

Work and Family

April 2003

COMMUNIQUE

Volume VI Number 7

Dates to Remember

April 06 – Daylight-Savings Time Begins

April 17 – Passover

April 18 – Good Friday

April 20 – Easter Sunday

April 23 – Secretary's Day



Hey Kids, Lighten Up!



New research from Akron General Medical Center in Ohio found that a quarter of 400 fourth- and fifth-graders in Ohio were lugging books weighing more than 20% of their body weight. That's comparable to a 180-pound man lugging a small refrigerator! Children carrying more than 10% to 20% of their weight risk neck and back problems, doctors say. If you can, arrange for kids to get two copies of their big books. Some notes for the backpackers in your life:

- Use both shoulder straps to avoid muscle strain and curvature of the spine.
- Get backpacks with abdominal belts, which help distribute the weight evenly.
- Keep heaviest books closer to the body and arm straps comfortably snug, so the pack sits 2" above the waist.
- Bend using both knees – not at the waist – when wearing or lifting a backpack.

Is Your College Grad Still at Home?

Companies expect to hire 4% fewer college grads in 2003 than they did in 2002, says the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Some advice for unemployed graduates:

1. Speak up – ask your barber, doctors, dentist, dry cleaner and anyone else with a large client base if they know any executives that will hire new graduates.
2. Work for \$1 – Your first job need not be your dream job, says Jeri Sedlar, a New York executive recruiter. Find someone who can teach you key skills and then offer to work for next to nothing. The experience you gain will be invaluable.
3. Wow them – on interviews, emphasize that you're big on details and follow-through, says Adrienne Alberts of the Johns Hopkins University Career Center. "Employers hire now if they are confident they can rely on you," she says.
4. Know your niche – focuscareer.com's interactive online program helps grads map out career plans.



Helping the Elder Settle In

After a move, an elder must make an enormous psychological adjustment. Many times a move involves giving up physical reminders of a lifetime of experiences – a home, a car, furniture, mementos, a way of doing things, perhaps a hobby such as gardening. In the new environment someone else may be setting the

schedule for meals and sleep. Suddenly, the elder is asked to accept and conform to different meals, different shopping, other forms of transportation and other living routines. All this comes after decades of making individual choices, of living alone or with a spouse. Is it any wonder the elder may feel uprooted and disoriented? Some elders will feel overwhelmed and lonely. They may withdraw regardless of attempts to make them feel wanted or secure, be up all hours of the night, become demanding, even act in ways that others find embarrassing. If your elder has difficulty, try to remember that it will probably take at least



ninety days for the elder to adjust to the new living arrangements. Intervention in this case is to help the person adapt. Think back to the first time you moved to a new school or a different city. Remember when you and your spouse moved to a

new neighborhood. How long did it take you to adjust and really feel comfortable in your new life? Give everyone involved in the move time to adjust. Everyone is under stress trying to work the kinks out of a totally new situation. If you feel unable to cope, get professional help. Keep up the faith, too! Remind each other that though the adjustment is difficult, it can be survived, and in time the trauma of moving may lead to a pleasurable new life.

Avoiding Medical Quackery

No one wants to be sick. And, sometimes it seems like it will take a "miracle" to make us well again. Unfortunately, every year millions of individuals search for medical "miracles" that will never happen. It is estimated that more than 10 billion dollars a year are spent on medical quackery, which preys on people's fears. Some ideas that work are:

- Be suspicious of miracle advertisements and avoid products advertised as "secret" remedies.
- Get documented evidence that proves the treatment works – and testimonials from "users" *do not* count. Ask about published

articles in reliable medical journals that support the effectiveness and safety of the method of treatment.

- Don't be anxious to part with your money. Quacks will usually want payment up front and insurance companies often do not pay for unproven therapy.
- Be cautious about new "cutting-edge" tests or medical procedures and "advanced medical techniques that are being suppressed by the medical establishment."
- Talk to your medical doctor about starting anything new and do not discontinue anything already prescribed without consulting them first. They can be your reality check against potentially dangerous and outrageous claims made by medical quacks.

Other resources for reliable information are:

1. National Council Against Health Fraud
www.ncahf.org
2. www.quackwatch.com
3. U.S. Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Room 1675, HFE-88
Rockville, MD 20857
Toll-free: (800) 532-4440
Fax: (301) 443-9767
Send a postcard, call, or fax your request for free pamphlets on more than 12 quackery subject (including "Quackery and the Elderly"), or visit the FDA website at www.fda.gov (choose publications).

