

# A dad's account

**CRYSTAL JA** talks to an author who shares his tales from France to fatherhood

**W**HEN Sacha Molitorisz found out his wife Jo was pregnant with their first child, like all good journalists, he thought what a good story it would make.

He figured a book about parenting — written from a father's perspective — would make a much better novel than the fiction he'd been working on for the past few months.

What he didn't know at the time was how hard it would be.

"How did I fit it all in?" he ponders in retrospect.

"The big irony of this book was that . . . I had to become a dad to write it, but once I had become a dad I had no time to write about becoming a dad."

He credits his long-suffering wife with playing a critical role in bringing both book and child to fruition.

"She shouldered the burden of the load for a few months there and she's glad the book's finished now," he says.

The book is called *From Here to Paternity, A User's Manual for Early Fatherhood*. But it's much more anecdotal than problem-solving.

It begins with the revelation of Jo's pregnancy, while the two are away in France for several months of indulgence in local wines, bubbly and cuisine.

Molitorisz's brief accounts of their indulgent, carefree adventures is enough to make the childless question why anyone bothers with parenthood.

But as Molitorisz learns, mother nature is a hideous beast who will ruin your plans by sending you a child when you least expect it.

The two (or rather three) return home to a marathon of tests, worry, misinformation — as well as episodes of calm and pure joy — before the arrival of their daughter.

Molitorisz supplements his personal journey with investigative forays into aspects of fatherhood.

He explores the issue of sex before and after pregnancy as well as postnatal depression in men, which affects about four per cent of dads.

He also looks at fatherhood in different cultures and even the animal kingdom.

For example, readers will learn that male ducks sometimes kidnap eggs to raise them themselves, or with a male mate.



**DOING OKAY:** Sacha Molitorisz and daughter, Edie.

"I was really adamant with this book that, sure, I would talk about my experiences, but I wanted to put it in the context of research and some history and some statistics," he says.

Molitorisz says there are no set rules for being a father.

"The idea of fatherhood is still evolving," he says.

"In 2007 in Australia, and other similar countries, we're still working out what it is to be a dad and what it should be."

He says dads are often overlooked when it comes to bringing up baby and fathers still tend to be the forgotten party when it comes to the impact of having a baby, both at home and in the office.

Take Lleyton Hewitt, Molitorisz says in the book.

A year after he made it to the final of the Australian Open, he fell in the third round in 2006.

Well no wonder, says

Molitorisz, doesn't anyone realise he just had a child?

"All of a sudden you're balancing different roles . . . you go from a position where you're really just looking after yourself," he says.

"There's that sense of responsibility, getting the work/life balance right over those first months and then the first year, must be a really big challenge for a lot of people."

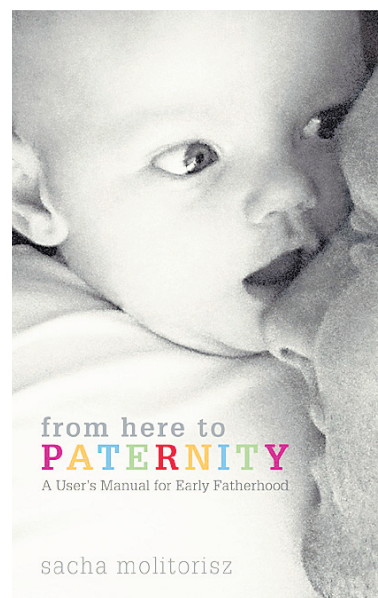
Molitorisz reckons he's "doing okay" at this stage, with Edie now almost two years old.

"The book describes there are a lot of challenges," he says.

"In the first six months you have this sense that . . . life will never be the same again and as a woman you won't be able to work and as a man, your sense of responsibility will choke you."

But he insists *From Here to Paternity* isn't "scare stuff".

In fact, one reader told him it



was more uplifting than other books he'd read on the subject.

An encouraging sign for those wanting to have children one day.

■ *From Here to Paternity, A User's Manual for Early Fatherhood* by Sacha Molitorisz.

Published by Pan Macmillan.  
RRP: \$29.95.

## young readers



### Almost Super Ethan

**Author:** Rebecca Green  
**Illustrator:** Ali Dullard  
**Publisher:** Picture Me Books  
**RRP \$34.95**

WANT a sure-fire way to get your children to read?

Put your children in the picture — literally.

Publisher Rebecca Green and illustrator Ali Dullard have hit on a gold mine with their new Picture Me series.

The unique series lets your child become the lead character in one of four pre-written books.

Rebecca and Ali insert your child, and friends' names, into the storyline of the book, and with the help of a supplied photo from you, their face.

Right before their eyes your child is starring in their own adventure.

The illustrations are vivid, bright and fun.

The stories are full of adventure, and are great learning tools — whether it be counting down in a rocket adventure, or learning to have faith in yourself as a super hero.

*Almost Super Ethan* has been a hit in our house since it arrived.

The pages are already dog-eared and have been memorised from go to whoa.

Young readers never tire of seeing themselves zooming over tall buildings or collecting slime beetles to defeat the evil scientist.

With four books in the series, including *Almost Super*, *Special Delivery*, *Too Many . . .* and *Captain's Rocket Jobs*, there is bound to be a story that fits your child perfectly.

And you don't have to get them just for children.

According to the blurb on the back *Almost Super Bob* got his Picture Me book from his wife for his 40th birthday — and loved it.

Green and Dullard are also working on their first double-header, "Koala Rescue: how NAME and DAD saved the day", which is due out soon.

To have a look at the Picture Me Books available or to order one visit [www.picturemebooks.com.au](http://www.picturemebooks.com.au)

— Reviewed by Lisa Korycki

## NATIONAL TOP TEN

supplied by Collins Booksellers

Retail prices

1.	Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows	J. K. Rowling	\$49.95
2.	A Thousand Splendid Suns	Khaled Hosseini	\$32.95
3.	The Memory Keeper's Daughter	Kim Edwards	\$29.95
4.	Skin Privilege	Karin Slaughter	\$32.95
5.	The Secret	Rhonda Byrne	\$34.95
6.	The Dangerous Book For Boys	C. and H. Iggulden	\$45.00
7.	Friend Of The Devil	Peter Robinson	\$32.95
8.	The Good Guy	Dean Koontz	\$32.99
9.	The Quickie	J. Patterson and M. & Ledwidge	\$32.95
10.	Who Killed Channel 9?	Gerald Stone	\$45.00

## CHILDREN'S TOP TEN

supplied by Collins Booksellers

Retail prices

1.	Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows	J. K. Rowling	\$49.95
2.	Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince	J. K. Rowling	\$19.95
3.	Harry Potter... Philosopher's Stone: Celeb. Ed.	Rowling, J.K.	\$15.95
4.	Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban	J. K. Rowling	\$15.95
5.	Harry Potter... Chamber Of Secrets: Celeb. Ed.	J. K. Rowling	\$15.95
6.	Harry Potter And The Goblet Of Fire	J. K. Rowling	\$18.95
7.	Harry Potter And The Order Of The Phoenix	J. K. Rowling	\$19.95
8.	Kisses For Daddy	F. Watts and D. Legge	\$24.95
9.	Why I Love My Daddy	Daniel Howarth	\$14.99
10.	The Cat On The Mat Is Flat	Andy Griffiths	\$14.95

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