

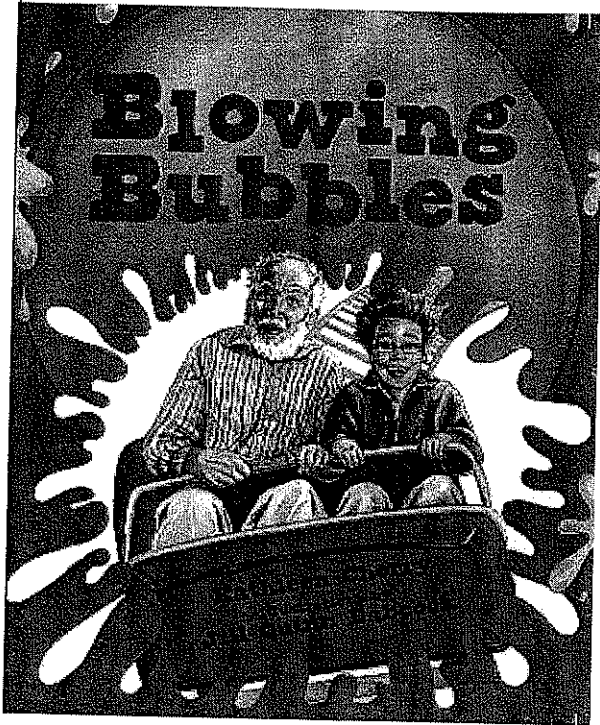
# Book Review

## *Blowing Bubbles*

by Kathleen Cherry,

with illustrations by Jill Quinn Babcock

Aaspirations Publishing, 2012



**B**lowing Bubbles, written by BC school counsellor Kathleen Cherry and illustrated by Jill Quinn Babcock, tells the story of Josh and his Grandpa George's many exciting adventures – riding a roller coaster, renting a speedboat and racing go-carts. Grandpa George celebrates the end of each adventure by blowing a perfect shiny pink bubble.

Josh's relationship with his grandfather is turned upside down when Grandpa George has a stroke. Josh doesn't like visiting Grandpa in the hospital because he's not the same – he just sits there, he can't talk, and he can't do anything anymore. One day, Mom leaves Josh alone to visit with Grandpa. Josh is nervous and reluctant until Grandpa motions for Josh to push him in his wheelchair. With Grandpa's silent urging, Josh begins to push the wheelchair faster and faster down the hall. Grandpa's cheeks get flushed, and he makes a grunting noise. Josh worries that Grandpa is going to have another stroke, when suddenly he sees something that makes him smile and laugh – Grandpa George has blown a perfect shiny pink bubble.

This beautifully illustrated and descriptively written picture book, available through Aaspirations Publishing, would be a good discussion starter with elementary school children who are struggling to come to terms with the changes in family or friends who have life-changing illnesses, or even for those struggling with their own life-changing illnesses. The bibliotherapy techniques suggested in Cherry's article on page 10 may be useful. For example, you could ask students how they would feel in Josh's shoes, or to speculate about how Grandpa George might feel now that he has changed.

This story acknowledges that the relationship prior to the illness was important and special, and that change can be scary. Nevertheless, aspects of that relationship are still possible after the illness.

Bonnie Knoll  
School Counsellor  
Victoria School of the Arts