

***“Hard times don’t create heroes. It is during the hard times when the ‘hero’ within us is revealed”.***

In the midst of troubled times, heroes emerge and not always with ostentatious display, but in their own quiet ways to help others through difficult days. An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, in an address to the nation on St. Patrick’s Day commended the frontline healthcare workers whose heroic exploits helped us to battle against Covid-19. It is not just our physical health that we must protect, but we need to take care of our emotional and mental wellbeing also. Recent weeks have been tough for all of us – young and not so young. There are many stories about the fear and anxiety that children are experiencing as they find themselves exposed to stories about the pandemic and this has been exacerbated by their separation from friends and extended family.

Emma Cahill created three characters who she affectionately describes as “three loveable superheroes” Blaze, Crash and Rustle who are the protagonists in her children’s Mental Health Book “Under the Mask”. This story was penned by Emma to teach children how to “activate their superpowers” by using their coping mechanisms to deal with their emotions in a safe way.

The trio have returned to guide children through this particularly turbulent time with a free short story created by Emma to help children understand feelings and different emotions that arise during this anxious period.

This book is a child-friendly story of a boy in lockdown who calls on the three Superheroes to help him manage his sadness, anger and worry. There are simple coping mechanisms for children as well as key messages centred on staying positive and remembering that this is a transient time and this situation will not last forever.

A wonderful resource to use with children, particularly those who may be exhibiting a sense of fear or may be unsettled at this time. The book is available for FREE to download on Emma Cahill’s website is <http://www.emmacahill.ie/inside-feelings/> where a video recording of the author reading her story can also be accessed, as well as activity pages to accompany the book.