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Metro Lutheran
Positive Parenting
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TODAY Is the Big Event!

This is the day the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Psalms 118:24

A decade ago, Nancy arrived at her close friend's front door to discover a sign, decorated with a water color of a purple clematis, announcing, "TODAY is the big event!" When Barbie answered her knock, Nancy inquired, "What is the big event?" With a twinkle in her eye and a smile wreathing her face, Barbie declared, "TODAY!" Today. Just being alive to this day. What a wonderful way to live!

Now, Nancy has journeyed for 15 months with multiple myeloma, a bone marrow cancer. With the irrepressible joy and abundant gratitude with which Nancy has marked virtually every day of her life, she found things to celebrate, even in the midst of her battle with this cancer. Chronicled in her daily posts on CaringBridge, she has taught her readers how to live, sharing Barbie's lived wisdom.

But you don't need to have battled cancer or known Barbie to experience today, any day, an ordinary day, as "the big event." If you have a child in your life, you have all you need. Life with children is suffused with joy, with optimism, with eager anticipation, with delight in daily discoveries.

Hayden at age five exploded through the door of our vacation cabin, calling, "Dad! Come here!" Heart pounding, certain that a disaster had befallen his children on a walk with their Aunt Kathryn, Jonathan raced to the door. Hayden announced, "Dad, do you know how many beautiful trees God made for us to enjoy? Do you want to come and hug a tree with me?" For years, Jonathan had teased his sister Kathryn about being a "tree hugger." I have photographic proof that Jonathan and Hayden hugged a tree together! Today was the big event!

Erica at four loved exploring everything on a walk in her neighborhood. She and her brother still remember the giant spider that their beloved neighbor Jim showed them, as he watered his flowers last summer. She crouched to examine it, amazed at its size. For weeks, she stopped by the garden, checking to see whether or not the spider was still there or had returned. Today was the big event!

Bennett, at 18 months, still squeals with glee at every discovery - the face that reappears in peek-a-boo, the magic kingdom under the dining room table, the arrival home of his brother and sister and mother and dad. All of the daily experiences are reasons to celebrate. Even Christmas morning was as delightful for the bags and tissue paper as it was for the gift that emerged. Today is the big event!

Children live with eyes and hearts and minds wide open to the wonder and delight of daily life. It doesn't take expensive tickets or a celebrity emcee to dazzle them. A favorite food, markers and paper, snow on their tongue, a morning snuggle, or a walk to the park can all be the big event. The writer of Psalm 118 captured the same

delight and wonder, declaring that “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” Children are a gift, sent to remind us of all of the gifts God showers on us every day and to announce, “TODAY is the big event.” May it be so for you and yours.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

1. Ask a child, “What makes today special for you?” Then, listen and celebrate. Make sure that you share with the child what has made today special for you.
2. Start a “gratitude journal,” in which you record the things for which you are grateful. Review it before bed and give thanks for all of those things.
3. When another person has made the day special, write a note, draw a picture, call or text or email and let that person know.
4. Tell a child or youth that they make every day special to you.
5. Thank God for all of the little, cherished things that made this day “the big event.”