



# Work & Family Matters

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1.877.682.2472 UAW-Chrysler Family Resource & Referral Program

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## School's in Session

Now, that your kids have returned to school from summer vacation, it's time for them to settle down and develop some good habits for the coming school year. Here are some tips for helping them get off to a good start.

## Shopping Tips



These lists were taken from articles written on the Yahoo home site. Do you agree or disagree with these lists?

### Some Things Not to Buy New ...

- Books
- DVDs and CDs
- Little kids toys
- Jewelry
- Sports equipment
- Timeshares
- Software/console games
- Office furniture
- Hand tools

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### Homework

- Check his/her assignments before they are turned in. If they are messy or illegible, have them redo or recopy them.
- Is your child's math homework covered in doodles? Maybe he or she is not a budding artist, but is having trouble grasping the concepts and is tuning out. Talk to the teacher immediately, before they fall too far behind. If you have a good handle on the basics, perhaps you can help. But, if you are unsure, hiring a tutor is a wise investment or contacting the Homework Hotline, a free telephonic tutor program at 1-877-682-2472, Mon – Thurs 4-9 p.m. ET.
- Provide the proper environment. We know it's not good to do homework while watching TV, but perhaps working on the kitchen table isn't the best place either. Make sure your child has an orderly work area, complete with pens, pencils, paper, and other supplies as needed.
- Being disorganized can be overwhelming, so help your child become organized. Make a simple, clear list of all of the tasks that need to be completed and go through them step by step.
- Poor time management can lead to sloppy assignments. Allocate a realistic chunk of time for completing the work, but be willing to be flexible if necessary. Take into account after-school activities and even favorite TV programs. However, as you establish a consistent routine for doing homework, it should become easier day by day.
- Explain to your child why neatness counts. To a child, neatness may seem pointless (and they may have different standards than you do). But, to teachers, there is an association between messiness and grades. The teacher can't read the homework if it's covered with spilled food and eraser marks.
- Allow your child to experience consequences. If all of your pleas and help have fallen on deaf ears, let your child experience whatever consequence the teacher hands out—whether it be a lower grade, missing recess to redo the work, or missing out on a special field trip or award. Sometimes this is the only way for the message to really sink in.
- *NEVER* rush to your child's rescue either by doing his/her homework yourself or writing an excuse to the teacher about why the assignment was not completed. This will only teach your child that he does not have to be responsible because you will rescue him. And, if rescued too often, the child receives the message that you really don't think he can do things on his own.
- Homework time can become family time—pay your bills, do a crossword puzzle, organize your recipe file.

*Adapted from articles found on the scholastic.com Web site and msn.com.*

## Shopping Tips (Cont.)

### Some Things to Always Buy New ...

- Laptop computers
- Car seats
- Plasma TVs
- DVD players
- Vacuum cleaners
- Camcorders
- Shoes
- Mattresses
- Wet suits
- Helmets

*Well, what do you think of these lists? What would you change about them? This could be a good conversation starter when meeting someone new or for the company breakroom.*



## The Best Foods You're Not Eating!!!



Although many of us are trying to eat healthier these days, there are many superfoods that do not often see the inside of a grocery cart. Look at the list below and you will see some foods that can help you become fitter and healthier.

- **Beets:** Although not great to look at, beets are naturally sweeter than any other vegetable. Much like spinach, beets are one of the best sources of folate and betaine, two nutrients that work together to lower your blood levels of homocysteine, an inflammatory compound that can damage your arteries and increase your risk of heart disease.
- **Cabbage:** One cup of chopped cabbage has just 22 calories, and it's loaded with valuable nutrients. At the top of the list is sulforaphane, which increases your body's production of enzymes that disarm cell-damaging free radicals and reduce your risk of cancer.
- **Cinnamon:** For most, this old-world spice only reaches their stomach when it's mixed with sugar and stuck on a roll or a doughnut. But cinnamon helps control your blood sugar, which influences your risk of heart disease. It has been found to significantly reduce blood sugar levels, as well as triglycerides, and LDL (bad cholesterol) in diabetics who consume at least 1 gram of cinnamon a day for 6 weeks (about ¼ teaspoon per day).
- **Pomegranate Juice:** A popular drink in the Middle East, pomegranate juice has only recently become widely available here in the U.S. Just 4 ounces provide 50 percent of your daily vitamin C needs. Israeli scientists have discovered that men who drank only 2 ounces daily for a year decreased their top blood pressure (systolic) number by 21 percent and greatly increased blood flow to their hearts.
- **Prunes:** Grocers now like to call these dried plums to get away from the image of nursing home food. Prunes contain high levels of antioxidants that are particularly effective at combating structural damage to your cells, which is thought to be one of the primary causes of cancer.

*Adapted from several articles on <[www.menshealth.com](http://www.menshealth.com)>, August 2007.*

**The Holidays are almost upon us.  
We wish you and  
your's a happy and  
healthy holiday season!**



## Getting Your Kids to Cooperate ...

- **Acknowledge strong feelings.** If your child thinks you are at least willing to listen, they are more likely to cooperate.
- **Talk less.** Say what you want in the least amount of words—it will sound less like a lecture.
- **Tell your child what they can do** rather than what they *can't* do.
- **Give limited choices.** You can say, “Do you want to have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or a grilled cheese sandwich?” rather than, “Do you want a sandwich?”
- **Take a break.** To calm an out-of-control or frustrated child, stop together and take a breath. Do this three times and see if everyone feels better.
- **Be silly together.** A sense of humor always comes in handy. When things are going badly, turn on some music and dance around the room, tell a joke, talk in a silly voice. The child will usually join in and the moment will be defused.

Try some of the tips above in an effort to become a more positive parent. A positive attitude helps the child and the parent maintain their dignity in a stressful situation.

Adapted from *Be a More Positive Parent*, Parent & Child Magazine, August 2007.

## Handling Holiday Stress

There are a few things we can do to help us better handle the pressures of holiday stress. Here are six relatively easy tips:

**Don't be Superwoman/Superman.** It is impossible to do it all and please everyone. Sometimes we take on responsibility for making the holidays perfect for everyone, and really believe we have enough control over life to make it happen just the way we planned. If life throws some curve balls—which it often does—we blame ourselves and believe we just didn't plan well enough or work hard enough. But, the truth is, there is only so much one can do, and only so much stress that one person can handle. So, give yourself a break from these superhuman expectations and relax. Chances are while things may not be perfect, your family will still most likely be pleased with the outcome.

**Get enough sleep.** This is the most overlooked secret for coping with stress. It is during sleep that our brain sorts through all the information taken in throughout the day, and works toward resolving any issues that have come up. It is a fact that even shortchanging your sleep hours by one hour can adversely affect how you function the whole next day.

**Get organized.** Start early in the holiday season and prioritize all the things you will need to do. Include everything on the list—the gifts you will need to purchase, things to decorate the home, special clothes to wear to holiday parties. You may be surprised when everything is written down to see that you can take one or two things off the list that won't be missed.

**Participate.** Loneliness is a major source of stress for many of us and can be more pronounced over the holiday season. Our expectations are high and sometimes people cannot measure up to them. Instead of sitting around feeling sorry for yourself, invite some people over or meet them for a quick cup of coffee or a lunch. Or volunteer—it is always heartwarming to help those less fortunate and will help to take your mind off yourself.

**Communicate.** Listen to what others are saying, and say exactly what you mean to say. This can be tough at any time of the year, but particularly so during the holiday season when we are distracted, and our stress levels are at their peaks. However, miscommunication creates much of the stress crises that we find ourselves facing.

**Budget.** It is easy to get caught up in the season and overdo it by spending a lot of money that you don't have in the quest to purchase the “perfect” gift. That great toy that your child has been admiring on TV may give them some pleasure, it's true, but what they will remember when they are grown are the times when you ran through the snow and built a snowman, had hot chocolate around the fire, or took a drive to see the neighborhood holiday decorations.

Using any or all of these tips should help you have a less stressful and more enjoyable holiday season.

*Article adapted from “Handling Holiday Stress” by A. Christopher Hammon, Director of the Center for Sleep and Stress on the Web.*