

Guest Blogger Jenny: Are You A "Never Enough" Mom? Than L.A. Private School Might Finish You Off

Description



Homemade vs. Store Bought Cupcakes

In the endless discussion of parenting, female identity, and self-flagellation, the latest incarnation of such is the contrast between the “Never Enough” mom and the “Good Enough” mom.

According to **Becky Beaupre Gillespie** and **Hollee Schwartz Temple**, authors of the new book, *Good Enough Is the New Perfect: Finding Happiness and Success in Modern Motherhood*, issues like the cupcake dilemma—and the myriad other choices moms must make in the name of “balance”—are actually part of a brand new Mommy War, especially for working moms. To read the interview with the authors at The Mother Company, click [here](#).

Apparently, the “Never Enough” mom usually has given up some high-powered job and focused all that energy onto the raising of her children. She constantly strives for perfection in all things, including homemade lunches, home baked cupcakes for her kids’ birthdays, and shuttling them to every class and event on the parenting docket.

The “Good Enough” mom, of course, isn’t exactly the opposite (that would be the “Doing Time” mom), but she definitely has lower standards. She doesn’t always run the bake sales (or, show up to the bake sales). Her kids aren’t booked into activities every waking hour (mostly because she doesn’t feel like driving them everywhere, at all hours). And often, those birthday cupcakes are from Pavilion’s instead of Mama’s Cucina. The implication of all this is, of course, that the “Never Enough” moms are going crazy in their endless pursuit of perfection, and the “Good Enough” moms are always wondering if they’re really “good enough,” or really

“kind of stink.” As I always wonder if I “kind of stink,” since I take time for myself and don’t go to every event, I can relate to these women. It’s a no win situation for sure.

And private school doesn’t make it any better. If you’re already prone to being a “Never Enough” kind of parent, private school will bleed you dry. There are just too many opportunities for involvement, from committees to special events to weekly time consuming commitments. Say “yes” to just one or two, and you will be inundated with offers, emails, and phone calls requesting your services. And this can snowball into quite a standoff.

One mom friend of mine has a fairly demanding job; she may work from home, but she might be working 24/7; she never knows. Yet, because she started out her first private school year with typical “Never Enough” mommy gusto, she was completely burnt out halfway through her daughter’s second year. She was forced to start saying no. And the disgruntled sighs and bug-eyed stares of disbelief she received while politely limiting her involvement made her beat herself up even more. Because there’s nothing worse to a group of “Never Enoughs” than a “Never Enough” turning “Good Enough.”

Because I’m so “Good Enough,” I choose my volunteer opportunities carefully. I helped out at used uniform sales, worked a two hour shift at the bake sale during the school fair, managed to get three great silent auction items donated, and chaperoned one field trip. Paltry? Perhaps, but I live over 20 miles away from the school and have lots of other responsibilities. I must admit I did make **homemade butterscotch brownies** (recipe on Jenny’s blog, [Find A Toad](#)) for Anna’s school birthday celebration (at her request), but since they’re my specialty and I can make them in my sleep, I don’t consider that a big deal. However, you’d never catch me up at midnight baking homemade cupcakes; the kids just want sugar, and store bought works just fine.

For Anna’s second year, I plan on ramping up my involvement a bit more. But I know my limits, and I don’t care about being branded as “Good Enough.” To all you overachieving, super human, cupcake baking “Never Enoughs” out there, bless you, and may the deity of your choice help you create private school volunteerism boundaries that work for you.

Jenny Heitz has worked as a staff writer for Coast Weekly in Carmel, freelanced in the South Bay, and then switched to advertising copywriting. Her daughter started 4th grade at Mirman School this year. She previously attended 3rd St. Elementary School. Jenny has been published recently in the Daily News and on Mamapedia, The Well Mom, Sane Moms, Hybrid Mom, The Culture Mom and A Child Grows In Brooklyn. She now writes about gift ideas and products on her blog, [Find A Toad](#).

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1. Good Enough Mom
2. Guest Blogger Jenny Heitz
3. Private Schools and Perfect Moms

Date Created

July 14, 2011

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