

Children First

Issue # 15: December 2004

Written By

Billy Arcement, MEd.

“Working with education leaders to keep children first.”

December 3, 2004

A Look Back At 2004

To Get The Greatest Value From This Newsletter

When you receive this newsletter, print, three-hole punch and place it in a binder for future review. Place the binder in your bookcase. Take the binder with you on trips to read in down time. Review it while you're sitting down glancing at your TV screen or create your own unique way to re-read the words. Reviewing the messages reinforces the content and expands the possibilities of retention and implementation of information shared. Put the ideas to work for you. This is how winners learn and grow and I believe you are a winner!

Review and Reflection

Nothing of great value results unless we constantly review and reflect on our performance. It is those tiny course corrections that keep us on the path of success. That is not only true in your career but it is equally important within your family environment. Here are some questions to get you started on your family review process. Add your own questions as you begin to reflect on the past year:

- How much time did you spend in meaningful conversation with your children in this year? Think daily, weekly and monthly. Recall specifically meaningful events and topics of discussion.
- What was the most serious situation you encountered regarding discipline? Is the situation improved? Regressing? Still the same?
- Am I aware of the character and values of my child's friends? Do I know their parents and something about their character and values?
- What was my proudest moment as a parent? Did I express my feelings to my children regarding this event? Have I used this situation to re-enforce other situations?
- Have you encouraged your child to maintain the best academic standing they can? Do you have clearly defined standards of behavior towards learning and school?
- Have you helped your children grow spiritually? Have you been a good role model?
- What is the greatest lesson I taught my child this past year? How has this lesson helped to improve the success potential of my child?

Don't shy away from tough questions. Be fair but firm with yourself. The object here is to avoid beating yourself up while being objective and honest. Once you've completed the question phase, spend time discussing your personal evaluation with your

children. Seek their reaction, input and stronger involvement in their growth process in the coming year. Successfully raising children is a 24/7 job that demands a well thought out plan and a serious commitment to doing the best you can. When you improve your parenting skills, you do a tremendous favor to your child that has lifetime benefits. This is one case where the end product is well worth the price one has to pay when one chooses to *really* become a parent.

The Communication “Gap”

Got a teenager in the house? If you do, you are well aware of the potential generational “gap” that can exist. Teenagers seem to lose their voice and interactive skills when they are around their parents. This communication deficiency is normally more prevalent with boys than with girls. Boys tend to be more private. (I remember my unwillingness to engage in detailed conversations with my parents.)

How can you reduce this communication gap? Start by talking to your child. Persist! Wear them out if you must but get dialog going. Don’t be too nose on personal events. Give them a little space and respect. Ask about their day and share a bit about your day. Find some common ground.

Consistently engaging in this activity will make everyone, including you, more comfortable with the process. Once the initial walls of resistance are knocked down you might find some very interesting conversation taking place.

Why not include more talk in 2005? It’s a wise choice with great rewards.

Helping Your Child Have A Great 2005

Not only should you engage in the review and reflection process, encourage your child to do the same. Ask your children to examine their activities in the past year. Are they comfortable they gave life their best effort? Do they feel they’ve matured and grown in character and contribution to the family and their own personal growth? What growth plan do they intend to implement for the coming year?

Encourage your children to set personal goals. Help them identify what is important and share your experiences that might enlighten their insights. A well thought out plan for life beats just reacting to the events of the day. Celebrate victories. Resolve to minimize mistakes. Next year at this time, everyone should be better positioned and possess a more confident ability to face the future. There are few better options you can offer your family

Everyone Should Be On The Same Page

Part of the reflective process should involve your spouse. Spend time together to discuss your performance as parents. This also demands great honesty. Strive not to have conflicting views or positions on the most important family issues. Effectiveness in this phase of parenting hinges on consistency of positions. Decide together what is most important for your family to accomplish and experience in the next year. Work in concert rather than in opposition to each other. Children can sense when parents are in conflict on a key issue and trust me, they will look for a decision that gives them the most benefits.

If you are a single parent, find a trusted friend who is familiar with your family circumstances and ask for honest feedback. You can't get mad when the truth stings a bit. Remember, this is your friend and you asked for honest feedback. Take the suggestions to heart and use the information to improve your parenting skills. Speaking to a professional counselor or a trusted member of the clergy might be another alternative for single parents who may not have a trusted friend.

Again, consistency is the goal. And that can only occur when you are crystal clear on your stance on issues and you have the personal courage to work through the process no matter how painful it might be. Remember, you are working with and helping to improve your most treasured asset. Is this a time to worry about price?

Closing Thoughts

Today many in the world are trying to diminish or eliminate the celebration of Christmas. I've decided I will no longer be a spectator. I'm getting involved and fighting back. Christmas is the day Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. He is a documented historical figure whose millions of followers support his philosophy of life. I personally have no problem with other religious views having their moment of celebration. But I do personally resent those who have chosen to take away my right to celebrate Christmas. And I'm determined to keep my rights to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

In that spirit, I extend to you my sincere wish for a most joyous and holy Christmas season.

Checkout Billy

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 parents to build a strong value system within their children. ***It makes a great Christmas gift.*** Why not make it part of your training process with your child? Send your \$ 15.00 check now and receive a signed copy in the mail before Christmas.

There's Another Newsletter for You

We publish a second monthly newsletter, *News from the Swamp*, which is filled with practical ideas on personal and organizational success techniques. You'll find value to help with your career and personal success strategies. The next issue goes out December 15. Subscription information follows.

Value Added Ideas

You may reprint content from this newsletter or publish one of our many articles from our archives to add value to your publications. Send an email request to barcement@eatel.net and specify your needs.

This newsletter was sent to you because of a request or because you were a participant at a conference where Billy Arcement was a speaker. It is being sent to you for educational purposes. Should this newsletter have reached you in error and you do not wish to continue receiving it, see the "unsubscribe" message below.

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION INFO

For a free subscription to *Children First*, send email to barcement@eatel.net and include the word "Children" on the subject line. For a free subscription to *News from the Swamp*, place "swamp" in the subject line.

To UNsubscribe, email with the word "unsubscribe" on the subject line or call Billy at (225) 677-9426 (Our office is in Prairieville, LA)

The Results Group

36570 Swamp Road South, Prairieville LA 70769

(225) 677-9426, Toll free (888) 376-7374

barcement@eatel.net

Copyright © 2004, The Results Group, All Rights Reserved