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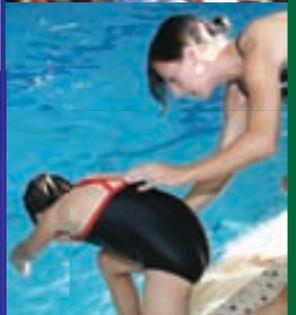
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FEATURES

- 8 Party for the planet**
Five Earth Day parties that pay it forward
BY DR. HEIDI SMITH LUEDTKE
- 10 Raising global citizens**
Eleven ways to remind kids we all share planet earth
BY CHRISTINA KATZ
- 12 Upcycled Easter crafts**
BY CHRISTINA KATZ
- 14 Good eats**
City kids lighten up and eat their veggies
BY ALLISON PLITT
- 20 This is National Childhood Abuse Prevention Month**
BY ALEXA BIGWARFE
- 22 Camper to camper**
Advice for newbies from seasoned kids
BY KIMBERLY CARLSON
- 38 Growing little entrepreneurs**
How kids have turned creative ideas into businesses
BY TAMMY SCILEPPI
- 40 Summer doldrums**
How to turn spoiled dreams into sweet memories
BY JUDY M. MILLER
- 45 Taxes & childcare**
What parents should know about tidying up their taxes
BY STEPHANIE BREEDLOVE
- 56 SAT in flux**
Why the College Board is making changes to the SAT
BY FRANCES KWELLER
- 60 Camp anxiety, parent division**
Feeling nervous as your child heads off to camp?
BY DR. HEIDI SMITH LUEDTKE
- 64 Off the books**
With two years experience, a father tells new parents what to expect
BY TIM PERRINS
- 74 Fighting childhood obesity in America**
BY JENNY TORGERSON



COLUMNS

- 16 Good Sense Eating**
BY CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD
- 18 Ask an Attorney**
BY ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER, ESQ.
- 36 New & Noteworthy**
BY LISA J. CURTIS
- 42 Parents Helping Parents**
BY SHARON C. PETERS
- 43 Healthy Living**
BY DANIELLE SULLIVAN
- 44 The Book Worm**
BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER
- 46 FabuLYSS Finds**
BY LYSS STERN
- 48 Divorce & Separation**
BY LEE CHABIN, ESQ.
- 49 Dear Teacher**
BY PEGGY GISLER AND MARGE EBERTS
- 50 A Letter from College**
BY AGLAIA HO
- 51 Death by Children**
BY CHRIS GARLINGTON
- 52 Family Journal**
BY ROBERT MORTON
- 53 Just Write Mom**
BY DANIELLE SULLIVAN
- 54 Dear Dr. Karyn**
BY DR. KARYN GORDON
- 58 Growing Up Online**
BY CAROLYN JABS
- 59 Lions and Tigers and Teens**
BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL
- 62 Mommy 101**
BY ANGELICA SEREDA
- 63 Family Health**
BY DR. PRAMOD NARULA, MD

CALENDAR

66 April Events

SPECIAL SECTIONS

- 24 Summer Camps/Programs Directory**
- 72 Party Planners**
- 73 The Marketplace**

Letter from the publisher

Loving the Earth

Every year we at *New York Parenting* join in the annual celebration of our planet and we encourage all the families in our communities to do so as well.

In this issue author Christina Katz has eleven ways to help us

raise global citizens. In addition Dr. Heidi Smith Luedtke gives us ideas for five Earth Day parties to reinforce the idea of going green.

We can't emphasize this enough for our children, that is, the importance of this being a priority for their future and the future of their children. Oscar Hammerstein, the great librettist and humanist, said it so eloquently, "You have to be carefully taught." We must carefully and pur-



posefully teach our children by example most of all, how to nurture our world/their world.

We must bend down and pick up the discarded trash and papers, even if someone else did it. We must form cleanup committees and get block efforts going in beautifying our communities. We must not only recycle but we should compost. We must make less waste and value longevity in the items we possess. Too much trash, too much new stuff is the mantra of our times and it was really great to remember a time when things sold themselves by the advertisement "made to last a lifetime."

We're getting better although as I go around the city I'm still seeing

plastic bags in the trees and cigarette butts all over the sidewalks. What makes a person who is otherwise a solid citizen throw their refuse out of their car windows and/or on to the sidewalk? What kind of carelessness is this? I see it as the "I couldn't care less" mode of thinking and acting. Shameful stuff.

I would like to challenge all my neighbors to bend down and pick it up and get your children in the plan too. Next time you go shopping make sure you have your own bags with you and eliminate the need to have them pack your things in plastic. Other cities have banned them entirely. We should be on that wavelength too.

Having your own cup will eliminate the need for all these discarded cups. Have your own and let them fill your coffee or tea or whatever in a

cup that you will take home or to the workplace and wash out. Save the earth! Save the unnecessary trash that we produce and the clutter that it brings to our surroundings. If everyone did something we could make a huge dent in the present horror of contemporary waste.

I know I'm not alone and that if we work together and we get our families in on the plan that we can make a striking change that will launch around our globe. Everyone has a part to play. Everyone counts.

Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
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New York Parenting collects nine awards



Our publisher, Susan Weiss, proudly accepted nine Awards for Excellence from the *Parenting Media Association* at the dinner held in Philadelphia, Pa. on March 1, 2014.

She was thrilled to once again be present to receive these honors as the Executive Editor on behalf of our contributing writers and design team.

Our publications won awards in all three levels, Gold, Silver and Bronze, in the arena of cover design, as well as for content in our columns, articles, and calendar.

Manhattan Family was a winner for large circulation in several categories as was *Brooklyn Family*, with both *Staten Island Family* and *Bronx/Riverdale Family* also garnering recognition in the midsize circulation group. Our pioneering magazine in the special needs genre, *New York Special Child* was honored with a cover award for our Fall/Winter issue.

Congratulations to all the members of our team, but particularly to those named in the winning categories! They include writers Danielle Sullivan (a double winner), Tim Perrins, Alison Besunder, Lee Chabin, Tammy Scileppi (also a double winner), and our art director, Leah Mitch.

This event culminated the last year of the presidency of the Parenting Media Association for Susan as she handed over the gavel to the incoming president, Sarah Taylor of Metro Family magazine in Oklahoma City. Susan still retains a board position as she has for the past seven years.

In recognition of her years of service to the organization, a special plaque was presented to Susan in a very moving ceremony, and after she thanked everyone and made sincere remarks about the pleasure her years of service to the organization have meant to her, she was given a rousing standing



(Top) Sharon Noble and Susan Weiss with New York Parenting Media's awards. (Above) Susan Weiss with Parenting Media Association Executive Director C. James Dowden and incoming president Sarah Taylor.

ovation.

The awards are judged by a team of 26 from the University of Missouri School of Journalism, and this year, the panel of judges reviewed more than 700 entries from across the US, Canada, and Australia.

It was a wonderful night for our Sales Manager Sharon Noble and publisher. They look forward to next year and hopefully even more recognition for the wonderful staff of talented people who contribute to *New York Parenting*.

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Party for the planet

Five Earth Day parties that pay it forward

BY DR. HEIDI SMITH LUEDTKE

Our kids will be living on this planet long after we're gone, so they should learn to care for it. Why not throw a party to celebrate Earth Day, April 22, and use it to reinforce the importance of going green? Kids will have fun and make a difference in the environment with these Happy Earth Day party options.

Red-light, green-light

The facts: If each American family replaced just one traditional incandescent bulb with a Compact Fluorescent Light bulb, we'd save enough energy to light three million homes for a year and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by nine billion pounds, an

amount equivalent to the emissions of more than 800,000 cars.

Big bonus: This bulb lasts six times longer than an incandescent bulb and saves more than \$40 in lifetime electricity costs. Learn more at www.energystar.gov.

The fun: Host a twilight potluck block party and green-up the neighborhood. Purchase a case of Energy Star approved Compact Fluorescent bulbs at a home supply store. (A box of 48 bulbs costs around \$90.) Ask each family to purchase one or more energy-efficient bulbs and head home to green up their porch light before dark. Bask in the earth-friendly glow while you get to know the neighbors.

Pay it forward: At night's end, donate proceeds from bulb sales (and any additional donations) to a com-

munity program that subsidizes energy bills for low-income families or seniors. Ask \$5 per bulb, and you'll cover your costs and donate \$150.

Read it again!

The facts: Forty-two percent of American families with children can't afford food, clothing, or rent. That means they can't afford children's books, which cost between \$5 and \$25 in retail stores. Studies show limited access to print diminishes kids' motivation to read and their academic performance. Fortunately, there are many ways to donate old reads to those in need.

The fun: Host a bookish bash for your kids and their friends. Invite (pajama-clad) partiers of all ages to bring books they've outgrown and get several goofy grownups to read kids' favorites aloud. Use your silliest voices and outrageous props to make this a story time to remember.

Pay it forward: When the party's over, donate guests' well-loved books to Reading Tree (www.readingtree.org), a charity that distributes used books to underfunded libraries and schools in the U.S. and overseas. If there isn't a drop-off site in your area, ship your donations to Sheltering Books (www.shelteringbooks.org), a kid-created non-profit that provides books to residents of homeless shelters across America.

Choosing a charity

Whether you're donating money, material goods or time, you want maximum impact. Here are some things to consider:

- Can you keep it local? National charities often have greater visibility, but there are probably several worthy organizations close to your home. Keeping it local makes it easier for kids to see (and maybe even touch) those they've helped.
- Is the charity financially re-

sponsible? Non-profit organizations vary. Some use resources very efficiently, spending little on overhead and advertising. Others spend less than half their money on actual programs.

To find local and national charities related to issues that interest you and identify smart spenders, visit www.charitynavigator.org. Its four-star rating system will help you get the biggest bang for your buck.

Make a splash

The facts: The oceans cover 71 percent of the Earth's surface and contain 97 percent of its water, but they're under threat. Pollution and over-fishing destroy the habitats of many marine species, and some types of whales, dolphins, manatees, sea turtles, and sharks are endangered. And global climate changes mean rising water levels and temperatures.

The fun: Screen a sea-worthy film like the documentary "Oceans" (2009) or "IMAX: Deep Sea" (2010) at a water-themed celebration. Guests will have a whale of a time eating ocean-inspired treats while they view exhilarating underwater footage. Serve goldfish crackers and gummi sharks or make starfish sundaes. (Decorate small, star-shaped sugar cookies with colored sprinkles and stick 'em on ice cream "rocks.")

Pay it forward: In lieu of ticket sales, collect donations. Send them to the Ocean Conservancy (www.oceanconservancy.org), a marine-wildlife rescue (such as the Turtle Island Restoration Network, www.seaturtles.org) or a local waterways or wetlands preservation project.

Save a species

The facts: No one knows exactly how many species become extinct each year, but experts estimate the rapid loss of species we are seeing today is 1,000 to 10,000 times higher than the natural extinction rate. In the US, 619 animals and 817 plants are threatened or in danger of extinction. Find out which ones are endangered in your area using the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's interactive map (www.fws.gov).

The fun: Choose an endangered animal that excites your kids — how about bats, frogs, birds, or wolves? — and throw a save-the-species

soiree. Let kids decorate with animal pictures and fun facts they find online. Plan games and activities around your animal theme, or get a long sheet of butcher paper and let the kids paint a mural depicting the endangered guest of honor.

Pay it forward: Collect donations from guests to send to a related charitable organization. Need ideas? Consider the American Bird Conservancy (www.abcbirds.org) or the Wildlife Conservation Network (www.wildnet.org).

Flutter by, butterfly

The facts: Butterflies are beautiful and fragile indicators of ecosystem health. They pollinate wild plants and agricultural crops, ensuring animals and people have food to eat. And butterflies themselves are a valuable source of food for songbirds. Learn more at www.zoo.org.

The fun: Plan and plant a butterfly garden at your school or in your neighborhood. Pick a sunny spot and let kids dig in the dirt and plant flowering nectar sources like asters, cornflowers, dogbane, goldenrod, and zinnias. Be sure to include plants that provide food for butterfly larvae, too (clover, milkweed and passion vine are good options). Place several, large flat rocks in the garden, so the butterflies can sun themselves after feasting and add a watering hole for thirsty guests.

Pay it forward: Plan a monthly or quarterly butterfly garden party to clear out debris, plant new flowers, and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine. Strong community ties are good for you, your kids, and the planet we call home.

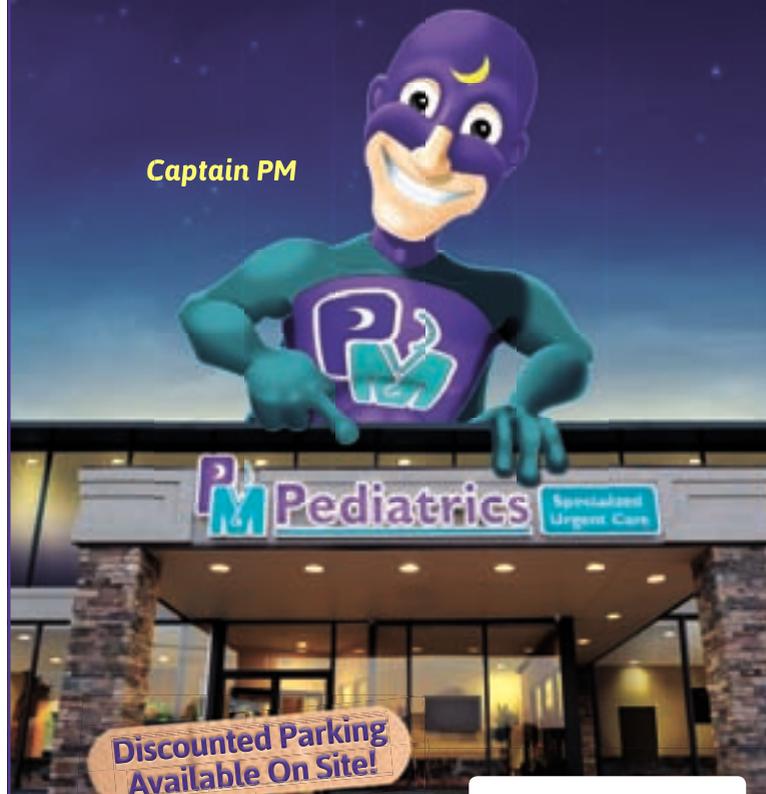
Psychologist Heidi Smith Luedtke loves to scuba dive and search for seashells with her kids. She is the author of "Detachment Parenting."

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Raising global citizens

Eleven ways
to remind
kids we all
share planet
earth

BY CHRISTINA KATZ

Every April 22, we celebrate Earth Day all over the globe. But this Earth Day, before you remind your kids about the importance of conservation, planting trees, and recycling, why not remind them of a few profound truths about what it means to be a human being living on planet earth? If you can instill a healthy amount of awe in your kids about living on earth, you likely won't have to work as hard to get them to consume less, dig in the dirt more, and sort their trash.

According to worldometers.info, there are more than seven billion people on the planet already and that number is expected to grow to nine billion by 2042. Think about it. Right now and on any given day, we are part of this vast collection of humanity sharing a tiny globe that orbits the sun at a rate of about 30 kilometers per second (or 18 and a half miles per second). As we zoom around the sun, the planet that we are standing on is constantly spinning on its axis, one full turn per day.

If this information doesn't get your kids' minds spinning about the daily



scientific miracle of life on earth, I don't know what will. But how often do parents stop and consider our place in the larger scheme of things? Considering the length of our to-do lists, probably not often enough. So these reminders are not just for kids — they are for the benefit of the whole family.

Here's what parents can do to instill a healthy appreciation for planet earth in the hustle and bustle of our busy lives: we can slow down, pay attention to the miracle that is our life on earth, and raise our family's consciousness about our humble place in the vast scheme of things.

You might think, "But I don't want my child to feel inconsequential and overwhelmed." Don't worry. Learning about the world and our place in the universe has an inspiring affect on kids, and teaching them will likely inspire you to want to learn more, too.

Ready to remind your family that we all share planet earth? It's easier than you might think. Weave a glimpse of the universe into your home décor. Bring some globally minded toys to your kid's bedroom. Let children see for themselves that although we all matter, no one person is the center of

the universe. Here's how:

- Display a large, flat map of the world prominently in your home.
- Keep a globe within reach.
- Hang a mobile of the solar system.
- Get a telescope or visit an observatory.
- Take virtual trips around the globe together using Google Earth.
- Watch A&E Television Network's "Spaceship Earth" as a family (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009505PX4/ref=dv_dp_ep6).
- Display a "you are here" image of our place in the galaxy.
- Subscribe to National Geographic Kids or National Geographic Little Kids magazine.
- Watch the documentary "Babies" with the whole family.
- Take a trip to the closest science museum and visit the planetarium.
- Read "Horton Hears A Who" and "The Lorax" by Dr. Seuss out loud every year on Earth Day.

Christina Katz loves being a member of the human race. Her latest book is "Permission Granted, 45 Reasons To Micro-publish," which presents her vision of a publishing model that creates less waste and is easier on the planet.

More resources

Use these books and toys to help raise little global citizens:

"National Geographic Kids, First Big Book Of Space" by Catherine D. Hughes and David A. Aguilar

"I Never Forget A Face" Matching Game with children's faces from around the world by Eeboo
Forty-eight-piece Solar Sys-

tem Floor Puzzle by Melissa and Doug

"If The World Were A Village, A Book About The World's People" by David J. Smith, Illustrated by Shelaugh Armstrong

"Children Just Like Me, A Unique Celebration Of Children Around The World" by Anabel and Barnabas Kindersley.

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Upcycled Easter crafts

BY CHRISTINA KATZ

With Easter and Earth Day falling within days of each other this year — why not channel your family's energy into the creation of upcycled Easter crafts?

Upcycling refers to finding fresh uses for old things in ways that increase the value of the items. The victory is when you create instead of consume. Once you upcycle your Easter, your kids will not only learn an important lesson that will last a lifetime, but they will also likely start begging for more opportunities to re-imagine everyday items that

would otherwise be discarded.

So what are you waiting for? Celebrate Easter and Earth Day at the same time every year. Here are five ideas to get your started:

“Welcome Spring” banner. Using whatever leftover garden twine, string, or thin ribbon you have on hand. Cut 18 banner-shaped triangles from leftover newspaper. Lay the string across the length of a table and starting at one end, fold the widest end of each triangle over the string and adhere with a glue stick. Outline letters to spell “Welcome Spring,” leaving a triangle blank between the words, and let the kids color the letters in with thick black markers. Have a couple of extra triangles on hand in case of errors. Hang your banner prominently, where it can be viewed until summer arrives, then fold it flat and put it away until next year.

Colorful candleholders. Collect recyclable, wide-mouth jars of all shapes and sizes. First, remove any labels and tags, then run your glass jars through the dishwasher. Next, gather whatever colorful leftover tissue paper you have and tear it into half-inch squares. Using Mod Podge or white glue that has been diluted to half-strength with water, coat the jar with a thin layer of glue, then add a colorful layer of overlapping tissue pieces as you go. When the jar is covered, go over the tissue layer once more with a thin coat of glue. When completely dry, add a tea light to each lantern and arrange them on the mantle or in

the center of your dining table for the night before Easter.

Tiny toy wreath. After a hearty round of spring cleaning, this playful wreath is a perfect way to create a new home for tiny plastic toys. Start with a wire wreath shape and wrap it in a long strip of old fabric, using a hot glue gun to secure the fabric to frame. Have kids help with the selection and sorting of the little toys and designate one person to be in charge of gluing toys to the wreath. Let dry, then hang. Create one shared family wreath or create a tiny toy wreath for each child's room.

Terrarium garden starters. Why should the turtles have all the fun? Use an old fish tank or an old glass baking dish (from home or the local thrift store) lined with one inch of gravel and two inches of lightweight potting soil. Cut up leftover cardboard egg cartons you have saved, and push them down into the soil and fill to just barely covered with soil. Plant seed starters for the flower or veggie garden in the egg “pots.” They can be pulled out after they sprout and replanted outdoors.

Decorate your terrarium with cut patches of moss or grass from outdoors. Send children out to gather bark and sticks. Then let your child finish the look with rocks, shells, and old toys. Place your terrarium in bright but indirect light and keep well misted with water from a spray bottle until seeds sprout.

Bookish eggs. It's time for some of those plastic Easter eggs that have been piling up over the years to get a literary makeover. When a favorite volume is damaged by rain or a spill, you might be tempted to throw it out. But next time, try drying the book by hanging it open, and then cut out any clean pages. Cut each page into a strip, just a bit wider than the egg and long enough to go all the way around. Paint the middle of the paper with Mod Podge and roll it around the egg. Let it dry while you move on to the next egg. Then come back around and make straight cuts into the paper from each end of the egg, so the pieces of paper will lay flat onto the tapered ends of the egg after being painted with more Mod Podge. Let dry, and *voila*, your children will remember their favorite books each year!

Christina Katz never gets tired of making a fresh start every spring in fun and creative ways. Her latest book is “Permission Granted, 45 Reasons to Micro-publish.”

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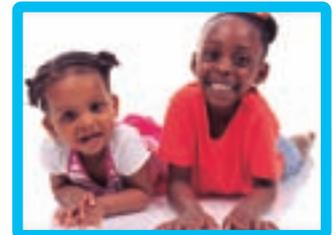
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Good eats

City kids lighten up and eat their veggies

BY ALLISON PLITT

For decades, there's been an increasing obesity rate in children, but in 2011, there was a reported decline in obesity in New York City schoolchildren spanning kindergarten through eighth grade. In fact, the obesity rate for this age group fell by 5.5 percent over a five year period, though it continued to climb for New York City teenagers and adults.

New York City officials were especially ecstatic over the drop in obesity for young children because of their recent attempts to combat obesity — putting calorie counts on menus at restaurants, an advertising campaign against sugary sodas, restrictions on school vending machines, and adding salad bars to some school cafeterias.

The decline in obesity was documented by the city during the public schools' annual physical education tests that are now completed by most of the city's kindergarten through eighth grade students.

City officials also observed trends among the participating schoolchildren. By age group, the decline was highest among 5- and 6-year-olds at 9.9 percent. By race, the drop in obesity was highest among whites (12.5 percent) and Asian children (7.6 percent), and lower for Hispanic (3.4 percent) and black (1.9 percent) children.

Dr. Marlene Schwartz, deputy director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale University, concluded that younger children, who respond better to adult direction, and children from more

affluent families, which have the resources to change, were easiest to reach.

It may appear that there is a great disparity in public schools in obesity rates among children of different socioeconomic backgrounds. First Lady Michelle Obama has led a nationwide push to change young children's eating and exercise habits in 10,000 child care centers across the country, and many of these participating child care centers, including some in the New York City area, are in low-income communities.

In August 2013, a government report was issued stating that for the first time in decades, obesity rates among preschool-age children from poor families fell in 19 states, including New York, between 2008 and 2011. Some of the reasons for the change were attributed to Obama's initiative, an increase in breast-feeding, a drop in mothers giving their children sugary fruit juices, and changes in the food offered in federal nutrition programs for women and children.

Buoyed by such positive feedback, city officials now seem to be praising every suggestion possible in an effort to get parents to teach their young children about good eating habits. New insights in the crusade against obesity are now being researched and studied, but some of the information being published nowadays appears to be questionably beneficial.

For example, a new study published in the *Journal of Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* recommends the strategy of pairing a new food with something a person already

likes, which is referred to as "associative conditioning." The study states that if parents give their children a new vegetable to eat, the child will not likely consume it by itself. However, if that child is given cream cheese to dip the vegetable into, then the child will be more likely to eat the vegetable.

The premise of the study sounds simple, but after you read in detail what actually happened during the data collection, you can take some grains of wisdom from the results and disregard the study's dubious testing tactics. To begin with, 29 children (13 boys and 16 girls) aged 3 to 5 years were included in the data analyses. They were served food in a school room setting starting at 9 am. Children received the vegetable snack five days a week, from Monday through Friday.

Children were put into groups of five or six each and seated in different rooms, so they would not be influenced by another group's opinion. All the children were first served Brussels sprouts alone. Next, they were served the sprouts with cream cheese, and then later they were served the vegetable with sweetened cream cheese. The same tests were done with cauliflower. All the vegetables were cooked in boiling water for up to seven minutes. Each vegetable (alone or with cream cheese) was tested for seven days.

According to the results, the children liked Brussels sprouts more with cream cheese. (Whether it was sweetened or unsweetened did not matter.) As for cauliflower, there were no significant differences



among the children in liking the vegetable alone or with cream cheese. Researchers believe the children's more pronounced liking of Brussels sprouts with cream cheese was due to the fact that it was the more bitter vegetable.

When I spoke with Dr. Dyan Hes, medical director of Gramercy Pediatrics and an obesity specialist on the American Board of Obesity Medicine, about the study.

She said she didn't like the idea of vegetables being eaten with cream cheese, because she said a food should not be sweetened just so a child will like it. Believing that children should be exposed to and enjoy a variety of tastes, Dr. Hes says her children come home from school "craving lentil soup." She said recent research studies also found that children who were breast-fed as babies were more inclined to eat a greater variety of flavors.

I commented on the fact that cream cheese was high in fat, but when I put olive oil, salt, and pepper on the Brussels sprouts and then roasted them in my oven, my daughter loved them.

Dr. Hes also critiqued the study because she felt that the number of children evaluated was too small. Nevertheless, she thought the 3 to 5 year age range for taste testing was perfect.

"It's better to start them earlier," Dr. Hes said.

Another aspect of the study that Dr. Hes liked was that the evaluations were conducted in classrooms. If a child is served Brussels sprouts at school, Dr. Hes thinks that child will be more likely to eat them at home as well.

In sum, the study of "associative conditioning" isn't perfect, but the lessons learned from it are invaluable: start children eating a variety of healthy foods at an early age, to ward off obesity in the future.

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



GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

The taste of health

Like beauty, taste can be in the eye of the beholder. What tastes scrumptious to you may taste “yucky” to your child. Sadly, if the food you serve does not taste good, your family may not eat it, regardless of its nutritional content or how long you slaved in the kitchen.

“Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right” is this year’s National Nutrition Month® theme. National Nutrition Month is a nutrition education and information campaign created every March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, headquartered in downtown Chicago.

Taste research

Consumer research confirms that taste tops nutrition as the main rea-

son why one food is purchased over another. While social, emotional, and health factors also play a role, the foods people enjoy are likely the ones they eat most.

As parents around the world know, children love sweet-tasting foods. Research conducted by the Monell Center indicates this heightened likeness for sweetness has a biological basis and is related to children’s high growth rate. This preference declines as kids’ physical growth slows.

Other research findings indicate most kids are sensitive to bitter flavors, such as those found in broccoli and other vegetables. Yet it is possible to get kids to enjoy them.

Combine taste and nutrition

“There is a lot of psychology involved with healthy eating. And there is a decent amount of evidence that tells us taste buds are adaptable,” says Registered Dietician Nutritionist Angela Lemond, a board-certified specialist in pediatric nutrition and spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. “A lot of parents are all-

or-nothing about healthy eating. Kids have high energy needs, so it’s okay to put a little ranch dressing or cheese on top of vegetables or salad” to improve their taste.

You’ve probably read this before, but it’s worth repeating. The process of a young child learning to enjoy a food can be long and tedious, but it’s worth the time and effort. Three- to 5-year-olds need up to 15 exposures to accept a new food. Yet, parents typically offer new items only three to five times, studies suggest.

Lemond is a big fan of avoiding so-called kid food by serving tots age-appropriate portions of regular grown-up food. She knows of a chef who serves his own little ones sushi rolls, which have become their favorite foods. This impressed on her if you just make adult food “the norm,” most children will accept it.

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

Easy stuffed peppers

This is a meal in itself. It contains a vegetable, protein, and whole grain.

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes

COOKING TIME: 1¼ hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

1¼ pounds 96 percent lean ground beef

6 large green bell peppers

1 small onion, chopped

½ cup bulgur

1 egg

¼ cup white rice, uncooked

1-28 ounce can crushed tomatoes

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

½ cup water

DIRECTIONS: With a sharp knife, remove the stem and about 3 inches off the top of each pepper. Carefully

remove seeds and fibrous membrane from each pepper. In a large mixing bowl, combine ground beef, bulgur, onion, egg, rice, salt, and pepper.

Divide the meat mixture into six portions, and stuff each pepper with it. Place crushed tomato and water in a large covered baking dish. Carefully add the peppers, so they are all standing up. Place in a 375 degree oven for about 1¼ hours. Carefully remove cover as there will be a great deal of steam. Serve on plate with tomato gravy spooned over each pepper and with additional gravy spread around the pepper.

NUTRITION FACTS: 270 calories, 32 grams carbohydrates, 25 grams protein, 6 grams fat (2 grams saturated), 470 mg sodium, 7 g dietary fiber, 25% DV vitamin A, 250% DV vitamin C, 25% DV iron, 29% DV zinc.





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ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,
ESQ.

Designation of care

Many clients ask me what would happen to their children in their absence, either because the parents are away and can't be reached, or are incapacitated, or have passed away. A previous column discussed the designation of a Standby Guardian under a law known as "Surrogate Court Procedure Act Section 1726." This article discusses another tool in the estate planning toolbox: a designation of a "person in parental relation" under a separate statute.

What is a legal guardian and what are his or her responsibilities?

A legal guardian is not a child's parent, but is an adult who has the same authority over a child as a parent. A parent might need a guardian for a child where: the parents have died, are sick, are in prison, or are too sick or disabled to be able to care

for the child and make decisions for them. The designation is also useful for families with only one parent and when both parents will be traveling together. In many states, the enactment of these laws was to address the needs of parents living with HIV and AIDS, other disabling conditions, or terminal illnesses.

What laws permit a non-parent guardian?

Every state permits transfer of guardianship authority over a child from a parent to another adult when the child has no other parent available to assume responsibility for care and custody of the child. A traditional guardianship provides for the care of a child in the event of the parent's death or permanent disability and is generally regarded as a permanent transfer of custody and authority from the parent to the guardian.

One recent approach to transferring custody is facilitated through standby guardianship laws. Many states developed these laws specifically to address the needs of parents living with HIV and AIDS, other disabling conditions, or terminal illnesses who want to plan a legally secure future for their children.

Surrogate Court Procedure Act or General Obligations Law?

Under the Surrogate Court Procedure Act, a parent can execute a written designation, signed by two witnesses, designating a standby guardian under certain circumstances. After the triggering event stated in the designation (usually death or disability), the designated guardian must file a petition seeking permanent appointment after a court hearing. Once activated, the standby guardian and the parent, while living, have concurrent authority.

However, the Act designation has its limitations: it expires 60 days after it is signed by the parent unless the standby guardian petitions to be appointed as permanent guardian within that 60-day time frame. For example, a parent executing a standby guardian designation in the ordinary course of

executing estate planning documents would have to re-execute the form every 60 days. The designation would still serve as evidence of the parent's intentions, which is given a strong presumption that a parent's choice will promote the best interests of the child. Yet, it could be subject to challenge in a dispute over the appointment of a guardian. The diligent parent would then have to re-sign an Act designation every 60 days, which is impractical.

The alternative tool is a designation of a "person in parental relation" pursuant to a different statute, General Obligations Law Section 5-1551. This law allows a parent to designate another person to act "in parental relation" to a minor or incapacitated person. The "parental relation" designation lasts longer than the standby guardian — six months from the occurrence of a contingency stated in the designation, as opposed to 60 days from the date of signing. The designation of parental relations can be submitted to a child's school, health care provider, or health insurer. The parent can limit the scope of the powers, and can grant any or all of the powers and duties pursuant to the Public Health Law Sections 2164 (immunizations) and 2504 (medical, dental, health and hospital services) and Education Law Sections 2 and 3212 (educational matters). The designation can be revoked at any time in accordance with the statute.

Although there is overlap between the two statutes, it is helpful to have both mechanisms available to address the situations that arise when custody over a child is needed in a parent's absence. It is important to add one or both documents to your arsenal of estate planning documents.

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



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This is National Childhood Abuse Prevention Month

BY ALEXA BIGWARFE

Child abuse and neglect are very real problems in the United States that place a large financial and emotional burden on our communities and country. April is National Childhood Abuse Prevention Month. Here are three reasons why each of us should care:

- A report released by the US Department of Health and Human Services in 2011 stated that an estimated 676,596 children were victims of child abuse in the US, and 1,545 children died as a result of abuse or neglect. Many of these situations were preventable with supportive community engagement and programs.

- Child abuse does not only impact the child, but the community as a whole. Response and treatment require many resources. Long-term abuse or neglect has been shown to affect various systems, to include: physical and mental health, law enforcement, judicial and public social services, and nonprofit agencies as they respond to the incident and support the victims. The economic impact can be tremendous. One analysis showed the costs to be as much as \$258 million each day, or \$94 billion each year.

- Collaboration is needed to help prevent child abuse and neglect. Research has identified factors that are known to prevent and reduce child abuse and neglect if implemented in a community. We can all play a role in bringing awareness to this problem to ensure actions are taken in the community.

A few simple things you can do for Child Abuse Prevention Month:

- Raise public awareness. You can share information about Child Abuse Prevention Month. You can also purchase, or encourage your school or church to purchase, a Children's Memorial Flag to be flown on the fourth Friday in April,

Children's Memorial Day.

Issue news releases, photographs, public service announcements, and compelling stories to the media, advocacy groups, parent-teacher organizations, police stations, hospitals, community centers, websites and special interest groups.

- Participate in ceremonies to memorialize children. Host or attend an event (candlelight vigil) at your state capitol and remember those children lost to abuse by reading their names.

- Write, visit, fax, phone, or e-mail your elected officials. Keep informed of policy issues at the state and federal level concern-

ing child welfare and subscribe to alerts. Contact your governor, state legislators, county commissioners, and mayor and request that they proclaim the month of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month and fly the Child Welfare League of America's Children's Memorial Flag. Reach out to US Senators and Congressmen and ensure they are aware of the events.

While child abuse may seem to be a "family" matter, the truth is, there is much that can be done to reduce and prevent abuse. Simple actions go a long way.

Alexa Bigwarfe is the mother of three small children. She has taken a special interest in child, maternal, and newborn health and writes regularly on these topics.

Additional resources

Child Abuse Prevention Month website: www.cwla.org/programs/childprotection/childprotectionfaq.htm.

Tell a friend, encourage neighbors, your church, your workplace, the media, and business leaders to order the Children's Memorial Flag [(800) 407-6273, e-mail: flag@cwla.org, visit www.cwla.org/pubs/giftsearch.asp?WHICH=4].



Here's to New York Parenting's Disney on Ice contest winners



Steven Dembinski, Yan Chen, 8-year-old Cate Dembinski, and 6-year-old Luke Dembinski meet Minnie and Mickey as winners of New York Parenting's "Meet and Greet the Characters" contest at the recent Disney on Ice at the Barclay's Center in Brooklyn.

When you wish upon a star, your dreams come true. And when you enter a New York Parenting contest, your dreams can also come true!

That was the case for Steven Dembinski, Yan Chen, 8-year-old Cate Dembinski, and 6-year-old Luke Dembinski when they won the chance to meet Mickey and Minnie Mouse at a recent "Disney on Ice" performance at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn — thanks to New York Parenting's "Meet and Greet the Characters" contest. They were afforded VIP greetings as well as special seating and had a magical experience.

"Thank you for the opportunity to win the Disney on Ice tickets," said Steven Dembinski. "The show was wonderful, and my kids had a great time."

The family has already put its name on NYParenting.com again to be considered for future contests. Congratulations to the Dembinski-Chen family!

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Camper to camper

Advice for newbies from seasoned kids

BY KIMBERLY CARLSON

When we were kids, summer camp meant something different to us than it does to our children. For us, camp meant camp: cabins or tents, canoeing, hiking, singing songs around a

campfire, and general camaraderie. Children today are much more active, much more schedule-oriented, and generally just busier. Consequently, the very dynamics of summer camp have changed. Camps offered now are much more focused and detail oriented. There's soccer

camp, art camp, violin camp, space camp, leadership camp, paleontology camp, etc.

But there are some things about camp that truly haven't changed, like the general apprehension your son or daughter might feel the first time he or she attends camp. Here's what seasoned camp veterans had to say to children who are going off to camp for the first time.

Everyone gets homesick

Some kids handle being away from home better than others. It's a great opportunity for the kids who don't get homesick to step up and show their sympathy, and their new friendship skills. In a dorm room with nine other campers, fourth-grader Dakota Lopez recalls two to three kids who got homesick.

"We felt bad for them, but we all tried to make them feel better. We brought them junk food and soda."

And the ones that do get home-

“Camp only lasts a week, and if you wait until the last few days of camp to make friends, you’ve missed out on half the fun.”

sick learn just how much they can rely on their peers to get them through difficulties. It’s a great learning experience for all campers.

“I didn’t like missing my mom,” said 10-year-old Michael. “But when the kids cheered me up instead of teasing me, I felt better.”

Learn something new

As a sixth-grader, Elise Finlinson is a seasoned camper. She’s been attending summer camps since she was in first grade.

“Camp is great because you get to explore things you wouldn’t get to do in school or learn about,” she says with a smile.

Elise has found a new love of art that wasn’t cultivated during the school year, but has stuck with her since last summer’s camp. She has since expanded her knowledge and delved into different artistic media with the help of an art teacher she sees outside of school.

Dakota reminisced about the sketches she and her roommates were tasked with writing and performing at soccer camp last summer.

“It was SO COOL!” she said. “We got to perform it in front of all the other campers and the coaches. That was the best part of camp.”

It was also unexpected. She was expecting all things soccer. But her favorite memory from soccer camp had nothing to do with soccer.

Have fun

This sounds like a pretty straightforward bit of advice, but sometimes children need to be reminded to have a little fun, lest they get caught up in the stress of the “new.” A new environment, new rules, new daily activities and routines.

“I love camp!” says 5-year-old Anna Finlinson. “I don’t ever miss

my mom, because I’m too busy having fun.”

Anna attended Princess Dance camp last summer, and is looking forward to “more and more and more camp” this summer.

“I didn’t think I would like the hiking, but it ended up being pretty cool,” said Michael.

Don’t be shy

One of the best parts about summer camp is the ability to “make new friends,” says Dakota.

“Some of them I’m still friends with from last summer’s soccer camp.”

Every child I asked had the same bit of advice right from the start: don’t be shy.

“Camp only lasts a week, and if you wait until the last few days of camp to make friends, you’ve missed out on half the fun,” says Elise.

Regardless of the type of camp you and your children have chosen, make sure they make the most of it. It will go by faster than either one of you expect. If your child can embrace the opportunities presented before him, he will have a much more enriched experience.

Elise says that “summer camp is much cooler than regular school, because although we’re still learning stuff, we’re not stuck behind a desk all day.”

Even Michael, who was the most apprehensive about attending summer camp, says he would “do it again” this summer. He found confidence and security in knowing he can rely upon himself, and trust in his peers to help him if he feels homesick.

“Riding horses was pretty cool, too,” he proffered.

Summer camp may only last a week or so, but the memories really do last a lifetime. See for yourself: ask any child you know about his summer camp experiences, and you’ll see his face light up with the memories.

Have your first-time camper talk to other children that have already attended. They are more than willing to share their experiences, and their energy and excitement about it can be quite contagious!

Kimberly Carlson is a published author, blogger, and mother of two. One of her kids loves camping in the mountains and snow while her other kid loves camping in the forest — in the summertime, of course!

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

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

Summer Intensives train campers in music video animation, printmaking, drawing and drama. Expert and nurturing faculty runs all programs, including numerous field trips throughout the city. Camp facilities include two gyms, rooftop playground, theater & music rooms, woodshop, darkroom, media centers and air-conditioned classrooms.

CBE KIDS Summer Day Camp

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

718-768-3814 or www.congregationbethelohim.org

CBE KIDS Summer Day Camp offers children fun, excitement and a wide variety of recreational activities in a safe, supervised environment.

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

Facilities include an indoor pool, art and computer rooms, darkroom and large, multi-use spaces. Prospect Park

is used for sports, nature and outdoor play.

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

College for Kids at Kingsborough Community College

Office of Continuing Education
2001 Oriental Boulevard
718-368-5050 www.kingsborough.edu/continuinged

The Summer's College For Kid's program at Kingsborough Community College is open to girls and boys ages 7 through 13 and meets weekday Mornings for 4 weeks and Full Days for your choice of 4 or 6 weeks!

SWIMMING | BASKETBALL & SOCCER | PIANO | TENNIS | READING | ART | MATH and much more!

For more information and to register please call or visit our website.

The Cosmic Cove Summer Program

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

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

Experiments with Carmelo may include making silly putty, glow in the dark slime, conducting a diaper powder study, making fake snow, etc. They can even work with animals like the weird moving mega mealworms...yuck! You can even take home your experiments...even the live ones.

Creative Arts Studio Summer Camp 2014

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

Creative Arts Studio offers children between the ages 5-13, the opportunity to have a wonderful experience of dance, drama, music and art.

There will be weekly swimming lessons, field trips to various museums and

Continued on page 26

**CBE
KIDS**
www.cbebk.org/camp

Summer Day Camps

Congregation Beth Elohim

Children of All Faiths & Ethnic Backgrounds are Welcome
For Elementary Day Camp and Movin' On Travel Camp
call Bobbie Finkelstein 718-768-3814 x210
For Hebrew Camp call Shanie Korabelnik x240



HA'GEMNASIA at CBE
Hebrew Summer Camp

Hebrew Summer Camp

Entering Kindergarten Through 4th Grade

Our new Hebrew camp, Ha'Geemnasia, will be led by highly qualified staff who are passionate about Hebrew, Jewish identity, and Israeli culture. Campers will enjoy a unique Israeli-style camp. Activities related to Israel through art, dance, sports, swim and exciting trips.



Elementary Day Camp

Entering Kindergarten Through 4th Grade

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



Movin' On Travel Camp

Entering 4th Grade Through 9th Grade

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

COLLEGE FOR

kids | SUMMER GROUP PROGRAM

The Summer's College For Kid's program at Kingsborough Community College is open to girls and boys ages 7 through 13 and meets weekday Mornings for 4 weeks and Full Days for your choice of 4 or 6 weeks!
For information about our 6 year-olds program, please call 718-368-5050

**SWIMMING | BASKETBALL & SOCCER | PIANO | TENNIS
READING | ART | MATH and much more!**

Please call **718-368-5050** for more information and to register.

Or visit us online @:
www.kingsborough.edu/continuing

KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
**CONTINUING
EDUCATION**

Kingsborough Community College/CUNY
Office of Continuing Education
2001 Oriental Boulevard, Brooklyn, NY 11235
www.kingsborough.edu/continuing



CUNY The City University of New York



\$3 MILLION RENOVATED FACILITY

Celebrate Easter Sunday on April 20th at PAC PLEX! Call Ext 157 for info

Summer Camp

- Daily swimming in our 4 outdoor pools
- Sports on our indoor field and courts
- Enriching games and activities
- Transportation for most of Brooklyn
- Early bird & sibling discounts
- 1199 and other vouchers accepted

OPEN • March 8th and 22nd • April 12th and 26th
HOUSE • May: every Saturday
DATES • June: every Saturday until the 21st

Holiday Camps

April: 4/14 - 4/22

June: 6/5

Swimming • Soccer • Basketball
 Enriching Games & Activities • Movies & Dance
 Lunch And Snack Provided
 8:00 am - 4:00 pm (or 6:00 pm)

Birthday Parties

- Swim Party
- Clowns
- 4 Outdoor/ 2 Indoor Pools
- Soccer - Indoor Field
- Inflatible Party
- Basketball - 3 Full Courts
- Arts & Crafts
- Costumed Characters
- Obstacle Course




ALL YEAR LONG

Ideal for children 4-16

- Swim Instruction
- Sports Coaching
- Enriching Programs
- After School
- Day School and UPK
- And Much More
- For Your Kids

- 4 Outdoor/2 Indoor Pools • Indoor Soccer Field
- 3 Indoor - 4 Outdoor Basketball Courts

1500 Paerdegat Ave. North, Brooklyn

718.209.1010/718.531.1111 www.pacplex.com

Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 24

special events along with projects and activities that explore weekly themes.

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

Creative Arts Studio Teen Summer Dance Intensive 2014

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

Creative Arts Studio professional Teaching Artists will be helping students strengthen their technique while learning composition and the history of specific dance styles. They will also focus on improvisation, music, and the process of learning restaged works.

Dance Styles include: Modern, Ballet, Hip Hop, Tap, Musical Theatre and more!

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

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

Crossing Borders Language Camp

Summer Immersion Program
281-465-0899 or www.crossingborderslanguage.com
4 years to Adult

"Learn Spanish or English while enjoying summertime fun. Our classes are dynamic and taught by native speaking and experienced teachers. Our teachers will immerse your child in their language of choice using a variety of fun and engaging activities, and offer Friday field trip opportunities as well."

FasTrackKids Summer

60 Broadway Williamsburg
7612 13th Avenue Bay Ridge/Dyker Heights
1605 Voorhies Avenue, Sheepshead Bay
150 4th Avenue, Park Slope
718-748-3000 or www.fastrackkids.com

Is designed for children ages 3-7. Sessions last for one week at a time.

A full day program is offered that includes enrichment classes, math, reading, and writing classes, exercise, local field trips, arts and crafts, karaoke, computers, special projects, science experiments and much more. Hours are from 9am-4pm with

extended hours available.

The camp offers a fast-paced, fun and fully interactive setting; learning adventures captivate and entertain as they deliver truly meaningful lessons.

Each day FasTrackKids will enjoy learning as they explore, discover, imagine and create. This is the summer adventure children will use for life. One or 2 times per week Enopi Math & English Classes are also offered all summer and throughout the year.

Greene Hill School Summer Program

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

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

Greene Hill summer Camp 2014 runs in six, week-long sessions. The hours are 9:00am-3:00pm (an 8:30am early drop off and extended day are available).

Select the weeks you want-weeks do not need to be consecutive.

Greene Hill School Day Camp proudly collaborates with the best of Brooklyn sports and arts education to offer a wide variety of both indoor and outdoor activities and is supervised by Greene Hill School teachers. Daily programs include: Gymnastics and Circus, Theater, Ceramics, Soccer, Yoga, Arts and Crafts, and Dance.

Hebrew Educational Society (HES)

9502 Seaview Avenue
718-241-3000 or www.thehes.org

K'tonton Summer Camp— licensed pre-school camp experience for ages 2 ½ to 5, staffed with experienced teachers and counselors. Children play outdoors in fenced in playground, indoors in full size gym, enjoying supervised swim period in indoor pool. Included are arts & crafts, karate, games, songs and computer fun in air conditioned camp rooms, breakfast, hot lunch and snacks. Trips are geared for each age group.

HES Summer Camp - based in our air-conditioned Community Center. Activities include: karate, American Red Cross certified instructional swim, arts & crafts, karaoke, academic enrichment, and exciting trips. Included are

Continued on page 28

Greene Hill School

SUMMER CAMP 2014

JUNE 30 - AUGUST 1

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

Creative Arts
 STUDIO

Boerum Hill & Carroll Gardens Locations

Summer Arts Camp 2014

718.797.5600

Dance. Drama. Music. Art

www.creativeartsstudio.com

CROSSING BORDERS
 Language Center

Sign up for
Spanish & English Summer Language Camp
 from 4 years to adult

Language Immersion Classes
 Starting at 4 years old

We can improve your child's language skills

Call or email info@crossingbordersgroup.com for complete details

281-465-0899
 in Brooklyn during the summer months

crossingborderslanguages.com

BROOKLYN FRIENDS SCHOOL

We're ready for summer.
 Are you?

375 PEARL STREET
 ONE BLOCK FROM BOROUGH HALL AND METROTECH

► **THINGS TO LEARN THIS SUMMER AT FRIENDS –**
 Swimming
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 Building
 Math & Science
 Chess
 Woodworking
 French
 Spanish
 Theater
 Dance
 Singing
 Songwriting
 Printmaking
 Penciltopia
 Drawing
 Sculpture
 Photography
 Metal Collage
 Making Great Friends

Brooklyn Friends School summer programs take the best of the school year experience and make that light shine even brighter! Every day offers new opportunities for children to grow, to learn, and to develop their talents and interests. Our two programs – Summer Camp for 4 to 7 year olds and Summer Arts for 8 to 13 year olds – are distinguished by their outstanding faculty and favorable teacher-student ratio. The experience for kids is fun and energizing, just as summer should be.

Sessions from
 June 18 - July 25, 2014

718.852.1029 x 248

BROOKLYNFRIENDS.ORG/SUMMER

Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 26

extended days, early care and after care, door to door transportation, weekly trips, breakfast, lunch and snack, sports and more.

Camp Xtra— camp division which provides enriched services for special needs children with emotional or physical difficulties, who participate in most of camp's activities.

one-and-a-half or two hours to allow for a relaxed, comprehensive atmosphere. Mothers meet other mothers, developing life-long friendships while their children grow.

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

Joe's Music & Dance Academy

114-04 Farmers Blvd. 11412, 718-454-3036

5712 Church Ave., Brooklyn 11203, 718-774-0700 or www.joesmusiccenter.org

A large diversity of instruments is taught in groups and individual classes from piano, violin, viola, cello, guitar, bass guitar, drums, saxophone, clarinet, flute, trumpet, trombone, voice, etc. to the less common instruments such as bassoon and tuba. Students can begin with classical, but the Academy also has many students that study pop, jazz, contemporary music or gospel. Students have the opportunity to pursue NYSSMA and other evaluations and prepare for specialized high school auditions. There are also competitive music opportunities. The academy is offering more of its most popular classes such as zumba, ballet, hip-hop, modern, liturgical, tap, jazz, evening adult classes including salsa, ballroom dancing and the popular 2-5 year old dance program. The academy has floor to ceiling mirrors and uses floating floors that absorb the impact of dancing, keep students energized and avoid injury.

Our Summer Arts Program includes music camp, audition workshop, musical theatre, music/audio production, dance and voice. Ask about birthday parties!

Just Wee Two Summer Program

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

Just Wee Two Summer Program is geared for kids 14 months to three-and-a-half years, directed and taught by early childhood teachers trained to work with young children. Just Wee Two is a place where children and grownups learn and play together. Class sizes are small, allowing for individualized attention. All classes are

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

Kim's Kids Summer Camp is a nature-oriented active camp for children ages 4-1/2 to 11. Being physical and outdoors are at the heart of the program. The camp takes trips every day; children may spend the day jumping waves at Riis Park or riding a camel at the zoo. It is a continuous agenda of hiking, swimming, running, climbing, and exploring.

Flexible scheduling allows children to attend three, four or five days a week. Early bird drop off and late pickup are available.

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

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

Leif Ericson Day School's Summer Creative Arts and Music Program (SCAMP) begins its 18th year of fun. Children from pre-K to grade 7 enjoy computers, art, music, movement, and drama. Professional caring staff and junior counselors are enthusiastic and attentive. Limited group size allows for a more fulfilling experience. All activities are on-premises. Two snacks provided daily. SCAMP hours are 9a.m.-3p.m. with "Early bird" care (8am) and "Late Bird" care (5pm) for additional fees.

Mark Morris Dance Group 3 Lafayette Avenue 718-624-8400 or www.mmdg.org/school

School Director: Sydnie Liggett
The School at the Mark Morris Dance Center offers one and two-week dance camps for students ages 6-17, and weekly creative dance classes for ages 4-6. Whether exploring new dance

Continued on page 30



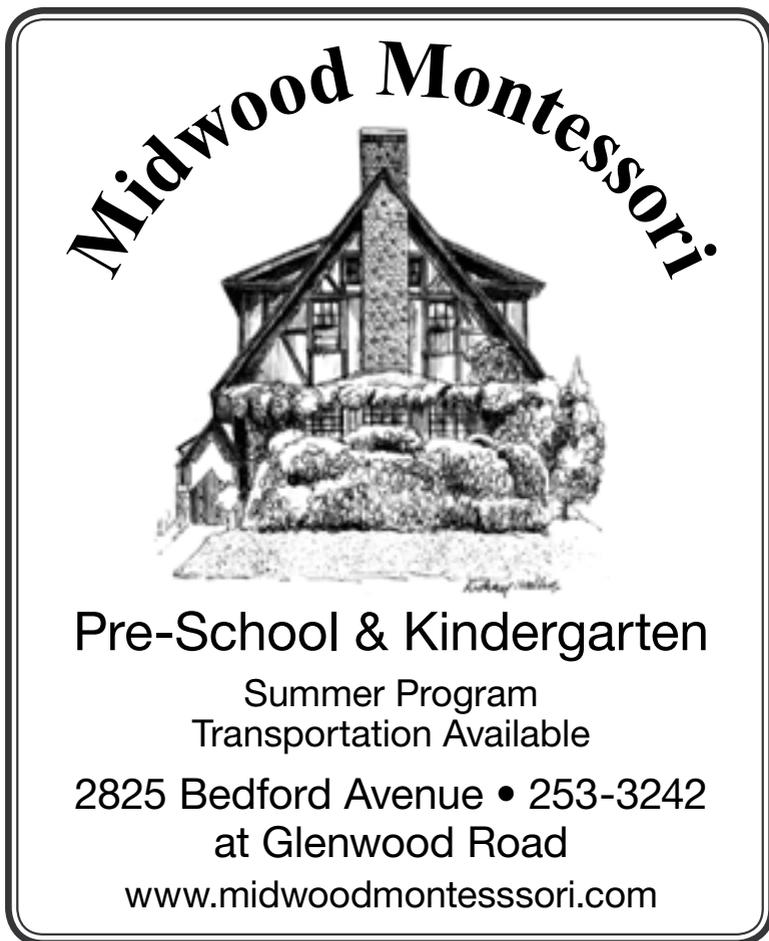
MUSIC & DANCE LESSONS FOR ALL AGES!
 Kindermusik • Guitar • Piano • Voice • Guitar • Bass • Violin • Viola • Cello • Drums
 Flute • Clarinet • Saxophone • Trumpet • Trombone and More
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Summer Music Program
 4 Different Disciplines • Music Theory
 Early drop-off / Late pickup available

NEW LOCATION!
 140 Empire Blvd.
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 718.484.1720

Adult Classes Available

JOE'S ACADEMY LOCATIONS

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 114-04 Farmers Blvd. St. Albans, NY 11412 718-454-3036 | 5712 Church Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11203 718-774-0700 | Joe's Music Store 114-02 Farmers Blvd. St. Albans, NY 11412 718-454-3030 |
|--|--|--|



Midwood Montessori

Pre-School & Kindergarten
 Summer Program
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 at Glenwood Road
www.midwoodmontessori.com

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A Summer Adventure

for students ages 2-10

10% Early Bird
Discount
before April 15th, 2014,
Sibling Discounts
Available



www.ftkny.com

6-10
Year Olds

FasTrackKids Enrichment

Sign up for 1 week or all 8!

6/30-7/3

Artist's Studio

Children will be inspired by the works of famous artists while creating unique pieces of art! Students will enjoy creating their own cartoon story, interacting with digital art, making several sculptures and illustrating books.

7/7-7/11

Trip around the World

FasTrackKids will travel to and explore Italy, Egypt, China, Mexico, and Brazil, while learning how children in those countries live.

7/14-7/18

Natural Science

Children participate in a variety of scientific experiments including magnetism, flotation, molecular change and buoyancy. The children gain an understanding of the scientific method through these experiments and games.

7/21-7/25

Zoology: Genus or Genius?

Learn about life in the animal kingdom.

7/28-8/1

Lost in Space

Explore our galaxy and the concepts that hold it together.

8/4-8/8

Anatomy: Body Language

Through the exploration of major body systems such as the skeletal, respiratory, digestive, and circulatory & nervous systems, your child will explore the human anatomy and learn to develop healthy habits along the way.

8/11-8/15

Dinosaurs - Young Scientist, Old Bones

A trip to the Pre-Historic Ages and back, to discover the dinosaurs and the fossils they left behind.

8/18-8/22

Earth Science

Children explore climate, geology, and forces of nature while taking an imaginary world journey to examine and understand the composition of the Earth from its surface to its core.

8/25-8/29

Entrepreneurship

The business world becomes real as children examine products from around the world. Children participate in an imaginary marketing survey and create an advertising strategy.

3-8
Year Olds

G&T / ERB

Summer Prep Course

8 Weeks | 16 Sessions
Grades: Pre-K*, K*, 1st & 2nd

2-3.5
Year Olds

FasTrackKids Explorers *

Educational, gradual separation class for the young ones.

Activities include group mingle & play, circle time, science lab, cooking together, fun academics, reading together, fun arts & goodbye friends!

Themes

July - Lets Play, August - Out & About

Schedule:

Tues & Thurs from 10:00 - 12:00pm

3.5-5
Year Olds

FasTrackKids Discoverers *

Fun enrichment for the young mind. See weekly themes on the left

Activities include: Smart Board, hands-on projects, arts & crafts, experiments, role-playing, videotaping & more!

Schedule: Mon, Wed, Fri, from 9:00-11:30am

6-10
Year Olds

Academic Enrichment

Sign up for 1 week or all 9!

Eye Level is a skill based math and literacy enrichment program. Children are given individualized instruction based on their academic level to improve their mental math, critical thinking skills, reading comprehension and writing ability.

½ Day Options (9am-12pm or 1pm-4pm)

Full Day Option (9am - 4pm) - Ages 6 & Up only

Early and Extended Day Options Available

* All parents must stay on premises at all times.

•Park Slope
150 4th Ave.
718.260.8100

•Williamsburg
60 Broadway
347.987.4450

•Sheepshead Bay
1605 Voorhies Ave.
718.891.5437

•Bay Ridge/Dyker Heights
7612 13th Ave.
718.748.3000

•Charleston
4852 Arthur Kill Road
718.494.1232

•Grasmere
1461 Hylan Blvd.
718.351.7333

POLY PREP SUMMER PROGRAMS 2014



Swimming Lessons
for children 2 and up

Camp Programs
for children ages 4-16

**Win
\$500 Off!**
Register at March 1
Open House
For chance to win
Camp Discount
Raffle

OPEN HOUSE FOR ALL PROGRAMS
Saturday, March 1, 2014, 9 am – noon
Please join us to meet our staff and tour our campus.
No RSVP needed. Children welcome.



Two newly constructed teaching pools!

Three new Specialty Camps!

Easier online registration!

Programs from June 16 – August 22, 2014:

SUMMER ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Four weeks, July 7–August 1 Grades 3–11.

Credited enrichment, remedial work and Test Prep in small classes.

SUMMER EXPERIENCE DAY CAMP

Six weeks, June 30–August 8. Ages 3 1/2– 15.

Counselor training for Grades 9 and 10.

Campers enjoy arts, dance, sports, swimming, special events, and games.

PERFORMING ARTS CAMP

Five weeks, June 30–August 1. Grades 4–9.

Professional mentoring for young actors, dancers, singers, and musicians.

SPECIALTY CAMPS

Many one-week sessions. Various ages.

**Basketball, Lacrosse, Squash, Rookie Multisport,
Sports Performance, Soccer, Baseball,
Girls' Running and Wellness,
Dance, Tech, Visual Arts**

Poly Prep Country Day School

9216 Seventh Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11228

www.polyprep.org/summer2014

Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 28

styles or learning Mark Morris repertory directly from members of the Mark Morris Dance Group, students develop their passion for dance in a positive, nurturing environment. All levels welcome. Please call or visit our website.

Summers With Mathnasium

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

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

Welcome to Mathnasium. We are a math learning center where we make MATH make SENSE to kids. We support K, 1st grade, 2nd – 12th grades and up.

Our Summer Math camp (July and August) is a great time to CATCH UP, KEEP UP and GET AHEAD.

We have fun activities, contests and rewards. It is an extra relaxed time to learn! Shorts, T-shirts, flip-flops welcome! We have earlier hours as well so you can enjoy those beautiful summer evenings.

At Mathnasium, we end the confusion, frustration and embarrassment children often feel about math.

Midwood Montessori Summer Program

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

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

Mill Basin Day Camp

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

millbasindaycamp.com

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

Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park Summer Program

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

With the magnificent revitalization of the Brooklyn waterfront, Oasis is thrilled to bring this opportunity to families in Brooklyn. Oasis utilizes Brooklyn Bridge Park's premier lawns, play areas and recreational facilities. Oasis also utilizes the indoor, state-of-the-art athletic and performing arts facilities of St. Francis College, as well as their pristine, air-conditioned classrooms and large meeting spaces. A traditional day camp in every way, Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park's program includes sports and recreation, visual and performing arts, recreational and Red Cross instructional swim, and field trips. In partnership with the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, Oasis offers an outdoor education component that includes environmental studies, orienteering and more! Oasis Day Camp is for kids ages 3-12. Families enroll for a minimum of two consecutive weeks, a maximum of eight weeks, or any combination you choose. Families have the advantage to enroll their children around their summer plans!

PAC KIDS Summer Camp

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

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

Transportation is available for most of Brooklyn. We accept Begin ACD and

Continued on page 32

MATHNASIUM®

The Math Learning Center

We Make Math Make Sense®

+ WE ARE EXPERIENCED MATH SPECIALISTS

+ WE TEACH ALL LEVELS OF MATH ABILITY

+ PROVEN RESULTS



Mathnasium of Bay Ridge

7409 3rd Ave. • Brooklyn, NY 11209 • (347) 443-9728

www.mathnasium.com/bayridge

Mathnasium of Bensonhurst

6806 20th Ave. • Brooklyn, NY 11204

(347) 7-MATH-11 • (347) 762-8411

www.mathnasium.com/bensonhurst



\$75 OFF
Assessment/
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MILL BASINS DAY CAMP

HOURS OF FUN & ADVENTURE!

5945 STRICKLAND AVE. BROOKLYN, NY 11234 718.251.6200 FAX 718.251.3600 WWW.MILLBASINDAYCAMP.COM

OPEN HOUSE

Register Early For 2014!

| APRIL | MAY | JUNE |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| 12, 19, 26 2014 | 3, 10, 17, 24 2014 | 14, 21 2014 |

11:00 am - 2:00 pm

- OUTDOOR POOL
- DANCE STUDIOS
- BASKETBALL COURTS
- SPRINKLER PARK
- MOVIE THEATRE
- COMPUTER LAB
- JUNGLE GYM
- VOLLEYBALL
- VIDEO GAME DESIGN
- CLAYMATION STUDIO
- 3D MOVIE THEATER
- VIDEO GAME ROOM
- BAKING CENTER
- ARTS & CRAFTS
- KARAOKE STUDIO
- GYMNASTICS
- DAY & OVERNIGHT TRIPS
- OLYMPIC GAMES
- CARNIVAL
- COSTUME BALL
- CIRCUS PROGRAM
- GRASS TURF FIELDS
- HANDBALL COURTS
- BLACK TIE GALA
- SOCCER
- PRIVATE LOCKER ROOM
- JEWELRY DESIGN
- DRAMA THEATRE
- KARATE
- BINGO
- FASHION DESIGN
- MICROSOFT CONNECT ROOM
- MANY MORE!

5945 Strickland Ave, Bklyn, NY 11234 718.251.6200 www.millbasindaycamp.com

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

Experienced, Carefully Chosen, Adult Staff

33 Years in Operation



DAILY TRIPS

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

Ages 4 1/2 - 11

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



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

Leif Ericson Day School

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Nursery - Grade 8

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- Small Class Size
- Professional, Caring Staff
- State Approved Curriculum
 - Music Performance
 - Computer Technology



REGISTER NOW
 for our
**Summer Creative Arts
 & Music Program**

June 23 - August 1, 2014

1037 - 72nd Street • 718-748-9023 • <http://ledsny.org>

Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 30

1199. Please call for more information.

Park Explorers Day Camp

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

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

The Park Slope Day Camp

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

PSDC = CAMP SPIRIT, COMMUNITY AND FRIENDSHIP.

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

Piper Theatre Workshop and Garden Explorers

Summer Fun At The Old Stone House & Washington Park
 3rd Street, between 4 & 5 Avenues
 718-768-3195 or www.pipertheatre.org

For Ages 7 – 17 June 30 – July 26
 9 am – 3 pm Monday – Friday
 Extended day available

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

Old Stone House - Garden Explorers
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234 Roosevelt Hall 2900 Bedford Ave.
 718-951-4111 or www.bcprepcenter.org

The Preparatory Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College is an exciting, nurturing environment where children ages 3-18 develop a lifelong love for music, theater, and dance. Creative Play program (ages 3-5) is designed to be a first experience with dance and theater. Group Instrument Classes (ages 5 and older) provide an opportunity to try out an instrument in a supportive, fun environment. For more information please call or visit our website.

Shorefront YM-YWHA Day Camp

718-646-1444 ext 335 or www.shorefrontny.org/camp

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Continued on page 34

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Please call **718-951-4111** for further information for summer 2014 and the 2014-2015 school year
Visit our website: www.bcprepcenter.org



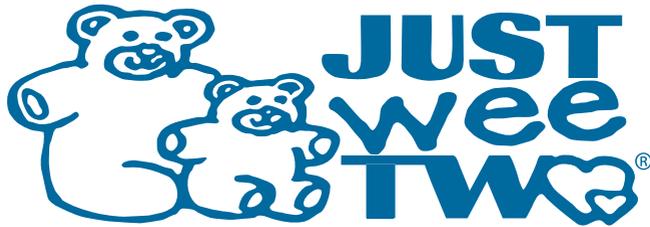
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Continued from page 32

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StageCoach Theatre Arts School Summer Program

718-852-3208 or www.stagecoachschools.com/brooklynheights

Stagecoach Theatre School in Brooklyn Heights is excited to offer summer performing arts camps for children aged 4-16 years for an intensive week of acting, singing and dancing. Students will have workshops with Broadway artists during the week as well as working on a show!

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Broadway Bound: August 11th – 16th.

Center stage: August 18th-23rd

All classes divided age.

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

Stepping Stones Nursery School Summer

245 86th Street
718-630-1000 or e-mail steppingstones86@aol.com

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Camp is open 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Stepping Stones has central air conditioning with modern learning materials and a safe surface playground. Call for more information.

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Our Summer Program & summer camp philosophy is to provide a fun and exciting experience with the objective of stimulating the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of the children.

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Windmill Montessori Summer Camp

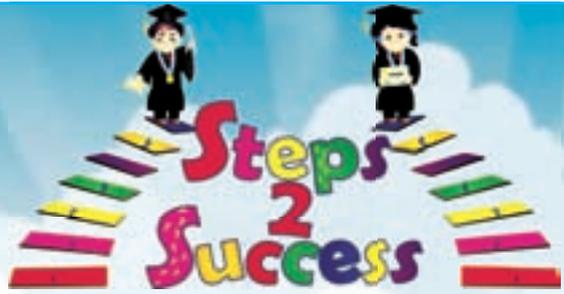
1317 Avenue T
718-375-7973 or 4277 or www.admissions@windmillsch.org

Registration is beginning now for Windmill's 2014-2015 School Year and our Academic Montessori Summer Day Camp and Creative Writing Program for 3-12 year olds. Windmill offers a nurturing place where the children make friends and learn through the Montessori Method, while having lots of fun. Spacious enclosed yard with playground and pool lets campers safely participate in outdoor activities, all with highly qualified and caring staff's guidance. Local trips, weekly themes, arts & crafts, computers, singing, group games, and pool activities are enjoyed. Olympics and carnival are highlights. Four to six week programs are offered, as are sibling discounts. Door-to-door bus service is available. Call for individualized appointment.

Young Poets, Playwrights & Drama Kids Summer Camp

1025 President Street
718-493-7981 or www.choicescholars.com

Choice Scholars Day School offers Young Poets, Playwrights & Drama Kids Summer Camp for children 6-12 years of age. This child-centered camp provides a medium for children to express themselves constructively, develop their writing portfolios, and discover his or her creative voice. Our two week sessions create fun magical memories as children paint stories with the power of their words, create intriguing, original one act plays, and developing skills in all aspects of theater. A great team, daily exercise, and all those cool trips complete our learning adventure. Visit: www.choicescholars.com to register online, or call 718-493-7981.



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New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS



Now hear this

Listen up, parents! Etymotic Research Inc. has created EtyKids 5 Safe-listening Earphones for children ages 4 and older. The manufacturers claim that the sound heard through these earphones will not exceed safe levels.

The set includes earphones (available

in pink, yellow or black), a set of three “accufit” eartips, a shirt clip, and a zippered pouch. The eartips come in a variety of shapes to ensure a good fit in small ears.

Because these earphones seal the ears, they do a better job of blocking out background noise. (If used at maximum volume, Etymotic recommends limiting their use to

no more than four hours a day.) The EtyKids earphones are made for devices with a standard 3.5 mm jack, including iPhone; iPod and MP3 players; iPad and tablets; DVD players; and gaming devices — and that’s music to our ears!

EtyKids 5 Safe-listening Earphones for Kids by Etymotic, \$39, www.etymotic.com.

Egg-citing idea

If the Easter Bunny is looking for just one item to put in a plastic egg that isn’t candy, make sure to tell him about Fan-A-Peel’s Peel & Stick Easter-themed Waterless Tatts.

We decided to check out this set of 12 tattoos, because they are made with 3M’s hypoallergenic tape. They are comfortably thin, long-lasting, and peel off in one motion. And this medical grade polyethylene tape can be applied to more than just skin. They can go anywhere a wee one would like to stick a picture of a dapper yellow chick, pair of bunnies, or colorful egg.

Fan-A-Peel’s hassle-free appli-

cation and removal is appealing, as is the fact that they won’t deteriorate over time like traditional, water-applied tattoos that need lots of scrubbing or rubbing alcohol to wash off.

For kids ages 3 and older, these American-made stickers are excellent additions to any child’s Easter basket.

Peel & Stick Easter Waterless Tatts by Fan-A-Peel, \$4.99, www.innovativeadhesives.com.



A clutch that pops

When baby arrives, mothers lose sleep and aspects of their social life, but they don’t have to give up glamour. The Posh Play Diaper Clutch Combo pairs a versatile changing pad with a generously sized, clutch-style bag with carry loop. In addition to

having space for the 18- by 14-inch pad, the zippered bag also has room for a couple of diapers and wipes. There is a tempting array of colors to choose from. Grapefruit (pictured,) was our choice. The pieces are made of embossed, child-safe, PVC-free faux leather, which looks like crocodile or reptile skin, and has the advantage of being a wipeable surface, inside and out. One less thing that needs to be added to the laundry pile of a new mother is a gift that keeps on giving!

Diaper Clutch Combo by Posh Play, \$58, www.poshplaymat.com.



Fun hinges on it

Make a splash introducing the engineering concept of a hinge to your 4-9-year-old with the new GoldieBlox and the Dunk Tank set. This toy includes a lively, rhyming story about Goldie and her dog, Nacho; a diagram showing how to build the dunk tank; and the pieces needed to build the tank, as well as a rubber ball and Nacho figurine, which displaces a satisfying amount of water when the dog cannonballs into the “tank” (a cup of water). (You supply the cup of water — and towels to mop up the action!)

Debbie Sterling’s story features Goldie and her dirty dog. After several attempts to get Nacho “squeaky clean and smelling like flowers,” Goldie comes up with the perfect cleaning contraption — a dunk tank. With the colorful, carnival-themed printed ma-



terials, kids learn about hinges and axles while creating the dunking tower from wheels, blocks, and long and short axles. (There are also two additional diagrams to re-use the pieces: “Nacho Earhart,” an airplane for Nacho, and the Cheddar Chopper, a helicopter for the precocious pooch.)

The dunk tank is an engaging, fun toy that combines just the right amount of mess conveying its important, educational message.

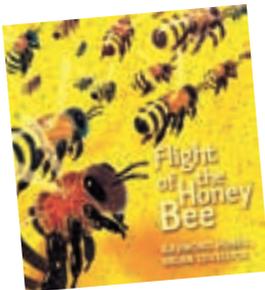
GoldieBlox and the Dunk Tank, \$19.99, www.target.com.

‘Bee’ ready for Earth Day

Celebrate Earth Day, April 22, by reading about our planet’s powerful pollinator in “Flight of the Honey Bee.” Raymond Huber’s exciting book generates interest in these fascinating creatures as he chronicles the journey of Scout, as she leaves her hive in search of pollen and nectar. Woven throughout the thrilling narrative, in which Scout must overcome rain and hail; a hungry blackbird; and a belligerent wasp, are fun facts about bees

such as, “Bees can smell in ‘stereo,’ each antenna smelling in a different direction.” The action is underscored by the kinetic watercolor illustrations by Brian Lovelock. Huber closes his book with advice on helping bees thrive. Your little reader may be so impressed that their feeling about the stinging insect will change from fear to fascination.

“Flight of the Honey Bee” book by Raymond Huber, \$16.99, www.candlewick.com.





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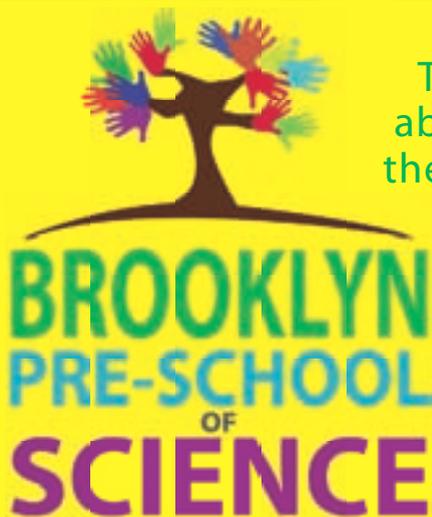


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(Left) Skylia Tuthill with her mom Sue, dad Brian, and brother Brodie. (Above) Skylia's colorful, handcrafted jewelry creations, featured in her Etsy shop — Loomtacular Creations.

Growing little entrepreneurs

How kids have turned creative ideas into businesses

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

Kids need a mentor — a parent, grandparent, or teacher — who is aware of their special abilities and strengths and can encourage them to explore them. Because when a kid follows their bliss, they might start bringing home some bucks.

Skyla Tuthill's mom noticed her 7-year-old daughter's creative streak emerge while they were making art projects together.

"She is very artistic and loves to experiment with all areas in art,"

says Sue Tuthill, proudly.

In November 2013, Skyla, a budding entrepreneur from Ridgewood, Queens, opened her own Etsy shop, Loomtacular Creations (www.etsy.com/shop/Loomtacular), featuring her unique line of trendy, handcrafted jewelry.

In her Etsy profile, Skyla writes: "Welcome to my Rainbow Loom shop! I love to do Rainbow Loom as my hobby. I am saving up for an iPad. My manager is my brother Brodie; he is 5. He is a kind and fair manager. His hobby is playing Wii, and his favorite Wii game is 'Harry

Potter.' Thank you for visiting my shop and supporting me :)."

Lovely Skyla makes colorful, official Rainbow Loom — winner of the Toy Industry Association's 2014 Toy of the Year Award — bracelets, earrings, rings, and necklaces for children, adults, and American Girl Dolls. Even the family pet can wear one of Skyla's Loomtacular dog collars.

"I use real Rainbow Loom rubber bands and a loom to make all of my creations," she says.

When she's not busy growing her business, the PS 113 second-grader says she likes playing basketball, hanging out with her brother, and playing with her dog. She also loves to read and write stories.

Doing most of her work from her bedroom studio, Skyla has been creating a variety of cool pieces for her shop, and she says friends and family love wearing her jewelry: butterfly, starburst, feather or fishtail bracelets, or flower and fishtail rings.

She says her mom inspires her, "because she is an art teacher, and I want to be creative like her."

“Since we opened her shop, she has managed every aspect, all on her own: she designed, created, communicated with buyers, and even mailed out all of her sales.”

Sue is also a multimedia artist, and sells custom paintings, posters, and picture frames in her Etsy shop, www.etsy.com/shop/skyandbrodie1.

“But she didn’t teach me how to make my creations,” says Skyla, who learned by watching YouTube videos and reading books on looming.

So, what does mom think about her daughter’s business savvy?

“I’m extremely proud of her! When she first asked me to sell on Etsy, I didn’t think she would be old enough to manage her own shop. I decided to give it a try, since Skyla was constantly making these bracelets, all day long,” she says. “Since we opened her shop, she has managed every aspect, all on her own: she designed, created, communicated with buyers, and even mailed out all of her sales. The only thing I help her with is taking pictures and uploading them for her.”

Sue feels this has been a great experience, because it has taught Skyla responsibility, and how to set and accomplish goals in life. And Skyla’s dad Brian, a New York City firefighter, says he’s extremely proud of his little girl and knows she could accomplish anything she wants, as long as she works hard and tries her best.

Skyla says when she gets older, she would love to become a veterinarian and also design clothes for animals.

So far, Loomtacular Creations has made 18 sales on Etsy, and several elsewhere. Skyla’s new bracelet design, the Double Fish Tail, is featured in her shop, along with her special St. Patrick’s Day line. She also takes custom orders.

But she’s not the only young-

ster flexing her flair for business and creativity.

Business idea: ‘Flops’

At 8, Madison “Maddie” Robinson had started out with a cool idea, just like Skyla. She turned her love for swimming, fishing, and drawing into imaginative designs for flip flops in 2006, and before long, her popular company, Fish Flops, exploded onto the fashion scene. Recently, Macy’s and Nordstrom started carrying her line, which also features hats, T-shirts, and children’s books.

According to Forbes.com, the future business major from Texas, who is now 15, has been stashing away her profits for her college education. Her dad makes sure things are running smoothly until Madison becomes head honcho.

Success is locket-ed up

Isabella “Bella” Weems, 17, founded Origami Owl when she was just 14. According to a 2013 article on Forbes.com, the savvy Arizona teen had set her sights on a used car for her 16th birthday. After doing a lot of research, she came up with an exciting idea and decided to create and sell pretty lockets with charms. She was motivated by her parents’ suggestion to start her own business, so she could pay for the car.

Based on a direct sales business model, Origami Owl blossomed into a custom jewelry company, which offers independent associates — now totaling more than 50,000 — an opportunity to make extra money by selling items to friends and relatives, and at private, hostess-run house parties or other venues.

According to Forbes.com, Origami Owl generated \$24 million in revenue in 2012, and was set to make \$250 million in 2013! But Isabella can’t take over and call the shots until she graduates from college.

What makes these ordinary kids special is their moxie and drive. They’re getting real world business experience early on, and learning other important lessons, such as independence and the value of a dollar, that they can do anything they put their minds and hearts into, how to manage money (and that money isn’t everything), and how to communicate and deal effectively with people they meet along the way.

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Summer doldrums

How to turn spoiled dreams into sweet memories

BY JUDY M. MILLER

Looking forward to having your kids home for the summer? I always am. I anticipate enjoying the outdoors and a much more leisurely pace — long bike rides and hikes, an annual trek to the beach, lots of ice cream, and more time and connection — all with my kids.

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

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

What we often love about summer — the easy-going, unstructured days — can backfire. Kids without routines can easily become restless and edgy, which can lead to them tormenting each other. Likewise, kids often spend the other 10 months separated — by bedrooms, school, peers, sports, and other extracurricular activities. Months of separation portend a lack of interaction, which in turn fosters unfamiliarity, and that makes spending time together challenging. So, do you want to nip a spoiled summer in the bud? Here are several ideas to address the key reasons summer



dreams sour:

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

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

Think 'active.' Sitting around day-in and day-out frustrates kids; they need activity for healthy bodies and minds. I ban the use of computers and watching of videos and TV during the day. (Different rules for inclement weather.) We still go down to the local park to swing and spin and hit some balls around on the tennis courts. We often play games of H-O-R-S-E or croquet while waiting on dinner.

Think transitions. Provide an

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

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

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

Judy M. Miller is a freelance writer living with her husband and four children, who can't wait to run through the grass and catch fireflies. She is the author of "What To Expect From Your Adopted Tween."

Back-Up options

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

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

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

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

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

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PARENTS
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SHARON C. PETERS, MA

Tips for a new mom

Dear Sharon,

I'm a new mom who has returned to work. I'm also nursing, which means I have to pump. Returning to work has been difficult for me, and I've been depressed about leaving my baby, but it's this pumping every day that's putting me over the edge. I'm getting more and more anxious every day. I constantly feel like crying. Any advice would be appreciated.



Dear new mom,

Please remember that you are not alone. Most working moms are depressed about having to leave their babies and find that parenting a young one while working is a tremendous accomplishment, requiring great physical and emotional stamina. Sadly, pumping while juggling the demands of a job, home, and new infant is often untenable.

I more than understand if you ultimately need to stop or limit nursing your baby, however, in case there are steps that you could take to make pumping at your workplace more manageable, here are some ideas that might help.

New moms usually report that finding a pump that best suits their needs can make a world of difference in reducing the time involved. Excellent pumps can be pricey but well worth the expense. A local chapter of La Leche League can be an in-

valuable resource for this kind of information and many other forms of support. New moms I know have contacted La Leche for guidance or to reach out to others who have confronted challenges while pumping at work. Experienced mothers can provide a wealth of comfort and practical assistance.

Working moms who pump usually need concrete assistance from their employers and colleagues as well. When women can share details about the complexity and benefits of nursing, it can help co-workers feel more involved and understanding. Finding and reaching out to associates who are parents or grandparents familiar with the challenges of nursing can also break through the isolation pumping moms experience.

Parents I know have also found ways to have their infants visit them during the day for a feeding. If this is at all possible, it can reduce the frequency of pumping, educate the office about what mothering a new little one is all about, and of course give moms the opportunity to connect with their babies.

Wearing clothes that make the process as easy as possible can also lessen the inconvenience, and taking some time to secure or request a secluded spot to pump often creates a sense of privacy that can reduce tension for everyone. Even moving furniture or paperwork to create a visual barrier can be a helpful idea.

Many women understandably have had to make the painful decision to stop or cut back on nursing when the strain of pumping while working has led to frazzled nerves and unwanted tears.

Almost all moms and dads have been forced to periodically make the decision to stop giving the "ideal" to their child so that they can offer more of their full selves. As I believe that the foundation of children's health and well being is built upon the relaxed and content time that they spend with their parents, these unfortunate decisions are usually correct.

As you do everything you can to take care of yourself while taking care of your precious young one, I think that whatever you do will go well.

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

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



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Benefits of spacing out your children

According to the research paper “Birth Spacing and Sibling Outcomes” by Kasey S. Buckles and Elizabeth L. Munnich of the University of Notre Dame, spacing siblings more than two years apart results in better scores on reading and math tests for the older children. Parents naturally want to do everything they can so their child can have an advantage, but there are other pros to spacing out your children.

I can’t say the spacing itself is the sole reason for the spike in test scores. I have three kids, each five years apart, unintentionally. They all do very well in school, but so do many of their friends, and some of them are only children or siblings spaced close together. I tend to believe that the parent’s educational goals and imposed study habits combined with a child’s natural ability and quality of teachers will largely determine a child’s educational outcome.

In our hyper-driven educational system that often cares more about test scores than actual learning, I wonder how much it even matters. Still, I have to say there are some definite advantages to spacing siblings widely apart.

Here is my top five:

Individual attention. With each child, I had time alone for him when he was a baby and toddler to focus on him for many hours a day. By the time another baby was born, the baby prior to that was in school, so I happily devoted time each day to playing, teaching, and enjoying the new addition. It was lovely.

Never diaper train more than one child at a time. My hat is off to the many moms who pull double duty and potty train multiple toddlers at a time. I don’t believe I’d ever have the patience to pull off such a feat.

Stagger out tuition. None of our kids will ever be in college when another is, and that realization is



huge. I especially recognize this perk since our oldest started college.

Live-in babysitters. As your oldest gets more mature each day, he can be a big help in watching the younger ones. This privilege should never be abused, of course, but sometimes having your 10-year-old watch her younger siblings — so you can finish dinner, help another with homework, or take a shower — can be purely joyful.

Prolong having a baby in the house. By the time my oldest was no longer a baby or toddler any-

more, I was pregnant again with another. I was lucky enough to have a baby in our home for many years. Now that it’s over (my youngest is 11), I can’t explain how much I miss it. A couple of years ago, when the baby urge hit an all-time high, we adopted an adorable black lab. Coincidence? I think not!

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney’s Babble.com. Find Sullivan on her blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.



THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Dive on into ‘Splash, Anna Hibiscus!’

“Look, Mom!” You probably hear that 10 times a day. Your daughter wants you to see what she’s doing. Maybe she’s just like the little girl in “Splash, Anna Hibiscus!” by Atinuke and illustrated by Lauren Tobia.

It was a beautiful, sunny day on a beach in Africa where Anna Hibiscus and where her family were relaxing.

Anna Hibiscus watched the ocean waves as they splashed and laughed. She wanted so much to splash, too, and she wanted everyone else to come with her!

She asked Angel and Chocolate, but they were digging in the sand. They invited Anna to play in the sand with them, but that’s not what she wanted to do.

She asked Benz and Wonderful to splash with her in the waves, but they didn’t even hear her. They were playing ball with beach boys and that wasn’t what Anna wanted to do, either.

She asked her girl cousins if they

would like to go play in the waves, but Clarity, Joy, and Common Sense said they were messing with their phones and were “too big now for playing.”

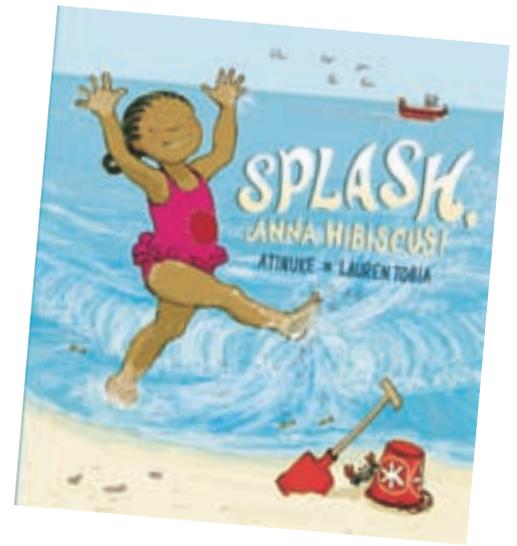
Mama was braiding hair. Auntie Joli was working beneath an umbrella. Auntie Grace was cooking corn.

Anna looked at the waves again. She wanted to splash in them. They wanted to splash with her, too. They were laughing and dancing. She started laughing, too.

And then Anna jumped...

It’s been a long and difficult winter. On many occasions, I’ll bet you dreamed of the tropics. So maybe now’s the time to put sand between your toes, the sound of the ocean in your ears, and “Splash, Anna Hibiscus!” in your child’s hands.

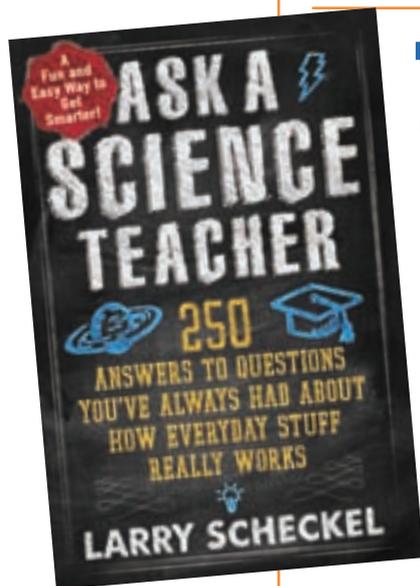
There’s a lot of joy in the story of a little girl who just wants to play in



the water. Author Atinuke and illustrator Tobia, in fact, make this one of the happiest books you’ll ever read to your children: there’s no pouting, no whining, just glee in what lies beyond the sand.

Just one caveat: careful parents of 3-to-7-year-olds should have a “don’t go in the water alone” talk while reading this book. Do that, then immerse yourselves in the delight of this adorable story. For both of you, “Splash, Anna Hibiscus!” is a book you’ll look at again and again.

“*Splash, Anna Hibiscus!*,” by Atinuke [32 pages, 2013, \$14.99].



The best way to learn science

Your son loves taking things apart — it helps him to break objects down in order to understand them.

It might be making you a little crazy, so maybe he needs to read “Ask a Science Teacher” by Larry Scheckel. That might be safer.

Wait ... science? Why do you have to study it, anyhow? Isn’t science all about people with thick goggles and lab coats doing experiments?

Lots of students think that way, says Scheckel, but science is a way of learning about the world around you. Understanding it is a great way to make sense of all of the other things you’re interested in.

Take, for instance, the great outdoors. Have you ever wondered where the white goes when snow melts? Or how cold could it get?

Let’s say you want to be an archi-

tect or a builder someday. Wouldn’t it be cool to know how Legos work? Or how lasers cut things without destroying them?

Kids who love animals will love this book. Don’t you wonder why dogs wag their tails when they’re happy? Can you really “talk” with your pet?

Haven’t you ever wondered why there are no seat belts on a school bus? Or how they get salt into peanuts without breaking the shells? Or how they know the number of calories in the snacks you’re eating?

And then there’s your favorite subject: *you!*

Why can’t you regenerate missing limbs? Could you really spontaneously combust? What happens when you sneeze? What if you didn’t have fingernails? Why are people left- or right-handed? And why should you never, ever use your tongue to see if a battery is any good?

So you say your child grouches about having science class, but he is also plenty curious. He can’t have it

both ways — but he can have “Ask a Science Teacher.”

With an engaging question-and-answer format and a delightfully geeky sense of humor, Scheckel picks apart all sorts of things to see how they work. The topics here are broad, touching upon a wide variety of interests and branches of science, and Scheckel’s musings beg to be explored further. I liked that this book doesn’t have to be read cover-to-cover, but can be browsed.

While it’s perfect for curious kids ages 12 and older, I also think this more-than-merely-science book would keep an adult entertained just as well. If you’re baffled by biology, frustrated by physics, or confused over chemistry, “Ask a Science Teacher” will pull it all together.

“*Ask a Science Teacher,*” by Larry Scheckel [348 pages, 2013, \$14.95].

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

Taxes & childcare

What parents should know about tidying up their taxes

BY STEPHANIE BREEDLOVE

April tends to be when tax talk reaches its crescendo. People are filing their personal income tax returns and crossing their fingers for a big refund check from Uncle Sam. But if you're a family in the Big Apple with in-home childcare expenses, you know your tax season really began back in January and is finally winding down.

By now, you've accounted for all of your caregiver's wages and taxes for 2013, given her a W-2 Form, and

filed paperwork with the Social Security Administration. It's quite a bit of work to do, so kudos for getting the job done!

There are only two things left to do before the April 15 personal income tax filing deadline. First, make sure you attach a Schedule H to your personal income tax return. Then, be sure to capitalize on your childcare tax breaks.

The Schedule H simply summarizes your household employment activity, so the Internal Revenue Service understands you paid someone to work in your home, withheld federal taxes from her, and paid your share of federal taxes. If you've remitted the federal tax throughout the year using the 1040-ES (Estimated Tax) process, you'll reflect those payments on your 1040 Form and they will offset the liability reported on Schedule H. If you have not made those payments yet, they'll be factored into your tax payment and refund.

The tax break you'll want to take is the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (IRS Form 2441) — not to be confused with the Child Tax Credit. As long as childcare was needed because you and your spouse both work or are full-time students, you can apply the wages you paid your caregiver (and other qualifying childcare expenses) to this tax credit.

If you have one child, you can itemize up to \$3,000 of expenses per year and if you have two or more children, you can itemize up to \$6,000 per year. Most families will receive a 20 percent tax credit on these expenses, so you can expect to see a savings of up to \$600 if you have one child and up to \$1,200 if you have two or more children.

NOTE: If you applied your childcare expenses to a Dependent Care Account ("Flexible Spending Account" or "FSA") through your work, you likely cannot take the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit unless you have

two or more children. The dollars applied in a Flexible Spending Account count against your expense limits. So, if you have one child and applied more than \$3,000 to your account, you have already exhausted your expense limit. However, if you have two or more children, you may itemize the expenses that have not already been applied to your account — up to \$6,000. Since most people utilize \$5,000 in their Flexible Spending Account, this provides an additional \$1,000 that can be itemized on Form 2441.

As you finalize these taxes and tax breaks, it's a great opportunity to look back at your care-related expenses in 2013 and see if you need to adjust your budget for 2014. For instance, a few things you definitely need to keep in mind are changes to laws specific to New York residents. As of this year, the minimum wage increased from \$7.25 per hour to \$8 per hour, so you need to make sure you've budgeted for this increase if you paid under \$8 per hour in 2013.

Lastly, if you're not doing so already, you'll need to make sure you've budgeted for your caregiver to have paid days off. State law mandates that if — on average — she works 30 hours or more per week, she is entitled to three paid days off once she's worked for you for a full year. If she works between 20 and 30 hours per week, she is entitled to two paid days off and if she works less than 20 hours per week, she earns one paid day off. This paid time off mandate was part of the New York Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights legislation that passed in 2010.

We know all these details are tedious, but taking care of all these tax and labor law obligations is important to you and your caregiver. It protects you from audit and wage disputes and entitles you to tax breaks. For your caregiver, the payroll system funds all the benefits and protections (Social Security, Medicare, Unemployment, etc.) other workers enjoy — now and in retirement. That peace of mind for both parties makes for a more professional and more successful working relationship.

Stephanie Breedlove is the vice president of Care.com HomePay.





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Photo by Paul Martinika

April in the Big Apple!

What is more DeLysscious than the beginning of spring in Manhattan, namely Central Park? April is special and extra-fun for many reasons: April Fool's Day, the beckoning of May flowers (you know the rhyme!), more time is spent outdoors, and Easter! Spring is a perfect time to get outdoors with your DivaTots and maybe even teach them a thing or two about nature, or explore new parts of our wonderful city!

April Fool's

You and your little ones can kick off the month with some laughs with a few cute (harmless!) pranks for April Fool's Day.

- Put a few drops of food coloring — choose your kid's fave shade — in a pitcher of milk. For my boys, I know I will be dyeing their milk blue, green or red! Make sure you are nearby with your camera when he or she sits down to eat breakfast.

- Change the language on your kids' smart devices to a different one! My kids love movies like "Karate Kid" and "Kung Fu Panda," so I will change their languages on the iPads to Chinese or Japanese. I cannot wait to see their faces as they try to figure out what went wrong with their lists of movies and music! But make sure you know how to change it back!

- This one's good for the kid who checks his messages, game scores, and e-mails every morning, or is always playing some type of computer game. Put part of a Post-It note over the tracking ball on a computer mouse to stop it from working altogether. Sit and watch his priceless expression; I can't wait to see Jackson, my oldest son, when he can't check his stats on Angry Birds!

- Use a pin or knife to make a few very small holes in a plastic cup, and make sure to put it back on the top of the stack or on the shelf. Watch as Dad gets a drink, and it ends up all

Cherry blossoms are the stars at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's Sakura Matsuri festival, April 26–27.

over his shirt. And make sure the kids are there to watch with you to laugh their heads off. But make sure that A) you're not the one doing the laundry that day, and B) it isn't something irreparable when spilled, like wine!

- End the day on a fun note. After dinner, send the kids up for a bath. When they get there, they'll find the tub has been turned into a ball pit! This is the most fun and generous "prank" if you ask me! My boys will be in heaven :)

Spring flowers

So, about April showers bringing those beautiful May flowers. Where should you go in the city to see the flowers bloom? Here are my family's favorite flower-spotting spots!

- The Brooklyn Botanic Garden: My boys and I absolutely love the Brooklyn Botanic Garden for its creativity with the designs and display of the beautiful looking — and smelling — flowers! We always stroll around for hours, and then, eventually, make our way to the gift shop to get a nature-themed cute little something to remember our special day. I can't wait to stroll my new daughter Blake around this year; I will definitely be dressing her in something floral and bright!

[1000 Washington Ave. in Brooklyn, (718) 623-7200, www.bbg.org]

•Conservatory Garden: Located at Fifth Avenue and 105th Street and open daily from 8 am until dusk, Conservatory Garden is the only formal garden found in Central Park. This garden is so beautifully and impressively kept, and just gets more and more luscious and gorgeous every spring! The flowers, water, and trees all come together to make you feel like you are somewhere far outside the city. My boys can kick their soccer ball around with my husband, while I sit and enjoy the views and unpack some Dellyssious snacks.

[Fifth Avenue and 105th Street in Central Park, Manhattan, (212) 628-1036, www.centralparknyc.org]

•Bartow-Pell Mansion: Located in Pelham Bay Park, the Bronx, this place is a MUST-SEE! The grounds alone are breathtaking, but add the sprawling, fit-for-a-princess mansion, and you will never want to leave! I hope one of my three children decides to get married here one day. It is free for children under 6, and very cheap otherwise (\$3 for kids and seniors, \$5 for adults). You can even take a tour of the carriage, mansion and grounds so as not to miss a thing!

[895 Shore Rd in the Bronx, (718) 885-1461, www.bartowpellmansion-museum.org]

•Wave Hill: Wave Hill is the perfect place to picnic with your kids. With water views and a mansion just as beautiful as Bartow-Pell, this is another perfect urban escape. In fact, the first blooms of the spring season were just spotted here! I can't wait to have my first mommy-daughter-day with Blake here this month.

[675 W. 252nd St. in Manhattan, (718) 549-3200, www.wavehill.org]

•The Bryant Park Flower Garden: Right near the New York Public Library, this little gem of a garden boasts more than 30,000 square feet of cultivated plantings with 100,000 daffodils, which begin to sprout green foliage in February and are in full bloom in March. Compared with most other parks in New York City, Bryant Park enjoys a relatively early spring. (The shelter of the surrounding buildings the lawn create a warm zone. And some of the more recently constructed high-rises, such as the Bank of America Tower, are sheathed in reflective glass, which bounces sunlight, like a heat lamp, back into the park. Yes, that's right; you can enjoy what will feel like an early summer with your family!) While

you're there, too, why not take your little ones to do some reading at the most beautiful library in the world?

[Between Fifth and Sixth avenues and W. 40th and W. 42nd streets in Manhattan, (212) 768-4242, www.bryantpark.org]

Easter

Living in the city, it may be difficult to find a safe place to set up a great Easter egg hunt for your little ones, or it may just not be in your family's tradition. Here are some bunny-themed, fun, free, family-friendly Easter egg hunts.

•The Great Easter Egg Hunt: The Lower Manhattan Community Church sponsors this Easter Fest, featuring egg hunts for children of different ages, photo ops with the Big Bunny and other holiday activities. This year's 10th annual event is on April 12 at 2 pm at PS 89 on Warren Street and is free.

At PS 89 [201 Warren St. at West Street in Tribeca, (646) 397-7051, <http://lowermanhattanchurch.com>].

•Carl Schurz Park Egg Hunt on the Upper East Side: Families can decorate egg-collection bags before participating in one of three hunts, on April 12 from noon to 2 pm. The rain date is April 13 at the Mayor's Lawn in the park off of E. 87th Street.

Carl Schurz Park is one of my family's favorites, as there is just so much going on! Jackson likes to watch the hockey and basketball players practice in the big sports arena, while my little Oliver likes to play with our puppy, Jedi, in the little dog park. Adding an egg-hunt and some arts and crafts will be more than enough springtime fun!

[E. 87th Street and East End Avenue in Manhattan, (212) 459-4455, carlschurzparknyc.org]

•Easter at the Children's Museum of Manhattan: The tot spot offers a trio of holiday activities on April 20. Preschoolers can create Easter collages while school-age kids decorate actual eggs. The museum also hosts a twist on the usual egg hunt: Visitors search for half a dozen paper eggs that are hidden throughout the museum. Once located, kids can redeem their completed hunt sheets for Easter prizes! Not to mention, you are at the museum! You can spend the rest of the day exploring and learning with your little ones.

[212 W. 83rd St. between Broadway and Amsterdam avenues in Manhattan, (212) 721-1223, www.cmom.org]

Lyss Stern is the founder of DivaLys-sious Moms (www.divamoms.com).

Where will your family be in April?



April 5, 12, and 19
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April 15
6 p.m.

Kosher-for-Passover dinner for family and friends. Members \$55; Nonmembers \$70; Children \$25; Toddlers under 2, Free. *Call now to reserve!*

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DAYTIME EVENTS

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Storytime
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Dance Around
Thursdays, 11a

Sun. Singlong
Every Sun, 12:30p

EVENING EVENTS

MarioKrt/Just Dance
1st & 3rd Saturdays, 6p

Friday Movies_6:30p
Sunday Bingo, 6p

Family Disco Party
2nd Saturdays, 6p

Kid 2nd Floor Entry Fee: \$5.00 for Singalongs, \$2.50/child otherwise
\$5 max fee per family play fee, \$2.50 play fee waived with each \$15 food purchase

FUN All Day: Toys, Art, Puppets, Games, Foosball, Computers!



DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

Financial infidelity

It's a fact that money issues contribute to the breakup of many relationships.

As individuals, we worry about money. As couples, we argue about it. Or avoid the subject. Some people spend without knowing where their money goes. Others track every dollar and are frightened of losing it all.

Times are hard. Unemployment rates remain high — higher than the numbers the government reports, in part because the long-term unemployed are not counted in the statistics, as if everything was just fine with them.

Many have had their homes foreclosed on. Many saw their retirement, savings, and investments lose value in the recession, and could not take advantage when the stock market rebounded. College tuition continues to increase.

Such challenges are stressful and frequently contribute to marital problems — that's so, even when we are open and honest with each other. When there is "financial infidelity," relationships suffer even greater strains.

In January 2014, Harris Poll conducted a survey for the National Endowment for Financial Education, and the results, "Financial Infidelity Poses Challenges for Couples," were posted on the Endowment's website in February. Its findings are probably familiar to most who work with couples. Here are some of them:

Deceitful behaviors

Of those who have ever combined finances with a partner or spouse, 33 percent have committed financial deception.

When those who have combined finances were asked about their own behaviors, the data showed that 30 percent have hidden a purchase, bank account, statement, bill, or cash from a partner or spouse. Thirteen percent have lied about finances or debt.

Asked about the deceitful behavior of a spouse or partner, 30 percent said that a significant other had hidden a purchase, bank account, statement, bill, or cash. Twenty-one percent said a spouse or partner



had lied about finances or debt.

Seventy-six percent said the financial deceptions affected current or past relationships in some way. As one would expect, trust is damaged; 33 percent said it caused less trust in the relationship.

Why behave deceitfully?

- Thirty-five percent said they believe some aspects of their finances should remain private, even from their spouse or partner.

- Twenty-four percent said they discussed finances with their spouse or partner, but knew the spouse would disapprove.

- Sixteen percent were embarrassed or fearful about their finances and didn't want their spouse or partner to find out.

- Fifteen percent said that while they hadn't discussed finances with their spouse or partner, they feared the spouse would disapprove.

Conclusions? Some might take away from these findings that partners should share financial information with each other. All of it. Always. This approach may work well for some couples.

For others, deciding together that each can spend an agreed upon amount on whatever she or he wants without any obligation to tell the other, will be the right way to go.

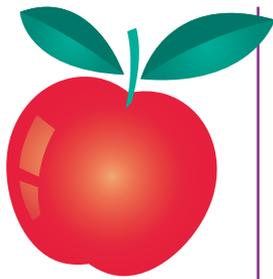
(This approach would very likely suit those in the 35 percent that said they believe aspects of their finances should remain private.)

You and your partner may well have different temperaments. It is very possible that growing up, your experiences regarding saving, spending, debt and so on taught each of you different lessons. Some of those lessons may have been unhealthy; for instance, the perception that money is bad and something to be frightened of, which resulted in never learning how to handle financial matters.

With a partner, or just for yourself, being honest about money pays off. Admittedly, talking about money can be hard work, especially if one of you has been deceitful. But a willingness to talk, listen, and change destructive behaviors may help to improve your own life and strengthen the relationship.

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

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



DEAR TEACHER

PEGGY GISLER AND
MARGE EBERTS

Celebrate the Earth

Dear parents,

April is a busy month, with most schools observing two special events — Earth Day and Screen-Free Week. You can make them more meaningful by tying them to family activities.

Earth Day is always celebrated on April 22. This year it will be on Tuesday — a day your children may be on spring break. Why don't you have your family join the more than 1 billion people celebrating this day by improving the environment in some way? Join one of the many Earth Day events in your community. You could be part of a group working to improve city, state, or national parks. Other groups clean up streams, plant gardens at schools, and pick up street trash.

Here are some other activities your family could do on Earth Day as well as other days throughout the year to green our environment. Whatever you elect to do will be hands-on learning about the environment for your children.

- Recycling is always a good place to begin. Commit your family to separating recyclables from your trash every week.

- Plant a tree for every member of your family. They will remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

- Start turning lights out when you leave a room. Unplug appliances when they are not in use. When you use less electricity, less oil and gas are being used to

create electricity.

- Build a compost pile. Find a section of your yard in a back corner and start putting all the leaves and grass cuttings from your yard in this pile. It will decompose, then you will be able to put it in the soil for other plants in your yard.

- Make bird feeders. This can be done by collecting pine cones and dipping them in peanut butter or honey and covering them with birdseed.

Your family should also think about observing Screen-Free Week, from April 28 to May 4. It is hard to believe that preschoolers average 32 hours a week of screen time from computers, TV, and other electronic devices. The time is even greater for older children. Screen media dominates too much of our children's lives, even if they are watching good programming. Use this week to examine your family's relationship with entertainment media and to rediscover the joys of screen-free living.

Introducing your children to music**Dear teacher,**

I love music and want to share it with my young children. What are the benefits of doing this? And how should I introduce them to music?

Dear parent,

All parents should definitely be taking the time to enjoy music with their young children, as it is very beneficial to their literacy development. Plus, it is a great way for them to acquire new vocabulary and learn rhyming words.

Through music, children are also building their listening and memory skills. Start singing to them when they are infants, and always smile while you are doing it. Don't worry if you don't have a good voice, just lip-synch to songs. As the children get older, have sing-a-long tapes in the car for fun while you are driving.

Fit music into your children's daily routine. Make up a pick-up song to sing as your child is tidying his toys with

you. Have bedtime and bath time songs, too. As your child gets older, get instruments that he can shake or bang along with the music. The more senses that your children use with music, the more they will learn about it. Besides, you will be having fun together.

Ways to teach social skills to young children**Dear teacher,**

I know having good social skills is important in many situations, including school. What social skills should I be teaching my young children?

Dear parent,

Both having and not having social skills can influence how well children do academically in school. You want your young children to be acquainted with sharing, waiting their turn, asking to use things, respecting other people, not interrupting, and managing both anger and frustration before they start school. Of course, they won't learn all these skills at once. As they continue through the elementary school years, you will need to continue helping them acquire these behaviors.

You can and should reinforce good behavior by acknowledging your children's behavior whenever they exhibit good social skills. Don't overlook bad behavior in young children, saying they will grow out of it — this may not happen. The sooner younger children learn how to behave appropriately, the fewer problems they will have in school.

What you do can help your children acquire social skills. You can show that these skills are part of the way you behave. If they see you waiting patiently in line, not losing your temper to rude drivers, taking turns, and not interrupting when you talk to others, they will be learning social skills. And it's absolutely necessary that you treat your children with respect by making polite requests, listening to them without interrupting, and avoiding any violence in your home.

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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A LETTER FROM COLLEGE

AGLAIA HO

The value of money

A few days ago, I received an e-mail from my college announcing next year's tuition. After one look, I almost had a heart attack. Tuition had risen 3.8 percent, and the new total was startling. I could already imagine the look on my parents' faces when they found out how much money they would have to fork over for my education next year.

This should not be a big surprise. The cost of college is a burden that all students face, and is one that seems to increase every year. Because of this, students have to consider the cost versus the benefits of attending college. Many of my friends have turned down prestigious private institutions for less-expensive city and state schools due to exorbitant tuition. Students must weigh their career choices as well, considering which jobs will pay off a hefty student loan the fastest. The days of dreamers and the "anything is possible" mantra are disappearing. You need to make decisions that are financially wise.

For a middle-income family like mine, paying for tuition can be a challenge. Like many other students across the country, I rely on financial aid. Financial aid packages contain three major parts: a grant or scholarship, a loan, and a work-study program.

Grants or scholarships are free money that the college gives out for those who struggle to pay. Schools do not expect students to pay them back. The amounts and types of grants and scholarships vary from school to school. My school, for example, gives out book grants, so that all textbooks and materials are free for those on financial aid.

Loans get paid back, with interest, after graduation. They are not as welcome, since today's interest rates are high.

Work-study programs fall somewhere in between. Many private colleges offer students the chance to work to pay off a portion of tuition. I am expected to find a job on campus and also work during the summer to contribute to my education. This is a lofty goal for a first-year college student to meet, and I have



struggled to meet my college's high financial expectations. Nevertheless, in my attempt to complete my work-study and find a useful, paid internship for the summer, I have learned the value of money.

Budgeting 101

I have also rarely thought much about money throughout my life. My parents never felt the need to limit my spending by imposing an allowance. However, because I never had an allowance, I never learned how to budget or manage money. Prior to college, I had worked summer jobs, but bringing home a paycheck had not meant much, because I rarely spent my earnings.

This changed once I got to college. With my parents paying down a large chunk of my tuition, it is my duty to help pay for as much as I can, too. My share comes from my job at school. I work as an events assistant at the theater. I am getting paid a little bit more than minimum wage. During my first semester, I worked frequently, signing up for shifts every month and leaving time for other extracurricular activities, as my parents suggested. I was proud of myself for working this job, and was happy to be paying for my education. In my mind, I was making plenty of money and was easily dusting through my work-study. Yet, at the end of the semester, I was shocked by how little I actually earned.

Work vs. play

When I looked back at my time cards and checked everything over, I realized that making money was a lot

harder than spending it. I calculated my spending in terms of how many hours of work I would have to put in. I was startled by the results. Just having a meal off-campus at the local deli would be an hour of work. Seeing a Broadway show? That's a whole semester of work right there.

Learning the value of money in this way has made me more frugal and more prone to grab unique opportunities from my school. I eat meals on campus, trying to take advantage of the 21-meals-a-week plan that has been prepaid. On overnight trips, I grab a little extra from the hotel's continental breakfast for lunch. When my school has special events or shows, I make sure to get my complimentary tickets from the box office.

The ideal internship

Searching for an internship for the summer has also been a struggle. As a freshman, I do not have many options. The two criteria I have for an internship are to gain a meaningful experience in the field of my interest and, of course, get paid to do it. Unfortunately, many internships in the city are unpaid. I am expected to make a decent amount of money this summer to pay for my education, but the cards seem stacked against me.

Minimum wage woes

Working to pay off my education has also opened my eyes to a bigger issue facing our country. I am fortunate enough to have parents who are willing to make sacrifices for my education, but not all students do. Plenty of people have no choice but to work minimum-wage jobs. In New York City, that's \$8 an hour. The city is one of the most expensive places to live, making \$8 an hour is almost inhumane!

The lesson to be learned here is it sucks to be paid so little.

Maybe, it will spark a fire in us to study harder to avoid such low pay. Nevertheless, I can only hope that we remember what it is like to work at the bottom. If we do, perhaps, we, as the future, can help those who need a leg up.

Aglaia Ho is a freshman at Williams College and a native New Yorker.



DEATH BY CHILDREN

CHRIS GARLINGTON

Palate-deficient kids

I can cook. Let me be clear here: I can throw down a confit de canard with spiced peach marmalade and a side of braised escarole with — look, I deserve a TV show. I'm that good.

Unless you're a kid.

For kids' cuisine, I'm egregiously overqualified. If I laid a nice plate of maple-glazed pork loin with a beet and goat cheese salad down before you, a grown up with an established and sensitive palate, you'd swoon. You'd lick the plate, then lick the inside of your mouth. You'd lick your own tongue. But my kids?

Boy: What the heck, dad?

Girl: You know we're not French, right?

Boy: Is this even real food?

Girl: I'm calling mom.

Or, say, I knock out a sweet coq au vin with a side of braised Brussels sprouts, chopped walnuts, and prosciutto.

Boy: What is this?

Me: Coq au vin — chicken with wine.

Girl: ARE YOU TRYING TO GET US DRUNK?

Boy: Why are these cabbages so small? What did you do to them?

Me: Look, it's just braised —

Girl: STOP BRAISING THINGS! We hate braise!

Boy: What's in braise?

Me: Look, when you ate the duck last week —

Together: WE ATE A DUCK!?

Me: Yeah, confit de canard. It means duck cooked in its own fat.

Girl: I'm gonna throw up.

Boy: WHAT ELSE DID WE EAT?

Me: Well, this is rooster.

Together: AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Me: Yeah, and there were the goat burgers.

Together: AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Me: Raccoon casserole.

Together: AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Me: Parakeet, skunk, badger, wombat, freshwater octopus, varmint —

Together: AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!

A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A!!!!

The next day, the boy comes home from school and races into the house.

"Dad, dad, dad — what's for dinner?!"

"Spaghetti."

"No, that won't work."

"OK, wait a minute — you love spaghetti."

"I do love spaghetti, but I told my friends about all the gross stuff you cook. They can't wait to hear what you make next!"

"I'm making spaghetti."

"Lame."

"With snake."

"Now we're talking."

"And pickled badger nostrils —"

"Yes!"

"— wombat knuckles —"

"Yes!"

"— jellied barnacles —"

"My favorite!"

"— and platypus drool."

A week later, I am, again, fed up with pandering to the gustatory trailer park of family's preferred cuisine; a groaning serving board heaped to the rafters with hot dogs, hamburgers, plain chicken breast, and taco dinners. I need to throw down. I need to get my chef on. I go buy a rabbit, some parsnips, chestnuts, and mushrooms. I'm elbow deep in a pan full of *râble de lapin* avec *duxelle* when the kid comes home from school.

"What smells so good?"

"Fruit bat."

"Oh my god, that sounds delicious," he says, winking dramatically like a vaudeville hack.

"Stuffed with shriveled yak spleen and toasted pencil erasers."

"Yes!" More winking.

"Here, taste this." I shove a steaming chunk of parsnip in his mouth.

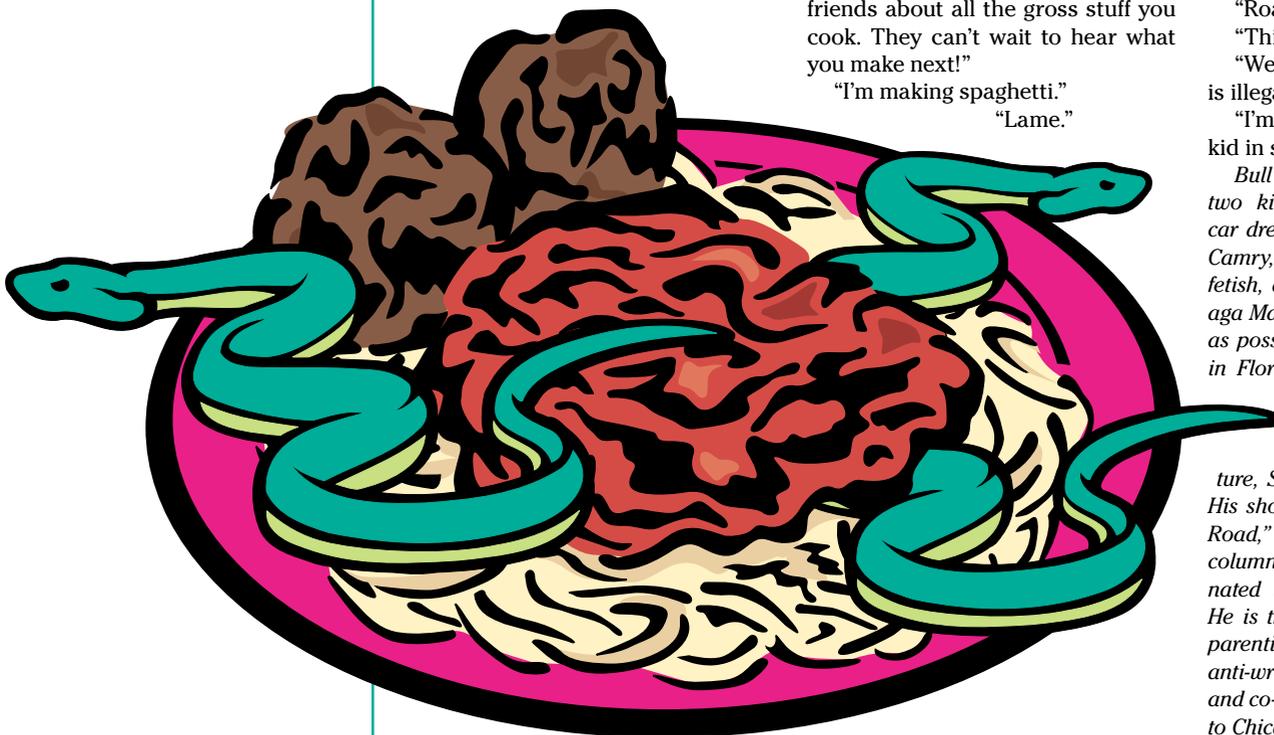
"Roasted zombie finger bone."

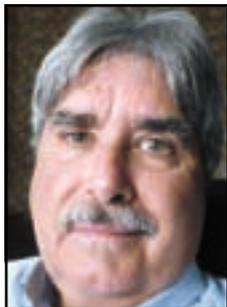
"This. Is. Delicious."

"Well don't tell anyone — fruit bat is illegal."

"I'm gonna be the most popular kid in school!"

Bull 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."





FAMILY JOURNAL

ROBERT MORTON

How to nurture your child's musical talent

We think our baby is musically gifted. At 8 months, she showed a keen interest in music and babbled the melodies to lullabies we sing to her. She actually learned to talk by singing and has an incredible "ear" for music. Now, at age 4, she sings songs on pitch and plays them with a simple flute we bought her. Are there any tests that measure music talent? Also, we've heard that "supercharging" an infant or child's environment to enhance gifted talent is popular. What's your opinion?

"Supercharging" your daughter's environment is unnecessary to further enhance her innate giftedness in music. Insufficient stimulation leads to lifelong stunts in normal intellectual growth and cognitive and developmental psychologists have been preaching this assumption for a half century. "Supercharging" a child's surroundings is popular, because many caring parents mistakenly conclude from this "meager experience" model that lavish experiences will create superior functioning children.

Reading to and playing classical music to a developing embryo; placing geometric, colorful mobiles over the crib; and placing scented candles in the room will not cause synaptic connections to fire away like a spark plug in developing children.

Even though no research demonstrates that playing Mozart and Bach makes babies brighter, Georgia and Tennessee give classical-music CDs to parents and the Florida Legislature mandated that state-run day care centers play such music every day.

Your informal observations and intuition rather than a formal test are probably the best measures of your daughter's musical intelligence. Is her singing voice pleasant? Is she aware if she's off-key when singing? Does she enjoy listening to all types of music? Does she already have a desire to play a musical instrument?



Do you feel a vacuum would exist in her life without music? Do TV jingles or other tunes run through her mind often? Can she keep the beat to music with a simple percussion instrument or by tapping on the table top? Does she know the tunes to different songs or musical pieces? After hearing a musical selection once or twice, can she sing it back fairly accurately? Does she make tapping sounds or sing little melodies while working or playing?

If you answered "yes" to most of these questions, I suggest you nurture her musical abilities by creating a special "music corner" for her. You can purchase maracas, rattles, and an inexpensive plastic flute, keyboard (toy version), and a small record player. You can build several homemade drums with her from different-sized coffee cans and oatmeal boxes. Keep it fun and create some music with her!

It's best to nurture, not push, her keen interest in music. Refrain from "teaching" her to read music be-

fore her formal reading instruction is well underway. Master teachers of music value "feeling" over mechanics for young children — they contend that forcing creativity upon children will actually kill it. So, respect your daughter's right to create casual music that flows naturally from her heart. Make it fun at this point; someday, she'll beg you for formal music lessons — when she's ready and eager!

I'm about as sharp as a bowling ball regarding musical talent. When attending symphonies with my wife, I observe her nodding her head and smiling while she "feels" the emotions and "sees" the story spawned by the William Tell Overture, while all I can envision is the Lone Ranger and Tonto. I wish your daughter a lifetime of musical enjoyment.

Robert Morton is a retired school psychologist and adjunct professor in the School of Leadership & Policy Studies at Bowling Green State University. Contact him at the Family Journal (www.familyjournal1.blogspot.com).



JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Offensive questions

Being a mom is hard enough without busybodies

Have you ever found yourself strolling around the playground or waiting outside your child's school, when seemingly out of the blue, a parent has asked you a question that was offensive? Maybe you didn't immediately know how to respond because you were so taken back by the comment. Perhaps you let him have it, because it was just that rude.

The question might have been about why you are doing or not doing a certain parenting technique with your child or why you are for or against a certain position, movement, or theory. Maybe it got personal.

Rude questions.

There are a lot of them going around these days. While the reasons behind them may change, a rude question generally occurs when someone is stepping out of his or her boundaries and into your business.

Here are some that top the list:

Are you done having children?

The implication here, especially when asked of a mom of large families, is that you should be. To some, if you have more than two kids, you are either adding to the earth's overpopulation or robbing your kids of precious financial and emotional resources.

Why aren't you breast-feeding?

Some women try really hard to breast-feed, but due to physical circumstances, just can't. Some breast-feed for a while and then give it up. Why is it anyone's business how another child is being nourished?

Why are you still breast-feeding?

The breast-feeding bond between a mother and child is very individual and there is no set timetable for stopping it completely. Sometimes moms do still breast-feed their toddlers, some don't. It's simple as that.

Said within earshot of the child: Why doesn't child X look like you or your husband?

Short answer: because he is the product of an illegitimate and illicit affair. Seriously, if this is the situation (and in some cases, it may be) do you really want to hear the answer? Newsflash: not all kids look alike, even siblings. Also, think before you speak. It's possible the child was adopted and not only have

you offended the parent, but you've also quite possibly put some doubt or insecurity in the mind of a small child.

Is there something wrong with Johnny?

Just because a child is more spirited or rambunctious or louder than yours doesn't mean that he has a problem. Furthermore, if he does have a problem, it's not anyone's duty to share with you unless they choose to do so.

Don't you want another?

Some people believe that only children are unhappy, lonely, or spoiled. Nothing could be further from the truth. And you just never know when a couple is going through second infertility, which makes this question not only disrespectful, but possibly painful.

Is he your 'real' child?

No, he's made of wood but with enough effort on my part, he might eventually morph into a real boy. It's just about the rudest way to inquire if your child was adopted, and again, none of your business!

What is she?

This question often gets asked to moms of multi-ethnic children. "What is he or she" sounds like something other than human. She's a child with real flesh and blood, and possibly different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Can you not bring your child to my party, dinner, shopping trip, etc.?

I understand that some people may not want children at adult-only events, but if you just don't want to be inconvenienced by kids, and I don't have a babysitter, my answer is, well, no. You have every right to not like children or the mess and noise they make, just as I can justify not spending my time and money to attend your function without them.

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find Sullivan on her blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.

How rude!





DEAR
DR. KARYN
DR. KARYN GORDON

Ensure online safety

Dear Dr. Karyn,

My family just got a computer. (I know people think we're absolutely crazy.) I've heard horror stories from other parents about what their kids are doing online. What are some practical suggestions you can give me about how to safely access the internet in our home?

Dear parent,

What a great question! The internet is an amazing tool; it provides us with an enormous amount of quick information, and it also allows kids to communicate quickly with each other. But using it is also a privilege, and like all privileges, it is accompanied by responsibilities.

Here are some suggestions:

- Put the computer in a public place, e.g., the kitchen or family room. Do not set up the computer in your child's bedroom.

- Set a limit on how much time each child will have on the internet and divide this up between school time and socializing time. I find a realistic total number is between one to three hours per night depending on their age.

- Go over some rules about what sites they can and can't go to. For example, are you OK with your child viewing pornographic material? Talking with strangers

in chat rooms? Visiting online gambling sites? If not, tell him. Be clear about your expectations.

- Discuss how your child is going to deal with conflict via e-mail. I've found that e-mail encourages people to voice their thoughts more openly (usually a good thing) but often this is done in a nasty, aggressive, or thoughtless manner. If your child is dealing with a conflict with a friend via e-mail, encourage him (but don't make it mandatory) to show you his response before he sends it. This way, you can be sure your child is responding in a healthy way.

If he doesn't abide or agree to some basic internet rules, you can always take the internet away as a consequence. Remember, access to the internet is a privilege, not a right.

Implement the best discipline style at home

Dear Dr. Karyn,

I have a 12-year-old son and a 15-year-old daughter. My problem is that my wife and I see differently when it comes to disciplining the children. I am more firm, while she is more laid back. It makes me look as if I am the bad guy, and because of that, my kids speak to my wife in a disrespectful manner. Dr. Karyn, sometimes I sit back and watch but sometimes it gets unbearable, and so I step in and yell. I would ask my wife why she lets the children get away with so much, and a few minutes later, she would behave as if nothing happened between her and the children. I am at my wits' end. Please help.

Dear parent,

Discipline or power is one of the three biggest stressors in marriage; you are not alone. As a therapist, I frequently receive questions about discipline. Before I recommend how you and your wife should respond, let me first educate you about the different discipline styles.

In my "Analyze Your Teen" CD series, one of the four CDs is all about how to set boundaries and teach responsibility. In this resource, I outline three different discipline styles.

- There is the "Stone Wall" boundary, when parents are very strict, rigid, and allow very little room for negotiation. In this family, children will often rebel or become resentful.

- There is the "Wild Field" boundary, when parents allow anything to happen. In this case, the children or teens are running the show, and the parents feel walked on and taken for granted. There is often a sense of chaos and anxiety in this home.

- Finally, there is the "Picket Fence" boundary, when boundaries and expectations are discussed, communicated, negotiated, and agreed upon. Often, appropriate rewards or consequences are also agreed upon. In this home, children feel valued and respected while parents still have authority.

From your question, my sense is that your wife is more of a "Wild Field" and you are more of a "Stone Wall." These two extremes will often create enormous conflict and chaos in any family. My number one recommendation: it is imperative for the well-being of your children and also your marriage that you and your wife get on the same page as it relates to discipline. For starters, you can get my CD series that will better educate you and your wife about how exactly parents can implement the "Picket Fence" boundaries in your home (www.dkleadership.org).

If you feel you still need more help, then I recommend you and your wife go to counseling. If you're wife refuses, I'd still recommend you go yourself, so you can learn how to respond effectively to the situation. Getting frustrated and yelling will not improve your situation. Getting the right education and information will empower you to act and respond differently!

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.



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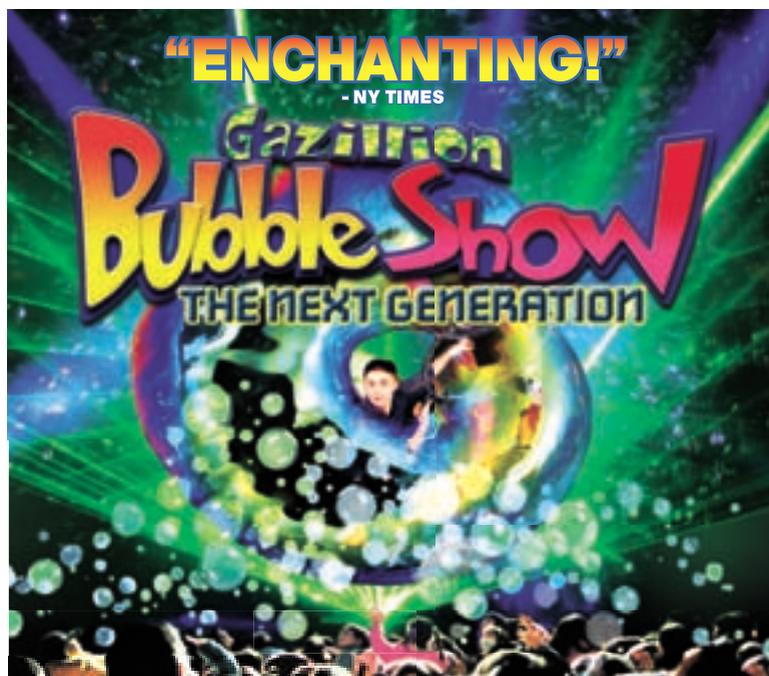
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SAT

in flux

Why the College Board is making changes to the SAT

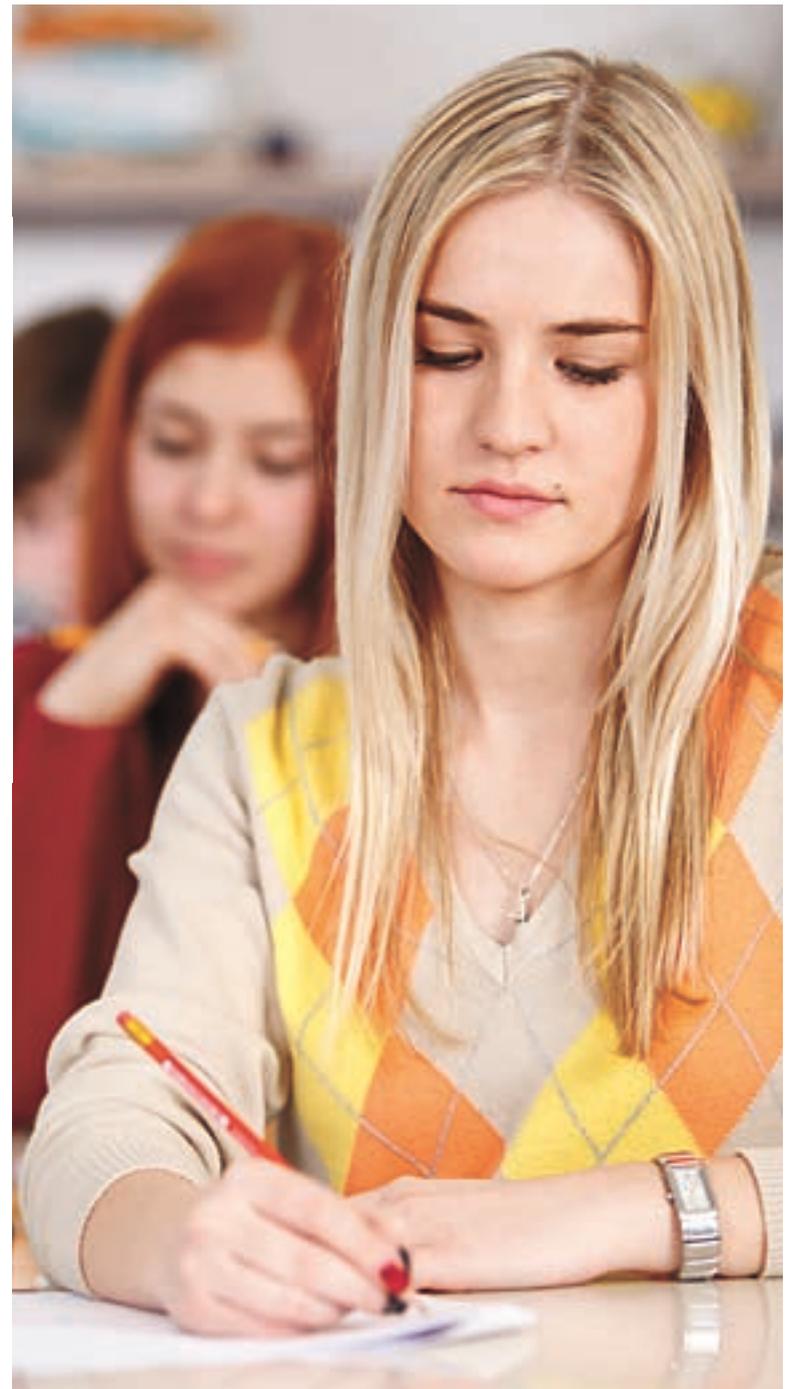
BY FRANCES KWELLER

Let the anxiety begin. The first line of the newly printed New York Times article reads, “Saying its college admission exams do not focus enough on the important academic skills, the College Board announced on Wednesday a fundamental rethinking of the SAT, eliminating obligatory essays, ending the long-standing penalty for guessing wrong, and cutting obscure vocabulary words.”

The College Board is advertising a newer test as a way to address social injustice. It is a flimsy defense against the criticisms of a test the College Board has administered for 81 years that is virtually impossible for most students to test in the top 10th percentile unless they can afford tutoring and materials. The reality is that the SAT has fallen behind the ACT in terms of test numbers and the College Board wants to make money. The College Board long held a monopoly as the only college entrance examination, but in the 1960s, the ACT emerged as a response to the SAT, long identified by many as a classist, and arguably racist, test. In 2013, 1.8 million students took the ACT as opposed to 1.7 million sitting for the SAT.

Actions speak far louder than

PERSONAL ESSAY



words, so let us examine what the College Board is doing rather than what it is saying.

SAT scoring will return to the system where the scores will be up to 1600, with a top math score of 800, a top “Evidence-Based Reading and Writing” score of 800, and the writing section optional. This seems to be a “back to the future approach” when once upon a time, the SAT consisted of a top math score of 800, a top “verbal” score of 800, and an optional written section. This is tantamount to an admission

of defeat with the retooled SAT as most college admissions departments never really adopted the writing portion of the exam in their processes because of the constant confusion surrounding it.

Furthermore, the college prep media never embraced the 2400 point exam. Even the “Bible” of college admissions, the “U.S. News and World Report” college guide, stuck to the 1600-point scale in its collegiate assessments.

This is not to say that I think that the SAT should remove the written section altogether. I think that would be a mistake. The strength of the SAT essay is to demonstrate

Actions speak far louder than words, so let us examine what the College Board is doing rather than what it is saying.

that a student can write a clear, concise essay in a tightly timed (25 minute) setting, using proper grammar, punctuation, spelling, a range of sentence structures, and apt vocabulary. There have been cases where the College Board essay was compared against student's college application essay to determine how polished the college application essay was by counselors, teachers, and parents.

Apparently, changes coming to the exam are going to be extensive: The SAT's "rarefied" vocabulary words will be replaced by words that are common in college courses, such as "empirical" and "synthesis." I sincerely hope I am not being abstruse in my query, but by what empirical metric is the College Board quantifying the syntax and lexis of the collegiately adept as opposed to the grammar and vocabulary of the vernacular? And doesn't this mean a lessening of the rigor of the exam without actually making preparation easier?

In addition, the use of a calculator will no longer be allowed on some math sections. In fact, most students must purchase \$100 to \$200 calculators for their daily math classes. That is the reality of today's schools, but the College Board has now arbitrarily decided that students who have used calculators in math classes for a generation, should now suddenly perform on a potentially life-changing exam without them. That Pandora's box has long been opened and cannot now be closed and still be representative of a student's high school work. This alone undermines the College Board's credibility as experts in measuring student performance.

The College Board touts its fee waiver program that allows students with limited means to send scores to up to four schools free of charge. The College Board has always offered this program, but

the process is labyrinthine and the waivers are ridiculously difficult to obtain, and the process must be repeated completely for each sitting for the exam. The College Board does not mention any improvement in this little-known program; it merely reiterates that the program exists.

Perhaps the most disingenuous statement is that, "It is time for the College Board to say in a clearer voice that the culture and practice of costly test preparation that has arisen around admissions exams drives the perception of inequality and injustice in our country." Big words for an institution that has for 81 years said nothing about the iniquities of its exams, and who charges an additional \$60 for online software with six tests, and charges \$19 for each time a student wants a copy of his test.

The Blue Book, a ponderous manual the College Board condones (and publishes for \$21.99) as the only "Official SAT Study Guide," is half useless. Literally, one entire half of the book is filled with jargon that is intended to detail the skills necessary for test success and instead ends up confusing readers, because everything is so poorly explained.

The second half of the book features 10 real SAT exams riddled with errors. For an extra \$10, the College Board will sell you a Blue Book with a CD with videos that makes a far better coaster than an effective preparation tool. And best of all, the Blue Book does not come with an explanation section, so that students can learn from the examiner how they will be examined.

And from the looks of the cease and desist letters sent to some educators who try and write explanation sections to the Blue Book, the College Board does not want anyone else explaining its tests either.

The College Board created the test preparation industry by the College Board's lack of direction and student outreach. It is not the test preparation industry that drives the perception of iniquity. It is the very necessity of such an industry that is the iniquity. It is an artificially created iniquity that the College Board wants to continue to profit from.

Frances Kweller is an education and testing standards expert and CEO of Kweller Test Prep in Queens.

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GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

Apps for exercise

Sixty minutes a day. That's the minimum amount of physical activity recommended for children, ages 6 to 17, by the Centers for Disease Control. Some kids meet that goal effortlessly. They can't wait to walk the dog, they belong to a team that practices every afternoon, or they nag their parents to go on long hikes and bike rides.

Other kids need a little encouragement to step away from their electronic devices, so they can get active. Now, that encouragement comes from the devices themselves. Some very innovative programmers have designed gadgets and apps that promise to make family fitness fun. Which one will be motivating in your household? Look for an app that intersects with things your family cares about. Here are some suggestions:

Tangible rewards. Zamzee is a tiny accelerometer that records motion. When the device, which looks like a flash drive, is clipped onto shoes or slipped into a pocket, your child earns points for any physical activity — sweeping the floor, climbing stairs, jumping rope, dancing, etc. Plug Zamzee into a USB, and kids can see graphic evidence of how active they've been. They also earn points that can be donated to charity or used to purchase virtual or real rewards including apps and games. (\$29.95 from Zamzee.com)

Batting balls (or bugs). Ballstrike and Buglylon turn iPads and Windows 8 tablets into something that resembles a Kinect at a fraction of the price. Just set the tablet upright on a flat surface, step back and use your body to pop balls (or smash bugs). The app, which has six levels, tracks calories burned and allows your child to share photos of their best moves. (Free from the App Store and Windows)

Run for your life. Zombies, Run! isn't for little kids, but teens who want to stay fit may find this immersive app very motivating. The user maps the course he plans to run, and then the program devises a story about finding supplies for a community besieged by the undead. Periodically, the app announces that zombies are in the vicinity and their noisy breathing makes most runners pick up the pace. The app



includes 33 missions and young people can also incorporate their favorite music. (\$3.99 at the App Store and Google Play)

Walk for the world. The Walk is a better choice for teens (and adults) who don't care to jog. The game, designed in the United Kingdom, starts with the premise that a bomb has exploded in the London underground. The only way to save the world is to carry a package from one end of the British Isles to the other, encountering misadventures along the way. The game is intended to cover three months of walking, long enough for most people to get a good habit established. (\$2.99 at the App Store and Google Play)

Football fanatics. NFL Play 60 encourages children to get their 60 minutes of activity by running, turning, and jumping over virtual obstacles. Kids control the character in the game by holding a phone or tablet that detects their movements. As they progress, they collect hearts that make the character invincible from the American Heart Association and coins that buy virtual gear from the NFL. Both organizations cooperated to create the game, which gives young football fans a fix without risking a concussion. (Free from the App Store and Google Play)

Good form for athletes. IronKids was developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics to minimize the risk of injuries in young athletes. The 45-minute workout emphasizes the correct way to do exercises that build strength, balance and endurance, so

it's ideal for teens and pre-teens who want to be in good shape for team try-outs. (\$3.99 from the App Store)

Peer encouragement — and competition. Fitocracy makes it very easy to keep track of a fitness routine, especially if it includes repetitive exercises such as weightlifting. Users set goals and earn points by achieving them. More important, Fitocracy taps into the power of social media, making it easy to find other people who enjoy the same kind of workout. Teens can learn from those who are more experienced, exchange encouraging words and even challenge others to friendly competition. (Basic level free from the App store and Google Play)

Of course, sometimes the very best way to get everyone up and moving is to put on the right music. You may already have a playlist of favorites, but if you need some inspiration, check out kidbeatz.com, where you can find family-friendly hip-hop renditions of childhood standards. Buzzle has a list of classic dance tunes suitable for kids (buzzle.com/articles/dance-songs-for-kids.html) and Common Sense Media screens contemporary songs so unexpected lyrics won't bring your dance party to a screeching halt (commonsense-media.org/lists/dance-tracks).

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

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LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

Teens and divorce

Adolescence is often a tumultuous time as teens slowly prepare for the adult world, coming to terms with their changing bodies and increasing responsibilities. Throw divorce into the mix, and a teen's world — already filled with extremes — is quickly thrown into a tailspin. Even though teens are more independent than younger children, divorce can lead to devastating consequences, because their parents are the glue holding everything together for them, and that glue seems to be disintegrating.

Depending on the circumstances, teens may have to adjust to additional life changes, such as a new school, new neighborhood, or varied living arrangements. Therefore, parents must try to focus on upholding a normal routine during a time when chaos and heartbreak can easily take over.

Easing the transition

Teens will likely experience a myriad of emotions after being told about an impending divorce, such as shock, anger, fear, loneliness, anxiety, despair, or a combination of feelings.

Parents need to address their teen's feelings and answer questions. This can be quite difficult since the parents are also experiencing anguish and uncertainty about what the future holds.

Debbie Pincus, a marriage and family therapist and creator of The Calm Parent: AM & PM program (www.empoweringparents.com), advises, "Parents can ease their teens into this lifestyle change by committing themselves to behaving well with each other and being conscious to not pull their kids between them."

She says that parents

- Maintain secondary family relationships with grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins on both sides of the family.

- Don't use visitation as a means for punishing the non-custodial parent.

- Encourage an ongoing relationship with the other parent.



should not criticize their spouse or ask teens to choose sides.

"Teens need to feel good about both parents." She also says that teens shouldn't be made to feel as if they have to take care of their parents emotionally.

Amy Morin, a psychotherapist and parenting teens expert, explains, "It's important to have ongoing conversations with a teen about what changes to expect. Try not to change everything at once. Instead, take the changes one step at a time," she suggests.

Dealing with major changes

Pincus counsels, "Teens should have flexibility and choice when it comes to visitation." She says that as long as there is no concern about neglect or abuse, parents should allow their teens some flexibility when it comes to time spent with each parent.

Morin recommends that parents keep their teens in the loop.

"Giving teens advanced notice about major changes, such as moving or changing schools, is important. A teen who is grieving the divorce may struggle even more if she has to move away from friends or change schools all at the same time," she warns.

Feelings of guilt

Be cognizant that a teen might feel he had something to do with the breakup of the family.

According to KidsHealth.org (sponsored by Nemours Foundation), "Some

kids feel guilty about what happened, or wish they had prevented arguments by cooperating more within the family, doing better with their behavior, or getting better grades."

Therefore, parents should be sure to regularly let their teens know that the divorce has nothing to do with anything their teens did. Instead, it has to do with the breakdown of the marital relationship.

Seek help early on

Morin says that a teen's depression or anxiety over a recent divorce is easier to treat in the early stages.

"Parents should err on the side of caution and speak to their teen's pediatrician or another mental health professional if they grow concerned about their child's adjustment to the divorce."

In order to be sure they can be there emotionally for their teens, parents should seek help and support for themselves as well.

Tips and tales

"I made sure to watch what I was saying about the divorce when the kids were around, and I didn't bad mouth their mother when they were around me."

Andy Bradford, Poughkeepsie, NY

"No matter what, the kids need to know and understand it is not about them or how much Mom and Dad love them. It's about Mom and Dad not being able to sustain the relationship and that, for everyone's sake, it's better if they go their own way."

John Keller, Earlville, NY

"Always remember your children have the right to love BOTH parents equally. Love your children more than how much you dislike each other."

Therese McKenna, Hyde Park, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic: High school graduation celebration ideas.

Please send your full name, address, and brief comments to myrna-haskell@gmail.com or visit www.myrna-haskell.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).

The following tips are provided by HealthyChildren.org (from the American Academy of Pediatrics)

- Let children know it is okay to love both of you.

- Don't pressure your children into taking sides.

- Refrain from making disparaging remarks about the other parent.

Top Tips

Camp anxiety, parent division

Feeling nervous as your child heads off to camp?

BY DR. HEIDI SMITH LUEDTKE

If your kids are going to sleep-away camp this summer, you may be wrestling with worries and what-ifs:

- What if he wets the bed?
- What if the other kids are cliquish or mean?
- Will the camp director call me if she's miserable?

Why parents worry

What is behind all of this fear?

"Much of our anxiety as parents

stems from the fact that there are so many things we cannot control in our children's lives," says Dr. Paul Donahue, clinical psychologist and author of "Parenting Without Fear."

You may worry that without structure, kids won't be able to handle routine tasks like showering, brushing teeth, or getting dressed. One mom I know felt so sure her son wouldn't change clothes at camp that she packed his items — one pair of underwear, shorts, shirt, and socks — in gallon-size Ziploc bags, labeled with the days of the week.

Because parents focus so much on kids' needs, it's hard to step back. Coverage of natural disasters and child predators makes the world seem scary.

"Concern about the safety of children has become something of a national obsession," Donahue observes. Even though our protective instincts keep us on edge, sometimes, we have to trust others to care for our kids, and trust our kids to look out for themselves.

Fear of letting go can also be driven by our own uncertainty about who we are without our kids and what we'll do while they're away. Without baseball practice, piano lessons, bedtime routines and movie night, our lives would be slower and saner and ... emptier.

How to stop it

Don't let worries weigh you down. Use them as an opportunity to confront your own needs for safety, control, and closeness. Here's how:

Step back. Anxieties have a way of sucking you in. Your thoughts and emotions may be swirling like a tornado around you. Get out of the eye of the storm and reflect on your feelings. What (exactly) are your worries? Write them down, so you can face them head on.

Question your assumptions.

Fears may be fueled by irrational beliefs. Kids don't suffer serious malnutrition from week-long candy binges. And wearing dirty clothes won't kill them either. Concerned your temperamental child won't fit in socially? Allow for the possibility that she'll find buddies to hang out with all on her own. Don't let your beliefs limit kids' potential.

Keep goals in mind. Ultimately, parents want kids to become self-reliant, says Donahue, and building self-reliance requires parents do less, not more for their kids. Camp builds competence and independence. Give your kids time to stretch beyond their comfort zones.

Have a plan. Keep anxieties in control by making a plan for how you'll use your "time off." Schedule special time with siblings who aren't going camping. Plan a romantic date or overnight getaway with your spouse. Learn something new or catch up on your favorite shows. Stay busy (but in a good way). You deserve a change of pace, too.

Share stories. One sure-fire way to break out of anxiety is to remember and share the fun times you had at camp with your kids. Tell them where you went and what you did. The time you flipped your canoe over and got sopping wet in the lake shouldn't be a secret. Kids love to hear about parents' camp adventures.

Stay connected. The kids will be gone but not forgotten. Find fun postcards, print pictures of family pets, and collect care-package items to send. Getting mail from home makes kids feel special. Resist the urge to check in every day: kids need space. Don't forget to send supplies, so your kids can send letters home. They'll want to share their experiences, and you'll treasure their letters forever.

Anxiety is understandable, but it shouldn't stop you from sending kids off to camp. It's likely that many of your cherished childhood memories involve nature, new friends, and time to explore on your own — summer camp offers all these opportunities and more. It'll be okay if they stay up too late, eat burned marshmallows, or lose their swim goggles in the lake. Really.

Heidi Smith Luedtke is a personality psychologist and mom of two adventurous kids. She is the author of "Detachment Parenting." Learn more at HeidiLuedtke.com.





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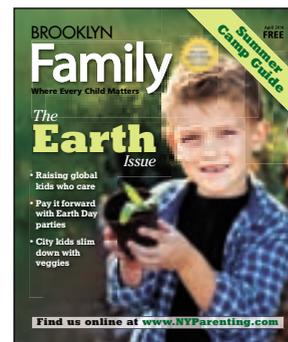


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MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SEREDA

First, there was Jada

The role of the family dog before and after kids

If I could read my dog's mind, she would probably complain about how we don't take her out on walks as much as we used to, how she feels like we give her less attention now that we have two kids, and maybe there would be a confession in there as well, such as, "I definitely go on the bed when you're not home."

Before we had kids, there was Jada, our 5-year-old pit bull terrier. I always say that we became a family almost immediately because of her. My husband and I got Jada as soon as we were married, and we soon discovered what a huge responsibility having a dog really is. It turns out, getting a dog together really does prepare you, somewhat, for having a child. Those first few months were difficult. Our sweet little puppy chewed everything in sight. My Bulgari eyeglasses that I had spent a small fortune on? Gone. My brand-new patent leather pumps that I had saved weeks for? Destroyed. It seemed she wanted to get us where it hurt the most. Or, she had good taste.

At our wit's end, we took the advice of other dog owners and crated her. Every morning, before heading off to work, we'd put her in the crate. We made sure to make it as comfortable as possible for her; she had a plush blanket, some toys, treats, and of course food and water. We felt terrible, but over the next few weeks, she was much more disciplined. After awhile, she didn't need to be crated any more. She's grown to be a very well-behaved adult dog, if you don't mind being licked to death, that is.

Even though neither one of us had owned a dog before, we quickly became dog people. Eve-

nings were spent running Jada on a nearby trail, weekends were for taking her to the park to socialize with other dogs, and every day we would try to teach her a new trick. She had her spot on the couch, usually nestled in between my husband and me, and if she had it her way, she'd be right between us on the bed, too, but she settled (sometimes) for the foot of the bed.

Nowadays, things are much different, and I can't help but feel like a bad dog mom. It's funny, when all we had was Jada, I couldn't imagine loving a human baby as much as I loved her.

Naturally, now that she shares our home with two small children, Jada has experienced a bit of a demotion in her position. Children need to be taken care of, a home needs to be maintained, and everything else in between has whittled away the amount of time we can devote to her. But we still love her as much as we did when we were newlyweds. It's great that my kids get to grow up with a loving pet. I'm pretty sure our pit bull is more affectionate and needy than my daughters will ever be. Jada is as much a part of our family as the girls are, and I hope that she has a special place in their hearts, too.





FAMILY HEALTH

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

A season of scrapes

Here's how to administer first aid for your child

After a long, cold, and snowy winter indoors, both my son and daughter can't wait to get outside to play again. I know that bruises and cuts are sure to follow. How can I best help my child during these first-aid situations?

Odds are that the vast majority of the injuries a child will encounter during his young life will not send you rushing to the emergency room. First-aid situations such as scrapes, bruises, and cuts can often be addressed by parents or other adults. Very minor scrapes and bumps may need no more than a parent's kiss or a hug. But here are some basic first-aid tips for cuts and bruises that are a little more serious, but that don't involve profuse bleeding or a suspected sprain or broken bones.

Bruises, also known as contusions, result from sharp impact that can result from a fall onto hard pavement, bumping into a sharp object, or being pinched so hard that the blood vessels below the skin break and excess blood rushes to the area.

A basic acronym for the care you should provide for a bruise — play-time or not — is RICE: rest, ice, compress, and elevate. Rest the bruised area; apply ice or a cold pack to reduce swelling (making sure that the ice does not directly touch the skin) compress the bruise by wrapping a bandage or piece of cloth around it firmly (though not so firmly that hurts), and elevate the injured area if possible.

Short-term use of over-the-counter pain medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen — never aspirin in children under the age of 18 — may help address your child's pain, as long as you follow the dosage recommendations for your child's age. If you follow these steps for up to 48 hours, and the swelling does not start to subside, or the pain stays

the same or worsens, then it's time to seek medical care.

Like care for a bruise, the sooner first aid is provided for a cut or scrape, the better. This is the case even if the wound has stopped bleeding on its own. No matter what, step one is to make sure the bleeding stops, first by applying continuous pressure for up to 10 minutes, then checking and continuing for another 30 minutes if the bleeding has continued.

Step two is cleaning out the wound with clear water to remove any debris, using small tweezers to remove any that does not come out in the rinse. Next, clean out the wound using soap, water, and a paper towel, napkin, or other type of clean cloth. Do not use hydrogen peroxide, which will kill bacteria, but will also kill the beneficial white blood cells rushing to the site of the cut to help it heal.

Applying an antibiotic ointment, if

available, will reduce the chances of infection (though it will not make the healing process go faster). Finally, cover the clean wound with a bandage or gauze, changing the dressing at least once a day, and after every time it gets wet or dirty.

The knowledge of proper care for a child's scrapes and bruises is essential, but equally essential is this rule: the "gray area" between when your care is appropriate and when a physician's care is appropriate is wide, and can vary from parent to parent. If you are uncertain, despite proper first-aid care, whether your child's injury requires professional medical attention or opinion, then that may be a sign that you should seek professional medical attention for your child, either through your child's pediatrician, an urgent care clinic, or the emergency room. Cuts and bruises are not only a test of a parent's first-aid skill, but of a parent's judgment as well.



Off the books

With two years experience, a father tells new parents what to expect

BY TIM PERRINS

My daughter recently turned 2, which means I am totally an expert at babies now. To you novices who have just found yourselves expecting your first child, I'd like to offer a piece of advice. Here's a secret that will simplify things as you anxiously prepare for what's ahead: reading is a waste of time.

I know this, because I'm also an expert at wasting time. Wait, I mean, because in the run-up to the birth of my daughter, I did *a lot* of reading. So I can tell you: don't bother.

I understand how daunting it all seems. Giving birth is different than it used to be — the days when your baby was dropped off by a stork are long gone (probably on account of the animal rights people). No longer does the nervous husband pace outside the delivery room door — he's right in there with the doctors and nurses and forceps. When my wife Jess became pregnant, I knew I'd need to do more than pick out cigars — I had to become a modern and enlightened "birth partner." So I hit the proverbial books to learn all I could.

I read about being actively sup-

NEW DAD

portive during the pregnancy. I learned techniques to help mom-to-be work through contractions and fear and panic. We both educated ourselves about the nefarious tactics of the military-industrial-hospital-delivery-complex, which pushes unnecessary interventions on women to get those babies rolling out of the factory on schedule. We read articles and watched videos about the wonders of natural birth, without Pitocin or epidurals, in a giant hot-tub, just like Mother Nature intended. (For the record, we didn't go so far as to plan a home birth, but we were sure to pick a hospital that had replaced its "Labor Ward" sign with one reading "Birthing Center.")

Finally, the time came, and all those months' worth of enlightenment proved as helpful as using a lawn mower to tend a rock garden.

Here's how it went down. At home around midnight, Jess's water broke. A few hours later, we were situated in our private hospital room — sorry, birthing suite — but there were still no contractions. You have about 24 hours after the dam breaks until infection becomes a more serious risk, so you don't want to mess around too much before medically inducing labor. When I mentioned our desire to get things started naturally, the midwife who was seeing to us stifled a look that said, "Oh boy, one of these," and said she would leave us alone for a while.

We began attempts to jump-start the baby's conveyor belt. We walked around the hospital. I attempted some kind of acupressure or Shiatsu or something on Jess's lower calves. (Hey, at least she can't say I've never given her an ankle massage.) I seem to remember dripping essential oils around the room and incanting the mystical mantra: "Deepak Chopra."

We tried everything. Well, there were a couple things we skipped: first, Jess wanted no part of the ol' Castor Oil Blowout remedy; and second, having sex is reputed to induce labor, but that's only permissible if the pregnant woman's water hasn't broken yet. (Not to mention, though our sophisticated birthing quarters may have looked like a hotel room, the constant foot traffic

of medical professionals just wasn't setting the right mood.)

While we're on the subject, if you nervous, newly-minted pregnancy partners are wondering what you can expect for your sex life over the next three trimesters, let me help you out. The prospect of sex when your partner is pregnant is like owing a favor to the Godfather. One day — and that day may never come — you may be called upon to do a service.

Anyway, sometime in the afternoon, we threw in the holistic towel and went ahead with induced labor. Look — I'm all for reading some stuff on the internet and deciding that I know more than the professionals, but you have to draw the line somewhere. (For me, that line falls squarely on this side of creationism, climate change denial and risking septic shock for my wife and unborn baby.) Things went along well after that. Hazel was born, and I never wanted to pick up a book on child care again.

That is, until now. Did I mention we have a 2 year old? Hazel is the cutest, most heartbreakingly sweet little person I've ever known, but the freak-outs have begun. She obsesses about the kitchen sponge, or goes into a screaming fit if I touch the remote control when she had other plans for it. And these are not merely spontaneous tantrums. They're part of a deliberate, twisted agenda. The other day she cried and threw herself onto the floor of our apartment; when I tried to nip the tantrum in the bud by picking her right back up, she calmly explained to me, "I want lie down onna floor!" — which she did, picking up right where she'd left off. We are in trouble.

That's why I'm getting back to the books. If reading up on tantrum-blocking Shiatsu techniques will in any way tame the 2-year-old banshee, I'm willing to give it a try.

For those of you just getting started, however, don't worry so much about what you read. You'll get plenty of practical advice from the doctor and from people who already have kids. In a year or two, you can try reading again. At this point — wait, you're still reading this? Haven't you learned anything? Put down the magazine, go make dinner reservations, and buy movie tickets while you still can. Trust me — I'm the expert, remember?

Tim Perrins is a part-time stay-at-home dad, who lives with his wife, their toddler, and two ravenous dogs 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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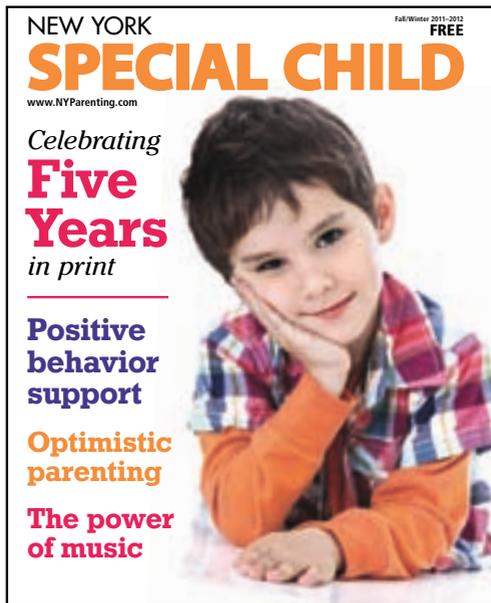
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Calendar

APRIL



Photo by Tom Callan

Up and down and 'round and 'round

The painted ponies go up and down and 'round and 'round on the beautifully restored Prospect Park Carousel.

If you don't know what to do with the children during spring break, take them for a ride on a horse, a lion, or a bear if you dare at the Prospect Park merry-go-round, April 14 through April 22.

Children can enjoy this beauti-

fully restored carousel, located in the Children's Corner, just inside the Willink entrance to the park. Spring break hours are April 14 through April 22 from noon to 5 pm. Tickets are \$2 per ride, \$9 for a book of five tickets.

Children's Corner [intersection of Ocean and Flatbush avenues and Empire Boulevard in Prospect Park, (718) 965-8900; www.bricartsmedia.org/cb].

Our online calendar is updated daily at www.NYParenting.com/calendar

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WED, APRIL 2

IN BROOKLYN

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

Children learn about the earth, the rocks, sand, clay and other surfaces that cover the planet.

THURS, APRIL 3

IN BROOKLYN

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

Children 5 years old and younger travel to far away places in their imagination by listening to stories from around the world.

"The Addams Family": Xaverian High School, 7100 Shore Rd. at 77th Street; www.xaverian.org/dramatics; 7 pm; \$15 at the door (\$10 in advance).

A new musical presented by the Xaverian Dramatics club.

FRI, APRIL 4

IN BROOKLYN

"All Shook Up": St. Edmund Preparatory HS, 2474 Ocean Ave.; (718) 743-6100; 7 pm; \$7.

High school thespians put on a production of "All Shook Up," based on Shakespeare's comedy "Twelfth Night" using music from the 1950s and the king himself, Elvis Presley.

"The Addams Family": 8 pm. Xaverian High School. See Thursday, April 3.

SAT, APRIL 5

IN BROOKLYN

Opening day parade: Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park West and Ninth Street; (718) 965-8900;



Riding high

Take a ride to experience "Sharin' a Ride," at the New York Transit Museum from April 12 to April 19. "Sharin' A Ride" is an original musical about the Carbon Footprint Man and The Professor. The hysterical, historical tale of public transportation in the Big (Green) Apple, is interactive and recommended for children 4 years and older. Get ready

www.bricartsmedia.org/cb; 10 am; Free.

Little leaguers and their parents march through the park to celebrate opening season and the ceremonial first pitch.

Pop-up Audubon: Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; noon-4 pm; Free.

Children explore, uncover and enjoy the park and fun activities.

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

Children help plant the first crop of the season and then make a fun but-

ton to take home.

Surprise buildings: 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 older than 6 years discover the secrets of the 74th Street Powerhouse, built in 1902.

"All Shook Up": 7 pm. St. Edmund Preparatory HS. See Friday, April 4.

FURTHER AFIELD

Citizen Science Series: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Noon-4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Citizen Science Series introduces au-

diences to a range of science projects.

Rubber Band Month: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1:30-3 pm and 3:30-5 pm; \$5, plus museum admission.

Children explore cool projects made with simple rubber bands, including rubber band-powered helicopters and cars, musical instruments and Viking catapults.

SUN, APRIL 6

IN BROOKLYN

Passover Family Bash: Kings Bay Y at North Williamsburg, 14 Hope St. between Havemeyer and Roebling streets; (718) 407-6388; info@northwilliamsburgY.org; www.northwilliamsburgY.org; 10 am; Free.

Singing and dancing to Russian songs, matzah and drinks, plus activities for the whole family.

Baby Expo: PS 133, William A Butler school, 610 Baltic St.; www.eventbrite.com/e/brooklyn-baby-family-expo-presented-by-a-child-grows-in-brooklyn-tickets-10640645457; 11 am-3 pm; \$15-\$130.

A fun event that gives moms and dads access to products, advice, and community resources for children, birth to early childhood. Vered Music, Little Rock its by Frolic and City Stomp provide the entertainment.

"Step Into Passover": Hannah Senesh Community Day School, 342 Smith St. at 1st Place; (718) 858-8663; smallcity@hannahsenesh.org; www.hannahsenesh.org; 1-4 pm; \$5.

Children's event with interactive activities including model matzah bakery, DIY kiddish cups, afikomen bags, live music.

Flax planting: 1-4 pm. Lefferts Historic Homestead. See Saturday, April 5.

Surprise buildings: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, April 5.

"The Kid": BAM Kids, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 2 pm; \$12.

The original 1921 version of the classic Charlie Chaplin flick.

Sid the Science Kid: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort Place and Kenilworth Place; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 2 pm; \$10.

Children 4 years and old up take a musical adventure based on the PBS Kids series. Sid and friends set off on a day of scientific exploration learn how things work. Plenty of audience partici-

Continued on page 68

Continued from page 67

pation, great music and science skills.

Earth Day celebration: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort Place and Kenilworth Place; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 3 pm; Free.

National Grid presents its seventh annual fete with music, arts and crafts, and street performances.

"The Addams Family": 3 pm. Xaverian High School. See Thursday, April 3.

FURTHER AFIELD

Sun Catchers: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10:30 am-12:30 pm; \$8 plus museum admission.

Children 18 months and up will explore light and color as they experiment with prisms, flashlights and filters to create their own sun catcher in this workshop.

Rubber Band Month: 1:30-3 pm and 3:30-5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, April 5.

MON, APRIL 7

FURTHER AFIELD

Science Workshop for Young Children with Autism: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 341; www.nyscience.org; 3:30-5 pm; Free.

Children ages 3 to 5 with autism and their families explore the physics of how things move as they play, paint, and build their own trains from recycled materials. Pre-registration is required.

FRI, APRIL 11

IN BROOKLYN

Teen night: Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; www.brooklynmuseum.org; 4:45-6:45 pm; Free.

Teens have an evening just to themselves with art, friends, food, and fun.

Tot Shabbat at BRJC: Bay Ridge Jewish Center, 405 81st St. at Fourth Avenue; (718) 836-3103; office@bayridgejewishcenter.org; bayridgejewishcenter.org; 5 pm; free.

Join other young families with children ages 5 and under interact with Rabbi Dina Rosenberg who uses music, songs and stories to interact with your child.

"The Addams Family": 8 pm. Xaverian High School. See Thursday, April 3.



Singing with Sparkle

"SPARKLE the Fairy Princess" is singing and dancing her way into your hearts on April 14 at the Flatbush-Tompkins Church.

This highly interactive and very educational 45-minute production is a fun musical with a modern-day twist — Cinderella saves the prince. Boys and girls 2-and-a-half to 7 years old will have lots of

fun dancing, singing and learning with Sparkle.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

"SPARKLE the Fairy Princess" on April 14 at 10:30 am. Tickets are \$10

Flatbush-Tompkins Church [1802 Dorchester Rd. and E. 18th Street in Flatbush, (917) 517-9913].

SAT, APRIL 12

IN BROOKLYN

The Cat Who Went to Heaven: BAM Kids, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 11 am and 3 pm; \$12.

Adapted from the Newbery Award-winning book by Elizabeth Coatsworth, this performance tells the story of an artist and his loyal cat in ancient Japan. For children 7 to 10 years old.

Pop-up Audubon: noon-4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 5.

Taylor ho Bynum: Roulette Kids, 509 Atlantic Ave.; (917) 267-0368; www.roulette.org; 1 pm; \$5.

An interactive, musical workshop for children 6 years and older. Taylor Ho Bynum leads this fun event. No musical experience necessary.

"The Addams Family": 8 pm. Xaverian High School. See Thursday, April 3.

FURTHER AFIELD

Eco House: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Noon-6

pm; Free with museum admission.

Children will be able to enter this mobile, cutting-edge exhibit that lets visitors see behind the walls and underneath the floor of a home.

Citizen Science Series: Noon-4 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, April 5.

Rubber Band Month: 1:30-3 pm and 3:30-5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, April 5.

The Great Easter Egg Hunt: PS 89, 201 Warren St.; (646) 397-7051; www.lowermanhattanchurch.com; 2 pm; Free.

Children of all ages enjoy the search for goodies, a photo op with the Easter Bunny and fun activities. Hosted by the Lower Manhattan Community Church.

SUN, APRIL 13

IN BROOKLYN

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny: Aviator Sports and Events Center, 3159 Flatbush Ave. in Floyd Bennett Field; (718) 758-7500; 10 am to 2 pm; \$20 adults \$18 children (\$22 adult non-members; Children 3 and under free) and \$20 children non-

members.

Join in for eggs, pancakes and yummy deserts along with cupcake decorating; crafts, and an Easter egg hunt. RSVP required.

Pet Adoption: Carroll Park, President Street between Court and Smith streets; marionfiore@yahoo.com; 1-5 pm; Free.

Children's activities and dance performances by the World Canine Freestyle Organization.

Junior Volunteer Corps: Prospect Park, Ocean Avenue at Parkside Avenue; (718) 287-3400; 1:30-3:30 pm; Free.

Families and elementary aged school children are invited to join in for a spring cleaning of the park and learn the importance of giving back to the community.

"The Cat Who Went to Heaven": 2 pm. BAM Kids. See Saturday, April 12.

"Have You Seen My Dragon?": PowerHouse Arena, 37 Main St. at Water Street; (718) 666-3049; www.powerhousearena.com; 3-4 pm; Free.

Author Steve Light shares his story of a small boy who travels uptown and downtown searching for his friend. RSVP requested.

"The Addams Family": 3 pm. Xaverian High School. See Thursday, April 3.

FURTHER AFIELD

Sound Science: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10:30 am-12:30 pm; \$8 plus museum admission.

Children ages 18 months and up will discover sounds as they make their own musical instruments with recycled materials and join in a jam session.

Eco House: Noon-6 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, April 12.

Rubber Band Month: 1:30 - 3 pm & 3:30 - 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, April 5.

Bronx-Whitestone Bridge Anniversary Lecture: Queens Historical Society, 143-35 37th Ave., Queens; (718) 939-0647 X 17; kmoooney@queenshistoricalsociety.org; 2:30 - 4:30 pm; \$5-8.

As a pre-programming event for our next exhibition and to help mark the 75th anniversary of the Bronx-Whitestone Bridge, Mary Hedge, Archivist for MTA Bridges & Tunnels, and one of the bridge engineers will be discussing the unique aspects of the bridge, its ultra sleek design and the many measures that have been taken since the year after it opened to make it more wind resistant.

Our online calendar is updated daily at www.NYParenting.com/calendar

MON, APRIL 14

IN BROOKLYN

Vacation bible school: Bay Ridge Salvation Army, 252 86th St. at Third Avenue; (718) 238-2991; 10 am–2 pm; Free.

Weird Animals is presented by the Bay Ridge Salvation Army for children in grades kindergarten through fifth. Space is limited, registration is required. Lunch is provided.

“Sparkle the Fairy Princess”: Flatbush–Tompkins Church, 1802 Dorchester Rd. and E. 18th Street; (917) 517-9913; 10:30 am; \$10.

The fairy princess will be singing and dancing with friends in this 45-minute interactive and educational musical with a twist — Cinderella saves the prince. For children 2 and one-half to 7 years only with an adult.

TUES, APRIL 15

IN BROOKLYN

Vacation bible school: 10 am–2 pm. Bay Ridge Salvation Army. See Monday, April 14.

FURTHER AFIELD

BubbleMania: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1 and 2 pm; \$6, plus museum admission.

Families will enjoy a fun, 30-minute show by comic bubble-ologist Casey Carle.

WED, APRIL 16

IN BROOKLYN

Vacation bible school: 10 am–2 pm. Bay Ridge Salvation Army. See Monday, April 14.

FURTHER AFIELD

BubbleMania: 1 and 2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Tuesday, April 15.

“The Last Pine Tree on Eagle Mountain”: Sunnyside Library, 43-06 Greenpoint Ave., Queens; 4 pm; Free.

Urban Stages presents a new musical for children ages 4-10 and their families about friendship and the environment.

THURS, APRIL 17

IN BROOKLYN

Tales of the Seven Seas: New York Aquarium, 602 Surf Ave. between W. Eighth and W. Fifth streets; (718) 265-3448; www.nyaquarium.com; 9 am–3 pm; \$125 (\$150 non-members).

This mini camp is great for children



Festival in Park Slope

What better way is there to celebrate spring? The annual Family Festival presented by Puppetry Arts is set for April 26 in Park Slope.

The borough-based nonprofit theater Puppetry Arts hosts this fun day of activities that includes rock climbing with Brooklyn Boulders, a meet 'n' greet with the UniverSoul Circus clown Onionhead, a visit from Tuffy Tiger of “That’s What Tuffy Tigers Do” web series sharing his best stories and songs, and

performances by students and staff from Dancewave.

The event, held each year, is a great way to meet your neighbors and help out by supporting free cultural programs in area schools and shelters.

Admission is free to the festival on April 26, but there is a \$2 hands-on craft fee as well as \$6 for rock climbing and \$1 each for activities. The festival is open rain or shine from 11 am to 3 pm

Old Stone House (Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street in Park Slope).

6 to 8 years old; activities include sea-themed storytelling, an aquatic animal exhibit, arts and crafts and hands-on activities.

Vacation bible school: 10 am–2 pm. Bay Ridge Salvation Army. See Monday, April 14.

FURTHER AFIELD

BubbleMania: 1 and 2 pm. New

York Hall of Science. See Tuesday, April 15.

FRI, APRIL 18

IN BROOKLYN

Tales of the Seven Seas: 9 am–3 pm. New York Aquarium. See Thursday, April 17.

Vacation bible school: 10 am–2

pm. Bay Ridge Salvation Army. See Monday, April 14.

FURTHER AFIELD

A Sneak Peak at Dear Albert Einstein: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1 and 3 pm; Free with museum admission.

Members of the cast will sing selections from the musical and chat with audience members after the performance.

SAT, APRIL 19

IN BROOKLYN

Junior Volunteer Corps: Prospect Park, East Drive and Flatbush Avenue; (718) 287-3400; 1:30–3:30 pm; Free.

Families and elementary-aged school children are invited to join in for a spring cleaning of the park and learn the importance of giving back to the community.

Calyber Child Enrichment Benefit: Nicholas Brooklyn, 570 Fulton St. between Rockwell Place and Flatbush Avenue; (917) 524-7685; www.Art-FoodandSoul@gmail.com; www.CalyberChildren.org; 8 pm; \$25.

Dinner, live performances by Mark Shine-Rocsta Society and motivational speaker Devon Harris of the first Jamaican Bobsled team of the 1988 Winter Olympics.

FURTHER AFIELD

Rubber Band Month: 1:30–3 pm and 3:30–5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, April 15.

SUN, APRIL 20

FURTHER AFIELD

Rubber Band Month: 1:30–3 pm and 3:30–5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, April 15.

Easter activities: Children’s Museum of Manhattan, 212 W. 83rd St. between Amsterdam and Broadway; (212) 721-1223; www.cmom.org; 11 am–3 pm; Free with museum admission.

Preschoolers create Easter collages, school age children decorate actual eggs and everyone goes on a hunt. Prizes awarded.

TUES, APRIL 22

FURTHER AFIELD

Colorful Kaleidoscopes: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10:30 am–12:30 pm; \$8 plus museum admission.

Continued on page 70

Calendar

Our online calendar is updated daily at www.NYParenting.com/calendar

Continued from page 69

Children ages 18 and up explore the colors and patterns inside of kaleidoscopes.

FRI, APRIL 25

IN BROOKLYN

Arbor day: Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Noon-4 pm; Free.

How many trees are in the park? Find out when members of the alliance teach the aspects of the importance of trees, games, crafts and an exhibit.

SAT, APRIL 26

IN BROOKLYN

"The Little Prince": BAM Kids, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 10-11:30 am and 11:30-1 pm (French); Free.

Come see the production and celebrate the 70th anniversary of the classic tale. For children 6 to 9 years old.

Family Festival: Puppetry Arts, Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue; (718) 768-3703; 11 am-3 pm; Free admission.

Enjoy a fun day of games, crafts, activities, and musical performances.

Park fair: Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park West and Ninth Street; (718) 965-8900; www.bricartsmedia.org/cb; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Enjoy a fun day of entertainment, vendors, food trucks, tennis demonstrations, and more.

Junior Volunteer Corps: Prospect Park, Ocean Avenue and Flatbush Avenue; (718) 287-3400; 1:30-3:30 pm; Free.

Families and elementary-aged school children are invited to join in for a spring cleaning of the park and learn the importance of giving back to the community.

Plant a green city: 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 learn how the MTA is building green, and using more efficient forms of energy to keep the city green and clean.

Dance festival: Actors Fund Theater, 160 Schermerhorn St. and Hoyt Street; (718) 640-1843; www.brooklyn dance festival.org; 7 pm; \$25 (\$20 seniors and students).

Presentation of unique dances, challenging routines, and contemporary choreography.



Photo by Reuben Reading

Astrograss is a gas

Get ready for sing-a-longs and dance contests! Brooklyn's own Astrograss is bringing its high-energy show to Symphony Space for the last Just Kidding show of the season. Families will be dancing and singing together, while listening to the unique blend of bluegrass, old-time, and folk music.

April 5 at 11 am. Tickets are \$20, \$17 for members, \$15 for children, \$13 for member children. Family four pack of tickets are available for \$65.

Symphony Space [2537 Broadway at W. 98th Street on the Upper West Side, (212) 864-5400, www.symphonyspace.org/event/8028/Family/astrograss]

FURTHER AFIELD

Run for the Wild: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road, The Bronx; (718) 220-5103; www.wcsrnforthewild.org; 8 am; \$30-\$40 registration fee.

The annual 5 K run/walk is dedicated to the WCS's 96 Elephants Campaign. Walkers and runners can choose from two different events — the Family Fun Run at 8:45 am and the individual race beginning at 8 am. Registration is required.

SUN, APRIL 27

IN BROOKLYN

"The Teacher from the Black Lagoon and other Storybooks": Kingsborough Community College, 2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street; (718) 368-5596; www.onstageatkinsborough.org; 10:30 am; \$12.

TheaterworksUSA presents this new exciting musical based on everyone's favorite children's book. Meet the cast after the show.

Earth day: Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Noon-4 pm; Free.

Learn about fishing, have fun cleaning up the park, learn about birds and make an instrument out of recycled materials.

Dance festival: 12:30 pm, 3:30 pm and 6 pm. Actors Fund Theater. See Saturday, April 26.

Plant a green city: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, April 26.

TUES, APRIL 29

FURTHER AFIELD

Exploring Circuitry: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10:30 am-12:30 pm; \$8 plus museum admission.

Children ages 18 and up explore the basics of circuitry with copper tape, coin batteries and LEDs.

LONG-RUNNING

IN BROOKLYN

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, Now - Thurs, May 3; Free with museum admission.

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

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, Now - Tues, May 6; Free with museum admission.

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

Ballroom dance classes: FIAO Beacon Community Center at IS 96, 99 Avenue P between W. 11th and W. 12th streets; (718) 232-2266; Wednesdays, 6-9 pm, Now - Fri, June 20; Free.

For beginners of all ages.

"Vectors, Marys, and Snow":

The Actors Fund Arts Center, 160 Schermerhorn St. between Smith and Hoyt streets; (718) 246-0146; brooklynballet.org; Thursday, April 3, 6:30 pm; Friday, April 4, 8 pm; Saturday, April 5, 8 pm; Sunday, April 6, 4 pm; Friday, April 11, 8 pm; Saturday, April 12, 8 pm; Sunday, April 13, 4 pm; \$10-\$25.

Brooklyn Ballet's 2014 spring season presents eclectic dancing, live music and collaborations as well as a sneak peek from the Brooklyn Nutcracker.

Art Kid: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Fridays, 11:30 am, Fri, April 4 - Fri, May 30; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 years and older explore a new style each week.

Singalong: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between S. Elliott Place and S. Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; greenlightbookstore.com; Fridays, 2:30 pm, Now - Fri, April 25; Free.

Children enjoy 40 minutes of song, stories and guitar music.

"Cinderella": Puppetworks, 338 Sixth Ave. at Fourth Street; (718) 965-3391; www.puppetworks.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm, through April 13; \$9 (\$8 children, \$7 for groups of 20 or more).

Children 3 years and older will enjoy this version of the classic fairy tale of a girl, a fairy godmother and a glass slipper.

Storytime: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between S. Elliott Place and S. Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; greenlightbookstore.com; Saturdays, 2:30 pm, Now - Sat, April 26; Free.

Our online calendar is updated daily at www.NYParenting.com/calendar

Children 3 to 8 years old listen to a story and look at picture books.

Arty facts: Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; www.brooklynmuseum.org; Sundays, 11 am and 1:30 pm, Now - Sun, May 18; \$10 materials fee plus museum admission.

Children 4 to 7 years old explore the galleries, enjoy an activity and take an art class.

Storytime: Greenlight Bookstore, 686 Fulton St. between S. Elliott Place and S. Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; greenlightbookstore.com; Sundays, 11 am, Now - Sun, April 27; Free.

Babies and toddlers enjoy a story time with songs, and interactive play.

Univesoul Circus: Aviator Sports and Events Center, 3159 Flatbush Ave. in Floyd Bennett Field; (718) 758-7500; Thursday, April 10, 10:30 am; Friday, April 11, 10:30 am; Saturday, April 12, noon; Sunday, April 13, 12:30 pm; Thursday, April 17, 10:30 am; Friday, April 18, 10:30 am; Saturday, April 19, noon; Sunday, April 20, 3:30 pm; Monday, April 21, 2:30 pm; Thursday, April 24, 10:30 am; Friday, April 25, 10:30 am; Saturday, April 26, noon; Sunday, April 27, 12:30 pm; \$18.50-\$26.

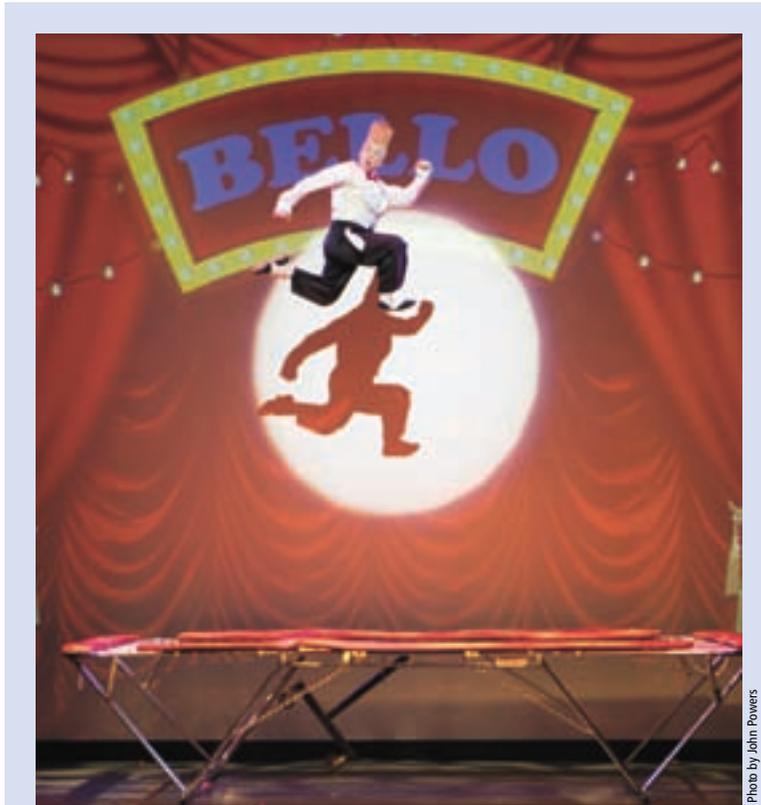
All new show featuring world-class acts including Chinese aerialists, pretzel twisting contortionists, pampered pooches, ferocious tigers and more.

Little Kids, Big Stars: MCU Park, 1904 Surf Ave. at W. 17th St.; (718) 37-BKLYN; info@brooklyncyclones.com; www.brooklyncyclones.com; Free.

Baseball is back and the Cyclones want the little ones to experience the game. Coaches of little league and softball leagues throughout the boroughs can nominate one player their team to be named Little Kids, Big Stars of the week. For boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 14 years old. The child should have a passion for baseball/softball, serve as a leader to the team and be helpful to the coaches. The winners will receive an invitation to a baseball clinic with the Cyclones a chance to throw out a first pitch and a commemorative t-shirt.

"Sharin' a Ride": New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; Saturday, April 12, 1:30 pm; Sunday, April 13, 1:30 pm; Tuesday, April 15, 11 am; Wednesday, April 16, 11 am; Thursday, April 17, 11 am; Friday, April 18, 11 am; Saturday, April 19, 1:30 pm; \$7 (\$5 children and seniors).

The original musical tackles carbon footprints and public transportation. Get ready to sing along in this 30-



It's 'Bello Mania!'

Demetrius Alexandro Claudio Amadeus Bello Nock, the creative genius behind "Bello Mania," is back by popular demand on the stage at the New Victory Theater. Be prepared to witness brand-new antics and daredevil tricks performed as only Bello can. Families with children ages 4 and

up will be delighted by this super fun show.

April 4 through 20, multiple performances. Tickets range between \$14 to \$38.

The New Victory Theater [209 W. 42nd St. between Seventh and Eighth avenues in Times Square, (646) 223-3000, www.newvictory.org].

minute performance that is perfect for children 4 years and older.

Blooming naturalists: Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Monday, April 14, noon; Tuesday, April 15, noon; Wednesday, April 16, noon; Thursday, April 17, noon; Friday, April 18, noon; Saturday, April 19, noon; Monday, April 21, noon; Tuesday, April 22, noon; Free.

Children play fun games and activities to learn all about birds.

Carousel: Prospect Park Children's Corner, Ocean and Flatbush avenues and Empire Boulevard in Prospect Park; (718) 965-8900; www.bricarts-media.org/cb; Daily, Noon-5 pm, Mon, April 14 - Tues, April 22; \$2 per ride.

Take a ride on the beautifully restored historic merry-go-round.

History workshop: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; Daily, 1-4 pm, Mon, April 14 - Tues, April 22; \$3.

Children help prepare the plot for potato planting; and then take some sees home.

"The Seeds of Abraham: Part Two of the Prophet's Cycle": Billie Holiday Theatre, 1368 Fulton St. between Marcy and Brooklyn avenues; (718) 636-0918; www.thebillieholiday.org; Thursdays and Fridays, 8 pm, Saturdays, 3 pm, 8 pm, Sundays, 4 pm, Fri, April 25 - Sun, June 29; \$15-\$25 (children and seniors \$12-\$15).

Family drama for teens and up, writ-

ten by Angelica Chéri.

TheatreSports: The Gallery Players, 199 14th St. between Second and Third avenues; (718) 595-0547; Sunday, April 27, 12 pm; Sunday, May 18, noon; Sunday, June 15, noon; \$10.

Competition improvisational show for children of all ages.

FURTHER AFIELD

The Butterfly Conservatory: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769-5200; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am-5:45 pm; Now - Mon, May 26; \$27, \$16 (children).

This annual favorite features up to 500 live, free-flying tropical butterflies from Central, South, and North America, Africa, and Asia.

Science Playground: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Weekdays, 9:30 am-5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm.; \$4, plus museum admission.

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

Rocket Park Mini Golf: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Weekdays, 9:30 am-5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm.; \$6 (adults,) \$5 (children and seniors,) plus museum admission.

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

"Bessie's Big Shot": Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater, 79th Street and West Drive, Manhattan; (212) 988-9093; Tuesdays - Fridays, 10:30 am and noon, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm, Now - Sun, June 29; \$10, \$7 (children under 12).

It's a bird, it's a plane, no — it's Bessie the cow! Based on the Puppet-Mobile show of the same name, this popular production is making its debut at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre.

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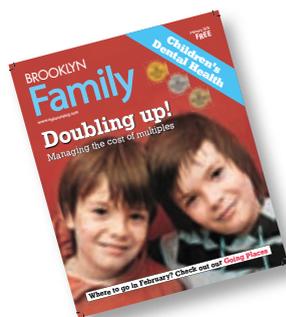
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Fighting childhood obesity in America

BY JENNY TORGERSON

Obesity has undeniably become an issue for modern American children. According to First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move Campaign" (www.lets-move.gov), obesity rates in America have tripled over the past year, leading to one in every three children becoming overweight or obese. Greater accessibility to junk food, commercial marketing, and increased portion size have all contributed to this trend.

In the idyll of early 20th century America, meals were home-cooked, people walked to work or school or the store, snacks were an infrequent treat, and vegetables were offered with every meal. As the "Let's Move Campaign" documents, within the past few decades, Americans have shifted away from these trends, and American children now lead a more sedentary lifestyle.

According to McDonalds.com, the fast-food giant serves meals to more than 70 million customers each day. In 1954, only one McDonald's restaurant existed; now, more than 35,000

are in operation around the globe. And while companies like McDonald's are increasingly striving to offer healthy menu options, Americans continue to choose sugary, high-fat, fried food options.

Fortunately, awareness about this issue is spreading and parents and teachers are taking a more active role in guiding children to make healthier lifestyle choices. At my school, children are not permitted to bring sweets or fatty snacks in their lunches; the administration strives to provide healthy, natural snack and lunch options; and nutrition and exercise are both incorporated into the classroom curriculum. These shifts have all been made in an attempt to lower obesity rates and improve children's overall health.

Author and child health advocate Merilee A. Kern encourages good decision making with her new book, "Making Healthy Choices: A Story to Inspire Fit, Weight-Wise Kids." The book targets children ages 7 to 14 and is intended to be read with a parent. The author strives to help readers recognize negative choices and get on the right track for a lifetime

of healthy living. Kern's book comes in two versions: one with a female protagonist and one with a male protagonist. A self-described fitness enthusiast, Kern hopes that the book will provide a non-combative way for parents to open up a dialogue about healthy choices with their children.

"Making Healthy Choices" speaks to many American parents who are struggling to encourage their children to choose nutritious foods. Rebecca Welch, teacher and mother of two daughters, ages 3 and 6 months, says she thinks it is important to "keep introducing children to healthy foods, even if they don't want to try them at first." This philosophy can often lead to a battle of wills between child and parent. Welch says she combats that struggle by "eating and enjoying the same healthy foods" in front of her children. Kern's writing can bolster the efforts of parents like Welch and provide them with another tool in their arsenal against unhealthy eating.

Books such as Kern's, and the First Lady's initiative to get kids moving, combined with the individual efforts of parents and school administrators, are making a dent in the national obesity problem, but we all still have a long way to go. Hopefully, over the next several decades, we will see a national shift to more active lifestyles and nutrient-rich foods from the past.

Jenny Torgerson is a teacher with a master's degree in education from Bank Street College.



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