

Mandy shares her journey

By Angela Norval

As a child growing up in Bundaberg, Mandy Mauloni would spend a lot of time outdoors, making the most of what she describes as the best weather and beautiful beaches, as well as her parents' acreage.

But she wasn't outside, she was exploring the local library or curled up on her bed reading, because her favourite activity of all was devouring books.

It is only fitting then that Mandy has her own book published and is excited to share it with audiences.

Mandy's memoir, *Pregnancy Virgin*, is a humorous insight into the ups and downs and ins and outs of pregnancy and is being released by Nightstand Press in the lead up to Mother's Day.

"With modern technology making so much information available, I'd assumed understanding pregnancy would be easy," Ms Mauloni said.

"Social media was telling me how it should look, the internet was giving me the information, and if I still didn't understand there was an app for that – yet I found the unexpected challenges confusing and at times, overwhelming.

"While every pregnancy is different, I found it incredibly helpful to hear about authentic pregnancy experiences and that's why I wrote *Pregnancy Virgin*, because I thought it may

help first-time pregnant women manage their own expectations about changes to their bodies and minds."

Ms Mauloni shares her emotions and experiences in a light-hearted way, exploring topics such as maternity fashion, loss of identity, exercise regimes and nutrition, star sign indicators, gender disappointment, ways to find time for yourself and the myriad of other issues that pushed the strong emotional response button for her during those disorienting nine months.

Ms Mauloni said while pregnant women should always consult a medical professional with any concerns, her debut novel revealed some unexpected pregnancy challenges that mothers-to-be may find useful to know about.

"For example, I had no idea that pregnancy hormones could blur your vision — I thought there was something wrong with my eye for weeks, before seeing an optometrist," she said.

"I also found proper scientific evidence revealing pregnant women suffering from moderate or severe heartburn are more likely to have babies born with above average amounts of hair."

Mandy stressed she was not a medical professional.

"While I've gained permissions from various sources to quote their research, and readers are bound to learn a thing or two, the

focus of *Pregnancy Virgin* is really the emotional journey.

"Every pregnancy is obviously unique, but I believe all women go on an emotional journey during those crazy nine months, and I hope that women who are curious about pregnancy or pregnant for the first time will be able to relate to some of my feelings of surprise, confusion, sadness, anger and joy.

"I hope that by sharing in my challenges and joys, it will help anchor the anxiety I know many expectant mothers feel ... plus give them plenty of opportunities to have a laugh at my expense!"

Mandy Mauloni was born in Bundaberg and lived there for 18 years, then moved back to the city after completing her university studies to work as a journalist in 2004 and 2005.

"Having my book published was a childhood dream realised and now being able to come back to my hometown to showcase it to the city is so special to me.

"The book briefly touches on my childhood here in Bundaberg too, so I imagine some of my readers from Bundaberg will be able to relate on that level."

To celebrate the release of *Pregnancy Virgin* published by Nightstand Press, The Book Boutique Bundaberg will be holding a book signing event at 10am, Saturday 26 March, 2022.



Mandy Mauloni is excited to provide a fun side to pregnancy for expectant mothers.