



1509 N. Clinton Blvd. · Bloomington, IL 61701 · (309) 828-MOMS · hearts@hearts-at-home.org

June 2011

Find *daily* encouragement from Hearts at Home:

Facebook:

[Hearts at Home](#)
[Jill Fleener Savage](#)

Twitter:

[Hearts at Home](#)
[jillsavage](#)

Blog and Website:

[Hearts at Home](#)
[Jill Savage](#)

Links to other Hearts at Home Resources:

[Events](#)
[Books](#)
[eCommunity](#)
[Heart Shoppe](#)
[HeartBeat Radio Program](#)
[Moms Group Leaders](#)



I live in Normal, Illinois.

Yes, there really is such a place. And yes, we get all the jokes about being "normal" or "abnormal" in this place called Normal.

Even living in a place called Normal, however, there have been times I've wondered if I'm normal.

Are my experiences normal?
Are my children normal? Are

the struggles I'm going through in my marriage normal? Are my emotions normal? What about this feeling of being overwhelmed...is that normal?

When I joined my first moms group, I experienced honest conversation about the realities of mothering, marriage, and homemaking. I found out that I wasn't as alone as I thought I was. And do you know what? I found out that I am normal!

Can you relate to any of these?

- Your marriage has gone through or is going through a rough time.

- Your child has thrown a temper tantrum in the middle of the grocery store.
- You know you love your child, but you honestly don't like him or her right now.
- You want to know where you can resign from being a mom.
- Your teenager has yelled "I hate this family."
- You wonder if there will be more month than money.
- Your child is making poor choices.
- You can't remember the last time you were alone in your own home.

If you can relate to any of these, I have good news! ***You're normal!*** Those are all common feelings and struggles that moms face.

Sometimes just knowing we're normal can help us know we're not alone. And you don't even have to live in a place called Normal to experience that!

Joining you in the journey,

Jill

Wife of Mark

Mom to Anne, Evan, Erica, Kolya, and Austin

Nana to 1-year-old Rilyn

Summer Travel Tips

Every parent needs a few tricks up their sleeve when traveling. Try some of these ideas to make the trip enjoyable for everyone.

- Stock up on easy snack items. Crackers, fruit roll-ups, and granola bars all travel very well. This will save you both time and money.
- If you will be traveling for quite a lengthy time, visit the Dollar Store and stock up on small trinket toys. Wrap each item individually and place all the "presents" in a bag. Once every hour or so, allow the kids to reach into the grab bag and pick a surprise.



- Pack a bottle of bubbles where you can access them easily (make sure and put the bottle in a zipper-seal sandwich bag in case of leakage!) If traveling by air, bubbles make the time go by quickly while waiting to board the plane. If traveling by car, turn the air conditioning on high and hold the bubble wand in front of the vent. Young children love it when the car fills with bubbles.
- Are you on a tight budget? Determine ahead of time what the boundaries will be on souvenirs and food. One family communicated there would be no kids meals and only water to drink when they ate out. By choosing to drink water, rather than carbonated beverages, they saved over \$250 on their two-week auto trip!
- Encourage reading by packing age appropriate books.
- Introduce your children to the joy of audio stories. Focus on the Family produces "Adventures in Odyssey" audiotapes that children age 5 through adult can enjoy. Visit www.whitsend.org for details.
- Pack a backpack of toys for the kids to play with during the vacation.
- If you have school age children, don't forget a deck of cards. This is a great time to teach them to play spades, euchre, or solitaire.
- Make your vacation a history lesson. Have the kids look up your destination (and other cities you might visit along the way) on the Internet. Print out information on the history of the area and place it in a folder or three-ring-binder. Use this to foster discussions as you travel.
- Encourage the kids to send postcards to friends and family. Bring along postage and addresses from home to simplify the process.

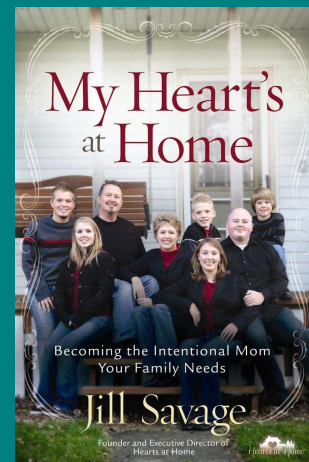
Need to know you're not alone?

Check out these summer Facebook studies that will help you improve your mom skills:



Click on the image of whichever book study you'd like to join to "Like" the page.

June



July

Then grab the book off your bookshelf or order it online and join the discussion!

A "Mom Revolution" Quote for You

"It may not be well with your circumstances, but it can be well with your soul."

*Jennifer Rothschild
2011 Hearts at Home Conference Speaker*

Do you have a favorite Hearts at Home book?

Organize your own Hearts at Home Go-To Group!

A *Go-To Group* is a small group of moms who read a Hearts at Home book together and then meet once a week to discuss one or two chapters.

It's a great way to read a book *and* benefit from the encouragement, wisdom, and experience of other moms!

How do you form a Go-To Group? It's easy! Just follow these five steps!



1. Select one of the Hearts at Home books listed below.
2. Invite 4-6 moms to join your Go-To Group.
3. Have each mom purchase her own book.
4. Set your summer meeting dates.
5. Email imecum@hearts-at-home.org and let us know what book you are reading and where you are located. When you do, your group will be registered in a drawing to win a 20-minute Skype conversation with Hearts at Home founder Jill Savage!

The following Hearts at Home books include a leader's guide to help you lead your Go-To Group!

- [*Balance That Works When Life Doesn't*](#) by Susie Larson
- [*The Mom I Want to Be*](#) by Susie Eller
- [*Becoming a Chief Home Officer*](#) by Allie Pleiter
- [*Real Moms...Real Jesus*](#) by Jill Savage
- [*Got Teens?*](#) by Jill Savage and Pam Farrel
- [*The Mother Load*](#) by Mary Byers
- [*My Hearts at Home*](#) by Jill Savage
- [*Professionalizing Motherhood*](#) by Jill Savage
- [*Facing Every Mom's Fears*](#) by Allie Pleiter

If you are an experienced group leader and don't need a built-in leader's guide with discussion questions, the following books are also great Go-To Group books!

- [*Living With Less So Your Family Has More*](#) by Mark and Jill Savage
- [*Getting and Staying Organized*](#) by Karen Ehman
- [*Growing Grateful Kids*](#) by Susie Larson
- [*Motherhood...the Guilt that Keeps on Giving*](#) by Julie Barnhill
- [*Mama Said There'd Be Days Like These*](#) by Jenn Doucette

Need a break?

A Hearts at Home conference allows you to step away from the urgent to focus on the important.



REGISTER NOW!

for the Western Conference, October 7-8, in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

REGISTER NOW!

for the North Central Conference, November 4-5, in Rochester, Minnesota.

Don't have a conference close enough to attend?

REGISTER NOW!

for a Conference To-Go!

Behind the scenes...

Jill Savage may be the face of Hearts at Home, but she doesn't do it alone. Under the leadership of the Board of Directors, Jill leads the Executive Team.

Jill serves as the Founder and CEO. This Normal mom has three kids who are married and two teens, age 17 and 14, still at home.

Brenda Paccamonti serves as the Executive Director of Resources. She's in charge of all the great resources you enjoy at Hearts at Home: conferences, website, Facebook, the Heart Shoppe, and more! Brenda and her husband Brian are getting ready to adjust to a new "normal" as they enter the empty nest season of life after launching their two young adult children into adulthood.

Lisa Reilly is the Executive Director of Operations. Lisa handles all the parts of Hearts at Home that are very important but take place behind-the-scenes: IT, Administration, Development, Human Resources, and Finance. Lisa's "normal" life includes three sons ages 20, 18, and 15.



L-R: Lisa Reilly, Brenda Paccamonti, Jill Savage

Hearts at Home
1509 N. Clinton Blvd.
Bloomington, IL 61701
Email: hearts@heartsathome.org
Phone: 309 828 MOMS
Web: <http://www.heartsathome.org>