

MONEY AND YOUR KIDS

A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS

December

Value for Your Money

How Children Use Money

Children, like adults, usually have many opportunities for spending money. The trick, of course, is to spend money wisely on the goods and services that will help them reach their goals. Children need experiences that will teach them consumer skills, such as how to shop, what features to look for, how to get information on a product, how to complain and how to make decisions about what to buy and when to buy it.

Some guides for helping children spend their money are given below. You may think of others that are appropriate for your family and the other children with whom you interact.

- Help children set limits on how much they should spend. Do this by asking children to name or list their "needs" as they see them and help them sort these "needs" into most important and least important.
- Teach children buying skills by comparing prices and quality and discussing the advantages and disadvantages of buying items on sale. Remember that you are a role model, so use good shopping habits for family, household and children's personal expenditures.
- Help children accept responsibility for their decisions when spending money. They may need your advice and encouragement to weigh the alternatives to make the best decision.
- Shop by phone, catalogs and fliers before going out to buy. This can help you save time and energy.
- Hang a family "wanted" list of items, prices and dates on your refrigerator. If you still want the items in three months, negotiate how to save for them.

Other Activities — Decision-making and Consumer Skills

- Show children where they can find information on consumer goods before buying them: labels, hang tags, consumer publications, etc.
- Help children write a letter of complaint if an item is defective.

- If you have been a victim of fraudulent misrepresentation, you can file a consumer complaint with the North Dakota attorney general's Consumer Protection and Antitrust Division. Explain the situation to your children and involve them in filling out the complaint form.

Numerous brochure and other consumer information, including consumer complaint forms, are available at the attorney generals Web site at www.ag.state.nd.us/CPAT/CPAT.htm.

Call the attorney generals office toll-free in North Dakota at (800) 472-2600 or (701) 328-3404 in the Bismarck-Mandan area.

For more information, the following publications are available from your county office of the NDSU Extension Service:

FE-260, Credit - Using It Wisely

FE-247, Money in Our Children's Hands

FE-445, Family Records: What to Keep, Where and For How Long

FE-446, Inventory of Important Family Records

FE-451, What To Look For In A Financial Professional

NDSU Extension Service

Brought to you by the NDSU Extension Service and your local extension office.

See your extension agent for more money management information and other family economics programs.