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Helping Our Children Feel Good About Themselves and Create Positive Memories for Later

By Dr. Barbara Becker Holstein

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We have so much influence over the next generation! Lots of times we forget how much influence, as our children or grandchildren can appear to ignore us, forget us or even worse—run from us in one way or another. Sometimes, we must just accept the fact that lots of times positive actions happen without positive recognition! Therefore, it behooves us as the 'grownups' in our personal worlds to keep looking for ways to help the young ones experience good times, feel nurtured and loved and to walk away from situations just a little more on the road to developing as a whole person with a good sense of self. I can assure you that insistence on creating a meaningful world for our children does eventually pay off!

I'd like to share with you how Lorna did just that with her daughter Sabrina. Here is some of what she wrote to me:

Yesterday afternoon Sabrina, my six year old daughter, was helping me make Chinese sesame cookies for our church's girls' club. Sabrina attends weekly club meetings and is always happy to help me out with the snacks for club. These cookies needed to be rolled into little balls and then rolled into sesame seeds. The seeding' of the cookies was Sabrina's job. We were halfway through the dough. She was rolling away. Suddenly she said to me without looking up, "This is great! I get to spend quality time with Daddy and now more time with you!"

She was referring to her Sunday evenings alone with her daddy. Sunday evenings at 5:30 pm, I leave and take my 9 year-old son to the boys club at church where I also help with snacks. During the time we are gone, Sabrina and her daddy have a tea party almost every Sunday evening. They turn the lights off, light the candles that I have usually in the center of the table, then boil water, and set the table. There is usually some kind of tea cookie' (like shortbread) in the pantry. They take those and then serve each other tea and cookies. Sometimes they act silly. e.g. Acting very aloof with flowery language or just simply talking about this and that.

Last Sunday evening I did not have to stay at club until it was over. I got home just in time for the tea party. Sabrina set me a spot at the table. She offered me sugar and cookies. We chatted. She acted a little silly. It was really cute and I was glad I got to peek in on what she and my husband usually do. After I had a couple sips, I slipped away to my office to check email so they could have their usual special time alone.'

Lorna, Sabrina's mom, is describing such a wonderful activity that lends itself both to building self-esteem and to beautiful positive memories in the future. I can picture Sabrina sharing her tea parties with her daddy years later with her own children!

Exercise: Play Date with a Child in Your Life

Can you think of something special that you could offer a child in your life? You don't have to be a parent or grandparent. You may know a child down the street, or a cousin or even a friend's child. A

special outing or treat can go a long way to bringing delight to a child.

I remember when my aunt Rose arrived at my cousin's home with a surprise for me! It was a box in the shape of a treasure chest and it contained some perfume and soaps all designed for a little girl. I was thrilled and felt very special. I can still remember lovingly keeping my treasure chest and eventually filling it with other treasures after I had used all the soaps, lotions and bubble bath. Yes, this treasure chest did make me feel special, very feminine and created a great memory trace.

I know you will have fun with a play date. Keep us posted on what you do.

Dr. Holstein is the originator of The Enchanted Self and a psychologist since 1981. She is the author of two books: The Enchanted Self, A Positive Therapy and Recipes for Enchantment, The Secret Ingredient is YOU! Dr. Holstein speaks on radio, and appears on television in NY and NJ. She gives lectures, seminars, retreats and audio interviews on LadybugLive.com and is in private practice in Long Branch, NJ with her husband, Dr. Russell Holstein.

Five Inexpensive Ways to Help Your Children Invest in Holiday Memories.

By Pamela Cole Harris

Christmas memories are never dependent on the amount of money spent or the popularity of the toy. Memories are made up of amount of heart invested and given. This year, let your children invest their time and hearts in making Christmas memories for your family.

1. Buy white or red place mats and let your children create their own artwork with fabric crayons. A placemat can be made for each guest at Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner. Your children will feel an important part of the festivities.

2. Make paper angels and have your children write short messages to each family member stating the

things about that person for which they are thankful. Your children will have an opportunity to think beyond the commercialism of the day to appreciate the blessings they already have.

3. Start a cookie exchange among the neighborhood children. Your children can make a dozen cookies for each family in the neighborhood and deliver them wrapped in a colored tin. They can then sit back and wait to see the kind of cookie surprises come to their door!

4. Allow your children to make this year's Christmas cards. Simply buy blank cards at your favorite office supply store and let your children loose with magic markers. They can even compose a poem and message for each recipient.

5. Have your children come up with small tasks they can easily do – like taking out the trash. They can then write those tasks on plain paper angels they make themselves. Have them deliver the angels to elderly neighbors as a gift of sharing for the holiday season. Learning to give the gift of themselves can be the most valuable memory of the season!

Let your children become a vital part of the planning of the holiday season and not simply receivers of gifts. It will help them understand that giving can be as much fun (and more rewarding!) as receiving. And their memories of this holiday season may set a lifelong pattern - which may be the best holiday present of all!

Pamela Cole Harris is an editor and writer with 35 years experience. Visit her website,

, for her unique view of home decorating and remodeling

(and a free monthly newsletter!). Or for original content unique to your website, written especially for your keywords and your audience, visit

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Five Inexpensive Ways to Help Your Children Invest in Holiday Memories.

10 Steps For Cooking–Up Family Memories

Coming To Your Senses, Again and Again!

Growing Optimistically

Who Says Nothing Lasts Forever?

Help Your Child Succeed In School

Create Your Own Scrapbook at minimum cost.

Wonderful Wedding Favors and Wedding Gifts

Use and Abuse of Steroids

The Alphabet of Birds



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