

# A PARENT YOU KNOW

**Name:** Jacquelyn (Jac) Lyga

**Married:** Mike, 15 years

**Age:** 40 (but I feel 25!)

**Children:** Carlyle, 6;  
Hayden 5; Clayton 3;  
Rylee 1; Camdyn 5 months

**Job title:** Principal at Irving Pertzsch Elementary School, Onalaska

Jac is a native of West Salem, where she lived until she attended UW-Stout, eventually receiving a master's degree in guidance and counseling. After working as a guidance counselor, she received her administrative license from Winona State University. Jac has worked in schools throughout the Coulee Region in Hillsboro, Tomah, West Salem, and Onalaska.

Jac's passions in life include spending time with her family and reading. "I read everything: novels, magazines, newspapers, the back of shampoo bottles, you name it," she says. "On those rare days when I get up before any of the kids and have to eat my cereal alone, I cannot eat it unless I am reading something."

She also enjoys walking and hiking, making greeting cards and jewelry, taking photos of her kids, reviewing recipes, and savoring the peace and quiet in her house from 10 pm until midnight.



Theresa Smerud, artist & photographer

## ***Briefly tell us about your family.***

I have five great kids and one hard-working husband. Mike and I went to high school together and traveled many roads over the years, yet we both ended up just where we always wanted to be, with a big family in our own cozy part of the world. Carlyle is our oldest and he will start 1st grade in the fall. Hayden is preparing for kindergarten. Clayton is joining a preschool class this fall. "Rylee girl" is almost 2 and loves doing everything her older brothers do. Our last cutie is Camdyn. She is a darling little sweetie pie and I can't get enough of her bright smile.

Nothing in my life compares to my little slice of heaven with my kids. I love their energy, questions, and enthusiasm.

## ***How do you keep a balance between a successful work life and family?***

Balance...what is that? I am teetering on

the edge. However, I try to stay focused on one thing at a time. When I am at work, I try to be at work mentally, even though I do miss my own kids. When I am at home and the kids are awake, I focus on them and their needs.

It is extremely helpful that Mike is a great dad and can do all of the parenting when I am working. I believe that raising our kids is a two-person job.

We also have a great care provider that comes to our home and provides excellent care to our children. For any working parent, it is critical to know that your children are well cared for when you are away from them. We also have family members in the area that help out often as well.

"The days are long, but the years are short." I have tried to remember that and live by it. Before I know it, my kids will be gone and off living their own lives (maybe then my house will be clean and I will get some sleep).

***What is your advice for parents to help their children start the school year off on the right foot?***

Get excited about the new school year. Start back-to-school rituals so they have fond memories. Share your own positive memories of school.

Your attitude will rub off on them. They are more likely to look forward with happy and successful thoughts if you convey those thoughts in your words and deeds.

***What things can a parent do at home to enhance a child's school experience?***

Ask specific questions about school. What did you learn in science class today? What was the name of the story your teacher read? Who did you play with at recess today?

Help them see how what they are learning ties into the world around them. Making connections to real life helps kids put the things they are learning at school in context.

When you have a question or concern about what is happening at school, contact the teacher or if needed the principal. Help avoid situations when youngsters miss essential details when reporting to you by regularly communicating with teachers.

Background knowledge helps make school easier for students as well. Give your child learning opportunities outside of the classroom. While classes, organized sports, or trips can help, just spend time talking with your child about life around you.

If you value school, most likely your child will too. Treat school like a job for them. Send them to school rested, well-fed, on time, and ready to learn.

***This issue of CPC explores how parents can help their kids find their strengths. How do you suggest parents help kids do this?***

You know your children best. What amazes them? Buy them books on that subject. What do they love to do? Find opportunities for them to expand on that skill. Do they love to ride their bikes? Take them on the bike trails and use math to figure out how far you went and/or how fast. With some thought, you can take any passion your child has and tie it in with many school subjects, using their interests to keep them motivated and intrigued.

Also, remember that we all have passions and they often change over time. That's why you see so much exercise, woodworking, and crafting equipment at rummage sales. We need to try different things to find our niche. Let kids explore and try a variety of activities. Yes, you may spend a lot of money on items that might end up in a second-hand store one day, but you will also open doors for your child.

***Among the kids who do well at school, do you see any commonalities in their parents and what they're doing at home to support their education?***

Successful students come from all walks of life. Most parents of successful students show their children that they care about them and what they accomplish. Parents whose children do well at school often expect their children to do well, both socially and academically. They teach their children how to be inquisitive and persistent. They model how to be a good citizen.

Also, as hard as it is, sometimes they let their children learn from their mistakes. As a parent, I'd like to keep my kids from ever having any kind of hurt or disappointment, but in real life we all make mistakes. The key is being able to learn from those mistakes and turn them into opportunities and/or learning experiences. Never forget to love them unconditionally and let them know you love them often. [CPC](#)

**Associated  
with making  
your dream  
home a reality  
Bank.**



Michael Glassmaker

To find out how you can get into the home of your dreams, please call Michael Glassmaker at 1-800-355-7468, ext. 4226 or (608) 796-4226.



associatedbank.com

La Crosse 605 State Street (608) 796-4200

Equal Housing Lender. Member FDIC and Associated Banc-Corp (9/05) 8009



MARK A. HUESMANN & SONJA DAVIG HUESMANN



**DIVORCE ~ PERSONAL INJURY  
FAMILY LAW ~ BANKRUPTCY**

Worker's Compensation • Civil Litigation • Wills & Probate  
Real Estate • Adoption • Disability Claims • Criminal Defense

**501 Empire Street, Suite 102  
Holmen, Wisconsin 54636  
608-526-9320**

info@huesmannlaw.com • www.huesmannlaw.com