



Author Megan Carige with her book *Happy Day Out on the Sunshine Coast*.



# Kids learn to read while exploring coast

By Abbey Cannan

**THERE** is a fun way for children to learn to read while exploring the Sunshine Coast thanks to author Megan Carige's latest book.

'Happy Day Out on the Sunshine Coast: Finn and Henry Explore' is a guide to child-friendly locations on the Sunshine Coast, told as a beautiful children's storybook based on Megan's family.

Megan spent her early childhood living in Fiji before her family moved to Toowoomba. She has spent most of her adult life living, working and visiting cities around Australia and the world.

"It all started back in 2016, when we decided to have a tree change and leave Brisbane. The boys were growing up fast and I was working full-time in a busy role with international travel and I felt like I was burning the candle at both ends," she said.

Moving back to live in the Garden City of Toowoomba with her two young sons gave Megan the inspiration for her first children's story book, 'Happy Day Out in Toowoomba'.

"My eldest son was starting school and he was having difficulty with his reading. I wanted to have something fun and engaging for him, to encourage him to read. It is really satisfying for me to see him now read the books. I think because he can identify the landmarks and knows he has been there, which makes it more interesting for him to read," she said.

After enjoying the experience of launching her first children's book at the start of 2017, Megan was keen to work on a second title.

"This book follows the characters Finn and Henry (my two boys) who explore the Sunny Coast," she said.

"There is a great little checklist at the back of the book, which encourages kids to follow along and explore their beautiful coast.

"The book is a handy guide for anyone visiting or living on the coast with kids. It gives some great ideas on where to visit and other fun activities to do."

Megan chose the Sunshine Coast for the location of her second book as it feels like a second home to her.



Alex Fullerton, Megan Carige and Honey Randall at the book launch of *Happy Day Out on the Sunshine Coast*.

"It is where we always holiday with the kids, and it is where I used to holiday as a child too.

"In fact, our family has holidayed on the Sunny Coast for the last four generations. My father grew up on a pineapple farm in Beerburum and his childhood was spent at the Sunny Coast as well.

"I was also inspired by my dad, as he has recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's and his memories of his childhood are slowly fading.

"I wanted to incorporate his childhood too. He gets enjoyment out of reading the book now and re-visiting the sites (particularly hiking up Mt Beerburum), which was one of his favourite things to do as a kid."

Megan said it's just too hard to choose the best activity for kids on the Sunshine Coast.

"There are so many great things to do. We love the rock pools at Shelly Beach and we love Noosa Main Beach, it is so great for kids," she said.

"We love our walks and there is great hiking around the Sunny Coast and very kid friendly too and of course we have always enjoyed boating."

The book is available at Annie's Books on Peregrine, The Bookshop at Caloundra, Mary Ryan's at Noosa, Sandy Pages in Noosa and Coolum, and various Visitor Information Centres on the Coast.

For more information, visit [happydayout.com.au](http://happydayout.com.au).

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