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March 2011

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The month of March is synonymous with Spring Break. Whether you have school age kids or not, you likely remember the anticipation of Spring Break as a student yourself.

Spring Break signals the end of one season and the start of another. It also serves as a much needed break during several months of hard academic focus.

I've been thinking about the need for a spring break for moms. We work hard and need to occasionally push the pause button for our own emotional, spiritual, and physical health.

However, the difference between a school spring break and a mom's spring break is who actually plans the dates and puts it on the calendar. In the case of the school spring break, the dates are planned by the school administration and by default, they are placed on our family's calendar. When a mom takes any type of a break, she has to plan the dates and make it happen. No one will do it for her...she has to learn to do it herself.

You know, Jesus was a master at taking breaks. It says several times in the Bible that "Jesus withdrew from the crowds." If he needed a break, we most certainly need one, too!

So how does a busy mom make a "mom break" happen? Here are some strategies I've found to be helpful:

- **Get rid of the guilt.** Taking time for yourself is not selfish...it's actually part of your job as a mom. You can't take care of your family if you're running on empty.
- **Ask for help.** You won't be able to take a break without some help. Ask your husband, your mother, your mother-in-law. You can also work up a switch with another mom: she takes a break and you watch her kids and you take a break and she watches your kids.
- **Start small.** If you're not used to taking time for yourself, start with an evening out once a month. Once you see the value in taking a break, you'll probably find the need to do it more often.
- **Use Hearts at Home.** I was talking to a mom the other day who said, "Hearts at Home is my spring break trip!" Whether it's spring or fall, a Hearts at Home conference makes a great break for any mom. If there's a conference within driving distance for you, get it on your calendar and start planning today!

When I first became a mom, I found myself with an empty emotional fuel tank entirely too often. It wasn't healthy for me, my marriage, or my kids.

Now I've come to understand that taking a break is part of my job responsibility as a mom. No one's going to hand it to me...I've got to be proactive so I won't be reactive.

And when mommy's happy...everyone's happy!

Jill

Wife of Mark
Mom to Anne, Evan, Erica, Kolya, and Austin
Nana to 10-month-old Rilyn

Hearts at Home helps you...



...love your kids by loving your husband.

...set suitable boundaries between your kids' wants and needs.

...prevent an emotional rollercoaster when you place your value in Christ rather than your children's behavior.

Five Lifeskills You Can Teach Your Kids on Spring Break



Have you ever thought of your home as a school? There are dozens of life skills kids need to have to be fully functioning adults someday. They won't learn how to do them if we don't provide them instruction and opportunity! If you're not going somewhere this spring break, why not use the week to teach your kids one or more of these life skills?

Laundry

Children in preschool and early grade school can learn how to sort clothes by color, match socks, and fold simple clothing. Older grade school children, junior high and high schoolers need to know how to do laundry from start to finish.

Cooking

Can your older grade schooler or junior high student prepare a simple meal on their own? Has your high school student ever been given the opportunity to plan, shop, and prepare a meal? Take the time to teach them the skills they will need when they eventually live on their own.

Baking

Have you relied on prepared cookie dough or ready mixes when it comes to baking? If so, take the opportunity to teach your children to follow a recipe, measure ingredients, and bake some goodies.

Hospitality

Children do not learn how to handle introductions, extend hospitality, or even offer a visitor a glass of water unless they have been taught the basics of hospitality. Invite a

friend or a family over for the day and take the time to instruct your child on how to be a good host before the guests arrive.

Cleaning

Do your children know how to dust and vacuum? Can they clean a bathroom? Younger grade school children can learn to dust while older children and teens need to know how to vacuum and clean bathrooms. Don't just turn them loose on the job, show them how to do it and work beside them while they are learning.



It's Hearts at Home's Mother's Day gift to your church or moms group!

When you order 30 or more copies of the book *Real Moms...Real Jesus* between now and Mother's Day, this regularly priced \$14 book is just \$5 a book!

Many churches and moms groups like to present their moms with a gift or special offer for Mother's Day. *Real Moms...Real Jesus* is the perfect gift for any mom in any season of life.

Whether her kids are toddlers or teenagers or whether her kids have kids of their own, *Real Moms...Real Jesus* offers a fresh perspective on Jesus' life on this earth. She'll be glad to know that Jesus is not an unattainable deity, but truly a Friend who understands.

Call 309-828-MOMS to purchase your copies today!

Ready to revolutionize your mothering?

Don't miss the
2011 Hearts at Home Conferences!



Walk-in Registration is available for the National Conference this Friday and Saturday, March 11-12!

- Click [HERE](#) for walk-in registration information for the National Conference.
- Click [HERE](#) to register for the October 7-8, Western Conference in Colorado Springs, CO.
- Click [HERE](#) to register for the November 4-5, North Central Conference in Rochester, MN.

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