



Family and Consumer Sciences

Family Ties

Family and The Holidays

Getting vs. Giving at Christmas: Helping Your Child Know The Difference

How do you teach your children the importance of giving to those less fortunate than they are? If you don't practice charity in your daily life, you may be tempted to lecture them about giving to the poor, with the caveat: "do as I say, not as I do." If you want your children to grow up to be charitable adults, you have to teach them this quality. Here are some ways to teach your children about helping the less fortunate.

Start in your coat closets. Take out any coats that aren't being worn any more and donate them to charities collecting them. Let your children see who these people might be, allowing them to put faces to the needy.

Participate in food drives. There are lots of food drives around the holidays, and here's a way to get your kids really involved in them. Take your children to the store with you. Buy a few cans or other items that can be donated. Have them go with you to deliver the items to a charitable organization or to drop them off at the bins set up outside most grocery stores.

Donate used toys. This is also a good time of year to sort through all of the old toys and to decide which ones to give away. Explain to your kids that you've got to make room for all of the new toys and let them have a say in what gets donated. Make sure the toys are in good condition, with all the pieces. There are lots of organizations that serve children and their parents who have need of good, clean, used toys.



Sponsor a needy child or family. Most malls, some department stores -- and even a few places of work -- have their own version of a "giving tree." You select a card with a child's first name and his or her "wish list." You choose one or more items from the list, buy them, wrap them and bring them back. Some organizations will let you sponsor an entire family. Choose one that mirrors your family in number of kids. Let each member of your family choose gifts for their counterpart in the needy family. On Christmas day, after all your family's gifts are opened, take some time to talk about the child or family whose wish list you fulfilled.

You will find many more ideas during the holidays to teach your children about giving to others. Whichever ones you choose, make sure your kids get involved with you. Children are never too young to learn how good it can feel to help others.

Matt Devereaux, PhD
State Extension Specialist
Child Development



Children Need Routines, Even During Holidays



The holidays can mean disruptions in your normal schedule or routines. For example, you may be spending many hours in the kitchen preparing foods for holiday meals or on the road to join family and friends. Hectic schedules can make meal and snack times unpredictable for your children.

Children need to have structured family meals and snacks whether it is a holiday or not. By providing the structure of regular meals and snacks, your child is more likely to be hungry at the table, take an interest in eating and eat what he or she needs. If your child learns to expect three meals plus snacks at routine times, he or she is less likely to overeat. If children have to wait for long periods between meals and snacks, they are more likely to eat more than they need for fear of being hungry. This is a natural instinct.

Offering structured family meals and sit-down snacks also helps reduce the need to graze. Don't let your child graze for food or beverages (except water) between meals and snacks. It makes it harder for your child to eat the right amount. It makes him or her less interested in nutritious food at meal and snack time. It makes children behave poorly at meals and it takes away the chance for emotional and social learning at family meals.

Yes, meals are about more than just eating. Mealtime is essential for family time and is all about love, support and connection. It is where traditions are formed and gives children the feeling that they are important enough to spend time with. It makes them feel loved.

Try having structured family meals with your children. You may be surprised at their reaction. You will find they treasure the time with you—you don't even need to be a great cook!

Janie Burney, PhD, RD
State Extension Specialist
Nutrition



Celebrate National Family Week



Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to reflect on our blessings over the year. We usually spend it with family and enjoy lots of traditional activities and foods. But did you know that the week of Thanksgiving is also celebrated as National Family Week?

National Family week is promoted by the Alliance for Children and Families. The theme for National Family Week is *Connections Count*. This theme emphasizes the importance of healthy connections with families, neighborhoods, and communities to help families thrive. Healthy connections might be a grandmother or neighbor who watches children after school until the parents get home from work, job placement centers that help people find good jobs, or community leaders who work to get a park built in your neighborhood.

During National Family Week, groups and organizations that work with families plan activities and celebrations to recognize the importance of strong families to create thriving communities. If you would like to be involved in an activity for National Family Week, check out the Web site at www.nationalfamilyweek.org.

Denise J. Brandon, PhD
State Extension Specialist
Family Relations

**For More Information Contact Your
County Extension Office**

Programs in agriculture and natural resources,
4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences,
and resource development.
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture,
U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

It's Easy to Please With Last Minute Gifts

Even with the best of intentions about early holiday shopping, most of us find ourselves short a gift or two a few days before Christmas. Finding gifts that please on short notice can be a challenge, especially if you don't want to fight crowds at major shopping centers and malls.

Grocery stores and local retailers can yield good gift finds if you use a little imagination in shopping. Food is a good gift choice if you keep the recipient's diet and preferences in mind. Many families on limited budgets appreciate 'luxury' items, large or small, that may be normally out of their price range at the grocery store. Examples include special sauces, pickles, jellies or condiments; jars or cans of nuts, chocolate after-dinner mints, flavored coffees or teas and fancy breads or deli items.

The personal care section of the supermarket also offers possibilities. Teenagers are usually impressed with higher-priced hair-care items, cosmetic sponges, puffs and brushes and skin-care products that the family's budgetary constraints may not allow them to purchase routinely.

Money is the preferred gift of most teenagers and young adults, and there are many creative ways of wrapping or presenting it so that it still looks like a gift. Since in some traditional circles, it's not customary to give money, here are a few alternatives which have added benefit for the local economy:

- Gift certificates to local restaurants—fast food for the kids and somewhere relaxing for the adults
- Movie passes for the local theater
- Video rental gift certificates
- A portrait sitting at a local studio
- Coupons for a local ice cream parlor
- Gift certificates for wine or beverages
- Gift certificates for choice steaks from a local meat market



- Certificates for canoe rentals or boat rides
- Pre-paid calling cards or cell time (another teen favorite)

With some quick thinking, your own neighborhood can yield gift treasures for most people on your last minute list. Best of all, shopping for last minute gifts locally keeps you far from the maddening crowd during the final countdown before Christmas.

Dena Wise, PhD
State Extension Specialist
Family Economics

General Health and Well Being During the Holidays

Some other ways to keep your stress levels down include:

- **Try to be moderate** - it may be the season to be jolly, but too much food and alcohol is harmful, and drunk driving is a real danger and illegal. If you can't (or don't want to) step off the social merry-go-round, at least try to eat and drink in moderation.
- **Get enough sleep** - plan for as many early nights as you can.
- **Keep moving** - keeping up your regular exercise routine can give you the fitness and stamina to make it through the demands of the holiday season.

Things to Remember

- Save a percentage of your disposable income throughout the year to provide a nest egg for Christmas expenses.
- Make a list of all the gifts you wish to buy and shop early.
- Don't expect miracles - if you and certain family members bicker all year long, you can be sure there'll be tension at Christmas dinner.



Don't Forget About Toy Safety During the Holiday Season

Skates, tricycles, toy trucks and cars, wagons and balls are among children's favorite playthings. But in one year, according to U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates, there were 150,000 toy-related injuries serious enough to require hospital emergency room treatment.

Falls are the most frequent kind of accident, but many serious injuries result from children swallowing small parts or placing tiny toys in noses or ears, from exploding gas-powered toys, from flammable products, and from sharp edges.

Each year, some 5,000 new toys enter the market place. The holiday season finds over 150,000 different kinds of toys for sale in approximately one million stores. Despite the efforts of manufacturers, retailers, safety inspectors, and others, it is impossible to examine every toy. But it is possible for parents and other relatives to check every new toy they buy and every old toy around the house for possible hazards.



The following suggestions can help you keep playtime a safe, fun time during the holiday season.

SELECT TOYS WITH CARE

Choose carefully. Look for good design and quality construction in the toys you buy.



Watch out for toys that have sharp edges, small parts, or sharp points. Avoid toys that produce extremely loud noises that can damage hearing and propelled objects that can injure eyes.

Buy toys that suit the child's age, interest, and abilities. Avoid toys that are too complex for young children. Many toys have a suggested age range to help you choose toys that are appealing as well as safe.

Be a label reader. Look for safety information such as "Not recommended for children under 3 years of age," or "non-toxic" on toys likely to end up in little mouths, or "washable materials" on stuffed toys and dolls.

Check with parents before you buy a child a toy that requires close supervision - electrically operated toys, shooting toys and games, chemistry sets, and the like. Remember, too, that younger children may have access to toys intended for older children once the toy has been brought into the home.

Look for the UL (Underwriters Laboratories) seal on electrical toys. It indicates the electrical parts have been tested for safety.

SEVEN TOY DANGERS

Sharp Edges: Toys made of brittle plastic or glass can break easily, exposing sharp points and edges. Wooden, metal, and plastic toys sometimes have sharp edges due to poor construction.



Small Parts: Tiny toys and toys with small, removable parts can be swallowed or become lodged in a child's windpipe, ears, or nose. The squeakers in some squeeze toys can be removed and possibly swallowed. The seams of poorly constructed stuffed dolls or animals can break open and release small pellets that also can be swallowed or inhaled.

Loud Noises: Toy caps and some noise-making guns and other toys can reach noise levels that can damage hearing. The law requires the following label on boxes of caps producing noise above a certain level: "WARNING - Do not fire closer than 1 foot to the ear. Do not use indoors."



Sharp Points: Broken toys can expose dangerous prongs and knife-sharp points. Pins and staples on dolls' clothes, hair, and accessories can easily puncture an unsuspecting child. Even a teddy bear or stuffed toy can be assembled with wires that can cut or stab.



Propelled Objects: Projectiles - guided missiles and other flying toys - can be turned into weapons and can injure eyes in particular. Children should never be permitted to play with adult lawn darts or other hobby or sporting equipment with sharp points. Arrows or darts used by children should have soft cork tips, rubber suction cups or other protective tips to prevent injury.

Electric Toys: Electric toys that are improperly constructed, wired, or misused can shock or burn. Electric toys must meet mandatory requirements for maximum surface temperatures, electrical construction, and prominent warning labels. Electric toys with heating elements are recommended only for children over age 8. Children should be taught to use electric toys cautiously and under adult supervision.



Wrong Toy for the Wrong Age: Toys that may be safe for older children can be extremely dangerous in the hands of little ones.

TEACH PROPER USE OF TOYS

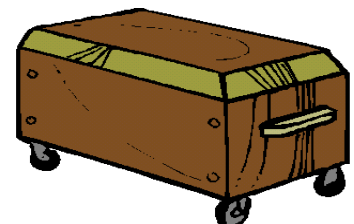
Check the instructions and explain to the child how to use the toy.

Always try to supervise children while they play. Learn to spot "an accident about to happen."

Check toys periodically for broken parts and potential hazards. A dangerous toy should be repaired immediately or thrown away. Sharp or splintered edges on wooden toys should be sanded smooth. Use only non-toxic paint on toys or toy boxes. Check outdoor toys for rust and weak or sharp parts that could become hazardous.

Teach children to put their toys away so the toys do not get broken and so that no one trips and falls on them.

Toy boxes, too, should be checked for safety. A toy chest should have a lightweight lid that can be opened easily from within. For extra safety, be sure there are ventilation holes. Watch for sharp edges that could cut and hinges that could pinch. Attach rubber bumpers to the front corners of a toy chest so little fingers won't be caught by a slammed lid.



Toy shelves are another storage possibility. Open shelves allow the child to see favorite toys and return them to the shelf after play. Be sure the shelf is sturdy and won't tip over if the child climbs on it.



CHRISTMAS - Tips to Reduce The Stress

Christmas can be one of the most stressful times of the year. Buying gifts, trying to fit schedules to allow for family get-togethers, pressure of last minute shopping can all combine to undermine our best intentions. Here are some suggestions that can help you reduce your 'Christmas stress.'



Budgeting For Christmas

For many of us, post Christmas stress includes dealing with a mass of credit card bills, that can take months to clear. If you plan ahead, Christmas doesn't have to be a financial nightmare. Stress reduction strategies include:

- Within a few weeks after Christmas, work out a rough budget of next year's expected Christmas costs. Don't forget 'hidden' expenses such as food bills and overseas telephone charges.

- Calculate how much flexible income you will have between now and next Christmas. A certain percentage of this can be dedicated each week to covering your expected Christmas costs. Don't be discouraged if the amount seems small. If you save \$5.00, \$10.00 or \$20.00 per week over a year, it can provide you with a hefty nest egg.

- If your nest egg isn't enough to cover your estimated expenses, perhaps you may need to re-figure your Christmas budget to a more realistic amount.

- If you have trouble keeping your hands off your Christmas nest egg, consider opening a 'Christmas Club' account.

Presents

If you have a large circle of extended family or friends to buy gifts for, it can be very costly. You might be able to reduce the stress and cost of Christmas for everyone if you suggest a change in the way your family and friends give presents. For example, you could suggest that your group:

- Buy presents only for the children.

- Let everyone draw a name out of a hat and buy a present only for that person.

- Set a limit on the cost of presents.



CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

According to a recent study by Roy Morgan Research, around 60 percent of adults dislike Christmas shopping, just 20 percent plan their shopping expeditions, and the majority of them (nearly 75 percent) often come home without a single purchase for our efforts. Stress reduction strategies for successful Christmas shopping include:

- Make a list of all the gifts you wish to buy before you go shopping. If you wait for inspiration to strike, you could be wandering aimlessly around the shopping center for hours.

- Buy a few extras, such as chocolates, just in case you forget somebody or you have unexpected guests bearing gifts.

- If possible, do your Christmas shopping early. Some well-organized people do their Christmas shopping gradually over the course of the year, starting with the post-Christmas sales.

- Buy your gifts by mail catalogue or over the Internet. Some companies will also gift-wrap and ship your presents for a small additional fee.

THE CHRISTMAS DINNER

Stress reduction strategies include:

- If you are cooking lunch at home, delegate tasks. You don't need to do everything yourself.

- Consider keeping it simple - for instance, you could always arrange for a 'bring a dish' lunch.

- Buy as many non-perishable food items as you can in advance - supermarkets on Christmas Eve are generally extremely busy.

- You may need to order particular food items (such as turkeys) from your supermarket by a certain date.

- Book well in advance if you plan to have lunch at a restaurant. Some restaurants may be fully booked for months before Christmas, so don't wait till the last minute.

(Continued)

Relationships

Stress, anxiety and depression are common during the holiday season. Keep in mind that these feelings are normal. Here are some stress reducing strategies:

Don't expect miracles. If you and certain family members don't like each other, you can expect there'll be tension at the family Christmas dinner.

Avoid known triggers. For example, if religion is a touchy subject in your family, don't talk about it. If someone brings up the topic, use distraction and quickly move onto something else to talk about.

Use relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or focusing on your breath, to cope with anxiety or tension.

Family members involved in after-dinner activities (such as touch football in the back yard) are less likely to get into arguments. Plan for something to do as a group after dinner if necessary.

People under stress tend to 'self-medicate' with alcohol, cigarettes and other drugs. Try to remember that drugs can't solve problems or alleviate stress in the long term.

The Little Extras

Other ways you might be able to reduce the stress include:

Write up a Christmas card list and keep it in a safe place so that you can refer to it (and add or delete names) year after year.

Plan to address your Christmas cards in early December. Book a date in your diary so you don't forget.

Overseas mail at Christmas time takes longer to arrive. Arrange to send cards or presents in the early part of December, to avoid long lines at the post office.

For great savings, buy Christmas necessities (such as cards, wrapping paper, ribbons and decorations) at post-Christmas sales.

Judy Cloud Berryhill, MS
State Area Extension Specialist
Adolescent Development



The Best Gift

As you make plans for the upcoming holidays, one of the things you will do is to try to select the best gifts to give to your family members. For children, this may mean driving from store to store searching for the requested toy that everyone wants this year. It may mean spending more than you can afford to get the item that your child has said he or she is dying to have. Yet, as you search and spend, you may be depriving your child and yourself of the best gift of all—the gift of time.



If you watch the ads on TV, you will be told that the way to happiness and the perfect holiday is to give or receive a particular commercial product. These items vary from the latest toy craze to vacuum cleaners to diamonds to cars. In reality, the gifts that will be remembered and treasured most are those gifts of time spent together.

As you prepare for the upcoming holidays, make sure that you plan time for just being together. Instead of spending a whole weekend shopping at the mall with thousands of strangers, plan a weekend with your family members. This may involve going somewhere that the family enjoys such as a theme park, a sporting event, a Christmas musical, or other special event. It might be a weekend at home that begins with Friday night videos and popcorn, decorating the Christmas tree together on Saturday, baking cookies together to share with neighbors or family members, playing a favorite board game Saturday night, attending a worship service on Sunday, and making a coupon book for Grandma's Christmas gift. The coupon book can include things such as offers to do chores for free, a coupon good for lunch at the restaurant of her choice, a trip shopping with her to get groceries or other needed supplies, etc. These gifts of time cost little money but mean the world to the person who receives them.

So, as you make out your gift list, try to include at least one small gift of time for each person on your list. Not only will their holidays be more enjoyable, but you will receive the gift of time spent with them as well. Time may be the only gift you can give that gives equally in return.

Denise J. Brandon, PhD
State Extension Specialist
Human Relationships



Divert Holiday Spending to Sharing With Those in Need



In recent years, we've often heard concern expressed about how much money we spend during the holidays and how we often "over gift" family members, especially children. With so many people struggling to reconstruct their lives after hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma, spending too much on unneeded holiday gifts seems especially wasteful this year.

Given the need we see around us, the time may be right this year to cut back on gift giving among family members and instead give to those in our communities and along the gulf coast who really could use our gifts.

Although there has been much attention given to need among those displaced by the hurricanes, nation-wide charity-watch organizations tell us that this holiday season will likely be very tough for local faith-based groups and charities because so much has already been given to hurricane relief.

If you decide as a family to divert holiday spending to charity, here are some tips to help "ease the pain" of children who may be expecting the usual holiday bounty.

- Solicit agreement among family members well before the holidays to limit the amount of money that family members spend on each other.
- Engage young people and children in planning how you will allocate your contributions of time, money, food or toy items to the charities in your community.
- Do some research on possible charities and let each child select one to receive his or her "gift."
- Schedule a time when the family can work together at a local event or fund raiser.
- Substitute family activities—caroling, games, inexpensive outings, cookie or candy-making—for the usual gift-opening.
- Draw names so that each family member will be able to open one small gift during the traditionally-scheduled time for giving.

Dena Wise, Ph.D
State Extension Specialist
Family Economics



Teens These Days !

A mother passing by her daughter's bedroom was astonished to see the bed was nicely made and everything was picked up.

Then she saw an envelope propped up prominently on the center of the bed. It was addressed, "Mom." With the worst premonition, she opened the envelope and read the letter with trembling hands:

Dear Mom,

It is with great regret and sorrow that I'm writing you. I had to elope with my new boyfriend because I wanted to avoid a scene with Dad and you. I've been finding real passion with David and he is so nice.

Even with all his piercings, tattoos, beard, and his motorcycle clothes.

But it's not only the passion Mom, I'm pregnant and David said that we would be very happy. He already owns a trailer in the woods and has a stack of firewood for the whole winter. He wants to have many more children with me and that's now one of my dreams too.

David taught me that marijuana doesn't really hurt anyone and we'll be growing it for us and trading it with his friends for all the cocaine and ecstasy we want. In the meantime, we'll pray that science will find a cure for AIDS so David can get better; he sure deserves it!!

Don't worry Mom, I'm 16 years old and I know how to take care of myself. Some day I'm sure we'll be back to visit so you can get to know your grandchildren.

**Your daughter,
Jenny**

PS : Mom, none of the above is true. I'm over at the neighbor's house. I just wanted to remind you that there are worse things in life than my report card that's in my desk drawer. I love you!

Call when it is safe for me to come home!!!

The Tablecloth

The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to their first ministry, to reopen a church in suburban Brooklyn, arrived in early October excited about their opportunities. When they saw their church, it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve.

They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc., and on December 18 were ahead of schedule and just about finished. On December 19 a terrible tempest - a driving rainstorm hit the area and lasted for two days. On the 21st, the pastor went over to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high.

The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, headed home. On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity so he stopped in. One of the items was a beautiful, handmade, ivory colored, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colors and a Cross embroidered right in the center. It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church.

By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later. She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder, hangers, etc., to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area.

Then he noticed the woman walking down the center aisle. Her face was like a sheet.. "Pastor," she asked, "where did you get that tablecloth?" The pastor explained. The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials, EBG were crocheted into it there. They were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria.

The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just gotten the Tablecloth. The woman explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week. He was captured, sent to prison and never saw her husband or her home again.

The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth; but she made the pastor keep it for the church. The pastor insisted on driving her home, that was the least he could do. She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a housecleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on Christmas Eve. The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great. At the end of the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return. One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighborhood continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving. The man asked him where he got the tablecloth on the front wall because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike.

He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison.. He never saw his wife or his home again all the 35 years in between.

The pastor asked him if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island and to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier. He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine.

True Story - submitted by Pastor Rob Reid

The Price of Children

We have repeatedly seen the breakdown of the cost of raising a child, but now someone has made a list of the rewards of raising a child. It's nice, really nice!! The government recently calculated the cost of raising a child from birth to 18 and came up with \$160,140 for a middle income family. Talk about sticker shock! That doesn't even include sports fees, dance lessons, a car or college tuition.

But \$160,140 isn't so bad if you break it down. It translates into \$8,896.66 a year, \$741.38 a month, or \$171.08 a week. That's a mere \$24.24 a day! Just over a dollar an hour. Still, you might think the best financial advice is don't have children if you want to be "rich." Actually, it is just the opposite.

What do you get for your \$160,140 ?

- Naming rights. First, middle, and last!
- Glimpses of God's handiwork every day.
- Giggles.... under the covers every night.
- More love than your heart can hold
- Butterfly kisses and Velcro hugs.
- Endless wonder over rocks, ants, clouds, and warm cookies.
- A hand to hold, usually covered with jelly or chocolate.
- A partner for blowing bubbles, flying kites, building sand castles, and skipping down the sidewalk in the pouring rain.
- Someone to laugh yourself silly with, no matter what the boss said or how your stocks performed that day.

For \$160,140, you never have to grow up.

- You get to finger-paint, carve pumpkins, play hide-and-seek, catch lightning bugs, and never stop believing in Santa Claus.
- You have an excuse to keep reading the Adventures of Piglet and Pooh, watching Saturday morning cartoons, going to Disney movies, and wishing on stars.
- You get to frame rainbows, hearts, and flowers under refrigerator magnets and collect spray painted noodle wreaths for Christmas, hand prints set in clay for Mother's Day, and cards with backward letters for Father's Day.

For \$160,140, there is no greater bang for your buck.

- You get to be a hero just for retrieving a Frisbee off the garage roof, taking the training wheels off a bike, removing a splinter, filling a wading pool, coaxing a wad of gum out of bangs, and coaching a baseball team that never wins but always gets treated to ice cream regardless.
- You get a front row seat to history to witness the first step, first word, first bra, first date, and first time behind the wheel.
- You get to be immortal.
- You get another branch added to your family tree, and if you're lucky, a long list of limbs in your obituary called grandchildren and great grandchildren.
- You get an education in psychology, nursing, criminal justice, communications, and human sexuality that no college can match.

In the eyes of a child, you rank right up there under God. You have all the power to heal a boo-boo, scare away the monsters under the bed, patch a broken heart, police a slumber party, ground them forever, and love them without limits, so . . . one day they will, like you, love without counting the cost.

ENJOY YOUR KIDS AND GRANDKIDS!

"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but the moments that take our breath away..."