

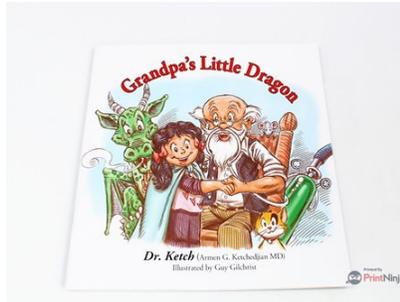
Blog

Anesthesiologist Turned Author Pens Third Children's Book

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By Armen G. Ketchedjian, MD

As physicians, we often see patients with conditions that are preventable. However, as anesthesiologist, when I see a patient, his or her case has usually advanced beyond the prevention stage. But what if we could educate children about substance abuse before they pick up unhealthy habits?



It's this concept that led me to become an author. I began writing an educational series in 1989 after caring for young teenagers in Lincoln Hospital in Bronx, N.Y., during my medical clerkships in medical school. After working with Rebecca Razavi at the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention in Bethesda, Md., I began concentrating my efforts on underage exposure to drugs, smoking and alcohol and how to prevent it. I completed and published my first book, *Golden Apples*, in 2007. It's a cautionary tale about the dangers of temptation that's designed to open a dialogue drug addiction.

Then, after looking at data from the CDC regarding the prevalence of smoking and health consequences in young people, writing *Grandpa's Little Dragon* was the logical next step. It's startling - 600,000 middle school children and 1.6 million high schoolers smoke. My goal was to put a dent in the stats and curb tobacco use among children and counteract the tobacco industry, which targets 12 to 25 year olds with its \$9.7 billion annual marketing budget. We have to get to them first.

I set out to write a short, entertaining book that would engage young readers (pre-K to 5th grade) in an interactive manner, yet deliver a few strong messages about smoking, creativity and powerful choices in life in an effective way. The book's illustrator is Guy Gilchrist, who worked closely with the late Jim Henson and the Muppets franchise. I feel fortunate that he has found merit in my work and my education series. We are now working on updating "Golden Apples," and plan to collaborate on another installment to the education series, "Hidden Cavern."

I'm also the author of, *Will it Hurt? A Parent's Practical Guide to Surgery*. In this book, I walk parents through the four Ps surgical process: Prelims and diagnosis; Preparation; Procedure; and Post-op and recovery. *Will It Hurt* also will be revised in 2017.

Writing has been a wonderful outlet for inspiring and educating children and

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their parents, while also using my medical expertise and experience. It's very gratifying.



Armen Ketchedjian, M.D., or Dr. Ketch, as he's often called, is a former assistant professor at Yale University School of Medicine and is listed in The Guide to America's Top Anesthesiologists by the Consumer Research Council of America. He trained at Cornell Medical Center, with a fellowship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and a pain management elective at Boston Children's Hospital, in the Department of Anesthesiology. He is on staff at Sharon Hospital in Sharon, Conn.

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