“A KEEPER”

One day someone’s husband died, and on that clear, cold morning, in the warmth of their bedroom, the wife was struck with the pain of learning that sometimes there isn’t any more. No more hugs, no more special moments to celebrate, no more phone calls just to chat, no more “just one minute.” Sometimes, what we care about the most gets all used up and goes away, never to return before we can say good-bye or say “I love you!”

So, while we have it...it’s best we love it...and care for it and fix it when it’s broken...and heal it when it’s sick. This is true for marriage...and old cars...and children with bad report cards and dogs with bad hips and aging parents and grandparents. We keep them because they are worth it, because we are worth it.

Some things we keep...like a best friend who moved away or a classmate we grew up with. There are just some things that make us happy, no matter what.

Life is important, like people we know who are special...and so, we keep them close!

Source: Delaware County Extension Connection, February 2006
ANSWER CORNER: SAVE ENERGY WITH YOUR REFRIGERATOR

Your refrigerator is the single biggest electricity-guzzling appliance in your home. The following tips can help you save energy and money:

Check Refrigerator Temperatures - You are losing money if they are lower than 37-40ºF for fresh food and 0-5ºF in your freezer. To check the temperature, put a thermometer in a glass of water in the center of the refrigerator and another between packages in the freezer. Read them after 24 hours and adjust as needed.

Defrost Manual-Defrost Refrigerators - Frost makes these models less efficient.

Cover and Wrap Food - Uncovered foods and liquids release moisture and drive up electricity costs.

Check the Refrigerator Door Seals - Close the refrigerator door on a piece of paper that is half in and half out of the refrigerator. If you can remove the paper easily without opening the door, you may need to adjust the door latch or replace the seals. Another way to test the gasket is by leaving a lit flashlight inside the closed refrigerator. If you see light around the gasket, replace the gasket.

Regularly Clean the Condenser Coils - These are typically located underneath or behind the refrigerator.

Got a Second, Older Refrigerator? Unplug it! Remember: It can cost about $130 a year to keep it plugged in. Also be sure to remove the door when you unplug a refrigerator so that children cannot accidently be trapped inside.

Buying a New Refrigerator? Get an Energy Star Model. A refrigerator that is only ten years old uses double the electricity of a new ENERGY STAR refrigerator. It even uses 40% less than a brand new refrigerator bought in 2001 that isn’t ENERGY STAR. See the following website to use a savings calculator to estimate your savings. The calculator can be downloaded at http://www.getenergysmart.org/WhereYouLive/EnergyStarProducts/refrigerators.asp

When you’re in the market for a new refrigerator, keep these things in mind to keep your electricity costs down.

★ Consider buying a model with a top freezer. Top freezer models use 7-13% less energy than side-by-side models.

★ Consider doing without an ice-maker and dispenser. Automatic ice-makers and through-the-door dispensers increase energy use by 14-20% and raise the purchase price by about $75-250.

★ Models with an anti-sweat heater consume 5-10% more energy. Look for a model that has an "energy saver" switch that turns off or turns down the heating coils.

★ The most energy-efficient models are 16-20 cubic feet. Generally, the larger the refrigerator, the greater the energy consumption. Too large a model will waste space and energy; too small a model could mean extra trips to the store.

Source: www.getenergysmart.org
UPCOMING EVENTS

March Health & Nutrition Forum
“Metabolic Syndrome” or “Syndrome X”: Are You At Risk?

Learn the warning signs of this “growing” syndrome:

- Abdominal fat
- Low HDL (good cholesterol)
- High blood pressure
- High fasting blood sugar and triglycerides

“Syndrome X” is seen in over 47 million adults and even in America’s youth. It increases your risk of both heart disease and diabetes. Find out what you can do to reduce your risk through diet and lifestyle changes.

**Speaker** ................. Jean (Borgia) Wolcott, RD, CDN, Upstate Cerebral Palsy and consultant, Charles T. Sitrin Home

**When** ................. Wednesday, March 29, 2006, 3:30 to 5:00 PM

**Where** ................. Basloe Library, Main Street, Herkimer

**To Register** ........... Please call CCE of Herkimer County at 315-866-7920

All Forums are free and open to the public.

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*Cornell Cooperative Extension Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties presents:*

*“Understanding and Addressing Youth Violence and Crime”*

Facilitated by: Steve Darman, B.A., ABD and Maurice A. Pauline, B.A.

This program will take an in-depth look at what drives youth violence and crime today and then focus in broad terms on ways to address this violence and crime. The influence of parents and peers, as well as the effects of neighborhoods and schools will be discussed. One segment of the program will examine the growing phenomenon of youth gangs and youth gang culture in NYS and our region.

**WHEN:** .............................. Tuesday, March 21, 2006

**WHERE:** ............................ Cornell Cooperative Extension Oneida County

121 Second St, Oriskany

**TIME:** ............................ 9:30 – 11:30 AM

**TO REGISTER** ................. call CCE at 315.866.7920

*Sponsored By: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Herkimer, Madison, and Oneida Counties. “Connecting with Kids” is supported by a grant from the Slocum-Dickson Foundation. All “Connecting With Kids” Workshops are free and open to the public.*
A HINT OF IRELAND

St. Patrick’s Day does not need to be filled with high fat foods. Many foods long traditional in the Irish diet - cabbage, carrots, parsnips, kale, potatoes - rank among the most nutritious. But they tend to get ruined by adding unneeded fat and cholesterol.

Here are some ideas to try:

**Carrots and Parsnips**

1 cup sliced carrots
1 cup sliced parsnips
1 Tablespoon chopped parsley
salt and pepper to taste

In a medium saucepan, simmer carrots and parsnips in 1 cup of water until tender when pierced with a fork. Drain and place vegetables in a mixing bowl, reserving some liquid. Add 1-2 Tablespoons of the cooking liquid, chopped parsley, and salt and pepper to taste to the cooked vegetables. Mash together. Serve hot.

*Yield:* 4 servings; serving size 1/2 cup, (40 calories, 0 grams fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 25 mg sodium)

**Colcannon**

2 medium potatoes, scrubbed
1 cup kale, stems removed and coarsely chopped
2/3 cup fat free milk
3 Tablespoons thinly sliced scallions
salt and pepper to taste

Cut potatoes into large chunks. Add to a medium saucepan with enough water to cover the potatoes. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and cook until tender when pierced with a fork - about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, add about one inch of water to a medium saucepan. Insert steamer basket, bring to a boil, then reduce heat to simmer. Add kale, cover and steam for about 4 minutes.

Remove kale and place in a mixing bowl. Once potatoes are cooked, peel and add to kale.

In a small skillet, heat the milk and scallions, and simmer 5 minutes. Add to potatoes and kale and mash together. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot.

*Yield:* 5 servings; serving size 1/2 cup, (35 calories, 0 grams fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 25 mg sodium)

**Irish Soda Bread**

2 cups all purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1/3 cup dried currants or raisins
2 Tablespoons light brown sugar
1 Tablespoon baking powder
1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1-1/3 cup buttermilk*

Preheat oven to 375º. Lightly oil baking sheet. Combine and mix all ingredients except buttermilk in large bowl. Mix in buttermilk. Gather dough together. Turn out on a floured surface. Knead to combine (about 1 minute). Shape into a round loaf and place on baking sheet. Bake until golden brown and baked through, about 40 minutes. Transfer to rack to cool. Makes one loaf.

*To make buttermilk: measure 1 Tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon lemon juice or vinegar into 2 cup measuring cup. Add skim milk to measure 1-1/3 cups.

*Yield:* 15 servings; serving size 1 slice, (110 calories, .5 grams fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 200 mg sodium)

*Shared by: Mary Ann Walrath, Nutrition Staff*
“THE POCKET PARENT”

Even Start has chosen a parenting book for this month: The Pocket Parent by Gail Reichlin & Caroline Winkler c. 2001 Workman Publishing.

This book is a small paperback of “tried-and-true” advice, common sense, parental wisdom and sanity. Its philosophy of discipline combines unconditional love with firm limits. A high point of this book is a list of recommended children’s books that address parenting issues raised in each chapter.

Sometimes reading books together can be a wonderful way for you and your child to revisit a variety of issues away from the heat of the moment or to prepare ahead of time for a situation that may arise. When you’re having trouble finding the appropriate words, a good book can often get a point across to a child in just the right way.

A listing of children’s books address issues or concerns about anger, a new baby, bad words, bedtime, biting, chores, comparing and labeling children, death, discipline, doctor and dentist visits, fears at night, fighting, preschool, friends, “gimmies”, grandparents, hitting and hurting others, interrupting, lying, manners, power struggles, self-esteem, sexuality, tantrums, values, whining, and finishes appropriately with the topic of wit’s end!

Visit your local library for both the children’s books listed in The Pocket Parent and other sources of parenting advice.

The Pocket Parent website is a supportive, easy-to-use web site designed to provide some instant relief for parents of 2- to 12-year-olds. You can find it on the web at www.pocketparent.com

Shared by: Becky Benson, Even Start Program Educator

TAKE THE GUESSWORK OUT OF GARDEN CATALOGS

Do those photos in gardening catalogs have you longing to grow...everything? When you’re poring over seed catalogs trying to decide what to grow, be sure to check out the “Cornell Vegetable Varieties for Gardeners” website: http://vegvariety.cce.cornell.edu

The website makes it easy to compare varieties and become aware of the wide variety that is available to gardeners. The site describes more than 3,400 varieties including days to maturity and seed sources.

It’s like an amazon.com for vegetable varieties. In addition to reading the basics about varieties, you can also rate how well a variety works for you and read reviews and ratings from your fellow gardeners.

The site has already attracted more than 500 registered users who have written nearly 1,000 reviews since the site launched last winter. A new feature allows you to view ratings just from gardeners in you state or with the same growing season you have.

The site also includes links to other Cornell gardening resources, including online growing guides for more than 60 garden crops. Their goal is to connect gardeners with their neighbors and others who have similar growing conditions to help them pick winners for their garden.
### NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH® 2006

National Nutrition Month®, celebrated every March, is a nutrition education and information campaign sponsored annually by the American Dietetic Association. The campaign reinforces the importance of nutrition as a key component of health, along with physical activity. This year’s theme is “Step Up To Nutrition & Health.” Here are the key points to remember:

▲ The food and physical activity choices made today - and everyday - affect your health and how you feel today and in the future. Eating right and being physically active are keys to a healthy lifestyle.

▲ Make smart choices from every food group. Give your body the balanced nutrition it needs by eating a variety of nutrient-packed foods every day. Just be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.

▲ Get the most nutrition out of your calories. Choose the most nutritionally rich foods you can from each food group each day - those packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients but lower in calories.

▲ Find your balance between food and physical activity. Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness plus it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

▲ Play it safe with foods. Prepare, handle and store food properly to keep you and your family safe.

For more information on National Nutrition Month® and healthy eating habits, visit the American Dietetic Association’s website at www.eatright.org.

### TRANS FAT AND FAST FOOD

**What is Trans Fat?**  Trans fat is made when manufacturers add hydrogen to vegetable oil - a process called hydrogenation.

**Why is Trans Fat bad?**  Trans fat raises LDL cholesterol, which increases your risk for coronary heart disease. It has also been shown to lower HDL, which helps remove LDL from arteries.

**Where is Trans Fat found?**  Trans fat can be found in vegetable shortenings and foods made with them. These include some margarines, crackers, cookies, snack foods, and many fried foods such as French fries and fried chicken. A small amount of trans fat is found naturally, primarily in dairy products, some meat and other animal-based foods.

**Trans fat is online.**  Now you can really see how fried fast food is bad for your heart. The trans fat information is now given for foods at both McDonald’s and Burger King. Here is the amount of trans fat found in popular items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fast Food</th>
<th>Trans Fat (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Burger King</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium French Fries</td>
<td>4.5g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Chicken Tenders</td>
<td>3g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Onion Rings</td>
<td>3.5g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender Crisp Garden Salad</td>
<td>3.5g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>McDonald’s</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium French Fries</td>
<td>5g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Quarter Pounder with Cheese</td>
<td>3g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 piece McNuggets</td>
<td>2.5g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filet-o-Fish</td>
<td>1g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What should I order?**  It is best to go online and research menu items and choose before you go. Best bets include low-fat salads, plain baked potatoes, small plain hamburgers and grilled chicken sandwiches with lettuce and tomato. Skip the fried foods and fatty sandwiches. Keep in mind that while these products are low in saturated fat and trans fat, they are usually very high in sodium. It’s always best to cook at home!

Source: Communicating Food for Health
The Dangers of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that comes from incomplete burning of fuel. It is one of the leading causes of poisoning deaths in the United States.

The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are:

- Headache
- Vomiting
- Sleepiness
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Trouble breathing

If you even think you are being exposed to carbon monoxide poisoning, call your Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

The Medicine Cabinet

Using over the counter medicines wisely is important in preventing unintentional exposures. A medication although available without a doctor's prescription does not mean it is risk-free. Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs can be dangerous when misused.

The National Council on Patient Information and Education promotes "The 3-Rs to Be MedWise".

Respect - OTC's are serious medicines that must be taken with care

Risk - It is important to recognize that all medicines (OTC and prescription) have risks as well as benefits

Responsibility - It is your responsibility to understand and use OTC medicine safely. Follow this important rule: when in doubt, ask first. Ask your pharmacist, doctor or call the Poison Center to get the facts you need to select and use OTC medicine correctly.

New Name for Poison Center

The Central New York Poison Center has changed its name to the Upstate New York Poison Center to better reflect the area they serve and to more closely align themselves with their host institution, University Hospital at Upstate Medical University.

Last year the Poison Center managed nearly 50,000 calls in the 34 county service area. The Upstate NY Poison Center collaborates with 71 hospitals offering expert advice on management of the poisoned patient. They also serve Departments of Health, Emergency Management Services, Bio and Haz-Mat Teams, School Nurses, and Skilled Nursing Facilities through patient management and educational outreach.

They offer professional and public education programs to inform and educate, including brochures, phone stickers, magnets and education materials promoting poison prevention. By dialing 1-800-222-1222 you will reach the poison experts, available 24 hours every day of the year.

For more information check out their website at www.upstatepoison.org.

Source:poison Prevention Newsletter, Spring 2006
SMART USES FOR YOUR TAX REFUND

A tax refund is always a welcome bonus. Whether it’s $300 or $3,000, the way you use that money can have a real impact on your personal and financial well-being.

New computer? New recliner? Nice vacation? Those are all nice ideas, but…

Follow Three General Rules:

1. **DO** plan ahead before spending your refund. Without a plan, you may use the money on the first important thing that comes to mind, and then later realize something else was more important. Planning ahead and involving the family, increases the chances you will identify all the possibilities, and think about which are most important.

2. **DO** devote a portion of your tax refund to build long-term financial security.

3. **DON’T** throw away part of your refund on loan fees. Did you know that those companies that offer “quick refunds” are just giving you a loan? It’s a high-cost, high-risk loan. (For more information on refund anticipation loans, see www.consumerlaw.org and follow the link under “Special Reports” regarding “High Priced Refund Anticipation Loans.”)

Four Smart Uses for Your Tax Refund:

1. **Pay off bills**

   - First priority: regular monthly bills if you have gotten behind (utilities, phone).
   - Most other debts should be prioritized with highest-interest rates paid off first.

Suppose you have a credit card balance of $2,000 at an interest rate of 18%, and you’re making payments of $50/month. At that rate it will be 62 months before the bill is paid off, and it will cost you $1,077 interest. If you use your tax refund to pay off $1,000 of that bill, and then continue to pay $50/month, the bill will be paid off in 24 months, at an interest cost of only $198. You save $800 interest by paying $1,000 toward the debt now.

2. **Save for needs in the coming year**

   - **Emergency Funds.** Having money saved for emergencies can get you through small emergencies like car repair or medical bills without breaking a sweat. In the ultimate emergency (loss of income), an emergency fund can keep you afloat until you find another income source. Use part of your tax refund to start to build your emergency fund!

   - **Occasional Expenses.** Those big bills that come once a year or every few months can cause huge problems for families. Avoid those problems by being ready for the bills! Use your tax refund to start a special savings fund, then keep adding to it throughout the year.

3. **Long-term savings!**

You CAN make progress toward long-term goals, and your tax refund can help make that happen.

Even small amounts add up. Adding just $500 a year into a retirement account such as an IRA can make a difference over a period of decades. Earning an average annual return of 9%, contributions of $500/year would yield $68,100 after 30 years.

Take the “small amount” theory one step further. Build on the momentum created by that once a year contribution, and make a monthly contribution too. If you contributed $500/year and $25/month, earning a 9% return, in 30 years you will have $113,800!

Contributing to your retirement may pay off with a tax credit! Moderate-income workers who contribute to their retirement accounts may qualify for a tax credit! For example, a married couple filing jointly with earnings of $32,000 would qualify for a 20% credit. That means that if they contribute $2,000 to retirement accounts, they will receive a direct tax credit of $400! Consult the IRS for details.

(continued on page 9)
SMART USES FOR YOUR TAX REFUND (continued from page 8)

4. Special Purchases

What about that new refrigerator? Or the sofa? Or…? Those purchases are valuable, too. Some may be essential, while others simply add enjoyment to life.

Your best bet:

First put some of your tax refund toward financial security:

- Pay off some debt.
- Plan for needs in the coming year.
- Set some money aside for long-term goals.

Then, use part of your tax refund to make your day-to-day life better. Among all the items on your “wish-list,” choose the most important and shop wisely for it!

Do you find yourself in a yearly cycle?

$ Using your tax refund each spring to catch up…
$ Then gradually getting more and more behind throughout the year, (and more and more stressed out) until…
$ You once again use your tax refund to get caught up.

You can prevent this common cycle, and save on late fees and finance charges, by putting more money in your regular paycheck, instead of getting such a large tax refund.

How can I get part of my refund money throughout the year instead of waiting?

1. Change your Withholding Instructions on Form W-4. If you receive a large refund, it may be because you claim too few exemptions. Talk with your payroll office at work about this.
2. If you have children and qualify for the Earned Income Credit, you can request to receive part of it throughout the year.
   **How?** Ask your payroll office for Form W-5 Earned Income Credit Advance Payment Certificate.
   **How Much?** Using IRS guidelines which estimate what your Earned Income Credit amount for the year might be, your payroll office distributes about half of the amount in your paychecks throughout the year.
   Example: a worker earning between $500 and $1,200 per month might receive $60 extra in each bi-weekly paycheck.

Workers who receive part of their Earned Income Credit in advance benefit in two ways:
$ They can still expect a good refund check in the spring.
$ They will have more money throughout the year for paying bills, paying off debts, or contributing to a retirement account.

Source: Iowa State University Extension as printed in Extension Connection, Delaware County, February 06
HELPING CHILDREN ADAPT TO A NEW SIBLING

“When does Joey go back to the hospital?”

Most children welcome new siblings with excitement and affection, but the changes in their lives may also frustrate them. Both positive and negative feelings and behaviors are common in children when a new brother or sister arrives. For example, children may feel jealous and left out, but they may also feel a great deal of pride and affection for the new sibling. Here are five ideas - based on current research - that can help promote good sibling relations.

Timing plays a part

Parents often consider timing when they are planning a new child. Some experts believe that children between 18 months and three years old have the hardest time adjusting to new siblings. Children under 18 months may have fewer problems because they don’t realize how life is changing for them. Four- and five-year-olds have more mature social and cognitive skills, so they can handle frustrating situations better than three-year-olds can. Parents should think about these things, but they should make their decision based on what will work best for the entire family.

Prepare children for change.

It’s important to prepare children for a new child. Children will adjust better if they have been included in the preparations for the new arrival and have had the chance to explore their feelings and anxieties. Here are some ideas for preparing an older sibling.

♫ Read books about new babies. Some excellent books on this topic include 101 Things to Do with a Baby (Ormerod, 1984, Puffin Books), She Come Bringing Me that Little Baby Girl (Greenfield, 1974, Harper Trophy) and A New Baby at Koko Bear’s House (Lansky, 1987, The Book Peddlers). Ask your children’s librarian for other recommendations.

♫ Introduce children to newborns and babies. When you see babies while shopping, at the park or at friend’s houses, let children observe babies and, if possible, interact with them. Talk about what a new baby can and cannot do.

♫ Take children to sibling preparation classes offered by many hospitals. They can see the maternity section and the nursery (if mother is going to the hospital). They can also learn what new babies are like and how to avoid hurting them.

♫ Teach children how they should behave with the new baby. Parents usually worry that older children will be too rough with the baby. Too often, they may emphasize things children should not do with babies. Parents should give more attention to showing children ways they can have a safe and enjoyable time together. An older child needs to know how to play with a baby, how they can communicate and how to handle conflict and frustration.

Let children learn the skills that set the stage for good sibling relationships by playing with other children. Children who play well with their friends are more likely to develop good relationships with their siblings. When your child is playing with other children, note their ability to manage conflict. See if they help keep the emotional climate pleasant.

(continued on page 11)
HELPING CHILDREN ADAPT TO A NEW SIBLING
(continued from page 10)

Rehearse some skills - like holding, diapering, feeding - with a large doll. Children can learn to rock, hug, cuddle and even feed and diaper a baby by practicing first on a doll.

It's only temporary!

Some children regress when a new child arrives. Children may be more demanding, have more toilet accidents or they may have trouble sleeping. Although these problems can be annoying, parents shouldn't worry too much - they usually disappear in three to five months.

Many siblings show signs of greater maturity when a new sibling arrives. They may take pride in showing that they are different from their little brother or sister because they can dress or feed themselves.

This is a great chance to praise children for helping in a stressful situation. Remember, though, that the same children who are showing off their new skills can also be showing immature behaviors.

Help your child learn how to be a sibling

Help your child find a role to play with their new sibling. Possible roles include assistant caregiver, teacher, helper or playmate.

As assistant caregiver, a child could fetch diapers, help prepare the baby’s meals or amuse the baby while waiting at the doctor’s office. Don’t push children into a caregiving role, though, if they don’t want it. If you do, they may feel that being a sibling is only a burden. Help the child find a different role to play, or wait until the baby is older and the children can interact more successfully.

One last piece of advice

Babies seem to come into the world ready to adore their older siblings. Make sure your older children know how important they are to their brother or sister. It will give them a sense of pride and fosters mutual enjoyment.

Source: Caring for Kids, CCE Ontario County, February 06
LESS SCREENTIME AND MORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEADS TO A HEALTHIER WEIGHT

TV viewing and lack of physical activity are major predictors for overweight [body mass index (BMI) > 95%] in children between 3 to 7 years of age. Research conducted at the Children's Nutrition Research Center (CNRC) suggests that ages 6 and 7 may be a critical time when TV viewing and physical activity have the greatest impact on BMI. A study following 3- to 4- year-old children from White, Hispanic and African American families for three years was published in the April 2005 issue of the International Journal of Obesity. TV viewing time and physical activity were assessed by direct observation of the children.

Dr. Tom Baranowski, a behavioral scientist at CNRC and collaborator on the research project, acknowledged that determining causes for obesity is a complex issue. Obesity results from an energy imbalance when calorie consumption exceeds energy expenditure. He added, "Physical activity is one of the activities we can encourage. Too much TV time can decrease the time available for physical activity."

Since TV viewing has been associated with consumption of soda, fried foods and snacks, the relationship between TV viewing and the increased presence of overweight could also be related to children making poor dietary choices while watching television. Interestingly, as the children became older the relationship between overweight and TV viewing became stronger.

He concludes, "When parents or caregivers focus on reducing the time spent watching television and increasing the time spent in physical activity, they may be successful in preventing obesity among young children."

The American Academy of Pediatrics in their message for parents suggests that:

- parents should limit their child's use of TV, movies, and video and computer games to no more than one or two hours per day
- parents should not let children watch TV while doing homework, and
- parents should not put a television in their children's bedrooms.

Source: Nutrition & Your Child, No. 2, 2005, Baylor College of Medicine

TV Turn-off Tips:

- Keep TV off during meals.
- Exercise as a family by taking walks, riding bikes, or learning a sport.
- Move your TV to a less visible location.
- Designate certain days of the week as “TV-free” days.
- Do not use the TV as a reward.
- Remove the TV set from your child’s room.
- Hide the remote.

National TV Turn-Off Week is April 24-30, 2006
See their website at www.tvturnoff.org for more information

Track your progress. See chart on next page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Instructions: Fill out the calendar and record your television viewing time (in minutes) on the corresponding dates above.

Instead of watching TV, I did the following:

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
METABOLIC SYNDROME: THE FASTEST GROWING DISEASE

Chances are you have heard about Metabolic Syndrome, now one of the fastest growing adverse health conditions in the world. Recent estimates suggest it will soon overtake cigarette smoking as the number 1 risk factor for heart disease in the US population. Some estimate that 50% of adults may have Metabolic Syndrome by age 60.

Metabolic Syndrome is a condition characterized by a group of metabolic risk factors including:

- Overweight or obesity
- High triglyceride levels
- High blood pressure
- Pre-diabetes

It is a disease that has its beginnings in childhood. In fact, 30 to 50 percent of today's overweight children have symptoms of Metabolic Syndrome.

Dr. John Foreyt, Professor of Pediatrics at the Children's Nutrition Research Center and Director of the Nutrition Research Clinic at Baylor College of Medicine has developed a “toolbox” of strategies for physicians to use when combating this disease. Dr. Foreyt explains, "No two patients are alike, and being able to tailor interventions to the unique needs of each patient increases the likelihood of long-term success." He adds, "The best part of these lifestyle intervention strategies is that they can be used by everyone to help develop healthful lifestyles."

The lifestyle-change strategies—including setting reasonable goals, raising awareness, confronting barriers, managing stress, cognitive restructuring (thinking about yourself in a more positive, realistic manner), preventing relapse, and providing support—are the keys that physicians can use with their patients.

You and your family can use these strategies too. For example, if you want to have a healthier lifestyle by reducing weight, use these lifestyle-change strategies to help.

- Set reasonable goals: Choose a weight that is appropriate and attainable.
- Raise awareness: Use a food diary to track your eating habits. Use a pedometer to determine your steps.
- Confront barriers: If you have a weakness for chips or snack crackers, don't buy them. If they are not available, you cannot consume them.
- Manage stress: Take time for yourself, relax, meditate, go for a walk.
- Restructure your thoughts: Come up with your own self-affirmations, such as "I will take a 30 minute walk with my child three times a week" and repeat it often.
- Prevent relapse: Learn to expect lapses during certain times, such as holidays or vacations, and develop coping strategies.
- Provide support: Be a role model for your friends and family. Enlist your family to eat and exercise together.

For more information on this topic, plan to attend this month's Nutrition Forum. See page 3 for details.

Source: Nutrition & Your Child, No. 3, 2005, Baylor College of Medicine
SPYWARE

Just when you thought you were Web savvy, one more privacy, security, and functionality issue crops up - spyware. Installed on your computer without your consent, spyware software monitors or controls your computer use. It may be used to send you pop-up ads, redirect your computer to websites, monitor your Internet surfing, or record your keystrokes, which, in turn, could lead to identity theft.

The clues that spyware is on a computer include:

- Barrage of pop-up ads
- Hijacked browser - that is, a browser that takes you to sites other than those you type into the address box
- A sudden or repeated change in your computer’s Internet home page new and unexpected toolbars
- New and unexpected icons on the system tray at the bottom of your computer screen
- Keys that don’t work (for example, the “Tab” key that might not work when you try to move to the next field in a Web form)
- Random error messages
- Sluggish or downright slow performance when opening programs or saving files

The good news is that consumers can take steps to lower their risk of spyware infections. Indeed, OnGuard Online suggests that you:

Update your operating system and Web browser software. Your operating system (like Windows or Linux) may offer free software “patches” to close holes in the system that spyware could exploit.

Download free software only from sites you know and trust. It can be appealing to download free software like games, peer-to-peer file-sharing programs, customized toolbars, or other programs that may change or customize the functioning of your computer. Be aware, however, that some of these free software applications bundle other software, including spyware.

Don’t install any software without knowing exactly what it is. Take the time to read the end-user license agreement (EULA) before downloading any software. If the EULA is hard to find - or difficult to understand - think twice about installing the software.

Minimize “drive-by” downloads. Make sure your browser security setting is high enough to detect unauthorized downloads, for example, at least the “Medium” setting for Internet Explorer. Keep your browser updated.

Don’t click on any links within pop-up windows. If you do, you may install spyware on your computer. Instead, close pop-up windows by clicking on the “X” icon in the title bar.

Don’t click on links in spam that claim to offer anti-spyware software. Some software offered in spam actually installs spyware.

Install a personal firewall to stop uninvited users from accessing your computer. A firewall blocks unauthorized access to your computer and will alert you if spyware already on your computer is sending information out.

If you think your computer might have spyware on it, experts advise that you take three steps: Get an anti-spyware program from a vendor you know and trust. Set it to scan on a regular basis - at least once a week - and every time you start your computer, if possible. And, delete any software programs the anti-spyware program detects that you don’t want on your computer.

For more information connect to www.OnGuardOnline.gov.

Source: http://onguardonline.gov/stopthinkclick.html
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“LIVING”
March 2006

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Living is published eight times a year by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Herkimer County. Newsletter fee $5.00 to help defray expenses.

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