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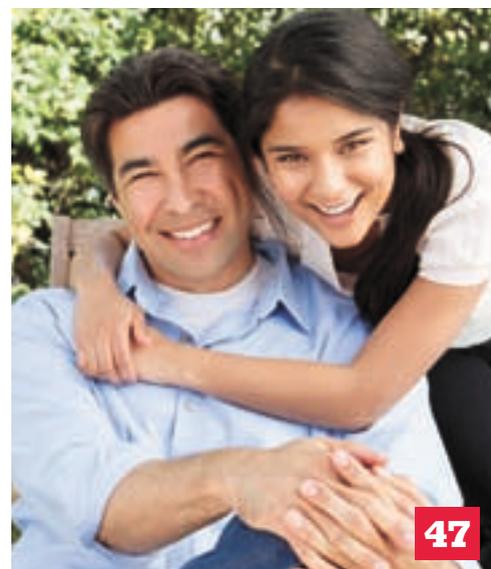
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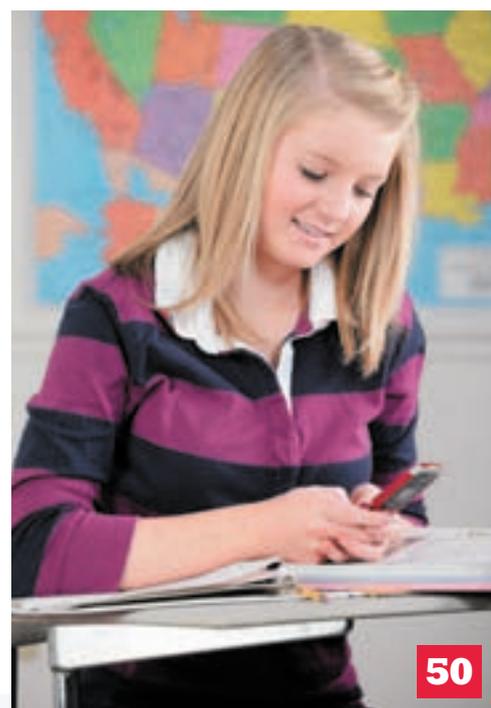
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Letter from the publisher

The end of summer

September is one of my favorite months, although when I was young I had real conflict with it like most kids. You want to go back to school and see your friends, but at the same time you don't want summer to end. For me, it was more



about the approach of winter than the loss of summer. The winters in Chicago where I grew up were pretty severe and I never looked forward to the harshness of that season. It used to be that way here in New York, too, as I recall. I've been here for many years now and it seems they get milder, or maybe my recall from youth just makes it seem that way.

Without a doubt, September brings a lot of great weather perfect

days and the irony is that most everyone is back in gear and unable to enjoy them to the fullest. Children look out the windows of their classrooms and see Indian Summer days that make one long for the summer that's past, or if they're lucky, they will

be doing great things after school that keep them outdoors a bit.

My daughter did everything, or it seemed that way to me, her personal chauffeur. She took gymnastics, swimming, dance, after school science, studied classical guitar, and was on a soccer team. Not all at once, I might add. That was a lot of organization for her mom, and I did it with gusto and professionalism while balancing my work life along side. The benefits for

her were huge and I was lucky that she was my one and only and I didn't have more than one to schedule.

Every year this issue presents an Activity/Afterschool Guide to help parents see the myriad of possibilities that exist around their communities that will enhance and intrigue the talents and potentials of their children. There are varied programs of all kinds and we urge you to sign your kids up for some of them, whatever their inclination and/or need. We have to provide a lot of extra stimulation for our children beyond their classrooms so they will become rounded human beings. We have to make certain their exposure is wide and stimulating. Education is about much more than reading, writing and arithmetic.

New York is a great place to be a parent raising children. There are

so many possibilities. Anyone who's bored here is not justified. There will be wonderful activities all month long throughout the five boroughs. We urge you to use our online calendar as well as our print publication to find out what's happening around our city. Log on to www.NYParenting.com and sign up for our e-blasts. They come twice a week and are chock full of information. We're proud of our website and think it balances our print products really well. There's something for everyone.

Thanks for reading.

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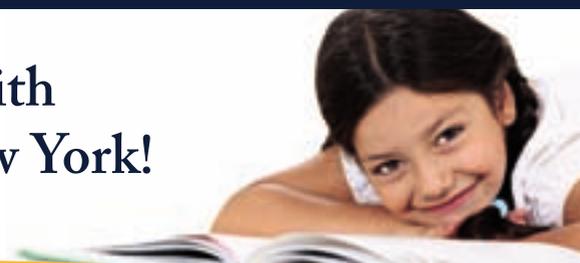
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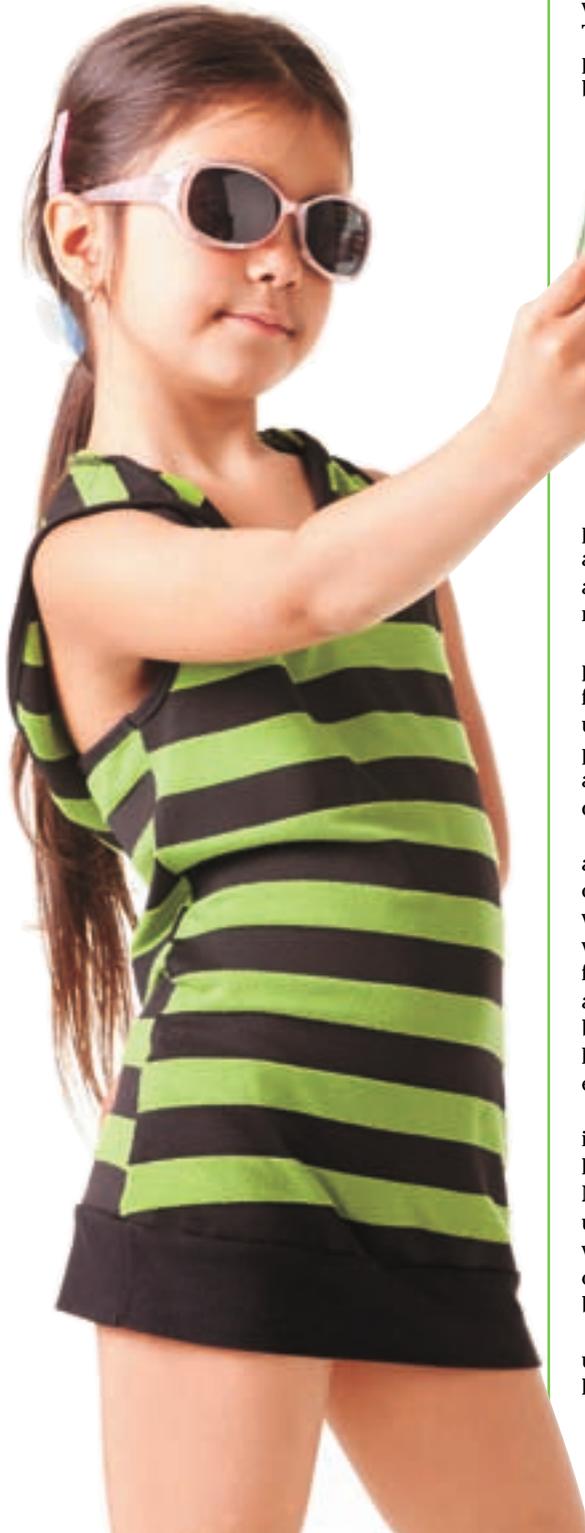
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Fashion & sense

Peacocking around — with style and self-respect



BY MEAGAN J. MEEHAN

Every day that we leave our homes, we put on a show via our choice of apparel. What we wear in public tells a story about us. The dilemma that hangs over most parents' heads is trying to find the balance between supporting their child's or teen's sense of self — and maintaining a sense of clothing appropriateness.

The term “peacocking around” comes to mind when we consider fashion sense, styles, and trends. Like the gorgeous pheasant, human beings put on a show in public.

We don't have multicolored feathers, but we do have options of color and style in clothes, accessories, hair, and makeup. Unlike peacocks, whose males are bright and colorful, human females are usually keener on selecting outfits than males are.

Many see fashion and style as a pastime for young women. What we forget is that society uses fashion and uniforms to distinguish all sorts of people. Firemen, policemen, doctors, and delivery men can be identified quickly by glancing at their attire.

When we are not obliged to dress a certain way for work or special occasions, we choose what we will wear based on what we like. In other words, our personal preferences influence what we wear. People who are into certain sports, such as skateboarding, or music, such as rock, have established dress codes popular enough to warrant their own brands.

Some children put little thought into what they wear, while others have opinions from very young ages. Many parents might not particularly understand their child's desire to wear neon yellow nail polish or wear off-color T-shirts, but few have trouble of a larger proportion.

When dress code issues occur, it is usually indicative of deeper and more long-running issues between child-parent relationships, especially when the children have reached their teens. Studies have shown that the children who are most likely to rebel are those from strict house-

holds — and the first indication of rebellion usually takes the form of image projection by rebelling against dress code.

Many teens either fail to realize, or flat out do not care, that self-image is reflected in dress, as are others' perceptions of an individual. The outfit one wears does automatically convey a certain message to other people. Dressing preppy or hipster or trendy are generally considered “safe” styles, even if some fads border on the outrageous.

However, there can be real problems with apparel that comes across as somehow intimidating. Chances are good that the local grocery store owner will not be overjoyed to see someone ambling down the aisles of their shop with chains hanging off their jacket or their pants three sizes too large.

For girls, outfits that are too tight or revealing can lead to negative perceptions being formed about the wearer. It might not be fair to judge someone by their attire, but the hard truth is that people do this instinctively since, through the clothing they choose to wear, individuals convey messages about themselves. If those messages are perceived as derogatory or threatening, then others' responses are going to be negative and laced with suspicion.

Parents should try to teach children from the time that they are small — well before the rebellious teen years peak — about the dire importance of maintaining self-respect while developing a personal style. Not every outfit choice is going to be a parental favorite. There will always be those shorts which are too short and those pants which are too baggy. Yet it is not worth fighting over unless something about the attire is truly unacceptable. Making fashion mistakes is part of growing up.

Fashion fads and trends are started via trial and error. Peacocking around is part of life. As long as self-respect is factored into every outfit, then we should all feel free to strut our style freely.

Meagan Meehan is a published author of poems, short stories, novels, and articles in numerous publications. She is also a cartoonist and an award-winning modern artist.

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Happy FEET

Putting your best foot forward in new shoes

BY KIKI BOCCI

You know the return to school means you need to put something more substantial on your child's feet than flip-flops and sandals, but what? Is there really that much of a difference among children's shoes?

If you think about the wide variety of shoes in your own closet, you'll know the answer is yes.

There are shoes that pinch your toes and are agony by the end of the day, and then there are the shoes that make you feel like you're walking on air. Which kind would you prefer your child to be wearing all day?

Finding proper shoes is not just a back-to-school task — it's a challenge all year long, say the experts at the American Podiatric Medical Association. Here are some things they suggest you keep in mind:

- When it comes to shoes, banish the hand-me-downs. Even if the shoes seem like they still have a lot of wear left, never hand down footwear. Just because a shoe fit one child comfortably doesn't mean it will fit another the same way. Also, sharing shoes can spread fungi like athlete's foot and nail fungus.

- Take your child shoe shopping.

You may think you know what your child will like. And you may think you know the correct size. But every shoe fits differently. Letting a child have a say in the shoe-buying process promotes healthy foot habits down the road.

- Proper fit is key. Always measure a child's feet before buying shoes. Don't assume you know the correct size based on your last purchase, even if it was just last month (or even last week). When your child tries on a pair — yes, both shoes! — Watch him walk in them. Do they slip down on the heel? Do they look too tight? Watch for signs of potential irritation.

- Bigger is better. Always buy for the larger foot. Feet are seldom precisely the same size. Make sure you check both feet and select the larger size. It's easier to deal with a shoe that is slightly too big than one that is too small. Also, make sure your child tries on shoes with socks of the thickness he will be wearing with the shoes.

- Patience isn't a virtue when it comes to shoes. Do not buy shoes that need a "break-in" period or that your child needs to grow into. Shoes should be comfortable immediately and fit properly from the start. How long would you be willing to wear shoes that give you blisters, make you walk awkwardly, or are uncomfortable?

- Buy something solid. Look for a stiff heel — it shouldn't collapse when you press on the back of the shoe. Also, the shoe should have a reasonably rigid middle. Your child's shoe should never twist in the middle. Finally, check for toe flexibility. The shoe should bend with your child's toes.

- Be prepared to go shopping again soon. Children's feet change with age. Shoe and sock sizes may change every few months as a child's feet grow. Don't expect your purchase to last for months on end.



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- feeling pressure to perform as though everyone is judging her?

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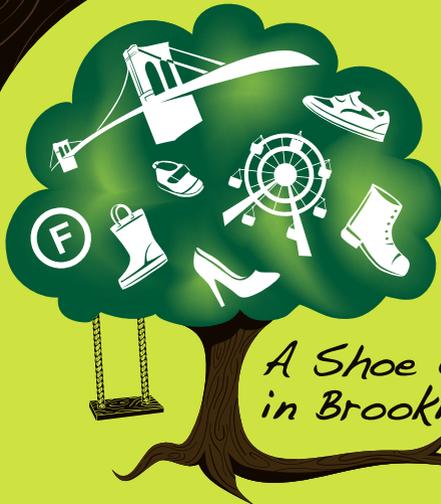
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Teacher trouble 101

How to
manage
child-teacher
conflict

BY CHRISTA MELNYK HINES

An elementary school child's disdain for her teacher may grow out of a variety of factors, like adjusting from a beloved former teacher's management style to a new teacher's approach. Other influences on a child's attitude toward her teacher include class size, peer competition, increased homework, more demanding and independent school work, as well as differences between home and school environments.

Take, for instance, 9-year-old Elora (whose name has been changed to

avoid conflict at school). One day, she came home from classes in a huff.

"I hate my teacher," she declared to her mother. But, when her mom pressed for details, Elora buried her head in her knees. So, her mother tried a different approach.

"I engaged her in a fun activity," she says. "Then, I lightheartedly asked questions like, who does she like the most at school, who does she like the least, followed by, 'Oh, how come?'" What I found out was that she felt like the teacher yelled at her."

If your child comes home grum-

bling about a new teacher, do some digging. Allow your child time to adjust to her teacher's expectations and rules. If complaints persist, ask objective questions, like: "How is the work for you? How are you getting along with the other kids?"

"By doing that, you can get a flavor of the environment rather than the situation," says Dr. Stephanie Mihalas, a child psychologist and a nationally certified school psychologist who frequently helps students and parents manage and resolve school conflicts. "You may get an idea that something else is happening that's triggering the 'meanness'

and then at that point, you have more information to call or e-mail the teacher.”

Review class work. Notice patterns like red marks and notes from the teacher on classwork. If your student struggles and seems afraid to ask questions, discuss appropriate times for her to talk to her teacher about the work and what types of questions she should ask.

Make real-world connections. A child may grow disenchanted with school and her teacher if she doesn't understand how the subject matter relates to real life. Due to increased pressure to focus on testing and assessments, teachers devote less classroom time for experiential learning opportunities or class projects.

That's where a parent can help. "Engaging in the learning piece is key," says Dr. Ashley Norris, assistant dean of the University of Phoenix College of Education.

On the weekends, integrate classwork into your daily errands. For example, if your child is learning about soil and climate in science, take her to the Saturday morning farmer's market. Practice multiplication skills to tally up the tip at a restaurant.

"Parents (then) become a partner with the teacher. Once that engagement starts to happen, the perception of the student-teacher relationship changes," Norris says.

Recognize the signs of a child-teacher conflict.

"The single biggest factor is a change in grades. If grades are starting to slip, that's a huge indicator," Norris says. Behavior changes can also indicate a problem, including disengagement at school, forgetting homework, and lack of effort.

Resolve a personality conflict, but rather than getting angry or defensive, take a calm, diplomatic approach when conferencing with the teacher.

"The last thing you want to do is instigate more conflict between the teacher and your child, and if you

start to pit sides, that's what ends up happening," Norris says.

Also, ask if you can sit in during class one day.

"Your presence might change the nature of how your child acts, but it will give you a flavor of how the teacher teaches," Mihalas says.

When do you contact administration? Only go over a teacher's head only as a last resort.

"One of the only times to bring in administration is if your child is covered by special education law and the teacher isn't following special ed law," Mihalas says.

Other times you might seek help from administration:

- The teacher agreed on a set of interventions, but isn't following those strategies.

- Your child comes home crying every day.

- You talk with the teacher and are unable to resolve the issue.

Do you request a different teacher? Sometimes, a child's personality and a teacher's personality simply clashes. Unless the teacher is abusive, help your child understand that she's not always going to like everyone, stressing the importance of remaining respectful and learning how to manage personality differences.

"In my humble opinion, I don't think it's a good idea to show children that because there's a problem, then they need to move from that classroom," Mihalas says.

Instead, teach flexibility by creating a link between friendships and getting along with others. For a younger child, you might say: "Everyone is different. Just as mommy and daddy do things differently, this is how your teacher is. It's really good to learn how to work with all different kinds of people."

Only seek professional help if interventions at school are unsuccessful. Seek help from a child psychologist to rule out learning disabilities and anxiety.

Freelance journalist Christa Melnyk Hines is a family communication expert. Connect with her at www.christamelnykhines.com.

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Questions to ask the teacher:

- Have you noticed my child struggling with a particular subject?
- Does she participate in classroom discussions?
- How does she seem to get along with her peers?
- How can we work together to help my child better adjust?

Healthy options for after-school snacks

Keep your
child eating
right with
these nibbles

BY DENISE MORRISON
YEARIAN

When your children come home from school with rumbling tummies, make snack time an extension of their nutrition plan by incorporating the same kinds of foods you would serve during mealtimes. Here are seven wholesome, yummy snack suggestions to get you started.

Core nutrition. Wash and core an unpeeled apple and place in a microwave-safe bowl. In the hollowed out center, add 1 teaspoon of low-fat margarine and sprinkle in cinnamon, nutmeg, and sugar substitute. Cover and cook for three minutes until soft. Add 1 tablespoon of chopped nuts or raisins to the core, if you want.

Zesty best chips and salsa. Spray a small, whole-wheat tortilla with olive oil. Add garlic powder, chili powder, or another spice, then bake at 400 degrees for four to six minutes. Increase salsa's texture, taste and nutritional value by tossing in diced tomatoes, avocados, mango, or pineapple.

Stick 'em up! Food on a stick is always fun. Insert bread, cheese, and lunch meat cubes onto a skewer; add grape tomatoes, olives, pickles, and lettuce leaves for a sandwich on a stick. Or, cut up firm fruits such as melons, pineapples, grapes, apples, and strawberries and slide them onto a stick. Sweeten the treat



by dipping one-third of the fruit into melted chocolate.

On a roll. Spread 1 tablespoon of hummus or low-fat cream cheese evenly over a small, whole-grain tortilla and top with diced vegetables; add herbs and spices if you want. Roll the tortilla shell tightly and insert toothpicks every half inch. Slice between toothpicks to make pick-up pinwheels. Turn this into a sweet rendition by using 1 tablespoon of peanut butter and chopped fresh fruit instead.

Peanut butter passion. Peanut butter is a favorite amongst kids. Top a chocolate rice cake with 1 tablespoon of peanut butter for that famous chocolate-peanut butter combo. You could also microwave 2 tablespoons of peanut butter for 15 seconds then add 2 tablespoons of water and whip with a fork until smooth. Serve it with fresh fruit or vegetables. Or mix one-quarter cup of each: peanut butter, honey, nonfat

dry milk, oats and rice cereal. Shape into 18 one-inch balls. Crush one-half cup of rice cereal in a zip-top bag, then drop in balls and shake until they are coated.

Chill out! Blend 1 small container of reduced-fat yogurt, 1 cup of frozen fruit and one-quarter cup of fat-free milk. Pour mixture into small paper cups, insert a Popsicle stick, and place in the freezer until solid. Or, break a graham cracker sheet in half, fill one side with 2 tablespoons of fat-free whipped topping, add chopped fruit, and cover with remaining cracker. Wrap in plastic wrap and freeze.

Going bananas! Bananas offer a bunch of options: Blend together a peeled, frozen banana, 2 tablespoons of oats, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, and 1 tablespoon of low-fat milk. Gradually add milk in 1-tablespoon increments, blending after each addition, until the mixture is a smoothie consistency.

Another idea is to insert a Popsicle stick into each end of a peeled banana. Soften 2 tablespoons of peanut butter in the microwave. Roll the banana in peanut butter then in rice cereal, granola or sunflower seeds. Wrap in plastic and freeze eight hours or overnight. Or, slice a banana in half lengthwise, spread one tablespoon of peanut butter on one half, then sprinkle with granola. Place the remaining banana over it; eat and enjoy.

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

More lip-smacking, healthy snacks

- Spray a tortilla with butter spray, sprinkle with sugar substitute and cinnamon, then bake until crispy.

- Top an English muffin, pita pocket, or mini bagel with tomato sauce, mozzarella, and veggies. Bake.

- Stuff a whole-wheat pita pocket with cream cheese and chopped vegetables, herbs, and spices.

- Layer berries and yogurt or

whipped topping in a parfait glass.

- Top a rice cake with whipped topping and fresh berries.

- Toast a high-fiber waffle until crisp, then cool, and cut in half. On one side, add a small portion of frozen yogurt and chopped fruit, then top with remaining waffle.

- Mix Chex cereal or popped popcorn with dried fruit, pretzel rounds, peanuts, and a limited amount of M&Ms or mini bitter-

sweet morsels.

- Spray olive oil over popped popcorn, then toss with taco seasoning mix, garlic powder, or a small portion of Parmesan cheese.

- Place Goldfish crackers in a bowl. Dip celery sticks into softened cream cheese, then into the crackers to "catch" a fish.

Healthy tip: Use whole grain and reduced- or low-fat ingredients when possible.

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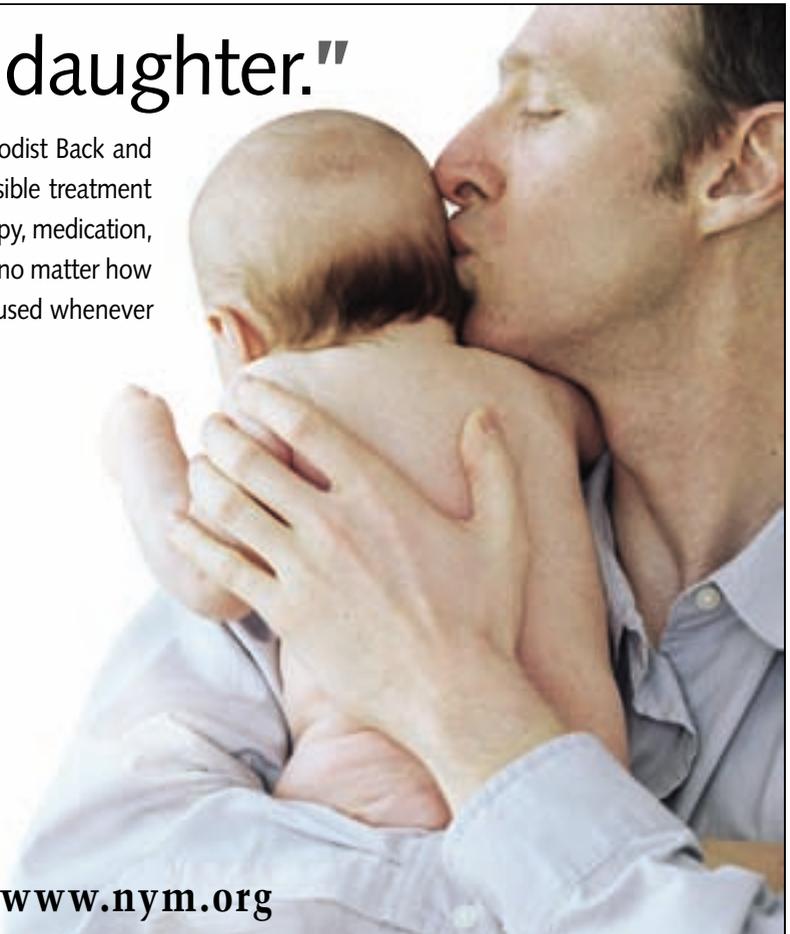
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Back-to-school APP help

Save money with the right smartphone and tablet apps

BY SUSAN FRENCH

Got the back to school blues? Leaving the freedom of summer behind is not just a bummer for kids, but parents, too. Back-to-school advertisements make school-supply shopping seem fun and easy, but in reality, school supply lists are chock-full of antiquated, expensive items that our little ones seldom use. That can all be changed with smartphone and tablet applications.

This year, get creative with your back-to-school shopping. Sit down with your kids and go item by item down the supply list and decide whether an app would do the job better.

For instance, paper school planners are pricey, get ripped or misplaced in a matter of days, and have limited functionality. Replace paper calendars and school planners with kid-friendly interactive calendar apps. These tools can help teach kids important time-management skills using colorful graphics and interactive features. Planners can be priced at \$25, whereas an app may be free or within the \$2-price range. Skillful savings!

You can do the same with any area of your child's curriculum. For example, strengthen your child's math skills with an interactive



math app. Replace boring flashcards at a nominal cost with apps that count with your child and teach multiplication. Swap tired, worn workbook pages with apps that reinforce reading skills, and even allow your little ones to practice their handwriting.

Simply peruse the iTunes Store's educational category to find kid-friendly apps. Some helpful search words to use are "kid's calendar," "student planner," "teacher tools," etc.

If you want expert advice, it is wise to check the ratings given by those who already use the app or

the countless review sites devoted to ensuring that apps on the market live up to parents' standards.

After you've done your homework, sit down with your kids to do some stress-free shopping in the comfort of your own home, instead of dragging them to the crowded mall!

Susan French is a kindergarten teacher, mentor, and math coach, working for the city's Department of Education for more than 20 years. She is the author of the iTunes app 4Kid-cal, which is designed to teach early childhood learners organization and time management.

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New school year gluten-free

BY DR. DUSTIN JAMES

As summer wraps up, it is time to get ready for school. Besides the usual stress of friends, activities, and grades, some will face an even bigger challenge — sticking to a gluten-free diet.

At home, many of us have a fighting chance of monitoring what our child eats. At school, this type of control isn't possible.

There are several things that you and your family can do in advance to make this transition as smooth as possible.

Go to the doctor

Make sure that you are seeing a health care professional for your child's gluten-free health needs. Many conditions that necessitate a gluten-free diet, like celiac disease and non-celiac gluten sensitivity, require regular health care follow-up.

Doctor's offices are also a great wealth of important gluten-free resources, such as dietitians, support groups, and blogs.

Be sure to ask your doctor for a note explaining your child's special dietary needs. It may also come in handy for a tax write-off at the end of the year.

Education, education, education

While it seems next to impossible to educate a 3 year old on what is gluten-free and what is not, it never hurts to try. Ultimately, the best thing you can do for your child is to help her understand her condition and what makes it better.

Almost all families

with children who need a gluten-free diet make their household gluten-free. Little ones are sponges that learn best by observation. Chances are that they already know a lot about the types of foods they should avoid, and which are okay.

I recommend that my patients with celiac disease visit with a dietician at least once a year to review their diets and make sure that they are getting the proper balance of nutrients essential for their growth.

People actually know what gluten-free means

All the hype behind gluten-free has done one thing — raised awareness of the condition. So, chances are that when you meet with a teacher or principal, you won't get that "deer in the headlights" look.

So instead of trying to prepare a dissertation on what gluten-free means, you should focus instead on your goals.

I recommend setting up a meeting with your child's teacher, principal, and cafeteria manager before school starts. You may be surprised to learn that they already have a gluten-free system in place. If not, just think of the

other kids you'll be helping if you help them set up a plan.

One aspect of eating gluten-free that many don't understand is that it is not truly a food allergy like a peanut allergy. With true food allergies, eating the foods (or inhaling food dust in very sensitive people) can lead to a sudden-onset, life-threatening swelling of the airway. If someone with celiac disease eats gluten, the immediate effects are much less obvious.

Don't be afraid of the lunch lady

You don't have to stress about making your child's lunch every day. Many schools now offer a healthy selection of gluten-free foods. Some people advocate a special table for children with dietary restrictions, but I find that this often does more harm than good. Being singled out on day one as different makes for a difficult start to the new school year.

Also, keep in mind that despite your best intentions, you can't control the other children at school who may flaunt gluten-containing temptations. Remember, a child who understands her condition is always the best prevention.

If it sounds too good to be true...

While hope is on the horizon in terms of ways to combat celiac disease in pill form, the only option right now is following a gluten-free diet. Avoid the enticement to take a dietary supplement that promises to digest gluten "before it becomes a problem." Just ask anyone with lactose intolerance, you can take all the Lactaid® in the world, but you'll still pay the piper if you eat dairy.

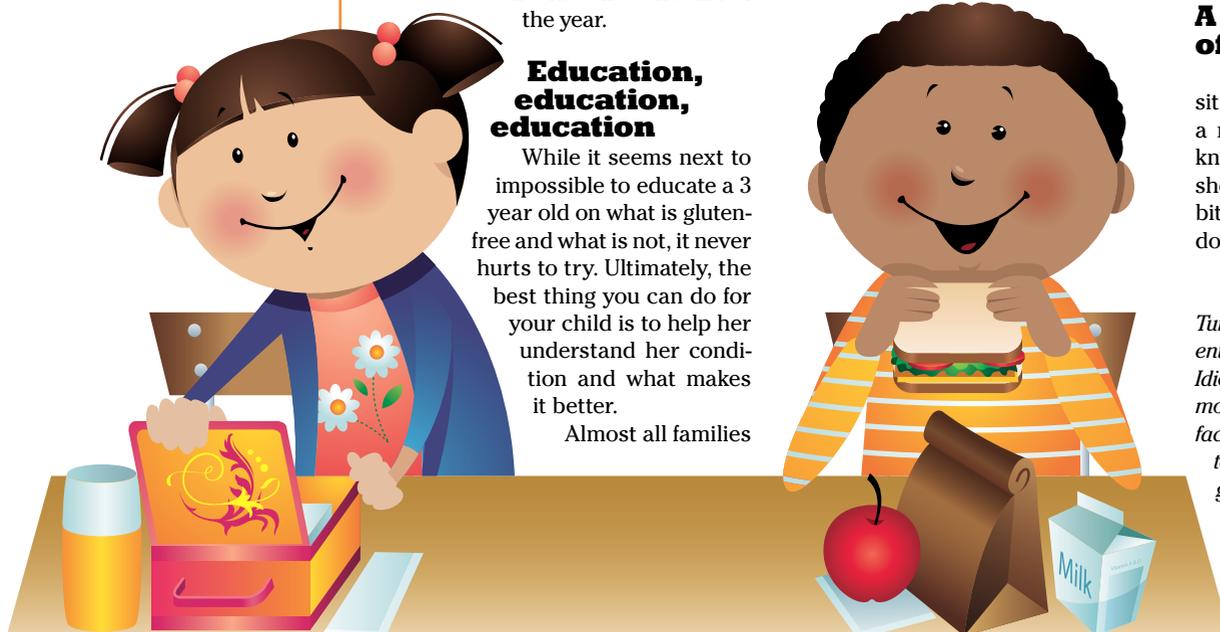
A little bit isn't the end of the world

You don't want your gluten-sensitive child to eat a little gluten on a regular basis, but take comfort in knowing that medical studies have shown that if your child has a little bit of gluten here and there, she still does fine.

Here's to a great school year.

Dr. Dustin James, known as *The Tummy Doc*, is a board-certified gastroenterologist and author of *"The Complete Idiot's Guide® to Digestive Health."* For more, visit www.enteralhealth.com, www.facebook.com/enteralhealth, www.twitter.com/thetummydoc, and www.instagram.com/thetummydocchannel.

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What's in a name?

New baby?
Remember, kids
are judged by
the monikers
they're given

BY KIMBERLY CARLSON

Last month, as pop culture buzzed about which name new parents William and Kate would give to the royal prince — and former British reality show contestant Katie Hopkins declared, “I do judge children by their names,” on a popular British morning talk show — I couldn’t help but wonder what sort of judgments will be made about my children when school starts.

Every year, sites like nameberry.com regale us with tales of the “top 10 baby names,” as though they are as important as the stock market. In fact, although 2013 isn’t even three-quarters of the way through, the site has already posted its list for this year! So what, exactly, is in a name?

Etymology

Friends, family, and even perfect strangers will proffer names to you for your unborn child — often unsolicited. Avidly, parents will write down names they like, and then research their history. I wanted my children’s names — Nickolas and Sarah — to be a reflection of themselves. Trouble was, they weren’t even born yet, so how could I choose wisely?

According to Laura Wattenberg, author of “The Baby Name Wizard,” the name you choose for your baby

reflects more about you than your child.

“The name doesn’t belong to you — you’re making the decision because your child can’t do it for himself — but what you choose does say a lot about your personality,” she says.

Name dropping

It may be true that my children’s names say more about me than them, but it’s not stopping college application boards from using their preconceptions about a name as part of their elimination process.

Dr. Hilary Levey Friedman, author of “Playing to Win, Raising Children in a Competitive Culture,” observed in her studies that “colleges will look at an applicant that participates in competitive lacrosse after school and immediately assume he is from an upper class. Same with names — you probably won’t find ‘LaShawnda’ in competitive rowing or applying to Harvard.” Friedman acknowledges it’s an unfair prejudicial assessment, but one that’s made regularly.

Kids can be cruel

Unfortunately, that gives far more credence to Hopkins’s statement that she is merely “speaking the truth that most parents are thinking if not saying,” than I am comfortable with. Especially when she declares

openly that she won’t let her children play with other children after school whose names are “too common,” like “Taylor” or “car names, like Mercedes,” because she fears a child “of that lower class” (meaning middle class, in her case) won’t be appropriate as a playmate.

It’s bad enough that children are mean to other children — creating terrible nicknames and taunts, without the parents openly discriminating as well.

Different approach

My best advice to parents: choose the names you like. Then, teach your child respect for others. Remind him that he cannot judge a book by its cover, and he simply can’t make an accurate assessment about others without getting to know them first.

If my daughter is ever denied the right to play at someone’s house due to name discrimination, I shall simply remind her that friends like that aren’t worth having. Hopefully, the majority of parents out there will agree with me and teach their children acceptance and tolerance to go with their healthy dose of decision-making.

Kimberly Carlson is a freelance writer, author, and mother of two fantastic children, who are defining who they are and what their names mean to them every single day.



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Romeo & Juliet had a baby

Ballerina leaps between career & motherhood

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

Principal dancer and former New Yorker Jennifer Kronenberg played opposite her real-life Romeo, hunky hubby Carlos Guerra, when she starred as Juliet in Miami City Ballet's \$1.5-million production of John Cranko's "Romeo

and Juliet," in 2011. Her stunning, glamorous image graced the cover of Dance magazine and dominated ballet posters when Miami City Ballet performed in New York City and in Los Angeles. Then in a three-week command performance that summer, the striking beauty starred in many key lead roles when the ballet company made its Paris debut at the Theatre du Chatelet.

Now at age 37, Jennifer Kronenberg Guerra is a mommy, and like many others out there, she's finding out that balancing family and work is a tricky business and requires fortitude — as well as a great support system. But she's embracing her new role with love, patience, and a ballerina's grace.

Mommyhood

Adjusting to motherhood, while rehearsing and performing ballets, isn't an easy feat, and if Jennifer could somehow manage to pirouette and leap across the stage, with little Eva strapped to her back — and make it look graceful — she would probably pull it off. That's how devoted she is to her baby girl and how passionate she is about her craft.

The new mom describes her beautiful daughter as an extremely happy and friendly baby, but "very opinionated, with a fierce temper!

"Naturally, she has us both wrapped around her little finger, and we fear that even as united as we are, we may not stand a chance against her will when she gets older," confides Jennifer. "We're actually quite sure

we're in for some serious trouble!"

Apparently, the bouncy baby girl has an astounding amount of energy, hates napping, and already loves music and dance.

"Eva is such a tremendous joy and light in my life. She brings my husband and me incredible happiness every day, and has filled our hearts with an unbelievable amount of love. She is such a funny girl ... what a character! We actually wonder how it can be possible that she has already developed such a kooky sense of humor."

Jennifer says she couldn't resist dressing Eva in a tutu and ballet slippers on several occasions.

"We will put her in ballet classes in a few years if she continues to show an interest in moving and dancing, but we're adamant about not forcing her to dance if she doesn't want to," says Jennifer. "She will continue to be exposed to it through our careers, and I feel that if she wants to dance, she'll let us know."

Returning to her roots

What's great about the former Queens girl is that despite her amazing talent and star roles, Jennifer is still a warm and friendly, down-to-earth person who never forgot her New York roots. She, Carlos, and Eva recently returned to New York City, where they saw the sights, had a chance to unwind in Central Park, and visited Jennifer's parents, who still live in Kew Gardens, where she grew up. The dancer also performed at a benefit hosted by Once Upon A Time, Inc., the Richmond Hill ballet school where her career began.

"I feel that growing up in Queens kept me very grounded. There was no extravagance. We lived in a nice,





Miami City Ballet's Jennifer Kronenberg and husband Carlos Guerra in *Romeo and Juliet*. (Opposite) Jennifer with baby Eva.

very middle-class neighborhood, on the top floor of a three-family home, on a quiet street, with a lot of families," Jennifer recalled. "I remember having lots of kids to play with (before I started ballet lessons). My dad was a lawyer, and then went into financial advising and investments, while my mom was a flight attendant for American Airlines."

The young ballerina-to-be went to public school, and took public transportation everywhere.

"Because there were no 'extras,' I had to earn the things I wanted, or earn an allowance to buy them on my own. I learned to be self-sufficient and independent at a very young age. Growing up in Queens also gave me a slightly tough outer shell, almost like a protective coat of armor. I think that is a characteristic

of a lot of New Yorkers, but most of us are really quite soft and sweet on the inside!"

Returning to her roots and her old 'hood brought back fond memories, and Jennifer said she was happy to see all her favorite Queens hang-outs still there, including Queens Center Mall in Elmhurst, Dani's House of Pizza in Kew Gardens, the Metro Soda Fountain on Metropolitan Boulevard, and the Midway Theater on Queens Boulevard.

The back story

Little Jen seemed destined to dance. As a tutu-clad tot, she would perform in her parents' living room to the delight of family and friends. Her savvy mom noticed her daughter's potential and whisked her off to a local ballet school when she turned

7. Once Upon A Time Inc., now located at 111th Street off Jamaica Avenue in Richmond Hill, became Jennifer's home away from home until she was 17, and owner Teresa Aubel, Jennifer's main and most influential teacher, took her under her wing and helped shape her destiny.

In a recent interview, Aubel recalled her eager student's hard work, ability to stay focused and motivated, and her wit and humor. She said she knew all along that one day, Jennifer would become a master artist.

"The training at OUAT was very focused, very serious, but also a lot of fun," said Jennifer. "Although Teresa was a 'no nonsense' teacher, she always maintained a very warm and loving environment. She always told me that if I wanted to dance, I would, and to give the best of myself

to everything I did, whether it was dancing or school, otherwise I was just wasting time.

"I remember her saying I'd have all the time in the world to rest when I was dead, and that I should never just 'dabble' in things. She made me believe and understand that it wasn't enough to be a dancer, but that I should be an 'artist,' and she made sure her students were humble and considerate to one another."

After attending the Montessori School in Forest Hills, young Jen went to PS 99 in Kew Gardens and then to Russell Sage JHS 190 in Forest Hills-Rego Park; she graduated from Benjamin N. Cardozo High School in Bayside.

At 17, she was accepted to the world-famous School of American

Continued on following page

Continued from previous page

Ballet in Manhattan, where her most influential teacher was Susan Pillare.

Her mentor

A year later, in 1994, she moved to Miami and started training with the city ballet's esteemed (former) artistic director and founder Edward Villella (from Bayside, Queens) — a huge star with New York City Ballet back in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Jennifer said it was a dream come true, and couldn't believe she had actually made it into a professional company.

"I was on a non-stop high for that entire first year."

Villella became her mentor and took a marked interest in Jennifer's dancing when she joined the company.

"Even though I was definitely not the strongest dancer in our group, he saw something special in me, and over the years he has added an entirely new dimension to my dancing," Jennifer said. She became a principal dancer in 2001.

"I always felt strongly about absorbing [and] maintaining the invaluable information he was passing on to us — all of this firsthand knowledge he had gotten from masters like George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins — and I felt a strong connection to his ideas about musicality and movement. I still do."

Both Miami City Ballet and Miami City Ballet School are acclaimed as one of the best dance companies and dance schools in the world.

"I will always be grateful for the wonderful career he helped me to build, and the greatest honor he could have given me was nominating me to be his successor, as director of MCB. Though I didn't ultimately get the position, being in the running was an amazing learning experience, and I am so grateful for having had that opportunity."

Pas de deux on and off the stage

Carlos and Jennifer met at Miami City Ballet. She was the first partner he was paired with when he joined the company, and the first ballet they danced together was "The Nutcracker," in the roles of The Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier. Since then, Jennifer says they have danced too many ballets together to count, but some of their favorites have been "Giselle," John Cranko's "Romeo and Juliet," Jerome Robbins's "Afternoon of a Faun," George Balanchine's "Diamonds" and "Who Cares?," and



Photo by Daniel Azoulay

Twyla Tharp's "Nine Sinatra Songs."

But "Romeo and Juliet" probably tops the list.

"It's the perfect balance of dancing and acting; so challenging and so rewarding at the same time. It was also a dream come true to dance it with my husband. That made it all the more romantic!"

Along came baby

"I had a fantastic pregnancy, very little sickness, and in general, felt great. But I was exhausted and had headaches during the first trimester," says Eva's mommy. "The second two trimesters were lovely. I performed (actually, danced the lead role in "Coppelia," a three-act ballet) up until I was four-and-a-half months pregnant, and continued taking ballet class and exercising in the gym until a week before my due date. By then, I was just getting too big and uncomfortable.

"Eva was actually two weeks late, and I had to be induced. Despite my doctor's patience and best efforts, she was not budging." Jennifer said she had been having contractions for more than a week, and after the induction, the contractions got stronger but didn't get any more productive. "It seems they were not pushing her down far enough to cause me to dilate, and after 22 hours of labor I had barely even dilated one centimeter. By hour 23 there were still no promising signs that Eva would come out on her own, so the doctor decided it was best to do a C-section. I just knew I didn't want one; I wasn't prepared at all for what it entailed. It certainly wasn't the beautiful birth I had envisioned.

"I was frightened, sad, and felt like I had failed somehow, since I couldn't



While things might not have turned out so well for Romeo and Juliet (left), their real-life counterparts, Miami City Ballet principal dancers Jennifer Kronenberg Guerra and Carlos Guerra enjoy a day in Central Park with their baby daughter Eva.

have her naturally. I also feared I'd not be able to dance again; I couldn't move for days. I couldn't fathom dancing again."

Eva was born at 11:45 pm on Nov. 12, 2012, weighing 6 pounds, 11 ounces.

"She was extremely alert, and what a screamer!"

Freshly delivered, the new mom says she was overjoyed, but exhausted, and in a tremendous amount of pain.

"I was adamant about nursing her, but I was on so many pain killers that even that was a challenge—I couldn't stay awake long enough to keep her latched. It was so frustrating. Carlos spent three days and nights in the hospital, helping to care for us. (They will not let the baby stay in the room alone with mom after a C-section, mainly because mom can't move.) And I wanted to be with my baby, so I wouldn't let him leave."

A balancing act

The new mom's recipe for keeping it all together?

"Patience, scheduling, and breathing. When I'm most exhausted, I try to remember how lucky I am to be able to have the baby I always wanted, and continue with the career of my dreams. That helps me go on every day."

So, what has a typical day been like for the ballerina since Eva came along?

Jennifer said a typical rehearsal day started at 10 am and ended at 6:30 pm, with a one-hour lunch break. She said her schedule hasn't changed so far, even now with the baby.

"I wasn't working so many hours when I first started a few months ago, but now I'm in the full swing of

things again. Eva used to come with us to the studio, but now that she's more active and awake most of the day, she stays at home with either her nanny or with Carlos's family. We will go home to see her if we're lucky to have a break for longer than an hour, and occasionally, we'll bring her to the company with us in the late afternoons, where one of the dancers will help keep an eye on her."

The ballerina says she plans to continue touring; luckily, most of the tours are within Florida and not too far from home.

"Scheduling, though, is a must, as is giving 100 percent of myself to whatever I'm doing at the moment, whether it's being a wife, mommy, or a ballerina. I don't see those roles as responsibilities, but rather as complementary parts of myself that make up who I am. That way, it doesn't seem so much like 'juggling,' but more like just 'being.'"

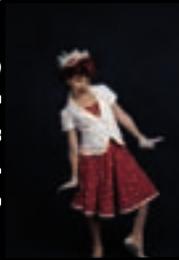
So, what are Jennifer's tips for new moms?

"Remember to breathe, and let things go. Give the best of yourself, but also know when to give yourself a break. Remember why you do what you do, and give yourself credit where and when credit is due. And, don't be afraid or too proud to ask for help!"

And how does she unwind?

"There is nothing better than sitting on the sofa, watching a movie with Carlos, and sipping a glass of wine. We don't often have time for that since the baby's birth, but we still try to make it happen whenever we can."

Jennifer Kronenberg's 2011 book, "So, You Want To Be a Ballet Dancer?: Making It in the Rough and Tumble World of Professional Ballet" [Kindle Edition], is available on amazon.com.



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"Acting Out! led to a huge turning point in my daughter's life. She never performed or sang and was labeled 'shy' and 'an observer'. Thanks to the amazing encouragement from the staff at Acting Out! my daughter shed those labels and added a new one - 'STAR!'" - Happy Mother - Stephanie Karp

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Brightstar Afterschool

50 Jefferson Avenue
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Bright Star Prep advocates academic success during extended school hours with our Homework Help Center by providing a safe and nurturing environment for children in Pre-K through 6th grade. We assist our students in being well prepared for the next day of instruction with completed Homework assignments in hand. We alleviate the worries and concerns of parents during extended school day hours 2:30pm-6:00pm, which greatly assists parents who work or are engaged furthering their own education. We provide homework assistance, tutoring/enrichment, poetry, test prep practice grades 3-5, arts & crafts, literacy/study skills and so much more. Our After School services are provided September-June at two elementary school locations: PS 3 (50 Jefferson between Bedford & Franklin) and P.S. 270 (241 Emerson between Dekalb & Lafayette)

CBE KIDS After-School Center

8th Avenue and Garfield Place,
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www.congregationbethelohim.org

CBE Kids After-School Center offers a variety of instructional classes and recreational activities, allowing each child to develop at his or her own pace. Supervised by a highly qualified staff, the program operates on a trimester basis and caters to children in grades K-6. Pick-up from area schools is available; call for details. Swimming is on-site in a spacious heated pool. Children in kindergarten - sixth grade can sign

up for a different course each day of attendance: examples are instructional swim, gymnastics, art, cooking, theater, video, dance, music, sewing and computers.

DJ Kids After-School Program

8905 Glenwood Road Canarsie
718-257-0547 or www.djsafterschool.com
Monday-Friday 2:00pm - 7:00pm -
Vouchers accepted

The mission of DJ School Age Program Inc., is to provide our school children with a safe and supervised environment in which to further enrich and educate them. It is of the utmost importance to the ever caring and professional staff of the program to cater to your child's every need, as we work on furthering your child's development and improving their weaknesses and confidence in the school program. In our program each child is given individual attention, so as to discover where the child needs improvement and practice, while boosting their self esteem and confidence in each area of practice. Children are taught to work and play together while respecting the golden rule that there is a time to work and a time to play.

DANCE

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The Joan Weill Center for Dance
405 West 55th Street (at 9th Ave.),
NY 10019

212 405-9000 or www.theaileyschool.edu or
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Continued on page 26



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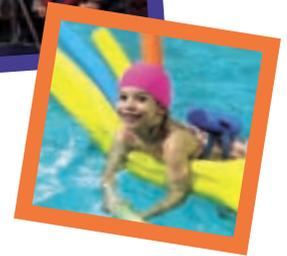
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Activity

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 24

to dance, bringing the joy of music and creative movement to young children. The pre-professional program for students ages 7-17, encompasses a broad curriculum of dance classes including Horton, Limón, and Graham-based modern dance techniques, classical ballet, tap, West African, and Spanish dance. Classes are taught by experienced, nurturing dance instructors with extensive experience working with children.

April's Dance-N-Feet

4-Locations

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9409 & 9411 Avenue L (Bet E. 94th & 95th Sts.) 718-272-1813

1866 Flatbush Avenue (Bet. Ave. K & E 38th St.) 718-258-2340 or www.aprilsdancenfeet.com

April's Dance-N-Feet is celebrating over 19 years, offering classes in tap, ballet, jazz, hip-hop, pointe, lyrical, gymnastics, Praise Dance, African, Caribbean dance, karate, Adult and boys classes, for beginners to advanced students. Adult classes are available as well. Private lessons or leveled classes are given for ages 2 - adult for reasonable prices. Their senior tap company and boys' troupe have performed with tap legends. We have 4 platinum award winning hip-hop competition teams ages 3-18: The Gems, Diamonds, Divas and Crystals. They have also danced in other Manhattan professional theater venues. The school's students have been accepted to LaGuardia High School (School of Performing Arts), Alvin Ailey School, and have performed in commercials.

Brighton Ballet Theater

**Kingsborough Community College
2001 Oriental Blvd, Bldg T7 2nd floor, Rm 7211
718-769-9161 or www.brightonballet.com**

Brighton Ballet Theater was created to preserve and further the tradition of Russian classical and folk dance in New York City.

The goals of BBT are:

To provide an AFFORDABLE and PROFESSIONAL dance education and performance opportunities to all students, regardless of talent, ability or ethnic background;

To serve as a community cultural oasis; To create a common ground through dance so children, of many ethnic and immigrant communities can interact and study other cultures through classi-

cal ballet and folk dances.

By adhering to these goals, BBT hopes to mold and develop responsible, well-rounded, passionate children who have the potential to succeed in any field. Our uniquely designed children's program raises children that are both physically and mentally healthy, with an understanding of a number of different cultural backgrounds.

Brooklyn Dance Center I

**2106 West 6th Street www.thebrooklyndancecenter.com
718-996-0319 or email bd1@thebrooklyndancecenter.com**

We are now serving the community for over 28 years. These schools for professional dance offer training for all ages and levels, beginner through advanced. Classes are available in Ballet, Pointe, Jazz, Modern, Hip-Hop, Tap, Lyrical, Modern, Contemporary, Acrobatics, Breakdance, Bellydance, Flamenco, Floor Barre, Pilates, Salsa, Ballroom, Hustle and yoga. Boys' only classes are also offered. Competition classes are by audition only. Please call for their registration dates and for more information.

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Continued on page 28



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photo by Ima Panek

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212-254-8520 or www.joffreyballetschool.com

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The Vicky Simegiatos Performing Arts Center, in business for over 40 years, offers the finest education in all styles of dance, music and musical theatre for boys and girls of all ages, from pre-school to adult. With two Brooklyn locations, the VSPAC boasts a faculty of top flight professionals. Their students have been accepted to elite schools and have gone on to enjoy successful careers. VSPAC's national award winning competition teams have performed at the Joyce Theatre, Alvin Ailey Theatre and Madison Square Garden. VSPAC will be offering scholarship workshops for young students who want to dance in our company's presentation of The Nutcracker, a full length ballet."

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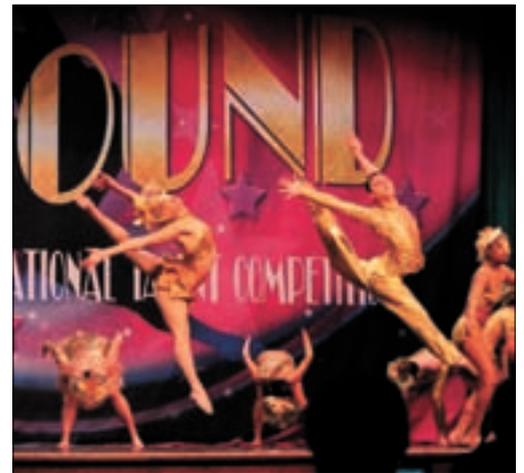
Come See How FasTrackKids is "Learning, Cleverly Disguised as Fun!" Welcome to FasTrackKids! We offer early childhood education programs for age groups that range from 6 months to 8 years old. These programs are designed to help improve creativity, critical thinking and communication skills while preparing your children for school and life.

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Continued on page 30



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Activity

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Continued from page 28
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MARTIAL ARTS AND AFTERSCHOOL

World Martial Arts Center

540 Atlantic Avenue (between 3rd Ave. and 4th Ave.) 3rd Floor

Continued on page 32



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photo by Tracie Maynor

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Please call 718-951-4111 for a registration consultation or visit our website at www.bcprecenter.org for complete course listings.



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Brighton Ballet is offering a few tuition-free scholarships for its Advanced Program "promising students". A limited number of partial scholarships are available as well.

Arrange to take an open class at BBT as an audition.

Visit www.brightonballet.org for more information. Call 1.718.769.9161 or email us at info@brightonballet.org to schedule an appointment.

Send bio & audition request to:
Brighton Ballet Theater, c/o Kingsborough Community College,
2001 Oriental Blvd., Build. T7, 2nd fl., Room: 7211, Brooklyn, NY 11235



Activity

DIRECTORY

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Continued on page 34



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DIRECTORY

Continued from page 32

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Motherhood examined on the Upper East Side

A new city museum looks at the history of family life

BY RISA C. DOHERTY

Back in 2003, Joy Rose researched the role of mothers in society and got permission to set up an exhibit in the window of her small Dobbs Ferry boutique, entitled “Mommy Girl Go-Go.” Prompted by the inquiry of a friend, she realized that there was no museum focusing on mothers and was determined to change that.

The Museum of Motherhood (MOM), which opened on Sept. 1, 2011 on the lower level of a building on E. 84th Street at First Avenue, was intended as a four-month-long, pop-up experiment, and it flourished, described by some “as a vibrant and vital part of the community.”

The making of a museum

Rose says she modeled the museum after the National Women’s Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls in content, after the National Museum of Women in the Arts in structure, and after the Museum of Sex in trajectory of development, since they both started as storefronts.

The only one of its kind in the world, this 2,500-square-foot museum explores “the evolution of family and how rigorous academic study, broadly disseminated to the public, might inform future family decisions,” according to Rose.

The museum includes a play space, communal center, an exhibition space, and an archival facility, which houses a motherhood library. Kids’ art, mother-made art depicting pregnancy and birth, and exhibits detailing the history of the woman’s role in the family create the backdrop for a “warm and inviting space.”

A learning center and family space

When I walked in, I was struck by the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, and a sense of camaraderie I do not usually associate with a museum.

I asked if the label “museum” was a misnomer, because MOM is so much



Visitors can suit up in a pregnancy vest to better understand how it feels to carry the extra 30 pounds in the final trimester of pregnancy.

more than a traditional exhibition space with dusty displays. Rose explained that museums today need to offer more to stay relevant.

One section of the museum focuses on helping the visitor better understand pregnancy, birth, and infancy. The “Womb Room,” which is currently under construction, will be a room for quiet contemplation, where one can listen to the sounds of the womb.

Visitors can suit up in a pregnancy vest to better understand how it feels to carry the extra 30 pounds in the final trimester of pregnancy, and experience fetal movement and rib constriction. It resembles the lead apron used by dentists, with some additional curves.

Infant simulators look and feel like real babies. They burp, cough, cry, and recognize their assigned caregiver, giving museum-goers the opportunity to get a feel for parenting.

The museum has offered courses in doula instruction and hosts La Leche League meetings; “Conversation Circles,” programs for expectant parents and new parents; de-stressing workshops; art and play toddler programs; and an annual academic conference. This fall’s 12-week “Mother Studies” course will examine “the changing perceptions of mother in history” and the evolution of family.

One exhibit displays a turn-of-the-century parlor in Seneca Falls, home of the Women’s Rights Movement, and another popular exhibit analyzes

various domestic tasks by gender and compensation.

The "Moms of Rock" exhibit, which adds dashes of hot pink to one corner of the main room, displays artifacts from literature, music, fine arts, comedy, and theater, which focus on the theme of "mother culture," including the music of Housewives on Prozac, featuring Rose. The film "Momz Hot Rocks" plays in a loop and includes the Housewives on Prozac lyrics:

"I wipe the baby's chin with my college diploma and wonder how did I ever get here / I'm the queen of my kitchen late at night / Singin' the dishwasher blues."

Also in this exhibit, visitors will discover "momabilia" from Mamapalooza, an annual gathering of performers, artisans, and educators that takes place each May on Riverside Drive.

Unlike most traditional museums, which might initiate a follow-up discussion about a piece of art, an artist movement or an event in history, this museum sparks an ongoing conversation about our own lives, choices, the roles we play and the impact we will have on subsequent generations.

MOM's visitors

Local mother and museum-goer Lynn Schaul says the institution fills a void.

"It is a gift to the Upper East Side," she tells me. "It is a great space to meet other moms and be with your kids."

She finds the space inspiring, and says, "It's not just about feminism [since] everyone is affected by motherhood." Schaul says the museum brings together people with different parenting perspectives. She liked the play space for her children, ages 4 and 10, but goes there sometimes by herself just "to hang out."

Medy Murphy also sees the museum as a discussion place, where mothers mingle and share parenting tips.

"It became my 'second home' last summer," she said, appreciating the safe, clean environment for her kids. "Living in the city, you don't have a lot of space."

The museum is not inhospitable to dads.

"We welcome fathers, mothers, and caregivers," Rose says, pointing out that Sunday is Family Day.

Murphy noted that men bring their children for play dates and, "are not intimidated, nor put off by

the artwork that pertains to motherhood."

Community Program Director Lisa Latcholia emphasizes that the museum is not about judgment, and mothers who breast feed, mothers who don't, working mothers, and mothers who stay at home, are all equally welcome.

A goal of the museum is "to give women their day" and then "to move forward." Rose recognizes the importance of youth in this pursuit. Consequently, she recruits college-age interns and interns from a local high school, one of whom mentioned how surprised she was at how much people do not know about motherhood. That sentiment was echoed by Latcholia, who told me how the story of the Suffragist Movement is new to many young people.

The greater vision

During my visit, Rose pointed out that 82 percent of women have children, but most have little or no training for the job. She noted that although doctors do not perform operations after studying medicine for a mere nine months, expectant mothers often complete one Lamaze class and they are "on the job," with no real preparation for the challenges of parenthood.

Rose acknowledges that we are raising males differently now, and we seek a new understanding of the value of childrearing and the responsibility for it.

"We are raising young male and female feminists, but there is no template for taking that into domestic life."

She sees a great future for the museum, stressing that this is just a small piece of a much larger vision.

Museum-goers need not have children to benefit from a visit — being someone's child is sufficient. Still, as the mother of older children, I am a tad jealous of younger women, who can visit before the start of their mothering years. Although I would like my son to see the museum, my college-age daughter has already expressed interest, because she knows that a visit to MOM could better prepare her for the extraordinary role that may lay ahead of her.

The Museum of Motherhood [401 E. 84th St. at First Avenue on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, (212) 452-9816, www.mommuseum.org].

Risa C. Doherty is an award-winning freelance writer. Read more at www.risadoherly.com.



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Worrying about the future

Realizing that as my daughter grows older, I won't always be able to protect her

BY TIM PERRINS

My daughter is only 18 months old, so why do I keep worrying about what life will be like 10 or 15 years from now? Hazel is becoming more willful, talkative, and silly every hour — so getting through each day and savoring her gleeful antics should be enough to keep me occupied. The problem is that I know people who have teenagers.

I see what they go through, and now I'm plagued by fears that in, say, 2026, the magical relationship I have with Hazel will give way to a downward spiral of suspicion, lies, and arguments about why she's not allowed to take the hover car. Then she'll be lost to me.

By the time she escapes the cloud of teen-angst, she'll be away at college, after which she'll move to Utah to dig up rocks with some doofus anthropology-grad-student boyfriend. The future is not looking good.

Am I being selfish? Well, yes, but I'm equally concerned for Hazel. In a few years, she'll have to contend with all the other toddlers who've become teenagers, too. A recent incident gave me a window into what that may be like.

Once a week, I take Hazel to the YMCA for "Chaotic Toddler Free-For-All" (or maybe it's called "Indoor Playground," I can't remember), an entire gymnasium full of cushy mats, plastic playground equipment, and every kind of ball imaginable. Throngs of toddlers, parents, and nannies fill the room, with balls flying in all directions, pieces of banana falling underfoot, and occasional clouds of ripe diaper aroma wafting through the air. It's a scene, and Hazel loves it.

On this occasion, after stuffing bas-



ketballs into the little hoop and climbing up the slide, Hazel made for the cubes — a couple of 3-foot-tall hollow plastic blocks, with a big round hole on every side, so kids can climb in and out of them. They're very popular among the 2- to 4-year-old set, but Hazel was lucky enough to find one empty. She likes to organize, so she started collecting balls and putting them in the cube. Then, she climbed in through the side to enjoy her treasures.

No sooner was she inside, than a boy slightly older and much bigger took an interest, which is to say he began hurling balls into the cube. This put me in that stressful predicament, familiar to parents everywhere: protecting my child while trying to remain diplomatic toward somebody else's annoying kid.

"Be careful!" I told him, while deflecting any projectiles that might clobber my 24-pound daughter.

Next, he scrambled on top of the cube and began lowering himself feet first onto Hazel's head. Maybe I should have picked him up and removed him, but it's never that simple. You can't let some clueless kid hurt your baby, but the moment you put a hand on him, his delinquent parent will take a break from texting, see you torturing little Johnny, and freak out at you. And maybe sue you, for good measure.

After I guided him safely down, he sat right next to Hazel amidst all the bouncy balls. She looked confused, but not scared, so I didn't intervene. It's all part of learning about the world, I reasoned, although something about this kid rubbed me the wrong way. His

sloppy bowl cut? The hunched shoulders? His thoughtless, self-indulgent behavior? He reminded me of a loutish high school kid. Here he was, having finagled his way into a tight space with a naïve young girl, sitting shoulder-to-shoulder with her as if at the end of a couch in some dark room at a party.

Take it easy, I told myself. This kid is — what? Three years old? He isn't working some sly plan. And at that moment, he put one of his big hands on Hazel's knee, leaned toward her and started mumbling something in her ear.

"We're done here!" I heard myself say out loud, while reaching in to pull Hazel from the back seat of that creepy little Hyundai. I mean, playcube. Whatever.

Us parents have to supervise our toddlers every second. We rarely get a break, and it's exhausting. But it's terrifying to realize that as they grow older, we won't be able to constantly oversee what's happening in their lives.

Looking back at my childhood in upstate New York, I'm surprised by all the freedom my parents afforded me. I was a bit like Huck Finn, traipsing around the neighborhood, fishing down at the pond, and exploring the woods with no adults to be seen. Even so, I always felt my parents' presence. They allowed me independence, but they provided me with some common sense and a good moral compass to find my way.

As Hazel continues to grow, I have to remember that I can't supervise every event in her life. It's hard to imagine not being there to protect her, but my real responsibility is to provide her with the skills to take care of herself. (Which reminds me — I have to find out if the Y offers self-defense classes for 2 year olds.)

The clod toddler finally wandered off, while Hazel sat on my lap, eating a snack. Suddenly, a little boy with a mop of curly hair popped his head up out of the top of the cube.

"Hi!" he said. "My name is Jake!"

"Hi," I replied. "I'm Tim."

"Oh!" he said. "What's her name?"

"This is Hazel," I told him.

"Wanna play catch?" he asked, holding up a playground ball.

That's more like it, I thought.

"Jake," I said, "it's nice to meet you."

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

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Understanding migraines

BY JAMIE LOBER

Everyone has heard of migraines, but a person may not know if she has actually experienced one. Essentially, migraine is a primary headache, but there is no way to tell if a headache is primary or secondary without an exam. Secondary headaches are from concussions playing football or from a specific cause.

“A diagnosis for migraine is a diagnosis of exclusion, because there is not a blood test or a brain scan that can be done to definitively tell that you have a migraine,” said Cathy Glaser, president and co-founder of the Migraine Research Foundation. “An important takeaway is that migraine is not just a bad headache; it is a neurological disease.”

It is fairly easy to suspect migraine.

“Migraine comes with head pain and associated symptoms like nausea, vomiting, dizziness, sensitivity to touch, light, and smell,” said Glaser.

A person with migraine can have one or multiple symptoms, and unfortu-

nately, often gets accustomed to it.

“Migraine is not curable, so that means that you may end up having this horrendous pain periodically throughout much of your life,” said Glaser. It does not make the situation better, but sufferers should know they are not alone.

“Migraine is extremely prevalent, and we estimate that 36 million people in this country suffer from migraine and 10 percent of all school-aged children, which is a huge number of people,” said Glaser.

What causes the disease is not understood.

“The real answer is funding, research, and not finding a magic pill that does not exist,” said Glaser. A good first step is to make sure that you are identified as having a migraine and not something else.

“If your migraine symptoms are affecting your life to an extent that you determine they are interfering with your enjoyment of life or being able to do your job or take care of your child, or if your child is missing school as a result of them, it is essential to go to a headache specialist and get diagnosed properly,” said Glaser. Getting diagnosed is not as common as you would imagine, given the alarming statistics.

“Probably 50 percent of the 36 million Americans never get diagnosed, and many of them are making themselves worse by self-treating, because even the use of over-the-counter medication can make your headaches worse,” said Glaser.

Have strategies in mind for when you experience migraine.

“There are lots of lifestyle things you can do to treat headaches, but medicine is the best way to control them if they are really bad,” said Glaser. There are three kinds of treatments.

“There is abortive, which is used when you get the attack to try to stop or control it; preventive for people who get frequent headaches,

and they take medications daily to lessen the duration, frequency, and intensity if not prevent headaches; and complementary, which are lifestyle things like staying on a schedule,” said Glaser. This means being consistent in your habits.

“Do not miss meals, and eat at pretty much the same time every day; go to bed and wake up at the same time; and stay hydrated, because drinking a lot of water ensures that you do not get dehydrated or overheated, which are common triggers for attacks,” said Glaser.

It is also wise to keep moving.

“Aerobic exercise is helpful as is making sure that your weight is on the normal side and kept down,” said Glaser.

Find what works for you.

“Some people find relaxation therapies, acupuncture, massage, stress management, biofeedback, or cognitive behavioral therapy helpful,” said Glaser. A specialist can assist you in finding relief. Experts are hopeful that there may be better treatments in the future.

“Research is looking at trying to understand the underlying mechanisms of migraines, because we just know there is a genetic component to it but that is not the answer,” said Glaser.

There are many genes involved, and researchers hope to be able to target them in the future, because right now, medications only focus on alleviating symptoms. This concept is similar to when you have a cold and you take cold medicine to dry out your nasal passages, so you do not have a runny nose anymore, but it does not treat the cold.

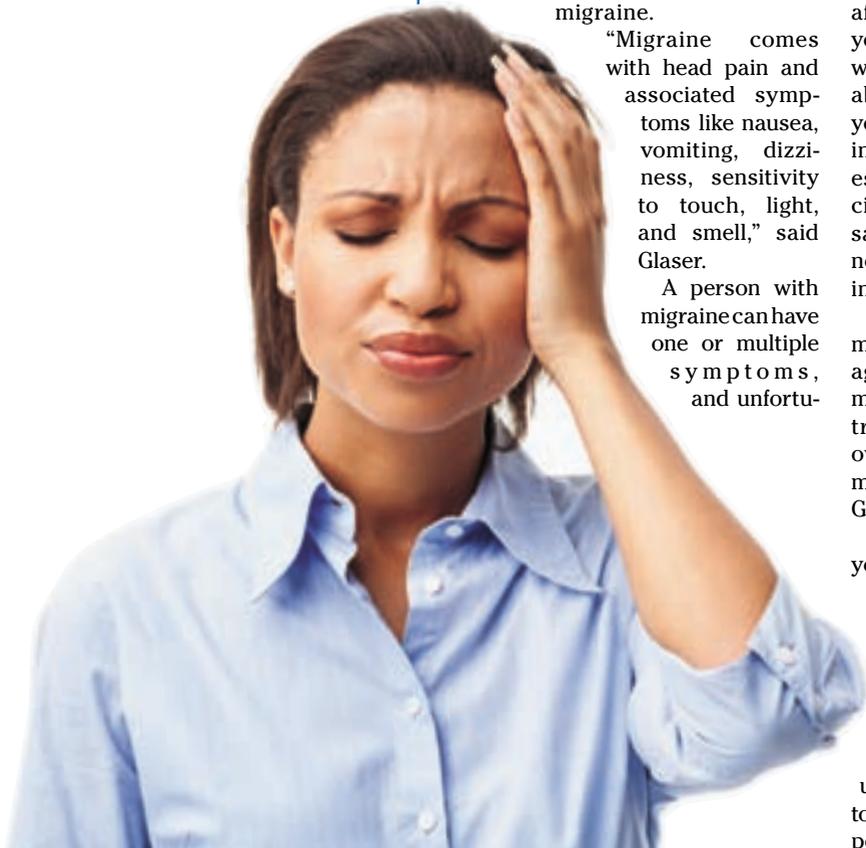
With the medical community hard at work, a cure may be within reach.

“We are optimistic with more money coming into research, but there is a misunderstanding and mischaracterization of the disease of migraine as a bad headache,” said Glaser. The key is to spread the word among friends and loved ones as to what they can do to heighten awareness.

“Step one is not treating it yourself,” said Glaser. “And step two is finding a qualified doctor, getting evaluated, and following his advice, so you can get help that is appropriate for the level of suffering that you have.”

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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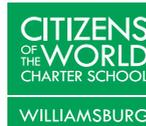
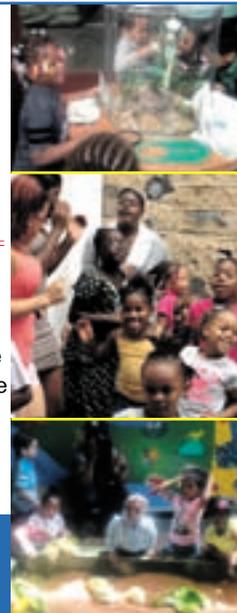
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MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SEREDA

It takes a village

Living closer to family makes a child's life richer

Since moving closer to my family a few months ago, I've noticed how much I had missed spending time with them. We used to be separated by a 45-minute trip, but now, I'm five minutes driving distance from both of my parents; a great advantage when you need a last-minute sitter!

I didn't notice it so much before, but since spending all this extra time with my family, I realize how great it is. My parents tell me how happy they are to be able to see their granddaughter more often.

Every now and then, we'll drop in and have dinner or even have a quick chat and just that little bit of time makes a difference.

I feel like Olivia really knows everyone, and they get to see her

grow up. My siblings get to play with their niece, and we even see our extended family a lot more, too.

Weekends are filled with family BBQs, picnics, and play dates with other kids. I realize how being closer to family has helped her be (even more) social.

When I was younger, I was lucky enough to live with my grandfather for some time, and he was a very active granddad. We played together, ate together, talked — and his favorite — took walks together. We walked everywhere, and he talked to me about life. He even let me play solitaire with him, one of his favorite pastimes.

As a result, we were very close, and I'm sure my mom loved the fact

that I got to know and love her father as much as she did.

I've always believed that "it takes a village to raise a child." When I was living further away, I didn't know what I was missing. Now, I would hate to move away from my family.

I love that Olivia gets to watch afternoon cartoons with her grandfather. She has pajama parties with her grandmother, and my sister loves taking her to the park. My brother, her godfather, is always playful, but firm with her when she misbehaves.

At least once a week we have a big family dinner, and when my husband and I want to have a date night, we have the most qualified babysitters in town.





THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Check out four reads from Carole Roman

Right about now, your child has her plate full. She's got school on her mind. She's thinking about new teachers, new friends, and new things to learn. She's got a backpack filled with supplies she has to have — so why not get her something she'll get to love? Why not look for these cute books by New York City author Carole P. Roman?

If your little one loves to do "what Mommy does," then Roman's "I Want to Do Yoga Too" is just perfect.

In this book, Young Hallie goes with her mother to yoga class, because she hates being sent to the kids' area with the other children. She wants to do yoga like Mommy! But the lady who runs the kids' area, Robin, knows what Hallie likes, and who knows? It might just be yoga, too.

...

For a true staycation — without even leaving the room — Roman's "If You Were Me and Lived in ... South Korea" is a great story to have.

Using words and concepts that 5-to-8-year-olds will easily understand, this instructional book helps kids understand the South Korean culture. Korean words are included, which is fun for kids who love to show off their new-found knowledge, and there's a helpful glossary and pronunciation guide in the back, to make sure they do it with flair.

...

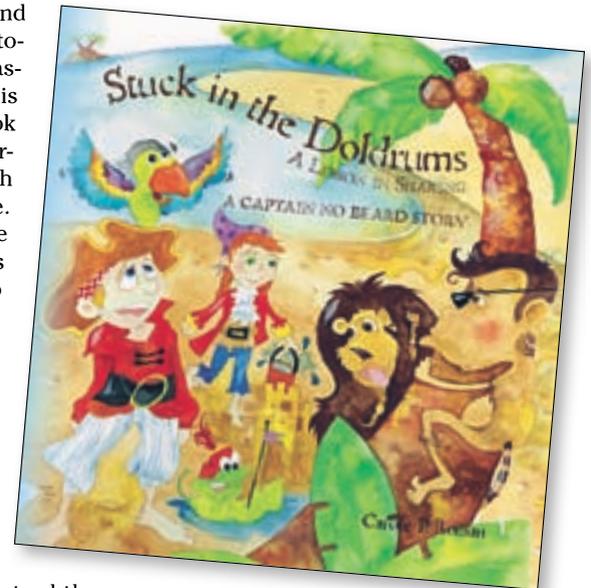
So, who says that subtle lessons have to be boring? Nobody, that's who, so come join the Captain No Beard crew!

In "Stuck in the Doldrums: A Lesson in Sharing," the captain and his crew are stuck, which makes them fussy and grumpy. The captain gets bossy, and he leaves his crew. Who needs 'em, anyhow?

As it turns out, HE does! Captain No Beard learns a good lesson in teamwork and sharing, which your child will easily learn, too, once he reads this book.

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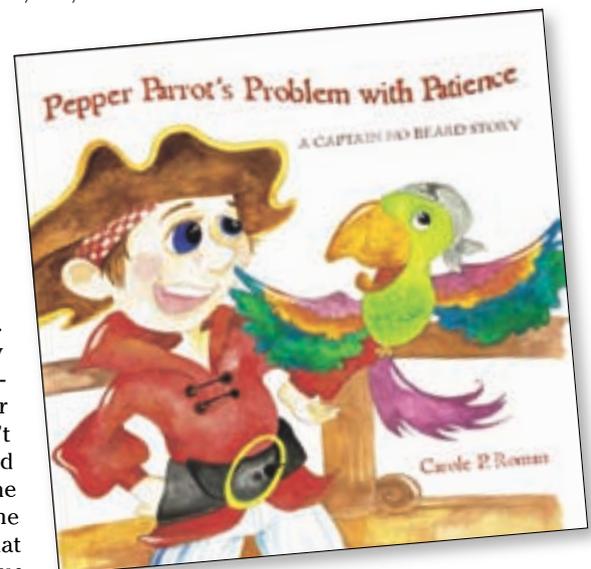
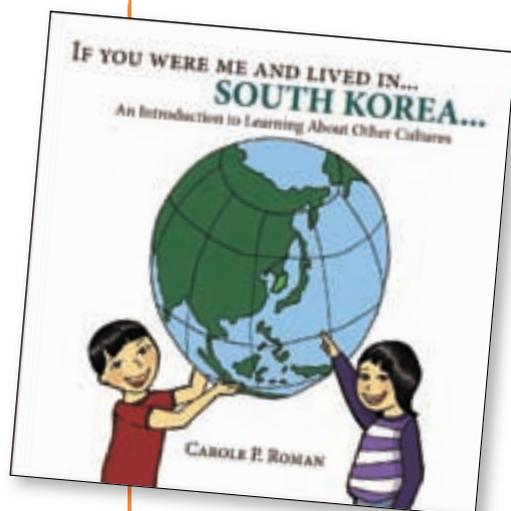
And finally, if your little one needs a dose of patience, then read Roman's "Pepper Parrot's Problem with Patience," which is another Captain No Beard story. In this book, fiery Pepper the Parrot lives up to her name. She doesn't like anything, and she argues with the whole crew. It's time for Pepper to see that patience is a virtue



for pirate and parrot alike. And there you are. Four fun books for school, for after school, or just for fun.

Happy reading!

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.





JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Living in the age of too much homework

My kids might want to move. Schools in Maryland and Wyoming have banned homework. There is no homework in Finland, and last year, the president of France made a definite push to bar homework throughout the country.

It's interesting to say the least, and leads to a host of conversations about whether more work, more tests, and a heavy workload in general are appropriate or counter-effective.

I can say that in my circle and many others, parents have had it up to here with the homework load, even in grammar school. Many find it takes time out of an already-busy evening, and adds to the family stress. By the end of this month, I'm willing to bet we will be hearing similar sentiments among parent friends.

Whether in the schoolyard, at

work meetings, family gatherings, and on Facebook updates, many parents say that kids are just losing their minds over homework. Many of the parents I know say the workload expected in public and private schools is just ridiculous. I confess, I agree.

Kids are constantly pushed to do more, do better, and score higher. This philosophy is good on one hand, but can very easily go bad. Not every child can handle the pressure and not every kid wants to, even those who are considered gifted. That leads to an even larger issue at hand: does every kid need to be "advanced?" Or, can childhood be a nice blend of education and fun, with an emphasis on blend? Too many kids I know are doing schoolwork the whole day, stopping only to eat and shower, and then dropping into bed, exhausted.

On the rare occasion that my kids don't have homework, I think it's great, and I've never equated their lack of homework with learning less.

In addition, the amount of homework required varies greatly from school to school and teacher to teacher. Let's face it, depending on your child's teacher each year, your kid may get a hell of a lot or hardly any at all. My kids have had teachers who have given a ridiculous amount of unnecessary homework, and they have also had teachers who have assigned very little. My daughter had a junior high teacher who barely ever gave homework, but it remains the one class in which she not only learned the most, but also retained it — years later, and carried that knowledge into high school.

I'm not convinced that homework equals better or smarter students. (Do grades themselves even matter?

That is a larger issue.) When I was a kid, we had homework, but rarely on Fridays, and weekday homework was not overwhelming. Yet, somehow, we all managed to go on to careers in our respective fields and be productive.

An episode of the popular PBS show "Arthur" makes a similar point. In it, Mr. Ratburn unwillingly has a virtual helper that appears from a smartboard in the classroom. The robot was programmed by a company to have 98 percent knowledge of all things, which lead to a two percent failure rate. Things go downhill fast in Arthur's classroom. The show's creator, Mark Brown, used this episode to show how the educational system is relying more on systematic learning than actual teaching. Mr. Ratburn, a true teacher at heart, naturally detests the system.

This episode brings out something that I fear we overlook in this time of state tests, technology, and insane amounts of homework: teachers are people, and good teachers, who can actually convey their thoughts and ideas to students in an engaging way, are not robots. They are gifted educators; their job is not just a job, but a calling. When our kids are lucky enough to have these types of teachers, they don't need constant or heavy homework, because they actually learn enough and are engaged in school.

Furthermore, our kids are not robots and to mindlessly complete hours of daily homework for 10 months out of every year (plus large summer packets) seems nothing but robotic.

Going through the motions is not learning.

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 @DanniSullWriter, or on her blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.



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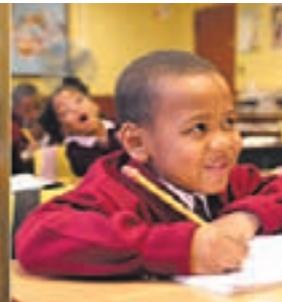
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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

How much 'energy' does a kid need?

As any mom or dad will attest, most kids are full of energy. Why then, would parents want their children to consume caffeine for an energy boost?

The Food and Drug Administration recently began an investigation into why certain food and beverage companies are adding caffeine to products targeted at children. The agency is also looking into caffeine's safety. In a related development, San Francisco's city attorney sued Monster Beverage Corp., accusing the company of marketing its caffeinated energy drinks to children as young as 6.

A growing number of foods have added caffeine with labels referring to "the right energy" and similar phrasing. Caffeine is being added to trail mix, oatmeal, potato chips, chewing gum, jelly beans, beef jerky, hot sauce, trail mix, as well as energy drinks and energy shots.

The only time the Administration approved the added use of caffeine in a food or drink was for

colas back in the 1950s.

These companies say they are marketing their products to adults. Yet, many of the items, such as candy and gum, are attractive to children.

A drug and its effects

Caffeine is a natural stimulant found in coffee beans, tea leaves, and cacao. When added to products, it must be included in the list of ingredients, but the amount doesn't have to be.

The Administration does not set caffeine limits for energy drinks, only for colas (capped at six milligrams per ounce).

Not much is known about the effects of caffeine on children. The American Academy of Pediatrics says caffeine has been linked to harmful effects on children's developing neurologic and cardiovascular systems. It can also affect sleep. In large amounts, caffeine can cause brain seizures and cardiac arrest.

A study published in the December 2010 *Experimental and Clinical*

Psychopharmacology discovered boys are more stimulated by caffeine than girls and that both genders have a preference for so-called junk food after consuming it.

As many caffeinated parents can attest, the compound is addictive and a sudden withdrawal produces a throbbing headache.

A single serving of any of these foods or beverages is unlikely to be harmful. But what about a child who consumes caffeine throughout the day?

Most health professionals say there is no role for caffeine in kids. Parents trying to control their children's caffeine intake should educate their children about what to look for. Packages that tout "energy" should raise a red flag.

Christine M. Palumbo, registered dietitian, is a nutritionist from Naperville, Ill., who is on the faculty of Benedictine University. Follow her on Twitter @PalumboRD, Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition, or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.



Blueberry sparklers

Makes 10 skewers

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup large fresh blueberries
- 1 cup white chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons multicolor candy sprinkles

DIRECTIONS: On each of 10 bamboo skewers (eight inches long), spear eight blueberries. In a perfectly dry microwavable cup, stir chocolate chips and oil. Microwave on medium power 30 seconds; stir. Microwave 20-30 seconds longer; stir until the chocolate is smooth. Transfer melted chocolate to a resealable plastic bag. Snip a very small corner off the bottom of the bag. Drizzle the melted chocolate over the skewered blueberries and immediately roll lightly in sprinkles.

NUTRITION FACTS: 136 calories; 18 g carbohydrate; 7 g total fat; 6 g saturated fat; 0.4 g fiber.

Used with permission by the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council.



DEAR
DR. KARYN
DR. KARYN GORDON

Teenage daughters: Mystery to their dads

Dear Dr. Karyn,

I recently heard you on a radio show discussing the topic “20 things dads don’t understand about their teen daughters.” I only heard the last half, and I was completely glued to the radio. Can you share with me again the top 20? I want to share these with my husband, because I really believe he doesn’t get our four daughters at all. Thank you.

Dear parent,

Great question! The wonderful thing is that the top 20 list was created by a group of female teenagers. I received dozens of emails from teen girls and parents the following day telling me that the list was “very accurate.”

To all mothers and fathers: sit back, enjoy the read, and think about how many relate to you!

Twenty things dads don’t understand about their teen daughters

1. We are going to have boyfriends, face it

2. We can’t even go to the grocery store without being bombarded on how to look and dress

3. Yes, a bad hair day could result in a three-day bad mood

4. We may buy an unnecessary amount of clothes, but shopping is more than shopping — it’s therapy

5. Some of us just may never be satisfied with our hair color

6. Even though I may switch friends week to week, I still expect you to remember their names

7. Getting into a fight with a present friend does not always mean it’s over. She just won’t be calling for the next hour

8. We think that we are amazing drivers, even though we’ve never had lessons from you

9. If a boy calls, please act as normal as possible. That means no jokes or my old nicknames

10. And if a boy comes to pick me up, the only necessary topics of discussion are: a. sports, b. sports, c. sports, and d. the fact that I will be returned safely and at a decent hour

11. Unfortunately, some of us don’t know that we look beautiful every day, so make sure you tell us, and mean it

12. You’ll never understand our online lingo, so please stop trying

13. At our age, you’re never going to convince us that your career is the best choice

14. Our room is our space, so please let us decorate it in as many non-damaging ways as possible

15. Dad, there are some things that you’ll be happy we just speak to Mom about

16. Beautification is a long-practiced process, that nearly always requires loud music. Please do not disturb us from this concentrative art

17. Our life, especially school, feels like a lot of pressures, and you are one of our toughest critics, so please just try to keep the criticism constructive

18. One of your hardest jobs is watching us grow up, but deep down we will always be your little girl

19. A teenage girl’s life is bumpy,

and we are going to need our strong and supportive fathers to keep us grounded

20. And finally, just remember that you were a teenager once, too

Texting 101

Dear Dr. Karyn,

Last month I watched you quiz parents and teens about how much of the [texting] lingo words parents knew. Can you highlight perhaps 10 to 15 words for me? I’m trying to understand my daughter’s language a bit more.

Dear parent,

Keep in mind that while it’s important for parents to learn the lingo — I would not suggest you use it.

Teens tend to be very protective of their “language” and may get annoyed at parents trying to be “cool.” See how many of these you know!

LOL: Laugh out loud

BRB: Be right back

G2G: Got to go

ROFL: Roll on the floor laughing

BTW: By the way

TY: Thank you

IC: I see

TTYL: Talk to you later

IMO: In my opinion

NVM: Never mind

JK: Just kidding

L8R: Later

WTG: Way to go

NP: No problem

CONVO: Conversation

<3: Love (looks like a heart)

YT: You there

WRUD: What are you doing

YTB: You’re the best

LYLAS: Love you like a sister

LYLAB: Love you like a brother

BTW: By the way

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





LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

Too young to die

Helping your teen cope with a friend's death

My daughter's classmate passed away last year, and my she was devastated. I was not prepared for the level of her grief. For weeks, she vacillated from wanting to talk non-stop about it, to closing her door and saying she wanted to be alone.

On too many occasions, our small community has been rocked by the tragic passing of a teenager whose life was suddenly cut short. Unfortunately, this is not uncommon, and parents and community members need to be prepared for the aftermath.

Expected behaviors

Parents should understand that their teen will experience a wide range of emotions. There are times when she might need to be with peers, but there are also times when she needs the comfort of knowing her parents will drop everything and lend an ear or a shoulder.

"Teens may become angry, confused, and frightened by the way they are feeling, the way others are feeling, and by others' reactions to their feelings," explains Dr. Michelle P. Maidenberg, a psychotherapist and clinical director of Westchester Group Works, a Center for Group Therapy in Harrison, N.Y. "It is important that this array of feelings be acknowledged and that teens are provided support and a safe place to express them."

Dr. Jerry Weichman, a clinical psychologist and adolescent specialist in Newport Beach, Calif., reports, "Sometimes teens do not follow the stages of grief in a linear fashion and

bounce around stages. I have found that more sensitive individuals take longer to get through the stages of shock and disbelief, anger, bargaining, depression, and eventually acceptance."

"Bereaved teens typically become anxious over the safety of other loved ones or themselves. They may have physical complaints without a disease or illness to account for them. This happens especially for teens who experience their friend dying from an illness," Maidenberg asserts.

Parental support

Aurora Winter, founder of the Grief Coach Academy and author of "From Heartbreak to Happiness," explains, "It is uncomfortable for a parent to see her teen suffering."

However, Winter says that grief is normal and natural, and can eventually unfold into something positive.

"The good news is that studies show that after grief, people can experience post-traumatic growth."

Parents need to give their teen space when needed.

"If they don't want to talk about the death, then don't push the issue. If they want to talk about it, then be there for them," Maidenberg counsels. "Talking about the death and directly addressing their questions helps empower a teen, especially if it is an unexpected and sudden death."

Weichman agrees that parents need to follow their teen's lead.

"Respect the times that teens do not want to discuss the situation, but be an attentive listener when they do. Do not try to 'fix' the situation. Just listen."

"Small things can make a huge difference, such as maintaining a regular routine, going for walks together, and providing healthy meals," says Winter. She also recommends that parents provide a hub for their teen's friends to band together to honor their deceased friend in a special way (e.g. plant a tree or host a dinner in their friend's honor).

"Challenge teens to come up with a creative idea of their own."



Tips and tales

"During those first few days, I found the kids relied more on each other. I provided a house, some food, or a ride to wherever they needed. Parents shouldn't rush their child through the grieving process or expect it to be over in a few months. There were several instances when I had to contact a teacher about late work, because my daughter was experiencing a lack of focus, obsessive worry about death, and just general depression."

Sharon Squire, Hyde Park, NY

"Help your child focus their grief towards something good. I helped my children participate in planning and building a memorial garden, participating in scholarship fund-raising efforts, and creating a memorial at their school."

Lynne Schiffer, Staatsburg, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic: Do teens stick to resolutions? Tips to help teens find resolutions that are manageable.

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 and Tigers and Teens: Expert advice and support for the conscientious parent just like you" (Unlimited Publishing LLC, 2012), available at Amazon.com.

When to get help

Experts agree that parents should seek professional help if their teen continues to experience these behaviors after several months:

- Shows little interest in daily activities
- Has difficulty sleeping
- Becomes socially isolated
- Refuses to attend school or has a persistent drop in grades
- Develops a significant increase or decrease in appetite
- Complains of recurring headaches or stomachaches

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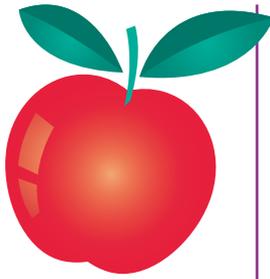
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DEAR TEACHER

PEGGY GISLER AND
MARGE EBERTS

Multitasking does not mix with school work

Dear Teachers,

All of my middle-school friends seem to be multitasking all the time. In class they text during discussions. When they do homework, they also tweet or spend time on Facebook. Most of them get good grades. My parents have made homework a technology-free time. It doesn't seem fair. It isn't like I'm addicted and staying in contact with my friends every minute of the day.

Dear Student,

If only our brains had a limitless capacity to process information, think of all the things we could do at the same time. At your age, a majority of students now seem to be trying to do their schoolwork while staying in frequent contact with their friends electronically. Unfortunately, if you multitask while studying, you are not really doing two things simultaneously, but switching back and forth rapidly from task to task.

According to David Pisoni, Chancellor's Professor of Psychology at Indiana University, "Memory and attention are limited. Students don't realize that when they study and engage in other activities, that multitasking comes at a price."

The price is not learning as much as they would without multitasking.

Students in middle school need to learn how to balance academics and using social media. Your parents, by their rules, have forced you to manage your study time with limited distractions. You have quality study time, which is far more important than the quantity of studying that you do. In the future, it should become your responsibility to focus on academic tasks without distractions.

What is RTI?

Dear Teachers,

What does RTI stand for, and is this just another program for children who are already receiving special education services?

Dear Parents,

RTI is the abbreviation for Re-



sponse to Intervention, referring to how teachers and other staff intervene in order to increase students' academic learning. However, some school districts are changing the wording to "Response to Instruction," in order to emphasize how teachers continually change and adapt their instruction to help each student achieve his or her academic potential.

RTI is a three-tier instructional model. It is the framework for building a comprehensive, high-quality instructional program for all students from kindergarten through high school. The tiers are overlapping. Each tier provides different levels of support to students. The duration and intensiveness of the support will vary to meet the needs of each individual student. Schools implementing RTI are making sure that their teachers, by using differentiating instructional teaching methods, are giving every student the opportunity to meet proficiency standards.

Does my child have an attention problem?

Dear Parents,

When children have trouble focusing in school and are also disorganized, many teachers and parents jump to the conclusion that a child has an attention-deficit disorder. When a student is also overly active and disruptive, the child's disorder will be called attention-deficit hyperactive disorder.

Diagnosing these disorders is not an exact science. There are no biological tests. Instead, the traits that make up the disorders are personality characteristics. When eight or more of the following statements accurately describe a child younger than 7, there may be a reason to suspect either, and you should talk to your child's doctor.

- Fidgets or seems restless.
- Has difficulty remaining seated.
- Is easily distracted.
- Has difficulty awaiting his turn.
- Blurts out answers.
- Has difficulty following instructions.
- Has difficulty sustaining attention.
- Shifts from one uncompleted task to another.
- Has difficulty playing quietly.
- Talks excessively.
- Interrupts or intrudes on others.
- Does not seem to listen.
- Loses things necessary for tasks.
- Frequently engages in dangerous actions.

Keep in mind that attention-deficit disorder or attention-deficit hyperactive disorder are often hereditary. So when looking at the 14 traits, you might consider if you or another family member might have eight or more of these traits.

To find out more information about attention disorders, visit our website and enter the keyword ADD or ADHD. You will also find helpful information online on the websites for the National Attention Deficit Organization, Children and Adults with Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder and ADDITUDE Magazine. If your child is diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder or attention-deficit hyperactive disorder, his school should be able to provide the support and accommodations that will help improve the child's life at school.

Parents should send questions and comments to dearteacher@dearteacher.com or ask them on the columnists' website at www.dearteacher.com.

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HEALTHY
LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN



A new baby — and too many visitors!

One of the most exciting parts of having a new baby is when your family and friends meet this special little person. It is heartwarming to have your loved ones hold and love your child, particularly for the first time. But, honestly, after the birthing experience, most moms want to go home and rest and recover, not host a gaggle of relatives who simply can't take the hint that mom needs some sleep.

Blogger Amy Morrison of *Pregnant Chicken* recently wrote a piece outlining tips for new parents for visitors. In it, Morrison churned out gems that I only wished I had followed, like “Go to people that you think will overstay their welcome — don't have them come to you,” and “Don't let anyone stay with you that you can't cry in front of or you can't tell to shut up.”

In the “put them to work” section, Morrison points out the fact that, “Not everyone is comfortable around babies but really want to help, so give them the satisfaction

of doing something for you and just enjoy it and thank them.” Invaluable advice.

Behind most of her suggestions is the reasoning that now is the time to make your wants and needs known. There is nothing like the drain and strain of new parenthood mixed with the insane hormonal surges to drown out your otherwise pleasant persona. But, it's also a good idea to set rules for self-care from the onset of motherhood. That is perhaps one of the biggest things that many women, who are typically people-pleasers, forget to do.

On the flipside, guests need to be sensitive to the new mom. Those who have never given birth themselves and don't really know what it's like might not realize the trials of new parenthood, but any mother knows how taxing it is. They should know better than to overstay their welcome or go on and on about their own latest drama, while you are desperately trying to not collapse from exhaustion.

Most new moms list their in-laws

as the primary source of conflict. It is one thing to have your own mom stay with you when you are vulnerable and feeling horrible, but it is entirely another to have a critical mother-in-law hovering over your every move. Of course, some women report that their own mothers are the critical ones.

Don't forget to enlist your husband's help in the visitor department. Your spouse can take over when you need some quiet time, and also to fend off would-be visitors. Someone needs to keep watch so that you can both get to know this precious little person alone and in peace. And then when you feel like having guests, invite away — but let it be up to you!

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 blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.



ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,
ESQ.

How to register to be an organ donor

Iwould like to be an organ donor but am not familiar with the process. How can I ensure that my wishes are carried out?

The decision to make a posthumous organ donation may prove difficult for many, but the process of doing so is simple. In New York state, you can indicate your intention of being an organ donor on your driver's license or at the Board of Elections. You can also register to be an Organ and Tissue Donor in your state's registry. A third opportunity is in your estate planning documents, such as a health care proxy or your last will and testament. Lastly, as with most objectives relating to health care and estate planning, it can be beneficial to mention your intentions to your family members, so that they know that you would like to be an organ donor, even if they cannot find your documents.

When registering to be an organ donor, you can choose which organs you wish to donate, as well as which organs you wish to exclude.

Organ donors and their families are not subject to a fee for making a donation. There is also no age restriction on being a donor, and all individuals, regardless of age or medical history, are eligible.

Some people wish to leave their organs, tissues, or their bodies to an institution for the purpose of research or science. If you wish to donate your entire body, you should contact the medical organization of your choice directly and make arrangements. Total body donation is usually not an option if you choose to be an organ and tissue donor, although eye donations may still be accepted. Medical professionals rely on such posthumous donations for the purpose of researching diseases

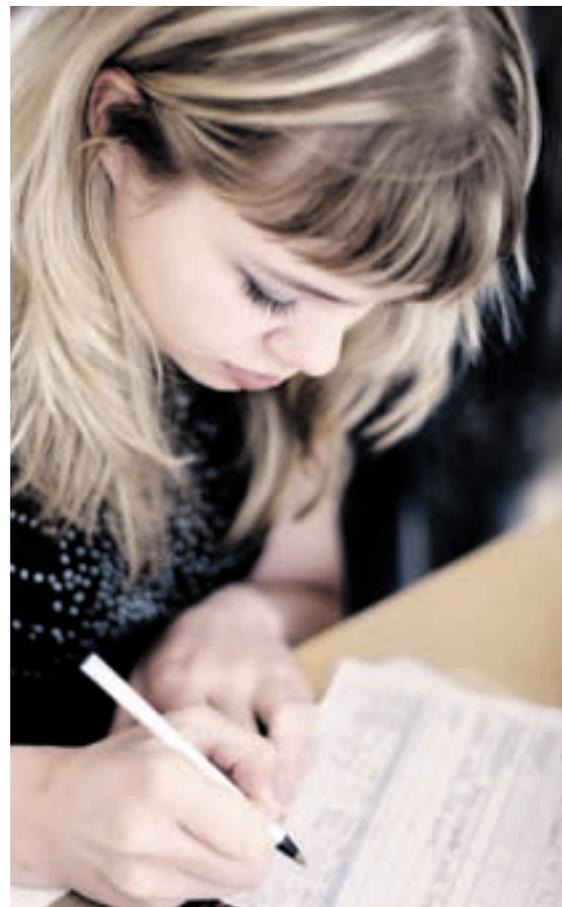
and developing new treatments, therapies, and cures for future generations.

There is no eligibility cutoff, although some individuals suffering from chronic or contagious diseases, drug abuse, or morbid obesity have been rejected. Interested individuals can register online or contact the desired institution directly.

You can also find out if a particular religion has a stated position on the subject of organ and tissue donation before making your decision.

It is important to note that donor registration should not impact the medi-

cal care you will receive. Many donors have indicated their intentions before they fall victim to an illness or accident. Medical professionals will make every effort to save the life of an individual, regardless of whether that individual's organs or tissues could save another life. If the potential donor is still unresponsive after all options have been exhausted, he is tested for brain death, and is declared brain dead only if he is unable to breathe and is completely devoid of brain activity. Only after brain death has been confirmed will the



potential donor's organs be eligible for harvesting.

For more information, visit www.organdonor.gov/index.html and www.donatelifenc.org/content/frequently-asked-questions.

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

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FABULYSS FINDS

LYSS STERN

Easing your family's back-to-school jitters

Getting ready for the first day of school is always exciting and a bit nerve-wrecking for kids — and their parents. I remember lots of butterflies in my stomach as I went to bed the night before school started, each and every year. Now, as a parent, I watch my boys pack and re-pack their backpacks days in advance to make sure they're just right (and, of course, searching for the cool backpack is a must). Back to school is an exciting time, but it can also cause anxiety.

The best way to erase those jitters is through preparation and communication. By planning ahead, parents and children can get ready for school with a little less stress. By really listening to our kids, we can better understand our children's feelings and help them address their fears.

Regardless of your child's age, going back to school can bring on the jitters. Here are a few of my favorite tips to help calm the butterflies for you and your kids.

- Make the first day of school the best day. A positive attitude goes a long way towards making the first day great. Avoid cranky kids by easing back into a bedtime and wake-up routine that follows your child's school schedule a few weeks before school starts.

To diminish early morning stress, make sure backpacks are packed, lunches are ready, and clothes are picked out before kids go to bed. If your child is a little extra nervous, put a pick-me-up note in a pocket or lunch bag.

I always take a picture of my boys on the first day of school. It is a fun tradition and they get to show off their new clothes and sneakers. I make sure to take them to school that morning, and we do something special for breakfast. We also try to have a special dinner that night, so they can talk about their first day. Communication is key to helping ease the anxiety of the first day (or week) in a new grade at school.

- Go shopping. Remember the

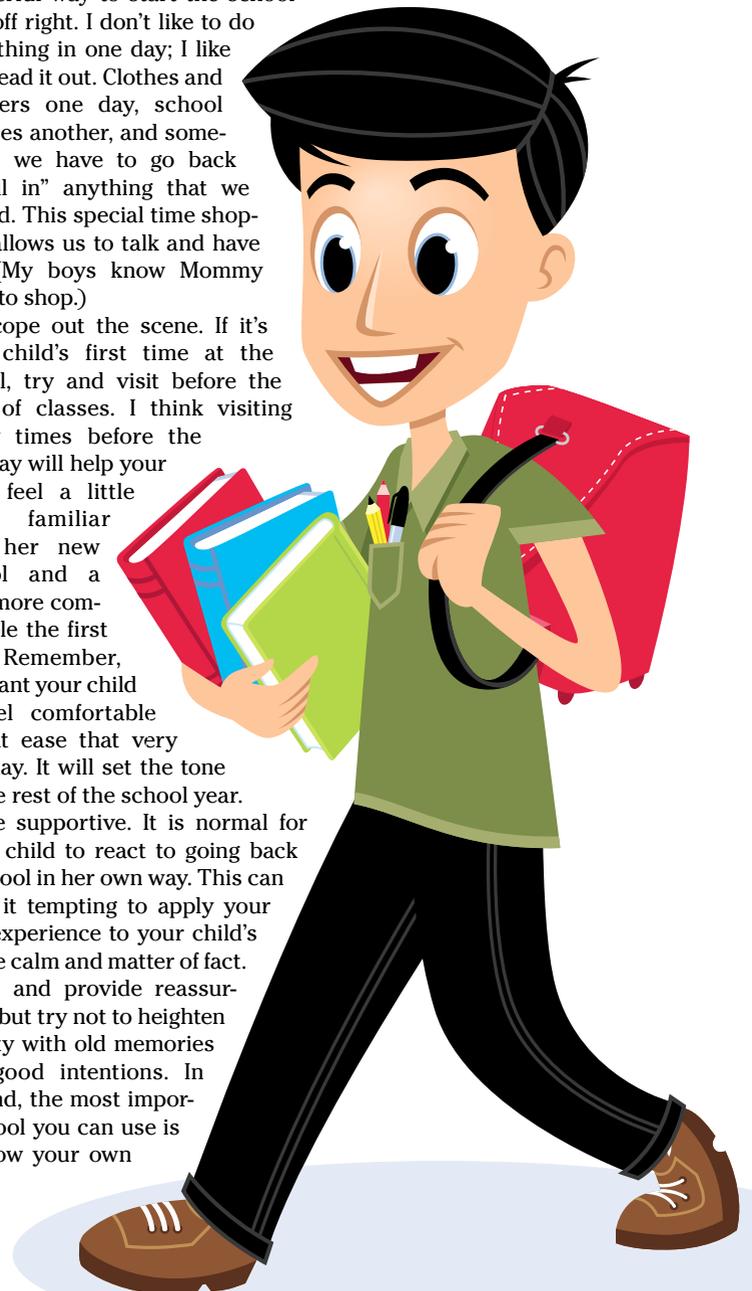
thrill of getting new school supplies? I love planning a special "mommy-and-me" back-to-school outing with my boys. We pick out school supplies (and a back-to-school outfit or two), have lunch at a fun restaurant, and talk about our goals and expectations for the school year. It's a wonderful way to start the school year off right. I don't like to do everything in one day; I like to spread it out. Clothes and sneakers one day, school supplies another, and sometimes, we have to go back to "fill in" anything that we missed. This special time shopping allows us to talk and have fun. (My boys know Mommy loves to shop.)

- Scope out the scene. If it's your child's first time at the school, try and visit before the start of classes. I think visiting a few times before the first day will help your child feel a little more familiar with her new school and a little more comfortable the first day. Remember, you want your child to feel comfortable and at ease that very first day. It will set the tone for the rest of the school year.

- Be supportive. It is normal for every child to react to going back to school in her own way. This can make it tempting to apply your own experience to your child's life. Be calm and matter of fact. Listen and provide reassurance, but try not to heighten anxiety with old memories and good intentions. In the end, the most important tool you can use is to know your own

child. Observe the situation, but also try to keep it all in perspective. For most kids, back-to-school jitters will melt away as easily as summer slips into fall.

Lastly, make sure to tell your child that you love her! You can never tell her too many times!





DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

Your blended family

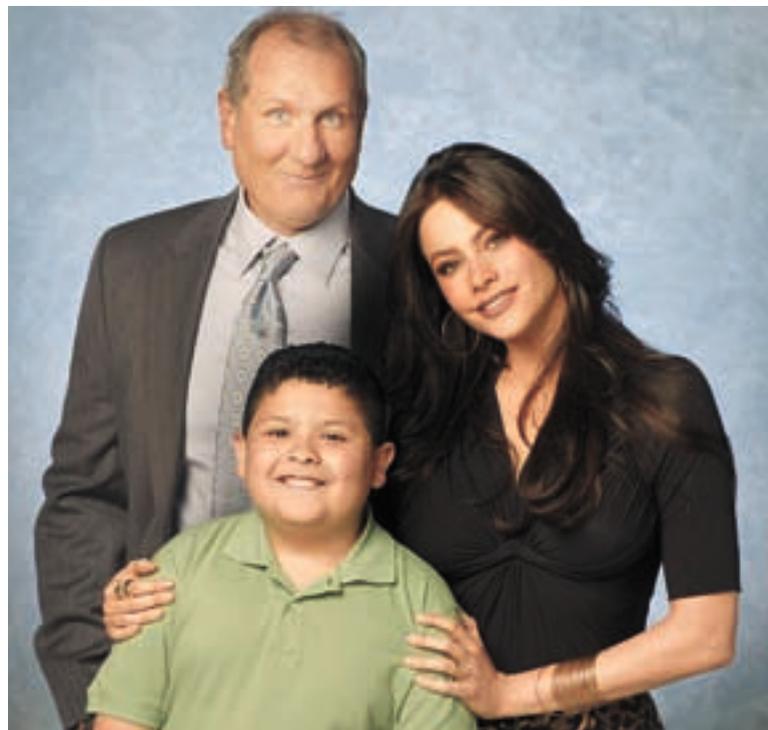
Jay, an older man, is married to Gloria, who is much younger and has a son from a previous relationship. Carol and Mike don't have the age difference to deal with, but the challenges they face as spouses and parents would seem to be significant: Mike has brought three children to their marriage — and Carol another three. From today's popular "Modern Family" to the 1960-70's "The Brady Bunch," with many other TV shows in between, the coming together of different families has been part of our onscreen culture.

With real-life divorce rates that remain high, remarriage and blended families have become much more common during recent decades. You probably know people in this situation. Unlike in comedies, where matters are usually resolved quickly and everything turns out alright, real-life adults may make serious mistakes with long-term implications for both themselves and their children. Fortunately, many parental blunders are avoidable; but know that preventing them may take courage and hard work on the parents' part.

Dr. Kristin Davin is a clinical psychologist in Manhattan who primarily works in the area of relationship and couples counseling. In speaking with me, she addressed what parents can do to allow families to blend as smoothly as possible.

Davin notes that blending families "is a process. While some may coalesce in a matter of months, for others, it can take a few years to fully blend; even then, the work may need to continue. Families may be frustrated that it takes this long, especially those whose members believe that there is a certain amount or range of time needed for separate families to become one. But each situation is unique, and no two families are the same."

Start with yourselves: It is very important for the parents to start by communicating with each other, and to understand and discuss "what they are like as individuals, their respective ideas on parenting, and their values — for instance, honesty and responsibility," she says. Are they in agreement on what they want for their new family?



The Pritchetts of "Modern Family."

Parents must realize that the spousal relationship is the primary relationship in the family. How well will they be able to work together as a couple? Can one spouse expect support from the other, even when they have differing views?

Davin introduces such questions to parents, who, without her assistance, might take the answers for granted. She helps them consider their feelings and attitudes and to talk about them openly.

"They've got to get their issues addressed, so they're on same page before implementing blending. How will discipline be handled? Who will do it, and who will follow up? It is important for the family that the couple have a joint front."

Otherwise, there is a real danger that, "the parents, who may come from different backgrounds and have dissimilar views, will be reactive, and the children will see that the parents are not unified."

Results may include parents being manipulated by the children and a greater distancing between the parents.

The adults need to consider how

they will continue to nourish and honor the bond between them.

Family meetings: Once the parents have reached this stage of discussion and understanding, Davin urges open communication with the children at a family meeting where they can share information and where children have an opportunity to express their feelings. Allowing the children to participate to some degree will "make them more invested and help them to feel more a part of this blended family," explains Davin. "Giving the kids a voice lessens their anxiety. By the parents doing more work at the front end, they will get better results at the back end."

More with Kristin Davin next month.

Contact Kristin Davin at (917) 715-6583.

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 or (718) 229-6149, or go to <http://lc-mediate.com/>.

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



DEATH BY CHILDREN

CHRIS GARLINGTON

Raised by Google

There are vital rites of passage fathers and sons must go through together, the most important milestones of a father's journey. I have experienced exactly none of them.

One was stolen by my wife, a titanic disaster on her part and all I'm going to tell you is he was 3 and it involved aiming.

All other benchmarks of tradition were ripped from my clawed, grasping fingers by my arch-rival, the un-father, a sinister, soulless substitute. My son was raised by Google.

It's my fault. I gave him unre-

stricted access to the internet.

There are parents tearing this article out of the magazine in pediatric offices all over Chicago to provide the state's Department of Children and Family Services evidence of my madness and neglect, but I tell you, the worst thing to come out of it is an affinity for high brow knock-knock jokes, Zen Buddhism, the ability to trounce me in the recollection of arcane '70s-era rock trivia — and that Google is his real father.

Google does everything better than me.

Take fishing. Classic dad. I took him out to the middle of a lake to teach him how to tie his

hook with a secret fisherman's knot handed down through my family, an heirloom knot. I reach for his rod, employing my raspiest McQueen.

"Let me show you how to tie that hoo..."

He whips his lure out into the lake like he's on Bass Pros.

"I tied it on with an eight-fold Japanese blood knot."

"Who taught you that?"

"Googled it."

Later on, I take a long look at the darkening sky, note the stumpy quality of the waves and see all the locals packing it in. Years of expe-

rience have taught me these are sure signs an NFL game is on in five minutes. Awesome, I'd like to see Google teach him...

"Dad, you see how the swans are tucking their heads into their wings?"

"Birds are stupid, son."

"Aaaaactually, they know it's about to rain so hard they won't have time to make it to shore."

"That's idioti...[THUNDEROUS DOWNPOUR]. How'd you know that!?"

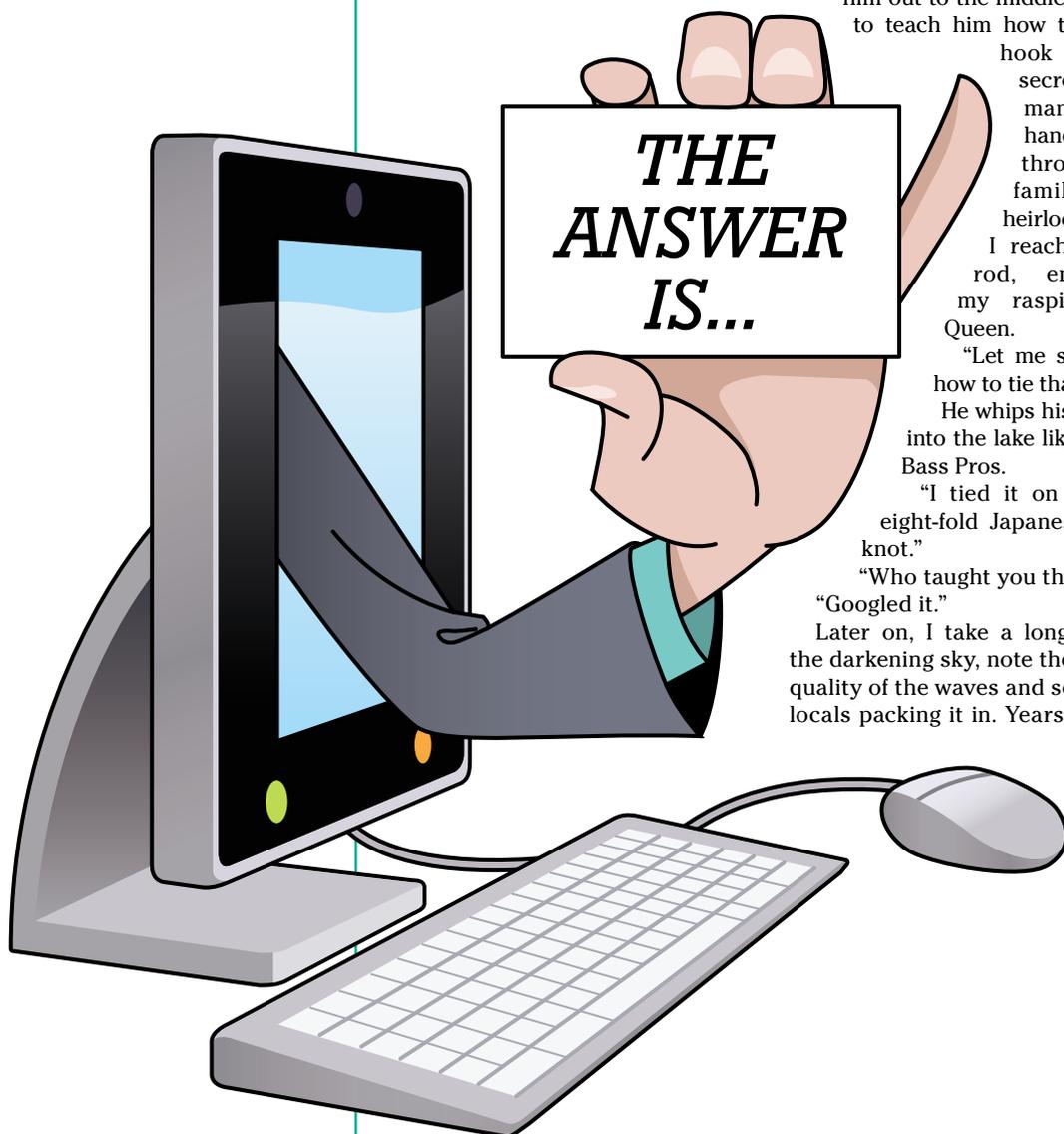
My son pauses as if he's taking a moment to compose a response, to level his tone so as not to insult me. Quietly, he says "I Googled it, Dad," squinting into the distance. "I Googled it."

Google is like a greedy stepfather stealing all my thunder. Meaningful moments are shot down before I can get the words out of my mouth with, "Googled it, Dad! I DON'T NEED YOU, I HAVE GOOGLE!"

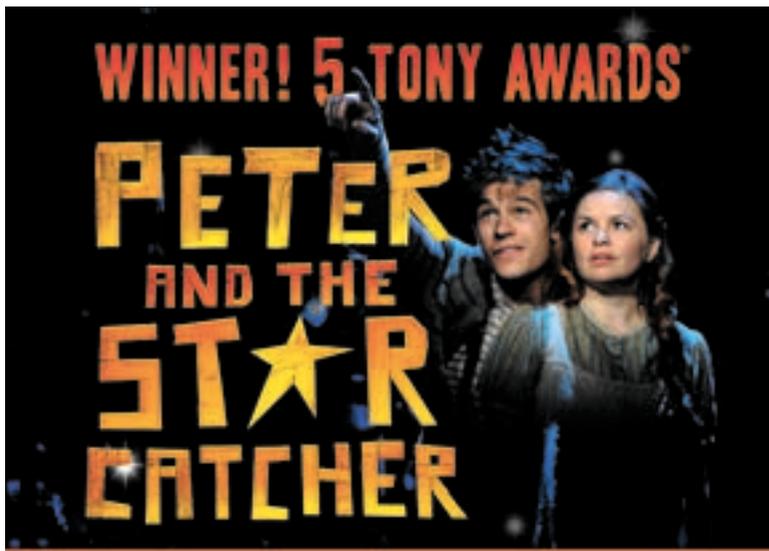
Google tells him stories, it shows him cool Zippo lighter tricks, it can teach him anything through a series of simple step-by-step videos, it's never wrong, and it never sleeps. Google's a better father than I'll ever be.

But I'm not going down without a fight. I'm not entirely useless. I'd like to see Google give him a hundred bucks and a ride to Six Flags.

Christopher Garlington lives in a standard two kids, wife, dog, corner lot, two-car dream package. He drives a 2003 Camry, sports a considerable notebook fetish, and smokes Arturo Fuente Partaga Maduros at the Cigar King as often as possible. His stories have appeared in Florida, Orlando, Orlando Weekly, Catholic Digest, Retort, Another Realm, The Dead Mule School of Southern Literature, South Lit, and other magazines. His short story collection, "King of the Road," is available on Amazon. His column "My Funny Life," was nominated for a national humor award. He is the author of the infamous anti-parenting blog, Death By Children; the anti-writing blog, Creative Writer Pro; and co-author of "The Beat Cop's Guide to Chicago Eats."



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A TEEN'S TAKE

AGLAIA HO

Teens need to read newspapers, too

Reading the newspaper may seem a bit outdated in the electronic age. With the internet, television, and smartphones, current events have never been more accessible. Nevertheless, according to the American Press Institute, only one-third of all young people actually pick up a newspaper. Furthermore, many teens dedicate most of their time on social networks, playing games, e-mail, and video sites rather than online news networks. According to the same study, many teens spend less than five minutes a day reading an actual newspaper or browsing online news.

This is a startling statistic, especially when one thinks about our fast-moving world. Events are occurring all around the globe, every second of the day. For teens, being aware of the latest happenings is an important habit; reading the news broadens your horizons, keeps you in touch with reality, and can also be very interesting.

I will admit that there was a time

when the news did not interest me. Most headlines did not seem to affect me. If an event did not happen locally, it probably was not worth knowing about. My dose of current events came in conversations with family and friends. The exchange usually went a little like: "Did you hear about so-and-so happening in so-and-so?" "Nope, but now I have."

I have started to realize how important it is to be aware of current events. The more we know about the world around us, the faster we can move forward and respond appropriately to the changes in our society. My first real taste of the news came when I started clicking on the news tab on my homepage search engine. I stumbled upon a page that provided a summary of all types of news on various topics. The headlines were provided along with a brief description of the event. As I read through the page, I was shocked by the range of events happening in the world. So much was going on in our country, in other countries, and in the scientific world.

My small taste of current events was a huge reality check that was as fascinating as it was shocking. Several headlines whetted my interest and prompted me to read the entire articles. At first, my interest was relatively narrow. I preferred reading entertainment pieces and New York City news instead of stories about international affairs and the economy. Nevertheless, as checking up on the news became a daily routine, my interest slowly began to broaden. I soon found myself curious about other topics. I never would've guessed I would read through an article about Wall Street!

I definitely became more knowledgeable from reading the news, but at the same time, I was a bit uneasy. With stories about terrorism, war,

heinous crimes, and natural disasters, the news isn't always rated PG. I came across stories that I would've rather not known about. Sometimes, I was even frightened by the disturbing events happening around me. I was especially concerned by how commonplace these events were in society.

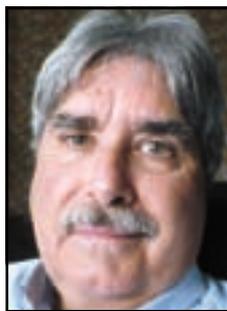
I've slowly overcome my fear and regained faith in humanity. It is always a pleasure to read a story about one who saved another's life or someone who had a lucky break. Newspapers are businesses and like all enterprises, they need to sell their stories. Sensational news of startling events always attracts more attention than a heartfelt, feel-good story.

I have learned that keeping up with the news does not have to be an arduous task. There are so many free sources that offer quick coverage on the most important stories. For teens, the internet is an effective source for the news. Many newspapers can be found online. Popular search engines also provide their own stories. I just make sure the article is coming from a trusted news provider, such as a local newspaper or TV station.

Staying up-to-date with current events is our responsibility. We are expected to know of the latest happenings so that we can respond accordingly to them. Without the news, we would be vulnerable and narrow-minded. We wouldn't know what is happening in other parts of the country or world. For young people, reading the news allows us to learn more about our world, be informed future voters, and prepare for the future. The news offers many lessons about the qualms of society that we, as the future generation, can help fix when we are older. Knowing about our world keeps us connected and allows us to progress.

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.





FAMILY JOURNAL

ROBERT MORTON

Tips for parents of shy children

Dear Mr. Morton,

I have two sons and one daughter. My daughter, age 9, is very shy and unhappy, because she has difficulty making and keeping friends. She is quiet in social situations and has problems relating to how others feel. How can I teach her empathy and the skills needed to build friendships? — *L.G.*

Dear L.G.,

Regarding her problems relating to how others feel, most younger children only share toys, not opinions or feelings. But, beginning at around age 8 and lasting until age 12, they become less self-involved and begin to develop empathy toward others. Becoming aware of how others feel develops during this time frame of social growth, and they also learn that their friends view the world differently.

None of us is born with social elegance; our capability to make friends is cultivated to varying degrees by our experiences. Some kids quickly excel in sports, music, art, or academics, while others take more time. Likewise, some youngsters effortlessly make warm, lasting friendships, while others do so in their own way and time.

Researchers found that 10 to 15 percent of children are born with a

degree of shyness and exhibit different physiological reactions to stress. Their nervous systems are more sensitive, and they are more easily startled than other children. Not unexpected, shy children produce more stress hormones and have a higher heart rate for a longer period of time when exposed to new situations.

Surprisingly, being “shy” is on the rise. Studies show steadily increasing numbers of young adults who report being shy.

Many experts suspect this increase in shyness is due to spreading social isolation spawned by the new cyberspace generation. Video games, web surfing, e-mailing, texting, electronic chatting, and a host of other computer interactions are all done alone, in private, without face-to-face interactions — an isolated and solitary form of social bonding. Without nose-to-nose interaction, the complex verbal and nonverbal language of social awareness remains dormant.

Here are seven tips to maintain the formation of true human bonding and friendship:

- Analyze verbal and nonverbal cues in photos: We “size up” social situations and how people feel only 10 percent via listening to what they say and 90 percent by watching their nonverbal cues, like facial expressions, body language, and deeds — impossible to do in front of a computer screen! Try browsing through magazines with your daughter and have her “read” what the people seem to be saying or feeling by their actions and facial expressions in each photo.

- Teach verbal mediation: In a fun-type manner, go through the five steps of verbal mediation when a misunderstanding with playmates occurs. Review with her (1) the social context in which the problem arose (what was going on), (2) what she said or did, (3) how her behavior may have contributed to the unpleasant social outcome. Then,

(4) help her brainstorm alternative things she could have said or done, and (5) the better consequences which would have resulted.

- Try “bibliotherapy:” Have her read age-appropriate books about shyness and friendships, and then discuss them with her. I recommend these children’s books, which are geared to your daughter’s age group: “A Smart Girl’s Guide to Friendship Troubles” by Patti Criswell (2003, Pleasant Co.); “How to Lose All Your Friends” by Nancy Carlson (1994, Puffin); and “Friends: Making Them and Keeping Them” by Patti Criswell (2006, American Girl).

- Have her engage in some group participation, but at her own pace: Lead, but don’t force her into situations that will be satisfying to her. Such things as Girl Scouts, day camps, or church groups may be good for her, but avoid placing her into any situation that will be embarrassing or frightening for her.

- Allow her time to verbalize and make every effort to listen to her. Ignore her nonverbal communications and don’t speak for her. She must make her needs known via words or complete sentences, whether it is asking for dessert or permission to play. Ask her questions that can’t be answered with a mere “yes,” “no,” or a shrug. Above all, make sure your two boys don’t interpret or speak for her.

Shyness is a personality trait, not a defect. And, empathy is an innate emotion in all of us; it just needs to be nourished more in some than in others.

True, it’s the cornerstone needed to construct worthwhile friendships, but your daughter will develop her own social skills and friendships in her own way and in her own time — just keep encouraging her along the way.

Robert Morton is a retired school psychologist and adjunct professor in the School of Leadership and Policy Studies at Bowling Green State University.





GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

Getting to know you

Facebook can hinder or help college applications

They may be a little late to the party, but college admissions officers have discovered Facebook. Most treat it as a recruiting tool, but a growing number also use it to check up on applicants, according to a 2012 survey by Kaplan Test Prep. It isn't yet routine, but a quarter of admissions officers admitted to visiting Facebook pages of applicants, up from 10 percent in 2008.

Only 15 percent of the schools surveyed had an official policy about how admissions officers should use social media. As a result, there's wide variation. Some believe offers of admission should be based solely on what's in the application packet. For them, using social media seems like eavesdropping or stalking. Others argue that what happens online is public information. They prefer students who are digitally literate and penalize those who show poor judgment in how they present themselves online.

This inconsistency means students who put time and thought into college applications should back it up with a careful attention to how they present themselves on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media. Even if college admissions officers aren't looking, the information available there may very well have an influence on scholarship committees, teachers writing letters of recommendation, employers offering internships, and even future roommates.

Parents can help high school students use social media to polish rather than tarnish their images. Here are some tips:

- Pay attention to privacy. Facebook offers many options, clearly described under Privacy Settings. At the very least, encourage your child to restrict who can see beyond the profile page. Remind your student that privacy restrictions won't provide complete security because friends can tag and share whatever your child posts.

- Review friends. Many students have hundreds of friends on Facebook. The site allows users to create lists so some of what they share goes only to an inner circle, but most teens don't have the discipline to evaluate every post. During application season, they should think twice before posting. Some students have had applications torpedoed by anonymous tips about Facebook that could only have come from "friends." Other students get — or send — Facebook invitations to influential adults, including admissions counselors. Making these connections is a good idea only if your child fully understands that everything on Facebook, including comments from friends, will now be under scrutiny.

- Chisel the profile. Your child can hide his profile, but it may be better to keep it public — and professional. Be sure it features a photo that's friendly and wholesome. Review the

"Favorites" that appear on the profile page. Remind your student that choices about music, books, movies, TV shows, websites, and quotations create an impression. Be sure it's positive.

- Take control of tags. The default setting on Facebook allows tags, so photos taken by your child's friends can show up on his wall. Encourage your child to change the privacy setting, so he can review tagged photos before they are posted.

- Accent accomplishments. Encourage your child to use social media to promote positive accomplishments. Include links to blogs and YouTube videos that showcase talent.

- Be law-abiding. If your child has the bad judgment to speed, text while driving, use illegal drugs, or participate in underage drinking, be sure he doesn't boast about it online. Even schools that have a reputation for partying don't want to see photos of inebriated students.

- Character counts. Avoid photos and posts that are rude, vulgar, or sexually suggestive. Remember that colleges are trying to create a climate of tolerance. A student may think it's funny to join an "I Hate ..." group, but a college admissions officer may see it as evidence of bullying or bias.

- Nix the negativity. It's tempting, but unwise, to use Facebook to vent about problems. Be especially careful about critiquing colleges. One admissions officer changed his mind about a promising student after she made disparaging remarks about her campus visit.

• • •

In addition to encouraging your child to burnish his image in social media, do a Google search for your child's name. In Kaplan's study, a quarter of admissions officers had done just that, and 35 percent found something that made them disqualify an applicant. If something especially embarrassing pops up, ask for it to be removed from the original website. If that's not possible, try to bury it in an avalanche of positive results.

Turning the tables

Most colleges and universities now use social media to connect with prospective students. Student-Advisor.com posts a list of the Top 100 Social Media Colleges with links that make it easy to connect with what they are doing on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and iTunes. For other schools, visit the Admissions page and look for icons that link to social networking sites. Here's what prospective students can do.

- Flip through the photo album, a good supplement to the website's virtual tour.

- "Like" or "follow" the Admissions office. It's one of the best ways to get updates about deadlines and activities.

- Check out departments and student organizations. Ideal if your child has specialized interests.

- Seek out student blogs and videos, which offer candid insight into

what life is really like on campus.

- Ask questions. A thoughtful question or comment on a Facebook page is a good way to get information — and to get noticed.

Schools usually ramp up outreach once students are admitted. Participating in admitted student groups is a great way to connect before getting to campus. Also, remind your student to check e-mail. Colleges often use it to send reminders about upcoming deadlines and even to announce acceptances.

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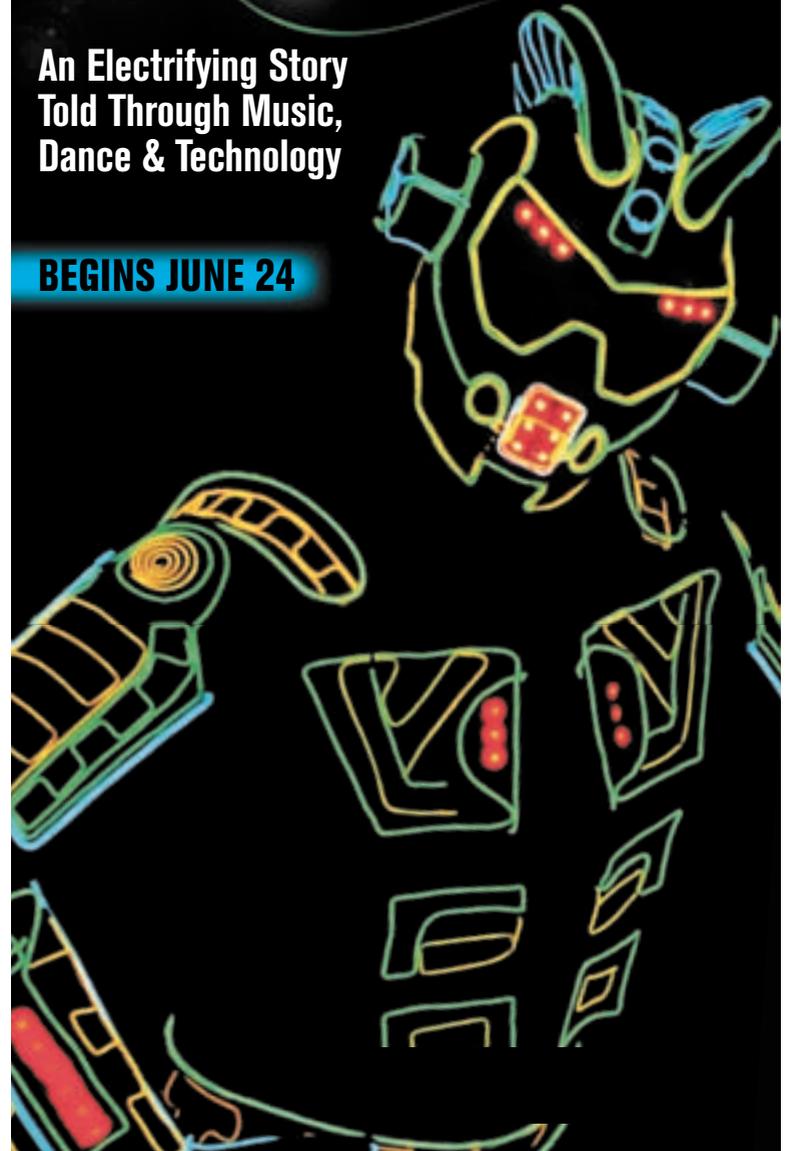
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PARENTS HELPING PARENTS

SHARON C. PETERS, MA

How to help an older child sleep all night



Dear Sharon,

Our 10 year old is having trouble going to sleep alone in his room. What should we do? He comes into our bed a lot, and we're concerned and losing sleep.

Dear Parents,

I have known of other 10 year olds who have had trouble sleeping alone. It may take some parental time and patience, but here are some ideas that could help.

Many young people go through periods of anxiety as they get closer to adolescence with its array of complicated social, academic, and physical demands. Pre-teens can easily become restless and need more company, and if they have a busy schedule, these issues can often surface at night. Therefore, it is important to think through any underlying pressures that are affecting young tweens who are having trouble sleeping. It can make a big difference to begin tackling sleep problems by taking steps to reduce or talk through external pressures that might be affecting a 10 year old's day-to-day routines.

Parents who think that their child's interrupted sleep will gradually end as stress eases, or he matures, often adopt a temporary compromise. Some people I know have put a sleeping mat or small bed in their room for their child to use. Others have decided to put a larger bed in their child's room so that mom or dad can lay down comfortably when "in demand" and have enough room to sleep if they need to. Some parents prefer this approach as it is usually easier for children to sleep through the night when they stay in their own bed, and eventually parents are no longer needed. In order to catch up on interrupted rest, others I know have temporarily resorted to taking turns sleeping in another room when their child appears.

Of course, some moms and dads can tell that their child's behavior might not be a brief phase, and decide to put their foot down and require that their child sleep through the night. In this case, it is important to remember that it is often difficult to present adult expectations when difficult issues surface, in this case

at the end of the day or in the middle of the night. Talking to a child about sleep at calm moments, well before bedtime, can often be helpful. If mom or dad can maintain a relaxed tone, it is usually easier to listen to a child's worries, calmly share why disrupted sleep is hard for everyone, and think through some possible solutions together. A child can sometimes make helpful suggestions to resolve a complex issue such as this when a good opportunity to do so is provided.

Some parents have had success offering a reward in return for a few days of solid sleep, as even a relatively brief period of success can help break bad habits. Others have gradually diminished the number of times they respond to their child's requests. This solution can temporarily mean less sleep for mom and dad and some degree of upset, but the long-term results can be worth the effort.

A good night's sleep can be hard to get for children at any age, but with consistent effort over time, I have seen many parents help their young person sort it through.

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.



FAMILY HEALTH

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

An itch to scratch

Head lice prevention and treatment for kids

My 4-year-old daughter is about to start preschool, and I'm finding plenty of things to worry about! In particular, a number of my friends have told me about lice infestations at their children's preschools. From my own school days, I know how quickly lice can spread in children's classrooms. What tips do you have for lice prevention and treatment?

Back-to-school season is upon us, and this can raise some anxieties in both parents and children.

As they wade through school shopping lists, homework assignments, and extracurricular schedules, parents like you might find themselves concerned about the health hazards of their children's school environment. One of the most common schoolhouse conditions is head lice infestation, during which parasitic insects, each about the size of a sesame seed, inhabit the human scalp. Every year, there are millions of cases of head lice in the United States, and infestation is most common among school children between the ages of 3 and 12.

Lice depend upon the human scalp for nutrition, and die within two days if separated from their human hosts, so it's highly unlikely that you'll ever actually see these insects crawling around your child's classroom or schoolbooks. Head lice travel from one human host to another, most commonly through head-to-head contact, which is why children, who often play and rest in close proximity, are especially vulnerable. In addition, though it's rarer, children can contract lice after sharing personal items, such as bedding, pillows, hats, and scarves.

There are some very expensive shampoos and sprays that claim to repel lice, but these products can contain harmful chemicals. There are also strong-smelling oils, such as tea tree oil, coconut oil, and lavender that may reduce your child's risk of getting lice when used as a



shampoo or conditioner. But the only sure way to prevent your child from getting lice is to lock her in a room and keep her safely away from all other children, forever — not very practical!

This is why it's also important to be aware of the best courses of treatment for head lice, since limiting physical contact and the sharing of personal items can be difficult when it comes to young children.

Signs and symptoms of lice include irritation of the scalp, intense itching, or a tickling feeling from the movement of hair. If you notice any of these signs, you should check for head lice and nits (lice eggs) by using a comb and a magnifying glass to thoroughly examine your child's hair, especially at the base of the hair shaft.

Treatments for lice infestation vary with a child's age. For most children, doctors recommend over-the-counter shampoos, topical drugs to apply to the scalp or hair,

or, in the case of very resistant infestations, prescription medication.

For very young children, doctors often advise parents to remove the lice and nits by wetting their child's hair and then using a fine-tooth comb to detach the nits. Once your child's hair is treated, you can take extra precautions to safeguard against reinfestation. Make sure you wash your child's bedding and recently worn clothing in hot water, dry clean clothing items that cannot be washed, and vacuum carpets and any upholstered furniture.

Lice are certainly annoying, but fortunately, they aren't dangerous, and they don't spread disease. If your child does catch lice, don't fret — a round of hair treatments and housecleaning should solve the problem.

After taking these steps, you'll no longer have to worry when your child greets her homework with the proverbial scratch on the head.



THE BOOK WORM

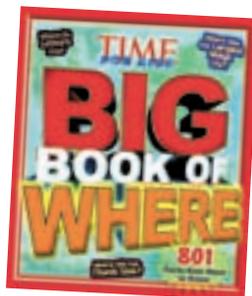
TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

A fun read for inquiring minds

Struggling to get your child to read something? Perhaps your “good reader” is bored with the same old fare? Either way, inside “Time for Kids Big Book of Where” is where you’ll want to point his nose.

“Time for Kids Big Book of Where” is a fun book pumped full of informative facts that will educate while entertaining kids. With “Time,” kids will learn where their trash goes each week, each year, and during their lifetime.

They’ll learn where the largest Mayan city was once located. They’ll read about a place where gigantic, thousand-year-old statues are waiting for a visit, and where there are huge cities underground. They’ll also find out which countries hold



more than a billion people and which are the smallest countries in the world.

Let’s say your child likes to build and invent things; he loves to create towers with his LEGOs. Now, he’ll learn where they were invented. He’ll find out where microchips and transistors originated, and where on Earth is Silicon Valley.

With this book in his hands, he’ll know exactly where Africa is splitting apart. He’ll know where the largest diamond, ever, was found (and where it is today). Kids will know where to go to breathe the purest air in the world, and where NOT to go if they want to avoid the world’s most poisonous snakes and bugs. They’ll find out where they’ll need to speak 800 languages to keep up, and where

the world’s newest island is poking out of the sea.

Packed with fun facts and lots of full-color pictures and drawings, this book has a little something for just about every kid: bugs, vehicles, mysteries, art, nature, science, animals. There’s even something for sports fans, and obviously, for kids who love to travel. I like that informational diversity, because it can lead young readers to find other areas of interest — something for which your child’s teachers will be very thankful this fall.

While it’s meant for 8-to-12-year-olds, I think that, with parental help, slightly younger children will want to open this book, too. For any kid with a curious mind, in fact, “Time for Kids Big Book of Where” is a shoo-in.

“Time for Kids Big Book of Where” by Time Home Entertainment [192 pages, 2013, \$19.99].

History kids understand

You have a little history buff in the house, but your biographies are a little too grown up. The new kid-friendly book “Nelson Mandela” by Kadir Nelson gives children just the right amount of information.

As a little boy, Mandela — then called Rolihlahla, his given Xhosa name — loved to play with his friends, fighting pretend battles, and hunting with slingshots on the grassy hills of Qunu, South Africa. But he couldn’t play forever: Rolihlahla was smart and needed an education. So his mother sent him to a local Methodist school.

At school, Rolihlahla’s teacher refused to say his Xhosa name, so she called him “Nelson.”

As Nelson grew, he attended the finest schools in Johannesburg. He became a lawyer, so he could help his poor and powerless countrymen.

But something else bothered Nelson just as much as poverty: the government had a policy that split its citizens into three groups, and it wasn’t fair. They called it apartheid, and many hated it.

So Nelson organized rallies and spoke to the people. He was jailed for speaking up, but he never stopped fighting against apartheid.

That is, until he was caught, arrested, and imprisoned. He was sent to a small island where he sat in a tiny room every day, eating cold meals and working hard labor. He was there so long that when he got out, his children had grown up. More importantly, South Africa had ended apartheid.

Finally, after almost 28 years, Nelson Mandela was set free. He was elected as South Africa’s new leader. And the people celebrated.

You always want to give your child a good sense of history, whether it’s in the past or in the making. “Nelson Mandela” is a good book for both.

Author Kadir Nelson is honest in telling what happened, without being scary. Curious readers will appreciate that this book is made kid-friendlier with a two-page section at the end that could help answer lots of questions.

But Kadir Nelson’s words are only half of the appeal.



Nelson is also the illustrator here, and his paintings — from the magnificent cover to every page inside — make this a book you’ll want to browse, whether your children are around or not.

Kids ages 4 to 7 will love this story, and I think older children will appreciate it, too. If your budding historian needs a little time out for reading, “Nelson Mandela” is a book they should spend time with.

“Nelson Mandela” by Kadir Nelson [32 pages, 2013, \$17.99].

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



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DOWNTOWN MOMMY

NOTOYA GREEN

Opt-out generation wants to opt back in

I recall the first time I read an article entitled the “Opt-Out Revolution” in the New York Times. It was a trend piece written 10 years ago about high-achieving women who were leaving their careers to become stay-at-home moms.

When I first read this story, I was fresh out of law school working as a New York lawyer and full of career ambition. At the time, I remember wondering whether I could ever

quit the practice of law to raise a family. I also wondered what would happen to me if I did decide to “opt out.” Would I ever be able to practice again when the children were older?

With those questions in mind, I decided that opting out was not an option for me, but admired those women in the article greatly for their strength and for their choice, although I was convinced that I couldn’t make the same decision for myself.

Recently, a contributing writer to The New York Times, Judith Warner, followed up with some of these women and found that after many years, they wanted to go back to work. She also found that while some of them were able to go back to work with ease (although not in the same position or at the same salary), most struggled to find employment.

Well, it’s been 10 years since the “Opt-Out Revolution” was first published, and I have a lot more in common with these women than I ever would have thought. I am no longer a practicing attorney. I am now a mother and yet another professional woman who has “opted out” of the traditional work force to become a stay-at-home mom. Like many of these

women in the article, though, I am a stay-at-home mom who, at some point, would like to opt back in.

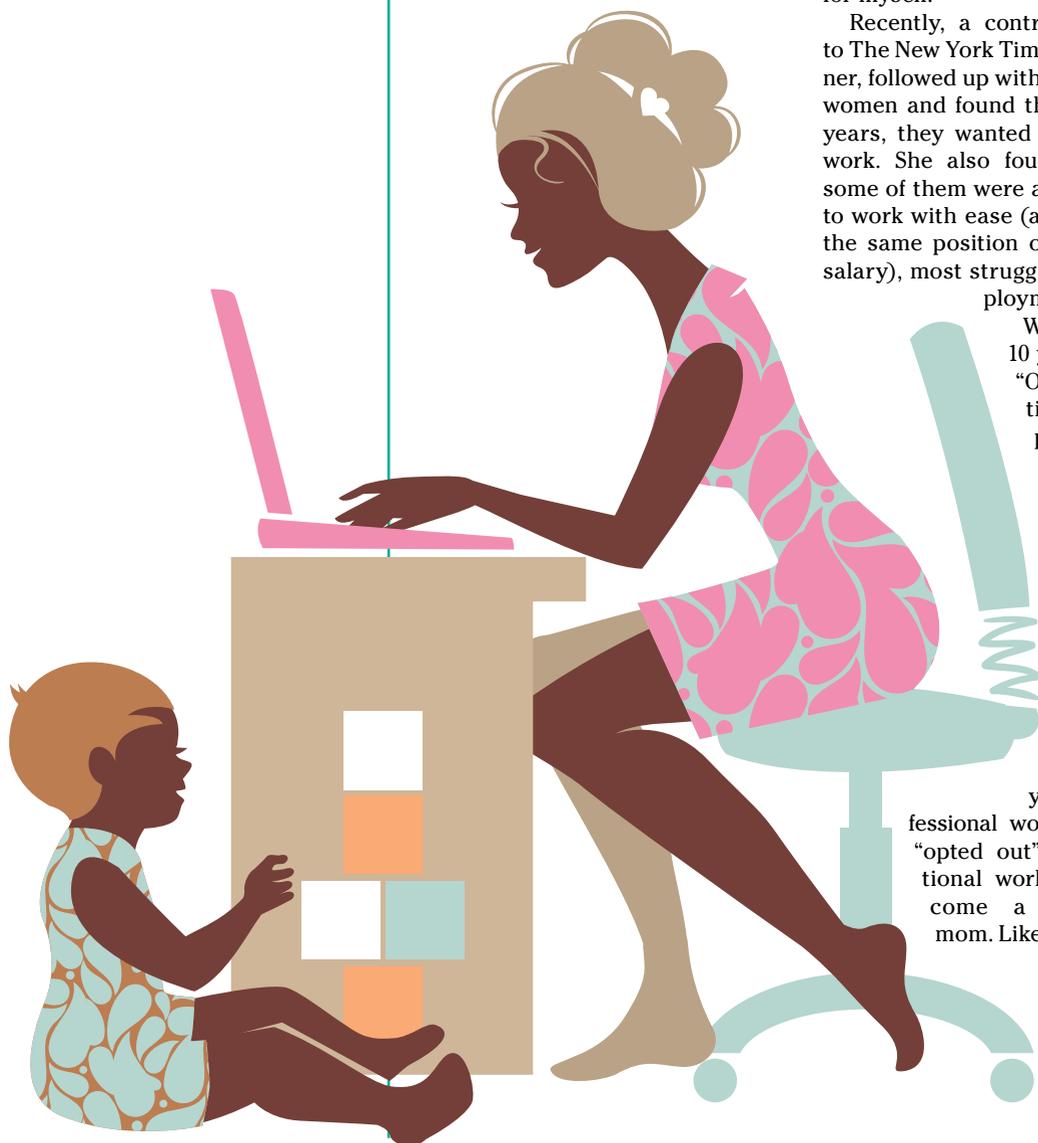
Before becoming a stay-at-home mom, I knew the consequences of my decision. I knew that many industries, such as law, could be very unforgiving of those who take time off, and finding employment after several years at home would be difficult. Now that I am a stay-at-home mom, I question the fairness of this and whether this makes sense for society.

In the United States, women make up the majority of college graduates. They also make up the majority of graduate degree holders. So with this said, does it make sense for society to lose parts of its most highly educated population indefinitely because traditional work life conflicts with family life — especially during those stages when our children are at their youngest and most vulnerable?

So, what are the solutions to this problem? I’m not sure, but here in New York City, the political cycle is heating up. During the next few days, candidates who are running for mayor will outline their positions on a variety of issues from transportation to housing, all of which are important. Someday soon, though, I would like for policy makers and would-be policy makers to talk about this very issue — the issue of women and work and family.

How can we as a society work to do a better job of retaining women in the work force — or at the very least, provide a means for women like those in the “Opt-Out Revolution” to opt back in?

Notoya Green is a parenting expert and former Family Law attorney. You can read her blog at www.tripletsintribeca.com. You can also follow her on Facebook at www.facebook.com/tripletsintribeca and on Twitter @NotoyaG.



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Calendar

SEPTEMBER



Feeding Frenzy at the Brooklyn Children's Museum

What's on the menu at Brooklyn Children's Museum? Find out during Feeding Frenzy, every Thursday beginning on Sept. 20.

It's a brand-new season at the museum, and children will enjoy lots of fun, hands-on activities.

Every living thing has to eat — whether it's Fantasia the albino Burmese python or the eastern box turtle pictured above. And at this event, children will learn

about the feeding habits of all the creatures that live at the museum.

Feeding Frenzy is every Thursday at 3:30 pm, beginning on Sept. 20. Suitable for children of all ages. Free with general admission to the museum of \$9 (free for members and children under 1).

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

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SUN, SEPT. 1

Explore the marsh: Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; 10 am; Free.

Wear appropriate clothes.

THURS, SEPT. 5

Holiday offerings: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 11 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

The Great Subway Search and Map NYC:ABC 123 to while away school holidays.

Puppet Show: Kings Bay Y at North Williamsburg, 14 Hope St. between Roebling and Havemeyer streets; (718) 407-6388; www.northwilliamsburg.org; 4:30-5:15 pm.

Families with young children are invited to join Ora Fruchter from Yellow Sneakers and celebrate Rosh Hashana with old and new songs. RSVP required.

FRI, SEPT. 6

Holiday offerings: 11 am and 2:20 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Sept. 5.

"The Time Machine": Narrows Botanical Gardens, Shore Road at 71st Street; (718) 748-4810; 8 pm; Free.

Bring a chair or blanket enjoy refreshments and take a chance on a 50-50 raffle.

SAT, SEPT. 7

Saltwater fishing: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 11 am; Free.

Rangers teach children to develop skills while connecting with nature.

State Street Fair: 355 State St. between Hoyt and Bond streets; (718) 855-6225; info@stmicholascathedral.org; www.stmicholascathedral.org; 11



Photo by Lisa Tomasetti

'Charlotte's Web' comes to BAM

Charlotte drops her web at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Sept. 21 with a special viewing of "Charlotte's Web."

Children of all ages will enjoy a screening of "Charlotte's Web," based on the classic children's book by EB White. It tells the tale of a very smart spider named Char-

lotte, who helps out Wilbur the pig to avoid being slaughtered, and teaches the value of friendship.

As part of Brooklyn Academy's new film series, BAMKids Movie Matinees, both the 1973 animated film featuring the voice of Debbie Reynolds as Charlotte and the 2006 film directed by Gary Winick — starring Dakota Fanning as

Fern, and the voice of Dominic Scott Kay as Wilbur — will be shown simultaneously.

"Charlotte's Web" on Sept. 21 at 11 am. Tickets are \$7 for children and \$9 for adults.

BAM Kids Peter Jay Sharp Building [30 Lafayette Ave. and Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org].

am; Free.

Featuring games, pony rides, face painting, live music, performances, and Mediterranean food.

"Pee Wee's Big Adventure": BAM Kids Peter Jay Sharp Building, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org/Family; 11 am; \$7 (\$9 for adults).

Children's classic starring Pee Wee Herman.

Sigma storytime: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.

[jsp?branchpageid=265](http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail); Noon; Free.

Volunteers from Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity read stories. For children 3 to 8 years old.

Grand Central day: 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 of all ages create a Grand Central city all their own.

SUN, SEPT. 8

Grand Central day: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 7.

MON, SEPT. 9

Open mic: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail; [jsp?branchpageid=265](http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail); 5 pm; Free.

Teens have a safe place to share their poems and meet other spoken word artists.

TUES, SEPT. 10

Tech time: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza;

Continued on page 70

Calendar

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(718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.jsp?branchpageid=265; 4:30 pm; Free.

Teens learn how to design a website, work on school projects, and explore the latest technology.

THURS, SEPT. 12

Chicken Institute: Imani Community Garden, 91 Schnecktady Ave. at Dean Street; www.nycgovparks.org; 5:30-7:30 pm; Free.

Children learn about raising chickens.

SAT, SEPT. 14

Kite festival: Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 1, Old Fulton and Furman streets; www.nycgovparks.org; 10 am-1 pm; Free.

Watch them soar or fly your own. Kites will be available for purchase.

Floyd Bennett Composite Squadron open house: Armed Forces Reserve Center, 1 Aviation Rd. at Flatbush Avenue; (347) 661-2038; deborah.peters@fbcap.org; www.fbcap.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Young people 12 to 19 years old can visit with the members of the squad.

Junior Engineers: 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 4 years and older visit the education center and experiment with balloon powered cars.

We build New York: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1792; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 2:30-4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 9 years and older learn to use SketchUp software and images from the museum's archives. Space limited, pre-registration requested.

SUN, SEPT. 15

Special day: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 10 am-4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Families with special needs children do hands-on activities, listen to music, and make art.

Scavenger hunt: McCarren Park, Driggs Avenue and Lorimer Street; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Search for hidden treasures.

Junior Engineers: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 14.

"Mr. Tiger Goes Wild": Power-



Photo by Arthur De Gaeta

Let's go fly a kite!

Go fly a kite, literally. Come on down to the Kite Festival at Brooklyn Bridge Park on Sept. 14 and watch them soar.

No matter the color or the shape — there's the diamond, box, winged box, sled, delta, and power kite — they will all be flying high

at Brooklyn Bridge Park. Families can bring their own, purchase one at this fun annual event, or just watch others' soar high.

Kite Festival on Sept. 14 from 10 am to 1 pm. Free.

Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 1 (Old Fulton and Furman streets in Brooklyn Heights; www.nycgovparks.org)

House Arena, 37 Main St. at Water Street; (718) 666-3049; www.powerhousearena.com; 3-4 pm; Free.

Author Peter Brown launches his new children's book. RSVP requested.

MON, SEPT. 16

Pre-GED registration: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.jsp?branchpageid=265; 5 pm; Free.

Register for classes. Discharge papers required for 17 year olds. Proof of age required.

SAT, SEPT. 21

Bounce Back to School Carnival: PS 9 Playground, 80 Underhill Ave. at St. Marks Place; www.ps9brooklyn.org; 11 am-5 pm; \$5 (\$2 children and free under 2).

This PS 9 fund-raiser features bounce houses, face painting, carnival games,

an outdoor dance party by Baby Loves Disco, and food and drinks.

"Charlotte's Web": BAM Kids Peter Jay Sharp Building, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 11 am; \$7 (\$9 adults).

The 1973 film and the recent 2006 remake playing simultaneously.

Sukkot: 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.

Explore the traditions of this holiday with fun activities.

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

Celebrate the sassiness of city kids and listen to Meredith Wright's original tunes.

"Inside-Outside": New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermer-

horn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 years and older read the book then make their own colorful book.

"Curious George": Barnes & Noble, 267 Seventh Ave.; (718) 832-9066; www.barnesandnoble.com; 2 pm; Free.

Children enjoy reading the mischievous monkey's tales.

We build New York: 2:30-4 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 14.

Camping: Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; 6 pm-7 am; Free.

Enjoy a sleep-out under the stars. Families are chosen by lottery.

SUN, SEPT. 22

Sukkot: 11:30 am-12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 21.

Harvest day: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; 1-4 pm; \$3.

Have fun and harvest, cook and eat the potatoes that were planted in spring, then work it off in a potato sack race.

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

Melanie Hope Greenberg reads her children's books, "Down in the Subway," and "Mermaids on Parade." For children 5 years and older.

TUES, SEPT. 24

Holiday offerings: 11 am and 2:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Sept. 5.

WED, SEPT. 25

Holiday offerings: 11 am and 2:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Sept. 5.

Admission workshop: Brownstone Tutors, 354 Court St. at Union Street; (347) 709-2258; info@nycadmissionsolutions.com; 6-7:30 pm; Free.

Parents of middle school children learn about the 10 myths of high school admission. RSVP is required. Space is limited.

THURS, SEPT. 26

Ezra Jack Keats: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, Flatbush Ave. at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza; (718) 230-2100; [70 BROOKLYN FAMILY • September 2013](http://www.brooklynpub-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

liclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.jsp?branchpageid=265; 7 pm; Free.

Bedtime stories for children 3 to 7 years old.

SAT, SEPT. 28

5K run: 69th Street Pier, 69th Street and Narrows Road; (917) 968-0799; Samantha@pietrosfight.org; www.pietrosfight.org; 9 am; \$30 (\$10 children, under age 4 free).

Benefitting Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

Sukkot: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 21.

Home sweet home: 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.

Children learn about homes from around the world.

Art workshop: 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 of all ages have fun designing their own Bus Depot logos.

We build New York: 2:30–4 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 14.

SUN, SEPT. 29

Annual Bus Festival: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; transitmuseumpress@nycct.com; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 11 am–5 pm; \$1.

Explore city buses of yesteryear during the Atlantic Antic.

Sukkot: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 21.

Home sweet home: 11:30 am–12:30 pm and 2:30–3:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 28.

Atlantic Antic: Local Development Corporation, 494 Atlantic Ave. between Nevins Street and Third Avenue; (718) 875-8993; atlanticave.org/atlantic-antic/about-the-antic; Noon–6 pm; Free.

The mile-long street festival returns, featuring more than 500 vendors and 10 music stages from Hicks Street to Fourth Avenue.

Disco Party: Greenwood Park, 555 Seventh Ave. between 19th and 20th streets; www.greenwoodparkbbk.com; Noon to 3 pm; Free.

Author Betsy Bird hosts a giant dance party with Monica Rodriguez helping to make glitter bottle cap magnets and



Time with Mr. Tiger

Mr. Tiger and author Peter Brown roar into PowerHouse Arena on Sept. 15 to launch this latest adventure.

Are you bored with being proper? Do you want to have more fun? Mr. Tiger understands. But does he go too far? Find out in “Mr. Tiger Goes Wild,” by Peter Brown.

musician DJ Misbehaviour providing the dance music.

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

Children prepare to go to school. Six-week course offers learning materials, music, and fun activities. For children 3 to 5 years old with caregiver.

LONG-RUNNING

“Album Tracks, Subway Record Covers”: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; Tuesdays – Fridays, 10 am–4 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 11 am–5 pm.; \$7 (\$5 children and seniors).

Exhibition celebrates album artwork that features the New York City subway and elevated system.

Ride the Carousel: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Thursdays –

Mr. Tiger learns that there is a time and place for everything, even going wild.

Author of “Mr. Tiger Goes Wild” Peter Brown at PowerHouse Arena on Sept. 15, 3 to 4 pm. Admission is free. RSVP requested.

PowerHouse Arena [37 Main St. at Water Street in Dumbo, (718) 666-3049; www.powerhousearena.com].

Sundays, Noon–5 pm, Now – Sun, Nov. 10; \$2 per ride.

It's open! The beautiful 101-year-old ride is up and running for little children to enjoy.

Greenmarket: Barclays Center, 620 Atlantic Ave. at Pacific Street; (917) 618-6100; www.barclayscenter.com; Wednesdays, 8 am–4 pm, Now – Wed, Nov. 27; Free.

Featuring locally grown produce, cooking demonstrations, and family-friendly activities.

Nature on the Go: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Thursdays and Fridays, 1–2 pm, Now – Thurs, Sept. 26; Free.

A naturalist leads children and families around the center, where they learn about what's all around the park.

Naturalism lesson: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Thursdays and Fridays, 2–3 pm, Now – Thurs, Sept. 26; Free.

Learn how to make your own journal

and use binoculars and field guides.

Animal encounter: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Thursdays and Fridays, 2–2:30 pm, Now – Fri, Oct. 4; Free.

Meet Snappy the turtle and learn about the animals at the park.

Blooming naturalist: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Thursdays and Fridays, 2–3 pm, Now – Fri, Sept. 27; Free.

Make your own journal, learn how to use binoculars and field guides.

History in your hands: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 1–2 pm, Sat, Sept. 7 – Sun, Oct. 6; \$3 (Children free).

Children learn how to process wool into yarn, card, spin and use a drop spindle and even make a felt ball to take home.

Discovery Mornings: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; Tuesdays – Fridays, 10 am–noon, Tues, Sept. 17 – Thurs, Oct. 31; Free with general admission.

Children are encouraged to explore the garden and listen to stories.

Try it Tuesdays: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays, 11:30 am–12:30 pm and 2:30–3:30 pm, Mon, Sept. 16 – Tues, Oct. 29; Free with museum admission.

Children try their hand in science, art and language in a fun new way.

Bug out!: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays, 11:30 am–12:30 pm and 2:30–3:30 pm, Mon, Sept. 16 – Tues, Oct. 29; Free with museum admission.

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

Sensory room: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11:30 am–12:30 pm and 2:30–3:30 pm, Mon, Sept. 16 – Tues, Oct. 29; Free with museum admission.

For children with autism spectrum disorder and their families. Space limited — first come, first served.

Nature tots: Brooklyn Children's

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Calendar

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Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Wednesdays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Wed, Sept. 18 - Wed, Oct. 30; Free with museum admission.

Children learn about the living and non-living things that are on the planet.

Touch tank: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Wed, Sept. 18 - Wed, Oct. 30; Free with museum admission.

Children of all ages touch a starfish, a horseshoe crab, or a sea snail.

Tales of Wonder: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Thursdays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Thurs, Sept. 19 - Thurs, Oct. 31; Free with museum admission.

Travel to far away places in your imagination.

Feeding Frenzy: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Thursdays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Thurs, Sept. 19 - Thurs, Oct. 31; Free with museum admission.

Hop up for the Pop Ups

Hop up for the Pop Ups in concert at the Museum of Jewish Heritage on Sept. 8.

Rock into the New Year with Jason Rabinowitz and Jacob Stein, the Pop Ups, for a special Rosh Hashana concert. The Brooklyn-based, too-cool-for-school indie rock band rocks out titles from its latest album, "Radio Jungle," and debut album "Outside Voices," to the delight of children 3 to 10 years old. Children can also make fun crafts.

The Pop Ups on Sept. 8 at 2 pm (craft-making from 1 to 4 pm). Tickets are \$10; \$7 for children ages 10 and younger; and \$7 for museum members (\$5 member children under 10).

The Museum of Jewish Heritage [33 Battery Pl. at First Place in Battery Park City, (646) 437-4202; www.mjhnyc.org].



Photo by Eric Waterman

Come and see what the museum's animals eat.

Art kids: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Fridays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Fri, Sept. 20 - Fri, Nov. 1;

Free with museum admission.

Children explore a new style of art each week.

National Grid's Earthworks:

Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue;

(718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Sat, Sept. 21 - Sun, Nov. 3; Free with museum admission.

Children learn about harvesting and gardening.

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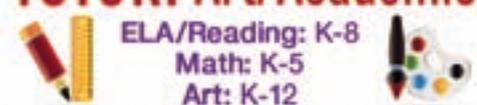
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New & Noteworthy

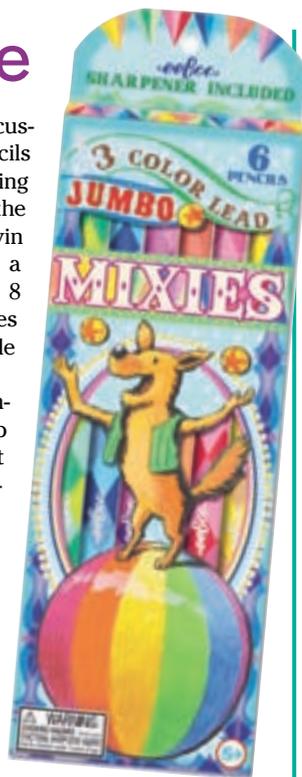
BY LISA J. CURTIS

Drawing the line

Step right up and behold Eeboo's new circus-themed sketchbook and matching colored pencils — must-have, after-school supplies for inspiring creativity. Recommended for ages 3 and up, the sketchbook's colorful cover illustration by Kevin Hawkes is accented with glitter that evokes a sparkling performance under the big top. The 8 1/2- by 11-inch, spiral bound pad offers 60 pages of thick, high-quality paper that will entice little ones to create.

The box of six "Circus Jumbo Mixies" pencils includes a sharpener wide enough for the large grip implements. Each one has three-color lead that reminded me of my favorite childhood art supplies, although Eeboo's are much more sophisticated — the green, yellow, orange, red, purple, and blue pencils are wrapped in a coordinating harlequin patterns reminiscent of vintage clown costumes! The mixed lead lends a depth to the lines — like ombre fabric. Their only downside is that you may not want to share 'em.

Eeboo Circus 6 Jumbo Mixies Pencils, \$7.50, and Eeboo Circus Sketchbook, \$6, on GeniusBabies.com after Sept. 15.

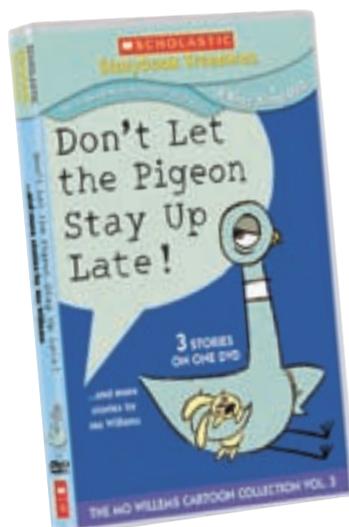


Enjoy a Mo movie night

For a movie night that the whole family will enjoy, pop in the new DVD, "Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late!" Scholastic Storybook Treasure's animated adaptation of three of Mo Willems children's books. In addition to the title cartoon, there are animated versions of "Knuffle Bunny Free: An Unexpected Diversion" (which had this sentimental

mom weeping over the poignant tale of a little girl who loses her lovey and later demonstrates that she's growing up fast) and "Edwina, the Dinosaur Who Didn't Know She Was Extinct." In "Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late!," Willems and author Jon Scieszka (of "The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales" fame) lend their voices to the story of the stubborn pigeon who pleads with the viewer to be allowed to stay up just a little bit longer, and Willems is joined by the voices of his wife, Cher, and daughter, Trixie, for "Knuffle Bunny Free." The bonus features include an interview with the charming author-illustrator Willems and a recipe for Edwina's chocolate chip cookies. The read-along function — think: subtitles — will even have you patting yourself on the back, because it's encouraging your child to read! This DVD is recommended for ages 2–8 and the caregivers who adore them.

"Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late! ... and More Stories by Mo Willems" DVD, \$14.95, www.amazon.com.



Loving Spuni-fuls

Spuni inventors Marcel Botha and Trevor Hardy have done the seemingly impossible: they have invented a more efficient spoon for babies transitioning to pureed foods. Dubbed "the first latching spoon for infants," Spuni's original design encourages babies to suck food off its surface, which is made from a medical grade thermoplastic elastomer outer layer. (It's the same material used for pacifiers and bottle nipples.) Designed in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the utensil features a long, pliable neck and a tapered, squarish bowl. Our 10-month-old tester, Parker Pettenato, was able to

get more food into his mouth with each Spuni-ful, and was soon opening wide in anticipation of the next scoop. Spunis come in sets of two: neon and playful pink; bouncing blue and oops! orange; bubbly blue and lucky lemon; and giggly green and peekaboo purple. Now, who wants to open up for the chew-chew train?

Set of 2 Spuni, \$18, www.spuni.com.



The 'ham' in 'Hamlet'

The return of September means it's time to get back to the books. With "The Ghastly Dandies Do the Classics," the reader will enjoy seven tales inspired by great works of literature that reveal the quirky, cheeky perspective of author-illustrator Ben Gibson. In this, his first children's book, extremely condensed versions of the stories of Don Quixote; Dr. Frankenstein; Gatsby; Ishmael and Captain Ahab; Hamlet; Sherlock Holmes; and Mr. Darcy are told via dapper monsters — as the title implies. Even Gibson's text is



rendered in an exciting variety of sizes, colors and fonts. The silly, sweet illustrations are crammed with lots of texture, pattern and color. "The Ghastly Dandies" is truly a wonderful gift for all ages; beginning readers and high school students alike will be charmed as Ishmael wisely counsels Ahab, "Let's go back to New Bedford for supper, Captain. Rhubarb pie tastes much better than revenge."

"The Ghastly Dandies Do the Classics" By Ben Gibson, Razorbill, \$13.46, www.barnesandnoble.com.

England's calling

Frances England's enchanting new CD, "Blink of an Eye," is a soft, sweet acoustic pop invitation to slow down and appreciate the joy of catching a glimpse of a firefly (in the title song) or the fleeting nature of childhood ("Little Wings").

There will be confusing disappointments in life, so the singer-songwriter's "Tell Me It All" is a reminder that there is someone who wants to lend a friendly ear and help that little

person dust themselves off and try again. And they can start by joining in on the fun percussion of "Move Like Saturday Night." Recommended for ages 5 to 12, "Blink of an Eye" is a quiet pleasure the family will spin again and again.

"Blink of an Eye" CD by Frances England, \$13.99, www.francesengland.com.



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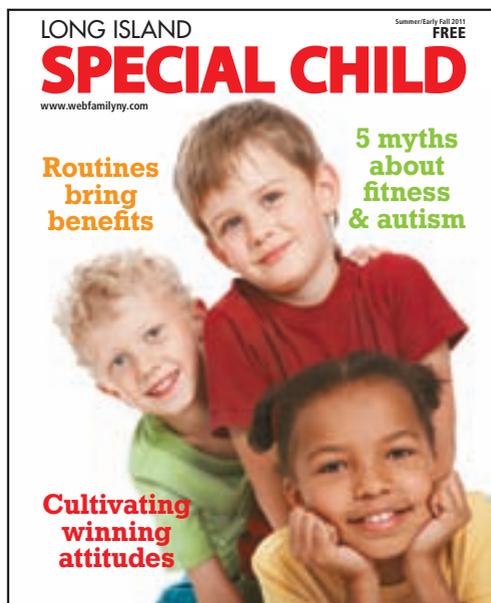
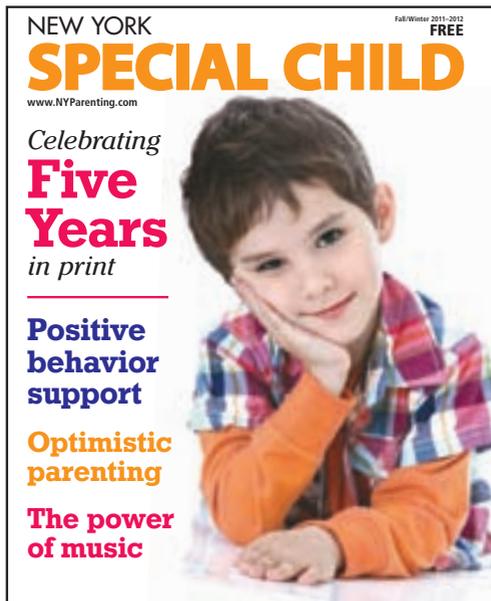
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