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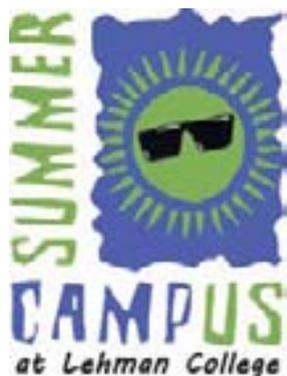
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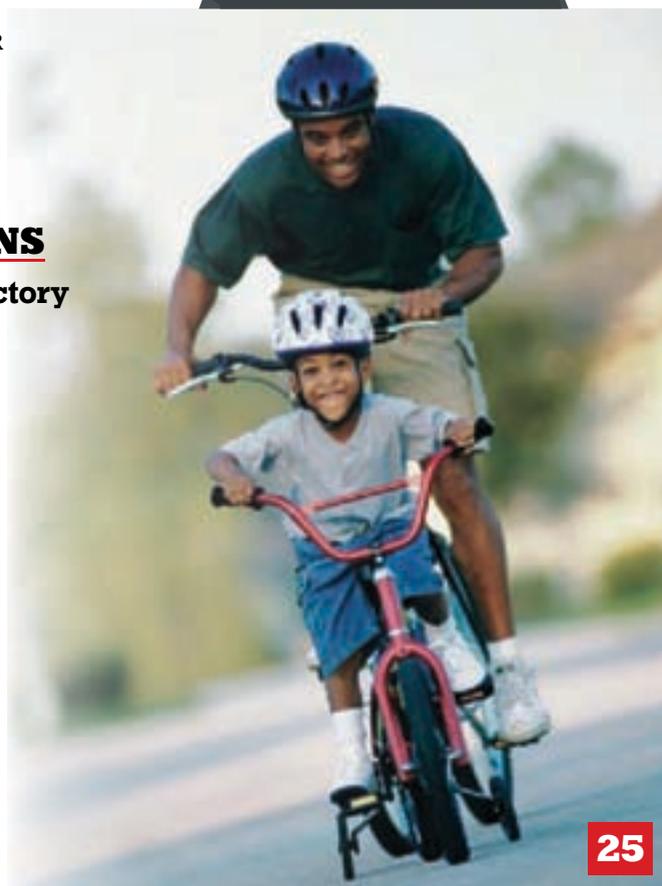
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# Graduations, birthdays & Father's Day

**T**he best graduation I ever went to was my daughter's from Kindergarten. It was so particularly moving on some wonderful level. Our family was supposed to sing a song together and I became such an emotional mess that I couldn't sing. I was weeping and as hard as I tried to control it, I couldn't. I've never been able to explain it to anyone very well, but I was peculiarly aware of the passage of time and I sensed that my little baby was moving on to being a child and that the film was about to speed up. I was right and it did and has.



In our house, June is a month of birthdays, my daughter's, mine and those of many good friends. We have

dinner celebrations and all feel great that the beautiful month of June is the month we entered into life. The good thing about having birthdays in the summer months is that you are able to have festivities outdoors if you want to. We have had many parties in the park, brought our food, set up a picnic under the shade of the trees and watched the children frolic in the beauty of late spring/early summer. Great memories.

Father's Day as I was growing up was every four years a special day I would share with my own Dad, because every four years it fell on my birthday. I loved this shared day with my father although he never liked making a big deal of it. In this

issue we talk a good deal about fathers and how important their role is as a hands-on parent. It can make or break the equilibrium of most children and the absence of a father can be devastating. We are happily finding that more Dads are opting for a strong presence and shared responsibility in the raising of their children starting from infancy. This is a very different posture and a welcome sociological change from past generations.

Although stay-at-home Dads are a welcome phenomenon and the number of men opting to be the primary caregiver to their children under 18 has risen considerably, unfortunately, so has the number of households without a father and children who have no male figure/role model in their lives has gone up as well. This is utterly detrimental to the well

being of millions of children and it must be our societal goal to change this statistical reality.

If there's a graduation or a birthday in your family this month, enjoy! Cherish the moments and bookmark the memories. To all the Fathers, we wish you a lifetime of responsible interaction with your children and the joy of hands-on caregiving. You will be happy you did and so will your children.

Have a great month. Thanks for reading!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,  
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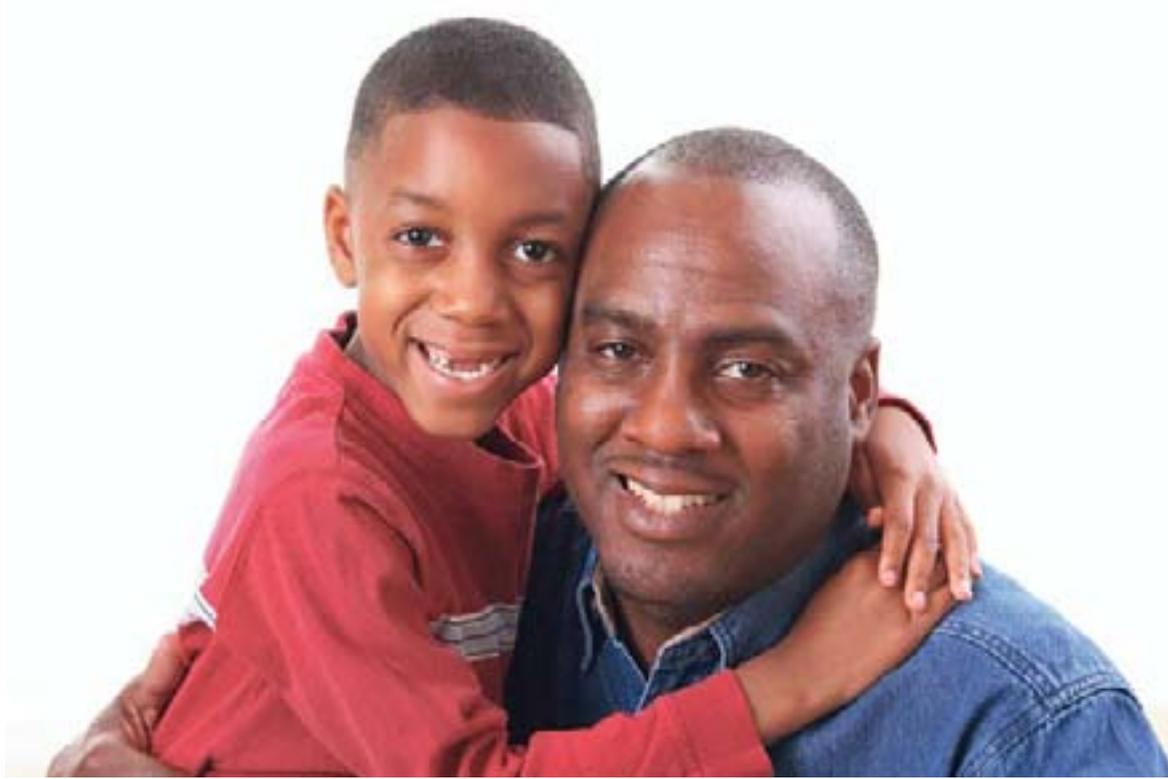
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# Dear Dad: Your kids need you!

Every dad has the chance to show love and acceptance

BY GAYLA GRACE

**D**ick Hoyt is an inspiring father. His son, Rick, was born a quadriplegic with cerebral palsy. His parents were told he would be mute for life and should be institutionalized. But his dad refused to believe it.

Hoyt noticed Rick's eyes followed him everywhere he went, and so he became determined to find a way to communicate with him. He solicited help from Tufts University, where a skilled group of engineers built Rick an interactive computer. Rick controlled the cursor by touching a switch with the side of his head, which enabled him to finally communicate with those around him.

Rick immediately relayed his love for sports, and at 15 years old, asked his dad to participate in a five-mile benefit run for a classmate paralyzed in an accident. Although not a distance runner, Dick agreed to join in the run and push Rick in his wheelchair. That day changed their lives. After the run, Rick said, "Dad, when I'm running, it feels like I'm not hand-

icapped" ([www.teamhoyt.com](http://www.teamhoyt.com)).

Inspired to offer Rick more opportunities to experience that feeling, Hoyt began training every day with a bag of cement in the wheelchair while Rick was at school. The two began participating in marathons, triathlons, and other grueling athletic events and have now completed more than 1,000 races together. Rick knows he has an incredible dad whom he refers to as "The Father of the Century."

Most dads don't have the same opportunity Hoyt had with his son. But every dad has the chance to show love and acceptance to his children, giving of his time to provide nurturing and guidance.

Children gain security from a dad willing to make time for them. I love to watch dads with their sons at the baseball fields as they play catch, practice batting, or offer encouraging words. Athletics offer a great way for dads to be part of something their children enjoy while the kids learn about good sportsmanship and reap the benefits of hard work and practice.

Children benefit from a dad who provides consistent love and dis-

cipline. Discipline teaches children self-control and right from wrong, while helping them feel secure and cared for. Dr. James Dobson, author of "Bringing up Boys," says, "Boys are more likely to get off course when they are not guided and supervised carefully ... When left to their own devices, they tend to drift toward the center divider or into the ditch, toward misbehavior or danger."

Children gain healthy standards from a dad with spiritual principles. Studies show that children who actively engage in a community of faith increase their odds toward a happier, healthier, and longer life, while significantly reducing the likelihood of risky behavior.

Children need a dad who exemplifies a stable male role model. We've all heard the saying, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day." Children mirror their parent's behavior and learn relationship skills and healthy social skills, including how to treat others, by watching them. Children benefit from a father who regularly shows them physical affection and treats his marriage partner with love and respect.

Our generation sees too many children reared without fathers. A high divorce rate, unbalanced career priorities, and prevailing addiction rates contribute to an absent father for many, emotionally and physically. However, study after study reflects the impact of a child's well-being from the influence of his father.

It's not always possible to be an active dad on a daily basis, but it is possible to stay involved in your child's life in other ways. A dad's role is a high calling that not everyone gets to experience. But for those who do, it's a role to be honored and cherished, carried out with intentional purpose.

*Gayla Grace is a freelance writer, wife, and mom to five children. She is thankful for the role her husband plays as their children's father.*

## Inspirational books by Team Hoyt

"One Letter at a Time": Inspirational stories of his life told by Rick Hoyt, using his one letter at a time method of speaking to communicate.

"Devoted: The Story of a Father's Love for His Son": The story told by Dick Hoyt of the incredible bond with his son and how Team Hoyt's mission statement, "Yes You Can," was created.

"Rick Hoyt: The Story of Rick Hoyt": A beautiful story of how Rick Hoyt, born with cerebral palsy, lives an inspiring life with the help of friends and family.

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# Good buzz!

## Kid critics enjoy the adventures of 'Maya'

*"Maya the Bee Movie" features a spunky young bee, Maya, who won't follow the rules of the hive. This lovely, animated film is devoid of violence or other scary stuff, that you can safely share with your younger family members. It's an engaging tale of adventure and friendship that teaches some poignant lessons about trust and honesty. The first version of this tale was made in 1925 in Germany using micro-photography of real insects to tell the story. This updated version, released on DVD and Blu-ray on May 19, is beautifully animated and offers delightful comedy to help grab and hold your attention.*

**"M**aya the Bee Movie" is an incredible animated film, written by Fin Edquist and Marcus Saueremann, directed by Alexis Stadermann. This is a very funny movie. I laughed during many scenes, and I also cried during a few scenes. I love the movie, because the characters are funny, and it teaches great lessons throughout the film.

The movie takes place in a beehive located in a colorful meadow full of beautiful flowers. In the meadow, there are many different types of bugs. Inside of the bee hive, there are lots of worker bees. All of the bees have different jobs, which are assigned by the royal advisor, Buzzlina (Jacki Weaver). For instance, one of the jobs is picking up pollen.

Another job is watching the adorable little baby bees.

This is also where Maya (Coco Jack Gillies) stays until spring. Maya wants to be independent and explore the hive. She does not like staying with the babies, so she sneaks out when she has the first opportunity. When Maya sneaks out, she causes a lot of chaos within the hive, because she is very young and does not know what she is doing. She takes you on a fun and exciting adventure.

The movie is well written. Stadermann draws out remarkable performances from the voice actors and brings out the best in each character. I love how Gillies expresses Maya's feelings. Weaver makes the royal advisor, Buzzlina, seem so real.

My favorite scene is when Willy (Kodi Smit-McPhee) and Maya meet. They seem to like each other from the very beginning. Another favorite part is when there is a battle between the bees and another group of bugs. My least favorite part of the film is when something horrible happens to Maya, and she finds out a secret about the queen.

The message of the story is: everyone has a role to play in life. It takes everyone working as a team

to get the job done. The movie is fun, fabulous, and family-friendly. I recommend it for ages 4 to 18 as well as adults. I give this movie 5 out of 5 gold stars.

— Brooke S., age 9

See her video review at: <https://youtu.be/BzDjUqX6hls>

**"M**aya the Bee Movie" is a cute and funny movie! It's about a young, little bee named Maya who is very curious and eager to learn about the beehive. As Maya explores the beehive without permission, she asks a bunch of questions. Maya quickly learns that she is completely different from the other bees. She repeatedly finds herself in trouble by Buzzlina, the queen's assistant. As a result, Maya gets banned from the hive. Her friend Willy does not want Maya to be alone, so he leaves the hive and follows her.

As Maya and Willy are out in the meadow, they learn that hornets and the other bugs and insects are not as bad as they have been told. While Maya has been banned from the beehive because of her curiosity, Buzzlina devises a plan to harm the Queen, so that she can take control of the bees and the hive.

There are several different messages in this movie. The one that stands out the most to me is, "Dare to be different." In this movie, the



bees have to follow specific rules, specific directions, and they must do as they are told. Maya is different, and she is told that she does not belong in the beehive. She works hard to find her place among the bees. She learns that she is an important bee in the kingdom and that her voice is important.

My favorite part is when Willy is mad at Maya and decides to fly back to the beehive. Willy is scared of everything.



But, when a frog sticks out his tongue to try to capture Willy for dinner, Willy hits the frog's tongue and flies away without looking back. That's pretty impressive for a fearful bee.

My favorite character is Willy. He is a very loyal and true friend. He supports Maya and helps her when she's down, and he's not afraid to tell her when she's not right. He is also very funny.

"Maya the Bee Movie" is a wonderful film! It has great messages for kids! I recommend this movie for boys and girls ages 5 to 10. I give this movie 3 out of 5 shining stars!

—Kayla P., age 13

See her video review at: [https://youtu.be/F5D58b\\_NPEk](https://youtu.be/F5D58b_NPEk)

If you enjoy comedy mixed with great animation, then you will love "Maya the Bee Movie." Maya is unlike other young bees her age. Instead of following orders, Maya has a mind of her own. For example, instead of staying within the safety of the beehive, Maya decides to go off on her own to visit the surrounding meadow, where she became friends with Flip the grasshopper.

At some point, Maya's curiosity led to her finding out that the Royal Advisor to the Queen Bee had stolen the royal jelly, saved especially for the Queen Bee, which leads to the Royal Advisor's kicking Maya out of the beehive.

At this point, Maya has to survive on her own in the meadow and is soon joined by her close friend Willy, who fears for her safety and cannot let Maya be by herself in the mysterious meadow. Together, the two bees become friendly with a variety of other insects and other creatures.

Eventually, Maya and Willy learn that the Royal Advisor has stolen

the Queen's royal jelly because she was seeking to make war with the hornets. By the end of the movie, Maya, Willy, and their other young hornet friend Buzzy stop the Royal Advisor's evil plans and, after recapturing the royal jelly, bring it back to the Queen, who then makes a complete recovery. For her efforts, Maya is appointed Hive Ambassador by the Queen Bee and she and Willy are made responsible for observing the meadow and reporting new friends that arrive.

My favorite character in the movie is Maya. She is easy to relate to for me, because she is very much a free spirit, unable to sit still, who always wants to be in on the action. I also enjoyed hearing from Flip the grasshopper. Flip is always able to provide Maya with excellent advice such as telling her to always "bee positive." The scenery is also colorful and beautiful and will be enjoyed by everyone.

My favorite part of the movie is when Maya and Willy are together out in the meadow attending the Jitterbug Hollow Musical Festival. There, they hear different insects playing a large number of musical instruments while Flip the grasshopper sings, "It don't matter what they say, be yourself every day."



This film has many positive messages that apply to younger audiences. For me, the most powerful message of the movie is that a person should be himself and does not need to follow in the footsteps of others. The movie also shows the strong bonds of loyalty between Maya and Willy, who have to work together in order to stop the Royal Advisor's plans.

I also appreciated the lesson that young people can make a huge difference in this world. In the movie, many grown-up bees and grown-up hornets are prepared to fight to see who would gain control of the meadow. In the end, it is two young bees and one young hornet who save everybody from being destroyed.

I give "Maya the Bee Movie" 5 out of 5 stars. It is a great family movie. I recommend it for ages 4 to 10. I appreciated its excellent messages and wonderful music.

—Adam C., age 9

See his video review at: [https://youtu.be/\\_0blgnr11Mo](https://youtu.be/_0blgnr11Mo)

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# Being a father

Going  
from mere  
paternity  
to true  
parenting

BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-  
TIEMAN

**M**y husband and I were both working on doctoral degrees when our first son was born. We also had part-time jobs and were hundreds of miles away from our families. After waiting five years to have a baby, we were anxious to take care of him ourselves. A system of “tag-team parenting” evolved that allowed us to take care of our extrafamilial responsibilities as well as have individual and joint time with Douglas. The different reactions we received when we were out separately with our infant son were most interesting. People would come up to me and comment on Douglas, but they would stop Jerry and say things like, “Your wife sure is lucky you’re willing to babysit,” or “How nice that you’re helping your wife out,” or “Giving the wife a break, I see.” The message was clear: When I had Douglas with me, I was doing my job, but when Jerry had him, he was doing me a favor.

The first few times we found these remarks amusing, but 25 years later we still hear the same thing. We both find this deeply disappointing. Why is it that when a father is doing what mothers have been doing for centuries, he’s Superman, but a mother doing it is still “just a mom?” These comments not only perpetuate the stereotypical practice of equating “par-

ent” with “mother,” but they also minimize the profound significance of the father’s role.

A growing number of fathers expect their parenting role to exceed the limits of paternity, financial support, and “roughhousing.” The majority of men in recent studies report that they are more involved in child-rearing than their fathers were and that they desire an equal partnership with their spouse in the rearing of their children. While including fathers in pregnancy and childbirth has been a tremendous improvement, it is not enough. It’s ironic that hospitals go out of their way to involve fathers in labor and delivery, even inviting them to cut the umbilical cord, and then fail to require the father’s presence when informing the mother about feeding, bathing, diapering, changing the umbilical cord dressings, etc. I’m pretty sure it’s not because they assume the father already knows how.

Children need fathers to progress out of the delivery room into the nursery and beyond. How do we (and by we, I mean all of us, males and females) go about replacing the peripheral father with an all-inclusive version? Here are a few suggestions:

## Changes in language

Words are powerful. Through language we communicate our attitudes, beliefs, and expectations. As long as we continue to equate

the word parent with mother, we are cheating fathers and children. When parenting books, magazines, or articles are clearly geared to a female audience, authors and publishers are suggesting that fathers need not read them. When letters asking for volunteers for school-related activities are addressed to mothers, the message is clear about who is expected to reply.

So gentlemen, the subtle, yet persistent exclusion of fathers in the conversation about parenting suggests you are free to move out of the picture, emotionally and even physically. But if you accept the circumstances as inevitable and, therefore, permission to renege on your responsibilities as a parent, not only are you depriving your children, but you are also denying yourself the rich rewards of this role. When we can openly say to our sons, as they cuddle their teddy bears, comfort a sibling or friend, or care for a pet, “You’re going to make a terrific father someday,” we’ll know the language of parenting has changed.

## Changes in attitudes and expectations

The false impression that child care is something fathers occasionally do for mothers continues to prevail. In actuality, parenting is what fathers do with mothers for their children. Referring to fathers as babysitters is absurd. Babysitters are people who get paid to fill in for parents who are unavailable. Fathers, you are not temporary filler. You are the real thing. Seeing you fulfill your parental responsibilities in public, as well as private, should be treated as the norm, not a novelty. Parenting should be a mutual sharing of both the responsibilities and rewards of child rearing. Men are not solely responsible for making the optional involvement of fathers acceptable. Many women lack a role model for a hands-on father. They have been socialized to believe that mothers should know all there is to know and do all there is to do with regard to child care. Otherwise they are not fulfilling their duty.

Many of us fall into the trap of assuming there are only two ways of doing things — our way and the



wrong way. When it comes to children, it is presumed mothers know “the right way.” When fathers demonstrate competence in this arena, it can be threatening to a mother’s self image. Fathers, if you face these situations, be patient, but persistent. Make it clear that your active participation is a statement about your desire to parent, not about your partner’s ability to parent.

### **Changes in actions**

Wilhelm Busch reminds us, “To become a father is not hard. To be a father is, however.” Any job worth doing is worth doing to the best of your ability. Parenting is no exception, whether you are male or female. In your efforts to become the father your children need you to

be, take the time to: Examine your sense of identity. If your identity is all tied up in whether or not you are employed, what you are employed to do, where you are employed, and how much you earn, then your identity is extremely vulnerable to the unpredictability of the marketplace. If you look to your colleagues or employer to provide you with a sense of worth, you are forgetting that these people are primarily interested in what you can do and specifically, what you can do for them.

In the eyes of your children, your value is not determined by the size of your paycheck. Children attribute the greatest power to those who are available to fulfill their needs — prepare their meals, participate in their play, provide comfort when they’re

hurt or ill, etc. The only place you are irreplaceable is at home. I have never heard of anyone expressing regret on their deathbed for not having spent more time at the office. Conserve your energy. Save some of the smiles, words of encouragement, patience and enthusiasm you demonstrate at the office for the people waiting for you at home. Utilize the time it takes you to travel home to mentally prepare yourself for the transition from your office work to your family work. Your children deserve the best of you, not the leftovers.

### **Get the training the job requires**

None of us is adequately prepared for the job of parenting. Few of us

have had any formal training. The rest of us are limited to the parenting we received as kids — the models our parents provided. Many men do not feel good about the job their fathers did, but they don’t know how to do any differently. Sometimes when people don’t feel competent in a role, they simply avoid it. Don’t allow your discomfort to rob you and your children of one of the most critical relationships in your lives.

Take the initiative to learn more about becoming the father you want to be. Read, attend classes and workshops, or join a parenting group. Identify a father you really admire and ask him to be your mentor. Spend time discussing your joint parenting goals with your spouse. Just because you didn’t give birth doesn’t make you any less of a parent.

The fact is, you can’t not parent. You can choose whether or not to become a parent or whether or not to be an involved parent. But if you have children, you cannot choose whether or not to parent. Your presence or absence will be experienced as parenting by your children. The way your children experience your involvement in their lives, or lack thereof, has an extraordinary impact on what they come to believe about themselves and how they relate to the rest of the world. The relationships that children establish with their parents provide the foundation for every other relationship they will ever have.

As you celebrate Father’s Day, take the time to reflect on what this role means to you, your children, your family, the future. The next time someone says, “How nice you’re willing to babysit for your wife,” boldly reply, “It’s my job. I’m doing this for them. I’m a dad!”

*Carolyn Waterbury-Tieman has degrees in Child Development, Family Studies, and Marriage and Family Therapy. Waterbury-Tieman has been married for 29 years and has two sons, ages 24 and 14. She spent 15 years in various agencies and clinics as a family therapist and parent educator and has written extensively on the topic of parenting. To contact her, please e-mail parent4life@yahoo.com.*

# 6

# more reasons why dads are super!

Fathers add so much to their children's lives

BY DR. HEIDI SMITH LUEDTKE

**P**op culture doesn't appreciate dads. Sitcoms make fun of their diapering (in)abilities or portray dads as irresponsible babysitters who feed the kids pizza, ice cream, and sugary soda while mom is out for the evening. Personal experience tells me there may be some truth in this. My own husband shows our kids zombie movies, then acts surprised when they refuse to sleep with the lights out. Really.

Stereotypes aside, it can be hard to move past the mom-knows-best mentality and make room for dad's different style of parenting. Mom of four, Tsara Shelton of Teague, Texas, says parenting together with her boys' dad has been the biggest challenge in their happy, 13-year marriage.

"I always want to be the one with the answers and insights! But in truth, it's been co-parenting that's blessed my boys with the best of what both mom and dad have to offer," she says.

All moms can learn valuable lessons from watching what dads do best. Here's how:

## 1. Dads are good with good enough

Most moms I know struggle to drown out the nagging inner critic who says we aren't good enough. We feel intense pressure to keep the house (and kids!) clean and to respond cheerfully to every social obligation. Our to-do lists never get done.

And it's stressful.

Researchers at Auburn University found women are more likely to feel inadequate at home and at work than men, because we're more apt to be perfectionists.

Dads recognize the 80 percent solution is often good enough. They can walk away from a sink full of unwashed dishes — without feeling

guilty — to spend time playing with the kids before bedtime. Moms can't deny there is wisdom in this approach. Dishes don't grow up and go off to college. Kids do.

Being good with "good enough" doesn't mean dads deny their shortcomings. Tina Bushman, co-author of the family discussion-starting book "Table Talk," says she has learned from watching her husband, John, address his missteps.

"When it has been a rough parenting day, he will sit on the edge of our child's bed and explain that even though parents try hard, we aren't perfect," she says. "He apologizes if he got upset or said the wrong thing and asks forgiveness. It takes a humble dad to do that, and I love him for it."

## 2. Dads encourage active play

Mud pies, snow forts, and do-it-yourself science experiments are dads' domain, says Wendy Valderrama of Denver, Colo., "They do messy fun really well."

Valderrama watches her 3-year-old daughter's princess wedding ball with prince Daddy every night. "He lets her take the lead and follows right along with her in the imaginative play," she says. A dad's passion for play is a joy to behold.

When they aren't entertaining kids on their own level, dads expose kids to grown-up tasks and topics. A dad might teach a child how to mow the lawn or talk about financial matters during informal apprenticeship sessions. Since dads aren't focused on ages and stages of development, they may share information that is over kids' heads. There is an upside to this, Valderrama says.

"The conversations I overhear between my daughter and her dad are amazing! I see her processing concepts I wouldn't have thought possible, because I am stuck in a

preschool mentality all day."

## 3. Dads encourage risk-taking

While moms' protective instincts lead us to discourage kids from taking physical risks, studies show dads give kids more personal space to explore the environment, even if there is risk involved.

"At the park, I'm nervous about my 2-year-old going down the big slide, and, at home, I protect my baby from face-planting every time he attempts to crawl," says San Diego, Calif. mom Anna Crowe. Dads often push kids to go outside their comfort zones.

Physical challenges help kids develop strength, coordination and confidence. And, by testing their physical prowess, "kids learn valuable skills that could prevent them from getting into serious trouble in the future," Crowe admits. Dads allow kids to learn by doing when moms might be more likely to teach by talking.

During the anxious moments in parenting, dads maintain a calm composure moms admire. Stacy Lewis of Long Beach, Calif., says her husband changed her perspective on parenting forever during one intense encounter with their three kids.

He said, "I don't get it! You are the mom. Why are you hollering?" And something clicked for Lewis. "He keeps things insanelly balanced, and I love him for that."

## 4. Dads set boundaries

Because women are focused on preserving social connections, we may avoid family conflict. The mental and emotional effort of peace-keeping can lead to emotional exhaustion for women, according to research by psychologists at Carnegie Mellon University. Over time, minor frustrations can grow into deep, simmering resentments.

Shelton admits she struggles to



establish clear, firm rules for her kids. She sees most issues as gray areas and enjoys discussing the connections between kids' behaviors, social expectations, and cultural pressures.

While moms might see kids' behavior in shades of gray, dads can take a more black-and-white view. Men are less likely to shy away from conflict, because they don't take it personally. That means they step in and confront interpersonal issues

head-on. Shelton's two youngest sons — who had symptoms of autism at early ages — learned to be comfortable in their own bodies and brains because of their dad's black-and-white boundaries.

"If my husband didn't bring everything down to its simplicity, I would get lost loving my boys in the gray," she says. The key to parenting well is to figure out which situations require a firm, rule-based response

and which ones call for deeper conversation. Dads seem to know this intuitively.

### **5. Dads don't fret**

Women often wish men would listen to our problems without trying to solve them, but that's not how men are wired. When things go wrong, dads jump into problem-solving mode and determine what steps they can take to change the situa-

tion. If the first attempt isn't successful, dads try another approach.

Women are more likely to focus on feelings, which can actually amplify distress. We may commiserate with girlfriends or replay worst-case scenarios in our minds. C. Lee Reed of Beachside, Fla., recalls her father often told his kids to "suck it up" in the face of disappointment.

"It sounds crazy, but we learned to put on our big girl panties when things didn't go our way," Reed says. Now she uses the same phrase with her own daughter. It lightens the mood when emotions run high.

Dads' emotional balance allows them to keep parenting problems in perspective. Crowe says she often panicked at her son's inability to sleep through the night or the fact that he didn't crawl when other babies did. But her husband took a longer view.

"He taught me not to worry so much about the little things, unless they become a bigger concern," says Crowe. A calm response is both comforting and practical.

### **6. Dads are present**

Moms take pride in our superhuman ability to do five things at once, but there is an undeniable downside. Multitasking prevents us from seizing the joys of the present moment. Lauren Nichols of Farmingdale, NY, praises her husband's ability to be in the moment with their 4-year-old son.

"I admire his ability to slow down and listen to everything our son has to say. It is as if he really remembers what it was like to be a little kid. They are two peas in a pod."

Reed is inspired by her husband's presence as well. While Reed, who calls herself "Helicopter Mom" is busy multitasking, her husband, "Just Plane Dad," knows how to be fully present in the moment, she says.

"When he spends time with our daughter, he's not worried about the laundry or paying the bills. He is all there."

Tuning in completely allows dads to see children as growing, loving little people. And it reminds us all that we're blessed by our children — and their dads — in big and small ways every day.

*Heidi Smith Luedtke is a personality psychologist who has gleaned many practical parenting strategies from her husband's more laid-back approach. She is the author of "Detachment Parenting."*



# Peace offering

Public and charter schools *can* work together

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

**T**he city's "district vs. charter" battle continues, until someone comes up with workable solutions that make both sides happy, and both sides realize it's all about making the students happy and encouraging them to succeed as they enter a super-competitive world.

According to a 2014 Wall St. Journal article, "High-Performing N.Y.C. Charter Schools Share Their Success Strategies," efforts have been made (behind the scenes) to help district teachers and principals learn from high-performing charters.

Places like NYC Collaborates ([nycollaborates.org](http://nycollaborates.org)) create opportunities for educators from district and charter schools to come together to share information and team up to improve student achievement.

It makes a lot of sense.

Youth organization Harlem RBI responded to the need for better access to education within the community and opened DREAM Charter School — East Harlem's community-based public charter — in 2008.

According to its website, [www.dreamschoolnyc.org](http://www.dreamschoolnyc.org), the school's mission is to prepare students for high-performing high schools, colleges, and beyond through a rigorous academic program that aims to nurture critical thinkers who possess a strong character and a love of learning, along with a commitment to wellness and active citizenship.

"DREAM Charter School is pleased to see the recent legislative changes that further secure

## NY'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PART 3 OF A SERIES

Efforts have been made (behind the scenes) to help district teachers and principals learn from high-performing charters.

the growth of New York City's charter school sector. But more work remains to be done until all charter schools in private space receive equitable facilities funding," said Eve Colavito, head of the school.

"Each dollar spent on rent takes away from valuable resources that could be spent on our classrooms," she added. "We look forward to working with our policy makers to bring about these changes to benefit our children."

In a 2014 NY Daily News article ("The truth about charter schools"), quality charters are compared to well-run organizations: Since charters have more wiggle room, unlike district schools (nine out of 10 aren't unionized), they can innovate and make changes to suit their needs, thanks to management flexibility.

It's all about having the freedom to make savvy decisions, like making the workday longer; adjusting salaries and offering rigorous training; even hiring and firing teachers and school leaders when it's deemed necessary.

However, did you know that local charters are held strictly accountable to the state for student performance, and every five years, are subject to reviews that determine if a school continues to operate?

According to that article, many kids who have attended several of Success Academy's 22 schools have brought home some of the best test scores state-wide, due to the way their unique charters are run: Students are encouraged to spend more time on task, and a respectful, academics-centered environment prevails, while the staff makes sure parents are truly involved with what goes on in the classroom. See more at: [successacademies.org](http://successacademies.org).

In her blog <http://tntp.org/blog/post/success-academy-works-for-my-kid>, super-involved Success Academy parent Ariela Rozman points out that "Success schools across the city have shown tremendous gains for students, often helping them meet state learning standards at double and triple the rates of other schools."

According to [insideschools.org](http://insideschools.org) — a website based at the New School in Manhattan that provides independent insight into local public schools and information about the New York City Department of Education — most of the new charters that have opened in the Big Apple are part of established charter networks, including Success Academy, Achievement First, and Ascend Schools.

And a few of the new schools are independent "mom and pop" charters that aren't part of a larger network.

Certainly, the "Don't compete, collaborate" cause would be furthered if both charter school enthusiasts and foes were more candid about their stance in this hot-button debate.

So, while it doesn't seem likely that folks on both sides of the aisle will be singing "Kumbaya" any time soon, on a more positive note, it does appear that charters are truly committed to sharing best practices with their district school counterparts and improving public education for all students here.



# Speak up

## Learning the ABCs of speech and language development

BY DR. ROSALIE MARDER  
UNTERMAN

**W**hat can you do if you have a child you feel may be late in developing speech? What if your voice is always hoarse or strained? What if you or your child stutters? What can you do if your child has difficulty communicating or does not relate with others due to difficulties with social skills? What can you do if someone has difficulty hearing, or needs a hearing aid? Even “small” issues, like a child with a lisp or a need to speak more clearly or accent reduction, can seem overwhelming.

Communication is key to learning and independence. Speech and language help us communicate thoughts, ideas, and emotions. When a child has special needs, development of communication may become more difficult, but no less important. Parents must be aware of speech and language development, for sometimes they are the first indicator of the need for assistance. Speech is the verbal expression of language; the way sounds and words

are formed. Language is the understanding and use of communication.

As parents, we wonder if our child is developing as expected. We may ask, when should speech and language skills develop? How will I know if he is on time or delayed? During the first few years of life, babies respond to their environment and to the people around them. During the first five months, babies react to sound, watch people speaking, vocalize pleasure and displeasure, and make noise when spoken to. At 12 months, a baby understands “no-no” and tries to communicate. Modeled sounds are repeated and the baby is babbling repeated sounds. At 24 months, the baby follows simple directions, points to objects named, says approximately 50 words and begins to put words together. By 3 years of age, a child’s vocabulary may be too large to count, using sentences comprised of two to three (or more) words. At age 4, the child can be understood by most people.

What if your child has not developed speech and language as described above? Does this mean he has a serious problem? When in

doubt, it is always recommended that one speak to a professional. Speech-language pathologists and audiologists assess individuals across the lifespan, from newborn hearing screenings and feeding assessments to geriatric communication, hearing, and cognitive issues. Speech-language therapy is offered for many issues, such as language development, articulation, voice, stuttering, apraxia, hearing impairment, aphasia, traumatic brain injury, autism, social skills, accent modification, reading, and functional communication. In many cases, advice can be given that will be helpful and questions can be answered. Sometimes a more in-depth look is needed, with a full evaluation, followed by a discussion of the results and recommendations.

If you are concerned about speech, language, or hearing problems for yourself or any member of your family, please seek help and be evaluated.

*Dr. Rosalie Marder Unterman, is a clinical director and associate professor at Touro College’s graduate program in speech-language pathology.*



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# What makes a **family**?

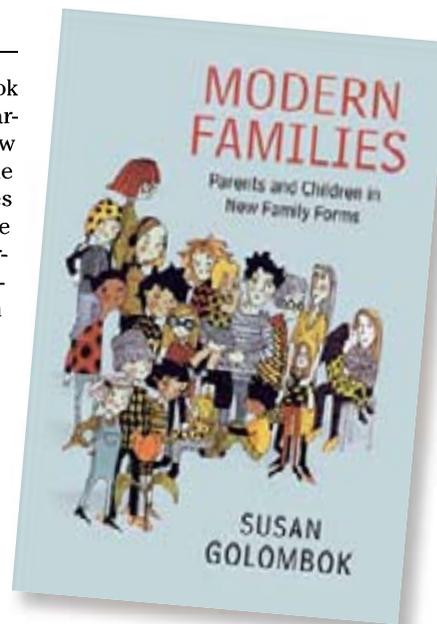
Taking a closer look at modern households

BY ALLISON PLITT

**D**on't be fooled by the book title "Modern Families: Parents and Children in New Family Forms." It is not about the Emmy-winning television series "Modern Family," which relates the humorous experiences of three current-day families. The book "Modern Families" is written by Susan Golombok, professor of Family Research and director for the Centre for Family Research at the University of Cambridge. In her book she assembles together about 40 years-worth of "cutting-edge" research about modern family models.

Although "Modern Families," March, 2015, consists of research studies and its results, it is similar to that of the popular television show in depicting the struggles and triumphs of different, evolving contemporary families. The conclusions Golombok makes from the research studies are fascinating and definitely worth reading. She not only stresses the positive aspects of these new modern family models, but highlights the drawbacks as well.

Most of the research Golombok cites in her book are studies done in economically developed countries since the early 1980s. The results of the studies attest to her conclusions. One interesting inference was that children raised by lesbian and homosexual couples do not suffer gender identity crisis. The worst situation these children experience are environments where they feel ashamed to talk about their families. Unfortunately, homophobia exists in the world and children from single-sex couples should be prepared to en-



counter this type of discrimination.

The book also discusses children conceived through in vitro fertilization, in which a sperm and an egg are fertilized in a laboratory to create an embryo, which is then implanted into a woman's uterus. Another form of in vitro fertilization is intracytoplasmic sperm injection, when a single sperm is injected directly into an egg. Many times when these procedures are conducted, multiple embryos are used for each ovulation cycle. Consequently, some mothers give birth to multiple children at the same time.

According to Golombok, there are "physical risks associated with multiple births, including perinatal mortality, preterm deliveries, low birth weight and neonatal problems and disability." Due to these problems in multiple births, she writes, "some countries have introduced regulations to limit the number of embryos

used in an IVF or ICSI cycle. In the United States, however, the incidence of multiple births following IVF and ICSI remains above 30 percent."

Children conceived with siblings of the same age also experience developmental delays in infancy, which is common for twins, however, by age 5, they had caught up to their peers in terms of motor skills. While families experience emotional and financial stress in raising numerous babies at the same time, once these children had reached adulthood, they lacked any physiological or psychological problems that may have been caused by their conception.

Another modern family structure causing a lot of controversy is surrogacy. A couple with fertility problems can ask a surrogate to be impregnated with their embryo and give birth to their child. An alternative option is having the surrogate contribute her own egg to a man's sperm to create an embryo and carry the child.

Homosexual men sometimes use surrogates when they want a child with a genetic link. Studies show that some children continue to see their surrogate mothers after childbirth and have relationships with the surrogate and her family throughout their lifetimes.

Due to the high cost of hiring a surrogate (some agencies will charge up to \$100,000), many US couples are going to economically developing countries, like India, to find women who will carry their child for much less expense. Many people are concerned that surrogate mothers will refuse to hand over the baby after the birth, but statistics show this rarely happens. There are only a few



recent studies done on surrogacy, but those that exist prove that children conceived in this manner grow up and adjust just as normally as any child their age would.

Another category under the “modern family” heading is single men and women who decide to conceive or adopt children and raise them by themselves. If a woman wants a genetic link to her child, she can get pregnant by donor sperm insemination. Women nowadays have the option to freeze their eggs or embryos (with donor sperm) in their 20s and 30s and then postpone having a child until their 40s. A new trend is an increasing number of single men electing to have a child with the use of a surrogate. These types of single

mothers and fathers are usually financially independent and have a strong network of family and friends to help them raise their children.

Children brought up by single mothers and fathers “by choice” generally do not suffer from any psychological problems associated with their conception. They build a very close bond with the parent who raises them, yet often miss having another parent. These children are almost always informed about how they were conceived because of the absent second parent and usually search for their other birth parent.

When these children find their birth parent, they are generally glad to have met them. They frequently, nevertheless, choose to have long-

term relationships with their donor siblings. “In 2000, the Donor Sibling Registry — an internet site designed to facilitate the search for donors as well as families who share the same donor — was established in the USA by a donor-conceived boy and his mother,” Golombok writes. “Since that time, 44,000 people have registered with this website and more than 11,000 matches between donor offspring, donors and donor siblings have been made.”

Looking back at the feedback of all the participants, Golombok believes it is best to let children know how they were conceived around age 10, when they will be able to have some comprehension of the in vitro and surrogacy processes. When families

are open with their children about their conception, they tend to get along better and there is less conflict within the household. When parents withhold information from children about their origins, there becomes a greater likelihood for stress and tension in familial relationships.

Many single-sex parents, especially men, consider adoption as a choice for having children. While some adoption agencies were initially skeptical about same-sex parents raising children, the success of so many single-sex families has allayed their fears. When children are adopted before the age of 1, there are fewer psychological problems between the parent and child. When a child is adopted after the age of 1, he or she is more likely to encounter neglect and abuse before being adopted, and, as a result, experience psychological problems later on.

One of the most predominant modern family forms is the divorced or separated single parent raising her children alone. Golombok writes, “Approximately 40 to 50 percent of married couples in the U.S. divorce ... studies have consistently shown that children whose parents divorce are more likely to show emotional and behavioral problems and are less likely to perform well at school than are children in intact families.”

Although these negative behavioral patterns in children of divorce decline as the years pass on, especially for girls, “boys still showed higher level of conduct problems.” Much of the research on the psychological problems in children of divorce indicates that these children suffered not as a repercussion of an absent parent, but due to conflict and hostility in the home before the parents separated.

In another study it was found that depressed parents with marital problems can cause depression in their children. Despite the economic hardships divorce can make for families, the effects of unhappy, married parents can produce a worse scenario for children. Golombok implies that, in the end, all it takes is a loving parent with some discipline, structure and open communication to create a better home for a child.

To obtain more information about Susan Golombok and her book, “Modern Families,” visit these two websites [www.cfr.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cfr.cam.ac.uk) or [www.childandfamilyblog.com](http://www.childandfamilyblog.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.*



# Children and GENDER ROLES

Be careful of  
typecasting  
your kids

BY CHRISTA MELNYK HINES

**D**uring the past 50 years, our society's gender rules have undergone a major shift. More women than ever are in leadership positions and in careers once reserved for men. Modern fathers are more involved in child-rearing and care-taking roles. But, do we still inherently treat our sons and daughters differently based on their gender?

"An unequivocal yes," says Dr. Deborah Smith, a University of Missouri-Kansas City sociologist who studies gender issues. "Within 24 hours, parents are handling male and female babies differently. If boys are crying, they're angry. If

girls are crying, they're fussy."

## Gender and age

For children under the age of 6, gender should play little role, if any, in how we parent our kids. Rules like discouraging our little girls from playing in mud and our little boys from crying can be developmentally damaging, Smith says.

During these formative years when children are curious about exploring a variety of interests, toys, and activities, avoid pushing your child in more stereotypical directions.

"You might be stopping the best chemist, because she's a girl and 'girls aren't into chemistry,' or stifling the best nurse because 'boys aren't nurses,'" Smith says.

## Gender differences

Many parents feel gender differences become more important as children enter adolescence. Chrissy Stewart, a mom of three, including two sons and a daughter, says she parents her children with the same general set of rules of behavior, but feels differences in the sexes demand awareness of different issues.

"General rules are the same and most expectations for behavior, like kindness and no bad language, but there are just things that parents are more worried about with a boy or a girl that are more gender-specific," she says. For example, a parent is more likely to talk to her daughter about self-defense, and her son about dating etiquette.

Laura Murphy, a parent coach, is the mother of three grown children, including two sons, 18 and 22, and a daughter, 20. She says parents should work toward the common goal of raising good people, but also celebrate the differences between the sexes.

“We do want men to model for their sons how to be a strong, good-hearted man in this world. Women need to model for their daughters how to be a loving, caring good woman in this world,” Murphy says.

And regardless of whether you have boys or girls, chances are you enforce different rules according to differences in behavior and personality.

### Division of labor

Parents may unwittingly set gender rules when it comes to chores, requiring their girls to complete indoor chores and their boys to take care of outdoor chores.

“I encourage parents to teach children to do both,” Murphy says. “I want my daughter to be able to take care of her own household inside and out someday, and I want my son to take care of his own household inside and out.”

Teaching children to care for themselves and their homes should be a universal goal as they grow into adulthood.

### Model respect

Consider the messages you send your children when you and your spouse divide household responsibilities, make child-rearing decisions, and how you treat one another.

“How the parents view their roles has a lot to do with how the children will view their roles,” Murphy says.

A mother who handles everything in the household, refusing to share any responsibilities with her husband, sends the message that he can’t do anything right, and he is left searching for a role, Murphy says. Children may also assume that women manage everything in the home.

“I don’t think men need to be the dominating force in the family, but they certainly need to be a leader in the family,” Murphy says. “Work as a team. Sometimes a woman has to defer to the man and the man has to defer to the woman.”

Honor, appreciate, and respect each other’s roles in the household. Your children will learn that gender has little to do with the healthy functioning of a home.

“The bottom line is everybody needs to be respected regardless of gender,” Smith says. “If we think about ourselves as humans first and what’s a good idea to create a healthy human — particularly not making a big distinction for 6 and under — would go a long way in helping children develop the full range of emotions and interests and competencies that you just need as a successful human being.”

Raised with less focus on rigid male and female rules and proactive guidance from you rather than from provocative media or cultural influences, your children can freely pursue their interests without feeling restricted by their gender.

*Freelance journalist Christa Melnyk Hines and her husband are the parents of two boys. Hines is the author of “Happy, Healthy, & Hyperconnected: Raise a Thoughtful Communicator in a Digital World.”*

## Historical fun facts

### True or false?

In colonial America, parents dressed young boys and girls alike in white gowns.

True! At age 6, old enough to begin helping his father with chores, a boy officially left babyhood behind upon receiving his first set of breeches. Parents didn’t begin dressing their babies in gender-specific clothing until the 1940s.

### Did you know?

Around World War I, Earnshaw’s Infant Department, a trade publication, designated blue for girls and pink for boys. The editors felt pink was a more masculine, stronger color, and delicate blue was more appropriate for girls. Parents, however, preferred blue for boys and pink for girls. Gender-specific pinks and blues didn’t take off, however, until the advent of sonograms in the mid-1980s.

Source: Smithsonian.com

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## JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

# 5 ways to say 'thanks' to your child's teacher

**W**ith the school year wrapping up, many moms are looking for a way to show gratitude to their child's teacher. My son's school takes up a collection, and the class mom buys a gift from all the collected money. I like to participate in that, and I think it's great, because it takes the pressure off busy moms who don't have time to find a personalized gift. But I also like to do something extra.

My son has been extremely fortunate in the teachers he has had at Good Shepherd School in Brooklyn. Every time I hear about another teacher doing something horrific in the news, I just cringe, and then I thank my lucky stars that my son has such wonderful educators helping to mold his mind and conscience.

Let's face it. When you drop your child off at his classroom, you don't really know what happens when you're not around. You might get filled in after the fact by your child, but more often than not, leaving your child in the care of another adult is a leap of faith.

Teachers are not just there to teach ABCs and 123s. They do a million countless things every day that never get recognized. My son's teachers have been a constant source of guidance, encouragement, and stability.

Teachers help children in countless ways each day, and it's important that we recognize that. Here are some small ways to thank your child's teacher this year:

**Bookstore giftcard.** What teacher doesn't like books or need more? Odds are that a bookstore gift card would be like giving your child's teacher the keys to a candy store. (It would be for me, too!) I don't think I could ever get sick of browsing the bookstore aisles.

**Not a mug.** By the time a teacher has completed teacher training and field visits, she probably already has more than enough mugs that say #1 Teacher on them.

**Giftcard for school supply store.** All the teachers I have ever known



could use more school supplies, and way too many pay for them out of their own pocket throughout the year. This gift is a no fail.

**Something they personally love.** A few years ago, my daughter had a teacher that was fascinated by frogs. She had frog pictures, statues, earrings ... you get the picture. So at the end of the year, my daughter picked out an especially beautiful porcelain frog for her collection. One year, another teacher was obsessed with the New York Jets, and we bought him a Jets souvenir. If you know for a fact that your child's teacher loves a particular thing, go with it.

**A handwritten letter.** You don't have to buy anything to let a teacher know how much she is appreciated. A simple letter telling her why this year was a successful experience for your child means way more than a store-bought gift. And a copy of that letter sent directly to the principal is a nice touch, too. Teachers make a school, and principals should know when a teacher does an outstanding job. Hearing it straight from the parents always helps!

On a personal note, I would like to extend my extreme gratitude to my son's (and my daughter who grad-

uated a few years ago) principal, Mr. Anthony Paparelli. Having had my three children at three different grammar schools, I have never encountered a principal who cared so much and strived every day to make school a positive, challenging, and fun environment for all his students.

Paparelli was available to the parents every morning and afternoon in the schoolyard, attended countless functions with enthusiasm, revisited curriculums and raised the standards each year, while somehow still managing to find the time to participate in the yearly jumpathon, hand out paper towels in the bathrooms during lunch, chat with parents, and find a million and one ways to make his students love their school and learning. He changed the lives of countless kids, and as he moves on to the next chapter in his career, his absence will surely leave a hole, but it will also leave a legacy of dedication, love, and strength.

*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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**DIVORCE & SEPARATION**

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

# Child support for low-income families

**T**he New York Times, in its “Room for Debate” column, recently asked, “How can child support be reformed so that children are provided for without the lives of poor families being damaged?” The Times referenced the shooting of Walter Scott by a South Carolina police officer, noting that his family, “said he may have fled for fear of being jailed for nonpayment of child support,” and stated that for poor fathers, these obligations often result in jail time “for noncompliance, making it harder for them to pay their debts and often costing them their jobs.”

Four opinions were given. Here are highlights:

**Help fathers**

The child support system exists “to collect and disburse money,” Jacquelyn Boggess, co-director, Center for Family Policy and Practice writes. It facilitates wage withholding and seizure of bank accounts, suspension of licenses, and more. Federal law requires states to retain money collected on behalf of the poorest families — current and former welfare recipients — as reimbursement for welfare cash benefits.

“Chronic unemployment or dire poverty” is not considered; debt is assessed knowing “that some parents have no assets, income, job or prospects ... We should “recognize that some parents will need services outside and instead of the child support system.”

The system should include “services to help ... parents gain economic stability” such as “a better Earned-Income Tax Credit policy, job training, employment services, and earning and income supplements while they train. Both parents need health, legal and other services.”

**Not tough enough**

By contrast, Kezia Willingham, a health coordinator for the Seattle public schools’ Head Start program, feels that “enforcement measures



are not strong enough.”

A single parent who has raised a child with “virtually no assistance from the biological father,” Willingham has thrived. But, there were times when “even \$50 a month would have been very helpful.”

The system, Willingham writes, has measures “in place to accommodate financial hardship ... A non-custodial parent’s financial hardship should not absolve them of responsibilities ... The custodial parent often has an even harder time.”

**The government taketh**

Kenneth Braswell, executive director of Fathers Incorporated, notes that child support “operates as a government cost-recovery strategy by reimbursing states and the federal government for benefits paid to mothers on behalf of children ... Families on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families only receive about a quarter of the child support collected on their behalf. The majority of states keep all child support collected on behalf of these families.”

Braswell believes “payments should be passed through to the custodial parent in their entirety.”

“Some fathers pay up to 65 percent of their wages in child support and arrearages,” he writes, driving “many low-income men into severe poverty.” Fathers can request a review, but many don’t know of their rights and cannot navigate the judicial process.

Fathers need “training and employment supports” to be able “to compete in this global economy ... Punitive methods ... like incarceration should only be used where fathers demonstrate that” they can pay, “but are unwilling to.”

**Threat as incentive**

National Child Support Enforcement Association executive director Colleen Eubanks writes that child support agencies “recognize that incarcerating parents for nonpayment can be counterproductive to its mission of supporting families.”

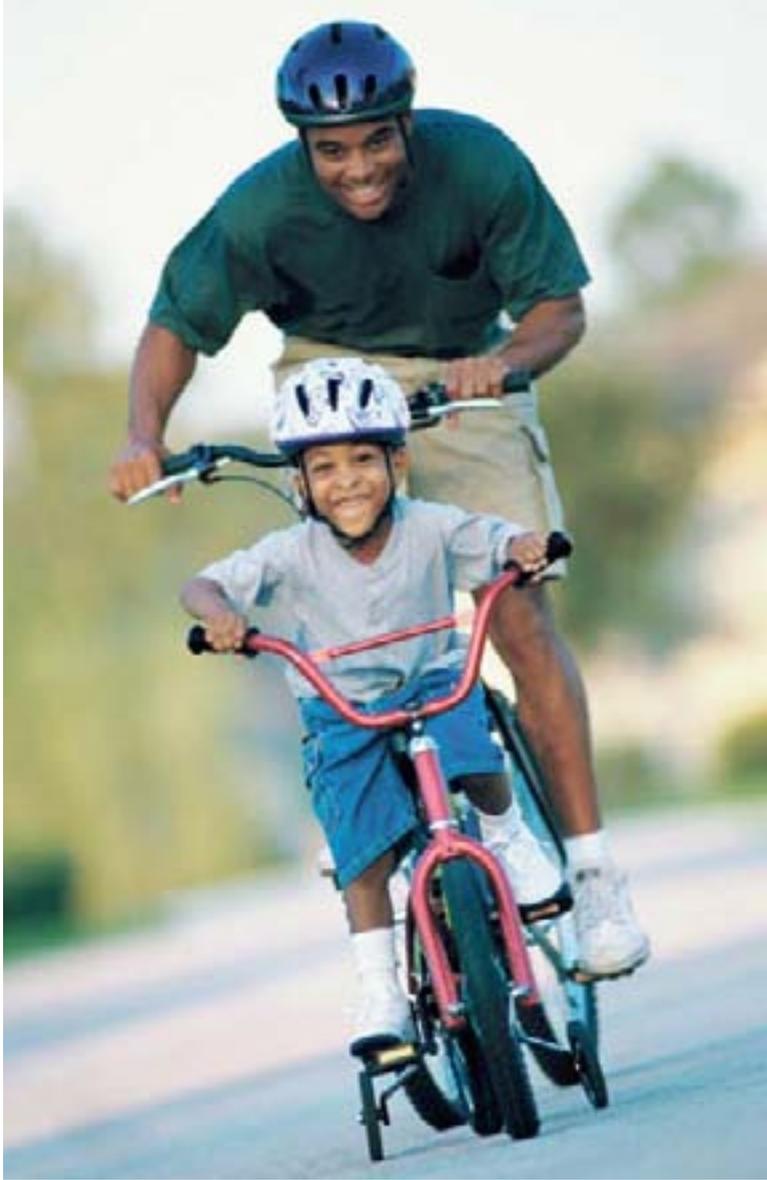
For obligors needing assistance, most states offer programs to assist them, ranging from G.E.D. attainment to job training to substance abuse counseling. Most agencies have forgiveness programs when the obligor is unable to pay a support debt owed to the state (because the children received public assistance). Child support programs now focus more on compliance than collections.

The threat of revoking the driver’s license of a noncompliant obligor actually becomes an incentive to negotiate a payment plan. When payments start coming in, more drastic enforcement approaches stop, including those leading to arrest.

The issues are complicated, and every action has consequences. What answers would you propose to reform the child support system?

*New York City and Long Island-based divorce mediator and collaborative divorce lawyer Lee Chabin helps clients end their relationships respectfully and without going to court. Contact him at [lee\\_chabin@lc-mediate.com](mailto:lee_chabin@lc-mediate.com), (718) 229-6149, or go to <http://lc-mediate.com/>.*

Disclaimer: All material in this column is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.



# Healthy summer

Simple tips  
for a happy  
season

BY DR. MATTHEW WEISSMAN

**A**s school lets out and the summer takes full course, families must not forget about important health and safety tips in the midst of all the excitement. Stay healthy and happy this summer with these quick tips and reminders:

## Food and drink

**Stay hydrated throughout the day.** Unlike soda and juice, water

provides you with optimal hydration free of empty calories and sugar. Start your morning with a tall glass of water and keep drinking it throughout the day. You can tell if you are properly hydrated by the color of your urine — the lighter, the better. To add nutrients and taste to your water, try infusing it with fruits such as lemons, cucumbers, and strawberries.

**Prepare healthy snacks at home.** Make your own healthy snacks for you and your kids to take along for the day. This will prevent the urge to spend extra money and make unhealthy choices at street carts and concession stands. Some go-to ideas include fresh fruit, nuts, hard-boiled eggs, and whole-grain crackers. You can make your own popsicles in the freezer out of fruit juice. Watermelon makes a great snack — look online for tips on how to cut it into sticks for easier snacking.

**Make time for breakfast.** A balanced breakfast consisting of fruit, protein, and whole grains will fuel your morning, boost your metabolism, and prevent overeating later in the day. Granola bars and yogurts are great on-the-go breakfast options, but be conscious of certain flavors or brands that may be high in sugar and fat.

**Don't forget food safety.** Make sure to keep hot food hot and cold food cold. Most foods start to spoil after just a couple of hours in the warmer temperatures, so make use of coolers, thermoses, and ice packs. Always wash your hands before eating.

## Protection

**Wear bug repellent.** Lightly cover any exposed skin with a repellent that provides protection for the amount of time that you'll be outdoors. Using repellent prevents irritating bug bites and reduces your risk of Lyme disease and West Nile Virus. Going camping? Consider a stronger repellent that lasts all day and is meant for the woods, with at least 20–30 percent DEET. Don't forget to check for ticks at the end of each day.

**Use sunscreen.** Use a sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher. Make sure to use at least two ounces; people often don't use enough. Reapply it every two hours and after swimming or sweating. Most clothing doesn't provide adequate sun protection, so make sure to apply sunscreen underneath. Talk to your kids about the importance of sunscreen, too — a few bad sunburns

during childhood can more than double the risk of melanoma.

**Wear protective clothing.** Wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses with ultraviolet protection are great ways to stay in style while protecting yourself from sun exposure. When walking or hiking in tall, grassy areas, remember to wear long pants and socks to protect yourself from ticks.

**Remember your helmet.** Every kid should have a well-fitting helmet to wear whenever on wheels. Accidents are common on bikes, skateboards, scooters and skates — even for older and more experienced riders. For activities prone to falling, consider knee, elbow, and wrist pads as well.

## Fitness

**Get moving.** Ditch the electronics, go outside and get active. Begin your day with a morning run, walk, or hike, and organize family outings that are centered around physical activity. Limit total screen time to one hour per day. Try to walk instead of taking the bus, or get off the bus or subway a stop early.

**Track your steps.** Get a pedometer app on your cellphone or a walk and run tracking app so you can see how far you've made it. If you have not made it 10,000 steps by the early evening, find a way to get some extra activity.

**Be cautious at the beach and pool.** Make sure to always swim with a buddy, preferably where a lifeguard can see you. Take frequent breaks and make sure to stay hydrated. Get swimming lessons for your children. Pay constant attention to your children — many kids drown while their parents are looking down at their cellphone or running a quick errand. Contrary to popular belief, drownings are generally silent.

**Take these tips on the road.** Remember, the rules don't change just because you are on vacation. Make sure to pack enough snacks and water for the car trip. Leave yourself enough visibility when driving, even with lots of suitcases in the back. Make sure to wear your seat belt and have the kids in appropriate car seats. Pack a first-aid kit with alcohol swabs, bandages, and tweezers in your car.

*Dr. Matthew Weissman, an internist and a pediatrician, is the chief medical officer for Community Healthcare Network, a network of 11 federally-qualified health centers in four boroughs of New York City.*



## GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

# Your health issues also become theirs

**M**egan was so fearful of food that when her 5-year-old son wanted to continue playing rather than stop to eat, she was relieved she didn't have to deal with it. At other times, she tried eating meals with him but would only pick at a salad. Needless to say, Megan was a poor role model for her son, who was underweight for his age.

A mom's past experience with weight and eating certainly influences how she feeds her children. But how much do women carry their eating issues into motherhood?

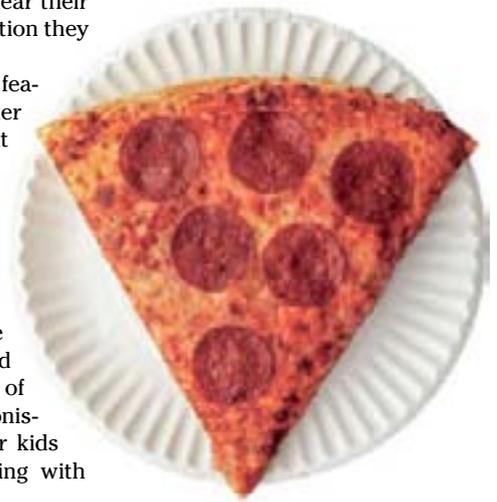
"I actually see this all the time," says registered dietician nutritionist Jessica Fishman Levinson, founder of Nutritioulicious, a nutrition consulting and communications business. "Moms may have eating issues after growing up overweight or with

eating disorders and often fear their children will have the condition they had."

One common situation features a mom who fears her daughter is putting on weight after being overweight most of her own life.

As a result, Levinson sees two different reactions. One group of mothers is often hypervigilant over what their children are eating and overly concerned about it. The other group of moms try to make it a non-issue to the extent that their kids eat everything and anything with no limits.

Neither of those extremes is providing your child with a balanced diet or teaching him how to eat once he's on his own.



### If you're struggling

If you had an eating issue in the past, or you're still struggling with one, and you feel like it could be impacting how you're feeding your child, seek out an eating therapist or registered dietitian nutritionist who specializes in eating disorders.

A professional can help you determine where your eating issues stem from, or why you react to food the way you do. This can ultimately allow you to change your behavior, especially in situations that make you anxious.

If your child is going to a birthday party where pizza and cake will be served, think through how you can make the rest of the day and week more balanced.

"The hardest thing you need to do is go with the flow," Levinson says. "If you don't let your child have the treats at the birthday party or at the friend's house when all the other kids are having them, your child is going to feel left out, and they're going to seek (the food) elsewhere."

*Christine Palumbo is a Naperville-registered dietitian nutritionist who is a new Fellow of the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Follow her on Twitter @PalumboRD, Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition, or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com*

### Bacon-stuffed shell salad

Serves 8

Prep time: 25 minutes.

Cook time: 15 minutes

#### INGREDIENTS:

12 ounces Canadian-style bacon, sliced

1 cup zucchini, shredded

1/2 cup red bell pepper, finely chopped

2 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese, grated

3 Tbsp. vegetable oil

3 Tbsp. red wine vinegar

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning

1/2 tsp. sugar

1/4 tsp. salt

1/8 tsp. pepper

16 conchiglioni (jumbo shells)

Romaine lettuce

**DIRECTIONS:** Cut Canadian bacon into thin strips. In a large bowl combine bacon, zucchini, red pepper, and



Parmesan cheese; set aside.

For dressing, combine oil, vinegar, garlic, Italian seasoning, sugar, salt, and pepper. Pour dressing over bacon mixture; toss gently to mix. Cover and chill 30 minutes.

Cook conchiglioni according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water. Spoon about 1/4 cup of the bacon mixture into each conchiglioni. Place the shells, filled side

up, in a baking dish. Cover and chill 2–4 hours.

To serve, arrange romaine lettuce leaves among salad plates. Place 2 shells atop each plate.

**NUTRITION FACTS:** 160 calories, 8 grams carbohydrates, 11 grams protein, 9 grams fat (2 grams saturated), 0 fiber, 700 mg sodium.

From [PorkBelInspired.com](http://PorkBelInspired.com).



THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Fast-paced, fantastical fairy tale

When you were small, thanks to fairy tales, you were quite afraid of giants. You simply knew they were just waiting to crush your house or grind your bones to make their bread. With hands the size of small cars, they'd pick you up and fling you aside. And if a giant didn't do it, an ogre could, unless, of course, you're a princess and, as in the new book by Betsy Schow, you're "Spelled."

Crown Princess Dorthea was really "pixed." It was bad enough that she was confined inside the Emerald Palace, courtesy of some ancient fire-making curse that nobody was sure even worked anymore, but her parents kept trying to marry her off to some dumb prince from another stupid kingdom — the latest of which, Prince Kato of Somewhere-Somewhere, was a big jerk. For Grimm's sake, Dorthea was only a teenager!

Okay, well, maybe it was infantile to throw a hissy-fit during the Muse Day ball. It was childish to pix off her parents. And it was definitely wrong to wish upon a star that a Fairy Godmother-wanna-be gave her; a star that Verde, the Kingdom's head sorceress, would've warned Dorthea not to take.

That star — that pocket-sized

white-rock star ruined everything.

As soon as Dorthea wished aloud that she didn't have to attend the ball or dance with Kato or follow any rules — boom! — everything went white. Chandeliers shattered. People Dorthea'd known her whole life were changed; even Kato was suddenly a tiny, furry creature the size of a puppy. And there, standing in the middle of the chaos, was a silvery-pale woman who said her name was Queen Griz — and though she hated to do it, she was going to kill Dorthea.

As the Emerald Palace collapsed in a heap, Dorthea fled on a vacuum cleaner with furry Kato and a snarky kitchen girl. She wasn't sure where to go; before Verde disappeared, she'd shouted something about Dorthea's sparkly red shoes and a rainbow.

Whatever that meant, with Griz's cackle resounding in her head, Dorthea knew she had to get there, fast.

There are, overall, two words to describe "Spelled": Clev. Er.

With a starting point of a basic princess story, author Betsy Schow moves with lightning speed through just about every fairy tale and fantasy story you can remember, taking her main character on an original adven-



ture with an Oz flair and a flirt with classic Grimm. There are cameo appearances in this story from Cinderella, Rapunzel, and a magical dragon; plus big roles for chimeras, a sometime-fairy godmother and a head-swapping hag, giants and a caterpillar army, an Ice Queen, leprechauns, flying puppies, and a "Mimicman" who can copycat anyone. That all adds up to a fast-paced, magical story with quick-witted dialogue and a spoiled royal who learns that there's gnome place like home.

Not too hard and not too soft, this book is just right for 12-to-17-year-old readers, but be sure to borrow it back for yourself. Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum, "Spelled" smells like gigantic Fun.

"Spelled," by Betsy Schow [352 pages, 2015, \$9.99].

Not a typical coming-of-age summer story

Carl Dunn didn't seem to be a diary-keeping kind of kid.

There was once a time when he wasn't the bullying type, either, and in the new book "The Trap" by Steven Arntson, almost-seventh-grader Henry Nilsson remembered those days. Now, Carl was the worst bully in their corner of Iowa.

Henry would've totally avoided Carl if possible, but Carl was big brother to Henry's best friend Alan, and in that late summer of 1967, Alan was worried. Carl had been skipping baseball practice and there were nights when he didn't come home. That wasn't at all like Carl; stranger still, he was writing, and what he wrote sounded dangerous.

And that was why Henry, his twin sister Helen, Alan, and Helen's best friend Nikki were on their bikes in the woods at a campsite where Carl had been. They were looking for clues to his odd behavior

when Henry found a book buried in a box beneath a pile of moldy old science-fiction novels. "Subtle Travel and the Subtle Self" had a plain cover. Henry put it in his rucksack because he liked to read.

That night, cracking the book open, he discovered something amazing.

At first, it didn't make sense: the book instructed readers to recite some numbers, then "using your eyes, rock yourself" to step out of the physical body. When it worked, and Henry met Carl while walking around in a parallel world, he couldn't wait to tell Helen and their friends so they could do it, too. Meeting with the author's widow made the trick even cooler — until she invited the kids to a graveyard and Henry's other body got ensnared in a ghostly trap.

That's when Henry knew that getting out wouldn't be easy.

"The Trap" has a "Stand by Me"

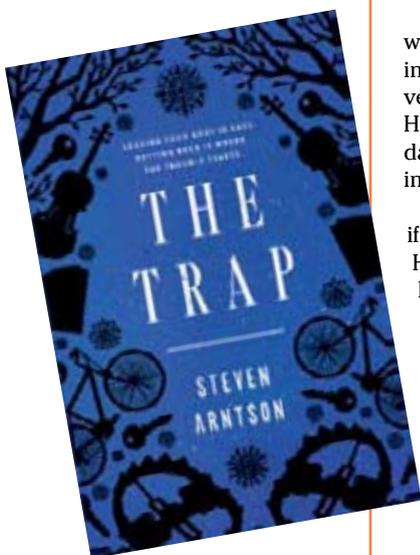
vibe. It is also reminiscent of '50s sci-fi novels — only a little bit sharper.

There is a big creep factor that will appeal to kids with good imaginations, and a thread of sweetly awkward romance to soften the story. Arntson further sets his book apart with parents that are more than just caricatures and a kid-centric ending that also feels very grown-up.

I think that if your child enjoys science fiction, but wants something a little more solid, or if you're looking for a quick, decent read yourself, you can feel good choosing this one. For fourth-through-seventh-grade readers and adults, alike, "The Trap" is a book to get caught in.

"The Trap," by Steven Arntson [247 pages, 2015, \$16.99].

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



# Calendar

JUNE



AP Photo/Gregory Bull

## Meet Mr. Met

Meet Mr. Met at LegoLand Discovery Center on June 15.

How many Lego bricks does it take to build Mr. Met's bat? If you can guess correctly you can win tickets to a Met's game at CitiField.

Mr. Met will be meeting children and challenge them to use their noodle and guess the right amount.

Put on those thinking caps kids and take a guess.

Meet Mr. Met, June 15, 10 am to 5 pm Free with admission to LegoLand.

*LegoLand Discovery Center [39 Fitzgerald St. in Yonkers; (866) 243-0770; [www.legolanddiscovery-center.com](http://www.legolanddiscovery-center.com)]*

## 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 [bronxriverdalecalendar@cnglocal.com](mailto:bronxriverdalecalendar@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!

## SAT, JUNE 6

### IN THE BRONX

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

Capture what you see by combining mists of watercolor with stains, splashes and drips.

**Story time:** Community Bookstore, 2113 Amsterdam Ave. at W. 165th Street; (347) 688-4456; 11 am; Free.

Bring your children to listen to their favorite tales.

## SUN, JUNE 7

### IN THE BRONX

**Walking tour:** Henry Hudson Park, Palisade Ave. and Kappock Street; (718) 881-8900; [nycgov-parks.org](http://nycgov-parks.org); 10 am–12:30 pm; Free.

Children learn from rangers the history of the neighborhood on the Hudson.

**Family Art project:** 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, June 6.

**Canoeing:** Van Cortlandt Nature Center, W. 246th St. at Broadway; (718) 548-0912; [www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers](http://www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers); 11 am; Free.

Rangers teach the basics and lead children 8 and older on an adventure.

**Art workshop:** Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; [www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org](http://www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org); 2 pm to 4 pm; Free.

Interactive program for people with disabilities to explore art glass.



Photo by Kate Hesler

## Brier Rabbit is up to his old tricks

Brier Rabbit and friends are hopping over to Poe Park Visitor's Center on June 26.

City Parks Foundation's PuppetMobile presents "Tales of Brier Rabbit," a classic story that follows the notorious trickster who is up to his usual no-good

ways. He thinks he is too clever to get caught, but his pals unite together to teach him a lesson he won't forget.

Crafted by the expert puppeteers from the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater, the production is suitable for children of

all ages.

"Tales of Brier Rabbit," June 26 at 2 pm. Free.

*Poe Park Visitor's Center (2640 Grand Concourse, between E. 192nd Street and E. Kingsbridge Road in Kingsbridge, [www.nycgov-parks.org](http://www.nycgov-parks.org))*

## MON, JUNE 8

### IN THE BRONX

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

Children 7 to 12 play with Wii, PS3 and Xbox. Pre-registration required.

## WED, JUNE 10

### IN THE BRONX

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

Children use iPads and read the recommended books. For children 8 to 12 years old.

## THURS, JUNE 11

### IN THE BRONX

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

Preschoolers 3 to 5 years old enjoy picture books with the librarian.

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

Caregivers or parents and their toddlers 18 to 36 months enjoy finger play, songs, stories and play time with other toddlers.

**College Prep program:** Community Bookstore, 2113 Amsterdam

Ave. at W. 165th Street; (347) 688-4456; 4:45 pm–6:15 pm; Free.

Hosted by Columbia University, juniors and seniors get tips on the college application process and scholarship materials.

## FRI, JUNE 12

### IN THE BRONX

**Children's story time:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse, between E. 192nd Street and E. Kingsbridge Road; [www.nycgov-parks.org](http://www.nycgov-parks.org); 10 am to 10:30 am; Free.

Interactive stories with songs, nursery rhymes, and poems for toddlers and pre-schoolers. Then they can create a work of art inspired by the story to take home.

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

Children 5 to 12 enjoy games.

## SAT, JUNE 13

### 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.

Luminous paper lanterns.

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

Parents and children are invited to participate in reading aloud and crafts. For ages 3 to 6. Pre-registration required. Limited to 25 children.

**Story time:** 11 am. Community Bookstore. See Saturday, June 6.

**Canoeing:** Crotona Nature Center, Charlotte St. & Crotona Park East; (718) 378-2061; [www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers](http://www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers); Noon-3 pm; Free.

Rangers teach the basics and lead children 8 and older on an adventure.

**"The Sword in the Stone":** Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 2 pm; Free.

Kick off the summer reading challenge with reading a book about Merlin and a very young King Arthur.

**Bomba show:** Willis Avenue Community Garden, 401 E. 143rd St.; (212) 333-2552; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 3 pm to 4:30 pm; Free.

Join Bombazo Dance Company for Afro-Caribbean dance.

## SUN, JUNE 14

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am-1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, June 13.

**Drums Along the Hudson:** Inwood Hill Park, 218th St. and Indian Road; 11 am-6 pm; Free.

Lotus music and dance presents a native American Festival and multicultural Celebration.

**Seining:** Orchard Beach Nature Center, Orchard Beach; (718) 885-3466; [www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers](http://www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers); 11 am - noon; Free.

Learn how to use nets to catch



Photo by Mara Brod

## Rock out in Madison Square Park

Alastair Moock and Friends are tuning up and getting ready to perform on June 18 at Madison Square Park.

The concert by the Grammy-nominated artist is a pre-release party of "All Kinds of You and

Me," which is set to come out on June 19, so be the first to rock out to this collection of songs inspired by the popular "Free to Be ..." books written by Marlo Thomas.

Songs address issues of gender,

ethnicity, and identity today.

Alastair Moock and Friends, June 18 at 10:30 am. Free

Madison Square Park (24th Street and Madison Avenue in the Flatiron District; [www.madisonsquarepark.org/kids](http://www.madisonsquarepark.org/kids))

fish and crustaceans. For all ages.

**Nature walk:** Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Ave.; (718) 549-3200; [www.wavehill.org](http://www.wavehill.org); 1 pm to 2 pm; Free with admission.

Join naturalist Gabriel Willow on a walk through the gardens.

## MON, JUNE 15

### IN THE BRONX

**Mr. Met:** LegoLand Discovery Center, 39 Fitzgerald St.; (866) 243-0770; [www.legolanddiscoverycenter.com](http://www.legolanddiscoverycenter.com); 10 am - 5 pm; Free with admission.

Children have an opportunity to

meet with the Met's mascot, Mr. Met, and a chance to win tickets to a game by correctly guessing the number of bricks in Mr. Met's Lego baseball.

**Game On:** 4 pm. Bronx Library Center. See Monday, June 8.

## WED, JUNE 17

### IN THE BRONX

**E-book discussion:** 4 pm. Bronx Library Center. See Wednesday, June 10.

## THURS, JUNE 18

### IN THE BRONX

**Storytime:** 11 am. Bronx Library Center. See Thursday, June 11.

**Toddler time:** Noon. Bronx Library Center. See Thursday, June 11.

**Father's day:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse, between E. 192nd Street and E. Kingsbridge Road; (718) 365-5516; [nyc.gov/parks](http://nyc.gov/parks); 1:30-3:30 pm; Free.

Create a faux glass paint greeting card for dad.

**College Prep program:** 4:45 pm  
*Continued on page 32*

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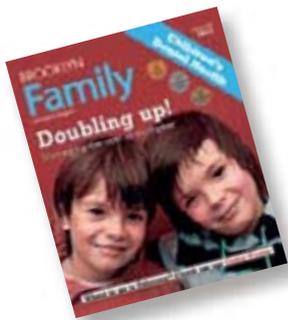
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–6:15 pm. Community Bookstore.  
See Thursday, June 11.

## FRI, JUNE 19

### IN THE BRONX

**Children's story time:** 10 am to 10:30 am. Poe Park Visitor Center. See Friday, June 12.

**Game Day:** 4 pm. Bronx Library Center. See Friday, June 12.

## SAT, JUNE 20

### IN THE BRONX

**Game Day with Princess for Lifetime:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365–5516; [nycgovparks.org](http://nycgovparks.org); 10 am–noon; Free.

Participants enjoy crafts, games, and other activities using sand art and paper.

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

Use Plaster of Paris to create a replica of your hand.

**Story time:** 11 am. Community Bookstore. See Saturday, June 6.

**Big Top Science:** Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave.; (718) 579–4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 2 pm to 4 pm; Free.

Children 5 to 12 years old learn all about chemistry and nature.

## SUN, JUNE 21

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, June 20.

**The Old Ball Game:** Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885–1461; [www.bartowpell-mansionmuseum.org](http://www.bartowpell-mansionmuseum.org); 2 pm to 4 pm; \$10 adults (\$8 seniors students; \$5 children 12 and under).

Take dad out to the Father's Day baseball match and watch the New York Mutuals play with 1864 rules — no helmets or gloves.

## MON, JUNE 22

### IN THE BRONX

**Game On:** 4 pm. Bronx Library Center. See Monday, June 8.



## 'Animals' at play

A “Carnival of the Animals,” comes to the Florence Gould Hall for a special presentation on June 6 and 7.

Queen Diana and her shaggy lion rules the magical forest. All is peaceful until a pair of human children wander in, and then the fun begins.

Presented by the New York Theatre Ballet, the production

features live music, with four hands on one piano, and beautiful choreography.

“Carnival of the Animals,” June 6 and 7 at 11 am. Tickets are \$35, \$40 for adults

*Florence Gould Hall [55 E. 59th St. at Madison Avenue on the Upper East Side, (212) 355–6160; [www.nytb.org/calendar-and-tickets/view/Carnival-of-the-Animals](http://www.nytb.org/calendar-and-tickets/view/Carnival-of-the-Animals)]*

## TUES, JUNE 23

### IN THE BRONX

**Fireworks and the Philharmonic:** Van Cortlandt Nature Center, W. 246th St. at Broadway; (718) 548–0912; [www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers](http://www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers); 8 pm to 9 pm; Free.

The orchestra celebrates the 50th anniversary of concerts in the park. The night ends with a fireworks display.

## WED, JUNE 24

### IN THE BRONX

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

Teens 12 to 18 learn the basics of this video work.

**E-book discussion:** 4 pm. Bronx Library Center. See Wednesday, June 10.

## THURS, JUNE 25

### IN THE BRONX

**Storytime:** 11 am. Bronx Library Center. See Thursday, June 11.

**Toddler time:** Noon. Bronx Library Center. See Thursday, June 11.

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

For children 7 to 12 years old make hands-on projects.

**College Prep program:** 4:45 pm–6:15 pm. Community Bookstore. See Thursday, June 11.

## FRI, JUNE 26

### IN THE BRONX

**Children's story time:** 10 am to 10:30 am. Poe Park Visitor Center. See Friday, June 12.

**“Tales of Brier Rabbit”:** Poe

Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse, between E. 192nd Street and E. Kingsbridge Road; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 2 pm; Free.

Puppetmobile brings this old tale to life with a new twist. Featuring hand-made marionettes crafted by the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre in Central Park, this tale has Brier Rabbit, as usual, up to no good. He thinks he is much too clever to get caught, but his friends teach him otherwise.

**Game Day:** 4 pm. Bronx Library Center. See Friday, June 12.

**Summer Stage Kids:** Crotona Nature Center, Charlotte St. & Crotona Park East; (718) 378–2061; [www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers](http://www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers); 7 pm; Free.

Disney and the City Parks Foundation presents Hybrid Movement Company, the Incredible Incredible, and Impact Repertory Theater.

## SAT, JUNE 27

### IN THE BRONX

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

Make pillows and sachets with cloth and buds.

**Solar observation:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse, between E. 192nd Street and E. Kingsbridge Road; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 11 am – 1:30 pm; Free.

Join with the amateur astronomers and view the sun through a solar telescope.

**Story time:** 11 am. Community Bookstore. See Saturday, June 6.

## SUN, JUNE 28

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, June 27.

**Freshwater fishing:** Van Cortlandt Nature Center, W. 246th St. at Broadway; (718) 548–0912; [www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers](http://www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers); noon–1 pm; Free.

Rangers teach children the catch-and-release method of fishing. Must attend water safety class.

## MON, JUNE 29

### IN THE BRONX

**T-shirt workshop:** Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at

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

Briggs Ave.; (718) 579-4244; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 4 pm; Free.

Celebrate a hero in your life by putting a photo on a T-shirt — for teens 13 to 18 years old.

## TUES, JUNE 30

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Foster parent workshop:** Joseph P. Kennedy Community Center, 34 W. 134th St. (Lenox Terrace Place), Manhattan; (718) 228-1515 X 169; [kortiz@catholicguardian.org](mailto:kortiz@catholicguardian.org); [www.catholicguardian.org](http://www.catholicguardian.org); 5:30pm – 7:00pm; Free.

Meet with recruitment staff from the city's Administration of Children's Services and provider agencies to learn about foster parenting and adoption. Hosted by Catholic Guardian Services.

## LONG-RUNNING

### IN THE BRONX

**Sports workshops:** St. Mary's Recreation Center, St. Ann's ave. and 145th Street; (718) 402-5155; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 9 am to 5 pm, Now – Sun, June 21; Free.

Pitch, shoot, and score with this workshop that focuses on developing sports skills. Children play a variety of sports each day, and can come every session, or just once. Pre-Registration required.

**Paper Arts & Crafts:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365-5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Saturdays, 2-3:30 pm; Free.

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

**Summer Sports Experience:** St. Mary's Recreation Center, St. Ann's Ave. and 145th Street; (718) 402-5155; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Tuesdays – Saturdays, 2 pm to 6 pm, Now – Sun, June 21; Free.

Pitch, score and shoot and hone your sporting skills. Register by mail.

**Drill and play:** George Washington HS, 549 Audubon Ave. at 192nd Street; (212) 335-9340; Saturdays, 5-7 pm and 7-9 pm, Now – Sat, July 25; Free registration.

Basketball training for children 11 to 19 years old.

**Identification enrollment:** Bronx Business Center, 3030 Third Ave. at E. 156th Street; [www.nyc.gov/idnyc](http://www.nyc.gov/idnyc); Weekdays, 8:30 am-4:30 pm, Now – Fri, June 26; Free.



## A world of puppetry

The wonderful world of puppetry comes to the Jewish Museum on June 14.

As part of the KulturefestNYC celebration, the Jewish Museum is hosting this workshop for families. Children learn about the Yiddish traditions and then design their own puppet character. Suitable for children 4 to 10 years old.

Make your appointment today — the city is offering a free ID card for all city residents. Enrollment in the program provides access to services and programs offered by the city as well as by businesses. Holder may gain access to all city buildings that provide services to the public and is an accepted form of identification for accessing numerous city programs and services. Benefits also include a free one-year membership at many of the city's leading museums, zoos, concert halls, and botanical gardens.

**Storytime:** Barnes & Noble Bay Plaza, 290 Baychester Ave.; (718) 862-3945; [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com); Mondays, 11:30 am, Now – Mon, June 29; Free.

Stories come to life on the Samsung Galaxy Tab 4 Nook.

**Story, arts and crafts:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365-5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Tuesdays, 10 am-10:45 am; Free.

Children 6 months to 4 years old enjoy a story followed by a craft and activity related to the reading.

**Paper Arts & Crafts:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Con-

course; (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.

**Recycle to art:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365-5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Wednesdays, 2-3:30 pm, Now – Wed, Sept. 30; Free.

Have fun turning junk to treasure — children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult. Wear appropriate clothing.

**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.

**Summer Sports Experience:** Mini Pool & Courts, Reservoir Oval East and Bainbridge Avenue; (718) 543-8672; [nycgovparks.org](http://nycgovparks.org); Week-

days, 10 am-6 pm, Now – Fri, Sept. 4; Free.

Shoot, pitch, score and learn to hone your sportsmanship skills. Register online.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Science Playground:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [www.nyscience.org](http://www.nyscience.org); Weekdays, 9:30 am-5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm; \$5plus museum admission.

Children are encouraged to explore science through slides, seesaws, climbing webs, a water play area, sand boxes, and more, weather permitting.

**Rocket Park Mini Golf:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [www.nyscience.org](http://www.nyscience.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm; \$6 (adults,) \$5 (children and seniors,) plus museum admission.

Golfers of all ages can learn about key science concepts such as propulsion, gravity, escape velocity, launch window, gravitational assist, and more!

**"Galapagos – Nature's Wonderland in 3D":** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [www.nyscience.org](http://www.nyscience.org); Weekdays, 11 am & 2 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 & 3 pm, Now – Tues, June 30; \$6 adults; \$5 children.

In this 3D movie, travel to the Galapagos archipelago to meet giant half-ton tortoises and marine iguanas that spit sea-salt from their noses, hunt fishes with the colorful blue-footed boobies, and swim with tiny penguins.

**Needlework and games:** Leferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; (718) 789-2822; [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 1-3 pm; \$3.

Join in with staff and make a small sampler and play board games.

**Brick Fest Live:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [www.nyscience.org](http://www.nyscience.org); Weekdays, 9:30 am to 5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am to 6 pm, Now – Sun, June 28; \$15 (\$12 for children 2 to 17 years).

Lego bricks will transform the hall with a derby race, an inspiration station; video game arena and so much more.

# From feuds to fun

## Five tips for turning spoiled dreams into a blissful summer

BY JUDY M. MILLER

**L**ooking forward to having your kids home for the summer? I always am. I anticipate enjoying the outdoors and a much more leisurely pace while we enjoy long bike rides and hikes, an annual trek to the beach, lots of ice cream, and more time and connection.

The saying goes that a mom's two favorite days are the day summer vacation begins and the day it ends. Is this true for you? Do you find yourself counting down the days to the start of school, because your kids have spoiled your dreams of a wonderful summer by arguing, fighting, or refusing to participate in family time and activities?

There are two primary culprits behind derailed summer dreams. Think back to the 10 months or so preceding summer and you'll likely recognize them: lack of routine and time together.

What we often love about summer — the easy-going, unstructured days — can backfire. Kids without routines can easily become restless and edgy, which can lead to tormenting each other. Likewise, kids often spend the other 10 months separated — by bedrooms, school, peers, sports, and other

extracurricular activities. Months of separation portend a lack of interaction, which in turn fosters unfamiliarity, and that makes spending time together challenging. So, do you want to nip a spoiled summer in the bud? Here are five ideas to address the key reasons summer dreams sour:

### Be intentional

The first step to a successful summertime with your kids is understanding why summers sour. That said, be thoughtful about how you're going to smooth the way. Realize that you will have challenges, and remember that your focus is on your kids, not what you need to do. Hold on to your enthusiasm, patience, and humor.

### Have a plan

Consider your kids' interests and plan activities around them or combine their interests into one activity. Remember to get your kids' input on what they'd like to do. I have a daughter who loves nature, one who loves to bake, and two sons who are very active. I combine their interests into a bike ride through the woods that includes a picnic (with a special dessert made by my daughter) on the bank of our local river. We skip rocks after we eat. This has become a favorite summer outing.

### Think 'active'

Sitting around day-in and day-out frustrates kids; they need activity for healthy bodies and minds. I ban the use of computers and watching of videos and TV during the day (although the rules are different for inclement weather). We still go down to the local park to swing

and spin and hit some balls around on the tennis courts. We often play games of H-O-R-S-E or croquet while waiting on dinner.

### Think transitions

Provide an hour of downtime every day, to quietly read or create artwork. I set the kitchen timer, one of my "best" friends. Kids need time to regroup independently, just as you do. Similar to when you had your newborn, rest when they rest. I encourage you to not take this time to do household chores or other activities.

### Keep it loose

Kids need routines; they help regulate their mind and body clocks, and kids know what to expect. Because there are fewer commitments during the summer, you can have a little looser routine, for example letting your kids stay up later to catch the fireflies or watch the stars and sleep later in the mornings. Kids should still have chores, like walking the dog and helping to water the garden. Just remember that while you have a looser schedule, the need still exists to keep a focus on the day and any plans.

The summer you desire is within your reach. Use the vacation time to reconnect and build deeper relationships among your kids, and between your kids and you. That last day of summer? You'll come to wish it wasn't.

*Judy M. Miller is a freelance writer living with her husband and four children. She is a parent educator and the author of "What To Expect From Your Adopted Tween" and "Writing to Heal Adoption Grief: Making Connections & Moving Forward."*

## Backup options

Have some back-up plans you can rely on in case of weather, other unforeseen circumstances, or your intended plan falls flat. The ideas are endless. Here are a few we enjoy:

**Board games:** Make sure the games can incorporate all of your kids' ability levels, as well as yours.

**Kitchen fun:** Create a menu together. Shop for the ingredients and

prepare the meal together. Kids of all ages can participate, from getting items together to measuring, stirring, mixing, cutting (with your supervision), and cleanup. We do a theme night once a week — Thai, Chinese, Italian, etc.

**Get out of the house:** Think pottery painting, first-run movies, local museums, and day-trips (destinations within a few hours of where you live).



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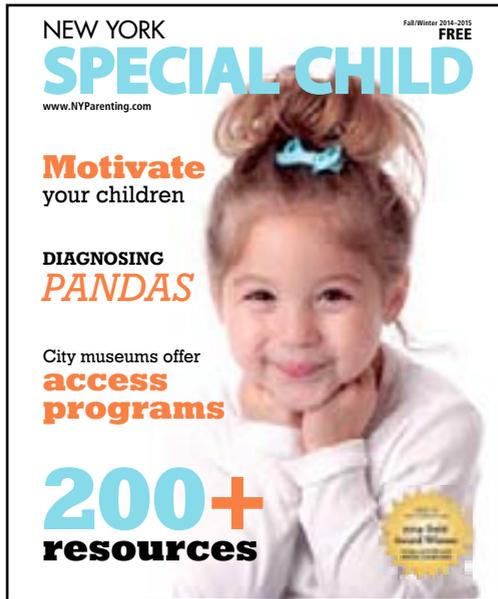
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