GRATITUDE?

Susan Punnett, the Executive Director of DC-FYI, shares a few of her thoughts on gratefulness below. Her thoughts serve as a great reminder that while parenting asks a lot of adults, the number one focus should always be the needs of our kids. Sometimes we need to pause and reflect on if our expectations of our kids, like gratefulness, stems from prioritizing personal needs over our kids’ needs because all kids deserve a home, “no-strings-attached”.

“Last week I had a troubling conversation with the foster parent of a DCFYI teen.

Foster mom was frustrated, which I understand; being the parent of any teen can be trying at times and some teens are more challenging than others.

What troubled me was when foster mom said the teen should be grateful she was being given a place to live (because she is in foster care). I don’t recall being grateful that my parents gave me a place to live (and food to eat and plenty of love and many wonderful experiences). In fact, I am sure I took all that for granted. Many children are fortunate enough to be able to take for granted their place in the world and in their families.

Children who land in foster care (through no fault of their own) already have more than enough to contend with—worries about family and siblings and where they’re going to live and what the next foster family will be like and who’s making decisions about their lives and who they can trust. Surely they should not have to be grateful that someone is providing them a place to live on top of everything else?

Shouldn’t every child have the right to a loving, nurturing family?”

By: Susan Punne

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Visit Our Blog!
hp://projectwaitnolonger.tumblr.com/

GRATITUDE?

FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT TEEN BOOT CAMP (F.I.T)

Experts from the Financial Literacy Organization for Women and Girls will provide this unique and age appropriate workshop of financial tips for young women and men ages 13-17. Attendees must commit to attending four days of programming at one participating branch. Due to limited space, registration is open to teens who have not previously attended the FLOW Financial Boot Camp program.

DATES OF PROGRAMMING:
Bethesda: July 6-9
Praisner: July 13-16
Rockville: July 20-23
Gaithersburg: July 27-30

HOURS OF PROGRAMMING:
9:30 am - 12 pm

REGISTER AT:
http://montgomerycountymd.libguides.com
Fostering Attachment...Focus on Food

A large part of daily family life revolves around food and the family dinner table. This excerpt from Trish Maskew’s Our Own: Adopting and Parenting the Older Child (p. 104) does a wonderful job explaining the connection between food and attachment.

“The food carries with it the psychological message of nurturating. Serving food, with a smile, is one of the best ways to form an attachment. By providing physical nourishment, you send the message that you are willing to provide for your child emotionally. Some children may resist this at first, as it implies trust, but over time it will likely aid your bonding. Because of its tie to bonding, you should try not to make food a control battle.”

The author’s assessment of food and attachment is spot on with what we often see in our PWNL families. The last sentence is a critical reminder to parents that power struggling over food issues can be damaging to building a healthy and loving attachment relationship.

Below find some tips you can follow at dinner time to help avoid common power struggles:

- Serve food family style (this allows a child control over what they eat/don’t eat)
- As you introduce your child to new foods, have at least one item of the meal be one you know your child feels comfortable with.
- Work on being a role model to your children by allowing them to observe your eating practices and table manners as they settle in and learn.

MD: Hitting the road this summer for a family trip? Print the 2015 Ice Cream Passport to take along! Kids will enjoy getting to collect stamps at each of the eight stops across the state and everyone will enjoy eating the ice cream! Find it online at www.marylandsbest.net

DC: Take in FREE Screenings of family friendly food themed films in Mosaic Park this July:

    Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs, July 3
    Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, July 17
    Ratatouille, July 31

VA: Visit Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture for their volunteer open house on July 25th. Your family will be able to work on the farm together learning more about sustainable farming practices and where our food comes from. arcadiafood.org.

Welcome

You may notice a new face around Barker! We are excited to welcome Emma Chaplin to our PWNL team as a summer intern. Emma is a rising senior at UMBC studying social work and is a participant in the Walter Sondheim Jr. Maryland Nonprofit Leadership Program.

Already in her short time with us, she has been doing a wonderful job of helping us to get moving forward on some of our long-term projects to enhance our family support services and we couldn’t be more thrilled to have her on our team!