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Family December 2011



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Letter from the publisher

Our children's future

My college student daughter recently asked me if I knew what she should do after she graduates. Her original plan to go to law school is being reexamined. The word is out that this career choice is not necessarily viable



any longer with a glut of law graduates and very few jobs for them. Outsourcing of this type of work is as prevalent as call centers, apparently. Who of us has made a call to a customer service center of any kind lately and spoken to someone in the 50 United States? Not many, I would imagine.

So what will our children do? How will they earn a living? What do they need to be studying to be ready

for the jobs of tomorrow? What will the jobs be? Who really knows? What we do know is that we are not properly preparing our children to be ready for tomorrow's work force and for the future. Our education systems are largely stuck in the past and

the preparedness is geared to yesterday's possibilities. The curriculums are based on a past economy that no longer exists or is fading fast.

What's a parent to do? What are the teachers to do? Who will provide the leadership and the new ideas, and when? We need to be asking these questions. Every parent needs to be asking and prodding the politicians, the corporate leaders and the educators so our children don't

come up empty-handed in the future; unprepared and unable to find security and fulfillment in their lives. Right now other governments are paying our universities to educate thousands of their children. They are getting the credentials and the training and then taking that expertise back home with them. Where is the investment for our kids? They will be competing against those same youngsters for jobs as the work force continues to go global.

The certainty of future joblessness for those without higher or specialized education would appear to be a given. As parents, this means it is our responsibility to make sure our children, from an early age, develop the kind of focus necessary to achieve, grow, and be competitive and adaptable as the new vocations unfold. We must steer them into

places we can't even see clearly ourselves — the unknown. This is an enormously important responsibility. This is pioneering. This is our century's "wagon train."

As we move into the New Year and the years ahead we will need to partner with each other more than we ever have before. Our children's futures will depend on it.

New York Parenting Media wishes your families happy holidays. My personal thanks go out to all our staff for their fine work, and especially to "our parents," Sharon, Tina and Lori, whose presence continues to make it all worthwhile.

Thanks for reading!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher

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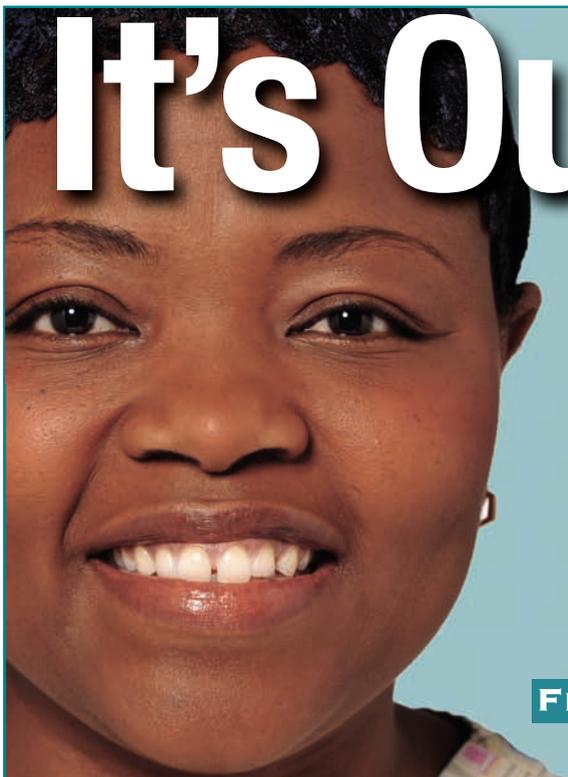
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The cost of having a baby

How to manage a bundle of joy who costs a bundle

BY CANDI SPARKS

Parenthood is a transformative experience on many levels, and one that will surely affect a family's finances — because having a baby is expensive! The average cost for an in-hospital delivery and caring for a baby during the first few months of life falls somewhere between \$20,000 to \$30,000, with the costs largely dependent on the family's resources, lifestyle and finances. Many families plan the financial outlay in advance, but not everyone thinks that far ahead, or in comprehensive terms. There are, however, some ways to cut expenses and get the most for your money for you and your little bundle of joy.

Sharon, a Staten Island working mom, is happy to share financial information with mothers-to-be. She says that when she got pregnant, she sat and figured out the costs in advance; including missing time from work and having to go on disability during maternity leave. Despite her best guessing though, she exceeded the amount she calculated for the baby by about a third.

"Health insurance premiums are about \$1,000 a month or \$12,000 a year. The co-pays were another \$1,000 or so. I had a normal hospital delivery at \$12,000, but we live far away from my family, so when they came to visit, we got a hotel room for our relatives for about another \$400," explains Sharon. "When you add in all the baby equipment and items that you need to stock up on — like diapers, wipes, formula,

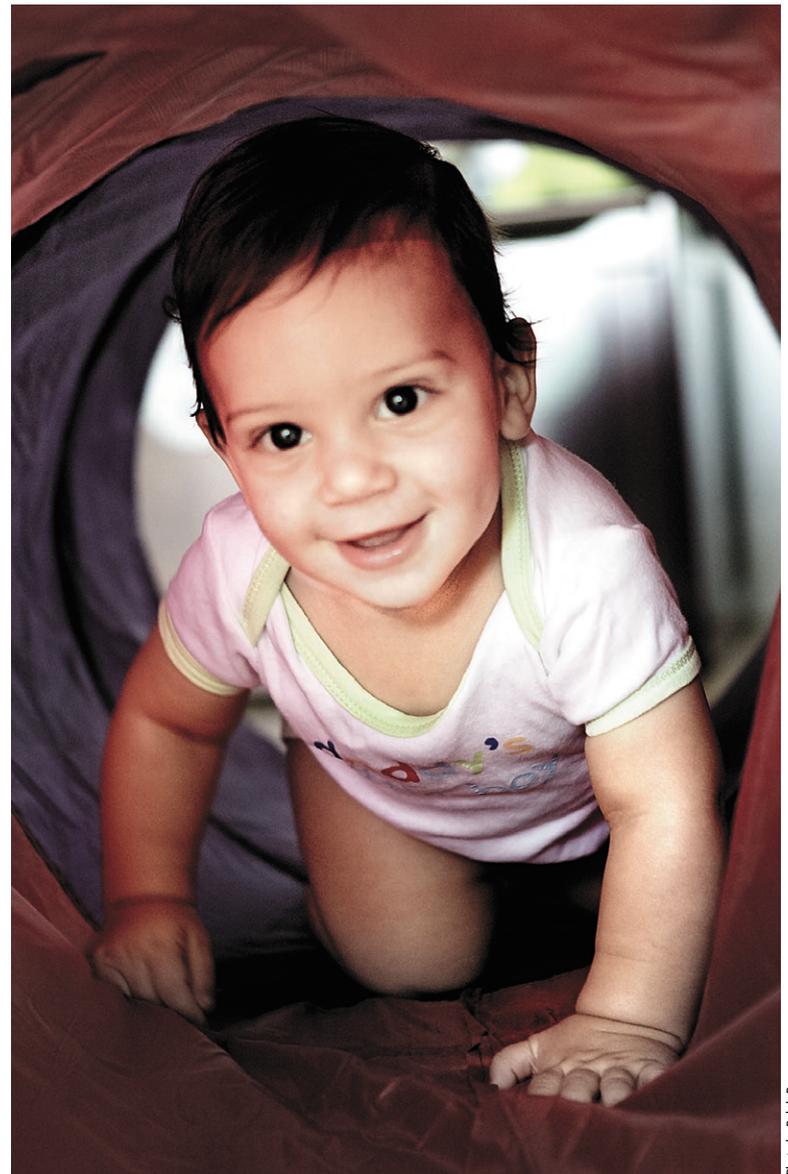


Photo by Ralph Renz

furniture and clothes — it's about another \$18,000.

"If you don't nurse, formula is pretty costly over the months until the baby is weaned. Away-from-home baby care is at least another \$25,000, and could be another \$10,000 on top of that, if you have someone caring for your baby in your home. That's not even for the first full year!"

Expect the unexpected

Regardless of one's circumstances, pregnancy is risky — and financially risky as well. Health issues for mother and child can drive the costs even higher. Marie, a Bronx mother of two, received two gifts last year, one when her husband returned home safely from the military, and the other when she became pregnant shortly thereafter. Although the couple has a 13-year-old son, Marie said she felt like a first-time mom all over again. There were unexpected

medical issues for both mother and child, and there had been such a gap between children that she was at a loss as to what she would need and when she would need it.

Marie estimates the cost associated with her 6-month old was at \$25,000 so far. She did not anticipate having an emergency cesarean section or needing an extra epidural and anesthesia. It was a risky pregnancy, which drove the cost up.

Then, once Marie's baby was delivered, there were feeding issues. She hired a lactation specialist to help, which cost extra. Marie then discovered that due to an allergy, the baby needed a special formula, sold in a specialty shop. She said she did not expect the unexpected, which happened to her at every turn during this pregnancy.

Marie's advice to future mothers is simple: "Plan ahead." She was so excited about the pregnancy, that she had purchased the bare mini-

mum in baby essentials only, and little else.

Stocking up

"Don't wait until the last minute and don't depend on getting gifts at the baby shower," she says. "Be prepared and save in advance for major items like the crib or changing table."

Since Marie will be heading back to work in the coming months, she suggests that mothers "figure in the cost of having a second playpen at the sitter's or a relative's home." This can really save a mom a lot of back pain resulting from toting baby items around.

For shoppers who don't know what to get, online baby registries can suggest what is needed for the baby and give the loved ones in your life a good idea of needed shower gifts (amazon.com, babiesrus.com, buybuybaby.com and others). Some retailers and registries also have great exchange programs in case of duplicate or unwanted baby items.

Medical care

Having a baby is expensive, but there are ways to cut expenses and get the most for your money. A reliable health insurance plan is a key factor in keeping costs down. The mother will need to go for regular check-ups, ultrasounds, lab work and any other necessary doctor visits. If you are planning a hospital delivery, the mother may also want to attend childbirth classes and see what special amenities a particular hospital may offer, and at what expense. The delivery itself is an extra expense to be considered. A cesarean section will cost more than a vaginal delivery.

Doctor vs. doula

Finding the right hospital or delivery room can also reduce costs. A future mother can call and ask questions in the early stages of the pregnancy to find out what is covered and what is not at a particular hospital. The doctor will have a fee, but the billing department will be the most familiar with the fees and coverage. Some options might include an at-home birth instead of a hospital delivery.

Jamie, a Brooklyn doula and mother of three, said she decided to do things differently with her third child. Her two boys were hospital deliveries, and she decided that her third child, a daughter, would be an at-home birth.

"The at-home birth was about one-third of the cost. Insurance covered the medical visits and the doula was a few thousand more, but my insurance also covered that," she says. "Having a doula and the at-home birth took a lot of the worry out of the equation. We did not have to think about when to transition to or from the hospital, or when the baby would be taken to the nursery. It was not an issue at home. I was comfortable and in one place the entire time."

Jamie had no medical issues and welcomed less medical supervision during this pregnancy. She recommends that a mom who is not having a high-risk pregnancy, or who is less risk averse, might actually prefer working with a doula at home.

Know your benefits

"Parents-to-be should consult the job manual before a pregnancy. It is important to know the parameters for time off, sick days and childbirth," explains June, a human resources professional in New York. "Most women work too hard and too long into the pregnancy to really enjoy it. If they had read the book and asked a few questions, they might have been able to relax a little bit more."

For the working mother-to-be, unpaid time out of the office is a big consideration. Taking time off from work during the pregnancy to go to doctor and lab visits may be used as "sick time." Or, this time may be calculated as "time without pay." Check the employee manual and visit human resources to see how this time off will affect the salary.

Mothers who love to save can find ways to reduce costs. Some move to cloth diapers and save a bundle on the disposables. Many community parenting sites offer free advice and hand-me-downs on gently used baby items. Craigslist is also a place to find freebies and bargains. Online baby calculators can give a range of expenses for various items and help to soften the blow when your baby arrives (babycenter.com, babyzone.com, i-am-pregnant.com are among a few of them out there).

Having a baby can be very costly, but there is nothing like the joy of holding him in your arms.

Candi Sparks is a Brooklyn mother of two and author of children's books about money, "Can I Have Some Money?" "Max Gets It!" and "Nacho Money." She is on Facebook (Candi Sparks Author) and on Twitter (Candi Sparks, New York).

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How to save big on maternity wear



BY JENNIFER LACEY

Congratulations! You've just discovered that you are pregnant, and the shopper in you can't wait to hit the stores to look for new clothes for your soon-to-be changing figure. But, even the most enthusiastic shopper can fret at the thought

of spending a fortune on clothes that are, let's face it, worn only for a short amount of time. Before you make your credit card balances blow up with new maternity outfits, here are some simple tips that will help you to become a penny-wise momma-to-be!

Shop smart in the stores

Nationwide retailers from Macy's to JC Penney regularly place merchandise onto clearance racks in order to make room for new arrivals. Trips to clearance aisles are a wonderful way to start building up your maternity wardrobe. Clothes and accessories in clearance are typically marked down anywhere from 20 to 85 percent off the regular price. So, when you make

your next visit to your local dress store, resist temptation, and keep walking past the beautiful displays in the front and head straight to the back, where you will find the clearance section for the best sales.

Another good tip: sign up for your favorite store's mailing or e-mail list (or even become their fan on Facebook) to find out about weekly or monthly sales or to get coupons.

Consignment shops

Say you have an invitation to your cousin's wedding. You're six months along, and although you know you will need to wear something special, you are hesitant about shelling out so much money for a dress that you are only going to wear for a few hours. Well-respected consignment shops may be a great place to find gently-used maternity clothes at a fraction of the cost. Consignment shopping provides you with several benefits, including:

- Finding better prices than at resale stores.
- The seller typically gets a better price than if he sold his items to a resale shop. The consignor (you) also typically gets a better price. For example, you might get 70 percent off your purchases.
- The variety and quality of items can be a lot better than those purchased at a garage sale.

The World Wide Web of bargains

When I was pregnant with my first child, the very idea of waddling my way through crowds at my local mall was not my idea of a fun day out. If fighting the crowds at the mall is not your thing either, you can comparison shop and find some fantastic savings online! Kimberly Hines, a mother of two, saved money by searching online for sales on mater-

Even the most enthusiastic shopper can fret at the thought of spending a fortune on clothes that are worn only for a short amount of time.

nity clothes.

"I would just wait until I would see that something that I wanted was on sale, and then I'd buy it online. A lot of the websites that I shopped from home on often had free shipping or half-off shipping specials, so that was a huge plus for my budget."

Have you had your eye on a pair of Lavish by Heidi Klum capri leggings, but you just can't bear to pay the full price? Try eBay! You can bid on new and used clothes and you may get lucky and find a great deal.

After your pregnancy, you could consider selling your gently-used maternity clothes on the site to get a return on your investment! Craigslist is another site where you can find maternity clothes. You can search your area and contact most sellers through the e-mails provided. Many sellers are looking to sell entire wardrobes for very little. (For your personal safety, never meet up with any seller alone and do not give him any address or other personal security information.)

Rentmaternitywear.com allows you to rent a designer dress for one to two weeks. You choose the dress (or dresses) you want, and they will send your choices via FedEx for a 48-hour-try-on period. If the dress you chose does not fit, you can easily return it for a free second chance. If the dress fits you perfectly, all you have to do is show up at your holiday party looking fabulous. When the party's over, just send the dress back to them right in your mailbox. Rentmaternitywear.com also offers brand new dress rentals for a little bit more money.

The power of frugal accessories can go a long way

Take a good look at your pregnancy clothes and chances are, you will notice that several items are capable of growing with

you for a portion of your pregnancy with a little help from some useful gadgets.

Belly Bands (http://babybem.inematernity.3dcartstores.com/White-Maternity-Belly-Band_p_8.html) consist of a stretchy band of fabric that is placed over your open jeans to create a new belted waistband. Belly Bands are available in several colors, and you can find them at many maternity stores and online.

Or, there are other types of fabric patches that conveniently insert into your jeans' fly to build a patch between an open zipper. No matter what type of band you choose, you will be able to wear pants that will fit well and stretch along with your expanding belly bump.

Not only is your belly expanding, but your breasts will change size and shape regularly throughout the next nine months. Every mom-to-be's body is different; however, if you have found that your cup size has remained almost the same and you are just not ready to shell out \$30 for a maternity bra, a bra back extender may become your new best friend. Bra back extenders (www.kaboodle.com/reviews/motherhood-maternity-bra-back-extender) help you to continue to comfortably wear your pre-pregnancy bra longer. Working in tandem with a two- or three-hooked bra, an extender can allow you to increase your bra size between 1 1/4-inches to 3 1/4-inches. They do not require sewing and just connect to your current bra at the hook.

Hip hand-me-downs

Michelle Salvo, a mom of four, found that the best thing to do during her pregnancies was, "to take any and all hand-me-downs from my friends and family. Maternity clothes are so expensive to only wear for nine months, and for me, it was really a lot less time than that, because I didn't wear maternity clothes until I was about six months along. So for me, I was only really wearing maternity clothes for three to four months."

And, let's face it; because of the short amount of time that a mom-to-be wears maternity clothing, it is generally in good condition, and can offer you an inexpensive alternative.

Jennifer Lacey is a freelance journalist, specializing in pregnancy and parenting issues, whose work has been featured in numerous national and regional publications and websites.

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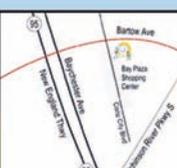
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Premature birth

You've come a long way, babies!

Advances in medicine gave these infants a chance

BY LAURA VAROSCAK-DEINNOCENTIIS

In the United States, more than half a million infants are born premature each year. Many factors contribute to preterm delivery, including poor nutrition, drug and alcohol use, diabetes, hypertension, infections, heart and kidney problems, and abnormalities with the cervix or placenta.

Age is also a determinant. Women under the age of 19 or over the age of 40 have an increased risk of delivering prematurely. When carrying more than one fetus, it is common for the uterus to overstretch — leading to early labor.

Preterm delivery has risen 36 percent in the past 25 years largely due to more older mothers having babies, as well as the use of assisted reproductive technology, which increases the chance of multiple births.

Joanne Hayes conceived triplets through in vitro fertilization at 35 years old. Two years earlier, she and her husband welcomed their first child, Caitlyn, into the world. Caitlyn was born one week early at a healthy 8.5 pounds.

Hayes understood that her second pregnancy was considered high risk because she was older and carrying multiples. Common medical complications in premature babies include problems with the lungs, brain, heart, and gastrointestinal tract, as well as ineffective immune systems.

Hayes's obstetrician started her on corticosteroids, knowing that she went into early labor at 34 weeks with Caitlyn. (Steroids help to speed up the development of the lungs and other organs, which increase the infant's chance of survival.)

When her doctor asked if she wanted an amniocentesis (a medical procedure used to determine chromosomal abnormalities and

fetal infections), Hayes refused.

"It wouldn't have changed anything, and I wasn't willing to risk hurting the babies."

The first 23 weeks of Hayes's pregnancy were uneventful. Her regular check-ups were normal and, other than tired, she felt fine. At 23 ½ weeks, Hayes experienced false labor and knew she was in trouble. Most premature babies are born "late-preterm," between 34 and 36 weeks gestation. About 12 percent of preterm babies are born between 32 and 33 weeks, about 10

After three months, Christopher, Ryan and Tara were finally discharged from the hospital. They still weighed less than five pounds.

percent between 28 and 31 weeks, and about 6 percent at less than 28 weeks gestation. All premature babies are at risk for health problems, but the earlier a baby is born, the greater the risk for serious complications.

Hayes's doctor admitted her to the hospital and put her on bed rest. She was carefully monitored and pumped with fluids to avoid dehydration. She went into true labor five weeks later. Within minutes, she had dilated from three to seven centimeters and one of her babies had already descended into the birth canal. Ryan (3.3 pounds), Christopher (2.3 pounds), and Tara (2.7 pounds) were delivered by Cesarean section in the neonatal intensive care unit at Long Island's Stony Brook Hospital the day before

Thanksgiving.

At such low birth weights, the babies lacked the fat necessary to maintain their body temperature and were immediately placed in incubators to keep them warm and protected from potential hypothermia and dehydration.

Hayes held Ryan right away, and says she remembers how tiny her largest baby felt in her arms. Christopher and Tara were immediately taken away before Hayes had a chance to see them. Ryan needed the support of continuous positive airway pressure, which delivered pressurized air to his lungs through small tubes to help him breathe. Christopher was able to breathe on his own with supplemental oxygen. Tara, the last one delivered, was immediately put on a respirator.

The lungs of preterm infants in respiratory distress are deficient in surfactant, a combination of fats and proteins that help to prevent the collapse of the air sacs in the lungs. By the second day, Tara had multiple complications. She suffered from pulmonary interstitial emphysema and was put on a jet ventilator, a loud, pounding machine, where she lay for almost a week, covered in sterile plastic resembling Saran Wrap. Finally, one of her lungs collapsed. The collapse closed up the air sacs that had been over-inflated and her condition gradually improved.

By the next week, however, Tara developed sepsis and was put on another respirator. Premies in the neonatal intensive care unit are particularly susceptible to this serious, potentially life-threatening blood infection. The invasive procedures (intravenous lines, catheters, and tubes) used to keep them alive can provide openings for dangerous bacteria, which their underdeveloped immune systems cannot handle. If left untreated, the toxins cause the immune system to



The Hayes triplets



Joanne Hayes's son Christopher was delivered by cesarean section. He weighed 2.3 pounds at birth. Christopher is now an 11-year-old who enjoys cooking.



When Ryan Hayes was born he weighed 3.3 pounds. Ryan is now an 11-year-old who is in honors classes.



Tara Hayes was born weighing 2.7 pounds. She was the last of the triplets born, and was immediately put on a respirator. Tara is now a happy 11-year-old who is doing well in school.

attack the body's own organs and tissues. Tara recovered with antibiotics. Soon after she was treated for sepsis, Tara was diagnosed with a heart murmur. Fortunately, that was also corrected with medication.

The constant pressure from the jet ventilator that kept her alive is likely to have contributed to the hemorrhage the doctors spotted on an ultra sound when Tara was a month old. The bleeding caused the ventricles of her brain to rapidly expand. Some hemorrhages are mild, but severe bleeds cause pressure that can lead to brain damage, including cerebral palsy and learning and behavioral problems. Tara's doctors continued to monitor her closely.

At 3 months old, Tara and her brothers were finally discharged from the hospital. Hayes and her husband, Michael, were relieved, but the need for medical attention was far from over. Although they were now strong enough to survive outside of a protective environment, the three siblings, who each weighed less than five pounds when they went home, required special shots on a regular basis. These synergist shots protected them from respiratory syncytial virus, a common virus that produces cold-like symptoms but can be dangerous to premature infants. The virus was such a threat to Tara, Christopher and Ryan that they could only visit the doctor after office hours, when no other children were present.

Although the Hayes triplets developed more slowly than others their age, they made slow and steady progress. Ryan came home from the hospital on an apnea monitor, but he and his brother gradually became stronger.

Tara struggled with feeding issues and continued to have medical problems. She developed aspiration pneumonia, which was treated with IV antibiotics. Her doctors attributed it to hydrocephalus. She had been vomiting from the pressure on her brain, so doctors inserted a shunt to drain the fluid and reduce the risk of brain damage.

Since then, Tara has survived three shunt replacement surgeries. Her health improved and for years she had few additional complica-

tions. Then in second grade, she began complaining of headaches. The doctors determined that her head was too small (from the constant draining of fluid) and performed an operation to enlarge her skull. The surgery was a success.

Despite the shunt that remains in her head, Tara is a happy, healthy 11 year old who loves school. She doesn't talk much about her past trauma, but recently asked her mother about the scars that extend from ear to ear.

Both Tara and her brother Christopher were diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in second grade, and are doing well in school with the help of special education classes. Ryan, the first born of the triplets, is in honors classes. The boys spend their free time playing video games, building with LEGOs and firing Nerf guns. Christopher has an affinity for cooking. Like most 11-year-old girls, Tara enjoys watching TV, shopping, and texting her friends.

Hayes describes caring for her infants as "a chaotic blur." Through it all, she clung to the positive and focused on the small changes that took place each day. She kept herself well educated so that she could be the best advocate possible for her children. The relatively recent advances in obstetrics and neonatology helped to give Ryan, Christopher and Tara life when they struggled for survival. Not so long ago, a premature baby was treated with no more than warm blankets and an oxygen mask. Today's specialized machines, procedures, and medications provide more hope for preterm babies. Although treatment also brings risks, the technology in the neonatal intensive care unit saves many premies whose underdeveloped bodies are vulnerable to living outside of their mother's protective womb.

Teacher and freelance writer Laura Varosca-DelInnocenti is a regular contributor to New York Parenting Media. In this capacity she has won numerous editorial awards from the Parenting Media Association. She holds master's degrees in fiction writing, education and psychology. She lives in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and is the proud mom of two sons, Henry and Charlie. Visit her webpage (www.examiner.com/parenting-in-new-york/laura-varosca) for more articles on parenting.

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Education

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718 823 8345

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Kinneret Day School

2600 Netherland Avenue, Bronx 10463

718-548-0900 or www.kinneretdayschool.org

Kinneret Day School was founded in 1947 by a group of visionary communal leaders. Presently located in Riverdale, NY, the school is dedicated to providing an integrated secular and Judaic instructional program. It strives to develop competent, independent and resourceful students, who possess a strong sense of self, and a lifelong commitment to learning and to Judaism.

The school prepares students to successfully function on the present, while helping them develop the necessary skills for dealing with the future. With students in nursery through eighth grade, it is an inclusive Jewish community day school, serving children from liberal to traditional families.

On average, more than half of Kinneret's graduating eighth graders are accepted into specialized high schools, with many choosing to enter elite private and Jewish day schools. Based on state tests, the school continues to be ranked among the top scoring schools in New York State.

Leake And Watts Services, Inc. Early Childhood Programs

Dr. Richard Green Educational Learning Center:
2165 Randall Avenue, Bronx 10473,
718-904-1689

Dr. Richard Green Educational Learning Center Head Start
2165 Randall Avenue, Bronx 10473,
718-829-9595

Soundview Child Care Center

1700 Seward Avenue, Bronx 10473,
718-991-7462

Highbridge Nursery School
1531 University Avenue, Bronx
10453, 718-294-0660

earlychildhood@leakeandwatts.org

Leake and Watts sponsors are sponsors for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited early childhood programs located in the Bronx.

Each of our early childhood programs provides the following services: NYS certified teachers, Developmentally appropriate curriculum activities, Universal Pre-kindeergarten services for four year olds, Nutritious meals and snacks prepared onsite, Air-conditioned classrooms, Outdoor play area, Extended day and extended year services (at the three child care centers).

For more information, please either contact each early childhood program directly.

Riverdale Community Nursery School

25 Knolls Crescent, Bronx 10463
718-543-0050 or www.

riverdalecommunityschool.com

The Riverdale Community School is a private nursery school serving the Riverdale, Kingsbridge, and Inwood neighborhoods for more than 30 years. We offer programs for pre-schoolers from 18 months to 4 years of age. The hours are 7:30 to 5:30; activities are from 9:30 to 4:00, snacks and free playtime after 4:00. Our activities and programs include music, art, outdoor play, cooking, readiness skills, writing and number recognition.

The Riverdale Community School is opened from Monday through Friday and we offer an eight week summer program in July and August. Tuition is paid on a weekly basis, there is no contract and enrollment is open, full and part time schedules are available.

Spuyten Duyvil Pre-School

3041 Kingsbridge Ave, Bronx 10463

718-549-1525 or www.

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Continued on page 14

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LEAKE AND WATTS SERVICES, INC. oversees three preschool special education programs, which are approved by the New York State Education Department and are under contract with the New York City Department of Education and/or Westchester County Department of Health/Office for Children With Disabilities:

- **DR. KATHARINE DODGE BROWNELL SCHOOL:** offering special class, special class in an integrated setting, full day Universal Prekindergarten services; located at 450 Castle Hill Avenue Bronx, NY 10473, (718) 430-7938
- **MARION AND GEORGE AMES EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTER:** offering special class, special class in an integrated setting, Universal Prekindergarten services, extended day/extended year child care services; located at 463 Hawthorne Ave., Yonkers, NY 10705, (914) 375-8820
- **CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER:** offering special class to students presenting on the Autism Spectrum; located at 310 West 103rd Street, New York, NY 10025, (212) 678-9555

Each of our preschool special education programs offers the following services:

- Monolingual & bilingual multidisciplinary evaluations (Ames & Brownell locations)
- NYS certified Teachers and Assistant Teachers
- Developmentally appropriate and individualized learning activities
- Related services (Occupational, Physical & Speech Therapy, Counseling)
- Nutritious breakfast and lunch
- Transportation (provided by the school district)
- Outdoor play area
- Air conditioned classrooms

For more information, please either contact each preschool special education program directly or visit our website at: earlychildhood@leakeandwatts.org



LEAKE AND WATTS SERVICES, INC. Early Childhood Programs

LEAKE AND WATTS SERVICES, INC. sponsors four National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited early childhood programs located in the Bronx:

- **DR. RICHARD GREEN EDUCATIONAL LEARNING CENTER:** located at 2165 Randall Avenue, (718) 904-1689
- **DR. RICHARD GREEN EDUCATIONAL LEARNING CENTER HEAD START:** located at 2165 Randall Avenue, (718) 829-9595
- **SOUNDVIEW CHILD CARE CENTER:** located at 1700 Seward Avenue, (718) 991-7462
- **HIGHBRIDGE NURSERY SCHOOL:** located at 1531 University Avenue, (718) 294-0660

Each of our early childhood programs provides the following services:

- NYS certified Teachers
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum activities
- Universal Prekindergarten services for four year olds
- Nutritious meals and snacks prepared onsite
- Air conditioned classrooms
- Outdoor play area
- Extended day and extended year services (at the three child care centers)

For more information, please either contact each early childhood program directly or visit our website at: earlychildhood@leakeandwatts.org



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Education

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 12

appropriately stimulating environment, designed to encourage independence, social growth, creativity and enjoyment of learning.

The "hands-on" curriculum supports each child's social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. Daily activities include stories and discussions, regular and varied art activities, math and science experiences, extensive dramatic play and block building, cooking and a large, a unique outdoor play space to support large muscle development. The front yard holds a compost bin and large planting boxes for each child to get direct experience in planting and environmental studies. UPK children also take part in weekly Yoga and Music classes with licensed specialists.

Open Houses held monthly; check the website and come visit- to see and hear the school in action is to love it!

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685 Tinton Avenue, Bronx 10455
718-993-9464 or www.stanselmbx.org

Offers a safe, nurturing, values-based learning environment for students in Pre-K (ages 3 and 4 years) through Grade 8 where they can achieve academic success, learn integrity and values in the Catholic tradition, and belong to a community that fosters self-confidence and school spirit. The school provides a high quality educational program designed to prepare

students to succeed and compete in the 21st century. Students are taught to not only develop a mastery of academic skills, but also enthusiastic and wholesome attitudes towards learning. The administration, faculty and staff work in partnership with parents in a spirit of mutual cooperation. St. Anselm School welcomes applications for admission. Please contact the school office for more information.

These Our Treasures, Inc. (TOTS)

2778 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx 10465
718-863-4925 or www.theseourtrees.com

TOTS is a warm, welcoming school that provides a full array of intervention services to special needs children, birth to age 5, as well as strong supports for parents and extended families. Begun in 1970, by a group of Bronx parents of young children with disabilities, TOTS incorporated as a school in 1973, and has set the standard for quality services in the Bronx for the past 38 years. Provision of special education, speech, OT, PT, and counseling is augmented by additional services like Music Therapy, Developmental Art, Sensory Groups, Yoga, PECS, TEACCH, Therapeutic Listening, and Assistive Technology. Expert staff individualizes programming to meet the needs of all children. For more information, call or see our website. Early Intervention inquiries must first go through 311.



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Birth to Age 5

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For Early Intervention Services Contact 311

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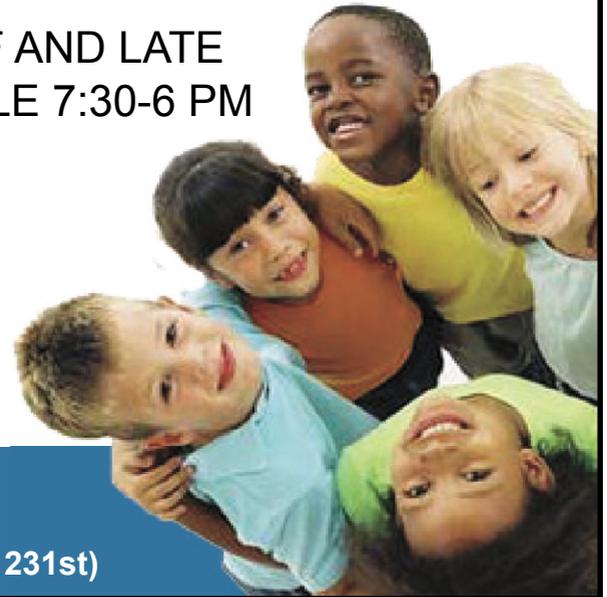
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Gift ideas for teachers

This holiday season, give something they'll really appreciate

BY KATHY SENA

Tired of giving apple stationery, apple earrings and “#1 Teacher” sweatshirts to your children’s teachers every holiday season? Imagine how the teachers feel! Here are some parent- and teacher-tested gift ideas that will really make the grade.

• **Think outside the classroom.** “I like giving something that conveys that you know the teacher is human, too — not just a teacher,” says mom Joy Hall. Think sports memorabilia (if you know the teach-

Jennifer Vena gives goody bags full of classroom supplies — dry-erase markers, paper clips, Post-it Notes, overhead markers, etc. With many teachers spending their own money on these items, this is a welcome gift.

• **Make it personal.** “Have your child make something that shows how much the teacher is appreciated,” suggests Hall. Including a photo is a wonderful touch, she adds, and it will help the teacher to remember your child when she looks at the gift in years to come. A personal letter of appreciation, along with a drawing from your child, is something many teachers say they read over and over again — and keep forever.

• **Choose a gift from the whole class.** Several parents suggested taking up a collection and choosing a class gift.

“This eliminates the two-dozen ‘#1 Teacher’ gifts,” says Karen Hammond of South Bristol, Maine. Some classes choose to purchase a pair of earrings or a gift certificate. One Southern California class pooled their gift funds and bought the teacher a much-longed-for gift: a beach-cruiser-style bicycle. While the bike cost a couple hundred dollars, when divided by the number of families in the class, it became an affordable group gift. The teacher was speechless — and thrilled.

Celeste Armitage of Hermosa Beach, Calif. suggests creating a class quilt. Have each child draw a picture. Then transfer the pictures onto individual fabric squares using heat transfers (the kind designed to be used on fabric), which are sold at craft stores. Finally, sew the squares into a simple quilt pattern.

“I’ve seen self portraits, flowers or a mixture of pictures,” says Armitage. “The important thing is to have each child sign his or her picture.”

• **Think books.** RaShell LeMay, a teacher, says teachers love to receive children’s books to help beef up their classroom libraries. Adding your child’s photo to the inside

cover, along with a note from the child, makes the gift extra special. To add a truly memorable touch, have the book signed by the author and dedicated to the teacher.

• **Let the teacher decide — with a gift certificate.** Ruth Opdycke says she once gave her son’s preschool teachers gift certificates to be used at any store at the local mall.

“They all loved it,” she reports, adding that she’s also given gift certificates to upscale toy stores for those teachers who have to buy classroom toys on their own.

Other popular gift-certificate options: massages, facials, manicures and pedicures, movies (either for movie theaters or the local video store), and restaurants. Most teachers don’t splurge on themselves very often, and a group gift of a gift certificate good for a day at a local spa may be just the well-deserved slice of heaven your favorite teacher has been wishing for.

• **Make your own goodies.** When you’re a teacher, there’s never enough time for holiday preparations. With winter music programs to organize, homework to grade, classrooms to decorate, class parties to plan, and a whole class of kids on holiday overdrive, what teacher has time — or energy — to go home and bake cookies in the evening?

“A can’t-miss idea for teachers is a plate of assorted, nicely decorated, homemade holiday cookies, wrapped for freezing or for immediate use,” says Hammond. “I used to buy inexpensive ceramic holiday plates to put them on (these can often be picked up at garage sales), but heavy-duty paper plates will work. They were so popular the first time I made them, that I repeated the idea for years.”

Be careful, though, or you may be labeled the “Wonderful Cookie Mom” for the duration of your child’s school career, says Lisa Iannucci.

“Now my kids’ teachers actually request the cookies,” she says. “One teacher told me she had to fight her husband for the last ones!”

Kathy Sena is a freelance writer specializing in parenting issues. Visit her website at www.badballet.com.



er’s favorite team), an addition to a favorite collection of bears, dolls, or snow globes. The list can be endless if you or your child just happen to listen up when the teacher mentions favorite hobbies and activities.

• **Consider a gift for the classroom.** As school budgets are increasingly cut, teachers are often asked to supply certain classroom items. So when her child was in kindergarten, Dorothy Foltz-Gray asked what classroom game the kids needed.

“The teacher responded as if I were a saint!” she says. Another time, she gave a monetary gift, again to be used for classroom supplies.



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Find something fun and educational in our 2011 Gift Guide

BY SHAVANA ABRUZZO

You know the drill by now, moms and dads. Every year you promise to get an early start on your holiday gift shopping, but here you are again, just weeks away from Chanukah, Christmas and Kwanzaa,

and you haven't bought a thing for junior or any of the other pint-sized people in your life.

Worse yet, the vast selection of toys, games and gadgetry out there — a mind-boggling maze that seems to grow each year like a wired Chia Pet — has you baffled about where to even start!

We suggest that you get cracking right here and now with our fun-tastic 2011 Holiday Gift Guide, a jam-packed seasonal blockbuster that takes the guesswork out of gift-giving with smart and wallet-friendly items culled from the toy boxes of some of the most innovative manufacturers around. From

classic to cutting edge, our editor's selections are hand-picked for their educational value without skimping on the fun.

The best part?

All of them are under \$50 and can be bought online, which means you can enjoy a hassle-free holiday!

My Keepsake Portfolio

(Ages 2+, \$19.95); Lakeshore; (800) 778-4456, www.lakeshorelearning.com/Holiday2011

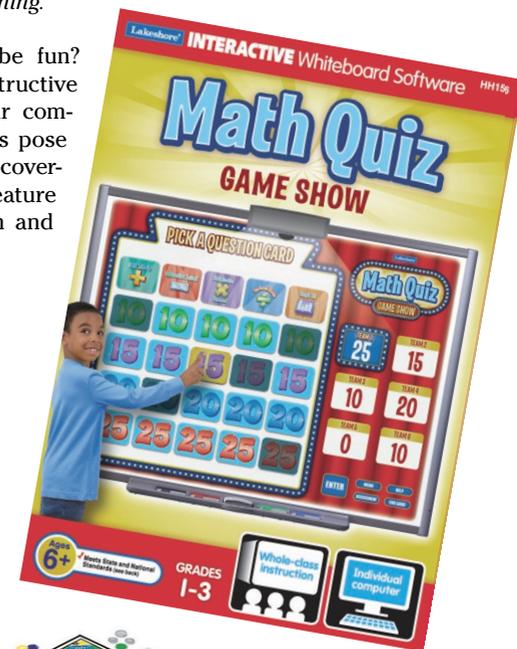
Preserve your pint-sized Picasso's paintings, drawings and other masterpieces in this super-sturdy, handy organizer. It comes with nine expandable storage pockets — large enough for even oversized works! Each has a nifty tab for easy labeling, and there's even room to label the cover!



Math Quiz Game Show

(Ages 6-8, for ages 9-11, \$14.95); Lakeshore; (800) 778-4456, www.lakeshorelearning.com/Holiday2011

Can homework really be fun? Count on it by holding instructive game nights right on your computer! Exciting game shows pose more than 200 questions, covering key math concepts. Feature totally awesome animation and sound effects!



The Allowance Game

(Ages 5-9, \$16.95); Lakeshore; (800) 778-4456, www.lakeshorelearning.com/Holiday2011

It's never too early to begin teaching your munchkin about money management! This fun-fueled, fast-paced game for two-to-four players teaches kids how to handle money and make change as they save and spend their allowance.



← What's Inside? Soft Feely Box

(Infant to 3 years, \$39.95); Lakeshore; (800) 778-4456, www.lakeshorelearning.com/Holiday2011

Go on, feel away! Little ones won't be able to resist getting their mitts into this fleecy and adorable treasure trove — and find out what's inside! It's packed with 10 different objects for kids to touch and explore, including a pretty butterfly with crinkly wings and a cute lion with a corduroy coat. Soft and machine washable, too.



↑ Gathering A Garden Board Game

(Ages 5+, \$9); eeBoo, (888) 800-1442, www.eebo.com

Hurry around to every vendor, so you can be a garden tender. Get your flower, herb and tree, vegetable and bird — they're free! Your garden is completely done? Get home first, and you have won!

→ Squinkies Surprise Inside Bubble Packs

(\$9.99); www.squinkies.com/boys

Each pack contains 16 collectibles Squinkies individually-packed in a toy bubble! Also includes four hidden "surprise" Squinkies to start or add to a collection!



→ Sunflower Growth Chart

(\$8.50); eeBoo, (888) 800-1442, www.eebo.com

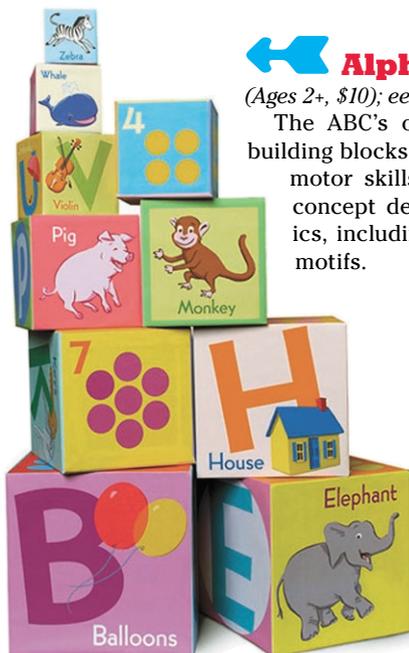
Your self-scrutinizing sprouters can gauge their gains as they inch towards new heights! Also available in baseball field, castle, firemen, musical fairy tree, solar system, and other eye-pleasing backgrounds. They come laminated with a gros-grain ribbon to hang, and stickers to mark special occasions!



← Alphabet Tower

(Ages 2+, \$10); eeBoo, (888) 800-1442, www.eebo.com

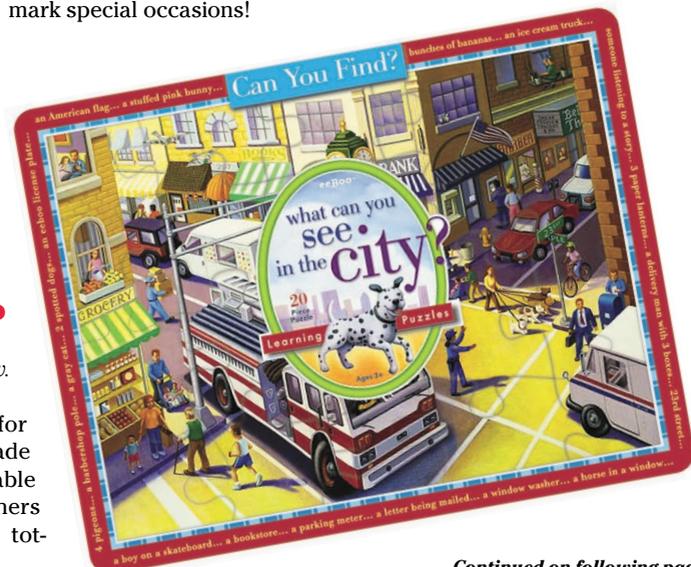
The ABC's of life begin with these colorful building blocks, designed to develop your child's motor skills while promoting language and concept development. Features cute graphics, including monkey, fireman and airplane motifs.



→ Friends Say Hello Tray Puzzle

(Ages 3+, \$4); eeBoo, (888) 800-1442, www.eebo.com

Fun learning tray offers food for thought anytime! It's 15" x 11" and made from sturdy durable board. Also available in "Fruits and Vegetables," "Wild Mothers and Babies," "Alphabet," and other top-pleasing topics.



Continued on following page

Gift Guide

continues...



Soccer Girls

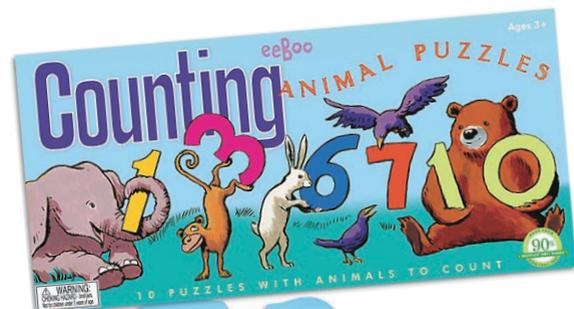
(Ages 3-9, \$24.99); KaskeyKids, (866) 527-5437, www.kaskeykids.com

KaskeyKids is ahead of the rest with its first boxed set of sports action figures for girls! Each comes with up to 30 pieces, including two full teams, a washable felt field, accessories and a snazzy storage container, allowing young athletes to recreate games and enjoy imaginary play for hours! Also available in other sports (for the little guy), and don't forget to check out the Go-Go Sport Dolls, and Bop Bags!

Magnetic Fishing Set

(Ages 3-5, \$29.95); Lakeshore; (800) 778-4456, www.lakeshorelearning.com/Holiday2011

Aspiring anglers can fish for the fun with sturdy poles baited with eye-catching magnetic "hooks" to reel in 18 colorful gilled beauties, and other sensational sea critters. They're weighted to float upright for a trouble-free trawl. Includes four adjustable poles.



Counting Animal Puzzles

(Ages 3+, \$7.50); eeBoo, (888) 800-1442, www.eebo.com

These fierce jigsaws add up to great downtime while honing vital math skills. Contains 10 three-piece puzzles with a divided tray for easy storage!



Mini Playing Cards Classic Card Games

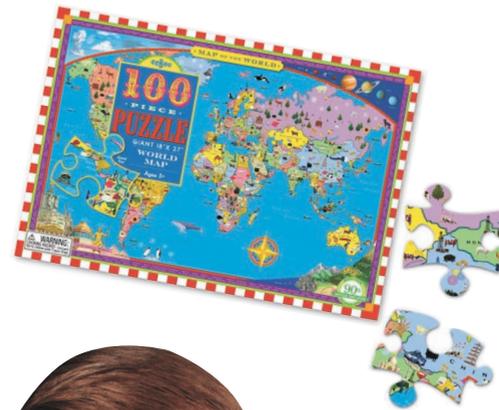
(Ages 5+, \$4-\$6); eeBoo, (888) 800-1442, www.eebo.com

Raining outside? Deck the doldrums and stack up the good times with a few rounds of Animal Rummy, Hearts, Color Go Fish!, Old Maid, and Crazy Faces (plays like Crazy 8's).

World Map Puzzle

(Ages 5+, \$7); eeBoo, (888) 800-1442, www.eebo.com

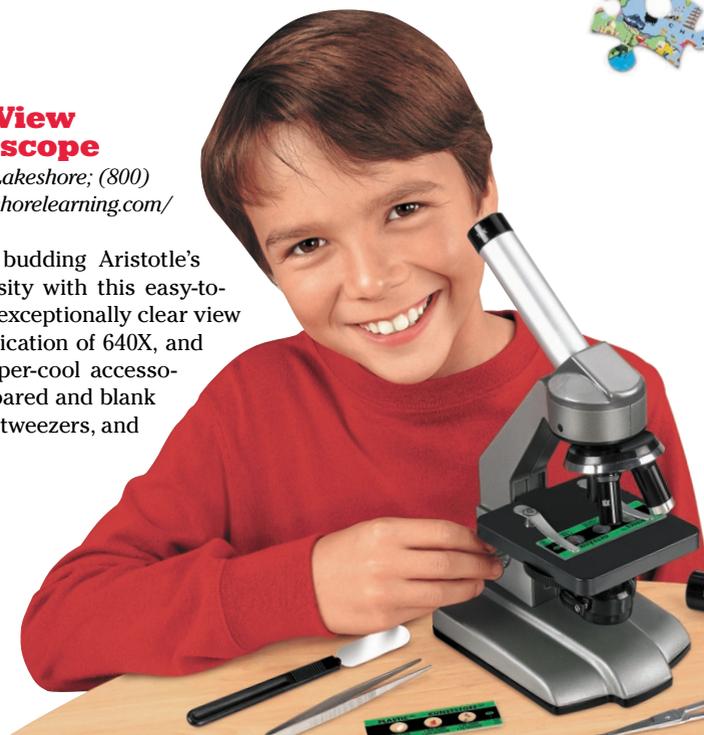
Cultivate your child's world view with this colorful, 100-piece jigsaw — Legends of Icons included.



Easy-View Microscope

(Ages 8-11, \$49.99); Lakeshore; (800) 778-4456, www.lakeshorelearning.com/Holiday2011

Maximize your budding Aristotle's potential for curiosity with this easy-to-use tool. Offers an exceptionally clear view with a total magnification of 640X, and comes with 19, super-cool accessories, including prepared and blank slides, a Petri dish, tweezers, and collecting vials.



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The perfect book can be enjoyed for years to come

Gifts to read

Helping kids overcome fear

If you're near a beach, pool, water trough, garden hose, or fire hydrant, there's a good chance your child is going to get wet this summer. But before he does, you'll want to read Jennifer Sattler's new book, "Pig Kahuna," first.

The pig, Fergus, doesn't like water because of what's in it. But as you'll see in "Pig Kahuna," when a friend is in trouble, even the worst fears can be overcome.

It was a warm day at the beach and Fergus and his baby brother, Dink, were busy collecting treasures.

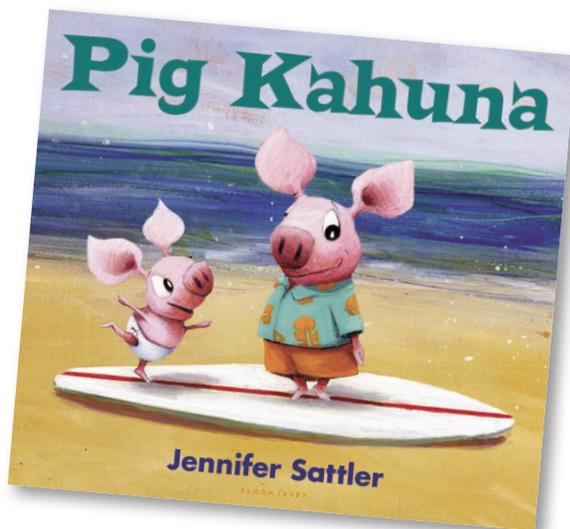
The ocean was behaving very well. Its waves rolled out, then rolled right back again, and each time, it brought more cool stuff for Fergus and Dink's collection. It laid them right on the beach, which was a very good thing. That meant that Fergus

didn't have to go into the water.

Fergus hated the water. It scared him, because he knew there was more than just his cherished items out there. He didn't even like to think about it.

Still, the ocean was good to Fergus and Dink. It gave them lots of awesome stuff: they found seaweed and shells, something that just might have been a real shark tooth, and a big, white surfboard that washed up on shore.

Since surfing was out of the question, Fergus and Dink dragged the surfboard out of the water. It was a



good board, perfect for all kinds of pretending. They named it Dave and played with it all afternoon.

But when Fergus left to get ice cream, Dink thought Dave looked kind of sad. He let Dave go wild and free, back to the ocean, but just seeing Dave floating away into the sea, well, that scared Fergus even more

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

than water did.

What if Dave was afraid of water, too?

Bravely, Fergus went out to rescue his new friend, but there was a gigantic surprise waiting for him in the water — that turned out to be the biggest treasure of all.

With a really cute story and two adorable characters, author Sattler shows kids that they can jump in, because the water's just fine. I loved how Fergus was whistle-in-the-dark, positively certain of the nasties that lurked in the drink, and I loved the subtle, soft humor in Sattler's illustrations.

Whether your 3- to 7-year-old is a tadpole at swimming lessons, or can hang 10 with the best of 'em and has just recently learned the meaning of "Cowabunga!," this is a great book to read aloud. Grab "Pig Kahuna" and dive right in.

"Pig Kahuna" by Jennifer Sattler [32 pages, Bloomsbury Kids, 2011, \$14.99] is recommended for children ages 3-7.

A new Christmas tale for your family to love

Looking for a children's book to explore the true meaning of the holiday season? For something very different, grab "The Christmas Eve Ghost."

In the 2010 hardcover by author-illustrator Shirley Hughes, two young children know it's not Santa they hear at the back of their house. It's too scary to be Santa!

Bronwen and Dylan hadn't lived in Liverpool long; they moved there from Wales after their Da died and their Mam needed a job.

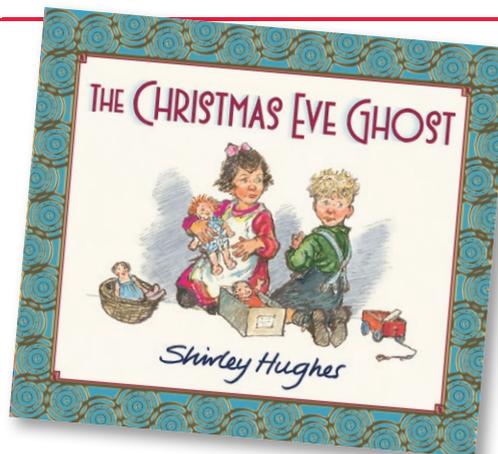
Every weekday morning, long before Bronwen and Dylan awoke, Mam, a laundress, left the children sleeping as she walked from house to house on her rounds. She hated leaving the children alone, but she

always returned in time to make porridge for breakfast. On Sundays, they went to chapel together.

In the house next door, lived Mr. and Mrs. O'Riley and their two sons. Mr. O'Riley and the boys worked at the docks in good times, and they stood on street corners in bad times.

There were no washing machines in those days, and well-off people were happy to have Mam do their washing. It was a hard job, and Mam was tired at the end of the long day. Most nights, though, she saved enough energy to spin ancient tales and legends of green valleys, dragons, and ghosties.

On the afternoon before Christmas, Mam left the children at home,



so she could finish shopping. She wanted to get them something special, so she warned them not to open the door and to stay quiet. All alone, Bronwen and Dylan were playing on the floor of their flat when they heard a noise. Plonk! Plonk!

That didn't sound like Santa! Could it be a ghost, like in one of Mam's stories?

The children ran outside as fast as they could, away from the ghost, and right into the nicest Christmas present anyone could have given them.

Based loosely on her Liverpool childhood, Hughes tells a tale of a Christmas that barely happens, and the gift of unlikely friendship. I loved the lesson in this book, subtle as it was, and I was absolutely smitten with the illustrations. This is the kind of book to read, savor, and discuss, particularly in this time when we gather our friends and family close.

If you plan on giving a book to your favorite kid this Christmas, here's one to find.

"The Christmas Eve Ghost" by Shirley Hughes [32 pages, Candlewick Press, 2010, \$15.99] is recommended for children ages 4 and older.

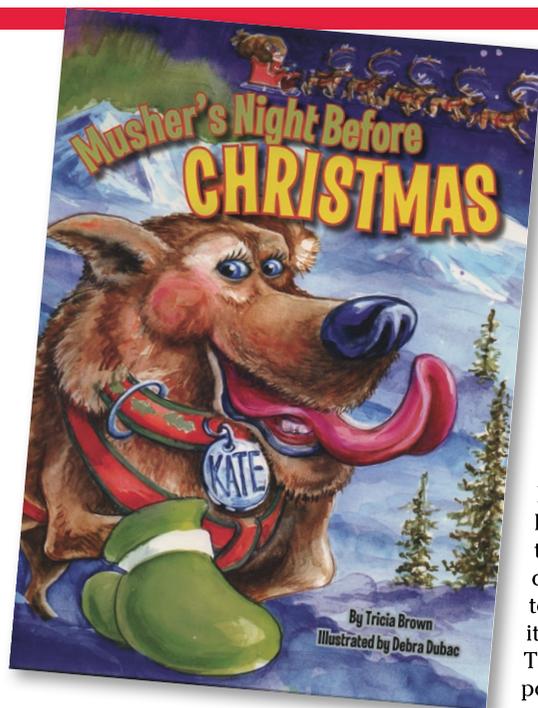
A new holiday favorite

Santa brings joy to so many, but who helps Santa? As you'll see in "Musher's Night Before Christmas" by Tricia Brown, illustrated by Debra Dubac, you might be surprised at the answer.

It was Christmas Eve, and everyone at the North Pole was caught up in the excitement. All the elves were there, clapping for the guy in the red suit and listening to reindeer facts and weather reports.

As the reindeer lined up and prepared to go, Mrs. Claus reminded Santa that it was cold up in Alaska and snowing hard in Nome.

But Santa wasn't worried. He patted each of his teammates, checked his pockets for last-minute things, looked the sleigh over, and when he was satisfied that everything was A-OK, he jumped



aboard and the reindeer leaped into the sky.

At a faraway cabin way up north, a yard full of huskies were yapping at the snow. Fleece booties, meant to protect their paws, were hung by the fire and everyone — including the dogs' owner, Tom — settled down

to dream of winning big races.

Then, one by one, the huskies saw someone coming, and they started howling. When Tom heard the noise, he jumped from his bed and ran outside. It was Santa and his reindeer, and they were exhausted!

While Tom danced barefooted in the snow, Santa explained that he was nearly done delivering presents, but there was one place he didn't have the energy to reach: Nome, where it was snowing hard. The reindeer were out of power and Rudy's nose was fading to pink, but Santa knew who could

help him get the gifts to Nome. He'd been following the news, and he knew all about Tom and his crew.

Could Tom and his huskies save Christmas morning?

Every year, it seems, someone comes out with another take on

Clement Moore's classic. Many of them have the barest relationship to the Yuletide, but this book is set practically in Santa's backyard.

With just a hint of Moore's "The Night Before Christmas," Brown tells the story of a string of unlikely heroes who thunder through the snow to give St. Nick a hand with his annual job. I especially enjoyed how Brown adds a touch of humanity to Santa's superhuman abilities, making the Big Guy even more huggable.

What kids will love, though, are the illustrations by Dubac. Her bold colors are holiday-perfect, and the facial expressions she gives each character are deliciously funny.

If reading a holiday book has become a beloved tradition in your family, reach for this one.

"Musher's Night Before Christmas" by Tricia Brown, illustrated by Debra Dubac [32 pages, Pelican Publishing Company, 2011, \$16.99] is recommended for children ages 3-5.

• • •

Terri Schlichenmeyer has been reading since she was 3 years old and never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill with two dogs and 12,000 books.

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Wishing You,
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A Happy & Healthy Holiday Season.



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Fight holiday stress

“I hate to admit it, but I almost can’t wait until the holidays are over,” says Anna Rosario, a mom of two from Fort Greene in Brooklyn. “I am already stressed out!” Rosario feels the way many moms do at this time of year. She says the thought of having to get all the various tasks done — like decorating, shopping, cooking, wrapping, writing cards, and visiting extended family — is overwhelming. When you throw in the demands of raising kids, running a household, and working, it’s a sure-fire recipe for stress. But don’t throw in the towel just yet, because there are some practical tips to relieve holiday stress.

Maintain healthy habits

By keeping healthy eating habits, you will be better equipped to deal with stress, so make sure you are eating healthfully, as well as exercising and getting a good night’s sleep. Sleep is often an underrated component of our health and one of the first things to go when stress hits. Likewise, skipping meals will make you more likely to overindulge later and will leave you feeling worse.

Ask for help

Enlist your spouse and kids to help plan the holiday gatherings, gifts and menus. Maybe your spouse can take over kitchen clean-up duties if you cook the meal. Maybe you can split the shopping down the middle, instead of you doing it all yourself. Make decisions together about who will accomplish each task, so there are no last minute hassles. Kids can help address cards, wrap presents, and decorate. Online shopping with your spouse (after the kids have gone to bed) can be a lifesaver, and most stores



offer free shipping during the holidays.

Make a plan for dealing with extended family

Let’s face it, for many people, visiting extended family and in-laws are a large component of the holiday stress. Dr. Susan Bartell, a nationally recognized psychologist, and author of “The Top 50 Questions Kids Ask,” says maintaining a positive attitude is vital.

“The first thing you have to do before you go to a family gathering is focus on the positive and don’t obsess on what you hate and rehash old wounds. If you do, you’ll go in with a really negative attitude and look for stuff to complain

about,” she advises.

Bartell also suggests taking small steps to make the day more pleasant. Maybe you can visit difficult in-laws but only stay for an hour or show up an hour late. She also says whatever you can do to dilute a tense situation helps, such as helping out in the kitchen or keeping the kids busy with things to do.

Make a shopping list before you go to the store

Identifying what gifts you want to purchase is the hard part. If you walk into the store with a list, it will enable you to get the shopping done fast. If you don’t, you might spend hours walking round aimlessly, feeling pressured to pick the right gift, and then end up choosing something you don’t really want.

Create a budget and stick to it!

If you spend too much, not only will it stress you out now, but it may cause long-term tension if you accumulate debt. Don’t think you have to get the most

extravagant gift for everyone on your list. A recent survey conducted by research firm Toluna said that nearly half of respondents said a phone call to catch up is the best present a distant friend or family member could give them during the holiday season.

The holidays are about showing the people who are important to you that you care — and that is absolutely free.

Danielle Sullivan, a Brooklyn-born mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years, and was recently honored with a Gold award for her health column by the Parenting Media Association. Sullivan also writes for Babble. You can find her on her blog, Just Write Mom.

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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Sugarplum madness

Help your family handle holiday temptations

Cookies, candy canes, fudge and egg nog, oh my! Everywhere we turn this time of year, we're faced with temptations galore. As if we need reminding, the media dishes up plenty of advice on how to avoid holiday weight gain.

As every parent knows, it's a more indulgent time for children, as well. While they have more caloric leeway than we do — and more opportunity to burn it off — some children gain weight during the holiday period.

Research published last year in the *Journal of Clinical Medical Research* suggests that elementary school-aged children can gain weight over the six-week holiday period between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Not surprisingly, those who are already overweight are more susceptible to this gain.

A 2000 study on adults published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* came to a similar conclusion. It found that they gained an average of 0.8 pounds during the holiday period of mid-November through mid-January. Those who were overweight gained significantly more weight, with 14 percent gaining more than five pounds.

Realistically, the "eating season" stretches much longer than six weeks. It starts in mid-October when people start stockpiling candy for trick-or-treaters, and usually ends when the kids head back to school in early January.



"Anyone is susceptible to weight gain and, even more importantly, to developing unhealthy eating habits if they allow the holidays to bleed into one another," explains Sally Kuzemchak, MS, RD, a dietitian and mother of two in Columbus, OH, who blogs at www.realmomnutrition.com. "After weeks of having treats around, kids and grown-ups expect these kinds of foods daily. Instead of being 'sometimes foods' they become 'all the time foods.'"

Burning those extra sugar plum calories is also important. Enjoy physical activities with your children, such as snowball fights, sledging, building snowmen, as well as walks during a snowfall. Even shoveling can be fun if you make it so.

Kuzemchak shares her tradition:

"My family is pretty active on the holidays. Between me and my brother, we have four little boys — so staying inside isn't really an option! After the big holiday meal, we often end up going outside to play football or taking a walk through the woods.

"Yes, it's cold and every fiber of my being wants to stay inside and eat cookies, but once we're out, I'm always glad we did it," continues Kuzemchak. "It's good for everyone's mental health, too. Kids like to be active and outside, even in the cold."

Here are some tips for keeping your child's (and your) weight under control:

- Remember, you are a role model, so make good food choices yourself.
- Keep healthful food choices front and center in the fridge and on the kitchen counter.

- Encourage small samples of rich holiday treats. Eat slowly and savor those tiny bites.

- Emphasize what celebrating the holidays are about: family, friends and its religious aspects.

- If hosting a get together, include beautifully displayed low-calorie foods, such as a tossed green salad with pomegranate arils, or an artfully assembled crudite platter.

Holidays are about making memories, which include enjoying the special foods we hold dear to our hearts. So make the traditional, once-a-year dishes. Bake the pies and cookies. Use butter and cream and other ingredients that make those once-a-year foods so special.

As Kuzemchak admits, "I actually let my kids have free reign on those days. We have family parties with tons of food, and I'm not about to police them at the buffet table. But that's ONE day. I try my very hardest to get everyone back on track the next day."

Christine M. Palumbo, RD, is a dietitian in Naperville, IL. Her three children are hoping she'll host a cookie exchange this year. She can be reached at Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com or at (630) 369-8495.

Poached pears in purple grape juice



Makes four servings

INGREDIENTS:

1½ cups Welch's® 100 percent Grape Juice made with Concord grapes
2 cinnamon sticks
Rind of orange, 2 strips
4 pears (Bosc or Bartlett), peeled

DIRECTIONS: In a medium saucepan, bring grape juice, cinnamon and orange rind to a boil. Peel the pears, leaving the stem. Place pears standing in saucepan and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Turn or spoon juice over

pears as they simmer. Remove pears and let cool. Reduce sauce by boiling down to about 1/3 cup. Spoon sauce over pears and keep chilled. Serve pears by themselves or with whipped cream or vanilla pudding.

NUTRITION: 150 calories, 0 g fat, cholesterol and sodium, 1 gram protein, 39 grams carbohydrate, 6 grams dietary fiber.

Used with permission from Welch's. Featured in Welch's "Taste the Harvest Guide: Where and How to Eat Fresh, Local and Seasonal." Visit welchs.com/zagat to check out the guide and more recipes.



A TEEN'S TAKE

AGLAIA HO

Why I love winter in New York City

With winter in full swing, the cold weather might tempt us to remain in the sanctuary of our warm houses. For me, winter in New York City means picking my way through slushy streets, avoiding catching a cold at school, and bundling up in scarves, down jackets, and bulky mittens. It's no surprise that at times I envy Fuzzy-Wuzzy, who hibernates until spring! Nevertheless, I've learned that wintertime has its own joys. The snow doesn't have to keep us inside. I've enjoyed many, fun-filled activities when I've braved the cold with my family.

Get inspired

Winter transforms our city into a pure white land of glistening icicles and snow-capped buildings. As an avid artist, I've been truly inspired by the way winter transforms the landscapes and scenes of the city. I find myself looking outside my window and being awe-struck by the breathtaking view of newly fallen snow, gently illuminated by morning light. This wondrous image soon translates into a poem. Sometimes, I rush outside in the bitter cold and whip out my digital camera to capture stills of my neighborhood.

One winter, a huge snowstorm hit New York City. Two feet of snow piled up in front of our house, locking us inside. My family and I were watching the snow come down, and we were inspired to create our own winter wonderland indoors. Together, we cut out at least a hundred, unique snowflakes out of recycled paper and hung them up all around our dining room.

Let the snow and wintery weather inspire you to release your inner creativity. Draw a picture, write a story, or create a song. Gather the family together and share your winter-themed creations.

Challenge yourself

With a world filled with progressive technology, it's not too hard to



occupy ourselves during a snowstorm. Yet, one of our family traditions is to dig out old-fashioned jigsaw puzzles. We sit around our coffee table cooperating to finish a 1,000-piece puzzle!

My dad's technique consists of dividing the pieces by shape, while my mom generally separates everything by color. I just use the common and very-effective method of plug and chug, otherwise known as "just guess!" We chat about life in general, tell jokes, and tease each other. Sometimes, I even serenade my parents with a song or two, mostly about nonsense, but it cheers us all up. It's an invigorating challenge that brings us together and also helps to pass time as the wind howls violently outside. Of course, puzzles can be extremely addictive (and frustrating, too).

Find your old puzzles and redo them during a frosty day. Perhaps challenge your family with a crossword puzzle or some brainteasers. It's bound to keep your mind churning and be enjoyable for everyone.

See the sights

Almost every year, for as long as I can remember, my mom and I would

take the subway into Manhattan to experience the holiday magic. We'd visit the magnificent tree at Rockefeller Center and stand under its gigantic boughs, smelling the distinct scent of the evergreen. Although I was never a huge fan of this towering tree, I loved to watch the ice skaters in the plaza below. I was even able to convince my mom to let me join them gliding by the golden, radiant beauty of the Prometheus statue.

However, the best part of our excursion was seeing the Christmas windows. Each year, Macy's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Henri Bendel's (which this year has a spectacular Lady Liberty decked in jelly-bean garb), and other department stores fill their windows with holiday and winter-inspired decor.

Saks Fifth Avenue windows are definitely the most memorable for me. Every year, they tell a different, adorable children's story. To this day, I find myself reliving my childhood as I watch the characters play out scenes from the stories. Afterwards, we'd treat ourselves to the warm, tantalizing taste of steamy pretzels, roasted nuts, and hot chocolate. Snacks in hand, we'd proceed through the city, drooling over the jewelry in the Tiffany's windows, marveling at the Gothic designs of St. Patrick's Cathedral, and greeting the Santas that line the street.

The city is always decked out for any approaching holidays. Experiencing the atmosphere is definitely enough to make an incredible memory.

Winter doesn't have to be a tiring season, waiting out the snow and longing for the warmth of spring. With innovation and fun, you can enjoy tried-and-true experiences or make new traditions that are the key to having a fulfilling winter.

Aglaia Ho is a 16-year-old student from Queens who enjoys writing. Her work has been published in Creative Kids, Skipping Stones, Daily News/Children's Pressline, and The State of the Wild.

www.NYParenting.com

The screenshot shows the NYParenting.com website. At the top, the logo "NYParenting" is displayed in purple, with the tagline "Where every Family matters!" below it. Navigation links for Contact, Twitter, Facebook, and Feeds are present, along with a search bar. A "2011 Gold Award Winner" badge is visible in the top right corner.

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Home:** Lists various family-focused groups like Brooklyn Family, Queens Family, Bronx/Riverdale Family, Long Island Family, Manhattan Family, Staten Island Family, NY Special Child, LI Special Child, and Baby New York.
- Calendar:** Includes a "Submit an event" button and a list of categories: MAP: Today's events, Movies, Music, Outdoors, Theater, and Workshops.
- Directory:** Categorized into Education (Afterschool programs, Nursery schools, Montessori schools, Pre-schools, Parochial schools, Private schools, Religious schools, Tutoring and learning centers), Activities (Art, Cooking, Dance, Martial arts, Multilingual, Music, Performing arts, Religious instruction, Sports), Dentistry (Family dentistry, Orthodontics, Pediatrics), Parties (Party entertainers, Party venues), Camps (Day camps, Sleepaway camps, Summer programs), and Special needs (Special needs education, Family support).
- Featured Content:** Includes "NEW EXHIBIT: Secrets of Circles" (145 Brooklyn Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11213), "SAVE THE DATE" for member and public openings, "MONSTER MASH Halloween Party" (Oct. 28 & 29), "The Hub" with a "Calendar: Tomorrow" section listing "Bounce-night" (5 pm-7 pm, Farinquadale, Long Island), "Life in the 19th Century" (1-5 pm, Historic Richmond Town, Richmond Town, Staten Island), and "Storytime" (12:00, The Moxie Spot, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn). A "Directories: Featured" section highlights "MATHNASIUM The Math Learning Center" with education and afterschool programs in Bensonhurst & Bklyn Hqts., Brooklyn.
- Articles:** A featured article titled "When should I feed my baby solid foods?" by Kerry and Jacqueline Donelli, accompanied by a photo of a young child.
- Newsletter Sign-up:** A section for signing up for an email newsletter, including a form for "Your email address" and a "Submit" button.
- Popular stories:** A list of five popular stories: 1. Living together during divorce; 2. FEATURED EVENT: Notable concert; 3. STATEN ISLAND: Scary Island!; 4. FAMILY HEALTH: Breast-feeding: Better for baby; 5. Get ready for a howling Halloween around town!
- Right Sidebar:** A vertical banner for "WIN TICKETS for you & your family (4) to local family-friendly shows" with a "Click here to register to win" link. Below it is an advertisement for "pole racing" with the text "built for racers by racers" and "Kart speeds up to 45mph! Real side-by-side racing. Adults & kids karts (Must be 48" tall). Group events & private parties. Video games, pool tables, food & more." The address "99 Caven Point Road Jersey City NJ 07305" is listed at the bottom.

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Going Places

LONG-RUNNING

Gingerbread Adventure: New York Botanical Garden, 200th Street and Kazimiroff Boulevard; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Daily, 10 am–6 pm, Now – Mon, Jan. 16, 2012; \$20 (\$18 seniors and students; \$10 children).

Children explore the spices that make up a classic gingerbread recipe.

"Polar Express": Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road; (718) 220-5103; www.bronxzoo.com; Daily, 10 am, Now – Mon, Jan. 2, 2012; \$5 plus zoo admission.

Come and take the adventure of a lifetime — view the condensed movie in 4D.

Holiday train show: New York Botanical Garden, 200th Street and Kazimiroff Boulevard; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 am–6 pm, Now – Mon, Jan. 16, 2012; \$20 (\$18 seniors and students; \$10 children).

The annual event features model trains that zip over bridges and past replicas of New York landmarks. (Closed on Nov. 24 and Dec. 25.)

Christmas Spectacular: Radio City Music Hall, 1260 Ave. of the Americas between 50th and 51st streets in Manhattan; (212) 247-4777; www.radiocity.com; Daily, check for times, Now – Mon, Jan. 2, 2012; \$45–\$125.

The world famous Rockettes, new music, dazzling costumes and state-of-the-art 3D technology make this year's show the greatest ever. And of course, there will be a visit from the jolly old elf himself, Saint Nick.

Dinosaur display: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street in Manhattan; (212) 769-5000; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am–5:30 pm, Now – Mon, Jan. 2, 2012; \$24 (\$18 students, \$14 children).

Children learn about the largest dinos, the long-tailed sauropods, by examining the innovative model.

Big Apple Circus: Lincoln Center, 62nd Street between Amsterdam and Columbus avenues in Manhattan; (888) 541-3750; www.bigapplecircus.org; Sundays and Mondays, 10 am–6 pm, Tuesdays – Saturdays, 10 am–8 pm, Now – Sun, Jan. 8, 2012; \$15–\$95.

The Big Top returns featuring the Flying Cortes, magician Scott Nelson and Muriel Brugman, aerialist Anna Volodko



All aboard adventure

The Bronx Zoo is presenting "The Polar Express" not in 2D, not in 3D, but in incredible 4D. Now through Jan. 2, don't just see the train, feel the train.

The zoo's 4D theater brings movies to life in a cutting-edge cinema simulator. Seats shake, fans blow and fake snow falls as conditions inside the theater alter to match events on the screen.

The running time for the film — originally at 100 minutes — has been cut to just 19, retaining only the juiciest scenes. Fans of the film might not appreciate the

omissions, but considering the film's North Pole setting and the theater's penchant for mimicking weather conditions, fans of warmth should be grateful.

"Polar Express 4D" at the Bronx Zoo 4D theater [2300 Southern Blvd. between Southern Boulevard and Boston Road in Riverdale, (718) 367-1010] now through Jan. 2, Monday through Sunday, with showings every 8 minutes from 10 am to 4:30 pm. Tickets are \$5 for members and \$7 for non-members. For more info, visit www.bronx-zoo.com.

and the mistress of the horses, Jenny Vidbel, on her fiery Arabian.

"The Three Bears Holiday Bash": Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre, 81st Street and Central Park West in Manhattan; (212) 988-9093; www.cityparksfoundation.org; Weekdays, 10:30 am and noon, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm, Now – Fri, Dec. 30; \$5 (\$8 adults; group rates available).

Celebrate Hanukkah, The Night Before Christmas, and Kwanzaa with song, dance and puppetry. Reservations required. There are no performances on Nov. 24, Dec. 25 or Dec. 26.

Puppet show: New York Botanical Garden, 200th Street and Kazimiroff

Boulevard; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 am–6 pm, Now – Thurs, Dec. 29; \$20 (\$18 seniors and students; \$10 children).

Children view a presentation of the classic "The Little Engine that Could."

Movie madness: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; Wednesday, Nov. 23, 4 pm; Wednesday, Nov. 30, 4 pm.

Children, ages 5-12, enjoy an age appropriate film.

The Yak Packers: Ruben Museum of Art, 150 West 17th St, between 6th and 7th avenues in Manhattan; (212)

Submit a listing

Going Places is dedicated to bringing our readers the most comprehensive events calendar in your area. But to do so, we need your help!

All you have to do is send your listing request to calendar@cnglocal.com — and we'll take care of the rest. Please e-mail requests more than three weeks prior to the event to ensure we have enough time to get it in. And best of all, it's FREE!

620-5000 X 344. www.rmanyc.org; Thursdays, 10:30–11:30 am, Now – Thurs, Dec. 29; \$10 child and parent (\$5 members).

Children, ages 2-4 accompanied by an adult, touch, explore and create projects inspired by Himalayan art.

"Atlas": Dixon Place, 161A Chrystie St. in Manhattan; www.dixonplace.org; Tuesdays – Fridays, 7:30 pm, Saturdays, 3 and 7:30 pm, Now – Sun, Dec. 11; \$10–\$18.

Lava's newest show featuring acrobatics and dance set to live and sampled music.

Mini-golf: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science in Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Fridays, 2–5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am–6 pm, Now – Sat, Dec. 31; \$6 (\$5 children and seniors plus museum admission).

Putt your way through a nine-hole course and learn about spaceflight along the way. Weather permitting.

Science playground: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science in Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Fridays, 2–5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am–6 pm, Now – Sat, Dec. 31; \$4 (plus museum admission).

The nation's largest playground, featuring 60,000 square feet of exhibits, with slides, seesaws, climbing webs, drums, mirrors, sand boxes and more, weather permitting.

Wild Ocean: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science in Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Fridays, 3:30 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 1:30 and

Continued on page 30

Going Places

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3:30 pm, Now – Sat, Dec. 31; \$6, (\$5 children, students and seniors, plus museum admission).

Science themed, 3-D show about the ocean and ecosystem. The movie is approximately 30 minutes long and is suitable for children 6 years and older.

Story time: Barnes & Noble Bay Plaza, 290 Baychester Ave.; (718) 862-3945; www.barnesandnoble.com; Saturdays, 11 am, Now – Sat, Dec. 31; Free.

Children enjoy a story and craft. All ages welcome.

Storybook Christmas: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, Noon–4 pm, Fri, Dec. 2 – Wed, Jan. 4, 2012; Free with museum admission.

Guided tours of the Greek revival mansion decorated for the holidays plus eight trees inspired by children's holiday classics. Reservations required.

"Peter Pan": The Theater at Madison Square Garden, 2 Pennsylvania Plaza in Manhattan; (866) 858-0008; www.theateratmsg.com; Daily, check for times, Wed, Dec. 14 – Fri, Dec. 30; \$35-\$99.

Pixie dust, Captain Hook and Wendy. Cathy Rigby stars as the boy that doesn't want to grow up, flying through the air and creating magical moments that delight young and old.

Erth Dinosaur Petting Zoo: Eisner & Lubin Auditorium of the Kimmel Center, 60 Washington Square South, 4th floor; (212) 352-3101; www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu; Wednesday, Jan. 4, 7 pm; Thursday, Jan. 5, 4:30 pm; Friday, Jan. 6, 4:30 pm; Saturday, Jan. 7, 11 am; Sunday, Jan. 8, 11 am; Wednesday, Jan. 11, 4:30 pm; Thursday, Jan. 12, 4:30 pm; Friday, Jan. 13, 4:30 pm; Saturday, Jan. 14, 11 am; Sunday, Jan. 15, 11 am; \$20-\$30.

It's a petting zoo but not as you know it! Touch, feed and learn all about these amazing creatures at a unique interactive puppet performance featuring everything from baby dino to teeth-gnashing giants. Recommended for children 6 and up.

TUES, NOV. 29

Teen advisory group: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nysl.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Children, ages 13 to 18, lend their voices to library topics.

Science workshop: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nysl.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children, ages 3-5, learn about chemistry, engineering and math. Pre-registration required.



Channel your inner elf

There's always lots to do at Wave Hill — even in the winter. During "Holiday Workshop Weekend," make a one-of-a-kind wreath, using fresh greens from the gardens, or handmade felted soaps with artist Paula Morvay.

Price for the wreath-making class is \$20 for members and \$30 for non-members. For the soap

workshop, the fee is \$10 for members and \$18 for non-members. Recommended for children ages 8 and older, with an adult.

"Holiday Workshop Weekend" at Wave Hill's Glyndor Gallery [West 249th Street at Independence Avenue in Riverdale, (718) 549-3200] is Dec. 10 and Dec. 11, from 11 am to 3 pm. For more info, visit www.wavehill.org.

WED, NOV. 30

Parent workshop: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at East 91st Street in Manhattan; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 10:30 am–noon; \$10.

For new parents with children, ages newborn to 12 months.

THURS, DEC. 1

Story time: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nysl.org; 11 am; Free.

For children, 3-5 years old.

FRI, DEC. 2

Shababa Bakery: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street in Manhattan; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 10:15–11 am; \$15.

Children squish, roll and braid their very own dough to make a challah loaf to take home.

Storybook Christmas luncheon: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 12:30–2

pm; \$40.

Tour of the mansion, homemade goodies, silent auction and festive lunch. Reservations required.

Shopping green: Wave Hill, West 249th Street and Independence Avenue; (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 1–3 pm; Free with admission to the grounds.

Don't know what to get for that special someone? From candles to potted amaryllis, these green gifts are perfect for the environmentally conscious.

Candlelight First Friday: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 5:30–8:30 pm; \$10 (\$8 seniors).

Trolley ride, holiday shopping, concert by Metropolitones and refreshments. Registration requested.

SAT, DEC. 3

Story day: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 10 am–1 pm; \$20 (\$15 members; adults and children under 1 Free).

Children delight in holiday tales, deco-

rate gingerbread people with baker Irina Brandler, and visit with Santa. Space limited, registration required.

Postcard art: The Skyscraper Museum, 39 Battery Pl. at First Place in Manhattan; (212) 945-6324; 10:30–11:45 am; \$5 (Free for members).

Children create their own postcards featuring their favorite skyscraper.

Holiday party: The New York City Police Museum, 100 Old Slip at Water Street in Manhattan; (212) 480-3100; www.nycpm.org; 11 am–2 pm; \$8 (\$5 seniors, students and children; Free for children 2 and younger and members).

Celebrate the season with fun activities and crafts. For all ages.

"My Baby is a Hero": Repertorio Espanol, 138 E. 27th St. between Lexington and Third avenues in Manhattan; (212) 225-9999; www.repertorio.org; Noon; \$12; (Free for parents).

Bilingual puppet show tells the tale of Prince Azulito and Princess Perlita and their newborn baby, presented by Scaramouches Latino Puppet Theater. For children ages 3-8.

"The Phantom Tollbooth at 50": 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street in Manhattan; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 12:30 pm; \$10.

Author Norton Juster and illustrator Jules Feiffer visit with the children.

"Tales of Snow": Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nysl.org; 2 pm; Free.

Children, ages 5 to 12, travel through snow country and make masks and puppets and sing and dance.

SUN, DEC. 4

The Okee Dokee Brothers: 92Y Tribeca, 200 Hudson St. at Vestry Street in Manhattan; (212) 601-1000; 11 am; \$15.

Original music that makes you feel good.

Chris Van Allsburg: Leonard Nimoy Thalia, 2537 Broadway at West 94th Street in Manhattan; (212) 316-4962; www.symphonyspace.org; 1 pm; \$15 (\$12 members).

Author of "The Polar Express" talks about his new short story collection, "The Chronicles of Harry Burdick."

Winter festival: The Morgan Library and Museum, 225 Madison Ave. between East 36th and East 37th streets in Manhattan; (212) 685-0008; www.themorgan.org; 2–5 pm; \$15 (\$10 for children).

Featuring ballet, crafts and more!

TUES, DEC. 6

Twilight holiday tour: Van Cortlandt Nature Center, West 246th Street

Going Places

at Broadway; (718) 543-3344; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 3 and 4 pm; \$5 (\$3 seniors, students; Free for children under 12)).

Take a guided tour of historic Van Cortlandt House, decked out in all its Christmas finery. Pre-registration is required.

Science workshop: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children, ages 3-5, learn about Newton's laws and physics. Pre-registration required.

WED, DEC. 7

Movie madness: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 4 pm.

Children, ages 5-12, enjoy an age-appropriate film.

Global school: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children, ages 5-12 years old, connect with students around the world through the internet.

THURS, DEC. 8

Story time: 11 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, Dec. 1.

Twilight holiday tour: 3 and 4 pm. Van Cortlandt Nature Center. See Tuesday, Dec. 6.

Arts and Crafts: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Make a holiday card. For children ages 5 to 12.

FRI, DEC. 9

Shababa Bakery: 10:15-11 am. 92nd Street Y. See Friday, Dec. 2.

SAT, DEC. 10

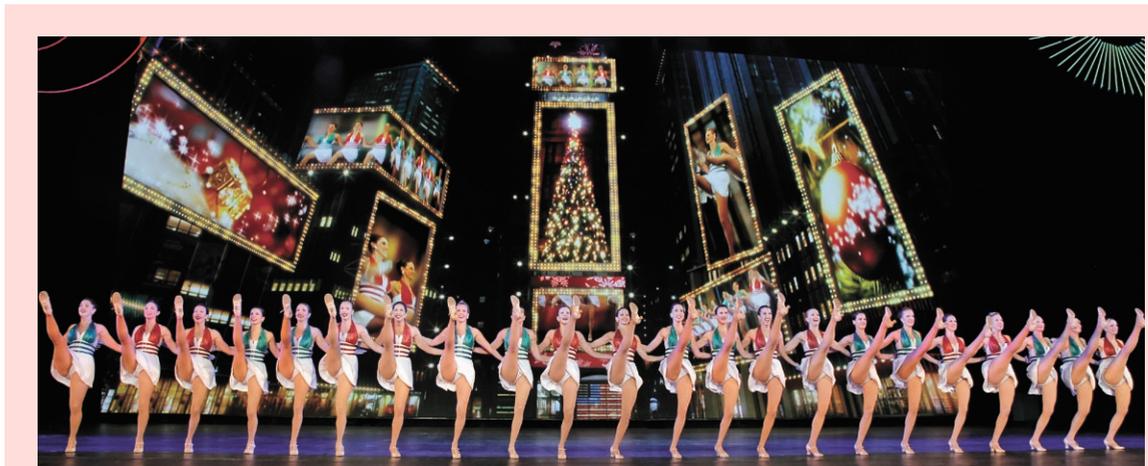
Family time: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 11 am-noon; Free.

Parents and children, ages 3-6, read aloud and make crafts. Pre-registration required.

Holiday workshop: Wave Hill, West 249th Street and Independence Avenue; (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 11 am-3 pm; \$20 (\$30 non-members).

Make a one-of-a-kind wreath using fresh greens from the gardens. For children 8 and older.

Holiday workshop: Wave Hill, West 249th Street and Independence Avenue;



Get a kick out of the Rockettes

The world-famous Rockettes are back in high-kick mode for the annual "Christmas Spectacular" at Radio City Music Hall. With dazzling new costumes, new music and state-of-the-art,

3-D technology, this year's show promises to be the greatest ever. And of course what would the holidays be without a visit from the Jolly Old Elf himself, Santa?

The show runs daily through

Jan. 2, 2012. Check for times. Tickets are \$45-\$125.

Radio City Music Hall [1260 Sixth Ave. between 50th and 51st streets in Manhattan, (212) 247-4777]. For more info, visit www.radiocity.com.

(718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 11 am-3 pm; \$10 (\$18 non-members).

Make handmade, felted soaps with artist Paula Morvay. For children 8 and older.

Survival workshop: Dana Discovery Center, 110th Street and Lenox Avenue; (212) 860-1376; 1 pm; Free.

Class provides hands-on activities in an outdoor setting, along with emergency preparedness tips. For children 8 and older.

Holiday concert: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Road; (819) 601-7399; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 1 and 3 pm; Free.

The Bronx Arts Ensemble and singers perform holiday classics. Pre-registration required.

SUN, DEC. 11

Hanukkah festival: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at East 91st Street in Manhattan; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 10:30 am-1:30 pm; \$10 (\$15 children).

Children celebrate the holiday by making their own menorah, dressing up as a Maccabee and making olive oil. Author Norton Juster and illustrator Jules Feiffer visit with the children.

David Weinstone: 92Y Tribeca, 200 Hudson St. at Vestry Street in Manhattan; (212) 601-1000; 11 am; \$15.

The fab performer just right for toddlers.

Holiday workshop: 11 am-3 pm.

Wave Hill. See Saturday, Dec. 10.

Holiday concert: 1 and 3 pm. Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum. See Saturday, Dec. 10.

TUES, DEC. 13

Twilight holiday tour: 3 and 4 pm. Van Cortlandt Nature Center. See Tuesday, Dec. 6.

WED, DEC. 14

Movie madness: 4 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, Dec. 7.

Global school: 4 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, Dec. 7.

THURS, DEC. 15

Story time: 11 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, Dec. 1.

Twilight holiday tour: 3 and 4 pm. Van Cortlandt Nature Center. See Tuesday, Dec. 6.

SAT, DEC. 17

Folk rock concert: Peter Jay Sharp Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. at West End Avenue in Manhattan; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am; \$25 (\$21 members; \$15 children; \$13 members).

Joined by her husband, Daniel, and daughter, Storey, Elizabeth Mitchell brings back the great songs of Woodie Guthrie, Bob Marley, The Velvet Underground and Vashti Bunyan.

"A Christmas Carol": Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 2 pm; Free. The Charles Dickens classic is staged by the Hampstead Stage Company for children 4 and older.

Winter night sky: Van Cortlandt Nature Center, West 246th Street at Broadway; (718) 548-0912; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 5 pm; Free.

View the heavens on the solstice.

Story time: Van Cortlandt Nature Center, West 246th Street at Broadway; (718) 548-0912; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 6 pm; Free (\$5 suggested donation).

Children listen to the traditional "Twas the Night Before Christmas" while sipping hot cocoa. Also, enjoy a visit with St. Nick himself. Reservations required. Space limited to 25 children.

SUN, DEC. 18

Chip Taylor & The Grandkids: 92Y Tribeca, 200 Hudson Street at Vestry Street in Manhattan; (212) 601-1000; 11 am; \$15.

Children's concert.

"The Legend of the Giant Caterpillar": Leonard Nimoy Thalia, 2537 Broadway at West 94th Street in Manhattan; (212) 316-4962; www.symphonyspace.org; 1 and 3 pm; Free.

Presented by the Thalia Teen Theatre Project, the story is from the Ivory Coast of Africa and involves interactive theatre for children of all ages.

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Going Places

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WED, DEC. 21

Movie madness: 4 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, Dec. 7.

Global school: 4 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, Dec. 7.

THURS, DEC. 22

Story time: 11 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, Dec. 1.

Arts and crafts: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Children, ages 5-12, make a tree ornament.

FRI, DEC. 23

Shababa Bakery: 10:15-11 am. 92nd Street Y. See Friday, Dec. 2.

TUES, DEC. 27

Holiday celebration: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science in Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 9:30 am-2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Re-make the holidays by bending,

twisting, sculpting and tasting.

WED, DEC. 28

Holiday celebration: 9:30 am-2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Tuesday, Dec. 27.

Movie madness: 4 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, Dec. 7.

Global school: 4 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, Dec. 7.

THURS, DEC. 29

Holiday celebration: 9:30 am-2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Tuesday, Dec. 27.

Story time: 11 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, Dec. 1.

"Tacky the Penguin": Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 2 pm; Free. Children, ages 3-12, hear stories read by LuAnn Adams.

FRI, DEC. 30

Holiday celebration: 9:30 am-2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Tuesday, Dec. 27.

SAT, DEC. 31

Tim and the Space Cadets: Leonard Nimoy Thalia, 2537 Broadway at West 94th Street; (212) 316-4962; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am; \$20 (\$17 members; \$13 children; \$11 member).

Heartwarming lyrics and pop tunes to get you up and rocking.

THURS, JAN. 5

Arts and crafts: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Children, ages 5-12, make a winter frame for their photos.

"Mickey and Minnie's Magical Journey": Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk. in Uniondale, NY; (800) 745-3000; www.nassaucoliseum.com; 7 pm; \$28.50-\$153.50.

Presented by Disney on Ice.

FRI, JAN. 6

"Mickey and Minnie's Magical Journey": 10:30 am and 7 pm. Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum. See Thursday, Jan. 5.

"Rumple-Stiltskin": The Duke Theater, 229 W. 42nd St. at Seventh Avenue in Manhattan; (646) 223-3010; 7 pm; \$25 (\$17 members).

Enchanting fantasy classic with storytelling and music. For children 8 years old and up.

SAT, JAN. 7

"Aga-Boom": Peter Jay Sharp Theatre, 155 West 65th St. at West End Avenue in Manhattan; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am and 2 pm; \$25 (\$21 members; \$15 children; \$13 member).

Clowning around with slapstick, physical comedy and outrageous zaniness.

"Mickey and Minnie's Magical Journey": 11 am, 3 pm and 7 pm. Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum. See Thursday, Jan. 5.

"My Baby is a Hero": Noon. Repertorio Espanol. See Saturday, Dec. 3.

"Rumple-Stiltskin": 2 and 7 pm. The Duke Theater. See Friday, Jan. 6.

SUN, JAN. 8

"Rumple-Stiltskin": Noon and 5 pm. The Duke Theater. See Friday, Jan. 6.

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New & Noteworthy



Match game

Who needs plastic, mass produced dolls, when you could have something unique and handcrafted?

Perfect for littles ones just learning how to count, the Monster Match-Up Learning Game Peg Doll Set from the etsy shop, Pegged, is a set of educational dolls in an array of colors, designed to help your tot identify colors and numbers. The set comes with five figures — each in two removable parts — to encourage your child to match shapes and colors. Each doll is hand-painted, and has varying numbers of eyes painted on its face, to aid in number recognition. Plus: they're adorable. This shop will be open through Dec.9.

Pegged Monster Match-Up Learning Game Peg Doll Set, \$25. For info, visit www.etsy.com/shop/Pegged.

New and old classic tales

The latest edition of Scholastic's DVD collection of adapted-for-film Caldecott Award-winning storybooks features an array of 20 phenomenal stories for tots, from classic tales such as "Make Way for Ducklings" and "The Ugly Duckling" to modern favorites "The Bear Snores On" and "Antarctic Adventures." Each adaptation upholds the integrity of the original



piece of literature, while delighting your child with different styles of animation. This collection includes three DVDs: "The Ezra Jack Collection," "Antarctic Antics — and More Hilarious Animal Stories!" and "Make Way For Ducklings — and More Hilarious Duck Stories!"

Scholastic Storybook Treasures Caldecott Favorites DVD collection, \$24.95. Order online at www.scholastic.com.

Laugh between the lines

You'll have more luck encouraging your tot to sit still for storytime if you read him Oliver Jeffers' hilarious new picture book, "Stuck" (Philomel Books). Recommended for children ages 3-7, this is the tale of Floyd, whose kite gets stuck in a tree.



never what the reader expects. Instead of climbing the ladder to retrieve the kite, Floyd hurls it into the tree, hoping to knock down the pinned toy! And this is just one of his many creative — and foiled — ideas to free the kite — each one, ramping up the suspense and teasing yelps of laughter from young and old readers alike.

Stuck by Oliver Jeffers, \$16.99.

The resourceful boy exhausts numerous attempts in trying to get it back, and the comic results are



Deck these halls

It's the ultimate, seasonally appropriate dollhouse!

Fisher Price's new Loving Family Home for the Holidays House has six rooms to decorate, with a stash of seasonal accessories including a Christmas tree, wreaths, candles for the window, a fireplace that glows, and holiday lights.

The house also makes sounds of its own — the stovetop sizzles, the tea kettle whistles, and

the Christmas tree plays holiday music. The best part? The house easily transforms from a holiday abode to an all-year-round toy. In fact, each room is reversible — one side features seasonal decor, and the other side is decorated for everyday play. Perfect for kids ages 3 and up.

The Fisher-Price Loving Family Home for the Holidays House, \$200, available at www.fisher-price.com.

Set the stage for play

If reading "Where the Wild Things Are" isn't experiential enough for your tot, now you can literally transform his bedroom into a jungle or a pre-historic forest — complete with birds, volcanoes and dinosaurs — using Smiley Walls Art Studio removable wall decals.



With several designs to choose from — including a blossoming cherry tree, replete with butterflies; a dinosaur land set with volcanoes, birds, clouds and rocks; and an owl-and-bird set.

The best part? You can even pick your own colors, so these stickers will match any nursery's

color scheme and design concept. And they come off as easily as they can be stuck on. Can you think of an easier way to decorate?

Smiley Walls Art Studio on Etsy.com, \$147 a set. Contact them at www.etsy.com/shop/smileywalls and via smileywalls@gmail.com.

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**DON'T MISS AMAZING ICE SCULPTURES 12/26-12/30, ICE COMPETITION 12/29, CLYDESDALE HORSE CARRIAGE RIDES,
THE POLAR EXPRESS 4-D EXPERIENCE, GIFTS FOR THE ANIMALS AND MORE THIS DECEMBER AT THE BRONX ZOO.
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Disclaimer: ONE general admission ticket to the Bronx Zoo will be provided for a donation of one new, unwrapped toy OR for every 10 food items at the Bronx Zoo, Central Park Zoo, Prospect Park Zoo or Queens Zoo. ONE general admission ticket to the New York Aquarium will be provided for a donation of one new, unwrapped toy OR for every 10 food items at the New York Aquarium. Limit of four tickets per family, valid 1/01/12-6/30/12. Food items must be canned, packaged and/or nonperishable foods - perishable items are not permitted. All WCS decisions final. For details on donation food items go to wcs.org/foodtoydrive. Promotion available from 11/19/11-12/31/11. May not be combined with any other offer.