

Passages Press



Six Words That Changed My Life

by Lateesha Grenier - Springvale

It was a Sunday like every other Sunday, waiting for my mom to pick me up from my dad's house. Hours went by, but she never came. I was in tears just sitting by the door. 'Til my grandmother came up to me and these words came shooting out of her mouth like a bullet, "*Your mother doesn't want you anymore.*" I stopped breathing. Screaming even louder, my dad came and scooped me up, telling me he loves me and it will be okay. I couldn't help but think, "How could it ever be okay?" I am now a five-year-old little girl, knowing her mother doesn't want her.

Switching schools was hard. I had no friends, lived in a new town, and I was really shy. Not to mention I had to start halfway during first grade. I sat alone at lunch and in the sandbox, all alone. A couple weeks passed, but nothing changed, 'til one day Annabelle came up to me and asked me to run with her and Brandon. So I did- and the rest of the school year Belle and I were inseparable.

Life is tough; you have so many things to learn about. Sometimes it will be really hard to even open your eyes, never mind go into the world and have to learn about everything under the sun. I always wanted to be a singer, but I let my dream pass. Now, from time to time, I get sad, knowing that

I have a good voice that could have been heard and it's just stuck in the closet forever. Nothing is ever out of your reach. If you work hard and keep a positive mind you will make it.

I learned too much. I was too young to know all the things I did. I wish I didn't have to learn what I did. I grew up with separated parents. I have an older brother whom I have always looked up to, but as the younger sister, I had to watch my brother's back. I always have, and I always will. My mother and father had tough lives. I lived with my mother and I went to my father's on the weekend.

My father lived with his parents, so I had to live by my grandmother's rules. Let me tell you, she was strict. I didn't do much there, and I can remember always wanting to go back to my mom's. My mom had some issues with drugs. But don't overthink that. She was always a wonderful mother. She got us in school, made us dinner, and loved us unconditionally. She worked at a bank and just made everyone smile. She was beautiful, smart, and so very lovely. Life was good for me. I loved it, until I turned five-years-old, when my whole world came crashing down.

Banking on It

by Tamara Pinkham, Lewiston

After going to the bank I feel like I have learned even more than I had thought I would. I learned that a checking account is an account for your purposes. This account has your credit card information, and you can write checks from this account. I learned that a savings account is something that keeps your money in a safe place and it also earns a little bit of interest each month. When you borrow money you pay interest, when you lend money you earn interest. Interest is the cost of using someone else's money. One thing I learned was over-drafting. This is when your account reaches zero but the bank still allows the person to continue taking money out of the account. The bank basically allows people to borrow a set of money but charges a fee when it happens.

I learned that credit unions are different from banks because when people ask the bank to hold money for them the bank will give them money but then, use the money that was asked to hold for loaning purposes. This money will be paid back to the person who lent the money but the bank just earned whole lot more money. A credit union is different because they run on business because of the people in the community (its members). Without the members the credit union would have no money to give out to the community because they needs loans from the community. Credit unions help their members save, borrow, and receive fair financial services.

I learned that some credit unions are very involved in the community. They donated diapers to the daycare and there was almost \$1,200 raised for the local Head Start. Also a woman won \$400 and she was very happy and said she was going to use it towards Christmas presents. The people of credit unions are not only helping people with their money



but they are also helping out in the community where it's needed and that's very considerate of them.

The last thing I learned about was about shared branches. This allows you to access your money anywhere you go. So say you're in Florida and you don't have any money on you and you need a ride back home. You can find a credit union and access your money there. You will need these things in order to successfully get your money: photo identification, your own credit union name, your own credit union account number, last four digits of social security, and your primary address that you have on file. With these five things you will be able to access your money.

The associate Leah at the credit union told me about her budgeting method, which I thought was very interesting and smart. Leah has three accounts - a checking, a savings, and a joint checking account with her boyfriend. Leah has her paycheck directly put into her savings account. Then she moves her money for her own bills into the shared checking account she has with her boyfriend. Then, she takes a certain amount into her own checking account for personal spending.

What I Would Hold on To

By Lucy Lombardo, Hollis Center

when Teegan was born
when I first wrote a song
homecoming freshman year
meeting X
when Teegan started crawling
when Teegan started walking
when I found out I was pregnant
my first job working at Funtown
going out to a movie and dinner with X
meeting Ashlee Finlay
summer of 2013
getting my nose pierced
turning 18
getting into Passages
getting my first paycheck
my baby shower
the Children's Museum with Passages
sleepovers and days spent with Ashley D.
sleepovers and days spent with Sabrina
when I got my camera
hearing Teegan's heartbeat for the first time.
All Time Low concerts I've been to
seeing Suicide Silence in concert
photography class at Bonny Eagle
chorus class with Mark
when I sang the song I wrote at pops night
theater class at Bonny Eagle
my birthday dinner with X
getting piercing done with X
christmas party with X, Y, and Z
2nd christmas with X, Y, and Z
meeting X's brother R
Teegan meeting her uncle R
meeting Megan
sleepovers with Ashlee Finlay

meeting Kristina T.
homecoming junior year
with Megan Leland and Kacey Bryant
going to Fort William's with my dad
riding the carousel with Teegan
taking Teegan to the playground
taking Teegan to see my nana
spending time with my nana
Christmas parties and other holidays with
my aunt Paula and uncle Wendell



Road Trip

by Sammi Leighton, Baileyville

Since learning all of the ways to read a map I have made up my mind to get over my fears of getting lost (have you seen *Deliverance*?), save up money, and take a vacation (as a mom that word doesn't usually exist), WITHOUT my children (I know, shame on me right?).



As a child I always dreamed of just driving to Florida just to spend the two nights by the beach when I graduated from high school. So that's what I'm going to do. I'm going to take my pretty little self, and maybe my cat, and just drive, reset myself, and my mind. I think we're all a little gypsy at heart in my family.

I would spend \$20 a day on gas and make gas stops about every 200 miles. I would spend \$30 dollars a day on food and soda at these said gas stations (I could live off of gas station hot dogs). Once I actually got to Florida I would spend two or three nights at a hotel close to the beach and spend no more than \$100 a night for a room with a killer bathtub. I'd walk the beach all day long just thinking and maybe stop to do some writing. Of course I would have to stop to pick up things along the way

for the kids- I would spend \$50-\$60 on souvenirs for all three of the little heathens because even though I'd be that far away from them they would definitely be on my mind the WHOLE time. Oh if only I could do this today and every day!

To do all of this I'm kind of going to need a vehicle. I can't really piggy back ride on my cats back to Florida, even though that would be completely fantastic and probably make me famous. Instead I went on a little research on the wonderful website called Google (god love it). So, to buy a vehicle- a brand new one with a monthly payment OR a used one with cash, both with insurance? UGH, so many options and questions.

THANKFULLY, I have one. It doesn't work at the moment but it wouldn't take much to fix it (fingers crossed). I have a 2002 Ford Escort that needs a starter which is roughly \$100, a CV shaft that is roughly \$60 - \$70, and a wonderful handy dandy inspection sticker for a whole \$12.50. I am also very lucky to have an uncle who is a mechanic and will fix the car for me for only \$50 after I buy all the parts he needs. It really does help to have the support of my family! On that note, insurance. It is a lot cheaper for my dad to put me under his insurance (shout out to more family support!).

Because I am prone to disasters, I would end up locking myself out of my car, losing my keys, getting a flat tire or something, so to be on the safe side I would get a AAA membership. When I join AAA, I have to pay a \$14 admission fee and my first year's dues which are \$49. All in all, it really isn't too bad!

To take this trip and pay for all of its expenses, pay to get my car fixed and road-worthy, along with AAA roadside assistance, it would cost me roughly \$2,455.50.

Emancipation



by Victoria Demmons, South Thomaston

How do you get emancipated?

To be able to get emancipated you have to have parental consent. One way you can get emancipated is marriage, or joining the military which requires parental permission if you are under the age of 18. If you are not married or not enrolling into the military then you go through the legal court systems. State emancipation requires a \$150-\$200 filing fee.

How old do you have to be, and what do you have to prove to become legally emancipated? 16 years of age to be legally emancipated. You have to prove that you are self-sufficient (meaning you are able to afford a home, the costs of food/ and or childcare if you have a child or children.) You have to prove that you have put in line a stable living environment, or you are at least making a clear effort to find one. You have to have prove that you are attending school, or have graduated with a diploma, as well as proof of “maturity” to make adult decisions.

Pros and cons of emancipation

Pros: You are legally responsible for yourself- you buy your own food, you get to sign your own papers, you have rights that adults have. Being emancipated is like being 18-a legal adult. You also get to make your own rules. But being emancipated does NOT mean you are legally able to “break laws.” You can not buy cigarettes, you cannot purchase alcohol, and you are not able to vote.

Cons: You don't have your parents around all the time, which is a very big thing. Believe it or not. Emancipation could come with a lot of regrets if you find yourself stuck and unable to maintain a job and stay in school (if you are in school). You

may find yourself getting worked up about not having your own transportation if you have not taken a drivers education course, or have not been able to receive a Maine state license. Car insurance for youth is also a lot more expensive than it is for an adult. Learning to keep to a budget is the biggest part of the emancipation process.

Co-Sleeping

by Kyleigh Philbrook, Cushing

One of the pros of co-sleeping is it encourages breastfeeding by making nighttime nursing more convenient. It also helps nursing mothers get their sleep in sync with their baby's. It can help babies fall asleep easier, and makes it easier for them to fall back asleep if they wake up during the night. Overall, nighttime sleep increases for co-sleeping babies, and could make a parent that does not get to see their child much during the day regain a sense of intimacy with their child.

Cons of co-sleeping could be less sleep for the parents, less intimacy for you and your partner, and it could lead to a rough patch in the future, for the child and you, to adjust to not sleeping together as the child grows older.

Some new things that I learned while researching co-sleeping, was that you and your baby could actually sync your sleeping times, and you could easily make it harder for yourself in the future, depending on how late you decide to move them into their own bed.

New strategies I decided to try after researching co-sleeping, was trying to put my daughter in her swing next to my bed for the night. Although it felt strange not to have her in the bed, I did in fact have a better night sleep, and so did Ryder!

Learning About US Civics

by Deserea Debrienza, Lewiston

Part 1: Timeline of women's rights

- 1777-13 states pass laws that prohibit women from voting.
- 1826 - First public high school for girls opens.
- 1833 - Oberlin College founded in Ohio, is the first co-educational college in the U.S.
- 1837 - Mount Holyoke Female Seminary is established in South Hadley, Massachusetts by Mary Lyon as the first college for women.
- 1848 - The first national woman's rights convention in Seneca Falls, NY.
- 1849 - Elizabeth Blackwell becomes the first woman to receive a medical degree in the U.S. from Geneva college in New York.
- 1856 - Susan B. Anthony becomes an agent for American Anti-Slavery Society. She sets up meetings, posters, and gives speeches. Afterward she encounters hostile mobs, armed threats, and things thrown at her.
- 1869 - American Women's Suffrage Association focuses on gaining amendments for the rights to women voting.
- 1870 - The 15th Amendment passes in response to the Civil War. It prohibits states from denying citizens the right to vote based on race and color.
- 1871 - Victoria Woodhull is nominated as the candidate of the Equal Rights Party and is the first woman to run for president.
- 1872 - Susan B. Anthony is first women to cast a vote in a national election.
- 1893 - Colorado first to adopt state's amendment giving women the right to vote.
- 1896 - The NACW is organized in Washington D.C at the 19th street Baptist Church.
- 1913 - The congressional union for woman suffrage is formed to work towards the passage the right to vote.
- 1915 - Twelve states grant women the right to vote.

- 1916 - Jeannette Rankin of Montana is the first women to serve in Congress.
- 1919 - The federal Women's Suffrage Amendment is passed, finally granting women the vote.
- 1960 - The Food and Drug Administration Approves the birth control pill.
- 1968 - Equal employment opportunity is revised for sex discrimination.
- 1981 - Sandra Day O'Connor is appointed the first woman on Supreme Court.
- 1992 - Abortion Control Act is deemed unconstitutional
- 2009 - President Obama signs the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act.
- 2013 - Leon Panetta announces the ban on women serving in combat roles were lifted



Part 2: My voice counts

The event I went to in my town was going to vote- not once but twice! My first time going to vote was at the Lewiston Armory for the Chin/McDonald mayoral election. I also registered there as well, so I could vote again. The ballot looked so weird. I didn't know what I was doing, but there's always a first for everything. The second time I went to vote was at Longley Elementary school, and I actually got to shake the hand of the guy I was voting for, which was pretty cool. Then I got to talk to a news reporter about who I voted for! It was an awesome experience. I learned that the people I see out on the streets don't seem like the type of people that would be voting at some of these elections. By their actions and the way they talk, and how they are street smart, you would never think they pay any attention to these type of issues. I was surprised to see them voting.

Soaked In Bleach: A documentary about Kurt Cobain

Film review by
Courtney Dudley-Mosher, Calais

After watching the documentary, *Soaked In Bleach*, it was a toss up between thinking Kurt was murdered or if it was suicide. If the case was re-opened, and people looked at the old evidence to see if they could discover new evidence in the case then it would definitely change a lot of minds if they did. Once I finished the documentary I took to the Internet to find other opinions on the matter, but all I found were people arguing about whether he died by murder or suicide. I think Kurt Donald Cobain was murdered.

The film was very convincing by showing all the facts and playing the actual recordings between his wife, Courtney Love Cobain, and Tom Grant the private investigator Courtney Love hired. If the Seattle Police Department does end up re-opening the case, I think they will realize Kurt Cobain was murdered and didn't commit suicide. The dosage of heroin that was in Kurt's autopsy shows that he had had 1.52 grams per milliliter which would be enough for three regular basis hardcore heroin users.



The film was very descriptive and I think they showed pretty much all the evidence. Personally, I think the case should be re-opened and all the evidence given to an unbiased group of investigators to go through and find what no one else could before. The SPD should also develop the crime scene pictures, which they have not done yet.

I hadn't really known much about Kurt Cobain or even who he was until now. I think before watching the documentary I would have thought he had committed suicide and wasn't murdered, but the film shows what the newspapers knew nothing about. The film gives more detail than anything I have seen or researched about Kurt. Courtney Love Cobain really tried to cover everything up in the papers about what was going on. I think now though after watching the film where Tom

Grant shared everything that he had for evidence, it does seem like Courtney Love Cobain had something to do with the death of Kurt Cobain.

The topic has taught me a lot, especially because I didn't quite know much about Kurt Cobain or his family until now. I also learned that people sometimes go for the weakest or the ones that are the most addicted to drugs. I think the reason for that is because it is easier to make a murder look like a suicide. With a drug addict the only reason it might be easier is because drug addicts could boot up with a needle, and then all you have to do is inject various amounts of heroin or whatever the drug addict is used to into the body to kill him.

The Book Thief

Book review by
Nikiah Berry, Belfast



The Book Thief is the story of Liesel Meminger, a nine-year-old German girl who is given up by her mother to live with Hans and Rosa Hubermann in the small town of Molching, Germany in

1939, shortly before World War II. On their way to Molching, Liesel's younger brother Werner dies, and she is experiencing nightmares about him for months. Hans is a gentle man who brings her comfort and helps her learn to read, starting with a book Liesel took from the cemetery where her brother was buried. Liesel befriends a neighborhood boy, Rudy Steiner, who falls in love with her. At a book burning, Liesel realizes that her father was persecuted for being a Communist, and that her mother was likely killed by the Nazis for the same crime. She is seen stealing a book from the burning by the mayor's wife Ilsa Hermann, who later invites Liesel to read in her library.

Keeping a promise he made to the man who saved his life, Hans agrees to hide a Jew named Max Vandenburg in his basement. Liesel and Max become close friends, and Max writes Liesel two stories about their friendship, both of which are reproduced in the novel. When Hans publicly gives bread to an old Jew being sent to a concentration camp, Max

must leave, and Hans is drafted into the military at a time when air raids over major German cities were escalating in terms of frequency and fatality. Liesel next sees Max being marched towards the concentration camp at Dachau. Liesel loses hope and begins to disdain the written word, having learned that Hitler's propaganda is to blame for the war and the Holocaust and the death of her biological family, but Ilsa encourages her to write. Liesel writes the story of her life in the Hubermanns' basement, where she miraculously survives an air raid that kills Hans, Rosa, Rudy, and everyone else on her block. Liesel survives the war, as does Max. She goes on to live a long life and dies at an old age.

I liked this book a lot. I think that it would be a good book for a person looking to know more about what it might have been like being there.

Home Safety

The Silent Killer

by Heather Barry, Brunswick

Are you aware that there is a silent killer in about every room of your house? A curtain or shade pull cord is one of the most dangerous things that most houses have. If you have little ones in your home make sure that the pull cords are out of their reach. If children can reach them they can strangle themselves with them, so they should not be left unattended with pull cords within their reach. Always tie up the cords where kids can't reach them. This silent killer is everywhere and it can be awful for children.

Opinions

Should You Vote for Bernie?

by Mariha Murphy, Rockland

Bernie has the ability to change the world, we just need to give him the opportunity to do so! He's for giving everyone the rights they deserve. Want to marry someone you love? Bernie's all for that. He also knows that the other races should be treated equally. We are no better than other races, maybe even worse. He knows that someone shouldn't be treated differently just because of their skin color.

I think it's frustrating- knowing how amazing Bernie could make this country, but yet everyone is going after some racist, rich guy. Bernie is running for president and he still is standing out from Trump And Clinton. He may not be rich- he's relying on our donations to help.

Why would you vote for Bernie? It's not like he's trying to give everyone a good paying job by raising minimum wage to fifteen dollars? Oh wait, yes he is doing that. He is also making sure we aren't getting killed with taxes. He wants to take taxes out of companies that make the money to give away. Unlike Republicans, who think poor people should have to pay the same amount as rich folks.

We want a president who can be accepting of all people. No matter their race or sexual orientation, whether they're just making it by or have all the money they need. A president shouldn't talk negatively about his people- Bernie accepts everyone.

He's trying to make this a safer country by making limits on who can and can't buy guns. If you don't get in trouble with the law, and you legally purchased your gun with a proper background check, why should you worry about your firearms being taken away? Bernie is only trying to make it safer for everyone. Civilians misuse guns and Bernie wants to make it harder for that to happen.

Something important enough to add to a timeline would be when/if Bernie becomes president. Or you could put when he was re-elected three times to be the mayor of Burlington, VT. His being re-elected three times is a major milestone in his life.



In the caucuses, Hillary Clinton is now ahead. Bernie Sanders is not far behind. By what the data looks like right now, Hillary is far ahead. There's is a chance for Bernie to win though. In my parents house, they are all voting for Trump. Which surprises me because they are Christians and Trump is never on his best behavior. They do make a good amount of money and there big reason is because they don't want Bernie to take their money for free college. Trump wants to build a wall along our border with Mexico, and I feel college is a better investment because it will help this new generation get great jobs.

Word of advice: If you want positive change vote for Bernie Sanders!

Letters to the Editor

Editor's Note: We received a robust response to Carolynne Barter's article in the last issue, "How Planned Parenthood Helped Me," which caused us to decide to publish ALL the responses received to the previous edition. We hope you find them good reading!

In response to Carolynne Barter's "How Planned Parenthood Helped Me"

I decided to write about Carolynne's newsletter piece because I thought it was helpful even reading it. I don't hear about girls talking about abortions, ever. So reading this was my first time hearing about someone's experiences towards one. She didn't end up going through with it, because she knew the time wasn't right, and it shows you know, when you know. I thought it was nice that someone opened up about one, to let other people know her experience, that they aren't too scary and she would go back. I personally don't think I would get an abortion, but I don't disagree with them. If someone is not ready to be a parent then I think they should be able to choose. If someone doesn't even have a home they should be able to make their own decision. I think it was great she shared her experience.

- Anonymous

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I thought this article was interesting because: I myself, was teen mom in her footprints. I was scared when I first found out that I was pregnant. My biggest fear was, telling my parents. The other things I was scared about was I was not ready to take care of a human being like myself at the age 15 and on. I was so shocked to find out I was pregnant, I too went to Planned Parenthood to confirm my pregnancy. This article was interesting to me because I was going through the same thing she did, as far as people wanting her to get an abortion, when I wanted to keep my son.

This article made me remember the moment I was in when my dad and mom came over to Josh's (my baby's father) house where I was, and yelled at me, told me I wasn't gonna gonna be able to do it, and they told me they were going to make me get an abortion and said they were going to kick me out if I kept the baby. The one thing they didn't know was that, they can't force anything on me without my permission. The only thing stopping them from hurting my son was the law. This also made me think about the other support I had while going through with this. I slowly gained my dad's support when my mom wasn't there. I had a lot of support with my decision to keep my baby.

I agree with Carolynne when she stated "In the past year I've had a pregnancy scare, and I know that if I end up pregnant again this soon, I would get an abortion. Not because I praise abortions, and not because I never want children again, just simply because the time is not right and I'm not ready for two children." Because being a mother is a hard job, and if the time isn't right for you, you shouldn't put any extra stress on yourself because stress only makes things harder then they should be.

I disagree with her grandmother for trying to talk her into getting an abortion because abortion is a sin. It's not her grandmother's choice, or her body, and it's not her baby. The person carrying the child is responsible for their actions, not anyone else. I didn't disagree with anything Carolynne actually said in her article.

-Shanika Simkowitz, OOB

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I really liked this piece by Carolynne because most teen moms think about abortion as well as getting talked into it. Like for example: every time I went into the nurse's office at my high school, either after a baby doctor appointment or just to take a break from my classes and relax for a minute, she ALWAYS

tried talking me into abortion or adoption so I could have a "better" life and graduate high school and get to experience college on campus. I ALWAYS had to reassure her I was keeping the baby. At first she really got to my head so I went to Planned Parenthood to check out my options and my first ultrasound. After looking at all the pamphlets and papers and brochures, I was very confused, so we did the ultrasound and once I saw that little human being growing inside me, I know I couldn't give that up. What if I was never able to carry a baby again? Or what if something happens to my ovaries so I can't have kids? So from that day on I decided to carry the baby and keep it and give it whatever it needed.

I didn't know I could ever love anything as much as I love that baby growing inside me! Overall I enjoyed the article because I can relate to it as well as many other teen moms/moms/moms-to-be.

- Lucy Lombardo, Hollis Center

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I do not agree with abortion. Some people think when you get an abortion you're just getting rid of an organism. But I did some research and found that a fetus has a heartbeat at 6 weeks. In my opinion that is killing an innocent human being because of your poor choices. I agree with it on some terms, like if you get raped. But if you decide to spread your legs and end up pregnant I feel that is no excuse to get an abortion.

When I found out I was pregnant my boyfriend and my mother wanted me to get an abortion. My boyfriend wanted to because he was concerned about our age difference (five years and four months) but I told him I do not believe in abortion at all. My mom wanted me to get one because she was against teen pregnancy and with my past she felt that I couldn't raise a child. But when I found out I was pregnant I cleaned up my act,

started going to school, and stopped doing the drugs.

I feel that if I didn't have Skyler I would be dead end right now, not going to school, not trying to better myself, and honestly I think I would be a drug addict because of all the stress. I feel that Skyler saved me from myself. Before I got pregnant I was all about partying and doing drugs. And if I didn't have her I would still be doing that stuff. So therefore I do not believe in abortion. At one point I felt like I wanted it get an abortion because my mother was scaring me telling me that my boyfriend was going to jail because of our age difference, but I spoke to Pine Tree Legal and they told me I had nothing to worry about as long as he was there supporting the baby. I am very glad I didn't get an abortion because I wouldn't be the person I am today.

- Kileigh Rickett, Sanford

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In response to Veronica Sinclair's "Let's Talk About Sex, Baby"

I completely agreed with Veronica's article about sexual information given to children. I always knew the rule "don't tell unless they ask" but I never thought about the importance of using the correct words like "penis" etc. I'm not sure if I want to use the storytelling option yet, depending on how old Liam is when he asks me. I want to be as honest and non-explicit as possible when explaining these things to him, while also keeping it simple.

I had a good understanding about why it's important to be serious to your child when explaining these things but when she wrote "If your child feels that you're even the slightest embarrassed or feeling awkward about the conversation, they could get the feeling that there's something embarrassing or humiliating about what you're saying then it won't get taken serious," made me realize that facial expressions and your tone of voice when communicating with your child is very important.

I really liked her article because I feel like this topic doesn't get addressed as much as it should and parents and children end up losing that part of communication throughout their relationship. She did a really good job covering all the basics without subjecting one style of parenting. She also did a good job at talking about how to converse with your child about sexuality so it doesn't make anything confusing, which is important.

-Carolynne Barter, Portland

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I have a three year old daughter, who is super smart and knows a lot, but one thing she doesn't know or has never asked about is where she came from, or the different body parts. She has asked about her private parts and she refers to them as her butt. Which is

totally fine with me! I do not think any kid from ages 0-8 should really know how a child is born or where it comes from. The only response I will ever give my daughter is she comes from mommy's belly, and that you will learn more about that when you are older.

I also do not at all think any 6 year old ever should be asking about a period. Not any child that young should even know that exists until about 9. If you don't want your child to be a pregnant teen like I was and other girls I know, then keep sex OUT of their life. Act as if sex doesn't exist. Not only that, as a mother when your "time of the month" arrives, keep that private also. No little girl should have to know that blood comes from her vagina 'til it either happens to her, or 'til she becomes that age when it happened to you. If anything I would want my child to fear sex- I did as a kid and I didn't want it. You don't always have to be brutally honest to your children, sometimes keeping a secret from them is best for them!!

- Lateesha Grenier, Springvale

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In response to Tamara Pinkham's "My Baby Boy"

The reason that it stood out to me so much was because she explains her joy of bringing her little boy into the world at a young age, so this reminded me of my own life because I had my son at a young age. When she talks about her son's soft skin, it takes me back to the first day that I laid my eyes on my baby boy and held him close. It was such a comfort to feel his soft skin on mine.

It has not been easy, but it he has filled my life with much happiness. I love raising my son and watching him grow. Even though Tamara's piece isn't a full of description or written like a story, it is a poem that still hits the main points of being a young mom to a little baby boy.

- Daylee Peaslee-Lister, Lewiston

In Response to Cheyenne Ward's "The Farm"

As I was exploring which article to read and write about I came across this one "The Farm." What caught my eye was the title. I am a full-blooded redneck and when I see something that has to do with farms, mud, animals, fishing, etc. or "all go hell-raising redneck fun" then I am in! The second thing that caught my eye was the beautiful illustration that represents the article. The third thing that caught my eye and I finally decided to start to read it was the first line of the paragraph. "The farm is my childhood home; it's where I grew up."

As I read this article I found myself starting to smile and becoming warm inside. I felt like I was telling the story. I felt as if I was there with Cheyenne. I felt like I was back in the past where I remember growing up, just not all the same things that Cheyenne remembers. I found myself relating my story to hers. As Cheyenne is explaining what she remembers as a child, you can't help but walk the line with her. She tells this story from her life so well that it's not shocking to me that I can throw myself in the picture.

When I was little, around 7 or 8, my father bought a bright white house with a dark red barn. We had a lot of land surrounded by trees and nature. Along the front of the house was a big beautiful porch where you sat in the morning watching the sun come up over the trees while you listened to the birds sing their songs. Over to the left across the driveway was a front lawn where I found myself spending a lot of my time. The reason for that was there were apple trees that I loved to climb. I loved to climb them by myself, but also with my sister. We loved sitting in those trees and just relaxing like we were grownups. I remember the rusty old tractor I used to sit on and pretend that I was a farmer. I remember being with my dad inside the dark red barn while he worked on his cars and built and fixed broken parts

of the tractor. Whenever my father was in that barn, I was too. I loved being in there with him and watching him. There inside that barn was a nest. That nest had a bird and eggs in there every season. When I went in the barn and the bird wasn't there protecting her eggs, I used to climb up the rusty old ladder to the nest and see if the eggs had hatched. Eventually they had and dad would put them in the incubator in the house to watch them grow until they had to leave our home to go to their next home.

I remember being in the garden behind the house in the backyard. The garden was a peaceful place to be, as I remember. I liked to crawl around and help dad pick out weeds and he would tell me what each plant was and why he planted it that year. We grew a lot of veggies to eat. As I walked around on the land behind the barn around the house I always had a friend that followed me. He was my dad's dog and his name was Mac. He was a black lab and was my everything. I remember Mac as always being my rock. I talked to him out by the barn like I would a friend and he'd sit there and listen. Our favorite game was fetch of course and we'd be out there till dawn, till the bell rang telling us that it was time for dinner.

We moved out of that house and into a trailer when I was 14. The memories of being in that house, the barn, the land, and the woods will never leave me. Living on that property was like living in a bucket of sweet smelling flowers! It was the best! This article has brought back where home used to be. This article has been my favorite article I have read in the Passage's Press since I have started. I love that I related to it and loved reading about it!

- Kayla Wing, Bath

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