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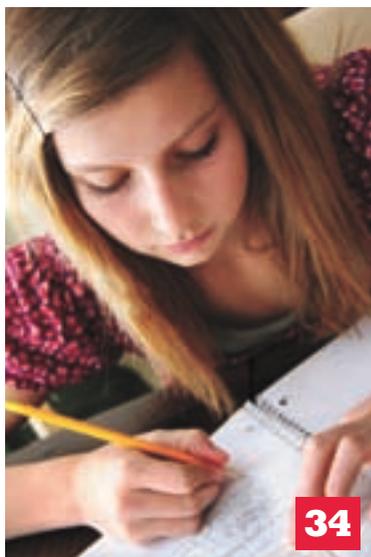
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# Letter from the publisher

## What a winter!

I live not far from a lovely park. That park has a sizeable hill and all winter long the kids have been having a blast. While the rest of us have been somewhat grumpy and grumbling about this year's winter weather, the kids have been having a largely different experience. Sleds, toboggans, saucers, and tubes; they have been climbing and sliding and enjoying the winter in a way only children can. The skating rinks have been busy and just in time a handful of new rinks were readied in the various boroughs, and they are beautiful!

In spite of the winter fun that many have been enjoying, hopefully this month we'll experience a hint of spring. It will be fantastic to put



aside these boots, hats, scarves, etc. and lighten our load. The kids will be happy too, I have no doubt and spring fun will begin with team sports and outdoor practices and the parks filling to capacity.

So at this point in the late winter/early spring

we're thinking a lot about summer and are highlighting summer camps and programs. Not too early in the least to start making some decisions for the summer. There are early-bird discounts that one shouldn't miss and all the Directors are hoping for a sensible sign-up season and not everyone waiting until the last minute. Why is it that so many people wait until the deadline to do everything?

We have some very thought provoking articles this month like the

bad language so many children are using on a regular basis. Our Award Winning writer Risa Doherty once again has tapped into a provocative topic and her piece in this issue is a must read. I know I'm not the only parent concerned with the way youngsters are expressing themselves and how it makes me feel to be hearing them.

Christa Melnyk Hines has written a piece on *Keeping Your Kids Safe* that is also a must read. All of us have experienced the anxiety associated with the thought of losing a child. This article will help give you some important steps to take to keep such a thing from happening.

Tammy Scileppi chimes in with an interesting article on a new app that can help us create time and commitment to achieve inner peace through meditation, and there's Allison Plitt's review of "It's Not About the Broc-

coli" and an interview with its author Dr. Dina Rose.

And in continuing on the health topic, a potential cure for peanut allergies is addressed by Alex Bigwarfe in an interesting article about new studies and potential cures. A lot to read and we hope you find it as interesting as we did.

Wishing you a good month and an end to snow and ice. We're all ready for a change and for those early spring plants to come up and let us know that spring is truly on the way.

Thanks for reading!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,  
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# What did you say?

Experts  
weigh in on  
how to curb  
the F-word  
scourge

BY RISA C. DOHERTY

**G**one are the days when a parent would threaten to wash a child's mouth out with soap for using a "four-letter word." Many of today's teens and tweens sprinkle their everyday conversation with language our mothers would tell us was "right out of the gutter," and they don't know what parents are getting so upset about.

Sam, a freshman at a Brooklyn high school, and his friend "Mark," from an Upper West Side Manhattan high school, found it humorous that an adult would even care, saying, "So long as adults are not present, what does it matter?"

"Youthologist" Vanessa Van Petten, author of "You're Grounded! How to stop fighting and make the teenage years easier," and founder of the Radical Parenting blog written by teens, tells me such language has "been normalized," and that there is a definite generational difference in the way our teens express themselves.

## What is the cause?

Opinions vary as to the biggest influence on our teens' colorful language. Van Petten points to pop culture and digital media as the main culprits for making this speech, which was once isolated to particu-

lar demographics, commonplace nationally. She also blames YouTube, where celebrities post videos replete with curse words, absent of content regulation.

It is hard to ignore the fact that the F-word is used with abandon in songs and popular films, such as "The Wolf of Wall Street" (506 times). The "Fockers" trilogy was a huge hit, as audiences delighted in quasi F-word humor. When Bono used the word to express excitement at the 2003 Golden Globes, the Federal Communications Commission initially let it slide, saying its use was "fleeting" and wasn't used in a sexual content. They later reversed their decision, condemning his utterance, along with similar award show slips by Cher and Nicole Ritchie.

In the 2005 documentary, "F--," radio show host Dennis Prager gives kids more credit, saying they know the difference between Hollywood and its fantasy world of movies and their own homes.

Journalism analyst David Shaw, who also appears in the film, attributed young people's indelicate language acquisition to the people around them: family members and friends, saying they hear it in backyards, placing the responsibility squarely on parents to protect kids. He said it is contagious, like a virus.

Kids do it to be more "adult-like, cool or popular," but, as kids use the words more and more frequently, they lose their initial impact, says Phillip, a Queens high school junior.

Brooklyn social worker Lori Hiller says that teens will "try on" language as they would different personalities, hairstyles, and clothing. She also says teens may use it to fit in, like on a neighborhood basketball court, where such words may make sense for the moment.

"It's lazy language," according to James O'Connor, founder of Cuss Control Academy. He says it is easier to fall back on those words, which are really not descriptive, and encourages teens to replace curses with alternative expressions, explaining that the word "s---" could easily be replaced with "manure," "garbage," "trouble," or "rotten."

## The 'normalization' of foul language

Van Petten references "the normalization" of expressions which used to be considered bad language, such as "kick a--" or "s---- day." She said they now appear regularly in blog posts and are basically part of the lexicon.

People always cursed in anger. But, the casual, cavalier manner with which today's average teens insert the F-word multiple times in sentences is a recent development. When my teen expressed himself in such a manner, I was offended and was told that the F-word wasn't directed at me, and "This is the way people speak these days." Other teens agree.

It seems as if the F-word is no longer considered profane in teen circles, and its colloquial use is not meant to be offensive. Phillip explains, "It's a common word," saying that it is used "not in a way to be rude, it's just a normal adjective."

"Patrick," a middle schooler from Queens, says his peers use it thoughtlessly, and "They don't mean what they say." All the teens I spoke with tell me they are not particularly impressed by its usage and are actually annoyed when it is overused by their friends.

Some teens who are hesitant to curse out loud curse freely on social media. Hiller warns teens that what they write in cyberspace will stay with them, and colleges and prospective employers might access them. Even their own friends could be offended reading posted expletives without context and inflection.

O'Connor recognizes that eliminating swearing altogether is unrealistic.

"I would not say 'Swearing is a bad thing, you should never do it,'" he told me by phone. "It is a part of the way we communicate." O'Connor distinguishes between "casual" and "causal" usage of such words: the former "for the fun of it," and the latter to vent frustration or anger. He says they are regularly used "as meaningless modifiers" by chronic complainers and whiners.

Van Petten also tells teens that use of the F-word as a mere adjective is still not excusable, if the time and place is inappropriate. Even in casual use, it can be viewed as crude, and if the teen is uncertain of how it will be received, it is best to refrain.

## Is it hypocritical to tell teens not to curse?

In the documentary, Hollywood director Kevin Smith says that it is too hypocritical never to curse, but that people can choose not to do it at home.

Van Petten is not troubled by the potential hypocrisy, as most adults limit their cursing to certain arenas. She advises teens to be aware of their surroundings and be extra

careful not to let loose in public areas where it would be considered crass and disrespectful, such as restaurants, trains, and sidewalks, and in front of adults and young children. She says the key is the teen's ability to learn how to moderate language, "to turn it on or off," depending on the environment, and that this is a skill every young adult needs to master.

Shocked as I was by my own teen's language, I understood that I would not be able to monitor it all the time. So, although I was not pleased that he would curse at all, I told him I never wanted to hear it, but that I would not know if he cursed if he was alone with his peers.

Some parents still prefer to tell their teens to refrain from cursing entirely, and commit to never use such language themselves, so that their rules are not inconsistent with their practice.

"Molly," a high school sophomore from Forest Hills, feels that her mother is backwards and out of touch with today's world because she doesn't curse.

Hiller recognizes that parents who never curse within earshot of

their children are creating "an artificial world" for them. She tells parents not to be ashamed if a curse word slips out occasionally in front of their teens, because they hear these words every day outside of the home. She does not condone inappropriate or excessive cursing, but she recommends parents think about how much of a bubble they want to place around their kids.

### How to break the habit

Van Petten says it is habit forming, and teens get used to it. Moreover, it can be a difficult habit to get rid of, just like an unwanted regional accent. She called it "muscle memory" — a type of reflex response.

O'Connor agrees, saying that once it becomes ingrained, there is a greater chance that it can slip out at the wrong time: in front of a boss or teacher. Like any bad habit, it will take a concentrated effort to break, he says.

When my kids were little, I docked them a nickel or a dime for each curse word. It was fairly effective.

Russell Barkley and Arthur Robin, authors of "Your Defiant Teen," recommend a rewards and punishment system, using money or points to condition tweens and teens to restrain their speech — but its effectiveness is not so clear for this age group.

Van Petten, who has worked with hundreds of teens, says it is best not to get hung up on "nickel and

diming" tweens and teens, because it just does not work. She found that even fining them as much as \$1 to \$5 still backfires: it may curtail the cursing, but creates more animosity. Teens and tweens do not want to be controlled.

O'Connor wrote "Cuss Control" in 2000 to help people curtail their cursing, relying on anger-control and coping strategies, and suggesting teens find alternative words to express frustration. He points out that there are roughly 900,000 words in the English language and 30 basic swear words, recommending replacement phrases like "holy smoke" or "fiddlesticks." Unfortunately, these phrases won't cut it anymore, and it is difficult to find peer-accepted alternatives, as most teens care more about fitting in than starting new trends.

Van Petten points out that parents need to pick their battles. Don't lecture tweens and teens, but instead, let them know it is their own personal choice. It may be difficult for some parents to change gears from earlier patterns of preaching at their child to talking to their adolescent as they would an adult, but it will be more effective.

She believes it is more important to teach teens that they need to communicate in a respectful way, which hopefully will not include curses. She tells parents to explain to teens that constant cursing in the wrong company makes them appear unintelligent and crude, giving a negative impression to people who might then choose to disassociate from them.

Van Petten says teens should practice refraining from cursing around their parents, so that they don't accidentally use the offensive language at the wrong time.

Parents feel responsible for guiding their adolescents' behavior, even though it gets harder to control the actions of older and oft rebellious offspring. They should discount their teen's seemingly automatic response, which likely starts with "at least I'm not..." (insert: "doing drugs," "drinking," "killing people," or other serious infraction), and take some time to explain the importance of language. Parents of teens may indeed have to face more serious issues, but the words we all use still have an impact and our teens need to know that.

*Risa C. Doherty is an award-winning freelance journalist who parented two teens. Read more at [www.risadoherty.com](http://www.risadoherty.com) or follow her on Twitter @risadoherty.*



# Tough nut to crack

Is there a potential cure for peanut allergies?

BY ALEX BIGWARFE

**F**ood allergies are on the rise in the United States, having increased by approximately 50 percent between 1997 and 2011. This is according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The most common fatal food allergy reactions are caused by peanuts. This affects one in 50 children. Exposure to peanuts (even trace amounts) can put a child into anaphylactic shock, which can lead to death if not treated. Due to the severity of the allergy, parents of children with peanut allergies sometimes have to take extreme measures to ensure that their children are not exposed to peanuts or anything that has come in contact with them.

However, there may soon be some relief for families who suffer from peanut allergies.

The findings of a study conducted at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, England, were released in *The Lancet* in late January 2014. The study in "tolerance therapy" was conducted over a period of five years in response to the half a million people in the United Kingdom that suffer from this allergy. Ninety-nine children ages 7 to 16 took part.

The patients participated in a therapy to help them build up tolerance over a short time period. A very small amount of peanut protein was introduced daily, with the amount being slowly increased over time. The goal was to get the patients to be able to eat about five nuts with no allergic reaction.

The treatment succeeded in 84 percent of the children who par-

ticipated in the study. The quality of life for these families has increased significantly. Maureen Jenkins, director of clinical services at Allergy UK, said: "Peanut allergy is a particularly frightening food allergy, causing constant anxiety of a reaction from peanut traces. This is a major step forward in the global quest to manage it."

This is not the first study in this line of research. In 2009, researchers at Duke University Medical Center and Arkansas Children's Hospital concluded that small doses of peanut protein over time could result in tolerance among children with peanut allergies. This was followed in 2011 by a study from Duke University Medical Center, which found that after one year of treatment, 11 children who had peanut allergy could

tolerate up to six peanuts.

Still, Dr. Anna Nowak-Wegrzyn, associate professor of pediatrics at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, warns parents that this is not an end-all cure. In order to maintain tolerance, those who are treated in this manner must continue eating peanuts daily.

Immunotherapy is part of the planned treatments in a new peanut allergy clinic opening at the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust. More research is needed on the topic, but these studies provide encouraging outcomes for those who suffer from peanut allergies.

*Alexa Bigwarfe is the mother of three small children. She has taken a special interest in child, maternal, and newborn health and writes regularly on these topics.*



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# Stranger danger?

Ten smart tips to keep your kids safe

BY CHRISTA MELNYK HINES

**W**ith the parade sounds of blaring horns and beating drums marching off into the distance, Angie Worth, along with her newborn daughter Ella, her 2-year-old son Todd, and her elderly grandmother, began to head back to the car. The exciting morning turned into panicked chaos when Worth lost sight of her energetic toddler.

“Todd took off running into the crowd and was out of my sight in just a few seconds,” says Worth. “I started yelling his name and running in the general direction of where I thought he might be.” Just as she was about to call the police, Todd reappeared. “I was so relieved and shaken at the same time,” recalls Worth.

The idea of losing a child and not knowing what happened to him is every parent’s worst nightmare. Although abduction by strangers is statistically rare, the media sensationalism of such events makes the ordeal seem all the more likely.

Chances are, though, your child may need to seek help from a stranger at some point, which leaves many parents scratching their heads: Who should your child approach for help, and how much information should your child give? And what about those people who your family only “sort-of” knows?

## Define ‘stranger’

Beth Wegner, a community crime prevention specialist, facilitates safety workshops with parents and children. She tells kids, “Strangers can be nice. They may have toys or pets, but strangers are people you do not know.”

In general, Wegner says, it’s easiest to teach very young kids not to talk to strangers at all.

“For the older children, we can go into more detail, and usually through



questions, flesh out what a dangerous stranger is,” she says.

Most importantly, if someone makes your child feel uncomfortable and won’t leave her alone, she should yell “Stranger!” and run and tell a trusted adult.

## Practice ‘what-if’ scenarios

Use visits to large stores, shopping malls, or the zoo as opportunities to educate your children about what to do if you should become

separated from each other. Agree on an easy-to-find meeting spot.

Debbly Helmer, a former nanny and school teacher, says she began pointing out cash registers at various stores to her son Alex, age 7, when he was 3 years old.

“I have found that the cash registers are easier to find than customer service. And I tell my kids to only talk to the cashier,” she says. Most of all, assure your child that you will never leave a place without him.

Are there safe strangers? Wegner doesn't advocate ever talking to strangers.

"With impersonators out there, including women with children, the safe stranger concept is a slippery slope," Wegner says.

Err on the side of caution if you point out strangers your children could seek help from. In a store, for example, make sure they notice a store employee's actual uniform, including distinctive name tags or badges, and not just the colors employees wear. Also, instruct them to only talk to employees in an area where other people are around.

### Safe-keep DNA samples

What do your child's old toothbrushes, baby teeth and hairbrushes have in common? These items can serve as DNA samples to help find a missing child. Seal your child's old toothbrush in a plastic bag, labeled with the date and your child's name, in the freezer. Save your child's baby teeth in a labeled film canister in the freezer. Collect hair with the root still attached from your child's hairbrush and save it in an envelope labeled with your child's name.

### Share limited information

Car rides provide a good time to practice going over your child's name, address, and phone number. Turning it into a sing-song jingle also helps him memorize all those numbers. If your child does seek help from a stranger, however, his first name and his parents' first and last names should suffice, says Wegner.

### Take pictures

Helmer suggests nonchalantly taking your kids' pictures with your cellphone when you arrive at a busy public place. Not only will you have yet another adorable picture of their smiling mugs to text to your family and friends, you'll also have a current picture of your children to share right away with authorities should the unthinkable occur. And you won't have to rack your already panicked brain about what clothes they wore that day.

### Avoid advertising your child's name

When a kid's name is on the back of his coat or backpack, predators

can use your child's name as a way to strike up a conversation.

### Emergency contacts

Have a couple of "in case of emergency" friends on call, just in case. The schools typically ask families to designate a few emergency contacts who have permission to pick children up from school in the event of an emergency. Have a similar carte-blanche policy in your family and make sure your kids know who the designated safe people are.

### Tell them who they may NOT go with

It's difficult enough to have someone untrustworthy in your family, but if you do not want that person to pick up your children in case of an emergency, then the children need to know that they should stay put until one of their "safe people" arrives. Remind your kids that their safety is, "more important than anyone's embarrassment, inconvenience, or offense," says Jennifer Blackwood, a certified Kid Power instructor, who teaches children safety skills and self-defense.

### Have a secret family password

If someone asks your child to go somewhere with him, your child can say that her mom and dad only allows her to go with someone who knows the password. Explain to your child that even if the person is insistent that he has your permission, you would never give anyone permission to take her anywhere without her knowing ahead of time. And, if it's a real emergency, the person you've put in charge will know the family password.

### Teach facts, not fear

Empowering a child with the skills to protect herself, like never approaching a stranger's car, builds confidence.

"Just as you would teach manners or crossing the street, weave personal safety skills into daily life in a very matter of fact way," Blackwood says.

For more child safety tips, check out [www.McGruff.org](http://www.McGruff.org), [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org), [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org), [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com), and your local police department.

Freelance journalist Christa Melnyk Hines and her husband are the parents of two boys. She is the author of "Confidently Connected: A Mom's Guide to a Satisfying Social Life."



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# LOVING

## *eating healthy*

New book on teaching kids about eating habits, not nutrition

BY ALLISON PLITT

**D**r. Dina Rose has spent the past 15 years of her life researching, blogging, and teaching families about how to get their children to eat healthy meals. Her new book, “It’s Not About the Broccoli,” takes a different approach to teaching children about health, because, while most books about children and healthy eating are written by nutritionists and revolve around nutrition, Rose, who has a PhD in sociology, focuses her efforts on changing families’ beliefs and behaviors about eating habits.

The book, her first, was published in January, and in it, she discusses her approach to getting kids to forge healthy eating behaviors.

“My PhD is in sociology, and that is what makes my work unique in the field of feeding children, because most people who approach this topic are nutritionists,” Rose says. “But if you think about what sociology is, which is really the study of socialization or how parents transmit norms and values, beliefs, and behaviors, this really fits right into that, because eating is not really about the food per se.”

According to Rose, “Nutrition teaches us about the food, but eating really is about the behavior about how we choose what to eat,

when to eat, why to eat, and how much to eat.”

### What kind of parent are you?

So in order to teach our children how to eat right, Rose says parents have to teach their children how to behave in relation to food.

The first part of Rose’s book takes a look at the ineffective approaches parents use to get their kids to eat. Rose gives a name to each tactic parents use. For example, there are “It’s-Just-A-Phasers,” parents who constantly give-in to their children’s food preferences for chicken nuggets or macaroni and cheese. There are also “Comforters,” parents who use food to stop feelings, and “The Food Police,” parents who are so worried about nutrition, that they only allow their children to eat unprocessed, healthy food.

### ‘The Big Fix’

What happens next in the book is what Rose describes as “The Big Fix.” Explaining her solution, Rose writes, “The goal of the teaching approach is simple: to teach children the three habits of proportion, variety, and moderation — in other words, how to eat a variety of foods in moderation and in proportion to their health benefits.”

Rose recommends parents speak frankly with their children about her eating plan before trying it out at home.

“We need to talk to our children about our strategies, and about why

we’re asking them to eat in a way that we want them to eat,” Rose says. “We have to explain why they should eat the way they should, because of the value of the concept of proportion, which is you can have any kind of food you want, but we eat certain foods more often than other foods.”

### Be a new foods booster

One of the main ideas in Rose’s book is the “rotation rule,” which means kids cannot be served the same meal two days in a row. The objective of her rotation rule is that the more foods you expose your children to, the more they will be willing to try them. She knows kids are scared of tasting new foods, so she recommends parents describe the new dish to them in terms of taste and texture.

Next, Rose suggests families adhere to a schedule for eating. The schedule she proposes allows kids to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner, a mid-morning snack, and another snack after dinner.

She also recommends that parents serve at each meal one “back-up food” — a food that children like, such as rice. So if children don’t like the main course, they can have a small portion of the “back-up food.”

She is also a proponent of children being in touch with their own feelings of hunger. She tells parents to never tell their children to finish eating all the food on their plates, and if their children are still hungry after dinner, they have to wait until they can eat their after-dinner snack.

### Rose’s food groups

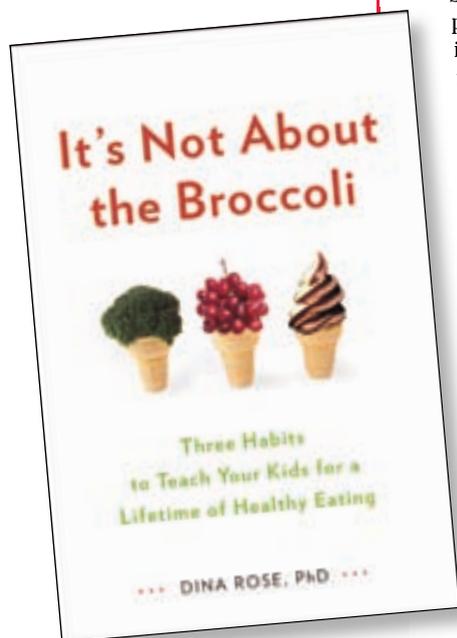
In her book, Rose classifies food into three categories:

- “Growing Foods” (fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, chicken, fish, eggs, beans, whole-grain bread, brown rice, nuts, unsweetened cereal, milk, and yogurt)

- “Fun Foods” (vegetables in rich sauces, fruits canned in light syrup, 100-percent fruit juice, red meat, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, pizza, peanut butter and jelly, bagels, pasta, popcorn, pretzels, pancakes, moderately sweetened breakfast cereals, sweetened yogurt, chocolate milk, and cheese)

- “Treat Foods” (any fried vegetables such as French fries, fruits canned in heavy syrup, fried chicken, doughnuts, muffins, heavily sweetened breakfast cereals, ice cream, frozen yogurt, soda, and sports drinks).

Rose says that, as a culture, Americans think healthy foods taste bad, and it is up to parents to teach their children the opposite.





Rose doesn't ban any of these foods. She explains, however, that parents need to show their children that they should eat these food groups in certain proportions: a large portion of "Growing Foods," a medium-sized amount of "Fun Foods," and small helping of "Treat Foods." Rose also believes parents need to teach their children to serve themselves the correct portions of food at meal times.

### **Everyone's a critic**

Rose says that, as a culture, Americans think healthy foods taste bad, and it is up to parents to teach their children the opposite. She suggests parents not serve bland vegetables, but cook them in tasty recipes that children will enjoy.

Rose suggests amping-up the fun at mealtimes by encouraging children to act as food critics, by having them circle different expressions

on faces as a way of indicating how much they like a specific food. Her theory is that if children enjoy being food critics, they will be more willing to try new foods. Rose advises never asking your child if he likes or dislikes a food, because children are fickle eaters and change their opinions all of the time.

Another interesting idea that Rose proposes is that when families eat out in restaurants, parents

should avoid ordering off of the children's menu, which usually consists of hot dogs, hamburgers, and mac 'n' cheese. Instead, Rose suggests children order appetizers off the adult menu, so they cultivate new tastes.

### **Teach good habits**

Rose says that as a culture, Americans are so obsessed with their children receiving nutrients, that they don't recognize the habits they are teaching their children. For example, Rose says some American parents give their kids a cheese stick two to three times a day, because the food contains calcium and protein. What Americans don't realize is that cheese has a high amount of fat and that parents are actually teaching their children to eat fatty foods two to three times a day.

Providing frightening statistics, such as poor eating habits in childhood lead to poor eating habits as young adults, Rose cautions parents from constantly filling their baby's sippy cup with fruit juice, because all of that sugary water will lead to a teenager constantly drinking soda.

According to Rose, Americans eat a grain-saturated diet, in which we eat bagels or muffins for breakfast, sandwiches for lunch, and pasta at dinner. To counter this habit, she suggests parents try to serve a fruit and vegetable at every meal and every snack.

"I don't expect parents to succeed," Rose says, "but we should set that intention, because it's by setting the intention that we flip the proportion so that our children start getting more fruits and vegetables in their diet."

Rose sums up the premise of her book as, "If knowledge about nutrition were the way to healthy eating, Americans would be the healthiest eaters on the planet, because there has never been a time in the history of the world when a nation knew so much about nutrition. It's not about nutrition. It's about behavior. Once parents start thinking about habits, the answer about what to do becomes so much clearer."

*For more information about Dr. Dina Rose and her book, "It's Not About the Broccoli," you can visit her website, <http://itsnotaboutnutrition.squarespace.com>.*

*Allison Plitt is a freelance writer who lives in Queens with her husband and young daughter. She is a frequent contributor to New York Parenting.*



## HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

# Puppy power

## Medical benefits of pet ownership

**M**ost of us know that pets can teach children about unconditional love, friendship, and responsibility, but having a pet also helps improve a family's health. It has been documented that people who have pets enjoy a more healthy and active lifestyle. After all, dogs require daily walks, which help improve cardiovascular systems. Dogs have also become a recognized strong force in the reduction of anxiety. Some animals have even alerted owners to a cancer or other health problem. Now, both cats and dogs are believed to be helping families get and stay healthy in another way.

Research shows that children who have pets at an early age may have added protection from developing pet allergies later in life. According to the medical journal *Clinical and Experimental Allergy*, "children who are exposed to pets during infancy may be less likely to become allergic to dogs and cats." The results were published after an 18-year study.

Furthermore, allergies to animals are said to be more likely in kids who were born into pet-free homes. Researchers at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit found that "babies younger than 1 who lived with pets were much less likely to develop sensitivity to animals than kids who got a family pet later in childhood."

The study followed 560 now-18-year-olds from birth since 1987. The children's pet histories were tracked and their blood was tested for a specific antibody indicating sensitivity to pets. Boys and girls who lived with cats during infancy were both half as likely to be sensitive to them later.

Researchers also believe that putting kids and pets under the same roof at an early age increase a



child's immune system against various forms of bacteria, making it less likely to react to animal dander later in life. The ramifications of this study may have an impact on children who have compromised immune systems. Researchers said the latest study doesn't prove that exposing infants to pets prevents allergies, but shows that more research is needed to determine allergy risk.

I was born into a home that had cats and dogs, and I lived with them my entire life, as have my kids. I couldn't even consider our family without our pets. Do I think that they have helped my kids become less allergic? I don't know. I do know that neither my daughters nor my son have allergies to pets.

I also know that what they have gained from taking care of our dogs and cats has been an invaluable lesson in love. A few years ago, we ad-

opted a new puppy at North Shore Animal League in addition to our chihuahua, Hayley, and three cats. Since we brought her home, it was instant love. Since then, the kids have happily (most of the time) fed, walked, and cleaned up after her.

Of course, no one should run out and bring home a pet simply because of any study, but hopefully this news might help parents who are considering having a pet and a baby, by showing them that it can be done, and may even be medically beneficial.

*Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find Sullivan on her blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.*

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# First-time camper

How to  
prepare your  
child for a  
time away

BY BOB DITTER

**S**ending your child away to camp for the first time is a major milestone for most families, one that is often marked by excitement, anticipation, and perhaps even some anxiety. Although camp is certainly about making friends and having fun, it is also about being on your own and being a part of a community.

One of the most important things a parent can do to help prepare

their child for both aspects of camp is to talk with them about it before they go.

In fact, it may be better to have several occasional, shorter talks rather than one long conversation, as children often absorb more when there is less to think about at one time.

I also find that children do better with this sort of conversation if it is part of a more general conversation, and if it is part of a pattern of talking, either at the dinner table

or while riding in the car doing errands.

The following are some sample topics for discussion that will help prepare your child emotionally for their big adventure:

## **Friends**

Camp is not anything if it is not about making new friends. If you are shy about meeting new kids, then learn to get to know others by being a good listener. Remember also that not everyone in your

Advice for kids: The more you put into camp, the more you will get out of it!

cabin, bunk, or group has to be your friend, and you don't have to be everyone else's friend. As long as you treat others with respect and they do the same with you, then having one or two friends at camp is fine. If you have more, then that's great!

### Activities

There are many exciting things to do at camp, many of which you may never have tried before. If you're worried about being homesick, then remember the excitement of going to camp: Remember, when you first decided to go to camp, what made you so excited? You may not like all the activities, or you may be better at some than others. That's normal. I, however, hope you are willing to try. The more you put into camp, the more you will get out of it!

### Cooperating

You, like every other camper there, will be part of a cabin, bunk, or group. As your parent, I hope you will cooperate with others and help out. That's part of what makes camp so special — kids helping each other out. Most kids will help you if you are friendly and help them.

Give yourself time. One thing about camp is that almost everything is new — the kids, the activities, the routines, the bed you sleep in, the bathroom. It takes a few days to get adjusted, so be patient with yourself.

Most of the time, you will be having so much fun, you won't mind all of the changes, but if you do, remember that you will get so used to things that by the time you come home, you will miss all those things!

### Helping out

Camp is about fun, but it also requires that you help out. Cleanup is part of camp. You do it every day! As your parent, I hope you will cooperate!

### Getting help

Everyone has good days and

bad days. If you are having a problem, your counselor is there to help you!

You don't have to wait to tell us if you are upset about something. After all, if your counselor doesn't know what might be troubling you, he can't help you. Be honest and ask for what you need. If your counselor doesn't seem to be concerned or doesn't help you, then you can go to the unit director, head counselor, etc. (Parents should know who these "back-up persons" are and how their child will recognize them if they need to.)

### Being positive

It's a great thing to remind your first-time camper about her strong points. I would focus not just on what she does well, but her positive qualities as well, such as what makes her a good friend or the type of person other kids would want to know.

Helping children identify their strengths can help them when they are having a setback — one of those inevitable growing pains all children have from time to time.

...

Talking with your child about these kinds of issues is a great way to show support as your child gets ready to take this important step on the road to being more resilient and self-reliant. For you as a parent, it can give you more peace of mind as you allow your child to participate safely in a broader world.

To learn more about camp and child development, please visit the American Camp Association's family-dedicated website: [www.CampParents.org](http://www.CampParents.org), or call the toll-free number, (800) 428-CAMP (2267).

Bob Ditter is a child and family therapist living in Boston who consults extensively with people who work with children. He was special consultant to the Disney Channel for the camp series "Bug Juice." Ditter has visited more than 500 children's camps in the United States, has been quoted in *Sports Illustrated*, *The New York Times*, *Parent Magazine*, and the *Ladies Home Journal*. He has appeared on "The Today Show" and the "Evening News with Peter Jennings" and is considered one of the nation's leading experts on camp.

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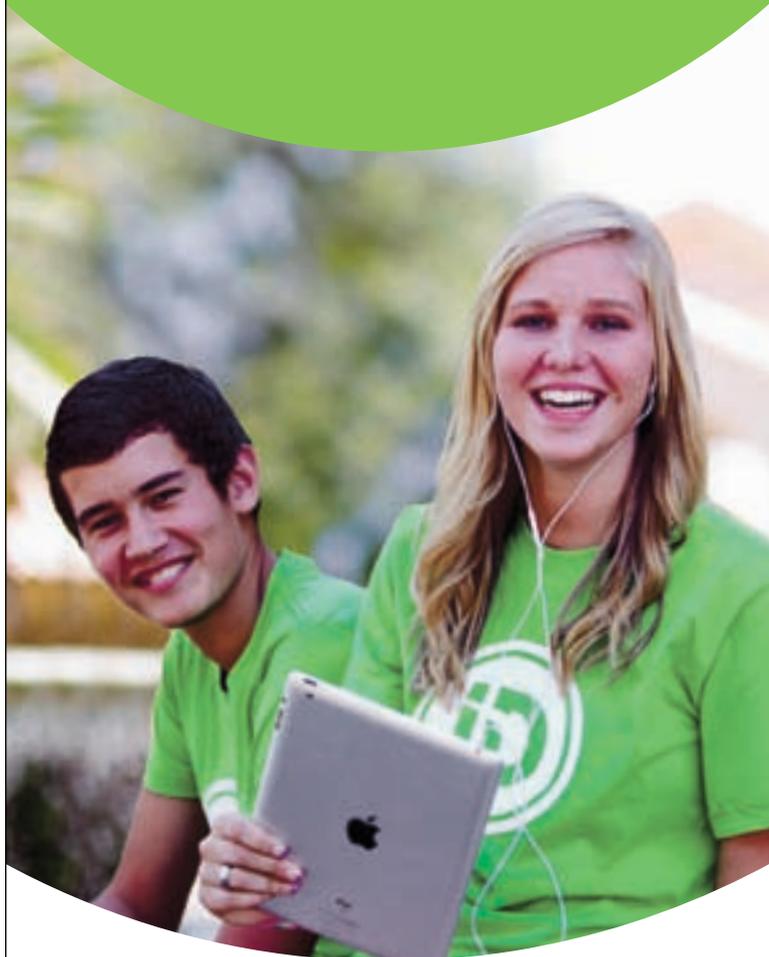
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*Continued on page 20*

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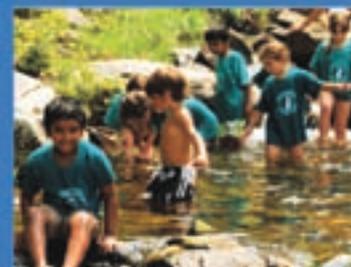
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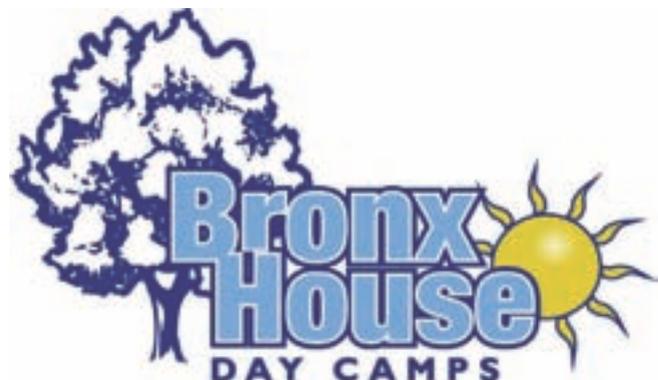


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7th-10th Grade



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# Summer Camps/Programs

## DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 18*

program where children develop skills and tone muscle while learning to swim, play tennis, practice gymnastics and karate under the watchful eyes of certified, experienced instructors. Our dedicated summer staff is largely comprised of the teachers who possess an in-depth knowledge of the social, emotional, and psychomotor development of early childhood and elementary aged children. Please call or visit our website for more information.

### iD Tech Camps

Held at Fordham, Sarah Lawrence, Vassar, Adelphi, NYU, Princeton, Stanford, and over 80 universities nationwide  
1-888-709-TECH (8324) or [www.iDTech.com](http://www.iDTech.com)

Take interests further and gain a competitive edge for school, college, and future careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)! Ages 7-17 create apps, video games, C++/Java programs, movies, and more at weeklong, day and overnight summer programs. Held at Fordham, Sarah Lawrence, Vassar, Adelphi, NYU, NYIT, Columbia, Marymount Manhattan, Stanford, Princeton, and others. Also 2-week, pre-college programs for ages 13-18: iD Programming Academy (held at NYU), iD Game Design & Development Academy (held at Vassar) and iD Film Academy.

### iD Programming Academy for Teens

Held at NYU, Princeton, Yale, Stanford, and select universities  
1-888-709-TECH (8324) or [www.iDTech.com](http://www.iDTech.com)

Gain a competitive edge and learn how programming can become a college degree and even a rewarding career. 2-week, pre-college summer programs for ages 13-18 in programming, app development, and robotics engineering. Held at top universities including NYU, Princeton, Yale, Stanford, and select universities nationwide. Additional iD Tech Academies at iD Game Design & Development Academy (held at Vassar) and iD Film Academy. Also weeklong camps for ages 7-17 held at iD Tech Camps.

### iD Game Design & Development Academy for Teens

Held at Vassar, Harvard, Stanford, and select universities  
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Instead of just playing games, create, design, and develop your own! Learn how game development can lead to a college degree and even a rewarding career. Pre-college, intensive summer programs where ages 13-18 spend 2 weeks immersed in game design, development, programming, and 3D modeling. Held at prestigious universities including Vassar, Harvard, Stanford, and others. Additional iD Tech Academies at iD Programming Academy (held at NYU) and iD Film Academy. Also weeklong camps for ages 7-17 held at iD Tech Camps.

### iD Film Academy for Teens

Held at Yale  
1-888-709-TECH (8324) or [www.iDTech.com](http://www.iDTech.com)

Put your creativity to use while exploring the Yale campus and using New Haven, CT as your film or photography backdrop. Pre-college summer programs where ages 13-18 discover how visual arts can lead to a college degree and even a rewarding career. Learn from experienced Academy faculty, tour a film studio, and explore a top university. Collaborate in small classes (max 8:1 student to instructor ratio, guaranteed) and work with industry-standard products. Graduate with a portfolio and receive (optional) accredited Continuing Education Units. Additional iD Tech Academies at iD Programming Academy (held at NYU) and iD Game Design & Development Academy (held at Vassar). Also weeklong camps for ages 7-17 held at iD Tech Camps.

### Lehman College's More Than a Camp

250 Bedford Park Blvd. West  
718-960-8512 or [www.lehman.edu/ce](http://www.lehman.edu/ce)

Open House: April 12 and June 14 on campus

Located on Lehman College's beautiful campus, More Than a Camp offers lots of fun for your children and flexibility for your schedule. Licensed by the Department of Health, our full-day summer camp is divided into two sessions: July 14 – August 1 and August 4 – 22. We also have a Pre-camp week starting July 7. Half-day and separate July/August packages are available. Camp has extended hours, 8 am – 6 pm. We use Lehman's Olympic-size swimming pool and there are many activities including basketball, performing arts – dancing and acting, computers, American Sign Language, and

much more. English Language Arts and Math are included in our sessions. It's all fun. Free lunch provided.

### Love Me Tender School for Child Development Summer Program

2500 Johnson Ave  
718 884 7252 or [www.lovetenderschool.net](http://www.lovetenderschool.net)

In the summer, playground activities include planting and harvesting from our garden, sprinkler play, water slides on the playground slide and plenty of fun.

Services for students who qualify for special education available throughout the academic year include a center-based classroom with a NYS certified special education teacher, speech, occupational and physical therapies as well as counseling. These services are also available in a 6 week summer session for children whose IEP's specify a 12 month program.

### Young People's Day Camp

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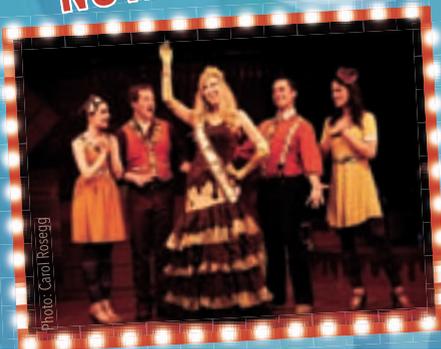
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**DOWNTOWN  
MOMMY**  
NOTOYA GREEN

# Making changes and making friends

**I** received some of the best news I have had in a long time last week — my son Samuel is making friends.

Ironically, my son — who is now 3-and-a-half — had always been my most outgoing child. I'm a mom of triplets and — while I would say that all my kids are open and gregarious — Samuel was by far the most social of the three. He was the most smiley, the most playful, the most affectionate, and the one that most easily connected with others. From his siblings to relatives to family friends, he pretty much bonded with everybody — just not with other kids.

For a long time, I didn't worry much about this, because I knew that he enjoyed being with people. I also knew that he loved playing with his siblings and being the center of attention. So I was confident that he would make friends once he started school.

He didn't.

For the first few months of school, Samuel seemed uncomfortable with his classmates and didn't seem interested at all in building relationships. In fact, it was not uncommon to see him ignore his "friends" when they would say "hello," or he would run away from them during birthday parties. After a few months of this, and by our third birthday party, I was starting to worry, but I felt in my heart that things would change.

I knew that Samuel loved people too much to not be able to make friends. We just needed to give him more time. Meanwhile, my husband and I did everything we could to help him by setting up playdates, enrolling him in extracurricular activities like martial arts and swimming, and spending more regular one-on-one time with him and his siblings.

About a month later, I started to see a new and different Sam-

uel emerge. I noticed he was singing and dancing more around the house. He seemed happier, more confident, and stopped avoiding social situations. While at his school, I shared this with one of his teachers and she told me about an even bigger change going on in the classroom. She told me that he was making friends. She also said he now plays regularly with other kids while building blocks and will sometimes go up to them and say, "Do you want to play with me?"

I can't say exactly what thing it was that brought about the change in Samuel — other than time. Every child is different, and some children just need more time to do certain things. Now, had Samuel never been an affectionate, warm child, perhaps the outcome would have been different here, but the fact is he had always been that child. He just needed more time (and perhaps space) to let that part of him shine through. Now, Samuel has friends in his classroom and has no problem asking others to play with him.

The other day I was home with him for a little one-on-one time, and I walked away from him briefly while he was playing with his cars and trucks, which he calls his "construction site." Within seconds he yelled out, "Mommy, do you want to watch my construction site?" I replied "Sure, Samuel!" I sat next to him and watched him play. A few seconds later, he said, "You can play with me, Mommy. You can play with me and my construction site, for a little while." And I said, "Thank you Samuel, thank you."

*Notoya Green is a parenting expert and former family law attorney.*

*You can read her blog at [www.tripletsintribeca.com](http://www.tripletsintribeca.com). You can also follow her on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/tripletsintribeca](http://www.facebook.com/tripletsintribeca) and on*

*Twitter @NotoyaG.*





**PARENTS  
HELPING  
PARENTS**

SHARON C. PETERS, MA

# When your child's friends are stealing

**Dear Sharon,**

Our daughter's friends have been stealing. When they go to a party at someone's home, they go through the drawers and take things. She told me this. What should I do about it? I feel I should do something, but I don't know what to do. — Susan



**Dear Susan,**

When children are caught up in ongoing stealing or other thoughtless actions, moms and dads can certainly help.

I encourage adults to make sure that they have good relationships with the parents of children in their child's social circle, strengthening ties with those who share their ideas about limits and general expectations for their children.

It is best to have ongoing relationships with other families in place before complex situations like the one you describe develop, but it is never too late to look for and talk to other parents who share your concerns. A group of adults can think through solutions such as better supervision and general awareness at parties and other social gather-

ings as well as agreeing on ways to speak to children about what is going on and how and why to avoid peer pressure.

Sometimes, it is even possible to enlist the help of caring school personnel who know the children involved. When parents and other adults can act in unison, children are less likely to feel separate from their peers and more a part of a caring community.

Unfortunately, it can sometimes be too difficult to reach out to others without negative consequences. The children who are acting out might not be given the support they need to successfully change their actions and difficulties could escalate. A child such as your daughter who is not involved in suspect behavior could also be ostracized or targeted for telling adults and getting the children in trouble.

If it is too risky to share confidential information, it can be best to focus on supporting a child who has managed to stay clear when

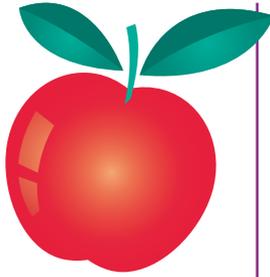
socializing gets "out of control." It is not uncommon for one or two young people in an exciting social situation, such as a party, to convince others that stealing or other troublesome behaviors are fun or a way to be included in a "popular" group. Peer pressure can be very hard to negotiate and resist.

Moms and dads can make a big difference by taking the time to listen to their child's concerns about social challenges, supporting and appreciating her good judgment, and setting up ample time and space for ongoing discussion about friendships. Helping children find like-minded friends who visit their home often can also help a great deal.

It is a good sign when children tell their parents about peer pressures they are juggling. Trusting parents enough to ask for help or advice can make a big difference to any young person. If one child is getting support and clarity at home, it can help other children handle social pressure as well.

Sharon C. Peters is a mother and director of Parents Helping Parents, 669 President St., Brooklyn (718) 638-9444, [www.PHPonline.org](http://www.PHPonline.org).

If you have a question about a challenge in your life (no issue is too big or too small) e-mail it to Dear Sharon at [Family@cnglocal.com](mailto:Family@cnglocal.com).



## DEAR TEACHER

PEGGY GISLER AND  
MARGE EBERTS

# Kindergarten ready?

**Dear teacher,**

We have a decision to make soon. Our son has a fall birthday, but he still makes the cutoff date. He is a bright child who already knows his letters and numbers, and definitely could handle kindergarten, according to his preschool teacher.

I'm torn about whether I should send him to kindergarten in the fall or enroll him in our district's transitional kindergarten program. What are the benefits of transitional programs?

**Dear parent,**

It has been pointed out that today's kindergartens are quite often yesterday's first grades. On the other hand, transitional kindergartens are more like kindergartens used to be. In them, academics take a back seat to socialization. Children learn how to wait their turn, share, and play with other children. Most of their learning is done through hands-on activities. These programs are fun, and children tend to fall in love with school, which is not always the story when regular kindergarten academics may keep them at their desks doing worksheets. This can turn young children off to learning.

As far as research goes on the benefits of transitional programs, most of it is positive. The only big negative seems to be that it can add a year of schooling. Positives include less retention, less need for special education programs, and higher achievement scores beyond grade three. Plus, children attending transitional programs will be older and more mature in high school and college.

Not all children can attend a public transitional kindergarten program. In some areas there is no funding available, or enrollment may be limited to disadvantaged children. The advantage of attending a public program rather than non-school-based programs is that the teachers are certified in public programs, and the curriculum is aligned with the school district's kindergarten program. At the present time, far more children attend non-school-based programs.

### Individual learning styles

**Dear teacher,**

My sixth-grader learns most eas-



ily by reading. However, her teacher puts a great emphasis on lecturing and class discussion. How can I get the teacher to give my child more reading assignments?

**Dear parent,**

Back in the 1970s, individual learning styles were a hot topic in education. The idea was that teachers should discover each student's learning style and teach in a way that best fits that student. Unfortunately, there hasn't been any solid scientifically based research to support this view. Further research is needed.

Your daughter has a preference to learn through reading. Most people do have a favorite way of processing information. Ignoring children's learning styles does not inspire or excite them to learn. The best approach is to incorporate all learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) in a teacher's instruction.

You certainly can talk to your child's teacher about your child's learning preferences. It is quite possible that the teacher would be able to give your child a list of materials to read that might make it easier for her to learn certain subjects. Be very careful that you are not criticizing the teacher's teaching style when you talk with him or her.

### A problem with listening

**Dear teacher,**

Why would a smart 8 year old have problems listening to his teacher's instructions? No hearing problems have been found. Do you

have any ideas?

**Dear parent,**

Many children have never learned to listen. Listening is not the same thing as hearing. Hearing is a passive activity. For example, children hear thunder, the car engine, and bees buzzing. Listening involves active participation of their brain. What they hear must register in their brain. Listening is an extremely important skill — one that is closely related to academic success in school.

First of all, you want to be sure that you listen to what your child is saying. Set a good example by making eye contact with your child and responding to what the child says.

Fortunately, parents can improve their children's listening skills through activities that are fun. Try some of these with your child to help him become a better listener:

- Make a habit of reading to your child and pausing to ask questions about what has been read.
- Make a deliberate error in what you are reading, and see if your child catches it. For example, call the cat in the hat a dog in the hat.
- Play Simon Says, 20 Questions, and Junior Trivial Pursuit.
- Share family activities at the dinner table.
- Talk to your child about activities that interest him.
- Clap your hands in different patterns, and have your child imitate them. Then add thigh claps or head taps.
- Listen to a favorite TV program for a few minutes, then have your child shut his eyes and identify the speakers.
- Start a story at the supper table. Each family member ends a sentence with "then." The next person completes the sentence and ends it with "then" until everyone at the table has added something to the story.

*Parents should send questions and comments to [dearteacher@dearteacher.com](mailto:dearteacher@dearteacher.com) or ask them on the columnists' website at [www.dearteacher.com](http://www.dearteacher.com).*

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## ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,  
ESQ.

# When relatives can't care for themselves

**M**uch of my practice involves caring for individuals when they become incapacitated. My previous articles have repeatedly emphasized the importance of having certain documents in place, particularly a health care proxy and power of attorney. However, many people do not put these documents in place until it is too late, and they no longer have the mental capacity or competency to execute (sign) those documents; indeed, many people live well into their 80s and 90s without having ever signed those documents. Some of the examples of the questions that come my way:

**Q.** My aging grandmother is having difficulty taking care of herself. She is unable to manage her own finances, and she really should not be living alone anymore.

**Q.** My 75-year-old mother is suffering from Alzheimer's and is struggling with dementia. She has lost the ability to take care of herself or her house, and has not been managing her finances.

**Q.** My 82-year-old father is a widower and lives alone. Yesterday, he forgot that he had the stove on and nearly burned down his house. His dementia is getting worse.

**Q.** My 79-year-old father was the victim of a con man at the supermarket yesterday. The person told him he needed \$1,500 ... and my father gave it to him!

All of these questions end with: He or she does not have a health care proxy or power of attorney and definitely does not have the mental capacity to understand or sign one now. What do I do?



This is, unfortunately, a common scenario. In order to execute the documents necessary to appoint someone to act for you, you need to have the requisite mental capacity to do so, meaning you have to understand what you are signing. A lawyer can assess a person's mental capacity and decide whether or not he feels comfortable having someone execute the documents. In the absence of these documents, the recourse is a guardianship proceeding. In other words, if you do not appoint a health care agent, the court will appoint one for you if it finds you incapacitated or in need of a guardian.

Article 81 of the Mental Hygiene Law allows for an application to the Supreme Court to have a guardian

appointed for an incapacitated person (referred to as an "allegedly incapacitated person" or "AIP"). Under Article 81, you can seek the appointment of a guardian of the person, a guardian of the property, or both.

This requires the preparation and filing with the court a petition setting forth — under penalties of perjury — that the person is incapacitated, does not understand or appreciate his lack of capacity or the consequences of his actions or inactions, and therefore is likely to suffer harm if a guardian is not appointed to protect him.

A family member or a person concerned about his welfare (such as a neighbor) can bring the petition and ask that the petitioner or

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someone else be appointed guardian. The allegedly incapacitated person's next of kin — spouse, children, parents, siblings, and in some cases nieces and nephews — will receive notice of the proceeding and have an opportunity to object. They will have the opportunity to come to court to object to the proceeding or to object to the requested guardian, and perhaps advocate for someone else to be appointed as guardian.

Once commenced, the court appoints a Court Evaluator, usually an attorney who is certified by the court to act as the “eyes and ears” of the court. The Court Evaluator interviews the relevant parties and the allegedly incapacitated person. The Court Evaluator is charged with explaining the proceeding to the person, ascertaining whether he would consent to the guardianship, and who he would like to serve as guardian, and recommending whether the person needs independent counsel. The Court Evaluator can review the person's finances and often his medical records. Oftentimes the Mental Hygiene Legal Services is appointed to represent the person. The Court Evaluator presents a written report on her findings and recommendations, and testifies in court.

The Court Evaluator fee is set by the judge presiding over the guardianship and is paid for out of the person's funds, if a guardian is appointed, or potentially will be paid by the petitioner himself if the petition is denied and a guardian is not appointed.

The court will only order a guardian and extent of powers that is specifically tailored to meet the needs of the incapacitated person in the least restrictive manner possible, so that his freedom is infringed upon in the least restrictive way. For example, if the person is unable to manage finances but is fully capable of making his own medical decisions, the court's order will reflect that.

After hearing all the evidence, the court determines whether or not a guardian is needed and the extent of the powers the guardian will have. The court might appoint the person requested in the petition, or a court-appointed guardian from a list of certified guardians, or a combination of both.

The guardian may only do the

things that the court expressly provides for in the order. Unless specifically ordered by the court, the guardian cannot make end-of-life decisions, consent to psychotropic medications, arrange for admission into a nursing home or other facility, or sell or transfer assets.

Once the guardian is appointed, the person is required to undergo a court-approved training program. The training includes instruction on the guardian's legal duties and responsibilities, the rights of the allegedly incapacitated person, a guide to useful resources, and instructions on preparing annual accounts. The guardian cannot begin acting until she is issued a “Commission” signed by the County Clerk, which evidences her appointment and authority to act as guardian. The Commission will not issue until a certificate of training is produced and the guardian signs a designation and consent to act.

The guardian must maintain financial records (and records of doctors visits for the personal-needs guardian), and is required to submit an accounting each and every calendar year of all assets received, all income collected, and all disbursements made. The court also appoints a Court Examiner whose responsibility is to review the guardian's annual account, identify any discrepancies, and advise the court if the guardian needs to be removed for inaction or breach of fiduciary duty, such as stealing the incapacitated person's money. The Court Examiner's fee is also paid out of the incapacitated person's assets or, if there are no assets, by the State or City.

The costs of a guardianship far exceed the cost of a basic estate planning package that includes advance directives such as a health care proxy and power of attorney.

Isn't executing a health care proxy and power of attorney so much simpler?

*Alison Arden Besunder is the founding attorney of the law firm of Arden Besunder P.C., where she assists new and not-so-new parents with their estate planning needs. Her firm assists clients in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties. You can find Besunder on Twitter @estatetrustplan and on her website at [www.besunderlaw.com](http://www.besunderlaw.com).*

## THE RHYTHM OF NEW YORK

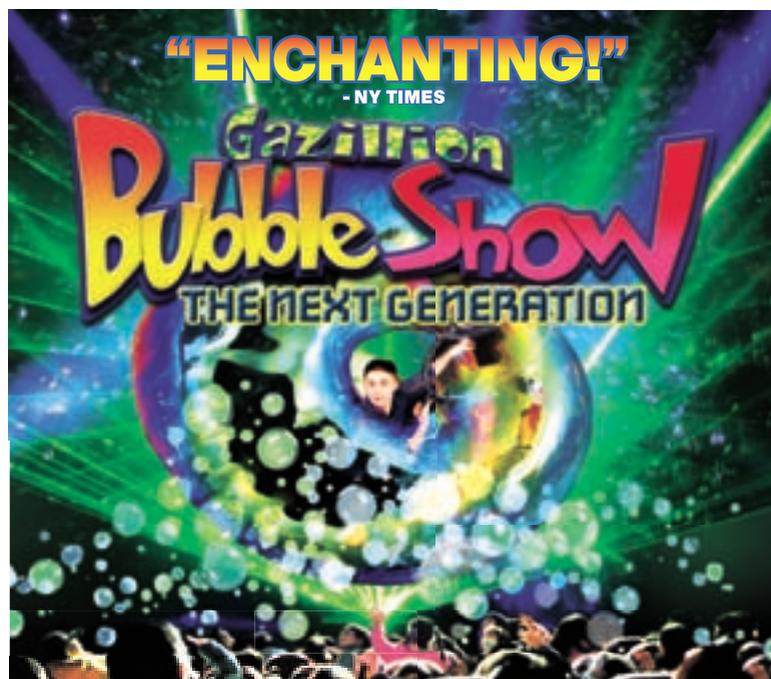


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# Calendar

MARCH



Photo by Robert Riczu

## Celebrate Hungarian Independence Day

Celebrate Hungarian Independence Day at the Pelham Art Center on March 16 with dance, music, and workshops.

Together with the Balassi Institute, the Cultural Center invites visitors to enjoy a concert of traditional folk music performed by the Fényes Band — playing music from the Kalotaszeg, Mezőség, Küküllőment and Slovakian areas; and

dancers performing the Peasant Dance. Visitors can also try their hand at decorating eggs using the Hungarian method, himestojas, in a workshop led by Ildiko Nagy.

Hungarian Independence Day on March 16 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm. Free.

*Pelham Art Center [155 Fifth Ave. in Pelham, (914) 738-2525; [www.pelhamartcenter.org](http://www.pelhamartcenter.org)].*

## Submit a listing

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

Send your listing request to [bronxcalendar@cnglocal.com](mailto:bronxcalendar@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!

## MON, MARCH 3

### IN THE BRONX

**Read across America:** Barnes & Noble Bay Plaza, 290 Baychester Ave.; (718) 862-3945; [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com); 11 am; Free.

Children read "Green Eggs and Ham" by Dr. Seuss.

## TUES, MARCH 4

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Inside Your Brain:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); 4:30 pm; \$125, \$115 (Members).

Children in third, fourth, and fifth grades learn about the cutting-edge field of neuroscience through hands-on experiments and innovative lab activities.

## WED, MARCH 5

### IN THE BRONX

**Toddler storytime:** Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 11-11:30 am; Free.

For children 18 months to 36 months with a caregiver.

**Film time:** Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 4-5:30 pm; Free.

Children 5 to 12 enjoy an appropriate movie.

## THURS, MARCH 6

### IN THE BRONX

**Baby time:** Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 11 am; Free.

For infants to 18 months old and a caregiver.

**Game on:** Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org);



## It's egg-stra special

Visitors are treated to a workshop on Pysanky, the time-honored method of decorating Easter eggs, on March 29 at the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum.

Pysanky is the Ukrainian method for decorating Easter eggs, featuring Ukrainian folk designs and using a wax-resist (known as "batik") method.

The hands-on workshop is for children 14 years and older. Visitors are encouraged to bring a

bag lunch — light refreshments are available. Hot wax and permanent dyes used, so please wear appropriate clothing. Space is limited and registration is required.

Pysanky workshop on March 29 from 11 am to 3:30 pm. Admission is \$15, \$10 for members.

*Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum* [895 Shore Rd. in Pelham Bay, (718) 885-1461; [www.bartowpellmansion-museum.org](http://www.bartowpellmansion-museum.org)]

4-5 pm; Free.

Tweens and teens, 12 to 18 years old have fun with Xbox and Xbox Kinect games.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Family Science Adventures:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X353; [www.nyscience.org](http://www.nyscience.org);

3:30 pm; \$60 (per adult/child pair,) \$50 (members,) \$15 each additional sibling.

In this fun and educational four-part series, children ages 3 to 5 will make kaleidoscopes, observe patterns and colors, listen to the rhythm and beats of musical instruments, and use their taste buds to identify different flavors.

## FRI, MARCH 7

### IN THE BRONX

**Teen Advisory Group:** Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 4-5 pm; Free.

Children 13 to 18 years old share their views at the library.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Twinkling Stars:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); 4:30 pm; \$100, \$90 (members).

Learn how different cultures have been spotting animal shapes in the stars, see the stars that inspired the stories, then make your own constellation model in this workshop.

## SAT, MARCH 8

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Ave.; (718) 549-3200; [www.wavehill.org](http://www.wavehill.org); 10 am-1 pm; Free with admission to the grounds.

Exploring family roots. Can you trace your family tree? Children create their own.

**American Girl:** Barnes & Noble Bay Plaza, 290 Baychester Ave.; (718) 862-3945; [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com); Noon; Free.

Girls 8 to 12 years old enjoy a special day of fun activities with this workshop.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Block Party:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Children enjoy erecting new buildings with an assortment of blocks.

**Imaginative Dance with Erica Essner:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 1 pm; Free with Museum Admission.

Stretch your bodies and imagination and enjoy a new exciting dance.

**Metro crafty:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Celebrate 20 years of MetroCards and then create your own one-of-a-kind design. For all ages.

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# Calendar

Our online calendar is updated daily at [www.NYParenting.com/calendar](http://www.NYParenting.com/calendar)

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## SUN, MARCH 9

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, March 8.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Journey to the past:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 11 am–4:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Meet Signal Tower Operator Paula, the museum's very own costumed storyteller who will tell tales of what it was like to work on the subways in the 1940s and how important signals are.

**Block Party:** 11:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, March 8.

**Metro crafty:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, March 8.

**The Night Sky:** Belvedere Castle, Central Park, Mid park at 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 628-2345; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/03/09/the-night-sky](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/03/09/the-night-sky); 7 pm; Free.

Urban Park Rangers will be your guides to the solar system, discussing the science, history, and folklore of the universe.

## TUES, MARCH 11

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Inside Your Brain:** 4:30 pm. American Museum of Natural History. See Tuesday, March 4.

## WED, MARCH 12

### IN THE BRONX

**Toddler storytime:** 11–11:30 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, March 5.

**Film time:** 4–5:30 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, March 5.

## THURS, MARCH 13

### IN THE BRONX

**Baby time:** 11 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, March 6.

**Crafting:** Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 4–5 pm; Free.

Children 5 to 12 years old make a fun project for St. Patrick's day.

**Game on:** 4–5 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, March 6.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Family Science Adventures:** 3:30



Photo by Richard Termine

## Don't miss Cinderella's ball

New York Theatre Ballet presents "Cinderella" and Cinderella's Ball on March 1 at the Florence Gould Hall Theater. This beautiful adaptation of the classic fairy tale will have both children and adults mesmerized. The costumes, characters, and choreography combine for a truly unique experience.

As an added bonus, there will also be a ball held after the final show where children can interact and take pictures with the characters, hunt for the infamous glass slipper, enjoy delicious desserts, play games, and more!

"Cinderella" on March 1 and 2, with performances at 11 am, 1 pm,

and 3:30 pm. The ball is after the 3:30 pm show on March 2. Tickets are \$40 for adults, \$35 for children. Tickets to the ball are \$50.

*Florence Gould Hall Theater [208 W. 23rd St. between Seventh and Eighth avenues in the Flatiron District, (212) 355-6160, [www.kidsncomedy.com](http://www.kidsncomedy.com)]*

pm. New York Hall of Science. See Thursday, March 6.

## FRI, MARCH 14

### IN THE BRONX

**Teen Advisory Group:** 4–5 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Friday, March 7.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Twinkling Stars:** 4:30 pm. American Museum of Natural History. See Friday, March 7.

## SAT, MARCH 15

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Ave.; (718) 549-3200; [www.wavehill.org](http://www.wavehill.org); 10 am–1 pm; Free with admission to the grounds.

Children create a mobile using natural objects.

**Purimania:** Chabad Lubavitch of Riverdale, 535 W. 246th Street; (718) 549-1100; 8 pm; Call for fees.

A reading of the Megillah, magic shows and prizes for the best dressed in costume.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Nature Photography:** Dana Discovery Center, 110th St. between Fifth and Lenox avenues in Central Park,

Manhattan; (212) 628-2345; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/03/15/nature-photography-winter-wildlife](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/03/15/nature-photography-winter-wildlife); 11 am; Free.

Urban Park Ranger Nature Art and Photography teach you about your local environment and encourage artistic expression. Bring your own camera.

**Imagine Jackson Pollock:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Young tots examine the natural elements and explore fire and water while learning about the artist.

**Squares in the city:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children experience a quilting bee and stitch different pieces of fabric together and make a colorful patchwork quilt.

## SUN, MARCH 16

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, March 15.

**Hungarian festival:** Pelham Art Center, 155 Fifth Ave.; (914) 738-

2525; [www.pelhamartcenter.org](http://www.pelhamartcenter.org); 1:30–3:30 pm; Free.

Enjoy a day of Hungarian delights presented in partnership with the Balassi Institute, Hungarian Cultural Center. Listen to traditional Hungarian music performed live and watch dancers in costume. Then learn the Hungarian art form of egg decoration in a hands-on workshop.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Imagine Jackson Pollock:** 11:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, March 15.

**Squares in the city:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, March 15.

## TUES, MARCH 18

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Inside Your Brain:** 4:30 pm. American Museum of Natural History. See Tuesday, March 4.

## WED, MARCH 19

### IN THE BRONX

**Toddler storytime:** 11–11:30 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, March 5.

**Film time:** 4–5:30 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, March 5.

# Calendar

Our online calendar is updated daily at [www.NYParenting.com/calendar](http://www.NYParenting.com/calendar)

## THURS, MARCH 20

### IN THE BRONX

**Baby time:** 11 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, March 6.

**Game on:** 4–5 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, March 6.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Free Thursdays:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 3 pm; Free.

Enjoy the museum and all the exhibits free every third Thursday of the month.

**Family Science Adventures:** 3:30 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Thursday, March 6.

## FRI, MARCH 21

### IN THE BRONX

**Teen Advisory Group:** 4–5 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Friday, March 7.

## SAT, MARCH 22

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Ave.; (718) 549-3200; [www.wavehill.org](http://www.wavehill.org); 10 am–1 pm; Free with admission to the grounds.

Children explore primitive prints.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**NASA Sun-Earth Day:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); Noon–4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Explore the special relationship between Earth and the Sun and learn about the delicate balance between them by talking with scientists, looking through telescopes, and hands-on activities at this family-friendly event.

**Garifuna Drumming:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); Noon; Free with museum admission.

Dance along to the music from the Garifuna community. They are descended from the Arawak Carib and West African peoples.

**Eco House:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [www.nyscience.org](http://www.nyscience.org); Noon–6 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children will be able to enter this mobile, cutting-edge exhibit that lets visitors see behind the walls and underneath the floor of a home.



Photo by Rob Davidson

## VH1's Family Day

Yeah! It's Family Day at PS 334, The Anderson School, on March 22.

This annual family day of fun encourages children of all ages to express their love of music through a series of games, workshops, live musical performances, and more. This year's events will be hosted by Nick Lachey, and will feature Alex & Ani, The Annie Minogue Band, DJ Beauty and

the Beatz, and more that will entertain both children and adults alike!

Family Day on March 22 from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is free, but you can purchase a VIP Family Package for \$150.

*PS 334, The Anderson School (100 W. 77th St. at Columbus Avenue on the Upper West Side, [www.vh1savethemusic.org/family-day2014](http://www.vh1savethemusic.org/family-day2014))*

**Parkour Workshops:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [www.nyscience.org](http://www.nyscience.org); 12:45 & 1:45 pm; \$6, \$4 (members).

Museum visitors can try out parkour, a type of movement that encourages interaction between our bodies and environment.

**Subway studio:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 7 years and older visit the newest art exhibition "Transit on the Spectrum: The Art of Pure Vision" and then have a session with artist Katie Taylor who will introduce drawing techniques using charcoal, pastels, and brushes.

## SUN, MARCH 23

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, March 22.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Journey to the past:** 11 am–4:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Sunday, March 9.

**Eco House:** Noon–6 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, March 22.

**Parkour Workshops:** 12:45 & 1:45 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, March 22.

**Subway studio:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, March 22.

## WED, MARCH 26

### IN THE BRONX

**Toddler storytime:** 11–11:30 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Wednesday, March 5.

**Teen movie time:** Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 4–6 pm; Free.

Children 13 to 18 years old enjoy a feature film selected by the members of the Teen Advisory Group.

## THURS, MARCH 27

### IN THE BRONX

**Baby time:** 11 am. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, March 6.

**Game on:** 4–5 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Thursday, March 6.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Family Science Adventures:** 3:30

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# Calendar

Our online calendar is updated daily at [www.NYParenting.com/calendar](http://www.NYParenting.com/calendar)

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pm. New York Hall of Science. See Thursday, March 6.

## FRI, MARCH 28

### IN THE BRONX

**Teen Advisory Group:** 4–5 pm. Kingsbridge Library Center. See Friday, March 7.

## SAT, MARCH 29

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Ave.; (718) 549–3200; [www.wavehill.org](http://www.wavehill.org); 10 am–1 pm; Free with admission to the grounds.

Spring is in the air and garden designs are there for children to explore.

**Pysanky workshop:** Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885–1461; [www.bartowpell-mansionmuseum.org](http://www.bartowpell-mansionmuseum.org); 11 am–3:30 pm; \$15 (\$10).

Visitors learn the time honored method of egg dying using hot wax and permanent dyes. For children 14 and older. Bring a bag lunch, light refreshments offered. Registration required.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**“Play, Said the Earth to the Air!”:** Brooklyn Children’s Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735–4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am, 1 pm and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

A reading of the Richard Lewis play allows children to let their imagination flow through air, light, colors, and sounds.

**Nano days:** Brooklyn Children’s Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735–4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children experiment with tiny technologies that have a big impact the way we live. For children 4 years and older.

**Miles of Tiles:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694–1600; [www.mta.info/mta-museum](http://www.mta.info/mta-museum); 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 4 years and older discover the beauty of mosaic tiles that beautify the subway stations.

**Nocturnal Wildlife:** Belvedere Castle, Central Park, Mid park at 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 628–2345; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/03/29/nocturnal-wildlife](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/03/29/nocturnal-wildlife); 7 pm; Free.

Rangers will guide you to the best

## Irish film fun for kids

The 16th annual festival celebrating Irish music and film, the Craic Festival, is back again, and the Kids Film Fleadh will kick off the festivities on March 1 at the Irish Arts Center.

Audiences will see new and inspiring short films that are family friendly, including “The Fear of Flying.” You’ll be transported to Ireland without ever

leaving the comfort of the Donaghy Theatre at the Irish Arts Center!

The Craic Festival, March 1 at 11 am. Tickets are \$10 for adults, and \$5 for children.

*Irish Arts Center [553 W. 51st Street at 11th Avenue in Midtown West, (212) 757–3318, [www.thecraicfest.com/kids-film-fleadh/](http://www.thecraicfest.com/kids-film-fleadh/)]*



wildlife viewing spots to look for bats, raccoons, and maybe even owls!

## SUN, MARCH 30

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, March 29.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**“Play, Said the Earth to the Air!”:** 11:30 am, 1 pm and 2:30 pm. Brooklyn Children’s Museum. See Saturday, March 29.

**Nano days:** 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children’s Museum. See Saturday, March 29.

**Miles of Tiles:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, March 29.

## MON, MARCH 31

### IN THE BRONX

**Pajama time:** Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579–4244; [www.nysl.org](http://www.nysl.org); 5–6 pm; Free.

Children 5 to 12 years old wear their PJ’s and do a craft have refreshments and read a story.

**Info session:** Rye Brook Library – Port Chester, One Haseco Ave.; (914) 939–6710; [www.portchester-rye-brooklibrary.org](http://www.portchester-rye-brooklibrary.org); 6:30–8 pm; Free.

Learn about adoption.

## LONG-RUNNING

### IN THE BRONX

**Paper Arts & Crafts:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365–5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Wednesdays, 1–3 pm; Free.

Children have fun creating collages using decoupage, origami, kirigami and more.

**Story time:** Barnes & Noble Bay Plaza, 290 Baychester Ave.; (718) 862–3945; [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com); Wednesdays, 6 pm, Now – Wed, April 30; Free.

Join in for a weekly session of fun reading and activities.

**Learn to draw:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365–5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Thursdays, 2–3:30 pm; Free.

Children 10 years and older learn the basics of still life pencil drawing, including volume, tone, value, and sketching.

**Seasonal crafts:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365–5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Fridays, 2–3:30 pm; Free.

Make holiday arts and crafts.

**Art Trek Plus:** The Cloisters, 99 Margaret Corbin; (718) 923–3700; Saturday, March 8, 11 am; Saturday, March 15, 11 am; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 to 12 tour the exhibits and make projects.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**The Butterfly Conservatory:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769–5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); Daily, 10 am–5:45 pm; Now – Mon, May 26; \$27, \$16 (children).

This annual favorite features up to 500 live, free-flying tropical butterflies from Central, South, and North America, Africa, and Asia.

**Beginner Hockey Clinic:** Lasker Pool & Rink, 110 Malcolm X Blvd., Central Park, Manhattan; (212) 348–4867; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/01/06/beginner-hockey-clinic](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/01/06/beginner-hockey-clinic); Mondays, 4 pm, Now – Mon, March 10; Free.

Children ages 6–9 can practice skating and puck control drills as well as scrimmage play. Offered by the Central Park Conservancy must register through them.

**“Bessie’s Big Shot”:** Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater, 79th & West Dr, Manhattan; (212) 988–9093; Tuesdays – Fridays, 10:30 am & Noon, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm, Now – Sun, June 29; \$10, \$7 (children under 12).

It’s a bird, it’s a plane, no — it’s Bessie the cow! Based on the Puppets Mobile show of the same name, this popular production is making its debut at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre.

**Flight of the Butterflies in 3D:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699–0005 X353; [www.ny-science.org](http://www.ny-science.org); Tuesdays – Fridays, 11 am, Noon & 2 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, Noon, 1, 2 & 3 pm, Now – Fri, April 11; \$6 (adults,) \$5 (children, students & seniors,) plus NYSCI admission.

Join millions of real butterflies on an amazing journey to a remote and secret hideaway in this award-winning film.

**Bug out!:** Brooklyn Children’s Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735–4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); Tuesdays, 11:30 am–12:30 pm and 2:30–3:30 pm, Now – Tues, March 25; Free with museum admission.

Children of all ages meet grasshoppers, worms, and Madagascar hissing cockroaches.

**After School Ice Skating:** Lasker Pool & Rink, 110 Malcolm X Blvd., Central Park, Manhattan; (212) 348–4867; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/01/08/after-school-ice-skating](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/01/08/after-school-ice-skating); Wednesdays and Fridays, 4 pm, Now – Fri, March 14; Free.

Children ages 5–7 learn the basic elements of ice skating through group and individual instruction. Offered through the Central Park Conservancy, must register through them.

**Arty facts:** Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 638–5000; [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org); Sundays, 11 am and 1:30 pm, Now – Sun, May 18; \$10 materials fee plus museum admission.

Children 4 to 7 years old explore the galleries, enjoy an activity and take an art class.

# theMarketplace

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DEAR  
DR. KARYN  
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# Ten tips for better homework habits

*What are some practical tips to get children to do their homework?*

**Y**ears ago, I interviewed Erin Hemsworth who was the director of “Parental Guidance” on my radio show, and she offered 10 wonderful tips to get kids to do their homework.

At the time I was not a mom, but since having my twin 6-year-old boys, I have implemented many of her tips and found them to be extremely effective!

Enjoy reading!

**Set up a homework routine.** Make study time a component of every day — the way you do with mealtime and bedtime. Sit down with your child, and as a family, come up with a schedule that works for everyone. When planning, consider that earlier in the day is better, and the younger the child is when this is established, the less resistance you will encounter.

**Create a space for homework time.** Decide where would work best for your child and family and then provide the guidance and resources to establish this as an effective work-space. When established early, your child can enjoy this study space for years to come.

**Decide on the time.** The general expectation is about 10 minutes per day for each grade. For example: 10 minutes for first grade and 80 minutes for eighth grade. This can include reading time, although additional reading time is beneficial and is a great way to wind down at bedtime.

**Help your child based on need.** By being involved in his schoolwork, you will soon become aware of your child’s strengths and weaknesses. The goal is to foster independence and accountability. Be sure your child knows your realistic expectations.

**Know the learning-curve method of studying.** Also called “three times, then it’s mine.” After learning something new, read it over within 24 hours (day one). Go over it again 48 hours later (day three) and then again 72 hours after that (day six). This is a very easy, yet effective, way to learn and remember new information.

**Focus on process, not product.** Help enable your child to enjoy the learning process by working through projects and studying for tests. Demonstrate your pride in the fact that he is working hard and planning ahead, and remember that this was done even if the result or final mark doesn’t meet your expectations. Remember that people learn a lot through trial and error;

focus on what was done well and then work on next steps.

**Concentrate on learning skills.** They’re the most important part of the report card! In elementary school, learning skills include independent work, initiative, homework completion, use of information, co-operation with others, conflict resolution, class participation, problem-solving, and goal-setting. In secondary, the skills include teamwork, organization, works independently, work habits, and initiative. Regardless of academic aptitude, all students can develop learning skills. Once students graduate, these are the skills that employers look for — the skills that will serve your child well.

**Provide sincere encouragement.** Negative feedback can be crippling. That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t give constructive criticism, but when giving it, remember it is not what you say but how you say it. It is important to celebrate successes and learn from less than desired achievements.

**Provide positive feedback.** As long as it is genuine, there can never be too much positive feedback. Celebrate efforts, improvements, and achievements. Take note of how hard your child worked on an assignment or test and celebrate that.

**Model good work habits.** For parents who bring work home, try to do some at the same time (or at least when children can witness it happening). For parents who don’t, balance your checkbook, or catch up on some letter-writing. And most importantly, let your child see you reading for pleasure.

*Dr. Karyn Gordon is one of North America’s leading relationship and parenting experts. She is a regular contributor to “Good Morning America,” founder of dk Leadership, best-selling author of “Dr. Karyn’s Guide To The Teen Years” (Harper Collins), and motivational speaker to a quarter of a million people. Visit her at [www.dkleadership.org](http://www.dkleadership.org) and on Twitter: @DrKarynGordon.*



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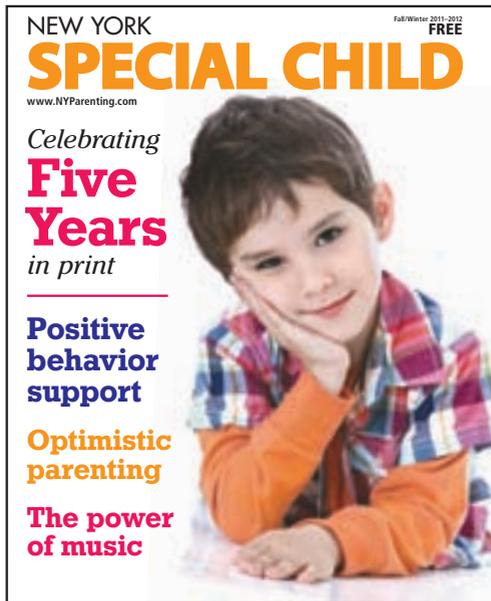
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