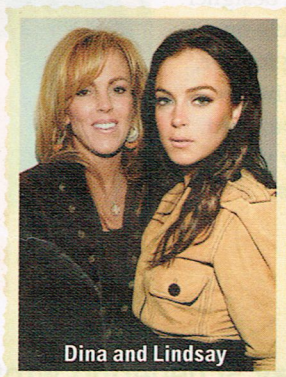


Lindsay Lohan


She made it to our photo shoot—but canceled the interview after she was hospitalized for an asthma attack a few weeks later. Now Dina Lohan defends her daughter against all the rumors.

Interview by *Lauren Brown* Photographs by *Tony Duran*



Dina and Lindsay

She is one of the top talents of her generation, able to hold her own with screen legends like Meryl Streep. But lately it seems as though everywhere you turn, Lindsay, 19, is making headlines for being part of Hollywood's fast crowd, thanks to her high-profile hookups, riotous partying, and alleged bad behavior. This work-hard/play-hard lifestyle has made Lindsay a magnet for drama: In the past year and a half, she has lost an alarming amount of weight and been hospitalized twice—plus she had to deal with her parents' contentious separation and see her father get sent to jail. Then in January, *Vanity Fair* reported that Lindsay had experimented with drugs and struggled with bulimia (more on that later). All this begs the question: Can Lindsay Lohan handle the pressure of being Hollywood's "it girl"? And is her mom (and manager) really able to help her through it? Since Lindsay wasn't available to speak with *Seventeen* for this story, her mother decided to set the record straight on her behalf. ➡



17: What do you want the world to know about what Lindsay is going through right now?

Dina Lohan: These kids work so hard across the board, from Jessica Simpson to Lindsay to Ashlee Simpson. All of these girls work 24/7. When you're over 18, you're working 22, 23 hours—getting up, having a couple of hours of sleep—and you're working for four months straight. People think all you do is go to clubs. This is not what they do. Hollywood is not going to hire you, and a record label is not going to keep you if you are not performing up to par.

17: But it seems like Lindsay is always out. . . .

DL: She loves to dance, so what is she going to do? Sit in her *room* and do that? She wants to go where her friends and peers are. And believe me, all the other girls her age in Hollywood are at the same place. [The media] just doesn't care about them at the moment.

17: Why do you think everyone has been so focused on Lindsay this past year?

DL: They care about Lindsay because she is talented. But this [business] is a nasty game, and I didn't learn that until Lindsay's star started rising past *another* star, whom I won't mention. But when that girl's mother went out and got two publicists . . . the whole [Lindsay's a] party girl thing came from *somewhere*. That *other* star was dating a person twice her age when Lindsay and [her former boyfriend] Wilmer Valderrama were closer in age.

17: Is it true that Lindsay is dating Sean Lennon?

DL: It's a new relationship. They're really, really good friends. He's the sweetest kid.

17: Does any of her behavior worry you?

DL: Lindsay's smoking. You think I like it? No. I cry to her. I told her, "You have to stop smoking. You have asthma. You could *die*. This isn't good for you." I can tell her, but I'm her mother. Did *you* listen to your mother at 19?

17: But you're really close friends too, right?

DL: She's my child. I'm her mother. If they say we are best friends—I'm her mother *first*. And if she's

smoking way too much, I'm going to call her on it—if she gets mad at me . . . oh, well! I'm her mother.

17: How is Lindsay's health now?

DL: Lindsay never had bulimia. Lindsay wasn't eating properly. Every girl goes through [a stage like], "I'm going to have Slim-Fast bars. Let's try the Slim-Fast diet or Weight Watchers. . . . Well, okay, *that* didn't work—so now let's not eat for two days." When she initially lost the weight, she'd had a very tough year, was in the hospital, came out, and was like, "Wow, I look hot—my pants look so thin." Her stylist is thin. She's styling thin girls. That's what happens. This isn't something new.

17: What about the rumor she wrote nasty things about Scarlett Johansson on a bathroom stall?

DL: Yeah, Lindsay goes to the bathroom and starts scribbling on walls—that's what she does in her spare time. The tabloids come out weekly. It's so fast and furious, they don't even investigate anything or check their sources. I'm not trying to convince someone *out* of something. My child is not perfect. *I* am not perfect. And if you tell me *you're* perfect, you're a liar. I *want* Lindsay to fail—kids *need* failure to have success.

17: Does the bad publicity upset Lindsay?

DL: I don't think it has any effect on Lindsay. I think the fear in Lindsay is, she doesn't want big directors to get the wrong idea about her fame and her goals. *That's* what really hurts her. She has to do these indie films and bust her a** and act like she can act, and that will defuse it. But when it first started, it was hard. So I said, "Lindsay, you're going to meet the director, you're going to sit down with him, and let *him* decide."

17: How has negative press affected your family?

DL: My 12-year-old daughter [Ali, Lindsay's younger sister] is a skinny little rail—and it's at the point where she's going to school and some kid is like, "Are you bulimic like your sister?" This is the s*** we have to deal with.

17: Do you ever want Lindsay to quit the business?

DL: I tell Lindsay, "Quit tomorrow. You can throw a dart at a board, go to law school, be a designer, be anything you want." And she says, "Mommy, I love what I do." **17**

