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Kids -- Terrific to Terrible and Back Again

As parents, ever wonder how your darling baby can turn from the "perfect child" into a "hell on wheels" overnight? According to parenting expert Dr. Nancy Buck, beginning at 18 months, children take their parents on a continual roller coaster ride between the "need to cooperate" (terrific) and "need to compete" (terrible). And the ride doesn't end until they turn 18!

Charlestown, RI (PRWEB) March 10, 2008 -- As parents, ever wonder how your darling baby can turn from the "perfect child" into a "hell on wheels" overnight? According to parenting expert Dr. Nancy Buck, beginning at 18 months, children take their parents on a continual roller coaster ride between the stages of the "need to cooperate" (terrific) and "need to compete" (terrible). And the ride doesn't end until they turn 18!

"Our brains are set up to pay attention to what is wrong, not what is right," says Buck, whose Peaceful Parenting® (www.peacefulparenting.com) technique derives from the "Choice Theory" developed by the psychiatrist Dr. William Glasser. "When your child is in the 'compete' stage, they feel safe enough to practice on you. So, it is actually a compliment that your child is a complete 'angel' for the babysitter and a 'devil' when you return. It means they feel safe with you."

Practicing Peaceful Parenting (www.peacefulparenting.com) means you understand your children are internally motivated by the genetic instructions for safety, love, power, fun and freedom. In one-on-one sessions and in lectures around the world, Buck teaches parents how to decode their child's internal motivations so they can lovingly guide them from birth into young adulthood when they are mature enough to make it on their own.

Buck points to several things that parents can do to make their homes more peaceful during the "need to compete" or "terrible" stage:

- * Acknowledge, accept and be happy about it. Remember these behaviors will serve them well in young adulthood when they will need to make their own decisions. For example, these learned behaviors will help teenagers distinguish between a safe and a dangerous situation, like not getting in a car with someone who has been drinking.

- * Give your child more choices and more opportunities to be in charge. For example, a family was having problems when they took their four-year old shopping. She always wanted something the parents didn't want to buy. So the parents put the daughter in charge of gathering items from mom's list in her own cart. It worked like a charm. She completely forgot about the items she originally wanted.

- * Pay attention to the cooperative times and celebrate them with your child. Acknowledge with a smile that your child is with you today; plan a special picnic on the living room floor when it is raining outside; or simply tell others how wonderful your child is acting when your child is in range to hear your compliment.

Parents need to know that children go back and forth between the competitive and cooperative stages every six months between ages 2-7. From ages 7-18, the flip flop between both stages extends to approximately eight months. So embrace the happy moments as well as the mood swings, for they are as natural as the day you gave birth to that beautiful boy or girl -- despite the pain of labor mothers so quickly forget when they decide to have another.

Nancy Buck is the author of *Peaceful Parenting* and her second book, *Why Do Kids Act That Way*, will be released in the Fall of 2008. She completed her Ph.D. in developmental psychology with a specialization in parenting at The Union Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio and has a master of arts in counselor education from the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, R.I. She has been a featured speaker at the American Montessori Society, National Foster Parent Association, New Jersey PTA Annual Conference Connecticut Counseling Association, Australia William Glasser Annual Conference, Annual Family Matters Conference, and the Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children. To book Dr. Buck for your next conference or a one-on-one telephone/in-person parent consultation, visit www.peacefulparenting.com or call 401-662-5788.