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Back to School; Time to Recharge

By Rondi Hillstrom Davis and Janell Sewall Oakes

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The back−to−school shopping is done. Brand new pencils, colored markers, and notebooks fill my daughter's back pack. I've cleaned off the refrigerator in preparation for the new onslaught of pictures and class notices. School's started. She is excited to be back amongst her friends. I find myself in the everyday routine of waking up in the dark, fixing breakfast and packing lunches. Even though my daughter is old enough to drive herself to school this year, I still rush out the door behind her dressed in sweat pants and no makeup. After a quick work out and a shower, my work day finally begins. It's good to be back in the routine.

But, back−to−school is also time to recharge the parenting batteries. The kids are gone until at least 3:00. The house is quiet. I actually get some work done for the first time in 3 months. I've signed up for an art class at the local university. I have time for lunch with my girlfriends.

This month, why not celebrate back−to−school by taking a few minutes for yourself? Put on your favorite CD and take a long leisurely, uninterrupted bath. Why not go for coffee with the girls or host a brunch for your neighborhood friends? Try something decadent, just for mom.

Foaming Chocolate Milk Bath Sachets

Enjoy a relaxing, aromatic moment to yourself.

Ingredients: 1 cup baking soda 1 cup instant nonfat dry milk 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder 2 tablespoons cinnamon 2 tablespoons cream of tartar 2 tablespoons cornstarch Vintage handkerchiefs or Pretty 10−inch square scraps of fabric Ribbon

Directions: Mix all of the ingredients together. Place about 3 tablespoons on the center of a pretty cloth handkerchief. Tie the bundle with a piece of ribbon. Hang the sachet over the bathtub faucet and let warm water run through it. Store the extra milk bath in an attractive airtight jar. It will keep up

to 6 months.

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Rondi Hillstrom Davis and Janell Sewall Oakes are the co−authors of the award−winning book Together: Creating Family Traditions. To check out their website that's jam packed with family ideas, visit

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A New School Year

By Kimberly Chastain

Depending on where you live school will be starting this month or next month. A new school year is usually exciting and scary at the same time. Most children won't admit it, but they are ready to get back to school and see their friends. As much as I love not having a rigid schedule in the summer, I do miss the structure of the school year. We get up later in the summer and go to bed later as well.

When you think of a new School Year what are your first thoughts? Back to school shopping for clothes and school supplies. A big transition from elementary to middle school, or to high school, even college. A new teacher who you heard is strict or not strict enough? There can often be lots of anxiety with a new school year for parents as well as children.

Can I offer a few suggestions for your back to school list? Remember whose children they are. Yes they are our children, but they are God's children. He cares about them and loves them more than we ever could. Pray for your children. Pray for their academics, choice of friends, study habits, and wisdom to make Godly choices. Pray for their teachers. If their teachers are not Christians, pray that God can use you to be an example to their teachers. Pray for the administrators in your child's school. Pray for the safety of your child and all the children at their school. Pray that your children will see a Godly example in you, with how you handle school difficulties or problems with your children. Begin praying with other mothers for their children as well. We don't have to carry the burden alone. Above all remember God is in control. I often have a difficult time remembering that principle.

In closing, God is a mighty God and he cares about our concerns. I often pray on the way to taking my children to school. I pray when my children are having difficulties with friends. God cares about everything in our lives and He truly cares about our children. My mother is a prayer warrior for my children and myself. May we all become prayer warriors for our children. Take your problems to Him

and leave them there.

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Kimberly M. Chastain, MS, LMFT is the Christian Working Mom Coach and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who specializes in helping Christian women make the most of their lives. She is the author of the on−line course, "I Can't Say No" and Pearls of Encouragement for Christian Working Moms, a free e−book. If you suffer from "I Can't Say `No" Syndrome, visit Kimberly's site today for the details on an exciting email course that's sure to set you free!

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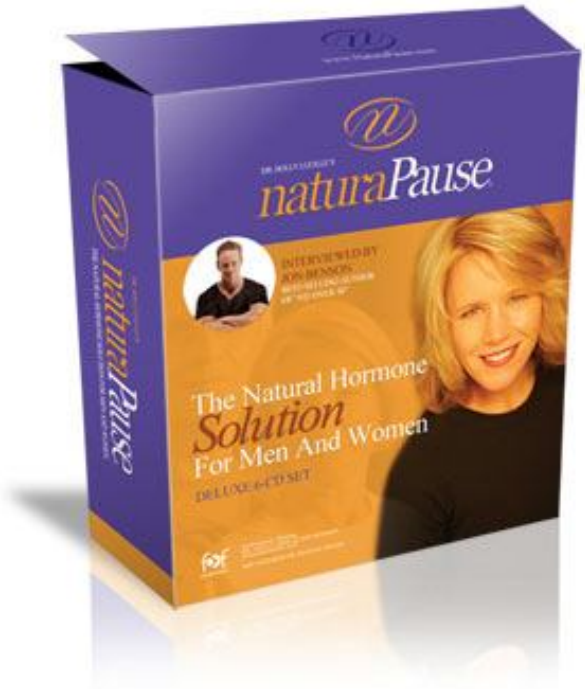

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