

Passages Press



It's a Thin Line

Candace Barry, Lewiston

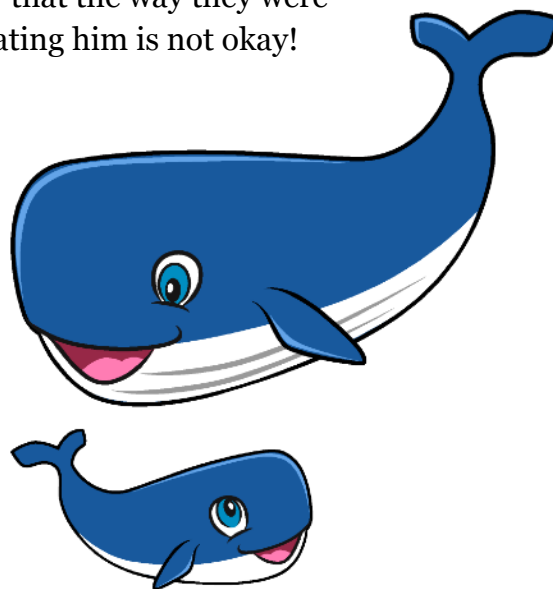
Sometimes it's hard to know if you need to be a parent or friend to your child. Some say you can't be a friend and a parent, and others say that you can. The definition of parent is a mother or a father, but I believe a more accurate description is someone who is there for the child, to guide them, and is present in the child's life. The definition of a friend is someone who knows you and has a bond with you. That's a very vague description, and can be taken in so many directions. A good friend can be described as someone who supports you, and doesn't let you do the wrong thing. When you look at the definitions of friend and parent you can definitely be a friend and parent.

The problem most people see is that they look at it like you're turning your child into one of your friends. No matter how you look at it, it seems like a thin line, because you have to give trust, as well as discipline them. When you have to punish your child, they don't see you as a friend. They usually are very mad. When they finally understand why you're doing this, then things will start to make more sense to them. Wanting them to trust you, be honest with you, and feel safe with you isn't bad though. Doing this is complicated, but it can be done.

A Dad and a Friend

Devon Danforth, Swanville

I feel like there is no reason why a parent can't be a friend and a good parent at the same time. As for me, I could be a parent and a good friend to my son. Say that he has friends that he has had a confrontation with. When he comes back home and is very upset he will need someone to talk to or someone to hang out with and do fun things with. Then yes, I will be a dad AND a good friend who will hang out with my son and have a good time. I will also let him know that his friends at school will learn one day that the way they were treating him is not okay!





Falling Asleep

Haley Breton, Lewiston

Parenting tests your patience a lot. You never know when there is something wrong and you have to guess everything.

A new skill I have tried with my son is a bedtime routine. Before I started doing this Zayden would sleep fine at night up until he started rolling over, and then it was hard to get him to go to sleep. I found a page about sleep training on a Facebook mommy group. It is recommended that you lay your baby down and let them cry it out no longer than ten minutes, and if they don't fall asleep rock them. At first it wasn't working as well as I hoped it would. After a couple weeks of trying, it is starting to work. Some nights he still needs to be rocked and talked to, but most nights he has been doing better.

Parenting is an amazing thing, and also hard and tiring, but I would never change anything about getting pregnant and having my son though.

Bedtime Battles

Katelynn Davis, Lewiston

I thought bedtime would get easier as they got older.

First, it's too dark.

Night light? Done.

Now she doesn't like the light, she wants music.

She wants it with words, and not too loud or too quiet.

Not one story, but three.

Not the big stuffie, the little one.

But wait that's too little, she wants a different one.

Now she needs to pee and wants a drink but that isn't allowed,

or wetting the bed happens.

Now insert a mild tantrum and some colorful language.

Momma is now upset and annoyed.

An hour passes by of this back and forth and this and that.

But wait can it be?

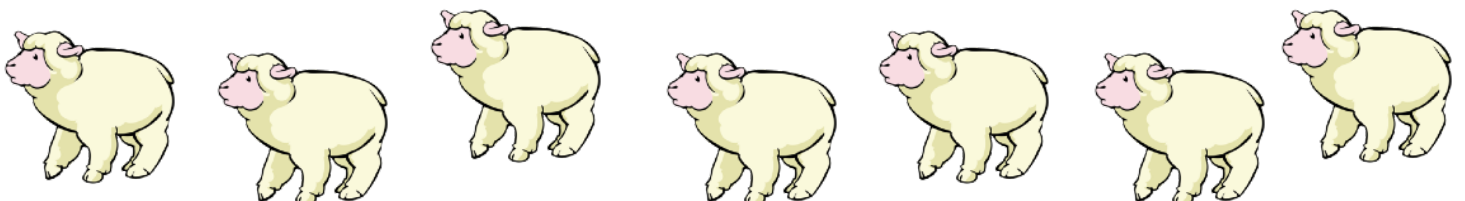
The three year old who claimed, "I'm not tired" is asleep.

Now momma is strung out and exhausted and has zero energy

for all the other things that need to be done before the next day.

Emily- 1

Mom- 0



Parenting Makes Me Crazy

Brianna Robinson, Lewiston

Being a mother is one of the most rewarding jobs I have ever had. I wake up every morning and have a purpose, something that keeps me motivated and happy, and that's my children.

However, there are days when it's really hard. Sometimes I work at night and don't get home until early morning when the boys are already bright-eyed and bushy-tailed for the day, and I still have to stay awake and maintain a smile through the day to show my children that it's only ever a good thing to be a hard worker. Sometimes, when I'm at the end of my rope, and Stormy is having a cranky day, I have to be patient and understanding, so he knows that it's okay to show your emotions. Parenting is a lot of give and take, and it takes a lot of teaching yourself how to keep the balance between being yourself and being a mother, but I wouldn't trade it for the world.

The hardest thing about parenting and the one thing that drives me absolutely wild, is that there is never enough time for anything. There's never enough food, the boys are super grubby, and a hectic amount of housework to be done, but never enough time to handle everything at once. There's never enough time to stop and take a second to enjoy ourselves like bake or draw or play outside or anything! I feel like my kids are growing up right before me and I'm still not standing close enough to see it.

In a world that's scary and judgmental, my only saving grace are my sons. But, I feel like I'm missing out on the best parts of them because I'm so busy parenting, which is ironic, to say the least. Ugh. Parenting really drives me crazy.

Organizing My Time

Lila Acheson, Indian Twp.

How you keep your home clean and organized is obviously an individual preference, but the way I like to do it is by making a schedule that plans out what I am going to do for the day. This way I know how much time I have in between each thing to get other less important things done. As far as it goes for doing it everyday, I just try and make it a habit of seeing how certain things each day spark my motivation.

What I like to do every morning, after I am fully awake, is the dishes. I notice that a lot of the time when I start with the dishes it motivates not only me, but the others around me to start to help do stuff too. Obviously it doesn't work out like that every morning, but the more and more I try to stay persistent, it becomes more second nature.



Working Out

Brandi Bailey, Princeton

I am creative about my workout, because I make it up as I go. Working out makes me feel good inside, and it makes me feel like I accomplished something. I like to be able to go do something I like to do that I'm ready and willing to do. I like going down in my basement to work out because it's my time to enjoy myself all alone and away from everyone.

The Perfect Escape

Marion Webster, Gorham

Reading can be enjoyable because you get to picture everything the way you want. In my opinion, it is better than watching a movie. There are so many more details in a book than there are in a movie. When you read a book, it's like a get-away or an escape. You get to travel to another world and take a break from the real world for a while. Reading can help open your mind. You get to feel what the character feels. When you sit down to watch a movie, you're not taken into a different world like you are when reading a book. Reading can be a great coping skill when you're feeling stressed or anxious, because it gives you the option to take a break and really focus on something else.



Look Again

Savanah Doak-Turner, Cushing

The main reasons why I read are because a) I get lost in the book, and b) it helps me find some "inner peace." By that I mean, it helps me relax, and takes my mind off things for a short while. Other people may read because they "have to," or because they are "bored." I've noticed that since I've started reading more that I am able to focus on more things, and can multitask like no other at work.

When I first read the back of the book called, *Look Again*, by Lisa Scottoline I

immediately knew I was going to like the book. Just by reading the back of the book, it drew me in, and had me wondering. This book was exciting, because no matter how many chapters, or pages I read I was wanting to read more.

I love reading about adoptions, whether they are fiction, or nonfiction. This book helped me to understand that some adoptions are very tricky, and dangerous. *Look Again* had me wondering the entire time I was reading it. It was almost like I was living the book myself. When I read I like to pretend that I am the characters, and I felt so much "worry" while reading this book as each page got more and more interesting. I didn't connect to any of the characters as I have never been in the situation that the characters in the book were in. I would definitely recommend this book to ANYONE that loves suspense, and loves to read about adoptions.

Peek-a-Boo, I Love You!

Autumn Francis Stevens, Pleasant Point

My daughter takes the lead when we are reading her favorite book, "*Peek-a-boo*" *I Love You!*" It has little animals under a pop-up on every page and she picks up the pages on her own because she knows now that something is under there. What keeps her interested in the book is all the colors and different pictures. She loves looking at different things. Every page rhymes with the animals and I think she likes hearing the expression in my voice change.

She makes me smile every time she sees me walk through the door because she gets excited and starts kicking her feet and raises her hands for me to hold her. I think my daughter is going to grow up to be very adventurous and energetic.

Infant Cues

Elizabeth Hustus, Searsport

Some non-verbal cues that I notice in my niece Avery when she's hungry and ready for milk, are mouth opening, trying to put things in her mouth, rolling around, and reaching towards things. When she gets tired she rubs her eyes, wants to be held, and blinks more than usual. When Avery wants to be held, she sits at my feet with her hands reaching toward me. When she wants to be put down, she wiggles and squirms. You can gather a lot of information just from body movement.

Some non-verbal cues that I notice in my daughter Kennedy, are kicking, squirming, and clenching her fists when she wants to be fed. When she is tired her eyes get heavy and she puts her right arm up by her ear for comfort. This is something that she has done even in the womb. When Kennedy moves her head and eyes while squirming, she simply wants a change of scenery. I've noticed that she's very curious about new things and a lot of the time she gets bored with just sitting in one spot. She quite frequently wants to be walked around, look at herself in the mirror, or look outside. When Kennedy gets engaged with my actions she smiles, raises her eyebrows, and opens her eyes nice and wide. I know every time that Kennedy is about to poop because she flares her nostrils, stares at me and grunts.

In the video I watched about newborn cues, I noticed many similarities between the baby cues they showed and what I've noticed in both Avery and Kennedy. For example, when Avery has gas or needs to be changed, she gets uncomfortable and fussy. She squirms and moves her arms until her needs are met. This goes for Kennedy as well, The hunger cue in the

video shows babies putting their hands in their mouth and sucking on anything within reach and moving their tongue, even diving for nipples. Kennedy has shown all of these cues. She sucks on her fist and arm when she's hungry. She sticks out her tongue and has even tried to dive for her dad's nipple when she wants milk.

Everything He Needs

Brooklyn Leigh, Washington

I've learned that all parents have different techniques and teaching methods for their kids. They respond differently to their child as they

grow. Looking back, I remember my mom being firm with punishments as I grew older. When I think back to how my parents parented, they were strict with me because I was the first born and my mom was very protective. My dad was more lenient with me because he didn't want to be the bad guy. I watched my sister with my nephew and she was lenient with her son.

Now, being a parent myself, I wouldn't copy anything from anyone. Now that I'm older, I thank my parents for the boundaries that they set. It made me more responsible as a parent. I want to give my son a great home to grow up in. I want to provide him with everything he ever needs. There's nothing that I am going to do the same, because every parent takes care of their child in a different way. Most parents are overprotective of their children and we want to try to make sure that nothing bad happens to them.

I have learned that my child needs me as much as I need him. He depends on me. I'm his role model. I need him to love me as much as I love him.



Childhood

Gayle Wood, Machias

My wild little girls are beyond anything I have yet to encounter. They make me proud, happy, and most importantly loved!

Being outside is Coraline's favorite thing! Her bicycle and ride-on toy are her first choice to play with. She gets a thrill from riding and then quickly turns to foraging for natural things and playing in the dirt! She is always asking questions and really listening to your reply. Cora has a great future! She'll be one smart kindergartener soon!

Violet is my sensitive babe. The thunder and lightning frightens her, and the moon is also



just as scary. She's gathering more knowledge everyday and learning all the time. Her vocabulary has recently gone through the roof

and she is putting four-word sentences together. She is only two-years-old and she's quite smart. Violet enjoys snuggles, sharing food, bath time, and shopping the most!!

When I was a child I loved to climb trees, ride my bike, and forage for water, dirt, flowers, leaves, and wild herbs to mix together. I liked watching bugs and how they interacted with each other, and observing owls, birds, foxes, and farm animals. I love everything about the outside world around us, because it holds so much beauty and wonder! It makes me feel free and unconfined. Away from all the problems of my day, I still use nature as a natural stress reliever and antidepressant.

Infant Care Log

Cassidy Priest, Swanville

Something new I've noticed about my baby is that he can roll over really easily now. Another thing I've noticed is that he can hold his own bottle, and put his binky in his mouth by himself when he's done eating.

One of the hardest things about being a parent is getting up in the middle of the night when you are super exhausted.

One thing I want to be different from my own experience of growing up is moving all the time and having parents who fight 24/7.

Something I've been wondering about my baby is when he is going to start crawling. He has been trying for so long but he just can't get the hang of it.

One way having a baby has changed me is I would rather stay home than go do anything. I used to want to be out and about all day and all night. Now that I have a baby I would rather go home and go to bed.

Something I love about my baby is the weird cute noise he makes when he is laughing. I don't know how to explain what it sounds like but it kind of sounds like a hiccup. I have lots of videos of him making this noise while laughing.



Broken, But Holding On

Mikayla Desruisseaux, Sanford

I am the happy one, who likes to hang out with my daughter.

I'm the hyper-crazy one, who might cry at night.

I am the defiant one, who would never stop doing anything.

I am the one with the scars and their secrets.

I am the messed up one who thinks everyone is against me.

I am the helpless one, who can't change who I am or how I feel.

I am the hurt one, but much more hurt on the inside.

I am the one with the scars, and their angry message is: I've been hurt a lot and don't trust easily.

I am the strong one, who is determined to become the girl I've always dreamed of.

I am a dreamer, who imagines a different life, imagines a time when things weren't so hard, when I didn't have a care in the world.

Say, "YES!"

Madison Dorais, Buxton

I read an article in *Psychology Today*, by Beth Kurland about saying, "yes" rather than saying, "no" all the time. Kurland said she wanted to become more healthy by eating the right foods and exercising in her article, *Want to Change a Behavior? - Find Your "YES!"* In the article, a psychologist named Kelly McGonigal said that by saying yes more, it will make your life, actions, and attitude more

positive rather than negative.

Researcher, Dr. Kristen Neff, said she read a book that changed the way she went after her goals. She said that after she read it, she wanted to become more healthy and fit by accomplishing her goals.

In conclusion, Kurland asked, "How might your inner dialogue support your long term goals when you are struggling?"

In my life I want to say YES more to hanging out with my friends and family rather than saying NO all the time when my friends or family ask to go out or just hangout. I want to change my NO'S to YES so I can be more socially interactive.

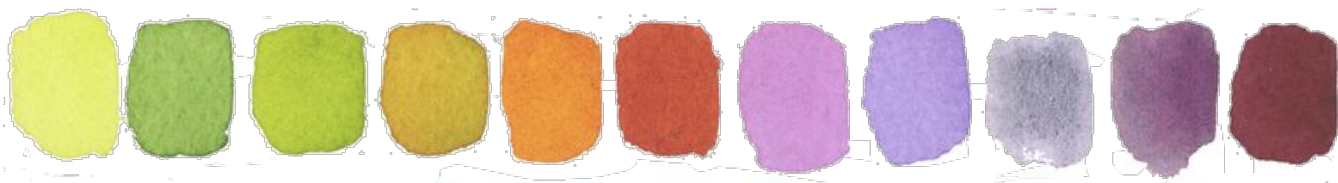
My Memory Library

Asia Hall, Turner

I read the poem "My Memory Library" by Sarah Blackstone. Reading it reminded me of the loss of my little brother Jayce. It reminds me of him because even though he may be gone, I will always have my memories with him.

*If I'm feeling sad and low,
if I'm struggling with what to do,
I can go and open my little safe
and watch my moment through.*

I like this part because whenever I'm feeling sad I can just open my safe of memories I keep of Jayce and think of all the great things about him. He can lift my spirits with his pictures, and I know he's always around watching.



Trying to Stress Less

Candace Barry, Lewiston

The parenting skill I've been researching is stress management, which has a few subcategories. The first thing that I've had to do was to be sure I was taking care of myself, and making sure Abby's needs are met. I've been getting enough sleep, eating when I need to, and drinking more water. Part of this category is not being so hard on myself, because I'm very mean to myself when something bad happens. That's not good for my mental health, and isn't good for anyone around me.



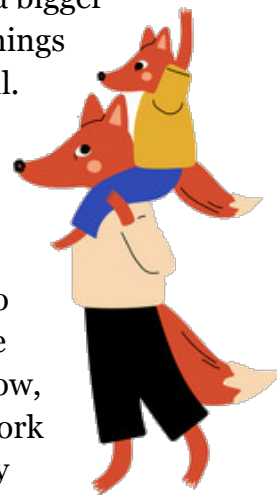
The next category is, "It Takes a Village." The reason I believe it's called this is because you can mostly parent alone, but you can't give your child all of yourself. You need other adults for help so your child will see other adults and have a larger trust network. This not only benefits your child, it benefits your spouse and you as well. This gives you two a larger support network. My support network isn't as big as most moms I know. I usually have others come over to help me with Abby, as well as give me an emotional break. They come over, and when I feel like I'm on my last straw they do simple things to help me. Sometimes the best breaks are the ones in your room while your toddler is with an adult you trust. Something I've also noticed is that my daughter behaves around others better than she does for me, which most of the time makes me happy, but sometimes it's

an unbearable burden that makes some days really hard.

The next category is called, "Progress Over Perfection." Nothing is perfect. Sometimes you're going to have an absolutely horrible day, but as long as you learn from your mistakes you can make the next day better. Something that I try to remind myself on bad days, is that you can't have good days without bad days, and vice versa. This reminds me of moments during good days that I'm fond of, and that kind of relaxes me.

The next category I call, mindfulness. This is where I need to pay close attention to how I'm reacting toward things, because sometimes when I'm raising my voice it's just going to make Abby more upset. Sometimes she has meltdowns, and I'm trying to learn to deal with them. They last anywhere from two minutes to an hour or so. When I'm calm and focused on her and her needs I can defuse the situation fast. When I'm not calm though, my volcanic eruptions of emotion just make everything worse. I have to keep in mind that she's trying to express herself, and not trying to make me sad or angry.

Another strategy is prioritizing. This is something I'm learning about every day. Whether it be about what is a bigger priority, or even that some things aren't actually a priority at all. Putting housework and homework aside so I can play with Abby and enjoy the little things seems to be my biggest struggle. I need to start telling myself that those dishes can wait until tomorrow, and that I can do my homework while she's napping. I usually forget this, and work on my homework while she's awake. On Tuesdays, and



Saturdays Kansas is home, so I don't work on a lot of homework while he's here. On Sundays Troy is home, and I can go about my normal day. I've decided that I'm going to give Abby more attention before nap time - a bigger chunk than I have been. Maybe this will help me not get as overwhelmed. If I give her this time she may not try to get all of my attention. I can't even go to the bathroom by myself most of the time. Usually, if she's awake I hear, tap-tap-tap, and the door opens.

This last category I've called, Picking Your Battles. This is something I already do on the daily. It's something that I've been trying to get better at though. This is where you have to prioritize which things are important for children to learn or do. Like if your child would like the pink fork, as long as they ask nicely why not give them the pink fork? If it's dirty, they'll have to be patient for it. If they would rather not wait they can have the fork you offered them in the first place.

Plastic Pollution

Chynna Chase, Brunswick

Recycling is important. The overuse of plastic isn't just a national problem, it's a global one. Plastic is a man-made product made with oil and synthetic products, which means they don't break down for hundreds of years. Plastic pollution has life long effects on our next generation of humans and animals, and if we don't make positive changes by recycling who knows what the world will be like in twenty years.

People use plastic like it's going out of style. Human beings have some kind of infatuation



with plastic, and enough plastic is thrown away each year to wrap around the earth four times. Over 50% of our plastic is single use and then thrown away. The average American throws away roughly 185 pounds of plastic a year! And we only recover about 5% of our used plastic. Plastic accounts for about 10% of the total amount of waste we generate. North Americans throws away 35 billion plastic bottles every year. The plastic in the ocean breaks down into such small segments that pieces of plastic from a one liter bottle could end up on every mile of beaches throughout the world. Annually approximately 500 billion plastic bags are used worldwide, and more than one million bags are used every MINUTE.

Plastic production uses around 8% of the world's oil reserves, The world is currently producing nearly 300 million tons of plastic each year, so its production of plastic takes away valuable natural resources and fossil fuels that we can't just get back. The process of making plastic and gathering oil are both extremely harmful to the planet. The waste and runoff from plastic factories, and/or oil spills, go into our water systems and oceans, which is both detrimental to the animals but also the environment. The petrochemical industry also consumes large quantities of hydrocarbon gas liquids (HGL) which may be produced by petroleum refineries or natural gas processing plants.

There are so many more reasons to recycle, reuse, and reduce plastics. They do not break down they are harmful to the environment and wildlife. Up to 60 to 75% of the plastics put in landfills could be reused or recycled. With fewer landfills, the depletion of trees, soils, and wildlife habitats would be reduced. It's up to our current generation to fix what's going on in our environment so future generations can live a normal, healthy life in a clean environment.

Lobstering

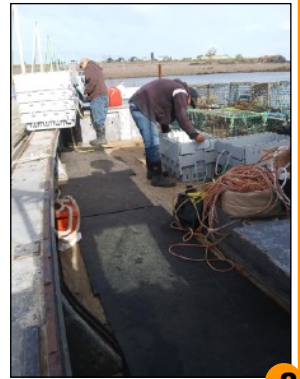
Autumn Francis-Stevens, Pleasant Point

We have to load the gas and gear on the skiff and drive over to the lobster boat. You can't keep expensive gear on the boat overnight. It stays in a public area and it has to be kept on a mooring so it won't block anyone using the boat ramp. That's why we have to use a skiff everyday.



1

Once we get onto the lobster boat we get everything ready to set trolls. The bait bags go inside the lobster traps and crates that we put lobster in once we catch them, because they have to be in crates to sell. We also have to make sure all the systems of the boat are working and running right so we know where we are going and can see what is under us and where our lobster trolls are located.



2



This is a bait bag. These dangle in the lobster crates and the lobsters can smell it. Then they crawl in to eat it and get trapped.

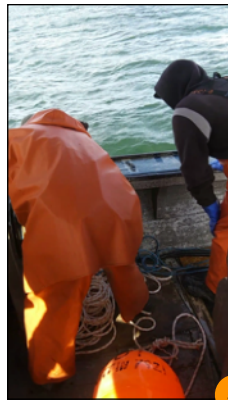
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These are "trolls" - lobster trap lines. This is what we make to drop into the bottom of the ocean and the lobsters crawl inside the crates.

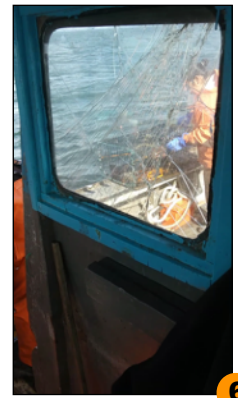
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My dad (in the orange suit) is pulling up the lobster troll. He grabs the rope with a grappler (a long metal hook) and hooks it onto the pot hauler - a machine on the boat that pulls up the lobster trolls and brings them onto the boat.



5

The deckhand grabs the lobsters out of the traps and sets them onto the table. The junk, like crabs and fish, get thrown back and then they change the old bait bag for a new one and get the troll ready to throw back out.



6



This is the lobster table where you band the good selling lobsters and measure the babies and throw them back. A "v-notch" is usually a female and you can't keep them because they are the breeders and usually have eggs on them. If you get caught with a too small lobster or one that is too big, then you can get written up and fined.

7



Lobsters have to be kept in a little bit of water so they don't dry out and die.

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Time to get paid and go home for the day.



8

Rights and Responsibilities

Researched by Olivia Orff, Waldoboro

Rights:

Freedom to express yourself
Freedom to worship as you wish
Right to a prompt, fair trial by jury
Right to vote in elections for public officials
Right to apply for federal employment requiring a U.S citizenship
Right to run for elected office
Freedom to pursue “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”

Responsibilities:

Support and defend The Constitution of The United States
Stay informed of the issues affecting your community
Participate in the democratic process
Respect and obey federal, state, and local laws
Respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of others
Participate in your local community
Pay income and other taxes honestly, and on time, to federal, state, and local authorities
Serve on a jury when called upon
Defend the country if the need shall arise



Eating Better

Savannah Senay, St. George

When it comes to eating and meal planning I do much better with Braelynn than myself. She has her set meal and snack times with nutritional foods and an occasional treat. Myself however I need to work on not snacking so much. Maybe eating more filling meals and having healthier snacks. However, I do drink a lot of water and only water. A time of the day that would probably be easiest to swap to a healthier snack such as fruit would probably be in the afternoon. A good snack switch would be eating something like fruit and peanut butter instead of junk food. Another big way I could better my diet would ultimately be to eat with Braelynn during her scheduled eating times and her healthier foods instead of eating at random.



Food Labels

Isaiah Ellis, Washington

Food labels are good because you can get useful information out of them to make good food choices. The important parts of the food label is serving size, calories, fats, proteins, carbs, ingredients, fiber, etc. Food labels are very important for people with certain diseases or for people who are trying to lose weight. People with food allergies could be in danger if the food label does not list the allergy warnings. If the food label does not list fat or cholesterol then people with heart disease are at risk.

My Friend is a Tattoo Artist

Bri Herbest, Machias

My friend is currently working on my tattoo. His artistic field is tattooing and drawing. All day he's doodling here and there. He's almost always got someone that wants something drawn by him. He is not professional, but he does a very good job.

He found his artwork when he was going through a rough patch in his life, and was physically harming himself. He decided that instead of making ugly scars he would make beautiful ones. He blossomed because he got good at doing tattoos on himself and gained confidence in his work and now he tattoos other people.

He still has some frustrations. He has a hard time with impatient and tedious people or if he isn't confident in what he's doing he gets a little frustrated, but he doesn't allow it to show and he takes a step back from what he's doing to redirect.

The joys he finds are seeing a happy face when he's 100% finished something. I talk to



him constantly about what he does because his artwork is beautiful to me. It's outstanding, in my opinion. I could go on for days about how much I love his artwork and all the things I've

learned about his journey to get to where he's at now.

Native American Stories

Willow Gabriel. Pleasant Point



Tall Man is one of the many stories that you hear about around here. Everybody says you only see him if somebody is going to pass away, or if something bad is going to happen. He is harmless, but he is a really tall man. This story has been around for longer than I've been breathing. I have never seen him. He could be real, or he could just be a story that somebody once started and it just stayed around.

I've also heard stories about the Little People. We have two islands on the rez. We call them First and Second Island. First Island is just grass and potholes, but Second Island is beautiful. It has trees, rocks and so many more things there. Everybody says that the Little People live there.

There's one story about the Little People on Devil's Head. Devil's Head is the cliff we have over by the Rec Center. On Devil's Head it's just grass and a few trees, too. The old owner of the Rec Center used to hold his sweat lodges down there. There were a few guys working there, and one said that somebody kept throwing pebbles at him. Every time one would hit him, he would turn around and nobody would be there. I'm not sure if this story is even true, but he used to tell me all the time.

And then there's the story about the Crying Hag. We say her name in Passamaquoddy, but I'm unsure how to spell it. Everybody says if

you see her, you can't run. She walks around crying for her loved ones that have passed away. You're also not supposed to look at her. My mom always told me that if I see her, don't show her fear, because like all the other stories we have, she showed herself to you for a reason and sadly, it's because a loved one is going to pass away. I walk around here at night and I'm always scared that I am going to hear her cry or see her and it's going to scare me even more.

Reading and writing about these stories always creeps me out. I've heard lots of stories from my family and my elders. I believe some of the stories, and some of the other ones not so much. These stories are very important because they've been around for so long.

Getting to Know Us

Tiny Interviews with Wayfinder Staff

Nicolette Sennett

Development & HR Manager



How has being a parent changed you?

Since having my daughter, I have been working on slowing down, taking moments in, and not sweating the small stuff. We are always go, go,

go in life, and we sometimes "live" too many moments on our phone/computers or try to capture every moment digitally. I try to take the time to really watch what she does, how she reacts, and try to really be in the moment – which is always a work in progress! She has taught me to be more patient and to laugh off the little messes and "whoops" moments that aren't going to matter five minutes later. Overall, I think she has made me appreciate time with family and friends more than I ever have.

What advice do you have for young couples?

Communication is everything. You need to be honest with yourself and your partner about how you feel. If they care for you they will listen. And in return, you need to be a good listener and make sure that you are hearing your partner. It always takes work. This means that you need to make sure you make time for one another (not just on the couch), and spend time without your kids. You also need to laugh together!

Do you have any regrets?

As I get older, my biggest regret has been not having more confidence in myself and worrying too much. We live in an age where it is so easy to compare our lives to someone else's, all by going on social media. In my teens I wish I hadn't worried so much about what my peers and society thought of the way I looked, dressed, or the interests I might have had. In my 20's I wish I didn't worry that my life wasn't meeting certain expectations based on the lives my friends were posting and sharing on their news feeds (nobody tended to post about the average everyday things). My goal for my 30's is to have more self-love, to appreciate what I do have, and to not worry about the little things.

Ida Chapman

*Passages Teacher,
Southern Maine/ Midcoast*



How has being a parent changed you?

Becoming a parent was something that happened when I least expected it. I was 22 years old, and in all respects still a child myself. I was finishing up my senior year of college, and when I found out I was pregnant I was working in a Mexican restaurant. Having my oldest child really threw me for a wrench and made me grow up. I was suddenly faced with the reality that there are pieces a thousand times bigger than me - namely, my infant daughter. She was a blessing of a child, and truly, one of the happiest babies I have ever met. Her smile was one that changed the room. Her sweetness and empathy, even as a baby, was so immense that she could change someone just by looking at them with her brilliant green eyes.

The birth of my eldest daughter made me want to be the very best person I could be, mostly so that she would see the depth I had gone to, and do all she could do to make her life incredible. I met one of the best friends I'd have in this lifetime. My daughters are my best company, my soul mates, and my true loves in this life.

Who has been the biggest influence on your life? What lessons did that person teach you?

My father was a man that you watched walking down the road and know he was something much, much larger than the space he filled. He had a voice with a heavy midwestern lilt to it. His presence was that no one was safe from his charms, including his four daughters. My father's idealism led him through this life with so much good humor that when he left this earth he never really did. My daughters swear he is with us still in the form of ravens in the treetops

My father was a poet. He could boast friendships with Gary Snyder and Allen Ginsberg when he was in the mood. My father held fast to the belief that the best method is to "say what you mean." He was blunt, and not afraid to tell it like he saw it, no matter the consequences.

His influence on my life reminds me to never let a day go past where I don't hold those that matter to me in my arms, loving them as much as I can.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

When I was a child, I wanted to be a writer. I still want to be a writer. When I was 18 and talking to one of my father's well known writer friends, they told me not to quit my day job. I was utterly crushed as the idealistic 18 year old I was. As a young mother, I waited tables and wrote at night. I wished for the ability to make it my "real" job. Time went by, I found that I loved teaching as much as I loved writing, I loved teaching writing. I realized that even if I wanted to make my life a writer it was almost good enough to take my love of words and put them in someone else's hands, and share that love. Because love is all about spreading it all around, right?