



# Work & Family Matters

## Inside This Issue:

- [March is Parenting Awareness Month ..... 1](#)
- [Family Resource & Referral Program ..... 1](#)
- [How To Keep A Cat Happy ..... 2](#)
- [Tips For Grandparents ..... 3](#)

Contact the **UAW-Chrysler Family Resource & Referral Program 1.877.682.2472** for 24/7 assistance

**MARCH 2008**



## Family Resource & Referral Program

Explore a wide variety of resources that can help you manage your work and personal responsibilities.

UAW-represented Chrysler workers are eligible to take advantage of this work/life program with topics ranging from **CHILD CARE & COLLEGE PREPARATION** to **RETIREMENT & ELDER CARE**. Developmental stages and ages are also part of this free service. Plus, benefit from the

(Continued on Page 2)

## March is Parenting Awareness Month

In honor of all parents and grandparents, here are a few tips that you can include on your parenting tool belt.



- ♥ Be specific. Instead of saying, “Be home early,” say, “Please be home at 10:00 p.m.”
- ♥ Acknowledge children’s feelings even when you do not agree with them. (For example, “I see you’re sad that Derrick did not invite you to the party.”)
- ♥ Provide a variety of healthy foods for your child and opportunities for physical activities.
- ♥ Schedule family time each week. Try playing Monopoly or riding bikes.
- ♥ Everyone makes mistakes. Perfect parenting is a myth. Say, “I’m sorry; I goofed” and moved on.
- ♥ When you are working, find high quality, consistent care for your children.
- ♥ Teach children your values.
- ♥ Read to your children from birth until after they can read on their own.
- ♥ Encourage children by acknowledging their efforts, “You really tried your best to make the team.”
- ♥ Talk to children about sex, drugs, and alcohol. Let them learn the facts from you.
- ♥ Model appropriate behavior for your children.
- ♥ You cannot spoil an infant. Cuddle, love, sing, and talk to them while attending to their needs.
- ♥ Listen attentively to your children’s dreams, stories, and feelings.
- ♥ Help children learn problem solving skills. Brainstorm solutions, pick one and give it a try. How did it go?
- ♥ State the behavior you **want** from the child. For example, say “Please walk” instead of “Don’t run.”
- ♥ Be consistent and honest. If you say you’re going to do something, do it; if you don’t mean it, don’t say it.
- ♥ Let children experience the natural consequences of their actions when it is safe to do so.

(Continued on Page 3)

**Family Resource &  
Referral Program  
(Continued from page 1)**

**CONVEINENCE &  
CONCIERGE** services,  
where we will locate  
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including, electricians,  
plumbers, landscapers,  
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we'll even help find  
those hard-to-find gifts  
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All topics in the *Family  
Matters* newsletters are  
covered in this  
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## How to Keep Your Cat Happy



Everyone knows that cats can be very particular about their likes and dislikes, and that they frequently have a mind of their own. Here are some tips that can keep the most finicky cat happy and healthy.

1. **A clean litter box.** Cats do not like dirty litter boxes. Make sure to clean your cat's box daily. If your cat is not provided with a clean litter box, he or she may search for a substitute—such as a corner of your living room, or in a basket of laundry.
2. **Spoiled food.** Food that has spoiled not only smells bad, but is very unhealthy for your cat to eat. The length of time you can leave canned food sitting out depends on the temperature in the room. If there is no air conditioning, and the day is hot, don't leave the food out longer than 20 minutes maximum. In the winter, if the heat is on, or the food is in a warm kitchen, the 20 minute rule would also apply. Kittens, who eat more frequently than older cats, should be provided with a fresh tablespoon of food approximately every two to three hours. Dry food can become spoiled as well. If left in a humid room for a long period of time, food may become moldy (especially on the bottom, if you just keep adding fresh food to the top every few days).
3. **Over-aggressive petting.** If you watch your cat carefully, you will see clues when they are getting tired of being fussed over and petted. Her ears may slant back, her tail will twitch and then wave wildly, and she may even growl (yes, cats can and do growl) at you. Learn to watch for the signs in your cat.
4. **Loud noises and commotion.** Holidays can be especially stressful for cats—from fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and New Year's Eve to a house full of excited, noisy children eager to open their presents on Christmas, Hanukkah, or a birthday. If your cat runs and hides at these times, do not try to coax him out. Just leave him be until he feels safe enough to reappear on his own.

*Written by Linda Demeshko*

**Parenting Awareness  
Month  
(Continued from page 1)**

- ♥ Set achievable goals with children.
- ♥ Give children uninterrupted individual attention every day.
- ♥ Encourage children by acknowledging their efforts, "You are working hard on that puzzle."
- ♥ Work with the school to establish a "bully-free" campus.  
([www.stopbullyinnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyinnow.hrsa.gov))
- ♥ Know who your children's friends are and be sure they are good influences on your children.
- ♥ Love your children unconditionally. Seek help when needed.



## Tips for Grandparents



Let your children know that you made more than your share of mistakes when they were little, and that, just as they do now, you had to learn how to take good care of them. I will never forget the time when my baby daughter was about to swallow something that looked to her like a piece of cherry candy. It wasn't candy. It was a bright-red glue pellet from a craft set. That is how I learned the importance of baby-proofing our home.

Then, my grown-up daughter had the fun of reminding me of those lessons when my own grandchildren were little and she brought them to visit me. She went around my house to be sure I had put all the peanuts and candies up high, and locked away the pills, and put safety plugs on the electrical outlets

Where babies are concerned, we can all use good advice. But as a grandparent, I try hard not to give it unless I'm asked. It's much better if I wait until I hear, "Mom, I need advice."

It may be our privilege as grandparents to indulge and maybe even spoil our grandchildren a bit. For example, I may buy more toys or treats for my grandchildren than I did for my daughters. But you need to be careful, too. A friend of mine, a new grandmother, proudly showed me the toy she bought for her two-year-old grandson. The age label on the toy was for an older child. Like me, she thought she had the smartest grandchild imaginable, and the toy would challenge him. But those age labels on toys are often safety recommendations, not measures of skill or ability. By providing appropriate playthings, you can spoil your grandchildren and keep them safe at the same time.

We're there with the power of example. Try not to force your beliefs. Rather, in a loving and conversational way, set a good example. For instance, my grandchildren see me in my job giving back to society. They've got the idea that's a good thing from watching what I do and how much I care about child safety. They've become safety ambassadors—very interested in safety for themselves and for their friends. It's your very presence that affects them. You're a grandparent figure. If you're informal, loving, friendly and casual, and you set a good example, it's the best way to encourage learning, values and connection that go beyond your family to the community and society at large.

*Written by Ann Brown, Chairman, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission*

[http://www.pueblo.gas.gov/cic\\_text/family/grandparents/grand.html](http://www.pueblo.gas.gov/cic_text/family/grandparents/grand.html)