

Parenting with Fran

It's hard to believe that I have been gone from Parenting Place for over 3 months. I am settling into my new life and enjoying dance classes, walking, camping, reading, socializing and creating both a small parent coaching practice and a seasonal peanut brittle business. When I am out and about in Boulder at the Farmer's Market or on Pearl Street, I often have the good fortune of running into Parenting Place families. I love seeing everyone and of course getting lots of hugs.

It was, thus, with very intense emotions that I recently attended the memorial service for Laura Swan. Over 4 years ago Laura and her baby son Mikey joined my Infant Group at Parenting Place along with at least a dozen other parents. These families stayed together as a group, forming strong friendships and support systems. This time the other parents were present to celebrate the life of Laura, offering cherished memories of their beloved friend. For those of you who might not know, Laura was killed by her ex-husband. It was a tragic and shocking event that has left all of us feeling the heavy weight of sorrow and loss. For those of you who might need extra support or merely an empathetic listener, please contact Louise Haimowitz, LCSW, at the Parenting Place. Louise took my place as the social worker and group facilitator and is a very warm, kind and insightful woman.

Since I will be sharing my thoughts about parenting with you each month, I wish to start this monthly column with my memories of Laura as a mother of 2 preschool aged boys. Watching Laura interact and play with Mikey and Tommy, I often fondly remembered my own days as a young mom with my little boys, Ben and Joe. Although Laura had her share of parenting frustrations like all of us, she also truly enjoyed her boys and shared in their enthusiasm for life. She allowed them to get messy at the art table while they experimented with paints and play dough, and watched as they dug in the sandbox and madly pedaled the riding toys on the playground. Laura allowed her sons to make mistakes and occasionally get hurt while they joyfully dashed around experiencing the wonders of childhood. Laura was a wise mom who knew that young children are curious, active, and love to test their capabilities. She knew that children learn through play and experimentation. Laura was a great mom and friend to many other parents. We will all truly miss her.

I do hope to hear from some of you. Please feel free to contact me about parenting or grandparenting issues. Each month I will select a couple of topics to write about. You can send in requests to renee@boulderparenting.org or parentingwithfran@gmail.com.

Fondly,
Fran Eichenauer, MSW