

The Laughing Mom: humorous tales of motherhood

Written by Susan Pfaltzgraff

Frazzled mom

I can clearly remember a certain outdoor community function our family attended not too long ago. I was such a well prepared mother that night. I knew it would be warm when we got there, but that the sun would set shortly thereafter. So I had Melise dressed in shorts and I packed a change of pants and a jacket for her. Unfortunately, as so often happened, I forgot about myself.

There we stood after sunset, Melise snug in her pants and jacket and her mother shivering in shorts and a short-sleeve top!

It has been a little while since that night, but I haven't improved much. I'm not sure why I can't plan for both of us. Is it that there isn't enough room in my thoughts to plan for more than one person? Maybe I haven't had enough practice at this mothering gig!

There are many instances when I do something with good intentions, but don't see other consequences. For example, back during the summer I cleaned my purse one day so my baby could dig through it without encountering dangers. I removed anything that could be a choking hazard. I let Melise explore my wallet while I watched to see if there was anything she could damage. It felt so good to know my purse was a safe play area in case I found myself without any other way of distracting her!

A few days later, I was out running errands in the heat of the sun and stopped to get ice cream. I was desperate for that cool treat! I opened my purse, but couldn't find my wallet. I realized I had never put it back after cleaning my purse out!

I dug down to the bottom of my purse hoping to find a few quarters. But alas! My cleaning job had been very thorough and not a single, chokable coin remained.

Luckily, I realized I had my co-op card and was at the co-op's gas station. I think the world might

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have crumbled down around me if I hadn't got my ice cream! I even let Melise taste ice cream for the first time that day.

I told my father about that trip and he teased me that I blame everything on my baby. I thought about that for a while. I do blame a lot of my errors on the fact I'm a frazzled mother. In fact, if there is any need to explain how something was broken or spilled or just went wrong in some ridiculous way, my story usually starts with, "Well, I had the baby on my hip and was juggling such-and-such with one hand . . .!"

Yes, maybe I use the baby as an excuse for too many of my own mistakes. Sigh. I wonder sometimes if I was this clumsy, forgetful, unorganized before I had my baby. Maybe. I could believe it, but I can't remember that far back . . . in fact everything before the birth of my baby seems like the story of another woman—a woman with empty hips, two free hands and overall a very unfamiliar lifestyle!