



# Work & Family Matters

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November 2006



## Did You Know ...?

- In the 2006 Student Monitor's Lifestyle and Media Survey, iPods came out as the top campus activity with 73% of the students. Other popular activities were text messaging (66%), downloading music (66%), instant messaging (63%), working out (62%), and coffee (60%). The college networking site Facebook.com was also very "in" on the campus.
- Fires and burns are the fifth leading cause of unintentional,

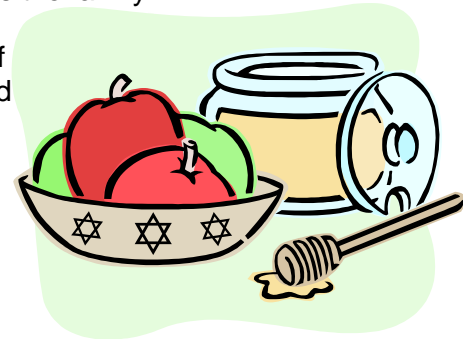
## Family Rituals and Traditions

As a child, what family rituals or traditions did you have? Did your parents read you a story every night before going to bed? Did your family gather at your grandparents' home for a special holiday meal?

What family traditions have you carried on or begun with your family? Does your family make it a point to have dinner together, go to the library once a week during the summer, or make cookies together for the holidays?

Family rituals and traditions are special ways of doing things that we repeat over and over again. When you use a muscle in your body over and over again in a certain way, it makes the muscle stronger. Likewise, sharing repeated experiences in a certain way strengthens the family.

Traditions give the family stability and a feeling of belonging. Values and beliefs are often reinforced through our traditions. Through the passing of time, we learn the unspoken message of why traditions are created—FAMILY IS IMPORTANT.



### Keeping the Old, But Adding the New

Many families celebrate important events in their lives such as birthdays, weddings, graduations, or the first day of school. But what about creating a new ritual or tradition in your family? Are there times when new and different rituals or traditions would be helpful?

Changes occur in our lives, such as moving, or changing relationships due to marriage or divorce. The family often experiences confusion and stress during major changes, upsetting routines and traditions. However, building new traditions can bring a family together to handle life's changes and challenges.

Perhaps your family has experienced changes. Draw from your past and think of the kinds of activities that fit into your new situation. What kinds of activities might be repeated daily, weekly or annually? It need not take a lot of time, money or energy. The predictable pattern helps family members feel more connected and know "this is the way our family does things."

*Resources: Building Family Strengths (1995). University of Illinois Extension/4-H Publication  
Come to the Table: A Celebration of Family Life (1999). Doris Christopher.  
Archives of Family Medicine, 2000, 235-240.*

## **GOT HOMEWORK? EXPERIENCED TEACHERS HAVE THE ANSWER.**

### **What is Homework Hotline?**

The Homework Hotline is a phone-based homework help service staffed by experienced teachers with a wide range of practical knowledge in most subjects and grade levels. When a customer calls, they are directly connected to a Specialist who can help. The Homework Specialists have many years of experience in the classroom and in private tutoring, including Special Education, Math, Reading, English and more; from early elementary through secondary school. Most homework questions are resolved with a single call. Occasionally, the Specialist will follow-up on an initial call with additional help and resources as needed.

### **What is the goal of the Homework Hotline Specialist when receiving a call from a customer?**

Our goal is to make the call a positive and encouraging experience for the child or parent. We try to handle each call with personalized attention to each individual's needs. We attempt to make it a learning experience for the caller, not just a question and answer session, unless that's all they need. We love to talk with new callers from all over the country and enjoy nurturing helping relationships with repeat callers.

### **How does a child caller differ from a parent calling the Hotline?**

When a child calls, it is usually straight forward with a specific question, often about Math. We help guide the child to successful completion of the task but we don't always stop there. As professional teachers, we like to check on the understanding of the material in question and extend our responses to help the child generalize the skill or concept to similar work, past and present. Because of our experience with multi-level and subject curriculum, we can help put the homework assignment in the perspective of greater learning and applications. On some occasions we will offer to email or send out additional information and resources which may further increase their learning regarding the homework topic.

### **Do you hear from callers more than once?**

We hear from many regular callers. They are wonderful because we like to follow the progress of a child through the year. We can anticipate their needs and the appropriate approach to take when talking to them. We like to find out how they did on a test or quiz which they mentioned was coming up. This kind of follow-up lets them know that their success in school is important to everyone.

[Contact the UAW-DaimlerChrysler Homework Hotline between the hours of 4:00 pm and 9 pm EST, Monday through Thursday!](#)

**THIS IS A FREE BENEFIT!  
1.877.NTC.CIRCLE**

## **Did You Know...?**

[Continued from page 1](#)

injury-related death among children, ages 14 and under, in the U.S. according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

- The number of U.S. students enrolled in special education programs has risen 30% (national Education Association, 2006).
- 73% of Americans name money as the number one factor that affects their stress level (American Psychological Association, Survey of 2004).
- According to the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, allowing toddlers to walk barefoot, or with non-skid

[\(continued on page 3\)](#)



### Did You Know...? (Continued from page 2)

- socks, indoors will help the foot strengthen and grow normally.
- Those 85 and older are the fastest growing segment of the population (U.S. Department of the Census, 2004).

## Coping with Three Generations Under One Roof: Some “Ground Rules” for Harmony

Most older people prefer to live in their own homes or apartments. They fear being a burden to their children. There are, however, times when an elderly parent and his or her adult child share living quarters, by choice or necessity. This will affect you, as well as your family. Here are some suggestions for making a cooperative living arrangement work well.

### Spouse in the House

- Involve your spouse in planning.
- Respect your spouse’s need for privacy and for time alone with you. Keep in touch with each other.
- Discuss your expectations of your spouse’s involvement as a caregiver. Solve problems together.
- Make a space where your spouse can pursue independent interests without distractions or interruptions.
- Discuss planned costs.
- Be cheerful and stay interested in your spouse’s activities.

### Kids Will Be Kids

- Involve your children in planning for any changes.
- Create a list of “courtesies” for them to observe; explain why these are important.
- Encourage them to join in family tasks that involve the elder. Foster inter-generational sharing.
- Allow for slip-ups; discuss special circumstances and limits. Remind children that you once lived in your parent’s home.
- Respect privacy and allow for time-out.

### Cooperative Senior

- Respect the privacy of family members. Don’t interfere.
- Don’t criticize housekeeping, cooking, spouse, friends, children, clothes, TV programs or church.
- Discuss problems calmly.
- Offer to help, but don’t force your way of doing something.
- Keep a sense of humor. Don’t inflict guilt.
- Set goals for yourself. Associate with friends.

Adapted from "Caregiver Connection," Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service. Prepared by Louise Franck Cyr, Extension community development specialist, University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

### Let us help you balance your Life, Work, & Family!

Contact the Family Resource &  
Referral Program 24/7 at  
1.877.NTC.CIRCLE OR AT  
[www.uawdcx.com](http://www.uawdcx.com)