



## Back to school

with Doctor Bob from the Parenting Centre, Maleny

With the start of another school year upon us, it's a great time to reflect on how parents can best support their children around school issues.

One of the most awe-inspiring things about human beings is that we are all different. Every one of us is unique - we are the only one who can provide our voice and our perspective to the world. It's a beautiful thing that each child is totally different.

Unfortunately, schools are forced to try to teach 25-30 children at one time. Most school teachers I know are amazingly creative and work extremely hard to provide the best experience they can for as many of the children in their class as possible. Still, they are left with a very challenging task, and it requires them to adopt a 'one size fits all' model. Children who are very focused and very compliant tend to be rewarded. Children who have a more diffuse focus, and are less obedient, tend to be punished or given the message there is something wrong with them.

Actually, just because a child doesn't 'fit' at school doesn't mean there is anything wrong with them. It doesn't mean there is anything 'wrong' with the school. It's just that one size, one approach, actually doesn't fit all.

As parents, we don't want our children to feel there is anything wrong with them if things don't go well at school. Even though there are social pressures on us as parents to have our children 'do well' at school academically and not be a 'problem' for the teachers, the best thing we can do for our children is celebrate them exactly as they are.

If school doesn't work for them, for whatever reason, it doesn't mean they are not smart, and it doesn't mean they are not 'good'. The challenge is working with the school, or the individual teacher, to try to meet your child's needs. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. But your advocacy and support for your child means everything. You are still the most important person in your child's emotional world. If we can embrace the fact that a child who earns straight A's and is school captain is no more valuable than a child who is unsuccessful academically or struggles because he or she is not compliant, we can focus on celebrating the unique and perfect individual our child is. And that's the best way to 'grow' children into adults with a strong self-esteem and sense of self worth.

# Babies, Kids & Parents

## Parenting Course at Maleny

Teaches skills and supports families in building more peaceful and loving relationships. P.E.T. is an internationally acclaimed course designed to teach communication and relationship skills. Parents learn to respond empathetically to children and connect before they correct.

They learn ways to get their needs met without using coercion and control. They learn how to build self-esteem, responsibility and resilience in children and resolve family conflicts easily.

Gain more cooperation from kids, create more harmonious relationships, raise responsible resilient kids, and resolve conflicts easily.

The course starts on Wednesday, February 3 and runs for eight weeks from 9.00am to 12.00noon at the Maleny Neighbourhood Centre. The cost of the workbook is \$33.00.

To find out more, contact Wendy McManus at Caloundra & Hinterland Family Support Program on 0423 716 705 or email [wendy@calcomm.org.au](mailto:wendy@calcomm.org.au)

## WIN WIN WIN

It's Back to School time, which can be a minefield of emotions for both parents and children alike. Dr Bob Jacobs, from the Parenting Centre has written a book that might help families navigate these and other challenges.

'Perfect Parents, Perfect Children' is about celebrating the inherent perfection in ourselves and in our children.

Through personal stories of the families Dr Bob has worked with, this book demonstrates that we do not need to 'control' or 'tame' our children, and suggests ideas of how to eliminate power-struggles and put the joy back into parenting.

Thanks to Dr Bob, we have five copies of his book to give away to our readers. To win, be one of our Facebook likers, share this competition post and comment 'shared' below. Competition will be drawn 4.00pm Monday, February 1 and winners notified via Facebook. Prize must be collected from the GC&M News office.