

Nurturing Ties

Fight Pain with Pals

Feel better with a little help from your friends: Strong social support can effectively ease chronic body pain and the depression that often accompanies it, according to a Spanish study of 117 subjects who had dealt with daily discomfort for at least six months.

52% of women felt re-energised when they talked to a girlfriend. The researchers also found that the more



solace patients received from loved ones, the more they actively looked for new ways to cope with their symptoms, bringing extra relief.

Camouflage Those Greens!

Getting your kid to enjoy his veggies is no longer a chore with these simple tips:

- Scatter cooked vegetables throughout pasta and then cover with marinara sauce.
- Grate carrots into tuna or chicken salad and stuff in a pita pocket.
- Make homemade pizza. Toss on sliced mushrooms and chopped



- broccoli before spreading on the cheese.
- Add cooked peas, corn and carrots to mashed potatoes.
- Top a baked potato with chopped broccoli and low-fat melted cheese.
- Make low-fat zucchini and carrot muffins.
- Serve "make-your-own tacos" and have different stations set up with lean ground meat like chicken or turkey, sliced tomatoes, shredded lettuce and carrots.
- Make a spinach dip with low-fat plain yogurt, low-fat sour cream and pureed cooked spinach. Dip with raw veggies like carrots, celery, peppers and zucchini or crackers.

So Tired!



Staying up late to Facebook, catch reruns of your favourite shows or battle mutant rats on Xbox 360 games – you may find that one (or all) of the above has become a part of your lifestyle. And it's not uncommon to hear people lament about how tired they are, burning the candles at both ends in the name of work or a combination of work and play.

UK University sleep researcher Neil Stanley was reported as saying

that over the past decade, there has been an increasing body of evidence that shows that sleep plays an important role in regulating weight and controlling appetite.

Adults are not the only ones to suffer the negative effects of sleep deprivation. Children who don't get their minimum hours of sleep face increased risks of developing obesity, diabetes, poor academic performance and behavioural problems.

Sources: *Lifewise*, *Prevention* and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Total Nutrition*

DISCLAIMER: Any information or advice given in this column is not intended to replace your counsellor's advice or services; neither does it represent that of the publication.

Develop an Attitude of Gratitude

If you wake up today with no pain, you're luckier than most.

If you've never known the dangers of war, loneliness of prison or hunger, you're better off than 500 million people in the world.

If you can follow your beliefs without persecution, you're luckier than three million people on this planet.

If your basic needs are covered, you're richer than 75% of the rest of the world.

If you have some savings, you're part of the 10% of the most prosperous people in the world.

If you saw your parents grow old together, you're almost unique.

If you smile and appreciate life, you're lucky because lots of people can but they don't.

If you have someone whose hand you can hold or can hug or even just a shoulder to cry on, be happy, you'll never be lonely.

If you can read this, you're blessed because more than two million people on the planet cannot read.

Dwell on your blessings and achieve higher goals for the benefit of yourself and others.

- Anonymous Author



e-PARENTING

Keeping Kids Safe in Social Networking Sites

What can be done to keep your kids safe online? Restricting your child from using any social networking site is impractical and perhaps a little excessive, so an alternative approach would be to educate your child about the potential risks these sites pose and how to stay safe when using them.

Here are some simple yet effective ways to let your child socialise online safely:

- **Carefully select which social networking site your child wants to join.** Most social networking sites will allow anybody to create a profile, but most have age restrictions that do not allow anyone under the age of 14 to join. If your teen's sole purpose is to keep in touch with friends, chances are all her friends will be on the same networking site.
- **Monitor your child's network usage.** It is not unreasonable to insist on knowing your child's password for logging onto any social networking site. This will help you keep track of whom she's talking to and the kind of information she's posting on her profile.

If you feel this is too invasive, create your own profile and

request your child as a friend. That way you can still monitor her profile without being overbearing or nosy. It is also reasonable to set limits on how much time your child spends on the sites each day.

- **Keep your child's personal information private.** Posting personal information makes it easier for online predators to learn your child's identity and to find him

offline. If your child is going to post personal information, make sure that he posts only those facts that he is comfortable with everyone knowing. Also remember: Once he posts information online, he can't take it back. Even deleted information may still exist in older versions of the site on others' computers.

- **Set the privacy settings to restrict access to your child's page.** Your child's friends will still be able to access and view her whole profile, but outside users and anyone who is not on her friend list will not.
- **Reject friend requests from anyone your child does not know.** Even if the requestor claims to be a friend of a friend, be wary of anyone your child has never met.
- **Be wary of strangers who want to meet in person.** The simplest solution to this issue is to refuse to let your child meet in person anyone she met online, unless you are present.
- **Report any suspicious behaviour.** If you or your child feels threatened by or uncomfortable about something online, report it to the social networking site and, if necessary, to the police.



Adapted from the article "What Is Your Teen Doing on MySpace and Facebook?" by Lindsay Hutton.