



MEET THE



Chris

**Age:** 13

**Proudest Moment:** got all As on his last report card

**Looking Forward to:** a trip to Alaska

**Favorite Food:** peach cobbler

**Best Quality:** stands up for others

# CHARACTERS



PHIL

**Age:** 13

**Biggest Problem:** being bullied by his older stepbrother

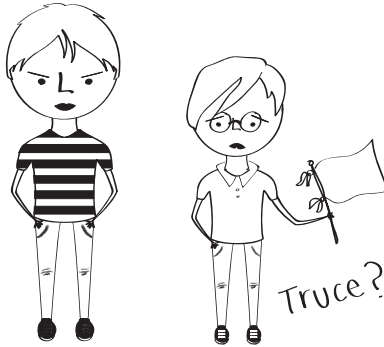
**Wants to Become:** a race car driver

**Favorite Food:** beef jerky

**Best Quality:** knows he could be nicer

# 1 THE CODE

It was a school fight like all the others. A big kid picked on a small kid. The small kid got his butt kicked. Other kids made a ring to watch and cheer.



The big kid was Phil Hartz. Phil was strong. The small kid was Sam Colton. Sam was a wimp. Phil liked to pick on wimps.

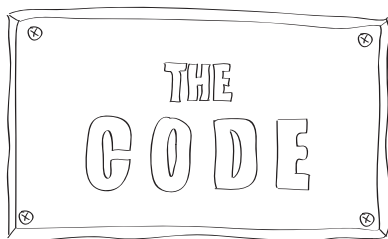


Phil used to pick on Chris Marks. That was why Chris did not try to stop the fight. He just stood there and watched. Just like all the kids in his seventh grade class. There were yells and shouts. It was not a fair fight. Phil did what he wanted. Sam fell to the ground. Phil kicked him in the ribs just for fun.

That was when Mr. Jones ran onto the field. He was the principal. He hated fights. He said all kids could get along. Chris was not so sure. By the time Mr. Jones got there, the fight was over.

“Who started this?” Mr. Jones was mad.

Phil shrugged. “It just happened.”



shh... all kids must follow



That was a lie. Chris knew it. No one said a word. The kids had a Code. No one ever talked. Chris did not like the Code. He did not like it one bit. But he did not want to be picked on by Phil. No one did. It was too bad that Sam got beat up. But Chris did not think it could be stopped.



“Come on, kids. Someone saw. Talk. Please.” Mr. Jones looked from kid to kid. Then he called the names of the best students. “Mary Lopez. Alan Parker. Chris