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Parent Times

October 2014

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President's Corner

Dear Members of NCPG,

Thank you all for a fabulous first month! We hope you have enjoyed the Wednesday morning breakfasts and classes. We also had a wonderful first Evening Lecture Series event at the Children's Museum of Phoenix with Dr. Lisa Smith. She was a wealth of knowledge, giving tips and tools for brain-based parenting.

And, we loved seeing all of you and your little ones at the Arcadia Park play-date, it's so nice to catch up outside of our meetings!

This month we have some really exciting things planned, so I hope you'll SAVE the DATE for:

- **October 25th — Fall Festival at All Saints, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.** Bring your families and come celebrate fall with us!
- **November 12th — Evening Lecture at the Children's Museum of Phoenix, 6 - 8 p.m.** Learn all about the nutrition that is critical for your child's brain development!

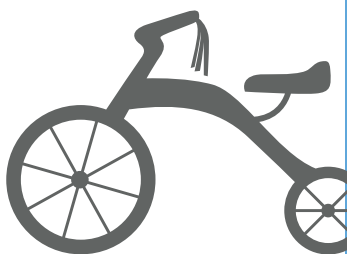
If you are looking to get more involved in NCPG, but don't know how, please reach out to me. We have plenty of opportunities & committees that would benefit from your help.

And lastly, don't forget to invite your friends. Our members are our best advertisement, so please spread the word about NCPG. It is not too late to join.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at director@ncpgaz.org. Thanks & I hope you all are having a wonderful start to fall with your families!

Sincerely,

Molly Livak



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NCPG is a non-profit, non-denominational organization providing classes to parents of infant to kindergarten age children.

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Parent Times

Members, this monthly newsletter is for your benefit, so we want to ensure our team is publishing content that is valuable, useful, informative, and fun! Please let us know if you have suggestions, comments, concerns, or any input that would help us to improve this publication. Shoot us an email at communications@ncpgaz.org. Thanks for your help!

Editor – Kelly Vasbinder

Designer – Neill Fox, www.foxnoggin.com

On the Cover

Kingsley Chan (4) photographed by Sandi Bradshaw Photography. See more of Sandi's work at www.sandibradshaw.com



Another Look at the Mommy Wars

Source: City Moms Blog

I don't know what it is about becoming a mom that suddenly makes you feel like every.thing.you.do. is being judged by every other mom that you ever come in contact with, from mother-in-laws to close friends to strangers on the street. You just know they are watching your every move and asking judge-y questions about you in their heads:

"Isn't she too young to be a mom?"

"Are ALL those kids hers?"

"She feeds her kids fast food and red dye!"

"Doesn't she know breast is best?"

You begin to feel defensive against a random elderly lady who wiped your toddler's nose in the dairy section at Wal-Mart. (Yes, that happened to me. I was going to wipe it in a minute, I swear! She probably thought I was the worst mom.) You begin to feel distanced from fellow mom friends who parent a little bit differently than you. (You don't think little Johnny's mom approves of you feeding your kids sugar so you feel awkward around her.) You choose not to "like" your co-worker's facebook post about rear-facing her 3-year-old because you turned your child forward in her car seat at 13 months. (And you stand by that decision, darn it! How dare she post something against it.)

You are positive that all other moms are thinking about when they see you with your children are all the "mistakes" you are making.

Or are they?

An experience I had with another mom this Christmas changed my views on mommy judgment a bit. It began when my husband and I chose to give our twins just three gifts total this year. One would come from Santa for them to share and then one gift for each of them would be from mommy and daddy. You might think they were only getting three gifts because they were really expensive or nice gifts, but no. The total of all three gifts was probably less than \$50. We made this decision for our family for this year together and stand by it, but I would be lying if I said I had no guilt about it. We could afford more and have the space for more and there are more things I know the kids would love to have. I felt especially timid about our decision when it came sharing the decision with other moms. I avoided talking about what I was getting the kids for Christmas, and I didn't post a picture of our tree on Christmas morning for fear that the mommy judgment would come raining down on me. "Doesn't she love her kids more than that? Why is she choosing to be so cheap at the expense of her kids? Didn't she spend more than that on herself at Target last week?"

But then, I saw a mom friend of mine write a social media post about feeling guilt over getting their child TOO MUCH for

Christmas. Too much?! Here I was worried about how other moms might judge me for getting my own kids too little, while there she is having the EXACT SAME FEELINGS on the other side of the coin. She feared being looked down upon by someone like me who got their kids the minimum, while I was nervous about being scoffed at by someone like her who went all out for her kids on Christmas morning. When really, both of us were so consumed with our own worries of what others might think of us that neither of us was really putting any thought into judging one another!

It occurred to me in that moment that maybe a lot of the 'Mommy Wars'-type judgment we feel is projected at us by others is really just mommy guilt bubbling up from none other than ourselves. I am not saying none of this mom-against-mom opposition goes on and that it's all in our heads: we know all too well that it does happen! But think about it: so many of these thoughts about what other moms *might* think about us are just imaginary tensions trapped in our own minds! And even when there are negative thoughts and differing opinions shot right at us, we cannot let it tear us apart. Maybe a good place to start in changing the Mommy Wars is our OWN thoughts, feelings, and attitudes; by not allowing opinions that may or may not be coming from others have a place in how we feel about our own parenting choices.

We can make our own choices for our own families with confidence, while knowing full and well that others may be making completely different choices for their own children. There doesn't have to be a right and a wrong amongst us in so many of these instances. I don't have any answers on erasing our own personal mommy guilt altogether, but I invite us each to relax and to be a bit kinder to ourselves, as well as others, on this wild ride we call motherhood.

After all, we are all just doing the very best we can.



NCPG Member Poll

As most NCPG members would agree, we join NCPG for the education, but we end up staying for the friends we make, and bonds we share. NCPG is a truly unique support system and we want to take a bit of time in each newsletter to share our choices, our funny stories, and our "Mom Moments." There is no judgment, just camaraderie... because, if you haven't been there yet, you will be soon.

How many NCPG members believe that....

The first year is survival — **65%**

Sleep trumps sex — **51%**

Bribes are worth it — **34%**

Some NCPG embarrassing/funny/terrible moments....

"I went to the grocery store with poop on my sweatshirt!"

"My bathing suit top came off at Hubbard Baby Splash!"

"My baby locked himself in the car at Costco, in 100 degree heat!"

"I get peed on more than I'd like to admit."

NCPG Moms are proud of....

"Giving birth without drugs or an epidural."

"Having 2 kids, working 2 part-time jobs, all while building a house."

"Learning to let it go."

"Breastfeeding for 4 months—shorter than a lot of other moms, but a milestone for me. Especially since I was back at work at 6 weeks."

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The List: Pumpkin Patches!

MACDONALD'S RANCH, SCOTTSDALE (OCT. 1-31)

Pumpkin patch, pony rides, and a petting zoo! Bring a can of food for the Desert Mission Food Bank, and get \$1 off admission price. Visit macdonaldsranch.com for rates, hours and more information.

SCHNEPF FARMS, QUEEN CREEK (OCT. 2 – NOV. 2)

Pumpkin patch, hayrides, roller coaster, swinging lady bugs and other rides, petting zoo, rock climbing wall, miniature golf, corn mazes, pig races, and more! Visit schneffarms.com for rates, hours and more information.

VERTUCCIO FARMS, MESA (THROUGH NOV. 2)

Corn maze, pumpkin patch, inflatables, farm animals, pedal race cars, train rides, and more! Visit vertucciofarms.com for rates, hours and more information.

TOMACHOFF FARMS, GLENDALE (OCT. 1- NOV. 9)

Pumpkin patch, petting zoo, train ride, hay pyramid, play areas, mini corn maze for the little ones, and, a haunted corn maze in a cemetery for the bigger kids! Visit tolmachoff-farms.com for rates, hours and more information.

MOTHER NATURE'S FARM, GILBERT (OCT. 1-31)

Pumpkin patch, pumpkin decorating, air bounce, maze, animals, and hayrides! Visit mothernaturesfarm.com for rates, hours and more information.



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EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

By: Betsy Delaney, Head of School at Christ Church School



In the United States, early 20th Century schools were typically one-room schoolhouses, where one teacher taught every subject to every grade of student. As populations grew, schools evolved into educational systems. Parents could choose between private or public education systems. Teachers in these systems taught a specialized subject to a specific set of students, with all students learning the same subject materials at the same time. Different levels of comprehension and learning styles were not taken into account. With the dawn of the 21st Century and the introduction of Charter schools, online education, and specialized education facilities, school choices have become more varied, allowing parents to choose the learning environment that best matched their student's interests and capacities.

Words like differentiation, individualization, and personalization are buzzwords in today's educational environment. Each word represents an educational alternative beyond the one-size-fits-all model of the late 20th century.

Differentiation

According to the U.S. Department of Education, differentiation is instruction that is tailored to the learning preferences of different learners. Learning goals are the same for all students, but the method or approach of instruction varies according to the preferences of each student.

Individualization

Individualization is instruction that is paced to the learning needs of different learners. Learning goals are the same for all students, but students can progress through the material at different speeds according to their learning needs.

Personalization

Personalization is a combination of differentiation and individualization. This type of instruction is paced to learning needs and tailored to the learning preferences of different learners. (<http://www.ed.gov/technology/draft-netp-2010/individualized-personalized-differentiated-instruction>)

Successful personalized education is achieved with a commitment to small class sizes and low student/teacher ratios. Teachers with small classes are able to actively engage with flexible groups of students to practice elusive concepts or expand upon mastered areas. Instructors are easily able to provide more feedback and individual attention to each student.

In this situation, quality curriculum plans ensure that age-appropriate required standards are covered. Teachers encourage students to take ownership of their individual learning experience by setting goals for themselves and taking responsibility for their achievements. Curriculum-based experiences enhanced with reasonable levels of challenge and hands-on activities provide the opportunity to maximize each student's learning potential every day!

Low student/teacher ratios also provide greater opportunity for students to work with other students in project-based learning activities, facilitated by the teacher. Students build self-confidence and leadership skills while mentoring others and expressing their own views and ideas, creating a learning community where all students feel safe, accepted, and supported.

Technology also plays a large role in a small classroom by supporting an interactive learning environment and providing flexible educational resources beyond the classroom.



During the formative years, preschool and elementary students benefit from personalized education incorporated into small classes with low student/teacher ratios and fortified with technology. These keys to successful education in the 21st Century encourage students to develop necessary academic, leadership, and social skills that become the solid foundation for success and life-long positive attitudes and enthusiasm about learning!

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NCPG Mom to Meet

Colleen Luke

Spouse:

Ryan Luke

Children:

Lucy (2) and Will (2mo)

Born, Raised & Lived:

Born and raised in Wichita, KS- moved to Phoenix in 2006

City & years married:

Married in Wichita, KS 4.5 years ago

Previous career:

Previously an Office Manager for Vaco Resources, now full time Mom

5 words to describe yourself:

At this moment... sleep deprived, disorganized, positive, energetic, happy

Favorite vacation spot:

Gull Lake, Minnesota

Favorite adult spot to dine in town:

Barrio Cafe

Favorite children's book to read:

Good Night Moon, Guess How Much I Love You, and Good Dog Carl

Favorite family hangout:

St. Francis on Camelback (free kids meals!)

Rules to mother by:

Don't let yourself get too stressed out, sometimes all you can do is laugh.

Most meaningful mom moment:

Watching Lucy's attempts to play with Will and make him laugh

Best mothering advice given to you:

Enjoy every moment, it goes by too quickly

Who introduced you to NCPG?

My sister-in-law

Best thing learned in NCPG?

The friendships and support of all the other moms is the best thing

Events Calendar

Fall Family Festival

Saturday, October 25th at 10 a.m.

All Saints' Episcopal Day School
6300 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85012

Bring your kids dressed in their adorable Halloween costumes for all to see and join us for lots of Halloween fun! There will be a bounce house, kids' crafts, bubbles and a trackless space train.

Lunch and ice cream will be provided for all!

NCPG Evening Lecture Series Nutrition for Learning

Wednesday, November 12 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Children's Museum of Phoenix
215 N. 7th St., Phoenix, AZ 85034

Many children are starting their school day with full bellies and starving brains. As a nutritionist and former Montessori educator, our speaker, Ms. Katzen, can attest to the fact that specific styles of eating are supportive to learning and others, detrimental to attention, mood, and behavior. Ms. Katzen will explain how certain foods and additives can actually short circuit brain function even in the healthiest of brains!

Presented by Jan Katzen-Luchenta, AMI, CFP-Author, Preconception/Prenatal and Children's Nutritionist



NCPG 30th Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser

Saturday, February 21, 2015

Phoenix Country Club, 2901 N 7th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85014

Join us for an evening full of food, fun, and a fabulous silent auction. This event helps fund NCPG activities, facilities, and instructors. Member tuition covers only a portion of our operating costs and we rely on members' participation in this fundraiser. Save the date now!

Mark your calendars!

This year's Annual Fundraiser will be on Saturday, February 21, 2015 at the Phoenix Country Club and the theme is... **Prom Night!** So get dressed up, bring your spouse and come celebrate 30 years of NCPG!

Each year, there is a silent auction & raffle, the proceeds of which go to fund NCPG. This year marks our 30th Anniversary and the Board & Fundraising Committee is working hard to make the evening extra special! We are looking for great items that YOU want so we can raise money for NCPG. Please, if you have any connections with businesses that may be interested in donating to our silent auction, let us know! We are looking for gift

certificates, gift baskets, private lessons, stay-cations, vacations and everything in between!

Also, each NCPG class will be asked to donate a basket, and we are looking for members to join our committee.

Please send us any questions and/or ideas to help make this year's Annual Fundraiser, a night to remember! We would love to hear from you!

Silent Auction Co-Chairs: Sara Snyder & Sarah Wolfswinkel
Email: fundraising@ncpgaz.org



New Arrivals!



Luc Philippe Bebeau

July 17, 2014
6lbs 5oz, 19 inches
Big sister: Nami
Parents: Nicolas & Licci



Jack Fenway Ghelfi

August 11, 2014
6lbs 7oz, 19 inches
Big sister: Sofia
Parents: Joey & JD



Alexis Lovejoy Lewis

August 16, 2014
5lbs 14oz, 17.5 inches
Sibling: Our puppy, Teddy
Parents: Tom and Jessica



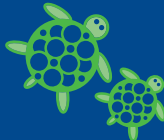
Cyla Beatrice Enyart

August 28, 2014
7lbs 3oz, 20 inches
Big brother: Zayn, Parents: Teddie & Lance



Charlie George Ragland

August 29, 2014
7lbs 13oz, 21 inches
Big brother: Hank, Parents: Sarah & Scott



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Evening Lecture Series Review: Brain Based Parenting

We had an excellent turn out for our first NCPG Evening Lecture Series. Dr. Lisa Smith provided a compelling lecture and open discussion forum covering the behaviors commonly seen in children, and strategies and tools for responding to these behaviors.

We loved seeing a wide variety of NCPG, non-NCPG, and CMoP members who came out for the lecture. We even had a few spouses show up!

Here's what they are saying:

"A great night out! My husband and I learned new ideas to better connect with our kids...and had date night with friends after!" – Jordan Ragland, Pre-school II

"I loved how she renamed "Timeout" the 'The Calm Down Corner', it just seems more logical since its really about getting your child to calm down," – Stephanie Binch, Toddler II

"She applied the concepts to some real world examples. Made it easy for me to walk away with a good understanding of how implement them at home the very next day. I also liked the black and white cookies."
– Brad Martin, NCPG Husband, Infant II

"Dr. Smith was an engaging speaker with lots of interesting and helpful information. I liked learning about the different neurodevelopmental stages to better understand my child's perspective as well as practical techniques to try out. I especially liked the idea of creating a list with your child for the 'mommy I want that toy right now!' episodes. It validates their wants, but also teaches patience and saving for something special."
– Kris Magin, Preschool II



Did you miss the lecture?

Here is a brief highlight of Dr. Lisa Smith's lecture.

All behavior is a language and misbehavior is "missed behavior." Children have inherent needs but do not yet possess the tools necessary to get those needs met. As parents, we must look at the behavior and decipher what is causing the behavior. I call "missed-behavior" a speed B.U.M.P. It is an opportunity to slow down and look at

B – Basics – Is my child getting their basic needs met (food, sleep, feeling safe, valued, nurtured),

U – Understanding – Do I understand what is going on in this situation so that I can respond rather than react?

M – Matter – Will this matter in 5 minutes, 5 days or 5 years? Am I placing too much importance on something that does not matter (does it really matter if my child wears mis-matched clothing to school?)

P – Problem – Whose problem is it? Am I "owning" my child's problem (grades, friendships, etc.) and not allowing them to learn through their experiences?

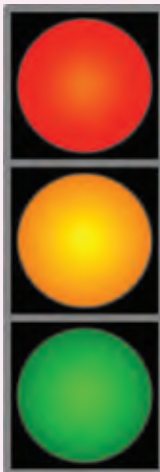


Parenting Tip

from Dr. Lisa Smith

To create healthy brain connections, you want to use every opportunity as a learning experience. When your child makes a negative choice, teach them to STOP, THINK & CHOOSE. Have them take some time to re-group, and then refer to this stoplight together.

You might need to provide the answers initially, but you are creating healthy brain connections and eventually, your child will begin to make better choices, having "processed" each "missed" behavior into a learning experience!



STOP

Take a breath.
Count to 5. Consider everyone's feelings.

THINK

What is the problem?
What are my choices?
What are the consequences of those choices?

CHOOSE

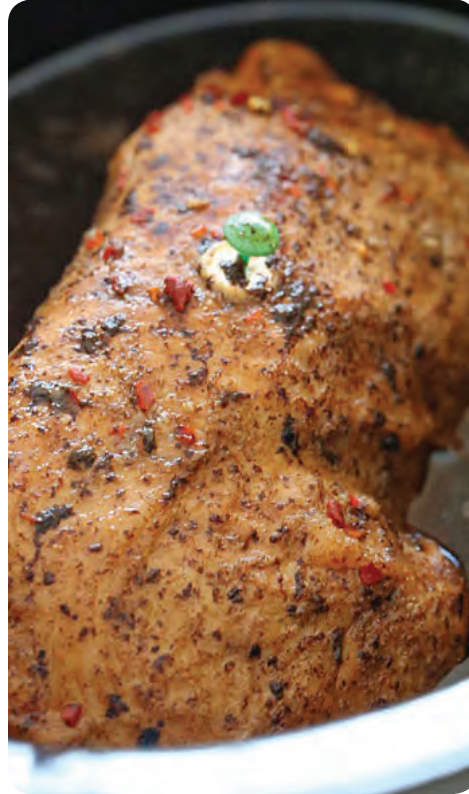
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Crock Pot Balsamic Pork Roast

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Ingredients:

2 pound boneless pork shoulder roast (sirloin roast)
kosher salt, to taste
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/3 cup chicken or vegetable broth
1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon honey

Directions:

Season the pork with salt, garlic powder and red pepper flakes and place it into the slow cooker. Mix together the broth and vinegar and pour it over the pork, then pour the honey over and set the timer for 4 hours on High or 6-8 hours on Low.

Once the pork is cooked and tender (it should shred easily with a fork), remove from slow cooker with tongs into a serving dish. Break apart lightly with two forks and put back into the slow cooker and ladle 1/2 cup sauce over the pork and keep warm until ready to eat.



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- See how faith and service inspires community responsibility and leadership
- Experience the multidisciplinary education students receive to meet the expectations of the 21st century
- Ask questions

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First Day of Classes



Kick-off Playdate



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