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## 2 hip moms got it covered *They invent wrap for low-rise jeans*

By SUNITA VIJAYAN  
The Salinas Californian

Two Salinas-area moms have found a fresh way to cover unsightly flesh exposed by low-rise jeans.

Combining the powers of innovative thinking and the Internet, best friends Christine Meeks and Kelley DeSerpa have launched the hip-T, an article of clothing designed to counteract rear-end exposure.

▼ ADVERTISEMENT ▼ Akin to a tube top in design, the hip-T is available in black, white and pink lace; black, white, medium-gray and chocolate brown without lace, or two different prints through the Fresh for Fall line.

On Tuesday afternoon, Meeks, 40, and DeSerpa, 42, wore hip-Ts of white lace and one of the Fresh for Fall prints, respectively. They spoke with barely contained excitement about their pioneering endeavor at DeSerpa's home in Salinas.

"One hard thing is there's nothing else like this out there," said DeSerpa, who's known Meeks for the past 11 years. "It's not like you can Google a hip-T, so no one knows where to find us. We'd like to get the word out, because it's such a new concept."

The two have a total six daughters ranging in age from 5 to 12 who once modeled "muffin tops" - an overflow of flesh at the top of jeans - "plumber pants" that expose the tops of derrieres, and bulky waistlines from layered shirts attempting to hide the problems. The

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SCOTT MACDONALD/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN

Salinas residents Kelley DeSerpa, far left, and Christine Meeks model 'Hip-T's' on Tuesday at De Serpa's home. The fashion accessory, which they invented, is designed to solve the problem of unintended exposure when wearing low-rise pants. The band of stretchy fabric wraps around the waist.

▼ADVERTISEMENT ▼ hip-Ts have ended all that.

▼ADVERTISEMENT ▼ "They wear them all the time," DeSerpa said. "They're our biggest supporters."

The first prototype came about a year ago from a T-shirt and a little sewing knowledge leftover from Meek's time in 4-H programs as a child. They introduced the product at a friend's party soon after, Meeks said, and word began to spread.

After about eight different versions, they went online and found a manufacturer in San Francisco to produce the hip-T. Their product is being sold at stores in Stockton, the Bay Area and Monterey.

"We spent the last year perfecting the project ... and it's taken us this long to get things right," Meeks said.

Business, unlike jeans fashion, is on the rise.

Most sales are taking place on the hip-T Web site, she said, with orders shipping out to places as far as Tampa, Fla., and Hawaii.

DeSerpa said the two are equal partners in their business, g3 Originals LLC. She handles inventory and processes orders while Meeks takes care of marketing and sales. She said both share the company's bookkeeping.

The women hope their small business eventually becomes a huge hit.

"We would love to be in the big stores - Macy's or Nordstrom's - go national and even worldwide," Meeks said. "We'd like to be the new T."

On Dec. 6, the hip-T will be featured at the Appel and Frank's "Stockings and Stilettos" event, featuring about 60 different designers, in San Francisco.

**Contact Sunita Vijayan at [svijayan@thecalifornian.com](mailto:svijayan@thecalifornian.com).**

#### DETAILS

For more information or to purchase the hip-T, a clothing product that solves rear-end exposure problems, e-mail [info@myhip-T.com](mailto:info@myhip-T.com) or visit [www.myhip-T.com](http://www.myhip-T.com).

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