

Happy Mother's Day: Lawerly Tactics For Good Parenting

By **Annie Pancak**

Law360 (May 7, 2021, 2:59 PM EDT) --Going to court eight months pregnant. Crossing out sections of the preschool parent agreement. Teaching kids how to avoid a cold call in online school.

These may sound like strange scenarios to most mothers, but not to lawyer moms.

Law360 asked attorneys in the MothersEsquire Facebook group, a community supporting and advocating for mothers in the legal industry, to share photos, tips and stories about lawyering while parenting.

Here is what they had to say.

And to all the other badass lawyer moms, happy Mother's Day!



01.

Laura Hughes McNally, partner at Morgan Lewis

"Something I don't say to opposing counsel but do say to my kids: 'I give up. You win!'"



02.

Camelia Lopez, senior counselor to the U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Texas

"One month before her due date, my youngest daughter accompanied me to my oral argument before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. She kicked when she heard the violent facts of the case before me and I knew that she would be quite the advocate one day! Today she is 7 and still loves to sit with me as I work. Watch out world."



Marian Lee, principal at Vital Contract Analysis LLC

"My daughter started preschool recently. The administrator told me that it was the first time she watched anyone read the entire Parent Agreement — and cross out the photo release — before signing."



Holly Ray, managing attorney at Legal Services Alabama

"[My daughter] Hope had the good luck to be born in October, mid-pandemic, so she's learned more about eviction defense than I ever expected she would."



Kristin Tyler, partner at Garman Turner Gordon; co-founder of LAWCLERK

"I try to get the kids involved in my work whenever possible. My son likes to make PowerPoints so sometimes I give him the words I need on slides and let him design the PowerPoints for internal meetings. My daughter is a regular attendee at many of my virtual meetings as she is a social butterfly and likes to say hi to mom's 'friends' on the computer."



Holly J. McCabe, associate at Brian L. Titgemeyer PSC

"I have found myself informing my three rambunctious boys of their waivers when engaging in roughhousing, for example: 'You start a fight with your brother then you are assuming the risk for injuries if he fights back.'"



Jennifer Fahrenholt, law student at University of Detroit Mercy School of Law and University of Windsor Faculty of Law; law clerk at Denenberg Tuffley PLLC

"Thanks to my own online law school experience, my daughter has learned the art of avoiding cold calls in her virtual 6th grade classes by volunteering for the easy questions. She will be well prepared for the Socratic method if she decides to follow in my footsteps"



Shay P. Talbitzer, associate at Holland & Knight LLP

"My daughter loves the book 'If You Give a Mouse a Cookie,' and has recently begun employing the mouse's tactic when it comes to asking for snacks before dinner or more books before bedtime. She will ask for something she thinks she can get and when I agree she then tries to sweeten the deal. My pro lawyer-mom tip for handling toddlers and opposing counsel who employ this tactic, particularly in settlement negotiations, is to explain that I am treating her 'request for a cookie' as an offer that can be accepted rather than as a 'request for an offer of a cookie' that can be countered to include milk (and a whole manner of other things) once extended."



Elaine M. Stoll, associate at Ulmer & Berne LLC

"Once I was trying to explain what lawyers do, and the concept of room for argument, to [my daughter] Ellery. And we were talking about whether a hot dog was a sandwich and how there are different ways to think about that. She said, 'Wait. It matters what kind of hot dog.'"



Jaclyn S. Alcantara, of counsel at Shook Hardy & Bacon LLP

"I frequently remind my daughter that negotiating is much more effective than whining or pouting to get her way and that she needs to make her case. Maybe I shouldn't be encouraging her to argue with us, but I think negotiating is an important life skill, whether or not she becomes a lawyer someday."



Valerie Gonzalez, owner and principal attorney of San Gabriel Valley Law

"A boy in [my daughter's] Sunday school class hit her and she told him that her mother would be suing him. While I am glad she stuck up for herself without retaliating, I didn't hope to create a hyperlitigious person, so I will have to speak to her about this."



Jennifer Belmont Jennings, wealth advisor at Hightower Wealth Advisors

"We've been so busy lately we promised our 8-year-old an 'Almost Yes Day' after we move. We assured him it wouldn't be as exciting as the 'Yes Day' movie. 'Of course there will be boundaries, nothing illegal,' he said."



Haley S. Stamm, attorney at Lawrence & Associates

"I don't always know where I find the time or energy to do all that must be done to be a good attorney and a good mom — but thankfully, all of my children inspire me to be my best every day. When these kids work hard and take pride in their work, when they speak up for others and are brave, I burst with pride! When they face their fears, I cheer them on!"