

# Lifestyles

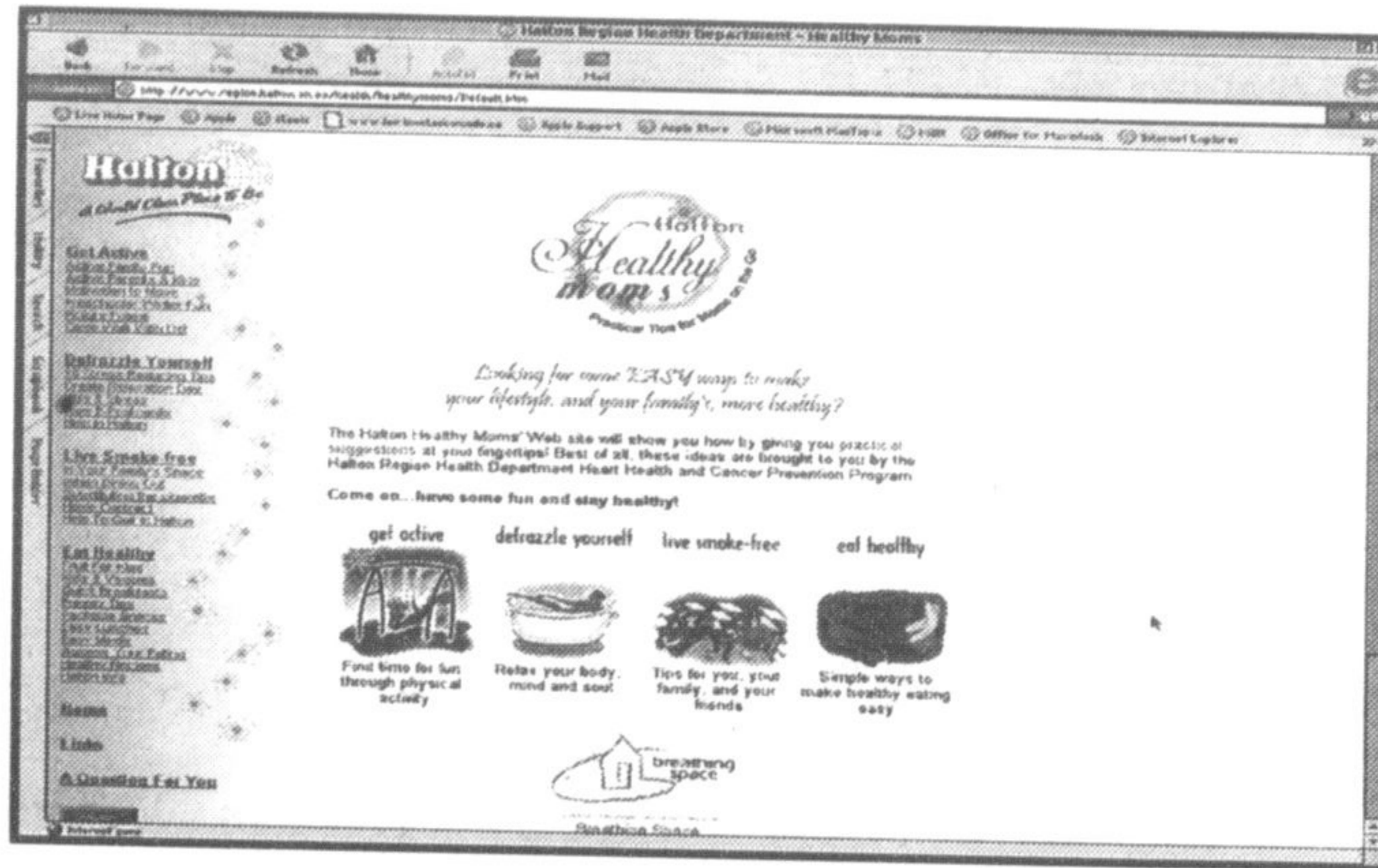
## Sometimes giving moms forget about themselves

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**  
The Champion

**W**ith Mother's Day approaching, kids and dads will soon shower their favourite lady with love and affection — be it in the form of a night out or a peanut butter-smearred kiss.

But how often do busy moms, especially those with young children, pay special attention to themselves and treat themselves with extra care?

Not often enough, says Sara Sanchez, a health promoter with Halton Region's Heart Health and Cancer Prevention Program. That's why the Halton Healthy Moms Web site was launched by the Heart Health and Cancer Prevention Program.



"It's aimed at moms, to allow them to have time to learn heart healthy behaviour," explained Ms Sanchez, who added it's easy for some moms to get so busy taking care of the others that they forget themselves.

Since it started two years ago, the site has received positive feedback and there's no better reminder than the approach of Mother's Day of the importance of caring for moms — and the part moms play in that.

Ms Sanchez said women are often seen as the "gatekeepers" of their households, often being the ones to make doctors' appointments, and pay particular attention to the health of family members. That's one of the reasons the Web site is specifically aimed at moms, although any adult will pick up useful information, Ms Sanchez noted.

The site includes information on four key heart-healthy ways of life: being active, limiting stress, being smoke-free and eating healthy.

The goal is to give moms quick tips on how to make healthy choices amidst hectic lifestyles and to show moms that some of the smallest decisions can make the biggest difference.

"Moms want fast information that's easy to implement, not a big book they have to read through," she said.

Health Canada's Physical Activity Guide recommends that adults be physically active most days, doing 30 minutes of vigorous activity or 60 minutes of moderate activity.

Some moms think their physical activity has to be done all at once — and this is one of the myths the site expels, Ms Sanchez said. It can actually be broken into 10 minute increments, making it easier to work into busy schedules. Ms Sanchez suggested that moms start the day off with five minutes of stretching after waking and a 10 minute walk at break-time — or during nap time — instead of remaining seated.

Some of the exercise ideas on the site include children. For example, moms can put on music and dance with their kids or allow their kids to help them cook, Ms Sanchez said.

In the food portion of the Web site, recipes that are quick and healthy — what every mom wants — are given.

Although most information is for moms, Ms Sanchez said it will also benefit kids for one simple reason: Kids model what they see — particularly in the area of physical activity.

"Role modeling is an important part of parenting," Ms Sanchez said.

In fact, if a mom is physically active, her children are 22 per cent more likely to be active themselves, she said.

The Internet has proven to be a particularly useful way of getting information out to moms, Ms Sanchez said. In Halton, 77 per cent of residents with Internet access have children under the age of 16 in the house. That statistic was one of the main reasons for the creation of the site, Ms Sanchez said.

The first step to living a healthier, more balanced life is wanting to change, Ms Sanchez said, adding that after that comes setting realistic goals. Once a mom has made lifestyle changes, it's important for her to know it's okay to relapse every so often as long as she gets back on track.

"Once she's adopted a behaviour for a long time, it becomes easy to maintain that for a lifetime," Ms Sanchez said.

To visit the Web site, go to [www.region.halton.on.ca/health](http://www.region.halton.on.ca/health), click on 'Heart Health and Cancer Prevention' and then click on the Halton Healthy Moms icon.

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## Maybe I should call everybody the name Steve

What's your name again?

I have a terrible time remembering people's names. And I don't like it when people don't remember mine.

I've heard it said that people who can't remember

your name are self-centered. Geez, nobody wants to be known as self-centered, even if they are.

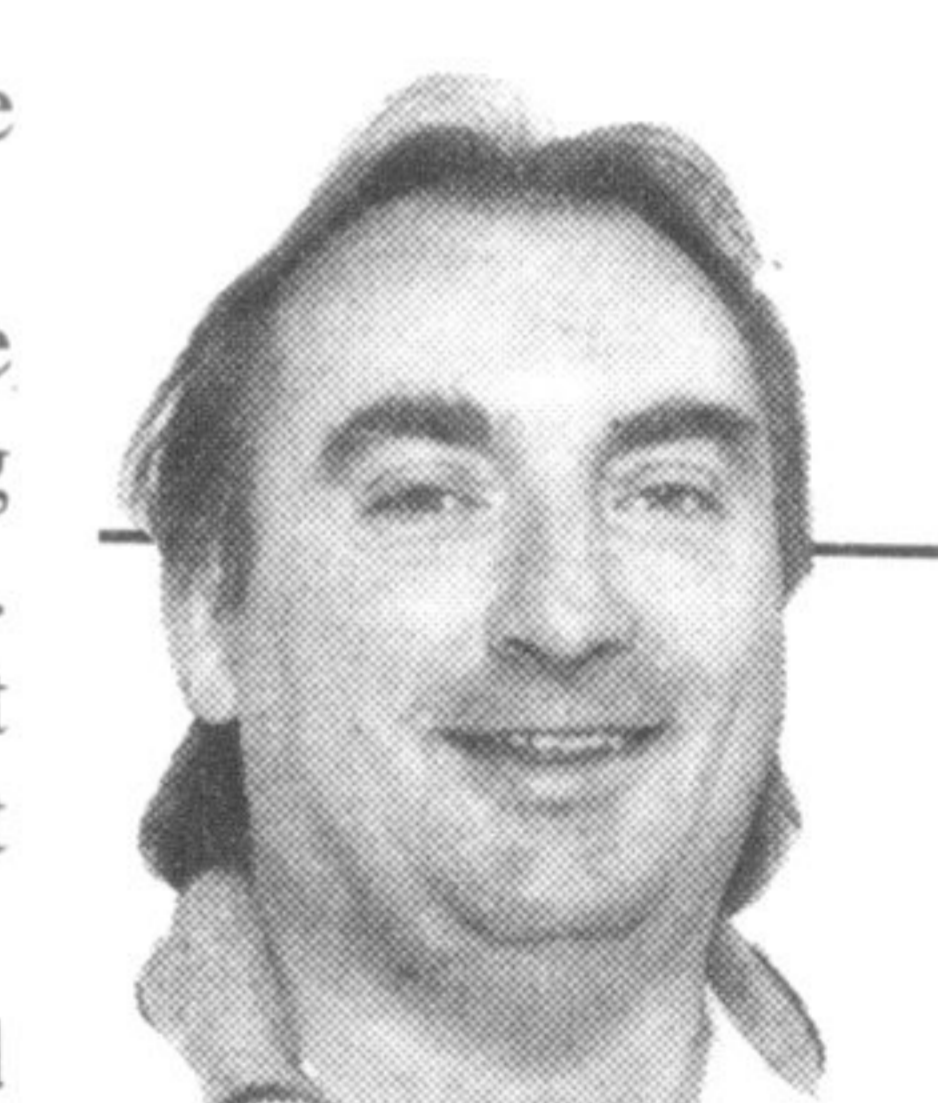
I just can't assimilate the name quickly enough in my head. I might remember everything about you, but your name. Consequently, I've had to develop strategies to combat that brain inefficiency.

I generally won't say: "Hi, Billy Bob." I'll say: "Hey there, how are you doing?"

A cheerful greeting, but I leave out the name. That's even when I know the name, so you can't assume all the time that I don't.

I know, however, when somebody says hello to me and don't include my name in the greeting, that they don't remember it. It's not a nice feeling, sort of like they're saying I don't really care about you, or that you're not memorable enough for me to remember. Sometimes, I'll mention my name, just to let them off the hook, and to let them know I know they don't remember it.

Introducing people can be a nightmare. I might tell somebody in advance that if I don't introduce them to people, it's not because I'm rude, it's because I don't remember the names.



*On the loose*

with **MURRAY TOWNSEND**

• see DON on page 13