

TRUE LIFE

Are we spending too much on our kids?

Two mums say where they draw the line on giving them what they want

NO

Charlotte Glancy, 30, is mum to Hannah, nine, and Tom, eight. She's married to Michael, 33, and lives in Horsham, West Sussex.

Charlotte says, 'My biggest weakness is buying clothes for Hannah. I like OshKosh and designer ranges like John Rocha for kids and Tigerlily, when I can afford them.'

'Birthday outings are important. In the past, I've taken Tom and his friends to the cinema, and Hannah's

had an ice-skating party. For her birthday one year, we went to London for a weekend theatre trip to see *The Lion King*, which cost about £350.'

'I think it's important to teach your children about their culture, and we'll often go on day trips

to famous sights like *HMS Belfast* or the Tower of London. It's expensive, especially when adult tickets can cost as much as £14 each.'

'Tom and Hannah have been on holiday to the USA, Canada, France and Antigua. These were expensive trips, but Michael and I thought the cost was worth it.'

'Tom begged us to get him a Nintendo'

'One of the hardest things about having had Hannah and Tom so close together is that you feel you

have to buy two of everything. Last year, my son begged us to get him a Nintendo DS just because his sister got one for her birthday, and eventually we gave in and bought one for his birthday six months later.'

'But I wouldn't necessarily buy them both the latest trainers at the



Charlotte with Tom and Hannah at home...



...and with Dad in Florida

same time unless they needed them. That would mean they're dictating what I buy them, and I certainly don't want that to

happen. Buying your children nice things doesn't spoil them or prevent them learning good values – it just makes them lucky.'

Words: Victoria Gibson Photos: St. John Page



Nelly and Warren with, from top, Nathan, Madeline and baby Amelle

YES

Nelly Shaw, 32, and her husband, Warren, 38, live in Hertfordshire with their three

children, Nathan, nine, Madeline, four, and eight-month-old Amelle.

Nelly says, 'I don't see the point in spending lots of money on your children, as most of the time they can't tell if something cost £3 or £30. The best things often cost nothing. We have the most fun as a family when we're running round the park or having a picnic.'

'Warren works in IT, and I'm a full-time mum. I'm lucky we can afford to live well just on his salary, but we both made a decision not to give in to pressure and spend loads on the children.'

'One year, Nathan was given a games

console for his birthday from my parents. But when I buy games, I often pick them up in second-hand shops rather than paying full price.'

'I'll occasionally buy Madeline a girly accessory, but she's not interested in clothes, and Nathan doesn't care about having the latest trainers or sports

jacket. They spend most of the week in school uniform anyway.'

'Holidays are either spent visiting my family in France or in Norfolk.'

I've got friends who can't wait for the school breaks to come to an end because they find them so expensive, but I'm the opposite. When school starts again, I always feel I could do with having the children around for another two weeks.'

'The best things often cost nothing'