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# Letter from the publisher

## Mid-summer musings

**T**alking about Back to School at the end of July is getting on my nerves. I'm not the only one. Our social media guru and columnist Danielle Sullivan and I had the same thought going.

It seems that we are pushing the marketing of things up further and further and the phrase itself is so worn out that we want to dispose of it and replace it with something else, but what? TV commercials and print ads are already overusing this tired expression.

The return to classes will mean summer's over and that a family's regular routine will resume. Vacations will be behind us and summer schedules and long days of light will



come to a close, as will the beaches. But not yet, and not now! We have weeks ahead of us of still lovely summer weather. Personally I love the beach!

There are great summer foods in the farmer's markets and food stalls with the first of the summer corn showing up in the last week or so. Peaches and nectarines have appeared and tomatoes too! Sunflowers are for sale and up in the loveliest places. To me they mean mid-summer.

New York is such a great place to be in the summer with many events taking place in every borough. Our calendars are full of wonderful things for every family to do wherever you live or want to play.

Signing up for our e-blasts and utilizing our website can help keep you in the loop about what's happening in every part of the city. Log onto [www.NYParenting.com](http://www.NYParenting.com) and sign up for the newsletter. Twice a week we will send you links to interesting articles and ideas for the weekend that will inspire you and your family. You'll also get a chance to win tickets and other prizes.

Speaking of winning, we are giving away a gorgeous Britax Affinity Stroller to some lucky family. Enter to win by clicking on the link [www.NYParenting.com/stroller](http://www.NYParenting.com/stroller) and make sure you fill out the form completely. That means also telling us why you would like to win it. Only city residents can enter, so don't tell your sister-in-law on the island or in Westchester. They are not eligible.

This issue has some great arti-

cles that we hope you enjoy. Allison Plitt has written an interesting piece on Smart Snack guidelines for the schools. Be sure to read it.

Whatever your plans are for the coming weeks, enjoy! If you're like me and you're hard at work except on the weekends, then make the most of those days. If the kids are away at camp or in a day camp nearby, they should be doing the same, relishing the summer time outdoors in all the ways that kids do.

Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,  
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# Kindergarten 101

Help your child score a smoother transition into school

BY CHRISTA MELNYK HINES

**F**or many parents, kindergarten signals an important transition from the all-consuming baby and toddler years. Suddenly, your “baby” is expected to make more choices on her own, stay focused over a longer period of time, learn new skills, and navigate a social circle with less oversight from you. Plan ahead to pave the road to a happier kindergarten transition for all with these tips:

**Visit the school.** Before school begins, attend school orientations and meet the teacher to help your child grow familiar with his new learning environment.

**Calm kindergarten jitters.** Build excitement and optimism for school. Shop together for a new backpack or lunchbox, school supplies, and new clothes.

“Even if parents are feeling nervous, they should do their best not to portray that to their child,” says Kathy Weller, a kindergarten teacher. “Be very upbeat about the upcoming new experience.”

**Recognize friendly faces.** Before school starts, arrange play dates with future classmates. A few familiar faces on the first day may help calm any nervous butterflies.

**Read together.** Reading to your child teaches valuable listening skills and creates an opportunity to help your child prepare for the kindergarten experience. Check out books like “The Night Before Kindergarten” by Natasha Wing and “Kindergarten Rocks” by Katie Davis.

**Tackle a few skills.** While knowing his colors, the ABCs, and how to count to 10 will give your child a head start, work on other skills like teaching him to tie his shoes and knowing his full name, phone number, and birthday.

**Plan transportation.** Avoid transportation snafus by sticking to a plan and keeping your child (and the teacher) informed. If your child will ride the bus and is nervous, listen and reassure her. Drive the route ahead of time. Also, seek out a “bus buddy” for your child, whether a responsible older neighbor child or another bus-riding classmate. On the first day of school, arrive early at the bus stop. Introduce yourself and your child to the driver. Assure your child that you (or whoever you’ve designated), will be waiting for her when the bus returns after school.

**Get good eats and sweet dreams.** Make sure your new kindergartener gets plenty of rest and eats healthy meals, which will help

him better manage the stress of the transition and stay focused during school. Wake up a little earlier to avoid a rushed first day.

**Team up with the teacher.** Share insights about your child’s strengths with the teacher to help her understand what motivates and interests your child.

“Parents should approach school with the idea that the teacher has their child’s best interest at heart,” says Dr. Holly Schiffrin, an associate professor of psychology at the University of Mary Washington, who specializes in child development and parenting practices. “The parent should convey that they are on the same team as the teacher (even if they have different ideas about how to assist their child).”

**Reflect on the day.** Having a hard time getting your child to discuss his day?

“Keeping a daily journal of their day (with mom’s help) is a fun way to get your kids to talk about school,” says kindergarten teacher Wendy Hughes. “Ask your child to tell you some funny or interesting things that may have happened that day.”

**Manage adversity.** Every child is bound to have a rough day. Encourage her to resolve her own problems and take responsibility for her actions.

“Ask your child for her input and perspective, genuinely listen, acknowledge and empathize, and then shift the focus towards reaching solutions as a family and in unison with your teachers and school,” says parent coach Tom Limbert, author of “Dad’s Playbook: Wisdom for Fathers from the Greatest Coaches of All Time.” “Focus on giving your child the tools, morals, and lessons she will need when not in your presence, which will now be more and more often.”

**Mark the occasion.** Celebrate your child’s first day of school with a special outing after school like a frozen yogurt, dinner out or a play date at her favorite park. Who knows? You may find that initial celebration turns into an annual first-day-of-school tradition for your family.

*Freelance journalist Christa Melnyk Hines is a family communication expert, wife, and mom. She and her two sons plan to celebrate the first day of school with a trip to the ice-cream counter.*





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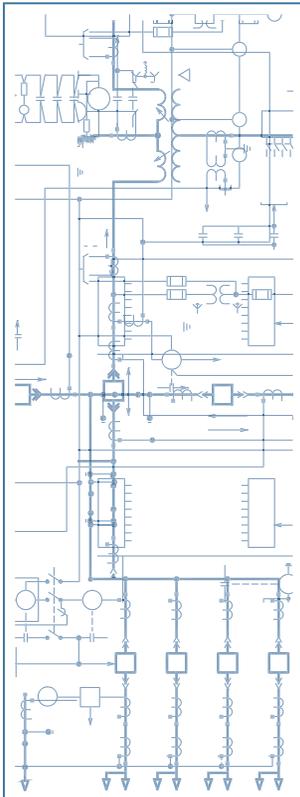
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# On Darwin and babies

Shouldn't we have evolved beyond tantrums?

BY TIM PERRINS

**H**ave you heard of the “terrible twos?” My daughter Hazel is a few months past her second birthday, and, personally, I think this time should be renamed the “beautiful twos.”

Ha! Just kidding — it's unbearable! One minute Hazel is saying “Daddy!” and spontaneously hugging my leg, but the next she's throwing herself on the floor and screaming “I don't want it!” because the piece of corn muffin I broke off for her is the wrong size. “I don't want the little one! I want a big one! Noooooo!”

Don't take this the wrong way. Most of the time I'm bowled over by how sweet she is, by how quickly she learns things, and how adorably she mangles the English language. Even her fits can be pretty funny. It's just that her sudden swings into tantrumland give me terrifying flashbacks to the days when she was an infant — to those nerve-piercing episodes when

tiny Hazel was screaming endlessly and I had to fight a heroic battle in my head to beat back the voice asking me, “Why are you doing any of this? You could be playing golf right now.” And I hate golf, so you can see how dire things must have been.

The other day, as Hazel was crying on the floor and I was reminiscing about those traumatic early days of parenting, I found myself wondering why infants take crying to such absurd lengths. I mean, from a Darwinian perspective, what good does it do to torture your parents by shrieking for hours on end? The conclusion I've come to is that Darwin didn't know what he was talking about.

I'm sorry, let me back up a bit: have you heard of this Darwin guy? Back in the “Olden Days” (that was the historical era before the internet and Starbucks)

a scientifically inclined fellow named Charles Darwin developed a theory called “Natural Selection,” which suggests that whichever variant of a plant or animal is best suited to its environs — due to its coloring, temperament, number of eyes or what-have-you — will have the best chance to thrive and further its species. Hence, an insect that happens to resemble a leaf or a twig will better survive in an environment full of carnivorous predators than will its cousin-insect that looks like a cheeseburger. That's why nowadays there are still plenty of green grasshoppers that blend into their leafy surroundings — but when was the last time you saw a beetle that looked like a Big Mac?

Sounds like this Darwin character was on to something, right? Well then, how do you explain human babies? At birth, little tiny humans are not equipped to handle much of anything. They can't walk like other newborn mammals. They have to rely on the adult humans for everything, so you'd think evolution would result in the flourishing of human babies who don't cry so incessantly that they cause their frazzled parents to seek relief by jumping off the nearest cliff. If this whole evolution thing has any merit, then shouldn't babies be much more well-adjusted by now?

Forget about “natural” selection for a minute. Throughout history, humanity itself has devised ways of selecting its own evolution. Take the ancient Spartans. They fancied themselves the toughest of human beings, and the auditions to become a new Spartan were pretty ruthless — any newborns who were sickly or feeble or otherwise

subpar were taken away and left on a mountainside to die. Now, the Spartans were ancient Greeks, who were supposed to be pretty enlightened. I hate to imagine what went on in the less-civilized parts of the world back then. It seems like this trait of excessive crying would've been “selected” out somewhere along the line, whether by natural means or otherwise.

So tell me, Mr. Darwin, how do you explain the fact that we're even still here, when *all* the babies of our species are clearly engineered to make their parents lose their minds? Shouldn't humans be extinct by now?

As a relatively new parent, I realize that I have a baby-centric perspective on just about everything, so maybe I need to take a broader view of this

“survival of the fittest” idea. Maybe it's not just babies who need to be tough. Maybe the

purpose of all that screaming is to weed out weak *parents*.

In my worst moments in those not-so-long-ago days as the parent of a newborn, there were times when the vicious cocktail of sleep deprivation and the endless wailing of an infant gave me the urge to seek out the nearest desolate mountainside. And yet, I didn't. Why? Well, it could be that evolution has made me just strong enough to handle that stuff.

Recently my wife and I took Hazel on a road trip to visit a goat farm. After driving for several hours on the highways and scenic country roads of upstate New York, we arrived and parked the car. Hazel, however, wanted nothing to do with the goats. As we approached the big red barn, she threw herself down onto the dusty gravel driveway, screaming: “I don't like it! I don't wanna go inna farm! Noooooo!” Fortunately, she loved playing on the tractor that was parked around back, so the trip wasn't a total waste.

Looking back on episodes like that, I can be happy that I have a willful and assertive child who will surely shape me into a strong and well-evolved parent. And for the record, those abandoned Spartan babies weren't always fated to a cruel demise. Reportedly, many of them were found and rescued by passing strangers — especially the ones who screamed the loudest.

*Tim Perrins is a part-time stay-at-home dad who lives with his wife and their highly selective toddler in Park Slope, Brooklyn. More of his thoughts about babies and other things that confuse him can be found at [www.RevoltOfTheImbeciles.blogspot.com](http://www.RevoltOfTheImbeciles.blogspot.com).*

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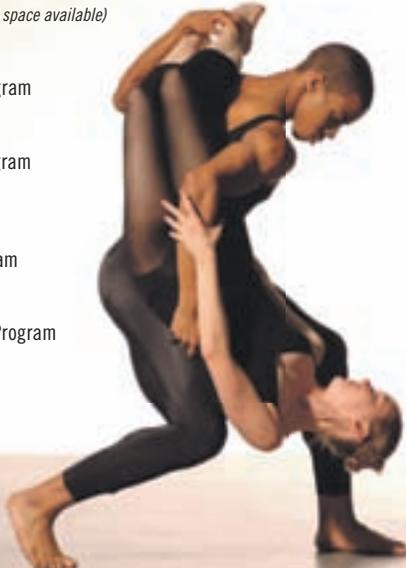
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# Wrap up summer reading with these local authors

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

As summer takes its last gasp, you might be looking for something with a little bit of a local flair, something to keep the kids occupied when the temperature rises. Why not check

out these books by local authors?

If your child loves animals, then “Chanterelle Finds a Family” by Nicole Brierre, illustrated by Ben Brierre and Sidney Hoang, might be a good choice. It’s the story of a puppy that doesn’t have a home, a family that doesn’t have a dog, and how they find one another.

For your family vacation — whether it’s away, abroad, or a stay-at-home affair — look for the “If You Were Me and Lived In...” series by Carole P. Roman. These books are specifically for kids who are curious about how others live, play, and work in various places around the world. If you’re headed away this year, check them out — one of them might be perfect for your little one’s trip!

For kids who need to learn safety, “Stranger Danger” by Helena Bobbie Ross is a

book to show them that there are good people in the world — and some that are not-so-good. This book is kid-friendly, aimed at children 2 years old and up: just the right age to learn things like this. They’ll also learn empathy and answers to their questions in “Jamie is Autistic” by J.L. Ramirez, a book for slightly older kids who want to learn about children with different needs. This book contains activities and some pretty big concepts so, though it appears to be a picture book for toddlers, it’s definitely not.

Children who love stories will want to read “Sofia’s Stoop Story, 18th Street, Brooklyn” by Maria LaPlaca Bohrer, artwork by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. It’s the story of stories: those we tell our families, those we love to hear, and those of our own that we cherish. With this book, the tale is half the appeal; be sure to look hard at the wonderful illustrations.

Happy reading, and have a great summer!

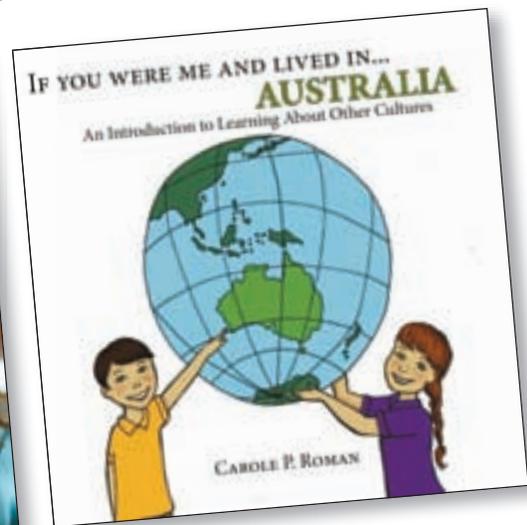
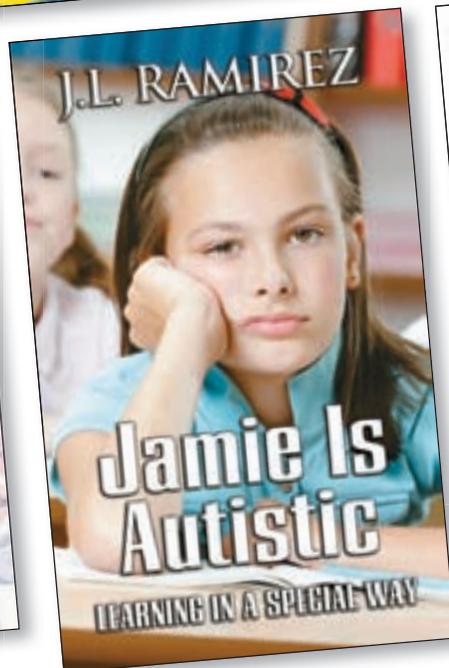
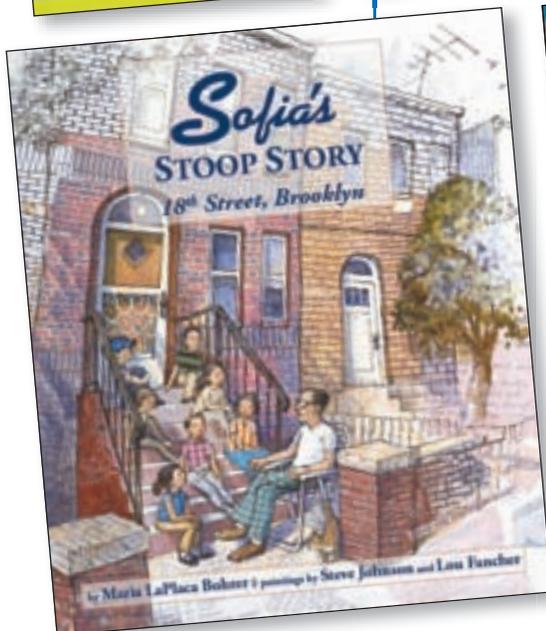
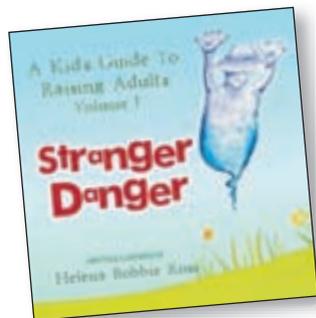
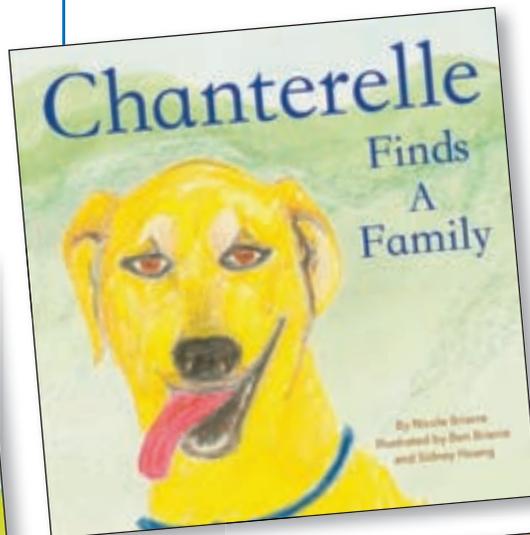
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Terri Schlichenmeyer has been reading since she was 3 years old, and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill with two dogs and 12,000 books.



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mother —  
and child

BY AMY GRIFFITH

**E**xercise during pregnancy is not only imperative to keep a mom-to-be fit and healthy, but it can also benefit the child's lifelong health. This is according to recent research from the University of Virginia School of Medicine, which determined that exercise during pregnancy has a distinct molecular consequence on the unborn child that essentially allows the child to be more fit. Other studies have shown that maintaining a healthy weight during pregnancy is tied to preventing childhood obesity, which has reached epidemic proportions in the U.S. Of course, prenatal fitness is also an imperative for the budding mom's own health with respect to both her physical and emotional well-being.

That said, while most understand that maintaining a pregnancy fitness regimen is beneficial, many women harbor erroneous fears and misconceptions about prenatal exercise or simply don't know the best way to go about integrating fitness into their daily lifestyles, both of which undermine and inhibit a pregnant woman's opportunity to optimize her health and fully enjoy the experience.

To help moms-to-be (with no applicable medical complications) gain expert-based knowledge and innate confidence relating to their fitness choices, below prenatal lifestyle expert, Amy Griffith, star of her own "Active Prenatal Yoga" Workout DVD, offers eight tips and truths to give di-

rection, debunk myths, and provide overall peace-of-mind to foster a fit, healthy and happy nine months:

- **Start now.** If a woman becomes pregnant and has not had a structured fitness routine beforehand, she can certainly start now — and should — since exercise develops muscle tone, can help prevent gestational diabetes, aids in digestion and can help regulate blood pressure. Just be sure to begin with some gentle forms of exercise. As the due date approaches, remaining active can also encourage the baby to move into proper position for birth. Even activity as simple as walking is hugely beneficial to a pregnant woman. She can even run, bike, dance, and strength train as long as it still feels safe for her body. Whatever modality of exercise she decides to engage in, it is always of utmost importance that she listen to her body and recognize individual limitations.

- **Exercise to release endorphins.** Exercise not only has countless physical benefits with keeping muscles toned, maintaining healthy body fat levels, and improving cardiovascular health among them, but it also releases endorphins that can help boost mood, improve self-esteem, reduce anxiety and depression, decrease stress, alleviate pain, and improve sleep. All of these can greatly enhance the lifestyle of a pregnant woman, helping her enjoy the overall experience.

- **Yes, "do abs."** Pregnant women still have them and will benefit from strengthening them in advance of

delivery. Exercising abs and the entire core group of muscles will help prevent back and posture problems caused by the growing stomach, will make pushing more effective pushing during labor, and will help the new mother recover quicker. For example, a pregnant mother in her second and third trimester will mainly be working her transverse abdominus, which wrap from front to back like a corset, and also the obliques. Keeping these muscles toned and active will help them to return to their pre-pregnancy state far sooner. Abdominal exercises during pregnancy can also reduce the risk of abdominal separation, which can lead to other physical ailments. Beforehand, be sure to research the safest types of abdominal exercise for the various trimesters and execute with proper form.

- **Try yoga:** Yoga is not just about gaining strength and flexibility, and finding calm in moments of stress; it also helps slow down our busy lives. Prenatal yoga is a very safe form of exercise. Executed with the use of props to support the pregnant woman as baby grows, the mother can maintain the standard yoga poses but in a modified way. Prenatal yoga also teaches the powerful connection of breath and movement, encouraging the woman to let go of tension trigger points in her body. All of these elements combine to cultivate a deeper understanding of how the woman's body moves, and what she can do to relax in an uncomfortable situ-



ation, both physically and mentally. Many of the elements of a prenatal yoga class can be utilized by the mother as she moves through labor and delivery, including poses to ease labor pains, breathing techniques, and meditation.

• **Cardiovascular exercise is a-ok.** The old theory of not allowing your heart rate to exceed 140 beats per minute is no longer supported by the medical community. There is about a 50 percent increase in blood flow when a woman is pregnant, so the heart works much harder to deliver all of these nutrients throughout the body and especially the placenta. While a pregnant woman who is exercising may tire out more quickly, there is no evidence that such exertion is harmful to her baby. The general rule of thumb is if a pregnant woman can continue to carry on a conversation while performing an exercise routine, then she is in a cardiovascular safe zone.

• **Set a fitness mantra.** A mantra is a positive intention — word or phrase that you come back to daily to “check in” and be reminded that everything is okay and on course. Setting a mantra will help you to trust your body, and accept the changes that are occurring

physically. It can help to quiet down the ego and encourage you to slow down and even accept the temporary fitness limitations. This is a key lesson to reiterate throughout pregnancy and can help to keep the pregnant woman safe while exercising. Some mantras are, “I accept,” “I trust,” and “I am strong.” These positive reminders carry throughout the pregnancy and the birth of the baby.

• **Massage to recover faster.** A carefully delivered massage from a prenatal massage specialist can alleviate pain in various parts of the body that can be caused by too much physical activity — exercise and otherwise. Massage stretches and loosens muscles that become tight as baby grows and the as the woman’s body changes. Massage will also benefit the pregnant woman as it relieves tension. A pregnant woman’s low back pain, headaches, sciatica, and swelling can all be eased by a trained massage therapist. When her body feels better, she is able to continue to keep herself healthy with regular exercise.

• **Meditate to de-stress.** Meditating can connect to a mantra you set or simply help to quiet down, clear your mind, calm your nervous system, and regulate your blood pressure. When employed in combination with a fitness regime, a pregnant woman can reap the rewards of both physical and emotional health. Pregnant women can quiet down fears and release them through the practice of meditation. When the mother lets go of fear, it opens her up to having a positive pregnancy and birth. Labor and delivery are certainly a physical experience, but many women say it is 90 percent mental. Allowing oneself to move inward and “step out of your own way” gives the body permission to do exactly what it knows how to do: birth baby! Meditation enables the mom-to-be to mentally surrender while exercise gives her physical strength and confidence.

*Nationally certified prenatal yoga instructor Amy Griffith is one of America’s leading prenatal fitness and lifestyle experts, providing free advice, including eBook and video content, to her army of followers and fans at [www.AmyGriffith-workout.com](http://www.AmyGriffith-workout.com). The above should not be construed as medical advice. Individuals should consult with their own physicians before starting any fitness or exercise regime.*

# Overdosing on vitamins

## Learn the risks to your child

BY ALEXA BIGWARFE

**I**would never have thought that I could make my child sick from giving them too many vitamins. However, the Environmental Working Group is warning parents that we may be harming our children by feeding them too many vitamins and minerals, particularly vitamin A, zinc, and niacin. These are commonly added to “fortified” cereals and other foods.

Vitamins and minerals were originally added to everyday foods to protect children’s health, but the Food and Drug Administration’s percentage of daily values shown on food nutrition labels are for adults and exceed maximum safe levels for

children. The group states that the agency’s guidelines on what food companies should show on the nutrition facts label — the percentage of daily values — are inadequate. Furthermore, those calculated on products made for children still show the values for adults, not children.

Does it really matter if children “overdose” on vitamins and minerals? The answer is yes. Too much vitamin A can result in short-term health problems, such as brittle nails and hair loss. In the long term, over consumption of vitamin A can lead to liver damage and skeletal abnormalities. If pregnant women consume too much vitamin A, it can cause developmental abnormalities in the fetus.



Too much zinc can result in anemia and can, impair immune function.

Excess niacin or vitamin B3 leads to rashes and skin reactions, nausea and toxicity in the liver.

Children are much more at risk of overdosing on vitamins than adults.

Where are the biggest sources of these excess vitamins? The Environmental Working Group’s report states: “Fortified breakfast cereals are the No. 1 source of added vitamin A, zinc, and niacin in children’s diets.” In 23 of the cereals with the highest added doses, just a single serving would exceed the daily safe level of a child age 8 or younger. Most of those cereals in the highest ranges are not marketed toward children, but there are also high levels in snack bars (consumed by children) as well.

To be safe, make sure you know about these vitamins and minerals, and limit your children’s intake of foods fortified with vitamin A, zinc, and niacin to only 20-25 percent of the adult daily value.

*Alexa Bigwarfe is the mother to three young children. She is a strong advocate for all things related to children’s safety and health issues.*

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# Prep list

Is your  
child ready  
for school?  
Are you?

BY JUDY M. MILLER

**A**nticipation builds as the new school year approaches. Every year, my kids become antsy as the stores fill up with new backpacks, fun and colorful accessories, and the latest in locker and school supplies. And even though I am not ready to begin the process of letting summer with my kids slip through my fingers, I grudgingly give in and get to work. The excitement of and preparation for a new school year can be stressful for the parents and their children.

So, what can parents do to make the transition smooth for themselves and their children? Especially for the child who is attending a traditional school for the first time or going to a new school? Here are some ideas to get everyone ready for school.

**Schedule a visit.** Meeting the teacher and walking through the building does a lot to ease the stress of change. If your child's schedule requires changing classrooms and the use of a locker, take her to school and encourage her to physically walk through her schedule and become familiar with her locker. Your child gains a sense of the familiar and you, when you think of your child during the day, can be calm knowing where your child is. (Make and keep a copy of her schedule.)

**Get the paperwork done.** Mark this task off your to-do list early. Doing so allows you the time to address anything that may have been overlooked, like a copy of your child's inoculations. Make and keep copies in case paperwork is misplaced. Keep a folder at home for each of your children with all required school paperwork, class list, phone numbers, class schedule, and any other important papers. If you need something, you'll know where it is. Last-minute worries and misplaced paper add to stress. You're working towards smooth, yes?

**Take your child shopping.** Going shopping for school supplies is our annual first step of getting ready for

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Gradually begin moving bedtimes and wake-up times back to school schedules. The excitement of the new school year, adjustment to class work and studying, and added expectations wears your child out.

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school, part of our tradition for transitioning from summer back to school. In the early part of August we wade through the aisles with shopping carts and our lists of required school supplies. Each of my four kids has a copy of their list and runs through the aisles, grabbing the items on their list and throwing the supplies into the carts. I check what is in the carts against my master list. I also adjust supplies, to account for the myriad of school projects that will be pop up throughout the school year, and the items that may not go the distance during the course of the school year (extra poster board, erasers, folders, plastic rulers, highlighters, dry-erase makers).

**Checkups!** If your insurance allows, consider scheduling checkups in early to mid-summer. Seeing the dentist and doctor earlier, especially when inoculations are required, disassociates them with the start of the school. Middle and high school sports physicals will need to be completed before your child begins practices for her fall sports.

**Connect or reconnect.** Consider a simple get-together or picnic with school friends and families you may not have seen over the summer. Reestablishing friendships and catching up does wonders for everyone. This is a great opportunity for new families to get acquainted as well. If you are the new family, ask for a mentor family who has a child of the same age as yours. The mentor family can “hold your hand” as you and your child transition into the new school environment, answering questions and helping you become familiar

with the system.

**Move the clock up.** Summer is time to replenish. To slow and let down. Even if you work, your child, whether she has been at camp or at home, has been sleeping in and staying up later. Gradually begin moving bedtimes and wake-up times back to school schedules. Changing the schedule early should help you get some added sleep since you aren't staying up as late either. Help the younger kids say good bye to the fireflies and flashlight tag, and assist your middle or high-schooler with a small scavenger hunt or barbecue with friends. The excitement of the new school year, adjustment to class work and studying, and added expectations wears your child out.

**Go over expectations.** Sit down with your children and go over what you and your child's school expects of them. Some schools require signed agreements from the student that holds them responsible for their actions, like cheating, turning work in on time, responsibility, and treatment of other students. If these are required by your child's school, make sure you discuss the agreement and that your child understands what she is signing. If you or your child feels anything needs clarification, get it and keep a copy of the signed agreement.

**Organize and mark everything.** When you are shopping for school supplies with your child, get yourself some new supplies, too. I always get myself a new supply of sticky notes, permanent markers, highlighters, paint pens, and notebooks. I purchase storage bins if they are needed. Extra supplies go into the bins and are used by my kids as needed throughout the school year. My personal supplies go into the desk drawer, necessary for marking clothing, new backpacks and school supplies. Permanent markers won't work on every surface, so paint pens come in handy (and they come in white).

Moving through the steps of preparing your child to return to school allows you and your child to become ready for school. If you find you aren't there when the bus picks her up that first morning, remember, you'll see her sweet face across the dinner table later.

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

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# Snacking smarter at school

BY ALLISON PLITT

**T**here is a revolution going on in our country's schools this year and it's not about the Common Core Standards. It's about ensuring that all food sold in schools (outside of the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program) adhere to the United States Department of Agriculture's Smart Snacks nutritional standards, in which schools must have transitioned to complete compliance by July 1.

To better understand the evolution of the Smart Snacks guidelines, it is important that parents and caretakers revert back to 1979, when the Department passed competitive food rules for the first time. Regulations limited sales of food with less than five percent of the recommended dietary allowances per serving for eight key nutrients. These products included soft drinks, chewing gum, and other sugar-based foods. These

items could not be sold in food-service areas during mealtimes but could be sold anywhere else in a school at any time.

President Obama signed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which required the Department for the first time in more than 30 years to establish national nutritional standards for all foods sold and served at schools any time during the day. This law exempts fundraisers from its compliance as long as they are approved by the school and are infrequent.

Three years later the Department proposed new competitive food rules and opened them for public feedback for 60 days. After public comment and revision, it published a revamp of school snack standards called "Smart Snacks in School" in June 2013 and informed all participating schools that they had 14 months in which to comply. The rules are in effect only during the school day and 30 minutes thereafter.

"I want us to imagine a new world. A world where healthy food is actually more convenient than junk food."

Helping United Mankind and Nutrition Healthy Vending Machines is one of the new merchants selling healthy food and beverages in schools across the nation. The company also published a "Smart Snacks In School Guide," which contains a summary of food and beverage rules as well as nutrient standards.

Any competitive snack food sold must be a fruit, vegetable, dairy product, protein-rich food (meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds), whole-grain rich food (first ingredient is a whole grain or product is 50 percent whole grains), or a combo food that has at least a quarter cup fruit or vegetable. All the competitive foods have nutrient limits in calories, sugar, sodium, and fat.

Competitive snack beverages are sold in limited portions and have limited calories. They include water, carbonated water, unflavored low-fat milk, flavored or unflavored fat-free milk and soy alternatives, 100-percent fruit or vegetable juice, and diet sodas. Caffeinated drinks can only be sold in high schools.

Sean Kelly, chief executive officer of Helping Unite Mankind and Nutrition Healthy Vending Machines, explains, "Kids consume up to 60 percent of their total calories from school and up to 40 percent of their caloric consumption comes from junk food. To exacerbate this problem, the nutritional education that we provide our kids in our society is negligible at best."

Some schools have already started selling healthful snacks at lunchtime either on the menu or from vending programs. As a result, these schools have already seen their students boost their overall daily consumption of fruit by 26 percent, vegetables by 14 percent, and whole grains by 30 percent. They also ate more fiber, calcium, and vitamins A and C.

Kelly believes there is a correlation between the declining aca-

demical performance of the United States' students (ranked 17th among 50 other countries according to a study done by the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2012) and an increase in the processed food industry in our country.

"This isn't just about obesity and malnutrition," Kelley remarked. "It's also about the state of education in America. Maybe the reason our kids can't learn what we want them to learn is because they can't focus or retain information because they're falling asleep in class and they continually experience blood sugar-induced erratic energy swings as a result of poor nutrition."

According to Kelly, when people talk about the solving the obesity epidemic, they talk about educating people more about nutrition, getting people to eat less harmful food and more healthy food, and having people exercise more.

Kelly, who was a personal trainer while in college, does believe in those solutions, but he also adds one more component to the mix — easy and convenient access to healthy foods.

"The reality of the world we live in today is that it is very, very difficult to be healthy, but for a second, I want us to imagine a new world. A world where healthy food is actually more convenient than junk food. Where it's easy to access nutrition and nutrition is everywhere. Where convenience stores and vending machines and micro-markets bring nutrition directly to people rather than asking people to get educated about it and go and find it on their own," Kelly says.

He continues, "Where it's incredibly difficult to find and, therefore, eat those foods that are harmful to you, so you do so sparingly as was the original intention. Where everywhere you turn there are fresh foods, energy-sustaining health snacks, foods from the earth, healthy drinks, fruits and vegetables. In this world, it's almost impossible to consistently eat harmfully and, as a result, the problems related to obesity, malnutrition, even education, began to fade away. Access, therefore, is the answer."

To find out more about Smart Snacks in School, visit [www.smartsnacksinschool.com](http://www.smartsnacksinschool.com).

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



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*Continued on page 22*

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*Continued from page 20*

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*Continued on page 24*

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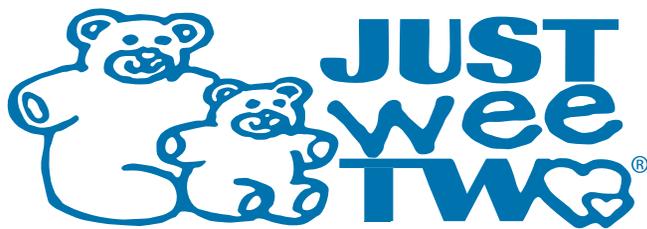
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## Education

### DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 22*

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With a small class size, a teacher and an assistant, this unique learning environment offers its students a safe and caring atmosphere. Please call 718-748-9023 or visit <http://ledsny.org> to find out more about this unique school that combines tradition values with a modern world.

#### Little Sun People, Inc.

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

Is a unique community childcare service founded in 1980 by Fela Barclift, an African American

mother of four and lifetime resident of 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.

#### Midwood Montessori

2825 Bedford Avenue at Glenwood Road  
718-253-3242 or [www.midwoodmontessori.com](http://www.midwoodmontessori.com)

We are situated in a charming Tudor "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.

#### Noah's Ark

**Preparatory School**  
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*Continued on page 26*

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# Education

## DIRECTORY

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Noah's Ark Preparatory School is a Universal Pre-Kindergarten site with free extended hours. UPK hours are 8am - 2:30pm and Extended hours are 7AM - 7PM

We provide three free nutritious meals.

We at Noah's Ark strive to create a warm and nurturing learning environment which invites the fullest expression of each child gifts. Envisioning education as a lifelong process, we endeavor to develop in our students those skills, abilities, values, and attitudes which will enable them to unite with others to promote a peaceful world community.

Our motto is "Learning while having fun" which extends to all areas in the classroom. Each classroom has several distinct learning centers where students are invited to explore, learn and have fun. Call us at 718-355-9660 for a tour of our facility

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**PAL Schwartz, 452  
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**718-342-4725 or [www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org)**

Offers full day sessions. Some sites have Universal Pre-K programs as well as inclusion classes. Hot meals are provided. PAL Headstart is a leader in early literacy; children learn all subject areas in a nurturing environment. PAL not only educates children, but provides a wide array of parent workshops. Special programs in the arts and sciences include field trips. All programs are free. Contact Asneth Council, Director.

### **Parkway School**

**5566 Kings Highway  
718-346-0369 or [www.parkwayschool.org](http://www.parkwayschool.org)**

Parkway School is a private not for profit institution that is dedicated to academic excellence. Educating students from pre-kindergarten through eight grade. Learning is the epicenter of activities at Parkway. Our students engage in stimulating curriculum, which encourages intellectual curiosity and critical thinking. By giving our students the ability to critically and objectivity analyze, we can be confident that they will seek to change what they conclude needs changing and to defend and strengthen that which is worth preserving.

Academics and critical thinking skills are not the only lessons learn at Parkway. Parkway school has an excellent after school program in our Custodial Care which runs from 3-6 p.m., the children are supervised until they are picked up. Generally, they do their homework or play educational games with other children. In our tutorial program which runs from 3:15 – 4:15 p.m. children are tutored in specific subject areas depending on their individual needs. Children do not have to be enrolled at Parkway School to participate in programs. Children may be enrolled in a combined Custodial and Tutorial Program.

### **Rivendell School**

**277 3RD Avenue; Bet Carroll &  
President Street  
718-499-5667, ext. 14 or [www.rivendellnyc.org](http://www.rivendellnyc.org)**

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

*Continued on page 28*



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usheadstart1@aol.com or usdaycare1@aol.com



# Digital Private School Guide



Check it out on [nyparenting.com](http://nyparenting.com)

## Education

### DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 26*

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.

#### **Sacred Heart Catholic Academy**

**115-50 221st Street Cambria Heights NY  
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Our school is Middle States accredited and we offer a challenging and demanding academic program designed to prepare students for high school. Our educational policy calls for the participation of teachers, priests, and parents in the formation and evaluation of curriculum guidelines in conjunction with State and Diocesan mandates. We feature SMART Boards in the classrooms, a fully equipped Computer Lab, Library, Science Lab, Spanish for Grades 3-8, French enrichment for Grades 5-8, Art, and Physical Education in our indoor gym and outdoor play area. We recognize that students enter Sacred Heart in different grades and at different levels, and our school is very successful at helping them reach their academic goals. We're committed to teaching to individual child and give students the resources they need to excel, including Title I services, ESL Math and Reading, Remedial Reading/Math Teacher, and a Guidance Counselor.

#### **Stepping Stones Nursery School**

**245 86th Street  
718-630-1000 or [www.stepsstones86.com](http://www.stepsstones86.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.

#### **Steps to Success**

**11 New Lots Avenue  
718-345-3555 or [www.stepsstosuccesspreschool.com](http://www.stepsstosuccesspreschool.com)**

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, discovery, blocks, table toys, art and sand and water. Our role here is to create an environment that invites children to be active, make choices, observe and experiment.

#### **St. John's Family Day Care**

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718-771-7720**

St. John's Family Day Care believes in providing a safe and nurturing environment where every child becomes a part of a caring community of learners. Our qualified and dedicated staff support children as they learn naturally at their own pace, find and develop their own interests and receives the individual attention needed to thrive. Our curriculum advantages include activities that enhance and enrich children socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively, and aesthetically with diverse activities. Children enjoy art, music, math, science, literature, computers,

*Continued on page 30*



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## Education

### DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 28*

physical activities and community resources such as parks, museums, and libraries. The children are also exploring and discovering the wonders of nature in our community garden. We believe that children need the gift of time and opportunity to explore and experience success.

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1091 Sutter Avenue/1152 Elton Street

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#### Windmill Montessori School

1317 Avenue T

718-375-7973 or 718-

375-4277 or [www.](http://www.windmillmontessorischool.org)

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# Rosie Pope

## Room for romance

A consummate multitasker offers tips for keeping the spark alive

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

**S**ummertime and the livin' is easy? Well, not so much, especially after those long, hot, stressful workdays that inevitably turn into even longer, more hectic evenings at home. Now that the kiddies seem to be underfoot 24 hours, seven days a week, that hint of romance on a balmy summer night may easily go unnoticed.

When you and your partner are in the mood for love, but your little darlings won't go beddie-bye, how do you keep that spark alive?

Rosie Pope has some great tips. Along with mastering the art of looking fabulous and sexy in her stylish high heels — while pregnant — the popular parenting diva, and star of Bravo's hit show, "Pregnant in Heels" (where she's a maternity concierge), has also mastered the art of keeping things fun and romantic with hubby Daron, despite the daily chaos of family life.

Married 10-plus years, Rosie and her husband are facing the challenges of raising four adorable, active kids, (ranging in age from 7 years to only 4 months), while juggling full-time careers. The couple has lived in New York and the surrounding area since meeting in an elevator one day, and falling in love. It was an urban romance.

"Juggling my dual life as business owner and a mother of four is not something that I've mastered with total elegance," she says. "While it may at times look like that from the outside — thanks to a great blow out and some snazzy wedges — the inside is a hurricane of emotion! Like so many other mothers in America, I was not able to take the maternity leave that I would have liked. After all, I run my own business, so stopping work for months at a time really wasn't an option."

While maintaining her whole-

some image, the dotting mom has skillfully managed to channel her inner temptress (much to her hubby's delight), and reminds harried New York parents to work on keeping that spark alive — no matter what!

According to Rosie, it's all about that all-important date night — even when mom's exhausted and not really in the mood.

"Every night can be Friday! Don't wait till the weekend to have a special date — if the opportunity presents itself, seize the moment!"

Here, she offers NY Parenting's moms and dads her insights as a parent, so they can better balance motherhood (and fatherhood) with intimacy, and discusses how you and your better half can find time for amoré (every night!).

Rosie reveals her secrets to a healthy and lasting relationship and marriage:

**Communication:** Communicate — even when it's hard (and quite often, frustrating).

**Empathy:** Don't forget to think of things from your partner's perspective. (It's tricky, especially when he or she is annoying the heck out of you. But it's do-able and works wonders to foster a loving atmosphere).

**Work on intimacy!** It is unequivocally a very important part of your relationship, and it's kind of like going to the gym: you may not like feel like it, but you are always glad you did it!

**Feel good about yourself:** Do what you need to look and feel confident. Remember —





How does Rosie find time for date nights and late-night shenanigans with four demanding kids, her maternity shops, and a line of baby clothing she designs?

confidence is attractive!

**Tell your love story:** Everyone has one, so regularly remind yourselves of that moment you fell in love. Those feelings live on inside of you and you need to revisit them often.

So, how does Rosie find time for date nights and late-night shenanigans with four demanding kids, her maternity shops, and a line of baby clothing she designs? Well, it ain't easy, but she truly believes the trick is to "seize that moment!"

"Any night can be a date night once the kids are in bed," she says. "We are strict about their bedtimes, so we have time with each other most evenings. My husband is a fantastic cook, so we don't need to go out. I pour the bubbly, make the play list, and he

grills the fish.

"We work together, so we actually get to spend a lot of time together. It's less about the need for us to go out to special places and more about finding those key points everyday — to check in with each other on a personal level, rather than on a parenting or business subject."

She admits they're very lucky to have help at home, and grandparents that really help out a lot.

And what's Rosie's advice for single parents dating and bringing someone new into the family?

"Be honest with your children. My parents separated when I was very young and I think some of the difficulty I had growing up was being kept in the dark about relationships. And so when I learned of them, they were very serious, and it seemed so out of left field to me and made it hard for me to adjust or accept this new person. Kids can handle a lot when you are honest with them."

So, on those balmy nights when a hint of romance is in the air, she reminds couples to "keep it fun and often!" You can fill in the blanks.

*Rosie Pope stores: [55 Warren St. between W. Broadway and Church Street in Tribeca, (212) 213-3393, www.rosiepoppe.com] and [1265 Madison Ave. between E. 90th and E. 91st streets on the Upper East Side, (212) 608-2036].*

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## LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

# Teens and politics

**M**ost teens are quite savvy with their cell phones, checking out the latest posts on Instagram, sending Snapchats, texting at lightning speed, or using GPS to find a friend's house. They are completely in tune with the latest apps and online trends, tapping into the most obscure social networking sites before the rest of the population catches on.

Could you imagine a world where teens cared more about their state senator's position on education reform than their friend's Instagram collage? In the 1960s, millions of young people across America became involved in politics due to their opposition to the Vietnam War. Since then, teens don't seem to be as universally involved in politics.

How can parents and educators encourage teens to become involved and passionate about the political and economic issues affecting our country?

### The youth demographic and voting statistics

Most experts agree that a knowledge of civic responsibility, U.S. political history, as well as registering to vote as soon as one turns 18 all contribute to a lifelong interest in government and politics. However, the youth vote and youth registration rates still lag far behind other age groups. According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University, 45 percent of registered youth aged 18 to 29 voted in the 2012 presidential election, while all other age groups voted at turnout rates of 60 percent and higher. In New York, the youth turnout vote was 42.4 percent as compared to 63.4 percent of registered voters above 30 years of age ([www.civicyouth.org](http://www.civicyouth.org)).

According to [Campusvoteproject.org](http://Campusvoteproject.org), "Despite widespread reports of overwhelming youth engagement in the 2008 election, young voters only made up about 19 percent of the electorate."

### What keeps young people from the polls?

"Young people don't vote right away because they don't see the im-



portance," explains Mary Ellen Balchunis, assistant professor of political science at La Salle University in Philadelphia. "Once they get their first paycheck, see the taxes taken out, have car payments, and pay health insurance premiums, they begin to realize that it is important who is in government."

Mary A. Evins, campus coordinator of the American Democracy Project and associate professor of history at Middle Tennessee State University, points out, "Some 18 year olds express that they aren't ready to vote yet, and some see voting as a chore and an inconvenience."

### What educators can do

"As a college professor, I know how to get young people involved in politics," says Balchunis. She reports that having discussions about issues that directly affect teens is key, such as staying on their parents' health insurance or lowering interest rates on student loans. Balchunis regularly invites political figures to visit her classroom. As a candidate for U.S. Congress, Balchunis has also worked with teens on the campaign trail and understands that teens will want to get involved if they can do something they are good at.

My daughter's U.S. government teacher helped her students get registered to vote. She passed out registration forms and hand-delivered them to the county board of elections office. Many of these students were then eligible to vote for the school budget in May.

### What parents can do

Young people should develop an interest in government and politics well before the age of 18. I used to take my kids to the polls with me at a young age so they could experience the democratic process first-hand. They watched their father and I vote in all types of elections — school, local, and national. Evins instructs parents to have frequent, thoughtful dialogues about community, state, national, and global issues. She also advocates visiting sites of local, state, and national governance.

"Parents who include civics education as part of regular family activities will help children grow naturally into understanding what their responsibilities are as good citizens," she adds.

Balchunis recommends, "Share the newspaper with them and watch the news with them."

### Tips and tales

Please share these tips from our past presidents with your teens (provided by: <http://www.cleanslatenow.org>):

- "Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost." — John Quincy Adams, sixth U.S. president.

- "The future of this republic is in the hands of the American voter." — Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th U.S. president

- "To vote is like the payment of a debt, a duty never to be neglected, if its performance is possible." Rutherford B. Hayes, 19th U.S. president.

### Share your ideas

Upcoming topic: How does a parent cope with an empty nest once their children are off to college or work?

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

# Informative books that aren't boring

If your child knows he had an awesome summer and would like a little more time to enjoy, then read “Why Spacemen Can’t Burp” by Mitchell Symons and “Poo! What Is That Smell?” by Glenn Murphy, illustrated by Lorna Murphy, and he’ll know things he can share when he gets back to class.

In “Poo! What Is That Smell?” you’ll learn why the little things you do each and every day are incredible!

Use your eyes to read this book and learn that eyes first evolved more than 525 million years ago. Read why animals see differently than you do. Learn that “hearing is really just a sense of touch that works at a distance” and that snakes have ears! You’ll see how your tastebuds are linked to your nose, why some things smell horrible, why animals eat disgusting stuff, why you can feel different

surfaces with different parts of your body, and how you’re wrong if you think you have only four basic tastes.

Speaking of senses, have you ever noticed why the first sniff of something is more powerful than the second sniff? Or why triangular-cut sandwiches taste better than half-cut ones? The answers to those difficult questions — and more — are inside “Why Spacemen Can’t Burp.”

In this book, you’ll learn when it’s acceptable to say the word “ain’t.” You’ll find out why you rubbed your knee last time you bumped it hard.

You’ll learn which are the most difficult letters for a ventriloquist to learn, why killer whales have such a bad reputation, how long laughter has been around, why Mom could be right if she thinks you were raised by wolves, why your little fingers are “pinkies,” and what you can do much better than any adult you know.

You want your child to be up-to-speed when school starts soon. You want him to keep reading between semesters, too, but nobody said it had to be boring — two good reasons to find “Why Spacemen Can’t Burp” and “Poo! What Is That Smell?”

With quick paragraphs enhanced by cute illustrations and humorously presented paragraphs, these two books speak to the hearts of young readers who don’t necessarily want the involvement of

narrative chapters.

No, these trivia-type books are the kind that kids can pick up and put down at will. They’re out-of-order browse-able, contain something that will interest just about any child, and the price is right on both.

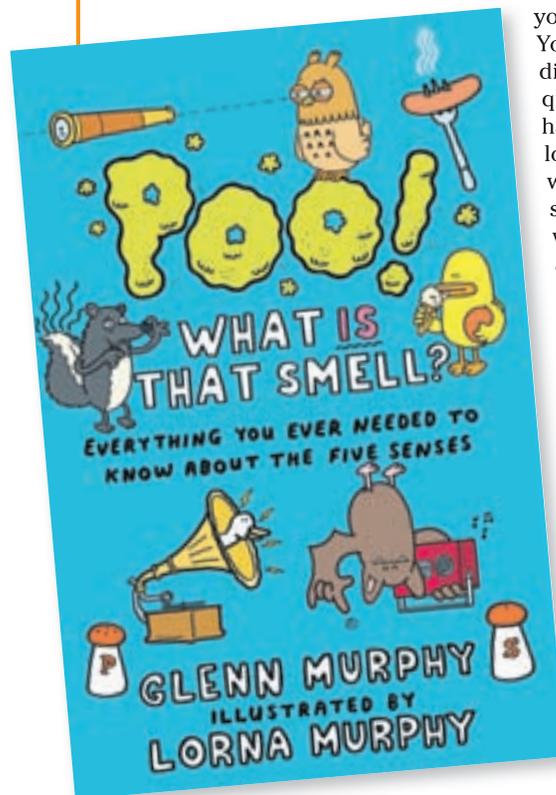
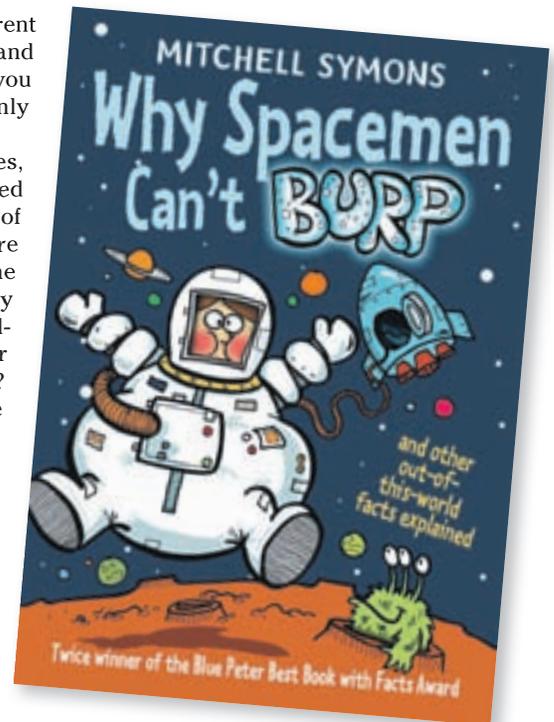
What’s not to like?

Be aware that there are Britishisms in the Symons book and bigger words in both, which makes them challenging for 7- to 8-year-olds, but still enjoyable for 9- to 12-year-olds. And if that sounds good, then “Poo! What Is That Smell?” and “Why Spacemen Can’t Burp” are books you know you need.

“Why Spacemen Can’t Burp,” by Mitchell Symons [272 pages, 2013, \$9.99].

“Poo! What Is That Smell?” by Glenn Murphy [158 pages, 2013, \$8.99].

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





## HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN



# Preventing dog bites

**T**hey call August the dog days of summer for a reason. Besides the unrelenting heat and humidity, by the time the summer draws to a close, most of us are tired of feeling hot and sticky, and the same goes for our dogs. In addition to the pool and the beach, summertime can also be the time for dog bites. The hot weather combined with active get-togethers creates the ideal combination for accidents waiting to happen in the form of pooch nips.

Naturally, children are more prone to being bitten by dogs, largely because due to age or ignorance, not all of them know the proper way to behave around dogs.

Below are 10 tips you and your children must know about approaching and playing with dogs, especially in the summertime.

- **Dogs get overheated and cranky, just like us.** Sometimes they need to not be around people. Pet owners can do them a favor and keep them away from people during family get-

togethers and barbecues.

- **Supervision, supervision, supervision!** Kids, particularly younger children, need to be watched when playing with dogs. Babies and toddlers don't always know that a dog is not a toy.

- **Never approach unfamiliar dogs.** One can never tell if a dog is friendly or not, so children should learn from an early age not to approach a dog they do not know.

- **Monitor hugs and cuddles.** A child may look like he is trying to show his love for a dog, but the pooch may interpret that affection as harmful and protect himself.

- **Do not go after a dog that does not want to be around you.** If the dog retreats to her bed, let her be. Teach your children to let the dog have some peace.

- **Never hit, kick, punch, or tease a dog.** From babyhood, children need to be taught how to treat a dog. It is anything but fun for canines, and that behavior will surely

provoke even the kindest of dogs to lash out.

- **Do not approach a sleeping dog.** It's best for children to let sleeping dogs lie, in this case.

- **Never blow in the face of a dog or stare at him very close up.** This behavior may provoke them, and you don't want to chance that.

- **Do not take a dog's food or treats away.** Children should never take treats away, as this could cause the dog to become aggressive.

- **Give them some (quiet, cool) space.** Sometimes, the absolute best thing a pet owner can do is place her dog in an air-conditioned room by himself during parties. This especially applies to senior dogs that cannot handle the noise and chaos.

*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.*



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# Travel writing teens

Kids get more  
out of a trip  
when they  
document it

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

**W**eekends away, school breaks or summer excursions abroad — traveling with kids takes planning.

The Family Travel Forum is a website that offers tips and first-hand examples of travel with children written by parents and kids.

The site encourages families to think ahead — like reviewing maps in weeks leading up to the trip.

By planning ahead to discover the sites and events that the destination has to offer, families can engage their older children in the research and encourage them to select some of the families' excursions. This is one of the great tips on the Family Travel Forum website.

Some other tips include con-

firming — in advance — the travel budget, the distance you're willing to travel, and the mode of transportation that will be used. On the



Scenes from teen travels: (Above) A friendship blossoms in Uganda. (Left) The teen author bonds with her host father in China.

day of your departure, be sure to pack plenty of snacks and quiet activities in a small bag or carry-on luggage to keep the children entertained during the travel to your destination.

Another great idea encouraged by the Family Travel Forum is to have children write and document their travel experiences in a journal or via a blog.

These activities will promote literacy and other artistic skills (i.e., photography, drawing, etc.), which will not only

help with your child's development and growth, but could also earn them scholarship money for their education or future travel.

## About the contest

Now in its eighth year, Family Travel Forum's merit-based contest is open to students ages 13 to 18 who are enrolled in junior high or high school or being home-schooled. Candidates submit a 600-word essay on any trip they have taken in the past five years

along with a photo or video. Family Travel Forum rewards the best posts with scholarship grants or travel prizes.

The top three essays are rewarded with cash (with first place receiving \$1,000; second place \$500; and third place \$250) and

25 honorable-mention winners receive travel gifts. Additionally, there is a prize for Best Video. These prizes are given by Family Travel Forum, along with the Society of American Travel Writers, our partner in this program.

This year, Family Travel Forum is offering two additional scholarships and more prize money

with its new sponsors I Love New York and the New York Travel Writers Association, increasing teen travel writers' chances to win.

Visit [http://myfamilytravels.com/Teen\\_travel\\_writing](http://myfamilytravels.com/Teen_travel_writing) to review the rules, requirements and prizes, and to find a link to the Scholarship Submission Form.

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“Documenting travel experiences contributes to overall literacy, and that as kids and teens enjoy sharing their experiences, this is both a fun and educational activity.”

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Family Travel Forum, the Society of Travel Writers, the New York Travel Writers Association and New York State’s Tourism Board (through the effective “I LOVE NEW YORK” travel campaign) have partnered for the past eight years to award grants and travel gifts to teen writers and bloggers ages 13 to 18. Thus, by encouraging your budding travel writer or photojournalist during your next family trip, it is possible that they could fund their own excursions in the future.

To get more information about the scholarship, Family Travel Forum, and traveling with children, I interviewed Fran Falkin, an editor for the website:

**Shnieka Johnson:** Why is it important to encourage kids and teens to document and write about travel experiences?

**Fran Falkin:** At Family Travel Forum we feel that documenting travel experiences contributes to overall literacy, and that as kids and teens enjoy sharing their experiences, this is both a fun and educational activity.

**SJ:** Is there a way to introduce writing and documentation at a younger age?

**FF:** Absolutely. Little ones can draw pictures in a travel journal and also dictate some words for a parent or older sibling to add, or they can make a collage of images from travel brochures or pictures printed from the internet.

**SJ:** Can this be done for trips both big and small? Even in “stay-cations?”

**FF:** Sure. It’s great for kids to connect with their own backyard. Last year’s scholarship topic asked teens to write about

why people should visit their hometowns, and we received a lot of great pieces.

**SJ:** What do you suggest to parents that want their kids and teens to write more?

**FF:** Kids really model their parents’ behavior, even when you think they’re ignoring you! Start your own family journal and give every child their own space to write on pages that you begin. You can start by noting that day’s activities, or your itinerary and hotel name if you’re on vacation. If kids only want to paste in their cut-out pictures, add postcards, ticket stubs, or other travel souvenirs, encourage them to add a caption explaining why that item is important to them. Soon you’ll have a big scrapbook that everyone will enjoy looking at. If your family is more comfortable typing, start an online blog together using a free service like <http://blogger.com>

**SJ:** Does technology play an important role? Or is a travel journal a sufficient start for young writers?

**FF:** Technology plays an important role in everything today. Teens love to tweet and share their pictures on Instagram, where they can write long captions. But, for story writing, the “travel journal” can be the old-fashioned bound notebook, or a tablet computer — whatever works for your teen.

**SJ:** Is there a larger number of teen travel writers and bloggers?

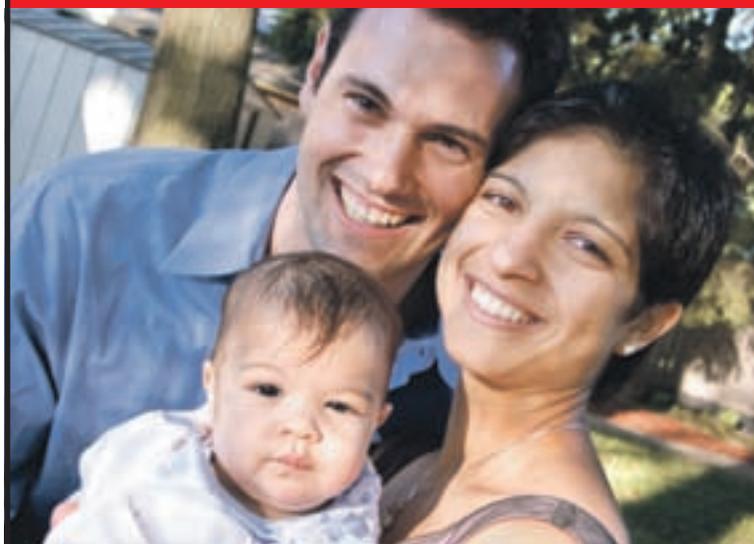
**FF:** Each year we receive several thousand applicants signing up for the scholarship from all 50 states, and most of them have never blogged before.

**SJ:** Tell me about the scholarship that you offer annually, how did it come to fruition?

**FF:** Family Travel Forum always encouraged kids to write about their family trips and at one time had a separate website called [kidtravels.com](http://kidtravels.com). In 2007, we realized that kids, especially teens, would be more likely to participate if there was a chance to win a prize, and so the Family Travel Forum Teen Travel Writing Scholarship was born.

*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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ESQ.

# Affording home care

*My parents are in their early 80s and my father was just diagnosed with Alzheimer's. My mom is afraid that she will not have enough money to pay for his long-term care, but that she has too much money to qualify for government benefits. What should we do at this point?*

**“A**ging in place” is the generally preferred course of action for our parents’ generation, meaning that they would rather remain in their home as they age. Many people are concerned that they will not have assets sufficient to pay for their care either in their home or a facility. There are options available to New York State residents that can help defray the cost of care, and allow the elderly to obtain assistance without emptying their or their children’s pocketbooks.

Medicaid (not to be confused with Medicare, which provides health-insurance and prescription drugs for the elderly) is a joint federal and state program that is becoming increasingly relied upon as the long-term care solution for the middle class. Contrary to common belief, being on Medicaid does not mean that you receive substandard care. The Med-

icaid program is simply a source of payment for those who qualify for it.

The Medicaid program is “means based,” meaning that you cannot have assets in excess of a certain amount to qualify. The asset threshold changes each year, and is \$14,550 for an individual for 2014.

### **Assets do not disqualify you from Medicaid home care**

Many people believe that they are disqualified from Medicaid Home Care because they are over the maximum \$14,550 Medicaid asset allowance. This is a misconception. First, an applicant’s home is an “exempt resource” and does not count toward the maximum. Second, certain transfers can be made in anticipation of Medicaid, which would not necessarily disqualify an applicant from Medicaid Home Care Services. People commonly cite the “five-year look-back,” but do not know that the look back applies only to nursing home care and not home care in New York State. Many are also unaware that retirement accounts are exempt and do not count toward the threshold.

There are various ways of transferring assets in order to qualify for Medicaid. This is often necessary where a parent is “house rich,” but cash poor, and wants to avoid selling their house in order to obtain care. The methods are too many and too complex to list here, but these transfers can be accomplished and, in many cases, can yield a favorable result to help keep a parent in his home while providing him with care. You should always consult with an attorney before transferring your assets.

### **Income does not disqualify you from receiving Medicaid home care**

There is an income limitation on Medicaid applicants. The income limitation for a single applicant for 2014 is \$809 to \$829. Many people are under the false assumption that their

income is too high to allow them to qualify for Medicaid. Wrong again!

In New York State, eligible applicants can employ what is called a “Not-for-Profit Pooled Trust.” The Pooled Trust operates similarly to a “flex account” that you might have through your employer at work to pay for qualified medical expenses. With a Pooled Trust, your income in excess of the threshold gets sent to the Pooled Trust organization (a non-profit organization that “pools” excess income from many other people). You are the beneficiary of that excess income and it can be used to pay qualified expenses. As a result, your income is reduced sufficient for you qualify for Medicaid Home Care services, while allowing you to still reap the benefit of the excess income. There is an annual fee for the Pooled Trust, and thus there should be enough excess income to justify payment of the annual fee. In addition, your bills (only bills in the beneficiary’s name) must be submitted to the Pooled Trust each month for payment. Lastly, the Pooled Trust is not a savings account. Any assets that are remaining in the beneficiary’s account at the beneficiary’s death revert to the Pooled Trust. It is important to use as much as possible in the Pooled Trust each month.

In short, if one or both of your parents are concerned about the cost of long-term care and implementing long-term care solutions, a consultation with an elder law attorney is invaluable. The best time to start planning for these situations is before your parents become ill or injured, but even if you have not done so, it might not be too late.

*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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## MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SEREDA

# Daddy knows best

**J**ulia recently has had a series of fevers (due to teething) and I find myself very thankful that my husband is there to step in. It's not that I don't know what to do, it's just that — I sort of freak out!

I remember the first time Olivia had a high fever. It shot up to 103 degrees and we were terrified. We had no idea what to do. My quick-thinking husband decided to wrap her in cold towels. Yes, he used common sense, but I couldn't even think straight, I was so worried and scared. We wrapped her body in a cold, wet towel in an attempt to bring the fever down quickly. She fell asleep snuggled in the towel until we had to wake her up after a few minutes and do it all over again. We must've done this at least five times. Each time she fell asleep and each time she cried when we woke her up. My husband was so calm while I practically chewed off my nails. He took her temperature one last time and it was finally back to normal. They each slept soundly that night, but I kept sneaking into her room to make sure she hadn't gotten another fever.

My husband has a way of staying very calm in high-pressure situations. Such as the time our home caught fire (our downstairs neighbor fell asleep while cooking) and he got everyone out of the house, including the neighbors, without skipping a beat. The crazy thing is that he was supposed to go to work that day. It was a hot day in July, and he decided to stay home and take us to the beach. If he had gone to work, I most likely would've gone back to sleep. When I think of what could've happened, I doubt I would've had the courage to think quickly the way he did.

And I'm grateful that he was there. He somehow always manages to stay focused and do what needs to be done. It's a trait I admire in him and it comes in handy since I am a big worrier. He's the sensible, calm one.

With two small children who are bound to get sick from time to time and who will no doubt injure themselves (hopefully

not too seriously) at some point, it's great to know that "Doctor Daddy" can step in confidently. He's taking care of the girls, of course, but he also takes care of one very nervous mother.



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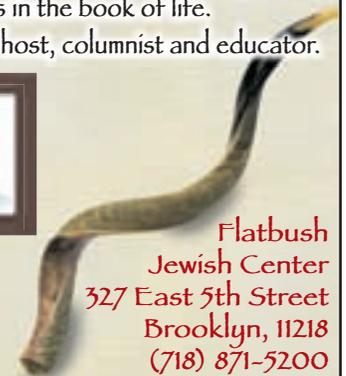
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DEAR  
DR. KARYN  
DR. KARYN GORDON

# 20 things teen guys want moms to know

## Dear Dr. Karyn,

I have three sons and find it difficult at times to know what they need and expect from me. I heard you on the radio sharing your Top 20 list about what teen guys want their moms to know. Can you share again? Loved hearing this!

## Dear parent,

I've received many e-mails and calls from parents wanting this list. Last year I shared the 20 things girls wanted their dads to know — so this is a nice continuation to that conversation! The following list was created by a group of teen guys I worked with, so sit back and enjoy.

Ask your son how many of these apply to him:

- Stop telling us to pull up our pants.
- Our first shave should not be considered a Kodak moment.
- Don't take it personally that we don't want to go shopping with you anymore.
- What may be "just a game" to you — e.g., sports game, video games — could be extremely important to us.
- You'll never think that a girl is good enough for us, but we need to find out for ourselves.
- Leave "the talk" to Dad.
- Try to bite your tongue when our voices crack.
- What may sound like noise to you is great music to us.
- Reminding is different than nagging.
- If you think something's wrong, there probably is. Please don't press the issue. We'll come to you when we're ready.
- We eat a lot.
- Just because video games weren't around when you were a kid doesn't make them any less fun.
- My room isn't messy, it's "lived-in."
- If you give us too much freedom we might abuse it. If you give us too little, we'll definitely abuse it.
- My cellphone is not a 24-hour personal walkie-talkie.



• It's not just good decisions we learn from.

• Assuring us that our current problem is "not a big deal" won't change our minds.

• It's one thing to introduce yourself to our friends, but another to interrogate them.

• Schoolwork is obviously important. That doesn't mean that other things aren't.

• Even if we don't say it enough, we do appreciate you.

## How to connect with introverted children

### Dear Dr. Karyn,

How can I connect to my introverted child?

### Dear parent,

According to a popular personality test called Myers Briggs, there are 16 common personality types. In families, there are often different personality types with differences that can lead to conflict. I find misunderstanding between parent and child is common especially if the parent is an extrovert and the child is an introvert.

Extroverts talk fast, like to be the center of attention, thrive in social settings, and enjoy being where the party is. Introverts may like to be where the party is, but generally don't want to be in the spotlight. They often

prefer conversations that are one-on-one and they usually need much more alone-time. Also, introverts like to collect their thoughts before they speak, while an extrovert speaks and thinks at the same time. This means the extrovert often becomes impatient waiting for the introvert to speak.

If a parent is an extrovert and a child is an introvert, they will often misunderstand each other. The extroverted parent will try to get the child to go out more, speak faster, and encourage her to have more friends. The introverted child may feel rushed and forced to be more social than she prefers.

It's important to remember that we are all different — not better or worse — just different. Extroverted parents: it's important to respect that your introverted child will not need to go out and socialize as much as you. And she will need more time to talk, so don't rush or cut her off in conversation. She has lots to say — she just needs more time to say it.

*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.*



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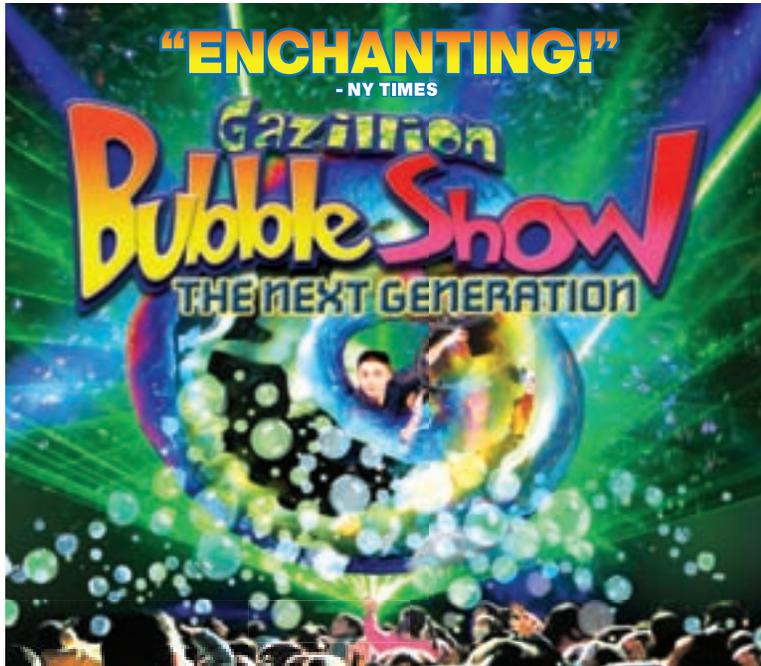
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# Understand your child's brain

What neurology can teach you about parenting

BY ALLISON PLITT

**S**teven Jay Fogel, a longtime student of human behavior and development, explains in his new book — “Your Mind Is What Your Brain Does for a Living: Learn How to Make It Work for You” — the way our brain functions, the importance of parent-child attachments, and how our addictive use of technology has brought about a digital revolution.

He recounts his story of financial success at a young age, but that happiness still eluded him. Having studied with psychologists, educators and rabbinical scholars, Fogel has published this book to share his insights and experiences with others about how he found that inner joy.

## Brain function

Initially, Fogel dispels the myth that the brain functions like a computer. The brain does process information like a computer, but the likeness ends there.

“Every-day experiences reveal ways in which your brain operates in a most uncomputer-like fashion,” he writes. “Examples include visual illusions, the emotional basis of decision making, irrational approaches to problem-solving, and the unreliability of human memory.”

Fogel said for years neuroscientists believed that humans only used 10 percent of their brain, but now they have discovered that people use all parts of their brain. They have also discovered that the brain is fully developed around the time a person is 25 years old.

Neuroscientists, furthermore, did a study in which 3-month-old babies showed a distinct preference for a puppet that was helpful to another puppet instead of a puppet that hindered another puppet. They concluded from the study that the babies were innately able to sense right from wrong.

One term Fogel often refers to is “default programming,” which is created by emotionally impactful experiences we have growing up. In



his own words, Fogel describes “default programming” as “the wiring that we have been developing since infancy.” Past traumatic experience often leads to an adult responding to an event without rational thought or emotion.

Fogel’s book takes an optimistic stance about neuroscience because he writes, “Brain research has revealed that our brains are malleable, with the capacity to be shaped and reshaped, which scientists refer to as neuroplasticity.” Although our brain may be programmed to a default setting that is based on past experiences, Fogel said it is possible to be “mindful” in which you are aware of your present thoughts and actions in order to

make reasonable decisions that defeat old self-destructive behavior.

## Parenting

For parents, Fogel’s chapter about parent-child attachment stresses the importance of children feeling secure in their bond with their parents.

“If you have a good parent-child attachment, then the child can go off into the world with a strong feeling of self-worth, feeling confident that they can handle things,” he writes. “If a parent or caretaker is remote, unresponsive, or emotionally turbulent and insensitive to the child’s needs, the parent-child bond won’t be secure, and children raised in these circumstances will grow-up with a poor self-image and are likely

to have other problems as well.”

Fogel believes another crucial aspect of parenting are the messages that parents communicate to their children.

He explains, “If a child has a mother or a father or a caretaker or a sibling who is in that child’s daily life, and if that person is always saying that around every corner is disaster and that the child’s only choice in handling things is just going to be shooting himself or herself in the foot, how can that child go out into the jungle and expect to find berries? All that child is going to expect to find are snakes.”

The middle prefrontal cortex, located behind the forehead, provides the brain with higher cognitive functions, which are a result of a healthy parent-child attachment.

“The more attuned a parent is to his or her child, the safer the child will feel; the more secure the bond between parent and child will be; and the healthier the child’s development will be in the first seven areas the middle prefrontal cortex participates in that enable us to modulate ourselves mentally, emotionally, and physically. Thus, parents who are mindful in their relationships with their children provide secure attachments,” he writes.

Fogel lists the first seven areas of the middle prefrontal cortex, which are responsible for the following cognitive functions: regulating your body (vital organs such as your heart and other bodily functions to keep them in balance), attuned communication with people, emotional balance, response flexibility (taking in information, stopping and reflecting before you act), insight, empathy and modulating fear. When the parent-child attachment is strong, these cognitive behaviors function properly, giving the child a sense of well-being.

### Technology and the brain

Another topic Fogel broaches is our modern-day addiction to technology, which is making us less-mindful individuals. Fogel says humans are fear-based creatures, as we walk around with our smart phones anticipating upsetting e-mails and text messages. He credits the smart phone for creating the 13-hour-a-day work mode, where it is not uncommon for a boss to call an employee for a file at 7 pm.

In regards to e-mails and text messages constantly coming in on our smart phones, Fogel says that



Steven Jay Fogel

often the messages that come in make people become “activated,” by which he means a highly dramatic state of intense emotions catalyzed by our default programming.

Fogel advises, “Any time you get a digital communication that activates you, don’t answer it for two hours. You want to be able to detach yourself, so you can be mindful enough to consider different possibilities for your response and respond productively rather than defensively. Once you’ve sent an angry or otherwise intensely emotional e-mail, you can’t take it back. As the old saying goes, ‘Once the bullet leaves the gun, there’s not much you can do.’ So when a digital communication upsets you, take a deep breath, keep breathing, and think about what you want to communicate and the way that you want to communicate it.”

According to Fogel, there are two crucial points in his book that can change someone’s life. He says, “First, we are not the voice in our head. The voice in our head sounds like an authority to us, and we believe it’s always right, but it’s not. Sometimes what the voice tells us is actually wrong — because what the voice says is just the interpretation of our default programming. We, not the voice in our head, are the ones that have to make the decision about how we’re going to act.”

The second vital point to his book, Fogel says, “Is that our feelings are not facts. Just because we feel our boss doesn’t like us, it doesn’t mean he doesn’t like us. Just because we feel someone is wrong about something and that we’re right doesn’t mean that it’s true.”

For more information about Stephen J. Fogel, visit <http://stevenjayfogel.com/>.

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

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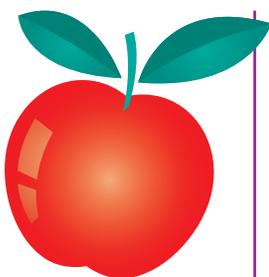
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## DEAR TEACHER

PEGGY GISLER AND  
MARGE EBERTS

# Five tips for success

**Dear parent,**

Once school begins, we have five tips that will help make the year a successful one:

- Look at your children's school work each day, whether it is a picture drawn by a first-grader or a paper written by a high-school sophomore.
- Talk about each school day with your children and share also what your day was like.
- Praise them for real accomplishments and efforts. Meaningless praise does not build children's self-esteem.
- Be supportive of your children's teachers and schools. Always consider yourself a partner of their teachers, not an adversary.
- Request conferences with teachers and counselors when trouble begins to appear. Don't wait for a full-blown problem to occur.

**Dear teacher,**

Common Core was implemented in my children's school this past year. How has it changed the curriculum?

**Dear parent**

Common Core standards are designed to prepare America's students for college and a career, as well as making sure that all children are literate in the 21st century, in both print and digitally. New York, as well as almost every other state, has adopted these standards, which are for English language arts-literacy and math. The new curriculum supporting these standards was introduced in New York City schools during the past school year. Schools spent time in 2011 to 2013 preparing to enact these standards. In the coming

school year, the emphasis will be on reflecting and refining instructional expectations.

You may have noticed in the past school year that the English language arts-literacy curriculum placed a greater emphasis on literacy in history-social studies, science and technical subjects in grades 6-12. And you probably saw your children reading more non-fiction. In addition, the standards required students to read to cite answers, not just rely on their opinions.

Plus your children should have been required to show that they can listen and speak clearly. They also needed to explain concepts and find information primarily from expository texts. And you should have observed more use of the internet.

In mathematics, there was a considerable change. No longer were teachers covering as many topics as possible. Instead, teachers were going into more depth in fewer mathematical areas. The idea is to eliminate content that is not helpful. Having students develop a deeper understanding of basic mathematical principles will help them move on to more advanced mathematical topics. You can see exactly what the new standards include for each grade level (K-12) at [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).

**Dear teacher,**

How can I help my young children become more creative?

**Dear parent,**

Fostering creativity in children is important. You do this naturally if you provide them with interesting and challenging materials and opportunities. Plus they need to experience the arts and music. Creativity is also developed through giving children free time for unstructured play and limiting time spent watching TV or playing electronic games.

The following activities will encourage creativity in young children:

- Give them an ordinary household item such as a stick, paper clip or bottle, and ask them to imagine other ways that it can be used. For example, a plastic bottle could be a vase, a bowling pin or a terrarium.
- Drawing is another way to en-

hance creativity. Draw a straight or curvy line on a piece of paper and have your children turn it into a familiar object. Or give them a page of circles drawn to different sizes. Have the children see how many objects can be depicted by adding elements to each circle.

**Dear teacher,**

I'm not sure that my children are really reading on grade level, even though their teachers say they are. Is there any way that I can measure their reading level?

**Dear parent,**

Teachers may or may not be able to give you an accurate picture of your children's true reading levels, as they as well as school districts often have different grade level standards. You can find many websites online that offer tests to determine children's reading levels. One of the most accurate and simple tests for good and poor readers is the San Diego Quick Assessment. You can find it on our [dearteacher.com](http://dearteacher.com) website right on our home page. Remember, bright children should usually be reading above grade level. And do keep up with your children's progress in reading by using the reading assessment test at the beginning, middle and end of the school year.

**Dear teacher,**

What is the best way to read a wordless picture book with my 4-year-old daughter?

**Dear parent,**

One of the best ways is to begin the book by looking at its cover. Tell your child the name of the story. Then go through the book looking at the pictures together. Do talk about what you both see in each illustration. The next step is to go back through the book telling the child a story about the pictures. Often after turning a few pages, your young daughter will just take off "reading" the book to you from what she sees.

*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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## GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

# 'I'm vegetarian now!'

**D**o you remember “The Simpsons” episode when Lisa — the politically active 8 year old — became a vegetarian? It was the same day her mother served lamb chops for dinner after the girl had bonded with a lamb at the petting zoo.

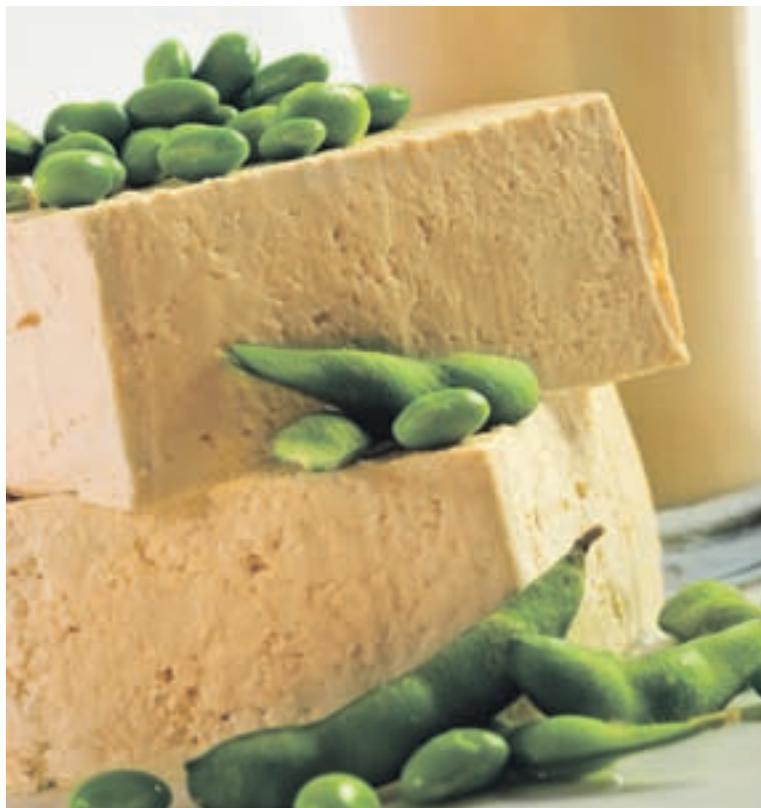
What if your own child suddenly announces, “I’m a vegetarian now”?

“A parent should have a conversation with their child about what their reasons are to be sure that their child is interested in vegetarianism for a legitimate reason,” says Rachel Meltzer Warren, author of “The Smart Girl’s Guide to Going Vegetarian.” “You don’t have to agree with the reason, but it’s important that your child has a responsible rationale for their choice.”

The majority of reasons are understandable. Kids are concerned about the environment, they think it’s a more ethical way to eat, or they simply do not like the taste or texture of meat.

Yet, some young people mistake vegetarianism as an easy way to lose weight or to achieve perfection. These are red flags for disordered eating, which is best to address as soon as possible.

People often shy away from the term “vegetarian” if they’re not 100 percent meat-free all of the time. Warren says it’s extremely common for a teen to be “veg curious.” They experiment with different parts of the vegetarian spectrum without of-



ficially choosing one defined label.

For example, there are red meat abstainers, pescetarians who eat no meat but do eat fish, and lacto-ovo vegetarians who eat dairy and eggs, but no meat.

### Peaceful coexistence

There’s no argument about the health benefits of shifting to a more plant-based diet, regardless of where

on the vegetarian spectrum your child is.

How to survive this change at the kitchen table without the muss and fuss of preparing two separate meals?

- The vegetarian can offer to make the family’s dinner every so often.

- Take one recipe. Set some of it aside to be infused with plant-based protein, and then toss some meat, poultry or seafood into the remaining portions.

- If a recipe calls for ground beef, try French green or brown lentils. These protein-packed legumes are terrific for mimicking the texture of ground meat in stews, chilies and casseroles.

- Tempeh is a good stand-in for cubed meat in stir-fry and curries, or it can be crumbled and used in place of ground meat in casseroles.

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

## Fignana smoothie

This sweet smoothie is a good source of iron and calcium, two nutrients that almost every teenage girl, veg or not, could use more of.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium banana, frozen
- 3 large dried figs, stems removed and soaked in water for at least 30 minutes
- 1 cup plain lowfat yogurt
- ½ cup lowfat (1 percent) milk
- 2 tsp. blackstrap molasses

**DIRECTIONS:** Place all ingredients

in blender and blend on high until smooth.

**VEGANIZE IT:** Replace vanilla yogurt and milk with nondairy substitutes such as soy, coconut, or almond yogurt and milks.

**NUTRITION FACTS:** 390 calories, 6 grams fiber, 18 grams protein, 3.2 mg iron, 0.8 mg zinc, 371 mg calcium, 0.57 mcg vitamin b12, 59 IU vitamin D, 37 mg choline.

Used with permission from The Smart Girl’s Guide to Going Vegetarian by Rachel Meltzer Warren. Sourcebooks Fire, 2014.





# Fun, excitement in the sky

Three young critics weigh in on 'Planes: Fire and Rescue'

*Disney's sequel to the successful "Planes" finds world-famous air racer Dusty with a new career as a firefighting plane. This anthropomorphic character charms us once again in a tame adventure that you can feel comfortable taking your preschoolers to. KIDS FIRST! film critics Gerry O, Haley P, and Adam C weigh in.*

**W**hat a funny and entertaining film! I did not know what to expect, this is the fourth film in this vehicle's universe with the two "Cars" movies and then the first "Planes" movie. I was wondering if maybe Disney pushed it a little bit. However, "Planes: Fire and Rescue" is an entertaining film that is a fantastic sequel in this magical franchise.

The story isn't about just one topic. This is a little bit of humorous romance and also a lot of action. They make some pretty funny jokes while adding a little sprinkle of drama and a great message for the kids as well.

The story starts when Dusty sadly learns that a key component in him is broken and he thinks he will never

race again. When a fire breaks out in his airport, they realize the town needs a second firefighter. Dusty steps up to the plate and goes into training. If you want to find out what happens and if he becomes a firefighter, you have got to watch the film.

What a great add-on to the series; the jokes are perfect. Julie Bowen (Lil' Dipper) is funny through the end. Also, there are a lot of great messages and a lot of references to things in real life. However, this film is very predictable. Ten minutes in, I knew the ending, so it probably would be more captivating for a younger audience. Also, "Planes: Fire and Rescue" is very similar to the last three films. There is a challenge, a serious character, and some comedy. Other than that, the voices are well done and they even changed a Native American folk tale into the version of vehicles just for this film!



Very clever!

My favorite scene is when Dusty first arrives at the firefighting station for his training. He is introduced to some Smoke Jumpers, cars that parachute into the fire to tackle fallen trees and save wildlife. One nearly takes off his head and the other two introduce themselves. Once they all get acquainted, the first fire breaks out and cars and planes all get into action in a well-choreographed manner!

This is a kid's film and nothing really is here that parents should be worried about. I recommend it for ages 3 to 18. Even kids that don't understand it will enjoy the bright colors. I give this film four out of five stars for great jokes and a fantastic story line, even though a bit predictable.

Video review available here: <http://youtu.be/PDQWRqNc1j4>

— Gerry Orz, age 12

**"P**lanes: Fire and Rescue" is not what I expected at all. It's even better! Although this is a kid movie, it has a message comparing real life situations even

adults can relate to.

Dusty Crophopper (Dane Cook) is a famous racing plane. While enjoying some fun and flying full speed, Dusty hears a sound he never heard before...“CRACK!” He loses control, but is able to land safely. When his crew checks him out, they find Dusty’s gear-box is broken — a part in his engine that has been discontinued. His crew promises to search everywhere for a replacement but in the mean time, he can no longer race.



Feeling sorry for himself, Dusty gets angry and goes on a flying frenzy. His wing accidentally clips a building that bursts into fire. Inspectors shut down the town runway because the fire safety plan was totally outdated, especially the fire truck in charge. Dusty feels bad and decides to get certified as a firefighter to help get the town runway reopened. In the process, he realizes it means more to put other people first and he risks his engine to save the life of someone else.

My favorite scene is when the whole forest is on fire. It’s the largest wildfire the smoke jumpers ever have to deal with. The crew springs into action to contain the wildfire and save everyone’s life.

I just loved Dotty (Teri Hatcher) the most. It is hysterical the way she has a crush on Dusty. She doesn’t leave his side. Blade (Ed Harris) is also a great leader. He risks his own life to protect Dusty in the wildfire. The 3D animation makes the story come alive. It’s like being in the middle of a real forest fire, and the whole movie is action-packed. The moral of this story is if life throws you lemons, make lemonade and never give up on your dreams in the process.

This movie is a good fit for ages 5 through 18. Boys, girls and even adults will enjoy “Planes: Fire and Rescue” because it has many life lessons. I rate this movie a five out of five “dazzling” stars!

Video review: <http://youtu.be/gH13sr1jB3E>

— Haley Powell, age 11

If you enjoy fun, thrilling action scenes then “Planes: Fire and Rescue” is the movie for

you. This is a sequel to the Disney movie “Planes,” where Dusty Crophopper becomes a famous racing star. Dusty’s engine is damaged and he may never race again due to his equipment failing. The local airport is closed due to safety concerns and the only way to save it is for Dusty to become a certified firefighter. Dusty decides to go to learn to be a firefighter with Blade Ranger and his team in a gorgeous National Park so he can be a certified firefighter.

My favorite character — or should I say plane — is Dusty Crophopper (voiced by Dane Cook). He portrays a wide range of emotions in the movie from sad to happy. I can relate to Dusty wanting to help the forest out when Blade Ranger was not able to do it.

The scenery in this film is beautiful. The national park is gorgeous and pristine. The animation is thrilling with the planes flying over the majestic park and dropping fire retardant on the flames.

My favorite part of the movie is when Dusty and the team fight a huge fire without their leader Blaze Ranger. Dusty is brave to go out without his mentor and earns his certification as a firefighter.

The firefighting scenes are beautiful and exciting to watch, especially for boys my age.

The film’s positive message can apply to all age ranges. Sometimes in life things do not go as we plan them to be and we have to have a positive attitude and not give up. Dusty provides a good role model for this as he takes on the brave role of firefighter when he cannot race anymore.

I give this movie five out of five stars. I am 8-year-old boy and I loved it. It is geared more toward young boys who will love it and want to buy the merchandise. I recommend it to ages 4 to 10, especially boys.

Video review: <http://youtu.be/AmRfe011LbE>

— Adam C., age 8

“Planes: Fire and Rescue” is in theaters now.



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## JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

# 'Teacher won't let me use the bathroom!'

**W**ith school just around the corner, parents of small children are preparing their kids to feel comfortable and adjust to spending long days in the classroom. Often, one of the main things that young children worry about is the ability to use the bathroom during the day. Teachers who say no to children using the bathroom have always been a huge pet peeve of mine. I can't understand why a teacher would deny a child going to the bathroom; it's not only a normal body function, dare I say it's a personal right?

There are so many reasons why children should be allowed to use the bathroom at school when they need to, and the top reason is health. Kids' bladders are not as mature as adults and it's common sense that they will need to use the bathroom more often.

Furthermore, having a child hold his urine can be damaging. It can cause the child's bladder to overfill and leak urine, which only makes things worse. Once this happens, children can develop urinary tract infections, which in turn, can lead to an irritable or overactive bladder.

What astounds me is when teachers say they don't want the child to lose instruction time, but how can kids learn when they are worrying about having an accident? Even worse are the social and mental ramifications of having an accident in the classroom. How many adults are denied using the bathroom at work? What always bothers me is when children are denied personal rights simply because they are young.

One anonymous mom related a story about how her 7-year-old son was denied using the bathroom



after already using the restroom twice. He then had an accident and the teacher made him sit the rest of the day in soiled pants. The teacher didn't call the mom to bring another set of clothes.

I have taught in different classrooms before and I never viewed a bathroom break as a disruption.

A child will not miss much in the three minutes it takes to relieve himself. Part of being a good teacher and educator is being sensitive to a child's needs.

Some children are so shy, and can barely raise their hand to ask a teacher to use the bathroom.

When a teacher denies them, or says they don't allow it from the beginning, it can produce a

great amount of stress in these students. I have known quite a few children through friends of my own kids who have been unnecessarily stressed out over using the bathroom in school. If a child feels uncomfortable at school, how can he thrive?

Have rules, yes, and maintain order, for sure, but teachers, please allow your students to enjoy the mental and physical contentment they deserve.

*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.*



## FAMILY HEALTH

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



# Keeping kids safe from swimmer's ear

*My son loves the pool, especially on these hot summer days. Sometimes, pool water gets stuck in one of his ears. It eventually drains out, but I am concerned that the pool water may be hurting his ears. What should I know?*

**Y**our son may not have a care in the world as jumps into the pool and splashes his friends, but you are right to keep his ears in mind. A condition called swimmer's ear, an infection of the outer ear, can indeed develop when the otitis externa — the ear canal from the eardrum to the outer opening — is exposed to excessive moisture. Moisture in and of itself isn't so bad, but it creates a fertile environment for the bacterial growth that can lead to infection.

The ear has an efficient system for keeping itself clean and healthy. Glands connected to the ear produce cerumen — commonly called ear wax. The ear wax coats the

canal with a thin protective layer as it slowly makes its way to the ear's opening, cleaning dirt and dead skin particles as it goes. The cerumen also creates a particular acidic balance that helps keep bacteria from growing. Moisture throws the acidity balance off, allowing bacteria to prosper.

But don't let the name swimmer's ear fool you — numerous things can invite bacteria into your otitis externa: cotton swabs irritate the fragile skin of the canal and take away the cerumen's protective coating and hearing aids, ear plugs, and ear bugs, if not cleaned before reuse, can literally press the bacteria into the canal. If ambient particles from perfume or hair-spray enter the ear canal, they too can irritate.

If your son tells you that his ear is hurting him, especially when he tugs on the lobe or touches the area right outside the opening, his

ear should be evaluated for possible infection. Even if the symptoms feel mild to him, his ear should be looked at by a pediatrician. Left untreated, the infection can become more severe, with increasing pain, decreasing hearing, and the potential to spread to surrounding tissue and bone.

Treatment usually includes ear-drops that include antibiotics to fight bacteria and steroids to decrease swelling. It is important that the drops be continued throughout the prescribed course, even if the symptoms have disappeared. Over-the-counter pain relievers may also be recommended for any pain associated with swimmer's ear. To prevent swimmer's ear, encourage your son to thoroughly dry the outside of his ear when he gets out of the water. If water remains stuck in the ear, lean the head to the side and jump a few times to dislodge it.

# Calendar

AUGUST



## Wild at heart

It's going to a wild time in East New York when Wildlife Theater from the Central Park Zoo comes-a-calling on Aug. 12.

The Wildlife Theater troupe is an outreach group that presents an educational and entertaining performance for children, explaining the importance of ecology. From penguins to polar bears, dinosaurs to butterflies, children leave with a new wonder for the world around them and

the creatures that share our planet.

Wildlife Theater from the Central Park Zoo on Aug. 12 at 10:30 am. Free admission, thanks to SummerStage Kids and City Parks Foundation.

*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park, Dumont, Blake and Miller avenues in East New York.*

*Wildlife Theater from the Central Park Zoo [[www.wcs.org/wildlifetheater](http://www.wcs.org/wildlifetheater); [www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org)].*

## 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!

## 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

**Karen K and the Jitterbugs:** Fort Greene Park Visitor Center, Enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park; (718) 722-3218; 10 am; Free.

Kids enjoy the cool shade and a concert in the grove.

**NY Chinese Cultural Center dance show:** Sunset Park flagpole, 41st Street and Sixth Avenue; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 10:30 am – 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 the museum. For all ages.

**"Beetlejuice":** Harbor View Lawn at Brooklyn Bridge Park, Furman St. and Middagh Street;

## Take a green stroll

Brooklyn Botanic Gardens is the coolest place to be this August. Families can have fun dropping by the Kid's Discovery Stations from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm to learn all about plants and composting, and then listen to garden stories.

Tuesdays through Saturdays, weather permitting, there is always a spot in the garden to check in and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

For a more active adventure, children 8 through 12 can sign up for a plant walk on Aug. 6 and 13 from 5:30 to 6:30 pm. They will

discover the different species of plants that line the walks of the garden and learn how to identify each variety.

Plant walks on Aug. 6 and 13 from 5:30 to 6:30 pm; \$15 for non-members, and \$12 for members.

The Kids Discovery Stations are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm through August. Free with general garden admission.

*Brooklyn Botanic Gardens [1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway in Crown Heights, (718) 6234-7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org)].*

[parks.org](http://parks.org); 6 pm; Free.

Darkly funny film by Tim Burton with Winona Rider. For older children.

## FRI, AUG. 1

### IN BROOKLYN

**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 and play, learn, build, and experience adventure.

**"Spy Kids 3D Game Over":** Owl's Head Park, 67th St. and Colonial Road; [nycgovparks.org](http://nycgovparks.org); 8-10 pm; Free.

Children enjoy this third installment of the franchise.

**Fireworks on the beach:** Coney Island Boardwalk, Boardwalk between W. 10 and W. 15th streets; 9:30 pm; Free.

The night sky lights up over Coney Island with bombs bursting in air and lots of oohs and aahs!

## SAT, AUG. 2

### 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 museum admission.

Children 18 months to 2 years discover bubbles.

**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.

**Cultural Connections:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brook-

lyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); Noon and 1 pm; Free with museum admission.

Hear the peaceful sounds of the mbira (an African thumb piano) with Kevin Hylton.

**Hudson line:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children of all ages enjoy a virtual ride on the Metro-North Hudson Line.

**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.

**Be a train operator:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 2-4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 10 years and older take control of a subway car and operate it over virtual miles of track. Limited capacity.

**Target Free First Saturday:** Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org); 5-11 pm; Free.

Celebrate the Caribbean community with music, dance and activities.

## SUN, AUG. 3

### IN BROOKLYN

**Shine & the Moonbeams:** Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 6 lawns, State St. and Furman Street; [www.brooklyn-bridgepark.org](http://www.brooklyn-bridgepark.org); 11 am; Free.

R&B children's concert will have the kids dancing, singing and grooving in their seats.

**Blooming Babies:** 11:30 am-12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 2.

**Cultural Connections:** Noon and 1 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 2.

**History Day:** Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org); 1-4 pm; \$3.

Children explore life before washing machines and get to examine the non-electric way to clean clothes, washboards, tubs and bar soap.

*Continued on page 56*

# Calendar

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

Continued from page 55

**Hudson line:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 2.

**The Wind-Up Circus Toy Show:** The Museum of Interesting Things, 1208 Surf Ave.; [www.coneyisland.com](http://www.coneyisland.com); 2 pm; \$10.

Demos, windup thingies and more — some more than 100 years old.

## MON, AUG. 4

### 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 four tickets to that night's game. Participating is on a first-come first-served basis. Registration required.

## TUES, AUG. 5

### IN BROOKLYN

**Youth corps:** Prospect Park Picnic House, Prospect Park West and Fifth Street; (718) 287-3400; [volunteers@prospectpark.org](mailto:volunteers@prospectpark.org); [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org); 10 am–2 pm; Free.

Teens volunteer in the park and take on a challenging project, ranging from painting benches to landscaping work. Teens also gain professional skills as well. Sign-up online.

**Beatz Science:** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park, Dumont Ave. at Miller Avenue; [www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Native New Yorker Camille Gainer, also known as Beatz Science, performs as part of the SummerStage Kids Performance Series.

**"Little Red's Hood":** Underwood Park, LaFayette and Washington avenues; [www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org); 10:30 am; Free.

A new twist on an old tale.

**Puppetsburg:** 184 Kent second floor Playroom, 184 Kent Ave. at N. Third Street; [www.puppetsburg.com](http://www.puppetsburg.com); 4 pm; \$40 for two shows.

Puppet show for children 6 months to 3-and-a-half years old. Dancing, music, bubble time and other activities. Treasure Island and Fiesta.

## WED, AUG. 6

### IN BROOKLYN

**Vared Music:** Fort Greene Park Visitor Center, Enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park; (718) 722-3218; 10 am; Free.



## Road rules for kids

Kids can learn about the rules of the road at the Safety Road exhibit at the Jewish Children's Museum, now through Aug. 31.

Children of all ages will step up to this engaging, interactive exhibit, complete with a crosswalk, traffic lights, and even a shopping strip.

Kids enjoy the cool shade and a concert in the grove.

**"Little Red's Hood":** Sunset Park, Sixth Avenue at 44th Street; [www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org); 10:30 am; Free.

A new twist on an old tale.

**Plant walks:** Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org); 5:30–6:30 pm; \$12 (\$15 non-members).

Children 8 to 12 years old discover the plants of the garden.

## THURS, AUG. 7

### IN BROOKLYN

**Carousel:** Prospect Park Children's Corner, 452 Flatbush Ave. at Ocean Avenue; [www.prospectpark.org/visit/places/carousel](http://www.prospectpark.org/visit/places/carousel); Noon–6 pm; Free.

Children 12 years and younger ride free all day every Thursday in August. Sponsored by Astoria Bank. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

## FRI, AUG. 8

### IN BROOKLYN

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

Summer Safety at the Museum, Sundays through Thursdays, now through Aug. 31, beginning at 10 am. Tickets are \$13, and \$10 for seniors.

*Jewish Children's Museum [792 Eastern Parkway at Kingston Avenue in Crown Heights, (718) 467-0600; [www.jcm.museum](http://www.jcm.museum)].*

[www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 3 pm; Free.

Celebrate summer and play, learn, build, and experience adventure.

**Peace Through Understanding:** Queens World's Fair Site and Park Nostalgia Ride: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; [transitmuseum@nyc.gov](mailto:transitmuseum@nyc.gov); [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 6:30 pm; \$50 (\$20 for members).

Take a trip back to to 1964 to discover the grounds of the third major World's Fair held in Flushing Meadows, Queens. Walking tour through historic paths and mid-century modern architecture.

**"Despicable Me 2":** Owl's Head park, Colonial Road and 68th Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 8–10 pm; Free.

Bring a blanket, some popcorn and visit with Gru and the Minions — their back!

**Fireworks on the beach:** 9:30 pm. Coney Island Boardwalk. See Friday, Aug. 1.

## SAT, AUG. 9

### IN BROOKLYN

**Bird watching:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lin-

coln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); 10 am; Free.

Children 8 years and older observe and identify some of the 200 species of birds that pass through the park. Binoculars and bird guides provided.

**Subway sounds:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 11:30 am to 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

It's a musical journey through the trains for children of all ages.

**Dance and movement workshop:** Noon–1 pm. Garden of Hope. See Saturday, Aug. 2.

**Be a train operator:** 2–4 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 2.

**Perseid Meteor Shower:** Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; 9 pm; Free.

This wonder of the universe appears each year in August peaking Aug. 9 through the 13. The best place to see it is here.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Circle Line Cruise's Pirate and Princess Party:** Circle Line, Pier 83 at W. 42nd St, Manhattan; (212) 563-3200; [www.circleline42.com](http://www.circleline42.com); \$28 adults, \$20 children 3-12.

The 75-minute tour is an opportunity for kids to cruise to the statue of liberty and back while enjoying live entertainment, interactive tour guides and kid-friendly food and drinks available for purchase. Boarding at 9:30 am, cruise begins at 10 am.

## SUN, AUG. 10

### IN BROOKLYN

**Subway sounds:** 11:30 am – 4 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 9.

**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.

Presented by HIP Tot presents fun events each month. Fun with Rolie Polie Guacamole and story time with Melanie Hope Greenberg reading "Supermarket."

**House tour:** Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org); Noon–1 pm; \$10.

Children take a tour of the house and step back into history.

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

Join with the rangers and tour the

# Calendar

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

park to look for the nocturnal denizens. Perfect for any age.

## TUES, AUG. 12

### IN BROOKLYN

**Youth corps:** 10 am – 2 pm. Prospect Park Picnic House. See Tuesday, Aug. 5.

**Wildlife Theater From Central Park Zoo:** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park, Dumont and Blake avenues; [www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Outreach program that entertains and teaches children about wild things, wild places and our ecology.

**The Rozz & Val Show:** Underwood Park, LaFayette and Washington avenues; [www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Harmony, singing, and high-energy pop, funk and rock and roll.

**Puppetsburg:** 4 pm. 184 Kent second floor Playroom. See Tuesday, Aug. 5.

**"Madagascar":** Valentino Pier, Coffey Street and Van Dyke St.; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 8:30 pm; Free.

Grab your popcorn and a place to sit and visit with Alex and friends.

## WED, AUG. 13

### IN BROOKLYN

**David Gonzalez' Aesop Bops! Funky Fables:** Sunset Park, Sixth Ave. at 44th Street; [www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Funky, physical storytelling leaves the children feeling like they were in the story too!

**Plant walks:** 5:30–6:30 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Wednesday, Aug. 6.

## THURS, AUG. 14

### IN BROOKLYN

**Carousel:** Noon–6 pm. Prospect Park Children's Corner. See Thursday, Aug. 7.

## FRI, AUG. 15

### IN BROOKLYN

**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 and play, learn, build, and experience adventure.

**"Annie":** Owl's Head Park, Colonial Road and 68th Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 8–10 pm; Free.

The sun will come out tomorrow but not the night the movie is on. Grab a blanket or chair, get some pop-



## Jazz by the harbor

Bring your shades to Brooklyn Bridge Park on Aug. 3 when Shine and the Moonbeams perform their indie brand of illuminating jazz.

Singer-songwriter Shawana Kemp and guitarist John Heagle combine their talents to present a soulful R&B concert that children can groove, move, and hip-hop

to. After the concert children can participate in art projects and fun activities.

Shine and the Moonbeams on Aug. 3 from 11 am to 1 pm. Free admission.

*Brooklyn Bridge Park (Pier 6 lawns between State and Furman streets in Brooklyn Heights; [www.brooklynbridgepark.org](http://www.brooklynbridgepark.org)).*

corn and view this classic with Albert Finney, Carol Burnett, and Tim Curry.

**Fireworks on the beach:** 9:30 pm. Coney Island Boardwalk. See Friday, Aug. 1.

## SAT, AUG. 16

### IN BROOKLYN

**Aztec innovations:** 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 what chocolate, chewing gum and popcorn all have in common — it's the Aztecs. Children discover the food, culture, and architecture of this ancient culture.

**Dance and movement workshop:** Jane Balley 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.

**Travel to the past:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694–

1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children of all ages enjoy listening to stories as told by Willie Maeby.

**Be a train operator:** 2–4 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 2.

**Family camping:** Owl's Head Park, Colonial Rd and 68th Street; [nyc.gov/parks/rangers/register](http://nyc.gov/parks/rangers/register); 6 pm; Free.

Enjoy a night out under the stars and in a tent — families are chosen by lottery.

## SUN, AUG. 17

### IN BROOKLYN

**Aztec innovations:** 11:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 16.

**Travel to the past:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 16.

## MON, AUG. 18

### IN BROOKLYN

**Jazzmobile:** Brooklyn Bridge Park,

Pier 1, Old Fulton St. and Furman Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 7 pm; Free.

Arturo O'Farrill, pianist, composer and educator performs.

## TUES, AUG. 19

### IN BROOKLYN

**B-Love's Hip-Hop Jazzy Groove:** Underwood Park, LaFayette and Washington avenues; [www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org); 10:30 am; Free.

Music, dancing, singing and lots of fun.

## THURS, AUG. 21

### IN BROOKLYN

**Carousel:** Noon–6 pm. Prospect Park Children's Corner. See Thursday, Aug. 7.

## FRI, AUG. 22

### 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.

**"Coraline 3D":** Brower Park, Prospect Place & Kingston Avenue; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 8–10 pm; Free.

Children will enjoy this movie sequel.

**Fireworks on the beach:** 9:30 pm. Coney Island Boardwalk. See Friday, Aug. 1.

## SAT, AUG. 23

### IN BROOKLYN

**Family Field Day:** Pier 6 Brooklyn Bridge Park, Atlantic Ave. at Columbia Street; (718) 222–9939; [www.brooklynbridgepark.org](http://www.brooklynbridgepark.org); 10 am–1 pm; Free.

Play games including volleyball, basketball and soccer, enjoy a potato sack and relay race and celebrate summer.

**Basic canoeing:** Salt Marsh, Burnett St. and Avenue U; (718) 421–2021; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 11 am – 1 pm; Free.

Rangers teach children 8 years and older the basics of this sport. Participation in a mandatory safety review course is required.

**Summer crafting:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children make a sun hat and learn how to stay cool in the shade.

*Continued on page 58*

# Calendar

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

Continued from page 57

**Battle of Brooklyn Reenactment:** Main St. in Brooklyn Bridge Park, Plymouth St. and Washington Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Noon–2 pm; Free.

Join re-enactors from Glover's Marblehead Regiment and learn how sailors saved George Washington's army during the battle of 1776.

**NYC maps:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694–1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

There are more than 24 subway lines and routes. Children ages 3 years and older learn how to map them.

**Be a train operator:** 2–4 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 2.

**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, AUG. 24

### IN BROOKLYN

**Commemoration of the Battle of Brooklyn:** Green-Wood Cemetery, Fifth Avenue and 25th Street; (718) 768–7300; [www.green-wood.com/toursevents](http://www.green-wood.com/toursevents); [www.green-wood.com](http://www.green-wood.com); 10 am–4 pm; Free.

A day of family-friendly events to celebrate the first battle of the American Revolution.

**Summer crafting:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children make a sun hat and learn how to stay cool in the shade.

**Family Day:** Greenwood Park, 555 Seventh Ave. at 20th Street; (718) 499–7999; [www.hiptot.com](http://www.hiptot.com); Noon–5 pm; Free.

Presented by Hip Tot. Enjoy a fun day at the park with a Get Ready for School Dance Party with DJ Misbehaviour and story time with Caron Levis reading "Stuck with the blooz."

**NYC maps:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 23.

## TUES, AUG. 26

### IN BROOKLYN

**"Frozen":** Highland Park, Highland Blvd. and Jamaica Avenue; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 8–10 pm; Free.

This year's breakout music from this



Photo by Filip Wolak

## Governor's Island fun

Gather the kids and head to Governor's Island for this amazing Jazz Age lawn party on Aug. 16 and 17. Music, dancing, dance lessons, kids' carnival activities, and more await you. This unique festival is the perfect way to

spend a summer weekend.

Jazz Age Lawn Party on Aug. 16 and 17, from 11 am to 5 pm. Admission is free.

*Governor's Island [Colonels Row, (212) 825–3045, [www.jazzagelawn-party.com](http://www.jazzagelawn-party.com)]*

animated feature was created by borough residents.

## THURS, AUG. 28

### IN BROOKLYN

**Carousel:** Noon–6 pm. Prospect Park Children's Corner. See Thursday, Aug. 7.

## FRI, AUG. 29

### IN BROOKLYN

**Back to school jam:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); 11 am; Free with museum admission.

Enjoy the last days of summer vacation with snacks, crafts, music and giveaways.

**Artpalooza:** 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 under 5 years old paint, draw, glue and weave to exploring and experiencing their inner artist.

**Family camping:** Salt Marsh Nature Center, 3302 Avenue U; (718) 421–2021; 6 pm; Free.

Join rangers for a night out under the stars and in a tent. Families chosen by lottery.

**Fireworks on the beach:** 9:30 pm. Coney Island Boardwalk. See Friday, Aug. 1.

## SAT, AUG. 30

### IN BROOKLYN

**Be a train operator:** 2–4 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 2.

**"Despicable Me 2":** Brower Park, Prospect Pl. and Kingston Avenue; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 8–10 pm; Free.

Grab a blanket and some popcorn and settle in with a visit with Gru and the Minions.

## LONG-RUNNING

### IN BROOKLYN

**Play Streets:** Play Street, 61st St.

between Fourth and Fifth avenues; [palnyc.org](http://palnyc.org); Weekdays, 9 am – 5 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 22; Free.

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

**Play Streets:** Surfside Houses, 2839 W. 33rd St.; [www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org); Weekdays, 9 am – 5 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 22; Free.

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

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

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

**Play Streets:** Fox Playground, East 52nd St. and Avenue H; [www.palnyc.org](http://www.palnyc.org); Weekdays, 9 am – 5 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 22; Free.

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

**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 and swim lessons available.

**Summer Safety:** The Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy.; (718) 467–0600; [www.jcm.museum](http://www.jcm.museum); Sundays – Thursdays, 10 am, Now – Sun, Aug. 31; \$13 (\$10 seniors).

Children travel the "Safety Road" and learn the basic rules of street and pedestrian safety, and take a stroll through a mini city street, complete with traffic lights, crosswalks, and a shopping strip.

**Kids's Discovery Stations:** Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623–7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org); Tuesdays – Saturdays, 10:30 am–12:30 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 29; Free with admission to the gardens.

Families drop by for a craft and learn about plants, composting and garden stories.

**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.

**Farmers Market:** Marcy Plaza, Ful-

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

ton St. and Marcy Avenue; Wednesdays, 10 am – 5 pm, Now – Wed, Oct. 29; Free.

Get fresh fruit, baked goods, yummy veggies and tons of vendors.

**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.

**Carousel:** Prospect Park Children's Corner, 452 Flatbush Ave. at Ocean Avenue; [www.prospectpark.org/visit/places/carousel](http://www.prospectpark.org/visit/places/carousel); Thursdays – Sundays, Noon–6 pm, Now – Sun, Aug. 31; \$2 per ride (\$9/a book of 5 tickets).

Take a ride on the park's historic carousel.

**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.

**Art Kid:** Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; [www.brooklynkids.org](http://www.brooklynkids.org); Fridays, 11:30 am, Fri, Aug. 1 – Fri, Sept. 26; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 years and older explore a new style each week.

**Kayaking:** Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 2 Dock, Bklyn Bridge Park Greenway; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Saturdays, 10 am–3 pm, Now – Sat, Aug. 30; Free.

Glide along the water while kayaking with the Brooklyn Bridge Park Boathouse' floating dock. Children under 18 must have an adult guardian present. All levels welcome no experience required.

**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



Photo by Gabriel Desbiers

## Circus in the parks

The 2014 International Contemporary Circus Festival brings the circus to city parks on Aug. 19 through Aug. 21.

Families can gather for a fantastic evening under the stars to enjoy world-class performers on stage, as well as strolling performers from Circus to Go by the

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

**Ezra Jack Keats Story Hour:** Children's Corner of Imagination Playground, Flatbush Ave. and Ocean Avenue; [www.ezrajackkeatsfoundation.org](http://www.ezrajackkeatsfoundation.org); Saturdays, 2 pm, Now – Sat, Aug. 30; Free.

Gather at the Peter and Willy statue for a storytelling adventure.

**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, Aug.

Big Apple Circus. This evening brings the circus outside the tent and into the park, as part of the SummerStage Kids series.

Aug 19 through 21, 7 pm. Free.

*Marcus Garvey Park, (W. 122nd Street & Mount Morris Park Westin Harlem, [www.cityparksfoundation.org](http://www.cityparksfoundation.org)).*

31; \$3.

Make your own Nine Man Morris board, learn how to play the old-time game and take it home.

**Family Concert:** Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 1, Furman St. and Middagh Street; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Saturdays, 3 pm, Now – Sat, Sept. 27; Free.

Walk across the gangplank of a renovated coffee barge and enjoy a family friendly event.

**Pier Kids:** Pier 6, Joralemon St. 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.

**History camp:** Van Cortlandt House Museum, Broadway at W. 246th St.; (718) 543-3344; Weekdays, 9 am–3 pm, Mon, Aug. 4 – Fri, Aug. 15; \$275 per child per week.

Treat your child to a day camp where he is immersed in 18th-century life.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Traveling in the World of Tomorrow:** The Future of Transportation at New York's World's Fairs: New York Transit Museum Gallery Annex at

Grand Central Terminal, 42nd Street and Park Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 878-0106; [www.grandcentralterminal.com](http://www.grandcentralterminal.com); Monday – Friday, 8 am – 8 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 10 am – 6 pm; Free.

This exhibition celebrates the 50th and 75th anniversaries of the 1939 and 1964 Fairs. With a variety of postcards, photos, ephemera and souvenirs, the exhibition shows how transportation was a symbol for the future, its potential effect on modern American life, and the technological advancements in transportation that American corporations claimed would make a better world possible.

**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, Now – Sun, Nov. 2; \$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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# New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

## Making a splash



Make this summer a memorable one for your little mermaid by surprising her with a Mahina MerFin from Australia. This fantastic beach and pool accessory is a rubber monofin — molded, in part, from recycled materials — that she will put both feet into and instantly transform from a biped into a mythical sea creature. (When she's ready to step ashore, your little mermaid will tug on the single flick release strap at the ankles.) The rubber flip-

pers come in three lovely marbled colors; choose from aqua marine, coral pink, or sunset orange. Judy Ishayik of Mary Arnold Toys on Manhattan's Upper East Side says that she has already re-stocked the fins twice this season — not surprising as her customers report attracting scores of admirers poolside. The MerFins come in children's sizes 12-2, 2-4, 4-6, 6-8, 8.5-10.5, and 10.5-12.5, and if mom wants to make waves on the beach, too, Ishayik can place a special order for adult-size MerFins.

*Mahina MerFins, \$89, [www.maryarnoldtoys.com](http://www.maryarnoldtoys.com).*

## Just beet it

Most parents want to give the best foods to baby but they simply do not have the time — or personal chef.

Well, Beech-Nut has come out with a new-and-improved line of 40 jarred, pureed foods that will make parents and kids alike open wide for the chew-chew train. Our testers are fans of its flavorful “Just Honey-crisp Apples” and the “Beets, Pear & Pomegranate” blend. The purees are gently cooked, leaving color and flavor intact, and the 83-year-old company says they are free of artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives. These jars prompted us to pull out Jessica Seinfeld's 2007 cookbook, “Deceptively Delicious,”



that has recipes for including vegetable purees in unexpected places (pancakes, quesadillas, brownies, etc.). Go ahead — reap the fruits of our tasty research.

*Beech-Nut baby food (4.25-ounce jar), \$1.09, [www.beechnut.com](http://www.beechnut.com).*

## These plates = success

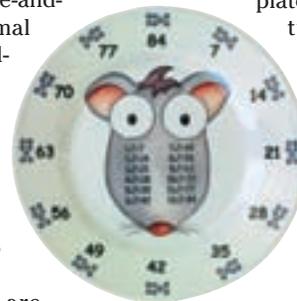
The Multiples are melamine plates adorned with Wallace-and-Grommet-esque animal illustrations and multiplication equations! These dishes serve up math in a palatable way in a social setting that can't help but improve a student's relationship with numbers.

The Multiples are available in individual pieces or four-piece Curriculum Sets (in-

cluding a 9-inch plate, 6.5-inch plate, bowl, and a 10-ounce tumbler) in three versions: The Early Years (x1-x4), The Middle Years (x5-x8), and The Later Years (x9-x12).

Everything about these dishwasher-safe, BPA-free dishes is a plus!

*The Multiples four-piece Curriculum Set of dishes, \$34.99, [www.themultiples.com](http://www.themultiples.com).*



## 'None' better than Jeffers

When you read this book by Oliver Jeffers, you can count on laughing.

In the Brooklyn author-illustrator's latest — “None the Number: A Counting Adventure” — starring his lovable oval characters, the Hueys, Jeffers tackles the mathematical concept of “the number before one.” The counting book, particularly suited

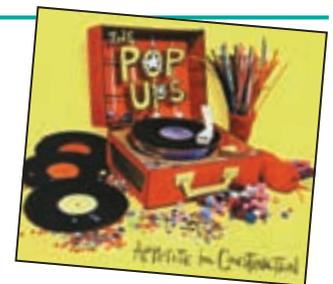


to tots ages 3 to 5, has his delightfully unexpected text — “Nine seagulls that are after Frank's French fries,” and enjoy! When it comes to “None the Number: A Counting Adventure,” we have zero complaints.

*“None the Number: A Counting Adventure” book by Oliver Jeffers, \$17.99, [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com).*

## Sounds like fun

When we heard that Brooklyn's the Pop Ups had a third CD coming out, it was music to our ears! Jason Rabinowitz and Jacob Stein — the talented duo that is the Pop Ups — will serve up their electro-pop “Appetite for Construction” on Aug. 19. It'll sate the cravings of parents yearning to hear fun, dance-able music that reminds them of their own carefree youth (“Block House” has tinkling echoes of Madonna's “Lucky Star”!). Even the lyrics have delightfully retro references — when brainstorming the possibilities in a square, they sing: “You could be a



window or a tooth, or a CD case for Sonic Youth.” Most importantly, their fanciful word play encourages wee ones to collage, build, and aim high, asking, “Are you more influenced by Frank Gehry or Rem Koolhaas?” We recommend this CD for listeners of all ages.x

*“Appetite for Construction” CD by The Pop Ups, \$14.98, [www.thepopups.com](http://www.thepopups.com).*

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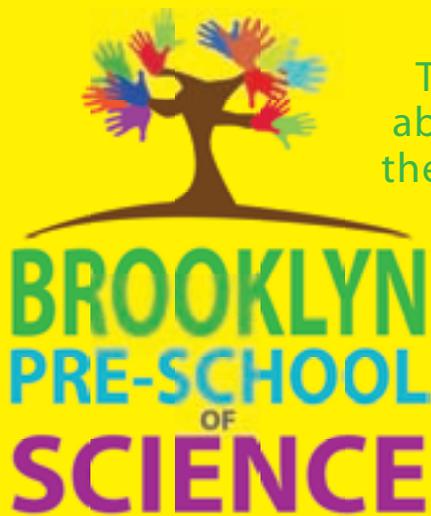
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