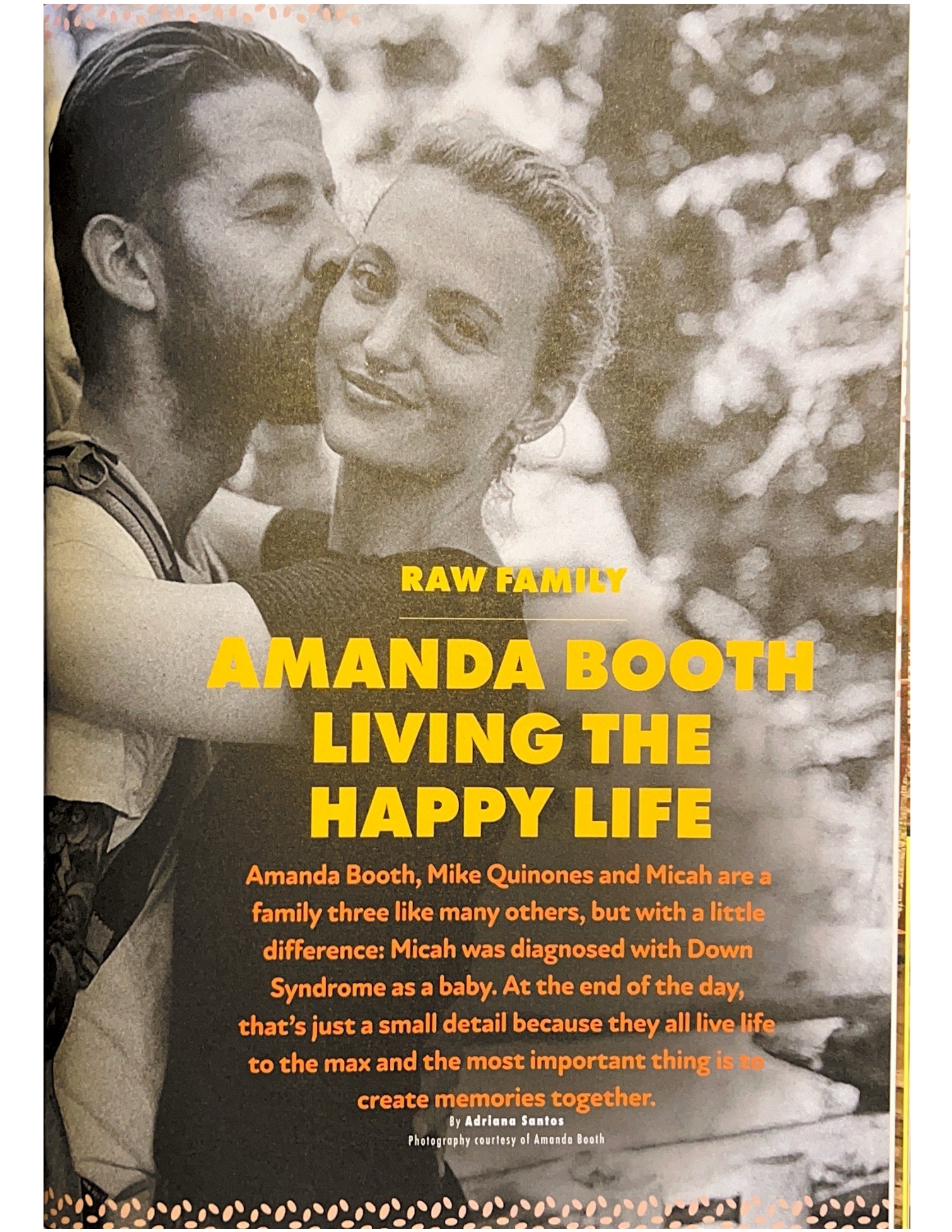




RAW FAMILY

AMANDA BOOTH LIVING THE HAPPY LIFE

Amanda Booth, Mike Quinones and Micah are a family three like many others, but with a little difference: Micah was diagnosed with Down Syndrome as a baby. At the end of the day, that's just a small detail because they all live life to the max and the most important thing is to create memories together.

By **Adriana Santos**
Photography courtesy of Amanda Booth

LEMON Magazine [LEMON] – Hi Amanda. Thank you for accepting our invitation! You have an amazing family. How did it all start? How did you and Mike meet?

Amanda Booth [A.B.] – Mike and I met through my old roommate, who was working for Mike at the time. We met at a work event and after a year of bumping into each other, he stole my phone number from my friend's phone. That was nine years ago!

LEMON – You have one child, Micah, who is five years old. He seems to be a very energetic and amazing kid. How would you describe him?

A.B. – Micah is a wonderful child! He's full of curiosity and energy. He loves to climb all over us and that always feels really lovely and connected. He really likes the simple things in life, and that's really such a blessing to be reminded of on a daily basis.

LEMON – Micah was diagnosed with Down Syndrome at four months old. Does he have a special routine? How is Micah's day-to-day life?

A.B. – Micah's day-to-day life is very similar to his typical peers. He goes to school, plays at recess, eats his lunch, and then comes home. He loves to go to the park and to the movies. He loves playing with his toys and especially loves watching his shows! He does have therapies that some kids don't have, but that's mostly just extra guidance so he can continue to do what he likes. Micah is all we know as far as parenting goes, so I suppose it all feels "normal" to us.

LEMON – Can you tell us what a day in your family life is like?

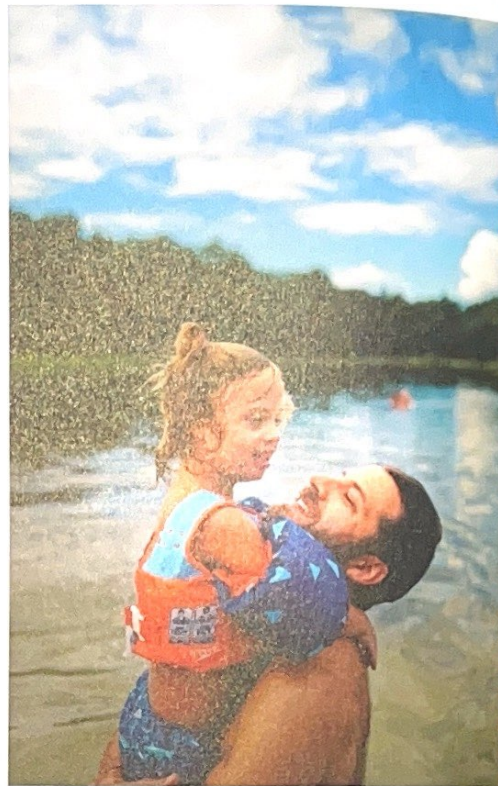
A.B. – A day in the life really varies for us if I'm on set modelling, or at home. I'm pretty lucky that even with my work as a model, I still have a lot of quality time at home! It's probably why I love my job so much... These days Micah has a lot of therapy at home after school, so that takes up a lot of our time. We always make sure to have a lot of outdoor play, jumping on the sofa, and climbing on mum.

LEMON – How do you find a balance between your professional life as a model and your personal life?

A.B. – We have always been aware of balance and making sure to just put the family at the forefront of every decision we make. If we have a busy week working, we take extra time the next week to be together! I think you can't strike that balance every day, but making sure the scales add up eventually is key.

LEMON – Would you like to have more kids?

A.B. – I grew up with a lot of siblings and for me I had always wanted just one kid to focus on. We've talked about it a lot since having Micah and for a while our thoughts changed and we imagined him "needing" a sibling... I have had two miscarriages though, so I'm not sure if expanding our family is on the cards for us. We are open to adoption and we'll see where life takes us...



LEMON – Micah has a very popular Instagram, @lifewithmicah. How did you come up with the idea of creating it?

A.B. – Initially we created his Instagram because I had to use mine for work, and our families don't live close by so we wanted a space where they could get updates on him! It was a few months after his birth that we got the Down Syndrome diagnosis, and at that time we thought it would be really helpful to keep using social media for his updates and to include his progress with the diagnosis too.

LEMON – Sometimes social media can be brutal. Do you feel that or have you received more support than anything else?

A.B. – I think we work really hard to keep our accounts very real and honest, and I think that ideal reverberates back to us. We have mostly gotten support, but I think you get back what you put out and we have seen this to be true!

LEMON – Do you think Micah is going to have to deal with many obstacles in life? Does that worry you?

A.B. – Micah will deal with many obstacles in his life, just like we all will and do! They may be different ones, but no one can escape them. I think the key is to live day-by-day and be present. We don't worry about the future because it's completely unknown for all of us. All we can do is love and be confident that together we can take on anything.

LEMON – Has your family ever felt discriminated against because of Micah's Down Syndrome?

A.B. – We haven't felt discrimination, but we have felt and are very aware of the progress for inclusion that still needs to be made. Micah is still treated differently by a lot of kids. He isn't accepted at every school, or by every doctor. He isn't treated poorly as a result, but there's not always a place for him.

LEMON – What values do you want to teach Micah?

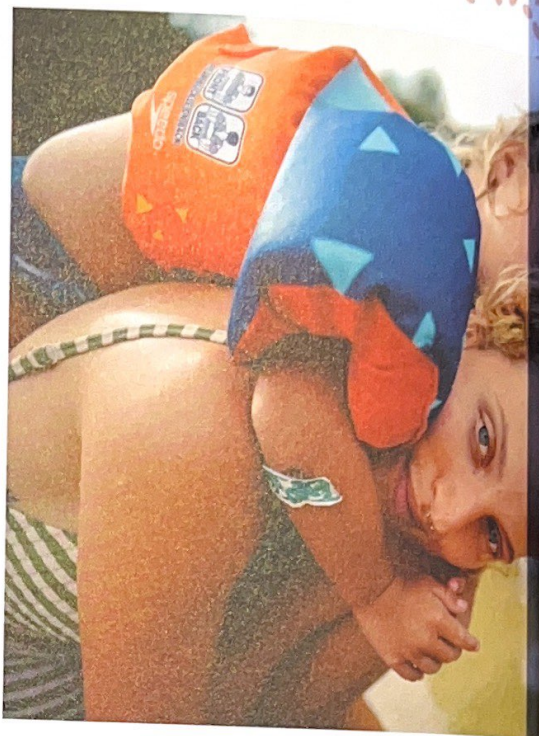
A.B. – I've got to say, it tends to be Micah teaching me values in life. But if it were up to me, it would be to never give up, even if something is hard. Accept that your best is your best; it doesn't always need to be *the* best. And above all else, make sure you're happy and treat everyone with kindness.

LEMON – Since having Micah did you start supporting causes or even beginning to worry about other problems in the world?

A.B. – Absolutely! He completely opened my eyes in every single way! We basically root for the underdog in every situation now. We try to champion those who need a voice. It's been the most beautiful gift to my life.

LEMON – What are your favourite activities to do as a whole family?

A.B. – We love to be active and outdoors! So we hike a lot together, or go to the beach. Micah loves being by or in the water, so we try our best to get as much of that in as we can! We swim almost every weekend together too.





LEMON – Which brands do you like to dress Micah in?

A.B. – We love Abercrombie Kids, Tommy Hilfiger, and, honestly, Target. They just have some really cute basics. We always donate Micah's clothes to charity when he grows out of them too.

LEMON – What's the most important thing to keep in mind when you are buying clothes for Micah?

A.B. – The most important thing is to make sure he won't be restricted when he's wearing them. He loves to climb, and jump, and active play. It would be silly to try to make him look cool if he couldn't be wild and free!

LEMON – Does your family follow a special diet? We've seen that you were a vegetarian for 12 years.

A.B. – I was vegetarian for almost all of my life, and since having Micah we eat mostly plant based but we allow room to eat animal protein occasionally. This is especially helpful when travelling. We believe that as long as you're aware of where your food is coming from, and if you eat animal products in moderation, you can sustain this lifestyle and make a huge impact on the environment!

LEMON – What are some of your fondest family memories?

A.B. – I loved flying all the way to London for two days when we shot *River Island*. It was such a wild thing to do. A whirlwind. It felt like we could do anything! My favourite memories are mostly from when we are doing nothing though. The slow mornings cuddling in bed or sitting on a bench sharing an ice cream cone.

LEMON – What do you think are the most important experiences you can give to your child?

A.B. – Quality time. 100% this has always been my opinion.

LEMON – What does family mean to you?

A.B. – Family is the love you choose to give. It's your heart and, for me, my purpose in life.

