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# Letter from the publisher

## Summer fun in the city

**S**chool's out and summer in the city can be a very stimulating time for families. So many events will be taking place around our wonderful five boroughs and in the surrounding metro area. This 4th of July will be no exception,



and with them moving the fireworks to the East River, more boroughs will be able to view them than when they are on the west side, so enjoy!

Perhaps you're like me and have been caught up in World Cup fever. Our family is crazy for soccer and we've been rather glued to the games. It's so exciting to root for our national team and as I'm writing this they have been doing quite well in their group and are probably moving

on to the next round. We are a "soccer" family and AYSO was a way of life for us for a number of years.

We're so glad to see it becoming more popular as more people get exposed to the game.

Whatever sport your children choose I hope they choose something. Complex and positive development is derived from participation in controlled and safe athletics. If your kids are enrolled in a summer program and/or camp they will undoubtedly be participating in lots of group activities and getting to know new friends and enjoying the many hours of daylight.

Still, it's also important for them to go on reading and stay on track

with their intellectual and academic achievements. Summer reading lists are always a great idea and most schools have sent home a selection and parents should encourage and assist with this summer goal. The learning process must be ongoing and parental assistance is necessary sometimes to see that it does.

July is also a big time for family vacations and I'm certain that many families will be opting for some time out of the city or at one of our many fine beach areas. Make sure your kids use sun block and know water safety precautions. Make it a family habit because our kids mimic either what we do or what we don't.

So with the whole summer ahead and a city loaded with street fairs, parks, block parties, beaches, ball fields, theaters, and more, no one should have a reason to not be active

and engaged.

I wish I had the summer "off" like our kids. I remember all too well the great feeling of freedom that we had in the summer break months and I recall it with wistful longing.

Whatever you do, I wish a great summer for you and your families. How terrific that it's just at the beginning and that many weeks still lie ahead. It goes fast though so make the most of it.

Thanks for reading and have a great time!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,  
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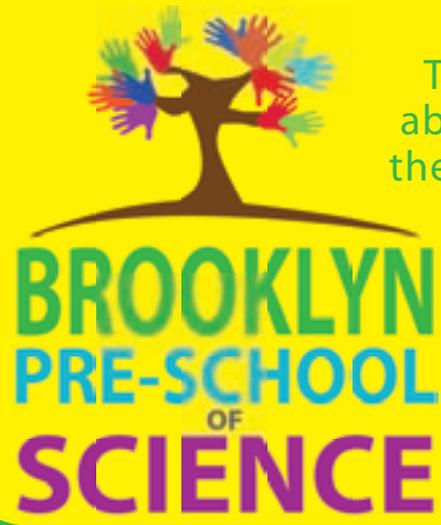
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# Summer is time for fun, not test prep

BY LEAH HEATH

*“Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire.”*  
— William Butler Yeats

**B**y the time you read this, summer will be in full swing. But at the time of this writing, we’re counting down just nine more days of school until summer vacation — that wide-open expanse of free days when we can do anything we please and nothing pressing is on the agenda. So imagine my surprise when I opened the June

edition of Queens Family to read in the article “Unlikely Summer” by Frances Kweller that “studying can’t stop in June when there’s a big test on the horizon.” Such a summer program demands four hours per day, four days a week for eight weeks — a total of 128 hours — because “your kids have the rest of their lives to do those things” like relax at the beach, play water sports, etc. But don’t we all feel like they grow up way too fast? And when is the last time that you had 69 days in a row off as a grown up? This is the only time in their lives that they will experience that kind of freedom and that time can never be replaced. How can we possibly squander a summer of their short childhood for a test that the author admits gains only a very small percentage of students access to these specialized schools “of their dreams?” I found it incredibly disappointing that this “family” magazine would feature an article that encourages parents to sideline quality time with their children so they can study for an exam all summer.

My oldest is in middle school and has worked his butt off all year doing way more homework than I think is appropriate for an 11-year-old. I miss him when he’s chained to a desk for hours on end in the evenings and on the weekends. I wouldn’t dream of taking this unstructured free time away from him. He deserves to take a break and get to all those things that he has limited time for during the school year, like expanding his Lego kingdom, making stop-motion movies, and devouring books of his own choosing just for fun. We can check

out new museums, run through the sprinklers, take bike rides, build sand castles together, and go on road trips. Like an ice cream cone on a scorching summer day, his childhood is not going to last forever. The author insists, however, that “over indulging won’t make you happy — but your child’s admission to Stuyvesant, Bronx Science, or the college of his dreams most certainly will.” As though spending quality time together is an indulgence, and our happiness and fulfillment could only be guaranteed by a fancy school’s admission.

I agree with the philosophy set out by Elisabeth Guthrie and Kathy Matthews in their book, “The Trouble with Perfect” — “It’s more important to cultivate a child’s drive than to push them to build a resume. To focus on character development rather than achievement.” Besides, my kids have managed to impress their teachers year after year without us having to outsource their education to tutors and test prep companies. Whatever happened to simply reading to your kids every night and getting them out of the house every once in a while to explore the real world? (And if you doubt the extraordinary impact of reading to your kids from day one, check out “The Read-Aloud Handbook” by Jim Trelease. He explains why “the best S.A.T. prep course is to read to your children when they’re little” at this link: <http://trelease-on-reading.com/rah-intro.html>.)

This point of view puts even more pressure on kids and families that are already under tremendous pressure, especially when it says, “This is not a mistake you or your child can afford to make.” I understand that some families agree with this way of thinking, but to phrase it in such a way makes it seem downright careless and irresponsible not to send your kid to a test prep program. It perpetuates this extremely competitive culture that has classmates pressing each other about their grades and test results at every turn when they should be just running around the schoolyard playing tag. As for me and my house, we will be wringing out every last drop of our summer together. I just hope other parents don’t feel pressured to take Kweller’s advice and ruin their kids’ summers.

## Unlikely summer

Studying can’t stop in June when there’s a big test on the horizon

BY FRANCES KWELLER

**W**inter has turned to spring and with the warm weather comes thoughts of summer. For many New York City parents, this is the time to start thinking about planning summer activities for the kids. Your children have worked hard for the past 10 months, and visions of hot summer days, ice cream cones, and water sports dance in their heads. It’s tempting to let them sit back, relax, and watch the days fly by. After all, isn’t this the time in their lives to let them lounge at the beach with their friends and get a tan?

The answer: your kids have the rest of their lives to do those things. But they only have this one moment to prepare for the New York City Specialized High School Admissions Test program. This is the time to make preparations that will have significant and profound effects on their lives.

In an increasingly competitive world, getting into a specialized high school can make a pivotal difference in your child’s future. As former New York City Comptroller John C. Liu wrote for The Huffington Post, “The Specialized High Schools are the equivalent of New York City’s Ivy League. Admission to these schools is a ticket to success. They bring an almost certain guarantee of high school graduation, in a city where the graduation rate is 65 percent, and an almost certain guarantee of college acceptance. More than a quarter of the graduates of Stuyvesant and Bronx Science go on to university in the Ivy Leagues, at Harvard, and Yale, and Brown, or other top-tier colleges.”

Getting a high score on the test is the only way to gain possible entrance into a New York City specialized high school and enrolling your child in a competitive test prep course gives your child the strongest advantage.

There are many local test prep companies that offer comprehensive summer camp tutoring programs that have had tremendous success in helping students get into



top New York City high schools.

Classes often take place four days a week, with both morning and afternoons sessions offered. In addition, students can elect to attend weekend sessions instead. Some even offer trips for both high school and college tours on Fridays.

You may be thinking that your child can simply study for the test on their own, in their spare time, and ace it nonetheless. This is not a mistake you or your child can afford to make. Even the most disciplined students need a structured setting in order to properly prepare for this challenging exam. Especially during the summer, procrastination is far too easy of a trap to fall into, and these classes are necessary to keep your child focused. In addition, top-notch tutors will help

your child truly grasp the material to an extent that no prep book can match.

And if you’re still not sure that you want your child to sacrifice his endless pool-lounging, just think about it. There is, in fact, still plenty of time to lounge by the pool or at the beach this summer. And that relaxation will feel so much better after a hard day of working and learning, knowing that you are taking key steps towards a successful future for your child. Over-enthusiasm won’t make you happy — but your child’s admission to Stuyvesant, Bronx Science, or the college of his dreams most certainly will.

Frances Kweller is an education and testing standards expert, and founder of Kweller Prep.

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# Avoiding the summer slide

## Boredom busters for all age groups

BY CHRISTINA KATZ

**Y**ou have probably heard about the summer slide — the way kids can lose a lot of the skills, knowledge, and motivation they learned during the school year over the lazy, hazy days of summer. And though I am sure you don't need your child to become the next Einstein or Madame Curie, you probably want to make sure your child will retain all that was learned last year in order to be prepared for the academic year to come.

And sure, a little strategic screen time here and there can be educational when we intend it that way, but the key to keeping summer fun and instructive is to mix up informative play and educational screen time. This is also a great way to stave off the inevitable choruses of "I'm bored" or "We're bored."

This summer, set tone that a little learning is an important part of each day, so kids still enjoy the relaxation

of summer while keeping up the habit of learning.

Here is a roundup of 21 ways to keep your kids' minds active all summer long, so your kids will have a happier summer and you won't worry about the transition back to school come fall:

**Ask for insight.** Check with your child's teacher before school gets out to see what kinds of educational goals she recommends for your child. Don't compare your children's academic performance to siblings or friends. Everyone learns and grows differently. Aim to support your child wherever he stands academically right now to maximize enjoyment of learning.

**Sign up for your library summer reading program.** Set a minimum reading time each day of 30 to 60 minutes. Or break reading time into two 30-minute chunks — one for a parent-approved book and the other for whatever your child chooses to read. The library offers lots of variety, and summer is a great time to check out age-appropriate comic books and graphic novels, as well as cookbooks and biographies.

**Visit museums in your area.** Find out in advance when the free days are to visit local museums and learning centers. Opt for guided or non-guided tour, as your family prefers. Be sure to check out the gift shop on your way out for inspired games and toys.

**Plant a garden together.** Use illustrated gardening books by Sharon Lovejoy to find projects that suit the personalities of your family and kids. If your family loves pizza, plant a pizza garden. If fresh salsa is your thing, plant a salsa garden. Think about what your family likes to eat and plant accordingly. See sidebar for guidebooks bursting with gardening inspiration.

**Shop like a teacher.** Visit your local teacher supply store and stock up on workbooks and educational games. Other things you will find that might motivate summer loungers include timers for breaking the day

up into learning chunks, craft supplies for every age, and educational games, videos, and music.

**Play store.** Pull out a portion of the food in your cabinets and pantry out onto the countertops. Let kids use real money, price items, break out the calculators, and do the math. Make playing store an all-day affair or a weekly occurrence, if your kids enjoy it. Make the game as simple or complex as suits your children's ages.

**Visit local nature centers, Audubon societies, and nearby gardens.** Make a list at the beginning of summer and plan to hit all the regional natural destinations all before the first day of school. Then plan a weekly outing and bring along a picnic. To review what you saw and learned on the way home, play "I Spied" instead of "I Spy."

**Research a future vacation.** Let each child pick his own destination and figure out what it would cost for the family to spend one week there including airfare, transportation, meals, hotels, and everything else. Have them present their proposed vacations to the whole family by showing the math writ large on posterboard. Who knows, they just might talk you into a trip you hadn't thought of yourself.

**Let them plan a meal.** The kids can become chefs for the day, including the jobs of finding the recipes, making the grocery list, cutting the coupons, doing the shopping, comparing brands, and cooking up a storm. Then be a good sport and enjoy whatever they serve. Very young children can do the same, only with make-pretend food.

**Have a word of the day.** Put the word in large letters at the top of a page with the definition just below. Hang the word on the fridge and make a game out of using it in sentences all day long.

**Battle bugs or weeds as research projects.** What a great way to practice troubleshooting and potentially solve your most nagging nuisances. Challenge older kids to solve your ecological challenges by

## More boredom busters

Use this list of movies based on books and gardening books to keep little brains active on summer vacation.

### Books with film adaptations to read together

"Madeline" by Ludwig Bemelmans and John Bemelmans-Marciano

"The Cat In The Hat" by Dr. Seuss

"Winnie-The-Pooh" by A. A. Milne

"Eloise" by Kay Thompson and Hilary Knight

"Charlotte's Web" by E. B. White

"The Tale Of Desperaux" by Kate DiCamillo

"Freaky Friday"\* by Mary Rodgers

"Charlie And The Chocolate

Factory"\* by Roald Dahl

"Diary of a Wimpy Kid" by Jeff Kinney

"Little Women"\* by Louisa May Alcott

"Harry Potter" by J. K. Rowling

"The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe"\* by C. S. Lewis

"The Hobbit"\* by J. R. R. Tolkien

\* More than one film version available.

### Gardening books by Sharon Lovejoy

"Roots, Shoots, Buckets & Boots: Gardening Together With Children"

"Sunflower Houses, Inspiration From The Garden"

"Trowel and Error: Over 700 Tips, Remedies & Shortcuts For The Gardener"



researching and experimenting with natural solutions they track down on the Internet. Keep a log of the results. Give rewards for problems solved.

**Measure and mix.** Put the kids in charge of desserts for the summer. Make sure they create some healthy choices like fruit pops or sorbet, as well as delicious baked goodies like pies, cakes, and cookies. If they get carried away, let them have a neighborhood bake sale.

**Go multi-media with books you read together.** Take turns reading out loud or check out audio books from your local library to listen to before dinner or before bed. Once you finish the book as a family, watch the movie together. Compare and contrast the books and the films. See sidebar for suggested books that have been made into movies.

**Keep a “How I Spent My Summer Scrapbook.”** Choose a blank-page, over-sized book with ample pages for writing, collaging, collecting, and embellishing. Set aside time to work on “summer books” for a half hour every day at whatever time

of day works best. Let kids decide whether or not to keep it private or share the results with the family.

**Sign up for BrainPop.** This educational website has more than 1,000 short animated movies for kids ages 6 to 17, making it the perfect substitute teacher for your kids over the summer. Best of all, they can pursue topics that interest them. Check with your child’s school library to see if they have free access to BrainPop.Jr for kindergarten through third grade. Otherwise, a subscription is money well spent on entertaining enrichment.

**Tackle a big creative project.** Choose one that takes planning, creativity, and involving others like putting on a puppet show, writing a play, or making a movie. Let your child approach the project in his own way, and only offer to help if you are needed. Invest a little money in your child’s creativity and their imaginations will be buoyed by your patronage.

**Visit friends and family around the world.** Start with a list of friends and family you know all over the

globe. Then once a week, take an hour to really explore that destination via Google Earth and by researching online information. Expand your geographic horizons further by video-calling your friends or family and informally interviewing them about the area where they live. Post a map on the wall and stick a tack in each location you visit virtually.

**Think beyond the lemonade stand.** Terrific lessons about business, sales, and marketing will be learned when you create your child’s version of the lemonade stand. Why not sell old toys, baked goods, or artwork as a lesson in entrepreneurship? You never know. You might spark a future interest in business.

**Commit to a cause.** If your child loves animals, see if you can spend some time volunteering at a local animal shelter. If she’s a regular fashionista, why not throw a summer “trashion” show to raise money for a local charity? Even a trip to your local food bank or letting your kids come with you while you give blood is a life lesson that keeps on giving.

**Share your childhood favorites.** Did you love to make friendship bracelets or collect comic books? Did your husband learn to play guitar or practice scouting skills in the backyard? Summer is the perfect time to share your favorite hobbies and summer pastimes with your kids. Why not strike up a conversation about it at dinner tonight to get the memories rolling?

**Admire intelligence.** Find healthy and smart virtual role models for your tween or teen to study over the summer. For example, if your young lady loves entropy and dissecting frogs, she might enjoy trying some home experiments created by Bill Nye, the “Science Guy.” Learn more at <http://www.billnye.com/for-kids-teachers/home-demos/>. Make a list of virtual summer tutors for each child and indulge in customized summer learning.

*Christina Katz loves jungle gym slides, water park slides, Slip ‘N Slides, and Chutes And Ladders, but not the summer slide. Her latest book is “Permission Granted, 45 Reasons To Micro-publish.”*

# Sibling on the way!

Helping children embrace a new family member

BY JUDY M. MILLER

**O**ur family building began with one child. As our family grew, I discovered that preparation helped our children transition into their new roles as a big brother or big sister. Here are a few tips from my in-the-trenches experiences, practices that helped our children embrace the newest family member with total joy:

## **Begin the big sibling preparation early**

You will have plenty of time once you have shared the news that you are expecting. Use some of this time to help your child become comfortable with welcoming the new arrival. Siblings-to-be can sing, talk to, or tell stories to the baby in your belly. Talk about what a great older brother or sister your child will be, and what a help they can

be to you.

Your child can carry a photo around of the child if you are adopting. My son did this after we received a picture of his sister from China. We laminated a copy for him so that he would not destroy it. He proudly shared the picture with anyone he could, "This is my baby sister!"

Siblings-to-be can help with nursery preparation — arranging small items like diapers, books, and stuffed animals. Older siblings can help with painting the room. Our son helped us pick out books for his sister, as well as toys and clothes. My daughter helped me put her sister's crib together by handing me the small assembly items. She then ran and got a stuffed animal from her cache to gift to her baby sister.

## **Acknowledge that everything shifts when a new child arrives**

An only or youngest becomes a big sister or brother. The youngest child relinquishes the spot of being the baby, to become the middle child. As parents, we should recognize and talk about these changes with our children and focus on the fact that even though our family is growing it is still our family, just bigger.

Our oldest was an "only" for five years before his sister arrived home. We spent a lot of time preparing him to be a big brother. We discussed responsibilities and expectations as well as the privileges that come with being the oldest. We read books and watched movies about families with multiple kids; then we talked about the relationships we read about or viewed in the

movies. The transition to becoming a big brother went beautifully because he was so invested. Now a teenager and an adult, my daughter and son continue to be close.

## **Be consistent**

Adhere to your schedule. Children do well with consistency; they need to know what they can rely on, what to expect. Consistency gives a child security, especially when there has been a big change, as in the addition of a new sibling.

It is common for children to act out or regress when a new sibling arrives into the family. My youngest daughter wanted a bottle after her brother arrived home. Recently potty-trained, she had a few accidents.

Discipline and reactions to your children should be consistent with how you handled things prior to the arrival of your new child. Praise the behavior you want to see.

## **Address the fears that come with change**

There will be less of you — energy, patience and time — to go around, especially during the first days, weeks, and, sometimes, months home. You will likely run into additional challenges because you are juggling more kids.

Assure your child that your relationship with and love for him will not change. Try to schedule on-on-one time to listen and share with your child. Have dad, another family member, or trusted friend watch the new sibling. Your child will feel loved, and this is the greatest gift you can give.

*Judy M. Miller is a freelance writer living with her husband and four children. She is the author of "What To Expect From Your Adopted Tween."*





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# Take it to the BANK

Should you  
bank your  
baby's cord  
blood?

BY SANDRA GORDON

**F**ive days before her first birthday, Peyton Connelly had been crankier and sleepier than usual. When her mom, Shelly, went to retrieve her from her crib after a lengthy nap, "Peyton stood up and fell over," Shelly says.

Alarmed, Shelly and her husband, Travis, 32, took their toddler to the local hospital. There, they were shocked to learn that Peyton had a malignant brain tumor.

"Fortunately, it was surrounded by benign tumor," says the 33-year-old mom of two. Surgery to remove the mass was all that was required and after a two-week hospital stay, little Peyton went home.

No sooner did the Connelys pull into their driveway, however, did Shelly notice Peyton twitching, soon limp as a rag doll. Shelly and Travis rushed Peyton back to the hospital, where tests revealed a major setback: The 1 year old had suffered a massive stroke. She could barely lift her head and had lost use of the right side of her body.

"It was as if it wasn't there," Shelly says. Gone were Peyton's budding verbal skills, too. The Connelys were told that intense physical, speech, and occupational therapy were all that could be done. Yet, progress was slow and frustrating.

Then, one day, "a light bulb went off," says Shelly, as she was reading a magazine article about stem cells

while waiting for Peyton to undergo an MRI at the hospital. Ah ha!

"We had banked Peyton's cord blood. We had options," she says. Indeed, Shelly and Travis had stored Peyton's umbilical cord blood at birth through Cord Blood Registry, the world's largest newborn stem cell company.

## A healing natural resource

Cord blood is a type of blood in a baby's umbilical cord that's rich in powerful blood-forming stem cells known as hematopoietic progenitor cells (these cells aren't embryonic stem cells). Hematopoietic progenitor cells — also found in bone marrow — are capable of renewing themselves and forming into more specialized cells.

"These master cells can differentiate and become different kinds of tissue in the body, to restore function," says Dr. Rallie McAllister, the co-author of "The Mommy MD Guide to Pregnancy and Birth."

After a baby is born, the umbilical cord and placenta are usually discarded. By collecting and freezing this blood instead, however, hematopoietic progenitor cells can be stored and used by someone who needs them — either the child from which the stem cells were derived, a family member, or even a stranger, through public cord blood donation. A cord blood transplant replaces diseased blood-forming cells with healthy ones, which can travel to wherever in the body they're needed. Hematopoietic progenitor cells reduce inflammation, stimulate blood flow and the growth of new blood vessels, and encourage and promote healing. Patients with leukemia, lymphoma, or certain inherited metabolic or immune system disorders have diseased blood-forming cells.

## Blood banking basics

If you're interested in banking your baby's cord blood, you can store the blood privately so it's available for your baby or another family member to use, or donate it to a public cord blood bank at no charge, where it can be used to treat people with life-threatening illnesses. Either way, put cord blood banking in your birth plan, then inform your obstetrician or midwife and the hospital or birthing facility of your intentions.

Private banking is an investment. There's an average one-time fee of \$2,000 and a yearly storage fee of around \$130. The cost can be a financial burden for a couple just starting out. To offset the expense, "put cord blood banking on your baby registry,"

Dr. McAllister says.

Cord blood banks must store cord blood under pristine conditions. There are 29 AABB (formerly known as the American Association of Blood Banks) accredited private cord blood banks in the U.S. AABB maintains standards for cellular therapy services to which accredited banks must adhere.

Cord Blood Registry's laboratory and storage facility in Tucson, Arizona, for example, is fortified with bullet-resistant glass, has one of the largest backup generators available, and monitors temperature every 1.6 seconds. For a complete list of AABB accredited private cord blood banks, visit [www.aabb.org/sa/facilities/celltherapy/Pages/CordBloodAc-](http://www.aabb.org/sa/facilities/celltherapy/Pages/CordBloodAc)

[crFac.aspx](http://crFac.aspx). Cord blood can be stored indefinitely.

If you decide to bank your baby's cord blood privately, contact the storage facility you select several months before your baby is born. You'll be sent a collection kit that contains two vials. Give the kit to your obstetrician when you're in labor. Once the vials are filled, they'll be shipped or taken by courier to the facility, where the cord blood is documented and placed into storage within 24 hours. If you choose to donate your baby's cord blood, ask your obstetrician or midwife how to go about it at the hospital or birthing center where you'll be delivering.

"If you do nothing else, at least educate yourself about cord blood banking," Dr. McAllister says. For more information, start by visiting the Food and Drug Administration at [www.fda.gov/biologics-bloodvaccines/resourcesforyou/consumers/ucm236044.htm](http://www.fda.gov/biologics-bloodvaccines/resourcesforyou/consumers/ucm236044.htm).





For some of these patients, an umbilical cord blood or a bone marrow transplant may be their best treatment option, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Over the last two decades, hematopoietic progenitor stem cells derived from cord blood have been

used in more than 30,000 transplants performed worldwide to treat more than 80 diseases and disorders in adults and children. It's a burgeoning area of medicine called regenerative medicine — the science of using the body's own cells to induce healing and help repair damaged tissues and organs.

"Cord blood is one of the most valuable resources we have in medicine today," Dr. McAllister says.

### **Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity**

The decision to bank your baby's cord blood is critical because you've only got one opportunity to do it —

when your baby is born and the umbilical cord is clamped. Cord blood banking is painless to you and your baby and not dangerous in anyway. It's safe and easy for obstetrician or midwife to do, whether you deliver vaginally or by cesarean section. Still, only 10 percent of cord blood is banked.

"Ninety percent of cord blood goes in the hospital incinerator," Dr. McAllister says. "It's a travesty."

Fortunately, the Connellys had the foresight to bank Peyton's cord blood.

"My father-in-law had remarried and his wife was pregnant at the same time I was," Shelly says. "Since he was banking his baby's blood, he offered to cover the cost of privately banking my baby's cord blood, too." (For more information about cost, see "Banking Basics.")

"But I wasn't thinking about brain tumors or stroke. It was like, sure, why not?" Shelly says. "Then, I had a 'what if' situation."

In the aftermath of Peyton's stroke, the Connellys researched their options and traveled to the Duke Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Program in North Carolina, where Peyton's stem cells were shipped. There, Peyton listened to a musician strum his guitar as her own stem cells flowed through an IV into her blood stream. The October 2009 procedure took about 20 minutes. It was that simple. Just weeks after the \$18,000 cord blood transplant, which was covered by health insurance, Peyton began to regain the use of the right side of her body.

Today, five years since Peyton's stroke, the kindergartener loves to sing and dance. She's on track both in the classroom and on the playground.

"Her speech has taken off. She no longer needs speech therapy," Shelly says. Although gripping with her right hand remains a challenge, Peyton continues to improve through occupational and physical therapy. She can open her right hand and use her left hand to close it around her bicycle handle, for example.

"It's phenomenal what cord blood banking can achieve," Shelly says. "We're so excited about what the future holds for Peyton."

*Sandra Gordon is an award-winning freelance writer who delivers expert advice and the latest developments in health, nutrition, parenting, and consumer issues. Her most recent book is "Save a Bundle: 50+ Ways to Save Big on Baby Gear."*

# Kids in business

Children rake  
in the skills  
when they  
get to work

BY DENISE YEARIAN

**C**hildren go into business for a variety of reasons. Some need extra cash to pay for recreational activities. Others have a desire to save for the future. Still others have a little extra time and want to make good use of it. Whatever the motivation, starting a summer business is a good way for children to learn entrepreneurial skills. Here are some things to consider:

## Choose an idea

To get your child started in a business, help him make a list of what he likes to do and businesses that relate to those interests.

“When Ben decided he wanted to start a business, we sat down and talked about what he could do,” says his mother, Stephanie. “He has always loved animals, so it seemed a good fit for him to take care of other people’s pets.”

Once your child has made a list of what he enjoys doing and the kinds of services or products he can provide, have him analyze the market. Are there people who live in your area with specific needs? Talk with your child about those needs and how he may be able to provide a service

or product for them. In Ben’s case, there were plenty of people in need of summer pet care. Also, look at small businesses in the community. Do any offer a similar service your child could provide at a lower cost?

## Sole proprietor or joint venture

Many small businesses successfully run with one person. The key question to ask is, how much time does your child have to devote to the business? If he is on a swim team or involved in another sports program, his time may be limited. For this reason, your child may want to consider working with another family member or friend.

For the Andersons, this was the best way to go. Their oldest child, Brandon, had karate lessons several times a week and a few summer tournaments on the calendar.

“While Brandon was at lessons, the girls and I mixed and baked cookies, so they would be ready to sell the next day,” reports their mother Kim.

The upside to having a joint venture is less work for each individual and more potential for the business to grow. The down side is they have to split the profits, and one party may feel he or she is doing more work than the other.

“There were times the girls complained that their brother didn’t help with the mixing and baking,” Kim says. “But I reminded them their brother was the one in charge of advertising. And he was always there when it came time to sell.”

## Advertising ideas

Before advertising, choose a name that fits. Some business names are cute and clever. Others have names that clearly state who is running the business and what it offers — Ben’s

Best Home Pet Care. With a little creativity, your child can come up with a name that’s cute, clever, and states its purpose.

The best place to begin advertising is with family, friends, and neighbors.

“One thing that made Ben’s business so successful was we lived in the same community for 10 years,” says Stephanie. “People knew our whole family and felt comfortable letting Ben take care of their pet.”

One of the cheapest and most effective ways to advertise is to print up flyers and pass them around the neighborhood or community. Flyers should be printed on bright paper and include the business name, child’s name, phone number, address, services or products offered, and price (if desired). Posters that are tacked on bulletin boards are another good option, especially if they have tear-and-take tabs on the bottom of the poster that lists the service provided and a contact number. Other advertising options include business cards, newspaper ads, phone calls, and emails.

## Count the cost

Before your child delves into business, have him list all of the supplies needed and the cost of each item. If he has money in his savings account, he can use that to get the business up and running. If not, perhaps you can loan it to him with the agreement he pay it back. That’s what the Andersons did.

“When my kids started Yum Yums, they were pretty broke,” Kim states. “I told them I would pay for the initial supplies, and they could reimburse me as the business took off.” Another option? Have your child do extra chores around the house to raise money for start up.

## Business ideas for kids

Short on business ideas? Here’s a few:

- Babysitting
- Birthday party helper or entertainer
- Tutoring
- Data entry
- Dog walking
- Pet care
- Refreshment stand
- Baking
- Produce stand
- Garden weeding
- Lawn mowing
- Car washing
- Personalized people and pet gifts
- T-shirt making
- Making care packages
- Jewelry making or other craft



### **Determine the price**

The flip side to counting the cost is determining the price. If your child is making a product, such as Yum Yum Cookies, go to a place where similar products are being sold. In the Andersons' case, a local bakery. What are similar products selling for? How much can your child reasonably charge after paying for supplies and still realize a profit?

If your child is providing a service, find out what his competitors are charging for the same services. Do they charge by the job or the hour? What are kids his age earning for doing similar work? One key question your child should ask himself is, "Can I offer this product or service for a little lower than market rate and still make a profit?" If the answer is "yes," he's in business!

### **Policies and practices**

Before embarking on the busi-

ness, have your child determine exactly what services or products he will offer. This should then be communicated to future customers. If, for example, your child starts a lawn mowing business, will he provide his own gas? Sweep the driveway? Rake, if necessary? Depending on the business, he may want to have a written description of what he provides. When the service has been completed, your child should give the customer a receipt and make a duplicate copy for himself.

Even though your child is young, he can earn the respect of customers by maintaining good work ethics. Impress on him the need to be on time, respectful, and hard working. This is also a good way to help the business grow. Remind him that current customers may pass along his name to potential new customers.

At the onset of your child's business, establish safety rules. Insist

that he inform you of his whereabouts at all times. Avoid letting him sell door-to-door. Stress the importance of not talking with strangers while he is alone. Remind your child that if he ever feels uncomfortable, leave the situation and find a trusted adult immediately. If you have an extra cellphone or one he can borrow, let him take it while he is gone.

### **Record his success**

Being a successful entrepreneur means managing money wisely. Encourage your child to record his income, expenses, and profit by making a chart in a notebook or using a ledger. This will show him how much money he has put into the business and how much he has gleaned from it. Allow your child to spend some of his earnings, but encourage him to save some and put some back into the business. If he has borrowed money from you, he needs to pay

you back. This is also a good time to teach your child about benevolent giving. Is there an organization he can give to?

Once kids experience the accomplishment of working, earning, and spending, they may decide to keep going. That's what Ben did.

"He had so much fun taking care of other people's animals, he kept the business going for several years," concludes Stephanie.

For the Andersons, Yum Yums was a summer experience that was shelved when school started.

"By the time fall rolled around, my kids were ready to shift gears," Kim finishes. "That's okay, though. It was a great experience, and I'm glad they did it. My kids worked together for a common goal and learned a little about what it takes to run a business."

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



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## PreSchool

### DIRECTORY

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372 Clinton Avenue  
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Or come to our fall information session on Wednesday, September 3 at 9 AM!

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*Continued on page 18*



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## PreSchool

### DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 16*  
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#### Little Sun People, Inc.

**1360 Fulton Street**  
**718-789-7330 or [www.littlesunpeople.com](http://www.littlesunpeople.com)**

Little Sun People is a unique community childcare service founded in 1980 by Fela Barclift, an African American mother of four and lifetime resident or the colorful community of Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Little Sun People, centrally located in the Bedford-Stuyvesant community, has been especially designed to foster the development of the younger child.

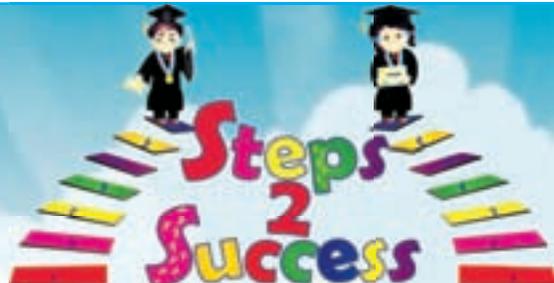
Something that sets them apart, however, is that at Little Sun People, they made the decision from inception that attention and responsiveness to the heritages and cultures of all people would be a very important part of how they would frame the preschool curriculum.

They have made it their special mission to highlight the long, wondrous history, as well as illustrious and diverse ways of life of all people of color on the planet, with a particular emphasis on people of African ancestry.

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*Continued on page 20*



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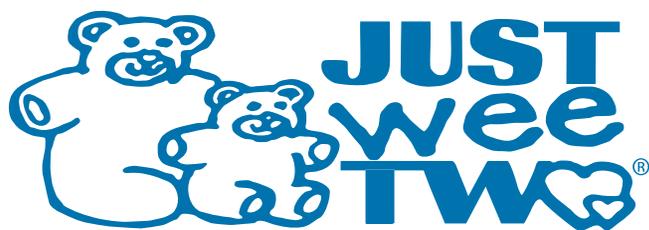





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## PreSchool

### DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 18*

“Children’s House.” The school provides a rich curriculum tailored to each child’s pace. Children served are ages 2.9 to 6 in pre-school and kindergarten. Special attention is given to encouraging socialization, while the academics are taught on a one-on-one basis by a dedicated and nurturing staff using the Montessori hands-on methods. The school offers full time art and music teachers, three outdoor play areas, an indoor gym, manipulatives, cultural studies, practical life and sensorial materials, language arts, math, science, and geography. AM, PM and full day sessions, summer camp, early drop off, and transportation service are available.

#### Parkway School Preschool

5566 Kings Highway, Brooklyn 11203

888 East 56 Street, Brooklyn 11234  
or [www.parkwayschool.org](http://www.parkwayschool.org)

Parkway Preschool is a Brooklyn based private, not-for-profit learning center, licensed by the Department of Health, Bureau of Daycare of the City of New York. With over 30 years of experience in education, we strive to make every day a learning day, filled with new and wonderful experiences to help young learners find what interests and inspires them. We provide a balanced early childhood education in a safe and nurturing environment. At Parkway Preschool, our goal is to provide the young child with skills and competencies that create the foundation for future academic success. The curriculum is sequential. We have year round programs for children two, three and four years old. We aim to provide structure for the young child to grow and develop in all skill areas. We use their innate curiosity and creativity to develop a knowledge base for them to build on in the future. Our exceptional teachers create a classroom environment that fosters engagement and a love of learning. Our children develop social skills and self confidence that enable them to be successful. At Parkway Preschool, we encourage every child to EXPLORE, DISCOVER and LEARN

#### Rivendell School

277 Third Avenue  
718-499-5667, ext. 14

A Montessori pre-primary inclusion school, was founded in 1977 as The

Children’s House of Park Slope and incorporated into Rivendell School in 1998. Rivendell provides a respectful, inclusive community that helps children feel powerful and confident as learners and as social and emotional beings. Toddler, half day and extended day programs are available (two through six years). Rivendell School offers beautiful Montessori classrooms, an excellent student/teacher ratio, and a warm, cooperative atmosphere where children learn to work and play. Shelly Wolf Scott is the Admissions Coordinator.

#### Stepping Stones Nursery School

245 86th Street  
718-630-1000 or [www.steppingstones86.com](http://www.steppingstones86.com)

We believe in engaging every child in small and large muscle activities, sensory and discovery exploration, social interaction and creative expression with an educational curriculum. Classes for two, three and four year olds are offered with a choice of full- or half-day programs. They are open 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. An After-school Program is available for Pre-K-5th grade with free pick-up service from PS 185 and DGK Holy Cross.

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At Steps to Success, we aim to promote our innovative and unique programs that strive to develop the highest quality day care for our children. Our goal is to educate and train our little students, in a loving and nurturing environment, to embody excellence in education as they move into the next level of schooling.

We support experiential learning where young children learn best by doing and actively exploring their environment. The planned activities, the environment, the selection of toys and materials, the daily schedule and interactions with the children are all designed to accomplish social, emotional, cognitive, physical and language growth leading to success in school.

The curriculum encompasses in many area, including dramatic play, library, music and movement, cooking, computers, outdoor play, discov-

*Continued on page 22*



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## PreSchool

### DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 20*

ery, blocks, table toys, art and sand and water.

Our role here is to create and environment that invites children to be active, make choices, observe and experiment.

#### Urban Strategies Early Learn

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# Got their 'Back'

Operation Backpack helps a child in need face school with a smile

BY SHAVANA ABRUZZO

**S**ummer is finally here, but the start of a new school year is around the corner.

The pint-sized pupils in your life may already be bugging you about buying pens, pencils, notebooks, binders, bookbags and all the other supplies that make their fresh start fun, so turn the nag into a flag of opportunity for good works and introduce them to Operation Backpack.

The annual campaign of Volunteers of America-Greater New York collects brand-new knapsacks filled with grade-specific supplies for the thousands of city children living in homeless and domestic violence shelters, and then delivers them to their doorsteps before the first day of school.

You and your family can help by dropping off new backpacks and supplies at

a Duane Reade store near you from July 14 through Aug. 8. You can also donate at the register from July 13 to 24 to help the retailer continue its assistance to vulnerable youth.

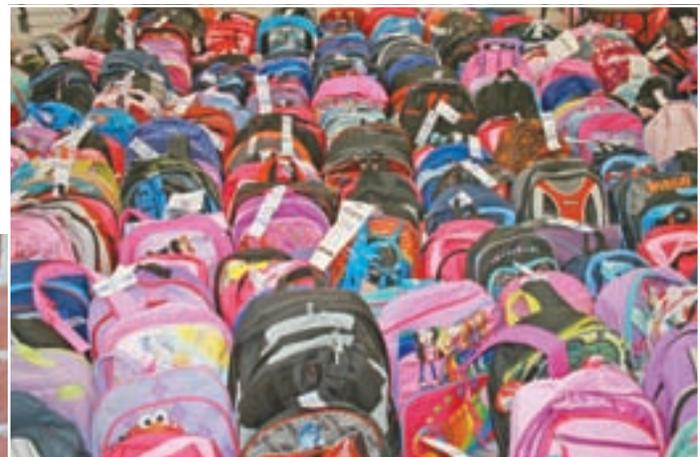
Operation Backpack instills community service in children while defraying costs for families in need, claims the program's founder.

"A new backpack and school supplies can make the difference between a child being excited to go to school and not wanting to go at all," says Rachel Weinstein. "With the average cost of a filled backpack hovering around \$81, we can relieve the financial burden that many parents face."

A humble backpack can amount to a badge of honor for underprivileged children: It can help restore normalcy to their otherwise chaotic lives, make them look and feel more like their classmates, and help them start the school year prepared and confident in the knowledge that their education is important and that someone believes in them.

It can be also be a fun and fulfilling summer activity for your whole family — the rewards of which are in a class of their own.

Visit [www.OperationBackpackNYC.org/fill](http://www.OperationBackpackNYC.org/fill) for a grade-specific supply list. Companies and community groups interested in donating can contact Rachel Weinstein at [rweinstein@voa-gny.org](mailto:rweinstein@voa-gny.org).



# New horizons

## Traveling abroad with children

BY DENISE YEARIAN

**P**arents who want to broaden their children's horizons should consider international travel. Taking children abroad gives them an opportunity to experience other cultures, customs, histories, and heritages. To make the most of your family's overseas endeavor, choose a destination with activities that will engage both children and adults.

This is what Yvonne Tomassetti did when considering a vacation to the United Kingdom with her 9-year-old son.

"Justin and I like to go to renaissance fairs and he has always wanted to see real castles. He's also

interested in bagpipes," she says. "So I found a group castle tour that took us from Buckingham Palace to Edinburgh Castle and a lot of places in between. I knew there would be a good deal of walking but he was old enough to enjoy it without getting too tired."

Brenda Hunsberger, director of travel programs for AAA thinks it's a good idea to plan the itinerary with your child's age and interest in mind.

"Consider the activities from his perspective," she says. "Ask yourself, 'Will he enjoy this?' 'Will it keep his interest?' 'Will it be too physically taxing on him?' Then plan accordingly."

Prioritize what you most want to

see, but avoid over-scheduling. Balance structured time with unstructured activities, such as playing at a park, shopping for souvenirs, or enjoying a local treat. These are ways children can connect with the culture on their level and ease into the environment. Martha Benintende found this to be true.

"When we first arrived in Italy, we rented a car and stayed on a farming estate in Tuscany for the first five days," says the mother of two, John Patrick, 7, and Quinn, 10. "We spent a lot of mornings just walking around the farm while the kids played with the animals there. In the afternoons, we'd take short day trips to nearby ancient hill towns to grab a bite to eat and

## What to know before you go

A list of helpful tips to think about before jetting off to your foreign destination.

**Time it right.** Plan travels abroad to be 10 or more days. This includes two days en route.

**Put it in perspective.** Establish trip priorities and evaluate them based on your child's age, personality, and interests. Look at the sites from his perspective. Focus on places your child has heard about and wants to see.

**Mix things up.** Don't over-plan or sightsee all day, everyday. Mix structured activities with free time for your child to play at the park, shop, or swim at your hotel. The hotel concierge can direct you to local family-friendly places.

**Get a guide or map it out.** When considering a tour, get a guide to make it more interesting. Expect that certain parts of the tour won't be fun, so bring snacks, toys, and books to keep your child occupied. If you opt out of a tour, get a map of the museum or site in advance to highlight those items you want to see, so you can get in

and out if need be.

**At-home primers.** Help your child prepare in advance. Look at globes and maps to get a distance perspective. Read child-friendly travel books and fiction titles set in the destination, watch related movies and television shows, and view virtual tours of sites online. Teach your child a few basic words from the given language. Ask his teacher if there is an upcoming unit on your destination to help your child prepare.

**Journal events.** Purchase a journal for your child to take along. Have him record not only what he saw, but also personal impressions. Purchase a camera so he can take pictures and create a photo album or scrapbook.

**Travel entertainment.** Before flying, find out what kind of entertainment is on the plane. Buy a portable DVD player; bring favorite books, toys, games, and snacks; and wrap up small gifts for the flight. Lay out expectations for your child in advance so he knows there will be a designated time for playing, watching TV,



amenities your family may enjoy. Ask about equipment on location, so you don't have to bring extra items along. When traveling with young children, choose one accommodation that is close to all the sites you want to see. This avoids having to juggle infant belongings from one place to another.

**Culinary adjustments.** In many foreign countries dinner starts at a later time. Also, different foods may not be palatable to your child. Bring along familiar snacks and foods, but encourage your child to try new things.

**Take on transportation.** Use public transportation in larger cities. Hop-on, hop-off buses allow you to stop at sites you want to see. In many parts of the world, trains are far reaching and a great way to travel distances. If you are going outside the city, weigh the option of renting a car with your comfort level of driving.

**Prepare for emergencies.** Most touristy locations have medical facilities with English-speaking doctors, but check your insurance policy before you go. Most policies, even good ones, don't cover medical in foreign countries. If yours doesn't, get travel insurance that covers medical.

reading, eating, and sleeping.

**Adjust to jet lag.** Ease the discomfort of jet lag by staying awake the first day as long as you can. Leave that day open and flexible.

**Find the right accommodations.** Many hotels in historic districts are small with twin- instead of double-sized beds. E-mail the hotel manager in advance and ask about bed and room sizes. Consider connecting rooms to give your family more space. Resorts may offer more room space with



explore the area. It was a great way to deal with jet lag and ease into our trip.”

Once the Benintendes were acclimated to their new environment, they traded a life of leisure for downtown sites of Florence, Venice, and Rome. But not before considering what they wanted to see and who would show them around.

“Because we were traveling with my 75-year-old mother, I thought private tours would be the best way to see what we wanted to see and have it geared toward my children’s interests but paced at my mother’s needs,” she says.

Getting a tour guide is one of the most important things parents of school-age children can do

when traveling abroad, say Amie O’Shaughnessy, travel expert and founder of the online family travel agency Ciao Bambino.

“The guides know how to tailor the content for kids to make it interesting and fun.”

You don’t have to go with a private guide, either. Group tours may be just as engaging for children.

“When we went to Edinburgh Castle, there was a lot of walking, but the tour was still geared for kids,” say Tomassetti. “In a couple of rooms there were swords and re-enactors were acting things out. Justin really liked that.”

But what really helps children enjoy the sites is to acquaint them with information in advance.

“Get a child-friendly guidebook while you are still planning the trip and point out fun facts and things to see,” says Hunsberger. “If you can find virtual tours online, do that.”

“Maps and globes are good primers too,” says O’Shaughnessy. “This will give your child a perspective of where he is going in relation to where you live. Another fun activity is to teach your child a couple of basic words such as ‘hello,’ ‘please’ and ‘thank you.’”

Benintende did this.

“We bought an Italian dictionary and the kids learned a few words. Almost everywhere we went the people spoke English, but my kids still said a lot of ‘ciao’ and ‘grazie’ and tried to order the food themselves. Their pronunciation wasn’t the best, but they had fun,” she says.

Benintende also purchased journals so her children could record thoughts about the trip.

“While we were in Tuscany, the kids would sit down every night and we would talk about our day, then they would start writing. It was their way to unwind,” she says.

Justin kept a record, too.

“He took a lot of pictures with his camera and picked up brochures,” says Tomassetti. “When he got home we integrated them into a photo album-scrapbook. Then he took it, along with some coins and souvenirs, and shared it with his class.”

Both families brought back mementos from their respective countries, but it was the day-to-day encounters that left an indelible impression.

“Our trip to Italy has opened my kids’ minds to things they had never really thought about before — art, history, geography, religion, and politics — and certainly not in this broad of a perspective,” says Benintende. “I think they’ve always had a sense that the world is bigger than where we live, but seeing is believing. Now they know it’s the real deal.”

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



## GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1 (45g)	
Servings Per Container: 1	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories: 185	Cal from Fat: 85
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 9.5mg	15%
Saturated Fat 2mg	9%
Trans Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 72mg	3%
Total Carb 19g	6%
Sugars 5g	45%
Dietary Fiber	
Protein 0g	
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 10%	Iron 4%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

# Food label accuracy

**Y**ou felt so proud of yourself. You consumed only half of one of those stubby cartons of premium ice cream — until you noticed with horror that a serving size is only half a cup and not the entire carton. Oops.

Let's face it, the nutrition facts panel that has been a part of our food packages for two decades is confusing and frustrating. But if the Food and Drug Administration gets its way, labels will soon be revamped.

Americans have mixed feelings when it comes to how helpful food labels are to them. According to a Harris Poll of 2,266 adults surveyed in February:

- They are divided on whether seeing “healthy” on a food package is a helpful nutrition indicator, with 53 percent feeling it’s helpful and 47 percent indicating it’s not.

**Fact:** This claim is strictly regulated, with specific limits on its fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium content, plus a requirement for certain good nutrients.

- Three out of four (76 percent) feel that the statement “Made with...” — as in “Made with real fruit” — is a helpful signpost.

**Fact:** These labels can be applied to anything that contains even very small amounts of the boasted content.

### New labels, new emphases

Calorie counts would be in large type and portion sizes will be adjusted to reflect how much Americans really eat. For example, a 20-ounce bottle of soda would be counted as one serving, rather than the two-and-a-half servings currently seen on most bottles. Your ice cream? The more realistic one cup serving would replace the current half-cup serving size.

“Things like the size of a muffin have changed so dramatically. It is important that the information on the nutrition fact labels reflect the realities in the world today,” says administration commissioner Dr. Margaret Hamburg.

The “Calories from Fat” line would be removed.

Percent daily calories would shift to the left of the label. And some package sizes would be required to show both “per serving” and “per package” calorie and nutrient amounts.

Added sugars would be highlighted on a new line. Currently, naturally occurring sugars and added sugars are lumped together. Foods with unexpected added sugars include pasta sauce, ketchup, and pizza. One cup of pasta sauce has five teaspoons of sugar while a frozen pizza may contain as much as six teaspoons. Each

tablespoon of ketchup contains one teaspoon of sugar.

A revised nutrition facts label may not stop you from overeating ice cream, but at least the portion size will be easier to read and will be more realistic.

*Christine Palumbo is a Naperville-registered dietitian nutritionist who is a new Fellow of the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and is enthused about the proposed changes, although she wishes caffeine would also be included. Follow her on Twitter @PalumboRD, Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition, or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.*

## Mini mushroom burgers

**PREPARATION TIME:** 5 minutes

**MARINATE TIME:** 30 minutes

**COOKING TIME:** 8 minutes

**SERVES:** 4

### INGREDIENTS:

2 Portabella mushrooms, stems removed  
 1/4 cup light balsamic vinaigrette  
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
 8 small high-fiber whole-grain dinner rolls  
 8 slices red onion  
 8 slices tomato

**DIRECTIONS:** Place Portabellas and vinaigrette in a large zip top bag. Zip and lightly rub the vinaigrette into the mushrooms. Let marinate for at least 30 minutes. Remove mushrooms from bag, drain and

season both sides with salt and pepper. Heat a grill or grill pan over medium heat and spray with non-stick cooking spray. Place the mushrooms on the grill gill side down and cook for 4 minutes. Turn and continue to grill until mushroom is almost cooked through, about 4 more minutes. Remove from pan and drain mushrooms on paper towel, gill side down. Cut each mushroom into quarters and place on buns. Top with onion and tomato and serve.

**NUTRITION FACTS:** 144 calories, 29 g carbohydrates, 4 g dietary fiber, 5 g sugars, 5 g protein, 2.5 g fat (0 sat or trans fat), 0 cholesterol, 300 mg sodium, 40% DV selenium, 8% DV iron, 8% DV potassium

Recipe courtesy of the Mushroom Council and mushroominfo.com.





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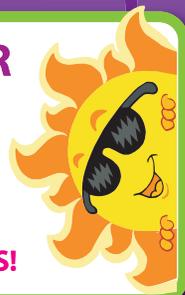
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# Music & Mandarin

## The perfect combination

BY LAURA LEE

**H**ave you ever heard a child rattling off a list of vocabulary words? Probably not. On the other hand, have you ever heard a child singing a song? Most definitely — a resounding, “Yes!”

From the very beginning, we teach children their ABCs through a song.



### Facts about music

- All children are musical when they are born — they can keep a steady beat and sing in tune. Their future musical ability depends on how and if you nurture it.

- Music develops a child holistically on all levels: social, cognitive, emotional, physical, musical, and with language development.

- Between the ages of newborn to 7, children experience rapid brain development. This is a prime time to expose them to many different types of music and movement vocabulary.

- The parent or primary caregiver is the most important teacher for one's child. Babies' brains develop based on three components: genetics, experience, and environment. When ba-

bies are given a safe experience within a loving environment, they learn better.

### Facts about Mandarin Chinese

- Mandarin is one of the six United Nations languages and is spoken by more than one billion people in the world, more than any other language.

- Mandarin is the standard language of China, the world's second-largest economy.

- Between the ages of newborn to 7, children experience rapid brain development. This is a prime time to expose them to a new language.

- Children who learn a language before adolescence are more likely to develop native-like pronunciation.

We speak rhymes and sing lullabies in our everyday rhythm. So why do language programs approach the task of learning a new language with the use of dry, repeated vocabulary lists?

Through research-based studies, an extensive music background, and professional, firsthand, early childhood development music teaching coupled with personal experience raising a bilingual child, I understand how music truly helps a child learn language.

My 3-year-old daughter is bilingual in English and Mandarin Chinese, completely at ease in either setting of native speakers. She switches effortlessly between the two languages, oftentimes translating for those who don't understand the other language.

It is amazing to see how her brain dives immediately from one language to the other, obvious that the synapses in her brain have direct links to each language, rather than having to travel through one language to access the other. The brain undergoes amazing, rapid development between the ages of newborn and age 7, a prime time to expose one's child to a new language.

I decided the moment that our daughter was born that I would speak only Mandarin with her and that my husband (who does not speak Chinese) would speak only English with her. I understood how important it would be for her to be bilingual in our global society.

It definitely took strict dedication on my part to speak only Mandarin with our daughter since I speak only English with my husband. Even though he does not speak Chinese, he had to be 100 percent supportive of what we had chosen since he would not understand what we were conversing about on a daily basis. Not only is he fully supportive, but also since our daughter's familiarity with Mandarin has soared, he has been inspired to start learning Mandarin as well.

We followed the One Parent-One Language method (one parent speaks one language and the other parent speaks another), and it certainly

works as I can testify from firsthand experience! It has been a wonderful experience to develop a strong relationship with our daughter in Mandarin. With the birth of our second child, it has been magical to see our daughter and son begin to develop strong sibling ties in Mandarin as well.

We sing songs daily — it's a natural part of everything we do. Built into our everyday rhythms, music is like another language. It doesn't take effort — it's fun. We sing songs when washing our hands, taking a stroll with a steady beat, saying “Hello” to all our stuffed animals, and cleaning up. My daughter can accurately match pitch and makes up tunes all the time, adding her own words or silly sounds. Is this exceptionally unique? Not at all. All children are musical. They respond receptively to music and movement. Why? It's simple: music activates many parts of the brain. When language information is condensed into a compact unit, such as a song, the brain is able to receive more, and as a result, process more. I say, “Sing songs — learn Chinese!”

*An educator, author, and mother, Laura Lee is an expert in early childhood development. She has a double degree in music and molecular cell biology from UC Berkeley. As an educator, she has been teaching music to children since 2003 and runs a piano studio. She is the author of the award-winning children's book “Little Laura and the Birthday Surprise,” a bilingual English and Mandarin musical storybook series. Lee can be reached at [littlelauramusic@gmail.com](mailto:littlelauramusic@gmail.com).*

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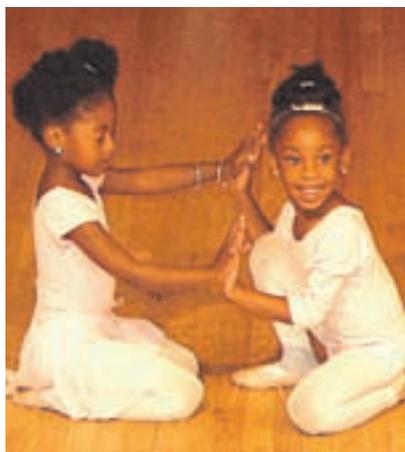
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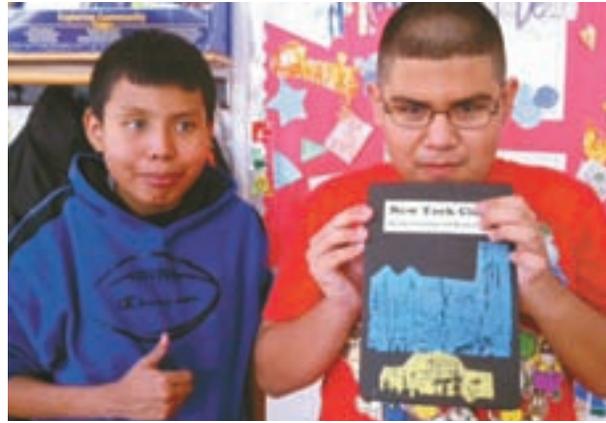
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(Left to right) Gianluca Pellegrini and Ping Wen Lin were citywide elementary winners for "Journey to the Stars." Brian Tzic and Alex Trinidad were citywide middle school winners for "New York City." Aleksandra Stanisavljevic clinched the title of citywide high school winner with her illustrations in "In Praise of Plants: Part V."

# The book club

## Five city kids win big in bookmaking competition

BY SHEREE WICHARD

**B**rooklyn and Manhattan students took home the top awards at the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation's annual Bookmaking Competition for grades third through 12.

Citywide and borough-winning books, honorable mentions, and all school-wide winning books were on exhibit at the Brooklyn Public Library Central Library (at Grand Army Plaza) in May. The citywide and borough winners and honorable mention recipients were given medals at an awards ceremony at the library. In addition, the citywide winners received \$500 and the borough winners \$100 from the Foundation.

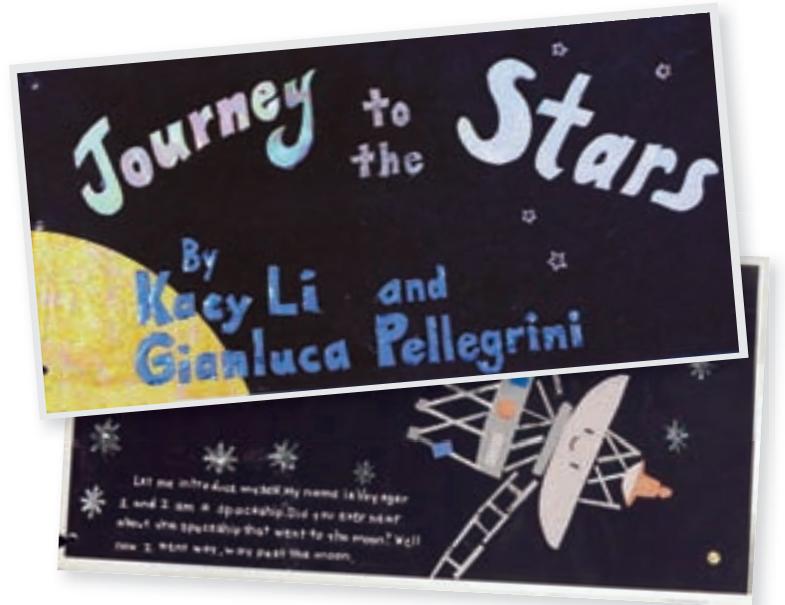
The competition is divided into three categories: elementary (grades three through five), middle (grades sixth through eighth) and high school (grades nine to 12). This includes elementary, middle and high school winners from District 75.

### Citywide elementary winner:

**"Journey to the Stars," by Gianluca Pellegrini, illustrated by Ping Wen Lin** (fifth grade at PS-IS 229, the Dyker School in Brooklyn).

The students were inspired by a story they saw about Voyager I.

"One day, Ping Wen and I were reading the New York Times and saw a story about Voyager I. That's how we came up with the idea for 'Journey to the Stars,'" explains Gianluca. "It was really fun trying to find words



that were descriptive and interesting and would work with Ping Wen's illustrations. My teacher helped me fix any writing mistakes, which is okay because everyone makes mistakes!"

Ping Wen explained that in their creative process, the illustrations came first.

"The illustrations for our book came before the story. I decided to draw Voyager I with a smile — I thought he'd be a happy spaceship because he was leaving the solar system. I used paint, special papers that my teacher got for me and pencils to do the drawings in the book. Voyager I had so many parts to his body that I'd have to say he was the most challenging part to make. It was fun working with a friend."

### Citywide middle school winner:

**"New York City," written and illustrated by Alex Trinidad and Brian Tzic** (Grade eight at PS 77K in District 75, Brooklyn).

The co-winner of this transportation story had a creative take on New York Harbor.

"One of my favorite pages to draw was the Staten Island Ferry with sharks in the water!" says Alex. "I also liked using printmaking. First, we picked a color of ink. Second, we rolled the ink onto the foam plate. Then, we printed the foam plate onto the book page. I am really proud of the book we made together."

Brian spoke about the fun they had learning about new mediums



Inside "New York City"

in art class.

"New York City is the first book I ever made!" he says. "Our art teacher, Ms. Amie, showed us many different kinds of books. I liked the accordion book best because it showed all the pages at once. To make the accordion, we had to fold the pages and glue them together. We drew on Styrofoam plates instead of paper because you can print your drawings in many different colors. It was fun working on the book with Alex. I am really good at drawing trains and buses and he is good at drawing boats and cars."

**Citywide high school winner:**

**"In Praise of Plants: Part V,"** illustrated by Aleksandra Stanisavljevic (Grade 12 at Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan).

The winner was inspired to interpret a poem she found.

"In Praise of Plants: Part V" is an excerpt from a poem by the noted Serbian poet Branko Miljkovic — I discovered an English translation of it on a field trip that my poetry class took to a Poetry Center," says Aleksandra. "I was moved by the images and colorful descriptions. I

decided to interpret the poem artistically, which resulted in many elaborate pop-ups that I created, painstakingly, with an X-acto knife and mixed media. But the effort was worth it!"

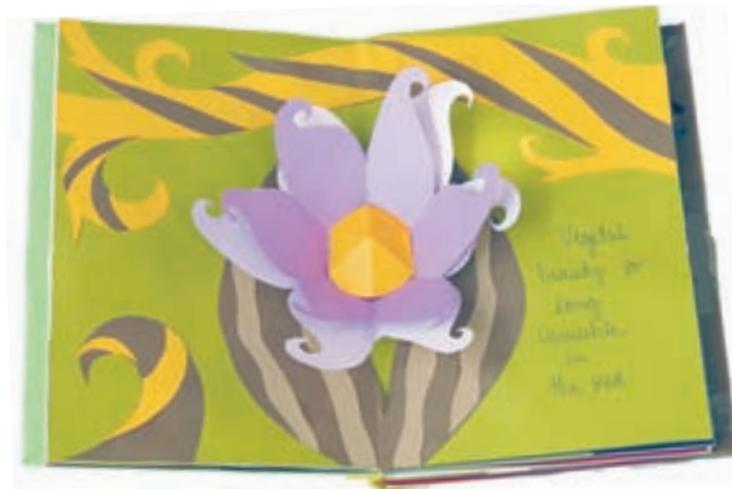
Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina praised the program.

"Getting kids excited about reading and writing is critical for their long-term academic success. And I want to congratulate all of the talented student bookmakers who have shown that they understand and appreciate the link between narrative and image," she said. "We know that teachers are the keys to our students' success, and I thank all of the teachers and librarians who have supported these young authors and illustrators. And I also want to thank the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation for creating and supporting this program for almost 30 years."

The annual Bookmaking Competition begins each fall. Public school students are invited to come up with an intriguing theme, create engaging text, and integrate illustrations using a range of media. Expressive writing and artwork are strongly encouraged.

The process is integrated into classroom instruction with a strong emphasis on the study of picture books. Student books are created under the supervision of a teacher or librarian.

*For a complete list of citywide and borough winners, visit 2014 Bookmaking Competition Winners at [www.ezra-jack-keats.org/2014-bookmaking-winners-list](http://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/2014-bookmaking-winners-list).*



Inside "In Praise of Plants: Part V"

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Ludwig Bemelmans's painting of Madeline at the Paris Flower Market.

# 75 years of 'Madeline'

New York is a great place to celebrate this story of Paris

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

**I**t all started in 1939, with a humorous, rhyming picture book about a petite Parisian school-girl. She's a mischievous red-head with spunk and attitude, who becomes the envy of her classmates when her appendix is removed (true story).

Madeline is the feistiest of 12 little girls in two straight lines, wearing identical coats and flat sailor chapeaux. A brave role model for her young female readers, she seems totally fearless when telling a tiger

in the zoo, "pooh, pooh!" — proving that being smart and strong is cool, even if you're a mademoiselle.

Since her whimsical debut 75 years ago, Madeline still remains one of the world's most popular and beloved fictional characters. And, through her whirlwind escapades in Paris, London, and the French countryside — brought to life by her creator Ludwig Bemelmans's enchanting watercolor illustrations and light-hearted storytelling — she has charmed her way from the original book through all five sequels, which have become

true classics.

You can probably find at least one "Madeline" storybook on every kid's bookshelf.

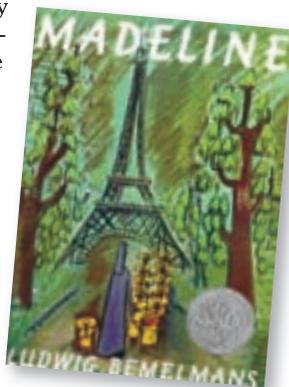
## Who was Bemelmans?

A hundred years ago, a footloose, frustrated, misfit teen from Austria arrived in New York City. Needing a creative outlet, he began to draw on walls — of his apartment, in restaurants — everywhere. Starting his first career as a busboy at the Ritz Hotel, he taught himself how to sketch on the backs of menus and kitchen tile walls.

"His ambition was to be a cartoonist, until the brilliant children's book editor at Viking discovered him, and said, 'You must write children's books!'" says exhibit curator, Jane Curley.

The first lines of "Madeline" were written on the back of a menu at Pete's Tavern in Manhattan.

Bemelmans claimed to have no imagination; all his books are mostly based on his experiences and people he knew. Madeline herself was actually a mix of personalities: his daughter, Barbara; his wife, Madeleine; and his mother. The school-girl was also her creator's alter ego, along with her favorite companion, Pepito, who expressed Bemelmans's wild and naughty side as a child.



Like Madeline, Bemelmans was a free spirit; he liked living large.

"His circle of friends ranged from mobsters to millionaires. He loved commissions like this one, where he got to stay on board a luxurious yacht, just as he stayed rent-free at the Carlyle, while he painted the murals at the bar there," said Curley.

And he loved to travel.

"For 'Madeline and the Bad Hat,' he visited Spain; for 'Madeline and the Gypsies,' he followed Gypsy caravans and circuses around for an entire summer in 1958. Of course, it was fun for him!" explains Curley.

And his message — which runs through all the Madeline books — is one of "courage, optimism, and delight in life, even in the face of challenges," says Curley.

The "Madeline" series includes "Madeline," 1939; "Madeline's Rescue," 1953; "Madeline and the Bad Hat," 1956; "Madeline and the Gypsies," 1959; "Madeline in London," 1961. Bemelmans's grandson has continued the series with books written and illustrated in his grandfather's style: "Madeline and the Cats of Rome," "Madeline at the White House," and "Madeline and the Old House in Paris."

### Bemelmans bar

At the upper-crust Carlyle Hotel on the Upper East Side, in the 1940s, Bemelmans was commissioned to paint murals in

exchange for room and board. In fact, if you visit the hotel's swanky Bemelmans Bar, you can enjoy a cocktail surrounded by his whimsical illustrations of city landmarks.

For youngsters who want to feel like they're part of "Madeline" and love music and dressing up fancy, Bemelmans Bar serves high tea and kid-friendly food from Saturdays from October through a week before Christmas. Singer and pianist Tina deVaron even takes singing requests and makes it a truly unique family experience.

*Madeline's Tea at the Carlyle [35 E. 76th St. at Madison Avenue on the Upper East Side, (212) 744-1600, www.rosewoodhotels.com/en/the-carlyle-new-york/dining/bemelmans-bar].*

### Anniversary celebration

To celebrate the 75th anniversary, the New-York Historical Society on Manhattan's Upper West Side is honoring the little darling of Paris and her creator with a special exhibit and family event from July 4 to Oct. 13 — featuring more than 90 original artworks by Bemelmans, as well as the weekly Madeline's Tea Party on Wednesdays.

To commemorate the anniversary, a lavish slipcased edition of the original book can be viewed or purchased at the New-York Historical Society. It includes a full-color panoramic pop-up spread of Paris, with all the famous landmarks, including Madeline's house.

*Madeline in New York: The Art of Ludwig Bemelmans at the New-York Historical Society [170 Central Park West between W. 76th and W. 77th streets on the Upper West Side, (212) 873-3400, www.nyhistory.org/exhibitions/madeline-new-york]*

*Madeline's Tea Party at the New-York Historical Society [170 Central Park West between W. 76th and W. 77th streets on the Upper West Side, (212) 873-3400, www.nyhistory.org/programs/madeline-s-tea-party July 4 - Oct. 13, July 16, July 23, Aug. 13, Aug. 20, Sept. 10, and Oct. 8, 3-5 pm. \$40 per child, \$35 members; \$50 per adult, \$40 members.*

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# Baby, I'm tired

Helping your  
baby sleep  
all night

BY MALIA JACOBSON

**T**here's no denying that parenting is exhausting work. But having a baby doesn't have to mean resigning yourself to months (and years) of sleepless nights. Armed with a bit of expert knowledge, you can help your little one sleep better — so you can catch a few zzzzs, too.

**Find your baby's  
sleep number**

According to sleep expert Dr.

Jacob Teitelbaum, late bedtimes cause many childhood sleep problems, because overtiredness makes it harder for children to get to sleep and stay asleep. But figuring out when to put your baby to bed can be tough.

To find your baby's perfect bedtime, first determine how many hours of sleep he needs in a 24-hour period to determine how many hours he can comfortably stay awake per day. Set your child's bedtime so that he is not awake longer than that, and you'll prevent overtiredness that can

wreck nighttime sleep.

For example, a 10-month-old who needs 14 hours of daily sleep can stay awake for 10 hours per day. If he gets up at 6 am and naps for three hours each day, he needs a standing 7 pm date with his bed. (Hint: Newborns need between 14 and 16 hours of shut-eye per day; tots 1 to 3 years old need 12 to 14 hours, and kids 3 to 6 need 10 to 12 hours.)

**Nix the nightlight**

You may love the way your baby's smile lights up a room, but when it

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Learning to fall asleep in bed will help your child learn to sleep longer stretches, and eventually, sleep through the night. But many babies won't tolerate being put down awake.

---

comes to sleep, the best light is no light at all. Nighttime light disrupts melatonin production, and even a small nightlight or the light from the baby monitor can be enough to prevent deep, restful sleep. Dim the house lights after dinner and install effective blackout blinds to get the bedroom truly dark. A black twin-sized flat sheet can be folded in half and tacked around a window in a pinch.

### Embrace boring

Sleep doctors agree that an effective bedtime routine is one that's absolutely set in stone: the same things, in the same order, every night.

"Our bodies love routine, and this is especially so with children and bedtime," says Teitelbaum. Performing the same events in the same sequence before bed cues a child's subconscious for sleep. Sure, a routine this solid is bound to get boring for you. But the routine is for their sake, not yours (and a happily snoozing child is well-worth the effort).

### Practice the pacifier

Pediatrics reports that nearly 70 percent of parents give pacifiers to their newborns. And it's likely that a good portion of these parents find themselves getting up at night to replug their baby's lost binky. The sooner a child learns to manage his or her own pacifier, the better everyone sleeps. Incorporate "paci practice" into tummy time and playtime, and your baby will be self-plugging in no time.

### Start sunny side up

For an easier bedtime, start your baby's day off the bright way. Strong morning light helps set your child's internal clock so

he'll fall asleep more easily come nightfall. Open curtains to let the light shine in, and serve breakfast in a sunny spot. When weather permits, take a quick stroll around the block.

### Atta baby

Many experts advise putting babies to bed drowsy but awake, to support independent sleep skills. It's true, learning to fall asleep in bed will help your child learn to sleep longer stretches, and eventually, sleep through the night. But many babies won't tolerate being put down awake.

Help your baby learn to love his crib by using rhythmic patting to soothe him after placing him in bed, without picking him back up. Because infants should be placed to sleep face-up, you might not be able to pat your child's back, so pat the crib mattress or the shoulder instead.

### Avoid nap traps

Naps are important to babies and young children — they promote healthy nighttime rest, and new research from Emory University shows that they help babies learn and retain new information. But napping all day is guaranteed to make your baby nocturnal; research links more daytime sleep with less sleep at night.

To promote healthy naps while preserving nighttime sleep, don't allow naps longer than three hours. For most babies and young children, naps of an hour or two are long enough to be restorative without robbing nighttime sleep.

### Get baby moving

Moving all day can help your baby sleep all night. A body in motion is one that's primed for sleep, because exercise helps children fall asleep faster and sleep more soundly. So put away your stroller and carrier and let your little one move. Aim for at least 60 minutes per day of vigorous activity. Toddlers and young children need plenty of chances to walk and run; babies need lots of time on their tummies and backs to wiggle, stretch, and work their muscles.

*Malia Jacobson is a nationally published sleep expert, health journalist, and mom of three. Her most recent book is "Sleep Tight, Every Night: Helping Toddlers and Preschoolers Sleep Well Without Tears, Tricks, or Tirades."*



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Stephanie Arnold  
and her son Jacob.



# Advocating for yourself

A patient's  
journey through  
a frightening  
pregnancy

BY JENNY TORGERSON

**S**tephanie Arnold had always dreamed of having children. She met her husband, Jonathan, later in life and together they went through three rounds of in vitro fertilization to have their daughter Adina. When Adina was 3, they decided that they wanted to try for another child. This time, it took seven rounds of in vitro for 42-year-old Arnold to conceive. The family was overjoyed, and for the first 20 weeks of her pregnancy, everything seemed to be perfect.

The family was splitting time between Chicago and New York City

because of work commitments, so Arnold had a dedicated ob-gyn in each city. At 20 weeks into her pregnancy, both doctors confirmed a diagnosis of placenta previa, a condition in which the placenta is located on top of the cervix. Her doctors assured her that this was perfectly normal, and as long as she refrained from lifting and exercise, she would be able to carry the baby to term.

Two weeks later, Arnold was convinced that would never happen. She began to have severe premonitions of her death.

"I could visualize my husband burying me, putting dirt on my casket," she says. She repeatedly

dreamed that she would need a hysterectomy and would hemorrhage to death.

"My dreams were so vivid, and so detailed," says Arnold.

She was compelled to seek answers. Together, she and her husband went to visit a specialist at Northwestern University in Illinois. She was convinced that she needed a hysterectomy; the doctor asked if she had "been on the internet a little too much."

"Everyone thought I was crazy. No one believed me," remembers Arnold. However, as her premonitions grew stronger, she became more convinced that she was right.

An MRI at 32 weeks of pregnancy revealed nothing abnormal. Rather than relieving her anxiety, this only increased Arnold's fears, because she had no tangible cause for what could be wrong. By that point, she had been told by doctors that she could no longer fly until after her delivery, so she knew she would be having the baby in Chicago. She went for a special appointment with an anesthesiologist. By this point, she had experienced six total premonitions, including one that convinced her that she would need general anesthesia.

The meeting with the anesthesiologist went well, and although she did not know it at the time, the anesthesiologist flagged her file, and made a plan to incorporate extra crash carts and blood monitors into her delivery. This measure would eventually save Arnold's life.

At home, Arnold began to write goodbye letters to her children and husband, and even mailed a goodbye letter to the embryologist who had helped her to conceive. She also posted on Facebook, requesting that friends who share her blood type, O-negative, donate so that she would have a supply on hand for her delivery.

On May 30, 2013, at 36 weeks of pregnancy, as she was feeding her daughter breakfast, she started to bleed all over the kitchen floor. She put her daughter into her car seat and drove straight to the hospital. As she kissed her daughter goodbye before being wheeled into labor and delivery, Arnold was convinced that "this was the last time [she] was going to see her."

Arnold remembers that she "just felt like a ticking time bomb." She grabbed the doctor's hand and begged her to realize that there was "something wrong." The doctor assured her that she would be fine, and as Arnold was wheeled into the operating room for a C-section, she made the conscious decision to "let go."

"I just felt like I had said something over and over and it was out of my hands," recalls Arnold. The last thing she remembers is soap being put on her stomach prior to the start of her C-section.

She woke up in the Intensive Care Unit six days later. Arnold suffered an Amniotic Fluid Embolism, which has a less than 15 percent survival rate. She was clinically dead for 37 seconds before doctors were able to revive her. The condition is so

rare that none of the doctors on her team had ever experienced one in their careers. Unbeknownst to Arnold, her doctors had attended a conference where they had learned a life-saving method to handle the condition. This training, coupled with the measures taken by her anesthesiologist, saved her life. When her doctors had the hemorrhage under control, they transferred her to the ICU in a medically induced coma.

While in the ICU, Arnold had to have a hysterectomy due to the marriage of her placenta and uterus. She had three surgeries within 36 hours of being admitted to the hospital. During that time, she had more than 60 units of blood transfused into her body — more than three times the normal blood supply.

When Arnold came out of the coma, she could not sit up, could not eat, and required dialysis to repair damage to her kidneys. After six weeks, she was finally able to come off the medication and machines. She is the first recorded case of someone who suffered an Amniotic Fluid Embolism and survived, without any neurological damage.

"I felt something, and I said something," says Arnold. Thanks to her persistence, doctors were able to prepare for the care that she would ultimately need to save her life. At first no one believed her, but Arnold was relentless in her quest to be heard.

"If doctors don't believe you, you need to speak up louder," she says.

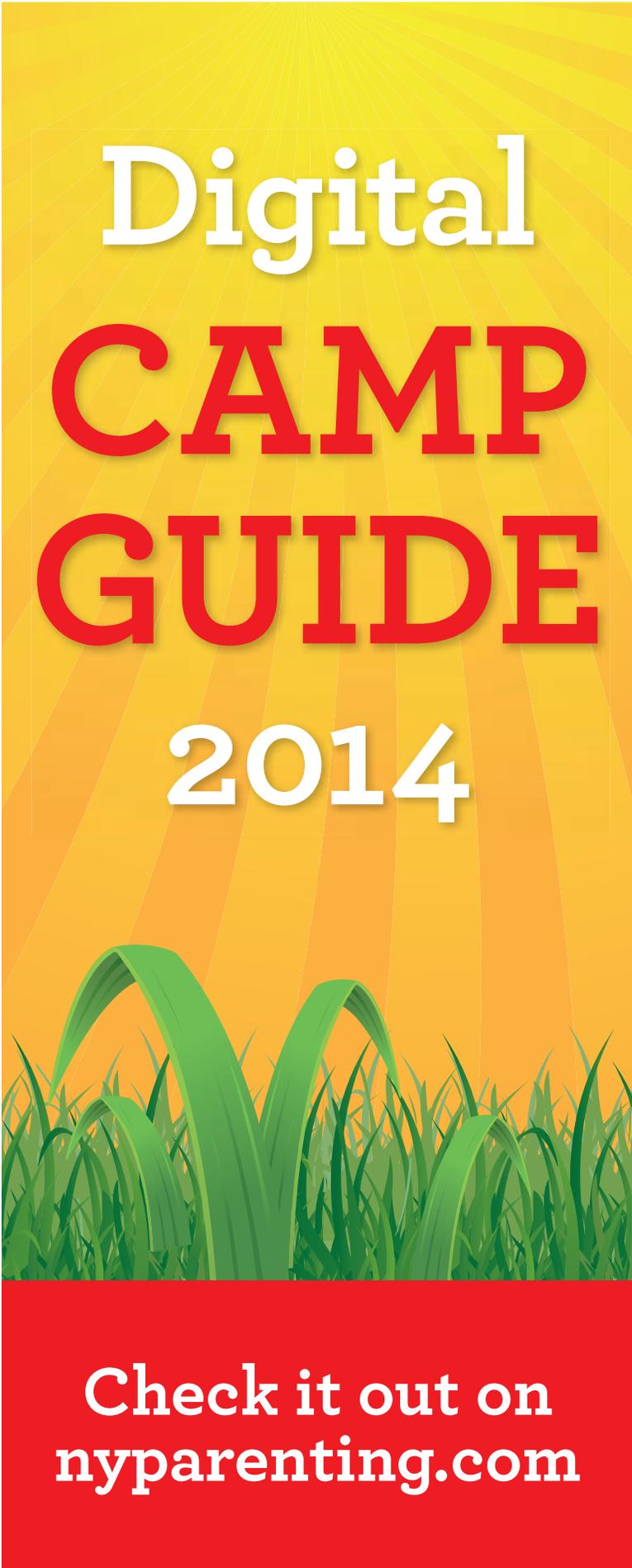
Today, Arnold's son, Jacob, is 10 months old. She is off all medications and she is unable to carry him — she is still rebuilding her muscle strength. She still has one more surgery pending to remove scar tissue to alleviate a resulting hernia. But this time, she has not had any premonitions. Her surgical team will be the same team that delivered Jacob.

"I just feel the normal fear anyone has before surgery," says Arnold. But, if that feeling were to change, she would not hesitate to advocate for herself.

"Patients need to speak up for themselves," advises Arnold, "you need to listen to your own body."

This is the message that she hopes others will take away from her experience.

*Jenny Torgerson is a teacher with a master's degree in education from Bank Street College.*



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# Summer reading on an e-reader

Summertime  
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BY SUE LEBRETON

**A**s temperatures rise and the days lengthen, are you dreaming about lazy, summer days, lounging on the beach or relaxing in a hammock reading a great summer book? How about your children, do they read throughout the summer or take a vacation from books?

Summer reading helps children maintain the academic progress they achieved in the school year. It is also a great time to encourage

kids to read for fun. Research shows that they are more likely to read a book that they choose. So have them pick an interesting book and then suggest making it an e-book to change their summer reading into a new and exciting experience.

Just as they embrace all the new technology, children are quickly adopting this form of book reading. According to the Scholastic Kids and Family Reading Report, the percentage of children who have read an e-book has almost doubled in the past three years, rising to 46 percent, and

they say they are keen to read more. Almost half of the children aged 6 to 17 told the researchers that they would read more books for fun if they had greater access to e-books. More books for fun? That is music to a parent's ears.

The Scholastic data also showed that 25 percent of boys who had read an e-book were now reading more books for fun. That is fantastic news for a group who tends to read less as they age. E-books could be a boon to your efforts to keep your boy reading regularly for pleasure.

What if your child is a reluctant reader? This is a group that can benefit from e-books because they are often intimidated by larger books and the appearance of a text-heavy page. E-books are read on slim devices that display a single page and offer the option to increase the type size. My 11-year-old son loves that the e-reader tracks his progress. Like the children in the study, he is motivated to see the percentage read increase on the screen instead of being discouraged by seeing the volume of a print book that remains to be read despite expending considerable time reading.

Two e-book attributes children say they like are portability and privacy. The ability to carry multiple books offers the opportunity to move to the next book when they complete one, or switch books if the current one loses their interest. What a great tool to have when traveling. Children commented in the study that they were also fond of the fact that with e-books they can hide what they are reading from friends. Admit it, sometimes we all read things we might not want our friends to see.

Are your eyes glazing over at the thought of introducing yet another

## More about e-readers

The experience that most closely mimics reading a print book is using one of the e-readers with black and white e-ink pages. The market is dominated by Sony, Kobo and Kindle devices. They range from the base models (about \$69) that require you to download books from a seller's site while hooked to your home computer, to newer wi-fi and touch-screen models that allow you to buy books on the go (up to \$199). Be careful, this is a convenient but potentially budget-stretching option for an avid book buyer.

These are dedicated book devices, so no surfing the web or checking e-mails. E-books are slightly cheaper to purchase than print books, so depending upon your reading and purchasing pace the e-reader can pay for itself fairly quickly. Remember, no late fees at the library. The lack of distraction from e-mail and the lure of web surfing can also be helpful for

readers who are easily seduced to other media.

### Buying an e-reader

Before you head to the store, go to your library's website so that you know what format they support, otherwise, you might end up with a device where purchasing books is your only option. Talk to friends who have e-readers and do some online research for comparisons. Define what is important to you as a reader. Do you need a dictionary? Do you need wi-fi? Once you are clear about what you need, go to a store and handle the various devices to see which you prefer. Remember to ask where you can buy books that are compatible with this specific reader.

### Other devices

You can read an e-book on your laptop, computer, iPad or tablet, iPod, cellphone and Play

Station Portable or the Nintendo DS. The PlayStation and Nintendo options are more cumbersome to turn into readers, but it can be done, and instructions are available online.

To use an existing device to read an e-book, download an app so that you can read your books, magazines, and newspapers anywhere. Just be sure that the app is compatible with the source where you purchased the original material. For example, if you buy books from Kobo for your Kobo reader, you need the Kobo app to be able to read that same material on your other devices. There are some conversion software options available if you purchase from multiple sources, but if you go that route, you will need to be more comfortable playing with the technology.

Some e-reader producers have entered into the tablet market so that users can surf the internet and check e-mails in addition to reading e-books. These devices range from \$200 up to \$600 for their multiple offerings.





pricey device into your home and budget? E-reading does not have to break the bank. There is an e-reader option to suit most budgets, and you can borrow books from the library without ever leaving your home. Some libraries even loan the devices. The best part about borrowing e-books from your library? No late fees. Once your borrowing period expires, the file is no longer

accessible on your device. The first time you borrow an e-book you have to download the required software but the process is relatively simple.

You can begin e-reading today without an outlay of cash if you use technology that you may already own, such as a cellphone, iPod, iPad, tablet, laptop, or computer. Download an e-book app and you can begin to buy or borrow books. Take

note that for summer reading on the beach or deck, many of these backlit devices do not perform well in direct sunlight due to the glare, but an e-reader is fine.

Despite its many merits, e-reading is not likely to replace print books for all uses. Nothing surpasses the joy of snuggling and reading to your child at bedtime, no matter what their age. Children in the study

echoed that sentiment and said they still preferred a paper book at bedtime. That is probably a wise choice, since exposure to lit devices can delay the onset of sleep, not at all what we parents are looking for at bedtime.

*Sue LeBreton is a health and wellness journalist and an avid reader. Thanks to her e-reader, she carries a library with her wherever she goes.*

# A need for flexibility

Comptroller  
Scott Stringer  
wants to give  
city employees  
more options in  
working hours

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

**C**ity Comptroller Scott Stringer is proposing legislation to set the stage for flexible workplace hours for city employees — a topic very personal to him as a parent of two small children.

The legislation, “Right to Request,” aims to decrease the level of fear that employees may have in requesting flexible working arrangements by creating a platform for employees to approach their employers. Stringer announced findings from a report issued by his office joined by his wife Elyse Buxbaum and their two children.

A similar bill has been proposed at the federal level (called the Flexibility for Working Families Act), and model legislation is currently under consideration at the state level. These laws do not mandate that employers provide flexible scheduling, but they promote dialogue that can help eliminate the stigma associated with non-tradi-

tional work arrangements.

Stringer’s report, entitled “Families and Flexibility: Reshaping the Workplace for the 21st Century,” provides examples of best practices for companies to offer flexible scheduling to their employees and the variety of cost savings and other benefits that this scheduling can have for businesses. Advocates of the proposed legislation say that there is a need for “right to request” legislation because a change in hours can help a family, especially working families, single parents, and those caring for elderly relatives. The report is a strong attempt to bring everyone (legislators, business owners and employees) to the table to discuss this topic and find ways to implement flexible scheduling.

Following Stringer’s presentation, I discussed this topic with him further:

**Shnieka Johnson:** Your family was present at your most recent press conference on the “Right to

Request” legislation. Are they what made you feel so strongly about this topic of workplace flexibility?

**Scott Stringer:** Yes, it’s a struggle my wife and I confront every day as the parents of two children under 3 with full time jobs. It is my duty to look out for the long-term interest of our city’s economy. Few issues have a more profound effect on the day-to-day lives of working people like us in our city and beyond than achieving what is popularly known as “work-life balance.”

**SJ:** There is a passionate group of supporters behind the legislation, but what obstacles do you foresee in implementing it?

**SS:** One of the greatest obstacles to flexible workplaces is the continued stigma associated with taking time from work to care for family members. That stigma won’t go away overnight — not after generations have become accustomed to the traditional 9-to-5 workday within the walls of a particular workstation.

However, the best way to chip away at that old philosophy and make employees expect and employers embrace flexible scheduling is to provide a safe space to start a conversation about how it can be a benefit to both workers and the bottom line.

We will look carefully at successful legislation overseas and in states across the country for best practices in how to effectively implement “right-to-request,” and I am confident that our city agencies, many of whom are well-versed in enforcement of employment laws, are up to the challenge.

I have a strong coalition in support of the legislation. At my press conference, I was joined by caregiver groups like AARP and the Alzheimer’s Association, women’s advocates like NARAL Prochoice NY and Catalyst, and groups that advocate for low-wage workers like the Center for Popular Democracy and the Retail Action Project.

**SJ:** Are there strategies in place to maintain momentum on this topic and continue the conversation?

**SS:** I plan to host a forum on this topic to engage with the business community and workers in all sectors. Many in the private



City Comptroller Scott Stringer spoke of his workplace flexibility legislation at City Hall.

"Few issues have a more profound effect on the day-to-day lives of working people like us in our city and beyond than achieving what is popularly known as 'work-life balance.'"

sector have already realized that flexible workplace scheduling is profitable for all participants, but government can do more. I have strong legislative partners at the city, state, and federal level and there will be hearings on the bills.

**SJ:** Technology and telecommuting was mentioned a number of times during your remarks. Is that where you see the trends of workplace flexibility going?

**SS:** We've seen how technology can revolutionize our daily lives — from smartphones to GPS. But all too often, our institutions — business and government — are slow to pick up on what consumers already understand, namely, that technology can revolutionize the workplace and make the world more efficient.

Telecommuting certainly isn't going to work for all businesses. After all, you can't knead pizza dough on the internet or fit someone for a pair of shoes remotely. But for many businesses, technology will be one piece of a broader conversation about how flexibility works for their company and industry.

Aetna, one of America's largest health insurers, increased its share of workers who telecommute — from nine percent in 2005 to 47 percent in 2012, saving the company \$78 million in real estate costs alone.

**SJ:** How will this help working families with small children specifically?

**SS:** Flexible workplace arrangements allow parents and their employers to accommodate their schedules — that so often involve juggling many activities: day care, school drop-offs, doctor's appointments, soccer practice, and

many, many others. Sometimes adjusting your schedule by even one hour can make all the difference and have a positive impact on your work product

**SJ:** The benefits to the employees are clear, how does this legislation positively affect the businesses that are on board?

**SS:** For New York City to remain an economic engine, we must compete with other cities for top talent and investment. To do that, we must realize that everyone benefits from a policy that sees family and work as complementary, rather than competing parts of life. Happy, productive employees are good for business.

**SJ:** In the long-term, how will New York City benefit financially from "Right to Request?"

**SS:** This is an issue of economic competitiveness for the future of the city's economy. By embracing flexible scheduling, it will help to keep employees who are also parents or caregivers in New York City and attract young people who see the city not only as a place where they can make their mark professionally, but also as a place where they can put down roots and raise a family.

**SJ:** What would you like to communicate to New York City parents about this proposed legislation?

**SS:** I am highlighting the value of this important policy change, and hoping to start a discussion about it in New York City. I want parents to know that I understand the challenges of balancing their family responsibilities and career. The pressure of caring for children and elderly parents is very real. I feel it every day. In the New York City Comptroller's Office, we have our finger on the pulse of the New York City economy. That means responding to the needs of the business community, but also taking concrete steps to address the real challenges facing working people in all five boroughs. Promoting flexible work arrangements is but one piece of that effort, and I look forward to continuing this conversation in the months and years to come.

For more information, visit: <http://comptroller.nyc.gov/fleximnyc/>

*Shnieka Johnson is an education consultant and freelance writer. She is based in Manhattan where she resides with her husband and son. Contact her via her website: [www.shniekajohnson.com](http://www.shniekajohnson.com).*

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info and support.*

# Stuck *in the* middle

Seven ways moms in the ‘sandwich generation’ can reduce stress of caregiving

BY ALEXA BIGWARFE

**M**others in the “sandwich generation” (between the ages of 35 and 54 who are simultaneously caring for children and aging parents), feel more stress than any other age group, according to the American Psychological Association. This stress impacts all aspects of their lives — relationships with their spouse and children, emotional well-being, and their health.

Caring for children is stressful on its own, but caring for a parent at the same time can cause caregivers to become overly stressed and even depressed.

The stress of dual caregiving is caused by numerous factors: increased financial burden, feeling as though they are torn between caring for their children and their parent, and managing all the extra duties that come along with caring for a parent. Mothers who are “sandwiched” between parents and

children often take on the bulk of the caregiving responsibilities. A 2008 study of social workers reported that the majority of mothers in the sandwich generation are not prepared for all of the responsibilities that accompany caring for children and an elderly family member simultaneously. Additionally, many of those mothers were also unaware of the resources that are available to help them with their daily caregiving roles.

You are not alone if you’ve found yourself exhausted from being “sandwiched.” Here are some ways to help you reduce the stress associated with the demands of being a caregiver:

**Breathe.** Take time to relax and take a step back. If you have to, schedule daily and weekly down time. Determine what priorities really need to be handled, and let some of the other stuff go.

**Get physical.** A regular exercise routine can really help reduce stress.

**Say “yes” to help, and don’t forget to ask for it!** If you have siblings, be sure to include them and have them help. You can also reach out to church members, friends, and social workers.

**Develop a care plan.** Include your parent or elderly family member, and ensure you understand her care goals and priorities. Also, involve the children in the planning process and allow their input, particularly if they will be sacrificing time, activities, and space due to your caregiving responsibilities.

**Identify outside resources to help.** Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for information on local caregiving services. Outside resources can really help alleviate stress. Available services usually include home health, laundry services, food preparation and delivery, driving services, and more.

**If resources allow, consider retaining an elder care attorney.** These attorneys are very familiar with the laws, rights, benefits, and all things related to protecting the elderly. They can be a tremendous support and wealth of information and also very useful in helping to prepare for end of life care and considerations.

**Guard your relationships with your spouse and children.** This is important. Family relationships can really suffer when children and spouses feel they are being ignored. Moms can also become overwhelmed with guilt from being torn away from their family in order to care for their parents. Be sure to make special time for your family and schedule periodic date nights with your spouse.

The sandwich generation phenomenon is not likely to end any time soon, especially since many children are living with their parents longer, women are waiting until later in life to have children, and life expectancies are longer. It is important for moms in this role to know how to get help and how to cope before becoming overwhelmed.

*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.*





## FAMILY HEALTH

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

# Watch those glands

## Addressing concerns with the adenoids

*For almost a year now, my son has complained that he always has a stuffy nose and a sore throat. More recently, he has developed trouble swallowing and has had frequent ear infections as well. A friend suggested that my son may have adenoiditis, as her son did earlier this year. Her son required surgery. Can you tell me more about this condition, and what the next step is? Is surgery always necessary?*

**I**ssues with the adenoids, or adenoid glands, are most common in children around your son's age, so your friend's suspicion is understandable. The adenoid glands are a collection of tissue that is located in the space behind the nose. From birth through the age of 3, the adenoids typically remain very small, and then start to grow rapidly until they reach their maximum size around the age of 6. After that, the adenoids usually start to shrink, and generally disappear altogether by a child's teenage years. However, if the adenoid glands become enlarged, either due to infection (adenoiditis) or excessive growth (adenoid hypertrophy), this can indeed lead to the symptoms you are describing — congestion, ear infections due to fluid not draining from the ear canal, sore throat, and trouble swallowing. Other symptoms may include trouble breathing, bad breath, dry mouth, and snoring. Persistent adenoiditis can also result in more serious complications such as bronchitis, pneumonia, and lung asthma.

A surgical procedure to remove the adenoid glands (adenoidectomy) can sometimes be necessary to treat adenoiditis. However, there are many steps that should come first. A doctor usually confirms a diagnosis of adenoiditis by viewing the adenoids directly, either with a specialized mirror inserted into the mouth or by carefully threading a device called an endoscope through the nose.

Antibiotics and steroidal nasal sprays are the most common treat-



ment for adenoiditis. However, should they prove ineffective, or if the symptoms of adenoiditis recur, adenoidectomy may ultimately be required. Adenoidectomy is a safe, non-invasive procedure that takes 45 minutes, and is performed under general anesthesia by an otolaryngologist — a surgeon who specializes in the study and treatment of diseases of the ear, nose, and throat.

If you are concerned that your son may have adenoiditis, consult your pediatrician. He can evaluate your child, recommend the proper treatment, and, if necessary, refer you to a specialist. Adenoiditis can be a serious condition, but the array of options available to effectively address it means that your child can be breathing easily before you know it.



## HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN



## Pets and pests boost children's immunity

**T**here is an old saying about how kids should eat a pound of dirt in a lifetime. That simple notion is meant to be taken in a figurative sense, but in an attempt to have parents lighten up about keeping their kids healthy and safe, many parents today have done just the opposite. Their effort to create a sterile environment has not helped their kids. In fact, a new study says it may unintentionally hurt them by not exposing them to immune-boosting germs.

Researchers at Johns Hopkins Children's Center studied nearly 500 babies in large cities, such as New York and Boston, and tracked their health, along with allergen and bacteria levels in their homes. The study found that babies who were exposed to pets within the first year of life were less likely to suffer from asthma and allergies than those babies who were exposed

after age 1. It also found that babies exposed to cockroaches and mouse danders were less likely to suffer from wheezing by age 3.

Eileen Watterson of Madison Park agrees, "when we were kids, we never had Purell or disinfectant wipes in our backpacks. We simply practiced proper hygiene, washed our hands when we came home and before we ate, and went on about life."

The mother of five maintains that she favors "practicing common sense over practicing germ panic." She also admits that she does not carry any precautionary cleaners other than regular baby wipes in her diaper bag.

While not many of us would be willing to live with mice or insects for the sake of allergy immunity, this study reaffirms the belief that pets do not pose an elevated allergy risk for babies. On the contrary, our furry children help our human children fight

off allergies while providing an immunity boost. The Wattersons have had pets (two cats and a dog) since the family's first child was born.

"So far, so good. None of our children are allergic and I do believe that exposing kids to normal, everyday germs is essential to a healthy childhood."

According to the study, the sooner you introduce your baby to bacteria and dander, the better. After age 1, the incidence of contracting allergies and wheezing actually increase upon exposure.

The study was published in the June issue of the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*.

*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.*

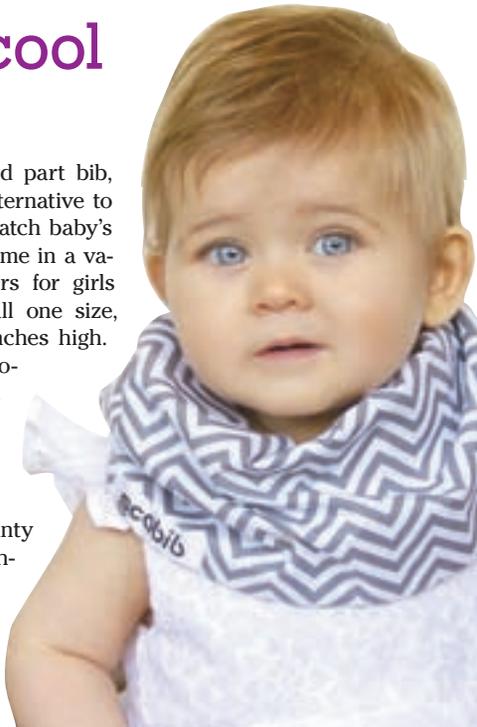
# New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

## Not too cool for drool

Part scarf-bib and part bib, the Scabib is a stylish alternative to bibs of yore that don't match baby's outfit du jour. Scabibs come in a variety of prints and colors for girls or boys, yet they are all one size, at 18-inches wide by 8-inches high. Scabibs have a Velcro-closure and absorbent, terry-cloth lining. An ideal accessory for teething babies (who drool constantly), or for a babe who's in dire need of a jaunty scarf to spice up an otherwise ho-hum ensemble. With a Scabib, baby is ready for the runway — if only she could walk.

Scabib, \$12.50-\$15, [www.scabib.com](http://www.scabib.com).



## Customize their ride

Britax's new Affinity stroller has a sleek frame (available in black, silver, or white), machine-washable seat liner, rain cover, and sun cover so kids ranging from six-months to

55 pounds can go for a ride in style. The clever design allows the seat to be forward- or rear-facing and has four recline positions for maximum comfort (and nap time!). With the addition of a Britax Bassinet, the Affinity stroller can accommodate newborns, allowing mother to look terribly British pushing her contemporary pram. Personalize this stroller — or make it feel new again for a second child — with one of the Color Packs, sold separately, which include a canopy, shoulder and buckle pads for the five-point safety harness, basket liner, and machine-washable padded seat liner in black, red pepper, fossil brown, sky blue, cactus green, or cool berry. Air-filled tires and an articulating handle round out this perfect combination of form and function that will have you walking and shedding that baby weight in no time.

Britax Affinity Stroller, \$599.99, Color Pack, \$99.99, and Bassinet \$199.99, [www.britax.com](http://www.britax.com).



## Dreamy new lullabies

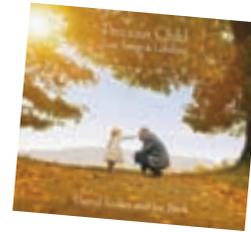
Every parent whose brain is addled by sleep-deprivation will be forever grateful for "Precious Child — Love Songs & Lullabies" for speeding their babes off to the Land of Nod. Darryl Tookes and Joe Beck's utterly soothing assortment of traditional children's songs ("Twinkle Twinkle Little Star")

and new works showcase Tookes' Johnny Mathis-esque baritone voice. Legendary guitarist-composer Beck and vocalist-pianist Tookes

drew on the love they have for their kids and paired it with their shared musical virtuosity to create an album

that will restore peace and harmony to moonlight-filled nurseries everywhere, beginning Aug. 15. It's a perfect baby shower gift, but we recommend this charming album for insomniacs of all ages.

*Precious Child — Love Songs & Lullabies CD by Darryl Tookes and Joe Beck, \$12.98, [mysiesstore.com/mckennagrouponlinestore](http://mysiesstore.com/mckennagrouponlinestore).*



## Sock it to 'em

Sometimes baby doesn't feel fully dressed without a pair of shoes. Trumpette has the answer for your little Peanut: a set of six socks that'll fool the eye into thinking she's wearing a pair of Lucy-inspired oxfords. Knit

from a cotton-nylon-spandex blend of yarn, the socks form a cuff on top. The set of Lucy socks, which fits babes ages 0 to 12 months, is packaged in a gift box so cute that it could even make Charlie Brown smile.

*Peanuts Lucy Sock Set by Trumpette, \$14.50, [www.trumpette.com/socks/peanuts\\_lucy\\_0-12-m.html](http://www.trumpette.com/socks/peanuts_lucy_0-12-m.html)*

## Just plane fun

Kadie Flye is the mother of the Flye Baby, an invention that will revolutionize airplane travel for families. She wanted to invent a device to alleviate the strain of traveling by plane with a baby on your lap. The result is the Flye Baby, a clever bed-seat that holds a baby up to 25 pounds. It allows face-to-face interaction with Mom or Dad, while the parent's hands are free to play, feed, or even do a super fast diaper change. The hammock is secured on one end by the tray table in front of the parent, and on the other end, straps around the parent's waist. The baby is attached in a five-point harness. The Flye Baby Infant Travel Seat can only be used



during cruising, not during take-off or landing, and can be compactly folded, stored, and carried in its own pouch. Now, when you're choosing your family's next vacation destination, the sky's the limit.

*Flye Baby Infant Travel Seat by SCS Direct, \$49.95, [www.thegrommet.com](http://www.thegrommet.com).*



# Learning in a special way

Teacher writes book to help autistic children succeed

BY JANE BIANCHI

**J**oan Ramirez is one passionate person. As a special education teacher in elementary schools in the New York and New Jersey area, she loves nothing more than helping children with autism make progress both academically and socially.

"They can achieve more than anyone else, because they're more sensitive and more attuned to what's going on in the world around them. They just learn in a different way," says

Ramirez, who was born in Brooklyn and grew up in Rahway, N.J.

One major inspiration has always been her father, who passed away at age 100 last year and had spent his career in Harlem teaching special education ("before it was called that," says Ramirez).

"He taught me why it's important to champion the underdog. Just because a child can't keep up in the classroom doesn't mean that he should be neglected or put in a corner," she says.

After working with one particular female student with autism, Ramirez was so moved by how far the child had come that she decided to write about the experience. The book is called "Jamie Is Autistic: Learning In a Special Way," and it's available on Amazon.com as a hardcover (\$8.99) or an e-book (\$5).

"I would like to help more kids like Jamie. Not enough parents know how to help their children. Most books that you read on children and autism are like doctoral theses," says Ramirez.

She shares key pieces of advice that helped Jamie, and may help your child with autism, too:

**Give your child a script.** Children with autism usually don't like to socialize and often don't know how. Help your kid start a conversation with another student in the school cafeteria by giving him this simple script that acts as an icebreaker: "Hi, my name is X. What's your name? Can I please sit with you?"

"Some parents keep their autistic kids sheltered and discourage them from talking to others because



“Just because a child can’t keep up in the classroom doesn’t mean that he should be neglected or put in a corner.”

they’re afraid that their child might say the wrong thing. But it’s critical to help your kid break out of his comfort zone by giving him tools,” says Ramirez. As your child learns how to approach others, he is more likely to feel self-confident and build more friendships.

**Encourage your kid to find a study buddy.** Sometimes in the classroom, a child with autism needs help, but the teacher is overburdened with 35 students and isn’t able to immediately help the child. As a result, the student becomes impatient and frustrated, and has an outburst. To help prevent this from happening, explain to your child: “If a teacher is busy, it’s not because she doesn’t want work with you. It’s just that there’s only one of her and there are lots of students.”

While your child waits for a teacher’s help, urge him to find a study-buddy nearby. For example, maybe he can ask a student for help with an addition problem and, in return, offer to help the student with subtraction.

**Ask questions.** Ramirez noted that one week at school, Jamie was upset and kept putting her head on her desk. Ramirez spoke to her privately in the hallway (so as not to embarrass her) and asked, “What’s bothering you? Why did you put your head down?” The goal was to get Jamie to verbalize what she was thinking and feeling. At the end of the conversation, Ramirez figured out that Jamie was tired because she had been staying up too late at night, so her parents gave her an earlier bedtime, which solved the problem.

**Be patient and motivating.** Recognize that it might take your kid hours, days or even weeks to do a task that feels simple to you, and that’s perfectly okay.

“It doesn’t matter if it happens quickly or slowly — all that matters is getting to the finish line,” says Ramirez. For instance, if your child

is aggravated that it’s taking him two weeks to read one chapter in a book, sit down with him, read a passage out loud and say, “Isn’t this interesting?” Help him see what’s exciting about what he’s learning, and it’ll be easier for him to stay focused and finish the assignment.

**Be gentle with criticism.** Sometimes in class, children with autism will talk at inappropriate times (like while the teacher is giving a lesson). The same thing might happen at home. For example, maybe your kid finally finished reading that book chapter and he’s so happy that he starts interrupting one of your stories at the dinner table to tell you. A great way to respond is to say something like, “This isn’t the time to talk, but I’m so proud of you and would love to hear all about that after I’m finished telling my story.” Being positive is key, because if you’re too negative, a child with autism might stop talking or stop reading his book altogether.

**Give praise and rewards generously.** Kids with autism need more positive reinforcement than other kids. If they do something well, give them a thumbs up and a big smile.

“I’m a big believer in stickers as prizes,” says Ramirez. Here’s another type of reward: Ask other family members to join you in giving the child a round of applause. “Just don’t make the applause too loud, because the child might be sensitive to noise,” says Ramirez.

**Be optimistic.** When your child leaves for school, say, “Today is going to be a good day.” If he comes home crying about something mean that somebody said, say, “Today was bad, but tomorrow will be better.” Giving a child hope can help him stay positive and overcome obstacles.

*Ramirez is available for workshops and can be reached at, writerjr1044@gmail.com.*

*Jane Bianchi was an editor at Seventeen, Family Circle, and Good Housekeeping, and now freelances for a variety of publications. She lives with her husband in Brooklyn.*

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The Musical

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## JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN



# Figuring out social media

I think I've finally understood Facebook. I admit I've had a love-hate relationship with it. Back in 2009, I first became enthusiastic about it when I attended a publishing conference and learned of the many ways we, as editors, could engage with our readers. I pushed for our company to set up Facebook pages for our magazines and through a collective effort, my edit team began the then-new process of embarking on social media as part of our workload. While not exactly cutting edge, it was exciting and it felt fresh. Since we were using it daily for work, we all had to make a personal page and this was harder for some of us than others. At the time, I had recently started a page, but never really knew what to put on it. And then it happened, just like my colleague told me it would. She had a Facebook page for a few months before I did and told me that once I got on the up-and-coming social media network, I wouldn't believe the amount of people who would find me, both a good and bad aspect, we agreed.

Slowly, I put up a few photos and reported on my family's happenings here and there, when I thought something worthwhile presented itself. I

watched my friend's list grow, as did my timeline, and I started to read what other people wrote on their daily status. Some folks wrote everything from what they were eating and which child was currently throwing up to what doctor they were visiting and which stores had the best sales that week. There were the rants about frustrating happenings of the day and then increasingly, there were the more disturbing personal attacks, over-sharing of the dirty laundry and other posts which felt invasive and proved to be uncomfortable reading. There were also the racist, sexist, or otherwise unnerving photos, memes, and articles that were shared which made me view certain people in a whole new, unsettling light.

Over time, I began to shy away from my personal Facebook page, using it only for work. I'd still check my timeline occasionally but it was becoming a playground for bad behavior. I would sometimes block people who posted disturbing material, which made my timeline instantly happier. I started checking in more often and then I began to notice that there were many uplifting messages of support for those going through hard times. There were sweet sto-

ries that friends shared of their new baby or puppy. There were photos of family celebrating milestones. During difficult times, like yet another horrifying (and maddening) school shooting, there was a collective discourse and discussion. During lively events, there was amusing chatter about the Oscars, World Series, and blockbuster movies. Little by little, I began to share more statuses. I also joined Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter, each a little different.

The thing is, when used properly, social media does connect us. It is not simply a breeding ground for the mean spirited, although it does have the potential to attract a certain type of ugly cowardice hiding behind the screen at times. If you choose your friends wisely, it can become a larger social circle, not a replacement for human face-to-face connection, but an extension of how we socialize. Just as we choose our words wisely when speaking, we can also choose our thoughts wisely when posting. If you wouldn't say it to a room full of people, then think twice before you post it. But if you've got some great news or could use some support, then by all means let your friends know. That's what we're all here for!

Find me on Facebook, keyword DanielleSullivanWriter.

*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.*



## ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,  
ESQ.

# The inherited IRA

*I inherited an Individual Retirement Account from my aunt. I am 45 years old, and there is \$350,000 in the account. What are the rules, and is that money exposed to creditors if I am sued or file for bankruptcy?*

**B**oth Roth IRAs and traditional IRAs are enjoying 15-minutes of fame this month in the wake of a United States Supreme Court's decision in the Clark vs. Rameker case on June 12, 2014. The Court was presented with the question: "Is an inherited IRA protected from the bankruptcy claims of creditors?" On June 12 the Court answered that question with a unanimous "No."

Specifically, the Court held that funds held in inherited IRAs are not "retirement funds" within the meaning of U.S.C. § 522(b)(3)(c) and therefore are not exempt from the bankruptcy estate. This renders inherited IRA funds to creditor claims in bankruptcy. Traditional and Roth IRAs have typically been exempt from bankruptcy claims up to a \$1 million limit (\$1,245,475 as adjusted for inflation in 2014).

The United States Circuit Courts of Appeals (the third court to address a bankruptcy case if it is appealed) has taken opposing views on this question. In the Eighth Circuit, inherited IRAs have been exempt from bankruptcy claims on the grounds that the funds are retirement funds in tax-exempt vehicles. Other Circuits have held that inherited IRAs lack the requisite "retirement purpose" and are governed by a different set of rules than IRAs in the hands of their original owners. Inherited IRAs can be liquidated at any time without penalty, unlike an original IRA, which suffers a penalty if the owner withdraws assets before the age of 59-and-a-half.

In the Clark case, Heidi Heffron-Clark inherited an IRA from her mother in 2001, who had named Heidi on the beneficiary designation form. The IRA was worth \$450,000 at the mother's death. Heidi had drawn the account down to approximately



\$300,000 before filing for Chapter 7 bankruptcy nine years later in October, 2010. Heidi argued that the money constituted "retirement funds" and was not available to creditors. The creditors objected. The bankruptcy court agreed. The U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin reversed the bankruptcy court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit overturned the District Court decision.

IRA accounts, employer sponsored retirement plans such as 401(k)s and 403(b)s are accounts that an individual creates and funds for himself. The Supreme Court decision turned on the legal distinction between self-funded IRAs and inherited IRAs, whether through an employer-sponsored plan or a roll-over when you leave the company. The Court noted that, unlike IRA owners, inheritors cannot make additional contributions to the account. They can withdraw funds without penalty. By contrast, non-spouse inheritors of an IRA must withdraw the entire account balance in five years of the primary owner's death or take out a minimum amount each year starting on Dec. 31 of the year after the IRA owner dies. This applies to all inherited IRAs. The Court emphasized this distinction, reasoning that the bankruptcy code provision is intended to ensure that a filer has money during retirement,

justifying its protection.

This presents an interesting conundrum for spouses who inherit an IRA. Spousal inherited IRAs receive slightly different treatment. An inheritor spouse can roll over the inherited IRA into her own IRA account and not take distributions until she reaches 70-and-a-half, even if that date is later than the date the decedent spouse would have turned 70-and-a-half. She would not be able to withdraw assets before the age of 59-and-a-half from the commingled IRA. If she elects the roll-over, her own account is not an inherited IRA. If she does not do the roll-over, the inherited IRA is considered such. The spouse in that scenario would not have to withdraw money until the decedent spouse would have turned 70-and-a-half (or immediately assuming the spouse died after he reached that age). Since now, under the Court's decision, the inherited IRA would not be protected from bankruptcy, this new interpretation militates in favor of spouses rolling over the IRA into their own (or opening one post-haste if they did not have one to begin with).

Naming a creditor-protection trust as a beneficiary is also an option for spouse and non-spouse inheritors alike. The trust will shield the inherited IRA funds from creditors, and can also control a (possibly spend-thrift) heir to withdraw the funds in terms of timing and amount. The rules applicable to setting up a trust that will be the recipient of an inherited IRA are complex, and should only be implemented with the assistance of a qualified estate attorney to ensure that your objectives are met and that you understand all the benefits and drawbacks of using a trust.

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

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## LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

# Teens need shut-eye

**I** used to feel like a broken record. Every evening, I would call down the hall toward the light that remained on in my daughter's bedroom, "Are you heading to bed yet?" This was because my daughter was typically up past 11:30 pm, and she needed to rise slightly after the birds — around 6 am. Typically she was aggravated, cranky, and just plain miserable when the sun came up. You would think that an 18-year-old could adjust, knowing that each and every morning she would regret the alarm. At the time, though, her schedule was definitely a catalyst — advanced-placement courses, two honor society schedules, volunteer work, and an insane athletics schedule. With freshman year in college approaching, another chaotic schedule is likely, so getting into a regular sleep schedule should be at the top of her list.

What's a parent to do when she realizes her teen is on a downward spiral due to lack of sleep?

### Inadequate sleep cycles

According to the National Sleep Foundation, teens should be getting approximately nine-and-a-quarter hours of sleep per night to function at their best.

Staff members at the Mayo Clinic write, "Puberty changes a teen's internal clock, delaying the time he or she starts feeling sleepy — often until 11 pm or later. Staying up late to study or socialize can disrupt a teen's internal clock even more."

Robert S. Rosenberg, medical director of The Sleep Disorders Centers of Prescott Valley and Flagstaff, Arizona and author of the newly released book "Sleep Soundly Every Night, Feel Fantastic Every Day," (Demos Health, June 2014), reports "Recent surveys have shown that only 15 percent of teenagers get eight-and-a-half hours or more of sleep."

Experts say that part-time jobs and extracurricular activities, in addition to school schedules, contribute to fewer hours of sleep. Teens also spend time on social networking sites before bed, which can affect their ability to fall asleep.

Dr. Nadav Traeger, director of Pediatric Sleep Medicine at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester



Medical Center, clarifies that the amount of sleep teens needs vary.

### Consequences

A lack of sleep can lead to negative consequences, including drowsy driving, which can be extremely dangerous.

Traeger says that teens who get insufficient sleep may present with various issues.

"The possible symptoms include: increased tendency for sleeping during the day, decreased school performance, decreased attention, restlessness or hyperactivity, moodiness, memory problems, behavioral problems, and propensity for clumsiness or accidents."

A lack of sleep can also affect a teen's athletic performance. Rosenberg points to a recent study conducted at Stanford University which involved baseball, basketball and football teams.

"Athletes demonstrated improved performance when they were encouraged to sleep ten hours, or at least one more than they had been sleeping."

Rosenberg advises parents to watch for the following behaviors:

- Sleeps late on weekends
- Falls asleep when not actively engaged in something
- Has trouble waking up for school
- Increased agitation and irritability

### Better sleep habits

Sleep is important for tissue re-

pair and strengthening muscles, explains Rosenberg, so parents should encourage teens to cut down on extracurricular activities that go well past dinner times.

"Let them know that during sleep a lot of important things are taking place, such as memory consolidation for, not only facts, but also for how to swing a bat or shoot a basketball."

Traeger suggests that parents persuade teens to practice good sleep habits.

"The main habits that will promote good sleep quality are: using the bed for sleeping only, sleeping only in own bed (not the couch, etc.), having little variability in the sleep-wake schedule (including weekends), exercising regularly (as long as it is not too close to bedtime), and getting sufficient exposure to daylight during the day."

### Tips and tales

Additional tips are provided by the National Sleep Foundation ([www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)):

- Keep a sleep diary: Use to determine how much sleep you need to feel good during the day.
- Naps: Keep these short and not too close to bedtime.
- Keep your bedroom cool, quiet, and dark.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks (coffee, tea, soda and chocolate) late in the day. Nicotine and alcohol also interfere with sleep.
- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. This will help keep your body in sync with its natural patterns.
- Don't eat, drink, or exercise within a few hours of your bedtime.
- Avoid TV, computer, and the telephone within an hour before bed.

### Share your ideas

Upcoming topic: Tips to encourage your teen to get involved in politics.

Please send your full name, address, and brief comments to [myrna-haskell@gmail.com](mailto:myrna-haskell@gmail.com) or visit [www.myrnahaskell.com](http://www.myrnahaskell.com)

Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer, columnist and author of, "Lions And Tigers And Teens: Expert Advice and Support for the Conscientious Parent Just Like You" (Unlimited Publishing LLC, 2012). For details, visit [www.myrnahaskell.com](http://www.myrnahaskell.com).



THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Tips for the university-bound

**T**hirteen long years. Twenty-six semesters, four proms, countless teachers, and you've graduated high school — but you're still not done with school. As much as you wish you were, it'll be awhile before you get your hands on your next diploma. U-bound, that's you.

But don't be too eager. The secondary-education years are time to prepare and explore and, says Hailey Bondy, there are still "77 Things You Absolutely Have to Do Before You Finish College."

So, in a few months, it'll be campus life for you: freedom, friends, parties, and lots of big decisions. It's exciting but it can also be overwhelming, even if you're an upper-classman. Your survival and sanity may depend on this book.

First, before you even pack the car to go to college, de-clutter your life. Toss "junk," keep what's important, and know what's worth schlepping to your new dorm or apartment.

Speaking of apartments, now's the time to learn how to get one. You'll also want to know how to make it a home and, while you're at it, Bondy says to learn to cook one decent meal there. Why not try some-

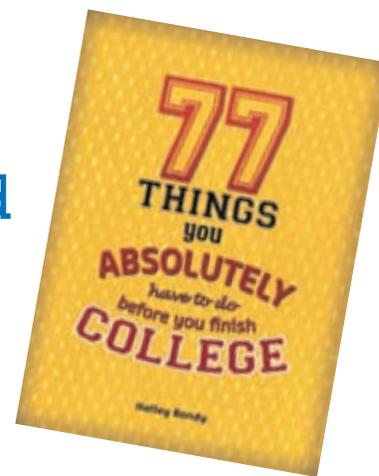
thing you've never eaten before? Or this: learn that it's okay — even desirable — to go to a real restaurant (not a chain!) and dine alone.

College is also a good place to hone your conversational skills. Have a real talk with a professor (but don't brownnose). Talk with an "elder local" and listen to what life was like 60 or 80 years ago. Volunteer to give tours in your new hometown and be ready (and knowledgeable enough) to answer questions.

Get politically active by attending a council meeting or volunteering for a political campaign. Go to the library, just because. Learn a new language. Understand that naps are not just for toddlers. Learn survival and self-defense skills. Ask someone on an old-fashioned date, but know how to be safe and how to end arguments and relationships. Learn how to make a killer resume and be financially savvy.

Finally, "forgive your own mistakes" and "break one of your own rules." Life is too short to cling to either one.

Looking to make next year the best ever? Are you a little freaked out that you might miss an opportunity

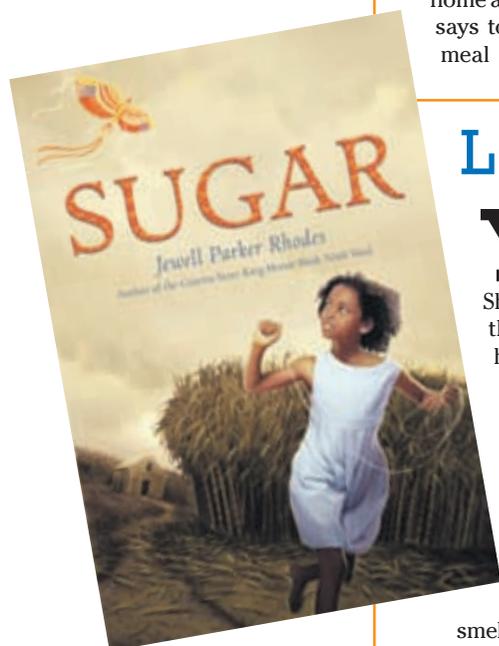


somewhere? With "77 Things You Absolutely Have to Do Before You Finish College," you can gather ideas now so you don't have to worry this fall.

There's no doubt that some of the ideas that author Hailey Bondy presents are things you're already doing. Who, for instance, hasn't spent some time doing volunteer work? You probably have, but Bondy takes it a step further and she also challenges her readers to get a little uncomfortable.

The nice thing about this book is that, even if you're not quite college-bound yet, you can still get a head start on some of the activities here. For any student age 16 and up, in fact, these "77 Things You Absolutely Have to Do Before You Finish College" are what you should get your hands on.

"77 Things You Absolutely Have to Do Before You Finish College" by Hailey Bondy [192 pages, 2014, \$14.99].



Learn about a new world with 'Sugar'

**Y**our child has already learned something about the Civil War. She's aware of what happened then — but what about what happened afterward?

Jewell Parker Rhodes' "Sugar" tells some of the tale.

More than anything, Sugar hated sugar. It bit her face and fingers at harvest time, and made them bleed. Sugar cane got in her hair and there was no escaping the

smell of it. When Missus Beale made a meal with sugar, it turned Sugar's stomach.

Sugar was sure there had to be a reason why Ma named her after that crop, but there was no way of knowing, since Ma had died.

As much as she hated it, though, working with sugar cane was all that 10-year-old Sugar had ever known.

She was born on River Road Plantation and that's where she stayed — even though the end of the Civil War meant she could go anywhere. She stayed because her freedom meant that her Pa was free, too. She hoped he'd return to River Road.

In the meantime, Mister and Missus Beale took care of Sugar. Mister Beale told her stories of Br'er Rabbit, and he said he liked her "spunk." Missus Beale tried to keep Sugar busy, but Sugar often wondered why she couldn't play with Billy Wills, her friend and the son of River Road's owner.

But that wouldn't happen easily: her friendship with Billy worried Missus Beale. What's more, everybody on River Road was concerned about the fact that Mister Wills was bringing Chinese people to the plantation to work. He'd decided that a handful of elderly ex-slaves couldn't handle the harvest anymore — which might've meant that everyone

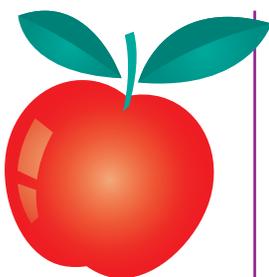
would lose their jobs, although Sugar wasn't sure if that was really true.

In her notes, Rhodes explains what she discovered and how she initially intended to write an adult book about the post-War years, until she envisioned a little girl who just wanted to be a kid.

Young readers will be glad she did: Sugar manages to keep a watchful, self-aware innocence mixed with joy. That brings this story beyond the dates-and-facts of history, and gives it a kid-friendly sense your 8- to-12-year-old will like. As an end-of-school read, in fact, or to keep her occupied this summer, "Sugar" is a book she'll fall for.

"Sugar" by Jewell Parker Rhodes [288 pages, 2013, \$7].

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.



## DEAR TEACHER

PEGGY GISLER AND  
MARGE EBERTS

# Exploring the arts

**D**ear parents, It is a simple fact that funding for the arts in schools is dropping — reducing the time spent on them. Having fewer opportunities to explore the arts is a shame because the arts play an important role in children's math, reading, problem-solving, and critical-thinking skills. And there is the inescapable fact that the arts can bring joy, as well as learning, to children, resulting in the creation of a satisfying interest in them throughout their lives. Our summer learning activities are designed to pick up the slack from disappearing arts programs in schools.

## Dance

Dance is a great way to gain better balance and coordination. It also is a different way to exercise that is a lot of fun as well as a way to express your creativity. Here are some ideas for a fun-filled week of family dancing:

- Dance to a dance exercise video.
- Put on some music and have everyone dance as if they were different kinds of animals (chicken, elephant, cat, and so on).
- Put on different kinds of music and just respond to the beat.
- Watch shows with dancing, from ballet to "Dancing With the Stars."
- Attend a dance production in the community.

## Theater

Your first arts activity involved dancing. Keep on dancing as you explore the arts of drama and the theater:

- Search the newspaper or online for local productions by theater groups and colleges to give your children a taste of what the theater is like. Then try to attend one of these productions or see a rehearsal.
- If there is a children's theater group in your community, your children may be able to take part in a program that will let them learn more about acting or the behind-the-scenes activities involved in putting on a play.
- Go to Zoom Playhouse at [pb-skids.org/zoom/activities/playhouse](http://pb-skids.org/zoom/activities/playhouse) to find plays for the family to perform. You don't need to memorize a role; just read it over silently several



times so everyone can read their role easily. These plays are really CUTE!

- Watch a play on television with your children.

## Sculpture

To most children, art centers on painting and drawing. This week, expand their artistic creativity to sculpture by giving them the opportunity to create actual objects. Your children can use a variety of materials to create sculptures, such as Play-Doh, sand, wood, Styrofoam, rocks, soap, paper, LEGOS, Tinkertoys, and ornaments. They can carve the materials, glue them together, or shape them with their hands. We'll give you several ideas of projects; however, you can find many more by searching online for "sculpture activities for kids."

- Play-Doh is a great beginning material for young sculptors. Unfortunately, if it is allowed to harden, it is likely to crack. To avoid this, look for oven-curable clay in your local craft stores to make lasting creations.

• Sand is also a great sculpting material. Wonderful castles can be created in sandboxes and at the beach. To preserve them for a few weeks, spray them with hairspray or use a mixture of 10 parts sand, one part glue, and three parts water.

- Your children also can make edible sculptures by using a combination of pretzel sticks and mini and large marshmallows. They can form them on a graham cracker base and

glue them together with frosting.

## Paint like the masters

Painting teaches children how to communicate visually and enhances the fine motor skills of young children and the creativity of older children. This week, increase your children's knowledge of famous artists by having them paint in the artists' styles.

- Begin by looking online or in art books at the paintings of several artists. Some interesting choices are: Georges Seurat, whose paintings are made of dots that somehow blend together. There is also Piet Mondrian, who later in his career only used vertical and horizontal straight lines and the colors red, blue, yellow, and black. They also can view the work of Jackson Pollock and then fling paint from sticks or large brushes onto canvasses to imitate his style.

- Take your older children to an art museum with a sketching pad. Then encourage them to copy several paintings that they find appealing.

## Music

Early musical training contributes to the development of the left side of the brain, which is involved in language processing. And music helps children learn to think creatively. Start your children listening to and making music as early as you can.

- It's Fourth of July time. Play John Philip Sousa patriotic tunes and march around the house.

- Have a family picnic in a park and enjoy a free band concert.

- Visit [www.schoolhouserock.tv](http://www.schoolhouserock.tv) with your school-age children. They can have fun learning grammar, multiplication, and science to such lively tunes as "Multiplication Rock" and "Conjunction Junction."

- Make musical instruments, from drums to tambourines, for your young children to play. Look online for "homemade musical instruments" for more ideas.

- Start your children on music lessons.

*Parents should send questions and comments to [dearteacher@dearteacher.com](mailto:dearteacher@dearteacher.com) or ask them on the columnists' website at [www.dearteacher.com](http://www.dearteacher.com).*

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## DEAR DR. KARYN

DR. KARYN GORDON

# Birds, bees, & teens

### Dear Dr. Karyn,

My 17-year-old daughter just confessed to me that she has become sexually active with her boyfriend. Where do I go from here? I feel she is too young for this step but, obviously, I can't change what has happened. Do I put her on the pill and just turn my head?

### Dear parent,

Oh, tough question, and I'm sure many parents are cringing at the thought of dealing with this situation themselves. The reality is you are absolutely right — you cannot change what has happened and you cannot control whether or not your daughter is sexually active.

Sex is one of those tough topics where parents and teens often share different values. My number one recommendation is to keep your lines of communication open with your daughter. Teens have so many difficult decisions they need to figure out, and I would much rather a teen go to her parent or professional for advice than trying

to deal with the situation alone.

I think it was very brave of your daughter to be honest with you — that certainly speaks volumes about her trust in your relationship. I would communicate your value with her, and that you'd honestly prefer her not to be sexually active at this time and why — but that you also love her and respect her decision. Respect, by the way, does not mean you agree or condone a decision, but rather you respect the person's right to make a certain decision. There is a big difference.

Since she has admitted to being sexually active, I recommend your next step be taking her to your family doctor. Have your doctor communicate the risks about being sexually active as well as recommend the different birth controls available. In this situation, you are not “turning your head,” but rather communicating your value and respecting where she is at. My hope is, through this, your relationship will get stronger and that when she needs some help, you will be the

first person she goes to.

### Bullying at schools

#### Dear Dr. Karyn,

I am writing about my eight year old son, he is being bullied at school. The bullying started with words but now has escalated to physical abuse. Our son is a very happy and well-adjusted little boy, but lately he has wanted to come home for lunch more often. Any insight you can offer would be greatly appreciated.

#### Dear parent,

Bullying is so incredibly damaging to a child's sense of safety and self-esteem. It does not surprise me that your son wants to stay closer to home. Here are some recommendations:

First, keep the lines of communication open with your son. It is so important for him to feel safe at home and that he has his parents to support him through this. It's most important to encourage him to share his thoughts and feelings about what is happening. Listen carefully, validate his feelings and then start talking about solutions.

Second, it's essential that you go to the principal of the school. Children at this age cannot nor should they figure out a solution for bullying on their own. Schools are supposed to be safe for our children and it's the adults in charge that need to make sure this happens. Keep a log of everything that happens so when you go in to talk with the principal you have everything recorded. Ask about their procedures regarding bullying, what they will do to protect your son, and what the consequences are if children bully.

Breaking the silence and surrounding yourself with people who also want to protect your son is most important!

*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](http://www.dkleadership.org) and on Twitter: @DrKarynGordon.*



# Calendar

JULY



Photo by Patrick Cashin

## All aboard for a trip to the past

Hop aboard a vintage R1-9 train for a ride back to the past. Nostalgia Ride takes off on July 12.

The MTA is dusting off the cobwebs of the vintage subway cars that ruled the rails in the 1930s. With rattan seats, paddle ceiling fans, and incandescent light bulbs, the cars take you on a nostalgic trip ending at the world-famous Coney Island. There you can step off of a hot train and cool your toes in the Atlantic, have a dog or two at Nathan's, and ride the new-

est coaster, the Thunderbolt. You can also stay on the train and ride through historic neighborhoods.

It's all aboard on July 12 beginning at 11 am. Tickets are \$50, \$25 for children; \$35 and \$20 for adult and child members of the museum.

Tickets can only be purchased online in advance. Meet on the lower level of the Transit Museum.

*New York Transit Museum [Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street in Downtown, (718) 694-1600, [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum)].*

## Submit a listing

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

Send your listing request to [brooklyncalendar@cnglocal.com](mailto:brooklyncalendar@cnglocal.com) — and we'll take care of the rest. Please e-mail requests more than three weeks prior to the event to ensure we have enough time to get it in. And best of all, it's FREE!

## TUES, JULY 1

### IN BROOKLYN

**Tree Care Tuesday:** Study location, Driggs Ave. and Monitor Street; (917) 727-9761; [info@humanimpactsinstitute.org](mailto:info@humanimpactsinstitute.org); 10 am–noon; Free.

Children learn how we humans impact the health of our trees. Children under 18 must be accompanied by a guardian. Bring a water bottle, sunblock, a hat and other personal items. Tree study supplies will be supplied.

## FRI, JULY 4

### IN BROOKLYN

**July Fourth celebration:** Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org); Noon–6 pm; \$3.

Declare your independence and celebrate America's birthday. You can sign a copy of the Declaration of Independence and then make yourself a jaunty plumed hat to wear while putting your John Hancock on the reproduction.

**Audubon Center:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Noon–5 pm; Free.

Get into the celebratory action and discover why the Bald Eagle became America's symbol of independence; use games and activities to learn why birds are so special; join with a naturalist and take a tour of the grounds discovering all the flora and fauna in the park; and finally, find out how Snappy the turtle got its name.

## SAT, JULY 5

### IN BROOKLYN

**Blooming Babies:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am–12:30 pm; Free with mu-



## Juggling with a twist

MindFlip Duo comes juggling and hip-hopping to Maria Hernandez Park on July 22.

When you mix Kid Ace's extraordinary magic with Paris, the Hip-Hop Juggler's, amazing stunts, you have MindFlip Duo, the hottest team to hit the summer stage. Blending hip juggling with magical tricks and treats, the comedy pair creates a full-length, kid-friendly show that will delight and amaze you no matter

what age you are. But be careful not to blink, because you just might miss something.

The best part is that you get to see these two free thanks to the folks at SummerStage Kids, presented by Disney and City Parks Foundation.

MindFlip Duo on July 22 at 10:30 am. Free.

*Maria Hernandez Park (Knickerbocker and Willoughby avenues in Bushwick, [www.nycgovpark.org](http://www.nycgovpark.org)).*

seum admission.

Children 18 months to 2 years discover what happens when ice gets warm.

**Macy's Fishing clinic:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Noon–5 pm; Free.

Don't let that big one get away! Children learn how to cast, bait and catch a fish. Equipment supplied. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

**Dance and movement workshop:** Jane Baile Memorial Garden, 327-329 Greene Ave.; (212) 333-2525; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Noon–1 pm; Free.

Lean basic hip-hop and discover the rhythm inside you.

## SUN, JULY 6

### IN BROOKLYN

**Wildlife Theater:** Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge Park, Joralemon St. and Columbia Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 11 am – 1 pm; Free.

The Central Park Zoo Wildlife Theater pays a visit with "Amazing Adaptations: The Dinosaur Adventure," featuring singing, science and fun.

**Blooming Babies:** 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, July 5.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Family Performance Festival and Musical Adventures:** Central Park, Peter Jay Sharp Children's Glade, enter at Duke Ellington Boulevard and Central Park West, Manhattan; (212) 776-1066; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/07/06/family-performance-festival-musical-adventures-in-central-park](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/07/06/family-performance-festival-musical-adventures-in-central-park); Noon; Free.

Discover more about the park and the music it makes from George Steele as you sing along with him, then head out on an adventure in the park.

**Global Family Day:** Central Park, Rumsey Playfield off of Terrace Drive, enter at E. 68th Street, Manhattan; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/07/06/summerstage-presents-global-family-day-okee-dokee-brothers-hybrid-movement-company-shaun-parker-company-acrobuffos-national-dance-institute](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/07/06/summerstage-presents-global-family-day-okee-dokee-brothers-hybrid-movement-company-shaun-parker-company-acrobuffos-national-dance-institute); 3–7 pm; Free.

SummerStage Kids presented by Disney presents a day dedicated to engaging young audiences and their families through performances, interactive workshops of circus arts, face painting and more!

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# Calendar

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

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## MON, JULY 7

### IN BROOKLYN

**"Frozen":** Coney Island Beach, W. 10th Street and the Boardwalk; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 7:30 pm; Free.

Enjoy a screening of this animated adventure at Movies on the Beach.

## TUES, JULY 8

### IN BROOKLYN

**Hybrid Movement Company:** Maria Hernandez Park, Knickerbocker Ave. and Willoughby Avenue; (718) 965-8900; [nycgovparks.org](http://nycgovparks.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Part of the International Contemporary Circus Festival presented by 2014 SummerStage Kids.

## WED, JULY 9

### IN BROOKLYN

**"Back to the Future":** McCarren Park, Bedford Ave. and N. 12th Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 7 pm; Free. Outdoor movies.

## FRI, JULY 11

### IN BROOKLYN

**Volleyball Clinics:** Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge Park, Furman St. and Columbia Street; 10 am – noon; Free.

Children sharpen their skills with spiking, serving, and saving. Experts at Metro Beach Sports start with the fundamentals all the way up to expert.

**Kids Junk Orchestra:** Brower Park, Brooklyn Ave. and Prospect Place; (212) 639-9675; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Presented by the 2014 SummerStage Kids.

**"Coraline 3D":** Maria Hernandez Park, Star St. and Knickerbocker Avenue; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 8-10 pm; Free.

Animated movie.

## SAT, JULY 12

### IN BROOKLYN

**Bird watching:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); 10 am; Free.

Children 8 years and older, with a parent, observe and identify more than 200 species of birds that fly through the park or make it their home. Binoculars and bird guides will be provided.

**Kayaking day:** Pier 2, Furman St. and Clarke Street; 10 am-3 pm; Free.

Glide along while kayaking with the



Photo by Jerry Speier

## Fun in the streets

Playstreets is coming to a street near you from July 7 through Aug. 22.

For 100 years the Police Athletic League has provided a safe place for children to play and learn throughout the hot days of summer.

Whether it's a street or a park, the area is made safe and supervised. From 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, staff lead children in sports, arts and crafts, games, music, and dance. Featured activities include double Dutch jump rope, hopscotch,

Nok Hockey, and basketball.

Participating areas are: 61st Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Bay Ridge; Surfside Houses in the rear of 2839 W. 33rd St. in the basketball courts in Coney Island; Kelly Playground located at Avenue S and 15th Street in Homecrest; and Fox Playground between E. 52nd Street and Avenue H in Flatbush.

Playstreets between July 7 and Aug. 22, from 9 am to 5 pm. Free. There will be no playstreets on Aug. 1.

*Playstreets ([www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org)).*

Brooklyn Bridge Park Boathouse at the floating dock. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult guardian. No experience necessary.

**Ride the nostalgia train:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 11 am; \$50 (\$25 child; \$35; \$20 adult and child museum members).

MTA is dusting off the cobwebs on the R1-9 cars and taking it to Coney. With rattan seats, paddle ceiling fans, incandescent lightbulbs, riders take a ride back in time to Coney. After the ride passengers can cool off on the shores of Coney, get a Famous Nathan's hot dog or brave the Cyclone, and now the newest Thunderbolt ride. Tickets can only be purchased on line in advance. Meet on the lower level of the Transit Museum.

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

[www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Children enjoy erecting new buildings with an assortment of blocks.

**Dance and movement workshop:** Garden of Hope, 392 Hancock St.; (212) 333-2525; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Noon-1 pm; Free.

Lean basic hip-hop and discover the rhythm inside you.

**Garden tour:** Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org); 2-3 pm and 3:30-4:30 pm; \$12 (\$15 non-members).

Family-friendly peek inside the gardens, learn about garden plots and make a tasty treat. Pre-registration required and online. Cancelled in case of inclement weather.

**Volleyball Clinics:** Pier 6, Joralemon St. and Columbia St.; 3-5 pm; Free.

Experts from Metro Beach Sports

teach teens to sharpen their skills from serving, setting, spiking, passing and ball control.

## SUN, JULY 13

### IN BROOKLYN

**The Art of Stepping:** Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge park, Joralemon St. and Columbia St.; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 11 am-1 pm; Free.

Children learn how to break it down step by step and use mathematics in dance.

**Block Party:** 11:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, July 12.

**Family Day:** Lakeside Rink Prospect Park, 171 E. Drive at Lincoln Road; (718) 809-8850; [www.hiptot.com](http://www.hiptot.com); Noon-3 pm; Free.

HIP Tot presents fun events each month. Beat the Summer Heat Dance Party with Hip Tween and DJ Misbehaviour.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**"Bugaboo Review Puppet Show":** Central Park, Peter Jay Sharp Children's Glade, enter at Duke Ellington Boulevard and Central Park West, Manhattan; (212) 776-1066; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/07/13/family-performance-festival-bugaboo-review-puppet-show](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/07/13/family-performance-festival-bugaboo-review-puppet-show); Noon; Free.

Families will learn more about the importance of bugs through bug puppets and interactive songs during this fun and educational show.

## MON, JULY 14

### IN BROOKLYN

**Kids' Capoeira Camp:** Raizes do Brasil Capoeira Academy, 114 Eighth St. between Second and Third avenues; (347) 921-2446; [info@rbcapoeira.com](mailto:info@rbcapoeira.com); [www.rbcapoeira.com](http://www.rbcapoeira.com); 9 am; \$400.

A one-week camp session for children ages 6-9 years old.

## TUES, JULY 15

### IN BROOKLYN

**Kids' Capoeira Camp:** 9 am. Raizes do Brasil Capoeira Academy. See Monday, July 14.

**"Little Red's Hood":** Maria Hernandez Park, Knickerbocker Ave. and Willoughby Avenue; (718) 965-8900; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Children enjoy a modern twist on a classic tale. Presented by CityParks Mobile and 2014 SummerStage Kids.

## WED, JULY 16

### IN BROOKLYN

**Kids' Capoeira Camp:** 9 am. Raizes do Brasil Capoeira Academy. See Monday, July 14.

**Walking with Dinosaurs:** Barclays Center, 620 Atlantic Ave. at Pacific Street; (917) 618-6100; [www.barclayscenter.com](http://www.barclayscenter.com); 10:30 am, 11 am, 1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm and 7 pm; \$30-\$94.

The spectacular featuring 20 animatronic beasts comes to the borough for a premier engagement.

## THURS, JULY 17

### IN BROOKLYN

**Softball clinic:** MCU Park, 1904 Surf Ave. at W. 17th St.; (718) 449-8497; [www.nymcu.org/youthclinics](http://www.nymcu.org/youthclinics); call for time; Free.

Children 7 to 14 years old can hone up on catching, fielding, stretching and running bases during clinic hosted by the Brooklyn Cyclones - Participants, limited to 100, will receive 4 tickets to that night's game. Participating is on a first come first served basis. Registration required.

**Kids' Capoeira Camp:** 9 am. Raizes do Brasil Capoeira Academy. See Monday, July 14.

**Walking with Dinosaurs:** 10:30 am, 11 am, 1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm and 7 pm. Barclays Center. See Wednesday, July 16.

**Drop-In Drawing:** Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; [dropindrawing@brooklynmuseum.org](mailto:dropindrawing@brooklynmuseum.org); [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org); 7:30-9pm; \$8 (\$7 for museum members).

## FRI, JULY 18

### IN BROOKLYN

**Kids' Capoeira Camp:** 9 am. Raizes do Brasil Capoeira Academy. See Monday, July 14.

**Walking with Dinosaurs:** 10:30 am, 11 am, 1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm and 7 pm. Barclays Center. See Wednesday, July 16.

**Janice Marie Robinson's Melodic Magic:** Brower Park, Brooklyn Ave. and Prospect Place; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 10:30 pm; Free.

Concert for children. Presented by the 2014 SummerStage Kids. In the basketball courts.

## SAT, JULY 19

### IN BROOKLYN

**"Creative Galaxy":** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at



Photo by Angela Cranford / Barclays Center

## Dinos at Barclay's

It's amazing, it's awesome, it's Walking with Dinosaurs at the Barclays Center from July 16 through July 20.

More than 10 species of dinosaurs are highlighted from the 200-million year reign of the beasts, from the terror-inducing T. Rex to the peaceful plant eaters Plateosaurus. There will also be a Stegosaurus and Allosaurus from the Jurassic period — no not the movie — Utahraptor, Brachiosaurs, and a Liliensternus.

The robotic dinos, hatched by Sonny Tilders, the head creature designer at Creature Technology

Company will walk through the Barclays Center thrilling, chilling, and entertaining children of all ages.

Walk along with the dinos on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, from July 16 through July 20. Show times are at 10:30 am, 11 am, 1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm, and 7 pm. Check our listings for exact times and dates. Tickets range from \$30 to \$94.

*Barclays Center [620 Atlantic Ave. at Pacific Street in Prospect Heights, (917) 618-6100; [www.barclayscenter.com](http://www.barclayscenter.com)].*

St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); tba; Free with general admission.

Screening of this make-along, create-along, interactive art adventure series for pre-schoolers. Arts and crafts following. Hosted by Amazon Studios.

**Walking with Dinosaurs:** 10:30 am, 11 am, 1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm and 7 pm. Barclays Center. See Wednesday, July 16.

**Dance and movement workshop:** Noon-1 pm. Jane Baile Memorial Garden. See Saturday, July 5.

**Max ZT & the Hammered:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); Noon; Free with museum admission.

The Jimi Hendrix of the Hammered Dulcimer this is an innovative concert that combines Irish folk music with tunes inspired by Senegal to India.

**Laura Marx Fitzgerald:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 1 pm; Free with museum admission.

The author of "Under the Egg" reads from her books and shares stories with children 8 years and older.

## SUN, JULY 20

### IN BROOKLYN

**Walking with Dinosaurs:** 10:30 am, 11 am, 1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm and 7 pm. Barclays Center. See Wednesday,

July 16.

**The Great Brooklyn Bridge:** Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge Park, Joralemon St. and Columbia St.; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 11 am-1 pm; Free.

Learn the history and engineering of the greatest bridge.

**Max ZT & the Hammered:** Noon. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, July 19.

## TUES, JULY 22

### IN BROOKLYN

**MindFlip Duo:** Maria Hernandez Park, Knickerbocker Ave. and Wiltoughby Avenue; [www.nycgovpark.org](http://www.nycgovpark.org); 10:30 am; Free.

The group performs as part of the International Contemporary Circus Festival and the 2014 SummerStage Kids event.

**"The Incredibles":** Valentino Pier, Coffey St. and Ferris Steet; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 8:30 pm; Free.

Animated flick.

## WED, JULY 23

### IN BROOKLYN

**"Cry Baby":** McCaren Park, N. 12th St. and Bedford Avenue; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 7 pm; Free.

John Waters does a quirky spin on '50s nostalgia with this musical homage to "Rebel Without a Cause" and "Romeo and Juliet."

## THURS, JULY 24

### IN BROOKLYN

**"Fantastic Mr. Fox":** Harbor View Lawn Brooklyn Bridge Park, Furman St. and Middagh St.; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 6 pm; Free.

Animated movie based on Raold Dahl's classic book.

## FRI, JULY 25

### IN BROOKLYN

**Volleyball Clinics:** Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge Park, Furman St. and Columbia Street; 10 am-noon; Free.

Children sharpen their skills with spiking, serving, and saving. Experts at Metro Beach Sports start with the fundamentals all the way up to expert.

**"Little Red's Hood":** Brower Park, Brooklyn Ave. and Prospect Place; [www.nycgovpark.org](http://www.nycgovpark.org); 10:30 am; Free.

A modern twist on classic fairy tale, presented by CityParks Mobile — and part of the 2014 SummerStage Kids event.

**Artpalooza:** Brooklyn Children's

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# Calendar

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

Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Paint, draw, glue or weave your way to explore your arts and crafts side. For children 5 years old and younger.

**Friday Family Jam:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 3 pm; Free.

Celebrate summer with a festive summer night when children can build and play with Imagination Playground blue blocks. For all ages.

## SAT, JULY 26

### IN BROOKLYN

**Family Field Day:** Pier 5 Brooklyn Bridge Park, Joralemon St. and Columbia Street; 10 am-1 pm; Free.

Play games including volleyball, basketball, and soccer clinics to potato-sack and relay races.

**Celebrate Hawaii:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Children learn all about the culture and history of Hawaii then make a flower necklace to take home.

## SUN, JULY 27

### IN BROOKLYN

**"Tina Ballerina and Friends":** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 1:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Join author Nandi Miley-Collymore and listen to the rhyming journey of "Tina Ballerina." Then, create a Popsicle-stick puppet of a favorite character from the book. For all ages.

**Pier Kids:** Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge park, Joralemon St. and Columbia St.; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 11 am-1:30 pm; Free.

Award-winning author Paul Zelinsky shares his stories.

**Celebrate Hawaii:** 11:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, July 26.

**Family Day:** Greenwood Park, 555 Seventh Ave. at 20th Street; (718) 499-7999; [www.hiptot.com](http://www.hiptot.com); Noon-3 pm; Free.

Presented by Hip Tot enjoy a fun day at the park with a sing-a-long with Suzi Shelton, and Underwater Adventures with Melanie Hope Greenberg reading "Mermaids on Parade," along with crafts and the Barking Cat Studio.



## Chinese drumbeats

The classic story of a young girl is brought to life on the stage performance of "Mulan the Musical" now through Sept. 13.

The famous Red Poppy Ladies percussion group performs traditional choreography, colorful projections, traditional kung fu, and traditional drumming in this musical version of a 1,600-year-old tale of love,

honor, and courage.

"Mulan the Musical," now through Sept. 13, Monday through Friday (expect Tuesdays) at 8 pm, Saturdays at 2 and 8 pm, Sundays at 2 and 7 pm. Tickets range from \$25 to \$68.

*The Ellen Stewart Theatre at La Mama (66 E. Fourth St. between Second and Third avenues in the East Village, [MulanTheMusical.com](http://MulanTheMusical.com)).*

### FURTHER AFIELD

**EarthCapades:** Central Park, Peter Jay Sharp Children's Glade, enter at Duke Ellington Boulevard and Central Park West, Manhattan; (212) 776-1066; [www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/07/27/family-performance-festival-earthcapades](http://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2014/07/27/family-performance-festival-earthcapades); Noon; Free.

Gather the family to watch the tricks and flips of this circus troupe as it teaches about ecological diversity.

## MON, JULY 28

### IN BROOKLYN

**"The Lego Movie":** Coney Island Beach, W. 10th St. and the Boardwalk; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 7:30 pm; Free.

Children enjoy this animated stop-action flick.

## TUES, JULY 29

### IN BROOKLYN

**"Little Red's Hood":** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Playground, Dumont Avenue and Bradford Street; [www.nycgovpark.org](http://www.nycgovpark.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Modern twist on classic fairy tale, presented by CityParks Mobile — and part of the 2014 SummerStage Kids event.

## WED, JULY 30

### IN BROOKLYN

**NY Chinese Cultural Center:** Flagpole, 41st and Sixth Avenue; <http://www.nycgovparks.org>; 10:30-11:30 am; Free.

Spectacular dance program featuring traditional steps and costumes.

## THURS, JULY 31

### IN BROOKLYN

**Free Thursdays:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 3 pm; Free.

Come and join in for an afternoon of fun exploring of the museum. For all ages.

**"Beetlejuice":** Harbor View Lawn at Brooklyn Bridge Park, Furman St. and Middagh Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 6 pm; Free.

Darkly funny film by Tim Burton, starring Alec Baldwin and Winona Rider. For older children.

## LONG-RUNNING

### IN BROOKLYN

**Pop-Up Pool:** Pier 2 Uplands, Furman St. and Columbia Street; Daily, 10 am-6 pm, Now - Mon, Sept. 1; Free.

Jump in — the water is fine. The 30-by-50-foot pool includes a sandy beach and play area with food and drinks from Lizzmonade. Swim lessons available.

**Sensory room:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Now - Sun, Aug. 31; Free with museum admission.

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

**Touch tank:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Now - Sun, Aug. 31; Free with museum admission.

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

**Blooming naturalist:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Thursdays and Fridays, Noon-4 pm, Now - Fri, Aug. 29; Free.

Children use fun games and activities to learn what makes birds so special.

**Animal encounter:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Thursdays and Fridays, 3-4 pm, Now - Fri, Aug. 29; Free.

How did Snappy get its name? Find out in this fun event.

**Pop-Up Audubon:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Saturdays and Sundays, Noon-5 pm, Now - Sun, Aug. 24; Free.

Children enjoy fun programming, Nature on the Go, Nature's Helpers, and Family Bird Watching.

**The Art of Math:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 12:30 pm, Now - Sun, Aug. 31; Free with museum admission.

Children learn all about shapes, triangles, and squares.

**Summer Series puppet theater:** Puppetworks, 338 Sixth Ave. at Fourth Street; (718) 965-3391; [www.puppetworks.org](http://www.puppetworks.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm, Now - Sun, Aug. 17; \$8 (\$9 adults; \$7 groups of 20 or more).

Prokofiev's orchestral adventure including "Peter & the Wolf," "The Frog

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Prince," "The Comedians," and "The Ugly Duckling." Recommended for children 3 years and older. Total running time is approximately one hour.

**Wonderful Warblers:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Saturdays and Sundays, 2 pm, Now – Sun, July 27; Free.

Nature on the go is for young ones to explore the park and learn about birds.

**Wonderful Warblers:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Saturdays and Sundays, 3 pm, Now – Sun, July 27; Free.

Nature's Helpers lets little ones take a tour, help keep the park clean, and have outdoor fun.

**Wonderful Warblers:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Saturdays and Sundays, 4 pm, Now – Sun, July 27; Free.

Bird Watching is fun for the whole family. Take a stroll on the Lullwater and look for colorful and unique visitors.

**History workshops:** Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 2-4 pm, Now – Sun, July 27; \$3.

Fleece fun is offered weekly. Children learn how to use wool and make a felt ball to take home.

**Pier Kids:** Pier 6, Joralemon Street and Columbia Street; (347) 268-0023; [www.brooklynbridgepark.org](http://www.brooklynbridgepark.org); Sundays, 11 am, Now – Sun, Aug. 3; Free.

Sing, act, dance, and draw. Each week activities will be accompanied by an outdoor pop-up reading room presented by the Uni Project.

**Playstreets:** 61st Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues; [palnyc.org](http://palnyc.org); Weekdays, 9 am-5 pm, Mon, July 7 – Fri, Aug. 22; Free.

Each year the Police Athletic League provides a safe place for children to play.

**Playstreets:** Surfside Houses, 2839 W. 33rd St.; [www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org); Weekdays, 9 am-5 pm, Mon, July 7 – Fri, Aug. 22; Free.

The Police Athletic League is providing a safe environment for children to play in.

**Playstreets:** Kelly Playground, Avenue S and E. 15th Street; [www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org); Weekdays, 9 am-5 pm, Mon, July 7 – Fri, Aug. 22; Free.

The Police Athletic League is providing a safe environment for children to



Photo by Larry Thompson

## Japan's ancient art

Audiences will have the rare chance to witness the old art form of kabuki as Japan's Heisei Nakamura-za kabuki company performs a revival of a 19th-century ghost story called "The Ghost Tale of the Wet Nurse Tree" on July 5.

The presentation will include a demonstration of various walking styles used by characters in

kabuki plays, as well how to use a dance fan stage prop, in order to familiarize audiences with the art.

July 5 at 11 am. Admission is free.

*David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center [Broadway between W. 62nd and W. 63rd streets on the Upper West Side, (212) 875-5000, [atrium.lincolncenter.org](http://atrium.lincolncenter.org)].*

play in.

**Playstreets:** Fox Playground, E. 52nd St. and Avenue H; [www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org); Weekdays, 9 am-5 pm, Mon, July 7 – Fri, Aug. 22; Free.

The Police Athletic League is providing a safe environment for children to play in.

**Giglio:** Our Lady of Mount Carmel, N. Eighth and Havemeyer streets; Weekdays, 6 pm to 11 pm, Saturdays, 6 pm to midnight, Sundays, noon to 11 pm, Wed, July 9 – Sun, July 20.

It's that time again — the 127th feast at Our Lady of Mount Carmel kicks off and features a parade, brass band, games, vendors selling Italian specialties, rides, amusements and old-world charm.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Science Playground:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science, Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [www.nyscience.org](http://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](http://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!

**Dinosaur Safari:** Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road, The Bronx; (718) 220-5103; [www.bronx-zoo.com](http://www.bronx-zoo.com); Weekdays, 10 am-5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-5:30 pm.; \$20.95 (\$16.95 children; Free for children under 3; \$18.95 seniors).

Mysteries Revealed features more than 30 dinosaur species and how scientists reconstruct the fossil pieces. The ride runs through the zoo and has fully animatronic dinosaurs as they move and snarl. The 40-foot T. Rex is joined by deinonychus, prodohadros, stegosaurus and edmontonia.

**"As You Like It":** Central Park, W. 103rd St. and Central Park West, Manhattan; [newyorkclassical.org/whats-playing](http://newyorkclassical.org/whats-playing); Thursdays – Sundays, 7 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 22; Free.

Audiences will enjoy this performance of Shakespeare's classic tale, as performed by the New York Classical Theatre, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary.

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## A LETTER FROM COLLEGE

AGLAIA HO

# A healthy lifestyle

**F**inals are complete and the school year is over, and I was ready to come home from college. I packed up my dorm, lugging pounds of paper and textbooks out, and packing all my freshman-year memories into cardboard boxes. Squeezing suitcases, bags, and boxes into the small trunk of our Honda Accord was not easy. My parents exclaimed and pondered why my belongings were such a tight fit into the car that had easily carried them to college in the fall. Lo and behold, I was definitely coming back with an accumulation of new items, from a three-foot-tall stuffed penguin to new clothes bought with the freedom of a handy-dandy credit card, to old posters I collected from my friends who did not want them anymore.

However, physical memorabilia was not the only novel acquisition I was carrying home. Also making the journey back to the city was the extra weight I had put on over the course of the year. I was a good 10 pounds heavier after my freshman year. This I attributed to being a little too-well fed from the cake and ice cream my dining hall served for dessert, and also my late-night indulgences when it seemed like midnight pancakes were calling my name. Looking around at other students on their way home for the summer, I noticed I was not the only one hobbling around with a little extra poundage.

Apparently, the “freshman 15” is no myth. I was astonished by how

quickly I put on the weight and I was a bit embarrassed by my weight gain, especially when I could not fit into my summer dresses and bathing suit that I donned so nicely last summer. Reevaluating my eating habits, I realized that my folly was my less-than healthy lifestyle while at college. With an expensive college meal plan and a frugal mind-set, I subconsciously tried to reap all the benefits of my prepaid dining arrangement. With 21 meals a week (three full meals a day), I made sure I ate every single one of them, filling my plate high with food at every meal. It was no help that the food was pretty good! However, bound to my desk with schoolwork (or social network sites and computer games), I did not exercise or work out as much as I should have.

Looking back, I grimace at my unhealthy and foolish eating choices. I am ashamed of myself for not taking care of my body at college. What frightens me the most is how quickly and easily I fell into it. Prior to college, I led a healthy, balanced life without much thought. My mother often portioned our meals appropriately, I figure skated religiously on the weekends, and ran up 10 flights of stairs each day at school. Once in college, it did not take much thought for me to lapse into a sedentary routine. To me, the extra weight is not the utmost important (although a flat belly is desirable for bikinis), it is the unhealthy lifestyle I developed. Fearing a similar future, I have decided to work towards eating better and exercising a lot more. The changes I have made to my life are none too drastic, yet they make a huge difference, helping to improve my energy, confidence, and sense of self-appreciation.

To begin with, I decided to make smarter and healthier decisions when it came to my meals. First, I have cut down on my por-

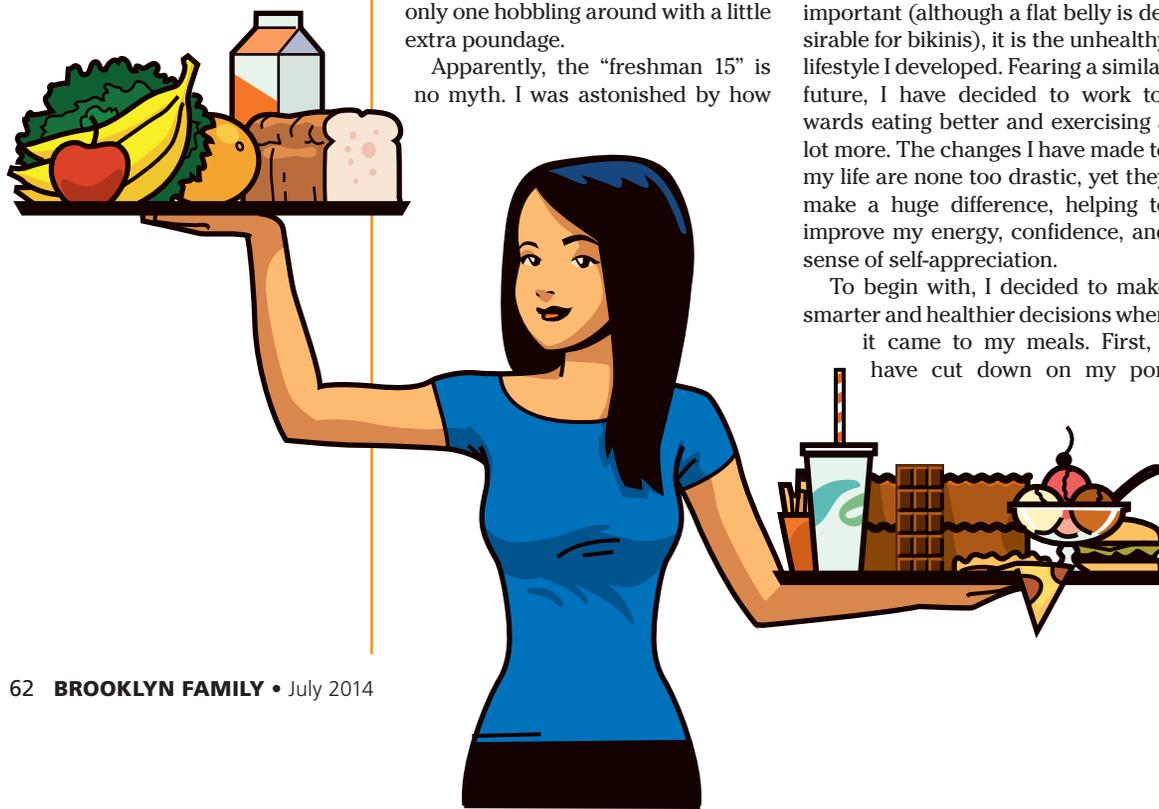
tions. I have a small stature, so my body does not need a full plate of food in order to function. Rather than stuffing myself like a Thanksgiving turkey, I now eat until I am satisfied. I also reduce snacking in between meals, which I often did at school out of boredom. Instead, I keep myself busy with activities so that I will not idly reach for a piece of candy or a bag of chips to fill the void.

I have also altered my diet to include more vegetables and fruit and less meat, recalling from my high-school health class that the human body actually does not need large portions of meat. This means trying to eat a few meat-less meals a week. I also have traded in salty and sugary snacks for healthier options, like yogurt, fresh fruit, and homemade smoothies. It is easy to find recipes for healthier meals which are simple to cook and delicious to eat on the Internet.

Another change is to exercising. I had to start off slowly with some light jogging and brisk walks, working on more rigorous exercise. The physical activity helps to boost my energy level and makes me feel refreshed when I am tired. I try to stay active whenever I can, even if that means hula hooping while watching television or walking to the grocery store instead of driving there. Working exercise into my schedule has helped me develop a routine. I realize how much I enjoy working out, and it is not too hard to motivate myself.

Transitioning to a healthier lifestyle was rewarding and, surprisingly, was not too difficult. My lifestyle is bound to change and grow as I do. For me, a healthy life is not so much about all the healthy fads and trends (i.e. juicing, cleanses, diets, etc.). It was more about making easy and small changes to how I live and make more health-conscience decisions. A healthy lifestyle is a general term, which means that you do not need to completely cut out certain foods or exercise like you are training for the Olympics. Strive for a balanced diet and a balanced life. It is so beneficial for the future. After all, a lifestyle is a habit and the earlier you start, the better.

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



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