

• LESSON FROM MY LITTLE ONE

A Purse of Toys Brings the Playground Together

TOYS HAVE ALWAYS been an icebreaker for my son, William. As a toddler, he was nervous whenever company came over. He'd hide as soon as anyone walked in, observing from around corners and through my legs. When he was finally ready, he would emerge with a toy at the end of an outstretched arm, waiting for our guests to say something about it before he would speak.

One place I discouraged bringing toys, however, was the playground. "You might lose it, buddy," I'd warn. "Or another kid will try to take it from you." But one day, when William was 5, he decided he should bring not just one toy to the playground, but lots of toys. He assured me he could manage because he had placed them in an old pink purse of mine that I'd given him. That day, I just didn't have the energy to argue.

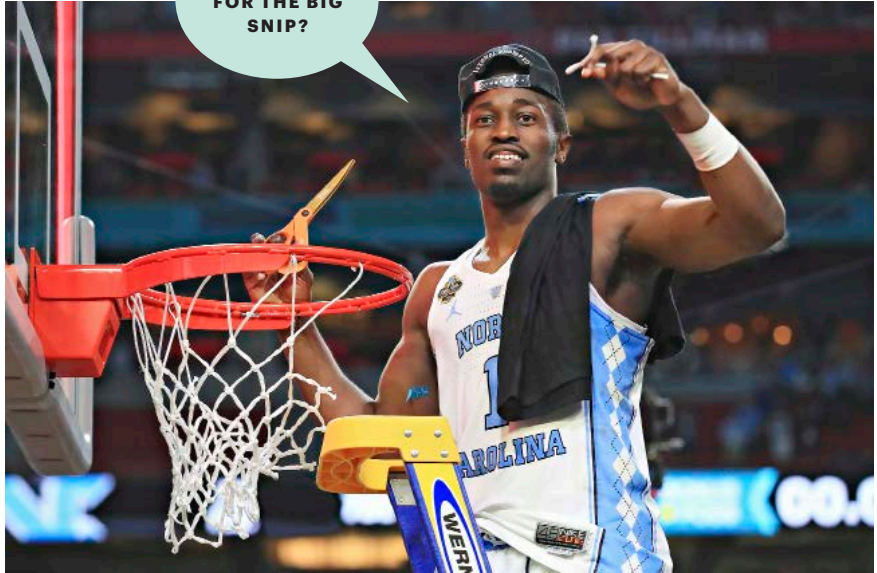
At the playground, William went up to a child playing by himself, the purse slung jauntily over his shoulder. He opened the bag and said, "Which one would you like to play with?" Once the other boy had picked, the two walked over to another child and made the same offer. Eventually, every kid was holding one of William's toys. The jealous behavior I'd feared had been unfounded. Instead, I saw a heartfelt effort to include everyone.

Toys were still his icebreaker, but William was no longer my shy toddler—he was my sweet kid who wanted the shy ones to know that introducing yourself to a new friend can be scary, but a toy can help.

—Jamie Kenney



READY FOR THE BIG SNIP?



• THIS IS HAPPENING

Time to Schedule Your March Madness Vasectomy

FOR THOSE DONE HAVING CHILDREN, a vasectomy may seem like a good solution for permanent birth control, and urologic practices have figured a way to motivate interested men to schedule the procedure: the promise of recuperating while watching a few days of NCAA March Madness. Urological offices across the country have started offering "Vas Madness" deals, which often come with cheeky post-op survival kits.

"We usually see a 50 to 75 percent increase in vasectomies from mid-February through mid-April," says Todd M. Waldmann, M.D., of the Idaho Urologic Institute. "Last year's promotion included a three-topping-pizza coupon, a Boise State rally towel, tickets to a Boise Hawks game, nuts, and coffee." Plus, the practice never forgets to throw in packages of frozen peas to ice the affected area. "We get a lot of chuckles over that," Dr. Waldmann adds.

"This is really the only 'Bluelight Special' we can offer in urology, so it's a great call to action," adds Frank D'Amico, M.D., president of Urology of Central Pennsylvania, Inc., which gives out free magazines and T-shirts during its March Madness deal. "We hope it gets people into the office and promotes urologic health, as many men don't like to talk about other potential concerns like testicular and prostate cancer." Go team!

—Marisa LaScala



10 Ways That Your iPhone Is Just Like a Small Child

- 1 - It's attached to your hip, right by your side, rarely out of your sight.
- 2 - You sometimes check on it in the middle of the night (even though you know better).
- 3 - It's your daily alarm clock.
- 4 - When you first get it, you're terrified of dropping and breaking it.
- 5 - Even when you're apart, you think about what it's doing.
- 6 - It's often covered in mystery smears and smudges.
- 7 - The software periodically updates to even smarter versions.
- 8 - It's fun to dress up in cute "outfits."
- 9 - It will basically bankrupt you, and it keeps getting more expensive.
- 10 - You don't know how you ever lived without it.

—Liz Krieger