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Brooklyn Family
December 2017

Where every child matters



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Thank you and Happy Holidays

It doesn't really feel like the winter holidays yet and I couldn't be happier because we all know that snow and ice will eventually come even if it's in smaller amounts than usual. For now we get to enjoy the sunshine and the milder temperatures.



Christine M. Palumbo help to provide the core of our editorial. We have worked together for years and no one is more pleased than I am to have them to rely on for quality parenting information and advice. I admire their content and their work and am very grateful for their collaboration.

attention to detail, me included.

We have a fine art and production staff led by Leah Mitch and I'm proud to work with all of them. Arthur in particular has been doing our ads and helping to put together our flyers and titles since the beginning. Sylvan has designed and manages our website and has created wonderful insignia and logos for our various efforts. We're loaded with talent thank goodness.

With Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas approaching, we have entered the season of wonderful family and child celebrations, and of course gift giving. Our writer Lisa J. Curtis who usually does our New & Noteworthy Column, has expanded it to give you all some more new ideas for great kid gifts this year. We hope they will be helpful.

Speaking of collaboration, I have to thank Tina, who is my right arm and has been the woman I have turned to since 2009 to get my work accomplished. I'm also happy to have a terrific partner in the editorial aspect of my work in Vinny DiMiceli and the various copy editors that pass through our doors. Right now Courtney is on maternity leave having recently given birth to Henry. She'll be back but I hope not too soon. Little babies need lots of attention, care and love. Meanwhile Jim is filling in for her and doing a fine job. Lisa Curtis does an amazing job of editing and I know all the writers are grateful for her

Thanks to our fine sales team, Erin, Mary, Shelli, Jay and Tom, as well as to our colleagues in Westchester. Happy Holidays to Jean, Nina and LynnMarie.

Finally I want to thank Cliff for being such a terrific partner all these years. Next year we begin our 20th year of publishing these magazines. We started with Brooklyn Family in 1998. It's been an amazing ride and one that's hardly over.

Happy Holidays everyone! Thanks for reading.

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HOPE

for the holidays

It's the best gift for your family

BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-TIEMAN

During the cold, dreary days of winter, a popular childhood pastime was listening to records. (For those of you too young to remember, records were flat, black, vinyl discs upon which sound had been recorded and was released when a diamond-tipped needle passed over the grooves as the record spun on a turntable at either 33 or 45 rota-

tions per minute.)

Our record cabinet was stocked with albums of classical music, original Broadway and movie cast recordings, popular artists from the '40s to the '60s, and holiday tunes. More importantly, there was a treasured collection of Disneyland storytime classics such as *Bambi*, *Cinderella*, *Snow White*, and other fairy tales. These were not recordings of the Disney, full-length, animated, feature films. They were

abbreviated versions, on 45s, told by a narrator with various performers providing the voices for the different characters. Catchy songs, unique to these recordings, such as "Cindy-Cinderella went to the ball, Cindy-Cinderella loveliest of all," and "Pinoc-, Pinoc-, Pinocchio, we'll find you if we have to go to Tokyo," were frequently sung, hummed, or whistled in our house.

Curled up in our comfy, green, rocking chair, I listened to these records until I knew them by heart. My favorite was the story of Pandora's box. Placed on Earth by Zeus, Pandora was given everything she could possibly need or want. She was charged only with never opening the beautiful box entrusted to her, (about which she was given no explanation — not a good parenting strategy).

Dreading the moment when her curiosity got the best of her, I remember willing her not to open the box. Visions of the horrible creatures, embodiments of the wickedness she unleashed, were vivid in my imagination. When she finally slammed the lid shut, a gentle, tinkling voice pleaded from inside, "Let me out. Let me out, too." Cautiously, Pandora asked, "Who are you?" Reassuringly, the voice

responded, "I am hope."

Realizing the dire consequences of her actions, Pandora threw open the box, releasing hope into the world. I recall tears of relief threatening to escape at the final words of the closing song, "When you have hope, you have everything."

Hope is a priceless gift we can give our children. It provides comfort when faced with loss and sorrow. It combats doubt in times of uncertainty. It is a source of strength when confronted with hardship and challenges. Combined with competence, confidence, wisdom, and love, hope makes what seems impossible possible. Parenting for hope requires us to:

Choose hope

When our children come to us feeling frightened, discouraged, or overwhelmed, we can help them discover the power of hope. By providing age-appropriate, accurate information; reminding them of their abilities and previous accomplishments; encouraging them to try again; and reassuring them of our unconditional love and support, we assist our children in developing the courage to choose hope.

Pair hope with action

Hope in the absence of effort tends to yield disappointing results. Hoping for a

good grade without studying; hoping for an excellent performance without practicing; or hoping for a successful presentation without preparing are all examples of the misuse of hope. Pairing hope with action significantly increases the likelihood of achieving the desired outcome. But even in the face of failure, it is better to have hoped and tried, than never to have hoped at all.

Inspire hope

Hope is contagious and can be readily spread by something as simple as a smile, a cheerful greeting, an encouraging word, or a random act of kindness. By modeling that which we hope for, we invite others to choose hope. Exhibiting courtesy and consideration for others regardless of age, gender, color, or religion demonstrates our hope for equality. Collecting and donating food and clothing conveys our hope for improving the lives of those less fortunate. Providing quality education reflects our hope for future generations. Adopting environmentally conscious habits is an expression of hope for our future on this planet.

Current social, moral, and political trends are contributing to an uncivil, divisive, combative, destructive interpersonal climate. Indefensible language, attitudes, and behavior are being legitimized, even

normalized. When bombarded, on a daily basis, by accounts of adults in positions of authority, influence, and power behaving abysmally, it is tempting to surrender to disillusionment. Giving in to despair is so easy, because it permits inactivity. By accepting the explanation, "that's just the way it is," we are relieved of the responsibility for attempting to change the status quo. We are choosing to ignore hope's plea to be set free to resist greed, hate, ignorance, and oppression.

This holiday season, my wish for us is hope. Not a passive kind of hope that enables us to sit around waiting for good things to happen, but an active, passionate kind of hope that inspires us to make good things happen for ourselves and for others. In the statement, "I hope..." it is important to remember hope is the verb, an action word. According to Christopher Reeve, "Once you choose hope, anything's possible." To hope is a courageous choice. May we have the courage to take action inspired by hope, even in the face of overwhelming odds.

Carolyn Waterbury-Tieman has been married for 29 years and has two sons. She spent 15 years 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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Holiday scents are the spice of life

Christmas — and the entire holiday season — wouldn't be the same without its signature scents. Think cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, ginger, peppermint, and pine.

For many of us, the scents of the season evoke holidays of years past. Those yummy smells are essential to the way we experience the traditional foods and beverages we enjoy during this magical time.

Why are certain spices so popular at this time of year? In medieval Europe, Christmas was an occasion to splurge on luxuries from distant lands such as the Middle East. Many classic holiday dishes containing cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves first became popular during that time.

These essential holiday spices don't only add depth and flavor to foods, they are rich in natural plant compounds that have been studied for their health-promoting and disease-preventing properties.

Because spices are derived from plants, they share many of the same nutritional attributes of fruits and vegetables. Spices are very concentrated sources of anti-inflammatory health-protective compounds. For example, a mere ½ teaspoon of ground clove is said to contain more antioxidants than ½ cup of blueberries or cranberries. Using a heavy hand boosts their benefits.

Those benefits are greater than the sum of their individual effects when you also combine two or more.

Let's look at a few of the most popular:

Anise: Popular for its licorice flavor, anise seed is thought to alleviate gas and relieve coughs. It can be added to cakes, cookies, and ice cream as well as breads and fruit salads.

Cardamom: The seeds are helpful for the digestive tract and taste like an airy, gentle ginger with a touch of pine. Cardamom enhances the flavor of pumpkin and other squash, sweet potatoes, and pastries. It's best to purchase the seeds whole and grind them yourself in order to preserve the volatile oils.

Cinnamon: One of the most beloved flavors of the season, cinnamon comes from the brown bark of the cinnamon tree and can be sprinkled into coffee, cider, hot cocoa, hot cereal, whole grain pancakes, toast, poached pears, and baked apples. It may help regulate blood sugar in people with type 2 diabetes and may also lower cholesterol. Cinnamon provides antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial effects.

Clove: Famous for its sweet nutty aroma, clove contains eugenol, which is linked with the prevention of toxicity from environmental pollutants, certain forms



GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

of cancer, and has antibacterial effects. Use clove wherever you add cinnamon or ginger. For example, stir ground clove into applesauce, stewed pears, or oatmeal. It can be added to muffins, cookies, whole grain pancakes, and sweet breads.

Ginger: Popular year round, it can be grated from its root or added as a powder form. Ginger helps quell morning sickness. In fresh form, it's favored for treating colds, coughs, and congestion.

Nutmeg: This quintessential spice, the seed of the evergreen tree *Myristica fragrans*, has a woody, sweet flavor, and can be purchased whole and grated or purchased ground. It can be dusted on eggnog or added to baked goods. Nutmeg may kill some of the mouth bacteria that contribute to cavities. Children have been known to become sick from ingesting it straight from the jar, so ensure you put it where your child can't reach it.

Finally, many recipes for baked goods call for more sugar than is really necessary. Try cutting the amount by one-quarter. Compensate by adding half as much again of the various "sweet" spices.

Tip: If your spices are more than two to three years old, toss 'em and replace with more potent, new ones. They're best stored in a cool, dark cupboard in airtight containers, not next to your stove.

Christine Palumbo is a nutritionist in Naperville, Ill., where she loves to combine bay leaf, lemon or orange wedges, cinnamon sticks, whole cloves, and water in a pan on the stove to naturally infuse the air with the scent of the holidays. Find her at Christine Palumbo Nutrition on Facebook, @PalumboRD on Twitter or ChristinePalumbo.com.

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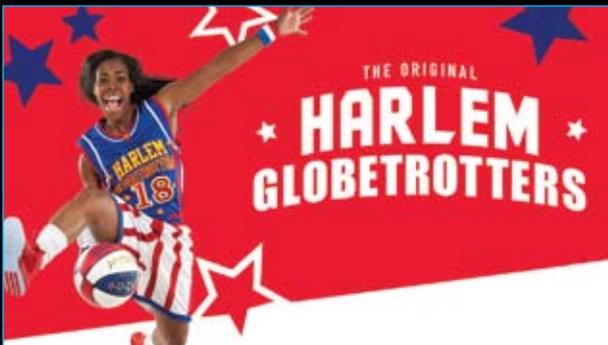
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Online minefield

Part two: Protect your daughter in hazardous digital world

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

There is an awakening happening in our homes in which parents like you are discovering the negative effects digital devices and obsessive, constant connectedness are having on their kids and their family.

In her roles as educator and motivational speaker focusing on parenting adolescents and social media, Laurie Wolk helps parents, and especially young girls, learn how to communicate and connect with themselves, each other, and the outside world.

“Physical and psychological changes in her adolescent brain mixed with the impact of the media — most importantly social media — [have] girls feeling lackluster about themselves and uncomfortable communicating in real life,” she explains.

The Westchester parent works hard to get the word out about raising balanced kids in our madcap, and sometimes dangerous, digital age, and provides mothers and fathers with practical advice and the tools they need to raise good online citizens in her timely, must-read new book “Girls Just Want to Have Likes: How to Raise Confident Girls in the Face of Social Media Madness” (Morgan James Publishing).

Here is part two of our interview with Wolk about teaching kids the do’s and don’ts of social media:

Tammy Scileppi: With teen mental illness, like depression, on the rise — due in part to lack of personal interaction — what should parents do?

Laurie Wolk: Our kids are facing a crisis of confidence. They’re not learning valuable social and emotional skills because of these devices. They’re more connected than ever and yet so alone. Many parents can barely get through to have a casual conversation or family dinner. Studies show they’re dating less, driving less, and hanging out with their



Author Laurie Wolk

friends in person less.

But with technology, like any new skill, we need to teach our kids the rules of the road while allowing for some twists and turns along the way. Our kids are going to need technology skills.

However, they also need to know how to monitor their own usage in a realm of 24-7 access, keep their self-esteem intact in a world of constant comparisons, and be good digital citizens.

TS: What can parents do to help their kids become more responsible and savvy in an increasingly vicious and sometimes predatory, online environment?

LW: I suggest that parents create a Digital Media Agreement. This one document can help you discuss, teach, and develop these skills. You’ll negotiate with your kids how frequently they can use their digital devices. You’ll create

rules around being kind, responsible, and staying safe online. And you’ll help them unwind, decode, and begin to navigate the “hurts” one encounters by being connected 24-7.

Then you’ll listen and revisit the agreement with them every month or so. Your agreement will give you a platform to explain the “why” behind the rules and [it will give] your children the voice to explain what makes sense for their needs.

TS: Will things change for the better? What does the future look like?

LW: When it comes to social media, parents should stop trying to go back in time to the way things used to be. We’ve got to get on board. Trust me, if you’re aware and accepting of your kids’ online world, you’ll be much better positioned to help them navigate that part of their lives. And they’ll be much more willing to discuss it with you.

Start looking at smartphones, digital devices, social media, and our kids’ alternate universes as a good thing. Use a different lens. Learning more about social media and online interaction today will give us more insight into their worlds. And that’s something I know we all want! Honestly, I think like any innovation — the car, the phone, the cupcake, ha! — things will begin to find their “normal.” Eventually, we won’t feel so fearful that these digital devices are “ruining” our kids. I think we’ll all slowly learn how to avoid binging on technology so much.

TS: So, what’s the attraction behind their need to be connected 24-7?

LW: You see, digital devices and all their fancy buzzes, beeps, and notifications affect our brains the same way that a hug or achieving something does. At the slightest indication of a reward in the form of an alert, we get a dopamine hit. That hit brings us pleasure and makes us feel wanted and appreciated. However, those digital dopamine hits are never

Wolk this way

The following is an excerpt from chapter 10 of Laurie Wolk's new book on the topic of what your daughters are not saying out loud.

- "Act approachable. Otherwise, I'll keep my stories to myself."

Kids, like horses, can feel your energy before you say anything. If you're tense, nervous, focused on getting that e-mail out, they know — and will stay away.

- "Sometimes, just sometimes, it would be nice if you could point out when I'm doing something right instead of wrong."

Every once in a while, catch your girl doing something good and let her know you appreciate her. Just because.

- "I do value family time. I just don't want to value it all the time."

What teenagers want most of all are social rewards, especially the respect of their peers.

Becoming an adult means leaving the world of your parents, and starting to make your way toward the future. A future that they will share with those peers. So, enjoy your time with your daughter. Make family time fun, and let her enjoy her friend time, too. Try and include her friends in some family activities to increase the strength of all of her ties.

- "Don't correct me in front of people. I will pay closer attention if you do it in private."

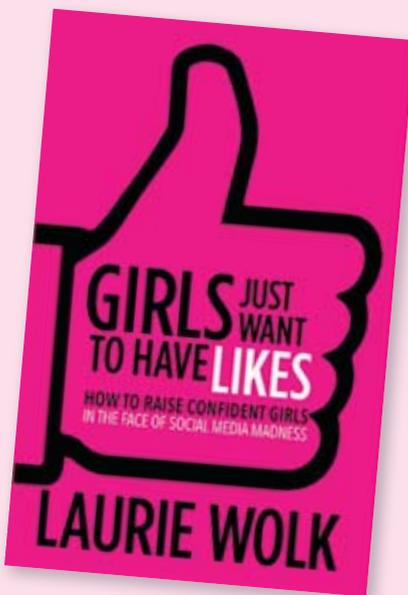
You are on your girl's home team. In fact, you're her best (and only dedicated) cheerleader, so why would you ever want to humiliate her in front of others? Plus, who can actually hear a "life lesson" if they are too busy feeling ashamed?

- "When I am feeling out of control, yell and push you away, do the opposite. Stay right where you are. Hold the line."

You are family. You are her parents. She is supposed to give you her worst. And you are supposed to be her rock. Her anchor. Just stay close and steady for her. Show her that this, too, shall pass, and you'll be right there when it does.

- "Don't make me feel badly when I make a mistake. It puts too much pressure on me. I can't be perfect."

Our girls just want to be girls. Sometimes, they want to leave the food pantry messy to go back out to play, and admit they forgot their homework assignment at school without us making such a big deal out of it. Sure we've got big picture lessons to teach about



responsibility, but sometimes, that can wait till later. Not every mistake signals a crisis or needs intervention.

- "Don't think that you can't apologize to me. Nothing makes me feel better than to know that you make mistakes, too. Show me how to handle that and put the relationship first."

Showing your daughter that you are human and make mistakes, too, is one of the best things you can do to build her resiliency. And, showing your daughter what it looks like to be genuinely sorry and make amends is developing a crucial life skill.

- "Don't let it upset you if I say mean things. It isn't you I hate, but I resent when I feel you use your power to thwart me."

Growing up isn't easy. You remember that, right? Our girls are going to act out, say mean things, make mistakes and tell white lies. Accept it, and let your girl know that there's nothing she can do that would change how you feel about her. (Okay, maybe not nothing, but you get the idea.) Tell her you love her, even though (you) don't love her behavior. It's a great go-to reminder when you want to pull your hair out, trust me.

- "Sometimes just zippy your lippy and let it slide."

As our daughters get older, more and more, they simply want and need us to listen and be there for them. No judgments, no life lessons. Just be there.

— An excerpt from Laurie Wolk's book *"Girls Just Want to Have Likes: How to Raise Confident Girls in the Face of Social Media Madness"* (Morgan James Publishing).

"With technology, like any new skill, we need to teach our kids the rules of the road while allowing for some twists and turns along the way."

going to fulfill our "real" needs.

Only living "in real life" and getting an actual hug or achieving actual success

can do that.

•••

Good news! Taking control is easier than you think.

And Wolk has proof. For over a decade, she has spent a lot of her time in classrooms coaching parents and kids, and has witnessed firsthand the positive effects that simple back-to-basics lessons can have on her clients, their children, and even their family life.

She insists, "Social media and these pesky digital devices are not going to ruin your kids!"

"My book and my online community — the Confident and Connected Kid Collective — can help that bold statement become a reality for parents," continues Wolk. "Parents love it, because it's a place where they can find like-minded parents to discuss the challenges of parenting in the digital age. They especially like the challenges I post each month that hold them accountable to 'do' the things they want, but often get too distracted to execute. It's never too early or too late to start doing things differently."

The holidays are a perfect time for every family member to finally disconnect for a while, then reconnect, and just enjoy some good old-fashioned fun together, like Family Fun Night or Game Night — Charades or Twister, anyone? — without distractions, arguing or nagging. Why not create a new holiday tradition?

Wolk's book *"Girls Just Want to Have Likes: How to Raise Confident Girls in the Face of Social Media Madness"* (Morgan James Publishing) is available on Amazon.com.

Tammy Scileppi is a Queens-based parent and regular contributor to *New York Parenting*.



How to have truly happier holidays

December is supposed to be a time of celebration. There are endless holiday parties, presents, and excitement in the air.

For many families, it ends up feeling like chaos, endless stress, and increased frustration. There are too many desserts, so your kids are bouncing off the walls. Family gatherings just stress you out, because everyone has an opinion about your parenting.

Do the holidays different this year. Come armed with a behavior toolkit to put the happy back into your holidays.

Here is what goes into your toolkit:

Some honey

Not literal honey, figurative honey. Did you know that you catch more bees with honey than with vinegar?

Every morning, before your family runs in different directions all over the city, tell everyone why you love them. Do it individually and specifically.

To your daughter, say, "I love you, because you got dressed the first time I asked you today." To your son, say, "I love you, because you tell amazing jokes." To

your partner say, "I love you, because you made the coffee this morning."

Show up prepared to speak with purpose

If you know your family will comment on your parenting, think of a few responses that you can quickly use in a pinch, like, "Thank you. I see how much you care" or "Hmm, that is an interesting perspective."

It may be new for you to just say "thank you" to criticism. It does not mean you will take their advice. It does not mean you agree with their advice. It just means that you are not going to argue with them about your parenting.

Be proactive within your immediate family

When changes happen to your normal routine, talk to your kids about it. Share with them what is happening before they ask you about it. If there is a different set of rules for a night (later bedtime or more screen time), let them know that it is happening and that it is a treat. Transparency is key to successful parenting.



BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

Know the power of your actions

There is a reason in Hollywood they say, "Ready, Set, Action."

It is the action where the magic happens. What you do is the special ingredient in your toolkit that brings everything together.

Your kids are watching your moves and learning from your actions. Your family members are, too. Whatever you say is going to happen, make sure it does. If you tell your little ones you will be there in five minutes, make sure you go. If you say you will play a game together, get that game started right away. Actions are where listening skills are built, especially during super busy holiday times.

Now you are all set to have Happy Holidays!

Looking for more tips like this? Get Dr. Marcie's new book "Love Your Family Again," available on Amazon. Dr. Marcie Beigel is an international speaker and trainer of behavior. She brings realistic ideas to real life behavior that results in lasting change for families, schools, businesses, and relationships. Since 1998, she has worked with more than 5,867 people and is the founder of Behavior and Beyond, a company dedicated to behavior change. She teaches Behavior Boot Camps and Boosts as live events and online, does educational trainings, and consults individuals.

Dr. Marcie Beigel is a behavior specialist based in Brooklyn with more than 20 years of experience. Her book "Love Your Classroom Again" is a bestseller. Find out more at DrMarcie.com.



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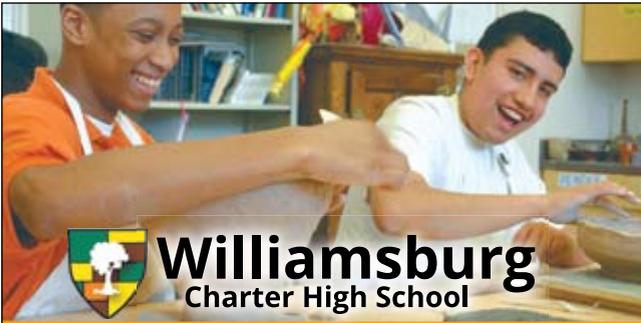
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THE ARTS

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Williamsburg Charter High School

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Upcoming Open Houses:

Saturday, January 6, 2018 at 11am

Saturday, February 3, 2018 at 11am

Saturday, March 3, 2018 at 11am

Saturday, May 12, 2018 at 11am

**Currently Accepting Students
in all grades for 2017-18**

**Now Accepting Applications
for 2018-19 Grades 9-12**

APPLY NOW!

Please call 347-217-6995 or email Dpierre@thewcs.org

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Estamos aceptando estudiantes en grados 9-12
para el 2017-2018

Por favor llame al (347) 217-6995 o mande un email
a dpierre@thewcs.org

Williamsburg Charter High School
198 Varet Street • Brooklyn, NY 11206
347-217-6995 • www.thewcs.org

Mid-Year Education

DIRECTORY

Brooklyn Urban Garden Charter School

Windsor Terrace
500 19th St., 718-280-9556
info@BUGSbrooklyn.org www.bugsbrooklyn.org

BUGS is a free community-based public charter school where students study the natural and social environment across all subjects, using a hands-on, inquiry-based approach. Students of all backgrounds and abilities are welcome. Students gain strong academic skills, enjoy a safe, welcoming, and respectful school climate that supports all learners and teachers collaborate regularly to create interdisciplinary projects. Our mission is to provide a hands-on, interdisciplinary education to young adolescents of all abilities and backgrounds, with a focus on real-world problem solving and the exploration of environmental sustainability. Our students will excel in the core academic subjects and become engaged community members who are critical thinkers prepared to achieve excellence in high school and beyond.

The Co-op School

Elementary School:
40 Brevoort Pl., 718-576-6470
Preschool:
87 Irving Place, 347-721-3408
thecoopschool.org
Bedford Stuyvesant

Founded in 2003, we are an independent pre- and elementary school. Our focus on inquiry-based learning, where children ask questions and find their own answers, builds confidence and a love of learning. The school uses a cooperative model to keep costs down and be accessible for all families. Expansion through middle school will be complete in 2020. Our students come from diverse economic, racial, ethnic and family structured backgrounds. Honoring difference and promoting understanding of varied viewpoints is imperative and ongoing. We are committed to anti-bias teaching, which for young children is as much about precluding the formation of biases as it is disproving their myths. The joy of self-directed learning and a practice of reflection together nurture and activate students and their families to create an equitable world.

Our Core Values: Compassion, Uniqueness, Innovation, Community Action and Joy

Dillon Child Study Center @ St Joseph's College

Clinton Hill, 239 Vanderbilt Ave.
718-940-5678, sstrautcollard@sjcny.edu, dillon.sjcny.edu

The laboratory preschool of St. Joseph's College offers half- and full-day, mixed-age programming for 2-5 year olds based on the child development approach. Each child's development is fostered in all areas – physical, social, intellectual, and emotional – as he or she follows a unique pattern in the predictable sequence of growth. During the critical early childhood years, children learn to become secure, confident, self-directed persons who can understand their world through activities involving focused attention, observation, exploration, problem solving and cooperative action. The Dillon Center has spacious and sun-filled classrooms, as well as a large, grassy area where the children play and ride tricycles. When you visit, you won't want to leave!

LePort Montessori School

Cobble Hill
292 Court St., 718-340-3550
www.leportschools.com/bk

Offering part-time and full-time Montessori programs for infants, toddlers, and preschool, as well as a Spanish Immersion option. Children are guided at every stage of development to gain the essential knowledge, thinking skills, and strength of character necessary to flourish as joyous children today, and as successful adults tomorrow. Our unique program emphasizes the relationship between the academically challenging material presented in the classroom, and the breadth of experiences children have in their lives outside of the classroom. With the wealth of knowledge they gain at LePort, students are able to understand and delight in both the wondrous world around them and their burgeoning personal identity within.

Midwood Montessori
2825 Bedford Avenue at
Glenwood Rd, 718-253-3242

Continued on page 16

dill  n
child study center at St. Joseph's College



OPEN HOUSE TOURS FOR 2018-2019

Dec. 15 • Jan. 19 • Feb. 26 • Mar. 16
Reservations required (call 718-940-5678)

PROGRAMS

- * Parents with toddlers program (walking to 28 months)
- * Drop-in program (walking to 28 months)
- * Mixed-age half-day (8:30-11:30am) and full-day (8:30am-3pm) sessions for children aged 2 through 5
- * Inclusive classroom for children aged 2.9 through 5
- * In-class specials: Gymstars, Music for Brooklyn and Construction Kids
- * After-school program (3-5pm or 3-6pm)

ALL TEACHERS ARE NEW YORK STATE CERTIFIED IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
239 Vanderbilt Ave • Brooklyn, NY • 718.940.5678 • sjcny.edu/Dillon
Questions? Contact our director **SUSAN STRAUT COLLARD**
at sstraucollard@sjcny.edu.



RIVENDELL SCHOOL

Rivendell School provides a warm, creative environment where children develop independence, respect for each other, and a lifelong love of learning.



An inclusive Montessori school for children 2-6 serving the Park Slope/Gowanus community for forty years

277 3rd Ave. (bet. Carroll & President Streets)
718-499-5667

<http://www.rivendellnyc.org/admissions.html>

Independence breeds confidence and happiness.

“I did it” is the refrain of the toddler years. It’s a time when children are insistently eager to become independent.

In Montessori, we make it easy for children to develop real self confidence and the can-do attitude they need to joyfully conquer their world.

Discover how LePort Montessori enables children to thrive as confident, happy young people.

leport.com/go/independence



INFANT • TODDLER • PRESCHOOL • KINDERGARTEN • SPANISH IMMERSION OPTION

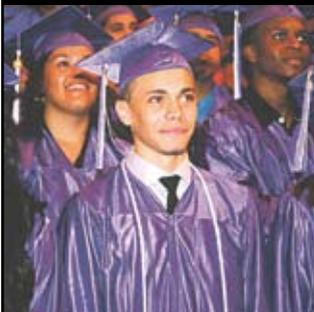
NORTHSIDE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL BROOKLYN



424 Leonard Street, Brooklyn, NY 11222

www.northsidechs.org

Currently Accepting Applications for the 2018-19 School Year



NCHS in the Greenpoint/North Williamsburg area is a college-ready school with digital, dramatic, and studio arts as well as championship athletics. At Northside, we prep for life.

UPCOMING OPEN HOUSE DATES

December 16th 10 am - 12 pm

January 27th 10 am - 12 pm

February 10th 10 am - 12 pm

March 17th 10 am - 12 pm

RSVP mtorres@northsidechs.org

Lottery date is March 23rd, 2018 6 pm.

To apply online: nschs.schoolmint.net

Mid-Year Education

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 14
midwoodmontessori.com

A private pre-school and kindergarten founded in 1983. The school has welcomed students ages 2.9 – 6 years of age for over 30 years providing a rich Montessori curriculum in a beautiful and charming Tudor "children's house". Optional are morning, afternoon, and full-day preschool and Kindergarten classes, as well as early bird drop off, and a fun summer session! Centrally located and very near Brooklyn College, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, and Midwood High School.

Northside Charter High School (NCHS)

Williamsburg
424 Leonard St., 347-390-1273
www.northsidechs.org

This four-year charter high school has a small community of learners who achieve big results. These include mastery of NYS Learning Standards, high school graduation, and acceptance to first choice colleges and universities. This is done by executing unique programs and enriching experiences for the students. The extended day schedule prepares students for college and beyond by creating a balance of scholastic and extracurricular programs. NYS Regents Diplomas and Advanced Regents Diplomas are offered as well as Advanced Placement Courses for college credit. A wide variety of clubs, competitive sports and activities enrich the students' experience and deepen their friendships. The NCHS Mentor Program is another way students are guided to successful outcomes. All staff members mentor a student. They create positive relationships while respecting students' individuality. Students are supported through academic and social/emotional challenges and are kept engaged and motivated to reach their goals.

PS 54 – The Magnet School for Environmental Science, Technology and Community Wellness
Bedstuy, 195 Sanford St.
apiro@magnetschool54.org

Under the leadership of Principal Anthony Pirro, the PS 54 Magnet School

for Environmental Science, Technology and Community Wellness is committed to 21st century teaching and learning through an active STEM project-based learning curriculum. Our small urban school reaches beyond just providing differentiated and individualized instruction to meet the needs of each child in the classroom. Through our partnerships with The Materials for the Arts, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, The Leadership Project and others, we are committed to providing opportunities for our students that present real world explorations and discoveries. Our role as educators at PS 54 is to cultivate students to grow into the visionaries of the future. Please contact us at if you have any questions.

P.S. 120
Williamsburg
18 Beaver St., 718-443-9402

Our school is an elementary Magnet School of Architecture, Engineering, and Design. We focus on education through S.T.E.A.M. All students at P.S. 120 engage in activities that relate to finding solutions to real world problems through project-based learning. Students' learning is enhanced with partnerships from the engineering field such as The Beam Center, Engineering is Elementary, LEGO Robotics, and Project Green Reach. Pre-K through 5th grade students utilize state of the art technology such as laser cutters, 3D printers, a S.T.E.A.M. Lab, Technology Labs, SMART Tables, and SMART Boards. Our goal is that all students leave P.S. 120 with the necessary skills to prepare them to be life-long learners with knowledge of careers in a variety of fields.

PS 123K The Suydam Magnet School for STEAM

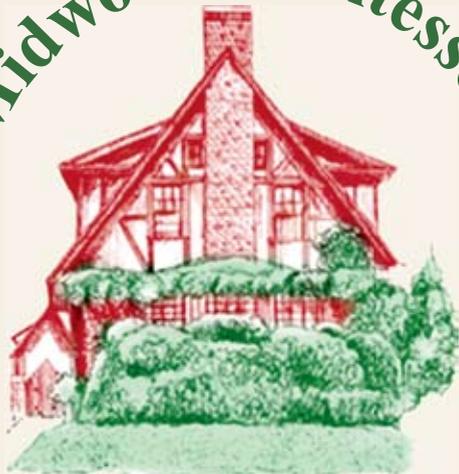
Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics

Bushwick
100 Irving Ave., 718-821-4810
www.ps123k.com

A learning community dedicated to fostering ethical, caring, self-reflective and critical thinkers with a life-long love

Continued on page 18

Midwood Montessori



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Summer Program
Transportation Available

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Brooklyn, New York 11210
www.midwoodmontessori.com



BROOKLYN URBAN GARDEN CHARTER SCHOOL

A free public middle school focused on real-world, science, math, sustainability & successful high school admissions

OPEN HOUSE & TOUR: FEBRUARY 6TH, 2018

5:30 – 6:30 or 6:30 – 7:30

500 19th St., Windsor Terrace, Brooklyn, 718-280-9556

APPLY NOW! 现在申请 APLICA YA اذق اذق ПРИМЕНИТЬ СЕЙЧАС

Untangling Middle School Parenting, Dec. 5th, 2017 6:30pm-8:30pm

*For ticket information, visit our website for more information

WWW.BUGSBROOKLYN.ORG

Non-Discrimination Statement: The Brooklyn Urban Garden Charter School does not discriminate against or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including the basis of race, creed, national origin, religion or ancestry, ethnicity, gender, disability, intellectual ability, achievement or aptitude or athletic ability. A charter school may not require any action by student or family (such as admissions test, interview, essay, attendance at an information session, etc.) in order for an applicant to either receive or submit an application for admissions to that school.

PUBLIC SCHOOL 120

The Magnet School of
Architecture, Engineering and Design

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INNOVATIVE AND INSPIRING
SCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD?

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE A LOVE FOR
S.T.E.M. AND EXPLORATION?

OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULE

December 14th, 2017 9:00am
January 4th, 2017 9:00am
January 18th, 2017 9:00am

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INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL TOURS
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

For additional information, give us a call at (718) 455-1000

Address: 18 Beaver Street Brooklyn, NY 11206 Website: www.PS120K.org

Mid-Year Education

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 16

for learning. Relationships and communication between adults and students are at the core of our community. Our school celebrates the diversity of all its members, supports their different learning styles, and encourages them to express their individuality and pursue their interests. PS 123 is a place for children (...and adults) to discover and feel confident about who they are, build healthy relationships with adults and peers, and investigate their questions about the world in a safe, nurturing and academically rigorous environment. This community aims to cultivate a love of learning in all its members.

Rivendell School

Park Slope/Gowanus
277 Third Avenue
718-499-5667, ext. 14
www.rivendellnyc.org

A pre-primary Montessori school, opened in September 1977 with twenty-five students and was called The Children's House of Park Slope. In 1998, it became part of Rivendell School as its model inclusion setting. Rivendell believes that learning to get along with a wide range of people and accepting and respecting their differences has lasting benefits for everyone. This approach shapes our firm commitment to each other and to Montessori education. Our preschool classrooms typically include children with a variety of learning styles and abilities. Students discover materials especially designed for their levels of readiness and maturity in a warm, creative atmosphere. Our Montessori teachers, along with the special education itinerant teachers and therapists who help children with identified special needs, provide a rich, inclusive community for all the children, for each other, and for parents.

Science, Language & Arts International School

718-636-3836 Main Campus:
Downtown Brooklyn
Early Childhood Annex (ages 2-4): Carroll Gardens
www.slaschool.org/admissions
info@slaschool.org

SLA's immersion programs are French: Nursery (age 2) through Grade 6, expanding to grade 8

by 2020 and Mandarin: Nursery (age 2) through Pre-K, expanding to grade 8 by 2028. Our model is based on the hands-on integration of science with visual arts, foreign language, and math. Children learn in an intimate setting with teachers trained in a revolutionary conversational approach. Its project-based, science-fueled interdisciplinary focus allows children to make connections among all areas of learning. Through hands-on exploration and experimentation, students develop critical thinking skills by questioning, observing, and drawing their observations. Upcoming information sessions: December 1st at 9 A.M. and December 5th at 6:45 P.M.

Stepping Stones Nursery School

Bay Ridge
245 86th Street 718-630-1000
9321 Ridge Blvd 718-630-1001
www.steppingstones86.com

Founded in 2002 by two NYC Public School teachers, our high quality early childhood facilities service preschoolers ages 2-5, with 2 locations. Both locations are a community that we like to call "Family" all of the students are loved and cared for by their dedicated nurturing teachers. All teachers are highly qualified in early childhood education and meet the requirements of the NYC Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene. Classes for two, three and four year olds are offered with a choice of full- or half-day programs. Open 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. An After-school Program is available for Pre-K-5th grade with free pick-up service from PS 185 and DGK Holy Cross.

Williamsburg Charter High School

Williamsburg
198 Varet St., 347-217-6995
admissions@thewcs.org
www.thewcs.org

WCHS unites youth, families, staff, teachers and the community at large in providing young people with the tools necessary to make sense of the world and prepares them in their journey to become skilled workers in and literate citizens of the world community. Students will accomplish this through their participation in a rigorous and demanding liberal arts education that includes language, literature,

writing, science, history, mathematics, the arts, technology and explorations in disciplines designed to teach fairness, justice, respect and compassion for themselves and others as well as the skills of critical thinking, communication and research.

The Williamsburg Neighborhood Nursery School

Williamsburg
54 South 2nd St., 718-782-4181
wnns.org, info@wnns.org

Our school was founded on the belief that a good early childhood program should provide children and their families with a bridge between the worlds of home and school. The nursery school environment must be both structured and nurturing; it must combine the safety and comfort of home with the social and intellectual stimulation of school. Our curriculum is firmly based in the ideals of Progressive education. As such the program is play-based, child centered, and focused on social-emotional growth. Our school provides a educational experience that is carefully structured, yet also allows the children to explore the school world at their own pace and in their own way.

It is this combination of structure and freedom that encourages the children's spontaneous curiosity and introduces them to the joys of learning.

Windmill Montessori School

Sheepshead Bay, 1317 Ave. T,
718-375-7973 or 718-375-4277
windmillmontessorischool.org

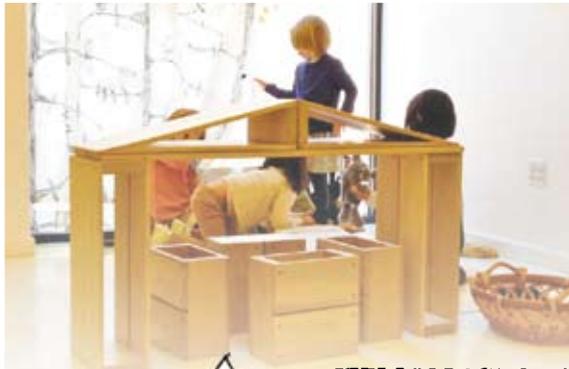
Founded in 1941, WMS proudly celebrates more than 75 years of serving our community as a peaceful place to learn, with an environment that encourages your child to progress at his/her own pace. The family-oriented Montessori method nurtures students in grades Pre-k to 8th, emotionally and academically, promoting a sense of purpose, a love of learning and civility. Small classes meet the students' individual needs. Curriculum-based trips, from puppet shows to museums, culminate in JHS overnights "Learning About History By Living It," with trips to Boston, Gettysburg and Williamsburg, VA; and "Meeting Our Lawmakers" in Albany and Washington, D.C. French, yoga, phys. ed., music, art, and computer skills enliven the school day. We also offer an After School program.

P.S. 54
The Magnet School
for Environmental
Science, Technology
& Community
Wellness

**Seats still available
for grades PreK-5**

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If you would like
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We are accepting students
on each grade level.

195 Sandford Street, Brooklyn, NY 11205
718-834-6752
MagnetSchool54.org



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NEIGHBORHOOD
NURSERY SCHOOL**

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Serving families and children since 1999.

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Applications are available on our website.

The Williamsburg Neighborhood Nursery School
Ages 2-4
54 South Second St., Brooklyn, NY 11249 • wnnns.org
(718) 782-4181 • info@wnns.org

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stepping stones

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- Two Year Old Classes
- Three Year Old Classes
- Four Year Old Classes

After School Programs

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5th grade

Full and Half Day Programs Available

School Session: September – June
Summer Session: July – August



Open House

Sunday, October 22nd at 11am
at 245 86th Street

Stepping Stones

245 86 St. • Brooklyn, NY 11209 p. 718-630-1000 • f. 718-630-1446

The Next Step

9321 ridge boulevard • brooklyn, ny 11209 • p. 718-630-1001

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A PEACEFUL PLACE TO LEARN SINCE 1941



Windmill's environment encourages children to :

- learn naturally at their own pace
- reach their natural potential
- find and develop their own interests
- get the individual attention needed to thrive
- develop interrelationships, community and leadership skills, and promote understanding

Our Montessori curriculum and environment encompasses:

- The Montessori Method, language, humanities, culture, geography, mathematics, sciences, technology, and computers
- French, Yoga, Music, Art

718-375-7973 ★ 718-375-4277

admissions@windmotsch.org | www.windmotsch.org
follow us on Facebook and Twitter

Windmill is non-sectarian. Licensed by The New York City Department of Health
Affiliated with The American Montessori Society

1317 Avenue T @ East 14th Street Brooklyn, NY 11229

OPEN HOUSE
Wed., Dec. 6th
Mon., Dec. 18th
Thurs., Jan. 11th
Wed., Jan. 24th
9-10:30am

Year-end tax tips

Five ways to save money this season

The end of the year is always a happy time for most people. Holiday parties, family gatherings, a slower time at the office. With a little planning and action now, you'll be able to enjoy all those parties without worrying about financial items on New Year's Eve. Below is a list of what to look:

Review your 401(k) contributions: If you participate in a 401(k), the maximum contribution limit this year is \$18,000; if you're age 50 and older the maximum contribution is \$24,000. You can contribute up to the limit until Dec. 31. If you want to contribute more money to your 401(k) you'll need to contact your company's payroll department and ask what steps are needed to increase your deduction starting with your next paycheck. If your employer allows a lump sum contribution you may want to redirect some or all your year-end bonus into your 401(k).

Take your required minimum distributions: Once you reach age 70-and-a-half you are required to take a distribution from your IRA, 401(k), and other types of retirement plans by Dec. 31 (except for the year you turn 70-and-a-half, when you're given an extension until April 1 to make your first withdrawal.) However, you don't need to take payment from your current employer's 401(k) while you're still working. Penalties are quite large if you miss the deadline — the amount not withdrawn is subject to a 50 percent excise tax. If you haven't taken your required payment yet, contact your financial advisor or 401(k) administrator and take the distribution before the deadline. Also, owners of IRA accounts over age 70-and-a-half can make contributions directly to charity from their IRA. This is a powerful planning tool because it allows taxpayers to make charitable contributions (up to the \$100,000) from their IRAs directly to a charity and to exclude that amount from income. Remember, no taxes will be paid on the distribution, and the income tax charitable deduction is not permitted for this amount.

Make the most tax-effective charitable gifts: Making a gift before the end of the year can increase deductions if



you itemize your deductions. Consider gifting highly appreciated stock instead of selling the stock and donating cash. If highly appreciated stock is donated, you get a deduction for the full value of the contributed stock but avoid paying capital-gains taxes on the increase in value since you've owned it.

Check the deadline for withdrawals from your flexible spending account: Many flexible spending sponsors require people to spend all the funds in their account by Dec. 31 or forfeit whatever money wasn't spent. So check to see if there is a balance in the account before the end of the year and make that doctor or dentist appointment, or buy those new glasses you may have been putting off. Flexible spending funds can also be used for many over-the-counter items like contact lens solution, pain relievers, diaper cream, medical devices like walkers and wheelchairs, and a host of other items. Under IRS rules, an employer may offer participating employees more time through either the carryover option or the grace period option to spend their funds. Under the carryover option, an employee can carry over up to \$500 of unused funds to the following plan



FAMILY FINANCIAL PLANNING

ANTHONY N. CORRAO

year — for example, an employee with \$500 of unspent funds at the end of 2017 would still have those funds available to use in 2018. Under the grace period option, an employee has until two-and-a-half months after the end of the plan year to incur eligible expenses — for example, March 15, 2018, for a plan year ending on Dec. 31, 2017. Remember, employers can offer either option, but not both, or none at all.

Contribute to a 529 college-savings plan: For most people, 529 accounts are an excellent strategy to save for college tuition. They allow the beneficiary of the account can use the money tax-free for college tuition, room and board, and fees. In some states a state income tax deduction is available for your contribution. Most states require the contribution be made by Dec. 31 in order to get the state tax deduction.

A little year-end planning could put you on the path towards solid retirement and college planning and might help you save on your taxes. Take a few minutes to review your financial plan before the end of the year to see if you can take advantage of any of these year-end strategies.

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. He can be found at www.corraoown.com.

Securities offered through First Allied Securities Inc., A Registered Broker Dealer. Member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory services offered through First Allied Advisory Services, A Registered Investment Adviser.



Breakfast & Bowling with Santa!

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- RENTAL SHOES
 - BREAKFAST BUFFET
 - PHOTO WITH SANTA

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9am to 12pm

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- BALLOON CENTERPIECE
- INVITATIONS & PAPER GOODS
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Holiday joy is fur everyone

When I was a child, my sister and I hung up our Christmas stockings on the same wooden doorway in the dining room each year. Once our stockings were up, we'd place our dogs' stockings right next to them. The glitter, the glue, and the mess were all part of the fun. I continued the tradition with my own kids, so we hang our Mom and Dad stockings next to our daughters' and son's stockings, and then we begin the process of hanging the pets' stockings.

If you walk into our living room in December, you'll see close to 10 stockings in total and you might have thought we have an enormous family. Well, I guess we do, if you count our furry members.

It's a little bit of extra effort in a home where Santa comes to all the children and pets. Many late Christmas Eves throughout the years have been spent filling stockings with goodies, including toys, rawhides, and catnip. It has always been well worth the work, partly because many Christmas mornings were spent speculating what Django and Hayley thought of Santa since they were really the only ones in the house

who knew for sure what he looked like in person. And then the kids would be off to inspect the stockings to see what Santa left behind. The joy on the children's faces was always a delight, and I hope it is a lasting memory that they will keep and share with their own children one day.

Django was the last pet to get her own stocking after we adopted her seven years ago. We excitedly made room on the wall for our new pup just as I recalled making a new stocking for each child and furry family member throughout the years. Our dogs may not talk, but they certainly provide comfort and love to all of us.

This summer, we had to say goodbye to Hayley, the sweetest pup on earth. Here we thought we were changing her life when we rescued the little, abused Chihuahua 10 years ago, only to find out, she changed our lives exponentially. It's going to hurt when we take her stocking out of the Christmas storage box. Just last year, we were taking funny Christmas photos with her. There isn't a day that goes by that we don't miss her.

Our dogs are a definite part of our fam-



JUST WRITE MOM
DANIELLE SULLIVAN

ily. We would be a different family without them. Yes, we'd have less fur and chores, but we'd also have a whole lot less love.

Wishing you and your family (human and furry) a wonderful and warm holiday season!

Danielle Sullivan is a writer living in New York City. Follow her on Instagram @Deewrite.

The Preparatory Center for the Performing Arts

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Theater & Dance
Ages 3 to Adult

www.BCPrepCenter.org

718-951-4111

2900 Bedford Avenue

234 Roosevelt Hall

Brookln, NY 11210

Brooklyn College

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Ho, ho, Hanukkah

Tips on celebrating both Hanukkah and Christmas

BY CHRISTINA KATZ

You don't have to be an interfaith family to celebrate both Hanukkah and Christmas each year. Any family can choose to celebrate whichever holiday traditions they wish. Holiday joy can be doubled, rather than halved, when you choose to light the menorah and decorate the Christmas tree to honor the cultural and religious traditions of both parents.

So forget the "December Dilemma." When it comes to religion, families increasingly run the Judeo-Christian gamut. In our family, we have Orthodox Jews on one side of the family tree and born-again Christians on the other side. But my husband and I both share the same beliefs about diversity, tolerance, and spirituality. And that's what we intend to pass on to our daughter.

As a woman who was raised Catholic and has been happily married to a Jewish man for the past 13 years, I can attest that once you become a parent in an interfaith family, you quickly become accustomed to not being able to please everyone. But since the wisdom of your hearts brought you and your partner together in the first place, why not call on that same source of wisdom to guide you through creating your own version of happy holidays?

Here are a few tips based on what our family has learned from holding the middle ground over the years:

Talk to each other first and last

The bottom line on family celebrations, holiday or otherwise, is to always do whatever you and your spouse deem best for your family. The only way to come to an understanding about what this means is to discuss it with each other first and last.

Be prepared for this to be an ongoing conversation, and probably one that you revisit each year.

Protect your joint point of view

Never let bossy or opinionated family members horn in on conversations that



rightly belong between you and your partner. You only have one spouse, and that's the person whose opinion you should value most. Your kids come next, and the grandparents after them.

Don't treat your parents like children or allow them to treat you like a child. This behavior will only create conflicts between you and your spouse.

Ignore disapproving outsiders

Never apologize for being an interfaith

family, even if people in your extended family or circle of close friends do not approve of your union. You are not seeking their permission — as Perchick expressed so boldly in "Fiddler On The Roof" — you are asking for their blessing.

Creating harmonious and joyful dual holidays in your own home is your parental right and your familial duty, even if it means agreeing to disagree with certain members of your extended family.

Stick to separate but equal

Christmas may be more common and commercial than Hanukkah, but don't let that trump your holiday fun. The nice thing about Hanukkah is that it lasts for eight nights. Light the menorah candles and say the Hanukkah prayer every night, if you possibly can. You may be amazed at how moving and inspiring such simple rituals can be, even on busy school nights.

Look for the quieter, more awe-inspiring moments in Christmas as well, such as ending the day admiring the beauty of the decorated tree and window lights.

Keep both sets of traditions

At our house, we celebrate as much of both traditions as we can, without a worry about whether the holidays overlap or not. For me, this means the

Christmas tree, the presents, the cookies, the big dinner. For my husband this means lighting two menorahs for eight nights (one for him and one for my daughter), having our daughter's friends over for potato latkes, and some lively dreidel games.

Don't double your gift budget

We make an effort to celebrate the bounty of two holidays without going overboard. If you are an interfaith family, your kids' friends may consider them "lucky" because they assume that they get double the gifts every holiday season. However, that's not necessarily the case at our house.

Our daughter typically gets a little present on the first day of Hanukkah and a bigger present on the last day of Hanukkah. One set of grandparents send a couple of

little Hanukkah gifts and a check and the other sends a couple of stocking stuffers and a check. The amount of gifts she receives is essentially the same as it would be if we only celebrated one holiday.

Share the love

Another thing we enjoy about dual holidays is that our daughter can share traditions about both holidays with her friends, no matter what religion they follow, exposing them to a culture they may not have had the opportunity to learn about.

Participate wisely

When invited to join a new or old tradition on either side of the family, give the ritual a chance. We will try just about anything once. But we reserve the right to say “no” to pressure or anything that makes us uncomfortable.

Maintaining an atmosphere where you can say “yes” or “no” to your parents without stern chastisement may not come easily in your extended family system. But start trying it, or you’ll never get there.

Honor the choices of others

We don’t try to protect our family members from our choices. They need to be exposed to what we value, if we expect them

Fun holiday family reads

Hanukkah:

“Hanukkah!” by Roni Schotter and Marilyn Hafner

“Lots Of Latkes, A Hanukkah Story” by Sandy Lanton and Vicki Jo Redenbaugh

“When Mindy Saved Hanukkah” by Eric Kimmel

“It’s A Miracle! A Hanukkah Story-book” by Stephanie Spinner and Jill McElmurry

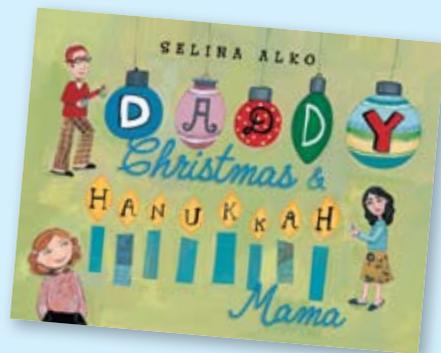
Christmas:

“The Christmas Story” by Jane Werner Watson and Eloise Wilkin

“’Twas The Night Before Christmas or Account Of A Visit From St. Nicholas” by Clement Clarke Moore

“How The Grinch Stole Christmas” by Dr. Seuss

“The Polar Express” by Chris Van Allsburg



Celebrating both:

“My Two Holidays, A Hanukkah and Christmas Story” by Danielle Novack and Phyllis Harris

“Light The Lights, A Story About Celebrating Hanukkah And Christmas” by Margaret Moorman

“Daddy Christmas and Hanukkah Mama” by Selina Alko

to understand and accept our choices. However, we also try to respect the choices that each of our family members make without imposing our life choices on them. The Jewish families get Happy Hanukkah cards and the Christian families get Christmas cards. When we cross over,

we go with “Happy Holidays.”

Author, journalist, and writing coach Christina Katz loves celebrating the winter holidays with her family and friends. Each year her family enjoys exchanging ornaments for the tree and inviting a new group of friends over to play the dreidel game and enjoy potato latkes.

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Mom, learn to say 'No' and mean it!

I have always been conscientious. I would prepare for everything and anything my kids might need starting at their birth. If they needed a cool drink, fresh diaper, or toy to keep them occupied, you could find that in my diaper bag. Of course, you'd also find a new set of clothes, some Tylenol, an extra bib, blanket, rattle, and snack. And you also might find a few headache pills for me, every credit card and medical card I owned, a list of things I had to do when I got back home, and a bottle of water in case the train got stuck between stops.

I almost never used any of these back-up objects.

Preparing for going out was combined with daily preparations inside the home, too. Schedule doctor visits, pay the bills, make that consultation with the new accountant, take our dogs to the vet, not to mention the laundry, dishes, feedings, etc.

I had been trying to do everything all at the same time, not let anything slip through the cracks, and control it all. Only I couldn't. No one can. None of us can do it

by ourselves, but I was not accustomed to asking for help. And each "Yes" I agreed to only fueled and heightened my anxiety.

It was the exact worst thing I could have done. I ended up feeling stressed, exhausted, and resentful.

Along the way, I slowly learned how to not do it all, and you can, too. It is especially important during this time of moms repeatedly over-extending themselves in order to make the holidays happen, and turn out happy for everyone (but themselves!).

It all begins with baby steps.

Recognize what you should stop doing. It might be as simple as checking your child's backpack or searching for your husband's keys. If the family member — child or adult — is fully capable of doing an age-appropriate task himself or herself, it is not your responsibility to do it for them. Kids have to learn consequences (and so do spouses!).

Say "No." How many times can we discuss that we need to start saying "No" and then continue to say "Yes"? It can be very



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

easy once we make up our mind to do it. No, we can't run that bake sale or iron that shirt last minute. No, we can't make that elaborate dinner just because it's your favorite or stay late at work to take on a new task. Don't justify it with a "Well, I actually can if I juggle this and that and stay up late." Yes, perhaps — technically — we can get the given request done, but what will it cost when we have? Will it make you a cranky and resentful mom and spouse? Then "No, I'm sorry, I can't do that today" is perfectly acceptable.

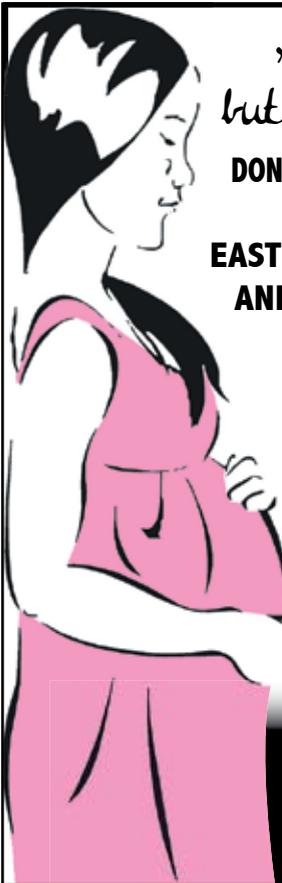
Remember that no detailed explanation is needed. A simple, "No, I'm sorry. I can't do that" is sufficient. We don't need to explain ourselves away. That short phrase is simple, respectful, and to the point.

Set aside time to recharge. Busy moms need to schedule relaxation time the same way you would a doctor's appointment. Without regular leisure and downtime, you will run out of steam fast ... and then how well will you take care of your family?

Make your weekly commitments a group effort. Spouses and children alike need to participate in the functioning of the family unit, so not all household tasks fall on mom. Create a weekly schedule together to help keep family members on point.

Remember that you are a full person who has needs that have nothing to do with your family, your job, or your friends. Taking time for yourself is an act of self-love (and makes you a wonderful role model for your kids), and only when you care for yourself, can you fully care for the people in your life.

Danielle Sullivan is a writer living in New York City. Follow her on Instagram @Deewrite.



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Gift guide

Presents to delight children of all ages

BY LISA J. CURTIS



Feline fine

Fur Real Roarin' Tyler is a wide-eyed tiger that responds to a child's voice and touch with more than 100 sound and motion combinations. Tots won't be able to resist letting this cat out of the (gift) bag, so it can be hugged and cuddled! Tyler comes with a squeaking chicken toy that he also reacts to. For kids ages 4 and older, this battery-operated, tail swishing, ear twitching critter promises to captivate. *Fur Real Roarin' Tyler the Playful Tiger*, \$94.99, www.Target.com.

Multitasking monitor

For newborn babies to 10-year-olds, Urban Hello's money- and space-saving Remi baby monitor actually serves a multitude of functions. With the help of its smartphone app, it's a baby monitor, sleep tracker, sleep trainer, alarm clock, music player, and sweet nightlight. Ooh la la, we love its French design! *Remi baby monitor by Urban Hello*, \$99.99, www.amazon.com.



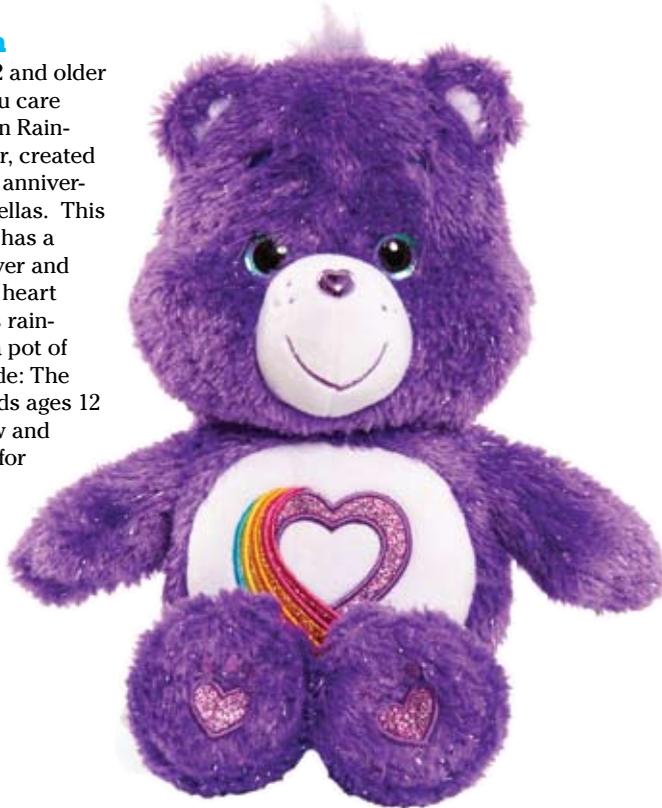
Gear for the A-Team

This military-themed baby carrier from Mission Critical outranks the competition — especially among fathers of infants weighing 8 to 35 pounds. In this carrier, baby can face towards dad or face out and enjoy reconnaissance of the great outdoors. The carrier also has a removable, washable liner and a sun shield. Available in three colors — coyote (pictured), black, or gray — this carrier deserves a medal for style meeting function. *Mission Critical baby carrier*, \$179, www.MissionCritical.cc.



Purple reign

Show that kid ages 2 and older how beary much you care with a limited edition Rainbow Heart Care Bear, created in honor of the 35th anniversary of these furry fellas. This deep purple edition has a pelt flecked with silver and a sparkling rainbow heart on his belly. And its rainbow just may have a pot of gold on the other side: The packaging invites kids ages 12 and younger to draw and submit their design for the next Care Bear for a chance to win \$3,500! *Rainbow Heart Care Bear*, \$24.84, www.walmart.com.



Faux fun

Sweetlings' Frost-A-Friend by Alex Toys includes everything your little pastry chef — ages 6 and older — needs to frost and decorate a cupcake, but without the sugar! In fact, this stocking-stuffer is not edible at all. In lieu of frosting, it includes a tube of whipped clay, a star tip (for professional-looking results), and a plastic cupcake base. After it's frosted, shower Her Majestling with glitter, and use the included tweezers to embellish her with stickers, plastic sprinkles, and, of course, accessories such as a wand, crown, or collar. When the frosting dries, kids can play with their new friend. For more frosting fun, check out the Sweetlings Sprinkle Shop (\$24.99). *Sweetlings Frost-A-Friend HER MAJESTLING* by Alex Toys, \$9.99, www.target.com.



Doodle and design

With the new Dr. Panda Plus Home Designer kit, kids ages 3 to 8 use a dozen dry erase markers to color 51 sturdy, cardboard flashcards featuring home furnishings, walls, and floors. Next, they take a picture of their illustrated flashcard with the app, and their illustrations are imported into their digital playhouse! They can also decorate the clothing of eight characters, including Dr. Panda. *Dr. Panda Plus Home Designer*, \$39.99, www.amazon.com.



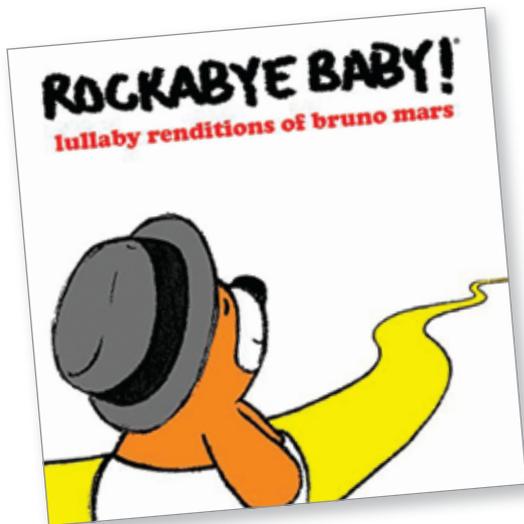
That's the 'Spirit'

Out of the pages of the historical fiction novel "Spirit Riding Free: The Adventure Begins," by Suzanne Selfors (Little Brown and Company), comes this doll and horse set. Inspired by the book's 12-year-old character, Lucky Prescott, and her horse Spirit — which also spawned a series that streams on Netflix, the set includes four carrots that the animal "eats" with battery-operated, whinnying gusto. (Additional accessories include a bucket, canteen, horse blanket, and an excerpt from the book.) Recommended for kids ages 3 and older that adore horses, the Wild West, and irrepressible heroines. *DreamWorks Spirit & Lucky Deluxe Feeding Set*, \$49.99, www.toysrus.com.



Eggciting minis

The Spin Master Hatchimals craze continues this holiday season. These Colleggtibles are an affordable, stocking-size alternative to pricey, full-size Hatchimals Hatching Eggs. First, kids — ages 5 and older — rub the heart on the speckled shell until the color changes, then they press on the shell to hatch the adorable, colorful, inch-high winged creature inside. Choose from seven collections: Cloud Cove, Giggle Grove, Meadow, Farm, Lilac Lake, Jungle, or Savannah. *Hatchimals Colleggtibles 4 pack + Bonus by Spin Master*, \$9.99, www.target.com.



'That's What I Like'

"The Rockabye Baby! Lullaby Renditions of Bruno Mars" album is the perfect stocking stuffer — or shower gift — for expectant parents. Soothing instrumental versions of Mars's hit songs — "Uptown Funk," "24K Magic," "That's What I Like," "Locked Out of Heaven" and much more — are a balm for the soul during those long, early morning hours when baby's awake and mom's feeling blue. *"Rockabye Baby! Lullaby Renditions of Bruno Mars" audio CD*, \$16.98, www.rockabyebabymusic.com.

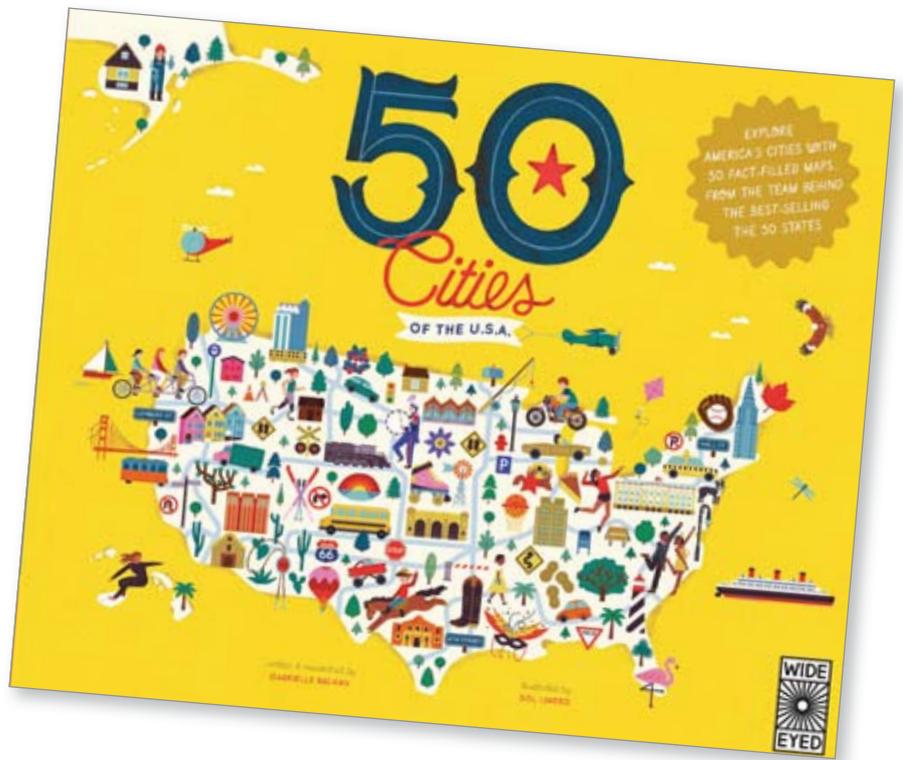


Expecto the entree

Inspired by the wildly popular Harry Potter series of books and films, here is a set of ceramic dishes that will dazzle wizards and muggles alike at your next special meal. Each of the four place settings (which includes a dinner plate, salad plate, bowl, and 12-ounce cup) features the emblem of one of the four Hogwarts houses: Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, and Slytherin. Kids will race to the table to claim the setting featuring their favorite house! The plates and bowls are edged with J.K. Rowling's couplet for each house. For example, "You might belong in Gryffindor, where dwell the brave at heart. Their daring, nerve, and chivalry set Gryffindors apart." All that remains is toasting the new year with a frothy butterbeer. *Harry Potter Hogwarts House 16 Piece Dinner Set*, \$99.99, www.thinkgeek.com.

For the armchair traveler

Savvy city kids will enjoy exploring the pages of “50 Cities of the U.S.A.” written by Brooklyn author Gabrielle Balkan and illustrated by Sol Linero. It stands out for more than just its impressive size (13.4 inches by 11 inches). It’s a densely illustrated book of fun facts that kids of all ages will enjoy poring over for hours. Especially recommended for children in grades 2 to 5, it includes information about our nation’s great cities — from Boston, Massachusetts to Honolulu, Hawaii — as well as sidebars with family-friendly itineraries for how to spend your time in each location. “50 Cities of the U.S.A.” hardcover book by Gabrielle Balkan (Wide Eyed Editions), \$30, www.thriftbooks.com.



Finish first

You couldn’t miss fans of the Entertainment One TV series “PJ Masks” sporting their costumes on Halloween. Now these devotees of the nocturnal pals Catboy, Owlette, and Gekko can enjoy the racecar play set of their dreams. In this set, the Night Ninja bus and Catboy in his Cat-Car zoom along the roadway, dodge pop-up Luna Girl, drive under the bridge, and burst through the museum. Kids set the vehicles in motion with one of two built-in launchers. *PJ Masks Rival Racers Track Playset*, \$39.99, www.toysrus.com.

The eyes have it

The Kid K’Nex Budding Builders Tub building set includes 100 pieces — including googly eyes — to create dozens of creations. Exercising the imaginations and fine motor skills of kids ages 3 and older, the colorful, interlocking K’Nex pieces can later be stored in its sturdy container for easy cleanup. *Kid K’Nex Budding Builders Tub building set*, \$39.95, www.barnesandnoble.com.





Children and sleep apnea

It's winter break and my 7-year-old son has been sleeping in later than usual, but he still seems tired during the day. When I check on him after bedtime at night or early in the morning, he is usually snoring quite loudly. Is this something I should worry about? I don't know if he is just catching up on sleep from his usual school schedule, or if I should be concerned about a sleep disorder.

Sleep apnea is a growing health problem among children. It's estimated that between 1 and 5 percent of children suffer from obstructive sleep apnea. Onset obstructive sleep apnea usually occurs between 2 and 8 years old, which is a period of peak tonsil growth, but the condition can really manifest at any age.

The standard symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea are snoring and witnessed pauses in breathing or periods of shallow breathing during sleep. It's important to know that not all snorers have the sleep disorder. Other symptoms include unusual sleeping positions (like hyperextended neck or seated with open mouth), morning headaches, and excessive daytime sleepiness. In adolescents, this sleepiness is more likely to manifest as depressed mood, poor concentration, decreased attention, or behavioral issues.

Children with obstructive sleep apnea typically have normal weight and body

mass index, but occurrences of obesity-related sleep apnea have been steadily increasing. Recent research has suggested that there is also a strong genetic factor for obstructive sleep apnea.

NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital's Pediatric Sleep Apnea Program works closely with the Hospital's Center for Sleep Disorders to identify children who suffer from obstructive sleep apnea and arrange treatment plans for them.

Children with suspected obstructive sleep apnea should be referred for a sleep apnea test called a polysomnogram, which is typically done in a sleep disorder center. When the patient is sleeping, a PSG records brain activity, eye movements, heart rate, blood pressure, the amount of oxygen in blood, air movement through the nose while breathing, snoring, and chest movements. One parent stays with the child throughout the night during this painless test. A sleep specialist will review the sleep study results to determine if a patient has sleep apnea and how severe it is.

At New York-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital, treatment approaches for obstructive sleep apnea include inpatient and outpatient surgical intervention. Should sleep apnea be diagnosed, by far the most common and effective treatment is continuous positive airway pressure. In severe cases, surgery may be required and



FAMILY HEALTH

DR. PRAMOD NARULA, MD
Chairman of Pediatrics
NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn
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the primary operation is an adenotonsillectomy. This procedure removes both the tonsils and adenoids, which are glands located in the roof of the mouth behind the soft palate where the nose connects to the throat.

Research has linked untreated obstructive sleep apnea in adolescents with lifelong neuro-behavioral problems, decreased attention, disturbed emotional regulation, decreased academic performance, nighttime enuresis, and impaired growth.

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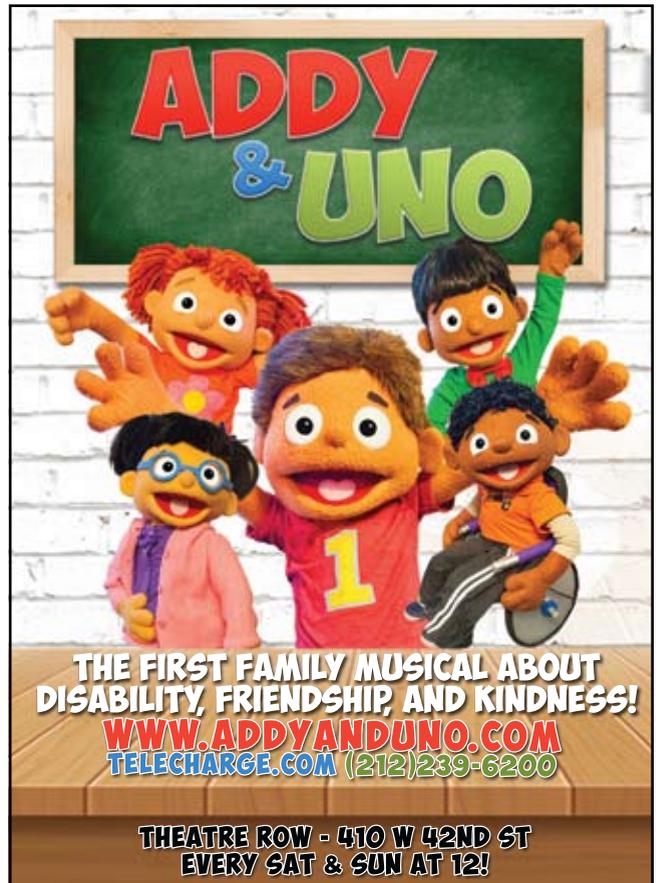
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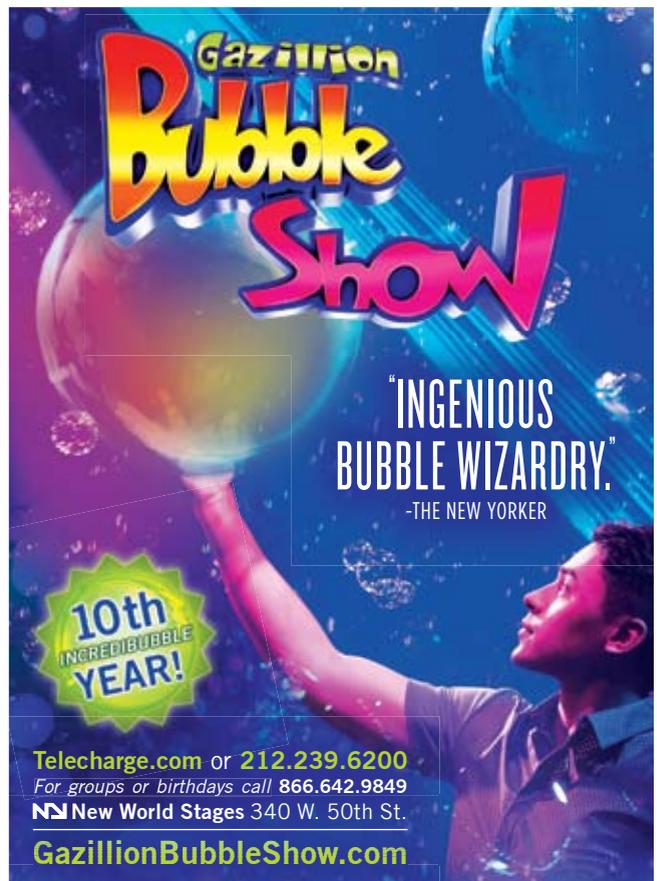
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Let it go...

Writer grudgingly accepts girls' love of princess culture

BY ALLISON PLITT

After remaining silent for years, women have been coming forward recently with stories of sexual discrimination and harassment — and even rape — by some of the most powerful men in this country.

Every day in the news there's testimony from a woman recounting the duress she endured in her job, her home, or a social situation where she felt denigrated, humiliated, or frightened by men. It's a fraught time to be the parent of a daughter.

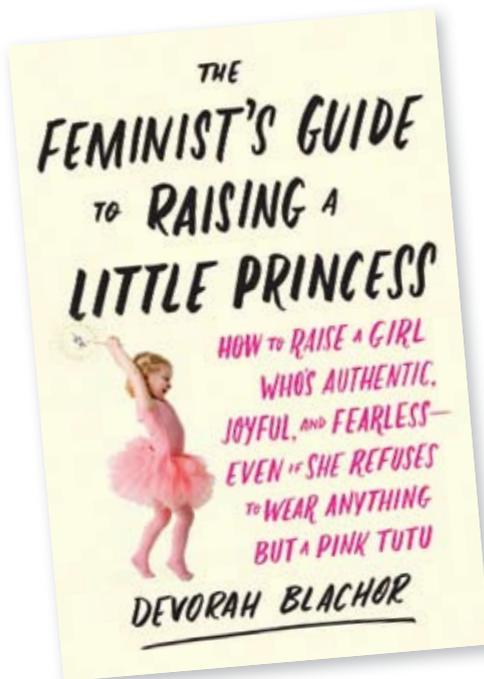
Author and journalist Devorah Blachor's new book, "The Feminist's Guide to Raising a Little Princess: How to Raise a Girl Who's Authentic, Joyful, and Fearless Even If She Refuses to Wear Anything But a Pink Tutu," was published last month by Tarcher-Perigee. In her guide, the self-proclaimed feminist writes of the difficulty she had accepting her daughter playing dress-up in ball gowns and watching Disney princess movies, but Blachor also addresses the innumerable challenges women face in our society.

Blachor herself spent much of her adolescence in passivity waiting for her prince to come. She did not identify with the Disney princesses of her childhood — Snow White, Cinderella, and Sleeping Beauty. Instead, Blachor associated herself with "The Ugly Duckling," a literary creation of Danish author Hans Christian Andersen (who Walt Disney also admired).

Deciding to be a "quiet" person at the age of 13, Blachor resolved that girls who were too loud never got boyfriends. By suppressing her true self, she fell into a deep depression that lasted over a decade.

Blachor left the United States at age 21, when she no longer felt she fit in and moved to Israel. When she still had not entered into a romantic relationship by the age of 25, she actively chose to take medication to help her overcome her depression. She now says she has not regressed into depression thanks to a healthy regimen of diet and exercise.

As she entered the dating world, Blachor learned to let go of the "quiet self" she had created as a child and expose her authentic self to a man whom she



would eventually marry. Abandoning her fears of rejection, Blachor embraced the relationship with her future husband who accepted her for who she really was.

Because of her personal experience with passivity and depression, Blachor became extremely cautious when her daughter, Mari, started emulating the princesses of the Disney empire, which re-ignited itself in 1989 with the release of the film "The Little Mermaid," another Andersen fairy tale.

Mermaid Ariel was soon joined by more assertive princesses from a new group of animated Disney movies in the 1990s — Belle from "Beauty and The Beast;" Jasmine from "Aladdin;" Mulan; Pocahontas; and Tiana from "The Princess and The Frog."

When a Disney executive attended a Disney ice-skating spectacle in 2000 and saw little girls in the audience dressed in their homemade princess costumes, he realized the market for a Disney-princess franchise. By 2012, that franchise had made \$3 billion in global sales.

Constantly hearing comments from strangers about "how cute" or "how adorable" her daughter looks in her Disney princess costumes, Blachor fears these comments will teach her daughter that looks

are more important than other values.

Blachor constantly reminds Mari how beautiful she is inside and out. (She blames the beauty industry for creating an unattainable image of female perfection as women are bombarded by photoshopped, flawless pictures of models selling products.)

Although Blachor secretly wants to throw out all of the Disney princess merchandise her daughter has acquired, she is reminded that parents who try to control their kids end up raising children more apt to be depressed, and later on in adulthood, have difficulty maintaining relationships.

Writing with a humorous edge, Blachor creates a "femtastic" (feminist) fairy godmother who updates all of the antiquated Disney princess tales. Most of the revised stories are funny, but some are quite shocking, as she writes:

- "Old Sleeping Beauty: Once upon a time, Prince Phillip kissed Princess Aurora, who was fast asleep at the time."
- "Femtastic Sleeping Beauty: Once upon a time, Prince Phillip read that one in five American women say they were sexually assaulted in college, including many instances of women being assaulted while they were passed out. So he took the ... pledge, recognizing that non-consensual sex is sexual assault. And they all lived happily ever after."

In 2013, the Disney world changed forever when it released a new princess movie called "Frozen," loosely based on Andersen's tale, "The Snow Queen." (Disney had tried to make "The Snow Queen" into a movie during the 1950s, but the idea was shelved.)

Blachor's unabashed love for "Frozen" stems from the storyline's similarities to her personal struggle to suppress her true self. The movie begins with Princess Elsa as a young child. Elsa finds out she has a power to create ice and snow, but when she hurts her sister, Anna, with it, she is told by her parents to repress it. Elsa spends the rest of her childhood in fear and isolation in her bedroom, rejecting offers from Anna to play together.

When their parents die, Elsa is forced to become the next ruler of the kingdom.



During the coronation ceremony, Elsa's power is unexpectedly revealed. Seeing the looks of horror on the faces of the people in the room, she runs to the mountains and finally unleashes her true self in isolation by creating "a breath-taking, beautiful ice castle," as Blachor describes it.

Anna pursues Elsa, because she loves her sister unconditionally. She now realizes that Elsa had shunned her to protect her from being hurt. It is Anna's belief that her sister can keep her power and still live in their family's castle.

When Elsa is forced to return to the kingdom, a man tries to kill her with a sword, but Anna saves her by blocking her sister with her frozen body. Because of Anna's act of true love, she melts off her ice. The vast freeze over the kingdom melts away as well.

Elsa, who has publicly exposed her authentic self, is now accepted and loved by her people and regains the throne. With a plot about supportive, sisterly love, "Frozen" stands as the highest-grossing animated film of all time.

Determined to find out what really happened to all of the little girls who dressed

up in Disney's princess merchandise, Blachor interviewed 17 girls, now in their late teens, and found they have all grown into relatively happy, ambitious young adults. When looking back on their "princess" experiences in childhood, these young women say they were happy being immersed in imaginative play.

As the more recent Disney movies have featured heroic princesses chasing after their own destinies, these young women added that as they grew older, they realized a prince was not coming to rescue them. While Disney has made progress in modernizing their fairy tales, the United States still proudly proclaims itself to be "egalitarian," an assumption Blachor finds hypocritical.

Stating that the United States is the only wealthy country not to offer family-friendly policies like paid maternity leave, Blachor writes, "If women attain full gender equality in the United States, up to \$4.3 trillion could be added to the annual GDP in 2025."

As some American politicians criticize welfare, Blachor believes that "welfare benefits like family leave don't drain the

economy, however. They are the backbone of a healthy work culture, which includes both genders and doesn't maximize the potential of one at the expense of the other." As an example, Blachor notes that Denmark offers its citizens family leave and "has one of the highest employment rates in general."

Blachor also found a research study that said the happiest countries are "the ones with the best work-life balance," such as those that provide paid maternity and paternity leave. With some smugness, she concludes, "According to the U.N. World Happiness Report and other studies like it, the happiest place on earth is Denmark, the home country of Walt Disney's favorite fairy-tale writer, Hans Christian Andersen."

Now when Blachor sees her daughter dancing and singing in public as a little princess, she views Mari as feeling brave and free enough to express her real self. Whether or not she will still be able to do that into adulthood is the unanswered question for us all.

Allison Plitt is a frequent contributor to NY Parenting and lives in Queens with her 11-year-old daughter.

Calendar

DECEMBER



Tom Ehrlich

Celebrate community with music

Feel the rhythm, everybody, as Los Pleneros de la 21 celebrates Christmas in El Barrio, at the Kumble Theater at Long Island University on Dec. 10.

“Los Pleneros de la 21: Christmas in El Barrio” is performed as part of the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts programming of holiday specials. The show celebrates community, family and

music. It features diverse musical styles, including jazz, salsa, and hip hop.

“Los Pleneros de la 21: Christmas in El Barrio,” Dec. 10, at 3 pm; tickets are \$25 and half price for children under 12.

Kumble Theater at Long Island University [DeKalb and Flatbush avenues in Fort Greene; (718) 951-4500; BrooklynCenter.org]

Never miss a great event!

Sign up for our FREE newsletter and get twice-a-week ideas for you and your family right in your mailbox. NYParenting.com

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!

FRI, DEC. 1

IN BROOKLYN

"A Wonderful Life": Fort Hamilton Army Base Theater, 101st St and Ft Hamilton Pkwy, (718) 482-3173; NCT@nctheatery.com, various times; \$25 (\$20 seniors and students; \$15 for children under 12). Narrows Community Theater presents its 2017 Winter musical production of the perennial feel-good movie ever. Will ZuZu get to hear that bell? And will George realize what a wonderful life he really has? Proper ID to enter the base is required.

Sweet Shoppe at One Brooklyn

Bridge Park: One Brooklyn Bridge Park-Pier 5, 360 Furman St., ground floor, waterfront side; (347) 541-9107; info@guerillascience.org; guerillascience.org/event/sweetshoppe; 11 am – 7 pm; Free.

This immersive installation explores sugar's role in everything from agricultural systems and cooking, to its physiological impact on the brain, to the politics of sugar manufacturing and obesity. Sweet Shoppe may look like any other high concept candy store, until you step inside and meet the shopkeeper, a pharmacist who seems to have traveled from another time — or dimension? — in order to serve you. There is no medicine at this Willy Wonka-inspired apothecary, but the secret life of sugar (and a treat, if you're nice) is offered in a broad range of immersive and sensory experiences incorporating art, technology and live performance.

Nuit des Racines/Roots Night!: Brooklyn Fete, 1515 Nostrand Ave; (718) 844-4094; kriyolance@gmail.com; 7 pm to 11 pm; \$15.

Kriyol Dance! Collective presents "Nuit des Racine/Roots Night!" An annual event to featuring the sounds of Racine Okan and Kriyol Dance! Collective, and celebrating Haitian culture in Brooklyn.

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

Presented by the Carnegie Hall Neighborhood Concert Series, the JUNO Award-winning singer Kiran Ahluwalia puts her personal stamp on the vocal traditions of India and Pakistan by infusing them with the guitar-driven blues of the Sahara and a dash of cutting-edge jazz. Her vocals are buoyed by her



Thomas Spiridellis

Get lost in the forest

What big eyes you will need to see this production of the classic Little Red Riding Hood at the Brooklyn Music School Playhouse on Dec. 15.

The classic transformative tale of Little Red Riding Hood comes alive and is presented by young musical theater performers. The imaginative production will feature the classic and original characters highlighting Little Red's journey through the unfamiliar woods and her encounter with the clever trickster wolf. As our young performers enact the evocative story and narrate the powerful lessons learned through

their characters' passage, audiences are reminded of the value of trust, kindness and the importance of community/family in times of hostility. In this exciting production, the creatures of the forest and trees come alive as the Mother's song echoes through the entire journey.

Little Red Riding Hood, Dec. 15 at 7 pm; tickets \$20 for adults and free for children 11 years and younger.

Brooklyn Music School Playhouse [126 St. Felix St. between Lafayette Avenue and Hanson Place in Fort Greene; (718) 638-5660; brooklynmusicsschool.org]

wonderfully eclectic band that is led by her husband, Pakistani-American guitarist Rez Abasi. The harmonium, tabla, and electric bass provide splashes of instrumental color, uniting with Ahluwalia's voice to create intoxicating music that is both rhapsodic and ecstatic.

FURTHER AFIELD

Drones: Is the Sky the Limit?: Intrepid Sea,

Air & Space Museum, Pier 86 (46th St. and 12th Avenue), Manhattan; www.intrepidmuseum.org; 10 am to 5 pm; \$33 (\$31 seniors; \$24, children 5-12; Free children under 5; Ret. & Active Duty Military, Free).

The exhibit explores pilotless aircraft and the history of drone technology. Visitors can fly actual drones and explore the use of drones in police and fire departments, fash-

Calendar

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

ion, and art.

Holiday Tea with American Girl: American Girl Place New York, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, Manhattan; (877) 247-5223; www.americangirl.com/retail/new_york_city.php; 3 pm-4 pm; \$24 per person.

Get a taste of the season at the brand new location for American Girl Place New York! Bring your dolls for a special holiday tea at the new flagship store in Rockefeller Plaza, complete with a deliciously different menu of teatime treats and crafts. Visitors will make a fleece headband to keep the dolls' ears warm on chilly days and will get festive with a holiday-card-making craft.

SAT, DEC. 2

IN BROOKLYN

PS/IS 121 Magnet School of Applied Life Sciences - Science Saturday: PS/IS 121, 5301 20 Ave., (718) 377-8845; jmontan@schools.nyc.gov; www.publicschool121.org; 11:00; free.

Join staff at the Magnet School of Applied Life Sciences from as they share science knowledge through engaging science activities for all ages.

"A Wonderful Life:" various times. Fort Hamilton Army Base Theater. See Friday, Dec. 1.

FAD Market Holiday Edition: Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street; (718) 222-4111; info@fadmarket.co; www.brooklynhistory.org; 11:00 AM; Free.

This holiday season, find the perfect gift for everyone at FAD Market – a roving Fashion, Art and Design pop-up marketplace. Stroll through the gorgeous Romanesque Revival building of Brooklyn Historical Society and meet over 40 thoughtfully selected independent designer makers showcasing handcrafted jewelry, apparel, bath and body care, tableware and home furnishings. Discover unique holiday gifts and snag one-of-a-kind stocking stuffers at FAD Market this winter!

Sweet Shoppe at One Brooklyn Bridge Park: 11 am – 7 pm. One Brooklyn Bridge Park-Pier 5. See Friday, Dec. 1.

Skate with Santa: LeFrak Center at Lakeside, 171 East Dr. at Ocean Avenue; (718) 462-0010; www.lakesidebrooklyn.com; Noon to 2 pm; Free (Skate rental extra).

Santa's hitting the ice at Lakeside, every weekend through December! Join him at the LeFrak Center from 12-2 pm on our public sessions, and sign up for a free 15-minute skate lesson at 1 pm or 1:15 pm to get a taste of our Skate School this holiday season. Does not include admission or skate rental.

Historic Games: Lefferts Historic House, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; 1 pm to 3 pm; \$3.

Join Prospect Park alliance at Lefferts Historic House for some great indoor fun. Learn



Sing-along at Shabbat

Come to a holiday Sing-along-shabbat at the Bay Ridge Jewish Center, Dec. 9.

Experience Shabbat morning with singing, guitar, puppetry and musical prayer. Families with 0-5 year olds, siblings and caregivers participate in a playful setting and form friendships. Followed

by challah and grape juice with the Bay Ridge Jewish Center community.

Sing-along-shabbat, Dec. 9 at 10:45am; free.

Bay Ridge Jewish Center [8025 Fourth Ave. between 80th and 81st streets in Bay Ridge; (718) 836-3103; office@brjc.org; www.brjc.org

how to play Nine-Man Morris and make your very own playing board to take home.

Sinterklass - Saint Nicholas Day: The Wyckoff House Museum, 5816 Clarendon Road; (718) 629-5400; <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sinterklass-saint-nicholas-day-tickets-38961884044>; 1 pm to 4 pm; \$5 for adults, \$3 for children.

The Wyckoff House Museum presents Sinterklaas, or St. Nicholas Day. The festivities will kick off at 1pm with a traditional concert by colonial balladeer Linda Russell. Children will enjoy a special visit from St. Nicholas as he arrives on horseback around 2:30pm. In the Dutch tradition, visitors can feed St. Nicholas's faithful horse carrots and hay. Children are invited to sign the Red Book with St. Nicholas before he tells the traditional tale of The Bakers Dozen. Visitors can sip hot cider, try their hand at colonial games, create a holiday pomander, decorate a Dutch clog for Sinterklaas, and dress the tree for the tree lighting that will close the day as the sun goes down.

Fall Art Classes: Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; gallery-studio@brooklynmuseum.org; www.brooklynmuseum.org; 1 pm – 3 pm; \$285 – \$305.

Come expand your creativity and sharpen your art skills inspired by the Brooklyn Museum's collection. Experience unique art-making activities while exploring the Brooklyn Muse-

um's special exhibitions. Art classes are open to all ages. Fall classes meet Saturday or Sundays and are two hours each.

FURTHER AFIELD

Drones: Is the Sky the Limit?: 10 am to 6 pm. Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum. See Friday, Dec. 1.

SUN, DEC. 3

IN BROOKLYN

"A Wonderful Life:" various times. Fort Hamilton Army Base Theater. See Friday, Dec. 1.

First Sundays: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; 10 am to 2 pm; Fee with admission to the gardens.

Experience the serenity and wonder of the Garden with programs for the entire family! Featuring Family Discovery Stations and Storytime; Winter Nature Walk with Bradley Klein; Chase Away the Winter Blues tour; and Conservatory Seasonal Highlights tour.

FAD Market Holiday Edition: 11:00 AM. Brooklyn Historical Society. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

Sweet Shoppe at One Brooklyn Bridge Park: 11 am – 7 pm. One Brooklyn Bridge Park-Pier 5. See Friday, Dec. 1.

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

Makers Market: Bay Ridge Jewish Center, 8025 Fourth Ave. between 80th and 81st streets; (718) 836-3103; office@brjc.org; www.brjc.org; Noon to 5pm; Free.

Support local artists; handcrafted items; original works of art and more.

8 Days of Klezmer: On Stage at Kingsborough, 2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street; (718) 368-5596; www.onstageatkingsborough.org; 3 pm; \$32-\$37.

To kick off the Hanukkah celebration join Host Elad Kabilio, the Israeli ensemble 12th Night Klezmer and guest vocalist and Yiddish theatre star, Daniella Rabboni as they explore the unique spirit of klezmer with melodies of joyful sorrow, and Gypsy-flavored Hanukkah favorites from the Shtetls of Eastern Europe to the streets of New York City.

Attacca Quartet: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch, 10 Grand Army Plaza, between Eastern Parkway and Flatbush Avenue; (718) 230-2100; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

As part of the Carnegie Hall Neighborhood Concert Series, the New York-based ensemble is known for its mastery of a vast range of repertoire that spans Haydn to John Adams. The quartet's recording of works by Adams prompted The New York Times to call its playing "exuberant, funky ... exactly nuanced." Most recently, it has served as the inaugural ensemble-in-residence at Texas State University's School of Music, in addition to appearing in concerts and master classes across the United States and South America.

Fall Art Classes: 4pm – 6pm. Brooklyn Museum. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

FURTHER AFIELD

Drones: Is the Sky the Limit?: 10 am to 6 pm. Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum. See Friday, Dec. 1.

THURS, DEC. 7

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.

The Little Orchestra Society: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 3 pm to 3:45 pm and 4 pm to 4:45 pm; free with museum admission.

A series of family music workshops. Each session explores music of a different culture, engaging children, parents, and caregivers through movement, song, composition, and an introduction to world instruments. Sessions accommodate up to 25 participants on a first-come, first served basis.



The Hip Hop Nutcracker

"The Hip Hop Nutcracker," a contemporary dance spectacle comes to the United Palace Theatre in Washington Heights on Dec. 14 and the Kings Theater in Flatbush on Dec. 16

The production is set to Tchaikovsky's timeless music and features Kurtis Blow, one of hip hop's founding fathers. He opens the show with a short set before rapping the introduction. The full-length production features a dozen all-star dancers, an on-stage DJ and an electric violinist. The traditional classic Tchaikovsky score complements the power moves of these 12 dancers, with music re-mixed and re-imagined, help-

ing to bring a contemporary vibe to the production. Suitable for children 10 years and older.

"The Hip Hop Nutcracker" United Palace Theatre — Dec. 14, at 7:30 pm; tickets \$30 to \$140.

Kings Theater — Dec. 16, at 8 pm; tickets \$29 to \$79.

All tickets may be purchased at www.hiphopnutcracker.com.

United Palace Theater [4140 Broadway at 175th Street in Washington Heights; (212) 568-6700]

Kings Theater [1027 Flatbush Ave. between Beverly Road and Tilden Avenue in Flatbush; (800) 745-3000]

FRI, DEC. 8

IN BROOKLYN

"A Wonderful Life:" various times. Fort Hamilton Army Base Theater. See Friday, Dec. 1.

FURTHER AFIELD

Holiday Tea with American Girl: 3pm-4pm. American Girl Place New York. See Friday, Dec. 1.

SAT, DEC. 9

IN BROOKLYN

Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker: Kings Theatre, 1027 Flatbush Ave. between Beverly Road and Tilden Avenue; www.kingstheatre.com; 2:00 P.M. \$27.50+.

All ages are invited to celebrate Christmas with the Moscow Ballet company of almost 40 ballerinas and danseurs on their 25th Anniversary Tour of North America in 2017. Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker is known for its award-winning Principal Dancers, lavish costumes in the style of the Victorian era, many backdrops created by "La La Land" Set Concept designer Carl Sprague, and its Russian focus including life-sized Matryoshka Dolls, Russian folk legends Ded Moroz (Father Christmas) and Snegurochka (Snow Maiden) and Troika Sleigh. Adults and children enjoy the special effects of the flapping winged owl on the Grandfather clock, the growing 50 ft tall Christmas Tree, the Dove of Peace with a 20ft wingspan, and of course, the leaps, spins, and extraordinary moves of the company all performed to Tchaikovsky's

complete and incomparable score.

"A Wonderful Life:" various times. Fort Hamilton Army Base Theater. See Friday, Dec. 1.

Alive & Thrive: Holiday Market and Open House: Minka Brooklyn, 1120 Washington Ave, 3rd floor; (917) 635-3666; info@minka-brooklyn.com; minkabrooklyn.com/workshops/2017/12/16/minka-holiday-market-open-house; 10am-6pm; \$30.

Get a jump on holiday shopping, whether you are celebrating Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice, or your own version of seasonal tradition, this is the perfect time to get together with people you love. Sharing meals, laughter and hugs are the best part of the Holidays - and exchanging of heartfelt gifts are always so much fun. This year, we are taking the stress out of 'holiday shopping craziness' - our second annual Holiday Bazaar is also our Open House!! You can get mini treatments while you shop -- whether you want to Zen out with a Reiki or Shiatsu session, get guidance from your guides via Palmistry, or Tarot Reading -- we've got it all for \$30 all day long. Our awesome vendors are all local makers of magical gift items, so come on out and celebrate with us!

Sing-along-shabbat: Bay Ridge Jewish Center, 8025 Fourth Ave. between 80th and 81st streets; (718) 836-3103; office@brjc.org; www.brjc.org; 10:45 am to 11:45 am; Free.

Children enjoy singing, guitar, a snack of challah and grape juice; for children 5 and under along with siblings.

Skate with Santa: Noon to 2 pm. LeFrak Center at Lakeside. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

Fall Art Classes: 1 pm - 3 pm. Brooklyn Museum. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

Dancewave Holiday Fiesta: PS 133 William A Butler School, PS 133, 610 Baltic St. at Fourth Avenue), marketing@dancewave.org; dancewave.org/Winter; 3.00pm; \$13.

A family event celebrating Dancewave students and their guests in four spectacular performances!

FURTHER AFIELD

"Chalk:" The Kraine Theater, 85 East Fourth St. and Second Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 460-0982; www.horsetrade.info/the-kraine-theater; 2:30 pm; \$15 (\$5 children under 12).

CHALK is a playful and poignant one-man show guaranteed to delight audiences of all ages. Chalk invites audiences into a hand-drawn world where imagination is made real and anything can happen. Charlie Chaplin meets Harold and the Purple Crayon in this feel-good romantic romp sure to "Draw You In."

SUN, DEC. 10

IN BROOKLYN

"A Wonderful Life:" various times. Fort Hamilton Army Base Theater. See Friday, Dec. 1.



Nir Arieel

'Tis the season for Klezmer

Spin those dreidels and kick off the Hanukkah season with 8 Days of Klezmer at On Stage at Kingsborough on Dec. 3.

To kick off the Hanukkah celebration join Host Elad Kabilio, the Israeli ensemble 12th Night Klezmer and guest vocalist and Yiddish theatre star, Daniella Rabbani as they explore the unique spirit of klezmer

with melodies of joyful sorrow, and Gypsy-flavored Hanukkah favorites from the Shtetls of Eastern Europe to the streets of New York City.

8 Days of Klezmer, Dec. 3 at 3 pm; tickets range from \$32 to \$37.

On Stage at Kingsborough [2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street in Manhattan Beach; (718) 368-5596; www.onstageat.kingsborough.org]

City of Science 2017 - Brooklyn: Park Slope Armory, Eighth Avenue at 15th Street; (212) 673-7030 ; cityofscience@worldscience-festival.com; www.ymcanyc.org/armory-sports-complex/armory-sports-home/facility; 10 am to 4 pm; Free.

Walk on Water - Blast Balls into Orbit, Defy Gravity as City of Science returns to the borough. Join the World Science Festival and Con Edison for this larger-than-life, touring event where the wondrous properties of science, technology, engineering, and math collide! Filled with interactive demonstrations, hands-on activities, and enormous exhibitions, this program unleashes everyone's inner scientist. RSVP is encouraged. www.worldsciencefestival.com/education/city-of-science cityofscience@worldsciencefestival.com or 212.348.1400.

Behind the Scenes tour: Lefferts Historic House, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; Noon to 1 pm; \$10.

Discover what's behind the scenes at the Lefferts Historic House. Prospect Park Alliance is offering a special tour of this 18th century farmhouse. Learn about its Dutch-American

architecture and the changing landscape of Brooklyn, and then explore our storage areas to view rarely seen collections items.

Los Plenarios de la 21: Christmas in El Barrio: Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 951-4500; BrooklynCenter.org; 3 pm; \$25 (half price tickets for children under 12).

The production is presented by the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts and will be held at the Kumble Theater. This holiday show celebrates community, family and family. It features diverse musical styles, including jazz, salsa, and hiphop.

Dancewave Holiday Fiesta: 3.00pm. PS 133 William A Butler School. See Saturday, Dec. 9.

Holidays with Dessoiff: Welcome Yule!: Saint John's Episcopal Church, 139 St. John's Pl. at Seventh Avenue; www.Dessoiff.org; 4 pm; \$20 - \$40.

The Dessoiff Choirs celebrates the holiday season with a trio of festive concerts. Now in its 93rd year, The Dessoiff Choirs continues to wow audiences with its seasonal repertoire and contemporary arrangement of carols performed in some of New York City's

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most beautiful churches. This season's offerings include a sing-in of Handel's Messiah (the quintessential classical music highpoint of the Christmas season), Bernstein's Simchu na celebrating the start of Hanukkah, and works by New York City-based composers: Ola Gjeilo, Nancy Wertsch, Gregg Smith, and James Bassi—to name a few.

Fall Art Classes: 4pm – 6pm. Brooklyn Museum. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

MON, DEC. 11

IN BROOKLYN

How the Rabbi(s) saved Hanukkah:

Bay Ridge Jewish Center, 8025 Fourth Ave. between 80th and 81st streets; (718) 836-3103; office@brjc.org; www.brjc.org; call for time; \$25 (free for members).

Hanukkah You Never Knew: Hanukkah is a minor holiday with major implications. The story you learned in Hebrew school probably didn't tell you the "whole" story. It's not just about the oil! RSVP required.

TUES, DEC. 12

IN BROOKLYN

BYOBaby Hanukkah Party: Bay Ridge Jewish Center, 8025 Fourth Ave. between 80th and 81st streets; (718) 836-3103; office@brjc.org; www.brjc.org; call for time; \$5.

Enjoy Hanukkah with your baby & friends! Potato latkes, candle lighting, & grab bag for babies 0-3 and caregivers.

WED, DEC. 13

IN BROOKLYN

Hanukkah Family Festival: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907-8833; www.jcm.museum; 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm; \$13 (\$10 seniors).

Celebrate the holidays with fun family crafts; beading studio; donut decorating; game show and the Lighting of the Grand Menorah.

THURS, DEC. 14

IN BROOKLYN

That's Quite Absurd!: Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 488-1624; www.thepaperbagplayers.org; 10 am and noon; \$8.

This brand new show by the Paper Bag Players is packed with stories, songs, free-wheeling dances, painting, audience participation, paper bag costumes and scenery — and lots of adventure! It's a funny, friendly, and thrilling hour of theater — perfect for children in Pre-k to 3rd grade, perfect for everyone!

Transit Tots: 10:15 am to 11 am. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

Hanukkah Family Festival: 12:30 pm



A very young Nutcracker

Don't just dream of the sugar plum fairies, come and see them in a production of Excerpts from the Nutcracker performed by the children of Cobble Hill Ballet, at Kumble Theater at Long Island University on Dec. 16 and 17.

Young ballerinas of the Cobble Hill Ballet perform excerpts from the "Party scene" to the magical "Land of the Snow." Clara's journey to "Candy Land" is a colorful mix of dancers, in-

cluding The Sugar Plum Fairy, Russian Dolls and Waltz of the Flowers. This shortened version of the original ballet is perfect for children and families.

Excerpts from the Nutcracker, Dec. 16 and Dec. 17; noon, 3 pm and 5 pm; tickets are \$22 (\$10 children under 12)

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

to 3:30 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Wednesday, Dec. 13.

The Little Orchestra Society: 3 pm to 3:45 pm and 4 pm to 4:45 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

Holiday concert: Union Church of Bay Ridge, 7915 Ridge Blvd. (718) 745-0438; ucbr.music@gmail.com; <https://www.facebook.com/events/159497974644223>; 4 pm; \$15.

Christmas classics by Vivaldi and Saint-Saëns.

FRI, DEC. 15

IN BROOKLYN

That's Quite Absurd!: 10 am and noon. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Thursday, Dec. 14.

"Little Red Riding Hood:" Brooklyn Music School Playhouse, 126 St. Felix St. between Lafayette Avenue and Hanson Place; (718) 638-5660; brooklynmusicschool.org; 7 pm; \$20 (Free for children 11 years and younger).

The classic transformative tale of Little Red Riding Hood comes alive and is presented by young musical theater performers. The imaginative production will feature the classic and

original characters highlighting Little Red's journey through the unfamiliar woods and her encounter with the clever trickster wolf. As our young performers enact the evocative story and narrate the powerful lessons learned through their characters' passage, audiences are reminded of the value of trust, kindness and the importance of community/family in times of hostility. In this exciting production, the creatures of the forest and trees come alive as the Mother's song echoes through the entire journey.

FURTHER AFIELD

Holiday Tea with American Girl: 3pm-4pm. American Girl Place New York. See Friday, Dec. 1.

SAT, DEC. 16

IN BROOKLYN

Family Christmas Bird Count: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; 10 am to noon; Free.

Blooming Naturalists of all ages can join a tradition more than 100 years in the making. Join Prospect Park Alliance in this na-

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

tionwide bird census that helps conservation researchers track the long-term health of bird populations.

Farmhouse Family Day: Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum, 5816 Clarendon Rd. (718) 629-5400; <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2017/12/16/farmhouse-family-day>; 11 am to 3 pm; Free.

Drop in and explore New York City's oldest house together. Arrive by 1:00 p.m. for a unique hands-on making activity. Seasonal activities inside the historic house and around the gardens include scavenger hunts, artifact investigation, gardening, self-guided exploration, and hands-on activities. Family Day is open to everyone. Activities are designed for families with kids ages 4 to 10. Children must be accompanied by an adult. No reservation required.

FAD Market Holiday Edition: Artisanal Food Gift Market: The Invisible Dog Art Center, 51 Bergen St. between Boerum Place and Dean Street; (347) 560-3641; info@fadmarket.co; www.theinvisibledog.org; 11 am; Free.

This holiday season, find the perfect gift for everyone at FAD Market – a roving Fashion, Art and Design pop-up marketplace. FAD Market's Artisanal Food Gift Market at The Invisible Dog Art Center will see over 40 carefully curated makers showcasing locally sourced, small-batch artisanal packaged foods including charcuterie, condiments, maple syrup, spices, finishing salts, chocolates, baked goods and more, as well as food-related products such as handmade ceramics, coasters, cheese boards, chopping blocks and kitchen textiles among others. Discover unique holiday gifts and snag one-of-a-kind stocking stuffers at FAD Market this winter!

FAD Market Holiday Edition: City Point: City Point, 445 Albee Square West; info@fadmarket.co; 11:00 am; Free.

This holiday season, find the perfect gift for everyone at FAD Market – a roving Fashion, Art and Design pop-up marketplace. Join us at the newly opened City Point in Downtown Brooklyn as we take over Prince Street Corridor. Meet over 60 thoughtfully selected independent designer makers showcasing hand-crafted jewelry, apparel, bath and body care, tableware and home furnishings. Discover unique holiday gifts and snag one-of-a-kind stocking stuffers at FAD Market this winter!

Excerpts from the Nutcracker: Kumble Theater at Long Island University, DeKalb and Flatbush avenues; (718) 488-1624; www.kumbletheater.org; Noon, 3 pm and 5 pm; \$22 (\$10 children under 12).

Performance by the children of Cobble Hill Ballet – from the "Party scene", to the magical "Land of the Snow". Clara's journey to "Candy Land" is a colorful mix of dancers including The Sugar Plum Fairy, Russian Dolls and Waltz of the Flowers. A shortened version of the original Ballet, perfect for children and families.

Skate with Santa: Noon to 2 pm. LeFrak Center at Lakeside. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

Fall Art Classes: 1pm – 3pm. Brooklyn Museum. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

"The Hip Hop Nutcracker:" Kings Theatre, 1027 Flatbush Ave. between Beverly Road and Tilden Avenue; hiphopnutcracker.com/#tours; 8 pm; \$29-79.

The re-mixed production of the holiday classic features Kurtis Blow, one of hip hop's founding fathers, who will perform a short set and then rap the opening number.

SUN, DEC. 17

IN BROOKLYN

FAD Market Holiday Edition: Artisanal Food Gift Market: 11 am. The Invisible Dog Art Center. See Saturday, Dec. 16.

FAD Market Holiday Edition: City Point: 11:00 am. City Point. See Saturday, Dec. 16.

Excerpts from the Nutcracker: Noon, 3 pm and 5 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University. See Saturday, Dec. 16.

Hanukkah Family Festival: 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Wednesday, Dec. 13.

Hanukkah party and blood drive: Bay Ridge Jewish Center, 8025 Fourth Ave. between 80th and 81st streets; (718) 836-3103; office@brjc.org; www.brjc.org; 2 pm to 6 pm; \$5.

Celebrate Hanukkah with potato latkes, candle lighting, games, singing, arts & crafts, fun for all!

"The Nutcracker:" On Stage at Kingsborough, 2001 Oriental Blvd. at Oxford Street; (718) 368-5596; www.onstageatkingsborough.org; 3 pm; \$32 to \$37.

The State Ballet Theatre of Russia founded by the legendary Bolshoi Theatre Ballet principal dancer, Maya Plisetskaya will perform the family-friendly, holiday ballet classic, "The Nutcracker."

Fall Art Classes: 4 pm to 6 pm. Brooklyn Museum. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

MON, DEC. 18

IN BROOKLYN

Hanukkah Family Festival: 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Wednesday, Dec. 13.

TUES, DEC. 19

IN BROOKLYN

Hanukkah Family Festival: 12:30 pm to 3 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Wednesday, Dec. 13.

WED, DEC. 20

IN BROOKLYN

Hanukkah Family Festival: 12:30 pm to 3 pm. Jewish Children's Museum. See Wednesday, Dec. 13.

THURS, DEC. 21

IN BROOKLYN

Transit Tots: 10:15 am to 11 am. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

The Little Orchestra Society: 3 pm to 3:45 pm and 4 pm to 4:45 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

FRI, DEC. 22

FURTHER AFIELD

Holiday Tea with American Girl: 3 pm-4 pm. American Girl Place New York. See Friday, Dec. 1.

SAT, DEC. 23

IN BROOKLYN

Skate with Santa: Noon to 2 pm. LeFrak Center at Lakeside. See Saturday, Dec. 2.

TUES, DEC. 26

IN BROOKLYN

Winter Holidays: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287-3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; noon to 4 pm; Free.

Join Prospect Park Alliance for educational programming to ring in the new year. Fun programming - Nature Exploration; Discovery Pack; Bird Nerds Game Hour; Nature on the Go; and Animal Encounter.

Historic Crafts: Lefferts Historic House, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; 1 pm to 3 pm; \$3.

Join Prospect Park Alliance at the Lefferts Historic House for the last week of the season. Have fun with traditional toys and games and learn to make a small needlework sampler to take home.

WED, DEC. 27

IN BROOKLYN

Winter Holidays: Noon to 4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

Historic Crafts: 1 pm to 3 pm. Lefferts Historic House. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

FURTHER AFIELD

Watson Adventures' Whodunnit at the Met Family Scavenger Hunt: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan; (877) 946-4868; rsvp@watsonadventures.com; www.watsonadventures.com/public/event/met-whodunnit-family-scavenger-hunt; 2 p.m.; \$31.00-\$42.00 (includes museum admission).

Join Watson Adventures on a unique murder mystery scavenger hunt for kids 10 & up! A killer is on the loose at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and it's up to you to stop him! The killer has created a scavenger hunt that, when completed, reveals his name, the



A fantasia of tiny trains

Hop aboard for the 16th Annual Holiday Transit Show at the New York Transit Museum at Grand Central Station now through Feb. 4, 2018.

Dazzling children and adults, the display features Lionel trains traveling along a 34' long, two-level, "O" gauge model train layout. Departing from a miniature replica of Grand Central Terminal on their way to the North Pole, this year's exhibition showcases the Transit Museum's Lionel Metro-North, Polar Express, and vintage subway train sets.

A selection from the Museum's col-

lection of trolley and elevated train models created by Dr. George T.F. Rahilly will also be on display to the delight of viewers.

The exhibit is set against a cityscape backdrop designed by Brooklyn-based artist Josh Cochran.

16th Annual Holiday Train Show, daily through Feb. 4, 2018; Monday to Friday, 8 am to 8 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm; free

NY Transit Museum at Grand Central Station [89 East 42nd St. at Park Avenue in Midtown; (212) 878-0106; www.nytransitmuseum.org]

weapon he used and where he hid the body in the museum. You'll get a list of suspects, weapons and hiding places that are all in the museum. By following the trail of clues and answering tricky questions, you'll provide the police with the evidence they need to catch and convict the killer. Can you figure out whodunnit? Kids must be accompanied by an adult. Price includes museum admission.

THURS, DEC. 28

IN BROOKLYN

Transit Tots: 10:15 am to 11 am. New York Transit Museum. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

Winter Holidays: Noon to 4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

Historic Crafts: 1 pm to 3 pm. Lefferts Historic House. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

The Little Orchestra Society: 3 pm to

3:45 pm and 4 pm to 4:45 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

FURTHER AFIELD

Watson Adventures' Whodunnit at the Met Family Scavenger Hunt:

10:30am. Metropolitan Museum of Art. See Wednesday, Dec. 27.

FRI, DEC. 29

IN BROOKLYN

Winter Holidays: Noon to 4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

Historic Crafts: 1 pm to 3 pm. Lefferts Historic House. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

SAT, DEC. 30

IN BROOKLYN

Winter Holidays: Noon to 4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

The Amazing Brooklyn Museum

Scavenger Hunt: Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue; (718) 638-5000; pogoevents@gmail.com; www.brooklynmuseum.org; 12:30pm to 3:30pm; \$39.00/Per Person.

POGO Events presents The Amazing Brooklyn Museum Scavenger Hunt. A series of clues leads you around the Brooklyn Museum performing mental challenges along the way. It is a great way to connect with friends or meet new ones. Each member of the winning team receives a New York City gift package. The hunt takes two hours. Please wear comfortable shoes. One member of the team should have a smart phone (either Android or iPhone). The hunt is run through an app called ScanQuest. Please download that before you come to the event.

Historic Crafts: 1 pm to 3 pm. Lefferts Historic House. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

SUN, DEC. 31

IN BROOKLYN

Winter Holidays: Noon to 4 pm. Prospect Park Audubon Center. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

Historic Crafts: 1 pm to 3 pm. Lefferts Historic House. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

New Year's Eve: Grand Army Plaza, Prospect Park's West Drive; 9th Street; 11 pm to 1 am; Free.

Join Prospect Park Alliance for this annual fireworks celebration! Help us kick off the new year with fireworks, live music and more. Locations for viewing the fireworks include Grand Army Plaza, the Park's West Drive, and along Prospect Park West between Grand Army Plaza and 9th Street.

LONG-RUNNING

IN BROOKLYN

Brooklyn Block Lab: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Thursdays, 2 pm to 5:30 pm, Fridays - Sundays, 10 am to 1 pm, until Fri, Dec. 29; free with museum admission.

Visitors of all ages are invited to design and build with an array of blocks including Magna-Tiles, Imagination Playground, Kapla Planks, and more. Block play supports critical social and cognitive skills in early childhood—everything from team building, creative thinking and problem solving to spatial reasoning and pre-engineering concepts. Different scales of blocks enable hands of all sizes to build and be challenged.

Drop in Play at Spark: Spark by Brooklyn Children's Museum, 1 John Street; (718) 852-2470; vcalabro@brooklynkids.org; www.brooklynkids.org

Calendar

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

brooklynkids.org/spark; Wednesdays and Fridays – Sundays, 1–5pm, Thursdays, 1–6pm, \$15.

BUILD IT! Design your own structures in our popular exhibit Brooklyn Block Lab **MAKE IT!** Creativity abounds in our art activities that change each week. **TOUCH IT!** Get cozy in our Discovery Den featuring soft play and reading space, and a series of discovery drawers that hold treasures from our collection as well as tactile materials for little hands to explore.

Train Operator Workshop: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street; (718) 694–1600; www.nytransitmuseum.org; Fridays and Saturdays, 1:30 pm, until Tues, Jan. 16, 2018; Free with museum admission.

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

Williamsburg Soccer Club - Children's Indoor Winter Soccer Team: The Backyard @ Berry Park, 196 N. 14th Street, (929) 201–4004; info@williamsburgsoccerclub.com; <https://www.williamsburgsoccerclub.com>; Saturdays, 9 am – noon, Sundays, 9 am – 11 am, until Sun, Jan. 28, 2018; \$250 / 10 Weeks or \$30 / Drop-in.

Williamsburg Soccer Club provides weekly kids soccer classes and coaching in partnership with The Backyard @ Berry Park. The club aims to run fun and friendly co-ed soccer classes on a weekly basis through 10-week terms (\$250 entire term) or drop-in classes (\$30 per class).

Sylvia's Story Corner: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Fridays, 3 pm to 3:30 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am to 5 pm, Sat, Dec. 2 – Fri, Dec. 29; free with museum admission.

Join a BCM Educator for this interactive story time!

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 Thurs, Dec. 28; Free with museum admission.

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

Nature Exploration: Prospect Park Audubon Center, Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue; (718) 287–3400; www.prospectpark.org/audubon; Saturday, Dec. 2, Noon to 4 pm; Sunday, Dec. 3, 10 am to 1 pm; Saturday, Dec. 9, 10 am to 1 pm; Sunday, Dec. 10, 10 am to 1 pm; Saturday, Dec. 16, 10 am to 1 pm; Sunday, Dec. 17, 10 am to 1 pm; Saturday, Dec. 23, 10 am to 1 pm; Saturday, Dec. 30, Noon to 4 pm; Free.

Join the Prospect Park Alliance – Discovery Pack, Prospect Park Alliance invites you to get inspired by nature with our new Discovery

Packs, a ready-to-go kits filled with nature activities for families. Bird Nerd Game Hour, mildly competitive hour of puzzles, Bingo, card games, and more! Nature on the Go!, : An Alliance Naturalist will lead children and families to areas near the Audubon Center, where you can learn about the nature that is all around us. This program leaves promptly at Animal Encounter.; Join Alliance Naturalists in learning more about the animals in the Audubon Center's collection.

Sensory Room: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue; (718) 735–4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 2 pm to 5:30 pm, until Thurs, Dec. 21; Free with museum admission.

An inclusive space where children of all abilities can engage with their peers and explore their senses. Sessions in the space are balanced between self guided exploration of the space and a facilitated program by one of BCM's Educators. The program might include story time, a song session, parachute play, or meeting one of the Museum's live animals. This room was created with an advisory committee of scholars and professionals with experience serving children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). All are welcome in this space, please let the Educator present know if your child has particular needs or sensitivities.

Craft room: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907–8833; www.jcm.museum; Sundays – Thursdays, 1 pm to 3 pm, Sun, Dec. 3 – Sun, Dec. 31; Free with museum admission.

Get creative with a variety of Jewish themed crafts to choose from! (Closed 9/20 and 9/21 for Rosh Hashanah).

Olive Oil workshop: Jewish Children's Museum, 792 Eastern Pkwy. at Kingston Avenue; (718) 907–8833; www.jcm.museum; Sunday, Dec. 3, 2:30 pm; Sunday, Dec. 10, 1:30 pm; Wednesday, Dec. 13, 1:30 pm; Thursday, Dec. 14, 1:30 pm; Sunday, Dec. 17, 1:30 pm; Monday, Dec. 18, 1:30 pm; Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1:30 pm; Wednesday, Dec. 20, 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Pick, press, pour, and explore the art of olive oil making in a fun and interactive workshop. Duration: Approx. 30 minutes.

"The Brooklyn Nutcracker:" Irondale Center, 85 S. Oxford St. at Lafayette Avenue; (718)-246–0146; <https://web.ovationtix.com/trs/cal/34418>; Tickets begin at \$25.

Brooklyn Ballet, presents the return of The Brooklyn Nutcracker which fuses ballet, hip-hop and an array of world dance genres to create a new tradition. This re-imagined holiday classic, transforms familiar Nutcracker characters and scenes to represent the diverse traditions and vibrant multicultural history of Brooklyn.

FURTHER AFIELD

Santaland at Macy's Herald Square: Macy's Herald Square, 151 West 34th Street,

Manhattan; (212) 695–4400; <https://l.macys.com/new-york-ny>.

Macy's Santaland transports the young and young-at-heart into a fantasy world of glittering pine trees, snow-capped mountains, twinkling lights, cuddly animals, and gingerbread cookies. Located on the 8th floor of the iconic flagship store, this 13,000 square foot Christmas Village is filled with holiday treasures, taking customers on a special visit with the one and only Santa Claus.

16th Annual Holiday Transit Show: NY Transit Museum at Grand Central Station, 89 East 42nd St. at Park Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 878–0106; www.nytransitmuseum.org; Weekdays, 8 am to 8 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am to 6 pm, until Sun, Feb. 4, 2018; Free.

Dazzling children and adults, the display features Lionel trains traveling along a 34' long, two-level, "O" gauge model train layout. Departing from a miniature replica of Grand Central Terminal on their way to the North Pole, this year's exhibition showcases the Transit Museum's Lionel Metro-North, Polar Express, and vintage subway train sets. A selection from the Museum's collection of trolley and elevated train models created by Dr. George T.F. Rahilly will also be on display to the delight of viewers.

Mummies: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at West 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 769–5200; enicholas@amnh.org; Daily, 10am; until Sun, Jan. 7, 2018; \$27 for adults, \$16 for children, and \$22 for seniors and students.

Mummies will offer an up-close look at one of the largest collections of mummies housed in North America. From ancient Egypt to pre-Columbian Peru, the exhibition will explore the intersection between societies, their environment, and the preparations they made for their dead. Through high-resolution CT scans and forensically reconstructed sculptures, visitors will glimpse people from centuries ago and learn how contemporary scientists have gleaned stunning details about their ages, practices, and even their causes of death. Interactive touch tables let visitors virtually "unravel" or see inside mummies as they delve deep into the unique stories of the people or animals who lie within.

The Three Bears Holiday Bash: Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater, West 79th and West Dr, Manhattan; (212) 988–9093; Mondays – Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:30 am and 11:30 am, Thursdays, 10:30 am and 11:30 am, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm, until Sat, Dec. 30; \$12 (\$8 for children under 12).

The special presentation is a variety show that celebrates the holiday season in song, dance and puppetry. The production quickly becomes a comedy of errors when Baby Bear invites Santa to star in Mama and Papa Bear's annual Christmas Eve holiday show. The audience also gets to join in on the fun with sing-alongs during the performance of holiday favorites "I Have a Little Dreidel" and "Feliz Navidad."

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Enslaved cooks' deep influence

You've been cooking up a storm for days.

Soon, the whole family will be sitting at your table, which will be loaded down with everybody's favorites. The turkey will be golden. The bread, warm and soft. Pies line your kitchen counter because you've cooked for days. At least, as you'll see in "Bound to the Fire" by Kelley Fanto Deetz, you didn't cook 'round the clock, too.

Most of us, says Deetz, are used to seeing black faces on boxes of our breakfast foods. We might not notice them much anymore but those trademarked figures hide an often misunderstood truth.

The "black community" in Virginia, says Deetz, "is almost as old as the colony itself." In 1619, some 20 "negroes" lived in Jamestown; by 1625, there were 23 "Africans" in all of Virginia. Once slavery took firm hold in the state, there were tens of thousands of enslaved people, but Deetz focuses on cooks, beginning with plantation homes.

As slavery expanded, kitchens began to be set apart from the main house, probably because white plantation owners didn't want slaves under their roofs. For enslaved cooks and their families, that was both good and bad: more privacy was gained by living in the building where the kitchen was, and accommodations were usually larger than in the slave cabins — but that proximity meant that cooks were constantly on-call.

It took "a network of enslaved folks" to put food on the table, not only in growing the food, but in what may have been a house staff of dozens. Cooks cooked, but they were also bakers, butchers, brewers, distillers, and sometimes, laundresses.

A cook was likely taught to read and do "basic math," and she (sometimes, he) taught kitchen chores to new slaves. Despite a constant likelihood of abuse and brutality, cooks often had surprising power over

their mistresses and may have even negotiated their own circumstances.

And if things went really bad, there was always the danger-filled chance for a cook to tamper with the food.

There are, as author Kelley Fanto Deetz indicates in her introduction, several myths and misunderstandings related to enslaved cooks. There were, until now, many unknowns. "Bound to the Fire" sets things straight, but cooking isn't the only focus here.

What would "Southern hospitality" be without the influence of enslaved cooks? Not much, as Deetz indicates — and Southern architecture would be the lesser, too. Using documents and research, Deetz explains how this is so, which leads to a fascinating look at day-to-day work of Virginia cooks, the power they wielded, and how they influenced what you'll eat this holiday season. You'll come to eagerly anticipate those tales, and they serve to underscore Deetz's final point: Americans must look beyond stereotypes and be mindful of those who literally nourished a nation.

Be aware that this is not a cookbook. Instead, this is a book of culinary history and a chance to set it straight. Yes, there are old-timey half-recipes in here but really, "Bound to the Fire" is meant for opening eyes, rather than mouths.

"Bound to the Fire: How Virginia's Enslaved Cooks Helped Invent American Cuisine" by Kelley Fanto Deetz [177 pages, 2017, University of Kentucky Press].

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



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