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Letter from the publisher

CONGRATS TO OUR GRADS!

I know that during this month many of you will have the honor of attending the graduation of perhaps your preschooler, your high school student, or maybe even your university daughter or son. I know what you will be feeling. I have been there myself many times, and each time, although I think I am prepared emotionally, I am overwhelmed with waves of tearful joy and amazement.

I am amazed at how quickly the time has passed and joyous at the juncture and at the achievement of my child. Proudly we watch as they graduate to yet another plateau, another level in their development and journey in this life experience. Sadly



and with nostalgia, we often conjure the vision of that baby we had, that little toddler, that youngster who first bawled, then crawled, then stood on its own two feet and took off, away from us and towards the independence we knew was coming and had trained it for.

There is truly nothing like it, nothing at all that can match that feeling of pride and of completion, that in spite of obstacles, the work has been done and your child has matriculated and is moving up. In this day of overwhelming competition and vocational uncertainty, there is little doubt that graduations are necessary; that continuing to be educated

is paramount and that our children need to "aim high."

We must be there along the way, to encourage, assist, tutor, and advise. There is little doubt that our job is ongoing, and that education begins at home, in the womb, in the nursery, in the house, and that we are the first and foremost teachers of our children. We set the tone, we create the priorities. We either give them confidence and direction or we don't and they flounder. It is not someone else's job. It is ours. Our children will only succeed if they are encouraged from the beginning by us, their parents, and informed from the start that success in every way is their destiny.

Congratulations to all of you who in these weeks will sit and watch your children collect their diplomas,

their proof that they have completed another level on the steps to adulthood and its inherent responsibilities. Snap your photos as we all do, but also take the time to really look at the ritual, to really look at your child and at all his friends, also moving up, who you also have watched grow to this point. Then, congratulate yourself as you congratulate them. It is your achievement as well as theirs. It's a huge job to be a good parent. I know.

Have a great month. Thanks for reading.

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MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SERADOVA

The social network

Mom seeks balance between friends and family

Something crazy happens after you have a child. Well, actually, a lot of craziness happens, but I'm talking about what happens to your relationships. You remember, your friends?

When I was pre-baby, I had a somewhat active social life; dinner after work with friends, happy hour on Fridays with co-workers, and date night with my husband, which usually included meeting up with other couples. I got invited to places and events. I got to pick and choose where I wanted to go, how I wanted to spend my time, and with whom. There was a healthy balance between me-time, friend-time, and family-time.

It's understood that once you become a parent, your priorities change. Yes, I get that. But even after I've pureed my daughter's baby food, done her laundry, played with her, chatted with my husband, made dinner (occasionally), I still want to make time for my friends. It's because of my new priorities that my rare friend time is even more special.

Let me tell you, I am the first one to respond to any invite these days. Girls night? I'm in. Brunch? See you there. Recently, my husband and I attended a wedding. We had a babysitter (thanks, Mom!) for the night and planned on staying out all night long (read: after midnight). I visited the open bar often, and we

were that obnoxious couple at the wedding asking everyone where the after-party was.

Don't judge me. Before I had my daughter, I never understood why some of our friends always wanted to stay out so late. What's wrong with them? Don't they know when to go home?! I now realize that they, too, had children, and they were enjoying their big night out.

I'm not eager to get away, because I'm a stressed-out mom or because I'm looking to escape my motherly duties, but because I want to hold onto my identity as much as possible. Going from child-free to new mom is a lot to take in. I understand that a lot of mothers (myself included) feel overwhelmed when they take a step back and see how everything has changed dramatically after having a baby. Happy moms make for happy babies, right? It's because I've managed to hold onto a piece of my pre-baby self that I am, for the most part, a sane mother.

It's this same attitude that has made my transition back to work a lot easier than I expected. I had mentally prepared myself for the separation anxiety (mine, not hers) that would surely come once Olivia started daycare. But, rather ashamedly, I haven't felt any guilt yet. When I'm at work, I'm engaged, and I look forward to going home to my baby. When I'm home, it's all about her.

Nowadays, the party invites aren't coming in like they used to, although Olivia has some to attend soon. But, maybe my friends are busier with their priorities, too. That's life. On the occasion that I am spending time with friends, I treasure that quality time, because the truth is, these moments are few and far between. I can't get up and go anymore, and I have to think about somebody else before I accept an invitation to do anything. I'm struggling to hold onto my friendships so hard. Will it get worse if I decide to have more children? Will my children be my new BFFs? That wouldn't be so terrible, of course. But it would be terrible if I didn't even make time for my friends.





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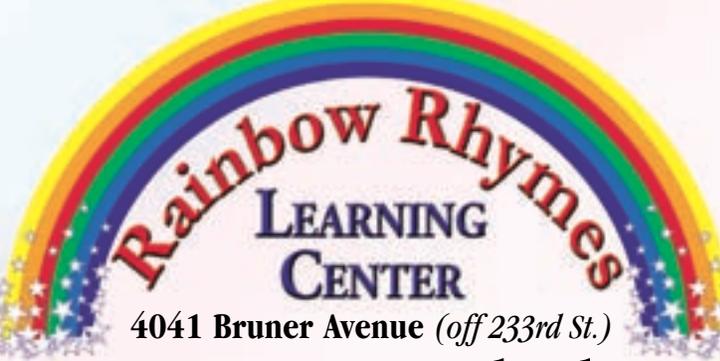


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TTYL, Mom!

When should
your kid get a
cellphone?

BY RISA C. DOHERTY

At what age should a child get a cellphone? Experts say that because children mature at varying rates and handle responsibility differently, there shouldn't be a set age. Yet it is surprising there are some second and third graders getting Smartphones, and, although it is not yet the norm, there is a definite trend of parents equipping their wee counterparts with the latest of everything. Child-rearing gurus we spoke with say that there are important steps a parent can take to make sure their child is ready to handle the responsibility of having a cellphone of their own.

The trend

"Parents are providing kids with more and more privileges and possessions at younger and younger ages," says clinical psychologist Dr. Michael Osit. Most kids who are now in their late 20s received their cellphones when they started



driving or went to college; my 21 year old got his at the end of eighth grade, and my 18-year-old daughter had one in sixth. A local PTA president tells me that now, "the last holdouts receive their phones by sixth grade."

Osit calls it "social and acquisition acceleration" and tells me "many kids are not ready for the privilege." He is concerned that a child who receives a privilege too early will be making increasingly grandiose demands as he gets older.

Early acquiescence to inappropriate demands can set the tone for future entitlement issues. In his

book, "Generation Text — Raising Well Adjusted Kids In An Age of Instant Everything," Osit addresses concerns over immediate gratification, which results in a failure to develop necessary coping mechanisms in adulthood.

Several parents I spoke with were apprehensive that their children would feel left out without a cellphone. Osit agrees with this concern over social marginalization — within limits. He explains, "If you don't provide your 15 year old with a texting plan, he will be out of the loop when it comes to maintaining peer relationships and making plans to get together."

Family cellphone contracts

Here are some possible provisions for your children if you choose to make a family cellphone contract:

- Compliance with school rules or school-wide ban
- Usage limited to specific hours (cellphone curfew)
- Required prompt responsive-

ness to parent contact

- No downloading from the web, dialing toll-free numbers, or posting photos or videos without parental permission
- Not sending hurtful, harassing, or threatening texts
- Requirement to pay charges exceeding the monthly fee

When are they ready?

According to the clinical psychologist Dr. Michael Osit, author of "Generation Text — Raising Well Adjusted Kids in an Age of Instant Everything," parents should ask themselves the following questions to determine the best age at which to get their kids a cellphone:

Top Tips

- How responsible is your child?
- How mature is he?
- Does he follow the rules, particularly with other electronics (computer, Internet, video games)?
- How adept is your child at social decision making?
- Is your child easily influenced by peer pressure?

Is there a need?

Lori Hiller, a school social worker in Brooklyn, believes that kids should get cellphones when they start to travel alone, which can be as young as fourth grade, but that children who are constantly chaperoned do not need them. She cautions that younger children do not need BlackBerries or iPhones, but that parents might want their children to have texting ability, since texts can often be easier to receive than calls.

Cellphones are also a convenience for the parents, so they can call kids to come outside for pick-up, stay connected with their tweens elsewhere in the mall, or text kids behind closed doors about dinner. (Yes, I do that.)

Lenore Skenazy, a Queens mom and syndicated columnist, explained to me that her kids wanted cellphones to arrange meetings with their friends in the park. Landlines are insufficient for most kids, because they keep their friends' contact numbers in their cellphones.

Most parents seem to feel that a cellphone is helpful, so they can keep tabs on their children or be reached in an emergency. Others consider a cellphone a safety device, because they know their children can deter a possible abductor by taking a photo.

Still, "[kids] want it for the games," one mother told me. And, cellphone society beckons to them constantly.

"Cellphones are so embedded in our culture that they are like a third appendage for kids. It is the only world they know," says Osit.

Well before they get their own phones, young children can recite texting acronyms, mimicking their favorite TV characters.

Kids notice that adults are "cell addicted," as Skenazy says, and they want to be part of the conversation, literally and figuratively. Moreover, most of us have witnessed parents handing their own cellphones to their infants and toddlers in public, to distract them

with games and videos. Is it no wonder that kids want their own?

Too close for comfort?

Despite her acceptance of cellphones for kids, as "a normal part of adolescence," Skenazy, author of "Free Range Kids," has concerns, too.



"Cellphones are so embedded in our culture that they are like a third appendage for kids. It is the only world they know."

"If they lose them, they only have so

much earning power to pay you back," she says.

More importantly, Skenazy warns that a cellphone can become "the world's longest umbilical cord," impeding a child's growth toward independence. Kids with cellphones often call parents to help them make basic decisions, which they should be making on their own.

"It can create a sense of dependency and undermine a child's self-confidence," says East Hills Elementary School psychologist Christine Flanagan.

Skenazy agrees.

"Kids need some self-determination at some point," she says. "By the time they are 10, for example, kids should know to eat if they are hungry."

She even suggests that parents leave their cellphones home occasionally, so that they cannot be

reached, thereby forcing their children to rely on their own resources to make reasonable age-appropriate decisions, without using their parents as a crutch.

Some parents refuse to do that, but I personally like being out of touch for a bit, as long as my kids know where I am in a true emergency. Not only can the cellphone enable children to become too attached, but one New Jersey

mother confided in me that her kids "have a longer leash with a neurotic mother," as she has a constant need to be sure that they are safe.

Teens have complained that parents who shadow their every step and constantly track them by navigation systems are stalkerish. Parents need to be wary of the fine line between monitoring for safety and demonstrating a total lack of confidence in their children, and slowly permit their children more autonomy.

Set & enforce rules

Osit notes that the pervasiveness of cellphones in our lives can cause adults to reach hasty conclusions, as "parents tend to assume their child knows proper use of it." To the contrary, he has been privy to "horror stories" of unacceptable use by children and teens. Accordingly, he encourages parents to establish rules for phone use.

"The cellphone is a privilege —

not a right," he says. New York City banned cellphones in public schools in 2006.

"Parents need to be specific about what is appropriate and what is not," says Osit. "Cellphones are not needed during homework; they should be in the parents' possession or turned off at that time."

He also tells parents to take away the phone for a few days if the rules are broken, and return it with the proviso that the rules will be adhered to in the future.

In my family, a cellphone had been used for 3 am conversations on school nights, and thereafter spent every night on the kitchen table unused after a set hour.

In an effort to set down rules for their kids, some creative Long Island parents drafted family cellphone contracts based on forms found online. They require the child and the parents to comply with different sets of expectations, many of which limit the child's usage, but some of which require the parent not to unnecessarily invade his child's privacy.

Osit also believes that parents should tell their children that they will occasionally check the child's text messages, mindful of the "trust issue," yet more concerned with safety and inappropriate behavior.

Parents can also purchase "starter phones," or phones designed especially for younger children, which come with navigation systems for tracking and parental controls, so the child cannot text or surf the Internet. In this way, the child can stay connected with the parent, without worrying about inappropriate use or loss of a pricey phone.

Cellphones are inanimate tools. In the hands of responsible tweens and teens, they can be a wonderful means of communication and connection with parents, peers, and the outside world. But, they can be instruments for cyber-bullying, cheating, or any number of dangerous and unsuitable behaviors. Before we invite our children to join us in this fast-paced global electronic world, it is our responsibility to be sure they are prepared, well-mannered, and safe.

Risa C. Doherty is a freelance writer and attorney with a cellphone family plan. Read more at www.risadoherty.com.

Planning a perfect play date

Follow these rules to make sure you and your little one have a great time

BY ALEXANDRA ESPINALL

As my daughter, Ali, and I walked home from school, three weeks into first grade, she said to me, “I made a new friend. Her name is Hannah; she wants to have a play date.”

Play date. I had heard of them before, but since Ali is my oldest child, this was the first time I was actually asked to plan one. In my day, I would just run down the block to my friend’s house, and my mom would whistle from the front porch when it was time to come back. I have planned two-day conferences at work, put together dinner parties and hosted events, so how hard could a play date be?

I called the child’s mom, and we decided to meet at the park (which was a lot better than having to clean my house, so they wouldn’t see the mess).

Believe it or not, there are actually rules to follow to make sure you and your little one have a great play date — and save yourself from being the family that people talk about.

- Try and meet somewhere neutral for the first time. A park, library story time, a walk, or a kid-friendly café are great public places to meet, so you can get to know the other parent before she comes into your home.

- Be on time. I’m sure your child will be counting down the minutes in anticipation, and so will her new friend, so don’t make the children, and the other parent, suffer by being tardy. (It’s also a good time to teach your child how to tell time.)

- Bring a snack. Always make sure to ask the other parent beforehand

if her child has any food allergies. You wouldn’t want to bring some strawberries and have the other child watch as yours finishes them alone. If the play date is at your home, have some coffee or tea for the other parent and vice versa: if you are invited, bring a snack.

- Speak to your child about manners. Good afternoon, please, thank you, etc. Explain to her that she is a guest in her friend’s home, and

she must behave. No running or screaming inside, and when the play date is over, she must help clean up.

- Sharing can sometimes become an issue, especially with little ones, so be prepared. If there are some toys that are very special to your child, or expensive collectables that shouldn’t be played with, put them away. Be aware that you will eventually run into another parent who hasn’t learned to share and doesn’t think her child should, either.

- A play date should not last all

day. You have a life to get back to. One hour for the first date is fine — as you get to know each other, you can slightly increase the time.

Make sure the pick-up time is clear to the other parent. Some think this is a baby-sitting service and will leave you with their kid for hours — so having a phone number is a good idea. If the play date is at their house, make sure that you are on time for the pick-up.

Keep in mind: play dates are not for parents. Unless you are invited to stay, don’t. I once had a mom drop her daughter off then settle into my couch and ask for something to eat. She stayed for three hours, and I had to entertain her the entire time. (I now pretend I’m in a rush when I see her and have never invited her child back to my house again.)

- Kids and cars. I, personally, do not want my child in anyone else’s car. Some people don’t mind. Before you decide to run errands with extra little ones in tow, make sure you have the other parent’s permission, and let her know how you feel about your kids getting in her car. I dropped my younger daughter off one time at her friend’s house and when I picked her up two hours later, I found out she had been all over town, running errands with her friend and her mom — without her booster seat! They even went to Queens to pick up a family member. Needless to say, after speaking to the other parent, I never sent her there again.

The most important thing is that your child learns how to interact positively with other children and play. After a while, you will get the hang of play dates, and then you can start reading articles to prepare yourself for when your little angel begins to go on real dates.

Alexandra Espinal lives in East New York, Brooklyn, where she is a mom to two girls, a dog named Chellita, a cat named Feathers, and a bearded dragon named Sandy.





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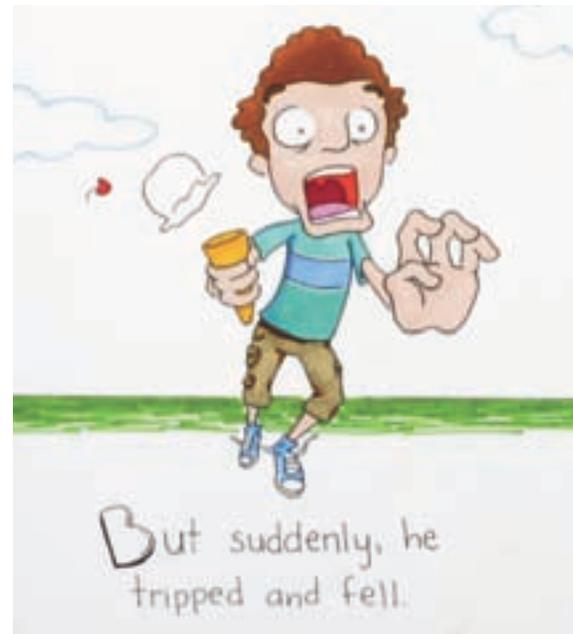
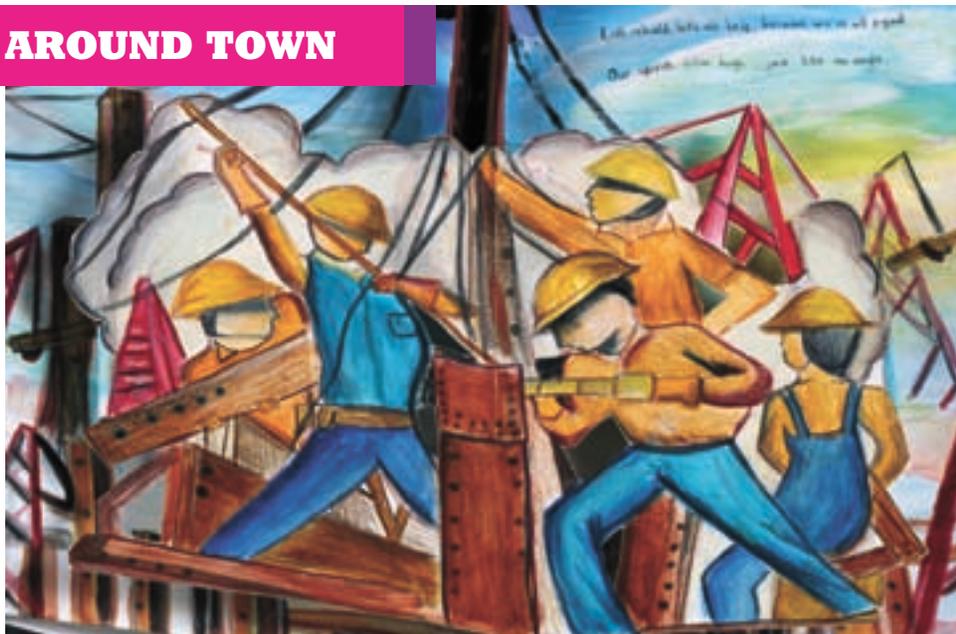
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By the book

The Ezra Jack Keats bookmaking competition encourages art and literacy in public schools

BY LAURA VAROSCAK-DEINNOCENTIIS

Ezra Jack Keats is one of our most beloved and influential children's book authors and illustrators. In 1962, his groundbreaking book, "The Snowy Day," introduced multiculturalism into mainstream children's literature and captured the hearts of readers all over the world. Today, third- to 12th-grade students are encouraged to write and illustrate their own stories through the Ezra Jack Keats Bookmaking Competition.

Born in Brooklyn in 1916, Keats and his family lived in an East New York tenement for most of his childhood. Exposed to poverty and anti-Semitism, he understood what it felt like to be an outsider, and this social isolation became a common theme in his work.

Growing up, he used art as a means of escape and learned that his talent could help him overcome obstacles in life. Despite Keats's passion, his father discouraged him from pursuing a career in art, terrified that his son would starve.



Pages from the winning books: (clockwise from top left) "Rebirth, New York," "Tyler Learns How To Tie His Shoes," "Detour to 1938."

Yet, Keats continued to draw and paint, encouraged by his teachers and librarians. Keats was first recognized and honored for his artistic talent when he was a young boy when his school presented him with a small pewter medal, which he treasured until his death in 1983.

The medal did not have significant monetary value, but it was meaningful to Keats. It reminded him that he and his work mattered. Keats appreciated the early support he received and wanted to give back by providing all children with opportunities to succeed. In

1963, he started the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation to support art and literacy in public schools and libraries.

After he died, he left the royalties of his books to the foundation. Among its many programs, including Minigrants and the Ezra Jack Keats Book Award, the foundation (in partnership with the city Department of Education) sponsors the annual competition.

This year marks the competition's 26th year.

All third to 12th graders enrolled in New York City public school programs are invited to participate. Students are supervised by teachers or librarians, but are required to complete 100 percent of the work themselves.

Deborah Pope, executive director of the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation, explains the value of bookmaking in schools.

"Creating books advances curriculum, making it come alive for the kids," says Pope. "It becomes something that lives and breathes and encourages young people to read."



A page from "Arrows and the Butterfly"

One hundred twenty-five young writers and artists worked on their books for three months before submitting them to the jury for review. The judging panel, a group of local educators, librarians, artists, and scholars, enjoyed reading these handmade books covering a wide variety of subjects, ranging from the adventures of macaroni-and-cheese superheroes to the ravages of war. The judges collected books shaped like fans, folded into origami, and decorated with flip-ups and pop-ups.

They looked for excellence in art and writing, a strong connection between picture and text, and originality.

The four books chosen as the city-wide winners on April 26 vary in subject, style, genre, and artistry, but they were all created in Keats's spirit — beautifully illustrated stories that speak to readers in clear, simple language with compassion, humor, hope, and truth.

All four city-wide winners were awarded a \$500 prize and a medal, but the greatest gift they received

was a feeling of pride after accomplishing such rewarding work.

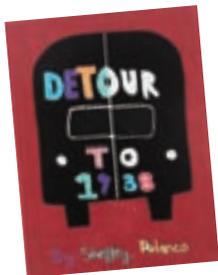
"If you work hard enough and long enough and give it all you got," says seventh-grade winner Anne Wang. "You will achieve something great."

For info on how to make books with your child, visit www.ezra-jack-keats.org/we-love-books/. For a complete list of winners, visit www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/sites/default/files/files/pdf/events/ejk/Ezra_Jack_Keats_Bookmaking_Competition_Winners_with_annotations%20and%20HM.pdf.

Detour to 1938
by Shelley Polanco, fourth grade (winner in third-to-fifth grade category)

PS/IS 333, The Museum School in the Bronx

Including herself as the main character, Polanco created a fun, interactive literary experience that teaches a wide audience about an important hero in history. In a dream sequence, she goes back in time and encounters a young Martin Luther King, Jr., who wants to grow up to be a famous jazz musician instead of a political figure. With the use of modern technology, like the Internet and a tablet, she gives the future



leader a glimpse of major life-changing events based on his work, including an introduction to our first African-American president. In the end, Polanco convinces the young boy to listen to her advice and stay focused in his fight for civil rights.



leader a glimpse of major life-changing events based on his work, including an introduction to our first African-American president. In the end, Polanco convinces the young boy to listen to her advice and stay focused in his fight for civil rights.

Tyler Learns How To Tie His Shoes
by Deidre Darius, 11th grade (winner in the ninth-to-12th grade category)

LaGuardia High School in Manhattan

Darius's art teacher assigned a bookmaking project for her advanced illustration class. When the students brainstormed ideas, half joking, Darius proposed writing a book on how to tie shoes, since her laces always come undone.

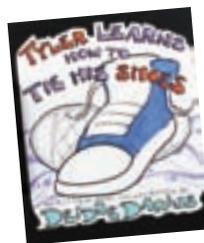
Her teacher acknowledged her open laces and showed her a few shoe-tying tricks.

Then, Darius got busy with markers, pen and ink to create a story all readers



can relate to. In it, a boy walks down the street and trips over his shoelaces.

The book offers step-by-step instructions to help the boy — and the reader — learn to tie. Real shoelaces are included.



Rebirth, New York
by Anne Wang, seventh grade (winner in the sixth-to-eighth grade category)

IS 259K, William McKinley in Brooklyn

The 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks inspired Wang's book, which commemorates the events with a story of rebirth and hope. She starts the book with dark colors. Through the clouds on the first page, the reader looks down on dirt, steel, and destruction. As the story progresses, more vibrant colors begin to replace the darkness. Through the use of watercolors, acrylic paint, and colored pencils, Wang rebuilds

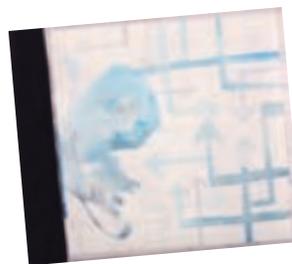


the city, including an intricate, handmade pop-up of the Freedom Tower, and shows how the world becomes brighter when people come together and work toward something positive.

Arrows and the Butterfly
by Dyanara Banana, 12th grade (winner in the ninth-to-12th grade category)

James Madison High School in Brooklyn

Banana's story stemmed from her interest in the butterfly effect theory, and its relationship to time travel. Two strangers share a chance encounter, which results in dramatically different outcomes in their lives. The main characters struggle



with feelings of low self-worth and question their purpose in life. It is a thought-provoking book that raises many questions relevant to teenagers in an uncertain, often tumultuous, world.

Unraveling the mystery of colic

Researchers find link to migraine-suffering moms

BY KIKI BOCHI

The conventional wisdom about colic — a baby's endless, inconsolable crying that can drive new parents to the edge of despair — is that it is caused by some kind of gastrointestinal distress. But new research suggests there may be a different cause for all that fussing among otherwise healthy babies — offering new hope and fresh ways for moms and dads to cope with colic.

For generations, distressed parents have been told that colic is most likely connected to tummy trouble. It seemed to make sense, since colicky babies have a tendency to tighten their abdominal muscles and pull up their little legs as they cry, making it certainly appear that they are having digestive difficulties.

But, despite more than 50 years of research, no definitive link has been proven between infant colic and gastrointestinal problems. Studies have shown that babies who are fed solely breast milk are as likely to have colic as those fed formula, and giving colicky babies medication for gas does not help.

For some, it turns out, the problem may not be in the baby's gut, but in an immature or oversensitive neurological system. Researchers are exploring this premise at the University of California, San Francisco, where a recent study showed that mothers who suffer migraine headaches are significantly more likely to have babies with colic than mothers without a history of migraines.

The work prompts the question of



whether colic may be an early symptom of migraines, and raises the possibility that reducing stimulation may help, just as reducing light and noise can alleviate migraine pain.

"We've known about colic for a really long time," says Amy Gelfand, MD, a pediatric expert with the school's Headache Center, who presented the findings at the American Academy of Neurology's Annual Meeting in April. "But despite this fact, no one really knows why these babies are crying."

In the study, mothers who suffered migraines were found to be 2.5 times more likely to have colicky babies. Overall, 29 percent of infants whose mothers had migraines had colic, compared to 11 percent of babies whose mothers did not have migraines.

Gelfand and her colleagues believe colic may be an early manifestation of conditions known as childhood

periodic syndromes, believed to be precursors to migraine headaches later in life.

Babies with colic may be more sensitive to stimuli in their environment, just as migraine sufferers. They may have more difficulty coping with the onslaught of experiences after birth as they are thrust from the dark, warm, muffled life inside the womb into a world that is bright, cold, noisy, and filled with touchy hands and bouncy knees, Gelfand theorizes.

Colic is defined as intense, unexplained crying lasting more than three hours a day, more than three days a week, for more than three weeks. It is often at its worst at around the same time each day, in many cases in the early evening. Typically, it appears within the first month of life — when new

parents are already feeling exhausted and overwhelmed — and often disappears rather suddenly by the time the baby is 3 to 4 months old.

If your baby is experiencing colic, take comfort that your mom is right: this, too, shall pass. When your baby is very young, cultivate a peaceful environment, with less background noise (yes, turn off the TV!) and minimal visitors. Seek advice from your doctor. You can try some of the traditional techniques for soothing your baby — turning her over on your lap to rub her back, rocking her, playing soothing background music, or even putting her carrier on top of a running clothes dryer. Just keep in mind that for some babies, the best strategy may be none of these. Some babies may actually need decreased stimulation and may do best swaddled in a darkened room.

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DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Hormones in food and early puberty

According to the journal *Pediatrics*, 15 percent of American girls now enter puberty by age 7. For African-American girls, the percentage is 23 percent. Seven – it's unbelievable, isn't it? Doctors say girls are maturing faster than ever for reasons even they don't completely understand. They are reaching puberty younger than any generation in history. Perhaps we should look at our food supply.

When most of us were growing up, our food didn't have the amount of artificial preservatives and chemicals in it that it does today. Meat, in particular, wasn't pumped with loads of hormones. Back when we were young, meat was expensive and families bought it less than they do today. Now, meat has not only become more affordable, it is everywhere. Typically, the cheaper versions are pumped with hormones, preservatives, and chemicals and are widely found in children's food offerings.

Anyone who has seen Jamie Oliver's "Food Revolution," in which he breaks down exactly how the ground beef is made in school cafeterias, would be alarmed. The meat, which is usually reserved for dog food, is mixed with ammonia and chemically manufactured into what passes for edible ground beef, or in other words, "pink slime."

Carla Hastings, a mother of three from the West Village, says she is very concerned, and ever since



puberty early, and those considered obese have an 80 percent chance of developing breasts before their ninth birthday. In this country, nearly one third of children and teens are overweight or obese.

Yes, of course, parents need to monitor their children's diet and health. But what is the accountability of the farmers and corporations that are intentionally creating unhealthy food for the sake of profit? The almighty dollar should never reign supreme over human health.

Some of us are fortunate enough to be able to buy organic milk and meat from cows that have been raised without antibiotics or hormones, but this is an extravagance many families cannot afford. Others are vegetarians who intentionally avoid the hormones and antibiotics found in meat.

While moms and dads ultimately select their child's food and the accountability falls on each individual parent, the Food and Drug Administration and the beef and dairy farmers are also responsible for choosing greed over quality and money over health. At the very least, food that is processed with hormones needs to be studied significantly more, especially in light of the growing number of boys and girls reaching puberty while still young children.

Danielle Sullivan, a Brooklyn-born mom of three, is a parenting and pet writer at Babble.com. Visit her blog, Just Write Mom, or find her on Facebook or Twitter (@DanniSullWriter).

reading up on food and hormones, she will only buy organic meat.

"I can't even believe, knowing what I know now, that I would allow my kids to eat fast-food hamburgers and chicken nuggets, or even that I bought any meat at the supermarket. I'm kind of horrified," she says.

Food in general (and the synthetic material it is often made from) is also behind another theory about early puberty — the idea that girls are more overweight now than ever and it is the extra body fat that stimulates the early puberty. The statistics are startling. Overweight girls are 50 percent more likely to enter pu-

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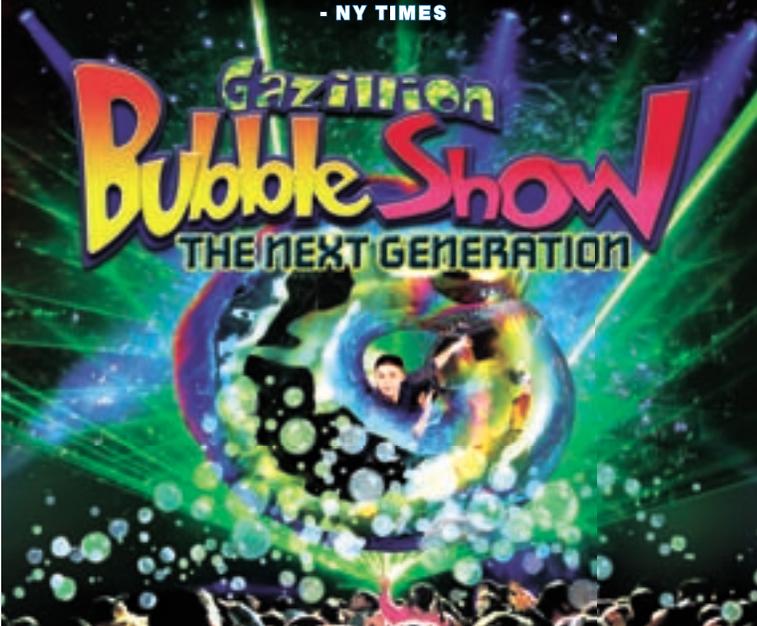
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Heads up



What you should know about brain injuries and concussions

BY KIKI BOCHI

Brooke de Lench was watching one of her sons play in a high school football game, and what she saw worried her. He looked slow. Confused. Uncoordinated.

No one else seemed to notice, but she saw enough to set off alarm bells. It wasn't just that he was having an off day. A visit to the doctor later confirmed her fears — her son was suffering from the residual effects of at least one concussion, and possibly more.

"I was told to never let his head be in a collision again," says De Lench, the founder of MomsTeam.com, a website whose mission is to empower parents of young athletes through information and resources. While her son recovered, De Lench has made a career of spreading the word about the dangers of concussions and other sports injuries.

The spotlight was refocused on concussions just before the Super Bowl, when former professional football players attempted to band together in federal court, claiming the concussions they suffered as players cause dementia, degenerative brain diseases, depression, and other mental ailments. At least 300 former football players are plaintiffs, claiming that the NFL didn't warn them of the long-term risks of repeated head injuries.

Well, the word is out — and it has been for a while. The question is whether parents and youth coaches are paying attention.

Kids continue to suffer concussions and return to play far sooner than they should on sports fields all across the country. Sometimes players and parents wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Battling pain is often glamorized. But in doing so, young athletes risk their health, their future, and even their lives.

"I think parents really need to understand the ramifications," says De Lench, who is also the author of "Home Team Advantage: The Critical Role of Mothers in Youth Sports."

Concussions can happen in any sport, not just football. They occur in soccer, baseball, lacrosse, basketball, wrestling, hockey, cheerleading and volleyball, among other sports. No activity is immune. With

kids playing harder than ever in today's ultra-competitive world of youth sports, it only makes sense.

Concussions are brain injuries that occur when a blow to the head or body causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Concussions can also be caused by a fall, or a collision between players or with an object, such as a goalpost. Even a mild blow to the head — a ding or getting your bell rung — can have serious consequences.

Recent research has shown that because of the way their brains are growing, adolescents are more sensitive to the effects of a sport-related concussion than adults or children.

"The frontal regions of the brain are more vulnerable to concussions. These areas oversee executive functions responsible for planning, organizing, and managing information. During adolescence, these functions are developing rapidly, which makes them more fragile to stress and trauma," says Dave Ellemberg, a neuropsychologist who oversaw the study published in the journal, *Brain Injury*.

In addition to long-term damage, young athletes who have suffered a concussion are at risk of second impact syndrome, a rare but usually fatal condition. If a child who has not completely recovered from a concussion receives a second blow to the head, it can cause massive swelling in the brain that can lead to sudden death.

Various studies reveal some frightening numbers: Forty-one percent of student athletes returned to play too soon after a concussion, according to guidelines of the American Academy of Neurology. The study found that a shocking 16 percent of high school football players who lost consciousness during a concussion returned to the field the same day. More than 20 percent of concussions in boys' and girls'

Warning signs of a concussion

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, athletes who experience any of the signs and symptoms listed here after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play until a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion says they are symptom-free and that it's OK to return to play.

Signs observed by coaching staff or parents

- Appears dazed or stunned

Top Tips

- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness, even briefly
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events either prior to hit or fall, or after

Symptoms reported by athlete

- Headache or a feeling of pressure in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"



soccer and basketball were repeat concussions. In fact, 16.8 percent of high school athletes suffering a concussion had previously suffered a sport-related concussion, either that season or in a previous season.

De Lench, a former athlete herself and strong supporter of youth sports programs, understands the pressure for kids to return to play.

“Kids should not be pulled out of sports. Sports are critical — critical! — for some kids. Pulling them out is not the remedy here,” she says. “We need to empower parents to make

sure coaches are trained properly, to make sure kids get the right kind of physical training — such as neck-strengthening — and to make sure kids are taught to self-report symptoms.”

While some school districts around the country are requiring young athletes to undergo cognitive testing prior to participating, so they can have a “baseline” to determine when a player can safely return to play, such information is only useful if students understand the importance of reporting symptoms, and if parents and coaches are vigilant about taking note of possible injuries.

So what are the most important things a parent — and coach — should know about concussions? First, seek professional medical attention if your young athlete shows any sign of injury, such as appearing dazed, stunned, confused, or clumsy, or if he exhibits a loss of memory, mood and behavior changes, or even a brief loss of consciousness. Some symptoms may not show up for hours or days, so parents need to be tuned in.

A young athlete with a diagnosed concussion should not be allowed to return to play on the day of injury, regardless of the medical resources available or his level of athletic performance. All

Sometimes players and parents wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. But in doing so, young athletes risk their health, their future, and even their lives.

concussion management guidelines, old and new, agree that no athlete should be allowed to return to play while exhibiting post-concussion signs or symptoms. Some call for at least one symptom-free week before returning to practice or play. Because activities that require concentration and attention might exacerbate the symptoms and delay recovery, children should limit exertion and school-related activities until symptom-free (e.g. no homework, no text messaging, or videogames, and staying home from school).

For young people ages 15 to 24, sports are second only to motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of brain injury, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But even far younger children have suffered concussions on the field and on playgrounds.

“The more parents know, the more they can make a difference,” De Lench says. “I always tell parents to think about the life-cycle of their child. Think about how that child will feel when they are 30 or 40, and they have cognitive issues or pain from injuries. You, as a parent, need to understand that you are the guardian of your child and their future.”

Additional information on concussions and youth sports, including an online training course for coaches, can be found on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/index.html. For more, visit www.MomsTeam.com.

KiKi Bochi is the mother of two and an award-winning writer and editor who specializes in family topics.

A time of transitions

Helping your special-needs child prepare for the end of school

BY REBECCA MCKEE

The school year is ending and summer is on its way. For any family, planning transitions from school to camp, home to vacation, vocational site to rec center, or any other form of change is key for accommodating schedules. For families of children with special needs, transitional planning is even more important to ensure that the child will be comfortable with changes in routine.

The definition of transition is the passage or change from one position or state to another. For people with autism spectrum disorder,

or other special personality, these passages may be difficult to cope with. Regardless of how minute or momentous changes are to us, to others, it may be the antecedent to emotional turmoil. While some may say we should try our best to avoid these moments of anguish and anxiety that result from change, the truth is that life is full of variety, passages, and movement.

Here are some ways you can plan for transitions to help prevent the breakdowns brought upon by familiar routines ending and novel events beginning.

Make note of transitions

Work with your child on changes to his schedule by mapping them out on the calendar. Highlight the months of June, July, August, and September (depending on your specific school schedule) as summer months. Mark half-days of school and specify where lunch will be eaten.

Mark the first official week of summer break. Identify when your child's activities — such as camp, pool, free time, and family vacations — begin. Locate major summer holidays and jot down some possibilities of celebratory festivities. Star the end of the summer and first day of the new school year.

Take walk-throughs

If your child is attending camp this summer, you can help alleviate nervous jitters by taking virtual tours on websites, and following up with actual one-on-one tours of the grounds. As the camper tours, have him take photographs. Looking through the pictures prior to the first day of attendance will be most beneficial. You can also physically de-sensitize a camper who is feeling uneasy by washing, drying, and folding the camp T-shirt.

Communicate with school

The sooner you iron out details, the less hectic it is for all. Articulate with the current support team at

school to gain a better grasp of the physical transitional changes that will occur within the classroom. This would include: cleaning out desks, taking home books, removing artwork from walls, and more.

Use this information to make a checklist at home for your special-needs child. Keep it on the refrigerator. As each task is completed, he checks it off and moves on mentally. Ask the school support team to make a copy of the reinforcement system that worked well for your child. Keep this. The new team may have a fresh outlook of ideas that work better for your child after a summer of maturity, but this will provide worthwhile background information.

It is important to respect and consider the rules of each school. However, having knowledge of the future school year is most beneficial. This would involve who the teacher is, the main focus of the curriculum, the exact location of the classroom, and maybe more.

Photographs speak volumes to people with limited preparation skills. With permission, take pictures of the new classroom setting and create a scrapbook titled, "My New School Year." If your child tends to display stressed-out behaviors when the workload in school is difficult, pre-teach some of the trickier curriculum in a fun, hands-on method. For example, if your child struggles with money and that is a major focus in math for the upcoming year, sell lemonade during the summer to raise money for charity.

•••

The overall message behind transition planning for a person with special needs is to touch, taste, journey, and experience a future change in small doses before the actual passage takes place. The goal is to have the person move from state to state and setting to setting, smoothly. Planning a transition will not only help with the present passage, but will also help him understand the concept of change.



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- Sustains involved and active Parents' Group.

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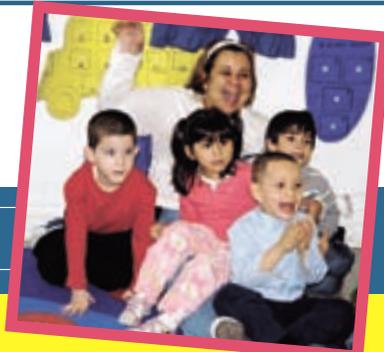
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Love Me Tender School

2500 Johnson Ave

718-884-7252 or www.lovetemetenderschool.net

There are many services for students who qualify for special education available throughout the academic year. These include a center-based classroom with a NYS certified special education teacher, speech, occupational and physical therapies as well as counseling. We have a large playground area which is not visible from the street level that allows the children to climb, use tricycles, chalk play & seasonal outdoor group activities. Because we have a garden in the playground, the children can plant in the Fall & Spring, and in the winter enjoy snow fun, building snow people, making snow angels etc.. The children also have the experience of trips that can be to the zoo, the ecology center in Queens, and the Queens Farm. These services are also available in a 6 week summer session for children whose IEP's specify a 12 month program. In the summer, additional playground activities include planting and harvesting from our garden, sprinkler play, water slides on the playground slide and plenty of fun.

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974 East Gun Hill Road

718-882-3700 or www.palomaacademy@optonline.net

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The Academy is the only school that departmentalizes their curriculum into Jazz, Rock, Reggae, R&B and Christian styles of music.

Our teaching staff includes highly trained musicians, Pre-school and Special Ed teachers. We are an 1199 SEIU service provider.

Riverdale Nursery School and Family Center

3816 Waldo Ave

718-884-3950 or www.msfc.org

The Riverdale Nursery School and Family Center is a well-established, inclusive preschool that strives to offer quality education to all students. This unique program reflects its mission to provide the least restrictive educational environment in which children with special needs learn alongside typically developing peers. For those children that can benefit from inclusion in a mainstream preschool, there are a variety of direct and indirect supports in place to maintain a fully-integrated setting, as well as to allow for the differentiation of the program to meet their specific needs. Support is given to families seeking services through Early Intervention (EI) or the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) and assistance with finding appropriate, experienced service providers.

These Our Treasures, Inc. (TOTS)

2778 Bruckner Blvd.

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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- PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)
- TEACCH/DIR Floor time
- Therapeutic Listening
- Augmentative Communication/ Whole Language Approach
- Sensory Integration/Assistive Technology
- Music Therapy/Developmental Art Education
- Computer Assisted Instruction



Birth to Age 5

For Early Intervention Services Contact 311

Services for Families:

- Individual/Family Counseling and Support Groups
- Home-based Family Training
- Graduation Seminar
- Topic-centered Workshops

For Preschool Services Contact TOTS at 718-863-4925

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(718) 588-1030

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1181 Nelson Avenue
Bronx, NY 10452
(718) 681-5216

Early Childhood Center I*
1594 Townsend Avenue
Bronx, NY 10453
(718) 299-3917

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1399 Ogden Avenue
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James W. Nathaniel, CEO HacFamilyServicesInc.org

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Brand new dad

Surviving the first weeks of parenthood

BY TIM PERRINS

Parenting will always bring challenges, but there's something uniquely difficult about those earliest weeks with your first child. As a newly minted dad who's just survived this grueling period, I may be able to shed some light on it. First of all, to really make sense of things, we need to look back a few trimesters.

When you are a first-time expecting parent, all of your energy becomes consumed with scaling the "mountain of pregnancy." You

can read and prepare all you want, but if you haven't had a baby before, the part about actually having a baby is as much as your excited, anxious brain can handle. During this stage, expect to have only enough mental stamina to focus on two things: preparing for labor, and getting all the stuff.

At long last, and still too soon, you're in the thick of the birth experience. Among other things, this period of time includes all the stages of labor — early labor, active labor, screaming labor — plus whatever combination of a la carte

factors happens to be included in your customized delivery package. Just be aware that the particulars of delivery are like a sandwich from a bad deli — whatever you planned for is not what you're going to get. Still, as long as you have your baby and everyone turns out OK, there's no sense in getting too hung up on the details.

As manic and magical as labor and delivery may be, it's all over before you know it. And only now that you've crested the "summit of pregnancy" can you see that it was just the first in a whole moun-

These first weeks are meant to push you to your limit — they're priming you for the years to come.



tain range of challenges that lay beyond.

Now, unless your name is Beyoncé and you've employed a platoon of nannies to keep your new baby from interfering too much with your life, pretty quickly you're in the trenches of parenting. Here, you find yourself frantically asking questions like: "What does it want?" "How do I make it stop?" "It's getting too big — what comes after onesies? Twosies? WHY DIDN'T WE PUT TWOSIES ON OUR REGISTRY?!"

Even if you are reasonably prepared for this, as the weeks wear on, you find that you're being pushed nearly over the edge. Sleep deprivation and the nerve-shattering scream of a tiny infant are the main causes, but there's another, less tangible one that you may not have allowed yourself to fully consider.

You see, during pregnancy, friends and family shower you with wisdom about how your life will forever change ("but in a good way!"), and about how you will feel love like you have never felt before. This creates a vision of unicorns drinking from a fountain while an enchanting harp plays and celestial light twinkles in the eyes of the cherub staring up at you. But instead, after a few weeks of running yourself ragged attending to your tiny baby's constant needs, you still can't tell if this odd little creature even realizes that you exist.

From the moment your baby was born, you instinctively felt like you would throw yourself in front of an oncoming yellow taxi to protect her, and yet, when you kiss your cherished weeks-

old infant on the cheek, she just flinches and turns her head away like you're a stray dog licking her face. All the while, she stares off into space and moves her little arms and legs according to some arcane ritual, as if she's communicating with the alien mothership. For all you know, you're just the silly earthling who is foolishly providing sustenance to the demanding creature that is engineering the enslavement of your entire world. Silly human! Silly, exhausted, distressed human, to be exact.

It's a little bit funny that you've turned your life completely upside down for a person you know almost nothing about, and who, at some point in the next 16 years, is going to slam a door in your face and scream, "I HATE YOU!" Even your baby's few recognizable traits could disappear. In the coming months, that brown hair may fall out and come back blond, and those blue eyes could turn green, or hazel, or who knows what.

So, in short, becoming a parent includes dealing with the fearful anxiety that your baby is an alien. Worse still, is that this leads to terrible guilt — at a time when you should be nothing but self-sacrificing, you find yourself wondering, "Why did I do this? What's in it for me?"

It's OK to have those thoughts — it just means you're human. (And for the record, your baby is, too.) These first weeks are meant to push you to your limit — they're priming you for the years to come. Parenting will be wonderfully gratifying, but it's essential to understand from the start how desperately your little one relies on you. There can't be any confusion about whose needs come first.

After the better part of two months, when all of that has had time to sink in, your little one will finally reward you with a sly look and a little grin. That, of course, is one of the most beautiful sights in the world, and no matter what else happens in the next 16 years, you'll always keep that with you.

Tim Perrins is a part-time stay-at-home dad who lives with his wife and their brand new tiny human in Park Slope, Brooklyn. More of his thoughts about babies and other things that confuse him can be found at www.RevoltOfTheImbeciles.blogspot.com.



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Photo by Charles O'Neal

The Installation “Baseball in the Bronx: Nine Innings of Bronx Baseball” at The Bronx Museum of the Arts brought out (above) Mrs. Elston Howard, widow of the Yankee legend. (Far right) A photo of the Corona Park Little League (1950s) was part of the exhibit.



Photo by Bob Williams

Batter up!

The Bronx Museum of Art exhibit features history of baseball in the Bronx

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI AND SUSAN WEISS

It's baseball season and Little Leaguers across the city have begun to hit the diamond. The boys and girls of summer are at it again so it's no wonder that in the Bronx — where the national pastime has united residents from diverse backgrounds since the Civil War — recently celebrated the sport with a terrific exhibit. The Bronx Museum of the Arts' “Baseball in the Bronx: Nine Innings of Bronx Baseball” was recently on view in this lovely museum on the Grand Concourse.

Of course, the Bronx is synonymous with the Yankees, and Yankee Stadium, the cathedral of the sport that was built in 1923, was the stage for legends including Lou Gehrig,

Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle, Red Ruffing, Hank Bauer, Whitey Ford, Joe DiMaggio, Yogi Berra, and Bill Dickey.

The exhibit included the Yankees' logo from atop the home team's dugout, along with photographs, vintage uniforms, memorabilia, and artifacts from baseball's bygone days. Visitors got a chance to see home movies filmed by Elston Howard (the first African-American Yankee), and a brief history of Latino baseball in “El Bronx.”

But it wasn't just about Major League Baseball. It featured material about Bronx Little League teams from Hunts Point, Crotona, Riverdale, and Van Nest; along with college baseball at Fordham University and New York University — painting a vivid picture of how the sport helped shaped the borough.

“The exhibit examined the role of baseball in the Bronx from — immediately after — the Civil War through the present day,” said curator Brian Richards, who is also museum curator at the new Yankee Stadium on River Avenue, which replaced the original in 2009. “It really mirrored the social history of the Bronx. Baseball has shown the borough's growth and evolution over the past century-and-a-half.” The Bronx wouldn't be the Bronx without the Yankees, and the team played a major part in putting it together.

The Yankees moved to the South Bronx in 1923 from Manhattan, bringing national attention and real excitement to the area: the team christened the Stadium with its first World Series championship that October, defeating the crosstown New



Photo by Mel Rosenthal

South Bronx circa. 1975 to 1983.

York Giants four games to two in the first "Subway Series."

Hundreds of exhibit visitors viewed DiMaggio's bat, Howard's Golden Glove, and vintage pics of the Negro League World Series at Yankee Stadium in 1930. The "ninth inning" of the exhibit showcased digital projections of nearly 100 baseball photos from the 1950s to the present that were submitted by the public.

Private collections from Fordham University, the Bronx County Historical Society, New York University, The Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, and artifacts provided by Arlene Howard, widow of Elston, were on display.

"There's never been anything like this," said Goodman. "The Bronx is the mecca of baseball, and the exhibit celebrated all the different aspects of baseball: Little League, high school, college, the Negro Leagues that were here, and of course, the Yankees."

Children and young adults have played baseball in parks or on empty sandlots since the game became popular in the 1800s. Organizations that promote professionalism and fair play among sandlot athletes, such as the Greater New York Sandlot Athletic Alliance, have formed and expanded over time. The Public School Athletic League, Police Athletic League, and the Catholic Youth Organization also sponsor leagues on local baseball fields throughout the city. High school baseball rivalries inspire intense competition and team pride among competitors.

Thanks to Williamsport, Penn-

sylvania's Carl Stotz, organized baseball for pre-teen boys became a reality in 1938. He called it "Little League," and baseball history was made on June 6, 1939, when Lundy Lumber played Lycoming Dairy in the very first Little League game in Pennsylvania.

Little League's popularity exploded in the wake of World War II. The Crotona Park baseball team's photo from the 1950s that was displayed in the exhibit showed the excited faces of the young players anticipating their next game. The decades haven't changed the excitement children experience before, during, and after a well-played game — whether their team wins or loses.

The Little League World Series is a baseball tournament for children ages 9, 10, 11, and 12. The road to Williamsport begins every July with hundreds of teams throughout the United States competing for regional titles and a chance to play in the World Series. The tournament has gained popularity, throughout the United States, where games from the series and even from regional tournaments are broadcast on ESPN in August.

There are youth, high school, and college baseball programs across the city, and the sport, through the excitement of the game, continues to be an integral part of summer for both boys and girls alike.

For more information about Little League for your child please log onto www.littleleague.org/east. For more information about The Bronx Museum of the Arts log onto www.bronxmuseum.org.

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THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Streaking in his birthday suit

Does your child act like he's allergic to pants, shirts, and underwear? A new book about a little boy who likes being naked but loves his father even more might help change your tiny one's tune.

"Birthday Suit," by Olive Senior (Annick Press), tells the story of Johnny, a free-spirited kid who likes to run around au naturel. Johnny enjoys waking up early when the weather is warm and running down to the beach, poking his toes in the salty water, and splashing around in the buff. He's been doing this since he was a little baby and the fish never seem to mind what he does — or does not — wear.

But when Johnny turns 4, his mom tells him that he's now a big boy and needs to start wearing clothes — like some fancy, red swim trunks she has bought him that are just right for a boy like him to wear to the beach. Johnny puts them on, but the

second his mama isn't looking, off come the trunks, and the frisky 4-year-old is back in the ocean wearing nothing but sand and water. Johnny's mother decides to try other types of clothing, like a pair of overalls. But they snap on too tight and make Johnny cry. Even the fish at the beach hate the overalls, so Johnny figures out a way to wiggle out of them.

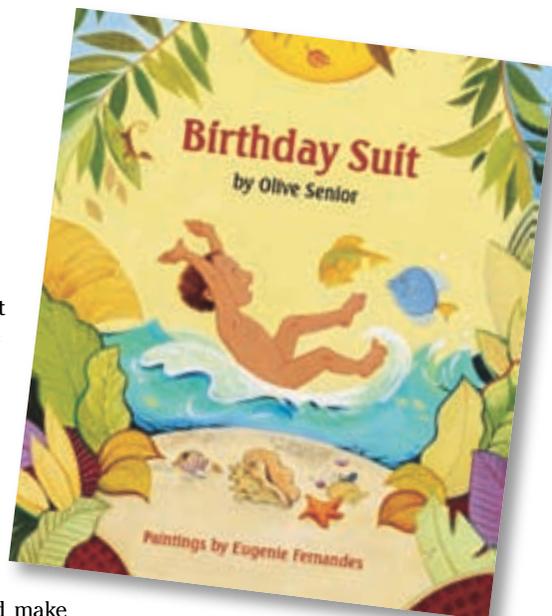
But then Johnny's dad gets a great idea that makes overalls and swim trunks feel absolutely natural for a growing boy to wear.

Every toddler who's ever peeled off his clothes and raced through the room will love this story. Senior's mischievous main character is loveable, relatable, and like most happy-

go-lucky toddlers, knows the freedom of skipping through warm waves at the beach without his pants.

This book is tasteful, cute, and though it's meant for 3-to-5-year-old streakers, it'll make adults smile, too. If your child needs to hold his britches, "Birthday Suit" will fit them like a tailored suit.

"Birthday Suit," by Olive Senior. [32 pages, 2012, \$8.95].



A smart, fun read about friends

Is your teen upset about moving? A new book about two girls who leave their hometowns and make great friends in a new neighborhood might be just what she needs.

In "Boyfriend Season: Cali Boys," by Kelli London (Dafina Teen), Jacobi Swanson, a teenage girl who loves following the stock market and is looking for creative inspiration when her father gives her an awesome, new video camera, is bummed. She's just moved to the suburbs of Los Angeles and is stuck in a one-bathroom house with two dorky brothers — Hunter, who's a pain, and Diggs, who's even worse.

She wants nothing more than to physically develop a

feminine, hourglass figure (she is, after all, a 15-year-old woman!) and move back to her old neighborhood

where she'd left behind her two best friends, Katydid and Scooby. She especially misses Scooby, since she always had a crush on him and now will never know if he liked her the way she liked him.

Jacobi's one silver lining is Alissa, her new next-door neighbor, who's her same age. Alissa has lived in the neighborhood for most of her life and once the two girls meet, they know they're meant to be friends.

Kassidy Maddox is also new to town and hates it as well. The southern California neighborhood she has just moved to is nothing like her old home in New York City — a place where she truly belonged. Back in the Big Apple, Kassidy had a modeling career and boyfriend. But her mother decided to elope with some guy from the City of Angels and now Kassidy is living with a step-daddy-dearest and a nasty, overweight, and overeating stepsister who doesn't know a single thing about fashion.

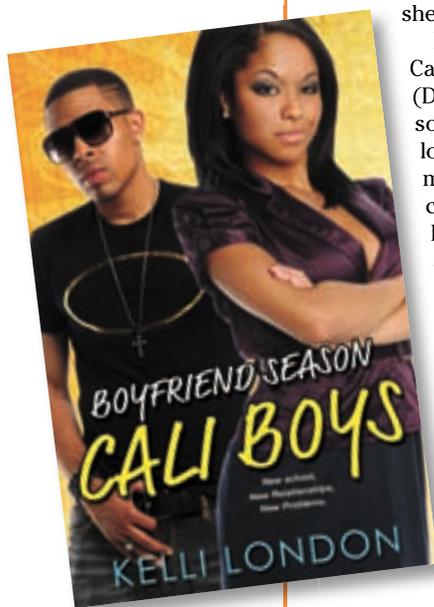
At least Kassidy has a new friend, Faith, who knows how to make a big-city girl like her feel at home by introducing her to the Cali boys — who

are interesting diversions — but not nearly as fine as the guy Kassidy left back in New York.

Judging by its title, it's easy to assume that "Boyfriend Season: Cali Boys" is, well, boy-crazy. Yet once you're a few pages in, it becomes evident that this book is so much more. Sure, the main characters have their sights set on romance but Jacobi and Kassidy both have well-rounded lives, interests, and dreams that go beyond crushes and kisses. Like all young adult novels by London, the teens in this book are spunky, smart, and do fun things that attract quality boyfriends in the end. Plus there's a parental bonus — zero profanity! This book is recommended for 12- to 17-year-old girls and is so good they'll want to share it with all of their friends — old and new. Really, what's not to love?

"Boyfriend Season: Cali Boys," by Kelli London [241 pages, 2012, \$9.95].

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



It figures

BY CYNTHIA WASHAM

FATHERHOOD FACTS



15: Percent of single parents who are men

160: Number of children 84-year-old Kenyan polygamist Ancentus Akuku believes he fathered through his more than 100 marriages

50,000: Estimated number of fundamentalist Mormons practicing polygamy today, in spite of its condemnation by the Mormon church

100 million: Number of neckties sold each year in the United States

210 B.C.: Year Chinese emperor Shih Huang Ti was buried wearing what's thought to be the world's first necktie



SUMMER SNIPPETS

27: Percent of children who consider ice-cream shakes the best summer thirst quencher

26: Percent who prefer lemonade



38: Percent of children who consider Disney World their favorite amusement park

\$1,845: Cost per night to stay in a three-bedroom grand villa at Walt Disney World's new Bay Lake Tower



\$3,995: Cost for a week at Princess Prep, a London-based camp to teach girls ages 8-11 how to behave like royalty, airfare not included

50: Percent of people who would go ahead with an outdoor barbecue they planned even if it rained



42: Percent of children who bring watermelon to the beach for a snack

36: Percent who bring potato chips



Sources: Census.gov, Infoplease.com, Scholastic.com, Maclean's, Notmuch.com, Ducksters.com, Disneyworld.disney.go.com

Going Places

LONG-RUNNING

Garden tool exhibit: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, Noon–4 pm, Now – Sun, July 1; Free with admission.

Selections are from the extensive collection of landscape architect Mark K. Morrison.

Cartoon exhibit: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science in Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Weekdays, 9:30 am–5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am–6 pm, Now – Sun, Sept. 2; \$11 (\$8 children 2-17, college students and seniors).

A 6,000-square-foot exhibit features characters from the Cartoon Network, including larger than life graphics, animation from concept to finished product, storyboarding, character design and drawing.

"Little Miss Muffet's Monster Sitting Service": The Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre, West Drive at 79th Street Transverse in Manhattan; (212) 988-9093; cityparksfoundation.org/swedish_cottage.html; Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10:30 am and noon, Wednesdays, 10:30 am, noon and 2:30 pm, Now – Sun, Aug. 26; \$8 (\$5 children under 12).

Based on the nursery rhyme, "Little Miss Muffet", this version tells the story of Molly Muffet, the descendent of the original Miss Muffet. Running time is approximately 50 minutes and is suitable for children ages 3-9.

Yak Packers: Rubin Museum of Art, 150 West 17th St., between 6th and 7th avenues, in Manhattan; (212) 620-5000 X 344; www.rmanyc.org; Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:30–11:30 am, \$10 (\$5 seniors and students; Free for children under 12 and members).

Children, 2 to 4 years old, explore the exhibits and collections, play, listen to stories, and make crafts.

"The Amazing Max and the Box of Interesting Things": The MMAC Theater, 248 W. 60th St. between Amsterdam and West End avenues in Manhattan; (212) 239-6200; www.telecharge.com; Saturdays, 4:30 pm, Now – Sat, June 30; \$29.50 (\$49.50 VIP seating).

The magic show with a mind of its own. Magician Max Darwin makes objects appear out of thin air.

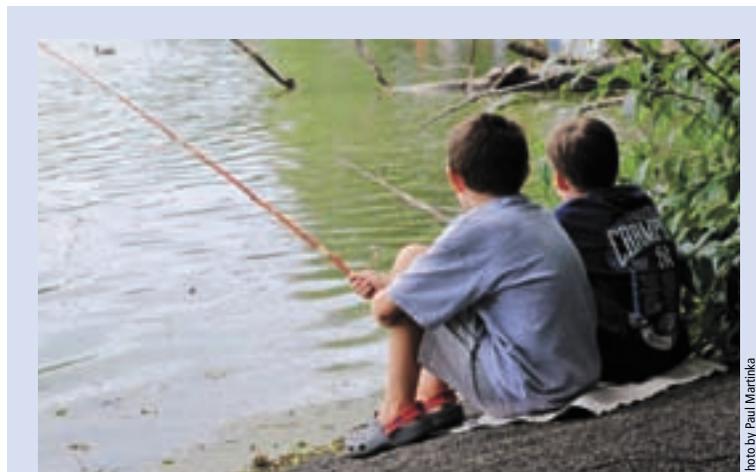


Photo by Paul Marinka

Rangers lure 'em in

Summertime and fishing and seining is the catch of the day at Orchard Beach on June 17 at 11 am.

Whether you're casting your net, or line attached to a bamboo pole, budding anglers, 8 years and older, get a lesson from the Urban Park Rangers on the ethics of fishing, ecology of the waterways, and basics of casting nets and poles.

Stars of tomorrow: Hudson River Park Pier 45, Christopher Street and the Hudson River in Manhattan; (212) 627-2121; www.hudsonriverpark.org; Tuesdays, 6:30–8:30 pm, June 5 – Aug. 21; Free.

Talented students from the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music and Mannes College New School for Music perform everything from Bach to Bebop. (Except July 3.)

"The Adoration of the Magi": Museum of Biblical Art, 1865 Broadway between W. 61st and W. 62nd streets in Manhattan; (212) 408-1500; www.mobia.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 am–6 pm, Fri, June 8 – Sun, Sept. 9; Free.

The beautiful early Italian Renaissance alterpiece by Bartolo di Fredi (1330-1410), will be displayed in its entirety. (Closed July 4.)

SAT, JUNE 2

Kinder Kritters: Central Park Zoo,

So come on down and cast your nets upon the water and see what you come up with. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Fishing and Seining workshop at Orchard Beach Nature Center [located on the boardwalk at Orchard Beach, City Island Road to Orchard Beach exit, (718) 885-3466, www.nyc.gov/parks.rangers]. June 17 at 11 am. The event is free.

830 Fifth Ave. at E. 65th Street; (212) 439-6583; www.centralparkzoo.com/programs; 10–11 am; \$25 (\$30 non-members).

Incredible insects - for 4- and 5-year-old children. Instructors lead the children through songs, dances and games, as well as creative animal-themed crafts.

"Morgan's Big Biology Test": Hatch Auditorium-Guggenheim Pavilion, 1468 Madison Ave. at 100th Street; www.mimplay.eventbrite.com; 10 am–noon; \$35 (\$25 students).

Interactive play that teaches young people about healthy living and careers in the biomedical sciences.

Family Art Project: Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Avenue; (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with admission to the grounds.

Use tissue paper and arts and crafts to create a fun project.

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!

Animal Tales Extravaganza: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road; (718) 220-5103; www.bronxzoo.com; 11 am–4 pm; \$29.95 (\$19.95 children, 3-12; \$24.96 seniors).

Arts and crafts presented by Bright Horizons, animal tales by Plum Organics, Ferdinand the Bull, Nat And Alex Wolf with the Music Unites Youth Choir (Sat. only). Kristi Yamaguchi reads "It's a Big World, Little Pig," and the Rainforest Parade.

Meet the artist: David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center, Broadway between West 62nd Street and West 63rd streets in Manhattan; (347) 703-5207; www.milstrills.com; 11 am – noon; Free.

Mil's Trills debuts her "Million Trillion" Brass Marching Band which will play N'Awlins-style tunes. Kids can join a hands-on instrument building workshop — "Perform 'n' Create Date," co-hosted by the Children's Museum of Manhattan and led by Museum staff — to create instruments to be use during the program.

Family camping: Van Cortlandt Nature Center, W. 246th Street at Broadway; (718) 548-0912; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 6 pm; Free.

Break out the sleeping bags and stock up on s'mores for a night of sleeping under the stars. Dinners are supplied. Families chosen by lottery. Pre-registration required.

SUN, JUNE 3

Family Art Project: 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, June 2.

TUES, JUNE 5

Butterfly boogie: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.kingsbridge.org.

Going Places

nypl.org; 4 pm; Free.

Summer reading is fun when it comes to reading about bugs. For children ages 5 and older.

Divorce seminar: Rehearsal Studios, 853 Seventh Ave. between 54th and 55th streets in Manhattan; www.lc-mediate.com; 7–9 pm; \$25.

Parents learn helpful hints from Cheryl Lazarus, divorce and relationship coach, and Lee Chabin, mediator and collaborative lawyer. RSVP requested.

WED, JUNE 6

Stories and songs: Edenwald Library, 1255 E. 233rd St.; (718) 798-3355; www.nypl.org; 11 am–noon; Free.

Young children enjoy songs, playtime and themes including Pajama Day and Toddler dance party. Good for children, ranging from newborn to 3 months old, with caregiver/parent.

FRI, JUNE 8

Family Yoga: Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Avenue; (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10–11 am; \$15 (\$23 non-member).

Can you do a twisty owl, a jumping frog or a downward dog? Let Lisa Ferraro instruct you. For children, ages 2 to 5 years old, and parent/caregiver. Outdoors only, weather dependent. Call day of for weather update.

Summer reading: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Avenue; (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Fun for teens, 13 to 18 years old.

Youth Ballet show: Manhattan Movement & Arts Center, 248 W. 60th St. between Amsterdam and West End avenues; www.manhattanmovement.com; 7 pm; \$25 (\$15 students).

Presented by the Manhattan Movement and Arts Center, performers debut to excerpts from Balanchine's "Divertimento No. 15" and Robbins "Interplay."

SAT, JUNE 9

Family Art project: Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Avenue; (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with museum admission (\$8 adults; \$4 students and seniors 65 and older; \$2 children 6 and older).

Children create foam materials into mixed-media sculptural flowers, let petals be your inspiration.

Gallery tour: Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Avenue; (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 1 pm; Free with general admission (\$8 adults; \$4 students and seniors 65 and older; \$2 children 6 and older).

Children and parents have an opportunity to view the artwork and partake



Stretch your fun

Be the cobra, downward-facing dog, cat, or 24 other family-friendly positions in Wave Hill's Yoga Together class, held every Friday, from June 1 through July 6.

Yoga Together is led by master instructor Lisa Ferraro of Yoga for Bliss and is suitable for children ages 2 to 5 years old and their caregivers. Participants learn to increase flexibility, relax the body and mind, and enjoy a playful dynamic ex-

ercise regimen in the beautiful grounds.

Sessions are held outdoors — weather permitting — and start at 10 am. (Registration begins on site at 9:30 am.)

Session fee is \$15 for members and \$23 for non-members, and it includes one adult and one child.

Yoga Together at Wave Hill [W. 249th Street and Independence Avenue in Riverdale, (718) 549-3200, www.wavehill.org]. Fridays, June 1 through July 6, from 10 am to 11 am.

in discussions and activities about contemporary art.

Fama Jama Sing Song: YMCA Grosvenor House, 176 W. 105th St.; (212) 749-8500; www.ymcany.org/grosvenor; 2–3 pm; Free.

Children's concert performed by Feldiken and Friends.

Youth Ballet show: 7 pm. Manhattan Movement & Arts Center. See Friday, June 8.

Back to the '80s: Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West; (718) 960-8833; www.LehmanCenter.org; 8 pm; \$45-\$60.

Concert featuring Eddie Santiago and Orchestra, Tony Vega and Ray De la Paz.

SUN, JUNE 10

Family Art project: 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, June 9.

TUES, JUNE 12

Stories in the Garden: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 11

am; Free with general admission.

Children listen to classes from a mystery reader, weather dependent.

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

For children 5-12.

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

For children 5-12.

Keigwin & Company: The Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave. at W. 19th Street; (212) 242-0800; www.joyce.org; 7:30 pm; \$10-\$49.

Pop culture fuses with high art with contemporary dance performances.

WED, JUNE 13

Stories and songs: 11 am–noon. Edenwald Library. See Wednesday, June 6.

Keigwin & Company: 7:30 pm. The Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, June 12.

"Kung Fu Panda 2": Hudson River Park Pier 46, Christopher St. and the Hudson River; (212) 627-2121; www.hudsonriverpark.org; 8:30 pm; Free.

Rated PG, children enjoy the voice of Jack Black in this sequel.

THURS, JUNE 14

Dad's day craft: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave. (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Children 5-12 make a special project for dear old dad.

Keigwin & Company: 8 pm. The Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, June 12.

FRI, JUNE 15

Family Yoga: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10–11 am; \$15 (\$23 non-member).

Can you do a twisty owl, a jumping frog or a downward dog? Let Lisa Ferraro instruct you. For children 2 to 5 years old - outdoors only, weather dependent. Call day of for weather update.

Family Yoga: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10–11 am; \$15 (\$23 non-member).

Can you do a twisty owl, a jumping frog or a downward dog? Let Lisa Ferraro instruct you. For children 2 to 5 years old - outdoors only, weather dependent. Call day of for weather update.

Skate Night: St. James Recreation Center, 2530 Jerome Ave. at E. 193rd St. (718) 367-3657; www.nycgovparks.org; 6:30–8:30 pm; Free.

Roller skating like it used to be.

Keigwin & Company: 8 pm. The Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, June 12.

SAT, JUNE 16

Family Art project: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with museum admission.

Ts for Dad and Me; children and families enjoy Dad's special day with projects.

Father's day: Hunts Point Recreation Center, 765 Manida St. at Lafayette Avenue; (718) 860-5544; www.nycgovparks.org; 1–3 pm; Free.

Celebrate dear old dad with cards and contests.

American Indian Native festival: Barretto Point Park, Barretto St. and Viele Avenue; (646) 232-7132; www.nycgovparks.org; Free.

For the second year in a row Native Americans share the ancestry and culture through dance, music and food.

The Festival features MC George Stone-

Continued on page 32

Going Places

Continued from page 31

fish, the SilverCloud Singers and the Red Storm Drummers.

Keigwin & Company: 8 pm. The Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, June 12.

SUN, JUNE 17

Family Art project: 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, June 16.

Dads and baseball: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansion-museum.org; 1 pm; \$10 (\$8 seniors; \$5 children 6-17; members 8, \$6 seniors and \$3 for children 6-17).

Take me out to the ball game of 1864. Families enjoy a game of rounders with team members and house tours. Pre-registration required.

Keigwin & Company: 2 and 7:30 pm. The Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, June 12.

Fishing and seining workshop: Orchard Beach Nature Center (OBNC), Orchard Beach; (718) 885-3466; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 11 am; Free.

Whether you choose to use a bamboo pole or fly fishing, mastering the art of fishing takes patience and practice. The urban rangers teach everything about the sport from ecology of the waterways to the ethics of fishing. For children 8 and older. Seining is the art of using a net.

MON, JUNE 18

PJ night: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave. (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 5 pm; Free.

Stories, crafts and refreshments. For children 5-12.

TUES, JUNE 19

Stories in the Garden: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 11 am; Free with general admission.

Children listen to classes from a mystery reader, weather dependent.

Game Day: 4 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Tuesday, June 12.

Game Day: 4 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Tuesday, June 12.

WED, JUNE 20

Stories and songs: 11 am–noon. Edenwald Library. See Wednesday, June 6.

FRI, JUNE 22

Family Yoga: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10–11 am; \$15 (\$23 non-member).

Can you do a twisty owl, a jumping frog or a downward dog? Let Lisa Fer-



Discover the Magi

The Magi comes to New York with The Museum of Biblical Art's exhibition of the famed Renaissance altarpiece "The Adoration of the Magi" by Bartolo di Fredi from June 8 to Sept. 9.

This beautiful work of art painted during the golden age of Sieneese painting is now visiting the United States for the first time in almost 200 years, and to only two locations: the Museum of Biblical Art and the University of Virginia. To celebrate the occasion, the museum is offering free admission to the general public.

Families can visit the museum's extensive collection of religious objects de art, as well as view a fantastic exhibit of scrip-

tures in their original bindings to demonstrate the innovation and creativity of Gutenberg, the art of book-making, and the printing press. The museum offers many family-friendly walk-in workshops that coincide with the exhibits and are appropriate for children of all ages.

"The Adoration of the Magi" at the Museum of Biblical Art [1855 Broadway, between W. 61st and W. 62nd streets in Central Park West, (212) 408-1500, www.mobia.org]. June 8 through Sept. 9. Museum hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm, and Thursday, 10 am to 8 pm. \$7 for adults, \$4 seniors, students, and active military personnel. Free children 12 and under, and members. Sunday free for everyone.

raro instruct you. For children 2 to 5 years old - outdoors only, weather dependent. Call day of for weather update.

SAT, JUNE 23

Family Art project: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718)

549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with museum admission.

549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with museum admission.

What makes a rainbow? Find out with fun crafts.

Summer festival: West Bronx Recreation Center, Jesup Ave. at W. 172nd Street; (718) 293-5934; [\[parks.org\]\(http://www.nycgov-parks.org\); 11 am–4 pm; Free.](http://www.nycgov-</p>
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Basic canoeing: Van Cortlandt Nature Center, (VCNC), W. 246th St. at Broadway; (718) 548-0912; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 11 am–2 pm; Free.

For children 8 and older. Canoe the lovely waters with a trained Urban Park Ranger. Registration is required.

SUN, JUNE 24

Family Art project: 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, June 23.

Puppet show: Crotona Nature Center (CNC), Charlotte St. & Crotona Park East; (718) 378-2061; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 1 pm; Free.

The Urban Park Rangers share stories with children.

Natalie Cole: Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West; (718) 960-8833; www.LehmanCenter.org; 7 pm; \$55-\$85.

Joining the stage with the 8 time grammy winning songstress is comedian Terry Hodges.

MON, JUNE 25

Tales to eat: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave. (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 2 pm; Free.

Every creature needs food to live. Children 3–12 years old hear stories about animals and their food.

TUES, JUNE 26

Stories in the Garden: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 11 am; Free with general admission.

Children listen to classes from a mystery reader, weather dependent.

WED, JUNE 27

Stories and songs: 11 am–noon. Edenwald Library. See Wednesday, June 6.

SAT, JUNE 30

Glowing gardens: Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with garden admission.

Use fluorescent colors to represent the season's color palette and create your own personal glowing garden vista.

The Red Trouser Show: St. Mary's Park, St. Ann's Ave. at 145th Street; www.nycgovparks.org; 4 pm; Free.

Bindlestiffs presents the Hell on Wheel Unicycle Club circus. Get ready for an interactive family day with tricks acrobatics and a dance party.

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New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

Creature comforts

Your little girl will keep her shoes on her feet this summer — if she has a pair of these magical seahorse sandals by Lemon Loves Lime. And they are easy to put on with their Velcro closures. (The buckles are decorative.) These pretty pink-and-silver sandals feature lined, cork footbeds and non-slip rubber soles, and they are embellished with just enough beads and sequins to catch the eye of the most discriminating mermaid.

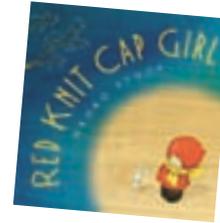
Seahorse sandals by Lemon Loves Lime, \$44. www.chasing-fireflies.com.



Mooning over 'Girl'

A stunning combination of artistry and prose, "Red Knit Cap Girl," the first picture book by Red Hook, Brooklyn author-illustrator Naoko Stoop, is certain to become an instant classic.

Red Knit Cap Girl yearns to talk with the moon, and enlists the help of several equally adorable forest friends in pursuit of her dream. Ultimately the girl — and the 5-year-olds the book will most appeal to — reaps the reward by taking a moment to turn off the lights and noise, so that she



can enjoy the natural world around her.

Stoop uses plywood as her canvas for the adventures of the child and her friend, White Bunny; the unexpected wood grain adds depth and whimsy to the illustrations. And we're not the only ones to have been charmed — this book is the first of a series; we can't wait to find out what the Red Knit Cap Girl will do next.

"Red Knit Cap Girl" by Naoko Stoop (Little Brown and Company), \$15.99. www.lb-kids.com.

'Wilder' wall designs

Your kid will be saying "Domo arigato, Mr. Robot-o" when he sees Aimee Wilder's new Big Robots wallpaper in his room, and he won't think twice before bidding a grateful "sayonara" to his old nursery decor. Each robot measures about 9-and-a-half-inches tall by about 5-inches wide.

The print is solid color, and it's available in a choice of three: Tin (gray), Robin (blue) or Sphinx (me-



talic gold). The pattern is hand silk-screened onto clay-coated paper, which can be gently wiped clean with a damp cloth. Wilder isn't just a talented artist, she's green, too! Her papers are manufactured with responsibly sourced fiber.

Big Robots Wallpaper by Aimee Wilder, \$150 per roll. <http://aimeewilder.bigcartel.com/product/robots-multi>.



Say cheese!

Artist Alicia Schultze has dedicated her Etsy Shop, Creative Cuteness, to crafting the perfect accessory for your infant: moustache pacifiers! Here, Schultze has bedecked a turquoise and lime-green orthodontic NUK with a dark brown mustache that Burt Reynolds himself would be proud to sport.

This latex pacifier is for babies

ages six months and up. Important note: Schultze advises that this pacifier only be used while child is under adult supervision — in case the child manages to pull the stash off and tries to eat it. But of course he's going to be under adult supervision! Your whole family is going to be standing right there, taking a million pictures of your future Magnum, P.I.!

Mustache Pacifier, \$9. Creative Cuteness shop on www.etsy.com.

Carnival of sound

Kindie rock band Recess Monkey has stuffed its latest album, "In Tents," with songs inspired by the circus. The CD is recommended for kids ages 3–8, but the whole family will enjoy these songs, some of which are reminiscent of the great ringmasters of the pop arena (Elvis Costello, Squeeze, The Beatles, Bee Gees) and all are about perennial childhood delights, like "Bouncy House," "Human Cannonball," and "Lemonade."



It includes a 32-page booklet that tells a tale about a band tricked into joining the circus.

This is Recess Monkey's eighth studio album, so it's no surprise that the band — Jack Forman, Daron Henry, and Drew Holloway, joined on this CD by Dean Jones — have perfected the art of clowning around.

"In Tents" CD by Recess Monkey (Monkey Mama), \$14.99. Release date: June 19, 2012. www.recessmonkey.com.

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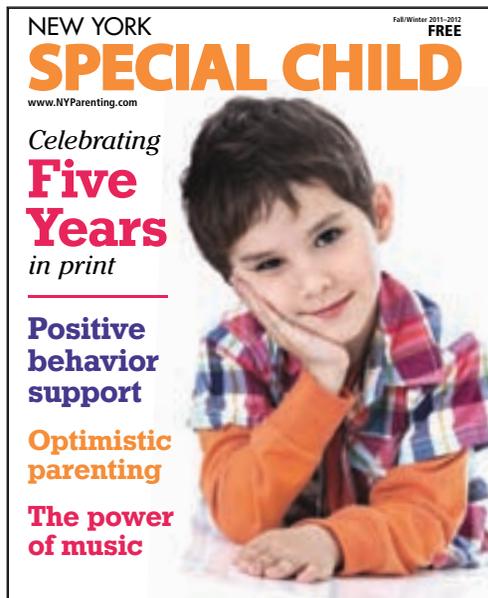
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