

# Edmonton a great city to become a parent



by *Connie Peters*

It takes a village to raise a child, or so they say. But these days we don't live in villages with our extended families available for 24/7 support, and it's nice to know the city that we live in supports young families.

## Affordability

The past year has shown a slight decrease in the cost of real estate and an overall stabilization in the market. Edmonton is still one of the most reasonably priced cities to own your own home and one of the highest disposable income cities in Canada.

## Health Care

Alberta offers completely free health coverage, making your pregnancy virtually 'free' if you're lucky enough not to require any fertility intervention. (Unfortunately, fertility treatment doesn't come easy or cheap in our city.) In British Columbia, basic health care costs \$1,224 per year for a family of two and \$1,368 for a family

of three, so we are very fortunate to have zero premiums for our health coverage.

## Birthing Options

Edmonton offers several amazing maternity wards within our major hospitals, many doulas, and midwifery care that is covered by the province (although there are more women wanting midwifery care than there are midwives to provide care). During your pregnancy, you can rely on several wellness centres and even spas dedicated specifically to easing your growing pains. These include [www.fromwithin.ca](http://www.fromwithin.ca) and [www.sweetmomma.com](http://www.sweetmomma.com).

## Mom support

So now the baby is born and you may be feeling isolated. What next? The city has a myriad of options for connecting with other moms through programs like Mommy Connections ([www.mommyconnections.ca](http://www.mommyconnections.ca)) and the Edmonton Mom & Tots Stroller Club on Facebook, which offers several activities per week. Just checking in with your health nurse can even be a starting point.

## Activities

Edmonton is stroller friendly too. There are walking trails through our great parks, most grocers and malls now have stroller or baby parking spaces and we have a ton of family-friendly restaurants. There is no shortage for activities and classes either. Gymboree Play & Music, local music classes, Peanut Butter and Jam playgroup and more, all keep your baby engaged as she grows like lightning through her first year.

## Resources

Some local resources for growing families are [www.familyedmonton.com](http://www.familyedmonton.com), [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) (search for moms groups) and the Mill Woods Family Resource Centre ([www.mwfr.org](http://www.mwfr.org)). Publications like *Edmonton's Child* as well as *Birth Issues* are great for local links and company listings as well (FREE for pickup at your local grocery store).

*Connie Peters is a mom of three girls in Riverbend. She founded [www.modernmama.ca](http://www.modernmama.ca) which lists events for Edmonton moms.*

## Local mom finds success is only a clip away

by *Carol McBee,*

*Founder of Bossy Mama — the network for Mompreneurs*

An amazing local success story: Ashley Fraser-Sexsmith, owner of *Kula Klips*, lives with her husband and 22-month-old son in the community of Riverside and takes claim to be the original creator of the hip clip for girls — the must-have accessory in Canada.

Originally a successful sales representative for a watch company, Fraser-Sexsmith had a demanding travel schedule which eventually led to her decision not to return after her maternity leave for her son Logan in April, 2008. Her entrepreneurial success story is not unlike others — she stumbled onto the idea in 2006 after having a hair cut with side swept bangs. To keep her bangs out of her eyes, her hair dresser gave her a metal clip. Being practical and artistic, Fraser-Sexsmith decided to cover the metal clip with a ribbon for both comfort and style. The first Kula Klip was born.

Fraser-Sexsmith's mother was the first to sell the clips in her retail store in B.C., and they sold immediately. For two years, Fraser-Sexsmith continued to create new styles and slowly expanded her business while continuing to keep up with a busy professional career.

Following the birth of her son, Fraser-Sexsmith's concentration on *Kula Klips* turned full time. Her unique designs now sell to over 130 boutiques across North America and she has expanded her line to include items for both boys and girls. Soother and mitten clips, belts, Kula bands, Pony O's and now limited edition lines are available.

Still a home-based business today, *Kula Klips* employs six women, five of who are also fellow mothers and all who have their own specialization. Fraser-Sexsmith has a sewer, ribbon cutter, head band specialist and Pony O creator. She still manages all the overall design of each and every piece created and compiles design kits for each of her staff monthly.

Constantly striving to differentiate herself from the dozens of copy cat companies, Fraser-Sexsmith has designed 55 exclusive ribbons with hand-drawn pictures of cupcakes, alligators, puppies and more. The skull-themed products continue to be the number one product for boys and girls. With so many products for girls on the market and Logan in mind, additional products are currently being developed with an increased focus on boys.

*Kula Klips* has definitely made its mark in the tot accessory industry. Fraser-Sexsmith has recently partnered with the California-based celebrity gifting company "Jewels and Pinstripes" which has notable clients like Oprah, Gwen, Usher and Halle! The company will be gifting *Kula Klips* belts to any celebrity babies turning one this year, such as Charlie Sheen's twins, Bachelorette Trista Sutter's daughter and The Biggest Losers host Allison Sweeny's daughter. And it doesn't hurt that the Affleck family are often photographed with their children sporting *Kula Klips* accessories.

A busy mompreneur, Fraser-Sexsmith is not only a home-grown success story, but she also gives the opportunity to other moms to contribute to

family income while also being the CEOs of their own households. This Bossy Mama even created her own website! Is there anything she can't do? Check out her website where you can view new product and even place your order online. [www.kulaklips.com](http://www.kulaklips.com) is generously offering a 20 per cent discount to the community. Enter coupon code "baby" during checkout.

When asked about her monetary success, this humble and down-to-earth mom said "Success isn't measured by money when you're working for yourself." A valuable lesson for any hardworking mompreneur!



*Two young girls wearing Fraser-Sexsmith's hair products.*



### Want to meet other new moms in the area?

Join our new moms social network... created by a new mom for new moms!

- 6 Weekly Sessions for mommy & baby
- After 6 weeks, continue your own weekly meet-ups with your group
- Sessions held in Riverbend with swag for all!

*A variety of topics will be presented:*

City Programs - Health - Fitness - Nutrition - Safety - Classes for Baby Childcare & Returning to Work - Mom's Clubs and more!

*Visit our website for more information:*

[www.mommyconnections.ca](http://www.mommyconnections.ca)

*We're expanding to other areas of Edmonton and need help  
Contact us for opportunity details!*