Living With Children

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logical disorders and have Other than the headbanging, he's a happy, verbal, his room for several hours banging their heads on the at a stretch. I'm blessed and worried at the same time. Can you give me some reassuring words?

A: That's not an unreasonable request. Try these: Far as I can tell, you have nothing to worry about. Hold that thought. I'll come back to it in a moment or three.

It's a fascinating fact, human beings are the only species that need – or have recently come to thinking they need - speciallyhighly-evolved, trained, super- sages like myself to help them navigate the fundamentally simple, non-intellectual process of raising a child to competent adulthood. Since 1970, more than 100,000 books on how to raise children have hit the market. Around twenty were written by yours truly (with more to come). God help me.

The irony in all of this is the more the experts have published, the more difficult childrearing has become. A good part of the problem has to do with the inherently progressive nature of the publishing business. To be published, an author must come up with a new idea, a novel approach, something "fresh." It follows that the more parenting books, articles, columns, and so on a parent reads, the more the parent is bombarded with new ideas and approaches, and the more confused and anxious the parent becomes. Too much information!

To continue...and the more confused and anxious the parent becomes, the more the parent reads in a never-ending and vain search for the new idea that will end all new ideas. This craziness is why I have a job. Like I said.

Unlike most people of my ilk, however, I am a proponent of the ancient kisaii school of wisdom parenting, kisaii standing for keep-it-simple, as-it-is. In the raising of a child, the simplest approach (unconditional love and an equal

Q: When my two-year-old measure of unequivocal gets angry, he sometimes leadership) and the simplest gets down and bangs his explanations rule. You, head on the floor. This hap- dear mother, are thinking pens two or three times a too much. You are indeed week, generally speaking. blessed! He entertains him-He's not bruised himself, self for hours? That's as yet, but I don't know how clear a sign of good devellong that's going to last. To opment as any. But, keep in make matters worse, I've mind, nearly all toddlers are made the mistake of read- haunted with episodes of ing about various psycho- kick-out-the-jams insanity.

I flunked Diagnosing started to obsess about the Across the Miles 101 in autism spectrum thing, grad school, but I can tell you that two-year-olds being the nut cases they can and very imaginative child, become in a heartbeat – are able to play by himself in prone to doing things like

floor when they don't get their way. I might be concerned if he was oblivious to hurting himself, but the absence of bruising and the fact he's still acting normatively in every other respect (he's not acting like a drunk, e.g.) suggests strongly that he knows when to stop.

To bring this chapter in his life to a close, draw a chalk circle on the floor in a side room. Tell him his doctor says he can bang his head all he wants, but only inside the circle. If he starts banging, take him to the circle (drag gently), say, "Bang your head here, my love," and walk away.

This too will pass. I give it two weeks, tops. See how simple that was?

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



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