

Celebrate Spring With Your Children!

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By Cyndi Roberts

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The days are getting longer, the grass is getting greener, wildflowers are blooming — it must be spring!

It's a great time to get outdoors with your children. Try these ideas for fun activities.

1. Just take a drive. Check out a book from the library on wildflowers in your area and pile everyone in the car! Get off the beaten path, so you can cruise slow enough to check out the scenery. See how many wildflowers you can identify.

Take your camera along and snap pictures of the kids and the wildflowers. It might even be fun to pick a few and take them home and press them. These pressed flowers can be used in craft projects or just a collection as a way to remember a fun day!

Look around as you drive; spring is a time of rebirth. You may be lucky enough to spot baby calves or newborn colts.

2. If you live in or near a city that has one, visit the zoo. Usually, the admission is low and this is a trip the children always enjoy. Take a picnic and stop at a park on the way. Some zoos have a picnic area on their grounds. And be sure to carry water for thirst-quenching instead of buying expensive, unhealthy sodas at the concessions.

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3. Let the kids plant their own garden in a corner of your yard. It needn't be a large spot. Just enough room to plant a few beans, or maybe a couple of tomato plants. Even very young children can help and they do love to watch things grow!

If you don't have a yard, don't despair. Plant a bean or tomato in a pot. All you need is a sunny spot to set it, on your porch or patio. You can even put it inside in a sunny window.

4. Put up a birdfeeder in your backyard or on your patio. Birdfeeders are not too expensive, but here's an idea for making one of your own. It's easy and the kids can help.

Buy a fresh coconut and cut a 2-inch hole in the side, near the top. Drain the juice and scrape out the meat. Drill a small hole in the top and also in the bottom. Insert an eye bolt in the top hole and secure with a nut inside and out. Fill the feeder and hang it up!

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Preserved Children

Take 1 large field, half a dozen children, 2 or 3 small dogs, a pinch of brook and some pebbles. Mix the children and dogs well together; put them on the field, stirring constantly. Pour the brook over the pebbles; sprinkle the field with flowers; spread over all a deep blue sky and bake in the sun. When brown, set away to cool in the bathtub.

Cyndi Roberts is the editor of the bi-weekly newsletter "1 Frugal Friend 2 Another", bringing you practical, money-saving tips, recipes and ideas. Visit her online at <http://www.cynroberts.com> to subscribe and receive the Free e-course, "Taming the Monster Grocery Bill".

Flowers For U

By John Francis

There are many times when flowers are the perfect gift. There are specific occasions when flowers add just the right touch. Flowers are also used for decorating at weddings, receptions and parties.

Who doesn't like to receive flowers? Unless you have an allergy, flowers are one of the favorite gifts to

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give and receive.

There are birthday flowers, anniversary flowers, get well flowers, I'm sorry flowers, and new baby flowers. You can send flowers to remember special dates, to celebrate new homes and to wish people well with a new job or business.

Christmas flowers look beautiful above the fireplace or mantle. A Thanksgiving bouquet makes the table complete and an Easter basket loaded with tulips and other spring flowers looks lovely on the coffee table. Put a vase of Valentine roses next to your bed or send your Irish friend a St. Paddy's bouquet filled with bright flowers and greenery.

Even a vase of daisies brighten up the darkest winter day. Order flowers to welcome spring and to celebrate a graduation. Flowers can make an ordinary day less than ordinary and just a small bouquet makes a thoughtful gift.

A baptism is a wonderful time for a special bouquet. First communion or a confirmation is even more beautiful when flowers are sent.

Time for a wedding? You can choose from the most exquisite flower arrangements. Use flowers to decorate the church for the service. Plan gorgeous flowers for the bride and for all the attendants. Don't forget the groom and all the other family members and friends. You can use flowers at the receptions, too. Flowers will look wonderful on the tables and placed around the room.

If you are planning a party you may want to use flowers. Fresh flowers perk up a table and add flair to any party. You can use flowers in vases, bouquets, with candles and other decorating items.

Don't forget the other things that can be added to flower orders. You might have an occasion that calls for flowers and balloons, flowers and cookies, flowers and stuffed animals, etc.

For an excellent selection of flowers you should begin your search online. There are many sites that have fantastic flower arrangements and bouquets. You will be able to look at all kinds of flowers and then choose which ones you want.

Flowers can be used for many gifts and occasions. Don't forget the flowers when you need a gift or want to celebrate a special day or plan a party.

Everything you need to know from silk to real flowers.

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