

westcoast moms

The Moms of WCF Meet the women behind the mag

by Kelly S. Thompson

I am lucky to work with some of the most talented women, all of them capable, strong and astounding mothers. As the only member of the *WestCoast Families* team without children, I am often on the outside looking in, a perspective rife with opportunity to reflect and admire.

Admire is a great word, because it's hard not to when you consider the company I keep at the magazine. I am impressed with the dedication my coworkers show not only in doing their jobs well but in being the best parents possible. That's why this holiday season I want to introduce you to the women behind the magazine.

Prepare to be inspired.



Andrea Vance
Publisher

Andrea is the owner and publisher of *WCF*. Her two children, Jesse, 5, and Olivia, 7, came later in life, allowing Andrea the chance to expand her career in finance after obtaining her degree from SFU. A dedicated Lower Mainlander, she now lives in Delta, citing the nearby resources as a draw. "So much is at our fingertips," she says.

Andrea is a true professional networker, and her dynamic personality lends to her ability to manage the *WCF* team. "The magazine itself exposes me to perspectives and insight that I otherwise might not see," she says. This attitude allows every member of the team to offer new ideas and suggestions, which Andrea encourages, fostering a work environment that promotes creativity and forward thinking, the same qualities that have contributed to Andrea's personal success.

When she isn't at the helm of the magazine, Andrea and her family travel extensively and explore the community at their doorstep. She is extremely active with a passion for photography, hockey, and more. But it is evident that her passion for her children is unmatched. "I never had to be a mom, but thought it would be interesting to share the world with little ones, watching them learn and explore," said Andrea. "It's given me patience I didn't know I had. I've learned to listen more and talk less. I've learned that imperfection can be a beautiful thing."

It's literally impossible not to like Jennifer, who keeps the magazine trucking with her financial prowess. "We support each other whether it's regarding work or personal lives," Jennifer said of her *WestCoast Families* partners. On top of being great at her job, Jennifer is infinitely kind and perseveres through any and all challenges. If that isn't enough, she is also mother to son Kenneth, who is 21 years old.

Of course, finance can't occupy every moment of her day. Jennifer spends much of her time hiking and travelling with her husband or exploring the art of pottery. Thankfully, the Lower Mainland offers space and opportunity to explore all of the things she loves. "I've lived here all my life and am glad I've been able to share experiences of living here with my son," said Jennifer.

These days, Jennifer is experiencing a new challenge after an illness left her mostly deaf, a stressor that she has dealt with by displaying incredible strength and dignity. Recently, she received a cochlear implant and is excited about the way ahead. In the meantime, she approaches her route to healing using the same concepts that she's learned in motherhood, offering this advice: "Have patience and try to find the humour in situations, no matter how difficult they might seem."

Jennifer Brulé
Finance



No business is complete without a capable and confident administration operator, which is where Jennifer Bruyns comes in. Jennifer manages the finer details of the magazine, all with an amazing sense of humour and quick wit. She is effervescent and absolutely hilarious, qualities that make her a great member of the *WestCoast Families* team.

One theme stood out amongst all of the *WestCoast Mom* interviews, and Jennifer was no exception. She insists that our "close knit" working team creates an "inspiring group of ladies" that she loves to work with. The feeling, we can assure you, is mutual.

Jennifer's children are 12 and 20, keeping her plenty busy when she isn't working on the magazine. Jennifer also loves to camp throughout the Lower Mainland, exploring the outdoors.

Although accomplished in her job, where Jennifer has made the biggest impact is as a mother to her two kids. "I now know unconditional love and I have two best friends," she said.

Jennifer Bruyns Administration



Jodi Iverson Sales Manager and Contributing Editor

The magazine doesn't function without Jodi, our Sales Manager, a role she's held for more than a decade. Her knowledge and experience have helped build the *WestCoast Families* brand through social media, events and more.

Her son, Alex, is 22 and her daughter, Emma, is 10. Together they live in East Vancouver with her husband, Corey. Meeting Jodi, it's obvious that she is one of those women who are meant to be a mother. "I've been a mom since I was 17, so it's a very big part of my identity," says Jodi. "It's the joy of my life."

Considering the hyper-local mandate of *WestCoast Families*, Jodi is a natural fit considering her involvement in her area. Indeed, her community participation is enviable and admirable, as she can often be found fundraising and bringing awareness to local issues. "I'm kind of a chronic volunteer," says Jodi. And in all her sacrifice as a mother, Jodi's children are cognizant of the effort. "She takes me to all my different programs, even if it means skipping things that she actually has to do in her own life," says Jodi's daughter, Emma.

Along the way, Jodi has learned many life lessons, but none as great as her parting words: "Live in the moment. That's the biggest thing my kids have taught me; to really be present."



Krysta is the Art Director of *WestCoast Families*, bringing the magazine to life with creative layouts and ideas. She lives in East Van with her partner, Dylan, her daughter, Clementine, 9, and two Border Collies. Both in her art and family life, Krysta represents everything we value at *WestCoast Families*, truly immersing herself in her community and exploring all it has to offer. "The magazine has made me feel a part of the wider community of families in the Lower Mainland," she said.

The reflection of all her hard work as a mother is evident in Krysta's intelligent and vivacious daughter Clementine, who is opinionated, stunningly polite, and passionate. "What I've learned most in being a mom is that my child is always watching me, and everything I do has an effect on her. It's a pretty huge responsibility when you realize that your child is emulating what you do."

When asked about about her experience with motherhood, Krysta says, "My daughter is the embodiment of all my life goals. It's about sharing life." How could anyone put it better than that? ★

Krysta Furioso Art Director

