



What's *your* dirty little secret?

You're not the only mom who's forgotten to brush her kids' teeth or cursed in front of her toddler. Trisha Ashworth and Amy Nobile, both 39, have compiled these

confessions and more in their new book, *Dirty Little Secrets From Otherwise Perfect Moms*. Here, they reveal how they got moms to spill the dirt:

How did you convince so many moms to tell you their secrets?

Trisha: When we interviewed moms for our last book, *I Was a Really Good Mom Before I Had Kids*, we would inevitably ask them, "Are you happy?" They would say, "Well, what do you mean by happy?" That's when they would talk about deeper issues, like feeling guilty about barely keeping it all together, and the confessions would just start pouring out.

Did certain secrets come up again and again?

Amy: Dinnertime was a huge hot button. When we asked about cooking, so many moms said, "Oh, my gosh, dinner just throws me over the edge!" Then we would get confessions like, "I sometimes feed my children macaroni and cheese five nights in a row" or "I get takeout and pass it off as homemade!"

Why do you think they were telling these secrets to you instead of their friends?

Trisha: There's so much pressure to be the perfect mom, and if you admit these secrets, it makes you feel like you're not doing a good enough job. We quickly deduced that there's not a whole lot of honesty about these issues, which makes moms feel like they're all alone. But in truth, we all have those moments when we don't make the best decisions!

Did the moms seem to feel relieved after they confessed?

Amy: Definitely—it was so cathartic! A lot of them started by saying, "I know you've never heard this before, but..." And we felt compelled to say, "Just so you know, this is probably the 10th time we've heard this!"

Okay, what's your dirty little mommy secret?

Trisha: We just gave Amy's two kids and my three kids lollipops and stuck them in front of the TV so we could do this interview!

"I forgot to pick my boy up from kindergarten because I was too involved in a VH1 rockumentary."

"I lied and told my son's preschool he was potty-trained so he could get in. I acted surprised when he had an 'accident' every day."

"Sometimes I purposely stay at work one hour longer at the end of the day so I miss the bedtime routine."



Scholarships for single moms!

Raising a kid solo can make getting a degree seem like an impossible dream. But for the more than 8 million single working moms in the United States, only 16 percent of whom have a college degree, there's a new way to earn a bachelor's or master's: Elearners.com is partnering with several online universities to grant \$2 million in full-ride scholarships for "Project Working Mom." You can take classes online, and you'll have dozens of different major options, from English lit to business. The deadline for applications is August 30, so log on to get a lift up.

BEING A MOM MADE ME...

"Fiercely protective, like a lion. My top priority is keeping my kids safe. Mothering is a beautiful word, and it doesn't only mean making cupcakes."

—Marcia Gay Harden, 50, actress, spokesperson for befiresmart.com, and mother to Eulala, 10, and 4-year-old twins Hudson and Julitta



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