

from the front page

A DAILY SUN SPECIAL REPORT

A Quarter of Moms Are Going it Alone

About one in four mothers are raising their children on their own. While most U.S. mothers are married (68 percent), a sizable minority (24 percent) are solo moms. All told, about 9 million mothers are living with a child younger than 18, without a spouse or partner. Solo motherhood is particularly common among black mothers, 56 percent of whom fall into this category. The same is true of 26 percent of Hispanic moms, 17 percent of white moms and 9 percent of Asian moms.

A look at the percentage of solo, cohabiting and married mothers among those who live with their children younger than 18

- Solo
- Cohabiting
- Married

Total	24	8	68
Black	56	8	37
Hispanic	26	9	65
White	17	9	74
Asian	9	3	88

Source: Pew Research Center



Marsha Crecelius, of the Village of Buttonwood, gave birth to her son, Cris, using in vitro fertilization at age 40.

Erin Williams, Daily Sun

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emotional, or put their expectations too high," Crecelius said.

It took two cycles before she got good news.

By that time, she was juggling her own doctor appointments with those of her father, who she was taking to chemotherapy treatments.

Her father died three months into her pregnancy, a year after her mother had died.

"She is an incredibly strong, independent woman who has devoted her life to the people around her," said her son, Cris, who was born Jan. 7, 1987. "She really went out of her way as much as possible to make my life the best it could be."

She keeps stacks of photo albums capturing Cris' childhood: the first swim, playing with the family dogs.

"He was my focus and he still is," she said.

A Mother's Day Like no Other

Ashley Talwar won't be missing today's Mother's Day service.

She'll be front and center at First Baptist Church in Leesburg with her son, Adam, for a baby dedication.

It's a magnificent stop in a journey that began two weeks after her 2008 wedding, when she was diagnosed with endometriosis, a painful uterine disorder that also can make conception more difficult.

Doctors told her and her husband, Micky, to start trying right away if they wanted to have children, because time was not on their side.

After a year and a half of unsuccessful attempts, they visited a fertility specialist.

They tried hormone treatments, intrauterine insemination and multiple surgeries.

Nothing worked.

In 2012, after years of saving up and with help from family, they pulled together \$20,000 to try IVF.

Talwar became pregnant with a girl, and they picked out a name, Shaylee.

On Mother's Day, the couple shared the good news with their families.

Two weeks later, Talwar miscarried.

Even now, six years later, as her baby boy snatches animal crackers from a bag, she tears up when talking

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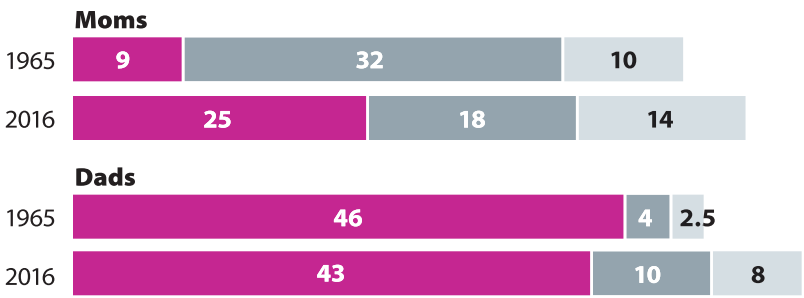
A DAILY SUN SPECIAL REPORT

Moms, Dads Spending More Time on Child Care

Moms are spending more time in the labor force than in the past, but also more time on child care. In 2016, moms spent about 25 hours a week on paid work, compared with nine hours in 1965. At the same time, they spent 14 hours a week on child care, up from 10 hours a week in 1965. Dads, too, are spending more time in child care than they were a half-century ago. In 46 percent of households with a mother and father, both parents are employed full time.

A look at the average number of hours moms and dad spend each week on paid work, housework and child care

Paid Work
Housework
Child Care



Source: Pew Research Center



Photos by Erin Williams | Daily Sun

After an upsetting medical diagnosis, unsuccessful treatment round with fertility doctors and a heart-wrenching miscarriage, Ashley Talwar, of Leesburg, gave birth to her son, Adam, last year on Father's Day. Ashley, and her husband, Micky, saw their dream come true after she underwent IVF treatments for the second time.



The couple won the second round of IVF treatments after winning a chance drawing at a luncheon in Orlando for a new fertility group a doctor had recommended.

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about the daughter she never got to meet.

"I didn't want to think about doing IVF again," she said. "I didn't want to lose another baby. My heart can't handle that."

In late 2015, Micky wanted to pursue adoption when their doctor pointed them to a new fertility group in Orlando.

It was holding a luncheon on the latest in IVF treatments, and Micky wanted to attend.

Though livid at the idea, Talwar agreed to do so if Micky promised never to bring up the subject again.

When she learned the clinic was giving away a free round of IVF to one attendee, she prayed, telling God that if they did not win, she would not attempt to get pregnant again.

While her husband listened intently to the speakers, Talwar doodled away furiously on a notepad. She had heard it all before, and nothing had helped.

"I was like a teenager in a bad mood," she said. "I had the worst attitude."

As the event came to a close, Talwar was thrilled to leave. But first, they waited for the announcement of the IVF winner.

"Just be happy for the winner and be grateful you can get out of here." That's what I was telling myself as I heard my name called," she said.

Adam was born in an emergency caesarean section on Father's Day 2017.

"I could not be more grateful or more happy with this little guy," Talwar said. "He makes me laugh. He keeps me awake, but it's OK."

Though she is excited to celebrate her first Mother's Day, Talwar is mindful of other

women who still are waiting for motherhood news.

"I'm very grateful that at least I had a happy ending," she said. "Not everybody gets that."

The best part about long-awaited motherhood?

"They bring out the best in

you," she said. "He has made me a better person."

Ciara Varone is a senior writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5395, or ciara.varone@thevillagesmedia.com.

Hasan A. Abualula, M.D.
Board Certified Rheumatologist

I chose a career in rheumatology because I value caring for my patients. Each day at work, I look forward to treat patients with expertise and understanding while also establishing rapport and confidence. I regard the physician-patient relationship as a partnership where I guide the patient and we make decisions together. I learn from my patients as much as they learn from me and this is what makes my job so fulfilling.

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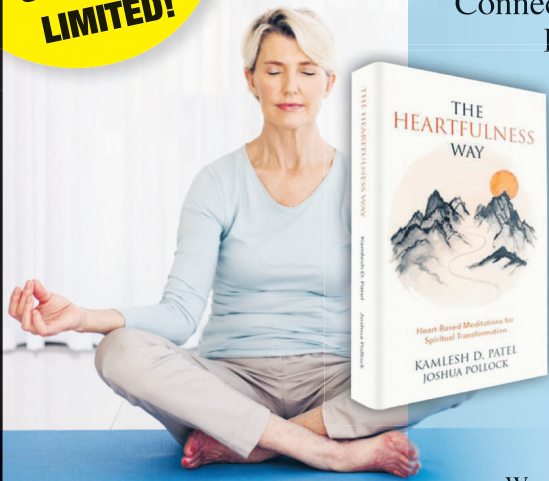
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