

# *Children First*

## **Issue # 1: September 2003**

By

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**“Working with educational leaders to keep children first.”**

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### **A Warm Welcome**

Welcome to the inaugural issue of this newsletter. It's the beginning of a dream to share information on how to make the lives of children, our own and others, better. Children are our future so if we wish to grow the future well, we must concentrate on the most important element of our future today—***children!***

I sincerely thank you for taking the time to read this issue although I must admit I did take advantage of your readership to introduce you to this newsletter. I hope you will forgive my boldness with this effort and that you will overcome your temporary feeling of being “tricked” by the value found in the messages contained in the newsletter.

What will be our focus? At this point, I want to share information that will help parents and educators improve their successes as they work with children. I wish a newborn came with an instruction manual. But, unfortunately, they don't.

I hope that the ideas shared will help you start you own manual. Let me know what you think. Love to hear from you.

### **A Resource for You**

The internet is a wonderful invention. But, like all good things, some people begin to use them in a way no one ever conceptualized. I came across this resource as I was doing some research on the web (one of the great things parents can use websites to do for their children) and thought it worthy of sharing with you.

<http://www.Cybertipline.com> is a great website where, among other things, you can report offensive or pornographic spam that comes into your home or office computer. It's worth checking out.

## Another Great Resource

I'm fortunate to have many friends who are full of useful and applicable ideas. One such friend is Dr. Marvin Marshall. Marv has a great newsletter, *Promoting Responsibility*. It is great for teachers and parents. If you would like a sample issue, contact Marv at [marv@marvinmarshall.com](mailto:marv@marvinmarshall.com) and I'm sure he will be more than happy to add you to his list and send you a trial issue. There is not cost.

You might also check out his book, *Discipline Without Stress, Punishments or Rewards—How teachers and parents promote responsibility and learning*. It's full of great advice for teachers and parents.

## A Thought for You

This is not something I'd normally do but, in light of the nature of this newsletter, I'm passing this poem on to you. It is reported to be a part of an unbroken chain of emails that began on September 11, 2001. Certainly, it has strong implications for all of us. Feel free to pass it on to as many as you'd like or to absorb the thoughts.

### IF I KNEW

If I knew it would be the last time that I'd see you fall asleep,  
I would tuck you in more tightly and pray the Lord, your soul to keep.  
If I knew it would be the last time that I'd see you walk out the door,  
I would give you a hug and kiss and call you back for one more.

If I knew it would be the last time I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,  
I would video tape each action and word, so I could play them back day after day.  
If I knew it would be the last time, I could spare an extra minute  
to stop and say "I love you," instead of assuming you would KNOW I do.

If I knew it would be the last time I would be there to share your day,  
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more, so I can let just this one slip away.  
For surely there's always tomorrow to make up for an oversight,  
and we always get a second chance to make everything just right.

There will always be another day to say "I love you,"  
And certainly, there's another chance to say our "Anything I can do?"  
But just in case I might be wrong and today is all I get,  
I'd like to say how much I love you and I hope we never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone, young or old alike,  
And today may be the last chance you get to hold your loved one tight.  
So if you're waiting for tomorrow, why not do it today?

For if tomorrow never comes, you'll surely regret the day.

That you didn't take that extra time for a smile, a hug, or a kiss  
and you were too busy to grant someone, what turned out to be their one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today, and whisper in their ear,  
Tell them how much you love them and that you'll always hold them dear  
Take time to say "I'm sorry," "Please forgive me," "Thank you," or "It's okay."  
And if tomorrow never comes, you'll have no regrets about today.

## **A Parental Responsibility**

Research shows that a child, by age five, has the vast majority of their value system in place. That means, when your child enters school, whatever values you've taught or didn't teach your child, becomes the nucleus of what a teacher has to work with. Those values can make a teachers job a dream or a nightmare.

Here is a list of what I call my "Daily Dozen List of Values" that all parents should have introduced to their child before their first day of school. Each demands continual refinement and improvement but they are the foundation upon which character is built.

Parents should also possess these important values. (I realize that you cannot teach what you do not know but now you don't have an excuse....you know!)

1. Courtesy and Manners
2. Compassion
3. Honesty
4. Strong Self-Worth
5. Thriftiness (Use of money)
6. Continually improving
7. Self-discipline
8. Positive attitude
9. Service to others
10. Using their talents
11. Use of their time and setting goals
12. A belief in God.

## **The Most Abused Parenting Skill**

You may never have perceived your parental role the same as the role of a manager. But they are the same. As a parent, you are managing the most important entity in your life—your child. Moreover, like a good manager, there are certainly guidelines that, if practiced, will make you a better manager and thus a better parent.

The most consistent difficulty managers experience is his or her *inconsistency*. Yes, being predictable is good. When you are not, you expose workers to confusion. The same idea works for your parenting role. If you are inconsistent with your discipline for example, children don't know how to act. The "punishment should fit the crime" is a good axiom to remember. When you come down on a child for an action then, the next

day when they do something worse and you don't react at all, this breeds confusion in the mind of your child. It's also a good idea for both parents to get together on a discipline plan. When parents are inconsistent in their idea of discipline, that just adds more confusion to the issue.

I've spent a lifetime studying leadership ideas and, my own personal research confirms that when a manager gets in trouble with his or her management style, the vast majority of the time it's due to inconsistent decision-making. As one who has been a parent for forty years, I can also say that when parents have trouble with their child, large parts of these difficulties are due to inconsistency in the way parenting takes place.

Let me suggest you reflect on past difficulties you've experienced with your child and determine the level of consistency around that issue. Chances are, when corrected in a consistent manner, the trouble will go away.

## **Actions Speak Louder Than Words**

If you want your child to read—read to them and let them see you read.

If you want your child to possess good manners—demonstrate them first

If you want your child to respect others—respect to all you meet.

If you want your child to value education—you must value learning.

If you want your child to respect teachers—demonstrate respect for teacher first.

If you want your child to be honest—demonstrate honesty in all you do.

If you want your child to find value in religion—you must have a strong belief system.

If you want your child to be responsible—be responsible yourself.

Do you get the message?

## **Your Input Appreciated**

If there is a burning question you might have about parenting, please pass the question on to me. I'm no expert on parenting having made my share of mistakes while raising my four children. But, I promise to research and validate answers prior to sharing them.

This newsletter is for you and the content should reflect issues important to readers. So, keep those cards and letter coming.

## **Checkout Billy**

Billy Arcement, MEd. is one of the premier speakers on school board leadership in the country. His philosophy of removing politics from the decision making process and making all decisions for the benefit of children is a refreshing change from "business as usual." He also has quality messages for superintendents, school administrators and teachers. He blends thought provoking ideas with his "Cajun Stories" to bring audiences a winning combination guaranteed to make your event a success. Call us. We'd love to help! Go to <http://www.searchingforsuccess.com> to learn more about Billy's programs and services. Our results are guaranteed!

## Build Your Success Library

*Searching for Success* is a great book for school administrators to use to train staff and teachers as well as helping them interact positively with students and parents. Why not make it part of your training process. It also makes a great gift from a business to a school staff. Contact us about discounts for multiple purchases for your school district or business.

## Value Added Ideas

**You may reprint content from this newsletter or from past issues. We're also happy to provide you with articles from our archive of previously published articles to add value to your publications. Send an email request to [barcement@eatel.net](mailto:barcement@eatel.net) and specify your needs.**

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