



Passages Press

Out as I Want to Be

by Ashlie Staples

Out As I Want To Be is a group for gay, bisexual, lesbian, transgender, queer and questioning young people ages fourteen to twenty two. Meetings are held on Wednesday nights from 5pm to 8pm and Friday nights from 6pm to 9pm. A lot of teens do not know about this organization that is right in Rockland, Maine, for teens that feel like they can't talk to their parents, teachers or anyone else. I would like to try and get this organization out there for young people to know about around the Belfast area. Many stores and schools will not allow you to post anything about organizations like this one, but if I could post it on an anonymous Facebook page or something, then it could be a real thing, and teens could get out there and speak their feelings and finally feel like they are a part of this world.

Out As I Want To Be has many ways of getting out there and helping young people: they have roller derbies; they walk in the Lobster Festival parade; they go out to the movies and even have a day in the park. The outings are scheduled and anyone may attend. OUT helps kids get to know their identity within themselves. They do not push things on you and will not push you to talk, either. If you go one time and feel that it is not

for you and you really are not gay, lesbian, bisexual or any other sex, then they do not force you to keep going to the group meetings.

Many teens and adults are shy to come out and say that they are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer or just questioning themselves because they think people will judge them. Well, that is the case; many people will judge, but there are many that will not and those are the ones that are friends and will stay there for you when the people who do judge run away. There are people that can be so cruel as to make someone commit suicide. If this group were around more areas, or there were other groups for the needs of these people, there may not be as much crime in the State of Maine or the country. It is a lifestyle, not a crime.

I would like to get it out there that there are places for people to go to talk about things like this. I would also like to get into a group like this for young kids to be able to talk to me or someone about this if it is their parents that are gay, lesbian, etc. I think it is important that children get it out of their system, because it can really bottle up and hurt you inside and make you an angry person.

Students rarely want to talk about the differences in their families; maybe having a group after school for younger students would be a good idea. I would let everyone know that it could be anonymous and can be one-on-one so that students would feel more comfortable and confident. I might not present a whole story to a younger student, but I would try to get them to understand that it really is normal to have a family with differences. I would try to get to know the child before I jumped into asking about their parents and the lifestyle at home. Some children would say it is cool to have a parent that is "different" now-a-days, more so than back in 2005. There are a couple of books I would recommend for children in broken homes or children who have a parent(s) that is gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, etc.: Hear Us Out: Lesbian And Gay Stories Of Struggle by Nancy Garden and Welsh Boys Too. I have personally read those two and they both give some good advice and examples. It's Okay To Be Different by Todd Parr and It's Not the Stork!: A Book About Girls, Boys, Babies, Bodies, Families and Friends by Robie H. Harris are two books that I would show or read to a younger student or child if they had questions about their family and differences.

Excursions

by Kayla Wing

My son Bryson is four months old. He's a happy and outgoing baby. Bryson and I started going to music classes when he was about three months old. We also started to go to story time and a baby wearing class. The music classes we go to are in Bath, Brunswick and Topsham. At the music classes we sing songs, read stories and do some activities with the babies.

It has been really fun and special to see my child grow and be happy. I love meeting the moms at the music classes, but they are not my age - they are 25 and up. It would be a lot more comfortable if I had some moms my age. I go to these music classes because it's good for my baby to learn and be around other children. It's also good for me, as well,

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because I'm getting out and trying to meet new people and also experiencing how other people parent. I know I'm doing a great job.

The story time I go to is included in the music classes at the Brunswick Library. It's good for Bryson to hear someone else read to him, because he is learning just as much as when he is at home. I read and sing to my son every day - once in the morning and once at night. It's going to help him so much in school. Most importantly, he's hearing his mother's voice.

The baby wearing class I go to is at Mid Coast Hospital. That is a class where moms show you how to hold your baby in different baby wear. It's a really great class, and I'd recommend anyone to go who has a newborn or an infant. Being a mom is amazing, but you need to get stuff done like dishes or picking up the house, and it's good for you and your baby to be next to each other when doing those things.

I also go to the Mid Coast Senior Center with the Passages teachers and other moms. That has been a wonderful experience, not just for Bryson, but for me as well, because I'm getting out and also showing my child different people. Their brains are learning so rapidly and getting out and taking your baby to all these places is so good for them!



Our Trip to the Senior Center

by Kelsey Turner

Dylan, Sophia and I all went on a field trip with other Passages students to the senior center. When my teacher Katy asked me if I wanted to go, I knew that I did want to. When I thought of the senior center, I remembered my Nana and remembered going to see her in the center she was in. She always loved telling stories and never told the same story twice; I was really close to her.

When we got there, all the seniors were sitting around tables and on couches, and when we all walked in with the babies, I saw their faces light up. It felt so great to make someone's day. The seniors had fun playing with the babies, and I know my daughter Sophia had fun playing with them, too. At first when we got there, everyone was a little shy, but we all sat down and started talking to the seniors, let them hold the babies, and soon we all got comfortable.

Our trip affected me in only good ways. Talking to the old ladies made me remember my Nana, and seeing them so happy made me feel so good. Everyone was so happy and friendly. It was fun being in a place where everyone is just having a good time. In the end it felt good to have taken part in something so good for the community and for those seniors. I'm looking forward to the next time we go back.



An Interview with an RN

by Kiera Satele

I am interested in becoming a Registered Nurse, so I interviewed my Gram because she has been an RN for 8 years.

What made you interested in becoming a RN?

I needed a career to support myself. Also, my best friend worked in a hospital. It became interesting as I learned more.

What do you like about your job?

I get to meet a lot of amazing people at a very difficult time in their life, it makes me feel good to be able to comfort and support them.

What don't you like about your job?

Sometimes, it's very sad, but rewarding at the same time.

Why is it sad?

It's sad because someone passes away and the families grieve.

Why is it rewarding?

Because I am able to help the families through a very difficult time.

Was the schooling for becoming a RN difficult?

It was hard but it was doable. But I would suggest doing it when you're younger rather than older, because you can make a great difference out there.

How long did it take you to finally become an RN?

It took me three years to get my degree. I did a year of courses, and that was a big help to get things done before going into actual nursing school.

How many hours do you work a night?

Most nursing facilities work either 8 or 12-hour shifts. I do 12-hour night shifts from 7:30 pm to 8 am.

If you could go back, would you pick a different job?

I wouldn't change my job, but I would have gone to school earlier.

Mother Love

by Amina Yunis

I love my mother so much,
She's always in my heart.
Even though we argue,
We'll never be apart.

She can tell when I have problems
She knows when I am down
She's always there to cheer me up
and take away my frowns.

At times when I get mad at her
It's hard to stay that way
Only because she makes me laugh
every passing day.

I love my mother with all my heart,
but this she does not know.
Sometimes I want to tell her
but I'm afraid to let it show.

Nevaeh: The Baby who Changed My Life

by Heaven Dow

In order for me to explain the impact the bond Nevaeh and I have, I have to share something personal before she was even born - an ugly past that no longer controls my future. Sometimes it's hard for me to not slip back. I think, *what would one pill hurt if I wasn't breastfeeding and I had a babysitter?* I know how much it would hurt, though. It would ruin everything I've worked so hard to build. It's not so much the pills, but the feeling of being high, free and in complete bliss. When I was high I was outgoing, funny - a social butterfly. My family didn't even recognize that I had a problem until I was sixteen. They just thought my depression was getting better, but it wasn't. I was crashing at an all-time low.

I miss forgetting about all the bad things that have happened to me, about the people who hurt me, about the people I hurt, and about the things I've done. It felt like I was released from this cage of guilt and pain. I no

longer felt suffocated by the memories, but alive.

When I found out I was pregnant with Nevaeh, I was terrified. I had run away from my parents; school was a mess; I was partying and ignoring the pain. I couldn't ignore it anymore. If I couldn't take care of myself properly, how could I take care of a baby? What would she think of me, as she got older? A failure? A drop-out teen mom? This was it. I couldn't get drunk or high anymore to hide my feelings. I couldn't ignore the way my life was going, because I had to change it. My whole pregnancy I struggled with not being on medication for my bipolar disorder, depression and anxiety. I lived off and on in Sand Hill in Augusta and honestly, it's not a place for a family. The temptation was there every day. We became homeless when I was between five and six months pregnant until a week before I gave birth. To top it off, our two dogs had ten puppies we had to take care of. I dropped out of school because it was an hour away. Dillon and I fought constantly because it was all moving so fast. People would kick us out after we gave them rent money. It was a nightmare. All I kept thinking was: Nevaeh deserves better. I felt like such a failure as a parent, and she wasn't even here, yet. It kills me to think at one point I was even considering adoption. There were points where I even wanted to just end my life, but I couldn't, knowing she was inside me.

It wasn't until a month before I was about to give birth that we moved back in with Dillon's mom. This gave me a little hope that we could turn our lives around. I spent my last weeks researching everything I could about newborns. I washed, air dried and folded her clothes twice a day. I organized and rearranged our room three times a day. I got a new caseworker, who was helping us find an apartment. Dillon and I were doing really well, and I was happy. All that was missing was Nevaeh. I couldn't ignore the fact that I was still terrified. The bond that so many pregnant women say they feel... here I am a week before being induced and I still didn't feel it. Was I one of those 1/100,000,000 women who don't have any maternal instincts?

My water broke later in the evening after I was induced, and I gave birth to Nevaeh at 5:27pm. She was 8 lbs12 oz and 21 inches long. When they put this blue-eyed beauty on my chest, I froze. I felt the weight of my world shift. I never thought I could love anyone more than I loved Dillon, but I was wrong. Her tiny fingers grasping mine took my breath away. All I could do was cry. That bond went from being non-existent to being everything I knew. In a second all the pain and guilt and memories washed away and turned into love and hope. I couldn't sleep the first two nights. All I wanted to do was stare at her and cuddle. My whole world wrapped inside a blanket. I traded: late night partying for early nights reading books after a bubble bath; fist fights for pillow fights; burn runs for family movie and dessert nights; being high to being in love.

Nevaeh saved me in so many ways. I love finding new ways to bond with her - teaching her to talk, reading her stories over and over again. If I could cuddle with her all day, I would. My favorite ways to bond with her are singing, playing peek-a-boo, reading new books, teaching her how everyday things work, and exploring outside. The more we bond, the stronger I feel about being a mother. Not only is it affecting me, it builds her independence and self-confidence from the trust and security she has with Dillon and me. I hope that as she gets older our bond gets stronger and stronger, and she knows that I'm always here for her. I hope that she knows how much she's changed my life for the better and that she can come to me with anything.

Parenting

by Shauna Tinker

What I have learned...

The biggest thing that I have learned from observing other parents throughout my life is the thing that I want for my daughter and that I don't want for my daughter in her life. I am a huge part of this, of course, because almost everything she knows is coming from me - her mom. We have all been in the grocery store and seen the mother with the

child who is screaming for a candy bar and she automatically gives him/her what he or she wants. Well, I have seen this type of charade on a whole new level.

My little brother had my mother trained to do exactly as he wished when he wished it. She fed into it as much as she possibly could. She slaved over his every need and desire, which led him to being extremely dependent on her. I have learned that when you go as far as to do every single thing for your child, he/she might never learn things for themselves, or have any sense of independence. A child needs to know that they can do things for themselves to a certain extent, according to their age. Not only does this help build independence and character, but also children of all ages love to be able to do things on their own, if it is encouraged in the right way.

I have observed this type of behavior in many parents. I believe it is very unhealthy for the child and the parents, and leads the child to be demanding or manipulative and sometimes leads to aggressive behavior. While I was watching TV a couple of weeks ago, an episode of Dr. Phil came on, so I decided to tune in. I could not believe what I was seeing in front of me. I sat in disbelief throughout the whole episode as it showed a 28-year-old man who was still living at home with his mother. It showed how she still bathes him, powders him, does his laundry, pays all of his expenses - and the list goes on. He had never held a steady job, and just by the way he interacted, you could tell he had severe self-confidence issues. This is just another example of parents spoiling their kids to an unhealthy extent.

The biggest thing I have learned from observing other parents is that I do not want to do the same thing I have just talked about to Allianna. I will always take care of anything she needs and teach her anything that I can, but I want her to know that she is great and that she can do things on her own. I do not want to give into her every want or plea and spoil her to a point that it ruins her whole life. I will make sure that my daughter is respectful and independent. I am thankful that I have observed these things from other parents,

because I don't feel I would have this insight otherwise.

I have learned a lot from my experiences with my own child. I've learned how much of a challenge parenting really is. Having a child allowed me to love another human being over myself. My daughter has taught me patience, and also tested that patience. She has taught me how to completely care for and love a child.

When I was pregnant I researched a lot on early childhood development and pregnancy. I learned more than I ever knew about my own body and my child, such as the different stages of pregnancy and how children develop from 0-5 years of age.

I breastfed Allianna when she was born - that was a whole new learning experience for me. I had to learn how to help her latch on, eventually learn how to use a breast pump, and just understand the ins and outs of breastfeeding! It was all brand new and it wasn't easy!

Having my daughter taught me most of what I know now about parenting. I know things that I never would have thought of before, such as how much Infant Tylenol to give an infant according to weight, or how to read an accurate temperature according to which spot you take it in. I have learned the best ways to communicate and bond with my child, how to understand different signals she gives me, and the right ways to nourish and soothe her. These are all things I feel like I would not have learned if I didn't have Allianna. I am thankful for all of the learning experiences that having a child opened up for me.

Discipline and "The Dog Food Dilemma"...

A parenting skill that I would like to learn more about is discipline. I would like to learn about different disciplinary techniques that are used for certain ages. The reason I am interested in this skill is because I am not sure of the right ways to discipline my daughter. Everything I have tried so far is ineffective. I'd like to know what I could do differently and what other parents have experienced and what has worked for them.

A personal experience I have had with trying (and not succeeding) at getting my daughter to stop doing something that is "bad", is a thing we like to call, "The Dog Food Dilemma." The dogs in my house are old, and they pick at their food and water all day, which is located in the kitchen. Well, let's just say that this is Allianna's favorite place in the whole house. It's not like she just plays with it for a minute and then finds something else to play with. She will play in the dog dish every minute of every day if I would let her, and when I say, "play," I mean dump the food all over the floor, dump the food in the water dish, and dump the water dish on the floor. It really is a safety hazard because she slips on the water all over the floor, and if she ever ate a piece, she could choke. I have tried several different things to try and teach Allianna that she cannot play in the dog food. I have firmly told her, "No, come with me," and have given her another toy to play with. I usually tell her, "No!" about three times and take her away before I tell her, "All right, it's time to go in the living room now," and put the baby gate up to keep her in the living room. She doesn't like this because it confines her to one area of the house, but no matter how long I have made her stay in there and play, the second I let her out she goes straight for the dog food.

I have researched some about what other parents have done with their children in this type of situation. One technique a mother had written about is that she would sit by the dog dishes, and when the child came to play in them, she would simply say, "No," over and over, without taking her/him away from the dog food right away. She stated that the child would eventually get bored with this and leave on his/her own. I tried doing this with Allianna, and it actually seemed to have the same effect. It took a few minutes, but she would eventually just walk off. Although she would still keep coming back after a little while, this was still huge progress from her being in it every second!

I also read an article on the right and wrong ways to verbally and physically redirect your child. This was very helpful for me, because I wasn't exactly sure if I was doing

either of these things correctly. I agreed with everything the article said, and it helped me to understand better ways to teach my daughter that something is not safe for her, and that when I say, "No," that means stop what you are doing.

I think I will continue to try the techniques that I have learned about while researching this skill. Everything I have learned about verbally and physically redirecting Allianna in the right way will help me to teach her right from wrong and that "No" means no.

My Best Friend

by Shauna Tinker

Little hands, little feet,
little nose, little teeth.
Big giggle, big smile,
big kisses, big hugs.
None are sweeter,
than from a child.
Loud laughter,
Streaming tears,
Happy or sad,
I will always be here.
Momma and Alli
until the very end.
We'll conquer the world together,
because you're my very
best friend.

My Mother's Shoes

by Shauna Tinker

Clomp, clomp, clomp.
Pink, orange, purple, blue.
Absolutely horrific shoes.
3 inch thick, she'd stomp around,
with her feet up 3 inches off the ground.
Stomp, stomp, stomp,
My mother's shoes.
I'd tell her not to wear them.
But she would always insist.

She loved those awful wedged rainbow
colored flip flops.

One day she wore them out in the rain
to walk to the store.

She fell down and broke her toe,
how long she was on crutches I no longer
know.

All because of those stupid shoes.
Even after breaking her toe she didn't quit.
She still loved those shoes and she would say
"Everyone else loves them too!" and
"They make me look so much taller!"
I would just look at my mother and at the
shoes,

and think of how I could just toss them
somewhere far away and leave them.

Then she'd stomp away making a
"CLAP, CLAP, CLAP"
sound with every step.
I don't know when or why she finally got rid of
them,
but I know she had those shoes a long time.
I thank god that she doesn't still have them,
I'm buying her a new pair of shoes for
Christmas this year,
I don't know what kind yet,
but I know for sure they will not be
big rainbow colored wedged flip flops!!

It Can Be Done

by Carrie Schaeffer

Being a new mom is a lot of work; there are lots you have to do throughout the day and night. There are lots of sleepless nights, changing diapers and feeding. It is very tiring and there are so many emotions going through your head all the time that you never know how to feel. The overall issue I've heard from lots of people is lack of money - trying to get money to buy the things their baby needs. This is where some of those emotions come in. No matter what age their child may be, the parents are always trying to figure out how they are going to get the money together to

get their child what he/she needs. Parents are also trying to get the things they need for themselves.

I'm going to tell you about my being a new mom who is going back to doing school work, having a job, keeping up a social life with friends and keeping communication for a healthy and strong relationship with my partner. It sounds like a lot of work, I know, but if you take it just one step at a time, it's really pretty easy. At first I never thought I would be able to have a life anymore, besides having a good life with my daughter. But I have come to realize that I could do all of this while being a new mom.

Being a mom is the greatest thing that has ever happened to me. I have developed so much love for Star-Lynn since the day I found out I was pregnant. My whole life revolves around her and making sure she has everything she needs. I will admit that in the beginning I was so tired and stressed out trying to understand what she needed when she cried. I'm just so glad now that I have finally gotten the hang of it after the first few weeks of being home. Since having her, Star-Lynn has brought out the stronger person inside me. Being 21 and already having a family of my own is a great feeling. I do think it's a good age to start having babies, but I do wish I had waited until I had the money saved up before I started having a family of my own. I look at it this way, "Things happen for a reason." If I didn't have her in my life right now, I never would have had as much strength as I do now.

Going back to school, I think, is the best thing I have ever done. I dropped out of school three times before I found out about the Passages program. This is my last chance to get a diploma. Getting a diploma is the next most important thing in my life. I'm able to get all my work done while taking care of Star-Lynn by getting some done when she is asleep or when my boyfriend is home to play with her. There are always times I can try getting a little bit of work in.

I'm happy to now have a job making some money. My job is working in the bakery. I have to be there at 2:30 am or 3:00 am. I'm only working on the weekend because my

boyfriend is working during the week. I also get my social life in by working. Where I work is at a gas station and there are some people I know that come in that I've gotten to know. I have gotten to know my co-worker pretty well, also. Work is pretty exhausting sometimes, but I work through it because of the money.

Having a good relationship with Bryan is the next important thing to me. We always find time to spend together, whether it's when Star-Lynn is sleeping or when she is awake. It is hard to get out to a restaurant or a movie, because we don't have the money. So we just make do with what we have.

I guess what I'm saying is being a mom is a lot of hard work, but it can be done.

Taking Care of Our Babies...

Ashley Bartlett:

Taking care of an infant is a lot harder than what most people think. Sometimes my baby cries for no reason and I can't figure out what's wrong. When I was pregnant I worried all the time because I didn't have a clue how to take care of a child. But as soon as she came out, it was all natural instincts. Sometimes I still need help with her because taking care of a child... I'm always learning.

Carrie Schaeffer:

There are so many things they depend on you to do to take care of them. Yes, there will be times you will get overwhelmed and upset to the point you will want to cry or get mad, but at that point you will just need to step away for a moment, if you have someone around to help you. There will always be times that you will need a break to calm yourself and maybe get some sleep. Nothing with an infant will get easier until about six months, when they are sleeping through the night. But when you get to that point when they are sleeping through the night, you will start thinking and realizing how fast they are growing and feel a little sad.

Dakota Pease:

I know that Luna needs a lot of love and attention to stay happy. I know she also needs a lot of food and diapers. Medical care is also an important thing that she needs. She needs

constant supervision and a structured diet. When adding new foods to her diet, it is important to be cautious and let her adjust to the foods she knows before introducing anything new. She also requires new clothes frequently. She grows so fast that I always need to buy her new things. Luna needs a lot of social time such as talk and play.

Aimee Barnstein:

Having a baby is a lot of work, and their needs should always come before yours. If you have \$10 and need make up, but your baby needs diapers, then you buy diapers. Part of having a baby is sacrificing your needs for your baby's.

Amber Gabriel:

The best thing that works when I feed Ever is to show her that I like what I feed her. After she sees that I like it, she will eat it. The thing that kind of works when I change Ever's shirt is when I put it on her head. I play peek-a-boo with her. One thing that works when I give Ever a bath is when I'm done, I drain the water. That makes her get out quicker. What really works when I play with Ever is playing a game that she likes.

Kayla McKenna:

When Kaitlyn is upset I pick her up and tell her it is going to be ok and just let her know I am there for her. I also pay very close attention to all her cries; that way I know when she cries exactly what she needs. By doing this it lets her know that she is important to me, and that if she ever needs to talk to me, she will know I am there to listen. Another way to help her emotionally is to play with her and read to her and just show I care. Talking to her will help her learn new words, so she will learn to tell me what she needs. Reading to her will also improve her vocabulary. I play peek-a-boo and let her look in the mirror. Making sure I tell her what I am doing before I do it will help her feel more comfortable at home and at other people's houses. A way I help her to improve her physical skills is I give her 30 minutes or more a day of tummy time; this way her leg and arm muscles will get stronger, so at some point she will crawl or walk. I also make sure she has two one-hour naps a day, so that she is not overtired. Another thing I do is I make sure

she always has a full belly, so that she is happy and can have plenty of energy to play. A way I improve her cognitive skills is to give her some Cheerios or blocks to pick up. This helps her learn how to hold things better. Another way is to give her a spoon and a pan and show her how to make noise with them; then let her try.

Shauna Tinker:

Keeping your infant clean by bathing him/her and also putting lotion on them to prevent dry skin is a huge need that infants have. They don't yet have the ability to keep up with their personal hygiene, and it is up to us to do that for them. When my daughter Allianna was a newborn, she very much disliked bath time. She would scream and cry the whole time. I would rush to get her clean and get her out! When babies are that little, I don't think they like the feeling of being completely exposed like they are at bath time. Now that Allianna is older, she absolutely loves getting in the tub. Every time I mention a bath she will run into the bathroom and say, "Bath, bath!" and try to jump in. She truly just enjoys playing in water in any form, and I am thankful that it is no longer a freak-out spell to clean her up. Instead it's a freak-out spell to take her out of the tub!

Bonding with Our Babies...

Dakota Pease:

I bond with Luna in a lot of ways. I think that playing is a great way that we bond. I think another thing we do that keeps our bond strong is cuddling when she gets tired. When we cuddle I sometimes say nice things to her, like telling her I love her and that she is beautiful. I also sing to her when she is fussy sometimes, and it really seems to settle her down, which I think is a great way of bonding. When Luna eats I try to always make sure we have eye contact for at least some of the time. If not, I try rubbing her head or tummy. I think these are all great ways of bonding with my daughter, and I think that it has changed me a huge amount. It really has shown me the significance of life and the beauty of having such an important role in someone's life.

Kaitlyn Buckingham:

Bonding with my son is my favorite thing to do. He is learning so much every day - it's incredible. We listen to music and dance around in the dining room. He loves music and will move back and forth to songs and slap his hands on things with the beat. Spending time with my child is my life. There isn't a moment where I'm not playing with him or spending time with him unless he is sleeping. He knows I'm here and never has to worry about not having what he needs. Being a mother to him is the greatest gift I've been given.

Kiera Satele:

One of my favorite things to do with Marcus is to talk to him and watch how big his eyes get and see him start to smile so big. Babies love being talked to, that's one of the BEST ways to bond with your child. Another way I bond with Marcus is when he's crying I pick him up, put him all wrapped up in his warm blanket and hold him against my chest, so he feels safe. Babies love being wrapped tight in warm blankets, because it's like being back inside their mom's belly and of course, they love their mother's heartbeat, because that's what they're so used to hearing.

My son has changed me completely. I've become such a better person in so many ways. My son is my life; he makes me smile non-stop throughout the day. Being able to wake up to his beautiful face makes my day so much better, and seeing him smile makes me feel amazing inside. I never thought I could love a person this much.

Kayla McKenna:

To keep our bond strong I make sure that when Kaitlyn is upset that even if I am cooking or cleaning that I drop whatever I am doing to make sure she is all right. This tells her mommy is here for her when she needs me. I also pay attention to what she likes and does not like. For example, when she is put to bed or just down for a nap she needs her music globe put on and she needs her pink bunny to hug and her binky. Without these items, good luck with getting her to sleep! Another way I bond with her is when she is talking to me, even if I don't understand what she is saying, I respond by saying something like, "Is that so?" or "Wow!"

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That's a good story." This way she knows she is being heard. Kaitlyn now loves bath time, so when I give her a bath we bond because I sit by the tub and play with her and her toys.

Ashley Bartlett:

How I bond with Jazmyn is cuddling and playing with her toys. She likes to drop them on the floor and I pick them up and she thinks it's so funny. Before bath time she loves to look at herself in the mirror and laugh. Naptime is when she's all cuddly and she likes to grab my nose. I know that I have a strong bond with Jazmyn, because I can't leave the room without her crying. When Tim, her Dad, has her, she still cries if I do anything. I find it annoying that she always wants me, but at least I know she loves me. Having a child is the best thing that I have ever experienced. I love being a mom and being here for my child.

Amber Gabriel:

Once your children get older and have kids of their own they will bond with their children like you bonded with them. The way bonding with Ever changed me is that once I started bonding with her more and more, it made me realize that she comes first, no matter what, and it made me change my way of life.

Aimee Barnstein

To keep my bond strong with Kaidyn I play with him, lay with him when he has tummy time, rock him to sleep, hold him when he is upset, and do things to get him to laugh and smile. The effects of bonding with an infant on an infant is it helps their emotional stability, makes them feel secure and helps them get to know their parents by their smell, voice and touch. Bonding with Kaidyn has changed me because it has made me become more gentle and soft. Also, I feel that bonding with Kaidyn has made me become more caring and it has made me love him more and more each day. Bonding helps both baby and parent.

Shauna Tinker:

A bonding experience that I have with my daughter on a regular basis is reading to her. I

feel this is a great bonding experience and a learning experience as well. When she and I read together we snuggle up in bed or on the couch and I read aloud to her. We talk and I point out the pictures as she watches and listens and babbles on. I think that these types of experiences that we share help to stimulate Allianna's mind and makes her feel happy and loved.

Interview with Linisa Beal, Photographer

by Monique Morin

What got you interested in photography?

I've had a camera in my hand since 1978 when my parents gave me a Kodak Instamatic 126 for a Christmas present. I have always and continue to love being able to capture a moment in time that will in the blink of an eye become a memory, whether it be one of my own or for someone else. In 2001, I started taking my hobby to the next level with the coming of the digital age, and the gratification that came with seeing in an instant that special point in time. At Beal Family Photography, we want you to be you in your photos and want to capture your personality not just your person. Whether you have a serious personality or a natural comedian we want you to be as comfortable with us as you are with yourself. In the end that's how it will portray in your photos and that's what a good image is all about! We feel that together, we have the ability to see and understand what you want for your own personal memories and don't mind taking the time to create them with you.

What kind of photography do you enjoy the most?

I enjoy photographing babies the most. Especially their feet.

How did you prepare for starting your business?

I purchased some equipment, a couple of prime lenses, set a website, had my truck lettered, acquired a business email and social media (Facebook twitter)

What kind of photo editor do you use? If you don't want to answer that question, could you answer what photo editor you first started off using?

I use a number of different photo editing programs: Picture It, Lightroom, Photoshop.

How did you know what prices to use for selling your pictures?

You will never earn enough money for the work you put into your photography. I have a base price now that we stick with for people that come to us versus when we travel to them.

Did you take any classes to prepare yourself for your career in photography?

No classes...just life education.

What kind of camera do you use and why?

I have several cameras. I have a Nikon d90, Canon 6D, Sony a350. I love them all for different reasons, I never have a lack of lens or battery.

What is your biggest failure during this job?

Biggest failure...hmmm, I can't think of one, we shoot until its right.

Are you scared about what others think about your photos?

Scared? No. I strive to make my client happy. Everyone else just falls into place and quite honestly unless they are paying their opinions do not matter to me.

What are the major challenges and problems you face being a photographer?

Major problems and challenges - not enough daylight in a day. Keeping up with active children during a shoot.

www.bealfamilyphotography.com