

# MOM'LL DEAL WITH IT

episode notes



## EP 8 - WORKSHOP: Mom'll Deal With It

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### About Today's Workshop Guest: Marie Burke



Mother to your host, his two siblings, and grandmother to six awesome kids 9 months to 5-1/2 years old.

- Today's workshop will be relevant to anyone interested in:
  - Parenting
  - Education
  - Cultural shifts from the 1980's to today

### Question 1

*It's been forty years since you became a mother. Any reflections?*

- Don't ever think its easy or that you can do it better than someone else
- I always babysat, and found raising kids easy - but having your own 24/7, with 100% responsibility, is a whole new level of stress.

- Every day is something new & different (and it still is)

## Question 2

*I've been told that with two kids, parents can still play a 1-on-1 defense, with 3 kids you have to move to a zone. On top of having 3 kids, you were the custodial parent for much of our upbringing. You worked hard to give us every opportunity, but how did you manage the stress?*

- For most single moms the major issue is financial stress: I was truly blessed & grateful to not have that to deal with
- For me, the very limited “me time” caused the most stress: If I did get any time, it usually ended up with me doing house chores
- Things I found helpful in dealing with the stress:
  - Bonanza Breaks: Cup of tea & Me on the Ponderosa
  - Finding something fun to watch/listen to while doing chores
  - Being creative
  - When I was on Empty: Early Bedtime!
- Another stressor was daily dinners: I picked my battles
  - Whoever didn't like it could pour themselves a bowl of cereal - we always had a bunch to choose from

## Question 3

*You help watch your grandkids on a regular basis. What differences do you see in parenting from the 1980's to the 2020's?*

Some of the major differences I see fall into three areas:

### 1. Technology

## 2. Stranger Danger

## 3. Medical

# 1. Technology

- There are many more technological tools available to parents
  - Example: Restaurants full of TVs & lots of parents putting iPad/Phones in front of kids
- Access to information much quicker & convenient: If you or a child has a question you don't have the answer to.
- Education is increasingly digital:
  - Not as many textbooks in the classroom
  - More interaction via screens - tech classes are important even at a young age
  - specially after stay home orders during COVID
- Concerning about the safety of minors with access to inappropriate information
  - Back in the 80's, 90's - movies like Hackers
  - Increasing fear of deep fake technology for child safety
- Having today's tech back in the day: I would have made my own baby food, tried more repairs & home improvements

# 2. Stranger Danger

- Totally different stress level now: Child abductions, school shootings, COVID are overwhelming & unsettling
- There were fingerprinting programs in the 1980's
  - Look for similar programs in your town for kids IDs or having some kind of biometrics on file to aid law enforcement.
- In 80's I could take my kids anywhere: Up & down eastern seaboard - never concerned about someone going to abduct us
- Now there's a fear of taking kids into a store: A sense of terror at the possibilities

- Now I'll only go in public with kids as long as there are an equal number of adults to children
- Keep an eye on roaming kids in case they might need help
- Rather than teaching your kids to never talk to strangers, teach them how to seek help:
  - Flag - Usually means someone official: School, police, fire, military
  - Food - Typically have high standards for cleanliness & friendliness
  - Families - If they have kids, they're more likely to be friendly & want to help
- Harder with kids on Autism/Asperger's spectrum: Difficult to read faces / intentions
- Impact on changes in media: Hype, fearmongering, social media algorithms
- How much was actually happening in 1980s/90s? You didn't hear about it as much - nowadays you're seeing a reexamination of church abuse, for example
  - People didn't discuss it much back in the day
  - Find the balance between scaring them and giving them the tools to seek safety

### 3. Medical

- COVID
- Health Insurance Coverage
  - 1980/90s: Pretty much everything was covered
  - 2020s: Co-pays, emergency costs, web information for diagnosing

*"The check engine light comes on at forty, honey." - Marie Burke*

### Question 4

*One of my fondest memories was when I told you I wanted to be an accountant like my father. Soon after, you handed me a book on creative projects that I could build at home. Then you rushed me to the art supply store where I went on a shopping spree and spent*

*way too much on supplies to build stuff. It's one of my favorite memories on how I was always encouraged to be creative & inquisitive. Any tips on fostering creativity in kids?*

- I was always an artistic kid, which wasn't fostered.
- We didn't have the money for supplies, so had to be resourceful & make own fun
- When I had kids, I wanted to provide the environment I would have loved.
- My philosophy to do that:
  - 1. Whatever you kids did, enjoy it so it didn't feel like work
  - 2. Be able to support yourselves and your dreams through your work
  - 3. Encourage self-sufficiency in whatever you wanted to do
- I learned more from helping you in your exploration
- My rule: I'd support if you wanted to try: See the initial batch of lessons through.
  - Can't take one class and say you don't like it - give it a fair shot
- I never would have been so creative with birthday cakes if you guys hadn't come up with those challenges



 **Hockey Chat Intermission** 

## Question 5

*My kids are 4 and 2. I'm stating to recognize distinct personality differences between them. Given my siblings & I had similar age gaps and now we're all adults - it's obvious we're all quite different. But what advice do you have on fostering what makes my kids unique, while instilling common values?*

- You know what your family values are: What you want your child to know is right & wrong
- What changes is how you instill that in each child. Each kid will tend to need a different combination of methods to get your values across:
  - Visual
  - Verbal
  - Demonstrative
  - *Use C/C/M as examples of the 3 above*
- As toddlers you use all 3 steps
- As they develop, a parent learns what works best with each child.
- You can then use those techniques to steer them not just in family values, but also in academics, hobbies, and activities

## Other Topics

- Being able to video chat is a huge difference since the 1980's.
  - The ability to interact & make young children familiar with a relative through face & voice recognition makes socialization way easier when meeting in person.
  - Avoids "Who's the stranger?" familiarity phase which can take up a large chunk of visits
  - Especially poignant when meeting grandkids for first time after COVID delays
- There's still no substitute for in-person visits
  - Back in the day: Writing letters

- Letters do survive - a great way to have a longer-form thought & tangible object of someone's thoughts. Less ephemeral
- Mom's Tip for sharing memories for when her grandbabies grow up: Journals
  - When watching grandkids: Puts in voice of kid so parent can get a run-down of their days & schedules
  - Other times (Thoughts pop into head, big occasions, visits, etc...): Write down her recollections, thoughts, observations
  - Each grandkid has their own journal - can put in thoughts they can grow into
  - She started these gifts for them when she first learned each kid was coming into the world
  - A legacy of her best thoughts to leave to her kids & grandkids: Knowing they were loved, knowledge to help them along their journey.

## Episode 8 Quotes:

Some classic Mom one-liners my siblings & I remember fondly from our childhood:

| *Get belted or be belted*

| *You have 2 choices for dinner: Take it or leave it*

| *Whoever survives gets dinner*

| *As long as my foot can reach your butt*

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## Links & Resources

- [Tiny Beans](#) - Great photo tool for parents to share photos, videos & memories that saves time. I also highly recommend their custom photo book features that work great!

- Episode #820 of The Art of Manliness - Escape the Safety Trap with Spencer Coursen - I'm quoting this fantastic episode when I bring up the idea of "Food, Flags & Families" for teaching children to seek help. Highly recommend this entire episode to all parents & caregivers!