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December 2003 Issue #1

Cover Story: Teaching your Toddler: The "NOT so terrible two's"

Are you READY for your Home Business?
View a 20 point checklist to see!

'Tis the Season...
Christmas is coming! Give the Gift of Heart-Made

Our FIRST Magazine Issue!
Read about the newest changes to MomsExpo and our visitors benefits!

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Welcome to our Online MomsExpo Magazine!

MomsExpo has created a magazine that is primarily for women, focusing on the needs of moms, and families.

What you will find in MomsExpo Magazine:

- Articles for Building, Starting, & Maintaining your Business
- Articles about Parenting, Children, & Pregnancy
- Articles about Crafts, Cooking & Holidays
- Announcements from MomsExpo regarding sponsorships, and contests!
- Beautifully designed Covers with Featured Articles that pertain to the issue month.

What you will **NOT** find in MomsExpo Magazine:

- Solo Advertising
- Banners/Buttons throughout the pages (unless it is associated with a particular article, then it will show ONLY in the article.)
- Get Rich Quick Schemes

If you would like to view the magazine online, then follow the links to the left. To return to the MomsExpo Home Page, click on the link in blue at the top left. We offer a printable version of our magazine through Adobe® Acrobat Reader. We are planning to place the Magazine in print in 2005.

Most of all, we want you to enjoy our MomsExpo Magazine, this is all for you!



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Originality Matters

By: Kristin Lane, <http://www.momsexpo.com>

As a WAHM Business owner, we face many battles. Some of the ever increasing difficulties are thinking of and actually implementing original ideas, staying ahead of the competition, and offering our visitors a fun site that they will want to come back to that is unique to others.

It is not always easy to think of an original idea because the competition is increasing daily. Also, there are many people that will actually take a great idea, and cast it off as their own. These idea predators can become cumbersome, and many times you do not know what to do as a result of this "virtual content stealing". So what can be done, and how can you stay ahead of the game?

:: Ways to come up with original content ::

We may not all be creative in coming up with new ideas, and many times, the more original they are, the more difficult it is to build. Specialized scripts may do the job, but hiring programmers may not be the cost effective solution for an idea that was just a passing moment. What are some ways to come up with an idea that will work?

Hold a Poll :: Involvement of your loyal visitors will oftentimes be the PERFECT solution. See what they would like to see. Ask them for ideas to pass along. If you have a few ideas, place them in the poll for your visitors to vote on. If you do not have a poll feature script, ask them to email the answers to you.

Pre-Built Scripts :: Sometimes, adding usual content like Message Boards with your original topics are the key to adding originality to a website. Many places offer free message board hosting and scripts to build a quick message board.

Audience Feedback :: Ask them to email you their ideas on what they would like. Place it in a highly noticeable area within your website.

Change Menu Names :: Sometimes, you may need to come up with a simple change of words to create a uniqueness. It is fast to do, and your visitors may appreciate the slight change.

Just do it! If you have an idea, do not just sit back thinking of how nice it would be to actually follow through, try it and see the results! Again, with the competition, it is best to stay ahead of the game. Internet time is much more faster than real world time. On the net, it is a 24/7 life and if you do not implement the idea, someone else may come up with it, and leave you with just a memory.

:: Keep away from Becoming an Idea Predator ::

If you find that taking other's content is the only way that you are able to change your content within your website then a website may not be the best business for you.

Taking Content Willfully :: This is the ultimate "virtual content stealing". Coveting a website or a website owner, and blatantly taking the content, ideas, slogans, logos, and so forth are not only disrespectful, but illegal. Think about it in this manner. If you are having a hard time coming up with an idea, that person probably did as well. Taking it from them to show as your own is not okay morally as well as legally.

Molding Your Website to be "like" Another :: Many times, if this is the case, each time the original owner comes up with an idea, idea predators will do the same exact changes with their "follower" website. Even taking an idea and changing it to suit your needs is not the best solution. BE ORIGINAL.

:: Permissible Content Usage ::

At times, you can actually find author's that want their content placed on other websites, as well as other methods of getting their names out there, if this is the case, they will state it with their article, or other content.

Reprintables :: You can find articles that you can place within your website with reprint rights, exactly as this article is, as long as the bylines are intact. Never take content word for word unless you have written permission from the original author. Also, NEVER remove the bylines, or state that the article was written by anyone other than the original author.

Asking for Permission :: Just that, go out and email the original author and ask for permission to reprint it. Make sure and add the resource box, or ask the original author to create one for the reprint of the article.

:: Fend off Idea Predators ::

If you know someone has stolen your website content, what can you do?

Confront the Person :: Simply email them and let them know that you are aware that they have your content published within their website, or they have taken your business name, slogan, or logo without your permission. This will usually solve disputes from going to the next level.

Legal Action :: If they still do not take the content off, start looking for your resources that prove that you had the content for a longer time frame. If you have the content trademarked, patented, or copyrighted, you are protected, if not, you may be able to use The Common Law Rights.

Give yourself credit :: Pat yourself on the back for your hard work. If you become frustrated at someone "taking" an original idea from you, tell yourself that your idea must have been a great one, that others need to "copy" it for benefit.

:: Protect Your Content ::

Sometimes there is no way around it. The internet is growing each day, and the more people, the higher the chance of "virtual content stealing".

Common Law Rights :: This begins once you use the content in public. This is enforceable in local courts, but are limited geographically.

Copyrights, Patents, & Trademarks :: To protect your content from others, the best step to take is getting it copyrighted, patented, or trademarked. You can read more information about obtaining a copyright, patent or trademark at the USPTO :: [U.S. Patent and Trademark Office](#).

If you want to run a successful online business, you must be able to come up with creative ideas. Taking another person's content is not the solution to success. Remember, the person that can come up with great ideas, are far more successful than the follower's that steal for their business solutions.

About the Author: Kristin Lane is a wife and the mother of 3 little girls. She has been working online since early 2002 and is the owner of [MomsExpo.com](#). She devotes her time to finding and writing resources to help create a business and run it from home. MomsExpo.com focuses on women, children, parenting, working, and balancing life. MomsExpo.com where stay at home moms become work at home moms! Click here to learn more: <http://www.momsexpo.com>

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Teaching your Toddlers :: The "Not So Terrible Two's"

By: Rebecca Olsen

The early days of our children's life are filled with new experiences, joy, excitement and many difficult challenges for both the child and the parent. How do you deal with these challenges? Ignoring them, slapping/hitting, yelling, or giving in? These are all possible responses to a child "not doing what they are told." None of these really work and all that they teach a toddler is that the world is a scary place. There are ways of dealing with your toddler and the "terrible two's" that can make this time of life much more relaxed and fun for you and your toddler. I will give you some suggestions on how to avoid and/or react to stressful situations.

The first thing that we need to do is to define what the word discipline means and doesn't mean. When applying the word discipline to a parent/adult-child relationship it doesn't mean punishment. Yelling, berating, hitting, or humiliating a child has nothing to do with discipline. Discipline is teaching. At this age, you are teaching them primarily what is right and wrong. The idea is to set limits for them. Making sure that these limits are realistic and can be achieved by a toddler. Often parents have unrealistic expectations of what their toddler can do. Here it is important to realize that toddlers think differently than your average adult. They are much more concrete in thought and quit impulsive by nature. To expect that your toddler will show impulse control, sit for long periods of time, or remember all of the rules of the house is setting yourselves up for confrontation. Toddlers need constant and gentle reminders about the rules.

Here's a few guidelines that might help with disciplining your toddler:

1. **Don't have too many rules.** Keep the rule's you do have simple, reasonable, and be consistent! Having too many, too complicated, or inconsistent rules can be overwhelming and confusing for a toddler.
2. **Child-proof your home.** Go through every room in your house and remove anything that is either valuable, dangerous, or messy. Preventive child-proofing will stop many possible discipline problems. Don't expect your toddler not to get into things just because you say no.
3. **Divert and substitute.** If a child is playing with something you don't want him/her to have, replace it with another object or toy that he/she enjoys. This approach avoids confrontation and does not place your child in a situation where they'll say "no."
4. **Teach and lead.** You yourself must abide by the rules that you set. Your child is watching you and learning from what they see. There are times when we all must take a look in the mirror and see if the behavior that were seeing from our toddler is theirs or ours. Changing the way your

child behaves might have to start from within.

There is enough stress in the world, and unfortunately, your child will experience their share through their lifetime. Let's make these early years fun, relaxing and enjoyable.

About the author :: Rebecca Olsen is a stay at home mom that recently became a work at home mom with [MomsExpo](#). She is married to Angelo, and the mom of Jason. She currently administrates and runs the [MomsExpo Message Boards](#), and is the website administrator to [DirectSales.ws](#) and [WAHMNetwork.com](#). She has just recently become a freelance writer for [MomsExpo](#) as well!

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63 Gift Ideas for Under \$10

Copyright 2002 by Michelle Jones

With the holidays drawing near we'd like to share some great ideas with you for frugal gift-giving. There are hundreds of gifts that can be purchased or made by hand for under \$10. Gifts that are both thoughtful and frugal at the same time. You don't have to spend a lot of money to find that perfect gift for someone, just be sure to put some thought into it and hopefully your gift will be well received. Here's a few of our favorites...

1. Gourmet coffees with a personal coffee cup
2. A pound of pistachios
3. Child's artwork, framed
4. Journal with special inscription inside
5. Teacup with box of herbal tea
6. Deck of cards and book of card game rules
7. Homemade cocoa mix in a pretty jar
8. Collage of special photos
9. Gel pens and pretty stationary
10. Bottle of sparkling cider
11. Home baked bread, include recipe
12. Disposable camera or rolls of film
13. Basket filled with deli cheese and fruit
14. Craft supplies
15. Holiday serving bowl or platter
16. Pretty basket filled with special jams or mustards
17. Decorative napkins and napkin rings
18. Fancy chocolate bars tied with a ribbon
19. Gardening gloves with a plant or flower seeds
20. Photo album, hand decorated is even better
21. Makeup tote
22. Prepaid photo developing envelopes
23. Homemade cookie mix with instructions for baking
24. Variety of bread mixes
25. Special coffee cup filled with candy
26. Fancy magazines tied together with a pretty ribbon
27. Gourmet popcorn and flavored oil
28. Locally made barbeque or steak sauce with basting brush
29. Pancake or waffle mix and a bottle of real maple syrup
30. Movie theater gift certificates
31. Board games
32. Jar of sourwood or pure honey with biscuit mix
33. Note cards and book of stamps
34. Picture frames, buy them on sale!
35. Specialty cookbook
36. Pretty glass jar filled with candy
37. Collectible sports cards
38. Muffin mixes with muffin pan
39. Books, there are still a few for under \$10
40. Set of dish towels and dish cloths

41. Nail polish kit
42. Pretty night shirt
43. Basket filled with kitchen gadgets
44. Video rental gift certificates
45. Pepper mill and fresh peppercorns
46. Handwritten copies of your favorite recipes
47. For the pets, gourmet dog biscuits or cat treats
48. Baking pans and supplies
49. Prepaid long distance phone cards
50. Small clock or radio
51. Pretty box for keepsakes
52. Colorful Post-It notepads
53. Address book
54. Christmas ornaments
55. Puzzles
56. Blank video or cassette tapes
57. Sewing supplies
58. Flashlight with batteries
59. Favorite quote embroidered on a nice handkerchief
60. Makeup brush set
61. Expensive socks, still under \$10
62. Special soaps and bath puff
63. and don't forget my absolute favorite... home baked cookies!

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What is an eBay Business?

By: Alice Seba

An [eBay](#) business is what you make of it. You sell your items auction-style; the items go to the highest bidder. Want to sell baby clothes? Collectibles? Toys? Computer equipment? The choice is yours. If you want to sell it, chances are eBay has the ready-made market to buy it.

*eBay Business Supplies *

1. Computer
2. Internet Connection
3. Digital Camera
4. Products to sell. You can sell used items you find at garage sales, from your closet, etc. You can sell new items you find at discount prices from liquidators, dollar stores and clearance sales. If you can find a supplier who will drop ship, you're even luckier.

eBay Business Skills

1. Marketing Skills - You can develop these skills as you learn how to sell various items on eBay.
2. Organizational Skills - You need to keep good records of your sales and not just for tax purposes. You need to be able to keep track of which buyers have paid, which have received their items, etc. Setting up a spreadsheet with all the pertinent information should help keep this under control.
3. Basic HTML Skills - To make your auctions eye-catching and appealing, you will want to know some basic HTML skills.

Get Your Business off the Ground

Start by choosing a certain type of product to specialize in (ex. toys, clothes, etc.). That way, you can become an expert in those products and how to sell them effectively. You may want to expand your product line at a later date.

Getting started is easy. Create an eBay user ID and you're on your way. Be sure to read through the eBay selling rules and check out all the tips eBay offers along the way.

Put up only a few items to start and don't saturate your auctions with too many of the exact same item. The objective is to sell your item at the highest price. If you are selling 5 identical items, it may be harder for you to get a high price. Experiment with various selling methods and find out what works your particular items.

Online Marketing Ideas

Promote your business with your own personal web page. This can be a web page just to promote your eBay business, or it can be an online store that links to your auctions. It gives you a more established presence on the Internet and gives your customers a better sense of who you are.

Join some newsgroups and visit message boards for other home based business people or people who are interested in your product line. Be helpful and participate in discussions. If it's allowed, be sure to include a link to your auction with a brief description in your signature line.

Build a mailing list. Send out an informative newsletter on a regular basis to your subscribers. Just be sure to promote your auctions in the newsletter too.

Other Online Auctions

Don't limit yourself to eBay. EBay is only one of the many online auction houses available, but it is, by far the largest. However, eBay's fees can get expensive. It may be cost effective to also sell your items on other auction sites and you may face less selling competition. Just remember, you may also have fewer buyers for your products and may have a lower selling price. You will need to evaluate which is the most efficient way to sell your items.

Be sure to check out the auctions at [Yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com).

Also, there are a number of "mom" online auctions houses, most of which do not charge any fees. Here are just a few:

- <http://www.wahmauctions.com>
- <http://www.primaauctions.com>
- <http://www.mothersnature.com/cgi-bin/auction.cgi>
- <http://www.momsnetwork.com/auctionhouse.shtml>

For a More Comprehensive Look at the eBay Business

Check out Marsha Collier's Starting an eBay Business for Dummies. This step-by-step guide covers everything from eBay rules, setting up an eBay store, where to buy goods to sell, writing your auctions, creating attractive-looking auctions (how to take photos, html templates), record keeping and eBay success stories. For more information on Marsha's book, visit

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0764515470/internetbas09-20>

Make Your Net Auction Sell is a highly informative ebook that takes a look at online auctions in general, not just eBay. The ebook includes: standing out by selling unique items, choosing the best sites for your goods, promoting your business, how to network with other auction pros, selling goods in volume, selling high priced items without having to buy them. Find out more at <http://www.sitesell.com/websuccess2054.html>. You can download this book right away and get started.

Alice Seba is the editor of <http://www.internetbasedmoms.com>. Fire up your online business with business ideas, web page building advice & marketing tips. Subscribe to the newsletter by sending a blank email to subscribenewsletter@internetbasedmoms.com.



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A 20-Point Checklist for New Home Businesses

By: Angela Wu

You're eager to start your home business and bring in some extra income. Although you're probably bursting with ideas and enthusiasm and want to jump right in, take some time to plan and prepare for your new venture.

Here's a simple checklist you can use in the startup phase of your home based business. Feel free to add additional checkpoints of your own!

- 1) **Assess your personality.** Are you the entrepreneurial type that will do well with your own business? Are you self-motivated, disciplined, and willing and able to put forth the effort, time, and money? Are you the type that can get up after a failure and try again? There are many quizzes available to help you decide whether or not you're ready for a home business. Try <http://quiz.ivillage.com/work/tests/areyouready.htm>
- 2) **Appraise your skills, knowledge, and experience.** Make a list of businesses you think you would be capable of building.
- 3) **Know your interests.** If you're doing something you love, you are more likely to work harder and enjoy yourself. A good place to find unique business ideas is here: <http://homebasedwork.com/cgi-bin/a/t.cgi?bizideas>
- 4) **Figure out what type of business you want to run.** Out of the huge number of possibilities, select one that works well with your skills and your interests. An excellent manual with 16 different Internet 'business models' that you can copy is available at <http://buildyourhomebiz.com/rd/senze.html>
- 5) **Do some market research.** Is there a demand for the product you plan to sell, and at the price at which you want to sell it? After your (projected) expenses, will you be profitable?
- 6) **Check out your competitors.** How will you distinguish yourself from them? Why should customers come to you instead of to them? What are they doing right or wrong, and how can you improve upon them?
- 7) **Select a business name.** Make sure you don't infringe upon someone's trademark! You can research trademarks at <http://www.marksonline.com>. Consult with a qualified legal professional for more information.
- 8) **Know the zoning regulations in your area.** Make sure that you are permitted to operate a business from your home. Some areas may also place restrictions on the type of business that can be operated from your home.
- 9) **Find out what licenses, registration, or permits you need to operate your home based business.**

- 10) **Research any additional regulations applicable to your product.** Find out if there are restrictions on producing it from your home. For example, if you're a caterer, the authorities may not allow you to prepare food in your home if you have pets running around!
- 11) **Select a business structure, such as sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation.** Again, you may want to consult with a qualified professional to determine what's best for your specific situation.
- 12) **Assess your financial situation.** Do you have enough to finance a business startup? How will you handle emergencies? Don't forget about marketing expenses -- the success of your business will depend in large part on how well you market it.
- 13) **Secure additional funds, if necessary.** Loans, lines of credit, grants, savings, and employment income are some ways that entrepreneurs can finance their businesses. The US Small Business Administration has a useful list:
<http://www.sba.gov/starting/indexspecial.html>
- 14) **Prepare a business plan to help you define your goals and stay focused.** Again, the US SBA offers help at
<http://www.sba.gov/starting/indexbusplans.html>
- 15) **Investigate the costs associated with purchasing the necessary equipment, materials, and supplies.** Contact several suppliers to compare quality, prices, and service.
- 16) **Talk to your local tax office.** Ask for any relevant information on how your home business will affect your tax situation.
- 17) **Consider purchasing additional insurance to cover your business assets.**
- 18) **Set up your home office.** Establish rules and 'office hours', when customers can generally expect to reach you. Consider setting aside a room specifically for your office space.
- 19) **Talk to your bank about a business account, to keep your business and personal income and expenses separate.**
- 20) **Consult with professionals.** Depending on your situation, you may need to use the services of lawyers, accountants or bookkeepers, insurance agents or brokers, and others.

For additional information, read the US Small Business Administration's 'Small Business Startup Kit' available at
<http://www.sba.gov/starting/indexstartup.html>.

Angela is the editor of Online Business Basics, a practical guide to building a business on a beginner's budget. It's a proven hit with beginners, for the down-to-earth style and loads of instantly useable tips! For details, visit <http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/article.html> OR request a series of 10 free reports to get you started:
<http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/freereports.html>



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YOUR GUIDE TO A STRESS-LESS HOLIDAY SEASON

By: Susie Michelle Cortright, <http://www.momscape.com>

Three years ago, I was so calm and relaxed, you'd never have guessed it was Christmas. I had a brand new baby, and we had just moved into a new house, but I was grounded with an overwhelming sense of peace. Now that another holiday season is bearing down on us, I think back to the reasons that time was so magical.

That year, we simply went into our backyard and picked out a crooked little tree that just screamed "Baby's First Christmas." I tied on some bows, and we invited our closest friends and relatives to share some Friendship Tea, sugar cookies, and prime rib (which my mother-in-law brought and prepared.) We opened gifts that I had ordered online weeks before. (They arrived gift-wrapped.) It was a low-cost Christmas spent in our unfurnished living room, but you would have been hard-pressed to find a merrier place that year.

When we renew our focus on the holiday spirit, the stress of the season begins to fade. This year, let us pledge to align our personal goals to reflect the goal of the holiday season as it has existed for centuries: to center on our spiritual awareness and connectedness in this spiritual time.

Simplify :: When professional organizers urge us to simplify, they ask us to eliminate our time-wasters. This year, let us find some time-wasters.

Particularly during the busy holiday season, we moms too often feel that if we aren't busy doing something, we aren't being of value. In the upcoming months, consider the value of just lounging on the couch with your kids, of playing a board game, of reading the Christmas Box or The Story of Hanukkah aloud in the evening, or of simply sitting around for awhile thinking about how lucky you are for the family and friends that are yours.

Meanwhile, take a close look at your self-made holiday to-do's. Is it necessary to bake enough goodies for the neighborhood, or are you okay with just whipping up the occasional batch of Rice Krispie Treats? Do you want to travel to a distant relative's house on Christmas Day or ask that they come to you? Keep in mind that the mere fact that you've always done something isn't always a good argument for continuing to do it.

Christmas cards :: This year, narrow your Christmas card list. Make it more personal. Follow the lead of Mitten Strings for God author Katrina Kenison and make your annual Christmas letter less about the accomplishments of your family members and more about the ways you have all connected with one another over the past year.

Meanwhile, reframe the way you perceive the task. Think of it not as a tedious chore that involves long hours of licking envelopes and signing your name, but as a way to illustrate your love for your family and friends and to reconnect with the people whom you may have contact with only

once each year.

One last note: start early. That way, it's a relaxed process that only requires you to jot a note or two in the evening as you sit with your family. Also consider enlisting the help of your husband and the kids. Little ones love to help moisten envelopes or draw pictures for relatives. If you run out of time - or the motivation - to send cards, pick up the phone instead.

Holiday Entertaining :: Parties can be as laid-back or as lavish as you like. Don't underestimate the power of a potluck. - guests love to feel like they're contributing to a meal. No time to deep clean? Speed clean and dim the lights. Keep a stash of things on hand for latecomers or unannounced guests.

Volunteer :: Helping someone in need can relieve holiday stress and help you ward off the holiday blues that sometimes seep in this time of year.

Particularly during the holidays, opportunities abound. Just look in your local paper. On the Internet, Volunteermatch (<http://www.volunteermatch.org>) can set you up with an opportunity or idea with your specific skills in mind.

Be good to yourself :: If you don't sit back and enjoy all of the fa-la-las, they'll be over before you know it. Savor the season, and remember that you set the tone for your family. If you're frenzied and frantic, your family will be too, and your children will grow up thinking that's what the holidays are all about.

If you are feeling anxious this time of year, release your feelings into a journal. Maintain, or start, an exercise program to release those energy-boosting endorphins, and make sure you're eating for energy.

Spend some time on yourself. Invite your friends or your daughter's friends (or both) for an indulgent Spa Evening. Prepare some homemade facial scrubs and masks and let the stress of the season melt away.

In the end, it's important to decide what the Christmas season means to you. I know my favorite time of the season isn't opening gifts or filling goodie baskets or attending office parties. It's that three minutes it takes on Christmas Eve to sing "Silent Night" by candlelight. It's looking around to see all of my family and friends with their faces lit up just enough that I can see their eyes glisten. To me, that's Christmas.

What is it to you?

About the Author: Susie Michelle Cortright is the author of More Energy for Moms and the founder of [Momscape.com](http://www.momscape.com). She is a writer and full-time mom whose passion is helping women celebrate and embrace their role as mothers. Click here to learn more: <http://www.momscape.com/cgi-bin/a.pl?momscape&1048>



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The Gift of Heart-made

By: Arleen M. Kaptur

A home is "where the heart is." This has been used in books, songs, and in greeting cards. It is as modern as tomorrow but with a history of yesterday. A person's home is where you are always welcome, accepted and cared for. This "care" comes in all sorts of ways and degrees, and sometimes it is just in the mind and spirit when a person travels or commitments carry them far away.

There are "little" things that make a home. That quilt that grandma made is just the ticket when cold winds blow or it's just been a bad day. A collection of embroidered towels not only add a touch of beauty to your kitchen or bath, but are softer and more skin-soothing. A canning jar filled with hot cocoa mix, brownie mix, or soup mix will always taste better, hit the spot, and go down with a smoothness that no store-bought, brightly over packaged, concoction can ever do. A painting by your aunt or uncle is a treasure for that wall in your den, as much as that "famous name" one that graces your front hallway. You pass that one by so many times coming and going, but you stop in your tracks so many more times in your den.

Christmas stockings made by your sister or that rocker built by your brother just set the mood for the Holidays and for a wonderful evening in front of the fireplace. Candles made by a friend, spice mixes or potpourri prepared by your neighbor, well these are all part of the joy of friendship, but they are a bit more. All of the above are, of course, hand-made or homemade, but they are also Heart-made. Nothing made with your hands can ever leave your hands without a bit of "you" sticking right in there. In other words, whoever cared enough to make you a "special gift" also cared enough to share a "bit of themselves" right along.

You are so much richer for these gifts, and the cold nights ahead won't seem so cold, and the darkness of winter won't seem so dark. There is sunshine in love and warmth in caring. Those Heart-made gifts have these two qualities in abundance - to receive them - you are indeed blessed; to give them - well, God needed helpers on earth to spread the true meaning of Christmas and friendship and you have undertaken that job.

ENJOY!

© Arleen M. Kaptur 2003 November
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please visit <http://www.arleensite.com>.



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Aromatherapy to Help Children Sleep & Parents Relax

By: Jeanine Byers

"A relaxing treatment for children before bedtime is a warm essential-oil bath. Most children love taking aromatherapy baths, particularly if they have their own personal blends."

--Health World Online

Aromatherapy is the use of plant oils to enhance well-being. Although one must be cautious about using essential oils with children, there are several that are safe to use, and they can be great at helping children settle down to go to sleep.

For babies, there are a couple of ways to use essential oils. One way is by giving your baby an all-over massage, and the other is by scenting the room. To scent the room, instead of using a diffuser, put the oil in a bowl of hot water, which allows for a more gentle approach.

If you would prefer to give your baby a massage, here are a few suggestions to get the most out of this bonding time...

- 1) Wait at least 30 minutes after the baby's meal.
- 2) Make sure that the room you use is warm and that your hands are warm.
- 3) Don't push hard, but instead, use gentle, light, stroking motions.

For more massage tips, download the article on aromatherapy and massage, by Aroma Health Tips, a UK company.

Your toddler may benefit from having an aromatic massage right before story time. This will give the essential oils plenty of time to soothe and relax and comfort as your toddler settles in for a story.

Older children may prefer room fragancing or an aromatherapy bath.

Teenagers may want to use the oils to massage themselves. Best areas would be the neck and shoulders, temples and forehead.

Here are several essential oils that both children and parents find relaxing and soothing...

Lavender: generates peace, eases tension, calms stress, opens the heart, feels gentle and nourishing and soothing, creates relaxation. Great for insomnia.

Mandarin Orange: encourages calm, creates tranquility, is soothing, uplifting and inspiring, promotes gentleness of spirit. Helpful for insomnia.

Marjoram: encourages balance, creates feelings of security, heightens intuition, keeps the heart open, grounds energy, releases fear--and the vulnerability that comes from fear of being hurt, allows more joy.

TAKE FIVE is a relaxing aromatherapy blend that contains lavender, mandarin orange and marjoram essential oils. Parents often use it to help their children sleep peacefully, but they find it brings them peace of mind, as well.

"We took it (Take Five) with us on a trip, and used the spray bottle in our hotel room when we got there. Sometimes our kids have a harder time getting to sleep the first night because it's a strange environment. Well, this time, they went right to sleep! So my husband and I sat down for a few minutes to read and talk, and the next thing we knew, we were waking up an hour later! I love that oil and I use it every night in my children's rooms to make for a quicker, quieter ritual."

--Michele

"I bought an extra wax melter just so I could have the Take Five already burning in our bedroom when we go up for the night."

--Cheri, Michele's sister

Jeanine Byers is a licensed self-care coach and a holistic aromatherapy practitioner. She introduces Take Five in the hopes that it will help the tired, cranky, sleep-deprived moms, the fussy, colicky babies, the overtired young children and the angst-ridden teen ALL get a good night's sleep! <http://www.takefive.ws>



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Winter Driving Tips

By: Angelo Olsen

The dog days of summer have come to a close, and the pristine white of winter is coming. I love this time of the year. The crisp cool air, the sight of falling snow, snowmen, snowball fights with the kids, it's all great! There is but one downside and what a downside it is. Driving! The snow and ice can make this necessity of life miserable and dangerous. There are some ways that you can make driving in the winter safer for you and your family.

Here is a short list of items that you should check on your vehicle at the beginning of winter.

1. **Have your battery checked.** If your vehicle is having a difficult time starting in warm weather then you will definitely have troubles come winter.
2. **Check the tread on your tires.** Excessively worn tires will give you very little stopping power. Studded snow tires will give you the best traction, both for starting and stopping your vehicle. If you have a good set of all season tires and don't want to spend the extra money on another set of tires, you can have your tires siped. Siping your tires is the cutting of grooves in your tire tread with specialized equipment. Having the extra grooves allows for better traction and can improve the life of your tire.
3. **Have your cooling system checked.** For most areas a 50/50 mix will work. This means using 50% anti-freeze and 50% water. For some areas you might want to go with a 70/30 mix. Most gas stations will do this and it takes only a couple of minutes. You definitely don't want your cooling system to freeze. Remember when liquids freeze they expand, and there goes your radiator and maybe even your engine block.
4. **Keep your gas tank over half full.** If you are to get stranded, your vehicle could be your only source of heat. Remember, if you are sitting in your car with it running, make sure to have the windows cracked. This will allow fresh air to come in and help to prevent you from excessive carbon monoxide exposure.
5. **Regularly check your windshield washer fluid.** Keep it full. You will be amazed at how much washer fluid you use in the course of a day, especially on those warmer winter days when the roads are a mess. It is a good idea to keep some extra fluid in your vehicle, just in case. I would recommend buying the good stuff. Frozen washer fluid will do you know good!
6. **Check your windshield wipers.** Old and worn windshield wipers will do you no good no matter how much wiper fluid you have. By not being able to see clearly will only compound the problems associated with winter driving.

7. Keep winter supplies in your vehicle. Invest in a snow brush and ice scraper for you windshield, and for heavens sakes clear off the entire windshield and all other windows, not just some little spec that you can barely see out of! It's also a good idea to carry a shovel and small bag of sand or cat litter for traction. You never know when this might come in handy. Throw a blanket and some old winter clothes that you don't regularly use. And remember to always dress for the weather. It's better to over dress then to kick yourself when you stranded out in the freezing cold!

8. If you have a cell phone then make sure and keep it charged and with you whenever you are traveling.

9. SLOW DOWN! Give yourself more driving time during the winter. Rushing to get to an appointment or to work will also compound the dangers of winter driving. Its better to get to your destination late then not at all.

Enjoy this winter and safe driving to all.

About the author :: Angelo Olsen is the loving and supportive husband of Rebecca Olsen, and father of Jason. Rebecca recently became a work at home mom with [MomsExpo](#). Angelo enjoys writing, skiing, and spending time with his family, and supports www.momsexpo.com and all of the resources that are provided for women around the world.

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Family Traditions :: Winter Snowflakes Craft

By: Kristin Lane, <http://www.momsexpo.com>

Do you remember creating those fun little Winter Snowflakes with your family once the coldness outside kept you in? Continue the tradition! I do this project each year with my children during family time, and they love it each year. Winter Snowflakes are very easy to do, and the supplies are quite common in a crafty household, so you probably will not need to spend a lot on supplies.

What you will need:

- Scissors (Kid Safe)
- Glue
- Crayons/Markers
- Yarn
- Decorations like stickers or beads
- Ruler
- Construction paper

To make the Winter Snowflakes:

- Teach your children the safety of using scissors first, to alleviate the chance of an accident.
- Cut out 6" X 6" squares (one square per snowflake) from the construction paper.
- Lay the paper in front of you.
- Fold the bottom left hand corner into the top right hand corner and crease, creating a triangle.
- Then, take the triangle, and fold it in half. Once you have folded this in half once, fold it once more. This will create a small triangle.
- Take your scissors, and cut designs along the creases and ends,

once you have cut out all of the designs that you would like, open it up to see the snowflake!

What next?

- Color and draw on the snowflakes, and glue the decorations on them.
- Cut your yarn in different length strands, and make a slipknot glue the other end to the snowflake, and hang the various sized snowflakes and strings throughout a small area.
- Then, have your kids look at the creation! Winter inside the house!

About the Author: Kristin Lane is a wife and the mother of 3 little girls. She has been working online since early 2002 and is the owner of [MomsExpo.com](http://www.momsexpo.com). She devotes her time to finding and writing resources to help create a business and run it from home. MomsExpo.com focuses on women, children, parenting, working, and balancing life. MomsExpo.com where stay at home moms become work at home moms! Click here to learn more: <http://www.momsexpo.com>

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Our Changes and YOUR Benefits!

Have you all noticed the incredible changes that are occurring with MomsExpo? We have added many resources for all of our visitors. We felt that although there are tons of resources on the web, that there is still room for more. MomsExpo has grown from a small website on the web that offered a directory for visitors to find business opportunities, to a large resource library, learning center, and exhibit Center. The newest addition has been the MomsExpo Magazine.

MomsExpo Magazine will be distributed each month here at www.MomsExpo.com. Each monthly issue will concentrate on Working from Home, Parenting, Biz Guides, Biz Tips, WAHM Stories, Family, and MORE!

Each issue will be displayed online. We offer the online version, as well as a printable version through Adobe® Acrobat Reader. Our Archive area will consist of the newest versions of MomsExpo Magazine as well as all previous issues. Simply click on the thumbnail in the archives to read the entire magazine from the comforts of home at NO COST to you!

Make sure and tell your friends about the NEW MomsExpo Magazine, and enjoy!

Sincerely, Kristin Lane, Owner MomsExpo LLC



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MomsExpo Contests :: MomsExpo is accepting applications for our Contest Sponsors for the MomsExpo Quarterly Contest that will be starting March 2004. There is a \$20.00 Minimum sponsorship prize. The sponsors will receive the following:

- A 2 Month Sponsor Listing with a 300 characters or less description of your website, services, and products, as well as a button size 125x125 on our Contest Page. The sponsors will be arranged in prize offering amount. The highest sponsored amount will be our Top Sponsor.
- The sponsorship names and website addresses are to be announced in both the months of March and April 2004 MomsExpo Magazine issues.
- In order to win the contest, the contest entrants will need to visit the sponsor's website and answer a question that the sponsor will provide. This ensures that the sponsor's website has been visited.

What kind of Sponsored Prizes will be accepted on MomsExpo?

- Free Advertising on the Sponsor's website
- Free Products and/or Services
- Gift Certificates are accepted ONLY if there is NO PURCHASE necessary. *For acceptions to this rule, please [Contact Us](#).

We will not accept sponsorship requests for the following:

- Gift Certificates where there is a required purchase amount.
- Romance Item Prizes.

Please note: To safeguard our winners and sponsors alike, all communication between the parties after winning the prizes are monitored. Sponsors MUST email MomsExpo with notification that the prize has been carried through and the winner has received it. Winners will be announced in the May 2004 issue of MomsExpo Magazine, as well as the Contest Page of MomsExpo.

MomsExpo Inspiration: MomsExpo is accepting Mother Stories for our annual publication MomsExpo Inspiration. This publication is an addition to our MomsExpo Magazine, and focuses on the strength of us moms, sisters, daughters, grandmothers, friends and wives. Any story of inspiration is accepted including but not limited to:

- Successful Business Stories
- Pregnancy Stories

- Birthing Stories
- Family Stories
- Love Stories
- and *MORE!*

You can submit a story, written in your own words, or, you can answer a list of questions from our questionnaire. The story will be placed within MomsExpo Inspiration, and distributed to all visitors that want to download and print, as well as view it online. You will be able to add your business information along with the story in a resource box. [Submit your story today!](#)



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