

# COPING WITH COVID-19 FEARS FOR KIDS

## NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK OFFERS READERS TOOLS TO DEAL WITH PANDEMIC

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A Hillsburgh chef's new children's book aims to help young readers develop life-long resiliency through the lens of the global pandemic. "As an adult, you have the life experience of going through challenges and knowing you can get through it," Pam Fanjoy, owner and executive chef of Fan/Joy Market Place in Hillsburgh, said. "When you're a child, if you haven't been through those experiences, you don't know what you're capable of."

Fanjoy's book, "Shooting Stars... A Wish for Healing and Togetherness," tells the story of Seth, a wise young boy determined to find his own courage through the COVID-19 pandemic. "The greatest freedom that we can give children during any crisis is faith in their own ability to find their courage when they are feeling anxious," added Fanjoy. "This leads them to be able to develop a resiliency which will last a lifetime. Finding our own courage comes often from having faith in something larger than ourselves and for Seth, this was his belief in shooting stars." Fanjoy continued her work at the restaurant through the pandemic. "I was working 80 hours a week, but I started paying attention and listening to what the parents were experiencing in the early days of the pandemic," she said.

The same themes of isolation and anxiety kept coming up while talking to her customers. "I started interviewing parents about the experience of their kids and what they were coping with," Fanjoy said. "This is really collective trauma we're all going through." Fanjoy said she sat down and wrote the book after her niece sent her pictures of a letter written by Fanjoy's great-nephew. "It was about shooting stars coming down to heal the world and take away the virus," Fanjoy said. "The book is written from a child's perspective about how they are experiencing COVID-19 and how they can find courage and become resilient." For adults, previous life

experience through tough times may make the pandemic a little easier to navigate. "Children are dependent," she said. "They rely on their parents, and when parents are experiencing unemployment, or they're worried about feeding their family, those things trickle down to kids." Fanjoy said she wrote the book with the intention of helping parents begin a conversation around pandemic-related worry and to allow children a forum to start talking about their feelings. Chef Pam Fanjoy is the owner and executive chef of Fan/Joy Market Place and Culinary Studio. In 2016, she was named a Chopped Canada Champion. Prior to her culinary career, Fanjoy spent more than 25 years working with children, adolescents and families as a



Saskia Brussaard-Crave photo  
Chef Pam Fanjoy, signs copies of her new children's book, "Shooting Stars," at Fan/Joy Market Place and Culinary Studio in Hillsburgh.

clinical social worker. "Shooting Stars... A Wish for Healing and Togetherness" is available at chef-pamfanjoy.com for \$15 plus HST, or at Fan/Joy Market-place (100 Trafalgar Rd. N.) in Hillsburgh. Each book sold is part of a "buy one, gift one" program, for every book purchased, one will be gifted to a child in need. All proceeds from the book will go directly to the Jr. Chef Program.



## Lest we forget

Throughout our nation's history, Canada's veterans have bravely protected the rights and freedoms we enjoy today and helped maintain peace around the world. They have also helped keep Canadians safe at home by providing essential support during times of crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic. On November 11, I encourage you to wear your poppy with pride to honour the bravery of our veterans and soldiers.

Gary Carr  
Halton Regional Chair

