



Dear Mums and Dads,

It is hard to believe that 2010 is upon us, and the festive season is a distant memory!

The silly season does take on new meaning when you have a toddler in the house. It is an incredibly exciting time for everyone, as your new family unit continues celebrating old family traditions as well as introducing your very own, new family traditions.

As we all know, simply give a toddler some boxes and wrappings to play with, and they are as happy as can be – have you ever noticed how a simple cardboard box makes the most amazing toy ever? We usually stay in Gauteng for Christmas (it is usually the best place to be, weather wise), but this year decided to get away to the bush for a much needed break. We spent Christmas day quietly at the pool gazing at the magnificent bushveld in the distance, but yet I couldn't help feeling a bit nostalgic though, for all the previous Christmas days we have celebrated over the years with a house full of noisy babies and toddlers getting completely caught up in the excitement of Christmas. At the time it all seemed quite hectic and overwhelming, when all the children were really interested in were the discarded gift trimmings and *clip clopping* in Grannys' sparkly shoes! However, sitting around the Christmas table having intelligent conversation with teenage and young adult family members, without having to worry whether the baby of the house had got hold of the small bits and bobs from the Christmas crackers, or whether the swimming pool was safe, was rather a treat! I guess we all have to embrace whatever stage of parenting we are in, and make the most of that particular phase of growth and development we find ourselves in. Parenting, as we all know, is a never-ending job. What is also a never-ending job is keeping the website updated with the latest news and happenings, planning talks and seminars (plus obtaining sponsorship to run them), writing articles and lecturing – all at the same time as being there for all my patients at the practice. Without the interaction with all the wonderful families I come across in clinical practice on a daily basis, I would gain neither credible nor practical wisdom to do what I do with love and skill! Thank you to all the families that share your parenting journey with me.

A big "thank you" too, to all the parents across the country who attended the Toddler Sense Seminar Roadshows which were held in October and November 2009. The seminars, held in collaboration with the TOPTOTS group, were sponsored by Abbott Nutrition, Floradix and Alchemy Magazines. The research questionnaires have been assessed and the lucky draw for the two micro-scooters has taken place under the strict supervision of Partners in Research.

The lucky winners are:

M Coetzee who attended the Cape Town North Seminar held at Ratanga Junction

Lizelle Botha who attended the Middleburg Seminar.

Micro Scooters will be in contact to get your prize of the stunning micro-scooter to you. To find out more about these amazing Micro Scooters (only the best will do), go to www.microscooters.co.za. Grateful thanks to Micro Scooters for sponsoring this stunning prize.

We had such interesting results from the research conducted at the seminars – look out for it in next months newsletter.

I have been invited to speak at the South African Society of Sleep Medicine Congress in Cape Town at the end of February. This is an international conference, and there will be many illustrious international speakers whom I look forward to learning from. I will be sure to report back on any new and exciting developments in the field of baby and toddler sleep!

For those of you who live in Namibia, diarise the weekend of the 8 May 2010 where I will be presenting a series of "Sr Ann's Sense-able Baby and Toddler Seminars". I will also be in Secunda on 15 May and Lydenburg on 18 September 2010. The Baby Sense Roadshow takes place in August and September and the Toddler Sense roadshow will take place in October 2010. Watch the website for further details and updates.

Annemarie Lombard of Sensory Intelligence, is running fantastic and enlightening workshops all about understanding sensory intelligence. Click here if you are interested www.sensoryintelligence.co.za

I highly recommend these workshops, so get there if you can – your way of thinking and parenting will change for ever!

The new, updated edition of my first book, *Baby Sense* is due to be released in March. I will be zooming around the country to promote this, so look out for the launches to be held at various Storcks Nest Clinics in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban – book at www.babysense.co.za. It is hard to believe that *Baby Sense* has been around for 8

years, and it would not be the success it has been (as has *Toddler Sense* and *Sleep Sense*) without the support of all of you – thank you!

This months article ends our series of language development articles. Michelle Servant, speech and language therapist at Cedarwood School, tells us all about language development in the pre-school years. Click here to access this article www.toddlersense.co.za

Debbie Levin, a post natal depression specialist counselor, is running workshops entitled “Is there life after birth?” If you are suffering from post natal depression, consider attending one of these nurturingworkshops and join her support group. You need not be alone. Click here www.toddlersense.co.za for more information.

Until next time (and I am really trying to get to you all on a more regular basis),

- Don't forget to buckle up your family
- Learn how to do CPR
- Have a good nights sleep

Enjoy these magical toddler years; and as Karl Menninger once said “*No one but doctors and mothers know what it means to have interruptions*”.

All the best,

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