

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Stories Connect Us!  
Telling Tales Virtual Festival**

**HAMILTON, ON – August 24, 2020:** When the team at Telling Tales gathered around the table to decide on a theme for their 2020 festival they never dreamed that the idea they came up with would become so relevant. Our communities are learning new ways to stay connected and share our stories. This year, like many other events, Telling Tales is taking their popular in-person festival online as they explore how ***Stories Connect Us***.

Telling Tales is excited to share with families an all-star line-up of virtual programming. Join your favourite authors, illustrators and storytellers share their stories and engage audiences from our own backyard to across the world. When stories connect us, there are no limits to where we can go!

“With a lot of thoughtful rejigging of we have designed sessions that bring our audience even closer to the artists.” says Susan Jasper, Telling Tales Executive Director. “Our ambitious line up has grown to over 80 artists. Each episode works as a mini festival in itself that will to inspire young readers to explore their own storytelling powers.”

Starting on September 20<sup>th</sup> and running until December 3<sup>rd</sup>, Telling Tales will be bringing authors, illustrators and storytellers into your home with all the festival fun you expect and some very special surprises! All schedules and episode descriptions can be found on the Telling Tales website. [www.tellingtales.org](http://www.tellingtales.org)

This year’s line-up features **13 themed episodes with quality children’s programming** from award-winning Canadian authors, illustrators, storytellers, and musicians who will engage and delight **children from tots to teens**. Hosting each episode is Hamilton born and raised, Josh Taylor, an award winning Hip-Hop and Street Dance dancer, choreographer and storyteller.

This year’s headliners include: **Aaron Bell and the White Pine Dancers, Kevin Sylvester** who will be launching his new series, *Hockey Super Six - The Puck Drops Here* and *On Thin Ice*, **Kenneth Oppel** with *Hatch*, the 2<sup>nd</sup> book in the trilogy, **Jonathan Auxier** launches his new series with *The Fabled Stables- Willa the Wisp*. **Monique Gray Smith** features her latest book *When We are Kind* and **Ruth Ohi** co presents *Friends for Real* with **Ted Staunton**.

Other book launches include: **Joel Sutherland**, *Haunted Canada 10*; **Deborah Kerbel**, *Slow Moe* and Paul Covello, *Canada Fun*.

Rounding out our line-up are: **Aimee Reid, Alisa Siegel, Angela Misri, Andrea Curtis, Andrew Larsen, Anoosha Syed, , Charlene Chua, Deborah Kerbel, Elizabeth MacLeod, Etienna Moostoos-Lafferty/Joanne Robertson, Ishta Mercurio, Jennifer Maruno, Jess Keating, Kate Moss Gamblin, Kathy Kacer, Ladybird Fancypants, Lana Button, Maika Harper, Naseem Hrab,**

**Patricia Storms, , Sarabeth Holden, Sharon Jennings, Sherry Lee, Sylv Chiang, Suzanne Del Rizzo, Sylvia McNicoll, Tanaz Bhathena, and Vikki VanSickle.**

Telling Tales is also proud to feature the talent of local presenters including: Annie Weber, Art Gallery of Burlington, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Gabe Crimelli, Hamilton Children’s Choir, Hamilton Youth Poets, Hachey The MouthPEACE, Heather Kuzyk, Krista McNaughton, Lisa Pijuan Norura, Mr. Ben, My Friend Christopher, Royal Botanical Gardens, Simon Frank and Westfield Heritage Village.

Episodes premiere on Facebook, YouTube then will be available on demand from [www.tellingtales.org](http://www.tellingtales.org)

Each episode brings you 30 minutes of story-loving entertainment with live chats, book giveaways, contests, crafts, music and a chance for your art to be featured on the Telling Tales website through the [Creativity Club](#).

While you’re waiting for the festival to begin, visit the Telling Tales website to see the [2020-21 Reading List](#) and get a head start on your festival reading.

For more information, interview or photos please contact:

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**Telling Tales**

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Telling Tales is a Canadian, Registered Charity committed to delivering outstanding literary programming for children and youth that raises awareness of the importance of literacy in our communities. We appreciate the support of our government and community [partners](#) without whom as this would not be possible.