

THE TEDDY BEAR POST



A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOLERS

Would You Like Some Cheese With That Whine?

This year, as you think of all the wonderful things that you have to look forward to as the holiday season approaches, one of them is *not* the sound of whining children! It seems that everywhere we go, amidst the shoppers, the pretty decorations and beautiful holiday music, there is the undeniable sound every parent can recognize from a distance: **whining**.

It is not surprising that such sounds should fill every corner of the mall during the holidays. The stores are overcrowded and as a result there are lines to buy, lines to pay, lines to eat, lines to use the bathroom and lines in the parking lot. Add to the confusion a set of a million flashing lights and all the animated decorations and you have a recipe for disaster.

Tell the truth, don't *you* ever feel like whining when they tell you that gift wrapping is free but the estimated time of wait is seven hours?

What if the whining is coming from your own children?

Before you panic, remember that your child will not be the only one having a hard time navigating through the mobs of people.

Children tend to whine when they are hungry, tired, frustrated or simply need attention. Whether you are headed to the mall, the airport, or grandma's house you want to minimize the amount of stress involved. You may want to explore some smart strategies to help curve the whining this season.

How to prevent it:

- Know your child's triggers. If whining is at its worse when she's hungry, make sure to carry small snacks whenever you are out of the house for any extended period of time. Tiredness equals crankiness. Plan on being home by naptime or bring along that favorite blanket.

- Let your children know what they can expect from the outing. Tell them exactly where you'll be going and what you'll be doing. Be very clear about what the rewards and consequences will be regarding their behavior while out.
- Whenever your child speaks in a pleasant voice, answer her promptly. Don't wait until she's called your name several times

before she gets your attention. Your child will drag her vowels longer and longer with each time they say "Moooooooom!"

- Ask yes or no questions. "What's bothering you?" may trigger a very winded answer but "Are you hungry?" may produce a simple reply that will help your child pinpoint the source of her discomfort/frustration.

- Treat *Before Tantrum*: reward your child for being patient by having a few

little treats ready. Make sure to reward your child before any signs of misbehaving or he will get the wrong idea.

How to stop it:

- Stay calm but be firm.
- Say simply that you do not understand what they are trying to say when they whine and that they must use their normal voices if they want you to listen.
- Give them a chance to redirect their emotions by asking them a yes or no question.
- Stick to the consequences you set before you left the house.

Remember, your child can sense if you're stressed so take breaks through out your shopping day to prevent you from becoming flustered. With a little preparation and some cheery holiday spirit your shopping trips will be much more manageable for you and your child!



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"A PARENT ASKS"

Q: My family will be traveling to the mainland this holiday season. What can I do to help our travels be stress-free?



A: Traveling with children of any age can be stressful. The best way to combat stress is to be prepared. Every child is different, so keep in mind your child's personality when making reservations. Booking direct flights may be best for your child, especially while flying during her normal sleep schedule. If your child is the active, restless type, you may want to book a flight with a layover so your child can get up and move around. If you book a flight with a layover, allow at least three hours between flights. This way you can walk around, eat, take bathroom breaks, etc. all without rushing from one terminal to another. Reserve your seats ahead of time to ensure your family has confirmed seats next to each other. When packing, have entertainment readily available. Pack coloring books and crayons, books to read, cards, dolls, and games that don't include small pieces. Toys that you should avoid packing are play-doh and other sticky items, balls, legos, and items that make noise which will drive both you and the other passengers crazy. Don't count on your child liking the food served on the plane. Be prepared with sandwiches, snacks, and reusable water bottles that you can fill after going through security. Keep your child well fed to avoid them becoming cranky. Arrive at the airport an hour earlier than suggested for any of those unexpected accidents, meltdowns, and hungry children. While on board, don't put your child in an aisle seats where they may be hit by passing passengers or food carts. Finally, explaining to your child the process of checking in, going through security, and boarding can help calm some anxiety your child may have, and help your travel experience be as stress-free as possible.

Holiday Jokes for Kids

Q: What do elves learn in school?

A: The elf-abet!

Q: Why does Santa have three gardens?

A: So he can ho ho ho!

Q: What do snowmen eat for breakfast?

A: Frosted Flakes!

Q: Who is never hungry at Christmas?

A: The turkey, he's always stuffed!

SUGGESTED READING

Some excellent books available at the State Libraries:

- **The Way I Feel**
By Janan Cain
- **A Children's Book About Whining**
By Joy Berry
- **Airport**
By Bryon Barton
- **Counting Christmas**
By Karen Katz
- **A Merry-Mouse Christmas ABC**
By Priscilla Hillman
- **Arthur's Christmas**
By Marc Brown



The Parent Line:

Free statewide phone line for parents and others caring for children. Call for support, encouragement, information, and ideas about handling behavior or about community resources.



Mon– Fri, 8:00am– 6:00pm
and Sat, 9:00am–1:00pm.
Oahu: **526-1222**.
Neighbor Islands toll-free:
1-800-816-1222

What Will Your Child Remember Most About Growing Up?

Many families have traditions, especially around this holiday season, but why stop there? Here are some ideas for creating rituals/traditions with your family throughout the year:

- Have Saturday or Sunday morning breakfast
- Have a regular movie or game night
- Celebrate the first and last day of the school year
- Start a collection—player cards, shells, stamps, etc.
- Have father/daughter or mother/son dates once a month
- Volunteer at soup kitchens or shelters
- Have a funny hat or silly costume night and come to the dinner dressed up
- Attend college sport games
- Have lunch with your child at school— make it a surprise

Let it Snow!!! Making Snowflakes

You will need:

- 4 craft sticks per snowflake
- Glue
- Paint, pens, crayons, etc.
- Glitter, pom-poms, buttons, etc.
- Ribbon/ string to hang

1. Glue 4 craft sticks together, crossing each other to form a snowflake.
2. DECORATE!
3. Add a ribbon or string to hang.



SAFETY WORKS!

Holiday shopping can be stressful, especially when shopping in crowded stores *with* children! Not only can it be stressful, it can also be dangerous without proper supervision of your child. Leaving your child with another adult is always the best and least stressful way for you to tackle your shopping list. Of course this is not always an option, so this holiday season exercise some basic safety measures. Keep your child with you at all times while shopping. If possible, keep your child in a stroller. Don't allow your child to stay in the toy department of a store while you shop elsewhere. Supervise your child in all public areas and accompany him to the restroom. Talk to your child about safety and what to do if strangers approach him. Teach your child to look for people who can help him if he becomes lost, such as a security guard, salesperson, or another mother. Inform your child to stay in one place if he becomes lost and not to walk around looking for you. Have your child walk with you, not behind you. Remember, young children are easily distracted and can lose sight of you in a second.

