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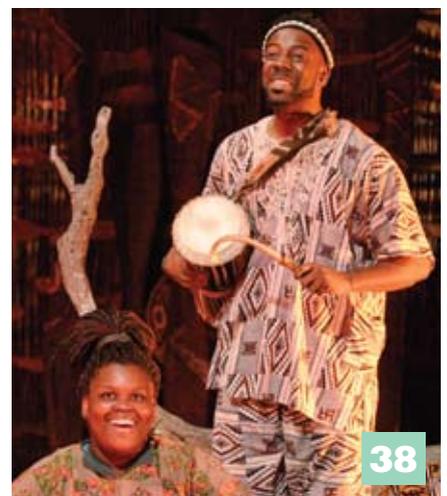
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Winning awards at the Parenting Media Association

New York Parenting was the recipient of 6 Awards of Excellence at Parenting Media Association's Annual Editorial & Design Awards. I once again attended the conference and Award Dinner and happily accepted the Awards on behalf of our team.

We picked up a Silver Award for our June 2016 Front Cover Stock Photo design, featuring a tender portrait of a new Dad lovingly holding his infant. I love that cover! Congratulations to our Art Director, Leah Mitch.

Additionally, this year we again picked up Awards for Editorial pieces from two of our resident writers. Allison Plitt won a Silver Award for her excellent Book Reviews, and Tammy Scileppi was the recipient of two Awards, a Bronze for her News Feature on the tenacious women who battled the NYS Tampon Tax, and another Silver Award for her fine Q & A Interview with a local transgender family. They are fantastic writers who



always provide great work.

Our sister publication Westchester Family also won two Awards of Excellence. Congratulations to Jean Sheff, Editor, and her writers.

I am so proud of the marvelous team of talented professionals who share with us their columns and articles. We are

grateful for their expertise and for their informative contributions to our editorial content. We strongly believe that quality content is essential and that our readers are actually still interested in reading.

It's a great pleasure to continue this work for that I began 17 years ago when we first launched Brooklyn Family. It certainly has grown. Most recently we have been thrilled to see the expansion, relevance and popularity of our fine website, NYParenting.com, as well as numerous other digital initiatives.

Who knows what's coming next ... Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
Publisher/Executive Editor
Susan@nyparenting.com

Community News Group

CEO: Les Goodstein

PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER:
Jennifer Goodstein

New York Parenting

PUBLISHER / EXECUTIVE EDITOR:
Susan Weiss

PUBLISHER / BUSINESS MANAGER:
Clifford Luster

OPERATIONS ASSOCIATE:
Tina Felicetti

SALES REPS: Erin Brof, Mary Cassidy,
Shelli Goldberg-Peck, Jay Pelc

ART DIRECTOR: Leah Mitch

WEB DESIGNER: Sylvan Migdal

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS: Arthur Arutyunov,
Gardy Charles, Earl Ferrer, John Napoli,
Mark Ramos

MANAGING EDITOR: Vince DiMiceli

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Courtney Donahue

COPY EDITORS: Lisa J. Curtis

CALENDAR EDITOR: Joanna Del Buono

Contact Information

ADVERTISING: WEB OR PRINT
(718) 260-4554
Susan@NYParenting.com

CIRCULATION
(718) 260-8336
Tina@NYParenting.com

EDITORIAL
(718) 260-4554
Family@NYParenting.com

CALENDAR
(718) 260-2523

ADDRESS

New York Parenting Media/CNG
1 Metrotech Center North
10th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

www.NYParenting.com



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New color palette

Packaged foods now replacing synthetic dyes with hues direct from nature

Whether you're dyeing Easter eggs or simply enjoying the emerging daffodils and hyacinths, your world is bursting with color this time of year. Yet, you may notice that some of your family's favorite packaged foods are becoming more muted.

Many well-known food companies are phasing out synthetic dyes from their products and replacing them with natural colors. Why? A growing body of research suggests synthetic food dyes trigger hyperactivity in susceptible children. There is growing pressure from consumers to ditch the dyes.

Mars Incorporated announced it would remove artificial colors from all the processed foods it makes for humans to be replaced with pigments found in natural substances. Other companies have also made the pledge — such as Campbell's, Frito Lay, General Mills, Kellogg's, Kraft Heinz, Mondelez International, Nestlé USA, and Panera. Some food chains, such as Whole Foods and Trader Joe's, have long refused to sell foods with artificial coloring.

The familiar macaroni and cheese found in the yellow-and-blue box? Tinted now by paprika, turmeric, and annatto (a color taken from achiote tree seeds). Sunkist orange-flavored jelly candies? Carrot juice now provides their bright shade. And Yo-plait's Blackberry Harvest yogurt gets its purple hue from beet juice.

A study released last year found that 43 percent of all food products marketed toward children contain artificial colors. Surprising foods with added pigments include marshmallows, French dressing, cherry pie filling, cookies, canned pasta, and hot chocolate mix.

In a 2014 study, some cereals, candies, and cakes were found to contain much more artificial coloring than we would expect. Food companies have to disclose the presence of artificial coloring on labels, but they don't disclose specific amounts.

Yet, while food scientists are having pretty good luck replacing orange and red with natural colors, they're having a devil of a time with the color blue. If you think about it, there isn't much blue that occurs in nature. And blue is generally associated with "fun" foods aimed at children, such as M&Ms, sugary drinks, cereal, ice pops, and candy.

Scientists are also finding the "natural" colors aren't predictable and can turn strange looking or tasting. Artificial colors are easier to work with and look and taste the same regardless of where they're placed.

An example of a natural food coloring is McCormick's Color from Nature Food Colors. More muted than the original food colors, they're an option for parents who wish to eliminate artificial dyes from their children's diets for recipes such as frost-



GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

ing. The colors are made from ingredients such as plants, vegetables, and seeds.

All color additives used in food — synthetic colors and those derived from natural sources — must be approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

Synthetic colors that are on critics' radar include Red 40 (causes behavior issues in certain children), Blue 1 (worrisome since it passes through the protective blood-brain barrier), and Yellow 5 and Yellow 6 (may contain a cancer-causing contaminant).

You might be asking, "Why add artificial colors to begin with?" There are several reasons why: Humans seek color in what we eat. Bright, artificial colors simulate the presence of fruits or other natural ingredients. Interestingly, adding a red color can make a food taste 10 percent sweeter.

What you can do:

- Watch out for labels stating "artificial color added" or "color added." Or that list "FD&C red #3" or any color followed by a number.

- Prepare more foods at home from scratch.

- Limit the amount of foods marketed towards kids.

Finally, children who get on a so-called "sugar high" may actually be experiencing the effects of these artificial colors. There is no peer-reviewed research that sugar causes hyperactivity.

Christine Palumbo is a Naperville, Ill.-registered dietitian nutritionist. After doing the research for this article, she plans to shun most artificially colored foods. Find her at Christine Palumbo Nutrition on Facebook, @PalumboRD on Twitter or ChristinePalumbo.com.

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How to practice patience

“Patience is a virtue!” I would like to disagree; patience is a behavior. You might have noticed that children do not have a high level of patience, and you would be correct. You can help them improve this skill, however, with the right kind of practice.

When children do not get their way, they often react with problem behavior, which can include everything from being sassy, to screaming, to hitting. You definitely do not want your children entering the world thinking that this kind of behavior is acceptable. Of course you know this, but it is worth repeating to emphasize the importance of dealing with this tendency early so that it makes your life easier later. Kids want what they want right now, but in the long term, giving in to their every whim will not serve their development.

Begin by observing what happens before your small being gets upset about hearing “no.” Last night your small being asked for an extra book at bedtime. What did you say? How did she react? What was your response to her behavior?

You want to start replacing your words

with action. For example, your small being screams because she wants a book. You react by giving in. She has thus learned that yelling gets her what she wants.

Do not reason with a child who is upset, frustrated, or angry. Expect these emotions from your small being and stop yourself from responding. Instead, say to your small one, “I will help you when you are quiet” or “I will talk to you again once you sit down.”

Make sure that your actions match your words. If you said you would read the extra book tomorrow, then do not read that book tonight. If you said that it was time to clean up Lego pieces, walk over and start working to clean up the toys. Put your words into action.

It may be helpful to narrate your actions, but be careful about starting to explain why that is the right course of action. A lack of understanding is rarely a reason for a small being to act out.

Being consistent is key! When you match your words and your actions on a regular basis, your small being will know that what you say is what will happen. Your patience in the process will teach



BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

them about patience.

Dr. Marcie Beigel is a behavior specialist based in Brooklyn. She has worked with thousands of families for more than 20 years and she has been a guest expert on WCBS and Fox. Her book “Love Your Classroom Again” was a No. 1 bestseller. Find out more at DrMarcie.com.

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Connecting *with the* earth

Fostering appreciation, knowledge, and respect for nature

BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-TIEMAN

Sundays during my childhood meant making the arduous trek over hill and hollow to my maternal grandparents' house for dinner. The scenic journey along state Route 11 bordered patchwork-quilt farms, wound between walls of sheer rock, and skirted pitch-black openings in the hillside that ignited my childish imagination, all the while roughly paralleling the south fork of the Kentucky River. Oftentimes I spent the duration with my nose in a book, singing with my sisters, or listening to my mother tell stories of growing up and rarely traveling beyond those hills. So familiar was this trip that I can still close my eyes and retrace its meandering course.

On one such Sunday excursion, when I was about 8 years old, my father suddenly proclaimed, "Look out the window, girls. Take a good look around. The world will never again look exactly the same as it does today." I begged to differ, pointing out that it looked just like it did the last time we drove this way.

He explained that while it may appear to be the same, it wasn't. The leaves on the trees had changed color, even if only slightly. Leaves had fallen. Different clouds were in the sky. Different water was flowing down the river.

Prior to this conversation, I'd considered the earth as merely a backdrop against which my life was meant to

unfold. But in that moment, the earth became a living entity, with a life of its own, and the seeds of my environmental conscience had been sown.

Having been allowed to revel in nature as a youngster — climbing trees, catching all manner of creatures, exploring the woods in search of fairies and wildflowers — the transition from casual observer to student and steward came about quite naturally with the guidance my father provided. He taught me to identify trees by their leaves, birds by their song and plumage, and the constellations by their pattern of stars. He explained the life cycle, the water cycle, and rainbows. While I may not have completely comprehended the words, the wonderment with which he conveyed this information was contagious. He made it clear that the ability to explain a phenomenon renders it no less miraculous.

These vivid recollections were prompted by an e-mail exchange with my son. He suggested I write an article exploring the role of parents in influencing environmental awareness in their children. When asked about the goal of the article, he replied, "to encourage parents to raise strong advocates for the earth who adhere to environmentally responsible practices." His heartfelt message reflected the appreciation, knowledge, and respect for nature that had been shared with him. My father's legacy of establishing a connection to the earth

is in good hands.

Establish a legacy for your children:

- Revel in nature. Roll in the grass. Walk in the woods. Wade in a stream.
- Identify nature. Books and apps can help.
- Plant something. Whether it's a garden on the terrace, windowsill, or rooftop or a single seed in an old boot, watch something grow.
- Bring nature indoors. Collect rocks, feathers, nuts, and shells.
- Create nature-inspired art projects.
- Work in the yard or adopt a space to maintain in your neighborhood or local park.
- Participate in conservation and anti-pollution efforts. Consume less. Waste less. Share more.
- Celebrate the earth every day, not just once a year.

There are those who lack contact with nature. From the time they rise in the morning until they retire at night, they don't step foot on actual ground, they don't encounter a wild creature, and they experience the weather as something they seek to avoid while getting from one place to another. This lack of connection with the natural world contributes to indifference.

Those who are ignorant of, or refuse to acknowledge, the interconnection between human activity and the environment are easily persuaded to adopt and support practices that potentially cause



irreparable damage to our planet, especially if they mean to benefit financially. They are operating on the misguided notion that they'll be immune to the consequences. But nature is apolitical and its forces are completely unbiased. Political affiliation, socioeconomic status, age, race, or religion are irrelevant. The environment is the one thing that cannot be corrected after the next election cycle.

The earth is an approximation of a closed system, which means, what is here is all there is. Fresh air, clean water,

and healthy soil cannot be pumped in from outer space. Nature's ability to recover from whatever damage we inflict is not infinite. The effects of human activity on the environment will continue to occur whether we believe it or not. The choice of whether or not to limit those effects is ours. But it is our children and grandchildren who will inherit the consequences of our choices.

Raising children to become good stewards of our planet begins by fostering their personal relationship with nature

— a connection to the earth. If we expect them to adhere to environmentally responsible practices, we must do so first. Imagine what could happen if we all intended to leave the earth a little better than we found it.

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.



Green gifts

Tips for fun, Earth-friendly giftwrap alternatives

BY LARA KRUPICKA

There's nothing like the fun of tearing at colorfully wrapped gifts to make a celebration exciting for a kid. The mere sight of a bow-bedecked box can elicit shrieks of delight.

And no wonder — a study by Daniel Howard of Southern Methodist University found that, due to positive association, recipients automatically feel more favorably about owning a gift when it has been wrapped. Which may also explain why the tradition of disguising gifts is such a long-standing one. Some date it back to 105 AD in China.

But for the environmentally conscious, this practice can be cringe inducing. How to please the birthday boy or girl and still care for the earth? Try one of the following options:

It's a calendar. No, it's gift wrap accessories

If you appreciate artistic recycled gift packaging, tags, and cards, check out the Paper Source Wall Art Calendar. Enjoy 12 months of beautiful calendar spreads. Then when the year ends, flip the pages over and cut out the templates for notecards, pillow boxes, and other gift wrappings. Purchase at your local Paper Source store or online at www.papersource.com.

The Sunday funnies

For years, thrifty folks have used full-color Sunday comics pages for wrapping gifts. The large newsprint pages fit most smaller packages, or you can use mul-

tiples spreads for a larger box. Save each week's funnies to build up your wrapping stash.

Or simply grab the current Sunday pages from your recycling bin.

Outdated maps

Did you know that your car's door pockets and glove box can be sources of gift-wrap? Cull any outdated maps and move them to your giftwrap bin. After a road trip, instead of discarding any maps collected, keep them to have on hand for the next celebration. The bright color and larger-sized pages make for great gift coverings, especially for guys.

Or add a decorative touch to any present by cutting maps into strips and winding them around a pen or pencil to create curls. Then tape a group of curls to the top of a wrapped package.

Retail shopping bags

Ever since Hallmark introduced the first handled paper gift bag in 1987, Americans have favored presenting gifts in decorative bags. Instead of buying bags specifically for gifts, why not use the cute shopping bags from retail chains you frequent?

American Girl and Vera Bradley's shoppers with their vibrant glossy colors and braided handles make alternatives as nice (and often stronger) than the "real thing." Be selective about which shopping bags you recycle and save the best for wrapping gifts. When a gift-giving occasion arises, take a few minutes to cover the company logo or name on the bag with stickers or decorative paper scraps. Add tissue, or for an even greener filler, use shredded paper, such as the shiny pages of last month's magazine. Tie on a tag or add a card, and you're set.

Empty Altoids tin

Care for a mint? If you have an Altoids lover in your household, you have on hand the perfect gift-card container. Simply wipe out the powdery residue from the empty candy tin. Then paint the top and sides with a layer of acrylic craft paint, glue on some cardstock, write your greeting, and insert the gift card. For a two-in-

one gift, decorate the top with a refrigerator magnet instead — it will stick readily to the metal tin.

Fabric

Think outside of the box by using fabric to cover a gift. The Japanese originated the use of a fabric wrap during the Edo period (1608–1868). Furoshiki, as the colorful, reusable cloth wrappers are called, began as a means for carrying personal items to the public baths, before being adopted as an all-purpose wrap.

Create your own furoshiki out of any available cloth. Wrap a hand towel around bath toys. Buy a bandana in the recipient's favorite color. If you sew, pull scraps from your fabric bin and secure with a long fabric strip tied in a bow.

Paper grocery bags

Next time you buy groceries, ask the bagger to use one or two paper bags in place of plastic or your reusable cloth bags. Kraft paper grocery bags can be cut open and turned inside out. Then have your children color a design on it, or stamp images to decorate before taping around a gift.

Treasure hunt

Instead of wrapping your gift, tuck a clue

written on paper in a small, bow-topped box instead. Create a series of clues, each one hidden in a location prompted by the previous clue. At the final location, hide the gift. This works especially well for large and oddly-shaped gifts that are difficult to wrap or consume large amounts of paper.

...

Keep your eyes open for other alternatives to traditional paper giftwrap. After all, even sheets and rolls of giftwrap originated as an alternative to customary wrappings. In 1917 the Hall Brothers' stationery store ran out of tissue sheets commonly used for wrapping gifts. As a quick solution, it brought out decorative French envelope lining papers from the manufacturing plant and offered them for 10 cents a sheet. Customers loved them and bought out the supply, both that year and the next. Thus Hallmark started the business of giftwrap, which has expanded now to a nearly \$3 billion dollar industry.

Have fun trying new, earth-friendly methods for packaging your gifts. You may surprise and amuse yourself as much as your recipient.

Lara Krupicka is a parenting journalist and mom of three who keeps plenty of old maps and Altoid tins on hand for gift wrapping.



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Understanding a Supplemental Needs Trust

I have an adult cousin who is disabled. She is the beneficiary under the Will of our aunt. She went to another relative who is an attorney to do her Will. Although the attorney was aware of my cousin's disability, he did not put any Supplemental Needs Trust provisions in the Will. Our aunt died. The bequest, which is significant, will disrupt her government benefits, which include residence in an assisted living facility paid for by Medicaid. What can I do?

This is a frustrating problem that happens quite often. Before we look at the solution, let's review what a Supplemental Needs Trust is. These trusts are authorized by federal and state law and are created to hold assets for the benefit of a disabled individual in a way that will not interfere with any government benefits available to him or her. The assets could come to the individual by employment, testamentary bequest, or proceeds from a personal injury litigation settlement. These benefits include Social Security income and Medicaid benefits.

These can be crucial for the disabled individual, both in economic terms and to the extent that there are community resources available to the disabled beneficiary through Medicaid that would not otherwise be available, even through a private pay mechanism. It is paramount to protect these benefits so that care continues without interruption.

There are two types of Supplemental Needs Trusts: a "first-party" and a "third-party." A Supplemental Needs Trust is often referred to as a Special Needs Trust and the two terms are, for general purposes, referring to the same trust vehicle.

When a Supplemental Needs Trust is funded with the individual's own assets

(i.e. bequest, lawsuit proceeds), it is called a "first-party SNT." This is in contrast to a "third-party SNT," which is funded with another person's assets for the individual's benefit.

A first-party trust is permitted only when the individual is younger than 65 years old when the transfer occurs; otherwise there is a transfer penalty (a period during which the government will not pay for benefits). If the individual was still in the community, a first-party trust may be established after the age of 65; however, the transfer is a non-qualified transfer with a five-year look-back period. If the disabled beneficiary is over 65 years old, however, and already in nursing home care, this is not the best option.

A testamentary trust established under someone's will is generally a "third-party SNT." The benefit to a third-party trust is that it does not have a "pay back" requirement to the government, because the funds used to "seed" the third-party trust are not the disabled individual's own funds. They are generally the funds contributed by a third-party, whether a parent, grandparent, sibling, or anyone else. Any remaining assets at the individual's death pass as the grantor of the third-party trust directs. A first-party trust requires that the trust balance be used to pay back any government benefits received.

Back to the problem with your aunt's Will. There are a few options, but usually the most prudent option is to seek reformation of the Will if it is financially feasible to do so:

Option 1: Pooled trust

Pooled Trusts are essentially a form of a Supplemental Needs Trust in that it suspends ownership of the funds sufficient to



ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER, ESQ.

preserve benefits, but the individual need not create or administer a separate trust (hence the "pooled" reference). A pooled trust is managed by a nonprofit organization that is authorized to act as trustee of a global Supplemental Needs Trust for several beneficiaries (not just one, like a privately created trust). The assets in the pooled trust are not counted as assets of the individual for the purpose of determining eligibility for government benefits. Unlike the first-party trusts discussed above, the pooled trust can be utilized at any age. However, a transfer to a pooled trust can create a transfer penalty if the disabled beneficiary is currently receiving Social Security income.

Assets of a disabled person are put into a subaccount with the pooled trust and the assets can be used for the individual's benefits during her life. Distributions are permissible to enhance the individual's quality of life, which may include payments for vacation, computers, sporting goods, furniture, or transportation. Prohibited distributions include distributions to the beneficiary directly (as with all trusts discussed herein), distribution to a bank account, alcohol, tobacco, or firearms.

The pooled trust option alleviates the administrative burden of ensuring payments won't jeopardize benefits, but drawback of this type of trust is that there are delays in payments, as the pooled trust must first authorize the payment and then send a check. Also, at the individual's death, the remainder of the trust assets

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will become the property of the pooled trust; you cannot direct a beneficiary.

There are some start-up costs to a pooled trust and a monthly (or annual) fee during the individual's life. In New York, there are approximately 20 different pooled trusts to choose from. Each has its own rules, minimum contribution limits, and fees. Once the individual is accepted into a pooled trust, her guardian or representative notifies Medicaid and the Social Security Administration by presenting the acceptance letter, a copy of the Master Trust Agreement, and Joinder Agreement, in order to ensure there is no disruption in the individual's government benefits.

The pooled trust option may not be viable if the beneficiary (your cousin) is already receiving government benefits, since it could create a transfer penalty.

Option 2: ABLE account

In 2014 President Obama signed a law called the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act (ABLE), which created the ability for disabled persons to have a savings account, similar to the college education 529 Plans, but for a broader scope of services beyond higher education. In order to be eligible for an account, the disabled person must be someone who had a disability that occurred before she turned 26 years

old. Even then, the account may only be funded with amounts up to the annual exclusion, currently \$14,000.

Because the individual became disabled later in life, she is not eligible for this type of account. Also, although the law has been enacted, it is up to each state to implement the accounts, and in New York, this type of trust is not yet available.

Option 3: Will reformation

The final and usually preferable option is to seek reformation of the Will. A reformation seeks to "rewrite" the will to include the trust provisions that were not included in the first place. If there is a contingent beneficiary in the Will, you can seek reformation in a way that would allow any remaining trust funds to pass to that beneficiary. There is no age limitation to a testamentary Supplemental Needs Trust.

In order to reform the Will, the executor or the representative of the disabled beneficiary petitions the court for a construction proceeding, and asks the court to establish the trust and authorize a trustee. You would present a proposed draft of the trust provisions. Ideally, you would obtain consent from all other interested parties (the other beneficiaries) who should not be adversely affected by the reformation and therefore are not likely to object.

Notice would also likely need to be given to the New York State Department of Health and the Department of Social Services, which might object because it might deprive it of reimbursement for the provision of benefits. However, case law does suggest that the court will be willing to reform a Will in order to effectuate the testator's intent, and if the reformation would not materially change the testator's dispositive plan.

If your aunt knew that your cousin was disabled, a valid argument could be made that she intended to protect her and would have done so had she known that the trust provision was an option. In that regard, if the reformation were to be disallowed, the testator's intent that the disabled beneficiary receives a benefit under the Will would be frustrated because it would require disclaiming her interest under the Will and sacrificing it in order to preserve her government benefits. However, the Department of Health and Social Services may object to the trust unless a payback provision is included.

Alison Arden Besunder is the founding attorney of the law firm of Arden Besunder P.C., where she assists with estate-planning. Her firm assists clients in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties. Find her on Twitter @estatetrustplan and on her website at www.besunderlaw.com.

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Self-defense

Life-saving tips for children

BY MATT ROMOND

Many children spend their mornings and afternoons unsupervised as they travel from home to school and back again. Bullies and other predators can pose a threat to the safety of a child who is waiting for the bus or walking with just one or two other children, which is why parents need to make sure their children are physically prepared for their new-found independence.

In addition to pencils, pens, paper, and a backpack, parents also need to make sure they have taught their children basic self-defense and safety skills that could save their life if they are ever attacked. These unsupervised hours pose unique dangers for different age groups. Here is a list of tips on what parents need to be teaching their kids now to make sure they stay safe throughout the school year:

Grades one to five

Lack of proper supervision is rare for this group of students, except for very short periods of time. Children of this age are most commonly left alone during a short walk to and from school. Here are a few practical tips to ensure that this time is as safe as possible:

- Always walk with a buddy who lives very close.
- Be sure to go straight to school or home. No detours or goofing around.
- If a stranger says “hello,” the child can smile, make eye contact, waive, and say “hello” back, but should always keep walking toward either school or home — no matter what.

Grades six to 10

Lack of supervision is relatively common in this group. At this age, children take on more responsibility and are less susceptible to the dangers faced by younger children. However, the dangers that these older children encounter are more commonly imposed by friends and acquaintances. These peer pressure-based dangers are experienced by every child in this age group. But the risk can be mitigated by ensuring that your child’s time and attention is occupied during these key hours. Here are a couple of practical tips for this



age group:

- Get your child involved in after-school activities that he or she genuinely enjoys.
- Schedule time after school for your child to complete chores or homework. Ensure that you hold him or her to that expectation when you come home from work.

Communication is key

Make sure your children understand that there is no such thing as communicating too much. By letting them know that you expect regular updates, you will feel better leaving them unattended. Before leaving them for the first time, set these expectations. Let your kids know what you expect — whether it be staying inside while you are gone or coming straight home after school.

Here are a few more tips every parent and child should know:

Talk to kids about knowing their surroundings. By explaining to them that they need to be fully aware of what’s going

on around them, they can stop a dangerous situation from happening.

Teach them to project confidence. Confidence in speech (speaking clearly) and body language (good posture, eye contact, etc.) are the single most important factors that can increase your child’s chances of safety. Regardless of the dangerous situation or the age, a child with a strong presence is less likely to be at risk than those that project shyness or aloofness.

Children should always listen to their instincts. If something doesn’t feel right, they should leave the area immediately without hesitation or fear of getting in trouble.

Matt Romond is a third-degree Krav Maga Worldwide Black Belt, the director of Krav Maga Worldwide’s KM-X kids program, and has more than a decade of experience teaching children and adults Krav Maga self-defense and fight classes. For more, visit www.kravmaga.com.



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Benefits of camp

— *from a kid's perspective*

BY GAYLA GRACE

Nathan Cole, 16 years old, has attended camp every year since he was 5. His eyes light up when you ask what he enjoys most about camp. A typical teenage boy who's not overly expressive, Nathan can quickly list reasons why he still loves to go to camp. Here are a few benefits from Nathan's point of view:

1. It's fun!

"Camp is always fun. Sports camp, church camp, day camp, or week-long camp — it doesn't matter, I always have fun when I go to camp," said Nathan. His preference is to head out with a few kids he already knows, but he says he's attended a few sports camps where he didn't know anyone on day one.

"The camaraderie happens easily among kids at camps. It doesn't take long for fun to begin, even with those you've just met," he adds.

2. It takes you away from normal life

Nathan admits that long summer days can get boring.

"I like to get away from the routine and experience things I can't do at home," he said. "My favorite camp has stuff like zip lines, paddle boats, go carts, paintball, archery, and riflery—things I don't get to do at home."

With activities like that to keep kids entertained, technology gets left behind and exercise becomes a daily occurrence.

3. You make new friends

"I didn't have any friends the summer we moved out of state when I was in elementary school," said Nathan. "I went to a baseball camp that summer and made friends who ended up being in my class the next school year, which helped me adjust to a new school."

Learning to meet new people and easily form friendships is a valuable skill for kids at any age.

4. You learn about others and different ways kids live

"I learned to appreciate my own family much more after finding out about the difficult home life many kids have," Nathan said. "Campers tend to open up with each other, and you find out your own life isn't so hard," he said.

Kids learn to accept others from different walks of life and appreciate their circumstances as they make friends outside of their everyday people base.

5. Sports camps help improve your skill

"I've gone to a lot of sports camps that helped me get better at soccer," Nathan said. "I've made the high school soccer team the last two years, and I think the camps I've attended helped."

Sports camps provide discipline and individual attention to a particular sport. They help develop an athlete in the game he loves. Competition on the playing field grows stronger as kids move through junior high and high school.

6. You learn to respect different kinds of authority

Kids grow accustomed to the authorities at home and school. It's good for them to experience different levels of authority at camp.

"The camp counselors are usually teenagers, and sometimes kids disrespect them," said Nathan. "But campers have to understand the counselors' place of authority, regardless of their age, and consequences for not following the rules," he added.

7. You gain confidence when you step outside your comfort zone

Camp offers activities not available at home, and kids are encouraged to try them.

"Some kids don't like to experience new things, but camp counselors help them move out of their comfort zone and do it anyway," Nathan said. Confidence is gained when kids overcome their fears.

...

Nathan says his camp experience will be different this summer.

"I'm going as a junior counselor for the first time to the camp I've attended since I was in elementary school," he said. "I'm looking forward to helping young campers get out of their everyday routine and find fun at camp!"

Gayla Grace is a freelance journalist and mom to five who sends her kids to camp every summer.

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Continued on page 22



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Questions: Eddie Mayrose, Director of Sports Camps,
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Continued from page 20

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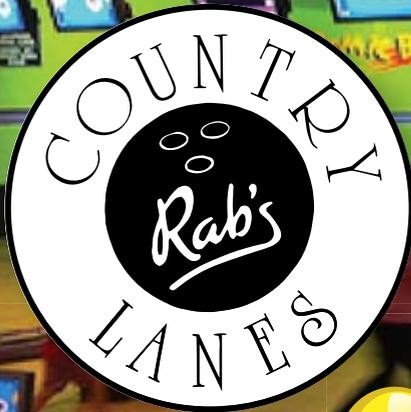
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Screen-free tips

Simple swaps for switching off for a week — and beyond

BY LARA KRUPICKA

“Screen-free week” can be a challenging exercise that provides a sense of accomplishment. A nationwide movement May 1–7, it’s a way to get people to unplug and rediscover the joys of life beyond the screen.

But to many families, it’s also a relief to return to a screen-filled lifestyle. In fact, it can be hard to imagine going without television or internet devices on a regular basis.

For some practical screen-time substitutions, take a glimpse at a day in the life of our (relatively) screen-free family:

Morning

Morning in our household consists of getting three children out the door to junior high and elementary school. I’m up at 5:30 am to snatch time to myself. By 6:30 am, my girls are up and getting dressed for school. A quick check of the weather forecast in the paper or on an iPod and wardrobes are selected. Within a half-hour, everyone gathers for breakfast.

We eat together most days (minus Dad, who usually arrives at work before we’re up). Over breakfast we review any activities for the day. Then I read the newspaper, my eldest occasionally looking over my shoulder at the sports news. Occasionally, we all discuss an interesting news report I’ve chosen to share with them.

Dr. Amy Nathanson, associate professor of communication at Ohio State University, points out the crucial nature of parents filtering the news for their children.

“Depending on their age and development, children simply aren’t ready to hear the kind of information news stories typically contain. In many cases, exposing children to news stories only results in them becoming frightened and without the abilities to effectively manage their fears.”

Developmental pediatrician Dr. Mark

Tips for limiting your family’s screen time

- Model intentional viewing habits by turning the television on only for specific programs.
- Set and keep rules on how and what children will watch.
- Provide reasons for those rules and involve older children in deciding

the rules.

• Don’t place televisions and computers in children’s rooms or other places where they can’t be easily monitored. Also consider limiting where tablets and laptops can be used.

For more information and ideas about screen-free week, see www.screenfree.org.

Bertin agrees.

“The news has become really disturbing. The images being shown and the information shared aren’t things many kids are ready to hear in that format.”

By 8 am, everyone is gone. I head to my office where I will work at my computer. The morning is otherwise screen-free.

Afternoon

Elementary school dismisses at 2:30 pm and my younger two arrive home shortly after. They empty their backpacks and scoot up to the kitchen counter for a snack. I stand and chat with them for a bit.

Soon my eldest returns from junior high and by then homework time is well under way. The television in our family room sits dark. Except for my teen listening to her iPod in her room and instruments being practiced, the house is still.

It’s 4 pm. One child reads on a couch while another plays with Lego bricks nearby. Even though the television is right there, they don’t ask to turn it on.

No television during playtime, as it turns out, is a good thing.

“Children’s play sessions are shorter and less sophisticated when background television is present compared to when it is not,” says Nathanson. “Because children learn a tremendous amount from playing, the detrimental effect of back-

ground television on children’s play is significant.”

Before I start dinner preparations, I urge my middle child into the kitchen to work on her birthday wish list. She has no ideas. It’s not that she’s an odd child with no desires. Nor are we indulgent parents, buying her everything she requests. Essentially, without television marketing to influence her, she lives relatively satisfied with what she has. The wish list grows slowly.

I move on to cooking dinner. Sometimes my children ask to play a video game together during the dead time before dinner. And often I allow them. Because it’s a limited time and I know exactly what they’ll be seeing on the television, I’m comfortable with it. And I’m not alone.

Lesley Wagner, a mother of three young children, also keeps her days relatively television free. But when it comes time to get dinner together, she admits she sometimes puts the television on.

“When my 4-year-old wakes up from his nap, we may watch TV while I’m making dinner. Maybe for 20 or 30 minutes.”

As Bertin notes, “Some screen time is a part of life. If children are watching a small amount, and we’re closely watching the content, they’ll be fine.”

The problem arises when it becomes a habit that takes over. Nathanson ex-



plains, “Parents may want to rethink their use of TV when they find they are continually turning to it to satisfy their own or their child’s needs.”

Evening

By 6 pm Dad comes home, and we sit down to dinner together. My husband takes this time to do his own catch-up with our girls. Soon our kitchen grows noisy with our girls’ rapid-fire interchange.

“When the TV is off during meal time, family members can tune into each other,” says Nathanson. “The reality is it’s difficult for anyone to ignore the images and sounds coming from a television. By turning the television off, parents and children

can talk and really listen to each other.”

After dinner, we all clear the table. Then Dad and I retire to the couch where we catch up some more. In the kitchen the three girls tease each other and carry on loudly as they wash the dishes.

Once the dishes are done, our eldest returns to her homework. Sometimes the rest of us play a board or card game.

At 7 pm, the bedtime routine starts. Our youngest showers, while the others read. The family room is empty, so Dad sneaks in a quick video game. (He can’t help it.)

By 8:30 pm, the house is quiet. The girls have gone to bed. I read. Dad settles in with a puzzle. The television is off.

After catching up on Facebook (yes,

we’re guilty of computer screen time more than anything), it is lights out for us. We both drift off easily, not wired by a fast-paced, late-night news program.

As you can see, we are not Luddites. Screen time does figure into our day in small amounts, and we’ve been intentional to constrain its limits.

Dr. Bertin sums it up well: “Recognize that media doesn’t have to happen to us. We can decide how to use media, even for our kids.”

It’s intentionality that makes the difference.

Lara Krupicka is a freelance writer who admits to enjoying one television show and plenty of games each week with her husband and three girls.



This is all of us

The show we all need right now

It's been a long while since I have been moved by a television series as much as I have been with NBC's "This Is Us." It's the story of a family — which is everyone's story. I've been waiting for a few weeks now to see what will become of William, Randall's biological father, who has terminal cancer. Randall (Sterling K. Brown) tracked William (Ron Cephas Jones) down and brought him into his own home after being abandoned by William as an infant. Of course, if Randall hadn't been left at the hospital, he wouldn't have been adopted by his parents (Milo Ventimiglia and Mandy Moore) and become one of the "big three," along with his sister Kate and brother Kevin, played wonderfully by Chrissy Metz and Justin Hartley, respectively.

Each week, this show has presented a glimpse into this beloved, imperfect, yet perfect family. The love they have for each other is real and uniquely, almost palpable. For instance, it shows Kevin, the actor about to take the stage at his new play, running off at the last minute to do what his dad would do, knowing that his brother Randall was having a breakdown.

And we see William utter his dying

words to his long-lost son:

"You deserve everything, Randall. My beautiful boy. My son. I haven't had a happy life. I had breaks. I had choices. A life of almosts and could-haves. Some would call it sad, but I don't. 'Cause the two best things in my life were the person in the very beginning, and the person at the very end."

Or the scenes of baby William dancing with his mother intermingled with scenes of him as an old man meeting his mom in heaven — I don't know what impacted me more. Watching William take his last breath just about broke me.

This isn't only writing at its best (and big huge kudos to these amazing writers, in particular creator and writer Dan Fogelman), it is humanity at its best. It is one of the very few displays of media that choose to show humans being kind and good rather than terrible, simply for ratings. I wonder if we were as deluged with simple acts of human kindness day in and day out, the same way we are inundated with horrific images, lies, corruption, and plain wickedness, would we be a different society?

With the current world, we may feel helpless and wonder what we can do to preserve the goodness that was innately



JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

born in our children. While we may feel like giving up some days, we have to keep trying. One thing we can do is be the good we want to see, be the change that needs to occur, be the kindness we want to foster, as Gandhi said so many years ago.

I commend the writers, producers, and actors of "This Is Us" for taking the lead in a sea of sharks, and taking a chance that good would outweigh evil. (I often imagine some of our so-called leaders being forced to watch this series, "A Clockwork Orange"-style, and see if any sense of humanity might well up in them after a while.) Many viewers have commented that each week, after watching, they try to be a better person and do better in their individual life. One viewer tweeted that after every episode, they want to hug everyone they see, because they have more of an open heart to a person's struggles. And each of us has our own.

A teacher once asked my high school class if we thought that people were inherently evil with a propensity to do good or if people were fundamentally good with a tendency to do evil. As an optimistic teen, I told him, I thought people were inherently good, and I still do, despite what we see over and over again on TV.

Maybe if we saw more goodness on the screen, just maybe, we just might see more goodness in our real lives.

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

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A pox on the party

Chicken pox parties dangerous for kids

My 4-year-old daughter's classmate has chicken pox, and her mother invited my daughter over for a "pox party." My daughter received her first chicken pox vaccine when she was a year old, and is scheduled to get her second vaccine in the next several months. I always make sure to keep up with her booster schedule, but it's just chicken pox! I had it, and everyone I knew growing up had it. Plus, I would rather she get it now, rather than as an adult, when it can be more dangerous. How should I respond to this invitation?

Many parents of young children remember a time when getting chicken pox was just a routine part of childhood. However, this is no longer the case. The vaccination for varicella, the virus that causes chicken pox, was introduced in 1995, and since then, there has been a drastic reduction in the number of cases that occur each year. Two doses of the vaccine are 98-percent effective at preventing chicken pox. Under no circumstances should you bring your daughter to a "pox party."

Just because chicken pox once was common does not mean it was safe. Of the four million cases per year reported before the varicella vaccine became avail-

able, more than 10,500 required hospitalization and more than 100 were fatal. Although the classic symptoms — fever and headache, followed by itchy blisters that can spread throughout the body — often resolve within approximately one week, serious complications can arise.

While relatively rare in children, these potential complications include bacterial infection of the skin, pneumonia, and encephalitis (swelling of the brain).

As you noted in your question, the common wisdom prior to the development of the vaccine was that it was better to get chicken pox over with in early childhood instead of risking developing it as an adult, when the chance of serious problems increase. However, this is no longer a necessary consideration. As long as your daughter receives her second dose of the vaccine according to her booster schedule, it is very unlikely she will have to experience chicken pox at all.

What your daughter's classmate's mother is doing is not just misguided, it is also dangerous. It is likely that many children in the class have not yet received their second vaccine, and are therefore not yet fully immunized. If an outbreak occurred in the class, the disease could then potentially spread to those who are at



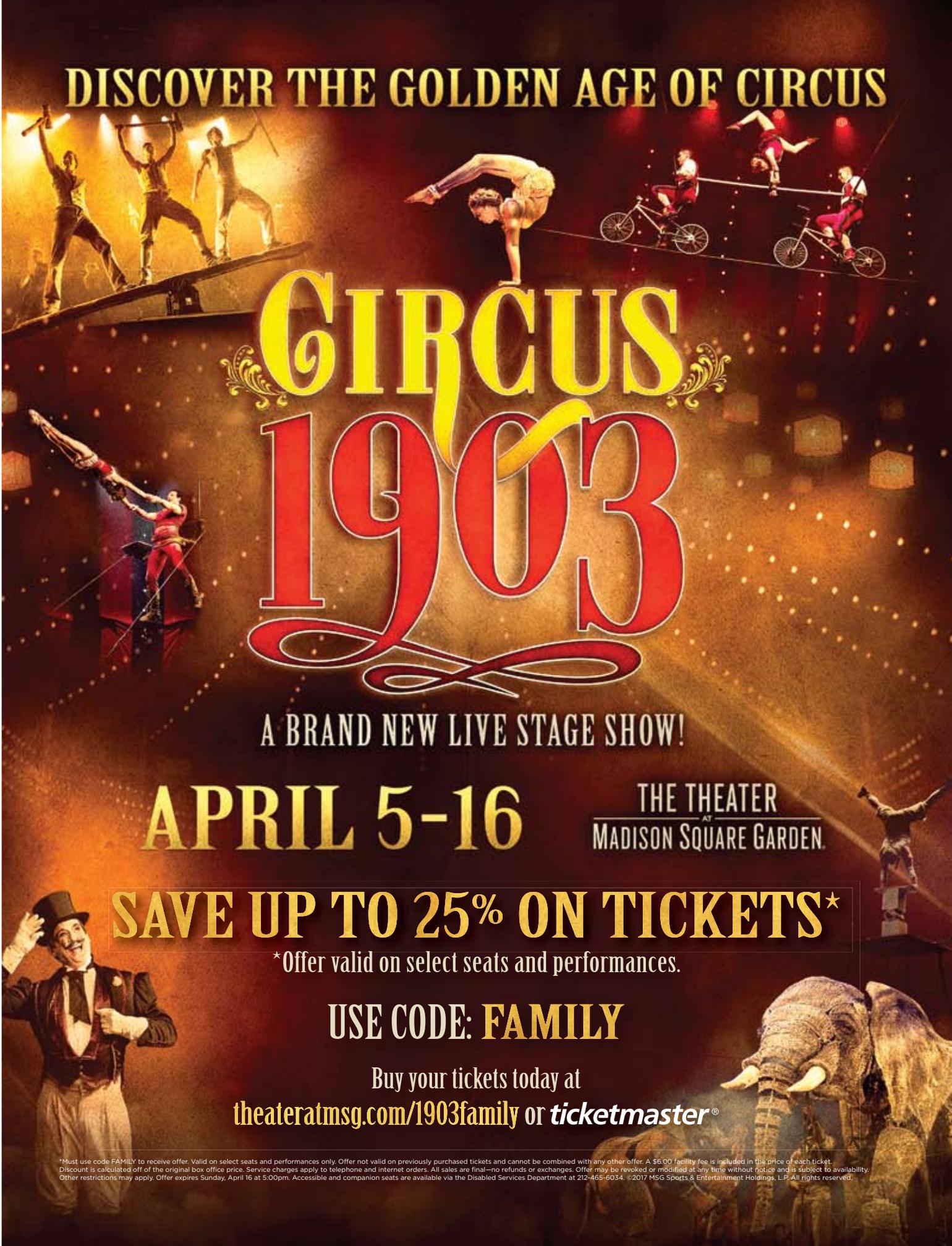
FAMILY HEALTH

DR. PRAMOD NARULA, MD
Chairman of Pediatrics
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highest risk for severe complications, such as pregnant women, people with compromised immune systems, or elderly people.

There is a possibility that your daughter's classmate may not be receiving vaccines or booster shots. This is something that needs to be brought to the school's attention immediately. The vaccine schedule exists as it does to maximize your child's immunity to diseases that were once commonplace and devastating. Chicken pox is going the way of polio and measles, and will continue to do so as long as parents are diligent about their children's vaccinations. Although there are some who resist the idea of vaccinating children, vaccines are safe and necessary.

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Not easy being green

The good, bad, and ugly of my family's recycling plans

BY LISA BEACH

My favorite Muppet, Kermit, said it best: "It's not easy being green."

Like any good mom, I try to lead my family down the do-the-right-thing path as we go about our lives. This includes adopting environmentally friendly habits as I try to instill a leave-no-trace mentality in my family.

Let's just say they're about ready to stuff me into the recycling bin with my attempts to "green up" our lives.

"Listen, Mother Earth, you need to chill," my husband Kevin says to me on a regular basis as I try to shove my save-the-planet philosophy down my family's throats.

I admit that I sometimes go a little overboard in my efforts. I also admit that I sometimes fail miserably at my own green habits due to inconvenience or the reality of living with teen boys.

For example, I've drilled my kids on the importance of the three big "Rs": reduce, reuse, and recycle. Yet, despite my best efforts, we often fall short:

Reduce:

The good: To cut down on all the harmful chemicals and reduce the influx of disposable containers in our home, I sometimes make my own non-toxic cleaning products with simple ingredients like water, vinegar, and lemon juice.

The bad: While this DIY approach works as effectively as most cleaners,

I'm banned from using them when my family is at home, because they claim it makes the house smell like pungent salad dressing. Which it does, but only for 10 minutes.

The ugly: With two teen boys in the house, I'm not against breaking out the Lysol as needed. I'm all for "going green," but teen messes and smelly soccer cleats demand the toxic big guns, like bleach, alkyl, dimethyl benzyl, and other ingredients I can't pronounce. Ozone layer, air quality, and clean water be damned! I'm trying to survive two teenagers.

Reuse:

The good: We own at least a dozen refillable water bottles, which we regularly take to school, work, soccer games, etc.

One drink at a time, we're not adding to the county landfill. Yay, us!

The bad: While we've slowly upgraded most of our water bottles to stainless steel or BPA-free plastic over the years, a few "bad plastics" still lurk in our cupboards. For unknown reasons, we're still holding onto a few toxic, BPA-laden freebies emblazoned with our local radio station's logo.

The ugly: At this very moment, we've got a case of disposable water bottles sitting on our back porch. Despite our best efforts to bring reusable containers everywhere, we've just committed the pinnacle of atrocious eco-crimes. Not only did we buy disposable water bottles, but we bought them in bulk. What kind of monsters are we?

Recycle:

The good: My family has dubbed me the Recycling Nazi for my zealot-level intensity of recycling. Each week, our recycling bins overflow with aluminum cans, plastic bottles, newspapers, and empty cereal boxes. I'm thrilled that we've reduced our carbon footprint.

The bad: Sometimes my overly aggressive efforts tick off my husband, like when he hasn't yet read the Sunday newspaper, and I've already tossed it into

Like George Costanza picking an éclair out of the trash in a classic "Seinfeld" episode, I've been known to pluck a perfectly good empty toilet paper roll out of the bathroom waste can and put it in the recycling bin.

the recycling bin by 10 am that morning. (This is where he starts, "Listen, Mother Earth...")

The ugly: Like George Costanza picking an éclair out of the trash in a classic "Seinfeld" episode, I've been known to pluck a perfectly good empty toilet paper roll out of the bathroom waste can and put it in the recycling bin. My husband thinks I've sunk to a new low. But do you know how many trees I've saved over the years?

...

While I've got the best of intentions, I

struggle with trying to set a good example and then consistently live up to it.

For example, rather than waste gallons of water while brushing my teeth, I turn the faucet off until I'm ready to "rinse and spit." Sometimes my husband or the boys will leave the faucet running full blast while brushing their teeth.

"My God, you can bathe a toddler with all the water you're wasting!" I chastise over the gushing stream. The problem? My hypocrisy comes back to haunt me when they point out that I take longer showers than a construction worker after a long, hot day on the job. Damn, they're right.

Yet, despite my eco-fails, I keep trying to live the green life. In fact, I've seriously asked for a compost bin for Mother's Day for the last five years. So far, no one's running to Home Depot to fulfill my wish. Instead, I usually receive flowers on Mother's Day. Of course, when they die, I could have tossed them into the compost bin *if I had one*. The struggle is real, people.

I agree with Kermit. It's not easy being green.

Lisa Beach is a freelance journalist, copywriter, and humor blogger. Check out her website at www.LisaBeachWrites.com and visit her humor blog at www.TweeniorMoments.com.

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Seven fast, easy ways to de-stress

One of our deep-seated beliefs of motherhood centers on the innate selflessness that goes along with it, so it comes as no surprise that new mothers are particularly vulnerable to feeling stressed, depressed, and basically exhausted. While we all want to do everything we can for our children and our families, there is a limit. In turn, if we don't find ways to instill harmony and relaxation into our busy lives, not only will we never feel peace, but there is little hope our children or spouses will be content either. Remember: "If mama ain't happy, nobody's happy," and doing things for yourself that make you feel good is not a luxury — it is a necessity!

Here are seven ways to de-stress in just 15 minutes:

1. Don't clean at nap time

A short nap can quite literally be the absolute best thing you can do all day. Having more energy after a brief rest period will boost your body and spirit loads much more than finishing up the dirty dishes.

2. But do schedule ways to keep your house tidy

You don't necessarily have to do it all yourself. Enlist help from in-laws and friends, delegate to your older children, and discuss the division of labor with your spouse. Bring in other people to share in

the responsibility, so it doesn't all fall on your shoulders. An uncluttered home is a peaceful home.

3. Continue regular beauty routines

Skin tells the tales of sleepless nights, inadequate nutrition, and sheer exhaustion most commonly in the form of breakouts and dryness. All you need to do to remedy this are two simple things: moisturize with a thick, soothing lotion everyday, and completely remove your make-up at night.

4. Bath oils

Essential oils are currently all the rave — and with good reason. Lavender has anti-anxiety effects, mandarin calms, and bergamot is recognized for relaxation. Known to soothe your mind and nerves, certain scents can physically calm you, not to mention a relaxing, hot bath is one of the true pleasures in life.

5. Make comfort a priority

After pregnancy, delivery, and sleepless nights, you deserve some comfort. There is nothing better than plush, soft materials to make you feel soothed. Invest in a nice pair of super soft sweatpants, T-shirts, and a hoodie. There are so many stylish and plush options available, you can look great and — even better — feel great.



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

6. Eat well, drink often

Keeping your blood sugar level up and your body well hydrated are often forgotten requirements. The hormonal changes that occur after a delivery, during breastfeeding, and while losing sleep can wreak havoc on an eating schedule. Dehydration and low blood sugar can make you feel terrible in the form of headaches, muscle spasms, anxiety, shakiness, and sluggishness.

Keep a water bottle and fresh fruit, veggies, and protein available, and eat and drink at regular intervals. If you are having trouble making meals, you can hire food preparation services, like Dinner At Home, which specializes in delivering up to three meals a week for expectant and new mothers (and fathers), and growing families.

7. Learn to say "No"

"Oh, you're home today, maybe you can meet me for lunch, go shopping, pick up my kids, write the school newsletter, take over the fund-raiser ..." the list goes on and on. And it will continue if you keep saying yes to things you do not want to do.

We as women have not been indicted with a life sentence of pleasing others (although many of us have imposed this punishment on ourselves). A simple, "No, I can't do that," is all the explanation you need, and the first time is purely empowering. You don't have to explain everything to everybody.

• • •

By taking care of yourself and your own needs, you will ensure a more peaceful you, which will result in a harmonious family environment.

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

Great thriller for young readers

In the new book “Spy on History: Mary Bowser and the Civil War Spy Ring” by Enigma Alberti and Tony Cliff, sleuthing and snooping change history.

Bet Van Lew knew that what she was about to ask of Mary Bowser was huge.

Once a slave owned by Bet’s family, Mary had given Bet many things through the years; when Bet freed the Van Lew family’s slaves, Mary kept in touch with her Quaker friend, who had ensured that Mary got a good education. Theirs was a strong bond, but Bet now had a problem.

She was pulling together “a network of spies” to help Union forces in the Civil War. Bet

knew that with Mary’s schooling and smarts, Mary would be the right person to gather intelligence inside the Confederate White House, where President Jefferson Davis lived with his family. Bet had to ask for help. She needed Mary.

It would be dangerous. Mary had to keep to herself and pretend that she wasn’t

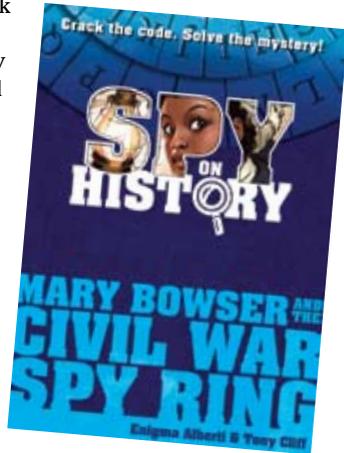
very smart, and that she couldn’t understand writing or maps. She memorized every scrap of information she found, then she sneaked the information out of the Davis household and into the hands of the people it would help.

Could Mary find the most important clues of all before someone saw her spying?

Loosely based on a real person and a true story, “Spy on History” is a story that’s as exciting as they come. I have to admit, I was breathless.

Even though your child might sense that things will resolve positively by the end of this story, authors Alberti (a “nom de plume”) and Cliff surely raise a kid’s adrenaline

with a plot that both thrills and teaches. Yes, part of this tale is fictionalized, but Mary — who actually existed, as did all of the people in this story — is a great role model; her bravery, wisdom, and (according to the authors) her smooth transition to post-war life is absolutely inspirational. What will further captivate a young read-



THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

er’s imagination is the mystery woven inside the story itself; there are clues all over this book — even inside the title page! — and a side-story whodunit that’s just plain fun.

This is a great introduction for Civil War buffs-in-the-making, young biography fans, and kids who are just learning to appreciate thrillers as a genre, so get “Spy on History: Mary Bowser and the Civil War Spy Ring.” This is something your 7- to 11-year-old will want to see for themselves.

“*Spy on History: Mary Bowser and the Civil War Spy Ring*,” by Enigma Alberti and Tony Cliff [96 pages, 2017, \$12.95].

Wicked sick!

Ugh, your kid has been feeling kind of sick. While he’s recuperating, give him “Twisted True Tales from Science: Medical Mayhem” to read, and he’ll feel happy that he didn’t live in ancient times.

Long ago, before hospitals and doctors, ancient people didn’t know about germs or microbes, writes author Stephanie Bearce. They thought evil spirits or curses brought illness, so they treated patients with things that were sometimes disgusting. Even so, folks often died of ailments that your modern kid would hardly notice.

Says Bearce, “it took thousands of years of trial and error” before scientists and doctors figured out how to use some of the medicines we have now. In the meantime, a bad tooth, skinned knee, or finger cut could kill a person. To avoid the worst, ancient docs devised tools to bore holes into skulls; Egyptians relied on amulets and mouse paste (which is just what it sounds like); Native Americans used tobacco as medicine; and Roman physicians

sometimes gave their patients clay to eat for whatever ailed them. Yuck!

Treatment was often worse than the illness, and some “cures” were really strange.

Legend says that men in Arabia sometimes volunteered to “go on a diet of only honey.” After they died, they literally became medicine. Animal poop was often used as medicine, too, especially when mixed with other things.

Slowly though, we humans learned a thing or two. Studying dead bodies taught early doctors about muscles, blood, and bones. Some folklore and folk cures turned out to be correct. Laboratory work and the invention of microscopes proved that fungus, germs, bacteria, and disease were real. Vaccines were developed to avoid further sickness, and we learned how to avoid getting sick in the first place.

Much as I enjoyed this book, the sub-

title is a bit of a misnomer — there’s not a lot of mayhem inside it. But that’s okay. Author Bearce adds enough disgusting-

but-fascinating chapters to satisfy any kid who’s looking for those things. Kids will get a good overview of how far we’ve come, and, for the extra-curious, there’s a great bibliography in the back for further research.

While it’s absolutely not for the squeamish, the 9- to 14-year-old with an inquisitive mind and interest in history will love every page. He’ll say that “Twisted True Tales from Science: Medical Mayhem” is wicked sick.

“*Twisted True Tales from Science: Medical Mayhem*,” by Stephanie Bearce [160 pages, 2017, \$8.95].

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



Calendar

APRIL



Karen Almond

A tale of kindness of heart

“Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters” will be performed at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College on April 29.

Dallas Children’s Theatre on tour presents an African tale adapted for the stage by Karen Abbott, with music and lyrics by S-Ankh Rasa. When a great African king desires a wife, only the most worthy maidens are invited to meet him.

Both of Mufaro’s daughters are beautiful, but does either have the inner beauty

of a potential queen? Told through African dance, drumming, narration, and song, this story celebrates goodness, generosity, and kindness of heart. Recommended for children ages 5 years and older.

“Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters,” April 29 at 2 pm. Tickets \$15.

Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College [2900 Campus Rd. between Hillel Place and Avenue H in Midwood, (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenter.org].

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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 — 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!

SAT, APRIL 1

IN BROOKLYN

Family Play Day: Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street; (718) 222-4111; www.brooklynhistory.org; 10 am; Free.

Hands-on activities and games will be featured in a new exhibition about the history of the Brooklyn waterfront. Come build puzzles of the borough's waterfront, color postcards of the Brooklyn Bridge, play with World War II-era tools from the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and more. Games and activities are designed for children 2-12. Attendees will receive snacks and a BHS giveaway gift. Reserve tickets.

Opening Day parade: Prospect Park's Long Meadow Ballfields, entrance at Flatbush Avenue, follow the path; 10 am to 3 pm; Free.

Join the Alliance and Baseball Association for the youth league parade to start the baseball season. Plus, the Brooklyn Atlantics will host an exhibition game and celebrate the Park's 150th anniversary, and then the fair begins with family activities, refreshments, and fun.

Nature adventures: Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 10 am to 1 pm; Free.

Celebrate the park's 150th anniversary with nature exploration.

Opening day at the Zoo: Prospect Park Zoo, 450 Flatbush Ave. at Ocean Avenue; (718) 399-7339; www.prospectparkzoo.com; 11 am to 4 pm; Free for children with paid adult admission.

Prospect Park Zoo is sharing in the park's celebration with free admission for children, and special park-centric fun.

Carousel Rides: Imagination Playground, Ocean Avenue and Lincoln Road; www.prospectpark.org; Noon to 5 pm; \$2 per ride; \$9 for a book of five tickets.

Celebrate with a first ride of the year on the park's beloved 1912 carousel.

Get up Stand Up!: BAM Fisher, 321 Ashland Pl. between Hansen Place and Lafayette Avenue; www.bam.org; 2 pm; \$10.

Mikal Alvin serves as host and Soul Science



File photo by Paul Marinika

Brooklyn flower power

Come celebrate Sakura Matsuri the weekend of April 29 and 30 at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

You know it's spring when the pink, peaceful cherry blossoms bloom at the garden.

Officially known as "Hanami," the garden's beautiful 220 cherry trees — the largest collection outside of Japan — are expected to start blooming around April 2, reaching their peak around May 1, just in time for the garden's

spectacular weekend-long celebration of Japanese culture, food, dance, and music that's always one of the season's biggest bashes.

Sakura Matsuri on April 29 and 30, 10 am to 6 pm. Tickets \$25, \$20 for seniors and students, free for children under 12 and members.

Brooklyn Botanic Garden [1000 Washington Ave. near Eastern Parkway in Crown Heights, (718) 623-7200; www.bbg.org].

Lab will perform. For families with children 8 years and older.

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

It's time for spring planting! Join Prospect Park Alliance to help plant our crop of flax and make a small pot out of newspaper, fill it with soil, and plant vegetable seeds to take home.

Martha Redbone Roots Project concert: Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; www.brooklynmuseum.org; 5 pm; Free.

Martha Redbone's award-winning blend of Native American soul, Appalachian folk, and Piedmont blues has positioned her to become "Americana's next superstar" (The Village Voice). She is a versatile artist who is equally at home in rhythm and blues as she is in conjuring memories of her Cherokee and Choctaw roots.

"Step Afrika!": Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Hillel Place and Avenue H; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenter.org; 8 pm; \$25.

Stepping is known for its intricate, synchronized patterns of stomps, kicks, claps, and call-and-response. As the world's first professional company dedicated to this art form, the dancers use their bodies as instruments, integrating stepping with African traditional dance and other dance forms to create a high-energy, sharply choreographed, and incredibly entertaining performance.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Who Would be King?": Theater 511, 511 W. 54th St., Manhattan; <https://web.ovationtix.com/trs/pr967389>; April 1, 8 pm; \$20-\$25.

Violence and betrayal, angels and prophets, villains and kings ... and chickens. This epic production by Liars & Believers swings from absurd buffoonery to high tragedy, with

Calendar

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kinetic physicality, silliness, swords, and a live synthwave score. The show runs 90 minutes (no intermission) with live music, clowning, physical theatre, and swordplay. Recommended for older teens.

SUN, APRIL 2

IN BROOKLYN

Opening Day Run: Prospect Park the Nethermead, enter the park at Bartell Pritchard Square; 9 am to 10 am; 11 am to 6 pm; Free.

Join the Alliance for a commemorative run in honor of the park's sesquicentennial. The run is from 9 am to 10 am, followed by the Smorgasburg, offering a wide range of cuisines from around the world.

Nature adventures: 10 am to 1 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Saturday, April 1.

Opening day at the Zoo: 11 am to 4 m. Prospect Park Zoo. See Saturday, April 1.

Carousel Rides: Noon to 5 pm. Imagination Playground. See Saturday, April 1.

Matzah factory: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907-8833; www.jcm.museum; 1 pm, 1:45 pm and 2:30 pm; Museum admission.

Can you bake that matzah before the dough rises? Our annual Model Matzah Factory is back! Join us as we cut, thresh, and grind wheat into flour. Race against the clock as you mix, punch, roll, and bake your very own matzahs to take home.

Story time: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907-8833; www.jcm.museum; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Take a journey through the pages of your favorite Jewish book, complete with dress-ups, props, music, a valuable lesson, and a bookmark to take home!

Spring Sprouts: 2 pm to 4 pm. Lefferts Historic House. See Saturday, April 1.

MON, APRIL 3

IN BROOKLYN

"Trip to the Moon": Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 488-1624; www.thepaperbag-players.org; 10 am and noon; \$8.

Children ages 3 to 8 will delight in this classic blend of cardboard and paper sets, whimsical stories, lovable characters, and live music that will have them singing and dancing in the aisles.

TUES, APRIL 4

IN BROOKLYN

"Trip to the Moon": 10 am and noon. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Monday, April 3.



Adam Hume

New York kids can play!

The InterSchool Orchestra's Symphony will perform on April 5 at Congregation Beth Elohim.

The orchestra, founded in 1972 and incorporated in 1974, began with a single group of 20 children. Today, it serves more than 350 children in eight major ensembles, creating opportunities for students in New York City to make music together through seven orchestras and a symphonic band.

The symphony's musicians will perform works by Mahler, Verdi, and Bernstein. Joining in this concert will be tenor Cantor Joshua Breitzer and mezzo soprano Donna Breitzer, who will be performing selections from "West Side Story."

InterSchool Orchestra's Symphony concert on April 5 at 7 pm. Free.

Congregation Beth Elohim (274 Garfield Pl. in Park Slope, <http://isorch.org>).

WED, APRIL 5

IN BROOKLYN

ISO Symphony Concert: Congregation Beth Elohim, 274 Garfield Place; isorch.org; 7 pm; Free.

Interscholar Orchestras of New York performs works by Mahler, Verdi, and Bernstein. Joining the ISO Symphony in this concert will be tenor Cantor Joshua Breitzer and mezzo soprano Donna Breitzer, who will be performing selections from "West Side Story."

THURS, APRIL 6

FURTHER AFIELD

Rise to Cancer: Marina Cafe, 154 Mansion Ave. off of Cleveland Avenue, Staten Island; (718) 967-3077; 7 pm to 10 pm; \$60 per person (includes hor d'oeuvres, prizes and cocktails).

Fund-raiser hosted by Sunrise Day Camps and The Verrazano Kiwanis Club. The camp is dedicated to sending patients and their siblings to a fun camp experience free of charge.

FRI, APRIL 7

IN BROOKLYN

"Twelfth Night": Brownsville Recreation Center, 1555 Linden Blvd.; (718) 485-4633; vivan.jett@parks.nyc.gov; 11:30 am to 1 pm; Free.

Presented by the Public Mobile Unit, this production of the comedy is set to the rhythms of house, Cuban, and '90s beats. Suitable for older teens. Space is limited, RSVP requested.

SAT, APRIL 8

IN BROOKLYN

Ukrainian Easter Egg Decoration Workshop: Private Picassos Art Studio, 237 Fifth Ave. at Sixth Street; (718) 215-0589; studio@privatepicassos.com; 10:30 am to noon; \$50 (one parent, one child; \$20 each additional person).

Participants will learn the ancient art of Pysanka (Ukrainian Easter egg decorating), which uses the beeswax and dye resist method. Pre-registration required. Recommended for older teens.

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

mended for children 6 years and older, work involves a burning candle.

SUN, APRIL 9

IN BROOKLYN

Opening Day Ceremony: Luna Park, 1000 Surf Ave.; (718) 373-5862; info@lunaparknyc.com; 10 am; Free.

Come out and enjoy games, giveaways, free rides, and new surprises and kick off the 90th birthday of the Coney Island Cyclone! Arrive early and #JoinThe100 to be one of the first to take a ride on the iconic Cyclone. Use the hashtag for a chance to win a VIP experience during our Opening Day Ceremony!

Scavenger Hunt: Sunset Park Recreation, 43rd Street and Seventh Avenue; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Join the Urban Park Rangers for an afternoon of family fun as we go on a scavenger hunt using digital cameras or smartphones. Bring your own digital camera and smartphones.

"Babe": BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave. between Lafayette Avenue and Hanson Place; (718) 636-4100; www.bam.org; 2 pm; \$7 (\$10 or adults).

A plucky piglet defies expectations to become a farmer's prize sheepherder in this 1995 delightfully imaginative barnyard tale. With marvelous visual effects and a surplus of heart, "Babe" brings to life a fantastical storybook world — complete with a memorable trio of singing mice — that captivates young viewers without condescending. Approximately 91 minutes.

MON, APRIL 10

IN BROOKLYN

Bug exploration: Marine Park Jewish Center, E. 33rd Street and Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Take the kids to the park to enjoy a family-friendly, guided hike filled with learning activities. You never know what you may observe on these bug exploration hikes led by the Urban Park Rangers.

TUES, APRIL 11

IN BROOKLYN

Sea Shore exploration: Marine Park Jewish Center, 3311 Avenue S; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Take the kids to the park to enjoy a family-friendly, guided hike filled with fun learning activities.

Colonial Games and History: Fort Greene Park Visitor Center, enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park; (718) 722-3218; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Fort Greene holds an important place in the history of the colonies and the American Revolution. Learn about the traditions, dress,



File photo by Tom Callan

Round and round again

The Prospect Park carousel is taking a spin on opening weekend and celebrating the park's 150th anniversary on April 1 and 2.

Celebrate with a first ride of the year on the beloved 1912 carousel featuring 51 hand-carved horses, giraffes, lions, deer, and dragon-pulled chariots.

Children and parents alike enjoy the painted ponies going 'round and

'round. Children under 3 years old must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The carousel is wheelchair accessible.

Opening weekend on April 1 and 2, noon to 5 pm. Tickets \$2 per ride, or \$9 for a book of five tickets.

Prospect Park Carousel [Near the Children's Corner-Imagination Playground, (718) 965-8999, www.prospectpark.org].

and games of the colonial people and Native Americans who lived in this area of Brooklyn centuries ago.

WED, APRIL 12

IN BROOKLYN

Wilderness Survival: Marine Park, E. 33rd Street and Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; nycgovparks.org; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

On this fun, family-friendly program (recommended ages 8 and up) you will learn tips and tricks that will enhance your knowledge of the natural world, and might just save your life. This program features hands-on activities in an outdoor setting. Please dress appropriately for the weather.

THURS, APRIL 13

IN BROOKLYN

Easter Egg Hunt: Aviator Sports and Events Center, 3159 Flatbush Ave. in Floyd Bennett Field; (718) 758-7500; 10 am to 4 pm; \$9.

Enjoy a day of searching for colorful eggs filled with treasures, pictures with Whiskers

the Easter Bunny, tiny tractor corn box, a fun house, hay ride, pony rides, and Easter baskets.

Nature Art: Marine Park, E. 33rd Street and Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; nycgovparks.org; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

School is out! Get outside and get excited! Urban Park Rangers hope to inspire and lift your creativity and create works of art using natural materials.

Campfire activities: Fort Greene Park Visitor Center, enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park; (718) 722-3218; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Join us for campfire activities around a colonial hearth. Learn about campfire safety and sing along to some fun campfire songs with the Urban Park Rangers.

Throw and Tell: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907-8833; www.jcm.museum; 1 pm, 2:30 pm and 4 pm; \$10 general admission (\$25 loge tickets).

A high-energy juggling performance with the world-renowned Michael Karas. Captivat-

Calendar

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

ing audiences around the world with an interactive show like no other!

Game Show: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907-8833; www.jcm.museum; 1:30 pm, 2:30 pm, 3:30 pm and 4:30 pm; Museum admission.

Everybody loves a quiz show. At the Jewish Children's Museum, visitors can compete against each other to answer questions on Jewish life in a sounds-and-lights-filled game show setting. Approximately 30 minutes.

FRI, APRIL 14

IN BROOKLYN

Easter Egg Hunt: 10 am to 4 pm. Aviator Sports and Events Center. See Thursday, April 13.

Throw and Tell: 12:30 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Thursday, April 13.

Scavenger Hunt: Marine Park, E. 33rd Street and Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

School is out! Get outside and get excited. With the Urban Park Rangers as your guide, use all of your senses to explore the park as we search high and low for clues.

Game Show: 1 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Thursday, April 13.

SAT, APRIL 15

IN BROOKLYN

Spring migration: Prospect Park Picnic House, Prospect Park West and Fifth Street; www.prospectpark.org; 10 am to 11:30 am; Free.

Budding birders will get to see the best spots to view our feathered friends in the urban jungle.

Easter Egg Hunt: 10 am to 4 m. Aviator Sports and Events Center. See Thursday, April 13.

Egg Hunt 2017: Center Pavilion Msgr McGolrick Park, Humboldt Street and Driggs Avenue; (718) 609-1090; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; Noon to 3 pm; \$15 (\$20 at the door).

As with last year, we'll have thousands and thousands of eggs and photo opportunities with the Easter Bunny. We'll enjoy fun arts and crafts and face painting while supplies last. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Egg hunts will be arranged for groups of 10 kids between noon and 3:00 pm as long as supplies last. You will select the hour of your egg hunt (ie. noon-1, 1-2, or 2-3) when you purchase your ticket.

Easter Egg Hunt: Ashford Learning Center, 341 Ashford St. at Liberty Avenue; www.nycgovparks.org; 2 pm to 3 pm; Free.

Come and join us for arts and crafts and an opportunity to find eggs filled with candies or treats.

Play with puppets

What better way is there to celebrate spring? The sixth annual Family Festival, presented by Puppetry Arts, is set for April 29 in Park Slope.

The borough-based theater company hosts this fun day of activities that includes crafts, games, and activities as well as live performances and giveaways. And the first 200 kids will receive Fifth Avenue Business Improvement District gift bags filled with tons of goodies.

Special guests include Tuffy Tiger and cameos by Star Wars characters from the 501st Empire City Garrison and the Echo Base Rebel Legion and Empire Saber Guild.

Family Festival on April 29, 11 am to 3 pm, rain or shine. Admission to festival is free but there is an activities fee of \$3 and \$5 fee for bouncy moon walk.



Wheelchair accessible.

Old Stone House by JJ Byrne Park [Fifth Avenue and Fourth Street in Park Slope, (718) 768-3195; info@puppetryarts.org].

SUN, APRIL 16

IN BROOKLYN

Easter Egg Hunt: 10 am to 4 pm. Aviator Sports and Events Center. See Thursday, April 13.

Throw and Tell: 12:30 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Thursday, April 13.

Sensory Perception Hike: Canarsie Park, E. 88th Street and Seaview Avenue; (718) 421-2021; 1 pm to 2:30 pm.

Hiking is the ultimate way to enjoy the outdoors and have fun. Our Urban Park Ranger hiking guides will introduce you to the hidden gems of New York City while you learn orienteering skills and explore our city's urban forests.

Game Show: 1 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Thursday, April 13.

FURTHER AFIELD

Easter Parade and Bonnet Festival: Kick off at E. 49th Street and Fifth Avenue, Manhattan; 10 am; Free.

Put on your bonnet and show off your Sunday best in the annual event that has marchers traveling up Fifth Avenue from E. 49th Street to E. 57th Street and passing St. Patrick's Cathedral.

MON, APRIL 17

IN BROOKLYN

Easter Egg Hunt: 10 am to 4 pm. Aviator Sports and Events Center. See Thursday, April 13.

TUES, APRIL 18

IN BROOKLYN

Basketball Clinic: Brownsville Recreation Center, 1555 Linden Blvd.; (212) 360-3300; www.nycgovparks.org; (3:30 pm) 4 pm to 6 pm; Free.

This junior Knicks clinic will provide boys and girls, 14 and under, with a structured learning experience that teaches defense, offense, and shooting fundamentals. Registration required.

WED, APRIL 19

IN BROOKLYN

Matuto: BRIC Arts Media House, 647 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place; (718) 683-5621; www.bricartsmedia.org; 7:30 pm; Free.

The lively, joyous sound of Matuto entwines Brazilian folk music with the flatpicking guitars and fiery fiddling of American bluegrass. Matuto (Brazilian slang for "country boy") beautifully embraces Brazilian forró rhythms and the folk traditions of the American South, with instruments that include accordion, gui-

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

tar, bass, triangle, and zabumba, a bass drum often used in Brazilian music.

SAT, APRIL 22

IN BROOKLYN

Laurie Berkner: Barnes and Noble, 267 Seventh Ave. at Sixth Street; (718) 832-9066; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11 am; Free.

The legend celebrates World Read-Aloud day with the release of her new picture book "We Are the Dinosaurs" at a special story time. Along with the release, she will perform some of her famous tunes.

Neighborhood Concert: National Sawdust, 80 N. Sixth St. at Wythe Avenue; (646) 779-8455; <https://nationalsawdust.org>; 7 pm; Free.

The Canales Project's Between Two Worlds gives voice to issues of identity and culture through a powerful musical message. Founder Carla Dirlikov Canales hosts this event that features music and discussion in three fascinating segments with young activist-artists that include Llewellyn Sanchez-Werner, a pianist and composer committed to social action through music; Mariela Shaker, a Syrian violinist born in Aleppo who uses music to raise awareness for the plight of her countrymen; and Andia Winslow, a Yale alumna and athlete who encourages young people and adults to maintain healthy and active lifestyles.

SUN, APRIL 23

IN BROOKLYN

"The Secret World of Arriett": BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave. between Lafayette Avenue and Hanson Place; (718) 636-4100; www.bam.org; 2 pm; \$7 (\$10 or adults).

Studio Ghibli's enchanting adaptation of the children's classic "The Borrowers" — about a family of tiny people living beneath the floorboards of a home and the human boy who befriends them — is a marvel of hand-drawn animation. Featuring an uncommonly strong, complex heroine at its center, this is children's entertainment at its most thoughtful, empathic, and imaginative. Film is 94 minutes.

TUES, APRIL 25

IN BROOKLYN

Young Readers Book Club: Greenlight Bookstore Fort Greene location, 686 Fulton St. at S. Portland Avenue; (718) 246-0200; www.greenlightbookstore.com/event/fg-young-readers-book-group-2; 5:30 pm; \$6.99 (cost of book).

Led by Greenlight receiving manager Grace, our young readers book group in Fort Greene is geared toward kids ages 9 to 12, and reads great contemporary and classic chapter books. For April, the group reads and discusses "Return to Sender" by Julia Alvarez. After his family hires migrant Mexican workers to help save their Vermont farm from foreclosure, 11-year-old Tyler befriends the oldest daughter, but

Storytime with Laurie

Laurie Berkner celebrates World Read Aloud Day with the release of her new picture book at Barnes and Noble on April 22.

The legendary children's musician reads and signs her new picture book, "We Are the Dinosaurs" at a special musical story time.

Laurie Berkner, April 22, at 11 am. Free.

Barnes and Noble [267 Seventh Ave. at Sixth Street in Park Slope, (718) 832-9066; www.barnesandnoble.com].



Todd Ouyoung

when he discovers they may not be in the country legally, he realizes that real friendship knows no borders.

WED, APRIL 26

IN BROOKLYN

Young Readers Book Club: Greenlight Bookstore Prospect Lefferts Gardens location, 632 Flatbush Ave. at Fenimore Street; (718) 246-0200; www.greenlightbookstore.com/event/plg-young-readers-book-group-2; 5:30 pm; \$6.99 (cost of book).

For April, the group reads and discusses "Figgs & Phantoms" by Ellen Raskin. While Mona hates all the attention her eccentric relatives bring to her in town, there is one Figg family member she likes: her Uncle Florence, the book dealer. But Uncle Florence keeps hinting that he's going to find his way to Capri, the Figg family heaven. And that means leaving Mona behind.

SAT, APRIL 29

IN BROOKLYN

Sakura Matsuri 2017: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; 10 am to 6 pm; \$25 (\$20 seniors and students; free for children under 12 and members).

Sakura Matsuri, the annual cherry blossom festival at Brooklyn Botanic Garden, offers more than 60 events and performances that celebrate traditional and contemporary Japanese culture. The festival marks the end of hanami, the Japanese cultural tradition of enjoying each moment of the cherry blossom season.

Fifth Avenue Family Festival: The Old Stone House, 336 Third St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues; (718) 768-3195; theoldstonehouse.org; 11 am-3 pm; Free.

The sixth-annual Fifth Avenue Family Festival!

Free admission and open to the public, the festival is great for kids of all ages, rain or shine! The event will host crafts, games, and activities as well as live performances and giveaways.

Garden opening: Highland Park Children's Garden, Jamaica Avenue and Ashford Street; (718) 235-4100; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm to 3 pm; Free.

Enjoy a fun-filled opening day at Highland Park's community garden. Enjoy workshops, music, and games.

"Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters": Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Hillel Place and Avenue H; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenter.org; 2 pm; \$15.

Told through African dance, drumming, narration, and song, this story celebrates goodness, generosity, and kindness of heart. Recommended for ages 5 years and older.

Earth Day: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Hillel Place and Avenue H; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenter.org; 3 pm; Free.

Children and adults alike will enjoy live music, arts and crafts, and street performers at this free community festival, with interactive family activities.

FURTHER AFIELD

Run for the Wild: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road, The Bronx; (718) 220-5103; www.bronxzoo.com; 7 am to 1 pm; \$50 (registration for adults; \$40 registration for children 3-15 and seniors 65 and older); Zoo Admission is included.

Join us for the annual event and run on behalf of your favorite animal — and then spend the day with us for exciting new activities. Music and dancing, face painting, rock climbing wall, a visit at the zoo, and of course the 5K run to help your favorite animal. The

Calendar

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

Family Fun run begins at 8:45 am (strollers permitted).

SUN, APRIL 30

IN BROOKLYN

Sakura Matsuri 2017: 10 am to 6 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Saturday, April 29.

Story time: 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Sunday, April 2.

Golden Dragon Acrobats: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. between Hillel Place and Avenue H; (718) 951-4500; www.brooklyncenter.org; 3 pm; \$25.

Dancers combine award-winning acrobatics, spectacular costumes, ancient and contemporary music, and theatrical techniques to present an unforgettable show of breathtaking skill and beauty.

LONG-RUNNING

IN BROOKLYN

Totally Tots studio: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am to noon, Now – Wed, May 31; Free with museum admission.

Children make inspired artwork. Learn about Kehinde Wiley, Titus Kaphar, Alma Thomas, and Ebony Patterson.

Craft Room: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907-8833; www.jcm.museum; Sundays – Thursdays, 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm, Now – Sun, April 30; Free with museum admission.

Get creative with a variety of Jewish-themed crafts to choose from!

Transit Tots: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.nytransitmuseum.org; Thursday, March 23, 10:15 am; Thursday, March 30, 10:15 am; Thursday, April 6, 10:15 am; Thursday, April 20, 10:15 am; Thursday, April 27, 10:15 am; Free with admission to the museum.

Stories, games, and surprises for our youngest transportation fans! Free with admission. For ages 2-5 and adult companions.

Musical Sing-A-Long with Aardvarks: Brooklyn Pharmacy & Soda Fountain, 513 Henry St. at Sackett Street; brooklynpharmacyandsodafountain.com; Thursdays, 11 am to noon, Now – Thurs, May 25; \$10 (drop in).

Babies and toddlers enjoy a full fountain musical morning.

Herve Tullet's "This isn't Trash": Invisible Dog Art Center, 51 Bergen St. between Boerum Place and Smith Street; (347) 560-3641; Thursdays – Sundays, 1-7 pm, Now – Sat, April 15; Free.

The children's book illustrator presents an exhibit of cut, folded, and painted paper.

Brooklyn Block Lab: Brooklyn Children's

Take a 'Trip to the Moon'

Get your ticket and blast off for a trip to the moon at Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts when the Paper Bag Players present "Trip to the Moon" on April 3 and 4.

Children ages 3 to 8 will delight in this classic blend of cardboard and paper sets, whimsical stories, lovable characters, and live music that will have them singing and dancing in the aisle. Show time is approximately one hour.

"Trip to the Moon," April 3 and 4, at 10 am and noon. Tickets are \$8.



Kumble Theater at Long Island University [DeKalb and Flatbush avenues in Fort Greene, (718) 488-1624; www.thepaperbagplayers.org].

Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Thursdays – Sundays, 2 pm to 5:30 pm, Now – Wed, May 31; Free with museum admission.

Visitors of all ages are invited to design and build with an array of blocks including Magna-Tiles, Imagination Playground, Kapla Planks, and more. Block play supports critical social and cognitive skills in early childhood.

Train Operator Workshop: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.nytransitmuseum.org; Fridays and Saturdays, 1:30 pm, Now – Sun, April 16; Free with museum admission.

Drop by our Computer Lab to take control of a subway car and operate it over virtual miles of track, using some incredibly realistic software! Space is limited, recommended for children 10 years and older.

"Puss in Boots": Puppetworks, 338 Sixth Ave. at Fourth Street; (718) 965-3391; www.puppetworks.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 12:30 pm and 2:0 pm, Now – Sun, April 9; \$9 (\$10 adults).

The classic fairytale is presented by Puppetworks. This adaptation of the 1697 French tale tells the story of a cat whose master buys him magical boots enabling him to speak. Recommended for children 3 and older.

Acoustic Sunday Mornings with Bobby & Bucky: Brooklyn Pharmacy & Soda Fountain, 513 Henry St. at Sackett Street; brooklynpharmacyandsodafountain.com; Sundays, 11 am to 1 pm, Now – Sun, May 21; Free.

Enjoy Peter Pan Donuts and acoustic music.

Music in Motion: Bargemusic, Fulton Ferry Landing at Brooklyn Bridge; www.bargemusic.org; Saturday, April 1, 4 pm; Saturday, April 8, 4 pm; Saturday, April 15, 4 pm; Saturday, April 22, 4 pm; Saturday, April 29, 4 pm; Free.

Bargemusic presents this gentle rocking se-

ries of family neighborhood concerts on the floating barge — the selections are chamber music, last only an hour, and include a post-show question-and-answer session with the musicians. Doors open 15 minutes prior to concert. The program is announced at the performance. No reserved seating.

Free Family Day: The Wyckoff House Museum, 5816 Clarendon Rd.; (718) 629-5400; programs@wyckoffmuseum.org; wyckoffmuseum.org/events/family-days; Saturday, April 15, 11 am; Saturday, May 20, 11 am; Saturday, June 17, 11 am; Saturday, July 15, 11 am; Saturday, Aug. 19, 11 am; Free.

Educators assist you and your family to explore what life was like in rural Brooklyn and investigate clues to the past. Touch old artifacts, examine the historic architecture, and get to know one of Brooklyn's first families, the Wyckoffs. The activities are best suited for kids ages 4 through 10. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

FURTHER AFIELD

"The Princess, The Emperor, and the Duck": Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater, W. 79th Street and West Drive, Manhattan; (212) 988-9093; Tuesdays – Sundays, 10:30 am and 2 pm; \$12 (\$8 for children under 12).

The Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre presents three classic tales from Hans Christian Andersen. For children ages 3 to 9.

Crafts and games: Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden, 421 E. 61st St. between First and York avenues, Manhattan; (212) 838-6878; www.mvhm.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 11 am to 4 pm, Tues, April 11 – Fri, April 21; \$8 adults (\$7 seniors & students; Free for children under 12).

Drop in and make a 19th-century craft and play historic games. If the weather is nice, enjoy the collection of wooden toys outside in the garden. Museum tour and children's corner included. Reservations required.

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New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS



Time to NOSH!

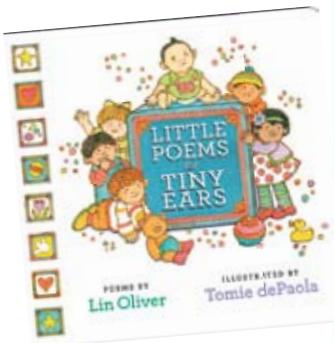
When he's ready for solid food, your baby just might enjoy sinking his gums into the new teething wafers from NOSH! Munchables as much as we did. Munchables are available in a fruity pomegranate and blueberry flavor combination, or in a savory broccoli, pear, and kale blend — as well as several additional varieties. They're notable for the ingredients they contain, such as organic Japonica rice, as well as for what they don't contain: they are free of eight common allergens as well as artificial colors and flavors. These baked treats are ideal for babies who are ready for solid food, because they dissolve quickly. These long oval, crispy wafers are wrapped in packages of two — ideal for toting in a pocket, purse, or diaper bag, so you are armed to curb fussiness on the run.

NOSH! Munchables teething wafers, box of 13 packets, \$3.99, www.luv2nosh.com.

Celebrating baby's firsts

If the Easter Bunny is looking for a sweet addition to fill baby's basket, he should get his paws on the new board-book version of "Little Poems for Tiny Ears," written by Lin Oliver, a 7-inch-square book that is just the right size. Oliver and illustrator Tomie dePaola ("Strega Nona") have created a collection of playful poetry that celebrates baby's milestones, like discovering toes for the very first time. A multi-ethnic crowd of charming children are depicted in adorable, softly colored illustrations alongside Oliver's stanzas that are as fun to read aloud as works by Dr. Seuss. This sturdy book will be a cherished gift for baby's first Easter.

Little Poems for Tiny Ears board book by Lin Oliver, \$7.99, www.barnesandnoble.com.



Tulle time

She'll be the belle of the Easter egg hunt in this stunning satin and tulle dress by David Charles. Of course, she will garner just as much attention at any spring fête, because this tea length stunner is embroidered with pale pink wisteria blossoms and bronze leaves. The waist is accented with a delicate string of rhinestones and beadwork. The airy confection features a sheer chiffon cutout in the back and a hidden zipper. This memorable dress is ideal for princesses, ballerinas, and darlings sized 6-12. Easter baskets are sold separately.

Wisteria Dress by David Charles, \$349, www.chasingfireflies.com.

Organics make a splash

In honor of Earth Day on April 22, raise a toast to the big blue marble with an organic juice from Planet Fuel. Our panel of tasters enjoys their line of organic juice and water blends, which include cherry lemonade, apple-grape, and mango-pear-lime. Their slim, 10-ounce aluminum cans fit easily into a lunch box or sports practice bag. (And cans are more completely recyclable than juice boxes or pouches.)

While our favorite flavor was the tart cherry lemonade, the apple-grape and mango-pear-lime were deliciously light and thirst-quenching. Both the lemonade and mango-pear-lime were elegant enough to serve to adults with more sophisticated palates.

The parents and tweens among us are gratified by the company's pledge to protect wildlife and wild places through their Planet Fuel Charitable Fund. Each can of Planet Fuel reminds us that we can care for the earth every time we shop for the people we love.

Planet Fuel organic juices, four-packs of 10-ounce cans, \$5.99, www.planetfuel.com.



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