

AAA Parent Coaching Newsletter

The more people have studied different methods of bringing up children the more they have come to the conclusion that what good mothers and fathers instinctively feel like doing for their babies is the best after all.

- [Benjamin Spock](#)



March 2008



Greetings,

I hope all is well with you and your family! I feel so fortunate to report that my family is well, and the last few months have been exciting for AAA Parent Coaching, despite some lost time due to a recent illness.

I so enjoyed the opportunity to appear with Star Jones on television to discuss the dangerous combination of cyber-bullying and parents' over-identification in the lives of their children.

In April I am looking forward to attending and meeting clients at the Whole Child Conference in New York City, and I hope that some of you will be able to stop by and say hello. I am so excited to be a part of this wonderful organization, who is doing so much to support children with Autism, ADHD, and numerous other differences.

In the hopes of reaching out to any hopeful adoptive parents out there, I would like

to take a moment to thank my special angel, Debra Vinson. Debra is an incredible woman who helped me to become a mother four times!! Because of her tireless efforts, professionalism, and extensive knowledge, I have never had a bad experience with adoption, was able to work through numerous potential challenges without a glitch, and am a deeply grateful mother of four incredible children. When my younger children explain adoption, they would say that God whispered in Debra's ear and she made us a family. Today Debra works as an adoption consultant and educator, and has founded her own new company, New Beginnings. She has also co-authored a wonderful book for potential adoptive parents, "Empowered Adoption." If you are considering adoption or love someone who is, I urge you to visit her website www.adoptionconsultant.com, and consider purchasing her book, which can be found on the web at www.empoweredadoption.com.

I have written this newsletter to share my favorite 2008 Parenting Resolutions with you. I hope that some of these ideas make your days a little brighter, and your nights a little more peaceful.

As always, I thank you for your support, and I wish you and your family all the very best!

Elizabeth Pflaum

Please visit my table at the Whole Child Spring 2008 Conference in Manhattan on April 12th.

Whole Child's mission is to "raise awareness about children with health, development, and learning concerns and to bring integrative healing options to families, professionals, and educators working with these children."

The conference will be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 71 West 23rd Street in New York City.

This is a wonderful resource for parents and the conference should prove informative. For more information, please visit them on the web at www.WholeChild.info.

Resolution Number 1: Let's Create An Attitude Of Gratitude

I am a strong believer in the magic of gratitude. I have been keeping a gratitude journal for over ten years now. Every night I make a list of thirty moments for which I am grateful, and I am convinced that the practice of acknowledging, recording, and appreciating our good fortune is deeply transformative.

Every life is chock full of challenges, and certainly some of us struggle more than others. But the ability to genuinely appreciate our blessings gives us the strength and the drive to rise above our difficulties and to lead a joyful life.

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Parent Groups To Begin In April

I am in the process of forming the following parenting groups to begin in May:

Adoptive Parenting

General Parenting

Parenting The Learning, Developmentally, or Emotionally Challenged Child

An attitude of gratitude does not have to be as time consuming as writing thirty items in a journal every day. When you speak with friends or family, you can simply make a concerted effort to focus on the positive and decline from spending time and energy on the negative. You can play "Guess What I'm Grateful For," at the dinner table. You can play a variety of different games with this theme in mind, or you can simply choose to focus your attention on the positive events in your day and in your child's day. The key is to recognize the blessings that surround you, and to encourage your child to do the same. If I could give my children but one gift, it would be the ability to experience genuine gratitude easily and often.

This is a very powerful activity! I hope that you will email me to let me know how creating an attitude of gratitude has affected your family.

"Gratitude helps you to grow and expand; gratitude brings joy and laughter into your life and into the lives of all those around you."

Eileen Caddy

Resolution Number 2: Let's Choose To Get Along

On the first page of my website I asked parents what they worry about the most. The number one worry among parents visiting my site is their relationship with their child or children. This worry was significantly greater than any other on my list. The second greatest worry among parents visiting my site was their parenting style. Of all of the parents that I have worked with this year, I would say that all of them shared these concerns.

I believe that when we use parenting techniques that involve anger, shame, or simply a lack of basic courtesy toward our children, we are left feeling both uncomfortable with ourselves as parents and the subconscious sorry for having damaged our bonds with our children. Screaming, sarcasm, withholding, and rage are NEVER effective parenting tools.

As an alternative, let's try to enforce our rules and boundaries with confidence and humor, and still actively shower our children with love. As parents, one of our challenges is to be disappointed with our children's behavior, and still adore them, connect with them, and get along.

I am a big believer in the importance of having fun together and in the power of humor. Recently my children, ages 16, 12, 8, and 7, all refused to do their evening chores after dinner. After a long day, I could feel myself getting angry, and I decided that a punishment was in order. The punishment was that they had to sit with me at the kitchen table and play a seemingly endless card game with me. Truly, my children initially experienced this as a punishment, especially since they also had to listen to my musical choice of Classic Rock on the radio. In the end, we actually had fun, my children realized that I was serious about enforcing an important rule without my ever having to raise my voice or lecture. I did, however, sing at the top of my lungs until they begged me to stop. They have not gone on strike since then, but if they do, I will try to come up with an equally entertaining punishment.

I would love to hear about the creative parenting approaches that work for your family. Please send me an email so that I can share them with my readers in the next newsletter.



Resolution Number 3: Let's choose to put our family first

If we are truly serious about putting our family first, we have to be prepared to take a hard look at the choices we make every day. As we make our decisions, we must ask ourselves if they support our decision to put our family first, or if they detract from our family harmony.

- Try to eat dinner together as a family at least four nights a week NO MATTER WHAT
- Decide which activities must be skipped in order to maximize family time.
- long Know your target audience. Who are your most important customers, clients or prospects, and why? Know what is important to them and address their needs

Groups will be based upon common challenges, goals, and ages of children

Groups will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday Afternoons And Evenings

Please call for more information

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in your newsletter each month. Include a photo to make your newsletter even more appealing. Inserting a link in your article lets you track which topics attract the most interest.

Taking time and sharing is the essence of teaching. The future of those we cherish, will be a reflection of what we model today.

-- Author Unknown

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this newsletter

I am so grateful to all of my wonderful clients and readers. It is truly an honor to be a part of your parenting journey.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Pflaum

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