

A Handkerchief for Little Possum

Susan Perrow © 2020

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A rhyming story for children in this C-19 pandemic who are overly anxious about 'germs' and getting ill.
(please do not share this with children who are too young to even know about this situation)

The story is in columns - the first column needs to be read on both pages before moving to the second column. It includes a 'handkerchief chorus' that can be sung to the tune of 'Here we go 'round the Mulberry Bush' – or you may make up your own song!

Open permission is granted for any translations – all I ask is for you to email your translated version so I can add a link to it on my website (E: susanperrow@gmail.com). I mention this as my previous story, 'The Little Gnome Who Had to Stay Home', written earlier in March 2020, was translated into 19 languages within a week of posting it online.

Our children need stories at this time - our world needs stories at this time!

Note: a possum is an Australian marsupial, and like the kangaroo, the mother carries her baby in a pouch.

This story will be included in the 'loss of health and well-being' section in my next book, 'Stories to Light the Night: A Grief and Loss Collection for Children, Families and Communities' (due to be published late 2020 by Hawthorn Press, UK)

Little Possum was so worried.
Through the day and all the night.
The forest news and chatter,
Had given him quite a fright.

Every trunk of every tree,
Had a sign that said: 'Watch out!'
In big letters on the bark -
'Nasty germs are all about.'

Little Possum was so worried,
All this germ-talk everywhere,
How could he even dare
To breathe the forest air!

Mother Possum told him:
'It's safe to be in our tree,
If you're playing close to me,
You'll be as safe as safe can be.

*Handkerchiefs to catch the germs,
Handkerchiefs for every day.
Helping to make the forest safe,
And keep the worries away.*

So, the spiders in the forest,
Set to work in all the trees,
A-spinning and a-weaving,
Making many silk hankies.

Next morning from the pouch,
Little Possum poked his head.
He saw a precious gift
Woven from the spiders' thread.

Soon every possum had a gift,
There were fewer germs about,
At last our Little Possum
Could climb safely from his pouch.

But still Little Possum worried,
And stayed inside his pouch.
If nasty germs were about,
Why would he want to come out?

Every day his mother begged,
'Come out and play in our tree,
Jump from branch to branch,
Be as free as free can be.'

But Little Possum still worried
And refused to play in the tree.
Little possum could only think,
'What if the germs get me!'

Then a breeze blew round the tree,
With a whispered song so clear.
Mother Possum heard the message,
And let out a happy cheer!

She called out to her spider friends
That lived in all the trees.
'What we need to keep us safe,
Are many handkerchiefs!'

Now all the forest possums,
Could play up and down their trees.
With hankies in their pockets,
To use ... so easily.

*Handkerchiefs to catch the germs,
Handkerchiefs for every day.
Helping to make the forest safe,
And keep the worries away.*

When the handkerchiefs were
finished,
The spiders had another chore.
Weaving soft and silky wash cloths,
For each little possum's paw.

If you visit Possum forest,
Look for washing in the trees,
Many little cloths and hankies
May be drying in the breeze!

*Handkerchiefs to catch the germs,
Handkerchiefs for every day.
Helping to make the forest safe,
And keep the worries away.*