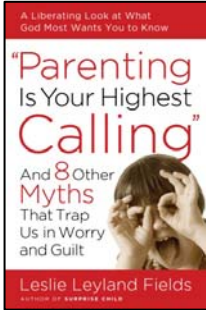


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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The Nine Most Common Myths of Parenting Exposed

Mother of Six Replaces Myths and Guilt with Empowering Truths



Los Angeles, Calif – Large families are the subject of reality shows, best-selling books and now the recent controversy over the mother of Octuplets - these have all stirred up conversations about parenting capabilities and responsibilities. This is little surprise to author **Leslie Leyland Fields**, a mother of six. **Fields did not intend to have a large family, but she had two surprise children later in life and has since defended large families** and she upholds the high value of children and life.

Fields believes this is the right time to question parenting beliefs and assumptions.

“We know by now that we are asking the wrong questions. We are so focused on ourselves—and our own need for success and the success of our children---that we have come to view parenting as a performance or a test. We cannot pass this kind of test.”

In her new book, ***Parenting Is Your Highest Calling: And 8 Other Myths That Trap Us in Worry and Guilt*** (WaterBrook Press, December 2008), challenges common myths of parenting, including these beliefs:

- Myth : Having Children Makes You Happy and Fulfilled
- Myth: Good Parenting Leads to Happy Children
- Myth: You Will Always Feel Unconditional Love for Your Children
- Myth: Nurturing Your Children is Natural and Instinctive
- Myth: If Parenting is Difficult, You’re Not Following the Right Plan and 4 more!!

Each myth is replaced with life-transforming truths that liberate readers and “break the cycle of guilt and failure” says Fields. Truths such as these:

"A parent's job is not to make their children happy - but to do for their children what they cannot do for themselves: to parent for the child's long-term good over their short-term happiness"

"On your parenting journey you may feel frustration, impatience, anger or hurt as you raise your children. None of this means you love your children any less."

Ultimately, Fields’ myth-busting returns parents to their families with a deeper commitment and clearer understanding of their role, restoring hope and joy to discouraged mothers and fathers.

Leslie Leyland Fields is the author of six books, including *Surprise Child* and *Surviving the Island of Grace*. She has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Christianity Today*, *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The Christian Science Monitor*. The mother of six, she divides her time among parenting, writing, speaking, commercial salmon fishing and teaching in Seattle Pacific University’s MFA program. Leslie and her family live on Kodiak Island, Alaska. Visit her online at www.leslie-leyland-fields.com.

About *Parenting Is Your Highest Calling*:

Parenting Is Your Highest Calling: And Eight Other Myths That Trap Us in Worry and Guilt by Leslie Leyland Fields. Published by WaterBrook Press/Random House. December 2008. Paperback, 240 pages. \$13.99. ISBN: 978-1-4000-7420-4. Family and Relationships / Parenting.

Suggested Interview Questions

For Leslie Leyland Fields, author of *Parenting Is Your Highest Calling*

1. You have a very interesting personal story as a mother (2 “surprise children” in her forties; live, work and commercial fish in Alaska). Could you share briefly about your family and where you live?
2. How have your own experiences fueled the content in this book?
3. You identify nine myths. Where do they come from?
4. What’s the fallout from believing these myths? Why are these myths a problem?
5. Let’s do some myth-busting here. First, the title myth: Parenting is Your Highest Calling.” If parenting is not our highest calling, what is?
6. Another myth, that children are here to make us happy and fulfilled. If they’re not here for our blessing, why are they here? What are children “for”?
7. Myth Eight, “Successful Parents Produce Godly (successful) children.” You’re saying that we can’t assess the quality of our parenting by how our kids are turning out. If this is so, how can we know if we’re parenting successfully?
8. Myth Four is “Good Parenting Leads to Happy Children.” Why does culture teach us to parent for our children’s immediate happiness instead of what’s good for them? Why is it good for children to sometimes be unhappy?
9. You write that we often have simplistic notions of love, and those notions often lead us into enormous amounts of guilt and worry as parents. What do you think is a truer understanding of love—and how does that free us from guilt?
10. You write in the Introduction, “for the first time in nearly twenty years of parenting, I have more hope and joy than guilt.” What truths have had the biggest impact on you as a mother?
12. This material will likely be controversial for some people; you’re taking on some entrenched ideas. What kind of feedback are you getting so far from people who have read the book?
13. What do parents most need to hear right now?

For an interview or to discuss an excerpt, contact Ben Laurro at Pure Publicity at 818.753.4056 or Ben@purepublicity.com

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Bio: Leslie Leyland Fields

Author of Parenting is Your Highest Calling

Leslie Leyland Fields is a writer, professor, wife and mother of six children, who span from college age to kindergarten. She lives on Kodiak Island, Alaska, but travels often to speak at conferences, retreats and seminars around the country, addressing matters of literature, family, writing and faith.

She is the author of six books: *Surprise Child: Finding Hope in Unexpected Pregnancy*, *Surviving the Island of Grace: A Life on the Far Edge of America*, *Out on the Deep Blue*, *The Entangling Net*, and *The Water Under Fish*.

Her essays have appeared in *The Atlantic*, *Orion*, *Christianity Today*, *Image: Art, Faith Mystery*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Best Essays Northwest*, *America and the Sea*, *On Nature: Great Writers on the Great Outdoors*, *Mama, Ph.D.*, and many others. Her poetry has appeared in *The Seattle Review*, *The Bellingham Review*, *Christianity Today*, *Patches of Godlight: Father Tim's Favorite Quotes*, *Light from Heaven* and many others.

Fields grew up in rural New Hampshire in a family of six children. With her father unemployed most of the time, she helped rebuild dilapidated colonial houses with her mother and siblings to make a living. While attending Cedarville University in Ohio, Leslie met a wild Alaskan named Duncan Fields, whose nonconformity and recitations of Robert Service poetry wooed her to the alter. She wanted a life outside of barbed wire and picket fences, and she got it! From 1980-81, Leslie and Duncan spent a year backpacking through Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Southeast Asia. They embarked on a second trip in 1986, riding an expedition truck through Africa.

After graduate school, Leslie and Duncan created a homestead on an uninhabited island, eighty miles from the town of Kodiak. They have fished commercially with extended family on Harvester Island each summer since 1979 in a salmon fishing operation. Her four older children all run their own fishing boats out on the ocean. In 2006-07, Leslie and Duncan pulled the kids out of school and traveled throughout North America and Central America, learning from the classroom-of-the-road. As they traveled, Leslie spoke at many universities, and taught seminars on "Incarnational Teaching" to educators in Guatemala. During the winter, Leslie travels and speaks and teaches creative nonfiction in Seattle Pacific University's Master of Fine Arts Program.

Leslie holds degrees from Cedarville University, the University of Oregon (M.A. in Journalism, M.A. in English), and Goddard College (M.F.A. in Creative Nonfiction).

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