

FREE



# London Mums

Issue 3 Winter 2010/Spring 2011

**How to  
make  
children's  
dreams  
come true!**

**Laila Rouass  
Exclusive!**

**Laila Rouass  
gives up her  
killer heels  
to Save the  
Children**



**Star  
mum**

**EXCLUSIVE!**

**'Strictly Come Mummy'**

**Dancing Star and  
Mumpreneur Karen  
Hardy speaks about her  
tough past, family and  
new ventures**

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# BE INSPIRED

## Editor's letter



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Dear London Mums

Summer seems long gone and soon the party season rolls on. This issue is packed with tips on how to keep fit and have fun over the winter and during the spring, i.e. by fencing (yes, I mean it!), dancing and walking. Our exclusive cover interview is with Strictly

Come Dancing champion and star mum Karen Hardy (p6-8). Dancing entertainer Latino Bambino will show us groovy moves at our big Christmas Party on 3rd December and Tricolore entertainment will brighten up our Carnival party on 4th February 2011 (p19).

Don't miss our super mums' interviews (p12-14) as well as an exclusive letter from actress Laila Rouass who tells us why she is giving up her killer heels to Save the Children (p28-29).

And in rainy days read our features on how to make our children's dreams come true (p16), how to make story cubes (p17), and another illustrated tale based on Vivaldi's seasons (p20-21).

Our parents' Agony Aunt Sue Atkins answers your letters (p24-25). We also road-tested pretty things (p30) and fashionable gifts that will come handy this Christmas (p26-27). And we have lots of fab competitions for you to enter (p18).

If you haven't done so already, join London Mums by filling in the online form at [www.londonmums.org.uk](http://www.londonmums.org.uk) to enjoy discounts, freebies and more importantly the company of a real group of mums. Come and meet us at our parties, playgroups and events across London (p19).

Spread the word – London Mums is totally and utterly **FREE!**

Hope you enjoy the magazine!

Monica Costa

*Monica*

**Editor in chief, Founder of London Mums and mum of lively four-year old Diego**

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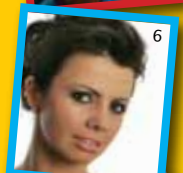
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Children's Birthday Parties

# STRICTLY COME MUMMY!

## Exclusive interview with Strictly Come Dancing champion and star mumpreneur Karen Hardy

By Monica Costa

Karen Hardy is an amazing woman and mumpreneur. She won Strictly Come Dancing with Mark Ramprakash in 2006 after beating cancer and post-natal depression. And she now owns a Dance studio in the heart of Chelsea.

**Q:** Home is...

KH: South Croydon. I live with my husband Conrad and my son Callum. Conrad is originally from New Zealand so I often see that as our second home.

**Q:** Since you left Strictly Come Dancing you founded your dance studio that promotes family dancing. What could you say to encourage kids and parents to dance?

KH: The increasing number of TV dance shows in the past few years has inspired both adults and children to learn to dance. Not everyone is a natural and many people find taking their first steps onto the dance floor an intimidating experience. The whole purpose of Karen Hardy Studios is to take the dance experience to the next level. It's not just a studio. It's an experience. Our glamorous Chelsea Harbour location is a far cry from the draughty church halls and commercial dance schools. We cater for everyone, from first-timers and accomplished dancers, celebrities and international dance champions, to couples, individuals and groups, both young and old. We wanted the real experience of dancing to live up to the fantasy and magic that you see on shows like Strictly Come Dancing. Dance can help youngsters of all ages and abilities to develop stronger communication skills and manners, health and fitness awareness and confidence. We have designed two dance programmes giving children the option of fun and structured group classes or private one-to-one tuition. Getting children to exercise can be hard but dance provides a fun and exciting way to get kids moving with their friends and family.



**Q:** You are a real inspiration to any woman. You have survived cancer three times, post-natal depression and been through a lot in your international dancing career. Where have you always found the strength to move on and keep smiling in life despite the drawbacks?

KH: Despite my drawbacks in life I can now look back and see that I have an incredible will to succeed in everything I do. I often hold my time in hospitals as a child responsible for it and it is this experience that has given me such drive. I watch my son striving to see, do and experience life every waking moment and maybe it is this natural striving feeling as a child that being ill made me feel behind with life that I now fight so hard even to date with wanting to "catch up with life". I remember so clearly sitting on my hospital beds watching my newly acquainted friends come and go as they only had to have their tonsils out – but not me! I could see life passing outside my window and I would just count the days until they would let me out and enjoy it once again. Pain was another factor I wanted to run from and keep active to try to ignore it. You will often hear me say today I don't have time to be ill it is an inconvenience! This must stem from those early hospital days when I knew my friends were all out doing exciting things yet I had to sit and deal with endless injections and operations. I guess when you are young everything is exciting but I would be stuck in a ward listening to music or watching telly and wishing I was out enjoying life!!!

**Q:** What do you like to do in your family time with your son and husband around London?

KH: My time with my husband and son is the most precious of all. Having strived so hard in life I have been rewarded with some wonderful experiences and opportunities, which I can enjoy with my family yet the best of all is what I call "just us time". For example this year on Mother's Day my husband wanted to do something very special for us all but my answer to him was simple. Let's just have us time. So we put our coats on, took a train into the city and wandered around some amazing places just experiencing life together as a family. It beats any five star restaurant, luxury hotel or holiday or any jewels and diamonds. Taking family pictures in the cold, drinking hot chocolate on the Millennium Bridge was the perfect family moment that no one can put a price on. For all that I have seen and done in my life the greatest moment was the day my son was born and being together with him and my husband is priceless.

**Q:** With your super busy work schedule, you must have some secret recipe to balance work/life. Please share it with us.

KH: There really is no secret to a balanced work/life other than believing in your priorities and know that your real friends and family will be there when you get it wrong, yet the others will go! Be ready to learn when you get it wrong and enjoy the moments when it is going right – that is balance!

**Q:** Any juicy Strictly gossip you can share with London Mums?

KH: Strictly gossip is quite simple: Watch out X-Factor! My lips are sealed – why spoil the surprise!!!!

**Q:** What would you do if your son one day would tell you that he wants to work in show business?

KH: If my son suddenly told me he wanted to be in show business he would have to have some very good reasons. I never set out to be in the show biz world – it accidentally found me. My strive in life was to succeed to the highest level in my chosen field of dance. I do get very sad when I see so many who just want to be famous...but ask them why and there are no answers. Showbiz is definitely not all that it is painted out to be. My husband and I have seen so much in life that we hope our son will get to experience the same and more. None of it was because of show biz but rather from studying and giving up so much to in return enjoy such amazing opportunities!

**Q:** If kids would be judges of Strictly what do you think their judgement criteria would be? How different would the show be?

KH: It would be fantastic if kids were judging Strictly. The year I won with Mark Ramprakash my then nearly 4 year old son enjoyed walking around telling everyone "mummy hot hot hot". That would only come from a child. Children have a very clear and honest opinion and say it as it is!!! Currently my son is asking: "Mummy are you going to share your secrets on how to win a medal?" This came the day after he got his first medal from swimming club and then relating it to the numerous trophies I have won. Children can also somehow clearly see when some people really "can't dance" and will naturally let you and everyone around know.







#### Q: What are you up to next?

KH: Life is out there to go and get and that is what you will always find me doing. I am currently coaching at Olympic level in China for a week, then on to Japan to also catch up with some great friends who I assisted achieving some titles for their country and who have since had a child whom they named "karenchan" after me! Lots of preparation is on its way for my son's first day at school. Strictly season is upon us and there are things I am involved with there!! Then I'm off to Lithuania coaching. Plus I will host the Royal Albert Hall International Dance championships in October. And of course, I am under a lot of pressure working closely with our Karen Hardy Studios team as we are launching Saturday nights at our studio in London, the premier location for Latin and Ballroom lifestyle nights out. Anyone who can't dance can join in while a DJ will play the latest dance sounds from 7.30pm to 11pm. Our luxury Christmas dance package gifts will be launching as well as me hosting the up and coming glamorous gala dance event of the season at the Wyndham Grand Chelsea in December. This is only the tip of the iceberg but hope it's enough to start.



For more information on the children's and adults dance lessons at Karen Hardy Studios visit [www.karenhardystudios.com](http://www.karenhardystudios.com)

#### Q: What are your favourite family activities in London?

KH: We love to take our bikes down to Battersea Park where our son mastered cycling without his learning wheels as well as find new parks and have picnics. But we also like watching dad play touch rugby at Clapham Common. We really enjoy London life. Getting up and going out to experience life is what we love best and 98% of the time our son is with us. We love being a family unit so we strive to see and do as much as we can altogether. Walks along the Embankment, shopping at Westfield, Disney movies at the iMax, Tate Modern galleries, wandering through the aquarium are just a few of the things we squeeze in. And yes, it is a squeeze on many occasions but it is vital to us that we do it.

#### Q: What would you do as a Mayor of London for the day?

KH: What I would do as Mayor for the day is really simple: Take away the yellow lines for a day and allow everyone to be able to pull up outside coffee shops wherever you like just to simply enjoy a hot chocolate with a friend or browse in shops rather than wasting time and getting stressed while trying to find a car park miles away. They are strangling so many amazing businesses by simply not being able to park outside them!! Like a river, human nature will always find its own path... Can it get worse than it already is?

# STRETCH MARKS

## PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

You're over the moon with the news that you are pregnant! With just nine months until the birth of your baby, this is the time to soak up information on how your body will change through the stages of pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. Between 75% and 90% of women develop stretch marks to some degree during pregnancy.

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## Walkfit is for EVERYONE

Walkfit is for everyone. If you're returning to exercise after children, an injury or illness – then its low intensity approach is perfect. Or if you lead an active lifestyle, but would like to include an exercise class in your busy schedule, then Walkfit, with its focus on movement, flexibility and balance as much as cardiovascular fitness and muscle tone is a simple, easy way to this.

## Walkfit is FRIENDLY

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## Walkfit is FUN

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Search online at [walkfit.co.uk](http://walkfit.co.uk) for your local classes and times.



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**Finsbury Park, N4 2DF** Tues and Thurs 18:00, Sat 09:00  
**Hyde Park, W2 3XA** Mon and Weds 19:30, Sat 09:00  
**Nonsuch Park, Cheam, SM3 8AL** Tues and Thurs 10:00, Mon and Weds 18:00, Sat 10:00  
**Peckham Rye Park, SE15 3UA** Mon 18:00 Weds 19:00, Sun 11:00  
**Wandsworth Common, SW17 7EG** Tues and Thurs 09:30



## CAROLINA (BARNES)

**Mum of Nicole (5.5), Maya (4), Alexander (2), a baby due in September 2010**

**Fav activity:** Rocks lane tennis club (Barnes) on Sat mornings. Older kids take lessons and the little ones plays in the playground.

**Fav family friendliest venue:** The Army museum in Chelsea.

**London Challenges:** Naturally secure neighbourhoods, money and schooling.

**Fav family holiday destination:** An all-inclusive resort with beach and swimming pool with lots of activities and facilities for parents and children

**Advice to other mums:** Listen to advice but please do what works for you. Every family is different and you don't have to go by the rules. Gut feeling and common sense will get you far. Also, go out there and network with other mums.



Get involved!!!! if you want to share your parenting tips with other London mums and want to be interviewed for these pages send an email to [monica@londonmums.org.uk](mailto:monica@londonmums.org.uk) we will reward you with a thank you gift!

## CAROLINE (CHISWICK)

**Mum of a 3-year old girl and a 4 months old baby boy**

**Fav activity:** Going to Hyde Park, feeding the ducks and lots of space for little ones to run around.

**Fav family friendliest venue:** Kew Gardens with its play area and kid-friendly cafes.

**London Challenges:** Not having family nearby to help with childcare. This made me change my career to run Talking Tots as it offers me more flexible working hours so I can spend more time with my kids. [www.talkingtots.info](http://www.talkingtots.info)

**Fav family holiday destination:** Jersey with its beautiful sandy beaches, very child friendly and only a half hour flight from Gatwick!

**Advice to other mums:** Get out and about and meet other mums with similarly aged children – you'll find you have lots in common and it's great to have a network of likeminded ladies to chat with and share playdates with.



## CHARIS (PUTNEY)

**Mum of 3-year old triplets Catalina, Matilda and Victoria at the London Mums Christmas party 2009**

**Fav activity:** Exhibitions at the London museums

**Fav family friendliest venue:** Eddie Catz Putney and Wimbledon [www.eddiecatz.com](http://www.eddiecatz.com)



**London Challenges:** Surviving the rainy days during the winter with triplets!

**Fav family holiday destination:** Alcuia in Mallorca (Spain)

**Advice to other mums:** Don't ever think on finishing the day as you have planned it because it will never happen. Leave every hour at the time and you will survive every day with a smile!

## CARINA (BARNES)

**Mum of Samuel (6), Freya (5) and Amelia (18months)**

**Fav activity:** I love to go to Richmond Park with my family with bikes, football and ... my camera. I also love Kew Gardens which I visit at least once a week, to catch up with friends and family and for picnics! The Gardens offer endless areas for children to run, play and Climbers and Creepers. It gets very busy during school holidays, though! It works well along my childminding practice as the children have great satisfaction and meet their developmental needs. I recommend bringing food or it can get costly and also getting the annual pass as it is cost-effective. [www.kev.org](http://www.kev.org)

**Fav family friendliest venue:** Gambado is our ultimate family activity during the winter months with its bumper cars and carousel (included with the ticket). Let off some steam with the huge climbing frame – it is adult friendly too!

**London Challenges:** We are suffocated with advice on what to do, what not to do... The pressure on parents and children alike to succeed in so many different ways is enormous. It is easy to get caught up in the stigma of the "perfect family

image". To be able to take a deep breath and step away from the circus, and simply enjoy the company of my family with no add-on is my most challenging thing.

**Fav family holiday destination:** Greek holidays are super: people really friendly, the restaurants are family-friendly and have great food. I recommend Pefkos in Rhodes, a little resort outside Lindos. Plus if you fancy a great night out with great food and a lovely atmosphere, visit Apostolis and his family (located 5 min walk outside Pefkos town centre) – you cannot find nicer people!

**Advice to other mums:** Enjoy your time with your kids: they grow so quickly and before you know it they are in full time school – it was a major shock to me when my son started school! Luckily we did so much together, visited many attractions, went to playgroups, children's parties, skiing holidays, summer holidays, Norway trips (my country), so I felt he had experienced a lot at his young age.



## KELLY (FULHAM)

**Single mum of 4-year old Troy, London Mums host for Fulham/Chelsea and Wimbledon playgroups**

Dear London Mums,

While pregnant I worked as a personal banking adviser and planned to return to work after my maternity leave. After having Troy I was worried about leaving him, however financially I had to work. I was interested in working in childcare but I could not afford a pay cut. With my baby there I felt it was the perfect time for me to change my career and I applied for a job as a carer at a Fulham nursery. And I also trained as a childminder. It took me almost a year but 2 years down the line I am loving every minute of it. I love taking the kids to Eddie Catz, the library, down the river to feed the ducks, museums, to the parks and to farms or the seaside

during the summer. Being a childminder means I can earn money and also be able to do the school runs and look after Troy in the holidays. It is hard for working parents to get the work-life balance right. London Mums have inspired me a lot since joining the group and I recently started hosting their playgroups in Fulham, Chelsea and Wimbledon. Time is special with children as it passes so quickly and I feel lucky to be able to work and still have time with my son.

Kelly Louise Tillman  
Ofsted Registered Childminder and proud London Mum  
[Kitillman2003@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Kitillman2003@yahoo.co.uk)



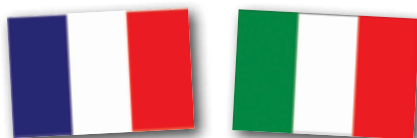
**@ If you want to become a London Mums host of playgroups in your local area, please contact [monica@londonmums.org.uk](mailto:monica@londonmums.org.uk)**

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# The Magic of Story Telling & Get Crafty

By Maggy Woodley



Many parents appreciate and understand the wonderful benefits that reading books with our children brings. Not only is it fun, but we bond with them, we create wonderful memories, whilst developing our children's imagination and vocabulary.

Story telling takes the wonder that books bring a step further. It creates a world that is unique to us and our children. Stimulating the imagination on a completely different level. You can weave in your values and lessons in life. You can use it to review the day or a particular event. You can simply enjoy it and create some very special magic.

Most people believe that they cannot tell stories and, as there are an abundance of beautiful books to read, shy away from it. It isn't easy at first, but the more you do it the easier it gets.

**Get Crafty** – make Story Cubes to help you tell stories

To help you along the way, you could try these very simple Story Cubes. They are so easy to make and you can make them with your children. The idea is simple. Throw the cubes and then make up a story containing all the elements on the cubes. As your children get older you can encourage them to tell the next part of the story.

I made some with the input of my 2 yrs old and bedtime has never been the same.

**Materials:** 6-8 25-30mm wooden cubes (available in craft stores), Varnish, Paintbrush, Fine Marker Pen (approx. 0.7 nib), Acrylic Paint (optional if you want "colour" options).

**Step 1:** Varnish the cube (this will stop the pen running into the grain) and let dry on a cookie rack.

**Step 2:** Decide on some prompts: I found it useful to think of all the drawings first and to practice drawing a couple. Remember, it does not have to be an artwork your children will love whatever you draw. When I ran out of ideas (I did ours whilst my children were sleeping), I enrolled the help of my eldest for ideas of what to draw on the remaining cubes! It is useful to balance animals, with food/ drink, with colours (if you want to have some), with objects, with methods of transport – maybe have one of each per cube? Include some favourite things, for us this was a bunny and a train!

**Step 3:** Draw your prompts!

**Finished!**

If you get stuck for ideas, contact me, Maggy at [info@redtedart.com](mailto:info@redtedart.com) for information on how to receive a free pdf of some my drawings suggestions!



# STORY TIME

Make Your Children's Dreams Come True  
By Clare Carpenter



As parents, we all want our children to be successful, happy and fulfilled. We want all their dreams to come true. We

spend hours helping with homework and nurturing their artistic and sporting talents. While these things give children a great start in life and a boost to their self-confidence, the fact is that academic and sporting achievements are not indicators of future success – or indeed happiness.

It is a child's beliefs, values, and sense of themselves as an important person – these are the characteristics that will determine the quality of their future. These are the qualities that are required to make their dreams come true.

As Brian Tracy, renowned author, says "if you raise your children to feel that they can accomplish any goal or task they decide upon, you will have succeeded as a parent and you will have given your children the greatest of all blessings".

Here are some tips to help you develop powerful beliefs and strength of character in your children:

## Dreams

*"We spend the first year teaching them to walk and talk, and the next 12 years telling them to sit down and shut up."* – Phyllis Diller



- Encourage your children to explore their dreams and goals. Their happiness will come from achieving what they want in life – not what we want for them.

- Chat regularly about what they want from their life. Ask them to think about how they might achieve their goals. Talk about what goals they've already achieved. Encourage them to take responsibility for how their life will turn out.

## Beliefs

Many of our children's beliefs are formed by us – their parents: what we say to them, how we say it, and how we treat them on a daily basis.

- Always talk to them with respect.
- Acknowledge and respect their feelings.
- Demonstrate that you love them and value them for who they are (not who you want them to be).
- Help them find things they are good at and encourage them to try new things – they will start to develop confidence in their own abilities.
- Help them to feel good about themselves regardless of whether they have "achieved" a particular task or goal.

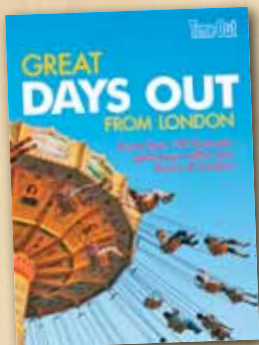


**THE AUTHOR:** Claire Carpenter is author of Hold on Tight and founder of Yes You Can Books, a series of self-development books for young children. They are perfect stories for bedtime – written to encourage self-esteem, a positive outlook, an open mind and a courageous heart. For more information please go to [www.clairecarpenter.com](http://www.clairecarpenter.com)

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All you need to do is to send an email to [monica@londonmums.org.uk](mailto:monica@londonmums.org.uk) stating the prize you want to win, along with name, address, email, age(s) of your children and where you picked up our magazine, and you could be in with a chance of winning!



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**South West London: Fulham/Chelsea** (The Wharf Rooms, 2 Station Court, off Imperial Road), Tuesdays 10-11am (from 19 Oct 2010) including Christmas party on 10th December 2010, 16-18

**Putney** (Eddie Catz), Mondays 16.15-17.15

**Wimbledon** (Eddie Catz), Fridays 10.30-11.30am



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**25 November 2010** London Mumpreneurs' networking evening (7.30pm) – LIVE Angels' and Dragons' Den!

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# STORY-TELLING

Vivaldi's Winter By Alice Rose Bowmer



What strikes me most when remembering my own childhood experiences of music is the limited appreciation of the connection between, sound, image and feeling. The idea behind this article is to try and combine these senses and to help make music more accessible to children.

I am using Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons' concertos because they were inspired by four paintings of the seasons by the artist Marco Ricci. The music in turn inspired Vivaldi to also write words to his music. In my last article printed in the summer issue of the London Mums magazine, I wrote a story based on the music from the first movement of 'Summer'. In this issue I am focusing on the music of 'Winter'.

Read the story below, then listen to the music and see if you can fit both together in your own way, adding to the story as you go. You could even draw pictures to go with the music and story of 'Winter'. Of course this is just one idea of where your imagination might take you during the music!

## Vivaldi: The Four Seasons (Winter): Allegro Non Molto

It is freezing cold. The wind is biting and whipping at the trees surrounding a small open field in the Devonshire countryside. The sky begins to turn black with thick, grey clouds billowing in from the east.

All of a sudden sharp shards of rain fall to the ground in several short bursts (heard in the solo violin part).

As we approach the first minute a chugging sound in the lower strings suggests thunder rumbling in the distance. The rumbles get louder as the thunder get closer. In an instant, flashes of lightening streak through the sky in the violins, brightening the strange, dark light.

And the rain continues to fall on the already sodden ground (solo violin). What do you think happens next?

## Largo

Sunlight (solo violin) streaks through the brightening clouds (low walking pace notes of the continuo) as they clear to reveal a fresh, blue sky.

Little green fairies are dancing around the puddles in the field (pizzicato in the middle strings), celebrating the end of the long storm.

The sun begins to dry the wet ground encouraging baby rabbits and birds out of their hiding places, to play amongst the trees and hedgerows.

## Allegro

A mystical white wizard glides across the field scattering a chalky powder and we hear a deep eerie note in the cello. All of a sudden the wizard disappears and a sharp frost covers the ground as day unexpectedly turns to night (listen for the strings playing scales up and down).

Heavy, spikes of hail fall to the ground (hear the strings get louder as they ascend in short spiked notes) but just as quickly as they began the sharp spikes become showers of fast-flowing, snowflakes (fat descending scales first heard in the violins).

As the sky is filled with white snow under a dark grey light, piles of thick snow build up across the field (chugging in the lower strings), hanging heavy upon the tree branches.

A lark (solo violin entry at '53) singing fearfully has realized that her husband is caught in a spiked hedge with snow beginning to cover him. Between sounds of the raging, explosive snowstorm she cries for out for him. What do you think happens next?

**Author:** Alice Rose Bowmer, Music teacher – [alice.bowmer@gmail.com](mailto:alice.bowmer@gmail.com)

**Illustration:** Guy Downes [www.guydownes.com.au](http://www.guydownes.com.au)

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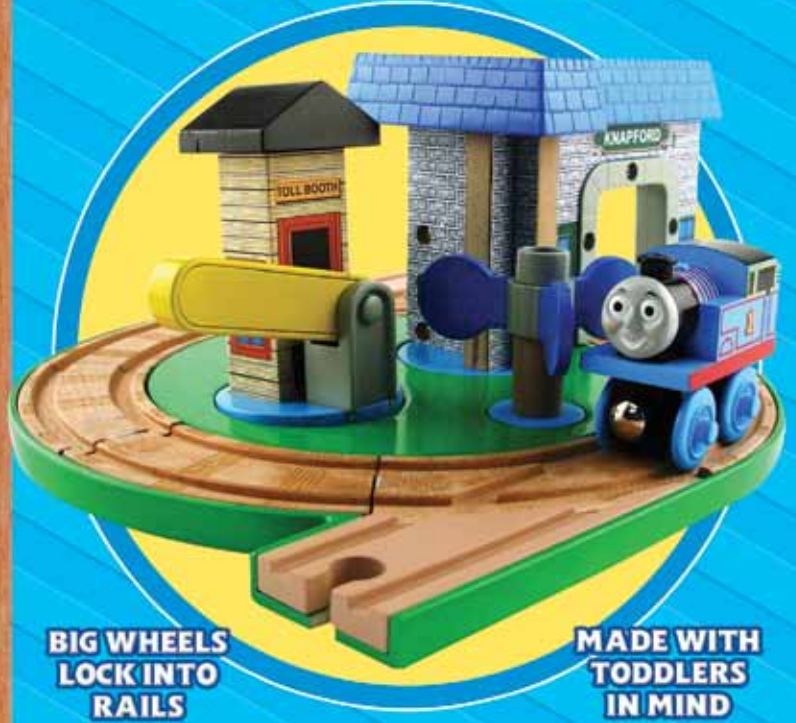
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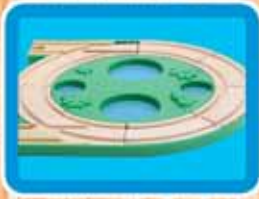
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# Readers' letters

## Our Agony Aunt SUE ATKINS

responds to your questions



*I found my 4-year old son playing doctor/patient with his 5-year old friend. What approach do you suggest with regards to explaining inappropriate games? Petra, Holloway*

Playing, exploring and discovering is all very natural for young children. Learning about sexuality is just as important to children as any other learning. Children need to feel that the sexual parts of their bodies are good, positive and natural just as they feel that it is good to have arms and legs. They need to feel that it is good to be a boy or a girl. When you talk with children about their bodies and about their sexual feelings and behaviour, children learn that it is okay to talk about these things with you and they feel safe and secure and at ease. Helping children to feel they can come to you to talk freely is one of the ways to help them sort out their values.

What you think and feel about your child's sexuality has a strong influence on how you respond to your children's sexual behaviours. What your own parents said and did, religious beliefs, cultural background and your feelings all make a difference to how you handle your own children's sexual development. You can help your children to feel good, healthy and normal, or ashamed, guilty and bad by how you respond to them.

Just be aware and monitor Television, radio and magazines. Children are influenced by what they see, hear and read. They see lots of sex in one way or another through television, videos, newspapers, billboards and magazines. They learn from what they read, see and hear about what it means to be a man or a woman, and how men and women act. Sometimes they see pictures of sexual violence and other sexual activity, which they are not old enough to understand and this can worry them.

Also they learn from how adults treat each other. Children learn from parents – their first teachers. They see how you respond and treat each other and whether you care and respect your partner. Some children may see their parents or other adults 'putting down' or making fun of people of the other sex, or even themselves. This sort of example can teach children to feel unhappy about being a boy or a girl. It may teach them to be afraid of people of the other sex or to think less of them.

### Children's Services and Schools point of view

Most schools and early childhood services teach children about their bodies, the proper names for parts of their bodies, and how to ask for help if they don't feel safe or if they are touched in ways that are not OK.

### In the preschool years

One year olds may like to play with their genitals when their nappies are off (or play with poo as well, if they get the chance). This is part of their natural curiosity. Preschool children are often not modest about their bodies and like being naked. They are interested in looking at their own and other's bodies. They may play doctors and nurses in ways which involve looking and touching. They are often interested in parents' bodies and might want to touch them in the shower. They are interested in where babies come from and how babies get out of what the mother's body. They are also interested in how they were born. By three years of age, children can say what sex they are (a boy or a girl). By the time they are six or seven they understand that this is something that does not change. Four year olds are very interested in toilet words and in what people do in bathrooms and toilets (especially other people's bathrooms). They often make jokes about toilets and like to use swear words if they know some. It's all about how you feel around it so relax, keep an healthy eye on it all if it gets a bit out of hand and trust your instinct.

*I would like to receive some advice on how to have a 'normal' sex life after having children. Jasmine, Bromley*

Just relax and ponder exactly what you mean about "normal sex life" as we are all so different – once a week is normal for one couple, while once a month may be for another. There really is no right or wrong answer to this – just what feels right for you. But I do suggest you have a chat with your partner and talked openly about your needs as things change when you first have children. You are often more exhausted, tired, overwhelmed or not so interested in sex as you once were. After you have chatted with your partner and got some clarity plan some "we" time where you go out to the cinema, keep on with a hobby you both shared before you had kids or take up a new hobby or activity to keep your own lives going. Also make sure you get regular "ME" time off and away from your children too – as you need a break to recharge your batteries, replenish your energy and to keep your own life going!

It makes you a better parent if you have balance, fun and breaks.



*My toddler has learnt how to play my husband and myself against each other in order to get what she wants. Our relationship is suffering as a result. Help! Lucy, Harrow*

It's all about being clear and confident in what you think are your house rules. Grab a cup of coffee and a piece of paper fold it in two so you have 2 columns and jot down things that "ARE ACCEPTABLE" to you and things that are "NOT ACCEPTABLE" to you. This gives you clarity. Then have a chat over a coffee or a glass of wine with your partner, child minder, nanny or grandma – whoever looks after your child regularly and talk openly about those rules – are they the same, can you compromise, how can you both agree and then be completely consistent with your toddler so that they get the same message and can't play you off against each other or fall through the net? It's very important for toddlers to have rules and boundaries because as they develop and mature they can learn to self regulate and they learn self control. Once you have got a clear set of very simple rules (not toooooo many) you can relax, have fun and enjoy your toddler years together.

Reference book 'Pocket Parenting Made Easy' (TODDLERS) [www.positive-parentsclub.com/Pocket\\_Parenting\\_Made\\_Easy\\_Toddlers.htm](http://www.positive-parentsclub.com/Pocket_Parenting_Made_Easy_Toddlers.htm)



**OUR EXPERT:** Sue Atkins is a Parent Coach, former Deputy Head with 22 years teaching experience, mother to two teenage children and is an NLP Master Practitioner and Trainer trained by Paul McKenna. She has written many books on self-esteem, toddlers and teenagers and has a collection of Parenting Made Easy Toolkits available from her website (including Coping with Change, Bereavement,

Behaviour Management, Toddler Tantrums and Bullying). She is also the author of "Raising Happy Children for Dummies" one in the black and yellow series published worldwide and a Judge for the National Family Week Family of the Year Competition. [www.positive-parents.com](http://www.positive-parents.com) and [www.positive-parentsclub.com](http://www.positive-parentsclub.com)



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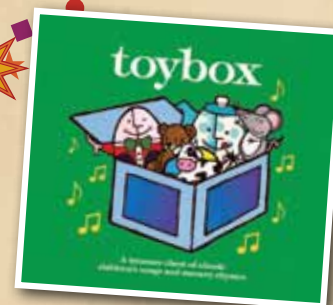


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# LAILA ROUASS TELLS US WHY SHE GIVES UP HER KILLER HEELS TO STAMP OUT KILLER DISEASES

**EXCLUSIVE TO LONDON MUMS!**  
Photography by Tom Piestrasik

Every year more than 9 million children around the world die from preventable diseases. Here is an exclusive letter from Footballers' Wives actress and former Strictly Come Dancing star Laila Rouass who tells us why she has given up her killer heels for a worthy cause. Save the Children is appealing to the fashion industry and the British public to donate their most fabulous party shoes and help stamp out child killers such as pneumonia, malaria, diarrhoea and measles.

I have a daughter who's 3 years old. I'm lucky to have raised my child in Britain, where I can be sure that my daughter will have the treatment and protection she needs to stop her getting sick, or worse. Any parent here in the UK will agree that here we are able to take vaccinations, doctors and treatment for our families for granted.

In other parts of the world, though, the story's very different. Around the world, almost 9 million children are dying



everyday before even reaching the age of five. That's the same as a child dying every 3 seconds. What's more, these children are dying from diseases like malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea that are simple to prevent or treat.

When I was 6 months pregnant, Save the Children invited me to meet children they were helping in Calcutta, India. During that trip, I saw poverty up close. It was really hard, knowing I was about to have my own child to meet women in India living in terrible conditions and trying to look after their young babies. It was tough to put myself in their shoes and realise that they were waking up every morning hoping their child wouldn't fall ill with something they wouldn't be able to shake off.

It made me think: What if my baby caught a simple tummy bug and I couldn't find or afford to pay for a doctor or medicines to make her better? What if, like so many mums I met in India, I had to watch my child die from something that I knew could easily be cured?

This to me is one of the world's great injustices and is what's inspired me to join with influential women to sign Save the Children's statement calling for a change. I signed my name and I'm writing this because it's time people realised; No child is born to die.

We stopped children dying from basic illnesses in rich countries like Britain a century ago. It's time we ended it for good in poor countries too. We know what the solutions are and they're not expensive. If governments make this a priority then we CAN save children's lives.



If what I've just said rings true with you too, please give your thumbprint to Save the Children's petition and make sure world leaders commit to reducing the number of needless child deaths. Go to [www.savethechildren.org.uk](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk) and do your bit.



**HOW MUMS CAN HELP!** Save the Children want to stop these needless deaths. **£5** is all it takes to save a child's life; with a pair of shoes selling for **£50** we will be able to save 10 children's lives. We all own pairs of glitzy shoes that are never to be worn again. Now you can donate them and know that they've helped save children's lives around the world. Throughout November and December **Save the Children** will appeal to the British public to donate their most sparkly and glitzy shoes of the season to their local Save the Children. The shoes will be displayed at **'Mary's Living & Giving shops for Save the Children'** and then auctioned off in December 2010 to raise money.





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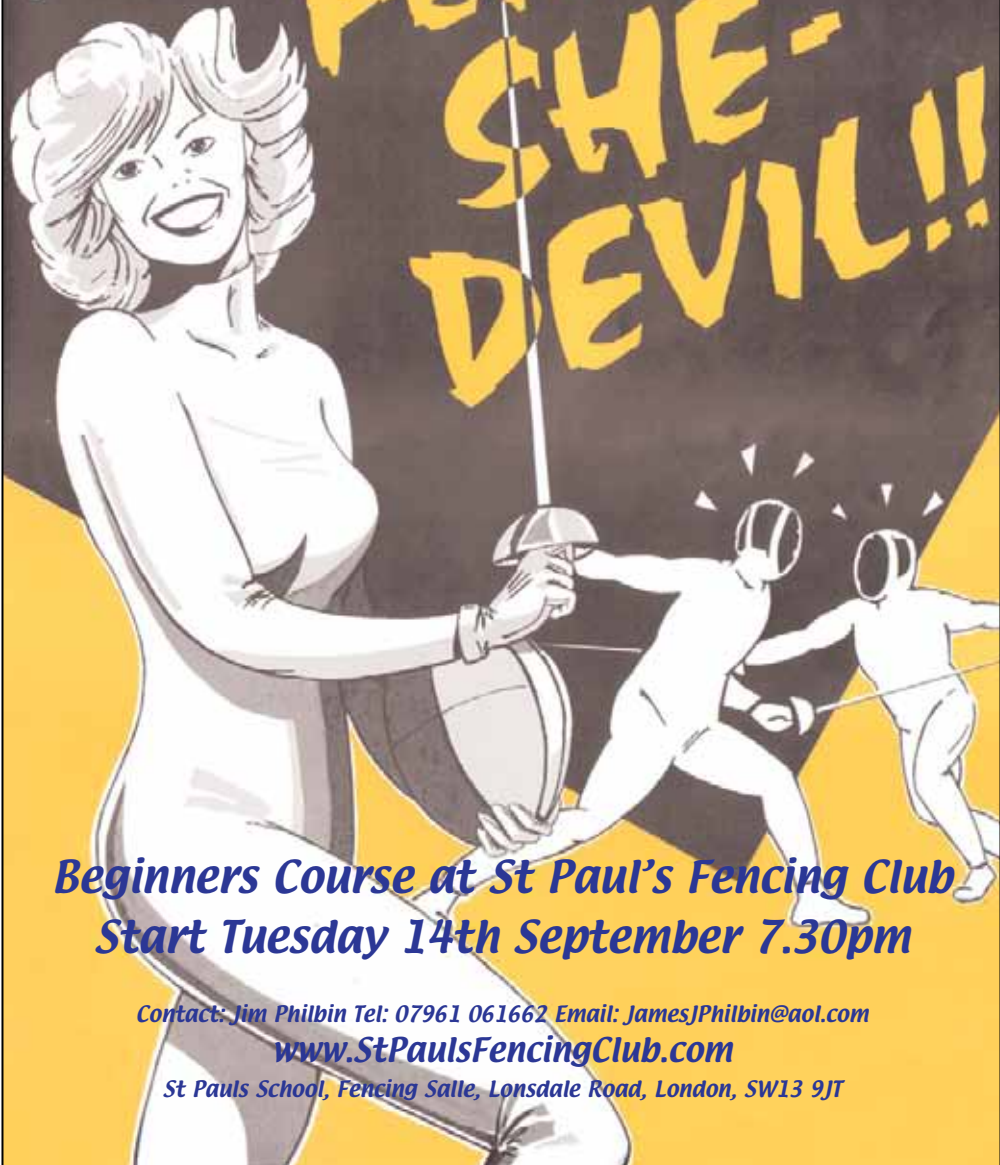
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