

Mom's Moments

A newsletter for moms to share stories, resources, scripture, thoughts, recipes and practical ideas to encourage and support each other as we connect in our roles as women and mothers. Send your input to contributions@momsmoments.ca.

A Note from Anna

Being a mother is the best, yet hardest thing I've experienced in my life! I never know what my days will bring as I raise up my two boys to be the men I hope they will be. My waking hours are filled with the most precious, sweetest, annoying, frustrating, nurturing, loving, patient moments of my life! And I have to be ready for any of these moments at any given time! People always tell me to enjoy my days with them because they pass by so quickly. It's true, and I catch myself wondering how my first tiny bundle of joy got to be such a big, funny, adventurous, independent 5-year-old boy!

I encourage you to ENJOY your mothering days, even the hard ones, whatever stage of mothering you are living out!

Thank You! to our readers on behalf of all of us at Mom's Moments! This resource is available for you and because of you! Keep on sharing with us! **HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!!!**

MM NOW HAS A WEBSITE! Visit us at www.momsmoments.ca to access all of our newsletters, search our growing list of resources, sign up for the newsletter's mailing list, take our poll, visit our photo gallery, read Anna's new blog, and more!

Aging Parents - Ten things to know in case of an emergency *From our 'Health Nut', Caroline Deschamps, Ottawa, Ontario*

Would you know how to answer specific questions about your aging parents' health if they ever had a medical emergency? Knowing these following 10 things (in order of importance) could save precious time in receiving medical care.

1. Names of their doctors.
2. Birth dates.
3. List of allergies.
4. Advance directives. This is a legal document that outlines a person's decisions about his/her health care, such as whether or not they want to be put on life support.
5. Major medical problems such as diabetes or heart disease.
6. List of medications, especially if they are on blood thinners.
7. Religious beliefs.
8. Insurance information. Know the name of the health insurance provider and policy number (this is not relevant for Canadians as we have provincial health cards, but would be important to know if you are traveling to another country with your parents).
9. Prior surgery.
10. Lifestyle information such as alcohol or tobacco use.

For more information and for a downloadable emergency medical information form to keep with you in your wallet, visit www.MayoClinic.com/images/pdfs/ha14_emergencyform.pdf.

Pregnant? Must Read! *From Karen Gregoire, Bowmanville, ON*
Your Pregnancy Week By Week by Glade B. Curtis, OB/GYN & Judith Schuler, M.S. — This book goes into full detail of how your body is changing and how the baby is growing.

A Candid Moment - Send your special pictures our way!



Welcome sweet angel!!

Picture from new mom Jennifer Dukovac, Ottawa, Ontario

Good Eats - 15-Min. Italian Chicken & Rice with Vegetables

- 1 tbsp. oil
- 2 boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into pieces
- 3 cups fresh or 2 cups frozen vegetables
(I used zucchini, orange pepper and broccoli the other night, and ALL my guys loved it—2-yr-old to 33-yr-old! YUM!)
- 1 can 25% less sodium chicken broth
- 1&1/2 cups Minute Rice, uncooked
- 1/4 cup fat-free Italian dressing

Heat oil in large skillet on medium heat. Add chicken. Cook and stir until lightly browned. Add vegetables. Cook and stir 3-5 min. or until crisp-tender. Stir in broth. Bring to a boil. Stir in rice and dressing. Cover. Reduce heat to low. Cook 5 min. or until liquid is absorbed and chicken is cooked through. Makes 4 servings. - *From Anna, Adapted from 'Food & Family Magazine'*
Go to www.kraftfoods.com to sign up for your free copy! I love them!

Reader Reactions

"I was wondering if you would consider bringing back the dessert recipe section. I love that you have added a healthy, cheap and easy meal recipe but I think it is still a great thing to share great treat ideas[...] Not to mention homemade treats are far healthier than processed or store bought treats as you can control the amount of fat, sugar and preservatives that go in there. And of course it's not just about treating the kids but our husbands...and okay me too!" Amy, Sudbury, ON

Editor's note: We are gladly introducing our new "Tasty Treats" section - so feel free to send us your yummy recipes, along with any "Good Eats" contributions for healthy meal ideas. Let us know what you'd like to see in MM!

Tasty Treats - Crispy Fudge

From the Rice Krispies box!

In saucepan, combine butter, corn syrup and chocolate chips. Cook and stir over low heat until smooth. Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla and icing sugar. Mix until smooth. Add cereal and mix well. Spread in lightly buttered 8" square pan. Chill. Enjoy!

- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1/4 cup corn syrup
- 1 cup semi-sweet choc. chips
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 cup icing sugar
- 2 cups Rice Krispies Cereal

My Story - Sharing in the Loss of a Child

Written by our very own Anna Sklar, Sudbury, Ontario

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."
Matthew 5:4 — *This is God's promise to us!*

We have a new tradition in our family. On May 21st we visit a playground, and take with us a helium balloon. We say a special prayer and we all grab hold of the balloon's string. Then we sing Happy Birthday, and we let the balloon go. We watch as it soars higher and higher, until we can't see it anymore, and we envision a balloon that reaches all the way to heaven, to our tiny Caleb, on his birthday.

May of 2003 was the hardest month of my life. My perception of motherhood changed forever, and I came to know that intense grief and indescribable love can exist side by side. My son, Caleb, taught me all this and so much more... Caleb is my middle child, one of my three precious boys, and he lives in heaven and in the hearts of all who know and love him. He was stillborn on May 21st, 2003, just 7 days before his scheduled c-section date.

There were no warnings beforehand, and no conclusions afterward. The week before Caleb was born, I felt something was not quite right, his movements had slowed down so much. The doctor checked his heartbeat which was still strong, and everyone told me he was just saving his energy for the "big move." I still felt him move a little, so I put my worries to rest and prayed a lot. It was so close to the due date, everything was all ready for him, how could anything go wrong now? I woke up on May 19th and knew I had to check his heartbeat again, something was VERY wrong. I went to a walk-in clinic, and the doctor couldn't find a heartbeat, but he told me not to worry, his equipment wasn't the greatest, and sent me to the hospital. Five nurses, a doctor, and an ultrasound later, it was confirmed that Caleb had died in-utero. At that instant I literally felt God pick me up and hold me in His arms of comfort, peace and strength. He didn't put me down again until after the funeral.

We were able to really honour Caleb at his funeral - and share the love we have in our hearts for him with family and friends. A lot of people were deeply touched that day. We have visited his grave many times since then, and it is always hard to go, but I know he is not really there.

I have let go of so much confusion, guilt, and anger in order to heal and grab hold of all that Caleb's life IS instead of all I wanted it to be. I have realized how often babies are lost to us in this world, and how many there must be in heaven! God has brought so many women into my life who share a similar loss, who have been such a blessing to me. I have found life for Caleb in all the people he's already touched and reached out to in their grief. I know God is with me, I know He always knew about Caleb, and I know He is caring for him now in my absence. And I am so grateful for that!

I am blessed to have Caleb as my son - he has given me many gifts - the ability to see beyond today and its trials, a glimpse of eternity, a greater love for my husband and my kids, an increased faith and trust in God, and another son who would not be here if not for Caleb (we would have stopped at 2, but now there are three children who fill my heart).

I hope to bring help, hope and healing by telling you about

my Caleb. I want to reach out to those who share in the loss of a child - whatever the circumstances are that brought about the loss.

Soon it will be time to launch our next balloon. We'll let our boys pick the colour, we'll watch as it flies beyond our reach, and we'll know our littlest one is safe, loved, and happy on his 4th birthday.

Please feel free to connect with me if this article has spoken to you in any way! anna@momsmoments.ca

Books & Resources that helped me as I grieved for Caleb:

- [Grieving the Child I Never Knew](#) by Kathe Wunnenburg
- [Empty Arms](#) by Pam Vredevelt
- Perinatal Bereavement Services Ontario - www.pbso.ca.

Hope Monument

From Diana Dodge, Vaughn, Ontario

"The Hope Monument...is a place for post-abortive women and women of all circumstances that have lost children to go to and be affirmed that Jesus has their child in heaven and [that their child is] waiting for them to arrive when it is time. It is so touching. To see the monument if you are interested go to www.hopemonument.com." The first Hope Monument for Canada will arrive at Centennial Road Standard Church in Brockville, Ontario on May 4th, and will be part of a Garden of Hope at the same location in June.

Budget Savers - *Keeping the Piggy Bank Full*

The Ontario Child Care Supplement for Working Families (OCCS) is a tax-free monthly payment to help with the costs of raising children under the age of seven. Many women don't know about this benefit from the government. It is separate from the Canada Child Tax Benefit, and can help out quite a bit towards paying the bills!

www.fin.gov.on.ca/english/tax/credit/occs.

Long-Distance Savings - Win-Tel Call 25 is a program that charges only a 25 cents per call to Canada and the US—anytime of day, no matter how long the call. A \$2.95/month network charge is applied, but still the savings are wonderful! You must however get your statement online. Visit www.wintel.ca and click on 'Long Distance Plans'! - **Anna**

Why God Made Mothers - Part 1

Answers given by children in the 2nd grade to the following questions:

Why did God make Mothers?

- She's the only one who knows where the scotch tape is.
- Mostly to clean the house.
- To help us out of there when we were getting born.

Why did God give you your Mother and not some other Mom?

- We're related.
- God knew she likes me a lot more than other people's moms

What does your Mom do in her spare time?

- Mother's don't do spare time.
- To hear her tell it, she pays bills all day long.

If you could change one thing about your Mom, what would it be?

- I would like for her to get rid of those invisible eyes on the back of her head. *Look for Part 2 in our June issue!*

Did someone forward or pass on **Mom's Moments** to you? Visit www.momsmoments.ca and **sign up** for our mailing list!

Summer Camp Reflections

Written by Jennifer, Napanee, Ontario

I take a moment during the day to watch my two little girls cuddle and interact with one another. One, age 3 ½, dances around, trying to make her younger sister, age 6 months, smile. I treasure each moment I have with them, and as I reflect on their present, and the wonderful moments we have had in the past, I can't help but to think about their future. What kind of women will they grow up to be? What careers will they choose? Will they marry? Have kids? What kind of difference will they make in the world?

So as I think about those things, I have to consider what I am doing to help mould them into the people they are to become. I do my best to teach them to be kind, considerate, loving, thoughtful, helpful, and the best they can be. But, I need to remember that I am not the only one who will influence who they will become. There will be teachers, friends, coaches, extended family and many others who will have an impact on the choices they make in life. So, I try to surround them with people I trust, and put them in situations that are safe, where they can learn and grow in a healthy environment.

One of the places that I want to expose my children to is summer camp. My parents sent me for a week to Camp Iawah when I was six years old. I loved it! It was a week of swimming, canoeing, laughter, fun and s'mores! From then on, I was hooked! I spent a week or two each summer meeting new friends and connecting with ones I had met in years past. From the age of 15 I spent every summer, all summer, up at camp. Each summer was filled with canoe trips, campfires, waterskiing, hiking, crafts, and adventures of all sorts. It was there that I learned more about how to live a life pleasing to God. I also gained confidence, leadership skills, independence and the ability to think on my feet. I owe a lot of who I am today to my camp counsellors, camp friends, and all the other great people who influenced me at camp.

All I need to ask myself when thinking about sending my girls to camp is: Do I want the same things for them? And the answer is a resounding YES! That is why, this summer, we are headed up to camp as a family, to spend a week relaxing and sharing together. I anticipate the day when I will watch my little girls hit the dirt road running, waving as they go, yelling, "See you in a week, Mom and Dad!" without a care in the world.

Questions about Camp

Written by Melanie Heffern, Newmarket, Ontario

Wondering what your options are with respect to camps?

Having much camp experience between us here at MM, we have recommended Christian Camps that we know and trust on our website www.momsmoments.ca/onlineresources.

Most of these camps have co-ed Jr. Camp-type programs (start age varies from 5-8 depending on the camp), most also have separate Boys and Girls camps (usually for ages 10-17). There are co-ed youth/teen camps, leadership programs, day camp sessions, and specialized programs in some camps (wakeboarding, outtripping, mountain biking, hockey, horse, dance, etc). So do take time to check out the camps on our website, also read the "Why Camp?" article which examines why camp really is such a smart investment for families. **Think your kids are too young?** Consider family camp! *(continued...)*

'Questions about Camp' cont'd...

Family Camp is how I started going to Camp IAWAH at the age of 2 (and also where I later met my husband while leading the leadership training program in my university days!)

Not from Ontario? Visit Christian Camping International www.cciworldwide.org to find a camp near you. **Finances are an issue?** There are aid programs and free programs for teens in some camps. Research and plan NOW before sessions fill up! Don't let your child miss out on all the FUN and GROWTH!

A Quiet Moment - *Inspirational Thoughts*

Written by Maureen Brown, Kingston, Ontario

"See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him. He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young." Isaiah 40:10,11

I had the privilege of looking after a friend's baby for a few hours one day. "She sleeps well at night," her mother said. "But during the day she just won't settle." Sure enough, I tried putting her down for a nap on my bed - uh uh. I tried snuggling her into her car seat - nope. She was restless and woke up crying after only a few minutes of sleep. So then I did what I really wanted to do in the first place; I picked her up and held her close. I walked back and forth and patted her on her little bottom and sang her name out loud: "Joanna, Joanna." When she finally settled down, I just left her, sleeping, in my arms, while I read a story to my older son. It felt like a little taste of heaven.

Upon reflection, that incident makes clearer to me the picture of God which is revealed in the verses above. Can you see it? The Sovereign LORD, the Creator of the universe, the powerful, mighty one, gathering his little ones in his arms and holding them close. You think you can multi-task - you know, make dinner, supervise homework and talk on the phone all at the same time - He can set captives free, restore sight to the blind and keep the world turning day and night, all the while holding you and me when we need comfort and singing our names to our souls. When you can't settle, when life seems hard and you don't know whether you can take another disappointment or one more bit of stress, remember: you can nestle in your loving Father's arms and feel the beat of his heart. He loves you - do you believe it?

To be honest, I've had a great deal of trouble with this concept myself. God loves me - my head has always believed it, but my heart is not so sure. I've wondered many times what it will take to make me sure. When will I really connect with God? When will my heart catch up with my head? It's a slow process, but God doesn't seem to be willing to give up. Weeks later, a casual reference by a friend to a scripture verse (1 Peter 5:10) sent a brand new idea bursting into my thoughts, and I looked it up in the Amplified Version. "...the God of all grace [who imparts all blessing and favour], ...will Himself complete and make you what you ought to be, establish and ground you securely, and strengthen, and settle you." I thought of Joanna, unwilling to settle until I held her in my arms, and I made the connection: Joanna and me, me and God. Like the song says: "There's no place I'd rather be: Than in your arms of love, in your arms of love. Holding me still, holding me near, in your arms of love."

Health Nut - *Wellness in a nutshell*

By Caroline Deschamps, RN(EC), PHCNP, BScN, PTS, PFS

Physical Activity—What and How Much?

PART 1 - CHILDREN AND YOUTH

As moms, we all want healthy children. As you know, there are many challenges in obtaining that healthy lifestyle we all aim for. Our schedules are overbooked with work and our children's activities. We spend way too much time in front of some kind of screen (TV, computer) and so do our children! We drive everywhere and forget what our legs are meant for! Too often crunched for time, many of us get some kind of fast food instead of preparing for what we already knew would be a crazy day.

So what does this all amount to? A whole lot of obesity! With obesity comes health problems such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension and high cholesterol (yes, even in children!). But that's not all, let's not forget the emotional consequences overweight children face daily such as social rejection and poor self-esteem.

So how do we improve or prevent obesity in children? We set the example! What does that mean? Well, it means that this is a family affair. Everyone will benefit from the lifestyle changes. So how do you go about it?

1. Plan a weekly menu of healthy meals and snacks for the entire family.
2. Plan for fitness by tracking everyone's daily physical activities on a family chart. You can be as specific as you want to be (minutes, sport, intensity) or just check off if you've been active today.

If you're not sure how much exercise your child needs in a day, it's simple, from the time they're one, until they are 13 years old, the recommendations are that they do at least 1.5-2 hours of daily physical activity. In adolescence, it is recommended that they do 30-60 minutes daily, including three 20-minute sessions of more vigorous exercise weekly.



If your child is not as active as he/she should be, gradually increase his daily physical activity starting with 30 minutes cumulative. This means they can accumulate their daily 30 minutes in bouts as short as 5-10 minutes and still get health benefits. On top of increasing their physical activity, they'll need to reduce their non-active time (watching TV, playing on the computer) by the same number of minutes per day. Once your child can tolerate a physical activity for 30 minutes (20 minutes moderate activity such as biking, swimming, outdoor play or brisk walking PLUS 10 minutes vigorous activity such as soccer, basketball or running), it is time to increase their total daily activity by another 15 minutes (10 minutes of moderate and 5 minutes of vigorous) and reducing their non-active time by the same number of minutes. Follow this gradual trend monthly until they have reached the desired 90 minutes per day (at least 60 minutes of moderate activity and 30 minutes of vigorous activity daily).

As a family, there are many physical activities you can do together. I personally enjoy hiking, biking, playing soccer or catch with my daughter. On rainy days, I blast the music in

the house and we dance like crazy for about 30 minutes or until I crash! You can also set up obstacle courses in your yard where you'll have to jump over low objects, bounce on a ball, roll over and run to the other end of the yard. We often make it a race and have a blast! You can also go rollerblading, or take your kids to the park and run around, play tag or an active version of "Simon Says" (this gets your blood pumping too!). Then there's ball hockey or skipping rope in the driveway. The possibilities are endless regardless of your children's ages. Spring is here! Get creative and get active!



Stay tuned in future months for information about physical activity guidelines for Adults, Seniors and Pre/Postnatal Women.

Resources:

For more information on physical activity guidelines for children and youth, please visit the following web sites:

- Public Health Agency of Canada
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html
- Canada Health Portal (Government of Canada)
www.chp-pcs.gc.ca
- You may also want to get this wonderful book:

Fit Kids. A practical guide to raising healthy and active children from birth to teens. Gavin, M.L., Downshen, S.A., Izenberg, N. (2004). Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. ISBN 1-55363-039-4

Exercise of the Month

May is Physical Activity Month in Canada! Get outside and get active with your family! Here is a fun and simple idea to get your children moving.

In your driveway, with a chalk, draw a big square and divide it evenly in twelve squares (4 by 3). Write down a number in each square, from 1 to 12 and/or letters. I'll sometimes draw a big flower where each petal and centre has a number or letter. I then draw the stem as a twisting ladder also with numbers or letters in each step and another number in the leaf. Take two dice and roll them to get a number or just yell out any number/letter. Ask your child to bunny hop to it. Next time get them to hop on one foot, or skip, or twirl, or long jump, etc. Not only will they be practicing their number/letter recognition, but they will also be having fun and exercising at the same time!

To find out more about Caroline check out "Our Team" at www.momsmoments.ca. Email all health-related questions and suggested topics to Caroline at healthnut@momsmoments.ca

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