

JUNE 2020

Kailua

Beach Neighbors

An exclusive magazine serving
the residents of the Kailua and
Lanikai Beach neighborhoods.

Kailua Surfing Moms



Best Version Media

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BY ERICA YAMAUCHI
PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH MADIN

After Elizabeth Madin had her first child, Charlotte, in 2009, she stopped surfing for a several years. As time passed, she missed it more and more, but then she had a second child and making time for surfing felt nearly impossible. She wondered how she could get back into the water more often as a busy working mom with kids in tow.

At the time, Madin was living in the little beach town of Avalon, New South Wales, Australia. In 2013, she heard about an organization called Surfing Mums (“mum” is Australian slang for “mom”) that met about 30 minutes away. Even though she

was nervous to join at first, she found a supportive group of like-minded parents to surf with, as well as share the ups and downs of parenting with too.

“I soon realized they were kind, fun-loving mums at all levels of surfing ability who didn’t want to let their surf habits die just because they had children,” said Madin. She ended up founding a chapter of the organization in Avalon.

After moving to Kailua in 2018 to begin her work as an assistant research professor at the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, she decided the benefits of her past involvement with



Surfing Mums far outweighed the effort it would take to start a similar group here. Even though time was in short supply with her new work responsibilities and three young children, Madin decided to take the leap and created the Kailua Surfing Moms Facebook group. She began to spread the word about the organization, and it grew organically via word-of-mouth from there.

Kailua Surfing Moms' purpose is simple: to give mothers (and other caregivers) and their kids, the chance to meet up, surf and have fun together.

"Surfing Moms is all about getting back in the water after we have kids," said Madin. "You don't have to give up your love of surfing, or postpone your dreams of learning to surf. You can be a surfer post-kids... It just takes regular surfing and you will get there. That's why I love this group – it keeps me surfing every week, even when I might otherwise be 'too busy' or 'too tired' from work and family life."

At the first official meeting of Kailua Surfing Moms, four

mothers showed up, which was more than Madin expected. And while it did take some time to get real momentum going, there is now always a handful of parents who regularly come to the group's weekly surf gathering.

Kailua Surfing Moms uses a "surf swap" system, meeting at a beach once a week and taking turns caring for each other's children, so everyone gets a chance to surf. Mothers partner up, and while one mom stays on the beach to look after her and another mom's children, the other goes for a surf. And then they swap.

They meet once a week in the morning from 9-11 a.m. on the beach next to one of the surf breaks in or around Kailua; which beach they go to each week depends on current surf and weather conditions.

Even though most of the group are moms who bring their young children, it's not a requirement. Mothers, fathers and other caregivers of all ages and surfing levels are welcome. Some of the parents are just learning to surf, while others



have been surfing since they were kids. And not everyone even surfs, some prefer to stand-up paddleboard or bodysurf instead.

The children in the group range from babies to middle-schoolers. Most of the children are under age 5, but during the summer and other school breaks, children of all ages come. Some of the older kids are learning to surf and paddle out too, while others are content to spend time on the beach with the younger children.

"You don't even have to bring your kids if they're in school; just come out to surf or swim," said Amelia Borofsky, a member of the group. "Even if there are no waves or you're a beginner, it's great to get salty! Every day that I'm in the ocean is a better day than it would have been otherwise."

While the group doesn't give lessons nor teach people how to surf, last year they organized a group lesson with a trained surf coach, Kiana Blankenfeld of Kailua's Hawaiian Watersports, for beginners. Many of the moms had wanted to learn, but felt it was too hard with children and didn't know where to start. Or they didn't have anyone to surf with regularly. Kailua Surfing Moms was able to help solve those

problems for them, and several of those mothers have now become regulars in the group, which has been rewarding for the group's leaders to see.

Madin is happy she put the time and effort into getting the group to this point.

"Right now, while the group can't get together on the beach with the children due to COVID-19, I'm thankful I've still got a bunch of moms who I can always call for moms-only surf sessions," said Madin. "We're really looking forward to getting back to our weekly meet-ups once this all settles down."

"As parents, we tend to let our hobbies and passions slip away over the years while trying to juggle parenting, work and other life pressures. What I've seen both in myself and others is that Surfing Moms helps people revive at least one of those - surfing," said Madin. "A surfing mom is a happy mom."

To get involved with Kailua Surfing Moms, join their Facebook group at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/kailuasurfingmoms>. You can also find out more at <http://www.surfingmoms.org>. Due to the current COVID-19 crisis, Kailua Surfing Moms may not be meeting as a group at time of publication; join the Facebook group for current updates.