



Parent Education Speaker Barbara Coloroso “Kids Are Worth It!”



Volume 2 Issue 1

Tuesday, March 23, 2010 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Marshall High School Theater

November 2009

In this issue: Who is Barbara Coloroso? How do I participate? Parenting Tips and Blog

How do I use this newsletter? If you're an **Administrator/Teacher/Day Care Provider**: copy/paste into parent newsletters, forward to PTA/PTO to post a link on their website; **Business**: forward to colleagues, post in breakroom, leave on counter for the public to take a copy; **Individual**: forward to friends.

Who is Barbara Coloroso: Barbara is the author of 5 international bestsellers: *Kids Are Worth It!*; *The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander*; *Just Because It's Not Wrong Doesn't Make It Right*; *Parenting Wit & Wisdom*; *Parenting Through Crisis: Helping Kids in times of Loss, Grief and Change*

Barbara's presentation gives kids the tools to be able to stand up for their own rights while respecting the rights and legitimate needs of others; to handle conflicts nonviolently; to act with integrity when confronted with difficult situations and to develop a personal code (inner moral code) that gives them the wherewithal to do what is right. In presenting to youth, Barbara will draw on decades of work with troubled youth and her wide experience in the areas of conflict resolution and reconciliatory justice. Discussion includes bullying behaviors, the long and short term impact of bullying and how to break the cycle. Barbara uses everyday family situations-from sibling rivalry to teenage rebellion-to demonstrate sound strategies for giving children the inner discipline & self confidence that will help them grow into responsible, resourceful, resilient & compassionate adults

Past parent education speakers: 2009: Dr. David Walsh, *No: Why - Kids of All Ages – Need to Hear It and Ways Parents Can Say It*. 2008: Mary Sheedy Kurcinka, *Sleepless in America: Are Our Children Misbehaving or Missing Sleep?*

How do I participate? With the help of the SW/WC Service Coop, United Way Success by 6 is able to webcast Barbara Coloroso's bullying presentation to schools on March 23, 2010. Students in grades 4-12 will have the opportunity to hear her message. United Way will contact schools to confirm and address any questions.

Barbara Coloroso will host two presentations on March 23, 2010.

- 1. Students in grades 4-12, have the opportunity to watch via webcast. (This reaches 4,500 students at 35 Southwest Minnesota schools.)**

Topic: Barbara's book, *The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander*

Opportunities to learn: Discussion includes bullying behaviors, the long and short term impact of bullying and how to break the cycle.

- 2. Community (Parents/Teachers) 7:00 – 9:00 pm at the Marshall High School Theater**

Topic: Barbara's book, *Kids Are Worth It!*

Opportunities to learn:

- Six critical life messages: I believe in you, I trust you, I know you can handle this, you are listened to, you are cared for, you are very important to me.
- Power struggles – what, how, why and when not to engage
- Three kinds of families - brick wall, jellyfish and backbone
- The RSVP system: Reasonable, simple, valuable, practical consequences
- Seven strategies to growing children's brains

Teachers have the opportunity to earn CEU credits for **each** presentation. Please contact the United Way office to register.

How can I learn more and spread the word?

- Parenting Blog – Each week we are highlighting portions of Barbara's book. Currently we are introducing the types of families: Brick-wall, Jellyfish, and Backbone.
 - Parenting Blog located at: www.unitedwayswmn.org under the Success by 6 tab, in parent education.
- The attached Parenting Tips are in word, so you can copy and paste them into parent newsletters. Please forward the blog address as well.

Parenting Tips

By: Colleen Gengler, (Family Relations Educator, University of Minnesota Extension), Bonnie Wasberg, (ECFE Parent Educator)



Directions: Teachers, feel free to use the entire sheet as a handout for parents. These messages refer to the kinds of families. In order to adhere to copyright laws, please copy the entire portion when you use each one, including: "Source: Barbara Coloroso, *Kids Are Worth It!*, Harper Collins, 2005. The author is coming to Marshall on March 23, 2010."

Three Kinds of Families

Families have their own natures, histories, traditions, and personalities. Even so, we can think of families as being one of three kinds. What makes them different is the kind of structure for each:

- * The "brick-wall" family has a structure that is very rigid. Parents use power and control with no compromise or discussion.
- * The "jellyfish" family has little or no structure. What happens, happens.
- * The "backbone" family has a structure that is firm but flexible and functional.

We all know parents and children influence each other, but parents are a big part of determining the kind of family they will be. So, we can also think of this as three kinds of parents. Which one are you?

Source: Barbara Coloroso, *Kids Are Worth It!*, Harper Collins, 2005. The author is coming to Marshall on March 23, 2010.

For additional descriptions on each kind of family, check out the parenting blog at www.unitedwayswmn.org located under the Success by 6 tab in parent education.

Basic Characteristics:

The Brick-wall Family

In the brick-wall family bricks are the building blocks. That means the "wall" is cemented together making order, control, obedience, and strict observance of rules very important and very rigid. Kids are controlled, manipulated, and made to mind. Feelings are often ignored or ridiculed. Parents direct, supervise, lecture, order, threaten, and remind. The brick-wall family is something like a top-down dictatorship. Parents might say, "It's my way or no way." Children learn little about taking care of themselves, making decisions, or thinking on their own.

The Jellyfish Family

The jellyfish family is the extreme opposite of the brick-wall family. The jellyfish family lacks a firm structure. There is chaos surrounding those events and tasks that make up day to day family life such as mealtime, bedtime, chores, allowances, TV time, and simply getting along as a family. This can happen because parents who came from a brick-wall family say they will never parent as they were parented resulting in few rules or expectations. Or, it can happen in families where parents grew up in a family with no structure and now have little idea on how to parent. In some jellyfish families the parents may have personal problems that get in the way of being effective parents.

The Backbone Family

The backbone family provides consistency, firmness, and fairness. There is a calm and peaceful structure provided for children so they can grow and develop into adults who can think and problem solve for themselves. Parents in the backbone family try to give their children these key messages every day:

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| * I believe in you. | * I trust you. | * I know you can handle situations. |
| * You are listened to. | * You are cared for. | * You are very important to me. |

All family members are given a chance to contribute to what happens within the family. Rules are simply and clearly stated with consequences for irresponsible behavior set ahead of time. The backbone family is flexible to allow for circumstances to change as children mature.

Source: Barbara Coloroso, *Kids Are Worth It!*, Harper Collins, 2005. The author is coming to Marshall on March 23, 2010.

Funding partners as of November 2009: United Way of Southwest Minnesota, Success By Six, Marshall ECCE and Little Cubs Preschool, Share group - Canby, Mary Rademacher - Psychologist, Marshall PTA, Pride in the Tiger Foundation

Supporting partners: Midwest Child Care Resource & Referral

Check out www.unitedwayswmn.org