

# Facebook vs. Real Life

If you scroll your Facebook feed, you'll immediately notice that nearly everyone has a perfect life, relationship, family and kids.

Postcard settings at the pumpkin patch. Smiling photos of a beautiful family. Expensive vacations. Delicious home-cooked dinners. Spotless homes.

So imagine your surprise when you run into one of these "perfect Facebook friends" at Walgreens.

She's picking up cold medicine, appears totally exhausted, and has a screaming, disheveled toddler in tow. While she's checking out, she realizes she left her wallet at home.

That experience never makes it onto Facebook, by the way. (Can you blame her?)

Social media has changed the way we connect with people. While it's possible to share anything and everything about your day, we often filter these messages to only share the best parts of life.

This is normal and natural. Many of us want to remember and document the best parts of life. And maybe we want to forget the tough times.

**Don't compare your behind the scenes to someone else's highlights reel.**



It's easy to compare your worst moments to others' best moments.

- When your child isn't sleeping through the night, you believe no one else has experienced this.
- When you don't have time to make a homemade dinner and resort to drive-through meals or PB&J (for the third night this week), you believe you must be doing something wrong. All of your friends manage a from-scratch dinner every night.
- When you lose your temper, you wonder why you can't keep your cool with your children when everyone else seems to have it together.

But this comparison is rarely fair because you are only seeing a snapshot of life. You don't know what goes on behind closed doors.

"Every person has a different idea of picture perfect," says Kacey Fleshman, a mom in Colona. "But the bad days happen to everyone."

**now what? Keep Going.**

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## Rely on honest friends.

Instead of comparing your life to what you see on social media, turn to your parenting tribe.

These friends and family members will be honest with you, sharing the ups and downs of raising children. This is exactly what Sara White of Eldridge experienced when her son was a late talker. She connected with another mom in her tribe who went through the same thing.

"I'm not alone," she explains. "Others have gone through this."

## Don't let comparison cultivate jealousy.

It's easy to see the perfect family photo on Facebook and feel a little jealous. You know that your last family photo session ended in screaming and tears.

But instead of feeling jealous, remind yourself that you don't know what went on behind the scenes.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I have all of the information?
- Am I allowing someone else's success or positive experience to make myself feel like a failure?
- Is comparing myself making myself feel worse about myself?

## The truth behind a picture perfect moment.

Kacey and son Jameson recently had their photos taken. By looking at the photos, you'd think that the session went perfectly. But in reality, this was far from the truth.

"The bad day started from the moment Jameson woke up," she laughs.

His toothpaste was too spicy. He spilled his breakfast on his shirt and had to change. He insisted that his pants were too long. He didn't want to leave the house.

Kacey was as surprised as anyone that the photos turned out beautifully. And you'd never know all the challenges that went into one picture-perfect moment.

Life isn't perfect for anyone. But you wouldn't know it by what your friends share on Facebook. Those picture perfect moments are fun to remember, but are not telling the whole story.

So, be kind to yourself. Limit comparison. And try to be honest yourself when sharing those perfect moments online.



Originally posted on the Now What? Blog on 10.29.14 The Now What? Blog served for nearly 7 years to

1. Normalize parents seeking support and help as a manner of child abuse prevention
2. Engage community in how they can work to prevent child abuse
3. Work to build resiliency in families through promotion of the 5 protective factors

Maybe you coach a baseball team or you help care for the neighbor kids from time to time. You are investing in the safety and security of the children in our community. Because it truly does take a village to raise our children, we want to offer the tools needed to bring awareness and education to preventing child abuse.