



## Planning Ahead



Some people never actually "own" their car. They're always making either a car loan or lease payment...and in the process spend a lot of money that could have been saved or used for other things.

To significantly improve your financial situation, think "Used" next time you're in the market for a car and plan/save ahead so that you can pay cash for it. True, you may not be able to get as nice of a car as you could if you got a loan or a lease, but you'll "own" your car, avoid the big depreciation on a new car, and save a significant amount of money every month...money that can be used for many things including buying a better used car (again for cash) the next time.

## Did You Know?



The next time you're in the market for a good car at a great price, check out Mel Trotter Ministries' used car sales program at 555 28th St. SE in Grand Rapids. The cars, which have been donated to Mel Trotter Ministries, typically sell for between \$800 and \$4000 and have all been prepared for sale and safety inspected by a mechanic. Everyone is welcome but the cars are targeted at families and individuals who might not otherwise be able to afford a car.

## THE SAVING CENTER



Raising children is expensive. Here are a few things you can do to help lower the cost.

- Shop at thrift stores like Goodwill. You'll find high quality, practically new and very low cost clothes.
- Breastfeed. Not only is it better for your baby but it will save you the high cost of formula.
- Shop at garage sales. They're a great place to find toys and clothes far below the "everyday low prices" at places like Wal-Mart.
- Use your local neighborhood library. Your child will enjoy the books, music and videos....and they're all free.
- Talk to your kids about money. Help them to understand that in order to get the things your family most needs, they will not be able to get everything they want and then be willing to say "no" if they insist.
- When they're old enough, encourage your children to get a job. The skills they learn will be invaluable to their future and the money they make will lessen the financial burden on you.

## Ask the Money Man

**Q.** I spend quite a bit each month on medicines. Can you give me any advice for cutting this expense without any negative consequences to my health.

**A.** To safely reduce the amount of money you spend on medicine, consider the following:

- Ask your doctor if you need all the medicines you're taking. It's possible that you could get the same results with a better diet or more exercise.
- With your doctor's OK, switch to generic brands or over-the-counter medicines whenever possible.
- Ask your doctor to review your medications regularly and drop those you no longer need.
- Make sure you take all medicines as directed. If you follow the directions, you may not need a refill.
- Don't insist that your doctor give you an antibiotic when you have a cold or sore throat. Antibiotics have no effect on colds or other viral infections.
- Ask your doctor for free samples.
- Ask your pharmacist about prescription discount programs.
- Check with the Family Independence Agency (247-6000) to see if you qualify for Medicaid.