

## Changes

Written by  
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By today's standards, both Rick and I became parents at a very young age. I was 20 when Karley was born and Rick was just 21 when Angie was born. No planning was involved when our families were started and it didn't occur to either of us to wait until we were financially secure. Back then, where we were at in our separate lives, folks just had their children, raised them to the best of their ability and provided them with the best that could be offered. Period. Looking back, I wouldn't change a thing and neither would Rick. I am glad Jim and I had our children so early in our lives, especially considering that his life here on earth was cut short. Here Rick and I are, just reaching 50 years old and our children are all grown and self sufficient which has enabled us to enjoy this lifestyle.

This weekend, spending time with Mike and Dolores reminded us of the days when our children were teenagers like Jake and Alicia. At their kid's ages, a lot of time is spent driving them to events or being concerned when they drive themselves. Teenagers have active social lives and they are busy with sports activities and school schedules. We were reminded of the times when we too were at the mercy of our teenager's lives and it only makes us smile. Today we spent some time with Karley and Makai and we see how time consuming babies can be. A trip to the grocery store becomes a well-planned manoeuvre requiring a fully equipped diaper bag and a baby with a full tummy. Children require our time no matter what age they are and their demands on us change just as they do. With the challenges comes the fun of watching their progress and the rewards of their achievements.

Alicia has become a conscientious, young lady preparing to enter college and Jake is an accomplished sportsman and academic. Today, Makai began smiling in response to Karley's affectionate coddling, another milestone in his life, albeit so new. We are easily reminded of the many stages of childhood and can only advise our friends and family to relish every moment and every change because they are gone in a flash. Those days for us may be gone and as happy as we are now, there is a part of us that misses them a little. At the same time we wouldn't change a thing and have a renewed appreciation for where we are now and the freedom we have acquired once again.