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Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Creating a Family Identity

By Ginny Warren

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CREATING A FAMILY IDENTITY

Everyone who has a family has stories to share. Family traditions, quotes and tall tales are valuable tools that can be used to help create a unique family identity. It gives us a sense of where we came from, our values, our sense of humor, our history and sense of belonging to something comfortable, unique and bigger than ourselves. Our family's faith and foundation is transferred to us by other, usually older, family members, and is important to us as we carve out our place in the big world. The most obvious and sometimes most difficult way to create a family identity is by taking the time to talk to our children, really talk to them, at length, about ourselves, our family growing up, and what their grandparents and great grandparents were like. Why is this so difficult? Because now, more than ever we are shuttling our kids from one activity to another, breathlessly throwing fast food at them and sending them off to bed with no more than, "Brush your teeth," in the way of conversation. We drive here and there listening to talk radio while our kids are plugged into video games and MP3 players with headphones that further distance them from their siblings sitting right next to them.

In order to enhance your ability to create a family identity, you don't need to quit everything and homeschool your children, although that works for some who are called to that lifestyle. Family traditions are important to building the family identity and seem to come naturally with holidays and birthdays. However, so can implementing things as simple as having no electronic entertainment on Mondays in order to enjoy more productive time together.

A half hour, bedtime tuck-in with stories, private talks and prayers will nurture a relationship and deepen the children's sense of belonging to something bigger and more important than themselves. Working as a team on a project such as gardening for Grandma, volunteering together at a community food bank, or making home made gift wrap can all enhance your family identity and relationships. Throughout your day you can say things to your children such as, "I'm so glad we live in a family that can talk about anything!" or "I love that my children are each others' best friends!" When correcting your children, gently point out that, "Our family doesn't call each other names," or "We don't spit on the playground," or "Our family likes to be polite, kind, or helpful to others."

Camping as a family is an activity that has stood the test of time when it comes to knitting families together. What better time to share family history and stories than around a campfire while enjoying s'mores and the clean mountain air?

Creating a Family Identity

There are countless ways to create your family identity and instill that identity into your children. Use your creativity to think of things that will work for your family members' interests and schedules. Make what you choose an integral part of all of your lives. It will enrich your children's lives, and create an important foundation for your family identity.

Try a few of these ideas or some of your own and you may be surprised at the way it sparks a new depth to the relationships in your family and a deeper understanding of who you; The Smiths, The Coronados, The Demchaks...really are and where you fit into this busy, confusing, big, beautiful world. Visit "stories" at <http://www.familytree4u.com> to see more family related articles and funny stories.
Ginny Warren 2/04

Ginny Warren is a work at home Mom, and owner of Family Tree 4-U creator of personalized, illustrated family trees. She enjoys family activities, the out doors and freelance writing.

Fighting Identity Theft

By James H. Dimmitt

Chances are good that you know someone who has been victimized by the fastest growing crime – identity theft. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported that there were 10 million cases of identity theft in 2002 alone. It's estimated that someone's identity is stolen every 79 seconds.

The bad news is with increasing amounts of personal information available to an experienced identity thief, it shows few signs of slowing down. The good news is that identity fraud is now a federal crime with stiff penalties for those who perpetrate these crimes.

Here are a few simple steps you can take now to minimize your risk:

- 1) Check your credit report annually, if not more often. Most victims of identity theft don't realize they've been victimized until 14 months after the crime. By then the damage is done and you will spend a significant amount of time and money trying to correct it.
- 2) Keep your Social Security number private. Do not have it printed on your personal checks or drivers license. Do not share it with anyone, including merchants, unless they can provide a good reason for having it. Once someone has your Social Security number they have the key to unlocking your identity and using it fraudulently.
- 3) Shred offers for pre-approved credit cards that you receive by mail. Do the same with any receipts that contain account numbers or your Social Security number. Identity thieves are not afraid to go "dumpster diving" in order to obtain your personal information.

Identity theft has become the fastest growing crime because it is the most profitable crime. On average, the loss from identity theft is about \$18,000.00. Taking these precautions now can you save you from becoming another statistic in the fight against identity theft.

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James H. Dimmitt

James is editor of "TO YOUR CREDIT", a weekly free newsletter. Subscribe to the newsletter by visiting

. He is also author of "Identity Theft – How to Avoid

Becoming the Next Victim!" available at

Fighting Identity Theft

What's Your Identity?

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A new career will change who you are

Your Identity Speaks Loudly...What Are You Saying?

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