

Colleen Ketchum, 37.

Owner of Pilates in Motion, Warwick.



Colleen Ketchum works out with sons Nate, Quinn and baby Beckett.

I had a rewarding career as a research scientist with International Paper when it was in Tuxedo. When my second son, Nate, was born prematurely with a respiratory illness, I stayed home, in Warwick, to be a full-time mother to him and my oldest son, Quinn.

Even before Nate was born, my sister-in-law, Rebecca, tried to get me to go to a Pilates class with her. I resisted for a long time. Finally I gave in and went. It was love at first try.

I felt great doing the routines that the instructor put us through. Pilates is not like yoga or Zumba. The exercises have a unique system of movement that focuses on the torso muscles. These are the muscles

that help provide support for the spine and keep the body balanced. This is important to me because I suffered from chronic back pain from an injury as a high school gymnast.

Over time, Pilates made my back stronger and my chronic pain disappeared. I was also able to rid myself of the little tummy I had from pregnancy.

Call it karma and providence, but Pilates and I are meant to be together. I absolutely love it, and I wanted to share it with others. So, in 2001, I got certified to teach and worked as an instructor in other gyms. I taught in my home, too. Quinn and Nate were babies, but being at home gave me the

flexibility to teach and still care for my babies. This is because you can do Pilates with your baby. To this day, my sons, who are 8 and 7, will do some routines with me at home. And not to exclude the newest member of our family, I will sit 1-year-old Beckett on my stomach while I work out. Sometimes I wrap him tightly against my chest in a Sasha Wrap and breast-feed him while I'm instructing; it's discreet and no one is the wiser.

Two years ago, I opened my own studio, Pilates in Motion, just 10 minutes from home. I'm my own boss. I have four other women who work with me, and three of them are mothers, too. When those unexpected events come up with our children, we cover for one another. And every day when my boys come home from school, I'm home also. My husband, Taft, watches the children when I teach on Saturdays. And during the week, a sitter watches Beckett. And to think that this all came about because one of my sons was sick.

One of my trainers is involved in the movie business and was able to get me connected with the business, too. Because of my Pilates fitness and my past gymnastics experience, I've been able to work as a stunt double in the movies and on TV. I doubled for Ana de la Reguera, who stars with Bruce Willis and Tracy Morgan in "Cop Out." I also doubled for Sarah Paulson in her show, "Law & Order." As a stuntwoman, I've done everything from skydiving to being dragged behind cars.

My movie career will come and go, but family and Pilates are forever. I've helped a lot of people who, as I did, had bad backs. And some of these were even facing surgery. Now they are pain free. Some had constant migraines that have left them because of Pilates.

When your job can help people on this kind of level, why quit? There's no magic pill, just good, honest work. I can do all of this and still enjoy my family. What could be better?