



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

Comments, questions? Contact us by phone: 541-730-8716 or 541-971-0246 or e-mail: questions@parentingtogether.us. To submit articles or feedback, or to sign up to receive this newsletter via email, write to fsveditors@gmail.com or talk to Robin Veek.

A Visit to the ABC House

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I wake up, but I don't want to open my eyes. I lay unnaturally still. Maybe if I don't wake up I can avoid all this pain. The alarm starts to buzz. I have no choice. It's time.

I stand in my little girl's doorway and hesitate for just a moment. She's so innocent. How could someone hurt her? She's already scared...and now I have to take her to this ABC house? What are they going to do to her? Why can't this just be over? How did I let this happen?

Gently I wake her. It's unusually quiet this morning as we get ready to leave. In the car, I want to cry. I have no idea what we're walking into. In the backseat, she clings to her 'service ani-

mal' stuffie. I can feel her watching me, and I know I have to be strong, for her.

At work, it's hard for me to concentrate. I keep thinking about the people we are going to see. The ABC staff, the police, DHS, and then whoever else has appointments! No wonder I can't concentrate.

When I pick her up from day care, I find out she has had a hard day too. She's been in fights with other kids today. She looks so sad.

"I'm sorry" she says, "I don't want to get kicked out!" but to me her eyes are

screaming "I'm scared mom! I don't know what to do! MAKE IT STOP!" I'm so sorry baby, I can't make it stop. Inside my heart is breaking.

"It's ok" I tell her, "We'll try again next time. Let's go have some lunch."

She hesitates, but finally gets distracted and has lunch with the other kids. Me,

I'm too anxious to eat. How did I not see it? Why would she make something like this up? Why don't they believe her? Oh god! What if she did make it up? I said I would never let anyone hurt her, but

I failed! The thoughts just keep spiraling out of control.

I start packing up my plate to go. "it's time, lets load up"

I can hear her hesitation as she asks, "the house?" Her voice is soft. Her breathing quickens. Her hands tremble just a little.

"Yes" I answer. Just that one little word flips a switch and suddenly almost frantically she has a million things she has forgotten and she has to do. She has to go to the bathroom. She has to say goodbye. Wait! She forgot her stuffie. I feel defeated...I just can't keep up with her. Why can't she just listen!?

I try to stay calm. "Babe, we are going to be
(Continued on other side)



Fall Class Schedule

Albany—Thursdays, 12:30-2:30 and 5:45-7:45pm, First United Methodist Church, 1115 28th Ave. SW., beginning September 14th.

Lebanon—Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 and 12:30-2:30pm at the Free Methodist Church located at 580 F St., beginning September 12th.

Sweet Home—Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00, at Freedom Hill Church, 2470 Main St. Beginning September 12th *Co-facilitated by consumer April Wheeler and Scott Jondahl

Children Activities available at some locations. Lebanon and Albany groups are facilitated by Debbi Barreras.

Questions? Please call 541-730-8716 or 541-971-0246, or visit: parentingtogether.us



A Visit to the ABC House (contd.)

late!" I know she can hear the frustration in my voice. She takes off to the car slamming the door as she gets in. As I drive away, she starts kicking my seat. Thump... thump... thump. Oh my god! She is being so difficult! I'm so frustrated that I pass the place three times, but finally we arrive.

She's crying now. Not the loud sobs, those I can handle. The soft, silent

years, and I can't take them away. "I'm sorry mommy, I can't make it stop! I can't help it!" she is pleading with me. I take a deep breath.

"It's ok, babe" I take her hand "let's go, I bet you're going to have so much fun" I hope I'm not wrong again.

Both of us are shaking now. Before we even reach the steps, a woman is there. She opens the door and greets us with a smile.

She seems very kind. She leads us in the building and I notice the huge lollipop decorations in the corner and stuffed animals everywhere.

She lets go of my hand noticing a huge teddy bear, more than half her size. Another woman joins us. She is there to play with my daughter. She looks at me for approval before she goes off to play, and she actually looks excited. It warms my heart to see her smiling.

I dread the paperwork waiting for me. But I am

pleasantly surprised that there is only a few pages. Next, I have to go into another room for my interview. This is going to be horrible.

The detective is there, someone from DHS, and a doctor are all waiting for me. I sit. I am so scared, and angry, and ashamed. I'm drowning in my own personal hell. They take it slow telling me the days progress. They ask me questions and I ask my own. But everything seems kind of foggy.

Family Fun!!!

Easy Chicken Salad

Great to keep on hand for sandwiches, wraps, cracker topping etc. so versatile and no need to heat up the kitchen on warm days.

Ingredients

1 pound boiled chicken shredded
1 cups celery diced
1 cup red grapes quartered
1 cup walnuts chopped
1 1/2 cups mayo
1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon yellow mustard
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice

Instructions

Mix mayo, mustard and chicken in large bowl with a spoon.

Add remaining ingredients and stir until all ingredients are thoroughly combined.

Refrigerate one hour before serving.

Enjoy!

A Visit to the ABC House (contd.)

They say my reactions are normal and it's not my fault. The best thing I can do is assure her it's not her fault either. I wipe my tears taking a moment to compose myself. They take my water bottle back to the other room. They say no other families will be here. They serve only one at a time. I find this comforting. I think it will be easier on her.

When I get there, they are laughing and having

etch-a-sketch races. She stops and hugs me, tells me about playing outside and having snacks. She leaves with the doctor still smiling but watching for my reactions. Now I sit and wait. I can't concentrate on the TV, the books or the coloring so I go back and forth between them all.

When she comes back, she is still happy and that relieves me a little. I still have to talk to them again. They tell me their findings. I

didn't think there was anything left to shatter. They are being so patient with me. They tell me what I can do to help. They go slow. Thank goodness because I am having trouble keeping up. My brain does not want to process.

They give me time to compose myself once more. Now I am reunited with my little one. They have made this so fun for her. I can never thank them enough. As we head out they shower her with praise. She was so good, and so brave. She is proud of

herself and I am proud of how strong she has been. They send her away with a blanket, a stuffed animal, and a bag with a few goodies too. She is happy. I am relieved. This is my own personal hell, but I can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Thanks to these people it went smoothly, and she got her voice heard. For that I will be eternally grateful.



Spot the difference

Find the 5 differences between the top picture and the bottom picture

