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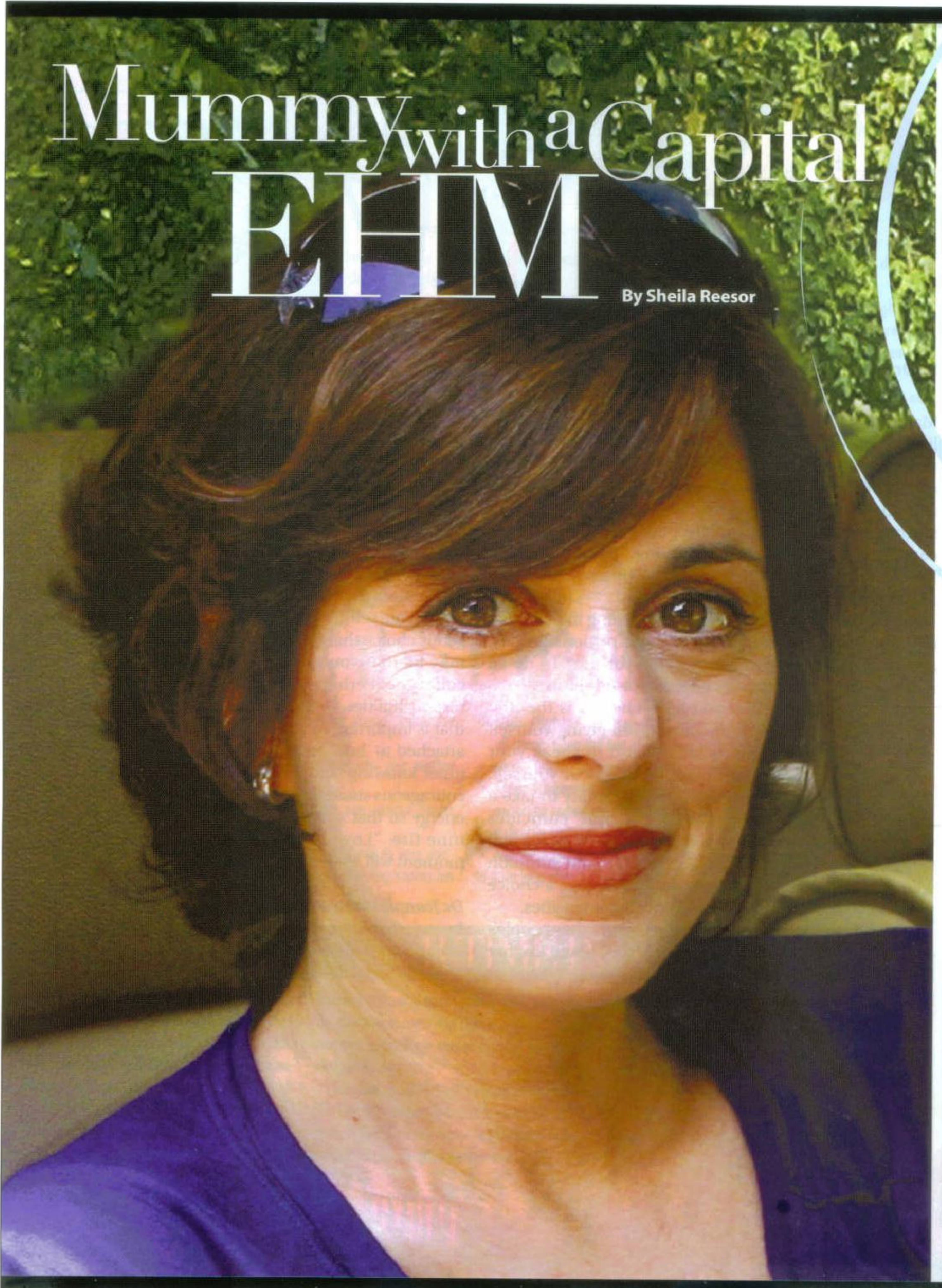


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Mummy with a Capital

EHM

By Sheila Reesor





When Erica Ehm, the first female host of MuchMusic and one of Canada's most recognized personalities, admits to being terrified after the birth of her son, one tends to be slightly intrigued. "I wasn't prepared – and I had read the books," says Erica. "I had no problem with 36 hours of labour, but as soon as they left me alone with my baby in the hospital, I had close to a nervous breakdown. I was in the deepest, darkest despair. Part of it was postpartum, part hormonal, but a lot of it was just that I'm a career person. I was never around a lot of children and I had no training. It's the only time in my life that I've been that insecure."

Prior to her mothering role, Erica's multi-faceted career in television, radio, film, theatre, journalism, songwriting and music publishing demonstrated her tireless resilience, versatility and competence. Now she's exposing the flip side, and letting everyone know that she's just as vulnerable as the rest of us.

Early in her career, Erica was dubbed the voice of her generation and she's still speaking on behalf of her age

group. Her traumatic experience was inspiration for a new parenting show targeted at the music video generation. From her home in Toronto, Erica has carved a new niche for herself as co-creator and host of "Yummy Mummy" – now airing on Life Network. She also created www.yummymummysite.com. This site provides support to moms, where they can go for no-nonsense information on child-birth and parenting and, most importantly, share a laugh or two. Humour, candor and straight-from-the-hip banter are mixed with honest, valuable assistance and encouragement.

"What I'm doing is opening the door and making everything a little more public," says Erica. "I'm trying to share what it's really like so that women who are considering having children get a better understanding – I mean a real understanding, and for other moms to start dishing."

As a quintessential entrepreneurial mom, Erica walks her talk as she strives to balance her own duties with the TV show and website, while being mom to Josh, age five, and two-year-old Jessie, and sharing life with the kids' "delicious daddy", husband Terry.

She's very clear when she says, "I'm not balancing both. I fail at both, but that's okay because I get to have both. I think the reason why a lot of people fail is because their expectations are unrealistic."

Erica sees so many moms drowning in guilt, convinced they're not good parents. Her core message is that there is no perfection and there is no balance. You have to be willing to cut yourself some slack and compromise. So what if your career shifts down a notch or two when you have kids. According to Erica, that doesn't mean you can't succeed or have fun while you're at it. "I have never been so happy in my life, creatively," she says.

As stated on her website, "A true Yummy Mummy struggles to find the impossible balance between the single sexpot she used to be, the woman she's become, the professional she works hard to be, the wife she aspires to be, and the mother she has to be. Basically, she's confused and exhausted. Forget CEO, this is the toughest job in the world. Why didn't anyone warn us? Now park your guilt at the door. Forget almost everything your mother taught you. Wave your reinforced Spanx in the air. And revel in the secrets of the Yummy Mummy club."

Sheila Reesor is a freelance writer and can be reached at sreesor@rogers.com