



"You almost want to say yes to everything because of those puppy dog eyes," Birkhead tells *Us*.



**SHE LOOKS LIKE MOM!**

"She's very nurturing, and she loves babies," Birkhead says of Dannielynn (left, at age 4; right, Smith in 1992).

DANNIELYNN & HER DAD

# Life Without Anna Nicole

Four years after Smith's tragic death, *Us* catches up with **Larry Birkhead** about being a single father, dating prospects and learning how to say no

**F**ATHERHOOD BEGAN inauspiciously for Larry Birkhead. First there was the death of ex-girlfriend Anna Nicole Smith in a Florida hotel room in 2007, followed by a dramatic paternity suit with Smith's partner Howard K. Stern for his then-infant daughter, Dannielynn. "It's hard to believe it's been nearly five years," says Birkhead, who was granted custody in April 2007. The Kentucky native, now 38, tells *Us* about life with his best girl.

**What's a typical day for you two in L.A.?** There's an hour ritual where we blow-dry her hair to get the tangles out. I still can't do girls' hair right, but I'm working on it! And I cut her sandwiches into shapes and draw faces on her bananas so she'll eat lunch. I don't have a nanny, so she keeps me busy!

**Are you a strict dad?** It's hard to flip from friend to parent. I overcompensate because she doesn't have a mom and I probably give her more than I should. I'm working on cutting down on the shopping sprees.



"She's got my personality," Smith (with Dannielynn in 2006) said in 2007.

**Do you see a stepmom in her future?** I went on a couple of dates and they were disasters. One girl said, "People tell me I look like Anna Nicole!" Another kept looking to see if paparazzi were taking her

picture. But I'm going to try to get out there!

**How much do you talk about Anna?** Dannielynn knows that her mom passed away. She obviously doesn't know details. At first I said, "Your mommy's up in the clouds." Then we were on a plane from Kentucky and she asked, "Which cloud is my mom on, maybe she can come play?" You have to be forthright but keep it on a kid-friendly level.

**Is she like Anna?** I see her mom in everything she does. We were at the Kentucky Derby and she started smiling and posing like her mom would. People ask me to put her in modeling, but I don't want to push.

**Any Father's Day plans?** Honestly, every day is like Father's Day because being with her is so wonderful! **US**

## HOW TO CONNECT WITH DAD

**N**o longer daddy's little girl? Many women have trouble finding footing with their fathers once they're adults. But Dr. Peggy Drexler, author of *Our Fathers, Ourselves*, gives *Us* tips to get the relationship back on track in time for Father's Day.

**Get to know him** "Talk to your father and learn who he is. Don't assume you know just because he raised you!"

**Show off your skills** "Take him to work or somewhere he can see you using your confidence and abilities."

**It's a two-way street** "Understand that the relationship works both ways. Be as involved in his life as you want him to be in yours."