

★ FIND SPRING OUTINGS IN L.A.'S BEST FAMILY CALENDAR ★

# L.A. Parent

FREE

32 Years and Still GROWING! | LAPARENT.COM | May 2011

MOMS  
WHO WRITE  
TOP 3  
ESSAYS

TIPS  
FOR  
KIDS IN  
SHOW  
BIZ

GENTLE  
ADVENTURES  
FOR MOM



©2011 Dominion Enterprises, Inc.

by Vivien Santana Hughes

## Melissa Rivers: Full House

Joan Rivers is not known for being quiet or laid back. Which is a good thing for an entertainer, but what is she like to live with? Well, difficult comes quickly to mind. As well as funny and loving. Melissa Rivers already knew all that, yet she was game to let “Nana Joan” move into her L.A. home and join her 10-year-old son Cooper, boyfriend Jason, friend Conrad, Swedish nanny Dominica (who Joan thinks is too “hot” to be a good nanny) and various drop-in friends for WE tv’s reality series *Joan & Melissa: Joan Knows Best?*

Joan had been living in New York since Melissa was in college, but now her grandson was growing up. “She said, ‘I want to be *in* the pictures, not *look* at the pictures,’” says Melissa. When Joan had rented locally for several months a few years ago, “It was a

fabulous time for us. You know when your family comes to town and you feel like you have to do things? All that pressure was gone.”

**You and your mom were on *Celebrity Apprentice* together. How did that lead to this show?**

On *Celebrity Apprentice* our relationship really struck a chord with people. Then, *Fashion Police* became a weekly show so my mom had to be here. She said, ‘I’m going to come out to L.A. and stay with you until I find a place.’ So there was an organic reason to do one of these shows.

**What has audience reaction been?**

Very positive! In the last couple years, with all the economic changes, the whole dynamic of how we live has changed. It’s not only the boomerang generation, it’s the reverse boomerang. I just feel like people can identify.

**What has surprised you about your mom?**

[Laughs] Her complete and total lack of ability to give up control of anything! Like when she changed my living room furniture. I’m off doing my thing and I come home and say, ‘Holy @#%\*!’

**What’s your favorite thing to do with Cooper?**

Just be with him. We’re a very outdoor-sports focused family – which is completely baffling to my mother. We surf and we’re at the park, and there’s flag football, lacrosse, tennis, skateboarding. I’m very much a boy’s mom like that.

**What’s the hardest thing about being a parent? A single parent?**

God, they’re just so much more mature at a younger age than I remember us being, so having to deal with things that I thought were a couple years off. Last year in school, social things were happening with the girls and now I’m seeing it with the boys. Cooper’s in fourth grade. He won’t talk to me or his dad about girls, but he’ll talk to [my boyfriend] Jason.

**Share the best parenting advice Joan ever gave you.**

‘This, too, shall pass.’ I always try to talk to other parents because I want to know that what I’m going through, they’re seeing as well. Like with the first eye roll – turns out that Cooper did that age appropriate! Also this year, the ‘sarcasm fairy’ touched his little head one night. I got a call from another mom who said the sarcasm fairy had come to their house, too. Makes you feel a little bit better! It’s like the first official ‘throw down’ [toddler tantrum]. You remember exactly where it was – mine was at the Salt Lake City airport. People who say, ‘Oh my child has never done that?’ Well, you just haven’t had it yet! ♦

*Catch past episodes of Melissa & Joan (and decide for yourself if Joan Knows Best) on WE tv and see the cast’s “video confessionals” and blogs at [wetv.com/shows/joan-melissa-joan-knows-best](http://wetv.com/shows/joan-melissa-joan-knows-best).*

Chat Room columnist Vivien Santana Hughes is a former *L.A. Parent* editor and the mother of three – two sons in college and (surprise!) a 6-year-old daughter. Her secret stress buster is reality TV.



**Reality series *Melissa & Joan: Joan Knows Best?* proved a big hit for WE tv and has been renewed for a second season. Says Melissa, “We’re jumping up and down for joy and the bickering has begun!”**