

TITLE: "The Secret to Keeping a Clean House"
SOURCE: Organizing the Chaos in Your Home – 8
Guest: Mrs. Kristi Clover

INTRO: John Fuller

[Standard] Have you ever come home to a messy house and just thought, "How in the world did this happen?" [Has this ever happened with dirty dishes piling up, backed up laundry, or messy counters?]

I'm John Fuller, here with Dr. Danny Huerta, head of our Parenting Team here at *Focus*.

When *Focus on the Family* President Jim Daly talked to Kristi Clover, she offered some tips on cleaning *and maintaining* an orderly house for the whole family.

CLIP (6:49)

Open: JDD: One thing in there, and you know, we haven't talked about this, but the what I would call you call the MOM, Master Organizer of Mayhem. Maybe DAD is the Dude At Dinner. How do dads show up? Yeah. To kind of augment what mom's trying to accomplish in the, in the home, becoming a place of shalom? I mean, we can either enhance that or detract from it.

Close: Kristi: ... tips, you know, whatever it is, for laundry and it'll pop out. I actually asked it to give me the top 20, stain, you know, stain remover removers, for typical laundry things. And it kicked out like, you know, blood, coffee, pen. like, all these different things. What to do to get rid of it. And, you know, and it was amazing. So I'm going to print that baby. **JDD:** And that's been so good

John: [Standard] So it *is* possible to have both kids and a clean house!

Danny, I love Kristi's ideas for developing sustainable systems for the whole family. What's worked in your family to keep the house organized?

Danny:

- **JDD:** How do Dad's show up to augment what Mom is trying to do at home?
- **Kristi.** DAD – Diverter of Disaster. What is our shared goal? My husband came from a family that seemed perfect. I used to put a lot of pressure on myself to make the home look nice. One day when he came home, our house was a hot mess. I got upset, and my husband said, "I don't need the house to be perfect." For him, if the counters are clean and there's a plan for dinner, that's enough.
- **JDD:** Communicating that is important. The final question of the book is this idea that cleaning is not one and done. How do you stay in the game?
- **Kristi:** We can make checklists that are one and done. We tend to list cleaning tasks as if they're one and done. Instead, they're cyclical. What is my rhythm for tasks like laundry and meal-planning? The task involves figuring out rhythms and systems that the whole family can understand. I put hooks on the inside of our closet doors to help my kids get used to putting hangers up. Create a master priority list. Google and Chat GPT are helpful tools for recipes, lists, and meal plans. 😊

John: [AC] For more great tips on how to keep your house clean, and get your kids to help too, Kristi Clover's book, *M.O.M. – Master Organizer of Mayhem*, is available for a gift of any amount. Information on how to get that resource will be in the episode notes.

We'll also link to an article called "Teach Your Children to Pick Up Their Things" with some creative ways to motivate your children to clean up around the house. The Pick-Up Game is one of them!

Next time, Justin Earley joins us to talk about how God teaches us to love Him, even when we get mad at our kids. For Dr. Danny Huerta and our entire team, I'm John Fuller, and thanks for listening to the ***Focus on the Family Parenting Podcast***.

TITLE: "When You Get Angry at the Kids"
SOURCE: Creating Spiritual Habits in Your Family – 1
Guest: Mr. Justin Earley

INTRO: John Fuller

[Standard] When we lose patience with our kids, it's the easiest thing to blow up in anger. [A time you got angry at your kids and had to take a step back?]

I'm John Fuller, and with me is Dr. Danny Huerta, who leads our Parenting Team. Danny, has this ever happened to you?

Danny: [A time you got angry at your kids and had to take a step back?]

John: [AC] Justin Earley shared about a time when he got very frustrated with his boys. Here's his conversation with *Focus on the Family's* President Jim Daly.

CLIP (3:30)

Open: JDD: Justin, welcome to Focus on the Family. **Justin:** Thank you so much for having me here. It's an honor. **JDD:** This is so great. I just want to say your dad, Mark Earley, took over from Chuck Colson and Prison Fellowship. Did a great job there in that transition. And tell him hi when you see him.

Close: JDD: Yeah. And what's so powerful and what parents need to hear is it can be done. You, the Lord, will give you the deep breath. They may to not be so, switched on with anger or something like that. This is just part of it. You just gotta – whew - take a deep breath, and that thing's going to be perfect. But it can take some thinking and some prayer in that regard.

John: [Standard] That is so powerful. [When have you taken a pause in conflict with your kids?] What about you, Danny?

Danny:

- **JDD:** When have you encountered God while striving to parent well?
- **Justin:** I realized when I had kids that it's harder than I thought. I remember one wild night with three boys under 5 years old, I started yelling a lot and told them, "I love them," and that God does too, and I left the room. Then I thought about how my boys must have understood love from my actions.
- **JDD:** It's hard to get that moment of spiritual epiphany – shouting at the kids for an hour, and then realizing, "I told them God loves them." That's quite an awakening.
- **Justin:** The Holy Spirit convicted me that my normal of going into an intense mode wasn't okay, but He had a new normal for me. There's grace; yesterday doesn't have to be like tomorrow.
- **JDD:** It can be done. The Lord will give you the deep breath you need.

John: [AC] Justin has more to say about seeing Christ work in his heart in his book *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms*. It's got great practical tips for forming good habits with your kids, and we'll send it your way for a donation of any amount. Look in the show notes to find that link and get your copy.

We also have a free parenting assessment in the show notes if you're interested in learning more about your unique strengths as a parent, *and* some areas you can grow in.

Next time, we hear from Melissa Hannigan, and how we can be flexible parents, especially when it's inconvenient. I'm John Fuller, and on behalf of Dr. Danny Huerta, and our entire team, thanks for listening to the ***Focus on the Family Parenting Podcast***.

TITLE: “Parenting With Unpredictable Children”

SOURCE: Instilling God-Given Qualities into Your Children – 1

Guest: Mrs. Melissa Hannigan

INTRO: John Fuller

[Standard] Remember that Bruce Lee quote, “Be water, my friend”? This may sound like it has nothing to do with parenting, but sometimes we need to be fluid with our schedules, goals, and plans, *especially* when our kids are involved. **[A time when your plans changed because of your children?]**

I’m John Fuller, and here with me today is Dr. Danny Huerta, who heads up the *Focus on the Family* Parenting department. Danny, I can’t be alone in this experience. Has this ever happened to you?

Danny: **[A time when your plans changed because of your children?]**

John: **[AC]** *Focus* President Jim Daly talked to Melissa Hannigan about how parents can appreciate their kids’ God-given spontaneity.

CLIP (3:37)

Open: JDD: Melissa, welcome to Focus on the Family. Great to have you for the first time. **Melissa:** Thank you so much. It’s such an honor to be here with you guys. **JDD:** Now, I like this — do you just put water on kids? Activate your child’s God given traits. Just add water. (laughter) **Melissa:** I wish it was that easy, right?

Close: Melissa It’s being able to be fluid in the way that we perceive information, but also being not fixed in our mindset, being open to the possibility of things being changeable... **JDD:** Another challenge for adults! **Melissa:** Correct! **JDD:** ... Thank you very much because by the time the kids come along, we got our troughs ... **Melissa:** Exactly. **JDD:** ... Otherwise known as ruts.

John: [Standard] Sometimes I miss that kind of childlikeness. [A time when your kids' flexibility influenced how you see the world?] How about you Danny, how has your kids' flexibility influenced you?

Danny:

- **Melissa:** My goal was to get parents to think differently about their kids and their purpose as parents. We need to see our kids through God's eyes, not as inconveniences. Playfulness – our kids can get overly playful. We change the way we think and grow.
- **JDD:** What are the 12 traits in your book?
- **Melissa:** Wisdom, Wonder, Vitality, Sensitivity, Flexibility, Curiosity, Creativity, Imagination, Inventiveness, Playfulness, Humor and Joy. In 2020, I learned these “Genius Qualities” from Dr. Charles Armstrong. These were fresh ideas for our homeschool classroom so our kids could reach their full potential.
- **JDD:** Was flexibility a concern for you? 😊 It's something a lot of parents battle with.
- **Melissa:** As adults we need to be fluid, not fixed in our mindset, especially with our kids.

John: [AC] Melissa's got some great tips and stories to help you see your kids as God does. For a gift of any amount, we'll send you her book *Inconvenient Parenting: Activate Your Child's God-Given Traits*. Find more information in the show notes.

We also have the Age and Stage e-Newsletter. It's free to sign up for, and it'll send you weekly content to help you work through the phase of parenting you're in. Details are in the show notes.

More with Melissa next time. For Dr. Danny Huerta and our entire team, I'm John Fuller and thanks for listening to the ***Focus on the Family Parenting Podcast***.

TITLE: “When Godly Parenting Stumps the World’s Standards”

SOURCE: Instilling God-Given Qualities into Your Children – 2

Guest: Mrs. Melissa Hannigan

INTRO: John Fuller

[Standard] Has God ever put something on your heart that just didn’t make sense to the rest of the world? We definitely see this theme in the Bible.

I’m John Fuller here with Dr. Danny Huerta, who leads the *Focus on the Family* Parenting department. **[A time in your life when God’s will didn’t make sense?]** Danny, has this ever happened to you?

Danny: **[A time in your life when God’s will didn’t make sense?]**

John: **[AC]** Melissa Hannigan joined *Focus* President Jim Daly to share about the world’s standard of living, versus God’s.

CLIP (3:19)

Open: JDD: Let’s, speak to the early days when you were applying this because I think one of the lessons you learned, you had a nice house and you and your husband doing well, had a good income, and you decided, okay, let’s downsize. Now maybe that was forced. I don’t know if you can describe that but what were the cost benefits of that experience and how it impacted your kids? **Melissa:** Right. So yes, we were to the world’s standard successful in Houston.

Close: Melissa: ... Moved from Houston to Florida and downsized significantly. And we still I mean, we still had paid our bills. We still were to the huge world standard. We were living wonderfully still. We had food, we had clothes, we had our needs met. But more importantly, we had time. And when God took us out of that environment, it really shaped up our priorities and our focus.

John: Danny, Melissa's story about her family is too relatable to parents, especially in today's digital age. What are some ways your family stays connected?

Danny:

- **Melissa:** We were successful in Houston. At that time, our family lost our connection with each other. I had an Aha Moment when my second-grade son and his friends called themselves J.E.R.K.S – Junior Educated Rich Kids. I realized I didn't want my son to be entitled, and prayed God would help our family.
- **JDD:** Jean was very good about making sure we had dinner together. You can be successful, but you need disciplines to get it across.
- **Melissa.** We knew people in our community who were successful and really focused on the Lord. But I knew God didn't want us to stay. We moved from Houston to Florida and downsized. We still had food and clothes, but we had more time.

John: **[AC]** For more of Melissa's story, and some tips on prioritizing godly character in your children, we'll send you her book *Inconvenient Parenting: Activate Your Child's God-Given Traits* for a gift of any amount. Information will be in the episode notes.

Also, we have a free online parenting assessment, which thousands of moms and dads have filled out to understand their strengths and areas they can grow in. The link to that is in our show notes.

Next time, Danika Cooley helps us understand how we can parent our children from the Bible without taking it out of context. I'm John Fuller and for Danny and our entire team, thanks for listening to the ***Focus on the Family Parenting Podcast***.

TITLE: “How to Use Scripture to Teach Your Kids About God”

SOURCE: Nurturing a Love for the Bible in Your Kids – 6

Guest: Mrs. Danika Cooley

INTRO: John Fuller

[Standard] As Christian parents, we want to raise our children up in the way they should go, according to Scripture. But practically, how do we do that? Sometimes it's hard enough to keep our kids' attention when we're reading stories from the Bible.

I'm John Fuller, joined by the head of our Parenting Team, Danny Huerta. Danny, how have you kept your kids' attention while reading the Bible?

Danny: **[How have you kept your kids' attention while reading the Bible?]**

John: **[AC]** *Focus on the Family* President Jim Daly spoke to Danika Cooley about how the Bible can be a great instructor, when used properly.

CLIP (3:57)

Open: JDD: Let's get some of the pitfalls that you've identified, mistakes that parents can make when they're reading with their kids and again, be age appropriate. Just tell us what age you'd find this pitfall ... And I think all parents when I say this, you're going to know it well, try to avoid moralizing. OK, how does moralizing what's that sound like when you're reading scripture together?

Close: JDD: Maybe the Lord was teaching you something. **Danika:** Yeah. I think familiarity with Scripture is such a big deal, knowing the stories and knowing how God works throughout history. And then I think scripture memorization is a big deal, too, because the Holy Spirit will bring back his words to our hearts at a time when we need them and we least expect it. And I know he's done that in my life.

JDD: So that's good.

John: [A time you've accidentally moralized a Bible story?] Danny, have you ever had to correct your children's understanding of a Bible story that they heard from you, or from a Sunday school lesson?

Danny:

- **JDD:** Try to avoid moralizing – what does that sound like in Scripture reading?
- **Danika:** Easy for us to say the book of Esther means God is going to put us in the right place at the right time. It's really about God's sovereignty. Same with David. The whole story is about God. Stick to the main things about God.
- **JDD:** You mention a cringey factor – A calendar with a scripture in it.
- **Danika:** "Bow down to me, and I'll give you everything." It was from Satan, during the temptation of Christ. If we cherry pick things, we can end up in error.
- **JDD:** Teach your kids to discern by becoming familiar with the Word ourselves. Over time, application as they grow older. When you hit a problem, what does the Word of God say about this? Trent was getting prideful at riding a bicycle, and I reminded him "pride goes before the fall." He fell down, and his brother said, "See, dad was right."
- **Danika:** Scripture memorization is critical, Holy Spirit will bring them to mind.

John: [AC] If you're looking for ways you can read the Bible with your children, we have videos and downloadable reading plans in our Family Reading of Scripture to help the whole family better understand the Bible. See the show notes to find that link.

Also, for a one-time gift or monthly pledge of any amount, we'll send you Danika's book, *Help Your Kids Learn & Love the Bible*. You can find information on how to get that resource in the show notes.

More with Danika Cooley next time on how teaching your kids the truths of God, even when the unexpected happens. I'm John Fuller, and for Dr. Danny Huerta and our entire team, thanks for joining us for the ***Focus on the Family Parenting Podcast***.

TITLE: "Teaching Our Kids About God When Nothing Goes Our Way"

SOURCE: Nurturing a Love for the Bible in Your Kids – 7

Guest: Mrs. Danika Cooley

INTRO: John Fuller

[Standard] It's never fun when we feel helpless with our kids. But even in those moments, God is still in control over us and our children.

I'm John Fuller, here with our Vice President of Parenting, Danny Huerta. Danny, I'm sure you know that feeling where nothing's going according to plan and your well-planned itinerary just won't cut it.

Danny: [A time when the unexpected happened and returning to routine wasn't possible?]

John: [AC] Danika Cooley talked with *Focus* President Jim Daly about creative ways we can expose our kids to Scripture.

CLIP (4:52)

Open: JDD: Just a couple of questions here at the end. Some days you'll try your hardest, I'm sure, as a parent, but you still won't get to the Bible reading. There's challenges. The schedule is out of control, sick child, whatever might have happened. But in that area where you may have that sick child or maybe an emotional teenager, um, what can you do to not get discouraged?

Close: JDD: Yeah, and I appreciate that. I just think you don't want to create more angst when what you're trying to do is help your kids understand the scripture. Right. You know, you're not doing this or you're not doing that and going back and forth as the adults in the room just settle down. You open the word up and get going, even if it's a small bite and start today.

John: [Standard] Danny, when's a time you joined Heather in a routine of reading Scripture or seeing God through nature with the kids?

Danny:

- **JDD:** How do we avoid getting discouraged when we feel like we're trying your hardest during difficult times with family?
- **Danika:** Plan for the unexpected, interrupted routines. I had pneumonia. I couldn't read Scripture to my kids. We put Bible-related audio programs and videos on, like AIO. There are passive ways to learn the Bible.
- **JDD:** Why do you like the story of the demon possessed son?
- **Danika:** (Reference Passage). Jesus says, "If I can?" The man says, "I believe, help me with my unbelief." We can't do what we want in our own strength. I pray that prayer all the time.
- **JDD:** I feel the angst of Moms here. For the moms carrying the heavy burden, what can they do to look at things differently? Invite husbands to help out, encourage Bible reading in a steady way with Dad.
- **Danika:** Don't nag our husbands. Together, you can go on nature walks, enjoy creation and pretend to do things like put on the armor of God. You can joyfully bring Scripture into the picture, without usurping your husband's authority.
- **JDD:** Don't want to create more angst in your marriage, right? Start today.

John: [AC] For more tips on teaching your child in the faith, we have an article in our show notes called, "Encourage Your Child's Faith," with more creative ways you can bring the Bible to life for them.

To help your kids develop a love for God's Word, we'll send you the book by Danika Cooley, *Help Your Kids Learn & Love the Bible*. It's available for a gift or monthly pledge of any amount, and details are in the show notes.

Next time Arlene Pellicane tells us why it's not too late to curb our kids' screen times. I'm John Fuller and for Dr. Danny Huerta and our entire team, thanks for joining us for the ***Focus on the Family Parenting Podcast***.

TITLE: "Is it Too Late to Fix My Child's Screen Time?"

SOURCE: How Your Family Can Manage Technology Well – 6

Guest: Mrs. Arlene Pellicane

INTRO: John Fuller

[Upbeat] Let's talk phones. While we've noticed the trend of kids receiving phones at an early age, the statistics have told us that more kids are realizing their own need for boundaries on their devices.

I'm John Fuller, along with Dr. Danny Huerta, who's in charge of our Parenting Team. Danny, when did you and Heather decide to give your kids phones? What rules did your family have toward phones?

Danny: **[When did you and Heather give the kids phones? What rules did you have?]**

John: **[AC]** Arlene Pellicane and *Focus* President Jim Daly talk about how parents can help their children be more mindful of their tech habits.

CLIP (3:02)

Open: JDD: And let's end where I mentioned at the beginning for the mom and dad that maybe they haven't done it. Well, yeah, and I'm telling you, don't feel guilty. I was there, too. I mean, Jean was on top of it and I was pretty passive. And, you know, she got upset with me saying, come on, be engaged here. And, I was to an extent, but I wish I could do that, do over and be more mindful of this.

Close: JDD: And if you can make a gift of any amount, we'll get it to you as our way and say we'll get it to you as our way of saying thank you for being part of the ministry. If you could do that monthly, like Jean and I do for focus, that's great. It helps us throughout the year. Then to budget. A onetime gift is great as well, but we want to get it into your hands.

JF&DH Wrap/GOAA/Thank you

John: [Standard] Communicating to our kids that we've given them a screen too early, and working with them towards healthy habits definitely takes humility. Danny, have you talked with your kids about how they want to raise their future children with technology?

Danny:

- **JDD:** Jean got upset with me about being too passive on our kids and technology. What can a parent do to reverse what's happened?
- **Arlene:** It's right where we are with our kids. It's not all about "We're taking it away!" It's rather a softer, "We've learned some new information." You can also say, "I'm sorry about getting you this phone too early. How can we make progress? Let's get this under control together." Shoot for 7 meals a week together, without phones, and no phones at bedtime to protect those 8 hours of sleep.
- **JDD:** This is the beginning. We're here to encourage you in your parenting journey. It's very easy to settle for being lazy. There's more diligence required. Jim gave this GOAA for *Screen Kids*.

John: [AC] Plugged In is a great resource from *Focus on the Family* for reviews on movies, video games, music and even YouTube channels that your child may be exposed to. Check it out in the show notes.

And like Jim said, Arlene's book, *Screen Kids*, is still available to you for a gift of any amount to our ministry. You can find that information in the show notes as well.

More with Arlene next time. For Danny and our entire team, I'm John Fuller, and thanks for listening to the ***Focus on the Family Parenting Podcast***.

TITLE: “Setting Effective Screen-Time Limits”

SOURCE: How Your Family Can Manage Technology Well – 7

Guest: Mrs. Arlene Pellicane

INTRO: John Fuller

[Standard] Last time, we talked about how it’s not too late to recognize how screen time needs to change as a family. Today, we’re discussing the evidence that extended time on phones and social media, especially for our children, affects their growth.

I’m John Fuller, along with Dr. Danny Huerta, who’s in charge of our Parenting Team.

Focus on the Family President Jim Daly talked to Arlene Pellicane about the data.

CLIP (4:25)

Open: JDD: Arlene welcome back. **Arlene:** So much fun to be here. **Jim:** Always good to have you. And, you know, last time we did kind of do a little, shock to the system of parents. Say, here's the data. Let's go back and just recap some of that data so that parents, can be mindful of what what it's telling us. You know, the statistics are not supportive of too much screen time. That's the bottom line.

Close: Arlene: So that's where we're trying to get with our teenagers that they have the buy in of, oh, you made this rule in this limit. I kind of hated you for it, but, well, my life is so much nicer. So parents, like, know that at the other end of this rule or this limit you're going to impose, your child will say thank you.

John: [Standard] Danny, in your counseling, how have you seen parents reluctantly or effectively place tech limits on their child?

Danny:

- **JDD:** The data is not good on social media. How they're wiring kids with dopamine is designed to form addictions. Even the surgeon general wants to put warning labels on it.
- **Arlene:** The average child is on a screen for amusement for 8 hours a day. By the time a child is 7, they've already spent a year on a screen. Imagine if they put that energy into reading or doing a sport. The Anxious Generation – Jonathan Haidt. Suicidal tendencies have skyrocketed under new phones. Haidt talks about The Great Rewiring of Childhood – play-based to screen-based childhood. We're signing them up for social deprivation and sleep deprivation. Half of boys are not sleeping enough. 6 out of 10 girls are in a funk.
- **JDD:** Jean was so intentional to not let boys use the phone too much.
- **Arlene:** Have to get buy-in from teenagers especially, when they realize their lives are better because of parents' limits they hated at first.

John: [AC] Maybe this conversation is a sensitive one for you, because your child is struggling with screen-time addiction. Our Counseling Team is here to help. You can reach them at 800 – A – FAMILY. The first call is free, so please reach out if you need help. There's no shame in doing so.

We also have Arlene's book, written with Dr. Gary Chapman, available for a gift of any amount. It's called *Screen Kids: 5 Relational Skills Every Child Needs in a Tech-Driven World*, and it'll encourage you in your journey to help your child grow while protecting them from the downsides of technology. More information is in the show notes.

If you enjoy listening to this podcast, remember to leave us a review on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. For Dr. Danny Huerta and our entire team, I'm John Fuller, and thanks for listening to the ***Focus on the Family Parenting Podcast***.