

January 2010

TCS Times

*The Children's School/ 208-343-6840
Nicole Shadduck--editor*

From the Director

By Cindy Finch

If you don't worry about your children, skip this article.

"We are not safe" screamed a headline in 2004 (a headline that referred to the final report of the 9-11 commission). I was on vacation with my family when that headline was published, and I had three immediate reactions as a parent. First, I wondered, momentarily, if I could keep my children close and protect them from any harm that might come their way. Second, I wondered how I could protect my children from hearing and internalizing too much of the news. Finally, I wondered how such a dose of national anxiety would affect my children's still developing sense of initiative and independence. For me, there has never been a shortage of things to worry about as a parent.

I have been thinking a lot about what it might be like to grow up during this period of history. News, information, warnings—we know much about the dangers in the neighborhood, city, state, country, and world that our families live in. If it makes you want to figure out how to protect your children, that's understandable.

It is our adult role to protect children. However, our task, as parents or teachers of young children, is to be protective and to, simultaneously, manage our protectiveness in two ways: 1) in ways that give children experience with manageable challenges and 2) in ways that don't interfere with development. In Erik Erikson's theory about child development, positive developmental outcomes for children from birth through elementary school result in trust, autonomy, initiative, and industry. Can over-protectiveness get in the way of these positive developmental outcomes? In my mind, yes. In our quest to protect children from uncomfortable situations, we can prevent them from developing self-soothing abilities as infants, and, during childhood, from seeking solutions to problems; from identifying and standing up for what is important to them; and, from feeling pride in taking on challenges and succeeding.

I was very lucky to have been in the right place at the right time to get a turn with a parenting book, [Free Range Kids: Giving Our Children the Freedom We Had Without Going Nuts with Worry](#) by Lenore Skenazy. Tiffany K.(R.'s mom) had mentioned the book to me months ago. When it appeared in my

“We have to learn to remind the other parents who think we’re being careless when we loosen our grip that we are actually trying to teach our children how to get along in the world, and that we believe this is our job. A child who can fend for himself is a lot safer than one forever coddled”

—Lenore Skenazy

Alumni News

A. W., (1997-2001), a 10th grader, was invited to join the Trey McIntyre Project to be an extra in their February 13th performance at the Morrison Center as part of her Modern Dance II class. Look for her on stage if you go!

M. H. (1997-1998) and S. A. (1996-1998) were highlighted in a December Idaho Statesman article about their travels in Africa to participate in a work service project. Sounded like a profound experience for these TCS alumni—life changing.

mailbox, I wondered if I would really take the time to read it. After all, I’ve read a lot of parenting books, my kids are older now, I’m kind of busy, and I can barely keep up with my book club reading. I thought I’d skim it and return it—but I ended up reading every word and taking notes before passing it along. Tiffany tells me that we can put it in the parent library when her friends have finished reading it—so, if it sounds interesting, look for it soon.

Of course, most of the children at The Children’s School are very young and need consistent supervision. There is much for young children to learn about being safe. And, we’ve all known children who were described by their parents as “fearless.” However, Skenazy promotes knowing your children well, listening to your children, and giving them (teaching) the tools they need to be safe—advice that I think is healthy and worth listening to. I would add this to her advice: know yourself and think about your parenting decisions. I think protectiveness works best for children when there is a general sense of it about much, and a heightened sense of it in only a few areas. These heightened areas of concern can be very personal. When my children were little I was concerned about mouth injuries. That’s the thing I didn’t want my children to experience more than any other injury. Both children walked around with bumps on their foreheads for a year during toddlerhood and skinned knees during preschool years and I was ok. But faced with mouth injuries or the potential for them, I became uncharacteristically concerned—and probably a bit unreasonable my friends might tell you. I doubt this insightful author would totally shame me for having felt this way—but she does encourage us to begin to “renormalize” childhood. That means giving up the sense that we have to have control over all our children’s experiences and do too much for them—denying them the opportunity to develop the confidence and independence that comes from having experiences—even some unpleasant ones.

Fears are a natural part of growing up and being grown up—having them, facing them, hanging on to a few, and letting go of many with more knowledge and experience. In 2004, when my children were much younger, I thought I’d get over that sense of worry that I experienced when I was reading that alarming headline. It doesn’t go away, but it changes as children grow up: from walking home from school alone to riding bikes in the street, from running in the foothills to driving away from the house for the first time alone—and even traveling or studying in parts of the world that most of us would consider not-so-safe (oh, that oldest child of mine!).

As a parent and an educator, I hope for children to have caring adults in their lives—adults who will interpret risk for the very youngest child, help children assess risk for themselves as they grow older, and support appropriate risk-taking for all ages. Cautiously releasing children to experience the bigger world—it’s one of the scariest and most necessary things we can do for children.

Parent Library

By Cindy Finch

We have or are soon to receive new books in the parent library (located in the coffee room). Recently we added two books about the parenting of gifted children, Keys to Parenting the Gifted Child and A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children. If that is an interest to you, please take a look.

Also, we are adding Lilian Katz' new book Intellectual Emergencies to the parent library. She and her son relate stories of what they've learned in their lives together. One thing she says about education in this book is this: "To me, it is about developing in the young certain dispositions. These dispositions should include being reflective, inquisitive, inventive, resourceful, full of wonder (wonder-full), and perhaps puzzlement too. These dispositions should also include the habits of searching for evidence; they should also include the dispositions to be tender, courageous, caring, compassionate and include some humor as well." (quoted in ExchangeEveryday, January 7, 2010)

We will be also adding Free Range Parenting by Lenore Skenazy to our parent library (see Cindy's article this month for some thoughts on this book). One thing Skenazy says is, "Teach them about bike safety and bad guys and traffic signals and how to ask for help and how to handle disappointment and what to do if they get lost and all the things parents have always had to teach their kids. Or at least they did until recently, when they decided they could just do everything for them instead."

If you appreciate this resource at TCS, you might be interested to know that it is a very low-maintenance way that we like to support families. We are interested in having a parent help us—if you are a frustrated librarian and want to find a way to use this energy. We are especially looking for someone to help with displaying books, maintaining order on the shelves, and help us get books turned back in. We'll help; together we can make this an even better resource for our TCS families.

When checking out a book from the parent library, please fill out the card and place in the card file box located on one of the upper shelves of the bookshelf. When returning a book, return the card to the book and the book to the shelf.

Just a reminder—

School mailboxes are the purpose of The Children's School business and communications only. No commercial, political, or non-TCS fundraising materials are to be put into school mailboxes. (Board of Directors, 2003)

Non-TCS advertisements, public information flyers, non-TCS fundraising, promotions, and other information, may be posted on the designated communication board, at the discretion of the director. Paid advertisements may be included in the school's monthly newsletter, at the discretion of the newsletter editor and the director.

—TCS Parent Handbook

Martin Luther King-Human Rights Day: Through the Eyes of the Primes Class

“Sooner or later, all the people of the world will have to discover a way to live together.”—Martin Luther King Jr.

The upcoming school year will be an exciting and momentous year at The Children’s School.

We will be celebrating our 30th anniversary as a school, and part of that celebration will be beginning the school year in a remodeled building.

Take a look at the last pages of this month’s newsletter for information on re-enrollment dates for the next school year!

As our Human Rights Day holiday approached, the Primes read the picture book, Martin’s Big Words, to begin learning and discussing the life and beliefs of Martin Luther King, Jr. We talked about his “dream” that people not be separated by the color of their skin. As a follow-up to these discussions, Primes wrote something they knew about Dr. King, or a dream of their own that would make our world a better place.

Martin Luther King helped make things fair. *P*

I have a dream that everyone wouldn’t throw their trash on the ground, instead they would pick it up. *R*

My dream would be that the world will be better. *L*

I wish that my teachers and me would have fun together. *S*

I wish that people (white, brown, black) should not laugh at glasses. *J*

Everybody will get a dog for Christmas. *O*

I hope everybody is fair to everybody. *O*

I have a dream that animals will be friends. *L*

My dream is that animals should be free. *P*

That snakes will never get hurt. And that all animals will not get hurt. That’s my dream. *A*

I wish that everyone was good. *C*

I had a dream that all snakes can be free (later she added, “good” snakes). *R*

My dream is that everyone has food and water. *I*

I have a dream that everybody was healthy. *B*

I have a dream to have fun with other people. *J*

I want people to put garbage in the garbage can. *C*

I wish that people would love each other. *O*

I hope that everybody is healthy all around the world. *A*

The Primes Class 2009-2010

PHOTO REMOVED TO
PROTECT CHILDREN'S
PRIVACY

Re-Enrollment Events and Important Dates

Jan. 28:	<p>Open House 6:00-8:00pm Re-enrollment packages available for returning families.</p>
Jan. 29	<p>Re-Enrollment packets sent to current families. It is time to arrange observations of classes and consider plans for next year. Information on applying for tuition assistance is included in the cover letter.</p> <p>No 3-4-5s and 4-5-6s Classes – Conference Preparation</p>
Feb. 3:	<p>No classes for 2-3s, 3-4s, 4-5s, 3-4-5s and 4-5-6s - Conference Preparation Primary class will release at 12:00 Please sign up in advance for Primary childcare.</p>
Feb. 4-5	<p>School is Closed Parent-Teacher Conferences. - Only All Days class and <u>Prearranged</u> Primary childcare open. There is a <u>\$50 daily fee</u> (\$25 for half day) for Primary childcare for conference days. There is <u>no</u> childcare provided for conference times. Children may not be dropped off during parent's conferences unless enrolled in Primary Childcare.</p>
Feb 12:	<p>Your Intention Form, which states your class preference for 2010-2011, is due by 1:00 p.m. in the office.</p> <p>Current families seeking tuition assistance should apply by today on line.</p>

Overheard in the 3-4s class—

[While singing the ABCs, (a three year old) reports,] "Yeah, some of those letters are in my name! Other classmates soon chimed in, "Yeah, in my name, too!"

In the next issue of TCS Times, literacy development in the preschool years.

The Children's School

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.tcsboise.org

www.nais.org/financialaid/sss School code number is 4112

Feb. 15:

School is Closed for President's Day.

Feb 12-19:

Contracts prepared and mailed. Tuition assistance awards will be finalized before enrollment contract sent.

MARCH 8:

Signed contracts with deposit are due in the office by 2:00 p.m. Tuition Payment Plan Form is also due.

MARCH 19:

Last day to have deposit refunded if enrollment is cancelled. Withdrawal after March 19 negates deposit refund. (See contract for conditions under which deposits are refunded and contract voided).

Teaching plan for 2010-2011 will be posted, subject to change

March 29 – April 2:

Spring Break. (Only the All Days Class and Prearranged Primary Childcare are open). To reserve a Primary childcare spot you must sign up in advance (please see sign up in classes). There is a **\$50 daily fee** for Primary Childcare for Spring Break.

April 5:

All Classes resume.

Important Dates

(See Re-Enrollment Dates and Events above.)

***Monday, February 15th, Presidents' Day, SCHOOL CLOSED**

*Monday, February 22nd, Parents for TCS meeting, 7:00 p.m. See Friday Update for location and details.

*Starting on Tuesday, February 23rd, Play by Stuart Brown M.D.. A book club discussion group, P-TCS Parent Education Event. This group will meet on Tuesday nights from 6:00-7:30 for six weeks. Look for information and sign ups in the front hall.