



COLE-HARRINGTON'S PRESCHOOL POST

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Dear Families,

Would you describe your child as intense, sensitive, strong willed, persistent and or extremely energetic? How about shy and/or overly cautious? Do you find your child's behavior difficult to understand? Do you sometimes feel you are always having battles with her? Does your child sometimes make you feel inadequate as a parent?

If you answered "YES!" to any of the above, you may have a "spirited child."

Guess what? You're not alone.

Let's take a look at **The Whys behind the Challenges** to help you better understand your child so you can interact with her more effectively:

Personality/Temperament: Each child is born with a unique personality that is well developed by three months of age. If your child's challenging behaviors have been present from early on, your child's temperament may be the cause. Some children are born with challenging traits. They may have been described as having a high activity level or are persistent or are intense or unpredictable. Some are ultra-sensitive to their environment. Sights, sounds, colors, etc. can have a strong impact on their behaviors. This child may "go bananas" in the grocery store. Changes in routine may make your child upset. In addition, adapting to change may be slow or a struggle. The "unhappy baby" or "moody child" may present challenging behaviors.

Once you learn to recognize your child's temperament and individual personality traits which cause the behaviors, you can develop strategies to deal with them. It is important for you to remember not to take her behaviors personally. Suggestions for strategies will be included later in the article.

Developmental Stages: Some challenges may be a stage your child is going through, such as the "terrible two's", "fearsome fours", "or troublesome teens." The good news is children usually outgrow these stages.

Family Situations: Challenges may result from your child's response to an event, such as the birth, divorce, illness, moving, etc. Young children are egocentric. They feel all events happen for or because of them. They think, "Maybe if I had cleaned my room quickly, we wouldn't have moved," or "I'm the cause of the divorce." Guilty feelings might cause negative behaviors which only reinforces their negative feelings about themselves. Talking openly with your child about her understanding of an event can help her make sense of it.

Personality Conflicts: You and your child may have different temperaments. For example, if you are a laid back, go with the flow type person and your child is high energy, impulsive and requires predictability and routine, misunderstanding and conflict can result.

Remember; neither one of you gets to choose your temperament but understanding temperament will help you plan for your child's natural response to a situation so you can put strategies in place for success.

Surroundings: Perhaps there is a mismatch between your child's temperament and her environment. For example, she may need a quiet calm place. Unfortunately, your home is the gathering place for the entire neighborhood. By creating a calm space for your child to go to, you send the message that you understand her and care about her.

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Special Needs: Challenging behaviors may be from a child's special needs such as sensory integration difficulties, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disabilities, speech and language issues, etc. Your child may not be able to communicate the problem or even know she has one. She may become frustrated because her needs are not recognized. She might act out her frustrations in her behaviors. For further information on these topics, consult your public school's special needs department or your local library.

Your reactions: How do you respond to challenging behaviors? Are your expectations too high or too low? Perhaps you impose too many rules or not enough rules. Are you reinforcing behaviors you really want to stop? Take a step back from the situation and evaluate. Get feedback from others. You don't have to have all the answers. There are a lot of supports out there.

Now that you know the "Why's," here are some additional strategies for dealing with your child's behaviors.

- * Know normal development. (This can help you set appropriate expectations.)
- * Set clear boundaries, rules, structure, and routine.
- * Support your child's feelings.
- * Be consistent and firm, avoid threats, say what you mean.
- * Avoid power struggles and choose your battles.
- * Keep directions simple.
- * Reinforce small successes.
- * Be a detective. Find out what's causing the distraction and change/remove it.
- * Use verbal and non-verbal cues, such as eye contact, clapping, snapping fingers.
- * Use one or two-word phrases, such as "Stop now!" "Sit please!"
- * Give choices: "You can come by yourself or I will take your hand." "You can have the red cup or the blue cup, choose one."
- * When your child starts losing control, build structure.
- * Observe, observe, observe. Stand back and evaluate. What is triggering this behavior in my child? Are the behaviors really that bad? Think about the dynamics between children in the family.
- * Create a quiet place where your child can go when she's overstimulated.
- * Rehearse changes ahead of time; prepare your child for what comes next.
- * Have age appropriate consequences and don't overdo time-outs.
- * Remember the positive and your child's positive qualities.
- * Find someone to vent to; get support from friends, family, and/or your child's school.
- * Take breaks; remember your sense of humor.
- * Be respectful of your child's likes and dislikes, sensitivities, needs.
- * Remember to provide energy releases, especially when your child can't go outside.
- * Give lots of love and encouraging words: "You used your words," "You went to bed on time."
- * Work with the school as a team.

I hope you find these strategies effective in your next encounter with your "spirited" child. The following resource is available for more information on this topic.

Sincerely,

Linda Feller, Program Coordinator

RESOURCE

Kurcinka, Mary Sheedy; *Raising your Spirited Child*, Harper Collins, New York, 2015.

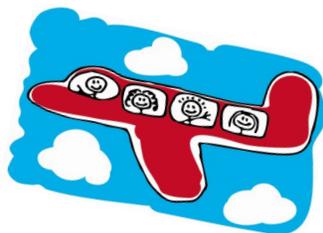
SPOTLIGHT ON LORRAINE ANDERSON

Lorraine Anderson grew up in Dorchester, MA with six brothers and sisters. According to Lorraine she always wanted to teach little children. "I must have been influenced by a number of good teachers along the way," she said. As a teenager she always managed to find jobs where kids were involved; camp counselor, lifeguard, swimming instructor, baby sitter etc.

In 1985 she graduated from Quincy College with an Associate of Arts degree in Early Childhood. In 2014, Lorraine received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Eastern Nazarene College in Early Childhood Education.

Lorraine came to Cole-Harrington in September of 2001. She brought with her over six years of experience teaching preschoolers. At Cole-Harrington she spent five years working with toddlers. In 2006 she got her first preschool group. "The most rewarding aspect about Cole-Harrington," she said, "is the parents. They notice the work we do here. It really makes me proud." Lorraine lives with her husband Kevin and has three grown children; Kevin, Kyle, and Luke. She also has a Daughter-in-law; Becky and a Grand-puppy Rudy.

When Lorraine is not working at Cole-Harrington you'll usually find her exploring places such as Ireland, Niagara Falls, Key West, Nova Scotia, the Grand Canyon and Sedona. She loves to travel.



COMMENTS FROM THE CHILDREN ABOUT LORRAINE

Theo M. "She help people."

Francisco "She works at school."

Cole R. "She write with me."

Teagan "We make puzzles."



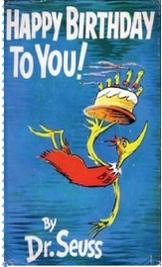
UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

All Month	All Families Invited to Attend Small Group
4	Yoga with Erin Mann
14	Valentine's Day Party
17	President's Day — CH Closed
27	Family Book Fair Preview 3-5 pm. (Come browse, sales start Monday).
24-28	Scholastic Book Fair



MARCH

	2	Last Day of Book Fair
	2	Dr. Seuss' Birthday Party
	13	Walpole Dentistry Dental Hygienist Visits
	17	Lucy the Leprechaun Visits
	25	Violet the Clown Visits

STAFF NOTES

- Linda Feller and Lorraine Anderson attended the training; *Anxious No More*. We learned about some of the why's anxiety is increasing among children, teenagers and adults. We also learned about some classroom strategies to support children who are anxious.
- Jen Anzivino, Lorraine Anderson, Lesley Otero and Linda Feller spent a Saturday in November attending an Early Education and Care training titled; *CLASS, Classroom Assessment Scoring System*. The CLASS is an observation tool used to access classroom quality in preschool through third grade. The CLASS is based solely on interactions between teachers and children in the classrooms. It is one of the many assessment tools used by the state to measure quality in early childhood.
- In February, Cole-Harrington Preschool will be hosting a workshop with our Healthcare Consultant, Dr. Jenna O'Connell. She will be presenting information on children's allergies as well as providing our annual training on how to administer lifesaving medications.

RECIPE FOR A NEW YEAR

Sift one cup of love;
add two cups of peace and justice;
mix in a dash of compassion and hope.

Add two tablespoons of good health and good will to
all,
a teaspoon of common sense,
and a pinch of humor.

Mix well and keep alive for a year (or more).

Makes enough to serve the entire world!



SAVE YOUR HOLIDAY TRASH

When the holidays are over recycle the used wrapping paper, tissue paper, ribbon, holiday cards, and tinsel for creative open ended art projects. With a little glue, some scissors, and construction paper your child can turn these scraps into beautiful collages, decorations, and cards. Maybe your child will want to save their work to give as gifts for another "holiday" occasion or maybe they'll want to display their work in their room or on the fridge or maybe they'll just want to experiment with the glue, and or scissors. Just remember, for young children the end product is not as important as the process. For them art is an experiment, their discoveries are endless.

COLE-HARRINGTON EXTENSIONS

Activities that Extend Cole-Harrington's

Curriculum and Content in the Home

Literacy Activities:

- ◆ Ask your child to find big lines, little lines, big curves and little curves in their names.
- ◆ Build awareness of letters by linking them with their sounds. "B" has a "bah" sound like in bat, ball, big and bee. What else begins with "B"?
- ◆ Ask your child to predict what a story is about by looking at the cover of the book.
- ◆ Teach children that books have valuable information.
- ◆ Explore your child's interests by using books as a resource.
- ◆ Expose your child to a variety of literature: poetry, fairy tales, fiction, non-fiction, picture books, etc.
- ◆ Cut your child's name in four parts. Ask them to put it back together. You can do this with first and last names.

Fine Motor Activities:

- ◆ Give your child a paper punch. Poke holes in wrapping paper, coffee filters or aluminum foil.
- ◆ Give your child a plant sprayer with colored water. Have them spray designs on the sidewalk or in the snow.
- ◆ Have your child pick up rice, beans or cheerios with tweezers.
- ◆ Let your child screw and unscrew nuts and bolts.
- ◆ Let your child cut with child scissors.
- ◆ Have your child pinch clothespins on the edge of a can and then take them off.

