



*Moms Get Real™*

*MomsGetReal.com*

**All Treats, No Tricks**

**Fall 2011**

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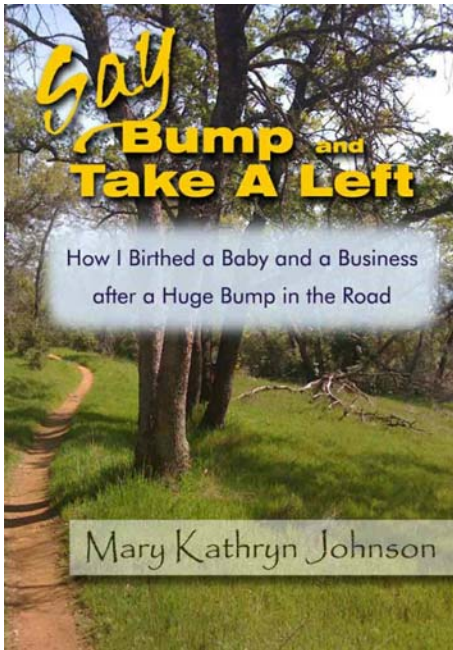
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## Say Bump and Take a Left by Mary Kathryn Johnson



Most of the time, when we're thinking about Halloween and fall, we're worried about things that go bump in the night. But "[Say Bump and Take a Left](#)" by Mary Kathryn Johnson is an unexpected delight that is pure treat – no tricks involved (except for the tricks Johnson had to pull to survive her ordeal).

Not only does Johnson tell the story of how she broke both her legs while pregnant and caring for a toddler– which despite everything will make you laugh, because she tells the story with such humor - but how she took each challenge and transformed it into an opportunity.

Johnson's self-deprecating humor starts on the first page:

*A great deal of skill was required for me to break both my legs at the same time. I'd like to say this was the result of a tragic auto accident, a harrowing ski accident or simply wearing 5" heels, but I can't. A unique series of events which, if they happened individually would not have even caused me to stumble, combined at one precise moment with my size 11 feet to change my life.*

From having to use a bedside commode to her hop-skip-jump method of diaper changing while in casts, Johnson will make you laugh so hard that you'll cry.

But you'll also be inspired. Because through it all – losing a job, getting a new job, breaking her legs, surgery, having a baby - Mary Kathryn Johnson kept her sense of humor. And through the experience, she was inspired to start her own business.

Because Johnson had survived so much, she felt confident that she would be able to be successful as a business owner – how could owning a business be harder than being 9 months pregnant with twins while both legs were broken?

Mary Kathryn Johnson's book, "Say Bump and Take a Left" is a fabulous read for all moms, moms-to-be, and mompreneurs.

## From Picnics to Shopping, the Reisenthel Carrybag is a Real Treat



Better than a picnic basket, sturdier than a canvas shopping bag, and collapsible so that you can fit it anywhere, the Reisenthel carrybag is simply fabulous. MomsGetReal promised an All Treats, No Tricks Halloween bash, and this bag (in carrot orange to celebrate the season) is a true treat.

[Reisenthel carrybags](#) are constructed of durable polyester that can be cleaned with water and have a collapsible soft rubber handle and a rigid bottom.

Inside the carrybag is a zippered pocket, making it a great option for quick grocery stops without the mess and damage of plastic bags. Stick your keys and wallet in the zippered pocket, and the Reisenthel bag is all you have to carry.

I simply love my Reisenthel carrybag and have used it for everything from taking food to a friend's house when we were getting together for a barbecue to carting books, supplies, and file folders from one room to another while working (making me less tied to my office - yay!). For Halloween it will make the perfect back up for holding extra Halloween candy in case the kids' buckets get filled to quickly.

In addition to making fabulous products, Peter Reisenthel also makes a difference in the world, directly impacting the lives of children by donating one euro from every mother-child bag sold to selected daycare facilities. It doesn't take a village to raise a child; it takes a global community, and MomsGetReal is very proud to support Reisenthel's efforts!

## **Zone Cookies and Nougat Bars – Good for You without Being Bad to Eat**

You know what I dislike the most about the coming holiday season? My own ability to resist temptation. I mean, the bags of candy are already on the shelf for Halloween, and because I found a good deal, there is a bag already in the house - more than a month before trick-or-treating. Is it really going to stay closed until the big night, or will I suddenly be overcome with a need for chocolate and tear into that bag?

And that's just the start of things, because then Dave will begin baking, and even though he has made adjustments to the amounts and types of oil he used as well as to how much he bakes, let's face it: there's just nothing better than a chocolate chip cookie straight out of the oven.



At least, that's what I thought until I tried my first Zone Diet M&M cookie.

Dr. Barry Sears, the founder of Zone Labs, is my personal hero. Dr. Sears has put his efforts into understanding the role diet plays in hormonal response, gene expression, and inflammation. And he has helped Zone Labs develop products that are good for you without tasting like it.

Sure, there's all sorts of reasons why Zone Labs products are important: eating their products, which use high-purity Omega-3 fatty acid concentrates and food specifically designed to keep you full longer while helping control weight...but what it really comes down to is that

**IT TASTES GOOD.**

When you eat a cookie, it doesn't taste like a rice cake covered in carob or something equally as disgusting. It's really a cookie. Sure, they look a little funny, but even my kids – notoriously famous for being the pickiest eaters on the planet – LOVED [Zone Labs M&M](#) and [Chocolate Chunk](#) cookies. And, they have **14 grams of protein** in them, without tasting heavy or well, icky.





Even better than the cookies were the [Zone Nougat Bars](#) which are baked fresh daily. Warning: once you try Zone Nougat Bars, you will never want to eat another store-bought granola bar, breakfast bar, or diet nutrition bar again. And remember those ads about the candy bar that could stave off hunger?

Skip it.

Zone Nougat Bars are the perfect snack, with 14 grams of protein – the same amount of protein as a four-egg white omelet. And the glycemic index of the bars? The same as one strawberry, allowing you to avoid sugar highs and lows and keep your energy up without having to gag down some offensive tasting health food.

So, this year, I'm going to save the candy for the kids and grab a Zone Cookie or Nougat Bar. I know I seem over the top enthusiastic about these items, but it's only because I am so very surprised at the high quality and delicious flavor. We've all been there – trying to lose weight or eat healthier and gagging down unpleasant tasting products because they promise to be healthy.

Dr. Sears and Zone Labs have managed to create foods that truly are designed to offer health benefits while tasting delicious, making enjoying a sweet treat a guilt-free moment.

## Scare Away Boo-Boos with Topricin Junior



*Restore Your Quality of Life*

This time of year, the kids are starting to get excited about all of the upcoming holidays. Most of them are also at risk for more injuries, whether from sports, playgrounds, dance classes, or other activities that have them stretching muscles other than their brains.

As the mother of an 8-year old dancer, I appreciate very much finding natural products that help relieve her muscle pain without exposing her to unneeded drugs and chemicals. That's why we use Topricin Junior.

Topricin Junior works well for Anika. At night after dance class (1.5 hours of tap, jazz, and ballet), Anika comes home and uses a small amount of Topricin Junior to rub into her feet and legs. It takes away the ache without any odor or burn, keeps her from needing ibuprofen or other meds, and doesn't use chemicals that easily absorb through the skin and into her blood stream.

The man behind the cream, Lou Paradise, answered some questions for MomsGetReal™ about Topricin Junior and the Topricin company philosophy:

**MomsGetReal™ (MGR):** Thanks for sharing information with us about Topricin Junior. As the mom of a dancer, I'm sold on the product, but why did you develop Topricin Junior?

**Lou Paradise (LP):** When it comes to pain relief there are many products marketed to parents and their children that are not safe or worse, can cause serious side effects. The perception that we can only get pain relief by taking oral pain medication puts everyone at unnecessary risk when we don't know the dangers. When it comes to our nation's children, this is unacceptable, as there are better choices and technology that guarantees every child can be safely treated for pain.

As a researcher of natural medicines and former pain sufferer it was both humbling and exciting to have discovered a way to formulate natural, regulated topical medicines to have the performance all of us are looking for, and the safety to match. That's how Topricin pain relief and healing cream was born.

**MGR:** What makes Topricin Junior work?

**LP:** Our children are not "*little adults*," they are "*little people*." Consequently, "mini versions" of products made for adults, children's acetaminophen or ibuprofen are not appropriate for children as these chemicals may literally be hazardous to their health. Strong margins of safety are called for in pediatric products—so the products we choose

for our children should never contain the same chemicals compounds and/or doses formulated for adults.

Topricin Junior is a new, proprietary homeopathic formula that was designed to address the delicate nature of young and growing children, and provide effective yet gentle treatment for a wide range of childhood pain ailments.

It is specially formulated to address the safe and effective treatment of the aches, pains, bumps, bruises our little ones experience throughout childhood. We are delighted that pediatricians and doctors specializing in family medicine recommend Topricin Junior.

**MGR:** What are the applications of Topricin Junior?

**LP:** Topricin Junior treats a full spectrum of all the hurts/boo-boos and other more severe injuries a child may have.” It is useful for relieving “growing pains,”—which occurs when the cells are in a bit of an overdrive. It reduces pain when applied to an injection site following a shot or vaccination. It relieves the body aches and pains of fever associated with the flu, allowing a productive fever to kill the virus that causes the flu. You should always let your doctor know when your child has a fever. When a child falls down, gets a bump, a bruise, a sports injury, a sprain, or a strain, Topricin Junior comes to the rescue. It’s also helpful for relieving the sting of bug bites and the discomfort of minor burns. Keep it in the medicine cabinet, and take it on the road, so you can look forward to no more tears, and a better night’s sleep for everyone.

**MGR:** What else would you like to share with our readers about Topricin Junior?

**LP:** At Topical BioMedics, one of our primary missions is to support a “First do no harm philosophy.” All Topricin products including Topricin Junior are regulated by the FDA as OTC medicine. We take our responsibility to meet and exceed the federal standard very seriously. The margin of safety for of products for our nation’s children must be uncompromised, after all shouldn’t that be the standard for all product manufacturers when making products for parents and their children?

We also subscribe to “Seventh Generation” sustainability. It’s the philosophy that decisions should be considered for their impact not just for today, but for seven generations to come, and changing what is wrong today, right now, to benefit all the children of the future.

In the words of the Iroquois, who wrote this “Great Law,” the credo is:

*“In every deliberation, we must consider the impact on the seventh generation... even if it requires having skin as thick as the bark of a pine.”*

Topricin Junior was created for my children’s children and yours—and their children, and their children’s children, and so on and so on, with love from our generation to the Seventh...And beyond.

## Elves, Druids, and Sorcerers...Oh My!

### The Sylvan Horn Has It All



As a mom of five, one of my primary concerns is making sure my kids are healthy and happy. I want them to do well in school, and I want them to have good self-esteem. What does any of this have to do with a book review?

Reading has to do with everything!

Studies, including one sponsored by [RIF](#) indicate that children who read and have access to print materials are not only healthier but do better academically. What is truly interesting is that it doesn't matter what the kids are reading – comic books, books about Hannah Montana, chapter books – as long as they are reading.

According to Ron Fairchild, Executive Director of the Johns Hopkins University Center for Summer Learning, kids who don't read during the summer lose an average of 2.6 months off their reading level by the time they return to school.

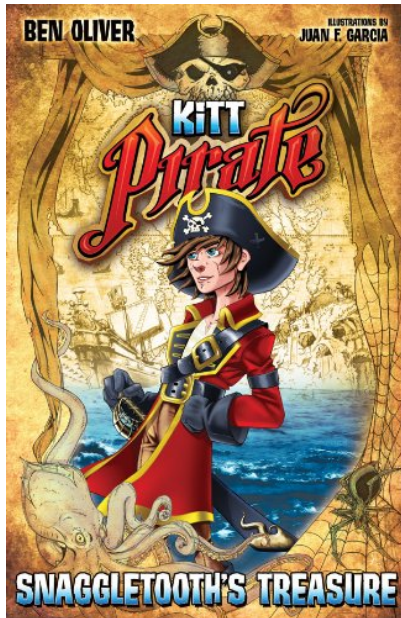
What's a mom to do?

In our house, we make reading a requirement, all year long. Throughout the summer as well as in addition to what is assigned during the school year, we don't just encourage our kids to read but make it a daily obligation. I don't want it to become a chore, so I'm always on the hunt for books that will hook the kids and make them hungry for more. We rarely even have to remind the kids to read; we simply keep piles of books around all the time (I haunt garage sales and used book stores and invest heavily in those put-it-together-yourself bookcases).

**The Sylvan Horn by Robert Redinger** is one of those books that I love to introduce to my kids. Not only is it a story that they can sink into and fall in love with (and read again and again) but it is phenomenally well-written. It engages them to something I believe is almost more important than reading – imagination. That this is just the first book in a series – **The Sylvan Chord** – is simply a bonus, because once the kids are hooked on a series, they tend to keep wanting more.

The Sylvan Horn, a Readers Favorite 2010 Gold Medal winner, takes readers to another world, full of elves and sorcerers and druids and featuring a young Elf hero named Efin, who, along with his friends must save the world. The story is great, but the writing is pure magic. It has a lyrical quality that pulls the reader in and doesn't let go...I highly recommend this book for your 9-12 year olds and older.

## The Prize Where X Marks the Spot is Snaggletooth's Treasure



How many of your kids are planning to dress up like pirates? Each of our kids have had their turn being a pirate; it seems to be one of the most popular costumes that never goes out of style.

The same is true for pirate characters, and one of my favorite pirate characters is Kitt Pirate. Kitt Pirate is the main character in Ben Oliver's new book, "Snaggletooth's Treasure."

This fabulous book targeted at the 8-12 crowd is a sure hit for both boys and girls who love to read about adventure. What I love most about Kitt the pirate is that rather than seek spoils for his own benefit, he has something better in mind to do with the treasure.

The book is written with energy and imagination. Oliver has a knack for writing from an almost child-like perspective that really allows kids (and the young at heart) to engage with the story.

Here's an excerpt of one of my favorite passages:

*My boots came loose and threatened to fly off my feet when I stormed toward the edge of the cliff. A strong gust of wind that blew up the steep rock wall drove my hair like a flag. I've never been afraid of heights. Not even the crow's nest in the middle of a storm could intimidate me, so I simply leaned over the cliff ledge to see below. Unfortunately, it was too steep. It led straight down toward the bottom, making it impossible for me to see what lay beneath our feet.*

Snaggletooth's Treasure is the perfect combination of friendship, adventure, exciting locations, and fun. I highly recommend it. The book is available in print as well as for Amazon Kindle and Nook.



Ben Oliver is making up stories almost every day of the week. Thinking up exciting adventures and daring heroes, there is nothing more fulfilling for him than to put these stories into written words for others to read.

"Kitt Pirate" is a character that has been rattling around his brain for some time until he thought the story was ready to be released for others to enjoy.

## **Sending Hugs Through the Mail Is Now Possible with Postcardly!**

Have you stopped printing pictures? Mailing letters? I know I have. Digital cameras and high-speed Internet make it too easy to maintain albums online. I don't even scrapbook anymore. Where I used to go through a book of stamps every month, writing letters to family and sending new photos of the kids, I simply upload photos and send emails to keep in touch. I only use two stamps now, and that's because the two companies who get the mail don't yet have a way to take online payments.

But... I live far away from family and friends, many of whom aren't on Facebook or Flickr, or at least don't spend a lot of time there (including my dad). It's best to send stuff to them through the mail. Even those who are on Facebook (like my Grandma) love getting surprises in their mail box.

Enter [POSTCARDLY.COM!!](http://POSTCARDLY.COM!!)



*The back of any photo becomes a postcard  
you can send to anyone in the U.S.*



*My favorite Halloween picture  
of my youngest daughter,  
the unhappy princess.*

At postcardly.com, all you have to do is create email addresses on their site associated with the people you want to send postcards to (the email will be @postcardly.com). Then, you can send emails to that address from anywhere, uploading a picture from your computer or camera. Postcardly.com will transform your photo into a postcard that arrives within a few days to surprise someone you care about with a real, live hold-in-your-hand photo from you.

This year, postcardly.com will let me bring Halloween to life for my far away friends and family – I can even use my cell phone to take a photo of the kids in action and email it to the special email addresses I've set up with postcardly.com and instantly create a postcard to send. They even offer a free trial, so you can test the water without making any major commitment.

I am always thrilled when someone comes up with a new way that lets me stay close to my family – most of whom live what seems worlds away on the other side of the country. I am 2,104 miles from my sister, 2,318 miles from my Dad, and 2,734 miles away from my aunt. It's a long way to be from the people I love, and hard for me knowing they don't get to see and know my children the way we all should.

Postcardly.com takes advantage of technology to provide a service designed to keep families a little more connected in a tangible way. That's a treat worth celebrating!

## A Pure Treat in the Form of SCANDLE-ous Pleasure This Fall

One of the roles I play at MomsGetReal is evaluating and recommending products to our readers. It's not always the best role, because we're very particular about the products we recommend and there are times when I have to go back to the company, author, or business owner and tell them how sorry I am that I cannot provide a review for their product because it simply doesn't meet our stringent standards.

But sometimes...oh sometimes it's just pure pleasure.

I recently had the opportunity to try out a pumpkin pie spice [SCANDLE](#). Scandle is an eco friendly body massage candle (a candle and shimmering moisturizer in one) that burns at 2 degrees above body temperature to produce a soothing oil for massage, manicures/pedicures, or as a daily moisturizer.



Made from 100% natural ingredients, the Scandle is perfect for at home spa settings. This particular Scandle Candle is the company's first ever Shimmering Scandle Candle and offers the added benefits of masking skin imperfections and wrinkles by defusing light.

Scandles come in over 18 fragrances (including limited edition fragrances for fall) and are packaged in refillable/reusable canisters and sustainable packaging.

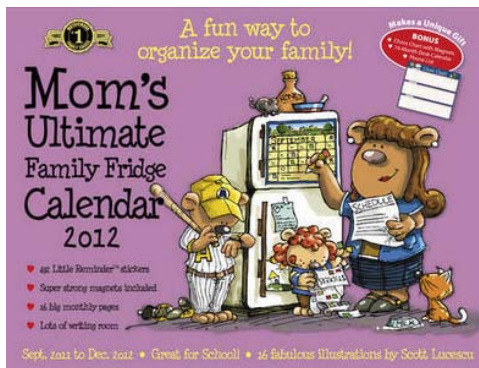
It was so easy (and FUN) to use. You simply light the candle about 15 minutes before you want to use it so that the wax melts. You want to wait until a layer of wax has melted to the edge of the container. Then, you can either use the wax to massage into your cuticles for a lovely manicure...or, you can have your special someone drizzle the wax onto your back and give you a magnificent massage...

The temperature of the wax is perfect, and the experience is simply blissful. (Thanks, Dave...) My goal this fall has been to remove all the tricks and find some perfect treats for all of you...and Scandle is the ultimate treat.

## Calendars.com Helps Moms Stay One Step Ahead of the Crazyies

I get distracted, and I forget things. Normally, it's because I'm knee deep in work and totally focused on what I'm doing to the exclusion of everything around me. While it helps me be successful in business, it's also why I'm not allowed to turn on the stove when I'm home alone (a self-imposed restriction). You should see what happens to eggs when you boil the pan dry.

Have you ever forgotten an important date? Been late for an appointment? Forgot to pick up a child from school? I haven't. Well, actually, I did forget to pick up Parker once, and he walked home. I remembered shortly before he arrived and he found me bawling my eyes out standing on the corner watching him walk down the street to the house, feeling like a complete failure as a mother.



Honestly, I sometimes forget to watch the clock long enough to make sure we make my daughter's bus on time. We're sometimes running out the door at the last minute, still brushing her hair as we go. While I'm almost fanatically organized in my business life, and have to be in order to stay in business, I tend to want to forget all that in my personal life. I don't even wear a watch.

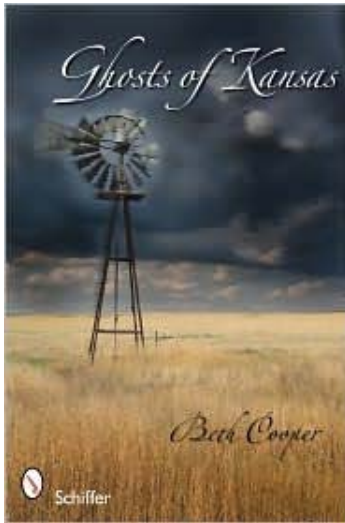
But being organized when you're a mom is crucial, especially during the school year. In fact, by about the week before school starts, I would be tearing my hair out trying to keep track of everything if it weren't for my little secret: I'm married to a really anal man who has always kept a calendar and writes down all of our appointments. Often, the only way I make it to the appointments I have is because he's written it down, and I tend to use him as a crutch.



But there is a better way, and thanks to Calendars.com, 2012 is going to be the year I manage to get my personal life organized on my own. Calendars.com has an AMAZING selection of calendars designed specifically for moms. From desk calendars with large spaces to keep track of everything from appointments to sports practice to special events to wall calendars that come with fabulous chore charts (including fun stickers to help motivate the kids) there are a variety of styles to choose from.

If mom calendars aren't your style, Calendars.com offers more than a thousand calendar styles with prices as low as a dollar. Calendars.com also has puzzles, gift wrap, and other items to make life easier.

## Treat Yourself to Some Spooky Excitement for Halloween



I live in an almost 200 year old house. With Halloween coming, the darkest recesses of our basement and other tucked away areas feed our imaginations more than normal. We're split about 50/50 in our family on believing in ghosts. Dave and I started joking about our house being haunted when the TV would turn itself on and off in the middle of the night; more than once I would almost swear I've seen a shadow of someone moving quickly around the corner and out of view when I'm home. With as much history as there is connected to the home, including, we think, being a part of the Underground Railroad, it's easy to get caught up in the fever.

Fueling that fever in the midwest is Beth Cooper, author, radio host, and historian. Not only has she written a fabulous book, "[Ghosts of Kansas](#)," in which you will read about the ghostly librarian who moves books in the state capitol, but added another spooky title to her repertoire with the release last month of "Wichita Haunts."

"[Wichita Haunts](#)" explores the haunted history of Wichita, introducing readers to Shadowman the friendly ghost Belle. Weaving historic details with entertaining tales of ghosts and hauntings, Beth Cooper adds a real treat to the spooky season.

Offering additional spooky entertainment perfect for the Halloween season or any time of year, Beth owns [Paranormal Adventures USA](#), offering tours of the most haunted places in Wichita and other communities in Kansas and Missouri.



## About MomsGetReal™

[MomsGetReal](#)™ is a premier parenting community owned by Shadra Bruce and operated by a team of socially savvy, dedicated mom bloggers known as the Mama Posse™. Our extended reach, powerful credibility, and a growing fan base is an exciting thing to be a part of.

MomsGetReal™ has grown into a phenomenal community of Moms dedicated to helping other moms know that when life with kids skids out of control and gets a little bit crazy, we're here to help with stories, advice, giveaways, and recommendations that make it all a little easier.

All of the Momspirations who write for MomsGetReal™ are dedicated to stripping away the pretense and getting real about Motherhood in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. MomsGetReal™ is a growing community of mom experts who seek to freely share their experiences in order to help others find solutions, solace, advice, and resources that make raising healthy, happy kids a little bit easier, empowering Moms to make a difference for their families, in their communities, and in the world.

Would you like your product to be included in next year's All Treats, No Tricks Guide? Simply contact [MomsGetReal](#) for more information. MomsGetReal produces four to eight product review guides per year. Upcoming guides include:

The **Stress Less Holiday Guide** runs November 1 - November 30 on the site featuring holiday gift ideas for the family as well as stress less products for Moms and will include a freely distributable publication featuring all sponsors and products.

The **New Year, New You Guide** will feature health & wellness, diet and fitness, and weight loss products and run January 1 - January 31 on the site and include a freely distributable publication featuring all sponsors and products.

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*The content of this guide is freely distributable. All items reviewed in this guide were provided by the companies so that I could adequately evaluate the product and provide my honest opinion. No monetary compensation was provided.*

*MomsGetReal™ complies fully with FTC Guidelines for bloggers and promotes honesty and transparency in all communications. The only expertise I claim to have is my own experience as a mother of 5, and several products were rejected for this guide that did not meet my personal standards for things I would use for my family or personally recommend.*

*If you have any questions or concerns regarding these reviews, please seek additional information directly from the manufacturers, authors, and product websites.*

*All prizes awards during the All Treats, No Tricks Fall Event were awarded using random.org to choose the winner from entrants for each product.*

*MomsGetReal's full FTC compliance disclosure is available [here](#).*



## ***About Shadra***

*Shadra Bruce is the creator of [MomsGetReal™](#). In addition to her business as a [social media consultant, writer, & editor](#), Shadra has been a contributing writer to several well-known websites, newspapers, magazines, and journals. She was a feature columnist for two years, penning the weekly feature “A More Perfect Union” with her husband Dave for the Corning, New York newspaper The Leader. In the column, they explored the joys and challenges of building a newly formed blended family together. Still happily partnering as parents and writers, Shadra and David are co-authoring a book based on their popular news column. In 2011 David launched [DadsGetReal™](#) The two serve as national co-chairs on the Parent Advisory Board for [Kidz Rock! Inc.](#)*

*Shadra is the author of [Stories from a Step Mom](#) (set to publish in early 2012) and a leading expert in family relationships, stepparenting and blended families. She has a bachelor’s degree in Economics and a master’s degree in English Literature.*

*Passionate about helping to improve relations in families, communities, and cultures, Shadra is a strong advocate for global peace. She resides in Bath, New York with her husband and children. A gypsy at heart who loves to travel, Shadra is fluent in French, essentially nomadic, and comfortable making her home wherever her travels take her, which is often Montreal.*

