

Children First

Issue # 5: February 2004

By

Billy Arcement, MEd.

“Working with education leaders to keep children first.”

In This Issue (February 1, 2004)

- **Building Self-Esteem**
- **Perfect Isn't Always Perfect**
- **Parents and Stress**
- **A Message for Mothers**
- **Parents and High Achievers**
- **Checkout Billy**
- **Build Your Success Library**
- **Value Added Ideas**

Building Self-Esteem

How we see ourselves determines how we behave. It's no different with children. Parents should work with their child to help them feel better about themselves. Here are a few tips to help pull this off:

1. **Encourage:** Smile at your children. Hug them. Use positive uplifting words like, “You can do it.” “That was great.” Encourage exploration to stretch their learning capacity.
2. **Be Supportive:** Be there for your child physically, emotionally and mentally. Help coach games. Play games in the yard. Share your knowledge to help build successes.
3. **Allow for Failure.** There will be failures. When they occur, view them as lessons learned rather than negative events. Don't teach them to like failing. Teach them to accept failure as a part of life's experiences. Let them know that most great accomplishments in life are preceded by great failures.
4. **Celebrate Differences.** Every child is a unique creation. All of your children will not achieve at the same level. Seek to identify their talents and encourage their use. Different is good, not bad. Build differences into enjoyable experiences.

Perfect Isn't Always Perfect

Some parents seek to raise the perfect child. OK, maybe we all want perfectionism but the reality is that no one can be perfect in all things. Expecting too much can build anxiety within your child. The father who believes his son can throw strikes with every pitch is placing unrealistic pressure on his son. The mother who wants her daughter to display perfect manners in the company of others needs to realize that

even Martha Stewart is occasionally imperfect. (If you don't believe that, you haven't been watching the news.)

Let me not discourage high expectations. We all want to do well and we all should do the best we can on all occasions. Make competition with self the way to continuously improve. It doesn't matter what others do. What really counts is what you do. If you do your best you can with your talents, then the achievement is outstanding no matter how it rates against the competition.

Encourage risks and log progress. Help your children realize that progress at their capability level is what life is all about. Occasionally, we may reach "perfect." When we do, celebrate the achievement. When we don't, be pleased if progress is made.

Parents and Stress

Raising children today can be a very stressful experience. Two working parents must make a strong commitment to fulfill parenting responsibilities along with their career expectations. That combination is clearly stress producing experience. But, there is some relief. Here are some ways to reduce stress and make life a bit more palatable:

- Change the daily routine whenever possible. Repetitiveness can be boring.
- Learn to laugh when things get a bit out of hand. Don't fret when every detail doesn't go as planned. Yea, you're human!
- Sorry to tell you this but when you decided to become a parent, you also made a simultaneous decision to put many of your personal plans on temporary hold. Understand this and you won't be stressed out when all of your desires aren't fulfilled.
- Get help to take some of your personal responsibilities off your shoulder. Get other family members to occasionally step in, share items with your spouse, or hire someone. That allows you to focus more on parenting without missing out on completion of your "to do" list.
- Enjoy the time with your children. Remember that you will never get the opportunity to re-live a lost moment with a child. Trust me; it will end sooner than you think no matter how you feel when you read this. Don't replace memories with regrets.
- Occasionally treat yourself. Do something just for you. Look at it as a "reward" for a job well done. No guilt, just fun.

A Message for Mothers

Last month I had a poem for fathers. This month, here are some thoughts for mother.

I Loved You Enough To Say No

Some day when my children are old enough to understand the logic that motivates a mother, I will tell them I loved you enough to ask where you were going, with whom, and what time you would be home.

I loved you enough to insist that you save your money and buy a bike for yourself even though we could afford to buy one for you.

I loved you enough to be silent and let you discover that your new best friend was a creep.

I loved you enough to make you take a Milky Way back to the drugstore (with a bite out of it) and tell the clerk, "I stole this yesterday and want to pay for it."

I loved you enough to stand over you for two hours while you cleaned your room, a job that would have taken me 15 minutes.

I loved you enough to let you see anger, disappointment and tears in my eyes. Children must learn that their parents aren't perfect.

I loved you enough to let you assume the responsibility for your actions even when the penalties were so harsh they almost broke my heart.

But most of all, I loved you enough to say NO when I knew you would hate me for it.

Those were the most difficult battles of all. I'm glad I won them, because in the end, you won something too!

Parents and High Achievers

I recently came across several studies that reached some rather interesting conclusions. How do you rate on these points?

1. Parents of achievers believed success was the result of hard work, not inborn talent or luck.
2. Parents of achievers held high expectations for their children's futures and encouraged and rewarded all efforts in the right direction. Parents focused on strengths, not weaknesses.
3. Parents of achievers were deeply committed to their children's education and gave it their time, energy and imagination to the development of their children's potential.
4. Parents of achievers built strong family bonds and a sense of family pride.

Checkout Billy

Billy Arcement, MEd. is fast becoming one of the premier speakers for business meetings, educational conferences and governmental strategic planning sessions. His work helping school boards make all decisions for the benefit of children is a refreshing change from "business as usual." He also has quality messages for superintendents, school administrators, teachers and business leaders. 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 parents to use to build a strong value system within their children. The content can also help make them better students. 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 within a few days.

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 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*, a leadership and personal growth content ezine, send email to barcement@eatel.net and include the word "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