



## HEALTH RESOURCES EAP Presents: Ways To Begin The New Year Successfully Keeping The Budget Alive

*Does it seem that the more money you make, the more you spend? Whether you have one income or two, the expenses of having a family adds to any budget. Here are some tips to keep spending down, as well as ways to find the best deals.*

1. Get rid of the credit cards. Cut up all but two major cards that can be used for emergencies and large purchases (that you agreed on in advance). You can close out an account even if it still has a balance. Having fewer cards will reduce your spending and can improve your credit, too.
2. Try the barter system. Trading services for products or other services is an ideal way to get what you need or want, without shelling out as much cash.
3. If you own, refinance when the rates are low. You can reduce your monthly payments, consolidate all your debt and even shorten the terms of your loan.
4. When you eat out, invest in a coupon book. Look for buy-one-get-one-free coupons and discounts.
5. Buy inexpensive used furniture at moving sales or from friends or relatives who are redecorating. Young children and pets cause a lot of wear and tear on new furniture.
6. Kids don't always need new clothes. Use hand-me downs from friends and relatives. Thrift stores, garage sales and consignment shops offer great deals on clothes for kids.
7. Discount shoe stores and large athletic chains often sell last years model of athletic shoes for as much as 70 percent less.
8. Sell outgrown clothing, toys and books at a garage sale or consignment shop. If you donate to charity, get a receipt so you can write it off on your taxes.
9. When you buy in bulk, make sure your family really uses all of the product. You're not saving any money if you throw half of it away.
10. Take a calculator to the grocery store and read labels. Find out if the double roll of paper towels is really a better bargain than two single rolls. Compare sizes on food items. Think of the cost per use of any item.
11. Invest in a large energy-efficient freezer. You can stock up on perishables when there's a sale.
12. Stop smoking. If you pay \$2.25 a pack and you smoke a pack a day, you're spending more than \$800 a year on a practice that is harming your health.
13. Go to matinees or use coupons when you go to the movies. Or better yet, wait until a movie comes out on video and enjoy it with your whole family.
14. Cut back on the premium channels on your cable and stick with the basic. Keep a lookout for free concerts and local events.
15. Join a baby-sitting co-op or create one. It will allow you to have dates with your partner, without the expense of a baby-sitter.

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Health Resources EAP can help refer you to professionals who can help you make appropriate financial decisions. To speak with a counselor, please call **1.800.451.1834**.

**HEALTH RESOURCES EAP 1.800.451.1834 [www.healthresourcescorp.com](http://www.healthresourcescorp.com)**