

Mom's Moments

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Spring 2009



Volume 3, Issue 5

A Note from Anna

I love this issue. It's full of great contributions from many different women all over North America! Thank you for reaching out to us as we reach out to you! And please don't stop!

Spring holds potential for LOTS of celebration - Easter and Mother's Day are on the way, spring cleaning can be very freeing (if you look at it that way!) and soon we'll be audience to the awakening of the great outdoors as the snow melts and the temperatures rise. A great performance awaits!

Welcome the experience of spring into your heart and home and don't keep it outside. Feel the renewal of this season soak into every aspect of your life. May God bless you richly this Easter. Thanks for reading & *Happy Mother's Day* ladies!

Check it Out!

Recommended Books & Resources

I love this site for so many reasons!

"Families with Purpose is an organization dedicated to helping busy parents create a meaningful family life for themselves and their children. Through our articles, products, and resources, we empower families everywhere to take control of their family lives and live their lives with intention and purpose. And most importantly we advocate the little things in life, because they really do matter!"

www.familieswithpurpose.com

Heart and Home

Special stories, reflections or traditions from your family

Like most families, we have lots of 'stuff'. The kids especially! Between Lego, Barbie and the special little 'treasures' my kids like to save, the 'stuff' ends up everywhere. Quite frankly, we have so much 'stuff' that we are inundated with 'stuff'. At the end of each day I would be walking around picking up and putting away everybody's stuff (my husband's included).

I went to listen to a seminar on parenting one night and I discovered the solution to my problem. It's called the 'One-Week-Bin'. What a wonderful place to put my family's stuff! I have heard it called other names, like 'safe-deposit box' or the 'disappear box'. Whatever you want to call it, it has worked for our family and it has actually been fun for my kids.

This is how it works. When any of us (including myself) leave things lying around in the house (bedrooms are off limits) before we go off to school/work and again at bedtime, it becomes fair game for the one-week-bin. In our house we use a laundry hamper to put our disappearing items in. Anything left out gets put into the hamper and they are returned to their owner once a week. We have regular family meetings in our house and it has become a ritual to return the items to the rightful owner following our meetings. If you leave something out the day after the family meeting, then you don't see it again until 6 days later, however, if you have left something out the day before our meeting, you consider yourself lucky because you get it back the next day.

My children get great pleasure out of finding something that I have not put away in its proper place and they truly look forward to catching me! They also love the weekly ritual of seeing what has made its way to the bin and dividing into piles by owner. It is then their responsibility to put the 'stuff' away until we move on to other things.

I find the one-week-bin has made for a much more peaceful environment in our home. There are far fewer items left out around the house, it has taught my children responsibility because they know what the consequence is and they actually stick to the rules. I am no longer nagging them to put away their things and it has actually been kind of fun for all of us since we implemented the bin. Let's just hope I don't leave my car keys lying around!! - **Juliane Goyette, Newmarket, ON**

Info Corner...

Blogs to Enjoy...

Anna's Blog:

www.annasklar.wordpress.com

Melanie's Blog:

www.mheffern.blogspot.com

Visit us online...

www.momsmoments.ca

Find out more about MM & our team, discover our online resources, polls & blogs, access all our newsletters, get ideas on how you can contribute & more!

Contact us...

info@momsmoments.ca



Tips for Spring "Greening"

It's that time of year. Spring is in the air. For lots of families that means it's time to tear apart the house with a good Spring cleaning. As you work on your home, here are some tips to do it a little "greener":

- Try to recycle as much paper as possible while going through old files.
- Donate unwanted clothing, toys, and various household

items to thrift stores for others to reuse. Many thrift stores support good charities.

- Clean using "green products" that are available in the stores or make your own at home.

www.organizedhome.com

- Start a compost in your yard. Compost is also great for use as fertilizer in your garden. Check out this site for tips and articles about composting:

www.howtocompost.org

- Become aware of the services your community offers for yard waste, composting, and toxic items such as batteries, medicines, paints, and so much more. Visit your community website and look under "Waste Management", or give them a call and ask for a brochure.

Happy "Greening"!

- **Ideas submitted by Lauren Raymond, Sudbury, ON**

A Deeper Moment - Inspirational thoughts from the Bible

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb."

Psalm 139:13

I love to start my Easter celebration by watching the sun come up over the horizon. I spend a few moments thanking God for His Son, Jesus, and what He did for me many, many Easters ago.

Jesus' death is not the end of the Easter story. The wonderful conclusion to His story - the truth that brings hope and healing to our lives is that HE ROSE to life again. All of our wrongs, mistakes, sins died with Him on the cross. They stayed there and lost their power over us, we just have to believe it to be true and ask God to forgive us for them.

Since His resurrection, Jesus has been living in heaven. He ROSE to live such an abundant, wonderful life and I believe He wants the same for us.

God made my "inmost being",

He put me together in a most original way as I grew inside my mom, with a unique set of likes and dislikes, passions and dreams, hopes and desires.

As He went about His "knit"-ting, I wonder what He saw for me. What blessings did He carefully stitch together for me? What colours did He pick for my life?

There are a few I already know about - God knew I'd love to write, cook, play the piano, dance, swim, bicycle, and travel. He saw that Josh would be a great husband for me, and that being a mother would bless me more than I could imagine.

When I chose to follow Jesus, I left behind a lot of my old life and rose to a new life - an abundant, wonderful life. Even through the trials and suffering, I can still see the blessings. I hope to continue to discover them all in this new life Jesus has given to me. - **Anna Sklar**

Read more about Identity in Christ in the spring issue of Deeper:

www.deepermoments.wordpress.com



Tonya and Bryson

Ray of Sunshine

So many dreams once unfulfilled

Now living, breathing, wonder filled.

Our little boy so soft & sweet

Is finally here. At last we meet!

Who will you be? No one yet knows.

Dear God, please guide him as he grows.

My love will be here every day

To teach & guide along the way.

I feel so blessed to call you mine.

My little ray of sweet sunshine

By Tonya Fox, Hickory, North Carolina

www.mybabyblue.wordpress.com

Health Nut - A Guide to Eating Fish for Women, Children and Families

Health-related topics, exercises or nutrition facts that promote wellness in a nutshell!



Health Canada recommends eating at least two servings (per our food guide) of fish each week that are high in omega-3 fatty acids and low in mercury. The following is an attempt to clarify exactly what that means to the average family.

Why should I include fish in my diet?

Besides being an excellent protein source, omega-3 fatty acids (called DHA), help to develop the brain and eyes of fetuses, infants, and children. It may also improve language skills and coordination. Women who are breastfeeding, are pregnant, or thinking of becoming pregnant, infants and children, benefit from omega-3 consumption. Breastfed babies can get DHA from mother's milk if DHA is included in the diet. Omega-3's are important for all ages in

reducing the risk of heart disease.

Does mercury exist in fish and shellfish?

Nearly all fish contain mercury, some types more than others. Exposure to high levels of mercury can be harmful, especially for pregnant women, infants and children. Fetuses and infants exposed to high levels may experience delays in walking, talking, memory and attention span. High levels can be toxic for children and adults, increasing the risk of heart disease.

Canned Tuna

Canned tuna contains lower levels of mercury than fresh and frozen tuna. Smaller types of tuna are used for canning. Choose **light** tuna more often than **white or albacore**, as it contains less mercury.

Salmon

Salmon is very high in omega-3's and low in mercury. When possible, choose wild salmon over farmed as it is lower in

PCB's (a type of pollutant in salmon). Canned salmon is generally wild.

Raw Fish

Pregnant women should not consume any raw fish, including that found in sashimi and some sushi dishes. Raw fish may contain elements that lead to illness or fetal complications. As well, these dishes often contain fresh or frozen tuna (which are high in mercury).

-**Diana Browning** is a mom and nurse living in Newmarket, ON.

Taken from: *A Guide to Eating Fish*, York Region Health Services, 2008

Additional Resources

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide, Health Canada, 2007

www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide

The 2007-2008 Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, 2007

www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/guide/

Planting a Rainbow

A children's book by Lois Ehlert

I recently checked out this wonderful book from the library about planting a rainbow with your children. Here's a summary of the ideas included:

Bulbs to Plant in the Fall

Orange Tiger Lily, Red or Orange Tulip, Yellow Daffodil, Blue Hyacinth, Purple Crocus, Purple Bearded Iris Rhizome

Seeds to Purchase in the Winter

Pink Phlox, Blue Morning Glory, Orange Zinnia, Purple Aster, Blue Cornflower, Yellow Daisy, Yellow Marigold

Seedlings to Plant in the Spring

Orange Poppy, Blue Delphinium, Purple Violet, Purple Pansy, Green Fern, Red Carnation, Red Rose

Have fun outside this year - no matter what size your garden may be. Create some special memories with your children and some beautiful landscapes for you and your visitors to enjoy.

Planting a Rainbow by Lois Ehlert



This is a picture of me (Deborah) playing with Anna's boys, which is always a lot of fun! Right before this picture was taken, Josiah (on the right) was trying to tickle me. I told him, "I'll get you back in a minute." Thus, the look on his face!

Sharing the Blessing of Children

I'm single and don't have any children of my own, and there are times when I feel a little sad about that. Then, one day, I was doing my Bible devotions and my eyes fell on a Bible verse in Isaiah 54:1, "Sing, O barren woman, you who never bore a child; burst into song, shout for joy, you who were never in labour; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband," says the Lord."

Wow! I then had a "light bulb" moment. I may not be a mother, but I am a teacher, and I have the opportunity to teach and care for many children throughout the course of my days. That Bible verse made me realize how blessed I am!

I love children, but I have to admit, I went into teaching partly because I thought it was a fun and EASY job! (When I tell the other teachers this, they have a good laugh!)

Most of the time, it is fun; easy, it is not. I wish that parents could go into their child's classroom for a day and see what a teacher's job is really like. Here's a hint: many classrooms are very different places than when we were kids! The respect for authority is not always the same as it used to be.

When I became a teacher, I learned how much time, effort,

and care teachers put into their jobs. We really do care about your children!

However, teaching, motivating, and disciplining other people's children is not always easy. And I hope that when you have a disagreement with your child's teacher, you'll remember that teachers are not perfect.

Sometimes, there are days when I wish I had more patience or feel as if I could have dealt with a classroom situation more effectively. But I love teaching, and I ask God to help me teach and care for children in a way that will glorify Him. I really am blessed!

Even if we don't have children of our own, there are children in our lives we can love and care for, and God can use us to have a positive impact on these children's lives.

Anna (editor of Mom's Moments) and I have been friends since 2005, and she happily "shares" her boys, Josiah (7) and Elijah (3) with me! They are cute, smart and finny and I love them very much!

If you have any single friends (or married without kids) think about including them in your family's life. It might be a wonderful blessing for all of you!

-Deborah Brennan, Sudbury, ON

Helping Hand - "Call for the Cure"

Share your ideas for reaching out to those in need

Avon and Bell Canada joined up to support Breast Cancer Research. Here's their easy, simple ideas for donating \$2 to a worthy cause—86% of your toonie goes directly to research.

1. Commit to call 1-900-561-PINK.
2. Bell Mobility customers call #PINK (7456).
3. Visit www.avoncrusade.ca and encourage others to call.

"Call for the Cure is the most grassroots-focused breast cancer awareness campaign ever launched by Avon Canada. The hope is to raise \$2 million and create a groundswell of support and hope to those touched by breast cancer. Imagine how much we could raise together if every Canadian made the call!"

- Idea from Karen Gregoire, Bowmanville, ON



Good Eats - Home Style Stew

2 pounds stew meat, cut up
 3 tbsp cooking oil
 4 cups water
 2 medium onions, cut up
 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
 ½ cup ketchup
 1 tsp salt
 1 tsp basil
 2 cups sliced carrots
 3 cups potatoes, cut bite size
 1 cup frozen peas



Brown meat in cooking oil in large saucepan. Add water, onion, Worcestershire sauce, ketchup, salt and basil. Cover and simmer until almost tender, about 1½ hours. Add carrots and potatoes. Boil until tender, about 15 minutes. Add peas. Boil about 3 minutes more. Add more water if needed.

If desired, gravy may be thickened. Mix 1 tbsp (15 ml) flour with 2 tbsp (30 ml) water for each cup of juice. Mix smooth. Stir into boiling juice to thicken. Serves 8.

- From *Company's Coming, Main Courses*

Submitted by Brenda Merrick, Sudbury, ON

The folks at **The Old Schoolhouse Magazine** have created three beautiful and FREE Easter resources to share with others. They are perfect for parents and grandparents to share with the children in their lives and are a great gift idea to tuck away into an Easter basket.

These wonderful and interactive tools can be downloaded here:

www.thehomeschoolmagazine.com/Easter-Giveaway/Easter-Giveaway.html

10 Ways to Make Your Home a Haven

Mary E. DeMuth loves to help folks turn their trials into triumphs. A mother of three, Mary lives with her husband, Patrick, and their three children in Texas. They recently planted a church in Southern France.



Mary's Books:

Daisy Chain - An achingly beautiful southern coming-of-age story. It offers a haunting yet hopeful backdrop for human depravity and beauty, for terrible secrets and God's surprising redemption

Ordinary Mom, Extraordinary God - Encouragement to Refresh Your Soul

Building the Christian Family You Never Had - Guidance for those who lack role models of faith-based parenting.

Watching the Tree Limbs - Read about the surprising redemption of God in the most terrible circumstances.

Wishing on Dandelions - Unexpected romance for a girl who feels unloved and incapable of love.

Authentic Parenting in a Postmodern Culture - Partner with God to see amazing transformation in your family.

Mary's Blog:

www.relevantblog.blogspot.com

You can also sign up for **Inside reNEWal** on Mary's blog. This monthly newsletter deals with the inside issues of the heart.

The following are ten ways to make your home a haven in this shifting world. This is adapted from my book, *Authentic Parenting in a Postmodern Culture*:

- By letting kindness reign.** Determine to treat your children and spouse with the same sweetness you'd give a stranger you're trying to impress. Remember it's God's kindness that leads us to repentance. What makes us think anything different would evoke our children's repentance?
- By welcoming hard questions.** It's okay to question. You did it, didn't you? Give your children the same leeway. Let them vent. Let them worry. Welcome their wrestling. Don't give pat answers; instead, let them work through their questions. Love them through a period of questioning.
- By being there.** Give your children the rare gift of your focused attention. Look into their eyes. Ask great questions. Relax alongside them. Dr. Ross Campbell says, "In short, focused attention makes a child feel he is the most important person in the world in his parents' eyes."
- By limiting media.** Steer your children away from
- mindless interaction with the TV or video games. Set limits and stick to them. Dare to believe your children are creative, innovative kids who can create instead of idly recreate.
- By playing outside.** We've lost the importance of outdoor play. Even if it means walking to the park with your kids, or swimming alongside them, or taking a nature hike, dare to move beyond the four walls of your home to venture out to see God's creation.
- By weeping and rejoicing at the right times.** We are to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15). When a child has a difficult day, scoop her into your arms and cry alongside. When she makes a great grade, jump up and down and celebrate with ice cream.
- By cherishing childhood.** Our kids grow up so fast in this crazy culture. Keep them kids as long as you can. Let them play, run, stretch, linger. Limit activities when they're younger so they don't become little stressed-out adults at age ten.
- By reading together.** The most haven-producing thing I do as a mommy is simply to read to my kids. I still read to my fourteen year old! Discover books on CD as a family, lessening the tedium of car rides without popping in a DVD. My kids have stayed in the car to listen to a story finish.
- By laughing hard, but not at another's expense.** Joking and laughter are blessings you can add to create a fun-loving haven, but be cautious not to laugh at your kids' expense or allow them to laugh at yours or others' expense. Watch funny, clean movies together. Tell jokes. Tell funny family stories over and over until they become ridiculous. A lighthearted family that doesn't take itself too seriously is a haven-home.
- By practicing God's presence in the mundane.** Require chores of your kids. It teaches them important life skills. Even so, introduce joy as you work. Turn on the radio, dance, laugh. By learning to practice the presence of God during the chores of life, you create a productive, gratitude-based home.