

Handsome young David Cassidy has had quite a normal life—considering that his father, his mother *and* his stepmother are in the entertainment field. The life of a show-biz kid is usually very weird. But David's life—up until he became the star of *The Partridge Family*, at least—has been as all-American as apple pie.

David was born at the Flower Fifth Avenue Hospital in New York City in 1950. His mother, Evelyn Ward, and his father, Jack Cassidy, had met and fallen in love while both were appearing in the chorus of a Broadway musical. David is their only child.

Jack and Evelyn were on the road much of the time, so David spent a great deal of his childhood with his maternal grandparents in West Orange. David says his grandparents were both

"very good people," but adds, ". . . I wasn't experiencing enough (in New Jersey). There are so many things you lose, spending your life in a small town like that."

Living in a "hick" town wasn't the greatest of David's misfortunes, however. He soon learned that things could get worse. When David was around five years old, he learned from one of his schoolmates that his mother and father were divorcing. David's "friend" had heard the news from his parents, who had read it in a gossip column.

David was crushed, to put it mildly. He hadn't even realized that there was trouble at home, as his parents had put up a

normal front to spare their child. David kept his feelings to himself for as long as possible—he didn't even let on to his parents that he knew about the fact that they were on the verge of a breakup.

Then one day when his father came to pick him up at school, David asked Jack if it was true that he and Evelyn were divorcing. Jack sadly admitted that yes, it was true, but he was quick to reassure his tiny son that the divorce wouldn't alter *their* relationship at all, and that David could spend time with him whenever he wanted. Still, it took a long time for David to recover from the shock of his parents' split.

After the break-up of his parents, David continued to spend much of his time with his grandparents, living in West Orange. Then, when he was ten years old, he and his mother moved to Hollywood. Evelyn Ward struggled to find work in California to support herself and her son. She was finally making it as an actress when she married director Elliot Silverstein and quit show business. "It's not that she didn't want to work," David says now. "She wanted a career, but her marriage and my welfare were more important to her. So she gave up her career." (Elliot and Evelyn have since divorced).

Even then, as a child, David wanted to be an actor. But his mom wouldn't allow him to go after a full-time career until after his graduation. "I'm glad now that I wasn't allowed to try acting until I was graduated from high school . . ." David says. "I think about those kids on our show, being around the set all day, surrounded by adults. That's (Continued on page 68)

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