

grandma now. I love this stage – if I'm honest I found it really tough when they were little. I loved them to bits, but because I'm a free spirit I sometimes felt like I'd had my wings clipped a bit when I had to stay at home. So I'd often make my life really difficult by taking them out with me – I tried to live my life the same – just with all these children in tow. But now is definitely the best stage of parenting for me. Everything is fun.

### What's the best advice you've had?

I have a tendency to try to control things, but that's not always the best way – the children have to experience things to learn, rather than me just telling them. My mum has always said to me, 'Pearl, you've got to stop trying to control every situation.' I've tried to step back as they've got older. They have to live their own lives.

### And what's your parenting style?

Disorganised! Especially now because I'm the busiest I've ever been in my life.

### What does Danny do better than you?

Cooking. He's an amazing cook. I'll be going away for a few weeks soon, and when I told Betty she said, 'Oh, that's fine, Mummy, Daddy can cook so much better than you anyway.' He won't tidy up, though!

### Describe your perfect family day.

We live in the Somerset countryside, and the older ones are amazing about coming home – they love it. We have lots of fun, even if it's just sitting around chatting or playing cards together. We like the country and I don't miss living in the city. Betty loves it. She goes to a wonderful school – she's thriving there.

## What's been your most embarrassing mum moment?

When they were younger it was hard with four of them and all the stuff they had going on. They all laugh about it now – how we'd turn up for birthday parties a day late, or forget things to take to school, or I'd even miss school events completely. Pretty

## PEARL'S MINI HEROES



### Mama must-have

'Dr Sebagh's Deep Exfoliating Mask is amazing – you instantly look younger when you've taken it off!'





### Dressing up

Betty road-tests the clothes in the Petite Pearl Lowe collection. She's really into trying them on and giving her opinion.



### Swing thing

'A swing chair saved my life. I'd pop them in there and I could clean, cook and do everything.'

We're like one big gang, and as the kids are getting older it's getting more interesting'

embarrassing. Some mums are amazing at all those things, and I'm so jealous because I'm just not!

### And your biggest panic?

It's horrible when they're ill, and as they've got older some of their teenage choices have caused a panic. We're pretty relaxed parents, but sometimes it's a challenge.

Who would be your fantasy babysitter?
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My kids all have a brilliant sense of humour, so Ricky Gervais would be great. He'd make them laugh.

# What's the one attribute that you've passed on to your children?

My generosity. They're all so generous and it drives me mad because they give away all their stuff. Frankie had money for his birthday and he went into school and bought everyone sweets from the tuck shop. In particular, I've tried to teach the boys to treat girls nicely; to pay for them on dates, to be kind and honest.

### What has having children taught you?

To be selfless. You have to think about other people before yourself. That's difficult when you first become a mum because you've only ever had yourself to think about.

### What have you had to give up?

I had to give up playing music, which I do still miss, but I couldn't tour and be a parent too. I did try to take them with me but it didn't work.

### What's your guilty pleasure?

Chocolate. I'm trying to switch to dark chocolate but it's not quite the same. For me, it has to be a Flake.

## If you could invent a crazy gadget for new mums, what would it be?

An amazing camera app on your phone so you could see your kids at all times, wherever they were.

## What's your one top parenting tip you'd pass on to new mums?

You have to give over to the baby – it goes so fast, so enjoy that first year without trying to do a million things.

Pearl has just launched a new range of children's clothing (pearllowe.co.uk). She was chatting to Ali Horsfall