

# Shoreline Thanksgiving



## Buy smart for your kids this year

On your mark, get set, go! The frantic search for the perfect holiday gift has begun once again. The sheer number of choices in the endless aisles of toy store shelves can be overwhelming to a parent.

For success in selecting the best possible toy for the child in your life, follow these tips from nationally known psychologist and toy reviewer Dr. Karen Shanor.

Toys have a great deal more influence on a child's development than is often recognized. "Good toys help a child develop motor skills, spatial relationships, creative thinking and interpersonal skills," says Dr. Shanor.

Toys should be safe and appropriate for the child's age range. Be sure to check the box for warning labels and age recommendations, and inspect the toy for loose parts.

Playing with a toy should build confidence and provide a child with a sense of accomplishment. Children quickly grow bored with toys they can easily master, and quit in frustration with toys above their skill level.

While children should be encouraged to play with others to acquire and sharpen social skills, toys which allow a child to play alone as well as in a group are often good choices because they foster independent thought and concentration.

## Award-winning author to host 'Eclectic Look at Seattle'

On Monday, December 11, from 6-7 pm, Shoreline resident Colleen Foye Bollen, a professional freelance writer and award winning author, will host "An Eclectic Look at Seattle" live in ExpressNet, the travel content area sponsored by American Express on America Online (AOL).

Geared for travelers, "An Eclectic Look at Seattle" will show visitors that there is more to the Emerald City than evergreens, punk rock and coffee. Learn about the real Sound Garden (located on the shores of Lake Washington), who's haunting Pike Place Market, teahouses, where non-coffee drinkers

take refuge, Seattle's gourmet chocolate shops, hidden city hikes and more.

Participants will also learn more about Shoreline — Washington's newest city — and the Shoreline Historical Museum.

Bollen will host the conference via modem from her Shoreline home.

*Directions: To get to ExpressNet on America Online, use keyword "ExpressNet" or enter ExpressNet through the Travel icon on AOL's main menu. Once in ExpressNet, choose "Message Boards & Conferences," and then click the "Conference Room" icon.*

## The sacred cows of parenting

By Nancy Thalia Reynolds

In my bid for recognition as the Camille Paglia of Motherhood, I keep on the lookout for parenting shibboleths to demolish. So many targets, so little time!

Sacred cows abound on all sides of parenting issues. In a spirit of helpfulness, I offer my own mom experience undiluted by expertise in medicine or anything else—wisdom absolutely free from an aging baby boomer mom who has personally confronted every issue discussed below.

### Natural Childbirth Vs. Drugs

Many women agonize throughout pregnancy—will they be able to withstand the pain of childbirth without hollering for

drugs at the first serious contraction?

As a parent you will discover that every day you must make dozens of decisions far more important to your child's development than whether to have an epidural.

Will you allow Sugar Krispy Treats "cereal" in your home? Should you give in and buy Totally Hair Barbie for little Vanessa? Is Kevin old enough to see the latest PG 13, McDonald's tie-in Batman picture?

You won't have more than a few minutes to make most of these decisions. So why not enjoy pregnancy (the last leisure you'll have for at least 18 years) and postpone the drug decision until you're actually in labor.

This will prepare you for the

split-second judgment call you'll soon be making.

### The Family Bed vs. Let Them Cry it Out

The issue is not whether your child can sleep through the night, but whether you can.

Does your infant have to get up at 6 a.m., get through an eight-hour work day, do the week's food shopping, take the cat to the vet, and write thank you notes for baby gifts?

Hardly. She reclines all day in the lap of luxury with you at her beck and call.

Thus, the question to ask is this—Which gives you a better night's rest: (a) having baby "sleep" next to you, snuffling, snorting, and wiggling like a small farm animal all night long, or (b) getting up to settle baby back into her crib each of the 15 times she awakens, and then listening to her inconsolable sobs after you refuse to take her into your bed? See, it's easy!

### Breastfeeding vs. The Bottle

You can eat everything you want and still lose nearly all the weight you gained during pregnancy (in my case, 70 pounds) if you breastfeed. The longer you do it, the more weight you lose.

This buys you the time you need to kick the Haagen Daz habit you acquired while waiting for baby to arrive.

### The Electronic Babysitter

Television is an addictive drug; the best way to control it is not to start. If you own a TV, don't get cable. If you have cable, don't buy the extras. If you have the extras, don't admit it out loud.

Find a 12-step program. Tell your friends your daughter is only allowed to watch PBS and Captain Planet.

### The Preschool Puzzle

I have a confession to make.

My son is a co-op preschool dropout. No! I hear you gasp.

Not that user-friendly milieu where children are lovingly attended while you earn college credits in parenting by hanging out with hyperactive 3-year olds.

My son was a loner, refusing to sing about the peanut on the railroad track, scorning snack-time. Nor did I relish crouching on children's chairs discussing parenting basics with women young enough to be my daughters.

Sadly, I discovered this was as good as preschool gets. Aside from the co-op model, the other options are: snotty, upscale, expensive preschool; religious preschool where efforts at civilizing children takes place in a drafty church basement; and Montessori, a model developed for the purpose of educating Italian street children early this century.

With considerable anxiety—was I raising a sociopath?—I dropped preschool altogether.

To my surprise, my son did just fine in kindergarten. We saved some money, and I was able to put off fund-raising drives and group snack preparation for several years.


Preschool, like drag racing, isn't for everyone.



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