Books

The Lion’s Guide to Parenting

These six books from Columbia alumni promise to make raising children just a little easier.

By
Rebecca Shapiro
|
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Photo illustration by Len Small

***Dr. Spock’s Baby and Child Care*, 10th Edition**

By Benjamin Spock ’29VPS (2018)

Since it was first published in 1946, Benjamin Spock’s *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* has sold more than 50 million copies and revolutionized the way generations of parents think about child rearing. Spock, the legendary

pediatrician — who graduated first in his class from Columbia's medical school — encouraged parents to trust their instincts, show affection for their children, and foster their emotional needs. Though the philosophy remains the same, the book has been updated multiple times to account for the latest medical research and address contemporary social issues.

How to Have a Kid and a Life

By Ericka Sóuter '02JRN (2021)

Parenting can seem all-consuming, but according to Ericka Sóuter, a journalist and *Good Morning America* parenting correspondent, that hyper-focus isn't good for either parent or child. Sóuter encourages parents to foster their own identities, offering tips on balancing family and career, connecting with child-free friends, and keeping up with or developing hobbies.

When Children Feel Pain

By Rachel Rabkin Peachman '02JRN and Anna C. Wilson (2022)

Pain is a universal experience from which children are certainly not exempt. But pain in children is often not taken seriously, argues science journalist and regular *New York Times* contributor Rachel Rabkin Peachman, and parents need to be taught how to treat and manage it. In her new book, cowritten with a pediatric psychologist, she gives parents the tools to help kids through everything from shots and blood draws to chronic illness.

Book and Baby

By Milda M. De Voe '01SOA (2021)

As the founder of Pen Parentis, a nonprofit community organization dedicated to supporting writers with kids, award-winning poet and writer Milda M. De Voe knows

well the challenges of balancing family with a creative career. In first book, she draws on her own experience as well as anecdotes from other accomplished writers to offer inspiration as well as resources for helping parents push through the obstacles and keep writing.

And Then They Stopped Talking to Me

By Judith Warner ’90GSAS (2020)

When Judith Warner’s daughter entered middle school, both she and her mother struggled with the transition. So Warner, a journalist and best-selling author, decided to approach the problem the way she would a story, interviewing parents, educators, scientists, and other experts. She found that some adolescent struggles are biological but that many are exacerbated by well-meaning but overbearing “helicopter parenting.” Her book offers practical advice on how parents can avoid this path and work to raise caring, moral teenagers.

Being There: Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters

By Erica Komisar ’90SW (2017)

Between work, older children, and other life commitments, most parents of a new baby can’t afford to put their lives on hold for a few months, never mind a few years. But psychoanalyst Erica Komisar argues that the benefits of being with a child, physically and emotionally, for the first three years of life are essential — especially for mothers. Komisar explains why this period is so crucial and helps mothers navigate the many obstacles that can stand in the way.

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