In a Perfect World

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Most of us have dreamed what it would be like in a perfect world...on Earth. The love between husbands and wives would be pure and overwhelmingly satisfying. Tires would last forever. The paycheck would always be more than sufficient. People would write and send thank-you notes. Kids would not only like all kinds of casseroles and vegetables, they would be an absolute joy all the time.

Expectations of the joy of parenting is one of the reasons why couples choose to have children. As with any expectation, it is really an illusion. An illusion is what we wish and hope an experience, or person, to be. Living in a less-than-perfect world, our reality often brings disillusionment.

An area of considerable disillusionment for parents is children’s behavior. It may be helpful to recognize that much of troubling behavior is symptomatic of deeper issues. One of the realities today is the apparent rise in childhood developmental disorders. When parents have a working knowledge of developmental milestones and learn how to distinguish typical behavior at a particular age, when they really “know” their child, they can recognize and face the reality of rearing that child, and perhaps facing their child is coping with a disability.

Developmental disorders in children are increasing. Although specialists are not certain why, the identified contributors include environmental toxins, environmental trauma, genetic disposition, teen pregnancy, older mothers giving birth, premature babies surviving, and prenatal drug and alcohol use.

Let me share briefly about Dysgraphia and PANDAS. Dysgraphia shows itself in slow, labored, and awkward writing. Children evidence poor organization on paper, they cannot write and think at the same time, cursive is harder to achieve, and writing is exhausting for them. These challenges result in loss of self-image and academic confidence, their self-expression is limited, and they avoid writing. This is associated with other motor or learning problems and does not occur in isolation. Because this evidences itself when a child is progressing in school, it is often misunderstood and seen as a lack of desire for learning or a child being lazy.

PANDAS is especially perplexing because it occurs after a beta hemolytic streptococcal infection, bringing with it a set of communication, social, and cognitive disruptions that effect a child for the rest of his life.

If you suspect your child may have a developmental disorder, it is imperative not to take a “wait and see” attitude. Our children are born into this less-than-perfect world, and they need us to seek to understand their behavior and to provide every opportunity for them to live full and enriching lives on this earth.

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