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3 Parenting Resolutions for the New Year

TAKE CHARGE on 12.28.12



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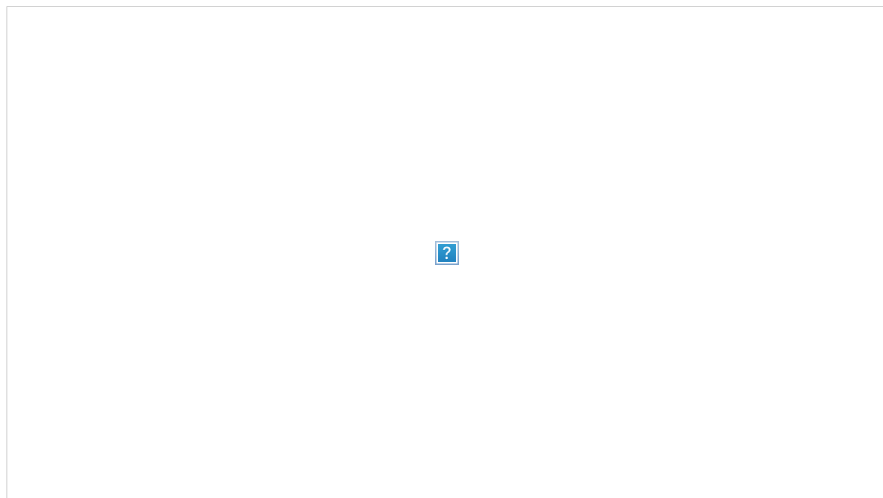


Photo: Charlene Prince Birkeland

I love reading stories and posts about **how people are preparing for the year ahead**. The process of reflecting on the past year and looking at successes, failures, surprises, and challenges always fire me up to make positive--and simple--changes in the new year.

As a parent, I can always find something I'd like to do differently over the next 365 days. For 2013, I invite you to join in and resolve to be a parent by adding "Joy" to your life every single day. Here's how:

Join in the fun. You know those times when your kid asks you to play with him or her and you say no because you have to fold the laundry or vacuum or peel carrots for dinner? You can't be your kid's playmate all of the time; things need to get done. Or maybe you just don't like playing kid games because they're boring. Or silly. Or your worried about being a **helicopter parent** simply because you are not letting your child play independently. But every now and then, *just let it go*. Join in the fun. You'll often hear parents of older kids say, "Some day they'll stop asking." Guess what? It's true. Savor the sweet moments and have fun with them. You'll lighten your heart and your day.

Observe your kids without technology blocking your view. I love taking photos of my kids. But when I'm behind the camera, I'm not fully present. Yes, I'm watching but it's as if I'm an outsider looking for the next shot. Do you have the same habit? Resolve to put down the smart phone or super zoom camera so you can actively observe your kids without a filter. Stop looking for photos, whether to save for posterity or to share on Facebook. Watch and enjoy what's playing out before you as it happens, not after the fact.

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Yes. Say "yes" more often to little--and maybe even a few big--reasonable requests from your children. **Catherine Arveseth** over at **The Power of Moms** calls **these simple requests** "the innocent desires of children's hearts." I just love that phrase. Say yes to reading an extra chapter of a bedtime story. Yes to taking a walk in the rain to splash in puddles. Yes to five more minutes on the swings at the park. Yes to letting them help you in the kitchen, even if it makes your process move a little slower. The power of "yes" is real. Try it!

How do you resolve to be a better parent in 2013? Do you **help your kids create resolutions**?

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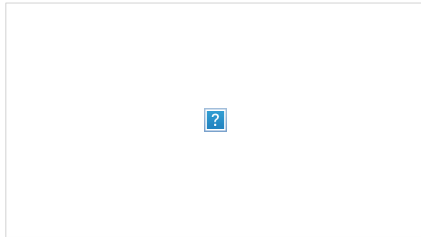
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