

## Family Living Focus

by  
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### Family Stress

Does your child stay with Grandma or perhaps go to some form of daycare while you are at work?

Is it sometimes difficult to get the youngster to cooperate with you in getting into the car and then into their car-seat for the trip home? Here's some food for thought about how to defuse this stress provoking situation. Cars seats and the need to obey child safety laws may be part of the 21st Century, but the parent/child power struggle behind the issue has been around for ages. Think of the acronym C-A-R. It will remind you of three key words Change, Activity, and Resistance.

Children need help making transitions. When you want them to leave the caregiver and peacefully enter the car, this is a change and most children resist change. They are not skilled at envisioning the future and you can make the transition easier by helping them visualize the steps that are involved.

Use words and questions to help draw them out. Do not tell the child what is doing to happen, what has to be done and how to do it. Take the time to talk through the activity by asking the child questions. This will take a little bit of time, but it will be much easier than listening to the youngster howl for the entire drive home after you have forcibly belted or buckled him/her into the car seat.

After greeting the child at the daycare location, ask the child what happens next. The youngster will probably respond with something like "you give me a hug and then we look at my art work", and maybe he'll say he doesn't want to leave yet.

Acknowledge that he enjoys being at daycare and would like to stay, but continue asking questions about what else needs to happen. Prompt the child if necessary, "What happens when we go outside? What do we do?"

"We get in our car." Ask him what happens when he gets in the car.

Eventually the child should be able to say that he needs to get into his car seat and get buckled up.

Talk the child through the whole process, step by step, helping the child create a picture of it in their mind. Remember, you are doing all of this while you are still inside the caregiver's home or facility. The process of visualizing the transition eliminates 75 to 80 percent of the battles and takes only a few minutes. Some of the most positive discipline in preventive discipline.

Some children might even need more than words to imagine the setting. Help them by drawing stick figures showing "This is Billy going to the car" "This is Billy buckled into his car-seat" "This is Billy and Mommy riding home".

Activity is the second keyword. Sitting in the car-seat if very con-

fining. Make sure the youngster has a chance to burn up some of that bubbling energy before you try to make them sit still. A few minutes spend running or jumping on the playground could use up some of that energy or consider playing a game of "hokey-pokey shaking" at the door so that "we can leave all our wiggles inside before heading for the car".

Bear in mind other physical needs. Share a drink of water, milk, or juice before leaving. Make a last minute potty stop before any outing. Avoid the threat of starvation bring along some small nutritious snacks like fruit leather, juice packets, or raisins to save the day.

The final letter of C-A-R is resistance. You want her/him to sit still and she/he is busy proving that you can't make her do it. Frankly you can't. Even if you do overpower the child and get them buckled into the seat, they will quickly learn to unbuckle themselves.

What you can control is your own behavior. Decide what you will do. Explain your decision to the child. For example, you have decided that if she fails to cooperate, you will read a book until she tells you that she is ready to get buckled in. Count on getting the opportunity to put this plan into action. The first time or two, the child needs to check it out and see if you really mean what you say.

When the child begins to struggle, you don't. Open your book and read. Say nothing. Even if this take 10 or 15 minutes, it beats listening to his/her howls during the entire trip. He will soon tell you he is ready to buckle up.

Fighting alone is boring and power struggles do not work with only one participant. In case it take him awhile to come to that conclusion, bring along a really good book. When the child says he/she is ready, help them buckle up, turn the key, and head for the road. Happy travels!



From left, Susquehanna County Dairy Princess Shana Mack poses for a picture with the Potts Family, Katie, Dru, Gladys, Delbert, Mary and Don.

## Dairy Princess Spotlights Sixth-Generation Farm

**KINGSLY (Susquehanna Co.)** — Susquehanna Dairy Princess Shana Mack spotlights Don-Mare farm owned and operated by Don and Mary Potts.

Don and Mary have four children, Dustin, Julie, Katie and Dru. The farm has been in the Potts family since 1842, a sixth generation farm.

Dell Baxter Potts and Joseph Potts first owned the farm. They passed it down to Arthur Potts who also sold maple syrup from the woods behind the barn. The farm at that time was called Maple Grove Farm. The farm was then passed down to Don's parents Delbert and Gladys who passed it down to Don and Mary in 1993.

The tie-stall barn is filled with 56 milking cows and approximately 50 calves and heifers, all registered Holsteins. Potts' own 257 acres and rent another 100 acres. Corn and mixed hay is grown on the farm. Don, Mary, Katie, Dru, and Delbert, all family members work on the farm. They also have four part-time employees, Jason Atkinson, Josh Lodge, Donny VanKuren and Leslie Hawley.

Mary lived on a farm in Springville when she was growing up. Mary has raised paint and quarter horses for the

past fourteen years. She is a leader for the Sunny Mountain 4-H Club and has done a lot of work with handicapped children. Mary gave therapeutic riding lessons for several years.

The Potts farm is a Pennsylvania Century Farm. They have received No Till Farmer of the Year and Young Farmer of the Year awards.

The view across the road from the farm is Forest Lake. Like any family they enjoy playing in the lake. Therefore they try to have all the cows freshen before July or after August, this way they have a little extra time in the summer months to enjoy the lake.

The Potts' have put in a waste management system and concrete barnyard. They are very active with the Chesapeake Bay program. Living by a lake there are a lot of regulations to follow. It is only natural for the Potts' that they protect the environment so they have clean land, air and water to enjoy.

They often give tours of the farm to the people that live in the cottages at the lake, and to school kids and handicapped children's classes.

### Build On Failure

**LEESPORT (Berks Co.)** — Help kids build on failure, Help them to rebuild their feelings by reminding them that there will always be another chance and that you will love them, no matter what.

If you tie a child's self esteem to their success, you are setting them up for unhappiness later in life. Having a loving, caring family is probably even more important for self-esteem than having a lifetime of successes.

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