

# Lessons you learned from children

**I**t's hard to explain all the things I've learned from my children. With those two little girls come the greatest feelings of love and pride and optimism that I ever hope to have. My kids have taught me that I have more patience than I thought possible. They've taught me to really and truly appreciate a full night's sleep. From them I've learned to stop trying to "make plans" because surely as I do one will develop a fever, a cough or a rash. We have learned to go with the flow.

Most of all, every day I have the pleasure of watching my kids love life. They live in the moment, and they always seem to make the most of any situation. My children inspire me to try to do the same.

—Kim Whorton Tripp, contributing editor



Thanks to everyone who sent stories. Next month we'll publish pictures of people who look like celebrities. [Deadline was July 15.] See the remaining themes and rules of our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series on page 18.



## To be thankful

About three years ago, God richly blessed our family by sending us my grandson Jayse Turner.

During a warm Saturday in January, Jayse was getting ready to enjoy a picnic of those wonderful Moravian cookies on his Nannie's front porch. First he wanted to thank God for his cookies. For once, I had my camera in

hand at the right moment (photos above).

I am truly grateful for being able to share these captured pictures, as this little guy has captured all our hearts.

Ann Jones  
Westfield, Surry-Yadkin EMC

## It all comes out in the wash

Most of what I learned from my children was to re-learn what I automatically knew as a child. First, don't discriminate. Not only against people, but against outfits, hairstyles and food choices for breakfast. Second, get over it quickly. My children have forgiving spirits and are quick to forgive my transgressions. Third, and the most important, stay loyal to the ones you love. We cannot give or be everything others expect. I fall short of the mark and so do my children.

Remember as the old folks used to say: It will come out in the wash. That includes the baby formula on your favorite dress, the crayon on the wall and the big dent in your car. That's what I've learned.

Wanda Lee  
Fayetteville, South River EMC

### See as children see

In an effort to expose our children to different cultures, we would occasionally invite international missionaries to stay with us while they were visiting our church. On one such occasion, we housed two elementary-aged boys from the African Children's Choir from Kenya.

Our younger son, Scott, was small for his age and often teased because of it. Imagine his thrill when James, one of our guests, stood eye-to-eye with him. Scott's baby blue eyes looked into James' black eyes and they both smiled the same toothless grin. They ran up to me to display the pleasure of their new discovery.

Scott gleefully exploded with, "Look Mom! We are eight years old, the same height, the same shoes, and we even wear the same size. We must be twins!" This was rather ironic since they could not have looked more different. Scott's fair-skinned freckled face with strawberry blonde hair versus James' tightly curled black hair and black skin were much more opposites than twins.

I learned that day that we all need to see others through a child's eyes—embracing the similarities rather than dwelling on the differences.

*Marie Ogram*

*Matthews, Union Power Cooperative*

### Going out to play

In this fast-paced world, we all have more to do in a day than we can get done, but most of us do not want to put things off.

My boys have shown me that by leaving a few things not done and going outside with them to toss the Frisbee or the ball will not kill me, but it will make my day seem worthwhile. Just by being able to play, smile and laugh with them, this makes it all worthwhile. It is good for their health, not to mention mine as well.

They are growing up way too fast, and I am getting older, too. I thank God I am even able to get out there and do things with them, and that they want me out there with them. Little things mean a lot. I hope when I am gone they will look back and remember when Mom would come out and play. I remember when my Dad did.

*Debbie Trull*

*Stanfield, Union Power Cooperative*

### Stop to smell the roses

I allowed my life to become so complicated with busy-ness and just everyday living, even exercising was just another item on my list of things to do. One day when my daughter and I decided to exercise by walking around beautiful Lake Junaluska in Waynesville she taught me something. We were coming to the end of our fast-paced walk and I was thinking, "Good. One more task completed." Then I watched my little girl stop and smell each of the many different types of roses planted along the sidewalk. She commented on each of the different fragrances and then asked, "Mommy, why don't you ever stop to smell the roses?" Her question hit me like a ton of bricks. My tasks were no longer tasks but opportunities to stop and smell the roses and appreciate and admire life and the beautiful creation that surrounds us.

*Cindy Schick*

*Clyde, Haywood EMC*

### Living all over again

What I consider weeds, my kids will look at as the most beautiful bouquet they can give. This is true with everything in life. We should all look at what we might first consider "weeds" and find the beauty.

Hallmark could never make a more beautiful card than the one that is handmade with broken crayons and a lot of heart and soul.

My kids are a mirror, and no matter what I say or do, it will come back to me "out of the mouths of babes," and I can see myself as others see me. Most of the time this happens at the most inopportune moments.

We have not one go-around in life, but two, three, etc. The one we live ourselves and the one we live through our children the first time they experience something that we have long taken for granted.

All stress and heartache can be solved with a smile or an "I love you, Mom."

What my single friends consider to be a burden is the most precious gift God can give. I wouldn't trade it for anything.

*Lori Poole*

*Sparta, Blue Ridge EMC*

### Not necessarily yours

My 3-year-old nephew Jamie was visiting me one summer. He found a red ball in the road, picked it up and started playing with it. After a while we turned to go home and he said, "I'm going to put the ball back where I found it."

"Don't you want to play with it?" I said.

"I want to put it back where I found it because it isn't mine." I thought for his age how mature he is. Jamie made me realize what you find isn't necessarily yours.

*Judith Ball*

*Morehead City, Carteret-Craven Electric*

### To be loving

The deepest and most sincere love on earth is the best way I can describe what my children and grandchildren have taught me over the years. They remind me everyday that what I say and do could mold their lives forever.

When my daughter gave birth to my little granddaughter Celina, I had serious doubts that my grandson Ben (then 8) would be able to cope with all the changes he would be going through with a younger sibling. He had been the center of attention, being the only child and grandchild. Well, he sure did teach me a thing or two. He has been the most devoted, unselfish, caring and loving brother in the world. As you can see in the picture, they have genuine love and devotion for each other.

*Barbara Hawks*

*Statesville, EnergyUnited*



*I doubted my grandson Ben would cope well when his sister Celina came along eight years later. I was wrong.*

## Send us your best—Earn \$50

Here are the themes in our “Nothing Could Be Finer” series. Send us your stories and pictures about these themes. If yours is chosen for publication, we’ll send you \$50. You don’t have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

### October 2005 My Favorite Photo

North Carolina people, places, things. Digital ones must be 300 dpi and at least 4 by 6 inches.

Deadline: August 15

### November 2005 It’s the Thought That Counts

The dumbest gift you ever received.

Deadline: Sept. 15

### December 2005 Holiday Mishaps

Those holiday plans that just didn’t work out as you hoped they would.

Deadline: Oct. 15

#### The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. One entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
4. E-mailed or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay \$50 for each submission published. We retain reprint rights.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can’t pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don’t agree to this.)
9. Send to: Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616  
Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com  
Or through the Web: www.carolinacountry.com

## Learning from students

I’m 24 years old and have 17 children, or at least that is what I tell everyone! You have to keep a sense of humor when you’re a school teacher.

Being a first-year teacher in fourth grade, I learned many lessons from each student. Video games (Game Cube and X-Box, not Nintendo) and MTV/VH1 shows (“Cribs,” “TRL,” “Real World”) rule their world. Today’s kids know more about “life” than some doctors, nurses or police officers.

However, kids long for good old-fashioned love and attention. Many people say, “Oh, she’s just a teacher.” They do not understand what real teaching looks like. Eight hours (really 15!) of everyday are spent teaching the curriculum and having “no child left behind,” but that is only part of reality.

The real lesson that I learned (from 17 teachers) was that I am more than “just a teacher.” I practice many professions such as counselor, surrogate parent, motivational speaker, nurse, fashion expert, relationship specialist, psychologist, cheerleader, coach (especially football), disciplinarian, mentor and friend. On the last day of school, I received several notes, letters and cards. One letter said, “I’m so lucky to have you as my teacher. Thank you for all you’ve done. I love you like a Mom.”

Being a teacher is a tiring, emotional and exhausting roller-coaster of a profession. However, it is an awesome responsibility, and I love learning lessons everyday.

Maria Merritt

Oakboro, Union Power Cooperative



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## Help, loyalty, honesty and fixing things

I grew up an only child and never knew what I was missing not having a brother or sister. I have a 14-year-old daughter and a 12-year-old son. They have taught me so much. When they were little and my boy started walking, my daughter looked out for him. She would grab him by the collar and drag him out of trouble, or pull him to where he was supposed to be. So, lesson number one: Family looks out for each other.

I learned that the best gift is time spent together. Lesson number two: Spend time together.

Another thing is that Mom is the glue that holds it all together. When everything falls apart, Mom can fix it—and if she can’t, Dad can.

You can tell Mom anything, ask her anything, and she’ll tell you the truth.

These are just a few of the lessons that my children teach me and continue to teach me everyday.

Wendy Teague

Granite Falls, Blue Ridge Electric