



14 May 2015
The Wellingtonian, Wellington

Author: Talia Carlisle • Section: General News • Article type : News Item
Audience : 72,524 • Page: 16 • Printed Size: 601.00cm² • Market: NZ
Country: New Zealand • ASR: NZD 1,847 • Words: 668 • Item ID: 407426459

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Parenting advice offered with smile

Baby show to cover wide range of issues

By TALIA CARLISLE

The Trinny and Susannah of the parenting world will share real advice at the Baby Show in Wellington next week.

Jacqueline Lockington and Natalie Cutler-Welsh, known as Jacqui and Nat, published their first book, *If Only They'd Told Me*, in November, after which "things got crazy", Lockington said.

Their blog of the same name and podcast series have taken off, leading them to speak at parenting events around the country and have their book promoted as far away as Britain.

"We get into the real stuff a lot of people just don't talk about and we're very honest with it," Lockington said.

"It's all about having sex for the first time after having children and day-to-day things like going supermarket shopping with a child."

The pair were completely different, Lockington said, which helped them appeal to parents of all kinds.

"Nat is a stay-at-home mum and I work four days a week. She's very eco-friendly and does the whole cloth nappy thing. I've always been a working mum and I was disposable nappies all the way," she said.

Their talk at the show will focus on "tips to have a fabulous first year with baby".

Some of their tips are: have frozen meals prepared for the first

few weeks, accept help, adjust your expectations, keep the love alive with your partner and cherish the moments when you can.

"It's really easy to have lots of visitors and rush around and go out for coffee, but it's about being present with your baby when they're awake because the time goes in the blink of an eye."

Fellow Baby Show speaker Jason Shon Bennett would have

benefited from his own advice when he was a first-time parent.

Twenty-five years, four children and two books later, the health researcher will tell Wellington parents what he's learned.

Shon Bennett said he wished he had known the importance of keeping a routine.

"The four key things are bed-time, wake time, exercise time and meal times. If you keep basic rhythms around these four things your health absolutely changes because your bowel health changes," he said.

"If I'd known that, it would've been helpful."

His Baby Show seminar fits in with an Australasian tour to promote his book, *My 20 Golden Rules*, being released next month.

The book answers questions he is most often asked at seminars.

"It's the 20 most important things if you want to be well and live a long, healthy life."

Shon Bennett has become an expert on long lives, having spent 25 years researching centenarians for his first book, *Eat Less, Live Long*.

His books form a basis for his Baby Show seminar about how to be a healthy parent from before conception.

"A lot of people have no idea how to look after their own health, let alone have a healthy pregnancy."

Having a healthy body before conceiving meant a healthy baby

and a happier experience.

"If you have a sick baby who is unwell, it's much harder than if you have a healthy baby. It changes your experience as a parent."

■ The Baby Show, TSB Arena, May 22 till 24, 10am till 5pm, adults \$15 at the door or \$12 online from babyshow.co.nz. Under-12s free.

► BABIES IN FOCUS

The Baby Show will showcase everything needed during pregnancy, early days after birth and beyond.

Products and services range from pregnancy care, maternity clothes and skincare to nappies, cots, wipes and toys. Learn about the latest technology, natural, organic and eco-friendly products, and things that make the life of a new parent easier.

The Baby Show Seminar Theatre will host parenting experts, including baby whisperer Dorothy Wade, Kate "The Nappy Lady" Meads, health researcher Jason Shon Bennett, baby sleep consultant Sarah Antunovic and the comedic duo Jacqui and Nat. The Kids Zone will keep children occupied with face painting, a spring-free trampoline jump zone and craft activities.

■ For information, visit babyshow.co.nz.



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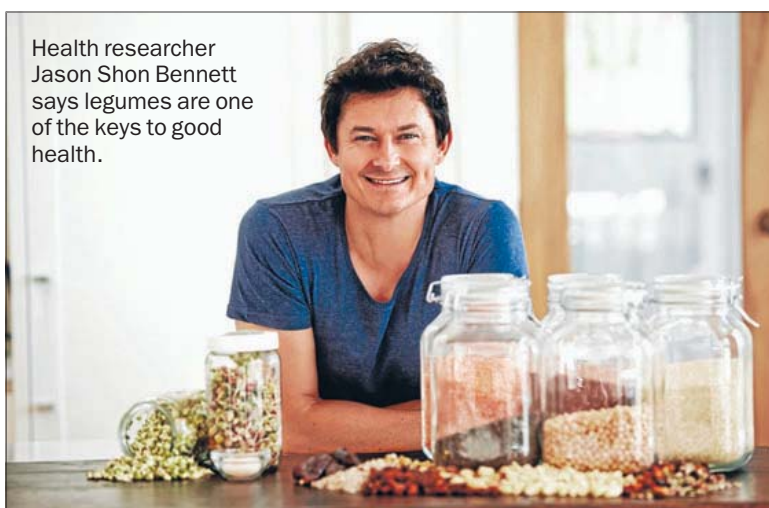
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Auckland mothers Natalie Cutler-Welsh and Jacqueline Lockington talk about the “real stuff” on their parenting blog ifonlytheytoldme.com.



Health researcher Jason Shon Bennett says legumes are one of the keys to good health.