

PEOPLE

Wee mouse with nous

By SIMON EDWARDS

Bedtime stories read by mum or dad are always looked forward to by youngsters – but how much more special if the book has been written by a parent.

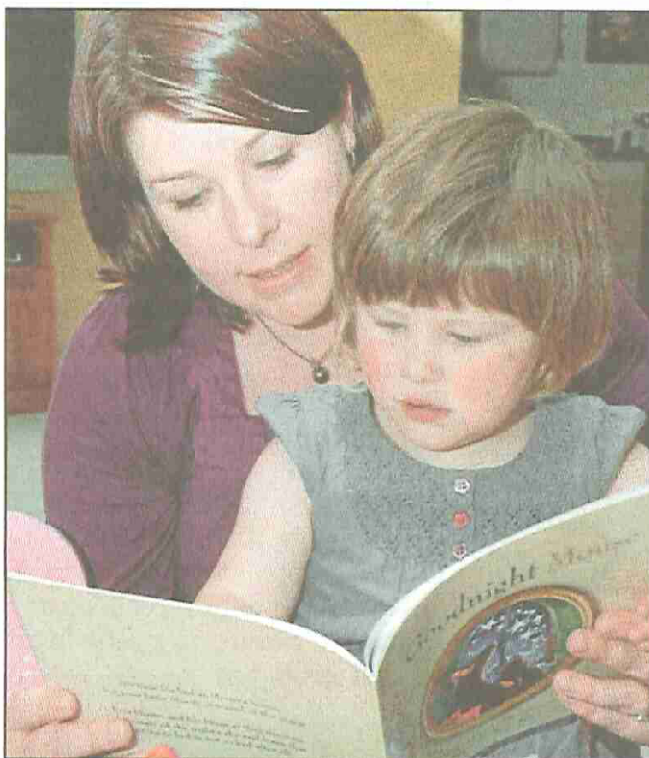
Kelson mother Rochelle Killiner was inspired to write her just-published storybook *Goodnight Mouse* by her two-year-old daughter Ava, who she says showed a strong interest in the moon and the stars, but much less interest in going to bed at night.

English and poetry were Mrs Killiner's favourite subjects when she was a student at Hutt Valley High School. She recalls that when she was 11 she thought it was "cool" when she heard someone her age had written a story that was published.

Over the years "ideas bubbled around" for books but "nothing really pushed me into it".

However, reading stories to Ava and hearing about the self-publishing option PublishMe.co.nz fired her up. In between her office work career and family commitments, she worked on putting ideas together and coming up with rhyming text that flowed along.

A comment by her brother gave her the idea that youngsters would be intrigued by the thought that each of us have a star looking out for us.



When you wish upon a star: Rochelle Killiner reads her storybook *Goodnight Mouse* to her two-year-old daughter Ava, who inspired it. The book's inscription reads: "for Ava, my little star". It will be launched at Petone store Play Days on May 15.

It was also a way of explaining to tiny Ava when her granddad died that he would be her brightest star in the sky.

For the storybook, it became a tale of a mouse who is afraid of the dark but is calmed by its parents telling him about the magic of the night sky.

Mrs Killiner says a breakthrough for her was PublishMe putting her in touch with Taranaki illustrator Agata Oleksiak, who interpreted her words just as she wanted.

Not only did Mrs Killiner find the whole self-publishing experience "much easier than I

expected", but she enjoyed keeping control of everything, and using available editors, illustrators, etc., only to the extent that she wanted to.

Goodnight Mouse is to be launched on Saturday 15 May, 1-3pm, at Play Days in Jackson Street, with book signings, face-painting and automatic entry to a bouncy castle for any child whose parent buys a copy. (See www.rochellekilliner.com)

Already, Mrs Killiner is mulling over another storybook.

"I don't know where it will take me, but I'm keen to give it another shot," she says.