



mothers
at home
matter.

Autumn 2022

RAISING RESILIENCE

As I write this editorial, lines of people weave through central London queuing stoically, in such a British fashion, to pay respects to our late Monarch in Westminster Hall. The dedication on display for hours on end seems a fitting display of tribute to the resilience and commitment that HM Queen Elizabeth II showed throughout her 70 years on the throne.

Resilience is the topic for both this autumn issue of the Mothers At Home Matter newsletter and our annual conference on the 1st of November. It is also a term close to my heart as I daily help one of my teens through the disruption that long-covid is currently causing in her life. Resilience can be defined as 'the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties' and 'the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape'.

In an uncertain world, how do we nurture resilience in both ourselves and our children? In this issue of the MAHM members newsletter, Maria Lyons reviews Erica Komisar's latest book, *Chicken Little, the Sky Isn't Falling*. The book unpacks and explains the importance of resilience; Maria's review made me realise that it's a book that I evidently need to place at the top of my 'to read' pile. Look out for a giveaway on our Instagram account in October!

We're looking forward to Erica Komisar's keynote talk at our conference to delve into this topic along with a great selection of seminars. Details of the four seminars will be online over the next few weeks. We've held prices this year to enable as many people as possible to join us. Have you booked your ticket yet?

One of our local support group leaders is meeting with others to watch the conference online together: *'I'm going to see if I can hire our church playgroup space for the afternoon of the*



'How do we nurture resilience in both ourselves and our children?'

conference, so people could watch the conference in the morning at home and then come together for a change of scenery and opportunity for the kids to play whilst we stream the second half together! Do grab a mum friend or two and organise your own watch party!

The change of Prime Minister and government opens up the possibility of a change in taxation for



families; Anne Fennell urges us to seize the day and hold the government to account. Read her article to see how you can help us campaign and build pressure for effective policy change.

We have some great contributions to this issue from new voices: Roxana Tigelaar tells of her journey from employment to being based at home caring for her son; Instagram influencer Louise Horrodine shares some money-saving tips; and Angela McLaughlin introduces the Butterfly Baby Club.

Mothers need encouragement and support as we increase our own resilience. We hope both this newsletter and our conference strengthen confidence in your natural mothering ability. I look forward to seeing you on the 1st of November!

Philippa Nicholson, Editor



Anne Fennell on the way to meeting MPs

FROM THE CHAIR

Our hardworking chair, Anne Fennell, digs into how the current political landscape relates to motherhood. Now is the time to act but we need your help.

As families face rising costs, hikes in food and energy bills, and fear of how to make ends meet, political attention is turning inwards towards the challenges families face. And it is families, particularly with children who will be hit the hardest by the cost of living crisis. With a general election two years away political parties will be listening to the public. Manifestos will be written. Those who shout the loudest will be heard.

One strong voice for families is the push for more 'affordable childcare'. This is understandable. With rising interest costs, bills and food costs many families see their only option as working harder, more hours and any alleviation with childcare costs is a welcome one. But it is not necessarily the best option nor the one the majority of parents want, although it is the only one heard throughout the media and supported by many MPs in Parliament.

'We need to be the voice for these mothers.'

The latest survey by the Department of Education 2021 (released in August 2022) shows that the majority of mothers, if there were no barriers, would rather work fewer hours and be home more with their children. This was a survey of 5,955 parents with children aged 0-14yrs. If the survey was narrowed to mothers of children 0-3 the figures for those wanting to be more at home would no doubt be even higher.

Year: 2021	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Views	%	%	%
<i>Base: All working mothers with child(ren) aged 0 to 14</i>	2,438	871	3,309
If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home and look after my children			
Agree strongly	14	12	13
Agree	17	16	16
Neither agree nor disagree	17	20	17
Disagree	40	40	40
Disagree strongly	13	13	13
If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children			
Agree strongly	24	17	22
Agree	36	34	36
Neither agree nor disagree	12	18	14
Disagree	23	25	24
Disagree strongly	5	6	5
If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours			
Agree strongly	4	8	5
Agree	17	21	18
Neither agree nor disagree	13	21	15
Disagree	47	37	44
Disagree strongly	19	15	17

We need to be the voice for these mothers. It is crucially important that our voice is heard and that all of us write and put pressure on our MPs so that they know this is an issue we feel strongly about. It is a mistake to think that our voices do not matter and it is wrong to still be paying the price from 1990 when household taxation was reformed to independent taxation.

In the 1980s, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nigel Lawson, sought to reform the tax system and made the case in his Budget speech (1985) for a system of 'independent taxation with transferable allowances'. *'Everyone, man or woman, married or single, would have the same standard allowance. But if either a wife or a husband were not able to make full use of their allowance, the unused portion could be transferred, if they so wished, to their partner... It would end the present discrimination against the family where the wife feels it right to stay at home, which increasingly nowadays means discrimination against the family with young children.'*¹



Strategy day in August.

However, Margaret Thatcher was not in favour of the transferable allowance. She identified with the two-earner family. Instead, Nigel Lawson hoped to get his mandate for reform from the public in response to the Green Paper setting out this tax reform proposal. *'I had hoped that the response to the Green Paper would be so strongly favourable that I could use this as the clinching argument for action at long last. Unfortunately, it was nothing of the sort. Very few ordinary people responded at all... response came from the most part from the various women's lobbies and pressure groups, many of which had their own pet scheme they wished to promote... What I plainly lacked was the mandate for action for which I had hoped... so a halfway house it had to be, and one without fully transferable allowances... There would be genuine independent taxation... The allowances would not be transferable.'*²

It is a mistake we cannot afford to make again. In July, on her campaign trail, Liz Truss made a pledge.

'We need to hold Liz Truss and her government to account.'

'Hardworking families are the bedrock of a stable society, and one of my top priorities as Prime Minister would be easing the tax burden on families. They don't just look after themselves but also build communities, charities and even businesses.'

'I want to make sure that our tax system works for them. We will review the taxation of families to ensure people aren't penalised for taking time out to care for their children or elderly relatives.'

The plans put forward by Ms Truss to allow households to share their personal tax allowances would build on the existing tax-break for married couples and will consider allowing people to transfer their full £12,570 personal allowance to a partner. That would be worth up to £2,514 a year per couple. There could be an extension for single parents (which used to be known as an additional person allowance) and for unmarried couples.

One may be cynical about Truss' motives: She was trying to woo Tory voters; she doesn't believe it (you may be justified in thinking this remembering that stay-at-home mothers were far from a priority for her as Education Secretary in 2012). Nevertheless, she has made a pledge and we need to hold her and her government to account and be positive that this pledge is good for families.

The reaction to this pledge from most media outlets including right-wing newspapers has not been positive.

'Is that what we want – to force more women out of the workforce and back to the kitchen sink?' (Pregnant Then Screwed)

Neil Leitch, of the Early Years Alliance trade body, said the proposal *'completely missed the point'*. He added, *'The only way to solve the rising costs of early years care and education is to properly fund the sector.'*

'Families across this country are crying out for affordable childcare so that they don't have to choose between their career and their kids – instead of helping them and investing in provision,' Labour MP Stella

'Mothers do want to be with their children. The role of 'mothering' and 'being available' is valuable. Raising children is work.'

engage their support. Make appointments to see them, invite them for a coffee and chat to your local playgroup. Anna and Ange (Tea Talks) have done just this and their MP is coming to tea! Look out for their letter to their MP and their Tea and Chat on our website. There will also be template letters on our Campaigns tool page.

We are all mothers with little time but as Edward Kennedy famously said, *'Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope... these build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.'*

At our conference on 1st November (see page 15), Imogen Sinclair, Director of New Social Covenant Unit will be leading a seminar on how we can value care and what is practically possible in politics now, with steps to how we can achieve this. Please join us and if you can invite your MP to join the discussion, even better! We will have other Think Tanks also at this seminar, still to be confirmed. Please keep an eye on our social media.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge our late gracious Queen for her wonderful smile and the many years of dedicated and selfless service to our nation. Our thoughts are with the Royal Family at this sad time and we wish King Charles well.

Carpe Diem!
Anne



Photo of Anne - with David Goodhart, Imogen Sinclair and Miriam Cates

1 Nigel Lawson: Autobiography 'The View from No 11' p883

2 Nigel Lawson: Autobiography 'The View from No 11' p885

Creasy said. *'Liz Truss seems to think taxes should be used to make women stay home instead.'* She went on to accuse Ms Truss of plotting to take the UK 'back to the 1950s' by considering using taxes to 'make women stay home'.

It is clear that a voice is needed to show that mothers want choice, that this policy promotes choice. Mothers do want to be with their children. The role of 'mothering' and 'being available' is valuable. Raising children is work.

We all need to pull together to be that voice and your help is needed. Currently, our active campaign team is made up of three busy mothers, one with three children under five, one building a house and another active member. We need to be able to respond to politicians and pressure group statements and articles. We need to have a strategy leading up to the general election in two years' time. We need to have members willing to talk to the media. We need you all to write to your MPs. If you are able to join our team please contact me at chair@mothersathomematter.com.

On a positive note, we have active support from Danny Kruger MP and Miriam Cates MP (both Conservatives) who will be working to hold Liz Truss to account. But we need to engage cross-party support which is a much more difficult task. We need you to talk to your MPs and see if you can

CHOOSING TO BE A STAY-AT-HOME MOTHER

Deciding on whether to stay at home to care for your children or continue working outside the home is not always an easy decision. Roxana Tigelaar shares her journey.

Growing up I aspired to be many things, ranging from a ballet dancer to an oceanographer and everything in between. Though my career aspirations changed over the years, I always knew that I wanted to have children and be a stay-at-home mother (SAHM). Both my mother and my grandmother worked up until the moment they became mothers and only started working again outside the home after their children were in secondary school. I admire the way they took care of their family and their homes. I'm also convinced that the bond I have with my mother would not be the same if she hadn't been a SAHM. I had the privilege of having a SAHM and now I am living the joys of being one, but it took me some time to feel confident about my choice.

In the Netherlands, where I live, you are only entitled to 16 weeks of leave. The majority of women, therefore, go back to work when their babies are only 2.5 months old. After my maternity leave ended in 2016, I had to decide whether I would go back to work. Although I instinctively wanted to quit my job to become a SAHM, my husband and others urged me to continue part-time, so as not to give up on my job and my income. My parents even agreed to take care of our son so that I could continue working. That made the decision somewhat easier, as I knew he would be well taken care of and would not be lacking in love and affection. So, after an extended (unpaid) leave, I went back to work four days a week. My son was seven months at the time and even though I was leaving him in my parents' care, I found it very difficult to be separated from him. After two months, my parents could only continue taking care of our son one day a week. I started working from home one day and we had to put our son in daycare the other two days. Placing our son in the care of strangers was something we did not want, but at that point, we felt we had no choice. Everyone around us was leaving their children in daycare five days a week, sometimes





excelling in any role – I was simply not being the best version of myself as an employee, as a wife and as a mother. My husband and I spoke about the possibility of me quitting my job and becoming a full-time SAHM. We had just taken out a loan to buy our house, so the timing was not great, but we'd done the math beforehand and knew we could afford to live off one income if ever the need arose. He was concerned about me becoming isolated and lonely, but although I wanted to become a SAHM, I had no intention of actually staying at home; there were so many things I wanted to undertake with my son! Once the decision was made and I handed in my resignation, it took a huge pressure off my shoulders.

'I was simply not being the best version of myself'

No longer working outside the home, allowed me to focus all of my time and energy on my son. We played in the house and the garden, checked out all the playgrounds in our area, and went to the library and read tons and tons of books. We visited friends and family, we took day trips to the beach, we went on (forest) walks, to the zoo, to farms, to castles and theme parks as well as to museums. We attended (puppet)theatre shows, and (toddler) concerts and took part in music, gymnastics, and swimming lessons. We did arts and crafts, as well as baking and cooking. And we joined a local baby and toddler group to go on lots of playdates. I loved being home with him and he loved being home with me, getting all the attention and affection he needed and deserved. I have taught my son a lot, but it is nothing compared to what he has taught me and I'm still learning every single day. Being at home, I also took care of the household – allowing my husband to focus on his work and leaving the weekends free to undertake fun things as a family.

At some point, however, a few of the mums started going back to work and I was regularly being asked when I would be returning to work myself. Not just in my friend's group, but also neighbours and family members started asking. I started to feel the pressure again, 'I should be putting my degrees and skills to good use', 'I should be contributing to the family financially', and 'If I don't go back now, I'll never be able to find employment again'. Our son was almost three and going to pre-school two mornings a week, so I began to casually look for part-time employment. I applied to a few positions and then to my surprise was invited for an interview

from the age of two months, so surely leaving him two days couldn't be that bad. But it didn't feel right and although it was a very nice-looking daycare – clean, bright with lots of toys and friendly staff – we were miserable leaving him there. We also noticed very quickly that our son was unhappy, not just at drop-off but also when at the end of the day we went to pick him up. With my husband and I both working during the week, we would spend weekends grocery shopping, running errands and cleaning the house – there was hardly any time for fun and relaxation.

During those months while I was a working-outside-the-home mother, I constantly worried about whether the daycare staff were properly taking care of my child. I knew he would never get the same kind of attention and affection from them, as he could be getting from me if I were not working. And I was also super stressed about meeting deadlines, staying focussed, attending meetings that were scheduled at times that conflicted with pick-up time, missing work when my son was sick or, as usually happened right after, I got sick. I was overcome by guilt because I knew I was not

for a 20-hour position. It's so uncommon that I thought I might as well give it a go. I made it through all the interview rounds and was offered the job. Then panic kicked in and I started to wonder whether I wanted a job in the first place, but many of my friends were struggling to find part-time employment so I felt I should consider myself lucky. The company wanted me to spread out the 20 hours over five days, so my son suddenly had to go to pre-school five mornings a week instead of two. I went to work and within the first two weeks had to conclude that it had been a huge mistake. Luckily, I was in my probation period, so I apologised profoundly and resigned.

'The pressure mothers feel to work outside the home is huge.'

Let me start by saying, that I don't regret that I went back to work outside the home (twice) because at least I tried. I'll never have to wonder 'what if...! I now know, that being a mother and working outside the home is not the right choice for me and my family. I know I'm the best version of myself being at home taking care of our son. But I do think that the pressure mothers feel to work outside the home is huge and that choosing to stay at home with your children is frowned upon. When I quit my job, one of my colleagues told me 'Be careful not to dumb down too much'. Since when do you lose your intellect when you dedicate yourself to raising your child(ren)?

Whereas in the past it was completely normal for women to stay at home with their children to take care of them, nowadays women are encouraged to continue working after having children, leaving them to be cared for by others. We are made to believe that to be happy and fulfilled we need to be working and that we need to have successful careers to be better wives and mothers. I think our society has gone too far in pushing women to work outside the home. And while continuing to work after you have children might be the right decision for some mothers, it is not the right decision for all mothers.



Roxana is based in the Netherlands and has set up a national (online) support group. In the coming months and years, she hopes to grow the group, so that, in time, regional groups can be set up throughout the Netherlands for meeting in person. If you are based in the Netherlands and would like to join, you can contact her via mahm.netherlands@gmail.com.



PREPARING FOR WINTER

With the cost of living rising and wages stagnating, homemaker **Louise Horrodine** shares her top five cost-saving tips with us. You can find Louise on Instagram @MotherInTheNorthernlands.

It will come as no surprise that this winter marks the start of an uncertain time for families in the UK (and other parts of the world). The cost of living has exploded, wages are largely stagnant and single-income families especially are facing big increases in their household expenditure.

But while it is a concerning time for many, there is no better place to prepare for these potentially difficult times than home.

The following is just a little sample of (hopefully) helpful tips and tactics to help homemakers and mothers at home make valuable savings to their winter bills and protect their families against the economic climate that threatens to relegate single-income families to either the very margins of society or the preserved privilege of only the wealthy.



1

Always keep your freezer stocked to capacity. This is the most efficient way for it to run and prevents wasted electricity.

2

Try to use your tumble dryer as little as possible. As far as household items go, tumble dryers are some of the most energy-hungry appliances. Use clothes airers wherever possible. Dotted in various rooms around the house, this has the added advantage of keeping your clothes closer to where they need to be put once dried.

3

Stock up on essentials now. Price increases are forecast to continue to rise. If you have space to spare and the budget to do so, start a little stock of tinned and dried goods. Sugars, salt, flour, spices and herbs. Home cooking is the friend of anybody wanting to cut back on their outgoings and for relatively little money, you can have a handy stock of goods available to you in the leaner winter months.

4

It's only a hop, skip and a jump and Christmas will be here. Put that home cooking and baking to good use and instead of buying gifts for family and friends, gift cakes, jams, jellies, chutneys and puddings instead. Decorative, pretty jars and bowls can be found in charity shops all over the country. Add a cute handwritten label and some festive ribbon and it's hard not to feel a sense of satisfaction at having produced something beautiful, nourishing and handmade.

5

Simplify, simplify, simplify. Much of our spending is habit formed. We buy the same items usually week on week and often forget to take a step back and assess what's working for us and what isn't. If you have the wiggle room, take a cold hard look at your spending and see what you could reasonably let go of. Any subscriptions you could live without? Could the kids maybe drop an activity a week? Little changes to spending habits can add up to a big difference over time.

Homemaking in difficult times can feel overwhelming. It can feel exhausting. And there is a temptation to see much of what we do in our homes as trivial, compared to the alternative of bringing home a pay cheque. But staying at home and being that anchor point for our families is not only not trivial, but in times such as these, its importance and value is only highlighted.

Mothers At Home Matter. At all times. In all ways. And especially right now.



LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS

Here is the latest news from the local support groups by [Becca Woollgar](#), our Local Groups Coordinator and Conference organiser.

We are so grateful to our 16 group leaders who are bringing mums together in their local area and supporting them in their vital role as mothers at home. All whilst juggling their own children and other commitments – we think you're all stars!

Our most recent group has been set up in East London: Thank you, Adele, for being the contact person for this area. She is planning a museum trip for their first meetup, we hope you have a great time!

For a full list of our current groups please go to mothersathomematter.com/our-community.

If you'd like to find out more about being a contact person for your area please email groups@mothersathomematter.com and either [Becca](#) or [Lauren](#) will be very happy to help.

You'll see enclosed with this newsletter flyers to help promote MAHM and our local groups in your communities. Please do distribute these to local mum friends, or ask if you can display on library or community centre noticeboards. If you attend a baby/toddler class perhaps you can leave a few on the side in case any of the mums are interested in finding out more. Most people hear about MAHM through word of mouth so please do help us spread the word so we can reach more mothers at home.

If you'd like more flyers please email [Philippa Nicholson](#) on newsletter@mothersathomematter.com.



BUTTERFLY BABY PROJECT

Developmental psychologist Dr Angela McLaughlin founded the Butterfly Baby Clinic in 2014 and explains how its free resources can assist your parenting journey. You can find the online services at www.butterflybabyclinic.com or email Angela on admin@butterflybabyclinic.com.

The Butterfly Baby Clinic was founded in 2014 to promote early development, parent-baby relationships and wellbeing from pre-birth to pre-school. Everything we do is for the benefit of families worldwide. That's why all our online family services are free and developed in collaboration with parents. There are lots of ways to get involved and we'd love you to join us.

Explore our Butterfly Baby Club resources to have fun in the Playroom, relax with your little one in the Quiet Space, develop your expertise in the Knowledge Hub and take a well-deserved rest in the Wellbeing Garden.

Join our new Butterfly Baby Club village to learn more about promoting your little one's development and resilience, feel supported in your positive and reflective parenting journey, boost you and your wee one's wellbeing and meet new friends. We understand that parenting isn't always easy and that 'it takes a village to raise a child'.

Access our Butterfly PIP service to receive specialist therapeutic support for parents and babies who are experiencing adversities and early relationship difficulties.

Share your expertise through our Parent Expert Panel (PEP) to help us and other organisations co-design services and resources for families through our fun Dragon's Den style PEP Talks, share your knowledge with professionals through PEP Conversations about parent-baby mental health and enjoy fun activities with other families through our PEP Catch-ups.

Become a Changemaker through our 1001 Think Tank and help to co-produce parent-baby wellbeing resources with and for families living in developing countries and affected by humanitarian crises.

Sign up for our Butterfly Blog to read interesting articles about nurturing your baby's development and looking after your wellbeing or join us as a guest blogger.

Follow us @1001butterflies on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

RESILIENCE GROWS THROUGH LOVE

A message from one mother to another

Never underestimate the impact you have on your child's life through the love, care and attention you devote to them every day. Research has shown that having at least one positive and secure early relationship helps babies to thrive in their development, boosts their resilience and protects their future health and wellbeing.

Everytime you sensitively respond to your little one, areas of their brain are activated which build strong connections to help them develop social skills, regulate their emotions, problem solve and learn how to overcome challenges.

We learn how to love through being loved and become resilient through the presence of protective factors, like positive social support.

There is no such thing as a perfect Mother, but every Mother is creating miracles every day by protecting their child's future through the love they show them today.

love Angela
xxx

Dr Angela McLaughlin is a Developmental Psychologist and Founder of the Butterfly Baby Clinic. She lives with her two grown-up children. In her free time she enjoys relaxing in nature.

www.butterflybabyclinic.com



DEAR MAHM...

We love to have as much feedback from our members as possible. Here is a selection of what you told us this year, including comments from the conference and via social media.

'I am so pleased I found this page!!! Thank you for existing and giving me the boost I needed right now'

'Thank you for the wonderful work you do to support women at home!! We appreciate it!'

'I've only just found you after five years of being a stay at home mum and it feels like I've found a like-minded tribe for the first time!'

'It is lovely to have an MP who focuses on 'choice' for mothers. Also that children's rights were mentioned [at the conference]. I noted Miriam Cates' point about how politicians choose to not 'follow the science' on the importance of mothers in the first 1001 days! Also that she mentioned the 'active role' of a SAHM!'

'Finally!!! I have found my tribe. (I felt very lonely, although pleased, with the decision to stay at home.)'

'[I'm] relieved and comforted in the knowledge that I'm not the only one!'

'I have read your newsletter from end to end as I always do. [...] Young adults can need their parents as much as young children, in different ways. [They] must not be neglected as they can be vulnerable!'

BOOK REVIEW

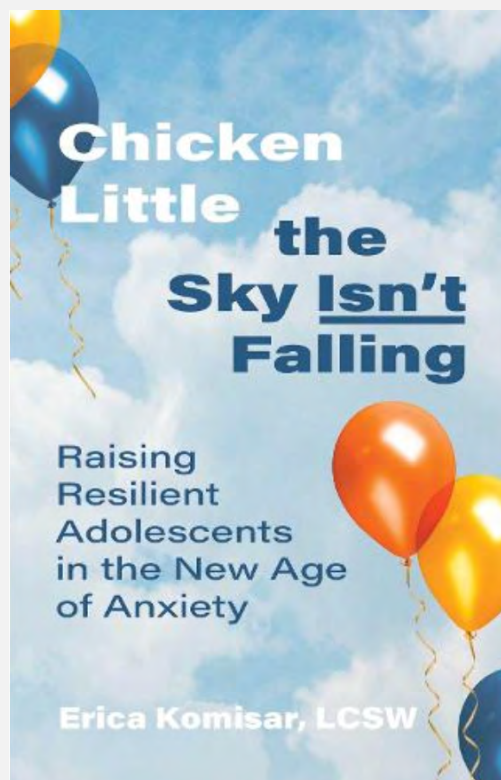
Committee member **Maria Lyons** reviews **Erica Komisar's** latest book about nurturing resilient young people. Erica is the keynote speaker for our annual conference in November (see page 15 for more details).

As mothers who have chosen to be at home with our children in the first few years of their lives, we know how crucial these years are for their development. Many of us know this instinctively; the overwhelming desire to be with our babies and toddlers and their total dependency on us is proof enough of what they need. But, for better or worse, we live in a world which expects scientific evidence to justify every course of action. Fortunately, there is now plenty of evidence that consistent, loving attachment to a primary caregiver in the early years is the foundation for emotional security and mental health not just in childhood but the whole of a person's life.

'The strongest ego is one that can yield when necessary...That is the definition of resilience!'

- Erica Komisar

Writer and practicing psychoanalyst Erica Komisar has done much to explain this body of evidence and promote the message that 'mothering matters', especially in that critical window of the first three years. In her new book, she turns her attention to the second most significant phase of child development. Adolescence, also a period of dramatic change and vulnerability, offers parents another precious opportunity to guide and support their children on the path to becoming secure, stable and above all resilient adults.



**Chicken Little the Sky Isn't Falling:
Raising Resilient Adolescents in
the New Age of Anxiety**
By **Erica Komisar**, 2022

ISBN 9780757324000

In *Chicken Little the Sky Isn't Falling*, Komisar describes what she terms 'the new age of anxiety', arguing that the many 'internal stressors' which are an ordinary part of the adolescent experience are being exacerbated by a multitude of newer 'environmental stressors'. These environmental stressors include separation and premature independence as mothers return to work earlier and earlier, schooling which favours cognitive over social and emotional development, sensory overload and over-exposure to media and technology, and fractured communities which leads to disconnection and loneliness. That adolescents especially are suffering is evidenced by the increase in mental health disorders in that age group over the last two decades, among them depression, ADHD, anxiety and many forms of addiction.

'Komisar's message is ultimately optimistic!'

Despite this bleak picture, Komisar's message is ultimately optimistic, as her title suggests. The key to helping our children to navigate this stormy and challenging time, she argues, is to deepen our understanding of what they are going through. Knowing what is realistic to expect, and when not to expect too much in terms of emotional maturity, judgement, behaviour regulation and so on, can help to ensure our responses are both sensitive and proportionate. *'Parenting is a nuanced high-wire act of persuading your adolescent to see your perspective without obviously ramming it down their throat.'* Because knowledge is power, she takes the reader on a journey through the main phases of 'normal' adolescence – physical, sexual, social-emotional and cognitive development – before looking in more depth at the most common mental health-related problems afflicting today's youth. These include learning issues and social development disorders, eating disorders, substance addiction, bullying and social media.

For parents facing any of these problems with their adolescents, this book provides invaluable information, guidance and follow-up resources to help them through the process. It is peppered with anecdotes which bring the content alive and make it relatable. It would be wrong, however, to assume that this is a book to reach for only once our adolescents are already in trouble. Komisar's message throughout is that being physically and emotionally present for our children is the best form of prevention. *'You need to be there when the door into their private world swings open, and they're ready to let you in. If you're not, the door will close again.'* She stresses repeatedly how much our actions and attitudes really matter. *'Who we are, what behaviours we model, and how we relate and care for our children impact them and their development more than any other factor.'*

For those of us who might not have reached that stage yet, this book is a powerful reminder that we cannot ask more of our children than we ask of ourselves. The best preparation for the challenges to come is to cultivate our own self-awareness, openness, trust and willingness to learn and continually grow. If we want our children to become resilient, we must give them an example of what that looks like. *'Your adolescent looks to you to be an adult and a parent. Our ability to live an examined life helps our children to live one as well.'*





HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Have you ever thought about helping behind the scenes here at MAHM? We are all volunteers and mothers in different stages of life with many things to juggle so are always happy to have as much help as you feel able to offer. Motherhood naturally equips you with so many skills and, if you are in a season of life with even a little free headspace, this could be the perfect time to step forward!

Current roles that really need filling include:

Conference Marketing

Would you like to be part of the MAHM conference team and develop your event management skills? This role will focus primarily on promoting our November conference to a wider audience, with the dual purpose of promoting our membership offer. You would help with marketing the conference each year, from helping decide a theme, to designing flyers and promoting the event on offline and online platforms. We'd love to reach more mums at home with this event but we need help to do that! To find out more please email [Becca Woolgar](mailto:Becca.Woolgar@mothersathomematter.com) at conference@mothersathomematter.com.

Social Secretary

Would you like to be part of the MAHM team and help us organise face-to-face social meet-ups? Do you have a passion for bringing people together? Are you organised and proactive in promoting events? Then we need you! We'd love to offer opportunities for mums

to meet other like-minded mums for special events during the year. Please email [Anne Fennell](mailto:Anne.Fennell@mothersathomematter.com) at chair@mothersathomematter.com if you could take on this role.

Newsletter Editor

Our current newsletter editor, [Philippa Nicholson](#), is preparing to pass on this volunteer role to make more time available for home-educating her secondary-school-aged children. The newsletter, as you likely know as a reader, is produced twice a year requiring time in March and September in the lead-up to the publication, along with joining our monthly online committee meetings to keep informed about our work. Please email [Philippa](mailto:Philippa.newsletter@mothersathomematter.com) at newsletter@mothersathomematter.com if you are interested in this role.

Campaign Team

We are looking for more mothers to join the Campaign Team. You don't have to be a committee member for this role, just a have desire to help MAHM shape policy that truly benefits mothers and their children. Please email [Anne Fennell](#) for further information.

MAHM Representative/s at meetings

We like to have representatives at conferences and meetings that overlap or could be influenced by our aims and objectives. It reminds policymakers and others that we exist while raising the profile of the mothers who want the choice to care full time for their children. You don't have to be a member of the committee for this role – just some time to show up and maybe ask a question on behalf of MAHM. We cover expenses and, with the majority of meetings now being online, this role has never been easier.

OTHER WAYS YOU CAN HELP INCLUDE:

Retweeting or sharing our posts on social media; mentioning us in conversations with other mothers and encouraging them to join as members; mothers willing to talk to camera about what they feel is needed for change so that we can use your voice on media channels; and, of course, writing to your MP – see our Campaign Resource page.

Please contact [Anne Fennell](#), or any other committee member, if you feel able to volunteer with us. We look forward to hearing from you!



MAHM ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022

Raising Resilience

This year's conference will explore how we can raise resilience in our children, our communities, and in ourselves.

Tuesday 1st November

Online, via Zoom. 9:50am-2:40pm

£5 members, £10 non-members

mothersathomematter.com/events/conference22

Ticket-holders will be able to access recordings afterwards

Join us for an inspirational and informative day hearing from a range of speakers with the aim of encouraging and uplifting us in our vital role as mothers. We are thrilled to announce that our keynote speaker will be **Erica Komisar**: Psychoanalyst, Parent Coach and Author from New York. Her aim is to help individuals to live more satisfying lives and raise healthier children.

Join us on Zoom for the morning from **9:50am to 12:15pm** to hear about Mothers At Home Matter's work along with a choice of seminars. After a short lunch break **Erica Komisar** will speak at **1pm** and the conference will finish by **2:40pm**.

'We are asking children to handle more but giving less. The first three years of life are crucial for building the emotional resilience needed for later life.'

– Erica Komisar

'Resilience, or the ability to cope with the unknown, is not something we are born with, rather it is something we learn from being given a foundation of emotional security through the consistent presence of our caregivers throughout our childhood!'

9.50
Conference opens
10.00
Welcome from Chair: Anne Fennell
10.25
MAHM updates & AGM
11.05
Seminar 1: The Joy of Motherhood
Seminar 2: Campaigning and Politics
11.50
Seminar 3: Motherhood - An International Perspective
Seminar 4: TBC - check our website for further details
12.30
Lunch break
13.00
Keynote Speaker: Erica Komisar
13.45
Q&A
14.00
What next for MAHM: 2023 priorities
14.30
Roundup
14.40
End



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Marie Peacock

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Further information about our volunteers and friends:

mothersathomematter.com/aboutus

SUBS RENEWAL

If you've already organised payment of this year's membership subscription, or have joined in the last six months, please ignore the request for membership renewal.

However, if you're a long-standing member, please don't forget to increase your Standing Order at your bank to £12.50 for single members or £15 for couple membership.

If you have changed your address or email, please let us know. If you would like to set up a Standing Order, or need any additional information about membership payment, please contact pj.dudley@btinternet.com

Our PO Box is no longer used.

Alternatively, you can pay online using Paypal.

Newsletter designed by Anna Robson and proofread by Fiona Cole.

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