

Messages from Mandi

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Summer 2005

FATHER'S DAY

Father's Day this year will be on Sunday, June 19, 2005. The first Father's Day was celebrated on June 19, 1910. Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, organized the first celebration on her own father's birthday. Her father was a farmer, a Civil War veteran, and had been a single father to six young children after his wife's death. In 1972, President Richard Nixon signs into law a permanent U.S. Father's Day to be observed on the third Sunday of June.

Here are some suggestions for that "special dad" taken from Lists to Live By compiled by Alice Gray, Steve Stephens, and John Van Diest and written by Daniel L. McAuley.

10 Ideas for a Fabulous, Unforgettable Father's Day

- 1. If you can't be together, mark your calendar so you will be sure to call your father. Include comments about what he means to you as a father, mentor, and friend.*
- 2. Pick a photo of you and your father together and write a note to him about why the picture is meaningful to you. Send it in time to arrive a day before Father's Day.*
- 3. Buy tickets to a game of his favorite sport and go together.*
- 4. Offer to join him at his church for the Father's Day services.*
- 5. Write him a letter thanking him for two*

or more traits he taught you that really make you a more successful adult.

6. Record a cassette for him that shares a special memory of childhood that you both cherish so he can enjoy it in the car or at home.

7. Order a beef stick and cheese box, or some other favorite snack gift package, and have it delivered a day early. Enclose a card that says you will join him to watch a game or movie of his choice.

8. Make a video for him of your childhood home and include a commentary on memories and lessons you really value from your childhood.

9. Take him to a dinner place of his choice and surprise him with two or three of his friends that he may not see often. Plan this for the day before or after Father's Day so they will be available.

10. Ask your brothers and sisters to join you in writing notes sharing how your father's influence and availability over the years has benefitted your family life. Include them in a memory book with a nice masculine cover.

Source: <http://print.infoplease.com>

Dietary Guidelines for Americans MyPyramid

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 was revised and released in January. The U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Health & Human Services

(HHS) publish the Dietary Guidelines for Americans which represent federal nutrition policy. The USDA has also just developed and issued MyPyramid which replaces the original Food Guide Pyramid published in 1992. MyPyramid translates the principles of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other nutritional standards to assist consumers in making healthier food and physical activity choices.

The purpose of MyPyramid is to help people plan a balanced eating plan and to be physically fit. To maintain good health, people need to incorporate variety, moderation, and activity into their diets.

There is not one food that provides all the vitamins and minerals needed to be healthy. People need to eat a variety of foods from each of the five food groups. MyPyramid lists five good groups: Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Milk, and Meat & Beans. Oils are not considered a food group, but it is illustrated in MyPyramid.

When selecting foods from the five groups and oil, it is important to select the option with the least amount of saturated or trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, added sugars, and alcohol.

Everyone can benefit from physical activity. Maintaining a healthy weight requires balancing the amount of food eaten with the level of physical activity exerted.

MyPyramid was developed to focus on maintaining overall health. For more information on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 and/or MyPyramid, contact Bailey County Extension Office, 272-4583, or go to www.mypyramid.com.

Source: "MyPyramid: Better Health with Better Choices"

By Sharon F. Robinson, PhD., R.D.
Texas Cooperative Extension

Take a Daily Family Vacation

Even with our busy and hectic schedules, it's so rewarding to take time to relax and

unwind as a family. In fact, experts recommend some kind of evening ritual to help you take a break and separate the day's activities from bedtime. And unwinding as a family is a perfect way to bring your bunch together for a daily respite.

There is no better way to get some exercise and still be able to catch up on everyone's day than going for a walk. If you have time, get the family together and head to a neighborhood park. Take a leisurely stroll along a trail and get as much quality time in as you can before the sun sets.

Whether your family enjoys charades or board games, there's sure to be a game everyone can participate in. Play a card game on Monday and a board game on Tuesday. Simply taking the time to interact as a family is the true purpose.

Select a favorite family book and read a chapter each night. If the kids are old enough, have them take turns reading chapters.

Even though it can be difficult to get the whole troop together, it's always nice to have a sit-down family dinner. If you can't do dinner, do dessert! Make sure it's a healthy treat, such as fruit. Take the family out for dessert, or snack on something in the backyard.

When all else fails, simply take time to share. Take a moment to talk about the day. Let the kids talk about their activities, while you talk about yours. This gives each family member a look into the other's day.

By taking a daily "family vacation" everyone can enjoy some family time together. So get in the habit of getting together before bedtime this summer

Source:

<http://www.homemadesimple.com>

Unwanted Summer Guests

Along with the summer sunshine and warmer temperatures come a few unwanted summer guests – pests. Mosquitos, biting

flies, and ticks can be annoying and sometimes pose a serious risk to public health.

Insect repellents come in many forms and concentrations:

- *Aerosol and pump-spray products are intended for skin applications as well as for treating clothing.

- *Liquid, cream, lotion, spray, and stick products enable direct skin applications.

- *Products with a low concentration of active ingredient may be appropriate for situations where exposure to insects is minimal.

- *Higher concentrations of active ingredient may be useful in highly infested areas or with insect species which are more difficult to repel.

- *Repellents containing a higher concentration of active ingredient (such as DEET) provide longer-lasting protection.

Most repellents rely on some percentage of N, N-diethyl-metatoluamide, called deet, a chemical developed more than 50 years ago by the U.S. Army and the Department of Agriculture. Deet doesn't kill bugs, but its vapors discourage them from landing or climbing on you. It's generally acknowledged to be the most effective mosquito repellent there is. *Consumer Reports* found that a product's hours of effectiveness generally increase with its percentage of DEET.

DEET is available in many different concentrations ranging from 4 percent to 100 percent. It is the active ingredient in most insect repellents. Approximately 230 products containing DEET are currently registered with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Most insect repellents that are available in stores are labeled with the chemical name for DEET. Choose a repellent that offers appropriate protection for the amount of time you will be outdoors. A higher

percentage of DEET should be used if you will be outdoors for several hours, while a lower percentage of DEET can be used if time outdoors will be limited.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend adults use an insect repellent that contains less than 35% DEET, while children should use a product that contains no more than 10% DEET. Repellents with DEET should be used sparingly on children 2 through 6 years of age and not at all on infants younger than 2 years of age.

Although DEET is generally considered safe when used according to directions, some people prefer not to use it. For that reason, *Consumer Reports* tested several products that use plant oils instead. It is important to remember that essential oils, while derived from plants that grow naturally, are chemicals too. Some are potentially hazardous if ingested, applied over wounds, cuts, irritated skin, or mucus membranes such as the eyes.

With any type of insect repellent it is essential to use the product safely and effectively. Here are some guidelines to help you keep your family safe from summer pests:

- * Read and follow all directions and precautions on the product label.

- *Do not apply over cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.

- *Do not apply to hands or near eyes and mouth of young children.

- *Do not allow young children to apply this product, and do not apply to children's hands (since children tend to put their hands in their mouths or rub their eyes). When using on children, apply to your own hands and then put it on the child.

- *Do not spray in closed areas. Avoid breathing a repellent spray, and do not use near food.

- *Use just enough repellent to cover

exposed skin and/or clothing.

*Do not use under clothing.

*Avoid over-application of the product.

*After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.

*Wash treated clothing before wearing it again.

*Wash hands after application.

Source: "Insect Repellent" by Courtney Schoessow
Health Hints, July 2003, by Carol. A. Rice PhD.,

R.N.

Texas Cooperative Extension

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Bailey County Extension Agent-Family and Consumer Sciences

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