



the
REALLY
really
BUSY PERSON'S
book on
PARENTING

DEDICATION

*To the friends and supporters of Care for the
Family – you are changing lives – Thank You!*



Rob Parsons & Katharine Hill



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Cartoons © David McNeill 2015

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you guys! And a very big thank you to David
McNeill – we couldn't have done it without you!*

We were recently chatting to a good friend over a cup of coffee about the ups and downs of family life. We looked back over the good times and the moments we would rather forget – sleepless nights too numerous to mention, bedtime stories, giggles in the dark, milk teeth, croup, dressing up, shoe laces, school runs, chickenpox, birthday parties, the teenage years (and more sleepless nights!) shopping trips, school discos, exams, broken hearts, gap year adventures, college ... and, before we know it, our children are adults and making their own way in the world.

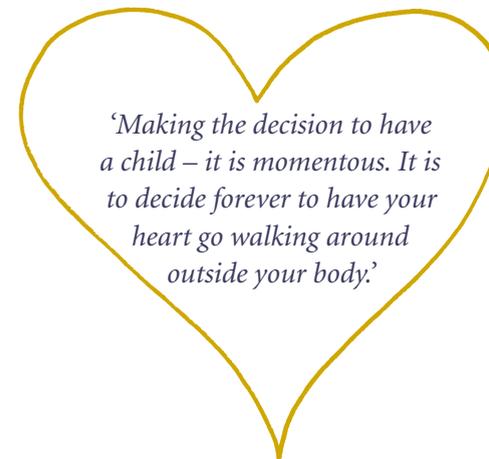
We began talking about the past twenty-five years at Care for the Family (the charity that Rob founded and of which Katharine is the UK Director) and the million people we have spoken to in live events across the world. And as we talked about the parenting books we have written, the advice we have given (and received!), and the brilliant parenting quotes we have heard over the years, our friend asked us what our favourite bits were. That conversation got us thinking. We teamed up with brilliant cartoonist and illustrator David McNeill, and gathered together our 'favourite bits' into this little book. There are some that made us laugh and some that made us cry, but we think all of them give wisdom, encouragement and hope to mums and dads in the incredible task that is parenting.

*So put the coffee on, enjoy the honesty of some of the parents who have shared their ideas with us, and allow yourself a smile at David's wonderful cartoons. But most of all, we want you to know for certain that whatever you are going through at this moment – a brand new baby who cries all night, a toddler who only will eat jammy dodgers or a teenager who decides he definitely hates you – you are not alone. When we grasp that wonderful truth we are set free to believe what, in our hearts, we knew all along: there is no one way to be a **perfect** parent but there are a hundred ways to be a **great** parent!*

No authors deserve to have as much fun putting a book together as we have. We really hope you enjoy it!

Rob and Katharine





'Making the decision to have a child – it is momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body.'

ELIZABETH STONE

When it comes to their own children, there are no 'experts' – just people trying to get their own families through as best they can.



“ I think a good parent isn't one who makes dinner or helps you with homework because I can do that myself, but a person who is always there for you no matter what and will always love and accept you for who you are. ”

13-YEAR-OLD GIRL

I naïvely assumed that the struggle to conceive, eight-and-a-half months of nausea followed by a night of hard labour meant that the difficult bit was over, and I looked forward to life as a mummy with a mixture of excitement and anticipation. I had somehow overlooked the fact that this was just the beginning. The journey of parenthood had really only just begun.



In giving our children boundaries appropriate for their age, we are giving them a gift: we are building in them a deep sense of security that will last a lifetime.

