

We celebrate two special days during May — **Mother's Day and International Day of the Midwife.** Take the time to celebrate women on both these occasions.

Bronwyn van Hooijdonk
Company Director

Mother's Day Sunday 13 May 2007

Mother's Day is celebrated to honor all mothers and express gratitude for the challenges they face in bringing up a child. It is a time of commemoration and celebration, a time of breakfast in bed, family gatherings, and crayon scribbled "I Love You's"

Most countries including US, Australia, Canada and India celebrate Mothers Day on the second Sunday of June.

Mothers Day came into being due to the efforts made by Ms Julia Ward Howe and Ms Anna Jarvis. The Resolution for having a dedicated 'Mother's Day was signed by US President Woodrow Wilson on May 8, 1914.

Since then people across the world have been celebrating Mothers Day with joy and devotion.

THE POWER OF TOUCH

Never underestimate the power of touch. A hand placed on your child's shoulder, a quick squeeze of the hand. These small gestures will stay with your child long after more "profound" expressions have faded from memory.

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antenatal classes in havelock north



topics covered include -
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hb doulas on **06 8778282** or **027 6775241**

held at 13 Porter Drive Havelock North
from 7-9pm Tuesday night

Mother

A halo that reflects a life of
wisdom, kindness and caring.
Eyes that sparkle with pride
and show how much she believes in you.
Shoulders that have been slept on
and wept on and
carried a world or two.
Arms that never run out of hugs.
Hands that know
just when to hold on
and when to let go.
A mind filled with amazing things,
from fairy tales to family tales
and long-ago stories of you.
A smile that can jump right into your heart
and warm you faster than hot chocolate.
A heart of gold
that holds more love
than you can possibly imagine.

Author Unknown

PARENTING TIPS

TIP ONE

Laughter releases healthy endorphins into our system and it is during the fun times that we are more likely to verbalise the positive messages our children need to hear from us. If you tell a child how much you love him after you've been laughing together, he will hear it right down deep in his heart. Surprises, the freedom to laugh long and loud, and the spontaneity of relaxed relationships plant memories and deepen our roots. What fun activity does your family do that makes your family unique to your children? We're missing out if the fun memories are being eclipsed by the fierce ones (the lectures and commands etc.) If life with our kids has become more of an endurance test than a refreshing catalyst, then our prime time project isn't too hard to identify. It's worth making the time! Being a parent is the most significant job you'll ever do - so why not enjoy it!

TIP TWO

Our children all need some time when we give them individual attention. Give positive attention for specific amounts of time to your children, then you can set boundaries on your need for some personal space as well. Remember kids will go for negative attention rather than no attention at all. Short spurts of focused attention on a daily basis are important. My parents **LOOK** at me and I know I'm loved and respected. They **SPEND TIME** with me, which means they're interested in me. They **LISTEN** to me and I feel heard. They **TOUCH** me and I feel good about myself.

TIP THREE

Heap on the praise and increase the freedoms when children use responsibility well. Make sure they know they are getting more privileges because of their trustworthiness. "I loved the way you kids came so quickly when I called. You can have some extra time on the swings if you come as quickly as that." Use big words to describe good behaviour. For example, "That was considerate", "That was conscientious", "That was courteous."

TIP FOUR

Emotions take off as the teenage years approach. Start giving your primary aged children the ability to label their emotions correctly and handle their emotions appropriately. Learning these skills is a life-long task. If you start to teach an "emotional vocabulary" during childhood, you will have a communication toehold when the emotional flak really starts bursting around you during the teenage years. Teenagers feel emotions more powerfully than any other time in their life. Sometimes they are wonderful emotions; sometimes they are awful, and often they are very confusing. A loving mum or dad can help a teenager understand his or her feelings. And it can be so much easier if your child can already speak "feelings-talk".

www.parentsinc.org.nz

"Of all the rights of women, the greatest is to be a mother."

Lin Yutang

Fatherhood

It took the birth of my daughter, at the age of 37, to turn me from a boy into a man.

Western industrial society does not mark life's passages well. There are, for most of us, no rituals to celebrate the move from childhood into youth. As a result we face our confusion and disorientation alone and unheralded.

The end of adolescence is not much better. Far from demonstrating manhood, sculling a yard at a twenty first proves simply that we are still boys. Has patriarchy so stunted male development that we are struggling to understand what being a man really means?

It seems pathetic that at the age of 36 I still felt like a boy. It took the birth of my baby daughter to change that. I watched my daughter grow inside the whare tangata. I spoke to her, rubbed her little feet, her nono, or whatever it was bumping at my hand. I sang to her and told her of my dreams for her. I looked after her by looking after her mother: massaging her back and feet, soothing her erratic emotions and fetching midnight snacks.

My manhood was not forged under gunfire or in the face of death, but in the face of life. It was the quiet, steady courage of loving another.

The revelation of my daughter's birth was that I am not the centre of the world - not even my own. As a boy, no matter how considerate I might be, I was centre stage. As a man I don't need to be. It's a beautiful thing to just be there to support my beloved to grow our baby, and to support our child.

If nurturing is a crucial part of manhood, and in my opinion it is, it is a nurturing that is particular to men. I find a particular pride in being able to sooth our baby sometimes when her mother can't. It's not competitive, just that I have my own relationship with our baby, same as mama does. It means I can take over, despite my lack of breasts (or perhaps because of it).

Birth is hard. One of the greatest things men can do is be solid. We watch our partners enduring an emotional roller coaster that is as disturbing and confusing to them as to us. We watch morning (all-day) sickness, unprovoked tears, fear and pain, and post-natal depression. We watch them give birth.

Our gift is to let go of our ego and be clear and solid. To let the feelings wash over us, to listen without judgment, to reassure, to be confident in ourselves and our partners, to be solid and steady and dependable. If she is buffeted like a kite, we can be the string that grounds her.

It would be easy to be overwhelmed. To run away in a panic of our own. It is a sad thing that so many of our brothers do that - run out on their families, and run away from their manhood.

www.nandor.net.nz

International Day of the Midwife 5 May

The idea of having a day to recognize and honor midwives came out of the 1987 International Confederation of Midwives conference in the Netherlands. International Midwives' Day was first celebrated May 5, 1991, and has been observed in over 50 nations around the world.

This year's theme is **Midwives reach out to women - wherever they live** - Celebrating the unique quality of midwifery in its model of a continuum of care for women and their babies wherever they need it: in the home, the community, the hospital.

Have fun celebrating this special day and help promote midwifery care for childbearing women in New Zealand.