



Alton's Youngest Author Teaches Kids to Love Their Natural Hair

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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Amoriah's Magic Afro Puffs

By: Amoriah Gray

YOU'RE PUFF-FECT!

ALTON - Angela Gray was surprised when her daughter, Amoriah, started asking questions about the differences between her and her white friends. But the result of these conversations has been the greatest surprise of all. A few years later, Amoriah is helping other kids learn to love themselves.

“Amoriah’s Magic Afro Puffs,” a picture book by Amoriah Gray, is a favorite for parents and kids alike. Angela and Amoriah have plans to get the book on shelves across the U.S.

“When I was 6 years old, I asked my mommy why I didn’t have straight hair like my friends,” Amoriah explained.

Angela was devastated.

“It was a total shock. My husband and I were just, like, stunned,” Angela said. “So we sat her down, we explained how beautiful her hair is, being natural hair, and we ordered a lot of books on Amazon. And we just kept talking to her and stressing to her how beautiful her hair is.”

Not long after that first conversation about her hair, Amoriah’s school offered a Young Authors competition. The Young Authors program encourages students to write short manuscripts. Amoriah decided to write about her afro puffs, which Angela calls her “signature style.”

As Amoriah started writing, Angela guided her daughter with questions. She asked what Amoriah likes about her hair. Angela explained that Amoriah likes how her afro puffs are big, round and —

“Fluffy!” Amoriah chimed in, finishing the sentence as Angela laughed.

It didn’t take long for them to realize how much this book could help other families. Amoriah finished writing, they hired an illustrator and in 28 days, they published the book with Kindle Direct Publishing through Amazon.

The response has been more than they could have imagined. The mother-daughter duo was even invited to speak at the Young Authors Conference this year. They’re currently in the process of making a hardcover version of “Amoriah’s Magic Afro Puffs” and finding a way to sell it in major stores like Barnes and Noble.

“We want the community to really support her,” Angela said. “We just thank everybody for their support. We just appreciate everybody. It is overwhelming.”

Amoriah's book, a corresponding coloring book and several t-shirts are currently available at [her website](#). The team is also researching dollmakers so they can create an "Amoriah's Magic Afro Puffs" doll, which is Amoriah's favorite toy.

Angela jokes that Amoriah was tough to please as they finalized the book and other products. It took six tries to find the right cover, mostly due to Amoriah's critiques. When they decided to create t-shirts, Angela said they had to first get the designs approved by "the queen," to which Amoriah nodded.

"She was the final person with the say," Angela laughed.

While it's been an exciting couple of years, the biggest reward has been the reactions of other people, mostly parents who are trying to help their kids love their natural hair.

"Parents have come up to tell us that they have struggled with that, and that this book is going to help their child," Angela said. "We just mainly wanted to get that message out for young girls to love themselves."

She encourages parents who are fielding questions like Amoriah's to focus on building their kids' confidence. She talks with Amoriah every day about the traits she likes about herself.

"After you get over the shock and cry, because I did cry, just instill self-esteem awareness," Angela said. "We developed some affirmations that we say every morning, just so she can love herself and love her hair and not try to be anybody else."

This is the goal of the book, and it seems to be working. Amoriah's favorite part of the "Amoriah's Magic Afro Puffs" is when her afro puffs accompany her to school. She said that her friends loved the book and, once they read it, told her how much they loved her afro puffs, too.

As Amoriah prepares to start third grade in the fall, she's narrowing down her ideas for the next story she'll write. And in the meantime, she has an important message for her fans.

"Thank you, and make sure you like and subscribe to my YouTube channel, [Amoriah's Adventures](#)," Amoriah said. "We're going on adventures."

She definitely is. You can find out more about Amoriah and order "Amoriah's Magic Afro Puffs" and other products at her website, [amoriahlove.com](#).