

FACE UP

Don't have a
Bummer of a
Summer!

Your guide to
happy holidays

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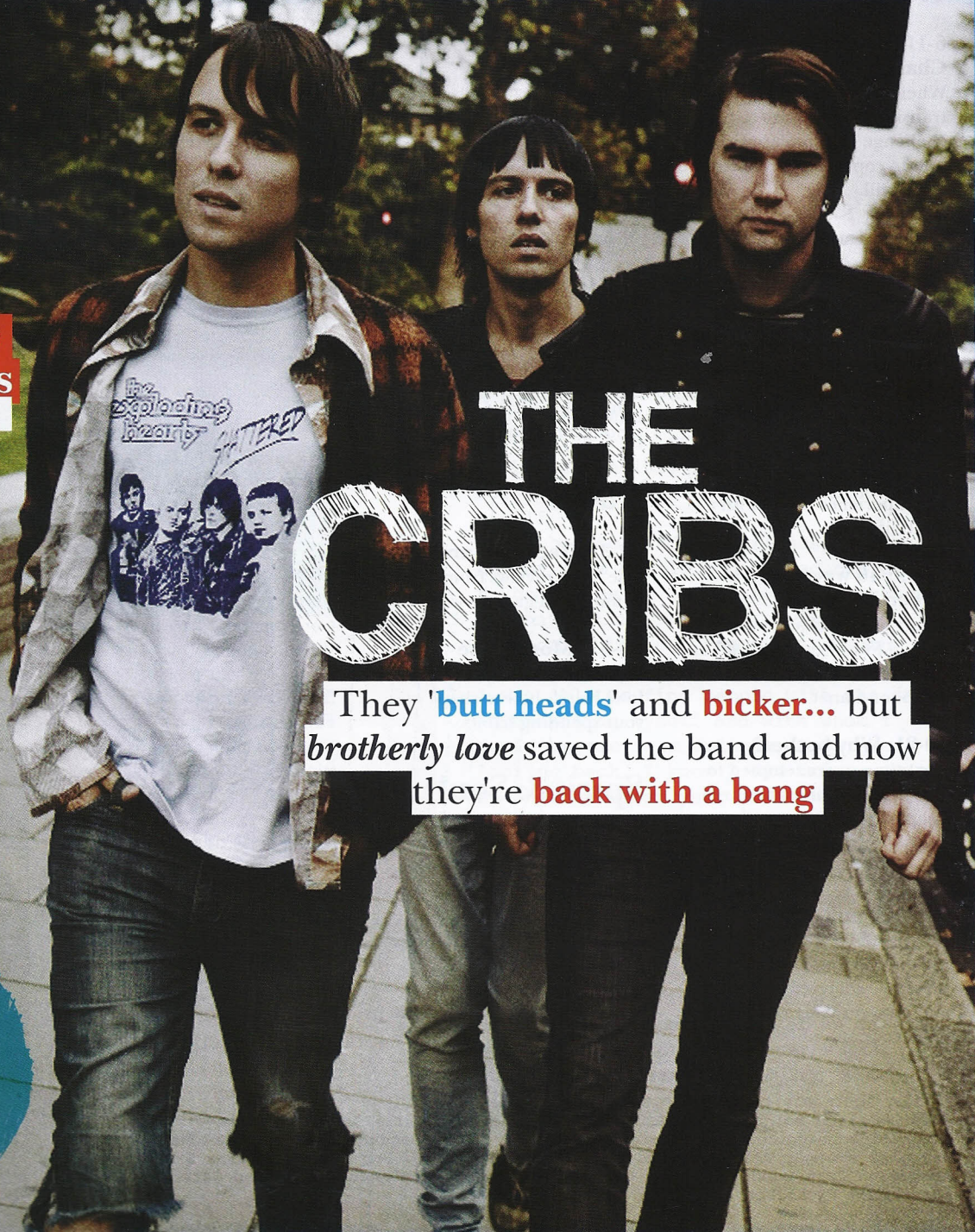
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- it's the surest
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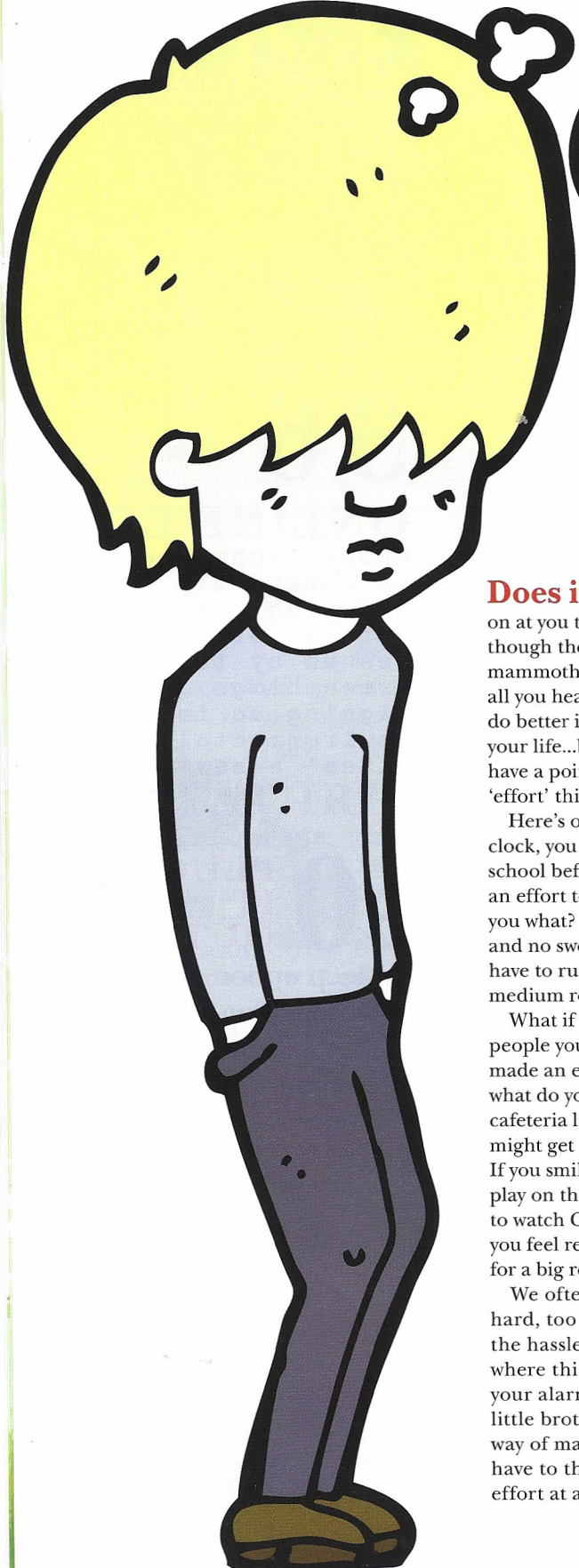
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WHY BOTHER?

Ever think, 'What's the point in trying?' **Gail E. Hedrick** reveals a few good reasons why it pays to make an effort.



Does it feel like everyone's constantly on at you to make more of an effort? Even though the task in front of you seems so mammoth and you'd rather go back to bed, all you hear is, "Just try harder and you'll do better in your exams/be fitter/change your life...blah, blah!" Well, maybe they have a point. But if that's true, how does this 'effort' thing work?

Here's one way. If you set your alarm clock, you get up on time and make it into school before the first bell rings. You make an effort to be on time. Being on time gets you what? No visits to the principal's office and no sweaty armpits because you didn't have to rush. The result: small effort for a medium reward.

What if tomorrow you smile at three people you don't normally smile at? You made an effort to be nice. By being nice, what do you get? If you smiled at the cafeteria lady who's always grumpy, you might get a more generous portion of chips. If you smile at your sister, she might let you play on the Wii even though she really wants to watch *Gossip Girl*. Besides, smiling makes you feel really good. The result: small effort for a big reward.

We often think that things are too hard, too complicated and not worth the hassle. So, we do nothing and... (see where this is going?)... we get nothing! Set your alarm clock, play *Ben 10* with your little brother, or come up with your own way of making an 'effort.' Soon you won't have to think about it – and it won't be an effort at all.



Amy's 'pointless' homework

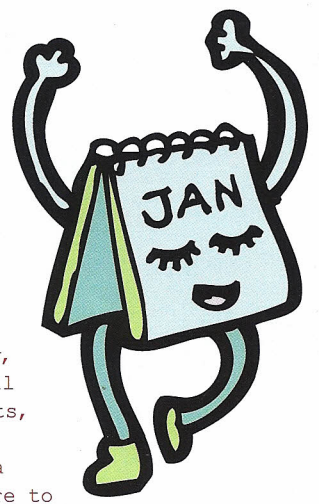
Amy had some really weird homework to do. She had to read something that didn't have a cord, plug or battery attached to it – like a cereal box or a recipe card. At first she thought, 'What's the point?' but she plowed on. When she read the label on a syrup bottle and discovered it takes 35 litres of sap to make one litre of maple syrup she had a lightbulb moment. The point was to learn something new from an unexpected place. As her knowledge grew, she saw the rewards could be big.

TRY IT: Do some re-reading. Every time you finish a piece of homework, check before you turn it in. You'll be surprised at the mistakes you discover. What do you get with fewer mistakes? Probably better results.

THE RESULT: small effort, big reward.



“If we do nothing, we get nothing”

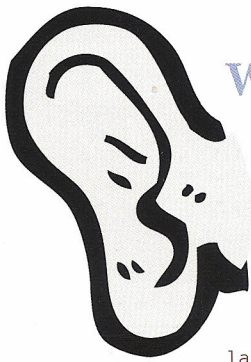


Jake's messy life

Jake likes to live spontaneously, but lately his life had been full of screw-ups - missed assignments, missed appointments, and missed birthdays. It seemed like such a huge problem he didn't know where to start. Then he spotted the calendar stuck to his notice board. Starting slowly, one month at a time, he wrote down the due dates for his assignments and the days when tests were scheduled. He made the effort to get organised and life ran smoother.

TRY IT: By being organised, what do you get? You're where you need to be when you should be and life is less stressful. Remember a card for your mum's birthday and you'll notch up major Brownie points!

THE RESULT: medium effort, big reward.



Will's mismatched expectations

Poor Will felt as if everything he did was wrong. It was like his expectations just didn't match up to those of anyone around him. He seemed to be way off the mark when it came to meeting other people's wants. What he needed to do was listen and focus on what people were actually saying. By making the effort to listen he discovered why his mum freaked out when he was late home for dinner and how his friend felt when he was late to meet her.

TRY IT: First, look at the teacher, parent or friend who's speaking to you. Next, repeat what they've said so you understand their expectations. Finally, ask questions. It shows you're listening and interested in what they're saying.

THE RESULT: medium effort, huge reward.