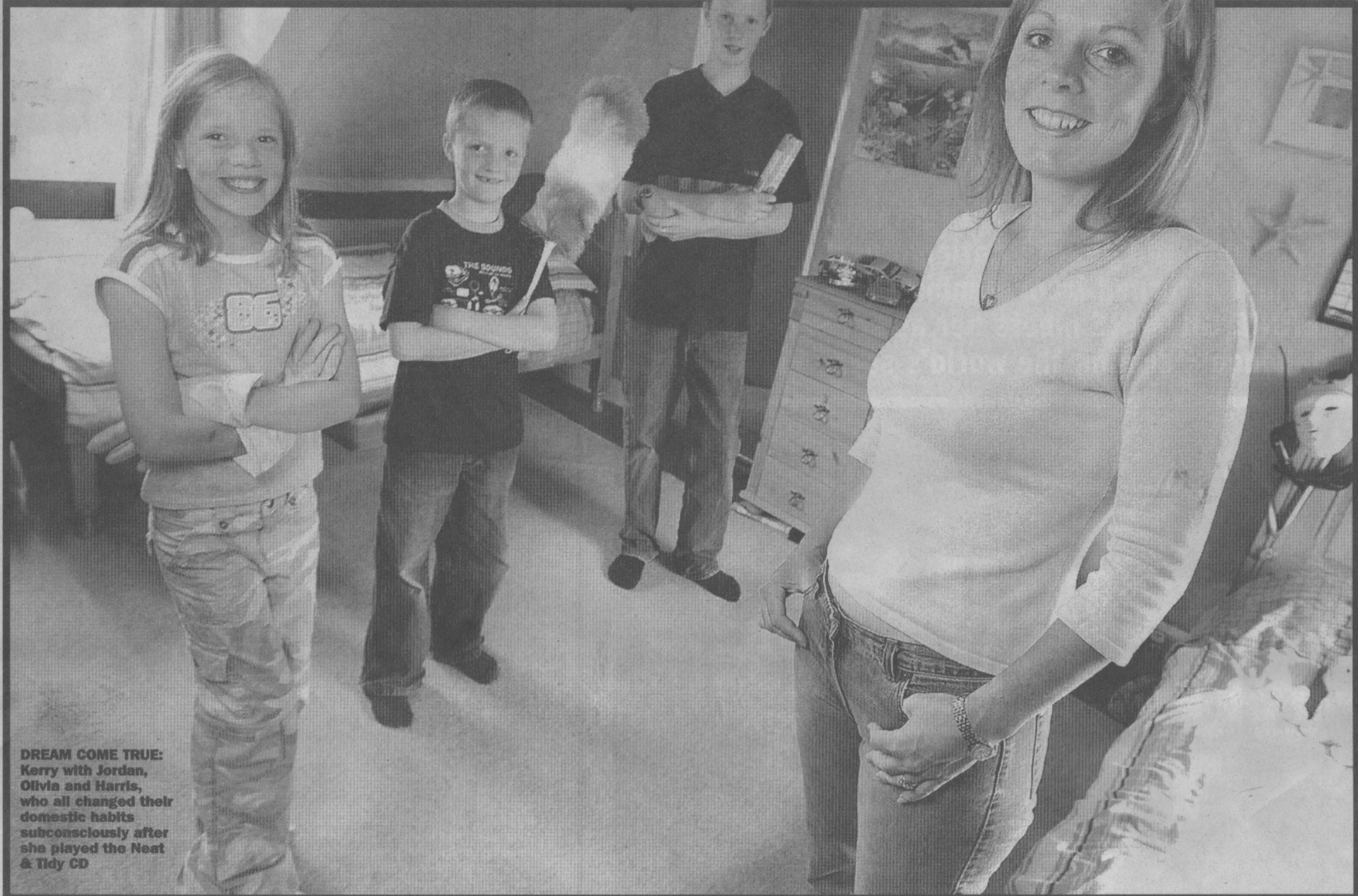



Express Woman

Picture: JOHN WRIGHT



DREAM COME TRUE: Kerry with Jordan, Olivia and Harris, who all changed their domestic habits subconsciously after she played the Neat & Tidy CD



DREAM COME TRUE:
Kerry with Jordan,
Olivia and Harris,
who all changed their
domestic habits
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she played the Neat
& Tidy CD

DO YOU ever hear yourself saying, "Pick that up, put that away, put that in the bin", and after the 10th time of doing so in as many minutes yelling, "Well I might as well do it myself"? Do you then resentfully set off, picking up and tidying up after the rest of the household? Until May this year, that was me. I was caught between wanting a tidy house and having three children and an undomesticated husband.

Our house is always buzzing with the children, their friends and their activities and that is how I like it, but I don't like the debris that goes with it. It was never a problem when the children were very small because I was at home clearing up as I went along but, now that they're older and I work five days a week as a healthcare assistant, I resent having to do it all myself.

I would not call my children brats; they are lovely but they *are* children and picking up their toys is just as likely to happen as me winning the lottery. Jordan is 13, loves football and is always on the go. Olivia is 11 and a horse rider and Harris is eight and a ball of energy. We live in a detached house in Great Dunmow, Essex, with two dogs and five chickens and it is a full-time job keeping up with them, the housework and the animals.

I work in an elderly patients' ward at the Hertfordshire and Essex hospital in nearby Bishop's Stortford. It is a pretty tiring job and, with my husband Jeremy, 46, working as a chauffeur and doing very long hours, the housework is the bane of my life.

A while ago, I was getting really depressed at how resentful I was becoming over the kids' behaviour. It was becoming apparent that the more they could do for themselves, the longer and greater the trail of mess they would leave behind. When they made their own lunch I could see exactly what had gone into their sandwich by surveying the debris on the kitchen counter. I would ask them nicely to tidy up even before they had started doing

My messy children became tidy angels

Most mums despair if their kids are pathologically untidy and Kerry Tzen was no exception. Then a CD that aims to help people become neat and tidy transformed her life, as she tells ROZ LEWIS

something and often I wouldn't realise they had not tidied up until they had gone out later.

The older they get the less quality time we have together and that time is very precious. The last thing I want to do is to moan about picking clothes up or putting cups and plates in the dishwasher. I want to have a good relationship with my children and being a nagging mum does not fit the picture. So it was driving me crazy. I would never shout or

scream, but I did find myself getting more and more frustrated about the situation.

Then I read about InnerTalk's compact discs in a weekly magazine a patient had beside her bed. It appealed to me because of its non-confrontational suggestion of making big changes, quietly, effectively and without negotiation, in so many aspects of your life. After studying the InnerTalk website, I found it had a CD called Neat & Tidy, for helping

people become exactly that. Then, one day in May, I got to the end of my tether. I had had a particularly tiring day and the kids' untidy trails of toys, food and clothes were everywhere. Nobody was listening to my exhausted pleas so I stole 10 minutes, sat down with a cup of tea and switched on the computer. I logged on to InnerTalk and bought the CD over the Internet. When it arrived I thought, "OK, let's try this out".

I was hopeful the CD might help slightly, although I was not expecting miracles. Even a slight improvement would, I thought, be worth it. Jeremy thought it wouldn't work and could not understand why I had bought it. He is out of the house so much, leaving home at 5am and often not returning until after midnight, seven days a week, that he doesn't know what a family with three active children actually

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does and he couldn't appreciate my cleaning woes.

I didn't tell the kids what I was doing. I just played the CD when we ate each evening. All you can hear is soothing classical music. As I normally play classical music, they didn't notice anything different but they were surprised that I refused to allow other music at that time.

I was astonished how soon little changes began. The very first evening, Jordan put his plate in the dishwasher after dinner. Then Olivia

did the same and Harris cleared the table.

Changes continued all week. They would come in from school and put their coats and bags away. Towels were hung up after their baths. Orange peel went in the bin and not on the coffee table. Glasses of squash went in the dishwasher, dirty clothes in the linen bin. Somehow they were taking responsibility for their own messiness – and they still do. They still create large obstacle courses of toys, but now they tidy up after themselves.

Jeremy still thinks it is all a bit far-fetched

Subconscious messages that spell out a major miracle for mums



PEACE AT LAST: The family enjoys life in the garden

but he's pleased the kids help me and I have got what I wanted without having to nag, moan and

have a go at them. It has made my life much, much easier and I feel much less stressed about the

housework. The great thing is they didn't even know it was happening.

I finally told them how, subconsciously, they were being reprogrammed to be neat and tidy at the end of July. Their first reaction was amazement, then puffed-up pride. They were intrigued and put their ears close to the music centre to try to pick up the messages on the CD.

Olivia says that when she came home from school the other day she

“naturally” dropped her uniform on the floor when changing and was then surprised to find herself feeling the need to pick it up and place it on a hanger and that to do so felt good inside. So, now that they do know, they are still being that much more helpful. It is a major miracle.

● *Neat & Tidy*, from *InnerTalk* (01628 898366/ www.innertalk.co.uk), costs £22.99, plus £1.95 postage and packing.

HOW DO THE CDs WORK?

THE technology works on the theory that to change behaviour you have to change your subconscious. The two halves of the brain process information differently. The left half, thought to be logical, rational and analytical, receives positive messages that conflict with negative beliefs, so it hears, “It's OK to succeed”. The right hemisphere, thought to be the creative, intuitive side, hears authoritative statements such as, “I succeed at everything I do”. The Neat & Tidy CD plays both types of message

simultaneously, so the brain's analytical left hemisphere cannot argue with the permissive statement, while the non-analytical right simply accepts the authoritarian line. As the hemispheres are task-orientated, both the left and right become involved. You don't actually hear the words, just nature sounds or pleasant classical music.

Affirmations on the CD, which lasts about 45 minutes, include, “I am organised”, “I am neat”, and “I love order”.