



Dina Lohan and Lindsay Lohan (Photo by James Devaney/WireImage)

Some daughters do 'ave 'em...

Meet the 'momagers' -- mothers hell-bent on pushing their children towards stardom, whether the kids like it or not.

By Caitriona Palmer

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It's early morning in suburban [Long Island](#) and [Dina Lohan](#) is partaking in her favourite morning ritual -- eagerly scanning the tabloid newspapers for any mention of her daughter, movie starlet and rehab regular, [Lindsay Lohan](#).

"They'd better not start in on Ali like this," says the raspy-voiced platinum blonde about her youngest daughter as she spies yet another photo of the troubled 22-year-old Lindsay. Lohan's defence of the paparazzi-hounded Lindsay would be admirable were it not for the camera crew jammed into her house filming her very public maternal indignation.

The 45-year-old former dancer -- who last year said that reality shows made her "sick inside" -- recently invited cameras into her home to document the showbiz aspirations of her 14-year-old younger daughter, Ali, for the new hit reality series, Living Lohan on E! channel.

The show depicts Dina and Ali googling themselves, watching tabloid TV and ignoring the plaintive pleas for attention from Dina's 11-year-old son, Cody. Lindsay Lohan -- who is reported

to have refused to have anything to do with the show -- is nonetheless referred to constantly by her overbearing mother.

Along with [Lynne Spears](#) -- mother of fallen pop princess [Britney Spears](#) -- Dina Lohan has gained infamy as a 'Momager', the feisty stage mother with big dreams who propels her progeny with manic intensity in hopes of [Hollywood](#) superstardom -- whether the kids like it or not. Both Lohan and Spears have been credited as the driving force behind their respective daughters' meteoric rise to showbiz fame and their equally disastrous fall from grace. They are merely the most famous of a much wider Hollywood phenomenon: parents who seem oblivious to what they have done to their children as they push them towards celebrity at any cost while profiting all the way.

A running theme for these entertainment parents is their tendency to act as friends to their children instead of mothers who set rules and discipline, says [Stephen Poulter](#), a clinical psychologist in [Los Angeles](#) who has counselled scores of showbiz moms.

"They're orphans. They're emotional orphans," Poulter says of the daughters. "That's really the feeling I get when I sit with these women and when I talk to them. They really strike me as orphans.

"Kids don't want you to be their friend. They really don't. You can be friendly but you can't be your daughter's best friend. And I think that's what happened with Britney and her mom. It just blew up," says the doctor, who has published a book called *The Mother Factor* (Prometheus).

Last year, in front of celebrity photographers, Britney served legal papers to her mother warning her to stay away from her grandchildren. The pair reconciled later in the year after Britney lost custody of her children to ex-husband [Kevin Federline](#).

Dina -- who refers to her famous daughter as 'Linds' -- told [Harpers Bazaar](#) last year that the pair text each other "like, 80,000 times a day". The mother and daughter wear matching tattoos on their wrists and Dina likes to borrow Lindsay's 'hand-me-up' designer clothes -- [Prada](#) and [Jimmy Choo](#) being firm favourites.

The duo have also hit the clubs together -- "Listen to me: Lindsay would drag me, literally drag my loser butt there and say, 'I need you to know who these people are'," said Lohan, often seen prancing and preening next to her daughter on the red carpet.

When introduced to [George Clooney](#), Dina pretended she was Lindsay's assistant. "I don't want them to know I'm her mom. It's a whole other demographic. People just go dark," she says. **Poulter refers to this friendship-style mothering as "very problematic" and believes that the child's natural development is interrupted because their best friend is their parent and not their natural peer group.**

"[The] daughter grows up essentially being a motherless daughter," he said. "They don't have that mother-daughter relationship where the mother sets limits and boundaries and is a role model or mentor, showing her daughter what to do and what not to do. I see a lot of that in showbusiness." Poulter also includes [Paris Hilton](#) and [Nicole Ritchie](#) in the same category of celebrities with parents who act more like hipster peers.

The use of their children as cash cows is another facet of this distorted parenting approach. Lynne Spears, who has been criticised for treating her daughters "like a piggy bank", made a reported \$1m when she sold the rights to the story of her teen daughter Jamie Lynn's pregnancy to OK! magazine.

"Lynne knew OK! would pay the most," a source told [US Weekly](#) magazine. "It was her decision." She will soon publish a tell-all memoir of her life with her famous daughters, *Through the Storm: A Real Story of Fame and Family in a Tabloid World*, that will "get into the dark period of Britney's life -- from a mother's eyes", according to [Usmagazine.com](#). Britney is allegedly furious with her mother's plans to publish the book.

The 52-year old former school teacher reportedly ensured from the start of Britney's career -- which began when she was a fresh faced 13-year-old on The New [Mickey Mouse](#) Club TV show - - that she would receive a percentage of her daughter's showbiz earnings.

"Lynne got all her money through those girls and loved it when it started rolling in," a source told [US Weekly](#). "She's the only one with a [Land Rover](#) in [Kentwood](#)" (in the southern state of [Louisiana](#)).

But friends of the young [Jamie Lynn Spears](#) -- who until her shock pregnancy announcement had been one of the most celebrated 'tween' stars in [America](#) -- say the 17-year-old was a reluctant celebrity. "Jamie wanted something different for her life, and her mom put her in situations she didn't want to be in," said [Alexa Nikolas](#), Spears' *Zoey 101* co-star.

Having feasted on the career of Lindsay since she first entered showbusiness at the tender age of three, Dina Lohan has now set her sights on the singing talents of Ali, who recently recorded a new album in [Las Vegas](#).

An aspiring dancer who attended ballet school but "was everyone's understudy", Dina Lohan's near frenzied desire for her daughter to achieve fame is indicative of unfulfilled ambition, according to Dr Poulter.

"The mother is living vicariously through the daughter. It's almost as if the mother is going into acting and her dreams are being realised and developed," he said.

Addicted to the limelight while embroiled in a love-hate relationship with the media, the 'momagers' seem unaware of the damage wrought on their kids -- and appear hell-bent on repeating the carnage with their younger offspring.

For Dina Lohan, promoting her daughters' stardom is not about her but about helping her children go after the "American dream".

"We're just so misunderstood," says Dina. "My sons are in sports; my daughters want to be actors. I was in the business, and I'm going to help them. You don't like that?" she says. "I'm living the American dream and you can...."

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<http://www.independent.ie/entertainment/film-cinema/some-daughters-do-ave-em-1427427.html>

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