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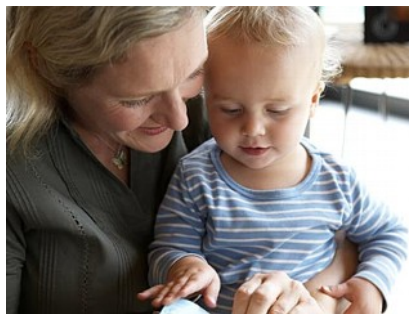
Updated May 4, 2011 - 4:09 am

Discrimination against moms over 40

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Women who were born in the 1960s and early 1970s might have been the first generation raised with the idea that they could have it all. They were told to get an education, focus on your career, and then have a family.

That's exactly what a generation of flower power girls did, and now they're in their 40s and are discriminated against in a new way.



"A couple of times now I've been at the library with my daughter and someone would make an innocent comment that I must be enjoying time with my granddaughter," says Lisa Riggs, 44, who played with her two year old at a Queen Anne park. "One time I went home in tears. The other time I just smiled."

"There's a fair bit of social discrimination against women who have kids when they're older," says Angel La Liberte, a 50-year-old mom with children who are five and eight. "There were fridge magnets and cups that actually say on them 'gee I forgot to have a baby' which was really insulting."

As Mother's Day approaches, there is a mini-baby boom for women 40 and older. A 2010 CDC report found the only age group in the United States to show an increase in birth rates were women over 40.

La Liberte is a lot like other women who grew up with moms of the 1950s. She was in the kitchen cooking with her stay-at-home mom, but she always knew her life would be different.

"I was very firmly expected to go out there and take advantage of the liberties that were acquired for me as a woman. And I did that," she says. "Now I think it's time for society to support older moms."

She believes older moms have "a lot more wisdom and life experiences" to offer children.

Regardless of social pressure on moms who aren't in their 20s or 30s, for decades we've been hearing about health risks to babies when a mother conceives after the age of 40. Are all of those warnings untrue? La Liberte says the medical risks talked about for older moms are still be there - such as Down's Syndrome for the baby, or high blood pressure and other problems for Mom - but medically, we can deal with the issues better.

"First of all, given the statistical probabilities they're able to make educated decisions, but the whole area of reproduction in our society has dramatically changed due to advances in medicine," she says.

This Mother's Day, La Liberte is starting a national online support group for moms over 40 on her website FlowerPowerMom.com.

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Linda Thomas



Linda is co-host of Seattle's Morning news, 5-9, on 97.3 KIRO FM. This is her local news blog, with an emphasis on social media, technology, Northwest companies, education, parenting, and anything else that grabs her attention.

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ottmilkr wrote...

It would have been better for the economy

May 4, 2011 3:39 pm

if these women had reproduced sooner in life. Waiting the 20 some odd years they did deprived the economy of the consumption of the people that did not exist till later, and it has a residual effect because their offspring will not be able to reproduce till that many more years later. We need population to increase in the USA for several reasons, #1 to create more consumers which equals greater profits for Corporations, #2 We need future soldiers to fight future wars to protect our oil and Arbic freedom.

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ottmilkr wrote...

Spelling Error

May 4, 2011 3:40 pm

I know Soo Purelaxitive will call me or question me on this so I better fix it now, " Arabic "...

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Keitho wrote...

So What

May 4, 2011 4:23 pm

Everyone is so sensitive. Who cares what people think. Choices are made. Some prefer work to the "traditional female role" and have kids later. Nothing to be ashamed of, certainly not worth crying about. I am a male but chose to have kids later as well. Sometimes I wish I started much earlier as I may or may not be around for weddings and grand children. But on the other hand, I was well financially established and better prepared than if I had kids early. Cant look back.

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pro_steel_header wrote...

having a newborn at 40???

May 4, 2011 8:21 pm

think about the kid why dontcha?? you think he wants other kids making fun of him because his parents look like his grandparents??

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hpitantso wrote...

I think all men should wait

May 5, 2011 1:19 am

Especially all the successful ones until late forties or fifties this would support ottmilkr master race of rich people with no heirs

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mjlfire wrote...

Agree with pro steel header

May 5, 2011 5:53 am

He hit it right on the head. There isn't a teenager alive that wants their 65 y/o dad or mom at their graduation. And if say you don't care what others think, THAT'S exactly what's wrong with society today...selfishly going about your life without a concern for others or what ramifications your choices have.

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Bubba wrote...

Discrimination?! You've got to be kidding!

May 5, 2011 7:48 am

Tell me how being mistaken for your child's grandmother is discrimination. Good grief. Perhaps

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I'm not "sensitive or compassionate" since I'm a single, non-mother. Quit your whining already and just parent your child to be a confident, productive member of society. At the rate you're going, you're child is going to join the ranks of the "sue happy" cuz someone looked at them sideways....

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boyerbl wrote...

To many risk at that age

May 5, 2011 7:55 am

I know too many mothers that gave birth to special needs children all due to being a mother in her late 40's or early 50's. Do you want to go to your child's graduation when you are 68 years old?

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EdSane wrote...

Age

May 5, 2011 8:46 am

Don't we as a society generally discriminate against poor choices? It's a known fact that the longer a woman waits to have a child the likely hood of complications (such as autism) dramatically increase. And god forbid the mother develops cancer in her 60s, so her child spends his teenage years caring for his mother on chemo...Really.

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sometimesrock wrote...

hmm

May 5, 2011 9:03 am

I hope the naysayers are joking. It's not up to you when others want to have children. It's their life and their body, let them have kids whenever they would like to. I'm happy women are waiting until they are ready instead of having them in their 20's and struggling to support their family because they weren't ready.

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snakes&barrels wrote...

Everyone's discriminated against

May 5, 2011 9:18 am

Unless you're a white male, then it's ok to hire less qualified people than you-because they're "underprivileged". I really don't care what other people at the library think, but when discrimination is taking food off my family's table I feel that's more of a problem.

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