

Katy's Mommy M.D.s



How these Busy Mothers Balance Family Life with Patient Care

Written by **Noreen Stavinoha**
Select Photography by **Suzanne Box**

The life of a working mom is often hectic, and the job never seems to be done. But these Katy area mom doctors have their work/life balance down to a science, and they're able to enjoy a successful career and still savor precious moments with their families.

Organization is a Must

"Organization is most helpful to me for keeping balance in my life," says Dr. Nichole Cole, a Katy Ob/Gyn. We do everything by a schedule which helps the girls know what to do and what to expect."

Dr. Cole and her husband, Robert, are parents to eight-year-old Sidney, who was born while her mom was still in residency in Houston, and Sheldon, age five. Both parents share the responsibilities of readying the girls for school, and tag team dropping them off and picking them up. As a pharmaceutical sales rep, Robert has flexible hours so he is able to help out a lot. The Coles believe in structure, keeping things simple, and not overextending themselves.

The Cole family moved to Katy shortly before opening Dr. Cole's practice seven years ago. Dr. Cole says she loves that Katy is a community where she can go to the grocery store and run into patients and kids that she knows.

Finding a Family Strategy

Dr. Stacey Gallas is a pediatrician who is married to Katy plastic surgeon Mennen Gallas. As busy as they are, the couple has found their own strategy for balancing family and career. Nine years ago, when their oldest son Peter was an infant, he went to daycare while they worked full-time. When baby Eddie arrived two years

later, Stacey Gallas decided to cut back on her hours. Because she works for Texas Children's Pediatric Associates, she was able to do what's called locum tenens, which is basically being a substitute physician as needed with any of the Texas Children's practices. Stacey Gallas continues to work as a substitute physician and enjoys more time with their three children, Peter, Eddie, and two year old daughter, Christina. This work arrangement enables her to keep up with what's going on in pediatrics so when the children are grown she can enter full-time practice again with ease.

"Children are not little forever," says Dr. Gallas, "and for the most part, the career will always be there if you can just keep up a little bit of it. It's always a balance. You can't do everything, so you have to make choices." Dr. Gallas and her family have resided in Katy for ten years and she says that the best things about Katy are that it is a family-oriented community with good schools and good medical facilities.

It Takes a Village

Dr. Tamara Stout knows all about adjustments when juggling family and career. When she opened her family practice three years ago, she chose to shorten her office hours three days a week, and she has a hospitalist take care of her hospitalized patients so she could spend more time with her husband and three children.

Justin, seven, was born while Dr. Stout was still in medical school, and her daughter, four-year-old Lauren, was born her last year of residency in Houston. She opened her office when Lauren was a year old, and has since added Brady to the family, who is now almost two.

Stacey Gallas, pictured with her daughter Christina, is married to Katy plastic surgeon Mennen Gallas



Chris and Tami Stout balance work life with raising three children



Photo by Karen Beyer Photography

Dr. Agnes Kisch has always put children first, whether it's her own or her patients





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VOLUME 2

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SPECIAL EDITION

2nd ANNUAL 2009 KATY HOLIDAY FUN FESTIVAL

Local organization sets its sights on building a community event.

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By G Entertainment Group

The *Katy Holiday Fun Festival* was established in 2008 for the purpose of providing an exciting community based holiday event in the Katy area during an exciting time of year as well as a venue to raise donations for local charities. All proceeds will go to assist non-profit organizations and local families who are in need of cash, clothes, food, toys and gifts for the holidays. Unfortunately, there are families in our community and the surrounding area who are in need of the community's assistance during this season. In 2008 the *Katy Holiday Fun Festival* collected over \$20,000 in food, clothes, and toys for the less fortunate families in the area as well as approximately \$5000 in cash to Katy area non-profits such as Katy Christian Ministries, Breath of Life Children's Clinic and the Pregnancy Help Center in 2008. We were also able to personally touch several individual families with food, toys and cash for the holiday season. The first year was truly a blessing for all who participated and we look forward to this event growing tremendously in the years to come. 2009 already promises a great deal of growth and now is the time to join forces with what will become the fastest growing charity event in the area. Don't miss your opportunity to expose your organization to one of the most affluent and fastest growing communities even in the Houston area.



Local kids enjoy carnival rides at the 1st Annual Katy Holiday Fun Festival.

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Bodile Vanort, 9, makes a snowball at the Katy Holiday Fun Festival Saturday. (Times photo by Tracy Dang)

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The Coles believe in structure, keeping things simple, and not over-extending themselves



Dr. Tami Stout believes a strong support system and shared responsibility between spouses are essential to raising a family

Photo by Karen Beyer Photography

Dr. Stout commutes from Sugar Land every day, largely because that's where her support system is anchored. Her parents live nearby, and they help a lot with the children. "A strong support system is necessary," says Dr. Stout. "Shared responsibility by a spouse is essential, and I probably couldn't do it without my parents. You have to weigh out what you can handle and how you can manage it, and take everything in stride."

Focused on Children

Dr. Agnes Kisch, a Katy area pediatrician, has made various adjustments over the years to serve the children in her practice and raise her own children at home. Her son Daniel is now age 20 and a student at USC in Los Angeles. Brandon, age 16, is a junior at Strake Jesuit High School in Houston, and an avid golfer. Her husband, Jason, helps out a lot and transports Brandon to and from his many golf tournaments. Although her children are now busy with their own lives, when they were small, she chose to work a part-time schedule. "The center of my life is children," says Dr. Kisch. "Whether it is my children or the children in my practice, I always try to arrange everything else around them."

It's not just physicians who struggle to balance work and family, most moms are busy and are looking for ways to juggle it all. Whether you're a full-time working mom, a part-time working mom, or a stay-at-home mom, most mothers struggle to find ways to balance their lives with the needs of their children. What works well for one family may not work for yours so the key is finding strategies and arrangements that work for your special situation.

As a pediatrician, Dr. Kisch talks to many busy Katy moms in her practice and offers this sound advice: "Devote some private time for your own well-being and relaxation. Give yourself a half hour every day for meditation, a massage, or whatever you choose, to relax and keep things in balance." KM

NOREEN STAVINOHA is a Katy resident who enjoys writing about interesting people.

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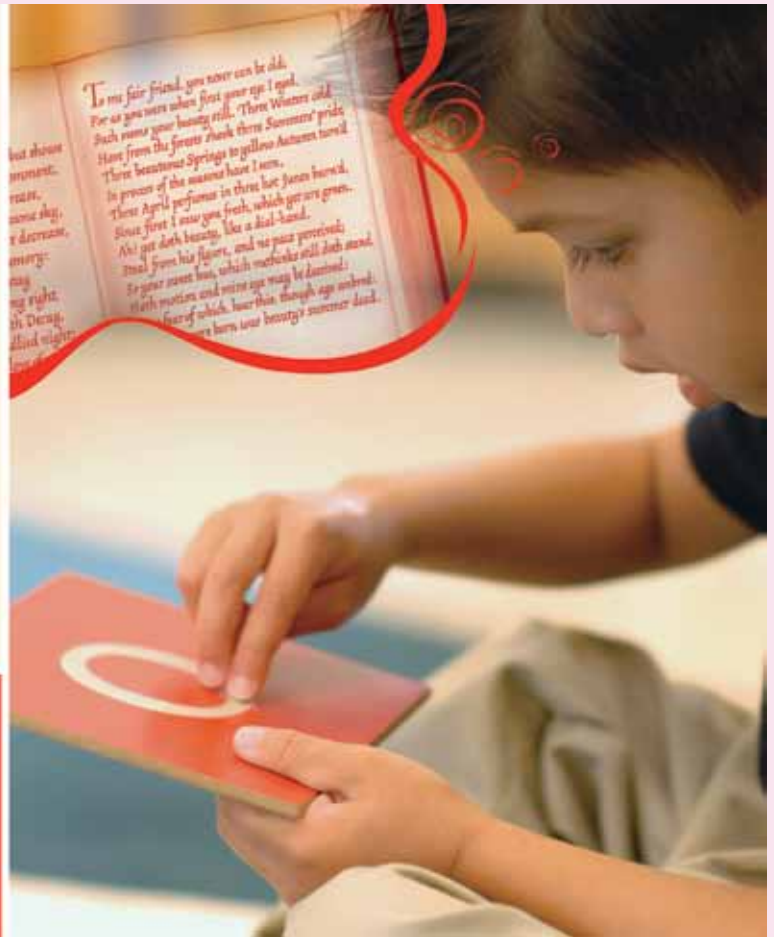
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The Gallas family, Drs. Mennen and Stacey Gallas and their children Peter, Eddie, and Christina

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