

# MOTHER'S DAY

## She's been special mom to foster kids

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Correspondent

Sheila Dowdall is a special mother. Along with raising her own children, she has been a mother to 44 foster children in the last 20 years.

"It's a career to me," Dowdall, 48 says. "That's not too many (children) really. Some foster parents have over 100 children."

Dowdall prefers being a foster mother to infants and toddlers because "it's the age I like and enjoy," she smiles.

While raising her own children, Dowdall felt infants and toddlers would also be easily accepted in-

to the family and because of the age difference, conflicts among the children avoided.

Dowdall soon discovered that being a foster mother is not all joy and bliss.

"Some children are delayed socially or mentally and some have medical problems," she says. "You help the children reach their individual potential."

Dowdall remembers her first foster child having a heart condition. She received proper training to deal with any possible emergencies, handle medication and be prepared before the child was released in her care. Her

own children were ages five to nine at the time.

"They found an ideal family for the baby. The adoptive parents were very special," Dowdall says.

After many years experience, Dowdall knows that being a foster mother differs from being a natural mother.

She believes a foster mother can never replace the child's natural mother but can only deal with problems and situations on an individual bases and provide stability for the child.

Letting go is one of the hardest parts of being a foster mother.

"You don't really have a say in the child's life. Your not a (permanent) legal guardian and you have to let go at some time," she says.

Dowdall believes a bond has grown with each of her foster children, but, "in some more than others. The more needs the child has, the stronger the bond is," and the length of the child's stay plays a significant role in the bond.

"It's difficult to let go. Sometimes you don't see or hear from them again and you wonder what the children think about

you, or about that time in their life," Dowdall says.

The Children's Aid Society has a visiting process that lasts up to a month for adoptive parents.

The foster child and the foster parent visit the adopting parents as part of a gradual process for the child to become comfortable to their new surroundings.

"It's also a lot easier to let go if you receive a visit or phone call from the child and the parents," Dowdall adds. "It doesn't seem finished if the child is just taken."

Foster children that are in temporary care are allowed regular visits with the natural parents.

Another role the foster mother has is to ease the fears of the natural parents and let them know that they are not being replaced.

Dowdall says it's as simple as saying "here's mommy and daddy" while handing the child over to the natural parents or making sure the child is wearing clothes that the natural mother purchased for the child.

Being a foster mother was not new to Dowdall. As she was growing up her parents had been foster parents.

Dowdall felt it was something she wanted to do after her three natural children began school.

Since that time, she has adopted one child and is in the process of adopting another, a girl almost 10 years old.

"It seems like the thing to do at this time," Dowdall says.

Dowdall is also a foster mother for an eight-month-old boy and a

nine-month-old girl.

Despite the fact that two generations of women have been foster mothers, Dowdall does not believe her children will carry on the tradition.

"Society has changed. Family life has changed. Now both parents work, women have careers and won't give them up for a family."

## Jewelry makes a great gift idea

Most jewelry is gold or silver toned — so no matter what you opt to give your mother, the jewelry you give her is sure to make her feel good as gold, even if it's silver-toned.

No mother has ever had too much jewelry or returned a bracelet or brooch because the diamond was too big, or the gold or silver too heavy.

It's unlikely that people select jewelry as the Mother's Day gift of choice unless they're pretty sure that jewelry is the gift that mom would select for herself.

However, research of consumer preferences proves that jewelry is comparable with apparel and fragrance as a gift of choice.

Your options are as wide as your imagination. Price is no limitation because you can buy fashion jewelry that is well styled to fit just about any budget.

Size isn't a problem, either. Jewelry fits everyone — big or small. Color ranges from traditional silver and gold to colorful stones or beads.

Jewelry is easily found in department stores, apparel

specialty shops, drug stores and variety stores.

Top designers make popularly priced jewelry, so there is a wide range of options available.

There is a large variety of styles and items to choose from. Start with earrings. Every mother always can use, and probably wants, another pair. They range from tailored and short, casual or formal, to long and exotic.

A necklace can be pearl, gold or silver with a drop for accent — the possibilities are endless.

Bracelets are a must and some come crested with bright stones in natural and synthetic materials.

Does she like rings? Have you scouted the watch scene lately? Maybe she would like a brooch, pin, clip, or even a good pen and pencil set.

And, if you're a last-minute shopper, you can go gift hunting as late as May 13, and still make the Sunday morning deadline. Jewelry has a way of highlighting her personality and her best features. It makes you look good, too.

Don't forget Mother's Day. It's May 14.

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The Corner House in Stouffville presents you with your one big chance to show appreciation for your Mothers hard work, patience, suffering and forbearance throughout the year. (And you don't even have to do the dishes.)

- 2 Sittings for Lunch, from 11:30am & 1:00pm.
- 2 Sittings for Dinner, from 5:30pm & 7:30pm.

Come on over and show Mom you care.

40 Main Street East, Stouffville. For reservations please call 640 8494.

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## Stouffville Place Mall

535 Main St. W. Stouffville  
Mon - Fri 9:30-9, Sat 9-6

"Indoor Shopping Comfort"

### REMEMBER MOM

**SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1989**

Complete the letters (from participating retailers) stating

**"My Mom's the Greatest Because..."**

Letters must be in no later than 9 p.m. May 12th, 1989

\*10 entrants will be selected to win prizes from participating merchants:

STOUFFVILLE PLACE MALL MERCHANTS MOTHERS DAY CONTEST

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the following:  
"My Mom is the GREATEST because...."

Return entry to any participating merchant before 9 pm May 12/89  
10 winners will be selected on Saturday May 13/89

## Family Ties

MATERNITY & CHILDREN'S WEAR

### MOTHERS-TO-BE MAY 10-13

TELL US YOU'VE SEEN THIS AD AND RECEIVE 20% OFF ON REGULAR PRICE MERCHANDISE



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