



Family Living IDEAS

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Greetings!

Thanks to those who have responded to our request for e-mail addresses or confirmation of household mailing address. During a time when all resources are really tight, your efforts to help us stretch our postage is greatly appreciated.

This is also the beginning of the "Food Preservation Season". A few key facts to remember:

- Follow USDA or WSU Extension approved recipes and directions.
- Test pressure gauge annually. This can be done in the Extension office---It's Free!
- Low acid foods (vegetables, meats, fish and poultry) must be processed with the pressure canner.
- High acid foods (fruits and pickled foods) may be processed with the boiling water bath canner.
- The use of paraffin for sealing jam or jelly is no longer acceptable. Jams and jellies must be processed at least 5 min. in a boiling water bath canner.
- Do not "make up" your own recipe combination for canned foods.
- Likewise, do not guess at the processing times...follow tested and approved times.

- Use standard canning jars---not mayo jars, gallon jars or other food product jars.
- Call me (or visit our WSU publication web site) if you need current food preservation instructions or information.

Sincerely,

M. Christine Price

M. Christine Price, County Director
 WSU Extension Grant/Adams Area
 Family & Consumer Science Educator

The Journey through Adolescence

One of the toughest jobs in the world is being a teenager. Everything's in transition. Everything's intense – even apathy.

Kids on the brink of adulthood have to cope with inconsistencies and conflicts. The desire to be different clashes with the need to fit in. The desire to be independent collides with the aversion to self-reliance and personal responsibility.

Here are five ways to improve your journey through adolescence:

1. Be yourself. Mindless conformity is a prison. Express yourself authentically and don't be afraid to stand out. But don't dress or behave in extreme ways just to be different or to prove you can. You don't need orange hair, a nose ring, or tattoos to be special. It's more important to be respected than noticed.

2. Don't expect too much or settle for too little. Don't expect anyone else to make you happy, but don't allow others to treat you badly. Hang out with people who bring out the best in you, and be the kind of person who brings out the best in others.

3. Responsibility is a privilege, not a penalty. Dependability and self-reliance are your tickets to freedom and independence. Don't waste energy resisting what you have to do. Instead, win others' trust by doing what you should do.

4. Think ahead. Every act has a consequence. The choices you make today will shape tomorrow. Pleasure lasts for a moment, but happiness lasts much longer. Just because it feels good doesn't make it good.

5. Take charge of your life. Your life is your ship, so be the captain, not a passenger. Figure out what needs to be done to improve your life, and then make it happen. Your attitudes are more important than your aptitudes. You can't control what happens to you, but you can control what happens in you. Don't whine, win.

Michael Josephson. *CharacterCounts.org*. July 2009.

Learn the Signs - Act Early

Parents who know the basic milestones in a child's development are able to recognize delays and make sure their child receives help to address them. During their child's early years, parents are keenly aware of changes in physical development, such as height and weight. But there are also important milestones children should reach in terms of how they play, learn, speak, and act. Smiling for the first time, making eye contact, and pointing are a few of these developmental milestones.

Parents need to know about developmental milestones as they are an important way to track a child's overall development. Also, the earlier a child with a developmental delay receives help, the better chance the child has to achieve his or her full potential.

"By recognizing the signs of developmental disorders early, parents can seek effective treatments that can improve their child's future," said CDC Director Dr. Julie L. Gerberding.

As of now, about half of children with developmental disorders are not diagnosed until school age. Many signs of delay can be easy to see. For example, a two-year-old should be able to:

Point to an object when asked
Use two- to four-word sentences
Follow simple instructions
Every child is different and develops at his or her own pace, but most children reach major milestones within a certain range of time. Parents should learn the milestones, but recognize that their child might develop some skills earlier and some later than other children of the same age.

If parents suspect a delay, the first step is to consult the child's doctor or health care professional. Sometimes a parent's concern might be resolved by the passage of time, but in many cases taking a "wait-and-see" approach could delay opportunities to take helpful action.

If after talking with a health care professional, parents still have concerns, they can seek a second opinion. They could ask a pediatrician specializing in child development or another qualified professional. Parents may also contact their local early intervention agency or public school.

eXtension.org. Parenting. *Learn the Signs*. February 2009.

*Content makes poor men rich;
discontent makes rich men poor.*

Conserving Pollinators in Gardens

Bees and other pollinators are important to our environment, providing essential services for the production of more than two-thirds of the world's crop species. This includes products we can grow in our backyard gardens, like apples and squash, but also things like alfalfa seed—creating forage sources for America's meat and dairy industries.

The United States alone grows more than one hundred crops that either need or benefit from pollinators. The economic value of these crops in the U.S. was estimated to be \$20 billion in 2000.

But, pollinators are in trouble. While the amount of cropland requiring insect pollination is at an all-time high, the number of managed honeybee colonies in the U.S. has dropped by 50 percent since 1945. Diseases, parasitic mites and Colony Collapse Disorder have created a honeybee crisis. It may no longer be a safe assumption that bees will always be able to provide the pollination services that farmers and gardeners need.

Before the honeybee was introduced from Europe in 1622, over 4,000 species of bees were native to North America. These include a vast and colorful diversity of gentle bumble bees, mason and leafcutter bees, mining bees, sweat bees and others. Many of these bees are more efficient crop pollinators than the non-native honeybee—especially for New World fruits and vegetables like pumpkin, tomato, cranberry, and blueberry—as well as wildflowers. Even without active management these native bees are responsible for pollinating American crops worth \$3 billion annually.

Unfortunately, research is also documenting declining native bee numbers across the country, including the possible extinction of some species. While our native bees are not affected by the same disease and parasite problems as honeybees, they are facing unprecedented habitat loss, pesticide threats as well as diseases.

Smaller diverse garden plantings can provide the floral diversity to support resident pollinators. Bee diversity is often maximized in landscapes where 15 or more flowering plant species are present. Different bees may have different flower preferences, so provide variety. As a general rule, gardeners who want to conserve bees should provide a minimum of three plant species that bloom at any given time during the growing season.

Mader, E. U of Minnesota. eXtension.org. Gardens, Lawns & Landscapes. *Conserving Pollinators: A Primer for Gardeners*. February 2009.

How does the 2009 economic stimulus bill affect me or my family?

The 2009 economic stimulus bill – The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act – is intended to stimulate the economy by getting Americans working and spending again. Here are some ways the economic stimulus bill might affect you:

Tax Credits Paid to Workers

Individuals will get a tax credit of \$400, while couples will get \$800. The tax credit payments will be spread out through the rest of 2009 in the form of reduced federal tax withholdings taken from workers' paychecks. For 2009, the tax credit will amount to about \$13 per week and about \$7.70 a week in 2010. Individuals with annual taxable incomes in excess of \$100,000 and couples filing jointly with incomes in excess of \$200,000 will not be eligible for the workers' tax credits. The credit begins to phase out at \$75,000 for individuals and \$150,000 for couples.

Retirees

A one-time payment of \$250 is being made to recipients of Social Security, Railroad Retirement, and veterans' benefits.

Families with Children

An expansion of the child tax credit will allow families with children to begin qualifying for the \$1,000 tax credit with every dollar earned over \$3,000. The change will help more low-income families who do not normally pay income tax

and families with three or more children to get the child tax credit.

Middle-Class Families

About 29 million middle-class families will be relieved of the threat of the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) burden. Congress created the AMT as a way to make sure wealthy people paid at least some income tax. Since it was never adjusted for inflation, the AMT quickly began to hit the middle class and must be adjusted yearly by Congress.

First-Time Home Buyers

First-time home buyers will qualify for an \$8,000 tax credit (increased from \$7,500) if they buy their home before Dec. 1, 2009. As a very important bonus, the repayment requirement of the first-time home buyer tax credit has been removed.

New Car Buyers

To help the U.S. auto industry, people who buy new cars, light trucks, and SUVs before Jan. 1, 2010, will be allowed to deduct all state and local sales taxes paid on the purchase from their federal income tax. This deduction will be subject to a phase-out for taxpayers with adjusted gross income in excess of \$125,000 (\$250,000 in the case of a joint return). According to the IRS, purchases made before Feb. 17, 2009, will not be eligible for this special deduction. More details are available from the IRS at www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=204519,00.html.

Homeowners

Homeowners who install certified energy-efficient windows, furnaces, and air conditioners can qualify for a tax credit equal to 30 percent of their costs, up to a total of \$1,500.

College Students or Their Parents

College students or their parents can qualify for a tax credit of up to \$2,500 for tuition and related expenses during 2009 and 2010.

Also see the Federal Student Aid Primer at <http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/moneymatters/a/studentaid.htm>.

Unemployed People

People getting unemployment compensation during 2009 will not have to pay taxes on the first \$2,400.

Small Businesses

Among other provisions, the bill allows a delay of the 3 percent withholding tax on payments to businesses that sell goods or services to governments and a cut in the capital gains tax for investors in small businesses who hold stock for more than five years.

Businesses that reduce their debt will be allowed to delay some taxes, thus allowing them to obtain additional resources to invest in creating new jobs.

Businesses that create jobs for unemployed veterans or youth who have been out of work and out of school for six months will enjoy tax credits.

Small businesses investing in plants and equipment during 2009 will be allowed to extend the bonus depreciation.

eXtension.org. *What provisions does the 2009 economic stimulus bill have that may affect me or my family?* FAQ #40028. July 2009.

60-second aerobics at the office

- Glance at the wall clock and rip off a minute's worth of jumping jacks.
- Do a football-like drill of running in place for 60 seconds. Get those knees up!
- Simulate jumping rope for a minute: Hop on alternate feet, or on both feet at once.
- While seated, pump both arms over your head for 30 seconds, then rapidly tap your feet on the floor, football-drill style.
- Or do walk-lunges in your office or a vacant room (you could also amuse your co-workers by doing these in the hall).

Master Composter Training

Washington State University Grant/Adams Extension and the Grant County Solid Waste Department will host a garden compost training on August 29, September 26, and October 10. This three-session workshop will cover several methods of composting. Students will learn how to build a compost bin, how to build a vermiculture (worm) compost bin, the advantages of recycling the nutrients available from household and garden waste, the biology of composting, the relationship of humus, compost, and soil, and how to grasscycle. Compost is the gardener's "black gold". Compost improves water retention, adding texture and workability, and providing nutrients for plants. The workshop is free to the public. Students will be asked to provide some volunteer hours and share their skills with their neighbors. This will be done through neighborhood workshops on composting, with support from Grant County Solid Waste and the WSU Master Gardener Program. The classes will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Fire Hall in Moses Lake. All instructors are leaders in composting from around the state. For more information, contact Erik Lampi, WSU Grant/Adams Area Master Gardener Coordinator, 509-754-2011 ext. 413, or Joan Melvin, Grant County Solid Waste, at 509-754-6082. Spaces are limited, pre-registration is required. To request an application, go online to <http://grant-adams.wsu.edu/gardener>.

WSU Grant/Adams County Extension Agents

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Karen M. Lewis:	Tree Fruit, Grape Horticulture
Andy McGuire:	Ag Systems, Cereal Crops
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Carrie H. Wohleb:	Vegetables, Vegetable Seed

Layout and design provided by Jenelle Kerner, a member of the WSU Grant/Adams Extension team.

World Class. Face to Face.

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