

Life lessons from a new generation's neighborhood

When it comes to the regular routine at our house, I do my best to keep TV time for my 4-year-old daughter, Lydia, to a minimum. There are so many more worthwhile things we could be doing; plus, I've never been one who enjoys the sound of the TV simply as background noise.

With that said, however, there are a few kid-friendly programs she is allowed to watch on occasion. One of which I am a particular fan of lately: "Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood."

For those of you not in the throes of the PBS Kids stage of life, you may not be familiar with "Daniel Tiger," but you have likely heard of a popular show from the 1970s and '80s by the name of "Mister Rogers'

Neighborhood."

I'm not sure how all the legalities of this work or who bought the rights to what, but "Daniel Tiger" is essentially a cartoon version of the Neighborhood of Make Believe from "Mr. Rogers," complete with a comfortable cardigan and change of shoes for the title character of the show.

Lydia was first introduced to this program at my in-laws' house. To be honest, I've never actually watched an entire episode myself, though I have caught snatches here and there. However, shortly after tuning in to "Daniel Tiger" during her weekly day at Grandma's, Lydia started sharing some rather interesting bits of wisdom.

One of the earliest, and still



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Momoirs

one of my favorites, emerged when she was relatively new to the potty training stage. Out of nowhere she would stand up from whatever she was doing and sing the following:

"If you have to go potty, stop! And go right away. Flush and wash and be on your way."

She even dramatically thrust her hand to the front — MoTown style — when she said the word, "stop!" before scampering into the bathroom.

She informed me that she

learned this little tune from "Daniel Tiger."

Another time, at dinner, my husband and I were encouraging her to eat whatever vegetable was being served that night. As she looked at the item on her plate, she sang another little ditty to herself:

"You gotta try new foods 'cause it might taste good."

Again, brilliant. And effective. The only time I don't like this particular piece of advice is when Lydia turns it around on me, like when she asks me to eat some strange concoction that she has created by mixing items found on her dinner plate, but that is a column topic for a later date.

I've since taken note of

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