



**Priceless[®]
Parenting**

"Training for your
most important job"

Priceless Parenting Newsletter September 2011

Dear Parents, Teachers and Child Care Providers,

One of the hardest things is to watch your children really struggle. While it's tempting to rescue them, there's so many situations where you simply can't ... you really can't go out on the baseball field and help your child get a hit, you can't take that math test for your child and you can't force other children to be your child's friend.

Children learn the most from their struggles, not from the things that come easily to them. This month we explore the tension in allowing children to struggle to solve problems. If you have ideas or stories to share on this, please add them to our [Facebook discussion!](#)

Warm Regards,

Kathy Slattengren

P.S. I hope you enjoy this newsletter. Please do me a favor and forward this to a friend who also may enjoy reading it.



When is Struggling the Best Way Out?

One of the hardest parts about being a parent is watching your children struggle. Whether your child is struggling to master a new skill in a sport or a homework assignment, it can be hard to take a step back and let your child handle it.

There's a Native American Legend of a man watching a butterfly as it fought to emerge from a small hole in its cocoon. He watched for several hours as the butterfly struggled to force its body through this little hole. After awhile it stopped pushing and seemed to have given up. The man decided to help the butterfly by carefully enlarging the hole. The butterfly quickly emerged but its body was swollen and its wings were shriveled. It crawled around dragging its wings.

Presentations

Parent Learning Link presentations at Evergreen Hospital:

October 5 7:00 - 8:30

Bringing Out Their Best: Providing Guidance While Avoiding Parenting Pitfalls [Register today!](#)

November 9 7:00 - 8:30

The Wild, Wild Web: Keeping Your Kids Safe in the Digital World [Register today!](#)

Schedule a presentation for your school, business or private home!

[Choose a topic](#) and then call to arrange a date: 425-770-1629



Online Classes

Do you want to see better behavior from your children? Start today with one of these online classes:

[Parenting - Ages 5 and](#)

What the man didn't realize was that the butterfly needed to struggle through the small opening in order to force the fluids from its body into its wings which would strengthen its wings to fly.



Having missed that opportunity to push through the small opening, the butterfly was weak and was never able to fly.

The man's desire to help that butterfly sadly had the opposite effect. Children are a lot like butterflies. They need to struggle in order to learn how to fly.

Doing Your Own Work

Children learn by doing. When your children do a task, they build their brain connections. When you do a task for them, you reinforce your own brain connections without adding to theirs.

Do your children ever complain about not being able to do something? My daughter complained that she wasn't good at making a peanut butter sandwich so she wanted me to do it for her. I responded that this was the exact reason she needed to practice doing it! If I kept making the sandwiches for her, she'd never learn how to do it herself.

Did she thank me for this opportunity to practice? No. However, eventually she did get very good at making peanut butter sandwiches!

A few years ago I was attending my son's 4th grade curriculum night. When the teacher announced she would not be giving much homework, one mom excitedly responded how happy she was to hear this! She mentioned that there were a number of nights last year that her daughter would go to bed and she would be up until midnight finishing her daughter's projects.

When other parents in the room expressed surprise, she explained that her daughter needed her rest and certainly couldn't be staying up that late doing homework. What do you think her daughter learned from this? How did she feel when her mother finished her homework?

Practicing Perseverance

My son took TaeKwonDo for many years starting at age 7. Along with the rest of the kids, he memorized the [tenets of TaeKwonDo](#): courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit.

[Under](#)

[Parenting - Ages 6 - 12](#)

[Parenting - Ages 13 - 18](#)

[Ready to Launch](#)

[Facebook Tips for Parents](#)

Other Resources



Developing these qualities was essential as he worked towards achieving his second degree black belt.

The hardest part for me was watching him struggle to break a board during testing. Clearly I couldn't jump in and do it for him. All I could do was silently cheer him on from the sideline. He had to find it within himself to try again and again until he broke the board.



His instructor, Master Shin, told the kids that breaking a board was a lot like achieving any other goal in life. In order to reach the goal, you must focus on it and exert the right amount of energy at just the right time. You must not stop when your fist or foot touches the board but rather go through the board. By following this advice and persevering, my son broke many boards.

Working Hard Versus Getting Lucky

When my brother and I were teens, the neighbor down the block called us in to discuss a business proposition. He explained that we didn't have waste time and money going to college after high school. He could show us how to earn a lot of money right now.

After going on and on about how easily we could become rich, he revealed the secret to our success - selling Amway products! Our parents had taught us that success came from hard work, not being lucky or finding a quick way to make money. We turned this opportunity down and instead took the longer, harder path by going to college.

We unintentionally taught our children that they too will need to work hard and not depend on luck or winning the lottery. How did we do this? We took them to their elementary school's yearly bingo night. Both kids went for seven years always anticipating the joy of winning one of the many fun prizes - maybe even the bike! How often did my kids win? Never. Not once. They clearly inherited our gambling luck!

Struggling Through to Success

Every child experiences different challenges as they grow and mature. What struggles are your children currently facing? What do you think your children are learning from their efforts to overcome these difficulties?

One of my greatest joys has been seeing the pride in my children's faces when they finally achieve their goals - on their own, through their own hard work. It's never easy to watch them struggle but ultimately it seems to be the best way out.

This Month's Challenge: Allowing Children to Struggle

This month's challenge is to think about how your children are currently struggling. What are their greatest challenges? What do you think they are learning from these difficulties? How are you avoiding rescuing them?

Please feel free to share your ideas in our [Facebook discussion](#).

Last Month's Challenge: Parenting Vows

Last month you were challenged to think about the vows you would like to make to your children. What vows did you make? Which one did you decide to focus on for the month?

Upcoming Presentations

Parent Learning Link

Wonderful Wednesdays at Evergreen Hospital in Kirkland

7 to 8:30 PM - \$30/\$50 (pair of parents)

9/14/2011 **Seven Simple Solutions to Focus Your Distracted Child** - Margit Crane

9/21/2011 **Parent and Tween Safety Class - Tackle the tween years with safety and confidence together!** - Kim Estes

9/28/2011 **Puberty Prep for Parents of Girls** - Amy Lang

10/5/2011 **Bringing Out Their Best: Providing Guidance While Avoiding Parenting Pitfalls** - Kathy Slattengren

See the [complete schedule and register here](#).

Scheduling a Presentation

Would you like a presentation at your school, company, church or your private home? [Choose the presentation topic](#) then [email us](#) or call 425-770-1629 to schedule it.

Planning a Presentation

Are you responsible for planning parent education events for your

school or group? If so, you'll want to check out Parent Learning Link's [Parent Education Event Guide!](#)

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