

thing out of the ordinary comes up, we'll have another meeting.

Before school starts in the fall, for example, we have a meeting to discuss what activities everyone wishes to participate in and outside of school to see if there is enough time and whether I can accommodate the driving required. We also decide what work they will do on the farm and how that fits in. The meeting starts off with the question: "What do YOU want to do this fall?"

As well, we also discuss what John and I have in mind for our own activities. I had an opportunity for more off-farm work. The older boys said fine, but Mike (my youngest son) wanted me at home more. I'll respect that. We discuss whatever a family member wants to talk over. Last time it was curfew. Since when was 5 a.m. a curfew! We settled on 1:30 a.m., with a 30-minute leeway.

Basically, it's a matter of respecting the children's concerns and wishes and including them in the decision-making. Mike loves it when we call a meeting; he's

thinking about what holidays he wants to take!

When it comes to school work, we leave it up to the boys with the expectation they will do well. I learned this from a fellow WI member who had already been there. She used to help her daughter with homework until one day her daughter came home from school crying and blamed the mother for doing poor on a test. The child was letting her mother take the responsibility for her school work. That was the end of that!

The other thing she told me was that as long as her children were in school she would support them. But if they quit, she would pack their suitcase and give them \$300 to tide them over until they got a job. I like this philosophy and have adopted it. We as parents should not shoulder our children's problems and related stresses. It's certainly not doing them a favour.

Recently our one son was testing 'the system' in every respect. After talking to a counsellor (etc., etc.), John and I asked him: "What do you expect of us as parents?" And we discussed this at length. He indicated what he expected and we've

accommodated him as he also has lived up to our expectations.

Obviously family meetings don't eliminate all the stress as teen-agers test their wings, but meetings do go a long way to know what matters to them. Communication and working towards the same goals is paramount.

When all is said and done, the most important thing we do in our lives is to bring up our children to be responsible individuals who feel good about themselves and caring towards others.

It's funny! Here I am writing about how I reduce stress in my life and yet, for me, as soon as one stress is relieved the time is filled with a new activity, such as coaching softball. But the most important thing is that this new activity is at the top of MY priority list. Coaching this team with my two sons is stressful but fantastic! Mike plays on the team as well, so it is truly a family activity.

[NEXT ISSUE: The stresses involved with farming.]

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ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE:

FARM SAFETY ASSOCIATION INC.

The Farm Safety Association (FSA) was founded in 1973 with the purpose of reducing the number of injuries and fatalities occurring on Ontario farms. The Association's objective is to provide a complete educational service to make all persons engaged in agricultural work in Ontario aware of occupational safety and health hazards.

The FSA is governed by a Board of Directors; all of whom are farmers. Eleven are appointed by various commodity groups, and the remaining eight are elected to represent the geographic regions of the province. Funding for the Farm Safety Association comes from

assessments paid by Ontario's agricultural, horticultural and landscape employers to the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB). Any employer who pays these assessments is automatically a member of the Association.

FSA members are offered a wide variety of services - free of charge. The following is a summary of key FSA services:

- A health and safety review of an operation identifying potential hazards and recommending corrective measures.
- Assistance with formulating a safety program, based on a particular operation's requirements.

- On-site safety training sessions with employees and supervisory personnel.
- Seminars for management and supervisors on a variety of occupational health and safety topics:
 - health and safety management,
 - safety committees,
 - accident investigation,
 - supervisor training,
 - workplace inspection,
 - and, the workplace hazardous material information system (WHMIS).

Additional programs and services available from the Farm Safety Association include:

- A comprehensive range of health and safety literature, films and videotapes.

- A variety of fact sheets on health and safety topics.
- Support for volunteer associations that promote health and safety.
- Statistical information concerning agricultural injuries.
- Programs designed to teach children about agricultural health and safety.

To arrange for any of the above services or for more information about the Association contact the Farm Safety Association Inc., Suite 22-23, 340 Woodlawn Rd. W., Guelph, Ontario, N1H 7K6, (519)823-5600.

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