

To Whom It May Concern:

They say that everything you need to know you learn in kindergarten and there is not a definitive manual on parenting. Fortunately however for my boys and several of their friends the learning began in pre-school. My 14 year old twin boys are well adjusted due to the outstanding foundation they were provided in pre-school coupled with the training my husband and I received through their pre-school teacher Carolyn Gatzke.

The fundamentals of positive parenting were modeled on a daily basis for all of us to learn from while we were in pre-school. The setting which required our participation one day a week was a learning lab never to be compared to any other. My husband would often ask, "what would Mrs. Gatzke say to do?" We realized quickly it was not the location but the teacher and we were fortunate enough to have Carolyn be our boys teacher and become a part of our lives.

For the children she was a comfort to see her smiling face every morning. For us as parents she was just a phone call away. What we learned was that this was not just a job for her, she truly loved our children and engaged with them in a loving, yet teaching way. Praise was frequent, corrective action with explanation always went hand in hand. Our children learned to express themselves at a young age with more reasoning than children of their age. This is how they were spoken to. They were listened to and respected. They taught us.

As they moved out of the pre-school setting, the need for parenting at the next developmental stage did not stop. This is where we found ourselves calling Carolyn on the phone to ask her for advice about whatever developmental stage our children were approaching. Her wisdom and accuracy continued, and was always a comfort to us as parents. In her calm and reassuring way, she always helped us identify the real issues causing certain behaviors and offered several potential solutions.

My children are now entering high school, and once again I am unprepared for this new stage that I have never been in as a parent. Carolyn continues to be our source, as her knowledge base has grown given her own experience raising a high school student coupled with her formal training through her masters program.

While there is no definitive manual on parenting, we always thought that Carolyn should write a book. However her new endeavor of reaching out to provide parent coaching is even better as the true benefit of learning from her directly cannot be compared to reading a book. I look forward to my own group training that I am setting up with Carolyn for parents of freshman students. I know that once again her wisdom, love of children and down to earth style will continue to keep me grounded through these challenging years ahead. I know she will provide me the confidence that I need that will help me to parent my children in a way that will provide them the opportunity to fully enjoy their high school years so that they may become independent, caring citizens of their community.

Sincerely,



Christina Winting