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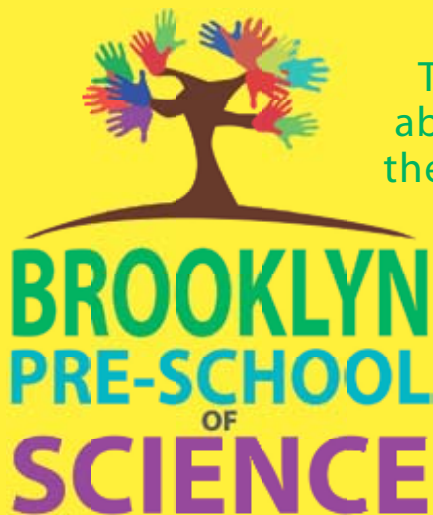
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# Proudly we salute our writers and designers

**I**t was so exciting to attend the recent *Parenting Media Association* Annual Convention and Awards Dinner in Indianapolis. We were treated so beautifully by our hosts at *Indy's Child*, and our conference got off to a great start by being whisked for an early evening reception to their Children's Museum, which happens to be the largest Children's Museum in the world. Indeed, it was really special. Many in our group also attended the opening night game of their minor league baseball's team.

Then we got down to business and had an informative and educational two days of great speakers and interactive workshops. Being



a part of the parenting media model is a truly satisfying and stimulating ongoing learning curve. Our businesses have grown alongside the sociological and technological developments of the last decade or so and have morphed from strictly

print magazines to the digital realities that are an intricate part of all our lives.

The final night was our Awards Dinner and *New York Parenting* proudly won 12 Awards of Excellence, and I was the lucky person who got to accept them. As the Publisher and Editor, I have had the good fortune to select the creative team around me, and what a team it is. So many fine talented people

whose hearts are in the right place all the time. The winners this year that I need to single out are Tammy Scileppi, Shneika L. Johnson, Lisa J. Curtis, Lee Chabin, Lyss Stern, Alison Arden Besunder, and the amazing Danielle Sullivan, who won three awards! So proud of all of them, as well as the many other great contributors, who to me are all award winners. Lastly, I want to congratulate our Art Director Leah Mitch for her fine work on our covers (three wins! including two GOLDS!).

Our first magazine, *Brooklyn Family*, is now in its 17th year and the others are not far behind. It has been a marvelous collaborative effort and couldn't have been done at all without the mentoring and patience of Cliff Luster, who has "had my back" throughout these years. I

am grateful to him and to the other terrific people, some of who have moved on, who have contributed to our effort.

Finally, I want to wish all of you a very Happy Mother's Day! Being a mother is the best thing that has ever happened to me. As I always say to my daughter, "I missed you so much before you got here!" Right?

Thanks for reading!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,  
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# Redefining motherhood

Your new role as the mother of a grown child

BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL

**M**y daughter and I were lounging by the fire pit talking about college, friendships, what holds a marriage together, and world peace. It suddenly hit me. The beautiful, young woman beside me — tanned from her summer job as a lifeguard and s'mores sandwich in hand — was all grown up. The funny thing? I realized I was listening differently. I genuinely craved her opinion on the big stuff. I also realized that I needed her, too. It was a revelation — an “aha moment.” I suppose I was also staring.

“Mom. What are you staring at?”

“I’m realizing you’re all grown up, and it’s amazing,” I answered.

“I mean, duh, mom!”

There it was ... the teenager still inhabiting part of her psyche. This

was comforting, so I had to chuckle. I know she thinks I’m being oversentimental and goofy, but someday she’ll understand and experience this with her own child.

I found that I suddenly wanted all the answers. Would this be the beginning of a new type of relationship between us? Would there ever be a day when she wouldn’t need my wisdom? My role as her mother was changing, but I am still her mother after all.

What’s a mom to do?

According to Dr. Deborah Gilboa, author of “Get the Behavior You Want ... Without Being the Parent you Hate” (Demos Health, 2014), mothering changes with time.

“Our kids all need parents no matter what their age.” She explains that the needs change, and that most adult children are looking more for

respect and love, not for rescue or unsolicited guidance.

Mothering is an ever-changing job, indeed, and one of the most difficult ones, too.

“As our kids grow and gain more autonomy, we often still expect to be in control of their lives in a way that they do not expect or want,” explains Gilboa. “The change here is to a constantly evolving and ongoing conversation about our expectations and our child’s, so that each person is treated respectfully and with clear boundaries.”

When moms have kids in college, things might get particularly difficult because college students are used to setting their own rules and living independently. However, rules associated with respect for one another, no matter what a child’s age, should be ongoing. Not long ago, I was visiting my parents the weekend of my 30th high school reunion. I told my mother where I was going and approximately what time I’d be home so that she wouldn’t worry. At this point in my life, I understood a mom’s worry quite well.

“Curfews don’t make as much sense if your child spends part of her time on her own, but it is totally reasonable to ask for (and receive) a call to let you know when you can expect that child home,” Gilboa advises.

Even if parents are still supporting a child financially (due to the cost of college or the burden of a new residence), there needs to be a transition plan in order for an adult child to become completely independent.

“Phasing ourselves out of a caretaking role is the biggest change as we parent older kids and young adults,” Gilboa states.

There is a common goal amongst moms. Simply stated, that goal is to give our children wings and to set them free as individuals who can navigate the world solo as respected and useful members of society. However, you will still be Mom, forever and always; and this means you are there to lend an ear or a shoulder when needed, to be a perennial cheerleader, and to regularly remind your child how much she is loved.

For more information:

- FamilyEducation.com

- <http://life.familyeducation.com/young-adult/parenting/51079.html>

*Myrna Beth Haskell is an award-winning author, columnist, and feature writer. Her work has appeared in national and regional publications across the U.S., as well as internationally. For more information, please visit: [www.myrnahaskell.com](http://www.myrnahaskell.com).*





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# 11 secrets of happy moms

Motherhood can be stressful,  
but you can stay positive

BY CHRISTA MELNYK HINES

**W**e know that happiness is an emotion that can come and go. But how do we recapture that bubbly feeling amid the challenges and stresses of parenthood? Here are a few tips from moms for staying positive and feeling good:

## **Lean on community**

Several moms polled for this article agreed that moms' night outs with their friends help them feel more optimistic. And science proves it. Studies find that time spent bonding with friends boosts a woman's level of oxytocin, a natural hormone that reduces stress. Check out mothers' groups in your area if you are struggling to build a support network.

## **Commit to healthy living**

Women who make time to care for their bodies enjoy a stronger self-image and feel more self-confident and energetic. Exercise, try to get adequate sleep, schedule regular massages, and make healthy food choices to feel your best.

"I know that when I am reasonably well-rested and happy, I am absolutely more patient, energetic, and empathetic to everyone in my household," says Erica Wilson, a mom of one.

## **Take time for personal pursuits**

Whether you like surfing Pinterest, training for a 5K, or simply taking a warm bubble bath, moments stolen throughout the week contribute to our overall sense of well-being.

"I try to take at least a few minutes





"I know that when I am reasonably well-rested and happy, I am absolutely more patient, energetic, and empathetic to everyone in my household."

a day outside. I close my eyes, take deep breaths, and listen to the sounds," says Melanie Werner, a mom of one.

### Nourish yourself

During the rush of the week, most of us throw meals together just to get our hungry crew fed. If you enjoy cooking, find a day when you can slow down and relish the preparation. The process of chopping and measuring ingredients is meditative and soothing. Create a feast to delight all of the senses by serving your meal on a table laid out with your favorite dishes and cheerful flowers.

### Laugh

Family life can be funny. Kids say hilarious things. Pay attention and write those gems down. Next time you need a lift, read them. Need more ideas? Look at funny family videos or photos, hang out with lighthearted friends, watch a silly movie, or read a humorous book.

### Follow a spiritual practice

Studies find that people who lean on an inner belief system are happier. You don't have to be religious to be spiritual. You can feel a connection to spirituality through helping others, nature, yoga, music, art, personal meditation, or journaling.

Michelle Hovick, a mom of one, says the "Elevation" church app is one of her favorite spiritual gateways to a mood shift.

### Practice gratitude

In a gratitude study at Eastern Washington University, researchers found a positive correlation between gratitude and happiness.

"We have found that grateful individuals tend to be happy individuals and that grateful thinking improves mood," the researchers report. Try writing down three

things you are thankful for each day — small moments count too.

### Get a groove on

Whether she participates in a Jazzercise class or switches on upbeat dance tunes in her kitchen, Jessie Mallicoat, a mom of three, says, "If I'm in a bad mood, I put on some 'dancy' music and it usually helps."

In fact studies find that dancing boosts the body's feel-good endorphins. Dancing has even been found to reverse depression and increase self-confidence.

### Set boundaries

Moms who are happier make conscious decisions on a daily basis about who and what is allowed into their lives. Switching to this way of thinking is empowering. You don't have to be harsh or hurtful to accomplish this goal. Politely decline invitations that don't fit with your priorities and limit interactions with negative individuals.

### Access good childcare

Seek reliable childcare in order to feel secure pursuing personal interests, maintaining routine health check-ups, and for date nights with your partner. A positive marriage contributes to the overall emotional health and happiness of your family. Having trouble finding a sitter? Check out SitterCity.com, Care.com, and ask other parents for references.

### Avoid comparison

Parenting philosophies that work well in one family may not work well in another. Thanks to the influx of information at our fingertips, parents have no shortage of advice. Decide which strategies make sense for your family. And beware of spending too much time on social media if you're starting to feel like you don't measure up.

"Being happy with yourself and how you parent is key to accepting other moms and how they parent, which creates a more supportive parenting community all around," says Mandy Yokim, mom of two.

*Freelance journalist Christa Melnyk Hines and her husband are the parents of two boys. She finds happiness while exploring new destinations with her family, spending time with her book club friends, and cooking. She is the author of "Confidently Connected: A Mom's Guide to a Satisfying Social Life."*



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**BROOKLYN HEIGHTS**

# Our big wins!

## New York Parenting wins a dazzling dozen in international contest

**N**ew York Parenting/CNG made its own headlines recently when our chain of Family glossies broke our previous records at the prestigious, inter-continental media competition, winning 12 awards for keeping mom, dad, kids, and parenting advocates informed and entertained.

New York Parenting received two golds, four silver, and six bronze medals at the Parenting Media Association's annual Editorial and Design Awards Competition, which celebrates excellence in journalism, design, and photography in parenting publications around the U.S., Canada, and Australia.

The sensational sweep was an all-time record high, although we have been contest winners for the last 15 years. New York Parenting publishes in print every month *Manhattan Family*, *Brooklyn Family*, *Bronx-Riverdale Family*, and *Staten Island Family*. *New York Special Child*, a magazine devoted to the issues of special needs children, is printed twice a year, and all are found online at *NYParenting.com*.

"We're so proud," said Susan Weiss, publisher and editor, who accepted the plaudits at the P.M.A. Annual Convention in Indianapolis earlier this month. "Columns, articles, covers! Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, Bronx, and Staten Island, all five magazines won, and one of our silver award-winning articles created a tremendous buzz on the internet."

Among the columns singled out for honors were "New & Noteworthy" by Lisa Jean Curtis, "Healthy Living" by Danielle Sullivan, "Divorce & Separation" by Lee Chabin, and "Fabulyss Finds" by Lyss Stern. The accolade-worthy articles included "Misty Copeland — Breaking Down Barriers" by Shnieka L. Johnson, Tammy Scileppi's "Telling Their Stories—Healing Scars (Teens and Domestic Violence)" series, and Sullivan's "Teen Disease You've Never Heard About," an investigative feature on Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome that went viral online.

Weiss and art director Leah Mitch — a perennial winner — clinched the gold for their "Super Dads" front cover



Publisher and editor Susan Weiss and the 12 awards from the Parenting Media Association's annual competition.



featuring a cute tot, and a cover illustration on a holiday issue of a gold star directing readers' eyes to children.

"This simple yet effective illustration tells the story of holiday traditions," determined the judges.

*New York Parenting's* own birth was an entrepreneurial conception.

The chain grew from a single

magazine Weiss — a globe-trotting former actress and restaurateur—created after moving to Brooklyn from Manhattan with her baby and discovering Brooklyn was a parenting-magazine desert.

"There was only one magazine and I thought it was provincial," she says. "I wanted a quality parenting publica-



tion that was sophisticated, had quality content and design, and excellent distribution." That was 17 years ago, and since then we've added the other boroughs and grown our digital presence, naturally.

Weiss's string of victories are a huge win for the entire CNG family, said CNG's president and publisher.

"I am thrilled to see the hard work and dedication Susan and her team bring to creating our Family magazines each month recognized with 12 awards," said Jennifer Goodstein. "The variety of awards shows that the magazines are hitting the right notes."



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# A smarter take on baby stuff

Mom-preneur  
helps families  
banish clutter  
by sharing

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

**L**ike it or not, clutter is a fact of life, especially in cramped Gotham apartments. Closet space? Fugheddaboudit! Don't you wish you could somehow push your walls out to make more room?

Every new parent knows or quickly learns: when your little tyke comes home, you can say bye-bye to your living room, 'cause baby stuff is taking over! Strollers are crammed into closets or parked by the front door, and storage containers live under beds, filled with outgrown newborn garb that you're holding onto for the next one, or just can't get rid of.

How much does a tiny human being really need?

In the old days new parents made do with a bassinet, a crib, and a playpen. But times have changed; we have adopted a more-is-better mindset in our "disposable" society.

Brooklyn mom-preneur Judy Bornebusch and her hubby Jan found out about baby clutter the hard way when they brought their adorable daughter, Charlotte (now almost 3), home from the hospital. Before long their small Downtown Brooklyn flat looked like a Babies R Us!

"Baby stuff was everywhere; it takes over your apartment," Borne-



Mom-preneur Judy Bornebusch with her husband Jan and daughter Charlotte.

busch said. "There's no place to store anything for your next baby, so you end up just selling it for pennies or giving it away."

So she decided to do something about it, and in 2015 launched her new business venture, Baby Grow Gear Sharing. The Brooklyn-based company provides a valuable service to local families, offering a monthly subscription service to rent baby gear and carriers that are quickly outgrown, instead of purchasing them. Brooklyn parents will have the opportunity to swap their new or gently used gear in exchange for a free Baby Grow Gear Sharing membership.

Necessity is indeed the mother of invention.

Bornebusch left a corporate career in management consulting to do something that was bit more personal. She had her daughter at age 38 and wanted to combine her love of entrepreneurship with her newfound love of mommyhood. And so the Baby Grow Gear Sharing concept was born. When you check out the website, you'll find a curated assortment of top-of-the-line gear and a variety of great carriers suited for different body types.

Did you know that on average, parents own up to 10 baby items that are only used for three months



Did you know that on average, parents own up to 10 baby items that are only used for three months or less?

or less?

"After you have a baby, you see how quickly each stage passes, and that the baby has her own opinions — and hates the same swing your BFF swore by," Bornebusch quipped.

"It's been great to see how our customers apply gear sharing to their own lives in unique ways — from testing out multiple carriers to find the best fit, to supplying baby items for out-of-town guests," she said. "One customer became a member because of her nanny share — the nanny uses a Nuna Leaf to rock one baby as she tends to the other, and uses it for naps so the parents don't have to lug a travel crib back and forth."

Bornebusch saw an opportunity to repurpose the abundance of barely used gear in Brooklyn to expand Baby Grow's rental offering, and bring families together to share and reduce waste. Her mission? Embracing minimalism and protecting the environment.

"You are going through so many diapers, wipes, bottles and washing everything constantly; it's hard not to think of the toll on the environment. There is so much waste," she said.

She knew from personal experience that buying and selling via neighborhood parent groups and Craigslist was time-consuming and the condition of the items varied greatly. In contrast,

Baby Grow accepts easy donation submissions online, and inspects and cleans all items to the highest standards to ensure safety before accepting into inventory.

Best of all, items are picked up and delivered as part of the membership package, so you don't have to leave your home.

A Baby Grow membership will save families time, money, resale hassles, and precious storage space. A basic membership, which gives you the use of one product at a time, will run \$29 per month, and \$79 means you can use three items at a time as a premium member.

That's a big drop from the more than \$1,240 parents typically spend on gear alone during a baby's first year.

Now, Judy, Jan, and Charlotte enjoy more living space in a Boerum Hill brownstone, but remain committed to a less-is-more lifestyle.

"I'm happy to be at a place where I can be involved in the community and use my new business in a socially responsible way," Bornebusch said. "I volunteer and donate to Covenant House, an organization that helps women and children. All our gear that gets 'aged' out of our stock will be donated to Little Essentials, and other local charitable organizations."

A bit of convenience in the first year of a new parent's life is worth so much!

*Tammy Scileppi is a Queens-based freelance writer and journalist, parent, and regular contributor to New York Parenting. Interviewing hundreds of New York City's movers and shakers has been an amazing adventure for her. Scileppi's work has appeared in a variety of media outlets. She has also written book cover copy for Simon and Schuster.*

### What you can share

All Baby Grow gear is listed online, includes instructional tips and videos, and can be reserved if out of stock — new items are added weekly. The service features top items in today's market, including:

- Baby carriers from Ergo, Beco, Stokke and more.
- Bounceroo & Rockaroo by 4moms.
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**LIU**Brooklyn

# Pregnant & afraid

## Author's tale of a not-so-perfect pregnancy

BY ALLISON PLITT

**I**n Nadine Bubeck's debut book, "Expecting Perfect: My Bumpy Journey to Mommyhood," the West Coast newscaster-turned-mompreneur describes her first pregnancy from its conception until she is finally at home with her child. Bubeck and her husband are both admitted "perfectionists" who want everything to be smooth sailing through her pregnancy. But while striving for a flawless pregnancy, they, unfortunately, encounter many rough roads along the way.

Before Bubeck begins her novel, her obstetrician and gynecologist Dr. JulieAnn Heathcott writes in the forward that her patient develops the condition called placenta previa. So while the reader knows right away that Bubeck will develop this condition — in which the placenta partially or wholly blocks the neck of the uterus, thus interfering with normal delivery — the way she leads up to that moment in her pregnancy, and how she endures it, creates suspense as her story unfolds.

The placenta is a vital organ to the fetus during pregnancy. According to WebMD, "The placenta is the organ created during pregnancy to nourish the fetus, remove its waste, and produce hormones to sustain the pregnancy ... The placenta supplies the fetus with oxygen and nutrition and removes waste from the fetus and transfer it to the mother. The fetus is attached to the placenta by the umbilical cord ... and is usually attached to the upper part of the uterus, away from the cervix, the opening which the baby passes through the delivery."

Placenta previa occurs when the placenta lies low in the uterus, partly or completely blocking the cervix. Dr. Heathcott describes the positioning of the previa into three different categories:

"A marginal previa occurs when the placenta comes close to the cervix but does not cover it; a partial previa has part of the cervix cov-



Author Nadine Bubeck with her husband and son.

ered by the placenta; and a complete previa occurs when the entire cervix is covered by the thicker part of the placenta. A complete previa is the most worrisome for causing maternal hemorrhage and the most dangerous for risking the life of the mother and the unborn child."

Placenta previa is usually first diagnosed in mothers during an ultrasound at 18 to 20 weeks. In most mothers, as the baby grows and the uterus stretches upward, the placenta migrates with the uterus and ends up clearing the cervix, creating a space for the child to be delivered.

Bubeck, however, was diagnosed with a complete previa, in which her placenta remained near her cervix until she was ready to conceive. This situation happens in about one in 200 pregnancies. Bubeck finds out about her placenta previa during her 20-week ultrasound. She is told not to engage in any strenuous exercise or stay on her feet for long periods of time. She is told that if she can deliver her baby at 34 weeks or later, she will have a chance at giving birth to a healthy child.

While the doctor's forward indicates that Bubeck successfully delivers her child, the days leading up to the 34-week mark are chaotic. Like a news reporter, Bubeck delivers

all the medical facts about what is happening to her body and adds to it an emotional roller coaster when she starts to hemorrhage at the end of her second trimester. She discloses absolutely everything that happens to her and her body during what seems to be a nightmarish pregnancy. As she dates each entry she recalls, the book reads like a diary, thanks to her candid writing style.

The book has pictures in the middle of it which show Bubeck, her husband, and newborn son happily leaving the hospital together, so I'm not giving away the ending

to the story. I did, however, feel surprised by the amount of stress she endures when her baby is wheeled off to the neonatal intensive care unit after her caesarean birth.

Although she does deliver her son at a safe 34 weeks, her baby still struggles with some health issues. Her depiction of her baby's condition in the neonatal intensive care unit really shows how emotionally debilitating it can be for parents when they deliver pre-term babies.

While on bed rest, Bubeck spends a lot of time discussing her relationship with her husband, how they met, and their love and respect for each other. She also discloses her difficult childhood when her parents divorced. She writes her story with the perspective of someone who has endured a painful experience, but has learned, like her other family members, that in the end anger and resentment give nobody relief.

By the time the book ends, you're cheering for Bubeck and her family to have "a happily ever after" following a harrowing pregnancy that is assuaged by a very capable hospital staff, as well as a supporting and loving family.

Allison Plitt is a frequent contributor to NY Parenting and lives in Queens with her 10-year old daughter.





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# The Montessori mind

How this educational approach promotes mindful learning

BY MALIA JACOBSON

**Y**oung children aren't usually known for intense concentration. To the contrary, kids are expected to bounce from one activity to another with the attention span of a gnat. That's why parents are surprised by what they see when they tour Eton Montessori School in Bellevue, Wash.: Children as young as 3 happily engaged in independent, focused work for long stretches.

Parents are just as surprised by what they don't see — no lecturing teachers prodding reluctant kids to complete assigned work.

"Our children are self-motivated. Our teachers don't stand over them, telling them to be quiet and get back to work," says Feltin, who founded Eton School in 1978.

This ability to focus at a young age is a hallmark of Montessori education, but it's revolutionary to parents who haven't seen a Montessori classroom in action.

Montessori learning is hardly novel — Maria Montessori's first school opened its doors in 1907. But a trend toward mindfulness in education is sparking new interest in this century-old style of education, and new science is showing how this type of learning benefits today's young minds.

## Mastering mindfulness

In the past decade, organizations like Mindfulness in Education Network, Association for Mindfulness in Education, and Mindful Schools have sprung up, training teachers, hosting conferences, and producing research aimed at helping children become more focused, motivated, and intentional in the classroom.

Just what is mindfulness, exactly, and why does it matter? MindfulSchools.org paints mindfulness as a deep, in-the-moment focus, char-



Educational pioneer Maria Montessori

acterized by self-awareness and internal motivation. In a world filled with chaotic distraction, advocates of mindfulness say it can be a salve for the conflict, impulsiveness, and stress plaguing modern students and schools.

Dr. Steven J. Hughes, a pediatric neuropsychologist specializing in attention, concentration, planning, and organizing — a set of traits known as executive functions — defines mindfulness as "sustained positive engagement." Other scientists refer to a "flow" state of prolonged, energized work that produces both calm satisfaction and profound joy in learning.

## Whole body, whole mind

Maria Montessori didn't coin the term "mindfulness," but she was an early advocate for sustained focus and internal motivation. Her meth-

ods deliberately encourage intense concentration as the best context for early learning.

Montessori's approach to motor development actually stimulates cognitive development and deep concentration, says Hughes. When children begin Montessori education at age 3 or 4, they work on motor-skills activities like sweeping, polishing silverware, and pouring. These aptly-named "practical life" activities prepare kids for greater independence and self-reliance in daily tasks, but there's something bigger going on — the development of higher cognitive functions essential to concentration and attention.

Montessori tasks like wiping a table or washing dishes develop fine-motor control, but they also activate areas of the pre-frontal cortex essential to executive function, which paves the way for greater concentration and focus, he says.

"Dr. Montessori wrote about the close relationship between cognitive development and motor development in 1949. Fifty years later, scientists made the same connection."

This whole-body approach is part of the reason numerous studies show that Montessori-educated children have an academic edge over children educated in traditional classrooms, he says.

## Happy work: Environment, schedule, and shared focus

One way Montessori promotes focus is through a carefully-prepared environment, a key component of Montessori learning. In Mon-





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Maria Montessori was an early advocate for sustained focus and internal motivation. Her methods deliberately encourage intense concentration as the best context for early learning.

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tessori classrooms, specially-designed materials — from child-size brooms to lacing cards to counting beads — are prepared to be aesthetically appealing and accessible for young children; simplicity, beauty, and order are paramount.

“Montessori environments are designed to be attractive and appealing, and to allow children to make a choice. Children get to look around and choose what they want to do,” says Feltn.

This important act of choosing one’s own activity promotes sustained engagement, says Dee Hirsch, president of the Pacific Northwest Montessori Association and director of Discovery Montessori School in Seattle. Montessori-taught children choose their own work from a palette of developmentally appropriate options that grow progressively more complex and challenging.

Montessori schools incorporate concrete learning goals into a child’s educational plan, but children are free to choose when and how to complete their work within a specified time frame.

“That act of choosing is what allows a child to make a whole-hearted commitment to their work.

It’s what makes Montessori education child-centered,” says Hirsch.

When children are motivated by their own interests, deep concentration is a natural result, she says: “Kids are choosing what they want to focus on.”

During a 90-minute work period, children can take their work through its beginning, middle, and end. Working through this natural sequence promotes competence and mastery; children can repeat the activity as many times as they want, without being told to hurry up and move on to something else.

Though the terms focus and concentration conjure up images of a child working alone, mindfulness is not always a solo pursuit. Montessori-style learning helps kids learn the fine art of shared concentration by encouraging them to engage in tasks with a classmate or two — a critical skill in the age of teamwork.

### **Mindful together**

How does this Montessori-style mindfulness benefit children? Greater confidence, longer attention spans, and natural self-motivation are a few of the rich rewards, according to Feltn.

“What’s so wonderful is the confidence they gain. Their attention spans have been lengthened. They’re going to meet their academic goals, but they’ll do it more naturally because their motivation comes from within.”

But mindfulness isn’t something teachers can achieve for students — like every other outcome in Montessori learning, students have to work toward it themselves.

“They’re not going to reach that state of mindfulness unless they get there themselves,” says Hirsch. “We can’t take them there, but we can go there with them.”

*Malia Jacobson is a nationally published freelance writer specializing in parenting. She’s working on adopting Montessori-inspired principles of mindfulness at home.*



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## Montessori Choices

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Accredited by NYSAIS and the American Montessori Society and a member of the National Association of Independent Schools.

#### C'e Montessori Brooklyn

**117 S 3<sup>rd</sup> St**  
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#### Carrig Montessori School

**100 Maspeth Ave.**  
**718-388-1023 [www.carrigmontessori.com](http://www.carrigmontessori.com)**

CMS opened in 2009 as the first school in Williamsburg to devote itself completely to the Montessori philosophy. Located directly across from Cooper Park, our children enjoy plenty of outdoor time each day. During their time indoors children are free to move about the classroom, choosing projects that appeal to their individual interests and unique abilities. The thoughtful and purposeful arrangement of each area of the classroom speaks to a child's natural sense of order, while our child-size sinks, bathrooms, materials and instruments support their drive for independence.

In addition to weekly art and movement classes, parents are a welcome and enthusiastic presence in the classroom, sharing food, music, culture or even a favorite story. In partnership with parents, our Montessori trained teachers put equal emphasis on supporting children's social-emotional development, while encouraging them to reach their full academic potential. Upon graduating from our program we've seen children show a joyful readiness to take initiative, seek challenge, and truly take ownership of their learning.

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**[www.elementalartsmontessori.com](http://www.elementalartsmontessori.com)**  
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In order for us to maximize our time with the children, EAM offers a small class size of only twelve children per program session. There are two Montessori trained teachers. This is to provide a warm, nurturing, caring and stimulating environment.

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#### Lefferts Gardens Montessori

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*Continued on page 20*



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# Montessori Choices

## DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 18*

**[www.mylgm.com](http://www.mylgm.com)**

Established in 1986, LGM is a progressive, independent Pre-school and Elementary school located in the historic Prospect Lefferts Gardens neighborhood of Brooklyn. We are minutes away from the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens, Prospect Park Zoo, Brooklyn Public Library and other cultural sites. We are a diverse and multicultural school community. We educate students from a wide variety of cultural, religious, racial, and economic backgrounds in the Montessori tradition. Our current enrollment is over 100 children from ages 2 through 11 years old with an 8:1 student-teacher ratio. Endeavoring to foster strong minds and empowered thinkers, our curriculum supports the emergent learner. We provide an environment that sparks the imagination to instill a love of learning in an ever changing world.

## Little Thinkers Montessori

**148 Clinton Avenue**  
**347-996-2688**  
**718-858-8961**

**[www.littlethinkersmontessori.com](http://www.littlethinkersmontessori.com)**

Our preschool curriculum is individualized, multi-aged, and thoughtfully guided to match each student's needs. Children in our program learn through the academic and experiential process, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, and influenced by the culturally diverse atmosphere of Brooklyn. Students learn to care for and respect themselves, others and the earth. Students in the early childhood program acquire tools for individual fulfillment, academic excellence, physical, social, and moral development, as well as confidence and independence for lifelong learning. The curriculum is focused on promoting world peace through diversity and also has a huge emphasis on healthy lifestyles and green living. The primary goal of our Montessori program is to use the "whole-child" approach to help each child reach their full potential in all areas of life. Also offering a summer program filled with Gardening, Science, Art, Yoga, Music, Dance and outside play.

## Midwood Montessori

**2825 Bedford Ave.,**  
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**718-253-3242**

**[www.midwoodmontessori.com](http://www.midwoodmontessori.com)**

We are situated in a charming Tudor "Children's House." The school provides a rich curriculum tailored to each child's pace. Children served

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

## Montessori Day School of Brooklyn

**237 Park Place**  
**718-398-2322**

**[www.montessoridayschool.org](http://www.montessoridayschool.org)**

MDS has become a permanent part of the Prospect Heights neighborhood where it has found its home and serves families from many parts of Brooklyn.

Through our continuing affiliation with the American Montessori Society, the Parents League and the Brooklyn Early Childhood Directors Association, we strive to provide excellent early childhood education as part of the broader Brooklyn community. Our school is a community of families, children and educators using Montessori philosophy to guide and inspire a joy of learning both in and outside of the classroom. We are an inclusive community of choice that values diversity, excellence in early childhood education, and continuous learning.

Our core values take our mission to the next step, allowing us to focus on what's important in what we do at the school. We strive to follow our mission and core values in every day and every activity at our school.

## Stuyvesant Heights Montessori

**644 MacDonough Street**  
**347-295-1100**

**[www.stuyvesantheightsmontessori.com](http://www.stuyvesantheightsmontessori.com)**

**The Gathering Space (an extension of Stuyvesant Heights Montessori)**  
**265 Decatur Street**  
**347-240-6363**

**[www.gatheringspaceschool.com](http://www.gatheringspaceschool.com)**

Stuyvesant Heights Montessori is committed to maintaining its leadership in Montessori education. Our mission as educators and parents is to foster independent, confident, academically prepared, and socially responsible citizens, who will be life-

*Continued on page 22*





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# Private/Independent School Guide

## Montessori Choices

### DIRECTORY

*Continued from page 20*

long learners and problem solvers. We will grow and evolve to meet the needs of our children, parents, and community.

Guided by the educational principles of Dr. Maria Montessori, we inspire the development of the individual child in a safe, supportive environment that gives the freedom to explore. We have unwavering confidence in the giftedness of all children. Your preschooler will realize their fullest potential in a child-centered environment where it is safe for them to explore with all of their senses, have successes, make mistakes and enjoy learning.

At The Gathering Space, the mission of Stuyvesant Heights Montessori continues. Along with a full program for the school year, we also offer interim and summer camp programs at this location.

#### Williamsburg Montessori

450 Kent Ave.,  
718-384-3400

[www.williamsburg-montessori.org](http://www.williamsburg-montessori.org)  
[info@williamsburg-montessori.org](mailto:info@williamsburg-montessori.org)

Our school opened in January 2014 with a small group of dedicated families and teachers for children ages 3 months to 6 years. We are now beginning our second year of a wonderful Lower Elementary program for children 6-9 years old, and a brand new classroom expansion to be completed Summer 2016! Our lead teachers are all fully trained in the Montessori Method of teaching, and our space is light and beautiful and

filled with natural Montessori-created materials. Our school philosophy is based on love and respect for each child. Our warm and loving school environment provides each child with the joy of learning and allows and encourages each child to realize their fullest potential in all areas of life.

We are thrilled to be part of the growing Montessori community in Brooklyn. We invite you to visit our website at [www.williamsburg-montessori.org](http://www.williamsburg-montessori.org) for details on our admissions process, and to learn more about our wonderful school.

#### Windmill Montessori School

1317 Avenue T  
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[www.windmillmontessorischool.org](http://www.windmillmontessorischool.org)

For over 70 years our school has been a peaceful place to learn, with an environment that encourages your child to progress at his/her own pace. The family-oriented Montessori method nurtures students in grades Pre-k to 8th, emotionally and academically, promoting a sense of purpose, a love of learning and civility. Small classes meet the students' individual needs. Curriculum-based trips, from puppet shows to museums, culminate in JHS overnights "Learning About History By Living It," with trips to Boston, Gettysburg and Williamsburg, VA; and "Meeting Our Lawmakers" in Albany and Washington, D.C. French, yoga, phys. ed., music, art, and computer skills enliven the school day.

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# You've gotta have ARTS

## What kids really learn from an arts education

BY LELA NARGI

**I**t's a late evening in early December and I'm sitting with my tween daughter in a stiflingly heated, baldly lit, packed-to-the gills auditorium near Coney Island, waiting for Mark Twain Junior High School's winter concert to begin.

We've come out to see my daughter's friend sing with her seventh-grade choral class — the same friend who, a week earlier, joined me to watch my daughter dance in a production of "The Nutcracker." It promises to be a long night, with three grades' worth of choral, band, and orchestra performances — each. But I'm used to these sorts of engagements. As the parent of a kid who's been lucky enough to attend public schools that vigorously buck the current trend of defunding arts programs, I've been sitting in on biannual music, dance, drama, photography, and broader "talent" shows since my daughter was in pre-K. I hardly give the enterprise any thought.

Arts education has been a big educational talking point for years, but possibly never more than since the advent of the test-driven Common Core curriculum. Across the country the arts have been cast aside in favor of reading comprehension and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects — as well as the high-stakes tests that supposedly determine a child's competency in them. Yet the findings of multiple studies champion the ability of painting, drumming, ballroom dancing, and playwriting to enhance creativity, fine motor skills, and even language development in our kids —

with even more significant and lasting boons for low-income children. Many parents with kids who have access to arts classes through school accept these benefits as a given. But those particular skills are not on my mind as the lights in the auditorium dim and the first orchestral group streams onto the Mark Twain stage.

The students are wearing the customary on-stage uniform of white shirts and black bottoms. They march purposefully out from the wings in a steady and orderly manner, delicately carrying their instruments. They quietly find their seats, set their music on their stands, and follow along with their section leaders in tuning their instruments. When Jamie Baumgardt, Mark Twain's strings teacher, appears on stage they stand, then await her cue to sit again. As anyone who's ever watched an orchestra knows, this is business as usual. But if you've ever spent any time with a large group of rabid tweens and teens, you know how exceptional this sort of behavior is.

And if you're an educator, you know it even more acutely. I've listened to my sister-in-law, a 20-year veteran of elementary school classrooms, bemoan the mounting inability of her students to sit still and focus. She chalks it up to the use of smartphones and tablets, devices that encourage them to eschew human interaction and reward them for making fast, unconsidered decisions. For years my husband taught literature to city community college students and every night came home with frustrated stories of kids who didn't know how to behave in his

classroom: they truly didn't know they shouldn't text and take phone calls, didn't know they shouldn't gobble sandwiches and bags of candy, didn't know they shouldn't listen to music through one headphone as he led them (or attempted to lead them) in discussions of Kafka and Chinua Achebe. Children are losing their understanding of basic courtesy, and in the process, are becoming ever more removed from their peers and larger society. With this loss, life becomes less pleasant and more challenging for all of us. Because the loss is palpable everywhere we go. Think of the people texting through movies. Refusing to let you pass as you haul heavy grocery bags down the sidewalk. Shoving you aside to get onto the subway car first.

And this is what I'm thinking about as the strings students finish their performance, again await Ms. Baumgardt's cue to rise, and quickly, silently take their bows and leave the stage. An orchestra has many governing rules. To survive and thrive in this setting, an orchestra member not only has to know them, but she has to tacitly agree to follow them. As these rules govern how members of an orchestra treat their leaders, their equals, and the audience that has come to see them — in addition to expectations for their own personal responsibility to practice — an orchestra, quite simply, offers a blueprint for how to behave in a society.

"My music students learn professionalism and that, regardless of the context of the setting, there are times and places to be professional," Ms. Baumgardt tells me. "Running around in the park you can be kids





and throw Frisbees. But in a professional setting there are expectations. What values should musicians have that translate to the rest of their lives?"

Plenty.

Do we want our children to be able to make eye contact with friends and strangers as they politely converse with them? Do we want them to be able to show empathy for others, both locally and globally? Do we want them to understand the positive influence of their hard work, not only on their own development, but on the achievements of an affiliated group? Thanks to the efforts of Ms. Baumgardt and other teachers of music, dance, drama, and plastic arts such as sculpture and drawing, they're getting an excellent footing.

"I show them that being commit-

ted leads to success, and that can make you feel great about yourself," says Ms. Baumgardt. "But it's also about the bigger picture. The efforts they contribute, in the long run, are going to make everyone successful."

In some cases, that even includes their own parents. As my daughter's friend takes the stage with her fellow singers, a dad sitting in front of me becomes animated. After snapping the obligatory photos with his stage-obscuring iPad, he begins to wave his arms over his head, trying to get his kid's attention. She ignores him. He tries again. And again. She finally acknowledges him with the meagerest of nods. By behaving professionally, as she's been taught, she's given her own father a subtle clue about how to behave with professionalism and courtesy. Hopefully, that tiny trend will radiate.

Regardless of all the important behaviors that arts programs teach our kids (when they're fortunate enough to have them), just the very fact of their existence is important in our children's development. My daughter is here tonight to show support for her friend, just as her friend came out to support her a week earlier. The older they get, and the more serious about their various artistic pursuits, the more supportive they become for each other. Empathy (in the plastic arts, critiques would be miserable without empathy) is built right into the framework.

And empathy — along with discipline, listening skills, manners, and the ability to articulate and to work as a team — will serve these kids whether or not they eventually choose careers in any arts-driven field. Sarah, a violinist in Ms. Baumgardt's eighth-grade ensemble, wants to be a doctor — and feels the emotional connection she's developed to music will help her have an emotional connection to her future patients. Tricia, an eighth-grade violinist, thinks teamwork and intuition are the two lessons she's learned from music that will be most valuable to her possible future career as a children's dentist. Ultimately, the goal of arts education is not to churn out professional artists. As Mark Twain's principal, Karen Dittola, puts it so succinctly, "By helping children learn these crafts, we're helping them grow as people."

There isn't any goal finer.

*Lela Nargi is a Brooklyn-based journalist who writes about parenting, travel, books, and food. She's also the author of "The Honeybee Man" and other books for children.*



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*Continued on page 28*

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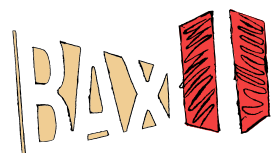
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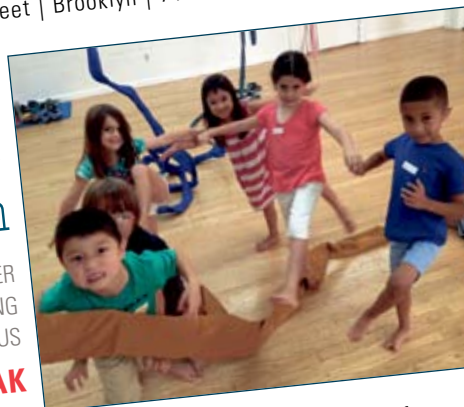
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BY PAUL MEKLEIN



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*Continued from page 26*

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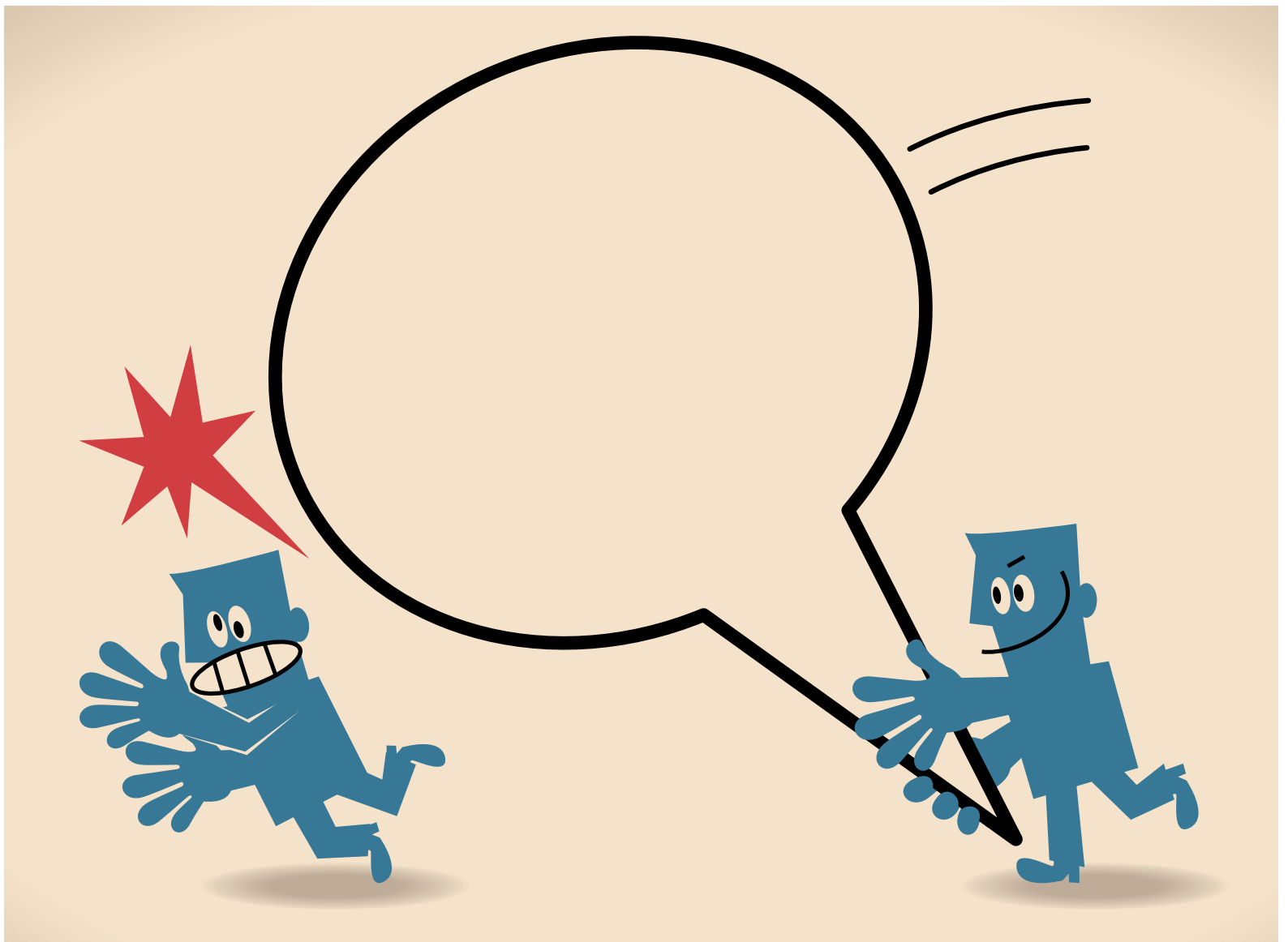
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# Words can sting

In today's  
toxic online  
climate, a  
simple plea  
for civility

BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-  
TIEMAN

**Y**ears ago, when my knees were much younger, I ran four miles a day. One late-summer morning, I set off under ideal conditions with a clear sky, low humidity, and lovely breeze. I was reveling in the euphoria that often accompanies exercise when suddenly a yellow jacket flew in my mouth and stung me. Instinctively, I spit the bee out, but its stinger lodged in the roof of my mouth. I frantically yanked it from my palate just as the pain message reached my brain. Instantly, it felt like I had been kicked

in the throat. I was stunned by the intense agony that such a tiny creature could inflict.

This incident came to mind recently during a moment of free association triggered by current social media posts. The swarm of venomous words flying frantically in search of their mark was striking. What happened to the claim that social media was going to improve interpersonal communication and strengthen relationships? It certainly is not substantiated by the current prevailing online climate. Apparently increasing the available forms of communication does not automatically improve the quality of communication. Every-

where, from Facebook to websites to news feeds, sarcasm, accusations, generalizations, aspersions, and downright vilification are rampant.

We are in the midst of a presidential campaign that has become verbally toxic, while at the same time, in classrooms all over America, our children are required to attend anti-bullying training. The potential future leaders of our country are epitomizing the very behavior our children are being warned not to exhibit. How can we, as adults, expect more of our children than we do of ourselves? When my 16-year-old son observed, "It doesn't seem fair that we are expected to be more mature



Builders are warned to measure twice, cut once. An equally safe policy is think twice, speak once, (or, better yet, not at all).

than the grown ups,” I had to agree. I replied, “It isn’t fair, but it will be worth the effort,” which launched us into a discussion about the power of words and using freedom of speech responsibly.

Here are highlights of the conclusions drawn from our conversation:

### Words can hurt

They may not break bones, but words can break hearts and spirits. When used as weapons, words can leave deep, lasting scars that interfere with and sometimes prevent fulfilling individual potential. Whether spoken or written, words can be either constructive or destructive.

As Frederick Douglas observed, “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken adults.” Choose words that nurture rather than destroy.

### Mind what you say

Lately we seem enamored with people who “just say what’s on their mind” as though it were an admirable quality. But just because someone says what’s on his mind does not make it true, accurate, or even real. Oftentimes he is merely expressing his opinion, which may or may not be based in fact. The fact is you cannot say what is not on your mind. so mind what you say.

### Think first

Becoming an adult means realizing that it is not necessary, or even desirable, to say whatever comes to mind. A hallmark of maturity is the ability to filter and edit thoughts before expressing them. Using forethought demonstrates consideration and respect for those with whom you are communicating.

Like it or not, there are repercussions from the things we say. Freedom of speech does not guarantee freedom from accountability. Builders are warned to measure

twice, cut once. An equally safe policy is think twice, speak once, (or, better yet, not at all). Sometimes the most powerful thing to say is nothing.

### Etiquette rules

When it comes to communication, there is no substitute for good manners and empathy. Practicing common courtesy increases the likelihood of being politically correct. Speak the way you want to be spoken to. Mark Twain wrote, “Kindness is the language the blind can see and the deaf can hear.”

### Final words

- You can be honest without being cruel.
- You can disagree without being derogatory.
- You can’t take back words. If you said it, you thought it, whether you meant it or not.
- No one can put words in your mouth.
- What someone says to you reveals more about him than it does about you.
- Profanity and vulgarity should not be confused with wit, maturity, sophistication, or intelligence.
- Shouting might get you noticed, but speaking gently is more likely to get you heard.
- It is not what you say or how you say it that matters. It is what you say and how you say it that matters.
- For your words to mean anything, your actions must match them.
- Reread your message before hitting send.

Fortunately my encounter with the yellow jacket resulted in a full recovery. The pain subsided after a few hours leaving me with only an unpleasant, albeit now somewhat amusing anecdote. Those attacked by words do not always make such a quick or complete recovery. The damage can last a lifetime. Perhaps if the words we aim at others got stuck in our throat and caused us the pain we may inflict on them, we would exercise more caution before opening our mouths. Use your words to sustain, not sting.

*Carolyn Waterbury-Tieman is a resident of Lexington, Ky. She has been married for 29 years and has two sons. She spent 15 years in various agencies and clinics as a family therapist and parent educator and has written extensively on the topic of parenting. To contact her, please e-mail parent4life@yahoo.com.*



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## JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

# Cross on the green?

## New York's streets are getting more dangerous

If you're like many New Yorkers, you've likely noticed the various cameras installed on busy streets in an attempt to identify and fine speeding drivers. With the quick flash of a camera light, a speeding car's license plates are photographed and a summons is mailed home to the offender. You've also likely heard complaint after complaint about the cameras' existence, such as, "It's all for the city to find ways to get extra money." These speeding cameras do, in fact, require the speeding drivers to pay a fine, but they are actually there to save lives.

When we were kids, we learned to "cross on the green and not in between" and by following this rhythm,

mic verse, we were supposed to be safe on the city streets. Drivers cannot always see people darting out into the middle of the street, but that is not the way many people end up getting hit by cars. Countless pedestrians wait for the green light, look both ways, and proceed to walk across the street while obeying all traffic rules and are hit when cars turn on them. In the first three months of this year, 19 pedestrians were killed by cars while crossing the street.

There is no doubt that drivers have become more aggressive. Just ask any parent, or even better, crossing guard, outside any city school during morning school drop-off. I see it at my son's school, which is located on an otherwise quiet block fully monitored by competent and caring crossing guards (this is not a given, trust me). Between 7:45 and 8:10 am, the cars are sharply turning, zooming past double parkers, and often driving recklessly. You would think people

would be more careful outside a school when hundreds of kids are out in the streets, but it seems that they are just angrier and in a hurry,

as is evident by their non-compliance to even stop or slow down, not to mention their gestures and rants. Some cars do not even stop for crossing guards who are poised out in the streets risking their own lives. (A parent turned the corner of the school this past week while staring down at her phone, and nearly ran right over our crossing guard.) Once the kids get into school, the traffic drops dramatically, although you will always find incompetent drivers no matter what time it is.

A few years ago, my son and I were hit while crossing the street. Thankfully, while we suffered injuries, we are still here. I can't explain the horror of watching your 7 year old go

down face first on the concrete. It's something I have replayed in my head way too many times. We were across the street from my home. My son had just gotten off the school bus and we crossed while other kids and moms crossed at the opposite corner. This busy corner has an elementary school on it and everyday, the cars trying to get to the Belt Parkway turn haphazardly onto people trying to cross the street with the green light. Residents here advised (after the fact) to not even cross at the corner; but rather walk up to the next street and cross, where there are not as many drivers turning to get down to the highway. Now keep in mind, the highway is a good five blocks or so down from me, so they will still encounter various lights before then. Still, they are in a hurry.

As a result of this, I am hyper vigilant every single time I cross the street. A day does not go by that I don't see a driver get "this close" to a pedestrian crossing, or zoom through a red light when the pedestrian has already received the green light to walk. I have drilled into my kids' heads the need to wait for the green, but then look around. Do not ever blindly step out just because you get a green light. Long before kids learn defensive driving, they must learn defensive walking. And the last time I remember, pedestrians had the right of way, but that just does not happen anymore.

Could it be that besides just really bad drivers, of which there are many, our self-obsessed culture has infiltrated nearly every aspect of life? People are less willing to wait, less likely to empathize for the other person, and everything has to happen now. So I welcome the speed cameras. If they cause people to slow down and pay attention I'm all for it. We wouldn't need them if people acted responsibly behind the wheel, and they can help save lives.

*Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, is a writer and editor living in New York City. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find Sullivan on her blog, Some Puppy To Love.*







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# 10 last-minute tips for day camp

BY DENISE YEARIAN

**C**amp season is upon us. But before sending your child to day camp, here are 10 last-minute suggestions to make sure it's the best experience for everyone:

## 1. Fill 'er up

Bring one bottle of water that has been cooled in the refrigerator and a second one that has been in the freezer. As the day wears on, the frozen water will melt and provide cool refreshment for your child.

Spray bottles are a great idea, too. They keep the face and body cool in the hot sun.

## 2. It's a scorcher

Apply sunscreen to your child's skin before he leaves home, and send the tube along for later reapplication. Avoid sending tanning lotion with little or no SPF, or sunscreen that contains glitter, as it can reflect light and cause sunburn. Consider sending along a hat for extra protection.

## 3. Bug off

If your child is going to be out in a natural environment, he should wear insect repellent. Look for a lotion formula that is safe for children; avoid sprays. When camp is over, follow up with a tick check.

## 4. All decked out

One no-no camp directors always see is children coming with the wrong outfit. Some kids want to pick out their own clothes, but if they have chosen black jeans and a dark T-shirt, it may not be the best option.

Dress your child for comfort, safety, and appropriate temperatures. Proper shoes are important, too, particularly if he is playing outside. Avoid strappy sandals and flip flops; opt for sneakers.

## 5. Name it and claim it

Any item brought to camp should have your child's name, address, and



phone number on it in case it gets left behind. It also avoids confusion if identical items are brought by two children.

## 6. Time out from tech toys

Do not bring valuable items such as handheld games or cellphones. Day camp programs are designed to provide an enriching experience, and your child should be engaging in these activities rather than playing with electronics.

If these items are brought, they may be confiscated and returned at the end of the day in hopes your child gets the message.

## 7. Pills, pains, and other problems

All camps have forms for parents to list medications their child is taking. But if you take your child off a medication for the summer, the camp needs to know that, too, because it could cause an extreme change in behavior.

Allergies are another issue to make counselors aware of, be it insect or food related.

Equally important is to share other concerns with camp staff, such as if your family is going through a divorce or has experienced a recent death, as this might affect how your child interacts throughout the day. Camps look out for the physical and emotional needs of a child, so the more

information you provide, the better equipped the staff will be.

## 8. Help is on the way

Having an emergency contact person is vital. Even more important is that the designated person knows you have written her name down.

Every year, camps have situations where they call the emergency contact person, and she was not informed she was designated as such. Before listing a person's name on the form, let her know and make a plan for how an emergency should be handled.

## 9. Beef yer' brain

Read the materials the camp gives you — policies, procedures, and planned activities. If you know what to expect and what is expected of you, things will run much smoother.

Most camps have a weekly schedule, so parents know about the upcoming activities. Talk with your child about the planned activities. If she cannot participate because of health reasons, make sure you (not your child!) inform the camp.

## 10. Getting to know you

Find out if there is an open house where you can meet the staff and see the facility prior to the first day of camp. If not, make other arrangements to introduce yourself to those who will be caring for your child. It is important for the camp directors and counselors to know you, so they can keep you informed on how things are going for your child.

Finally, encourage your child to enjoy the experience. Mark the first day of camp on the family calendar and do a countdown. Help your child develop a checklist of items needed. And don't forget to share your own camp stories. Remind your child to do his best, obey the rules, be respectful of others, and have a great time!

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





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DEAR  
DR. KARYN  
DR. KARYN GORDON

# Eight tips for young people at new jobs

**W**hat if you found the answers to every test you had to write? What if you knew exactly what your spouse wanted from you to have a thriving marriage? What if you knew exactly what you needed to do to get the next promotion? It sounds like a fairy tale, but it's a lot more realistic than we think. The common thread in all of these examples is understanding what the other person is looking for and his values! The great news is if we spend the time to dig and discover these answers, we can use them to create our own cheat sheet to perform more effectively in all parts of our life (home and work)!

As I work with teenagers 16–20 years old, and young adults 21–35 years old, many of them feel anxious about their role in the workforce. They may come across as overly confident (or even arrogant), but what I've learned while working closely with them is that many of them feel anxious about their life and career, often wondering:

- What if I'm not doing a good enough job?
- What if my boss doesn't like me?
- What if I don't get the promotion?
- What if I get fired?
- What if I've chosen the wrong career direction?

"What if" thoughts drive anxiety and one of the best ways to deal with anxiety is to have a strategy plan! So this month I offer these practical tips so teens can feel empowered. For most individuals, having a plan and taking action is the surest way to decrease our anxiety and increase our confidence. Enjoy!

## 1. Talk it out — don't just quit!

One of the biggest obstacles I have observed is that when conflicts occur at work, people keep their frustrations to themselves — or worse, start backstabbing. This



creates a toxic office culture and solves nothing!

Be courageous, and if you're frustrated with your boss or fellow employees, have the guts to speak to them directly. Voice your frustrations. Listen to how they perceive the situation, and try coming up with solutions. The reality is, conflicts will happen at all jobs. The way they are handled has much more potential to cause problems than the conflict itself.

Don't just quit — use conflict as a "character-building opportunity" (I know it's something that a parent would say, but it really is true). Quitting is simply the easy way out — not the best way!

## 2. Ask — don't demand

This is one of my favorite simple tips. When people demand (even in the nicest tone) it often comes across as an attitude of entitlement and can really rub people the wrong way. Instead of saying "I need to have Friday off to go to a doctor's appointment," try saying "I need to schedule a doctor's appointment. Is it okay if I can take some time off on Friday?" Making requests in the form of a question comes across as being much more respectful to older generations.

## 3. Find a mentor

I'm convinced that one of the best strategies to make ourselves



more employable and learn great skills — and also deal with generational gaps — is mentoring! Baby boomer traditionalist managers have been around longer, and they have an incredible amount of wisdom and experience to share with the younger generations, but here's the trick: teens and young adults have to be the ones to take the initiative!

Managers are busy, so don't expect them to pursue you and maintain this relationship. When you take the lead on this, you'll be surprised how many managers are thrilled that someone is asking them for their advice!

#### 4. Ask and manage expectations for feedback

If you need more feedback (which I often hear from teens and young adults) tell your boss — but again, phrase it as a question, not a demand. Ask how often you should expect feedback to help manage your own expectations.

One young woman I coached asked her boss, "I really want to do a great job for you. So the more I know how I'm doing, the better I will be able to meet your expectations. What is a realistic expectation I should have in terms of feedback? Monthly? Quarterly? Annually?"

#### 5. Be appreciative

One of the most basic needs all people have, regardless of their generation, is the need to be appreciated! When you appreciate something that your boss, your manager, or your fellow colleague has done don't just tell them or drop them a thank-you email — buy personalized stationary and mail them a card! Set yourself apart. Make a statement and voice your appreciation!

Teens and young adults may prefer to receive a digital thank you, but remember who you are talking to — older generations often prefer the "good old-fashioned way" (in person, over the phone, in a card), and they will appreciate your effort.

#### 6. Challenge yourself

Don't wait for your employer to provide ongoing training. Take the initiative and seek further training for yourself. Take leadership courses. Advance your skill base. Meet for coffee or lunch with wiser and more experienced

colleagues, and learn from them. The more you do, the more you learn, and the more employable you become.

#### 7. Be open to feedback, even if it hurts

Sometimes feedback hurts. When we receive negative feedback we often get defensive and dismiss it, especially if the communication of this feedback is poorly handled.

But try to ask yourself if there is any truth in the feedback. Do your best to be objective. Ask people around you that you trust and respect what they think. Then ask yourself, what can I learn from this? What can I do differently? How can I use this experience to help me make progress?

The best way to move forward if we are striving for excellence is to be willing to hear and learn from feedback, both positive and negative.

#### 8. Think big picture and volunteer

Often teens and young adults will tell me that they don't want to volunteer; after all, they have skills and degrees that seem "so much better" than volunteer positions. But this is a shortsighted perspective.

Volunteering is such a simple strategy to get your foot in the door of a company you want to work for. It builds relationships (and let's face it, so much of business is networking), increases confidence, and provides new skills to be learned. Volunteering may seem like a short-term loss in terms of time invested, but is often a huge long-term gain (which is the heart of discipline and delaying gratification). You might be further ahead in the long run by seeking out volunteer positions in the field you really want to be involved in, even if it means working for less money while you try to get your foot in the door. Think big picture, not just about today!

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



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## HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

# Green your home!

**C**limate change and global warming are an ever-pressing concern these days. We may feel helpless in instituting change, but there are specific things we can all do to help (beyond voting for politicians who will make these issues a priority!).

By making small daily changes, you can actively contribute to helping preserve our earth. And all you have to do is go green right in your own home. Here are seven ways to reduce your carbon footprint, use less energy and more natural resources, and save money to boot:

### 1. Go paperless!

Sign up for online bills and statements (which is a major convenience) and request to be taken off of coupon and junk mail lists. Doing this simple act will help save trees, lessen paper loads on planes, decrease ink needed, and leave more room in landfills. And the clutter reduction is priceless!

### 2. Install smarter lights

Just changing your light bulbs can help use 75 percent less energy! New bulbs with light-emitting diodes will also last 10 to 25 times longer than an incandescent bulb.

### 3. Weather strip

Drafts coming in and out from doors and windows allow heat and air-conditioned air to escape from your home.

Buy simple weather strip materials at your local hardware store and save up to 10 percent on your heating and cooling bills.

### 4. Fix that leak

Leaky toilets and faucets are more than just an annoyance. They are a continual source of wasted water and money.

According to EPA.gov, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates, "10 percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day, and the average household's leaks can account for more than 10,000 gallons of water wasted every year."

### 5. Buy low-flow showerheads

The agency also estimates that 17 percent of a family's water use comes from showering, which averages about 40 gallons every day. Low-flow shower heads cap the flow at two gallons per minute, which equals big savings, both environmental and financial.

### 6. Replace electrical appliances with energy-efficient models

It may cost an extra few bucks to pay for new appliances, but it is cost effective in the end. The energy efficient appliances use lower amounts

of water and energy, which allows you to save monthly on your energy and water bills. Just look for the Energy Star label. Many companies also offer rebates for these models.

### 7. Collect rainwater

Use collected rainwater to water plants and clean outdoor surfaces. You can purchase rainwater collection barrels, which collect rainwater from gutters, and store on your porch until you need to use some water. One night of rain can yield 300 gallons of water on one roof alone.

*Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, is a writer and editor living in New York City. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find her on her blog, Some Puppy To Love.*





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# Listening in

## When eavesdropping affects a contentious custody battle

**A** father calls his ex-wife on the phone. He hears her voice, and her boyfriend's in the background. The line is open, but the ex-wife doesn't realize it. The father stays on the line as the boyfriend yells at and threatens the father's 5-year old son. The father begins recording the conversation.

Is this father breaking the law?

According to the recently decided Court of Appeals (the state's highest court) case of *People v. Badalamenti*, no. The father is allowed to do this (the case was actually about the admissibility of the recording in a case against the boyfriend).

Recording conversations without consent is, in fact, against the

law, and out of the seven judges hearing the case, three believed that the father had broken the law, since the ex-wife and boyfriend were unknowingly recorded without giving consent. But four other judges, who comprised the majority, found otherwise.

The majority opinion acknowledges that none of the participants in the conversation gave the father consent to record it. However according to the majority, the definition of "consent" in this case includes "vicarious consent" on behalf of a minor child.

That is to say, under certain circumstances, a parent can be treated as if he has been given consent by a minor child, even though in reality the consent has not been given.

For a parent or guardian to be "given" this vicarious consent, though, the court must determine that the parent believed in good faith that making the recording was necessary to serve the best interests of the child, and that there was an "objectively reasonable basis" for this belief. The majority of judges believes that with these constraints, parents won't be able to record any discussions just because they feel like it.

They go on to back up their opinion by pointing out that other cases decided by federal courts have recognized vicarious consent.

The dissenting judges, not surprisingly, take a very different view.

Judge Stein, writing for the dissenting judges, notes that the majority's purpose to protect children is "laudable."

However he says there are certain accepted guidelines that judges must follow when interpreting a statute. Judges do not have the authority to go beyond those principles; to go further is to make the law, rather than interpret it. Making laws is the legislature's role.

Stein believes that our legislators know that "the most prevalent form of illegal eavesdropping occurs in the context of marital or family relations," including custody disputes. Since legislators know this, he says, they would have included the vicarious consent exception, if that had been their intention.

The dissenting judges make additional and strong points that there isn't room to set out here. But, the majority rules.

The court's decision may lead to many more parents recording conversations. But before you do it, you might want to talk with your lawyer.

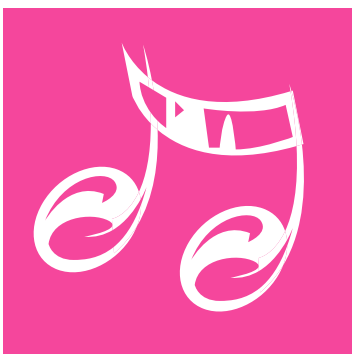
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Disclaimer: All material in this column is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.





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# The benefits of water polo

BY MICHAEL RANDAZZO

**M**ost Brooklyn parents are only aware of water polo during the summer Olympics, but those in the know appreciate this team sport that combines the rigor and fitness of swimming with the strategy and ball-handling skills of basketball — and is impacting the local youth sports scene, especially among girls.

Three Brooklyn-based clubs offer opportunities for water polo. Y Pro Water Polo ([\[polo.com\]\(http://www.yprowater-polo.com\)\) is a boys-only club for ages eight to 18 that swims out of the Kings Bay YM-YWHA pool in Sheepshead Bay. Brooklyn Heights St. Francis \(<http://bhswaterpolo.org>\) and Imagine Swimming Mako Polo \(<http://imagineswimming.com>\) offer coed polo opportunities for ages 8 to 18 in St. Francis Brooklyn's pool in Brooklyn Heights. All three clubs compete in U12, U14 and U16 age groups in the Tri-State League \(<https://tristatewpleague.shutterfly.com>\), a fall and spring league that operates primarily out](http://www.yprowater-</a></p>
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of the Greenwich YMCA in Connecticut.

## Every four years a spotlight on an obscure sport

The upcoming Olympic games in Brazil will shine a spotlight on the United States men's and women's national teams. New men's coach Dejan Udovicic — successful in his native Serbia and imported to revive a program that captured its only Olympic gold in 1904 — is tasked with an upper half finish among the world's 12 best teams.

The women's squad faces a different task. Olympic champs in the 2012 London games, the Americans are favored to again win gold. Head coach Adam Krikorian's biggest challenge may be keeping his experienced players focused.

Keeping the American men and women's teams healthy is Naresh Rao, medical liaison to the United States Olympic Committee and to USA Water Polo, the sport's governing body. A doctor of osteopathic medicine, Rao has a sports medicine



practice in Manhattan.

He may treat elite athletes, but Rao, who recently published "Step Up Your Game," ([www.stepupyourgame.nyc](http://www.stepupyourgame.nyc)), a guide to achieving peak athletic performance, is bullish on water polo's affect on children.

Young athletes ages 8 to 14 receive "tremendous" benefits from the sport, because water polo simultaneously provides two distinct exercises: aerobic, which causes the heart to pump blood to provide muscles with energy and oxygen; and anaerobic, which works those muscles.

"You can combine both of those with water polo and at a high level," Rao said.

Besides learning swimming, a fundamental skill, water polo is a team sport that teaches children how to interact, take direction, and work together.

USA Water Polo's top doc said it is particularly beneficial for girls.

"Generally, as they get older, girls tend to be more flexible, which may lead to certain kinds of overuse injuries," he said about a sport that allows girls to play a contact sport at a high level. "Water polo can provide a great way — in the water and out — for girls to strengthen muscles to maintain structure and a foundation so that overuse injuries can be prevented."

Rao also mentioned Splashball ([www.usawaterpolo.org/programs/splashball.html](http://www.usawaterpolo.org/programs/splashball.html)), a program that teaches the game to children as young as 4 and 5 while standing in the shallow end of a pool.

### A great sport for girls

Linda Angels of Manhattan, whose children Lucas (age 15) and Maya (12) play for Imagine Swimming's Mako Polo team, is pleased that both her children — in particular her daughter — have an alternative to swim team.

"For Maya, water polo is a great outlet for taking her swimming skills to the next level, by adding a demanding team sport with a ball," Angels said. "She has gained such confidence in the physical interaction with players as they tussle for the ball."

Encouraged to follow her brother to the sport by the Mako's coach Zoli Danko, Maya is benefiting not just physically, but emotionally as well.

"She has not only become physically fit, but has high self-esteem,

a healthy competitive spirit, and has learned good sportsmanship — skills and values that will greatly help her in life," Angels explained, then praised the sport's penchant for physical contact: "Girls are not typically encouraged to wrestle or get physical in a safe environment. If any of these girls had to face a situation of potential physical intimidation, I know they would feel confident to respond."

A former high school athlete, Angels appreciates the safety, conditioning, and confidence-building that water polo provides her children.

"It's not only one of the best physical conditioning sports, I believe, it is safer than other sports from injuries," she said. "I can't imagine another sport which would give kids the confidence and determination that this sport does."

### International love story ends in Brooklyn

Andi Dolnay began playing polo in Budapest, Hungary, when she was 6 years old.

"My dad used to be a water polo coach when I was little," said Dolnay, who now lives in Brooklyn. "He took me to his practices, training camps, and games. I just loved it and decided I wanted to play."

And play she did, earning a scholarship and a spot on St. Francis's Division-I women's water polo team. Graduating in 2011, Dolnay stayed in New York where she met and married Danko, another Hungarian who came to Brooklyn for Terrier water polo.


Dolnay says that while opportunities are growing for girls in a sport that involves strength, stamina, and smarts, recognition is water polo's biggest problem.

"USA [women] won the last Olympics, but many people here still don't know what water polo is," she said. "Someone once asked me how we could play polo in the pool with horses — and this person wasn't joking. They had no idea about water polo."

Polo's long-term benefits are clear to the 27-year-old Dolnay.

"I've been around the world and made friends because of this sport. I met my husband, too."

*Michael Randazzo is a regular commentator on local Brooklyn sports and arts for Fort Greene Focus, Fort Green Patch, and The Brooklyn Paper. He resides in Brooklyn with his wife and two children.*



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## GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

# Kick the competition with nutritious meals

**T**here's a reason why soccer is the second most popular childhood sport in the US: It's easy to learn, a good workout, and fun. And whether your child plays with your local park district or an elite club league, what he consumes can impact performance.

Young children who are learning the game and are on the field just a few times a week can maintain their usual diet.

"For little ones who are just starting out playing soccer, there really isn't much more needed than three healthy meals a day and normal healthy snacks," says registered dietitian nutritionist Jill Castle, author of "Eat Like a Champion: Performance Nutrition for Your Young Athlete."

"However, in middle school and high school, the demands of soccer increase, and this may translate to an extra snack after a long practice that provides a carbohydrate source and a protein source. These two nutrients help reload the muscles with glycogen, the preferred energy source for muscles, and promote repair of muscle tissue."

### Game day

A nourishing breakfast is a must on game day. A morning meal allows



athletes to stay ahead of their nutritional needs all day. Often, when athletes skip breakfast, they get behind in calories and nutrients. This may affect their athletic performance and cause them to be hungrier later, resulting in poor food choices and even overeating.

Lunch is the mid-day nutritional boost kids need to either prepare for competition or recuperate from morning events. Lunch should provide an array of food groups, such as protein foods, dairy, grains, fruit,

and vegetables.

Naturally, fluids are also very important for the athlete all day long, with dehydration being one of the big culprits in poor athletic performance.

Travel soccer presents its own set of challenges.

"The best tip I can give is to be prepared with food on hand. Having a variety of different healthy snacks packed up and ready to travel is ideal, because it allows athletes the ability to avoid the concession stand where we know most of the choices there may be unhealthy," suggests Castle. "Bring a cooler of fruit, veggies, and hummus or other dip, yogurt, granola, cheese, crackers, nut butters, 100-percent juice, small bottles of sports drinks."

All day tournaments require more substantial fare such as sandwiches, cold pasta salads, and green salads.

With the growing emphasis on player wellness that includes carefully planned nutrition, eating well may give your child an edge over the competition.

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

### Smoky chipotle mac and cheese

Serves 10

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb box cellentani (or any hearty pasta)
- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 chipotles in adobo, minced
- 4 cups shredded 3-cheese blend
- 4 cups whole milk
- 2 pks of Nasoya Chipotle TofuBaked
- 1 small can diced green chilis, drained
- ½ can fire-roasted, diced tomatoes, drained
- ½ tsp pepper



**DIRECTIONS:** Cook pasta to al dente (approx seven minutes), shock in cold water, drain, and set aside.

In a medium sauce pot, combine but-

ter and flour. Cook on medium, stirring until smooth and slightly toasted. Slowly add milk while stirring and continue to simmer until sauce is bubbly. Stir in cheese until melted and smooth. While still hot, stir in chipotles, Chipotle TofuBaked, chilis, fire roasted tomatoes, and drained pasta. Season with pepper and serve.

#### NUTRITION FACTS: 580

calories, 49 g carbohydrate (3 g fiber, 8 g sugar), 27 g protein, 31 grams fat (18 g saturated), 75 mg cholesterol, 610 mg sodium, 20% DV vitamin A, 8% DV vitamin C, 50% DV calcium, 20% DV iron.

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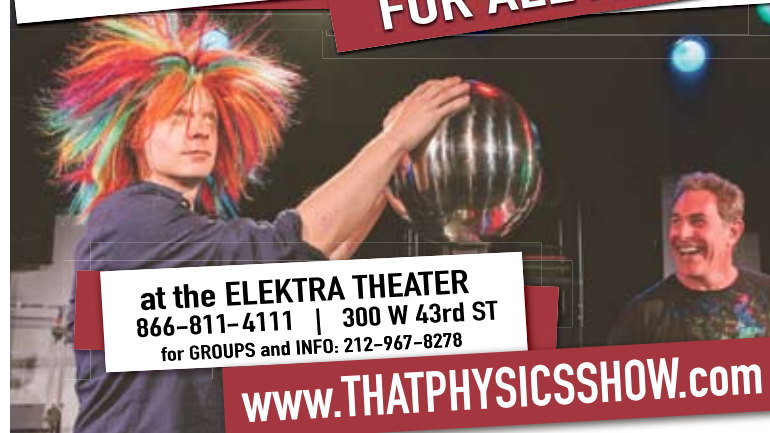
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# Not-so-smart mouth

As a child,  
wishing you  
could take  
back words

BY PATRICK HEMPING

**I**t's not easy being a parent. In fact, sometimes it's downright frustrating, like when you have to correct your child for the same behavior over and over."

These were the opening sentences for the first Mother's Day column I wrote. It's been three years and I still feel the same. Of course, there are two sides to every story. It's not easy being a child, either. In fact, sometimes it's downright frustrating, like when your parents continue to nag you over and over.

## CHERISH THE MOMENTS

I'm sure all parents have given the "think before you speak" speech. Jessie, my 10-year-old daughter, has heard this speech a few times, with a special emphasis on "it's not just what you say, but how you say it." But, whether you're a kid or an adult, we've all been there, wishing we could take back words or deliver them over with a different tone.

Prior to a recent corrective-action discussion (Jessie calls them lectures), I had a flashback to my sixth grade days. I hadn't thought about this story in years – maybe I blocked it out. But it's a perfect story of a 12-year-old boy not learning the "think before you speak" rule. After this experience, though, I had a much firmer grasp of the concept.

Near the end of our school day, we were supposed to be working. However, the second-grade class played dodge ball in the courtyard outside our window. The teacher, Mrs. Dowd, instructed us to focus on our work, not the second graders. I'm not sure what the teacher said next, but smart-alecky me, trying to get a laugh, raised my hand and said, "I'll go out and play with them." Needless to say, my response didn't sit well with Mrs. Dowd. She gave me two choices, march down to the principal's office or head outside to play with the second graders. Since playing sounded much better than bending over and grabbing my ankles, as principals spanked during my school years, I chose dodge ball. I won't forget my embarrassment when I had to explain to the second-grade teacher why I crashed her students' game of dodge ball.

When second-grade recess ended, I walked back into my classroom. Had I learned my lesson? I'm sure I was trying to save face with my classmates when I told my teacher, "That was fun. I'd do that again." I've never won an award for being a quick learner, but I did

realize at that point I had just forced Mrs. Dowd to intensify my training.

"Okay then, the next time we have recess, you can stay in to work, and then go out with the second-grade class for their recess." By that point in time, the light bulb in my brain flickered with the notion that maybe I should keep my smart mouth shut.

It's good this happened near the end of the school day, because my stomach felt like it had taken a direct hit from a dodge ball. Somehow, though, I kept it together until I made it home. Then I cried. During supper that evening, more tears flowed as I told my parents what happened and begged them to, "Please talk to my teacher so she doesn't make me play with the second graders again." Of course, in my heart I knew my parents would never try to get me out of a punishment I richly deserved (and they didn't).

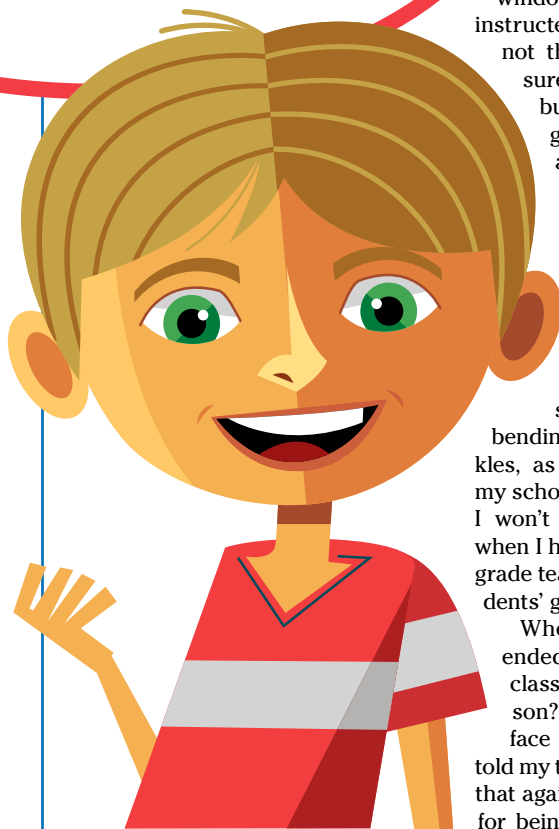
Luckily for me, Mrs. Dowd never followed through on her plan, and I gained a valuable lesson on the line between humor and disrespect. It seems obvious, but we all have to learn the importance of the timing, tone, and content of our words, and that sometimes silence is golden. I try to share this with Jessie to spare her the pain of learning it the hard way like I did.

Jessie is likely in for more lectures in the tween and teen years ahead. I'll try to deliver them without nagging, but I'm likely to fail. Remember, I'm not a quick learner. As often as I can, though, I'll share my own childhood experiences so she'll know I was once in her shoes. I hope she'll listen to my carefully spoken words.

Thanks to the parents who teach their children all kinds of lessons, sometimes repeatedly. May all of us remember to conclude our corrective-action discussions with three important words that apply to every lecture topic, "I love you."

Until next month, remember to cherish the moments. Happy Mother's Day!

*Patrick Hemping had a 20-year professional career in banking, accounting, and auditing before he became a father at age 44. He is now a full-time husband, stay-at-home dad, and writer. Follow Patrick at [www.facebook.com/patricklhemping](http://www.facebook.com/patricklhemping) and on Twitter @PatrickHemping.*





# For love of the game

BY ROBERT TROTTA

**W**hen it comes to America's pastime, the Staley family of Astoria, Queens, expects to take the sport far into the future. Originally from Ohio, they've been living in New York for 10 years, where Parents Rebecca and Nathaniel have three kids — two girls and one boy — and baseball is a big part of who they are, literally.

Their oldest daughter, Paige, 9, was named after Baseball Hall of Famer Satchel Paige. Their middle child, Gehrig, 7, was named after ... you probably guessed it: New York Yankees' Lou Gehrig, another legend and Hall of Famer. Last May the Staleys were blessed with a third child, a baby girl, and the pattern had to continue. So what name would they choose for the fifth member of their family? Would it

be Morgan, after Cincinnati Reds legend Joe Morgan? No. Did they go with Ruth, their new "babe?" Not quite.

They decided on Reese, after Brooklyn Dodger Hall of Fame short-stop Pee Wee Reese! All three children were born here in New York.

"Growing up in Ohio, baseball was always my favorite sport," recalls Nathaniel. "In high school, I had to write a term paper, and since there was already so much history with the Yankees, I decided to choose Lou Gehrig. I told friends that Gehrig would be an awesome name for a boy. Ironically, years later, when my son was born, that idea back then came into fruition."

Seeing how much baseball was a part of Rebecca and Nathaniel's lives while they were dating and even after they were married, it was Rebecca's mom who suggested to consider the



name Paige when the couple's first child was born. It was a suggestion they embraced and put into action.

As for Reese, Nathaniel said that choice was a combination of simply thinking "it was a cool name" and the historical relevance it had to New York City and baseball.

Now with spring in the air and baseball season here, Paige is getting ready for her girls' softball season and Gehrig is warming up as he prepares for Little League. As for Reese, she'll enjoy watching and

cheering on her sister and brother, until she's old enough to put on a glove and swing a bat on her own.

All members of the family have a genuine love for the game. The family trips to games include, but extend beyond, Citi Field in Flushing, Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, and MCU Park in Coney Island, home of the Brooklyn Cyclones. In a nutshell, if it's a baseball game, they're there.

"Our next draft pick," stated Rebecca with a smile, "will be of a four-legged variety."

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# Communication in the digital age

## How has the texting phenomenon affected family connections?

BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL

**T**exting literally drives me nuts. I press the wrong letter all of the time. I get frustrated because I want to send a long-winded message, and the darn thing keeps auto-correcting me. I'd much prefer to send a real note via my computer or just pick up the landline (Shh ... I still have one of those).

I know I sound ancient, but what has the world come to? No one uses words anymore. We've graduated to emoticons and abbreviations. For a person who makes a living with words, this is downright depressing!

I can't even get a hold of my kids normally anymore. If I want to hear from my son, who now lives on his own in the big city, I have to send him a text to tell him to check his e-mail. My younger daughter even thinks e-mail is antiquated. It's as if telephones and normal correspondence never existed. Try asking a 14-year-old to send a thank you note. You have to remind him that you mean put a pen to paper and a stamp on an envelope!

Has the digital world morphed our communication skills into bits and bytes for the long haul? We know that texting is not going away. The ease, convenience, and instan-

taneous response aspects of texting are just too enticing. According to the findings of a September 2014 Gallup poll, "Texting is the most frequently used form of communication among Americans younger than 50."

So, what does this say about communication between family members? Does living in the same household somehow trump the new techno talk? No matter what you prefer — texting or real-time, verbal banter — it's time to examine if this new form of communication is for better or for worse.

### What's missing in a text?

We've all read books that have excited various emotions. However, texting is communication a la shorthand, so much is lost in the translation.

"Face-to-face conversations allow us to notice cues about the other person's emotions, such as eye contact, facial expression, tone of voice, body posture, and the timing and intensity of response," says Heather Leneau Bragg, a learning specialist and author of the book "Learning Decoded: Using Your Child's Unique Learning Style to Improve Academic Performance." "Texting cannot offer these important pieces of informa-

tion, which can be key to understanding, communication, and connecting with others."

"Texting certainly makes it easier to avoid real communication and having to say something directly to someone's face," says Rebecca Levey, family tech expert, host of ParentingBytes (a CBS podcast exploring parenting in the digital age), and co-founder of KidzVuz (a media company posting reviews of products by kids and for kids). She explains that this is one of the reasons why it's much easier to bully via text.

How many times have you personally experienced a misunderstanding when texting (or even e-mailing) is involved? Perhaps you are very angry with your teenage daughter who is late for dinner because she is hanging at a friend's house. If you text, "You need to get home," she might interpret this as I should start thinking about getting home, instead of I better leave right now. However, misinterpretation is not the only issue. Should we also worry that the tech generation has lost the ability of effortless, in-person, social conversation?

"When children (or adults) become more dependent on texting as communication, they often become averse to spontaneous conversation. Live conversations involve more vulnerability, with little opportunity to hide emotions and reactions. Being able to have live conversation is a foundational ability for meaningful connection," Bragg continues.

Levey points out that there could be a decrease in independence with some children because of the too readily available communication. In other words, kids might be less likely to fend for themselves if they can instantaneously request help from Mom instead.

### Maintaining family connection

"If communication is suffering,

### When texting provides safety

Let's not forget that texting can also provide an invaluable safety net. Cellphone users should be aware of the availability of the following safety services, features, and notifications. Sometimes, during widespread emergencies, text messages may go through when phone calls do not:

**College students:** Sign up for your campus emergency text notification system.

**Parents:** Register for your public school's notification system and allow text notification if offered.

**Hospital emergency rooms:** Some allow consumers to access emergency room wait times via text — check with your local hospital.

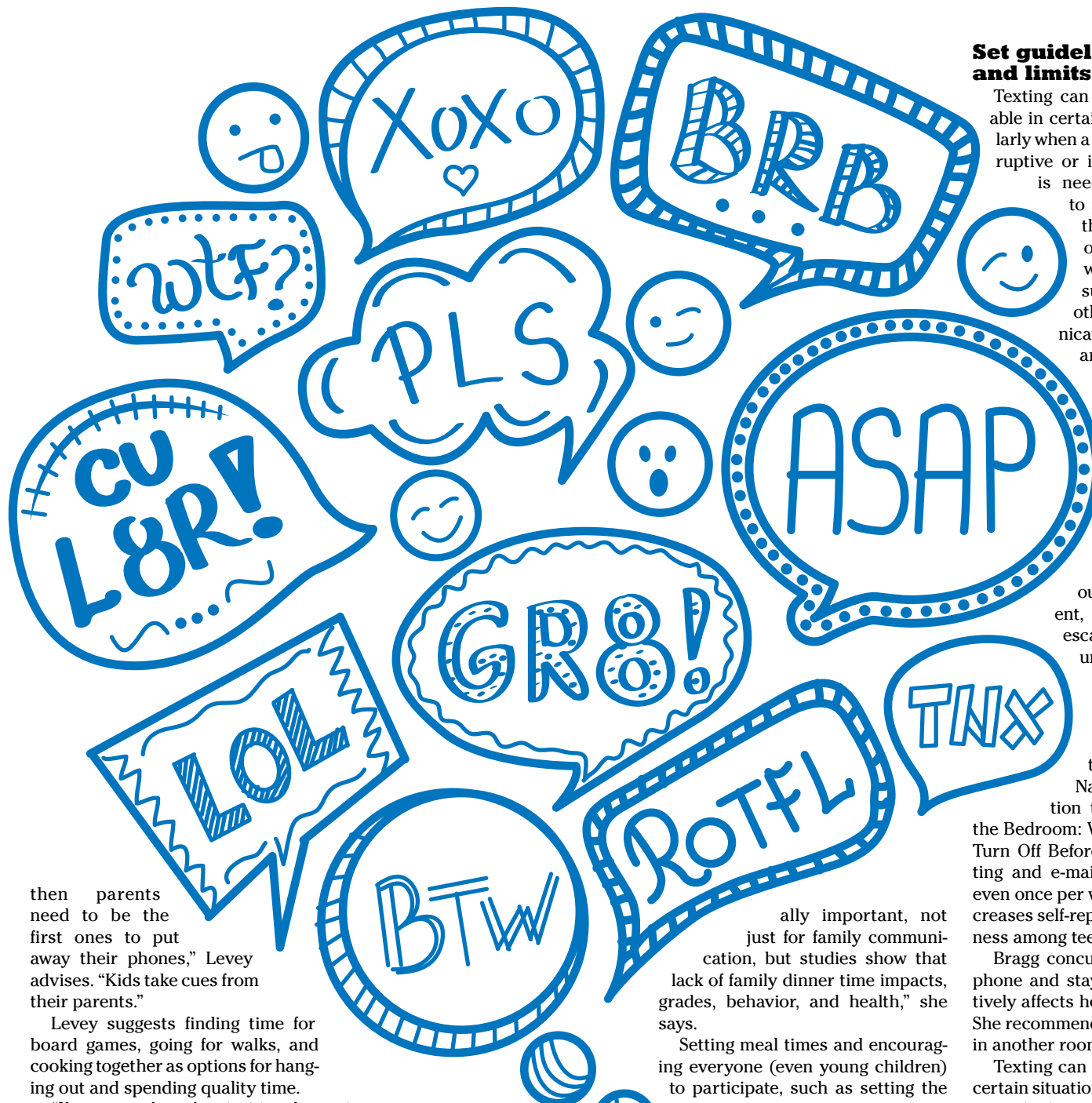
**Wireless Emergency Alerts:** This public safety system allows customers who own certain wireless phones and carriers to receive text-like messages alerting them of imminent safety threats

(i.e. extreme weather, Amber alerts, and other national emergencies).

**Text-to-911:** In the future, this service will be available throughout the U.S. For updates to service areas: [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)

**CrisisTextLine (71741):** Trained crisis counselors assist those in crisis via text. Local churches, community centers, and health networks sometimes offer similar services. Note: Teens, in particular, often prefer to text, rather than talk about problems.





## Set guidelines and limits

Texting can be useful and desirable in certain situations, particularly when a phone call can be disruptive or immediate assistance is needed. Problems tend to arise when texting is the predominant form of communication, or when texting becomes such an obsession that other modes of communication and socialization are lost.

"Tech is awesome in moderation. Look for the 'happy medium,'" Bragg states. "Being able to shelve the phone as often as possible allows more opportunities to connect with our children. Be present, not checked-out or escaping elsewhere," she urges.

Texting before sleep can also become a problem.

According to an article published by the National Sleep Foundation titled "Electronics in

the Bedroom: Why it's Necessary to Turn Off Before you Tuck In," "Texting and e-mailing after lights out, even once per week, dramatically increases self-reported daytime sleepiness among teens."

Bragg concurs that checking the phone and staying up to text negatively affects healthy sleep patterns. She recommends that phones be left in another room at bedtime.

Texting can be a safety hazard in certain situations, or even downright rude. All family members should refrain from texting while:

- Driving
- Sitting in a class or lecture
- Operating machinery
- Attending an event where silence or attention is expected (i.e. churches, concert halls, funerals, etc.)
- Eating meals with others
- Crossing the street
- Having a conversation with someone

*Myrna Beth Haskell is an award-winning author, columnist, and feature writer. Her work has appeared in national and regional publications across the U.S., as well as internationally. For more information, please visit: [www.myrnahaskell.com](http://www.myrnahaskell.com).*

then parents need to be the first ones to put away their phones," Levey advises. "Kids take cues from their parents."

Levey suggests finding time for board games, going for walks, and cooking together as options for hanging out and spending quality time.

"If a parent doesn't prioritize that time, then they can't expect the kids to," she says.

Bragg states, "Family can and should be the safest place to work on communication, connection, vulnerability, and conflict resolution. Important conversations should happen face-to-face, not via text."

When communication happens via text as opposed to in organic conversation, "Children are less likely to learn compassion and empathy, as well as how to interpret non-verbal cues such as body language, gesture, and tone of voice," Bragg clarifies.

Bragg also explains that texting can reduce the amount of interaction we have with our children during

family rituals, such as meals, bath time, and bedtime. Establishing these rituals builds and maintains familiarity and connection.

"It is prime time for understanding each other and what makes each family member tick." She warns, however, that dinner conversations should not be about stressful issues. "This is a time to share about each other's lives and not the best time to grill your child on his latest test grade or rule infraction."

Levey claims that family dinner has been in jeopardy for quite some time, due to parents working longer hours and kids participating in more after-school activities.

"Taking back family dinner is re-

ally important, not just for family communication, but studies show that lack of family dinner time impacts, grades, behavior, and health," she says.

Setting meal times and encouraging everyone (even young children) to participate, such as setting the table and helping with cooking, will strengthen family connection.

Even when it is literally impossible to sit for dinner together — because of conflicting work schedules, for instance — finding time on weekends for a family breakfast or planning other activities where everyone participates — sans phones — will encourage intimacy and family bonding. Some families also opt to have regular family meetings, where everyone has a chance to talk about something that's bothering them or to share something they want feedback on. This is a two-way street: both parents and children should share what is going on in their hearts and minds.



## FAMILY HEALTH

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



# Proper first aid for playground injuries

*Both my son and daughter love heading to our local playgrounds during the warmer months. I go with them, but they are old enough now to play without me constantly by their side. But I'm already bracing myself for the bruises and cuts that are sure to follow! What first aid should I be ready to provide for common playground accidents?*

**O**dds are that the vast majority of the injuries a child will encounter during his young life will not send you rushing to the emergency room. Very minor scrapes and bumps may need no more than a mother's kiss or a hug. But here are some basic first-aid tips for cuts and bruises that are a little more serious, but that don't involve profuse bleeding or a suspected sprain or broken bones.

Bruises (contusions) result from sharp impact such as a fall onto hard pavement, bumping into a sharp object, or being pinched so hard that the blood vessels below the skin break

and excess blood rushes to the area. A basic acronym for the care you should provide for a bruise is R.I.C.E.: Rest, Ice, Compress, and Elevate. Rest the bruised area; apply ice or a cold pack to reduce swelling (making sure that the ice does not directly touch the skin); compress the bruise by wrapping a bandage or piece of cloth around it firmly (though not so firmly that it hurts), and elevate the injured area if possible. Short-term use of over-the-counter pain medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen — never aspirin in children under the age of 18 — may help address your child's pain, as long as you follow the dosage recommendations for his age. If you follow these steps for up to 48 hours, and the swelling does not start to subside, or the pain does not go away or get worse, then it's time to seek medical care.

Like care for a bruise, the sooner first aid is provided for a cut or scrape, the better. If the wound is still bleeding, step one is to make sure the bleeding stops, first by applying con-

tinuous pressure for up to 10 minutes, then checking and continuing for another 30 minutes if the bleeding has continued. Step two is to clean out the wound with clear water to remove any debris, using small tweezers to remove any that does not come out in the rinse. Next, clean the wound using soap, water, and a paper towel, napkin, or other type of clean cloth. Applying an antibiotic ointment, if available, will reduce the chances of infection (though it will not make the healing process go more quickly). Finally, cover the clean wound with a bandage or gauze, changing the dressing at least once a day, and after every time it gets wet or dirty.

Though the knowledge of proper care for a child's scrapes and bruises is essential, equally essential is this rule: if, despite proper first-aid care, you believe your child's injury requires professional medical attention or opinion, trust your instincts. You can call your child's pediatrician, head to an urgent care clinic, or go to the emergency room.



# NYC beach clubs

## You can get used to this

Getting a  
real resort  
experience  
— within  
city limits

BY JAMIE BLATMAN

*What are your summer plans in the Big Apple? Maybe you'll take the family on a day trip to the shore, stroll one of the city's numerous parks, or even acquaint yourself with the heat of a "tar beach." Others may take the family on a week-long vacation to see relatives or a famous mouse in Orlando.*

*For those looking for more, there are beach clubs. Jamie Blatman, the general manager of the Silver Gull Beach Club and Breezy Point Surf Club, provides an insider's look into these rare local getaways.*

**A**lmost unique to the northeastern coastline and with only three left in the five boroughs, beach clubs are a truly magical summer oasis. Growing up in Brooklyn, I was fortunate to enjoy these clubs on hot and humid summer days — thanks to my parents. Beach clubs are worlds within themselves, and you'll make friends you keep forever and enjoy a certain freedom that is lost within the city.

These beach clubs are seaside resorts. You can rent a cabana or locker (don't think high school gym) and spend the entire summer at the beach enjoying the ocean breezes and all the features these clubs have



to offer. All this for less than you'll pay for your family to visit Orlando for just one week!

So what do you get for your summer? A short drive to Breezy Point, where the Silver Gull Beach Club and Breezy Point Surf Club are located, transports you to a life you can only imagine. There are multiple swimming pools, some heated, some with water slides, and even a kiddie pool with a pirate ship — talk about adventures! Live music hits the stage on the weekends. Free day camp for the kids is available during the week, and the beach is open all week long.

Maybe you're a sports enthusiast; these clubs offer tennis courts with optional instruction, plus basketball, paddleball, softball, and bocce. Or, you can choose to work out in the fitness centers with complimentary group classes.

Maybe you just want to relax with a cocktail while the kids are off at camp or playing with their newfound friends. What could be better than an oceanfront tiki bar with the best frozen drinks in town? These clubs can also provide breakfast through dinner, and more, in one of the many food outlets. (Pizza is their specialty — remember, this is still New York City.)

You'd think these places are something right out of a movie, and you'd be right! The 1980s classic "The Flamingo Kid," starring Matt Dillon, was

filmed at the Silver Gull Beach Club, one of the two still located in Breezy Point. Not much has changed since then — you still have valet parking and acres of free parking, cabana attendants looking to meet all your needs, and a group of lifeguards making sure your swims — whether pool or ocean — are safe.

Still want more for the family? Well there's plenty! Maybe you'd enjoy music bingo by the pool or a trivia contest on the deck. How's your cannon ball or belly flops? Clubs have a contest for that, too! Popular paint and wine nights — with soda for kids — are fun for the whole family.

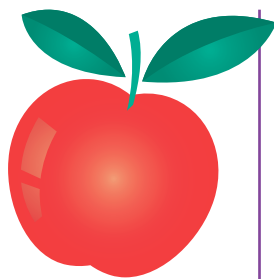
When the day comes to an end, you can enjoy dinner with the family in the main restaurant or one of the themed dinner events, like the Clam and Lobster Bake, Prime Rib and Bingo Night, or one of the poolside barbecues.

Just minutes from anywhere in the city, you just might want to check out one of the beach clubs while there's still space available for this summer.

*Silver Gull Beach Club [1 Beach 193rd St. in Breezy Point, (718) 634-1500, info@NYSilverGull.com]. Breezy Point Surf Club [1 Beach 227th St. in Breezy Point, (718) 634-2500, info@NYBreezyPoint.com]. Sea Gate Beach & Cabana Club [3700 Surf Ave., (718) 372-4477, info@seagatebeachclub.com].*



(Top and above) Scenes from Silver Gull Beach Club in Breezy Point, Queens.



## DEAR TEACHER

PEGGY GISLER AND  
MARGE EBERTS

# Materials to help children who stutter

**Dear teacher,**

My third grader often gets embarrassed and distressed at school because she stutters. Do you know of any materials that could be helpful for her to read?

**Dear parent,**

The Stuttering Foundation ([stutteringhelp.org](http://stutteringhelp.org)) has recently published an exciting book for children: "The Teacher Who Made a Difference." It should help your daughter feel good about herself. It is a story about a child who stutters and tells about how she was able to overcome some of the challenges of stuttering with help from a special teacher. You will find it in the store catalog.

Beyond this book, there are several terrific materials that should be helpful for your daughter. There is the film "For Kids, By Kids," on YouTube as well as the books "Sometimes I Just Stutter" and "Trouble at Recess" that you can read or download for free on the Stuttering Foundation website. In addition, the website has a neat section called "Drawings and Letters From Kids" in which children who stutter share their stories along with techniques that have helped them.

## Reservations about child's readiness for kindergarten

**Dear teacher,**

We have been told by our son's preschool teacher that he is ready for kindergarten both academically and socially. He has a January birthday, so he will be 5-and-a-half by the time kindergarten starts. However, we have some reservations about sending him because there are confidence issues, as he is very cautious and somewhat reluctant to try new things. How should we factor in this issue? Is there any downside to another year of preschool?

**Dear parent,**

The one certainty about the kindergarten readiness issue is the in-



ability to see the future. There are more than three months before he will go to kindergarten — time for your son to gain more confidence. Furthermore, you cannot be sure another year of preschool would make him more confident.

You can start building his confidence by helping him learn how to handle new situations. For example, before he faces a new situation, such as an overnight stay at a friend's house, talk over what is going to happen and play-act possible responses. And when he faces a new task, guide him in breaking it down into manageable units.

The negative about another year of preschool is that it means an additional year of schooling. Also, since the preschool teacher believes that he is ready for kindergarten, another year of preschool might not be very challenging intellectually. In addition, your son will not be the youngest in his class next fall. This is a positive, as older children tend to do better in the first three grades.

Visiting the preschool to see how your son interacts with classmates and does the school work also could help you make this decision. You may also notice there are other students who demonstrate the same reluctance to try new things.

If you decide another year of preschool is the way you want to go, be

sure to contact the school district to make sure that your son can enter kindergarten instead of first grade the next year. Some districts will insist that an older child enter first grade.

## Ways to improve poor listening skills

**Dear teacher,**

The teacher says that my third grader has poor listening skills. However, she had no suggestions when I asked for her input on how together we could improve the her listening.

**Dear parent,**

Fortunately, there are some things that you can start doing at home to improve her listening skills:

- Be sure to have eye contact with your daughter when you speak to her.
- When you give directions, occasionally ask your child to repeat or rephrase them. When a task is completed, praise her for her cooperation.
- Play listening games with her like Simon Says and "I'm going on a trip and I'm going to take a (name an object, plus all the objects other players have mentioned)." The latter can be played at the dinner table.
- Start reading brief stories to your child, and ask her to tell you when she hears certain information.
- Read part of a story and ask your child to predict how it will end before finishing the story.
- Have many one-on-one conversations with your child. Be sure to ask for feedback, so you know she's able to process what she hears.

A conference with this teacher that includes your child could be helpful. Perhaps, the teacher could ask your child the first question in a classroom discussion.

It might also be effective to have the child sit near the teacher in the classroom.

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

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## BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL



# CRY BABY!

## How to tell if those tears really signify a behavior problem

**P**arental instinct tells you that when your child is crying, something is wrong and you must fix it. You're not able to focus on anything else when you hear your child wail. Your full attention is on making the crying stop.

But what if somewhere along the way that urge was subverted into enabling your child to have bad behavior?

In other words: Your child could be using crying as a method to get what she wants. This is not a good place to be as a parent. On the one hand, you're compelled to help your child, but on the other hand, by responding you're facilitating more crying. The next time your child wants something, you can be sure she'll use crying to get it.

You can teach your child to express disappointment or requests without crying. Here are a few rules to follow in order to break the cycle. I know that with repetition you can master them. The crying might not stop the first time you attempt this new plan, but if you remain consistent the crying

will subside.

Here are the rules:

- When you notice that your child is crying, pause for one moment to assess the situation. This moment of clarity is critical. Get clear and think through your actions.

- If your child is hurt, go help and comfort her. We all need comfort when we are hurt.

- If your child appears sick, go see if she actually is. If she is sick, then comfort her.

- If your child is not sick or hurt, then ask yourself, "Why all the tears?" Take an honest guess and you're likely to be correct. Decide if crying is an appropriate response to this guess.

- If you decide it is a reasonable response, then comfort your kiddo. Provide the reassurance she is looking for in that moment. If you decide it is not a reasonable response, then do not comfort her. Instead, wait for your small being to communicate in another way.

The last rule is where the magic happens. If you wait, your child will most likely do something else. If

she does not receive the response she wants, then she will change her behavior. Wait for the behavior you feel is appropriate or provide unflustered prompts for your child to give the "correct" response. Then engage with her.

It would be beneficial to take stock now about the appropriate reasons for a tearful outburst before you're faced with a crying being in front of you. This will make it easier to stay calm and avoid going into default mode.

You will have your own unique line for this, so I cannot tell you what will be right for your family. Outside of being hurt and sick, what are you comfortable with your child using crying to express? Something like not getting her favorite cup with dinner might be on the list of inappropriate reasons for crying. This might be an occasion when you wait out the tears.

The goal is for crying to become a response to situations in which something is terribly wrong. With consistency and composure you can make this happen!

For a special gift especially for New York Parenting readers please visit: <https://drmarcie.leadpages.co/quick-video-for-ny-parenting>

*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](http://www.BehaviorAndBeyond.net).*



## A LETTER FROM COLLEGE

AGLAIA HO



# Turn up for safe partying

**I**t is difficult to get to sleep early on a college campus on Friday night. There is always at least one party raging in my dorm. As the night progresses, the crowds only seem to grow larger, and I lie awake wondering how these seemingly overworked students have the energy to “turn up” at 2 a.m.

Exciting as college parties may seem, they can be very dangerous. Far too many weekend hangouts manifest into bad decisions, next-morning regret, or incidences even worse.

Partying is a part of the college experience, but being aware of the risks of crazy parties and taking the precautions necessary to protect yourself are critical. The key is being in control of your own actions and making smart choices.

### Before the party

Be sure you know the host and the intention of the party, and then scope out the vibe. Other students are your best resource to obtain

advice regarding what types of parties to avoid and which are safe. Social media like Facebook allows for better planning for even impromptu, last-minute parties, but always be wary of events that you encounter solely through the grapevine.

Try to attend large campus parties with a group of friends. Before my friends and I leave for a party, we generally set a time frame for how long we stay. We ensure that no one ever stays or leaves alone. Because campus parties can be loud and crowded, be sure you have a way to contact your friends if you are separated from them.

If you attend a party alone, make sure to let a friend know where you are going and how long you will be there. This small gesture can act as an insurance policy. You will have someone to call for help and to check up on you if something goes wrong. There are also phone apps, such as Circle of Six, that allow you to connect easily with your friends

if you are faced with an emergency situation.

### At the party

To have the best time possible, make sure that you are in control. It goes without saying that you should avoid drinking excessively and stay away from any drugs. Any substance that can cloud your judgment may lead to unintended consequences. Be careful with your drink and never leave it unintended. Stay with your friends and be sure to support one another if anything goes wrong.

Know when to leave and what your limits are. Never feel pressured to stay if you are uncomfortable. If the party is too crazy or not what you expected, leave!

### Safer alternatives

College parties do not always have to be loud and rowdy. They can be merely exclusive with just a few close friends. I once hosted a princess-themed college party. I decorated my common room with streamers and lanterns inspired by Disney’s “Tangled” and prepared an array of simple food, like finger sandwiches made from cucumbers and cream cheese, and Betty Crocker tea cakes. I bought plastic champagne glasses and filled them with soda and ice tea. The scene was probably no different from a 5-year-old’s birthday party. Nonetheless, memories were made, laughs were shared, and a game of Disney Apples to Apples kept everyone occupied. Surprisingly more than 20 students shared my enthusiasm and came to the party.

Admittedly my friends and I are not the norm. Nevertheless we are not the only ones either. Some students run an activity night every Friday for those uninterested in a wild nightlife. They play board games, learn to juggle, or make a craft. Far from antisocial, they enjoy each other’s company while being safe. Even seeing a theater production or having a movie night with some friends can lead to just as many happy memories as a campus party.

As tempting as a party may be, sometimes missing out may be the safer way to go and make your college experience more memorable.

*Aglaia Ho is a junior at Williams College and a native New Yorker. She also writes for her own blog at [www.aglaiaho.weebly.com](http://www.aglaiaho.weebly.com).*



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# Calendar

MAY



## Hands-on learning

The Environmental Education Center is open for learning fun at Brooklyn Bridge Park, now through November.

Get to know Brooklyn Bridge Park with its 250-gallon aquarium filled with critters from the East River, a 10-foot scale model of Brooklyn Bridge Park, crafts, a reading corner, and so much more!

Parents and children will have a ball in the drop-in hours four afternoons per week.

Environmental Education Center, now through November. Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 3 to 5 pm. Free.

*Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 6 [Atlantic Avenue at Furman Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-9939, [www.brooklynbridgepark.org](http://www.brooklynbridgepark.org)].*

Photo by Alexa Hoyer



## Never miss a great event!

Sign up for our FREE newsletter and get twice-a-week ideas for you and your family right in your mailbox. [NYParenting.com](http://NYParenting.com)

# Calendar

### Submit a listing

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

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

### SUN, MAY 1

#### IN BROOKLYN

**Sakura Matsuri:** Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org); 10 am; \$20-\$25 (Free for children 12 and younger).

The 35th annual Cherry Blossom festival features traditional and contemporary Japanese dances, performances, and customs.

**Learn to Ride:** Kaiser Park, Neptune Avenue and E. 31st Street; (718) 965-8935; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Noon to 3 pm; Free.

Experts teach children how to start, stop, steer, and safety for bike riding. The Department of Transportation will be giving away helmets, while supplies last.

### THURS, MAY 5

#### IN BROOKLYN

**Tree Detective Tour:** Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org); 4 pm to 5:30 pm; Free with garden admission.

Children 7 to 11 years old have a hands-on workshop to explore the trees in the garden. Pre-registration required.

### SAT, MAY 7

#### IN BROOKLYN

**Mini-Matisse B.Y.O-Artwork Weekend:** Private Picasso's, 237 Fifth Ave. at Carroll Street; [www.privatepicassos.com](http://www.privatepicassos.com); 10 am-6 pm; Free.

Drop by to have children make their one-of-a-kind masterpiece and then B.Y.O.A. (Bring Your Own Artwork) to Ground Floor Gallery, a few blocks away, to hang it on the gallery wall, snap a photo, and leave with a mini-Matisse goodie bag.

**Joanie Leeds:** Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, 10 Grand Army Plaza, between Eastern Park-



## Rocking in the library

Get ready to rock and roll with Joanie Leeds and her band the Nightlights at the Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch on May 7.

The Indie rock singing sensation will put on a show-stopping performance and introduce the audience to her seventh children's CD. Joanie wants to bring

all the mommies and daddies out to rock with her interactive tunes.

Joanie Leeds and the Nightlights on May 7 at 1 pm. Free.

*Central Library [10 Grand Army Plaza, between Flatbush Avenue and Eastern Parkway in Prospect Heights, (718) 230-2100, [www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch\\_library](http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library)].*

way and Flatbush Avenue; (718) 230-2100; [www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch\\_library\\_detail.jsp?branchpageid=265](http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/branch_library_detail.jsp?branchpageid=265); 1 pm; Free.

The singing sensation for kids will be performing her Indie rock along with her band the Nightlights.

**Operators School:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Drop by the computer lab to take control of a city subway car and operate it over virtual miles of track using realistic software. Limited capacity; suggested for children 10 and older.

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

Using the museum's vintage sub-

way cars as the stage, you'll design a crowd of puppets that animate a tale of travel! For children 5 years and older.

**"Pop Pop Popcorn":** On Stage at Kingsborough, 2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street; (718) 368-5596; [www.onstageatkingsborough.org](http://www.onstageatkingsborough.org); 2 pm; \$12.

"Pop-Pop-Popcorn!" is the latest fun-filled show from The Paper Bag Players, bursting with new work and sprinkled with classic Paper Bag Player sketches sure to entertain and delight!

### SUN, MAY 8

#### IN BROOKLYN

**Seining:** Marine Park, Burnett Street and Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Rangers introduce anglers to catch-and-release fishing. Equipment provided; suitable for children 8 years and older.

**Shadow Puppet Subway Stage:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 7.

### WED, MAY 11

#### IN BROOKLYN

**"Hello, Dolly!":** Joseph Papp Theatre at Edward R. Murrow High School, 1600 Avenue L; (718) 258-9283; [www.ermurrohs.org](http://www.ermurrohs.org); 3:30 pm; Tickets range from \$12 to \$15.

Students put on the musical based on the Thornton Wilder's 1938 farce, "The Merchant of Yonkers" with music by Jerry Herman. Matchmaker Dolly Levi takes a trip to Yonkers, New York to see the "well-known unmarried half-a-millionaire," Horace Vandergelder.

### THURS, MAY 12

#### IN BROOKLYN

**Tree Detective Tour:** 4 pm to 5:30 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Thursday, May 5.

**"Hello, Dolly!":** 5 pm. Joseph Papp Theatre at Edward R. Murrow High School. See Wednesday, May 11.

### FRI, MAY 13

#### IN BROOKLYN

**"Hello, Dolly!":** 7 pm. Joseph Papp Theatre at Edward R. Murrow High School. See Wednesday, May 11.

### SAT, MAY 14

#### IN BROOKLYN

**Art on the tracks:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1792; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); Call for Time; Call for fees.

Railroad landscape photographer John Sanderson and painter Janina McCormack led this four-session workshop for teens in ninth-12th grades to hone their photography skills. The group explores the life around the terminals of three subway lines. Pre-registration required. Call for fees for materials, travel costs, and film processing.

**Viking Fest 2016:** Owl's Head Park's Park House, 69th Street and Colonial Road; [www.scandinavian-museum.org](http://www.scandinavian-museum.org); 10 am to 5 pm; Free.

Hosted by the Scandinavian East Coast Museum, this yearly event celebrates the Scandinavian culture and Viking heritage with performances by accordionist Ellen Lindstrom, Viking-themed activities, re-enactments of medieval sword play, food, and more.

**Operators School:** 1:30 pm to

*Continued on page 58*

# Calendar

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

## Continued from page 57

2:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm.  
New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 7.

**Shadow Puppet Subway Stage:**  
1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum.  
See Saturday, May 7.

**"Hello, Dolly!":** 2 pm and 8 pm.  
Joseph Papp Theatre at Edward R.  
Murrow High School. See Wednesday, May 11.

## FURTHER AFIELD

**Scout Day – Science in Motion Day:** Intrepid Sea Air and Space Museum, Pier 86 at W. 46th Street and 12th Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 245-0072; [www.intrepidmuseum.org](http://www.intrepidmuseum.org); 11 am to 2:30 pm; call for tickets.

Spend the day with museum educators and learn about the science involved in problem solving on an aircraft carrier. Be inspired by the machines and inventions — from aircraft elevators to steam catapults — that have made advancements in aviation and life at sea possible. Workshops take place between 11 am and 2:30 pm. During the day Cub Scouts will work on their Science Belt Loops and Academics Pins while Boy Scouts will work on their Aviation Merit Badges.

## SUN, MAY 15

### IN BROOKLYN

**Basic canoeing:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 421-2021; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); 11 am to 2pm; Free.

Trained Urban Park Rangers will lead you on a canoe adventure that ranges from the gentle waters of protected lakes to the challenging open waters of rivers and bays. All canoe

programs are for ages 8 and older. Participation in a mandatory safety review led by a trained park ranger is required. This basic canoeing program is great for all skill levels.

**Shadow Puppet Subway Stage:**  
1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum.  
See Saturday, May 7.

**"Alexander, Who's Not Not Not Not Not Going to Move":**  
Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Hillel Place and Avenue H; (718) 951-4500; [www.brooklyncenter.org](http://www.brooklyncenter.org); 2 pm; Free.

Family musical based on Judith Vorst's best-selling "Alexander" series.

## TUES, MAY 17

### IN BROOKLYN

**Terrible Twos:** Open House Nursery School, 318 A Warren St.; (718) 625-5252; [Carey@openhousekids.org](mailto:Carey@openhousekids.org); [www.openhousekids.org](http://www.openhousekids.org); 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm; Free.

Here Comes the Twos is perfect for parents of current and soon-to-be 2 year olds. RSVP required. Come with all your questions for a very informative Q&A after the workshop.

## THURS, MAY 19

### IN BROOKLYN

**Tree Detective Tour:** 4 pm to 5:30 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Thursday, May 5.

## SAT, MAY 21

### IN BROOKLYN

**Art on the tracks:** Call for Time. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 14.



## Fleece fun at the farm

Learn all about wool at Fleece Fun at Lefferts Historic Homestead, weekends from May 1 through May 29. Visit with staff and see how wool was used on a Flatbush farm. You can brush the wool with carding paddles, spin yarn using a drop spindle, and even make a felt ball to take home

with you.

Fleece fun, Saturdays and Sundays, 2 pm to 4 pm. From May 1 to May 29. Free.

*Lefferts Historic Homestead [452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway in Prospect Lefferts Gardens, (718) 789-2822, [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org)].*

**Operators School:** 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 7.

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

Traveling across cities, mountains, deserts and forests requires different types of vehicles. We'll discover how kids around the world travel and then play an interactive art game, where we'll collaborate to create postcard stories and pictures from a journey around the world on a single vehicle. Recommended for children 5 years and older.

## FURTHER AFIELD

**Decade of Dance:** DanceFest at Tompkins Square Park, 500 E. 10th St., Manhattan; (267) 350-9213; [danceparade.org](http://danceparade.org); 1 to 3 pm and 3 pm to 7 pm; Free.

The parade and show features dancers from around the world as far away as Japan to showcase dance styles in a multi-cultural, rhythmic display of art, movement and color. Hosted by Dance Parade Inc. The pa-

rade starts at 21st Street and Broadway and ends at the Grandstand at Eighth Street and University Place. The festival begins at 3 pm in the park.

## SUN, MAY 22

### IN BROOKLYN

**Impossible Postcards workshop:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 21.

## WED, MAY 25

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Fleet Week:** Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum, Pier 86 at W. 46th Street and 12th Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 245-0072; [www.intrepidmuseum.org](http://www.intrepidmuseum.org); 10 am to 5 pm; Free to service members; Call for tickets.

Celebrate Fleet Week at the Intrepid Museum! Join a special lineup of programs, performances, and interactive displays as we honor our service men and women. Watch the parade of arriving ships, and explore the U.S. Naval Academy Yard Patrol Craft that will dock at the pier. Catch a free screening of "Top Gun" on the flight deck, kicking off the Summer Movie Series. Over the weekend, discover an array of hands-on activities

## Come and say 'Hello'

Broadway has come to the Joseph Papp Theatre at Edward R. Murrow High School on May 11, 12, 13, and 14 for a production of "Hello, Dolly!"

The students at Murrow will be putting on this most wonderful musical based on the Thornton Wilder's 1938 farce, "The Merchant of Yonkers" with music by Jerry Herman.

Matchmaker Dolly Levi takes a trip to Yonkers to see the "well-known unmarried half-a-millionaire," Horace Vandergelder and gives him very sound advice: "On

those cold winter nights, Horace, you can snuggle up to your cash register. It's a little lumpy but it rings."

"Hello, Dolly!" on May 11 at 3:30 pm, May 12 at 5 pm, May 13 at 7 pm, and May 14 at 2 pm and 8 pm. Tickets are \$12 for the May 11, and May 14, (2 pm) showing; and \$15 for May 12, May 13, May 14 (8 pm show). You can purchase tickets online or at the door.

*Joseph Papp Theatre at Edward R. Murrow High School [1600 Avenue L and E. 17th Street in Midwood, (718) 258-9283, [www.ermurrows.org](http://www.ermurrows.org)].*



offered by various military partners on the pier, and enjoy World War II-era music performed by live bands. And don't miss an evening of music and swing dancing on the flight deck on Saturday, May 28. Three of New York City's best big bands will battle it out — James Langton's New York All-Star Big Band, the George Gee Orchestra, and Gordon Webster Big Band. There will also be a vintage fashion show and contest, a 1940s photo booth and more. Don't miss the Memorial Day celebration on May 30.

## THURS, MAY 26

### IN BROOKLYN

**Tree Detective Tour:** 4 pm to 5:30 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Thursday, May 5.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Fleet Week:** 10 am to 5 pm. Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum. See Wednesday, May 25.

## FRI, MAY 27

### IN BROOKLYN

**Open mic:** Brownsville Recreation Center, 1555 Linden Blvd.; (718) 965-8918; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 6 pm to 8 pm; Free.

Teens and young adults express themselves through poetry and the spoken word.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Fleet Week:** 10 am to 5 pm. Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum. See Wednesday, May 25.

## SAT, MAY 28

### IN BROOKLYN

**Art on the tracks:** Call for Time. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 14.

**Operators School:** 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 7.

**Impossible Postcards workshop:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 21.

**Read aloud:** Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org); 2 pm to 4 pm; Free.

Come to the event for a day of education with a special book giveaway.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Fleet Week:** 10 am to 6 pm. Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum. See Wednesday, May 25.



Photo by Arthur De Gaeta

## Vikings invade Ridge

They're taking Bay Ridge by storm.

Come and celebrate all things Nordic at the annual Viking Fest. The event will feature replicas of Viking ships, exhibits on Nordic pastimes including embroidery and spinning, and, of course, plenty of folks in Viking garb.

Storytellers will regale children with tales of Viking revelry, and children will learn all about the culture.

Viking Fest on May 14 from 10 am to 5 pm. Free.

*Owl's Head Park (69th Street and Colonial Road in Bay Ridge, [www.scandinavian-museum.org/events](http://www.scandinavian-museum.org/events)).*

## SUN, MAY 29

### IN BROOKLYN

**Impossible Postcards workshop:** 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, May 21.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Fleet Week:** 10 am to 6 pm. Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum. See Wednesday, May 25.

## MON, MAY 30

### IN BROOKLYN

**Memorial Day in the park:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park

at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Noon to 5 pm; Free (\$3 for Lefferts; \$2 per ride on the carousel).

The Prospect Park Alliance invites you to spend the day in the park for a boat load of family fun — from a special nature play to a potato planting at Lefferts Historic House. Don't forget a ride on the carousel. Visit the Audubon Center, the Carousel and Lefferts.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**Fleet Week:** 10 am to 6 pm. Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum. See Wednesday, May 25.

## LONG-RUNNING

### IN BROOKLYN

#### "Light — A Dark Comedy":

Triskelion Arts, 106 Calyer St. between Banker Street and Clifford Place; (718) 389-3473; [info@triskelionarts.org](mailto:info@triskelionarts.org); [www.triskelionarts.org](http://www.triskelionarts.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 10:30am, Now – Sun, May 1; \$18.

A show about an 11-year-old's adventures in a world without light.

#### Family Discovery Weekends:

Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm, Now – Sun, June 5; Free with garden admission.

Families experiment, learn, and play together in this fun drop-in event and then do a nature-based craft.

**Arty Facts:** Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org); Sundays, 11 am and 1:30 pm, Now – Tues, May 31; Materials fee plus museum admission.

Families enjoy a day at the museum with hands-on activities, and explore the works of artists.

#### Educational Center Drop In:

Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 6, Atlantic Avenue at Furman Street; (718) 222-9939; [www.brooklynbridgepark.org](http://www.brooklynbridgepark.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm to 5 pm; Free.

Get to know Brooklyn Bridge Park and visit the giant aquarium filled with East River critters, the reading corner, and so much more.

**Fishing Fun:** North end of Esplanade, East Drive and Ocean Avenue; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 2pm and 3 to 4 pm, Now – Tues, July 26; Free.

Families with children 15 and younger learn about aquatic ecology, fishing safety and collect their own bait.

**Bird Watching:** North end of Esplanade, East Drive and Ocean Avenue; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 2pm and 3 to 4 pm; Free.

Families with children 15 and younger join a ranger and identify the more than 250 species of birds in the park.

**Fleece Fun:** Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; [www.prospectpark.org](http://www.prospectpark.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 2 pm to 4 pm, Sun, May 1 – Sun, May 29; Free.

Visit and see how wool was used on a Flatbush farm. You can brush the

*Continued on page 60*

# Calendar

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

## Continued from page 59

wool with carding paddles, spin yarn using a drop spindle, and even make a felt ball to take home with you.

### Educational Center Drop In:

Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 6, Atlantic Avenue at Furman Street; (718) 222-9939; [www.brooklynbridgepark.org](http://www.brooklynbridgepark.org); Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 3 pm to 5 pm; Free.

Get to know Brooklyn Bridge Park and visit the giant aquarium filled with East River critters, the reading corner, and so much more.

**Teen pass:** Red Hook Recreation Center, 155 Bay St. between Otsego and Court streets; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Weekdays, 3 pm and 6 pm, Now - Fri, June 17; Free.

Clubs that focus on the areas of city parks, arts, environmental science and sports that are tailored to the interests and talents of sixth to eighth graders.

**First Discoveries:** Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org); Tuesdays, 9:30 am, Now - Tues, May 31; Free with garden admission.

Calling all explorers from 2 to 4 years old to plant a seed, touch a wriggly worm, and hear a story by the meadow nook.

**Kids' Discovery Stations:** Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org); Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:15 am to 12:15 pm, Thursdays and Fridays, 10:15 am, Now - Fri, June 3; Free with garden admission.

Dig in and get your hands dirty, investigate and classify plants, learn how a carnivorous plant eats, and explore the meadow.

**Transit Tots:** New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; [www.mta.info/mta/museum](http://www.mta.info/mta/museum); Thursdays, 10:15 am, Now - Thurs, July 28; Free with museum admission.

Stories, games, and surprises for the youngest transportation fan. For



## Transit fun for little tots

Transit Tots is now at the New York Transit Museum on Thursday mornings through July 28.

It's perfect for children 2 to 5 years old who love to listen to stories, play games, and do fun activities.

Transit Tots, Thursday morn-

ings at 10:15 am now through July 28. Free with admission to the museum.

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

ages 2-5 and adult companions. No class May 26.

**Nature Exploration:** Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; [www.prospectpark.org/audubon](http://www.prospectpark.org/audubon); Thursdays and Fridays, Noon-4 pm, Now - Thurs, June 30; Free.

Alliance members take children on a bird watch, a nature trail hike and meet with Snappy the Turtle.

**Wonderful Warblers:** Eastwoods in Prospect Park, East Drive at the Ravine; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 11 am to 4 pm, Sat, May 7 - Sun, May 29; Free.

Join members of the Alliance and discover the many birds in the park.

**Free Family Day at Wyckoff Farmhouse:** Wyckoff House Museum, 5816 Clarendon Rd. at E. 59th Street; (718) 629-5400; Saturday, May 21, 1 pm; Saturday, June 18, 1 pm; Saturday, July 16, 1 pm; Saturday, Aug. 20, 1 pm; Free.

Wyckoff Farmhouse hosts a day of kid-friendly tours, hands-on activities, scavenger hunts, and more. Special activities for kids younger than 10 before 2 pm.

## FURTHER AFIELD

**Dinosaurs Among Us:** American Museum of Natural History, Central

Park West at W. 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); Daily, 10 am to 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

The exhibit features ancient, rarely seen fossils, and life-like models, including a 23-foot-long feathered tyrannosaur (*Yutyrannus huali*) and a small four-winged dromaeosaur (*Anchiornis huxleyi*) with a 22-inch wingspan and vivid, patterned plumage. Visitors will encounter a tiny dinosaur whose sleeping posture precisely echoes that of a living bird, an extinct-dinosaur nest containing remains of the adult that guarded the hatchlings, and the fossil cast of a relative of Triceratops that had simple feathers on its body.

### Beneath the Ice Immersion

**Dome installation:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at W. 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); Daily, 10 am to 4 pm; Now - Fri, May 27; Free with museum admission and members.

The Milstein Science Series presents this exhibit that takes visitors on a deep dive into Antarctic waters to explore a hidden world beneath the ice. Once thought to be low in species diversity, the Antarctic is now known to be home to a rich variety of life. This immersive dome experience showcases a surprising and visually stunning array of marine life that flourishes on, around, and underneath the Antarctic ice.

**A Year With Children 2016:** Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. at 89th Street, Manhattan; (212) 423-3500; [www.guggenheim.org](http://www.guggenheim.org); Mondays, 10 am to 5:45 pm, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays, 10 am to 5:45 pm, Now - Sun, June 12; \$25 (\$18 seniors/students; Free for members and children under 12).

Now in its 45th year, Learning Through Art, presents the annual exhibition organized by the Sackler Center for Arts Education that showcases select artworks by students in grades two through six from 12 public schools, representing each of New York City's five boroughs.

**The Titanosaur:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at W. 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); Daily, 11 am to 5 pm; Free with museum admission.

The cast of the largest dinosaur that ever walked the earth is now on exhibit. The 122-foot long dino is residing on the fourth floor. This giant herbivore belongs to a group known as titanosaurs, and weighed about 70 tons.



## Learn to ride a bicycle

Learn to ride a bike — and get a helmet, too — on May 1 at Kaiser Park!

Experts will be on hand to teach children the fundamentals of bicycling. They will prepare children for years of safe and confident cycling, teaching them to steer, stop, and balance on two

wheels. The New York City Department of Transportation will be giving away helmets while supplies last.

Learn to Ride, May 1 from noon to 3:30 pm. Free.

*Kaiser Park [Neptune Avenue and 31st Street in Coney Island, (718) 965-8935, [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org)].*



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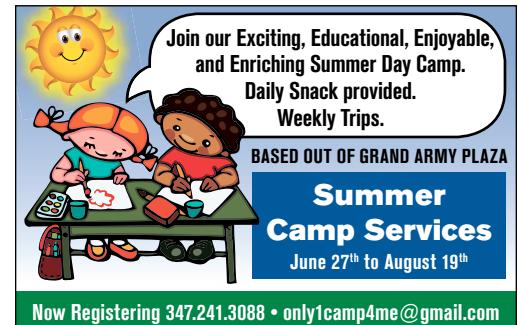
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# New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

## Let's party!

Fashion and style guru Lauren Conrad's "Celebrate" has how-to tips for planning comfortably elegant soirees. Although I consider myself a seasoned party planner, I gleaned lots of helpful tips from Conrad — best known for her appearances on MTV's "The Hills" and "Laguna Beach."

Conrad introduced me to the concept of a "baby sprinkle," which is a downsized baby shower, when family and friends want to help an expectant mom welcome baby number two or three. Her comprehensive tome is a reference manual I turn to again and again for cocktail recipes and inspiring photos of centerpieces,



tablescapes, and even proper attire.

*Lauren Conrad Celebrate book by Lauren Conrad, \$28.99, [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com).*

## Measuring spring fevers

Just when you thought there wasn't any way to improve upon a thermometer, we are thrilled to introduce you to the Kinsa. It's an app-enabled thermometer that plugs into your Apple or Android mobile device.

The app helps you create profile of your family, so you can keep track of each person's symptoms and history. While you're waiting — just 10 seconds — to find out your child's temp, it displays "bubbles" on your device's screen,

so your child happily sits still and pops away while waiting for the reading. Genius!

The thermometer can be used for oral, rectal, or underarm readings. And if fever is detected, the Kinsa app offers guidance on what to do, based on the patient's age and symptoms.

It's so reassuring, you almost wish your kids would get sick so you can use it again.

Almost.

*Kinsa thermometer, \$25, [www.kinsa-health.com](http://www.kinsa-health.com).*



## 'Jumping' for joy

"Every Day's Your Birthday!" is the third CD by Miss Nina (Nina Stone), and it features original songs — and traditional favorites — that encourage movement and turns those frowns upside down.

Ideal for children ages 2–6, its sweet songs can be enjoyed by kids of all ages. Stand out "Colors of You" is a 1920s-style



tune with trumpet and ukulele. This is Miss Nina's first album with her band The Jumping Jacks, and it drops on May 6. We hope to hear many more from these talented musicians.

*Every Day's Your Birthday CD by Miss Nina & The Jumping Jacks, \$12, [www.mymissnina.com](http://www.mymissnina.com).*

## Breakthrough bottle

Finally, there's a baby bottle that reduces air intake, and — along with feeding in the upright position — reduces gas, colic, and spit-ups. BittyLab's Bare bottle operates like a syringe, with an air-plug that allows the parent to expel air from the bottle before baby starts to slurp — reducing air ingestion. As baby sucks, the plug easily moves toward the nipple to deliver air-free milk.

The set comes with one 4-ounce Bare bottle and two nipples, the Perfe-latch (which BittyLab recommends for breast-fed babies) and an Easy-latch nipple. The set — which also includes a set of detailed directions that address usage, care, and any possible mishap a sleep-deprived parent may run into — is for newborn babies, up to 24 months.

By reducing colic-producing tears and increasing baby's smiles, the Bare bottle is a bare necessity!



*Bare Air-Free 4-oz. Single Pack Baby Bottle with Perfe-Latch and Easy-latch nipples by BittyLab, \$15.50, [www.bittylab.com](http://www.bittylab.com).*

## Time-traveling letters

"Letters to Me, When I Grow Up" prompts children to make a "paper time capsule" where they can record — in pictures and words — their hopes, dreams, and memories; seal them; and open them later in life. The 12 letters make a sweet snapshot of childhood in their bound book. They can be sealed with the included stickers and unsealed in adulthood. (And of course, parents can read

them now to find out what's on their kids' fascinating little minds!)

A wonderfully creative way to introduce the concept of keeping a diary or journal, each letter encourages the child to record his favorite toys; to write about his family; answer questions about school; list five things he would do to make the world a better place — and more!

Recommended for children ages 4–8, this book offers a dozen ways to get kids to put pen to paper for a memento he — and his parents — will treasure forever.

*Letters to Me, When I Grow Up: Young Writer's Edition activity book by Lea Redmond, \$14.95, [www.chroniclekids.com](http://www.chroniclekids.com).*







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