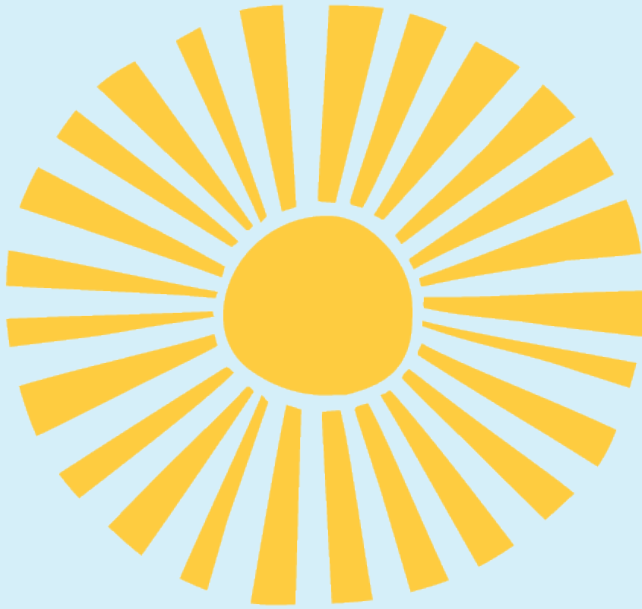


MY VOICE MATTERS

A SAFE PLACE TO TELL MY TRUTH



RYLEE TUGGLE
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To all of the children who trusted us with your stories, thank you for believing in us. For all the children we have yet to see, we look forward to earning your trust.

– From your friends at the Lakeshore Children’s Advocacy Center

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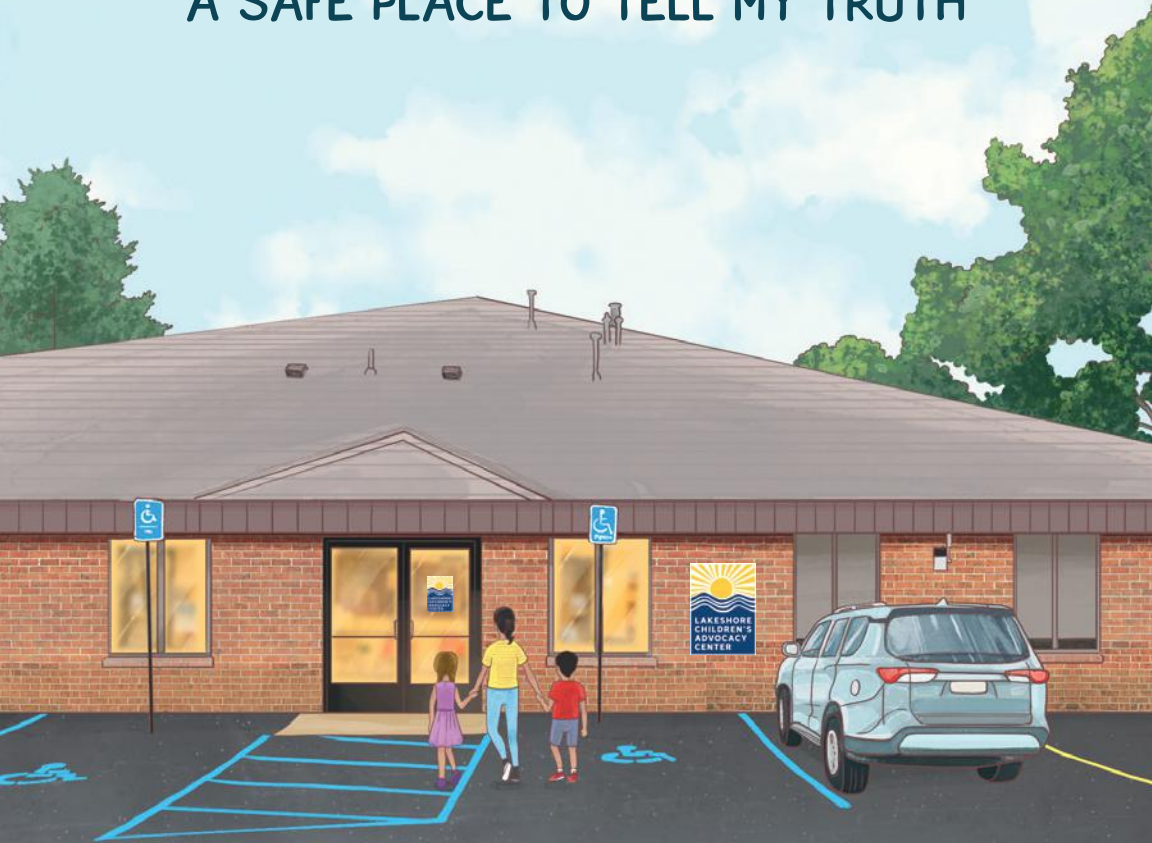
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This is a support tool. This is not a guarantee of the members assigned to your advocacy team. Your team may be comprised of different individuals than those listed in the book. Any names, genders, and resemblances of characters may differ from the people you work with during your multidisciplinary team process.

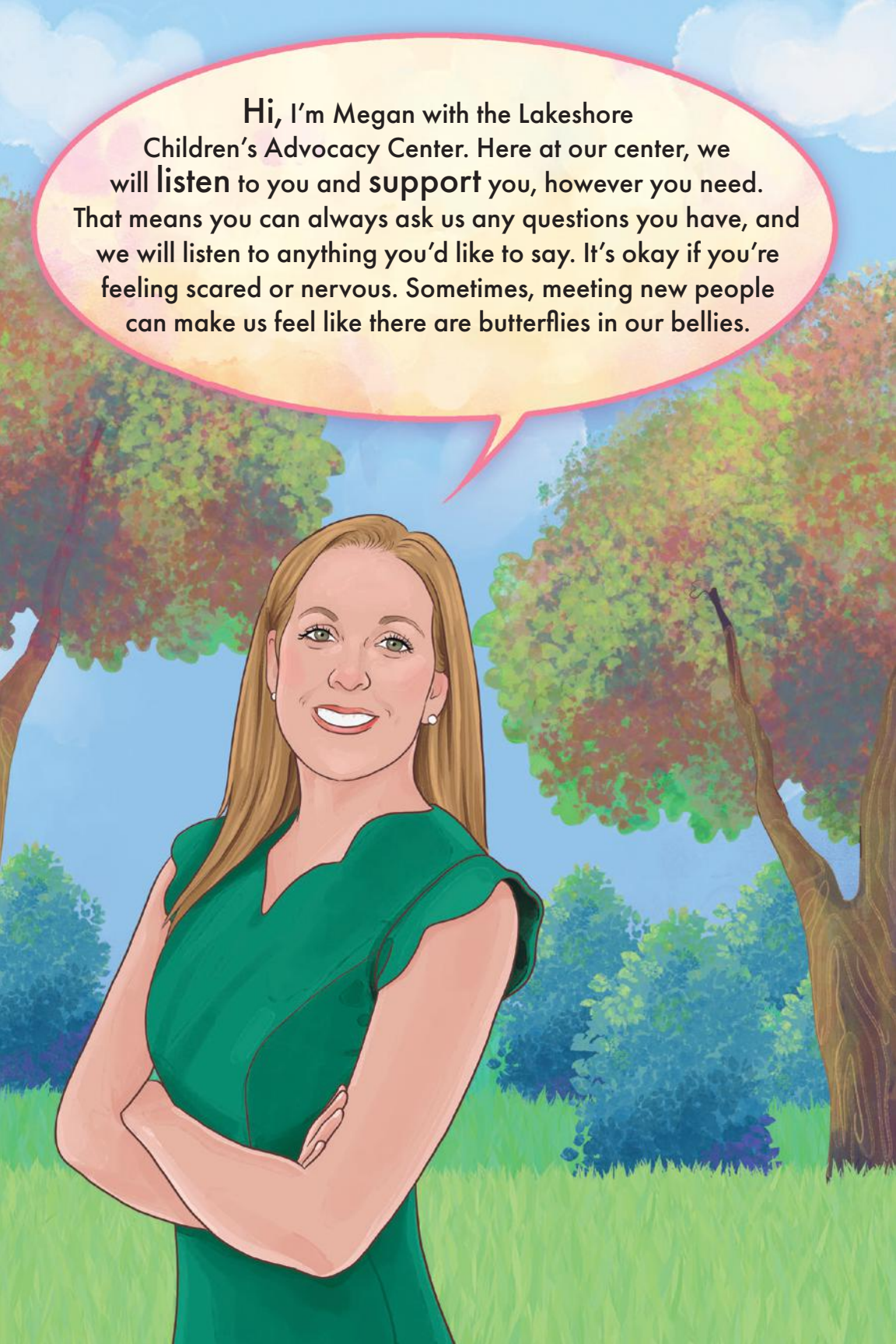
MY VOICE MATTERS

A SAFE PLACE TO TELL MY TRUTH



WRITTEN BY RYLEE TUGGLE

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENTIU GABRIEL DUMITRU



Hi, I'm Megan with the Lakeshore Children's Advocacy Center. Here at our center, we will **listen** to you and **support** you, however you need. That means you can always ask us any questions you have, and we will listen to anything you'd like to say. It's okay if you're feeling scared or nervous. Sometimes, meeting new people can make us feel like there are butterflies in our bellies.



I am going to tell you about some members of the team and what you will do when you visit the center. Your team is made up of **professionals** who work to keep you **safe**. Each of your team members has a special job, and they are ready to learn all about **you**.



These are your **advocates**, Traci and Chelsea. When you come see us, one of them will be here to welcome you and anybody you bring along. An advocate's job is to help make sure you feel **comfortable** and **safe**.



Your advocates will stay with you most of the time you visit with us. But when they are not with you, they will make sure you are **always** with someone from your advocacy team. When it's time for you to meet the next member of your team, Traci or Chelsea will stay behind with your caregiver. They help **support** your caregivers too!



Next, you'll see our talking room. There, you will meet Tina, or another one of the forensic interviewers. A **forensic interviewer** is someone who talks to kids. They ask questions and listen carefully to the answers. They listen carefully because **your voice matters**.



Tina has lots of questions for you, but she also knows you may not want to talk yet. When you are ready to talk, Tina will be ready to **listen** and **learn** more about you. You probably have rules you follow at your house or school. Tina will also have some rules to go over with you.



When you're done talking with Tina, Traci or Chelsea can help you get some toys or activities started. Then your caregiver will go to a meeting with your advocacy team. Don't worry, Traci or Chelsea will stay with you while the team meets.



Your advocacy team meets to make sure we take very good care of **YOU**. The team may meet with other people too, including a police officer. If you want to meet them, or have any questions, **you can always ask!**



Your advocacy team may recommend that you see some of our medical friends, like a **doctor** or **nurse**. Their jobs are to make sure **you** and **your body** are **safe**. Traci or Chelsea can make an appointment for you if your caregiver decides that's best for you.



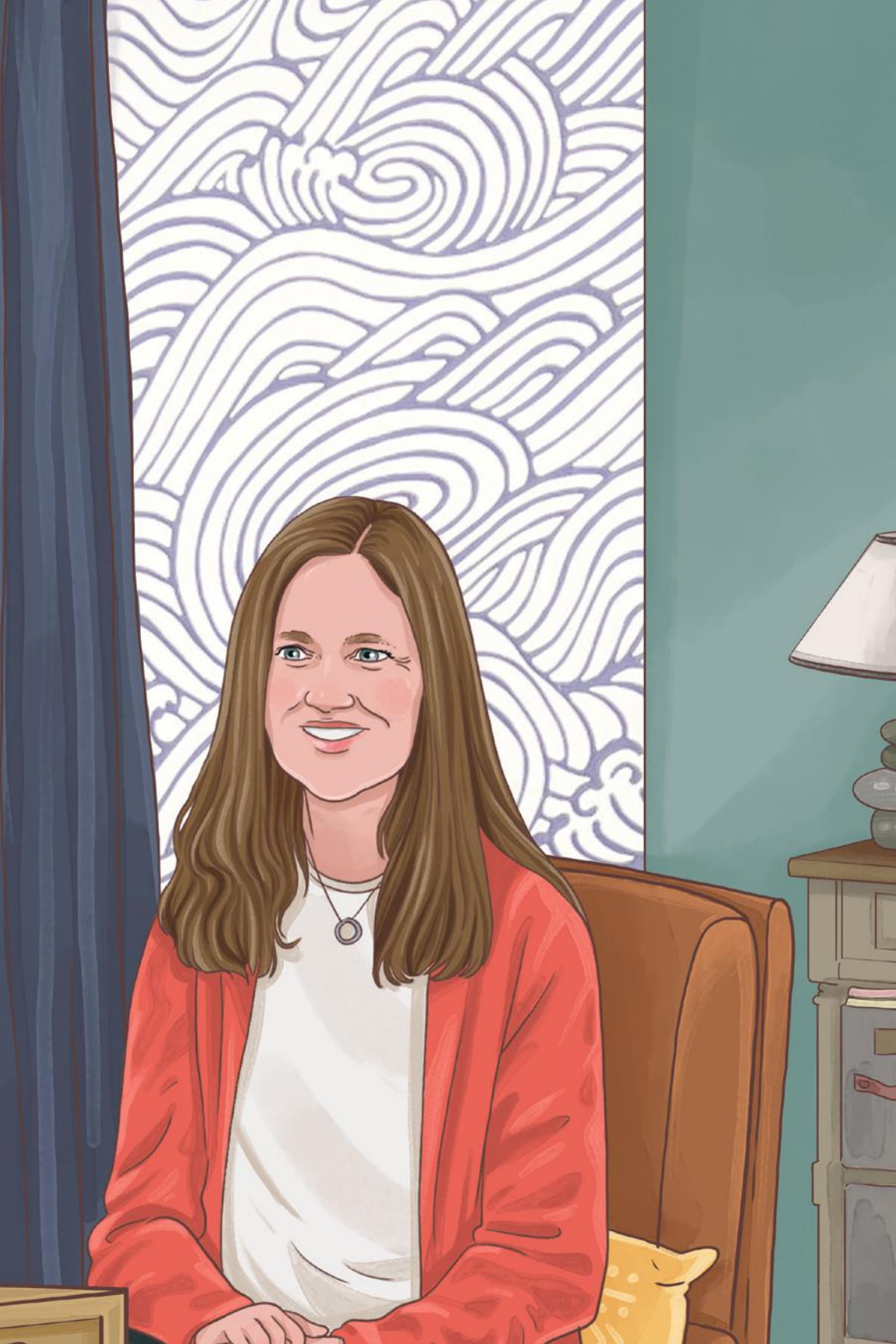
When you visit the **medical team**, you can ask them any questions about their jobs, your appointment, or your body.



After your visit to our center, you may feel like you need someone to help you understand your **feelings** and work through them. We have special **listeners** who will do just that! They are called **counselors** or **therapists**.

At the Children's Advocacy Center, our therapists are named Katie and Kelli. Their job is to listen to and support you and your family.





If you choose to come in to meet with Katie or Kelli, we have a special room where you or your family can talk with them and begin to work through your feelings.



The room is special because it's full of toys, games, and tools to help you understand and work through your emotions.



Remember, **all of us** on your advocacy team are here for **you**.
We are ready to answer any questions you have for us.
We can't wait to meet you and say **hello!**



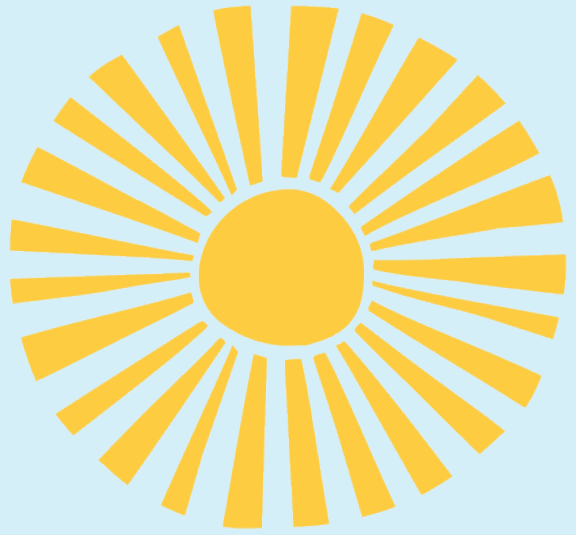


YOUR ADVOCACY TEAM

We are your advocacy team. We are here for you!
You can reach us anytime by calling the
Lakeshore Children's Advocacy Center at (231) 299-1400.



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This book was created in partnership with the Northern Michigan Alliance for Children (NMAC), an organization that provides healing, hope, and justice to abused children in rural Michigan. It was their dream that the book could be replicated to help children across the world. If you have an organization in mind that might benefit from having their own customized copy of this book, please visit www.mikids.org/book or www.booksbyrylee.com/my-voice-matters.





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