



# AAA Parent Coaching Services

Parent Coaching Newsletter

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## In This Issue

- Greetings
- Parenting Workshops
- Coaching Skills: The Art Of Listening
- A Look at the Social Implications of Learning Challenges
- Halloween as the Consummate Opportunity to Flex Our Parenting Muscles



Being a bit of a ham and a zealous teacher, I absolutely LOVE leading interactive and lively parenting workshops! My favorite topics include:

Parenting & Discipline Strategies That Really Work

Keeping it Together: Managing Anxiety, Schedules, Clutter, and Multiple Children Without Losing Your Mind

Creating & Implementing Effective Routines

Parenting The Challenged or Challenging Child

Promoting Healthy Relationships Among Siblings



## Featured Headline

Hello,  
I hope this message finds you and your family well.

I am pleased to say that this past month has been busy, as I have been presenting parenting workshops and classes all over the place. I find that this is not only rewarding for me, but that the program itself promotes the development of a support system among attendees, which I believe is so important for all parents. It really does take a village, and we all benefit from coming together with other parents facing similar challenges. For this reason, I am offering my own workshops on November 5th in the morning and in the evening. I hope that those of you in tri-state area will consider attending what I expect will be a very special event.

One of the reasons that I became a parent coach was that I believe, as parents, we are, among other things, our children's coaches through life. I find that there are certain key coaching skills that apply perfectly to parenting, and I would like to devote one column in each month's newsletter to a targeted coaching skill. I hope that you will find these skills to be as useful as my clients and I have.

Working with many parents of children with reading based learning disabilities, I have been thinking a lot about the social implications of dyslexia and other such challenges for children. I found some wonderful research that I hope to share with all of you.

Finally, like many of you, I LOVE HALLOWEEN! It is such a wonderfully fun time to be a parent. Nevertheless, I also believe that Halloween presents some of the most perfect opportunities for us to flex our parenting muscles, as it were. There are numerous boundaries to be created, rules to obey, and fun to be had, and I think this holiday serves as an excellent metaphor for today's parenting challenges.

I hope that you will find this newsletter useful, and I look forward to hearing from you with suggested topics and opinions.

Wishing you and your family good health, happiness, and peace,

Elizabeth Pflaum



## Coaching Skills: The Art Of Listening

Active listening is essential to conscious and effective parenting. This type of listening means listening at the deepest level, beyond the words that are spoken. When we listen at the most basic level, we listen to words being spoken and pay attention to the meaning of those words. More focused listening involves a shift in concentration to your child as speaker. Careful attention is paid to words both spoken and unspoken. Meaningful listening such as this involves careful attention to body language and countenance. To reach this state we must release our own thoughts, preconceptions, and emotional needs, and truly listen to what our child has to say.

Loving Without Spoiling

Instilling Positive Social Skills

The Art Of Advocating For Your Child

The Importance Of Spirituality In The Life Of A Child

Married with Children: Maintaining a Healthy Marriage While Raising Children

The Importance of Sleep, Exercise, & Proper Nutrition in the Life of a Child

Adoptive Parenting 101

Adoptive Parenting For The Experienced Parent

Effectively Parenting Your Child With ADHD or Autism

Promoting a lifelong love of school and learning

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Through the act of focused listening we communicate to our children that we value what they have to say. We support them as they learn to process their own feelings and experiences, and to choose how they wish to handle situations that arise.

It goes without saying that when you listen on a deep level, eye contact is very important. We must try to ignore the telephone, emails, and other external stimuli, and focus all of our attention on what your child is saying.

The next time your child is struggling or their behavior is off target, consider asking yourself "How can I listen more actively to my child right now?" or "What does my child really need from me right now?" Then, act accordingly.

For the interested reader, here are a few more tips:

- **Try the 70 / 30 rule.** Let your child do 70% of the talking while you do 30% of the listening
- **Don't Interrupt.** Wait for your child to complete his or her thought and then ask questions to clarify what you have just heard.
- **Pay extra attention to body language and facial expressions.** Children communicate so much without actually speaking!
- **Quiet your inner voice and focus solely on what your child is saying.**
- **Resist the temptation to give your opinion or to offer solutions. Simply treat your child to the gift of truly being heard.**



## **A Look at the Social Implications of Reading Challenges**

Through both my professional and parenting experience, I have long believed that academic struggles go hand in hand with social skills challenges. A recent study, conducted by Sarah Miles, a doctoral student in the Stanford School of Education concluded that social and academic development are inextricably connected.

The study found that children rated as having strong social skills were also considered to have strong reading scores, a trend which continues at least until third grade. In addition, the study found that children who were forced to contend with reading difficulties, were identified by teachers as being more aggressive than their peers in later grades. In fact, poor literacy in third grade seemed to predict increased aggression by fifth grade.

This study speaks to the paramount importance of early social skill development in preschool and the early elementary school years. It also points to the fact that a child struggling with a relative weakness in literacy struggles with much more than the simple challenge of decoding, comprehension. She struggles also socially.

As parents and educators, I believe we must provide our learning challenged children with social skills support, using role play, social stories, and other such effective approaches to help our children function better in the social realm. We also must identify our children's strengths and interests, and help them to engage in activities in which they can thrive. Further, responsibility and respect go a long way towards developing an authentic and strong self-esteem, which is a powerful asset to any child.

For more information on this topic, check out the study, "Contemporaneous and Longitudinal Associations Between Social Behavior and Literacy Achievement in a Sample Of Low-Income Elementary School Children," by Sarah Miles and Deborah Stipek.

## Halloween As The Consummate Opportunity To Flex Our Parenting Muscles

Halloween is a wonderful time to be a parent! Decorating the house, buying costumes, and trick-or-treating can be joyful and memorable moments with our children. At the same time, Halloween provides the perfect opportunity for parents to flex our parenting muscles. There are numerous rules to create and boundaries to set, such as deciding on an appropriate costume, the amount of candy to be consumed, how many decorations to buy, and how long to trick - or - treat.

Shopping for the costume and candy can be highly overstimulating for many children. A simple and reasonable, "No," may elicit an intense tantrum. Please remember to be firm yet fair, and that giving in to a tantrum teaches our children to have more tantrums because they are a useful tool for achieving a desired result.

When you make a decision about the candy you are buying, whether or not your child has to cover up a great costume with a warm jacket on a cold night, or any other decision designed to ensure your child's safety and well-being, do so with confidence. You are the parent, you know what is best, and you have the right to make and enforce the rules.

I hope that you will find the following suggestions helpful:

- Be selective when choosing a costume. Stay away from flammable fabrics, such as nylon and vinyl. Make sure that hems are short enough to avoid tripping.
- Consider leaving imitation weapons at home, If you do let your child bring them along, make sure that they look obviously pretend.
- Make sure that you and your child have a flashlight and reflective tape on the front and back of your clothes so that you can be easily seen by oncoming traffic.
- Young children should always be accompanied by an adult
- If you do decide to allow your older child to go out without an adult, make sure that they are wearing a watch that can be read in the dark and that they have a flashlight. Children trick-or-treating alone should be crystal clear as to where they may and may not go, and exactly when they are expected home. If possible, consider giving your child a cell phone to use as well.
- Encourage your child to engage in extra physical activity on the day of Halloween and the following day to burn extra sugar.
- Eat dinner before trick-or-treating. Remember that children with full stomachs will have an easier time waiting to eat

candy until it is inspected at home

- Consider cutting down on sugar and fats by handing out packets of pretzels, crackers and cheese, or non-food items, such as pencils, erasers or stickers.
- Make sure trick-or-treaters stay outside of strange homes at all times.
- Do not allow your children to eat candy until you have had a chance to carefully inspect it at home. Once at home, discard anything that is not wrapped, and then allow your children to take only the predetermined amount of candy that you have specified in advance.
- Have lots and lots of fun! These years go by in a blink of an eye and now is our chance to create our most treasured memories.



### Upcoming Parenting Workshops

When: Wednesday, November 5th 9:30 until 11:30 a.m. and again from 7:00 until 9:00 p.m.

Where: 19 Parkfield Road Scarsdale, New York 10583

Topics: Advanced Parenting, Keeping It All Together, & Tips For Helping Your Child To Succeed In School

Spots have started to fill up and spaces are limited, so please call or email to reserve your

I wish you and your family a safe and happy Halloween! I thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, and I wish you all the very best.

Elizabeth Pflaum

Elizabeth Pflaum  
AAA Parent Coaching  
Tel: 914-725-5545  
Cel: 914-320-9506  
Fax: 914-723-4659  
email: [liz@aaaparentcoach.com](mailto:liz@aaaparentcoach.com)  
[www.aaaparentcoach.com](http://www.aaaparentcoach.com)