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May is for Mom

The responsibilities of being a Mom these days are more complicated than ever. With a preponderance of urban Moms working outside the home, whether having vital careers or seeking that necessary paycheck, it's more intrinsic than ever to be A Super Mom.



Kids seldom go off to their neighborhood school, or rather it's not always the norm. Many schedules have to be worked out, meals have to be established and drop off and pick up arranged. Every one of these women deserves a standing ovation. I know because I have been one of them. This issue presents a number of really good articles, with a few of them celebrating mothers.

Of course it's definitely the time of year when you should be making the summer camp or program decisions for your kids. It's time to decide what they will be doing and where they will be doing it. Lots of good ideas in this issue, from our advertisers to the advice of our columns and articles.

Springtime in New York. Who doesn't love this time of year? The trees are in bloom with blossoms and all the bulbs are up everywhere you look. It's so refreshing to take off the heavy coats and boots and lighten up. The kids are loving it too! I see them in the parks and in the playgrounds and one gets the full sense of new found freedom from watching their play.

I wish every mother a Happy Mothers' Day, whether she's the mother of another mother and now a grandmother or pregnant with her first child and waiting for the birth day. It's an amazing thing to be someone's mother, and for sure has been the most illustrious part of my life. I'm certain that every mother could echo that sentiment.

Have a great month and thanks for reading.

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Mom

A role to be cherished

BY GAYLA GRACE

At 38 weeks pregnant, Jenn eagerly awaited the birth of her first child. Her pregnancy had gone well and she looked forward to what lay ahead as she arrived for her routine doctor exam. With little warning, and a racing heart, she was ushered to a nearby hospital for a more extensive ultrasound. The doctor said the baby appeared to have quit growing and needed to be examined further. After several tests, Jenn learned the baby girl she had carried for nine months would arrive with heart complications that would affect her for the rest of her life.

Upon admittance to the hospital for delivery to begin, Jenn was understandably beyond anxious, but she wasn't prepared for the emotions she experienced when the baby arrived. Regardless of the challenges she knew were ahead, she felt an unconditional love that far surpassed any of her expectations. Within the next few years, Jenn and her husband welcomed two more children. And all were — not surprisingly — embraced with an immense love.

Parents so often take the privilege of parenthood for granted, instead of a role to be cherished. (Yes, no one can possibly cherish every moment. Certainly there are many non-magical moments during parenthood.) It's easy to overlook the important role we play, but the influence we have as parents can't be denied. We teach, we nurture, we counsel, we discipline, we taxi, we solve problems, we ease

drama, we nurse wounds, and more. While the preschool years have days that never end, the teenage years have days that take flight. Before we're ready, our babies begin to drive, graduate from high school, start college, and venture out on their own.

Time runs out for those positive parenting moments we intended to have. The daily influences we take for granted to mold our children change to parenting snapshots via text messaging, late-night conversations, and crisis intervention.

Parenthood provides meaning to life we wouldn't otherwise experience. Although

not easy, life without children wouldn't be the same. The lessons we learn while raising children aren't taught in school: how to make it through a long day after enduring a colicky baby all night, how to rid your child of lice without setting her hair on fire, how to stay calm when the school administrator reports your teenager has skipped school, or how to alleviate the intense fear of your new driver getting in an accident. As our kids grow older, we learn how to let go when our 18-year-old leaves for college and how to move on when our young adult announces wedding plans.

Parents offer unending selflessness with little guarantee of what lies ahead. We endure heartache and disappointment; we celebrate victories and accomplishments. We refuse to give up when our child goes astray, or turn our back when our child rebels.

Parenthood never truly ends. Whether your parent lives next door or out-of-state, she's always a phone call away. When my job ended in my young adult years, my mom was the first to know. When my children were born, she celebrated with me. When I endured a difficult divorce, she walked with me. When I struggled as a single parent, she encouraged me. When I celebrated marriage again with a new family, she congratulated me.

Now, as my parents approach their sunset years, I seek to be there for them. Our roles have reversed as I watch the effects of Alzheimer's grip my mother's failing mind, and I take over the driver's seat to help my dad with errands. The caretaker role goes full circle: sacrificial love and devotion without end.

My friend, Jenn, cherishes the joy of raising three babies. All of her children are loved immeasurably and she genuinely has an unending appreciation for a role she'll never take for granted. Plan for the future, while simultaneously living in the moment as you celebrate your extraordinary role. Affirm your value and commit to be a positive influence as you guide and nurture your children. No one else can play the role only you have been granted.

Gayla Grace is a freelance writer, a wife, and a mom to five children. She considers it a privilege to be called mom.



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The bond of motherhood

This Mother's Day, celebrating the connection we share

BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-TIEMAN

As the youngest of four, and considerably younger than her sisters and brother, my mother's early life on the family farm consisted primarily of staying out from under foot. She found refuge in the home of a neighbor lady who had seven children. Apparently with seven of her own, one more hardly made a difference, especially when all this little one wanted to do was help with the babies. My mother learned to cook, sew, clean, churn butter, make soap, plant, harvest, and preserve food from her mother, but she learned patience, tenderness, and affection from a woman named Maude.

Witnessing the pleasure Maude derived from her children had a profound

impact on my mother. She found a model for the kind of mother she longed to have and longed to be. Becoming a mother herself became paramount. She married my father days after graduating from high school and one month shy of her 18th birthday. They were introduced and courted primarily through letters while he was in the Navy with her brother during the Korean War. One year and three months after their wedding, she gave birth to her first child. Her dream of becoming a mother had been realized.

Surprisingly, having children was not the first priority my mother had for her three daughters. We were expected to get "an education." I complied and became a dedicated student. When it came time for college, I didn't realize there was a choice about whether or not to go, only

where to go. Going to school became such a familiar, comfortable way of life that I kept on going. I met my future husband while working on a master's degree and married him while we were both pursuing doctorates.

While I spent years in post-secondary education studying child development and family relationships in preparation for becoming a marriage and family therapist, becoming a mother had never been more than a fleeting notion. There simply wasn't time. But that changed when a little girl named Mallory entered our lives.

Her father was a fellow doctoral student. He needed help transporting some new furniture to his apartment. We had a truck, so we volunteered. We knew he was married, but we didn't realize

they had a baby. She was not quite two months old, with big blue eyes, and curly, strawberry blond hair. The first time I held her, there was something special between us. My husband and I spent the next two years falling in love with this child. For the first time, we found ourselves longing for one of our own.

Nearly three years later, after graduate student health insurance finally offered coverage for pregnancy (coded as a “planned illness,” but that is a whole other article), childbirth, and postnatal care, we discovered we were expecting. Ours was to be the first grandchild on both sides of the family, so to say this news was met with excitement would be a vast understatement.

The morning I went into labor, we called my parents on the way to the hospital. About seven hours later, within minutes of our son being born, while still in the delivery room, my parents arrived. They drove from Beattyville, Ky. to Athens, Ga. in record time. Having raised three children and helped countless others raise theirs, my mother was, once again, in her element. She would be the first to say that the only thing better than being a mother was becoming a grandmother. After 29 years in a parent-child relationship, we shared the bond of

We must support and encourage one another in our efforts to become the best mother we can be — the mother our children need.

motherhood.

With Mother’s Day approaching, my thoughts turn to these early days of motherhood and I’m reminded how important it is to:

- Recount our personal “becoming a mother” story.
- Discover models or mentors for becoming the mother we want to be.
- Become a parenting partner with our spouse.
- Learn as much as we can about child development and parenting, not just from parenting books. Some of the greatest lessons I’ve learned have come from mothers I admire in literature.
- Remember to parent by the child, not by the book, because no matter how much we know or how much experience

we have, every child is unique. Our parenting must be adjusted accordingly.

• Celebrate the bond of motherhood. There are as many ways to be an excellent mother as there are mothers. We must support and encourage one another in our efforts to become the best mother we can be — the mother our children need.

One of the most meaningful examples of this last item occurred a few years ago when working at my son’s school. I discovered an envelope in my mailbox containing this hand-written message:

“Dear Carolyn, I want to thank you for being such a great mom. You probably barely know who I am, but I have seen you with your boys at various school events and your dedication has at times been inspiring to me. I’m sure you’ll get lots of appreciation from your own family, but know that your love for them spreads beyond ... Happy Mother’s Day! An Anonymous Parent.”

Such is the nature of all love.

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

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Four things to look for in a summer day camp

BY KATHLEEN DUFFY

With an overwhelming landscape of summer day camp opportunities for kids in New York City, it can feel impossible to select the right one for your child. As a camp director for more than seven years, I have learned what components are key to an engaging, safe, and fun experience. Here are some tips on what to look for when choosing a summer day camp:

Leadership

You want to be sure the environment is right for your child, and much of that comes down to who is in charge. Ask leaders if the camp has been accredited by the American Camp Association — those with accreditation must meet rigorous guidelines regarding program quality and the health and safety of campers.

Find out counselors' experience level and training procedures, and if their goals for the summer align with your own. Research shows that kids with positive adult role models develop better self-esteem, so strong leadership is of the utmost importance.

Location, location, location!

It's important to consider where your child will spend his time. Think about the commute, and ask if camp buses are available. Visit the campus and assess safety and privacy measures as you walk around. It's a bonus if your camper has the opportunity to meet new friends right in his own neighborhood.

Developmental opportunities

Strong social-emotional skills have benefits both in the classroom and in life, and

a national study from The American Camp Association demonstrates that camp is a unique setting for this type of development. Camp is a great opportunity for your child to build skills like self-awareness and responsible decision-making, especially if it offers the right mix of activities. Which leads us to...

Selection of activities

Team sports, dance, cultural activities, creative writing, and gardening offer opportunities for growth and provide children with the chance to shine outside of a formal classroom setting. Group activities also provide kids with a common purpose and a sense of belonging, which helps kids develop resilience — another critical life skill.

Kathleen Duffy has been director at Asphalt Green for seven years. Asphalt Green offers summer day camps for kids at its Upper East Side and Battery Park City campuses.



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Questions: Eddie Mayrose, Director of Sports Camps, emayrose@xaverian.org or call 718.836.7100, ext. 118.

Keeping your cool while parenting

It was a beautiful spring day, and I took my girls to the park. They jumped and ran and played, and then we fed the ducks and swans. But it soon got late and on the walk back home, they begged and pleaded for ice cream. Waiting on a long line, knowing I had dinner, laundry, and a deadline ahead of me, I grew impatient, but tried to keep calm. My 3-year-old was going through a terrible two period, but when we finally were handed the cones, I thought I had put out a potential fire.

Two minutes later, as I was hurrying the girls to put a spring in their step, my youngest took one lick of the rainbow sprinkles and screeched, "This tastes bad!" and threw the whole cone on the ground. If a head could explode from agitation, mine would have that day.

I immediately shrieked, "Why did you do that? I just got that!" And I mentally lost it.

I grabbed her hand and walked angrily down the block. My 7-year-old stopped enjoying her ice cream and became silent while my little culprit screamed and cried even more, because I was upset. It was a very non-Zen moment and one that I had hoped I was above having.

There is no parent in the world that never loses it or gets angry. Kids challenge our patience every day. Even in those of us who actively strive to find a balance and struggle to be more calm and serene, there are those times when your child pours red juice on the white carpet or has a screaming meltdown in aisle three. Later on, it may be when those preteens give you an eye roll that instantly raises your diastolic in 30 seconds flat. Yet, with all the parental challenges that are thrown at us, being a mindful and calm parent is a practice, and it is something we can get better at.

It all starts with us, after all. Our children will pick up on the cues that we give them. Do we get irate every time a little milk spills, or when we can't find our keys and the bus is late? Or, do we take these common instances as a bump in the road of a good day that is to come? How we deal with disappointments from little to big will affect how our children do the same. So if your child flies off the handle with his or her friends over minor infractions, we



might want to take a look in the mirror at what messages we are sending them.

Clinical psychologist Yishan Xu explains, "Children, especially young children, are able to pick up their parents' stress easily. Research has found that children who have stressful parents have higher chances of developing various psychological and physical problems later in their lives. I

n clinical settings, when a child is sent to us for psychological treatment, it is not surprising if we find a complicated family environment, including one or both parents who have difficulty dealing with their own stress. Children are not only picking up parents' stress, they are also learning coping skills from their parents every day."

The good news is that practice makes (almost) perfect, and by following a few simple tips, we can help foster mindfulness and harmony into our lives:

Expect disappointment

This doesn't sound very optimistic, but expecting an inconvenience here and there will help prevent meltdowns of



JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

your own when your very busy schedule is impacted.

Distract and dissociate

Dr. Xu offers one quick tip that works right in the moment: "When parents are caught off guard in the middle of a stressful parenting moment, they can distract themselves by shifting attention away from the stressful situation."

This alone may help them calm down quickly. Dr. Xu advises parents to "count numbers silently, or play the ABC game: think of all words starting from letter A, B, or C.

Redirect self-talk

Sometimes parents have negative self-talks such as "Oh no, not again! I am so angry (or anxious or unhappy or embarrassed) about this situation)." When this happens, parents can disassociate their acute stress by reframing their thoughts in this format: "I have feelings such as ... I have thoughts such as ...".

This way, parents can tell themselves: "Well, let me reframe this: I have feelings that I am angry ... I have thoughts that my kids are driving me crazy all the time!" It is key to separate you as a whole from your thoughts, which helps you identify your source of angst without becoming caught up in it.

Practice relaxation skills

For long-term stress relief, Dr. Xu encourages parents to practice relaxation skills such as meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, or diaphragmatic breathing. The more parents practice on daily basis, the more they will be able to calm down faster when faced with a stressful situation.

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, is a writer and editor living in New York City.

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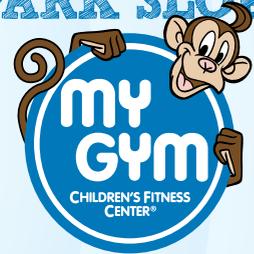
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Too old for camp?

How to get your teen involved in a service project

BY SARA MARCHESSAULT

It's finally happened. The kids are no longer excited about summer camp. They may be complaining that camp is for little kids or that none of their friends are going. We parents may agree, but still want our kids to have a summer with some structure.

Thankfully, there are alternatives. One in particular can be incredibly beneficial to adolescents — that is the summer of service.

You may have heard of “service learning.” It’s a current buzzword in education. The idea is that students will engage in a service project as part of the regular curriculum and reflect on what they learn as it relates to a class or classes. More and more service learning is popping up in classrooms around the country, particularly at the high school and college level.

Instead of sending your older teen to summer camp, a service project can give her summer structure and engage the mind in an experience that might be different from how she learns during the regular school year.

In addition, your son or daughter starts to develop marketable skills. Even volunteer roles that seem simple — such as selling concessions, emptying trash cans at a local music festival, or sorting donated goods at a food bank — require elements of working on a team, following directions, and using math skills in the real world. Volunteer work can be added to a resume and discussed as examples of experience during job interviews.

Depending on the service project, your child may have the added benefit of moving in new circles and meeting people from different walks of life. You just never know when an experience will lead your child to a career choice he had never thought of, a network connection that someday might result in a great internship or job, or even simply a chance to shine on his own.

So, how can you get started?

Decide

This seems simple, but sometimes talking to teens feels complicated, right? What if instead of arguing about whether or not he or she heads to camp, you



were able to ask: What would you like to do instead? Engage in a conversation where you each lay several options on the table.

If your teen wants to relax and hang out with friends, you can negotiate how he or she will manage time over the summer as you select a service experience. The first step is initiating the conversation and putting it on the table as an alternative to summer camp.

Selecting a project

Next comes the exciting part: selecting a project. You can choose an organization that already offers work to volunteers, such as a residential home for the elderly, homeless shelter, or library. Residential communities for the elderly may have volunteers come in to read, help residents use the computer, or share other skill sets. Homeless shelters take volunteers to help sort donations, serve food, or again, help with computer skills. Your public library may be a great place to volunteer. Shelving books, reading to kids, helping patrons locate specific media, or even tutoring for family literacy programs are all possibilities.

Another resource is the United Way (www.unitedway.org). It can help connect you with projects going on in the summer

in your community.

For students looking for something right before college or during summer breaks, AmeriCorps (www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps) is an option. This organization is similar to the Peace Corps. Volunteers have an age limit and make a commitment to serve, but instead of international travel, all of the service projects are here in the U.S.

Check out what's going on in your community. Research local online calendars for festivals or concerts that will need volunteers, then visit their websites for more details. Remember that even though an event may be scheduled for just one day, sometimes volunteers are needed weeks in advance.

Finally, one more possibility is to create your own service project. Does your son or daughter have a cause he or she feels passionate about? Encourage research on the presence of a group in your community that supports a cause your child expresses interest in. Then talk about ways to get involved. How can he or she use a current skill set to support a cause? What new skills can be learned?

Document the service

Once the service work has started, it's important to document the experience.

This can be a written journal, or even an audio or video log. When it's time to refer to these service experiences in an interview or on a college entrance essay, the details will have already been captured. Encourage your teen to record what she does, how she does it, and what she is learning. This will help her recall the service experience in greater detail in the future.

Keeping notes on the service experience can also turn a simple volunteer post into a high-level service learning activity. When we take the time to reflect through writing, we can start to make connections between the experience and our prior knowledge. When a young person has a moment of "Ohhh, this is why it's important to know how to use fractions" something incredible happens, and he just may get excited about learning. And in that case, bravo parents, for encouraging a summer well spent.

Sara Marchessault is the former owner of a summer camp for middle-school girls and author of "Beyond Pen and Paper: 33 Experiments in Journaling." She has spent many hours getting to know young people, listening to their dreams and their fears, and encouraging them that their parents are on their side. When she isn't playing with her own kids, Marchessault is a writer, publisher, and teacher.

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15 books to help kids understand LGBTQ issues

BY CINDY HUDSON

Someone I know once said, “The beautiful thing about books is that you can find all of humanity in their pages.” And yet, until recently, there hasn’t been much emphasis on books that have diverse characters, particularly when it comes to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer issues.

Why is it important for kids to read books that have characters representing a wide range of humanity? Donna Gephart, author of “Lily and Dunkin,” which tells the story of a transgender girl, says, “Reading about LGBTQ characters allows young readers to walk in someone else’s shoes and gain empathy, which naturally leads to understanding, compassion, and kindness — something so needed in today’s world.”

It’s also important for anyone questioning his identity to see characters strug-

gling with issues similar to his. Gephart says a transgender woman once told her that having positive role models could have saved her a lot of suffering when she was younger.

“We all need and deserve mirrors in the books we read to affirm and validate our existence, to let us know we’re not alone in this world, and to provide role models, so we can envision a bright future,” said Gephart.

Here are 15 titles, ranging in appropriateness from toddlers to teens, where readers can find a variety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer characters.

Picture books

Introduce the concept of diversity to children ages 4 to 8 with these titles:

“**My Dad is a Clown**” by José Carlos Andrés and Natalia Hernandez. This bilingual (English and Spanish) story is told

by a boy who has two dads, one of whom works to make people laugh in his job as a clown.

“**Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress**” by Christine Baldacchino and Isabelle Malenfant. Other kids make fun of Morris for donning a tangerine dress. But with support from his mom and an active imagination, he helps them see that outward appearances aren’t as important as what’s inside.

“**The Great Big Book of Families**” by Mary Hoffman and Ros Asquith. Families come in a variety of types and sizes, and this book celebrates that diversity.

“**It’s Okay to Be Different**” by Todd Parr. Bright colors and funny drawings highlight differences of all kinds, including skin color, family makeup, disability, and more, while getting the message across that these differences are all just fine.

“**And Tango Makes Three**” by Justin Richardson, Pete Parnell, and Henry Cole. This tale about two male penguins given the chance to hatch an egg is based on the real-life story of Roy, Silo, and baby Tango, who live at the penguin house in the Central Park Zoo.

Middle grade

Ages 9 to 13 is a time for kids to begin exploring their individuality and how it fits into the big picture. Try these reads:

“**Lily and Dunkin**” by Donna Gephart. Timothy knows that deep inside he’s really Lily, but how does he show his true self to the rest of the world without getting hurt?



“Will Grayson, Will Grayson” by John Green and David Levithan. A random meeting between two high school boys with the same name, one gay, one straight, changes both their worlds in unexpected ways.

“The You I’ve Never Known” by Ellen Hopkins. Ariel isn’t sure if she’s more attracted to boys or other girls, and she’s afraid to share her conflicted feelings with her dad, who claims Ariel’s mom left him for another woman.

“Ask the Passengers” by A. S. King. A story that explores the issue of sexual identity and what defining it means not only to the teen, but to the people surrounding her as well.

“If I Was Your Girl” by Meredith Russo. Amanda wants to start a new life in a new town by moving in with her estranged dad. But as a transgender female, she finds the issues of having friendships and dating difficult to navigate.

“Symptoms of Being Human” by Jeff Garvin. It’s hard enough being a teen who’s gender fluid, but when your dad is running for Congress, it means everything about your life will eventually end up in the spotlight.

Cindy Hudson writes about books, reading, and family literacy at MotherDaughterBookClub.com.

“The Best Man” by Richard Peck. Archer learns a lot from all of the male role models in his life, including his grandpa, his dad, his uncle — who happens to be gay — and his substitute teacher, Mr. McLeod, who dates Uncle Paul.

“George” by Alex Gino. A tender story about someone who sees herself as a girl even though the world sees her as a boy. With the help of a friend, and inspiration from “Charlotte’s Web,” she finds a way to express who she really is.

“Drama” by Raina Telgemeier. A graphic novel that highlights the “drama”

that can occur in middle school, when kids are learning how to navigate budding interest in romance and relationships.

“Lumber Janes” by Noelle Stevenson and Shannon Watters. This graphic novel series is about the adventures of five female friends who attend summer camp and end up battling monsters and solving a mystery.

Young adult

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12 quick tips to teach toddlers to share

BY DENISE YEARIAN

When toddlers have play dates, territorial battles are bound to ensue. To foster sharing skills in young children, consider these 12 tips:

1. Start early. Children can't cognitively grasp the concept of sharing until they reach the developmental age of 3 or 4, but parents should set the expectation and foster learning opportunities early on.

2. Show and tell. Children often imitate what they see others doing. When you have opportunities to share food, a toy, or another activity with your child, talk about how you are sharing, so he begins to associate the word with the action.

3. Pretend play. Imaginative play can provide powerful lessons in sharing. Place a puppet in each hand and have them discuss and act out sharing scenes. Then invite your child to join in. Tea parties and play kitchens are good platforms, too.

4. Read books. Read children's stories about sharing, then talk about past ex-

periences: "Do you remember when you shared your toy with Eli yesterday? That's what the children are doing in the book."

5. Talk it up. Before play dates, remind your child how much fun it is to play with his friends and tell him he will need to share his toys.

6. Stash special items. Have a designated basket to place special toys that don't come out during play dates. For some children, it will be helpful to be part of the process; other kids won't understand.

7. Have duplicates on hand. Having more than one of a given toy will allow children to play alongside of and imitate one another. It may also avoid an altercation.

8. Build in cooperative activities. Group activities such as drawing, finger painting, Play-Doh, or blowing bubbles can be used to teach sharing skills. As the children participate in these activities, talk about sharing and how well they are playing together.

9. Include adult interaction. From time to time, it may be helpful if you participate in your child's group play so you

can support him in being kind and sharing. It may even stop a squabble.

10. Promote with praise. When you see your child sharing, bring it to his attention. Kids want to please their parents, so be sure to offer plenty of praise.

11. Set up sharing situations. Create opportunities for your child to develop empathy and sharing skills. Have him help you make a batch of cookies, and then hand them out to his friends. Or, encourage him to draw a picture or make a card for a friend.

12. Address major misdemeanors. If your child grabs a toy while playing with a friend, tell him he must give it back and wait for his turn to play with it. Offer an alternative toy as a distraction. If it turns into a tantrum, remove your child from the situation and sit next to him until he calms down. If one child hurts another over a toy, remove it from the play area.

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



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Continued on page 22



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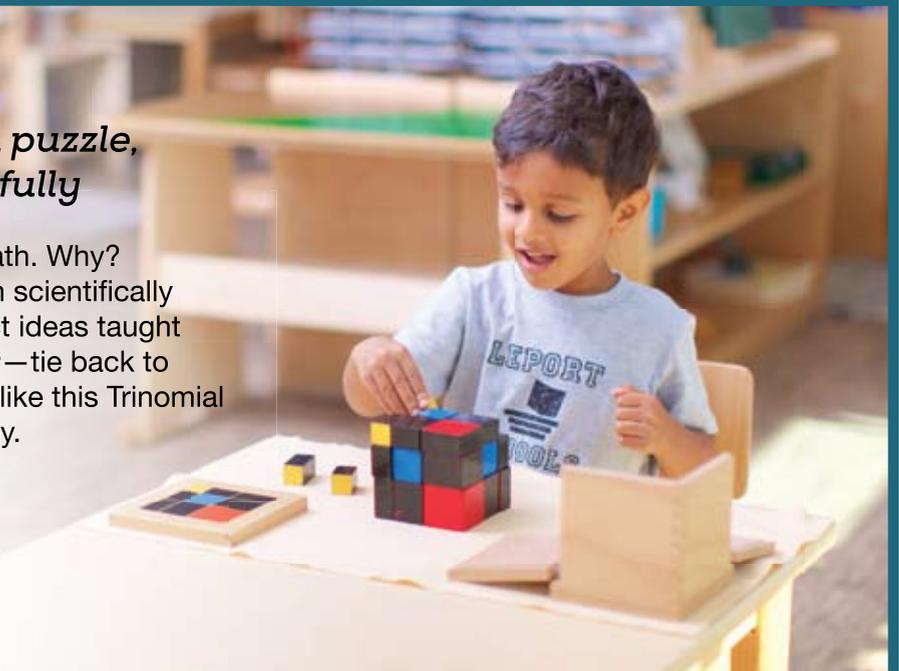
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Continued from page 20

culturally diverse atmosphere of Brooklyn. Students learn to care for and respect themselves, others and the earth. Students in the early childhood program acquire tools for individual fulfillment, academic excellence, physical, social, and moral development, as well as confidence and independence for lifelong learning. The curriculum is focused on promoting world peace through diversity and also has a huge emphasis on healthy lifestyles and green living. The primary goal of our Montessori program is to use the “whole-child” approach to help each child reach their full potential in all areas of life. Also offering a summer program filled with Gardening, Science, Art, Yoga, Music, Dance and outside play.

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Saving for college

Study hard, get good grades, go to college. My parents said this to me, and their parents said it to them. Historically, a college education has been the path to upward mobility and a better life. This still remains true, but with the cost of college increasing so rapidly, many worry that the dream may drift out of reach. Think about it: According to The College Board, tuition, room and board, and fees for one academic year at a four-year public college have grown from \$8,439 in 2000–2001 to more than \$20,000 this year. For private institutions, that total has nearly doubled to \$46,000 per year.

I have seen families go to extremes to send their children to college. Some have taken out loans so large that it will be years before they are repaid. Others have borrowed from their retirement savings. While at first it appears easy to borrow against one's 401(K), it is important to remember that these funds must be paid back, and not doing so can have serious consequences for your own retirement plans. Some families hope to rely on loans taken out by the child, but this can saddle a young college graduate with an immense debt burden when he is just starting out on his own. Astonishingly, the New York Federal Reserve reported student loan balances were \$1.31 trillion as of Dec. 31, 2016 — a record high level.

Planning ahead can keep you from raiding your retirement funds or over-borrowing to pay for college when the time comes. Borrowing too much can have an effect on your retirement plans and your child's life goals. Fortunately, there are options available to parents to help them prepare for the cost of college before that happens. Here is a brief overview of some of the education funding options available:

529 Plans

529 plans are state-sponsored education savings accounts. Parents, grandparents, and others can contribute to these accounts regardless of how much they earn. The maximum that can be contributed is relatively high, currently \$375,000 in New York.

These accounts allow your money to grow tax-deferred (meaning you won't pay taxes on growth in the account). Withdrawals from the account also won't be subject to federal tax, and in most cases, state tax, as long as withdrawals are used



for qualified education expenses, such as tuition, and room and board. These accounts can be used to pay for college, vocational school, or graduate school.

If you withdraw the money for any reason besides qualified education expenses, you'll be taxed at your current income tax rate plus incur a 10-percent penalty. If plans change, and your child doesn't need the money for her education, you can change the beneficiary at any time to a sibling or other family member. Depending on where you live, some states, including New York, give residents a state tax deduction for contributing to the account.

UTMA, UGMA, or custodial accounts

Money contributed to a Uniform Gift to Minor's Act or Uniform Transfer to Minor's Act by anyone is for the benefit of your child. You can contribute to these accounts regardless of how much you earn and there is no maximum contribution limit.

When your child becomes an adult, at either 18 or 21 years old depending on each state's law, these funds will automatically become hers and can be used for any purpose she wishes — not just for college. Earnings in these accounts are not tax-deferred like 529 plans, but subject to taxes like an ordinary investment account.

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Parents who earn too much money won't be able to contribute to these accounts. If you have a modified adjusted gross income more than \$110,000 for a single person and \$220,000 for a married couple, you aren't eligible to invest in these accounts. And the maximum annual contribution amount is fairly low, only \$2,000 per year for each beneficiary.

...

An important issue to consider is what assets you own and what assets are owned by your child. Ownership of assets is important because it can affect your family's ability to receive financial aid. I'll address these issues in my next column. Before buying a 529 plan or any investment, you should inquire about the particular plan and its fees and expenses. Always consult your own tax advisor when considering investing in any of these plans.

Anthony N. Corrao is an independent advisor with Corrao Wealth Management. For more than 25 years he has helped families with their financial goals by developing financial, educational, and retirement planning strategies.

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Cinderella

MAY 20TH, 21ST, 27TH, 28TH at 2PM

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Arts for Kids

DIRECTORY

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www.theaileyschool.edu
juniordivision@alvinailey.org

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421 Fifth Avenue
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www.youth.bax.org

Providing expert instruction in building technical skills in dance, tumbling, and theater with an emphasis on cultivating creative expression. Working with professional performing arts faculty, our students develop improvisation, original choreography, and performance skills, working independently and in collaboration. Youth classes embody our overarching mission to provide the space and support for "artists-in-progress" to explore, hone, and share their unique voice. Here's a recent quote from a BAX parent: "It's wonderful that she has enjoyed her classes from day one (18 months of age) and still does now (over a decade later). She has an outlet to express herself, and all of her teachers have encouraged her individual style. Her dad and I see self confidence that we attribute to her BAX experience."

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718-935-9700
info@cumbdance.org
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Arts for Kids

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 26

Our goal is to tap into children's amazing capacity for imagination and wonder, while introducing them to the joy and vitality of dance, song and rhythms of Africa and its Diaspora in the Caribbean, Latin America and the U.S. We believe children learn through fun and play, and our lessons are designed with that in mind. Cumbe is a small camp. Our program invites artists ages 3-7 to explore dance, movement, song, percussion, and visual art, and is limited to 13 students, so our teachers will have a chance to really get to know your child. At the end of each two week session the campers and instructors will put on a show demonstrating all they have done. Producing a show also means collaboration, so the children will learn how to work with others, share ideas, and create a production they can be proud of. Above all, we want your children to leave camp each day smiling and excited!. Join us for an info session.

technique, pointe, acting for dancers, dance history, choreography composition, and rehearsals for regular student performances that are offered to the public. In a focused and inspired environment the students study the many facets of their heritage as classical ballet dancers. With resident and guest faculty from NYC Ballet, ABT, Dance Theater of Harlem, and the Kirov Ballet, the style of training combines the Russian Vaganova and Italian Cecchetti methods with the American Balanchine style, giving students a well-rounded technique preparing them to work professionally both in the US and abroad. Our program offers dual French/English Ballet classes, all boys ballet classes as well as an affiliation with the Metropolitan Opera's children's non singing chorus. This year we are offering unique full day summer programming for children which combines ballet with either Shakespeare or French immersion and includes costume making.

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Continued on page 30



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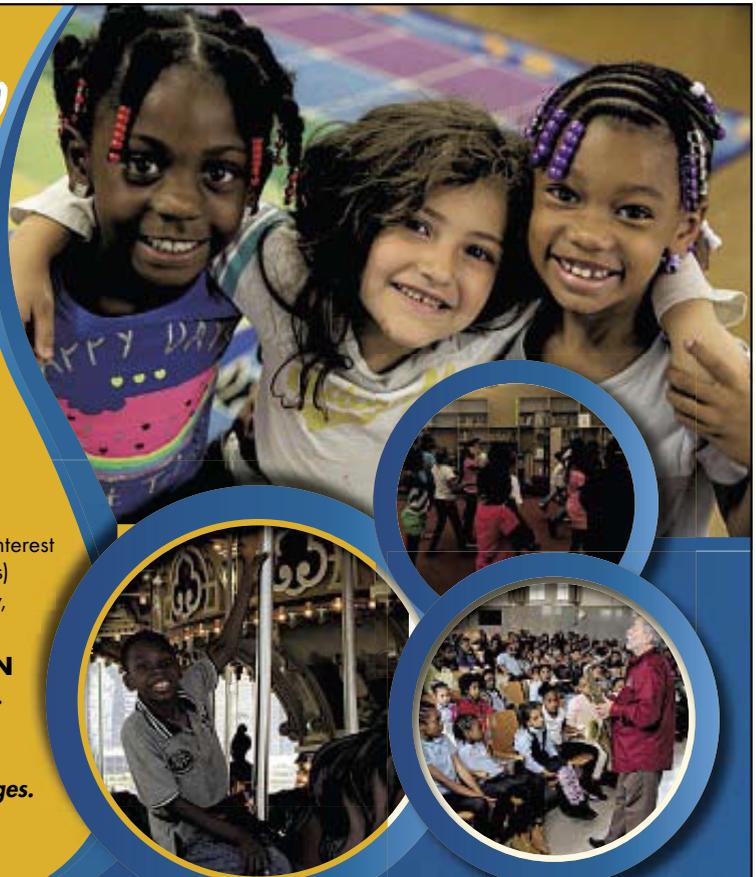
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Online Activity Guide

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Arts for Kids

DIRECTORY

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a summer camp at our 2 locations, we are also offering camp at PS 335 (as part of the DOE's Summer in the City programming).

Mark Morris Dance Center

3 Lafayette Avenue
718-624-8400

www.mmdg.org

Under the direction of School Director Sarah Marcus and School Administrator Elise Marafioti, The School at the Mark Morris Dance Center is a year-round, high-quality dance training program offered at affordable rates. The School reflects the spirit of the Mark Morris Dance Group in its celebration of dance and music, which are essential to a child's education and development. The School offers a diverse range of classes for all ages and abilities and is a growing center of creative activity for children, community residents, and professional dancers. Please call or visit our website for more information.

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www.noelpointer.org
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Join the fight against Williams Syndrome

Family Fun Day and Carnival raise funds to solve disorder

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

A New York mom's passion for helping her daughter (who was diagnosed with a rare disorder) and others like her has created an event on May 7 that has evolved over the years from a modest walk to a full-blown carnival at the 79th Street Boat Basin.

Melissa Felsher's daughter, Josie, has Williams Syndrome, a developmental disorder that affects many parts of the body. It is caused by the deletion of genetic material from a specific chromosome region (short arm of chromosome 7), resulting in the loss of 26 to 28 genes. Although this is a small percentage of genes in the human genome, this small loss can affect physical, behavioral, and cognitive makeup. The loss of these genes is the assumed cause of characteristic features of individuals with Williams Syndrome. The severity of symptoms varies case by case, but some of the difficulties affecting those with Williams Syndrome include (but are not limited to):

- Developmental delay
- Mild to moderate learning disability
- Unique personality
- Cardiovascular problems

This rare disease affects one in 10,000 individuals worldwide, with no predominance in one gender or culture. There are approximately 20,000 cases in the United States alone. Children diagnosed with Williams Syndrome endure costly, ongoing medical care because of the numerous hurdles they face throughout their physical and cognitive development. However, socially, children with Williams Syndrome are often quite verbal, friendly, and endearing.

The Williams Syndrome Association is an organization that has sprouted to provide essential resources for parents of children diagnosed with Williams Syndrome, including connecting all the families affected by the disease.

"Our family and all those directly impacted by a diagnosis of Williams Syndrome don't know where we would be without this invaluable organization,"



Melissa Felsher and her daughter Josie.

said Felsher. "Josie was diagnosed in November 2007 at 3 months old. In July 2008, my family and I flew to California to attend our first national Williams Syndrome Association convention. I was hooked, and that Fall, I was nominated by someone I had met there to serve on the Board of Trustees. I served two consecutive three-year terms which is the maximum."

The association manages a registry of individuals with Williams Syndrome to spur research, and it lists local services and community events. It relies on awareness events, and Felsher's yearly

New York event has been particularly successful.

"In 2010, the WSA started the first-ever Williams Syndrome Awareness month to be held each May. The goal was to get volunteers across the country to hold an awareness and fund-raising event. I volunteered to run and organize the New York City event. I have continued each year since," Felsher said.

Her Family Fun Day allows families and their friends to enjoy each other, learn more about the disorder, and raise money for the Williams Syndrome Association.

"It started with a Walk For Williams, which was held in Battery Park along the esplanade. It was a wonderful venue, but after five years, we outgrew the space, so I searched for a new location for the 2015 event.

"I came across the 79th Street Boat Basin, which is a gorgeous spot and can hold up to 1,000 people. Because of the layout of the space, I came up with the idea of a Family Fun Day and Carnival," said Felsher, who has lined up carnival games, a DJ, a magician, and more for the May 7 event.

"We get a lot of children — about 200 or so — so it seemed like a perfect fit," said Felsher.

And the carnival is a hit that keeps on growing.

"[The New York City] event has steadily grown over seven years. The people at [the 79th Street Boat Basin] are incredible to work with. At my first event in 2010, we had around 125 attendees, and it has steadily grown to over 600 people in recent years," stated Felsher. "We also have grown in terms of fund-raising from about \$50,000 the first year to over \$100,000!" she added.

"Josie loves 'her carnival' and before that 'her walk!' She knows, though, that we do it for Williams Syndrome and many



Josie and her friends at the event.

other 'Williams Syndrome families' attend. Josie looks forward to seeing her many friends, who we only see a few times a year, either at our event, another held on Long Island, or the national conventions held every other summer in a different part of the country.

"Josie loves to see our friend Carolyn who has generously volunteered each year to do face painting and our friends from the Craft Studio who volunteer staff and a craft each year. The support is incredible!" said Felsher.

There are numerous research projects

that the Williams Syndrome Association helps to fund. The research is critical in order to understand more about individuals affected by the disease. Key cognitive research is happening at the University of Louisville and has been underway for more than 20 years. Dr. Carolyn B. Mervis and her research is just one valuable resource for Williams Syndrome families. Unfortunately, there is a lack of federal funding, so this critical research is substantially supported by private fund-raising.

Because the association relies on awareness events like the Family Fun Day and Carnival organized by Felsher — and a team of 20 volunteers — the association is always excited to see new faces at the events. There are few hours as fun and enriching as time spent at the Boat Basin playing games, enjoying food, and raising awareness and funds for the Williams Syndrome Association.

Shnieka Johnson is an education consultant and freelance writer. She is based in Manhattan where she resides with her husband and son. Contact her via her website: www.shnieka-johnson.com.

For more, visit:

- Williams-Syndrome.org
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Estate tax liabilities for non-U.S. citizens

Spring has sprung, and this month we have answers to two questions for you to ponder as you enjoy the warmer weather!

I am a Canadian citizen living in New York. I have heard that estate taxes for non-US citizens can be much greater. What is my estate tax liability as a Canadian?

For U.S. citizens or U.S. residents (both of which are referred to in this summary as “U.S. residents”), the current exemption from federal estate tax is \$5.49 million per person for 2017. The federal exemption increases slightly every year for a cost of living adjustment. A resident for estate tax purposes is someone who resides in the United States for the long-term. For estate tax purposes, it is defined as follows: “A person acquires a domicile in a place by living there, for even a brief period of time, with no definite present intention of later removing therefrom. Residence without the requisite intention to remain indefinitely will not suffice to constitute domicile, nor will intention to change domicile effect such a change unless accompanied by actual removal.”

If you are in the US on a contract basis with a specific and planned end-date to return to your country, you are not considered a U.S. resident. People who are non-U.S. citizens and non-U.S. residents are subject to estate taxes for any assets in the U.S. that exceed \$60,000. “U.S. assets” include any real property within the U.S., any U.S. bank accounts and U.S.-based stocks and securities, whether the account is held in or outside of the U.S. Life insurance policies are not considered U.S. assets.

Also, non-U.S. residents cannot take advantage of a marital deduction and the whole of any joint asset is included in the predeceased spouse’s estate (as opposed to only 50 percent inclusion for a U.S. resident).

However, the U.S. has tax treaties with many countries that override these rules, including with Canada. The U.S.–Canada

tax treaty allows Canadian residents to take advantage of the federal exclusion amount (\$5.49 million for 2017). If, like many people, you are a Canadian citizen and non-U.S. resident at the time of your death, the Executor of your estate will need to file a specific form to take advantage of this (IRS Forms 706-NA and 8833).

For New York State, under a change in the law effective April 1, 2017, the exemption is \$5.25 million per person and will increase each year until it matches the federal exemption in 2019. If you are a New York resident, an estate tax return must be filed if you are over the exclusion amount. You receive a deduction for any assets that are not New York assets. If you are not a New York resident but have assets in New York, you will only need to file a New York estate tax return if the assets in New York are over the exclusion amount.

If you are concerned about estate taxes, you should consult an attorney and accountant to better understand your estate tax liability based on your assets and the tax laws affecting you.

I opened an Uniform Transfer to Minors Act account for my child when she was young and now she is about to turn 18 years old, and I am concerned about turning over the account to her, which now has more than \$50,000.

Many parents open bank accounts pursuant to the Uniform Transfer to Minors Act when their children are young in order to save monetary gifts from grandparents, or to save for the children’s future college expenses. However, many parents do not realize that when the child turns 18, he or she is entitled to possession and control over that money, and can use it in whatever way he or she desires. The law does not require that the child use that money for college, but requires that it must be turned over to the child when that child turns 18 years old. In some cases, the account does not turn over to the child until he is 21 years old. The title of the account



ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER, ESQ.

should indicate whether the account is held until age 18 or 21.

New York law provides that a transfer made pursuant to the act is irrevocable and the custodial property is vested in the minor child at the time of transfer. As custodian of the account, you are obligated to inform the minor of those assets at the time the account completely vests in the minor. The statute does, however, state that the custodian “shall transfer in an appropriate manner the custodial property to the minor,” which provides some options for steps you may take if you are concerned about turning over a large account to your child:

Use the funds for the minor’s benefit

Until the minor is 18, you can use the funds for his benefit. If you are also the parent of the minor, you may not use funds for items that are part of your existing support obligations to your child (such as food, clothing and shelter), but you may use the account to pay for “luxuries” such as private school, extracurricular activities, camp, or a new computer.

Transfer the assets to the minor

When the minor is 18, you can retitle the account into an account in his name. You can, with the minor’s permission, be named a co-signer or receive duplicate statements to see how the minor spends the money.

Disclaimer: This column is provided by Arden Besunder P.C. and New York Parenting Media as a public service to inform readers of legal issues. It is not intended to advise. Since legal issues vary with an individual’s situation and needs, one should consult with an attorney. It is impossible to cover all aspects of the law in an article. Please be advised that the laws are constantly changing. The content in this article reflects the current law. Nothing contained in this article is intended as advice and does not create an attorney-client relationship between the reader and the firm. Individual consultation with an attorney is required to determine the specific facts and circumstances of any particular situation. A written retainer agreement between you and the firm is required before any attorney-client relationship may be created. Circular 230 Disclosure Notice: To ensure compliance with Treasury Department rules governing tax practice, we inform you that any advice contained herein (including in any attachment) (1) was not written and is not intended to be used, and cannot be used, for the purpose of avoiding any federal tax penalty that may be imposed on the taxpayer, and (2) may not be used in connection with promoting, marketing or recommending to another person any transaction or matter addressed herein.

You may incentivize your child to use the funds responsibly by stating that you will pay for college with other funds if she keeps the funds for graduate school (as one example) or you may even use “strong-arm” tactics to state that you will reduce her inheritance if she uses the funds irresponsibly.

Purchase an income-producing asset

You can use your discretion under “appropriate manner” to use the funds to purchase an asset that the minor would not be able to easily liquidate once she receives it at age 18, such as income-producing real property or an annuity. This is not recommended because it could be later reviewed as a breach of fiduciary duty. Fiduciary obligations include that a fiduciary must transfer assets to a beneficiary upon the termination of a fiduciary duty in a manner that is easily converted to cash. If, however, the minor consents in writing, this may help protect against a later claim.

529 Plan

You may transfer the account proceeds into a newly created 529 Plan for the minor’s benefit. This will require liquidating any stocks or securities in the account because a 529 Plan can only be funded with cash. This may trigger capital gains

taxes if the assets have increased in value significantly.

However, transferring the funds to a 529 Plan will allow you to continue to be the custodian of the funds until the funds are completely withdrawn, thereby allowing you to withhold it to pay for college. But, if your child requests the funds at any time for any purpose, you will need to release the funds or she may petition the court to receive the funds pursuant to your obligation as fiduciary of the account since you used those assets to fund the 529 Plan.

2503(c) Trust

If you want to continue to hold the funds, you could create a living trust for the minor’s benefit under Internal Revenue Code § 2503(c). The terms of the trust can be drafted to allow you, as Trustee, to make discretionary distributions and forced distributions at set ages, so the funds stay under your control until you believe your child is able to handle the account on her own.

In order to deter future claims of breach of fiduciary duty, the trust should allow the minor a one-time withdrawal right, where she is afforded the opportunity to withdraw the funds up to the full amount when she turns 18 years old. Your child will have a 30- or 60-day window to do so.

If she does not exercise her withdrawal right, the funds stay in trust pursuant to the trust agreement. If your child does not exercise her right of withdrawal, the trust would then be considered a “self-settled” trust and any creditor of your child could potentially reach the funds to satisfy a judgment. If instead of setting up a new trust you keep the funds in the account after your child becomes 18, she could demand the funds at any time. As discussed above, you can try to incentivize your child to not exercise her right of withdrawal in your discussions with her.

Each situation is different and fact specific, and whether a particular option is right for you depends on your particular situation. If you have or are considering an account and are concerned about turning over the account to your child when she turns 18 or 21, you should speak to an attorney to discuss your options and which option is best for your situation.

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

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Sunday, May 7th 10:00am-1:00pm
Park Slope Jewish Center, 1320 8th Ave, Brooklyn
Event is free of charge and open to the public

10:00am-1:00pm Join us for an interactive “tour of Israel”. Take a flight to Israel, make art in Tzfat, get spa treatments at the Dead Sea, visit a Beduin Tent, and MUCH more!

10:30am-11:15am Join MusicTalks and our youngest travelers for a fun-filled musical journey and Yom Ha’Atzmaut celebration with the delightful PJ Library book “Ella’s trip to Israel”.

12:15am-1:00pm Rikudei Am--Israeli folk dancing with Rina and our shinshinim.
The Taim Food Truck and Schnitzli Food Truck will be available throughout the day.
This activity is not sponsored or endorsed by the DOE or the city of New York.

Idan Raichel Live in Concert. Monday, May 1 at 7:45pm. Congregation Beth Elohim
Yom Hazikaron Ceremony. Sunday, April 30 at 6:30pm. Congregation Mount Sinai

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Understanding your rights as a client

Recently, I was invited by a therapist to join her and one of her patients during a session (with the patient's consent, of course). My role was to be that of a consultant who would provide information and answer questions. I gladly accepted the opportunity, on the condition that it was clear to the patient that she would not be hiring me as her attorney to represent her.

I met with the therapist and "Mary" (not her real name) the next day, having learned that Mary had a case involving custody and child-support. One issue concerning Mary was her lawyer; she had one, but had doubts about how the attorney was handling her case.

One question I asked was whether he had provided Mary with the Statement of Client's Rights and Responsibilities. Mary said, "No," unaware that such a thing existed.

What is this document, and does it matter if a lawyer gives it to clients?

According to the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations's Procedure for Attorneys in Domestic Relations Matters, "This Part shall apply to all attorneys who, on or after Nov. 30, 1993, undertake to represent a client in a claim, action or proceeding, or preliminary to the filing of a claim, action or proceeding, in either Supreme Court or Family Court, or in any court of appellate juris-

diction, for divorce, separation, annulment, custody, visitation, maintenance, child support, or alimony, or to enforce or modify a judgment or order in connection with any such claims, actions or proceedings."

Courts have held that attorneys cannot collect their fees if they have failed to follow the rules regarding the statement or provide a written retainer agreement that includes certain information. Lawyers may even have to return fees that clients have paid.

You can read the statement in full at <http://www.nycourts.gov/divorce/part1400.shtml>. Here is some of what you will find:

- You are entitled to a written retainer agreement which must set forth, in plain language, the nature of the relationship and the details of the fee arrangement. At your request, and before you sign the agreement, you are entitled to have your attorney clarify in writing any of its terms, or include additional provisions.

- You may refuse to enter into any fee arrangement that you find unsatisfactory.

- Your attorney may not request a fee that is contingent on the securing of a divorce or on the amount of money or property that may be obtained.

- Your attorney may not request a retainer fee that is nonrefundable. That is, should you discharge your attorney, or



DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

should your attorney withdraw from the case, before the retainer is used up, he or she is entitled to be paid commensurate with the work performed on your case and any expenses, but must return the balance of the retainer to you. However, your attorney may enter into a minimum fee arrangement with you that provides for the payment of a specific amount below which the fee will not fall based upon the handling of the case to its conclusion.

- You are entitled to receive a written, itemized bill on a regular basis, at least every 60 days.

- You are expected to review the itemized bills sent by counsel, and to raise any objections or errors in a timely manner. Time spent in discussion or explanation of bills will not be charged to you.

- You are entitled to be kept informed of the status of your case, and to be provided with copies of correspondence and documents prepared on your behalf or received from the court or your adversary.

- You are entitled to make the ultimate decision on the objectives to be pursued in your case, and to make the final decision regarding the settlement of your case.

As a client, you have rights. You should wonder about a lawyer who doesn't share them with you.

New York City and Long Island-based divorce mediator and collaborative divorce lawyer Lee Chabin helps clients end their relationships respectfully and without going to court. Contact him at lee_chabin@lc-mediate.com, (718) 229-6149, or go to <http://lc-mediate.com/>. Follow him on Facebook at www.facebook.com/lchabin.

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



Raising a peaceful child

Parenting happy kids in a world that is so often fraught with unhappiness and chaos is an uphill battle. And while it is certainly a challenge to remain positive and hopeful, it can be done. In fact, you might say, it needs to be done first and foremost. Otherwise, how will our kids ever be optimistic, hopeful, and filled with peace?

Parenting is so much more about taking care of the physical day-to-day demands, like good nutrition and health, homework, and after-school activities. Those things are quite important, but sometimes the psychological needs are greater, because without a healthy and mindful outlook, the other things won't be possible.

Kathy Walsh, parenting expert, educator, and author of the award-winning "Joyohboy" book series says intention is everything. Walsh is the founder of Peace Place for Kids, and has been teaching mindfulness to schools and workshops throughout the country for more than 20 years.

"Intention is a force that sets everything in motion. How often do we think about and write down our intention for raising our children? What could be more important? When you are clear about your intention for raising your children, other decisions become easier to make," she says.

If you want your kids to be stable and peaceful people, it all starts with your behavior and attitudes. Read on for Walsh's

tips for raising peaceful kids:

1. Be aware of your actions

Model the behaviors that you want them to copy. Children mirror you. Be aware of your actions when you are in front of them, and model the behavior that you want them to mirror.

2. Encourage them to look at things in a not-so negative way

Always start and end your day with gratitude. Gratitude is not just a habit; make your bed, brush your teeth, and be grateful every day. Gratitude is the gift that keeps on growing. It is the key to a joyful life. It is hard to complain and feel grateful at the same time.

3. Acknowledge their feelings

We have to acknowledge them, not bury them. This is how behavioral problems happen. Things happen in life and a healthy response is how we grow emotionally. Teach your children that when we show love, it comes back to us. It is the gift that keeps on giving. It's just that simple.

4. Be mindful

Life is 10 percent what happens to you and 90 percent how you react. This captures the essence of mindful parenting. Teach your children that how they see



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

things is more than half the battle. They have a choice whether to look at life in a positive way or not. The more positive they are, the better their life will be. Life will be a reflection of their thoughts and what they put out they get back.

5. Practice non-judgment

When you are showing gratitude, you are not judging others. People can feel that, and it is contagious. When you are grateful for them, they in turn become more grateful for your presence. Choose your words carefully.

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, is a writer and editor living in New York City.



Bed-wetting: How old is too old?

My 6-year-old son has a bed-wetting problem. He never has an accident during the day, but occasionally he has one at night. He is embarrassed about it, and I assure him that all kids wet the bed sometimes. I wonder, though, is 6 years old too old to still be wetting the bed? And if so, could it be indicative of a medical problem?

Although your son is at the upper end of the normal age range for nocturnal enuresis (the medical term for wetting the bed), it is more common than you may think. The fact that nighttime diapers (“pull-ups”) for older children are readily available in supermarkets is evidence that this is not an unusual issue. Approximately one in 10 6-year-olds have nighttime accidents, and usually they are not caused by any underlying health issue.

Often, bed-wetting is just a routine part of childhood development. The fact that your son does not have this problem during the day is a good sign that he will likely outgrow it soon. Sometimes, a child’s bladder may simply be too small to hold urine throughout the night, or the bladder’s nerves are too underdeveloped to wake him from sleep when the bladder is full.

Childhood bed-wetting also tends to run in families — parents who were bed-wetters as children are more likely to have children who also have accidents at night.

This is not cause for you to bring your son to the pediatrician beyond his usual checkups. You can help your son manage bed-wetting by making sure he is urinating throughout the day, and limiting the amount of liquid he consumes in the two hours before bed. If he continues to wet the bed a year or two from now, you may want to consider having him do exercises to strengthen the muscle that controls the bladder. He could also use a bed-wetting alarm at night, which is a device that uses a moisture-sensitive pad that is inserted into the underwear and goes off at the first drops of urine. This will wake him up, so he can go to the bathroom.

You may want to bring your son to a pediatrician, however, if the nighttime bed-wetting started again after six months or longer had passed without an incident. Although uncommon, bed-wetting can be symptomatic of another condition. If the bed-wetting is accompanied by a fever, abdominal pain, or blood in the urine, that may indicate a urinary tract infection. If bed-wetting is accompanied by increased



FAMILY HEALTH

DR. PRAMOD NARULA, MD
Chairman of Pediatrics
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Methodist Hospital

thirst, hunger, fatigue, and weight loss, the cause may be type 1 (juvenile) diabetes. Type 1 diabetes is diagnosed when the body halts production of insulin, a hormone that allows the body to process glucose from carbohydrates. If you have witnessed any of these symptoms in addition to bed-wetting, a pediatrician can perform a urinalysis to see if there is anything unusual going on.

Your son’s bed-wetting is probably just a phase that will soon pass. Every child develops at his or her own pace, and there is no need for him to feel ashamed. With good bathroom and bedtime habits, he can look forward to nights without wetting the bed.



Easier mealtimes

Getting your child to sit down and eat

Parents either love mealtime or they hate it. Which side of the fence are you on?

You face two different challenges during meals:

Getting your kid to sit at the table:

This is the social part of eating.

Making sure your kid eats his food:

This is the nutritional side to the meal.

My advice is to address one problem at a time:

Getting your child to sit at the table

Notice over three days how long your small being will sit at the table before you have to say, “Come back here” or “Sit down.” How long will she sit without your intervention?

Also, take stock of exactly what is happening when your small being wants to leave the table. Are you talking with your kiddo or are you speaking to another adult? Are you sitting at the table eating together or are you multitasking and hardly noticing that your child is eating?

If you are not paying attention to your small one, then she will get up from the table so that you pay attention to her. It might be negative attention, but your small being does not differentiate between the two.

Meals are a time to be social and build up conversation skills. It is also an opportunity to give your child the attention she is craving from you. Yes, I know, you have a ton of things on your plate, but you must find a way to sit down with your child at mealtime. This is critical if you would like your small being to sit with the rest of the family.

Wait until you have the plates of food ready before you call your child to the table. Sit down with her. At first, adjust your expectation; accept that she will sit down for the length of time you noticed her sitting down for earlier. I strongly suggest you use a timer!

While you are sitting together, ask how her day was and share how your day was. Talk about the exciting things that are going to happen later in the week. Keep the conversation going, and keep it



BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

positive. When the time is up, congratulate her for sitting so nicely at the table during mealtime.

As you find your small being staying at the table for the entirety of the timer's period, then each week increase the term by one minute. Before you know it, she will be at the table for a full 15 minutes without any reminders!

Making sure your kid eats his food

Children need to eat in order to have all of that fantastic energy! You can encourage healthy eating by only placing the food on their plate that you expect them to eat. The idea is that there is no negotiating around dinner; children must eat what is on their plates. When this is the rule, kiddos are much more likely to eat without complaint and to not constantly argue about it.

Since your child must eat what is on his plate, do not fill it with too much food. Once the plate is clean, he can always get more food, so it is okay to give him less.

The goal is for him to feel the satisfaction of finishing his plate and not fighting with you about it. When your small one is used to eating what is on his plate, you can start adding new foods, one at a time.

Dr. Marcie Beigel is a behavior specialist based in Brooklyn who has worked with thousands of families for more than 20 years. Her book “Love Your Classroom Again” was a bestseller, and she has served as a guest expert on WCBS and Fox. Find out more at DrMarcie.com.



GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Lessons from mom

Our mothers taught us much more than cooking during our times together in the kitchen. Often something much deeper was being passed along. I've asked several local registered dietitian nutritionists to weigh in on the topic:

Growing up, our home was very food-oriented. My mother is Finnish with a bit of English and Irish; my dad was Italian. Mom learned to create Italian cuisine that my father's family loved and also cooked her own traditional meals. Our family always had a big organic garden where we grew tomatoes and other vegetables and everyone was involved in the cooking process. Mom taught us how to make our own tomato sauce that I still make today. Flavoring with fresh, locally grown produce and taking the time to cook as a family is a gift!

— Linda Arpino,
Life Focus Nutrition, LLC

When I was growing up, my mother used to have a tried-and-true principal she used when working off a cookbook. She said, "If one recipe doesn't work in a cookbook, probably most of them won't work." Through the years, I have found that some cookbook authors may not have tested all their recipes or may not have used measuring spoons, cups, or scales. This would lead to proportions that may not be correct, which is crucial — especially when baking. So Mom was right — if one recipe

doesn't work from a cookbook, most recipes probably won't work.

— Marlisa Brown,
President of Total Wellness Inc.

My mother taught me about love — the love of music and family. Oftentimes my mother would have gospel music playing in the background while she cooked. I would anxiously pull up a chair at the kitchen table — not to help cook — but to hear stories about her and my uncles. When they were young, my uncles sang in a gospel quartet, and mom played the piano for her Sunday school. She was the youngest of her siblings and her stories always centered around how her brothers took care of her. Thanks to Mom, I love and appreciate all types of music and understand the importance of a strong family bond.

— Constance Brown-Riggs,
author "The African American Guide to Living Well with Diabetes."

Standing in the kitchen side-by-side with my mom while helping her cook for the holidays, she would say, "This is for Grandpa." Curious, I would ask her why we were cooking a separate pot of stuffed cabbage for him. She explained that Grandpa had diabetes and cannot eat foods with sugar. So we always made a low-sugar version for Grandpa. When we served the holiday meal, Mom would hand me two serving bowls and say, "This one is for Grandpa, this is for everyone else." Today,

we are aware that it's the total amount of carbohydrate that affects blood glucose levels, although we still encourage reducing added sugar. When I invite people over to my home for a meal, I always consider the special nutritional needs of my guests. Thanks, Mom, for teaching me this valuable lesson.

— Bonnie R. Giller,
Dietetics & Nutrition, P.C.

I can't say I learned how to be a chef from my mom, but I can say that I learned the importance of a family meal and how a few great recipes can create memories, make a cold day warmer, and gather lots of "Mmmms" at the dinner table. My mom cooked with a lot of packaged ingredients; think Good Seasons Italian dressing, Lipton Cup-of-Soup, and Duncan Hines cake mix. But the outcomes were delicious. Now I make the same foods with my kids, but I do it my way. I use organic and local ingredients and cook from scratch, but the end result is the same: Full bellies, big smiles, and lots of warm memories.

— Amy Shapiro,
founder of Real Nutrition NYC

The lessons our mothers taught us weren't just about food and cooking; they were about life. Why don't you prepare a cherished recipe soon to celebrate and honor the women who taught you so much?

Christine M. Palumbo is a registered dietitian nutritionist and Fellow of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in Naperville, Ill. Her mother taught her the joy of eating, how not to waste food, and the value of a pot of soup bubbling on the stove.

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Calendar

MAY



File photo by Elizabeth Graham

It's shear excitement

It's time for Prospect Park Zoo's sheep to get their summer haircuts during the annual Fleece Festival on May 20 and May 21.

After a long winter, the sheep are ready to get their thick, woolly coats sheared. Shearing expert Don Kading will explain the process and answer visitor questions before giving the sheep their annual trims.

All weekend long, the zoo is talking about farming and farm life, and getting you in the mood with felt-making

and some special wool activities.

Zoo volunteers and wool experts will be on-hand to answer any questions you have about woolly animals and their coats.

Fleece Festival, May 20 and 21, from 10 am to 4 pm. Tickets are \$8, \$5 for children 3 to 12 years, \$6 seniors and free for children under 2 years.

Prospect Park Zoo [450 Flatbush Ave. at Ocean Avenue in Prospect Lefferts Gardens, (718) 399-7339, www.prospectpark-zoo.com].

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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!

TUES, MAY 2

IN BROOKLYN

First Discoveries for Toddlers: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; 9:30 am to 11:30 am; Free with admission to the gardens.

Calling all explorers 2 to 4 years old (and their caregivers) to this drop-in program! Plant a seed, touch a wriggly worm, and nestle into a meadow nook to read a story, or create a unique nature craft at special Discovery Garden activity stations designed for toddlers. Programs are outdoors and canceled in inclement weather.

THURS, MAY 4

IN BROOKLYN

Transit Tots: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.nytransitmuseum.org; 10:15 am to 11 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.

"Olive & Pearl:" BAM Fisher, 321 Ashland Pl. between Hansen Place and Lafayette Avenue; www.bam.org; 11 am; \$20.

Magical, visual, stimulating, and often-times funny, the story of young Olive and her grandmother is performed through beautiful puppetry, dance, and an original live music score inspired by melodies of bluegrass, Irish fiddle, and traditional lullabies. For ages 2-5.

FRI, MAY 5

IN BROOKLYN

"Olive & Pearl:" 11 am. BAM Fisher. See Thursday, May 4.

SAT, MAY 6

IN BROOKLYN

Flea Market: Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit, 8117 Bay Parkway at 82nd Street; (718) 837-0412; www.episcopalchurch-of-holyspirit.org; 9 am to 4 pm; Free to enter.

Clothing, family commodities, arts, books,



Joannie Leeds rocks out

Baby, it's a brand-new album — Brooklyn Baby!

Get ready to rock and roll with Joannie Leeds and her band the Nightlights when they release the new album *Brooklyn Baby!* on May 7 at the Atrium at City Point.

The indie rock singing sensation will put on a show-stopping performance with finger-popping, foot-stomping, fun songs to get you up and rocking.

Special guest Amelia Robinson of Mil's Trills will join Joannie to celebrate the release of this eighth CD.

And if you purchase a Brooklyn Baby! CD at the show, you will receive a free Joannie Leeds & The Nightlights shirt. Joannie will also raffle off several Brooklyn Baby! CDs, as well as the bedazzled pizza box she hand-decorated for the band's recent photo shoot.

So come on down, it's gonna be a blast!

Joannie Leeds & The Nightlights, May 7, at 11 am. Free.

The Atrium at City Point (445 Albee Square W. near DeKalb Avenue in Fort Greene, www.joannieleeds.com).

refreshments, and more — great for community service.

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

Join Prospect Park Alliance to discover why Prospect Park is an important place for many species of birds. Through fun games, experiments, and citizen science projects, learn why warblers are so wonderful.

Nature workshops: Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 11 am to

4 pm; Free.

Join in a nature hike, nature on the go, and natures' helpers.

"Olive & Pearl:" 11 am. BAM Fisher. See Thursday, May 4.

"Bang on a Can" Marathon: Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; www.brooklynmuseum.org; 2-10 pm; Suggested donation: \$16 adults, \$10 students and seniors.

Some of today's most innovative musicians and young artists celebrate the 30th anniversary of the music phenomenon with eight hours worth of fresh new music.

Calendar

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

SUN, MAY 7

IN BROOKLYN

Joanie Leeds and The Nightlights:

Atrium at City Point, 445 Albee Square West at DeKalb Avenue; www.joanieleeds.com. 11 am; Free.

Come on down to the release party of the eighth CD, *Brooklyn Baby!*, and enjoy this fun concert. There will be special guest appearances, a give away, and T-shirts.

"Olive & Pearl:" 11 am. BAM Fisher. See Thursday, May 4.

Garden storytime: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; Noon to 1 pm; Free with admission to the gardens.

Read garden-inspired stories alongside volunteers. Drop in anytime during program hours to join in. All programs are outdoors and canceled in inclement weather.

Best of BAMKids Film Festival 2017:

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 selection of the most popular films from this year's BAMkids Film Festival, including the "BAMmie" award winner for best short film as selected by the 2017 festival attendee.

"Amelia & Her Paper Tigers" Kid's

History Adventure: Waterfront Museum Barge, 290 Conover St. near Reed Street; (718) 624-4719; www.waterfrontmuseum.org; 2 pm; \$10 to \$15.

The show about Amelia Earhart is presented by the Bond Street Theatre.

Seining: Marine Park, Burnett Street and Avenue U; (718) 421-2021; nycgovparks.org; 2 pm to 3:30 pm; Free.

Catch-and-release fishing is a great way to get outdoors and discover nature just a few blocks from home. Our experienced rangers teach the ethics of fishing and the ecology of our waterways in every program. Get ready to get your hands wet, seining programs use nets to catch fish. All equipment is provided. This program is recommended for ages 8 years and older. Participation is first-come, first-served.

FURTHER AFIELD

Asian-American Heritage Festival:

Ellis Island National Park, New York Harbor, Manhattan; www.statuecruises.com; Noon; Free — but must purchase ferry ticket.

The National Park Service in partnership with Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company presents the festival with ceremony and performances in The Great Hall of Immigration at Ellis Island. The event showcases traditional and contemporary Asian-American music and dance.

MON, MAY 8

IN BROOKLYN

Block studio and lab: Brooklyn Children's



Fly with Amelia Earhart

Dust off those wings and take a flight with "Amelia and her Paper Tigers" in a Kid's History event on May 7 at the Waterfront Museum Barge.

Presented by the Bond Street Theatre, "Amelia & Her Paper Tigers" shares the stories of famed adventurer and aviatrix Amelia Earhart.

The play is highly physical, laugh-

out-loud funny, and features great characters. Using an array of puppetry and circus skills, including stilt walking, this is perfect for children 13 and under.

"Amelia and Her Paper Tigers," May 7 at 2 pm. Tickets range from \$10 to \$15.

Waterfront Museum Barge [290 Conover St. near Reed Street in Red Hook, (718) 624-4719; www.waterfrontmuseum.org].

Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 10 am; free with museum admission.

In the museum's second-floor studio, which focuses on art and architecture, visitors of all ages develop their engineering skills as they engage in open block play with large Imagination Playground blocks and table top-sized Kapla Planks and Magnatiles, as well as artist James Paulius's house-shaped wooden blocks and pegs from his installation *Sky Village*.

"Olive & Pearl:" 11 am. BAM Fisher. See Thursday, May 4.

TUES, MAY 9

IN BROOKLYN

First Discoveries for Toddlers: 9:30 am to 11:30 am. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Tuesday, May 2.

WED, MAY 10

IN BROOKLYN

Plant sale: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; 1 pm to 2 pm; Free with admission to the gardens (plus purchase of plants).

Come to this spectacular annual event and get a plant or two for mom — Mother's Day is May 14.

THURS, MAY 11

IN BROOKLYN

Transit Tots: 10:15 am to 11 am. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, May 4.

"Cinderella Samba": Sunset Park, 41st Street between Fifth and Seventh avenues; www.cityparksfoundation.org/event/cityparks-puppetmobile-presents-cinderella-samba-2; 10:30 am to 11:30 am; Free.

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

This contemporary twist on the classic “Cinderella” fairy tale is presented by The CityParks PuppetMobile and sets the timeless tale in the lush landscape of Brazil, where, thanks to the help of her fairy godmother, Cinderella attends Rio de Janeiro’s biggest Carnaval gala and dances the samba with Prince Paulo. After Cinderella is forced to flee the gala just before midnight, the prince sets out to find the mystery woman who stole his heart, in hopes of marrying her. The production features an original commissioned musical soundtrack that brings samba center stage; handcrafted Carnaval festival floats on parade; and one-of-a-kind marionettes donning their most vibrant Carnaval costumes.

Salsa Party: Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; www.brooklynmuseum.org; 6–9:30 pm; Suggested donation, \$16 adults, \$10 students and seniors.

Join a salsa class led by professional dancers, followed by live music and dance performances by some of Brooklyn’s best Latin dance teams.

SAT, MAY 13

IN BROOKLYN

“Morgan’s Journey:” On Stage at Kingsborough, 2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street; (718) 368-5596; www.onstageat-kingsborough.org; 2 pm; \$12.

From the moment of his birth, we follow Morgan the Clown on a journey of discovery. We delight in the birthday presents he receives, especially a wise sock puppet who becomes his companion. In a captivating exploration of the joys and challenges of childhood, with active audience participation, Morgan learns a valuable and moving lesson about love and the true meaning of friendship. Meet the cast after the show!

SUN, MAY 14

IN BROOKLYN

Nature walk: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; 11 am to noon; Free with admission to the gardens.

May is prime-time for migratory songbirds — some arriving to nest, others passing through on their way farther north. Registration is required.

Basic Canoeing: Prospect Park Audubon Center, enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospect-park.org/audubon; 11 am to 2 pm; Free.

Few experiences compare with being on the open water in New York City. The rhythm of the waves, the sun on your face, and the exhilaration of slicing through the water all add up to an experience you’ll never forget. Our trained Urban Park Rangers will lead you on canoe adventures that range from the gentle waters of protected lakes to the challenging open waters of rivers and bays. All canoe programs are for ages 8 years and



Polish your b-ball skills

Basketball clinics are back at Brooklyn Bridge Park, from May 2 through Aug. 31.

Children 8 to 17 years old can polish their b-ball skills and learn new ones at the Basketball Clinic with Big and Little Skills Academy.

Each clinic will include either yoga

to enhance flexibility or flag football for agility training.

Basketball clinics on Tuesdays and Thursdays, May 2 through Aug. 31 at 4 pm. Free.

Basketball Courts at Brooklyn Bridge Park (Pier 2 Promenade in Brooklyn Heights, www.brooklynbridgepark.org/pages).

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

Garden story time: Noon to 1 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Sunday, May 7.

MON, MAY 15

IN BROOKLYN

Block studio and lab: 10 am. Brooklyn Children’s Museum. See Monday, May 8.

TUES, MAY 16

IN BROOKLYN

First Discoveries for Toddlers: 9:30 am to 11:30 am. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Tuesday, May 2.

WED, MAY 17

“Cinderella Samba”: Red Hook Recreation Center, 155 Bay St. and Court Street; www.cityparksfoundation.org/event/cityparks-puppetmobile-presents-cinderella-samba-2; 10:30 am to 11:30 am; Free.

THURS, MAY 18

IN BROOKLYN

Transit Tots: 10:15 am to 11 am. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, May 4.

SAT, MAY 20

IN BROOKLYN

Flea Market: 9 am to 4 pm. Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit. See Saturday, May 6.

Viking Fest 2017: Owl’s Head Park, 68th Street and Narrows Avenue; www.scandinavian-museum.org/events.html; 10 am to 5 pm; Free.

Come to the 17th annual celebration of all things Nordic. Sponsored by the Scandinavian East Coast Museum, the event features replicas of Viking ships, exhibits of Nordic pastimes including embroidery and spinning, and, of course, plenty of folks in Viking garb.

Fleece Festival: Prospect Park Zoo, 450 Flatbush Ave. at Ocean Avenue; (718) 399-7339; www.prospectparkzoo.com; 10 am to 4 pm; \$8 (\$5 children 3–12; \$6 seniors; Free for children under 2).

Calendar

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

After a long winter, the sheep are ready to get their thick, woolly coats sheared. Shearing expert Don Kading will explain the process and answer visitor questions before giving the sheep their annual haircut.

SUN, MAY 21

IN BROOKLYN

Fleece Festival: 10 am to 4 pm. Prospect Park Zoo. See Saturday, May 20.

Garden storytime: Noon to 1 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Sunday, May 7.

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

Children join the workshop and uncover the history of the scrolls, sand and scrape unfinished hides for parchment, mix the ink, and watch the scribe as he practices his "scribal scribble" on a piece of parchment.

MON, MAY 22

IN BROOKLYN

Block studio and lab: 10 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Monday, May 8.

TUES, MAY 23

IN BROOKLYN

First Discoveries for Toddlers: 9:30 am to 11:30 am. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Tuesday, May 2.

THURS, MAY 25

IN BROOKLYN

Transit Tots: 10:15 am to 11 am. New York



Asian-American culture

Celebrate Asian-American heritage at Ellis Island on May 7.

The National Park Service in partnership with Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company presents the festival with a ceremony and performances in the island's Great Hall of Immigration.

The event showcases traditional and contemporary Asian-American music and dance, with performing artists from the community, including the Nai-

Ni Chen Dance Company, the Chinese American Chorus of New York, the New Asia Chamber Music Society, the Chinese American Music Ensemble, and the Children's Orchestra Society.

Suitable for all ages.

Asian-American Heritage Festival, May 7 at noon. Admission is free, but must purchase ferry ticket.

Ellis Island National Park (New York Harbor; www.statuecruises.com).

Transit Museum. See Thursday, May 4.

SUN, MAY 28

IN BROOKLYN

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

Join the Prospect Park Alliance and the

Brooklyn Reading Council for a day of education and fun at the Lefferts Historic House with a special read aloud and book giveaway event.

Garden storytime: Noon to 1 pm. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Sunday, May 7.

Torah unwrapped: 1:30 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Sunday, May 21.

Best of BAMKids FilmAfrica film: 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 family-friendly film in the FilmAfrica series as part of BAM's annual DanceAfrica celebration. Previous films have included "Kirikou and the Wild Beasts," "Kirikou and the Sorceress," and "Felix."

MON, MAY 29

IN BROOKLYN

Block studio and lab: 10 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Monday, May 8.

TUES, MAY 30

IN BROOKLYN

First Discoveries for Toddlers: 9:30 am to 11:30 am. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. See Tuesday, May 2.

Viking Fest

Velkommen to the 17th annual Viking Fest in Owl's Head Park on May 20.

The annual event celebrates all things Nordic. The Scandinavian East Coast Museum is hosting this fun festival that features replicas of Viking ships, exhibits of Nordic pastimes of games and crafts, Scandinavian treats and sweets, and, of course, plenty of folks clad in Viking garb. Several storytellers will be on hand to regale the crowd with the tales and sagas of Viking revelry and life in old-world Scandinavia.

Viking Fest, May 20, 10 am to 5 pm. Free.

Owl's Head Park/ (68th Street and Narrows Avenue in Bay Ridge, www.scandinavian-museum.org/events).



Photo by Arthur De Gaeta

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

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, Until Wed, May 31; Free with museum admission.

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

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

Enjoy Peter Pan doughnuts and acoustic music.

Rock and Roll Playhouse: Brooklyn Bowl, 61 Wythe Ave. between N. 11th and N. 12th streets; (718) 963-3369; therockandrollplayhouse.com/brooklynbowl; Sundays, 11 am, Until Sun, June 25; \$10 (children under 1 years old free).

Weekly programming offers families an opportunity to enjoy music together using educational cornerstones like literature or songwriting with kids.

Museum Highlights: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694-1600; www.nytransitmuseum.org; Saturdays and Sundays, Noon to 1 pm, Until Sun, May 28; Free with admission to the museum.

Join expert museum educators on a dramatic journey through the building of New York's subway system, the evolution of the city's surface transportation, and our priceless collection of vintage subway and elevated cars dating back to 1904.

The Ed Center: Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 6, Atlantic Avenue at Furman Street; (718) 222-9939; www.brooklynbridgepark.org; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3 pm to 5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm to 5 pm, Until Sun, May 28; Free.

Get to know Brooklyn Bridge Park and visit the giant aquarium filled with East River critters, a 10-foot scale model of Brooklyn Bridge Park, the reading corner, and so much more.

Family Discovery: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm to 3 pm, Until Sun, June 4; Free with admission to the gardens.

Experiment, learn, and play together in the Discovery Garden. Hands-on stations throughout the garden's meadow, woodland, and marsh habitats and in the vegetable garden encourage families to explore nature together. Create a nature-based craft, artwork, or invention with Discovery Garden docents. This is a drop-in program for families with children of all ages. All programs are outdoors and canceled in inclement weather. (No programs on May 27 and May 28).



A rock music education

Rock out and rock on at the Rock and Roll Playhouse at Brooklyn Bowl every Sunday.

Rock and Roll Playhouse offers programming that provides families an opportunity to enjoy music together. The kids are having so much fun they don't realize how much they are learning.

Peter Shapiro, owner of Brooklyn Bowl, is a parent of two young children. When he discovered first-hand a lack of regular programming in New York City that combined his passion for live

music and his family, he wanted to fill the void. Since opening, the event has introduced kids to the music of David Bowie, Prince, The White Stripes, Taylor Swift, and many more.

Rock and Roll Playhouse on Sundays. Doors open at 11 am and the party gets started at 11:15 am sharp. Admission is \$10 per person; kids under 1 are free.

Brooklyn Bowl [61 Wythe Ave. between N. 11th and N. 12th streets in Williamsburg, (718) 963-3369, <http://therockandrollplayhouse.com/brooklynbowl>].

Brooklyn Block Lab: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Thursdays - Sundays, 2 pm to 5:30 pm, Until 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. Different scales of blocks enable hands of all sizes to build and be challenged.

Touch Tank: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm, Sun, April 30 - Sun, July 9; Free with museum admission.

Meet and touch real, live sea creatures like starfish and sea urchins.

Explorers' Day: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org;

org; Tuesdays, 10 am - 4 pm, May 2 - June 27.

Tuesdays are dedicated to our permanent exhibits. Together with your child, can you find an authentic West Indian Day Parade costume? Have you met the Madagascar hissing cockroaches in our greenhouse? Can you try your dance moves in Global Beats? Check out our exhibits.

Kids Discovery Stations: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave. at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; Tuesdays - Fridays, 10:15 am to 12:15 am, Until Fri, June 2; Free with admission to the gardens.

Get your hands dirty at kids' discovery stations throughout the garden. Investigate and classify plants, touch a carnivorous plant and learn how it eats, or go on a monarch and milkweed exploration in the meadow! This is a drop-in program for schools and families with children of all ages. All programs are outdoors and canceled in inclement weather.

Calendar

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

Aleph Bet Ship: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907-8833; www.jcm.museum.org; Mondays, 1:30 pm, Tuesdays, 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, Noon to 4 pm, Tues, May 2 – Sun, May 28; Free with museum admission.

Children can climb aboard and learn the Hebrew Alphabet with interactive and hands-on experiences.

Basketball clinics: Basketball courts at Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 2 Promenade; www.brooklynbridgepark.org/pages; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4 pm, beginning Tues, May 2; Free.

Improve basic basketball skills with the Big and Little Skills Academy on Pier 2. Each clinic will include either yoga to enhance flexibility or flag football for agility training. For children 8 to 17 years old.

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

Babies and toddlers enjoy a full fountain musical morning.

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

Drop by our Computer Lab to take control of a city 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.

Fleece fun: Lefferts Historic House, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; Saturday, May 6, 2 pm; Sunday, May 7, 2 pm; Saturday, May 13, 2 pm; Sunday, May 14, 2 pm; Saturday, May 20, 2 pm; Sunday, May 21, 2 pm; Saturday, May 27, 2 pm; Sunday, May 28, 2 pm; \$3.

Join Prospect Park Alliance to learn how wool was used on a Flatbush farm. You can brush the wool with carding paddles, spin yarn using a drop spindle, and even make a felt ball to take home with you.

Music in Motion: Bargemusic, Fulton Ferry Landing at Brooklyn Bridge; www.bargemusic.org; Saturday, May 6, 4 pm; Saturday, May 13, 4 pm; Saturday, May 20, 4 pm; Saturday, May 27, 4 pm; Free.

Bargemusic presents this gentle rocking series 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.

Holding History: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Sundays, 11 am, Sun, May 7 – Sun, June

Visit with 'Olive and Pearl'

It's a magical story with puppets and dance at BAM Fisher, when Treehouse Shakers presents a production of "Olive and Pearl" from May 4 through May 8.

The funny story of young Olive and her grandmother is performed through beautiful puppetry, dance, and an original live music score inspired by melodies of bluegrass, Irish fiddle, and traditional lullabies. Perfect for children ages 2 to 5 years old.

Centered on thematic elements of home, and what a home means, young audiences are invited into a cozy and gentle world, rich with sensory experiences. Granny Pearl builds fires, warms tea, makes meals, has a comforting lap to tell stories on and safe arms to rock Olive to sleep.

"Olive and Pearl," daily, May 4 through May 8, 11 am. Tickets are \$20 (\$30 premium seating).

25; Free with museum admission.

What makes an object "historical?" Why do museums keep objects behind glass? Children will ponder these questions while being able to physically hold, touch, and feel historical artifacts from our collection. They will learn about the history of those objects through this tactical investigation and by relating these historical artifacts to their own lives.

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

History comes alive as you explore a new theme in the garden or historic farmhouse each month. Educators assist you and your family to explore what life was like in rural Brooklyn and investigate clues to the past. The activities are best suited for kids ages 4 through 10. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Summer reading: Pier 3 Greenway Terrace in Brooklyn Bridge Park, Furman Street and the Promenade; (718) 514-7359; www.brooklynbridgepark.org/park/pier-3-greenway-terrace; Wednesdays, 11 am, Wed, June 7 – Wed, Aug. 2; Free.

Enjoy story time with librarians from the Brooklyn Heights branch of the Brooklyn Pub-



Christopher Duggan

BAM Fisher [321 Ashland Pl. between Hansen Place and Lafayette Avenue in Fort Greene, (212) 715-1914 www.bam.org; www.treehouseshakkers.com].

lic Library who read fun stories from their summer reading list and more.

FURTHER AFIELD

"The Princess, The Emperor, and the Duck:" Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre, 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 "The Princess and the Pea," "The Emperor's New Clothes" and "The Ugly Duckling." For children ages 3 to 9.

Drones – Is the Sky the Limit?: Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, Pier 86 (46th Street and 12th Avenue), Manhattan; www.intrepidmuseum.org; Weekdays, 10 am to 5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am to 6 pm, beginning Wed, May 10; \$33 (\$31 seniors; \$24 children 5-12; Free children under 5; military, free).

The exhibit explores pilotless aircraft and the history of drone technology, from its modern-day origins in World War I and its military development to its current applications in solving complex humanitarian and commercial challenges. Visitors will be able to fly actual drones and watch the first-person viewpoint of a drone racing, among much more.

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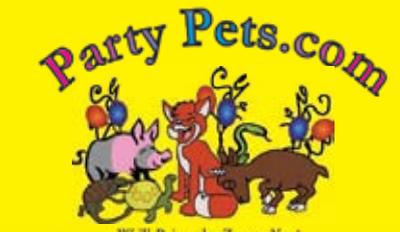
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New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

Go cubbing

Whether you're treating yourself to a casually cool mommy-and-me top for Mother's Day, or you're looking for a gift for a special mom, the Mama Bear and Baby Bear shirts from The Oyster's Pearl shop on Etsy have got you covered.

The Ohio-based, husband-and-wife design team of Emily and Brad Weckesser screen-print Mom's shirt by hand with the silhouette of a bear emblazoned with "Mama." This version is available in sizes XXS to XXL and offers a choice of V-neck or crew neck. The tee's fabric is a blend of polyester, rayon, and cotton.

The Baby Bear onesie is made of gray or white ring-spun cotton, and it's available for cubs newborn to 18 months. The soft unisex, short-sleeve bodysuit has snap closures.

It's a gift certain to earn you a bear hug.

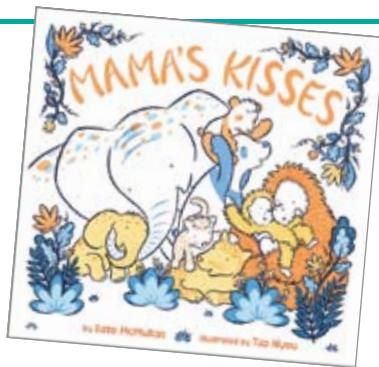
Mama Bear T-shirt by The Oyster's Pearl, \$32, Baby Bear onesie, \$24, www.etsy.com.



Snoring stories

Two new picture books that Mom will love reading again and again are "Mama's Kisses" by Kate McMullan and "If I Were a Kangaroo" by Mylisa Larsen — instant classics that will be cherished gifts.

McMullan's "Mama Kisses" is a dive into a lush rain forest where four different animal moms search for their children to put them to bed. The Manhattanite's sweet, cuddly, rhyming tale is a departure from her bestselling "I Stink!" series. Tao Nyeu's stunning illustrations, rendered in a unique, cool palette, depict playtime and bedtime with a quiet charm that reminds us of Babar and Pooh.



Larsen's "If I Were a Kangaroo" is a roundup of the endearing details of how animal moms care for their kids. Larsen's text is also illustrated with a muted palette, this time with aww-inducing ink washes and pencil by Brooklynite Anna Raff.

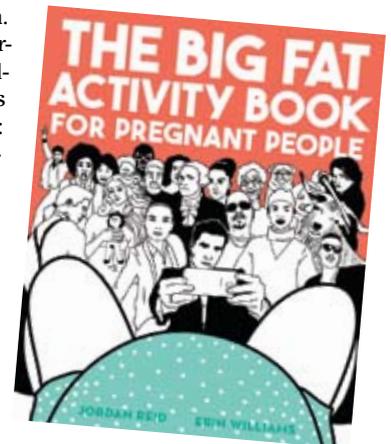


"Mama's Kisses" book by Kate McMullan, \$16.99, "If I Were a Kangaroo" book by Mylisa Larsen, \$17.99, www.barnesandnoble.com.

Belly laughs

"The Big Fat Activity Book for Pregnant People" is a hilariously irreverent Mother's Day gift for expectant moms who are in an arguably stressful situation.

The concept of Jordan Reid and Erin Williams' workbook is cheerfully ludicrous: it's intended to distract future moms from their many worries. The duo's advice: "Step away from The Google" — at least long enough to do a word search titled "Sorry, Nope" featuring items you can no longer eat or activities that are off limits now that you've got a passenger. It's hard not to laugh out loud when faced with the comic genius of the



"Where You Were The Moment Your Life Changed Forever" connect-the-dots page that clearly reveals ... a toilet!

This book is strictly for lifting moms up when pregnancy has got them feeling down.

"The Big Fat Activity Book for Pregnant People" by Jordan Reid and Erin Williams, \$16, www.amazon.com.

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JOIN US FOR AN INFO SESSION!

Meet at the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy (334 Furman St)
May 6th & May 20th at 11:00 am (walking tour to follow)

We have great indoor facilities located at St. Francis College & Grace Church!

