

Parent touts foundation laid by 'Love and Logic' classes

ON THE MOM BEAT

When the Coxe child, they were outnumbered and in need of reinforcement.

"We were feeling out of control, and looking for help. On recommendation, we tried Keri Maughan's 'Love and Logic' classes," said Michelle Cox of Mesa. "I had read several parenting books and been exposed to lots of parenting ideas, but I needed specific ways to implement these concepts. Keri's classes are amazing; she not only tells you parenting ideas, she shows you how to put them into practice.

"Her classes are full of role plays for every situation. She shows how to react appropriately to all kinds of child responses, what to do when you get stuck

or when things don't go as expected, and answers every 'what if' you can think of."

Learning the specific parenting tools has been extremely helpful for Cox, but the family has changed because the classes have helped Cox become empathetic, calm and in control during difficult situations.

"I now have the ability to step back and take a breath, see my child for who he really is and respond in a loving way. We have such a strong parent/child relationship, even though we still deal with many difficult things. It was such a relief for me to know that clamping down hard wasn't the only option. We now help our children by setting limits without being tyrants," Cox said.

That is the goal of Love and Logic par-

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enting.

"Most of us can set limits but can't enforce them without getting angry. Love and Logic allows children to learn from the natural consequences of their actions and the loving limits their parents put in place," Maughan said.

Maughan's goal is to teach basic life skills to parents that work with children of all ages. She wants parents to respond to their children with respect, kindness and empathy, while still holding the child accountable and teaching him or her a better way. She reminds parents often that there is a difference between correcting and teaching.

For instance, if a toddler constantly takes toys from friends during a play date, some teaching needs to take place.

"Before a friend comes over, the parent and child need to role-play the upcoming situation (let the parent be the friend and child be herself) and practice sharing many times in different situations," Maughan said. "That is teaching, not correcting. During the play date when you see your child sharing, reinforce that good behavior verbally. If you see her fall into selfish behavior, remind her what

you have practiced. If she won't share, get down on eye level and say, 'Oh, how sad that you can't share and have fun with us, you must need a little bedroom time.' Let her be in her room while you play with the friend. She can return when she is ready to share. Welcome her back with open arms. Also, if there is a specific toy that causes the problem, remove the toy from the playing. ...

"No one likes to be demanded to do something, so give choices and have shared control. ... Help them find the joy in a job well done. Love and Logic is really about parents teaching children how to become great, kind, loving, and respectful members of a community through empathy and example."

Next week we'll show how Love and Logic works for preteens, teens and adult children. Maughan teaches her Love and Logic classes at San Tan Learning Center in Gilbert. To register, visit www.keri.maughan.com.

Brooke Romney lives in Higley with her husband, Mike, and their three young sons. Send comments and story ideas to brookeromney@cox.net.

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