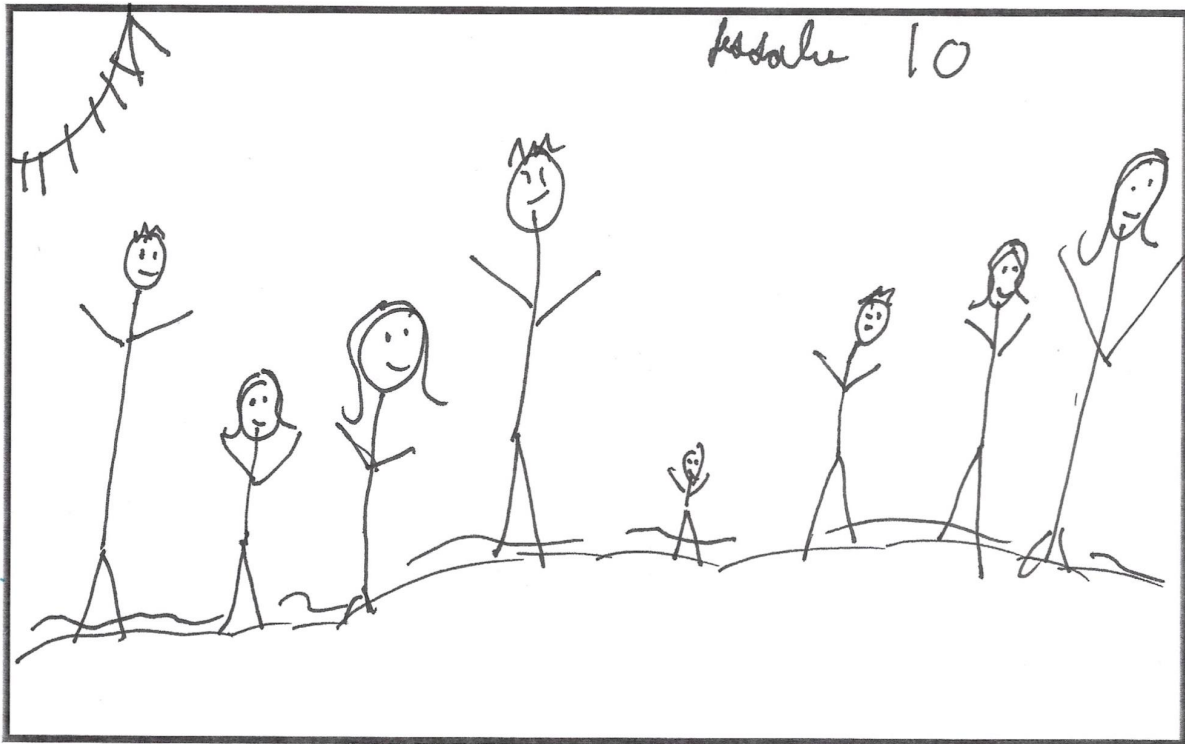


Becoming Us

A Collection of Poetry and Prose
From the Students, Parents, and Staff
Pellston Elementary School



December 2022

Introduction

We hope you enjoy the pages that follow. Most of the poems are written by first time authors. This collection brings together the voices of parents, students, and teachers from our school community.

For six weeks in the fall of 2022, 16 parents and 8 teachers came together to write about their children, their teaching, and their lives. We read and responded to children's literature and shared many stories.

Our hope is that ***Becoming Us*** evolves into an ongoing journal of poetry and prose. To work with so many dedicated and talented parents and teachers was a rewarding and renewing experience for us all.

Shari Saddison & Becky Bigelow
Family Literacy Project Leaders Fall 2022

Our Family Literacy Project was funded with a special grant provided by the following organizations:

The National Endowment for the Humanities, Building a More Perfect Union Pandemic Recovery Grants for Humanities Organizations;

The National Writing Project;

The Foundation for Teaching and Literacy;

The Top of the Mitt Writing Project;

Little Traverse Regional Historical Society; and

North Central Michigan College



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES



Little Traverse Regional Historical Society



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I Am

Parents and teachers create poetry and prose to reflect on their own “coming of age” while finding their place and space in the world.



Mabel

Loud, weird and full of light.

Video games, skiing and socializing.

Her silly giggles are contagious.

Mabel

A Cinquain Poem About My Son
By Julie Wonnacott

Gavin

stubborn, loving

baseball, dancing, brother

rocking an extra chromosome

Gavman



The Ocklet's
Funny, carefree
Chasing chickens around
The sun and wind flows through your hair
Goofballs!

I Am Poem
By Mary Ocko

I am sweet & kind
I wonder always of young love
I see the beauty of ordinary things
I want peace and happiness in the whole world
I am a loyal capricorn

I pretend flowers grow constantly
I feel freedom outside walking my dog
I touch my children's faces
I worry my kids watch too much tv/phone
I cry at the end of good books
I am a conversation

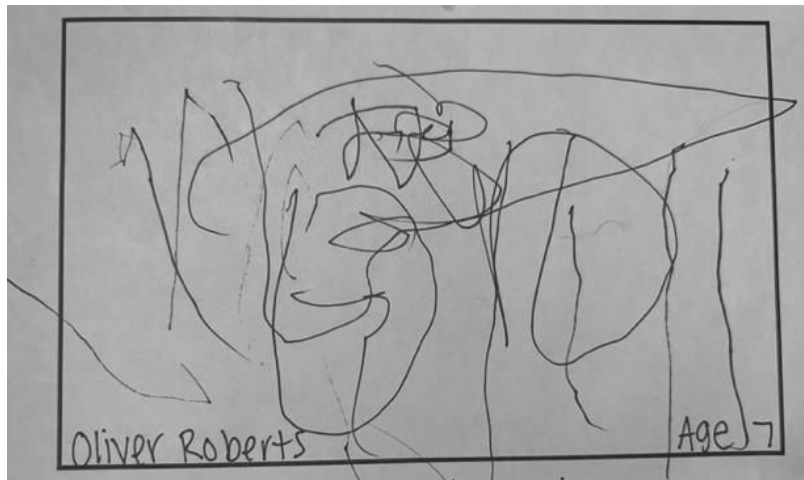
I understand my small world
I say magic
I dream beyond Pellston
I try new places and trails
I hope to leave only footprints
I am Oliver, Alaina, Linora, and Eli's mom

I Am

Shari

Passionate, determined, stubborn, creative
Sister to Kary and Ray
Lover of Wilson and Stella
Who feels anxious and worried
Who needs more time, walks, and vacation
Who fears Halloween and wind
Who gives patience
Who would like more kid voice
Resident of Northern Michigan
Saddison

Alicia
Fire and Ice
Strong willed outspoken and loving
Affectionate-she will take the world by storm
Alicia beacon of light.



I Am Poem By Tay Roberts

I am Tay.
I am loving, friendly, caring and passionate.
I am a relative of Mother Nature.
I am a lover and a believer who feels every emotion;
Who feels to be loved and heard often and who fears losing
loved ones.
Who gives even when I have nothing to give.
Who would like to be stress-free. I am a resident of Alanson.
I am Tay Roberts

I Am

By: Melanie Greenier

I am strong and loving
I wonder about everything
I hear more than I want
I see my family and loved ones
I want more for my kids
I am tired but motivated

I pretend to be a dragon with Kyah
I feel many emotions
I touch my family's hearts
I worry about more than I need to
I cry when I feel overwhelmed
I am happy

I understand, that is my strong suit
I say encouraging things
I dream about the future
I try my hardest
I hope to accomplish my goals
I am proud of the growth I have made

John

John,

loving, quiet

observant, brave, adventurous

horse rider

FUZZY

Nellie

Nellie,

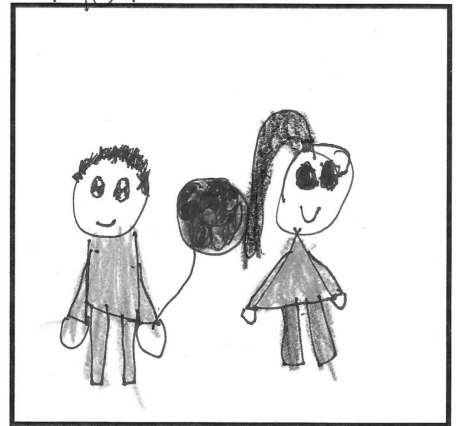
kind, sensitive

sweet, happy, helpful

animal lover

GOOTS

nellie



Baran

Baran,

smart, sweet

loud, excitable, good natured

resident paleontologist

BABY DUDE

MATELSKI
MARYON



Maryon

Maryon,

affectionate, compassionate

snuggly, fun, energetic

momma's baby

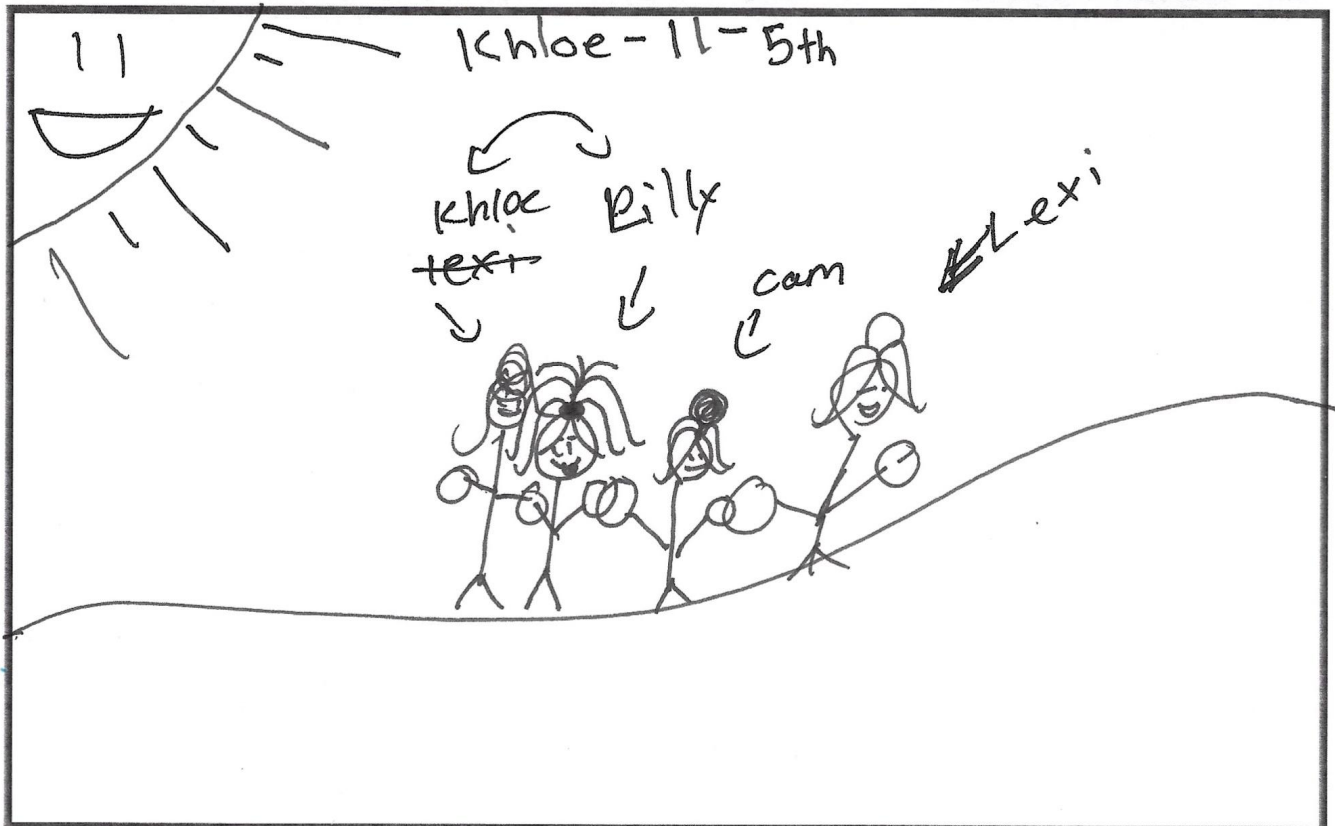
PUKA-SHELL

Khloe
Sensitive, Bossy
Helpful, Flexible, Kind
She keeps me going
Khloe

Lilly
Bossy, Attitude
Helpful, Lovely, Sweet
Keeps me on my toes
Lilly

Breydon
ADHD, Autism
Helpful, Kind, Lovely
Pushes me to keep going
Brey

Jaceson
Attitude, Bossy
Helpful, Lovely, Pushes buttons
Tests all my buttons
Jace



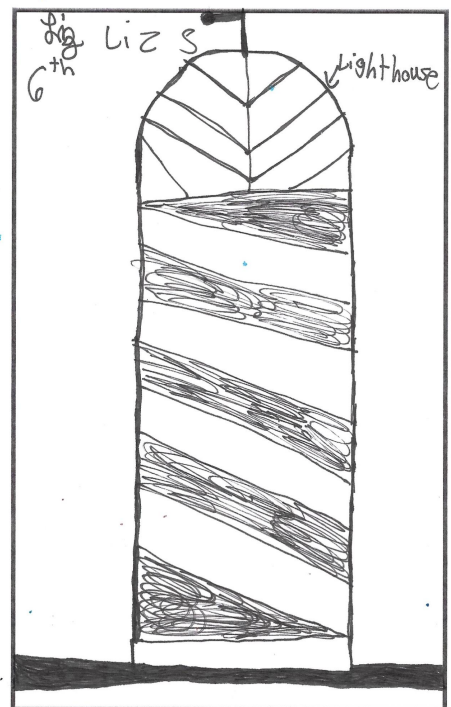
I AM

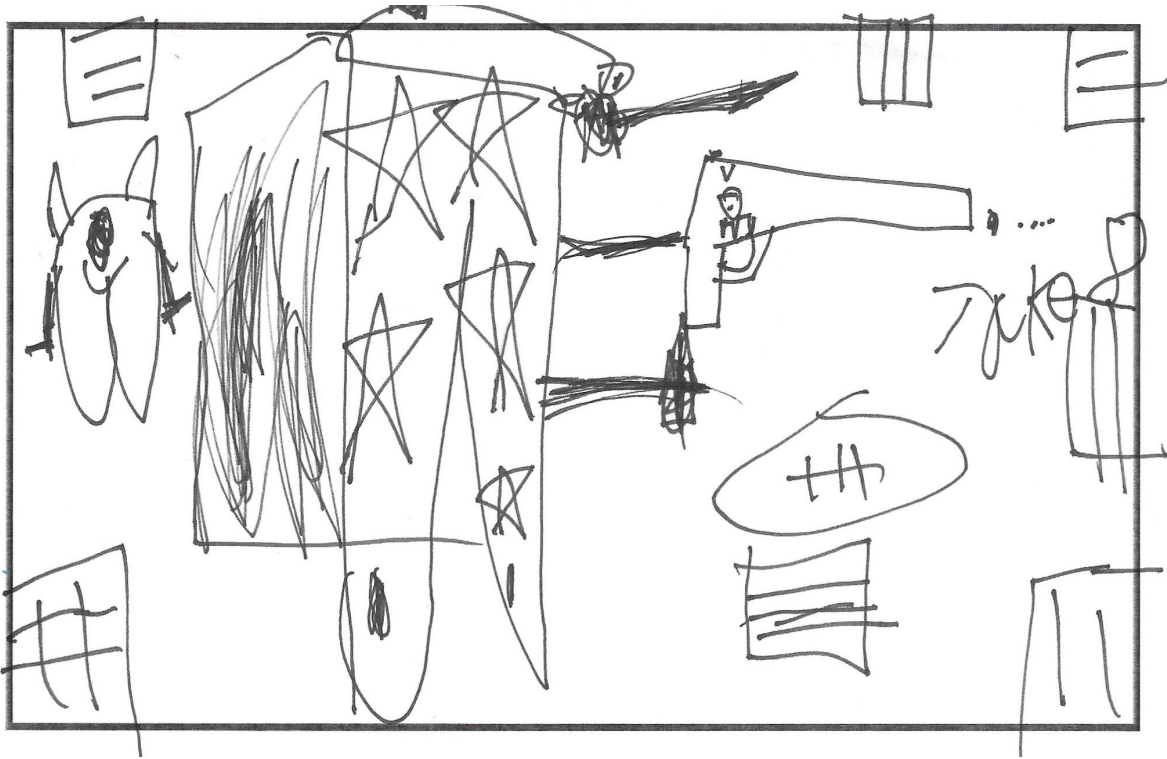
by Lois Cook

I am a mother
I wonder if people can see me when I can't
I hear music everywhere I go
I see my daughters daily grow
I want the best for them
I am a mother

I pretend to be ok most days
I feel the eyerolls when they walk away
I touch the toys left out to play
I worry about them all day
I cry when they cry
I am a mother

I understand when they hurt
I say "Mom loves you always"
I dream big for them
I try my hardest for them
I hope my daughters understand
I am a mother





Jessalee

Animal lover

Kind, caring, thoughtful friend

Determined to always look on the
bright side of life

Jessa

Jake Kline

Energetic

Joyful playful, loving

Trick pulling, joke telling
comedian

Jakers

Tammy

Strong, faithful, compassionate, loving

Relative of native Islanders

Lover of my dog and children

Who feels deeply for those who struggle

Who needs hugs

Who fears tornados, crescent rolls, balloons

Who gives courtesy to others

Who would like to travel to Greece

Resident of Petoskey

VanAntwerp

I am Poem

Written by: Ashley Bickes

I am a wife, a mother, a friend.
I wonder what the future will bring for my family.
Who will my children grow up to be?

I hear our world at war,
but also the voice of those who will be our future leaders
and I'm encouraged.

I see beauty in nature and the wonder and excitement of
my children as they experience it.

I want... EVERYTHING!!! Happiness, love, adventure, and
loved ones to share it with.

I am many things including those I have yet to discover.

I pretend everything is ok, even when it's not.

I feel others pretend this too, and it gives me comfort in
comradery.

I touch hearts, I hope, this makes me feel good.

I worry I'm not good enough, but my family loves me and
this lessens the worry.

I am everything I need to be.
I am Ashley Layne Bickes

Nana
Tough mommy's girl
Happy, smiley, giggles
Growing, but always my baby
Butt butt

Bella
Unique, vivid
Gaming, singing, dancing
Sweet as can be, but super shy
Beezy

Lizzy
Spunky, social
Cheer, wrestling, sports
Tough as nails, but soft-hearted too
Boo Girl



I am

Written by: Emily Hahn

I am a warm hearted person who cares about everyone

I wonder if I am doing things right.

I hear untrue rumors that I try to ignore.

I see the struggles everyday that I have to conquer by myself.

I want to strive for success

I am a great mother of two and a wonderful fiance.

I pretend sometimes that I don't care but I really do

I feel unsure about somethings

I touch the hearts of a lot of people

I worry about the future of my children and myself

I cry when I feel like a failure and when I mess up

I am doing the best that I can do with what I have.

I understand I am not perfect.

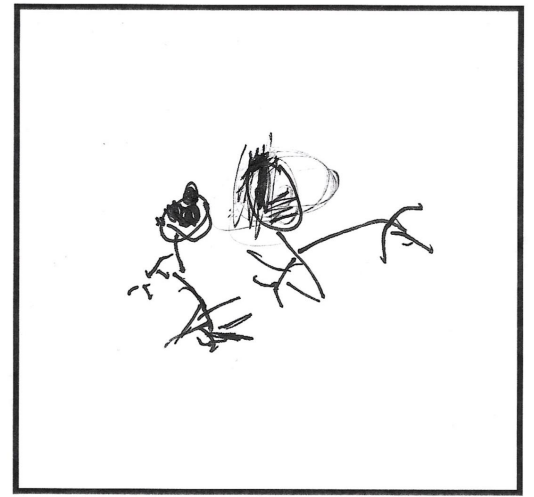
I say that I am ok when I really am not

I dream I could make the world a better place

I try to be helpful to everyone

I hope I am the best mom and fiance that I can be

I am not a perfect person



Leah

Bright, easy pleaser

Helpful, kind and always smiling

She is always trying to please adults and we love her so much

(Angel) Bellmer-Hahn

Le d h.

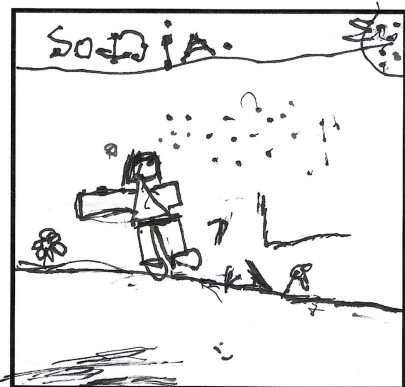
Sofia

Intelligent, cheerful

Energetic, helpful, silly

She is a very smart girl and we love her

(Princess Monkey) Bellmer-Hahn



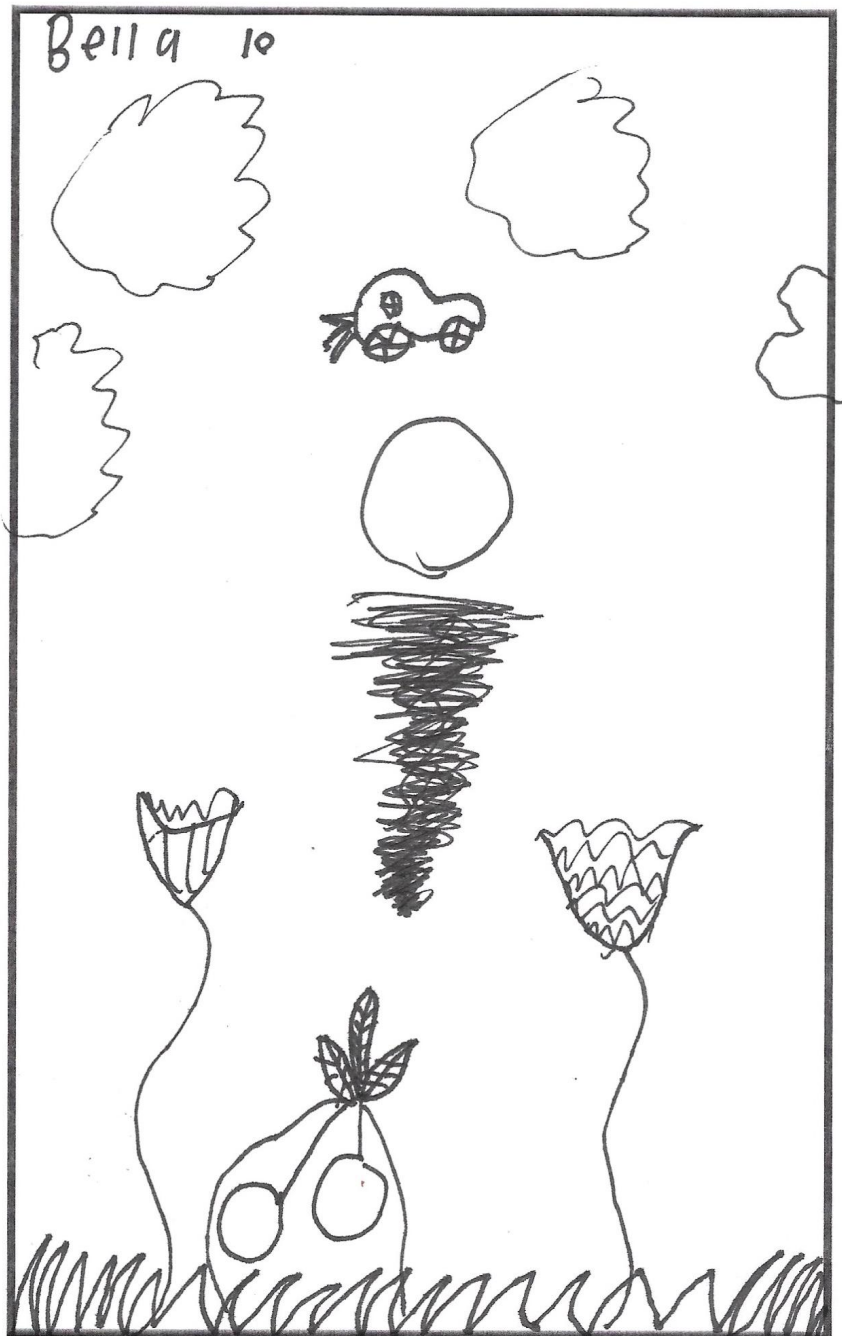
I Am Poem
By Tay Roberts

I am friendly.
I wonder about the unknown.
I hear the birds and the wind.
I see all of my surroundings.
I want to always be happy and free.
I am loving and kind,
I pretend that my life is perfect sometimes.
I feel overwhelmed at times.
I touch the sand and water underneath my feet.
I worry about my children's future.
I cry when I am sad.
I am caring.
I understand that life is short,
I say 'I love you' often.
I dream about the future.
I try to be positive.
I hope to live a long and happy life.
I am Tay.

Becky
Kind, driven, passionate, loving
Daughter of Jack and Marlene, mother of Owen and Eli
Lover of beaches, books and sunsets
Who feels overwhelmed by the chaos of life
Who needs alone time and ice cream
Who fears death coming too soon
Who gives everything she has into everything she does
Who would like a cure for epilepsy
Resident of Gaylord
Bigelow

Becoming Me

Our poetry shows reflections on life.



Becoming Me

By Tay Roberts

Once I was a curious and innocent girl, now I am a strong and independent woman.

Once I lost my Dad and lost my way, but then I found myself again through the pain.

If I could have one wish, it would be to see him one last time to tell him how much I missed him since he has been away.

If I could change the world, the world would see that we are all different and that is how it is supposed to be.

Once I couldn't climb out of a dark hole but now you should see me climb mountains.

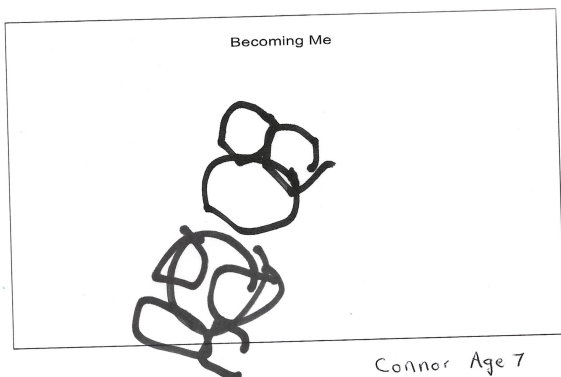
I used to feel lost and alone, but now I know that I am not alone nor am I lost anymore.

The one thing that I have learned is to love hard, life is FRAGILE. Once I was an innocent girl, but now I am a strong woman.

Becoming Me Remington

Once I was 7 years old
Now I am 8 years old
Once I lost a lego
But then I found lego piece
If I could have one wish, it would be tall.
If I could change the world, the world would see more trees.
Once I couldn't touch my feet.
But now you should see me taller.
I used to feel humble.
But now I know how my feet don't feel humble,
The one thing I've learned is horses are fast.
Once I was baby,
But now I am a child.

Once I was a monster now I am spoiled
Once I lost a tooth and then found my
safe spot.
If I could have one wish it would be to
scare people
If I could change the world, the world
would see kindness
Once I couldn't talk
But now you should see run
I used to feel scared
But now I know mom and dad love me
The one thing I learned is school is fun
Once I was mommy's baby
But now I am brave



Connor Griffith 1st grade

Becoming me

By: Heather

Once I was a people pleaser

Now I am strong

Once I lost hope

But then I found family/love

If I could have one wish, it would be for everyone to have
everything they need/desire

If I could change the world, the world would see more nature,
kindness, & smiles

Once I couldn't open up

But now you should see me sharing

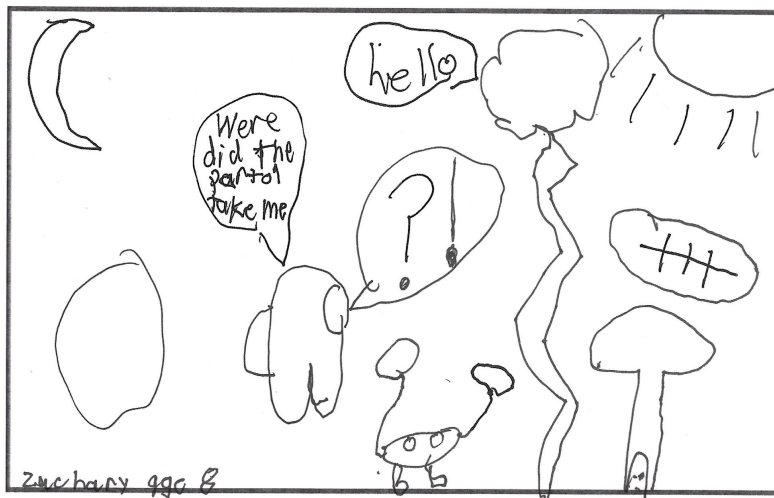
I used to feel helpless

But now I know people who help

The one thing I've learned is always say what's on your mind

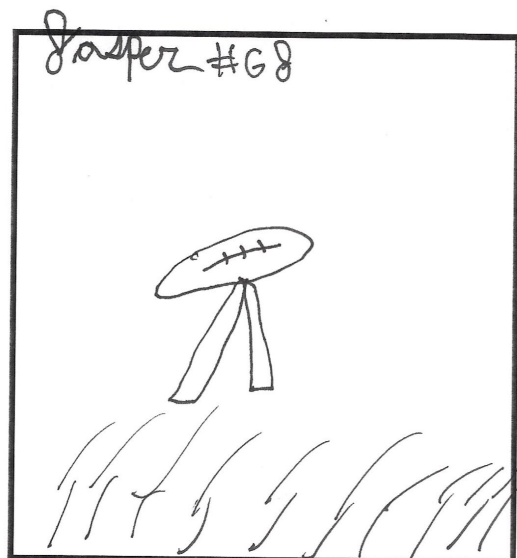
Once I was broken

But now I am whole.



Becoming Me
By Mabel Roberts

Once I was eight.
Now I am nine.
Once I was lost a bird.
But then I found another one.
If I could have one wish, it would be for infinite robux.
If I could change the world, the world would see how long people live.
Once I couldn't snowboard.
But now you should see me ski.
I used to feel bored.
But now I know you can do things.
The one thing I have learned is why pen caps have holes in them.
Once I was eight.
Now I am nine.



Becoming Me

By: Kenzi Giannini

Once I was six

Now I am seven

Once I lost my tablet for a week

But then I found other things to do.

If I could have one wish, it would be to have no parents for a week.

If I could change the world, the world would see pizza falling from the sky.

Once I couldn't play the xbox

But now you should see me build things.

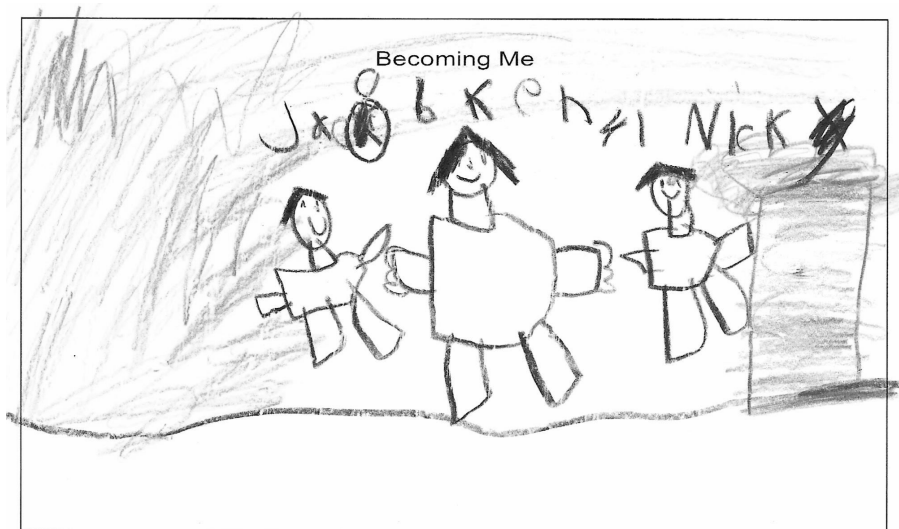
I used to feel lonely

But now I know how to be friendly

The one thing I've learned is how to do math

Once I was six

But now I am seven.





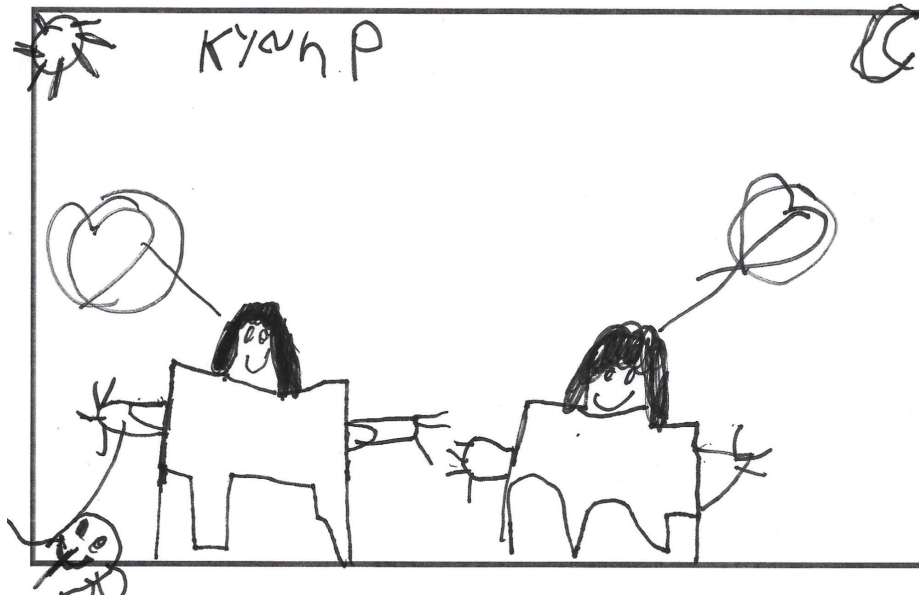
Taylor Noel age 10

Becoming Me
By Taylor Noel

Once I was happy
Now I am very happy
Once I lost and was scared
But then I found Mom
If I could have one wish, it would be to have a lot of slime
If I could change the world, the world would see more magic
Once I couldn't do math
But now you should see me doing math
I used to feel anxious
But now I know how to make slime
The one thing I've learned is how to make slime
Once I was nervous
But now I am excited

Becoming Me
By Melanie Greenier

Once I was young and free
Now I am young and overworked
Once I lost my imagination
But then I found it when I became a mom
If I could have one wish, it would be more time in the day for
work and freedom
If I could change the world, the world would see compassion and
justice
Once I couldn't read
But now you should see me reading as much as I can
I used to feel misunderstood
But now I know the world is like that
The one thing I've learned is you have to have some level of
acceptance
Once I was young and free
Now I am a wonderful mom

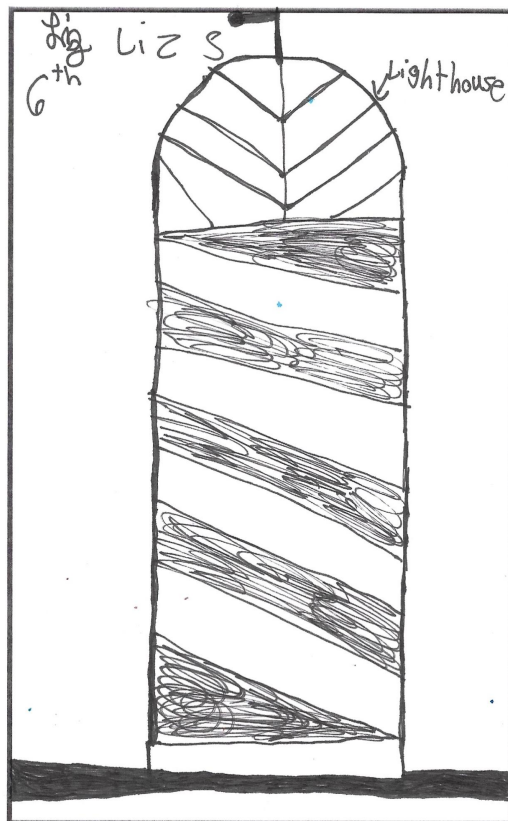


Becoming Me
By Kyah Greenier

Once I was so tiny
Now I am growing so big
Once I lost my dog Ally
But then I found him down the road
If I could have one wish, it would be the world would be made of fidgets
If I could change the world, the world would see how beautiful
everyone is
Once I couldn't read very good
But now you should see me read to my mom
I used to feel like school was hard
But now I know I am learning lots of stuff
The one thing I've learned is to be nice to others, have fun, be the very
best friend I can be!
Once I was sad because I couldn't read very well
But now I am proud and happy I can read

Becoming Me
Lois Cook

Once I was sitting in an office, meeting my new parents
Now I am a mother of 3
Once I lost myself to depression
But then I found a light shining through
If I could have one wish, it would be that no child felt the sadness of a foster child
If I could change the world, the world would see everyone equally
Once I couldn't be on anyone's team
But now you should see me coach my cheer team
I used to feel lost and lonely
But now I know I'm here for a reason
The one thing I've learned is to stop being hard on myself
Once I was lost in my own darkness
But now I am shining my own light.



Becoming Me
By: Miss Whittaker

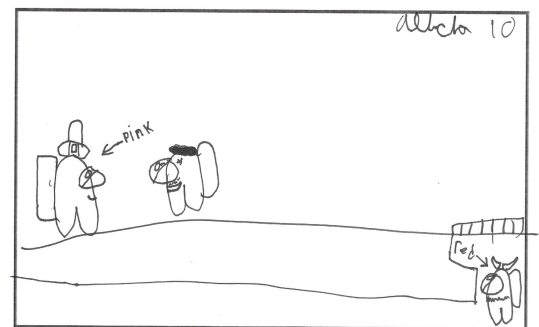
Once I was a Dreamer
Now I am living that Dream
Once I lost myself
But then I found a better me

If I could have one wish, it would be for healthy lives to all
If I could change the world, the world would see no flaws

Once I couldn't find motivation
But now you should see me make a difference
I used to wonder what my purpose was
But now I know it is to impact others
The one thing I've learned is to always keep growing

Once I was a dreamer
But now I am living that dream

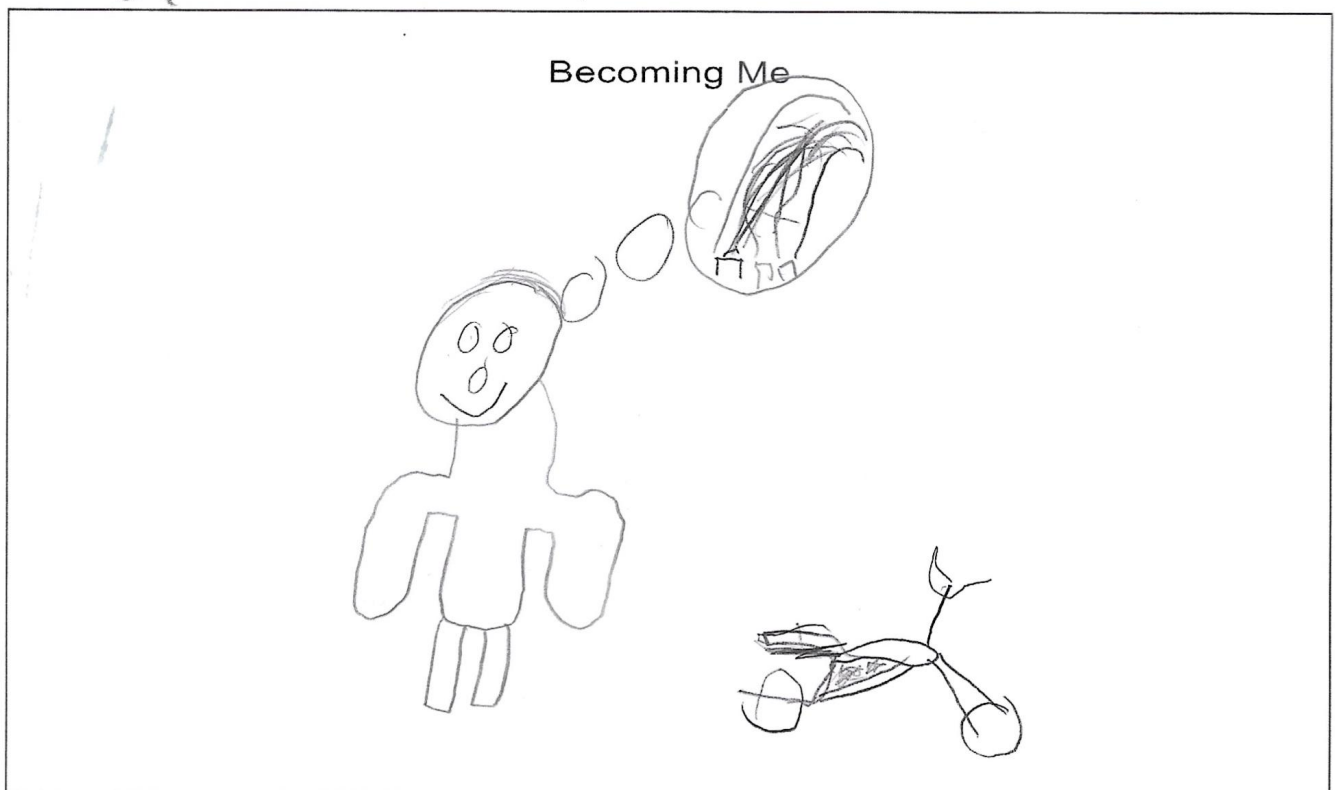
Becoming Me
by Shari Saddison



Once I was nervous and scared
Now I am brave
Once I lost my confidence
But then I found learning and determination
If I could have one wish, it would be for kids to have a bigger voice
If I could change the world, the world would see more kindness
Once I couldn't face my fears
But now you should see me speak in front of others
I used to feel anxious
But now I know mindfulness
The one thing I've learned is children can change the world
Once I was stressed
But now I write everything down

Becoming Me
By Bryce Noel

Once I was happy
Now I am excited
Once I lost being outside
But then I found my home
If I could have one wish it would be no scary people to come here
If I could change the world, the world would see more turtles
Once I couldn't do a front flip on the trampoline
But now you should see me do one
I used to feel lonely
But now I know more people
The one thing I've learned is to stand up in loose dirt when I race
Once I was on the mini track
But now I am racing on the big track



Bryce Noel age 8

Becoming Me

By Leah Bellmer Hahn

Once I was a quiet newborn

Now I am a sassy, independent, and smart kid

Once I lost how to communicate with words

But then I found teachers who knew how to help me

If I could have one wish it would be to become the best kid I can be

If I could change the world the world would see a change to reduce
bullying

Once I couldn't read, write, or communicate

But now you should see me, I can do it all

I used to feel scared, shy, and weak

But now I know I can confide in adults

The one thing I've learned is to take my time and listen to my
teachers

Once I was 7 pounds 15 ounces 19 inches long and a sick NICU baby

But now I am 55 pounds healthy and in 3rd grade

Becoming me

By: Emily Hahn

Once I was my parents hermit crab who didn't want to be on my own

Now I am on my own and have my own little family

Once I lost all trust in people

But then I found the love I have needed that I can trust

If I could have one wish it would be to relive my childhood and have a normal childhood life

If I could change the world the world would see positivity freedom and help for everything you ever needed

Once I couldn't afford to live on my own

But now you should see me and how I've grown

I used to feel scared and alone

But now I know I have someone who will protect me and care

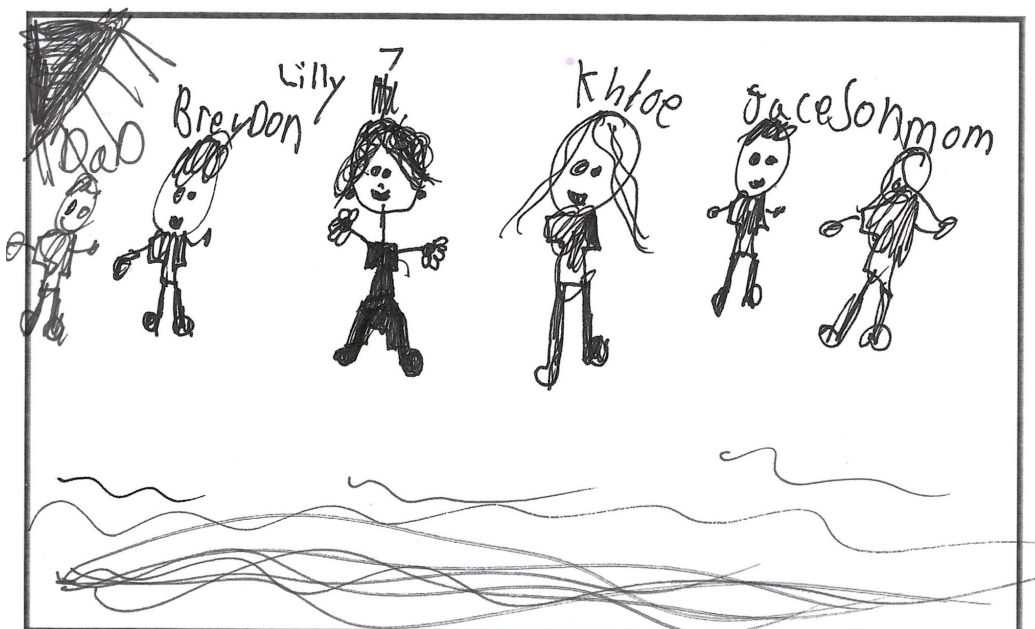
The one thing I've learned is don't ever let your guard down for one minute

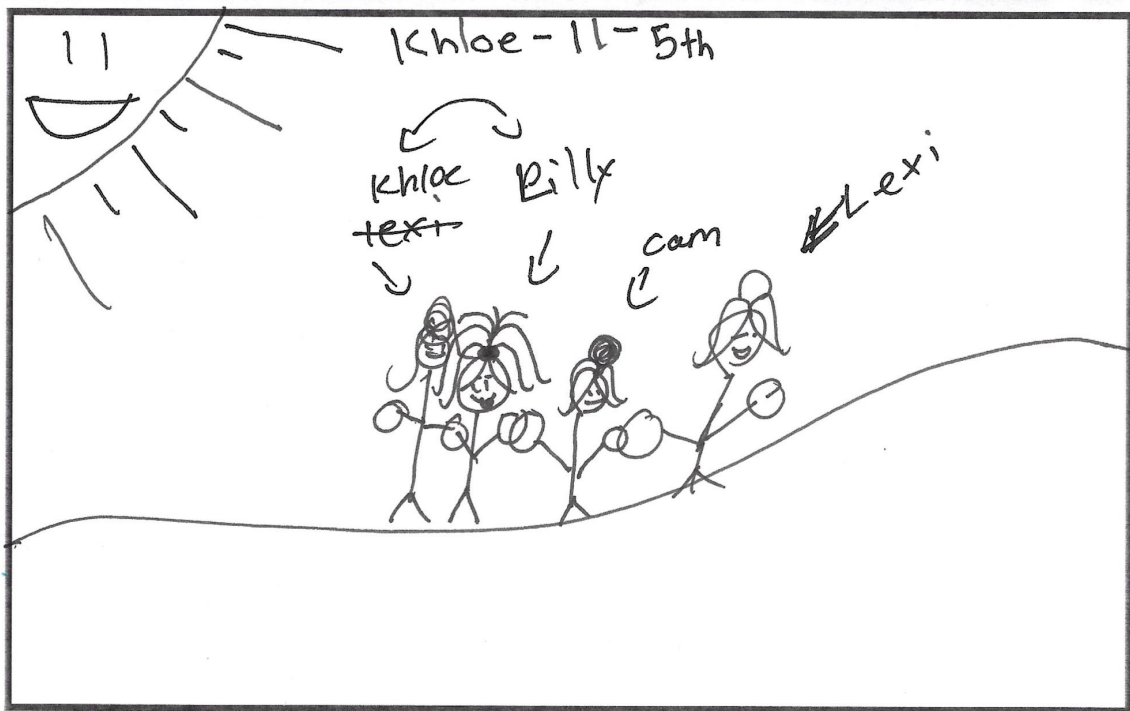
Once I was a lonely hermit crab

But now I am out shopping independently with strangers

Becoming me
By Zack Elya

Once I was younger
Now I am wiser
Once I lost track of life
But then I found happiness in my marriage
If I could have one wish, it would be to go back in time and give my
grandma one last hug
If I could change the world, the world would see more happiness
and peace with each other and less hate
Once I couldn't remember how to read a tape measure
But now you should see me, part owner in a construction company
I use to feel small to everyone
But now I know I can do anything I put my mind to
The one thing I've learned is you must have faith in what your
doing to succeed
Once I was younger
But now I am wiser, I AM ME.



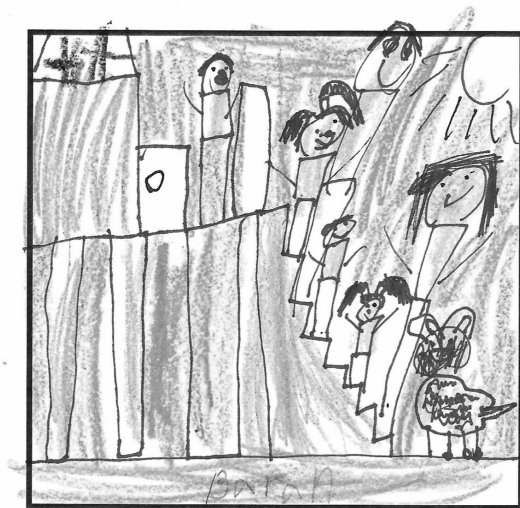


Becoming Me
By Anne Elya

Once I was a Victim
Now I am a Mother, Wife
Once I lost Everything
But then I found My Forever
If I could have one wish, it would be to go back in time and tell
myself everything will work out, and to never be depressed, never
struggle
If I could change the world, the world would see no abuse, or hate
Once I couldn't see a future
But now you should see me Thrive
I use to feel Weak
But now I know im Strong
The one thing i've learned is don't give up
Once I was Victim
But now I am Me and Stronger than Ever!

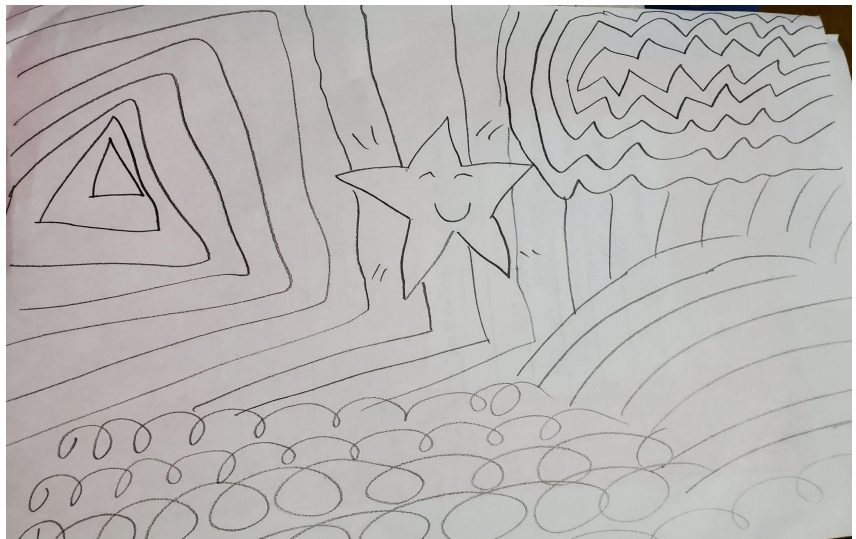
Becoming Me
By: Caitlin Strobel

Once I was anxious,
Now I am confident.
Once I lost my edge,
But then I found my voice.
If I could have one wish, it would be to always feel content.
If I could change the world, the world would see the good in others.
Once I couldn't stand out,
But now you should see me advocate.
I used to feel uneasy,
But now I know my worth.
The one thing I've learned is to trust the process.
Once I was meek,
But now I am brave.



Becoming me
By: Jake Kline

Once I was 7
Now I am 8
Once I lost 4 teeth
Then I found money
If I could have one wish I would have all superpowers in the world
If I could change the world the world would see happiness
Once I couldn't talk
Now I can talk
I used to feel bad
Now I know how to be good
The one thinking I've learned is multiplication
Once I was 6
Now I am 8



Becoming Me
By Tammy VanAntwerp

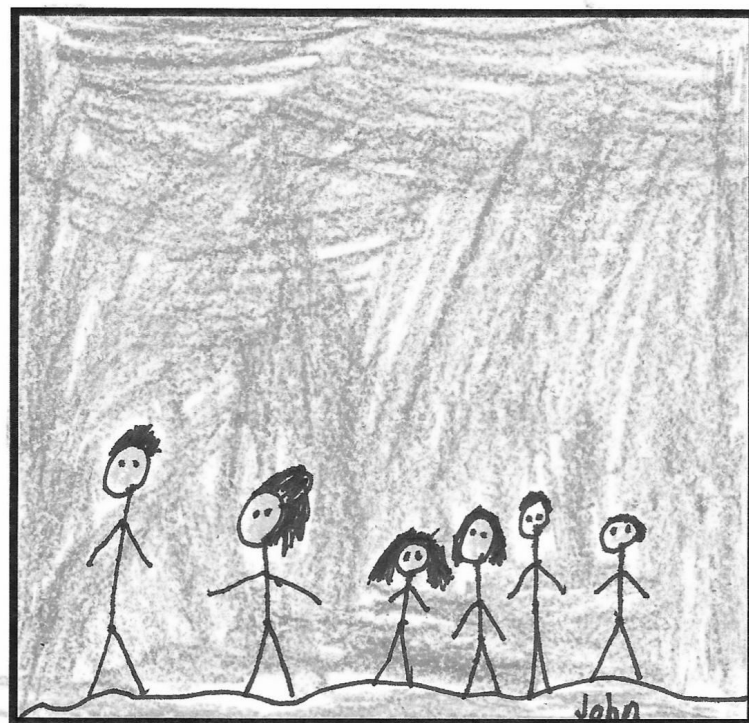
Once I was a child
Now I am a mother
Once I lost my cool
But then I found inner peace
If I could have one wish, it would be to travel to Greece
If I could change the world, the world would see that we can do great things with love and kindness
Once I couldn't imagine being a mother
But now you should see me killin' it
I used to keep scared of growing old
But now I know it can be beautiful
The one thing I've learned is life is hard but doesn't have to define who you are
Once I was afraid to fail
But now I am living the life God intended

Becoming Me
By Becky Bigelow

Once I was a young girl
Now I am not
Once I lost myself
But then I found me again
If I could have one wish, it would be for life to be everything we dream it is
If I could change the world, the world would see beauty in everyone
Once I couldn't stand up
But now you should see me be brave
I used to feel alone
But now I know I am not
The one thing I've learned is attitude changes outcomes
Once I was her
But now I am me

Becoming You

Through poetry, we reflect upon watching our children “come of age.”



Becoming You
By Lisa Noel
For Bryce Noel

Once you were my baby
But now you are a growing boy
If i could have one wish for you it would be that you never feel alone
I know you can change the world with your positive attitude
Once you couldn't be away from me
But now you can be more independent
You used to be so shy
But now you know how to open up more
Once you were my baby
But now you are a great young man

Becoming You
By Lisa Noel
For Taylor Noel

Once you were a little girl
But now you are a beautiful young lady
If I could have one wish for you it would be to always believe in yourself
and stay true to yourself
I know you can change the world with your kindness and ability to see
the good in everyone
Once you couldn't do as good as you wanted in school
But now you can reach your academic goals
You used to be nervous about cooking
But now you know how to make a couple of delicious meals
Once you were a little girl
But now you are my favorite young lady

Becoming You By Mabel Roberts

Once you were eight,
But now you are nine.

If I could have one wish for you a ton of pets and friends.
I know you can change the world with kindness, love and respect.

Once you couldn't ride a bike,
But now you can get a up by yourself.

You used to be small.
But now you know you are tall.

Once your were eight.
But now you are nine.

Becoming You By Tay Roberts

Once you were young and curious,
But now you are strong and brave.

If I could I have one wish for you it would be not to take anything for granted.

I know you can change the world with your love, kindness and compassion.

Once you couldn't walk,
But now you can run.

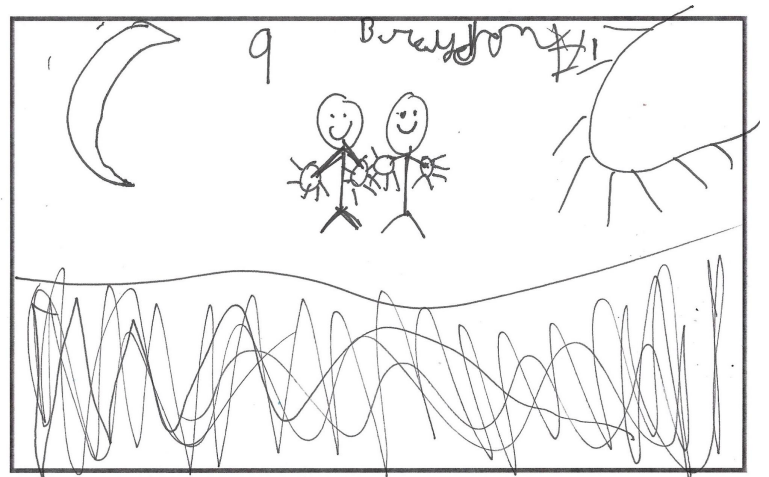
You used to be fragile,
But now you know that you are strong.

Once you were young and curious,
But not you are strong and brave.

Becoming You

By: Brayden

Once you were here
But now you are there
If I could have one wish for you it would be that you could go everywhere
I know you can change the world with your mind
Once you couldn't know why
But now you can understand
You used to be me
But now you know how to be you
Once you were me
But now you are you



Becoming You

By: Zachary

Once you were an ordinary person
But now you are a coder
If I could have one wish for you it would be to become a GREAT coder
I know you can change the world with you video games because some
can help you, like harvest moon
Once you couldn't code
You used to be an ordinary boy
But now you know how to code
Once you were a normal boy
But now you are a GREAT coder

Becoming you
Jessalee kline

Once you were free from fear
But now you are critically aware of your surroundings
If I could have one wish for you I wish for you to know how
valuable you are
I know you can change the world with your inclusion of all people
you incur
Once you couldn't stand up for yourself
But now you can tell others to stop
You used to be afraid to take action
But now you know you are important
Once you were invisible
But now you are present and resilient

Becoming You
For Remington

Once you were medium size.
But now you are long size.
If I could have one wish for you lots of trees and tree house.
I know you can change the world with paint.
Once you couldn't reach the fridge,
But now you can reach the freeze.
You used to be little.
But now you know you can't see in the dark.
Once you were funny.
But now you are kind.