Dear Parents:

We do not know the source of this story, but its message is so good that we wanted to share it with you.

A few months before I was born, my dad was fascinated with an enchanting newcomer, and invited him to live with our family. As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family.

The stranger was our storyteller. Adventures, mysteries and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spell-bound for hours. If I wanted to know about politics, history, or science, he knew it all.

He took Dad, Bill and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see the movies and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars.

The stranger was an incessant talker. Dad didn’t seem to mind – but sometimes Mom would quietly get up and go to her room. I wonder now if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave.

My mom and dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But, this stranger never felt obligated to honor them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our house – not from us, from our friends, or adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used occasional four-letter words. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted.

My early concepts of the man-woman relationship were influenced by the stranger. Time after time he opposed the values of my parents. Yet he was seldom rebuked and never asked to leave.

His name? We always just called him T.V.

Yours for Children,

Elaine Wilson
Parenting Specialist

Oklahoma State University
Kids Still At Risk From Air Bags

Ninety-nine percent of parents with children under age 1 say they have heard about the risks air bags pose to children and are heeding the warnings. However, 11 percent of parents who regularly transport an infant in a vehicle with a passenger-side air bag continue to place babies in the front seat, according to a recent survey by the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign. Infants under 1 year of age account for roughly one in 12 of the children at risk, yet they account for about one in five of the child deaths. To date, 63 children have been killed by air bags, prompting experts to recommend that all children under age 13 ride in the back seat.

Check Out These Web Sites

National Program for Playground Safety: www.uni.edu/playground
National SAFE KIDS Campaign: www.safekids.org
United States Coast Guard: www.uscgboating.org
Emergency Nurses Association: www.ena.org
American Trauma Society: www.amtrauma.org
Children’s Safety Network: www.edc.org/HHD/csn

Parenting and Family Responsibilities

Check the ones that you think are important responsibilities for parents and families. Double check the responsibilities you and your family assume.

☐ ☐ Parents love, care for, support, and protect their children.
☐ ☐ Pregnant women protect their own and their baby’s health and begin regular visits to the doctor early in their pregnancy.
☐ ☐ Parents do all they can to keep their children healthy, making use of health checks, immunizations, and getting early advice and treatment for sick children.
☐ ☐ Parents take responsibility for seeing that their children are well-prepared for school and attend every day ready to learn.
☐ ☐ Parents love and care for their children, support them financially, and share parenting responsibilities, even when not living together.
☐ ☐ People take responsibility for developing the skills and knowledge they need to help them get a job or take on a new job.
☐ ☐ People manage their money to meet the basic needs of themselves and their family.
☐ ☐ People do all they can to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Source: New Zealand government brochure
Divorced Dads

Some fun things for dads and kids to do together on weekends - or anytime!

**Story Time**

Have fun reading or telling stories with your child. Ask other friends or family members to share favorite stories with your child. Stories about the child’s own history or culture are especially exciting. Ask the librarian to help you pick out books that have pictures and stories about people with the same ethnic background as your child.

**Library Outing**

Visit the local public library with your child. Be a role model by checking out books that you would enjoy reading. When you get home, set aside a special time to read with your child.

**Cut out a food pyramid from the side of a cereal box or other food. Talk about the different food groups. Ask your child to name a favorite food and what food group it belongs to.**

**Have a pretend phone conversation with your child, asking what your child did yesterday, is doing today, and wants to do tomorrow.**

**Plan a “TV Blackout” night. Instead of watching TV, read aloud or play games with your child.**

**Take your child outside with a bucket of water and a paint brush to “paint” his or her name, and to draw shapes and letters on the sidewalk with the water.**
Most parents ignore fighting among brothers and sisters. But, they think this is not the best thing to do. Actually, there are at least three things parents can do when brothers and sisters fight.

1. Ignore the fight
2. Help the children solve the problem
3. Punish one or both children

Parents are three times more likely to ignore the fight. But they feel helping or punishing are more effective. When the children argue, parents, especially mothers ignore or help. When children push or shove, parents, especially fathers, punish or ignore.

Experts suggest assistance from parents right away when the argument begins. This teaches children how to peacefully resolve conflicts. Waiting until the fight escalates and then ignoring or punishing is not advised. This teaches that power wins over reason.

Source: www.apa.org