



On Becoming Toddler Wise

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From First Steps to Potty Training There is no greater fulfillment a parent can receive than the upturned face of a toddler, eyes speaking wonders and a face of confidence in discovering a brand n

On Becoming Toddler Wise Details

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Kate says

First of all, let me just say that I know some people are opposed to anything Ezzo has ever written. They think he's some kind of cult leader. Whatever. He's not, and like any child-rearing book, you need to consider what he says and use what's useful for you and your child. He's definitely not into attachment parenting, so if that's your thing, you probably won't agree with his ideas on parenting. But if you're open minded, then his books are worth reading.

Like Babywise, this book's basic philosophy is that kids thrive on routine and structure. (You can refer to my review of Babywise for more on how that worked for us. Let's just say, I'm positive that Lily sleeping through the night at 5.5 weeks wasn't a coincidence.)

The authors talk about things like giving your child's day structure and routine, being proactive in using that time for learning and play, and being consistent on other elements of your interaction with him. They also talk about things such as different ways of communicating with your toddler, which I found really useful. The whole thing was practical, and I definitely gleaned a lot from it. I think the major thing I'm taking away is that I need to be a little more intentional in how I structure our time during the day; I think this will prevent Lily from getting bored as easily. I also want to help her work on self-control and more self-directed playtimes (such as blanket time).

Any book that gives you several useful things to use with your child is worth reading to me!

Erin says

OK, the prose is painfully bad. I can't review this without saying that. The whole "land of good reason" imagery was honestly painful to read.

That said, here are the ideas I took from it that I am going to try out with Emily:

- * It is important to focus on goals, rather than methods, when parenting. It will keep you grounded on why you do what you do.
- * Discipline matters in the little things, because it will set a pattern of obedience for the big things.
- * Too much freedom in environment = too overstimulated to learn properly.

Mandy J. Hoffman says

Anything you need to know about raising a toddler is found in this book.

Christina says

I just re-read this one to help me with my 13 month old twins. It doesn't give you warm fuzzies or anything,

but it sure helped get me in gear and back on track with parenting them. Especially regarding high chair manners. I didn't think they were that bad, but as I read they do just about every naughty thing on the list... drop food/silverware off the tray, put dirty utensils in their hair, scream (for fun), spit raspberries while eating, grab the spoon when I'm feeding them, etc. I've gotten better about reinforcing sign language with them as a result of reading this and have seen positive results in just two days. I really believe in the importance of individual play time and it's pretty amazing to see my one-year olds focus for 30-45 minutes at a time, all alone without direction. This seems especially important for twins who constantly have another guy their size messing with them and trying to take their toys all day. This is a gem and can be read in one sitting.

Alison says

The author provides too narrow of path to parent and the author has questionable background and experience to give this advice. It became annoying to read.

Luke Gruber says

Parenting is essentially a collection of advice from family, friends, books, and google. Not that everything heard should be employed, but having an understanding of various methods and solutions are helpful when refining your own parenting strategy. This book is just that. It's helpful information for a 18-36 month year old child. I find all of these books written by the Ezzo's to be helpful. This book was broader than the previous books and spoke more high level. Honestly, I thought the last chapter was better than the rest of the book combined. It was the most applicable. It was good.

Kelly says

I like this book. At first I was disappointed because I wanted it to be more like "If your child does this, then you should..." This books gets into the psychology and ethics/morals/decision-making much more than I expected. Which is not a bad thing, and I am sure it is necessary. But, it was refreshing for me to see some of the tactics that were popularized when I was a child. I like knowing that there are some things that we can reward our children for. And, I really liked that they pointed out that your toddler is not malicious, he is not "out to get you," etc. I think when we get caught up in the moment, it can definitely feel that way. I wish there was a little synopsis though of the things that were specific actions to take when your toddler does something a certain way.

I really liked the stuff on structuring your day, and the need for the various types of play throughout the day. I completely agree with this. In our house, both parents work, so I am not planning to map out the days because it's not feasible for us. But, I will not forget the various forms of play on the weekend, and I can stop feeling guilty about not playing with my child 24/7 when I'm home from work because he needs time to play by himself. Generally, my toddler can roam around the downstairs because we keep it baby-proofed, but now that he is in his toddler phase, I feel like he is constantly following me around rather than playing with his toys. I found that when I put him in a smaller, gated area upstairs to play by himself, I have success for 15-30 minutes. He cries when he knows that I leave, but he quickly busies himself with his toys. This really opened my eyes to ways that we might overwhelming him.

I also really enjoyed the focus on ensuring things are age appropriate. I definitely agree with this. This was something that I had thought long and hard about before I read the book, so I am really glad that they spent time addressing this.

Karli says

I often don't just love everything in a parenting book (I've read several, especially before we had Noah, but I kind of like to glean a little from each one and tend to take a pretty balanced view - meaning I don't believe in magic formulas that work 100% of the time for everybody because every parent and child is so different.) But I really like this book... I liked it even more than Babywise for some reason (which doesn't totally make sense because it's the same heart value). At the Bible School, one of the things we focus on with our first year students is what we call "The Power of a Focused Life" - which at its heart is about managing time and disciplining your life that you would not squander your destiny in Christ. The students fill out Personal Goals - related to overall life vision and then also focus on more specific goals such as finances, relationships, rest, ministry, vocation, prayer and study, etc, etc. Once they have done that, they create a schedule that sets them on a course toward achieving those goals. One of the biggest revelations for our students just in scheduling their time like this is how much time they are actually wasting... doing things aimlessly and losing hours - precious hours that add up to years lost over the course of a lifetime.

The heart of this book reminded me of the heart of above. It's the Power of Focused Life for Toddlers... and I LOVED it! Much of it was something we already do in part, but it gave even more clarity and direction to the heart of what we were feeling/doing. I wished it had more practical tips and strategies because I bought into the philosophy right away (didn't need three more chapters to explain it for me)... but overall, I'm glad I have this book.

Lori says

Garbage. This book assumes that the mom is the only one parenting the child. This book was first published in 2003! It states that girls excel at talking but not math and engineering. Seriously?? Even if you can see past that, this book reads like a Buzzfeed article that was stretched into a book. Hard pass.

Karen says

This was an incredibly fast read, I read it in two sittings. Maybe because I skipped most of the chapter on potty training, since I'm not ready to tackle that with the kiddo yet. General takeaway I got from this:

- a schedule / routine is helpful
- be intentional with your time with your child (guide them and try to teach them, don't just let them wander around)
- focus more on redirection and restriction than punishment at this stage
- use your word choice carefully; don't bog the kid down with long explanations, keep it simple and direct and find ways to encourage positive behavior rather than always discouraging negative behavior

One thing I did not like about this book is that it assumed a stay-at-home mother in all cases. So all the examples were like "when the dad gets home, he can spend one-on-one time with one kid while the mom

bathes the others and puts them to bed" and stuff like that. A sample day schedule was entirely focused on a stay-at-home mother so for a two-job couple like us, I found it hard to translate some of the suggestions to our varied schedule and caregivers.

Taco Tuesday says

I liked the sleep training method in Babywise, so I was hoping this would have some good general toddler information, but it was a huge miss for me. The chapter about creating a schedule read like it was straight from the 1950s, talking about how moms will be less stressed and will be able to get food on the table before dads come home if they just stick to the routine. There was a line that said something to the effect of "Dad should try to spend a few minutes with each child, even if a few minutes is all he has time for," and I just lost it. This book was published in the early 2000s. There is just no excuse for this antiquated portrayal of American family life. What about more equitable parenting divisions? What about working moms and stay-at-home dads? What about nannies, day cares, and other child care options? So gross and unhelpful.

Laura says

I appreciated this book. Again, I don't necessary agree with EVERYTHING, just like I didn't agree with EVERYTHING in Babywise, but I did appreciate the structure and authority presented in this book. I KNOW in my head that I am Cannon's authority, but sometimes when in you're in the nitty gritty of the day with the whining and crying you start to doubt yourself. I thought this was a much better read than Babywise II.

Goals for your child:

Moral - self, control, obedience, patience, manners, focus, concentration, relationships

Academic - gross & fine motor, ABs, math, reading, writing

Spiritual

Routines should include meals, naps, roomtime, play time (free & structured), table activities, alone time, reading, and play groups

Work on - staying in bed until mom comes, pick up throughout the day, require eye contact and saying yes mommy

Things don't happen all of a sudden - they've been little things that have been there all along.

Give instructions, not suggestions. You don't need your child's permission to parent.

Aja says

Fantastic parenting resource. I feel much more confident walking into this toddler phase. It was a quick read, but shared the essential information in a concise, digestible fashion.

Summer says

I've read the first three books in the series within the past year or so, and I have loved them; they earned five stars from me. This one, however, only got three because I think that it could have been pared down to maybe 50 pages. They go back over a lot of the things covered in the other three, which has some value, I suppose, but they also go into great detail about potty training. Granted, that is definitely appropriate for toddlers, but they have a whole book dedicated to potty training, which I also own and plan on reading when the time comes.

The 50 pages that it could have been are really good, though. I like their advice on teaching self-control, not over-feeding your child, teaching them boundaries, how to talk to your child, and not giving in to tantrums. I'm a huge fan of the Love and Logic series, and I think these all go very well together. That's probably also why this one didn't bowl me over like the others: I've recently read two of the L&L books, and they cover a lot of the same things. This book is worth the read, and definitely worth a skim.

Sue says

This book is dangerous.
