

## HELPING KIDS COPE WITH A PARENT'S JOB LOSS

**The loss of a job impacts everyone in a family, including kids. But there are ways to help your children understand and cope with your job loss.**

With the downturn of the economy, unemployment is having an impact on many people across the country. Job loss is particularly overwhelming when you're a parent because there is so much financial responsibility resting on your shoulders.

If you've recently lost your job, you may be tempted to keep the news from your children in order to protect them. But children have keen intuition and are likely to notice that something isn't quite right with Mom or Dad, and in turn, if they're not informed why a parent seems preoccupied they may begin imagining worst case scenarios or even feel that they are to blame.

So what is the best way to deal with job loss? According to Jill Jukes, co-author of "I've Been Fired Too," we can go a long way in easing the stress associated with unemployment by informing our children in a realistic manner that focuses on a positive outcome. "It's important for couples to sit down together and discuss that a parent has been fired and why, and to give a child age appropriate information, so that the children have words that they can use with their friends or anyone who might be talking to them about it."

Jill adds that children who have experienced job loss within their family felt more empowered and able to cope when they became a part of the solution. "When children were asked to help out as a result of Mom or Dad being fired, they were very proud of the contribution they were able to make," explains Juke. "Some children gave up rooms so that Dad could use it as an office, they became good message takers, or were more agreeable at home. And in the end when it's all over they were proud to say, 'We made it as a family, we participated, we helped out.'"

All in all, as difficult and stressful as job loss is, it is usually temporary. In the end, there is actually much to be gained in lessons for both children and parents on the benefits of working through tough times together.