

Bailee, Lincoln, Ben, Harrison,
Cooper, Jackson, April, and
London Hughes



Making It Work

How do they make it work? “Patience, I guess,” says April. “Sometimes I get overwhelmed, but I had kids because I wanted kids. They came one at a time. I keep it all in perspective and learn their personalities and what works for them.”

Her husband Ben grew up as the second oldest of five. “I’d rather have my hands too full than not full enough,” Ben says. “We have a lot of fun together. There’s never really a dull moment as a parent in our family.”

Their schedules are sometimes stretched when it comes to logistics. “When I’m just getting home from work, April’s dropped one of the kids off at football practice, another at soccer, and then she has to do something for another child. So we have to understand our limits and work within them,” shares Ben.

He works as an operations manager at WorleyParsons, and April is a part-time labor and delivery nurse. The family moved to Katy from Colorado two years ago as part of a job transfer.



The Hughes

HALF-DOZEN

**Ben and April Hughes use teamwork
to parent their six children**

*Written by Tonya Ellis
Photography by Juliana Evans*

As a young girl, April Hughes dreamed of having a large family. “My younger sister and I were five and a half years apart,” the Calgary, Canada native recalls. “We kind of grew up as two only children.” Her wish came true in a big way years later, when she met her husband Ben in college in Idaho, and they later married. Today, the Katy couple are proud parents to six children. Bailee, 11, Lincoln, 9, Jackson, 7, Harrison, 5, London, 3, and Cooper, 3 months, make up the Hughes half-dozen and keep their parents on their toes.

Helping Hands

The Hughes parents stress the importance of hard work to their children, and each child is assigned chores. “We live in a beautiful community and have been richly blessed with things,” says Ben. “But as a boy from Idaho, I learned to work by feeding cows, mowing lawns, and bailing hay. Some of those opportunities don’t exist in the suburbs, but we’ve been able to provide them other opportunities to work and do their chores.”

April welcomes any sort of help around the house. “The two oldest are responsible for the main floors. On Saturdays, everybody cleans the bathrooms together,” says April. “The youngest empty the garbage, and everybody clears their own dishes from the table and puts them in the sink or dishwasher.”

Their extended family doesn’t live in Texas, but they get lots of support from their friends at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and other friends in the community. Ben volunteers with the youth at church, as well, and has

coached some of his son's sports teams. April has been active in the PTA at the schools the kids attend and served as a Cub Scout den leader.

"We have a wonderful network of friends here in Katy - from other members of our church to those we've met on our children's sports teams or from school and friendly neighbors as well," he says. "Folks in Katy have always been willing to lend a hand."

Playing Together, Staying Together

The parents require that each of their children plays at least one sport and is involved in music in some way, whether it is playing an instrument or singing. "We have a piano in the home," says April. "My husband and I grew up playing the piano."

*"We have a lot of fun together.
There's never really a dull moment
as a parent in our family."
- Ben Hughes*

When one of the children is participating in a game or event, the entire family supports them. "All of us go together," says April. "Nobody gets to stay home."

An outdoorsy family, the Hughes clan enjoys biking, going for walks, and playing football and soccer together at Seven Lakes High School. The children also like to spend time in their own backyard, doing archery or swimming in their pool.

"We love the Cinco Ranch community," adds Ben. "We really enjoy the pathways, bayous, and numerous lakes around Cinco Ranch for running, fishing, and exploring."

Couple Time

To carve out couple-time amid their many responsibilities, Ben and April get creative. "Sometimes it's grocery shopping on a Saturday night, or we will talk in the car," shares April. "We go out on formal nights for dinner." April advises other parents struggling to juggle family and other commitments to keep perspective. "Don't try to conform to what everybody else thinks a family should be. You've got to let the little things go and have fun with it. They are not little forever, so just enjoy it." **KM**



TONYA ELLIS enjoys feature writing and spending time with her husband and three children.

MEET The Hughes HALF-DOZEN



Bailee, 11

Sixth-grader at
Seven Lakes Junior High

Enjoys soccer, plays flute in the school band, and starred in her first junior high play this year

Lincoln, 9

Fourth-grader at
Stanley Elementary

Plays baseball for Katy America and is a Cub Scout Bear



Jackson, 7

Second-grader at Stanley Elementary

Played on a championship-winning team in the Katy Youth Football league

Harrison, 5

Kindergartner at
Stanley Elementary

Recently started his first season of basketball



London, 4

Playful and enjoys gymnastics and attending preschool

Cooper, 8 months

Cheerful and loves charming those around him with his smiles and dimples



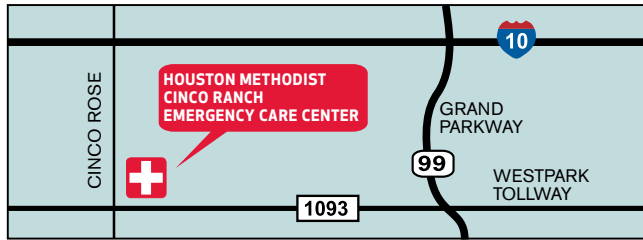
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