

Put the Spark Back in Your Marriage

One of the biggest complaints from men and women about their spouses is how much they have changed since they were first dating.

People tend to put their best foot forward during the courting ritual, doing the utmost to impress their dates. They try to be polite, courteous, caring, giving, sensitive, well groomed, and well mannered. Then, they get married and often revert back to their old, self-centered, slovenly tendencies.

If you feel that your relationship may have lost some of its "spark," ask yourself if you're acting the same way as when you went out on those first few dates.

Can you imagine how different your relationship would be if you always behaved as though you were still wooing your significant other? You would belch, complain, argue, curse, whine, and nag much less. You would bathe, smile, caress, encourage, give, clean, and communicate much more.

If you desire to keep that "newlywed spark," you should never stop dating and courting the one you love – even after you exchange your vows.

Michael Webb is the best-selling author of *The RoMANTic's Guide*, *50 Secrets of Blissful Relationships* and *The RoMANTic's Guide to Popping the Question*, available at bookstores nationwide, by calling 1-888-4ROMANTIC, or by visiting www.TheRomantic.com.



Protect Your Family from Germs

With back-to-school time here and the flu season just around the corner, it's not too early to take a refresher course on how to protect yourself and your family from germs. Here are several ways to fend off germs:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially before eating or preparing food; after contact with body fluids such as blood, vomit, nasal secretions, or saliva; after using the bathroom or changing a diaper; after handling animals; after touching something that could be contaminated, such as a garbage can, cleaning cloth, or soil; before treating a wound, giving medicine, or inserting contact lenses; or whenever your hands look dirty.
- Routinely clean and disinfect counters and other surfaces in the kitchen and bathroom.
- Use safety precautions when cooking or preparing foods. Avoid cross-contamination. Cook foods to their proper temperature. Refrigerate foods promptly.



Tips for Back-to-School

As schools open their doors for a new school year, here are several back-to-school safety tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- ◆ *If your children will be riding the bus, review bus safety rules with your child:*
 - Wait for the bus to completely stop before approaching it.
 - Stay seated on the bus when it's in motion.
 - Always check for oncoming traffic before crossing the street to get on or exit from the bus.
 - Never bend down in front of a bus to pick up objects or tie shoe laces or stand behind the bus as the bus driver may not be able to see you.
 - Always obey the bus driver's instructions.
 - Pay attention to where the safety exits are located on the bus.

- ◆ *For all drivers:*

Drive safely around buses.

Yellow flashing lights indicate the bus is getting ready to stop and load or



unload. This means cars need to slow down and get ready to stop. Red flashing lights and the stop signal arm indicates that the bus has stopped and that children are getting on or off. This tells motorists to stop their cars.

- ◆ *Warn children about bullies.* Teach them to walk away from a bully and tell the bully to stop. Ask them to tell you if someone is bullying them.
- ◆ *Make sure that your children know where to go after school and how to get there.* If your child will be home alone after school, explain the rules and make sure they know how to get help in an emergency.
- ◆ Provide a comfortable place to do homework and adequate supplies.
- ◆ Be sure your children get plenty of sleep so they can concentrate and excel in school.

Use Your Inheritance Wisely

Traditional advice on handling a windfall such as an inheritance is all about the one-third plan – purchase something you want or need, pay off bills, and save a third. Here are other tips:

- Avoid rushing into a spending plan just after you receive the money.
- Spend it in small increments to avoid irreversible decisions you might regret later.
- Have fun. It's okay to enjoy some of the money, just don't go overboard.
- Avoid risky investments and loans to relatives.