



# Work and Family

## Dates to Remember

March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day  
March 20 – First Day of Spring

and immuno-compromised persons – should not live in homes with reptiles.

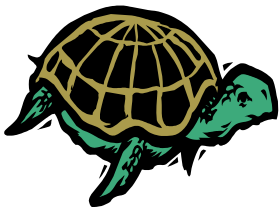
- If you are expecting a child, remove any pet reptiles from your home.
- Pet reptiles should not be kept in childcare centers.



## Family Health Issues

### Beware When Choosing A Family Pet

Pet reptiles may hold a place in your heart, but they have no love for your health. Most reptiles and amphibians carry salmonella, which can cause fever, diarrhea, and meningitis. About 93,000 cases of reptile-associated salmonellosis occur yearly in the United States, and some even result in death.

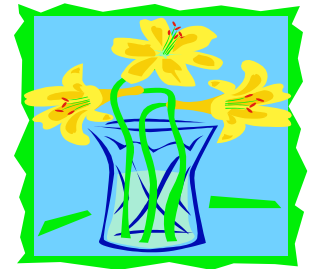


The Humane Society of the United States warns against owning reptiles as pets. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests these guidelines:

- Ask your pet store owner, veterinarian, or pediatrician about the risk of acquiring salmonellosis from reptiles.
- After handling reptiles or their cages, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Do not wash their dishes, cages, or aquariums in the kitchen sink. Clean any bathtub used for this purpose thoroughly and disinfect with bleach.
- Keep these pets out of food preparation areas to prevent contamination.
- Anyone at increased risk for infection or serious complications from salmonellosis – such as children younger than 5 years old

## Flower Therapy

As an early welcome to Spring, bestow a handful of happiness on a loved one by using nature’s feel-good treatment: flowers.



This commonsense gesture is now scientific fact, says Jeannette Haviland-Jones, Ph.D., a professor of psychology and director of the Human Emotions Lab at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. Haviland-Jones led three studies that showed flowers not only make you smile immediately but also have a longer term effect: chasing away the blues. The studies included men and women representing various age groups. What a difference a bright bouquet of scents and colors can make! Recipients expressed a heightened sense of enjoyment and satisfaction in life. And with flowers around, they made more efforts to connect with family and friends. Perhaps a few blooms on your desk will sweeten your workday or that of a co-worker.

## Elder Care Issues

If you are contemplating your elder’s need for assisted living, the Eldercare Locator Service (800/677-1116) can provide you with free information on the Agency on Aging nearest you.

The agency can then give you information on the assisted-living facilities in your area.

## **Operation Organization**

Is your desk a mountain of files, computer printouts, empty coffee cups, and who knows what else? Is your personal calendar open to a page from last week? Are phone messages, notes on scraps of paper, and half-finished reports scattered



among magazines and stacks of unread mail? If your desk is in this condition, the clutter probably has caused you to forget an appointment, miss deadlines, or lose important documents. If you're on yesterday's calendar page, you

need to organize your desktop. Organizing your desk will help you become more productive and less stressed. Solving the problem of a disorganized desk will be easier if you follow these hints:

- Assess your needs. Do you really need a desk? If a desk isn't there, you can't mess it up. Perhaps a round table to write at is all you require. Is your desk too big? Unneeded space is space to clutter up. If your desk is wider than an arms' length from your chair, it's too big.
- Open your desk drawers and look at the contents. Get rid of all unused and unnecessary items.
- Divide and conquer. Use a drawer organizer to keep frequently used items visible and in order.
- Work on only one project at a time. Put the rest out of sight; they will only distract you. You should be able to see the top of your desk.
- Don't clear off your desk by shoving everything into a drawer or in one big pile. You will waste valuable time sorting through the stack before you can work on any one item or project again.
- Use a computer and file as much information as possible on it. Strive for a "paperless" desk. When creating file names, be consistent so information can be easily located.
- Set up a good filing system. You should be able to find the information you want in a few seconds. Clearly label your files.
- Clean out your files periodically to eliminate clutter. Ninety-five percent of all filed materials more than one year old are never referred to

again. If you don't need it, put it in storage or throw it out.

- Use your wastebasket. Throw out regularly what you don't use and don't need. If possible, try to recycle.
- Keep a calendar planner on your desk in order to prioritize your daily tasks and keep track of messages and notes.

## **Helping Children Build Self-Esteem**

Self-esteem is one of the critical factors in helping children and teens avoid unhealthy and high-risk behaviors, including alcohol and drug use. Maintaining a sense of self-worth, especially in the teenage years, can be difficult amidst multiple changes and increasing peer pressure. Here are some ways you can help:

1. Take your teens worries seriously. Respect his or her feelings.
2. Catch your child doing something right. Praise his or her strengths.
3. Encourage problem solving and decision-making. Congratulate your child when he or she makes sound choices. Help your child understand the consequences when wrong decisions are made – do so in a constructive manner.
4. Listen without judging and, above all, without yelling or losing your temper.
5. Choose your battles. Too much control and strictness invites rebellion. Not everything has the same amount of importance or impact. Be loose with the little stuff.
6. Give your teens responsibilities at home and express your appreciation for his or her contributions to the family.
7. Learn more about your child's interests. Show you respect what is important to him or her.
8. Have positive & reasonable expectations.
9. *ALWAYS* show your love, even when it's difficult. It's critical to your child's sense of security and self-esteem.

