

Creating Your Frazzle-Free Family

by Kathy Slattengren

Take a minute to sit back and think about a time when your family was operating smoothly and everyone was feeling pretty good. What was going on?

Below are some of the things that come to mind for my family when things are going well.

Everyone is...

- pitching in with household tasks
- joining the family for meals
- acting respectful
- feeling supported and loved
- remembering to let the rest of the family know where they are and when they'll be home
- feeling like they have enough time and don't have to rush
- healthy, getting enough rest and exercise
- having some time for fun

Do these things happen all the time? No, but when they do happen, our family atmosphere is more pleasant.

Beginning with Changing Yourself

What changes could you make to your own behavior which would positively impact your family? Since you absolutely control your own behavior, you can make these changes happen!

Gretchen Rubin invested a year working on changing her life for the better. Each month she focused on a different part of her life and described her journey in [The Happiness Project](#). She tackled things like going to bed earlier, organizing her things, asking for help, stopping nagging, acknowledging people's feelings and taking time to be silly.

Each month she had a different focus. For example for April she wrote, "My goal for April, the month dedicated to parenthood? To become more tender and playful with my two daughters. I wanted a peaceful, cheerful, even joyous atmosphere at home - and I knew that nagging and yelling weren't the way to achieve that."

She thought of various ways to become more tender and playful with her daughters. She kept a log of her goals and regularly checked off how she was doing on each goal.

Keeping a log gave her a way of staying accountable for her goals. (Continued Pg. 2)

An Irish Blessing for St. Patrick's Day!



***"May you have warm
words on a cold
evening,
A full moon on a
dark night,
And the road downhill
all the way to
your door."***

Quote of the Month

*"A little of anything isn't worth a
pin; but a wee bit of sense
is worth a lot."*

—Irish Proverb, Unknown

Saturday Mountain Hikes at Panola Mountain State Park

Come out and be a part of the Get Outdoors Georgia program!

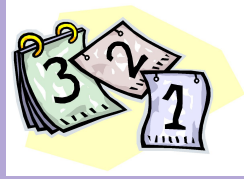
Saturdays 2 PM until Mar 2, 2013
Saturday, Mar 9, 2013 10 AM
Saturday, Mar 16, 2013 10 AM
Saturday, Mar 23, 2013 10 AM
Saturday, Mar 30, 2013 10 AM

Find out why Panola Mountain is such an important ecosystem during a Ranger led hike to the top of the mountain. As we twist and turn on the trail, we will see different plants and wildlife. Bring sturdy hiking shoes and water.

Register in advance. Meet in Nature Center. \$7 plus \$5 parking.
770-389-7801.



Dates to Remember



Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!

March 2, 2013. Join us in celebrating the birthday of the creator of our beloved *Cat in the Hat*, *The Lorax*, and so much more!

Daylight Savings Time Begins

March 10, 2013. Don't forget to "Spring Forward" when we add an hour of daylight. More time for fun in the sun!

St. Patrick's Day

March, 17, 2013. May the luck of the Irish be with you and don't forget to wear your green!

Easter

March 31, 2013. Celebrate all new beginnings, spring and more on this annual favorite!

Yellow Pollen Street Festival in Hampton

Saturday, March 16th

Join more than 80 vendors and over 2500 visitors at Hampton's premiere event! Celebrate that pesky pollen in style sponsored by the Bear Creek Association. This non-profit group supports the arts and literature in Hampton.

For the first time, the Mid Georgia Model Railroad Club will set up their display during the festival. See the differences between N and O gauge trains. Enjoy this big little boys expound on their favorites hobby. Returning is Tom Bonnell—beekeeper extraordinaire!

Also, visit the LifeSouth Blood Mobile among other favorites. Listen to the chatter and tunes by two DJs—JT and Jimmy Smith! This only happens once a year—so join us from 10 am until 5 pm for food and fun and educational experiences in Hampton's downtown.

Frazzle-Free Family (Continued)

Changes that Involve the Entire Family

I've recently spoken to a couple different moms who are very unhappy with how isolated their family members have become. Although they all live in the same house, they rarely share time together. Most of the time, each child and parent eats dinner by themselves.

These situations have been exacerbated by technology - parents and children with their own computers, video games and TV. Over time each family member has become increasingly interested in spending time alone with their technology of choice.

Making changes that involve the entire family will take everyone's cooperation. One way to begin the process is with a family meeting. Establishing regular family meetings is useful

for making significant changes. Family meetings provide a structure that allows problems to be expressed, solutions to be brainstormed and implemented ideas to be evaluated.

Will it be easy? No. Will it be worth it? When someone in the family is seriously unhappy, ignoring the elephant in the room does not make it go away. In fact, the elephant is likely to stampede making a huge mess at the most inopportune time.

Choosing One Thing to Change

If you could only choose to make one change in your family, what would it be? You are more likely to be successful if you focus on one item at a time. Making any change takes time and plenty of practice.

It can also be helpful to find someone outside your family who can give you support on the changes you are trying to make. May 2013 be the one where your family makes many changes for the better!

Do You Have Trouble Setting Limits?



by Kathryn Kvols

If you answered yes to this question, you are not alone! Many of us have trouble setting limits. Some of us set limits that end up punishing us! Some of us set limits and then don't follow through! And some of us don't know how to set a CLEAR limit.

So what is the first step to setting effective limits? The **first step** is understanding how important it is to set them.

1. When you set a clear limit and follow through, you teach your child a very essential life skill. You model for them how to draw boundaries in their lives.

2. Even though your children may "fight you tooth and nail", limits tell your child you love them enough to move through their anger. A child that does not have limits often feels unloved.

3. Clear limits avoid confusion for both you and your child. If your child doesn't know how s/he is expected to act and what will happen if s/he doesn't act that way, s/he will often test you and provoke you to set limits.

The **second step** is to know what issues you need to set limits around. For example, TV watching, video games, bedtime, homework, going shopping, chores, etc. I recommend that you get together with your co-parent and create your own list of what to set limits around.

Another tip for setting limits is to make sure that you are clear. If you waffle, your children will sense it and start to test you.

In the arena of horses (pun intended), you are taught that a horse is often times testing you to see if you are a good leader. I think our kids do that to. They want us to be convicted in our decisions.

For example, tell your child ahead of time (which I highly recommend), "we are going shopping today and I need to buy some things. However, today is not a shopping day for you. So if you choose to get upset about buying something, I will take you to the car to calm down". The minute s/he starts to fuss, take her/him to the car.

This does not mean we can't change our mind or negotiate with your child. Just get clarity BEFORE you set your limit to minimize your child's testing.

Honey Bunny Cookies

This is an adorable recipe to make for Easter. It's more bread-like than cookie, so it keeps the sweetness low. Kids will love putting the bunnies together and then taking them apart.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 C. unbleached flour
- 2 pkg. active dry yeast
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2/3 C. evaporated milk
- 1/2 C. water
- 1/2 C. honey
- 1/2 C. margarine, melted
- 2 eggs
- 3 1/2 C. unbleached flour
- 1/2 C. honey
- 1/4 C. margarine, melted
- 1/2 C. raisins

Directions

To prepare batter, combine 1 1/2 C. flour, undissolved yeast, and salt in a mixing bowl; set aside. In a skillet, heat evaporated milk, water, 1/2 C. honey and 1/2 C. margarine until very warm, 120-130 degrees. Gradually add to dry ingredients; beat 2 minutes at medium speed. Add eggs and 1/2 C. flour. Beat 2 minutes at high speed. Place in a mixing bowl coated with cooking spray. Cover tightly with plastic wrap. Refrigerate 2-24 hours.

On lightly floured surface, divide dough into 15 pieces. Roll each into a 20-inch rope. Divide each rope into: 1 12-inch (body), 1 5-inch (head), and 3 1-inch (ears and tail) strips. Coil pieces to make body and head; attach ears and tail to head and body. Place bunnies on baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Cover; let rise in warm, draft-free place until doubled in size, 20 to 25 minutes. Bake at 375 degrees for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks. Meanwhile to prepare glaze, combine remaining honey and margarine in a saucepan until margarine has melted. Brush bunnies with glaze while warm. Then, decorate with raisins for eyes.



COMEDY CORNER



"Not yet. Don't fly off until the moment they raise their binoculars."

"Marching Into Spring"

With the Pinnacle Curriculum

As we "March into Spring", the children will experience the wonders of the changing season and celebrate one of our most loved authors.

Week 1: Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!! Join us to celebrate reading with one of our absolute favorite authors. Ask to be a volunteer reader in the classroom.

Week 2: March Winds Students will learn how the wind works and explore all of the ways we enjoy it - kites, windsocks, wind chimes, and more!

Week 3: Birds & Butterflies Children will explore the change of the seasons and the flying friends that emerge!

Week 4: Spring Things Explorations in language, poetry, flowers and plants abound!

Week 5: Interesting Insects The students will either be "buggy" about them or "bugged" by them while we study a new generation of insects safely!

Character Education Topic of the Month: Compassion

Events at Barrington

- Candy Sales Extended through March 8
- Art by Me Fundraiser begins Feb 25 and ends March 13.
- Scholastic Book Fair will be the week of March 18
- Muffins for Moms will be on March 20

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Local FUN for ALL ages!!

Mardi Growl March 9th 11:00 a.m.

A parade of dogs and their owners will start in the large park on Cleveland Street in Historic Downtown District area. Parade starts at 11:00am and festivities end at 2:00pm. Call 770-6923 for more information or visit our website for an entry form.  
[www.locustgrove-ga.gov](http://www.locustgrove-ga.gov).

Easter Bunny Photos at Tanger March 16th to 30th, 2013

1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. at Tanger Outlets

## Five Boredom-Busting Tricks

by Ashley Young

No two words can make a parent's blood run cold quite as quickly as "I'm bored." That's especially true when those words are spoken before you've even finished your morning coffee. To help you deal, we've pulled together five easy, fun ways for you to respond when your kids drop the bored bomb.

- Build a Blanket Fort
- Do Something (anything) Crafty
- Hold a Talent Show
- Set Up an Indoor Obstacle Course
- Pretend It's Summer

No matter what you do, beating boredom requires equal parts ingenuity and going with the flow. Have fun banning the b-word from your house!

Be Creative! Once inspired, simply follow the leader...your child!

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