

Start 2003 on a family mission

You may feel a combination of exhaustion and relief now that the holiday season is over.

But are you really ready to tackle the challenges of the weekly routine just yet? Did you and your family resolve to do things differently in the New Year to make life easier in your household?



Celebrating family
Lisa Luckow-Healy

A good way to start off 2003 on the right family foot is to develop a family mission statement. Fine-tune your list of goals to firmly support each value of your statement. For instance, if one of the values of your mission statement is "Communication plays an integral role in our family," create a list of supporting goals to help remind each family member of how you plan to maintain this value. These might include:

- We share thoughts and ideas at the family dinner table.
- We practice patience when another family member is trying to convey a point we don't understand.
- We don't lie to each other, even if it means there are consequences for our actions.
- We regularly share our expectations of a goal or action.
- We share dreams and aspirations, and ways to help strive for them.
- We discuss what we perceive as fears, and talk about ways to overcome them.

LIST GOALS

Next, make a list of goals that will help your family attain or maintain these values. Talk about ways you will work together to achieve your values in your daily lives.

Your children's views may surprise and enlighten you to things you fail to notice because you are too busy to take the time to see them. You can all look at your list as a series of features and ben-

efits. For instance, the feature might be "the importance of spending quality family time together," while the benefits are "deeper communication and stronger family relationships."

The feature is a component of your family mission statement. The benefit is a goal of your family that helps everyone accomplish what's written in your statement.

Your mission statement doesn't have to be so specific that it falls to cover a broader range of meanings. It can encompass a range of family values including everything from financial goals to education to how you spend your family time together to expectations of each family member.

Present your ideas to your children during a family "round table" discussion. Ask them to share their thoughts. Compare the values everyone thinks are important to your family.

ON PAPER
Use one of your software programs to help you design your mission statement in a format symbolic of your family. If your family doesn't own a computer, or no one is computer savvy, you can just as easily write your statement down on a nice sheet of paper.

Once your statement is on paper, put it in a place where it will remind your family of its purpose on a regular basis. You may wish to frame it, then hang it on a wall or display it on a counter surface.

Another alternative is to mount it onto the front page of a new scrapbook. Place the scrapbook on a coffee table or in another high-traffic family area where it will get noticed on a regular basis.

Use the other scrapbook pages for photographs, memorabilia or journal entries that remind you of examples of your family mission statement.

When life throws your family a curve ball, or you get so busy you forget what's important, pull out your mission statement.

Remind everyone what you all set out to accomplish. Revise your routines, if necessary, to redirect your attention to your values and goals.

By establishing your family's mission statement at the onset of 2003, you can watch your family blossom now and for years to come.

To leave Lisa Luckow-Healy a message from a touch-tone phone about how you celebrate family, call (343) 953-2048, or e-mail your suggestions for future family topics to takehealy@comcast.net.

GARDEN CALENDAR

Royal Oak Garden Club
The Royal Oak Garden Club will meet 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 13, in the main floor auditorium of the Royal Oak Public Library, 222 E. 11 Mile, one block east of Main. The public may attend. Admission is free. The program will be Understanding Principles and Elements of Design, presented by

Jerome Raska and Robbin Welverton from Bloomington, IL. MSU advanced master gardeners will be available to answer questions. For more information, call MSU master gardener president Rose Kudron at (248) 288-4300, or e-mail advanced master gardener Dorel Martin at dcmartin1@aol.com.

Cactus and Succulent Society
The Michigan Cactus and Succulent Society will have a slide presentation. A trip to Baja, California, 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 12, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 814 N. Campbell in Royal Oak. Admission is free. For more information, call (248) 524-0227.

HOME CALENDAR

Redstone auction
The Frank H. Boon Gallery, 420 Enterprise Court in Bloomfield Hills, will auction the Ruth and Louis Redstone collection of pre-Columbian and ethnographic art, Amish and Iranian ceramics, and art pottery 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15. A preview will take place noon to 8 p.m. Friday and Monday, Jan. 10 and 13, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 14. Call (248) 332-1500 for more information.

Quilting
The Rochester Community House, 616 Ludlow, will offer an introduction to quilting class for six weeks beginning Thursday, Jan. 16. The sessions will take place 9-11 a.m. Thursdays (no class Jan. 30). Cost is \$60. Pre-registration is required, by mail or in person at the RCH. For more information on this class or others on the winter schedule, call (248) 651-0622 or visit www.rochestercommunityhouse.org.

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