



ROSS W. GREENE, PhD

# LOST & FOUND

UNLOCKING  
COLLABORATION  
AND COMPASSION  
TO HELP OUR MOST  
VULNERABLE,  
MISUNDERSTOOD  
STUDENTS

*(and All the Rest)*

SECOND EDITION

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## PRAISE FOR *LOST & FOUND*

“ Dealing with challenging behaviors? The first goal is to alter your lenses, to understand that challenging behavior is the result of lagging skills. The second is to start solving problems together and teach those skills. *Lost and Found* is a must read. ”

—MICHELLE GARCIA WINNER, MA-CCC,  
SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST; FOUNDER, SOCIAL THINKING

“ *Lost and Found* gives readers lots of examples for how Dr. Ross Greene’s Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) process works—and how to avoid pitfalls—at every step of the way. The process he describes is the best way to engage kids and adults in mutual problem solving that, at its core, removes blame and replaces it with respect. ”

—PEG DAWSON, EdD, NCSP, CO-AUTHOR, *SMART BUT SCATTERED* AND  
*SMART BUT SCATTERED TEENS*

“ For those perplexed by how to positively support students with challenging behavior, *Lost and Found* is a game changer. Greene brings a fresh perspective on the subject and clearly articulates the essentials to get everyone on the upswing. ”

—LEAH KUYPERS, MA, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST; AUTHOR, *THE ZONES OF REGULATION: A CURRICULUM DESIGNED TO FOSTER SELF-REGULATION AND EMOTIONAL CONTROL*

“ Greene’s CPS model encourages school staff to look at behaviorally challenging students from a new frame of reference: kids are very capable of providing information about why they’re having difficulty meeting certain expectations; they’re eager to partner with adults in solving the problems that are affecting their lives; and they’re capable of developing new skills. *Lost and Found* provides the tools to help schools abandon old, toxic ways of responding to challenging behavior. ”

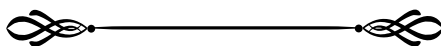
—DEBRA THIBODEAU, MEd, CAS, SCHOOL COUNSELOR, GEORGETOWN, ME

“ Throughout *Lost and Found*, the voices of educators are a testament to how this simple, research-based process, done with rigor, results in changing beliefs, practices, and school cultures. Ross Greene should be considered a living, international treasure. ”

—PEGGY BLAIR, SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION, AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT  
SCHOOL BOARD, ONTARIO, CANADA



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*Unlocking Collaboration  
and Compassion to Help Our  
Most Vulnerable, Misunderstood Students  
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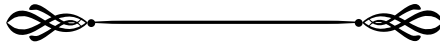
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SECOND EDITION

PREVIOUS BOOKS BY ROSS W. GREENE, PHD



*The Explosive Child* (1998)

*Treating Explosive Kids* (2005)

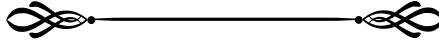
*Lost at School* (2008)

*Raising Human Beings* (2016)





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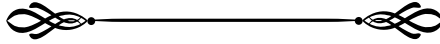
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*Dedicated to my mom, Cynthia Greene,  
who taught me a thing or two about empathy,  
compassion, and resilience*

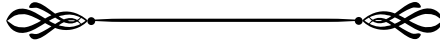
## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**R**oss W. Greene, PhD, is the originator of the innovative, evidence-based approach known as Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS), as described in this book and his prior books *The Explosive Child*, *Lost at School*, and *Raising Human Beings*. Dr. Greene served on the faculty at Harvard Medical School for over twenty years, and is currently adjunct professor in the Department of Psychology at Virginia Tech and adjunct professor in the Faculty of Science at University of Technology Sydney in Australia. He is also the founding director of the nonprofit Lives in the Balance ([www.livesinthebalance.org](http://www.livesinthebalance.org)), which provides a vast array of free, web-based resources on his model, and advocates on behalf of kids with concerning behaviors and their parents, teachers, and other caregivers. He also developed and executive produced the award-winning documentary film, *The Kids We Lose*. Dr. Greene is the author of numerous articles, chapters, and scientific papers on the effectiveness of the CPS model; the classification of and outcomes in youth with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges; and student-teacher compatibility. He consults to families, schools, inpatient psychiatry units, and residential and juvenile detention facilities throughout the world and lives in Freeport, Maine.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



There are many theories and models that influenced the approach to helping kids with concerning behaviors—called *Collaborative & Proactive Solutions* (CPS)—described in this book, including social learning theory, family systems theory, transactional/reciprocal models of development, goodness-of-fit theory, personal construct theory, neuropsychology, and developmental psychopathology. I am indebted to the countless people who exposed me to and taught me about those theories and models, including Dr. Elizabeth Altmaier (then at the University of Florida); Drs. Tom Ollendick and George Clum (at the Department of Psychology at Virginia Tech); and Dr. Mary Ann McCabe and Lorraine Lougee, then at Children’s National Medical Center in Washington, DC. Of course, my children—Talia and Jacob (now twenty-three and twenty years old)—have taught me plenty. And the influence of my original teachers—my father, Irving (who is no longer with us), and my mother, Cynthia, to whom this book is dedicated—is inestimable.

But I am especially indebted to the thousands of general and special education classroom teachers, school administrators, paraprofessionals, ed techs, school mental health professionals, and specialists I’ve had the good fortune to work with and learn from

over the past twenty-five years. Despite working under very difficult circumstances, often thanklessly, you've taught me what a huge difference an educator can make in a child's life, most especially those with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges who badly need someone to listen to them, nurture them, and help and care about them. You have my everlasting admiration.

## INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the second edition of *Lost and Found*. This book was originally intended as a follow-up to my earlier book *Lost at School*, which was first published in 2008. So why write another book on the same topic? Because many of the very same educators and parents who found *Lost at School* to be helpful told me they wanted more: more instruction on using the assessment instrumentation of the model (called the Assessment of Lagging Skills & Unsolved Problems [ALSUP]), more help in using and guiding others in solving problems collaboratively, and more information on organizing and sustaining the effort to transform discipline practices and implement the Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) model in a school. Those are the ingredients you'll find in the ensuing pages. Even if you haven't previously read *Lost at School*, all of the details of the CPS model are included in this book as well.

And why publish a second edition? Because the CPS model has evolved substantially since the first edition was published in 2016. This edition reflects the most current updates.

But the most exciting aspect of this book is that you'll be hearing from some of the amazing, courageous, visionary educators who have implemented the model in their schools and classrooms

and with whom I've had the incredible privilege of collaborating. They are quoted throughout each chapter by their first names; here are their full names:

- Tom Ambrose, superintendent in SAU 17 in New Hampshire  
Kathy Bousquet, former second-grade teacher, Central School,  
South Berwick, Maine
- M. Scott Brinker, district behavior specialist, Groveport Madison  
Schools, Groveport, Ohio
- Alanna Craffey, second-grade teacher, Central School, South  
Berwick, Maine
- Nina D'Aran, principal at Central School, South Berwick, Maine  
Carol Davison, district principal, human resources, Surrey,  
British Columbia Schools
- Susan Forsely, former educational technician, Central School,  
South Berwick, Maine
- Ryan Gleason, principal, Yarmouth, Maine Elementary School,  
and formerly assistant principal at Durham (Maine) Commu-  
nity School and Falmouth (Maine) Elementary School
- Nicole Grant, teacher educator and former classroom teacher  
Katie Marshall, former learning center teacher, Central School,  
South Berwick, Maine
- Susan McCuiag, former principal at T. E. Scott Elementary, Sur-  
rey, British Columbia, and at Betty Huff Elementary, Surrey
- Ryan Quinn, principal, Kennebunk Elementary School,  
Kennebunk, Maine
- Alex Spencer, former Manhattan borough principal, Alternative  
Learning Centers, New York City Public Schools
- Vicki Stewart, former director of communications at MSAD 35 in  
Maine and former principal at Central School
- Brie Thomas, school counselor, Central School, South  
Berwick, Maine

They represent a small fraction of the many educators who have embraced the CPS model and have helped many thousands of vulnerable, at-risk students in the process.



The mission remains the same: understand and help students with concerning behaviors in ways that are nonpunitive, non-adversarial, non-exclusionary, skill building, relationship enhancing, collaborative, proactive, and—most important—*helpful*. In too many schools, those ingredients are still missing. That’s why rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion are still way too high, why schools in nineteen states in the United States still employ corporal punishment, why restraint and seclusion procedures are still employed hundreds of thousands of times in schools every year, and why there are still so many kids who feel disenfranchised, marginalized, disheartened, hopeless, and *lost*. To bring them back into the fold, we need to find our way to new lenses and new practices. And this needs to be a priority for every school.

The task is not made easier by the fact that classroom teachers have been given the very strong message that their job performance and security are judged by how their students perform on high-stakes tests. Although standards can be a good thing, the obsession with tests hasn’t been good for classroom teachers or administrators or parents or students with concerning behaviors, or anyone else. But, as you’ll be reading, many schools have accomplished the mission despite all the obstacles.

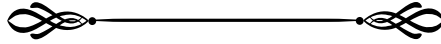
If you’re brand-new to the CPS model, many of your existing beliefs and practices may be called into question by what you read in the ensuing pages. That’s OK; our knowledge of kids with concerning behaviors has expanded dramatically over the past forty to fifty years, and it turns out that a lot of what we were thinking about those kids—and doing to them—doesn’t square up with what we now know about them. If you’re already familiar with the CPS model, this book will take you further.

In an effort to be sensitive to different preferences, the book is written using male, female, and gender-nonspecific pronouns in alternating chapters. I’ve drawn on a multitude of

real kids and educators I've known and worked with in the dialogues in the book, but they are composites; any resemblance to people you may know is purely coincidental (but not necessarily surprising).

I'm looking forward to spending some time with you in the next nine chapters.

Ross Greene  
Freeport, Maine



# WHO AND WHY

This book is primarily focused on students whose difficulties meeting academic and social expectations at school is communicated through concerning behaviors. The ones who are flying frequently into the assistant principal's office. The ones who are on the receiving end of countless discipline referrals, detentions, suspensions, expulsions, restraints, seclusions, and (yes, in many places, still in the year 2021) paddlings. That these interventions aren't helping is made clear by the fact that they are being applied so frequently to the same students. In almost every school, 70 to 80 percent of discipline referrals are accounted for by the same fifteen to twenty students.

Those are the kids we are losing. We find them in our statistics on dropping out, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and incarceration. These are also very expensive kids. Placing a student in a program outside of the mainstream classroom is very costly: more than sixty-five thousand students are placed in alternative education settings every year in the United States, at a cost of an estimated \$5 billion. The annual cost of incarcerating kids is even greater. So the stakes are high, both in human and financial terms.

But they're not the only ones we're losing when we don't effectively help these students. Their reasonably well-behaved classmates lose, too. There's lost learning. And there's the stress and anxiety of feeling unsafe in the presence of a peer who can be scary and may seem out of control. And these classmates also have the sense that the adults aren't exactly sure what to do or how to make things better. They may also sense that the ways in which peers with concerning behaviors are being treated are unnecessarily ostracizing and inhumane.

Classroom teachers lose as well (and we lose them, too). Those students—and their parents—are cited as a major contributing factor by many of the high number of teachers who leave the profession within the first four years. And the emphasis on high-stakes testing has caused many classroom teachers to feel like test-prep robots, which, many tell me, has taken a lot of the humanity out of the work. Legislators and school boards often aren't focused on humanity; they're focused on test scores and new initiatives and budgets and reducing referrals into special education.

We lose paraprofessionals and ed-techs as well. These staff members spend a good part of the day with kids with concerning behaviors, but frequently don't even get invited to the meetings in which those kids are being discussed. They are therefore relegated to the “winging-it” approach to intervention, along with the other people in the building—specialists such as the art, music, and physical education teachers—who work with lots of different students but often feel like they know very little about them.

“ Sometimes, due to time, specialists (music, art, and so forth) and paraprofessionals can get left out of the conversation in schools. Including them in meetings is so valuable. They have so much insight, and I think we forget about that sometimes because they have such a hard schedule. They have such an important voice because they see everybody in the whole school. ”

—NINA, PRINCIPAL

Parents of students with concerning behaviors get lost, too. Those parents know a thing or two about feeling ostracized.