



# Care House News

Volume 10, Issue 2

Fall/Winter 2007

## CARE HOUSE MISSION

*"To prevent and reduce the incidence and trauma of child sexual and serious physical abuse in Macomb County through collaborative, multi-disciplinary and effective family services."*



### Taking Back the Holidays

*Help Your Kids Learn the True Meaning of the Holidays, Not the Marketers'.*

As children grow into their pre-adolescent years, they spend more time outside the home and with friends, and are exposed to a lot more media messages beyond the influence of parents. Tweens are bombarded with advertising, both blatant and subtle, especially during the busy shopping season.

Developmentally, tweens are beginning their search for an identity separate from parents and family, so they are especially vulnerable to manipulative advertising that plays on their insecurities. They are anxious to "grow up," and marketers exploit this desire by targeting younger and younger audiences for products that were once considered only appropriate for adults.

We can relate to that feeling. Adults also buy into the hype of consumerism - a feeling that is only heightened during the holiday season. Just like our tweens, we hop from one "miracle product" to the next in hopes of buying a new and improved identity, or an instant wealth of happiness.

Help your tween separate fact from marketing: A product endorsed by their favorite celebrity will not give them a better sense of who they are. Having strong holiday traditions - making memories your child will always cherish - those are the things that will resound in their lives.

Here are some good ways you can spend time with your son or daughter, to help your tween develop the warm feeling:

- Make special holiday memories with your kids. Do things that they will enjoy and remember, so that some day they might share those things with their own children.
- Do volunteer work. Any community center or organization can advise your tween on how and where to begin, and the holidays are a great time, not only to reach out, but to reflect.
- Have your kids provide a gift for you, a sibling or a friend that costs no money.

Help your tween concentrate on making improvements based on actions rather than consumerism; he or she will be happier and more productive, and will know real warmth this holiday season.

From [Who's Raising Your Child?](#), by Laura J. Buddenberg and Kathleen M. McGee



### Positive Consequences Mean Keep Up The Good Work!

A positive consequence can be your best friend because it reinforces and encourages positive behavior. Positive consequences (or rewards) are things your child likes and enjoys. When used correctly, a positive consequence will increase the frequency of positive behavior.

If you only give negative consequences or punishments, you run the risk of becoming a negative consequence yourself. Studies show that parents who balance negative and positive consequences are seen as more fair and reasonable by their children. If you consistently use positive consequences, you're probably more pleasant and effective with your children, and they are more likely to listen to you.

Here is a list of positive consequences that work:

**Activities:** Everyday activities your child enjoys (playing video games or baseball, watching sitcoms, baking cookies, reading)

**Possessions:** The things your child wants (sweat shirts, baseball cards, comic books, dolls, CDs)

**Food:** Favorite snacks (popcorn, popsicles, pizza, pop, candy, fruit juice) When it comes to consequences, food refers to special snacks, etc. **\*\*NOTE: Do not use meals as a negative consequence; for example, do not take away a balanced meal and make your child eat bread and water. Children have the right to proper nutrition.**

**People:** The individuals your child wants to spend time with (friends, grandparents, cousins, mom, dad, teachers)

**Attention:** Positive acknowledgment (hugs, smiles, time together, compliments, high fives, thumbs up)

This list is just a start. If your child has other interests or is always talking about doing something he or she has never done before, you can make that into a reward, too. An excellent resource for learning more about using consequences and providing effective discipline can be found in the book [Common Sense Parenting](#), available from the Boys Town Press.

Source: [www.parenting.org](http://www.parenting.org)

If you know of anyone who would like to receive our newsletter or if you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact us at (586) 463-0123.



## Say What You Mean... Mean What You Say

Fuzzy statements like these leave kids wondering exactly how they should respond. Kids interpret them at face value, which leads to battles. It helps kids cooperate when parents are very specific with their requests.

*"I wish you'd get dressed."*

*"I think you should start on your report."*

*"It would be nice if you cleaned your room."*

*"Be good."*

### Say please

We learned that one in kindergarten! Saying please softens our request and when followed with a specific call to action it can get a kid moving. And adding a *"thank you"* in closing with your expectation that your request will be followed. *"Please take the trash out before dinner. Thank you."* The added benefit here is that you are modeling the behavior you want your child to learn.

### Be specific

When you say, *"Clean your room."* your child hears, *"Shove everything under the bed so I can't see it."* In essence, he is doing what he was told. Prevent this miscommunication by being very clear – *"Please put the toys in the toy box, and books on the shelf."* Now THAT is very clear.

### Think

Often we make half-hearted requests of our child, and when he doesn't respond we just drop it. Usually, this happens over little issues, and we drop it because it's not worth fighting over. The problem is, a child gets in the habit of ignoring you, on both little issues and big ones. When you take a breath, take a minute and think first, you can then be clear about your request and willing to follow through to the end.

### Eye-to-eye

How often do you call to your child from another room and expect her to listen? Do you then follow-up with, *"Did you hear me?"* Instead, take the time to get eye-to-eye with your child. Make a clear, specific request and ask, *"What do I need?"* When your child tells you what you said it helps her to remember. For example, your child is in the other room playing. Go to her, look her in the eye and say, *"Mara, please take the trash out before dinner. Now, what do you need to do?"* When Mara says, *"I need to take the trash out before dinner."* she has given her clear instructions and is likely to follow through.

### Pick your battles

Parenting is a 24-hour a day job. If you try to deal with every issue, fix every problem and be a constant teacher and coach, you will drive yourself CRAZY! Before you open your mouth, take a minute to decide if this issue is worth a battle. If you decide it is - then win at all costs. This will prevent you from choosing the wrong battle, realizing it in midstream and backing down because it's really not important. The danger is that your child doesn't know you've changed your mind due to a better decision. He figures you changed your mind because he put up a good fight, which leads him to try again the next day and the next. Fight the important battles, and using good skill and a level head - WIN! It's good for you and best for your child.

Source: Elizabeth Pantley, author of "Kid Cooperation and Perfect Parenting." [www.circleofparents.org](http://www.circleofparents.org)



## Keeping Children Safe on the Internet is Everyone's Job

- Parents need to stay in close touch with their kids as they explore the Internet.
- Teachers need to help students use the Internet appropriately and safely.
- Community groups, including libraries, after-school programs, and others should help educate the public about safe surfing.
- Kids and teens need to learn to take responsibility for their own behavior -- with guidance from their families and communities.
- It's not at all uncommon for kids to know more about the Internet and computers than their parents or teachers. If that's the case in your home or classroom, don't despair. You can use this as an opportunity to turn the tables by having your child teach you a thing or two about the Internet. Ask her where she likes to go on the Internet and what she thinks you might enjoy on the Net. Get your child to talk with you about what's good and not so good about his Internet experience. Also, no matter how Web-literate your kid is, you should still provide guidance. You can't automate good parenting.

Source: [www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org)



We are very pleased to announce the launch of our new and improved website! Check us out on the Web: [www.mccarehouse.org](http://www.mccarehouse.org).

Also, check out these Internet Safety Resources:

- [www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com)
- [www.safeteens.com](http://www.safeteens.com)
- [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org)
- [www.netfamilynews.org](http://www.netfamilynews.org)
- [www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org)



## Need Help?

If you have a court case coming up and would like legal information, support or counseling services from Care House, please contact us at (586) 463-0123. We are here to help.



---

### “How do I Respond to Sexualized Behaviors?”

As children begin to explore their bodies and experiment with their peers, parents should not shame, blame or discipline a child. Parents who do not feel comfortable discussing sexuality or fail to recognize that exploratory behaviors are normal may respond to children’s behaviors by over-reacting. When responding to sexualized play between children:

**Do Not Over-React:** By staying calm and handling the situation without over-reacting, children will develop a positive sense of self sexuality.

**Stop the Behavior:** If children are masturbating in public or in front of others, explain to them that it is not appropriate to touch their private parts in public and that if they feel they need to touch their private parts they need to do it in private, hence, “private parts”.

Children should not be told that it is “bad”, “dirty” or “nasty”, when found masturbating and they should not be punished.

When children are exploring their sexuality with other children, parents should explain to them that when they are playing with their friends they need to leave their clothes on and that it is not okay to touch or show private parts. Parents should also ask the children if they have any questions and be available to answer any that they ask.

**Don’t Punish:** Don’t yell at or punish them. Punishing such behaviors can lead to sexual inhibitions later on and hinder a child’s sexual development. Tell children that their behavior is not appropriate by being clear and direct without making them feel guilty.

**Provide Information:** Explain that touching their own private parts is private and should be done in private. Reinforce that children should respect each other and the touching of others’ private parts is not acceptable.

**Redirect the Behaviors:** Redirect the children’s behavior into a more acceptable play activity. Introduce a new game or other activities to distract their behavior.

Source: The Children’s Assessment Center, Grand Rapids, Mi



---

### All Kids Need: Freedom for Creativity & Imagination

The “left-brain” (creative) part of ourselves is vital to our existence! Not a single advancement, invention or breakthrough in civilization would have been created had it not been for someone taking a different road, a second look, a risk to try new ideas, an adventure into unlimited possibilities. Let every child be encouraged to explore and discover. And, if your child is especially inquisitive, that is a special gift and ability that should not be stifled, but rather nurtured and nourished.

**TRY IT!** Take your child on an impromptu, spontaneous mystery ride. Objective: to discover five new things about the world!

Source: Zimmy’s Guide to All Kids Need: How All Caring Adults Can Nurture Children.

---

### Construction Paper Turkey

Parental supervision is recommended

Dish out the Thanksgiving fun with this construction paper turkey craft. You can keep kids busy while the bird is cooking and finish up with a cute centerpiece for the table. What you’ll need:



- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2 toilet paper tubes      | Tempera or watercolor paints |
| Brown construction paper  | Glue                         |
| Yellow construction paper | Scissors                     |
| Red construction paper    | Pencil                       |
| White construction paper  | Paintbrush                   |
| Black construction paper  | Stapler                      |

#### How to make it:

Trace around your child’s hand on a piece of white construction paper. Note: You may wish to trace a larger area around your child’s hand to make the turkey feathers bigger and also make it easier for your child to cut out. Cut out the pattern. Paint the hand pattern with different colors of paints. Let the paint dry. Cut one of the toilet paper tubes in half. (You will only need one piece) Cut out brown construction paper to fit around the two toilet paper tubes and staple the paper onto the tubes. Staple the two tubes together, the shorter one on top of the longer one. Cut out a beak and some feet out from the yellow construction paper, a gobbler out of red construction paper, and eyes out of the white and black construction paper. Attach the eyes, beak, feet, and gobbler to the tubes with glue. (See photo) Staple the feathers to the back of the tubes when the feathers are dry.

Source: [www.kidsdomain.com/crafts](http://www.kidsdomain.com/crafts)

---

If you know of anyone who would like to receive our newsletter or if you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact us at (586) 463-0123.

---

## Care House Board of Directors 2007

**Frank J. Marella, President**  
*Clintondale Board of Education, Retired*  
**Roger Petri, Vice-President**  
*Community Representative*  
**Mark Schulte, Treasurer**  
*Lasertec*  
**Sheri L. Milson, Secretary**  
*Community Representative*

**Honorable Frank Accavitti, Jr.**  
*State Representative, 42<sup>nd</sup> District*  
**Joseph A. Alcini, Jr.**  
*Tom's Landscape and Nursery*  
**Frank Buscemi**  
*Macomb Community Bank*  
**Gregory A. Buss**  
*Gregory A. Buss, P.C.*  
**Jay Eastman, M.D.**  
*St. Joseph Mercy of Macomb*  
**Edward Greenup**  
*Cherf & Greenup, P.C.*  
**Honorable Dawnn Gruenburg**  
*37<sup>th</sup> District Court*  
**Donald I. Habkirk, Jr.**  
*Macomb County Community Mental Health*  
**Sheriff Mark Hackel**  
*Macomb County Sheriff's Dept*

**Phil Hernandez**  
*Community Representative*  
**Honorable Kathleen Jansen**  
*Michigan Court of Appeals*  
**Tom Kalkofen**  
*Macomb County Health Department*  
**Chris LaBelle**  
*LaBelle Electric*  
**Honorable Peter Maceroni**  
*16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court*  
**Commissioner Anthony V. Marrocco**  
*Macomb County Public Works Commissioner*  
**Honorable Candice S. Miller**  
*U.S. Representative, 10<sup>th</sup> Cong. Court*  
**Tom Morley, Jr.**  
*President, Functional Food Company*  
**Angelo Nicholas**  
*Director, Macomb County DHS*  
**Honorable Pamela Gilbert O'Sullivan**  
*Macomb County Probate Court*  
**Joseph Peters**  
*Director, UAW Region 1*  
**Stephen T. Rabaut**  
*Law Offices of Stephen T. Rabaut*  
**Prosecutor Eric J. Smith**  
*Macomb County Prosecuting Attorney*  
**Honorable George Caram Steeh**  
*U.S. District Court*  
**Craig Walworth**  
*H & W Sales*

**Cathy Gordon**  
*Program Director*  
**Dorie Vazquez-Nolan**  
*Director of Operations*

**Associate Board Members**  
*George Adams*  
*Isabelle Adams*  
*Gerald Alsip*  
*Honorable William Cannon*  
*Joseph Coates*  
*Lynn Davidson*  
*Honorable Jennifer Faunce*  
*Dennis Franks*  
*Thomas McVicar*  
*Honorable Sheila Miller*  
*Tom Moons*  
*Dean Olgiati*  
*Larry Rancilio*  
*Honorable Norene Redmond*  
*Patty Rizzo*  
*Colleen Shefferly*  
*Joe Simasko*  
*Honorable Catherine Steenland*  
*Honorable Matthew Switalski*  
*Hon. Michael Switalski*  
*Anthony Vallone*  
*Michael Wujek*

Care House  
131 Market Street  
Mt. Clemens, MI 48043

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

*Serving Macomb County families since 1996.*