



Spring 2013

Volume 8, Issue 5

Newsletter Date: January 2013

Meeting Dates:

- January 17th & 31st
- February 14th & 28th
- March 14th & 28th
- April 11th & 25th
- May 9th & 23rd

Inside this issue:

Mommy Lessons- It's All About Choices	2-3
Why Didn't I Think of That?	4
Announcements	5
Crafts & Keepsakes	5
In the Kitchen	6
Calendar & Events	7
Directory & Ads	8

Mommy Lessons - It's All About Choices

Written by Katie Loveland, Published online at www.lifewithjack.com. Reprinted with permission

Parenting is all about choices. We choose what to name our children, how to dress and feed them, when to discipline, and who will provide their medical care. In the information age, innumerable “expert” opinions are a Google search away, and with the help of Facebook, we can broadcast these decisions to the world. As a parent to my two kids, Eliza (age 3) and Abe (10 months), I agonize about some of my decisions (should I make my daycare center go peanut-free in response to my son’s allergy?) and make others with confidence (if you don’t eat dinner now, no food for the rest of the night. Family rule.)

And here’s the thing about parenting choices - when I research and study and pray about the choices I make for my children, then I start to feel that these decisions are the RIGHT thing to do. Not just for me, but for everyone. I remember early on as a parent, sitting in a group of moms discussing vaccinations. I work in public health. Vaccination is one of the crowning jewels of my profession. Have you heard of small pox? Probably not, because this once devastating illness has been eradicated through vaccination! As you can imagine, many of the moms in this group did not share my enthusiasm for vaccines. I was scandalized, even angry. How could these women choose to not provide their children protection from such life threatening illnesses?

Have you ever had your blood pressure skyrocket upon hearing other moms talk about making parenting decisions that you felt were wrong or even dangerous? Have you lost a friendship with another mom because the decisions you make for your children are so vastly different from hers? Doubtless, my vaccination conversation has played out in some form in your life as well. So what do we do with this tension, this struggle over parenting choices - choices which we are required to make and want make well? How can I be confident in the decisions I make while other moms come to such different conclusions? I don’t have all the answers, but I am learning a few lessons about navigating the murky waters of parenting choices.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1, Mommy Lessons...)

Lesson #1: Most choices are less important than they seem

A while back I was sitting in a group of moms who were talking about pacifiers. Ideas were flying back and forth - should you allow them, take them away at a certain age, and so on. Jessi (this blog's super mom) turned to me and mouthed, "I don't care." She was not saying this to be rude or callous, she was speaking out of her deep wisdom as the mother of a micro-preemie. Take eating (cause of such consternation among young moms) as an example. Jessi doesn't care if Jack consumes only organic, homemade food-she just wants him to eat and grow and thrive. She doesn't care how he is diapered, she just wants his kidneys to function well and do their job. Jessi has taught me that SO many of the decisions moms agonize over-breast or bottle, co-sleep or crib, organic or non-organic, cloth or disposable-are not really that important. Her perspective has helped me realize that, when my children are grown, it will make little difference whether they wore sustainable cotton onesies or potty trained by age 2. I will care about their character and their ability to love, and this is what I hope to focus on and cultivate today instead of agonizing over extraneous details.

Lesson #2: My choices are less influential than I'd like them to be

When my daughter was a baby, my husband, Josh, and I had a set bedtime routine for her. Every night we followed the same steps, and every night she slept soundly. We were convinced that our choice to adhere to this routine was the cause of her good sleep habits. When we went on vacation and this routine was interrupted, we were on pins and needles anticipating a horrific night. Come to find out, she slept just fine. She was naturally a good sleeper. The careful "choices" we made about her bedtime had little to do with that fact. Josh and I always laugh that parenting is an ongoing experiment with a very small sample size. In our case $n=2$. So it is easy to start thinking that EVERYTHING you do has a significant consequences, either good or bad. But children are who they are. They have their own unique personalities, temperaments and quirks. Sometimes the agonizing decisions you make for them will have little or no effect. Your choices are often not as influential as you make them out to be. Embracing that fact can be really freeing if you let it.

Lesson #3: Your right to choose can be revoked

At our daughter's one year well-child check, they found a "click" in her hip. X-rays confirmed her hip was dislocated, requiring surgery and a body cast for 12 weeks. Suddenly, our parenting choices were vastly reduced. We needed to follow our surgeon's instructions, no matter how painful, to treat this potentially debilitating problem. For the first year of Eliza's life, we felt we had control of virtually every aspect of her existence. Now decisions were being made for us. At first I was terrified. But slowly I came to see that control of a child's life is ultimately an illusion. Our children are individuals-given by God, growing away from us, subject to the natural and often supernatural forces of this world- forces over which we do not have full control-no matter how much we love and care for them. When my right to control Eliza's life was revoked by her hip dysplasia, I learned to entrust her to God, see the big picture and more fully be with her instead of trying to control what was out of my hands. That loss of choice was ultimately a gift.

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As I have begun to learn these lessons about parenting choices, I have also started to commit to some different choices as a parent:

- The choice to listen to other moms who are different from me and learn from their perspective
- The choice to put relationships with people over the need to be right or give correction
- The choice to be secure in the decisions I am making for me and my family while graciously accepting that other families will come to different conclusions about what is right for theirs
- The choice to free myself from the tyranny of comparison and judgment and instead commend other moms for making the best decisions for their families

Moms - will you join me in making these choices so that our relationships as mothers can be built on encouragement instead of judgment? I know I can always use more encouragement as I make these weighty decisions for and with my family everyday.

A Spa for the Soul



Saturday, January 26, 2013

8:30-2:30 PM



Join us at the
SYV Presbyterian Church
1825 Alamo Pintado Road
Solvang, CA 93463

A Note From *Carol*

Each day brings many challenges that can wear you down if you are not refreshed and revived on a daily basis. Please join me for this Spiritual "Day Spa" which is designed to:

- Restore your inner beauty
- Renew your weary soul
- Refresh your spirit

Carol Hopson's passion is to teach God's Word, love God's people and reach the lost world around her. She is the founder of HeartSong Ministries, and international speaker, counselor and author of 9 inspirational books...for God's glory alone.

**OPEN TO ALL WOMEN
OF THE SANTA YNEZ VALLEY AND BEYOND**

Doors open at 8:15 ~ Welcome & Worship at 8:45-9:15 ~ Seminar begins at 9:15 with Carol ~ Lunch at noon ~ Seminar ends at 3 PM

\$20 per person

(plus a love offering for lunch)

Childcare available at no charge, please rsvp

To register for the event and childcare, contact SYVPC at (805) 688-6323

Why Didn't I Think of That...



Scan your kids' artwork into a book so you don't have to keep 1,000 pieces of paper forever.



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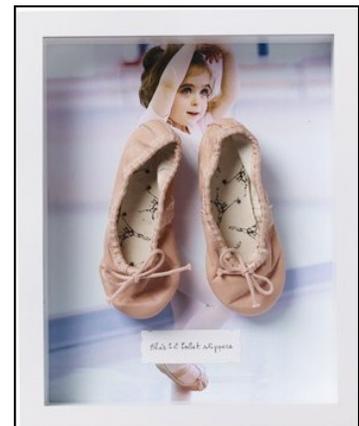
Family yearbooks. Since most people don't print out pictures like they used to, this would be a great way to document your years in pictures and still have hard-copies to look through/show people.



Cut the cover of a puzzle box and store it with the pieces in a ziploc bag because the boxes inevitably break apart.



Car seat emergency contact printables. great, great, great idea! if you are ever in a car accident and you are unresponsive, paramedics can easily see who your emergency contacts are.



Do this with firsts (baseball gloves, ballet shoes, etc.)

Thanks Pinterest!

Announcements, Announcements, Announcements!



Happy Birthday to our January Moms:

- Carola Hecker - 4th
- Lindsey Ammann - 18th
- Lisa Church - 31st



Food Assignments by Table:

Jan 31st: Green & Blue

Feb 14th: Pink & Red **Feb 28th:** Orange & Yellow

Mar 14th: Green & Blue **Mar 28th:** Pink & Red

April 11th: Orange & Yellow **April 25th:** Green & Blue

May 9th: Pink & Red **May 23rd:** Catered

If you would like to announce a pregnancy, birth, anniversary, birthday, or anything important to you and your family, please contact Christina Whippo at symopsnewsletter@gmail.com or at 701-1596.

Winter & New Year Crafts & Keepsakes



Snowman Footprints

Use paint, construction paper, and your family's handprints to create this cute winter keepsake.

A New Year through New Year's Eve Project

Start the year with an empty jar and fill it with notes about good things that happen. On New Year's Eve, empty it and see what awesome stuff happened that



In the Kitchen...



Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes
Difficulty: Easy
Serves: 2-4

BBQ Chicken Quinoa Salad

from whatsgabbycooking.com

It's kind of like a BBQ chicken pizza but subbed with quinoa which makes it healthier and guilt free! Hands down this is one of my new favorite salads that you absolutely have to try! Any quinoa skeptics out there will most likely change their mind after a few bites of this.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked quinoa
 - 1/2 cup corn
 - 1/2 cup black beans, rinsed and drained
 - 1 cup shredded BBQ chicken
 - 1 avocado, chopped
 - 2 tbsp White Cheddar cheese, shredded
 - 2-4 tbsp BBQ sauce
 - 2 scallions, chopped
 - cilantro for garnish
1. In a large bowl, toss together the quinoa, corn, black beans, chicken and avocado. Season with salt and pepper
 2. Transfer mixture onto a bowl and top with shredded cheese, BBQ sauce, scallions and cilantro.
 3. Serve warm or at room temperature

*Note: this recipe calls for already cooked chicken so plan ahead! I prefer to cook my chicken in the crockpot, using 6 chicken thigh, 1 white onion sliced and 1/2 cup of BBQ sauce. I cook on low for about 6-7 hours and then shred and refrigerate for later

Slow Cooker Baked Potato Soup

from mamalovesfood.com



Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 6-10 hours
Difficulty: Easy
Servings: 8-10

Who wants a slow cooker recipe? Well, if you do, you are in luck! This takes very little time to prepare and you can let the slow cooker do the rest! Enjoy this on a cold day.

Ingredients:

- 5 pounds russet potatoes, washed but NOT peeled. Diced into 1/2 inch(ish) cubes
 - 1 medium/large yellow onion, diced
 - 10 cloves of garlic, minced (if you use jarred, it's a 5 teaspoon equivalent)
 - 64 ounces (8 cups) chicken stock or broth
 - 16 oz cream cheese, softened
 - 1 tablespoon seasoned salt
 - optional garnishes: crumbled bacon, shredded cheese, green onions
1. Add potatoes, onion, garlic, seasoning, and chicken stock to slow cooker.
 2. Cook on high for 6 hours or low for 10 hours.
 3. Add the softened cream cheese and puree soup with an immersion blender until the cheese is incorporated and about half the soup is blended. (Alternately you could remove half the soup and the cream cheese to an upright blender, then re-incorporate).
 4. Stir well, top with your choice of garnishes & enjoy!

If you would like to submit a recipe, please contact Christina Whippo at symmopsnewsletter@gmail.com or at 701-1596.

January 2013



Future Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Years Day	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 MOPS Food: Steering	18	19
20	21 MLK, Jr. Day	22	23	24	25	26 A Spa for the Soul
27	28	29	30	31 MOPS Food: Green & Blue Tables		

PLAYDATES:

MOM'S NIGHT OUT:

MOPS EVENTS:

- Easter Egg Hunt
- Couples Chili Cook-Off
- Parenting Class



On Going Events

Parent's Night Out

SYVP Church offers a drop-off childcare program for infants through 6th-grade so parents of young children can have a date night?

PNO happens on the 1st & 3rd Friday each month from 5:30pm-9:45pm and every Wednesday from 6pm-9pm for the low cost of \$10/child. The first time is free!

To reserve your spot, sign-up in the nursery or contact Lis Wilson with questions at 688-6323, ext 237.

Mother's Day Out

SYVP Church offers a drop-off childcare every Monday and Tuesday from 9:00am-Noon during Mom's Day Out.

Cost is \$10/child per day. You must reserve your spot in advance as space is limited.

To reserve your spot, sign-up in the nursery or contact Lis Wilson with questions at 688-6323, ext 237.

Mom's Tuesday Fellowship & Bible Study

This semester we are studying Beth Moore's book *Believing God*. Meet @SYVPC Fireside Rm, 9:30-11:45am Contact Jeanne Gibbs 688-4855.

Other Online Resources:

[SYV MOPS Facebook Page](#)

Like our page and be up to date on the latest news and information regarding meetings and events. Fun questions will be posted and answers may be featured in the newsletter.

Read our blog:

www.syvmps.blogspot.com

SYV Moms at Meetup.com

Visit www.meetup.com/syvmoms to see what activities other moms are doing. Membership is free and you must join to participate. Contact Christina Whippo if you have any questions 701-1596.

Leadership Directory

Coordinator

Shellee Castillo 245-3875

Assistant Coordinators

Amanda Benoit 705-8060

Robyn Caplan 405-2223

Speaker Coordinator

Alicia Crowley 717-2535

Hospitality Leader

Lindsey Ammann 688-6851

Creative Activities

Jennifer Mlodzik 693-5192

Care & Celebrations

Charisse Spry 325-1826

Social Coordinator

Maureen Widroe 688-2581

Publicity/Newsletter

Christina Whippo 701-1596

Table Leaders

Becky Letts 705-5447

Jamie Green 860-543-4848

Kim Stevens 344-6050

Meggan Johnson 621-2859

Misty Sedehi 949-677-8617

Tracy Angel 450-8060

April Trieger 448-5040

Mentors

Maggie Le Pley 688-8333

Anne Lautensack 686-1328

Paula Albrecht 688-8131

Gerri Eberly 688-2265

Cindy Long 688-5338

Cindy Fredette 688-3553

Chris Elmerick 686-1599

MOPPETS Coordinator

Amy Tagles 216-4030

SYVPC Staff Liaison

Lis Wilson 688-6323



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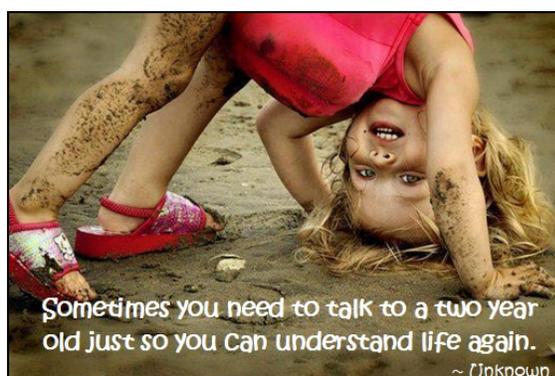
*Give your children the gift of global perspective,
receive affordable childcare, and make a friend for life.*

*Please call our Local Representative at (805) 688-1630
or visit our Web-site at ExpertAupair.com
for more information.*

**Santa Ynez Valley MOPS
is sponsored by:**

**Santa Ynez Valley Presbyterian Church
1825 Alamo Pintado Road, Solvang, CA
805-688-6323**

www.syvpc.org



*Sometimes you need to talk to a two year
old just so you can understand life again.*

~ Unknown