

Managing the holiday expectations of children

As parents, the holiday season can quickly become overwhelming with the demands on us to find the perfect gifts, host the perfect holiday dinner and participate in numerous invitations to "celebrate the season" with family and friends. It can quickly become a very stressful time for parents, especially with the spending that often goes along with these activities.

In late January each year, we hear the reports on the holiday debt families have incurred in order to celebrate the season. This year, over-spending will be particularly concerning knowing that many of us have been impacted by the downturn in the economy throughout our country and around the world.

While not every family has been affected by the downturn in the economy, we are all aware that this could happen to any of us. We have recognized the need to be more responsible than ever with our money and change our spending habits wherever we can. Many friends and colleagues I talk with are using the upcoming holiday season to teach their children responsible spending, creative gift-giving, and are planning low-cost or no cost activities throughout the holidays.

How do we manage our children's expectations for the holiday? How do we manage the pressures of the season to participate in dinners out with family, gift-giving activities in the workplace, and school functions?

There are several tips I either found on the Internet lately, through talking with colleagues, or tips my family has started using over the past few years:

Planning and budgeting — It is important to start with a budget for the holiday season and involve the whole family in the planning. Start with a list of the events your family has coming up at work, at school, with friends, and with family. Write down the gifts and food you will need for each event. What can you make

and what do you need to buy? Do you want to participate in all the events? Know your budget and stick to it. Start and finish early in order to avoid last minute shopping, which always costs more.

Food and decorating on a budget — Throwing a low budget party during the holidays is easier than you might think. Ask people to bring a food item so that you are not responsible for the entire dinner. Not only will everyone enjoy bringing his or her favourite dish, it means less preparation for you. If you have a few events you are bringing food to, make the same item in bulk.

With decorating, put up your holiday lights, but limit how long you turn them on. This is environmentally friendly and will save you on your January hydro bill. Make decorations, gift cards and wrapping paper. There are lots of ideas on the Internet and it is great family time.

Gift-giving on a budget — For family gift-giving with extended family, draw names or have a "Secret Santa" exchange and remember to set a budget for the gifts to be exchanged. Make your own gifts and involve your children. For example, frame your children's art for family members, make a recipe book of favourite recipes. An idea I came across on a website is making gift coupons, which promote decision making in children or passes and privileges like staying up late, having a sleep-over, not having to make the bed, extra dessert or going on a bike ride with mom/dad. These coupons also work with a spouse or partner.

The Dufferin Parent Support Network wishes you all a very happy and meaningful holiday season. If you have a parenting question, please e-mail info@dpsn.ca or call 519-940-8678.

This article was written and submitted by Brenda Burman, a parent, committee member of Dufferin Children & Youth Festival and co-ordinator for Georgian College's Centre for Career & Employment Services.



DPSN

ASK A PARENT

NOTICE

Hunting in the Dufferin County Forest

All users of the Dufferin County Forest are hereby advised that Nov. 30-Dec. 4 is the continuation of the shotgun/muzzle-loading gun season for deer in 2009. During this time there will be a number of hunters using the Dufferin County Forest properties. Please use caution in the forest and wear bright-coloured clothing. Suspected violations of the *Fish & Wildlife Conservation Act* should be reported to the Ministry of Natural Resources at 877-847-7667 (877-TIPS-MNR). Other inquiries should be directed to the County Forest Manager at 705-435-1881.

Corporation of the County of Dufferin

Central West LHIN

Public Appointments Secretariat Advertised Position

Health and Long-Term Care

Agency Title: Central West Local Health Integration Network PAS-0945
Position Title: Board of Directors (3 Part-Time Positions Available)
Description: The Government of Ontario seeks candidates to be Directors for the Board of Directors for the Central West LHIN.
 LHINs are a key component of Ontario's plan to make the health care system more patient-centered and responsive to local health care needs. LHINs respond to local population needs by planning, coordinating, integrating and funding the delivery of health services in each of the 14 LHIN geographic regions.
Qualifications: As a member of the Central West LHIN, each Director is responsible for directing the affairs of the LHIN in accordance with applicable legislation, constituting documents, approved strategic and business plans and government policies established and communicated by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.
 Previous Board experience and knowledge of the many diverse communities within the Central West LHIN, combined with knowledge of and experience in any of the following areas would be considered assets:

- Health Care
- Community Service
- Accounting
- Law
- Communications/Marketing
- Governance/Strategic Planning
- Systems Perspective
- Francophone

Terms: Directors are appointed by Order-in-Council for a term of up to three years, subject to renewal.

To apply, an application form, quoting file number PAS-0945, must be received by December 20, 2009

All application forms must be addressed to: Downloadable application form is available at www.pas.gov.on.ca.
 Public Appointments Secretariat
 Room 2440, Whitney Block
 99 Wellesley Street West, Toronto, ON M7A 1W4
 Fax: (416) 327-2733
 Alternatively, you can apply online.
 Only applicants selected for an interview will be contacted.

Girls Rep Soccer Tryouts

Caledon 1995 Rep Program
(must be born in '95/'96)
To play in South Region Soccer League

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38 Goals for, 25 Against

For more information, contact David Richards **519-927-9367**

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