

“Mommy and Me” Guru Demystifies Parenthood *So long Spock — Jackie Rosenberg is a new mother’s best friend*

By Robin Borim

Thoughts of motherhood are often laced with the fantasy of endless quiet moments spent reclining on a hammock with your picture perfect baby. You imagine yourself a radiant glowing beauty — completely calm and under control.

Well, I hate to be the one to break it to you, but in the *real* world, babies just don't get the fantasy memo. In fact, they come without an operating manual altogether. Most first time mothers have no idea what to do with this new bundle of joy. Do you rely on family traditions, books, friendly advice, TV shows, pediatricians or plain old guessing? All of this information can be overwhelming, and some if it just might not sit well with your values or way of life. So what do you do — is it hopeless? Is your child doomed?

Relax. I wouldn't leave you hanging — especially in your condition.

If baby is baffling you, the number one greatest gift you can give yourself is to enroll in Jackie Rosenberg's Sherman Oaks based *Babies First Class™*. This is a *Mommy and Me* class unlike any other, due to the incredible background and knowledge of its creator. Rosenberg is trained as a Pediatric Occupational Therapist, specializing in premature, handicapped, autistic or sensory deprived infants. When her nephew was born, weighing a bit more than one pound, she found herself in the infant ICU using all of her training to help her sister work with her baby. The other mothers there were eager to learn what she was doing, especially the remarkable work on increasing her nephew's experience of positive touch. From there, her first class was born.

That was seventeen years ago, and her “*Premie Progress Group*” evolved into fourteen weekly *Babies First Class™* groups, three “*Mommy and We*” groups (for twins or triplets, run by Sue Darison) and an evening lecture series. Enrollment begins when your baby is 2 – 3 months old and ends at 16 – 17 months old. Topics covered range from *Coming Home From the Hospital to Sleeping Through the Night to Going Off to Pre-*

School and multiple issues in between.

But why is this class is different? Jackie's approach is from all angles. She imparts medical, developmental and psychological information, sprinkled with her vast personal experience. She will also answer endless amounts of questions. Try doing that with your pediatrician!

“(I teach mom's), not by the book, but to look at children as individuals,” she says. “I want them to use their instincts within a few structures, which help them to relax.” One of her favorite skills to teach is for mothers to parent as a united force with their partner — eliminating a child's ability to manipulate and play one against the other. Above all, if she could accomplish just one thing with each mom, she says it would be to encourage them to always try new ways to par-

ent, building “parental confidence” in the process. This, she says, yields big rewards — self-esteem for your child.

She urges parents to “learn to think for yourself, whether you've read it in a book or heard it in a lecture,” always going back to “how does it feel to you.” And always, please, “be respectful of your child.”

Jackie Rosenberg is the mother of Allison, 33 and Todd, 30. She is also the grandmother of Tyler, 6 months. Her kids will tell you, she practiced what she teaches.

Babies First Class™ is located at 14368 Ventura Blvd. Sherman Oaks (818) 501-BABY. Classes are wildly popular — call when you are pregnant to book your slot.



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