

#NoFilter

> WHERE LATINA MOMS TELL IT LIKE IT IS

CELEB PAPI

Howie Dorough Is Back (All Right!)

The Backstreet Boy and dad of two opens up about embracing his Latino roots.



"I want to pass on my love of Latin culture—the people, food, rhythm—to my sons."

What inspired the recent release of your family album, *Which One Am I?*

Music was such a big deal to me when I was little. But I had a hard time connecting to the kids' songs out there with my sons, James, 10, and Holden, 6. Then one night, as I was looking out at the audience at a Backstreet Boys concert, it

hit me. A lot of our fans had grown up and were now bringing their children to our shows. I thought, "Why not make music that families can enjoy together?" I wanted the record to be lighthearted but also take on relevant issues I faced as a kid—growing up multiracial, and dealing with sibling rivalry and anxiety.

Did you worry a lot as a kid?

I was a child actor and performer, and I remember being stressed. Even to this day, I tell my sons, "Daddy hasn't completely stopped worrying." I worry every time I go on stage, but I've learned to accept and understand that the butterflies keep me on my toes. As a Latino, sometimes you want to be a macho man. I'm trying to be more personal with my kids. I teach them to be honest about their feelings.

What's the story behind "No Hablo Español," the first single off the album?

It's about my experience struggling with identity as a kid. My dad is Irish-Scottish-American. My mom is Puerto Rican. We lived in a mostly Caucasian neighborhood in Florida, but I didn't really look at myself as not fitting in. If anything, that happened more when I was around my Latin community. When I'd go with my mom to Puerto Rico, people would automatically assume that I spoke Spanish. I had to learn quickly to say, "No hablo español." I later studied Spanish in high school and college but always felt guilty that I didn't pronounce everything correctly. As I've gotten older, I've realized that there are many people in the same boat. We didn't grow up speaking Spanish, but we're still Latino. I'm more comfortable now with who I am. Every time I go to Puerto

Rico, I speak the language on behalf of my family. It's not the best Spanish, but we get by!

How important is it to pass on your culture to your kids?

Extremely. Especially music and food. It's in my sons' *sangre*—they crave rice and beans! My wife, Leigh, is Dutch, Czechoslovakian, and Italian. We're constantly getting Latin recipes from my mother and her sisters. I want to continue learning to make Puerto Rican food so I can keep our culture alive for James and Holden. They're also learning a little Spanish at school, which is exciting. I've taken James to Puerto Rico, and I'm getting ready to take Holden too.

How do you and your wife merge traditions?

We're a melting-pot family. We alternate holidays between Leigh's Italian relatives in New Jersey and my Puerto Rican family in Florida. At my in-laws, they're making *zeppoles*—fried dough—and saying, "Mangia! Mangia!" When we're back with Abuela, we're eating *lechón* and *pasteles*. It's a really nice balance. The two sides are actually very similar, even the way that we talk with our hands!



Hover your phone's camera to watch Howie D play a game of "Parenting Truths!"

HOLIDAY
HITS

Personalized Presents

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1

FOR THE

BEAUTY LOVER

The **Frida Kahlo by Ulta Beauty Signature Box**, complete with eye-shadow palette and brush cleaner, will make her winged liner pop. \$30; ulta.com



2

FOR THE

**SUPERSTITIOUS
CHICA**

Gift her feathers, sparkles, and a whole lotta luck with these **Ojo Statement Earrings**. \$36; raggedytiff.com



4

FOR THE

DISNEY SUPER FAN

She'll stand out in the Splash Mountain line with these handmade serape **Minnie Mouse ears**, available in kid sizes too. \$20; etsy.com/shop/chasingcamilla



3

FOR THE

COFFEE-OBSSESSED

Whenever she needs a boost, she can "Drink Some Cafecito, Play Some Reggaeton, and Handle It" thanks to this **oversize mug**. \$25; karlaandco.com



Turn up the volume

'cause those hips

don't lie!

WE ASKED. YOU ANSWERED. What Makes You Unapologetically Latina?

"In my house, we talk loud, we argue loud, we play loud, and we laugh even louder. Loud is our love language!"

Gloria Toscano; Tracy, CA

"I need hot sauce with every meal!"

Isabel Acevedo; Chicago, IL

"Music everywhere, at all times, in all languages!"

Hannia Bejarano; Little Rock, AR

"Saying where I bought the item someone complimented me on (soooo Boricua)!"

Lydiana Garcia; Los Angeles, CA

"Using 'vaporu' for everything!"

Rachel Ortega; Miami, FL

"The hustle! My parents have worked hard their whole lives and still do. It's part of who we are. I can only hope to pass that motivation on to my son."

Maribel Benitez Rasco; Midland, TX

"Speaking Spanglish to my 2-year-old daughter."

Alyssa Augustine; Minneapolis, MN

"My 'sí se puede' attitude."

Stephanie Rose Sorady-Iverson; Los Angeles, CA