



Curbing Power Struggles with Special Days

by Tulum Dothee

One of the easiest ways to empower your children is to implement special days. Special days work well because you let the calendar, as opposed to yourself, be the authority thus reducing the number of power struggles. Remember that your child must separate himself from you to become independent. This often results in power struggles. To reduce those power struggles someone has to let go of the rope and that someone is you. The sooner you let your child have a turn at being in charge, the faster he will achieve independence.

Special Days give your child the opportunity to be in charge. Just as importantly Special Days also offer your child the opportunity to come to terms with others being in charge and waiting for his turn. This perspective is crucial for your child to get past the narcissistic stage where he thinks the world is all about him. He is not going to get it unless you build it into his external surroundings and schedule. Since he learns from the concrete to the abstract or from the outside in, you have to build it into his daily schedule.

Here's what you need to know:

Assign each child one or two special days per week to be in charge. Mom and Dad each get a special day too. Obviously Dad and Mom need to be home on their special day, so accommodate work schedules. You will have to get creative if your work schedule varies. Simply create the calendar whenever you get your schedule. Your family will soon accustom to the pattern.

Mark the special days on the calendar using a unique color or photo for each person. Follow the same pattern each week. When your child asks whose special day it is, say, "Go look at the calendar.", even if you already know. Otherwise YOU, versus the calendar, become the authority again. Not a good thing. Once you have let go of the reins you must be very firm with yourself and leave them there.

For those days with no special person assignment, refer to the dog for a solution, at least it will make everyone laugh!

The special day person gets to make all the decisions possible from who gets to help prepare meals to which story is read. Try and think of every little thing that the child could be in charge of, even if it appears inconsequential to you.

For example at breakfast, the special day person chooses the menu. When you are driving to school, the he gets to choose the music. If you are going to watch a dvd, he chooses it. If two other family members both want the same toy, the special day person decides who gets it. Every single decision possible, he makes.

Tulum Dothee is a credentialed and certified educator and counselor, with 30+ years experience teaching and working with families. For more information visit her website at www.asktulum.com.

Ongoing Events

Ongoing

Early Pregnancy Consultation

Mention the First 5 Newsletter to receive 50% off. Now only \$27.50. For women in their first or second trimester. Consultations scheduled regularly.

Call to schedule: 477-5442
lauriechamberlin.com

Mondays

Mother Dance

Dance class for moms and pre-walking babies designed to nourish and nurture both Mom and baby with an opportunity to connect intimately through touch, movement, rhythm and dance!

Mondays 10:30-11:30. Cost \$10/class.
Moving Ground Studio, Grass Valley
Phone: 272-4240

Wednesdays

"Your Amazing Infant"

A series for parents and their infants, ages birth through 3 months. On Wednesdays, noon to 1:15pm at Sierra Mountain Community Education Center in Truckee. These classes increase bonding through nurturing touch, infant massage and baby yoga. Drop-in at any time. Cost for a series of 6 classes is \$72.00 with scholarships available. Call the Early Learning Project at 582-2583.

Wednesdays & Fridays

Toddler Gymtime

Toddlers and their parents enjoy free play in the big gym with an array of exciting developmental equipment. Have fun, meet new friends and build new skills. Sierra Mountain Community Education Center in Truckee. Ongoing sessions follow the school schedule. Parent-facilitated and free to families. Wednesdays and Fridays, 10-Noon. Call 582-2583 or email rhall@ttusd.org for information.

Thursdays

Music Together

New session begins in April

Children birth to 4 and their parents enjoy this

Gestures Related to Language Development

by First 5 Nevada County

A new study shows that pointing and other natural gestures are related to language development: the more a child uses gestures to help tell you something at 14 months, the bigger their vocabulary at age four and a half. It seems that the more that parents use gestures, the more the children do. So point at objects, wave bye-bye, use your hands to show “up” and “big” and any other word you can think of as you are talking with your baby or toddler. And when your toddler points at a dog or raises her arms to be picked up, respond with your words to make the connection for her “Yes, you see a dog,” or “You want me to pick you up.” The more words a child hears and the more his parents use gesture to help convey meaning, the bigger his vocabulary will be, which will help him succeed in school.

For more child development articles visit www.first5nevco.org/articles.cfm

Did You Know...

Gum is the number one choking hazard for children 5 and under—more children choke on gum than any other food. Experts recommend waiting until a child is 7 before giving them gum.

Becoming A Father

by Laurie Chamberlin, CD, ICCE, LE

Do you know him? Tall, strong deep voice, amazing presence and a great person to know, especially if you are becoming a father. His name is Belden Johnson MFT, and I want to share him with you. He has two grown children now and more time on his hands to share gems of experience from a man’s perspective on fatherhood. He’s on my mind today as I read something he wrote for fathers called, “Congratulations, You Are About to Become a Father”. A short, six point missive I think you will enjoy. I like what Belden has to say, and I want fathers all over to be receivers of his wisdom. So please, share this with the men in your lives. You can find the link in the articles tab of my website at www.lauriechamberlin.com

Laurie Chamberlin, CD, ICCE, LE teaches childbirth preparation classes, lactation classes and is a prenatal counselor serving the Grass Valley/Nevada City/Auburn area. For more information contact: www.lauriechamberlin.com | lauriechamberlin@comcast.net or call 477-5442

research-based program that includes songs, instrument play and movement in a relaxed and playful setting. Sierra Mountain Community Education Center in Truckee. \$130 for the series and materials. Scholarships available. Call 582-2583 to save a spot.

Fridays

“Baby and Me”

New series begins March 6

Ongoing series through out the year. Fridays, 9:30-10:45 at Sierra Mountain Community Education Center in Truckee. These popular classes provide education, support, informal discussion and interactive fun for parents and non-ambulatory infants, 3 months to 1 year old. The class fee is \$84.00 with scholarships available. Call: Early Learning Project: 582-2583.

March Events

Enrolling Now

Baby & Me

Join in for songs, playtime, and discussion while getting to know other parents and babies. Join an existing group now. Birth to 12 months. Weekday mornings at the Grass Valley Methodist Church in downtown Grass Valley. FREE to first-time participants, sliding scale fee up to \$50 for 10 sessions for subsequent groups. Phone: Meg 913-2745

Enrolling Now

Toddler & Me

Join in for songs and playtime in a preschool setting while getting to know other parents and toddlers. We are creating new groups now for children 12 to 24 months. Weekday afternoons at the T.K. McAteer Family Resource Center in Nevada City. FREE to first-time participants, sliding scale fee up to \$50 for 10 sessions for subsequent groups. Phone: Samie 265-0611 x223

March 19

Free Prenatal Breastfeeding Class

6:30-8:30pm. Call to reserve your space. Phone: 477-5442
www.lauriechamberlin.com



You are reading a printed version of our new on-line newsletter Little Steps.

To see this in full color, and save a few trees, we encourage you to sign up for the on-line version.

Visit www.first5nevco.org

Enter your e-mail address in the box on the home page and you will be e-mailed an edition of Little Steps at the beginning of each month.