

Mother's Survival Kit

**A hands-on collection of ideas to help
save the sanity of every busy mom**

Written and Illustrated By Pam Sargent



2nd Edition

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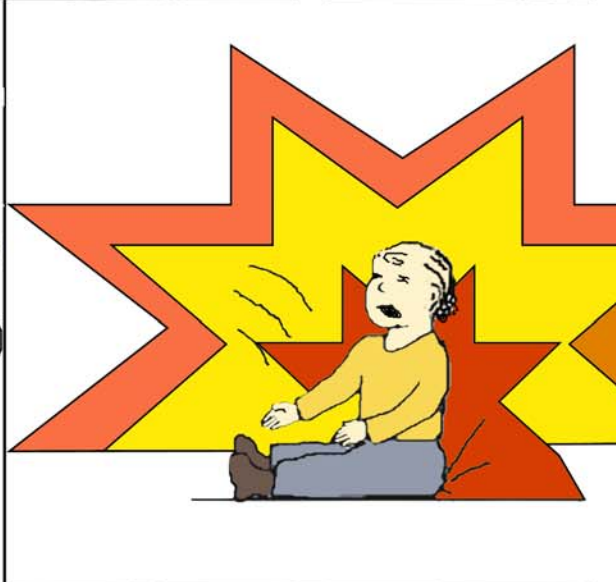
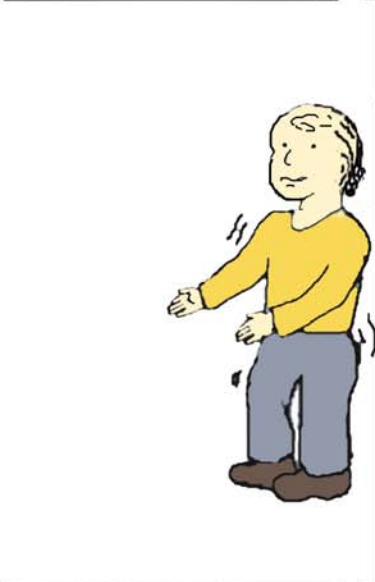
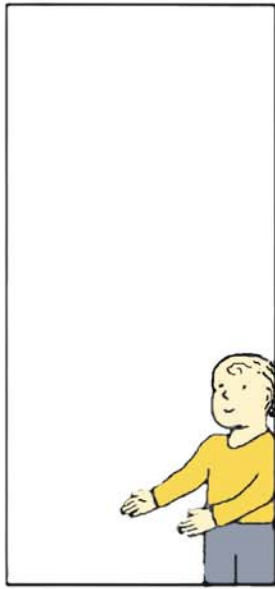
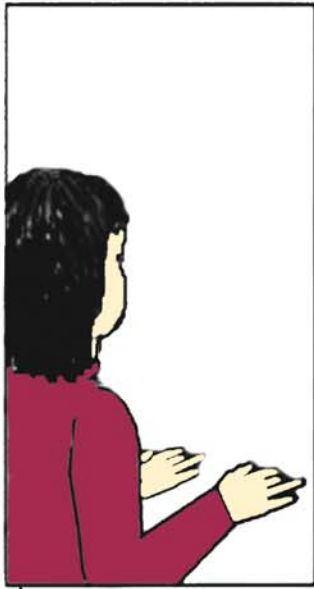
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All cartoons are the creation from the mind and personal experiences of the author; situations similar to YOUR real-life situations are purely coincidental.



Dedication

This is lovingly dedicated to my mom, dad, sisters, brothers, and especially my husband, who have supported me always no matter what I do, and to my children, nieces, and nephews, who have supplied endless inspiration.

Introduction

To say I was a precocious child, would be putting it mildly. I was a hellion on wheels, intensely curious about everything and, as my mother puts it, “The queen of temper tantrums.” I never understood why my parents would get so upset. I was simply doing what all children do, exploring my world as thoroughly as humanly possible. Then I had children of my own. Do you know that old wives tale about the mother’s curse? The one that says “Someday you will have a child JUST like you?” It really works. I got four of them, just like me, and I now find I’m apologising to my mother a lot.

In a child’s mind, the whole world revolves around him, and anything in the world is put there specifically to entertain him, including his parents. A child’s job, as near as I can figure it, is to explore and learn as much as he can, in the process, getting into as much mischief as possible and pushing his boundaries to their limits. A parent’s job is to mold her active and self-absorbed youngster into a responsible, caring adult. It’s not an easy task, especially in this day and age, when most parents both have to work in order to make ends meet. Just because you both have to work, however, does not mean you can’t spend quality time with your children.

Children do not stay children forever, no matter how much we may wish otherwise. (I have told mine numerous times that they were not allowed growing up and they keep doing it anyway.) Every moment we spend with them, however brief, should be considered more precious than gold. Something as simple as shopping with your children can be a chore, as most of us have found out, but it can also be a perfect opportunity for the busy working parent to bond.

This book is not only a humorous look at the trials and tribulations of the parent shown in cartoons, but also includes some ways to help occupy your child’s attention, how to redirect all that energy in constructive ways, and at the same keep them out of trouble, instill values, and most importantly, bond with them. It includes some games; some interesting craft ideas and coloring pages that you can either do with your children or use to occupy them while you do something else; and a song or two to share with your children at bedtime or in the car.

I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed writing it.



Recycling for Art

Coming up with materials for art projects doesn't have to be expensive. Chances are you throw away things everyday that could be put to a better use and save on the landfills. For instance, pop bottle lids.

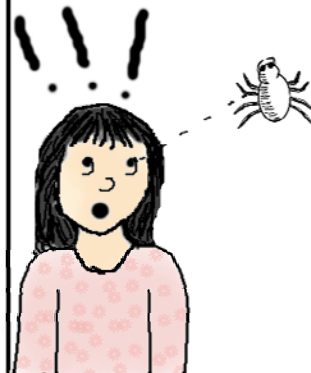
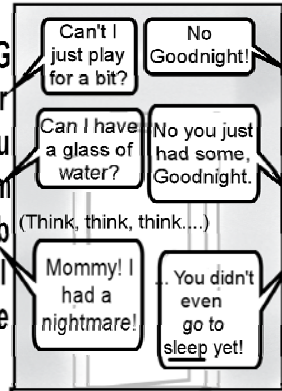
We recycle every week here and one of the rules is the pop bottle lids need to be removed. I was just throwing these things away, not even thinking of them because they were so small. When in reality there are a great deal of things you can do with these. Have you ever created your own wind chime? The pop bottle lids **do** make an interesting sound when they click together. How about putting them in plastic containers for musical shakers? This gives a deeper sound than rice or dried beans.

Half of the things that you put in the garbage or recycling bins are potential musical instruments or craft materials. Here is a brief list:

- Egg crates
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Bottles of every shape and size
- Cereal boxes
- Milk cartons
- Bottle lids
- Tin cans
- The metal ends of frozen juice cans
- Magazines
- Old puzzles
- Broken jewelery
- Glass jars
- Spice bottles
- Old, scratched cd's and dvd's
- Old light bulbs
- Old board games
- Mismatched or holey socks
- Scrap material

And that's just the beginning! Before you throw something away, stop a minute to think, could I use this at a later time? Use your imagination, or better yet, use the imagination of your child. You would be surprised at how much fun a child can have thinking up new ways to use old stuff.

While you're at it, think about the stuff you **can't** reuse. How about starting a compost heap with your child? You can teach them a lot about nature and maybe start a small garden with them in the process. This also teaches them responsibility, fine motor skills, respect for nature, and gives them the satisfaction of doing something on their own. It's also a great way to strengthen the bond between you and your child. By the time you are finished recycling for art and composting your garbage output will diminish dramatically!



Halloween Centerpiece

Figure 1

Materials Needed

- Several small branches (found on the ground)
- Pipe Cleaners
- Miniature Ornaments
- Construction paper
- Crayons
- Markers
- Scissors
- Small Plant Holder
- Florists Styrofoam (You can use soil packed tightly)
- Assorted Beads and Buttons



Take the plant holder and put the florists foam into it. We cut the foam to make it fit as closely as possible and fill in the empty spots with scraps. You can also use plain ordinary soil packed tightly. This is your base for your mini Halloween tree. Let your children use the markers to decorate the plant holders to their hearts content. We used torn up bits of paper and glued them on to make a mosaic look.

Take the tree branches and start trimming. Stick the branches into the florist's foam or soil and arrange them into a tree formation.

You can buy miniature ornaments to adorn your centerpiece at any dollar store, or you can make your own with the materials I have listed above. We cut out ghost, witch, and black cat shapes to hang. We also twisted together orange and black pipe cleaners to create Halloween candy canes.



Make your own Fridge Magnets

Materials:

- Create your own Photo-magnet Sheets
- Scissors
- Stickers (Optional)
- Photos (Optional)
- Comics (Optional)
- Magazines (Optional)
- Paper and Crayons (Optional)
- Coloring Book (Optional)
- Glue stick (Optional)



While browsing the dollar stores for craft items and ideas, I came across some create-your-own Photo-Magnet Sheets. Now this is a product that just BREEDS ideas.

Put this together with specialty stickers or special 3-D frame stickers made for scrap booking and you have an activity you and your child can do together. Other options are your own photos, a picture from your child's favorite comic or coloring book, magazine pictures, or a picture your child drew him/herself.

The directions are simple, and are listed on the product. Simply cut out the picture or sticker you want to use, cut the magnetic sheet in the same rough shape, peel the backing, and place the picture on the magnet. Then trim the whole thing to the exact size of the picture.

I prefer using stickers, because they have a longer life. If you choose not to use a sticker you can either simply put the picture on the sticky side of the magnetic sheet or, to make sure the magnet stays on, add some glue with a glue stick to the back of your picture.

For younger children, let them choose the image, arrange it to their liking, and place it on the sticky side of the magnet. You get to do all the trim work.

For older children that can handle scissors, they can handle the whole craft. However, it is ALWAYS recommended to supervise when children are handling scissors, even so-called safety scissors.

Pop bottle lid wind chime

Materials Needed:

- 8 Pop Bottle Lids
- String
- 1 Margarine Container Lid
- Glitter (Optional)
- Paint (Optional)
- Plastic Pop Bottle Lid Liners (Optional)
- Beads (Optional)
- Buttons (Optional)
- Small jingle bells



The first step for this craft is a little preparation. You should remove the plastic liners from the pop bottle lids and wash them along with the lids. We are going to save the liners to decorate this craft or to use in another craft. Poke a hole into the center of each pop bottle lid and into the center of the larger lid. Poke ten holes around the rim of the margarine container lid, equal distances from each other around the edge and one in the center. You need 10 pieces of string about 8 inches long and 1 piece about 10 – 12 inches long.

The next step is the fun part. Get the kids to decorate the pop bottle lids and the margarine lid. Be creative with this. They can glue glitter and/or paint the lids. They can put beads or liners on the strings for decoration. Beads make better sounds.

Take every other string from around the edge of the margarine lid and tie them together to hang your wind chime. Thread each remaining string through a pop bottle lid and tie a small bell at the end.

Thread the longer string through the remaining three bottle lids. Thread the upper part of the string through the margarine lid. Tie it off with a good knot or a button.

Your wind chime is ready to hang.