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Letter from the publisher

March musings

A few weeks ago we were happily informed that our publishing group had been selected as Finalists in a variety of categories in the Parenting Media Association's 2013 Editorial & Design Awards. Once again we were able to



congratulate our many writers and creative contributors and can only hope that we will take home some winning Silver or Gold Awards at the upcoming Conference and Awards Dinner in Atlanta this month.

It's a wonderful feeling to be acknowledged for excellence and for having worked hard. Life is loaded with competitions and competitive spirit and most of it is highly healthy and motivates us to do more than we

might if we were able to rest on our laurels and coast with a guarantee.

This competitive spirit is often personified for children in its purest and more innocent form in the wonderful activities they engage in while attending summer camps and programs. Sports,

games, hikes, hunts, and other such activities are wonderful vehicles to teach children the techniques of competition and of competing with good cheer, generosity and teamwork.

So many terrific programs abound around our city and within our various communities. This issue presents many of them, as will the issues in the months to come. Summer is a great time to be a kid, at least for most of our children. I remember my own joys

of summer and of camp activities, beach going, waiting for the ice cream truck, ball playing and hanging out with my friends as the long daylight hours enabled later group behavior.

For my daughter it was a day camp here in our city and the great pleasure of making new friends, both in other campers and in the wonderful young people who become their counselors. As the years passed it was she who became a counselor and years later she still is a part of that "family" that began 15 years ago.

We've started this issue out with an article asking us, "What kind of parent are you? It's a good question and I don't think there's any simple answer, but I've certainly been asking myself that question for many years and still do. I think it's integral for us to give ourselves that evaluation and to examine how our behavior can and

will shape the lives of our children. Self-evaluation is mostly positive unless administered too harshly. There's little doubt that this is the most important job we ever have in our lives with almost no training and modest guidance. Where are the parenting classes that everyone needs and should be given as a matter of importance?

That's why we do these magazines, to try to bring support and a sense of community to the often-dizzying role of parenting. We can only hope it's making a difference.

Wishing you all a good month. Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
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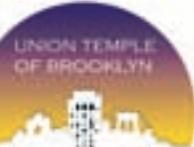
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What kind of parent are you?

The type of parent who you are today shapes who your child will become tomorrow

BY DANA J. CONNELLY

Parenting is truly an art form comprised of what we have learned in the past with what we would do differently in the future. With each passing generation, there is a certain underlying goal to either improve upon or completely revamp the style of parenting we were raised with. The task seems daunting, especially while every move you make, the little ones are watching. It can be helpful to know what type of parent you are.

Baumrind distinguished the four parenting styles as “Authoritarian,” “Authoritative,” “Permissive,” and “Uninvolved” (1991). Essentially, the kind of parenting style you employ shapes the type of child you are raising.

- The authoritarian. This would be considered to be the strict parent, the one that puts forth rules and boundaries and punishes any and all infractions. This parent would have a “do-as-I-say” attitude to parenting. Having such a rigid approach to child rearing could result in an obedient child, but one that lacks an overall sense of contentment. The child is more likely to suffer from poor self-image and would struggle to feel confident in social situations.

- The authoritative. This would be considered to be the “ideal” parent. This parent would implement rules and boundaries, but would be open to the child’s input. Punishments are delivered not as intimidation, but as an opportunity for the child to learn from his mistakes. An open dialogue is maintained without sacrificing the rules or consequences. A child reared by an authoritative parent would likely be well-adjusted and

successful. He would have the ability to cope with changes, feel an overall sense of security and pride, and also respect authority.

- The permissive. This would be the parent that “spoils” a child. This parent is overly sensitive to her children’s reaction to the rules and boundaries. She may even cover for her child if he gets in trouble at school. This is the parent who allows the child to shape her behavior as a parent, when it should be the other way around. When rules are not consistently enforced, the child begins to behave inconsistently. At times he can be compliant and cheerful, but can also engage in tantrums and can be quite defiant when things do not go his way. A child raised by a permissive parent tends to have low levels of contentment, has great difficulty regulating his emotions, and displays problems with authority.

- The uninvolved. This is the parent who meets the basic needs of a child (food, shelter, medical care, education), but spends minimal time involved in the other aspects of child development. This could be a parent who suffers with addiction or releases her children into the custody of the state, or the parent who places the child rearing into the hands of a nanny while she travels, works, shops, or lunches. Children need rules and structure in order to feel successful and appropriately stimulated. When their lives lack such ingredients and the parent is distant or neglectful, it

can result in a child who lacks self-control. Children raised in this parenting style tend to have lower levels of intelligence and low self-esteem.

The following are role-play scenarios designed to illustrate how one common, every day parent-child interaction would be handled by each parenting style:

Scenario: Eight-year-old Lilly lives with both of her parents and is an only child. Lilly is very excited about the party that her best friend Amelia is having this weekend. Lilly has not been cleaning up her room and needs to be repeatedly reminded to do so. Lilly’s mom and dad feel that if Lilly cannot do a better job with cleaning up after herself, she should not go to Amelia’s party.

Authoritarian parenting style

Dad: Lilly, come into the kitchen now, please.

Lilly: Dad, five more minutes, please, I just want to see the end of the show.

Mom: Your father said “now” Lilly. You have five seconds to turn off that TV.

Lilly: Fine, I’m coming. (Walks into kitchen) What’s going on?

Dad: You have not cleaned up your room, again. Your dirty clothes are all over the floor.

Mom: The beads from your jewelry kit are scattered everywhere and it broke the vacuum today.

Dad: Your mother and I are not allowing you to go to Amelia’s party this weekend.



Lilly: No, wait. I'll go clean it right now. Please let me go.

Mom: Absolutely not. You are right that you will go clean up right now, but the party is out of the question. Maybe you will remember how disappointed you are and will clean up after yourself in the future.

Authoritative parenting style

Dad: Lilly, come into the kitchen please, your mother and I need to talk to you.

Lilly: Dad, five more minutes, please. I just want to see the end of the show.

Mom: Lilly, you are watching a DVD. Press pause and come in here.

Lilly: OK. OK. (Walks into the kitchen) What's going on?

Dad: Your mom and I have a deal to make with you. Take a look at this list. (Hands Lilly the cleanup list).

Lilly: One, put dirty clothes in the hamper. Two, pick up all toys and put them in the bin. Three, put all books on bookshelf. Four straighten the sheets and pillows on your bed. I know, I'm sorry, I forgot.

Mom: We know. That's why we made this list. Today is Tuesday and Amelia's party is on Saturday. Every night between now and the party you will need to use this checklist to help you remember what we mean when we say "Cleanup your room." If you do these things every day you can go to the party. If we check your room and the four things on the list aren't done, we're sorry, but you won't be able to go to the party this time.

Lilly: Aw, man. But what if I forget to do it a day or two?

Dad: Lilly, you are a big girl now and I think your Mom and I are being

very fair. Because you left your toys out one of them got caught in the vacuum and now it is broken. So you can either pay for the vacuum (jokingly) or follow this list.

Lilly: Dad, you know I don't have money.

Mom: So this list is looking pretty fair, don't you think?

Lilly: Yeah, OK.

(Lilly understood what was expected of her and understood the consequences. She adhered to the deal she made with her parents and enjoyed her time at Amelia's party.)

Permissive parenting style

Dad: Lilly, your mom and I want to talk to you. Please come into the kitchen.

Lilly: Five more minutes, Dad. I want to see the end of this show.

Mom: Fine. You have five more

minutes.

(15 minutes later)

Lilly: Hey, what's going on?

Dad: Your room is very messy and your mother and I want to know why you haven't cleaned it yet.

Lilly: Mom, Dad, I had so much homework. Ms. Stevens is so hard on us. She said that if we don't finish our work then we won't get to play outside during recess.

Mom: Well, what if we say "If you don't clean up your room, then you won't go to Amelia's party?"

Lilly: (Starts crying) Oh Mommy, no. Please, I'll be good. I'll clean up now. I didn't have the time.

Dad: Lilly, please don't get upset. We didn't want you to cry. We just want you to clean up your room. One of your toys broke the vacuum today.

Lilly: I am so sorry. I'll do a better job. But please let me go to Amelia's. All of my friends will be talking about it on Monday and I won't have anything to say because I wasn't there.

Mom: I will help you with your room between now and Saturday. If you are a good helper then you can go to the party.

Lilly: Oh, thank you. I will help. I promise.

(Lilly had to be reminded everyday to help her mother clean her room. She had a great time at the party.)

Uninvolved

This parent would care little as to whether the room was clean or not. She might clean it herself or have another caregiver do it. She may not even know who Amelia is or that there is a party to look forward to this weekend.



We all want to succeed in our parenting as we all want our children to succeed in life. How we approach discipline and how we nurture our children directly impacts the type of people they become. It's important to recognize what we do right as parents, but also what we do wrong, and realize that we all have something we wish we were doing better.

Dana J. Connelly holds dual Master's Degrees in education and special education, working as an educational evaluator for a New York-based agency. She specializes in applied behavior analysis and is the proud single mother of a 5-year-old boy.

Reference:

Baumrind D. (1991) The Influence of Parenting Style on Adolescent Competence & Substance Use - Journal of Early Adolescence p. 56-95.

A healthy weight

Here are some tips to help your child

BY JAMIE LOBER

New York parents often wonder if their children weighs too much, too little, or are just right. When you have proper insight, you can judge where your child stands and what action, if any, he needs to take to stay at a healthy number.

“For kids in general, we use body mass index to measure where they fall in the healthy weight range,” said Despina Hyde, dietician and diabetes educator with the New York University Langone Weight Management Program.

Acting appropriately when tackling body image and weight issues with your child can make a difference.

“Especially for children who are still growing and developing, it is important that parents understand that the goal is not necessarily to lose weight, but to slow down the rate of weight gain and still allow normal growth and development,” said Hyde.

It is not usually recommended to put kids on a weight-loss diet.

“It is important to encourage plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains,

and to drink lots of water and not caloric beverages, and to reinforce reasonably sized portions,” said Hyde.

The American Heart Association suggests aiming for four to five servings each of fruits and vegetables daily if you consume a 2,000-calorie diet (vegetable or 100-percent fruit juice counts!). The American Heart Association names brown rice, whole-grain cereal, whole-wheat bread, and rye bread as foods with whole grains that are good for you because they are low in saturated fat and cholesterol, but rich in fiber. Chicken and fish are encouraged over red meats because they are lower in saturated fat and cholesterol.

Healthcare professionals find that kids are eating more than they used to in past years, which means it is even more important that parents take a stand.

“You can cut out or reduce calorie-rich treats like high-fat, high-sugar treats or salty snacks in your house, and have fresh fruit and vegetables that are kid-friendly, like grapes, carrots, apples, and bananas around your household instead,” said Hyde.

Parents can use canola, corn or safflower oil as their main kitchen fat.

Also, make sure that dessert is in the evening, rather than all day long.

“Kids need to understand that ice cream is a treat, and not something that should be a normal part of the diet everyday,” said Hyde.

Obesity is not just a health problem, but a psycho-social risk as well.

“Obese children are a target of social discrimination, which can put psychological stress on kids and affect their self-esteem, academic performance, and social life,” said Hyde. These children and adolescents typically carry that on with them into their adulthood, which is dangerous. “Obesity is a predictor for cardiovascular risk, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure,

and abnormal glucose tolerance, so if these issues are treated or prevented in childhood, it will lead your child to live a healthier life overall as adults and prevent the development of some of these diseases.”

Keeping your child at a healthy weight comes down to common-sense math — and limiting screen time.

“You want to make sure your kid is getting adequate nutrition by balancing those calories with the calories he is expending, which means increasing physical activity and limiting screen time,” said Hyde. “The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend television viewing for children below age 2, and it is recommended that it is less than two hours a day, which includes video games, television, and internet.”

Find healthy alternatives to screen time and make having an active lifestyle a family affair.

“You want to try to encourage your child to do more active activities, which will help him in turn expend more calories because what is happening now is that kids are taking in way more calories than they used to, and using less because they are sedentary,” said Hyde.

And keep in mind that kids like to imitate adults, so be a good role model.

“Develop an overall healthy relationship with food, which sets the stage for years to come,” said Hyde. Paying attention to the food labels and asking your doctor for guidance on how to interpret them can also be helpful.

Let your child know that positive lifestyle choices, as well as an annual physical, are important to your family — and to his health. If you are having trouble coming up with practical ideas to make a change, consider consulting with a pediatrician or dietician who can offer some expert guidance as to an approach that will work well for your family.

Jamie Lober, author of “Pink Power” (www.getpinkpower.com), is dedicated to providing information on women’s and pediatric health topics. She can be reached at jamie@getpinkpower.com.

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The nightly grind

Don't lose sleep over nighttime tooth grinding

BY MALIA JACOBSON

Deep, even breathing. Blankets softly rustling. The occasional sigh. These sweet sounds of children asleep are music to a weary parent's ears — until the serenity is pierced by the unmistakable noise of grinding teeth!

When I tiptoed past my slumbering preschooler's bedroom one night, I heard her peaceful sleep sounds shattered by the bone-rattling, fingernails-on-a-blackboard racket of her tiny teeth, gnashing away.

I lapsed into a moment of parental panic. Surely, this would damage her teeth! Did she do this every night? Was she overstressed? Should I wake her?

The grinding noises tapered off after a few minutes, but my questions continued.

Many parents will hear their children's teeth grinding at some point. A study in *Journal of Dentistry for Children* found that more than a third of parents report the condition

in their children.

"It can get pretty loud," admits Dr. Paul Bussman, spokesperson for the Academy of General Dentistry.

Though teeth grinding, or bruxism, may be alarming or worrisome, it's generally a normal part of the growing process, he says.

Grinding can begin in babyhood — as soon as children have teeth to grind — and generally starts to subside as the permanent teeth begin to erupt, says Dr. Bussman. The condition commonly disappears on its own in childhood, but a small percentage of kids will continue to grind as adults. Severe or persistent grinders may suffer facial pain, ear aches, jaw-joint disorders, damaged teeth, and disturbed sleep.

According to Dr. Khaleel Ahmad of the Iowa Sleep Disorders Center, researchers haven't pinned down a cause for bruxism. Genetics may play a role — if either parents grinds their teeth at night, children are 1.8 times more likely to grind their own.

Daytime stress and medicines like amphetamines have been associated with bruxism. Interestingly, nearly a third of grinders also bite their nails, and more than 20 percent suck their thumbs, says Dr. Ahmed.

If your child's teeth have become nighttime noisemakers, here are some tips for coping:

Do not disturb

"Don't wake a child engaged in nighttime teeth grinding," says Dr. Bussman.

"They're not aware of it, so bringing it to their attention will probably confuse them."

Stress less

Grinding can be associated with daytime stress, so help kids relax. Ask them to talk about any stressful events they may have encountered during their day, and encourage them

to unwind in the hours before bedtime with a bath, books, and quiet activities.

Practice healthy habits

Help your child maintain good sleep habits, with an age-appropriate bedtime, a regular bedtime routine, and a cool, dark, quiet, and comfortable sleep environment.

Back off

Bruxism occurs more commonly during back sleeping. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends back sleeping for infants, but older children who grind may be more comfortable sleeping in another position.

Get a move on

Encourage kids to get adequate exercise. Physical activity helps kids fall asleep faster, promotes deep, restful sleep, and eases stress, which can contribute to teeth grinding.

Turndown service

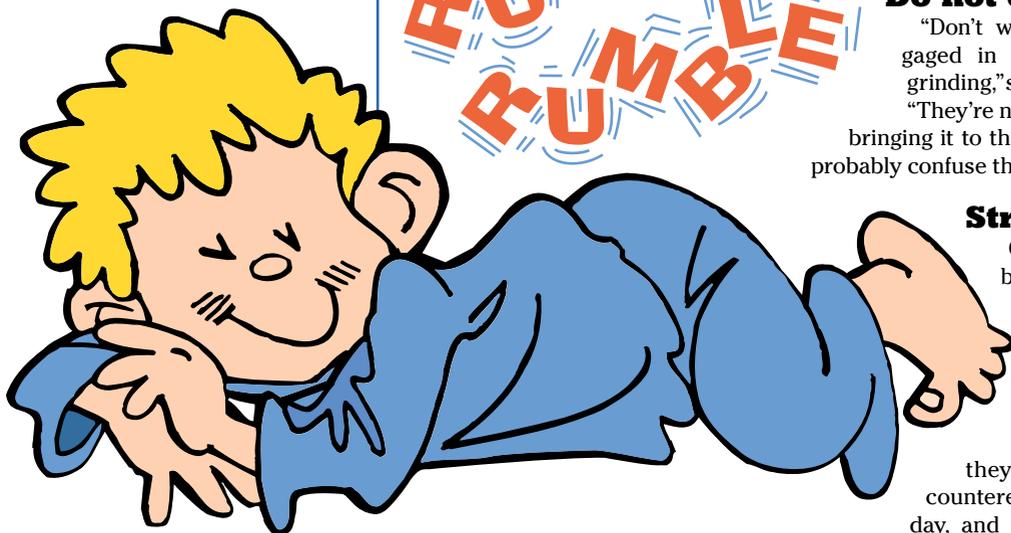
As difficult as it may be, try not to become overly concerned with the occasional episode of bruxism. Dr. Bussman advises parents to turn down the volume on monitoring devices so they aren't tuned in to every little sound.

If grinding regularly interferes with sleep or if a child complains of pain in his teeth or face, see a dentist. In severe cases, a dentist may prescribe a nightguard made of soft plastic to protect the teeth and the jaw joint. Occasionally, grinding is associated with a misaligned bite. If that's the case, a pediatric dentist will refer your child to an orthodontist.

Thankfully, my little bruxist has eased up. But if I hear more teeth-gnashing noises coming from her room, I'll be better prepared — and I'll worry a lot less.

Malia Jacobson is a freelance journalist and mom who writes frequently about children's sleep and health topics. Her latest book is "Sleep Tight, Every Night: Helping Toddlers and Preschoolers Sleep Well Without Tears, Tricks, or Tirades."

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Young & bipolar

Controversial diagnosis in pediatric and adolescent psychiatry

BY ALLISON PLITT

Doctors for years believed that the onset of a mental illness called bipolar disorder could only begin in early adulthood. But in 1995 two psychiatrists observing children in a psychiatric clinic found that children could exhibit symptoms of the disorder, and doctors began prescribing medications approved for adult use to young children.

According to “The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,” which professional psychiatrists use in order to look at their patient’s symptoms and diagnose their illnesses, bipolar disorder, also known as “manic depression,” is characterized by mood swings between two different, intense states — a “manic” phase in which the patient is hyperactive, shows reckless behavior, acts grandiose, and has racing thoughts, and a “depression” in which the patient is sad, lacks energy, has difficulty concentrating, and can even be suicidal. The length of time that a manic or depressive episode usually lasts is at least one or two weeks.

New findings

In 1995 psychiatrists Dr. Joseph Biederman and Dr. Janet Wozniak were observing children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in a psychiatric clinic at Massachusetts General Hospital, the primary teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder — the most commonly diagnosed childhood behavior disorder, which affects three to five percent of school-aged children — is when kids have problems with inattentiveness, over-activity, and impulsivity.

Doctors Biederman and Wozniak found, however, that some children were having periods of extreme aggressiveness, depression, or anger, and were not getting better by taking stimulants, which are psychoactive drugs that improve concentration and focus for sufferers of the disorder.

Dr. Biederman felt that there was a portion of the kids in his clinic

whose problems with anger seemed to go way beyond normal attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. He and Dr. Wozniak observed these children more closely and saw kids who continued to struggle with intense, uncontrollable outbursts of anger — violent hitting, screaming, and kicking — even after they passed through their preschool years.

While Dr. Wozniak believed children suffering from attention deficit

PART ONE of a series

hyperactivity disorder had difficulty with impulse control, she thought that the other kids dealing with difficult-to-treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder had serious mood problems, which could be defined as bipolar. She wrote up her observations in 1995, in a now-famous paper in which she proposed that some of the kids originally diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder were actually bipolar. Her paper won awards and many physicians believed her insights helped transform their practices.

Dr. David Shaffer, professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Columbia University Medical Center, explained the findings.

“The defining feature of [adult] manic-depression was that it was episodic. You had episodes of depression and episodes of mania and episodes of normal mood, and that was really [bipolar disorder’s] defining characteristic,” he says.

According to Dr. Shaffer, the kids Dr. Wozniak described rarely, if ever, had these kinds of week-long or month-long episodes. In order to make these children fit the traditional concept of bipolar disorder, Dr. Wozniak and Dr. Biederman made the argument that the children experienced these episodes in a different context.

“They said, maybe in childhood the episodes would be very brief and very frequent,” says Dr. Shaffer. “These are called ‘ultra diem,’ you

know, ‘many times a day.’ If you regarded every time children changed their mood, every time they lost their temper or became over excited, as a mood episode, then they were really being misdiagnosed and were really cases of bipolar disorder.”

Critics countered that bipolar disorder should look the same in kids as in adults, and that there were bipolar adults who did not suffer uncontrollable anger issues when they were younger. Nevertheless, the pediatric bipolar disorder diagnosis took off.

Controversial prescriptions

Once psychiatrists learned they could diagnose children as bipolar, the number of cases of children with the illness exploded. Based on a study published in the Archives of General Psychiatry that measured national trends in outpatient visits that resulted in a diagnosis of bipolar disorder, there was a 4,000-percent increase in the number of children diagnosed with bipolar disorder from 1995 through 2010. Suddenly, children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, who were becoming more agitated by taking stimulants, were being treated with antipsychotic medicines, which adults took for bipolar disorder.

“The initial reports from Joseph Biederman and Janet Wozniak started a very controversial period when kids started getting antipsychotics all over the country for disruptive behavior,” stated Dr. Jess Shatkin, an associate professor and director at New York University’s Child Study Center.

Consequently, some doctors began prescribing to children a new breed of antipsychotic medicines that had just come onto the market in 1993 — Geodon, Zyprexa, Abilify, Seroquel, and Risperdal.

Antipsychotic medications are primarily used to manage psychosis, which is when a patient loses touch with reality by having delusions or hallucinations that are often caused by schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Some physicians, on the other hand,



found that when the kids with difficult-to-treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder took these medications, they seemed to settle down and had fewer aggressive outbreaks.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the use of antipsychotics in youth for treating bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, Tourette's syndrome, and irritability stemming from autism. Other physicians, nevertheless, began in the mid-1990s to prescribe these powerful drugs to young children and adolescents to treat conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, and insomnia.

In a 2008 study conducted at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill's School of Public Health, two doctors found that patients under 19 years old accounted for 15 percent of antipsychotic drug use in the U.S. in 2005, compared with seven percent in 1996.

According to Stephen Crystal, a Rutgers University professor who studies the drugs, more than 70 percent of the antipsychotic use in young children

and teenagers has been for off-label mental disorders, like attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a nonpsychotic condition. In other words, the doctors were prescribing these drugs to treat illnesses that the Food and Drug Administration did not approve the medications to be used for.

"In 2010 antipsychotics were one of the most prescribed classes of drugs in the United States. That's remarkable. If you had told us 10 years ago that antipsychotics would soon be one of the most prescribed medications in the U.S., we [psychiatrists] wouldn't have believed you," Dr. Shatkin explained. "Antipsychotics are being increasingly used because so many doctors, most often non-psychiatrists, are prescribing them for sleep, anxiety, agitation, irritability, and to augment an anti-depressant. These medicines are expensive and have great promise, and they also have significant side effects and should be used with great caution."

Unfortunately, the children who have benefited from taking the drugs have also often suffered many docu-

mented side effects. In 2009 the Journal of the American Medical Association conducted a study of young children and adolescents from ages 4 to 19. These patients took four different antipsychotic medications.

In less than 12 weeks the young patients added eight to 15 percent to their body weight after taking the pills. The study concluded that when children and adolescents took certain antipsychotic medications, they risked rapid weight gain and metabolic changes that could lead to diabetes, hypertension, and other illnesses.

The two most severe side effects from taking antipsychotic drugs are a life-threatening nervous system problem called neuroleptic malignant syndrome, and an uncontrollable movement problem called tardive dyskinesia. One mother recounted that her son had taken an antipsychotic medicine for three months before he experienced tardive dyskinesia.

"The muscles in his face were contorted and he looked like a different kid, like frozen in a way," she said. She complained that the doc-

tor who prescribed the medication had never even mentioned the side effects to her.

There is also a decade-long history of lawsuits against pharmaceutical companies that manufacture antipsychotic medications by the patients who use them and experience unreasonably dangerous side effects. Patients also sue the pharmaceutical companies, pharmacies, and physicians for not providing sufficient warnings or instructions regarding the use of these drugs.

Future of disorders

"The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders" does not address pediatric or adolescent bipolar disorder in children, since it was published in 1994, one year before the controversial Massachusetts General Hospital study. An updated manual to be published in May 2013 will define bipolar disorder in children, but psychiatrists have insisted on including a new term for children who do not classify as bipolar.

The newly proposed category is called temper dysregulation disorder, which is seen as a brain or biological dysfunction but not necessarily a lifelong condition. Kids who can be diagnosed with the condition are between the ages of 6 and 18 and have temper outbursts three or more times a week that are grossly out of proportion in intensity or duration to the situation.

By adding this new entry, the American Psychiatric Association is trying to help curb the use of the pediatric bipolar label, which is a lifelong label that some physicians seem hesitant to diagnose in young children.

However, critics think temper dysregulation disorder, also referred to as disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, is too vague a diagnosis and will turn temper tantrums into mental disorders. Its defenders, though, believe there are irritable kids who get excited and overreact, most likely by having tantrums, and whose parents and teachers have trouble dealing with them. If these children are diagnosed with disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, they won't be labeled bipolar, which, according to proponents of the use of the term, can often lead to stigma and the likelihood of taking powerful drugs.

Allison Plitt is a freelance writer who lives in Queens with her husband and daughter. She is a frequent contributor to NY Parenting Media.

SPARK of activity

A program works to improve gym class and fight childhood obesity

BY MARY CARROLL WININGER

The epidemic of childhood obesity is well on the rise: 17 percent of children are obese today as opposed to five percent 30 years ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. And in 2010, the Centers for Disease Control reported that more than a third of children and adolescents were considered overweight or obese.

Budget cuts have left some schools with few teachers and less equipment for traditional gym class. This means kids may have gym only once a week — barely enough time to work up a sweat, let alone burn off any significant calories. How did this happen, and what can be done to fix it? A public health organization in San Diego is working to change this, and to revolutionize the way physical education is taught and experienced in this country.

Obesity is defined as having an excessive amount of body fat to the detriment of one's own health. It's a medical condition that is hard enough to face as an adult, with all of the physical and emotional challenges that come with it. But there is something altogether more poignant about a child being overweight, because he's experiencing these same challenges at a time in his life that should be joyful and carefree.

Food intake is a major part of the problem, of course. Portion sizes have ballooned in the last 50 years, and the increased reliance on sugary drinks and fast food isn't helping. According to the book "Fast Food Nation," people spent \$6 billion on fast food in 1970. In 2000, it was more than \$110 billion.

Lack of physical activity, however, seems to be inflicting the most damage upon America's kids, which is even more distressing when you realize that children are no longer naturally doing what they've always done — playing. As a result of overloaded schedules, too much homework, or a preponderance of video games, kids today aren't getting nearly enough activity. And nowadays kids can no longer rely on even school-sanctioned activity like physical education.

Originally created with the goal of building a better physical education class, Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids, known as SPARK, is a program that trains teachers and other recreation leaders on how to lead children and teens through research-based curriculum that fosters wellness.

It was implemented in 1989 as a "solution to the then-growing childhood obesity epidemic," says Billy Beltz, the marketing manager. "The National Institutes of Health decided to do a research project to find out if a better physical education program was possi-

ble, and to see the positive outcomes that could result."

The original SPARK task force noticed in its research that most of gym class time consisted of kids doing a lot of waiting. Waiting their turn in line during kickball. Waiting for the ball to come to them when playing fullback in soccer. Waiting to be picked for a team. There were — and are to this day — "physical education programs that were not as active and engaging as they should [have been]," says Beltz. "It was such that the level of activity in class time was not optimized."

In order to maximize class time, the SPARK staff sought out to make gym "active, inclusive, and fun" and engage every kid — even the least athletic — from the minute they walk in. In SPARK-driven gym classes, kids work in small groups, doing vigorous physical activities that are disguised as fun for the duration of class. The ultimate aim of the program is to foster a lifelong love of exercise and physical activity.

"By helping kids to be more active and engaged during class time, we find they enjoy physical education class more, and [then] it spills over into after-school activity and beyond. They're more inclined to stay physically active throughout their lives," says Beltz.

So how do parents get involved, especially if they notice their child's school's gym program is lacking?

"It starts with asking the right questions, and engaging," says Beltz. "Sometimes the school doesn't know, and even the parents may not know what kind of situation they're in. Have the physical education programs at the child's school been assessed? How often is P.E. being offered, and for how long? It starts by making sure you have [the] answers and everyone's aware. Then you advocate for a quality physical education program that is evidence-based and is proven to work."

Mary Carroll Wininger is a writer based in New York City. She is a frequent contributor on topics ranging from etiquette to feng shui.



Kids enjoy SPARK-based physical education classes.

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Questions to ask the pediatrician

BY JAMIE LOBER

The pediatrician is one of the most valuable players in your child's life. It is critical that you feel comfortable talking with your doctor and sharing the most intimate details of your child's life, growth, and development. This way, your doctor can help your child stay well.

If you do not already have a pe-

diatrician that you like and trust, take the time to interview a few. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests asking about the doctor's background and training, general office procedures, medical school, residency, finding someone who is conveniently located, learning the office policy on taking and returning phone calls, and deciding if you want someone in a group practice with other physicians.

Other important deciding factors may include whether you can make an appointment on short notice if your child has a sore throat or infection, if the doctor communicates clearly about illnesses and treatments, and what the fees are for sick visits, routine examinations, and immunizations.

Once you have identified who this essential player in your child's life will be, try to give a holistic picture of your child's overall wellness.

"First and foremost, make sure your pediatrician thinks your child is developing normally in terms of physical development, mental health development, and social and emotional development," says Dr. Kirsten Cullen Sharma, clinical assistant professor in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at New York University Langone Medical Center. For some, language development may be a concern and

Allowing the pediatrician to get to know your child makes it easier for him to be counseled on healthy living.

a developmental pediatrician may come in handy.

"They can comment on whether children are hitting language or motor milestones, and if further evaluation is required, they can take the extra step and do more of an in-depth evaluation," says Dr. Sharma. The pediatrician should not just be someone you see when your child is sick.

"You should have a relationship with the pediatrician from the time you come home from the hospital with your baby, and you should have a schedule so you feel like you are getting regular checkups annually and making sure whatever vaccines, hearing, and vision screenings are followed according to the time table," she adds.

Allowing the pediatrician to get to know your child makes it easier for him to be counseled on healthy living.

"Recommendations can be given on healthy eating, physical activity, and how much media and technology access kids should have," says Dr. Sharma.

Parents should pay attention to their kids and point out any changes to the pediatrician.

"If you see your child is not talking much, maybe he is shy or quiet and that is within the normal range, or maybe he needs more clinical support to help him speak more in public," says Dr. Sharma. "If a child is anxious in general or has specific fears about things, find out if that is within normal limits or something that requires help, strategies, and support for the family and child."

If you suspect your child has a delay, address it and seek therapeutic support so you can have the best outcome. The pediatrician will let you know if he is on par in all aspects of growth and development, both physical and otherwise.

"There is a growth and weight chart of what is considered nor-

mal, but there is also a range for other domains like language and fine motor skills, and parents need to be aware of those things," says Dr. Sharma.

Help your child view the pediatrician as a friend and advocate, rather than someone to be feared.

"It is helpful for families to have a support person in the medical field who can pay attention to those things that parents might not pick up on their own," says Dr. Sharma, adding let nervous children know that everyone sees a pediatrician. "It is important for them to know that all kids go and the pediatrician helps them stay healthy, gives the family good advice on how to live a healthy lifestyle, and is a support person who really cares about children."

Of course, it is normal for children to feel anxious about visits.

"Some kids are scared to go because a common fear is getting shots, so one of the best things the pediatrician can do is explain to the child and parent exactly what is happening before he does it," says Dr. Sharma. This means if your child is getting a shot, the pediatrician should tell what it is, why it is being done, how long it will take and what it feels like.

"It is about helping the child to be comfortable and let them know what is going to happen at every step along the way because it eases anxiety for a lot of them," she says.

Let your child do some talking.

"It is helpful for kids to bring questions to the pediatrician because it helps them feel involved," says Dr. Sharma.

Take a journal with you and write down your child's measurements and how he is doing. Ask questions about medications, vaccines and vitamins. Remember that your child does not want to spend a lot of time with the pediatrician, and time is limited.

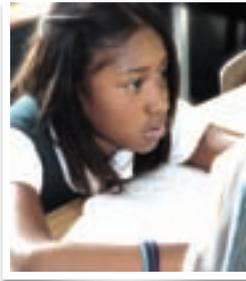
"If you come in with your list of questions in advance and maybe tell the nurse what concerns you want answered, the doctor can focus that time on your concerns and it is helpful," said Dr. Jennifer Shu, spokesman for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Jamie Lober, author of "Pink Power" (www.getpinkpower.com), is dedicated to providing information on women's and pediatric health topics. She can be reached at jamie@getpinkpower.com.

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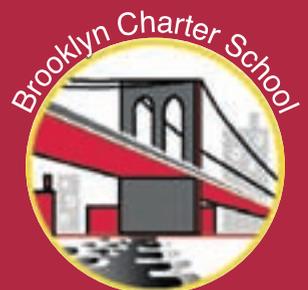
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Building Bridges To Tomorrow

Ten tips for finding the right day camp

BY DENISE MORRISON
YEARIAN

Summer day camp is a place where children can learn new skills, acquire new interests, and make new friends. But there is no one-size-fits-all camp. To find the right day camp for your child, consider these 10 tips.

Consider your child

Talk it over and narrow down the options based on your child's interests and needs. Find out what he wants from the experience and work together to make a list of things he might like to do.

Also consider his developmental needs. Is he ready for an all-day program? Would he be more comfortable in an intimate versus large group setting?

If your child likes sports, but has shown some interest in drama or art, encourage him to step out of

his comfort zone. It just might spark a new passion.

Gather information

Attend camp fairs, or pick up a local camp guide. Circle programs of interest, then comparison shop.

Call each prospective camp to inquire about philosophy, daily schedule, and other topics important to you. Invest this time up front and you may find a camp to stay with for several years.

Traditional or specialty?

When choosing between a traditional versus specialty program, consider this rule of thumb: the younger the child, the more varied the activities should be.

Children between the ages of 7 and 11 thrive in a setting where they can sample a variety of subjects. As their attention span develops, they may want to focus on a

single activity.

If you go with a specialty camp, find out how intense the program is. It may be labeled "specialty," but only have a one- or two-hour component with other activities scheduled in.

Look at location

Find a camp close to your job or home to shorten travel time and allow quick access to your child in an emergency.

Convenience, however, shouldn't be the primary factor. Balance your decision with what the camp has to offer. If your child really wants to participate in a given camp, consider your willingness to drive out of the way. Or, see if there's a neighbor with whom you can carpool.

Ponder program length

Program length should be viewed in light of the family and child's needs. If your schedule dictates him having to stay a full day, ask about before- and after-care. If he's younger, find out about naps or quiet times.

It's also important to find out who runs the before- and after-care program. Is it the same staff your child has all day? What activities will he be engaged in during this time?

Scout out schedules

Before enrolling, ask about the daily schedule. What themes and related activities are planned? Will there be field trips or special guests coming in to keep camp exciting and extend theme-based learning? Will your camper receive any reading, writing, or math experiences? Done properly, kids can enjoy games and activities that keep those academic skills sharp.

Also look at resources the camp has to offer and inquire how often

Questions to ask before choosing a day camp

- Are you licensed by the state or do you hold an accreditation or certification? What exactly does that credential mean?
- What kind of background, training, and experience do counselors and staff have? How are they chosen?
- What is the counselor-to-camper ratio? How many students are in each group? How often are the groups together?
- What kind of medical response is on hand? Camp nurse, or CPR- and first aid-certified staff?
- Are you able to administer medicine?



- What is a typical day like?
- How often will the campers take field trips? Where do they go? Is there increased supervision in populated setting?
- What other resources are available to campers, such as a pool, ice arena, farm, hiking trails, ropes course, archery, etc.? How often will my child be able to participate in these?
- Are lunches or snacks provided?
- Do you offer before- and after-care? Will it be the same staff caring for my child?
- How often are the facilities cleaned?

- What alternative plans do you have for inclement weather?
- What does the camp fee cover? What extra fees will I be required to pay?
- Do you offer scholarships or financial aid?
- What is the refund policy and rules regarding transfer of weeks?
- What is your policy regarding cellphones and other technology items brought to camp?
- How do you handle home-sickness and other adjustment issues?
- What is the discipline policy?
- How do you handle bullying?
- What are your drop-off and pick-up policies?
- Will you provide references?



your child will participate in them. Don't assume that just because there's a pool, ropes course, or archery field on the brochure it will be part of your child's session. Ask to make sure.

Ask about staff

Find out how staff and counselors are chosen, their experience, background, age, and training, as well as counselor-to-camper ratio. The American Camping Association's day camp recommendations are one to six staffers for campers ages 4 to 5, one to eight for ages 6 to 8, one to 10 for ages 9 to 14, and one to 12 for ages 15 to 17. Also ask how counselors are screened and what background checks are done. If you're going with a specialty camp,

what kind of in-depth knowledge and experience do the counselors have teaching the subject?

Consider costs

Compare program costs and find out what the fees actually cover. Some camps include field trips, materials, meals, and T-shirts into their initial fee, with others it's an add-on. Also find out the camp's refund policy and rules regarding transfer of weeks if your plans change or your child gets sick. If the camp is out of your price range, is a scholarship or financial assistance available?

Explore open houses

Visiting an open house can get children acclimated to the environment and give you a better perspec-

tive of the staff, facilities, and activities. Are the staffers smiling and friendly? Do they immediately bond with the children? Are the facilities well maintained, clean, and free of safety hazards?

Peruse policies

Eliminate future problems by reviewing the camp's policies and procedures before you sign up. You don't want to learn after the fact that your child can't turn on his cellphone during camp hours, or that drop-off and pick-up policies differ from what you thought. Share pertinent information with your child, too, so there are no surprises on his end.

Denise Morrison Yearian is the former editor of two parenting magazines and the mother of three children.

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Is located just one block from Borough Hall and easily accessible by public transportation. They offer three summer programs for children ages 2 to 14.

Summer Camp enrolls children ages 2 to 8 and features specialty classes in art, dance, science, tennis, group games and swimming.

Summer Arts enrolls children ages 8 to 11 and offers courses in puppetry, music, fiber arts, hip-hop, photography, drawing, painting and woodworking.

Summer Intensives train campers in music video animation, printmaking, drawing and drama. Expert and nurturing faculty runs all programs, including numerous field trips throughout the city. Camp facilities include two gyms, rooftop

playground, theater & music rooms, woodshop, darkroom, media centers and air-conditioned classrooms.

CBE KIDS Summer Day Camp

In the Garfield Temple at 8th Avenue and Garfield Place, Park Slope

718-768-3814 or www.congregationbethelohim.org

Offers children fun, excitement and a wide variety of recreational activities in a safe, supervised environment.

The program meets the needs of children entering K-4th grades. Children of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds are welcomed.

Facilities include an indoor pool, art and computer rooms, darkroom and large, multi-use spaces. Prospect Park is used for sports, nature and outdoor play.

Activities include daily recreational and instructional swim, gymnastics, nature, arts & crafts, music, sports hobbies and twice a week trips, a mid-session Olympics, Music Festival and Carnival.

The Cosmic Cove Summer Program

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, making 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.

Creative Arts Studio Summer Camp 2013

Boerum Hill and Carroll Gardens
718-797-5600 or www.creativeartsstudio.com

Offers children between the ages 5-13, the opportunity to have a

Continued on page 24

Summer Fun

at **YOUNG PEOPLES** Day Camps

#1 Private Day Camp in Brooklyn!

Our 41st Year!

Days Filled with FUN, FUN, FUN!

- Arts and Crafts, Games, Karate, Talent Shows...
- Sports With Instruction: Swimming, Soccer, Basketball, Softball...
- Weekly Field Trips, Movies & Bowling, Barbecues, DJ Dance Parties...
- For Boys, Girls 4 - 14
- 2 - 8 Week Programs Available
- Operated by Licensed Teachers & Administrators
- We Offer Special Rates For Union Members
- Conveniently Located Camp in Brooklyn

And More!!!

Call Now For Information

1-718-951-9732 or 1-800-DAYCAMP

Free Transportation

www.ypdce.com

Join us at our
Summer Day Camp
Open House
 Sunday, March 3rd
 1pm to 3pm

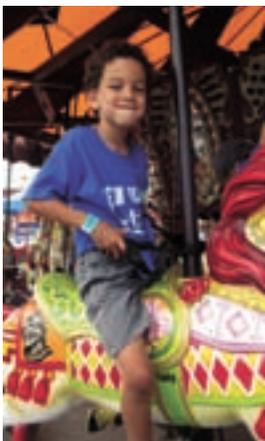
CBE KIDS



Summer Day Camps

Children of All Faiths & Ethnic Backgrounds are Welcome

Call Bobbie Finkelstein 718-768-3814 x210 or www.congregationbethelohim.org



Elementary Day Camp Entering Kindergarten Through 3th Grade

Full Day program. On-site swimming, active outdoor sports, arts & crafts, nature, gymnastics & music. Trips in & around NYC.

Movin' On Travel Camp

Entering 4th Grade Through 9th Grade

Five days of trips. Two overnights, mature, qualified staff.

NEW THIS SUMMER Enriched Hebrew

Programming including native speaking Hebrew counselors and specialists; Israeli culture is explored through music, art sports, cooking and drama.



Brooklyn Arts Exchange
arts & artists in progress

421 Fifth Avenue @ 8th Street, Brooklyn | (718) 832-0018 | **VISIT BAX.ORG**

Spring Break Arts Program

April 9-13 9:00am-3:00pm
for kids currently in grades K-5



Summer Arts Program

July 2 - August 17
9:00am-3:00pm
for kids entering grades K-6



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN • FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

www.youth.bax.org/school-breaks

Summer Camps/Programs

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wonderful experience of dance, drama, music and art.

There will be weekly swimming lessons, field trips to various museums and special events along with projects and activities that explore weekly themes.

The outstanding Teaching Artists of the Creative Arts Studio will be teaching this multi-arts workshop in a fun and nurturing environment.

Creative Arts Studio Teen Summer Dance Intensive 2013

Boerum Hill and Carroll Gardens
718-797-5600 or www.creativeartsstudio.com

Creative Arts Studio professional Teaching Artists will be helping students strengthen their technique while learning composition and the history of specific dance styles. They will also focus on improvisation, music, and the process of learning restaged works. Dance Styles include: Modern, Ballet, Hip Hop, Tap, Musical Theatre and more!

At least two years of recent ballet or modern experience required.

For further information and a complete schedule, call 718-797-5600.

FasTrackKids Summer

60 Broadway Williamsburg
7612 13th Avenue Bay Ridge/
Dyker Heights
1605 Voorhies Avenue,
Sheepshead Bay
718-748-3000 or www.fastrackkids.com

Is designed for children ages 3-7. Sessions last for one week at a time. A full day program is offered that includes enrichment classes, math, reading, and writing classes, exercise, local field trips, arts and crafts, karaoke, computers, special projects, science experiments and much more. Hours are from 9am-4pm with extended hours available.

The camp offers a fast-paced, fun and fully interactive setting; learning adventures captivate and entertain as they deliver truly meaningful lessons. Each day FasTrackKids will enjoy learning as they explore, discover, imagine and create. This is the summer adventure children will use for life. One or 2 times per week Enopi Math & English Classes are also offered all summer and throughout

the year.

Greene Hill School Summer Program

39 Adelphi Street
718-230-3608 or www.greenhillschool.org

Greene Hill School Day Camp is located in Fort Greene/Clinton Hill and offers Day Camp for kids ages 3-5 (Campers must be toilet trained), Mini-Adventure Camp for kids age 6-7, and Excursion Camp for kids ages 8-10.

Greene Hill summer Camp 2013 runs in six, week-long sessions from June 24-August 2. The hours are 9:00am-3:00pm (an 8:30am early drop off and extended day are available). Select the weeks you want-weeks do not need to be consecutive. Greene Hill School Day Camp proudly collaborates with the best of Brooklyn sports and arts education to offer a wide variety of both indoor and outdoor activities and is supervised by Greene Hill School teachers. Daily programs include: Gymnastics and Circus, Theater, Ceramics, Soccer, Yoga, Arts and Crafts, and Dance.

Joffrey Ballet School

Founded By Robert Joffrey in 1953

434 Avenue of the America's,
3rd, 4th and 5th Floors
212-254-8520 ext 208 or www.joffreyballetschool.com

Summer Dance Camp- Ages 3 - 6, 7-9 (NO AUDITION REQUIRED)

Six Ballets in six weeks! Our youngest dancers will explore a different story ballet each week culminating in a Friday family performance. The children will use improvisation, basic movement concepts, and basic principals of classical ballet to recreate the great story ballets. The children will design and construct costumes, masks and scenery to enhance the productions. A light, theme based, snack will be served daily.

Just Wee Two Summer Program

Brooklyn Heights and Park Slope
1-800-404-2204 or www.justweetwo.com

Is geared for kids 14 months to three-and-a-half years, directed and taught by early childhood teach-

Continued on page 26

Greene Hill School

SUMMER CAMP 2013

JUNE 24 - AUGUST 2

TO REGISTER, VISIT
GREENHILLSCHOOL.ORG (KEYWORD: SUMMER CAMP)
(718) 230-3608 OR
SUMMERCAMP@GREENHILLSCHOOL.ORG



5 LOCATIONS
1 GREAT SUMMER!
Flexible Daily & Weekly Schedules
ages 3.5 to 14



Traditional outdoor, fun, stimulating day camp
Soccer & Circus specialty programs that can be easily combined with Traditional Camp
On Wheels travel camp for grades 6 – 8
Leadership Experience for grades 9 & 10



Transportation available from most Brooklyn locations

parkslopedaycamp.com

SPRING BREAK MINI-CAMP

*Based in Park Slope
grades PK – 6*

March 25 – April 2

Minimum registration of 2 days

Join us for **fun day trips** and
wacky camp culture!



*Based in Park Slope,
Carroll Gardens & Brooklyn Heights*

Indoor classes for ages 3 – 10

in the Brazilian Futsal style.
Registration never closes.

Register online
sonicsoccerfun.com

Summer Camp **OPEN HOUSE DATES**

Saturdays - March 9 • April 6
339 8 Street, just below 6 Avenue

Presentations begin at 1pm & 2:30pm

Children are Welcome!

718.788.7732

Physically Active • Outdoors Everyday
 • Nature Oriented • Travelling Day Camp

Experienced, Carefully Chosen, Adult Staff

32 Years in Operation



DAILY TRIPS

Swimming at a lake, pools and beaches.
 Weekly hikes. Trips to Museums, Zoos, Playgrounds,
 Bowling, Aquarium, Science Centers.
 Special trip to Sesame Place

Ages 4 1/2 - 11

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE
 3, 4, 5 or 6 week sessions
 3, 4, or 5 days a week
 Early drop off & late
 pick-up available



LOCATED IN PARK SLOPE
Kim's Kids Summer Camp
 718-768-6419
www.kimskidscamp.com

**WE'RE
 READY
 FOR
 SUMMER.
 ARE YOU?**



**Who needs Maine or Vermont
 when you've got Brooklyn Friends?**

**Our two summer programs, SUMMER CAMP for
 5 to 8 year olds, and SUMMER ARTS for 8 to 14 year
 olds, provide a "summer in the city" experience
 for friends in three camp sessions, from JUNE 19
 through JULY 26. Recreational athletics and swim-
 ming, field trips, special guests and master classes
 are part of the BFS experience.**



**Sibling and early registration
 discounts are available.**

Learn more on the BFS website:
www.brooklynfriends.org/summer
 375 Pearl Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Summer Camps/Programs

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ers trained to work with young children. Just Wee Two is a place where children and grownups learn and play together. Class sizes are small, allowing for individualized attention. All classes are one-and-a-half or two hours to allow for a relaxed, comprehensive atmosphere. Mothers meet other mothers, developing life-long friendships while their children grow.

Classes celebrate summer through special arts & crafts, songs, water table activities and creative play. A mini-camp program is for children two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half who are ready to separate.

**Kim's Kids Summer Camp
 Meets at PS 321 in Park Slope
 718-768-6419 or www.kimskidscamp.com**

Is a nature-oriented active camp for children ages 4-1/2 to 11. Being physical and outdoors are at the heart of the program.

The camp takes trips every day; children may spend the day jumping waves at Riis Park or riding a camel at the zoo. It is a continuous agenda of hiking, swimming, running, climbing, and exploring. Flexible scheduling allows children to attend three, four or five days a week. Early bird drop off and late pickup are available.

**The Summer Creative Arts
 & Music Program of Leif
 Ericson Day School**

**1037 72nd Street in Dyker
 Heights
 718-748-9023 or www.ledsny.org**

Leif Ericson Day School's Summer Creative Arts and Music Program (SCAMP) begins its 17th year of fun. Children from pre-K to grade 7 enjoy computers, art, music, movement, and drama. Professional caring staff and junior counselors are enthusiastic and attentive. Limited group size allows for a more fulfilling experience. All activities are on-premises. Two snacks provided daily. SCAMP hours are 9a.m.-3p.m. with "Early bird" care (8am) and "Late Bird" care (5pm) for additional fees.

**The Marks JCH Day Camp
 7802 Bay Parkway**

718-943-6345 or www.jchcamp.com

The Marks JCH has been serving south Brooklyn for over 85 years. One of their most important functions has and continues to be the provision of an enriching camp experience for children. The camp program provides children ages 3-14 with an educational, recreational and social experience that will last a lifetime. Their activities include, instructional swimming on a daily basis, sports leagues, arts & crafts, dance, and computers. Day trips include Six Flags, Splish Splash, Adventureland, Funzone, various museums, and shows. Overnight trips include, Philadelphia, Virginia, Massachusetts and New Jersey Y Camps. Their programs help children to develop their identities by promoting individual growth, while embracing Jewish family and community values. Please contact Michael Abdurakhmanov, Camp Director, for more information.

**Summers With
 Mathnasium**

**6806 20th Avenue
 347-7-MATH-11 (347-762-8411)
 or www.mathnasium.com/bensonhurst**

Summer Hours (July and August):
 Mon-Tue-Wed-Thurs: 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Sat 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM.
 Friday and Sunday: Closed

Welcome to Mathnasium. We are a math learning center where we make MATH make SENSE to kids. We support K, 1st grade, 2nd – 12th grades and up. Our Summer Math camp (July and August) is a great time to CATCH UP, KEEP UP and GET AHEAD. We have fun activities, contests and rewards. It is an extra relaxed time to learn! Shorts, T-shirts, flip-flops welcome! We have earlier hours as well so you can enjoy those beautiful summer evenings. At Mathnasium, we end the confusion, frustration and embarrassment children often feel about math.

**Midwood Montessori
 Summer Program**

**2825 Bedford Avenue, one block
 from Brooklyn College
 718-253-3242 or www.midwoodmontessori.com**

The rich Montessori setting that attracts children to our school influences our summer camp - a

Continued on page 28

Creative Arts

S T U D I O

Summer Arts Camp 2013



Photo by Gregory Dillon Scherer

718.797.5600

Dance . Drama . Music . Art

www.creativeartsstudio.com

Summer Camps/Programs

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nurturing, creative environment providing a wide variety of activities for children ages 2.9 - 6 years. These include indoor play in our centrally air conditioned building, three outdoor play areas, daily water play, gardening, picnics, barbecues, music, arts & crafts, weekly field trips and theme days, all of which are supervised by our caring and experienced year-round staff. Transportation is available. Located one block from Brooklyn College, our hours are 9 AM - 3 PM (8 AM drop-off available).

Mill Basin Day Camp

**5945 Strickland Avenue
718-251-6200 or www.
millbasindaycamp.com**

Mill Basin Day Camp is dedicated to providing an exciting and fulfilling camp experience for children entering Pre-K through 9th grade. As the largest camp only facility in Brooklyn, their modern, fully equipped, air-conditioned and secure space offers a wide range of on-site activities. Campers are supervised by qualified staff in a fun and safe first environment. Door to door bus service is available to most locations. Call or come in for a personal tour of the facility.

New Country Day Camp

646-395-4355 or www.14streety.org

A Summer in the Country So Close to the City!

Voted 'Best Day Camp' in NYC by Nickelodeon's ParentsConnect Fun, healthy outdoor experiences are at the heart of New Country Day Camp, the 14th Street Y's premiere day camp for kids in Kindergarten through 6th grade. Swimming pools, hiking trails and open meadows provide the setting for this idyllic camp on the 75-acre Henry Kaufmann Campgrounds on Staten Island, just 45 minutes from bus pick-up points in Manhattan and Brooklyn. New Country Day Camp is also accredited by the American Camp Association

Activities include instructional swim led by 4x Olympic Gold Medalist Lenny Krayzelburg, free swim, boating, sports, arts and crafts, gymnastics, science and technology, camping, cooking & pioneering, martial

arts, and performing arts. Please visit our website for our open house dates. RSVP is required: please email newcountry@14StreetY.org or call 646-395-4357.

Nova Summer Day Camp

**3701 Surf Avenue, inside Seagate
718-996-2229 or www.
novaathletics.org**

Has been serving the Brooklyn community for 35 years offers a combination of programs. Besides their top quality, well known gymnastics programs, they also offer dance, martial arts, swimming, soccer, basketball, arts and crafts, talent shows, music, weekly trips and more.

Programs are taught by professional staff in a state-of-the-art, air conditioned facility, one block from the beach, in their own private seaside community that has an on-site pool and playground.

Each of the sports will develop campers in many ways: eye-hand coordination, water skills, self-defense, good sportsmanship, courtesy, respect and personal creativity. The campers are building skills that last a lifetime.

Kosher breakfast and lunch are included.

Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park Summer Program

**180 Remsen St. Brooklyn Heights
11201
718-596-4900 or www.
oasischildren.com**

With the magnificent revitalization of the Brooklyn waterfront, Oasis is thrilled to bring this opportunity to families in Brooklyn. Oasis will utilize Brooklyn Bridge Park's premier lawns, play areas and recreational facilities. Oasis also will utilize the indoor, state-of-the-art athletic and performing arts facilities of St. Francis College, as well as their pristine, air-conditioned classrooms and large meeting spaces. A traditional day camp in every way, Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park's program includes sports and recreation, visual and performing arts, recreational and Red Cross instructional swim, and field trips. In partnership with the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, Oasis will offer an outdoor education component

Continued on page 30

Summer Camp
at
NOVA

NEWLY RENOVATED FACILITY
Gymnastics • Dance • Karate • Soccer • On-Site Pool
Music • Basketball • Crafts • Weekly Trips
Air Conditioned Gym • Beach Access
LUNCH INCLUDED!

Early Registration Special
Last Year's Prices Before April 1st

**Give Your Child
The Best!**

AWARD WINNING PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES
CITY VOUCHERS ACCEPTED

35 YEARS SERVING THE COMMUNITY
RUSSIAN SPEAKING COACHES AVAILABLE

3701 Surf Avenue
Seagate Private Seaside Community
1 Block From The Beach
Call: **718.996.2229**
ЗАНЯТИЯ ПРОВОДЯТСЯ ОПЫТНЕЙШИМИ ТРЕНЕРАМИ
РОССИИ И США
www.novaathletics.org



Marks JCH Day Camp

Fun. Friends. New Experiences.

Summer 2013
June 27th - August 16th
Ages 3-14

Camp Open House - March 21st
RSVP Today!

www.jchcamp.com

718.331.6800 x 145 or camp@jchb.org

7802 Bay Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11214



Midwood Montessori



Pre-School & Kindergarten

Summer Program
Transportation Available

2825 Bedford Avenue • 253-3242
at Glenwood Road

www.midwoodmontessori.com

PARK EXPLORERS DAY CAMP

Summer & Holiday Camps!

Over 25 In the heart of Park Slope
Lots of activities
Weekly Sessions
Ages 4 through 14



718-788-3620

www.parkexplorers.com

Summer Camps/Programs

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that includes environmental studies, orienteering and more! Oasis Day Camp is for kids ages 4-12. Families enroll for a minimum of two consecutive weeks, a maximum of eight weeks, or any combination you choose. Families have the advantage to enroll their children around their summer plans! Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park is open this summer from July 1st to August 23rd.

PAC KIDS Summer Camp 1500 Paerdegat Avenue North, 718-531-1111 or www.pacplex.com

A variety of programs for children ages 3.5 to 14. All activities are located on the premises, and include swimming, gymnastics, basketball and soccer. As always, the philosophy is to provide fun and exciting activities that create a rewarding experience for your children while always maintaining a safe environment by an experienced and caring staff.

Transportation for most of Brooklyn. We accept Begin ACD and 1199. Please call for more information.

Park Explorers Day Camp 611 8th Avenue, one block from Prospect Park 718-788-3620 or www.parkexplorers.com

At Park Explorers Day Camp no two days are alike. Each week offers a trip to the beach, gymnastics, sports, arts and crafts, drama, movement, singing, special events, twice a week pool swim, a different trip each week around NYC, plus lots of healthy outdoor sunshine. Third graders and up can try special programs in Exploring Theater and Exploring Soccer. Fifth graders and up may sign up for special trips and overnights. There are flexible weekly sessions plus early drop off and extended hours; shuttle bus service available in designated areas.

The Park Slope Day Camp Park Slope, Windsor Terrace, Bay Ridge, Carroll Gardens 718-788-7732 or www.parkslopedaycamp.com

PSDC = CAMP SPIRIT, COMMUNITY AND FRIENDSHIP.

Welcoming, stimulating, lively,

diverse, safe, professionally managed outdoor camp for ages 3.5 – 14. Exciting travel camp for grades 6 – 8; fantastic Leadership Experience for grades 9 & 10. Specialized Sports Academy and Circus program. Swim, sports, arts, gymnastics, horseback riding, lots of special events, trips. Very flexible registration; extra long season and accommodating hours. Transportation. An experienced, creative, stable staff, second to none!

Summer Fun At The Old Stone House & Washington Park

Piper Theatre Workshop and Garden Explorers 3rd Street, between 4 & 5 Avenues 718-768-3195 or www.pipertheatre.org

For Ages 7 - 11

Two week sessions, July 1-12 (closed July 4) & July 15-26

9 am – 3 pm Monday – Friday

Extended day available

Piper Theatre Workshop - Starlings Children spend their days creating drama together under the guidance of nurturing, professional artists. This season's productions range from Hamlet to One Thousand and One Nights.

Old Stone House - Garden Explorers Discover the world of plants, gardening and food in our beautiful gardens. Gather and plant seeds; harvest your lunch; explore soil, worms, and insects; use garden tools, play; and make art.

Programs take place in the OSH's Great Room, and next door at MS 51, with lots of outdoor time in Washington Park and the beautiful new JJ Byrne playground.

Preparatory Center For The Performing Arts at Brooklyn College Summer Program

234 Roosevelt Hall 2900 Bedford
Ave.
718-951-4111 or www.bcprepcenter.org

The Preparatory Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College offers music, theater and dance classes and private lessons for chil-

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Oasis

DAY CAMP 2013

Get up to \$100 off
when you attend
an info session!

Amazing Summers, Lifelong Friends

BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK



BROOKLYN BRIDGE
PARK
CONSERVANCY

BROOKLYN BRIDGE
PARK

- ✓ Traditional 9-5 day camp for kids ages 4-12
- ✓ Modern, air-conditioned facilities at St. Francis College featuring an NCAA gymnasium and state-of-the-art theatre!
- ✓ Kayaking, Fishing, Beach Volleyball, Team Sports, Arts & Crafts, Gymnastics, Performing Arts, Instructional swim & More!
- ✓ Camper's CHOICE TIME every week
- ✓ Fun trips & special events
- ✓ Hot lunch, bussing, early drop off and late stay available
- ✓ Flexible enrollment with only a 2 week minimum

Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park is presented in cooperation with Brooklyn Bridge Park and the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy



Visit us for online registration & more:

WWW.OASISCHILDREN.COM

Upcoming Info Sessions

Saturday 3/16 2:30-5pm at Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 5

Call us at 1.800.317.1392



Check out our new residential camp!
OASIS PINES, A Sleepaway Experience Like No Other
Call us for details & to request a brochure!

OLD STONE HOUSE

& WASHINGTON PARK



GARDEN EXPLORERS AGES 7 TO 11

SPRING AFTER SCHOOL
APRIL 10 TO JUNE 12
3:30 TO 5:30 PM
10 WEDNESDAYS
FREE PICKUP FROM PS 321
AND THE CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

SUMMER PROGRAM
JULY 1 TO JULY 26
TWO WEEK SESSIONS 9 AM TO 3 PM
EXTENDED DAY AVAILABLE 'TIL 5 PM

REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.THEOLDSTONEHOUSE.ORG 718 768 3195



**PIPER
THEATRE
PRODUCTIONS**
PIPERTHEATRE.ORG
Building Communities through Drama

July 2013 Theatre Program
at the Old Stone House & Washington Park

Be transformed this summer!
Register today at www.pipertheatre.org

Two-week workshops: Ages 7-11
Four-week workshops: Ages 11-15

Piper Theatre Productions, Inc. PO Box 150613 Brooklyn, NY 11215
Phone 718.768.3195 info@pipertheatre.org

Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

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dren of all ages and levels. We also welcome adult students for private instruction in musical instruments, voice, and composition. Registration is currently underway for our summer semester. Offerings for the summer include a Creative Play program for ages 3-5, dance and theater classes, and private and group music study. Informational and placement interviews are currently being held. Suzuki program in violin, cello, and flute, as well as for our other music, theater, and dance classes. If you are interested in learning more about the Preparatory Center, you can access information from our website or call our office.

Prospect Park Zoo Summer Program

718-399-7327 or www.wcs.org/camp

Explore animals and learn about conservation activities you can do at home! All campers will engage

in hands-on science activities, create whimsical nature crafts, meet animal guests, and much more! The zoo offers week long camps for kids ages 2-17 years. Extended care until 5pm is also available. Sessions begin in mid June. For more information call or visit our website.

Red Tiger Academy Summer Program

8520 Foster Avenue
347-693-8592 or www.red-tiger.com

Let your children enjoy their Summer attending Red Tiger Academy Summer Workshop. The Workshop is packed with fun, exciting and challenging daily activities where your kids will never be bored. Our trained staff will take care of your loved ones this Summer. Free breakfast and lunch at the local public school. For more information please call or visit our website.

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where children and grown-ups learn and play together

For 8 months - 3 1/2 years

REGISTER NOW FOR SPRING AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

Park Slope Location
8th Ave. & 14th St.

Brooklyn Heights Location
250 Cadman Plaza West

Join Us For Fun

- Arts & Crafts
- Music • Stories
- Creative Movement
- Playtime
- Narrow Age Spans
- Maximum 10 Children Per Class
- 1 1/2 Hour Classes
- Professional Staff

"Just For Me"

2 1/2 - 3 1/2

Separation Program

Partial Separation Classes
Also Available

**Infant Classes (Parent & Child) and ABC Enrichment
Classes Also Available**

For Information Call 1-800-404-2204 or 516-433-0003
Or Log Onto Our Website: www.justweetwo.com

Other Locations: Bayside, Plainview, Manhasset, Greenwich, & North Stamford, CT



Summer Day Camp 2013



Open House Dates:

Saturday Mar. 2nd
Saturday Mar. 9th
Sunday Mar. 10th
Saturday Mar. 23rd

11pm-4pm

over 20

Great Activities Weekly

Ice Skating, Gymnastics, Recreational Swimming, Soccer, Rock Climbing, Field Sports, Dance, Sky Jump, Aerobics, Leadership Building, Water Slides, Theater, Science and Nature, Volleyball, Kickball, Arts and Crafts, Basketball, Flag Football, Environmental Education, Health and Nutrition, Field Trips, Spirit Days & Color Wars!

AVIATOR SPORTS AND EVENTS CENTER

Floyd Bennett Field, 3159 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11234

Contact Jennie at 718-758-7518 or Camps@aviatorsports.com.

Also visit Aviatorcamps.com ~ Parking is always FREE!



Summer Camps/Programs

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Shorefront YM-YWHA Day Camp

718.646.1444 ext. 335 or www.shorefronty.org/camp

A fun-filled summer experience for children ages 3 to 14. Ideally located on the Boardwalk in Brighton Beach, the experienced staff provides a safe & nurturing environment for your children. Kosher lunches and snacks are provided daily. Exciting activities include beach outings, sports, swimming lessons in the Olympic sized indoor pool, arts & crafts, dance, singing, drama, thrilling trips, special events and much more!

intensive week of acting, singing and dancing. Students will have workshops with Broadway artists during the week as well as working on a show!

Glee week: August 5th – 10th
Broadway Bound: August 12th – 17th.

This is a fantastic week for children who would enjoy an intensive and fun filled week of acting, singing and dancing. Workshops run in Cobble Hill Brooklyn, 1 block from F train at Bergen Street. Reasonable rates as well as sibling discounts!

Please call Beth Kent on 718-852-3208 for more information or take a look at our website www.stagecoachschoools.com

StageCoach Theatre Arts School

Brooklyn Heights 718-852-3208 or www.stagecoachschoools.com/brooklynheights

Stagecoach Theatre School in Brooklyn Heights is excited to offer summer performing arts camps for children aged 4-16 years for an

Staten Island Academy Summer Day Camp

715 Todt Hill Road
718-303-7846 or www.statenislandacademy.org/camp
Staten Island Academy Summer Day

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Julie Larsen-Waher © WCS

ZOO CAMP

THE ZOO OFFERS WEEK-LONG SUMMER CAMPS FOR KIDS AGES 2-12 & A 3-WEEK TEEN INTERNSHIP.



PROSPECT PARK ZOO

Visit wcs.org/camp or contact us at ppzeducation@wcs.org or 718.399.7327



Winston Preparatory School Summer Program

Education for the Individual

- ◆ A unique individually designed program aimed to develop:
 - Reading Comprehension
 - Decoding and Spelling
 - Organizational Skills
 - Study Strategies
 - Writing
 - Math
- ◆ Small class sizes for students in 4th through 12th grades
- ◆ After-school activities include basketball, art, music, yoga, photography, acting, computing, and dance
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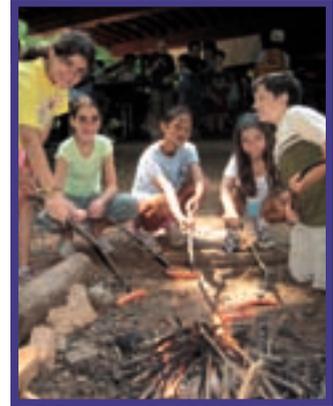
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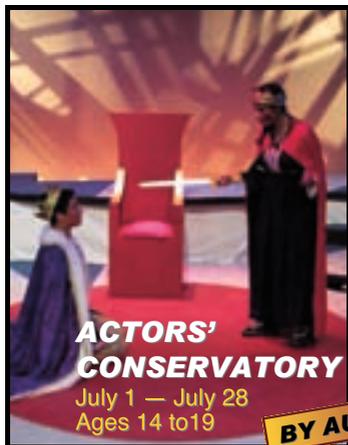


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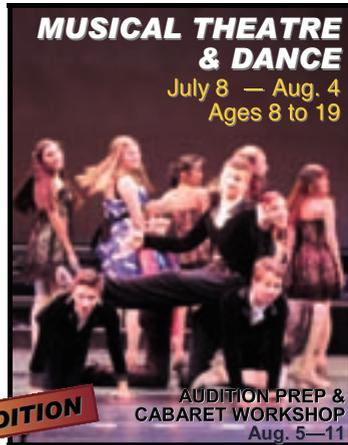
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Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

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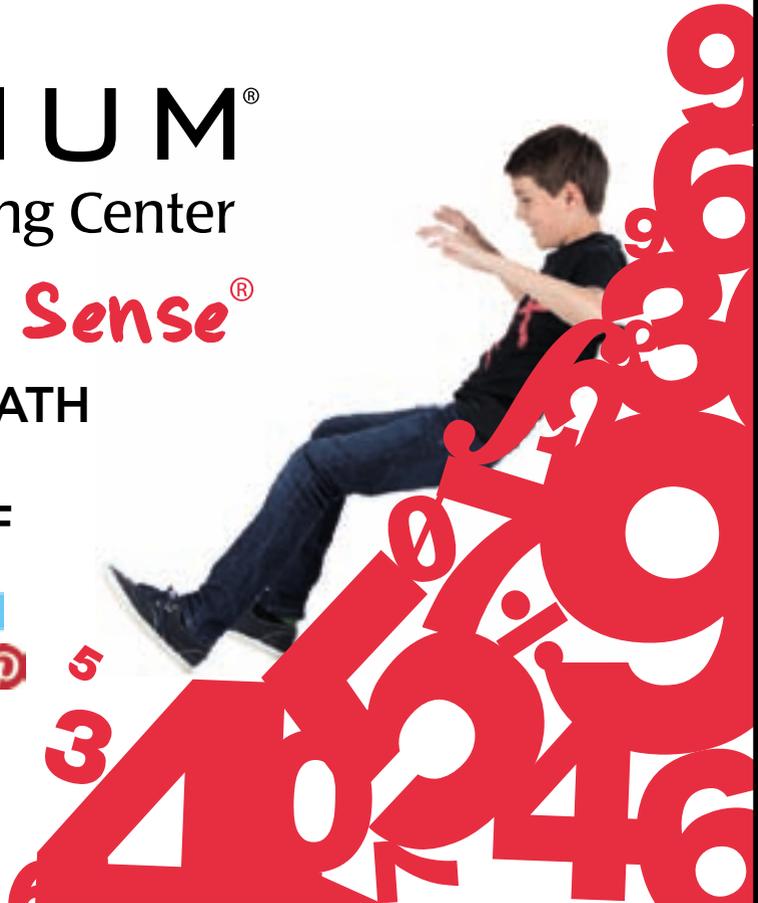
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Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 36

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Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 38

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Should your child go to camp with a friend?

A big question without an easy answer

BY LAURIE ROBERTS KAROL

Heading off to sleep-away camp can be a fearful time for both parent and child. In many instances, a child simply will not agree to go without the comfort of a friend or acquaintance.

It's one of the most frequently asked questions I hear as a professional summer camp advisor. The answer is never absolute. Let me provide some food for thought to guide you through making the best decision for your child.

In a perfect world, camp directors would prefer that each new camper come to camp without a current buddy, thereby putting all new campers on a socially even play-

ing field. Without the security of knowing a friend is by your child's side, the general consensus is that he will be more open and available to forge new relationships. It also gives him leeway to re-invent his persona without question or judgment from someone who may perceive him differently based on their existing relationship. So much for the perfect world — now let's move on to reality!

This is a time where a parent should listen to her gut instinct and proceed in the manner she feels is best for her child — not the child's friend, or the other child's parents. Take time to play out some of the scenarios that can occur.

Let me present a few:

Brittany and Nicole are good friends who go to school together and can't imagine being separated for the summer. Their families went through the search process together and have mutually agreed on a camp for the girls. Summer arrives and both girls happily board the bus, feeling quite comfortable sitting next to one another. Once at camp and settled into their new summer environment, it is inevitable that one of the girls will make a new connection first. How will the other girl feel? Will one feel left out or abandoned if she hasn't made a new friend yet? Will she feel like a tag-along in the wake of her friend's excitement? Will she write a letter home reflective of her feelings? How might this impact your relationship with the other child's mother?

Michael and Jared have been in day camp together since they were 3. The boys were reluctant to go to sleep-away camp, but the prospect of going away together provided enough security for each of the boys to agree. The families mutually select a camp for the boys and after months of shopping and packing, the camp buses will be leaving in a week. Jared has an unfortunate accident on the soccer field, breaks his foot, and has to stay home. Is Michael prepared to go without him?

Take the time to think these and other scenarios through. Discuss them with your spouse, your child, and the friend's parents. If your gut still tells you that this is the best formula for success, then by all means, sign them up together.

Keep in mind that together does not always mean they have to be in the same bunk. Most camps will have more than one bunk of campers in a division, and may have more than one division within an age group. Requesting separate bunks or divisions can give each child a different core to his experience, yet still provide the comfort of having a friend nearby.

Sleep-away camp is a time to grow as an individual, gain independence, participate in new activities, and learn to be part of a community of peers. Your ultimate decision on what camp to choose for your child and whether or not he should go with a friend should consider maximizing the benefits of the total camp experience.

Laurie Roberts Karol is a professional camp consultant with The Camp Experts and Teen Summers, a free summer camp and teen program advisory service that guides families through the decision-making process and assists in planning summer camp visitations. For more information, visit www.campexperts.com or contact her at (718) 766-8005 or (516) 780-6464.



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Can we talk?

Six reasons you should get your tween a cellphone

BY PAM MOLNAR

When my oldest daughter was in fifth grade, she started asking about cellphones. Evidently, some of her friends had recently acquired a cellphone of their own.

My first reaction was to assume

that their parents were crazy and were simply giving in to the wants of a spoiled tween. Why did a fifth-grader need a cellphone?

According to a report for the National Consumer League, conducted by Opinion Research Corporation International in 2012, nearly six out of 10 parents of tweens (ages 8 to 12) got

cellphones for their children. Thankfully, the majority of the parents did not take their decision lightly. The report showed that parents take the steps to phone ownership slowly by reading articles, talking with other parents, and comparing cellular service before taking the plunge. The result was a better understanding of

It is a comfort to a parent to know that she can call her children to see if they arrived safely, or to tell them of a change of plans to pick them up.

the benefits of buying a cellphone for their tween.

• **Peace of mind.** The most obvious reason to get a cellphone for your tween is the security of being able to reach her when she is not at home. Many middle-school kids take a bus to school for the first time and prefer to walk to the bus stop alone. As your children get older, their activity level increases, taking them away from home more often. It is a comfort to a parent to know that she can call her children to see if they arrived safely, or to tell them of a change of plans to pick them up.

• **Comfort for your child.** It is reassuring for parents to be able to reach their children, but the kids also feel more secure. Your tween is trying to spread her wings and gain a little independence, but she still finds comfort in the fact that her parents are a phone call away. When my son — my youngest child — got a phone, he felt better knowing that if he didn't see me the moment practice got out, he could call to see if I was on my way. He could also call to ask for permission to go home with a friend after school, knowing I would worry if I didn't see him by 3:45 pm.

• **A way to communicate with friends.** A cellphone is very handy to use as a phone, but most of the communication from your child's phone will be in the form of texting.

"We got our son a cellphone for safety reasons first, but also because using technology to communicate, learn, and play has become the way of the world," explains Tamará Ortegél, a mother of three.

Unlike our generation, our children don't have to wait in line to use the kitchen phone to get the math assignment from a friend. Your tweens can simply send their friends a text. As a parent, you can monitor who they are texting by sporadically checking the old mes-

sages, or when the phone is left in the charger at night.

• **Teaches responsibility.** Having a cellphone gives your tween the chance to try a little responsibility. Letting your child out the door with her cellphone does not guarantee that it will come back in working condition, or at all. Tell your tween that she get one phone and she has to take care of it. My oldest child is notorious for losing and breaking her phone, but I refuse to carry insurance on it. Her punishment for irresponsibility was to use grandma's old phone with the antenna and no key board.

• **Strengthen relationships with family.** One of the benefits that you may not expect is better communication with the extended family. Lisa Yore, a mother of four, believes her son has become more connected to family members.

"My son has the phone numbers of aunts, uncles, and his grandmother. They have had conversations and told him that if he ever needs to talk or needs anything, he shouldn't hesitate to call them."

Getting a simple, "Good luck at your game" text from Grandma tells the kids that she is thinking of them.

• **Save money.** With the addition of cellphones in your house, your landline will become obsolete.

"We got Jack a phone because we switched our TV and internet provider and got rid of the land line because no one used it except him," explains Stacy Bella, a mother of four. "His sisters all had cellphones and it was cheaper to do that than it was to keep the land line."

With the addition of each new cellphone in the house, the few calls that come into your home phone are telemarketers. To balance the increasing cellphone bill, many eliminate their landline completely.

As the parent, it is up to you to set the rules regarding limits and expectations. Teach your tween about the responsibility that goes with owning a phone, and explain the repercussions for losing or damaging it. Above all, remind your tween that having a phone is not a right, it is a privilege.

Pam Molnar is a freelance writer and mother of busy a teenager and two active tweens. Their activities often keep them away from home, but it is a comfort to all to know that they are only a phone call (or text) away.



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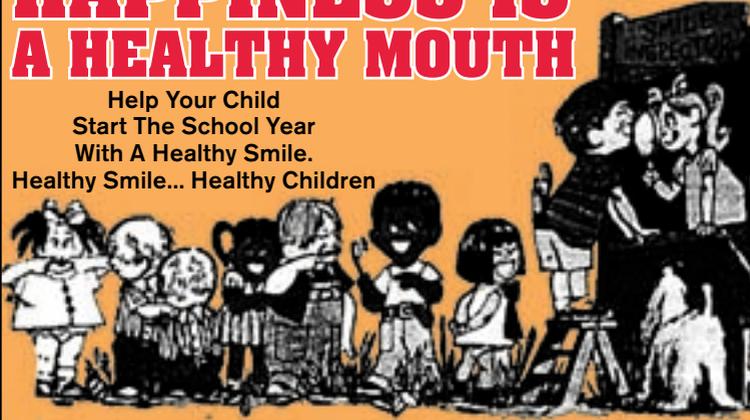
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Leaving a stain

Identifying
the foods
that stain —
and clean —
your pearly
whites

BY MARC LIECHTUNG, DMD,
MANHATTAN DENTAL ARTS

How to keep your pearly whites sparkling is a matter of what you put inside your mouth.

The “dirty dozen” that stain your teeth are:

- Black coffee and black tea — the darker the beverage, the more staining can occur. So try adding a little extra milk to lighten the color and reduce the staining effect.

- Wine — both red and white, and while red stains, white wine’s acidic composition actually etches tiny grooves in your teeth, making them more porous and more easily stained.

- Colas and sports drinks are highly acidic, and promote staining by other foods.

- Berries — blueberries, raspberries, cranberries, cherries and other types — so be sure to rinse out your mouth thoroughly with water after each indulgence.

- Beets leave their powerful mark, so moderation is the key.

- Sauces — soy, tomato, and other deeply colored varieties — are major culprits.

- Juice — grape, pomegranate, and cranberry are highly pigmented, so rinse your mouth out with water or drink through a straw to bypass the fronts of your teeth.

- Pickles and ketchup are acidic and good at opening up the pores of your tooth enamel, allowing for easy staining.

- Balsamic vinegar, while great on a salad, causes havoc to your teeth. Try it on lettuce instead to provide a protective film over your teeth.

- Candy contains coloring agents. If your tongue turns a funny color, there’s a good chance that your teeth will too.

- Curry, although great on Indian food, can be harsh on teeth. So make sure to rinse thoroughly after indulging.

- Popsicles color your tongue and your teeth. Plus, they have an added



double whammy negative effect produced by all of that sugar. So, limit your intake and rinse with water after finishing.

Here are 12 foods that are also potent tooth whiteners:

- Apples and pears increase salivary production which flushes away stains over time.

- Pineapple acts as a natural stain remover.

- Carrots contain vitamin A which is needed for healthy tooth enamel.

- Cauliflower and cucumbers also help to increase salivary production the natural way to flush away stains.

- Green vegetables like broccoli, lettuce and spinach contain iron

which helps form an acid-resistant film or barrier that can protect tooth enamel.

- Shitake mushrooms help inhibit bacteria from growing in your mouth.

- Onions help reduce bacteria that cause tooth decay.

- Cheese is rich in protein, calcium and phosphorus, all of which can help safeguard the acids in your mouth.

- Salmon provides calcium and vitamin D, nutrients needed for healthy bones and teeth.

- Poppy and sesame seeds help scrub away plaque.

- Ginger acts as an anti-inflammatory to support healthy mouth tissue.

- Basil is a natural antibiotic that reduces bacteria in the mouth.



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8 reasons to journal

How finding time to write can really improve your well-being

BY CHRISTINE COLEMAN

As a mom to three kids ages 16, 11, and 10, my days are filled with errands, laundry, carpool, Parent-Teacher Association meetings, and trying to find quiet moments in which to write.

Inevitably, those “quiet writing moments” always seem to present themselves in the carpool line, waiting in the doctor’s office, or in-between activities.

To make my writing time more productive, I spend those quiet moments journaling. Journaling allows me to write with no worries about the casualness or tone of my writing.

My journal is personal and it is a place where run-on sentences, missing punctuation, or messy thoughts have permission to exist. A journal can be as simple as a spiral notebook or composition book. It can also be more art-oriented like a sketchbook or a handmade book. Writing can be done with pens, pencils, markers, paint, and stamps — there are no rules except to have fun and of course, write.

For me, journaling is an excellent way to jumpstart my creativity. Here are a few benefits of journaling:

- **A place to record thoughts, feelings, and emotions.** A journal is a place to document feelings, thoughts, and emotions as they occur on a daily basis.

A child’s first steps, a rant about an injustice, or an opinion about something seen on television or the internet are everyday occurrences to write about in a journal. Feelings can be revealed openly and honestly, thus eliminating fears of condemnation, hurt feelings, or ridicule.

- **Reduces stress and anxiety.** When we take time to journal about stress in our family life, work, a pile



of laundry, or holiday shopping, we are removing those thoughts from our mind and transferring them to the paper. Author of “The Artist’s Way,” Julia Cameron, suggests morning pages as an exercise in clearing the mind.

“Morning pages are three pages of longhand morning writing,” said Cameron on her website www.juliacameronlive.com. “They seem to have nothing to do with creativity, but what they do is clear your mind.” Morning pages help bring clarity, which can help with priori-

tizing a to-do list and structuring of the day.

- **A way to record and preserve memories.** Recording those everyday moments remind us that work, family life, and the more mundane events are important and help shape who we are.

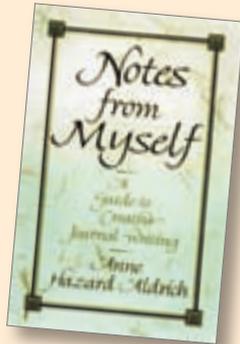
I have journaled about my children’s antics, coffee at Starbucks with a friend, conferences with my children’s teachers, and family vacations spent at Disney World. With the business of living, it is easy to forget how much happens during

Additional resources

“The Artist Way,” by Julia Cameron, includes additional exercises for those looking to discover or rediscover their creativity.

A great book for those just beginning to journal is “Notes from Myself: A Creative Guide to Journal Writing,” by Anne Hazard Aldrich.

“List Your Self,” by Ilene Segalove and Paul Bob Velick is a fun book full of list ideas to get you writing. They can be creatively incorporated into an art journal or regular journal and help spark



ideas for future writing.

In addition, “Rip the Page: Adventures in Creative Writing,” by Karen Benke, and Keri Smith’s “Wreck This Journal” series lists fun and creative ways to generate ideas for writing.

“Journal Bliss” by Violette, “The Art Journal Workshop” by Traci Bunkers, and “Raw Art Journaling” by Quinn McDonald are great for all levels of journalers looking to learn specific techniques to showcase their creative talents.

the span of a year.

•**Become more observant.** When we journal, we become more aware of habits and events occurring around us. We see birds circling overhead, the colors of the leaves, and the interaction of people in a coffee shop or at the mall as potential story ideas. By recording the more interesting things we see and hear in our journals, we are able to tell those stories through our writing.

•**Reflection.** Journaling allows us to reflect on repeating patterns in our lives, such as the more stressful and busy times.

Reviewing past journal entries over a span of two or three years can be a great indication of behavioral patterns that may occur during specific times of year. It may reveal the similarities of pregnancies or happy moments spent on a family vacation at the beach.

•**Provide answers.** In the journaling process, questions are sometimes posed, but there may not be a clear answer. When we journal our thoughts, ideas, and feelings, those questions are sometimes answered as we dig deeper into ourselves and listen to the questions we are asking. By creating a habit of writing and listening, an answer to a question or a truth you have not acknowledged will likely reveal itself.

•**Brainstorm.** Jotting down ideas, sketching, and recording overheard conversations allow

the opportunity to flesh out story ideas, a business plan, or dialogue to be used in a book or script. Ideas sometimes present themselves at the craziest times. Having a notebook or journal handy allows you to capture that thought and make notes to reference at a later time. Writing prompts and list writing are also ways to brainstorm ideas for writing articles, blogging, or art journaling.

•**Creative mojo.** Using journals for drawing, painting, sketching, and writing are all ways to express our creativity.

Art journaling is a great way to creatively express ideas, thoughts, events, and art. Art journals include all kinds of ephemera, such as movie ticket stubs, letters, receipts, and pictures to convey a message. In my art journals, I use rubber stamps, stickers, tags, junk mail, and a variety of papers to journal my thoughts and ideas. I have also used my art journal to preserve memories such as holiday traditions, stories, or notes my kids have written, as well as time spent with family.

Journaling — whether using prompts or lists, writing morning pages, or art journaling — can be simple and creative. The most important part is just to put pen to paper.

There is no right or wrong way to journal — it is all about the words.

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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

The health benefits of owning a pup

When parents consider getting a pet, many tend to look at the negatives, such as cleaning up after the animal, while others claim that living with animals is merely unsanitary at best. There has been much said about the ways that pets cause health hazards to people. From pregnant women emptying dirty cat litter, to allergens in pet dander, to dog bites, to eczema brought on by fur, pets take the blame for a host of health hazards.

However, there are also specific ways in which pets — and dogs in particular — improve our health. (And there is nothing quite like the unconditional love that a dog can bring to a family!)

Here are five definite instances in which dogs rescue us in the health department:

Exercise: It's a no-brainer that when you have a dog, you just walk more than you would if you didn't have one. The American Journal of Public Health and the American Journal of Preventive Medicine have both confirmed that "children with dogs spend more time doing moderate to vigorous activity than those without dogs, and adults with dogs walk on average almost twice as much as adults without dogs."

Cardiovascular benefits: Besides the effects of exercise on cardiovascular health, owning dogs brings a sense of calm and peace that enhance a person's cardiovascular condition over the long run. There is also a reduced risk of high blood pressure and cholesterol levels for dog owners. Plus, a study published in the American Journal of Cardiology reports that "male dog owners were less likely

to die within one year after a heart attack than those who did not own a dog."

Doctor visits: In general, people who own dogs go to the doctor less. In a study out of Australia, dog and cat owners made significantly less visits to the doctor than those who didn't own pets.

Illness: When people are hospitalized for long periods of time, they benefit dramatically from visits with dogs trained in pet therapy, as well as visits from their very own pups at home. Luckily, more hospitals are realizing this, and with help from pet organizations, are creating programs in which sick children and adults can have hospital visits from their own pets. The results have been amazing.

Anxiety: There is perhaps nothing better than taking care of a dog, and giving and receiving the unconditional love that only a pup

can bring to person who is worried or anxious. When my daughter was first diagnosed with an autoimmune disease at the age of 9, we adopted an adult chihuahua mix who had encountered a lifetime of suffering herself. Hayley had been abused and required a lot of attention and pampering. My daughter desperately needed something to take her mind off her ailments and there was no better remedy for her anxiety and panic attacks brought on by her disease than to care for this abused little dog. Five years later, they have helped each other very much to heal and retain a very special, loving relationship.

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find her on Facebook and Twitter @DanniSull-Writer, or on her blog, Just Write Mom.



Twelve months in...

Our columnist reflects on his daughter's first year

BY TIM PERRINS

Are you the parent of a baby, like I am? Do you realize how silly it sounds when we constantly refer to our babies' ages in months? Instead of saying, "She's 2," we insist on declaring "She'll be 26 months in two weeks." There's a reason we do this, of course, and that reason is denial. When you consider a baby in terms of years, you realize there are very few numbers before you're into little kid territory. Months, though, seem to stretch out to the horizon, and allow you to get lost in the developmental minutiae of babydom — at so many months they'll be crawling, walking, eating napkins, etc. We'd all rather focus on the next few months, and ignore the prospect of the next few years.

My little baby girl just turned 12 months. Happy birthday, Hazel! At just more than a year — there, I said it — she's a giggling, crawling, climbing ball of delight. There's no doubt she's still a baby, but now that she's starting to mimic words and taking a faltering step here and there, she's beginning the transition to toddlerhood. Part of me is sad about that, but since I'm entitled to a bit of denial myself, to mark her first birthday I'd like to stop

worrying about what's to come and just marvel at getting this far.

It's been an eventful year, and while I now feel like a veteran at this child-rearing stuff, a few short months ago, well, I was just a babe in the woods. Humankind has raised billions of babies, but when it's your turn, you're as confused and terrified as anyone has ever been. It's not like there's a lack of accumulated knowledge to guide you. Here in the internet age you can find help on any topic instantly. The challenge now isn't that we don't know

anything. We know too much. There are so many different theories about babies that it's hard to be sure, for example, which method of sleep training will result in your kid getting into Harvard, and which will turn him into a no-account freeloader who spends all his time in pool halls. Or whatever it is "bad apples" do these days.

Fortunately, we're not alone in this adventure. Our friends with babies are a great source of support. Strangely, though, they don't provide much clarity in terms of the best approach, either. Everyone we know has entirely different ideas about parenting.

When a couple of our friends were recently expecting their first child, they explained that they wanted everything new for their baby. No hand-me-down clothes, no used baby furniture. I was perplexed; the coming decades will bring endless opportunities to spend money on your child, and in most cases, the mere suggestion of substituting something used will be met with tantrums, scorn, or the phrase "Ew, Dad, that's disgusting." These early years are your chance to save money by happily accepting stuff that other people's children no longer need. Sure, some things you'll want new — for instance, it's practically forbidden to buy a used car seat. (Due to ever-changing safety regulations, a car seat not manufactured according to the latest guidelines is a death trap, and any child who previously rode around in it is fortunate not to have spontaneously combusted on any given trip to Nana's house.) Such exceptions aside, what's wrong with some pre-owned baby wares? Trust me, through "food-redistribution," spit-up, and a few other tricks that I won't go into, your little munchkin will ensure that any item looks used within a week anyway. And she'll outgrow it the week after that.

On the other end of the spectrum, we have friends who wish to supply their baby boy only with used goods — they have largely forbidden any gifts that are new. In spirit, I'm with them on this. Why obligate everyone you know to spend money on stuff

for your baby that will only be used for a month? That kind of strict idealism, though, would never last in our household. Due to a recent deluge of Hello Kitty merchandise in the children's retail market, hardly a week goes by in which my wife doesn't bring home a Princess Kitty sweater or Chococat pajamas. (Usually for the baby, but not always.)

Another new mom friend of ours mentioned that the TV mostly stays off in their house because the American Pediatric Society says television can have negative effects on a baby's development. I get that. Some things we enjoy as adults aren't all that good for us, so it's better to delay exposing our babies to them for as long as possible — sugary foods, caffeine, Fox News. I do my best to keep the TV off on my days with Hazel. Nonetheless, after six or seven hours alone with a rampaging infant, switching on "Ice Road Truckers" while baby plays with soup cans for a half-hour can go a long way towards keeping daddy from losing his mind. I'm sure the American Pediatric Society would understand.

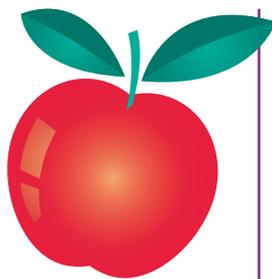
Much of parenting is figuring out how to retain your sanity. It's important to do your homework, but don't drive yourself crazy — just as essential as learning the rules is learning to trust your own instincts. Fortunately, there's room for mistakes with little babies (there's a reason they have soft bones and little capacity for memory), so instead of stressing yourself out, remember to have fun. That's one of the best ways to create a nurturing environment for your little one.

Anyway, that's enough of this overblown theoretical stuff. Time to get back down onto the floor with the soup cans so I can show Hazel how it's done, before she outgrows them. I mean, she's already approaching 13 months. Or should I say, 1,083 years?

Tim Perrins is a part-time stay-at-home dad who lives with his wife and their 1.083-year-old baby in Park Slope, Brooklyn. More of his thoughts about babies and other things that confuse him can be found at www.RevoltOfTheImbeciles.blogspot.com.



Happy birthday Hazel!



DEAR TEACHER

PEGGY GISLER AND
MARGE EBERTS

Homeschooling

Why it can be right for some children

Dear teacher,

My son is not doing very well in fourth grade, even though he is quite bright. In fact, he has come to hate school. All the homework robs him of the opportunity to participate in sports or take music lessons after school — activities that he really loves.

How can I find out if there are any cooperative homeschooling groups where we live so both of us could have some support?

Dear parent,

One significant advantage to homeschooling is that children do not need to spend as much time on schoolwork in this environment. This is largely because they are working one-on-one with a parent, instead of sharing a teacher's time with 20 or even more than 30 other students. Another big advantage of homeschooling is that each lesson can be tailored exactly to the child's needs and interests. In regular classrooms, the teacher is trying to help children with a wide range of abilities, which often means that many lessons will not be appropriate for your child. In the homeschooling atmosphere, children can learn rap-

idly. Most will outscore their classroom peers on standardized tests.

Homeschool cooperatives are very diverse. Some are limited to field trips, study of a specific subject, or musical, art, or sports groups. Others offer a great variety of options. Most meet once a week. A few offer a complete program of classes taught by parents and others, especially retired teachers.

You can easily find where cooperatives, as well as other homeschooling families, in your area are by going online and searching for "homeschool" and the name of your area.

• • •

Dear teacher,

My daughter is 6 and in the second grade. She cries because she can't keep up with her classmates. Is this a reason to hold her back next year?

Dear parent,

Meet with your child's teacher immediately to get the teacher's perspective on your child's ability to handle the work. Find out what the school can do to get your child on track. Find out if a tutor would be a good idea. Find out what good opportunities there are in your area for more help this summer: summer school, college remedial programs, learning centers. Also, find out what you can do to improve your child's skills.

Your daughter would appear to be young for a second-grader. On the positive side, young children change fast. Your daughter may suddenly catch up with some help.

Parents do need to think long and hard about enrolling very young children in kindergarten who just make the cut-off date. This decision becomes very important later on if the young child encounters a lot of difficulty in the early grades, and retention is considered. Retention is almost always a traumatic event for children — on a par with losing a parent.

• • •

Dear teacher,

Next year, my children's elementary school will begin looping and

keeping the students for three years with one teacher. The children will only have two teachers in elementary school — kindergarten, first, and second grades, and third, fourth, and fifth grades. Is this good preparation for middle school where they will have several teachers each day? What are the pros and cons of looping?

Dear parent,

Whether students attend an elementary school where they have a new teacher each year or the same teacher for two or more years, there will be an adjustment to having several classroom teachers in middle school. In some countries, looping continues into high school where students have the same content area teacher.

On balance, there are more pros than cons to looping. The big advantage for students is a continuing relationship with a teacher. Other advantages for them include an easier transition at the start of the school year, stronger relationships with classmates, more individualized instruction, more self-confidence in the classroom, and greater continuity in what they are learning.

There are advantages to teachers also. In the second year of looping and beyond, teachers save time at the start of the year because they already know their students' strengths and weaknesses, and what they have been taught. They also have more time to develop solid relationships with students and their families. Plus, they have more time to meet the special needs of their students.

There is one big con for both students and teachers: a poor match with each other. Another is a poor match between students. And it can be difficult for new students who join a class that has been together for more than a year.

Parents should send questions and comments to dearteacher@dearteacher.com or ask them on the columnists' website at www.dearteacher.com. ©Compass Syndicate Corporation, 2012. Distributed by King Features Syndicate





MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SERADOVA



Do as I say, not as I do

It's fun to watch our children grow, isn't it? They're developing, learning, and experiencing the world in their own unique way. Or, in my case, not-such unique ways.

Something that I've noticed Olivia doing a lot more of is acting just like me. I wish I could say that I love it, but as much as I think it's adorable, it's terrifying.

Sure, there are plenty of tender moments. For example, she enjoys "dressing up" with me in the mornings as I get ready for work. She wants to put on my heels and walk around just like mommy. She stares at me in awe as I put on my makeup (just like I did with my mother) and waits for me to "powder her nose." I love the way she scrunches her nose as the brush strokes her little cheeks. Obviously, it's pretend

makeup, but she looks at herself in the mirror and says, "Wow!" Yes, wow. Such a cliché mommy experience that I thought I would experience at least two years from now, but I get to enjoy now. She wants to play with my jewelry and wear it just like mommy, or dress me up in all of my accessories.

These are the mother-daughter moments I live for, but then there are those that I'd rather she didn't imitate. I'd rather not see her grunt in frustration when she can't open something, or when things don't necessarily go her way.

I know this is what most toddlers do, but it's also what I do, unfortunately. I'd rather she didn't yell at the dog when she does something she's not supposed to do (where did she get that from? Oh yeah, oops!). And I definitely

would rather she didn't imitate her daddy's bad habits either, like the time she took a cigarette out of his pocket and placed it behind her ears, just like daddy does. Needless to say, we looked at each other horrified. My husband quit smoking right then and there.

Yes, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, maybe when an acquaintance or friend does it. But when your child imitates your behavior, good or bad, it's a reminder that every move is on display to a very impressionable little person. That's a lot of pressure!

Each time Olivia politely says "please" or "thank you," and each time she affectionately gives us a hug and kiss, we know we're doing something right. I'm proud of her when she tries to help me clean up around the house, when she volunteers to brush her own teeth (all five of them), and when she helps us feed the pets like a big girl.

But we also know it's not just our good behavior that she will be copying. So we're extra nice to each other, remember our manners, and make sure not to use bad words. Every now and then, we even catch ourselves being good when she's not watching us at all.



DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

More collaborative divorce suggestions

Leslie and John decided to end their 14-year marriage. Joint counseling had helped them speak more openly to each other than they had in many years, but rather than bringing them closer together, their discussions highlighted how far apart they had grown. Both were angry and, ultimately, neither wanted to stay married.

The usual process:

Most couples, when getting divorced, hire litigators — because what else is there to do?

Often, the lawyers file threatening motions with the court, motions likely filled with exaggerations, if not outright lies about the other partner. Each spouse blames the other and

demands more than the other can accept.

The lawyers take depositions, perhaps hoping to intimidate the other spouse and discover weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

You pay for experts with the expectation that they will report or testify in a way that is favorable to you. Of course, your spouse is likely to hire his own experts for the same purpose.

The judge appoints a forensic psychologist to report on who should get custody of the children — a terrifying win or lose proposition for many parents.

Most spouses never question their lawyers. After all, their lawyers are the experts, aren't they? If there were another way to proceed, the attorney would tell them, wouldn't they?

Well, no, most litigators don't discuss the different ways to divorce with their clients. Some litigators don't know about collaborative divorce. Others are afraid of it because it poses challenges to their way of doing things.

A better way:

Unlike most couples, Leslie and John learned that they had a choice when it came to getting divorced, because their therapist knew about collaborative divorce (and mediation).

They knew that if they chose collaborative divorce, each of them would be represented by an attorney, and both of the lawyers would agree in writing to work together in good faith to reach mutually beneficial agreements, and *to not go to court*.

With their lawyers present, Leslie and John would have opportunities to communicate directly with each other. Rather than threatening and blaming, they would be assisted in examining their needs for the future, and how best to get those needs met.

Instead of sitting through depositions and giving away as little information as possible, in collaborative divorce John and Leslie would freely share financial information to allow for a better understanding of how

they are currently situated, and to use this understanding as the foundation for creating workable options to consider.

Collaborative lawyers spend no time at all preparing for trial, and the chances are very good that the spouses, with the help of their attorneys, will succeed in reaching an agreement. Statistically speaking, 86 percent of collaborative divorce cases end with a settlement agreement.*

John and Leslie have also learned that one of the greatest differences between court battles and collaborative practice involves the use of experts.

In collaborative divorce, an accountant or financial planner will provide balanced information of, say, what a small business is worth, or the value of other property such as retirement accounts. He will help you weigh your decisions and the potential implications. Often, the spouses split the cost of fees between them.

Also in collaborative divorce, the therapist you may decide to consult won't report to a judge. Instead, *he would work with you*, perhaps helping you deal with the sadness at the loss of the marriage, and with the fears of going forward.

Your collaborative lawyer will help you work through the divorce in a way that is much less stressful and adversarial than going to court. Collaborative divorce is faster, more efficient, and more constructive than litigation. You may find it to be less expensive as well.

*Statistics compiled by the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals

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

Disclaimer: All material in this column is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Discussing your particular case and circumstances with a legal professional before making important decisions is strongly encouraged to safeguard your rights.





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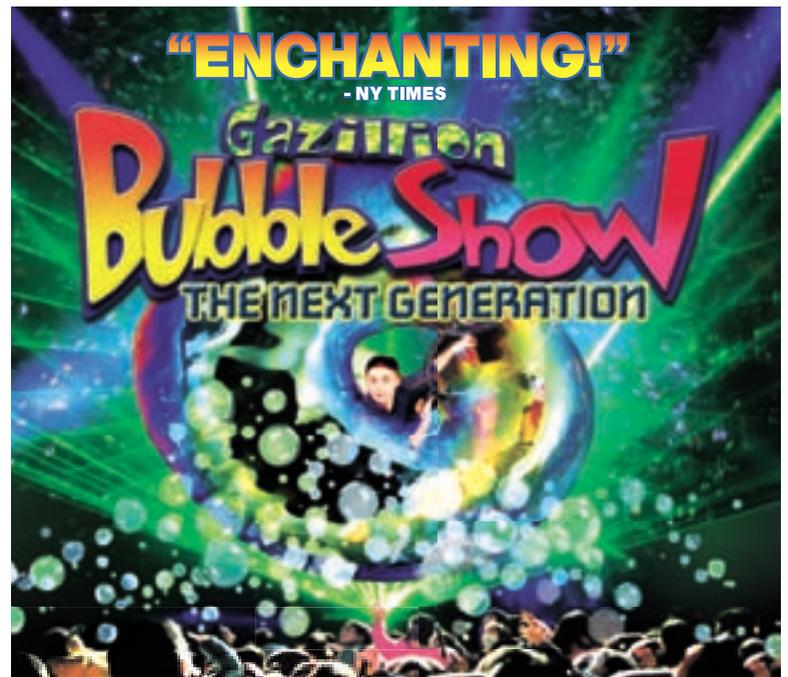


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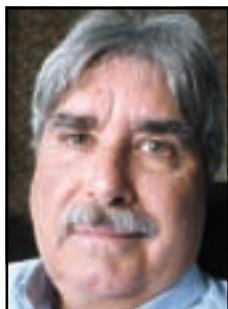
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FAMILY JOURNAL

ROBERT MORTON



Be on the lookout for 'pretty poisons'

Dear Mr. Morton,

Last year you wrote a column about “pretty poisons” and how dangerous they are to preschool children. I have two preschool boys. Please update that column. I will tape it to my refrigerator door! — L.W.

Dear L.W.,

Poison control centers receive more than two million calls annually asking for help on how to treat possible poisonings. Fifty-three percent of those calls involve children under the age of 6, with many at the toddler stage. Not surprising, 92 percent of all poisonings occur in the home. Unintentional poisonings kill more than 30 children per year.

I interviewed Dr. Mark Hoelzle of the Fremont Memorial Hospital, and he told me about an “out of sight, out of mind strategy.” The most important thing you can do, Hoelzle said, is to not only keep household chemicals and medicines out of the reach of children, but to lock them up as well. This makes much sense, because some children can open child-resistant packaging. Also, it’s good to place the poison control center

number next to your telephone and call immediately if a poisoning occurs. The most common areas in the home where child-poisoning occurs are the kitchen, bathroom, garage, and storage areas.

Lock up your everyday cleaning products like ammonia, disinfectants, soaps, bleaches, detergents, furniture polish, oven and drain cleaners, rust removers, and toilet bowl cleaners. They all contain chemicals that, if ingested, are particularly harmful to a child. Make these products inaccessible to your two preschoolers by storing them on high shelves that are out of reach, or in cabinets with childproof locks on the doors. But always remember that your small children must be constantly supervised around the home — never underestimate their ability to get into areas and containers that appear “childproof.”

According to the Northern Ohio Poison Center’s log, children can mistake containers of cleaning products for food, including “a round, green can of Comet bleach for a can of Parmesan cheese, vitamin or prescription drug pills for sweet candy, colorful

and sweet-smelling liquid soap and lamp kerosene for pop, ammonia or rubbing alcohol for water, E-Lax Chocolate laxatives for Hershey’s Chocolates, colored lamp oil for cranberry juice, mothballs for mini-marshmallows, Pine-Sol for apple juice, windshield washer fluid for Blue Punch or Kool Aid” ... the list is endless!

The consequences for toddlers ingesting such “pretty poisons” are serious, since the poisons have a rapid effect on children due to their smaller body size and quicker metabolism rate.

As a final thought, in my opinion, perhaps toddlers shouldn’t be told that medicine tastes like candy, or perhaps manufacturers shouldn’t make medicines taste so good, so kids are not tempted to seek out and eat medicine unattended.

For a poison emergency, call the American Association of Poison Control Centers at (800) 222-1222.

Dr. Robert Morton worked as a school psychologist and adjunct professor in the School of Leadership and Policy Studies at Bowling Green State University. Contact him at the Family Journal, www.familyjournal1.blogspot.com.



LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

Giving teens that leadership quality

Have you ever asked your teen the age-old question, “If your friends were jumping off a bridge, would you?” You may have been exasperated with your teen blindly following a friend straight into a troublesome situation. Perhaps he dared to take the car out past curfew because a friend called and begged to be picked up for a party. Maybe your teenage daughter decided to start dressing like a group of friends whose school garb looks like it belongs on a beach.

Teens follow the crowd because

teens can seek in both the school setting and their larger communities, such as team captain, class president, or scout leader. These types of positions give teens hands-on experience in leadership.

Kuczmariski advises that teens learn their leadership style in order to become an effective leader. They also need to develop their best qualities and use them. If a teen is adept at organization, she might develop a list of specific tasks for officers in student government to increase efficiency, for instance. Kuczmariski explains that teens should also understand the needs of the group they are leading and discern which individuals are best suited for various assignments based on their strengths.

Six qualities of a successful leader:

- Honesty
- Respect for others and their opinions
- Superb communication skills
- Decisiveness
- Courage
- Confidence

Can parents ‘raise’ a leader?

Carole Lieberman, MD, a psychiatrist on the Clinical Faculty of University of California, Los Angeles’s Neuropsychiatric Institute, believes that parents can encourage leadership qualities in their teens.

“Go to the movies with your teens that tell stories about teen or young adult heroism, not through violence, but through using their intelligence, creativity, and courage.” She also recommends that parents encourage hobbies and sports in which teens can feel proud of their accomplishments and start to teach others what they’ve learned.

Kuczmariski agrees.

“Extracurricular activities are ideal places for teens to explore and practice what it means to be a group leader.” She reports that these activities nurture social learning and can

provide a balance to an academically focused schedule. In addition, group activities help teens learn how to be leaders by providing a set of tangible responsibilities and deadlines.

“You will be amazed at their rapid rate of growth and maturation,” she says.

Parents can also encourage a positive self esteem by showing pride in their teens’ accomplishments.

“Praise with a new level of enthusiasm,” instructs Kuczmariski.

Matthew Smith, owner and director of Longacre Leadership, a summer leadership camp for teens in Newport, Pa., urges parents to give their teens freedom and responsibility.

“Kids should be given responsibility well before adolescence. This builds work ethic and self-confidence. If parents want to encourage leadership qualities in their teens, they must build their teen’s self-confidence.”

If parents nurture self-esteem and confidence while providing opportunities to lead in social situations, their teens will develop invaluable life skills and learn to believe in themselves.

Tips and tales

“If you encourage your child to believe in her own ideas and make her feel good about herself, she will be less likely to be a follower.” — Robert Babcock, Hyde Park, NY

“If they want to lead, they must learn to serve others.” — John Kelle, Earlville, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic: How to help your teen cope with the death of a friend.

Please send your full name, address, and brief comments to myrnahaskell@gmail.com, or visit www.myrnahaskell.com.

Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer, columnist and author of “Lions, Tigers and Teens: Expert advice and support for the conscientious parent just like you” (Unlimited Publishing LLC, 2012). For details: www.myrnahaskell.com. Also available at: Amazon.com.



they want to be accepted, but parents want their teens to make good choices and avoid succumbing to peer pressure. It takes a teen with an exceptionally strong personality — a leader — to oppose a peer group and have faith in his individual ideas and values.

Becoming a leader

Is leadership learned or an inherent part of someone’s personality?

“Leadership is learned behavior,” says Susan Kuczmariski, EdD, author of “The Sacred Flight of the Teenager: A Parent’s Guide to Stepping Back and Letting Go.”

“It is developed through experience. The most effective way of learning leadership is through doing.”

There are many leadership roles



DEAR
DR. KARYN
DR. KARYN GORDON

Seven tips to give feedback effectively

Dear Dr. Karyn,

Are there some special kinds of tips a parent should use to give feedback well? I've been told by my husband and two kids that I'm not very good at it! Help!

Dear Parent,

Great question! The topic of feedback is definitely one of those topics where the tools are exactly the same for parents, young adults, employees, or managers! Feedback done well strengthens relationships and is one of the best ways we can improve personally and professionally, so learning how to give and receive it are essential skills! Below are seven tips below on how to give feedback effectively!

Understand that no one can read your mind

Many people shy away from giving feedback thinking, "they should know this," or, "I shouldn't have to tell them." The reality is that no one can read our minds, so it's our responsibility to tell them our thoughts. Keep in mind that there is no such thing as reality, only perception. So when sharing your feedback, be sure to say "From my perspective," or, "the way I see it." Remember that people will see (and remember) different perspectives.

Pick your timing carefully

When giving feedback, you want to make sure that the receiver will hear it, so to help this, make sure you choose the timing carefully! The best time is when you are relaxed, the receiver is relaxed, and you have the time to discuss it further (employees will often say lunchtime works the best, and parents often say evening is the ideal time).

Be sure to use 'I'

When having the courage to voice your thoughts, be careful with your language and be sure to use "I" (I think, I feel, I value, I need). Using the word "you" will often trigger a



defensive reaction in others, and as a result they won't hear what you are trying to say. The key is that you want to respect yourself by voicing what you really think, while respecting your listener in the process.

Start positive

Before bringing up an issue, be sure to first tell the person what he is doing well (give authentic examples). Some people find this manipulative, sneaky, or "a waste of time" (so I've been told). I find this tip essential for two reasons: First, while we all have areas to work on, there are likely other areas that we are doing well in, so it's more of a full picture to tell a person both sides. Secondly, anyone who has studied human motivation knows that most people are far more motivated to change, and more likely to listen, when they are told first what they are doing well! For this tip to work, though, praise must be given regularly! If people only hear positive encouragement at the time of critical feedback, they will start to resent it.

Be specific about what needs to change

When addressing the criticism, be specific with what needs to be

changed. A lot of people use negative statements, which are very ineffective ("You never clean your room"). Focus on telling the person what you do want, not just what you don't want (it's more clear and it's more positive). For example, "I really need you to tidy your room before you watch TV"

Get to the point

These type of conversations can be difficult (and draining for many) so you want to get to the point as quickly and effectively as you can! Don't beat around the bush or give five examples — stay focused!

Ask for feedback

The most effective types of conversations around feedback are when they are two-way, not one-way. So be sure to give time to ask the receiver his thoughts on what you've said. It allows you to know what he is thinking, strategize possible solutions, and also helps him to clarify what you need from him.

Dr. Karyn Gordon is the best-selling author of "Dr. Karyn's Guide to the Teen Years" (Harper Collins), a relationship and parenting expert, speaker, and founder of dk leadership, www.dkleadership.org. Follow her on Twitter and Facebook.

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FABULYSS FINDS

LYSS STERN

A mom & an entrepreneur

As the mother of two young children, (Oliver is 6 years old, and Jackson is 9), I am frequently asked how I balance motherhood with owning and operating my own business. While every successful mother and business owner has her own recipe with ingredients that work for her, some tips that I like to give other mothers that are in similar situations are the “Divalyssious Tips,” and the ingredients that work for my “Mommy Entrepreneur Recipe.”

Here are my “Five divalyssious tips on how to be a mom and an entrepreneur” for owning your own business and being mother of children under the age of 10.

Prioritize

Make sure that your work can be done early in the morning before the children wake up. Yes, that means sometimes waking up at 4:30 am to finish work—of course you will need a large cup of coffee! If you know that mornings are to hectic, then finish the work the night before

after the kids are sound asleep in their beds. But don’t put off time with them just to work. There still needs to be a balance between work and family. And be careful, putting things off will only stress you out more.

Delegate

Always remember that being a mom and a business owner gives you the right to delegate the work, which means surrounding yourself with a great supportive team comprised of positive people who have high energy. Make sure these are people who you can trust, and people who can help you. My husband is my biggest supporter, and at times he has to help with the children because I might need to be at a meeting, have to work late, etc. I know that I can count on my husband and vice versa for him, as he, too, has a high-demanding job.

This is your job and your life, so don’t let feelings get in the way, since the most important thing is to get the job done. That’s not to say you can’t be kind, but just make sure that you are respected by the people you ask for help so you don’t get stuck with more work than you originally anticipated. No matter who it is, delegate the errands with your family, caregiver, and do not be afraid to ask for help! It’s always better to ask, than to be completely overwhelmed.

Don’t cut corners

Sometimes it’s easier to skip that morning breakfast, or walk out the door without saying goodbye to your family before going to work. Don’t skip out of those moments because those little smiles saying, “Bye Mommy!” is what is going to put your mind and heart at ease when you get overwhelmed, and what puts you back into a great mood. Also,

eating breakfast is critical. We hear it all the time, but we often shrug it off anyway. If you can, try to always have breakfast with your children in the mornings before you run to the office and they go to school. It is critical to build those family fundamentals at an early age so that becomes normal within the household. And if you prioritize properly, spending those extra 15 minutes sitting down with some cereal won’t stress you out and you will be able to properly enjoy the reboot period before you start your busy day.

Take a breath

It’s always stressful being in the office, even on a good day, but that means if you don’t stop for a second to take a breath, you’re going to become way too overwhelmed. Find a quick thing you can do every day that will bring you back to a calm state of mind when it starts to feel like too much. Perhaps you have a small photo album of your family you can flip through, or if you know your spouse or caretaker is going to be with your kids at a certain time of the day, give them a call, and speak to them for a quick second even to tell them you love them. Those little ones can do amazing things for you in such a short time, so don’t take that for granted.

Never forget YOU

As moms and business women, it’s easy to forget ourselves in the mix of things. It is so important that we don’t let all of our stress get so pent up that we don’t know what to do with ourselves, because it only makes us more on edge. Maybe during your lunch break, go down to the closest nail salon and get a quick 10-minute back rub, or keep your favorite color nail polish with you at your desk and slick on a new coat while you’re at your computer. Of course you need to find those moments for your family, and you don’t want to do so much that you aren’t able to get your work done, but in the time you spend saying you don’t have the time is enough to give yourself a little love in return for all the hard work you do. And besides, you deserve it.

Lyss Stern is the founder of DivaLyssious Moms (www.divamoms.com), the premiere luxury lifestyle company for moms, and co-author of the best-selling book, “If You Give a Mom A Martini... 100 Ways To Find 10 Blissful Minutes For Yourself.”





PARENTS HELPING PARENTS

SHARON C. PETERS, MA

Tips for a stepmom



I am getting married to a man who has two children, ages 3 and 7, from his previous marriage. Do you have any advice for me in getting to know them and being accepted by them as their stepmom?

Dear new stepmom,

Congratulations on your marriage and becoming a stepmother! Here are some ideas that could be helpful as you take on these wonderful new relationships.

Stepparents often generate fun and interesting ideas, and become a source for important perspective and guidance for their families. However, this important role takes time, sometimes years, to develop.

Some stepchildren happily welcome their dad's new partner, while others are more cautious. In either case, it is good to remember that when a dad gets a new wife, it represents a big transition for his children.

To have this transition go well, it often helps to follow the little ones' lead about the amount and form of contact. Some stepchildren are reluctant to interact in any way, while others jump into their new stepmom's lap to get to know her. Both reactions are fine and will most likely change over time.

At some point, it can help the "step" relationship to set aside some time to do something alone together

that is relaxing and fun. A trip to the grocery store for a special dessert or a walk with the dog are some possible places to start. Regular opportunities such as these give both people time to get to know and enjoy each other in a relaxing way.

It is usually easier for children to accept their parent's new partner if their precious time with dad is relatively unchanged by the new arrival. In other words, couples need to make sure that the children are the focus of their attention whenever little ones are around. This means affection, discussions, and adult activities need to be tabled for another time whenever possible (often challenging to do). It can also help when a stepmom makes an effort to support dad's alone time with his children. This sometimes means that stepparents create a separate space for themselves at home, or arrange to do things away from their family from time to time.

Children are often understandably wary about the addition of another authority figure in their lives. After a divorce, juggling two parents in two homes is usually difficult enough to sort through. Therefore, it is usually very important to let dad be the disciplinarian, setting the tone and rules in the home.

Of course, stepparents often notice rules and routines that could be

changed to improve their family's dynamic, and this is often a good thing. However, children can resent sudden changes, even if they are good ones. In order to avoid tension and upset, couples need to discuss family routines away from little ones and any new ideas need to be introduced over time.

Biological parents also need to get the final say, as the wisdom of an outside observer doesn't always incorporate the history or intricacies of long-standing parent-child relationships. Stepparents who can sort through this difficult challenge are often able to develop deep relationships with their stepchildren.

I mentioned earlier that stepparents are often a source of invaluable perspective and guidance. This is true, but I usually suggest that stepparents let their young stepchildren initiate requests for support or advice. Unsolicited suggestions are often far less appreciated. It is also good to remember that children are smart. Even if they don't show it, they will soak in a stepparent's thought and care.

I often describe successful step-parenting as a gradual process of becoming life-long best friends to an appreciative child. I have been lucky enough to have the privilege, I am glad you get to do so as well.

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 Family@cnglocal.com.



A TEEN'S TAKE

AGLAIA HO

A good night's sleep

A teacher walks into his first-period class to find his students slouching over their desks. Some have their faces buried in their arms. Others fight to keep their eyelids from fluttering shut. Even the low rumble of snores is augmented by the otherwise silence of the room. It is just another typical day at high school.

Most high school students today do not get enough sleep. A typical day can start as early as 6 am and end well after midnight. Rising expectations and increased competition at school has caused students to forgo sleep in order to juggle their heavy workload and extracurricular activities. Excelling in school does not mean just merely passing, it also means acing the most challenging courses. Students are now expected to have not one or

two extracurricular activities, but a wide variety of music, sports, community service, and leadership positions. Additionally, more students are attending school in a borough other than the one in which they live. The commute to and from school is often time-consuming and draining.

Lack of sleep for teenagers is a major concern. Sleep deprivation will not only harm a student's health and well-being, but it can also be dangerous and counterproductive. With less sleep, students may be without a clear mind, and may be less active in class. A lot of my friends

catch up on sleep in class, rather than paying attention to the teacher.

As a student, I see the symptoms and effects on a daily basis. I have even experienced the consequences at times. As with most high school students, I have a busy schedule inside and outside of school. Yet, for the most part, I have fortunately been able to avoid sleep deprivation during my high school years. Knowing my limitations, smart planning, time-management skills, and setting priorities have been my guide to getting enough sleep.

How much sleep do you need?

For me, it was important to know my own limitations and needs. Find out how much sleep you need and how you function with little sleep. Some students need more sleep than others. I need at least seven hours each night. Knowing your boundaries is important to getting sufficient sleep and also learning how to cope when you don't. Without sufficient sleep, I am literally a zombie, roaming the school hallways half lost. I can trip over my own feet and even go to the wrong classes! I rarely do well on a math test without enough sleep. I'm also prone to headaches and usually feel lightheaded. Knowing about how much sleep I need has allowed me to plan ahead and avoid these unwanted effects.

Planning ahead

Most students stay up late finishing last-minute projects, studying for exams, and doing homework. This is a lot for one night. It is no wonder why many high school students do not get enough sleep. Spreading out your workload and learning how to better manage your time can help you complete your work and get enough rest.

Scheduling and organization are extremely important. When I have a lot of work and a very limited time, I need to visualize my workload. I write down all my assignments on a calendar, sometimes color-coding deadlines, exams, and special events. This helps me to get my bearings. A checklist is also helpful and reminds me of my status.

Once you have figured out all your work, try to plan ahead. I like to get a head start on projects and studying for exams. Avoid procrastination! Starting early on a project will allow you to work at your own pace without having to rush. Studying ahead of time, even just a little bit each day, actually helps to reinforce the information and saves you from cramming the night before.

Setting priorities and avoiding temptations

High school students often get distracted easily. They can spend

hours talking to friends, watching YouTube videos, playing online games, or wasting time on Facebook. This often contributes to why many students do not get enough sleep during the school year. Prioritizing your activities and needs is important.

Sleep should always be a priority. Maintain a focus on schoolwork and put off whatever social networking and games until the weekend or until you have more time.

Dealing with lack of sleep

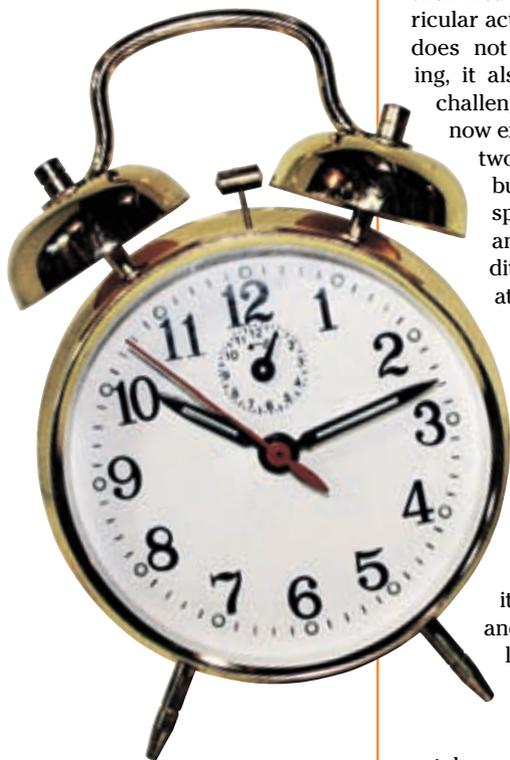
No matter how hard we try, once in a while, we will find ourselves up late finishing work. Sometimes our schedules fail or we underestimate everything we need to do. How can we deal with the occasional lack of sleep?

Stimulants like caffeine can be tempting. A cup of coffee can definitely keep you awake. However, I would suggest avoiding caffeine, sugar, and energy drinks, if possible. It is easy to become addicted. Many of my friends come to school with coffee every day. One boy even takes caffeine pills in order to stay awake in school. These provide a temporary burst of energy, but withdrawal and after effects are usually more devastating than helpful.

When I'm tired, I try not to think about how tired I am. I focus on my day and what I need to achieve. I distract myself by answering questions in class and taking a lot of notes. At home, I sing or play the piano in order to give myself a natural high. If I have time, I might sneak a in a power nap after school. It is invigorating and allows me to finish my day comfortably and faster.

Today's city culture revolves around the lack of sleep. Students are not the only ones who deal with sleep deprivation. In a fast-paced world, adults seem to put all their work before sleep. It is a problem that we really need to change.

Aglaia Ho is a 17-year-old student from Queens who enjoys writing. Her work has been published in Creative Kids, Skipping Stones, Daily News/Children's Pressline, and The State of the Wild.





DEATH BY CHILDREN

CHRIS GARLINGTON

Sick notes that can cure any sickness

My son misses school a lot. Or, he did, until I discovered the awesome power of sick notes.

Now, he won't stay home even if he's bleeding and on fire. He'd rather expire in the nurse's office than have to turn in one of these:

"To whom it may concern, Please excuse Connor for his absence Nov. 1, as he was working on his port de bras. Allow him extra time between classes as he will be practicing his battement fondu. Also, do you sell tutus in school colors? Go Tigers! Entrechat!"

"To whom it may concern, Please excuse Connor's absence Oct. 9; Connor was severely ill after eating a significant volume of library paste."

"To whom it may concern, Connor was absent Sept. 14 after receiving multiple needle gun wounds in Halo 3. He respawned later in the day, alas, too late to make it to school on time."

"To whom yadda yadda yadda, Connor was late today because he was trapped in the shower by a spider. I urge caution when approaching him, he's kind of jumpy."

"People, listen: Connor was late Tuesday because we couldn't find a McDonald's that had cinnamon buns. We went to four different drive-thrus. Also, we ran out of gas."

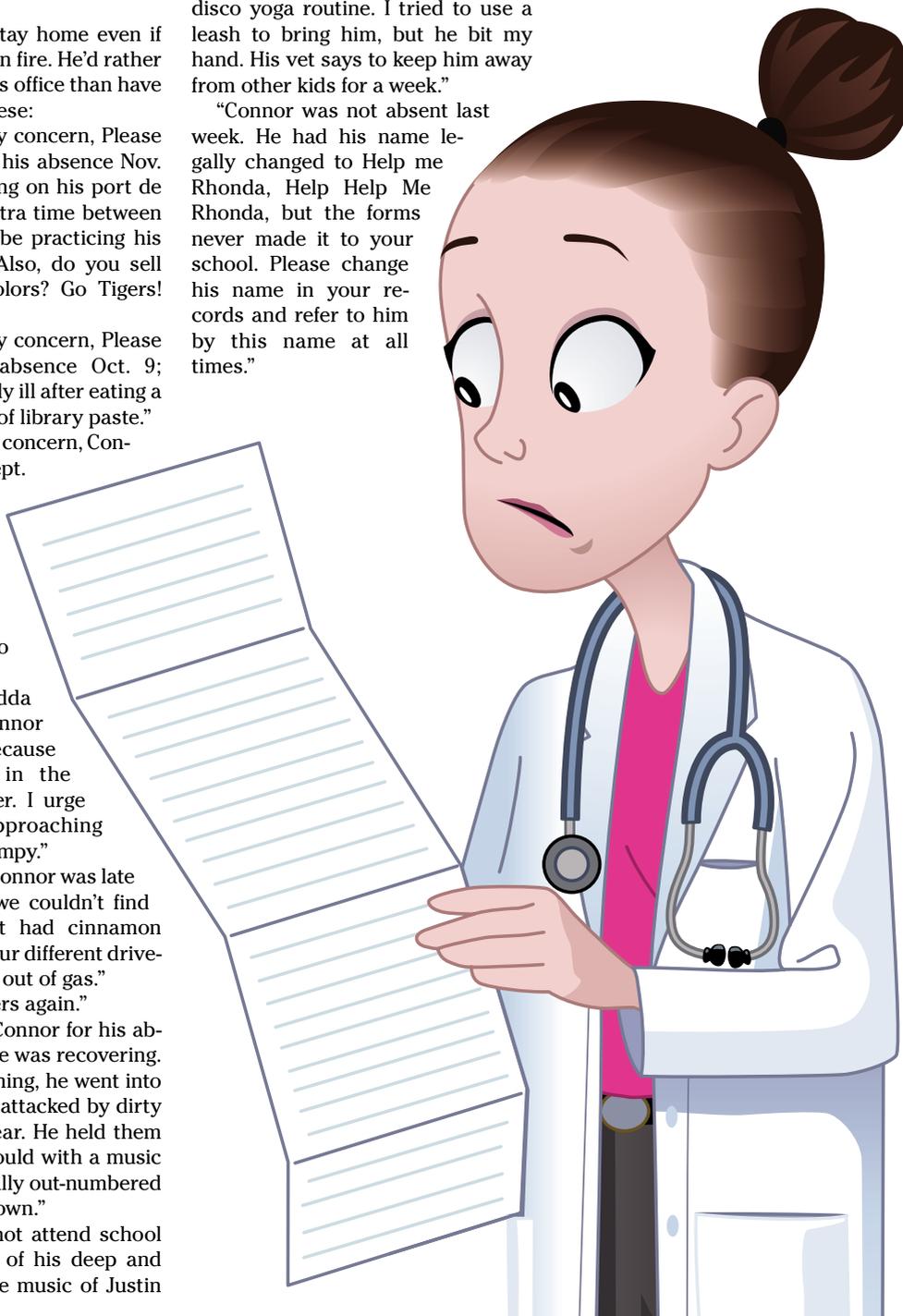
"To whom, spiders again."

"Please excuse Connor for his absence Monday as he was recovering. Early Monday morning, he went into his closet and was attacked by dirty jeans and underwear. He held them off as long as he could with a music stand, but they finally out-numbered him and he went down."

"Connor could not attend school Thursday because of his deep and abiding love for the music of Justin Bieber."

"Connor was late Monday after getting stuck in the 'Downward Facing Dog' pose during his morning disco yoga routine. I tried to use a leash to bring him, but he bit my hand. His vet says to keep him away from other kids for a week."

"Connor was not absent last week. He had his name legally changed to Help me Rhonda, Help Help Me Rhonda, but the forms never made it to your school. Please change his name in your records and refer to him by this name at all times."





FAMILY HEALTH

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

ADHD medications for some, not all

For years, my daughter has had trouble concentrating in school. Her attention often drifts when I talk to her, she forgets a lot of things, and is easily distracted as well. I know that other children in her school with the same behavior have been diagnosed with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, and are given medication to help. Should my daughter be taking medication, too?

There has been a lot of skepticism and unmerited stigma from critics who say that attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder is a vague, “made-up” dis-

order, an excuse for poor school performance, bad manners, and the general restlessness that all children experience to varying degrees. Other unscrupulous and unqualified physicians have taken to prescribing these medication for completely non-medical reasons, such as living in a certain school district or facing difficult family circumstances.

So let me put the argument to rest.

Attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder is a very real neurobehavioral disorder. It impacts millions of children, teens, and adults throughout the world, and a diagnosis is nothing to be ashamed of. And far from being vague, the diagnostic — and prescription — criteria for it are very specific.

To be diagnosed with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, a child must display a number of behavioral traits that differ significantly and negatively from those of other children at his developmental level. A child can spend years exhibiting almost half a dozen behaviors commonly associated with the disorder — including forgetfulness, difficulty sustaining attention in tasks and play activities, not listening when spoken to directly, inability to finish schoolwork, and being easily distracted by irrelevant topics and stimulus — and still not necessarily merit a diagnosis of the disorder. Only an expert mental health professional is qualified to determine if a child should or should not be prescribed medications.

The medications most commonly used to treat attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder are stimulants, either in the amphetamine (Adderall, Vyvance) or meth-

ylphenidate (Ritalin, Concerta) classes of drugs. As you and your daughter have experienced, for a child with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, working closely with a physician and taking her medication as prescribed, medicines like Adderall and Ritalin, do not simply improve schoolwork, behavior, or ability to concentrate, they can change an entire life for the better.

However, using these drugs unnecessarily, or under the direction of an unqualified physician, can have devastating consequences. The United States Drug Enforcement Agency defines many attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder medications as Schedule II drugs, the most tightly controlled substances that are still considered to have medicinal value. Other drugs in the category include powerful pain medications, such as morphine and Oxycontin. Schedule II drugs carry a high risk of physical and psychological dependence, and great potential for abuse. When attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder medications are abused, or taken in excess, side effects can include panic attacks, cardiac arrhythmia, and psychosis.

One of the true dilemmas the disorder is that a diagnosis may inevitably require the input of a parent, teacher, or another non-physician who is in the position to observe a child’s behavior over an extended period of time, someone who understandably wants what is best for the child, but is not an expert in the physical or psychological consequences of taking attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder medication when it isn’t needed.

Ethical considerations aside, if you encounter physicians who casually prescribe powerful medications knowing that the child does not have the disorder the medications merit, it’s perhaps the clearest indicator that those doctors are not qualified to manage the health of anyone, let alone your child.





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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Can the arsenic scare be justified?

Is a recent story about arsenic-laced rice true?

Most parents were startled by the headlines warning about arsenic-laced rice. The grain has long been a first solid food for babies, and it's a nourishing staple in many households, especially in Latino and Asian homes. And rice — in the form of pasta, bread, cereals, and pizza crust — is increasingly eaten by those sticking to a gluten-free diet.

Arsenic is a chemical element found in water, food, air, and soil. It can be either organic or inorganic. If plants are grown in areas with arsenic in the soil or water, some of that arsenic can find its way into those plants.

The headlines

Last September, Consumer Reports released the results of indepen-

dent lab tests that found inorganic and organic arsenic in a variety of rice and rice products, including organic and conventional products.

What did the headlines not reveal? Rice contributes 17 percent of dietary exposure to inorganic arsenic, but fruits and fruit juices contribute 18 percent, and vegetables 24 percent.

Consumers Union hopes its report encourages the Food and Drug Administration to set limits, as there is no federal limit for arsenic in most foods. The standard for drinking water is 10 parts per billion (ppb) and 23 ppb in fruit juice. According to the USA Rice Federation, one ppb is equal to a single drop of water in an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

Should you be concerned?

The fact that rice contains arsenic is old news. In the opinion of many health professionals, Consumer Reports did a disservice by publishing analytical data showing that rice contains arsenic without answering the question of what is known about the effects of very low doses.

The American Academy of Pediatrics says “additional research is needed before recommendations can be made on the possible risks involved in consuming these food products, including baby cereal.” It also says “at the individual level, offering children a variety of foods, including products made from oats and wheat, will decrease children’s exposure to arsenic derived from rice.”

Consumer Reports recommendations for children (serving sizes are uncooked)

Infant cereal (1/4 cup): One serving a day

Hot cereal (1/4 cup): 1-3/4 servings a week

Rice-based ready-to-eat cereal (1 cup): 1-1/2 servings a week

Rice drink (like rice milk): None

Rice (1/4 cup): 1-1/4 servings a week

Rice pasta (2 oz): 1-1/2 servings a week

Rice crackers: Eight to nine crackers a day

Rice cakes (1-3): One serving a week

Cooking tips

Rinse your rice. The Administration cites several studies that show thoroughly rinsing rice until the water is clear (four to six changes of water) reduces arsenic content by about 25 to 30 percent.

Cook and drain like pasta. Using about six parts water to one part rice, cook the rice, then drain off the water. Studies suggest cooking in excess water can reduce total arsenic levels by 50 to 60 percent.

Final thoughts

As Dr. David Katz wrote in his US News and World Report blog, “I look forward to FDA guidelines regarding safe levels of arsenic in foods. In the interim, though, brown rice will remain a part of my diet, as will other foods containing rice — just as vegetables and fruits do despite some potential for contaminants there, and just as fish does despite the mercury. Perfectly pure food is, alas, not available on this planet. So those of us living here should focus on net health effects rather than the media hype du jour, and do the best we can with the food supply we’ve got.”

Christine M. Palumbo, registered dietitian, is a nutritionist based in Naperville, Ill., who is on the faculty of Benedictine University. She loves to warm up leftover brown rice for breakfast. Follow her on Twitter @PalumboRD, Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition, or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.



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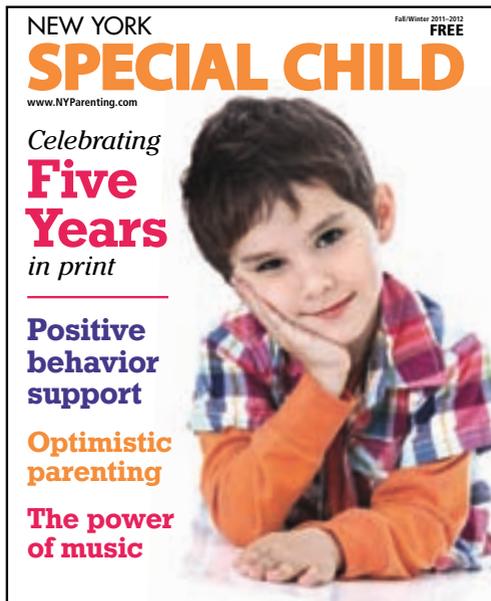
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JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

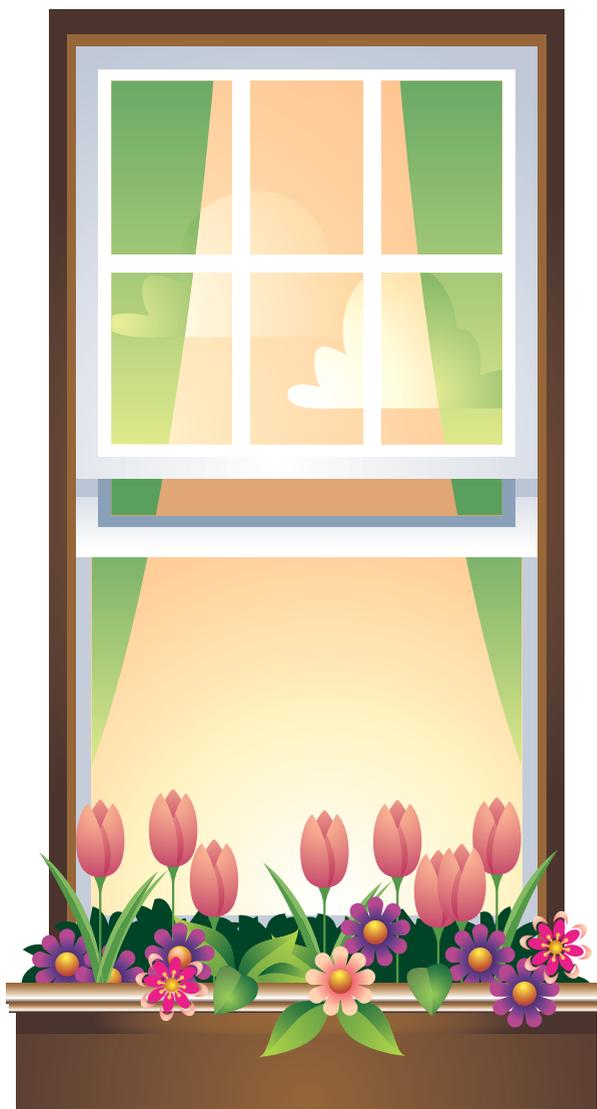
Getting over 606

I had my dream again last night — the one where I'm in my childhood house. The circumstances change from dream to dream, but invariably whenever I dream about being at home (even if I'm home in present day with my husband and children), in my dream, we live in my childhood home — 606.

That's the number of the house that I grew up in and I'm not quite sure what that means.

Four years ago, after years of scrimping and saving while raising our growing family, my husband and I finally purchased a one-story home in a more rural part of Brooklyn. Both my husband and I grew up in Windsor Terrace, and we both would have loved to stay there, but once the influx of out-of-towners inundated the place a few seconds after the neighborhood was deemed trendy, the prices of homes became literally insane. So we found a cozy, one-family in a neighborhood where children, families, and home life was abundant and alive. It was a solid, mindful, and good decision.

And yet there is something in me that achingly longs for that childhood neighborhood of mine, and it has nothing to do with the restaurants, venues, coffee shops, or schools in Windsor Terrace or Park Slope. You see, when I grew up there, the neighborhood was anything but desirable. There was graffiti on the Key Food supermarket and the F train, more litter on the streets, and no fancy restaurants, but there was a bunch of



families struggling to make ends meet and kids who lined the streets each day playing made-up games. Everything was closed on Sunday evenings because family dinners were important. It was as small town America as you could get in New York City. You better believe that if you misbehaved, someone's mother would scream at you through the window and then tell your mother, and you'd get punished at least twice. Most of us kids grew up having very little — except a lot of fun.

I often wonder if my recurring dream in which I am always living in

that house is a longing for a simpler life, but I tend to think that it has more to do with wanting to recapture my childhood. It was a simple upbringing. My sister and I lived on our single mother's modest income and we did without brand-name labels and luxuries, but our lives were very filled with love and laughs. It's ironic how crazy we get as parents today, trying to make sure that our kids have everything they need and want. As children, most of us didn't, but we were settled, stable, taught to do the right thing, stick up for ourselves, and go after what we want.

Will the kids today — who are simply handed everything — have the same strengths growing up? And is their childhood any better because they have iPods, iPads, cellphones, an app for everything, and anything else they want? I fear it's the opposite.

I'm willing to bet that if you recall your favorite childhood memory, it has nothing to do with an expensive item, but rather has something to do with a special memory involving people you cared deeply about.

My kids often tell me they would have loved to grow up on the '80s when things were simpler. I wish they could have, too. So I tell them stories about how my childhood was and try my best to recreate special family memories for them.

And every now and then, I dream about 606.

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find her on Facebook and Twitter @DanniSull-Writer, or on her blog, Just Write Mom.

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ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,
ESQ.

Ensuring my kids will be protected

I want to make sure that someone is appointed as the guardian of my minor children if both me and the child's mother pass away. How can I ensure that my kids will be protected?

Many of my clients are new (and not so new) parents who want to ensure their minor children are cared for in the event that both parents die. It is every parent's right, but also their responsibility, to take care of this issue and to express their wishes in legal writing. There are two circumstances to consider: what would happen to the care and raising of minor children if both parents were to die, and what would happen if both parents become disabled while the children are minors. This is critical for single parents, and stepparents or non-biological parents who live with but have not adopted the child.

The procedure to name a guardian for minor children is to nominate an individual or individuals in your will to take legal custody of your child. This can, but does not need to, be

the same individual as the minor's trustee, who will oversee the management of any finances left to the minor child.

A guardian nomination is just that — a suggestion to the court that, in most cases, will be upheld if the individual qualifies as a fiduciary, meaning a person in a position of trust. In the State of New York, a person is not eligible to be a fiduciary if he is a “non-domiciliary alien [...] except [...] one who shall serve with one or more co-fiduciaries, at least one of whom is resident in this state,” S.C.P.A. 707. That said, the court may still appoint a non-domiciliary alien or a New York resident as a fiduciary in its discretion. An individual who is mentally incompetent, a felon, or who otherwise “does not possess the qualifications required of a fiduciary by reason of substance abuse, dishonesty, improvidence, want of understanding, or who is otherwise unfit for the execution of the office,” is also unfit to serve as a fiduciary, as is anyone else who is ineligible in the court's discretion. The court may also declare as ineligible to act as a fiduciary “a person unable to read and write the English language.”

What does this mean? For international clients, it means that while they should nominate the guardian of their choice based on substance (i.e., their true qualifications to provide the best care for their children). The choice is a mere nomination and is subject to the judge's approval and order of who will raise a child and have legal custody. Second, for the many expatriates living in New York City, it means that extra care must be taken to communicate to the court why the appointment of a non-domiciliary individual as guardian is in the best interest of your minor children. These specifics can be spelled out in the will itself or in a separate writing that

should be properly executed.

The other thing to consider is that many non-U.S. citizen parents reside in the U.S. with no real intention to leave, but are insistent that their children be raised in their home country. The thing they fail to consider is that a child who is raised in the U.S. her entire life may not want to leave the U.S. when she is older, because her entire life is based here. It is a very different situation when the child is an infant or toddler and could easily adjust. If a parent wants the child to be repatriated to the home country, the child's citizenship may be a factor bearing on the judge's decision. If the parent applied for or obtained dual-citizenship from the home country for the child, this may be deemed evidence by the judge of the parents' intent for their child to keep a connection to the parents' country of origin. It has the added impact of providing a basis for which the guardian in the home country can request assistance from his own state department or diplomatic agency to repatriate the child. In the absence of dual citizenship, the home country's state department lacks standing to assist. This, together with basic border-control issues, poses an obstruction to relocating a child to another country either temporarily, pending the proceeding, or permanently.

In short, international clients with minor children living in the U.S. must pay particular attention to making clear in the will who will raise their child and where.

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



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GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

Your family's privacy

Privacy is a value that develops over time. Anyone who has toilet trained a child understands this truth. At first, kids actually want witnesses — look what I did! Then they decide they'd rather have the door closed on certain occasions. And, at some point, they are likely to be outraged if anyone knocks on the door during a marathon grooming session.

This progression is worth remembering when parents think about protecting online privacy online. Young people are likely to be impulsive, willing to trade away information about themselves for quick access to a game, a product, or a social network. The assumption that you get to decide who knows what about you

other content are vulnerable to this kind of manipulation. So are tweens and teens who may be capable of thinking about these distinctions but often don't.

New rules from the FTC may do a better job of protecting children under 13 — Common Sense Media has started a petition in support of the new rules at <http://tinyurl.com/8j7dyod>. In the meantime, parents need to become familiar with strategies they can use right now to protect online privacy.

Track the trackers. The problem with big data isn't simply that information is being collected. Without effort on your part, you won't know who's gathering it or what they plan to do with it. To get a glimpse into what's happening behind the scenes, consider a program called Do Not Track (available at albine.com). They do not collect anything except what they need to make the program work. In return, you get a little icon that sits at the top right corner of your browser. When you visit a website, the icon tells you which social networks, ad networks and companies are tracking your visit.

Diversify. In Europe, tough laws require companies to get explicit consent before collecting data and to delete information at a customer's request. In this country, consumers have to protect themselves with guerilla tactics. Opt out of data collection and sharing whenever you can. And avoid using the same company for search, e-mail, and social networking. Companies may claim that cross-referencing your data is for your benefit because it customizes your online experience. The reality is that it also creates bulging files of information about purchases, searches, and communication that may find their way into the hands of insurers or even law enforcement.

Don't be misled by privacy policies. Most experts on privacy tell you to read a website's privacy policy before clicking "agree". This is good advice only if you have an advanced law degree! Also, don't be reassured by a statement like, "We will not share information about you." Such statements are often followed by a lengthy list of exceptions that

are anything but transparent.

Browse wisely. All major web browsers include a "private browsing" option. When go into this mode, your computer rejects cookies and doesn't keep a history of what you've done. (Parents may not want to share this option with younger kids because it deletes the cache and history files, so you can't see what websites your child has visited.) For details about how private browsing works in Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox and Safari, visit <http://tinyurl.com/cycfpee>.

Keep an Eye on Facebook. Privacy on social networks is tricky because, of course, the whole point is sharing information. SecureMe (www.secureme.com) is a tool that helps you become more deliberate about what you (and your children) decide to disclose by monitoring posts and photos that show up on your wall and in your network. Even more important, the program monitors how apps are handling and managing data, and it flags apps that aren't trustworthy.

Look for Privacy Icons. In response to the prospect of FTC regulation, an industry group called the Association for Competitive Technology is encouraging app developers to use a simple set of icons that give parents at-a-glance information about whether an app is suitable for children. Developed with the help of Lorraine Akemann of Moms with Apps, the App Privacy Icons answer several key questions: Does the app include ads? Does it interface with social media? For more information, visit apptrustproject.com.

Ideas about privacy are evolving and the next generation will have different standards about what should and shouldn't be shared. Parents who implement safeguards help preserve choices so that, when children start thinking seriously about protecting privacy, there will be something left to protect.

Carolyn Jabs raised three computer savvy kids, including one with special needs. She has been writing Growing Up Online for 10 years and is working on a book about constructive responses to conflict. Visit www.growing-up-online.com to see past columns.

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is very much at risk in the era of big data. Recently, the way companies compile and sell dossiers based on how people interact with websites has attracted government scrutiny. The FTC in particular has become concerned about how websites track children as they wander around online. COPPA, a law passed in 1998, requires websites to get parental permission before children under 13 fill out forms including personal data like name or address, but it doesn't begin to address the subterranean information websites routinely collect. Data about where a child clicks and how long they linger on a site is often used to determine what ads will pop up as the child browses. Young children who can't easily distinguish between advertising and

Calendar

MARCH



Courtesy of the Toy Museum

Fun on a string at New York Toy Museum

Three great shows for the price of one at the New York Toy Museum. Puppet Theatre will appear on a limited basis on March 2, 9, and 16.

The new series offers families an opportunity to enjoy three short puppet performances just right for little ones.

Each skit lasts up to 15 minutes, and features “Mumford

the Monster’s Magnificent Fairy Tales,” “Goldie and the Bears,” and “The Story of Ferdinand the Bull.”

Reservations are required for the March, 2, 9, and 16 performances at 2 pm. Tickets are \$10.

The New York Toy Museum [180 Smith St. at Warren Street in Cobble Hill, (718) 243-0820; www.Toy-MuseumNY.org].

Submit a listing

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TUE, FEB. 26

Wacky Tuesdays: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesday, 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 years old and younger explore art, science and culture in a fun and exciting way.

THURS, FEB. 28

Transit Tots: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 10:15 am; Free with museum admission.

Stories, games and fun for children 2 to 5 years old.

FRI, MARCH 1

Blooming babies: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am to 12:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 18 months to 2 and 1/2 years old listen to stories and then make a craft.

"West Side Story": Richard Perry Theater, Campus, 9216 Seventh Ave. at 92nd Street; (718) 836-9800 X 3953; www.polyprep.org; 7 pm; \$15 (\$5 for students).

Students in the Performing Arts Department perform Leonard Bernstein's classic musical.

SAT, MARCH 2

"Saddles and Sunshine": Kingsborough Community College, 2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street; (718) 368-5596; www.onstageatkingsborough.org; 10:30 am; \$12.

Presented by the Paper Bag Players, this all new show of vignettes is filled with unforgettable songs, jokes dances and innovative new paper bag sets.

Blooming babies: 11:30 am to 12:30



Associated Press / Carolyn Kaster

The Brooklyn Children Museum's celebration of Women's History Month will honor women including Michelle Obama.

March madness at the Museum

Come and enjoy a bit of March madness at the Brooklyn Children's Museum. The whole month promises to be nothing but fun, fun, fun.

Children help build a giant machine with levers, pulleys, ramps, and wheels in Invent It! on March 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 30, and 31 at 11 am and 1 pm.

Celebrate Women's History

pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Friday, March 1.

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

Amelia Robinson, founder of Mil's Trills leads families in gentle songs, games and stories for children birth to 4 years old.

Mixed up vehicles: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm; Free

Month, with Imagine Being, an exploration of the movers and shapers, like Frida Kahlo, Michelle Obama and Shirin Ebadi, on March 12, 13, 14 and 15 at 11:30 am.

You can also watch a special performance of "Alhambra" on March 24 at 1 pm. The play, sponsored by Tiger Baron, takes you on a trip to 1492 Spain and the journey of a young boy forced to

leave his home.

There are many more great events at the museum, just check out our calendar for a complete listing. All events are free with the \$9 museum admission, unless otherwise noted. Free admission for children under 1.

Brooklyn Children's Museum [145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue in Crown Heights, (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org].

with museum admission.

Create and color your very own fantasy vehicle. Children 4 years and older mix and match their favorite things in this bookmaking workshop.

Puppet theater: The New York Toy Museum, 180 Smith St.; www.toymuseumny.org; 2 pm; \$10 all seats.

The new series offers families a chance to see three shows for one price. The performances are short, between 12 and 15 minutes long and feature, "Mumford the Monster's Magnificent Fairy Tales," "Goldie and the Bears," and "The Story of Ferdinand the Bull." Reservations required.

Happy birthday Dr. Seuss: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2:30-3:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children have a seuss-tastical party and then make a craft to take home. Great for children 5 years and younger.

Kids Cafe: Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 488-1624; www.brooklyn.liu.edu/KumbleTheater; 3 pm; \$20 (\$15 students, \$12 children under 12).

Major college dance departments perform selections.

Continued on page 74

Calendar

Continued from page 73

"West Side Story": 7 pm. Richard Perry Theater, Campus. See Friday, March 1.

SUN, MARCH 3

Blooming babies: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Friday, March 1.

Wilderness workshop: Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; 1 pm; Free.

Urban park rangers teach you how to be prepared. Recommended for children 8 years and older.

Mixed up vehicles: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, March 2.

City Stomp Live: Littlefield, 622 Degraw St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues; (718) 855-3388; www.littlefieldnyc.com; 2:30 pm; \$10 (\$13 at the door).

Celebrate the sights, the songs, and the sounds of New York City in this concert performed by Kindie rock Brooklyn sensation, City Stomp.

Happy birthday Dr. Seuss: 2:30–3:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, March 2.

Kids Cafe: 3 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Saturday, March 2.

"West Side Story": 3 pm. Richard Perry Theater, Campus. See Friday, March 1.

"Shoot to Win": Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 488-1624; www.brooklyn.liu.edu/KumbleTheater; 7:30 pm; \$22.

Written by Jo Martin, this sassy, funny and gritty new play is straight from the London stage. Recommended for older teens.

MON, MARCH 4

"Shoot to Win": 7:30 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Sunday, March 3.

TUES, MARCH 5

"Shoot to Win": 7:30 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Sunday, March 3.

WED, MARCH 6

"Shoot to Win": 3 and 7:30 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Sunday, March 3.

Book night: PowerHouse Arena, 37 Main St. at Water Street; (718) 666-3049; www.powerhousearena.com;



Kindie rock stomp!

Stomp those feet, clap those hands, and stand up and rock to City Stomp in this live concert at Littlefield on March 3.

The kindie rock borough group, comprised of five veteran musicians — including founder Kevin MacCallum — brings a very special brand of music for kids of all ages, celebrating the sights, sounds and songs of New York

City — the most happening metropolis in the world.

Come on down on March 3 and enjoy the concert, children's activities, snacks, and giveaways. Doors open at 2:30 pm. Tickets are \$10 in advance, and \$13 at the door.

Littlefield [622 Degraw St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Park Slope, (718) 855-3388; www.littlefieldnyc.com].

5:30–6:30 pm; Free.

Join with other tweens 9 to 13 years old and discussion with Jordan Nielsen of TheRustyKey.com.

THURS, MARCH 7

Transit Tots: 10:15 am. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Feb. 28.

"Shoot to Win": 3 and 7:30 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Sunday, March 3.

SAT, MARCH 8

Block party: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am–12:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children of all ages use their imagination and build with foam blocks.

Junior engineering: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 years old and up explore the air engine.

Spring Music Fest: PS 193 Gil

Hodges School, 2515 Avenue L and E. 24th Street; (718) 338-9011; 2–5 pm; \$12.

Fund-raiser including professional musicians The Lords of Lichtenstein, Corey Sky, Kevin Webb, Sarah Worthington, and Nathan Carver, plus children's activities and a raffle.

Puppet theater: 2 pm. The New York Toy Museum. See Saturday, March 2.

Night Sky: Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; 7 pm; Free.

Learn about the history and folklore of the solar system and view the heavens above. Weather permitting.

Inside/Out: BAX — Brooklyn Arts Exchange, 421 Fifth Ave.; (718) 832-0018; www.bax.org; 8 pm; \$5.

Performance featuring AcroBax Performance Workshop students.

SUN, MARCH 10

Block party: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, March 9.

Junior engineering: 1:30 pm. New

York Transit Museum. See Saturday, March 9.

"Sleeping Beauty": Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort and Kenilworth places; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 2 pm; \$7.

Fairy godmothers, magic spells, glass slippers, true love, and happily ever after. Recommended for children 4 and older.

Inside/Out: 3 pm. BAX — Brooklyn Arts Exchange. See Saturday, March 9.

MON, MARCH 11

Latin Fusion: Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 488-1624; www.brooklyn.liu.edu/KumbleTheater; 7:30 pm; \$15 (\$10 students and seniors).

The sounds and rhythms of Latin America come to life in this collaboration of musicians and performers. Recommended for older teens.

TUES, MARCH 12

Imagine Being: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am–12:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Be inspired by the creativity of Frida Kahlo, motivated by Michelle Obama's Let's Move campaign, and fight for world peace like Shirin Ebadi. Celebrate Women's History Month. For children 5 and older.

WED, MARCH 13

Imagine Being: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Tuesday, March 12.

THURS, MARCH 14

Transit Tots: 10:15 am. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Feb. 28.

Imagine Being: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Tuesday, March 12.

FRI, MARCH 15

Teen Arts Conference: BAX — Brooklyn Arts Exchange, 421 Fifth Ave.; (718) 832-0018; www.bax.org; 10 am–3 pm; Free.

Artists ages 13 to 18 years old are invited to participate in workshops, engage with leaders in their chosen discipline and then share their work in a gala performance.

Imagine Being: 11:30 am – 12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Tuesday, March 12.

Calendar

SAT, MARCH 16

Teen Arts Conference: 10 am–3 pm. BAX — Brooklyn Arts Exchange. See Friday, March 15.

Easter Fair: Our Lady of Grace Church, Avenue W at E. Third Street; (718) 627–2020; www.ologchurch.com; 11 am–7 pm.

Come to the fair. Get pictures with the Easter Bunny, take a chance on an Easter egg hunt; have yummy food, and take a gander at the all the merchandise. Need to make a reservation for the Easter egg hunt.

Imagine a day in Ireland: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am–12:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

You're in the luck of the Irish, so celebrate St. Pat's day by learning about traditions, foods, and celebrations, then make a craft to take home. Suitable for children 2 to 5 years old.

Charles Moore Dance Theater: 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; Free with museum admission.

Celebrate Women's History Month with a special performance and learn all about the pioneers of the female dance movement. Great for all ages.

Nature crafts: Fort Greene Park Visitor Center, enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park; (718) 722–3218; 1 pm; Free.

Children connect with the natural world and make a fun project to take home.

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

Discover the art of the beautiful mosaic murals that adorn the subway stations. For children 4 and older.

"Beauty and the Beast": Kingsborough Community College, 2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street; (718) 891–6199; www.covenantballet.org; 2 and 7:30 pm; Call for tickets.

Classic ballet performed by the students at Covenant Ballet Theatre of Brooklyn.

Puppet theater: 2 pm. The New York Toy Museum. See Saturday, March 2.

Asteria: St. Charles Borromeo Church, 21 Sidney Pl. between Joralemon and State streets; (718) 624–3614; www.theater2020.com; 3 pm; \$20.

The duo of Sylvia Rhyne and Eric Redlinger perform the music from the



Back in the saddle

Gather 'round partners for a rousing production of *Saddles and Sunshine* by the Paper Bag Players at Kingsborough Community College on March 2.

It's a western-themed welcome, as cowboys and cowgirls gallop onto stage in this all-new show, featuring skits, singing, dancing, and a whole lot of fun. Start clapping those hands and howl a great big "howdy" for a fantastic,

whopping good time. Just right for children 3 to 8 years old. But there is enough fun for moms and pops too.

Saddles and Sunshine at the Kingsborough Community College Theater on March 2 at 10:30 am. Tickets are \$12.

Kingsborough Community College [2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street in Manhattan Beach, (718) 368–5596; www.onstageatkingsborough.org].

medieval courts of Burgundy.

SUN, MARCH 17

Easter Fair: 9 am–4 pm. Our Lady of Grace Church. See Saturday, March 16.

Ladies Singing the Blues: Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (212)

459–1854; www.brooklyn.liu.edu/KumbleTheater; 10 am and 12 pm; \$7.

In the tradition of Billie Holiday, Dinah Washington, Bessie Smith and Alberta Hunter, Ghanniyyah Green and her ensemble celebrate the great ladies of soul. Recommended for older teens.

Imagine a day in Ireland: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Mu-

seum. See Saturday, March 16.

Miles of tiles: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, March 16.

"The Beauty of Ballet": Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort and Kenilworth places; (718) 951–4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 2 pm; Free.

The program, presented in collaboration with the School of American Ballet, features talented youngsters demonstrating excerpts from famous ballets. Recommended for children 4 and older.

"Let's Crack Some Eggs": Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (212) 459–1854; www.brooklyn.liu.edu/KumbleTheater; 7:30 pm; \$15 (\$10 students and seniors).

Errol Grimes Dance group presents this dance production through elements of West Indian folk culture. Recommended for older teens.

MON, MARCH 18

"Let's Crack Some Eggs": 7:30 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Sunday, March 17.

TUES, MARCH 19

"Let's Crack Some Eggs": 7:30 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Sunday, March 17.

WED, MARCH 20

"Let's Crack Some Eggs": 7:30 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Sunday, March 17.

THURS, MARCH 21

Transit Tots: 10:15 am. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Feb. 28.

"Let's Crack Some Eggs": 3 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Sunday, March 17.

SAT, MARCH 23

"The Bremantown Musicians": Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort and Kenilworth places; (718) 951–4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 6 pm; \$45–\$65.

Adapted from the Russian cartoon, this rock musical follows the adventures of a wandering musician and his animal companions. In Russian with English synopsis. Recommended for children 8 and up.

Continued on page 76

Calendar

Continued from page 75

SUN, MARCH 24

"Alhambra": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1-1:45 pm; Free with museum admission.

Take an unforgettable trip back in time through the eyes of Simon, a young boy who left his home in 1492, and his journey. Presented by Tiger Baron. Suitable for all ages.

TUES, MARCH 26

Spring mini season: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; 9 am-12:30 pm; \$125 (\$150 non-member).

Children in kindergarten through fifth grade help with early season tasks at this mini break class. They learn about mulching, weeding and seeding. Children also do a craft, participate in a scavenger hunt and do other fun stuff. Wear appropriate clothing, no sandals, sun hat, water bottle and sunblock.

Young Readers Group: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between S. Elliott Place and S. Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; greenlightbookstore.com; 6:30 pm; Free.

Former teacher Brette leads children 8 to 14 years old in a discussion of contemporary and classic chapter books. Parents are welcome (but not required) to attend; pizza is served.

WED, MARCH 27

Spring mini season: 9 am-12:30 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Tuesday, March 26.

THURS, MARCH 28

Spring mini season: 9 am-12:30 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Tuesday, March 26.

SAT, MARCH 30

"Egg-citing eggs": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Explore the world of eggs and create your own with sticky, gooey papier-mâché. For children 5 years old and younger.

SUN, MARCH 31

"Egg-citing eggs": 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, March 30.



Big top revels at Morgan Library

"Itsy Bitsy Big Top" is setting up tents at the Morgan Library and Museum on Mar. 9.

Clowns, acrobats, jugglers, magicians, lions, horses, and elephants all come to life in the ring during this fun, interactive workshop led by educator Lisa Libiki.

After a visit to the exhibit, families build a small circus using a slew of materials, including wire, fabric, and paper — and of course a whole lot of imagination. The tour and workshop is just right for families with children ages 6 to 12.

"Itsy Bitsy Big Top: Build a Mini

Circus," Mar. 9 from 2 to 4 pm. Admission is \$6 (\$4 for members) and \$2 for children. The workshop is for families with children, with a limit of two adults per family.

The Morgan Library and Museum [225 Madison Ave. between W. 36th and W. 37th streets in Midtown; (212) 685-0008; www.themorgan.org].

LONG-RUNNING

Winged Tapestries Moths at Large: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am-5:45 pm; \$24 (\$14 children, \$18 seniors and students).

This exhibition features 34 striking and dramatic images of moths, displaying the arresting beauty and surprising diversity of moths from Ottawa-based photographer Jim des Rivières. Runs through September 2013.

The Butterfly Conservatory: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; awang@amnh.org; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am-5:45 pm; Now - Mon, May 27; \$24 (\$14 children, \$18 seniors and students).

The annual exhibition, "Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter," returns and celebrates its 15th year.

Global shoes: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays - Sundays, 10 am-5 pm, Now - Sun, March 10; \$7.50 (Free for members and children under 1).

The exhibit, which incorporates cultural artifacts from the museum's collection and a variety of hands-on, feet-on activities, encourages children and their families to explore global cultures within the context of fantasy shoe store and factory. Suitable for children 5 to 12 years old.

Art Works: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks

Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Fridays, 2:30 pm, Now - Fri, March 15; Free with museum admission.

Little Picassos explore their artistic side.

Show for kids: Union Temple, 17 Eastern Pkwy, (718) 638-7600; uniontemple@uniontemple.org; www.uniontemple.org; Saturdays, 9:30-11 am, Now - Sat, June 15; Free.

Out of the Shabbox's programming features Avodah Dance's Julie Gayer Kris (movement), Backyardigan Live!'s Shawn Shafner (storytelling) and Joach Rocker Jay Rapoport (minstrel). Join an interactive, fun filled programming where families can come together to sing, dance and tell stories.

Invent It!: Brooklyn Children's Mu-

seum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Saturday, March 2, 11 am; Sunday, March 3, 11 am; Saturday, March 9, 11 am; Sunday, March 10, 12 pm; Saturday, March 16, 11 am; Sunday, March 17, 11 am; Saturday, March 30, 11 am; Sunday, March 31, 11 am; Free with museum admission.

Help build a giant machine with levers, pulleys, ramps and wheels inspired by Rube Goldberg.

"The Prince and the Magic Flute": Puppetworks, 338 Sixth Ave. at Fourth Street; (718) 965-3391; www.puppetworks.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 12:30 and 2:30 pm, Now - Sun, March 24; \$8 (\$9 adults).

Puppetworks presents the comic adventure, based on the classic Mozart opera. The tale is of the brave prince and a bird catcher, who attempt to try and rescue the princess. Recommended for children 3 years old and older.

Sundays@Senesh: Hannah Senesh Community Day School, 342 Smith St. between First and Second places; (718) 858-8663; Sundays, 9 am-noon, Now - Sun, March 17; \$15.

For newborns to preschoolers, includes open play in gym, guided play

Toothfairy tale set to tickle the ivories

Ever wonder where the Tooth Fairy goes for vacation? The answer is at hand when "A (Tooth) Fairy Tale" flies in on fairy wings for a run at the McGinn/Cazale Theatre from March 16 to Apr. 28.

Collecting teeth and delivering quarters is tiring work, and the Tooth Fairy is ready for a vacation. Luckily, the Tooth Fairy (played by Jarusha Ariel) meets a kid named Samuel (played by John Magalhaes) who is sick and tired of being a kid and all the rules that go with it in this wild, silly adventure filled with shiny quarters, sugary candy, and learning



Photo by Sun Productions

who you're really meant to be.

"A (Tooth) Fairy Tale," Saturdays and Sundays from March 16 to Apr. 28 at 11 am and 1 pm. Tickets are \$25 and \$30.

McGinn/Cazale Theatre [2162 Broadway at 76th Street; (212) 579-0528; www.iseats.net].

in music and movement, led by a early childhood instructor.

"Make it Grand": New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; Saturday, March 23, noon; Sunday, March 24, noon; Tuesday, March 26, 11 am; Wednesday, March 27, 11 am; Thursday, March 28, 11 am; Friday, March 29, 11 am; Saturday, March 30, noon; Tuesday, April 2, 11 am; Free with museum admission.

This original, interactive musical celebrates 100 years of Grand Central Terminal. Performance is approximately 30 minutes long and is recommended for children 4 and older.

TheatreSports: Gallery Players, 199 14th St., between Fourth and Fifth avenues; (212) 352-3101; galleryplayers.com; Sunday, March 24, noon; Sunday, April 28, noon; Sunday, May 19, noon; Sunday, June 16, noon; \$10 (Parents free).

Freestyle Repertory Theatre is bringing improv to a new level and adding children to the mix. Groups of teens challenge each other to create scenes on the spot. Come with your children and have as much fun as they do.

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THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Reading for a young sleuth

Your teen is aching for a good mystery, but she has already read all of your old Nancy Drew books.

Then Kimberly Reid's "Sweet 16 to Life," which follows 16-year-old amateur detective Chanti Evans — a modern-day Nancy Drew — might be right up her alley.

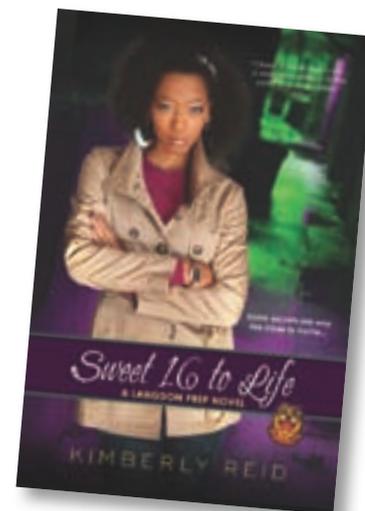
Chanti didn't look for crimes to solve, they found her. Case in point, the night her friend MJ's house caught fire. Thankfully, nobody was home and the blaze was easily extinguished, but Chanti was suspicious: MJ was more worried about the contents of the basement than the rest of the house. Add in the creepy hoodie-wearing dude who stood smiling as he watched the house burn, and something wasn't right.

Neither was the fact that MJ seemed to be awfully close to

Hoodie Dude. She said it was nothing, that she was just creeping on her boyfriend, but Chanti thought it was more than that. And if there was trouble, it could jeopardize MJ's parole.

But watching her friend's back wasn't the only drama in Chanti's life. It seemed, for instance, that her ex-boyfriend Marcus was always nearby, and he was too tempting. Plus, there was the stress of keeping her mother's job under wraps. It wouldn't do for everybody to know that Lana was an undercover cop.

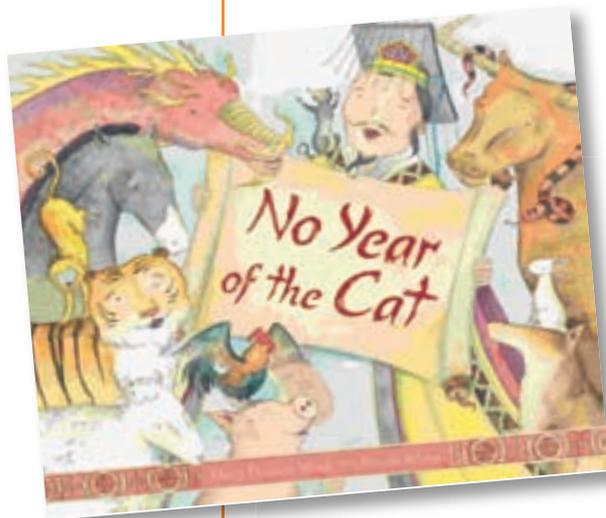
Reid's main character, Chanti, is like Nancy Drew in the 'hood: same savvy sleuthing, but with the bite of modern realism and a good amount of humor. There's keen danger depicted here, but no profanity. Teen gumshoes will find a fun, not-so-easily-solved, mystery without the



hard-core violence. That makes this a perfect whodunit for readers ages 12 to 17.

This book is part of a series, so you'll probably be happier if you get up-to-speed by grabbing one of the earlier installments first. Once you do, then "Sweet 16 to Life" is a great book to have your nose in.

"Sweet 16 to Life" by Kimberly Reid [256 pages, 2013, \$9.95].



Learn about animals of the Chinese New Year

named for them."

On the big day, all the animals gathered on the shores of the river. Cat and Rat were there, and they were scheming. They decided to ask Ox to carry them across on his wide, strong back.

Ox agreed, and Cat and Rat scrambled up. They all plunged into the river and Ox began to swim hard and fast. He was way ahead of all the other animals, so when he stumbled up on the other side of the water, the emperor declared that Rat was first and Ox was second.

Tiger arrived with a droopy tail. Rabbit took the easy way across. Dragon stopped to help some farmers, so he was fifth. Snake slithered in, then Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, and Dog. Pig trotted up and took last place, telling the emperor that he was late because he was hungry.

The emperor smiled. His empire now had a way to remember the years (especially the auspicious ones!). All the animals were very happy — except for Cat. She had totally missed being counted. Where

had she been all that time?

Kids will giggle when they find out the answer and what happens, because "No Year of the Cat" is a very likeable book. Author Wade offers children an explanation for the 12-animal cycle in the Chinese calendar and why those specific animals were chosen, basing her story loosely on an ancient traditional Chinese folktale that's familiar in the Chinese culture.

I loved the different personalities that each animal gets here, and I loved the way the story is woven in with Wong's Asian-inspired illustrations. I think that if your 3- to 6 year old enjoys a good animal story (and what kid doesn't?), or if he loves folktales, this is a book to grab. "No Year of the Cat" is one you'll be reading aloud all year round.

"No Year of the Cat" by Mary Dodson Wade and Nicole Wong [32 pages, 2013, \$16.95].

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

It figures

BY CYNTHIA WASHAM



KNOCKED-UP NUMBERS

375 Days of the world's longest pregnancy, by Beulah Hunter, who bore daughter Penny Diana in Los Angeles in 1945.

76 Percent of mothers who experience changes in their sense of taste or smell during pregnancy.

1 in 2,000 Odds of a baby being born with some teeth.

1978 Year the first baby was born in Antarctica: 1978

20 to 1,000 Range among various websites' claims in how many times its normal size the uterus expands during pregnancy.

1.83 Drop in ounces of the average birth weight in the U.S. from 1990 to 2005.

2.4 Day decrease in the average length of pregnancy during the same period.

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

1837

Year Friedrich Froebel, honored on April 21, Kindergarten Day, established the world's first kindergarten in Germany.

1923 Year Welch's introduced concord-grape jelly, a favorite for peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches, which are celebrated annually on April 2.

1,500 Number of peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches the average American eats by the time he graduates from high school.

1,342 Weight in pounds of the world's largest PB and J sandwich, made in Grand Saline, Texas, in November 2010.

96 Percent of people making a PB and J who put peanut butter on first.

33 Number of recipes for peanut butter sandwiches, including peanut butter and pickle, in Florence Cowles's 1928 book "Seven Hundred Sandwiches."



Sources: Time.com, Howstuffworks.com, Baby.lovetoknow.com, Baby-names-now.com, Reuters.com, HolidayInsights.com, Pacific.edu, NationalPeanutBoard.org, Tylerpaper.com, Foodtimeline.org.

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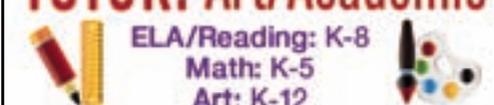
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New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

Fly gear

If you also have a tiny paleontologist at your house, but they prefer the softer, sweeter versions of T-Rex and his reptilian pals, the hoodies by Brooklyn-based Dinosaur will make him happier than an herbivore in a lettuce patch.

Their ready-to-raw collection includes a red pterodactyl with striking yellow under its wings, a blue torosaurus, and an orange T-Rex. The hoodie body is made of a cotton and polyester blend, while the appendages are polar fleece shaped with polyester stuffing. The handmade hoodies are in sizes 6 (for kids ages 3 to 5) and 8 (for ages 6 to 9).

It's a dino-mite costume they can wear from now until Halloween.

Dinosaur hoodie by Dinosaur, \$85, www.wearedinosaur.com.



Play smart

Eeboo's non-slip, embroidered velvet juggling balls have hit the market just as educators are beginning to appreciate the academic benefits of playing with this classic toy. Available in rich jewel tones — blue, orange, pink, purple, yellow and green, the balls come with a vintage-style, step-by-step, instructional poster. Schools from Florida to California have started juggling programs, and teachers have observed in-



creased hand-eye coordination, reading ability, and concentration in their student jugglers. And the best part for the kids? Tossing around these two-and-a-half-inch balls of non-toxic, plastic pellets is just plain fun.

Set of three Juggling Balls by Eeboo, \$18.95, www.geniusbabies.com.

Milkshake, rattle & roll

Fans of the tutu-wearing Lisa Mathews and her band, Milkshake, should mark March 26 on their calendars! That's the release date of the group's latest — and possibly last — album for kids, and this is a CD you won't want to miss as "Got a Minute" is a gift that keeps on giving with no less than 33 tracks, of predominantly upbeat, toe-tapping material. In addition to 13 songs that are about a minute in length

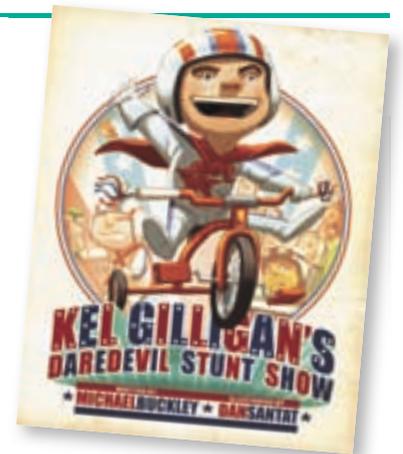


that aired as videos on PBS Kids in 2006, there are 20 more new songs. Recommended for kids ages 4-9, "Got a Minute" features songs from a variety of musical genres (rap, country, pop rock, sea chanteys) that touch on lots of subjects that will resonate with kids and their parents — from pet fish to bullying to hiccups.

"Got A Minute" CD by Milkshake, \$14, www.milkshakemusic.com.

Tiny hero

In a thrilling homage to Evel Kneivel for the preschool set, writer Michael Buckley and illustrator Dan Santat have created the humorous, inspiring picture book, "Kel Gilligan's Daredevil Stunt Show." The title character — like every child — is amazing because he can "perform super scary stunts" such as eating broccoli, successfully using his potty chair, dressing himself, and protecting his parents from the monsters under their bed. Buckley's book cleverly reminds us how challenging the world can seem from the perspective of the littlest humans, while giving our kids the encouragement and congratulations they deserve for summon-



ing all of that courage every day. *"Kel Gilligan's Daredevil Stunt Show" book by Michael Buckley, \$16.95, www.amazon.com.*

Victory for 'Babar'

The only thing missing from "Babar: The Movie," Alan Bunce's animated, feature-length film that was re-released last month on DVD after long nine years, is the popcorn.

The G-rated film por-

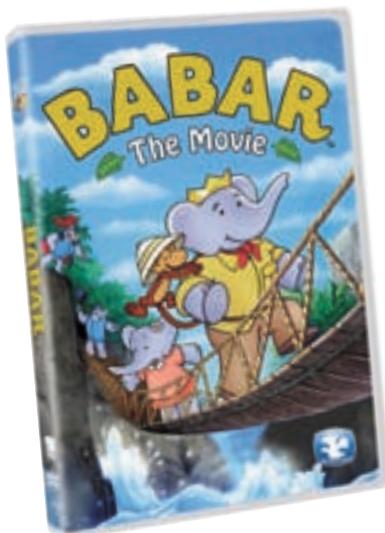
trays the grand adventure of young King Babar, who has been enlisted by his friend Celeste to rescue her family from the terrible rhino, Rataxes, and his army.

The riveting tale is often hilarious, and boasts a rich vocabulary and fantastic music, including the "Committee Song" written by Phil Balsam of "Fraggle Rock" fame and the "Elephantland March," written by Maribeth Solomon.

The DVD's bonus feature is the classic "Babar" television episode, "Monkey Business," which is a Simian take on the-boy-who-cried-wolf parable.

"Babar" is truly a must-see film, and the whole family will want to "join in the celebration!"

"Babar: The Movie" DVD, \$14.98, www.amazon.com.





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Location for all dates listed: 155 Bay Ridge Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11220

- March 9, 2013.....11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- March 14, 2013.....4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- March 27, 2013.....4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

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