



# Dolphin Tale™



**Rated:** PG • **Running Time:** 113 minutes

**Themes:** Adjusting to life's ups and downs, compassion, parental support, community, permanence of family, teamwork, creative problem-solving, brokenness

**Cautions:** An Indian legend suggests that a goddess turned children into dolphins. A girl prays to her deceased mother. Mild language includes "crappy," "shoot" and "darn." Some swimwear is a bit revealing. Despite noble intentions, a boy skips school and deceives his mom.

### Story Summary

What's more heartwarming than a Hollywood hero who overcomes physical challenges and inspires others to do the same? How about if that story was based on actual events? Better yet, make the hero an animal. And then let this charming creature play itself in the movie. That's the unique combination that makes *Dolphin Tale* special.

Sawyer, a lonely 11-year-old mourning his swimmer cousin's military deployment, finds an injured dolphin on the beach tangled in the ropes of a crab trap. He cuts her loose. When a rescue team takes the wounded animal to a nearby marine hospital, Sawyer volunteers there and makes new friends (including Hazel, a bubbly peer) thanks to his special connection with the downcast dolphin known as Winter.

Sadly, Winter's condition worsens, and the doctors must amputate her tail. Can a fish survive if it can't swim? Sawyer and Hazel refuse to lose hope. Winter learns to motor through the water without tail fins, though it puts a life-threatening strain on her vertebrae. After visiting wounded soldiers in a VA hospital, Sawyer wonders if the doctor responsible for creating their prosthetics could design a new tail for Winter. It's a long shot, but everyone pitches in to give it a try. Meanwhile, with the marine hospital swimming in debt and a deadly hurricane approaching, this community must band together again. And again.

Buoyed by a happy ending, as well as strong statements about family and the need to adjust to life's unpleasant obstacles, *Dolphin Tale* is especially touching in its final moments. That's when we see real-life footage of Winter interacting with disabled children and adults who have come to draw strength from her heroic example.

### Family Activity

After viewing the film, gather the family for a board game such as *Candyland* or *Chutes & Ladders* that allows players to make great strides in a hurry, but can just as quickly set them way back. As you play, relate frustrations to the highs and lows in the movie or those you may have experienced as a family. Be encouraged by Isaiah 40:28-31.

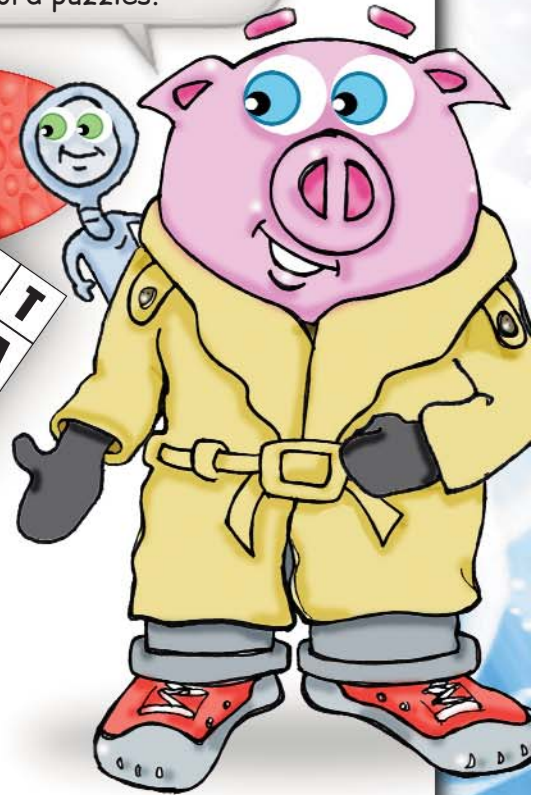
To learn more about Winter's story or watch her via webcam, visit [seewinter.com](http://seewinter.com).

### Talking Points

1. Imagine together how much fun it must be to swim with a dolphin. Then read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 and discuss the healing effect Sawyer has on Winter, and vice-versa. Ask, "Do you have a special friend who always cheers you up? What are your favorite things to do together?"
2. What do you think Dr. McCarthy means when he tells Kyle, "Just because you're hurt doesn't mean you're broken"? How have various characters been battered by life's storms? Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-9 and Philippians 4:6-7 for the hope God offers hurting people.
3. Explain why it's important never to give up on people, even if they seem to resist our help. Like Winter fighting the sock, they may be struggling with something we don't understand ... and they can't explain to us.
4. Ask, "Why is Sawyer wrong to hide things from his mom?" Point out that, once she fully understands his bond with Winter, she is his greatest advocate (especially with Mr. Doyle). Reassure your child of your love and support, and why it's important that you have all the facts. —by Bob Smithouser



PI Guy and Maggie here! As we continue to take a closer look at Winter's tale, try making heads or tails of these fun word puzzles.



Beginning with the "E" in the top corner, count clockwise to the fifth letter, and put that one in the first open space below. Keep jotting down every fifth letter until you've filled in all the spaces with a message from Philippians 4:13.

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Clues 'n' Claws

Answer these questions about the movie, crossing off the letters on the crab that correspond to each correct reply. Then arrange the leftover letters to reveal an important lesson learned by Sawyer.

1. X-rayed in a turtle \_\_\_\_\_
2. Winter's home state \_\_\_\_\_
3. Hazel's father's name \_\_\_\_\_
4. Roofus is such a bird \_\_\_\_\_
5. Kyle's gift to Sawyer \_\_\_\_\_

A: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

