



# Parenting News



We are a group of parents in Linn County who want to be supports to other parents. We have difficult kids or kids with difficult behaviors, and have felt alone, misunderstood, isolated, confused, frustrated, and everything in between.

Support with other parents has been a lifeline, and reminded us that we do not have to be alone.

## Meltdown at Wal-Mart

By Michael Trout

In a hundred years, I don't think I'll ever figure this out. Why today? Why over nothing? (At least nothing I could see) Why a complete, total, in-my-face, who-is-this-child meltdown in aisle at good ol' Wal-Mart?

We had stopped for toilet paper (they had a deal) and some magic markers for a project at her pre-school. I told her we only had a few minutes, and we couldn't dawdle.

I didn't yell when she *did* dawdle at the Baby Wets-a-Lot display. I just said, "Come on, hon'. Gotta' go." And that was the last thing I remember before my child flopped herself to the floor screaming at the top of her 4-year-old lungs, flailing wailing, legs and arms everywhere. It wouldn't stop. I thought I was watching a

crazy person. Though soon I was feeling like the crazy person. (Did they cover this in class?) I meant to proceed to the toilet paper area. (It would be dumb to leave without the thing I came for, wouldn't it?) But then re-directed myself to the door, with nothing to show for my little errand but an enraged child barely contained in the arms of her bewildered and beleaguered parent.

It was a relief to feel the outside air, and I thought to put her down – which is when she dashed away from me, across the lot in front of several cars. By the time I tackled her, she had added a new twist. Now she wasn't just making howling noises, she was crying out to the slowly-gathering crowd: "Help me! This white guy is trying to kidnap me! Call the police!" Hands reached for cell phones, and it dawned on me: I am in trouble here. This child has more power to win the hearts of these onlookers than I do.

I look pleading at a man who

is rushing toward us, but what do I say? How do I tell him that this little girl watched her first mommy shake her baby brother to death, that she then lost everyone she knew and that she has moments when it all rushes back in on her. At those moments, I really am the enemy. Or should I get into the thing I just now, this very minute, thought of: There was a woman inside that store who looked eerily like the mommy my little girl hasn't seen in two years- the one who did not protect her, the one for whom she yearns even while she can barely remember her, the one she fears and wants all at the same time? Can I explain all of this to a confused and critical mob, in the next few seconds before they really *do* call the police?

Or do I just scoop up my precious child, find some way to strap her into the car seat before someone straps me into a squad car and dive off?



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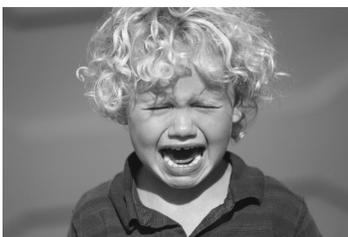
## Activities

- 4/16 - Lebanon Chamber of Commerce Biz Expo. 3000 S Santiam Hwy in Lebanon. Free samples and giveaways
- 4/18 - Practical Solutions for Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. At Family Tree Relief Nursery in North Albany 6-8 PM Thursdays through 5/16 Call (541)971-4899 for info.
- 4/20 Heritage Mall Kid's Adventure Club "Pet Appreciation" 11 AM to 12:30 PM. Crafts games music, etc.
- 4/26 Oregon Pinto Breeders Horse Show at Linn County Fair & Expo Center. Opens at 8 AM Free admission.
- 4/27 Geocache demonstration. Albany Senior Center at 10:30 AM Please bring GPS enabled device.
- YMCA Healthy Kids Day in Albany 10AM to 1PM. Free admission

If I manage to do this how shall I bring calmness back to my soul?

How do I not only forgive her but love her even more deeply, on his day that we both peered into the very depths of her despair?

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How do I remind myself that it's not me?

How do I hold her (the limp rag that she usually becomes, after one of these meltdowns) and reassure her?

(When I'm needing reassurance so badly)?

How do I clear my vision so that I can integrate that today did not come out of the blue (the way it seemed), that it came out of a soul so injured that the body containing that soul could do nothing *but* flail, and rage, in a fight

with smoke-like demons only she can see, but I am required to imagine?

I am the parent of a child whom others hurt, I signed up. They didn't tell me about days like today, but I know what my job is. As the sweat begins to dry under my shirt, and my embarrassment begins to drift away, I know that this little girl needs me.



## Important Information About Oregon Health Plan

Many children who are eligible are not covered by a health care insurance plan. Oregon Health Plan (OHP) is available and should be used if your child is not covered by another health plan, or even to supplement a health plan that they are on. For more information about OHP and how to determine if your child is eligible and to apply, please call 1-800-527-5772 or visit <http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/healthplan/Pages/index.aspx> to check eligibility and apply online.



## Family Fun!!!

### **Pizza Casserole**

Submitted by *Alicia Harlow*

- 16 oz. uncooked rotini pasta
- 1 lb. ground Italian sausage
- 24 oz. jar pasta sauce
- 16 oz. container cottage cheese
- 2 1/4 oz. can sliced black olives
- 4 oz. can mushrooms, drained
- 12 oz. shredded mozzarella cheese
- 6 oz, sliced pepperoni

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.  
Lightly grease a 9X13 casserole

dish. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Place pasta in the pot, cook for 8 to 10 minutes, until al dente, and drain. In a skillet over medium heat, cook the sausage until evenly brown, drain grease. Mix in the cooked pasta and pasta sauce. Pour into prepared casserole dish. In a bowl, mix the cottage cheese, olives, mushrooms and mozzarella cheese.

Spoon the cheese mixture over the sausage and pasta mixture. Top with pepperoni slices. Bake 25 minutes in the preheated oven, until bubbly and lightly browned.



### **TP Roll Bird Feeders**



Yarn, Empty toilet paper rolls, Scissors, Peanut butter, Knife, Birdseed

Use knife to cover the toilet paper roll in peanut butter. Roll the covered rolls in birdseed. Cut yarn long enough to make loops to hang the roll by (no need to measure.) Thread yarn through the toilet paper roll, and tie the two ends together. Hang on tree branches in your yard.

## Upcoming Class Schedule

### **Spring Classes!**

**Albany**—Thursdays beginning April 11th from 5:45 to 7:45 at Eastside Community Church at 1910 Grand Prairie St. in Albany

**Lebanon**—Tuesdays Beginning April 9th from 12:30 to 2:30 at The Free Methodist Church located at the corner of F and 7th in Lebanon

Comments, questions? Contact us by phone or through e-mail: 541-971-0246 or [parentingquestions@hotmail.com](mailto:parentingquestions@hotmail.com). To submit an article or feedback, or to sign up to receive this newsletter via email, write to [pneditors@gmail.com](mailto:pneditors@gmail.com) or talk to Crystal Rowell.

