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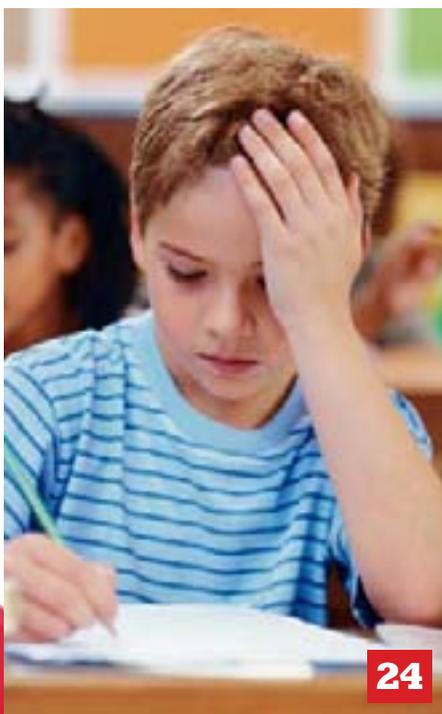
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# Family March 2016



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# Camp thoughts

I remember going away to camp when I was a kid and pretty much loving it for the first summer. The second summer I didn't love it so much and in fact, was so homesick that my Dad had to drive up there and get me and bring me home. I can't remember why exactly or what the difference was between the two years. I was very young, but I do remember the feelings I had. I also remember that I learned to swim at camp, make a perfect bed, roast marshmallows over a campfire, and do arts and crafts. We made lanyards, belts and wallets too and had a Sadie Hawkins Day Race. It



was fun!

When it came time to contemplate camp for my then 8 year old daughter, I didn't even consider a sleep-away, although many of her friends starting going to them at around the age of 9. My daughter didn't. She stayed here in NY

and went to day camp every year. Different strokes as they say. Did she miss out? Maybe. But the truth is that I would have missed her too much and I wanted to keep her close to the nest as long as I could in life. She also didn't seem that anxious to go anyway.

Whatever you choose, there are so many interesting options these

days. You can go to a program for the entire summer or you can choose weeks in more specific interests or specialized camps. There is something for everyone in every price range.

The one thing you don't want to do is let your kids be unengaged for the summer, unless you have a country house with a swimming pool nearby. Even kids who will be living at the beach for the summer are better off enrolled in a program that pairs them with other kids in group activities. The camaraderie of "summer friends" only adds to the great mix that makes a child's social life an interesting and enriched experience. The more friends the better.

This print issue presents a lot of programs and there will more next

month as well. In addition to this print magazine, we have a great online Guide at [www.NYParenting.com](http://www.NYParenting.com). There are programs there that have not elected to go into print and vice versa. I always think they should do both, but I'm not in control of their budget.

Be sure to check them out in both print and digital and best of luck in finding the right fit for your youngsters. Thanks for reading!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,  
Publisher/Executive Editor  
[Susan@nyparenting.com](mailto:Susan@nyparenting.com)

## Community News Group

**CEO:** Les Goodstein  
**PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER:** Jennifer Goodstein

## New York Parenting

**PUBLISHER / EXECUTIVE EDITOR:**  
Susan Weiss

**PUBLISHER / BUSINESS MANAGER:**  
Clifford Luster

**OPERATIONS ASSOCIATE:**  
Tina Felicetti

**SALES REPS:** Alexis Benson, Erin Brof, Jay Pelc, Stephanie Stellacio, Shanika Stewart

**ART DIRECTOR:** Leah Mitch

**WEB DESIGNER:** Sylvan Migdal

**GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:** Arthur Arutyunov, Daria Avvento, Gardy Charles, Yvonne Farley, Earl Ferrer, John Napoli

**MANAGING EDITOR:** Vince DiMiceli

**ASSISTANT EDITOR:** Courtney Donahue

**COPY EDITORS:** Lisa J. Curtis, Shavana Abruzzo

**CALENDAR EDITOR:** Joanna Del Buono

## Contact Information

**ADVERTISING: WEB OR PRINT**  
(718) 260-4554  
[Susan@NYParenting.com](mailto:Susan@NYParenting.com)

**CIRCULATION**  
(718) 260-8336  
[Tina@NYParenting.com](mailto:Tina@NYParenting.com)

**EDITORIAL**  
(718) 260-4554  
[Family@NYParenting.com](mailto:Family@NYParenting.com)

**CALENDAR**  
(718) 260-2523

**ADDRESS**  
New York Parenting Media/CNG  
1 Metrotech Center North  
10th Floor  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

[www.NYParenting.com](http://www.NYParenting.com)



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# Are you raising a leader?

## Encourage kids to become motivated and confident self-starters

BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL

**M**any years ago, I used to help out in my daughter's kindergarten class. I remember one female student who always seemed to be in charge. When the class would break up into groups, this little one would embrace her teacher persona, immediately directing those around her. On the playground, she was always surrounded by her peers, who were invariably hanging on her every word.

Some children seem to effortlessly fall into the role of leader, no matter what the environment. However, there are those children who are late bloomers. These are the ones who blend in early on, but blossom with maturity and become presidents of their high school class or captains of a varsity team.

What does this tell us about the development of leadership qualities in our youth? Why do some young people take charge of school projects and playground activities with ease, while others are happy to take the proverbial back seat? Are leaders born or nurtured?

"Talent for leadership is a combination of nurture and nature. Leadership requires the building of a strong central core," says Dr. Gail Gross, a nationally recognized family and child development expert, author, and educator.

Karin Hurt, CEO of Let's Grow Leaders, LLC ([letsgrowleaders.com](http://letsgrowleaders.com)), adjunct professor at the University of Maryland, and prominent keynote speaker, explains, "Important leadership skills can be nurtured in all children. Of course, some personalities will be more drawn to leadership roles, but the truth is that every one of us will face situations in our lives where strong leadership skills are necessary to accomplish something we believe in."

If nurture is a substantial influence, how can parents encourage their children to embrace those qualities that successful leaders possess?

"Parents can be as deliberate in developing leadership as they are in exposing children to reading music and excelling in sports," Hurt reports.

She helped her son in this capacity. "My son was shy as a small child. I don't think anyone would have said

at that point that he was a 'natural-born leader.' We worked on developing leadership skills every single day, but we didn't talk about it as such. Today, he has significant leadership roles in college and in the community. I'm inclined to think he leads well, because he led early and often, and he was exposed to a wide range of experiences."

The following key leadership qualities can be nurtured in children from a very young age:

### Confidence

Confidence and self-esteem are inherently linked.

"Bonding is everything, and parents who build security and self-esteem through positive interaction with their child — from birth throughout childhood — have it right," Gross contends. "A well-bonded child has less stress, processes information better, sticks to problem-solving longer, and ultimately, has good self-esteem."

Capable leaders are confident with their vision and decisions, while simultaneously listening to others' opinions without feeling threatened.

"A child who is secure in his own shoes can listen to his own inner voice, as well as the opinions of others, without the need to dominate," says Gross.

Gross also advises parents to allow their children to be take part in decision-making.

"You are building that secure central core which is so important for good self-esteem."

### Self-advocacy

Children need to learn to fend for themselves and to fight their own battles. Therefore, parents shouldn't constantly rescue their kids when a mistake has been made, such as delivering a forgotten textbook to school or explaining to a child's teacher why a project wasn't completed on time. You are helping your child to learn to be a self-starter when you teach him to take responsibility for his actions.

Gross asserts, "Teaching your child how to tactfully and clearly explain his position and feelings to others allows him to be self-advocating. Through your own authentic, social interactions, you are teaching your child to respect the opinions of others, to evaluate them, and to follow her own voice."

Gross also points out that by teaching a strong sense of values and integrity, you are strengthening your child's ability to be assertive.

## Extracurricular activities for budding leaders

Studies show that early experiences in life impact future leadership potential. Youth who experience the following activities and programs will gain valuable leadership skills and overall confidence:

### Activities for children 7 to 12:

#### *In school:*

- Student council
- Project leader
- Intramural sports teams
- Student buddy program

#### *In the community:*

- Boy or Girl Scouts
- 4-H Club
- Boys and Girls Clubs of America's "Torch Club"

ca's "Torch Club"

- Youth ministry programs at local churches

#### *Conferences and programs:*

- Global Young Leaders Conference ([www.envisionexperience.com/explore-our-programs/global-young-leaders-conference#what-to-expect](http://www.envisionexperience.com/explore-our-programs/global-young-leaders-conference#what-to-expect))

### Activities for teens:

#### *In school:*

- Student government
- Captain of a sports team
- Class officer
- National Honor Society
- Student Mentor or Ambassador program

dor program

#### *In the community:*

- Camp counselor-in-training
- Boys and Girls Clubs of America's "Keystone Teen Program"
- Church youth organization
- Volunteer organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity

*Conferences and programs (some have a selection or nomination process):*

- Student Exchange Programs
- National Student Leadership Conference ([www.nslcleaders.org/youth-leadership-programs/](http://www.nslcleaders.org/youth-leadership-programs/))
- Youth Action Net ([www.youthactionnet.org/](http://www.youthactionnet.org/))



## Motivation

Does your child run for the hills when you ask him to take out the garbage or walk the dog? Does she protest when asked to finish homework before dinner? What motivates young people to complete tasks, even when it's the last thing they want to do?

"Intrinsic motivation is one of the key qualities of leadership," Hurt explains. "Human beings of all ages are more motivated to invest time and energy when they feel they are an important part of something bigger than themselves."

Therefore, it's important for children to understand "why" they are asked to do something. If a child knows that a good grade in social studies will help secure a spot on the

debate team that he hopes to join, he will be inclined to study harder.

Hurt warns parents about rewarding expected behaviors.

"External incentives, such as candy to finish homework, can actually decrease intrinsic motivation, and children will be less likely to develop an interest in pursuing these tasks without being reminded."

## Realistic goal-setting

Goal-setting can sometimes be overwhelming and frustrating, especially if the goals are too far-reaching. Parents should help children set goals that are attainable.

"An important part of goal-setting is making them realistic and incremental," Hurt points out. "Setting them too high at first can be de-

motivating, and a child may feel like the goal is impossible to achieve. Helping children break big goals down into smaller milestones can really help."

For instance, if your daughter is determined to break the school record in the back stroke, setting goals to improve her time by one second per meet is a realistic benchmark and will keep her motivated as she strives for her ultimate goal.

## Decisiveness

In order to be decisive, a person needs to feel secure with his own decision-making and problem-solving abilities. Parents should allow their kids to make small decisions from an early age, such as what to have for a snack after school.

"Helping your child make age-appropriate decisions will guide him towards the principles of responsibility and commitment," Gross clarifies.

"One of the most important parts of learning to be decisive is understanding that choosing between two good alternatives is not right or wrong. Deciding whether to take ballet classes or play soccer is not a life-or-death decision, and it is reversible," Hurt describes.

Hurt recommends that parents teach children to write down the pros and cons of choices.

"This is a good way to help them develop critical-thinking skills," she adds.

## Communication

Some children are comfortable presenting reports to their class, while others break out into a cold sweat. Public speaking is sometimes the most difficult communication skill to teach, because some children are petrified to speak in front of a group.

Gross describes practicing communication in everyday life as a key component in teaching good communication skills.

"Sharing stories, taking turns with the dinner blessing, and making toasts in celebration are all easy ways to help your child gain confidence and competence in speaking in front of others."

Gross also suggests encouraging children to put on little performances for the family, such as read-

ing poetry, singing, or sharing an experience.

"Such performances give your child the opportunity to practice and rehearse public speaking in front of a loving audience," she says.

## Courage

Children need to learn to take risks and to fearlessly follow dreams, even when peers don't get it.

"The 'No risk, no reward' mantra is practiced by leaders who have mastered good core values, strong inner vision, and self-control," Gross claims.

It's imperative to teach your children that it is okay to fail because you always learn something from the process. Therefore, parents should share past mistakes and what they learned from them.

Hurt explains that modeling is critical when teaching children about risk-taking.

"If you freak out when you make a mistake, your kids will pick up on that. When adults say, 'I can't do that,' children hear, 'Don't try unless you know you will be successful.' Instead, encouraging experimentation is one of the greatest gifts you can give your children."

## Humility

Humble leaders understand their own shortcomings as well as others' strengths. They also accept that they can't do everything themselves and know when to seek help from others.

"Life is about relationships, and this requires being able to get along with all people from all walks of life. Good leaders value their team and listen to the ideas of others," Gross points out.

Hurt suggests exposing children to lots of people in different environments and circumstances. She advises parents to talk to their children about what they learned from the people they met.

"Humility and empathy are two of the most vital leadership skills to learn."

Even if a child is not destined to be a governor or CEO of a Fortune 500 company, leadership qualities help young people reach goals and become successful adults, no matter what their future holds.

*Myrna Beth Haskell is an award-winning author, columnist, and feature writer. Her work has appeared in national and regional publications across the U.S., as well as internationally. For more information, visit her website, [www.myrnahaskell.com](http://www.myrnahaskell.com).*

# Camp counselor

## The perfect job for your teen

Important life skills among all the fun

BY GAYLA GRACE

**K**ids love to go to camp and experience new adventures, enjoy a break from everyday life, and make new friends. But as our kids get older, we want them to experience a summer job and the benefits that go along with earning an income. Why not consider the perfect blend of both: a camp counselor job?

Teens can begin working as camp counselors during their high school years and continue during college if they choose. Some camps offer the opportunity for younger teens to begin as counselors-in-training during their junior high years.

A camp counselor job has a lot to offer your teen other than just an income. Here are a few life skills your teen will acquire:

**Responsibility.** A camp counselor is assigned to a group of kids and

asked to look after their needs and help manage their schedule. Responsibilities include ensuring they're at activities on time, helping with minor first aid, playing with kids at activities, and being a friend on a bad day or during a homesick moment. Teens gain maturity as they help young campers with needs that arise.

**Endurance.** Camp schedules are packed with activities to allow kids the opportunity to experience as much fun as possible in a short amount of time. Camp counselors must keep up, even on days they feel tired or unmotivated. Counselor Jamie Newman says, "The schedule is exhausting. You have to learn how to endure long days and persevere through exhaustion."

**Selflessness.** The teen years typically include spells of sour attitudes and selfish behaviors. A camp counselor role forces a teen to suppress his self-indulgent attitude and replace

it with empathy and understanding for others. It shows teens how to put others' needs before their own, a valuable life skill that many teens never acquire.

**Relationship skills.** Camp counselors are thrown together with other counselors they don't know, some of whom they might not like. They're forced to learn how to get along with others while working toward a common goal. Meaningful relationships are built as counselors work alongside one another day after day.

**Overcome fears.** Camp is all about new adventures, for campers and counselors both. "We were constantly pushed outside our comfort zone. I had to encourage kids to be adventuresome and try new things, which meant I had to do that, too," Newman says. "Sometimes I felt ridiculous, but I had to let go of my pride." Counselors gain self-respect as they overcome their fears and push themselves outside of their comfort levels.

**Humility.** Camp counselors learn how to work under someone else's leadership and follow directions. Counselors must do what's asked of them in taking care of kids and following a predetermined schedule.

**Self-esteem.** What a great feeling to know you're investing in others. That's the feeling a camp counselor experiences every day at camp. Whether it's one week or 10 weeks, camp counselors go home knowing they've made a difference in young children's lives, and that's something to be proud of!

If your teen needs a job that offers life skills with an income, consider a camp counselor position. Camps of all varieties fill their staff with teenagers that offer fun and camaraderie with young campers. Match the interests of your teen — sports, music, education, etc. — with an appropriate camp and watch your teen blossom. As camp counselors, our teens gain valuable experience that offers lifelong lessons and memories in the process.

*As a freelance journalist and mom to five kids, Gayla Grace loves sending her teens to camp as counselors.*



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Facebook: Bronx House Day Camps

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<http://www.khccc-nyc.org>

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#### Van Cortlandt Child Development Center

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Bronx 10463

718-654-0563 or [www.mmcc.org](http://www.mmcc.org)

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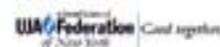
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# Swearing OFF

## Breaking the bad-language habit in kids of all ages

BY MALIA JACOBSON

**F**rom first steps to first cars, childhood milestones are causes for celebration. Except one: a child's first four-letter word.

This unwelcome utterance usually takes place in church, at the grocery store, or the in-law's house — at top volume, of course. Short of shunning all social gatherings, can parents avoid these cringe-worthy scenarios?

If your child has picked up a few choice words, take heart. According to Leslie Petruk, a licensed counselor and director of Stepping Stones

Counseling and Consulting in Charlotte, N.C., parents have loads of influence over children's language. The right response to swearing can clean up bad language — or help prevent cursing in the first place.

Here's an age-by-age guide to cleaning up dirty mouths:

### **Toddler and preschool years 2-5: Curse cues**

When toddlers and preschoolers experiment with swear words, it's the parent's reaction that determines whether those words become favorites. The key is remaining neutral and responding in a calm, matter-of-fact manner, says Petruk.

"If a parent has a strong emotional reaction to a curse word, the child immediately realizes that this is a 'high-power' word and will likely continue using it."

After a bout with bad language, calmly inform the child that the chosen word isn't acceptable, and that choosing to continue using the word will result in a lost privilege. Petruk recommends employing the same technique, whether kids use a mildly naughty phrase (commonly known as "potty talk") or drop a bona fide four-letter gem. Whatever the offending word, calmly reinforcing the boundary helps forbidden words fade away, fast.

### **Elementary years 6-11: Peer fears**

For older kids, cursing is all about fitting in. School-age kids are keenly aware of social cues, and some see "grown-up" language as the ticket to a cooler image.

"Many children do it to fit in with their

peers and appear cooler and edgier than they are," says certified parent educator and coach Meghan Leahy. "It is about belonging, and swearing is a fairly safe way to do that."

But knowing why kids curse doesn't make the problem any less vexing for parents.

School-age children are old enough for an open conversation about personal language choices. Help kids think about the words they use with questions like: Do you think it sounds cool when your friends use bad language? What do you think is cool about it? How do you think others view you if you used that kind of language? Avoid a profanity power struggle by emphasizing that kids have choices about which language to use and enforcing consistent consequences for poor decisions.

### **Tween and teen years 12-18: Media mayhem**

Peers, movies, music, and increasing independence expose adolescents to a plethora of profanity. Many tweens and teens try peppering their own language with these words and phrases — but parents can deflect the influx of nastiness with a strong parent-child bond.

"It's all about staying connected to your child and having conversations with them that are non-judgmental and non-punitive," says Petruk.

Parents can help clean up teen language by encouraging self-reflection: ask a teen whether using swear words shows self-respect, whether she is swearing to gain acceptance or feel included, and how she thinks the language is impacting her reputation.

"Having an intelligent conversation with you around the issue is more likely to have the impact you want," notes Petruk.

And asking empathetic questions is more effective than lecturing or doling out harsh punishments — two tactics that make teens more likely to use bad words as soon as they're out of earshot.

*Malia Jacobson is a health and parenting journalist, mom of three, and author of "Sleep Tight, Every Night: Helping Toddlers and Preschoolers Sleep Well Without Tears, Tricks, or Tirades."*





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# Glued to the Game

## What every parent needs to know about video games

BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL

**B**ack in the good-ol'days (gosh, I sound like my grandmother), parents just wanted kids home by dark. I don't remember my mom being worried about my choice of activities, but I do remember there was always a new adventure. If I wasn't with my next-door neighbor building tree houses with twigs, I was probably catching bullfrogs with my older brother. Usually spring fever was rampant when we'd dash home from the bus stop, grab buckets from the garage, and skip out into the woods — a shortcut to the pond.

Today, many kids are holed up in front of a screen, chasing digital monsters or cracking codes to hidden passageways, all within the comfort of their homes. There are no worries about being caught in a thunderstorm or getting lost in the woods. So, what's wrong with this picture?

Video gaming is, for the most part, an antisocial exercise, such as solitary or curling up with a good book. It should be something to do on a rainy day or while waiting for dinner to be served. Instead, many kids get so addicted to video games that they sit in front of the screen every minute of their free time. Does this sound familiar? Is it any different from sitting in front of the TV all night long?

Parents should be acutely aware of their children's video game habits and preferences, just as parents in the '70s used to monitor TV time. It's not healthy for children or teens to always choose gaming over social activities. Therefore, monitoring the amount of time spent in front of the

screen, as well as the types of games their kids are hooked on, is essential.

### Addiction or pastime?

Some children develop a real addiction for gaming, which goes far beyond the definition of typical pastime enjoyment.

Katie Hurley, a child and adolescent psychotherapist, parenting expert, and author of "The Happy Kid Handbook: How to Raise Joyful Children in a Stressful World" (Tarcher/Penguin, 2015), instructs parents, "Like any addictive behavior, there are signs to look for if you have concerns." She says that parents should be concerned if their child is exhibiting the following behaviors:

- Preoccupation with gaming — talks about it incessantly.
- Irritability when not playing.
- Secrecy and dishonesty about gaming time (i.e. pretending to be online to do homework, etc.).
- Defensive attitude about gaming habits when confronted.
- Considerable impact on other areas of life (i.e. drop in grades, disinterest in friends, poor hygiene, loss of interest in other activities).
- Mood swings (excited while playing and depressed when not playing).
- Insufficient sleep.

Dr. Catherine Pearlman, a family therapist and founder of The Family Coach, LLC ([www.thefamilycoach.com](http://www.thefamilycoach.com)), agrees.

"For children who are truly addicted, the gaming is interfering with life, such as lower grades, not eating or sleeping enough in order to play, losing friends, missing events, etc,"

she says.

If this is the case, Pearlman suggests that a detox period of a week or more, so that the child unplugs completely, will open the door to other activities.

### Special cases

For children with autism spectrum disorder and other social disabilities, obsessive behavior towards gaming is very common. Since children with social challenges often find themselves alone and with nothing to do, gaming provides a connection with the outside world because online relationships are easier to navigate.

"Parents often overlook excessive gaming because the child is busy and happy. This can be even more true for parents of children with autism or other social disabilities," Pearlman asserts. "These children and parents have a difficult existence at times, and gaming can help mediate that. However, children on the spectrum may have a more difficult time walking away from the game and may show more anger when not playing."

Pearlman explains that children with social disabilities are sometimes able to form relationships through gaming that were otherwise too difficult. This might solidify a child's obsession because he is finally receiving the attention he has craved. She suggests that parents replace video games with social skills groups or other activities that encourage socialization. For instance, parents can provide an opportunity for their child to be engaged with peers in an activity he desires, such as swimming.

Hurley states, "For a true addiction, a child or teen needs to see a specialist."

She suggests that parents ask their child's pediatrician for the name of a mental health practitioner who specializes in video game addiction.

"Programs like reSTART ([www.netaddictionrecovery.com](http://www.netaddictionrecovery.com)) offer treatment options by trained specialists and include a digital detox combined with family education, life-skills development, and transition," she adds.

### Give gaming a rest

How much is too much?

A Neilson 360 Gaming Report

### Positive choices

Gaming companies have caught on to the public's concern about screen time, and it's correlation to childhood obesity, as well as concerns about the antisocial aspect of gaming. Therefore, video games that require teams, promote exercise, and have educational content have been created.

Here are a few suggestions based on multiple reviews from different sites. Parents should also

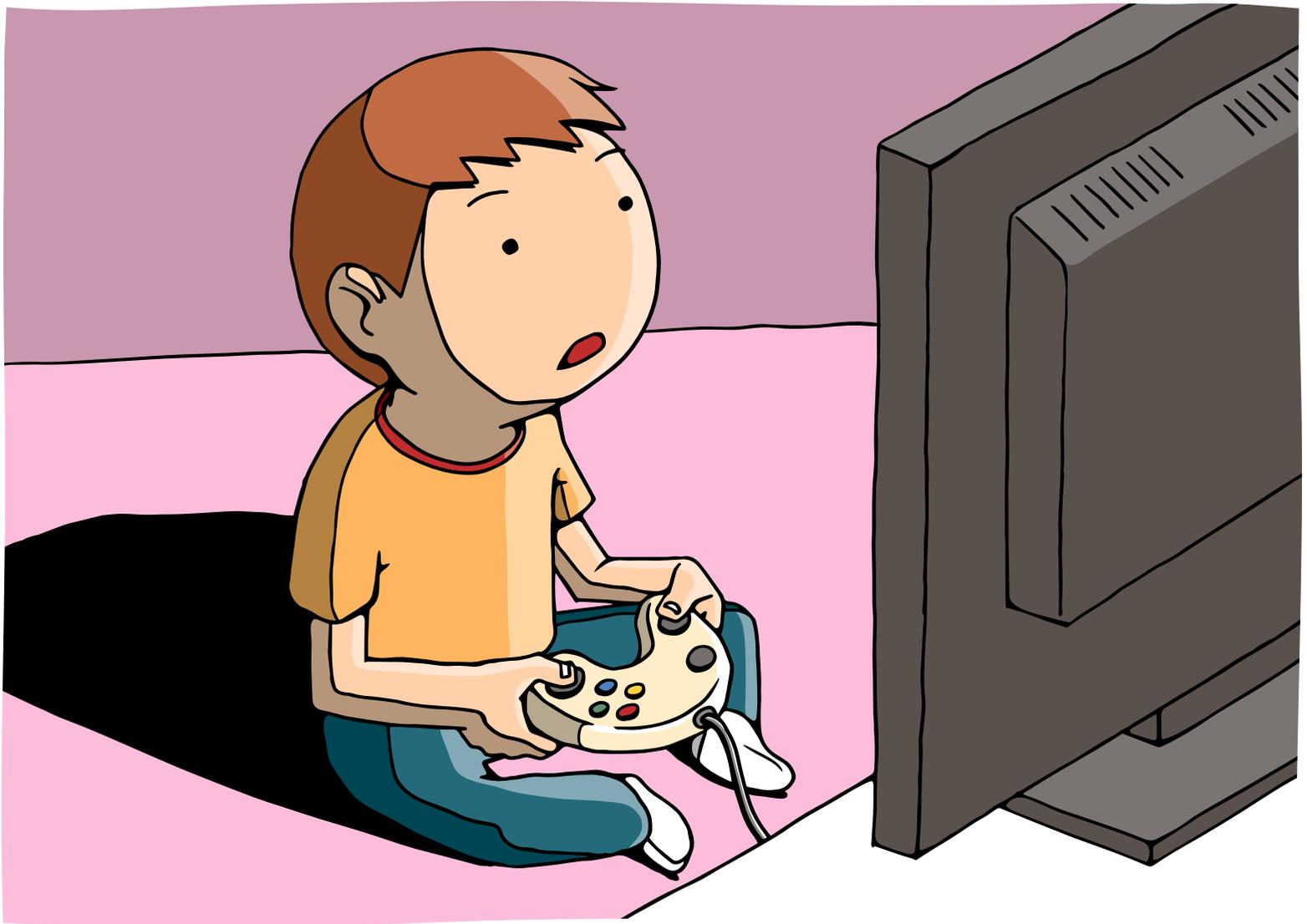
ask trusted friends and teachers for suggestions and preview games themselves:

#### For kids

- Mario Party 9 (Wii)
- Just Dance Kids (Wii)
- Disney Magical World (Nintendo 3DS)
- Professor Layton Series (Nintendo 3DS)
- Magic School Bus (PC)
- Reader Rabbit (Wii)
- Vita Pets (PlayStation)

#### For teens

- Third World Farmer (free online)
- Broken Age (PC)
- Just Dance 2014 (Wii)
- Portal 2 (PC, PlayStation 3, Xbox)
- Professor Layton Series — selected games (Nintendo 3DS)
- Valiant Hearts: The Great War (PlayStation, Xbox)
- Zumba Fitness World Body (Xbox)



showed a significant increase (12 percent) in gaming time (not including other entertainment media) for players 13 and up from 2012 to 2013. However, young people are glued to screens for a myriad of reasons. In addition to gaming, kids are involved with social networking on smart phones, computer video games, and movies, or watching TV programming. When the amount of time for all of this entertainment media is added up, the statistics are daunting. Therefore, parents should keep an eye on all of their children's screen activities, not just gaming.

Pearlman suggests a guideline for usage.

"In general, older children (late middle school and high school) shouldn't be playing or staring at a screen for more than two hours per day during the week. Younger children should limit use to no more than 30 minutes."

"Parents need to take an active role in creating rules for game use," Pearlman advises. She suggests that

parents define specific rules for weekdays and weekends and designate clear consequences if the rules are broken.

"Moderation is essential, as is honesty," Hurley claims. "Don't judge your child for his gaming habits. Instead, ask what he likes about the games. Find out what drives him to continue playing, then shift the focus to other pastimes that might offer similar feelings and results."

Pearlman points out, "The more a child steps away from the game and engages in other activities, the less they feel they must play."

So, if parents can initiate getting their kids away from the screen, their children will be more inclined to stay away.

Parents should also be privy to the latest information about parental controls. Parents can control computer use and gaming console use. They can also limit data usage on smart phones. For parents who are new to the game, a user-friendly guide — "A Parent's Guide to Video Games, Parental Controls and On-

line Safety" — can be downloaded to their computer. This guide is published by PTA and Entertainment Software Rating Board.

### **Concerning video game violence**

A recent review done by the American Psychological Association (2015, [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)) confirms a link between video game violence and aggressive behavior.

This report states, "No single risk factor consistently leads a person to act aggressively or violently. Rather, it is the accumulation of risk factors that tends to lead to aggressive or violent behavior. Violent video game use is one such risk factor."

Hurley reports, "A recent study indicates that it's not necessarily the specific game that's to blame, but the time spent playing that can alter behavior. It really comes down to parents knowing their children's personalities and temperaments. All kids are different. If you see aggressive behavior after two hours of play, try cutting the time spent

playing and reevaluate."

Talking openly with your kids and teens about your observations and working together to make a reasonable plan for the amount of game time is paramount.

Both Pearlman and Hurley recommend that parents check out Common Sense Media ([www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)). There are suggested age ranges, content categories, and reasoning behind the rating.

However, Pearlman reminds parents to go with their gut.

"Parents should use the suggested age range as a guide. They know their children better than game raters. If a game says it's appropriate for a 10 year old, but a particular child has a very suggestible brain and often has nightmares from movies, then the parent should consider if what is seen in that game would be appropriate."

"It also helps if parents play the games with kids or before kids play to get an understanding of the content," Hurley advises.

# Charter Schools

## DIRECTORY

### Brilla College Preparatory Charter School

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K-8 school in the classical tradition, helping students to grow intellectually, socially, and physically into young men and women of good character and spirit, and to be prepared for excellence in high school, college and beyond. In the fall of 2013, Brilla College Prep proudly opened its doors and welcomed our inaugural class of 203 students in kindergarten and first grade. The school will grow one grade per year until we reach K-8. During the 2016-17 school year, we will offer Kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, 3rd grade and 4th grade. The school is located in the Bronx community of Mott Haven.

### The Bronx Charter School for Excellence 1 & 2

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In October 2015, Bronx Excellence 2 was approved to open in the fall 2016 for 120 students in grades K-1, making the waiting list even shorter for Bronx CSD 11. The school will be located in Morris Park at the current Bronx Excellence 1 middle school location.

In an effort to serve even more families in the surrounding neighborhoods, we are proposing to open three more charter schools in the next 3 years. The proposal would open Bronx Excellence 3 in the fall of 2017, Bronx Excellence 4 in the fall of 2018, and Bronx Excellence 5 in the fall of 2019.

### The Bronx Global Learning Institute for Girls

#### The Shirley Rodriguez Remeneski School

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from traditional social pressures and focus on personal development and academic achievement. BGLIG's goal of developing college ready girls includes enrichment programs in the performing arts.

### The Charter High School for Law and Social Justice

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[www.chslawandsocialjustice.org](http://www.chslawandsocialjustice.org)

Product of a unique partnership between two institutions of higher learning - the College of Mount Saint Vincent and New York Law School - which have combined their resources to design the CHS for Law. Using a law and social justice theme, the school exposes students to the power of law to promote social change. It provides students from traditionally underserved communities with a high-quality education focused on creating a pathway to college, graduate school, and careers in the legal profession.

The school's objective is to provide students with a rigorous, high-quality education focused on equipping students with the skills they need for success in college and careers. The curriculum includes four years of ELA, math, science, and social studies, Spanish, law-related electives, and a four year law and social justice course sequence. In addition we use a law and social justice theme to engage and inspire its students and help them reach their full potential.

### The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School

116 East 169th Street  
Bronx, New York 10452  
347-735-5480

<http://www.yalowcharter.org>

The school's mission is to eliminate the learning achievement gap for poor urban children—including special needs students and English language learners—by using an engaging and demanding curriculum to graduate students at or above grade level in literacy and math.

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*Continued on page 18*



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## Charter Schools

### DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 16*

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Bronx Charter School for Excellence 2 will be located at the current Bronx Excellence 1 Middle School location in the fall of 2016

# Zika and you

## What pregnant women need to know about the virus

BY ALEXA BIGWARFE

**Y**ou have probably heard of the Zika virus by now. For pregnant women, it is especially terrifying. The information is changing quickly, and while at this point you are NOT likely to contract the virus in the United States, the type of mosquitoes that transmit the virus (*Aedes* mosquitoes), are found in warmer climates of the U.S.

It's expected that four million people will contract the Zika virus in 2016 in the Americas.

The outbreaks are more likely in tropical zones — southern regions in the U.S. — and the U.S. will not likely see an outbreak until the warmer months when mosquitoes are more active. While your odds of contracting the virus are low (unless you travel to one of the countries listed in the travel advisory), it's still important to know how to protect yourself and your unborn baby.



pain behind the eyes; however, four out of five people infected will not show symptoms. Zika is not contagious, and is mostly spread through mosquito bites.

However, it can be spread through sexual intercourse, according to experts, so if your significant other has recently traveled to one of the places on the travel warning, use protection throughout the duration of the pregnancy.

### Is there a treatment or test?

There is no treatment for the Zika virus, however, if you are pregnant, and you or your partner have traveled to an affected country, ask your doctor to administer a blood test to detect the virus.

If it's positive or inconclusive, an amniocentesis may be done to check the baby for infection. Additional ultrasounds will also be administered to check for signs of microcephaly throughout the pregnancy.

For more info on testing, see the Center for Disease Control's flow chart: [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6505e2er.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6505e2er.htm)

### Can Zika be prevented?

There is no vaccine for the Zika virus. The best thing you can do is protect yourself from being bitten by mosquitoes.

This includes wearing long pants and sleeves, staying indoors during peak mosquito times, and using mosquito repellent (which is safe and recommended during pregnancy), and not traveling to countries on the travel advisory.

The Zika virus is a mild disease — in most cases — and rarely results in severe illness or death, but it can be very dangerous for pregnant women's babies.

This is because when a pregnant mother is infected, the fetus can be infected, causing the rare birth defect microcephaly.

This is a neurological condition causing babies to be born with small heads and sometimes small brains.

The condition can also cause other life-threatening developmental anomalies and death. If a mother is infected in the first trimester, the baby has the highest risk of extreme issues.

The Center for Disease Control is still studying the virus and trying to understand all outcomes that may increase risk to the fetus and any outcomes associated with infection during pregnancy.

Here's what you should know:

### Symptoms of Zika virus

Most commonly, the symptoms include fever, rash, headaches, red eyes, muscle and joint pain, and

*Alexa Bigwarfe is the mother of three children who writes articles about infant, children, and maternal health. She is a freelance writer living in Columbia, S.C.*

### Travel advisory

The Center for Disease Control has issued a Zika-related travel warning, due to cases of infection, for the following countries:

- American Samoa
- Barbados
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Cape Verde
- Colombia
- Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, U.S. territory
- Costa Rica
- Curacao
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- French Guiana
- Guadeloupe

- Guatemala
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Jamaica
- Martinique
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Saint Martin
- Samoa
- Suriname
- Tonga
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Venezuela

*Visit the Center for Disease Control's website for updated travel advisories and Zika virus information.*

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## FAMILY HEALTH

DR. PRAMOD NARULA, MD  
Chairman of Pediatrics  
New York Methodist Hospital



# It's your best shot

## Don't avoid the childhood immunizations

*I found a pediatrician that I trust for my soon-to-be-born infant. I planned on following all of her advice about immunizations, but a friend is now telling me to avoid immunizing my baby, because of risks of autism, sudden infant death syndrome, and other disorders and illnesses that have been linked to vaccines. What should I do?*

**T**he growing trend of avoiding routine immunizations for children is based on unsubstantiated myths, conspiracy theories, and debunked research, and it poses an unnecessary (and in some cases, life-threatening) risk to children, as well as to family, friends, and communities.

The impulse to second-guess the need for childhood immunizations is understandable. Vaccines can be painful. In rare instances, they can lead to fever, allergic reactions, or other temporary illnesses. And of course, no one enjoys seeing his or her baby stuck with a needle! However, the benefits of immunizing your child, and sticking to the vac-

ination schedule, far outweigh the comparatively microscopic — and in some cases non-existent — risks.

Although there have always been unfounded theories that immunizations have long-term negative effects, the notion that vaccines were dangerous really caught on in 1998 with a study published by British medical researcher Andrew Wakefield. In it, Dr. Wakefield concluded that the routine measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine was a possible cause of autism. Subsequent studies failed to reproduce or confirm Dr. Wakefield's hypothesis, and it eventually surfaced that lawyers had paid Dr. Wakefield to conduct the study to lend credence to lawsuits against the vaccine manufacturers.

In 2010, the paper that originally published the study issued a retraction. Unfortunately, that hasn't stopped the autism myth from sticking.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends a number of immunizations for infants in their first year

of life. Those include the hepatitis B vaccine, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) (Dtap) vaccine, polio vaccine, and measles, mumps, and rubella vaccines. It is estimated that, worldwide, immunizations for those illnesses alone save more than three million lives per year.

Getting your child vaccinated also protects your community from outbreaks of dangerous diseases. Although immunizations drastically reduce the risk of contracting an illness, they rarely eliminate that risk entirely. That means that if a child contracts the measles, he will pose a risk to everyone around him, even those who have responsibly kept up with an immunization schedule.

As a parent, you'll find that there's no shortage of things to worry about when it comes to your child, but vaccines should not be among them. By keeping up with your child's immunization schedule, and refusing to fall prey to the latest rumors about the dangers of vaccinations, you will ensure that your child has the best shot at a healthy life.

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# BOYS

## left behind

Help males  
to thrive  
academically  
and socially

BY MALIA JACOBSON

**“B**oys are hard.” When Charlene Grism was expecting her son Brady, now 7, she heard this refrain. She didn’t quite believe it, though, until she took a job as dean of students at a middle school a few years ago. There, the so-called gender gap became clear, but not in the way she’d expected.

It wasn’t that most of the students called into her office for discipline problems were boys — the chairs in her office were evenly populated by boys and girls — but that nearly every time, boys were at a complete emotional loss, overwhelmed by tears, while the girls played it cool. Grism was shocked.

“Girls held tough; they stood there and calmly talked it through,” she says. Boys were another story. Nine out of 10 times, the boy would cry. Not out of anger, she says; rather, the boy would be engulfed in a tide of feelings he’d worked hard to cover up all day long.

Most boys lacked the coping skills to self-regulate or the emotional vocabulary to express their versions of the story or the reasons behind their actions. So in the safety of Grism’s office, out of sight of mocking peers, boys let their tears loose.

“I think it’s about holding in emotions,” Grism says. “When someone pin-pokes it, it just spews.”

### The problem with school

It’s no secret that girls fare better in school. The past decade has been good for girls in academics: As research and initiatives like the National Girls Collaborative Project help advance girls’ progress in science and technology, and programming geared to cut out “mean girl” bullying, support healthy body image, and

develop social-emotional intelligence abounds, girls are surging ahead.

The global “girl power” trend starts in kindergarten, and by the end of high school, more girls graduate than boys, and they make up 70 percent of high-school valedictorians. And this pattern continues into higher education. Globally, there are 93 men per 100 women in universities. In the U.S., women make up 60 percent of university graduates, earning 60 percent of master’s degrees and 52 percent of doctorate degrees in the country.

Young women are entering wage-earning years with more education than their male peers: 38 percent of women ages 25–32 have at least a four-year degree, compared to 31 percent of men. And today’s young women are living in a society that’s more supportive of their success than ever before. In a 1993 Gallup poll, 63 percent of those polled felt that society favored men over women; by 2013, that number dropped to 45 percent.

A brighter future has emerged for girls. But in the wave of all this success, boys are lagging behind. They score lower in literacy, communication, and empathy, skills essential for classroom and workplace success, and they receive harsher and more frequent school discipline than girls. Although boys make up 54 percent of preschool enrollment, they represent 80 percent of preschoolers suspended. High-school boys are suspended about twice as often girls, despite data showing that girls and boys misbehave at similar rates.

### Book-smart boys

Gender differences in education pop up from pre-K through college and beyond, but the problem isn’t about book learning. Research suggests that the gender gap in educa-

tion has little to do with academic deficiencies — academic test scores tend to favor males in some countries and at some grade levels, and females in others, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Case in point: Boys and girls score similarly in fourth-grade math; while girls pull ahead in literacy, boys fare better in science, particularly in high school. Girls show more literary prowess, with higher scores in reading comprehension and verbal fluency, while boys outperform girls in spatial reasoning and spatial visualization. And boys and girls perform similarly on IQ and achievement tests.

In other words, academic differences between the sexes aren’t clear-cut and neither gender has an across-the-board advantage. But it appears that boys aren’t falling behind in school because they can’t do the work.

So why are boys trailing? Because, experts say, the school environment seems uniquely designed to penalize boys for being, well, boys.

School success favors a particular skill set that boys aren’t born with and aren’t being taught, says psychotherapist Michelle P. Maidenberg of Harrison, New York, mom to three boys, 15, 11, and 9, and one girl, 6.

In today’s politically correct climate, it isn’t popular to talk about innate biological differences between boys and girls. But differences exist, and when it comes to behavior and success in school, they matter, Maidenberg says. Research shows that in utero, exposure to higher levels of testosterone is linked to slower maturation of parts of the temporal lobe, along with lower levels of empathy and lower-quality social relationships.

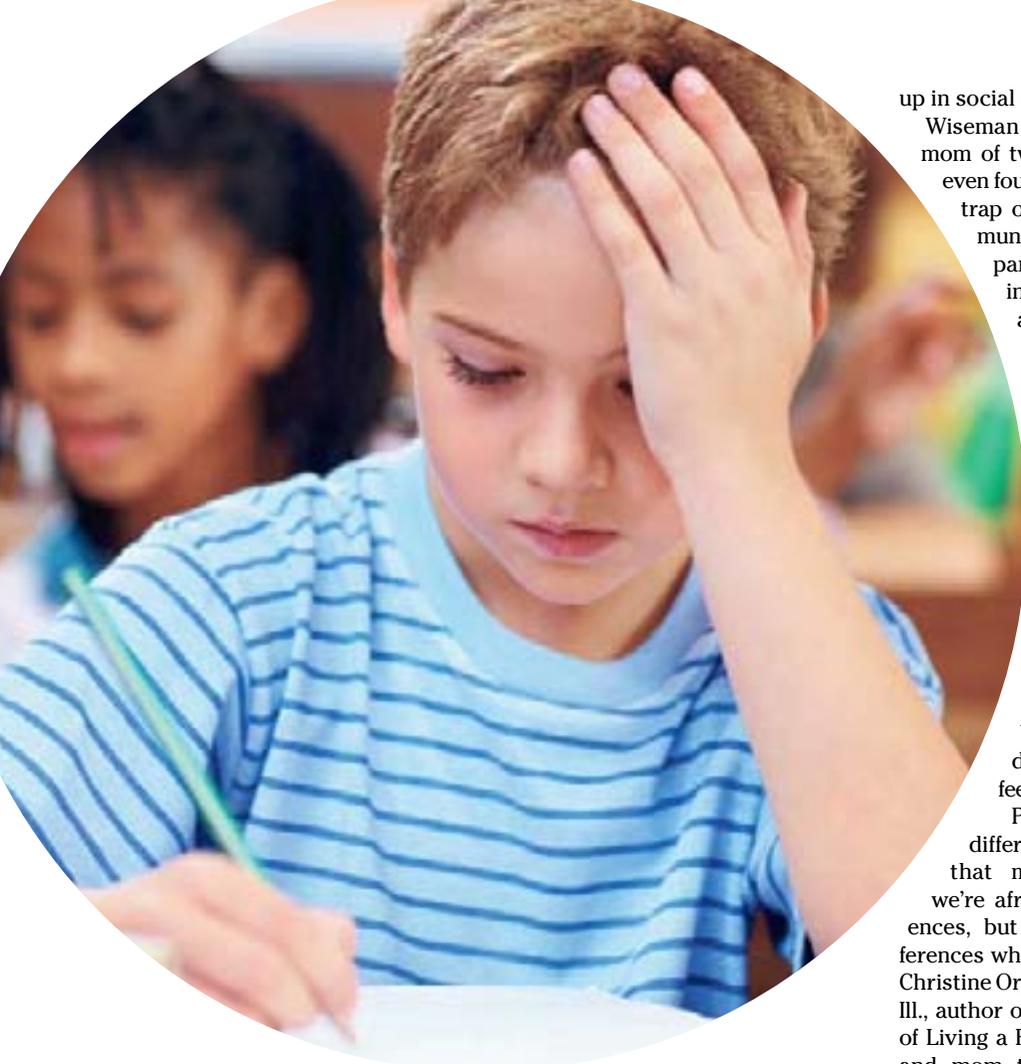
Girls routinely outperform boys when it comes to self-control and delayed gratification, skills that predict academic and career success. And girls’ frontal cortices mature more quickly than boys’, giving females an early edge in problem solving, planning, communication, and relationship building.

“Boys and girls are taught similarly, even though they have different needs. This unfortunately puts boys at a disadvantage,” Maidenberg says.

“Research shows that girls tend to be more goal-oriented and better in planning, following directions and organizing. Given the disparities, boys need appropriate skills to compensate for these challenges.”

### Discipline dilemma

These noncognitive skills are underemphasized in schools, according to a recent report by the Economic Policy Institute, despite their critical im-



portance in school and life.

It's precisely these non-cognitive skills that may help girls stay out of trouble in school and bounce back more quickly when they are penalized.

Maidenberg's oldest son points to gender-biased discipline differences at his high school. Girls don't necessarily misbehave less often, but they don't receive the same treatment.

"He says girls are treated with special privileges, especially when it comes to 'misbehaving' in class," says Maidenber. Girls get warnings; boys get sent to the principal.

Last year, Maidenber was called to pick up this same son from school. He was accused of destroying a school bulletin board and suspended for the day. Video evidence later proved his innocence, but the experience was jarring for the boy, she says.

"The principal refused to listen to him. When he tried to explain, she asked him if he thought she was a liar," says Maidenber. "When I spoke to him about it, the first thing he said was, 'If I were a girl, I wouldn't have been treated like a criminal.'"

There's a misconception that boys always require harsh punishment, and that they won't respond to other types of discipline, Maidenber says. That's

false; a study from Hanover College suggests that both genders would fare better with inductive discipline — "positive discipline" tactics, such as treating kids with empathy, clearly explaining behavior guidelines, and allowing natural consequences to take their course — instead of corrective, or punitive, discipline, such as suspension or losing privileges. Unfortunately, the study notes, schools rarely employ inductive discipline. Simply put: It's faster to slap down a suspension than examine and address root causes of misbehavior.

### Emotional evolution

In "Masterminds & Wingmen: Helping Our Boys Cope with Schoolyard Power, Locker-Room Tests, Girlfriends, and the New Rules of Boy World" (2013), New York Times best-selling author Rosalind Wiseman writes about the rich emotional world of boys — a topic that surprises parents of boys, she says.

"Parents get these one-word responses from boys and think there's nothing going on, that they're emotionally stunted," Wiseman says.

That couldn't be further from the truth. Boys feel deeply; they get hurt, are humiliated, and become caught

up in social drama, too.

Wiseman should know: As the mom of two boys, 12 and 14, she even found herself falling into the trap of misjudging boys' communication cues. Too many parents and educators buy into the belief that girls are complex creatures with intricate emotional worlds, and that with boys, what you see is what you get.

"I think we take boys at face value too much, and we don't give them credit for the fact that there might be a motivation for what they do, something we take for granted with girls," Wiseman says. "Just because a boy is loud doesn't mean he doesn't feel things deeply."

Parents downplay the differences between genders that might matter, because we're afraid to talk about differences, but we're also making differences where there are none, says Christine Organ of Arlington Heights, Ill., author of "Open Boxes: the Gifts of Living a Full and Connected Life" and mom to two young boys. In terms of depth of emotion, boys and girls are more alike than they are different, and yet boys are told to toughen up, be a man, rub some dirt in it, she says.

Her second-grader was recently devastated when a friend scoffed at his athletic ability. She resisted the urge to tell him to brush it off.

"I needed to validate his sadness. His friend hurt his feelings. Sadness is normal in that situation."

Organ did the right thing, according to licensed family therapist Linnea Shapiro Fuchs of the Exceptional Children's Foundation in Culver City, Calif.

"We need to help boys develop strategies for dealing with emotional states surrounding disappointments in school, achievement, relationships," she notes. "They need to develop the ability to move forward after small failures."

This ability to handle small relationship snafus becomes more vital during the teen years. Modern boys aren't being taught the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in relationships, says Seattle-based therapist Jo Langford.

Langford wrote "Spare Me 'The Talk!': A Guy's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Growing Up," which

was published last year. He speaks at schools and runs a private practice, filled mainly with teenage boys struggling with the intersection of sex and technology (think sexting and downloading porn).

Boys don't know how to connect with someone they like, how to show interest, he says.

"They don't know anything about flirting," says Langford. "They know about sex from Google and porn. It's sexual but not really sex. That doesn't teach them how to ask someone out, how to tell someone you're interested."

### Communication crunch

The key to ramping up boys' non-cognitive and relationship skills is building strong relationships at home — which means getting him to talk to you. But parents typically go about this all wrong, Wiseman says.

"One of the biggest takeaways [of my work with boys] is that boys want their parents to stop interrogating them at the end of the day."

Trading "How was your day? How was practice? How did the test go?" for a simple "Hi. I'm glad you're here" works wonders, she says. Connect, but give him space, she says. "Boys open up when they're ready. Parents are amazed."

Emotional connection is critical. But to truly champion boys' success, educators and parents also need to rally around boosting boys' literacy in the same way that science and mathematics are now emphasized for girls.

In "Bright Beginnings for Boys: Engaging Young Boys in Active Literacy" (2009), authors Debby Zambo and William G. Brozo make a case for special supports for boys to help close the gender gap in literacy, a deficit that stretches from five percent in elementary school to 14 percent in high school.

Bridging this gap is critical to boys' success, say Zambo and Brozo. They write: "In a world driven by information and knowledge, boys' skill deficiencies will limit access to the full range of opportunities enjoyed by their more literate peers."

Is pairing emotional literacy with actual literacy too lofty a goal? This writer hopes not. Fluent in both language and love, our boys will be poised to succeed.

*Malia Jacobson is an award-winning health and parenting journalist and mom of three. Her latest book is "Sleep Tight, Every Night: Helping Toddlers and Preschoolers Sleep Well Without Tears, Tricks, or Tirades."*



## ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,  
ESQ.

# Can student loan debt outlive you?

*My husband and I together have a combined \$200,000 in student loans, between undergraduate and graduate school. If one of us dies, what is the obligation of the estate to pay the loans?*

**T**oday's students are graduating college and graduate programs with an unprecedented amount of student loan debt — \$1.2 trillion as of 2016. Of law students, 88.6 percent take out loans to pay for law school, with \$80,000 in cumulative graduate debt. Although credit card, mortgage, and other non-revolving debt are contracting, the federal government will lend out \$1.4 trillion dollars by 2023 — mostly student loans — even though gross domestic product growth will not match it.

There are 37 million student-loan borrowers with outstanding loans today. Seven million borrowers are in default, translating into about 17 percent of all borrowers being severely delinquent. Approximately \$85 billion is past due.

Only 37 percent of borrowers made timely payments without deferment or becoming delinquent between 2004 and 2009. Two out of five borrowers (41 percent) are delinquent at some point in the first five years of repayment.

The crushing amount of student loan debt raises several questions, including whether and when these debts are generally forgiven, and what happens to them when a borrower dies.

### Federal student loans

If a borrower on a federal student loan dies, the loan is automatically canceled and the debt is discharged by the government. Recipients of private student loans



do not enjoy the same debt forgiveness on death.

For private student loans, forgiveness on debt depends on the terms of the individual loan and the lender's policies. Some private lenders might offer death insurance, whereby the debt is discharged on death. For lenders such as Sallie Mae (Sallie Mae's Smart Option Student Loan, New York Higher Education Services Corporation's NYHELPS loans, and Wells-

Fargo private student loans), these programs offer death and disability forgiveness policies. This is not standard for private lenders.

Even when a student loan is forgiven, the debtor is not completely off the hook. There are tax implications to debt forgiveness, which is treated as income. Even where the debt is forgiven due to disability or death, the tax authorities will impose a tax on the amount of the forgiven debt. In other words,

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the estate could owe as much as 35 percent on the full unpaid amount of the loan.

### Can a spouse be liable for the debt?

A spouse does not have repayment liability on a federally backed education loan.

If a spouse is not on the student loan as a co-signer or joint borrower, the surviving spouse is not legally liable for the debt (if the decedent and spouse lived in a community property state like California or Texas, the result might be different. It would depend on the type of loan and the laws of the individual state).

However, the same result might ensue if the debt can be collected from the decedent's estate, thereby reducing the spouse's share.

Now that you know what happens to the loans when you die, what happens to the loans during your life?

There are four main income-based repayment programs for federal (not private) loans. Private loans are at the mercy of the lender.

### Deferment or forbearance

The borrower need not make student loan payments while the loan is in deferment. Subsidized loans accrue no interest during deferment; un-subsidized loans accrue interest which is "capitalized" with interest added to the balance and interest charged on the interest.

Those not qualified for deferment might secure forbearance, which allows the borrower to make no payments, or reduced payments, for up to a year. Interest accrues on subsidized and un-subsidized loans (including all PLUS loans) and unpaid interest is capitalized. Both deferment and forbearance can be very expensive propositions in the long run.

### Income-based repayment

A borrower who qualifies for income-based repayment pays a maximum monthly payment of 15 percent of discretionary income, calculated under a specific formula. This means that a borrower exiting law school with an average monthly loan payment of \$1,000 earning an annual salary

of \$50,000 can pay as little as a few hundred a month.

The more recent Pay As You Earn program caps the payment at 10 percent of discretionary income.

Depending on the borrower's program, and whether the borrower works in public interest, the balance could be forgiven after 10, 20, or 25 years. The government pays up to three years of accrued interest for subsidized loans. Un-subsidized loans accrue interest. In either case, interest is capitalized if the borrower no longer has a partial financial hardship.

### Income-contingent repayment

Borrowers in the contingent program make monthly payments based on their income, family size, and loan balance.

The remaining balance is forgiven after 25 years, 10 years for public service loan forgiveness. Accrued interest is annually capitalized.

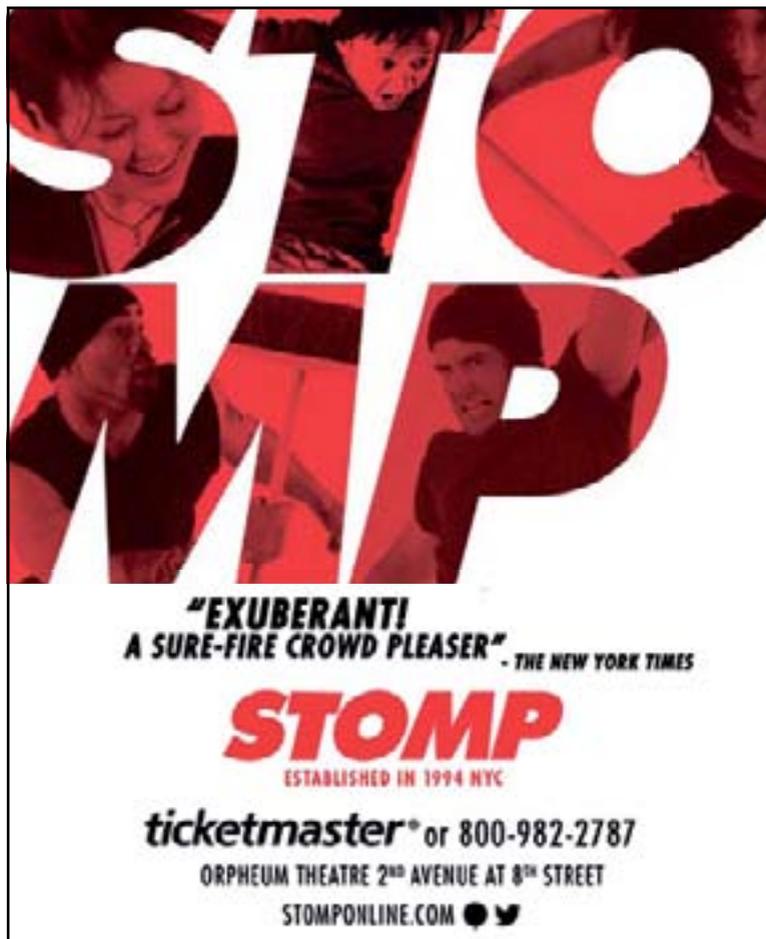
### Public service loan forgiveness

This program forgives remaining debt to federal borrowers after 10 years of eligible employment and qualifying loan payments. Eligible employment is a range of "public service" jobs in government and nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations. A public interest job is eligible if it is with:

- The federal, state, local, or tribal government (including the military and public schools or colleges).
- Any nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.
- AmeriCorps or Peace Corps.

A borrower may still be eligible if his or her employer provides certain public services such as emergency management, public safety, law enforcement, early childhood education, public health, public library services, or services for the disabled or elderly.

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



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## DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.



# Is mandatory mediation a good idea?

**T**he Jerusalem Post recently published a piece entitled, “Mediation and the law: The advantages of mediation are manifest.”

Why should we be interested in another country’s mediation matters? Because the major question raised is as valid for New Yorkers as it is for Israelis.

The piece begins:

“A law has been passed in Israel that will ... require couples to try mediation before they can obtain their divorce through the courts.”

In the United States, a requirement to engage in mediation is often referred to as mandatory mediation. Numerous states have such laws when it comes to divorce-related issues such as those involving “custody-visitation.” New York is not one of them.

The author explains the definition of mediation: “Mediation is a form of resolving disputes by using a neutral third party to try to help the parties to come to a resolution, which has to be voluntarily agreed upon. Within this wide definition there are many forms.”

Should mediation be mandatory in

New York? Obviously, opinions vary. Many, though by no means all, New York mediators are in favor. I am not.

What I am in favor of is clients having all the necessary information so that they can make their own informed decisions. Rather than forcing them to try mediation (which is often touted as voluntary) for two or more sessions, they might be asked to participate in a free informational session, in person or online, say for 90 minutes.

Does that sound burdensome? Maybe it is. But consider that if you have divorce papers served on your spouse, or vice versa, you are going to court — maybe many times.

In such a session, you would learn about the different ways to divorce:

**Mediation.** How the process works; advantages; monetary costs; time to complete; who is likely to benefit and who is not a good candidate; impact on children; experts who might be helpful, and what the role of each would be; the legal steps that follow mediation; what the probable effect will be on future communication between you and your spouse/ex.

**Collaborative divorce.** I’ll leave

you to read my previous articles on this subject, available on [nyparenting.com](http://nyparenting.com).

**Litigation.** What happens in court? How long might the process take? Costs? When might social services get involved, and what are the possible consequences? What does a “lawyer for the child” do? A forensic psychologist? What are depositions? What impact does conflict have on children? How well can you expect to communicate with your ex after the divorce?

Do you think you already know what you should about litigation? From what so many people who have gone to court have shared with me, I have to think that many of you don’t.

So, in my humble opinion, everyone going through divorce should have this information, provided in an unbiased manner, before going through one of the most difficult experiences that most of us will ever face. Then you would be better able to decide how to go forward.

An enormous number of people in New York do not know what mediation, collaborative divorce, or even litigation really entails. That might be different if trial attorneys explained the alternatives to litigation to potential clients; but many don’t.

Which process should you avail yourself of? With information and time to consider, you can figure it out. Litigators shouldn’t make your decision for you by withholding or distorting what mediation is. Similarly, the government shouldn’t require mediation.

Will New York pass a law requiring mediation anytime soon? Probably not. Unlike in Israel, where “even the most hardened litigators are not often averse to [mediation],” many New York litigators are.

This is a big reason why even a much more modest plan to ensure that you are better informed about your options won’t become law either.

*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/>. Follow him on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/lchabin](http://www.facebook.com/lchabin).*

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# Calendar

MARCH



Photo by Timur Kinzileev

## Awaiting true love's kiss

Will true love win? Will a kiss wake a princess? Find out when the Moscow Festival Ballet brings to life the classic tale of true love, "Sleeping Beauty," on March 13 at the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts.

The Moscow Festival Ballet transports you to the storybook kingdom of fairytale princesses, malevolent witches, and true love's kiss. The magical classic is the tale of the

beautiful princess who waits in sleep for the kiss of her true love.

Suitable for older children.

"Sleeping Beauty," March 13 at 4 pm. Tickets are \$45, \$40, \$25 and \$10 for children under 12 (any seat).

*Lehman Center for the Performing Arts [250 Bedford Park Boulevard West and Goulden Avenue in Norwood, (718) 960-8833; [www.Lehman-Center.org](http://www.Lehman-Center.org)]*

## Never miss a great event!

Sign up for our FREE newsletter and get twice-a-week ideas for you and your family right in your mailbox. [NYParenting.com](http://NYParenting.com)

# Calendar

### 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!

## WED, MARCH 2

### IN THE BRONX

**Celebrate Dr. Seuss:** Woodlawn Heights Library, 4355 Katonah Ave.; (718) 519-9627; 3 pm; Free.

Do arts and crafts and read the author's beloved books.

**First Wednesdays:** Longwood Art Gallery at Hostos, 450 Grand Concourse; (718) 931-9500; 5 pm; Free.

Catch the trolley and take a visit to all the fun stops along the way.

## SAT, MARCH 5

### IN THE BRONX

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

Returning migrators and winter birds could use a little help right now with nests and food. Use the boxy shape of an ordinary milk carton to your advantage, camouflaging it with natural materials like pine boughs and leaves, and add an inviting stick perch. Add seeds and welcome home our feathery friends!

**Pysanky workshop:** Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; [www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org](http://www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org); 11:30 am to 3:30 pm; \$20 per person.

Instructor Lesia Kozicky teaches the time-honored art of creating intricately patterned Ukrainian Easter eggs. Participants, 14 years and older, create their own to take home and ready to display using a wax-resist technique at this hands-on workshop. Hot wax and permanent dyes used; please dress accordingly. Bring a bag lunch, only light refreshments offered. Registration required as space is limited.

**Astronomy night:** Pelham Bay Ranger Station, Pelham Bay Park, Bruckner Boulevard and Wilkinson Avenue; (718) 319-7256; [www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers](http://www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers); 6 pm to 7:30 pm; Free.



## Egg-cellent fun!

Visitors are treated to a workshop on Pysanky, the time-honored Ukrainian method of decorating Easter eggs, on March 5, and an Easter egg hunt on March 19 at the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum.

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

The hands-on workshop is for children 14 years and older. Visitors are encouraged to bring a bag lunch — light refreshments are available. Hot wax and permanent dyes used, so please wear appropriate clothing. Space is limited and registration is required.

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

Pysanky Workshop, March 5 from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm. Admission is \$20.

The Easter egg hunt is the one day when it's okay to put all your eggs in one basket! Children 2-12 hunt for eggs, tap their talent at arts and crafts tables, and have photos taken with the Easter Bunny. Light refreshments offered. Please bring your own basket. Registration required.

The Easter Egg hunt is on March 19 from 10:30 am to 1 pm (rain date March 20, 1 to 3 pm). \$15 for children 2 to 12 (\$10 member children)

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

using the naked eye to locate stars and planets. For children 8 years and older.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Career Day:** Riverside Church, 490

Riverside Dr., Manhattan; [www.trcnyc.org](http://www.trcnyc.org); 8:30 am; Free.

The 25th annual event provides students in grades seven to 12 an opportunity to learn about careers in Stem, business, education, ministry and more. Breakfast and lunch provided.

**NYC Big Apple Con:** Penn Plaza Pavilion, 401 Seventh Ave. at 33rd Street, Manhattan; [www.nycbm.com](http://www.nycbm.com); 10 am to 6 pm; \$25, \$10 children.

Mike Carbonaro's event returns with comic books, sci-fi fantasy, horror, and Cosplay. Top comic book creators, media celebrities, dealers, panel discussions, a costume contest & more in one incredible day! There will also be a special 50th anniversary of the Batman TV show, the first appearance of Marvel's Black Panther, the history of Charlton Comics, Star Wars, the Winter Indie Film Awards animated shorts, and NY Jedi.

**Operation slumber!:** Intrepid Sea Air and Space Museum, Pier 86 at W. 46th Street and 12th Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 245-0072; [www.intrepidmuseum.org](http://www.intrepidmuseum.org); 6 pm to 8 am; \$120 (\$99 museum members).

Spend the night aboard the Intrepid. There will be educational activities, a visit inside the Space Shuttle Pavilion, a flashlight tour of the flight deck, a scavenger hunt, a ride in a flight simulator and meals (dinner, snacks and breakfast). Kids also receive a goodie bag with a T-shirt! It's perfect for children 8 to 12 years old. Individual cots provided. Bring your sleeping bag!

## SUN, MARCH 6

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am-1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, March 5.

**Family Fling:** Riverdale Country School, 5250 Fieldston Rd.; (800) 529-2267; [www.esfcamps.com](http://www.esfcamps.com); 1 pm to 4 pm; Free.

Meet the staff and learn about the programs for the summer camp program, enjoy arts and crafts, camp tours, face painting, games, refreshments and raffles.

**Sweet Plantain:** Wave Hill, W. 249th Street and Independence Avenue; (718) 549-3200; [www.wavehill.org](http://www.wavehill.org); 2 pm; \$28 (\$22 member) \$15 ages 8-18 member.

Sweet Plantain is four immensely talented, classically trained musicians who fuse their skill, diverse backgrounds and eclectic musical interests to bridge the gap between genres and generations. Their sound is unique, the styles spanning classical, Cuban, Venezuelan joropo, hip-hop and rap.

*Continued on page 32*

# Calendar

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

Continued from page 31

## FURTHER AFIELD

**Special day:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 10 am to noon; Free.

The museum invites families with children with special needs to enjoy the museum before we open to the public! Explore the historic train cars, walk through turnstiles, and drive buses! Put on a hard hat and a vest in our ticket booth for a photo op. Dance along to live music.

**Hands on Family day:** The Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St., Manhattan; (212) 864-4500; [www.studiomuseum.org](http://www.studiomuseum.org); 2 pm to 4 pm; Free.

Children discover the museum and create fun projects.

## THURS, MARCH 10

### IN THE BRONX

**"Bronxside Story":** Renaissance Youth Center, 3485 Third Ave. and E. 168th Street; (718) 450-3466; 7 pm; Free.

This performance showcases songs written about the South Bronx and New York City — addressing issues of homelessness, violence, and other community struggles, while also highlighting youth searching for a better life in a community that can come together to create a place of love, peace, and joy.

## FRI, MARCH 11

### IN THE BRONX

**"Bronxside Story":** 7 pm. Renaissance Youth Center. See Thursday, March 10.

## SAT, MARCH 12

### IN THE BRONX

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

With spring on the way, green is the focus this weekend! Be inspired by classical music, comedy and extraordinary storytheater for children in the Sarah and Geoffery Gund Theater, led by guest storytelling musicians The Green Golly Project! Make green collages incorporating many verdant hues of green, then participate in a group installation project — a green wall! Performance at noon.

**Museum Day Live:** Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; [www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org](http://www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org); Noon-4 pm;

Free with museum admission.

In honor of Women's History Month, there will be guided tours illuminating the diverse achievements of women within the context of the 19th century. What do Harriet Tubman and Marie Curie have in common? Both women played significant roles in transforming 19th-century society. The 19th century was an era of revolution — women suffragists, abolitionists, prohibitionists, scientists, and a host of other female leaders championed social, cultural, economic, and political causes and transcended social boundaries to contribute to science and technology, inspiring women to be actively involved in society and paving the way for future female leaders.

## FURTHER AFIELD

**Girls in Science & Engineering Day:** Intrepid Sea Air and Space Museum, Pier 86 at W. 46th Street and 12th Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 245-0072; [www.intrepidmuseum.org](http://www.intrepidmuseum.org); 11 am to 3 pm; Free with museum admission.

Celebrate science, technology, engineering and math at the Intrepid Museum's fourth annual Girls in Science and Engineering Day. Enjoy hands-on experiences, exciting demonstrations and creative discussions offered by various science-based organizations, clubs and colleges.

## SUN, MARCH 13

### IN THE BRONX

**St. Patrick's Day Parade:** St. Benedict's church, 2969 Otis Ave.; 9 am; Free.

It's the 18th annual Throggs Neck parade. Festivities begin with a mass at St. Benedict's Church, followed by a complimentary breakfast and line of march at 11 am at the corner of E. Tremont and Lafayette avenues. The parade begins sharply at noon and heads down E. Tremont onto Harding Avenue and concludes at Harding and Brinsmade avenues. After the parade, celebrations continue with Irish delicacies, traditional music, and children's activities.

**Family Art project:** 10 am-1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, March 12.

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

Join naturalist and educator Gabriel Willow on a family-friendly walk through the gardens or woodlands. No registration required. Ages 6 and older welcome with an adult. Canceled in case of severe weather.

**"Sleeping Beauty":** Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250

Bedford Park Boulevard West; (718) 960-8833; [www.LehmanCenter.org](http://www.LehmanCenter.org); 4 pm; \$45, \$40, \$25 (\$10 children under 12 any seat).

The Moscow Festival Ballet transports you to the storybook kingdom of fairytale princesses, malevolent witches, and true love's kiss. The magical classic is the tale of the beautiful princess who waits in sleep for the kiss of her true love to awake.

## THURS, MARCH 17

### FURTHER AFIELD

**St. Patrick's Day Parade:** Kick off, 44th Street and Fifth Avenue, Manhattan; 11 am to 5 pm; Free.

New York's oldest tradition of celebrating everything Irish is celebrated with a grand parade kicking off at 44th Street and working its way up Fifth Avenue, passing St. Patrick's Cathedral and ending on 79th Street.

## SAT, MARCH 19

### IN THE BRONX

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

Observe the lovely shapes of bulbous succulent plants. Then, creating shapes using construction paper and simple templates, we'll make bold and brushy, large-scale prints, an engaging project that is easy for all!

**Easter egg hunt:** Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd.; (718) 885-1461; [www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org](http://www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org); 10:30 am to 1 pm; \$15 for children 2 to 12 (\$10 member children).

This is one day when it's okay to put all your eggs in one basket! Children 2-12 hunt for eggs, tap their talent at arts and crafts tables, and have photos taken with the Easter Bunny. Light refreshments offered. Please bring your own basket. Registration required. Parking available across the street in rear of Pelham Bay/Split Rock Golf Course parking lot. Rain date is March 20 from 1 pm to 3:30 pm.

**Easter egg hunt:** Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center, 3225 Reservoir Oval East at 208th Street; (718) 543-8672; 11 am; Free.

Children hunt for eggs, do crafts, see who wins the potato sack races, dance, yoga and reading fun. Suitable for children 3 to 11 years old.

## SUN, MARCH 20

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am-1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, March 19.

## TUES, MARCH 22

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Auditions:** Citi Field, 126th St. and Roosevelt Avenue, Queens; (718) 507-6387; 10 am to 2 pm; Free.

Tryouts for all singers of all ages (18 and under must be accompanied by an adult) who wish to try out to sing the National Anthem at CitiField stadium for the Subway Series game on Aug. 2. The first 100 contestants to arrive are guaranteed an audition to sing a song of their choice — excluding the National Anthem — a cappella.

## FRI, MARCH 25

### FURTHER AFIELD

**"Disney Live! Mickey and Minnie's Doorway to Magic":** Kings Theatre, 1027 Flatbush Ave. between Beverly Road and Tilden Avenue, Brooklyn; [www.kingstheatre.com](http://www.kingstheatre.com); 1 pm and 7 pm; \$25.

Join Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald and Goofy as 25 of your favorite characters surprise and delight every visitor. With special appearances by Snow White, Tinker Bell and Aladdin's Genie, you never know what to expect or who might join in the fun.

## SAT, MARCH 26

### IN THE BRONX

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

As trees grow, they produce a new ring of visible growth each year, creating a history of their life span in an emanating pattern, like a mandala. Count the years of your own life, and use special papers and natural materials to create your own mandala, with a unique ring for each of your years.

## FURTHER AFIELD

**"Disney Live! Mickey and Minnie's Doorway to Magic":** 11 am, 3 pm and 7 pm. Kings Theatre. See Friday, March 25.

## SUN, MARCH 27

### IN THE BRONX

**Family Art project:** 10 am-1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, March 26.

## FURTHER AFIELD

**"Disney Live! Mickey and Minnie's Doorway to Magic":** 1 pm and 5 pm. Kings Theatre. See Friday, March 25.

## LONG-RUNNING

### IN THE BRONX

**Wintertime wonders:** New York Botanical Garden, 200th Street and Kazimiroff Boulevard; (718) 817-8700; [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org); Saturdays – Mondays, 10 am, Tuesdays – Fridays, 1:30 pm, Now – Sun, March 20; Free with garden admission.

Inside the cozy Discovery Center kids of all ages can take a closer look at the wonders of plants and animals in winter. Make bark rubbings, count tree rings, craft a bud necklace and head back into the winter garden with a field notebook to discover the vital sparks of life that lie just below the surface of this quiet season in the Northeast.

**Le Petit Art:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365-5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Tuesdays, 2 pm to 3:30 pm; Free.

Create miniature works of art (4-by-6 inches) or less using multiple mediums like acrylic paint, water color, pastel, pencil, ink, and surfaces like wood, canvas, paper, metal, and glass.

**Learn to Knit:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365-5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Thursdays, 1 pm to 2 pm, Now – Thurs, May 26; Free.

Learn the basics of knitting: choosing your yarn, needles, measuring gauge, yardage. Learn to read patterns and create a simple project. You'll need some materials: wosted weight (#4) yarn, pair of #8 knitting needles, measuring tape and measuring tool. No experience needed, beginners welcome.

**Kids Art class:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365-5516; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Fridays, 2:30 pm to 3:45 pm; Free.

Children use multiple mediums and learn drawing and painting techniques.

**NY Road Runners Open Run for Life:** St. Mary's Park, St. Anns Avenue and E. 149th Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Saturdays, 9 am to 10 am, Now – Thurs, March 31; Free.

This is a new community-based initiative that launched in St. Mary's Park to empower local volunteers to bring free weekly runs to local neighborhood parks all over the city. All runs are directed by volunteers and are free to all participants. The finish line is open until the last person is done. The courses vary based on park, but they are between 2.5-3 miles. Participants are encouraged to arrive 15 minutes before the start of the run and to leave their valuables at home — bag check is not provided. No need to do anything before the run, just show up. Open to all ages, experience levels, walkers,



## Pop in for Pop Ups!

Just in time to celebrate Purim, the Grammy-nominated duo of Jason Rabinowitz and Jacob Stein are popping in to the Jewish Museum on March 20.

The Pop Ups will catch the attention of children 3 to 8 years old as they light up the stage with an action-packed show inspired by their album *Great Pretenders Club*. This multimedia extravaganza is packed with hilarious puppets, live drawing, whimsical

stories, and more! Hear favorites from their hit albums, including “Costume Party,” and other irresistible electro-pop tunes.

The Pop Ups on March 20 from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. Tickets are \$18 for adults, \$13 for children, and \$15 and \$11 for members and member children.

*The Jewish Museum [1109 Fifth Ave. at 92nd Street in Carnegie Hill, (212) 423-3200; <http://thejewishmuseum.org>].*

strollers, and dogs. All are welcome!

**Beginners' dance class:** Poe Park Visitor Center, 2640 Grand Concourse; (718) 365-5516; [rsvp@powerhousearena.com](mailto:rsvp@powerhousearena.com); [nycgovparks.org](http://nycgovparks.org); Saturdays, 10 am to noon; Free.

Teen girls 14 to 17 years old learn hip-hop, ballet, and jazz steps.

**Soccer workshops:** St. Mary's Recreation Center, St. Ann's Avenue and E 145th Street; (718) 402-5155; [nycgovparks.org](http://nycgovparks.org); Saturdays, Noon-2 pm, Now – Sat, March 26; Free.

Learn the fundamentals of the game with Coach Victor Campbell. For children 6 to 12 years old.

**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.

**UniverSoul Circus:** 50 E. 150th St.; [www.ticketmaster.com/149th-St-Exterior-St-across-tickets-Bronx-venue/1270?camefrom=CFC\\_USOUL\\_](http://www.ticketmaster.com/149th-St-Exterior-St-across-tickets-Bronx-venue/1270?camefrom=CFC_USOUL_)

[WEBSITE\\_TIXSCHEDULE#focus\\_event\\_table](#); Wednesday, March 30, 7 pm; Thursday, March 31, 10:30 am; Friday, April 1, 10:30 am; Saturday, April 2, 12 pm; Sunday, April 3, 12:30 pm; Tuesday, April 5, 10:30 am; Wednesday, April 6, 10:30 am; Thursday, April 7, 10:30 am; Friday, April 8, 10:30 am; Saturday, April 9, 12 pm; Sunday, April 10, 12:30 pm; \$15-\$35.

Interactive combination of circus arts, theater, and music. Under the single ring big top they combine circus arts, theater, and music. The show is fresh, funky, bold, fun, and challenges your imagination like no other circus.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Gracie Mansion tours:** Gracie Mansion in Carl Schurz Park, E. 88th Street and East End Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 676-3060; [gracieinfo@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:gracieinfo@cityhall.nyc.gov); [www.on.nyc.gov/gracietour](http://www.on.nyc.gov/gracietour); Tuesdays, 10 am to 10:50 am, Now – Tues, April 12; Free.

Mayor DeBlasio and First Lady Chirlane McCray have introduced a new art installation, titled “Windows on the City: Looking Out at Gracie’s New

York.” The installation consists of previously and newly acquired works, all from the original Gracie Mansion period, which have been curated to create a more historically accurate picture of life in New York City during the time of Gracie Mansion’s construction. RSVP required. Photo ID required for entrance. No photography permitted in the interior. At the present time, tours are available in English only.

**Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey’s “Legends”:** Barclays Center, 620 Atlantic Ave. at Pacific Street, Brooklyn; (917) 618-6100; [www.barclayscenter.com](http://www.barclayscenter.com); Tuesdays, 10:30 am and 7 pm, Wednesdays – Fridays, 7 pm, Saturdays, 11 am, 3 pm, and 7 pm, Sundays, 11 am, 3 pm and 7 pm, Now – Sun, March 6; Tickets start at \$21.

The circus is coming to town. Prepare to be amazed as the world’s most skilled circus masters entertain and dazzle with acrobatics, animal tricks, and high-wire thrills.

**The Titanosaur:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at W. 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); Daily, 11 am to 5 pm; Free with museum admission.

The cast of the largest dinosaur that ever walked the earth is now on exhibit. The 122-foot long dino is residing on the fourth floor. This giant herbivore belongs to a group known as titanosaurs, and weighed about 70 tons.

**“Shen Yun Dancers”:** The David Koch Theatre, 20 Lincoln Center Plaza, Manhattan; (800) 818-2393; Wednesday, March 2, 7:30 pm; Thursday, March 3, 7:30 pm; Friday, March 4, 7:30 pm; Saturday, March 5, 2:30 pm; Sunday, March 6, 1:30 pm; Wednesday, March 9, 7:30 pm; Thursday, March 10, 7:30 pm; Friday, March 11, 7:30 pm; Saturday, March 12, 2:30 pm; Sunday, March 13, 2:30 pm; \$80- \$300.

Dancers invite you to experience this divine culture of the Middle Kingdom. Shen Yun brings the profound spirit of this lost civilization to life on stage with unrivaled artistic mastery. Every dance movement, every musical note, makes this a stunning visual and emotional experience you won’t find anywhere else. The performance is suitable for children 5 years of age and older. Run time is two hours, 15 minutes with intermission.

**“Medea”:** Harlem School of the Arts, 645 St. Nicholas St., Manhattan; (212) 926-4100 X 327; [www.hsanyc.org/soul-nativity](http://www.hsanyc.org/soul-nativity); Fridays – Sundays, 7 pm, Now – Sun, March 20; Call for tickets.

Drama, dance and suspense is the theme for this version of the Greek tragedy.



## GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

# 'In the mood' food

Couples hoping to spice up their love life have long turned to candlelight, romantic music, and a bottle of wine. But can the menu serve as an aphrodisiac as well?

Here's the bad news: Sadly, there isn't much science behind foods that get you in the mood.

"Foods such as chocolate, oysters, shrimp, and strawberries have been identified as aphrodisiacs, but little evidence supports that these foods produce any significant effects," according to Jim White, a registered dietitian nutritionist, spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, exercise physiologist, and owner of Jim White Fitness and Nutrition Studios.

Lentils, grapes, truffles, pine nuts, artichokes, vanilla, alcohol, figs, honey, and even the spice turmeric are other foods touted as ways to increase libido.

Here's the food news: Enjoying a



healthy dietary lifestyle regularly will improve how someone feels physically and mentally, which naturally impacts their love life, according to White.

"When the body feels healthy and is working properly, the individual is more likely to desire engaging in acts of love," he says.

So what's a healthy dietary life-

style? It includes fresh fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and plenty of water every day.

"When men and women are eating healthy and exercising, they look better for their partner and they are more self-confident, which can improve their overall love life," he says.

Steer clear of most unhealthy foods, especially in excess. A poor diet can make someone feel tired, cause excessive weight gain, or negatively impact her mood.

Consuming less-than-healthy foods will adversely impact blood flow and digestion in the body, which can lower the desire to have a healthy love life.

So what about those so-called aphrodisiacs? Oysters, shrimp, strawberries, lentils, grapes, truffles, pine nuts, artichokes, vanilla, alcohol, figs, honey, and yes, a little chocolate, are nutrient-rich foods that taste delicious and can improve your health and that of your sweetheart, too.

*Christine Palumbo is a nutritionist in Naperville, Ill. Find her at Christine Palumbo Nutrition on Facebook, @PalumboRD on Twitter, or ChristinePalumbo.com.*

### Peppered filet mignon with blackberry glaze

Serves 4

#### INGREDIENTS:

##### Steak:

- 1 tsp. crushed black peppercorns
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt
- 4 filet mignon about 5 ounces each and 1 1/2 inch thick

1 tbsp. olive oil

##### Blackberry Sauce:

- 1/4 cup finely chopped shallots
- 1/2 cup dry red wine (Cabernet preferred)
- 1 cup beef broth
- 3 tbsp. seedless blackberry preserves
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter

**DIRECTIONS:** Rub crushed pepper-



corns and sea salt on both sides of steak. Heat oil in large heavy skillet on medium-high heat. Add steaks and cook six to eight minutes or until desired doneness, turning once. Remove from skillet and keep warm. In the same skillet sauté shallots for one minute. Stir wine into skillet, scraping any brown bits from skillet. Let wine boil until reduced by half. Stir in blackberry preserves and broth, let boil until reduced by half. Whisk in butter. Serve steaks with sauce drizzled over.

**NUTRITION FACTS:** 390 calories, 13 g carbohydrates (10 g sugar), 33 g protein, 20 g fat (8 g saturated), 1 g fiber, 20% DV iron, 2% DV calcium, 4% DV Vitamin A, 2% DV Vitamin C.

Recipe adapted from and used with permission by oregon-berries.com



# SUMMER EXPERIENCES FOR LIFE

Day, Sports, and Specialty camps  
for boys and girls, ages 3-16

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AT RIVERDALE COUNTRY SCHOOL  
IN BRONX, NY

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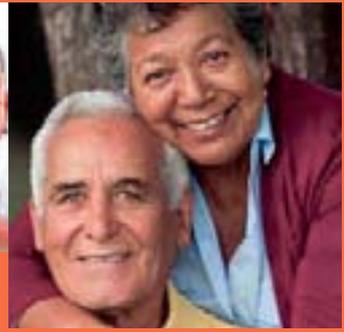
Acquire new skills and create compelling designs this summer with programs in Game Design, Minecraft, robotics, web design and more.

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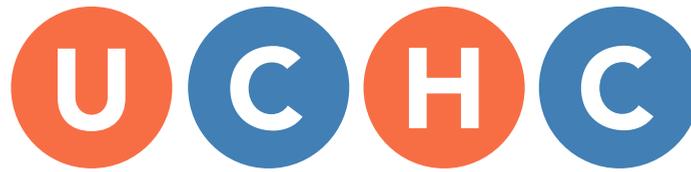
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HEALTH CENTER**

CARING FOR THE BRONX FOR OVER 100 YEARS

**Affordable, Compassionate, Family-Centered, Convenient, Quality Health Care**

**GRAND OPENING**  
 2016 Bronxdale Ave, Suite 301  
 718.220.2020  
[www.uchcbronx.org](http://www.uchcbronx.org)  
**Hours:**  
 Monday & Friday  
 8am-4pm  
 Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday  
 11am-7pm

**Accepting New Patients – Open Evenings!**

Primary Health Care for the Entire Family  
 Infants/Children - Adolescents/Teens  
 Adults - Seniors

Services include:

- General Medicine
- Physical Exams
- Sick Visits
- Immunizations
- Preventive Health Screenings
- Chronic Disease Management
- Assistance in Applying for Insurance Coverage
- Assistance with Enrollment in Self-Pay, Sliding-Scale Program.

Most Insurance Plans Accepted  
 (Medicaid/Commercial/Medicare/Union/VA)

**Hablamos Español y esperamos la oportunidad de desearle la bienvenida al llegar a su nuevo hogar medico!**

LIKE Union Community Health Center TWEET @UCHC\_Bronx