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Starting the discussion on gender

I've been thinking a lot about gender and the very new issues that the idea of gender is raising lately. I don't think I ever considered it before the last few months, but suddenly one is hearing about gender neutrality and I'm finding it fascinating. There are forms available now where a third gender possibility is optional, neutral.



I recall back when I was in school that there was a boy who sat next to me who was a rather odd character. He was without friends and seemed to actually lack an apparent personality. Every day I said hello to him although he would only nod in response. He was beyond shy, and never spoke to any-

one as I recall. He was an enigma. It made me sad and I purposely went out of my way every day to give him a greeting waiting for the day when he would open up. He never did.

Some years later, I was shopping at a major department store and a rather elegantly dressed and beautiful woman asked me if I had gone to such and such a school. I said yes and she told me she was a former classmate of mine. I couldn't imagine who she could be because she looked like no one I had ever known before. She said she wasn't at all surprised that I didn't recognize her because she was very changed from the way she looked in school. It turned out

that this lovely woman used to be that very shy and repressed boy who sat next to me in class and in the choir. She then went on to tell me that it took her many unhappy years to realize, accept and then act on the fact that she was in the wrong body. She also thanked me for having been kind to her. She said I was the only one.

There have been numerous articles written lately and TV programs about experiences like this and many parents are being advised to take seriously the issues of gender identity confusion or questioning and seek professional counseling. In this issue there is a letter posed to our columnist Sharon Peters from a concerned parent whose child is professing to be a different sex. She is unprepared for this reality and wisely is reaching

out. Fortunately, like many of the other topics in today's more transparent world, this issue is being addressed with greater sensitivity and intelligence.

Parenting is the most important thing anyone will ever do. It demands great patience, skill and adaptability and the willingness to reach out for help when help is needed.

Thanks for reading. Have a great month. It's almost spring

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
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Collaborating, not competing

New York's
complicated
and sticky
debate over
charter
schools

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

The ongoing clash between New York City's diverse traditional district schools and charters seems to resemble a World Wrestling Federation Superstars competition at times. And the confusing myths and media distractions swirling around this hot-button debate can make your head spin, especially if you're a parent.

So, what are charter schools?

These publicly funded hybrids are a vital part of the city's sprawling public education system, where there's no shortage of structural and cultural differences. Independently managed, charters are actually free public schools that are open to all New York City children. That includes English Language Learners and special needs kids, as well.

There are 197 charter schools here: Eighty-two in Brooklyn, 52 in the Bronx, 46 in Manhattan, 14 in Queens, and three on Staten Island. And the approximately 83,200 students who attend charters come from all backgrounds and ethnicities.

Charter schools have gotten a bad rap recently for not being inclusive enough, yet it appears they have taken the lead in and have done a good job educating special education students and English Language Learners, while making solid progress in recruiting more of these kids into their schools, according to the New York City Charter School Center, www.nyccharterschools.org.

In fact, according to that site, it seems English Language Learners attending charters become proficient in English more quickly than in public schools citywide, where it appears that many immigrant students

NY'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PART 1 OF A SERIES

may take about five-plus years to reach proficiency.

Opinions are mixed and emotions run high on both sides of the charter school movement issue, while politically driven battles over space, funding, and quality of education seem to add fuel to the fire and hinder much-needed collaboration.

The biggest issues about charter schools generally are:

Co-location

Some parents argue that public schools lose space to fit charter schools into public school buildings. But it turns out the issue may really not be that big of a deal. Did you know that (according to charternyc.org) the Department of Education has been co-locating public schools for nearly 100 years, and that surprisingly, charters are only involved in eight percent of all co-locations citywide?

Outperforming public schools

Charter schools are thought to outperform public schools test-wise. The big picture seems to indicate that charter schools are in fact outperforming peer district schools, but it appears that the quality of charters across the board isn't the same: some have high records of achievement, while others aren't as strong.

Money and funding

Charter schools have been described as "laboratories of innovation" by some and "a drain on public schools" by others.

• • •

For the past six years, early childhood education expert and longtime

Brooklyn resident Renee Dinnerstein, has been doing consulting work at a public school on the Lower East Side that shares space with a charter. She said the public school "serves incredibly needy children — children in shelters, foster homes, abusive homes, and they also have a very large special education population."

Dinnerstein feels that "our democracy should be putting money into public education to make it better, not using funds that they need to pay for charter schools," and she points out that "Special ed is very tricky — a child who needs speech therapy, or who is dyslexic, can be considered special ed. Then there are children with behavior disorders, who are very violent, and these children are also special education children."

Dinnerstein, whose grandson has always attended Brooklyn public schools, believes that "the charter school skims off children who are the highest-achieving students, or at least who come from the most involved families. If they take special ed students (which they tend not to) they absolutely don't take the children with behavior issues. Then the public school is left with the most needy children. Because they are losing more and more population to the charter school, they are losing more and more money and have less money for the children in their school, who need special services."

And in her opinion, "Parents are attracted to the charter school because it has all-new material, carpeted classrooms, two teachers in a classroom, and longer days. They don't understand that the instruction is basically test prep all year.

"Basically, the charter movement is a drive to privatize education. I



know that the people who run charters are saying that it's public education. Not so. Absolutely not so," she said. "Think about all of the money that they have for their advertising campaign. Think about closing all of the schools for a political jaunt to Albany. We should be putting all of our energy and funds into creating the best public education possible."

Dinnerstein's blog, "Investigating Choice Time: Inquiry, Exploration, and Play," www.investigatingchoicetime.com, is a place where she writes about inquiry-based choice time, and advocates for developmentally appropriate instruction for children in grades pre-K through third. She is also writing a book on inquiry-based choice time, scheduled to be published by Heinemann in the fall of 2016.

Indeed, finding a peaceful solution isn't easy, but there's hope.

In February, Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña called for collabora-

Opinions are mixed and emotions run high on both sides of the charter school movement issue, while politically driven battles over space, funding, and quality of education seem to add fuel to the fire and hinder much-needed collaboration.

tion with (and from) charters, during a professional development day for district teachers and principals, held at an Uncommon Charter School in Brooklyn. She said that the future of the city depends on how all kids do, no matter what kind of school they come from. And it appears she's interested in finding ways for schools to share space and resources more effectively, according to a recent capitalnewyork.com article.

With 21 charters in Brooklyn, Uncommon New York City Charter

Schools, www.uncommonschools.org, serve more than 5,900 kindergarten through 12th grade students, including both single-sex and co-ed schools. According to its site, the main goal is to prepare students to enter, succeed in, and graduate from college. Students are randomly selected by public lottery in grades kindergarten and fifth, and waiting lists are kept through grade eight. It currently has schools in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brownsville, Crown Heights, East Flatbush, Prospect

Heights, and Williamsburg.

Uncommon Schools CEO Brett Peiser said they are incredibly fortunate to have had so many great minds united at their Collaboration Day event, including Schools Chancellor Fariña, and more than 170 educators from 14 district partner schools.

"It is exciting to collaborate with such talented, committed educators working in the same communities as we do each day. We get better as educators when we collaborate closely and learn from one another in order to keep making a meaningful impact in the lives of our students – and that is what we are all doing each and every day."

After weighing the pros and cons of charters vs. traditional district schools, interested parents should research, call, interview staff, and visit charter schools in their area to decide which is the best fit for their child(ren). For more info, you can visit: www.uncommonschools.org/our-schools/all-charter-schools-by-city.

Star

with a cause

Young actress puts spotlight on hungry kids

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

Actress Quvenzhané Wallis first gained notice for her role in the 2012 film “Beasts Of The Southern Wild.” The role of Hushpuppy led her to becoming the youngest actress to ever receive an Academy Award nomination. At the time, she was just 9 years old. She most recently starred in Sony Picture’s 2014 remake of “Annie,” in which she played the title character. The 11-year-old, Louisiana native is known for playing children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and this has inspired her to help other kids suffering from childhood

Action for Healthy Kids

Action for Healthy Kids is a nonprofit and volunteer network targeting both childhood obesity and undernourishment. The kids would otherwise not get that first meal of the day. By helping schools create or improve existing breakfast programs, the organization works to make schools become healthier places where kids learn to eat right, be active, and develop healthy habits.

It helps nearly 12.9 million kids in 29,000 schools across this country. Through its School Grants for Healthy Kids program and Kellogg’s, it’s working to help provide one million breakfasts during the 2015-2016 school year. To apply for grants, visit www.actionforhealthykids.org/tools-for-schools/apply-for-grants.

Links: www.kelloggs.com/en_US/give.html, www.actionforhealthykids.org/



Academy Award-nominee Quvenzhané Wallis wants to end the blight of childhood hunger in America.

hunger. Millions of school children in the United States are faced with this challenge.

Quvenzhané’s mother, Qulyndreia, is a former school teacher, and she knows firsthand how hunger can impact children on a day-to-day basis. Mother and daughter joined Kellogg’s efforts to give breakfast to kids in need. The two have been promoting the “Breakfasts for Better Days” campaign, which is part of Kellogg’s commitment to provide one billion servings of cereal and snacks to disadvantaged children and families around the world by 2016. Kellogg’s is taking a step towards that goal by providing up to one million breakfasts in 2015. The company is also partnering with the nonprofit organization Action for Healthy Kids — for a fifth year — to provide more children with breakfasts in schools.

I spoke to Quvenzhané about her partnership with Kellogg’s, other upcoming projects, and just what it’s like to juggle adolescence and Hollywood.

Shnieka Johnson: What projects are you currently working on?

Quvenzhané Wallis: Right now,

I am partnering with Kellogg’s in order to spread the word about childhood hunger in America. I learned that one in five children may go to school hungry, including my peers at school, and knew that I wanted to join Kellogg’s in spreading awareness on this issue.

SJ: Can you tell me a little about the “Give A Child A Breakfast” program?

QW: I am partnering with Kellogg’s in order to spread the word on childhood hunger in America. My mom, being a teacher, has always made sure I have breakfast before I leave for school. All kids need and deserve the opportunity to reach their full potential — and starting the day with a great breakfast can help get you going.

SJ: Why did you choose to team up with Kellogg’s for this initiative?

QW: I joined Kellogg’s when I learned that one in five children may go to school hungry, including my peers at school. Even though I’m an actress, I’m still a normal kid that goes to school and has homework. I’m fortunate enough to start my day with a great breakfast, like Kellogg’s Rice Krispies and milk,



Wallis acted opposite Jamie Foxx in "Annie" in 2014.

and I want to help other kids have that same opportunity. I'm excited for the chance to help other kids my age to reach their full potential. You can learn more at www.kelloggs.com/give.

SJ: Any upcoming movies or television appearances that we should look out for?

QW: "Annie" came out on DVD and Blu-Ray on March 17. Later this year, I have two new movies coming out, Kahlil Gibran's "The Prophet" and "Fathers and Daughters."

SJ: What are some of your hobbies when you're not acting?

QW: When I'm not acting, I love spending my time playing sports, especially basketball, volleyball, and cheerleading. I also like reading, playing video games, hanging out with friends, and playing with my two dogs.

SJ: What advice do you have for other kids interested in acting?

QW: Acting is all about having fun and keeping focus on your character. If you are determined and work hard, you can reach success in whatever you are doing. I believe that starting your day with breakfast can help you reach your full potential every day!

I also had a chance to speak with Quvenzhané's mother, Qulyndreia, about her daughter's career.

Shnieka Johnson: How do you manage your daughter's schedule between home life, work, and school?

Qulyndreia Wallis: The number one thing is that my husband and I treat her like a normal kid. We make sure she has structure in her day, does her homework and her chores, has time to have fun and experience life like every other kid. No matter how busy we get, we make it work. At the end of the day, she's just like any daughter. She's just been blessed to have an amazing opportunity, and I want to continue to encourage her to just do her best.

SJ: What do you do to keep your daughter grounded while working in the film industry?

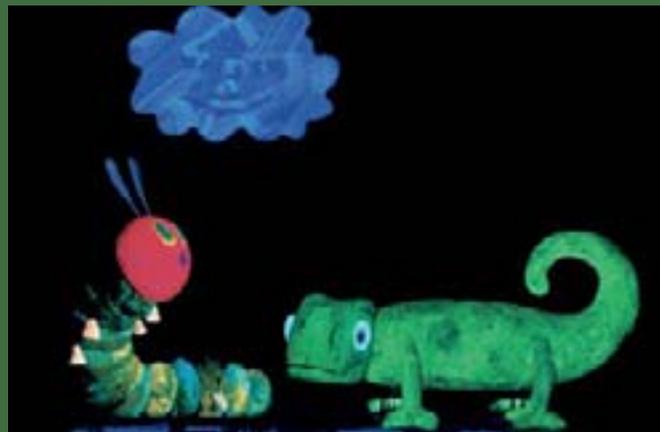
QW: I think that focusing on giving back to the community is very important. That is why I support Quvenzhané's partnership with Kellogg's in helping give breakfasts to children in need. As a school teacher, I know how important it is for students to have breakfast before school. I'm proud of my daughter for helping raise awareness for this worldwide issue — Kellogg's has committed to a great goal.

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.

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Sunny skies

Safe, happy
air travel
with kids

BY MALIA JACOBSON

Whoever said, “Getting there is half the fun,” never flew cross-country with a needy newborn, a boisterous toddler, or a moody tween. Not to mention a purse full of wrinkled airline tickets and coloring books, snacks for every member of the family, and a caravan of luggage.

At best, airplane travel with children can be educational and exciting. At worst, it’s an all-out nightmare. Here’s how to plan for a memorable (in a good way) trip that starts before you land.

Baby-toddler years 0-4: Plane plan

Air travel with tots in tow takes planning, patience, and more planning. Celebrity travel expert and mom Amy Graff recommends using

a packing list (you can find one online at BabyCenter.com).

“You might not find the right kind of diapers or that exact baby

food your little one loves at your destination. This is the time when you don’t want to forget anything.” Prep for a smooth takeoff and landing by planning to feed baby — by breast or bottle — during the plane’s ascent and descent; the sucking motion helps equalize pressure inside their tiny ears to minimize painful popping (and the resulting screams). Remember to pack a few more diapers than you think you’ll need on flight, and a change of clothes — or several. And don’t forget to pack extra clothes in your carry-on for a toddler or preschooler.

On a long flight from California to North Carolina, Raleigh native Christen Pope remembered to pack plenty of clothes for 7-month-old Sydney, but forgot a change for her newly potty-trained 3-year-old Jaden. Guess who needed fresh pants shortly after take-off? She can bet she’ll never forget again.

School years 5-12: Fun fare

Elementary-age children usually love plane travel, but can be notori-

ously slow to get through airports. Yelling “Let’s go!” at the top of your lungs may turn some heads, but it won’t make your poky pre-teen move any faster. Instead make the most of kids’ pre-vacation excitement by treating the airport like a fun destination. Start by turning the dreaded security screen into a race; have kids try to get their shoes off and unload their luggage onto the conveyer belt as fast as they possibly can, says Graff.

“It’s a game of speed and it can be a lot of fun.”

School-age kids respond well to delegation, so assign each child a responsibility pre-take-off and in-flight, like carrying the family’s flight snacks or marshalling carry-ons as they come through the security conveyor. Grade-schoolers are also old enough to take responsibility for their personal belongings, both in the airport and in-flight; before boarding and deplaning, gently remind your child to gather her things — but don’t do it for her (you undoubtedly have your own hands full).

Teen years 13-18: Time travel

A long flight layover with bickering teen siblings is a recipe for vacation disaster; quell squabbles by allowing each sibling to take charge of a family decision (one sib can pick a lunch locale at the airport, while another gets to select dinner fare at the destination). Bring a deck of cards, teen-friendly snacks, and an extra set of batteries and AC adapters to keep electronics charged up while you wait.

On the trip, avoid the “teen tune-out” during travel by creating a connection to your destination before you leave. Did your family’s ancestors hail from the region? Do you have any childhood stories about the area? Any major historical happenings? Young teens may get a kick out of an on-flight scavenger hunt with landmarks to watch for during take-off and landing. Appointing a teen “trip historian” with responsibility for journaling and documenting the trip with photos ensures that you’ll have plenty of memorabilia — and gives you a chance to view the trip through your teen’s eyes.

Malia Jacobson is a nationally published sleep and health journalist and author of “Sleep Tight, Every Night: Helping Toddlers and Preschoolers Sleep Well Without Tears, Tricks, or Tirades.”

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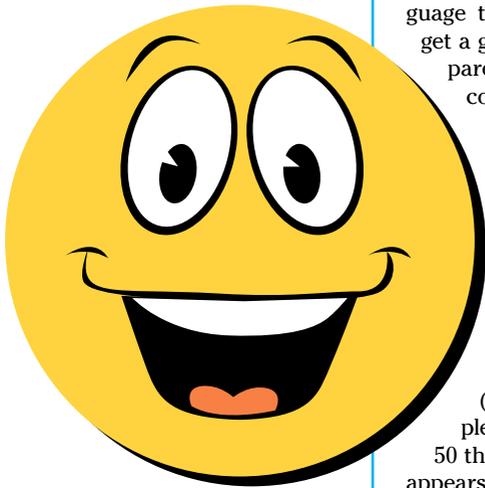


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GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS



Symbols and slang

Understanding the elements of a text message

If you feel like reading text messages has become an exercise in code breaking, you're right. Some people still send plain text but many — especially kids — stuff their messages with abbreviations and acronyms, smileys and slang, winking hearts and piles of poo.

All these devices are an attempt to restore some of the richness and fun of face-to-face communication. In the absence of body language, facial expression and tone of voice, symbols are a way to convey additional information about thoughts and feelings.

Kids are especially drawn to these symbols, in part because every generation enjoys having a secret language that baffles their elders. To get a grip on what kids are saying, parents need to know the most common forms of code.

Acronyms. Take the initial letter of each word in a phrase. Throw in a number that sounds like a word — 4 and 8 — or stands for something else. Acronyms can be silly — ROFL (Rolling on the Floor Laughing), practical — BRB (Be Right Back) or subversive — 420 (using marijuana). A very complete list of acronyms, including 50 that every parent should know appears at Netlingo.com.

Emoticons. Emotion icons, aka smileys, were reportedly invented back in 1982 by a computer scientist who was worried that people weren't getting the humor or sarcasm behind messages on an online bulletin board. Using the characters on a standard keyboard, people have created thousands of clever combinations that turn into faces if you turn your head sideways. An exhaustive list is available at cool-smileys.com/text-emoticons.

Kaomoji. Most smartphones include alternate keyboards, which open up even more creative possibilities. Kaomoji, for example, take advantage of the much larger character set needed for Japanese. See examples at japaneseemoticons.net.

Emoji. Loosely translated as pic-

ture character, these tiny cartoon-like drawings were unleashed in Japan in 1995. Informally, emoji is often used to refer to any tiny graphic that occupies the space of one character. Technically, emoji are the 722 characters that have been incorporated into the Unicode keyboard (the consortium plans to introduce 250 more characters later in 2015, including faces with different skin tones). Companies are given latitude in interpreting the characters, so an emoji won't necessarily look the same on Apple, Google, Twitter or Microsoft. To see all the official characters, check out emojipedia.org.

Stickers. These graphic elements aren't associated with the keyboard. Some are embedded in specific apps and won't work anywhere else. Others can be purchased and pasted wherever you please. To avoid adware and other problems, be sure kids download free sticker apps only from trusted sources like the Apple Store or Google Play.

All of these elements enliven text messages. They are popular in part because they are quick. Instead of thumb typing a sentence about feeling sad, your child can insert a weeping emoji. Some observers also feel that emojis in particular soften online communication, extracting the sting from messages that might otherwise seem harsh. For parents, the question isn't so much whether kids are using code but how. Here are some things to consider:

Appreciate the creativity. Remember rebuses? These charming books had pictures embedded in the text so little children could participate in "reading" before they could decipher text. Emoji capture that playful joy. Like music and painting, the images used in text are an effort to capture ideas and feelings that aren't easily put into words. Deepen your child's emotional intelligence by talking about the nuances of emotion in emoji faces.

Discuss ambiguity. Emojis and even acronyms are open to interpretation — and misinterpretation. Pop almost any acronym into acronym-

finder.com and you'll come up with multiple meanings. BYOB, for example, might mean bring your own beer ... or bike ... or even book. Emojis can also be misunderstood. In Japan, a pile of poo is regarded as good luck, though that isn't necessarily the first thought that springs to mind in other countries. If you post a tiny fist, are you threatening to punch someone or offering a congratulatory fist bump? Talk to kids about the risks of sending the wrong message.

Consider intent. For most kids, adding code to text is simply a way to connect with friends. Still, parents need to be aware that acronyms in particular can be used to camouflage messages about illicit activities including sex and drugs. Children need supervision so you can be sure they are texting only with friends who won't lead them into situations they aren't mature enough to handle.

Recognize limits. No matter how many ways you dress them up, text messages won't do justice to certain kinds of communication such as apologies, condolences, or even gratitude. Remind your child that face-to-face is still the best way to make a heartfelt connection.

Reiterate rules. Texting of any kind should be subject to all the usual rules about online communication. Don't abuse or harass other people. Don't talk to people you don't know in real life. Don't send sexually explicit messages. Be sure your child understands that texting privileges are contingent on following these rules.

Like every other form of communication, texting creates connections with other people. Being aware of the secret language of texting — and talking about it now and then — creates one more opportunity for parents to help kids develop relationships that are healthy and rewarding as well as fun.

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

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DEAR
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DR. KARYN GORDON

Tips and techniques for communicating

Each generation responds to different approaches

I was flying back to New York this past week and ended up seated behind a family whose parents unfortunately had fully lost control of their kids (I'm sure we've all experienced similar situations before!). As I watched these parents try to communicate to their 4-year-old daughter with reason and empathy (they had big hearts) to stop the screaming, the child went further into hysteria and eventually the parents just gave up! Passengers quickly got out their headphones to drown out the screaming for the one-hour flight. And as I was sitting there, thinking about how each passenger was feeling (including the parents and their children!), I realized that if the parents had just a little more information about their child's developmental abilities they would likely have gained a different response. Yes, small children need empathy, but they also really need firmness! That age doesn't tend to respond well to reason alone. Empathy without a firm approach means a child will walk all over her parents. But the opposite is also dangerous — if parents are too firm without empathy, a child will often shut down and cut-off from her parents. It truly comes down to striking the right balance between being firm and empathetic that I find makes the difference for effective communication in conflict; not just with kids but also with students, clients, and employees.

This month I promised you some tips on how to communicate effectively to each generation, and one of the biggest keys to doing this is to truly understand where your audience is coming from! As I've already shared with you as part of this series, each generation is unique and values different things in their communication. So if we know what they need, it becomes much simpler to connect to them. It's like getting the answers to an exam in advance — it's not that hard as long as we are open to learning! If you missed "Engage and



motivate all generations at home and work," email my assistant, kay@dk-leadership.org to send it to you.

Let's be honest — communication seems easy in theory until people start practicing it, and only then do they realize how many ways it can go sideways! As I've said many times before, the secret to motivating, engaging, and now communicating effectively to all generations is to understand your audience! So whether you have a 16-year old son (Gen Z), 25-year-old employee (Gen Y), or a 61-year-old boss (Boomer), these simple tips will help you focus on what is truly the most effective way to reach them!

Communication tips to reach Gens Y and Z

I've talked about the importance of speed for both of these generations, this includes everything from technology to talking fast and mak-

ing what you are communicating relevant! If you want to communicate more effectively to Generations Y and Z, here are some other tips that will connect to their values!

Explain why in advance

Remember that this generation is constantly asking why. Why should they make their bed? It will just get messy again tonight. Why is it a big deal if they are late? Why should they ask for help? Why should they get a mentor? Why should they go to university or college if they just want to start their own business? A great speaker, teacher, and parent knows what her audience is thinking and answering the "whys" before he even asks.

Give feedback ALL THE TIME!

Traditional performance reviews do not work for this generation (if you haven't already figured that out, you will soon enough). Performance reviews are very outdated for a gen-

eration that wants and needs feedback constantly! For organizations, try using more updated technology programs with groups like Salesforce. For parents, make feedback a daily habit (I'm not kidding), letting each other know what you liked, and what you didn't! Keep it light, but try to make it part of your everyday family and work culture.

Be affirming and firm

This generation is used to hearing a lot of praise. Don't give fake praise (they are very intuitive and will pick it out quickly). But when you see them doing something well, tell them! They will be more motivated to listen when they know first what they are doing well! But as I shared at the beginning, you'll need to be firm as well around certain policies! If you need this generation to be on time, tell them (firm) but communicate it with a lot of praise (affirming) and you'll find they listen better! And for anyone who thinks that praise is a waste of time (see, I'm thinking about my audience), yes, it will take time, but it will actually save you time since they will actually listen more to you, and you will find yourself repeating yourself less!

Communication tips to reach Gen X

Gen-Xers love independence, it truly is one of their highest values. These tips highlight ways to communicate effectively with them by recognizing this!

Don't be needy

If you have a Gen X parent, employer, employee, teacher, or colleague, understand that he wants to see you be independent! They are used to giving out jobs and expecting that it will be done. They won't tend to do regular check-ups (that's not their style) and they can't stand micro-managing. Try your very best, and if you need help, ask for it — but first try to do it on your own!

Ask, don't tell

If you need something from a Gen X, ask, don't tell him! Listen to the difference: "Mom can I go to my friend's house?" versus "Mom, I'm going to my friend's house." "Boss, can I take Friday off?" versus "Boss, I can't work on Friday." Do this even if you think you already know the answer — when people ask, it is interpreted as a sign of respect!

Be early

Gen X grew up in a generation when punctuality was highly noted. So if you're trying to connect to a Gen-Xer, don't aim to be on time

— be early! Lateness equates to disrespect!

Communication tips to reach Boomers and traditionalists

Say thank-you OFTEN

Voicing gratitude is always a great habit to get into! Research tells us that people who not only are thankful, but voice their gratitude — and they are happier, more likely to get promoted, more physically resilient, and people want to help them more! Look for opportunities to say thank-you (again, it must be genuine) to all Boomers and traditionalists in your life whether it's a parent, a colleague, or an employer! One of my former coaching clients set out to make a habit of voicing 10 "thank yous" every day. Once she started she found she was saying it up to 20 times daily and people around her were more eager to help her because they felt appreciated!

Turn off your technology

When you are communicating to this generation, either put your technology away or turn it off so you're not distracted. While using technology is like breathing for younger generations, others will view it as a massive sign of immaturity and disrespect if you use it in front of them. From dinner table conversations with the family to job interviews (yes, a recent survey said a high percentage of people would still look at their phone during an interview!) to your day-job, turn off your technology when communicating to this generation.

Honor their experience

Yes, younger generations are often faster at technology, but nothing compares to years of experience. If you want to communicate effectively with these generations, ask about their life, career journey, failures and successes, what they would have done differently, and their advice to the next generation. By asking them about their story, and learning from them, you honor their experience, and they will feel respected!

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

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All photos by Anna Kesztenko

(Left and center) Cozy looks for girls and boys at the Anais & I show. (Above) New Jersey-based designer LaToia Fitzgerald of all-boy brand Dillonger with her son Dillon.

Trending now

In this stylish city, even kids get a fashion week

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

New York City's tweens and teens, and even their little sisters and brothers, seem to have a built-in sense of street-smart style.

That fashion savvy reverberated down the runway in February, as spirited young models rocked a slew of cool designer threads during petitePARADE's popular bi-annual city event, Kids Fashion Week.

Spring beckons, but those warm, bright, and stylish head-turning looks have been the talk of the town since they were featured at the fall-winter 2015 Showcase, held at historic Bathhouse Studios in Manhattan's East Village. Several unique toddler-to-teen collections got plenty of oohs and aahs from invited guests and families eager to get a sneak peek at what the younger set will be wearing in the coming months.

Rising designer Alia Charvel opened the Showcase with the debut of her Little Miss Galia collection in the American market. The Mexican brand interprets fashion trends with colorful cultural elements and past traditions through lovely fabrics and patterns (littlemissgalia.com).

And designer Jane D' Haene debuted her collection with a fun kickoff that took place at a local school park. Kids modeled her clothes while playing hop scotch and volleyball.

During the grand finale, Manhattan-based designer HJ Chung of Imoga (a petitePARADE alumni brand) walked the runway with her teen daughter, who wore a fabulous wintry jacket that her mom designed. Crafting pint-size silhouettes that maximize style and freedom, Imoga is all about timeless and whimsical, fun-to-wear clothing, and Chung's designs keep little souls delighted all year long. You can find her creations

at dozens of stores all over the city (www.imogacollection.com).

All-boy brand Dillonger's New Jersey-based designer LaToia Fitzgerald and her son Dillon accompanied Chung at the finale walk. Young city dudes really dig the edgy style that makes her clothes stand out in a crowd.

This time around, Manhattan-based designer and mom Bonnie Young emphasized fun geometric shapes and showed off her signature dramatic style on the runway.

Here and there sparkly party and holiday pieces emerged, and a luscious blue velvet jacket was a hit with onlookers.

Short, retro black leather jackets looked hip on the runway; girls wore them with flare skirts, tights and leg warmers, reminiscent of the '80s. And there was lots of big hair.

An exotic flower motif adorned a stunning party dress by Anais &



(Above) Manhattan-based designer HJ Chung of Imoga walked the runway with her daughters, who wore fabulous fur jackets during the grand finale. (Left) This Little Miss Galia design has a throwback vibe.

I — a simple, geometric pumpkin sheath had that unmistakable '60s look. Oh, and your daughter will probably want to check out the newest version of a '70s shirt dress for fall. You can take a cue from petitePARADE designers and show her how she can create a great outfit by wearing a soft sweater (even a cotton one) under an edgy, zipper-accented textured vest. She can complete this look with a pretty skirt or dark leggings.

News flash! This fall, colorful large-print flowers will be popping up amidst those basic blacks and darker hues. And traditional prints and plaids — which were all the rage on the runway — got an unexpected twist. Look for fabulously mismatched prints as well, and muted tones juxtaposed against shiny fabrics. If you're thinking, anything goes! You're right.

Rumor has it that Gotham's trendy young ladies and gents will have a lot of great looks to choose from in the fall. And budget-conscious moms and dads shouldn't worry, because there are so many options out there for every wallet, and in the coming months you and your kids and teens will be finding runway styles at many local retailers.

More than ever before kids designers are saying: cute but not cutesy, sophisticated yet whimsical, basic but not mediocre, comfy but always stylish. Look around you. Long gone are the days of cookie cutter childrenswear — even for babies. Savvy designers are breaking all the rules while holding on to that innocence factor.

My own impressions: Bonnie Young's classy and dressy white colored black dress with white cuffs looked a lot like a piece that my cousin wore to a birthday party back in the '70s (I found an old pic). And one short red jacket with a wide collar looked like a really cool, very updated version of a gray '90s jacket that's still hanging in my friend's closet. Overall, the runway vibe seemed to range from sophisticated chic to slightly lil' rebel for the young set, while the wow factor was amped up for tweens and teens.

If you want to get an idea of what your kids' tweens' and teens' closets might look like this coming fall and winter, check out these awesome collections at: www.petiteparade.com/8th-edition/

Without a doubt, the newest kids' looks are kind of edgy and electric in a fun and funky way. For show highlights, you and your kids can go to: <https://instagram.com/petiteparade>.

And for a behind-the-scenes peek at the recent event, visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhBHov7sNKo.

With more than 100 designers and 10,000 guests, petitePARADE continues to attract media, parents, and the children's industry, but philanthropy has always played a vital role. Each season, it partners with outstanding organizations, such as Only Make Believe, Free Arts NYC, New York Foundling, K.I.D.S./Fashion Delivers, and The Juice Foundation to raise money and awareness and provide the families in attendance with fun, interactive workshops which expose children to the importance of giving back.



ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,
ESQ.

How to talk openly about elderly care

My parents are getting older, and I am concerned about how my siblings and I are going to be able to take care of them while taking care of our own families. How can I broach the topic with my parents without upsetting them?

Starting the conversation with your parents is a tricky thing. They are already anxious about approaching or being in their golden years. Many of their friends in their age-group may be sick or have died, and this is a sobering reminder of one's own mortality. It is challenging to approach this issue without having some people feel like you are rushing them to their grave.

I advise my clients to approach the topic slowly and with sensitivity. Sometimes framing it in a way that makes your parents think that they are doing you a favor is helpful. Some examples:

"Dad, you know, Bob and I went to see an estate planning attorney to get our estate planning documents in order. She advised us to let our family know where we keep our documents. It made me think that I don't know where you keep any of your documents. Would you be willing to

talk about this with me?"

Or:

"Mom, a friend of mine is in a nasty lawsuit with her brother over their dad's estate because his affairs weren't in order. I'd really hate to have that happen with my siblings and I'm sure you wouldn't want your legacy to be us having an irreparable rift after you're gone. Can we have an open discussion about this when you're ready?"

Once you've benignly introduced the topic at an appropriate time (i.e., not Thanksgiving or Christmas!), below are some topics and questions you might want to use to get the conversation started — just not all at the same time:

Financial and legal

"Do you have a last will and testament? A health care proxy? A power of attorney? Where do you keep the originals? Who should we contact?"

If your parents don't have those documents, ask, "Would you consider meeting with someone to get those documents in place?"

"Who do you want to handle your financial affairs in an emergency or if your health fails?"

"Do you have a financial planner? Would you like to meet with one?"

Note: this is a much "softer" way to approach the assets, as opposed to "where is your money!"

A study from a few years back found that almost 30 percent of adult children are financially supporting their parents. Retirement calculators available online can help you determine whether your parents have sufficient assets to meet their objectives. This will not be resolved in a single conversation but will require multiple discussions over a period of time. Try to involve your siblings in the conversation so everyone is on board.

Health

"Would you consider giving your doctor permission to talk to me and my siblings about your health in case we have questions?"

"Can any of us come with you to your doctor appointments?"

"If, god forbid, something happened where we couldn't communicate with you, what is your feeling about being kept alive through artificial means like ventilators, artificial feeding tubes, or respirators? In what type of situation would you want or not want those medical technologies used to keep you alive?"

Living situations

"Where do you want to continue to live? Do you want to stay in your house? Are you willing to move into a smaller house?"

"If you need assistance would you rather move in with one of your children, or would you prefer hiring someone to help you at home?"

Don't be surprised if your first attempts are met with defensiveness and resistance. Also don't be surprised if your parent comes back to you a few weeks later and says, "You know, I had this great idea: why don't we go look at an assisted living facility?"

The trick to these conversations is letting your parents get there in their own time, but before a crisis happens. If they feel they are still in control and making their own decisions the stress of a difficult conversation can be alleviated.

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



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MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SEREDA

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The days following my second daughter's birth were drastically different than with my first baby. When Olivia was born,

we barely had guests over. I stayed in my little post-baby cocoon nursing and sleeping whenever I could. When friends and family offered to come by and help, I would shyly tell them that I was OK. My father-in-law flew in from Europe and stayed with us, so he could meet his new granddaughter, and aside from the language barrier, I was too proud to ask for help, even when he was right there.

I'm not so proud anymore. The

second time around, I took all the help I could get!

Shortly after Julia's birth, my mother-in-law and sister-in-law came by, and I couldn't have been more grateful. My sister-in-law brought a huge box of diapers and my mother-in-law came with a week's worth of groceries. She brought meats and cheeses, yogurts and juices, and she prepared a huge pot of tomato soup that she said would help me nurse. My husband played sous chef so he could learn how to make it, and it was delicious. When the baby slept, she encouraged me to lie down, even though Olivia was running around and needed to be looked after. She spent the night, and it was great having someone look over the baby while I got to steal some zzzs.

Having someone swoop in and take over isn't practical for most of us; we want to make sure our homes are nice and tidy (especially when a mother-in-law drops in), and it can be difficult on our ego to give someone the reins to our home, but if there's something I've learned that's crucial to growing a family, it's that it really does take a village. I look back at that time and am so grateful for the help. It may not have mattered much to them, but it was a life-saver for me during a stressful time.

So, the next time you're about to visit a new mom, sure, bring a gift for baby, but don't forget the value in offering to help with other things, too. Maybe you can take a toddler off mom and dad's hands for a few hours or bring mom a meal she can share with her family. And moms, don't be so proud that you don't take the help!





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FABULYSS FINDS

LYSS STERN

Easter ideas & other seasonal activities

Looks like we can officially put those puffy jackets, hats, gloves, mittens, and snow boots away! Spring fever has sprung! I can't remember the last time I saw so many children happy just from being outside. So many young children were cooped up this winter for way too long. The parks are in full bloom and the kids have never been happier

to skip, hop, slide, and run outdoors. I know the parents are equally as excited to have the kids playing outside, especially with the extra hour of sun we now receive each day.

Moms on the Upper East Side, make sure you book a ride at the new E. 60th Street Flywheel, www.flywheelsports.com. You will want to make sure you're bathing suit ready for summer, which is right around the corner. In all honesty, as much as this exercise is great for our physical being, for me it's so much more for my mental state of mind. It's my 45 minutes of Mommy Time Out, when I can escape in my own head to the music and just let go. As busy city parents, sometimes we need to just let it go, the words right out of Elsa's mouth.

If you are going away for spring break, have a #FabULyss time spending quality time with your family and don't forget to power down. If you are here in New York taking a staycation, there are so many wonderful activities to do with your family.

Easter and Passover are also a great time to spend quality family time with your loved ones. I will be making chocolate-covered matzah with my boys. I especially love this toffee-covered chocolate matzah recipe from Martha Stewart (recipe below).

How much fun is an Easter Egg hunt? Make yours creative and have lots of fun with the family.

Easter egg hunt fun idea #1: Use different colored eggs by age.

Color code the eggs you hide according to age so that means the littlies, or the 2- to 4-year-olds, can hunt for blue eggs, while the older kids go for purple. Or have the boys hunt for blue and the girls hunt for pink.

Easter egg hunt fun idea #2: Add letters to each egg so kids can make words.

Buy some alphabet stickers or write a different letter on the outside of each egg. You can even get crafty enough to paint letters on each egg.

Set the kids loose on their egg hunt and then offer extra Easter prizes to the kid who makes the longest word from his egg stash.

Easter egg hunt fun idea #3: Leave telltale bunny prints.

Make bunny footprints near each hidden Easter egg to give the kids some easy hints as to where the eggs are hidden.

You can also try making the footprints out of plain paper or even sprinkle some baby powder and put a bunny paw print in it with your fingers.

Easter egg hunt fun idea #4: Hide them in the house.

Make a trail of little eggs from your child's bedroom to the living area, and then lead them to one giant clue that will allow them to discover either a larger egg or a non-chocolate Easter gift such as a book or toy.

Most importantly, have a #FabULysslyFun time!

Also this month, don't miss #DivaMomsBookClub's night out with New York Times best-selling author Kimberly McCreight, author of "Reconstructing Amelia." Celebrate her newest book release, "Where They Found Her."

Kimberly McCreight book signing and Q and A at New York Design Center (200 Lexington Ave. between E. 32nd and E. 33rd streets in Kips Bay, Manhattan, divamoms.com) April 13, 6:30-8:30 pm. Free. Be one of the first 75 moms to sign up and you will automatically be entered to win a \$1000 gift certificate to Duc Duc. RSVP@Divamoms.com.

Lyss Stern is the founder of DivaLycious Moms (www.divamoms.com).



Handmade toffee-chocolate matzah

INGREDIENTS:

4 sheets unsalted non-egg matzah
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
1 cup packed dark-brown sugar
1 (12-ounce) package semisweet chocolate chips (2 cups)
Coarse sea salt

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place matzah in an

even layer on baking sheet and set aside. Melt butter in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Add brown sugar and immediately reduce temperature to low. Cook, stirring, adjusting heat as necessary, until sugar has completely dissolved and begins to bubble. Drizzle toffee over matzah and spread to cover using a spatula. Transfer toffee-covered matzah to oven and bake until toffee has a rich, shiny sheen, 10 to 20 minutes.

Remove from oven and sprinkle with chocolate chips. Tent matzah with aluminum foil and let stand 20 to 30 minutes. Remove foil tent and spread melted chocolate over matzah to cover; sprinkle with sea salt. Transfer matzah to refrigerator and let chill at least two hours. Break chilled matzah into pieces. Matzah will keep in an airtight container for up to four days at room temperature.

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Andrea Giammattei, MS.Ed, is a learning specialist and child/family therapist with 24 years experience providing progressive inspiring educational and therapeutic opportunities for children and families.



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Camp empowered



How to help your child achieve self-determination this summer

BY DR. HEIDI SMITH LUEDTKE

Parents spend a lot of time trying to motivate kids. We use chore charts, checklists, reminders, and rewards to get them to feed the dog, clean their rooms, and complete schoolwork. But these techniques don't change behavior long-term. Real motivation must come from within. And time at camp may be all it takes to

spark a little self-determination in your kid.

I know it sounds too good to be true. Your school-age slacker — the one who expects you to find his homework and pack his lunch — might start doing some things for himself. And your often-bored tween might come home with more pep in her step.

Psychologists use self-determination theory to explain why some

experiences make us feel engaged and excited while others drain and deplete us.

The premise is simple: when an activity meets our needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, we are energized and empowered. Kids' basic needs are no different from adults'.

Kids want to do things for themselves. They crave a sense of accomplishment and routinely seek feed-

Kids want to do things for themselves. They crave a sense of accomplishment and routinely seek feedback. And kids thrive on connections with loved ones and peers.

back. ("Look what I made, Mom!") And kids thrive on connections with loved ones and peers. Feelings of belongingness boost their self-worth. Summer camp offers loads of opportunities to meet all these needs. And that should make kids (and the parents who love them) very happy campers indeed.

Autonomy

The need for autonomy is satisfied when kids control their own lives.

At camp, your son will have endless opportunities to care for himself. Staff won't select his clothes, organize the contents of his locker, or remind him to put on deodorant. No one will delay dessert until he eats his veggies. Independence is what camp is all about. Don't worry. The world won't stop if your son wears the same shirt three days in a row. His peers will speak up if he gets super stinky.

During the school year, many kids jump from one regularly scheduled activity to the next with no unstructured time in between.

Camp puts kids in charge of their own activities. Maybe your daughter will take a hike. Maybe she'll paint pottery. Maybe she'll write you an email. It is up to her to decide how she'll spend her free time. One thing is certain: she won't sit around whining about having nothing to do. And if she does, you won't be there to hear it.

Competence

The need for competence is satisfied when kids learn new things and get positive feedback about their efforts. Your kid might

choose a camp focused on art, science, sports, or music. Or, he may opt for a good, old-fashioned sleep-away experience, complete with row boats and weenie roasts. Some camp activities may be outside your kid's comfort zone. Stretching is good.

Your child may be unsure she can cross the slippery log over the creek. She may tremble with excitement about her role in the theater production. Peers and counselors will coax her along and give constructive advice. By the end of camp, she'll be the star of her own adventure stories.

If your kid is an experienced camper, encourage him to share what he knows with newbies. Being an ambassador or mentor affirms kids' competence in a big way. Teaching a peer how to trim a sail or chip a golf ball out of the tall grass will take your son's skills to a higher level. His confidence will soar in response.

Relatedness

Your biggest concerns about summer camp may center on the social scene. Your child may not know anyone on arrival. That's okay. Camps create connections in many ways. Your kid will be instantly bonded with bunkmates because they share a home base. Family-style dining and friendly competitions encourage interaction, too. The pursuit of shared goals — like building a robot or putting a frog in the counselor's sleeping bag — cements kids' camaraderie.

Extroverted kids may make lots of friends at camp. Less-social souls may not. What matters most is that kids have opportunities to talk, play, and live with a diverse group of peers. They won't all become fast friends.

Learning to navigate the choppy waters of friendship formation is a big part of the camp experience. Your kid's social skill set will expand — even if she doesn't find a new BFF.

No matter what your kid takes to camp, he'll come home with a suitcase full of memories and a renewed sense of self-determination. You'll see it as soon as he wakes from his long post-camp nap.

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



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4th Grade Through 9th Grade

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Hours

9 am - 5 pm

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*Each overnight and the 8th week enrollment are only available
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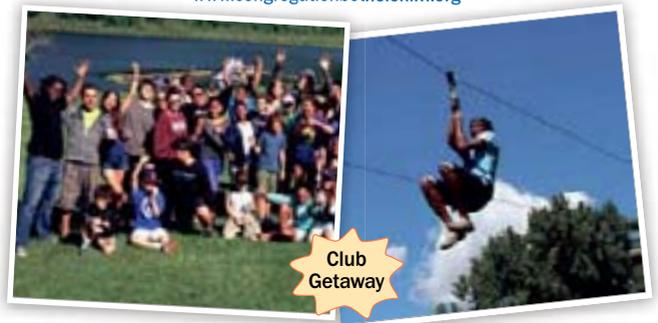
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Tuesdays & Thursdays the CBE pool is available for
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Flexible Registration

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CBE Kids Movin' On Travel Camp

In the Garfield Temple at 8th Avenue and Garfield Place, Park Slope
718-768-3814 or www.congregationbethelohim.org

Movin' On, CBE KIDS Travel Camp, offers youth entering 4th through 9th grades an exciting summer program of trips and activities. It is designed to meet the campers' developmental needs, allowing for independence within a supervised environment. Using Congregation Beth Elohim as a base, campers travel daily to various points of interest in and around New York City. Trips include Mountain Creek Water Park, Ice Skating, Roller Skating, the Bronx Zoo, Baseball Games, WNBA and much, much more. There are weekly bowling and beach trips. All campers can participate in two overnights over the summer; Camelbeach Mountain Water Park and Club Getaway. Camp dates are June 29th through August 14th (with an 8th week mini camp if needed). Hours are 9:00 - 5:00 (early bird, 8 - 9 and late bird, 5 - 6). Register online at www.cbebk.org/camp

CBE KIDS Summer Day Camp

In the Garfield Temple at 8th Avenue and Garfield Place, Park Slope
718-768-3814 or www.congregationbethelohim.org

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

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

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

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

Olympics, Music Festival and Carnival.

CBTB Dance Academy

2085 Coney Island Avenue (Kings Highway and Avenue R)
718-891-6199 or www.covenantballet.org

Are you an aspiring dancer (ages 10 and up) looking to experience the kind of training a professional will have? Look no further! CBTB Dance Academy brings the Manhattan dance experience home to Brooklyn in our spacious and centrally air-conditioned facility! The Summer Intensive program offers diverse, professional instruction in classical ballet, pointe, modern, cross-training, composition and repertory. The program is fun but yet serious. It will strengthen your "technique" and broaden your dance vocabulary. New students must attend a placement audition. Summer dance classes are also available for adults and children under 10.

CBTB Dance Academy is the official school of Covenant Ballet Theatre of Brooklyn, a professional, non-profit dance company founded and directed by accomplished dance instructor and choreographer, Marla Hirokawa. The school also offers a 10 month student program, adult classes and special workshops throughout the year. The Academy incorporates the ABT® National Training Curriculum for the school's Primary through Level 3 ballet classes.

Creative Arts Studio Summer Camp 2015

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

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

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

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

Creative Arts Studio Teen Summer Dance Intensive 2015

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

Creative Arts Studio professional Teaching Artists will be helping students strengthen their technique while learning composition and the history

Continued on page 28

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Photo by Gregory Dillon Scherer

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Camp

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 26

of specific dance styles. They will also focus on improvisation, music, and the process of learning restaged works.

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

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

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

ConstructionKids Inc. Summer Camps

718-522-2902 or www.constructionkids.com

Located throughout Brooklyn and Manhattan

ConstructionKids' Summer Camps are known for the dynamic projects campers build. Imagine what happens when you combine a kid's love of building, a bunch of friends, and a week of time to explore their imaginations. Campers 4 to 8 years old, work on individual and group projects with real tools and materials that are scaled and selected for small hands. We teach safe, appropriate tool usage, along with drawing and painting. Creativity and problem solving are encouraged.

Our goal is to foster each child's confidence and self-assurance so that their skills at designing, making, repairing, and revising are unlimited—like their imaginations. Summer camp is about having fun, making new friends, bonding with staff, and building really cool stuff.

The Cosmic Cove Summer Program

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

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

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

EBS Therapy of New York

155 Bay Ridge Avenue, 718-238-0377
or www.ebstherapy.com

EBS Therapy of New York's summer programs provide children with

a multi-disciplinary experience in a play-entered environment. During the summer programs, children will have the opportunity to continue their speech-language, occupational and physical therapy goals. Your child will engage in motivating group activities while enhancing social communication, sensory, motor, and attending skills. We believe that children learn most effectively when they are having fun. For more information about our summer programs or to obtain the required forms, contact us today!

FasTrackKids Summer

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

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

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

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9 am - 3 pm Monday - Friday
Workshops Aug 10 - 14, Aug 17 - 21,
and Aug 24 - 28

Goodwill Youth Services Locations in Brooklyn & Queens

Continued on page 30

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Email us at: info@ConstructionKids.com
Phone us at: 718-522-2902**

Camp DIRECTORY

Continued from page 28

718-777-6397 or www.goodwillnynj.org/youthservices

Goodwill Youth Services provides free summer programming to New York City youth at locations in Brooklyn and Queens.

Services includes 7-8 week day camp, recreational and academic activities, activities for teens, adults and families. Visit www.goodwillny.org for locations and contact information, or call 718-777-6397.

**iD Tech Summer Programs
Held at Queens College, NYIT-
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1-888-709-8324 or www.idtech.com**

Code, game, create! At camp, students ages 6-18 code apps, design video games, mod with Minecraft, engineer robots, build websites, create wearable electronics, and more.

Hands-on courses are taught in small groups of just 8 students per instructor, guaranteed. Plus, kids and teens meet new friends, learn real-world skills, and gain a competitive edge for school and future STEM careers.

In addition to iD Tech Camps, our flagship program for students ages 7-17, we also offer the following summer programs in New York: At Alexa Café (held in Brooklyn), girls ages 10-15 collaborate around café tables and learn to code apps, design websites, develop wearable electronics, and more. At iD Tech Mini (held in Brooklyn and Manhattan), kids ages 6-9 explore graphic design, coding, robotics, and Minecraft modding in half-day or full-day camp sessions. We also offer 2-week, intensive, pre-college teen programming and game design academies.

Just Wee Two Summer Program

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

Just Wee Two Summer Program is geared for kids 14 months to three-and-a-half years, directed and taught by early childhood teachers trained to work with young children. Just Wee Two is a place where children and grownups learn and play together. Class sizes are small, allowing for individualized attention. All classes are one-and-a-half or two hours to allow for a relaxed, comprehensive atmosphere. Mothers meet other mothers, developing life-long friendships while their children grow.

Classes celebrate summer through special arts & crafts, songs, water table activities and creative play. A mini-camp program is for children two-

and-a-half to three-and-a-half who are ready to separate.

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

**1037 72nd Street in Dyker Heights
718-748-9023 or www.ledsny.org**
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**Mark Morris Dance Group
3 Lafayette Avenue, 718-624-8400 or
www.mmdg.org/school**

School Director: Sydnie Liggett
The School at the Mark Morris Dance Center offers one and two-week dance camps for students ages 6-17, and weekly creative dance classes for ages 4-6. Whether exploring new dance styles or learning Mark Morris repertory directly from members of the Mark Morris Dance Group, students develop their passion for dance in a positive, nurturing environment. All levels welcome. Please call or visit our website.

Mathnasiums of Bay Ridge/Bensonhurst

**7409 3rd Avenue 11209, Bay Ridge
6806 20th Avenue 11204,
Bensonhurst
347-7-MATH-11 (347-762-8411) or
www.mathnasium.com/bensonhurst**

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

Bay Ridge is open on Sundays 9-1PM
Welcome to Mathnasium. We are a math learning center where we make MATH make SENSE to kids. We support K, 1st grade, 2nd – 12th grades and up.

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

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

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

Continued on page 32

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SUMMER INTENSIVE

July 6 - 31

Ballet - Modern - Jazz - Repertory
Composition - Conditioning

For students with at least 2 years of classical ballet training. Placement audition required. Call for appointment.



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For students 7 years and up. No prior dance training required.



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3300 Coney Island Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11235

Camp

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 30

Mathnasium of Park Slope

361 5th Avenue, Park Slope (5th Av., near 5th St.)

718-369-MATH or www.mathnasium.com/parkslope

Avoid the "Summer Slide", and make it a Mathnasium Summer!

We will be offering many program options:

First Steps (3-6yo) - Morning one-hour classes with interactive math fun!

Weekly Focus Camps (Rising K-7th grade) - Camp hours will be Monday-Friday 10am-1pm. Choose one week or sign up for multiple weeks!

Summer Packages- choose between a package of 15, 30, or 45 one-hour sessions to use this summer (June 1st-September 8th)

Regular Membership- Stay on track with the regular monthly membership which includes up to 10 one-hour sessions

GAME HOUR - 1pm-2pm Monday-Thursday. All members can attend our game hour anytime throughout the summer!

Mention this ad for FREE Assessment and Registration!

Midwood Montessori Summer Program

2825 Bedford Avenue, one block from Brooklyn College

718-253-3242 or www.midwoodmontessori.com

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

Mill Basin Day Camp

5945 Strickland Avenue

718-251-6200 or www.millbasindaycamp.com

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

bus service is available to most locations. Call or come in for a personal tour of the facility.

New Country Day Camp

646-395-4355 or www.14streety.org
A Summer in the Country So Close to the City!

Voted 'Best Day Camp' in NYC by Nickelodeon's ParentsConnect

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

Activities include instructional swim led by 4x Olympic Gold Medalist Lenny Krayzelburg, free swim, boating, sports, arts and crafts, gymnastics, science and technology, camping, cooking & pioneering, martial arts, and performing arts. Please visit our website for our open house dates. RSVP is required: please email newcountry@14StreetY.org or call 646-395-4357.

Summer Music Programs at Noel Pointer Foundation

1368 Fulton Street, 3rd Floor

718-230-4825 or www.npsom.org

Give your child the gift of music and set them up for future successes through the Noel Pointer Foundation's Summer Strings Program. In this fun, intensive workshop series, your student will learn their choice of violin, viola, cello, classical guitar, piano, double bass and music theory. The program runs daily from Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with extended hours for working parents. A dedicated, highly experienced staff of teaching artists will encourage and nurture your child's creativity while challenging them to fulfill their true potential. Our mission is to provide high-value music instruction to those who might, otherwise, not have the opportunity. Studying music is proven to increase attendance and graduation rates as well as open up greater college opportunities for students. Join us this summer and expose your children to a world of new possibilities!

Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park Summer Program

180 Remsen St. Brooklyn Heights

Continued on page 34

SUMMER STRINGS 2015

JULY 6 - AUGUST 7

9am - 3pm with Extended Hours from 8:30am - 5:15pm

!!REGISTER NOW!!

Violin | Viola | Cello | Double Bass | Piano
Classical Guitar

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1368 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11216

info@noelpointer.org | www.noelpointer.org

718.230.4825

SUMMER OPEN HOUSE

April 18 | 10am - 12pm





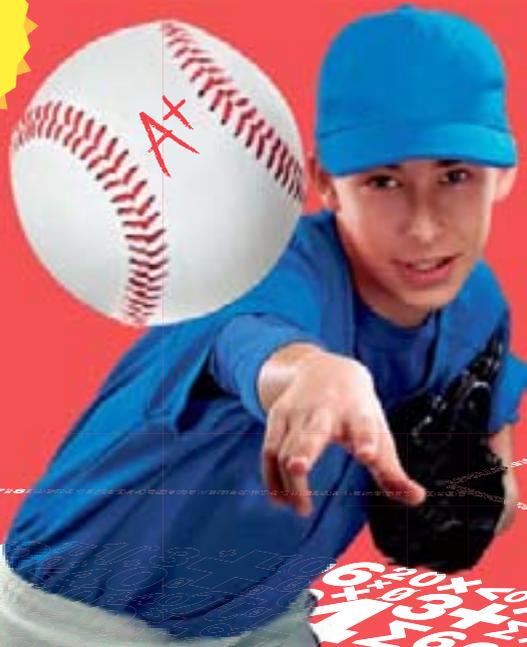
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Workshops
Aug 10 - 14
Aug 17 - 21
Aug 24 - 28
Monday - Friday
9 am - 3 pm

at the Old Stone House & Washington Park in Park Slope | theoldstonehouse.org | 718-768-3195

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Park Slope, NY 11215
(718) 369-MATH(6284)

mathnasium.com/bayridge mathnasium.com/bensonhurst mathnasium.com/parkslope

www.mathnasium.com

Camp

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 32
11201, 718-596-4900 or www.oasischildren.com

With the magnificent revitalization of the Brooklyn waterfront, Oasis is thrilled to bring this opportunity to families in Brooklyn. Oasis utilizes Brooklyn Bridge Park's premier lawns, play areas and recreational facilities. Oasis also utilizes the indoor, state-of-the-art athletic and performing arts facilities of St. Francis College, as well as their pristine, air-conditioned classrooms and large meeting spaces.

A traditional day camp in every way, Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park's program includes sports and recreation, visual and performing arts, recreational and Red Cross instructional swim, and field trips. In partnership with the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, Oasis offers an outdoor education component that includes environmental studies, orienteering and more!

Oasis Day Camp is for kids ages 3-12. Families enroll for a minimum of two consecutive weeks, a maximum of eight weeks, or any combination you choose. Families have the advantage to enroll their children around their summer plans!

PAC KIDS Summer Camp

1500 Paerdegat Avenue North, 718-531-1111 or www.pacplex.com
Variety of programs for ages 3.5 to 14. All activities are located on the premises, and include swimming, gymnastics, basketball and soccer. As always, the philosophy is to provide fun and exciting activities that create a rewarding experience for your children while always maintaining a safe environment by an experienced and caring staff. Transportation for most of Brooklyn. We accept Begin ACD and 1199. Please call for more information.

The Park Slope Day Camp

Park Slope, Windsor Terrace, Bay Ridge, Carroll Gardens 718-788-7732 or www.parkslopedaycamp.com
PSDC = CAMP SPIRIT, COMMUNITY AND FRIENDSHIP.

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

Piper Theatre Workshop at the Old Stone House

336 3rd Street, 718-768-3195 or www.pipertheatre.org

For Ages 7 – 17 June 29 – July 25

Piper Theatre Workshop Children spend their days rehearsing under the guidance of professional artists, culminating in fully staged and costumed performances outdoors at the Old Stone House & Washington Park. This season's productions include Puppetry, Shakespeare, One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest, Hands-On Film, The Music Man and more!

Ages 7-11 One and Two Week Workshops

9 am – 3 pm Monday – Friday

Extended day available

Ages 11-17 Four Week Workshops

9 am – 5 pm Monday – Friday

Programs take place in the Old Stone House and MS 51, with lots of outdoor time in Washington Park and JJ Byrne playground.

Poly Prep Summer Camp

9216 7th Avenue, 718-836-9800 x322 or www.polyprep.org

Poly Prep Summer Programs offer families an outstanding alternative to sleep-away camps. On our 25-acre campus in Dyker Heights, campers create, play, sing, swim, dance, and explore! You can choose from our weekly programs offered in basketball, baseball, lacrosse, soccer, squash or computer; our 5-week Performing Arts Camp, or our 6-week Summer Experience Day Camp. We also offer afternoon swim lessons. Please visit our website or call for a free brochure.

Preparatory Center For The Performing Arts at Brooklyn College Summer Program

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

The Preparatory Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College offers music, theater and dance classes and private lessons for children of all ages and levels. We also welcome adult students for private instruction in musical instruments, voice, and composition. Registration is currently underway for our summer semester. Offerings for the summer include a Creative Play program for ages 3-5, dance and theater classes, and private and group music study. Informational and placement interviews are currently being held. Suzuki program in violin, cello, and flute, as well as for our other

Continued on page 36

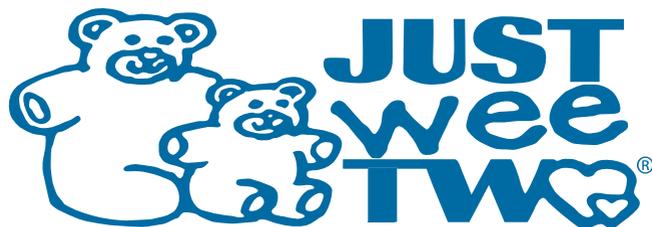
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for ages 4-17

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For 8 months – 3½ years

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111 Remsen Street (off Henry)

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

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Summer Program
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- Evening & weekend activities for teens & adults

Contact programs directly for enrollment details and schedules

LOCATIONS

Beacon 265
101 Park Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11205
718-237-0852

Farragut Cornerstone Community Center
228 York Street Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-852-6318

For more information about Goodwill Youth Services or employment opportunities please visit www.goodwillnynj.org or contact 718-777-6397

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f t i

Camp

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 34

music, theater, and dance classes. If you are interested in learning more about the Preparatory Center, you can access information from our website or call our office.

Red Tiger Academy Summer Program

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

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

Shorefront YM-YWHA Day Camp

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

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

StageCoach Theatre Arts School Summer Program

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

Stagecoach Theatre School in Brooklyn Heights is excited to offer summer Performing Arts camps for children aged 4-16 years for an intensive week of acting, singing and dancing. Students will have workshops with Broadway artists during the week as well as working on a show! Each week explores a different theme and campers work on a new Musical.

Week 1: July 20th-25th

Week 2: August 3rd-8th

Week 3: August 10th-15th

All classes divided age. All abilities welcome.

This is a fantastic week for children who would enjoy an intensive and fun filled week of acting, singing and dancing. Camp locations in Cobble Hill, Carroll Gardens and Brooklyn Heights. Reasonable rates as well as sibling discounts! Please call Beth Kent or visit our website for more information.

Windmill Montessori Summer Camp

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

Registration is beginning now for Windmill's 2015-2016 School Year and our Academic Montessori Summer Day Camp and Creative Writing Program for 3-12 year olds. Windmill offers a nurturing place where the children make friends and learn through the Montessori Method, while having lots of fun. Spacious enclosed yard with playground and pool lets campers safely participate in outdoor activities, all with highly qualified and caring staff's guidance. Local trips, weekly themes, arts & crafts, computers, singing, group games, and pool activities are enjoyed. Olympics and carnival are highlights. Four to six week programs are offered, as are sibling discounts. Door-to-door bus service is available. Call for individualized appointment.

Winston Preparatory School Summer Program

126 West 17th Street
646-638-2705, ext. 688 or www.winstonprep.edu

The Summer Enrichment Program at Winston Preparatory School provides students with the unique opportunity to participate in an individually designed program to enhance academic skills and performance. Students in grades 4-12 attend four academic classes each day as well as art, music, and gym classes from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm, from June 26-July 24. Students are grouped by learning style and skill level in classes no larger than eight individuals in order to facilitate greater learning and maximize individualized instruction. The program develops decoding and encoding, reading comprehension, critical-thinking skills, memory retrieval, organizational skills, written language expression, self-advocacy, mathematical computation, time-management skills, test preparation, and expressive language skills within a nurturing, academic environment. From 2:00-3:30 pm, students may also enroll in optional one-on-one classes to target specific skill development and/or engage in after-school activities such as digital photography, art, acting, cross-training, music, zumba, and computing basics. Students may also enroll in one-on-one sessions from August 3-20. Students from private, public, and parochial schools from New York City and abroad participate in the program. Scholarships are available. For further information, brochures, or applications, please call or e-mail.

5845 STRICKLAND AVE, BROOKLYN, NY 11234 718.251.6200 FAX 718.251.3600 WWW.MILLBASINDAYCAMP.COM

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Education for the Individual

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










June 26 – July 24, 2015

126 West 17th Street New York, NY 10011
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applications available online at www.winstonprep.edu



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN



Get glowing

Four tips for regaining vibrant skin after harsh winter weather

After enduring this harsh winter, many of us not only have cabin fever. We are also suffering the after effects from sustained cold, like intensely dry skin. We have also grown accustomed to covering up with scarves and sweaters, forgoing our normal beauty routine because, let's face it, if there was ever a time to feel yucky and sluggish, it had to be these past few months. But now is the time to spring forward and revamp ourselves.

Since healthy, vibrant skin is the foundation of all beauty, how do we get it back after these long, cold months? It starts with not adding

more damage to your skin as the weather warms up.

"My skin has been so dry and flaky this winter, that I don't know if I'll ever get it back to being healthy again," says new mom Kristine McCraig. "I just cannot wait until I can go out in the sun every day again and not be covered up in gloves and scarves. I tried to cover my face whenever I was outside in the freezing cold, and I spend a lot of time in the car, but my face is still so dry."

1. Apply sunblock

Even though we are sun starved, Dr. Rebecca Baxt, a board-certified

New York City dermatologist, advises us to take pause and resist the urge to bask in the glorious, warm sunshine.

"Try to avoid the sun and use daily sunblock SPF 30 or above liberally and reapply every two hours. Moms do a great job protecting their kids, but they forget to put sunblock on themselves." For moms, particularly, Dr. Baxt recommends the powder sunblock because it's "easy to apply over makeup as the day goes on to maintain sun protection."

2. Replenish moisture

Yet, sunblock is only part of the equation, because many people require a moisturizer.

"Dry skin looks dull. Make sure you moisturize once or twice a day. I also recommend really good eye creams, serums, or plain Vaseline petroleum jelly if needed to moisturize — nothing looks worse than dry skin around the eyes, which accentuates wrinkles."

3. Shield your face

However, Dr. Baxt points out that if your skin is oily, a moisturizer may not be necessary. Other tips for long-term healthy skin include wearing a hat, which shields the face from sun damage, and wearing sunglasses.

"They prevent squinting in the sun and reduce wrinkles in addition to reducing risk of cataracts," explains Dr. Baxt.

4. Slather on the C

While everyone benefits from a healthy and regular skin care program, "retinols/retinA is great to help reduce sun damage, fine lines, wrinkles, and hyperpigmentation, as is glycolic acid. These are available over the counter or at the dermatologist's office or with a prescription. Not everyone can tolerate those chemicals, and topical vitamin C is a good alternative and great antioxidant."

Like most good habits, having luminous skin begins with a routine. So moisturize, moisturize, moisturize, put on the SPF — and then go out and catch the rays we have been waiting for this entire, dismal winter.

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.

A SUMMER ADVENTURE

for students ages 2-10

2-3.5
Year Olds

FasTrackKids Explorers *

Educational, gradual separation class for the young ones. Sign up for any number of weeks 1-10!

Activities include:

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

Themes

July - Lets Play, August - Out & About

Schedule:

Tues & Thurs from 9:30am-11:30am

6-10
Year Olds

FasTrackKids Enrichment Camp

Sign up for 1 week or all 10!

Trip Around the World Part 1 (6/29-7/3)

FasTrackKids will travel to various regions of the world and learn how children in those countries live. Visit the FasTrackKids International Expo at the end of the week. This summer we will explore China, India, Mexico, and Australia.

Biology (7/6-7/10)

Children discover the wonders of plant, animal and human life through activities and scientific experimentation. Children take a "virtual" trip to the Amazon, the Sahara and Antarctica to learn about their unique ecosystems.

Artists Studio (7/13-7/17)

Join Ana Paula in the FasTrack art studio and be inspired by the works of famous artists such as Van Gogh, Matisse and Picasso while creating unique pieces of art! Students will enjoy creating their own cartoon story, interacting with digital art on the Learning Station, making several sculptures and illustrating books.

Astronomy (7/20-7/24)

Explore our galaxy and the concepts that hold it together.

Natural Science (7/27-7/31)

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

Trip Around the World Part 2 (8/3-8/7)

All aboard the FasTrack Supersonic Exploring Airplane! Azora and FasTrackKids will fly to different countries across the world while learning games, famous landmarks and delicious foods found in those countries. The countries explored are Italy, Brazil, Egypt and the USA.

Earth Science - Geology (8/10-8/14)

The Earth reveals its wonder and variety as children explore climate, geology, and forces of nature. Activities and games on the Learning Station allow the children to take imaginary world journeys to examine and understand the composition of the earth from its surface to its core.

Anatomy (8/17-8/21)

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

Archeology (8/24-8/28)

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

Creativity (8/31-9/4)

Children learn to see and appreciate creativity in themselves and others. Through stories and activities, they learn about different cultural styles, creativity and imagination in music, art and dance. Individual and team problem-solving skills are developed through various interactive activities.

Schedule:

½ Day Options (1pm-4pm) / Full Day Option - Ages 6 & Up Only!
9am - 4pm) if combined with Academic Enrichment Program
Early and Extended Day Options Available (7:30am - 6:30pm)

3.5-5
Year Olds

FasTrackKids Discoverers *

Fun and challenging enrichment for the young mind.

Sign up for any number of weeks 1-10!

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

Themes

See FasTrackKids Enrichment Themes to the right.

Schedule: Mon, Wed, Fri, from 9:30am-12:00pm

4-14
Year Olds

Eye-Level Classes - Stop the Brain Drain, all year round!

Children come 1 or 2 times per week plus do homework. Children focus on developing their Math (Critical Thinking and Calculation skills) as well as their English (Reading, Writing, and Reading Comprehension skills)

3.5-7.5
Year Olds

G&T/ERB Summer Test Prep Course

7 Weeks | 14 Sessions
Grades: Pre-K, K, 1st & 2nd
10% Discount off of Fall Rates!!!!!!!
(*Summer Sessions must be used up in July & August)

5-10
Year Olds

Academic Tutoring & Enrichment Camp

Sign up for any number of weeks 1-10!

Children come Monday through Friday where they have a 1 hour Eye-Level session each day, then they have fun with computers (l-pads), arts and crafts, board-games, puzzles, play and socialize with their classmates each day.

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

Schedule:

½ Day Options (9am-12pm or 1pm-4pm)
Full Day Option - Ages 6 & Up only! (9am - 4pm)
if combined with FasTrackKids Enrichment Program
Early and Extended Day Options Available
(7:30am-6:30pm)

Park Slope
150 4th Ave.
718.260.8100

Williamsburg
60 Broadway
347.987.4450

Bay Ridge/
Dyker Heights
7612 13th Ave.
718.748.3000

Sheepshead Bay
1405 Voorhies Ave.
718.891.5437

* parents must stay on premises at all times

www.ftkny.com



Party in the PARK

Creative ideas
for planning
an outdoor
celebration

BY DENISE YEARIAN

Plant seeds for a memorable birthday bash or just celebrate spring! Here are several great outdoor party ideas to get you started.

Bloomin' invitations

Create flowers from cardstock and include party details, along with a suggestion for the children to wear outdoor play clothes. Place in an envelope, along with flower seed packets.

Turftop tommy

Items needed: old pantyhose; ruler; scissors; rubber bands; potting soil; grass seed; small, flat plastic bowl with lid; permanent marker; straight pins.

Cut off approximately 5-1/2 inches from one-foot section of a pair of pantyhose. Pour a little potting soil into the toe. Gather hose around the

soil and wrap a rubber band around it to make a nose. To make the head, fill the stocking with about 1 inch of soil (nose should be positioned to the side of the head). Sprinkle grass seed on top of the soil and, without shifting it, add more soil on top of the grass seed until the head is proportionate to the nose. Gather the nylon opening and tie it off with another rubber band. Carefully turn the head over (tied off end will be at the back) and place in a shallow plastic bowl. Cut two small oval eyes from the lid, and use a permanent marker to draw in pupils. Attach the eyes to the head just above the nose with straight pin. When guests leave, tell them to add a little fresh water to the bowl daily. Within days, "hair" will begin to grow.

Prize planter

Items needed: small terra cotta planters painted with bright colors; faux gemstones; glue guns (low setting); permanent marker; aluminum foil; small stones; potting soil; flowers.

Glue gemstones around the upper, outer rim of the planter. Around the lower section of the planter, write "My Garden of Delights!" Place aluminum foil around the outside of the planter to protect it from getting dirt. Place the stone over the planter's interior hole to keep soil from leaking through during watering. Fill planter one-third full of potting soil. Place flowers in

the center of the planter then cover the roots with potting soil, gently pressing around the plant to secure in place. Remove foil.

Crazy critters

Items needed: cardboard egg cartons; tempera paint; tacky glue; wiggly eyes; miniature pompoms; hole punch; pipe cleaners; pencil.

Cut and trim egg cups from the carton bottom. Paint outsides of the cups with tempera paint. Glue two wiggly eyes and a pompom nose on one side. Let dry. Trim pipe cleaners to 4 inches. With a sharp pencil, punch three holes on opposite sides of each carton cup. Push pipe cleaners from the outside of one hole through the inside of the opposite hole, bending pipe cleaner ends to create legs. Poke two holes on top of the cup near the eyes and insert pipe cleaners to make antennae.

Other activity ideas: Have children create a mosaic design using various kinds of seeds, or create garden markers for plants by painting individual vegetable designs on flat stones.

Flourishing games

Divide children into teams and play one or more of these relay games: "Water Down." Use a small, plastic watering can to transfer water from one bucket to another. "Budding Bouquet." Transport flowers one at a time from a bucket to a vase. "Can You Dig it?" Use child-sized shovels to move dirt from a pile to fill a bucket. Another fun idea is to give kids a magnifying glass and paper bag and have a nature treasure hunt.

Dirt diggin' treat

Items needed: Instant chocolate pudding; milk; whipped cream (in a tub); crushed Oreo cookies; gummy worms; serving cups, spoons.

You can prepare this fun treat or let the guests help. Prepare instant pudding according to box instructions. Let mixture sit for 5 minutes until it thickens. Add whipped cream and cookies. Transfer into serving cups. Add more crushed cookies on top of the pudding mixture. Garnish with gummy worms. Give children spoons and let them dig in!

Other food ideas include a veggie tray; cucumber and cream cheese sandwiches; veggie or fruit pizza; chocolate-dipped strawberries and fruit punch.

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

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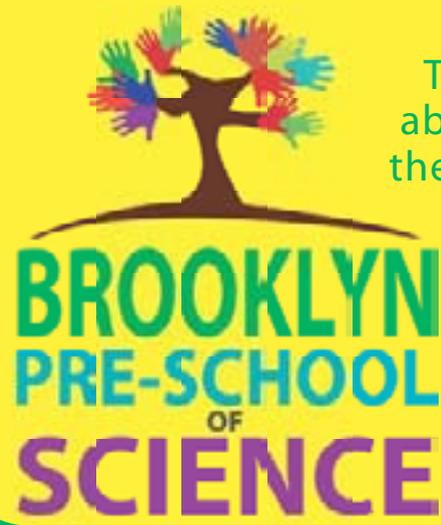
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BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

Kids and attention

To children, all attention parents pay is good

Kids love attention. To your little one any attention is good attention. If you're looking at her, then she's happy! If you are talking to her, then she's thrilled! Especially since you're her parent, every moment that you focus on her is one that she treasures.

You and I have a different definition of attention. For adults good attention is good, and bad attention is bad. You want your boss to congratulate you on a job well done — good attention. Yet you'll actively avoid your boss if you know he'll yell at you for a problem — bad attention. There's a big difference to you between the two situations.

Your small being doesn't see it the same way. She wants you to praise her for doing really well on her spelling test — attention. She's also okay when you're upset that she made a mess with her paints — more attention. The critical piece for you to remember is that your child doesn't see the difference and will gladly accept any attention that is focused attention on her. Why is this important for you to know? Because when your small being is looking for attention, I'll bet the farm that she'll find a way to get it. For instance when your small being dresses independently and doesn't get enough attention afterwards ("Look what I did!") she may start to refuse to dress on her own again. If you're small being is feeling ignored at bedtime and is lacking a solid routine, then she'll start fighting to go to bed so you're bound to give her all your energy.

So many times I find that problem behaviors in small beings are simply ways to obtain your engagement and have nothing to do with what she's supposedly fighting about. When your small being is begging you for five more Goldfish, keep in mind that she may simply want to speak with you. Find ways to connect your small being in a way that will feel good to all of you.

It's also helpful to provide attention on your own schedule, this way she'll demand less of it in negative ways. Yes, life is busy and you're try-



ing to get 10 things done at once, I understand. You do have more say in the matter than you probably know. Would you rather put other tasks on hold to calmly sit down for a snack with your daughter or have her stage a milk-pouring party in the kitchen while you're on an important phone call? Decide and stick to it.

Please note that your small being isn't making a conscious decision to wreck havoc; your child is not plotting step by step how to get your attention. It's a subconscious operation to get her basic needs met

and there's no logic and reasoning happening in these behaviors. Your small being is doing the best she can to get what she believes she needs. Children need parents' attention and will always (always!) find a way to get it. Teach them to do it in a better way!

Dr. Marcie Beigel is a behavioral therapist based in Brooklyn. She has worked with thousands of families for more than 15 years and has condensed her observations into her practice and programs. For more on her, visit www.BehaviorAndBeyond.net.

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FAMILY HEALTH

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



Worth a shot

Benefits of childhood vaccines outweigh any associated risks

I found a pediatrician that I trust for my soon-to-be-born infant. I planned on following all of her advice about immunizations, but a friend is now telling me to avoid immunizing my baby because of risks of autism, sudden infant death syndrome, and other disorders and illnesses that have been linked to vaccines. What should I do?

The growing trend of avoiding routine immunizations for children is based on unsubstantiated myths, conspiracy theories, and debunked research — and it poses an unnecessary (and in some cases, life-threatening) risk to children, as well as to family, friends, and communities.

The impulse to second-guess the need for childhood immunizations is understandable. Vaccines can be painful. In rare instances, they can lead to fever, allergic reactions, or other temporary illnesses. And of

course, no one enjoys seeing his or her baby stuck with a needle! However the benefits of immunizing your child and sticking to the vaccination schedule far outweigh the comparatively microscopic — and in some cases non-existent — risks.

Though there have always been unfounded theories that immunizations have long-term negative effects, the notion that vaccines were dangerous really caught on in 1998 with a study published by British medical researcher Andrew Wakefield. In it, Dr. Wakefield concluded that the routine measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine was a possible cause of autism. Subsequent studies failed to reproduce or confirm Dr. Wakefield's hypothesis, and it eventually surfaced that lawyers had paid Dr. Wakefield to conduct the study to lend credence to lawsuits against MMR vaccine manufacturers. In 2010 the paper that originally published

the study issued a retraction. Unfortunately that hasn't stopped the autism myth from sticking.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends a number of immunizations for infants in their first year of life. Those include the hepatitis B vaccine, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) (Dtap) vaccine, polio vaccine, and measles, mumps, and rubella vaccines. It is estimated that, worldwide, immunizations for those illnesses alone save more than three million lives per year. Getting your child vaccinated also protects your community from outbreaks of dangerous diseases. Though immunizations drastically reduce the risk of contracting an illness, they rarely eliminate that risk entirely. That means that if a child contracts the measles she will pose a risk to everyone around her, even those who have responsibly kept up with an immunization schedule.

As a parent you'll find that there's no shortage of things to worry about when it comes to your child, but vaccines should not be among them. By keeping up with your child's immunization schedule, and refusing to fall prey to the latest rumors about the dangers of vaccinations, you will ensure that your child has the best shot at a healthy life.



PARENTS HELPING PARENTS

SHARON C. PETERS, MA

Questioning gender

Dear Sharon,

Our 5-year-old son wants to dress like a girl. He says he's not really a boy and that he is a girl. What should we do?

Dear Parents,

Every 5 year old is unique. When parents ask me questions such as this I usually talk for quite a while before agreeing on useful perspectives.

Here are some general ideas that might be helpful as you think this through.

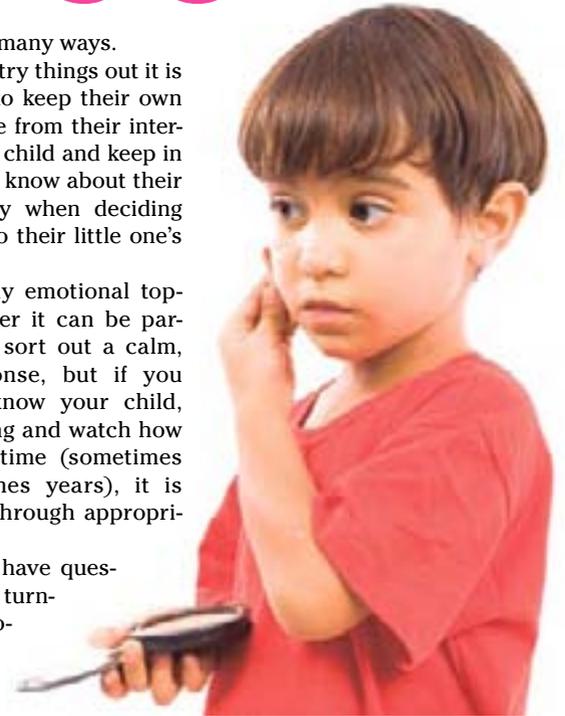
Five year olds experiment with all kinds of ideas that grow and change with time, including sorting through the differences between

girls and boys, in many ways.

When children try things out it is best for parents to keep their own emotions separate from their interactions with their child and keep in mind all that they know about their child's personality when deciding how to respond to their little one's ideas.

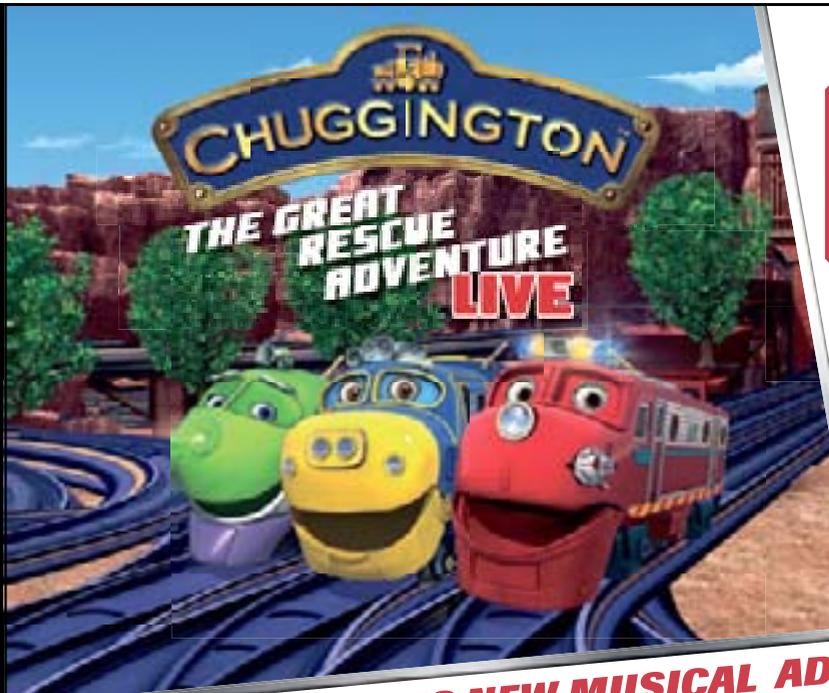
With potentially emotional topics such as gender it can be particularly hard to sort out a calm, thoughtful response, but if you remember you know your child, trust your thinking and watch how things go. Over time (sometimes months, sometimes years), it is possible to sort through appropriate reactions.

In time, if you have questions or concerns, turning to a trusted professional for support is always an option.



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

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



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Tourism Toronto

(Clockwise from top left) The touch tank at Ripley's Aquarium. The Toronto skyline. Casa Loma. The CN Tower observation deck.

Time to visit **Toronto**

Ontario's
diverse
capital city
offers lots of
family fun

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

Toronto is a city that caters to almost anyone — it is kid-friendly, multinational, and has a vibrant culture. The capital of Ontario, Toronto, is the most populated city in Canada and the most diverse. Exploring the city is a unique experience, because many neighborhoods host distinctive shops and places to eat, such as Kensington Market. One of the best ways to explore the city is through a free heritage walk or a city-sponsored and themed “discovery walk” around the city.

The city is brimming with activity, and you will not lack for something to see or do. Toronto has a reputation for high-quality, live theatre, and it now boasts the third largest theatre scene in the world.

Of course, there is a lot to like for the sports lovers because Toronto has several professional teams, including baseball's Blue Jays, the Maple Leafs hockey team, basket-

ball's Raptors, and soccer's Toronto FC. The city also has a football team (the Argonauts), a lacrosse team (the Toronto Rock) and a second hockey team (the Marlies) that is affiliated with the Maple Leafs.

In getting around Toronto, it is quite manageable by foot or on public transit. There is also “Bike Share Toronto,” which is similar to New York City's own bike-sharing program. One of the best resources available while exploring Toronto is the “See Toronto” mobile app, which can be downloaded for free and will list things to see and do while you are there. The app includes easy-to-search listings for events, dining, attractions, and shopping.

A great way to see attractions at a discounted price is to purchase a CityPASS, which is a booklet that will give you admission to five tourist attractions. CityPASS booklets are valid for nine consecutive days, beginning with the first day of use, and it allows you to skip most ad-

mission ticket lines. In the booklet, you will find your tickets, detailed attraction information, coupons, and a map.

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.

Black Creek Pioneer Village

[1000 Murray Ross Pkwy., (416) 736-1733, www.blackcreek.ca]

Toronto's largest outdoor living history museum. Take your family to enjoy a unique experience, and learn what it was like to live in rural Ontario. You can learn about Victorian costumes, take a horse-drawn wagon ride, and see the process of making maple syrup using traditional syrup cauldrons.

Hockey Hall of Fame

[30 Yonge St. between Wellington Street W and Front Street E, (416) 360-

7735, www.hhof.com]

At 60,000 square feet, the Hall of Fame offers something for every member of the family. The space showcases a collection of hockey artifacts, offers hands-on activities that challenge shooting and goal-keeping skills. There are also themed exhibits dedicated to the game's greatest players, teams, and achievements. For the tech savvy, you'll find multimedia stations to further learning about the sport.

Niagara Falls

[6650 Niagara Pkwy., (905) 358-3268, www.niagaraparks.com]

One of the Seven Wonders of the World is just a short drive from Toronto. Experience the power of the Falls and the natural beauty of the surrounding area.

Ripley's Aquarium

[288 Bremner Blvd. at Lower Simcoe Street, (647) 351-FISH (3474), www.ripleyaquariums.com/canada]

Canada's largest indoor aquarium, it features extensive exhibits and touch pools for hands-on learning. A very special activity offered at the aquarium is the "Family Sleepover." (Please note, there is an additional fee to stay overnight.) You and your family can spend the evening exploring the aquarium, participating in hands-on experiences, and learning about the animals, and then tuck into your sleeping bags in the "Dangerous Lagoon" shark tunnel. Upcoming Family Sleepover Dates: May 23, June 13, and June 27.

Textile Museum

[55 Centre Ave. between Dundas Street W and Armoury Street, (416) 599-5321, www.textilemuseum.ca/]

The museum houses more than 13,000 textile artifacts, archaeological to contemporary. The museum addresses the nuances of cultures and identities in a global context. Through initiatives like TXTilecity, the museum moves beyond its physical space and merges into the diverse communities that surround it in new ways, and in new spaces.

CN Tower

[301 Front St. W at Lower Simcoe Street, (416) 86-TOWER (868-6937), <http://cntower.ca/>]

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nation with two observation levels and an outdoor SkyTerrace.

Casa Loma

[1 Austin Terr. at Walmer Road, (416) 923-1171, <http://casaloma.org/>]

Casa Loma is the only landmark castle in North America. Your family can explore secret passages and tunnels, tour the stables, or view an exhibition of vintage cars from the 1900s. Take a look at the city view from various towers. The castle's gardens are open May through October.

Ontario Science Center

[770 Don Mills Road between Eglinton Avenue East and Gateway Boulevard, (416) 696-1000, <http://ontariosciencecentre.ca/>]

The science center boasts interactive experiences, more than 500 exhibits, live demonstrations, a planetarium, and IMAX dome theatre. Your little one will love KidSpark, a playground and learning space for children, ages 1 to 8.

Royal Ontario Museum

[100 Queen's Park at Bloor Street W and Charles Street W. Main entrance off Bloor Street West in the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, (416) 586-8000, <http://www.rom.on.ca/>]

This is Canada's largest museum of natural history and world cultures. Whether your child loves dinosaurs, is interested in history or nature — there's something exciting for everyone at this museum!

Toronto Zoo

[2000 Meadowvale Rd., Northeast of downtown at Highway 401 and Meadowvale Road (exit 389), (416) 392-5929, <http://torontozoo.com/>]

The 700-acre zoo showcases more than 5,000 animals, representing 450 species. Learn how the Toronto Zoo is working to protect animals and endangered species at home and abroad. Open year round! Bring the kids in spring, summer, fall, or winter!

Additional links:

www.toronto-theatre.com/index_family.php, <http://txtilecity.ca/index.php>

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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

The forbidden fruit

Food restriction doesn't promote healthy habits

Do you prohibit your child from eating certain foods? Orange cheese puffs? Brightly colored sugar-sweetened cereals? Candy bars? If you do, you may wish to rethink your stance.

It turns out that food restriction is counterproductive. It makes the forbidden foods all the more appealing and makes your child want to eat it more.

Last year researchers at Pennsylvania State University found that preschool children identified as being highly motivated by food showed more interest in and ate more of off-limit snacks than children who showed less interest in the foods.

When it comes to picky or tiny eaters parents may encourage consumption by telling them it is good for them. Also not a good idea.

"Kids eat for taste and satisfaction. So when a parent tries to convince a child to eat a food using nutrition as the selling point, kids interpret that as meaning the food isn't tasty," says Maryann Jacobson, registered dietician, family nutrition expert, and coauthor of the book "Fearless Feeding." Jacobson summarizes the feeding strategy she employs with her children.

"I don't try to push or oversell healthy foods or try to get them to eat less of so called unhealthy foods," she says. "Instead, I serve a



variety of food in a structured way and teach them to listen to their tummy. I stress the importance of variety and frequency over pressuring and restricting."

Does this mean your children are allowed complete access to all foods? Of course not. Instead of keeping pop, candy, and salted snack foods

on the top shelf of your kitchen cabinets, do this: Stock your kitchen with primarily healthful foods, then allow the kiddos a reasonable amount of control over what they eat.

When it's snack time, ask them to choose between two nourishing items. For example, "Would you like corn chips with guacamole or ants on a log or a pear with peanut butter?"

When my own kids were young I noticed when their "restricted" friends came over they tended to binge on our treat foods.

"Unlike so many of the struggling adults I've counseled as a dietician, I want my children to eat healthy food and be active as part of their regular life," Jacobson says. "Basically, I want them to choose healthy habits because they are enjoyable, not because they feel obligated."

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.

Broiled Sweet Scarletts™ grapefruit

PREP: 5 min. Time to Table: 10 min

SERVING SIZE: 2

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Sweet Scarletts™ grapefruit
- 2 Tbsp. turbinado sugar or granulated sugar
- 2 Tbsp. granola
- 2 Tbsp. fat-free Greek yogurt

DIRECTIONS: Heat broiler and place rack 4-inches from heat. Cut grapefruit in half crosswise. If desired, use a paring knife to cut around segments to separate from membrane.

Sprinkle each half with 1 tablespoon sugar and immediately place on a baking sheet under the broiler. Broil until sugar is melted and browning. Remove grapefruit and let cool slightly. Serve each grapefruit half with 1 tablespoon each yogurt and granola.

NUTRITION INFORMATION: 140 calories, 33 g carbohydrate (27 g sugar), 3 g protein, 1 g fat (0 g saturated fat), 2 g fiber, 10 mg sodium, 30% DV vitamin A, 100% DV vitamin C, 4% DV calcium, 2% DV iron.

Adapted and used with permission from Wonderful Sweet Scarletts™ Grapefruit



No laughing matter

Kid critic reviews emotional docu-drama about bullying

KIDS FIRST! FILM CRITIC

Jessica Burns has a secret that she's afraid to share with anyone — except her best friend Brian Slater. For the past year the 16-year-old has been victimized by another girl — her former friend Avery Keller, one of South Brookdale High School's most popular and beautiful students. What can you do when the world sees the image of a person, but not the reality? With Brian's help and a hidden digital camera, the evidence of Avery's relentless harassment is captured and finally exposed, bringing both girls and their families face-to-face with the truth.

This is a film that is shot to look like a real-life documentary about bullying, concentrating on everybody who is affected by it. "A Girl Like Her" truly shows that something that may seem so small can actually affect and mess up so many people. This movie isn't a ro-

mance or comedy or an action-packed adventure, but rather quite the contrary. It shows a drama-filled journey. It will not make you laugh. However, it may make you cry. It is about bullying, which should not be referred to as a joke.

In the film a girl named Jessica goes to one of the best public high schools in the nation. After refusing to let her "friend" cheat on her test, she starts getting bullied. She makes her real best friend tell no one of this. But the friend decides that they should do something about it. He gives her a hidden camera to wear and this documents all the bullying. Soon Jessica tries to commit suicide, and the movie shows the struggle of not only the victim and her family, but everybody — the bystander, the bully, the administration, everybody.

This movie is truly emotional. It is made to look like it is documenting



a real story. I didn't even know it was fake until the end! That's how good of a job it is! The acting is truly wonderful. This is the only time I have ever truly hated a character (the bully) and then felt pity for her. The director does a wonderful

job showing the emotions of characters and proving that bullying isn't just a normal part of life to deal with. It is a serious matter that has killed hundreds of children.

My least favorite scene is when the school administration denies the need to institute anti-bullying policies and tries to brush it away as nothing. It shows you how quickly a school will try to brush off bullying as nothing to look out for its own benefit.

This film should be seen by everyone above the age of 9. I give it 4.5 out of 5 stars because it is a wonderful movie about something we all know



is taking place around the world. The only thing I would have liked to have seen in this film is a message at the end or beginning saying that bullying is wrong and is no laughing matter.

Gerry O. — age 12

See his video review at: http://youtu.be/s_xCEC79MT4

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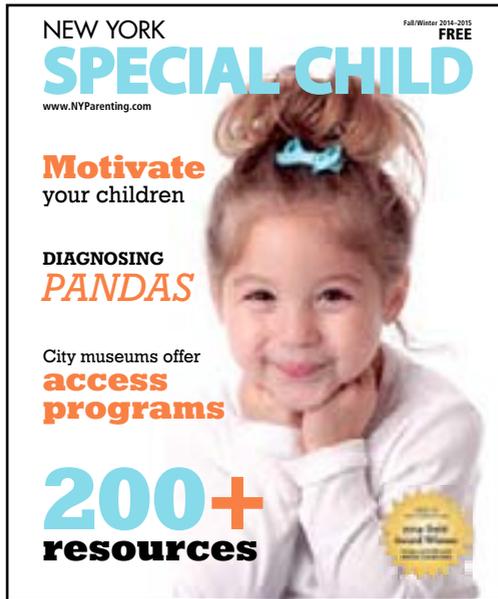
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Calendar

APRIL



Charging up

It's Electricity Live! at the New York Transit Museum on April 3, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Children of all ages will enjoy this fun workshop while spending spring break learning all about electricity and how currents travel along the subway's third rail to power the trains.

Electricity Live! April 3, 7, 8, 9, and 10; at 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 12:30 pm and 2 pm. Free with museum admission.

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

Submit a listing

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

Send your listing request to brooklyncalendar@cnglocal.com — 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!

THURS, APRIL 2

IN BROOKLYN

Easter Egg Hunt: Floyd Bennett Field (Aviator Sports & Events Center), 3159 Flatbush Ave.; (718) 470-0224; www.greenmeadowsfarmny.com; 11 am – 4 pm; \$6.

Children can search for that “eggcellent” treasure, take a ride on a tiny tractor corn box, swoosh down a giant hay wagon slide, and many other activities for the day. Hosted by the Green Meadows Farm.

Curious George and friends: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 6-8 pm; \$7 (\$5 seniors and children 2-17; free for members).

Come meet Curious George at “The Curious Commuter Train Party for Families.” George hosts this special party and shares his love of travel and exploring the New York City subways. Go on a subway safari scavenger hunt; assemble a model train and tinker with electric circuits. Advanced registration required.

Speaking Truth: BAM Fisher, 321 Ashland Pl. between Hansen Place and Lafayette Avenue; www.bam.org/visit/buildings/bam-fisher; 7:30 pm; \$15.

Teens 13 and older enjoy an evening that showcases dynamic interdisciplinary performances incorporating spoken word artists, rappers, and musicians.

FRI, APRIL 3

IN BROOKLYN

Electricity live!: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 12:30 pm and 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Discover the secrets of how current travels along the third rail to power the trains. For all ages.

Curve City Lab: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermer-



Japan in Brooklyn

Sakura Matsuri comes to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden for a weekend of celebration and culture on April 25 and April 26.

Sakura Matsuri is the annual Cherry Blossom festival that celebrates traditional and contemporary Japanese culture. Featured events include Taiko Drumming, a cosplay fashion show, tea ceremonies, Kabuki dancers, a demonstration of Samurai Sword

horn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 11 am-noon and 1-2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Curves are found all around the New York City transit system — in the design of subway stations and tunnels. Children explore the designs and experiment with whirled and twirled materials to get a lesson in curvilinearity. For all ages.

Easter Egg Hunt: 11 am-4 pm. Floyd Bennett Field (Aviator Sports & Events Center). See Thursday, April 2.

Very Very Verrazano: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 3-3:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children work together to build a giant-sized model of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge while learning about the towers, anchorages, cables and deck that make this suspension bridge an engineering marvel. Suitable for children 5 years and older.

Fighting, Manga drawing, a Bonsai children's workshop, a display of beautiful parasols, and of course, the beautiful cherry blossom trees in the gardens.

Sakura Matsuri, April 25 and 26, from 10 am to 6 pm. Free with general garden admission.

Brooklyn Botanic Garden [1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway in Crown Heights, (718) 623-7220, www.bbq.org].

SAT, APRIL 4

IN BROOKLYN

Sing-A-Long History: Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street; (718) 222-4111; www.brooklynhistory.org; 11 am; Free plus admission to the Society.

Lloyd H. Miller presents this musical foray into the Civil War.

Easter Egg Hunt: 11 am-4 pm. Floyd Bennett Field (Aviator Sports & Events Center). See Thursday, April 2.

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

Explore the world of eggs and discover how families around the world celebrate Easter. Then make your own next to take home.

Parade and egg hunt: Central Pavilion in McGolrick Park, Russell St. and Driggs Avenue; (347) 559-1410; www.nycgovparks.org; Noon-3 pm; \$10 to join the hunt; activities extra.

Children search for the illusive Easter egg and have fun with crafts, face painting and music. Then dress up and

walk in the parade showing off those bonnets.

Sensory Perception hike: Fort Greene Park Visitor Center, Enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park; (718) 722-3218; 1 pm; Free.

Join with the rangers and explore the Fort Greene Park.

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

Come and watch eco-themed episodes of this program on the big screen.

Junior Engineer: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm to 2:15 pm; free with museum admission.

Children 5 and older learn about the pneumatic subway. Inventor Alfred Ely Beach caused a sensation when he opened his experimental subway in 1870; children learn about his unique design and then use air power to conduct experiments.

Easter Egg Hunt: Park, Shore Rd. at 79th Street; (718) 238-6044; 2 pm to 4 pm; Free.

Hosted by State Sen. Marty Golden, with an Easter bonnet contest for children 12 and under.

Flax planting: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; 2-4 pm; \$3.

Help plant the first crop of season.

Dance Festival: BAM Fisher, 321 Ashland Pl. between Hansen Place and Lafayette Avenue; www.bam.org/visit/buildings/bam-fisher; 8 pm; \$48.

A platform for professional dance companies and established choreographers to show new and cutting-edge work of various styles.

SUN, APRIL 5

IN BROOKLYN

Easter Egg Hunt: 11 am-4 pm. Floyd Bennett Field (Aviator Sports & Events Center). See Thursday, April 2.

Eggciting Eggs: 11:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, April 4.

CyberChase: 1 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, April 4.

Junior Engineer: 1:30 pm to 2:15 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, April 4.

Flax planting: 2-4 pm. Lefferts Historic Homestead. See Saturday, April 4.

Continued on page 56

Calendar

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

Continued from page 55

MON, APRIL 6

IN BROOKLYN

Easter Egg Hunt: 11 am–4 pm. Floyd Bennett Field (Aviator Sports & Events Center). See Thursday, April 2.

Tennis program: Prospect Park Tennis Center, 50 Parkside Ave.; www.prospectpark.org; 1 pm to 4 pm; \$80 per day.

Children learn the basics. Registration in advance required.

TUES, APRIL 7

IN BROOKLYN

Electricity live!: 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 12:30 pm and 2 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

Curve City Lab: 11 am–noon and 1–2 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

Tennis program: 1 pm to 4 pm. Prospect Park Tennis Center. See Monday, April 6.

Very Very Verrazano: 3–3:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

FURTHER AFIELD

Outdoor adventure: Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 1000 Richmond Ter. between Snug Harbor Road and Tysen Street, Staten Island; (718) 448–2500; www.snug-harbor.org; 11 am – 12:30 pm; Free.

Explore Staten Island's Snug Harbor, a cultural center and botanical garden, on this nature hike with your guide, Will Lenihan. All ages are welcome. Wear sturdy shoes and sun block.

WED, APRIL 8

IN BROOKLYN

Electricity live!: 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 12:30 pm and 2 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

Curve City Lab: 11 am–noon and 1–2 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

Tennis program: 1 pm to 4 pm. Prospect Park Tennis Center. See Monday, April 6.

Very Very Verrazano: 3–3:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

THURS, APRIL 9

IN BROOKLYN

Electricity live!: 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 12:30 pm and 2 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

Curve City Lab: 11 am–noon and 1–2 pm. New York Transit Museum.



Hungry for more?

Take a bite with “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College on April 19.

Continuing the Target Storybook Series, and presented by the Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia, children 3 years and older can enjoy all of Eric Carle’s wonderful tales including “Little Cloud,” “The Very Hungry

Caterpillar,” and “The Mixed-up Chameleon.”

“The Very Hungry Caterpillar” on April 19 at 2 pm. Tickets are \$9.

Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College [2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort and Kenilworth places in Midwood, (718) 951–4500, www.brooklyncenteronline.org].

See Friday, April 3.

Tennis program: 1 pm to 4 pm. Prospect Park Tennis Center. See Monday, April 6.

Very Very Verrazano: 3–3:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

FRI, APRIL 10

IN BROOKLYN

Electricity live!: 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 12:30 pm and 2 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

Curve City Lab: 11 am–noon and 1–2 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

Tennis program: 1 pm to 4 pm. Prospect Park Tennis Center. See Monday, April 6.

Very Very Verrazano: 3–3:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Friday, April 3.

SAT, APRIL 11

IN BROOKLYN

Family Bird Watching: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 10–11 am; Free.

Learn to use binoculars and identify the 250 species of birds residing in Prospect Park.

Dutch house tour: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789–2822; www.prospectpark.org; Noon–1 pm; \$10.

Examine the timbers amid the many layers of additions. For adults and teens only. Limited to 10 persons per tour. Reservations required.

Junior Volunteer Corps: Prospect Park, Ninth St. and Prospect Park; (718) 965–8951; www.prospectpark.org; 1:30–3:30 pm; info@prospectpark.org.

Families and elementary-aged youth groups are invited to pitch in and get the park ready for spring by raking

leaves and other activities. Refreshments provided. Register online.

Junior Engineer: 1:30 pm to 2:15 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, April 4.

Wildlife theater: Brooklyn Children’s Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2 pm to 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Presented by MetLife. Bugs are gross, they are great — come and watch Butterfly Boogie and learn all about insects.

SUN, APRIL 12

IN BROOKLYN

Bicycle Power: Brooklyn Children’s Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11 am; Free with museum admission.

Learn all about the pedal.

Junior Engineer: 1:30 pm and 2:15 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, April 4.

Artie Bennett: The BookMark Shoppe, 8415 Third Ave. between 84th and 85th streets; (718) 833–5115; www.bookmarkshoppe.com; 2 pm; Free.

The man who braved butts and poop addresses more bodily functions at a special reading for tots who want to know and reads his newest picture book, “Belches, Burps, and Farts — Oh My!”

“The Great Gatsby”: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort and Kenilworth places; (718) 951–4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 3 pm; \$30.

Montana Rep’s adaptation captures the Jazz Age.

MON, APRIL 13

IN BROOKLYN

“Waiting is not Easy”: Barnes and Noble, 267 Seventh Ave. at Sixth Street; (718) 832–9066; www.barnesandnoble.com; 5 pm; Free (books sold separately).

Author Mo Willems will be signing copies of his latest children’s book.

TUES, APRIL 14

IN BROOKLYN

“The Earth and Me”: Walt Whitman Theatre, Campus Road and Hillel Place; (212) 724–0677; www.shadowboxtheatre.org; 10 am and 11:30 am; \$15 in advance (\$10 at door; \$8 groups of 10 or more).

Celebrate Mother Nature with a flowing tapestry of song, dance, pup-

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

petry and music. "The Earth And Me" inspires children with hope and empowerment. The children learn how they can help protect the Earth's delicate balance through harmony, tolerance and peace. Presented by the Shadow Box Theatre.

WED, APRIL 15

IN BROOKLYN

Egg and Spoon: BAM Fisher, 321 Ashland Pl. between Hansen Place and Lafayette Avenue; www.bam.org/visit/buildings/bam-fisher; 10:30 am; \$12.

Geared to younger children, this interactive performance takes children on a sensory tour through the four seasons. Viewers are invited to run through rain and falling leaves, watch stars glow overhead, sleep on a blanket of snow and chase butterflies around a flowering tree as they wait for spring and wait for Birdy to hatch from his egg. For children 2 to 5 years old.

THURS, APRIL 16

IN BROOKLYN

Egg and Spoon: 10:30 am. BAM Fisher. See Wednesday, April 15.

FRI, APRIL 17

IN BROOKLYN

Egg and Spoon: 10:30 am. BAM Fisher. See Wednesday, April 15.

"Face the Music": BAM Cafe, 30 Lafayette Ave. between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street; www.bam.org/programs/bamcafe-live; 9 pm; Free.

Kaufman Music Center presents the city's most talented teen musicians in this concert series.

SAT, APRIL 18

IN BROOKLYN

Egg and Spoon: 10:30 am, 1:30 pm and 3 pm. BAM Fisher. See Wednesday, April 15.

Pop Up Audubon-Leaf Litter Critters: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Help uncover the secrets of soil creatures, fungus and decomposition.

Adventure Hike: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Learn about the natural history of the park. Recommended for children 5 years and older.

Nature on the Go: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln



Photo by Paul Martinka

Celebrate Earth Day

Celebrate Earth Day and Mother Nature at the Prospect Park Audubon Center on April 19.

Presented by the Prospect Park Alliance, this annual event celebrates all things nature.

Enjoy a catch-and-release fishing lesson from 1 to 4 pm taught by Alliance naturalists. The children will learn how to tie a fishing knot, attach bait, and cast a line to try and hook that big one.

If fishing isn't your thing, you can get face-to-face with a real bird of prey in the Raptor Meet and Greet from 1 to 3 pm.

Participants can also help park

Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Learn about composting.

Pop Up Audubon-Animal Clues: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Explore the aquatic habitats and learn about birds and other animals that make their home near water, and

staff keep the green space clean with a trash pick up and mulch spreading activity from 2 to 3 pm.

To cap off the day at 3 pm, join in a Bash and Trash Performance and Parade, when kids can make instruments out of recycled materials and then jam out in an exciting performance and march led by Bash the Trash.

Earth Day on April 19 from 1 to 4 pm. Free.

Prospect Park Audubon Center [Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Lefferts Gardens, (718) 287-3400, www.prospectpark.org/audubon].

add to the "nest" we are weaving with natural materials.

Discovery pack: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Get inspired by nature with ready-to-go kits filled with nature activities for families. Play Habitat Bingo, search for birds, and design a home for one of the Park's many living things.

Dragons love salsa: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission. Investigate the five senses.

Nature stroll: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Noon-1 pm; Free.

Take a guided nature walk through the meandering paths of the Peninsula and search for signs of animal homes.

Junior naturalists: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 1-2 pm; Free.

Help Alliance naturalists track migrating birds and invasive plants that impact where animals can make their homes in this Citizen Science program.

Transit Mysteries: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm to 2:15 pm; Free with museum admission.

Check out the mystery relics from the museum's collection and uncover fun history. All ages.

"Aqualicious": Barnes and Noble, 267 Seventh Ave. at Sixth Street; (718) 832-9066; www.barnesandnoble.com; 2 pm to 4 pm; Free.

Pinkalicious and her family go on a trip to the beach for a day of sun, fun and sand castles! Find out all of the pink, amazing things to do at the seashore.

Nature's Helpers: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 2-3 pm; Free.

Lend a helping hand to make the park a better place. Learn how mulch helps trees, spread wood chips or protect the environment by removing damaging litter.

Family Bird Watching: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 3-4 pm; Free.

Learn to use binoculars and identify the 250 species of birds residing in Prospect Park.

SUN, APRIL 19

IN BROOKLYN

Hands-on History: Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum, 5816 Clarendon Rd.; (718) 629-5400; www.wyckoffmuseum.org/events/; 10:30 am - noon; Free.

Explore New York City's oldest

Continued on page 58

Continued from page 57

house with the whole family and enjoy hands-on learning, colonial crafts, and a scavenger hunt. Learn about how 13 people lived in a one-room house more than 350 years ago! Recommended for families with children 3 and up. Adults must accompany children.

Egg and Spoon: 10:30 am, 1:30 pm and 3 pm. BAM Fisher. See Wednesday, April 15.

A child grows in Brooklyn: St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St. between Court and Clinton streets; leah@pressshoppr.com; <https://achildgrows.com>; 11 am – 3:30 pm; Free.

Baby and family expo includes a line up of baby products, advice from experts, kid-friendly entertainment, resources and a whole lot more. Snacks and beverages provided. RSVP required.

Pop Up Audubon-Leaf Litter Critters: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Adventure Hike: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Nature on the Go: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Pop Up Audubon-Animal Clues: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Discovery pack: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Dragons love salsa: 11:30 am and 2:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, April 18.

Nature stroll: Noon–1 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Earth Day: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 1–4 pm; Free.

Celebrate with fishing lessons; a raptor meet-and-greet; and a Bash the Trash Performance and Parade.

Junior naturalists: 1–2 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Transit Mysteries: 1:30 pm to 2:15 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, April 18.

"The Very Hungry Caterpillar": Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort and Kenilworth places; (718) 951–4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; 2 pm; \$9.

Continuing the Target Storybook Series, and presented by the Mermaid

The bard of gross stuff

Artie Bennett comes to the BookMark Shoppe on April 12 with his latest installment of bodily functions.

The man who braved butts, poop, and meltdowns, Artie Bennett now addresses "Belches, Burps and Farts — Oh My!"

This book covers all things gaseous and takes children on a fascinating, albeit, smelly journey through the gas we pass. The awesome illustrations and fun facts make this a very addicting

tale for curious minds who want to know.

Bennett's silly and lyrical rhymes captivate the kids and tickle tiny tots and parents alike. His approach to this stinky subject is matter-of-factly fun but not gross, and filled with lots of humor.

"Belches, Burps and Farts — Oh My," on April 12 at 2 pm. Free. *BookMark Shoppe [8415 Third Ave. at 84th Street in Bay Ridge, (718) 833-5115].*

Theatre of Nova Scotia, children 3 years and older enjoy all of Eric Carle's wonderful tales including "Little Cloud" and "The Mixed-up Chameleon" in celebration of Earth Day.

Nature's helpers: 2–3 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Nature's Helpers: 2–3 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

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

Enjoy the eighth annual event hosted by National Grid with live music, arts, crafts and street performers.

Family Bird Watching: 3–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

bouncy house; life petting zoo; t-shirt making and free giveaways.

Sakura Matsuri: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623–7220; www.bbg.org; 10 am–6 pm; Free with admission to the grounds.

The annual Cherry Blossom festival is a celebration of Japanese culture featuring Taiko drumming, Cosplay fashion show, tea ceremonies, Kabuki dance, Samurai sword fighting and more.

Family Festival: JJ Byrne Park, Fourth Ave. at Fifth Street; (718) 768–3703; www.puppetryarts.org; 11 am–3 pm; \$2 activities; (\$4 T-Shirt; \$3 bounce house).

Puppetry Arts presents live music, games, and activities, Star Wars characters, a meet-n-greet; puppets, bounce house, and juggling shows. First 200 children receive a goodie bag.

"Manxmouse – The Mouse That Knew no Fear": BAM Fisher, 321 Ashland Pl. between Hansen Place and Lafayette Avenue; www.bam.org/visit/buildings/bam-fisher; 11 am and 2 pm; \$12.

This is the story of a strange little mouse with blue fur, ears like a rabbit and no tail, but absolutely fearless in the face of his differences. The whimsical tale is suited to audiences 6 to 10 years old.

Pop Up Audubon-Leaf Litter Critters: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Adventure Hike: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Nature on the Go: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Pop Up Audubon-Animal Clues: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Discovery pack: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Freshwater fishing: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Noon–4 pm; Free.

The rangers teach children the catch-and-release method. It's a great way to learn about ecology, enjoy the day out and experience the sport. Mandatory safety review prior to fishing lesson. For children 8 years and older.

Nature stroll: Noon–1 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Junior naturalists: 1–2 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

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

Teams plan and construct wacky, winding machines. For children 6 years and older.

Nature's helpers: 2–3 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Small is Big, Big is Small: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

The lovable character Biriki from Italy is composed of simple shapes. Watch a fun video featuring the whimsical character.

Family Bird Watching: 3–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

SUN, APRIL 26

IN BROOKLYN

Sakura Matsuri: 10 am–6 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Saturday, April 25.

"Manxmouse – The Mouse That Knew no Fear": 11 am and 2 pm. BAM Fisher. See Saturday, April 25.

Pop Up Audubon-Leaf Litter Critters: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Adventure Hike: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Nature on the Go: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Pop Up Audubon-Animal Clues: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

FRI, APRIL 24

IN BROOKLYN

Arbor Day: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 1–4 pm; Free.

How many trees are there in Prospect Park? Enjoy games, crafts and an exhibit on Brooklyn's last remaining forest, Prospect Park!

SAT, APRIL 25

IN BROOKLYN

Healthy Kids Day: Dodge YMCA, 225 Atlantic Ave. and Court Street; (718) 625–3136; www.ymcanyc.org/dodge; 10 am–3 pm; Free.

Children learn about good health and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle through fitness, sports, fun and activities. Included are carnival games; a

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

Discovery pack: 11 am–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

“Dinosaur Train Live – Buddy’s Big Adventure”: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Amersfort and Kenilworth places; (718) 951–4500; www.brooklyncenteronline.org; Noon and 3 pm; \$15.

Presented by Target Storybook series. Based on the PBS Kids series, this interactive adventure features the Jim Henson puppets including Buddy, Tiny, Don and Mr. Conductor.

Nature stroll: Noon–1 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Junior naturalists: 1–2 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Get Kinetic: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, April 25.

Nature’s helpers: 2–3 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

Small is Big, Big is Small: 2 pm. Brooklyn Children’s Museum. See Saturday, April 25.

Family Bird Watching: 3–4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 18.

LONG-RUNNING

IN BROOKLYN

From Here to There: Brooklyn Children’s Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 am–5 pm, Now – Sun, May 10; Free with museum admission.

This innovative exhibit teaches the science of how things move by land, sea and air. The exhibit consists of twelve interactive sections, helping kids explore transportation by land, sea, and air, and the mechanics that go into it.

Babies and Books with Reading is Fundamental: Gerritsen Beach Public Library, 2808 Gerritsen Ave. between Bartlett Place and Gotham Avenue; (718) 368–1435; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Thursdays, 10:30–11:30 am, Now – Thurs, May 14; Free.

Books, songs and rhymes for babies 0–18 months.

Sensory room: Brooklyn Children’s Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11:30 am–12:30 pm and 2:30–3:30 pm, Now – Thurs, April 30; Free with museum admission.

For children with autism spectrum

A day to get healthy

Healthy Kids Day is a day full of fun activities at the Dodge YMCA on April 25.

Children can learn all about good health and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle through fitness, sports, fun, and activities in this open house event. The fun starts with carnival games, a bouncy house, live petting zoo, T-shirt making, and free giveaways.

Healthy Kids Day on April 25 from 10 am to 3 pm. Free.

Dodge YMCA [225 Atlantic Ave. at Court Street in Boerum Hill, (718) 625–3136, www.ymcany.org/dodge].



disorder and their families. Space limited, first come first served.

Toys, Games, and Puzzles: Gerritsen Beach Public Library, 2808 Gerritsen Ave. between Bartlett Place and Gotham Avenue; (718) 368–1435; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Fridays, 10:30 am–11:30 am; Free.

Playtime for kids aged 0–5.

Carousel: Children’s Corner (Willink entrance), Flatbush Ave. at Empire Boulevard; (718) 965–8951; info@prospectpark.org; www.prospectpark.org; Daily, Noon–5 pm, Fri, April 3 – Sun, April 12; \$2 per ride (\$9 for a book of 5 tickets; free with Alliance Family Plus membership).

Celebrate the start of spring with a ride around the 1912 carousel.

Blooming Naturalist: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Friday, April 3, 1 pm; Saturday, April 4, 1 pm; Sunday, April 5, 1 pm; Monday, April 6, 1 pm; Tuesday, April 7, 1 pm; Wednesday, April 8, 1 pm; Thursday, April 9, 1 pm; Friday, April 10, 1 pm; Saturday, April 11, 1 pm; Sunday, April 12, 1 pm; Free.

Join Alliance educators to make your own journal and learn how to use binoculars and field guides.

Decomposers Delights: Brooklyn Children’s Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Fridays – Sundays, 1:30 pm, Fri, April 3 – Sun, April 26; Free with museum admission.

What are decomposers and how do they help the planet? Children 4 and older explore these questions.

Reading is Fundamental: Gerritsen Beach Public Library, 2808 Gerritsen Ave. between Bartlett Place and Gotham Avenue; (718) 368–1435; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Fridays, 2 pm; Free.

Kids receive a free book when they sign up, on their birthday, and every third week if they checkout two books per week.

Spring Sprouts: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789–2822; www.prospectpark.org; Daily, 2–4 pm, Fri, April 3 – Sun, April 12; \$3.

Make a small pot out of newspaper, fill it with soil and plant and herb to take home.

Nature on the Go: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Friday, April 3, 3 pm; Saturday, April 4, 3 pm; Sunday, April 5, 3 pm; Monday, April 6, 3 pm; Tuesday, April 7, 3 pm; Wednesday, April 8, 3 pm; Thursday, April 9, 3 pm; Friday, April 10, 3 pm; Saturday, April 11, 3 pm; Sunday, April 12, 3 pm; Free.

Take a tour with an alliance member and learn about the park.

Game On! Board Games: Sunset Park Public Library, 5108 Fourth Ave. at 51st Street; (718) 965–6533; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Fridays, 3:30–5 pm; Free.

Kids play games such as Connect 4, Uno, Clue, and Monopoly.

Tween Teen Tech Time: Sunset Park Public Library, 5108 Fourth Ave. at 51st Street; (718) 965–6533; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; Fridays,

3:30–5 pm; Free.

Tweens and teens enjoy books, Nintendo and Playstation videogames, and music, while participating in Reading is Fundamental.

Animal Encounter: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Friday, April 3, 4 pm; Saturday, April 4, 4 pm; Sunday, April 5, 4 pm; Monday, April 6, 4 pm; Tuesday, April 7, 4 pm; Wednesday, April 8, 4 pm; Thursday, April 9, 4 pm; Friday, April 10, 4 pm; Saturday, April 11, 4 pm; Sunday, April 12, 4 pm; Free.

Curious as to how Snappy the turtle got its name? Alliance naturalists share interesting facts about these animals.

Needlework and games: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789–2822; www.prospectpark.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 1–3 pm; Free.

Join in with staff and make a small sampler and play board games.

Nature playtime: Prospect Park Zoo, 450 Flatbush Ave. at Ocean Avenue; (718) 399–7339; www.prospectparkzoo.com; Sundays, 10:30 am–12:30 pm, Now – Sun, April 26; Free with zoo admission.

The workshops are designed to help families explore nature through play, activities include nature inspired arts and crafts, insect observation, playing with snow and more. Children receive a nature play activity guide to the park. Each workshop is led by a trained teen discovery guide.

Arty Facts: Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638–5000; www.brooklynmuseum.org; Sundays, 11 am, Now – Sun, May 17; Free with museum admission.

Children are invited to imagine and create new worlds and explore the museum.

Nature Exploration: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Thursdays and Fridays, Noon–4 pm, beginning Thurs, April 16; Free.

Children enjoy bird nerd games, nature on the go, and animal encounter.

FURTHER AFIELD

Science Playground: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., Queens; (718) 699–0005 X 353; www.ny-science.org; Weekdays, 9:30 am–5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am–6 pm; \$5plus museum admission.

Children are encouraged to explore science through slides, seesaws, climbing webs, a water play area, sand boxes, and more, weather permitting.



THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Curl up with Nadine the dog

“Open your ears and close your mouths!”

That’s something your teacher says when she wants your class to be still and listen. “Look but don’t touch” is something Mom says, or “That smells fishy” when she doesn’t believe something.

Hearing, smelling, feeling: those are three of the five senses you might use every day. And in the new book “Nadine, My Funny and Trusty Guide Dog” by Carol Chiodo Fleischman, illustrated by Stephanie Ford, one woman “sees” with the help of four furry feet.

Nadine the guide dog had a lot of special training to do her job, but she could be goofy sometimes, too. She liked to steal socks, for instance, and she liked to pretend that she didn’t know how to slide inside her harness. But she really did know how, and she was happy to wear her harness when she was working.

Guide dogs have big responsibilities: they help their humans to see. And for Nadine’s human partner, that was important. Being outside

with Nadine was “like dancing,” no matter what the weather. Nadine the guide dog could allow her human to explore the neighborhood, and on one particularly chilly winter day, that meant a walk, the smell of chimney smoke, and fresh air.

But the wind grew stronger and the air got colder, and it was soon time for Nadine and her human to get home. There was a storm coming, and “walking became dangerous.” Traffic on the street was dangerous, too, but Nadine’s human remembered that “trust your dog” was one of the rules for having a guide dog. Nadine knew a lot of things, and she knew exactly when it was safe to cross the street! But did she know how to find their house?

She led her human partner past a squeaky gate. She led her by a garbage can rolling around in the wind. She warned her human that there was ice on the sidewalk and she didn’t get distracted when they heard another dog’s bark. Nadine’s human was glad for that — but where was home?



Author

Carol Chiodo Fleischman offers a cute tale of a young woman with a smart but very mischievous new buddy — one that will give her delightful independence. That new freedom is clear, both in story and in Stephanie Ford’s colorful illustrations. It’s in the author’s notes that you and your child will learn more about how a puppy becomes a Seeing Eye dog.

Meant for 3- to-6-year-olds, I like this book for classrooms — and, if your family’s thinking about raising a future guide dog, you’ll want it, too. “Nadine, My Funny and Trusty Guide Dog” is one your child will want to repeatedly open.

“Nadine, My Funny and Trusty Guide Dog,” by Carol Chiodo Fleischman [32 pages, 2015, \$16.99].

Everything is possible in ‘The Imaginary’

Yesterday afternoon you spent some time wrestling alligators. Someone had to! Wild animals can be dangerous in your neighborhood and besides, those snapping jaws were making it hard to find dinosaur bones.

Isn’t pretending fun? You can be anyone, anywhere — all you have to do is think it. And in the new book “The Imaginary” by A.F. Harrold, illustrated by Emily Gravett, even adults pretend, although that’s not always good.

Amanda Shuffleup wasn’t the least bit ruffled to find a boy in her closet. She was more worried about getting caught tracking mud across her mother’s carpet, or maybe the boy did it. Strangely, Mrs. Shuffleup didn’t seem to notice him; she didn’t say anything about him, so Amanda didn’t, either. And that was how Amanda met Rudger.

Before he woke up in Amanda’s wardrobe, Rudger had no recollection of anything, but he somehow knew he was where he was supposed

to be. He immediately liked Amanda, and it quickly became obvious that she was the only one who could see him — which was just fine. He was apparently meant to be her friend only and he “rather liked that.”

Oh, the adventures they had! Rudger thought Amanda had to be the best imaginer ever! That summer, they went to the moon, hiked through jungle and desert, and built an igloo without even leaving Amanda’s backyard. But on the day they were spelunking near the front door, real danger appeared.

A man told Amanda’s mother that his name was Mr. Bunting, that he was doing a survey. But he wasn’t alone. With him was a silent, creepy girl that Mrs. Shuffleup couldn’t see.

At first, Rudger liked the idea that he wasn’t the only imaginary friend in the world. But then Mr. Bunting’s creepy girl showed up one dark night and she attacked him! Rudger managed to escape but a few days later, near the swimming pool, Mr. Bunting almost got him again.

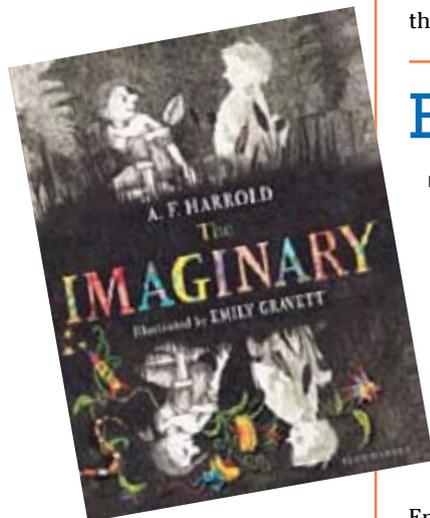
What was the name of your imaginary friend? If you don’t remember, maybe you’re not supposed to — though you’ll be sad if you can’t, after you’ve seen “The Imaginary.”

In the spirit of so many childhood classics, author A.F. Harrold and illustrator Emily Gravett invite us into a world that adults usually can’t see (or that they try to manipulate). It’s a world filled with innocence, the love of a friend, danger and frights, and wistful loyalty that’s heartbreakingly sweet; a world where everything’s possible — as long as you’re a kid.

So, yes, this is a book for 9-to-12-year-olds, but definitely, it’s for adults, too. I highly recommend it, in fact, as a perfect read-aloud. “The Imaginary” is a story I imagine you’ll both like very well.

“The Imaginary,” by A.F. Harold [224 pages, 2015, \$16.99].

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



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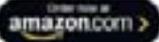
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JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Remembering Lily

It's not easy to say 'goodbye' to a beloved pet

About a week ago, our oldest cat, Lily, stopped eating out of the blue. She began vomiting a bit and quickly appeared dehydrated. She had become very skinny over the past few months, but I chalked that up to age, because she was still so friendly, happy, and lively. However, one day she was rubbing up on the kitchen chair and chomping down on a bite of pizza with the kids, and yet, just a few days later, she was vomiting and parched. I took her to our vet, Dr. Jeff Beverly, at Marine Park Vet Group in Brooklyn on Wednesday.

Initial blood tests ruled out a few suspected diseases, like thyroid issues and kidney failure. She was given fluids for dehydration and the next step was an ultrasound sched-

uled for Monday morning. But on Friday night, she looked listless and was projectile vomiting. Dr. Beverly said to bring her in at any time if she became any worse, and I did just that on Saturday morning. I was sure she needed fluids and, honestly, I was afraid to keep her at home.

Dr. Beverly agreed she should be hospitalized, because she needed IV fluids and had a heart murmur, but since the practice is closed on Sundays, he quickly set us up with an emergency care hospital where they could also perform an immediate ultrasound. In less than an hour, Lily was being triaged at the 24-hour facility.

A nice vet that I had never met before quickly proceeded to give Lily and exam and an ultrasound, and then informed us that Lily has intestinal cancer. There was a large tumor in her intestine, which is why she could not keep anything down. Then she said we could put her down that day.

When I heard that, I pretty much lost my train of any rational thought. I was just told Lily had cancer and needed to be put down all within 30 seconds. My brain was spinning, and as the vet calmly and sympathetically explained why Lily was not going to recover from this, I couldn't wrap my head around it all.

My oldest daughter, Amanda, was with me, thank goodness, and she asked if we could talk to Dr. Beverly before we made any decisions. The doctor said she'd call him to fill him in, and then we could call and speak with him. Just a few minutes later, she came back in the room and said he was coming right over.

I asked Dr. Beverly so many questions, but they all really boiled down to "what should we do?"

I didn't want Lily to suffer, but I didn't want to lose her, either. When he said that we could certainly take her home and bring her back when we reconciled ourselves with the poor prognosis, I took one look at beautiful Lily being cradled in my daughter's arms, her lethargic look, and her obvious dehydration, and I

knew we had to let her go.

I have said before that Dr. Beverly is outstanding, but he was even beyond that on Saturday. I don't think I would have been able to make that decision if it wasn't for his medical expertise and compassionate, thoughtful words.

I also would never have been able to do it without my daughter there. She was my rock. We cuddled and talked to Lily for hours that day while waiting, and then a little while after we made the decision, we kissed her sweet head and said "goodbye."

Now, even though I know it was the right thing to do, we are all still so very sad. We miss petting her, feeding her, and even talking to her. I always say "hi" to our pets every morning, and it feels strange to leave Lily's name out of the loop.

But I also feel slightly relieved, because I don't see her looking incredibly weary and trying so hard to get her to eat when it was the last thing she wanted to do.

I want to remember her the way she looked when she was healthy, a bright-eyed, loving, happy cat. The photo here really shows the true Lily, and that's the way I'd like to remember her. It is never easy to say "goodbye" to a beloved pet, but hopefully, the memories of the good years outweigh the suffering at the end. Lily had a wonderful and happy life, and that's what I try to keep reminding myself every time I miss her.

As I was finishing up this piece, I checked the mail and found a condolence card from the vet's office, and the text is on target: "Some friends come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for a while, leave paw prints on our hearts, and we are never, ever the same."

We'll always have Lily's paw print, and we are definitely all the better for it.

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.



Lily is remembered after losing her life to intestinal cancer.



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