

# HOLA FRIDA

Original version: French/ English subtitles



**Directors: Karine Vézina/ André Kadi**

**Release date (Quebec): April 4, 2025**

**Genre: Animation**

**Countries of origin: Canada (Québec) /France**

**Runtime: 82 min.**

**CLASSIFICATION**

# REVIEW BY COMMON SENSE MEDIA

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/movie-reviews/hola-frida>

## Common Sense Media Review

By  [Monique Jones](#), based on child development research. [How do we rate?](#)

 age 8+ 

Young artist faces illness in vibrant animated biopic.

### Parents Need to Know

Parents need to know that *Hola Frida* is a vibrant animated film about the childhood of iconic Mexican painter Frida Kahlo (voiced as an adult by Olivia Ruiz in the original French dialogue and by Angela Galuppo in the English-language dub). Inspired by Sophie Faucher's picture book *Frida, C'est Moi...*

### Parents Need to Know

Parents need to know that *Hola Frida* is a vibrant animated film about the childhood of iconic Mexican painter Frida Kahlo (voiced as an adult by Olivia Ruiz in the original French dialogue and by Angela Galuppo in the English-language dub). Inspired by Sophie Faucher's picture book *Frida, C'est Moi*, the film includes a few scary moments when young Frida is very ill with polio, including her encounter with La Muerte (aka Death), who's ready to take Frida with her but is talked out of it ... temporarily. But there's no strong language, sex, or substance use, and Frida demonstrates both resilience and perseverance through adversity. The movie shares information about Mexican culture, including the history and mythology of the Zapotec people and traditions around the Day of the Dead. To stay in the loop on more movies like this, you can sign up for weekly [Family Movie Night emails](#).

#### Why Age 8+?

**Violence & Scariness**   
Frida is very ill with polio, and others worry about ... >

**Sex, Romance & Nudity** Not present

**Language** Not present

**Products & Purchases** Not present

**Drinking, Drugs & Smoking** Not present

#### Any Positive Content?

**Positive Role Models**   
Frida is imaginative, compassionate, kind, and caring ... >

**Positive Messages**   
Focuses on the power of imagination, perseverance ... >

**Diverse Representations**   
Set in Mexico and makes references to/includes ... >

**Educational Value**   
Young viewers will learn a lot about the early years ... >

### Positive Role Models

 a lot

Frida is imaginative, compassionate, kind, and caring. She faces tremendous adversity after being diagnosed with polio, and she does feel down at times because of her illness. But she keeps her spirits as high as possible through both drawing and using her imagination. Her love for life helps her persevere through her challenges.

## Positive Messages

●●●●● a lot

### Positive Role Models

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Focuses on the power of imagination, perseverance, courage, and optimism during trying times. Promotes empathy in its portrayal of Frida and her experiences with childhood illness. Portrays death as a part of life by depicting La Muerte as a figure who's nurturing and empathetic, if unyielding in her ultimate duty.

## Diverse Representations

●●●●● a lot

### Positive Role Models

●●●●● a lot

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Set in Mexico and makes references to the mythology of the Zapotec people, the traditions surrounding the Day of the Dead, and the idea that death is part of life. Most of the original French Canadian voice actors are of Latino descent as well, adding authenticity to their characterizations. The cast of the English dub includes people of various races and ethnicities. Frida is a complex, relatable girl character in a lead role. She also offers disability representation, given the chronic conditions she lived with after surviving both polio and a terrible accident.

## Educational Value

●●●●● some

Young viewers will learn a lot about the early years of famous artist Frida Kahlo, who is portrayed as a vibrant, optimistic child. The movie references/includes facts about Mexican culture, including the history and mythology of the Zapotec people and traditions around the Day of the Dead.

## SYNOPSIS

Little Frida doesn't have a care in the world. By day, she strolls through the market with her mom and befriends a stray dog. In the evenings, she enjoys the company of her family at dinnertime. Her carefree existence comes to an abrupt end, however, when she contracts polio and is confined to bed. She finds solace in her imagination, in a world full of colors and flowers, which primes her to overcome all of life's obstacles.

<https://www.filmfest-muenchen.de/en/program/films/film/?id=8009&f=120>

## FILM REVIEWS

To its credit, *Hola Frida* is a sweet little movie that largely (if not quite entirely) skirts the ideological baggage of Kahlo's later life. It is bright and colorful, in a way that evokes the colors and textures of Old Mexico. In fact, the geometric character design vaguely evokes the vibe of pre-Columbian art. Yet, the film never slavishly tries to approximate Kahlo's own style

Plus, Chiquita's scampish mischief should entertain young viewers. It will entertain plenty of adults too. On the other hand, the sequences featuring Santa Muerte are impressively striking, but they might be a bit intense for little ones (or maybe not—kids, they grow up fast)

<https://www.jbspins.com/2025/02/nyicff-25-hola-frida.html>

## An inspiring story

This animated film plunges us into the lively streets of **Coyoacán**, Mexico, where we follow the adventures of a little girl unlike any other. Bubbly and curious, young **Frida** faces life's

challenges with her boundless imagination. It's a story that promises to inspire both young and old, **highlighting resilience, creativity, and the power of dreams.**

<https://strasbourg.eleusal.com/en/>

**Familyfaire...*Hola Frida*** is a film that children will enjoy with vivid animation and a story that centers around a child who uses her imagination to create an imaginary self that she uses to escape the problems that Frida encounters. The film explores Frida's troubled childhood, when she got polio and was teased for her weaker leg, but Frida always found a way to overcome her obstacles and persevere. Frida was a young girl who fought for her artistic ideals and became one of the greatest artists of the 20th century. *Hola Frida* offers young viewers a magical glimpse into her early years and the many challenges she overcame

<https://lastonetoleavethetheatre.blogspot.com/2025/08/freakier-friday.html>

## DETAILS

### LANGUAGE

The language spoken by the characters, both children and adults, remains simple and adapted to young audiences. It's a vocabulary devoid of swear words and profanity, even when Rafael makes fun of Frida and her leg: "chicken leg", "the lame one" he shouts at her during a roller skate race. Several vocabulary registers can be noted

### ILLNESS

- Virus, poliomyelitis, fever, pain, the thinned leg, contagion, isolation in the bedroom, Frida's father's epilepsy, accidents caused by roller-skate racing.
- Help: the brace, the pills to save Frida's father.
- Disability: Frida can no longer jump or climb trees but throws herself into overcoming the illness thanks to her training for the roller-skate race.
- Emotional effects of the illness: fear, doubts, tears caused by frustrations and limitations.
- Strengths generated by the illness: resilience and the desire to fight.  
"She is strong and stubborn like you": her father compares Frida to Matilde Calderón, his wife and Frida's mother.

### THE SPANISH LANGUAGE

Throughout the film, the characters use affectionate words such as "Papito," "Friducha," "Mamita," "Mi corazón" [My heart].

On her good days, Frida exclaims: "Buenos días" to the sun, the garden... [Good morning].

You hear her say "hola muchachos" or "gracias," "Ándale," "cálmate," etc.

"Felicidades" [congratulations], "espléndido" [splendid], "hasta luego" [see you later], etc. enrich the dialogues.

"La muerte" [death] or "Pelona" [bald woman / the bald one].

## **MEXICAN FOOD**

Frida's father encourages Matilde, his wife, to make "polvorones" (very crumbly shortbread cookies, often called "Mexican wedding cookies" in English and typical of Mexican and Spanish pastry) and "conchas" (sweet brioche bread) for Frida. But Matilde realizes that his request is more for him than for Frida.

**Tacos** and **tortillas** seem to be better known Mexican food fare.

## **VIOLENCE**

The animation does not show any graphic violence but rather situations involving moral and physical injury:

- Moral harm caused by:
  - Schoolchildren's mockery when they nickname Frida "chicken leg".
  - Gossiping women.
- Physical harm caused by:
  - The pain brought on by polio.
  - The rivalry during the roller-skate race when Rafael pushes Frida. Frida loses control and gets bogged down when she loses her red good-luck ribbon. But she pulls herself together to win the race. Frida's accident, when she falls from very high up amid the sound of breaking glass, has no graphic details except that she is later shown in bed in a cast, which suggests physical injuries.

## **NUDITY**

The focus is on the leg as the part of Frida's body that suffers. Otherwise, nothing to report.

## **SEXUAL ACTIVITY**

No sexual activity to report, except for hints of Frida's attraction first to Rafael, who rejects her, and then to Tonito, with whom she exchanges a kiss on the cheek.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT / MESSAGES**

### **MESSAGES THAT COULD WORRY OR DISTRESS CHILDREN UNDER 10**

- ◇ Illness affecting Frida: "I can't climb anymore nor go back to school...". Frida suffers from the physical limitations she experiences in the scene where she tries to skip rope, for example.
- ◇ Illness such as her father's epilepsy, or the mention of accidents during the roller-skate race.
- ◇ Bullying by schoolchildren who make fun of Frida's physical disability.
- ◇ The lack of love and family support can make children mean and unhappy, which explains Rafael's aggressiveness.

- ◇ The fear of dying – “La muerte” or “Pelona” appears twice with the intention of taking Frida into her world. She is personified by a skeletal face and an enormous hat.
- ◇ The bus accident may seem sudden and frightening, even though it is shown without graphic details.
- ◇ Discrimination against women, which outrages Frida when her father tells her: *“...many people still think that women could not do certain jobs and that it is better for them to be done by men.”* *“That’s unfair,”* exclaims Frida.
- ◇ The ban on dressing as a boy, which removes the privilege of choosing one’s style of dress and could imply a different sexual orientation.

### **POSITIVE MESSAGES CONVEYED BY THE COLORFUL, PLAYFUL WORLD OF THE ANIMATION**

- ◆ Illness only lasts for a while, because Frida is able to train with her father for the roller-skate race and WIN!
- ◆ Frida recovers from her illness thanks to the love and attention of her family.
- ◆ Rafael changes and becomes gentler when he admits he is neglected by his mother. Frida shows her sensitiveness and compassion towards him.
- ◆ Frida is able to help her father during an epileptic crisis by giving him the medicine he needs.
- ◆ A philosophy seems to emerge from the film when a character close to Frida tells her: *“You will always find someone who will not like the way you dance, the way you sing...”*. In fact, you have to accept this, because you cannot be loved by everyone.
- ◆ Family love plays a protective role in Frida’s life, in contrast with the lack of love in Rafael’s life, her bully.
- ◆ In her moments of illness and struggle to live, Frida doubles herself into a sick Frida and a guardian-of-life Frida who motivates her. *“You must fight... you have not crossed the bridge of flowers...”* [the world of the dead]. During the Day of the Dead, Frida speaks to her grandparents: *“¿Cómo están, abuelos?”* [How are you, grandparents?]. With her brace filled with flowers, Frida pays them tribute and reveals her strength.
- ◆ Because of her health and because of the contempt she feels toward the men who recommend that she becomes a midwife rather than a doctor, she states: *“I will be a painter. I needed to express myself.”*
- ◆ Under the loving and artistic influence of her photographer father, Frida develops her taste for colors. *“...You choose colors with your soul. They have to touch your heart,”* he says as he guides her while she colors his photos for an exhibition.
- ◆ Frida emerges as a strong, determined young girl capable of defying society’s prejudices. She campaigns for “Libertad” [Freedom]. She recognizes that without the threat of death and without pain, she would never have discovered her strength. Certain lines of dialogue highlight Frida’s resilience and courage: *“Each burst of laughter... a victory against pain”*; *“I discovered an inner strength in myself”*; *“Even if it was not easy, I deeply loved my life.”*

The positive aspects of this animation can be summed up by its optimistic tone, the support and love of family and friends (Rafael and Tonito in particular), the valuing of

difference, disability, and cultural diversity on a path toward self-confidence and success.

Frida's song, with its rhythm, evokes her love of life..

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhH7RYiv0mo>

Remark: The film concludes on archival footage of Frida Kalló as an adult

## PHOTOS DU FILM



Frida is a child loved by her parents (Matilde & Guillermo), her little sister Cristina and the stray dog Chiquita.



One of Frida's frustrations was to stay isolated in her bedroom because of the contagious polio virus



Thanks to her wild imagination, her lucky red ribbon, her courage and strength Frida wins the roller skates race.



Frida celebrates the Day of Dead with her parents and little sister



On leaving the medical school where she is a student, Frida has a serious bus accident and finds herself in a cast



*"I want to be a painter"*: after the accident, Frida in a wheelchair finds her vocation and inner strength



**Long live life! Viva la vida!** sings and celebrates Frida's triumph over all the harsh trials of her life