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ONETOUCH
Ultra2

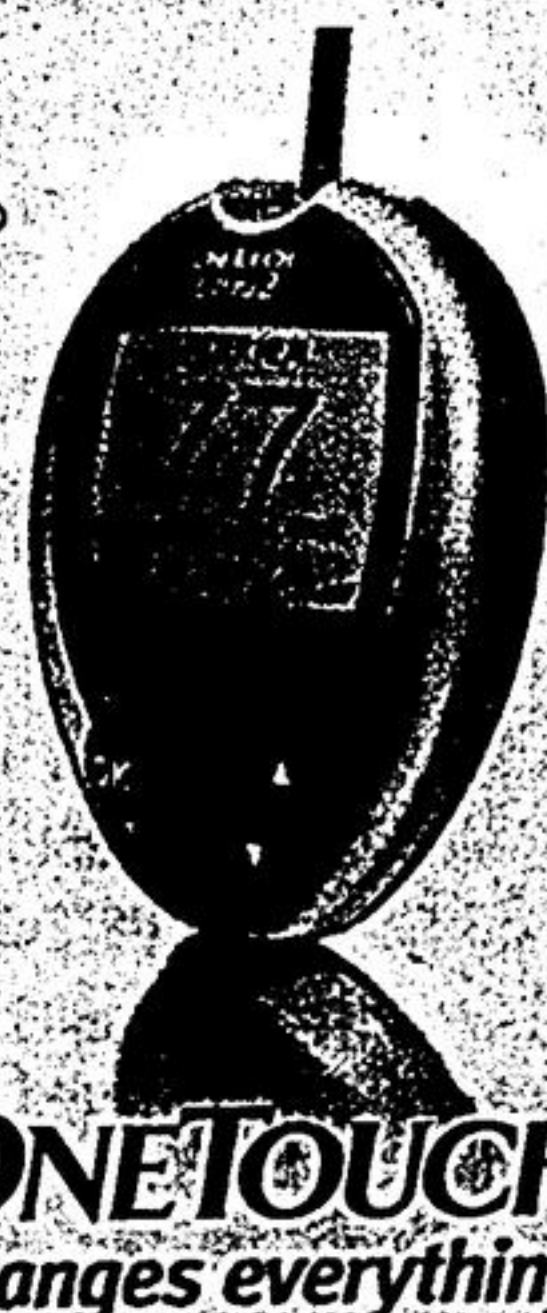
New! ONETOUCH® Ultra® 2

FREE† with the purchase of 100 OneTouch® Ultra® Test Strips

† To receive your FREE OneTouch® Ultra® 2 System Kit, give this voucher to your pharmacist when you buy a box of 100 OneTouch® Ultra® Test Strips. Limit of one voucher per person. Not valid for existing OneTouch® Ultra® 2 users, or in combination with other rebates, coupons or promotional offers from LifeScan Canada Ltd. Valid for end-user only. Institutions and resellers are not eligible. Good only in Canada and void where prohibited, restricted or taxed by law. Offer expires December 31, 2007.

TO THE DEALER: Attach redeemed vouchers to completed customer warranty cards and retain for reimbursement by LifeScan Sales Representative. LifeScan Canada Ltd. will reimburse your cost to a maximum of \$40.00 for the OneTouch® Ultra® 2 System Kit. Other applications may constitute fraud. Invoices showing purchase of sufficient stock (in the previous 90 days) to cover all vouchers submitted for redemption must be presented on request. Failure to do so will, at our option, void those vouchers. Vouchers submitted become our property. Reimbursement will be made only to retail distributors who redeemed vouchers.

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Forget fancy schools, time to get back to basics

Libraries are full of them, so are malls, swimming pools and playgroups.

If you haven't guessed, the above reference relates to kids and their parents. Every kid-friendly outlet in the city is bombarded by parents in search of a place to go and spend a few hours of the day.

As a mom of toddler twins, I've become increasingly dependent on such outlets.

My girls are driven around on such strict schedules a bystander might think they're being conditioned for the 2008 toddler Olympics.

How did our parents deal with babies, toddlers and pre-teens before the emerging playgroup era?

After polling some friends and neighbours, much to my surprise, I realize that as much as kids are criticized today for sitting in front of video games, a mere few decades ago we were sitting around watching Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble hash out issues of the stone age.

The pressure used to be on outdoing Mr. and Mrs. Smith's perfectly manicured lawn, now it's outdoing each others birthday parties.

Most of us managed to get to university without fancy Montessori schools. Open up your weekend newspaper and the lure of promises to have your child reading by the age three entices many to pay the big bucks.

Is it due to the recent announcement that it's becoming more and more difficult to get accepted at a decent university? Are we all worried that it will be too costly, so we must ensure our kids all receive scholarships?

If cost is on our minds, let's plan for it. There are many resources out there to help us plan for the near future.

Surely, if you've recently entered a bank with your child by your side you've probably been solicited at least once by a teller to invest in registered education savings plans.

If you're not convinced that is the way to go, maybe the flat panel TV can be put on the back burner until you've built at least two years worth of college funds.

Allowing kids to be kids is the grand-



Milena Brkic

TODAY'S PARENTS

est informal education we can offer them. Let's alleviate the pressure on kids and take the matter into our own adult hands.

For many professionals, responsible parenting is constantly debated. Does it suffice to simply offer the basic necessities of clothing, food and shelter, to be deemed a great parent?

Or does it require a minimum of two hours of homework help, an average of three hours per week in the family minivan, expensive movies and, let's not forget, the perfectly catered birthday parties which sometimes include limousine rides.

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My girls are about to turn three and the birthday party planning department is suddenly open for business in our house. Cake or cupcakes, a pink or purple color theme and, last but not least, the pressure to conjure up a thoughtful gift. Is it even necessary to buy a gift for a three-year-old who doesn't even grasp the concept yet?

In retrospect, clear images of my childhood include playing in sandboxes, looking for clubhouses and visiting the Riverdale Farm with my dad and brother every weekend. My father used to holler at us to run faster as we neared the bridge that runs across the Don Valley Parkway.

For us, it was merely kids having a fun-filled weekend.

What's on your parenting mind? Send your questions or comments to milenabrkc@hotmail.com

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