

VOLUME 8. ISSUE 1.

# In-Style MotherHood

...Parenting, Family, Lifestyle & More

5

Things You Think  
Your Children Are  
But They Are Not.

**Common Illnesses in  
Toddlers & What to Do**



**Getting To Know  
The McDermotts**

**Dolapo Holmes On Home-Schooling Her Kids In Lagos**





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# In-Style MotherHood

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## COVER CREDIT

Dad's Outfit: @kimonokollection  
Mum's Dress: @moofadesigns  
Wig: VV Hair Nigeria  
Kids: Ruff 'n' Tumble  
Makeup: Joy for Studio24  
Stylist: Yummie  
Hair Stylist: Laben Hair Concept  
Photography: Gbenga Akindele-Nelly



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# Motherhood In-Style

TEAM

## EDITOR

Pauline Rumm

## CREATIVE / ART DIRECTOR

Babs Okubote

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Gbenga Akindele-Nelly

## FASHION STYLIST

Yummie

## MAKE-UP ARTIST

Joy for Studio 24

## HAIR STYLIST

Laben Hair Concept

10, Omolanke Street, Maryland  
234 703 2301660, 234 7098018170

## OB/GYN

Dr. Alex Molokwu  
expert@motherhoodinstyle.net

## GENERAL PRACTITIONER

Dr. Oke  
expert@motherhoodinstyle.net

## OB/GYN

Dr. Olajuwon Alabi  
expert@motherhoodinstyle.net

## GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Temitope Adewole

## ACCOUNTANT

Blessing Asakpa

## CONTRIBUTORS

Chiomah N. Momah  
Oluwatoyin Osaigbovo  
Ameena Aliyu Bleighton  
Moyin Kalu  
Dolapo Marinho  
Yemisi Oluwole-Ikuomola  
Bamidele Wale-Oshinowo

## MIDWIFE/ NUTRITIONIST/ FITNESS EXPERT

Christine Wild  
expert@motherhoodinstyle.net

## CSA EXPERT

Ololade Hector Fowobaje  
expert@motherhoodinstyle.net

## PAEDIATRICIAN

Rupert Moser  
expert@motherhoodinstyle.net

## LOGISTICS

Paul Ugbede

## ADVERTISING

08091443394, 08091363389

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32, Omodara Street, Awushe Estate,  
Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria  
Website: [www.motherhoodinstyle.net](http://www.motherhoodinstyle.net)  
e-mail: [info@motherhood.com.ng](mailto:info@motherhood.com.ng)

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## Meet our team of

## EXPERTS



○ **Dr. Alex Kaoranu Molokwu,**  
OB-GYN

Dr. Alex Molokwu has been in medical practice for 34 years. He has a daughter and two sons, Nneka, Nnamdi and Iloba.



○ **Christine Wild,**  
MIDWIFE / BABY NUTRITIONIST /  
FITNESS EXPERT

Christine Wild has been a midwife for 32 years. She has three daughters and a 16 months old grandchild.



○ **Dr Olajuwon Alabi**  
OB-GYN

Dr. Olajuwon Alabi is a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at the South Shore Women's Clinic, Victoria Island, Lagos. He is a UK trained clinician having undergone his postgraduate training at both the Yorkshire and North Western Deanery. He attained a Membership of the prestigious Royal College of Obstetrician and Gynaecologist and is also on the specialist register by UK General Medical Council. His special interest areas are advanced Gynaecological Endoscopy, early pregnancy problems, endometriosis, fibroid and high risk pregnancies. Before relocating to Nigeria, he worked as a consultant at the Liverpool Women's Hospital and the Penine Acute Trust in Manchester. He is a trainer in Emergency Gynaecology and endoscopic skills.

○ **Dr. Gboyega Oke,**  
GENERAL PRACTITIONER

Dr. Gboyega Oke has been a general practitioner for 27 years. He is married to Peace and has two daughters, Oluwafunmilayo (16), Oluwaseunlafunmi (13) and a son, Oluwadamilare (11).



○ **Dr. Rupert Moser,**  
PEDIATRICIAN

Dr. Rupert Moser is a German based paediatrician who has been in active private practice for many years.



## CONTRIBUTORS

○ **Chinwe Kalu**

Chinwe Kalu is a wife and mother of four teenagers-Dikachi 19, Maruche 17, Ginika 15 and Neto 13. She is a Value Creation Consultant and Trainer, author and radio presenter of the Dove Eyes Show. She loves to share her experience and wisdom with other women.

ck@doveeyes.com  
+234 803 201 2458  
www.doveeyes.com



○ **Ololade Hector-Fowobaje**

Married to Olu and mum to Lade 16, Toni 14 and Kiki 13. Ololade is a psychologist and author. She heads the O5 Centre for children; an organization which campaigns against child sexual abuse (CSA), counsels CSA victims and disseminates sexuality education. She has also authored two highly successful behavioural books: The many faces of sexual Abuse and Etiquette Nuggets.

She is the co-ordinator of UNICEF Child Protection Network (CPN) Ikeja, Lagos. Check out her activities at [www.O5centre.org](http://www.O5centre.org)





# In Mails



Dear MJM,

Adunni's beauty and courage is simply mind-blowing! I admired her from TV shows and music videos, but hearing her story, having her relive it has just birthed a new side to her awesomeness! Well done MJM for capturing it and sharing it with us!

Funke Bello  
Abuja

MJM!

I just want to say that my best segment of the magazine is the mum to mum with Paula. Your views and opinions on motherhood are so rich, enlightening and full of that motherly passion, that can't be denied. I love the magazine; I'm already looking forward to the next edition's mum to mum!!

EDITOR'S LETTER



"All men cheat!" This phrase used mostly by women, is a sweeping generalisation that doesn't hold true. While it may appear that faithful, trustworthy men are out-numbered by their dishonest counterparts, they are by no means extinct.

I know a number of men who would take exception to this declaratory statement. It is not only unfair and disrespectful to faithful men, but is also misleading and untrue.

Cheating is not exclusive to men, women also cheat in staggering numbers. Would it then be acceptable to say "all women cheat?"

If you have had the good fortune to be part of a healthy, loving and transparent relationship, you would agree that infidelity is not a given. Sadly, the custodians of this flawed ideology have undoubtedly been shaped by their negative experiences and influences.

Declaring that "all men cheat" reeks of acceptance. It validates a toxic abnormality, creating an ensnaring environment for infidelity to thrive.

While I can empathise with anyone suffering at the hands of a cheat, I also implore that you do not stoop.

men cheat. What you are doing is justifying your reason for accepting his behaviour. Cheating is a choice.

What worries me most is the danger of passing this fallacious mindset on to the younger generation. Our sons and daughters begin to think that cheating is the prerogative of the male species. No one is entitled to cheat on their spouse. It is a breach of trust and vows made to the union.

As mothers, it is our responsibility to teach our sons and daughters self control, how to cleave to the one woman or man they have chosen to commit to till death do them part, while highlighting to them the pain, misery and trauma infidelity, without exception, produces.

Our duty lies in raising strong, independent daughters who understand that fidelity within relationships and marriage is not a mirage. Teach them to value their peace of mind and happiness over their desire to be someone's Mom!

Change begins with you. You can do this!

Wuraola Akobie  
Uyo



Hello MJM!

The article on 5 things you should know about your little boys penis I particularly enjoyed, because I'm 7 months pregnant, expecting my 2nd child and it's a boy! Yay! These are things that I need to learn and be aware of. It's good that there is a platform mums can go to be educated. Not sure my mail will get featured but, it's worth a shot to write to you. Good Job Motherhood!!

Sade Williams

Folake  
Lagos

Raising teens these days is almost impossible. They are so addicted to the internet, their phones and friends. It's like they deliberately make their parents outcasts. Thankfully once again, MJM came through with a very interesting and rich article on how to make my teen my best friend. Kudos!!

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## One Major Lesson I Learned in 2017

No matter how far or how long you've been heading in the wrong direction, stop, count your losses, review your situation, make a turn around and keep moving.

Easier said than done as I wrangled to accept the truth. For me, it was a huge struggle because I had invested scare resources, time and painstaking effort into this particular project and I didn't want to come to terms with this unexpected situation. I was in denial.

You need to know that if you keep living in denial, someday, reality is going to hit you in the face like a blustery wind in the storm. The day of reckoning will come, that's for sure. So, will you keep going until the situation spirals out of control or will you find the courage now to make a U-turn?

For me, it was dealing with the fallouts of a business idea gone wrong. For you, it may be ending up in an unhappy marriage which leaves you with a feeling of worthlessness or finding yourself in a caustic relationship. It could also be making a parental mistake, and all these for an extended period of time.

When you make this realization, you will experience a myriad of emotions. Anger. Disappointment. Pain.

Depression. Sadness. These are all perfectly normal emotions but do not be too hard on yourself. What is important now is you coming to terms with reality. Like an African proverb says, "when-ever you wake up is your morning."

You must summon the courage to pick up the pieces, dust yourself and take a different turn that will set you on the right path. Keep moving and as you do, stay focused. Did I hear you say, "What will people say?"; "Ha! They will laugh at me" "They will say that I am a failure."

What do you care about what people with logs in their eyes are saying? If they could see clearly, they will see where you are going but they can't. But this isn't even about them, it is about you, you doing the right thing, you understanding that the best success stories often begins with failure, you keeping your eyes on the prize.

As you press on in 2018, my prayer for you is that, the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands for you.

Love, *Paula*





**15**  
**PAGES**  
**SPECIAL**

# M O T H E R H O O D



## THIS EDITION'S MUST READ

- Dolapo Holmes On Home-Schooling Her Kids in Lagos
- How To Wash Your and Care For Your Veejay

# DOLAPO HOLMES

on

# HOME-SCHOOLING

## HER KIDS IN LAGOS

“Mine is the white gate on the left towards the end of the street”, was how Dolapo Holmes described her home in a text message. It was the only white gate on the street and in retrospect, it aptly described the mother of two – unconventional, free, swimming against the tide and loving every bit of it.

I am here to talk with the Holmeses about why they are home-schooling their children Lolade, 14 and Reya, 11 and see what it looks like I am not sure what to expect but it turns out to be a regular home with normal people except that in place of family portraits are various works of art. Frames of different sizes and colours line the stairs leading to the upper floor, Dolapo sprayed and distressed them herself.

Their dog, Tom-Tom, seems very drawn to me the moment the door opens and I am later informed that Tom-Tom has a thing for the female gender. The TV is tuned to SuperSports and Nadal is playing Sock at the ATP World Tour, a match which the former wins easily.

There are over fifteen tennis tournament trophies between the Holmeses combined, none of which are on display, just neatly arranged in Reya's room. Lolade and Reya could one day shock the world on this path, remember the Williams sisters? However there's much more to the Holmeses than the tennis they love and I let them tell their story in between dance class, tie & dye, mathematics, baking and of course, tennis.









**MIM:** Why home-schooling, was it something you stumbled into or did you always know you were going to do this?

**DH:** First of all I think I have to make clear that I am not anti-school; I have never been anti-school. I went through the school system and attribute many of my talents to having attended wonderful schools. Home school was a personal decision that came out of a realisation that I was not satisfied with the breadth of what was being offered to my children at that point in their lives. It was too one dimensional. My husband and I talked about it and decided we had the right set of circumstances to perhaps try to do something different and see how the children would respond to a home-schooling environment. At that time my emphasis on academics was very limited. I was more drawn towards the idea of creating children that were interested in the world around them. Empathetic children that understood suffering and wanted to alleviate it, that understood that riches and worth are not the same thing. So we figured, teach them to be interested in ideas and concepts and they could go to and do the academics themselves later. That's essentially how home-schooling came about. Sounds quite ideological doesn't it!

**MIM:** How long have you home-schooled and how has it worked out so far?

**DH:** Well, we've been at it almost five years now. In the beginning, we stumbled and there was no order. In fact, I started off replicating the school model; 9-9:30 – English, 9:30-9:45 – Break, and after a couple of weeks, I started thinking, 'No, this is feeling like regular school and we didn't want to do that'. I even went through a period where I was unschooling, 'do what you want, let's be led by your interests' and we found that probably meant sitting in front of the telly all day, so that also wasn't working. We've transitioned through lots of different versions of home-education and we are still learning. Whatever needs we have at a particular point in time, we work through there and then. There's no set curriculum we follow, we don't have any cycle testing, nothing like that; we just do what we feel needs to be done at particular times – up it or lower it, according to how the children are responding.



**MIM:** What has been the response from family and friends?

**DH:** DH: My family is pretty forward thinking, they are generally modern in their mind set. It was just the usual, "Oh really?" "How come?" "How did you decide upon that?" But I think they know me by now, I am pretty anti-establishment and I like to do my own thing and they were a supportive bunch. I did have friends that thought 'Nah, you will never pull this off!', even had some people that thought 'Ah, she's a snob! What does she think taking her children out of school, does she think they are better than mine?' But at the end of the day, I think, once we started doing it and people saw that we weren't crumbling under the weight, it just became more of a fascination to them.

**MIM:** How has home-schooling affected your life, have you had to sacrifice anything?

**DH:** DH: Well, before home-school, I was running a business called Couture Cards Limited and we manufactured and designed event stationery and it was good business. When we made the decision to home-school, I felt (perhaps naively), that I could balance both work and school. As I was doing the bulk of the teaching at that time I discovered that even at the reduced rate of work, it was still way too much to take on simultaneously. So stationery design went out the window and I focused squarely on home-schooling. In terms of sacrifice, I don't think that letting go of the business was a sacrifice, I just accept that things happen in stages. At different points in life you have to adjust to different sets of circumstances. Opportunities come but simply because you are faced with an opportunity does not mean you have to grab it immediately. If you have ability, you can somewhat create your own opportunities. Say I live till I'm 90 and I spend 18 years looking after my children, that's like a blip in my life, so this is the way that I kind of looked at it.



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**MIM:** Today, you've had Dance, Tie & Dye, Mathematics; how do you find your tutors?

**DH:** Teachers are not difficult to find, there's so much talent in Nigeria you have no idea. Even people that are not really teachers have a lot to give. Our wonderful dance instructor, Bunmi Olunloyo, I found her off Studio 53 when I was watching a couple of years ago and I eventually dug her out. Tennis is massive for us, we are a tennis playing family so the kids were introduced to tennis from a very young age.

At the moment, we have three teachers that do academics. Lolade, my oldest daughter is now at secondary level and wants to get some IGCSEs, so she has specialist teachers to take her through core subjects. We do Spanish and try to read a lot, which for me is number one – reading is king. You can travel the world from your sofa if you are reading a book, there's so much that can be experienced simply by reading books, so I'm constantly harassing them about what books they've got their noses in. Many elements of literacy that we spend hours trying to teach like punctuation, sentence structure, flow; become innate simply by reading books.

**MIM:** So do you have light bulb moments where you just think pottery! We should have pottery lessons!

**DH:** I'm essentially a creative, so the thing about creativity is ideas doesn't always pop into your head randomly. You might be looking at a packet of chin-chin and slowly realise 'Oh, that actually would look stunning as a mosaic on canvass' and you glue it to canvass and think 'Oh, what if I add some saw dust or spray it all gold!' Ideas sometimes build like that organically. Other times the kids come and tell me 'I really want to do karate' and I say great, let's go find a karate teacher. They have an input into what they do; there are some things that I make them do by force because I know later on they would be happy to have been taught that skill, but other things they have an input so it's a balance.

































































































































































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