

## It's Mother's Day

By Barbara Burrows

Barbara Burrows is founder and director of Barbara Burrows Parenting. She has a weekly Q/A column that is carried in a number of newspapers in Canada, as well as producing Barbara Burrows Parenting Magazine six times per year. All of the parenting services developed by Ms. Burrows take a psychodynamic approach.

As Mother's Day approaches, I like to remind readers, once again, of the marvelous book, "The Myth of the Perfect Mother" by Jane Swigart. The more mothers can know about the complicated emotional tasks they face day in and day out raising children, the happier and (emotionally) healthier both they and their children will be. Happy Mother's Day to all!

Imagine a woman who wants only what is best for her children, whose needs she intuitively finds them fascinating. She is exquisitely attuned to her children and is so resourceful she is immune to boredom. Nurturing comes as naturally as breathing and child rearing is a source of pleasure that does not require discipline or self-sacrifice. She is the Perfect Mother.

Now imagine the opposite: a woman easily bored by her children, indifferent to their well-being; a mother as self-absorbed that she cannot discern what is in the best interest of her children. Insensitive to her needs, she is unable to empathize with them and often uses them for her gratification. This woman dam-



ages her children without knowing it. Unable to learn from the suffering she causes, she is incapable of change. She is the Bad Mother. (The Myth of the Perfect Mother by Jane Swigart P.6, 7)

Jane Swigart, in her book "The Myth of the Perfect Mother" points out that all of us would like to resemble the first "perfect mother" but we know, having experienced the daily difficult moments in bringing up our chil-

dren, that we are not her and never will be. She also points out that possibly, somewhere, there are mothers so disturbed that they do horrible things to their children without remorse, but the majority of us are parents who love our children and want to nurture them the best we can.

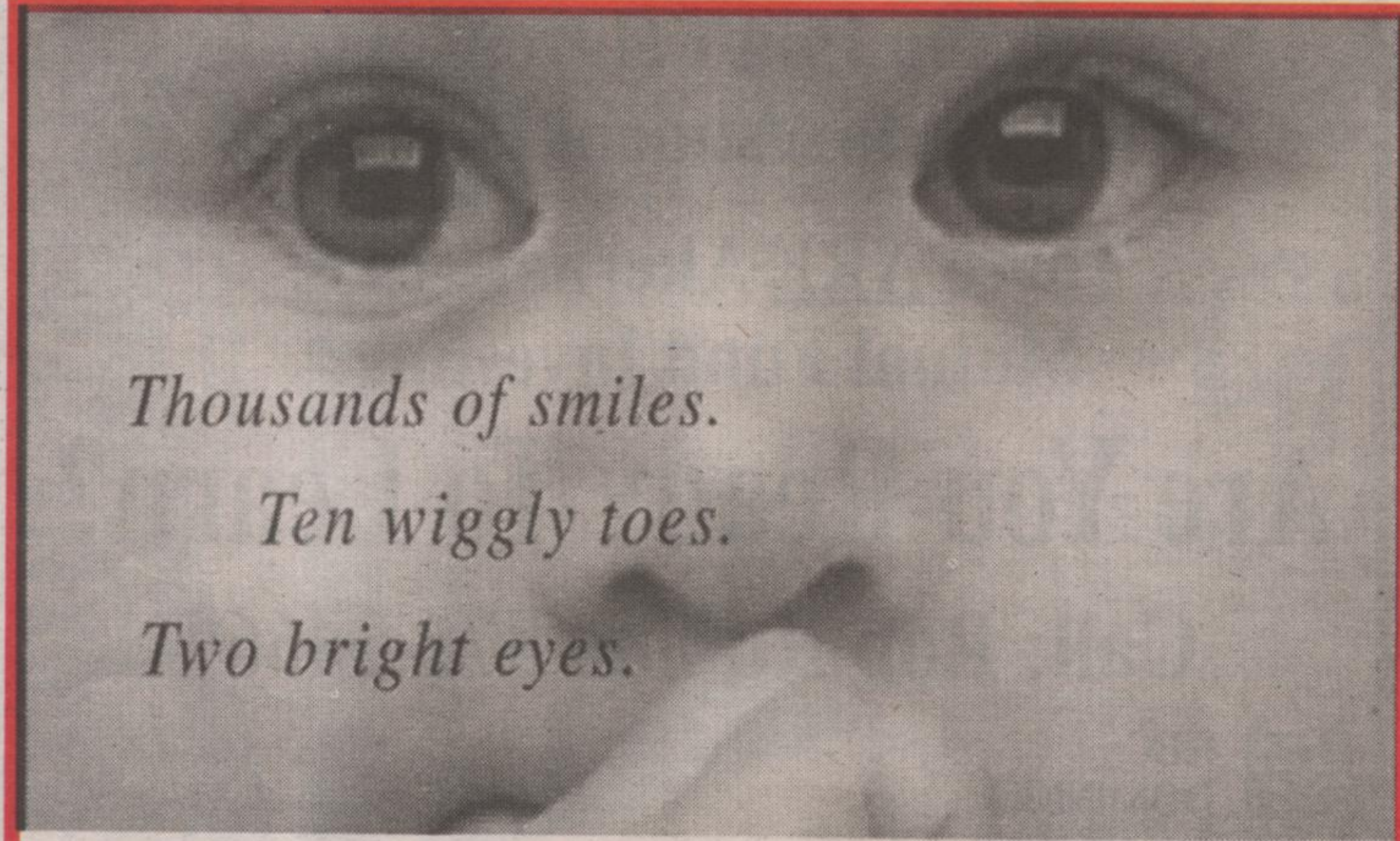
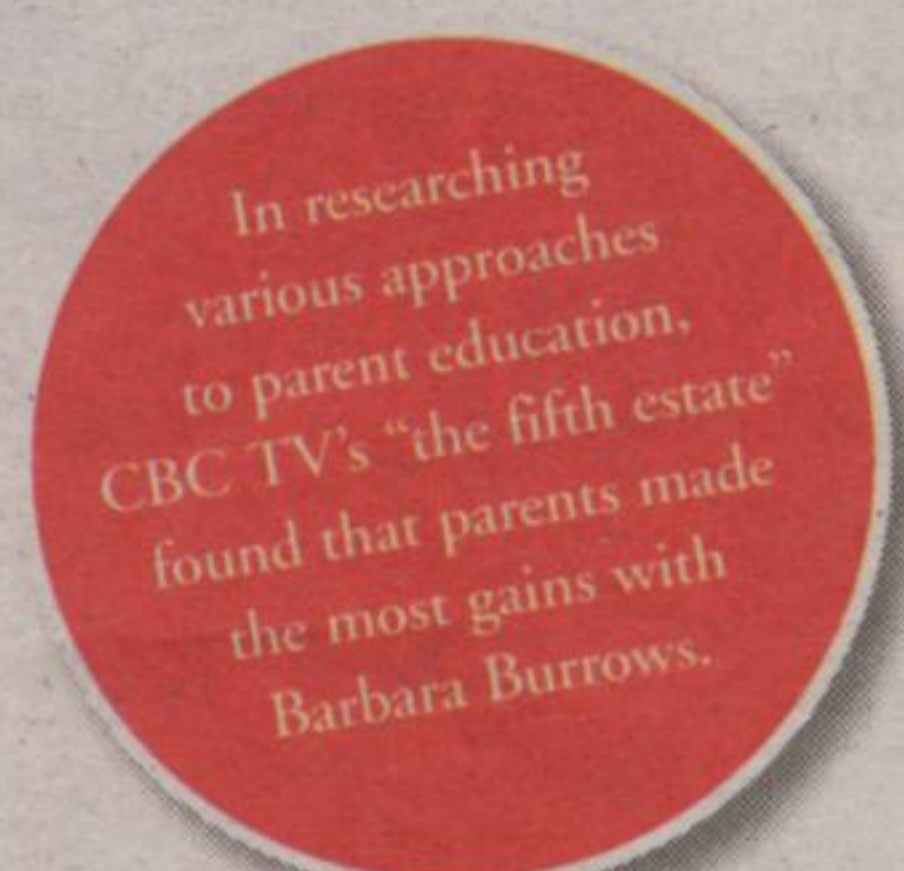
Continued on page 6

### About Barbara Burrows

Barbara Burrows is a psycho-therapist in private practice. She is founder of Parent to Parent Magazine and Positive Parenting. In 1999, these companies merged to form Barbara Burrows Parenting. Her syndicated column runs in newspapers across Canada.

Barbara helps parents raise emotionally healthy children and experience joy in parenting. After graduating from McMaster University in sociology and psychology, she worked to help parents with children's behaviour in Hamilton at Chedoke-McMaster Hospitals before developing her own parent education program.

She and her husband have two daughters and a son, and live in Burlington Ontario.



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