

# Work and Family

January 2002

COMMUNIQUE

Volume V Number

January 21, 2002 – Martin Luther King Jr.'s  
Birthday Observed

## Happy New Year

**Begin The New Year Right...** If you do not have a destination, you will never get there. Setting goals is simply a long-term method of keeping track of your time. A goal is a dream with a deadline.

### New Year's Resolutions

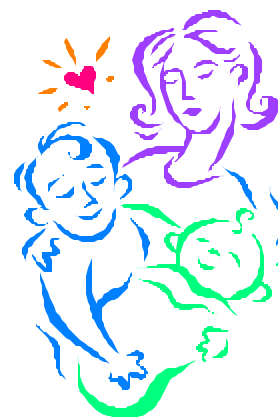
Each January we all set goals for ourselves and some succeed, but the statistics of success are not favorable when it comes to New Year's resolutions. Twenty-five percent of all resolutions fail within the first week. Only nineteen percent lasts for two years. Acknowledging the need to change is the first step in a successful resolution. Next, plan how you will achieve your goal, reward yourself along the way, especially when you beat obstacles or meet expectations. If you do relapse, don't beat yourself up and don't give up. Pick up where you left off and figure out what triggered the set back. Many adults make their resolutions each year based on health and fitness goals, often the same

resolution each year. You may want to set a physical goal and find another trait to alter that will allow more time and less stress thus allowing more time for health and fitness. Procrastination is the root of much frustration. Whatever you set as your New Year's resolution, invest a few dollars and purchase some resources to help you get started. Buy a book or guide to assist you through the change. There is a wide variety of good self help books on the market, or stop by the library and research your life trait and how to make your desired change a success.

### Living With Adult Children

More adult children are staying in the parental home longer before moving out on their own, and many adult children are returning to the ancestral home after living away. The reason for both of these trends is almost entirely economic; the adult child simply cannot *afford* to live independently. If you find yourself in this situation, you should draw up a lease between the two of you to lay out how you will live together. This will eliminate the illusion that your home is a hotel, which includes laundry and maid services, and will eliminate unfair curfews on the adult child. Decide up front if any rent will be required and which chores they will assume. Even if the rent is not needed, you may want to set the fee and deposit the money into a savings account to give your child towards their next residence.

## Effective Communication Skills For Parents and Older Siblings



Sending the right message to children is not always easy. Parents and older siblings should be aware of the example they set for younger children by avoiding the following traps and instead making sure to portray a kind gentle person:

- Ignoring – too many parents ignore their kids when they speak. It frustrates the kids and is a bad habit to pass on to someone. Make sure you listen to children when they speak to you, acknowledging what they say. If you catch your child ignoring someone else, point it out to him or her.
- Sarcasm – sarcastic children are the worst to be around; they appear to be disrespectful and hateful. If your family has a reputation for sarcasm, try to curb it as best you can. Answering children's questions seems the perfect opportunity to use sarcasm, but the children won't get it, and they will learn an awful trait.
- Bullying – older children quickly realize they are bigger and stronger than younger children. If you see an older child bullying a younger child, point out what they are doing and why it should not happen. This is the perfect opportunity to teach kindness.

## Parent Care

Your overriding concern for your parent's health right now might be stroke, cancer, dementia, or heart disease. But don't lose sight of your parent's more mundane complaints such as blurry vision, incontinence, and restless nights. The doctors will attend to your parent's severe illnesses, but are apt to ignore those other ailments. And they can add tremendously to your parent's discomfort, dependency, and despondency. Poor hearing may distance them from people they love, itchy skin may keep them awake at night, or a crippled knee will mean they cannot do the activities they enjoy. Don't simply pass these off as signs of old age because, in most cases, something can be done to prevent, cure, or manage the discomfort. A few symptoms worthy of looking into are: vision problems, hearing loss, insomnia, overmedication, alcohol abuse, hypothermia, skin problems, and mouth ailments.

## Identifying & Understanding ADHD



*Maybe You Know My Kid* by Mary Fowler is a guide for parents to help them try to

identify, understand, and most importantly work with children diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. *Maybe You Know My Kid* describes some of the scientific advances and clinical breakthroughs and discusses the recent changes in the education of children suffering from ADHD. Mary Fowler has written a candid and dramatic guide for parents just like her, whose children have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

## When No means No...

When kids ask you to explain yourself, they deserve an answer. But when your answer is followed by a repeated "Why?" the child is expressing their opposition to your decision and is trying to get you to change your mind. Trying to reason at this point will be frustrating to both of you, and the best way to handle the situation is with a firm "No". Often, parents that reason excessively find it hard to say no because they feel that failing to give an answer would be disrespectful to their child. The child on the other hand is focusing on changing their parent's mind and at times makes it a game of trying to do so. If the child's tactics are affirmed, they will only increase their efforts in the future. Try turning the tables and ask your child "Why do you think you can't?"

ORGANIZE YOUR DAY – One of the best ways to take charge of your time is to organize your day by breaking it down into segments. Work in each block of time without interruption and be sure to take a break in between. In order for this to work effectively, you must prioritize what is important. Focus on the task that will bring you closer to your goals and do not waste time.