



Heather Shumaker

Ready to reexamine long-standing ideas about parenting?

Looking for a speaker who inspires and challenges audiences with fresh ideas about kids today?

Ready to get people talking?

Heather is an experienced speaker whose warm, engaging style connects with audiences. Her presentations touch on today's most timely topics for parents and teachers – safety and weapon play, bullying and conflict mediation, homework and recess, play, screens and the changing nature of childhood.

Based on her renegade parenting books – *It's OK NOT to Share* (Tarcher/ Penguin, 2012) and *It's OK to Go UP the Slide* (Tarcher/ Penguin 2016) – Heather's presentations lead audiences to confront deeply meaningful questions about parenting and learning in today's world. *Parents* magazine called her first book "brilliant" and named it one of the **Best Parenting Books of 2012**. *Salon.com* called it "an insightful, sensible and compassionate book full of downright revolutionary ideas."

Keynote topics

Why it's OK (and even Good) for Kids not to Share (also offered as workshop)

An introduction to the counterintuitive world of "Renegade Parenting." This thought-provoking keynote examines a suite of age-old parenting conventions, and, based on emerging brain research and child development, turns them upside down. Topics covered typically include sharing, saying 'sorry,' coping with angry children, rough play, homework, toy weapons or other topics. Be prepared to change your mind.

Standing up for Children's Rights in a High-Pressure World (also offered as workshop)

How can we meet young kids' needs in a world where kindergarten is the "new first grade?" In this inspiring keynote, Heather examines myths about early academics and explains the 2 main skills children 6 and under need to master. With a mix of storytelling and research, she shares her dynamic list of "Children's Rights" and explores how we can realign our expectations to truly meet kids' needs. Workshop version includes developing a set of children's rights for your program.

Workshop topics

Offering the Right Risks in a Sometimes Scary World

When it comes to raising kids, it's always Safety First. Or is it? Childhood is also a time of risk. Learn the 4 key areas (physical, creative, social and emotional) kids need to experience risk – and how we undermine it. This program examines present-day parent fears and looks at social rejection, conflict, structured time, outdoor play, and tips to balance risk and safety for our children.

Bridging between Preschool and Kindergarten

You're happy with your play-based early childhood program. What lies ahead? This program helps parents understand their new role: parenting in partnership with elementary school teachers on topics such as homework, recess, and kindergarten options. Gain tools for finding balance, understand signs of stress and dig into what's developmentally appropriate for young elementary school kids.

Boys, Boys, and Tomboys

Perplexed by the boys in your life? Learn power activities to help high-action kids channel energy, at home and in the classroom. This program covers topics including wild emotions, physical play, aggression, shame, literacy and creativity. Discover the benefits of rough-and-tumble play and leave with ideas to make daily life more boy-(and also girl) friendly.

Wild Emotions

Kids can have explosive emotions. What to do with all those BIG feelings? Heather guides you through understanding attitudes toward negative feelings and gives a host of practical tools so you can help children understand, accept and express their big feelings appropriately. Key to this program: All Feelings are OK; All Behavior isn't.

What audiences are saying

"One of the best keynotes I recall us hosting. She reaffirms your belief in the power of play and sends you back to work Monday morning armed with fresh ideas to put into practice." - Michelle Lewis-Barnes, Provider Resource Organization conference, Portland, OR

"Heather stood out as a major highlight of the event. Her sessions were packed and people lined up to talk to her afterwards. It was like rock star status. Even months after the event people are still talking about her!" - Sandra Fischer, Unplug & Play conference, San Jose

"She's magical. Intelligent, absorbing, inspiring and full of heart." - Susan Odgers, professor, Grand Valley State University.

"Just three days after your visit, and what changes we've seen in the kids. It really is remarkable. 'Oh, so this is what Heather was talking about with uninterrupted play!'" - Danielle Cassetta, Director, Acorn Glen Cooperative Preschool

Meet Heather

Heather Shumaker is the author of *It's OK Not to Share* and *It's OK to Go Up the Slide*, both published by Tarcher/ Penguin. She's a speaker, journalist, blogger and advocate for free play and no homework for young children. She's been featured on *Fox & Friends TV*, *Huffington Post*, *New York Post*, *Parenting*, *Parents.com*, *USA Weekend*, *Wisconsin Public Radio* and other media. Heather is a graduate of Swarthmore College (BA) and University of Wisconsin-Madison (MS) and the mother of two children. She travels from northern Michigan.

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