

## Courageous Conversations

# MARCI GREENBERG COX

## Navigating Cancer Diagnosis and Parenthood with Grace and Resilience

**N**avigating the turbulent waters of a cancer diagnosis is a daunting journey, one fraught with uncertainty, fear, and numerous challenges. For Marci Greenberg Cox, this journey became a defining chapter in her life, igniting a passion for advocacy and support that reverberates through her work today. In 2018, Marci found herself confronted with a Stage 3 breast cancer diagnosis, thrust into a world of surgeries, chemotherapy, and the emotional turmoil of explaining her illness to her young daughters.

In the face of adversity, Marci's resilience shone brightly. Rather than succumbing to despair, she embraced open dialogue with her children, crafting a narrative of hope and understanding amidst the chaos. This experience sparked the genesis of "Mommy Has a Boo-Boo," a poignant tale born from her own struggles, aimed at helping families navigate the complexities of cancer diagnoses with grace and honesty.

But Marci's journey didn't end there. Fueled by a desire to support others facing similar challenges, she embarked on a literary endeavor, penning additional books and journals to offer guidance and solace to those in need. Her creation of Flor Publishing in 2020 further solidified her commitment to providing resources and a sense of community for individuals and families affected by cancer.

In a recent interview with Reader's House Magazine, Marci delved into the inspiration behind her writing, the personal journey that influenced her work, and the profound impact her books have had on readers facing similar battles. Through candid discussions and heartfelt reflections, she shares not only her experiences but also invaluable advice for parents and caregivers navigating the delicate task of discussing cancer with young children.

Marci's dedication to advocacy knows no bounds. With future projects aimed at expanding her literary repertoire to include diverse representations and themes, she remains steadfast in her mission to empower and uplift those affected by cancer, offering a beacon of hope in the darkest of times. Through her website and publications, she continues to weave a tapestry of resilience and courage, reminding us all that in the face of adversity, there is always strength

to be found.

### What inspired you to write "Mommy Has a Boo-Boo"?

In November 2018, my life took an unexpected turn when I was diagnosed with Stage 3 Breast Cancer—a journey that would test my strength and resilience in ways I never imagined. As I grappled with the reality of my diagnosis, one of my greatest challenges was finding the right words to explain it to my young daughters, then aged 5 and 1, as well as to my 15-year-old stepdaughter.

### How did your personal journey with breast cancer influence the writing process?

Throughout my aggressive treatment regimen, including a double mastectomy and chemotherapy, I was determined to maintain open communication with my children, ensuring they understood my illness without feeling overwhelmed by fear of losing me. This experience inspired me to pen my first book, "Mommy Has a Boo-Boo," a heartfelt account of my journey and a guide for other families facing similar challenges.

### Marci Greenberg Cox shares her journey battling Stage 3 breast cancer, inspiring her to pen books aiding families facing similar challenges.

However, my eldest daughter, still curious and uneasy about my appearance without hair, prompted me to create another resource. Thus, "Mommy Has a Boo-Boo Now What?" was born—a journal designed to facilitate discussions between parents and children, addressing their concerns and fostering understanding and support.

Reflecting on my own initial confusion and anxiety upon diagnosis, I recognized the need for a comprehensive guide to navigating the complexities of breast cancer. This led me to author "The Breast Cancer GPS," a practical handbook offering insights into medical procedures, questions for healthcare professionals, and coping strategies for those confronting the unknown.

The response from both the medical community and women battling breast cancer has been overwhelming. The necessity for these books is palpable. While I didn't receive formal feedback

on these three particular books, they stem from my personal journey and reflections during that time.

### What advice would you give to parents or caregivers who need to discuss cancer with young children?

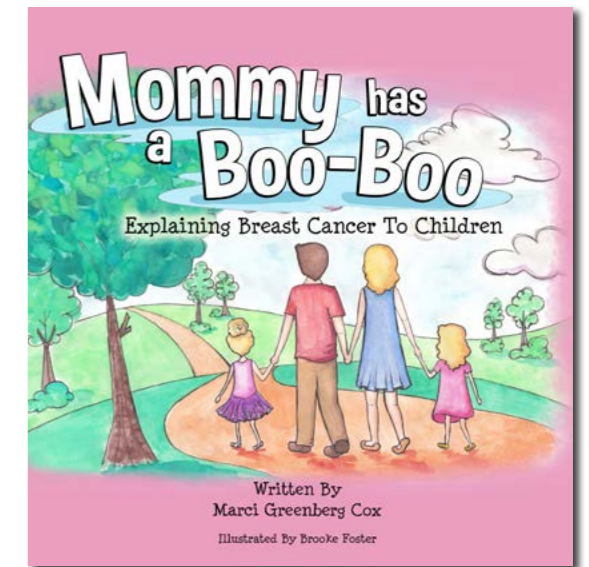
I consistently advocate for honesty and openness between mothers and their children when facing illness. Children have an innate sense that something is amiss, and skirting around the issue isn't fair to them. Contrary to what we might assume, children demonstrate remarkable resilience. Naturally, the approach varies depending on their age, but honesty remains paramount when explaining to them that "mommy has a boo-boo."

Moreover, I'm fervently passionate about advocating for the rights of younger women to access proper medical care. Despite the standard recommendation in the US for mammograms starting at 40, there's a growing population of women in their 20s and 30s receiving diagnoses. It's unjust that insurance dictates when a woman can seek preventive care.

### What future projects or initiatives do you have in mind to continue supporting individuals and families affected by breast cancer or cancer in general?

My latest releases, "Michael the Magnificent Fights Back" and "Maggie the Magnificent Fights Back," tackle the challenging theme of children confronting a cancer diagnosis. I aim to expand this series to encompass eight books featuring diverse characters. While the current editions focus on Caucasian characters, I'm committed to creating representations of African American, Asian, and Indian characters. Cancer knows no boundaries, and it's essential for children to see themselves reflected in these narratives.

Today, I continue to share my journey and insights through my website, [www.florpublishing.com](http://www.florpublishing.com), and my books are available on Amazon. My mission is to empower and support individuals and families facing similar challenges, providing them with the tools and resources they need to navigate their own journeys with courage and resilience.



Mommy Has a Boo-Boo beautifully explains breast cancer to children, fostering understanding and hope through simple language and heartfelt illustrations.

*Mommy Has a Boo-Boo: Explaining Breast Cancer to Children* by Marci Greenberg Cox, with contributions from Kristen Hampshire and Brooke Foster, is a touching and invaluable resource for families navigating the challenging journey of a breast cancer diagnosis. Aimed at children aged 3-9, this book gently introduces the concept of cancer in a way that is both accessible and comforting.

The narrative follows a mother's experience with breast cancer, covering key events such as surgery, chemotherapy, and the physical changes that come with treatment. Through simple, clear language and engaging illustrations, children can better understand why their mommy might look different and what she is going through. The story is both honest and hopeful, emphasizing that while the journey is tough, recovery and healing are possible.

Readers have praised the book for its effectiveness in sparking important conversations between parents and children. One parent noted that it provides a "perfectly sweet, simple way to describe to your young child exactly what is to come," while another highlighted its educational value in explaining cancer and its impact on the family.

The book is a heartfelt, educational tool that supports families during a difficult time. It reassures young readers that even though their mommy has a "boo-boo" called cancer, with time and care, she will get better. This book is highly recommended for any family facing breast cancer, offering a sense of understanding and hope for both children and parents.