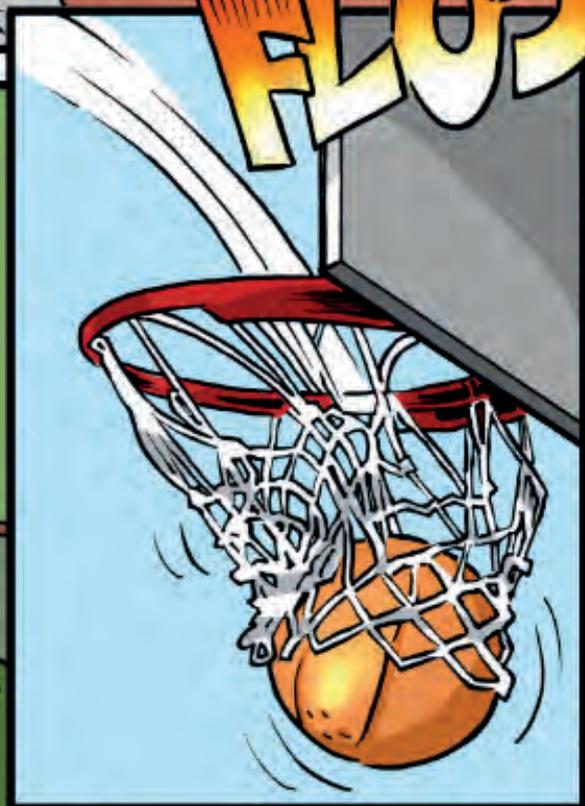


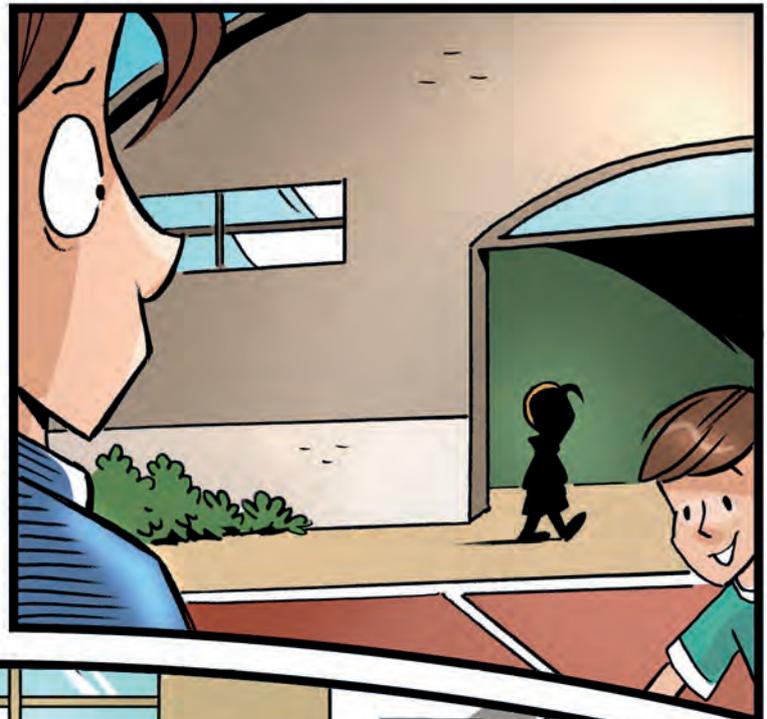
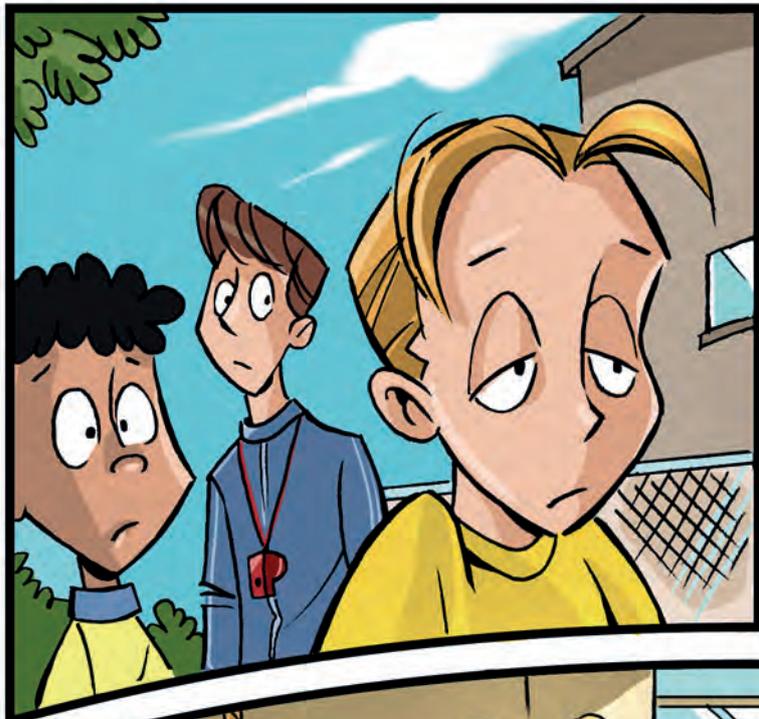
# THE SMALLEST BOY IN THE CLASS!

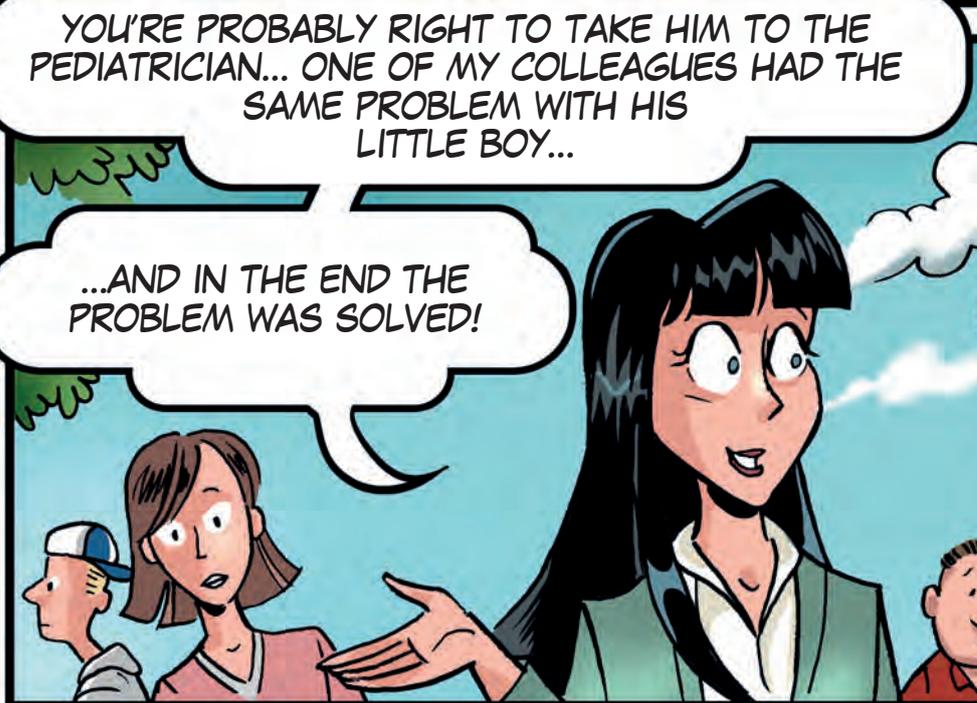
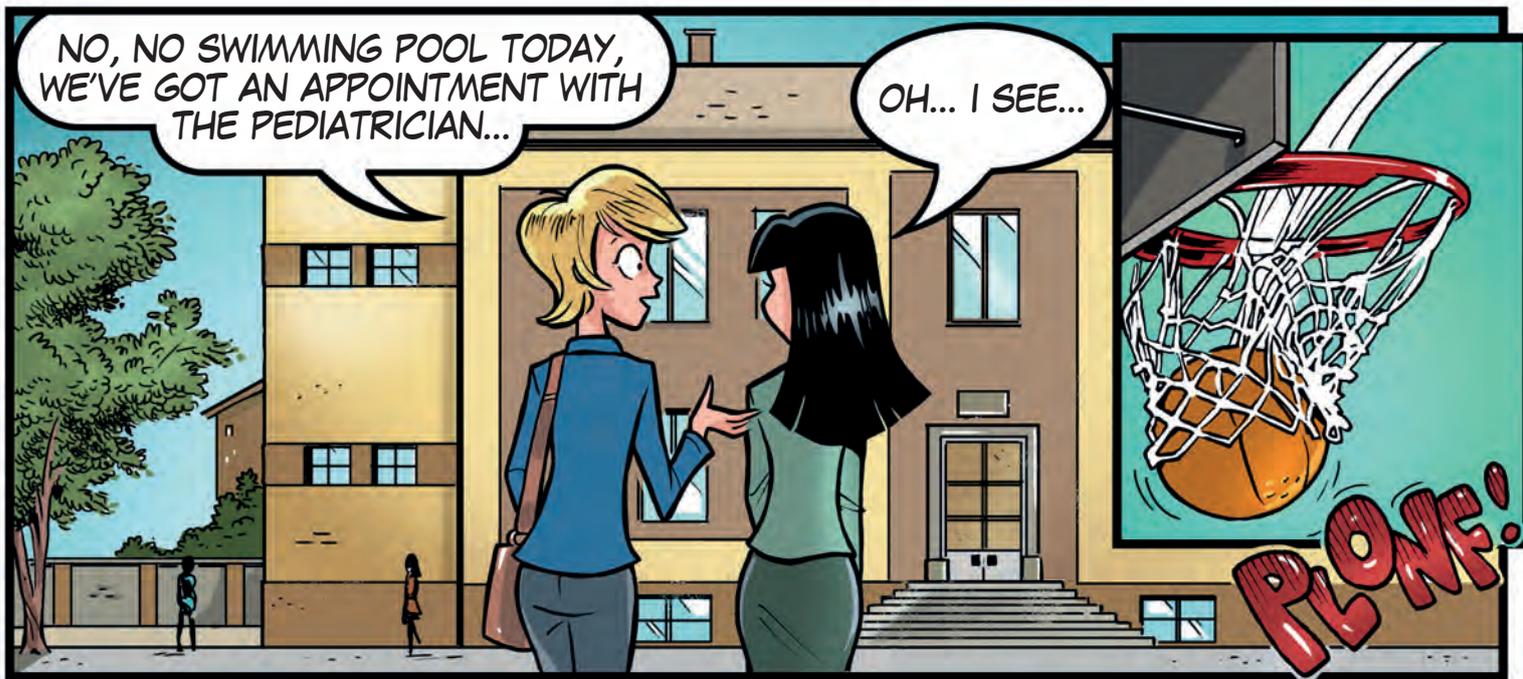


ONE MORNING IN SPRING

**FLOOSH!**

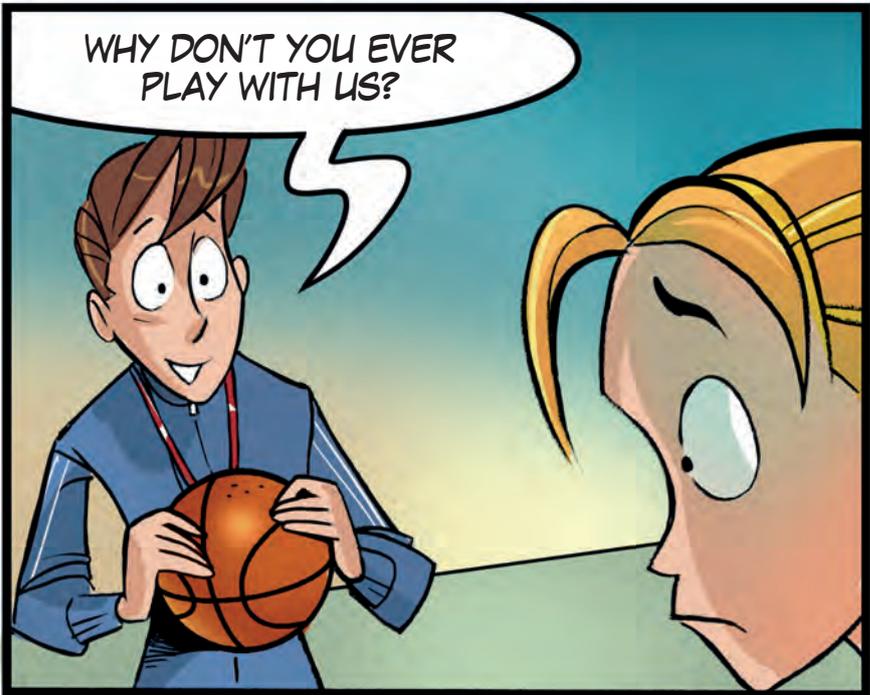




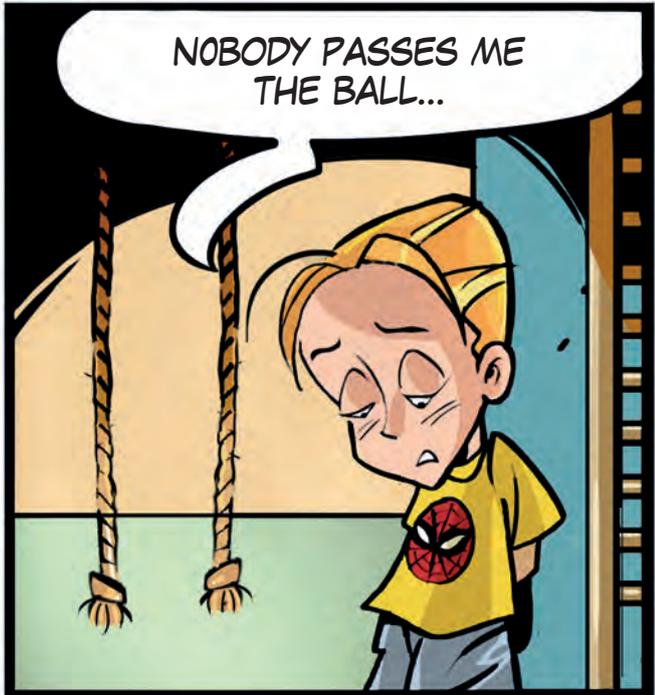




GREAT PLAY, WILLIAM!



WHY DON'T YOU EVER PLAY WITH US?



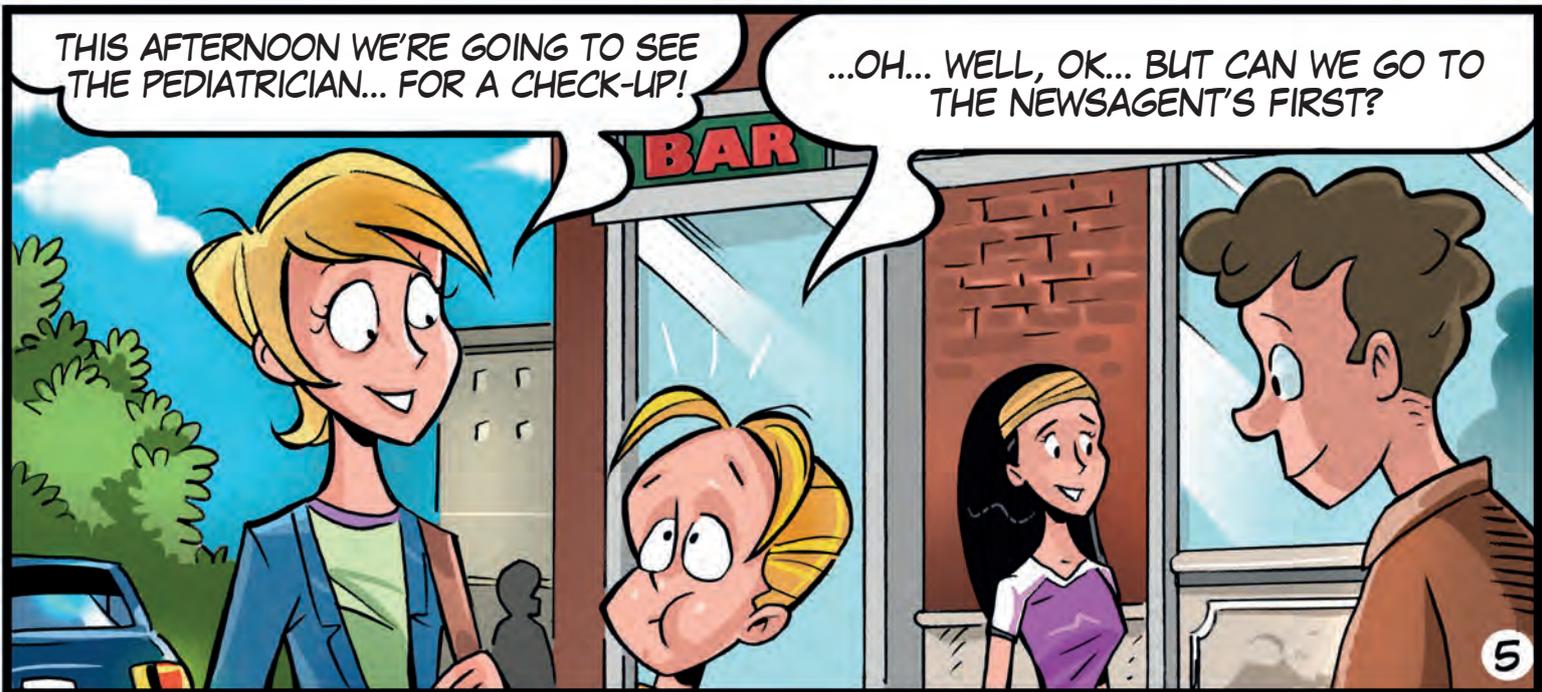
NOBODY PASSES ME THE BALL...



YOU'VE GOT A GREAT SHOT...



RIIING





HERE'S YOU CHANGE...

THANKS...

COME ON!...

BYE, PETER!

MOM, WHY DO YOU GET ME A COMIC EVERY TIME WE GO TO SEE THE PEDIATRICIAN?

YOU USUALLY SAY NO WHEN I ASK FOR COMICS...

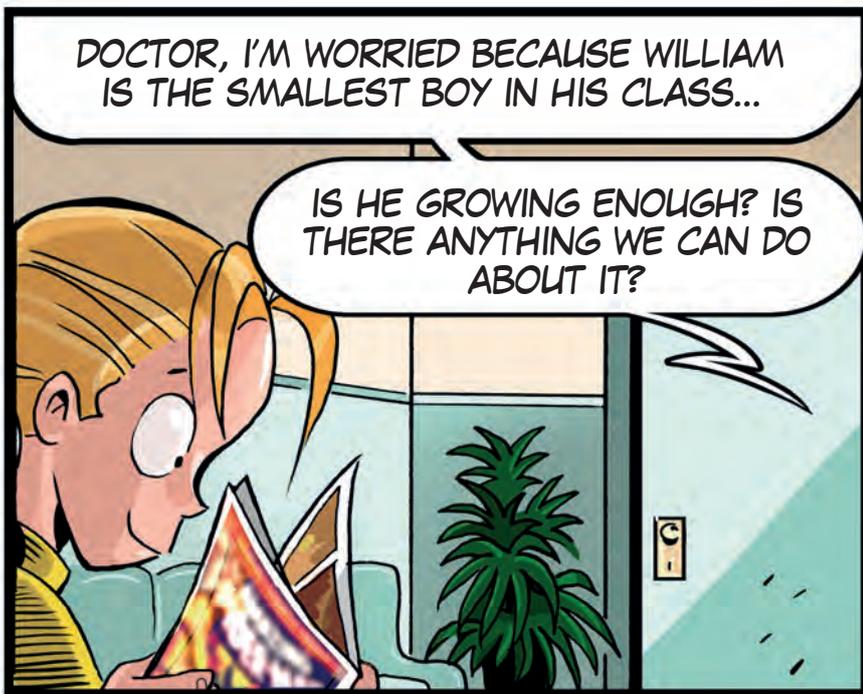
I DON'T WANT YOU TO GET BORED WHILE I'M TALKING TO THE DOCTOR...





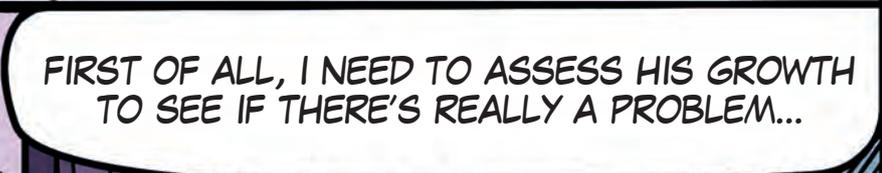
ALMOST GOT YOU!

THERE!...

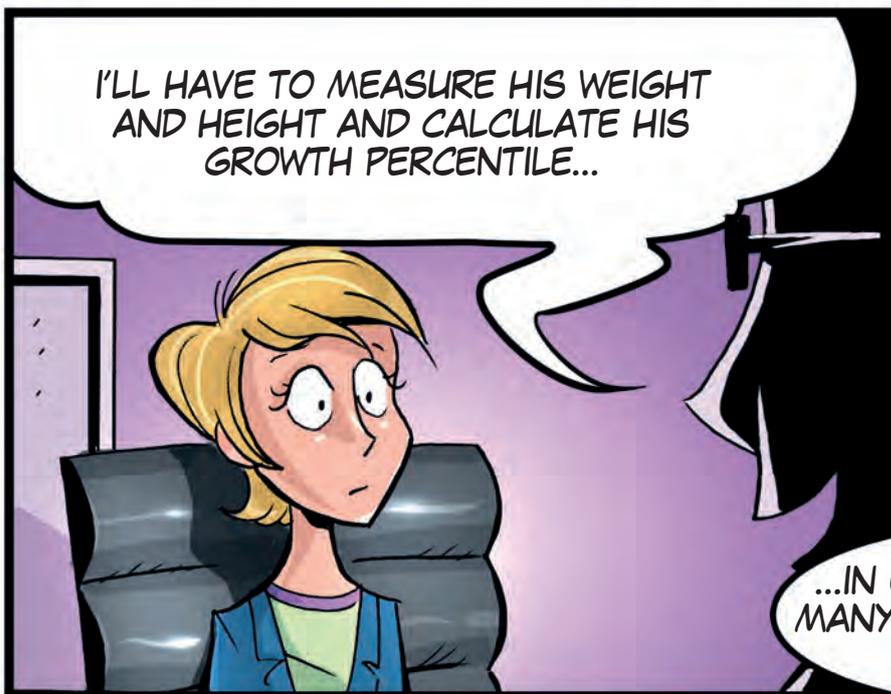


DOCTOR, I'M WORRIED BECAUSE WILLIAM IS THE SMALLEST BOY IN HIS CLASS...

IS HE GROWING ENOUGH? IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT IT?



FIRST OF ALL, I NEED TO ASSESS HIS GROWTH TO SEE IF THERE'S REALLY A PROBLEM...



I'LL HAVE TO MEASURE HIS WEIGHT AND HEIGHT AND CALCULATE HIS GROWTH PERCENTILE...



AND THEN THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO WORK OUT HIS GROWTH RATE...

...IN OTHER WORDS, HOW MANY INCHES A YEAR HE'S GROWING BY!

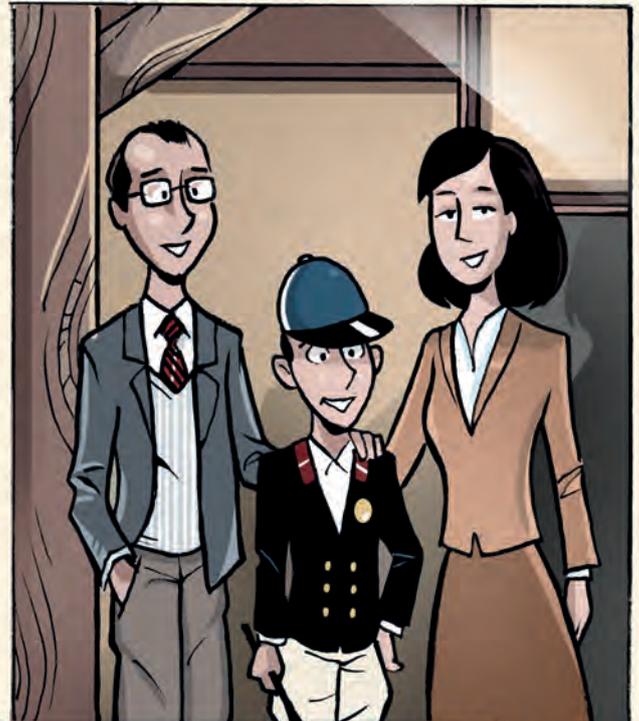
I ALSO NEED TO KNOW YOUR HEIGHT... AND YOUR HUSBAND'S...

REALLY? WHY?

TO ESTIMATE HIS HEIGHT BASED ON YOUR HEIGHT...

BUT I KNOW SOME TALL PARENTS WITH SHORT KIDS, AND SHORT PARENTS WITH TALL KIDS.

IT CAN HAPPEN... SOMETIMES TO A SURPRISING EXTENT... BECAUSE PREDICTING HEIGHT IS QUITE COMPLICATED...

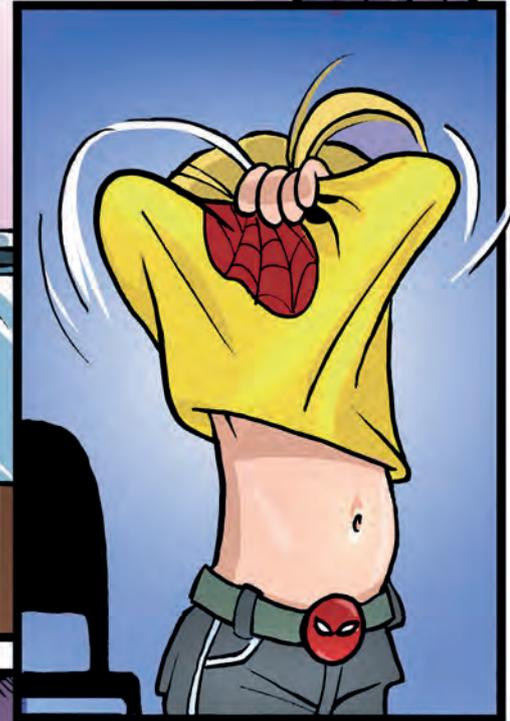


"BUT PARENTS' HEIGHT IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR THAT WE NEED TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION..."

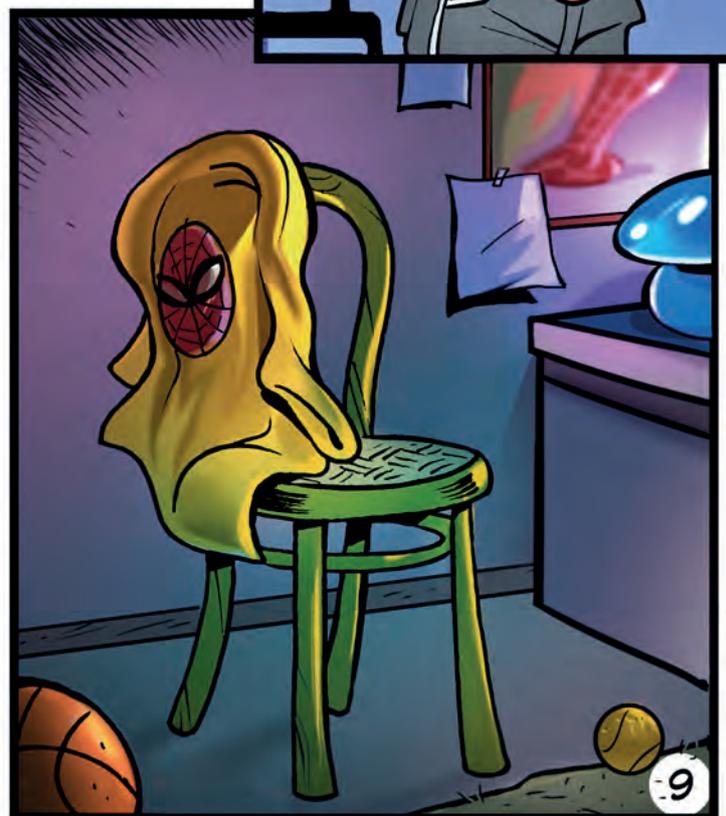
A BIT LATER...

GREAT TO MEET YOU, SPIDERMAN, BUT NOW I HAVE TO ASK YOU TO TAKE YOUR SHIRT OFF.

OK!



...NOW I'M GOING TO MEASURE YOUR HEIGHT.

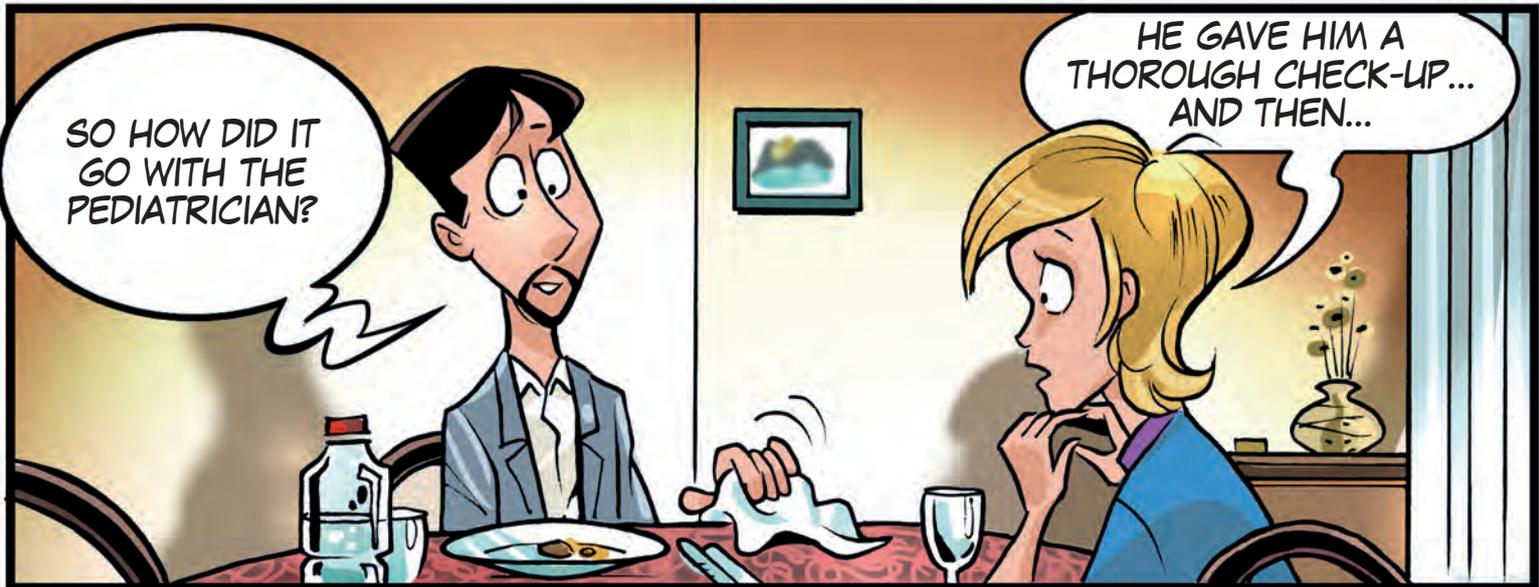




HE WANTED TO STAY AWAKE TILL YOU GOT HOME, BUT HE FELL FAST ASLEEP...



...LOOK AT HIM! SLEEPING LIKE AN ANGEL...



SO HOW DID IT GO WITH THE PEDIATRICIAN?

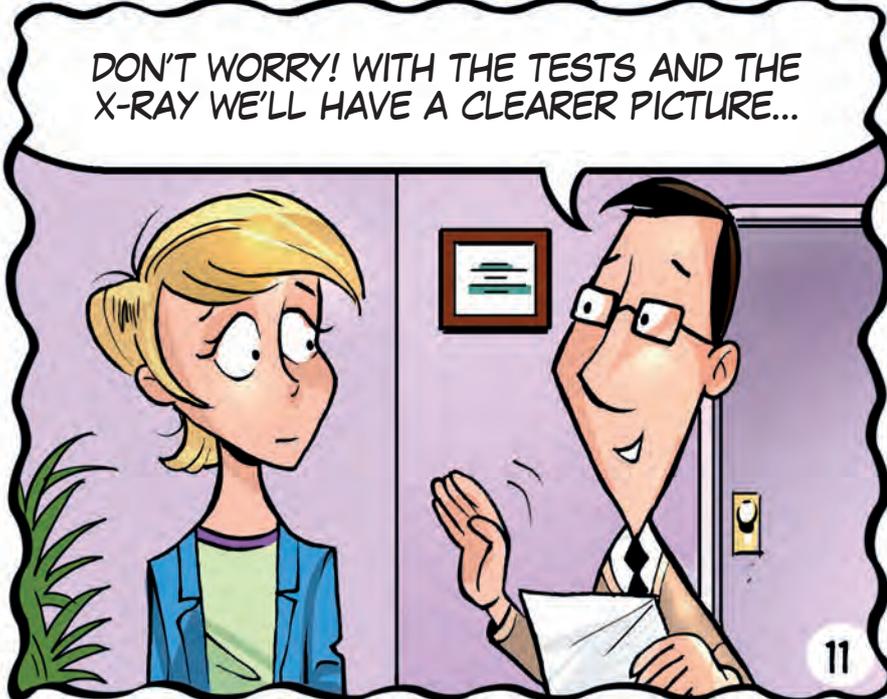
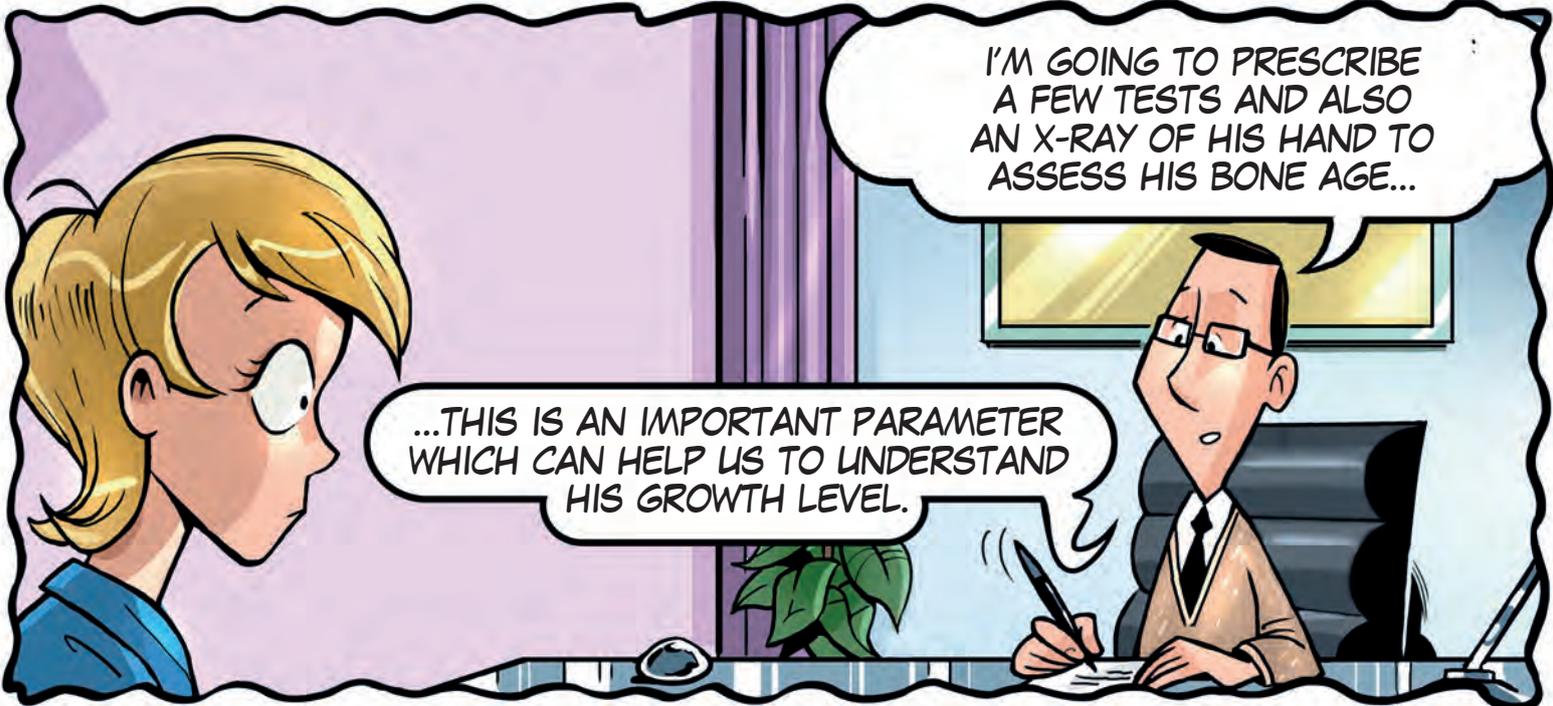
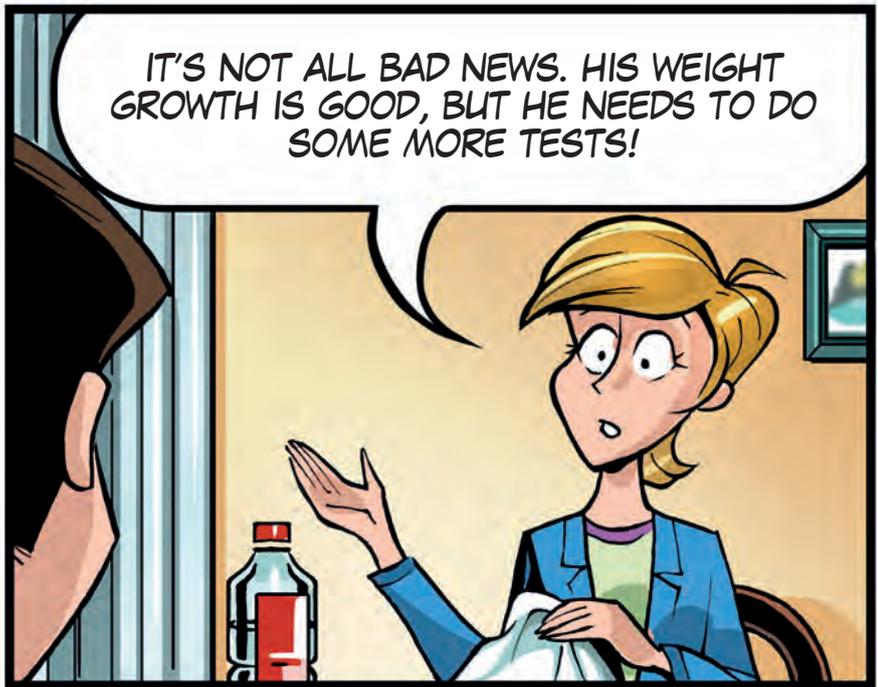
HE GAVE HIM A THOROUGH CHECK-UP... AND THEN...

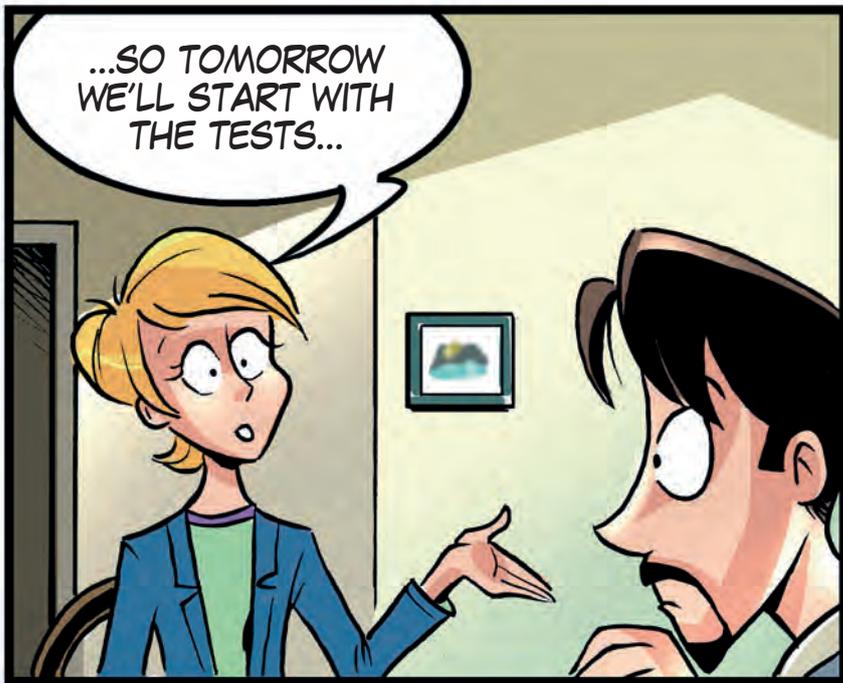


IF WE COMPARE TODAY'S RESULTS WITH THE PREVIOUS ONES, IT SEEMS THAT YOUR SON IS GROWING LESS THAN THE AVERAGE...



...IN OTHER WORDS, HE'S NOT GROWN MUCH IN THE LAST YEAR...





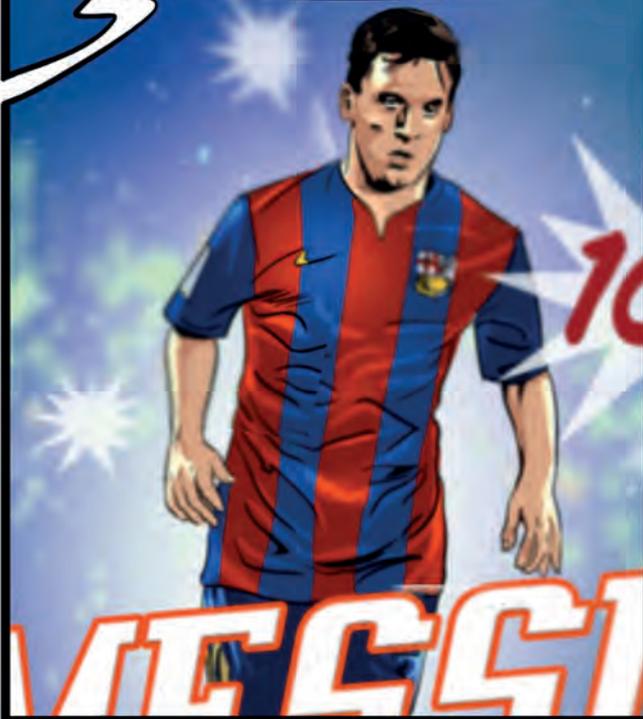
...DON'T WORRY, YOU'LL GROW! YOU'LL BE TALL AND STRONG!



HUH... THAT WOULD BE GREAT!



LOOK AT MESSI! HE WAS REALLY SMALL...



THEN ONE DAY HE GREW! HE'S NOT THE TALLEST, TRUE, BUT HE'S THE BEST IN THE WORLD!



SAY GOODBYE TO PETER, WE HAVE TO GO...



A FEW DAYS LATER...

DOCTOR... I'M ON TENTERHOOKS...  
WHAT DO THE TESTS SAY?



YOUR SON HAS NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS, BUT THE TESTS SHOW THAT HIS IGFI, OR GROWTH HORMONE, IS VERY LOW.



MEANWHILE...

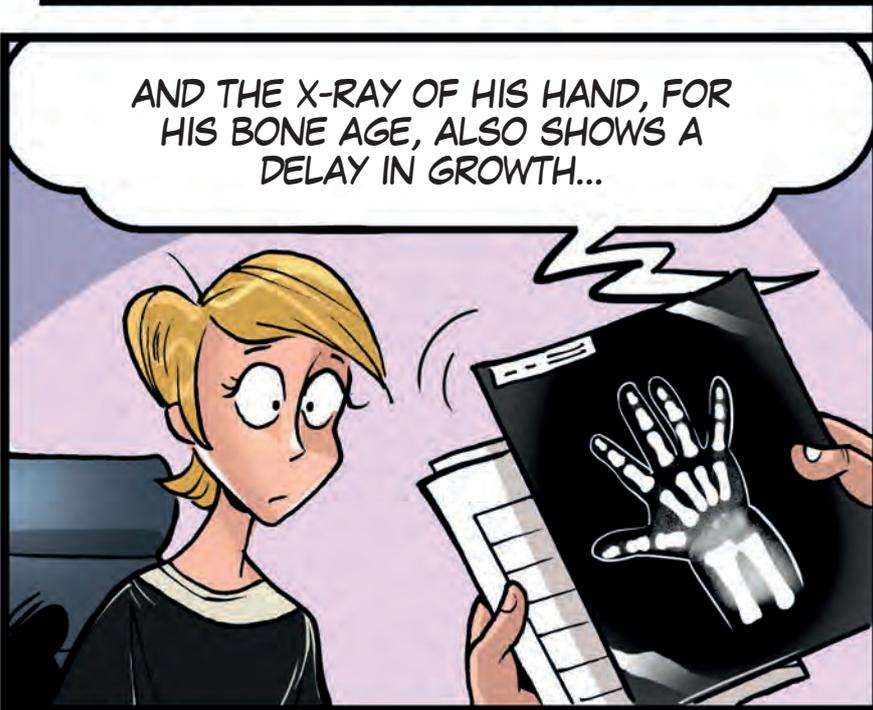
DAD, HAS MOM GONE TO SEE THE DOCTOR?

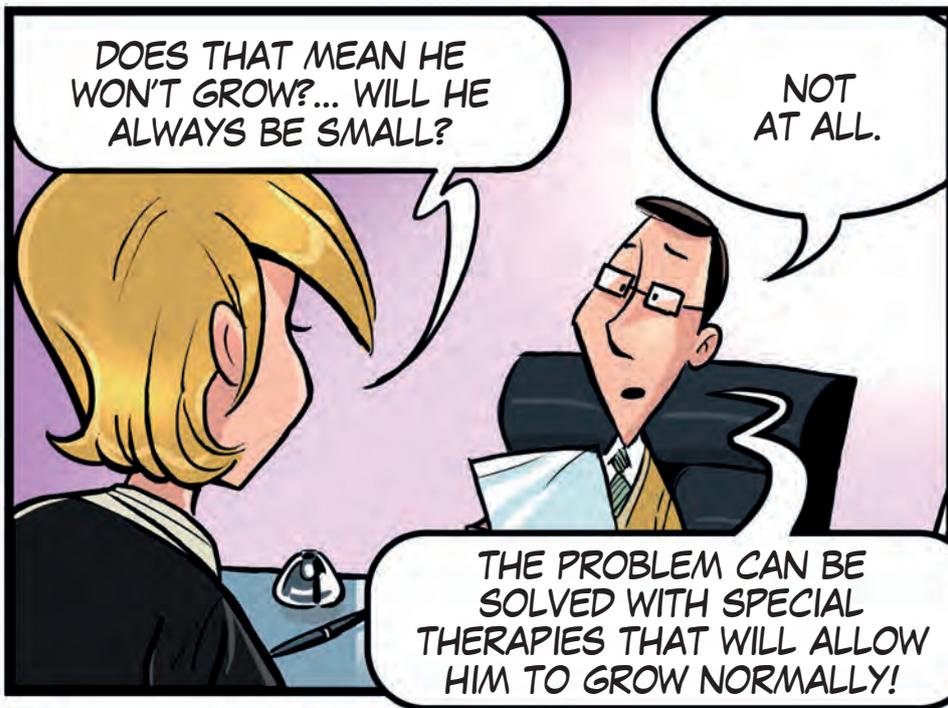


YES... BUT BEFORE SHE WENT SHE GOT YOU A COMIC... SHE MUST HAVE LEFT IT IN THE KITCHEN...



AND THE X-RAY OF HIS HAND, FOR HIS BONE AGE, ALSO SHOWS A DELAY IN GROWTH...

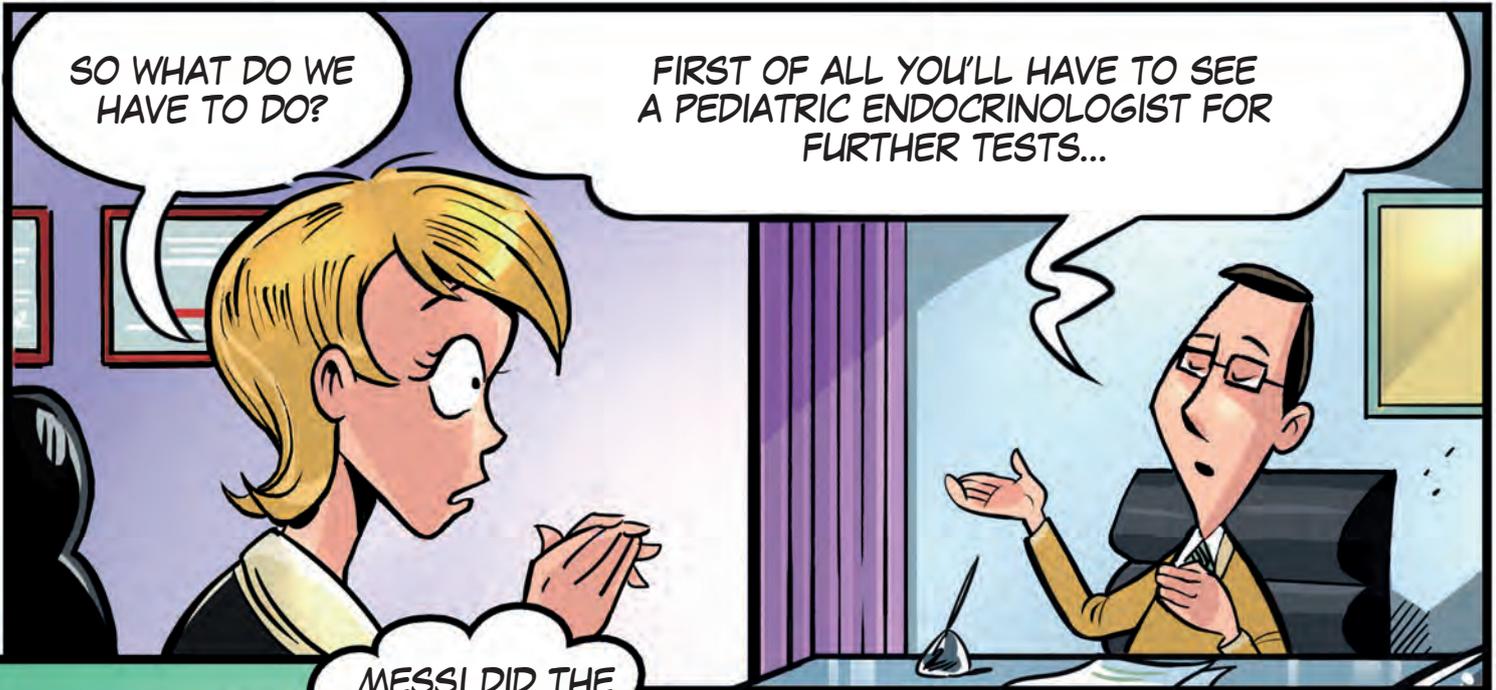




DOES THAT MEAN HE WON'T GROW?... WILL HE ALWAYS BE SMALL?

NOT AT ALL.

THE PROBLEM CAN BE SOLVED WITH SPECIAL THERAPIES THAT WILL ALLOW HIM TO GROW NORMALLY!



SO WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO?

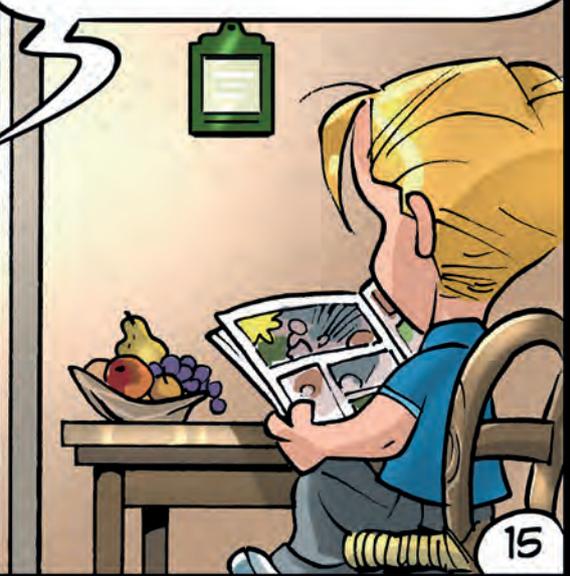
FIRST OF ALL YOU'LL HAVE TO SEE A PEDIATRIC ENDOCRINOLOGIST FOR FURTHER TESTS...

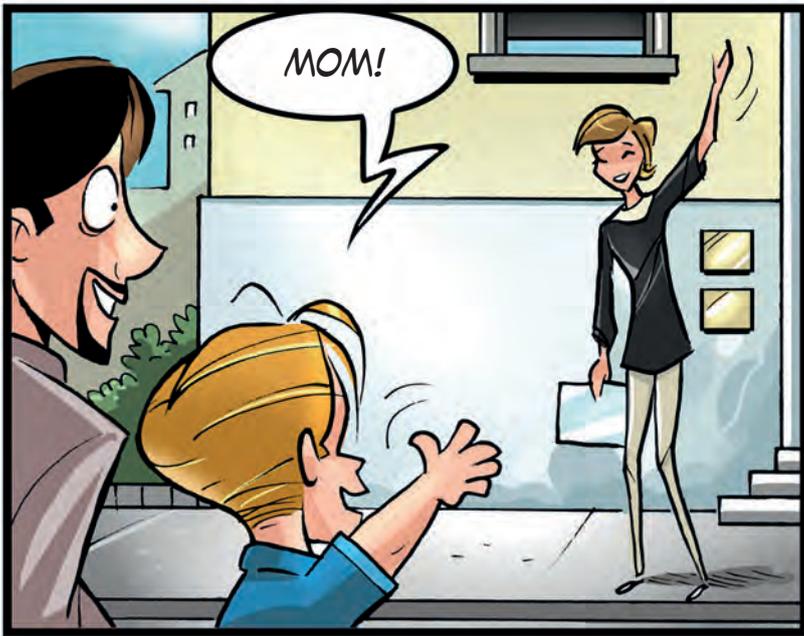


MESSI DID THE SAME THING WHEN HE WAS A BOY...

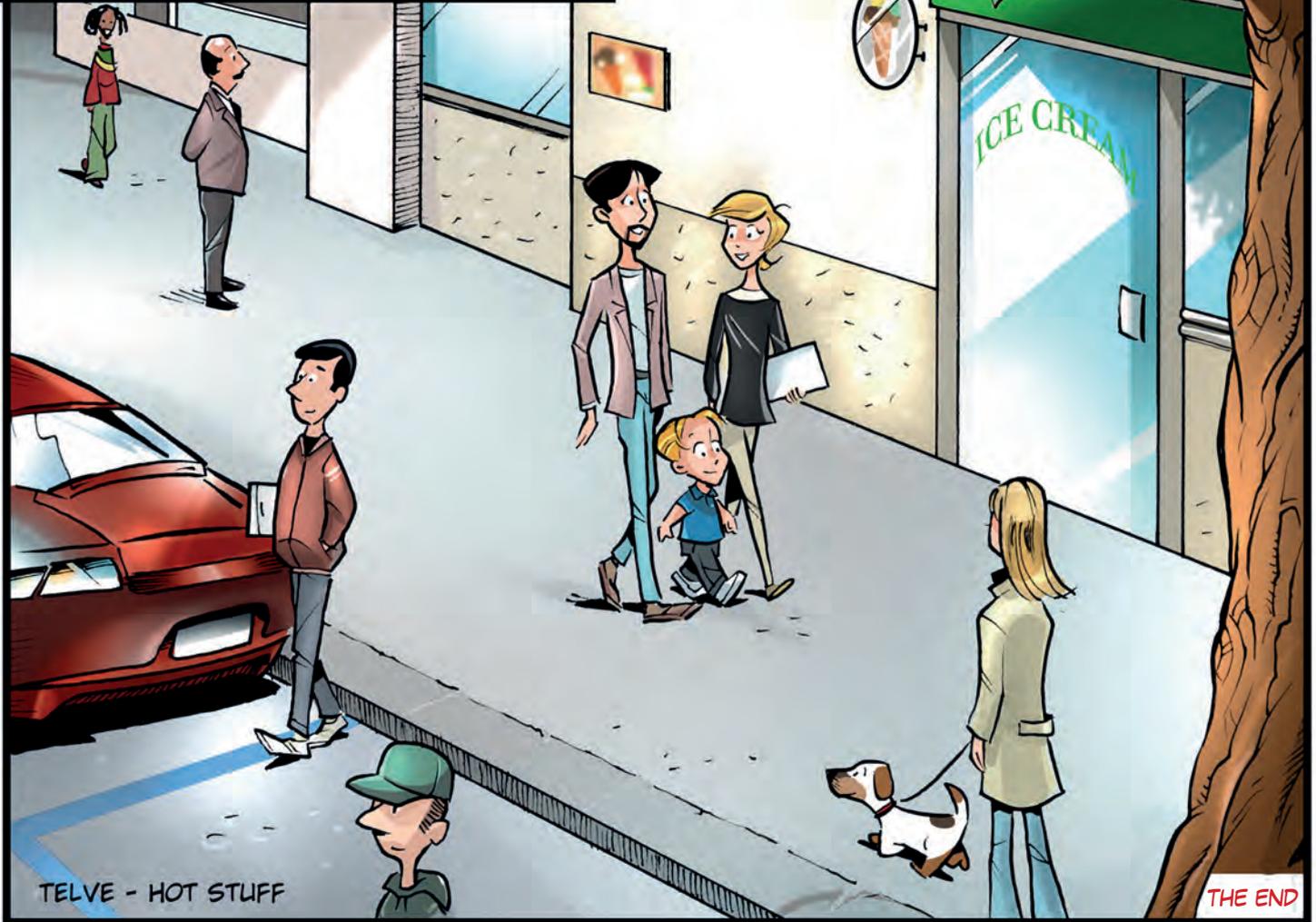


LET'S GO PICK MOM UP, SHE'LL BE WAITING FOR US!





"THE DOCTOR SAID THAT IF WE FOLLOW THE ADVICE OF THE PEDIATRIC ENDOCRINOLOGIST WILLIAM WILL NO LONGER BE THE SMALLEST BOY IN THE CLASS!"



TEXT BY DANILO FINTINI, ENDOCRINOLOGY AND DIABETES UNIT  
OSPEDALE PEDIATRICO BAMBINO GESÙ, ROME  
CREATED BY SCUOLA ROMANA DEI FUMETTI

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