

PARENTING

Picnicking parents



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

(Above) Jason Herbst pushes his giggling daughter, Emma, 5, on the swings at Holy Trinity Church, Webster, at the parish's 140th anniversary picnic June 10; (right) Kinsley Whittum holds his son, Kory, 4. Festivities included a Jubilee Mass, a pig roast, a dunking booth, and games for children. The picnic also marked the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone for the church building, and the 35th ordination anniversary of Father Thomas Nellis, pastor.



'De-commercialize' kids

Parents can participate in the crusade against advertising targeted at children. The "Watch Out for Children: A Mothers' Statement to Advertisers" report suggests the following:

1. Think about the messages you give children as you deal with money and time, as well as the role that media and advertising play in your life.
2. Reassert yourself and your values by playing a more active role in your children's lives and strengthening their ethical foundations.
3. Deconstruct advertising and marketing messages by deepening your own and your children's understanding of marketing strategies and tactics.
4. Limit the use of TV, cable, radio, video games and the Internet, and the use of brand names. Mute the TV during commercials. Increase the amount of time spent with your children doing non-media-driven activities.
5. Assist in creating more places in which children are free from the influence of advertising and marketing.
6. Make your schools commercial-free zones by lobbying school authorities to fund independent media literacy programs in your schools.
7. Refuse to support companies whose advertising promotes anti-social values, instant gratification, self-indulgence, and obsession with the material world. Support companies showing a willingness to look after children.
8. Work for public policies that adequately protect children.

— Jeanne Kidera

Coalition targets ad-makers

NEW YORK (CNS) — A coalition of mothers, community activists, national religious and other leaders has urged the U.S. business community to stop targeting children and teens in their advertising and marketing.

"For you, our children are customers, and childhood is a 'market segment' to be exploited, a 'demographic' for which you are competing," more than 100 women and their male supporters said in a report called "Watch Out for Children: A Mothers' Statement to Advertisers."

The report, released May 9 in New York by the Mothers' Council of the Institute for American Values, called for: an end to all advertising, marketing and market research in schools; no targeting of children under age 8; no product placement in movies or TV shows aimed at children or adolescents; and an end to ads that promote "an ethic of selfishness and ... instant gratification."

The signers pledged to take steps in their own homes and communities to reduce and counter the effects of advertising and marketing in children's lives.

The report noted that more than \$5 billion is spent each year on advertising and promotions to children. Children between the ages of 4 and 12 spent almost \$27 billion of their own money in 1998, it said.

"As recently as a generation ago, it would have been unthinkable for so many advertisers and marketers to spend billions of dollars each year to target our children at the earliest possible age with the expressed intention of training them to be lifelong consumers and making them feel that their

worth as people hinges on the products they buy," the statement said.

"But the unthinkable has become commonplace," it added. "You seem to have stopped caring about what you do and what you say in front of our children."

The report was especially critical of marketing and advertising in schools, saying that it "compromises and ultimately supplants the moral authority of educators by constantly suggesting to students that everything in life, even their education, is ultimately about spinning and pitching and soliciting."

Channel One, a commercial satellite network that provides television sets to some 1,200 U.S. schools in return for the right to deliver 10 minutes of news and two minutes of ads each day, actually devotes only about 20 percent of its air time to coverage of "recent political, economic, social and cultural stories," according to the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education.

"The remaining 80 percent is spent on advertising, sports, weather and natural disasters, features, and Channel One's promotions," the center said.

But that is certainly not the only way that U.S. advertisers seek to influence students during school time, the statement said.

"From school buses covered with ads, to book covers and day planners with commercial messages, to textbooks and other curricular materials sporting corporate logos, to multimillion-dollar deals with soda companies, a growing number of U.S. schools are beginning to resemble commercial bazaars," it said.

The signers promised to support those companies that heed their words and avoid those that do not.

"Advertising that promotes anti-social values, urges instant gratification, promotes self-indulgence, promotes an obsession with money and material things, and sells the idea that 'we are what we buy' harms our children, undermines the authority of mothers and fathers, and hurts society," they said. "We will make it our business to find out which advertisers are supporting us and which are not."

Family events

© JUNE 14-24 — Musical revue: "Pets!"; musical about humans and pets; Bristol Valley Theater, 151 S. Main St., Naples; Thurs., Fri., Sat. 8 p.m.; Sun. 2 p.m.; \$20 general, \$18 seniors, \$7 children; 716/374-6318.

© JUNE 15, 22, 29 — Walking tours: of downtown Rochester; meet at City Hall, 30 Church St., Rochester; noon-12:50 p.m., 4:45-6 p.m.; \$5; Mariana Rhoades 716/271-7368.

© SAT, JUNE 16 — Juneteenth: Emancipation Proclamation commemoration; entertainment, crafts; Strong Museum, One Manhattan Sq., Rochester; noon-6 p.m.; \$3 adults, \$2 children; 716/263-2700.

© SAT, JUNE 16 — Drama: "An Abolitionists' Tour of Mt. Hope Cemetery in 1860"; relive Rochester involvement in Underground Railroad; North Gate House, Mt. Hope Cemetery, Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester; 10, 11:30 a.m.; \$10 adults, \$5 children 8-18; reservations suggested; 716/271-4552, ext. 342; also July 21, Aug. 18, Sept. 15, Oct. 20.

© SAT, JUNE 16 — Nature walk: with naturalist Bob Cooper; Cumming Nature Center, 6472 Gulick Rd., Naples; 11 a.m., 2 p.m.; adults \$4, seniors \$3, students K-12 \$1.50; Saturdays June-Aug.; 716/374-6160.

© JUNE 16, 17 — Film festival: Strassenburgh Planetarium, 657 East Ave., Rochester; "Dolphins"; Sat. 11 a.m., 3, 9:15 p.m.; Sun. 3 p.m.; "Grand Canyon"; Sat. 2, 4, 8:15 p.m.; Sun. 2, 4 p.m.; adults \$6; students, seniors \$4; for other dates & times call 716/271-4552, ext. 411.

© SUN, JUNE 17 — Cool treat: free ice-cream novelty for Dad; kids make 3-D biplane or Father's Day card; Strong Museum, One Manhattan Sq., Rochester; noon-5 p.m.; adults \$6, seniors \$5, ages 3-17 \$4, under 3 free; 716/263-2700.

© SUN, JUNE 17 — Family fun: take a trip to bottom of Lake Ontario; climb a challenging wall; see Rochester 1873 time capsule; make a gift for Dad's office; Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Ave., Rochester; noon-4 p.m.; adults \$6; students, seniors \$4; children 3-18 \$4; 716/271-4552, www.rmssc.org.

© SUN, JUNE 17 — Walking tour: Pinnacle Range to Washington Grove; extraordinary plants, noteworthy trees, glacial geology; 1-3:30 p.m.; \$3; Dads free; no pets; to register call Mariana 716/271-7368.

© JUNE 22, 29, JULY 6 — Cool Kids in the Park: Sagawa Park, Main St., Brockport; June 22: developmentally disabled dancers bring original works and interactive fun; June 29: local Lords of the Dance from Butler School and Irish Musicians Assoc.; July 6: storyteller Tiny Clover with big reptiles; 7-8 p.m.; free; 716/637-3984.

© FRI, JULY 13 — Catholic Family Day: Six Flags Darien Lake; park-beverage pass \$15; park-picnic pass \$20 (picnic lunch, 1-3 p.m.); call your parish or Jeannie Raisbeck 716/328-3210 or 800/388-7177.

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