**PEP Provides Online Resources**

**The Power of a Parent’s Apology**

by Robyn Des Roches

A friend of mine faced a parenting dilemma recently when she was unable to locate her cell phone and immediately blamed her 7-year-old daughter. The girl began to defend herself, but my friend was too exasperated to listen. “How many times do I have to tell you not to take my things?” she shouted, as her daughter stormed angrily out of the room. Soon after, my friend put her hand in her jacket pocket and was both relieved and mortified to find her phone—just where she had put it when she went out walking that morning.

What’s a parent to do when she

continues on page 6

**“Bad” Parent?**

**Dear Addy...**

Guest author is Liz Neville

Dear Addy,

I’ve lost it so many times yelling at my kids, I’m in desperate need of some fresh ideas. I don’t want to be a bad parent!

–Trying

Dear Trying,

You are not alone!

We yell when we feel angry and have no other tools in the toolkit to deal with the anger. “Taking it personally” when we see our kids’ misbehavior as a direct threat to our authority, or when we feel the behavior reflects badly on us—is the main reason we let loose with yelling.

continues on page 3

**Picky Eaters and Meal Time Battles**

by Amy McCreedy

Transcript from Ask AMY TV (originally on YouTube)

“Welcome to ASK AMY TV where we provide simple solutions to your most frustrating discipline dilemmas.

“I’m Amy McCreedy, founder of PPS and author of If I Have To Tell You One More Time. Our question today is from Rochelle from Fort Meyers and she asks…

‘I can’t get my son to eat anything. Every night it’s a battle at dinner. I want him to have a healthy meal but he just refuses to eat. Please help—I’m at my wits end!’

“Rochelle—trust me you’re not alone. It’s probably one of the most frequently asked questions from parents.

“You are in a classic POWER STRUGGLE. You’re trying to make him eat and he’s digging in his heels with a ‘you can’t make me’ attitude.

“Mealtime battles are so common especially with younger kids because it’s one of the areas in which they do have legitimate power or control. We can’t MAKE them eat. Period. We can try—but can’t MAKE them eat and they know it.

“The more we coax, prod, beg and encourage night after night, kids know that eating is really important to us and

continues on page 7

**Member Memo**

This issue highlights articles from members who maintain websites, blog and/or are commentators in other media.

We hope you will not only be enlightened by their various articles, but also motivated to explore their websites and perhaps “go and do likewise.”

Nice work spreading the word about the efficacy of Adlerian parent education, members!

**Also in this issue**

**Your Co-Chairs Report...............................................................Page 2**

Also, Adlerian Wisdom, how to reach us

**Membership Matters................................................................Page 3**

Time to elect a new Co-Chair: Offer to serve

**Conference ..............................................................................Pages 7-8**

Pre-Conference topics perfect for Family Educators

North American Society of Adlerian Psychology...International Adlerian Leadership Since 1952
Dear Family Education Section Members,

Hope everyone made it through winter with spirits high. I know having to go to work on a -60 day (with the wind chill) made me have to dig deep to find the positive in it. Speaking of positive, it is only months away until our annual NASAP conference in May in Chicago. The theme this year is Celebrating the Original Positive Psychology. In the Family Education Section alone, we have 14 interesting sessions to choose from, in addition to the other Section offerings and inspiring workshops. For those of you who would like to encourage parents you know to come, we have a full day Parent Track on Saturday for only $50.00. For those of you who are teachers or know of interested teachers, there is also a Teacher Track on Saturday for $50.00. If you haven’t already seen the line-up, check the conference brochure on the NASAP website <http://alfredadler.org/conference-2014>.

The other draw for the conference is the opportunity to meet so many interesting and inspiring people in your field. It is exciting to be able to network with others, learn about what they are doing and share what you do.

We are encouraging everyone to spread the word about the conference through your channels such as websites, listservs, tweets, Facebook and of course face to face.

This issue of FAMILY! introduces you to some new voices (plus a renewed look at old friends) actively spreading solid Adlerian parent education ideas in creative ways: their attractive websites, programs, articles, blogs, radio and TV. We hope you’ll take a closer look and be inspired!

Congratulations to Parenting Network on the release of their new book, quoted in our Adlerian Wisdom.

We are still looking for a Co-Chair to replace me. The new 3 year term starts after our annual business meeting at the May conference. You would need to attend the fall meetings (2 days) and a further day of meetings attached to the annual conference. Outside of the meetings there is approximately one hour of work a week. I would highly recommend the position. You get to contribute to NASAP, meet new people, work with Marlene, Doone and Bryna (that alone is worth its weight in gold) and have a voice in the governance of NASAP and your Section.

Marlene and I have both been blessed with new grandchildren this year. Marlene has had 3 new grandbabies since January and I had a grandson last April and a granddaughter last August. For those of you getting close to being grandparents, we both highly recommend it. Somehow being a grandparent helps you look at everything with fresh eyes yet backed by years of experience. You know that tantrums will pass and sticky finger prints on the window are to be treasured.

We hope that all of you are blessed with what is important in life—those wonderful (and sometimes messy) family moments!

Your Co-Chairs,

Terry Lowe along with Marlene Goldstein
Dear Addy, continued from page 1

I was a frequent offender in this department before I discovered STEP. It led me to many a tirade, where I’d work up a good head of righteous steam before I finally shut up. Once it blew out, I’d see the effect of my words on my kids’ faces—devastating. Most of the time they were just doing the things that kids do before they know any better, other times it was the frustration of the same offenses over and over.

What I learned was that we don’t have to react in anger if we know that the result of the behavior will not be our burden. In fact, it becomes the very teaching tool our kids need to become responsible adults. For instance, if they make a mess, whether by accident or not, the reaction is the same—find a mop or towel, and show them how to clean it up. No screaming, no berating, no insults. Just the training they need in dealing with spilt milk.

And while they are learning that, they also see that you love them and trust them to be able to do the job properly—well, to the best of their ability anyway. And ultimately, with the practice they are sure to get, they usually meet your standards.

The use of consequences (instead of punishment) for those repeated but minor infractions gave me the proper tools to deal with those things before they became a major source of my frustration—and yelling.

Learning how to use I-messages (“When I see the toy truck running into the curtains, I worry that they’ll get torn”) to let my kids know when I felt disrespected or frustrated helped me head off the full-blown, I’ve-had-it-up-to-here tirades.

And gentle, sensible reflective listening helped me show my kids that their concerns were important to me—as well as modeling to them how to be a good listener. With reflective listening, instead of taking over and solving their problems, the parent can be an empathic sounding board and allow them to brainstorm solutions.

Incorporating the principle of using encouragement instead of praise is also a key component of STEP.

It’s daily work to keep all of these principles in mind, even for a family like mine which has practiced STEP for over 12 years. The little struggles, disappointments, and frustrations of family life can sometimes get the better of us. But STEP works for me every time I use it.

I encourage you to sign up for a parent group and access STEP principles, too.

~Addy

Elizabeth Neville is a member of NASAP’s Family Education Section. An enthusiastic practitioner of Adlerian techniques presented in STEP, she is a speaker and trainer in the Montvale, New Jersey area. Her practice is called One STEP Ahead Workshops.

Website: <http://OneSTEPAheadWorkshops.com>

Email: <goodcopy@optonline.com>

Don’t miss: Pre-conference Workshop with Rob Guttenberg or any of the outstanding Parent Track sessions at NASAP 2014 in Chicago! Sign up NOW for Early Bird rates for entire conference. Go to http://alfredadler.org/conference-2014
The Invisible Child

What It Means to Really See Your Child
from a blog entry posted on her website
by Cheryl L. Erwin

My husband and I went out to dinner last night, gliding over icy roads to sit by a cheerful fire and chat with friends. We had just started on our soup when a family of five—mom, dad, and three children—slid into the booth next to us. We were deep in conversation so it took me a while to make sense of what I was hearing, but eventually it dawned on me: I could hear the voices of the three children, but nothing else. I leaned over as discreetly as I could and took a peek, and saw two little girls and a boy sitting quietly, and chattering away to their parents—who were so engrossed in their phones that they didn’t even notice.

Now, let me be clear: this is the sort of restaurant with butcher paper on the tables and jars of crayons so everyone can draw. It’s cheerful and noisy, the sort of place where kids can move around and just be kids without disturbing anyone else. And these children were beautifully behaved, sitting calmly and speaking in their best “indoor voices.” Their parents were simply tuned out. Occasionally, mom or dad would make an “uh huh” or “mmmmm” noise, but otherwise, there was no response. And somehow, given the setting and the mood, I seriously doubt they were occupied with an emergency that required their rapt attention. Gradually, the children stopped talking and silence settled over the table.

When I was a child, my brother and I watched a cartoon show called “Casper the Friendly Ghost.” Casper was a white, blobby sort of ghost who was always smiling; he was the farthest thing from scary you could imagine and just wanted to make friends with the people around him. Sadly for Casper, no one could see him—which is, after all, the definition of ghosthood. And sadly, I fear we may be raising a generation of “Casper kids”; unless they’re misbehaving, they receive little focused time or attention. I grew up in the “children should be seen and not heard” era, but I believe the Casper kids have it worse: at least we were seen. Far too many children today have become invisible, expected to behave themselves, to comply with adult commands, and otherwise, to politely disappear. No wonder so many children whine, act out, and raise their voices; they’ve realized that even negative attention is better than no attention at all.

I understand how stressful parenting can be. Most of the parents I know work hard to provide for their families and do their best to create a loving and peaceful home. Parents are people, too, and need time to relax. But here’s the catch: children need attachment and real connection. It’s not optional, something you can provide if you have the time. A child’s cognitive, social and emotional development, especially in the early years, depends entirely on the quality of the connection he has with parents and other caregivers. Everything he learns, he learns from you—and that requires time and energy.

Children, it turns out, need to be seen and heard. They need you to look at them, and not only when you’re angry. They need you to be interested in all the many things that fascinate them. And when you’re busy—and parents often are—they need to know that if they can wait patiently, you’ll find time to really see and hear them, to be fully present with them.

Do you know any “Casper kids”? If you do, how many opportunities for connection and learning are you missing? Consider putting down the phone, turning off the TV, and shutting down the computer. Have a conversation; play a game together. Go to dinner and draw funny pictures with crayons. Laugh together. You may be pleasantly surprised to notice that misbehavior decreases when invisible children become visible.

| Posted by cheryl | Saturday, January 19, 2013 |

A frequent contributor to FAMILY!, Cheryl Erwin is a marriage and family therapist in private practice in Reno, Nevada. She holds MA, MFT and is the author of several books in the Positive Discipline series, as well as the Everything Parent’s Guide to Raising Boys. She also does radio commentaries weekly on KLINR-FM (88.7), Reno NV.

Cheryl can be reached at (775) 331-6723 or at <cheryl@cherylerwin.com>.

Check out her website at <http://cherylerwin.com>

Excited about what your colleagues are doing online? We are, too! Here’s more:

Jane Nelsen, founder of Positive Discipline
Website: <http://positivediscipline.com>
Example article: <http://store.positivediscipline.com/Connection-Before-Correction_b_33.html>

Jody McVittie, M.D.
Website: <http://encouragingsolutions.net>
Membership Matters

Co-Chair Vacancy
Terry Lowe’s two terms as Co-Chair, holding down the traditional Canadian commitment, is coming to an end as of our conference meeting in May. Offer to serve! It’s a great way to make a contribution to NASAP and other family educators. Your job includes soliciting and evaluating proposals for conference presentations; serving as editorial sounding board for FAMILY! content; and encouraging contact on the listserv. Being our Section co-representative to the NASAP Board is great experience in nonprofit service, and good for your career, too! Use the form on page 3 or email our Co-Chairs (see page 2) to nominate yourself or someone you know who would be willing to serve in this capacity. Talk to Terry or Marlene if you have questions.

Can’t Ignore the Sibling Fighting? Put Them in the Same Boat
from website of Alyson Schäfer

I recently posted a parenting tip for handling sibling fighting that recommended you walk away and refuse to get involved in the conflict. I know for some of you, the worry is that your children are either too physical or too young, and still need your involvement.

That’s fine. If ignoring is not going to be a viable tool for you, then let me offer up another method called: “Putting Them in the Same Boat.” This tool ensures that both children involved in the conflict perceive that you are not siding with one over the other. This method makes sure there is no accidental favoritism that can erode the sibling relationship. It honors the fact that in any conflict, both parties are able to influence the outcome. Since fighting requires both children to keep the situation hostile and unresolved, both should experience the same discipline for their disruptive antics, regardless of who started it, who had it first, or who owns it. None of that matters! If fighting erupts and doesn’t resolve itself, and you feel you must step in, try one of these lines:

“Looks like you two are having trouble being together at the moment. You can both go to your rooms and cool down for 5 minutes.”

“I guess I will have to put away the riding truck until you two can figure out how to share it without fighting. When you have a plan worked out, come get me and I’ll give it back.”

“If you can’t agree on how to take turns on the family computer without fighting, the computer will be turned off for this evening. You can both try again tomorrow.”

“I am having a hard time enjoying my dinner when you’re at each other like this. I’m going to take my plate to the kitchen. Call me when the table is peaceful again and I’ll come back.”

With both children being put in the same boat, they are now interested in getting their brother or sister to be cooperative with them rather than sustaining the conflict. With this new method, they are invested in not upsetting the other.

Give it a try and let me know how it goes for you. If you’ve already had success with this method, share your stories! Nothing is more motivating than someone else’s success story.

Alyson Schäfer is a past Co-Chair of our Family Education Section. She holds advanced degrees in coaching and psychotherapy. A resident of Toronto, she has a dynamic website on which she blogs and advertises her workshops and classes. Alyson is the Ask an Expert columnist for Today’s Parent Magazine and sits on the Health Advisory Board for Chatelaine Magazine. She is the best-selling author of three parenting books published by John Wiley and Sons: Breaking the Good Mom Myth (2007), Honey, I Wrecked The Kids (2009), and Ain’t Misbehavin’ (2011). Alyson is regularly seen on local TV as a parenting expert commentator – which she shares with her email list, inviting them onto her website. She will be joining us at the May NASAP conference. (You should, too!)

Email: <alyson@alysonschafer.com>
Website: <http://AlysonSchafer.com>

More Great Member Websites
Bill Corbett, a frequent contributor to this publication, regularly writes thoughtful articles on parenting.
Website: <http://CooperativeKids.com>
Email: <bill@CooperativeKids.com>

Cindy Walton-McCawley
Website chiefly to acquaint parents with Adlerian Child Care Centers but providing on homepage clear and useful definitions of Adlerian philosophy; and several articles on Resource page:
Website: <http://www.adlerianchildcare.net/resources.html>
Email: Cindy <adlercc@aol.com>

Michael Popkin, founder of Active Parenting
Website chiefly sales and leader support, but Research on effectiveness of A.P. is important to know about:
Website: <http://www.activeparenting.com/research>

Does Your Name Belong Here?
Power of Apology...cont from page 1

finds she has wronged, hurt or embarrassed her child? Should she swallow her pride, confess her error and apologize? Or would admitting the mistake weaken her authority, cause her child to lose respect for her and call her future judgments into question?

Make Friends with Mistakes

The fact is, we all make mistakes. Far from undermining the parent-child relationship, parents actually rise in their children’s estimation when they are forthright in accepting blame. Kids benefit, too. When they grow up in an environment in which mistakes are a normal part of life, children develop the courage to try new things and remain resilient in the face of difficulty or failure. ... Children who learn that it is possible to recover from errors will be far more honest in admitting when they have made one.

By contrast, when parents cling to the illusion of perfection by refusing to admit their own mistakes, they create an environment in which the bar is set too high, for both their children and themselves. Kids who grow up believing that mistakes are shameful and unacceptable often become risk averse (because they can’t fail if they don’t try) or adept at denying or hiding their faults (tendencies they may have picked up from their parents). They also grow increasingly resentful and angry toward parents who refuse to own up to and make amends when they are in the wrong.

Model How to Take Responsibility

Children learn by observing and imitating the important adults in their lives. If we want them to accept responsibility for their actions then we must first demonstrate what genuine repentance looks like. It will take young children several years of observing parental apologies before they truly internalize this complicated social exchange.

A sincere apology requires not only finding the right words but, more importantly, finding the right feelings. As a first step, adults need to calm down, put aside their own charged emotions and consider the situation from the child’s point of view. In order to be more than empty words, an effective apology should include an action plan for improvement and a humble request for forgiveness.

“It must have hurt your feelings when I yelled at you and falsely accused you of taking my cell phone. I was wrong and I’m so sorry. I will remember this next time I’m tempted to jump to conclusions before listening to you. Will you forgive me?”

It is important to remember that an apology is not a defense, a sneak attack or a manipulation. The words “but you” do not belong in an apology, as in “I’m sorry I lost my temper but you dawdle so much it drives me crazy.” Most of the time, when we say we are sorry without making excuses, our children will immediately chime in with “That’s OK.” With increasing maturity, they will freely acknowledge their own fault in the situation. This mutual admission of responsibility helps clear the air, clean the slate and strengthen trust between parent and child.

The Benefits of Apologizing

Scientific research has associated apology with measurable health benefits. A study conducted in 2002 by researchers from Hope College and Virginia Commonwealth University noted that heart rate, blood pressure, sweat levels and facial tension all decreased when subjects imagined they were receiving an apology.

These findings are easy to replicate at home. A carefully thought out and sensitively delivered parental apology can go a long way toward undoing the negative effects of unkind words or thoughtless actions. In the short run, children are visibly calmed and soothed. In the longer run, they are taught an invaluable life skill.

Apologizing can be a humbling experience of growth. It forces us to face up to our faults. But the words are only as good as the efforts toward improvement that follow them. If nothing changes and we find ourselves apologizing for the same things over and over again—yelling, being late, breaking promises, changing plans—it’s a warning sign that we need to examine the underlying causes of our behavior and devise a strategy for improving the situation.

Contrary to the sentiment expressed in the 1970 film “Love Story,” love really does mean saying you’re sorry, because all loving relationships are composed of imperfect human beings. When parents take the lead in apologizing, they demonstrate two crucial family values: that they are people of integrity and that their children are worthy of respect.

Five Steps of an Effective Apology

1. Summon compassion. Put yourself in your child’s shoes and consider the impact of your actions or words.

2. Express regret. Focus on your own behavior and describe it specifically in order to demonstrate that you understand the harm you have done.


4. Offer a plan for improvement. State the steps you will take to avoid this mistake in the future.

5. Request forgiveness. Give your child the power to restore the relationship as a demonstration of trust and true contrition.

Reprinted with permission of Robyn Des Roches and the Parent Encouragement Program, Kensington, Maryland; online November 2012 at Washington Parent.

Robyn is a certified parent educator with the Parent Encouragement Program (PEP) and a leader of PEP’s “Parenting Preschoolers” classes.

Website <http://PEPparent.org>.
Meal Time Battles...cont from page 1

they find tremendous power in dawdling through their meal or refusing to eat all together. The harder we push to get them to eat—the bigger the power struggle. It’s their way of saying, ‘You may think you’re the boss of me—but you’re not.’

“To turn this around, you have to make eating your child’s problem, not yours.

“I want you to Stop coaxing and prodding—just let him know that he’s really growing up and he can choose to eat what’s served or not. Either way—you are fine with that. However, let him know the kitchen will close at 6:30 and then that’s it. There will be no more snacks served until breakfast.

“Then prepare a healthy meal with at least one thing that you know he’ll eat and don’t say a word. If he eats—great—if not, he’ll be hungry until the next meal. It becomes HIS problem NOT yours.

“Don’t worry…he’s not going to starve between now and the next meal.

“If he’s fussing and whining before bedtime because he’s starving, don’t rescue with a bag of goldfish. Just hold your tongue with the ‘I told you so’s’ and calmly say, ‘I’m sure you’ll be fine until breakfast, but you may want to get a drink of water if your tummy is rumbling.’

“In doing this—you’re removing the power from the power struggle. You’re not trying to force him to eat—it’s his decision and HE experiences the consequences of that decision.

“Remember—this plan will work a lot better if they’re actually hungry at mealtime so don’t let them graze on snacks and juice throughout the day.

“There are a lot of other strategies for diffusing power struggles. You can find those at our website at www.PositiveParentingSolutions.com.

“What has worked well for you in diffusing mealtime power struggles? Let me know in the comment section under this video on our YouTube channel.

“And, be sure to subscribe to our YouTube channel so you know when a new ASK AMY video is posted.

“And of course, continue posting your questions in the box at AskAmy TV. I may pick your discipline dilemma for my next ASK AMY video.

“...Thanks for joining me at Ask Amy TV and as always, I wish you parenting peace.”

Amy McCready is author of If I Have To Tell You One More Time...The Revolutionarory Program That Gets Your Kids To Listen Without Nagging, Reminding or Yelling. She is a self-described “recovering yeller” and the founder of Positive Parenting Solutions. Her website tells us that Amy reaches a worldwide audience with her online course and webinars as well as regular media appearances including NBC’s TODAY show, Rachael Ray, MSNBC, Fox & Friends, CNN and others. Mom to two teenage sons, Amy holds a BS in Finance from Penn State University and is certified as a Positive Discipline Parent Educator.

Contact Amy at <Amy@PositiveParentingSolutions.com>
Her website: <http://www.positiveparentingsolutions.com>
Preview Topics in the Parent Track on Saturday, May 24 at NASAP 2014

Bullying: How To Safeguard Your Children
Doone Estey

Parenting Program Leader Training and Lifestyle Dynamics
Jolita Jonyniene, Roy Kern

Parenting Assessments-Evaluating Parents’ Strengths & Challenges
Mary Jamin Maguire

Family Therapy: Winning Parents Over, Turning Complainants into Customers
Steven Maybell, Bahereh Sahebi

An Application of Positive Psychology in Family Life
Michael McDonough

Process and Pitfalls in Working with Parents in High-Conflict
Joseph Noble, Lori Thibodeau

Sibling Fighting—Should Parents Always Stay Out of It?
Patricia Cancellier

Instilling True Self Esteem in Your Children
Beverley Cathcart-Ross

Research Support for Individual Psychology’s Parenting Model: Democratic Parenting
Kelly Gfroerer, Eva Dreikurs Ferguson

It’s More Than Play . . . Preparing Children to be Problem Solvers and Creative Thinkers
Terry Lowe

PHPPSS (Parents Helping Parents Problem Solving Steps)
Lori Onderwyzer, Dina Emser

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The mission of the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology is to promote growth and understanding of Adlerian (Individual) Psychology, the work of Alfred Adler, and effective approaches to living based on his philosophy. NASAP membership includes educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, parents, business people, community organizations and other interested people. The Family Education Section applies Adlerian principles to the home. Members are professionals and nonprofessionals dedicated to understanding and improving family relationships between children and adults, with couples, and among individuals.