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OB/GYN publishes children's book to help working moms explain where they are



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Working moms juggle the balance of maintaining a career while caring for children and striving for balance in life. "Mommy, Where Are You?" is a conversation between children and their working mothers in which children ask about their mothers' whereabouts during the day and the mothers answer in an inspiring way.

"During residency, when I came home from an 80-hour work week delivering babies and caring for women, I was absolutely exhausted," said Tera Howard, M.D., author of the book and obstetrician and gynecologist at the University of Alabama at Birmingham Women and Infants Center. "I wanted to read to my then 2-year-old, but I lit-

erally couldn't keep my eyes open. I constantly wondered if there were short, educational and inspirational books that I could read to my child."

From that idea, Howard's first book "Mommy, What's That?" was born; it teaches children about body parts and shows them how to use each part in a positive way. Howard's newest book, "Mommy, Where are You?" shows children that their moms are making a difference in the lives of others while they are at work. It also shows working mothers that it is OK to be away and to pursue passions, serving as role models for their children to pursue their own passions and make a difference.

"The message in the book is important not only to working mothers, but to all mothers,"

Howard said. "It's OK to pursue your passions, and you should."

The book, illustrated by Howard's high school friend Addy McNew, introduces elementary-age children to the concept of working motherhood while celebrating the diversity of careers in which women thrive. A wide variety of careers is represented in the book, from professionals to those in the service industry.

"My mother was a working mother," Howard said. "I am a working mother. I am surrounded by working mothers. We all know what it feels like to be away from our children for our work, and oftentimes that feeling is guilt or sadness or longing. In some small way, I hope my book helps to replace that guilt with feelings of hope and inspiration."

The book is the second in a series that Howard hopes to expand on, creating a series of educational and inspiring children's books that are short and impactful. "It is important to me that the books be short, because a mother's most precious commodity is time," Howard said.

Both books, "Mommy, Where Are You?" and "Mommy, What's That?" are available on Amazon and at Barnes and Noble.