

Ending Illiteracy in America Parents and Parenting

Becoming a Parent

What would my becoming a parent have to do with workaround number five? Everything. My fellow parents and I are the reason this book exists.

Center Babies

When the Center was in its earliest days, more than half of our employees were part-time workers from three local high schools and West Valley Community College. Trisha, one of our high school part-timers became pregnant when she was just sixteen. I learned of her pregnancy even before her parents did. Trisha told me that she and her boyfriend were definitely going to keep their baby. That meant that she would likely be a seventeen year old high school drop-out when her baby was borne. Not a great start to her future life.

Years earlier, when Mary and I were in Washington D.C. giving workshops at a teachers' center, we noticed that the center director's baby was sleeping comfortably in a crib behind her desk. The baby's presence in that crib was not a one time thing. That crib was her home away from home while her mother was at work. It had never even crossed my mind before then that babies could be brought to work. However, once I learned of Trisha's pregnancy, I told her that if she ended up dropping out of school, we would switch her to working full time at the Center and she could bring her baby to work with her every day. Trisha initially declined my offer, but when her daughter Ashley was three months old, Trisha changed her mind and the Center had its first baby at work.

I said "first baby" because what was true for Trisha would, of course, be true for any other female employee who might wish to take advantage of the Center's baby policy. One year later, Robin, who had been the Center's very first full time employee, gave birth to twin boys. Aaron and Kyle did not wait three months to join their mother. They came as soon as Robin returned to work.

Whereas Trisha's pregnancy had not been planned, Robin's pregnancy was by design. Her very good reasons for becoming a mother before marriage will not be listed here. Robin was, in essence, a single parent. The boys' father did not live with Robin and offered little help in caring for his sons. Since Robin lived within walking distance of the Center, I would accompany her everyday after work as she and I wheeled the twin's strollers from work to home. Once we reached Robin's home, I would help her with the boys for an hour or two before leaving.

When the boys were about six month old, Robin asked me if I would mind watching them for three days and two nights so she could take a little break from motherhood and go skiing with her brother. Before Robin took her break, she wrote out a long list of everything I would need to know to care for Aaron and Kyle in her absence. When Robin returned from her days off, I said to her, "Taking care of babies is hard! You need a break from doing this every single day!"



Me with the first three Center Babies

Even though I had been helping her for an hour or two after work each day, I had absolutely no idea how much was involved in caring for babies all day long. I told Robin that from that day forward, I would come to her house every Wednesday and care for Aaron and Kyle in her home, so she could have one normal day at work each week without having to add baby care to her work load. I would also come to her house every Thursday after work and take complete care of the boys for the evening, so she could have that evening out with her friends. Robin had named me as her sons' Godfather at their birth. My Godfather's role was now in the process of expanding.

Kindergarten and The Little Yellow Bus

My Wednesdays and Thursdays with Aaron and Kyle remained a weekly event until they entered kindergarten. I mentioned earlier that Robin lived within walking distance of the Center. She also happened to live just across the street from the elementary school her boys would be attending. The school's two kindergarden classrooms and their playground were directly across the street from Robin's house. Aaron and Kyle had seen the kindergarden children playing across the street from them for years and were looking forward to being kindergardeners there themselves.

When Robin took Aaron and Kyle with her to enroll them in kindergarten, the person in charge of kindergarten enrollment put the boys through a series of tests. At the tests conclusion Robin was told her sons were not ready for kindergarten just yet. Instead, when school started, they would be picked up each day in a little yellow bus and taken to a special education class at another school. Two boys who had been looking forward to attending the kindergarten directly across the street were now to be told they were not good enough to join that group and bussed somewhere else instead. Not on my watch.

I asked the school the reason for the boy's supposed failure. What I was told was, they didn't know how to skip. I am not making this up. Failure to skip was their ticket to the little yellow bus. Aaron, Kyle and I went shopping that day to buy them new shoes. I told the boys that their new shoes were skipping shoes. Once we were back at their home, the boys put on their skipping shoes and we went outside for skipping lessons. They could not skip when they were tested by the school because they had never had a reason to skip before. Neither Robin nor I had ever thought that skipping was an essential skill for school success. Anyone at the school could have taught the boys to skip as quickly and as easily as I had done, but not a single person there thought to try.

I informed the school that the boys could now skip and they would not be boarding that little yellow bus. I then made sure they were enrolled in the kindergarten class they could see from their front porch. Robin and I agreed that from that time forward, I would keep her company at any school or teacher's meeting she attended, including all the parent-teacher conferences there would be. My reason for becoming a teacher was to change how children felt about themselves. As I was growing up, the teachers at my schools had either been indifferent or oblivious to the problems I was facing. (See the [Depression's Beginning](#) sub-section of the [College Sophomore Year](#) section of [Chapter 2 - My Path to Becoming a Teacher](#).) It was now my role as a parent to make sure that neither Aaron nor Kyle would be made to feel bad about themselves from anything teachers or administrators said or did to them at school.

The Elementary Grades

The skipping incident and its potential disastrous effect on Aaron and Kyle committed me to being actively involved in their school lives. When the boys began school, my Wednesdays with them continued in a modified way. I would now pick them up after school and take them to my home for an overnight stay. Robin still had her one night off from parenting each week, it was now just a day earlier. The school provided after-school daycare until about 5:00 each afternoon. When I picked the boys up, I would play with them and all the other children in daycare for an hour or so before leaving with them.

I joined PTA, of course, and went to every meeting. The meetings were frequently held during school hours. My fellow attendees were, for the most part, stay-at-home moms. Raising their children was their day-job. Until Aaron and Kyle's senior year in high school, I was the only male parent at any of the PTA meetings.

The students at the elementary school Aaron and Kyle were attending would all be going to the same middle school for sixth through eighth grades and then to the same high school. Unlike the schools where I had taught, Saratoga schools had very low turn-over rates. When the other kindergarten parents and I got together for our first meeting, I knew we all were in our first year of at least nine and probably thirteen years together. In middle school there would be more of us, since the middle schools drew students from three feeder schools. Our nine years in elementary and middle school would be followed by another four years together at high school. The only feeder school for the high school was our middle school. As a teacher, I had taught at three different schools in three different cities. The only lasting teacher friends from any of these schools that I had were the teachers who had followed Mary and me to the Center. I was now looking forward to the opportunity of experiencing long-lasting friendships with my fellow parents, as we all grew closer though our children.

The teachers at Aaron and Kyle's school solicited parent volunteers as classroom aides for a few hours each day. I was turned down as a volunteer in both kindergarten and first grade. The kindergarten and first grade teachers told me that my connection to Math Their Way had them feeling a bit intimidated. It was not until the boys were in second grade that my offer to volunteer was finally accepted. However, for all grades, volunteers were also needed for driving children on school field trips. My driving groups of children places did not intimidate anybody, so for both kindergarten and first grade I was at least allowed to be a volunteer driver.

I was a volunteer aide for the boys second and third grade classrooms. For both fourth and fifth grades, my offer to teach math lessons in their classes once a week was accepted. When I taught in the fourth grade, the teacher spent my lesson-time sitting at her desk correcting papers. Because the fifth grade teacher actively participated in my lessons, I gifted her sets of the various manipulatives I was using, so that she could continue what I was teaching the other four days of the week.

In [The Year 1993](#) sub-section of the [Acceptance and Rejection](#) section of this chapter I mentioned that when the State of California's test of mathematical understanding was first used, my Godsons were takers of the test. Their school principal was impressed with how well the

students in her school's fifth grade class had done on the new test. When she asked the students where they had learned the mathematics the test was measuring, they all told her "Bob taught us." That "Bob" was only in their class once a week. I got the credit, but their teacher did 80% of the teaching.

Center Summer School

My seeing the baby in the crib at that teacher's center is what let me know babies could come to work. My being a parent of children in school made me much more aware of the problems facing parents when their children are out of school for the summer. The summer following Aaron and Kyle's first year in school marked the beginning of the Center's Summer School for the Center employees' elementary school children.

The Center Summer School was created for the benefit of all of the Center employees' children who were in elementary school. The Center Summer School was also created to give me the opportunity to play a bigger role in Aaron and Kyle's education. The Summer School would place Aaron and Kyle in a Ten-No's school for a part of each year, where everybody helps everybody learn and everybody learns without exception. This would be true even in the multi-grade one-room school house the Center's school represented.

Trisha and I put ourselves in charge of hiring two teachers each summer to serve as the school's staff. I would be teaching there, as well. The mornings would be for academics. The afternoons would be for playing at the park across the street from the Center. Wednesdays would be for day-trips to different destinations every week. Places nearby like Great America, Giants baseball games, Raging Waters Waterpark, the beach at Santa Cruz, and eventually ice skating at a local rink. Ice skating was added because one of the applicants for that summer's teaching position had listed former Ice Capades skater on her resumé. For that summer, ice skating lessons were a weekly event.



The ice skating lessons turned Trisha's Ashley into a figure skater. They also turned Aaron and Kyle into competitive ice hockey players from their fifth grade year through their senior year in high school.

Images from Summer School



Middle School

The middle school teachers were new to us, but the parents and children from Aaron and Kyle's elementary school were still the same. There were no longer any parents needed as classroom aides. There were, however, now school dances in need of chaperones and field trips still needing drivers. Fieldtrips would now occasionally also include overnight stays. Children in their eighth grade year could even sign up for a week-long field trip to New York and Washington D.C.

I still attended PTA meetings regularly. At one meeting, a PTA member brought her two-year old child along with her. While the parents there were deciding who should serve in the leadership positions for the group, I volunteered to take the two-year old outside and play with her while the leadership discussion was taking place. When I returned, I found that I had been elected to the Board.

In Aaron and Kyle's elementary school, teachers taught children. In their middle school, teachers taught subjects. There were seven periods during each day, which meant as many as seven different teachers for each student. I was actively involved in PTA, and both dance and fieldtrip chaperoning. However, there were no parent-teacher meetings, so I had no involvement with any of their teachers. Near the end of Aaron and Kyle's seventh grade year, Robin was notified that both boys would have to repeat seventh grade the next year.

The boy's father was only occasionally in contact with his sons and out of Robin's life completely. Robin was now married to someone definitely not their father. When the boys were seven they welcomed Zachary, the first of their two half-brothers. Half brother Jacob joined the family when the boys were eight. Aaron and Kyle got long quite well with their younger brothers, even though they were not exactly impressed with their brothers' father. Aaron and Kyle asked me early on if I was also going to be the Godfather for their new brothers. I said No, because Zack and Jake already had a father.

Because Robin now had two additional children in school, she was paying less attention to how Aaron and Kyle were doing in that seventh grade year. Whenever she would ask if they had homework to do or any other school assignments, they would say they had completed all their work at school. Since there was so little communication between teacher and parent, Robin had no way of knowing her sons were not being truthful. Neither Robin nor I had any idea the boys were failing, until she was told they would be held back next year.

Upon being told that Aaron and Kyle would be held back in seventh grade, I met with the school's Principal. I knew him through all the interactions we had through PTA meetings, school dances and assorted fieldtrips. I told him that I definitely did not want Aaron and Kyle to be held back. I also said that even though they had not passed seventh grade, I personally guaranteed that they would pass every single class their eighth grade year. The principal accepted my guarantee and the boys moved on to eighth grade with their classmates. For their eighth grade year, all their homework was brought with them to my house and, of course, they graduated from middle school right on schedule.

I was one of a few seventh grade parents assisting the eighth grade parents in organizing activities for the party that would be held on the school's premises for all eighth graders immediately following their graduation ceremony. The seventh grade parent-helpers like me were there to learn about conducting the same party when our seventh grade children became eighth grade graduates. My assignment for the actual party was to sit in a room set aside for the eighth graders to drop off any prizes they won at the party. I was to be the guarder of the prizes until they were retrieved at the end of the party. However, during the party I only saw two students all night and that was just in passing. Those two students did not know what my room was for and, apparently, neither did any of the other students.

When the other parents and I were planning the graduation party for our eighth graders, and we were again setting up that room for storing any prizes won, I stated that room's problem. It was easily solvable. Traditionally as each graduate entered the very large party room, he or she was given a bunch of tickets that were to be used to spend on various games at the party. It was these many prizes that were to be checked into that room. All we did was have the graduates start the evening by going to that room to pick up their tickets. They were also told that the ticket-pickup room was where they could store any prizes won during the evening.

The other parents on the party committee gave the room a name for reference. They called it "Bob's Room." At the conclusion of their ceremony, the graduates were told to start their evening by following the signs to Bob's Room. Yes, I was now a parent, however, all the other parents were always referred to as Mr. or Mrs. So and So. From kindergarten on, I had always been "Bob". I don't know if any of Aaron or Kyle's friends from any of their years in school or their eight years of playing competitive ice hockey ever knew my last name.

High School

Aaron and Kyle's middle school students had come from three different feeder schools, all within the Saratoga Union Elementary School District. Even though their high school was in the Los-Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District, their high school's only feeder school was Aaron and Kyle's middle school. There was even less opportunity for parents to interact with school staff than there was at the middle school. Dance and field trip chaperoning were now the sole responsibility of the teachers and school administrators.

I was still active with PTA, but our link with the school was mainly through meetings with the Principal, a person who did not impress me at all. While there were many things I found about him to be annoying,

there was one thing he said at a parent meeting that summed up his general attitude. He said that any student who was failing a class at his school shouldn't even be in high school. In essence, if a child was not succeeding, get rid of that child. No blame for the teacher. All blame to the child. While I did not express my distain to him personally, my one word view of his thoughts was "disgusting."

In Aaron and Kyle's Sophomore year, the boys were having difficulty in their math class. The word on the street about that particular teacher was that he had developed his math curriculum early in his teaching career, including all his handouts and other assignments, and had not changed a thing in all the years that followed. I arranged an after-school meeting with him to discuss the problems the boys were having. During our chat I suggested that he might test his students' understanding of math by asking them why when they multiply two whole numbers, the answer is a number bigger than the two that were multiplied together, but when they multiply two fractions, the answer is a fraction smaller than the two that were multiplied together. He said he would not ask his students that because it would only confuse them. I could tell he couldn't even explain it. If you personally do not know the answer, there is an explanation in the [Fractions Patterns, Too](#) section of [Curriculum Chapter 11 - A K-6 Math Curriculum](#).

After my meeting with Aaron and Kyle's math teacher, I decided I did not want them in his classroom. I met with the school's vice principal and she agreed to let me home-school them. She gave me the name of an extension course that covered the same topics. We then agreed to an end-of-year test administered on school premises by the vice principal. Their grade for the year would be based that test. Aaron and Kyle then had a free-study period during the day and I taught them math at my home after school. They each earned B grades in math for the year.

High School Parenting

Parenting in high school was quite different than it had been for the earlier grades. There was less opportunity to interact with the boy's classmates and their teachers. However, less opportunity was not the same as no opportunity. Parent-teacher contact was limited. However, each class had at least two parent advisors assigned to it by the PTA to work with that class's elected officers on any project for which the officers needed assistance. I was one of the Freshman Class's Advisors. The only project I helped with that year was getting volunteers to work on the class's float for the homecoming football game. As it turned out, my responsibility also included riding herd on the goofy boy volunteers (including my Godsons) who were a potential annoyance to the much more responsible girls working along side of them.

My main responsibility as the Sophomore class advisor was to recruit Sophomore parents to bake cookies to be served at the Senior class's graduation ceremony in June. That was what tradition dictated, but it is not what I decided to do. I met with the other advisers and they agreed to go out in the community and solicit coupons and gift certificates for things like movie passes, free meals, event admissions and so on. Once we had prizes lined up, I met with the Sophomore Class Officers and said that rather have parents make cookies for the day of graduation, let's have the Sophomore boys and girls make the cookies instead. Anyone who turned in a batch of cookies would have his or her name placed in a bowl to be used for a prize drawing conducted by the class officers on the same day the cookies were due to be submitted.

Of course, parents could help their children make the cookies if help was needed but the cookies were still to be turned in by the children. There were so many cookies made for graduation that June that cookies were served both before and after the graduation ceremony. Aaron's name was drawn as one of the winners. Not a problem, because even though I was at the drawing, it was the class officers who were the ones pulling names from the bowl, not me.

One of the assignments for the Junior Class Advisors was to meet with the parents of the Senior Class who were in the final stages of setting up that class's all-night graduation party. We were to learn from them the planning structure for our turn at planning next year's all-night party. We were also to arrange the guarding of the party's location when all the parents who had been working on it were attending their children's graduation ceremony.

What we learned from them was how terrible their experience had been. Their advice for us was to abandon the practice of having the party conducted at the school. We should hire a party hall and pay professional party-givers to set up the all-night party for us. The thirty or so parents working on the project had experienced trouble recruiting additional volunteers, and when parents who had already volunteered had to quit for whatever reason, there was no one to replace them. That meant the ones still there were burdened with even more work than before. In addition to the actual work on preparing the party venue, there was the additional workload of all the different cake-bake sale and similar fundraising activities that needed to be conducted to raise money to cover the expenses not covered by the money raised through the tickets students purchased for admission to the party.

Once our children were Seniors, as the now Senior Class Advisors we set up an evening meeting at the school for all the parents who wanted to be involved in planning our children's all-night graduation party. That

meeting was like a mini-reunion for all of us who had worked together for our children's middle school graduation party. My assumption was that the head of our middle school group would volunteer to head our new group, as well. The parents at the meeting had a different leader in mind. They chose me to be the head of the party planning.

Once I was chosen as the leader, I had all of us discuss the problems that last year's Senior parents had faced and what we should do about them. The parents in the room were evenly split on whether to hold the party at the school as was the tradition or move it to an outside facility. I had one of parents record two lists on the room's chalkboard while we were talking, one for what was good about using the school as the site and one for what was bad. I also had us make a list of all the problems last year's parents had faced, like the absence of volunteers, and the continual need for fund raising.

Once our discussion had produced the lists, without asking for a vote, I told the parents that we would have the party at the school. I then promised everyone in the room that I would see to it that our group would not face any of the problems we had listed on the chalkboard that had confronted last year's parents. I would use the Back-to-School Night that was coming up shortly to recruit parent volunteers. I also said that the first thing we were going to do right now was to eliminate the need for all that time-consuming fund raising. I simply set the cost of the ticket to the graduation party at \$201.00. That price was quite a bit higher than had ever been charged before. It was also an amount that I had calculated before the meeting that would cover all the party's expenses. I also said that I would justify this year's price hike to all the other parents when I met with them at our Back-to School Night meeting.

For Back-to School Night we reserved an empty classroom at the school and posted signs at the various school entrances announcing our meeting and its location. In addition to the chairs I had added to the ones already present, I posted separate sign-up sheets around the room for each of the subgroups that comprised party planning. The Principal paid me a visit before it was time for the parents to start arriving. His one comment to me as he pointed to the room's setup was, "You won't need that many chairs." At the time the meeting was to begin, the classroom was standing-room only with all the many chairs occupied.

The question I asked the parents as the meeting started was, "How many of you attended an all night party at your school for your high school graduation?" Of the more than sixty people in the room, only three hands were raised, mine included. I was unaware until right then how rare such parties had been when I had been a high school student.

I told the parents that the reason parents hosted graduation parties for their children was to keep them safe. Far too many times in the past there had been accidents, sometimes fatal, on graduation nights involving graduates who had gone out celebrating with their classmates and ended up in accidents while driving after drinking. That's why parents began hosting these all-night alcohol-free parties on grad-nights. That's the reason for parents to host the parties. However, students don't love these parties because they will now feel safe. They pretty much already think they are invincible.

A Senior class is made up of many different groups of students with many different interests. None of these many different groups are capable of drawing every other group together for a celebration that is meant to include every child in their class, with no exceptions. Our children love these parties because we parents working together can do something that they could never do without us. They are an entire graduation class, however their parents working together are the only people with the capability of creating a party for their class that includes every child. We parents are the only ones that can do this. The all-night party is our graduation gift to our children.

After explaining the reason for the party, I mentioned the reason for the \$201 price for attendance. This class was the Class of 2001. I said \$2,001 seemed like a bit too much to charge, so I eliminated one of the zeros. In past years, the cost of a ticket to the party was set so low, that far too much time for the party volunteers had to be spent raising money to cover the cost of the event. I wanted every parent who volunteered to help with the party to actually be helping creating their child's party. I also said that if anyone knew of any student's family that could not afford the \$201, let me know quietly and I would adjust the fee for that family. Not a single parent expressed concern about the new price to anyone on our planning committee.

At the end of my talk I walked around the room pointing to each of the signup lists and stated which group that list represented. At the close of the meeting I did not see any parent leave without signing up for something. On Saturday, September 30th I made a list of the volunteers we had by that date. There were 291 Seniors in the Class of 2001. By that date, we already had a total of 113 parent-volunteers. The total continued to grow over the coming months. That entire school year, we had only one committee leader who had to give up her assignment. At the time she told the rest of the committee heads of her departure, she brought her own replacement with her. Near the end of the school year, when it was time for the Junior parents to meet with us, there was no longer any thought of conducting future grad-night parties any place other than the school.

At the graduation ceremony in June, the Senior Class President announced the names of three parents the class had selected as having done the most for their class over their four years in high school. I was one of those three announced names. It seems they did know my last name after all. I gave the bouquet I received to the boy's mother. My reward was being able to attend Aaron and Kyle's all night graduation party with them. We adults had to be there to run the party.

The Community of Parents – The First Part

At the very beginning of this [Becoming a Parent](#) section, I said: "What would my becoming a parent have to do with workaround number five?" My answer was: "Everything. My fellow parents and I are the reason this book exists." My "Everything" is divided into two parts. The first part is me as a parent in the community of parents. The second part is me as Aaron and Kyle's parent.

All of the many parents I worked with from Aaron and Kyle's time in kindergarten all the way through their senior year in high school were there for the same purpose that I was. We were all there to look out for the needs of our children. That was our job. That was our calling. I may have been better at the looking-out part than some parents because I could bring my teaching experience into the mix, and because I was used to getting my own way. However, my being better at some aspects did not mean I cared more than any of the parents with whom I worked.

A boy a year older than Aaron and Kyle became their classmate when he was held back in second grade. I knew his family well. He was one of Aaron and Kyle's neighbors. His parents were no more pleased that he had been held back than I would have been if it had happened to either Aaron or Kyle, but they were not able to stop it. That same boy also failed to graduate with his and my Godsons' Senior Class. What I could do for him, at least in that situation, was tell him that the Grad-Night Party was for their whole class, and not just for the graduates. He was welcome to attend and so was anyone else from his Senior Class that he might know who was not graduating. He had a great time at the party.

Being a parent introduced me to countless other parents who cared as much for their children as I cared for Aaron and Kyle. Despite how much I knew we all had in common in caring for our children, it had never once occurred to me that these same parents might be interested in my thoughts on better ways that our children could be taught. Future events would cause me to think of my fellow parents in a different way.

Aaron and Kyle's Parent – The Second Part

Being a member of the parent community is a necessary first part of workaround number-five because it was my introduction to my fellow

parents. The second part and the IFs it represents are the reason for this book's existence. The [Becoming a Parent](#) section explains how I became a parent and gives examples of a few of the things I was able to do for my Godsons during their time as students. Not included in that section is what my Godsons did for me. Parents and children are not in a one-sided relationship. Aaron and Kyle and I were extremely important in each other's lives. If one were to measure which of us benefitted the most from our parent-child relationship, I would say I did.

Life had not always been easy for me since Mary's death, or at least not life outside of work. All of that changed when I became a parent. From the time Mary passed away in 1978 until Aaron and Kyle's birth in 1983, my life was narrowly focused around running the Center. I enjoyed my work, but I had no life outside of it. All of my social interactions were with my family members or with the people I either worked with or knew from work. I never took vacations. All the trips I took were either business related or taken with business associates. I had no outside circle of friends.

Aaron and Kyle changed all of that. What started as all-day on Wednesdays and evenings on Thursdays evolved into my eventually giving Robin a seven-day schedule each week for what the boys and I would be doing. The boy's summer school skating lessons had come just before the National Hockey League added the San Jose Sharks. The Sharks coming to town brought with it a surge in the number youth hockey teams in the surrounding communities. Aaron and Kyle's having learned to skate and skate well and the Sharks coming to town was what led them to playing competitive ice hockey from when they were fifth graders all the way through their Senior year in high school.



There was even a time when I took my turn at coaching. The picture above is of a team that we formed that Aaron and Kyle named “Players” and that I coached to an undefeated victory in a hockey tournament.

For all of Aaron and Kyle’s eight years of playing hockey I was their hockey parent, attending every single practice and every single game. I was their accompanying parent at summer hockey camps both locally and as far away as Minnesota and Canada. There were also hockey tournaments locally and in places as far away as Las Vegas, Anaheim and Whistler, Canada.

In addition to being a hockey parent, I now also took actual vacations with Aaron and Kyle. We had many great adventures. The picture below is from just one of those adventures.



The presence of Aaron and Kyle in my life changed my life completely. Technically, I was just their Godfather. However, I regarded the boys as my non-biological sons. What were Aaron and Kyle’s feelings? When they were in Second Grade, they were watching T-V after school one day and a man and a boy in a rowboat came on the screen. Aaron turned to Kyle and asked who he thought the man might be. I found it interesting that they had not assumed the man was the boy’s father. Kyle said, “Maybe it’s his Bob.” Aaron said, “No. No one else has a Bob.”