Living With Children

By John Rosemond

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Q: My 5-year-old has had eating issues since he was an infant. When I introduced solid food at six months, he began rejecting most vegetables. His feeding problems have worsened since then to the point, today, where he will eat only breaded chicken strips, Tater Tots, and vanilla ice cream (but only a certain brand). We worked with a feeding therapist for about six months but made no appreciable progress. She said he has a form of sensory integration disorder, which she explained as his brain is wired such that foods don't taste to him the way they taste to most people. So, even certain sweet foods taste bitter to him, for example, and he will gag and even throw up at the mere sight of them. In addition, he reacts negatively to certain textures. My mom says I was a picky eater, so he apparently inherited a tendency in this direction from me. I'm grasping at straws here, but do you have any suggestions?

A: First, you need to know that there is zero confirmable evidence with which to back up the claims made by the occupational therapist. She cannot prove her contention that the "wiring" between your son's taste buds and his brain is abnormal, nor can she can't prove he inherited some "tendency" from you (contrary to popular belief, no one has proven that "tendencies" are inherited). What the OT told you is typical of the pseudo-scientific babble dispensed by professionals who can't see outside the boundaries of the medical model they were taught in graduate school.

My very simple belief is that most if not all childhood behavior "disorders" are nothing more than long-standing bad habits. In some cases, it's relatively easy to figure out how these habits developed while in other cases, it's anyone's best guess. At some point in the development of a certain bad habit, the child in question intuits (i.e. he cannot explain his thought process) that the behavior in question – in this case, refusing to eat certain foods – is a means by which he can control other people, cause them to treat him as a special case.

Over the course of my career, I've been consulted by dozens of parents about "feeding issues." When parents cooperate and follow through as prescribed, my approach has never failed. It's based on the commonsense notion that children will do what is to their advantage and, conversely, stop doing what is no longer to their advantage.

For example, I once had parents tell their preschool-age son that his picky eating (after six months in a feeding therapy program he was eating about five foods) was due to a lack of adequate sleep – that when a child doesn't get enough sleep, taste buds stop working properly and food tastes weird. In other words, I had them begin their son's "therapy" by redefining the problem in terms a young child could understand.

The solution became obvious: When he was unable to eat the food put on his plate at the evening meal (one teaspoon portions of what everyone else was eating), it simply meant he needed to catch up on his sleep. In that event, he was excused from the table and went to bed, lights out, curtains drawn. He did not like that, not one bit (pun!).

In less than a week, his repertoire of acceptable foods went from five to fifteen. The last time I checked, he was eating anything his parents put on his plate and usually asking for seconds. Mind you, a few nights of early bedtime "therapy" accomplished more than six months in a feeding therapy program where he received attention and concern for acting like his tongue and brain weren't properly connected.

Commonsense trumps pseudo-science once again!

That's the prize. Go for it!

Family psychologist John Rosemond: johnrosemond.com, parentguru.com.

Sunshine your fundamental right

Sunshine Week, March 10-16, is a national initiative spearheaded by the American Society of News Editors to educate the public about the importance of open government and the dangers of excessive and unnecessary secrecy. It was established in March 2005 with funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

JIM ZACHARY

For government to be of, by and for the people it must be out in front of the people.

The theme for Sunshine Week 2019 is simply, "It's your right to know."

The reason it's your right to know is that it's your government. From the courthouse, to the statehouse to the White House, it is your right to know what government is up to. Every deliberation by city council, county commission, the General Assembly or U.S. Congress is the people's business. Every penny spent by local, state and federal government is your money.

Every document held in the halls of government belongs to you. Transparency is not, or at least should not be, partisan. Access to government meetings and public documents should never be arduous or even controversial.

Government derives all of its powers from the public and is answerable to the public. It is unfortunate state and federal laws are needed to protect the public's right to know. Of course, we know those laws are needed and more often than not must be leveraged by people requesting even the most basic information from elected and appointed officials.

No branch of government should exempt itself from freedom of information laws and no person in government should seek to circumvent those laws.

Accessing government information and attending deliberative meetings should simply be viewed as democracy in action and not as an adversarial relationship between the governing and the governed.

Access laws are not media laws.

Every person should have free and open access. The right to know is not only an American right, it is fundamentally right. Government secrecy that goes beyond national security is fundamentally wrong.

So records custodians at city hall, the county courthouse, with the public school system or at the state capitol must not bristle when a person asks for public records. The records requestors are simply asking for a copy of what belongs to them already.

Records requestors should not create an unnecessarily hostile relationship when making requests. A records request and fulfillment should be a basic, and ordinary, transaction between government and the public it serves. City council, county commission, the board of education, the General Assembly and its committees should not balk at the public's right to attend meetings and should not look for every excuse to retreat into an executive session or closed door meeting.

Attending meetings, sitting in on deliberations, understanding not only what decisions are reached but how those decisions are reached are all things which are simply basic American rights, fundamental to living in an open and free society. In our politically charged, polarized, vitriolic climate there is very little conservatives and progressives can agree on.

The public's right to know is one thing that everyone, both in and out of government, both left and right leaning, and at the local, state and federal levels, should agree on.

We are the government.

The government is us.

It is, therefore, everyone's fundamental right to know what government is, and is not, doing.

Jim Zachary is CNHI's Deputy National Editor, regional editor for its Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas newspapers and Editor of The Valdosta (Ga.) Daily Times. He is the vice-president of and FOI trainer for the Georgia First Amendment Foundation. He can be reached at jzachary@cnhi.com blog: transparencyprojectofGeorgia.com @OpenGovGa

Obituaries

EDWARD EARL COBB

Edward Earl "Ed" Cobb, 68, died Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at his home in West, MS. Visitation was held at 10:00 a.m. until service time at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, March 9, 2019 at Southern Funeral Home in Lexington. Burial was in Odd Fellows Cemetery in Lexington.

Ed was born in Belzoni, MS to Mae Sue Rodgers Cobb and Harper Cobb. Ed was a catfish farmer and a member of 1st Presbyterian Church in Belzoni.

Survivors are his wife Dee Dee Word Cobb; sons, Ward Cobb (Leigh Ann) of Meridian, Brent Cobb (Amanda) of Richland, Jason Cobb of Madison, Jeff Sides (Emily) of Cleveland and Bailey Britt of West; daughter Amber Ford (Jason) of Cleveland; brothers, Leon Cobb and Richard Cobb both of Ridgeland; sister Annie Ruth Millsaps of Greenwood; and ten grandchildren.

CHARLES W. BURRELL

Charles W. Burrell, 84, died Saturday, March 9, 2019 at Baptist Medical Center in Jackson, MS. Funeral services were held at Southern Funeral Home in Durant. Burial was in Brister Cemetery in West, MS.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, 4:00 P.M.

LEBANON M.B.C.

Lebanon M.B. Church in Lexington will celebrate Lebanon Inspirational Choir 25th Year Anniversary on Sunday, March 31 at 3 p.m.

3-7,14

SOUTHSIDE M.B.C.

Southside M.B. Church in Lexington will host its annual Men and Women Day Program on Sunday, March 17 at 2 p.m.

3-7,14

SWEET HOME M.B.C.

Sweet Home M.B. Church will celebrate its Second Year Pastor Anniversary of Pastor and Mrs. Otis Anthony II on Sunday, March 17, at 2:30 p.m.

3-7,14

DURANT LIBRARY

Durant Public Library will host a job skills workshop by Families First on Tuesdays starting on March 5. Participants can learn how to set goals, create a resume, dress for success and rock an interview.

Call Durant Library at 662-653-3451 for information.

3-7,14

HEALTH COUNCIL

The Lexington Mayoral Health Council will meet on Wednesday, March 20 at 10 p.m.

3-14

ODD FELLOWS

The Lexington Odd Fellows Cemetery Board met in February and decided that all flower arrangements that are wilted or unsightly will removed twice a year, in March and October. Flowers should be discarded in the bins provided not thrown over the fence.

3-14,21

HOLLY GROVE

Holly Grove M.B. Church in Lexington will host its Pastor and Wife's 25th Year Anniversary on Sunday, March 24 at 2:30 p.m.

3-14,21

MACEDONIA M.B.C.

Macedonia M.B. Church in Lexington will host its Annual Family and Friends Day Program on Sunday, March 17 at 11 a.m.

3-14

WEST GROVE

West Grove M.B. Church in Lexington will its Pastor and Wife's 9th Year Appreciation Service on Sunday, March 24 at 2:30 p.m.

3-14,21

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