

I held this project very close to me. I wanted it to change me, enlighten me, better me, and teach me, but wanting it to have an impact on you is not enough. You must allow it to have an impact on you – and I did that. I was able to experience a fraction of motherhood and if only a fraction is that amazing, than the entire essence of motherhood must be breathtaking. I was able to care for another life. I was able to feel true responsibility. I was able to know what it feels like to be depended on and what it feels like to know that the way your life will build another's. This was such a wonderful experience for me.

The baby gave me so much pleasure. I was actually nervous about caring for it and self-doubt is never more beautiful than when you feel it because you know you need to be the world for someone. Since I only took the baby for a day, I wasn't able to receive any reactions from the outside public. Students both involved in the project and uninvolved, thought that it was a wonderful idea and a great life-skill building project. We all thought that it was one of those things that we'll take with us as a universal class of '06 memory. When I told my family about it, they were really interested in the mechanics of the project – how long do you keep him?, does he cry?, what's his name? All in all, I truly wish I could do this project again.

If I could give advice to someone considering parenthood I wouldn't be able to tell them all the things they need to know, but I would tell them this: Live your life for your child. Know that how you do, builds how they will. Tell them to do as you say and do that as well. Let open arms be the way your greet them and depart from them. Always let them know that they can talk to you about anything. Let them know that they can call you at 2:00 in the morning to ask you to pick them up from a party that they snuck out to attend.

Tell them to be wary of the mistake that you made, but let them freely choose to make them. Tell them of the regrets that you had, but don't live the life you wish you would have through them. Tell them that you love them...even in public. Don't believe them when they say they hate you because they wouldn't let them have that third chocolate-chip cookie.

Only be the child when you play with them, not when you raise them. Savor every giggle, every smile, every crayon mark on the wall, and every fingerprint on the windows you just spent hours cleaning. Never let someone else dictate how you raise your children because everyone's an expert, but only you know how to love your child. Pray that they don't grow up too fast, but help them to become who they're destined to be. Protect them, but allow them to learn. Teach them, but allow them to see. Love them, just love them, and everything else becomes instinct.