



Endorsement for Iris the Dragon

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“Children with mental illness suffer greatly, not just because of these devastating conditions themselves, but also because they lack the grown-up capacity to understand what has happened to their feelings, their thoughts, their behavior...in short, to themselves. As a result, special assistance is needed to tell them their story and with appropriate intervention, and to show them a brighter future. To be effective, this hope and help must be offered in children's own language and metaphors. The mythical but magical Iris the Dragon assists not just the young boy who meets the Dragon in this story, but can also help all children who read about the boy and the Dragon. Beautifully told, incredibly illustrated. My highest recommendation for parents and their children afflicted with this disorder.”

Peter S. Jensen, MD

Ruane Professor of Psychiatry, Columbia University
Director, Center for the Advancement of Children's Mental Health Formerly Associate Director,
National Institute of Mental Health for Child & Adolescent Research

“Children's stories are wonderful vehicles for teaching important lessons in life. The message that mental illness can be treated and people can resume their lives will be a great value to children, their parents and teachers. As the parent of a son with mental illness and as a former classroom teacher, I know that knowledge is the first step towards early intervention.”

Jacqueline Shannon

Board President, NAMI, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill

“This charming, beautifully illustrated book, speaks to children in language they can understand. At once playful and imaginative, it is also realistic and poignant in a way that captures children's fears, worries and the longing for the comfort of a wise and caring friend. The story is set in an imaginary landscape with a friendly wise dragon, Iris, whose motto is faith, hope and courage. Fish, the central character comes to depend on Iris, who offers her friendship and advice on how to relax. Finally when Fish's worries persist and worsen, Iris encourages Fish to get help from a special doctor, a psychiatrist who will help Fish with his big worries. This book humanizes children's suffering, puts a face to it, and speaks to parents, educators and others about the pain and anguish mental illness can bring; pain that is often invisible and easily misunderstood. Iris helps pull the cover off children's problems showing a simple, easy to understand way that some worries don't just go away, they can grow and intensify, but that help can be found. This book has an important and powerful message - we must listen to our children, and respond with wisdom and support to their fears and worries and make use of available specialists to reduce suffering and distress. I heartily recommend this book to all, especially anyone who wants to better understand children, children's worries and the help that they may need.”

Joseph H. Beichman, MD

Clinical Director, Child Psychiatry Program,
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Psychiatrist in Chief,
Hospital for Sick Children TD Financial Group Chair in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Professor and Head,
Division of Child Psychiatry, University of Toronto

“Using the medium of the fairy tale story, this book introduces children and their parents to the early warning signs of childhood mental illness in a thoughtful and innovative way. It helps its reader become aware of the many issues surrounding mental illness, including the importance of early intervention. I believe that the book's sensitive but direct approach will help remove the stigma of mental illness and lessen the burden of individuals, and their families, who suffer from psychiatric disorders.”

Simon Davidson, M.B., B.Ch., F.R.C.P.(C)

Chairman, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry,
Department of Psychiatry, University of Ottawa;
Chief of Psychiatry,
Medical Director of the Mental Health Patient Service Unit, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario