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Letter from the publisher

March musings

A few weeks ago we were happily informed that our publishing group had been selected as Finalists in a variety of categories in the Parenting Media Association's 2013 Editorial & Design Awards. Once again we were able to



congratulate our many writers and creative contributors and can only hope that we will take home some winning Silver or Gold Awards at the upcoming Conference and Awards Dinner in Atlanta this month.

It's a wonderful feeling to be acknowledged for excellence and for having worked hard. Life is loaded with competitions and competitive spirit and most of it is highly healthy and motivates us to do more than we

might if we were able to rest on our laurels and coast with a guarantee.

This competitive spirit is often personified for children in its purest and more innocent form in the wonderful activities they engage in while attending summer camps and programs. Sports,

games, hikes, hunts, and other such activities are wonderful vehicles to teach children the techniques of competition and of competing with good cheer, generosity and teamwork.

So many terrific programs abound around our city and within our various communities. This issue presents many of them, as will the issues in the months to come. Summer is a great time to be a kid, at least for most of our children. I remember my own joys

of summer and of camp activities, beach going, waiting for the ice cream truck, ball playing and hanging out with my friends as the long daylight hours enabled later group behavior.

For my daughter it was a day camp here in our city and the great pleasure of making new friends, both in other campers and in the wonderful young people who become their counselors. As the years passed it was she who became a counselor and years later she still is a part of that "family" that began 15 years ago.

We've started this issue out with an article asking us, "What kind of parent are you? It's a good question and I don't think there's any simple answer, but I've certainly been asking myself that question for many years and still do. I think it's integral for us to give ourselves that evaluation and to examine how our behavior can and

will shape the lives of our children. Self-evaluation is mostly positive unless administered too harshly. There's little doubt that this is the most important job we ever have in our lives with almost no training and modest guidance. Where are the parenting classes that everyone needs and should be given as a matter of importance?

That's why we do these magazines, to try to bring support and a sense of community to the often-dizzying role of parenting. We can only hope it's making a difference.

Wishing you all a good month. Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
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What kind of parent are you?

The type of parent who you are today shapes who your child will become tomorrow

BY DANA J. CONNELLY

Parenting is truly an art form comprised of what we have learned in the past with what we would do differently in the future. With each passing generation, there is a certain underlying goal to either improve upon or completely revamp the style of parenting we were raised with. The task seems daunting, especially while every move you make, the little ones are watching. It can be helpful to know what type of parent you are.

Baumrind distinguished the four parenting styles as “Authoritarian,” “Authoritative,” “Permissive,” and “Uninvolved” (1991). Essentially, the kind of parenting style you employ shapes the type of child you are raising.

- The authoritarian. This would be considered to be the strict parent, the one that puts forth rules and boundaries and punishes any and all infractions. This parent would have a “do-as-I-say” attitude to parenting. Having such a rigid approach to child rearing could result in an obedient child, but one that lacks an overall sense of contentment. The child is more likely to suffer from poor self-image and would struggle to feel confident in social situations.

- The authoritative. This would be considered to be the “ideal” parent. This parent would implement rules and boundaries, but would be open to the child’s input. Punishments are delivered not as intimidation, but as an opportunity for the child to learn from his mistakes. An open dialogue is maintained without sacrificing the rules or consequences. A child reared by an authoritative parent would likely be well-adjusted and

successful. He would have the ability to cope with changes, feel an overall sense of security and pride, and also respect authority.

- The permissive. This would be the parent that “spoils” a child. This parent is overly sensitive to her children’s reaction to the rules and boundaries. She may even cover for her child if he gets in trouble at school. This is the parent who allows the child to shape her behavior as a parent, when it should be the other way around. When rules are not consistently enforced, the child begins to behave inconsistently. At times he can be compliant and cheerful, but can also engage in tantrums and can be quite defiant when things do not go his way. A child raised by a permissive parent tends to have low levels of contentment, has great difficulty regulating his emotions, and displays problems with authority.

- The uninvolved. This is the parent who meets the basic needs of a child (food, shelter, medical care, education), but spends minimal time involved in the other aspects of child development. This could be a parent who suffers with addiction or releases her children into the custody of the state, or the parent who places the child rearing into the hands of a nanny while she travels, works, shops, or lunches. Children need rules and structure in order to feel successful and appropriately stimulated. When their lives lack such ingredients and the parent is distant or neglectful, it

can result in a child who lacks self-control. Children raised in this parenting style tend to have lower levels of intelligence and low self-esteem.

The following are role-play scenarios designed to illustrate how one common, every day parent-child interaction would be handled by each parenting style:

Scenario: Eight-year-old Lilly lives with both of her parents and is an only child. Lilly is very excited about the party that her best friend Amelia is having this weekend. Lilly has not been cleaning up her room and needs to be repeatedly reminded to do so. Lilly’s mom and dad feel that if Lilly cannot do a better job with cleaning up after herself, she should not go to Amelia’s party.

Authoritarian parenting style

Dad: Lilly, come into the kitchen now, please.

Lilly: Dad, five more minutes, please, I just want to see the end of the show.

Mom: Your father said “now” Lilly. You have five seconds to turn off that TV.

Lilly: Fine, I’m coming. (Walks into kitchen) What’s going on?

Dad: You have not cleaned up your room, again. Your dirty clothes are all over the floor.

Mom: The beads from your jewelry kit are scattered everywhere and it broke the vacuum today.

Dad: Your mother and I are not allowing you to go to Amelia’s party this weekend.



Lilly: No, wait. I'll go clean it right now. Please let me go.

Mom: Absolutely not. You are right that you will go clean up right now, but the party is out of the question. Maybe you will remember how disappointed you are and will clean up after yourself in the future.

Authoritative parenting style

Dad: Lilly, come into the kitchen please, your mother and I need to talk to you.

Lilly: Dad, five more minutes, please. I just want to see the end of the show.

Mom: Lilly, you are watching a DVD. Press pause and come in here.

Lilly: OK. OK. (Walks into the kitchen) What's going on?

Dad: Your mom and I have a deal to make with you. Take a look at this list. (Hands Lilly the cleanup list).

Lilly: One, put dirty clothes in the hamper. Two, pick up all toys and put them in the bin. Three, put all books on bookshelf. Four straighten the sheets and pillows on your bed. I know, I'm sorry, I forgot.

Mom: We know. That's why we made this list. Today is Tuesday and Amelia's party is on Saturday. Every night between now and the party you will need to use this checklist to help you remember what we mean when we say "Cleanup your room." If you do these things every day you can go to the party. If we check your room and the four things on the list aren't done, we're sorry, but you won't be able to go to the party this time.

Lilly: Aw, man. But what if I forget to do it a day or two?

Dad: Lilly, you are a big girl now and I think your Mom and I are being

very fair. Because you left your toys out one of them got caught in the vacuum and now it is broken. So you can either pay for the vacuum (jokingly) or follow this list.

Lilly: Dad, you know I don't have money.

Mom: So this list is looking pretty fair, don't you think?

Lilly: Yeah, OK.

(Lilly understood what was expected of her and understood the consequences. She adhered to the deal she made with her parents and enjoyed her time at Amelia's party.)

Permissive parenting style

Dad: Lilly, your mom and I want to talk to you. Please come into the kitchen.

Lilly: Five more minutes, Dad. I want to see the end of this show.

Mom: Fine. You have five more

minutes.

(15 minutes later)

Lilly: Hey, what's going on?

Dad: Your room is very messy and your mother and I want to know why you haven't cleaned it yet.

Lilly: Mom, Dad, I had so much homework. Ms. Stevens is so hard on us. She said that if we don't finish our work then we won't get to play outside during recess.

Mom: Well, what if we say "If you don't clean up your room, then you won't go to Amelia's party?"

Lilly: (Starts crying) Oh Mommy, no. Please, I'll be good. I'll clean up now. I didn't have the time.

Dad: Lilly, please don't get upset. We didn't want you to cry. We just want you to clean up your room. One of your toys broke the vacuum today.

Lilly: I am so sorry. I'll do a better job. But please let me go to Amelia's. All of my friends will be talking about it on Monday and I won't have anything to say because I wasn't there.

Mom: I will help you with your room between now and Saturday. If you are a good helper then you can go to the party.

Lilly: Oh, thank you. I will help. I promise.

(Lilly had to be reminded everyday to help her mother clean her room. She had a great time at the party.)

Uninvolved

This parent would care little as to whether the room was clean or not. She might clean it herself or have another caregiver do it. She may not even know who Amelia is or that there is a party to look forward to this weekend.



We all want to succeed in our parenting as we all want our children to succeed in life. How we approach discipline and how we nurture our children directly impacts the type of people they become. It's important to recognize what we do right as parents, but also what we do wrong, and realize that we all have something we wish we were doing better.

Dana J. Connelly holds dual Master's Degrees in education and special education, working as an educational evaluator for a New York-based agency. She specializes in applied behavior analysis and is the proud single mother of a 5-year-old boy.

Reference:

Baumrind D. (1991) The Influence of Parenting Style on Adolescent Competence & Substance Use - Journal of Early Adolescence p. 56-95.

A healthy weight

Here are some tips to help your child

BY JAMIE LOBER

New York parents often wonder if their children weighs too much, too little, or are just right. When you have proper insight, you can judge where your child stands and what action, if any, he needs to take to stay at a healthy number.

“For kids in general, we use body mass index to measure where they fall in the healthy weight range,” said Despina Hyde, dietician and diabetes educator with the New York University Langone Weight Management Program.

Acting appropriately when tackling body image and weight issues with your child can make a difference.

“Especially for children who are still growing and developing, it is important that parents understand that the goal is not necessarily to lose weight, but to slow down the rate of weight gain and still allow normal growth and development,” said Hyde.

It is not usually recommended to put kids on a weight-loss diet.

“It is important to encourage plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains,

and to drink lots of water and not caloric beverages, and to reinforce reasonably sized portions,” said Hyde.

The American Heart Association suggests aiming for four to five servings each of fruits and vegetables daily if you consume a 2,000-calorie diet (vegetable or 100-percent fruit juice counts!). The American Heart Association names brown rice, whole-grain cereal, whole-wheat bread, and rye bread as foods with whole grains that are good for you because they are low in saturated fat and cholesterol, but rich in fiber. Chicken and fish are encouraged over red meats because they are lower in saturated fat and cholesterol.

Healthcare professionals find that kids are eating more than they used to in past years, which means it is even more important that parents take a stand.

“You can cut out or reduce calorie-rich treats like high-fat, high-sugar treats or salty snacks in your house, and have fresh fruit and vegetables that are kid-friendly, like grapes, carrots, apples, and bananas around your household instead,” said Hyde.

Parents can use canola, corn or safflower oil as their main kitchen fat.

Also, make sure that dessert is in the evening, rather than all day long.

“Kids need to understand that ice cream is a treat, and not something that should be a normal part of the diet everyday,” said Hyde.

Obesity is not just a health problem, but a psychosocial risk as well.

“Obese children are a target of social discrimination, which can put psychological stress on kids and affect their self-esteem, academic performance, and social life,” said Hyde. These children and adolescents typically carry that on with them into their adulthood, which is dangerous. “Obesity is a predictor for cardiovascular risk, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure,

and abnormal glucose tolerance, so if these issues are treated or prevented in childhood, it will lead your child to live a healthier life overall as adults and prevent the development of some of these diseases.”

Keeping your child at a healthy weight comes down to common-sense math — and limiting screen time.

“You want to make sure your kid is getting adequate nutrition by balancing those calories with the calories he is expending, which means increasing physical activity and limiting screen time,” said Hyde. “The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend television viewing for children below age 2, and it is recommended that it is less than two hours a day, which includes video games, television, and internet.”

Find healthy alternatives to screen time and make having an active lifestyle a family affair.

“You want to try to encourage your child to do more active activities, which will help him in turn expend more calories because what is happening now is that kids are taking in way more calories than they used to, and using less because they are sedentary,” said Hyde.

And keep in mind that kids like to imitate adults, so be a good role model.

“Develop an overall healthy relationship with food, which sets the stage for years to come,” said Hyde. Paying attention to the food labels and asking your doctor for guidance on how to interpret them can also be helpful.

Let your child know that positive lifestyle choices, as well as an annual physical, are important to your family — and to his health. If you are having trouble coming up with practical ideas to make a change, consider consulting with a pediatrician or dietician who can offer some expert guidance as to an approach that will work well for your family.

Jamie Lober, author of “Pink Power” (www.getpinkpower.com), is dedicated to providing information on women’s and pediatric health topics. She can be reached at jamie@getpinkpower.com.

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Young & bipolar

Controversial diagnosis in pediatric and adolescent psychiatry

BY ALLISON PLITT

Doctors for years believed that the onset of a mental illness called bipolar disorder could only begin in early adulthood. But in 1995 two psychiatrists observing children in a psychiatric clinic found that children could exhibit symptoms of the disorder, and doctors began prescribing medications approved for adult use to young children.

According to “The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,” which professional psychiatrists use in order to look at their patient’s symptoms and diagnose their illnesses, bipolar disorder, also known as “manic depression,” is characterized by mood swings between two different, intense states — a “manic” phase in which the patient is hyperactive, shows reckless behavior, acts grandiose, and has racing thoughts, and a “depression” in which the patient is sad, lacks energy, has difficulty concentrating, and can even be suicidal. The length of time that a manic or depressive episode usually lasts is at least one or two weeks.

New findings

In 1995 psychiatrists Dr. Joseph Biederman and Dr. Janet Wozniak were observing children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in a psychiatric clinic at Massachusetts General Hospital, the primary teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder — the most commonly diagnosed childhood behavior disorder, which affects three to five percent of school-aged children — is when kids have problems with inattentiveness, over-activity, and impulsivity.

Doctors Biederman and Wozniak found, however, that some children were having periods of extreme aggressiveness, depression, or anger, and were not getting better by taking stimulants, which are psychoactive drugs that improve concentration and focus for sufferers of the disorder.

Dr. Biederman felt that there was a portion of the kids in his clinic

whose problems with anger seemed to go way beyond normal attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. He and Dr. Wozniak observed these children more closely and saw kids who continued to struggle with intense, uncontrollable outbursts of anger — violent hitting, screaming, and kicking — even after they passed through their preschool years.

While Dr. Wozniak believed children suffering from attention deficit

PART ONE of a series

hyperactivity disorder had difficulty with impulse control, she thought that the other kids dealing with difficult-to-treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder had serious mood problems, which could be defined as bipolar. She wrote up her observations in 1995, in a now-famous paper in which she proposed that some of the kids originally diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder were actually bipolar. Her paper won awards and many physicians believed her insights helped transform their practices.

Dr. David Shaffer, professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Columbia University Medical Center, explained the findings.

“The defining feature of [adult] manic-depression was that it was episodic. You had episodes of depression and episodes of mania and episodes of normal mood, and that was really [bipolar disorder’s] defining characteristic,” he says.

According to Dr. Shaffer, the kids Dr. Wozniak described rarely, if ever, had these kinds of week-long or month-long episodes. In order to make these children fit the traditional concept of bipolar disorder, Dr. Wozniak and Dr. Biederman made the argument that the children experienced these episodes in a different context.

“They said, maybe in childhood the episodes would be very brief and very frequent,” says Dr. Shaffer. “These are called ‘ultra diem,’ you

know, ‘many times a day.’ If you regarded every time children changed their mood, every time they lost their temper or became over excited, as a mood episode, then they were really being misdiagnosed and were really cases of bipolar disorder.”

Critics countered that bipolar disorder should look the same in kids as in adults, and that there were bipolar adults who did not suffer uncontrollable anger issues when they were younger. Nevertheless, the pediatric bipolar disorder diagnosis took off.

Controversial prescriptions

Once psychiatrists learned they could diagnose children as bipolar, the number of cases of children with the illness exploded. Based on a study published in the Archives of General Psychiatry that measured national trends in outpatient visits that resulted in a diagnosis of bipolar disorder, there was a 4,000-percent increase in the number of children diagnosed with bipolar disorder from 1995 through 2010. Suddenly, children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, who were becoming more agitated by taking stimulants, were being treated with antipsychotic medicines, which adults took for bipolar disorder.

“The initial reports from Joseph Biederman and Janet Wozniak started a very controversial period when kids started getting antipsychotics all over the country for disruptive behavior,” stated Dr. Jess Shatkin, an associate professor and director at New York University’s Child Study Center.

Consequently, some doctors began prescribing to children a new breed of antipsychotic medicines that had just come onto the market in 1993 — Geodon, Zyprexa, Abilify, Seroquel, and Risperdal.

Antipsychotic medications are primarily used to manage psychosis, which is when a patient loses touch with reality by having delusions or hallucinations that are often caused by schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Some physicians, on the other hand,



found that when the kids with difficult-to-treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder took these medications, they seemed to settle down and had fewer aggressive outbreaks.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the use of antipsychotics in youth for treating bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, Tourette's syndrome, and irritability stemming from autism. Other physicians, nevertheless, began in the mid-1990s to prescribe these powerful drugs to young children and adolescents to treat conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, and insomnia.

In a 2008 study conducted at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill's School of Public Health, two doctors found that patients under 19 years old accounted for 15 percent of antipsychotic drug use in the U.S. in 2005, compared with seven percent in 1996.

According to Stephen Crystal, a Rutgers University professor who studies the drugs, more than 70 percent of the antipsychotic use in young children

and teenagers has been for off-label mental disorders, like attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a nonpsychotic condition. In other words, the doctors were prescribing these drugs to treat illnesses that the Food and Drug Administration did not approve the medications to be used for.

"In 2010 antipsychotics were one of the most prescribed classes of drugs in the United States. That's remarkable. If you had told us 10 years ago that antipsychotics would soon be one of the most prescribed medications in the U.S., we [psychiatrists] wouldn't have believed you," Dr. Shatkin explained. "Antipsychotics are being increasingly used because so many doctors, most often non-psychiatrists, are prescribing them for sleep, anxiety, agitation, irritability, and to augment an anti-depressant. These medicines are expensive and have great promise, and they also have significant side effects and should be used with great caution."

Unfortunately, the children who have benefited from taking the drugs have also often suffered many docu-

mented side effects. In 2009 the Journal of the American Medical Association conducted a study of young children and adolescents from ages 4 to 19. These patients took four different antipsychotic medications.

In less than 12 weeks the young patients added eight to 15 percent to their body weight after taking the pills. The study concluded that when children and adolescents took certain antipsychotic medications, they risked rapid weight gain and metabolic changes that could lead to diabetes, hypertension, and other illnesses.

The two most severe side effects from taking antipsychotic drugs are a life-threatening nervous system problem called neuroleptic malignant syndrome, and an uncontrollable movement problem called tardive dyskinesia. One mother recounted that her son had taken an antipsychotic medicine for three months before he experienced tardive dyskinesia.

"The muscles in his face were contorted and he looked like a different kid, like frozen in a way," she said. She complained that the doc-

tor who prescribed the medication had never even mentioned the side effects to her.

There is also a decade-long history of lawsuits against pharmaceutical companies that manufacture antipsychotic medications by the patients who use them and experience unreasonably dangerous side effects. Patients also sue the pharmaceutical companies, pharmacies, and physicians for not providing sufficient warnings or instructions regarding the use of these drugs.

Future of disorders

"The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders" does not address pediatric or adolescent bipolar disorder in children, since it was published in 1994, one year before the controversial Massachusetts General Hospital study. An updated manual to be published in May 2013 will define bipolar disorder in children, but psychiatrists have insisted on including a new term for children who do not classify as bipolar.

The newly proposed category is called temper dysregulation disorder, which is seen as a brain or biological dysfunction but not necessarily a lifelong condition. Kids who can be diagnosed with the condition are between the ages of 6 and 18 and have temper outbursts three or more times a week that are grossly out of proportion in intensity or duration to the situation.

By adding this new entry, the American Psychiatric Association is trying to help curb the use of the pediatric bipolar label, which is a lifelong label that some physicians seem hesitant to diagnose in young children.

However, critics think temper dysregulation disorder, also referred to as disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, is too vague a diagnosis and will turn temper tantrums into mental disorders. Its defenders, though, believe there are irritable kids who get excited and overreact, most likely by having tantrums, and whose parents and teachers have trouble dealing with them. If these children are diagnosed with disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, they won't be labeled bipolar, which, according to proponents of the use of the term, can often lead to stigma and the likelihood of taking powerful drugs.

Allison Plitt is a freelance writer who lives in Queens with her husband and daughter. She is a frequent contributor to NY Parenting Media.



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Charter Schools

DIRECTORY

Harlem Hebrew Language Academy Charter School

153 St. Nicholas Avenue
646-801-2427 or www.harlemhebrewcharter.org

Harlem Hebrew Language Academy Charter School is a free public charter school in Manhattan's Community School District 3 that provides students with the foundation to successfully pursue advanced studies and achieve continued personal growth as global citizens. Harlem Hebrew offers a nurturing yet rigorous K-5 curriculum featuring intensive instruction in the modern Hebrew language. Students in our diverse student body develop social and civic responsibility through service learning and community service. Our specialized social studies curriculum explores Israeli history and culture and Harlem's history as a focal point of migration and immigration. Harlem Hebrew opens August 2013 with grades K-1 and will add one grade each year. Like all public schools we are non-sectarian and do not teach religion. All are welcome!

New York French American Charter School

311 West 120th Street
212-666-4134 ext. 105 or www.nyfacs.net

Founded in 2010, NYFACS is the first bilingual Franco-American public charter school in New York and the United States. This school began as an answer to the numerous needs of the francophone community in NYC, specifically in the western Harlem neighborhood where NYFACS is currently located. Even before entering the school, you will most likely hear French being spoken on the street. NYFACS welcome students from Kindergarten to 4th Grade. Next school year, we will be happy to open two fifth grade classrooms and run a full capacity elementary school. The curriculum is a blend of the French Ministry of Education and the NYS Common Core. Our students are hence fully immersed in the French language on their first year, giving them a true opportunity to develop oral and written skills in another language. If you have the chance to come on a tour of the school, you will be impressed to hear French in the hallways, in the classrooms and most likely, in the playground. In addition to the language skills that students develop, we hope to make them the citizen of the world but also via hands-on activities, to engage them in their learning.

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SuccessAcademies.org/Family

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The mission of the bilingual/biliterate **New York French-American Charter School** is to develop global citizens who are well-prepared to assume leadership in a multicultural society.

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 ACROSS NYC

Ten tips for finding the right day camp

BY DENISE MORRISON
YEARIAN

Summer day camp is a place where children can learn new skills, acquire new interests, and make new friends. But there is no one-size-fits-all camp. To find the right day camp for your child, consider these 10 tips.

Consider your child

Talk it over and narrow down the options based on your child's interests and needs. Find out what he wants from the experience and work together to make a list of things he might like to do.

Also consider his developmental needs. Is he ready for an all-day program? Would he be more comfortable in an intimate versus large group setting?

If your child likes sports, but has shown some interest in drama or art, encourage him to step out of

his comfort zone. It just might spark a new passion.

Gather information

Attend camp fairs, or pick up a local camp guide. Circle programs of interest, then comparison shop.

Call each prospective camp to inquire about philosophy, daily schedule, and other topics important to you. Invest this time up front and you may find a camp to stay with for several years.

Traditional or specialty?

When choosing between a traditional versus specialty program, consider this rule of thumb: the younger the child, the more varied the activities should be.

Children between the ages of 7 and 11 thrive in a setting where they can sample a variety of subjects. As their attention span develops, they may want to focus on a

single activity.

If you go with a specialty camp, find out how intense the program is. It may be labeled "specialty," but only have a one- or two-hour component with other activities scheduled in.

Look at location

Find a camp close to your job or home to shorten travel time and allow quick access to your child in an emergency.

Convenience, however, shouldn't be the primary factor. Balance your decision with what the camp has to offer. If your child really wants to participate in a given camp, consider your willingness to drive out of the way. Or, see if there's a neighbor with whom you can carpool.

Ponder program length

Program length should be viewed in light of the family and child's needs. If your schedule dictates him having to stay a full day, ask about before- and after-care. If he's younger, find out about naps or quiet times.

It's also important to find out who runs the before- and after-care program. Is it the same staff your child has all day? What activities will he be engaged in during this time?

Scout out schedules

Before enrolling, ask about the daily schedule. What themes and related activities are planned? Will there be field trips or special guests coming in to keep camp exciting and extend theme-based learning? Will your camper receive any reading, writing, or math experiences? Done properly, kids can enjoy games and activities that keep those academic skills sharp.

Also look at resources the camp has to offer and inquire how often

Questions to ask before choosing a day camp

- Are you licensed by the state or do you hold an accreditation or certification? What exactly does that credential mean?
- What kind of background, training, and experience do counselors and staff have? How are they chosen?
- What is the counselor-to-camper ratio? How many students are in each group? How often are the groups together?
- What kind of medical response is on hand? Camp nurse, or CPR- and first aid-certified staff?
- Are you able to administer medicine?



- What is a typical day like?
- How often will the campers take field trips? Where do they go? Is there increased supervision in populated setting?
- What other resources are available to campers, such as a pool, ice arena, farm, hiking trails, ropes course, archery, etc.? How often will my child be able to participate in these?
- Are lunches or snacks provided?
- Do you offer before- and after-care? Will it be the same staff caring for my child?
- How often are the facilities cleaned?

- What alternative plans do you have for inclement weather?
- What does the camp fee cover? What extra fees will I be required to pay?
- Do you offer scholarships or financial aid?
- What is the refund policy and rules regarding transfer of weeks?
- What is your policy regarding cellphones and other technology items brought to camp?
- How do you handle home-sickness and other adjustment issues?
- What is the discipline policy?
- How do you handle bullying?
- What are your drop-off and pick-up policies?
- Will you provide references?



your child will participate in them. Don't assume that just because there's a pool, ropes course, or archery field on the brochure it will be part of your child's session. Ask to make sure.

Ask about staff

Find out how staff and counselors are chosen, their experience, background, age, and training, as well as counselor-to-camper ratio. The American Camping Association's day camp recommendations are one to six staffers for campers ages 4 to 5, one to eight for ages 6 to 8, one to 10 for ages 9 to 14, and one to 12 for ages 15 to 17. Also ask how counselors are screened and what background checks are done. If you're going with a specialty camp,

what kind of in-depth knowledge and experience do the counselors have teaching the subject?

Consider costs

Compare program costs and find out what the fees actually cover. Some camps include field trips, materials, meals, and T-shirts into their initial fee, with others it's an add-on. Also find out the camp's refund policy and rules regarding transfer of weeks if your plans change or your child gets sick. If the camp is out of your price range, is a scholarship or financial assistance available?

Explore open houses

Visiting an open house can get children acclimated to the environment and give you a better perspec-

tive of the staff, facilities, and activities. Are the staffers smiling and friendly? Do they immediately bond with the children? Are the facilities well maintained, clean, and free of safety hazards?

Peruse policies

Eliminate future problems by reviewing the camp's policies and procedures before you sign up. You don't want to learn after the fact that your child can't turn on his cellphone during camp hours, or that drop-off and pick-up policies differ from what you thought. Share pertinent information with your child, too, so there are no surprises on his end.

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

Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

USA Chess Camp/Active Learning Services

Dalton School
108 East 89th Street
888-652-4377 or www.usachess.com

This summer, Active Learning Services presents a variety of fun and entertaining summer programs. Whether your child is interested in learning or improving their chess skills, designing their own video game, or animated short story, our programs provide expert instruction in a fun filled environment. Chess Camp: Children ages 5-15, beginner to advanced, are welcome! Morning, afternoon and all day camp sessions are available. Campers experience chess instruction and play in a fun-filled environment designed to improve their skills whether they are interested in casual or competitive play. Computer Enrichment Camp/Gamebuilder Video Game Creation Camp: Children ages 8-15. Imagine how much fun your child will have creating and designing their very own video game or animated short story. All that is required is some computer know-how and a bit of imagination because there are no limits!

Camp Lee Mar

450 Route 590 Lackawaxen, PA 18435
215 658 1708 or www.leemar.com
or www.guildedtour.com

In 2013 Camp Lee Mar will celebrate its 61st season as the foremost camp for children with special needs. The founder and director, Ms. Lee Morrone, will celebrate her 61st season; and Ari Segal, owner and executive director, will celebrate his 21st season!

21 seasons working together, an incredible milestone! Lee and Ari's combination of wisdom, experience, and innovations, have made Lee Mar a very unique program, with campers attending from all over the USA and overseas. Campers learn new skills, make friends, and build self esteem, all while having fun! Ari and Lee also bring their personal experiences being parents of children with special needs themselves. Ari also directs The Guided Tour, Inc., a supervised vacation program for adults (17 & up) with developmental challenges. 2013 marks The Guided Tour's 41st year! Visit our website for more information about our programs.

ESF Summer Camps at Riverdale Country School

5250 Fieldston Road Bronx 10471
718-432-4807 or 1-800-529-CAMP
or www.esfcamps.com/Riverdale

ESF Camps (Education, Sports and Fun) is an award-winning, family-owned and operated camp since 1982. ESF features exciting programs offering over 60 activities, a wide variety of sports and new adventures for boys and girls ages 4 to 15.

Day Camp (ages 4-8) features arts & crafts, swimming, sports, music & drama, world cultures, science, martial arts, fencing, theme days, special events and much more.

Sports Camp (ages 6-14) offers instruction and league games in soccer, basketball, baseball, street hockey, lacrosse, team handball, flag football and golf with swimming available daily.

Senior Camp (ages 9-15) offers art, swimming, sports, martial arts, fencing and "True Life Adventures" into the worlds of outdoor adventure, drama, digital photography, cooking, breakdancing, music production and more.

Tennis Camp (ages 6-15) designed for beginner, intermediate and advanced players. Morning, afternoon and full day sessions available.

ESF offers 2-8 week options. An optional extended day program is available. Optional bus transportation from New York City and Westchester County.

Fieldston Outdoors Summer Program

Ethical Culture Fieldston School
3901 Fieldston Road Bronx 10471
718-329-7352 or www.ecfs.org/summer.aspx

Fieldston Outdoors, a program of the Ethical Culture Fieldston School, is a six-week co-ed day camp for ages 5-12 that offers a unique focus on nature and the Hudson River, which campers learn about through songs, folklore and crafts. Trips are an integral part of the experience and include hiking the Hudson Highlands, sailing on the Clearwater sloop and canoeing the Piermont Marshes. Overnight camping is optional for 1st through 6th graders. Additionally, a full range of traditional camp activities is offered, including art, physical education, swimming, dance, gardening and music. Three afternoons campers select from an extensive roster that comprises the "choice program." All campers participate in theme days, such as Strawberry Festival and Carnival. Fieldston Outdoors is committed to the philosophy of the Ethical Culture Fieldston School, which emphasizes the unique value and dignity of the individual, encourages the potential growth in every child and values the importance of sharing experiences in a diverse community. The program offers full and per session rates and financial aid is available. Door-to-door bus service to and from Manhattan is available for an additional cost. Call camp director David Smelin at the number above for additional information.

Gate Hill Day Camp

750 Gate Hill Road, Stony Point, 10980
845-947-3223 or www.GateHillDayCamp.com

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Continued on page 18



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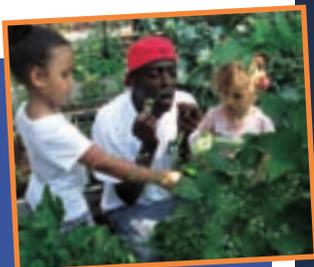
Full/per session rates and financial aid are available. Door to door bus service to and from Manhattan is available for an additional cost.

FOR FURTHER INFO, PLEASE CONTACT:

DAVID SMELIN, DIRECTOR
718-329-7352
FIELDSTONOUTDOORS@ECFS.ORG

FIELDSTON OUTDOORS

ETHICAL CULTURE FIELDSTON SCHOOL
3901 FIELDSTON ROAD, BRONX, NY 10471-3997



Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 16

instilled in every staff member, Gate Hill Day Camp is truly a special place for the whole family. Serving campers ages 3-15, Gate Hill offers flexible 4-8 week sessions. Escape the city this summer with door to door transportation from Manhattan, a large heated pool complex, daily swim instruction, a splash park, shady trails, zip lines, a climbing tower, outdoor adventure, creative and performing arts, athletics, gaga, and much more! Parents are worry free with our constant communication, friendly bus counselor on every bus, and weekly photos. Additional programs in Early Childhood, Explorers: Enrichment & Exploration and Trailblazers: Teen Travel is available. Family tours are available 7 days a week! Call or visit us online for more information.

Joffrey Ballet School

Founded By Robert Joffrey in 1953
434 Avenue of the America's, 3rd, 4th and 5th Floors
212-254-8520 ext 208 or www.joffreyballetschool.com
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Lighthouse Child Development Center

111 East 59th Street
212-821-9600 or www.lighthouse.org/school

The Ethel and Samuel J. LeFrak School at the Lighthouse Child Development Center is a nurturing, integrated, pre-school offering a smart, fun, convenient choice in Midtown for the Summer: Physical education, outdoor play and neighborhood trips. Low teacher-student ratio. Master's degree-level teachers and a multi-lingual staff and highly competitive tuition. Children of all abilities learn together creating a more enriching educational experience. Our curriculum is designed to maximize learning and growth while children enjoy creative and fun activities, make new friends and discover new experiences in a safe and nurturing environment. We currently have openings for Summer and Fall 2013 — Enroll today! For more information, or to make an appointment call 212-821-9608

Marymount Summer Camp

1026 5th Ave, NY, NY 10028
212-744 4486 or www.marymountsummer.org

Marymount Summer Camp offers a variety of specialty programs for children ages 3.5-15 in the heart of New York City. All camps include outdoor sports, weekly swim instruction and field trips. The World Cultures Day Camp (ages 3.5-5) is designed to inspire creative play and discovery through indoor and outdoor activities including music, dance, sports, water play, and nature study. The Drama Camp (ages 5-13) is a creative acting, singing and dance program run by professional teaching artists culminating in the performance of a full musical production. In Science and Technology Camp, (ages 5-13) campers discover the world of natural science and technology through laboratory experiments, state-of-the-art equipment, multimedia activities and field study. In Our Innovation, Design and New Media camp, Campers will use state of the art computer programming, digital media and technological design techniques to invent robotics, make bots, game design, and movie making. Hours are 8:30am-2:30pm (ages 3.5-6) and 8:30am - 3:00pm(ages 7-15). After Camp Program available (ages 7-14) until 5:00pm.

New Country Day Camp:

646-395-4355 or www.14streety.org

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

Oasis in Central Park Summer Program

95th & Central Park West
718-596-4900 or www.oasischildren.com

For more than ten years, in association with the Central Park Conservancy, Oasis has provided children with a fantastic opportunity to play and learn in the great outdoors without ever leaving Manhattan. Located on the Upper West Side, Oasis utilizes Central Park's incred-

Continued on page 20

New Country Day Camp



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www.NewCountryDayCamp.org



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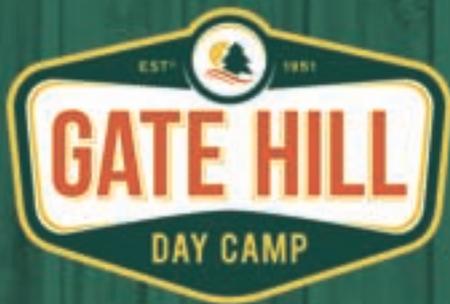
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Summer Camps/Programs

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 18

ible collection of recreational facilities including tennis and basketball courts, softball fields, soccer fields, nature trails, and an incredible Olympic-sized outdoor swimming pool. Oasis also utilizes two indoor facilities, including their new home at The Mandell School on Columbus Ave, with access to classrooms, gymnasiums, an auditorium, and other large meeting spaces. A traditional day camp in every way, Oasis in Central Park's program includes sports and recreation, visual and performing arts, recreational and Red Cross instructional swim, field trips, and an outdoor education component that includes environmental studies, orienteering and much more. Oasis in Central Park is the perfect opportunity for children to have an active and safe summer while making lifelong friends along the way! Oasis day camp is for kids ages 4-11. For emerging teens ages 12-14 Oasis offers the Teen Travel program which gives emerging teens the opportunity to take unique trips every day. At Oasis, children enroll for a minimum of two consecutive weeks, a maximum of eight weeks, or any combination you choose. Families have the advantage to enroll their children around their summer plans! Oasis in Central Park is open this summer from July 1st to August 23rd.

Oasis Downtown Summer Program

285 Delancey St. Lower East Side, Manhattan
718-596-4900 or www.oasischildren.com

Oasis Downtown is located in the heart of Manhattan's Lower East Side New for 2013, Oasis will partner with Kids Creative to offer a wide variety of performing arts instruction and activities! Still a traditional day camp in every way, other activities include sports and recreation, swim lessons, field trips, and special events. Children have fun participating at the annual carnival, in-camp Olympics, talent shows and themed weeks. Oasis campers also engage in a wealth of enriching activities such as cooking, martial arts, and creative writing. Oasis provides children with all the tools to be active, safe, and develop lifelong friendships this summer! Oasis utilizes East River Park for plenty of outside summer fun. Oasis Downtown is for kids ages 4-12 and is open this summer July 1st through August 23rd. At Oasis, children enroll for a minimum of two consecutive weeks, a maximum of eight weeks, or any combination you choose. Families have the advantage to enroll their children around their summer plans!

Open Lines Summer Learning Programs

352 7th Ave, Suite 305
212-430-6800 or www.OpenLinesGroups.com

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Literacy Specialists lead small groups of children ages 2-4 in a variety of play, learning, and socialization activities. A small group environment allows for individualized attention, customized to meet the needs of each child to allow for faster social-emotional, language, and academic development, as well as private school readiness. Our groups are lead by certified and licensed Speech-Language Pathologists and NYS-certified Teachers holding Masters Degrees from Columbia University. Classes include strategies for parents/caregivers to facilitate carryover in the home and other environments. Receive weekly, individualized reports of your child's progress. Choose (3) 2-hour classes per week. Classes are offered Monday-Friday: 9:30AM-11:30AM or 1:00PM-3:00PM. Pay in advance one month at a time. For more information please call or visit our website.

Spring Lake Day Camp

234 Conklingtown Road, Ringwood, NJ
973-831-9000

Just 25 miles from the GWB, Spring Lake Day Camp of Ringwood, NJ is the place to be. Our 30 acre campus is a kids paradise offering a well balanced swim, sports and arts program. Our unique daily camp experience offers a 5 acre lake for boating and fishing, heated pools with water slides, awesome athletic fields, adventure ropes, shade and plenty of indoor facilities for rainy day events. Catered lunch, door to door air-conditioned mini-bus transportation and uniform shirts included. We are the perfect choice for Manhattan campers. We are not just a camp, we are a family. SLDC is single family owned and operated since 1989 by Mitchell and Michelle Kessler who currently reside on the Upper West Side. We are proud to be celebrating our 25th Anniversary. Every child deserves a SLDC Summer.

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325 Park Avenue (at 51st Street)
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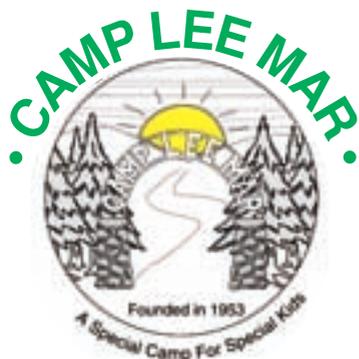
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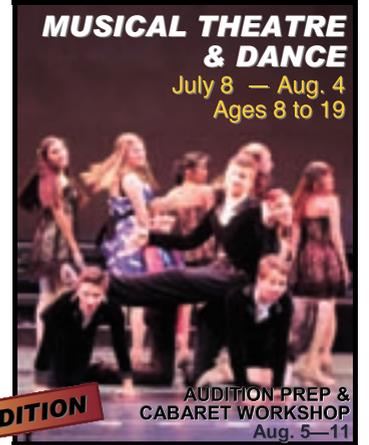


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Should your child go to camp with a friend?

A big question without an easy answer

BY LAURIE ROBERTS KAROL

Heading off to sleep-away camp can be a fearful time for both parent and child. In many instances, a child simply will not agree to go without the comfort of a friend or acquaintance.

It's one of the most frequently asked questions I hear as a professional summer camp advisor. The answer is never absolute. Let me provide some food for thought to guide you through making the best decision for your child.

In a perfect world, camp directors would prefer that each new camper come to camp without a current buddy, thereby putting all new campers on a socially even play-

ing field. Without the security of knowing a friend is by your child's side, the general consensus is that he will be more open and available to forge new relationships. It also gives him leeway to re-invent his persona without question or judgment from someone who may perceive him differently based on their existing relationship. So much for the perfect world — now let's move on to reality!

This is a time where a parent should listen to her gut instinct and proceed in the manner she feels is best for her child — not the child's friend, or the other child's parents. Take time to play out some of the scenarios that can occur.

Let me present a few:

Brittany and Nicole are good friends who go to school together and can't imagine being separated for the summer. Their families went through the search process together and have mutually agreed on a camp for the girls. Summer arrives and both girls happily board the bus, feeling quite comfortable sitting next to one another. Once at camp and settled into their new summer environment, it is inevitable that one of the girls will make a new connection first. How will the other girl feel? Will one feel left out or abandoned if she hasn't made a new friend yet? Will she feel like a tag-along in the wake of her friend's excitement? Will she write a letter home reflective of her feelings? How might this impact your relationship with the other child's mother?

Michael and Jared have been in day camp together since they were 3. The boys were reluctant to go to sleep-away camp, but the prospect of going away together provided enough security for each of the boys to agree. The families mutually select a camp for the boys and after months of shopping and packing, the camp buses will be leaving in a week. Jared has an unfortunate accident on the soccer field, breaks his foot, and has to stay home. Is Michael prepared to go without him?

Take the time to think these and other scenarios through. Discuss them with your spouse, your child, and the friend's parents. If your gut still tells you that this is the best formula for success, then by all means, sign them up together.

Keep in mind that together does not always mean they have to be in the same bunk. Most camps will have more than one bunk of campers in a division, and may have more than one division within an age group. Requesting separate bunks or divisions can give each child a different core to his experience, yet still provide the comfort of having a friend nearby.

Sleep-away camp is a time to grow as an individual, gain independence, participate in new activities, and learn to be part of a community of peers. Your ultimate decision on what camp to choose for your child and whether or not he should go with a friend should consider maximizing the benefits of the total camp experience.

Laurie Roberts Karol is a professional camp consultant with The Camp Experts and Teen Summers, a free summer camp and teen program advisory service that guides families through the decision-making process and assists in planning summer camp visitations. For more information, visit www.campexperts.com or contact her at (718) 766-8005 or (516) 780-6464.



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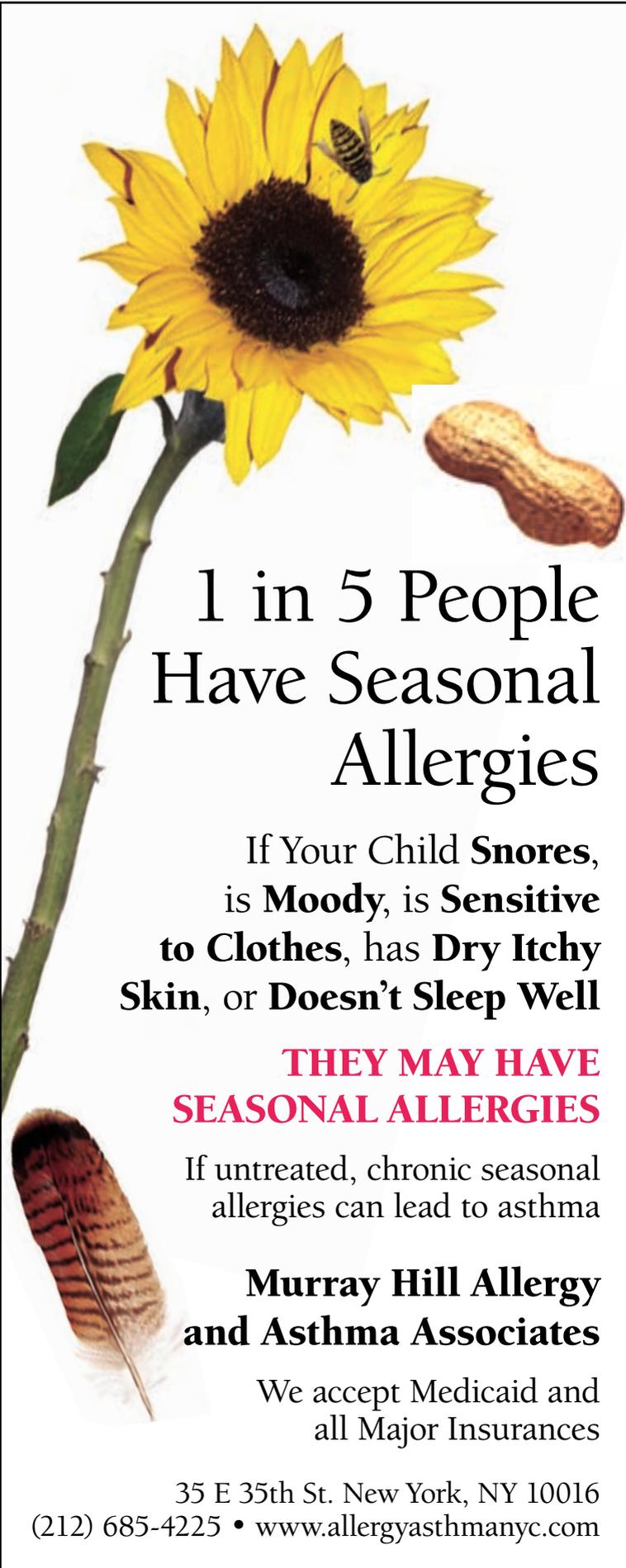
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Questions to ask the pediatrician

BY JAMIE LOBER

The pediatrician is one of the most valuable players in your child's life. It is critical that you feel comfortable talking with your doctor and sharing the most intimate details of your child's life, growth, and development. This way, your doctor can help your child stay well.

If you do not already have a pe-

diatrician that you like and trust, take the time to interview a few. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests asking about the doctor's background and training, general office procedures, medical school, residency, finding someone who is conveniently located, learning the office policy on taking and returning phone calls, and deciding if you want someone in a group practice with other physicians.

Other important deciding factors may include whether you can make an appointment on short notice if your child has a sore throat or infection, if the doctor communicates clearly about illnesses and treatments, and what the fees are for sick visits, routine examinations, and immunizations.

Once you have identified who this essential player in your child's life will be, try to give a holistic picture of your child's overall wellness.

"First and foremost, make sure your pediatrician thinks your child is developing normally in terms of physical development, mental health development, and social and emotional development," says Dr. Kirsten Cullen Sharma, clinical assistant professor in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at New York University Langone Medical Center. For some, language development may be a concern and

Allowing the pediatrician to get to know your child makes it easier for him to be counseled on healthy living.

a developmental pediatrician may come in handy.

"They can comment on whether children are hitting language or motor milestones, and if further evaluation is required, they can take the extra step and do more of an in-depth evaluation," says Dr. Sharma. The pediatrician should not just be someone you see when your child is sick.

"You should have a relationship with the pediatrician from the time you come home from the hospital with your baby, and you should have a schedule so you feel like you are getting regular checkups annually and making sure whatever vaccines, hearing, and vision screenings are followed according to the time table," she adds.

Allowing the pediatrician to get to know your child makes it easier for him to be counseled on healthy living.

"Recommendations can be given on healthy eating, physical activity, and how much media and technology access kids should have," says Dr. Sharma.

Parents should pay attention to their kids and point out any changes to the pediatrician.

"If you see your child is not talking much, maybe he is shy or quiet and that is within the normal range, or maybe he needs more clinical support to help him speak more in public," says Dr. Sharma. "If a child is anxious in general or has specific fears about things, find out if that is within normal limits or something that requires help, strategies, and support for the family and child."

If you suspect your child has a delay, address it and seek therapeutic support so you can have the best outcome. The pediatrician will let you know if he is on par in all aspects of growth and development, both physical and otherwise.

"There is a growth and weight chart of what is considered nor-

mal, but there is also a range for other domains like language and fine motor skills, and parents need to be aware of those things," says Dr. Sharma.

Help your child view the pediatrician as a friend and advocate, rather than someone to be feared.

"It is helpful for families to have a support person in the medical field who can pay attention to those things that parents might not pick up on their own," says Dr. Sharma, adding let nervous children know that everyone sees a pediatrician. "It is important for them to know that all kids go and the pediatrician helps them stay healthy, gives the family good advice on how to live a healthy lifestyle, and is a support person who really cares about children."

Of course, it is normal for children to feel anxious about visits.

"Some kids are scared to go because a common fear is getting shots, so one of the best things the pediatrician can do is explain to the child and parent exactly what is happening before he does it," says Dr. Sharma. This means if your child is getting a shot, the pediatrician should tell what it is, why it is being done, how long it will take and what it feels like.

"It is about helping the child to be comfortable and let them know what is going to happen at every step along the way because it eases anxiety for a lot of them," she says.

Let your child do some talking.

"It is helpful for kids to bring questions to the pediatrician because it helps them feel involved," says Dr. Sharma.

Take a journal with you and write down your child's measurements and how he is doing. Ask questions about medications, vaccines and vitamins. Remember that your child does not want to spend a lot of time with the pediatrician, and time is limited.

"If you come in with your list of questions in advance and maybe tell the nurse what concerns you want answered, the doctor can focus that time on your concerns and it is helpful," said Dr. Jennifer Shu, spokesman for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Jamie Lober, author of "Pink Power" (www.getpinkpower.com), is dedicated to providing information on women's and pediatric health topics. She can be reached at jamie@getpinkpower.com. © 2013 Jamie Lober

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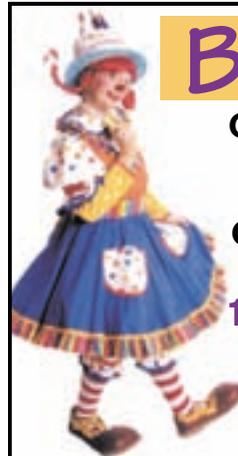


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SPARK of activity

A program works to improve gym class and fight childhood obesity

BY MARY CARROLL WININGER

The epidemic of childhood obesity is well on the rise: 17 percent of children are obese today as opposed to five percent 30 years ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. And in 2010, the Centers for Disease Control reported that more than a third of children and adolescents were considered overweight or obese.

Budget cuts have left some schools with few teachers and less equipment for traditional gym class. This means kids may have gym only once a week — barely enough time to work up a sweat, let alone burn off any significant calories. How did this happen, and what can be done to fix it? A public health organization in San Diego is working to change this, and to revolutionize the way physical education is taught and experienced in this country.

Obesity is defined as having an excessive amount of body fat to the detriment of one's own health. It's a medical condition that is hard enough to face as an adult, with all of the physical and emotional challenges that come with it. But there is something altogether more poignant about a child being overweight, because he's experiencing these same challenges at a time in his life that should be joyful and carefree.

Food intake is a major part of the problem, of course. Portion sizes have ballooned in the last 50 years, and the increased reliance on sugary drinks and fast food isn't helping. According to the book "Fast Food Nation," people spent \$6 billion on fast food in 1970. In 2000, it was more than \$110 billion.

Lack of physical activity, however, seems to be inflicting the most damage upon America's kids, which is even more distressing when you realize that children are no longer naturally doing what they've always done — playing. As a result of overloaded schedules, too much homework, or a preponderance of video games, kids today aren't getting nearly enough activity. And nowadays kids can no longer rely on even school-sanctioned activity like physical education.

Originally created with the goal of building a better physical education class, Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids, known as SPARK, is a program that trains teachers and other recreation leaders on how to lead children and teens through research-based curriculum that fosters wellness.

It was implemented in 1989 as a "solution to the then-growing childhood obesity epidemic," says Billy Beltz, the marketing manager. "The National Institutes of Health decided to do a research project to find out if a better physical education program was possi-

ble, and to see the positive outcomes that could result."

The original SPARK task force noticed in its research that most of gym class time consisted of kids doing a lot of waiting. Waiting their turn in line during kickball. Waiting for the ball to come to them when playing fullback in soccer. Waiting to be picked for a team. There were — and are to this day — "physical education programs that were not as active and engaging as they should [have been]," says Beltz. "It was such that the level of activity in class time was not optimized."

In order to maximize class time, the SPARK staff sought out to make gym "active, inclusive, and fun" and engage every kid — even the least athletic — from the minute they walk in. In SPARK-driven gym classes, kids work in small groups, doing vigorous physical activities that are disguised as fun for the duration of class. The ultimate aim of the program is to foster a lifelong love of exercise and physical activity.

"By helping kids to be more active and engaged during class time, we find they enjoy physical education class more, and [then] it spills over into after-school activity and beyond. They're more inclined to stay physically active throughout their lives," says Beltz.

So how do parents get involved, especially if they notice their child's school's gym program is lacking?

"It starts with asking the right questions, and engaging," says Beltz. "Sometimes the school doesn't know, and even the parents may not know what kind of situation they're in. Have the physical education programs at the child's school been assessed? How often is P.E. being offered, and for how long? It starts by making sure you have [the] answers and everyone's aware. Then you advocate for a quality physical education program that is evidence-based and is proven to work."

Mary Carroll Wininger is a writer based in New York City. She is a frequent contributor on topics ranging from etiquette to feng shui.



Kids enjoy SPARK-based physical education classes.

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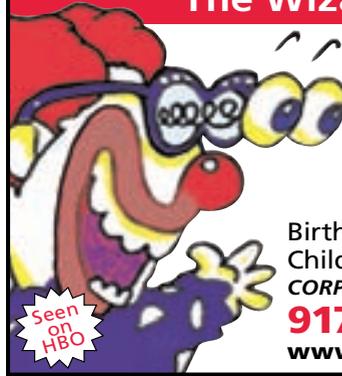
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The nightly grind

Don't lose sleep over nighttime tooth grinding

BY MALIA JACOBSON

Deep, even breathing. Blankets softly rustling. The occasional sigh. These sweet sounds of children asleep are music to a weary parent's ears — until the serenity is pierced by the unmistakable noise of grinding teeth!

When I tiptoed past my slumbering preschooler's bedroom one night, I heard her peaceful sleep sounds shattered by the bone-rattling, fingernails-on-a-blackboard racket of her tiny teeth, gnashing away.

I lapsed into a moment of parental panic. Surely, this would damage her teeth! Did she do this every night? Was she overstressed? Should I wake her?

The grinding noises tapered off after a few minutes, but my questions continued.

Many parents will hear their children's teeth grinding at some point. A study in *Journal of Dentistry for Children* found that more than a third of parents report the condition

in their children.

"It can get pretty loud," admits Dr. Paul Bussman, spokesperson for the Academy of General Dentistry.

Though teeth grinding, or bruxism, may be alarming or worrisome, it's generally a normal part of the growing process, he says.

Grinding can begin in babyhood — as soon as children have teeth to grind — and generally starts to subside as the permanent teeth begin to erupt, says Dr. Bussman. The condition commonly disappears on its own in childhood, but a small percentage of kids will continue to grind as adults. Severe or persistent grinders may suffer facial pain, ear aches, jaw-joint disorders, damaged teeth, and disturbed sleep.

According to Dr. Khaleel Ahmad of the Iowa Sleep Disorders Center, researchers haven't pinned down a cause for bruxism. Genetics may play a role — if either parents grinds their teeth at night, children are 1.8 times more likely to grind their own.

Daytime stress and medicines like amphetamines have been associated with bruxism. Interestingly, nearly a third of grinders also bite their nails, and more than 20 percent suck their thumbs, says Dr. Ahmed.

If your child's teeth have become nighttime noisemakers, here are some tips for coping:

Do not disturb

"Don't wake a child engaged in nighttime teeth grinding," says Dr. Bussman.

"They're not aware of it, so bringing it to their attention will probably confuse them."

Stress less

Grinding can be associated with daytime stress, so help kids relax. Ask them to talk about any stressful events they may have encountered during their day, and encourage them

to unwind in the hours before bedtime with a bath, books, and quiet activities.

Practice healthy habits

Help your child maintain good sleep habits, with an age-appropriate bedtime, a regular bedtime routine, and a cool, dark, quiet, and comfortable sleep environment.

Back off

Bruxism occurs more commonly during back sleeping. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends back sleeping for infants, but older children who grind may be more comfortable sleeping in another position.

Get a move on

Encourage kids to get adequate exercise. Physical activity helps kids fall asleep faster, promotes deep, restful sleep, and eases stress, which can contribute to teeth grinding.

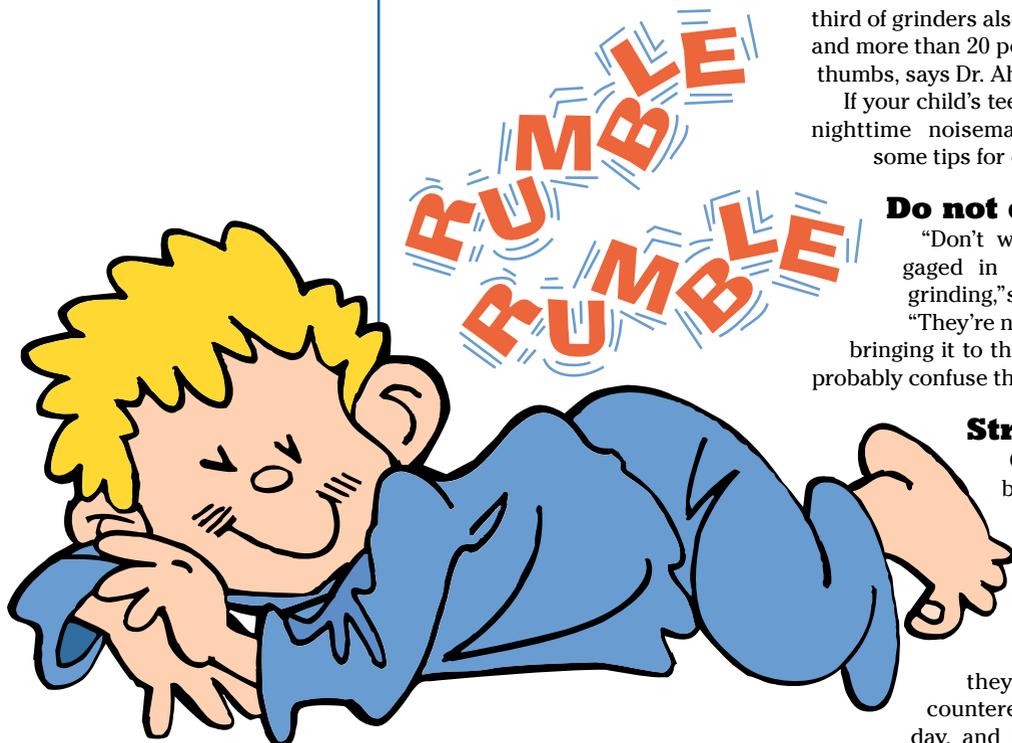
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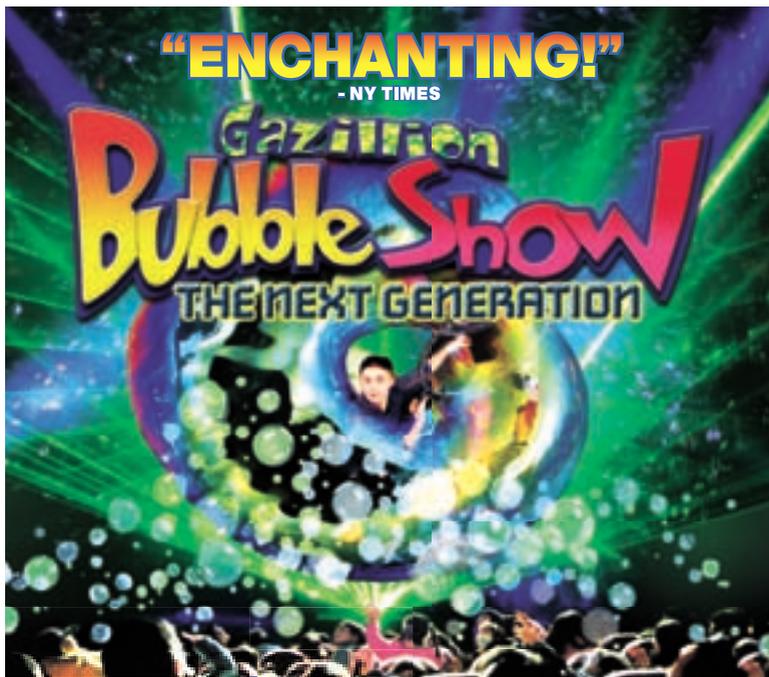
As difficult as it may be, try not to become overly concerned with the occasional episode of bruxism. Dr. Bussman advises parents to turn down the volume on monitoring devices so they aren't tuned in to every little sound.

If grinding regularly interferes with sleep or if a child complains of pain in his teeth or face, see a dentist. In severe cases, a dentist may prescribe a nightguard made of soft plastic to protect the teeth and the jaw joint. Occasionally, grinding is associated with a misaligned bite. If that's the case, a pediatric dentist will refer your child to an orthodontist.

Thankfully, my little bruxist has eased up. But if I hear more teeth-gnashing noises coming from her room, I'll be better prepared — and I'll worry a lot less.

Malia Jacobson is a freelance journalist and mom who writes frequently about children's sleep and health topics. Her latest book is "Sleep Tight, Every Night: Helping Toddlers and Preschoolers Sleep Well Without Tears, Tricks, or Tirades."





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DEAR
DR. KARYN
DR. KARYN GORDON

Seven tips to give feedback effectively

Dear Dr. Karyn,

Are there some special kinds of tips a parent should use to give feedback well? I've been told by my husband and two kids that I'm not very good at it! Help!

Dear Parent,

Great question! The topic of feedback is definitely one of those topics where the tools are exactly the same for parents, young adults, employees, or managers! Feedback done well strengthens relationships and is one of the best ways we can improve personally and professionally, so learning how to give and receive it are essential skills! Below are seven tips below on how to give feedback effectively!

Understand that no one can read your mind

Many people shy away from giving feedback thinking, "they should know this," or, "I shouldn't have to tell them." The reality is that no one can read our minds, so it's our responsibility to tell them our thoughts. Keep in mind that there is no such thing as reality, only perception. So when sharing your feedback, be sure to say "From my perspective," or, "the way I see it." Remember that people will see (and remember) different perspectives.

Pick your timing carefully

When giving feedback, you want to make sure that the receiver will hear it, so to help this, make sure you choose the timing carefully! The best time is when you are relaxed, the receiver is relaxed, and you have the time to discuss it further (employees will often say lunchtime works the best, and parents often say evening is the ideal time).

Be sure to use 'I'

When having the courage to voice your thoughts, be careful with your language and be sure to use "I" (I think, I feel, I value, I need). Using the word "you" will often trigger a



defensive reaction in others, and as a result they won't hear what you are trying to say. The key is that you want to respect yourself by voicing what you really think, while respecting your listener in the process.

Start positive

Before bringing up an issue, be sure to first tell the person what he is doing well (give authentic examples). Some people find this manipulative, sneaky, or "a waste of time" (so I've been told). I find this tip essential for two reasons: First, while we all have areas to work on, there are likely other areas that we are doing well in, so it's more of a full picture to tell a person both sides. Secondly, anyone who has studied human motivation knows that most people are far more motivated to change, and more likely to listen, when they are told first what they are doing well! For this tip to work, though, praise must be given regularly! If people only hear positive encouragement at the time of critical feedback, they will start to resent it.

Be specific about what needs to change

When addressing the criticism, be specific with what needs to be

changed. A lot of people use negative statements, which are very ineffective ("You never clean your room"). Focus on telling the person what you do want, not just what you don't want (it's more clear and it's more positive). For example, "I really need you to tidy your room before you watch TV"

Get to the point

These type of conversations can be difficult (and draining for many) so you want to get to the point as quickly and effectively as you can! Don't beat around the bush or give five examples — stay focused!

Ask for feedback

The most effective types of conversations around feedback are when they are two-way, not one-way. So be sure to give time to ask the receiver his thoughts on what you've said. It allows you to know what he is thinking, strategize possible solutions, and also helps him to clarify what you need from him.

Dr. Karyn Gordon is the best-selling author of "Dr. Karyn's Guide to the Teen Years" (Harper Collins), a relationship and parenting expert, speaker, and founder of dk leadership, www.dkleadership.org. Follow her on Twitter and Facebook.



DEATH BY CHILDREN

CHRIS GARLINGTON

Sick notes that can cure any sickness

My son misses school a lot. Or, he did, until I discovered the awesome power of sick notes.

Now, he won't stay home even if he's bleeding and on fire. He'd rather expire in the nurse's office than have to turn in one of these:

"To whom it may concern, Please excuse Connor for his absence Nov. 1, as he was working on his port de bras. Allow him extra time between classes as he will be practicing his battement fondu. Also, do you sell tutus in school colors? Go Tigers! Entrechat!"

"To whom it may concern, Please excuse Connor's absence Oct. 9; Connor was severely ill after eating a significant volume of library paste."

"To whom it may concern, Connor was absent Sept. 14 after receiving multiple needle gun wounds in Halo 3. He respawned later in the day, alas, too late to make it to school on time."

"To whom yadda yadda yadda, Connor was late today because he was trapped in the shower by a spider. I urge caution when approaching him, he's kind of jumpy."

"People, listen: Connor was late Tuesday because we couldn't find a McDonald's that had cinnamon buns. We went to four different drive-thrus. Also, we ran out of gas."

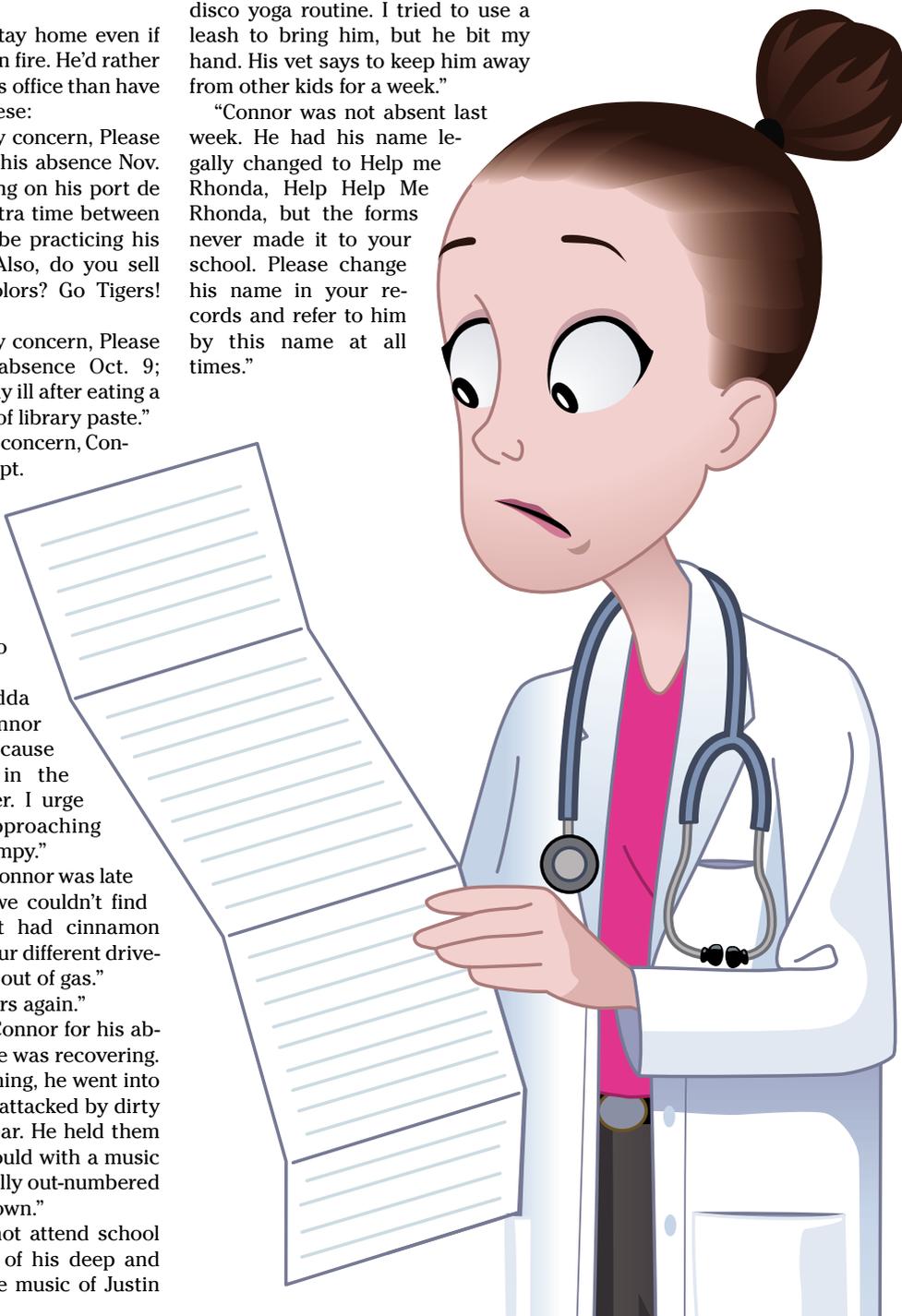
"To whom, spiders again."

"Please excuse Connor for his absence Monday as he was recovering. Early Monday morning, he went into his closet and was attacked by dirty jeans and underwear. He held them off as long as he could with a music stand, but they finally out-numbered him and he went down."

"Connor could not attend school Thursday because of his deep and abiding love for the music of Justin Bieber."

"Connor was late Monday after getting stuck in the 'Downward Facing Dog' pose during his morning disco yoga routine. I tried to use a leash to bring him, but he bit my hand. His vet says to keep him away from other kids for a week."

"Connor was not absent last week. He had his name legally changed to Help me Rhonda, Help Help Me Rhonda, but the forms never made it to your school. Please change his name in your records and refer to him by this name at all times."





Can we talk?

Six reasons you should get your tween a cellphone

BY PAM MOLNAR

When my oldest daughter was in fifth grade, she started asking about cellphones. Evidently, some of her friends had recently acquired a cellphone of their own.

My first reaction was to assume

that their parents were crazy and were simply giving in to the wants of a spoiled tween. Why did a fifth-grader need a cellphone?

According to a report for the National Consumer League, conducted by Opinion Research Corporation International in 2012, nearly six out of 10 parents of tweens (ages 8 to 12) got

cellphones for their children. Thankfully, the majority of the parents did not take their decision lightly. The report showed that parents take the steps to phone ownership slowly by reading articles, talking with other parents, and comparing cellular service before taking the plunge. The result was a better understanding of

It is a comfort to a parent to know that she can call her children to see if they arrived safely, or to tell them of a change of plans to pick them up.

the benefits of buying a cellphone for their tween.

• **Peace of mind.** The most obvious reason to get a cellphone for your tween is the security of being able to reach her when she is not at home. Many middle-school kids take a bus to school for the first time and prefer to walk to the bus stop alone. As your children get older, their activity level increases, taking them away from home more often. It is a comfort to a parent to know that she can call her children to see if they arrived safely, or to tell them of a change of plans to pick them up.

• **Comfort for your child.** It is reassuring for parents to be able to reach their children, but the kids also feel more secure. Your tween is trying to spread her wings and gain a little independence, but she still finds comfort in the fact that her parents are a phone call away. When my son — my youngest child — got a phone, he felt better knowing that if he didn't see me the moment practice got out, he could call to see if I was on my way. He could also call to ask for permission to go home with a friend after school, knowing I would worry if I didn't see him by 3:45 pm.

• **A way to communicate with friends.** A cellphone is very handy to use as a phone, but most of the communication from your child's phone will be in the form of texting.

"We got our son a cellphone for safety reasons first, but also because using technology to communicate, learn, and play has become the way of the world," explains Tamara Ortegel, a mother of three.

Unlike our generation, our children don't have to wait in line to use the kitchen phone to get the math assignment from a friend. Your tweens can simply send their friends a text. As a parent, you can monitor who they are texting by sporadically checking the old mes-

sages, or when the phone is left in the charger at night.

• **Teaches responsibility.** Having a cellphone gives your tween the chance to try a little responsibility. Letting your child out the door with her cellphone does not guarantee that it will come back in working condition, or at all. Tell your tween that she get one phone and she has to take care of it. My oldest child is notorious for losing and breaking her phone, but I refuse to carry insurance on it. Her punishment for irresponsibility was to use grandma's old phone with the antenna and no key board.

• **Strengthen relationships with family.** One of the benefits that you may not expect is better communication with the extended family. Lisa Yore, a mother of four, believes her son has become more connected to family members.

"My son has the phone numbers of aunts, uncles, and his grandmother. They have had conversations and told him that if he ever needs to talk or needs anything, he shouldn't hesitate to call them."

Getting a simple, "Good luck at your game" text from Grandma tells the kids that she is thinking of them.

• **Save money.** With the addition of cellphones in your house, your landline will become obsolete.

"We got Jack a phone because we switched our TV and internet provider and got rid of the land line because no one used it except him," explains Stacy Bella, a mother of four. "His sisters all had cellphones and it was cheaper to do that than it was to keep the land line."

With the addition of each new cellphone in the house, the few calls that come into your home phone are telemarketers. To balance the increasing cellphone bill, many eliminate their landline completely.

As the parent, it is up to you to set the rules regarding limits and expectations. Teach your tween about the responsibility that goes with owning a phone, and explain the repercussions for losing or damaging it. Above all, remind your tween that having a phone is not a right, it is a privilege.

Pam Molnar is a freelance writer and mother of busy a teenager and two active tweens. Their activities often keep them away from home, but it is a comfort to all to know that they are only a phone call (or text) away.

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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Can the arsenic scare be justified?

Is a recent story about arsenic-laced rice true?

Most parents were startled by the headlines warning about arsenic-laced rice. The grain has long been a first solid food for babies, and it's a nourishing staple in many households, especially in Latino and Asian homes. And rice — in the form of pasta, bread, cereals, and pizza crust — is increasingly eaten by those sticking to a gluten-free diet.

Arsenic is a chemical element found in water, food, air, and soil. It can be either organic or inorganic. If plants are grown in areas with arsenic in the soil or water, some of that arsenic can find its way into those plants.

The headlines

Last September, Consumer Reports released the results of indepen-

dent lab tests that found inorganic and organic arsenic in a variety of rice and rice products, including organic and conventional products.

What did the headlines not reveal? Rice contributes 17 percent of dietary exposure to inorganic arsenic, but fruits and fruit juices contribute 18 percent, and vegetables 24 percent.

Consumers Union hopes its report encourages the Food and Drug Administration to set limits, as there is no federal limit for arsenic in most foods. The standard for drinking water is 10 parts per billion (ppb) and 23 ppb in fruit juice. According to the USA Rice Federation, one ppb is equal to a single drop of water in an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

Should you be concerned?

The fact that rice contains arsenic is old news. In the opinion of many health professionals, Consumer Reports did a disservice by publishing analytical data showing that rice contains arsenic without answering the question of what is known about the effects of very low doses.

The American Academy of Pediatrics says “additional research is needed before recommendations can be made on the possible risks involved in consuming these food products, including baby cereal.” It also says “at the individual level, offering children a variety of foods, including products made from oats and wheat, will decrease children’s exposure to arsenic derived from rice.”

Consumer Reports recommendations for children (serving sizes are uncooked)

Infant cereal (1/4 cup): One serving a day

Hot cereal (1/4 cup): 1-3/4 servings a week

Rice-based ready-to-eat cereal (1 cup): 1-1/2 servings a week

Rice drink (like rice milk): None

Rice (1/4 cup): 1-1/4 servings a week

Rice pasta (2 oz): 1-1/2 servings a week

Rice crackers: Eight to nine crackers a day

Rice cakes (1-3): One serving a week

Cooking tips

Rinse your rice. The Administration cites several studies that show thoroughly rinsing rice until the water is clear (four to six changes of water) reduces arsenic content by about 25 to 30 percent.

Cook and drain like pasta. Using about six parts water to one part rice, cook the rice, then drain off the water. Studies suggest cooking in excess water can reduce total arsenic levels by 50 to 60 percent.

Final thoughts

As Dr. David Katz wrote in his US News and World Report blog, “I look forward to FDA guidelines regarding safe levels of arsenic in foods. In the interim, though, brown rice will remain a part of my diet, as will other foods containing rice — just as vegetables and fruits do despite some potential for contaminants there, and just as fish does despite the mercury. Perfectly pure food is, alas, not available on this planet. So those of us living here should focus on net health effects rather than the media hype du jour, and do the best we can with the food supply we’ve got.”

Christine M. Palumbo, registered dietitian, is a nutritionist based in Naperville, Ill., who is on the faculty of Benedictine University. She loves to warm up leftover brown rice for breakfast. Follow her on Twitter @PalumboRD, Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition, or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.





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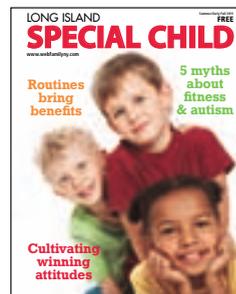
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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

The health benefits of owning a pup

When parents consider getting a pet, many tend to look at the negatives, such as cleaning up after the animal, while others claim that living with animals is merely unsanitary at best. There has been much said about the ways that pets cause health hazards to people. From pregnant women emptying dirty cat litter, to allergens in pet dander, to dog bites, to eczema brought on by fur, pets take the blame for a host of health hazards.

However, there are also specific ways in which pets — and dogs in particular — improve our health. (And there is nothing quite like the unconditional love that a dog can bring to a family!)

Here are five definite instances in which dogs rescue us in the health department:

Exercise: It's a no-brainer that when you have a dog, you just walk more than you would if you didn't have one. The American Journal of Public Health and the American Journal of Preventive Medicine have both confirmed that "children with dogs spend more time doing moderate to vigorous activity than those without dogs, and adults with dogs walk on average almost twice as much as adults without dogs."

Cardiovascular benefits: Besides the effects of exercise on cardiovascular health, owning dogs brings a sense of calm and peace that enhance a person's cardiovascular condition over the long run. There is also a reduced risk of high blood pressure and cholesterol levels for dog owners. Plus, a study published in the American Journal of Cardiology reports that "male dog owners were less likely

to die within one year after a heart attack than those who did not own a dog."

Doctor visits: In general, people who own dogs go to the doctor less. In a study out of Australia, dog and cat owners made significantly less visits to the doctor than those who didn't own pets.

Illness: When people are hospitalized for long periods of time, they benefit dramatically from visits with dogs trained in pet therapy, as well as visits from their very own pups at home. Luckily, more hospitals are realizing this, and with help from pet organizations, are creating programs in which sick children and adults can have hospital visits from their own pets. The results have been amazing.

Anxiety: There is perhaps nothing better than taking care of a dog, and giving and receiving the unconditional love that only a pup

can bring to person who is worried or anxious. When my daughter was first diagnosed with an autoimmune disease at the age of 9, we adopted an adult chihuahua mix who had encountered a lifetime of suffering herself. Hayley had been abused and required a lot of attention and pampering. My daughter desperately needed something to take her mind off her ailments and there was no better remedy for her anxiety and panic attacks brought on by her disease than to care for this abused little dog. Five years later, they have helped each other very much to heal and retain a very special, loving relationship.

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find her on Facebook and Twitter @DanniSull-Writer, or on her blog, Just Write Mom.





ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,
ESQ.

Ensuring my kids will be protected

I want to make sure that someone is appointed as the guardian of my minor children if both me and the child's mother pass away. How can I ensure that my kids will be protected?

Many of my clients are new (and not so new) parents who want to ensure their minor children are cared for in the event that both parents die. It is every parent's right, but also their responsibility, to take care of this issue and to express their wishes in legal writing. There are two circumstances to consider: what would happen to the care and raising of minor children if both parents were to die, and what would happen if both parents become disabled while the children are minors. This is critical for single parents, and stepparents or non-biological parents who live with but have not adopted the child.

The procedure to name a guardian for minor children is to nominate an individual or individuals in your will to take legal custody of your child. This can, but does not need to, be

the same individual as the minor's trustee, who will oversee the management of any finances left to the minor child.

A guardian nomination is just that — a suggestion to the court that, in most cases, will be upheld if the individual qualifies as a fiduciary, meaning a person in a position of trust. In the State of New York, a person is not eligible to be a fiduciary if he is a "non-domiciliary alien [...] except [...] one who shall serve with one or more co-fiduciaries, at least one of whom is resident in this state," S.C.P.A. 707. That said, the court may still appoint a non-domiciliary alien or a New York resident as a fiduciary in its discretion. An individual who is mentally incompetent, a felon, or who otherwise "does not possess the qualifications required of a fiduciary by reason of substance abuse, dishonesty, improvidence, want of understanding, or who is otherwise unfit for the execution of the office," is also unfit to serve as a fiduciary, as is anyone else who is ineligible in the court's discretion. The court may also declare as ineligible to act as a fiduciary "a person unable to read and write the English language."

What does this mean? For international clients, it means that while they should nominate the guardian of their choice based on substance (i.e., their true qualifications to provide the best care for their children). The choice is a mere nomination and is subject to the judge's approval and order of who will raise a child and have legal custody. Second, for the many expatriates living in New York City, it means that extra care must be taken to communicate to the court why the appointment of a non-domiciliary individual as guardian is in the best interest of your minor children. These specifics can be spelled out in the will itself or in a separate writing that

should be properly executed.

The other thing to consider is that many non-U.S. citizen parents reside in the U.S. with no real intention to leave, but are insistent that their children be raised in their home country. The thing they fail to consider is that a child who is raised in the U.S. her entire life may not want to leave the U.S. when she is older, because her entire life is based here. It is a very different situation when the child is an infant or toddler and could easily adjust. If a parent wants the child to be repatriated to the home country, the child's citizenship may be a factor bearing on the judge's decision. If the parent applied for or obtained dual-citizenship from the home country for the child, this may be deemed evidence by the judge of the parents' intent for their child to keep a connection to the parents' country of origin. It has the added impact of providing a basis for which the guardian in the home country can request assistance from his own state department or diplomatic agency to repatriate the child. In the absence of dual citizenship, the home country's state department lacks standing to assist. This, together with basic border-control issues, poses an obstruction to relocating a child to another country either temporarily, pending the proceeding, or permanently.

In short, international clients with minor children living in the U.S. must pay particular attention to making clear in the will who will raise their child and where.

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



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

Calendar

MARCH



Photo by Sun Productions

Toothfairy tale set to tickle the ivories

Ever wonder where the Tooth Fairy goes for vacation? The answer is at hand when “A (Tooth) Fairy Tale” flies in on fairy wings for a run at the McGinn/Cazale Theatre from March 16 to Apr. 28.

Collecting teeth and delivering quarters is tiring work, and the Tooth Fairy is ready for a vacation. Luckily, the Tooth Fairy (played by Jarusha Ariel) meets a kid named Samuel (played by John Magal-

haes) who is sick and tired of being a kid and all the rules that go with it in this wild, silly adventure filled with shiny quarters, sugary candy, and learning who you’re really meant to be.

“A (Tooth) Fairy Tale,” Saturdays and Sundays from March 16 to Apr. 28 at 11 am and 1 pm. Tickets are \$25 and \$30.

McGinn/Cazale Theatre [2162 Broadway at 76th Street; (212) 579-0528; www.iseats.net].

Submit a listing

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

Send your listing request to manhattancalendar@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!

MON, FEB. 25

Build It!: Children's Museum of the Arts, 103 Charlton St. at Hudson Street; (212) 274-0986; www.cmany.org; Noon-5 pm; \$11 admission fee.

Children explore unconventional ways of building, constructing, and assembling in this three-dimensional guided workshop.

WED, FEB. 27

New Parent Get-Togethers: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 11:15 am-12:30 pm; \$10 per session.

For new parents of babies ages newborn to 12 months, this weekly discussion group is a great way for new parents to share experiences, learn from one another and make friends.

Mix It Up: Children's Museum of the Arts, 103 Charlton St. at Hudson Street; (212) 274-0986; www.cmany.org; Noon-5 pm; \$11 admission fee.

Using mixed media, such as paint, cardboard, fabric, tissue paper, and pipe cleaners, children create unique artwork.

THURS, FEB. 28

In the Sound Booth: Children's Museum of the Arts, 103 Charlton St. at Hudson Street; (212) 274-0986; www.cmany.org; Noon-5 pm; \$11 admission fee.

Have a melody in your head that you just can't stop humming? Ever secretly dreamed of being a famous pop star? The sound booth provides children with the opportunity to write and record their own songs, with the assistance of a teaching artist.

FRI, MARCH 1

Stroller Tours: Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave. between E. 74th and 74th streets; (212) 671-1846; whitney.org; Noon-1 pm; \$25 per adult.

Parents enjoy the museum alongside



Big top revels at Morgan Library

“Itsy Bitsy Big Top” is setting up tents at the Morgan Library and Museum on Mar. 9.

Clowns, acrobats, jugglers, magicians, lions, horses, and elephants all come to life in the ring during this fun, interactive workshop led by educator Lisa Libiki.

After a visit to the exhibit, families build a small circus using a slew of materials, including wire, fabric, and paper — and of course a whole lot of imagination. The tour and workshop is just right for families with children ages 6 to 12.

“Itsy Bitsy Big Top: Build a Mini

Circus,” Mar. 9 from 2 to 4 pm. Admission is \$6 (\$4 for members) and \$2 for children. The workshop is for families with children, with a limit of two adults per family.

The Morgan Library and Museum [225 Madison Ave. between W. 36th and W. 37th streets in Midtown; (212) 685-0008; www.themorgan.org].

their children in strollers.

SAT, MARCH 2

Meet The Maestro: Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College, 695 Park Ave. between 68th and 69th streets; (212) 772-4448; www.littleorchestra.org; 10 and 11:30 am; \$15-\$45.

Children meet the person with the baton and see how gestures shape the music of Beethoven, Bach and Ravel. Then, they become conductors and help lead the orchestra.

Shababa Saturdays with Karina and Coco: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 10:30 am-12:30 pm; Free.

This Shabbat celebratory experience

for the whole family with newborns to 5 years old features instruments, arts and crafts, puppets and movement. Karina Zilberman and her puppet pal Coco offer a multigenerational, interactive and dynamic Shabbat experience.

Family Fun Painting Practices: Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave. between E. 74th and 74th streets; (212) 671-1846; whitney.org; 10:30 am-12:30 pm; \$10 per family.

Families, with kids ages 6 to 10, explore artists such as Jay DeFeo, Jacob Lawrence, and Stuart Davis and then head to the Whitney Studio to make their own art.

Whitney Wees: Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave. between E. 74th and 74th streets; (212)

671-1846; whitney.org; 10:30-11:30 am; \$10 per family.

Families, with kids ages 4 to 5, dot, dash, smudge, and stroke. Bring the little ones to discover how different artists make their mark on canvas, paper, metal, or wood in American Legends and throughout the museum.

The Deedle Deedle Dees: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am; \$13-\$20.

The Dees take the audience on a musical tour of the city. The performance includes a range of this city's musical sounds: hip hop, klezmer, old jazz, punk rock, mariachi, salsa, old string band music, mixed together in new and surprising ways.

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Calendar

Continued from page 43

Families and Folk Art: American Folk Art Museum, 2 Lincoln Square between Columbus Avenue and W. 66th Street; (212) 265-1040; www.folkart-museum.org; 1-2 pm; Free.

Children ages 4 to 12 explore the exhibitions with a focus on the children, pets, merchants, and other community members. Following a gallery tour, families will make their own works of art inspired by what they see.

Natural Mosaic Workshop: Morris Jumel Mansion, 65 Jumel Terrace; (212) 923-8008; www.morrisjumel.org; 1-2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Join artist Andrea Arroyo and create 3-D seed mosaic using card-stock.

Open Studio: Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave. between E. 74th and 74th streets; (212) 671-1846; whitney.org; 2-4 pm; \$18 admission fee; ages 18 and under are free.

Like musicians, some artists use rhythm, pattern, and repetition in their paintings, sculptures, and installations. In "Blues for Smoke," families create their own artworks inspired by sound.

SUN, MARCH 3

Spring! New-York Historical Society DiMenna Children's History Museum, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 11:30 am; \$15 admission, kids ages 7 to 13, \$10.

It's almost spring — what will we do to prepare? Take out our lighter, cooler clothes, but what do animals do to get ready for the warmer weather? Children listen to two books to find out.

Exploring Toys of Yesterday: Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave. at 103rd Street; (212) 534-1672; www.mcny.org; Noon-2 pm; \$10; children 12 and under are free.

Families explore the toys of the past in the "On the Move" exhibition, showcasing selections of the museum's collection of transportation toys. Then children try some old-fashioned toys, and create one of their own.

Mostly Magic With Matt Wayne: New-York Historical Society DiMenna Children's History Museum, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 1 pm; \$20 per child.

Join celebrity magician Matt Wayne as he breaks down tricks ranging from card-based to mind reading. Children, ages 8 to 14, will get hands-on practice. RSVP required at familyprograms@nyhistory.org.

Meet The Maestro: 1 and 2:30 pm. Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College. See



Courtesy of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Art fun at the Guggenheim

Enjoy a world-wind tour and art workshop at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum on Mar. 24 and Apr. 7.

Families enjoy a day at the museum with an interactive gallery tour, and then discover their inner artist in the museum's stu-

dios by creating works of art to take home. Registration is required online at www.guggenheim.org/families.

Family Tour and Workshop — 11 am to 1:30 pm — is guaranteed fun for the whole family. Admission is \$30 per family, \$20

for members, and includes workshop materials, plus a tour for two adults and up to four children.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum [1071 Fifth Ave. at 89th St. Central Park East; 212 423-3500; www.guggenheim.org].

Saturday, March 2.

Milkshake Concert: The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave. at 92nd Street; (212) 423-3200; TheJewishMuseum.org; 2 pm; \$18; \$13 for children.

The favorite kiddie band rocks the Jewish Museum.

Family Concert: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 3 pm; \$18.

Christian McBride he brings his quintet Inside Straight (sax, vibes, piano, bass and drums) to 92Y to introduce the magic of toe-tapping, finger-snapping jazz, for ages 6 to 10.

TUES, MARCH 5

The Future of Food: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; awang@amnh.org; www.amnh.org;

6:30 pm; \$15; \$13.50 members, seniors, students.

Bust through common myths and discover the real science and issues beyond the headlines in this groundbreaking conversation with experts from diverse fields about the future of food.

WED, MARCH 6

Degas, Miss La La, and the Cirque Fernando: The Morgan Library and Museum, 225 Madison Ave. between W. 36th and W. 37th streets; (212) 685-0008; www.themorgan.org; 10:30 am; \$15, \$10 children.

Families revel in the spectacle of Le Cirque Fernando as they travel back to 1879, when Parisians, including Edgar Degas, were mesmerized by aerialist Miss La La, one of the most famous circus performers of her time.

THURS, MARCH 7

Cross-Stitch Circle: New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 4:30-5:30 pm; \$15 admission, children ages 5 to 13, \$5.

Beginning cross stitchers learn the basic stitch and create a bookmark with their new skill. More seasoned stitchers can continue working on their bookmark or branch into more complicated designs.

FRI, MARCH 8

Shababa Bakery: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 10:15-11 am; \$15.

Children squish, roll and braid their very own challah and take it home to bake.

Calendar

SAT, MARCH 9

Shababa Saturdays with Karina and Coco: 10:30 am–12:30 pm. 92nd Street Y. See Saturday, March 2.

Family Fun Painting Practices: 10:30 am–12:30 pm. Whitney Museum of American Art. See Saturday, March 2.

Whitney Wees: 10:30–11:30am. Whitney Museum of American Art. See Saturday, March 2.

Hablemos de la Historia Del Arte: New-York Historical Society DiMenna Children's History Museum, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 2 pm; \$5.

Families with children ages 4 to 10, look, discuss, and create in this Spanish-language monthly family program, combining time in the galleries with art-making in the studios.

Itsy Bitsy Big Top: The Morgan Library and Museum, 225 Madison Ave. between W. 36th and W. 37th streets; (212) 685-0008; www.themorgan.org; 2–4 pm; \$6, \$2 children.

Clowns and acrobats, jugglers and magicians, lions, horses, and elephants come to life in a ring during this workshop led by educator Lisa Libiki. After a short visit to the exhibition, families build a small circus using a variety of materials such as wire, fabric, and paper.

Family Astronomy: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; awang@amnh.org; www.amnh.org; 6:30 pm; \$12.

Families enjoy an evening of stargazing, mythology, and stories of the sky.

SUN, MARCH 10

Sunday Science Spectacular: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 10 am–noon; \$40 adult; \$20 child.

How do plants grow, reproduce and make their own food? Children find out as they make their own terrarium in a bottle.

Second Sunday Family Tours: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. at 89th Street; (212) 423-3500; www.guggenheim.org; 10:30 am; \$15.

Families with children ages 4 to 12 explore the Guggenheim's spring exhibitions through family-oriented tours that incorporate conversation and creative hands-on gallery activities.

New York City Birds: New-York Historical Society DiMenna Children's History Museum, 170 Central Park West at



Photo by Little Orchestra Society

'Tubby the Tuba' toots into town

“Tubby the Tuba” will be the “oompah” heard around at Lincoln Center when the new production toots into town on March 16.

This latest rendition, presented by The Little Orchestra Society, shares the vision of Paul Tripp and George Kleinsinger, who wrote the original Tubby the Tuba score way back in 1941.

Come on down and enjoy the narration by the iconic rock mu-

sician, poet, and National Book award winner Patti Smith, as she introduces a whole new audience to Tubby the Tuba and his friends.

“Tubby the Tuba” at Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall on March 16 at 11 am and 1 pm. Tickets for the show range from \$15 to \$55.

Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall [65th St. at Broadway in Central Park West; (212) 971-9500; www.littleorchestra.org].

77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 11:30 am; \$15 admission, kids ages 7 to 13, \$10.

Families learn all about New York City’s own birds, including Pale Male the Red-Tailed hawk and the baby Blue Jays of 87th Street. Then head upstairs to see colorful and innovative depictions of birds in the first installment of the three-part series Audubon’s Aviary.

Mostly Magic With Matt Wayne: 1 pm. New-York Historical Society DiMenna Children’s History Museum. See Sunday, March 3.

MON, MARCH 11

Stroller Tours: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. at 89th Street; (212) 423-3500; www.guggenheim.org; 3 pm; \$15.

Led by museum educator and new mom Jackie Delamatre, one-hour tours of the Guggenheim’s spring exhibitions are given for caregivers and their babies.

THURS, MARCH 14

Cross-Stitch Circle: 4:30–5:30 pm. New York Historical Society. See Thursday, March 7.

FRI, MARCH 15

Stroller Tours: Noon–1 pm. Whitney Museum of American Art. See Friday, March 1.

SAT, MARCH 16

Shababa Saturdays with Karina and Coco: 10:30 am–12:30 pm. 92nd Street Y. See Saturday, March 2.

Randy Kaplan Concert: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am; \$13-\$20.

Kaplan’s latest release is Mister Diddie Wah Diddie, an award-winning, kid-friendly tribute to blues music of the 1920s and ‘30s.

“Tubby The Tuba”: Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall, 65th Street and Broadway; (212) 971-9500; www.littleorchestra.org; 11 am and 1 pm; \$15-\$55.

The Little Orchestra Society presents this production of “Tubby the Tuba,” narrated by Patti Smith, the iconic National Book Award-winner, rock musician, and poet, recommended for ages 6 to 12.

New York City Saint Patrick’s Day Parade: Fifth Avenue and 44th Street; nycstpatrickspatrol.org; 11 am; Free.

Everyone is Irish at this largest and oldest St. Paddy’s parade!

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Calendar

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Bark Baby Bark Trunk Show: D Pet Hotels Chelsea, 104 W. 27th St. between Sixth and Seventh avenues; (646) 478-7877; Noon-2pm; Free.

All attendees enjoy food, fashion, treats and a play day. Event benefits the Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals.

SUN, MARCH 17

St. Patrick's Day: New-York Historical Society DiMenna Children's History Museum, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 11:30 am; \$15 admission, kids ages 7-13, \$10.

Families listen to "The St. Patrick's Day Shillelagh" by Janet Nolan, the story of Fergus, who whittles the branch of an Irish blackthorn tree into a Shillelagh so he will always have a piece of Ireland with him.

Passover Party with ShirLaLa: Museum of Jewish Heritage — A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, 36 Battery Place; (646) 437-4202; www.mjhnyc.org; 2 pm; \$10, \$7 children 10 and under.

The day features an interactive musical journey and holiday crafts for children ages 3 to 10.

Shababa The Concert: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 3 pm; \$20.

Bring the children and dance in the aisles to a live band at the second annual Shababa The Concert.

THURS, MARCH 21

Singalong with Hopalong Andrew: 92Y Tribeca, 200 Hudson St. at Vestry Street; (212) 601-1000; www.92y.org; 10 am; \$10 child; \$5 for additional children in the same family; adults accompanying children free.

Join the fun for plenty of pre-K and early-childhood standards, with folk songs, cowboy songs and other fun songs sprinkled in.

Cross-Stitch Circle: 4:30-5:30 pm. New York Historical Society. See Thursday, March 7.

FRI, MARCH 22

Shababa Bakery: 10:15-11 am. 92nd Street Y. See Friday, March 8.

SAT, MARCH 23

Shababa Saturdays with Karina and Coco: 10:30 am-12:30 pm. 92nd Street Y. See Saturday, March 2.

Morgan's Journey: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am; \$15-\$25.



Wag-nificent fashions for Fido and Fiffy

It's the fashion event of the year when Bark Baby Bark Trunk Show opens its lid on March 16 at the D Pet Hotel.

Fashion conscious pups and owners view the latest styles for fashion-forward Fidos and Fiffies. There will be plenty of trendy and unique pieces to adorn your precious pet — just right for the winter season. Put your four-legged friend in coats, sweaters, coats, and booties, or purchase a handmade hat

or toy.

The event benefits the Mayor's Alliance for New York City's Animals. Enjoy the day, have a woofing good time, and help out man's best friend. You can also enjoy food, treats, and a pooch play day.

Bark Baby Bark Trunk Show on March 16, from noon to 2 pm. Admission is free.

D Pet Hotels [104 W. 27th St. in Chelsea; www.animalAllianceNYC.org; www.dpethotels.com/].

This "perfect gift of a show" follows Morgan the Clown on a journey of self-discovery. From his birth, to his first steps, and from learning to speak to sharing his delight of the world, Morgan (with help from the audience), learns valuable lessons about love and the true meaning of friendship.

SUN, MARCH 24

Family Tour and Workshop: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071

Fifth Ave. at 89th Street; (212) 423-3500; www.guggenheim.org; 11 am; \$30 per family.

Following an interactive gallery tour, families with children ages 4 to 12 create their own work in the Guggenheim studio.

Passover: New-York Historical Society DiMenna Children's History Museum, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 11:30 am; \$15 admission, kids ages 7 to 13, \$10.

Children listen to "The Yankee at the Seder" by Elka Weber, the story of 10-year-old Jacob cannot believe his ears when a Yankee soldier asks for his piece of matzoh.

TUES, MARCH 26

Shababa Family Passover Seder: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 5:30 pm; \$70 adults; \$50 children over 2; \$20 children ages 1 to 2 (free for children under 1 year).

Celebrate Passover with your family and the Shababa community, and recreate the meaningful traditions with joyous songs, stories, movement and games.

Vacation week: Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave. at E. 104th Street; (212) 534-1672; www.mcny.org; 10:30-3:30 pm; Free with general admission.

Children can explore the history of New York's World's Fairs or explore the stories of activists in New York's history during vacation week in two interactive events. World's Fairs of the Future and Pushing Buttons: Activist New York, provide lots of fun activities. Make a clay model or express their own views and ideas. Go to one or both, the choice is yours.

WED, MARCH 27

Vacation week: 10:30-3:30 pm. Museum of the City of New York. See Tuesday, March 26.

THURS, MARCH 28

Cross-Stitch Circle: 4:30-5:30 pm. New York Historical Society. See Thursday, March 7.

Vacation week: 10:30-3:30 pm. Museum of the City of New York. See Tuesday, March 26.

SAT, MARCH 30

Shababa Saturdays with Karina and Coco: 10:30 am-12:30 pm. 92nd Street Y. See Saturday, March 2.

LONG-RUNNING

A Song for the People: Museum of Jewish Heritage — A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, 36 Battery Place; (646) 437-4202; www.mjhnyc.org; \$10, \$7 children 10 and under.

This exhibition transports listeners through memories of celebrations across generations. It features vibrant modular carpets, donated by FLOR, that are used for wall treatments and flooring. Some of the tiles are embedded with photographs, artifacts, and video screens, while others are laser engraved with

graphics and text. Opens September 13, 2012 and runs through spring 2013.

WWII & NYC: New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; \$15 admission, kids ages 5 to 13, \$5.

WWII & NYC explores the impact of the war on the metropolis, which played a critical role in the national war effort, and how the city was forever changed. Runs through May 27, 2013.

Winged Tapestries Moths at Large: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am-5:45 pm; Suggested admission \$19, \$10.50 children, \$14.50 seniors and students.

This exhibition features 34 striking and dramatic images of moths, displaying the arresting beauty and surprising diversity of moths from Ottawa-based photographer Jim des Rivières. Runs through September 2013.

The Butterfly Conservatory: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; awang@amnh.org; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am-5:45 pm; Now - Mon, May 27; Suggested admission \$19, \$10.50 children, \$14.50 seniors and students.

The annual exhibition, "Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter" returns and celebrates its 15th year.

"Pippi": Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater, 79th Street and West Drive; (212) 988-9093; Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10:30 am and noon, Wednesdays, 10:30 am, noon, and 2:30 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm.; \$8, \$5 children under 12.

Take a history trip to the fairs



Courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York

"World's Fairs" and "Pushing Buttons: Activist New York" are two exciting activities offered at the Museum of the City of New York during spring break, from Mar. 26-28.

Children can explore the history of New York's World's Fairs, and then make a clay model of their own 2013 pavilion, or explore the stories of activists in our history during vacation week, and then write their own views and opinions.

Whether they want to learn about the World's Fairs of the future, or activists of the past, the choice is theirs.

Vacation Week, Mar. 26-Mar. 28, from 10:30 am to 3:30 pm. Free with general museum admission.

Museum of the City of New York [1220 Fifth Ave. at E. 104th Street on the upper East Side; (212) 534-1672; www.mcny.org].

This family production features nearly two dozen, hand-made marionettes crafted by the expert puppeteers.

Cross-Stitch Circle: New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; Thursday, Feb. 28, 3:30 pm; \$15 admission, children ages 5 to 13, \$5.

Beginning cross stitchers learn the basic stitch and create a bookmark with their new skill. More seasoned stitchers can continue working on their bookmark or branch into more complicated designs.

Grug: New 42nd Street Studios, 229 W. 42nd St. between Seventh and Eighth avenues; (646) 223-3042; www.new42.org; Friday, March 1, 10:30 am; Saturday, March 2, 10:30 am; Sunday, March 3, 10:30 am; Thursday, March 7, 10:30 am; Friday, March 8, 10:30 am; Saturday, March 9, 10:30 am; Sunday, March 10, 11:30 am; Thursday, March 14, 10:30 am; Friday, March 15, 10:30 am; Saturday, March 16, 10:30 am; Sunday, March 17, 10:30 am; \$14-\$20.

Hamish, Jude and Lucas lead this charm-filled puppet performance by Australia's Windmill Theatre. Join the

huggable haystack with a knack for problem solving as he turns a cramped burrow into a cozy home, finds food to quiet his grumbling tummy and tends his growing garden, for ages 2 to 5.

"Fancy Nancy": The McGinn/Cazale Theatre, 2162 Broadway at 76th Street; (212) 579-0528; www.iseats.net; Saturdays and Sundays, 3:30 pm, Now - Sun, April 28; \$29.50 regular; \$49.50 premium.

The musical shows Fancy Nancy and her friends, Bree, Rhonda, Wanda, and Lionel perform in their very first show, "Deep Sea Dances," but will she and Bree will be picked to be mermaids?

"Bello Mania": The New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. between Seventh and Eighth avenues; (646) 223-3010; www.newvictory.org; Daily, times vary; Fri, March 15 - Sun, March 31; \$9-\$25.

Bello Nock, the circus superstar, amuses and amazes children of all ages as he performs his unique blend of comic daredevilry in a theatrical setting for his brand new show.

"A (Tooth) Fairy Tale": The McGinn/Cazale Theatre, 2162 Broadway at 76th Street; (212) 579-0528; www.iseats.net; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 am and 1 pm, Sat, March 16 - Sun, April 28; \$25 regular; \$30 premium seats.

Collecting teeth and delivering quarters is tiring work, and the Tooth Fairy is ready for a vacation. Luckily, she meets a kid named Samuel who is sick and tired of being a kid, and all the rules that go with it in this wild, silly adventure filled with shiny quarters, sugary candy, and learning who you're really meant to be.

Make an splash at the Whitney!



Photo by Jamie Rosenfield

Dots, smudges, strokes and splashes are on the canvas at the Whitney Museum of American Art during the "Whitney Wees" art-fest on March 2 and 9

Families with children 4 to 5 years old will channel their inner O'Keeffe and Calder while exploring art-smart ways to make their own mark on canvas, paper, metal or wood in the American Legends exhibit.

Whitney Wees on March 2 and 9, from 10:30-11:30 am. Admission is \$10 per family.

Whitney Museum of American Art [945 Madison Ave. between E. 74th and 74th streets in Midtown, (212) 671-1846; www.whitney.org].



DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

More collaborative divorce suggestions

Leslie and John decided to end their 14-year marriage.

Joint counseling had helped them speak more openly to each other than they had in many years, but rather than bringing them closer together, their discussions highlighted how far apart they had grown. Both were angry and, ultimately, neither wanted to stay married.

The usual process:

Most couples, when getting divorced, hire litigators — because what else is there to do?

Often, the lawyers file threatening motions with the court, motions likely filled with exaggerations, if not outright lies about the other partner. Each spouse blames the other and

demands more than the other can accept.

The lawyers take depositions, perhaps hoping to intimidate the other spouse and discover weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

You pay for experts with the expectation that they will report or testify in a way that is favorable to you. Of course, your spouse is likely to hire his own experts for the same purpose.

The judge appoints a forensic psychologist to report on who should get custody of the children — a terrifying win or lose proposition for many parents.

Most spouses never question their lawyers. After all, their lawyers are the experts, aren't they? If there were another way to proceed, the attorney would tell them, wouldn't they?

Well, no, most litigators don't discuss the different ways to divorce with their clients. Some litigators don't know about collaborative divorce. Others are afraid of it because it poses challenges to their way of doing things.

A better way:

Unlike most couples, Leslie and John learned that they had a choice when it came to getting divorced, because their therapist knew about collaborative divorce (and mediation).

They knew that if they chose collaborative divorce, each of them would be represented by an attorney, and both of the lawyers would agree in writing to work together in good faith to reach mutually beneficial agreements, and to not go to court.

With their lawyers present, Leslie and John would have opportunities to communicate directly with each other. Rather than threatening and blaming, they would be assisted in examining their needs for the future, and how best to get those needs met.

Instead of sitting through depositions and giving away as little information as possible, in collaborative divorce John and Leslie would freely share financial information to allow for a better understanding of how

they are currently situated, and to use this understanding as the foundation for creating workable options to consider.

Collaborative lawyers spend no time at all preparing for trial, and the chances are very good that the spouses, with the help of their attorneys, will succeed in reaching an agreement. Statistically speaking, 86 percent of collaborative divorce cases end with a settlement agreement.*

John and Leslie have also learned that one of the greatest differences between court battles and collaborative practice involves the use of experts.

In collaborative divorce, an accountant or financial planner will provide balanced information of, say, what a small business is worth, or the value of other property such as retirement accounts. He will help you weigh your decisions and the potential implications. Often, the spouses split the cost of fees between them.

Also in collaborative divorce, the therapist you may decide to consult won't report to a judge. Instead, *he would work with you*, perhaps helping you deal with the sadness at the loss of the marriage, and with the fears of going forward.

Your collaborative lawyer will help you work through the divorce in a way that is much less stressful and adversarial than going to court. Collaborative divorce is faster, more efficient, and more constructive than litigation. You may find it to be less expensive as well.

*Statistics compiled by the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals

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

Disclaimer: All material in this column is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Discussing your particular case and circumstances with a legal professional before making important decisions is strongly encouraged to safeguard your rights.



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A mom & an entrepreneur

As the mother of two young children, (Oliver is 6 years old, and Jackson is 9), I am frequently asked how I balance motherhood with owning and operating my own business. While every successful mother and business owner has her own recipe with ingredients that work for her, some tips that I like to give other mothers that are in similar situations are the “Divalyssious Tips,” and the ingredients that work for my “Mommy Entrepreneur Recipe.”

Here are my “Five divalyssious tips on how to be a mom and an entrepreneur” for owning your own business and being mother of children under the age of 10.

Prioritize

Make sure that your work can be done early in the morning before the children wake up. Yes, that means sometimes waking up at 4:30 am to finish work—of course you will need a large cup of coffee! If you know that mornings are to hectic, then finish the work the night before

after the kids are sound asleep in their beds. But don't put off time with them just to work. There still needs to be a balance between work and family. And be careful, putting things off will only stress you out more.

Delegate

Always remember that being a mom and a business owner gives you the right to delegate the work, which means surrounding yourself with a great supportive team comprised of positive people who have high energy. Make sure these are people who you can trust, and people who can help you. My husband is my biggest supporter, and at times he has to help with the children because I might need to be at a meeting, have to work late, etc. I know that I can count on my husband and vice versa for him, as he, too, has a high-demanding job.

This is your job and your life, so don't let feelings get in the way, since the most important thing is to get the job done. That's not to say you can't be kind, but just make sure that you are respected by the people you ask for help so you don't get stuck with more work than you originally anticipated. No matter who it is, delegate the errands with your family, caregiver, and do not be afraid to ask for help! It's always better to ask, than to be completely overwhelmed.

Don't cut corners

Sometimes it's easier to skip that morning breakfast, or walk out the door without saying goodbye to your family before going to work. Don't skip out of those moments because those little smiles saying, “Bye Mommy!” is what is going to put your mind and heart at ease when you get overwhelmed, and what puts you back into a great mood. Also,

eating breakfast is critical. We hear it all the time, but we often shrug it off anyway. If you can, try to always have breakfast with your children in the mornings before you run to the office and they go to school. It is critical to build those family fundamentals at an early age so that becomes normal within the household. And if you prioritize properly, spending those extra 15 minutes sitting down with some cereal won't stress you out and you will be able to properly enjoy the reboot period before you start your busy day.

Take a breath

It's always stressful being in the office, even on a good day, but that means if you don't stop for a second to take a breath, you're going to become way too overwhelmed. Find a quick thing you can do every day that will bring you back to a calm state of mind when it starts to feel like too much. Perhaps you have a small photo album of your family you can flip through, or if you know your spouse or caretaker is going to be with your kids at a certain time of the day, give them a call, and speak to them for a quick second even to tell them you love them. Those little ones can do amazing things for you in such a short time, so don't take that for granted.

Never forget YOU

As moms and business women, it's easy to forget ourselves in the mix of things. It is so important that we don't let all of our stress get so pent up that we don't know what to do with ourselves, because it only makes us more on edge. Maybe during your lunch break, go down to the closest nail salon and get a quick 10-minute back rub, or keep your favorite color nail polish with you at your desk and slick on a new coat while you're at your computer. Of course you need to find those moments for your family, and you don't want to do so much that you aren't able to get your work done, but in the time you spend saying you don't have the time is enough to give yourself a little love in return for all the hard work you do. And besides, you deserve it.

Lyss Stern is the founder of Divalyssious Moms (www.divamoms.com), the premiere luxury lifestyle company for moms, and co-author of the best-selling book, “If You Give a Mom A Martini... 100 Ways To Find 10 Blissful Minutes For Yourself.”





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