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# Short days and long nights

I'm writing this on the shortest day of the year, Dec. 21, and I can only say how happy I am to know that every day from here on will grow longer. It's draining to get up when it's dark and to leave work when it's dark also. I miss the light and don't know anyone who doesn't. Kids especially have a really difficult time in the winter, particularly now that most of them are engaged in after-school programs. By the time they too are finished, it's dark and also cold, not the best recipe for outdoor fun.



of the glorious things about life in New York are all the wonderful parks that make our city so enjoyable in every season.

It won't be long before we have a snowfall that leaves accumulation on the ground, and what kid doesn't love finding a good hill in a park and sledding or snow tubing down? And what about those ice rinks? There are many wonderful rinks in all the boroughs and I urge you to make sure that your family begins this fun practice really early on in your child's life.

Light is very important to our psyche and we have to take advantage of the week-ends in the winter in particular to make sure we get enough outdoor light time. Getting yourself and the kids up early enough on weekend days to get outside and frolic is of the utmost importance. One

The holidays were fun as they always are but now we're on to a New Year and new experiences. New York is exciting all year long and winter is no exception. This issue offers a variety of ideas of how to stay healthy, eat well, and prioritize and make the cold months internally warmer.

Rolling out soon will be the "new look" of our website, NYParenting.com, and we hope you will visit it often. It works well with any device and offers a great calendar, helpful guides and of course all of our editorial, both recent and archived. Our Online Camp Guide 2017 will be launching soon. Be sure to look for it.

Wishing all of you and our staff and contributors a very Happy New Year! We hope you have started out the year right and that good health and prosperity will be a part of your every day life in 2017. Take nothing for granted. Enjoy! Thanks for reading.

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# AMAZING IS OUTSMARTING A BRAIN INFECTION.

While on a family Thanksgiving trip to NYC, Brandon had what was thought to be just a cold. Then he started to lose feeling in his limbs. On the advice of a doctor at their hotel, his mom rushed him to NewYork-Presbyterian, where pediatric specialists found extensive clots and a severe infection in his brain. Brandon had four emergency surgeries in five days, and then a full team of doctors and rehab therapists helped him to a full recovery in time to return home to St. Louis for the holidays.

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# Writing out your resolutions

## How making a list can help you reach your goals

BY LARA KRUPICKA

**N**ow that the calendar has turned and you have a whole year before you, what will you do? Whether you favor New Year's resolutions or not, there's nothing like the positive image of possibility that lies in the fresh beginnings of Jan. 1. And tapping into that inspiration can take your family on adventures all year long, if you adopt the right mindset.

### This year I will...

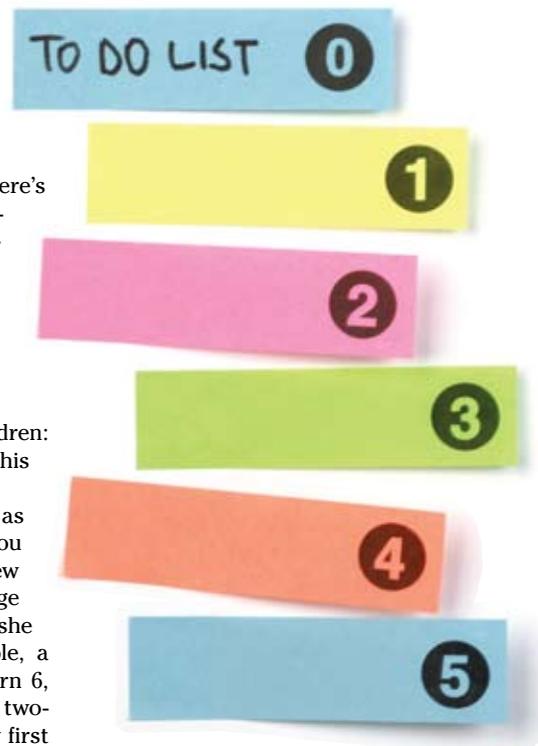
Try this exercise with your children: write (or print out) the phrase: "This year I will..."

Then, have your children list out as many things as they can think of. If you need to, prompt your child with a few expected events, but also encourage her to consider new ideas of hopes she wants to make happen. For example, a child may write: "This year I will turn 6, start first grade, learn how to ride a two-wheeler, and go to Grandma's for my first long overnight without Mom and Dad."

Ask younger children to draw pictures of what they hope will come in the next year. Then you can write underneath the pictures a description of what each one depicts.

While your children are working on their lists, write your own. Again, if it helps, start off with the occurrences you can be fairly certain will happen. Note any special events you are looking forward to. Then delve into your desires of what you would like to see take place during this calendar year.

Consider also creating a list that you can share together: "This year we will..." There may be overlap between your individual lists and the shared list. It doesn't matter. The important thing is that you take the opportunity to look ahead at how you will spend time as a family.



### Power in writing

Just having written those thoughts down will make a difference. As Henriette Anne Klausner says in her book, "Write It Down, Make It Happen," "Writing down your dreams and aspirations is like hanging up a sign that says, 'Open for Business.'"

She goes on to explain how the act of putting a goal in writing stimulates a part of your brain (the reticular activating system) that filters out the unnecessary and non-urgent and latches on to what is relevant to the stated goal.

"Once you write down a goal, your brain will be working overtime to see you get it, and alert you to the signs and signals that were there all along," Klausner explains.

In practical terms, it means that you will pause and pay attention when information related to one of your "This year I will"

desires comes up. If your intention is that this will be the year you take up watercolor painting, you will be more likely to notice the article in the local paper about a woman opening a studio to offer watercolor classes. Not only will you notice it, but you will be mentally prepared to take action — to check your calendar to see which class fits your schedule and then phone to register for the class. You will make it happen.

### A call to celebrate

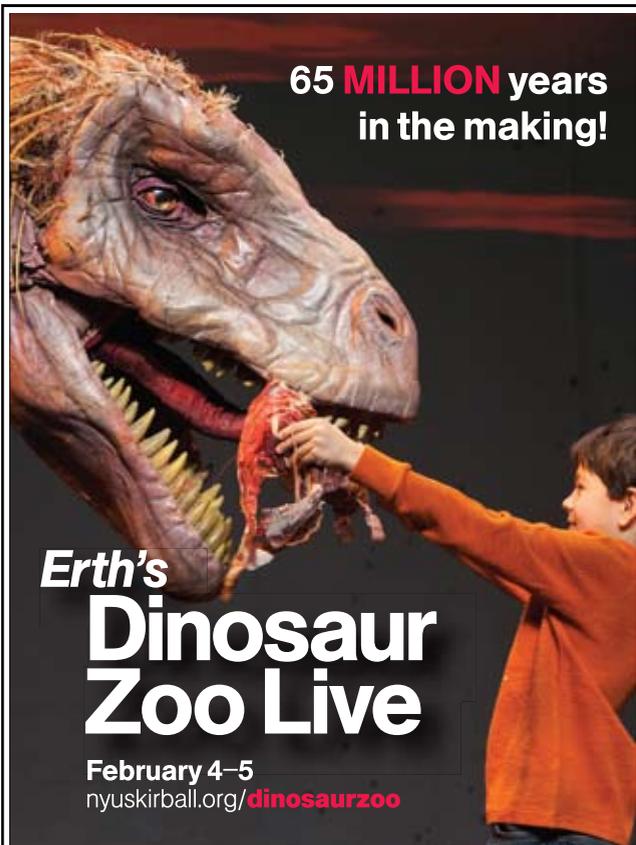
You and your children have listed what you look forward to this year. But consider this: those lists can also provide a reminder of what you want to celebrate — be it a milestone you anticipate or an accomplishment someone is aiming for. So while the year is young, think about how you would like to acknowledge special events. Will you have a party? Or will a certain reward correspond with crossing off a goal? Talk as a family about when and how this year you will all commemorate those occasions.

If you can, post your lists out in the open where you can see them and be reminded regularly of where your family wants this year to take you. Commit to reviewing your lists once a month or so — perhaps as a family night activity. As you review, cheer each other on for any progress made toward attaining your goals, or milestones you have passed.

Unlike New Year's resolutions, where often we hope to break a bad habit or initiate a difficult one, "This year I will ..." lets you look forward to all that the new year will bring with anticipation. And it keeps generating enthusiasm long after others' resolutions have died.

So what will you do this year?

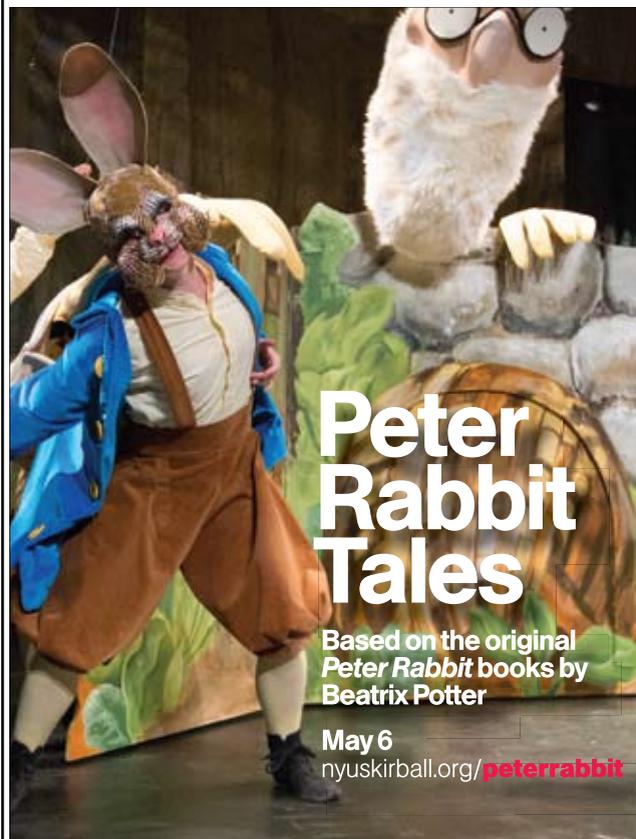
*Lara Krupicka is the author of "Family Bucket Lists: Bring More Fun, Adventure & Camaraderie Into Every Day" and mom to three girls who have plenty they plan to make happen in 2017.*



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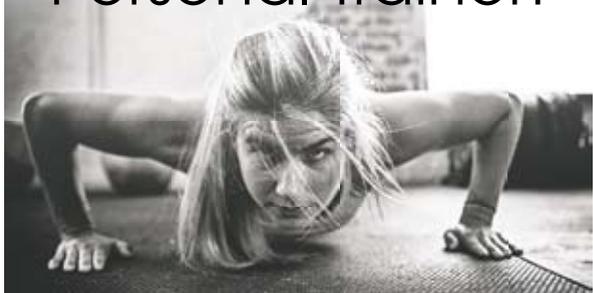


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# Kids & TV

## Ratings, recommendations, and guidelines for parents

BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL

I knew a mom several years ago who had a “no TV” policy. She was adamant about a television-free environment, so she didn’t own one. What she may not have known was that her son would visit his friends’ houses and make a beeline for the tube, instead of choosing to play soccer down at the park or go for a bike ride.

Television programming has changed immensely in the last 20 years. There are so many choices that it can make one dizzy at times. Part of the positive aspect of this change, however, is that there are plenty of quality choices available.

Perhaps the quandary for parents today is not if their children should watch TV but what they should watch and how often they should tune in. Parental controls as well as resource websites (i.e. [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org)) provide parents with control and information that they didn’t have decades ago.

### How much is too much?

Have you ever tried to have a conversation with a child engrossed in his favorite TV show? It’s like trying to get your dog’s attention when he’s just gotten a hold of his new, stuffed bone. He knows you’re there, but he’s too busy chomping to acknowledge you.

Balance is the operative word. Sometimes we all — parents included — need a bit of a break from the “real” world. It’s not unhealthy if quality television programs are viewed in moderation and are not interfering with social activities,

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“In terms of negative programming, I always say that turning on any media is like opening the door to your living room. Would you let kids in who were being violent, mean to each other, or making fun of other kids?”

---

school work, and family time.

“Television can be a source of learning and entertainment,” explains Dr. Sanam Hafeez, a licensed neuropsychologist and founder and director of Comprehensive Consultation Psychological Services, P.C. ([www.comprehendthemind.com](http://www.comprehendthemind.com)). “However, too much TV can take away from other activities, such as exercising, playing with friends, reading, and doing homework.”

Hafeez warns parents of additional concerns.

“Studies have shown that kids who watch too much TV are more likely to be overweight, and depending on the content of what they see, more aggressive. Excess TV viewing has also been linked to poor grades, sleep problems, and behavioral problems.”

Dr. Lisa Strohman, a clinical psycholo-

gist, co-author of “Unplug: Raising Kids in a Technology Addicted World” and founder of Technology Wellness Center ([www.technologywellnesscenter.com](http://www.technologywellnesscenter.com)), reports, “The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends no television for children under the age of 2. For children older than 2, the recommendation is no more than one to two hours of quality programming a day. TV watching and technology use can impede valuable developmental activities like exploring, playing, and interacting with others. These functions are vital to learning and healthy physical and social development.”

Experts also remind parents that TV time includes watching programs on the computer and iPad.

Dr. Jephtha Tausig-Edwards, a New York City-based clinical psychologist and supervising psychologist for Family & Children’s Services of Nantucket, says, “Don’t have it playing in the background. Keep screens and other media out of children’s bedrooms and do not use right before bedtime. There really isn’t a substitute for reading to a child in terms of the boost this gives to early literacy and the opportunities for interaction between parents and children.”

If televisions are not in children’s bedrooms, the battle is half won, because it will be easier to monitor screen time if the television is in a central location used by all family members.

### Quality programming

What should parents look for in quality programming?



“Look for educational content, respectful language, take-home messages or lessons which are congruent with your values, and what you feel are important perspectives you would like your children to have towards their fellow human beings,” says Tausig-Edwards.

“I’ve always recommended a rich diet of good, quality educational media that kids are interested in, want to talk about, and want to learn more from,” explains Angela Santomero, a child development expert, TV executive producer, and co-

creator of the current hit, “Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood” (PBS Kids) as well as “Blue’s Clues” (Nick Jr.) and “Super WHY!” (PBS Kids). She advocates television viewing in moderation: a good balanced diet of healthy media!

When it comes to preschoolers, Santomero counsels, “Interacting and physical touch is the most important stimulation for babies and toddlers. When television is introduced, it should be at a slower pace so that it is not overstimulating.

‘Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood’ fits this bill because of its socio-emotional storylines, preschool musical strategies about sharing, going to the potty, dealing with disappointments, and trying new foods. These are life lessons that this young age group is able to grasp with musical strategies that help and guide both parents and kids together.”

“Go with calm, quiet programs. Slower-paced viewing gives small children time to think and absorb. Lots of random activ-

*Continued on following page*

ity, like the kind in action-adventure cartoons, confuses them,” Hafeez describes. “Instead, choose simple programs that emphasize interactivity. Ideal shows inspire your child to make sounds, say words, sing, and dance.”

Santomero suggests the following shows for various age groups:

**For preschoolers:**

“Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood” (PBS Kids: Socio-emotional)

“Creative Galaxy” (Amazon.com Inc.: Art)

“Super WHY!” (PBS Kids: Literacy)

“Blue’s Clues” (Nick Jr.: Kindergarten readiness show)

**For young kids:**

“Wild Kratts” (PBS & PBS Kids: Adventure learning)

“Wishenpoof!” (Amazon.com: Adventure learning)

“Word Girl” (PBS & PBS Kids: Literacy)

**For tweens:**

“Master Chef Jr.” (FOX: Cooking)

“Project Runway Jr.” (Lifetime: Fashion creation)

“The Amazing Race” (CBS and Travel Channel: Reality adventure)

“The Gilmore Girls” (Warner Bros. and Netflix: Family drama)

“Fuller House” (Sequel to “Full House.” Netflix Original Series: Family drama)

**For teens:**

“Downton Abbey” (PBS: Period drama series)

“Friends” (Reruns on TBS and NIK: Comedy drama)

Also recommended for teens:

“Scorpion” (CBS: Tech-driven drama series)

“Bunheads” (Freeform: Dance drama)

“The Fosters” (Freeform: Family about foster teens)

**What to avoid**

Santomero advises, “In terms of negative programming, I always say that turning on any media is like opening the door to your living room. Would you let kids in who were being violent, mean to each other, or making fun of other kids? Depending on the age of your child, the immersive experience of media creates an image that can hardly ever be erased, so be careful of what stories you decide to have your kids be part of and what characters you want your kids to be friends with. Also, be ready to talk about any and all issues that they see.”

Experts have studied the effects of violent and sexual content affecting young viewers’ behavior for decades.

## How to interpret TV ratings

Here are Dr. Strohman’s explanations of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ratings.

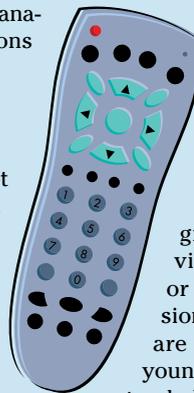
**Ratings directed towards children:**

**TV-Y:** These programs are not expected to frighten or upset young children as they are specifically designed for viewers between the ages of 2 and 6.

**TV-Y7:** These programs feature fantasy that young children may not have the developmental skills to understand and are typically not appropriate for children under 7. The make-believe plot lines are more likely to frighten young children.

**Ratings directed toward general audience:**

**TV-G:** These are not “specifically”



geared toward children, but they are appropriate for all ages by most parents. They do not contain excessive violence, expletives, or sexual references.

**TV-PG:** These programs may contain some violence, some suggestive or sexual material, and occasional strong language. They are likely not appropriate for young children to watch unattended, but are acceptable for older children.

**TV-14:** Parents are cautioned to not allow children under 14 to view these programs without supervision. These programs might include overtly sexual situations, inappropriate dialogue, indecent language, or graphic violence.

Tausig-Edwards points to Albert Bandura’s seminal work in this area.

“The work showed that children are affected by instrumental violence. For example, if they see it, they are likely to try it subsequently. Content is crucial as children are not able to differentiate between real and cartoon violence until they are much older.”

Hafeez agrees.

“Younger children tend to model behavior they see and don’t always understand the difference between reality and entertainment. Therefore, exposure to sex and violence through the media’s influence can cause aggressive or anti-social behavior. Media can influence children to believe violence is a good solution to solve problems or desensitize and cause a lack of empathy for human suffering.”

In terms of the consequences of being exposed to sex and violence on television, Dr. Hafeez states, “Kids exposed to sex on TV are almost twice as likely to initiate sexual intercourse. Some research suggests that kids who watch violence on TV are more likely to display aggressive behavior.” For young children, she suggests that scary shows be avoided as well.

Santomero adds, “Watching violence on television is not only a modeling concern for kids, but might also motivate kids to be more violent in nature. Watching sexual content, before [one is] ready, could cause confusion or lack of understanding about what a positive relation-

ship can and should be.”

**Some general guidelines**

“Overall, I believe in watching age-appropriate content that is enriching and inspiring,” says Santomero. “I also believe that, as a parent, you are doing your best when you are interested, active, and involved in what your kids are doing. Get into the content that they are watching as deeply as possible. Read the books, play the app, do related activities, or just sit over a snack and have a good old-fashioned discussion about your child’s favorite show.”

Hafeez advocates critical viewing.

“Even young children can learn to watch without ‘tuning out.’ Encourage your child to ask questions and relate what’s happening in the show to her own life. For example, if you and your toddler have just finished watching a ‘Sesame Street’ segment that introduces a number, talk about it later and find other examples to show him. While setting the table you might say, ‘Hey, today’s number was 3, and there are 3 places to set!’”

All experts advise encouraging social activities that draw kids away from obsessing about what’s on the screen.

*Myrna Beth Haskell is an award-winning author, columnist, and feature writer. Her work has appeared in national and regional publications across the U.S. as well as internationally ([www.myrnahaskell.com](http://www.myrnahaskell.com)). She is also cofounder and senior editor of “Sanctuary” ([www.sanctuary-magazine.com](http://www.sanctuary-magazine.com)).*



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# This kid's got chops

## NYC cooking prodigy tells us about his prize-winning dish

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

**B**en's Beginners is an interactive program and contest that aims to make cooking an activity that bring families together. Offering a cash prize to kitchen-savvy kids, the contest is simple: submit a photo of you and your family making a rice-based dish together to the Uncle Ben's rice company. Manhattan seventh grader and cooking prodigy Jesse Gunn did just that.

His "Lop Chung Fried Rice" earned him \$15,000 and an additional \$30,000 for his school. Thanks to Gunn's creativity in the kitchen, the East Side Community School will now have a lunchroom makeover. Gunn shared his experience with us.

**Shnieka Johnson:** Who taught you to cook?

**Jesse Gunn:** My dad taught me how to cook. His favorite thing to tell me is nothing is hard, you just have to try and learn from your mistakes. He is not a chef, just a foodie. We spend a lot time together in the kitchen with me cooking and him cutting onions and cleaning up after me, ha! We work as a team. We get to talk about the day, video games, our next projects, and things like that.

**SJ:** At what age did you start cooking?

**JG:** I started helping my dad in the kitchen when I was really young by stirring and mixing ingredients. Later on, my dad got me interested in tasting new things. When I was 8, I used to watch "Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern" and began to start eating things like chicken feet, tripe, snails, and frogs. But I really got into cooking when I was 10. I had seen "MasterChef Junior," and I saw how good those kids were and was a little sad — I thought I could never be that good. But my dad asked me if I would be interested in trying out. I said "no," so he said, "ok, well, I can teach you if you really want to do it." So for the next six to seven months, I was cooking with him three times a week. Each week, it was always something different and harder, reinforcing the basics and learning new techniques. At the last minute, my dad entered me into "MasterChef." I lasted eight episodes and went out on team challenge. Since the show, I have learned and improved so much, and with cooking you never stop learning!

**SJ:** Have you always enjoyed it?

**JG:** Yes, I love trying new things and ex-



Matt Hurst, Corporate Affairs Manager at Mars Food North America, and Ben's Beginner's recipe winner Jesse Gunn celebrate Jesse's prize — \$30,000 for his school's lunchroom makeover.

perimenting, but the most fun is when I do molecular gastronomy. It's like doing science, which is one of my favorite subjects.

**SJ:** Who do you cook with now?

**JG:** I cook with my dad and sometimes my friends come over and they want to learn how to make something. I have cooking play dates, and I show them how to make French macaroons, profiteroles, Chinese food, and other things. Other times I cook with other chefs doing demos or teaching classes.

**SJ:** What inspired your dish?

**JG:** We came up with a lot of amazing dishes, like rice pudding, crème brûlée, mango sphere on top of coconut rice on a bed of Crème Anglaise, but the rice dish we posted, I think 15 minutes before the contest ended, was Lop Chung fried rice with transformation egg. What makes our fried rice different is that almost every fried rice dish uses a plain scrambled egg. We put umami in ours.

It is based on a Japanese dashimaki tamago-styled scramble egg, which is full of umami, which totally changes the egg to a different flavor — sweet, salty, savory, sour — and plays with your taste buds. The second reason is anyone can make fried rice super easy and every ingredient is interchangeable, so if you don't have Lop Chung — Chinese sausage — you can use chicken or sausage beef. We really wanted to win

to help our school with the cafeteria makeover and help promote healthier eating.

**SJ:** Do you want to go into culinary arts?

**JG:** At the moment, I have been asked to do a series of cooking videos called "Recipes from the Studio."

The guys Manny and Peter are great, I get to cook whatever I want. I am involved in a lot of cool things in addition to cooking. I love music and playing guitar. I am in two bands right now, and we play out in nightclubs like the Bitter End, where Bob Dylan and Janis Joplin used to play. I am also into building and designing drones. I have been building them since I was 8 years old and right now, I am the youngest professional drone training pilot in the world. I have trained more than 700 people how to fly a drone. I do this with the aerial sports league at the Maker Faires across the country.

If you're passionate about something and put the time and work into it, no matter what it is — sports, science, music, art, writing, school, or cooking — you will see results. Anyone can cook, you just have to get in the kitchen and start!

*Shnieka L. Johnson is an education consultant and freelance writer. She is based in Manhattan, where she resides with her husband and son. Contact her via her website: [www.shniekajohnson.com](http://www.shniekajohnson.com).*



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# First-date jitters

## Daughter's first dance brings out mom's teen nostalgia

BY KARA MARTINEZ BACHMAN

**T**his weekend, I had the first-date jitters. My heart raced a little. My hands shook. My nerves were on fire.

As the big day neared, I had made sure everything was perfect. Shoe heels: high enough to be attractive, but not high enough to attract the wrong glances. Dress: Just the right amount of sparkle — but not too much! (Remember: there's a fine, but very important, line between "Frozen" snow queen and over-the-top drag queen.) Makeup: just a touch, on the eyes only.

When the day of the winter dance came, the big event was the first thought I had when waking up and the last I had before going to sleep.

My daughter had a blast.

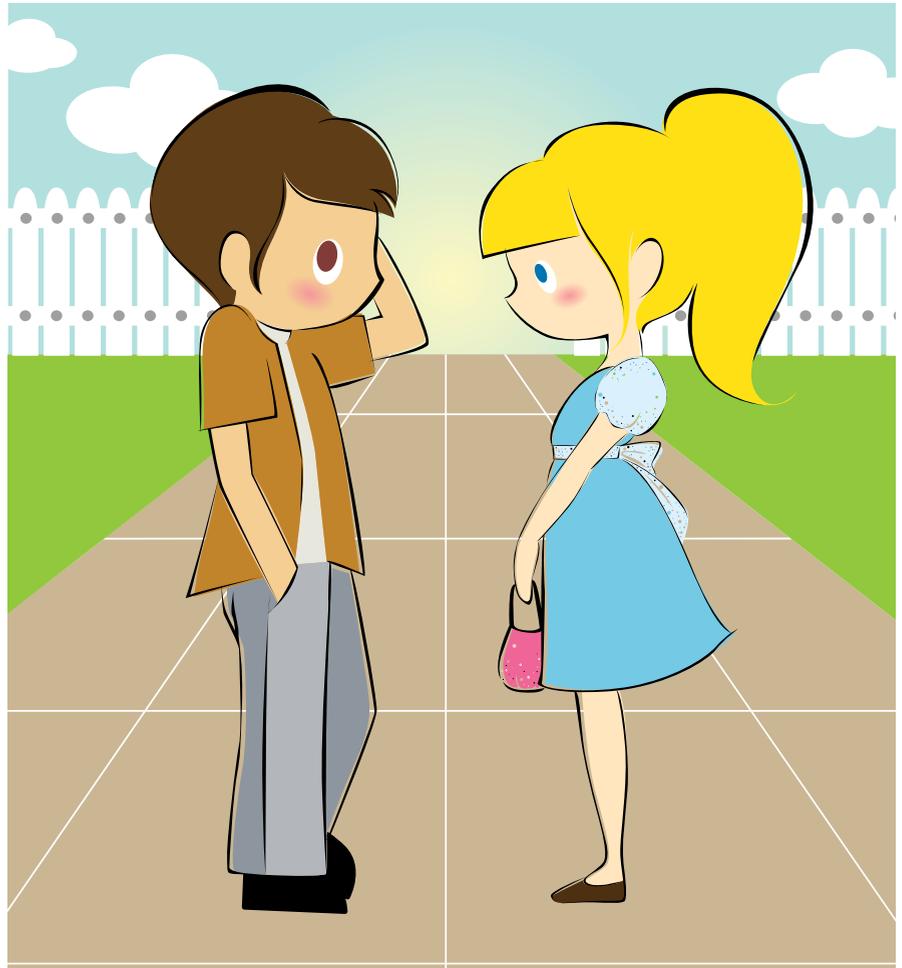
Yeah, the big date was, of course, hers. At age 46 and married for more than 20 years, I'm a little old for first dates. And believe me, if for some reason I had one, I'd spend less time worrying about how I looked and more concerned with whether I'd brought a Tylenol, two antacid tablets, and if I'd make it home before the news started.

When I was her age, there was no eighth-grade dance. Not the kind where anyone brought dates, at least. These days, though, things are different. Everything seems to happen at younger and younger ages.

I wonder why that is, why there's a mad rush on for childhood to start — and thus, end — sooner. Why? Does everyone want to just "get it over with," so our children can move on to more important things, such as making money and continuing the competitive climb?

It's sad to rush something so precious and brief. Rushing the years of first dates and terrible, but exciting, kisses is a mistake. I look back on those times, and I wish I could grab and hold them. I wish I could bottle up those sweet teen days and set the bottle (it would be pink) on my fireplace mantle. I wish, maybe every decade or so, I could open the bottle and release a tiny whiff of carnation corsages and punch bowl punch and let a bit of that genie out of the bottle. Just for a minute.

And that's kind of what happened this weekend. When my daughter stood ner-



ously with her date and posed for a few awkward photos; when I adjusted her wrist corsage — because it was too loose — and felt a misty hint of tears well up; when she left the house beaming, but returned saying, "Well, that was okay, I guess. Nobody danced much ... "; the genie of nostalgia was on the loose.

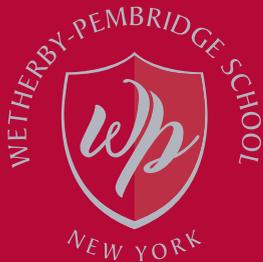
In the end, her first date at winter dance was more about the preparations than the thing itself, just as it was for me back in the 1980s.

It was more about what was to come, a reminder to me that I'd some day lose her, and a herald of all the dreams of most every girl: marriage, children, friends, job. And as every mom knows, our jitters may momentarily subside as dance night winds down, but still crop up when we open the

report card, or wait on medical test results, or when it's almost midnight and our oldest child is still not home

When the genie's popped out of the bottle, all we can do is watch, wait, and go ahead and take those two antacid tablets, hoping she uses her three wishes wisely.

*Kara Martinez Bachman is author of the humorous essay collection, "Kissing the Crisis: Field Notes on Foul-mouthed Babies, Disenchanted Women, and Careening into Middle Age." She's read her work on NPR, and it has appeared in dozens of magazines and newspapers, including The Writer, Funny Times, the New Orleans Times-Picayune, and many more. She is managing editor of Parents & Kids—Gulf Coast, Parents & Kids—Pine Belt, and Parents & Kids—MS Delta magazines in Mississippi. Find out more at KaraMartinezBachman.com.*



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Continued on page 18

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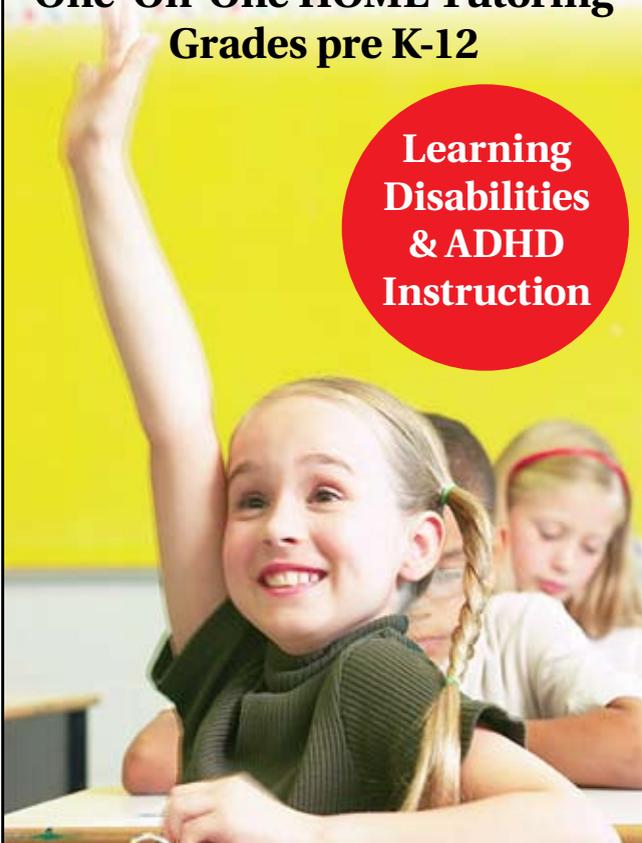
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Continued from page 16

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# Ten easy nutrition resolutions for '17

**N**ew Year's resolutions tend to focus on a few themes: Lose weight, stop smoking, and so forth. How about declaring some nutrition resolutions that will benefit your family now and in the future? Here are a few resolutions to try in 2017:

**Plan meals more often.** While it may appear you simply don't have time to do this, once you get into the habit, you'll realize how much time and money this ultimately saves. Meal planning can impact your family's eating habits as much as anything else you do.

**Get out of your recipe rut.** Admit it: While you have an endless supply of recipes at your disposal, you cook less than 10 of them regularly. Set aside 30 minutes on the weekend to comb your trove of recipes. Prepare a shopping list with ingredients for one or two recipes you haven't made in the last year. Try a new, healthful entrée once a week.

**Keep an eye on your food-purchasing habits.** Believe it or not, you're likely buying more at this time of year than any other time. According to a study of more

than 200 households in New York over the course of seven months, we buy roughly twice as many calories per serving in food in the first three months of the New Year than during the holidays. Despite New Year's resolutions to eat better, consumers buy the healthy foods they promised themselves they would, along with the unhealthy foods they promised themselves they wouldn't. Whoops.

**Try a new vegetable each shopping trip.** People who eat a wider variety of vegetables tend to be thinner, probably because they're displacing higher-calorie foods. About half of all Americans' vegetables are iceberg lettuce, potatoes, onions, and canned tomatoes. Have the kids help you with choosing something new and look up creative ways to prepare it.

**Enjoy a familiar food in a new, unexpected way.** Pizza is the second most common entrée Americans consume. The number one type? Pepperoni and cheese pizza. There are ways you can shift to a healthier pizza. Substitute vegetable toppings for the pepperoni and use smaller amounts of cheese. Some places even offer



## GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

a whole-wheat crust.

**Try some new seasonings.** Explore the herb and spice aisle and bring home a few that sound interesting. While you're at it, clean out your spice cabinet by tossing any that have lost their fragrance.

**Clean out the refrigerator more often.** At least once a month, pull everything out of the fridge and toss foods that are "questionable." Wipe down the entire interior, then put things back with an eye on keeping more healthful foods front-and-center. Consider holding an end of week "buffet" in order to use up leftover foods before they go bad.

**Try some new whole grains.** Cook up a pot of barley, quinoa, buckwheat, brown rice, or wheat berries. Keep it in the fridge and warm up a bowl at a time for a rib-sticking breakfast once you add chopped fruit (frozen or fresh), nuts, and a teaspoon of sugar.

**Put legumes on the menu every week.** Enjoy legumes such as beans, peas, and lentils as a replacement for meat at least one day a week. They're near-perfect foods with loads of fiber, protein, folate, potassium, iron, and other vitamins and minerals. Replace that side of rice, potatoes, or noodles with beans or lentils. Cook up a pot of chili or bean soup in your slow cooker, and there's dinner for a few days. Or make a bean salad.

**Switch from tuna to salmon.** Canned salmon has more healthy omega-3 fats than canned tuna and the salmon is almost always wild.

*Christine M. Palumbo is a registered dietitian nutritionist in Naperville, Ill. Her nutrition resolutions are to use her slow cooker more often and to finally "nail" her homemade pizza recipe.*



# Talking politics

## How to handle election discussion with your children

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

**A**s our country prepares to inaugurate its 45th president, Donald J. Trump, it would be an understatement to say that there are still mixed feelings amongst many Americans. The election is over, and we must accept the results, regardless of political designation. As parents, we focus on our kids — their questions, concerns, and opinions. Now more than ever, children (as young as elementary aged) are politically informed.

Due to social media and mass media coverage, children engaged with their parents more than they might have during previous presidential election cycles. In fact, children are quite aware of the significance of this most recent election according to KidsHealth.org poll, where 75 percent of kids and 79 percent of teens answered “yes” when asked whether they

thought that the outcome of the election would change their lives. Most teens who took the poll also ranked issues — like gas and food prices, education, health care, war, and the environment — as “very important” to them.

Regardless of personal politics, parents are still tasked with promoting certain ideals in their children in the face of divisiveness surrounding our political leaders. Although we are no longer inundated with election coverage and advertisements, we have not seen the end of negative talk on our screens, which will continue to raise questions and reactions for children. Adding to the challenge in discussing the current news coverage with children is that parents may still be struggling with their own feelings about this election.

For example, a task for parents who hoped Hillary Clinton would become the first female president, is how to cope with

disappointment in themselves, but also their children’s dismay. Clinton said during her concession speech, “To all the little girls who are watching this, never doubt that you are valuable and powerful and deserving of every chance and opportunity in the world to pursue and to achieve your own dreams.”

Parents can use this moment as an opportunity to show our kids how to voice their opinions, respect others’ opinions, and value differences. Start by sharing your own opinions on these subjects, and then ask your children their opinions. Encourage expression, questions, and feelings, to ensure children become comfortable voicing these difficult emotions.

Talking about the election result will add to their learning and critical-thinking skills. It will also allow for you to hear their thoughts and correct any misconceptions. Maybe your child has fears about the fu-

ture. Possibly something a candidate said or did while campaigning is still concerning to them. Actively listen to your child, her concerns, and reassure her, but also encourage her to think about the future. Let your children know that they can also make a difference in their greater community, and help them think of things that they can do for others, or identify a cause that they can more actively support.

Although it can be difficult at times to decipher the complications of this election, parents must model a positive example and provide support for their kids as the 45th president takes office.

### Strategies for helping children

Denise Daniels is a Peabody Award-winning broadcast journalist, author, and parenting and child development expert, who specializes in the social and emotional development of children. She offers the following strategies and discussion tips for helping children understand the election:

### Actions and values

We're guided by our values, but we're judged by our actions. And actions, especially in children, are almost always inspired by feelings. That's why one of our key jobs is to help our kids understand

Although we are no longer inundated with election coverage and advertisements, we have not seen the end of negative talk on our screens, which will continue to raise questions and reactions for children.

their emotions and learn to manage them appropriately.

### Managing emotions

Research has shown that children — and adults — who can't manage their emotions have more difficulties academically, professionally, socially, and psychologically.

It's never too early, or too late, to begin the process of helping children develop "emotional intelligence" — so that they learn to act with civility and respect, despite any bad examples they may have seen during the election season.

### Talking to kids

Help older children feel comfortable talking about their emotions by listening without judgement and emphasizing that all feelings are okay. Then teach your children strategies for managing their emotions, whether it's taking deep breaths

and counting to 10 to diffuse anger, or using positive self-talk to overcome fear or sadness.

### Talking to teens

When children understand their own feelings and those of others, they can act with self-control, compassion, and empathy. When teens have developed emotional intelligence, they are better able to resist peer pressure and stay true to themselves.

When young adults act responsibly, they will vote with care and conviction. Our world — and our endless election cycles — will be better for it.

Find this and other tips online at [www.denisedanielsparenting.com](http://www.denisedanielsparenting.com).

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



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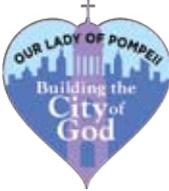
176021 Wexford Terrace, Jamaica Estates  
718-297-2120  
[www.tmla.org](http://www.tmla.org)  
Principal – Sister Kathleen McKinney

The Mary Louis woman is offered an array of intellectually challenging courses that provide academic foundation. Each student develops her program incorporating honors and advanced placement courses focusing on her strengths and interests and leading to a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation. SMARTBOARD Technology is used throughout the school. Over 100 computers are available for student use. Guidance Counselors offer personal and academic counseling beginning in the first year. TMLA has a unique and extensive college program which focuses on acceptance to top level colleges and universities. Student talents are developed and interests cultivated through participation in more than 50 extracurricular clubs and activities.

#### Xaverian High School

7100 Shore Road, Bay Ridge  
718-836-7100 x117  
[www.xaverian.org](http://www.xaverian.org)

A Catholic, co-educational, college preparatory school in the tradition of the Xaverian Brothers since 1957. A cutting edge, one-to-one learning environment with iPads for every student. Project and problem-based learning through hands-on classroom experiences within the Michael T. Strianese '74 STEM Program, Xaverian's highly acclaimed Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math curriculum in conjunction with Project Lead the Way. Private bus service is available. Now offering Parent Tour Thursdays or spend a day on our campus as a "Clipper for a Day".



### OPEN HOUSE

January 10th & 31st,  
February 14th, March 14th

Our Lady of Pompeii School is a Catholic elementary school serving PreK-3 through grade 8 located in the heart of Greenwich Village.  
*Come to one of our open houses to learn more about us!*

West 4<sup>th</sup> Street:  
A, B, C, D, E, F, M trains;  
Christopher St.:1

**Our Lady of Pompeii School**  
240 Bleecker Street, NY NY 10014  
212.242.4147 | [ladyofpompeii.org](http://ladyofpompeii.org)

# The Mary Louis Academy

# TMLA+

At The Mary Louis Academy, you will find your own voice — distinctive, confident, intelligent, creative, and empowered — a voice that will be one of your greatest assets in life.




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The Mary Louis Academy is sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Brentwood, New York. Accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and Chartered by the State of NY.



# XAVIERIAN

**Xaverian now offers  
Parent Tour Thursdays.**  
For more information, contact the  
Admissions office at 718-836-7100 x117

A Catholic, co-educational, college preparatory school in the tradition of the Xaverian Brothers since 1957, Xaverian offers:

- A cutting edge, one-to-one learning environment with iPads for every student
- Project and problem-based learning through hands-on classroom experiences within the Michael T. Strianese '74 STEM Program, Xaverian's highly acclaimed Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math curriculum in conjunction with Project Lead the Way
- College counseling and Internship Program
- College credit opportunities available through

**VISIT US**  
Spend a day on our campus as a  
"Clipper for a Day" and  
experience what life is like as a Clipper

numerous AP, St. John's University, and Syracuse University courses

- College placements at prestigious schools such as Brown University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Georgetown University, Macaulay Honors at CUNY, New York University, Princeton University, University of Notre Dame, University of Pennsylvania, US Military Academy at West Point, and US Naval Academy, with the class of 2016 earning \$36,880,924 in scholarships!
- Unique extracurricular offerings, including the renowned MAX (Music at Xaverian) Program, as well as a competitive athletic program for boys and girls



For more information, please contact Xaverian's Office of Admissions at (718) 836-7100 x117 or admissions@xaverian.org  
7100 Shore Road, Brooklyn, NY 11209 | www.xaverian.org/admissions | TACHS #011

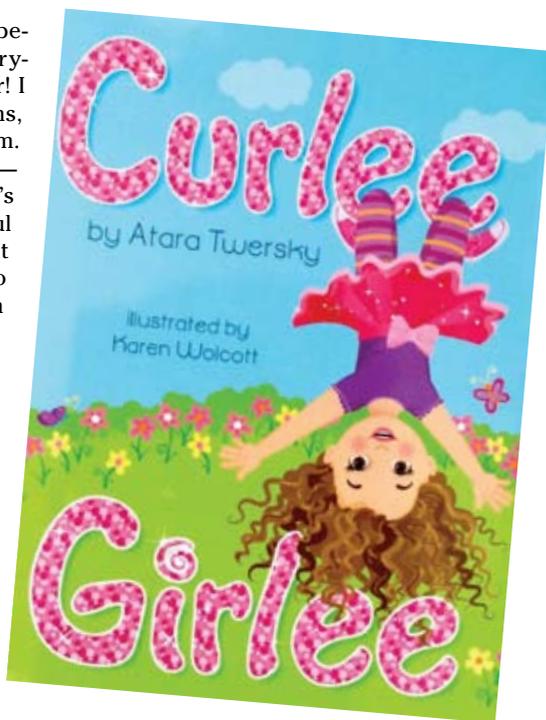
# A new year, and a new you

**N**ew year, new you, new beginnings! Wishing everyone a FabuLyss New Year! I made a few New Year's resolutions, and I look forward to keeping them. A new year is like a blank book — the pen is in your hands. Now it's your chance to write a beautiful story for yourself. Talking about stories, I cannot wait for you to read my new book, coming out in spring 2017.

• • •

The cutest new book that I have been reading to my daughter every night is "Curlee Girlee." Curlee Girlee's hair makes her mad! She wants it to grow down her back like spaghetti, not sideways and all curly-whirly. Curlee Girlee wants to look like everybody else — and she'll try anything to solve her problem. Then one day, she discovers that her curly hair is perfect just the way it is. Curlee Girlee doesn't need to look like everyone else to be beautiful. After all, everyone is beautiful inside and out.

"Curlee Girlee" is written by Atara Twersky, a New York City mom of three young children. Both myself and my young daughter have very curly hair, and I wish I could have read this book when I was a young girl — many moons ago.



"Curlee Girlee" is available on Amazon.com.

• • •

Sometimes there are Broadway shows that affect you for a lifetime. Most recently, I took my 13-year-old son to see "Dear Evan Hansen." I will warn you, bring lots of tissues. I think every middle school and high school should make it



## FABULYSS FINDS

LYSS STERN

mandatory to see this show. It's been a few weeks since we saw the heart-piercing musical, and we cannot stop talking about what we experienced in the theater for the first time ever. From the director of "Rent" and "Next To Normal," run (don't walk) to see this show — you will thank me.

"Dear Evan Hansen" at Music Box Theater (239 W. 45th St. between Seventh and Eighth avenues in the Theater District, <http://dear-evanhansen.com>).

• • •

I hope everyone has a wonderful start to the new year! Another one of my New Year's resolutions is to visit some of the city's tourist spots that my kids have never been to. I want to be a tourist in my own city with my children. I want to take them to the top of the Empire State Building, on a trip to Ellis Island, and to the Top of the Rock.

Lyss Stern is the founder of DivaLyssciious Moms ([www.divamoms.com](http://www.divamoms.com)).

### Surprise cookies

I am loving these surprise cookies from Martha Stewart, who says she was inspired to make them by mugs of hot chocolate topped with marshmallows.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup milk

- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 12 large marshmallows, cut in half horizontally
- Chocolate frosting

**DIRECTIONS:** Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt; set aside. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about two minutes. Add egg, milk, and vanilla, and beat until well combined. Add reserved flour mixture; mix on low speed until combined.

Using a tablespoon or 1 3/4-inch ice cream scoop, drop dough onto ungreased baking

sheets, about two inches apart. Bake until cookies begin to spread and become firm, 10 to 12 minutes.

Remove baking sheets from oven, and place a marshmallow, cut-side down, in the center of each cookie, pressing down slightly. Return to oven, and continue baking until marshmallows begin to melt, 2 to 2 1/2 minutes.

Transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool completely before frosting. Spread about 1 tablespoon of frosting over each marshmallow, starting in the center and continuing outward until marshmallow is covered.

[www.marthastewart.com/356831/surprise-cookies](http://www.marthastewart.com/356831/surprise-cookies)

# Smart snacking for cold weather



**A**s the temperature drops, kids need warm, nourishing foods to keep their immune systems strong and their energy up. Snacks loaded with antioxidants, spices, and superfoods as opposed to sugar and processed ingredients will keep sniffles and sore throats at bay. With a couple of easy tricks, you can fill your kids' bellies with delicious treats that

satisfy their cravings while supplying vital minerals and vitamins for optimal health:

### Serve it on a stick

Kids eat with their eyes. The more festive and colorful the presentation, the more likely they are to get excited about it.

Try assorted roasted vegetables on a skewer with a protein-loaded sweet potato

### Peanut butter love — the best flourless Blondie

These peanut butter chip squares resemble a Blondie or a Nestles Toll House Cookie; only they are protein-loaded and contain zero flour — a winning combination for optimal taste and health.

Makes 12 squares

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 16 ounces natural, no sugar-added peanut butter
- ½ cup pure maple syrup
- ½ cup original soy milk or nondairy milk of choice (I use nondairy milk that has about 7 grams of sugar per serving.)
- 1 ripe banana, mashed
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ cup dark, semisweet chocolate chips
- Butter or oil for greasing the pan

**DIRECTIONS:** Preheat oven to 325 degrees. In a bowl, mix the peanut butter, maple syrup, milk, and mashed banana. Mash it all up and combine well. Then mix in the beaten eggs, vanilla, salt, and baking soda. Mix together until well blended and smooth. Stir in half the chocolate chips. Pour the batter into a well-greased 8-inch-square Pyrex dish. Scatter the remaining chips on top.

Bake for 55 minutes, checking after 15 minutes to make sure the edges do not get too brown. If the top looks very brown, cover with foil and bake for the remaining 40 minutes. Cool and serve.



## TIPS FOR FEEDING KIDS

DAWN LERMAN

hummus dipping sauce or turkey meatballs dunked in warm vitamin C-loaded marinara sauce.

### Serve it in a mug

After school, kids are tired and hungry and need a quick, soothing pick-me-up.

Nothing promotes a feeling of calm and comfort like warm liquids. Fill their mugs with magnesium loaded hot chocolate, sprinkled with blood stabilizing cinnamon, or have them indulge in a cup of rich bone broth — infused with ginger, garlic and turmeric — promoting healthy joints, improved digestion, increased concentration and a better night's rest.

### Warm your house with sweetness

Nothing creates better memories than the aroma of brownies, granola, or muffins cooking in the oven. Baking from scratch gives you the opportunity to infuse your children's treats with superfoods like nut butters, flax seeds, eggs, and coconut oil. From the time my kids were old enough to hold a spoon, I let them cream the butter, crack the eggs, and fold in chips or raisins to whatever sweet snack we were making.

Kids feel a sense of pride and accomplishment when they are involved in the preparation process. Even picky eaters might be open to experimenting with new flavors, textures, and ingredients in the context of following the directions of a recipe.

*Dawn Lerman — also known as the Snacking Mama — is a top Manhattan nutritionist, founder of Magnificent Mommies, and the author of the best-selling book, "My Fat Dad: A Memoir of Food, Love and Family, With Recipes." Follow her on Twitter@DawnLerman*



# Hurtful words

## What *not* to say to your daughters

**I**s there anything that matters more to a little girl than what her mother thinks of her?

Quite possibly, what her mother says to her.

To some, a mother is a little girl's whole world, so when she says something negative, her daughter takes it to heart (and often keeps it in her psyche for years to come). In teens, whose feelings are magnified times a thousand, one demoralizing comment can make her see herself in a terrible light, which can lead to low self-esteem.

Even as adults, we don't want to hear our mothers questioning our judgments in a condescending way. Yes, we do want their advice, but not their harsh criticism.

Luckily, it seems like many of us have surpassed the old-fashioned way of raising girls, even though that is exactly how many of us were raised. Yet, there are many moms who still let some things slip without even realizing the damage they are doing.

With that in mind, here are some things a mother should never say to her daughter:

**Be girlier:** A mom might be a feminine

flower, but if her little girl is a tomboy, let her embrace who she is. If a mother is obsessed with frilly dresses and shoes, she should wear them, and not force them on her unwilling daughter.

**Don't be rude:** Sometimes life calls for being rude. So many times, it calls for standing up for oneself. The old-fashioned (and disgusting) notion that girls need to be nice all the time creates people-pleasers — who please everyone else except themselves.

**You can't do that:** Whether it's become a scientist, win a contest, take that calculus course, or become the next president, any time you tell a girl she can't do something, it creates a negative thought pattern in her brain. Pretty soon she may internalize that she really can't do many things, and then of course, once she believes that, she will stop trying.

**You are running out of time to have kids:** Words hurt even when you're an adult. Remember the part in the movie "The Help," when Emma Stone's character's mother, Charlotte Phelan, told her daughter, "Your eggs are dying. Would it kill you to go on a date?" If you do, then you probably also remember how terrible she made her very smart daughter feel just



## JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

because she didn't have a man in her life. The pressure to have kids when you want them and can't have them is nothing short of huge. Any kind of negative comment from a mother is damaging. And let's not even go there about how plain horrifying it is to make a woman's life all about landing a man.

**Don't get dirty:** Girls should experience everything that boys can. One of my absolute favorite memories as a child was playing with the mud in my yard. Give me a spoon, and I could dig for hours. You deny a girl a lot when you expect her to stay clean all the time. Kids — boys and girls — were meant to explore, have adventures, and sometimes, get dirty!

**What will the family, neighbors, or other girls think?** So a girl doesn't want to go to a sleepover, join Girl Scouts, or dress the way her friends do. Mothers should never have a girl question any decision by asking what her family or friends would think. Not unless they want the girl to make every decision based on what others think rather than what she thinks.

**Put on some lipstick before you go:** Which snidely means that how you look sans makeup is not good enough. More moms need to encourage girls that they don't need to hide their faces under a mountain of cosmetics.

**Just smile:** Or "Don't look so angry, sad, or bored." Every time you tell a girl to mask her own feelings for the sake of looking good for the neighbors, friends, or family, you are telling a girl to hide how she really feels, which will only make her feel much, much worse. If a girl is angry, for God's sake, let her be angry!

Have something to add to this list? Let us know on Facebook!

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

# Teaching kids to clean up



## BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

**T**he holidays have come and gone. Your home is now filled with new toys that will be played with and then tossed aside, giving a new covering to your carpet. You think to yourself, “What would it take to get my children to actually clean up when they finish playing?”

You have heard that they clean up in school. One catchy song from the teachers, and they are all about it. Yet, when you say “clean up” and then sing a song, nothing happens.

Day after day, you spend precious time picking up Legos and puzzle pieces, figurines, and Zingo tiles. You realize, this is why half the games can’t be played — the pieces are lost in the piles of toys left unsorted.

Enough!

Today is the day that you start teaching your small ones to clean up. Here is the secret: cleaning up is a skill that needs to be taught. Just like the alphabet or tying shoes. If you teach them, they will clean up. If you don’t, you will con-

tinue to feel like a maid and frustrated that games purchased two months ago are useless.

Here is how you teach cleaning up:

Play a game with your small being — together.

At the end, say, “Let’s clean up.” Then, give him a specific part of the game to clean up, and you pick another part to clean up. This is a clear direction.

“You put all the red pieces away, and I will get all the green pieces.”

Make sure you only put away your pieces and wait for him to clean up his. If there are then more pieces left, assign them to your small being or yourself.

When your small being pushes back, saying, “No, I don’t want to,” simply stick to your guns and repeat the direction. Wait until he cleans up his pieces before another game can be started. Make sure to stock up on patience, as the first few times you do this, it might take some time for him to realize you mean it.

Once all the parts of the game are

packed away, give the job of closing the box to someone. Either you or him, doesn’t matter, as long as you say it aloud.

“I am going to close the box now that all the pieces are away.”

Putting the game back in the closet is another specified job. Assign it to someone and then make sure that person does it.

“You get to put the box back in the closet.”

This is how you teach your kiddo to clean up!

Now, there are variables that can be added. Wait to raise the bar until this joint clean up is mastered. Then you can start having him clean up toys when he plays independently. Providing the specific elements to clean up will be a great way to support your kids accomplishing the goal of getting all the pieces away. Over time, you can reduce the details, and your small being will be a fantastic cleaner upper!

One day you will get super fancy and add in choices: “What piece do you want to clean up first?”

It’s a great goal to work towards, but know that it is not a great place to start. Start with clear directions and then move into choices.

*Dr. Marcie Beigel is a behavioral therapist based in Brooklyn. She has worked with thousands of families for more than 15 years and has condensed her observations into her practice and programs. For more on her, visit [www.BehaviorAndBeyond.net](http://www.BehaviorAndBeyond.net).*



# Don't have a will? Know the risks

“**J**ust” is not justice.

People often think that if they die without a will, everything will just get taken care of.

“Oh, I don't need a will. Everything will just go to my spouse.” Or, “I don't need a power of attorney. Worst comes to worst, they'll just get a guardianship.”

Often, these statements are driven by the speaker's desire to avoid paying legal fees, making it easier to resort to his vision of focusing on what he thinks is the ultimate result — rather than the process required in order to get there.

When someone dies without a Last Will and Testament, the rules of descent and distribution of property under the laws of intestacy — that is, dying without a will — apply. These rules also apply when someone leaves a will that is invalid and does not comply with the formalities of the statute, for example,

when someone pulls something off the internet and just has it notarized, or has it witnessed by one of the beneficiaries named in the will.

There are rules about the order of priority about who stands to inherit from an intestate estate and who has “standing” — the right to petition to be the fiduciary of the person's estate. The fiduciary is called an “Administrator” and not an “Executor,” a term which applies to probate estates where a decedent died with a will. (By the way, in New York State, female fiduciaries are no longer called “Executrix” or “Administratrix” since the diminutive suffix was abolished by court rule in 1997, yet many people continue to incorrectly use these terms.)

The application of the laws of intestacy may have unintended consequences. For example, the spouse does not take all. Instead, the spouse takes the first \$50,000, and then half of the remainder, with the



## ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER, ESQ.

other half going to any surviving children. And, there are many people who hold themselves out to be husband and wife (or spouses) but in fact are not legally married. New York State does not have common-law marriage.

Often people lose sight of what is involved to administrate an estate, and the fact that it can be less organized and require additional paperwork than in a probate estate. For example, for unmarried persons, you can try to go to court to have a judicial declaration of a marriage, but it is a high burden of proof and an uphill battle, one that encounters legal costs. Those costs are always considered in determining the cost-benefit analysis of whether to proceed in a certain direction. Estate taxes can also be higher in those cases, where a decedent was not actually married to his partner, who now will not receive the assets of the decedent because he or she has no legal standing as a non-spouse.

Also, if there are minor children, those minor children are not legally competent to own property. Therefore, the parent must seek appointment as a Guardian of the property in order to receive the assets, at which point those funds must be held jointly with the Clerk of the Court, and the Court's permission is required for a withdrawal of those assets.

This puts the Court in control of the assets, and not the child's parent. The parent is then required to seek the Surrogate's Court approval every time she

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

or he wants to access some of the child's money for childcare expenses. In New York County, the Guardianship department has an unspecified rule (not codified anywhere) that there should be enough money left for the child to go to college. There are no guidelines for what this means. College tuition at a state school or a private university?

Although the child is legally entitled to whatever is left in the account once he or she reaches the age of 18, many would agree that no child should have access to large sums of money at 18, particularly when that child has experienced a tragedy like losing a parent.

In addition, there are certain factors that render a person ineligible to serve as a fiduciary, such as a felony conviction. Although a will does not necessarily overcome that statutory barrier, at least you would be able to state why you want that person to serve notwithstanding the defect or barrier to serving.

In other situations, the decedent might not have gotten along with his or her siblings, or parents, from whom he or she was estranged, or distant cousins whom he or she never met. Often, people in same-sex relationships, particularly those who hail from the South or "fly over" states, had a falling out with their

conservative family members and don't speak with them once arriving in the Big Apple. Nonetheless, in this case, blood really is thicker than water, and they will stand to inherit if there is no will to stand in the way of that situation.

Without a will, you lose the option of choosing the person who will administer an estate, or serve as trustee. Often in an intestacy situation, in cases where there is no one suitable to serve, or even where there is no family, the Public Administrator will serve as fiduciary. This is a person appointed by the Court to administer those estates that are without someone to serve.

In certain circumstances, even those people who are otherwise entitled to take under the statute can be barred from that entitlement. For example, a parent or spouse who abandoned the decedent cannot inherit, nor can a person who murdered the decedent or was culpable in their death (known as the "Son of Sam" rule).

A Surrogate Court recently took that logic one step further: A husband who murdered his wife's mother (his mother-in-law). The wife — the heir of the murdered woman's estate — post-deceased her mother, also intestate, leaving her husband as the sole heir of her estate.

Even though he was not culpable in his wife's death, the Court barred him from taking in intestacy.

Children who are "adopted out" may also not inherit from the biological parent. Stepchildren are not included in the intestacy list, no matter how emotionally close the relationship.

You need to look no further than estates of celebrities to visualize what happens. Prince died unexpectedly this year without a will. Now his estimated \$300-million estate will be distributed among six siblings. This is complicated because of the nature of his assets. Unsurprisingly, other potential heirs have surfaced claiming to be Prince's out-of-wedlock child, including a federal prison inmate.

There are serious consequences to not leaving a valid will, yet nearly two-thirds of American adults fail to do so. Don't be one of them. And remember that this is not a "do-it-yourself" project.

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

**Digital**  
**CAMP**  
**GUIDE**

Check it out on [nyparenting.com](http://nyparenting.com)

The advertisement features a bright yellow background with a sunburst pattern. At the bottom, there is a green grassy field. The text is prominently displayed in red and white.

**Gazillion**  
**Bubble**  
**Show**

"INGENIOUS  
BUBBLE WIZARDRY."  
-THE NEW YORKER

10th  
INCREDBUBBLE  
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New World Stages 340 W. 50th St.  
[GazillionBubbleShow.com](http://GazillionBubbleShow.com)

The advertisement shows a man in a blue shirt blowing a large, colorful bubble against a dark blue background with stars and other bubbles. The text is in various colors and fonts, including a quote from The New Yorker.

# Calendar

JANUARY



## Who is the fairest of them all?

Evil stepmothers, seven dwarfs, a magical kiss — it's "Snow White" at the Galli Theater, weekends now through Jan. 15.

Snow White is a young woman whose stepmother is jealous of her beauty. When the magical mirror on the wall says that Snow White is the "fairest of them all," the stepmother makes a plan to get Snow White out of the castle and out of her life forever!

Will the handsome prince be able to save the day? Come and see for yourself. For children 3 years and older.

"Snow White," weekends now through Jan. 15. Show times are at 2 pm, box office opens 1:30 pm. Tickets are \$20, \$15 for children, and \$35 for a family combo.

*Galli Theater [151 W. 26th Street between Seventh and Sixth avenues in Chelsea, (212) 731-0668; [www.gallitheaterny.com](http://www.gallitheaterny.com)].*

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

# Calendar

### Submit a listing

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

Send your listing request to [manhattancalendar@cnglocal.com](mailto: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!

### SUN, JAN. 1

#### IN MANHATTAN

**Come calling:** Merchant's House Museum, 29 E. Fourth St.; (212) 777-1089; 2 to 5 pm; \$20 (\$10 members).

Paying calls on friends and family on New Year's Day was one of Old New York's most cherished customs. Join us for tours of the house, 19th-century readings about New Year's Day celebrations, and punch and confectionery, as we continue the 19th-century tradition of renewing, reviving, and reaffirming friendships.

**"Snow White":** Galli Theater, 151 W. 26th Street, seventh floor; (212) 731-0668; [www.gallitheaterny.com](http://www.gallitheaterny.com); 2 pm; \$20 (\$15 children; \$35 combo).

Snow White is a young woman whose stepmother is jealous of her beauty. When the magical mirror on the wall says that Snow White is the "fairest of them all," the stepmother makes a plan to get Snow White out of the castle and out of her life forever! For children 3 and up.

### TUES, JAN. 3

#### IN MANHATTAN

**American Dance Platform:** Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave.; (212) 242-0800; [www.joyce.org/performances/american-dance-platform](http://www.joyce.org/performances/american-dance-platform); 7:30 pm; Tickets start at \$10.

Now in its second year, the American Dance Platform initiative continues to showcase some of the most captivating American companies performing today. This year's festival features an eclectic roster of artists, with each of the eight companies performing twice throughout a week of double bills. Dedicated to the memory of Theodore S. Bartwink of the Harkness Foundation for Dance.

### WED, JAN. 4

#### IN MANHATTAN

**American Dance Platform:** 7:30 pm. Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, Jan. 3.



## All aboard for this show

Hop aboard and come see the Holiday Train Show at Grand Central Terminal now through Feb. 26.

The 15th annual display features iconic holiday images of a model train whirring by as it circles the base of a brightly-lit tree, evoking feelings of warmth and wonder in children and adults alike.

To the delight of all, Lionel trains will journey along a 34-foot long, two-level, "O" gauge model train layout, departing from a miniature replica of Grand Central Terminal on its way

to the North Pole. This year's exhibit showcases Lionel's Grand Central Express, Metro-North, Pennsylvania Flyer, Polar Express, and vintage subway train sets against a backdrop designed for the museum's 40th anniversary.

Holiday Train Show, weekdays now through Feb. 26, Monday to Friday, 8 am to 8 pm; Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 6 pm. Free with museum admission.

*Grand Central Terminal (89 E. 42nd St. and Park Avenue in Midtown East, [www.nytransitmuseum.org/exhibits](http://www.nytransitmuseum.org/exhibits)).*

### THURS, JAN. 5

#### IN MANHATTAN

**Cross-Stitch Circle:** New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org); 3:30 pm; Free with museum admission of \$19 adults, \$6 children ages 5-12.

Beginning cross stitchers and younger children will learn the basic stitch and create a bookmark with their new skill. More seasoned stitchers and older children and adults make a handcrafted gift for someone. Ages 7 and up.

**American Dance Platform:** 8 pm. Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, Jan. 3.

### FRI, JAN. 6

#### IN MANHATTAN

**American Dance Platform:** 8 pm. Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, Jan. 3.

### SAT, JAN. 7

#### IN MANHATTAN

**Living History:** New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org); 11 am; Free with museum admission.

Meet fascinating living historians and reenactors who bring the American Revolution to life inside the museum, presented in conjunction with our groundbreaking exhibition, *The Battle of Brooklyn*.

**"Les Parfaits Inconnus":** Peter Jay Sharp Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. at West End Avenue; (212) 864-5400; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org); 11 am and 2 pm; \$17 (\$14 members).

In this New York premiere, witness a crazy adventure through the world of the circus, where comedy, acrobatics, balancing, and juggling mingle with the festive rhythms of live music.

**"Night and Day":** David I Koch Theater,

# Calendar

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

20 Lincoln Center Plaza; (212)-875-5456; 11 am and 2 pm; Free.

Inspired by the jazz classic Night and Day, JoJo and the Pinecones celebrate the craziness of our days and the joys of falling asleep through their fresh kid-friendly mix of classic jazz favorites and clever originals. For children 2 to 5 years old.

**"Snow White":** 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Sunday, Jan. 1.

**American Dance Platform:** 2 pm and 8 pm. Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, Jan. 3.

## SUN, JAN. 8

### IN MANHATTAN

**"Playing by Air":** Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org); 11 am, 2 pm, and 3 pm; \$17 (\$14 members).

Spectacular juggling and musical feats and at 3 pm, "Stam-Pede," a percussive dance showcase with multiple companies.

**Living History:** New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org); 11 am; Free with museum admission.

Meet fascinating living historians and reenactors who bring the American Revolution to life inside the museum, presented in conjunction with our groundbreaking exhibition, The Battle of Brooklyn.

**Macy's Storytime:** New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org); 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

All ages are welcome to join this special storytime.

**Teddy Bear Tea:** Mount Vernon Hotel Museum and Garden, 421 E. 61st St. between First and York avenues; (212) 838-6878; [www.mvhm.org](http://www.mvhm.org); 1 pm to 2:30 pm; \$10 (\$5 children under 12).

Banish post-holiday boredom with a special event for kids ages 3 to 6 and their favorite teddy (or doll) to role-play the daily activities at the Mount Vernon Hotel in 1830. Afterwards, enjoy fruit tea and cookies. Reservations recommended.

**Heather Garden:** Heather Garden – Fort Tryon Park, Cabrini Boulevard and Fort Washington Avenue; (212) 795-1388; 1 pm to 2 pm; Free.

Start the New Year right by rediscovering the Heather Garden and the former Billings Estate entrance area, and learn what plants are prominent in winter. Find out what birds can be found in the park in the winter, and the plants that support them. Then, create bird feeders for your home with artist Jenae Schwartz to help our feathered friends during the cold winter months.

**"Snow White":** 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Sunday, Jan. 1.

**American Dance Platform:** 2 pm and



## Tea time with Teddy

Get your tea cups ready for the Teddy Bear Tea at the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum and Garden on Jan. 8.

Banish post-holiday boredom with this special event for children ages 3 to 6. Bring your favorite teddy (or doll) to meet Mrs. Woodhull, the proprietor's wife, and role-play the daily activities at the Mount Vernon Hotel in 1830. You'll have an opportunity to try out

William's toys and help Sarah with the laundry. Afterwards, enjoy fruit tea and cookies. Reservations recommended.

Teddy Bear Tea, Jan. 8 from 1 to 2:30 pm. Tickets \$10 and \$5 for children under 12.

*Mount Vernon Hotel Museum and Garden [421 E. 61st St. between First and York Avenues in Lenox Hill, (212) 838-6878; [www.mvhm.org](http://www.mvhm.org)].*

7:30 pm. Joyce Theater. See Tuesday, Jan. 3.

## THURS, JAN. 12

### IN MANHATTAN

**Cross-Stitch Circle:** 3:30 pm. New-York Historical Society. See Thursday, Jan. 5.

## SAT, JAN. 14

### IN MANHATTAN

**Learn to box like Ali:** New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org); 1 pm to 3 pm; Free with museum admission.

In honor of our special exhibition Muhammad Ali, LeRoy Neiman, and the Art of Boxing, celebrity trainer and former professional boxer Ehinomen "Hollywood Hino" Eikhamenor will join us in the museum to teach some of the moves that made Muhammad Ali "The Greatest of All Time."

**Pause and Play:** 14th Street Y Preschool (formerly known as Gani), 344 E. 14th Street

(646) 395-4325; 2 pm to 6 pm; \$10 (\$15 adults; \$45 family up to 5 members).

A bounce house and rock wall will be set up all afternoon in the gym, plus PJ play!, family swim, klezmer music for kids, and a disco dance party will make this the grooviest place to burn those holiday calories!

**"Argus":** David I Koch Theater, 20 Lincoln Center Plaza; (212)-875-5456; 11 am and 2 pm; \$25.

Dead Puppet Society- Step into a whimsical wonderland where table tops grow grass and water bottles become the depths of the ocean. Using nothing but household objects and the performers' hands, Argus tells the story of an endearing little creature trying to find a home in a world where he just doesn't fit in, brought to life with stunning creativity by one of Australia's premier puppet companies.

**"Snow White":** 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Sunday, Jan. 1.

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

## SUN, JAN. 15

### IN MANHATTAN

**Macy's Storytime:** 11:30 am. New-York Historical Society. See Sunday, Jan. 8.

**"Snow White":** 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Sunday, Jan. 1.

## MON, JAN. 16

### IN MANHATTAN

**Discovery walk – Balto's winter wonderland:** By the Gift Shop, Central Park, 65th St. Transverse; 11 am to noon; Free.

What Central Park secrets are revealed in the winter? With the park's most famous canine resident leading the way, we'll explore the wintery landscape to discover the answers! Bring your family for a guided walk and discover why Central Park is a sanctuary for plants, animals, and humans alike. Pre-registration required as space is limited. Ages 5 and up. Families only; maximum of three children per parent or guardian; no groups, please. Please arrive at walk location 15 minutes before the start of the walk to allow time for check in. Terrain: Uneven, with hills, stairs, and wood-chipped trails; may not be suitable for strollers.

## THURS, JAN. 19

### IN MANHATTAN

**Cross-Stitch Circle:** 3:30 pm. New-York Historical Society. See Thursday, Jan. 5.

## SAT, JAN. 21

### IN MANHATTAN

**"Hansel & Gretel":** Galli Theater, 151 W. 26th Street, seventh floor; (212) 731-0668; [www.gallitheaterny.com](http://www.gallitheaterny.com); 2 pm; \$20 (\$15 children; \$35 combo).

Hansel and Gretel are brought into the woods and cannot find their way back! A witch lures them into her little house with all kinds of tasty treats. Can clever Gretel trick the witch and get them safely back home? For children 4 and up.

**Storytime:** David I Koch Theater, 20 Lincoln Center Plaza; (212)-875-5456; 11 am; Free.

Jean-Michael Basquiat and his unique, collage-style paintings rocketed to fame in the 1980s as a cultural phenomenon unlike anything the art world had ever seen. But before that, he was a little boy who saw art everywhere: in poetry books and museums, in games and in the words that we speak, and in the pulsing energy of New York City.

## SUN, JAN. 22

### IN MANHATTAN

**Macy's Storytime:** 11:30 am. New-York Historical Society. See Sunday, Jan. 8.



## Blast off to outer space

Ground control is calling all space travelers to come and visit before the mission takes off on Jan. 22 at the Children's Museum of Art.

The exhibit Mission to Space covers the mysteries of outer space and how it continues to challenge our imaginations. As life on Earth faces a volatile future, outer space emerges as a destination of refuge, peace, and infinite possibility.

While there, come to the Pepperman Family Fine Arts Studio and enjoy two new interactive installations by designer

Ellen Van Dusen, and the Bridge Project Crazy Space Odyssey, by Tom Burnett, Edy Escamilla, and Yung Oh Le Page.

The Bridge is full of sights, sounds, and even a moving comet. As you continue to the space station you will board a spacecraft and blast off into outer space.

Mission to Space, daily until Jan. 22, from noon to 4 pm. Free with museum admission.

*Children's Museum of the Arts [103 Charlton St. at Hudson Street in Hudson Square, (212) 274-0986; [www.cmany.org](http://www.cmany.org)].*

**"Otoyotoy":** Carnegie Hall, Stern Auditorium, 881 Seventh Ave. at 56th Street; (212) 247-7800; ["Otoyotoy" is a piece of immersive music theater for children under the age of 3 and their families that combines humor, storytelling, and vocal improvisation. Conceived by Zoe Palmer and Thomas Cabaniss, with Saskia Lane. Performed by Moving Star Vocal Ensemble and Friends. Seats are a first-come, first-served basis.](https://ticketofficeeventsales.com/Venues/Carnegie-Hall-Isaac-Stern-Auditorium?gclid=CNqPnOnKitACFYcmhgodTt0CsG; Noon and 2 pm; Free.</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

**The Big Quiz Thing:** Leonard Nimoy

Thalia, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 316-4962; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org); 2 pm; \$17 (\$14 members).

Put on your smarty pants for this live, family-friendly multimedia quiz show spectacular! The Big Quiz Thing brings a ridiculous amount of fun to Symphony Space for an afternoon of fast and funny team trivia with quizmaster extraordinaire EdP. Over the course of six rounds, children and their parents team up to show off their knowledge of topics ranging from history, sports, art, animals, geography, pop culture, and more.

**"Hansel & Gretel":** 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 21.

# Calendar

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## THURS, JAN. 26

### IN MANHATTAN

**Cross-Stitch Circle:** 3:30 pm. New-York Historical Society. See Thursday, Jan. 5.

## SAT, JAN. 28

### IN MANHATTAN

**"Hansel & Gretel":** 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 21.

**Open studios:** Whitney Museum of American Art, 99 Ganesvoort St.; (212) 570-3600; [whitney.org/Education/Families](http://whitney.org/Education/Families); 10:30 am to 3 pm; Free with museum admission.

Every month the Whitney Museum of American Art offers opportunities for children of all ages to engage with our current exhibitions and create their own artwork in the Whitney's Hearst Artspace during Open Studios. Open Studio with artist Jenny Perlin. Jenny Perlin's films incorporate innovative techniques to investigate history as it relates to the present. Her work combines live-action, staged, and documentary images with hand-drawn animation.

## SUN, JAN. 29

### IN MANHATTAN

**Shadow Play:** David I Koch Theater, 20 Lincoln Center Plaza; (212)-875-5456; 11 am and 2 pm; \$25.

Trusty Sidekick Theater Company Have you ever wondered what happens to your shadow while you sleep? Well, it turns out that some shadows are more mischievous than others. Soon after moving to his new home, Flash discovers that his shadow has moving plans of its own! Shadow Play is an early-years, multimedia performance that enchants and engages.

Macy's Storytime: 11:30 am. New-York Historical Society. See Sunday, Jan. 8.

**"Hansel & Gretel":** 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 21.



## Skate in the heart of NYC

Lace up your skates and visit the Bank of America Winter Village at Bryant Park, there now until March 5.

The rink is the centerpiece of the village and features free-admission ice skating in addition to high-quality rental skates, skating shows, special events, and activities.

Skating at Bank of America Winter

Village at Bryant Park, now through March 5 from 8 am to 10 pm, Monday through Thursday and Sunday; 8 am to midnight Friday and Saturday. Admission is free; skate rentals are \$20.

*Bank of America Winter Village at Bryant Park [42nd Street and Avenue of the Americas in Midtown, (212) 768-4242; [www.bryantpark.org](http://www.bryantpark.org)].*

## LONG-RUNNING

### IN MANHATTAN

**Winter Village:** Bryant Park, 42nd Street and Avenue of the Americas; (212) 768-4242; [www.bryantpark.org](http://www.bryantpark.org); Daily, 8 am to 10 pm; Now - Sun, March 5; Free, fee for skate rentals.

The rink is open for ice skating. Lace up those skates and get gliding around.

**Train show at Grand Central:** Grand Central Station, 42nd Street and Park Avenue; [www.nytransitmuseum.org/exhibits](http://www.nytransitmuseum.org/exhibits); Weekdays, 8 am to 8 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am to 6 pm, Now - Sun, Feb. 26, 2017; Free with museum admission.

The Fifth Annual Holiday Train Show is an iconic holiday image of a model train, whirling by as it circles the base of a brightly-lit tree, evoking feelings of warmth and wonder



## Spotlight on American dance

The American Dance Platform is starting at the Joyce Theater from Jan. 3 through Jan. 8.

Now in its second year, the American Dance Platform festival continues to showcase some of the most captivating American companies performing today.

This year features an eclectic roster of artists, including Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre and Company E on Jan. 3 and 8; RawDance and Contra-tiempo on Jan. 4 and 8; Ragamala Dance Company and

Davalois Fearon Dance on Jan. 5 and 7; as well as Lucky Plush Productions and Dallas Black Dance Theatre on Jan. 6 and 7.

American Dance Platform, Jan. 3 at 7:30 pm; Jan. 4 at 7:30 pm; Jan. 5 at 8 pm; Jan. 6 at 8 pm; Jan. 7 at 2 pm and 8 pm; Jan. 8 at 2 pm and 7:30 pm. Tickets start at \$10.

*Joyce Theater [175 Eighth Ave. between W. 18th and W. 19th in Chelsea, (212) 242-0800; [www.joyce.org/performances/american-dance-platform](http://www.joyce.org/performances/american-dance-platform)].*

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

in children and adults alike.

**Mission to Space:** Children's Museum of the Arts, 103 Charlton St. at Hudson Street; (212) 274-0986; [www.cmany.org](http://www.cmany.org); Daily, Noon to 4 pm; Now – Sun, Jan. 22; Free with museum admission.

Explore the mysteries of outer space and how it continues to challenge our imaginations. Also enjoy the new installation by Ellen Van Dusen, where you will be able to interact by moving the magnetic pieces to create your own patterns in space, and the Crazy Space Odyssey, where you board a spacecraft and blast off into outer space.

**Jazz for Kids:** Jazz Standard, 116 E. 27th St. between Park and Lexington avenues; (212) 576-2232; [www.jazzstandard.com](http://www.jazzstandard.com); Sundays, 1 to 3 pm; Free (\$5 donation requested).

Come and listen to jazz concert and help benefit the Jazz Standard Discovery Program. Jazz Standard donates \$1 from each kid's menu sold to Spoons Across America, a non-profit organization dedicated to educating children, teachers, and families about healthy eating habits. Table reservations requested.

**"iLuminate":** New World Stages – Stage 1, 340 W. 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth avenues; (212) 239-6200; [www.iluminate.com](http://www.iluminate.com); Mondays, 7 pm, Wednesdays – Fridays, 8 pm, Saturdays, 2 pm and 8 pm, Sundays, 3 pm and 7:30 pm, Now – Sun, Jan. 8, 2017; \$77- \$99.

Music, art, and the technological magic of "iLuminate" bring you a story of adventure and romance told through dance styles ranging from contemporary, hip-hop, latin, and breaking, all using the power of light. Suitable for tweens and young adults.

**Wreath interpretations:** Arsenal in Central Park, 830 Fifth Ave.; (212) 360-8114; Weekdays, 9 am to 5 pm, Now – Thurs, Jan. 5; Free, fee for skate rentals.

Come to the 34th exhibit and view unconventional and inventive wreaths.

**Little New-Yorkers:** New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org); Tuesdays and Fridays, 3:30 pm, Tues, Jan. 3 – Tues, Jan. 31; Free with museum admission.

Held in the cozy Barbara K. Lipman Children's History Library, this program introduces New York and American history to the little New Yorkers with age-appropriate readings and engaging hands-on activities. Ages 3 to 5 years old.

**Story Hour:** Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art, 898 St. Nicholas Ave.; (212) 335-0004; [www.sugarhillmuseum.org](http://www.sugarhillmuseum.org); Fridays, Noon to 5 pm, Now – Fri, Jan. 13; Free.

A fun-filled family day will include art-making and face painting; storytelling through dance, music, theater and the oral tradition; food trucks, and more.

**Shababa Saturdays:** 92Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; [www.92y.org](http://www.92y.org); Saturdays, 10:30 am, Now –



## The circus is in town

Be amazed at the wacky talents of the members of "Les Parfaits Inconnus" on Jan. 7, at the Peter Jay Sharp Theatre.

The New York premiere offers theater-goers a crazy adventure through the world of the circus, where comedy, acrobatics, balancing, and juggling mingle with the festive rhythms of live music. The scene is an abandoned lot on the outskirts of town, where a family of traveling circus performers stop and set up camp the way they always do, as part of their life on the road. One idle day, as the young bohemians are quietly keeping busy with small daily chores, they suddenly notice the unexpected presence of an audience fully determined to be entertained. With their instincts suddenly reawakened by this surprising visit, the travelling acrobats step up to the plate and showcase their multiple talents to the delight and awe of the audience.

"Les Parfaits Inconnus," Jan. 7 at 11 am and 2 pm. Tickets are \$17 and \$14 for members.

*Peter Jay Sharp Theatre [155 W. 65th St. at West End Avenue on the Upper East Side, (212) 864-5400; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org)].*

Sat, March 4; Free.

Sing, dance, and celebrate the joys of Shabbat with this intergenerational family experience!

**Showtime Saturdays:** Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art, 898 St. Nicholas Ave.; (212) 335-0004; [www.sugarhillmuseum.org](http://www.sugarhillmuseum.org); Saturdays, Noon to 5 pm, Now – Sat, Jan. 14, 2017; Free.

Move your body, make music, and be a part of the story every Saturday with dancer, actor, and in-house talent Alexander Elisa.

### FURTHER AFIELD

**"All Aboard with Thomas and Friends":** New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Blvd. at Fordham Road, The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org); Daily, various times, Now – Fri, Jan. 20, 2017; \$30 (\$28 seniors & students; \$18 children under 12).

Join Thomas and Driver Sam for All "Aboard with Thomas & Friends" at the New

York Botanical Garden. Help Thomas find his way from Knapford Station to Brendam Docks using teamwork, friendship, and discovery in this fun-filled sing-along, mini-performance adventure. Bring your camera to have your photo taken with Thomas after the performance.

**Holiday Train Show:** New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Blvd. at Fordham Road, The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org); Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 am to 5:30 pm, Now – Mon, Jan. 16, 2017; \$20 (\$10 children). Weekends \$30 (\$18 children).

More than 150 New York City landmarks are recreated in miniature out of bark, nuts, leaves and other plant parts. Large scale model trains zip around such familiar sites as the Statue of Liberty and Rockefeller Center. A recent addition of 3,000-square-foot of exhibition has made room for new trains, bridges and tracks. See website for extended hour. Reservations strongly recommended.

# Mediation tackles income, expenses

**B**ill and Angela, who we have been following, are set to begin their second mediation session. They attended a consultation in November. In their first mediation session in December, they addressed parenting issues. Now, they will begin to discuss financial matters.

## Jan. 19 — Session 2

The mediator asks Angela and Bill how they and the children are, and whether anything of note has happened since the last session.

The mediator gives the spouses a brief overview of Marital and Separate Property (and Debts).

He then begins setting out Bill's and Angela's respective income and expenses. [The mediator had e-mailed each of them a blank form asking for this information after the first session, and both spouses have filled it out.] This is done using a flipchart, so that all three of them can see the figures that the spouses supply.

Bill questions why Angela is paying \$400 a month for clothes for herself and the children. Bill isn't angry, but thinks the number is high. In discussing the matter, it turns out that Angela based her calculation on her September credit card statement, which showed higher costs than average due to purchasing back-to-school clothing. Their daughter needed a lot of

new things, because of how much she had grown over the summer.

Angela says that she will look at her statements for the past year and take the average of that 12-month period. Bill agrees to her suggestion. The mediator makes a note to come back to this question.

Angela asks if — since money will be tight — Bill can cut down on his recreational spending. Bill bristles at first; but looking at where his money goes, decides this is reasonable. Bill says he can spend a lot less on sporting events. He does a quick calculation, agreeing to reduce recreational spending by 10 percent, starting this month. He believes that he can bring it down further, but feels comfortable starting at 10 percent.

The mediator, noticing Angela's facial expression, asks if she wants to say something.

She answers, "Well, I think Bill could do more here." (Bill immediately becomes upset.)

"But," she adds, "Bill is willing to commit to this, and says he'll do more; I believe that." Turning to Bill, she says, "Maybe it's a good idea that you start with 10 percent; that way, you won't feel deprived. If you spent less now, you might hate it, and be angry with me, and we'd be worse off. So, good. Do the 10 percent for now. Then, we can talk about it again in a month or two.



## DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

Can we do that?"

Bill is still annoyed, but he also feels that he is being heard by his wife. He agrees. They discuss what to do with the money that will be saved. Bill wants to use it to pay down a credit card. Angela agrees to this.

Regarding the expense and income figures now displayed on the flipchart, the spouses agree that the numbers are pretty accurate.

Bill raises a concern he has about the parenting agreement. He says that he has what is a minor change in mind that would allow him to spend more time with the children during the summer, if Angela would be ok with it. Bill shares his thought.

Angela says that the change would be alright with her, if another small change can be made when it comes to the Thanksgiving holiday break, starting the following year.

Bill tells Angela that he is willing; while he likes the Thanksgiving break and doesn't really want to change the schedule they had agreed to, the change over the summer is a much bigger deal to him.

The session ends, with the spouses agreeing to complete the Asset/Debt forms for the next session.

**Next time: Assets (especially the house) and debts.**

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

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



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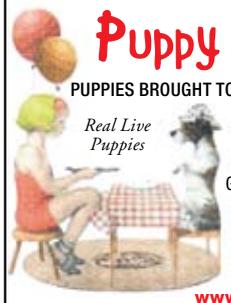
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# New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

## Give boring shoes the boot

What's more fun than a pair of rainboots for splashing in slushy puddles? How about transparent wellies that your little girl can transform as easily as changing her socks? She can wear her American Girl plastic Peek-A-Boo Wellies with their set of five pairs of WellieWishers socks for instantly adorable footwear transformations.

The polyester-cotton sock set includes a pink ballet slipper inspired pair, another pink pair with a gold Mary Jane shoe design, a red polka dot pair with ladybug faces on the toes, a multicolored floral pair, and a blue-and-green fish pair.

The rain boots are available in sizes 8/9, 10/11, 12/13, and 1/2.



Peek-A-Boo Wellies rainboots, \$26, WellieWishers set of five socks, \$20, AmericanGirl.com.

## Junie B. Jones sings!

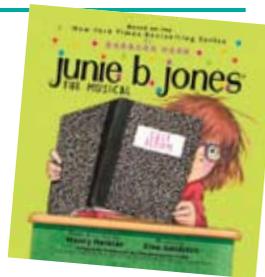
For all of those little musical theater buffs, a Junie B. Jones The Musical cast album dropping on Jan. 13 is a treat for the ears — and heart.

New York City songwriting team Zina Goldrich and Marcy Heisler deserve to go the front of the lunch line for having successfully set the adventures of this first-grade heroine to music for the off-Broadway show originally produced by Theatreworks USA.

The CD opens with a rousing tune sung by Junie B. (Lori Casteel) about her new

journal, "Top Secret Personal B e e s w a x . " More highlights include the comically ominous "You Need Glasses" and the gleeful, exuberant perk of donning her purple specs, "Now I See." It's a great listen for the whole family, especially those between 3 and 9.

"Junie B. Jones The Musical" Album, \$9.99, iTunes.com.



## Hot gift idea

The Misty Copeland Barbie is not your child's typical fashion doll.

This one is sculpted in the likeness of real-life American Ballet Theatre star Misty Copeland. The doll is dressed in Copeland's thrilling red costume from Igor Stravinsky's ballet "The Firebird," and she stands tall en pointe.

Sales of this toy — through the Metropolitan Opera's website — support the ABT's Manhattan home. The Misty Copeland Barbie is certain to delight aspiring ballerinas and balletomanes ages 6 and older. This fiery dancing doll will ignite the imaginations and career aspirations of little girls everywhere — especially when paired with Copeland's picture book, "Firebird," illustrated by Christopher Myers.

Misty Copeland Barbie, \$35.96, MetOpera.org.



## Dropping science from the 'Blue'

Kids can discover scientific concepts while on an out-of-this-world adventure in Galxyz's new app "Blue Apprentice."

Galxyz founder Osman Rashid's digital game for students ages 6-12 is rich in science content — and surprisingly, has many moments of laugh-out-loud dialogue. While it is entertaining, Blue Apprentice takes its educational component seriously. Created in partnership with the New York Academy of Sciences to follow Next Generation Science Standards, it covers more than 45 topics.

Players customize their avatar, Thalo, and — along with their flying friend Grit, a wisecracking Chipku — they're off to save

the galaxy from the evil King Dullard. Like a choose-your-own-adventure-style book, players move at their own pace and select their next actions with text prompts — that can be played aloud for emerging readers — all the while revealing real information, like the elements in the periodic table, or the definition of matter, and much more.

The Blue Apprentice app can be played on iPads (which we preferred) or online at blueapprentice.com via a monthly subscription; the first seven days are free, so they can try it, before you buy it.

Blue Apprentice app, \$10.99 per month or \$74.00 per year, blueapprentice.com.

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