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This issue of PKR's Online Parenting Newsletter marks 4 years of continuous publication. We sent the first issue in November of 2000.

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HAVE A FAMILY THANKSGIVING

The kids have been back in school for a few weeks. They should have settled into their winter, as opposed to summer, routine. But how are they doing in school?

I made a lot of dumb parenting mistakes when I was raising my children. One of these mistakes had to do with Thanksgiving so I will share it with you hoping you will learn from it and not repeat it.

All moms are busy but I was super busy with two small children and a demanding full-time job running a hospital pediatric department. But, hey, every mom knows she is supposed to go all out for Thanksgiving. After all it's a feast.

The mistake I made was to worry so much about the food and the festivities and the flowers and what our guests would think if everything wasn't perfect that I ignored my kids that day. I remember my daughter crying as though her heart was breaking for my attention, and sobbing, "You care more about the turkey than me!"

I figured out later how I could have avoided this particular DPM (dumb parenting mistake).

First, that tendency toward perfection most women have lurking in their psyches somewhere.

Second, get help by asking guests to bring a dish or buying items like pies.

Third, involve the children in the planning, table

decorations, and cooking. If children are involved they own a piece of the holiday, it's not your solo performance.

So concentrate on your family togetherness on this holiday, not on how perfect a meal you can prepare.

Happy Thanksgiving!