

FREE

ISSUE 39 SUMMER - AUTUMN 2023

LONDON MUMS

Star 

Raquel Reno

**Unleashing the
Soul of the 60s
in Modern Music**

Dr Zoe Williams



INCognito

A heart-to-heart chat

www.londonmumsmagazine.com



**Award-winning practical and
blended paediatric first aid training
tailored to your needs**



Also available online

Gain the confidence to help

www.firstaidforlife.org.uk

e-mail: emma@firstaidforlife.org.uk

Tel: 020 8675 4036

**Fully Regulated and Approved
Fulfilling Ofsted and Early Years criteria**

EDITOR'S LETTER



Hello

The past six months have brought us a whirlwind of events in London, from the loss of a Queen to the celebration of a King's coronation. It's undeniable that the world has been marked by social divisions and belligerence. However, in discussing these issues with Bluey, the lead singer of Incognito, I realised that music holds the power to make our world a better place. As London Mums magazine is the publication of good news, we believe in the transformative power of music, especially during this hot festival season.

Another shining star we feature in this issue is Raquel Reno, a beautiful and retro-looking musician who possesses remarkable talent. In an exclusive interview, Raquel shares her journey through life, her music, her love and her aspirations for the future. Prepare to be captivated by her soulful melodies and her enchanting personality.

We also had the pleasure of chatting with Dr. Zoe Williams, NHS GP and media medic, about her latest book, "You Grow Girl!: The Complete No Worries Guide to Growing Up." Dr. Zoe's ability to explain complex medical information in an easily digestible manner is truly impressive, and her book provides valuable insights for girls growing up in today's world.

Additionally, our expert contributor, TV Consultant Dermatologist Dr. Natalia Spierings, enlightens us on everything we need to know about sunscreen for kids in our "Ask the Expert" segment.

I want to express my gratitude to the entire team for their hard work in putting together this exciting edition. I hope you find joy and inspiration in reading these stories as much as we enjoyed bringing them to you.

Wishing you a delightful summer and a vibrant autumn.

Warm regards,

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

Monica Costa



Editor in chief, Founder of London Mums & mum of 17-year-old Diego

monica@londonmums.org.uk, [@londonmums](https://www.londonmums.org.uk)

Send all your letters and feedback to monica@londonmums.org.uk or via Twitter/Instagram at [@londonmums](https://www.londonmums.org.uk)

Register online NOW at [londonmumsmagazine.com](https://www.londonmumsmagazine.com) and www.youtube.com/londonmums

EXCLUSIVE



THE Big INTERVIEW

Raquel Reno

London Mums magazine is produced by **London Mums Limited**
Editor and publisher: **Monica Costa**
monica@londonmums.org.uk

Editorial Assistant: **Carolina Kon**
info@londonmumsmagazine.com
Illustrators: **Alison Cracknell, Irene Gomez Granados.**

Contributors: **Emma Hammett, Adele Greaves, Alec Mackeson, Julia Minchin, Madeleine Neave, Diego Scintu.**

Photography credits: **Dr Zoe's image by Charl Marais and her book's illustration by Luna Valentine**

POST: **London Mums Limited, 74 Dowdeswell Close - London SW15 5RL**

CALL: **07900088123**

Copyright London Mums Limited 2009

Advertisers & Sponsors

To discuss your advertising requirements, email

info@londonmumsmagazine.com.

NEXT ISSUE: **The Winter 2023/2024 issue will be out mid-October 2023 - Deadline for advertising: 28th**

August 2023

DESIGN: **Alison Cracknell.**

alisoncracknelldesign@gmail.com

PRINTED BY **Holbrooks Printers**

Views expressed in articles are strictly those of the authors. Every effort is made to ensure that all the information given is correct but London Mums Limited accepts no liability for any inaccuracies, errors or omissions that may occur or their consequences. This publication is copyright and may not be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form without written permission from the publisher. Unsolicited materials cannot be returned.

IN THIS *Summer-Autumn Issue 2023*



06 *Music Star*

Raquel Reno:

UNLEASHING THE SOUL OF THE 60S IN MODERN MUSIC



12 *Fashion*

A MEANINGFUL SUMMER WARDROBE



14 *Music Interview*

Bluey of Incognito:

"I NEVER GIVE UP BECAUSE I HAVE FAITH IN THE LITTLE THINGS THAT I DO"



18 *Book Corner*

'HEY! IT'S ME! IT'S LILLY EVERLEA'

By AK Cooper-Elliot



19 *Book Corner*

ADVENTURES WITH RAYMOND AND BONNIE: 'THE DESERTED COTTAGE'



20 *Star Mum*

Dr Zoe Williams:

"I WISH I WAS KINDER TO MYSELF GROWING UP"

24 *Ask The Expert*

TV CONSULTANT
DERMATOLOGIST

Dr Natalia Spierings

EXPLAINS EVERYTHING ABOUT SUNSCREEN FOR KIDS



27 *Music Corner*

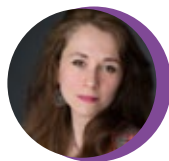
MUSICAL HOLIDAY CAMPS IN LONDON AT THE STRINGS CLUB



28 *Empower!*

EMPOWERING MOTHERS TO FOLLOW THEIR DREAMS

By Anna Thachuk



30 *Summer Travel Wishlist*



31 *Book Corner!*

INTRODUCING "PEANUT, BUTTER AND CRACKERS": A HILARIOUS GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES FOR PET LOVERS



SUMMER SLEEPING BAGS

with
feet!



EXCLUSIVE
READER OFFER

20% OFF

when you spend over £40

Excludes sale items

USE CODE

LONDON20



Under arm
poppers for
a better fit



Fold-over cuffs
with non-slip soles



For kids on the move!

slumbersac 

WWW.SLUMBERSAC.CO.UK

Music Interview!

Raquel Reno: UNLEASHING THE SOUL OF THE 60S IN MODERN MUSIC

By Monica Costa

In the heart of London, amidst the glitz and glamour, I found myself in the penthouse flat of multi-millionaire entrepreneur Charlie Mullins and his talented fiancée, Raquel Reno. As I entered their luxurious abode, I was greeted by two adorable toy poodle puppies, a testament to the couple's warmth and charm. Raquel is the gifted singer-songwriter whose soulful melodies have been captivating audiences worldwide. In this exclusive interview, Raquel takes us on a journey through her life, her music, and her aspirations for the future.

Monica Costa (MC): *It seems like you have a vibrant and joyful life. Can you tell us how this environment affects your creativity?*

Raquel Reno (RR): It's truly a pleasure to be here, and I'm glad you've met Charlie and our lovely puppies. They bring so much happiness into my life. Living in such a picturesque location definitely has its influence on my songwriting. I still pinch myself every day because it's quite a journey from being a struggling musician to living in this penthouse in central London. Despite the glamour, I've managed to stay grounded and connected to my roots. This balance keeps me inspired and allows me to create from a place of authenticity.

MC: *As a young girl, what influenced and inspired you to become a professional singer-songwriter?*

RR: When I was four years old, I used to dance around in the garden, completely captivated by the music. In the '90s, I was more into pop music. However, as I grew older, around the age of eight or nine, I discovered divas like Aretha Franklin, Dusty Springfield, and Whitney Houston. Their powerful voices had a profound impact on me, and I knew I wanted to sing like that. That's where my journey as a singer-songwriter began.

MC: *Your songs often delve into personal and emotional themes. What inspires you to write such deeply introspective songs?*

RR: Heartbreak and personal experiences have been a significant source of inspiration for my songwriting. I've had my fair share of bad breakups, and those painful situations fuelled my creativity. Writing about heartache and personal struggles has a therapeutic effect. It allows me to process my emotions and find closure. There's something about tapping into those emotions that brings out the raw and authentic side of my music.

MC: *Many of your songs convey a sense of longing and nostalgia. Can you share the story behind one of your favourite tracks that captures this sentiment?*

RR: One of my favourite tracks that embodies longing and nostalgia is "Unbreakable." I wrote this song for Charlie during our time on a BBC show called "Unbreakable." We were given challenges that required us to express our true feelings through various art forms. I came across an old, out-of-tune piano in the house we lived in during filming, and it became the vessel for this song. I worked with some incredible people in London, and together we created "Unbreakable." It's a heartfelt piece that resonates with people on a soulful level.

MC: *The view from your penthouse with a hopper American diner-style interior is absolutely stunning. Has living in such a picturesque location influenced your songwriting in any way?*



RR: The story of how I got here is remarkable. Sometimes I ask myself, "How the hell did I get here?" I was the typical struggling musician, and to be honest, I still struggle with the music industry. I don't think it gets any easier, and I was travelling all the time. I was hustling for gigs constantly. I was just on this bandwagon of doing the same thing over and over again because I knew where to find work and how to make money. But then I met Charlie in Dubai. He was just visiting on holiday, and that's when we really became friends. We first met in Spain. He gave me some business advice, and not only that, but he also offered me to live in his spare bedroom while he was living with his girlfriend. I ended up staying here, and we became really good friends. We grew fonder of each other; it just naturally happened very nicely, although his partner was not very happy about it. I am a country girl from Cheltenham in Gloucestershire who still likes to buy from farm shops but now lives in this penthouse in central London. I pinch myself every day because I'm not used to that.





MC How's the age difference with Charlie?

RR: We did take a liking to each other when we first met. There was an immediate spark. But I've run so far away from it, because I was worried about the fact that he's double my age. I wasn't quite sure. I was probably lying to myself, and it took 10 months for me to give in. I've never been in a relationship before where I've been friends with my boyfriend for a while beforehand. But with Charlie, we got to know everything about each other before becoming a couple. I was worried about what my parents would think about the age gap...

MC: Do you want children?

RR: I want to have children, but I need a few more years to launch my music career. I have puppies now, but should I get pregnant along the way, so be it. I believe that our path is written...

MC: How did you end up in Nashville recording at the Sound Kitchen Studio?

RR: Nashville is amazing. As soon as you walk into the airport, you can smell music. My experience there was so incredible, and it opened up a huge creative door for me. Out of everywhere I've been, that's probably where I feel most eager to be more creative. It's like a door that you walk through into creativity because creative energy is just everywhere. I'm quite a sensitive person anyway, so I pick up on energy, and if that's anywhere around me, I'm going to thrive.

Nashville was an amazing experience, and it was quite surreal at the same time. I sat in a hotel writing a song in the lobby with my co-writer of the time, Nigel. I was singing like full-blown in the hotel because it's a music city, and nobody minded. It's so fun and friendly as well. We were staying in a little place called Franklin, which is about 25-30 minutes from downtown Nashville. It's a really traditional town, which is still the same as in Elvis' time. Just like a Mormon town, very religious, with a motivational church on every street. I'm a massive Dolly Parton fan, and she inspires me in many ways with my music and song-writing. I'm not a country artist, but I love Dolly as a human being. With no ego.





MC: *The glamour and freewheeling lifestyle of the 1960s is often looked back upon fondly. Do you think your music can evoke such feelings in a new generation that seeks to recreate that vibe?*

RR: I want to learn how to naturally look beautiful like they did back in the '60s, similar to Elizabeth Taylor, Marilyn Monroe, Dusty Springfield, all these wonderful women who used their natural beauty but enhanced it with makeup. So, I would like to try and tap into that kind of market. I think the problem with the current mobile phone situation is that people are so disconnected. We have this whole online metaverse, and no one is actually connecting one-on-one anymore. It's dramatic. I have a big conflict with that, but with my music, it's about genuine feelings and the true pain of life. You know, I haven't had a bad life at all, but I have also struggled like everybody else in this world. Everyone has their own struggles, and I think heartbreak is one of the worst pains you can go through because it is another form of grief. Music making is a form of therapy.

I'm absolutely nuts. I've gone on stage with heels, and then this week I've got puppies in my hands. Life is never boring; it's never plain sailing unless you make it that way.

MC: *Who are the rock rebels that you like?*

RR: My favourite band is Fleetwood Mac and Stevie Nicks because she's a very spiritual lady, and I really connected with their music growing up in my 20s, and I still listen to their music a lot now. I love Stevie's character. She's amazing and really powerful. I also like Joan Jett and Janis Joplin. When I was in Abu Dhabi, I formed a four-piece band that purely sang rock, and that was great because everybody else was doing normal top 40 covers, but there was no '50s rock 'n' roll in Abu Dhabi. But then I went to Dubai and formed a band called Cherry Bongo, and I loved doing '50s Rock for a while, and we did really well in Dubai until Covid hit.

MC: *Are your songs rebellious or political?*

RR: Not really political, because it's an area that I don't really want to get into. I feel like that's a losing game.

Nothing is ever based on what people think. Everything happens behind closed doors. My fiancé talks about politics all the time, but I'm more interested in my music. My song "Welcome to My Life" is a bit political. It is actually about the struggle of working in the music industry. It's all a big mess. I love my country. I love England, and I love living in London. I love everything around me. However, I do feel that people are very frustrated and sad because of the cost-of-living crisis.

MC: Tell me about the new album. When will it be released, and what are your ambitions for this new chapter in your life?

RR: Actually, it's only an EP. I've got lots of songs, but I decided to do an EP, which is going to be out in June. It has taken a year and a half and includes five songs. We wanted the strongest songs on a short play because if it's smaller than an hour, you can fill a gap in the market. My music is a little bit different and has a bit of a '60s vibe. I wanted to get that influence across. If you look at vinyl and fashion now, the '60s have come back.

MC: Collaborations are often an integral part of the music industry. Is there any particular artist you would love to collaborate with in the future, and why?

RR: The 1975 band are all in their 20s but has this vintage feel about them. They play '70s-'80s kind of music and are bringing back the old school style of music in a modern feel. I've had my eye on that band for a while. I'm hoping we'll get in a room together at some point. I'd love to do something with Rod Stewart! The first time I met Charlie, I thought he was Rod Stewart (she giggles). If I could time travel, I'd love to sing with Dusty Springfield. She was a very interesting person. Aretha Franklin, but ultimately Dolly Parton, who has just brought out a rock album. Eric Clapton too!

With her mesmerizing voice and a spirit reminiscent of the rebellious rock icons of the past, Raquel Reno is poised to ignite the hearts of a new generation. As we bid farewell to Charlie Mullins and Raquel Reno, it becomes clear that their love story is not just one of romance but also a shared passion for success and determination. As Raquel embarks on the release of her new EP, we eagerly await the enchanting melodies that will transport us to the golden era of the '60s while resonating with the challenges and emotions of today. Join us as we witness the rise of a star who effortlessly blends the past and the present, infusing her music with an indomitable spirit that is uniquely Raquel Reno.



Mill Hill | Enterprises

FACILITIES TO HIRE

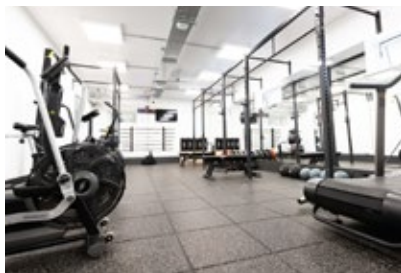


& many more...

mhse@millhill.org.uk
020 8906 6343

[@millhillschoolenterprises](https://twitter.com/millhillschoolenterprises)
[@themill_gymandstudio](https://twitter.com/themill_gymandstudio)

GYM AND STUDIO



**SCAN FOR MORE
INFORMATION:**



Fashion

A MEANINGFUL SUMMER WARDROBE

As the weather improves and thoughts turn to getting out and about this summer, many of us can't help but be tempted to add a few new pieces to our summer wardrobes. But with countless brands offering beautiful clothing and accessories, which to choose? Well, if it's a choice between fast fashion or sustainable and meaningful pieces that look good and do good, it's a no-brainer, right?

If you're searching for a new summer clothing crush, you'll love **Sherpa Adventure Gear**, a brand with a heart that quietly and resolutely weaves kindness into the world with the sale of every one of their clothing or accessories pieces. Having recently hit an impressive target of providing 1 million school days for the children in Nepal, Sherpa are determined to reach the next target of 10 million days by 2030. You can help nudge them nearer to achieving their goal while bagging yourself a meaningful, stylish and sustainable wardrobe too. Win win.

Sherpa are partnered with the globally recognised **Room To Read**, a charity who has worked with Nepali schools and teachers for some twenty years, focusing on literacy and gender equality in primary education. You may not realise that it's not compulsory to attend school in Nepal and that more girls than boys work between the ages of five to seventeen years, often in dangerous rural conditions. Seven per cent of girls are married before the age of 15 but studies show that every year spent in education

reduces the likelihood of them marrying before the age of 18.

Wherever you roam, **Sherpa** have something for you. Opt for super comfy, flattering dresses, short or long-sleeved tops, shorts, tights, cosy fleeces for cooler days, technical jackets for rainy days or stylish re-usable totes for trawling the markets and shopping.



In addition to arming children with better life opportunities via literacy and education, Sherpa offer Nepali women meaningful employment as part of knitting cooperatives in local villages. This enables women to earn their own money and work flexibly around family life.

Perfect for your summer travels, Sherpa have added lots of new pieces to their summer collection with vibrant designs, styles and colours that are inspired by the evocative landscapes while capturing the spirit of Nepal. You'll go comfortably too, with cool, soft UV protective materials that tread lightly on the planet, thanks to **Sherpa** planet continuous commitment to using eco-friendly, natural fabrics which pack down lightly and remain crease-free.



Whatever you decide on, every piece you purchase will hang in your wardrobe with meaningful pride and bring a little hope and kindness to the world.

We all need that...

sherpaadventuregear.co.uk

90
nety years of outdoor adventures
Since 1933

15th-17th
SEPTEMBER
2023

ellis**brigham**

EXPLORE WEEKEND

Join us to celebrate our 90th anniversary
with a weekend of exploration and adventure

- Hiking • Paddle Boarding • Rock Climbing
- Trail Running • Wild Swimming • Workshops
- Forest School, plus lots more...

Supporting partners



Scan to find
out more

**Llyn Tegid, Bala
North Wales**

ellis-brigham.com/exploreweekend



Music Interview!

Bluey of Incognito: "I NEVER GIVE UP BECAUSE I HAVE FAITH IN THE LITTLE THINGS THAT I DO"

Monica Costa talks to **Jean-Paul "Bluey" Maunick** of British acid jazz band **Incognito** about songwriting, music legends, and making a difference in the world.



Incognito, the renowned British band known for their eclectic blend of jazz, funk, and soul, is preparing for their highly anticipated performance at the Rochester Castle Concerts on Thursday, 6 July 2023. Joining them on stage will be the legendary Nile Rodgers & Chic, creating an unforgettable night of music. In my conversation with the talented singer- songwriter Bluey, the heart and soul of Incognito, his passion for music was evident.

He believes that true inspiration is crucial to the longevity and success of a musician, and Incognito's constant live performances and new material have allowed their audience to continue growing.

Bluey's musical influences, such as Stevie Wonder and the sound of Tamla Motown, shaped his perspective on life and his love for dance music. Jazz found its way into his music through artists like Herbie Hancock, who introduced him to

improvisation and funk.

Throughout their career, Incognito have collaborated with renowned musicians, but Bluey's connection with Chaka Khan stands out as a dream come true. He recalls a special moment performing "Destiny" with her and cherishes her appreciation for his choices. When it comes to Incognito's creative process, Bluey emphasizes the importance of being open to inspiration from various sources. He finds inspiration in everything around him, from world news to simple conversations, allowing his inner voice to guide him in creating music. Reflecting on memorable moments, Bluey recalls surprises from Stevie Wonder and George Benson during performances, which reinforced the power of love and friendship in his life and career.



Bluey believes that love and music serve as great equalizers in life, healing wounds and bringing people together. He expresses gratitude for the love he has received, emphasizing that love surpasses monetary success in the music industry. Rebellion, for Bluey, lies in his commitment to helping others, confronting issues in his community, and uplifting those around him.

Looking towards the future, Bluey shares exciting projects and collaborations.

Incognito have completed their new album, generating immense anticipation, and Bluey reveals a full band retro-futuristic project called Str4ta, in collaboration with Giles Petersen.

Bluey expresses interest in DJ gigs as well as aligning with his passion for performing and spinning records. He eagerly anticipates the upcoming Rochester festival, where he hopes to jam with Nile Rodgers, whom he admires for his humility, genuine personality, and ability to connect with others.

Reflecting on legends in the music industry, Bluey recalls the recent loss of Tina Turner, highlighting her embodiment of the title of a legend. He also reveres Stevie Wonder for his musical genius and the lessons in history and humanity he imparts through his words and interactions. Bluey believes in the healing power of music, its ability to uplift and bring people together, and how it should not be dismissed despite the personal lives of musicians.

***"Not all of us can do great things.
But we can do small things with
great love"***

Quote by Mother Teresa

Bluey expresses gratitude for the blessings in his life and acknowledges the journey of life as one filled with imperfections, aiming to bring people together and foster healing. He criticises governments prioritising economic gain over the well-being of their citizens, quoting Mother Teresa to emphasize the power of small acts of love in effecting meaningful change. Bluey concludes the interview by highlighting Mother Teresa's "rock 'n' roll" spirit, admiring her incredible strength and determination despite her fragile body.



**Incognito play at Rochester Castle
Concerts with Nile Rodgers & Chic on
Thursday 6th July 2023.
Tickets via
www.rochestercastleconcerts.com/**

Summer sports fun

rocks lane

for ages
3-14
years

at Rocks Lane Multi Sports and Padel
Centres in Barnes and Chiswick and Fulham

With school summer holidays just around the corner, you can keep your child safe, happy, active and entertained at Rocks Lane. With options including mini multisports, football, netball, tennis, padel and pickleball, there's bound to be something your child will love.

To find out more, visit **www.rockslane.co.uk** and keep up to date with all our activities by following Rocks Lane's Insta pages [@rockslanemultisports](https://www.instagram.com/rockslanemultisports) [@rockslanepadel](https://www.instagram.com/rockslanepadel)



Rocks Lane Multi Sports Centres

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Barnes | 020 8876 8330 | barnes@rockslane.co.uk |
| Bishops Park | 020 7736 3854 | bishopspark@rockslane.co.uk |
| Chiswick | 020 8994 1313 | chiswick@rockslane.co.uk |

Book Corner

HEY IT'S ME! IT'S LILLY EVERLEA

By AK Cooper-Elliot



I was born in Germany and raised in Yorkshire. After graduating from university in the early nineties, I perused a high-flying career in Accountancy and Procurement. Retiring early from my

executive role, I now create exciting detective stories for my young readers and romantic - crime novels for my adult readers.



AK Cooper-Elliot

Terrance is a fantastic gardener experimenting with his vegetables, but sometimes his experiments go badly wrong. In the second story Lilly and The Time Marrow, Terrance creates a time machine in the form of a metal marrow. I used to watch my grandfather grow different types of vegetables and this gave me the idea. The book made me laugh when I was writing it because when I was at school, I used to mix the wrong solutions in chemistry. One day just like Terrance I mixed a bad solution and the whole class had to be evacuated. At the time my mother was walking up the corridor and my chemistry teacher ran into her with his nose covered. The whole experience was so funny that I produced Terrance from that experience.

Both stories are funny and enjoyable with twists to keep the pages turning.

Lilly and The Ruby Ring

When Mrs Lemming's ruby ring is stolen Lilly Everlea and her gardener Terrance investigate the case. After finding a note pushed underneath his office door, Professor Everlea reveals the names of the culprits to Sergeant Smiffy. Everyone is surprised apart from Lilly and Terrance who solve the case.

AK Cooper-Elliot

When I was young, I loved to watch Scooby Doo and Nancy Drew. When I created Lilly, I remembered my happy times watching these shows. I put all my memories into a bag and gave it a good shake and Lilly Everlea popped out.

Lilly and The Time Marrow

When all the cats in the village fall asleep, Lilly finds out that the link is connected to Mr Muggles Catnip.

Terrance has created a time machine in the form of a metal marrow. Lilly and Terrance travel back to 1898 to stop the production of the catnip.

Professor Muggles is stunned when Terrance introduces him to chamomile tea instead of using catmint. This changes the history of Mr Muggles Catnip, but someone's interference could ruin the ingredient.

Can Lilly and Terrance stop the intruder from sabotaging the Muggles recipe?

Book Corner

ADVENTURES WITH RAYMOND AND BONNIE: THE DESERTED COTTAGE

By Monica Costa



The story

We all need a good friend. Learning to stick together and lean on each other's strengths is the dynamic duo in John's debut children's book, ***Adventures with Raymond and Bonnie: The Deserted Cottage***. In it, a young robin called Raymond and his best friend Bonnie, a blue tit, get into a bit of a fix and realise they need help. Raymond is plucky and brave, but he's sometimes foolhardy. Bonnie is sensible but is often nosy.

The little chums enjoy living in rural Billsborough County but, on one particular snowy December day, their normally safe and peaceful environment is threatened by the arrival of two shifty-looking strangers with less than friendly intentions. Who are these intruders and what, exactly, do they want? Far from being enjoyable, this turns out to be a very challenging day that the intrepid pair will never forget...

The author

By 2017, John's career in finance had spanned over 40 years. With mounting levels of regulation, travel, and paperwork, Wrexham born John decided that a change was needed. On leaving the financial arena in 2018, John wanted to further test himself and enrolled at Glyndwr University to study history. By 2021 he had obtained a BA (Hons) degree and had also undertaken a course in creative writing.



North Wales based John Williams is a financial professional turned children's author who has written a new short story about two feathered friends, Raymond and Bonnie.

As a grandfather, John resolved to put some time aside to write a short story for children. In deciding who should be the protagonist(s) in his tale, he drew on his love of the countryside and the birdlife he witnesses in his ongoing role as a volunteer towpath ranger and photographer for the Canal and River Trust.

Ideal for ages seven to nine, this charming tale teaches children that whilst it's fine for them to try and solve things on their own, it's also OK to seek help when necessary.

The book sequel

As John explains, "Having worked under unbending regulation for so long, I now enjoy letting my imagination run free, to flesh out personalities within a story and to imagine a young reader enjoying my tale and looking forward to discovering what Raymond and Bonnie get up to next. A sequel is underway and I have ideas for even more adventures for these little characters to get stuck into."

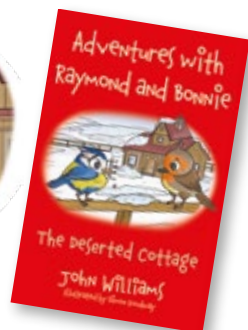


Adventures with Raymond and Bonnie: The Deserted Cottage

by John Williams is illustrated in colour and is available to order through all good retailers and to preview and order at [Amazon.co.uk](https://johnwilliamsauthor.co.uk) or via

John Williams' website

<https://johnwilliamsauthor.co.uk>.



Dr. Zoe Williams: "I WISH I HAD BEEN KINDER TO MYSELF GROWING UP"

Monica Costa chats to mum of one Dr. Zoe Williams, NHS GP and media medic, as well as founder of non-profit organisation Fit4LifeCIC about her latest book.

I met Dr. Zoe last year at a health conference and I was immediately fascinated by her charisma and ability to explain difficult medical information in easily digestible insights.

*Can you tell us more about your new book, **You Grow Girl**, and what inspired you to write a growing-up guide specifically for girls?*

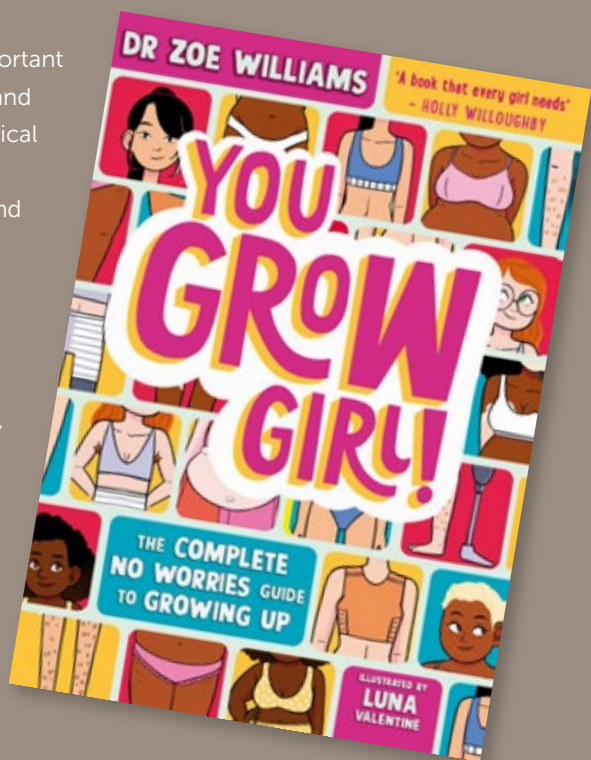
Dr Zoe: This is the book that I wish I had had when I was growing up, but it's been written for girls living in today's world. Our children have access to instant information at their fingertips, which may not always be reliable, age appropriate or even scientifically correct. I wanted to provide a resource which is honest, reassuring, and comprehensive when it comes to answering questions they might have about changes happening to their bodies, their emotions, and their relationships. **You Grow Girl** is much more than a puberty book, though, and covers topics such as body image, mental health, bullying, consent, and 'being kind'. Girls growing up today face additional challenges to what I did, such as social media. This book explains how we can use social media to our advantage, respect and self-love are important by 'curating our feed'



so that it works for us and not against. Confidence, respect and self-love are important values for girls in this age group to adopt and maintain, so there are tips, tricks and practical activities throughout the book that are designed to empower, build confidence and self-love, as well as approach the world around us with kindness and compassion.

What are some of the key topics and information that girls can expect to find in your book regarding puberty and body changes?

Dr Zoe: Girls experience so many physical changes and I always say that knowledge is power so having a scientific understanding of why we gain weight in certain places and why we sprout hairs and why we are more likely to get spots can be really helpful. The section of the book about periods goes into a little more detail than your typical puberty book. It teaches girls that by having a deeper understanding of the four different phases of the menstrual cycle, they can learn to use hormonal changes to their advantage. For example, phase one of the menstrual cycle is when we have the lowest pain threshold but phase two is when we are at our strongest and is when we are more likely to get a personal best on the athletics track. Whereas phase three is when we are more likely to enjoy social events like parties. It is so important that girls and women understand their bodies I recently launched a podcast called **The Doctor Will Hear You Now** and the first episode features Lisa Snowdon explaining how her perimenopause went undiagnosed for several years. It is never too early to know about the biology of your own body.



In addition to physical changes, you mentioned that the book covers mental health awareness. Could you share some advice for girls on how to prioritise their mental well-being during this transitional phase?

Dr Zoe: Now more than ever it is important that girls grow up with the tools to help them build resilience and safeguard their mental health. There is a complete chapter that helps girls understand when feeling sad or being anxious has tipped over into something serious like depression or clinical anxiety. The book includes actionable tasks and activities that help girls build skills such as mindfulness, journaling and support them towards building a healthy relationship with themselves.

Relationships can be complex for young girls. How does your book address the topic of managing relationships, including family, friends, and crushes?

Dr Zoe: The book explains how the most important relationship you will ever have is the one you have with yourself. It does also have sections on how puberty can change the relationship you have with those around you, including parents, siblings and friends. Of course, the other kind of relationship that girls at this age are particularly interested in are those that may come about with a more romantic nature. The book talks about crushes, sexual relationships and how to recognise when a relationship is a good one or not.

As a practicing GP and media medic, you have extensive experience sharing medical knowledge. How do you ensure that the information in your book is presented in an easy-to-understand and myth-busting manner?

Dr Zoe: The book is broken down into small manageable chapters which are further broken down through sections such as Myth Busters, Dr Zoe's Prescriptions (these are actionable tasks) and some Over Share Moments. Along with the text, the book is illustrated with pictures and diagrams to aid learning and understanding.

Beyond your work as a doctor, you are also involved in various advisory and non-profit initiatives. Could you tell us more about your work with Fit4LifeCIC and its impact on young people's health and well-being?

Dr Zoe: I co-founded Fit4Life as a charity that supports young people who are living with challenging circumstances we work to co-create physical activity programmes with the young people and provide mentors who they can trust. This is done with the aim to raise their aspirations, build their confidence and help them to be healthier.

What's your parenting style?

Dr Zoe: As a fairly recent mother I wouldn't say that I follow a particular parenting style – like most, I have just been enjoying motherhood whilst navigating the challenges of balancing family life with work and everything else. The most important advice I'd give to women and girls whether or not they are a parent is to be as kind and respectful to yourself as you are to others that you care about. I wish I had been kinder to myself growing up which is something that inspired me to write the book.



You Grow Girl!: The Complete No Worries Guide to Growing Up by Dr Zoe Williams is published by Wren & Rook, priced £9.99. Available now.

Reclaim Your Nights, Empower Your Days Discover the Secret to Blissful Sleep for You and Your Child

Sleepless nights taking a toll? My Sleeping Grace brings balance and harmony to your family's sleep. As a trusted child sleep consultant and holistic health coach, we empower mums like you to reclaim nights and awaken refreshed, ready to conquer the day.



My Sleeping Grace
Sleep Well, Thrive Together.



Say Goodbye to Sleepless Nights

Tailored 1:1 sleep support packages. Proven techniques. End bedtime battles, night wakings, and early rising. Transform your family's life.

Unlock the Secrets of Peaceful Mornings

Exclusive masterclasses: conquer early rising and night wakings. Gain insights, practical strategies, and expert guidance. Regain control of your mornings.

Experience life transformed

Restful nights, boundless energy, empowered motherhood. Holistic support for your well-being. Embrace joy and transformation.

Contact us for a personalised sleep consultation. Reclaim nights, unlock potential, and embrace transformation. Visit www.mysleepinggrace.com

Ask The Expert

TV CONSULTANT DERMATOLOGIST, **Dr Natalia Spierings**,
AUTHOR OF SKINTELLIGENT:

WHAT YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW TO GET GREAT SKIN

At what age should children start wearing sunscreen and why is it so important to start young?

Sun exposure is the main source of vitamin D and it is absolutely essential for healthy bone development in children.

Sunburn in childhood is a recognised risk factor for skin cancer in older age. I generally would not recommend exposing infants to sun in general (keep them in the cool shade, keep them covered up if exposing to sun). When children get a bit older and start to crawl or walk and play outside, then the first line of defence should be protective clothing followed by a minimum of SPF 30 and a good UVA protection.

What is the best way to apply sunscreen on children?

Sunscreen sticks are like deodorant sticks and you can make it a game by having your child roll the 'sunscreen stick' everywhere his or her skin is going to be exposed to sun. Sprays are another option but you still have to rub them into the skin. The good thing about the sticks is that they can be pure mineral sunscreen sticks which is great, because they go on white so you can see where the child has applied it and where he or she may have missed a spot.

Explain the difference in creams.

I prefer physical or mineral sunblocks made of zinc oxide or titanium dioxide as they don't photodegrade in sun like chemical sunscreens and are much less likely to cause skin irritation. But they can be hard to use from a cosmetic perspective as they can be a

bit chalky and leave a white paste. Chemical sunscreens are perfectly adequate but do need to be reapplied every 2-3 hours with constant sun exposure in order to maintain the sun protective effect.

For those that have skin issues such as eczema and psoriasis, is it better to use chemical or mineral sunscreen?

Mineral sunscreens are generally considered less irritating than chemical but this varies from person to person. The most important thing is finding a sunscreen that you like to use and doesn't irritate your skin or make it feel uncomfortable.

What are the most common misconceptions about SPF?

The most important thing to do to protect your skin from the sun is to physically block your skin from sun exposure with clothing, hats etc. Avoidance comes first, then physically blocking then sunscreen. That is the 'hierarchy' of sun protection. Think of sunscreen as 'insurance.'



Dr Natalia Spierings



www.drnataliaspierings.com

SUMMER HOLIDAYS CHILDREN'S FUN FAIRS



W6 OUG

RAVENSCOURT PARK
HAMMERSMITH
Fri 14th JULY to Wed 2nd AUG

EELBROOK COMMON
FULHAM/CHELSEA
Fri 4th AUG to Sun 20th AUG

**SW6
4SQ**

RAVENSCOURT PARK
Thur 24th AUG to Sun 3rd SEP

This Fair is Token operated
NO CASH ACCEPTED
1 TOKEN £1.20
10 TOKENS £10
TOKENS ON SALE AT BOOTH

**FREE
ENTRY**

FAIRS OPEN FROM
11am

**ALL
NEW
RIDES!**

FREE
SPLASH POOL
SAND PIT
**ADVENTURE
PLAYGROUND**



Check our website or Facebook
f (Kidz World) for Character and
Promotion Days!

www.parnhamfunfairs.co.uk

Health & Wellness

Sealions UK

A LEADING UK HEALTH & WELLNESS BRAND ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE A COLLABORATION WITH SESAME STREET – WITH A NEW RANGE OF CHILDRENS MULTI-VITAMIN GUMMIES

Launched in 2021 by SUPREME - (AIM:SUP), a leading manufacturer, supplier, and brand owner of fast-moving consumer products – SEALIONS is an online-only UK health and wellness brand offering affordable and accessible vitamin and wellness supplements for all ages.

Sesame Street is one of the world's most iconic children TV programmes in history, which for over 50 years has aired around the globe, with its array of colourful characters that have become ingrained into modern culture – this collaboration with Sealions is exclusive to the UK.

The exciting product collaboration is in the form of vitamin gummies, which are sugar-free and vegan-friendly, and are suitable for children age 4+. They're designed to support children's growth and development, providing a tasty and fun way to take their vitamins, with benefits for immunity, energy, and bone and teeth health.

It's so important to make sure kids eat a healthy, varied and balanced diet – but it's not always easy! These multivitamin gummies help to safeguard children's daily diets if they're not getting enough essential nutrients from food alone. Containing 8 essential nutrients, our gummies are sugar-free and vegan-friendly, with a delicious natural raspberry flavour your little ones will love.

Each daily serving contains vitamins A, B6, B12, C, D3 and E, plus Biotin and Folic Acid. Our expert formula has been designed to provide a helping hand in supporting several areas of children's wellbeing during their growing years.

Vitamin C contributes to the normal function of the immune system, normal energy-yielding metabolism and the reduction of tiredness and fatigue. This water-soluble nutrient doesn't stay in our bodies for long periods of time, so a regular intake is essential to ensure optimum daily levels. Vitamin C also helps with the absorption of the essential mineral iron.

Vitamin D is needed for the normal growth and development of bones in children and contributes to the normal function of the immune system. It can be hard to get enough vitamin D through diet alone as its main sources aren't foods typically enjoyed by children – such as oily fish and eggs. Some food sources, such as cereals, are fortified with vitamin D, but the NHS recommends all children in the UK should be given a daily supplement due to them spending less time in direct sunlight.



B vitamins, including B6 & B12 contribute to your little one's energy production, helping to give them the healthy energy levels and vitality that they need to enjoy play and seek adventure! Vitamin B12 supports normal energy-yielding metabolism and the reduction of tiredness and fatigue.

These new gummies retail at £5 and provide a 30-day supply with a 2 gummies-per-day serving.

Please see below nutritional info:

| Nutrient | Qty Per Serving | % Recommended Intake (RI) |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Vitamin A | 400mcg | 50% |
| Vitamin B6 | 1.4mg | 100% |
| Vitamin B12 | 2.5mcg | 100% |
| Vitamin C | 60mg | 75% |
| Vitamin D3 (Vegan Source) | 2.5mcg | 50% |
| Vitamin E | 12mg | 100% |
| Biotin (B7) | 50mcg | 100% |
| Folic Acid (B9) | 100mcg | 50% |

PRODUCT INFORMATION -

<https://sealions.com/products/kids-multivitamin-gummies-sugar-free>



Music Corner

MUSICAL HOLIDAY CAMPS IN LONDON AT THE STRINGS CLUB

The Strings Club runs 11 award-winning holiday camps in London using music as a force for good, offering a refreshing approach to childcare that parents can trust – time and time again. With over a 100 independent 5* reviews in 2022, The Strings Club ensures that every day is wonderfully different.



From wellbeing to confidence to musicianship, it is scientifically proven that music provides lots of benefits to our little ones.

That's why The Strings Club is on a mission to profoundly improve the wellbeing of a million children in the next 5 years. Each morning at the The Strings Club includes serotonin-fuelled Ukulele, Guitar or Violin sessions, led by the UK's friendliest, experienced teachers. Free hire of an instrument to take home too!

Afternoons offer an unmissable range of 12 super interactive workshops, designed by qualified teachers. Each created to inspire your child right up until pick up time. Think sport, music, drama, dance and art! From David Bowie to The Greatest Showman to the Greek Zorbas Dance, Holiday Camps at The Strings Club really do have it all!

The full offering includes:

Holiday Camps (for 4-7 years old)

Packed with unmissable musical experiences, the Holiday Camps bring together the very best in childcare and music – every school holiday.

Holiday Camps (8-12)

From wellbeing to confidence to teamwork, The Strings Club team recognises the sheer benefits music can have on children aged 8-12.

At a Glance

- Enjoy learning a range of songs they'll love
- Explore the "nuts and bolts" of music
- Interactive sports and creative activities
- Daily Diaries – personalised by our team
- Daily 6pm Newsletters – with access to gallery
- Free hire of an instrument to take home
- Qualified, friendly fully DBS checked team

They're trialling the new Holiday Camp in Dulwich and are expanding to further areas now.

Taking place every afternoon, they delve deeper into the "nuts and bolts" of music in a truly interactive way. No whiteboards in sight!

From dynamics to pitch to tempo to rhythm, children will cover a range of topics that will nurture their love of music even further! – Let's Explore: Active and Creative

– This is a key age where children love to move their bodies and use their imaginations!



So, whether that's daily dance sessions, a team-bonding game of rounders or innovative upcycling, children will get the chance to experience what they love best.

Free Discovery Sessions

The Discovery Sessions are the perfect way to ignite your child's love of music, inspiring them from the offset.

After-school Clubs

Music education should be affordable for all.

How to get in touch

You can get in touch with the office team in a number of ways:

Email: info@thestringsclub.org Call: 0121 296 9204

Regular office hours are 09:00 – 17:00, Monday to Friday every week.

During the Holiday Camps these are extended to 08:00 – 18:00.

www.thestringsclub.org

Empower!

EMPOWERING MOTHERS TO FOLLOW THEIR DREAMS

By Anna Thachuk

As we look to the future, it's more crucial than ever to empower all mothers with the opportunities to pursue their dreams and make the best choices for themselves and their families.

Not only am I a devoted mother of three, but I'm also the founder and president of KeepsakeMom, which creates customised jewellery to honor the breastfeeding journey of each of our customers.

It began almost twenty years ago, when I graduated from medical school, emigrated from Ukraine, and became a diagnostic medical sonographer. After our first baby was born, I threw myself into motherhood, revelling in the joy of breastfeeding and building that indescribable bond between mother and child. At the same time, I found a creative outlet in handcrafting jewelry, which grew out of my lifelong passion for pretty, sparkly things.

Now, as a successful commercial jeweller, I'm incredibly grateful to be channeling my passions into a career that touches others' lives. And part of that gratitude stems from the help of my amazing husband, who not only supported my goals and the risks that our family would have to take, but who also took on many of our household and childcare duties to give me the time and mental space to focus on my business.

For many mothers, however, this kind of support isn't available. We all know that mother - whether they work outside the home, work from home, or focus on the work of raising a family - face enormous pressure from all sides. Yet I've seen how empowering it is to follow one's passions, dream big, and achieve meaningful goals, opening doors for even more mothers down the road. Because when more of us mums become executives, founders, and leaders, we'll have more role models and more diverse opportunities for pursuing our dreams. And so will our children.

So how can we give more mothers access to that kind of opportunity and success? First, we need to provide the education, training, and professional development they need to pursue their goals. Dreams are important, but so are practical steps toward those dreams - like skills, scholarships, grants, coaching, and mentoring.



When a man becomes a father, it often doesn't disrupt his career like when a woman becomes a mother. So, let's level the playing field a bit, and lift mums up so that they too have more choices and opportunities.

Another huge factor toward opening up these crucial opportunities is capital. By investing in women, we can help grow companies and turn ideas into reality. By investing in social structures like affordable childcare, we can help ensure that mums have more resources and opportunities for success. And we can make sure that our voices are heard when it comes to making decisions in our workplaces and communities.

In today's economy, it's more crucial than ever to empower all mothers with the skills and confidence to make the absolute best choices for ourselves and our families. And whether you're a working mum, a stay-at-home mum who's looking to transition back into the workforce, or a mum who's decided to focus full-time on family, we all deserve access to the opportunities and support that will enable us to follow our dreams.

www.keepsakemom.com

Kids' Oral Health

A NEW FIRST STEP IN TRANSFORMATIVE ORTHODONTICS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Early orthodontic treatment, also known as interceptive orthodontic treatment or two-phase orthodontic treatment, is when children begin treatment while they're still growing and have most of their primary (baby) teeth.

The goal is to direct a child's growth and development in order to amend or prevent problems with the size, position or spacing of the teeth or jaws, so that further orthodontic treatment to align the teeth is easier down the road. In cases of protrusive or crowded teeth, or with a crossbite, for example, when the face and jaw are fully developed, it is much harder to manipulate them and get optimal results, and waiting until adulthood could mean the need for jaw surgery or extraction of adult teeth. With early treatment, orthodontists can intercept and correct the issue before it has a chance to become a problem. This is particularly true when the teeth stick out in front of the lower lip. This is known as a 'trauma prone profile' and creates an increased danger of damaging the adult front teeth.

New York trained specialist with over 30 years experience multiple award winning orthodontist Dr. Neil Counihan is one of only a handful of UK specialists offering a new, pioneering and contemporary interceptive treatment for young children using Invisalign First clear aligners rather than more intrusive braces. These are specifically designed for early intervention in younger patients – typically aged between eight and eleven years of age – with a mix of primary and permanent teeth.

Says Dr. Counihan: "Invisalign First offers me more options to treat children without having to extract teeth. It also enables children to avoid that 'ugly duckling' phase we often see at nine or ten years old when they can be victims of teasing from other children."

"It allows me to treat younger children, manage the eruption of permanent teeth and, significantly, achieve predictable development of the face and jaws while they are still growing."

The treatment was developed building on the same proven Invisalign clear aligner technology, comfort and convenience developed by Align Technology for adults and older teenagers.



"The aligners are really comfortable for children to wear. It also helps that I'm able to show both children and their parents a vision of what their teeth will look like at the end of this phase of their treatment and give them a definite time period in which this will be achieved. If the Invisalign First system says treatment will take 20 weeks, it will take 20 weeks. We've achieved exceptional results."



Dr Counihan encourages concerned parents to make an appointment directly with him at Twoth, the newest dental and facial aesthetics clinic in London's St John's Wood: visit <https://twoth.com> or call 0204 542 0155.

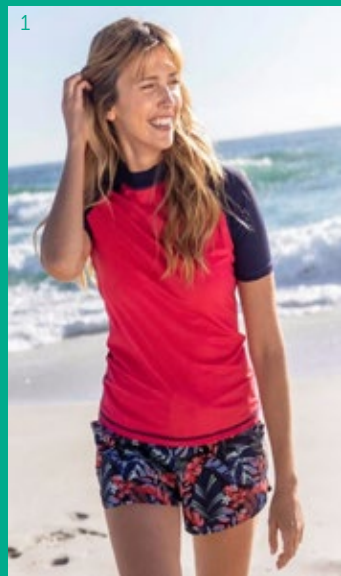


LONDON MUMS

Summer Travel Wishlist

1. *Mountain Warehouse beachwear*

The UV protection lightweight Women's Rash Vest and Patterned Women's Stretch Boardshorts provide sun protection with their UPF50+ treatment, while the quick-drying and stretchy fabric ensures comfort both in and out of the water.



2



2. The packable Wide Brim Straw Hat offers breathable sun protection.

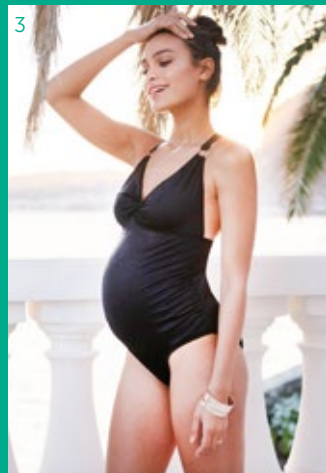
www.mountainwarehouse.com

3. *Seraphine's beach wear*

Seraphine's beach wear collection for expecting mothers flawlessly combines style and comfort, creating fashionable pieces that make pregnancy look effortlessly chic.

RRP: starting from £29.00

Available from
www.seraphine.com



4



4. *Gaia Shoulder in Tan Weave by Fiorelli*

This small shoulder bag features a sleek curved silhouette in a sophisticated tan weave finish, elevating the overall aesthetic. With a secure zip fastening, it ensures the safety of your belongings on any occasion. Made from faux leather and adorned with Fiorelli branded hardware, the bag offers both durability and style.

RRP £55

Available from <https://fiorelli.com>



Book Corner

INTRODUCING "PEANUT, BUTTER AND CRACKERS": A HILARIOUS GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES FOR PET LOVERS



Paige Braddock

New young graphic novel series from artist and writer Paige Braddock - the chief creative officer at Charles M Schulz - "Peanut, Butter and Crackers" is set to steal hearts from this summer.

In this charming series for children aged 6 and above, a high-strung dog and a snarky cat find their lives turned upside down when a goofy new puppy enters the picture. These heart-warming stories, filled with humour and charm, offer a glimpse into the secret lives of pets, leaving readers curious about their own furry friends' escapades behind closed doors. Beyond its entertainment value, *"Peanut, Butter and Crackers"* serves as a fantastic introduction to the world of graphic novels. Braddock's beloved visual storytelling style fosters independent reading skills and sparks young imaginations. The series addresses themes such as love for pets and animal rescues, promoting a general appreciation for animals and nature. It also provides a safe space for exploring emotions like nervousness, confidence, and empathy.

Paige Braddock, an Emmy-winning and Eisner-nominated artist and writer, brings her expertise to the series. Known for her long-running comic strip *"Jane's World"* and illustrations in *Peanuts* children's books, Braddock skilfully weaves character-driven narratives in *"Peanut, Butter and Crackers"* - much like Schulz, an obvious direct influence on Paige.



A notable aspect of the series is its commitment to non-gendered and non-binary roles. The animals and humans in the books are neutral, allowing young readers to imagine them however they please. The stories also emphasise the importance of relationships and how characters interact with each other and the world around them. This inclusive approach ensures that every child can find relatable characters within the captivating adventures.

The first three books in the series - *"Puppy Problems"*, *"River Rescue"*, *"Doggy School"* - will be released throughout the summer.

In the first book, *"Puppy Problems."* *Butter and Crackers*, two contented rescue pets, enjoy a peaceful life until an exuberant and clueless puppy named *Peanut* disrupts their routine. Overwhelmed, *Butter and Crackers* decide *Peanut* needs to leave. However, when *Peanut* goes missing, the two pets realise their home is incomplete without the lively pup. This sweet and hilarious adventure explores companionship and the true meaning of home.

"Peanut, Butter and Crackers" stories are perfect for newly independent readers and will bring laughter and warmth to readers of all ages. Paige Braddock's talent and love for storytelling shine through in every page of this charming series.

Stay tuned for more exciting adventures with *"Peanut, Butter and Crackers,"* tackling topics such as camping, teamwork, bullying, and the meaning of home. These engaging stories encourage empathy, confidence, and friendship.



Beautiful toys
built to last

Use code LONDON20
for 20% off everything
Hippychick



www.hippichick.com | [@hippichickbaby](https://www.instagram.com/hippichickbaby) | 01278 434440