



## Our Little Angel, Our Greatest Joy!



One of Gymboree's great impacts on each family is building strong bond through sharing their quality time with their little angels. From playing to learning and from sharing to caring, you'll even see them in little one's stolen shots taken by their very supportive mums and dads. The milestones we saw in every picture really inspired us and gave us idea to push through this so-called "photo contest". We have done an interview with Ms. Sonia Schrotterova, the mother of Gymboree's very first photo contest winner. Here's what she said about her little angel, her greatest joy, named Ella.

### *Can you tell us a little bit about Ella and your family?*

Ella was born on July 06, 2010 in Prague, Czech Republic. We moved with baby Ella to Viet Nam at the beginning of September 2010 and have been living here since then. Ella is a very happy baby, active, cheerful, and enjoys company of other kids as well as grown-ups. Pavel, Ella's Father, works in banking industry in HCMC and I am taking care of her during the day.

### *How do you feel about your child being the winner of Gymboree's Photo Contest and be the cover of our Newsletter?*

Obviously, I am very happy and proud as any other Mother would be. My husband has one copy at work and he also sent one to Ella's grand parents. They were enthusiastic seeing Ella in a real magazine. It was just great 😊

### *What did your husband/family say about it?*

Actually my husband knew and saw the Newsletter before me. We were on holidays in the Czech Republic while the issue was out. My husband just mentioned he had a big surprise and did not want to say more. And in a week or so I received a big envelope where I saw Ella on the cover of Gymboree's Newsletter. He said we had a star at home and that it was Ella's first "cover" with other popular titles like Vogue or Elle to come later 😊

### *How did you take such a great photo and manage to get your child's best shot?*

The picture was taken in Gymboree class Play & Learn 2. While kids play and explore, there is plenty of occasions to make an excellent shot. They have countless of facial expressions so it is just a spur of a moment and the best one is taken.

### *Were there any difficulties taking your child's best angle?*

Ella is agile and vivid so it is rather difficult to take picture when she is not moving. In fact it is impossible to arrange her into any static position. Actually my husband took a whole series of pictures in that class. But this one was outstanding and our first choice for the photo contest.

### *Does your family love photography?*

Yes, my husband is addicted to photography. We both do not have too many pictures when we were little. So we try to capture a bit more of Ella, what she does, how she does like it and so on. Even now we compare our childhood photos with Ella's and have much fun persuading each other whom she resembles more.

### *What inspires you as a mother who loves taking photos of your beloved child?*

I think the biggest inspiration is her everyday progress and how quickly she grows. Being with her all day long I do not realize it. But from the pictures we have taken so far I can tell she is different every day. And it would be pity not to save this great change, don't you think?

### *What is the best part and even toughest part about doing photography?*

As most of our pictures are taken by my husband, the best part for me is to see the whole bunch of pictures from our trip, or a party, or a Gymboree lesson, for example. I then live it once again. The toughest part is to pick just couple of them and have them developed as you always leave plenty of nice pictures behind.

### *If you had to pick your three (3) favorite places/sceneries of taking your child/family's photos, where would they be and why?*

It is quite hard to decide, but our favorite places/sceneries are sea shore (mainly because we do not have a privilege of sea/ocean back in the Czech Republic), encounter with strangers (it is always very interesting how Ella reacts and interacts with total strangers), family (it is the best way to capture moments when she feels happy and loved).

### *What is one last piece of advice you would give to parents who also love taking photos of their child?*

Always carry your camera 😊, be patient and ready. Wait for the right moment and get it in the camera as soon as you feel it is about to come.

*Interviewed by Dina Absalon - Gymboree Instructor*



## Our Little Artist!

Seiko Turner, a part-time editor and a full-time mum, mother of our first Gymboree Drawing Contest Winner, Jenson Turner, shares her tips on how to encourage creativity and flexibility on your little one's Art & Craft ideas.

*How did you come up with the idea of family hand printing that made your child's entry a masterpiece winner?*

Jenson is just 22 months so he couldn't do much drawing yet, so we thought of something that he can do and something that would involve us too. So we decided to do hand printing using paint. Jenson likes painting so much.

*What makes your child's art piece unique and special compare to the others?*

I think our entry is not actually a "drawing" so that's why we were very surprised to know that we won. I think ours is a painting and that what makes it unique.

*How did you manage to get your family and even your helper's participation in doing your child's art piece?*

My maid was very friendly! We changed maid now but the previous one was very friendly and helpful. She got involved with most of our activities, so it was easy for us to ask her to do her handprint too.

*How do you feel about your child being the winner of our 1st Gymboree Drawing Contest?*

Very surprised! Very happy! We never really expected this since ours is not really a "drawing" and I am very thankful and I really appreciate it!

*Why do you think art is important, especially for kids?*

When I was a kid my mother gave me opportunity to explore with different kinds of materials. Just like that (pointing to a tissue box), we see that as a tissue box and

we throw that when it's finished but my mother looked at that differently. We made something out of it. We did home projects using materials we had at home. She sent me to a piano class and she was very flexible to me. She was very supportive of what I did when I was young.

*What are your favorite ways to encourage your son to be creative?*

Be flexible! Do what you want to do! I expose him as much as possible to materials available for him to discover. I support him in whatever he wants to do at home. He likes play dough so much. There were even times when he played dough even before taking breakfast! Just be flexible. And, I myself am trying to be creative in any way. I always make something in front of him. For example, I made sink and gas top using cardboard for him. He enjoyed playing with it as well as making it. He really likes me to make something from nothing.

*What are some of your favorite supplies, mediums, or materials that you use at home?*

We have dough at home, paint, some coloring materials and many things which we can make something such as tissue box, cloths... But his favorite is dough. We also tried to get some stuff that we use here in Gymboree Art class like feathers, glitters etc.

*How does art help your child's aspects of development (physical, motor, cognitive / intellectual, social-emotional and language development)?*

There is definitely a benefit from exposing my child to this. When

I was a child my mum took me to some places like museums, galleries and I definitely learned from it. We just didn't think of what it does to us or me. We didn't look for results. We just had fun!

*How is your child now before and after joining Gymboree Art Class?*

He is getting better and better. Before he was reluctant to mess and stain. He didn't want to get dirty at all! Now he is embracing it, he doesn't mind getting dirty. Sometimes he wants to get dirty so that he can play with water afterwards.

*What are the tips you have for parents who would like to encourage creativity in their children at home.*

Be supportive of what your child likes to do. Be flexible. I may not be the best person to ask tips from but just be supportive of your child. Just have fun doing things together!

*Interviewed by Melza Antigua - Gymboree Instructor*

