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Brian Keyes, DO



12, 10



Slices of life

Hard or easy – thoughts on birth order

Birth order intrigues me. According to the theory, certain characteristics are associated with your place within a family – whether you are the oldest, middle or youngest child. We can't choose this particular lot in life. We are simply dealt our hand and we live it out.

There are positives and negatives to each family position. But one thing is clear. The oldest child has it the easiest.

The oldest child has a new car seat, new crib, new toys, and brand new parents. These parents haven't had the time or experience to develop bad habits like wiping the dropped pacifier on a semi clean T-shirt before returning it to baby's mouth. New parents sanitize the pacifier every time it hits the floor.

In the best of circumstances, oldest children have the attention of two parents. Mom or dad (and sometimes both) jump up at 2 a.m. when baby produces the slightest of whimpers in their sleep.

Baby's hands are washed and dried before mealtimes. Bath is an everyday occurrence. Naps happen on time all the time. The best developmental toys are purchased. Parents worry and fret about



PERTLER Contributer

anything and everything. They hover sometimes incessantly. This can cause stress - for parents and baby.

Oldest children have to pave the way for others. They must be courageous and brave. They are the first to climb the big steps of the school bus - alone. When they mess up (and all kids do) it is a first for their parents and treated like it is the end of the world – or at least the end

They have the responsibility of training in new parents and just when things are getting comfortable, another baby comes along and divides the parental attention the first-born has finally gotten used to.

Perhaps being the oldest child isn't easy at all. Maybe it's the hardest spot to own.

The logic is obvious then; the middle child has it the easiest.

The middle child does not have to

experience the hovering and overattentiveness of newbie parents. No one stresses over sanitizing everything – even and especially the pacifier. Daily activities are more streamlined. Seasoned parents realize they don't need every baby gadget and gizmo available on Amazon. This actually makes life easier for everyone.

Mom and dad understand this baby thing and have learned to trust their gut with the middle child. They have learned to work together and are more relaxed and baby picks up on this. Relaxation is a good thing for both parents and baby.

The middle child has an older sibling to watch and learn from physically, socially and emotionally. There are lots of interesting toys in the house because of said older

Then again, while interesting to watch, the new baby has to share parent time with their older sibling. And older siblings might express jealously on occasion. Parents might not notice because they are in the new state of experienced and relaxed parenting. Pacifiers get misplaced and even lost. This isn't easy for baby.

Perhaps being the middle child isn't the easiest at all. Perhaps it's better described as hard.

So then, we are left with the one option; the youngest child has it the

Life for the youngest child is never boring. He has two or more siblings to entertain him day and night. They've already paved the way and he has the easy job of following in their footsteps.

Parents are now outnumbered which makes them too tired to helicopter, much less restrict.

It's likely there are treats in the house not available to prior children and the youngest is introduced to Twinkies and chocolate chips at a much earlier age than older siblings

However, the activities and abilities of older siblings could make a baby frustrated: "Why can't I do those things, too?" Outnumbering your parents means someone has to wait for their pacifier to be cleaned. (Who cleans pacifiers anymore at this point?) Parents no longer jump out of bed because of a whimper. They have learned the importance of having babies sleep through the

The last-born child wears hand-

CROSSWORD

me-down cloths that may be well-worn and not quite perfect anymore. Toys are far from new and sometimes broken or not in working condition. Older siblings pave the way; this can be good or bad. It's hard to live up to a first-born's stellar performance - or the opposite of that. Older siblings can serve to define the youngest child and that could feel restricting.

Perhaps being the youngest child isn't easy after all. Perhaps it is hard

Which leaves me confused. I can see the pros and cons of each place in the birth order. Who has it best? Who has it worst?

Depends on who you are and how you see it. It's the whole glass half something dilemma - full or empty, take your pick. None of us chooses our birth order but whether firstborn, middle child or youngest, we all have the power to choose how we perceive it.

What color is your sky? Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist, published playwright, author and member of the National Society of Newspaper Columnists. Don't miss a slice; follow the Slices of Life page on Facebook.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

Theme: Rap Artists

ACROSS

- 1. Same as Amir
- 6. Graduate degree
- 9. Rotisserie skewer 13. Wispy clouds
- 14. *Run-DMC performed at "Live ", 1985
- 15. Elbow room
- 16. Portfolio content
- 17. Some special effects
- 18. Noncommittal response
- 19. *N.W.A. songwriter turned actor 21. *Marshall Bruce Mathers III
- 23. Last letter of Hebrew alphabet
- 24. Two-fold
- 25. Tit for
- 28. Serve soup, e.g.
- 30. Done at "inspiration point"
- 35. Eurasian mountain range
- Jack of all trades' sphere of expertise
- 39. More painful
- 40. Little bit, in Mexico 41. Open-mouthed
- 43. Classic TV's Mr. Cleaver
- 44. Friend from Mexico
- 46. Power system
- 47. Batman's cave, e.g.
- 48. Ketchup, to some
- 50. *a.k.a. Detective Tutuola
- 52. "To Kill a Mockingbird" author
- 53. Bangkok native
- 55. Yoga turf
- 57. *She likes dollars, she likes
- 60. *SAG and Golden Globe awards recipient
- 64. 2 halves of a diameter
- 65. Exchange for money 67. Watery-eyed
- 68. Turn upside down
- 69. To add, often used with "out" 70. Shockingly graphic
- 71. "Cobbler, cobbler, _ my shoe"
- 72. Up and down nod
- 73. Horace's poem

- 1. South American blackish-purple berry
- 2. Catchall abbr.
- 3. Gaelic tongue
- 4. Not slouching
- 5. Something regularly observed
- 6. Debilitating spray
- 7. *The Notorious one
- 8. Opposite of bonjour
- 9. Distance from wingtip to wingtip,
- 10. Pay as you earn tax system
- 11. Ballistic missile acronym
- 12. Golf peg
- 15. Expression of pleasure, pl. 20. Boss, in Swahili
- 22. Vitruvian one
- 24. Ancient Roman silver coins
- 25. *"The hate you give..." artist
- 26. Scent
- 27. Like unspoken agreement 29. *Snoop's last name?
- 31. Loose hood 32. Cattle enclosure in African
- 33. Chill-inducing
- 34. *Beats by
- 36. Fireplace fodder
- Rap Battles of History" 42. Possible allergic reaction

_ Epsilon

- 45. Bested
- 49. Sigma_ 51. Babble out
- 54. *Drake's tattoo of the The Beatles' _Road"
- 56. Bind 57. Super garb?
- 58. Port in Yemen
- 59. Orange peel
- 60. Cleaning cabinet supplies
- 61. Wyatt Earp's card game
- 62. Desert quality
- 63. Jekyll's alter ego
- 64. Cuba Libre ingredient
- 66. Israel Kamakawiwo'ole's strings

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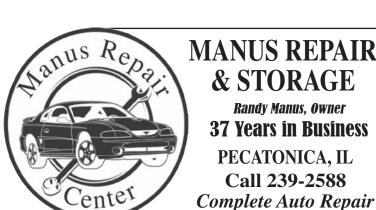
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Auction Schedule

SAT., SEPT. 28 - Arthur Hafferty Estate Auction - 3112 Searles Ave., Rockford, IL - 10:00 A.M. Hack's Auction & Realty Service, Inc., Pecatonica, IL, 815-239-1436, hacksauction.com

SAT., SEPT. 28 – Hafferty Trust Real Estate Auction - 3112 Searles Ave., Rockford – 1:00 P.M. Hack's Auction & Realty Service, Inc., Pecatonica, IL, 815-239-1436, hacksauction.com

SUN., SEPT. 29 - Americana, Antique, Stoneware & Toy Auction - 10:00 A.M. Hack's Auction Antique Center – 400 W. Third St., Pecatonica, IL. Hack's Auction & Realty Service, Inc., Pecatonica, IL, 815-239-1436, hacksauction.com

SAT., OCT. 5 - Mullen Estate Antique Tractor, Tool & Equipment Auction - 2106 Williams Dr., Stoughton, WI - 10:00 A.M. Large 2-Ring Auction. Hack's Auction & Realty Service, Inc., Pecatonica, IL, 815-239-1436, hacksauction.com

SUN., OCT. 6 - Vicky & the Late Pete Cooling Auction – 946 Hutchins Park Rd., Rockford, IL - 11:00 A.M. Hack's Auction & Realty Service, Inc., Pecatonica, IL, 815-239-1436, hacksauction.com

SAT., OCT. 26 - NITE Equipment Consignment Auction, 9 a.m.

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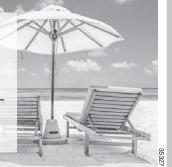
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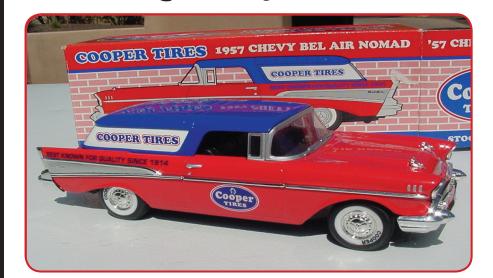
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