

## TogetherTime

by: Brette McWhorter Sember

### Bring Spring Indoors

**S**pring may be here according to the calendar, but it certainly doesn't feel like it yet.

You and the kids are still stuck with that gloomy winter feeling. There may be snow or rain outside and you're just about ready to charter a private jet to take you anywhere warm and sunny even if you have to pay it off for the rest of your life.

Put away that credit card! You and your family can bring some spring into your lives without fleeing the state.

#### Do Away With Dark

Look around the house. Take down or put away any dark or heavy accessories or decorations in your home. Things will begin to feel lighter and brighter quite quickly. Move your lamps around so your rooms have better lighting. Check the wattage on your light bulbs; replace them with the highest wattage your lamps and fixtures can support. Open your drapes or blinds; get some sunlight into your house.



#### Fresh Air

Crack a window and let some fresh air into your house or spritz some floral perfume into the air.

Change some things around in your house so you feel as if you've given your life some fresh air.

Rearrange the furniture in the main living area and make some changes if possible in the children's rooms as well.

Put away boots and mittens (or at

least place them out of sight!).

Rearrange decorative items so that everything seems new and fresh again. Put new photos in your frames.

Move toys and games around and rotate the rooms they are in so that they will all have new appeal to your children.

Put clean sheets on all the beds so the bedrooms will smell fresh. Put out some lighter colored towels (if you have any).

File that stack of papers that sits on the counter and throw out those old magazines.

#### Spring Cleaning

It's an old cliché, but spring cleaning really does make your home feel fresh again. Take it one room at a time and make sure you involve ALL family members.

Tell your kids to put on their junkiest clothes (always met with squeals of glee at my house!), put on some music and give everyone a task.

Go treasure hunting under the beds; there are quite a few lost treasures to be found under there!

Cleaning the inside of the windows will make everything seem so much brighter.

Put away toys that are no longer played with. This should free up some closet space, floor space and shelf space.

Wipe off your houseplants with a damp cloth; they will seem greener and fresher.

Have a race to see who can finish dusting a room first.

Go barefoot and mop the kitchen floor together with wet rags under your feet (Careful! This can get slippery!).

#### Be Crafty

Do some craft projects together that will result in some spring decorations for your home. Try making some paper flowers, wreaths and animals like frogs, rabbits and lady-



#### Kiddie Egg-citement!

- Kiddie Giveaways
- Facepainting and Arts and Crafts
- Clowns

Children can meet the easter bunny and have their picture taken for \$5\*

\*proceeds to benefit Our Lady of Victory Infant Home

## THE BUNNY HOP AT

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Rain or Shine



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bugs using paper or other craft materials. Hang up your creations on the fridge, front door and in the children's rooms.



**Bring in the Green**

Buy a forcing bulb or plant some seeds in a small container and watch the plants grow and change each day. Buy some small live herb plants. Not only will you enjoy watching them grow, but they will add a fresh, green taste to any foods you use them in.

Cut forsythia branches and force them to bloom in a vase. The cheery yellow flowers will really let you know spring is coming. Splurge and buy a fresh bouquet.

**Plan a Fashion Show**

Take an afternoon and have your kids model their summer clothes from last year. There are sure to be plenty of laughs since most of the clothes will be ridiculously small. Put away or donate the items that no longer fit and bring the remaining spring and summer clothes to the front of the closets or drawers.

**String it Up**

Make paper kites and decorate them with markers, crayons and glitter. Head to the park on the first warm day and see whose will fly the highest.

**Plan a Garden**

Get out some seed catalogs and have the children cut out the pictures of the things they want to grow and paste them on a piece of paper to make a paper garden.

Make a garden fence from popsicle sticks around the garden and add some cut outs of bunnies, bugs and birds to complete the pictures.

Allow older children to help you plan out the real garden. Draw a diagram together and plot out what you will grow where. Encourage them to read and consider how much space each plant needs and the type of care required.

Children of all ages can make garden stepping stones. Stepping stone kits are available at craft stores. The kits provide you with a

form that you fill with cement made from an included mix. Children then can add colored pieces of glass and stone to create designs and can even write their names

in the cement. The stepping stones also make great Mother's Day or Father's Day gifts for grandparents.

**Eat a Flower**

Find very small terra cotta flower pots and wash them. Plug the hole the bottom of each with a soft cookie. Fill the flower pot with layers of softened ice cream or sherbet and crumbled chocolate wafers. Add gummy worms if you want. Stick half of a straw in the top of each and freeze. When the ice cream is set, serve them with a flower placed inside each straw.



**Creature Features**

Fill a bird feeder and hang it near a window. You can also try making your own feeder by smearing peanut butter/birdseed mix on a pine cone or inside an empty grapefruit half.

Borrow some books about birds and squirrels from the library and set up a look out point at the window — a chair, the books, binoculars if needed and a notebook. Take turns watching for visitors and identifying and recording what you see.

It really will feel like spring before you know it and until then, these ideas will get you through!

**Brette McWhorter Sember** gave up her practice as a Western New York matrimonial and family law attorney when her youngest child, now 3, was born in order to have more "TogetherTime" with her family. She has found a new "at-home" career as a freelance writer and is the author of several legal self-help books.

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Kids Programming

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