

just



SMILE

By Barbara Hagen

(Based on a true story)

If you want a friend, you must show that you care (Children's Songbook, 262).

Paul ran down the school steps and got into Mom's car.

"How was school?" Mom asked.

"Great!" Paul exclaimed. "We have a new girl in our class named Cristina. She is from another country, and she is just learning to speak English."

"I hope you will help her feel welcome," Mom said.

"I'd like to, but how can I do that if she can't understand me?" Paul asked.

"That's easy," Mom said. "Just smile."

"Smile? What do you mean?"

"A smile can mean hello, how are you, or have a nice day. It is an international sign," Mom said.

"I never thought of it that way before," Paul said.

A few days later, Paul was excited to tell Mom about his day.

"Mom, remember when you told me that if I couldn't talk to Cristina, I should just smile?" Paul asked. "Well, it worked!"

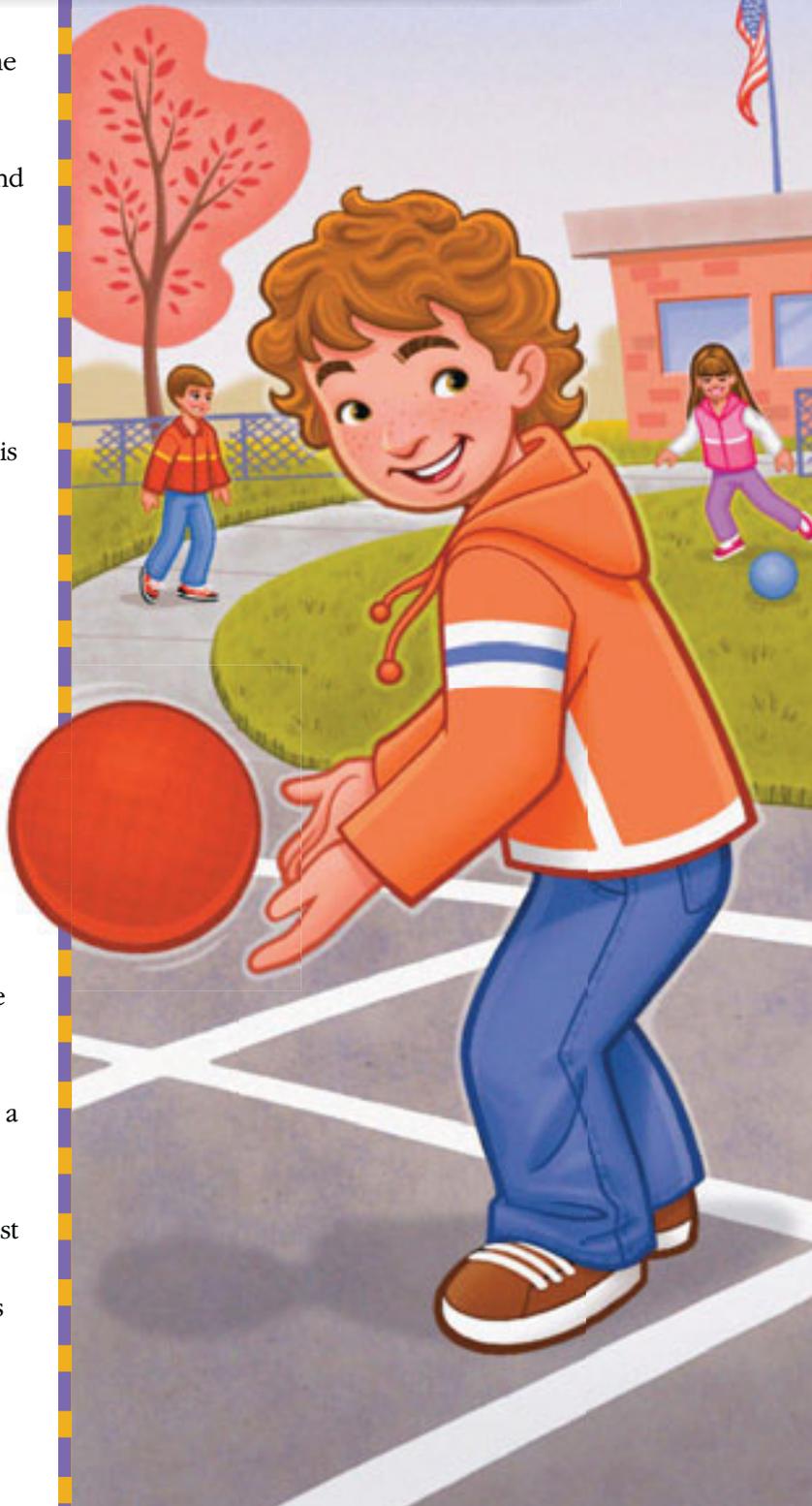
"That's great!" Mom said. "What happened?"

"During recess I noticed that Cristina was standing by herself. She had a jump rope in her hand, but she wasn't jumping. I wanted to be nice, but I didn't know what to say. Then I remembered what you said and I smiled at her. She smiled back. Then she started jumping rope, and for the rest of recess she looked happy."

"That's wonderful!" Mom said. "I'm proud of you for being nice to Cristina."

About a month later, Paul went to a school party at the roller-skating rink. As he skated around, he noticed that Cristina was standing alone at the side of the rink. Then there was an announcement over the loudspeaker: "Find a buddy to skate with for the next song."

Paul skated over to Cristina. She looked surprised. He gave her a big smile and motioned for her to join him. Just like that day on the playground, she smiled brightly. As they skated with their classmates, Paul realized Mom was right. A smile means friendship in any language. ♦





"A friendly smile, a warm handclasp, a sincere testimony of truth can literally lift lives, change human nature, and save precious souls."²

President Thomas S. Monson

