

5 myths of the Facebook-perfect family

Facebook is a great way to stay connected and share a glimpse into your own life.

(It can also be a great way to put off doing something productive- like cleaning or doing laundry. But that's a post for another day.)

When it comes to Facebook, it's not fun to share the ugly parts of life. Who really wants to relive the bad parts of your day?

Which is why Facebook shows us a whitewashed version of our lives. The versions of life, parenthood and relationships that we want to relive and remember. Not the parts we wish we could forget.

But this means that we all think our friends have perfect lives. And your friends may also think you have a perfect life. (Which we can all agree doesn't exist.)

Here are a few myths Facebook would have you believe

Your family always gets along.

Let's chalk this myth up to all the amazing family photographers in the Quad Cities. Those golden-lit photos of your family laughing and romping in fields of sunflowers?

Those probably aren't the typical picture of your life. (Although these images are definitely beautiful and swoon-worthy. You should definitely keep sharing those photos on Facebook.)

If your family photo sessions are like many, they involve stress about coordinating outfits, candy bribery, and prayers that the kids will behave and smile enough to get one good photo for grandparents.

In truth, some of the most memorable and beautiful moments of parenthood don't reach your album and aren't magazine-ready. And in truth, there are many days that your family is having a hard time just getting along.

That's normal and that's okay.



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Your family has picture-perfect vacation.

It's an unwritten Facebook rule that families must share vacation photos. Otherwise, the vacation may not have actually happened.

So that Disney cruise you took? It looks beautiful and magical. The photo of your daughter with Princess Jasmine? It could be on the cover of the cruise pamphlet.

But I'm guessing there are some moments that didn't make it onto Facebook - like that time you got seasick or your kids had epic sugar-induced meltdowns right before the evening Mickey show.

Your kids are geniuses.

When your child makes the Honor Roll, masters reading a chapter book or sings the alphabet, it's going to make it onto Facebook.

And your Facebook friends cheer along with you and your kids! Because you both deserve major pats on the back.

But remember that there are some things that don't make it to the Facebook feed - like when Junior failed his Chem test or your daughter didn't do well in the spelling bee.

There's no reason to rehash these online, but it's important to know that every family has ups and downs. (You just may not see the downs.)

You never have to worry about money.

Expensive jeans, new cars and designer kitchens - it may make you feel like you can't compete. We already know that money isn't everything. But that doesn't mean a little doubt or jealousy can't creep in.

But there are also things you may not see - like financial stress or long work days. Money can be a stressful topic for almost any family. Most of us are working hard to support our kids and make our family's life better.

You always get along with your partner.

Every romantic relationship involves ups and downs. But to look at Facebook, you'd believe that every relationship is perfect - filled with flowers and love notes and kissy photos.

That's why many of us are shocked when we find out the relationships of friends are ending.

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That's because there are many things that don't hit your Facebook newsfeed. Those screaming fights or the nights that pass in silence and anger. The jealousy and heartbreak and betrayals that happen to some extent in all relationships.

They are often (for better and worse) kept in the privacy of home.

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KEEP GOING.

You aren't perfect, and neither are your Facebook friends. Be kind to yourself and try to limit comparison on Facebook.

And as parents, try to connect with others in the community to support and uplift each other. During the Facebook perfect moments and the tough times.

And this may mean posting a little anecdote about a bad day now and then. (Your Facebook friends could be the source of some much-needed encouragement.)



Originally posted on the Now What? Blog 10/29/15. 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.

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