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Family January 2011



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Letter from the publisher

A GREAT YEAR AHEAD

As of this writing, we have been lucky and haven't had any blizzards or massive rains like the West Coast or Western Europe. My college-age daughter was one of those travelers who flew into the craziness of the Euro-



pean airports in mid-December for winter college break and to travel with her big brother. What a mess!

But here in New York, we passed through the shortest days of the year with an amazing lunar eclipse and relative ease, although cold. But that's winter, and we're used to it and accustomed to being bundled up and cozy. Now it's a new year and with many weeks of our winter still in front of us, we will be watching the

days grow longer as the weeks pass, and hoping that it's a sign of positive things to come in our economy as well.

With that in mind, this January issue presents an article by our award-winning contributing writer Candi Sparks about the pressures put on families when Dad

has lost his job and Mom is the sole working partner. Who does the shopping, cooking, and cleaning and takes care of the children? It's so typical for men to look to women to fulfill those roles. An out-of-work Dad is depressed anyway, and not usually expansive or open to taking on new duties. He's coping with his own innermost feelings of inadequacy, and she's left holding the

bag — and everything else.

Finances are on everyone's mind and budgets are being slashed and watched in every home and every business, and the stress for families when incomes are reduced so drastically is enormous. Everyone pays, including the children who have to be nurtured in an atmosphere often tense with problems that never were there before.

And now, speaking of business, I want to take this opportunity to thank not only you, our thousands of readers throughout the boroughs of our four magazines in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx/Riverdale, and Staten Island (our newest member of the family!), for your continued support and for your letters and good wishes throughout the years, but also our hundreds of advertisers, who are also struggling through

these pressured economic times. Their trust in us and their loyalty to our brand has enabled us to continue to continue. We are very grateful for these marvelous relationships and for the response you, our readers, give to them, making this marketing choice a successful one.

We hope for a brighter year for everyone and a more prosperous one.

Happy New Year to all! We promise to continue to work hard to produce the very best parent guides for your communities with the most interesting and relevant editorial. We wish you a great month and thanks for reading! Happy New Year!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher

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WORD UP! reading series is made possible in part by the Verizon Foundation.

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NEWBIE DAD

BRIAN KANTZ

Turning the page

Author passes down the joys of collecting

BY BRIAN KANTZ

When you're a kid, collecting things can be an exhilarating — and sometimes exasperating — adventure. After starting a new collection, the thrill of the hunt often leads to a point at which you realize that your collection will never, ever, ever be complete. And that knowledge can drive you crazy.

I recall a simple second-grade assignment I was given to collect different types of leaves. I canvassed the neighborhood with purpose, collecting an impressive sample of maple, oak and birch leaves in a wide variety of greens, reds, oranges and yellows. I was quite proud of myself. Until I walked into the classroom the next morning. Looking at all of the other kids' leaves — most of which weren't represented in my suddenly-meager-looking collection — I discovered that you just can't keep up with the vastness of nature.

It's also very difficult to keep up with the vastness of the toy industry's manufacturing prowess. As a child, I was hooked on "Star Wars" figures. My brothers and I acquired quite a collection,

which we stored safely inside one of those large Darth Vader carrying cases. Yes, it was cool.

Still, for all of the figures that we did own, there were even more that we didn't. George Lucas's mind for weird-looking space characters ran too deep. Despite receiving "Star Wars" figures as gifts for birthdays, holidays and every occasion in between, there was no way that we would ever collect every "Star Wars" figure. That's the harsh reality of collecting.

Recently, my two young sons started their first big collecting adventure. I'm proud to report that their collection revolved around books. In particular, they became dedicated to an absolutely terrific set of books called, "The Nature Series" by North Carolina-based author, Suzanne Tate.

Wonderfully illustrated by James Melvin, each book in the series tells the story of a different creature. Some are sea creatures, some are land creatures, all are fascinating creatures. The stories promote the conservation of nature in a fun, engaging way. They're anything but heavy-handed.

We've found "The Nature Series" books to be the best bedtime reading material around. Each book is the perfect length for bedtime: not too long, not too short. And they're written at an age-appropriate level — and by that I mean that Suzanne Tate knows that little kids are capable of understanding some higher-level stuff. Our 3-year-old can now tell you what a mollusk is, thank you very much.

The collection started out innocently enough. The boys' grandma discovered the series in the gift shop of her local zoo in Florida. She thought the books looked interesting, so she bought a copy of "Oozey Octopus: A Tale of a Clever Critter," and mailed it to her grandsons. Oozey's wild adventures — highlighted by being devoured, then spit out by a large fish and losing a tentacle in the process — totally

captivated the boys. And the book totally captivated me.

Immediately, I called the phone number listed on the back cover — a direct line to Suzanne Tate's studio — and ordered three more books. They arrived a few days later and were just as good as "Oozey." We repeated this process and the book collection grew. At the same time, Suzanne Tate kept publishing new books in the series and the boys added them to their collectors' wish list.

The mania became so great, in fact, that the boys began making up their own titles for new "Nature Series" books. I suggested that they let the author in on their ideas. So they wrote her a letter. And to their delight, Ms. Tate quickly replied with a handwritten note thanking them for their enthusiasm.

Eventually, my kids collected 31 of the 32 books in the series. It all came down to one book about a wise fish, "Old Reddy Drum." We discovered, however, that the book had gone out of print. Suzanne Tate's studio didn't have it. Online bookstores didn't have it. The boys were out of luck. Like many of my boyhood collections, this one seemed destined to remain agonizingly incomplete.

But then the miracle happened. On a family vacation to Myrtle Beach, we happened upon a small country store with a long dirt driveway. I pulled in. We perused all the usual country store fare: watercolor paintings, scented candles, and old-fashioned hard candies. Then, suddenly, our older son let out a whoop and jumped up and down as if he had just found the needle in the haystack. He did. There in his hands was a copy of "Old Reddy Drum." With their collection complete, the boys are enjoying sweet satisfaction ... until Suzanne Tate writes another book.

Brian Kantz doesn't collect anything anymore, except the bills for his kids' collections. Visit Brian online at www.briankantz.com or drop him a note at thenewbiedad@yahoo.com.



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Beat math angst

Tackling the emotions behind poor grades can equal success

BY MICHELE RANARD, M.ED.

As a math tutor, I once received a phone call from a parent feeling so desperate for help that she held out the phone, so I could hear the shouting match between her son, Chase, and her husband as he attempted to help him with math homework. It sounded like the chaotic bedlam of a Jerry Springer soundstage!

Tearful homework dramas are common. Chase became overly emotional, said he hated math, and his frazzled parents said they were “los-

ing it,” while trying to help. They felt that hope was nowhere. Throw a demanding teacher or challenging math curriculum into the mix, and it can add up to math mayhem.

Math angst

The majority of the students I tutor are like Chase. They may have lost all joy for math, fallen behind, and then feel hopeless about catching up. Many students find it difficult to engage in the abstract thinking expected at advanced levels of math. There is also the “cool” factor. It may be socially acceptable to be bad at math. Few students brag they cannot read, yet there is little stigma attached to “I can’t do math.”

Parents feel discouraged, too. Your own struggle with math may have left you feel-

ing helpless or thinking that some folks get it and some don’t. In my experience, when students learn to do math and start to experience success with it, they begin to like it.

While a magic bullet for math angst has yet to materialize, there is always hope for your child — even if he is failing. Everyone can get better at math!

High anxiety plus low confidence

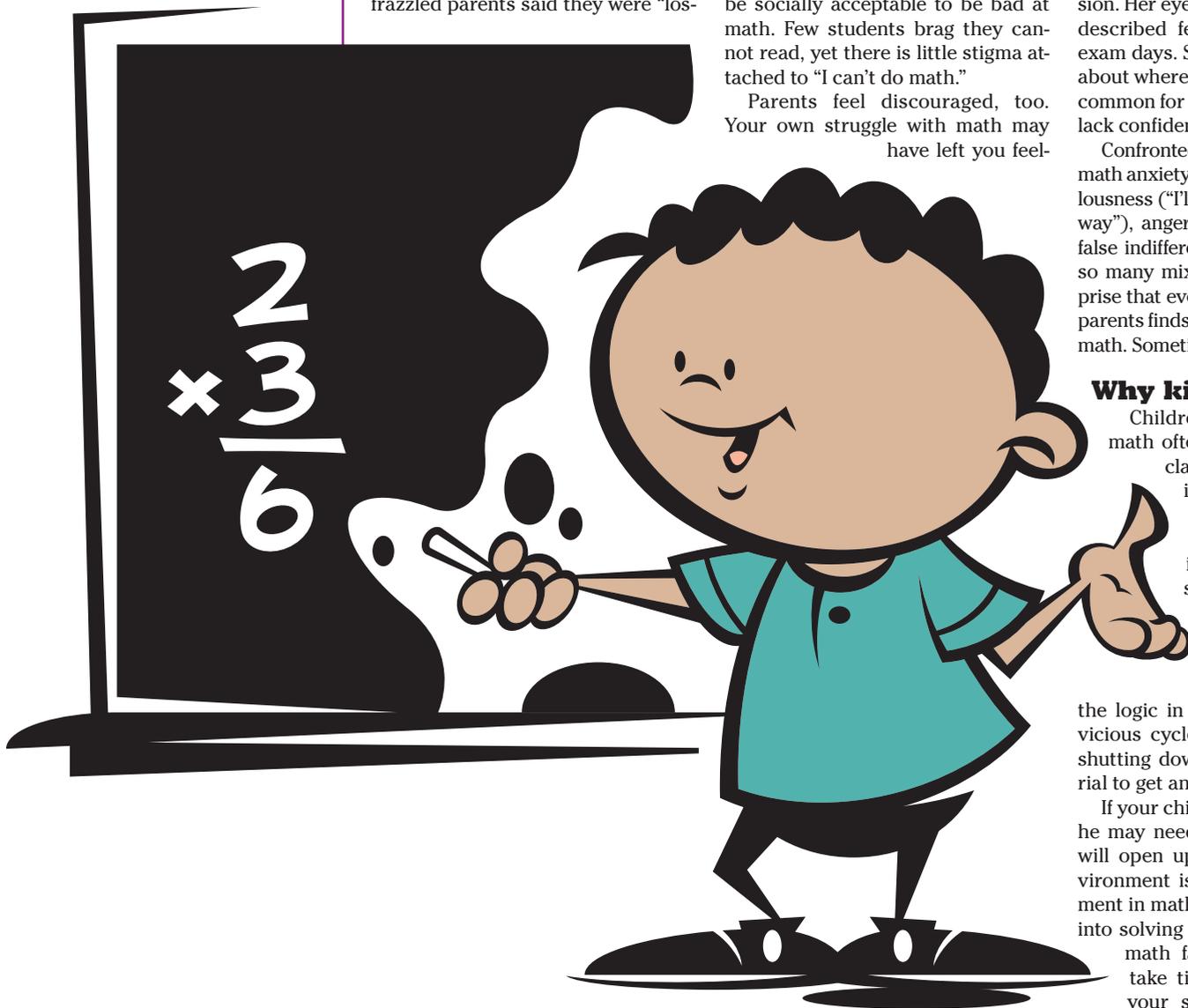
Taylor Swenson could barely speak during our first tutoring session. Her eyes filled with tears as she described feeling overwhelmed on exam days. She said she felt clueless about where to begin. Test anxiety is common for students like Taylor who lack confidence.

Confronted with repeated failure, math anxiety may be masked with callousness (“I’ll never use this stuff anyway”), anger (“It’s too difficult!”), or false indifference (“Whatever”). With so many mixed feelings, it is no surprise that even the most easygoing of parents finds it unnerving to help with math. Sometimes tutoring can help.

Why kids shut down

Children who struggle with math often “shut down” in math class to avoid painful feelings and defeat. They have trouble seeing the meaningfulness of solving abstract problems so removed from their real life. They have not lived long enough to develop an appreciation for the beauty of the logic in math. So it becomes a vicious cycle of poor performance, shutting down, failure of new material to get anchored, etc.

If your child is caught in the cycle, he may need to feel safe before he will open up. A warm, friendly environment is essential for improvement in math. Instead of diving right into solving problems or rehearsing math facts, a good tutor will take time to build trust with your student. The tutor will



explain why investing effort into math is worthwhile. If this sounds touchy-feely ("I want my child to PERFORM better in math, not necessarily FEEL better about it,") be assured that addressing anxiety and safety is a critical step toward improved performance and grades.

Eight strategies to build math confidence

While tutoring sessions are tailored to meet the needs of each individual student, the following strategies are always woven into my work. They may be used as a framework for discussions with a math tutor or teacher.

- Engage students in a working relationship.

Most students need an answer to "Why bother with math?" The objective in tutoring is not to pour into the student all the formulas, theorems, and math expertise of the tutor. Better performance in math is more often a result of seeds planted in tutoring, hard work, and a strong relationship with the tutor.

- Explore strengths and obstacles to learning. Frequently, math teachers have suggestions for how a student may improve. Chase's teacher reported his tendency to drift off during lecture time and his inability to get started on assigned work. Tutoring sessions will reveal a student's learning style (such as visual or auditory), his impairments (never mastered math facts, bad note taking, disorganized), and his strengths (abstract thinker, good at mental math, etc.).

- Set them up for success. When possible, students should be given choices. Rather than articulating immediately how a math problem should be approached, students may be asked, "What math operation could be applied here?" It becomes deeply satisfying for them when they can truly own their success. This is different than being the submissive recipient of a tutor's help.

- Improve math vocabulary. Math teachers are sometimes pressured to squeeze a math lesson into a half hour, leaving little time for vocabulary instruction. However, students perform better

when they understand terms such as product, quotient, equivalent fraction, average, etc.

- Provide tools to seek help. Vocabulary for math is a valuable tool for soliciting help and answers quickly and effectively from teachers and textbooks. When vocabulary is weak, a student may say to the teacher, "I don't know what to do with these fraction thing-ies," whereas a developed vocabulary helps him express, "I keep forgetting how to find a common denominator."

- Explore self-image. With repeated failure in math, students may become vulnerable to negative "self-talk." They may tell themselves, "I'm just dumb" or "My teacher thinks I'm bad at math."

Chase's negative catch phrase was "I've NEVER been good at math." Parents may unwittingly reinforce such negativity when they say "I was never good at math, either." Instead, give productive encouragement

such as: "Nobody is perfect, a math grade does not reflect intelligence, and math can be learned in different ways."

- Restructure counter-productive self-talk. Taylor's reading comprehension skills were unfortunately weak for word problems. However, the negative "I'm horrible at word problems!" became "Reading comprehension is tricky for me, so I have to draw pictures to get what the problem is asking." If a student's memory is poor for recalling the rules about adding decimals, "I'll never remember all this!" can become "Until I master adding decimals, I'll refer to my notes." Even subtle shifts in thought patterns re-shape math attitudes.

- Acknowledge that there is no substitute for hard work. If there is one mantra my students hear more than any other in tutoring, it is this one: There is just no substitute! Conquering math angst is an honorable quest and never a waste of time.

By the way, Chase won a math achievement award at school last month, and Taylor has a solid A- in the subject!

Michele Ranard is an academic tutor/counselor. She has two children, a master's degree in counseling, and a blog at cheekychicmama.com.

Few students brag they cannot read, yet there is little stigma attached to "I can't do math."

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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Food labels & you

Are you a label reader? If you are, you're in good company. A survey by the American Dietetic Association found that nearly 62 percent of grocery shoppers read the nutrition facts panel.

What are they looking for? The top five items shoppers are interested in are calories, total fat, calories from fat, and sugar and sodium levels, according to a recent report from the NPD Group's Dieting Monitor.

The nutrients shoppers are trying to avoid? Number one is fat, followed by sugars, cholesterol, sodium and trans fats. The Dieting Monitor also identified the nutrients people are trying to maximize: whole grains, fiber, calcium, vitamin C and protein. Consumers are also seeking out foods with a short list of recognizable ingredients with minimal processing, according to the Natural Marketing Institute.

Mistakes parents make

Two terms on the front of a package could sabotage weight management efforts: "Low fat" and "organic." Both are linked to overeating. The term "low fat" can lead people to infer that a food has fewer calories. And consumers even associate the term "organic" with low calories, according to a 2010 study in the journal "Judgment and Decision Making." In the study, college students who read labels for organic Oreo cookies described them as having fewer calories than the conventional Oreos. They also thought the organic cookies could be eaten more often than the non-organic ones.

Bonnie Taub-Dix, a dietitian from



Q: Where do food companies come up with these portion sizes? A pizza clearly meant for one was actually labeled "two servings."

A: Serving sizes were developed by the Food and Drug Administration based on portions consumers supposedly eat. There is a movement to make serving sizes more realistic as part of food labeling reform.

New York, and author of "Read It Before You Eat It: How to Decode Food Labels and Make the Healthiest Choice Every Time," points to three other common mistakes:

- Only checking calories without looking at the nutrient value: A 150-calorie pack of jelly beans does not compare to a 150-calorie yogurt. Yogurt is rich in calcium, protein and a medley of other vitamins and min-

erals, while jelly beans are nearly pure sugar.

- Not looking at the serving size: Remember to multiply every number on the package by the number of servings in each package.

- Being duped by the flashy front of the package: Don't be fooled by a word like "natural." Flip that box over to see what you're really getting.

Getting kids started

Taub-Dix, a mother of three sons, says children can start to scan a label with your help as soon as they know what numbers look like and represent.

What foods are best to start with? Little ones can look at breakfast cereals and milk. For example, show milk's calcium and protein levels. Older kids can critique energy bars and note how some are higher in sugar and/or fat with little fiber or protein value.

In addition to becoming nutrition smart, children who read food labels gain the benefit of improving their reading and math skills. Try this: If your kids love a breakfast cereal that's high in sugar — say 13 grams — combine it with one that's low in sugar — one gram. Together you can do the math and bring the sugar down to seven grams per serving.

Christine M. Palumbo is a Naperville-based registered dietitian and mother of three. There's nothing more exciting to her than curling up with a good food label and ingredient list. She can be reached at (630) 369-8495 or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.

Pomegranate Pink Jade

Fresh pomegranate juice turns into a simple spritzer. You can mix the juices up to a day ahead (store it sealed in the refrigerator) but don't add the sparkling water until just before serving.

Makes one serving

INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup pomegranate juice
(purchased or freshly squeezed)*
1/4 cup orange juice
1/4 cup sparkling water

Ice cubes

3 tablespoons vodka (optional, for adults only)

INSTRUCTIONS: In a large glass (pitcher for six servings), mix pomegranate juice and remaining ingre-

dients; add ice cubes (make ice cubes with some whole pomegranate seeds in them for a festive touch).

*One medium pomegranate (about 9 ounces) yields 1/2 cup juice

NUTRITION FACTS: 70 calories, 18 grams carbohydrate, 0 grams fat, cholesterol and fiber, 1 gram protein, 10 milligrams sodium, 40 percent DV vitamin C.

Adapted from pomegranates.org/recipes



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Continued on page 12



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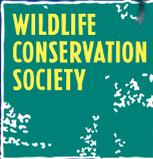
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DIRECTORY

Continued from page 10

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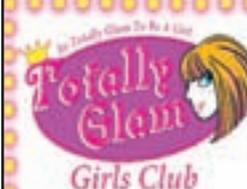
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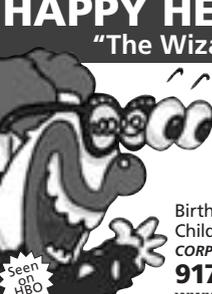
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10 reasons to goof off

Studies confirm kids need more free-play time

BY MICHELE RANARD, M.ED.

With school in full swing, homework, studying, and a steady diet of rigidly structured activities are standard fare for many kids. Soccer, ballet, and piano broaden the horizon and set the stage for personal growth, but over-scheduling our children to beef up their competitiveness on college resumes has a downside.

While academics, lessons, and organized sports are important, kids need goof-off time, too. Studies show that in order to remain healthy, children of all ages need plenty of unstructured playtime.

Playtime is critical to the emotional, social and cognitive health

of our children, according to Dr. Stuart Brown, clinical researcher and author of “Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul” (Avery, 2009). He studied the play behavior of animals and more than 6,000 people from all walks of life — from serial killers to Nobel Prize winners — and found that everyone needs to let loose and play.

Everyone understands that play is pleasurable and a good distraction from stress, but studies show that play is also a biological process crucial to our survival. In rats, play reduces impulsivity — which is similar to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in humans. We are simply hard-wired to play.

Unfortunately, recess and physical education classes are disappearing from schools at a time when kids need unstructured free-play more than ever.

So, what constitutes play? Brown says it is much more than games and sports — play involves books, music, art, jokes, movies, drama and daydreaming. It is part of our daily lives and is critical to us feeling fulfilled as happy, successful human beings.

Here are 10 important reasons to create more time for play:

Happier kids: Sometimes we trivialize play or fail to see its usefulness. But it’s more than fun. In addition to improving emotional health, it serves a biological pur-



Play is part of our daily lives and is critical to us feeling fulfilled as happy, successful human beings.

pose. When social mammals, such as rats and monkeys, are deprived of rough-and-tumble play, they enter adulthood emotionally fragile. Play helps them distinguish friend from foe, handle stress better, and form better skills with which to mate properly.

Social competence is enhanced: Play teaches people to master and adapt to changing circumstances. Even dealing with or avoiding being excluded from games like tag or dodgeball are helpful social skills to learn.

It may lessen the symptoms of mild ADHD: Parents of children with ADHD should make time for them to run around outside before school, and be sure that recess is never taken away as a punishment for poor behavior, says Dr. Laura Honos-Webb, author of "The Gift of ADHD" (2005). She says it is important to remember that being out and active in nature can act as medicine for the child.

It burns calories: Trends for childhood obesity are staggering. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the prevalence of childhood obesity for 6- to 11-year-olds has increased from 6.5 percent from 1976 to 1980, to 17 percent from 2003 to 2006. Obese kids have increased risk for cardiovascular disease, asthma, sleep apnea, and Type 2 diabetes.

The idea is not to raise rigid, humor-less adults: Play deficiencies can lead to closed-mindedness, inflexibility and unhappiness, according to Brown. Life-long play is part of the antidote, and may even prevent depression. Play is not just a trivial escape — it provides a vehicle for learning to problem solve.

Rough-and-tumble play is developmentally critical: We knew it was helpful to development, but Dr. Brown's research revealed that for young homicidal males and drunk drivers, rough-and-tumble play was missing from their childhoods.

Stronger academic performance: This may be especially relevant for boys. Successful peer interaction at recess is an excellent predictor of success on standardized tests, according to Anthony Pellegrini, an educational psychology professor at the University of Minnesota, and author of "Recess" (2005). When boys establish competence on the playground, they also do better in the classroom and pay attention better.

Play keeps curiosity and wonder alive: Kids today spend 50 percent less time outside than they did just 20 years ago. The lure of animation, video games, and online networking is so tempting and culturally reinforced that the beauty of nature and fresh air is often overlooked.

Successful people play a lot: Playfulness sparks creativity and innovation. Analysis of the play histories of successful adults revealed that they all had a rich play life.

It is honorable: Play is not just a mindless activity — it is active learning.

"From an evolutionary perspective," says Brown, "the smarter the animal, the more they play ... it gets us in touch with our core selves and the joy of life."

Michele Ranard has a husband, two children, and a master's degree in counseling. She is passionate about helping parents and children lead richer lives.

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Give winter a kick

Help your kids stay active this season with martial arts classes

BY SENSEI VLAD DAVYDOV

What ever happened to exercising? Kids would rather be in front of a computer or TV screen than be outside, and will usually have an excuse for not working out, like, "It's too hard," "It's boring," or "I hate sweating."

But, without physical activity, they can become obese, easily tired, anti-social and depressed. It is extremely important that you encourage your child to stay off the computer and TV screens, and get outside and exercise. Alternatively, there are plenty of indoor activities he can do on a weekly basis, such as martial arts. So get your child active today.

What can martial arts do for my child?

There are many benefits martial arts can offer your child, including helping him with self-discipline. Karate classes teach kids dedication, perseverance and self-dependence, which transfers over to school, homework and other sports and activities. Before you know it, he'll be doing his homework without being told, finding answers to hard questions without asking for help, and being helpful at home and in the classroom.

Martial arts, and being active in general, will also help sharpen your child's memory. Kids need to practice and memorize their martial arts moves. The more they work on learning and memorizing their moves, the more it will get easier to remember dates for exams and keywords and information from reading materials — ultimately leading to higher grades.

Karate highly values respect toward each other and elders. Students respect their instructor, their classmates and the equipment by not interrupting while the instructor is talking, bowing to each other and the instructor, and helping to clean up after practice. From this, kids learn to respect their parents, teachers and other adults with a different type of tonality and maturity. They start to realize that interrupting a conversation is rude, talking back is



wrong, and helping out is great and very much appreciated.

Is karate good for those with ADHD?

Yes, it is. Impatience, lack of focus, difficulty controlling behavior — all signs of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) — can't be cured by karate, but can be curbed. A new, fun, challenging activity turns on kids' attention — they are unconsciously required to focus and pay attention. Martial arts helps kids become more active and aware of their surroundings. They also learn to control themselves and their actions, think before they attempt to do something, and pay attention.

Exercising is necessary to ensure children are healthy and happy. All changes happen in time. For some children, it just takes more time than others.

Sensei Vlad Davydov is the owner of AmeriKick Martial Arts in Staten Island. He is a former head instructor of two martial arts studios and is a second dan Kenpo Karate black belt. He has taught more than 1,000 students and has won a 2009 International Excellent Instructor Achievement Award, as well as a 2005 Heisman Award.

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In Brooklyn Heights; 718-852-3208 or www.stagecoachschools.com

The award winning part-time Theatre School Network, is now registering for fall classes. StageCoach, which has over 500 thriving schools and 30,000 enthusiastic students attending each week, has an enviable reputation for stretching children's imagination and building their confidence through classes in drama, dance and singing. The schools run for three hours every Saturday and students are grouped by age. For more information contact Principal Richard Padro.

ACTIVITY / AFTER-SCHOOL / PLUS

Congregation Beth Elohim 8th Avenue and Garfield Place, 718-499-6208 or www.congregationbethelohim.org

Tots on the move, art cooking & swimming classes beginning February 7th, 2011. Art & cooking (20-28 months) water play (6 mos. - 3 years). Please call for more information.

The Little Gym of Bay Ridge

8681-18th Ave Bensonhurst
718-259-6878 or www.tlgbayridgebensonhurstny.com

A feeling of success is one of the many benefits your child receives at the Little Gym. The Little Gym provides gymnastics-based motor skill development programs for children 4 months to 12 years old. Through sequential skill-building, movement, gymnastics, exercise, music and games, our curriculum builds student's physical, social, emotional and intellectual skills. All classes taught in a fun, safe and nurturing environment. Classes are offered in the morning, evening and weekends. Call to schedule your free trial class. Celebrate your child's birthday at The Little Gym.

Marks JCH of Bensonhurst 7802 Bay Parkway, 718-943-6345

Robbins Corenman after School Center at Marks JCH of Bensonhurst offers a safe and fun place for you child Monday through Friday after school. Homework help, sports, swimming, arts & crafts, computers and many other recreational activities. But there is more on Sundays we offer over 20 different classes in our Sunday Camp fun program such as gymnastics, swimming, chess, soccer, painting and many others. Please call for more information.

ART

Barking Cat Studio
65 Bond Street, 718-855-8050 or

www.barkingcatstudio.net

Barking Cat Studio is a uniquely equipped art studio dedicated to promoting creativity, discovery and independent thinking. Our studio provides the perfect environment for nurturing and encouraging young artists to explore their imaginations and inspirations by creating fun, age-appropriate projects that focus on the basics of the visual arts while using a variety of materials. We do Birthday Parties too!!! Call or visit our website for more information.

DANCE

CBTB Dance Academy
2085 Coney Island Avenue, between King Hwy and Avenue R;
718-891-6199 or www.covenantballet.org

Formerly known as Covenant Dance Studio and Covenant Dance Theatre. CBTB introduces children to the beauty of ballet and nurtures precision and artistry in the technique. The dedicated professional instructors inspire a love of dance in the students and cultivate a solid foundation that has carried students into professional careers.

Founded and directed by accomplished dance instructor and choreographer, Marla Hirokawa, the school also offers Modern/Jazz and Yoga/Pilates instruction, Flamenco and workshops as well as summer programs for children and adults.

Dancewave Inc.

Classes in Park Slope at The Dancewave Center, Salsa Salsa Dance Studio or The Old First Reformed Church, 718-522-4696 or www.dancewave.org

Offers the community after school classes, programs in the schools, Kids Cafe Festival, and a summer dance intensive. Performance opportunities are available for Kids Company, Kids Company II, and Young Movers Ensemble pre-professional teen dance troupes. Programs serve young people from a diverse spectrum of backgrounds. Fall after-school classes include Ballet, Modern, Jazz, Hip-Hop, Tango, Tap, Yoga and Sing & Swing. After-school scholarship auditions and Kids Company Auditions are in early September. Reservations are required for all auditions.

The School at Dancewave Tadpole Dancers Program

45 Fourth Avenue at Dean Street
Downtown Brooklyn B, D, Q, N, M,
R, W, 2, 3, 4, 5 to Atlantic/Pacific
Street 718 522-4696 phone 718 522-4769 fax www.dancewave.org

Dancewave announces the Tadpole Dancers Program, parent/guardian & child movement & discussion group classes for 0 mos-3 yrs. Begin feeding your young dancer in these dynamic & nurturing classes. Start your child off with Monday Morning Moms (0-8 mos), Busy Babies

Continued on page 20



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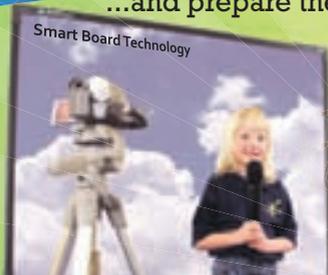
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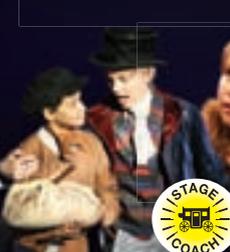
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Stagecoach
 Theatre Arts Schools

Winter Activities

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 18

(9-12 mos), Sing & Swing with Baby (5-9 mos) & Toddler Time (12-20 mos). This program grows with the child as they venture into our Creative Movement series divided into three age groups from 20 mos-3 yrs.

MARTIAL ARTS

AmeriKick Karate Studios
 529 5th Avenue (14th Street); 718-768-8200

5815 5th Avenue (58th Street); 718-567-7860 or www.amerikick.com

Under the direction of Alex Davydov, a 3rd degree black belt in Tae-Kwon Do, NYC wrestling champion, and four-time karate world champion, AmeriKick Brooklyn offers an array of programs. Young students will find after school programs ranging from acrobatics and self-defense to karate, kickboxing, and extreme martial arts as well as varied seminars, private lessons, demonstrations and tournament competition. Tiny tots and their parents have the AmeriKick Child Safety Program, which teaches awareness and self-protection from strangers. Teens and adults are offered Mixed Martial Arts programs from World Champion instructors. Call about a free trial lesson.

PERFORMING ARTS

Preparatory Center For The Performing Arts at Brooklyn College
 234 Roosevelt Hall 2900 Bedford Ave., 718-951-4111 or www.bcprecenter.org

Is an exciting, nurturing environment where children can develop a life-long love for music, theater and dance and gain skills that will give them confidence. Faculty is skilled in teaching beginning to advanced students. Music classes include private instruction, musicianship, and ensembles as well as Suzuki programs in Violin, Cello and Flute. Traditional Theater, Musical Theater, Ballet, Tap and other Dance classes are offered for children 5 and up. Beginning music, theater, and dance classes for very young children are available during the school year.

SCIENCE

The Cosmic Cove
 300 Atlantic Avenue, 718-344-4631 or www.carmelothesciencefellow.com

Invites you to discover his science parties, created at his unique and memorable Cosmic Cove. Here, children are transformed into scientists: they touch, hold, and most importantly take part in all of the experiments. They participate in hands-on activities that are fun, exciting, and, most importantly, educational.

Experiments with Carmelo may include making silly putty, glow in the dark slime, conducting a diaper powder study, mak-

ing fake snow, etc. They can even work with animals like the weird moving mega mealworms...yuck! You can even take home your experiments...even the live ones.

SPORTS

Brooklyn Fencing Center
 62 Fourth Street, corner Hoyt Street in Carroll Gardens; 917-541-8902 or www.brooklynfencing.com

Is Brooklyn's first competitive fencing club. Their mission is to make the excitement and joy of Olympic-style fencing more accessible to Brooklynites of all ages. They offer beginner classes for ages 6 and up – and the great thing about fencing is you can keep it at 60 and beyond! Ideal for people who "hate sports" but want to get active, fencing entertains your brain as much as your body. Get in touch with your inner swash-buckler at Brooklyn Fencing this winter.

New York Fencing Academy

2896 West. 12th Street, 718 996-0426 or www.nyfencingacademy.com

Quality instruction for all aspects of fencing! NY Fencing Academy was founded in 2010 to help people discover, enjoy, and advance in the sport of fencing. We not only aim to develop fencer's technical skills but we also focus on physical fitness. It is no wonder that we provide one of the best youth Epee programs in the tri-state area, which results in marvelous achievements in both local and national competitions by our current members. Our classes range from beginner groups to individualized lessons for all ages, depending on your personal interest and needs.

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1500 Paerdegat Avenue North, 718-531-1111 or www.paerdegat.com

We offer an after school program in which a staff member will pick-up your child after school and safely bring your child to the center. They enjoy healthy snacks and help with their homework and then...the fun begins. Licensed teachers supervise this program. A.C.D., Begin, and Union vouchers are welcome. The Paerdegat Sports Program offers lessons that are educational, recreational and help your child excel in their development while enhancing confidence. Activities available include gymnastics, swimming, soccer, basketball plus teen & pre-teen fitness.

TUTOR/LEARNING CENTER

All About Kids Tutoring
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Continued on page 22

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Non-Profit Organization Status
The Corporation serves children of any race, color, religion or ethnic origin who are in need of ballet, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion or ethnic origin in its programs and services. No part of the net assets of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of any individual. The Corporation is not a charitable organization.

Winter Activities

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 20

allaboutkidsny.com

Since 1988, All About Kids Tutoring has helped students, parents, and educators achieve their very best results at every stage of the educational journey. All About Kids Tutoring provides superior tutoring services for all students grades d-12. We tutor children and support their families in schools and homes across Long Island, the 5 Boroughs of NYC, and Westchester. Your child will be on the path to a positive learning experience with our dynamic teachers. All About Kids' tutors are all New York State Certified Teachers with fingerprint clearance, who maintain a high level of professionalism.

All About Kids Tutoring offers small group tutoring services in schools with their peers, and one-on-one instruction in homes, community centers and libraries. We offer both Private Tutoring Services and Supplemental Educational Services (SES, as defined in the Federal "No Child Left Behind Act").

All About Kids Tutoring curriculum includes reading comprehension, writing skills, basic and complex math, and testing skills and we also specialize in English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Education. Working together as a team, we can help your child succeed and achieve.

Club Z! In-Home Tutoring 718-483-8506 or www.clubztutoring.com.

Club Z! is successful because we provide highly individualized, one-on-one instruction. Sessions may be conveniently scheduled at home, school, after-school facilities or libraries. Club Z! tutors are experienced, degreed professionals and/or state certified instructors with impeccable credentials, and a heartfelt enthusiasm for teaching. Unlike many other tutoring services, our tutors use students' own school curricula. We work together with schools and families to help provide the essential support students of all levels and abilities need perform at their best. We guarantee increased confidence in the classroom, higher grades, stronger study skills, and enhanced motivation. We serve all ages, Pre-Kindergarten through adult. Tutoring is available in all subjects.

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Come See How FasTrackKids is "Learning, Cleverly Disguised as Fun!"

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The best way to find out if FasTrackKids is the right program for your child is to sign up for a Free Discovery Class.

Remember...there is a small "window of opportunity" for your child to make critical brain connections for future learning. Don't wait for this window to close on them!

Thank you for visiting us! If you have any questions, please call or see our website.

The Tutoring Club of Bay Ridge

7811 3rd Avenue, 718-748-8867

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The Moxie Spot is a full-service, two-story restaurant with kid's activities at Atlantic Avenue and Hicks Street. It's creative environment makes classes especially fun for kids. Before or after class you can hang out and enjoy the great food, toys, games and art activities that are available throughout the day. Fall classes will be John Carlin's Kid's Music Underground, Jane Z's Kids Cook, & Baby Fingers w Ana. For more information on the schedule and how to sign up, please visit www.themoxiespot.com or call 718-923-9710. Check out our schedule for free activities such as story times, sing along with Lloyd Miller, Dance Around w Nat, Nintendo Wii Night, Saturday family disco, and movie nights.

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SCIENCE MATTERS

MARGARET HONEY

The ever-changing wonders of science

The history of science is the story of how ideas travel. Science is not just a litany of facts and formulas. It is an ever-evolving story, with new characters and subplots adding complexities at every turn.

Every era of discovery leaves a legacy of scholarship that inspires and challenges successive generations. Nicolaus Copernicus, who first asserted that the sun is the center of our universe, is regarded as one of the founders of modern astronomy. But Copernicus did not develop his theory in a vacuum. He was not only influenced by the other great Renaissance scholars of his time, but he also acknowledged his indebtedness to the great minds who came before him, whose texts

he consulted, and whose experiments laid a foundation for his own work.

Among those who came before him was al-Battani, whose work Copernicus cited in his landmark book, "On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres." Al-Battani, a ninth-century astronomer who worked most of his life in Antioch and Syria, catalogued 849 stars and determined the solar year as being 365 days, five hours, 46 minutes, 24 seconds. Similarly, his breakthroughs were facilitated through his study of the ancient civilizations that preceded him — the Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians, among others. This thread of discovery passes through all ages and civilizations.

Scientific discovery happens on a

continuum. Inventions of the Middle Ages paved the way for the Industrial Revolution. And the mobile devices we are becoming more and more dependent upon are made possible by algorithms that were first proposed by mathematicians centuries ago. As long as humans possess an innate curiosity about the world, there will always be advancement and new ideas.

In our modern age, science is truly a global enterprise. New technologies and societies that are more interconnected than ever provide an environment in which innovation flourishes, and the potential to improve our world is limitless. The stories of scientific achievement are an encouragement to all of us.

That is why science centers like the New York Hall of Science present exhibitions and programs that not only explain scientific concepts, but also tell the stories of the great men and women who made these important advancements. At the Hall of Science, your family can play miniature golf to learn about rocketry, and learn geometry from catapults. The exhibits are accessible to a wide audience, so everyone can understand that revolutionary scientific breakthroughs are made possible because scholars are curious about the way the world works.

A quest for understanding leads to a theory, and a series of experiments designed to test that theory. Ultimately, a new way of seeing the world emerges, and new theories develop in that context.

So, the next time a child asks you to explain something, don't just give him the facts. Tell him the story. The information is all around, and the stories are waiting to inspire.

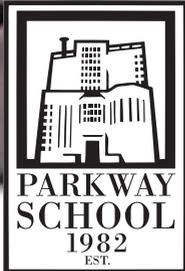
Margaret Honey is President and CEO of the New York Hall of Science [47-01 111th St. near 47th Avenue in Corona, (718) 699-0005], where the U.S. debut of 1,001 Inventions is currently on view. The exhibition tells the story of the scientific legacy of the Middle Ages, and its influence on scholars of the Renaissance.



The 1,001 Inventions exhibit at the New York Hall of Science.

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For additional information contact:

Joseph Gallagher, Magnet Director

Email: jgallag@schools.nyc.gov

Phone: (718) 968-6186



She works, he doesn't

When moms go to the office, will the dads keep the home fires burning?

BY CANDI SPARKS

Although any employee is grateful to have a job in this economy, a relationship can suffer when a husband loses his job and his wife becomes the household's primary breadwinner. This is especially true when he believes that his purpose is to provide for his family. Unfortunately, among the couples having to switch roles, clinging to these traditional ideas of family life can lead to their "love bank" going bankrupt during the role reversal.

Women are usually the keepers of the household budget. When the additional pressure of job security is also a concern, they are much more vulnerable to the ramifications of having a bad day at work. A husband who stays at home may help take care of the kids, but may expect his wife to still cook dinner, clean the house and do laundry after coming home from work. On the other hand, the wife may expect that her husband would do those chores while at home — and it can hurt her when her husband refuses.

"I wish I had enough money to pay someone else to do the housework — spouse or otherwise," says Susan,

who lives in Manhattan. "It's hard to find a man who wants to be kept at home with a vacuum and a duster in his hands."

Donald, who makes less money than his wife, doesn't mind the monetary imbalance, and still pays his share of the bills and cooks. But, the Staten Island-based freelance computer repairman prefers that his wife do the housework.

"Most men feel that they can help out and do chores once in awhile," he said, while his wife was not in the room. "But housework is really a woman's job. They are genetically programmed for these tasks."

Lynn, a working mother who lives in Whitestone, is the sole breadwinner in her home — and the housekeeper.

"For me, the upside is that [my



A husband who stays at home may help take care of the kids, but may expect his wife to still cook dinner, clean the house and do laundry after coming home from work.

husband] Bill gets to spend more time with [our son] Matthew, during the day and after school," she says, happy in the belief that Bill is developing a strong emotional bond with Matthew. But, their situation is not without problems — the problems are just simply not financial. Bill gets stressed about his job situation and his role in the marital relationship. He helps with Matthew's homework, doctor visits and recreation, but will not help with household chores that do not involve Matthew. He won't pick up his own dry cleaning, cook, or clean.

Lynn also finds it difficult when Bill decides that he needs to do "guy stuff" with his friends on the weekends. She admits she can't wait for him to find a job, so he can get out of the house and return to being the man she married.

When their roles become reversed and their wives are supporting the families, some men can feel emasculated — particularly when they are expected to help with chores, or they feel they are not getting the attention they think they deserve when their wives come home from work.

"In these tough economic times, most couples are simply trying to make it all work, regardless of the added social pressures of holding new or old roles in their domestic lives," says John Gray, relationship expert and author of "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus."

"You both need to be more sensitive and accommodating to each other's needs. You've built a life and a family together. Your shared future at every point is more important and certainly more lasting than any daily pressures you feel."

Promises to help out and be more supportive are not as important as actually doing what is needed to improve the family's situation.

"Actions speak louder than words. My family is pulling together to work things out until the economy gets better," says Anne, a working mother in Queens.

She makes what she calls "good money" as a medical assistant. But, she says, it wasn't enough to support the family's lifestyle when her husband Kurt lost his job 18 months ago. Her family has found ways to dramatically cut back on spending. When he couldn't find work after several months, Kurt decided to return to school. Their young children needed to go to daycare, so Kurt now stays at home with the children during the day and goes to school at night.

Anne had been working at three different sites but had to cut back her hours, because she felt she was missing her rapidly growing children's daily progress, and the company of her spouse. So the family sold the car and cut out cable TV and other luxuries. Currently, their condo is on the market, but they haven't yet found a buyer.

Bronx resident Lydia is the primary breadwinner in her household. Her long-time spouse works on a part-time basis in a field that he enjoys. He is openly supportive of his wife's career on a cognitive level, but on a primal level, he doesn't seem to understand why she is not more motivated to do more cooking and cleaning in the house. They joke about their expectations of one another — her husband pounding his chest while yelling, "I'm a man," while Lydia copies him and says, "I need a wife."

We should remember the victories women have made in the business world and offer them real support when they are ready, able and willing to step up and provide for their families. Be glad for those who can pinch hit, financially, because we don't know how many innings the downturn will last. But one thing is certain: Everyone will be a lot happier when this job market rebounds. Hopefully it will — and can — end the war between finance and romance.

Candi Sparks is the author of the "Can I Have Some Money?" book series. You can follow her on Twitter and Facebook as Candi Sparks (writer).

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It's cold outside!

Keep your kids safe when winter winds howl

BY KATHY SENA

What's not to like about winter when you're a kid? As a first grader, I looked forward to sledding, snowball fights with my brother, and, of course, the cup of hot chocolate that followed. And, according to my mom, it was easy for me to love the snow because "[I] didn't have to drive in it."

Now that I'm a mom, I realize that my parents had more practical matters on their minds: How thick is the

ice on that pond? Those kids aren't sledding toward the street, are they? How many layers should the kids be wearing? Did they go to the bathroom before they put on all those layers?

As parents, we can all use a few tips when it comes to winter and kids. Even families who live in warmer climates often travel to see snow. So, I checked with the American Academy of Pediatrics, Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital in New Haven, Conn., and the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in Ohio for some tips on keeping kids safe during winter's coldest months.

Keeping kids cozy

- **Think layers:** The rule of thumb for older babies and young children is to dress them in one more layer

of clothing than an adult would wear in the same conditions. Clothing for older kids during very cold weather should include thermal long johns, turtlenecks, one or two shirts, pants, sweater, coat, warm socks, boots, gloves or mittens, and a hat.

- **Keep your baby warm — and safe — at night:** Blankets, quilts, pillows, sheepskins and other loose bedding may contribute to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and should be kept out of an infant's bed. A one-piece sleeper is preferred.

- **Avoid hypothermia:** This condition develops when a child's temperature falls below normal due to exposure to cold. It often happens when a youngster is playing outdoors in extremely cold weather without wearing proper clothing. As hypothermia sets in, the child may shiver and become lethargic and clumsy. His speech may become slurred and his body temperature will decline. If you suspect your child is hypothermic, call 911 at once. Until help arrives, take the child indoors, remove any wet clothing and wrap him in blankets or warm clothes.

- **Prevent frostbite:** Frostbite develops when the skin and outer tissues become frozen. Fingers, toes, ears and nose are most at risk, and they may become pale, gray and blistered. The child may complain that his skin burns or has become numb. To protect against frostbite, set reasonable time limits on outdoor play. Have children come inside periodically to warm up. Young children should be checked every half hour when playing outside in cold weather. If frostbite occurs, bring the child indoors and place the frostbitten parts of her body in warm — not hot — water. Warm washcloths may be applied to frostbitten areas. Do not rub the frozen areas. After a few minutes, dry and cover the child with clothing or blankets. Give him something warm to drink. If the numbness continues for more than a few minutes, call your doctor.

- **Don't forget sunscreen and lip balm:** The sun's rays can still cause sunburn in the



winter, especially when they reflect off snow. Make sure to cover your child's exposed skin with sunscreen.

Avoiding winter health woes

•Nix nosebleeds: If your child suffers from winter nosebleeds, try using a cold-air humidifier in his room at night. Saline nose drops may help keep tissues moist. If bleeding is severe or recurrent, consult your pediatrician.

•Don't bathe baby too often: Many pediatricians feel that bathing two or three times a week is



The rule of thumb for older babies and young children is to dress them in one more layer of clothing than an adult would wear in the same conditions.

enough for an infant's first year. More-frequent baths may dry out the skin, especially during the winter. (After all, you're already cleaning certain areas with every diaper change, right?)

•Wash up to fight winter colds and the flu: Despite old wives' tales to the contrary, cold weather does not cause colds or the flu. But, both tend to be more common in the winter, when children are in school and are in closer contact with each other. Frequent hand washing and teaching your child to sneeze or cough into his elbow may help reduce the risk of catching and spreading colds and the flu.

Keeping winter sports safe

•Ice skating: Allow children to skate only on approved surfaces. Check for signs posted by local police or recreation departments, or call your local police department to find out which areas have been approved. Advise your child to skate in the same direction as the crowd, avoid darting across the ice, never skate alone and not chew gum or eat candy while skating, to avoid the risk of choking.

•Skiing and snowboarding: Helmets are recommended. Kids should be taught by a qualified instructor in a program designed for children. They should never ski or snowboard alone and young children should always be supervised

by an adult. Older children's need for adult supervision depends on their maturity and skill. If they are not with an adult, they should at least be accompanied by a friend. They should never ski or snowboard alone. Snowboarders should wear gloves with built-in wrist guards. Children under the age of 7 should not snowboard.

•Sledding: Helmets are recommended, although no specific sledding helmet is available, so wear a properly fitted helmet designed for higher impact. Keep sledders away from motor vehicles. Supervise young children and keep them separated from older kids.

Instruct children to sled feet-first or sitting up instead of lying down, head-first. Use steerable sleds, not snow disks or inner tubes. Sledding slopes should be free of obstructions, should be covered in snow (not ice), should not be too steep (a slope of less than 30 degrees) and should end with a flat runoff. Kids should avoid sledding in overcrowded areas, and should never ride a sled being pulled by a moving vehicle. To stop a sled kids should drag their feet or make a sharp turn. Discourage them from stopping a sled by steering into a snow bank, since snow could be hiding dangers such as sharp rocks or branches. Teach them to roll off a sled that's sliding out of control.

•Snowmobiling: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under the age of 16 not operate snowmobiles and that children under age 6 never ride on snowmobiles. For parents who choose to allow their older child to ride with an adult: Do not use a snowmobile to pull a sled or skiers. Wear goggles and a safety helmet approved for use on motorized vehicles such as motorcycles and travel at safe speeds. Stay on marked trails, away from roads, water, railroads and pedestrians.

Kathy Sena is a freelance journalist specializing in health and parenting issues and is the mother of a 15-year-old son. Visit her blog at www.parent-talktoday.com.

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Talking 'Headz'

Park Slope author's 'Spaceheadz' series follows its own rules

BY CHUCK O'DONNELL

Michael K is on a mission to help three aliens save the world.

They call themselves Spaceheadz, and they've come to P.S. 858 in Brooklyn for his help in getting 3.14 million and one kids to say they are Spaceheadz — or else "Earth gets turned off."

As if this isn't an impossible task already, Michael K's efforts are hampered by the fact that two of the aliens, Bob and Jennifer, walk around with perpetual grins, eat pencils and kitty litter and speak only in commercial jingles, advertising slogans and pro wrestling parlance that have traveled from our TVs on airwaves to their planet.

Oh, and the third Spacehead, Major Fluffy, speaks primarily hamster.

If you think this sounds like the plot of a Jon Scieszka book, you're right!

In Scieszka's "Spaceheadz, Book #2!", out now, Michael K enlists the help of two of his tech-savvy fifth-grade classmates, Venus and TJ, to get the word out.

Still, how are they going to sign up all those Spaceheadz, help the kindergarten class put on a play, avoid the bumbling Agent Umber from the Anti-Alien Agency and hide the whole thing from his mom, dad and the school's faculty?

Park Slope's Scieszka has thrown out the operator's manual in this series, aimed at readers ages 7 to 10. Some chapters are a few sentences long. Some sentences trail off and pick up in the next chapter. Some chapters are written in hamster squeaks, others are upside down. There's this weird alien language subtitle to each chapter. A few of the pages are just a random collage of black-and-white stickers proclaiming "SPHDZ" — the book's way of referring to Spaceheadz.

Brooklyn Family sat down with Scieszka to learn more about this wacky series.

Brooklyn Family: You're drawing attention to the fact that kids



are inundated with advertising slogans and commercials every day. What moved you to shine a spotlight on this?

Jon Scieszka: I've always been interested in reading, literacy and storytelling. But just seeing how the 21st century world works made me realize that kids need to be more than literate today. They need to be fully media literate. Actively involving kids in becoming media literate is the very heart of the whole Spaceheadz experience.

BF: Why does Michael K feel compelled to help Bob, Jennifer and Major Fluffy, although they're strangers and they've basically ruined his fifth-grade social status?

JS: Like most kids, Michael K wants to be liked, and he wants to have friends. He is initially thrown together with what he thinks are the weird kids in class. But he comes to find out that these kids, even though they truly are from another planet, are real and true friends.

BF: You could almost feel Michael K squirm when he's unexpectedly called on by Mrs. Halley. And your ears almost ring as the kindergarteners overrun Michael K and his friends. What is your secret to writing vivid scenes?

JS: Having been an elementary school teacher, I have been in those scenes. In my writing, I do my best to get every detail right. And I think

one of the best compliments I ever got was from a reader who said, "I felt like I was right there."

BF: Why did you go against the conventional way of making a chapter book?

JS: The Spaceheadz have learned everything they know about Earth from watching TV and absorbing radio, computer and microwave emissions. So their story is told in Spaceheadz style, and that style very consciously mimics multi-strand, cut-and-jump TV narratives. Pages from Michael K's favorite science book appear in between chapters. The subjects of the science pages (camouflage, network structures, swarm intelligence, the wave nature of energy, etc.) add a fun, factual harmony that supports the fictional storyline.

The chapter where Spaceheadz's Major Fluffy (who has chosen to disguise himself as the class hamster) explains everything (in hamster) is one of the best chapters I have ever written. I read it to every audience. Just to see how long I can read "eeks" and "squeaks" before someone stops me. And the great news about Major Fluffy is that he speaks many languages. He speaks a chapter of dog in Book #2. He speaks a chapter of baby in Book #3. And who knows what he might speak in Book #4? I also love that I got to title the four books in true Spaceheadz style: "Spaceheadz Book #1!", "Spaceheadz Book #2!", "Spaceheadz Book #3!", and possibly something even stranger for Book #4.

BF: There's an interactive element to the book. Just as the kids are trying to get people to sign up at their website, you've offered, what, three Spaceheadz-related websites? How did you intend for them to be used?

JS: The digital, interactive element is actually fully half of the storytelling. There are websites, blogs, videos, ads, homemade commercials and, most importantly, the SPHDZ.com website that Michael K builds to collect 3.14 million and one more Spaceheadz to save the world.

When you read Spaceheadz, you actively become a Spacehead. You

sign up more Spaceheadz. You create Spaceheadz stories. You create Spaceheadz art. You create Spaceheadz ads and commercials. Kids become creative producers, instead of just passive consumers.

The world of Spaceheadz digital is created and maintained by fellow Brooklynites: my writer-daughter Casey Scieszka and her illustrator boyfriend Steven Weinberg. And I have to say they are brilliant at it. They live in the digital world. They know how the Spaceheadz would use it. And they create pieces as models to show Spaceheadz kids how to be creators (of text, audio, video, etc.) in the same way. This is also a perfect reason to give Major Fluffy a blog and a Twitter account where he blogs and tweets, in hamster of course.

BF: The enlistment numbers are going up at about the same rate as the plot. We are slowly learning more and more about Bob and Jennifer. We find out they are waves that need to watch a certain amount of TV each day to hold their human form. We get a glimpse at their "home." We learn that they are kindergartners. How do you know how much to reveal and when to reveal it? Will they ever get the 3.14 million and one SPHDZ?

JS: The full Spaceheadz story will be told over the course of four print books with new websites and digital pieces and online content that evolves out of the story. I just finished Book #3 for next spring. Book #4 to follow in the fall. The Spaceheadz mission is to create a social network of 3.14 million and one creative, media-literate Spaceheadz kids. I'm sure they can do it. But I am worried about a few characters who seem a little too anxious for the Spaceheadz to succeed. I wonder what they are up to.

BF: You mentioned that you threw all of your favorite places in Brooklyn into the story. Can you point out a few?

JS: The school the Spaceheadz invade is a combination of P.S. 58 on Smith Street and PS 39 on Sixth Avenue. I've been to both schools, and was inspired by their kids. Book #1 is dedicated to the class of PS 58 fifth graders, their teachers and principal — all who heard the earliest version of the Spaceheadz story and helped me refine it. Park Slope pizza places, junk shops, toy stores, donut shops, grocery stores, appliance stores, streets, stoops, brownstones, and the

particular neighborhood connectedness are featured in all the books. I've lived in Park Slope for 30 years, raised my kids here, and with my job as a writer could really live almost anywhere in the world. But I love Brooklyn. It has the craziest mix of people and the best kind of real community. I think that is why the Spaceheadz decided to invade here.

BF: You've been a proponent of a literacy program aimed at boys. Was it something that first struck you during your time as an elementary school teacher?

JS: "Guys Read" came out of my experience growing up with all boys, teaching elementary school with almost all women, and working in a business (children's books) that is mostly women. I know that boys are capable of being great readers. But I saw so many choosing not to. I just had see if I could make a difference. I actually taught on the Upper East Side. I taught First through Eighth [grade] over the course of 10 years.

BF: What has been the most fun aspect of making the books?

JS: SPHDZ has been so much fun — from the very beginning of the



"Actively involving kids in becoming media literate is the very heart of the whole Spaceheadz experience."

idea to have three not-too-sharp aliens come and invade Brooklyn. The stories almost write themselves. If you walk around and look at our world through the eyes of someone new to all of this, you would think humans are nuts. The slogans and jingles and ads are all real. And I love to ask kids to watch commercials as if they were from another planet. You do that, and you really have to wonder, as the Spaceheadz do, what Charmin toilet paper is all about. It is, apparently, something that makes large colorful bears happy because it is ultra-strong and ultra-soft.

For more information, visit www.sphdz.com.



Everyday battles

Strategies for
being a better
parent to an
ADHD kid

BY CINDY GOLDRICH, ED.M.

Do you feel as if your day never ends and you are constantly on alert? Living with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is not easy for the child with ADHD, the siblings, or the parents. The environment that surrounds the family of a child with ADHD is often full of stress and chaos.

So, how can you, as the parent, stay grounded, alert, and ready to deal with each day's new challenges? It isn't easy, but there are certain steps you can take to make the road a little more smooth and manageable.

Take comfort in the fact that you can cope and thrive by following these guidelines:

Understand ADHD

ADHD is a complex condition. There is so much more to know and truly understand beyond the diagnosis. Most people recognize the main traits of impulsiveness, hyperactivity and inattentiveness, but few realize that having ADHD often involves other character traits, such as impaired sense of time, emotional dysregulation, and difficulties with short-term memory, to name just a few. There are also a number of common coexisting conditions that often occur, such as learning disabilities, anxiety and sleep disorders.

Each person's ADHD manifests itself differently, and, as in all areas of life, knowledge is powerful. Knowing what goes along with your child's

ADHD allows you to make decisions based on facts. It is helpful to communicate your needs and that of your child to others who interact with him. You must also be prepared to answer to the naysayers who still profess that ADHD is just an excuse for laziness, poor parenting, and an overly-stimulating society.

Agree on rules

Make sure you and your spouse, or any other significant caretakers, are all in agreement, and working together, regarding how you work with your child. One of the greatest roads to discord and chaos is when a child has different or inconsistent rules and expectations placed upon him. Many children, and especially those with ADHD, will look to test limits. By

having consistent rules and expectations established, there is less room for chaos and confusion.

The most important key is to stay calm and let the rules do the talking. Don't allow yourself to enter into a debate unless it's truly an open issue and you can have a constructive conversation about it. Bear in mind, though, that each child is different and needs different parenting. It can be very tricky to establish and maintain appropriate guidelines and boundaries for your children, especially as they mature. If you are unsure about what reasonable and appropriate structures to put into place, or are having difficulty following through on the plan, outside support and guidance might be helpful.

Have a support system

Surrounding yourself with a support system is not just about having friends and family to spend time with. The support you need is from people with whom you can share some of the true stresses and strains life with your child brings about. Your friend with whom you enjoy shopping may be a fun and interesting person and may truly care about you, however, this same person may not, for now, be the person with whom you want to share the challenges you and your child face. Perhaps she has a child who is your child's age and you want to respect your child's privacy. Or, perhaps, this friend doesn't quite understand your struggles and you are not yet ready, or able, to help her understand.

Find other parents, perhaps through your local support group, or your school's Special Education Teacher Association, with whom you can let your hair down and share war stories. It may relieve stress and give you needed support as well.

Take time for yourself

Notice how your day is spent. Is there any time that you have that is not about everyone else? Realistically, it is neither easy nor practical to have an abundance of time to devote to yourself while you are raising a family. However, there are two solid reasons why you must take care to pay attention to yourself. First, to avoid emotional burnout and physical illness, you

One of the greatest roads to discord and chaos is when a child has different or inconsistent rules and expectations placed upon him.

should take some time to let your mind truly take a break from your daily demands. Just as a person training for a distance run will take walk breaks at intervals, you will recharge your emotional and physical battery if you take true breaks.

Second, it is always important to recognize that you are, at all times, modeling how to be an adult to your child. It is valuable for him to see that you have interests and needs, and that you know how to take care of yourself. Take up knitting, running, or some activity that you do independent of being a parent. Try to find a way to have your spouse, your family, or a friend, watch over your children for a short while.

Have fun

Finally, one of the best ways to fight the fatigue that often goes along with raising a child who has ADHD is to have fun with your child. Set the stage by explaining that this is your special time together to just enjoy being together. Let your child choose an activity that you can agree upon. Keep the time limited to about half an hour when it can be one-on-one time. Don't worry about teaching or accomplishing anything. Just enter his world and be with him. The more you can build upon the positive experience with your child, the more you can build a connection between the two of you that will lead to his trust and growth in the years to come.

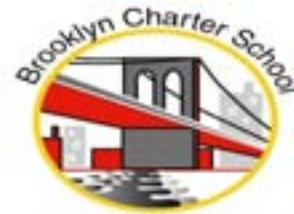
Cindy Goldrich, Ed. M., is a parent and teen coach with a specialty in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) coaching. She helps parents learn specific strategies to help their children thrive independently and successfully. She works directly with teens to help them create the structure, time management and goal-setting skills they need. She also lectures and runs a parent coaching workshop series. Visit www.PTSCoaching.com for more information.

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Avoiding frostbite

My family and I just returned from a ski trip to Colorado. Although the weather seemed nice, the ski patrol warned us about frostbite. Does frostbite occur that easily?

Frostbite, one of the hazards of winter recreation, occurs when the skin or extremities are exposed to extremely cold temperatures. Children are particularly susceptible to frostbite. It can happen quickly and people sometimes mistake early indications of frostbite for the discomfort associated with exposure to the cold. Frostbite, however, can cause permanent damage and, in severe cases, amputation of the affected area is the only treatment.

Frostbite begins with extreme redness, followed by a loss of feeling and color in the affected area. Frostbite usually shows up on the extremities — the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers or toes. It's important, though, that people get out of the cold or protect any exposed skin at the first signs of redness or pain. Those with reduced blood circulation are at increased risk for developing frostbite.

People who have been out in the cold and suspect symptoms of frostbite should seek medical care immediately. Hypothermia, a potentially life-threatening drop in body temperature, often goes hand-in-hand with frostbite. Trained medical personnel will be able to watch for hypothermia as well as treat frostbite.

If medical attention is not readily available, a person who suspects frostbite should take shelter in a warm room as soon as possible and immerse the frostbitten area in warm — not hot — water. The temperature should be comfortable to the touch for unaffected parts of the body. If possible, have someone else test the water temperature. If warm water is not available, the affected body part can also be warmed by using unexposed skin — such as placing affected fingers under your armpits to warm them.

A common misconception associated with frostbite treatment is to massage or rub snow over the exposed skin. This will only cause



additional damage. Heating pads, heat lamps or the heat of stoves, fireplaces or radiators for warming should also be avoided. The affected skin is most likely numb, and can be easily burned.

Dressing appropriately for outdoor activity is the best way to avoid frostbite altogether. Make sure children wear a scarf or knit mask to cover the face and mouth, and goggles if they're skiing or snowboarding. Coats should have sleeves that are snug at the wrist, and mittens are preferable to gloves, because they use the heat of fingers more effectively.

In addition, staying dry is important because dampness or excess perspiration increases heat loss. So for activities where a child is exposed to snow, a waterproof parka or jacket is important.

Layering several light fabrics such as wool, silk or polypropylene retains more body heat than one heavy layer of cotton.

Finally, do not ignore shivering. It's an important first sign that the body is losing heat. Persistent shivering is the body's way of saying it's time to take a break from wintry weather and head back indoors.

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How to break your family's bad habits

Replace your old ways with healthy ones this year

BY SHARON MILLER CINDRICH

The kids do their homework on their way to piano lessons, your family meal is often eaten in front of the TV, and the floor of the family room is covered with shoes, game pieces, and newspapers. Most families don't strive to serve fro-

zen TV dinners every night or purposely ignore the clutter that builds up at home. But busy schedules, growing kids, and any change in lifestyle can trigger the onset of a bad habit. So, how do we teach our kids good habits in the midst of all our bad ones?

"It's really not the kids that are the issue," says Laura Gauld, a parent of three, who coordinates national parenting workshops derived from her book "The Biggest Job We'll Ever Have." "Once we get parents where they need to be, their children will be inspired

by their parents' growth."

Gauld's book is built around 10 core beliefs on how families can find a balance between character and achievement, and offers families strategies to tackle their most difficult family challenges.

"What we try to do is help parents focus on themselves as the primary teachers and the home as the primary classroom," says Gauld, who adds that families who can confront their bad habits can



change their ways and influence their children.

Recognize any of these bad habits in your family? If so, try these suggestions for turning them around:

Bad habit: The kids eat in the car on the way to soccer practice, standing at the kitchen counter, or in front of the TV. "We can't beat ourselves up for being on the go, but the action of making an effort to sit down as a family, even once or twice a week, is really up for success," says Gauld.

New habit: Plan family meal times and make an effort to sit down together at least half the nights each week. Have kids help find Crockpot recipes or easy soup and sandwich menus they can help prepare and cook. Assign each family member a task (Dad is in charge of dessert, Mom makes the main course, and the kids can place biscuits on a pan, set the table or pour the beverages). Turn

off the phone, light candles, bring out the china, and make it special at least once a week.

Bad habit: Mom works late most nights, Dad is drowning in home improvements, and Junior is signed up for five extracurricular activities. "We aren't very good at saying 'no,'" says Gauld. "But when you get going and put too many things on your calendar, you become a slave to that schedule and no one is served."

New habit: Families need to schedule time for each other. Before your monthly agenda books up, set aside some time for R & R in permanent marker, just like you would for one of your other obligations. Making a commitment to zone out in front of the TV together, read a book at night or play a family game of Monopoly is just as important as any meeting you have during the week.

Bad habit: You drive to school, the grocery store, even your neighbor's home just two blocks away. The kids could walk home from a friend's house, but they call you for personal limo service every time.

New habit: Each time you set off on an excursion, ask your fam-

ily if you can walk instead. Encourage children to walk to school, the park, even to the convenience store for a gallon of milk to keep your family exercising and teach kids to appreciate the ride. If you have to drive, build in some extra time, park halfway to your destination, and get some fresh air as you walk across the parking lot.

Bad habit: Dad's birthday came and went. Your anniversary passed by without a card. It's easier to deal with the guilt of missing special days than the pressure of planning a big celebration. "Some of the most special things are done when people work together," comments Gauld, who adds that the achievement culture drives us to think that special events need to be big.

New habit: Think small when planning a party and ask for help from other family members. Develop a family celebration day that fits into everyone's schedule each month to honor special events: anniversaries, sports victories, birthdays, and good grades.

Bad habit: The dining room table is stacked with papers. The fish tank is dirty, and you can't see the floor in the children's rooms. "The home needs to be a cherished place," says Gauld, who notes that the home is often treated as a way station. "There is a principle of ownership and respect for our things that we need to teach," and parents need to lead the way for kids.

New habit: Dedicate one or two hours each weekend to a whirlwind tidy-fest. Get kids together, turn on music and hand out assignments. Dust and vacuum bedrooms, clean out backpacks and briefcases, and organize your closet so you'll have clean clothes for the coming week. Each time, add one major chore — like raking leaves or organizing the toy chest — that the whole family can do together.

Sharon Miller Cindrich is the author of the "American Girl" books "A Smart Girl's Guide to the Internet," "A Smart Girl's Guide to Style" and the column "Plugged In Parent." Learn more at www.pluggedinparent.com.

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The parochial school education

Your guide to getting the most out of a Catholic school

Every child is a unique gift from God. Similarly, while all Catholic schools share a common mission as part of the Church's educational ministry, every Catholic school is a unique community.

As a parent or guardian, one of your most important responsibilities is to choose a school that "fits" your child's personality and learning needs, as well as your family's practical needs and educational priorities.

In electing to send your child to a Catholic school, you have already made some very important choices. Most importantly, you have chosen to blend your child's academic and spiritual development in accordance with the educational mission and ministry of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.

A vital premise underlying that mission is that every child has

strengths, talents, and interests to be encouraged and developed. Equally important is the commitment to an educational approach that nurtures "the whole child" in an environment of spiritual development, academic excellence, moral values, respect and safety. Catholic schools provide that environment, treating each child as a special "gift" that will flourish with individual care and attention.

Keep in mind that tuition costs do vary from school to school. While financial assistance is often available, it is important to consider how much of your family's budget will be dedicated to education. Remember to consider other costs such as supplies, school uniforms and fundraising requirements.

All Catholic schools provide an opportunity for children to grow

in their faith and develop personal spirituality. How does your family practice the faith, and what do you want the school's role to be in the spiritual growth and development of your child? What opportunities does the school provide for students to learn about their faith? What opportunities do students have to pray and to receive the sacraments? What opportunities do students have to be involved in Christian service? What is the relationship between the school and the parish? What values does your family hold that you want the school to reinforce? What type of educational philosophy and priorities does the school possess? How does the school involve families?

If your child has any special educational needs, you'll want to make sure that any school you consider has the necessary resources to meet

those special needs.

Once you have considered your family's practical and philosophical needs, you should develop a list of schools that "qualify" and have a solid idea of the values and special services your family requires.

Depending on how many schools "qualify," you may want to narrow your list down to a few "target" schools that you will investigate and evaluate more thoroughly.

Choosing the right school can be a big project, so let's simplify it by starting with the basics. That means deciding what your family's values and priorities are when it comes to education. There are two main areas to consider: practical issues and philosophical issues.

The practical issues are things like location and cost. The philosophical

Continued on page 40



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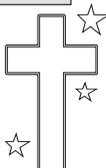
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Continued from page 38

issues are value oriented, such as opportunities to grow in faith, strong academic programs, and the overall school climate.

Some simple things to look for that can help you build your foundation based on practical and philosophical considerations include choosing a school that is located conveniently near either your home or work. While not all parish elementary schools require the family to be a registered member of the parish, most Catholic families do send their children to their parish school.

Some areas to explore include:

- What are the principal's priorities and goals for students?
- What goals do teachers have for their students?
- How does the principal interact with teachers, students and parents?
- What is the principal's educational philosophy? Is he or she knowledgeable about current educational practices and trends?
- Does the principal seem open to questions, and are the responses direct

and empathetic?

- How does the school communicate with its families? How often?
- Ask for any newsletters or calendars that the school distributes to families. These will help you get an idea of what types of activities are held throughout the year.
- What does the school/principal view as the parents' role in education?
- What are the teachers' qualifications? Do any teachers specialize in teaching particular subjects or providing particular services?
- What indicators of parent satisfaction does the school have? What proportion of parents express satisfaction with the school?
- There are several ways that you can get valuable information about your "target" schools:
 - To get a general introduction to the school, schedule a meeting with the school's principal.
 - To learn how the school community works on a daily basis, you'll want to visit classrooms and talk with teachers.
 - To get a parent's perspective, talk to other parents who have children in the school.
 - What is the registration and enrollment procedure? Are there any special requirements?

- How many students are enrolled in the school?
- How many children are in each classroom? What is the ratio of classroom teachers to students?
- Does the school offer before- and after-school care programs?
- Is transportation available for students who need to go to an off-site before- and after- care program?
- What is the school's behavior code? How are disciplinary problems handled? Ask for a copy of the current parent handbook.
- Are parents welcome to visit their children's classrooms? Is an appointment needed?
- What opportunities do parents have to become involved in the school? How much volunteer time is asked or required of parents?
- How do parents interact with each other?
- How do the goals other parents have for their children compare with yours?
- Are there any financial requirements beyond tuition?

Other questions to ask include:

- What are the main concepts, skills, and values that will be taught at each grade?
- What proportion of students com-

plete the curriculum successfully?

- How is religion integrated into other subjects and woven into school life?
- How often are textbooks reviewed and updated?
- What role does technology play in the students' learning? Is there a computer lab? A science lab for older students?
- Are art and music treated as important subjects in the curriculum?
- Are there programs and services for children with special needs, both for students who are academically talented and for students who have difficulty learning?
- How do teachers address students' individual learning styles?
- What extracurricular programs (i.e. scouts, athletics, band, etc.) are available?
- How extensive is the athletic program?
- Does the instructional program provide for the interests and needs of your child?
- How does the school foster growth and development in children, regardless of the level at which they begin?

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Parents with younger kids might think that the parents with teens are sleeping at the wheel. Did we not see that our teenagers left in this state? Most of us probably did, but we've given up on this one. Or, maybe some of us shoved a jacket in our teen's hand as he ran out the door, but it was instantaneously stuffed in the backpack. Are you frustrated with your teen's apparent ignorance when it comes to the weather? Does he don shorts in late February? Some parents feel that at this point in our children's lives, there are more important things to grouse about.

What's up with this?

Why don't teens like to wear jackets? I've heard varying responses from my own teens, including: "They don't fit in the locker," "The bus is hot," "It's just another thing to carry," "It's not cool," and so on. Most of my friends have heard the same sorts of stories.

And now, even retailers have caught on. Many of the stores that cater to teens now carry heavy sweatshirts lined with fur. They call them "sweat jackets," which satisfies both the parent and the teen — not to mention sales at the stores!

Whose problem is it anyway?

When you feel the need to say something that you know will lead to an argument, think to yourself: Does this problem directly affect me?

"Pick your battles. Know when



to let go and when to take a stand," advises Evonee Weinhaus, LCSW, LPC, a therapist, communications coach, and co-author of "Stop Struggling with Your Teen" and the award-winning "Stop Struggling with Your Child" (Penguin USA).

In the case of your teen not wanting to wear a coat when it's cold, it doesn't affect you, says Weinhaus.

However, if you can't stand watching your teen go out the door sans jacket, Weinhaus says you should avoid nagging and giving in.

"Check the weather report for the day. If it is under a certain temperature, alert your teen and say something simple like, 'I hope you wear a jacket today, but I realize it is you

who will be cold, not me,'" she says. "Hand your teen a jacket. What is important is to use motion, not emotion. Don't talk, just act."

You should take control, says Weinhaus. Meaning, control of the problem, not your teen.

Let it go

Let him be cold. His doctor will tell you that being cold doesn't cause a winter virus. If we're truthful with ourselves, there has been a time or two when we've opted out of the jacket thing as well. I know I've gone without one on formal occasions when I just didn't have the coat that worked with the fancy dress. So, don't bother getting cranky — in 40 years or so, we'll all have sweaters on when it's 90 degrees outside!

Tips and tales

"My 14-year-old wears shorts all winter. I have to chase him out of the door with a sweatshirt! Makes me crazy!"

Paula Auringer, Kingston, NY

"I choose my battles. Kids don't get sick from not wearing jackets. If they choose not to wear a jacket and are freezing, chances are they'll wear one the next time."

Kristine Wiedemann-Williams, Hyde Park, NY

"Buy the sweatshirt with the fur, if they'll wear it! Even if you see them leave with a coat on, chances are they'll just take it off and stuff it into a locker ... or, if they drive to school, under the backseat."

Leslie Quick, Poughkeepsie, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic:

Teens and self-esteem: How do you help your teen with her "self image?"

Please send your full name, address, and brief comments to: myrnahaskell@gmail.com, or visit: <http://home.roadrunner.com/~haskellfamily/myrna>.

Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer and columnist specializing in parenting issues and children's development. She is the mother of two teenagers.

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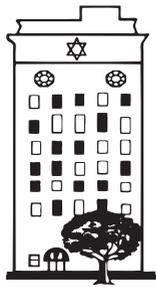
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Books of wonder

There's more
to picture
books than
meets the eye

BY DEBORAH POPE, PHD

A 5-year-old reading a picture book about traveling to another planet or befriending a dinosaur isn't wondering whether the book is challenging enough to help him get into an Ivy League college. Yet many parents are doing just that — worrying about how the books their children read now will affect their educational opportunities later.

A recent New York Times article stated that more and more parents are trying to advance their child's comprehensive skills by skipping picture books altogether and going straight to chapter books. Given the current emphasis on testing in almost all school systems, it's not surprising that so many parents feel pressured to do everything they can to give their children a com-

petitive edge. But if kids are pushed through their developmental stages too quickly, they may likely end up frustrated, discontented and even discouraged — not what any parent wants for her child.

Picture books make kids happy and help their imaginations soar. They nurture longer attention spans, cultivate the ability to follow the structure of a story, and lay the foundation for linking images with words, thus developing the “mind's eye.” Armed with this experience, children will find the leap to chapter books easier and much more fun. Because choosing the right picture books for your child is key, here are some things to consider:

How does your child learn best?

If your daughter learns best by listening, she may respond more to a book with rhymes or words that sound just like what they are describing, like “BOP!” If she is a visual kid, vivid illustrations are the perfect thing. A child who absorbs best through touch is a shoe-in for books that feature texture. Fit the book to the child and the result will be the association of reading with fun.

What does she want to be when she grows up?

Does your daughter stop to point up whenever she sees an airplane? Well then, a book about planes would be in order. A girl who loves animals might flip over a book about how animals live and how humans can protect them. Forming personal connections with books is the way to create a gateway to investigating anything and everything!

Do you like the book?

Be careful not to judge the subjects your child gravitates towards, unless you feel the topic is inappropriate. Instead, try to meet her in the middle. If your daughter loves a particular book but you feel otherwise, find something about the book that you enjoy, too.

What picture books did you like as a child? If stories by Margaret Wise Brown, Ezra Jack Keats or Rosemary Wells were among your

favorites, why not share these with your child? Reading together is one of the most meaningful activities that adult and child can do together, creating memories that are passed from generation to generation.

Will she have nightmares?

Just because a book is a best seller doesn't mean that it's right for your child, or right for her at this moment in time. Is your daughter really ready to hear a story about death and dying? Will a mystery that takes place in a haunted house give her nightmares? Or will she be afraid to go to school if she hears a story about bullying? In other words, always read the book before you read it to your child.

Give your child a day off from reading

That's right — if she wants a “no reading” day here and there, no worries. Did you know that playing house, or doctor, or firefighter, is as important to kids' success in life as learning to read? It's true! It has been found that imaginary play is the method by which children teach themselves how grown-ups interact successfully and ultimately get things done. That is why, no matter how ambitious you might be for your child's intellectual growth, you would not want to deprive her of her playtime.

• • •

Remember, picture books become friends that will last a lifetime, often resurfacing when that child needs comfort or reassurance that she has advanced since that book was the hardest she could read. So, if your fourth grader wants to go back to a treasured picture book, let her. College is how many years away? The best thing you can do is let your child build a lifelong love of reading — one stage at a time.

Dr. Deborah Pope is executive director of the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation (www.ezra-jack-keats.org), a not-for-profit founded by the award-winning picture book author and illustrator, dedicated to the support of arts and literacy programming in public schools and libraries across the country. She is also the mother of two wonderful daughters.



Brooklyn residents Sabine and Jay Goldberg share time together reading one of their favorite picture books. Adults should choose books that resonate with them in some way — the more the adult likes the book, the more meaningful his connection with the child.



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PEPINO MARINO

Prevent gay teen suicides

How to be
the difference
between life
and death

BY MONICA BROWN

The suicide of Rutgers University freshman Tyler Clementi in September — and several other young adults and teens in recent months — is anything but a distant memory. Clementi and these other young people ended their lives because of people bullying them about their sexuality.

The tragedy of these suicides, and the headlines they generated, shed

gay, bisexual, and transgender. Now, new research finds that acceptance and support from the homefront could help protect gay youth.

Support begins early

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, homosexuality is defined as the persistent sexual and emotional attraction to someone of the same sex. It is not a mental disorder, and the Academy says it is not a matter of choice.

Some parents feel deeply conflicted about having a gay teen, whether it be for religious or societal reasons. But experts say it's important for families to realize that many LGBT individuals first become aware of, and experience, their sexual thoughts and feelings during childhood and adolescence, so the support process can sometimes begin well before those difficult teenage years. It may also be helpful to recognize that societal attitudes have evolved into more accepting norms, and that can help LGBT youth feel more comfortable with their sexual orientation.

Recognize distress

Certainly, all teenagers can be moody and withdrawn at times, but LGBT youth have particular concerns that may lead them to think they are fighting an uphill battle alone. The Academy says parents need to be on the lookout when LGBT teens begin to exhibit socially isolated behavior — withdrawing from family and friends — have trouble concentrating, and act as if they have low self-esteem. The child's worries and concerns can often stem from:

- Feeling different from his peers
- Rejection and harassment by friends and family
- Discrimination when joining sports clubs, seeking admission to college, and finding employment
- Feelings of guilt about his sexual orientation
- Concerns about AIDS, HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Family acceptance

Studies suggest the attitude of

family members can also have a dramatic impact on a teen's ability to cope and to be protected.

Two years ago, a study in the journal "Pediatrics" concluded that LGBT teens and young adults — as a group — had one of the highest rates of suicide, as well as some health and mental problems, including substance abuse.

The good news is this: that very same study suggested that parental acceptance, and even neutrality, with regard to a child's sexual orientation, can play a large role in reducing that statistic.

Recently, a separate study was published in the "Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing," which found a clear link between family acceptance of LGBT youth and better overall health in adulthood. The study included 245 white and Hispanic LGBT young adults in California, ages 21 to 25, who were open about their sexual orientation to at least one caregiver during adolescence. The results? Positive family attitudes and behaviors toward LGBT teens can reduce their risk of depression, drug abuse and suicidal thoughts when they become young adults. Examples of positive parental acceptance included supporting gender expression, and advocating for children when they're mistreated because of their LGBT identity.

Families can use the media attention given to cases like Clementi's as a catalyst for discussion.

"At a time when the media and families are becoming acutely aware of the risk that many LGBT youth experience, our findings that family acceptance protects against suicidal thoughts and behaviors, depression and substance abuse, offer a gateway to hope for LGBT youth and families that struggle with how to balance deeply held religious and personal values with love for their LGBT children," said Caitlin Ryan, the director of the Family Acceptance Project at San Francisco State University.

For more on the study, visit familyproject.sfsu.edu.

Monica Brown is a cable television news anchor and freelance journalist who writes for several publications throughout the tri-state area.



some light on the fears and insecurities faced by gay youth, particularly in the era of the Internet, where, through social networking sites, their business can sometimes become everyone's business. In Clementi's case, he jumped off the George Washington Bridge after a gay sexual encounter of his was posted online by classmates.

The deaths moved a nation to act. In several states across the country, lawmakers are drafting anti-bullying legislation, and more stringent regulations on college campuses, in an effort to protect our young people — especially those who are lesbian,

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Frog for breakfast

Four tips to ensure more time for you in 2011

BY GAIL LOWNY ALOFSIN

Feeling overwhelmed? Is your schedule jam-packed? Do you find yourself lamenting, “If only I had more time?”

You are not alone. Even with 24 hours, many women still find it difficult to manage their time and choices — and can’t accomplish a great deal each day.

Luckily, time management is a learnable skill, and, as my son, Samuel, says, “Nothing begins until you start.”

So, start. Take your first steps this new year by implementing four key strategies into your life. They’re sure to create more time for you and the things you want to achieve in 2011.

Recognize your limitations

Even though you think you can — as the little engine said in that childhood classic — the reality is you can’t do it all. No matter how talented or energetic you are, you can only do so much. Initially honored when asked to join a committee, attend a

meeting or lead a school project, you later find yourself overwhelmed after that early elation.

So, before you launch into a new project, identify other projects, responsibilities or tasks you can STOP doing. Review your calendar. Ask yourself what the consequences will be if you say “yes” or “no” to the requests that are being asked of you. What is the consequence of spending time on this request rather than spending it on something else?

This is called your “opportunity cost” and, with only 24 hours in your day, you must make your decision accordingly.

Eat a frog for breakfast

“If you eat a frog first thing in the morning, this will probably be the worst thing you do all day,” said author Mark Twain.

Do you make your “to do” lists and conquer them by doing the easy tasks first? No doubt it feels good to check multiple actions off your list quickly. However, the frog (i.e. the big project that needs to be addressed) is looming. If you eat that frog earlier in the day, your day will be much more productive.

But making a “to do” list is not enough. Rank your list and focus on the most important items. I recommend A, B, C, D, E steps. Items marked with an “A” are the things you have to do today, if not right now. “Bs” are the things that you need to get done but not immediately. “Cs” would be nice to do but are not necessary. “Ds” can be delegated; and “Es” can be eliminated if you run out of time.

Learn to say ‘no’ nicely

There is a way to say “no” that does not make the person asking feel insulted or hurt.

We’ve all had times in our lives when we have said “yes” to too many things, resulting in a very full plate. While a full plate is attractive, and perhaps comforting, we want to do

our best to avoid regretting that we signed up for an activity or program for which we do not have time.

When you do say “no,” say it nicely and succinctly, without a dissertation on how busy you are. No one cares how busy you are — busy is not a contest! We all know people who rant on and on about what they are doing. In the time it takes to listen to such a speech, the person could have pitched in to help you.

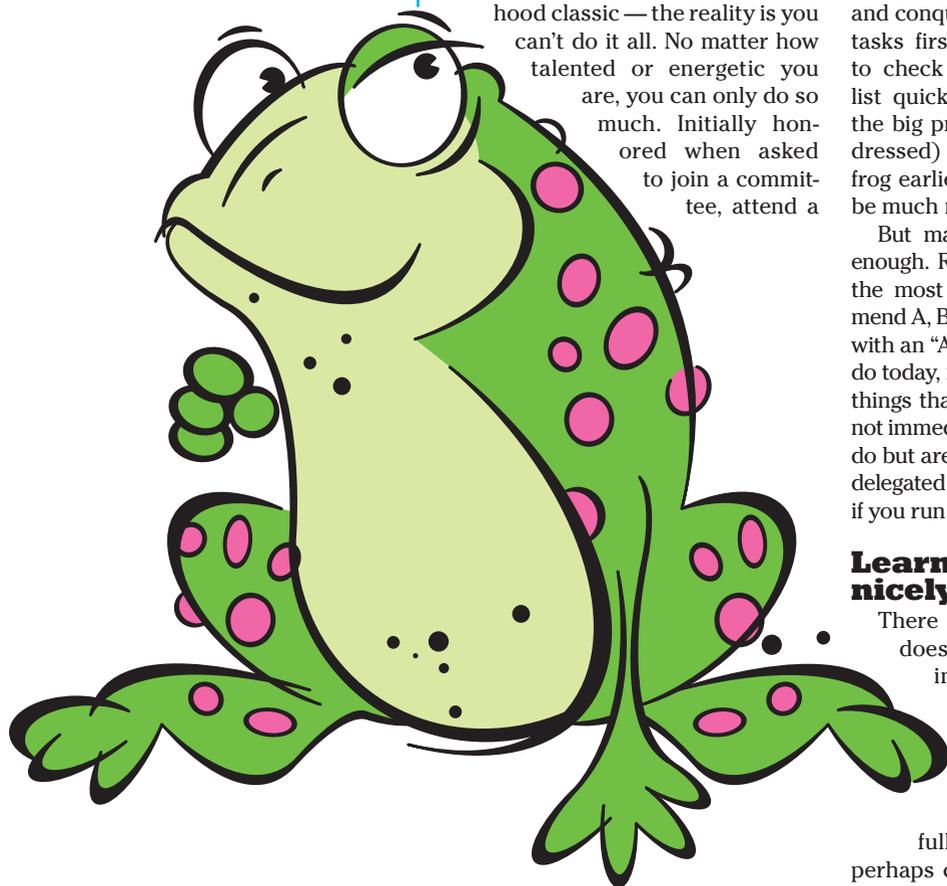
Here’s an example: As a parent, you may be asked to chair or assist with an event at your child’s school. If you don’t have a great deal of time to commit, there may be something else you can do that requires less time than what was originally requested of you. Perhaps you can procure a few great prizes for the silent auction or beverages for the event, rather than organize the entire function. Do not apologize. Just offer to do what you can.

Make appointments with yourself

Make appointments with yourself to focus on you! Carve out time for what you want or need to do and add them to your calendar. Prioritize these appointments — and activities with your family — as if they are mandatory meetings. Spend quality and focused time with your family and friends.

Any activity that is worth doing requires practice — learning an instrument, a language or how to cook. Practice time management and it will become second nature. Research shows it takes 21 days to start a new habit. Get into the habit of eating frogs, and after 21 days, it will become second nature! The result? Feeling more accomplished with the things that matter the most to you.

As a sales and marketing executive, adjunct professor, active member serving on five boards, national educational and inspirational speaker and “the best” mother and wife, Gail Lowney Alofsin practices balancing work and life on a daily basis. Between “eating frogs,” she can be reached via her website at GailSpeaks.com.





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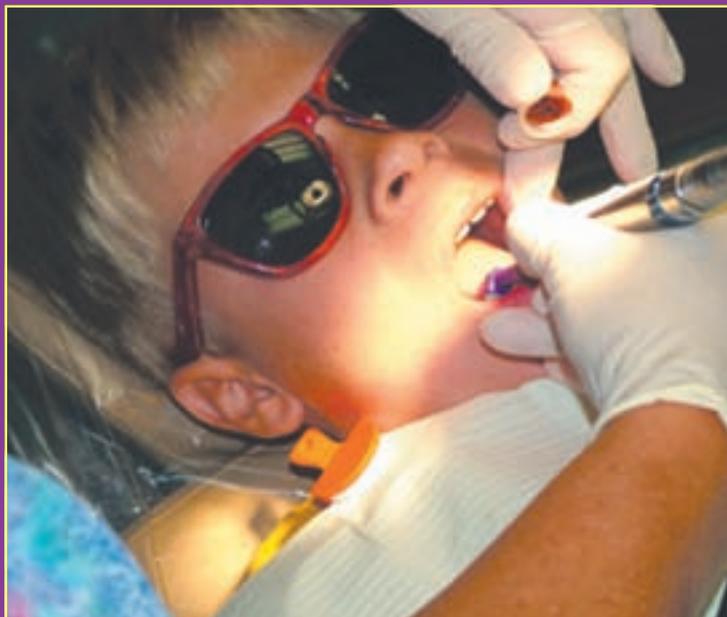


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GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

Cookie monsters?

Making sense of your child's online privacy

Should you give a child a cookie? That's the question privacy experts have been asking ever since an expose in the Wall Street Journal revealed that many popular websites for children surreptitiously download dozens of cookies and other tiny programs that track what kids are doing online.

Cookies have always been controversial. The companies that use them insist they are benign, bits of software that allow them to customize visits to their websites. That may have been

with any website. Now, Common Sense Media has asked that legal protection from tracking software be extended to anyone under 18. A full explanation of its campaign is available at www.commonsensemedia.org/privacy, but here are the highlights: Simplify privacy policies so it's easy to understand what's being collected and how it will be used. Instead of the prevailing opt-out policies, sites aimed at minors should adopt opt-in policies so teens can make deliberate decisions about sharing information.

Those ideas do sound like common sense. Unfortunately, marketers are unlikely to abandon such lucrative practices without a fight, so parents must help children think through and manage their privacy. Online privacy is easier to understand if parents differentiate between personally identifying information and personally embarrassing information, suggests Danah Boyd, a researcher at Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society. To get a grip on cookies and other tracking software, parents may also want to add personal behavior information to that list. Here are some issues that need to be considered:

Personally identifiable information

This is the information that allows someone else to identify — and locate — your child. In addition to name, address and phone number, it may include the name of your child's school or travel team. Children who aren't mature enough for social media should have a simple rule about this information: Don't give it out online without permission.

Personally embarrassing information

Once a child joins a social network, sharing some identifiable information is inevitable, though teens should use every available privacy setting on sites like Facebook. At this age, dis-

cussions should focus on information that could be embarrassing, the kind of information that will make your child — or you — cringe if it falls into the wrong hands. Talk often about how information that's shared online can take on a life of its own because other people can replicate, distribute, and search for it. Google your child so she can see what's leaking through despite her defenses.

Personal behavior information

Doing anything online leaves clues about personal interests. Marketers are eager to have this information, particularly about young people who haven't yet made firm commitments to products. In fact, the opportunity to collect information about prospective customers is part of what makes so much of the web free. Instead of paying for what a website offers with money, people pay by offering up bits of information about themselves.

If a young person understands this, she can make informed decisions about when to share information. For example, a teen searching for college information may want to see ads from similar schools. Teach your child to check for a privacy policy before using a new website. Unless there's a compelling reason, encourage your child to use the most conservative settings, if only to minimize the number of cookie crumbs clogging your computer.

Obviously, the conversation about cookies is part of a larger discussion about what kind of information should be kept private. If, as Boyd observes, privacy means having control over who knows what, parents will want to be sure their children have access to the very best privacy tools so they can decide for themselves whether they really want that cookie.

Carolyn Jabs, MA, has been writing about families and the Internet for over 15 years. She is the mother of three computer-savvy kids. Other Growing Up Online columns appear on her website www.growing-up-online.com. Copyright, 2010, Carolyn Jabs. All rights reserved.



true years ago when cookies were used primarily to remember passwords or the contents of a shopping cart.

Today, cookies are both more prevalent and more powerful, allowing marketers to target ads based on what a person does online. For adults, this might be inconsequential or even helpful. If you're researching a new car, you may be OK about seeing ads for comparable models. Yet, even adults often feel uneasy about customized advertising related to personal issues, such as weight loss or fertility.

Targeting kids raises even more concerns because their defenses against marketing aren't fully formed. The current law protects children under 13, who are supposed to get adult permission before registering

It figures

BY CYNTHIA WASHAM



JANUARY FACTS

1986 Year the Rev. Kevin Zaborney of Caro, Mich., named Jan. 21 National Hugging Day.

69 Percent of public high school teachers who support a ban on students hugging and kissing on school grounds.

6,623 Number of participants in the world record largest group hug, on Sept. 25, 2005, in Juarez, Mexico.

24 hours, one minute

Time Paul Gerrard and Sandra Brooke spent hugging in a London train station from Feb. 13-14, 2008, to set a world record.

2 Number of days 13-year-old Illinois student Megan Coulter was suspended in 2007 for casually hugging two friends at Mascoutah Middle School.

151 Average hours per month Americans spend watching TV.

60 Increase in the risk of obesity in people who watch 60 hours of TV per month.

51 Percent of adults whose biggest goal of the year is to lose weight.

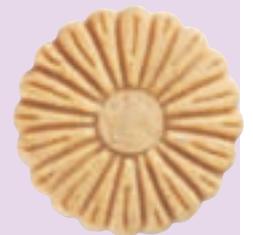
11 Percent whose biggest goal is to spend more time with family and friends.

11 Percent of children who say their greatest wish for their parents is that they "spend more time with me."



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Number of Girl Scout cookie orders 8-year-old Wild Freeborn of Asheville, NC, sold in two weeks in 2009 through a YouTube video, before the Scouts enforced its ban on online sales.



TWICE THE ADVICE

JACQUELINE AND
KERRY DONELLI

My girl's getting fat!

Dear Twins,

I know this sounds bad, but my daughter is 18 and is getting really fat. Over the holidays she ate everything in sight. I'm her dad, and a little overweight myself, but heck, I'm not looking to find a young male suitor. She gets mad and storms out if I say anything to her. What should I do?

— *The fat family*

Jacqueline says: Your daughter is at a sensitive age — the way she looks is very important to her. And I'm sure she is aware of her eating. Perhaps you should work another angle, like gently talking to her about what might be going on in her life that is causing her to dull her feelings with food. For you to tell her she's fat is only adding salt to the wound. Also, inspire her to join the gym by you doing it first. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Kerry says: I agree with Jackie. You already spoke to her about it, so there's nothing more to say. What you should do is set the example, especially since you have a weight problem, too. Doing something about it for yourself will show her that you're not a hypocrite and there are no double standards. More important, however, if she sees good results with you, this will encourage her to follow suit. Being a good role model is far more effective than badgering her to change.

Dear Twins,

At a recent PTA meeting, our daughter's teacher was speaking to all the parents in her classroom in an open discussion. It was very interesting and going very well until she said to one set of parents, "Well, at least your son and the rest of the class aren't having the same problems as Lisa M _____," who just happens to be OUR daughter. We were so embarrassed that we just walked out. Should we report her to the principal, or just let it go? — *Humiliated*

Jacqueline says: In most cases I would say talk to the teacher first



and explain how you felt and give her a chance to explain. In this case, she was completely unprofessional and damaging. I would report the incident to the principal immediately.

Kerry says: I disagree with Jackie. The reason being, I find it even more disconcerting that your daughter is having problems to begin with! While the teacher was totally and completely out of line — and you should mention that you wished she had come to you first instead of announcing it — nonetheless, I think it's much more important getting to the bottom of what's going on with your daughter. I suggest that you leave communication wide open with this woman, as you will need to continue conversing with her until your daughter's problems are resolved.

Dear Twins,

Our 16-year-old son is an excellent athlete, and has played soccer on championship teams for the last two years, but his grades have paid a price for it. His father and I finally told him that he had to maintain A and B averages in all his subjects, or we were going to pull him off the soccer team. So when his report card came, he had some As and Bs, but he had two Cs and one D. We don't want to go back on our word, but if we pull him off the team now, they probably won't win the championship this year. We feel like we're letting the whole team down! What should we do? — *Wavering*

Kerry says: You and your husband should sit down with your son and tell him your exact sentiments. Tell him you made a deal, he broke it, and

work out with him a fair agreement between the three of you. Pulling him off the team isn't going to motivate him to work any harder at school and will only leave resentment. If you act fair and reasonable and treat him like an adult, I believe he will not only appreciate you both, but will come up with a fair solution and will stick to it. Give him a chance.

Jacqueline says: I would agree that you should not go back on your word, however, this punishment will not only affect your son, but all those on the team who have worked hard all season to get this shot at the championship. Kerry is spot on; let your son decide on an appropriate punishment that you all agree upon. You will have done right by the team, without backing down on your threat of a consequence for his actions.

Dear Twins,

My husband works full-time, and I've recently had to go back to work, as finances have become very strained. We have a 4-year-old daughter who is very shy and tiny for her age. We had to put her into a daycare program, and she is just terrified every day to go there! She starts to vomit usually just as we arrive, and the ladies who run it tell me that she usually vomits at least one more time in the morning, and won't play with anyone. I know they are nice to her, as a neighbor's child goes there, and he loves it. I have to keep working, so what am I to do? She is breaking my heart. — *Broken*

Kerry says: It might just be a matter of time that she needs in order to adjust to not having mommy around all day to care for her. I suggest you get her used to being around other people, by making play dates with other children or taking her to the park to play with the other kids. You can also opt to have a nanny care for her instead of placing her in daycare.

Jacqueline says: Take the plunge and bring her to another daycare center. She doesn't like where she's going now, and her reaction to it may have more to do with that particular program than just separation anxiety from her mother. You may just be pleasantly surprised when she actually can't wait to go to daycare.

Jacqueline and Kerry Donelli, twin sisters, are multi-award winning filmmakers. They are currently getting their Masters in Mental Health and have a radio show on WBCR-AM also called, "Twice the Advice" — where one twin gives advice and, often, the other completely disagrees! Please e-mail them at TwiceTheAdvice2@gmail.com.

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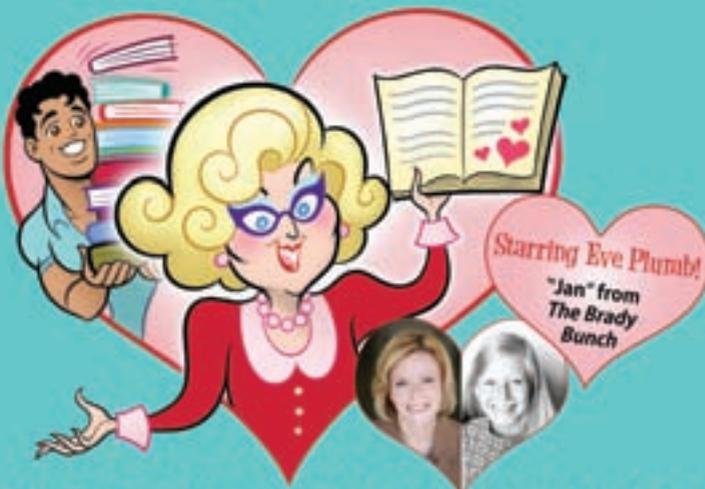
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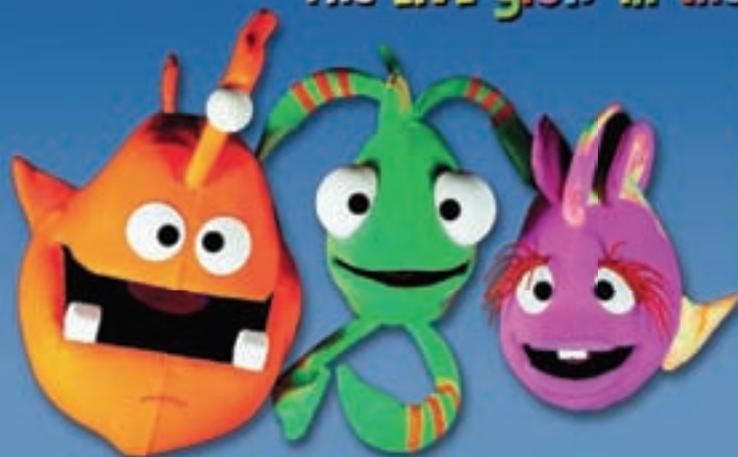
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PARENTS
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SHARON C. PETERS, MA

Hard habit to break



Dear Sharon,

My son is constantly picking his nose, and I can't get him to stop. It seems to be a nervous habit, but he's now 10 years old, and it looks terrible. Some teachers have mentioned it, and have tried to talk to him about it. Do you have any advice?

Dear Parents,

Many children — and adults — have developed at least one behavior to cope with nervousness. Biting nails, twirling hair, and cracking knuckles are a few common habits. Of course, some nervous habits, such as your son's, can offend others.

It is useful to remember that children go through stages of maturity and — more often than not — eventually grow out of nervous habits like nose picking. However, if parents want or need to help speed the process along, it is possible to do.

Unfortunately, helping someone stop a nervous habit is rarely easy. Sometimes repeated reminders are helpful, but often only for a limited period of time. Here are some suggestions that might help you and

your son sort through other possible solutions:

Parents I have worked with have begun to help their child control a nervous habit by setting aside a period of relaxed time to discuss the issue. Have some fun before beginning the “heart-to-heart.” Also, Mom and/or Dad should try to stay relaxed and uncritical if at all possible when speaking — I know, easier said than done. Weekends or vacations — when homework and everyday pressures are not the focus of attention — can support the calm atmosphere that is often needed.

It can also be useful to begin such conversations by helping the child acknowledge that a habit, such as nose picking, is one he ideally would like to stop if he could. A child's personal agreement to try and make a change is often a better starting place than a halfhearted concession to adult authority.

One way to help a child feel more in control and able to act — and less resigned and passive when con-

fronted with other people's reactions — is to ask him to propose one or two ideas that could move things forward. Children are often quite creative about strategies that might help.

Remembering the idea of “one day at a time” can also make it easier to break a habit. If a child can agree to try and stop for a short period of time — a day, week or even a few hours — a parent can offer rewards for success and the child might feel less overwhelmed about achieving the ultimate goal. The child might also notice that without the offensive behavior, it is easier for people to be around him. At that point, the accomplishment becomes its own reward.

It is often difficult for parents to be hopeful and confident about ending their child's nervous habit, especially when other adults, such as teachers, are concerned about the problem. Nevertheless, I have seen many instances when relaxed time and attention from parents have made all the difference.

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

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



OUR RELATIONSHIPS

JOAN EMERSON, PhD

Caveman cometh

How our ancient past defines our actions

BY JOAN EMERSON, PHD

Gender differences help explain why, in this age of couple's equality and open communication, we are still plagued by primitive needs from each other. Gender theories look way back to when humans belonged to tribes and lived in caves. We can picture women sitting around the fire cooking, making clothing, caring for children and sharing joys, woes and vulnerabilities with each other as the men roamed the hills, often alone, guarding against danger, and bring-

ing home the spoils from a successful hunt.

A family's survival depended on the male's ability to keep it safe and content and this is how the men were judged by the rest of the tribe and how they judged themselves. A woman's comfort came from the community, yes, but mainly from feeling valued and protected by her man and from the tribe recognizing his loyalty and attachment to her. Gender theory says those ancient dynamics are still part of our DNA and affect our behaviors and needs, resulting in clashes between our primitive and more evolved needs.

These days, women are fiercely independent and competent. Yet, they still have needs from their men which don't seem rational. What seems to be hardwired into women's brains from caveman days is a need to have a man clearly indicating ownership, pride in them, and taking a protective stance.

One of the ways this need can get filled today is for the man to simply take his woman's hand when they're out for a walk together. Although I first noticed this desire on my own and felt silly about it, I really took note when conducting couples sessions and "taking my hand when we're out walking" was often on the woman's list of easy things the guy could do to make her feel loved and cared for. When we're inside, having our man sit with his arm around us actually releases hormones that relax and calm us. Men are often not aware of the power of these acts, so I encourage women to speak up.

When it comes to men, the gender-based theory says that for a man to feel happy with himself, he needs to feel competent and successful in regard to protecting, pleasing and satisfying his mate. If he feels he can't get it right, the resulting feeling is deep shame. Not intellectually maybe, but emotionally, if a man

senses his woman's dissatisfaction with his efforts, he internalizes it as his failure and incompetence. The shame he experiences is so strong that he'd rather withdraw, attack, escape — anything but confront, or talk about this devastating feeling. The tendency in men to feel that they alone must know how to solve all problems in the family no longer makes sense in the age of equality and communication that modern marriage strives for, yet gender theory says their well-being depends on feeling success in this regard. This goes for satisfying his mate sexually, all the way to knowing how to dress the kids, and amusing the family with stories about local sports or the less-than-gripping details about his day.

If this theory is true, that the primitive part of us still wields this power (and that's what I have observed), we can try to use this awareness to meet each other's deepest needs. When it comes to a man's happiness, his woman must build his confidence and make him feel able and competent. So, for example, his wife can allow time for him to relax when he comes home from work, even though women also work, do most of the childcare, and never relax. Women can step aside when the men are caring for the children and not interfere with advice. Women can freely show affection, so that the men know they are physically pleasing. This is a true gift: behaviors that help men feel good about themselves.

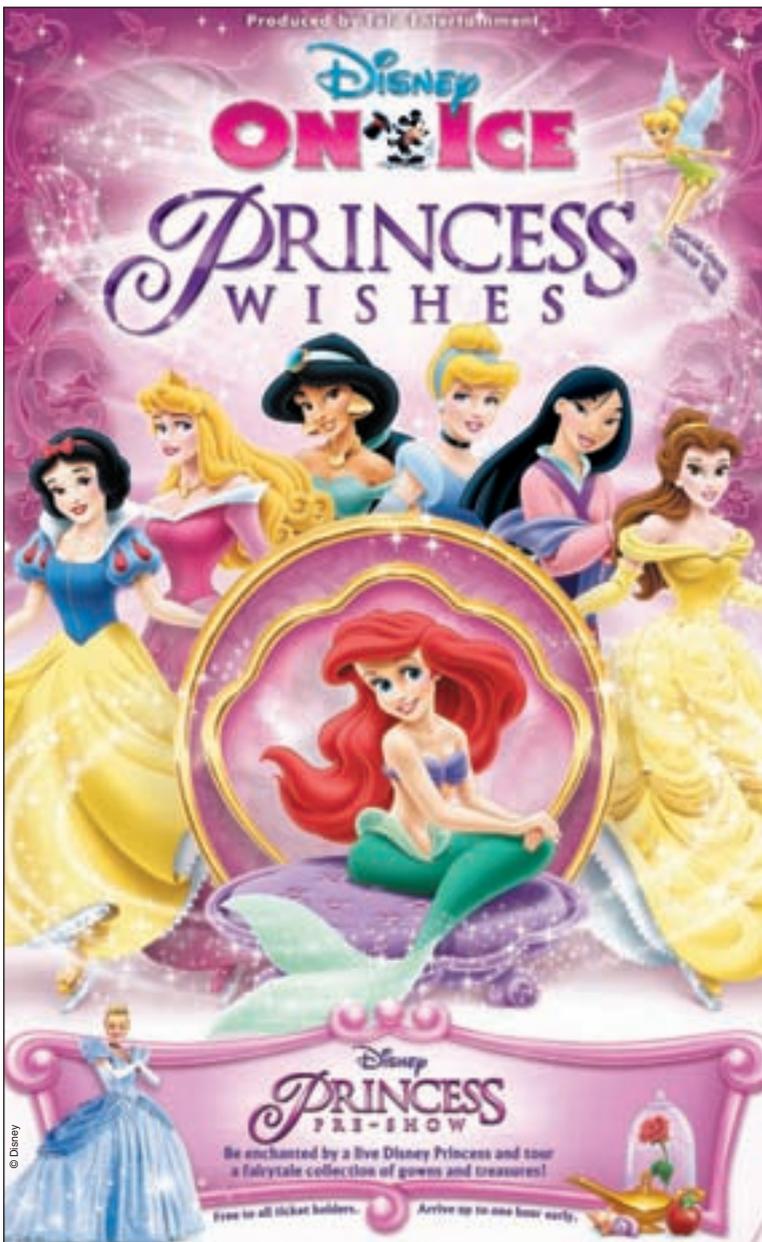
To please these deep female needs, the men can take their women out in the world and attend to them in a protective, yet affectionate way, showing the world how they value them. At home, he can invite his woman to sit next to him and reach out and hold her for a while.

Talk to each other and see how these gender differences play out in your relationship.

Dr. Joan Emerson is a New York psychologist who specializes in couples therapy. Visit her website at www.Joan-Emerson.com.



One of the ways caveman needs can get filled today is for the man to simply take his woman's hand when they're out for a walk together.



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JAN. 27* - 30

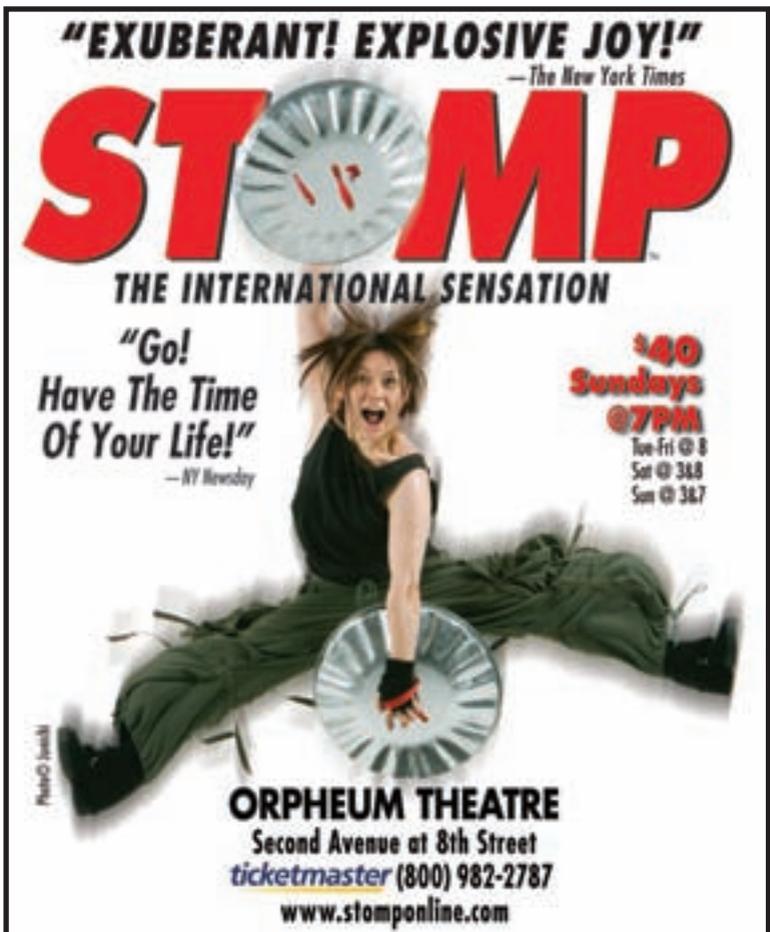


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Going Places

LONG-RUNNING

"Drawn in Brooklyn:" Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Mondays – Thursdays, 9 am–9 pm, Fridays and Saturdays, 10 am–6 pm, Sundays, 1–5 pm, Now – Sun, Jan. 23, 2011; Free.

Brooklyn-based children's book illustrators show off their favorite pieces.

Race to the End of the Earth: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5100; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am–5:45 pm; Now – Sun, Jan. 2, 2011; Donations suggested.

The exhibit recounts the most stirring tales of Antarctic exploration: the contest to reach the South Pole in 1911–1912. Highlights include photographs, paintings, and rare historical artifacts as well as actual items of clothing and tools; life-sized models of portions of Amundsen's and Scott's base camps; and a diorama featuring the largest of all penguin species alive today, the emperor penguin. There are also interactive and hands-on activities for all ages.

New York Botanical Garden

Train Show: New York Botanical Gardens, Bronx River Pkwy. (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road; (718) 817-8716; www.nybg.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 am–7 pm, Now – Sun, Jan. 2, 2011; \$20 (\$10 children, children under 2 free).

More than one dozen large-scale model trains running on nearly a quarter-mile of track along with replicas of Manhattan landmarked buildings.

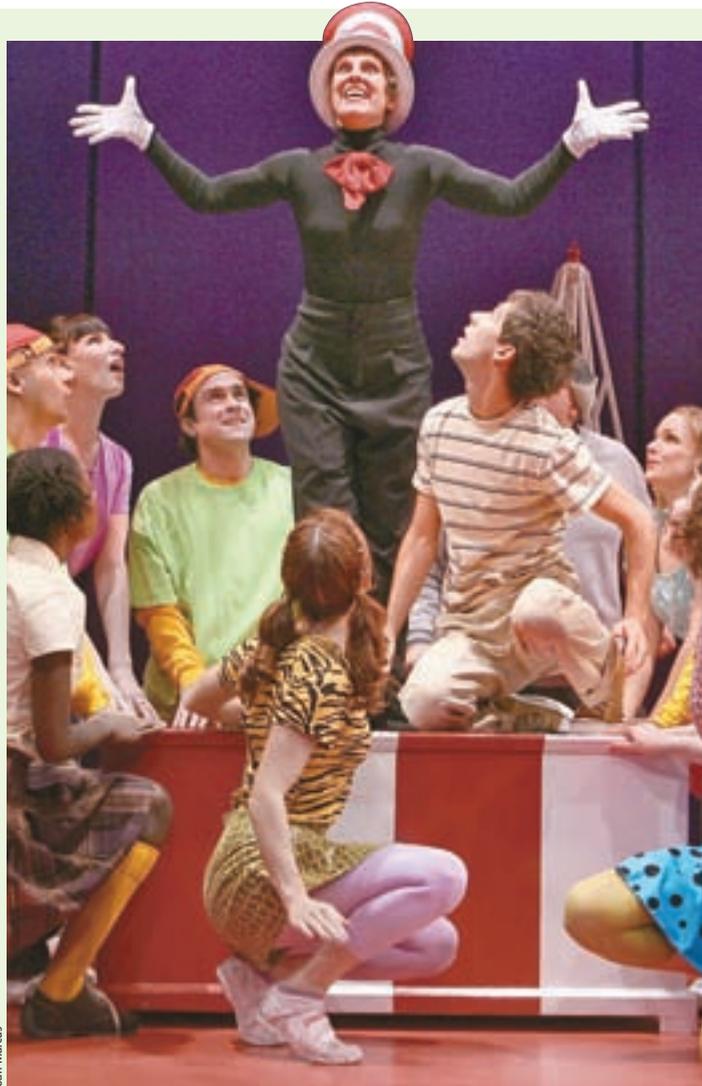
"Big Annie": PS 3 - The Bedford Village School, 50 Jefferson Ave. between Bedford and Franklin avenues; (212) 724-0677; sbt@shadowboxtheater.org; www.shadowboxtheater.org; Tuesday, Dec. 21, 10 am; Wednesday, Dec. 22, 10 am; Thursday, Dec. 23, 10:30 am; \$15.

The tale of a Creole flatboat captain and larger-than-life heroine.

PlayStation: Sheepshead Bay Library, 2636 East 14th St. between Voorhies Avenue and Avenue Z; (718) 368-1815; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Thursdays, 4 pm, Now – Thurs, Dec. 23; Free.

Join friends and play video games.

Story time for kids: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland



'Seussical,' a musical

It's Dr. Seuss classics like you've never heard them before.

In "Seussical," a musical adaptation of the beloved children's tales, the talented performers of Theatreworks USA transform into Horton the Elephant, Gertrude McFuzz, The Cat in the Hat and more familiar characters. And you can catch it with the whole family when it comes to the Brooklyn Center for the Perform-

ing Arts on Jan. 30.

Experience the fun as these beloved stories collide into one that is full of adventure and, of course, staying true to Dr. Seuss, imagination.

"Seussical" at Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts in Flatbush [2900 Campus Road and Hillel Place in Brooklyn (718) 951-4500], Jan. 30 at 2 pm. Tickets \$6, \$7 at the door. For info, visit www.brooklyncenter.com.

Submit a listing

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

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

Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com; Saturdays, 10:30 am, Now – Tues, Jan. 11, 2011.

Science power hour: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Saturdays and Sundays, 1:30 pm, Now – Thurs, Jan. 20, 2011.

Learn about nature.

Tutoring by BUPH: Rugby Library, 1000 Utica Ave. between Snyder and Tilden avenues; (718) 566-0054; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Saturdays, 2:30 pm, Free.

For ages 8 to 12 in grades one through six. Registration required.

Green quilts: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Saturdays and Sundays, Noon–4 pm, Now – Mon, Jan. 31, 2011; Free.

Featuring works that drew inspiration from recycled materials.

Winter in the Wild: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Daily, 1–3 pm, Now – Sun, Jan. 2, 2011; Free.

Children discover how squirrels get their food, how birds stay warm and other interesting stuff.

Handiwork: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; Daily, 1–3 pm, Now – Sun, Jan. 2, 2011; Free.

Children try their hand at needle-

Continued on page 58

Going Places

Continued from page 57

point or write in quill and ink.

Arts and crafts: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Saturdays and Sundays, 1–3 pm, Now – Mon, Jan. 31, 2011; Free.

Children create projects using natural materials.

Babies and books: Flatlands Library, 2065 Flatbush Ave. between Quentin Road and Avenue P; (718) 486-3365; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Mondays, 3:30 pm, Now – Mon, Dec. 27; Free.

Little ones birth to 18 months and their caregivers listen to songs.

Bedtime stories: Leonard Library, 81 Devoe St. between Metropolitan Avenue and Anslie Street; (718) 486-3365; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Mondays, 6 pm, Now – Mon, Dec. 27; Free.

Children three to eight enjoy cuddle up stories and activities.

Pre-school story time: Windsor Terrace Library, 160 East Fifth St. between Ft. Hamilton Parkway and Caton Avenue; (718) 686-9707; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Wednesdays, 10 am, Now – Wed, Dec. 29; Free.

For children three to five.

Word Play - Imaginative Storytelling: Rubin Museum of Art, 150 West 17 Street, between 6th and 7th avenues; (212) 620-5000 X 344. www.rmanyc.org; Wednesdays, 4–5 pm, Now – Wed, Dec. 29; \$10 (\$5 for museum members children; Accompanying adult free).

Children ages four to six can travel to the Himalayas with their imagination through a series of fun and interactive stories perfect for the whole family.

Textile recycling: Ft. Greene Greenmarket, Washington Park at DeKalb Avenue; (212) 788-7964; recycle@grownyc.org; Saturdays, 8 am–3 pm, beginning Sat, Jan. 1; Free.

Bring clean and dry textiles including clothing, paired shoes, towels, sheets, scarves, hats, bags and belts for reuse or recycling.

Textile recycling: McCarren Park Greenmarket, Union Ave. at N. 12th Street; (212) 788-7964; recycle@grownyc.org; Saturdays, 8 am–2 pm, beginning Sat, Jan. 1; Free.

Bring clean and dry textiles including clothing, paired shoes, towels, sheets, scarves, hats, bags and belts for reuse or recycling.

Marine mammal watch: Coney Island Beach, West 10th St and the Boardwalk; (718) 421-2021; www.ny-cgovparks.org; Daily, 11 am; Sat, Jan. 1 – Mon, Feb. 7, 2011; Free.

Watch the otters, seals and whales



Dance, dance, dance!

Master class workshops and professionally produced performances for university dance department, high school programs and Dance-wave companies arrive at the Kumble Theater of Performing Arts on Jan. 29, Feb. 5 and 6.

Kids Cafe Festival Goes to College introduces interested high school students to college dance options and brings new dancers into the dance field.

Admission to the Master Class Day on Jan. 29 is free and runs from noon to 5 pm and is only open to high school juniors and

seniors. The performances on Feb. 5 and Feb. 6, both at 3 pm, feature David Park and the Bang Group, and the premiere of Nathan Trice's "Conversations," Matthew Westerby's "A Watershed Moment," and Dedrick Anthony's "Holding 'Till Daybreak." Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for students with valid ID and \$12 for children 12 and younger.

Kumble Theater for Performing Arts at Long Island University [DeKalb Avenue at Flatbush Avenue Extension in Downtown, (718) 488-1624]. For info, visit www.kumble-theater.org.

from the beach.

Story play with First RIF: Gerritsen Beach Library, 2808 Gerritsen Ave. between Bartlett Place and Gotham Avenue; (718) 368-1435; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Mondays, 11 am, beginning Mon, Jan. 3; Free.

Children to five years old play with toys, hear stories and earn free books by reading.

Story play with First RIF: Pacific Library, 25 Fourth Ave. at Pacific Street; (718) 638-1531; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Tuesdays, 2 pm, beginning Tues, Jan. 4; Free.

Children to five years old play with toys, hear stories and earn free books by reading.

Toddler time with First RIF:

Brooklyn Heights Library, 280 Cadman Plaza W. at Tillary Street; (718) 623-7000; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Wednesdays, 1:30 pm, beginning Wed, Jan. 5; Free.

Children 18 to 36 months engage in interactive play and hear stories.

Babies and books: Flatlands Library, 2065 Flatbush Ave. at Avenue P; (718) 253-4409; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Wednesdays, 3:30 pm, beginning Wed, Jan. 5; Free.

For children birth to 18 months.

"The Ohmies, Morning Wish

Garden": The Daryl Roth Theater, 101 E. 15th St. at Park Avenue South; (212) 239-6200; ohmies.cmail1.com; Thurs-

days – Sundays, 11 am and 1:30 pm, Thurs, Jan. 6 – Sun, Jan. 30, 2011; \$36.

Children three to eight enjoy an interactive musical experience.

Story and crafts: Pacific Library, 25 Fourth Ave. at Pacific Street; (718) 638-1531; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Thursdays, 3:30 pm, beginning Thurs, Jan. 6; Free.

Children create art projects based on stories.

Tween time: Mapleton Library, 1702 60th St. at 17th Avenue; (718) 256-2117; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Thursdays, 4 pm, beginning Thurs, Jan. 6; Free.

Read, play games and listen to music.

Pre-school story time: Pacific Library, 25 Fourth Ave. at Pacific Street; (718) 638-1531; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Fridays, 10:30 am, beginning Fri, Jan. 7; Free.

Children three to five enjoy classic books and songs.

Story time: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com; Saturdays, 11 am, beginning Sat, Jan. 8; Free.

Children 3 to 8 listen to stories and enjoy age appropriate activities.

Tutoring: Rugby Library, 1000 Rugby Rd. at Avenue H; (718) 566-0054; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Saturdays, 2:30 pm, beginning Fri, Jan. 7; Free.

Black United and Proud of Our Heritage offers homework help for students in grades one through six.

Baby story time: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com; Sundays, 11 am, beginning Sun, Jan. 9; Free.

Toddlers, listen to stories and songs.

Tween time: Sunset Park Library, 5108 Fourth Ave. between 50th and 51st streets; (718) 567-2806; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Thursdays, 3:30 pm, beginning Fri, Jan. 7; Free.

Read, play games and listen to music.

THURS, DEC. 23

"Santa Christina and Her Sled

Dog": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1 pm; Free.

Author author George William Kelly reads from his new children's picture book.

Arts and crafts: Dyker Library, 8202 13th Ave. between 82nd and 83rd streets; (718) 748-6261; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; 3:15 pm; Free.

Going Places

Create holiday decorations.

FRI, DEC. 24

Christmas in Bethlehem: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 440 Ovington Ave. between Fourth and Fifth avenues; (718) 748-9502; www.bethlehembay-ridge.org; 11 pm; Free.

Candlelight service.

SAT, DEC. 25

Christmas in Bethlehem: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 440 Ovington Ave. between Fourth and Fifth avenues; (718) 748-9502; www.bethlehembay-ridge.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Morning service.

Presents to the animals: Prospect Park Zoo, 450 Flatbush Ave. at Ocean Avenue; (718) 399-7339; www.prospectparkzoo.com; 11 am; Free with admission to the grounds.

Animals at the zoo tear into wrapped presents filled with holiday treats.

The Moscow Circus on Stage: Millennium Theater, 1029 Brighton Beach Ave. near Oceana Terrace; (718) 615-1500; Noon and 3 pm; \$40-\$60, free for children five and under.

The best Russia has to offer.

SUN, DEC. 26

Presents to the animals: 11 am. Prospect Park Zoo. See Saturday, Dec. 25.

The Moscow Circus on Stage: Noon and 3 pm. Millennium Theater. See Saturday, Dec. 25.

Lenape legends: Fort Greene Park Visitor Center, Enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park; (718) 723-3218; 1 pm; Free.

Children three to 12 listen to folktales and traditional stories of the Native Americans.

Toy inventor's workshop: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1:30-2:30 pm; \$7.50 (Members and Children under 1 free).

Children five and older learn the basics of propulsion and make a rocket.

Art works: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2:30-3:30 pm; \$7.50 (Members and Children under 1 free).

Children five and under visit the Totally Tots Art Studio and make a project.

MON, DEC. 27

Kwanzaa celebration: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400;



Time to boogie down

Holy moly, it's Rolie Polie Guacamole!

Bring the kids to the Old American Can Factory on Jan. 9, when the popular children's band performs its psychedelic tunes.

While you shop for fresh items at the farmer's market, kids will get to boogie with one of the hottest

groups in Brooklyn. With original hits like "Always Brush Your Teeth," and "Waiting For The Train," kids also will learn some valuable lessons as they get down.

Rolie Polie Guacamole at the Old American Can Factory [232 Third St. at Third Avenue in Gowanus, (718) 330-0313], Jan. 9 from noon-2 pm. Free. For info, visit xoprojects.com.

www.brooklynkids.org; 12:30-1:30 pm; \$7.50 (Members and Children under 1 free).

Children six and older enjoy a candlelit feast and make a hanging candle.

Art classes: Gumbo, 493 Atlantic Ave. between Nevins Street and Third Avenue; (718) 855-7808; 2-3:15 pm; \$70.

Children five to nine enjoy different art activities during school break. Includes all materials. Pre-registration required.

"Holiday Hoops Tournament": Aviator Sports, 3600 Flatbush Ave., at Floyd Bennett Field; (718) 758-7500; www.aviatorsports.com; 7:15 pm; \$5 per day for adults/\$3 per day for students.

Archbishop Molloy, Brooklyn Colle-

giate, College of Staten Island/McCown, Curtis, Midwood, Franklin D. Roosevelt, St. Edmunds Preparatory and St. Francis Preparatory High Schools will compete in basketball.

TUES, DEC. 28

Toy inventor's workshop: 1:30-2:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Dec. 26.

Art classes: 2-3:15 pm. Gumbo. See Monday, Dec. 27.

"Holiday Hoops Tournament": 7:15 pm. Aviator Sports. See Monday, Dec. 27.

WED, DEC. 29

Kwanzaa celebration: 12:30-1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Monday, Dec. 27.

Art classes: 2-3:15 pm. Gumbo. See Monday, Dec. 27.

"Holiday Hoops Tournament": 7:15 pm. Aviator Sports. See Monday, Dec. 27.

THURS, DEC. 30

Art classes: 2-3:15 pm. Gumbo. See Monday, Dec. 27.

"Holiday Hoops Tournament": 7:15 pm. Aviator Sports. See Monday, Dec. 27.

FRI, DEC. 31

Blooming Babies: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am-12:30 pm; \$7.50 (members, children under 1 free).

Children 18 months to two and one-half years discover balloons.

Kwanzaa celebration: 12:30-1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Monday, Dec. 27.

"Flute Sweets and Tickle Tunes, Treasures of Light": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2:30-3:15 pm; \$7.50 (Members and Children under 1 free).

Multi-cultural version of Rapunzel.

Art works: 2:30-3:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Dec. 26.

SAT, JAN. 1

Story time with Mary: Barnes and Noble Park Slope, 267 Seventh Ave. at Sixth Street; (718) 832-9066; Noon; Free.

For children four to eight.

Dimitrea Tokunbo: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstorein-brooklyn.blogspot.com; 1 pm; Free.

Author of "The Sounds of Kwanzaa."

"The Sounds of Kwanzaa": Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstorein-brooklyn.blogspot.com; 1 pm; Free.

With Dimitrea Tokunbo.

SUN, JAN. 2

Story hour with the Rangers: Fort
Continued on page 60

Going Places

Continued from page 59

Greene Park Visitor Center, Enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am; Free.

Children 12 and under hear a fun story and then make a book to take home. All materials provided.

Blooming Babies: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Friday, Dec. 31.

"Fati and Charles: Three Kings Day": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1–1:30 pm and 2–2:30 pm; \$7.50 (members, children under 1 free).

Children of all ages sing songs in Spanish and celebrate this Latin holiday.

Art works: 2:30–3:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Dec. 26.

TUES, JAN. 4

Story play with First RIF: Mapleton Library, 1702 60th St. at 17th Avenue; (718) 256-2117; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; 11 am; Free.

Children to five years old play with toys, hear stories and earn free books by reading.

WED, JAN. 5

Wii: Clarendon Library, 2035 Nostrand Ave. at Farragut Road; (718) 421-1159; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Teens enjoy video games with friends.

THURS, JAN. 6

"The Three Kings": Teatro SEA, 107 Suffolk St. between Delancey and Rivington streets; (212) 529-1545; www.gteatrosea.org; 3–5 pm; Free.

Children of all ages celebrate one of the most important Latin American holidays of the year. The first 1000 children meet the three kings and receive a free gift. Parents can take pictures of their children with the three kings.

Karaoke: Clarendon Library, 2035 Nostrand Ave. at Farragut Road; (718) 421-1159; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Teens meet with friends and sing along and dance.

SAT, JAN. 8

Bowling lessons: Maple Lanes, 1570 60th St. between 15th and 16th avenues; (718) 331-9000; 10–11:30 am; Free.

Children six and up learn the game from members of the junior coaching staff. Pre-registration required.



Crafty family fun

It's time to get artsy! The Brooklyn Museum is inviting guests to celebrate the 25th anniversary of its Gallery-Studio Program and Arty Facts on Jan. 16 with a full day of family friendly activities.

The festivities include tours of the museum, a memory-book art-making activity, a community sculpture project and the opening reception for the Gallery/

Studio Program's student exhibition.

And possibly the best part — the day also includes free cupcakes for the whole family!

Family Day at the Brooklyn Museum [200 Eastern Parkway in Prospect Heights] (718) 638-5000, Jan. 16 from 11:30 am-5 pm. \$10 suggested donations for adults, children 12 and under free. For info, visit www.brooklynmuseum.org.

Wintry delights: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com; 11 am; Free.

Children listen to stories from Ezra Jack Keats' classic "Snowy Day" and Robert Frost's "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening," and do a craft.

Story time with Mary: Noon. Barnes and Noble Park Slope. See Saturday, Jan. 1.

Children's hour: Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Children 12 and under make a nature based craft.

"Strega Nona": Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, Campus of CW Post, Route 25A; (800) 745-3000; [\[center.org\]\(http://center.org\); 2 pm; \\$20.](http://www.tilles-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Tomie dePaola's whimsical folk tale comes to life with music. Recommended for children three to 9.

Artist talk: Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street; (718) 222-4111; www.brooklynhistory.org; 2 pm; \$6, (\$4 students and seniors; free for children under 12 and members.

Painter and curator Nina Talbot talks about her process of story collecting and studio practice.

Paper Jungle with Yunmee Kyong: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.jsp?branchpageid=265; 2:30 pm; Free.

Children 8 to 12 create paper-mache

creatures. Class limited to 25 children, first come-first served.

SUN, JAN. 9

Mammal watch: Coney Island Beach, Boardwalk at West 10th Street; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am; Free.

Look out for seals, whales and dolphins.

TUES, JAN. 11

Story play with First RIF: 11 am. Mapleton Library. See Tuesday, Jan. 4.

WED, JAN. 12

"The Fort Greene and Clinton Hill Neighborhood and Architectural History Guide": Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com; 7 pm; Free.

Author Francis Morrone.

SAT, JAN. 15

Bowling lessons: 10–11:30 am. Maple Lanes. See Saturday, Jan. 8.

Birthday bash: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 10 am–5 pm; \$7.50 (members, children under 1 free).

Celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend.

Eight Days; a Story of Haiti: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com; 11 am; Free.

Author Edwidge Danticat's new book is the story of Junior, a seven year old boy trapped beneath the rubble of his house.

The Butt Book: The Word Bookstore, 126 Franklin St. at Milton Street; (718) 383-0096; 11:30 am; Free.

Author Artie Bennett. Book signing and fun activity for children two to 12.

Family day: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. 718-699-0005; www.nysci.org; Noon–5 pm; Free with general admission.

Engage your creative and inventive side with Design Squad Nation. Get photos and autographs with the show's hosts. For children seven to 14.

Masks from Around the World with Sam Tomasello: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.

Going Places

jsp?branchpageid=265; 2:30 pm; Free.

Children decorate a blank paper mask form with oil pastels, construction paper and feathers. Limited to 25 participants, first come first served basis.

"Better Day a Comin'": Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, 85 S. Oxford St. at Lafayette Avenue; 8-9:30 pm; \$25 (\$20 seniors).

Gospel concert benefitting Pratt Area Community Council.

SUN, JAN. 16

Birthday bash: 10 am-5 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Jan. 15.

History club: Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 6 pm; Free.

Children learn about the Lenape Indians and see Red Storm Drum and Dance Troupe perform.

MON, JAN. 17

Birthday bash: 10 am-5 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Jan. 15.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., tribute: Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street; (718) 636-4100; www.bam.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Musical performances by The Persuasions and the Reverend Timothy Wright Memorial Choir of the Grace Tabernacle Christian Center.

Concert: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. at Hillel Place; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 4 pm; Free.

Celebrate the life and times of Martin Luther King, Jr.

TUES, JAN. 18

Story play with First RIF: 11 am. Mapleton Library. See Tuesday, Jan. 4.

THURS, JAN. 20

Karaoke: 3:30 pm. Clarendon Library. See Thursday, Jan. 6.

"All About Clifford": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 5-7 pm; Free.

Enjoy a book reading, art project, meet and greet, and of course a photo opportunity with Clifford.

FRI, JAN. 21

"Aladdin": Pacific Library, 25 Fourth Ave. at Pacific Street; (718) 638-1531; http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; 4-5 pm; Free.



Now say Ohmies

Come join the ultimate play date, as you dance, stretch and giggle with The Ohmies.

Get your kids moving and let their imaginations run wild as they sing along to original music, hop like a grasshopper, slither like a snake, fly like a butterfly and help The Ohmies shake off the worries in the show, "Morning Wish Garden," all month long at the Daryl Roth Theater.

Grow and glow with Bella But-

terfly, Carlin Caterpillar and all of their friends on their way to surprise Mr. Sun and see their wish garden bloom.

It's much more than theater — it's a one-of-a-kind interactive musical experience.

"The Ohmies: Morning Wish Garden" at the Daryl Roth Theater [101 E. 15th St. between Park Avenue and Irving Place in Manhattan, (212) 239-6200], Jan. 6-30, Thursdays-Sundays at 11 am and 1:30 pm (only 11 am on Jan. 6). Tickets \$36. For info, visit theohmies.com.

Ride the magic carpet with Aladdin and Jasmine in this Disney favorite.

"The Music Man": Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, CW Post Campus, Route 25A; 516.299.3100; www.tilles-center.org; 8 pm; \$65, 50, 40.

SAT, JAN. 22

Bowling lessons: 10-11:30 am. Maple Lanes. See Saturday, Jan. 8.

"Beaver is Lost": Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com; 11 am; Free.

Author Elisha Cooper presents his newest picture book.

Art workshop: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.jsp?branchpageid=265; 2:30 pm; Free.

Children visit with artist Peter Brown and create objects with wood and paper. Limited to 25 participants, first come first served basis.

WED, JAN. 26

Wii: 3:30 pm. Clarendon Library. See Wednesday, Jan. 5.

THURS, JAN. 27

Introduction to Tarot: Queens Library at Seaside, 116-15 Rockaway Beach Blvd. (718) 634-1876; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 6:30 pm; Free.

Teens and adults learn the basics of divination.

FRI, JAN. 28

Origami: Brighton Beach Library, 16 Brighton Beach First Rd. between Brightwater Court and Brighton Beach Avenue; (718) 946-2917; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children learn the ancient art of paper folding.

Jammy Jam: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 5:30-8:30 pm; Free.

Pajama party, storytelling, lullabies and more. Separate ticket required.

SAT, JAN. 29

Camp Fair: Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Columbus Ave. at West 60th Street; (212) 677-4650 X 20; www.re-sourcesnyc.org; 11 am-3 pm; Free.

Parents and caregivers of children and teens with disabilities obtain information from 70 New York City day camps and sleepaway camps and receive a Camps 2011 Directory.

Our Favorite Bears: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between South Elliott Place and South Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com; 11 am; Free.

Staff reads from the books of Eric Carle, "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See," "Old Bear and his Cub." Children are encouraged to bring their very own stuffed bear to cuddle.

Kids Cafe Festival Goes to College: Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 522-4696; www.dance-wave.org; Noon-5 pm; Free.

Five 50 minute classes for junior and senior high school students.

Magic show: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.jsp?branchpageid=265; 1 pm; Free.

Myron the Magnificent astounds his audience.

SUN, JAN. 30

"Seussical": Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. at Hillel Place; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 2 pm; \$6 (\$7 at the door).

Musical based on the works of Dr. Seuss. For children four and up.

SAT, FEB. 5

Kids Cafe Festival Goes to College: Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 522-4696; www.dance-wave.org; 3 pm; \$20 (\$15 students with valid id; \$12 kids under 12).

Performances.

SUN, FEB. 6

Kids Cafe Festival Goes to College: 3 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Saturday, Feb. 5.



cinematters



LAURA GRAY

Villain succumbs to sweet sisters

Despicable Me

Rated PG

Mean old Mr. Moss may be the grumpiest neighbor ever. He complains about the noise. He complains about the toys in your yard. He complains about, well, everything! But he lives next door, and your kids need to learn how to live in harmony with a variety of personalities. So you launch a “kindness campaign.”

The next time your children get a little too loud, they apologize to Mr. Moss. They make an effort to put away their toys at the end of the day. And when Mr. Moss gets sick, your family takes him a pot of soup and a tray of cookies. After a while, the complaints are fewer and Mr. Moss becomes downright pleasant. Your children learn an important lesson: that love can turn frowns upside down!

Love is the secret weapon in “Despicable Me,” now available on DVD from Universal Pictures. Enjoy the movie at home with your family and then use our Talk Together questions to discuss it. Later, you can create “Smilecakes” with our Play



Supervillain Gru rides a roller coaster with the little girls who steal his heart.

Together activity.

In “Despicable Me,” the world’s number one super-villain, Gru, is quite comfortable with his evil ways. He lives in an old, dark house with his army of Minions — yellow, oblong creatures who assist him in his dastardly deeds. When his plan to steal the Great Pyramid is intercepted by a young, power-hungry new villain named Vector, Gru comes up with a bigger plan: to steal the moon! But first he needs to steal the shrink-ray in Vector’s compound to accomplish this feat.

While he seems unable to find a way into Vector’s super-secure compound, Gru is amazed to see three orphan girls walk right in. They are selling cookies and Vector places a large order. Gru decides to use the girls to get him inside Vector’s home. So he adopts the girls, who mistakenly believe he loves them, and begins making plans for the heist.

Gru’s plan succeeds, although the girls — Margo, Edith and Agnes — are unaware of their role in his mission. On the way home from Vector’s base, the girls beg Gru to take them to an amusement park. They convince him to ride the roller coaster with them. He has so much fun that he starts to actually care

about the girls. But his assistant, Dr. Nefario, believes they are a distraction. He returns them to the orphanage and Gru and the girls are heartbroken.

Meanwhile, Vector figures out that the girls helped Gru steal the shrink-ray from his home. So he kidnaps them and demands that Gru deliver the moon in exchange for them. Gru hands over the moon, which he shrunk with the shrink-ray, but Vector takes off in a spaceship with the girls in tow. Gru chases them and rescues the girls. The four of them become a real family, thanks to the powerful “weapon” of love!

Talk together

Why do you think Gru was so mean? What does he remember about his mom from his childhood? How does her attitude toward him affect his personality?

Although Margo and Edith become suspicious of Gru, Agnes believes he really loves them. Why is she so trusting? What does she hope to get from Gru?

Stay warm indoors this winter with a family movie night! Check out our archives at www.Cinematters.com and get some great ideas for fun with your favorite films. © 2011, Cinematters.

Play together: Smilecakes

Whip up a batch of pancakes and serve them with sliced-fruit facial features. For instance, use berries for eyes, cantaloupe for a mouth, pineapple for a nose and whipped topping for hair. Create a frown on your pancake’s face. Before you take a bite, share one thing that makes you feel loved. Then, turn that

“frowncake” into a “smilecake” by flipping the fruit frown upside down. It’s a tasty way to remember that love can turn growls into grins!



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I am a certified Birth Doula and have attended births with The Park Slope Midwives. References available.
Lisa Kundreskas can be reached at 917.881.7544.

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New & Noteworthy

Look of Lazoo



Get the look! Your child will be super warm — and adorable — in these playful sets by Lazoo.

From hats with playful monkeys to pretty ballerinas to matching scarves and gloves, your little one will be coordinated to a tee.

The line, inspired by the company's popular children's books, features more than just outerwear, including clothes, backpacks,

and finger puppets that incorporate different tactile experiences on each — from sewn-on appliques on one shirt to varying textures on others.

Find it at Babies 'R Us. If you like the look, you can also stock up on Lazoo's stuffed animals and activity books.

For info, visit www.lazoo.com.



Monkeying around

For an eco-friendly, colorful version of the traditional sock monkey, check out this green of-green from Blackbird Fashion.

Made from recycled sweaters, each aptly named Sweater Monkey is one of a kind.

They come in a variety and mix of colors, from green and red to pink and purple to red, yellow and orange, and are simply adorned with stripes. For easy cleaning, just throw in the wash inside a pillowcase.

At 12 inches tall, they're sizeable, but still small enough to hold. Your little one won't want to let go!

Sweater Monkey by Buy Green (\$22). For info, visit www.buygreen.com/sweater-monkey.aspx.

Giddy up!

Is your littlest future rodeo queen going barefoot?

Get her some stylish cowgirl booties hand-crocheted out of soft 100-percent cotton yarn.

These booties for kids up to 6 months old, are hand washable, hang dry because even the daintiest cowgirls make a mess. Pair them



with Western wear for portraits, costumes, or just hanging around the ranch.

If pink isn't your thing, there are other cowboy booties to choose from, including traditional tan.

Pink cowgirl booties by Curious Workmanship (\$15). For info, visit www.etsy.com/couriousworkmanship.

Leave no wall bare

It's a jungle in there!

With these wall decals by Simple Shapes, that's a good thing.

The fun designs feature trees with hanging monkeys, fawns and perched birds and owls. The tree decals can even be coordinated with standard shelves so that the branches and shelves align for a fun, fresh look in any room.

Other designs include snowflakes, for a wintry theme, and a city skyline. There's even decals for grown-ups, including vintage photo frames and a dry erase calendar.

Don't find one you like? The decals can be customized, too, so they



can fit any wall and taste.

Simple Shapes wall decals range from \$68-\$88. For info, visit www.etsy.com/shop/SimpleShapes.

'Pop-Up' and listen

This is a must-have.

The Brooklyn-based Pop-Ups, fronted by the smiley Jacob Stein and Jason Rabinowitz, have gained buzz recently for their new album, "Outside Voices," which tells musical tales of whimsy and childhood adventure in a range of influences, from '80s synth-pop and reggae dancehall to indie-pop and classic soul. It's a journey through New York's synth-beat subway trains, a balloon ride over Prospect Park, a big wheel rally down your childhood block.

It's not just fun to listen to, but educational, in a silly way, as it teaches how to draw an ape with shapes, the names of over 40 different pastas, and the difference be-



tween indoor and outdoor voices.

If these kinds of things are important to you, the album was recently recognized with a National Association of Parenting Publications Award for best music, and is on the Top Ten of 2010 lists of Time Out New York Kids, The Fids and Kamily Awards, Out with The Kids, and one of the Top Ten Kids Debut Albums by Zoogobble.

For info, visit www.thepopups.com.



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- On Wheels: travel camp for campers entering grades 6 - 8 features daily & overnight trips.
- Leadership Experience for teens entering grades 9 & 10
- Outdoor, fun, stimulating programs for campers ages 3.5 to 14.
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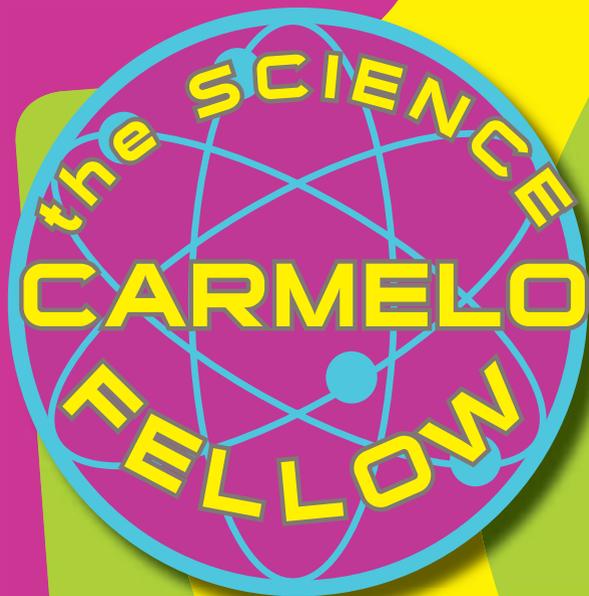
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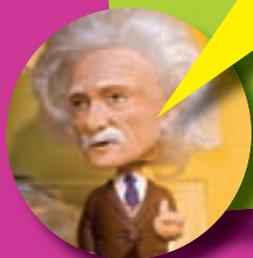
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