

Parent Success Story

Responsibility & Participation

This story is from Jennifer in Toronto, Ontario.

Helping out helps kids cope

Mom blew out the candles on the cake that marked her 74th birthday, and took a bit of time with each of her five children and nine grandchildren. Four days later her body finally succumbed to the cancer she'd been living with for two years. We would miss her dearly, but we were grateful for the time we had together and made the most of each moment. Now she was pain-free and at peace.

Mom had requested that we gather family and friends to have a party to celebrate her life, not to mourn her death. There was plenty to celebrate. She had inspired many people with her positive outlook and contributed much to her community by lending a helping hand when needed.

As my siblings and I were preparing Mom's house for the gathering, I noticed my little nephews (ages 2 and 3 years) were unusually quiet, watching everyone from the staircase. We had told them that Gramma had gone to heaven and she was happy and peaceful there, but they looked a bit lost.

I asked them if I could have their help preparing for Gramma's party. "Yes!" they exclaimed as they leapt into action, working together to drag four folding chairs from the closet to the living room. It took considerable effort on their part to complete the job, but they were just as eager to help me fold napkins and bring knives and forks to the dining room table.

It was lovely to see them contributing to the family effort to celebrate Mom's life. And it was heartwarming to hear the 3-year-old saying to his younger brother, "Gramma is proud we are helping out!" And so she would be. Thanks Mom, the impact of your positive role modeling will be evident for generations to come!