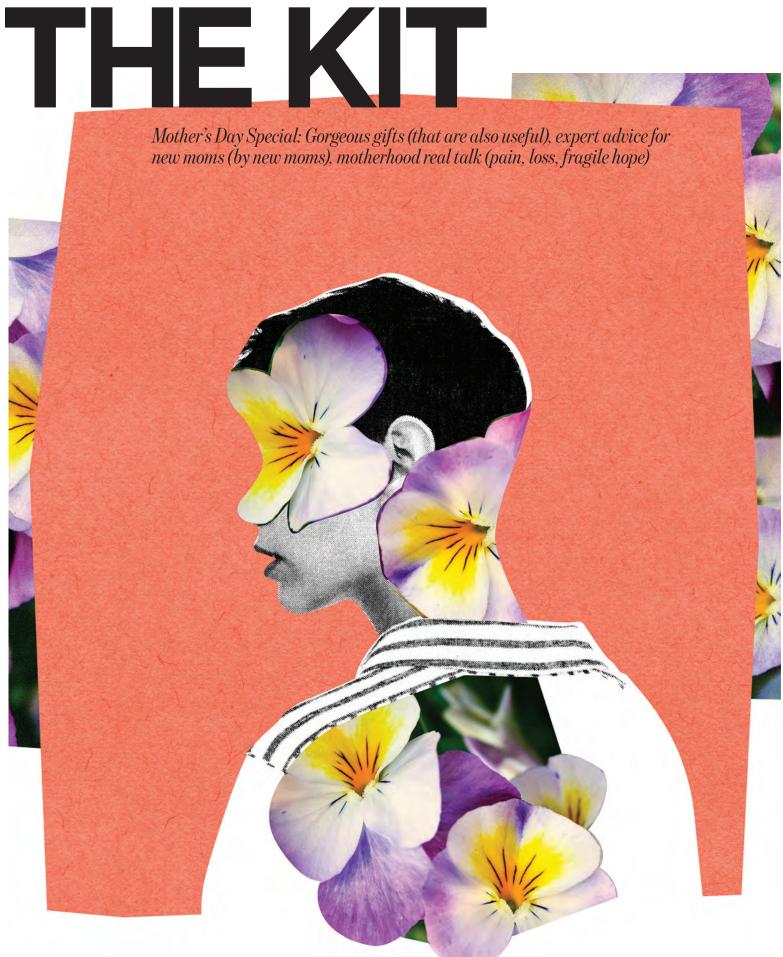


### Royal Report: Watch the wedding of the year with us

We're your destination for all things royal wedding. On Saturday, May 19, join us for live coverage on thekit.ca and thestar.com, and look for a special section of *The Kit* in the Sunday edition of *The Toronto Star*. Cheers!



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Revamping the dress code Buy less, buy better PAGE 3



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**Summer beauty collab**Add this to your hot list PAGE 3

## The truth about m(otherhood)

Being a mom means negotiating layers of emotional and philosophical insecurities. Not conforming to societal norms adds a few thousand more

BY SARAH LISS | ILLUSTRATION BY MARIN BLANC

As a kid (and for the better part of my adult life), I never thought I'd have a baby—that supposedly innate desire to grow a human that some women describe was utterly foreign to me, and my biological clock seemed perpetually unwound. Not only that, but as a queer person, procreation didn't strike me as an inevitable conclusion of coupledom in the same way it so often appears to be in heterosexual relationships. I also had such a fraught relationship with my body (particularly my breasts and belly) that the prospect of expansion, of weight gain, of ceding control of my physical self was less than appealing. That aversion was compounded by the fact that pregnancy is so often touted as a time when a woman ascends to some acme of femininity; my experience of gender is more complicated than that.

If I didn't plan to produce a kid, it seemed fair to assume that I'd never become a parent. The two were inextricably linked in my mind. At least, that was my subconscious narrative until somewhere in the fall of 2013, when a pair of faint pink lines on a pregnancy test confirmed it: My partner was pregnant. We were having a baby.

I officially became a mother on an afternoon in April 2014. Though he'd incited a minor panic by deciding to show up six weeks early, our kid emerged pink and hale, weighing a (relatively) whopping six pounds, three ounces. I'm not typically given to spontaneous tears, but I found myself weeping as I watched him open his mouth to mewl, then wail. In that moment, I was engulfed by a torrent of emotion—much of which, I'd imagine, is familiar to many moms meeting their infants for the first time: elation, disbelief, worry, pride,

But there was also something lurking underneath those feelings: Gazing at this wrinkled, vernix-smeared being as he nuzzled, naturally and instinctively, against the chest of my partner, the person whose body had created him, I felt a faint, nagging sense of insecurity. I wasn't the mother who'd grown him or pushed him out into the world, or the one he'd instinctively turn to for comfort and sustenance; I was something else—another mother.

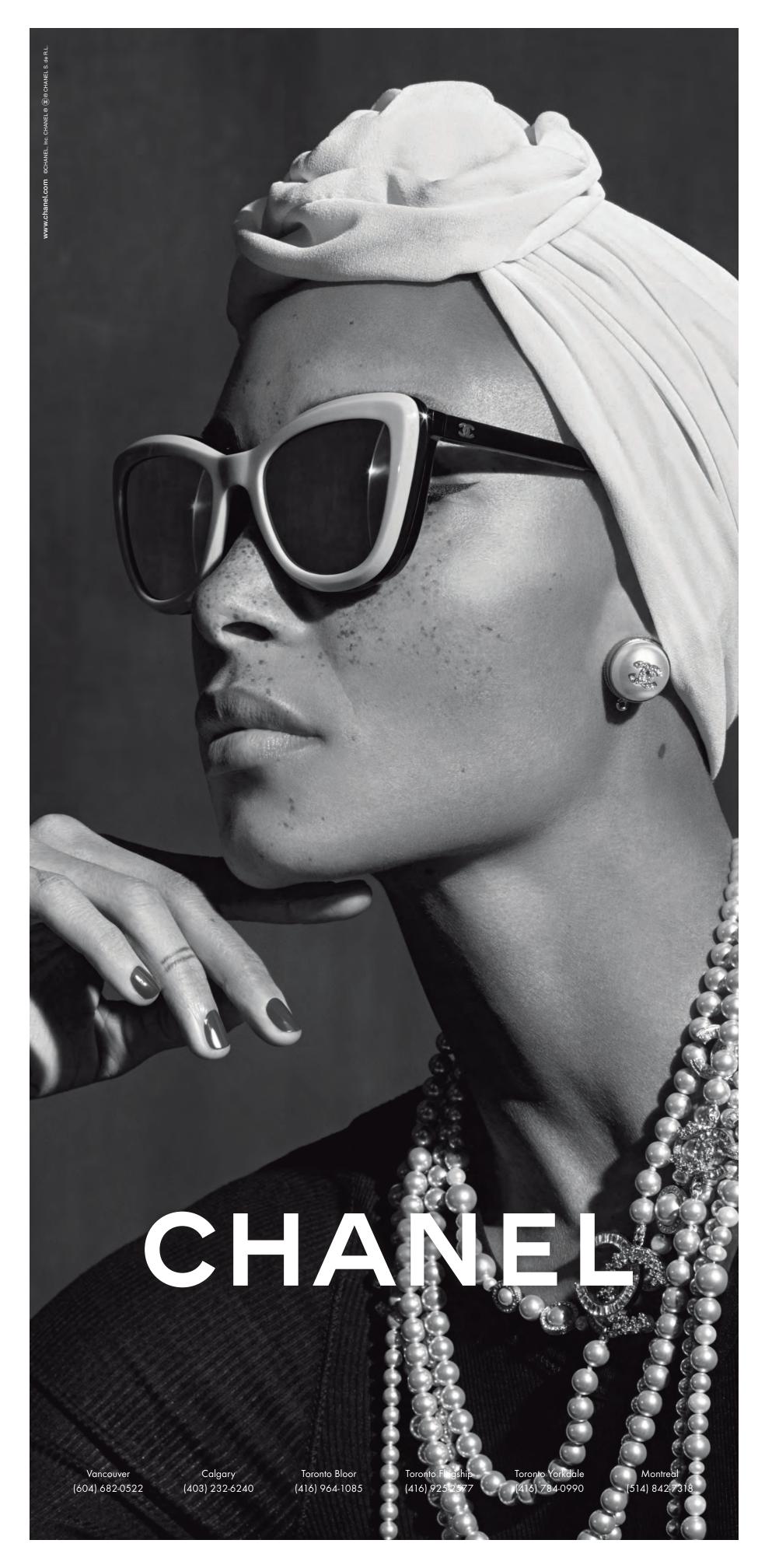
I didn't *want* to question my role. And yet, as I sat in the dim NICU surrounded by beeping moni-

tors and the distant wheeze of breast pumps, shirt unbuttoned, holding this kid—my kid—skin to skin, I worried about whether my best intentions could ever be enough for him. Was I missing some essential, authentic maternal connection because I'd been just a sympathetic bystander while my partner did the intense (and intensive) physical work of becoming a mom?

Rationally, I knew that my feelings were neither new nor revelatory—how many non-birthing parents had walked this path before I got there? To fixate on biology as some stamp of maternal certification was to dismiss the depth, beauty and authenticity of the bonds between the adoptive parents and kids I knew; to undermine the "realness" of the kids conceived through assisted reproduction by people who'd weathered serious struggles with fertility; to willfully ignore the primacy chosen family has always held for members of the LGBTQ community who've been disappointed or rejected by their blood relatives.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4





#### **Absolutely fabulous**

YouTube phenom Patrick Starrr has created the summer's most joyful makeup collection

BY KATHERINE LALANCETTE



It's 10 a.m. on a Wednesday and Patrick Starrr is draped in a sheer beaded gown with a tulle turban atop his head. His lids sparkle with expertly blended sweeps of cerulean and bubble-gum, shades hatched for his latest M.A.C Cosmetics collaboration. It's a full-circle moment for the 28-year-old, having once corner of the mouth. That's a good guideline." worked at the brand's Florida Mall counter in his hometown of Orlando.

Describing himself as a "good Catholic Filipino boy" growing up, Starrr, born Simondac, originally planned on pursuing a degree in nursing, but discovered makeup was his true passion. Feeling depressed when he wasn't working a M.A.C shift because he didn't have a reason to paint his face, he decided to try his it even more.' What do I do, walk around thin-lipped?" hand at vlogging. His YouTube channel now boasts a cool 3.7 million subscribers.

We caught up with the makeup sensation to chat blending, blossoming and Instagram brows.

You used to work at a M.A.C counter. What's it like collaborating with the brand now? "It's so crazy. Just looking at the images we shot, it's such a pinch-me moment. This is going to go where I used to work, so I wanted to represent my blossom story, which is why I went with a floral theme. I also think it'll be really special for a little girl or a little boy to see someone so different. It's a new time."

What drew you to M.A.C when you were younger? "Growing up, I'd see these big cosmetic ads from other

brands. I loved it, but when I saw M.A.C, it dared me to be different. Their credo really stood out to me: all ages, all sexes, all races. It's very special to see a brand that celebrates such diversity, especially with RuPaul being the first Viva Glam ambassador. That's why I wanted to work at M.A.C for so long. And now they're working

What your go-to glow recipe? "Skin prep is so important. If I have an event, I'll do masks and serums the night before, so my skin will soak it up. I also believe in setting sprays to get that overall glow. Mist a setting spray, apply a powder or cream highlighter, and then spray again to sandwich your highlighter with moisture."

A common makeup mistake you see? "If you're doing a smokey eye, a lot of people would think to put black on first and blend it out. But you should put a transition colour first, like a wash of nude and a grey, and then the black. Layering colours from skin tone to darkest is essential."

What's your take on so-called Instagram brows? "I'm not about it. It looks unnatural to me unless you're competing on RuPaul's Drag Race, then that would be a different story. It's going to be a no for me."

Your foolproof contour tips? "Stick to the number '3' or sweep bronzer from the top of the ear to the

What do you think of overlining? "Girl, do you see my lips? [Laughs] I overline all the time. Would you rather buy a \$15 lip liner or pay \$500 for a syringe of filler? I love overlining my lips. It's part of the illusion. I sometimes think, 'Okay, if I overline my lips people hate it, but if I get injections, people are going to hate



SHOP THE COLLAB



you thought about strict dress codes BY JILLIAN VIEIRA

If you work on the Bay Streets of the world, you're well aware of the challenges the corporate life poses to your closet. There's an expectation to conform to the straight-laced uniform, a look that speaks loudly of professionalism, but says nothing of style. It means budgeting for two wardrobes—one that's all business, another for your everyday life—that rarely overlap in practice. It was the dilemma faced by Stephanie Ray, founder of Canadian workwear essentials line Grayes, after she wrapped up law school in 2016. "I didn't want to feel like I was forced into something just to meet the standard," Ray says. Her solution was a highly edited, "buy less, buy better" collection that could be personalized for traditional office spaces and weekend itineraries. A pair of windowpane-print pencil pants, tailored to modernity, is the perfect accompaniment to a Sunday spent window-shopping in white sneakers. Come Monday a.m., the same trousers, pulled over a crisp blouse, shift into boardroom mode. Even the line's beloved blazer dress, a piece that takes the guesswork out of dressing, is a favourite among television personalities and CEOs alike. What's more, the brand commits to dress code rules—think appropriate hemlines, devoid of skimpy straps or form-fitting silhouettes—so that you can always put your best foot forward. "The corporate world can be intimidating," says Ray. "When you walk into a room, you want to feel like yourself and have that confidence."

#### THE KIT COLLAB

# Mom-worthy gifts for your favourite

ECOSSE WOMEN'S

WATCH, \$16, MYSTYLE WOMEN'S FRINGE SCARF, \$8, GIANT TIGER

Mother's Day—and every day—should be dedicated to making Mom feel special. Without her, where would we be? (\*Literally, not here.\*) You don't need to break the bank to spoil her on May 13. These affordable items are sure to put a smile on her face.







## The other side of motherhood

Women open up about the experience of being a mother, and a daughter, in all its heartache, guilt and glory



"I don't think I always knew my relationship with my mother was fraught, but it always was. It took us a long time to figure it out, but we're pretty sure that she has narcissistic personality disorder. It all has to be about the picture she wants presented to the world. You don't even know it; you kind of buy her story, which is that she's a hero, she's way smarter than she is, and that she's way more ethical than anyone else. She gaslighted us. Once she was mad at me because I embarrassed her, so she told my Dad I was anorexic, and I'm not. She divides and conquers between siblings. She could do it in front of everyone but in a way that no one else would know she was being abusive

\*NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED

PERSON IS YOUR MOTHER

#### RAISING A CHILD WHO HAS LOST HER MOTHER IS AS COMPLICATED AS IT IS HEART-WRENCHING

When I was in my late 30s, I was married always be there, and we always miscarriages and had been told that I about Leanne often. We look was not going to have kids. After my at pictures all the time. I always partner and I divorced, I started inves- ask, 'What's happening for you tigating options: being a single mother, right now? You don't have to adoption, in vitro. But it wasn't in the be embarrassed or ashamedcards. Then I met Axel. His wife had died you can tell me anything. It's of cancer the year before, and he was not going to hurt my feelings." raising their child, Georgia, who was five, by himself. Georgia and I didn't meet holding onto stuff that she's until Axel and I had been dating for quite awhile. At the beginning, I was always check-ins often. wondering: 'What does she think? What do I think? What does he think?' But, from the moment I met her, I knew in my mind and in my heart, that I loved would hope that the person her. When we all moved in together it made us this odd little family.

Building trust with Georgia took a times, too, 'What do you think long time. She was experiencing loss, and it's a land mine of complexity. I figured out early that everything becomes much easier and clearer if I ask, 'What is good for Georgia?' When imagining what I would want if I I think about [her mom] Leanne, and was in that situation, and what I if I go too much down that road, it's a would want is for that person to disaster. I will never be able to compare to her for Georgia. I can only cultivate for my child. I feel like I have this this special, different relationship, and I have to remember that.

Georgia had a meltdown a couple ence. It is a choice to let her be of years ago, and I didn't know why. there, and it is her choice to let She finally said, 'I just feel like there's me be here. When I start to feel

this empty part of me, something that that space with the memories, and I'm forgetting.' That scared her. It was such a can feel a kinship with her and that helps

deep feeling of grief for her, and it comes me." —Shannon Barnett in waves. It will last her whole My biggest fear is that she is not talking about, so we do

I told Georgia that I have chats with her mother all the time, because if it was me, I taking over my job was considering me. I ask Georgia some-Mama would want?' Sometimes I sit and I have quiet moments, like a crazy person, and ask Leanne for a hand. I'm always always consider what is the best weird companion that I haven't met, but I deeply feel her pres-

insecure, that I don't know what I'm doing, can't be filled. I don't know how to fill I remind myself that nobody knows what they're doing and she didn't know either.

been better since I stopped talking to her.

that mom." —Penelope Campbell\*



#### A mother of an idea

Money is among the most whispered about subjects of motherhood, but here's a stat to make you shout: Having a kid costs almost \$14,000 a year in Canada. In March, as part of the Liberals' election platform, Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne unveiled a game-changing childcare plan: a \$2.2 billion program that provides free licensed childcare for kids age two and a half until they start kindergarten. We asked Wynne to walk us through it

BY LAURA DECARUFEL

families? "The change will be profound. We've seen the impact of full-day kindergarten, which means families save \$6,000 per year per child. [With this program], people who have decided to have children can look forward to saving \$17,000 a year. Recently, I was with a group of young moms, and one of them said, 'This will mean that my husband and I can think about having another baby.' That's one of the impacts that, to be honest, I hadn't really thought about. It became clear to me that we can't wait any longer, that women can't wait any longer."

If this program was in place when you had kids, what difference would it have made to you?

earlier. I had three kids in four years, and it would have been very, very expensive [to have them in daycare]. We hear from women that after they have kids, they often pursue more part-time, flexible work—when my youngest was eight months old, I ended up working part-time Out of necessity, I was always working around my kids' schedules. My career path may have

What have you found to be the most surprising thing about being a working mom? "Balancing work with being there for my children. [In addition to paid work], I spent a lot of time doing parent activism, teaching mediation, volun-

How will this program impact women and "It would have meant that I went back to work teering in schools. It wasn't always easy to be they choose—is not possible until we provide available for my kids. This announcement on childcare doesn't change that. It's still a challenge for working parents to juggle work and home life. We can't prescribe that, but this program gives parents a fair shot.

> For you personally, what is the significance of the wage gap? "It perpetuates this notion that women are unequal—it's both fuelled by that and it perpetuates that. As long as we allow [the gap] to continue, we allow women to be kept out of the workforce and to be paid less, then the true level playing field just isn't there. This struggle that I've been involved in

care of the family."

How do you shield your kids from the vitriol you experience as a politician? "I worry more about how it affects my family than how it affects me—I've made this choice. I try to make sure that I stay in touch with my kids. They look at the front page of *The Toronto Sun* and read the articles. My daughter sent me a text asking 'Are you okay?' after reading in the Star about the debate. My dad follows everything—he's 92—and he worries. My mom always wonders if I've had enough sleep. I try to see them as often as I can, and to reassure them that I'm my whole life—that women can do and be what okay, that I'm able to deal with it."

#### The truth about m(otherhood)

CONTINUED FROM COVER

In my teens and 20s I tried not

talking to her because I was miser-

able. When I finally cut off contact

seven years ago, I died of guilt for

about a year. But I didn't have a choice.

She would call, she would email and

I would feel so ill. I was absolutely

incapable of talking to her, and I still

am. My two sisters don't speak to her

either. But I think part of the reason I

finally had the fortitude to do it was

that having my own child put the

abuse in technicolour. It wasn't one

thing, but a million little things that

were so wrong, that I would never do.

the beautiful grandmother things,

but I watched her do what she had

done to me a million times. Once,

she spoiled my daughter the whole

weekend and, as a two-year-old, she

had a tantrum. My mom, joking, said

to her, "Oh you're ugly," and then

said, "I'm kidding," and moved along.

It was just like what she did to us:

boost you up and then confuse you by cutting you off out of the blue. It's

creepy and weird and couched in

loving terms. She would seem affec-

tionate. She would tell me she loved

me all the time. But I'm positive she

doesn't have the capacity to love in

any real way. It's difficult because my daughter asks me about her. I finally

just said that Grandma's old and she's

not very well and it makes her mean.

Mother's Day. With my mom it was never good enough, no present was

ever good enough. Even when I was 10, it wasn't good enough. She'd say,

'Well, so and so got this." I'd call my sisters on December 1, and all of us

would be like, "Who's going to get the shit this year?" Christmases have

integrate it into your life. There are people with different degrees of

narcissism, but hers was so great that I don't feel guilty. This is pathetic,

but I'm 47 now, and I always think, 'I want my mommy.' But I don't want

My therapist said that, like a death, you never get over it—you

Christmas is the worst. I hate

As a grandmother she did all

But socially and culturally, motherhood, as a concept and an (admittedly fraught) identity, is overwhelmingly bound up in the act of gestation, rooted in a kind of biological supremacy. It can leave you with the sense that if you didn't give birth to offspring who share your DNA, you've failed on some primal level—that your experience and connection fall short of being a true mother. I fought hard against this essentialism. But even so, as my kid left behind the squirmy, squinting lump stage and became an infant, then a toddler, I still struggled with the parameters of my role—or, perhaps more accurately, worried that I was somehow an impostor, that even if I might appear to be his mom when we were out together. I was duping people because I hadn't grown him inside me.

I'd felt no envy while my partner endured her particularly gruelling pregnancy (it involved both severe nausea and a nasty case of restless leg syndrome). Still, at some point over that not-quitenine-month stretch, I started to wonder what it would feel like to meet a tiny person you'd been experiencing as an abstract internal thrum. Three decades of vehement aversion gave way to an almost scientific curiosity—and a growing realization that I might regret it if I didn't at least *try* to carry our second child. Two miscarriages later, I was knocked up.

The experience was profoundly surprising. Heartburn made me miserable, I itched and ached, my fingers and wrists were consumed by tingling and numbness. And I was shocked by how delighted I felt to have this proof of parenthood visible through my body. For the first time in my life, I found myself drawn to items that clung rather than shrouded. I typically flee from cameras, but I'm grateful, still, for the small collection of photos that capture me, head to toe, in stretchy stripes and leggings, snug spandex-laced tanks and T-shirt dresses stretched over my impossibly huge stomach. (That's not to say that I was thrilled with the options that were available: With their endless ruffles and wraps and cap sleeves, most maternity clothes are cartoonishly femme. I relied on Henleys and flannel buttondowns and elastic-waisted skinny jeans, basically becoming a ballooned-out version of my late-'90s teen self.)

In public, it felt weirdly, disconcertingly validating to be the gestational carrier. Older women gazed fondly at my belly; sweet teenagers ceded their seats on public transit. It wasn't that I didn't feel anxious—who would this new person be? How would he change our family? But I had some clarity when it came to my role: I'd be giving birth, as mothers often do. Even so, I found myself struggling to answer simple questions. "Is it your first?" asked the cashier at the grocery store, smiling as I waddled through the checkout. Well, no. But it was the first time I was having this experience. I couldn't land on the correct response.

When our youngest arrived just before noon in late August last year, amidst even more chaos and confusion than his older brother, I held him against my chest and blinked away tears. wondering whether I'd be swept up in a newfound maternal epiphany. I felt physically different, to be sure—a lastminute (but welcome) C-section had left me numb from the waist down; adrenaline and hormones were doing donuts through the parking lot of my nervous system—and I felt wonder at having played a role in creating this blinking, squishy organism. The epiphany came about an hour later, when our big kid quietly entered the hospital room, approached the bed and gently beeped his new sibling's nose; I was overcome by a surge of love and pride and recognition and, yes, maternal joy—these weirdos are actual people, and they're mine, both of them. Gestation was a pretty cool trick, but it's not what made me a mother.



Ste-Foy | Chinook Centre | West Edmonton Mall | Oakridge Centre

## **Knowledge is Power**

Could cancer run in your family? Getting tested for BRCA can give you the tools you need to make informed and proactive decisions—and possibly save your life



#### Karen and Marleigh Roth

When Karen Roth was diagnosed with breast cancer in the fall of 2007, the news came as a shock. She was an otherwise healthy, active mom of two young children, and there were almost no cases of cancer in the family.

Roth decided not to tell her kids why she was having surgery, but daughter Marleigh, in grade seven at the time, knew something was up. "Mom being in bed during the day was unusual, so my brother and I knew she wasn't well." she remembers. "But. Mom being Mom, she didn't want to worry us. She told us she had a 'boo boo' that had to come off, but not that it was cancerous."

After her operation, Roth hesitated to pursue further treatment. She wanted to spare her children the visible effects of chemotherapy and radiation—her younger son, Tory, was only eight—but her oncologist strongly recommended she continue the treatment to minimize the chance of the through breast or ovarian

"I worried it might be upsetting for the kids to see me without my hair, and honestly, I was dreading the self-consciousness of being bald," says Roth. Deep down, though, she knew she had to do everything possible to stay well for her children.

During chemotherapy and radiation treatment, Roth made sure family life stayed as normal as possible. "I was lucky; chemo didn't give me nausea or make me too weak," she remembers. She filled the house with family. "The kids had their friends over, played and even fought...there was no tip-toeing around!"

While all women are at risk of breast and ovarian cancer, some are at greater risk than others. Marleigh heard about the *BRCA* gene ence, if the gene might run in our family," she

was no question as to whether she'd get tested.

"Getting tested is about being proactive about your health, both for you and for your family."

"It's better to know than to be in the dark and take a chance," she says. As it turned out. Roth didn't have the gene. But she's keen to stress that all women who have been cancer, or think their family history might put them at risk, should find out their BRCA status.

"Knowledge is key," says Roth. "If you're BRCA positive you can explore preventative options early. Ultimately, it's about being open

and taking control of your health. Women shouldn't be afraid to talk about it, or of coming across as paranoid. Getting tested is about being proactive about your health. both for you and for your family.'

That's a statement that MJ Decoteau. the founder and executive director of Rethink Breast Cancer Group—a Toronat high school, when a friend's mother was to-based organization whose mission is to their health. These include risk-reducing diagnosed with cancer. "It definitely opened empower and respond to the unique needs mastectomies and risk-reducing removal my eyes to cancer being a genetic disease. It of young people worldwide concerned of ovaries and fallopian tubes. The decialso made me wonder, given Mom's experiabout and affected by breast cancer—sion to undergo these options is highly wholeheartedly agrees with. "For women personal and can be overwhelming. It's if her kids might be at risk. For her, there status can be empowering, and women information about managing menopausal

shouldn't feel alone with that information," says Decoteau. "Working with a genetic counsellor from the time of diagnosis can help women understand their risk, and how a positive BRCA status may affect

them or family members." "BRCA-positive women have options that can allow them to be proactive about symptoms and breast reconstruction options from their healthcare team."

Roth's experience with cancer also brought a new dimension to her relationship with her daughter, Marleigh, now 21. "My mom and I have definitely always had a great relationship," says Marleigh. "But this experience showed we could get through anything together, and helped us become friends."

Today, the two are closer than ever. "We've been through a lot together," Roth reflects. "Now that Marleigh is older, she's says. Roth did the test, keen to understand with breast cancer, knowing one's BRCA important for women to get thorough we know if there's something really tough

> link between genetics and certain cancers. Parker is cancer-free and continues to advocate When Annie Parker was 14, her mother died suddenly of cancer. That was in the mid-1960s, Annie Parker Foundation. and even though there was a family history of the disease, Parker and her siblings never talked about

it. Twelve years later, after her sister died from breast cancer, Parker decided something had to change. "Why did my mother and sister both have breast cancer? I wanted answers," says Parker. "The doctors put it down to 'bad luck', but my gut told me that wasn't the whole story." When her first cousin died of secondary breast cancer later that year,

When cancer first entered Annie Parker's life,

she had no idea of the role she would play in a

major medical breakthrough. Thirty years later,

Parker became convinced genetics were involved. Then in 1980 at the age of 29, Parker found a lump in her breast. It would be the first of three that you have a BRCA gene mutation, suggest that cancers she would battle over the next 35 years. "Strange as it sounds, this was a eureka moment for me," says Parker. "Finally, [there was] evidence only registered Canadian charity solely dedicated of a correlation between cancer and my family....But the doctors still had no idea that cancer could be a genetic disease. The knowledge still wasn't there."

radical mastectomy. Eight years after beating breast the people you love about the next steps, knowing cancer, Parker was diagnosed with Stage 3 ovarian cancer. Rounds of chemo and extensive surgery left her weak, and weighing 80 pounds.

"Even then, the doctors still wouldn't acknowledge the possibility of a genetic link for cancer in my whomever she could to find out more, but gaining momentum was difficult

Berkeley discovered the BRCA1 gene mutation. may save your life." King and her team found that women with a BRCAgene mutation, which can be inherited from either parent, are at a higher risk of developing ovarian and For more information on the Annie Parker Foundation breast cancer, more likely to develop breast cancer visit her on Facebook at @annieparkerdecoded

Parker became one of the first women to be tested her hereditary connection to cancer. Following for the BRCA1 gene mutation, helping establish the her diagnosis, she felt a responsibility to create a legacy that would help other people. Today, at 67,

at a younger age and often have multiple family

by Dr. King. After an anxious two-year wait for

results, she tested positive for BRCA1, confirming

Parker was one of the first women tested

members with the disease.

on behalf of those affected by cancer through the "I've fought off cancer three times, and I'll battle those

demons again if I have to.

"If you have ovarian or breast cancer and know your family pursue genetic testing," says Elisabeth Baugh, CEO of Ovarian Cancer Canada, the to overcoming ovarian cancer. "For them, while a genetic mutation may indicate an increased risk, it's also an opportunity to make a potentially life-saving She went ahead with treatment, which required a decision about their health. In addition to informing about your own genetic makeup could also open up

options for targeted treatment." "I've fought off cancer three times, and I'll battle those demons again if I have to," says Parker. "When it comes to your health, knowledge is power. family," says Parker. She did research and talked to If you feel something isn't right, then get a second opinion. Knowing your family history and BRCA status gives you options." Parker's ultimate take-Finally in 1990, Dr. Mary-Claire King at UC away? "Trust your gut and be proactive, because it





A speedy serving of

relaxing bergamot,



#### The mom friend handbook

Your best friend just had a baby: She's tired, and you're confused **Kathryn Hudson** on how not to screw up your friendship

DO: Laugh at the horror I like to think of myself as a chill and capable person. Having a baby taught me—within 24 hours—that I am neither of those things. My best friend came to visit three days after my son was born, when I was trying to broker breastfeeding. Standing shirtless, I threw a breast pump against the wall and started sobbing. She patted my back while I ugly cried and milked myself into the bathroom sink. Filled with swirling hormones, I mourned the loss of my dignity. Then instead of quietly doling out a dose of pity, she laughed at the absurdity. And I laughed the kind of belly laugh that only comes from old friends and relief.

DO: Kidnap her for an hour When I was still having trouble sitting comfort-

made me hysterical with rage and sadness. Was our friendship as doomed as disco? Instead, suggests Kelly, mom of two, show up at your friend's house during those first sleep-and-shampoo-deprived weeks, take her by the hand and force her out for a quick coffee. "Willing or unwilling, she needs to leave the house for an hour," says Kelly. Lovingly wipe the spit-up off her cheek and treat her to cortados. DO: Tell her about the outside world

ably after having a baby, I received a text from

friends. You know, the all-caps kind of group

text from rowdy friends who stay up too late

and drink too much. "Disco bowling. Perfect

for baby bc it's casual. Meet u at 9:30?" The

image of nursing under the black light with

"I Will Survive" pounding in the background

When I was on mat leave, a spacecraft visited Pluto for the first time. I didn't know about it. I was isolated on my own dwarf planet, Maternity Leave: population two. Well-meaning friends would pop by and ask the cruelest

question you can ask a new mom: "So, what's

new?" The only answer is: "Nothing! I haven't

left the house since the new year and do you think this poop is a weird colour?!" Instead, offer tidbits about current events, share a list of hilarious podcasts or suggest must-see non-poop-related docs on Netflix that will give her something to think about.

DO: Acknowledge that things have changed Release your friend from the burden women face of pretending to be okay all the time. "When my son was a month old, I saw my best friend and everything was covered in mustardy baby poop because he had the worst rash so diapers were out of the question. She looked shocked," says Elena. "I tried to say brightly, 'Business as usual!' I cried in the shower that night." Let her know that it's okay if your friendship hits the back burner for a few months while she figures this out; it's okay if she can't chime in with a pitch-perfect punchline like she normally would because her brain is fried; it's okay if she bails on drinks because she just can't; it's okay if she doesn't feel like herself right now, because it'll all come back soon enough. And let her know you'll be there waiting.

#### For the little one

Everyone, and we mean everyone, has their recos for baby must-haves, but these tried-and-true products are guaranteed lifesavers



This all-natural, hand-blended balm gently calms redness and rashes. MINERBS BABY BALM, \$23, MINERBS.COM



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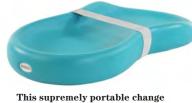


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**Bumpy road** 

Can cellulite actually be

conquered? Beauty director Katherine Lalancette searches for smoothness

I'm shuffling down the hallway of a

posh plastic surgery clinic in white socks and a paper gown, clutching the back slit so I don't inadvertently moon anyone. Stephanie, the doctor's assistant, directs me toward a pedestal in the photography room

where I turn to face the wall, relieved I don't have to make eye contact for this next part. She proceeds to give my behind a full-on photo shoot, capturing it from every angle and dimming the lights midway to empha-

The only thing getting me through this festival of awkwardness is a glimmer of hope I'm holding onto with the same tight grip that kept my gown closed. At the end of this humbling tunnel lies the possibility that I will be

cured of that most pesky of female

one of only four Canadian clinics

offering Cellfina, a cellulite-

banishing treatment launched in the

U.S. about three years ago. With the

help of a tiny blade, it slices the bands

that pull down on skin and create the

divots known as cellulite. It requires a

single hour-long procedure, involves

but my particular feeling is it that it

should be a pretty permanent result," says Dr. Mitchell Brown, a plastic surgeon and the clinic's co-founder.

zero downtime and smoothes dimples

"That's how long the FDA trials ran,

He first heard of Cellfina a few years

ago and immediately reached out to its makers to bring it up north. For years,

his patients had asked if there was

anything he could do to iron out the

dents that made them self-conscious

at the beach or sometimes peeked

work well," he says. "This works."

"Everything else previously didn't

Unfortunately, it doesn't work for

all women. Cellfina treats only a very

specific kind of cellulite, namely local-

ized dips, like those of a golf ball, rather

than what is charmingly called "a gener-

alized cottage cheese appearance."

Because of this, almost 60 per cent

of patients who come in wanting the

my bum in a hot pink thong (should

have thought my underwear choice

through), she announces that I am

unfortunately of the untreatable

cottage cheese variety. My hopes are

as crumpled as the skin on my thighs.

was one of the lucky few to get the green light. She flipped through a Cell-

fina pamphlet one day while waiting

to get another procedure in Brown's

office and was instantly intrigued.

Following a consultation shortly after,

she decided to take the \$4,500 plunge

"I'm 54 years old and have prob-

ably had cellulite for 40 years, just

like my mom," Spenceley says. "I work

out avidly five days a week. You know

when they say in Pilates 'What area

one who says 'glutes!' I eat extremely

well. I've had the same body weight

most of my life, and I've never found

anything made a difference. It was still

always there and always embarrassing

Spenceley gingerly rolled down the

compression shorts she was instructed

to wear overnight and was amazed

to find the dimples already seemed

lifted. Her bum was bruised for about

two weeks and she had some trouble

The morning after the procedure,

toward smoothness.

Ann Spenceley\*, on the other hand,

As Stephanie shows me photos of

treatment get turned down.

through their skinny jeans.

Toronto Plastic Surgery is

size each lump and bump.

ailments, cellulite.

for at least three years.

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Your guide to glowing, summerready skin from top to bottom



skin from good to great (bouncy, juicy, just so fresh) with advice from Korean beauty experts If my skin had a personality type, it would be super

chill. Easy going, low-maintenance and not at all gently flick excess water away from your face, and needy. And while I owe a lot of that to my genes, I'm no slouch when it comes to skincare either. I follow the Korean 10-step skincare routine and Layer toner have even devoted an entire section of my fridge to beauty products. I'm that girl.

But lately I've been haunted by eight little words that ring over and over in my head like a persistent mom nag. Only it wasn't my mother who said them, it was my facialist: "You know your skin is really dehydrated, right?"

Cue the immediate existential crisis. I thought I was the girl with the good skin. How did it get to "really dehydrated" without my noticing?

Turns out, dehydrated is not the same as dry, and the symptoms can be a lot more subtle. Properly hydrated skin is bouncy, fresh and glow-y. Dehydrated skin is just kind of blah. A good way to check is the pinch test: gently pinch the skin on your cheek—if it's slow to bounce back and you notice some fine lines, welcome to the dehydrated skin club

woman swears by.

Ditch your towel

Happy feet

BY KATHERINE LALANCETTE

"Sorry my feet are so ugly!"

the cheery, brick-walled space.

Turns out your bathroom towel is not your skin's best friend. "I don't use towels on my face at all," Sarah Lee, co-CEO of Korean beauty site Glowmore easily." I'd tried this a couple times but a "Everyone uses facial mist here," says Kim. "If

Here's to welcoming sandal season qualm-free

The first words most women utter when

they take their shoes off, says Emily Stock,

owner of Toronto's Barefoot Beauty salon?

a pedicure in years or haven't shown their

feet in ages because they're embarrassed

by them," she says, sitting at the back of

A registered chiropodist, Stock opened

the eco-conscious salon (it offers waterless

pedis and non-toxic polishes) and an adja-

cent foot care clinic last July, effectively

creating a one-stop shop for feet. She

found that while we regularly tend to other

parts of our body, we often fail to extend

They get their eyes checked and their teeth

cleaned regularly and really, it should be the

Howard knows better than most. A first

soloist at the National Ballet of Canada,

she says feet are often the first thing

people inquire about when they find out

what she does for a living.

Beat-up feet are something Tanya

same for feet. They take such a beating."

"People often neglect and hate their feet.

the same type of care past our ankles.

"They often tell me they haven't gotten

reaching for my towel after a couple days. The trick is a) shake off as much water b) pat-pat-pat-pat!

When the 7 Skin Method first appeared in Korea two years ago, it immediately went viral. The idea was to pat in seven layers of toner (also called "skin" in Korea) one after the other. "Lighter-weight textures penetrate more deeply into the skin, so don't own a humidifier. But in Korea, it's a applying multiple layers of a hydrating toner, just a couple drops at a time, will give a much better result than a single layer of toner plus a thick mois- and some men, too, have portable humidifiers turizer, which will just sit on top of the skin," says at work. It's totally normal to take a 15-minute Lee. It may sound like a lot of effort, but once you break, turn on your humidifier and put a sheet see the way your skin drinks up the toner and how plump it looks by layer five, you'll be hooked.

Mask daily

Many of us break out a sheet mask on the weekend or during a girl's night in, but in Korea, masking is more than just an occasional indulgence: It's an essential step in the everyday Since Korean women are obsessed with skincare routine. "There's a movement in Korea keeping their skin moist and dewy (a.k.a. called 'one day, one mask,' and basically people "chok chok") at all times. I tapped my favouare sheet masking every day." says Lee. "It's not rite K-beauty gurus to get the scoop on what's something that's seen as extra care." In fact, missing from my routine. Here are five, ultra- people will sheet mask anytime, anywhere hydrating, life-changing skin tricks every Korean and everywhere. "I've seen people driving while wearing a sheet mask," Kim tells me. "It's normal." If you're too lazy to do it daily, a good alternative is a sleeping mask, i.e., a hydrating overnight treatment you put on before bed.

Mist and spritz

Recipe.com, tells me. "Think of your skin as a We're familiar with facial mists, but in Korea, sponge. If it's damp, it's ready to absorb product the misting game is on a whole other level.

"It's usually 'What do your toes look

like?' and 'Can you do the splits?'" she

jokes of the typical reactions. "Sometimes

I'll wear closed-toe shoes just to avoid

talking about them. It's not always the

acceptance, Howard says dancers, herself

included, are beginning to take pride in

their battle wounds. After all, they work

hard for those cracked nails and calluses.

company, there was a principal dancer

who never wore an open-toe shoe. Never

ever! Personally, I can't resist a strappy

high-heeled sandal, so I try not to care.

tell my kids everyone has a weird toe," she

If someone who sacrifices their feet for

says with a chuckle, pointing out a partic-

their craft can learn to love them, we mortals

should have a fighting chance. Besides,

wouldn't it be wonderful to enjoy what

little sockless weather we get in this country

without being bogged down by insecurities?

them more," says Stock, asserting we

"If they look nicer, you're going to like

ularly roughed-up appendage.

"I remember 10, 15 years ago in the

But in an age of increasing self-

ice-breaker you want to have at an event.'

dripping wet face and a you're walking down the street and you pull out lot of impatience had me a mist and start spritzing, no one will think it's weird. I've even seen grade-school kids misting each other." For a watery glow, Lee recommends a technique she recently learned from a few from your hands as possible before using them to Korean beauty experts. "Try using a facial mist between each step of your routine," she says. "So you would cleanse, then mist, do the 7 Skin Method, mist, use a serum, mist, moisturizer, then seal it all in with a final spritz. It sounds crazy but it works amazingly!"

If you live in North America, chances are you must for every family. "Having a humidifier is like having a fridge," says Kim. "Most women, mask on at your desk. No one will think that's odd. I've even seen people plug in their portable humidifier at a café while they hang out with friends. I have one in my car."



A. GLOW RECIPE WATE ONCANADA.CA. WHAMISA PRICH ESSENCE TONER, \$51, VHASOO FIRST CARE ACTI-1. SULWHASOO F

SHOPPING LIST Skin saviours Korean women can't get enough of

> driving, likening the pain to "a very bad sunburn," but says she'd do it all over again in a heartbeat. "All those years tugging my swimsuit bottoms down to hide the cellulite...I don't think I'll be doing that this

summer," she says. "I wish I could have done this earlier." The figures vary, but most studies estimate between 89 and 98 per cent of women will have cellulite at some point in their life, a fact attributable to the way fat attaches to our muscles,

says Brown. So what can my cottage cheese sisters and I do about it? "Other solutions that I believe as a clinician are worth the money and are likely to work? None," declares the doctor. "It's like asking for a solution

for stretch marks. We haven't figured that out yet. Perhaps sensing my despair, he offers up some reassurance. "Genetics

and the way we're made are what make us unique. We've figured out so far how to change certain things and not others. Five years ago, Cellfina didn't exist, so we have to hope that five years from now, someone will come up with a good idea that will treat other types of cellulite."

Until then, every time I feel that urge to tug on my bikini, I'll try to remember I'm far from alone in this predicament. And since there's nothing to be done, there really is no use obsessing about it. Here's to enjoying the summer, dimples and all.

\*Name has been changed

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blue toe look acceptable!"

Publisher, The Kit

Collab Director

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could all do with some extra maintenance.

"Appreciate your feet. They carry you all

through life, so you want to make sure you

calluses with a file or pumice (steer clear

of grater-like apparatuses), moisturize with

a lotion designed for soles' thick skin and

make sure your shoes fit right. When all

else fails, there's always nail polish. "A

bright red polish can fix everything," says

Howard. "It can even make a bruised navy

Her top tips? Gently smooth down

allow them to do that comfortably."

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