

Parental guidance



STUART WEARS
M.J. Bale shirt;
Gazman pants;
Calvin Klein belt;
R.M. Williams boots
ELYSE WEARS
Nicola Finetti dress;
Tony Bianco shoes,
all from myer.com.au,
13 69 37

Myer ambassador Elyse Knowles and her father, first-time model Stuart, join up to showcase new spring fashions and tell *Stellar* about the special bond they share

Photography JEDD COONEY Styling IRENE TSOLAKAS Interview NADIA SALEMME

She's one of Australia's most in-demand models, but Elyse Knowles has never lost her lifelong thirst for adventure. Despite cultivating a successful beach-bombshell image for the cameras, the Myer ambassador, 26, is just as at home on a pair of waterskis as she is in stilettos. Chalk it up to her father Stuart's influence.

The duo recently joined up in Melbourne for a sit-down interview and family photo shoot for *Stellar*, which saw them trading their typically laid-back attire – no shoes for Byron Bay-based Elyse and high-vis workwear for Stuart, 57, an electrician – to try on selections from the department store's new-season collection. Much of the chatter centred on this spring's key style trends – put clashing block colours and the ever-reliable party dress on your shopping list – but also covered off family values, Elyse's move to the beach and, in typical Knowles style, their love of extreme sports.

Stuart, your shoot with Elyse for *Stellar* marked your modelling debut. So what did you make of it?

Stuart: It was a bit scary! Elyse guided me through it.

Elyse: It was all very casual and [we were] just being "us", which is usually joking and having fun. It was quite hard to be serious with us two together.

S: We had to look into each other's faces at one point. We lasted about two seconds...

E: ...before we laughed.

Your daughter is one of Australia's most in-demand models. How do you feel about her chosen career?

S: I'm very proud of what she's achieved. She started out very young and, like anyone in the industry, had her fair share of knockbacks along the way. At times she came home in tears, and she's persevered and worked very hard for a long time. I think one of the traits I tried to teach her – without

directly saying it – was to treat others as you would like to be treated. And perhaps not to worry about the smaller things in life.

Elyse, you're being joined in the Myer family by their new Style Ambassador, Asher Keddie. What do you see her bringing to the brand?

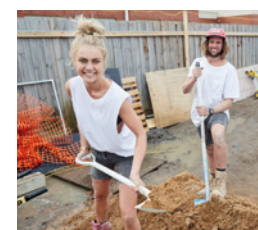
E: I love how she's a very confident, strong woman. I've watched a lot of her shows; I loved *Offspring*. She shines bright and is very talented. I'm excited to work with her.

How would you best describe your father-daughter relationship?

E: Mucking around! I would say our relationship is very down-to-earth. That's how I have been brought up, to be as real as I can. We have a big WhatsApp group, the whole family, so we send photos to one another, cracking jokes and checking in.



ELYSE WEARS
Rotate by Birger
Christensen dress,
myer.com.au,
13 69 37



ALL IN THE FAMILY
(from top) Elyse Knowles at the Melbourne Cup last year; walking the runway at Myer's spring/summer 2018 show in Sydney; Elyse as a toddler with her dad Stuart in 1994; with her boyfriend Josh Barker on *The Block* in 2017.

Is it hard living interstate [Elyse and her boyfriend Josh Barker live in Byron Bay] while your family live in Melbourne?

E: We still have our house in Albert Park that we're renting out for now. We moved to Byron in February, which was quite a big risk. We moved there not knowing if it was going to work, because Josh wanted to start his business. But the risk took off, and I think that's why we work so well [together]. I can be scared of change and taking those big leaps of faith, but Josh really does push me to do it, and who cares? Maybe we'll learn or grow. I'm pretty sure we'll stay up there [Byron]. The lifestyle really does suit us. It's very cruisy, but there are people there who are very business-orientated.

Stuart, do you have a guest bedroom set up already?

S: I haven't been up to see them yet. I am actually going up in about a month's time for a few days.

Will you see each other on Father's Day next Sunday?

E: I will be coming home to Melbourne. I think we'll get together. We want to do something fun like go-karting or bowling, maybe mini-golf.

S: We went go-karting a few years ago... and that was a good laugh, actually.

Elyse, what do you miss most about home?

E: I really do feel like I've got the best of both worlds – I fly down for family holidays, like going motorbike riding. ▶

“I’ve been brought up to be as real as I can”



ELYSE WEARS
Misha Collection dress;
Tony Bianco shoes; (above
right) Alex Perry dress

STUART WEARS
T.M. Lewin knit;
Gazman pants, all from
myer.com.au, 13 69 37

So is the Knowles family really into extreme sports?

S: [Motorbike riding] is the winter sport. During summer, we waterski near Avoca.

E: There's no phone reception, we have a big bonfire with 50 to 80 people there, we have big cook-ups, we ride our motorbikes all day or four-wheel drive, we talk. We just have fun and have a few drinks around the fire.

S: Quite often, more than a few drinks around the fire. We free camp a lot of the time on the Murray River.

What is free camping?

S: You have to take all your own gear. We've been doing it a long time now; we're pretty well set up.

E: The river is your bath and your shower. And you dig a hole [to go to the loo].

S: You wake up in the morning and you look out to the river and off you go – you're set for a good day. Anything camping or outdoors, we love. I went around Australia for four months a couple of years ago with [Elyse's brother] Brayden and about five of his mates.

E: Just Dad... and five 24-year-olds. He had a ball. ★

OTHER PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID CAIRD; GETTY IMAGES; INSTAGRAM/ELYSE.KNOWLES; NINE NETWORK. HAIR, MAKE-UP AND GROOMING: CRAIG BEAGLEHOLE