

Mom's Moments

www.momsmoments.ca

December 2007

Volume 2, Issue 3



A Note from Anna

Christmas is a season full of invitations - parties, family functions, concerts and gift exchanges.

Our days are packed with planning (or last-minute trips to the store!) The holidays seem to fly by and are soon done for another year!

This issue of Mom's Moments has many invitations for you - to *Ease the Stress of Gift-Giving*, *Stay True to the Season*, *Become a Child of God*, *Live a Long and Happy Life*, *Prevent Obesity in Children*, help the *Bracelets of Hope* program, read the

NEW Winter issue of the **Deeper** newsletter on our website & more!

Most of all, you are invited to cherish all the moments that make up your Christmas 2007. Create wonderful memories, capture priceless photos (and share them with us!) and remember that Christmas is about **love, hope** and **joy!**

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Christmas Traditions for Staying True to the Season

- Decorate your tree with ornaments that portray the Nativity** (animals, stars and presents will also work) **or other Bible stories** (eg. Noah's Ark). These are great for sparking conversations with your family and guests about the meaning of Christmas.
- Participate in Advent.** This tradition begins on December 1, 2007. There are so many activities, stories, verses and songs available on the Internet for each day of Advent:

Colouring Pages:

www.dltk-bible.com/advent/index.htm

Daily recipes, crafts, games & more:

<http://homeschooling.about.com/cs/unitssubjhol/a/advent125.htm>

Family Advent Kits:

www.familieswithpurpose.com/adventkits.html

Advent Celebration Book:

www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=855675&p=1010575

- Read a story each day in December that focuses on the Nativity, loving others, or giving at Christmastime.** There are great books available at the local libraries, and children's Bibles give wonderful accounts of the events of Jesus' birth.

NOTE: For some the holidays bring a sense of isolation and discouragement. If you find yourself feeling this way, reach out, we'd love to hear from you. Email anna@momsmoments.ca.

Share With Us For Our Next Issue...

- Budget Savers:** Where do you find the best clearance sales?
- Around the House: Clean-Up Time** - Have any ideas for tidying up with little ones?

Find more contribution ideas on our website.

Send January submissions by **December 15th**.

Email contributions@momsmoments.ca to share.

Candid Moment



Ho! Ho! Ho!

Submitted by Karen Gregoire, Bowmanville, ON

Ideas for Easing the Stress of Gift-Giving this Christmas

- Come up with one **homemade gift** that can be duplicated for most of the adults in your family:
 - Photo Collages or Calendars
 - Wreaths
 - Advent Candle Holders
 - Coupons for a movie, free babysitting, etc.
 - Gifts in a Jar www.geocities.com/giftsinajar
www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=831376&p=1010575
 - Special Ornaments
familyfun.go.com/arts-and-crafts/season/specialfeature/christmas-ornaments-ms
- Family Gift Exchange:** Pick names from a hat for the adults in your family. Set a price limit and everyone buys for one member of the family. This also works great when relatives live far away - gifts can be carefully wrapped and mailed and no one feels isolated!
- White Elephant Parties** are great for saving money, having fun and receiving unique presents! Each person (or family) brings an item from their house they no longer want (it must be in great shape!), numbers are assigned to the items, and then a draw takes place!
- Family Gift Grab:** Each person brings a wrapped gift bought at a set price limit to put in the centre anonymously for the game. Everyone picks a number out of a hat to decide the order. One by one, people choose a mystery gift to open or "steal" someone else's gift, forcing them to choose a new gift. This makes for fun family times filled with laughter! You never know what you'll go home with!

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A Quiet Moment - Inspiration from the Bible

"Yet to all who received Him [Jesus], to those who believed in His [Jesus'] name, He gave the right to become children of God."

John 1:12 (NIV)

The writer of this verse, John, is giving us an invitation...

Receive Jesus - you are invited to accept His love for you, let it sink in, soak it up until there is no doubt that this man who was born 2007 years ago thought you were worth the effort of all that happened to Him on this earth.

Believe in Jesus' name - the name Jesus means *Jehovah is salvation*. In this case, you are saved from sin - the wrong things you have done in your life. You are invited to believe that Jesus is the key to salvation from sin. Remember - no sin is too big for God to forgive.

Become children of God - you are invited to join God's family. Being a child of God is a wonderful experience, He is a good Father. You can talk to Him anytime about

anything by praying. He will take care of you, meet your needs, and help you fulfill your dreams (or give you new ones to enjoy). He loves His children in the best way. Life doesn't necessarily get easier, but going through the life you're living certainly does.

I think of the tiny baby in the manger so many years ago, about the hope He brought to His world. That hope has never changed, time cannot destroy His message of salvation. It is the same today as it was for the first Christians.

The invitation stands. It will always stand. For everyone.

Receive, Believe, Become. It really is as simple as that.

I wish you the merriest of Christmases as you celebrate this season of love, hope and joy!

Read our newest issue of the *Deeper* newsletter or "[Looking for Peace with God](#)" on our website to discover more about the love of Jesus.

- Anna

The Christmas Story

Such common things of everyday like lowing cattle, fragrant hay, stars flung across a velvet sky, and shepherds watching night go by,

Such common things, and yet they hold the greatest story ever told - the story of a Saviour's birth and hope for all of peace on earth.

- Virginia Blanck Moore

Snowflake Ornament Craft Idea

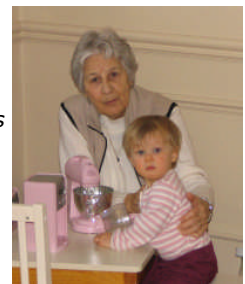
Reuse your mini pie plates or buy them brand new to make shiny snowflakes for indoor/outdoor Christmas decorations! Flatten the pie plates and cut out snowflake designs. This craft is ideal for any age - use safety scissors for wee ones! Hang snowflakes close to Christmas lights to create beautiful reflections inside or out! And remember to recycle them after the holidays! - Lynne Collier, Kendal, ON

Tips to Living A Long and Happy Life

Written in Collaboration with Colette Côté at 83 Years of Age!

- Stay active! Cycle, walk and swim for as long as you can! I now take the bus and walk in the mall and keep busy running errands and doing as much of my own housework as I can (it's a luxury to have this independence!).
- Eat well - This is so important to staying healthy!
- Get enough sleep and keep regular hours! It is also good to have a rest in the day, especially to save up energy before an outing as you get older.
- Keep your mind sharp! I like to do crossword, Sudoku and other puzzles, I play solitaire and watch quiz shows on T.V. etc.
- Don't wait to seek medical attention when needed and be sure to follow doctor's orders!
- Stay connected with young positive people who breathe life into you! Spending time with younger family members keeps me young!
- Have a good circle of friends. Get out and get involved in a community around you! Take part in activities to have a social life! Play cards and darts, attend the theatre and grandkids recitals, etc.
- Attend church weekly. This is an important part of my week as is my faith.
- Take short trips to visit with friends and family. Though I cannot make longer trips to Florida and Mexico anymore, shorter trips have me relive happy memories and keep me young!
- Have peace of mind in knowing that your will is up to date, and that you have a trusted family member as your power of attorney for property (finances) as well as for personal care. At this point, I also have peace in knowing that my funeral arrangements are made so that I can forget about it and not worry about it being a burden to my family!
- Do special things for others. I like to bake treats for family gatherings and shop for gifts for my great-grandkids, others knit or make crafts, others still are able to volunteer to serve those in need.
- Adapt to the changing times! I got a computer at 75 years of age and took a computer course. I surf the internet, discover new things, keep up with current events, get emails (like Mom's Moments!) and pictures from my children and grandchildren (who provide my technical support!)
- Keep a positive attitude. Negativity will only slow you down and isolate you.

Mme. Côté lives in Ottawa, Ontario. She has two children, 7 grandchildren and 4 great-grand-daughters (and counting)!



Childhood Obesity—An Epidemic

By Caroline Deschamps, PHC-NP, PTS, PFS

Childhood obesity... Why is it such a big concern? Dr. Thomas R. Kimball, a pediatric cardiologist from Cincinnati says that **"the obesity epidemic of kids today is going to be the heart disease epidemic 20 years from now."** Wow! That's a powerful statement!

The future seems bleak if things don't change. **But what are the risks during childhood?** The obese child has an increased risk of having type 2 diabetes (formerly known as adult onset diabetes), hypertension, high cholesterol, depression, liver & gallbladder disease, asthma and sleep apnea (stopping to breathe while sleeping). Obesity can also affect your child's self esteem and self-confidence as a result of feeling possible social rejection. The lack of energy, inability to be as agile as the other kids can be humiliating. Some kids can be very cruel and say hurtful things to your child. This can affect them emotionally for many years.

The good news is this can be PREVENTED! How can we, as parents, help our children maintain or obtain a healthy weight? For starters, **be a good role model!** A child who sees their parents eat a healthy diet, healthy portions and exercise regularly will grow up thinking this is normal. If your child sees you dreading your workout, they will only associate exercise to pain and displeasure. The goal is to associate health and fitness with feeling good and having FUN! Find something you love and transmit that love of health and fitness to your children. Help your child find a physical activity they love and make it happen!



Health and fitness should be a family affair. You may want to review the physical activity guidelines for children from MM's May 2007 issue to see how much daily activity your child needs. Go for family bike rides, nature hikes, a game of soccer, football or baseball in the park, a golf game, skating, street or ice hockey, alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, rollerblading, swimming, dancing, a game of hopscotch, and the list goes on! As long as you're moving and having fun!

Healthy weights are maintained or achieved with regular physical activity and a healthy diet. By diet, I mean a selection of any foods. Obviously, if your goal is health, you will gravitate towards healthy foods. A healthy diet also includes variety, even the odd chocolate chip cookie! **Be aware that weight loss programs designed for adults are not appropriate for children.**

Healthy nutrition requires planning and effort. So what can we do as parents? Think ahead and be PREPARED!



You are responsible for what you put on your child's plate. Plan on offering plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole-grain breads and cereals. Choose poultry, lean meat, tofu, fish and eggs as your sources of protein. You know your kids come back from school famished! So always have washed fresh fruits out on the table, ready to be eaten. Set out a plate of washed and prepared crudité's with hummus or any low fat dip. Always have some water out for them to drink. If your drive home from school is

long, prepare a healthy snack (as above) for your kids to eat in the car.

Eat in – avoid restaurants as much as you can. **Allow your child to listen to their body's hunger signals.** Do not force them to finish their plate. Do not offer a different menu than the one you have prepared for the family. What is on the table is it! Do not offer desserts or sweets as a reward for finishing a meal! Offer milk or water with meals, avoiding fruit juices



and soft drinks. I encourage you to eat dinner as a family – TV OFF. Use this time to catch up on things that have happened to each of you in your day.

Find ways to encourage each other as a family to reach your individual goals. Try creating a chart for the family to see how everyone is doing. You can make a fitness chart where each member checks off each day they have participated in a physical activity of at least 30 minutes. Aim at being active 5 days a week. Create a nutrition chart where everyone checks off the number of vegetables, fruits or glasses of water they've taken throughout the day. Don't push your kids too hard or emphasize winning. Leave them time to just be kids!

Before the goal is reached, think of what you will do as family for a reward. It can't be food related! Try planning a fun family activity (camping outing or skiing week-end, horseback riding), shop for new clothes, visit a museum, go to the wave pool, the list is endless... be creative! **Consider having a weekly family fitness night.** The one who has been the most active that week and has had the healthiest eating habits chooses the activity for all to participate.



Please be alert and aware of your words and behaviour, as well as your child's behaviour. How do we teach our children to have a healthy relationship with food and fitness? **Look at yourself closely and see what messages you are sending your child.** Are you always talking about food, exercise or something related to your weight? Are you an emotional eater? Are you always on a new diet? Do you criticize yours or other people's weight in front of your child?

"It's important that children learn the importance of healthy eating and exercise – without taking it too far. Be on the lookout for signs that they are taking the initiative to diet on their own. Many adolescents, especially young girls, feel uncomfortable with the normal weight gain that occurs with the onset of puberty. Help them understand these changes and be willing to answer questions. Educate them about the dangers of fad diets, fasting, and other dietary restrictions that may hurt their health and growth." (Gavin, ML, Dowshen, SA, Izenberg, N (2004) *Fit Kids*, p.18).

If you are interested in learning more about the signs and symptoms of

Caroline is a nurse practitioner and personal trainer specializing in pre/post-natal fitness in Ottawa, Ontario. Email questions or suggested topics to Caroline at: healthnut@momsmoments.ca

Reaching out to connect, encourage, and support women.

Book Study Blog

A Woman's Journey to the Heart of God

Anna has been reading through this book for the past two months and posting comments on the website to share with other readers. The study will wrap up this month. Check it out at www.momsmoments.ca/blog.



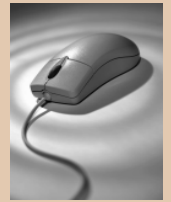
Deeper

Mom's Moments produces a quarterly 2-page newsletter called **Deeper** for those who desire to seek God more and dig deeper in their faith. Find them on our website www.momsmoments.ca.

Don't miss our NEW Winter issue out this month!

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Take Action...Help Out - *Bracelets of Hope*



Carrie-Anne Bauer (age 12) of Perth, Ontario is raising \$50,000 to build a medical clinic at the Village of Hope in Harare, Zimbabwe, AFRICA! **Bracelets of Hope** was started with the help of a friend, Rachel Lackey (age 13), and has already raised **\$42,000!** The Village of Hope in Harare is one of 3 Villages of Hope for AIDS orphans in sub-Saharan Africa. Presently in Harare, there exists a 20 acre campus with church, preschool, 2 children's homes and 2 classroom blocks. When fully developed, this property will contain another 16 children's homes, housing about 200 children, a school and an HIV/AIDS clinic.

Carrie-Anne sells Bracelets of Hope all over Canada. Proceeds (excluding cost of supplies) go directly to the Village of Hope. Prices range from \$4 to \$10. You can help Carrie-Anne by buying bracelets, selling bracelets, hosting a beading party in your area, or making a donation to ERDO (Emergency Relief and Development Overseas) - a registered charity that administers Village of Hope. Receipts are issued for donations over \$20. For more info visit: www.braceletsofhope.ca.

November Poll Results:

How Much Do You Spend On Average For Christmas Presents?

| | |
|----------------|------------|
| \$0 - \$100: | 11% |
| \$100 - \$250: | 22% |
| \$250 - \$500: | 56% |
| \$500+: | 11% |

Total Number of Votes : 9

We love to get to know our readers better! Take our monthly polls online at www.momsmoments.ca.

December Poll:

If Your Kids Are Younger, Are You Involved With A Mom's Group?



Cough Medicine Alternative

The Canada Research Council has found a way to stop night-time coughing in a child (or adult) without prescription cough medicines. Put Vicks VapoRub generously on the bottom of feet at bedtime, then cover with socks. Even persistent, heavy, deep coughing will stop in about 5 minutes for many hours of relief. It also has a soothing & calming effect on the child helping them to sleep soundly.

Tasty Treats - *Fudge Balls*

This recipe comes from my husband's family recipe vault! It'll be time for him to do his Christmas baking soon - these treats are one of my all-time favourites! - Anna

Melt in a saucepan over low heat:

6 oz or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter

Add:

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
 2 cups icing sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup evaporated milk

Blend well. Cool for 30 minutes. Roll into balls about 1 inch in diameter. Recruit your children to help you decorate with sprinkles, nuts, icing sugar, crushed candy canes, mini M&M's - be creative! Or enjoy them as is! Keep the Fudge Balls cool in refrigerator. These are also great for freezing!



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