



News for the modern-day woman



# Marvelous Girl

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## Is the Hollywood baby boom glamorizing motherhood?



In Hollywood these days, the question isn't who's having a baby; it's who's *not* having a baby? From **Beyoncé** and Natalie Portman to Victoria Beckham, Kate Hudson, Jennifer Garner, Tori Spelling and Hilary Duff, the list keeps growing and the whole world seems to be on bump watch for the next pregnant celebrity! There's definitely a baby boom in tinsel town, but this particular Hollywood trend may be over romanticizing motherhood, giving many woman a false reality of what to really expect when they're expecting.

"The amount of publicity and saturation in the media market about the Hollywood baby boom of course has had a significant effect on young women,"

explains Dr. Charlotte Reznick, child educational psychologist, associate clinical professor of psychology UCLA and author of *The Power of Your Child's Imagination*. "From the daily evening entertainment TV shows, to the splashes of baby bumps in weekly celebrity magazines, it's easy to be pulled into the glam and glitz of motherhood."

While celebrities make it look so easy with their impossibly perfect post-baby bodies, immaculately coiffed hair and I've-had-a-solid-eight-hours-of-sleep glow, what you don't see are the nannies, assistants, stylists, makeup artists, personal trainers and chefs that work behind the scenes to keep the stars shining. In reality, the average woman has little or none of the aforementioned help and hardly enough time to take a shower, let alone do her hair and makeup. Motherhood is far less alluring than Hollywood makes it out to be.

"Those hot maternity clothes, fab fun baby showers, high fashion baby outfits, gorgeous tots seemingly smiling all day long... how could one not to be drooling with envy?," says Dr. Reznick. "It's perfectly normal to enjoy how celebs seem to live – everyone deserves a good fantasy. But the truth is, this is a time to stop and... use your thinking skills! The media blitz is made to tap into your emotions and desires, when a good dose of brainpower is needed. Just ask any "regular" mom – 'Is this what it's like?' You'll get a loud and resounding 'NO' – and she'll share the exhaustion, sleepless nights, the baby's screams for no discernible reason, and more... Then she'll go into the strains... on finances, on your relationship, on your own freedom. None of that is hinted at when you're watching those celebs."

Although teens and young adults are the most vulnerable audience of celebrity media according to Dr. Drew Pinsky and S. Mark Young's book *The Mirror Effect*, the recent popularity of websites like *Celebrity Baby Scoop* and *People's Celebrity Babies* prove that an older audience is susceptible too. From Jessica Alba's baby bump to Kourtney Kardashian's nursery furniture and Heidi Klum's post-baby body, many people have become obsessed with celebrity moms and it has sparked a modern-day keeping-up-with-the-Joneses kind of phenomenon.

"If SJP [Sarah Jessica Parker] has bought the latest stroller, then all her virtual neighbors will need to purchase the same thing just to feel contemporary and fashionable," explained David Giles, a psychologist and celebrity-worship researcher at the University of Lancaster in Britain.

While motherhood is immensely rewarding, one must wonder if it's not just SJP's stroller that people are looking to replicate. Perhaps a baby is just this season's toy puppy in a handbag; just another hot accessory that celebrities are donning and that media is telling us we should aspire towards. Either way, it's important to occasionally peek behind the curtain and remind yourself that doing what's best for you (and your child of course) is what will make you a superstar, not imitating a celebrity.

As Dr. Reznick says, "It's not that one should not have babies, it's just best done with a healthy dose of reality."