

An interview with... Dr. Ellie Cannon

WE CAUGHT UP WITH DR. ELLIE TO DISCUSS HER NEW BOOK AND FIND OUT HOW SHE MANAGES TO JUGGLE BEING A MUM AND A PROLIFIC DOCTOR...

Dr. Ellie Cannon is often hailed as the face of general practice. She is the resident GP for the Mail on Sunday, MailOnline and Woman magazine and writes regularly for other titles. She also makes regular appearances on Sky News Sunrise. Somehow between all of that as well as practicing as a GP on the famous Abbey Rd in London and raising two young children, she has found the time to publish a book for new mums.

Keep Calm: The New Mum's Manual: Trust Yourself and Enjoy Your Baby is out from 6th March and is, according to Dr. Ellie, the antidote to parenting books. Read on to find out why...

What inspired you to write your new book?

I'm a mum, obviously, and have been for a decade and I've been in general practice pretty much the same length of time. What I've been seeing over the last 10 years, both through friends and family and practice, was that women (and men) are now absolutely bombarded with information when they become parents. Whilst that can be a good thing, what it seems to have achieved is to absolutely confuse and bamboozle people. I certainly felt like that and most of my patients feel like that. These vast waves of information have basically served to completely undermine inherent parental instinct.

So I wanted to hand back the power to parents. I wanted people to realise that there are really only about four or five rules of parenting with a newborn baby that are essential and the rest is merely opinion. If you give yourself a chance you can form your own opinions on many of the crucial aspects of parenting, like sleeping and feeding and you will have a much happier parenting experience. That's why the subtitle is 'Trust yourself', because I wanted parents to realise that the best experts with their baby is themselves.

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What makes it stand out from all the other parenting books out there?

It's an antidote to all of the parenting books out there because there are no rules in it. I don't tell people how to feed their baby or whether they should have a routine. I say, these are the facts and this is how it is and make your own mind up. You don't need to be told how to bring up your baby. And I can say that because I am a doctor and I know which of these rules are important and which aren't. The whole essence of the book really is that I don't believe in a dogmatic approach to parenting. There is no one size fits all and I wanted to rebel against all of the dogma that's around feeding, sleeping and a whole host of other things. Which buggy you should buy, when you're allowed to go back to work,



whether you're allowed to lose weight, when you're allowed to have sex again with your husband. There seems to be people giving so-called expert advice on absolutely everything.

Also, out of 12 chapters, which cover the obvious topics like weaning and crying, I actually have four chapters that are just about the mums, which I think is something that other parenting books fail to do. They cover the less obvious things like coping with tiredness and boredom, going back to work, childcare and coping with a body that doesn't look like it used to.

What is the most valuable piece of advice you could give to new parents?

You need to choose one person or one place where you are going to seek advice and stick with that. I find that people (for example

when they are trying to get their baby to sleep) ask huge numbers of people for advice, all of who tell them something different, then they go online and read loads of different things. Once you've found someone who instinctively feels like the right person for you, whether it's an internet forum, your grandma or a health visitor, stick with them. Don't seek advice in loads of places, if it's working stick with it.

As a busy mum of two how do you manage to juggle everything?

With a husband who never expects dinner on the table! I'm no super woman because I've learnt over 10 years of being a working mum that you don't have to do everything perfectly. If you're trying to work and trying to bring up children then you prioritise. You

don't need to make the birthday cakes from scratch yourself, you don't need to be the person who is also running a triathlon, you have to prioritise what's important for you and your family, not anybody else's misconceived notion of what a successful working parent is, and stick with it. In my house I do make birthday cakes from scratch but I don't have dinner on the table in the evenings for my husband. People have

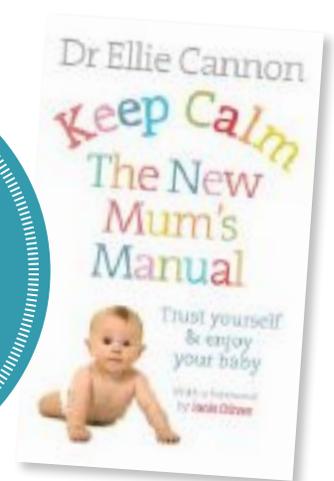
different things they should concentrate on.

What do you do in your spare time (if you have any!)?

I just like hanging out with my kids and taking them ice-skating. All four of us bake in our house, including my husband so we like baking too. I do try and exercise because exercise makes me feel good and I watch TV like everyone else.

KEEP
CALM

The New Mum's Manual:
Trust Yourself and Enjoy
Your Baby will be released
on 6th March priced at
£10.99.



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