

# MOM'S GOT GAME

Sport and physical activity have a special ability to bring families together. Through fun learning moments, early mornings, evening practices and new challenges, sport creates special moments and stories that make us smile. Mom is there through it all. And you're there for her too.

## TRACEY'S STORY



This story is my moms story but also my own. My mom had an undiagnosed mental health illness. She had a pretty challenging life. She was a single mom and did her best to provide for me. At age 30 she suffered a brain aneurysm and as a result would suffer from seizures for the rest of her life. Although life dealt her many challenges, she was extremely resilient and hard working.

In 2001, my mom and I trained to bike the Cabot trail. We trained for 3 months in Ottawa and in July we conquered the trail together. After that trip my moms mental health deteriorated. She became more recluse, struggled more and withdrew from family and friends. In 2014, we lost her to suicide. During one of her hospital stays she shared with me that the best year of her life was the year we biked the Cabot trail together. This speaks to the power of exercise on mental health, along with having a goal, achieving that goal and connection with others through activity.

Although it's been a tough journey, I'm grateful for being able to have shared the best year of her life!

## BEVERLY'S STORY



Determined to overcome the events of 2018, colon cancer, chemo and serious collision, I set a goal to complete 50km in events in 2019. September 2019, with a few events completed, I was diagnosed with a brain tumour and emergency surgery. Using a walker, I completed my 2019 goal via a virtual event and mall walking. In 2020, I focused on walking. In 2021, I have been rucksacking 20+ km. Still fighting cancer, but enjoying the outdoors. My son and daughter both encourage me.

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## ELLEN'S STORY

Without skis or skates, it's not easy staying active in the middle of a Canadian winter. What better time to try a new sport — an indoor sport — like volleyball? That's exactly what my mom did when I was growing up in Ottawa.

Having never played before, she joined a City of Ottawa league in the mid 2000's for beginners. She had the time of her life, and also inspired me to never stop trying new things.

## SOPHIE'S STORY



My mom has been playing ringette since she was 7-years-old. It was important for her to try it. I also quickly fell in love with the sport. My mother has been involved in ringette for years. She was my coach, and I hope she will be for a long time. We developed a beautiful complicity and some moments are forever engrained in our memory.

## PAT'S STORY

My mom is walking. It was hard for her to figure out how to walk with no destination in mind. Walk to this or that store to take care of a need. She has, after many months of starting and stopping, figured it out. She has an app for that. She has worked to figure out how to manage the excessive amounts of data she downloaded in listening to podcasts. She managed to find podcasts that she enjoys listening to, which is hard! It was not something that happened overnight but something that she worked hard at over and over again. She is now a walker!

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## LORI'S STORY



When my grandmother was diagnosed with cancer, my mom signed up for a half-marathon to raise money for Leukemia research. She had never run a half-marathon before but trained hard for a year and completed the race while raising a lot of money for the Leukemia Society. Her dedication made us all very proud and inspired us all to participate in charity runs. Since then, my whole family has signed up for a 10 Km run on Mother's Day to spend the day doing something my mom loves and contributing to a great cause. We always have so much fun doing this together, and it is a great way to keep us all active!

## BETTY'S STORY



Getting outside with my brothers and sisters and cousins and school friends, and then my children, are some of the best memories I have. Making snow forts and then picnics outside in the warm spring thaw sunshine. I was a bit naturally aggressive, not afraid of the corners and muscling in on the puck. Now taking my grandchildren out to skate, ski and sled, nothing better in the winter and swimming to the raft in the summer, along with canoeing and kayaking. Morning swims at our lake wake me up and I will continue as long as I can.

## PENNY'S STORY

In our house growing up, it was my mom that was a big sport fan, not my dad. Our participation in sport was an expectation, and she provided lots of support. From throwing my first curling rock, to captaining my high school field hockey team, I followed in my mom's footsteps.

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## BECKY'S STORY



As a mother everything was new and despite expectations of how great I would be as a mom I found that I did not have a clue. I felt like I was failing at everything. It was not until I laced up my cleats that I fully felt like me again. Many of us were new moms. We were all exhausted, stressed and our bodies could not do what they used to be able to do. But I have played with the same women for years and together we helped each other. We helped each other get back into shape (or whatever would become our new normal for fitness), we listened to each other brag about how cute our kids were and sympathized when kids were driving us crazy. We had husbands who set aside everything else for that one night of soccer every week so we could get out to play. We joked that we should just leave the house with our kits and get a hotel room to sleep instead. We nursed babies on the sidelines. We rocked strollers on the sidelines. We let the kids run wild on the sidelines. My body may have changed; I am slower for sure. But I am no less fierce. Some nights (most nights) it took more energy to get me out the door to the game than it took me to actually play the game. But those Thursday nights on the soccer field made me feel like me again and reminded my kids and myself of just how fierce their mom was and will always be.

## DIBBIE'S STORY



I played sports all my life, and once my kids were grown I found ways to get back into it recreationally. My friend moved here from Toronto, and I convinced her to join my recreational women's volleyball team, to get active and to meet new people. She took some convincing, as had only ever done ballet. She had never, in her life, touched a volleyball, much less served one or been part of a team. I thought she might quit after the first game, which was a disaster, but instead she embraced the game. She was determined to learn how to play, and she got better (after the first season!), Teammates became friends. Over the years we both recruited other moms we knew. We had so much fun playing volleyball—mostly against other moms!

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## THERESA'S STORY



Setting my own pace in the grandma season of life, counting steps and flights and distances daily, annually upping my PB goals, breathing fresh mountain air, absorbing sunlight, laughing at the days to come.

## WALLIE'S STORY



Mom would send us outside to play daily. There were so many of us (14 kids) we could play a great game of baseball. If we were lucky, and after doing all her other work, she would come out and hit a few baseballs herself. She was a skilled player and it made me so proud. However, mostly I remember her laughter and her absolute joy when she did come out to play. I did not get to hear that when we were working in the house. It taught me that my mom was more than a provider, a friend, and a role model...she needed to kick back, play a game, and just laugh sometimes.

## FADIA'S STORY

Despite a busy and hectic schedule, my mom has always made sure to log in as many steps as possible. Whether that is going for walks in the morning before work, during her lunch break, or in the evening. Her dedication to physical activity has inspired me to be active and prioritize my physical wellbeing even when life gets busy.

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## ERIKA'S STORY



My name is Erika and I'm a wife to Jeff and mom to two boys: Jack almost 10 and Hunter almost 7. I haven't always been active. I played sports in high school but most of my adult life I didn't make sport or fitness part of my regular routine. It wasn't until our family was faced with a stressful and challenging situation in July 2015 that this changed. Going through one of the most stressful times of my life, it occurred to me that I needed to take care of my own health – physical and mental – and I knew that exercise was a good way to do that. I recall clearly when I made that decision; it was one evening in July 2016 and I signed up to a popular gym near my work and promised myself I would start going regularly on my lunch breaks. I fulfilled my commitment and regularly went to the gym, supplemented by long walks pushing my youngest in his stroller on the weekends when I couldn't get to the gym. One sunny day in October 2016, I broke into a jog for part of my walk...and I liked it! I alternated between walking and jogging for well over an hour. I thought about setting a crazy goal for myself: training for running a half marathon the following year! I don't know where or why I came up with that goal, but that decision changed the trajectory of my life.

I created a plan, I stuck to it. I met other runners along the way who were so incredibly supportive of my goal and I suddenly felt part of a community. Feeling that sense of belonging really helped me to be able to get through the challenges I was facing in my personal life with the illness of a loved one. Not only did I complete the half-marathon but, in 2017, I ran my first ever 5k race, 10k race, 10 miler and TWO half-marathons! The sense of pride I felt after each one of those challenges was indescribable. I relished in sharing my accomplishments with my family and having them cheer me on at the finish lines of those events. I signed my kids up for running events so they could experience the same sense of working hard and challenging themselves that I was making a routine part of my life. By challenging ourselves, we learned we can do hard things and get through hard times. I noticed parallels between endurance running and navigating life's challenges: there are parts that feel like you're on top of the world, there are parts where it hurts but you keep going and there are times you feel like you can't possibly go on... but you do. You always make it through. You might need to slow down, it might not be what you expected, but you persevere. This felt reassuring to me.

In 2018, I added trail running, tennis and cross-country skiing to the mix – my kids also started playing tennis and we love going to our neighbourhood courts together. Last year, 2020, I took up mountain biking – this year, I look forward to having my eldest join me for trail rides on flowy, single track trails around Ottawa! That is another huge benefit of embarking on having an active lifestyle: the opportunity to connect with nature and the inner peace that it brings! There are so many beautiful places that I would never have seen or experienced if it weren't for running or mountain biking!

Fitness and sport have not only benefited me physically and mentally, but it has provided me with so much more: confidence, amazing friendships, a positive outlook, a sense that I can accomplish anything I put my mind to, appreciation of sport, connection to nature and most importantly I am setting a good example for my kids and ensuring we're have an active, fun and fulfilling family life.

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## KIM'S STORY

Sports are a big, big part of my life (and always will be). I met my boyfriend (and father of my 2 kids) on an Ultimate field and, ever since, physical activity has always been important in our family. I brought my 6-month-old daughter to almost every practice and to even the Canadian Ultimate Championships in Brampton, ON in 2018. My kids and boyfriend were cheering me on from the sidelines. Now whenever I train downstairs or if I leave the house to go cross country skiing, they are always cheering me on. My kids now ask if they can join me or lift weights with me! My oldest started soccer last summer and we go cheer as a family. The legacy must go on!

## JUDI'S STORY

My mum started walking during our family's Fitness February competition. Our goal was to encourage physical activity in the form of active minutes on our Garmin/Fitbit devices during our coldest winter month (temperatures as low as -40 degrees Celsius this year) and to try to be more active in the new year. The mums in our group sparked great competition, continuing to set the bar high for active minutes and providing "words of encouragement" when I was in last place. My mum thoroughly impressed me with her competitive spirit and perseverance throughout the month, keeping those active minutes counting until the last day of competition. I am proud of my mum and am looking forward to her fierce participation again in our March Madness competition!

## DENISE'S STORY



Growing up I played every sport I could get my hands and feet on. Sport is my outlet, my joy, my fun, my pathway to great friendships, and when I started having my family, I was determined to keep it in my life. Soccer was the sport I loved the most and was very accessible. Thursday nights were sacred....nothing was going to get in the way of my night with my soccer sisters. Soccer keeps me connected with my younger self and it allows me to forget about everything for a while and just run and kick my stress out. I began refereeing when I was 36 years old, as I wanted the ability to stay in the game if my body wouldn't allow me to play one day. Refereeing the game keeps me challenged and on the ball physically, mentally and emotionally. It gives me the opportunity to model what a mom of four can do, and to encourage the next generation of young women that moms have got game!!

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## KATHY'S STORY

There wasn't a sport I didn't like and have tried most at least once. I revelled in the team sports because we worked together to compete. It wasn't as much the exercise as it was the "play hard, give your best" attitude so many women I played with had. I still like to give my best on either team or individual effort yet find myself turning to less passionate pursuits, taking up pickleball, skiing, hiking, biking, paddle boarding, golf and without fail a brisk walk. Really told, sport does more for our mental health than we realize. I hope I can continue to play both competitive and individual sports and that I can share this love with my children and grandchildren for years to come. Without question physical exercise has sustained my health and well being during the pandemic.

## KATE'S STORY



Mountain Biking is my therapy session, social connection, physical release and meditative practice. I am a mom of 2 kids, I work outside the home fulltime, I volunteer with my local Mountain Biking club and recently completed my coaching certification. I started really getting into mountain biking in my early 20's and a few years later I suffered prolonged grief due to the passing of my brother and other family members. I went to counseling, which helped, but I have learned over the years that when the darkness creeps in, it means I need to get out on my bike in the forest. To now be able to share this passion with my kids brings me so much joy!

## PATRICIA'S STORY

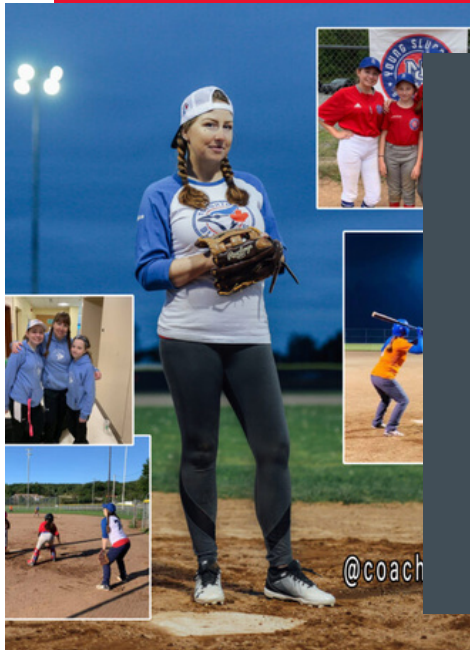
To keep me moving, my fantastic gym has been hosting live Instagram workouts during every lock down. Seeing the trainers I know and comments from my fellow gym members has both kept me moving and feeling connected to my gym community.

My husband and I have also been taking walks together after dinner, a great chance to chat without distractions. On weekends it's family hikes keeping us all moving and connected. Movement is so important to us for both physical and mental health.



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## JEN'S STORY



My daughters didn't get to see me as a young athlete. Volleyball and Softball were two of my favourite competitive sports. Like most mothers, after pregnancy, my life became all about my kids and their interests. I always dreamed of coaching my daughters when they were old enough, so when my oldest was 4-years-old I signed her up for baseball and volunteered as her team coach. I was happy to be back in my element, in a new role as an instructor. 11 years of coaching later, I decided it was my turn to play too! 2020 was my rookie year, along with my youngest daughter (13). We are truly a baseball family. I coach their teams, they are my cheering section at my games. The three of us love to play baseball, and we all coach with Canadian Girls Baseball! Promoting girls baseball is a passion, which is what inspired me to start playing at 40-year-old. Just like my oldest daughter, I'm the only female on my team of men. Showing my girls that being a woman doesn't stop me, is very important to me. I want them to know there is always a place for them in sport.

The importance and fun of staying active through sport have always been something I wanted to teach my daughters. They have watched me play volleyball weekly, for many years. Now they play too! Sport is a big part of our lives, and I wouldn't have it any other way!

## NANCY'S STORY

As a Mother of 3 I knew it was important to keep my children busy and active as they were growing up, especially during the early teen years. Basketball was the perfect sport. The three of them as well as my husband and I spent many hours in the driveway shooting hoops, playing one on one or simply making up our own game. It gave all three of them a foundation to excel and move on to play rep basketball in our community. The sport also taught them the importance of fitness, hard work and working through personal challenges. As a family we travelled with each of their teams and provided them support and encouragement. The good work ethics developed during their basketball years has definitely carried forward into their work careers. I am now looking forward to see what sports our grandchildren might play and hope we have the opportunity to watch them participate and encourage them as we did our own children.

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## JEN'S STORY



My hockey 'life' would begin in 1960 when I first laced up a pair of skates for an actual game with an actual team. We did not have a coach; thus, my mother stepped in and coached us. An unheard of thing to do in those days as a woman was not meant to coach a boys team let alone a hockey team. My Mother won the Saskatoon Playgrounds Coach of the Year Award in 1962, as well she was presented with a Life Membership in the Saskatoon Playgrounds Hockey League in 1966. This is how and where I fell in love with the game, since then I have been involved in hockey as a player and manager at the Minor, Recreation and Oldtimers level as well as various other capacities ever since. I fell in love with the game she surely loved as we would sit together every Saturday night and watch Hockey Night in Canada together. I am 67 years old now and my Mom is not with us anymore. She alone is the true inspiration to me as her teachings and passion for the game has led me to play the game I love, to volunteer in various roles in the game, to work part-time at the ground level in a hockey organization and help build it into the largest in the world of its kind as well as reaching the pro level as a volunteer and eventually leading to a paid position. I owe all of this to my Mom, she had nothing but the kids best interest in teaching me (and others) to enjoy what we love. Thanks Mom!

## JOSEE'S STORY



I had taken my daughter skiing when she was 8 years old, but she did not like it and she was scared to death about going down the hill. I kept asking her for a couple of years if she wanted to ski but just always refused so I stopped asking. Then, last winter (2020-2021) I just mentioned the reason that we do not ski is because my daughter was scared, and that I would go skiing with her. So, this past winter my daughter (now 15 years old) said she would be willing to try it again with me. I told her that I would not push her and we would go on the tinniest hill. I can proudly say that because this Mom's got game that now my daughter adored and fell in love with skiing this past winter. We are going to go skiing next winter and even started buying some attire. We are slowly buying as it expensive to get all the equipment and even winter clothes. We both are excited to go skiing together next winter because Mom's got game! Thank you!!

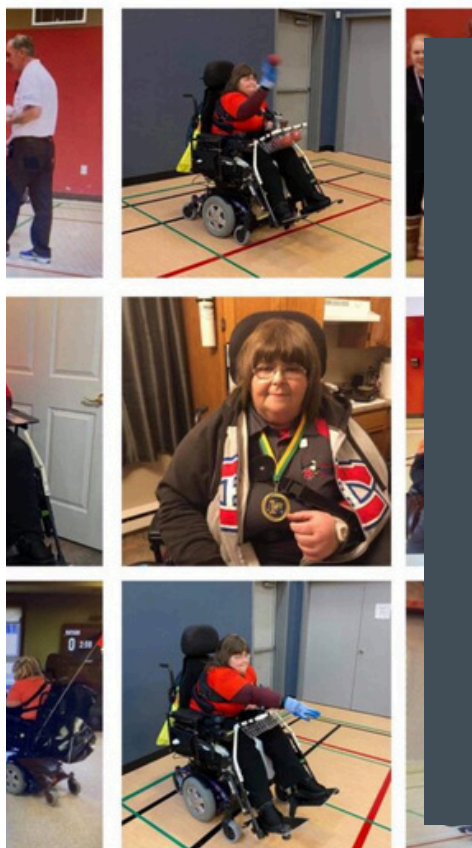
# MOM'S GOT GAME

## HEATHER'S STORY



As an avid adventurer, I love being outside. When my daughter came into our lives, I couldn't wait to start bringing her along. Everyday we hike, bike or ski and she's become the best little adventure buddy. We are both our best selves when we can spend the whole day outside exploring.

## TERRIE'S STORY



My friends from Empower first introduced me to boccia back in October 2017. I had never heard about the sport and thought it was a cross between curling and lawn bowling, so I told them "I don't like curling." They were very persistent and finally encouraged me to try it that following Saturday with them. It was instant, within 10 minutes I fell in love with the sport. I became excited by how challenging, enjoyable, and satisfying it can be.

Boccia as a sport has lifted me out of a deep depression, and I will forever be grateful for the sport in my life. Prior to 1998 I was an EMT, I was then involved in a drunk driving accident which resulted in me becoming a paraplegic, with no use of my legs and one arm. Boccia has helped me to understand that although I am disabled, it does not mean that I am unable to accomplish and achieve my ambitious goals and dreams.

Since 2017 I have developed and grown as an athlete, with encouragement from a couple of very special friends: Stephen, Hayley and Mike. In addition, my two coaches have helped me to succeed, along with my own dedication and hard work. I am proud that I have been able to qualify at the national level, which has enabled me to travel to exciting locations. In my first tournament, in London Ontario's Boccia Blast, I was able to achieve a gold medal in the Pairs and 4th in the individual competition.

I am excited for my future in boccia and look forward to being able to compete in tournaments again once we are out of lockdown. Finally I encourage anyone who is disabled to not give up on their dreams, and to give boccia a chance, so you too can see how exciting and inspiring it can be.

# MOM'S GOT GAME

## JAYNE'S STORY



I played hockey as a kid with the boys. There were no girls only teams. I quit playing in my teens and sold my gear when I had my first child. I ran in to a friend who suggested I play for her team, I was hesitant, but I said yes. I'm so glad I did! For that hour that we are on the ice, I'm not a Mom with a list of things to do that is a mile long – I'm a member of a team working towards the same goal.

## SARAH'S STORY



I am a mom of 3 and I do not have all of my kids together often, so last summer I had family photos done. Like a lot of moms, I am usually behind the camera, and I was shocked when I got the photos back to see just how heavy I had gotten. This was a wake-up call for me and so my journey began. I started hiking with my daughter and have recently added trampoline jumping with my youngest to my fitness plan. I know that I have a ways to go on my fitness journey, but having my kids along side me as I hike and jump has given me a whole different reward. I am sharing new experiences with them and laughing a lot and we are all getting healthier. Next time I do family photos, I'm going to be shocked again, but at how great I look.

## DEB'S STORY

My mom loves gardening; however, we've been encouraging her to explore other avenues of physical activity to help alleviate the pain in her back. When I arrived back from university this summer I wasn't surprised to see her in the garden... I was however surprised to see she was doing yoga IN the garden! We're so proud of you, Mom! Keep it up #MomsGotGame

# MOM'S GOT GAME

## VALERIE'S STORY



I turned 40 years old when I moved to the small mountain village of Haines Junction, Yukon. The place we were renting just outside of the village had a creek in front of it that we skated on with our two young sons. After playing shinny hockey with them I decided to try the real thing. Encouraged by my husband and wearing second-hand gear I started to play with him in an OldTimers Hockey League.

As the boys got older & I did, too I noticed that the girls were falling between the cracks after the PeeWee hockey level as it was then contact hockey. I reintroduced a Female Division in our Minor Hockey program & girls aged 13 and up along with women were encouraged to join. It was often the largest & most popular Division in our Minor Hockey League!

I also started a one-day family tourney between Christmas & New Years so returning students from universities & college (by now including my own sons & their girlfriends) had a venue to have some hockey fun when they were home for Christmas Break. This tradition, as well as an Annual Female Hockey Jamboree in the late winter, continue to today! Over 25 years of hockey fun!

I am still playing & organizing Female Hockey in our village. I just turned 74 years old & am so delighted to be playing with both my daughters-in-law and my 3 granddaughters. As well I have a standing date after school at public skate to play shinny hockey with my two 8-year-old grandsons and their friends. I hope to have many more years of hockey fun with them all.

## ALLISON'S STORY

Allison is a mother of 3 energetic boys. She is a teacher (amongst other subjects, she teaches fitness). She takes pride in teaching her students the importance of exercise and shows them multiple options. She takes her students on outdoor ed trips (pre-covid) and shows them the beauty that goes along with all the great outdoor activities. She coaches after school sports teams.

Allison is an amazing role model for her 3 boys. She has energy for days to keep up with them and teaches her kids loads of fun activities. They play hockey, where she coaches some of their teams, as well as playing in a women's league. In the summer it is the same thing with baseball or soccer.

She manages early morning walks with friends, or hikes on different terrains to constantly challenge us. Allison is an inspiration, I envy her energy and she always has a smile and kinds words for all.

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## HAYLEY'S STORY



I watched my boys play hockey for years. I was very involved in their teams. When I was 45 I decided to try it out. It was so much fun! I am now 55 and still playing. Now everyone plays hockey in our house.

This is a photo of the best Mother's Day I have ever had!

## DENISE'S STORY



When COVID was still ongoing, our family decided to get a ski pass for our local ski hill. I had not been on skis in over 24 years. Needless to say, I was rusty! My kids had been on skis a couple times in their life. Because COVID shut down sports for our kids, we were lucky to have the ski hill as our outlet. We learned how to ski together as a family – we fell, we got up, we tried again. By the end of the season, the kids have been doing blue/black runs. Their mother, on the other hand, still enjoys the bunny hill and the green runs. She does not have as much as an adventurous spirit like her kids. However, we created great memories together as a family on the ski hill and got active together.

## LUCIE'S STORY

My mom has been on a weight loss/ healthier lifestyle journey, she walks everyday and started using weights this year. She is feeling amazing and I couldn't be more proud of her.

# MOM'S GOT GAME

## AMY'S STORY



My mom does not just have game, she plans, organizes, encourages and inspires those around her to get involved in the game! Growing up, my mother always aspired to be a hockey player, but like many other women at that time, participating was not a possibility. Starting with figure skating, she strengthened her skills, and then moved on to ball hockey before finally getting her chance to play league hockey, nearly 28 years ago in the Winchester & District Ladies Hockey League. Now, as the long-time President of this league, and a 40+ league, she gives other women the opportunity to learn, socialize, keep fit, and have fun!

While my mom worked hard to improve her own hockey skills, she also took on the responsibility of coaching and training me, her daughter, in my own hockey career. As a shy young girl playing hockey in a minor boy's hockey league, there is nothing that comforts yet pushes you like having mom's support on the bench!

Through all of this, she still found time to practice volleyball with me in the living room, play catch in the backyard, run a minor ball hockey league with my father, participate in long distance bike rides, entertain the neighbourhood kids with her scooter-ing skills, and support me in all my own athletic endeavours!

Not only is she my mom, but she is also my teammate and inspiration, and I don't think it gets any better than that!

## CATHERINE'S STORY



I took up running when my kids were 4 & 7 and I needed a way to exercise that was not tied to a gym, studio or schedule. Running gave me the freedom to lace up whenever the family's schedule made sense and just head out for how long or short I wanted. I signed up for my first 10k trail race just because running in nature sounded great. That is how I first learned of ultra running and was hooked. I ran my first 50k in the fall of 2019. Along the way, we have run 5ks as a family and have been greeted at the finish line and cheered on by my kids at many races. Having 2 neuro-atypical children drains every ounce of energy I have. Trail running is my secret for recharging my batteries. A brand-new surprise baby in 2021, 10 years after the last is slowing me down a bit but I look forward to having her gorgeous face added to my cheering squad at my next race.

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## CHERY'S STORY

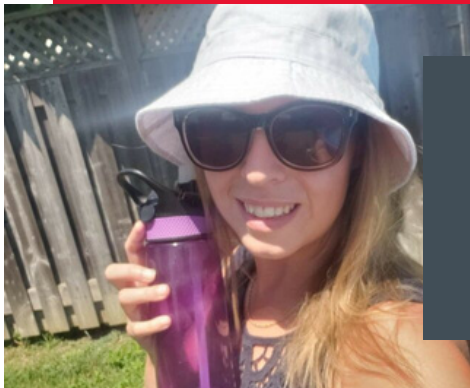
Not able to play hockey during the pandemic I started with walking more. As the weather warmed, I pulled out my mountain bike. Initially 3km was a challenge. I soon was frustrated with my lack of speed and watched road bikes zoom past me. I purchased the last road bike in the universe as the summer wore on. By the end of summer, I had logged over 1000km and longest ride was 57km. New sports are a challenge but fun! #getoutdoors #mentalhealth #physicalhealth #momsgotgame

## SOLANGE'S STORY

I joined an organisation called My Peak Challenge (MPC); a global movement dedicated to educating & inspiring its members to live healthier, happier, and more balanced lives while raising funds to change lives. We are proud to have raised more than \$5,000,000.00 for our charity partners to date. One of the charities of note is Blood Cancer UK. We call ourselves Peakers.

I lost my mother to lymphoma about two years ago & have dedicated my HIIT fitness training & journey to her. I workout a minimum of 5 days per week and was an avid gym-goer but, because of COVID, had to switch to power walking approximately 8-10 km/day. Over a year, I was able to amass enough equipment for my own home gym and happy to share that I am back to my HIIT program. I couldn't be happier with my journey and I am a proud supporter of MPC!

## AMANDA'S STORY



I am a stay-at-home mom who has always put everyone in my family first. I would walk everyday but my heart rate wasn't increasing enough to make a change. I bought the tech and started speed walking then, running around the yard with a soccer ball. Now I trampoline with the kids. I am absolutely loving my active lifestyle and make the time to complete it every single day. No more excuses. We are all having a lot of fun living an active healthy lifestyle. Watching what I put in my body, including plenty of water.



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## BARBARA'S STORY



I am a Mom as well as a teacher of movement classes on Zoom called Nia. Most of my participants are moms, grandmas and persons who nurture others. These "Moms" follow my lead and guidance to engage in moving their bodies to soul-stirring, world music to receive all the benefits of fitness such as strength, flexibility, stability, agility, and mobility, both in their physical body as well as in their mind, emotions, and spirit. During this pandemic, moms have found a way to engage their bodies to feel less stress, feel more joy, release tension, and connect with a community online, releasing a sense of isolation. Science tells us that our bodies are made to move at any age and that it is Through Movement that We Find Health.

While climbing Mount Kilimanjaro just a few years short of 60, I realized what a strong body I had that carried me up and down that highest free-standing mountain in the world. I began to treasure the gift of my body and do whatever necessary to keep it in good shape. A couple of years later, I was introduced to a movement practice called Nia and immediately fell in love with it, so much so that I ventured on to become trained and certified to teach Nia. As a Black Belt Nia instructor, I have transitioned from teaching in person to teaching on Zoom, learning the new technology of streaming. Most of my students are moms, grandmas and individuals who care for and nurture others. They come in various shapes and sizes, ages, and abilities. What we all have in common is to move in our body's way as it is today to achieve the desired level of fitness in our body, mind, spirit and emotions. Even through this new medium, we are able to connect on some level as a community of movers, eliminating a sense of isolation during the pandemic.

## PAULA'S STORY

I did not exercise very much when I was younger but a few years ago I found pickleball and I enjoyed it so much I was playing at the community centre three times every week and also sometimes in the evening with my husband. I am waiting for a knee replacement, so I had to stop for now but after my operation, I hope to get active again and back to playing pickleball at the centre with my friends. I think playing should assist me in becoming active again and a good example to my kids.

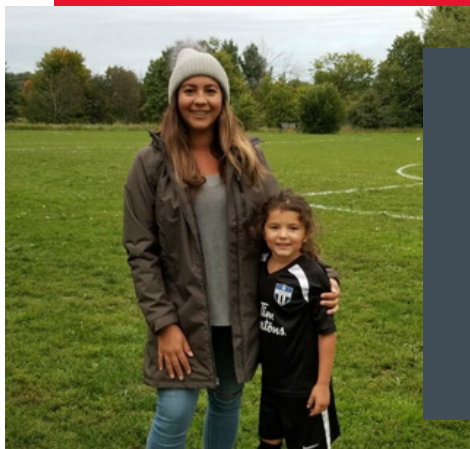
# MOM'S GOT GAME

## JOANNE'S STORY



I am a small business owner who juggles many hats. I donate shoes through my store to local school children who have less. This initiative is called Shoes on their Feet. I am the local shoe fairy! I also do triathlons – I have my whole life and I'm 50 now. I continued to put shoes on the feet of local kids through my store and while pursuing my dream of doing Ironman and to inspire others to get active. My son is my inspiration. Check out my profile and my store Kiddoe Kobbler Stittsville Kanata for the whole story.

## DALILA'S STORY



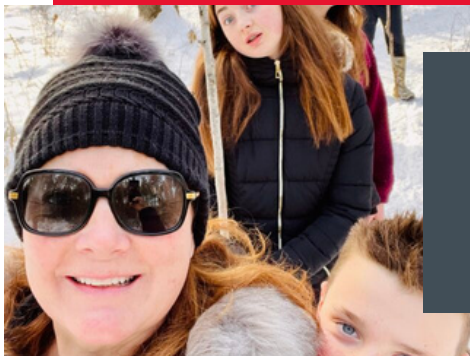
My dad played soccer in Algeria and when he came to Canada in the early 1970's, he continued to play the sport he loved so much. I started playing organized soccer when I was 7 years old and played all the way until I went to Ottawa University. Soccer has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. Heck I even broke my leg playing soccer and have proudly bore my soccer bruises and scars! I am now a proud mama of 3 kids, Tiago/9, Yasmine/7 & Giselle/4 who all played competitive soccer with Ottawa South United. Throughout this pandemic, we have greatly missed our soccer family and we can't wait to be back on the soccer field. Right now we are doing on soccer practises via online zoom classes until we can get back outside to team sports. See picture attached....The family that plays soccer together, STAYS TOGETHER!!!!

## CHERYL'S STORY

I have loved hockey since I was little. Unable to play in my hometown I grew up playing ringette....but I coached hockey. As university student I finally got to play! I have continued to play and coach since. Still one of the few female coaches in my area, I love how hockey brings us together. Currently I'm coaching my 13-year-old son's competitive team and I love every minute.

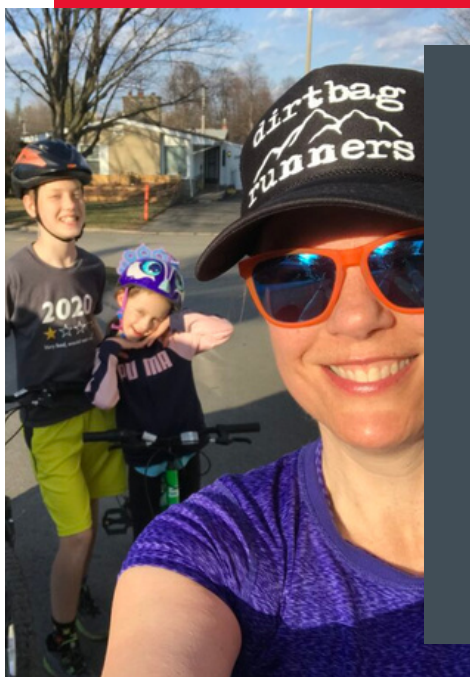
# MOM'S GOT GAME

## CHRISTY'S STORY



COVID has given us the opportunity to come together as a family. A new activity we have started together is hiking with our 3 kids (and dog). We hike local trails and some a bit further. We love good scenery and finding new things. It keeps us happy and fit.

## DENISE'S STORY



My journey started 14 years ago when I quit smoking. I was overweight and unhealthy, and I started a learn to run program to change my life habits.

When I had kids, I wanted to show them that struggles (current or past) shouldn't keep you from doing what makes you happy.

I run to deal with stress, to maintain a healthy weight, to enjoy snacks guilt free, to keep my body from aging quicker, to just be healthy overall, and I want the kids to see that sometimes it's hard, but if we work as a team, things can be easier or at least more enjoyable.

When I started to train for ultras, I found it took me away from home for long periods so now I have my middle child ride along with me on weekday runs, and my oldest has started mountain biking so he could join me on the trails for weekend long runs. It is super important for all of us to feel included during our heavy training cycles and the kids have taken their "pacing and crew" duties very seriously!

I could never replace the bonding and conversations that I get to have with them during this time.

# MOM'S GOT GAME

## STEFANIE'S STORY



I played soccer my whole life and after having my kids it was important to me to still have an outlet where I could just be me – and where I could forget about everything for an hour! Soccer has continued for me and I'm always so proud when my family comes to watch me play! When my son, daughter and husband all took up hockey I decided to give it a try and signed up for a women's learn to play program! It was so much more fun than I expected! The pandemic put my organized sports activities on hold – so I started running more regularly – often with the kids next to me on their bikes!

## CHRISTINE'S STORY

I have played hockey for 33 years, I played both forward and defence. When I had children, I was sure to sign them up for hockey, it brought back so many amazing memories from when I first started. I hope my kids will follow my path of loving sports! When they were between 4-8 years old they would come and cheer me on in my hockey and soccer games. I was so happy to see them in the stands. They are now 10 and 12 and both play competitive hockey, and both are goalies. I ended up injuring myself, on the job as a Paramedic, and required numerous surgeries. It ultimately ended my career and my ability to play hockey or soccer. I worked hard in therapy and was able to start trying new sports that I could do. Walking, Swimming, Curling and even skiing. I love that I could show my kids that even when we face adversity, there is always a sport that they can play to stay fit and make new friends. They have both participate in many sports: swimming, gymnastics, parkour, football, curling, soccer and softball. All these sports will help them to become well rounded athletes and confident people.

# MOM'S GOT GAME

## HEATHER'S STORY

After watching our kids grow up in the sport and seeing how much fun they were having a few of us got together to create the first ever Master's division in our club.

It started with just two of us & grew to 6 in just over a year! COVID shut us down but we still chat and are already planning for next season.

It's been great to connect as athletes with our kids and to learn new skills together as adults – something that doesn't happen very often!

## MARY LYNNE'S STORY



On holidays like Easter and Thanksgiving where the focus is on food, chocolate and sitting around inside – my Mom hosts the "Turkey Tri" and the "Egg-Olympics". Essentially it is an annual game that takes place outside and consists of 3 backyard physical challenges. Some are teams and some are individual. The games change annually to keep it interesting.

## CAROL ANN'S STORY



My mom joined the Nordic Pole Walking group that I started!! She has never been "sporty" but is always supporting my athletic goals. She joined the very first class I taught and was the number 1 member for the new club. (She's in the pink coat- leading the pack) My mom, an athlete at 75 years young!

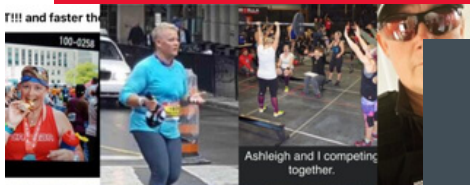
# MOM'S GOT GAME

## TANYA'S STORY



Taking time to workout is important to me because it makes me a better Mom. Taking the 30-60 minutes per day for myself allows me to be a better Mom. I had a great role model in my Mom who continues to do kickboxing, water skiing and hikes almost everyday (in her 60s!). I enjoy showing my 2 daughters (6 and 8 years old) that being sporty is not just for the boys and I see it rubbing off as they do their sports: ringette, soccer, swimming, tennis and even learning to water ski!

## DEB'S STORY



I have accomplished a number of things in life but the best is the 3 kids I had and being able to make memories with them.

I have competed with them as my partner, coached their sports teams, and even did things on my own that I could never had completed without their encouragement and help.

The ones I remember most are completing a 1/2 marathon, a full marathon and competing as a family in CrossFit all just before I turned 50 and now I am training to do the half Army Run.

Being a Mom and staying active has given me a new lease on life. Being over 50 and having my family wanting to participate with me is amazing. Here is to Mom's everywhere.



# MOM'S GOT GAME

## DEBBY'S STORY



I was just introduced to Hap Ki Do in 2007. My son and I started at the same time. It was a real challenge as I was 52 years old. I trained really hard with the goal of reaching my Black Belt level, but I had a bad break of my left leg in 2011 that kept me out for over 6 months. I came back determined and was awarded my black belt in Dec 2012. My son's work schedule slowed his progress, but he achieved his black belt level a few years later. It was awesome being able to train with my son. We still participate but at a reduced level during the Pandemic but will be back at training soon!!!

## HARRIET'S STORY



My mom became an athlete late in life. I remember my Zaida telling me she took her to a baseball practice once and when the coach asked her what position she wanted to play, she said batter. Although health and fitness were always a priority, she didn't really play organized sports until my brother and I were older. She always encouraged us to play sports, volunteered, and cheered us on. Even though she isn't necessarily an All-star, she is always willing to try and learn and has built a community on the teams she plays on. As her daughter, it's pretty inspiring and cool to see her having fun. It's also awesome to be able to connect and play sports together as a family doing something we all love.

## HARRIET'S STORY



Our Mommy plays Ultimate frisbee. She can jump really high and catch very well. She won 2 gold medals at the Canadian And US National championships in 2019. Sometimes we go running together. We do lots of hikes and bike rides together too. She even coaches our soccer teams!

She makes sure that we are staying active and having fun.

# MOM'S GOT GAME

## MICHELLE'S STORY



Our Mommy plays Ultimate frisbee. She can jump really high and catch very well. She won 2 gold medals at the Canadian And US National championships in 2019. Sometimes we go running together. We do lots of hikes and bike rides together too. She even coaches our soccer teams!

She makes sure that we are staying active and having fun.

## LIZ'S STORY

It was my mom who decided to put me in ringette at the age of 7 and immediately she became the ultimate ringette mom. She drove me to all the games and practices, near and far, and was the positive force behind all the hard games and sometimes lack of motivation. She even led by example by being one of the first women to form a ladies bunnies league for moms who wanted to give ringette a go. They created a safe space for women who haven't really played sports before to learn the game for themselves. And of course, she volunteered me to be the ref (it was the least I could do after all she had done for me). And ringette has been in our blood ever since. Although she has hung up her skates, she continues to support me in my athletic endeavours and has been the ultimate example of commitment. Thanks mom!