

(Beep)ing Off

Saturday, 03 June 2006

Last night, I popped in the PG rated movie Spaceballs thinking it would be a fun family movie. Good &ol Mel Brooks! Within 30 minutes the boys heard nearly every cuss word we’d been shielding them against since birth. I was mildly relieved that the first – and even second – sh*t blew past their heads without their acknowledgement. But we had to turn the movie off when the a**hole dialogue started; the part where there are six or so guys on the bridge and they each take turns calling someone they know an a**hole. Chuck told the boys that he would like to see the movie, but with the bad words beeped out.

That was critical back-story to understanding the day we had today.

Last night, I popped in the PG rated movie Spaceballs thinking it would be a fun family movie. Good &ol Mel Brooks! Within 30 minutes the boys heard nearly every cuss word we’d been shielding them against since birth. I was mildly relieved that the first – and even second - sh*t blew past their heads without their acknowledgement. But we had to turn the movie off when the a**hole dialogue started; the part where there are six or so guys on the bridge and they each take turns calling someone they know an a**hole. Chuck told the boys that he would like to see the movie, but with the bad words beeped out.

That was the back-story to the day we had today.

I’ve been helping Chuck and his business partners, Kyle and Gary, with their bookkeeping for the past several weeks. Part of the deal, though, is that the boys have to accompany me to the office and entertain themselves while I work. I think having Alex and Chris tear around the office all day has given Mr. Kyle and Mr. Gary (as the boys call them) a fresh appreciation for the single life.

The boys love the dry-erase board. They like to draw pictures and act out full feature dramas – always involving superheroes and spacecraft. No matter how many times they are reminded to use a proper eraser between scenes, in their excitement to get on with the show they forget and wipe the ink off the board with their bare hands, then transfer the ink onto their clothes, or faces, or legs, or the walls, or, simply don’t wipe their hands at all. It doesn’t take long before they look like they’ve spent the day sweeping chimneys or, at best, like their tattoo artist was a half-wit wearing oven-mitts.

Today was an especially artful day and we were expecting a Client visitor to the office. When our Client came to call, Chris was black smudges from head to toe, looking like a street urchin. No problem, we simply sequestered the boys to the other room with me where we keep another white board. Usually the arrangement works out pretty well, but if there’s one thing you can count on kids to do, it’s to embarrass you in front of a Client.

Unfortunately the rooms are not sound-proof so the whole office – including our Client guest – was privy to my little street urchin, acting out loud from his six-year-old imagination: “Alex, I’m going to say ‘beep’ in the place of a bad word! ‘I’m gonna get you beeper! You’d better beeping keep away from my spaceship or I’ll beeping shoot! I’ve got beepity-beeping x-ray vision so don’t try to beeping hide!”

At the end of the day, Mr. Kyle wished Chuck a pleasant weekend and added, "I'm gonna get the beep out of here and go home."

Kids are sponges, right? And don’t you sometimes want to just wring their beeping little necks?