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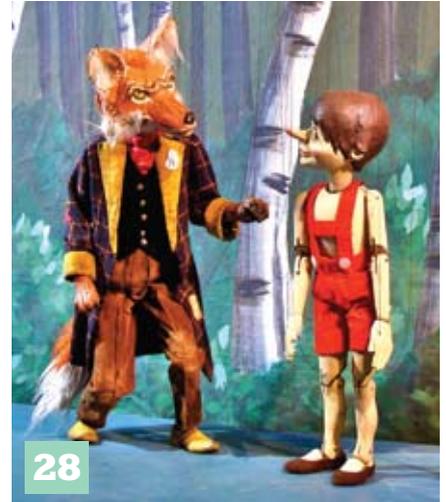
# NEW YORK Parenting

Manhattan Family  
December 2017

Where every child matters



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# Thank you and Happy Holidays

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



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

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

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

attention to detail, me included.

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

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

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

Happy Holidays everyone! Thanks for reading.

**Susan Weiss-Voskidis,**  
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# How to have truly happier holidays

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

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

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

Here is what goes into your toolkit:

## Some honey

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

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

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

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

## Show up prepared to speak with purpose

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

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

## Be proactive within your immediate family

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



## BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

### Know the power of your actions

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

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

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

Now you are all set to have Happy Holidays!

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

*Dr. Marcie Beigel is a behavior specialist based in Brooklyn with more than 20 years of experience. Her book "Love Your Classroom Again" is a bestseller. Find out more at [DrMarcie.com](http://DrMarcie.com).*



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# HOPE

## for the holidays

It's the best gift for your family

**BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-TIEMAN**

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

tions per minute.)

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

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

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

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

responded, "I am hope."

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

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

### Choose hope

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

### Pair hope with action

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

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

### Inspire hope

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

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

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

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

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

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The SpongeBob Musical / Joan Marcus

"SpongeBob Squarepants" has come to Broadway.

# Family fun abounds during the holidays

New York City during the holidays is really the most magical time of the year for the family!

Make sure to take a "MTO" Mommy Time Out and see some of the beautiful

holiday windows at Barneys New York and Bergdorf Goodman. The kids will love the windows at Macy's and Saks Fifth Avenue.

Don't forget to take a "selfie" with the kids in front of the beautiful Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center, or a spin around the ice-skating rink there.

Bryant Park also transforms into a winter village every year, complete with a centrally located outdoor ice skating rink. Shop from local vendors selling food and drinks and shop all the little pop-up shops that are filled with treasures.

The Union Square Market is one of my favorites during the holiday season. Warm up with hot cocoa or cider as you navigate this market. I love supporting local businesses. There's also lots of food to taste while you shop.

"Spongebob Squarepants" is a new Broadway musical for everyone! It's a FabULyssfuns show for the entire fam-



## FABULYSS FINDS

LYSS STERN

ily. It's based on the popular Nickelodeon cartoon series. If your children are SpongeBob fans, they are going to love this. I took my boys, and we all agreed the last scene, "Best Day Ever," is one of our favorites. You will leave the show singing and dancing, with a smile from ear to ear. [www.spongebobbroadway.com](http://www.spongebobbroadway.com)

Did you know there is a hip-hop Nutcracker? "The Hip-Hop Nutcracker with Kurtis Blow." A holiday mash-up for the whole family, the "Hip Hop Nutcracker" re-imagines Tchaikovsky's classic score through explosive choreography, a dozen all-star dancers, on-stage DJ, an electric violinist, and digital scenery. This evening-length show celebrates love, community, and the magic of the holiday season. [www.unitedpalace.org/upca-calendar/eventdetail/4730/56/the-hip-hop-nutcracker-with-kurtis-blow](http://www.unitedpalace.org/upca-calendar/eventdetail/4730/56/the-hip-hop-nutcracker-with-kurtis-blow).

Looking for something really #FabULyss to do this holiday season? Take your little divas to breakfast at Tiffany's! Get your pearls and sunglasses on! Re-watch the original movie with your family before having breakfast or lunch at the new Blue Box Cafe inside Tiffany's on the fourth floor of their Fifth Avenue flagship shop.

Be prepared to wait on line for a long time, and make sure your iPhone is charged. <http://www.tiffany.com/Locations/EventDetail.aspx?eventid=1063>

Have a wonderful holiday season with your family, and don't forget to unplug and spend some off-the-grid, quality time with your loved ones.

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

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Beat 2 sticks of butter, 1/2 cup granulated sugar, and 3/4 cup confectioners' sugar until fluffy. Beat in 2 egg yolks, 1 teaspoon of vanilla, and 1 teaspoon of orange zest. Whisk 2 1/4 cups flour, 1/2 teaspoon baking powder, and 1/4 teaspoon salt; stir into the butter mixture, then chill 30 minutes. Roll tablespoonfuls into balls and flatten; sprinkle with coarse sugar and bake 15 to 20 minutes at 350 degrees.

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/articles/holiday-treats-50-cookies/50-holiday-cookies>

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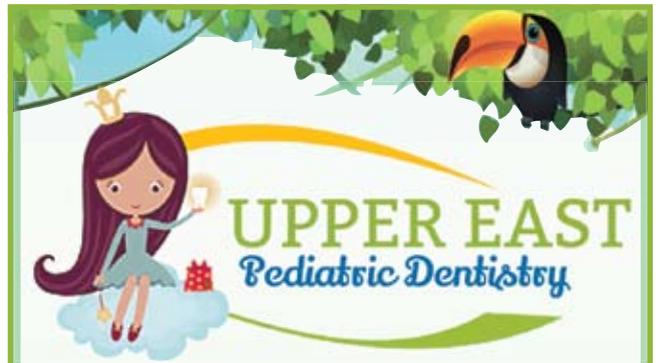
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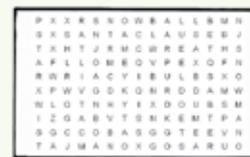
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# Mom, learn to say 'No' and mean it!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It all begins with baby steps.

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

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



## HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

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## Mid-Year Education

### DIRECTORY

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Head of School – Angela Coombs

A private, co-educational Catholic, PreK3 to 8th Grade School, currently holding provisional membership with the NYS Assoc. of Independent Schools. The Academy fosters the intellectual, spiritual, social, emotional and physical development of students while instilling in them the highest standards of character, competence and compassion in a joyful, welcoming community. Our school creates a strong foundation for students to become life-long learners, responsible citizens, and effective leaders as they embrace and improve the global society. A warm welcome is extended to all families to come and visit.

and multi-cultural school community developing culturally astute students who become bi-lingual in Mandarin Chinese or Spanish. The Academy values curious, active, and growth mindsets, and nurtures all aspects of human development—intellectual, physical, creative, social, and emotional—in order to raise young adults who possess the skills, confidence, and the compassion to contribute and thrive anywhere in the world. We deliver personal attention to each student, nurturing their intellectual, physical, creative, social and emotional development, teaching them the skills to contribute and thrive in today's world. They learn in our classrooms and in our community with our convenient location being next to Central Park and renowned museums. Presently we go through Grade 3, and will be adding a grade each year through Grade 8.

#### Ecole Internationale de New York

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#### The Weekday School

**Upper West Side**  
490 Riverside Drive  
212-870-6743  
[www.wdsny.org](http://www.wdsny.org)

The school is a diverse community based on sharing, understanding, and respect where each child's gifts are celebrated. Dedicated to teaching children to become confident learners, passionate explorers, and discerning risk-takers, the curriculum draws from both progressive and traditional approaches to encourage children to use all their senses and skills to learn and grow. Offering compelling learning opportunities for children from two years of age through kindergarten, our teachers work collaboratively to create a loving community of learners. In addition, "Side by Side at Riverside" is a program providing a 90 minute introduction to the preschool experience for very young children accompanied by an adult. Skilled Early Childhood educators guide the children through music, movement and art activities and a circle time with songs and stories. Classes are scheduled on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and on Wednesday afternoons.

#### International Academy of New York

**Upper East Side**  
4 East 90th Street  
212-641-0920 [www.ianyc.org](http://www.ianyc.org)  
[info@ianyc.org](mailto:info@ianyc.org)

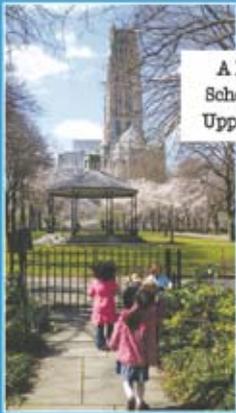
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## Private/Independent School Guide



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For more information or to enroll contact Ms. Tricia Pool: [tpool@wdsnyc.org](mailto:tpool@wdsnyc.org)



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## Holiday joy is fur everyone

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

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

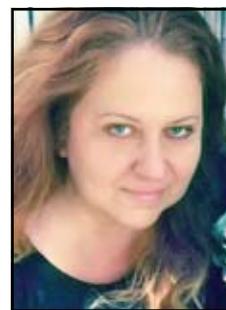
It's a little bit of extra effort in a home where Santa comes to all the children and pets. Many late Christmas Eves throughout the years have been spent filling stockings with goodies, including toys, rawhides, and catnip. It has always been well worth the work, partly because many Christmas mornings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

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

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

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

Our dogs are a definite part of our fam-



**JUST WRITE MOM**  
DANIELLE SULLIVAN

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

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

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

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# Let it go...

## Writer grudgingly accepts girls' love of princess culture

BY ALLISON PLITT

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

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

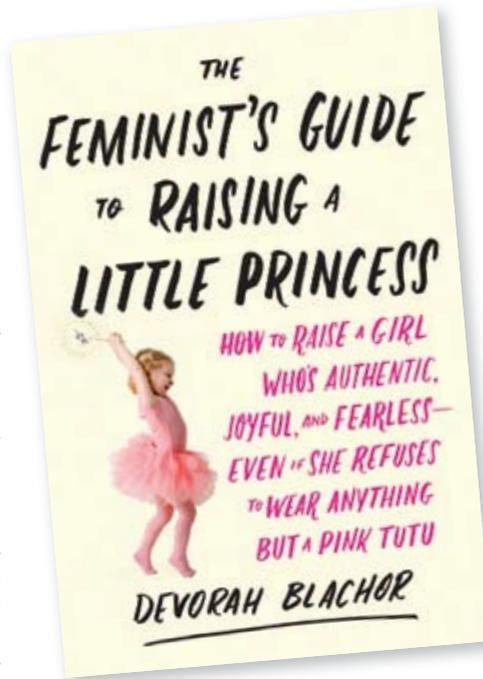
Author and journalist Devorah Blachor's new book, "The Feminist's Guide to Raising a Little Princess: How to Raise a Girl Who's Authentic, Joyful, and Fearless Even If She Refuses to Wear Anything But a Pink Tutu," was published last month by Tarcher-Perigee. In her guide, the self-proclaimed feminist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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

are more important than other values.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Gift guide

Presents to delight children of all ages

BY LISA J. CURTIS



## Feline fine

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

## Multitasking monitor

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



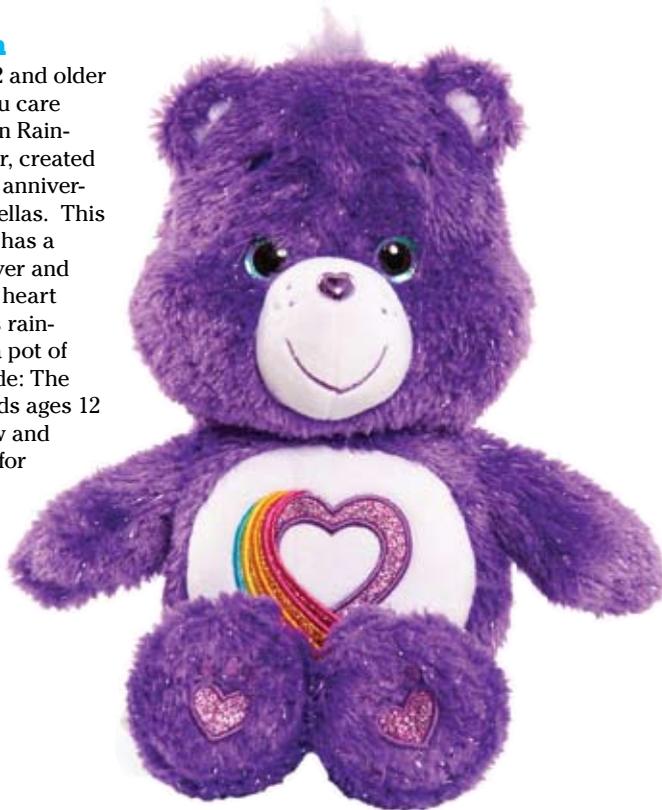
## Gear for the A-Team

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



## Purple reign

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



## Faux fun

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



## Doodle and design

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



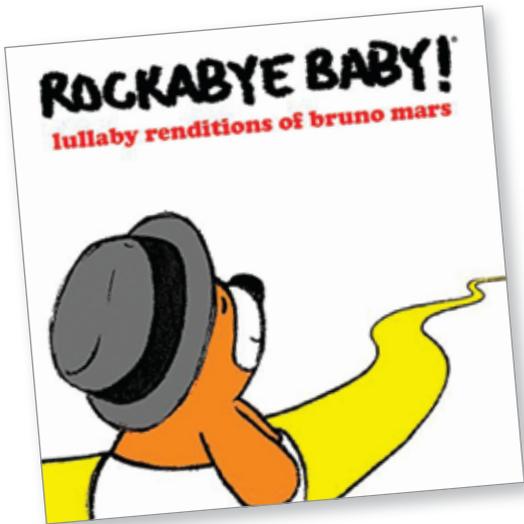
## That's the 'Spirit'

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



### Eggciting minis

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



### 'That's What I Like'

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



### Expecto the entree

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

### For the armchair traveler

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



### Finish first

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



### The eyes have it

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



# Year-end tax tips

## Five ways to save money this season

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

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

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

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



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

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



## FAMILY FINANCIAL PLANNING

ANTHONY N. CORRAO

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

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

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

*Anthony N. Corrao is an independent advisor with Corrao Wealth Management. For more than 25 years he has helped families with their financial goals by developing financial, educational, and retirement planning strategies. He can be found at [www.corraoown.com](http://www.corraoown.com).*

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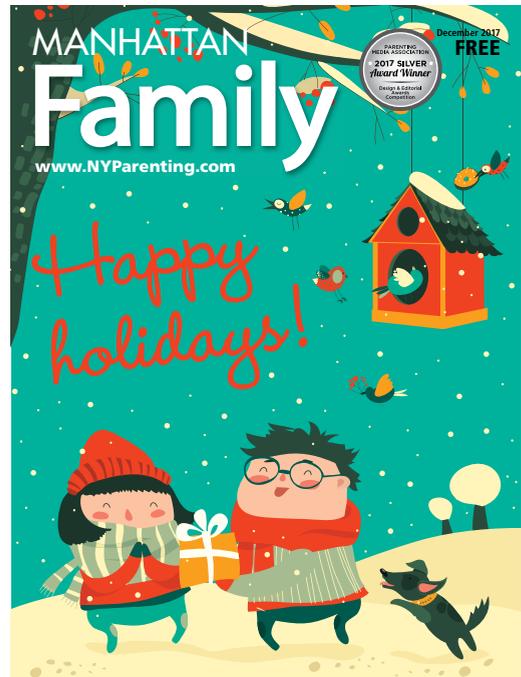
# Digital CAMP GUIDE 2018



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info and support.

# Online minefield

## Part two: Protect your daughter in hazardous digital world

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Author Laurie Wolk

friends in person less.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Wolk this way

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

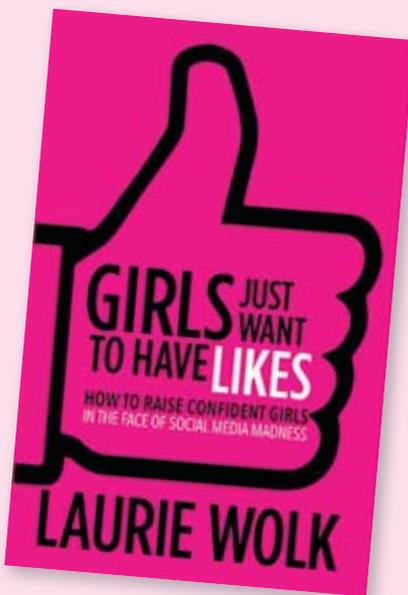
You are on your girl's home team. In fact, you're her best (and only dedicated) cheerleader, so why would you ever want to humiliate her in front of others? Plus, who can actually hear a "life lesson" if they are too busy feeling ashamed?

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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going to fulfill our "real" needs.

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

can do that.

•••

Good news! Taking control is easier than you think.

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Calendar

DECEMBER



## Puppet comes to life

The National Marionette Theater brings the classic story of Pinocchio to life at Symphony Space on Dec. 9.

Children ages 3 to 9 and families will enjoy this storytelling of Carlo Collodi's epic tale about a puppet that wants to become a real boy is brought to life with beautifully crafted marionettes, and stunning scenery.

\*\* Please note — for families with

children on the autism spectrum or with sensory sensitivities, this performance features: Brighter lighting in audience, lowered sound levels, and a designated quiet area.

"Pinocchio" Dec. 9 at 11 am and 2 pm; tickets are \$17 and \$14 for members.

*Symphony Space* [2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; on the Upper West Side; (212) 864-5400; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org)].

## Never miss a great event!

Sign up for our FREE newsletter and get twice-a-week ideas for you and your family right in your mailbox. [NYParenting.com](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 [mhantancalendar@cnglocal.com](mailto:mhantancalendar@cnglocal.com) — and we'll take care of the rest. Please e-mail requests more than three weeks prior to the event to ensure we have enough time to get it in. And best of all, it's FREE!

### FRI, DEC. 1

#### IN MANHATTAN

**Drones: Is the Sky the Limit?:** Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum, Pier 86 (46th St. and 12th Avenue); [www.intrepidmuseum.org](http://www.intrepidmuseum.org); 10 am to 5 pm; \$33 (\$31 seniors; \$24, children 5-12; Free children under 5; Ret. & Active Duty Military, Free).

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

**Holiday Tea with American Girl:**

American Girl Place New York, 75 Rockefeller Plaza; (877) 247-5223; [www.americangirl.com/retail/new\\_york\\_city.php](http://www.americangirl.com/retail/new_york_city.php); 3pm-4pm; \$24 per person.

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

**Tree Lighting Skate-tacular:** Bryant Park - Bank of America - Winter Village, West 40th St. and Fifth Avenue; (212) 768-4242; <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2017/12/01/tree-lighting-skatetacular>; 6 pm to 6:45 pm; Free.

Bryant Park's annual Tree Lighting Skate-tacular.

**Holiday Candlelight Tours:** Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden, 421 East 61st St. and York Ave. (212) 838-6878; [www.mvhm.org](http://www.mvhm.org); 6:15 pm and 7:30 pm; \$20 (\$10 Members; \$5 Children under 12).

Tour the Museum by the warm glow of candlelight, step back into the holiday season of 1830 and sample traditional confections, as you enjoy classical and holiday favorites played by PACC Recorder Consort and harpist Sarah Loveland Gill. [Refreshments courtesy of Two Little Red Hens and Glaser's Bake Shop] Reservations required.

**Ballet Hispanico:** Apollo Theater, 253 W 125th St. at Frederick Douglass Boulevard;



## A fantasia of tiny trains

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

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

A selection from the Museum's col-

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

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

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

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

(800) 745-3000; [www.balleshispanico.org](http://www.balleshispanico.org); 8 pm; \$10 to \$65.

Ballet Hispanico in collaboration with the Apollo Theater makes its annual return with three inspiring works that reflect on the migrant experience, the tragedy of marginalization and the resilience and triumph of the human spirit to capture contemporary Latino culture through movement.

### SAT, DEC. 2

#### IN MANHATTAN

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

**Katherine Paterson:** Symphony Space,

2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org); 11 am; \$17 (\$14 members).

Thalia Kids' Book Club. The author presentednets "My Brigadista Year." Two-time winner of the Newbery Medal and the National Book Award shares a conversation on her new book with author Neela Vaswani (Same Sun Here). My Brigadista Year is an engrossing historical novel about a young Cuban teenager as she volunteers for Fidel Castro's national literacy campaign and travels into the impoverished countryside to teach others how to read. For children 10 to 14 years. Presented in partnership with the Bank Street Book Store.

**LMC Kids - Duke Otherwise:** David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center, Broad-

# Calendar

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

way between 62nd and 63rd streets; (212) 875-5350; [www.lincolncenter.org/show/lc-kids-artists-at-the-atrium-duke-otherwise](http://www.lincolncenter.org/show/lc-kids-artists-at-the-atrium-duke-otherwise); 11 am and 2 pm; Free.

Kids and grownups will delight together in the hilarious and imaginative songs of this charismatic guitar-playing, tap-dancing performer. For children 2 to 5 years old. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Design Kids | What Makes You Tick?:

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, 2 E. 91st Street; (212) 849 8353; [cheducation@si.edu](mailto:cheducation@si.edu); <https://www.cooperhewitt.org/event/design-kids-what-makes-you-tick-12-02-2017>; 11 am to 3 pm; Free.

For children ages 5 - 12. The design of clocks has evolved in ingenious ways over time. Participants will assemble their own mechanical clock with the Horological Society of New York. This event is part of the 2017 Smithsonian Ingenuity Festival. Pre-registration is not required. First-come, first-served.

**Fort Tryon Kids:** Conifers, Pine Cones, and Evergreens: Ft. Tryon Park at Inwood Hill Park, Payson Ave. and Dyckman Street; (212) 795-1388; [RSVP@FortTryonPark-Trust.org](mailto:RSVP@FortTryonPark-Trust.org). <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2017/12/02/fort-tryon-kids-conifers-pine-cones-and-evergreens>; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Join artist Jenae Schwartz and take a deeper look into trees and shrubs. Discover various conifers and evergreens through art and create a collage of mixed media using recycled, natural, and other various materials. Paint your own pine cone with bright colors to take home! Space is limited (ages 4 to 11.) RSVP is required.

**Holiday Candlelight Tours:** 6:15 pm and 7:30 pm. Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden. See Friday, Dec. 1.

**Ballet Hispanico:** 8 pm. Apollo Theater. See Friday, Dec. 1.

## SUN, DEC. 3

### IN MANHATTAN

**New York City Children's Theater's PLEASE BRING BALLOONS:** University Settlement, 184 Eldridge Street; (212) 505-1995; [tix@nycchildrenstheater.org](mailto:tix@nycchildrenstheater.org); [www.nycchildrenstheater.org](http://www.nycchildrenstheater.org); varies; \$25.

Enchanting and endearing and perfect for a preschooler. Following a sold-out run in Spring 2017, "Please Bring Balloons" is back by popular demand. The show is an interactive, multi-sensory theater experience created for our youngest audience members. Based on Lindsay Ward's beautiful illustrated book, the show is a fun and dynamic introduction to theater that you and your toddler will love. 30 min. Best for ages 2-5.

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

**New families - New Traditions:** Mu-



## Singing Hanukkah songs

Celebrate the holiday with a fun filled rocking concert with Mister G at the Jewish Museum, Dec. 17.

Mister G's joyful and energetic concerts span genres from bluegrass to bossa nova and funk to folk, with children and parents singing and clapping along from the first infectious catchy song.

For his Hanukkah show, Mister G puts a new twist on traditional holiday favorites, with songs from his Parents' Choice® Gold award-winning album,

The Mitzvah Bus. Missus G (Mister G's partner onstage and in life) will lead the crowd in dancing to "Challahlala," "Hola Shalom," "Tokhes" (a Yiddish take on Simon Says), and of course, "Hanukkah," his ska-tinged ode to the Festival of Lights.

Hanukkah concert with Mister G; Dec. 17 at 11:30 am; tickets are \$16 general admission; \$13 for members.

*The Jewish Museum [1109 5th Ave. at 92nd St. in Carnegie Hill; (212) 423-3200; [thejewishmuseum.org](http://thejewishmuseum.org)]*

seum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place at First Place; (646) 437-4202; [www.mjhnyc.org](http://www.mjhnyc.org); 10:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Join the musical group Yellow Sneaker and their puppet pals for entertaining programs that nurture family bonds and bridge connections to Jewish life and traditions.

**Youth Wheelchair Basketball:** Gertrude Ederle Recreation Center, 232 W. 60th Street; (212) 360-3341; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 1 pm to 3 pm; Free with Recreation membership.

Hosted by the New York Rolling Fury, this is for children to learn how to play, how to scrimmage against other wheelchair players and learn from the best.

## MON, DEC. 4

### IN MANHATTAN

**Believe, Breathe, Birth:** Citibabes - 3rd Floor, 52 Mercer St. between Grand and Broome streets; (917) 576-1624; [feedingschmooze; 11 am; Free.](https://www.birthyourownway.com/blog/breast-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

This support group provides mothers with an opportunity to sit and nurse their babies, hang with other moms, ask questions, and get some answers in a non judgmental environment. Led by Birth Your Own Way Doula & Lactation services. This program is for women only. Pregnant women are encouraged to come. Support is key. Come find your village. Led by Liza Maltz - birth and postpartum doula - CLC - Certified In Hypnobirthing.

**Neil Patrick Harris:** Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org); 6:30 pm; \$17 (\$14 members).

The author shares his book "The Magic Misfits" in a magical evening celebrating his middle-grade debut novel. This delightful book takes the reader on a whirlwind adventure of family, friendship and illusion sprinkled with real magic tips and tricks. In cooperation with the Bank Street Bookstore.

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

## THURS, DEC. 7

### IN MANHATTAN

**Storytime:** Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place at First Place; (646) 437-4202; [www.mjhnyc.org](http://www.mjhnyc.org); 3:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Our storyteller, Shawn, starts this season with new stories and songs to share. Feel free to bring friends and come make new ones. We look forward to welcoming everyone. Drop-in.

**The Yorkville Nutcracker:** The Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College, East 68th St. between Lexington and Park avenues; (212) 772-4448; [www.dancespatrelle.org](http://www.dancespatrelle.org); 7pm; \$65.

Dances Patrelle presents the 22nd production of this perennial holiday favorite. Set in 1895, the audience takes a tour through Olde New York's most beloved landmarks, including a holiday party at Gracie Mansion, dancing at the Crystal Palace in the New York Botanical Garden, and skating in Central Park. The Yorkville Nutcracker provides an opportunity for young dancers to dance alongside professional artists.

**Jazzmeia Horn – a Social Call:** Harlem Stage Gatehouse, 150 Convent Ave. at 135th Street; [carnegiehall.org/NeighborhoodConcerts](http://carnegiehall.org/NeighborhoodConcerts); 7:30 pm; Free.

Presented in part by the Carnegie Hall Neighborhood Concert Series — the vocalist is the winner of the 2015 Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Competition and the 2013 Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition. The Dallas native burst onto the New York scene, performing with such jazz luminaries as Frank Wess, Junior Mance, and Ellis Marsalis Jr. She has also appeared at some of the city's preeminent jazz clubs with her ensemble The Artistry of Jazz Horn, showcasing her vocals with saxophone, piano, bass, drums, and a poet and dancer.

**BodyStories:** Teresa Fellion Dance Presents The World Premiere Of Rose Walk Green Ice: Danspace Project, 131 E. 10th Street; (866) 811-4111; [info@bodystories-fellion.org](mailto:info@bodystories-fellion.org); <https://web.ovationtix.com/trs/pe.c/10192025>; 8 pm; \$10 for children 12 or younger, \$22 in advance, \$25 at the door.

BodyStories: Teresa Fellion Dance presents rose walk green ice at Danspace Project, this world premier is the culmination of work begun with Home and Agawam that explores self-awareness within communal bonds. By varying spatial orientation to the audience, utilizing various groupings, and highlighting key moments from previous pieces in the trilogy, audiences are offered multiple perspectives of each character, from a variety of angles. Through these perspectives, the audience is offered notions of familial bonding and identity formation, in the hopes that each audience member becomes more aware and appreciative of the complete self and of those around them.



## The Hip Hop Nutcracker

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

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

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

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

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

All tickets may be purchased at [www.hiphopnutcracker.com](http://www.hiphopnutcracker.com).

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

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

## FRI, DEC. 8

### IN MANHATTAN

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

**The Yorkville Nutcracker:** 7pm. The Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

**BodyStories:** Teresa Fellion Dance Presents The World Premiere Of Rose Walk Green Ice: 8 pm. Danspace Project. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

## SAT, DEC. 9

### IN MANHATTAN

“Pinocchio:” Symphony Space, 2537

Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org); 11 am and 2 pm; \$17 (\$14 members).

Children 3 to 9 and families will enjoy this storytelling of Carlo Collodi's epic tale about a puppet that wants to become a real boy is brought to life with beautifully crafted marionettes, and stunning scenery. \*\* Please note – for families with children on the autism spectrum or with sensory sensitivities, this performance features: brighter lighting in audience, lowered sound levels, and a Designated quiet area.

“Interstellar Cinderella:” The Beckett Theatre at Theatre Row, 410 West 42nd St. and Broadway; (212) 947-8844; [telechargeoffers.com](http://telechargeoffers.com); 11 am; \$29.25, General Seating (\$49.25 Premium Seating).

New York City Children's Theater is ex-

cited to offer a sensory-friendly performance of *Interstellar Cinderella*. This performance is designed to create a welcoming environment for all families with children on the autism spectrum and related conditions. In this futuristic retelling of one of the world's most beloved stories, Cinderella is a space engineer looking to revolutionize space travel with her new invention. When the prince holds a space parade, Cinderella knows it's the perfect opportunity to show him her hyper warp speed engine. But first, she'll have to keep her evil stepmother from throwing a wrench in her plans! From beloved singer-songwriter Laurie Berkner and Barbara Zinn Krieger, the creators of the hit shows *Wanda's Monster* and *The Amazing Adventures of Harvey and the Princess*, comes a new musical about making your dreams come true. Presented by the NYC.

**"The Polar Bears Go Up:"** The Clarke Studio at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, 165 W. 65th Street; (212) 546-2656; [www.lincolncenter.org/show/the-polar-bears-go-up](http://www.lincolncenter.org/show/the-polar-bears-go-up); 11 am and 2 pm; \$25 (\$18 members).

In this fun, surreal, and highly enjoyable theater adventure, the polar bears must step up and explore unknown territory: the sky above their heads. They climb trees, jump on clouds, and reach for the stars as they race each other all the way to space. For children 2 to 5 years old.

**The Yorkville Nutcracker:** 2pm and 7pm. The Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

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

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

**Kids Wildlife Workshop with Bobby Horvath:** J. Hood Wright Recreation Center - JHood Wright Park, 351 Fort Washington Ave. (212) 795-1388; [RSVP@FortTryonPark-Trust.org](mailto:RSVP@FortTryonPark-Trust.org); <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2017/12/09/kids-wildlife-workshop-with-bobby-horvath>; 2:30 pm to 4 pm; Free.

Have you ever wanted to meet an eagle owl? Pet a fox? Hold a red-tailed hawk? Here's your chance to get up close and personal with Northern Manhattan Parks' wildlife. Join rehabilitator, Bobby Horvath, to meet some of the wildlife and learn about the work of Wildlife in Need of Rescue and Rehabilitation. Space is limited. RSVP is required.

**Holiday on the Hudson:** West Harlem Piers, 125th St. and Marginal Street; 311; <https://www.nycgovparks.org/>



## The Yorkville Nutcracker

Come and enjoy this perennial holiday favorite, "The Yorkville Nutcracker" at The Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College Dec. 7 through Dec. 10.

The production is set in 1895 and takes the audience through a tour of Olde New York's most beloved landmarks, including a holiday party at Gracie Mansion, dancing at the Crystal Palace in the New York Botanical Garden, and skating in Central Park.

The 22nd production of "The Yorkville Nutcracker" by Dances Patrelle provides an opportunity for young dancers to dance alongside professional artists. This year, Abi

Stafford of New York City Ballet will be the Sugar Plum Fairy with Cavalier Stephen Hanna (former principal dancer, New York City Ballet), and Maximilien Baud and Therese Wendler will perform the Snow Pas de Deux.

"The Yorkville Nutcracker" Dec. 7 through Dec. 10; Thursday and Friday, 7 pm; Saturday, 2 pm and 7 pm and Sunday, noon and 5 pm; Tickets begin at \$65.

*The Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College [E. 68th St. between Lexington and Park avenues in the upper east side; (212) 772-4448; [www.dancespatrelle.org](http://www.dancespatrelle.org)]*

events/2017/12/09/summer-on-the-hudson-holiday-on-the-hudson; 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm; Free. Join us for our tree lighting party and celebrate the season with live music, dancing, decoration-making, and hot chocolate (while supplies last).

**Bach's Christmas Oratorio:** Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, West 57th St. and Seventh Avenue; (212) 247-7800; [ceciliachorusny.org/#/oratorio](http://ceciliachorusny.org/#/oratorio); 8 pm; \$25 to \$85.

The Cecilia Chorus of New York presents the concert performed by soloists, chorus and full orchestra, under the direction of Maestro Shapiro. Bach's Christmas Oratorio comprises six cantatas written for the period between Christmas and Epiphany. The Cecilia Chorus of New York will be singing all six, with full orchestra and soloists.

**BodyStories:** Teresa Fellion Dance Presents The World Premiere Of Rose Walk

Green Ice: 8 pm. Danspace Project. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

## SUN, DEC. 10

### IN MANHATTAN

**New York City Children's Theater's PLEASE BRING BALLOONS:** varies. University Settlement. See Sunday, Dec. 3.

**"The Polar Bears Go Up:"** 11 am and 2 pm. The Clarke Studio at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. See Saturday, Dec. 9.

**The Yorkville Nutcracker:** Noon and 5pm. The Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

**Youth Wheelchair Basketball:** 1 pm to 3 pm. Gertrude Ederle Recreation Center. See Sunday, Dec. 3.

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

## THURS, DEC. 14

### IN MANHATTAN

**"The Hip Hop Nutcracker:"** United Palace Theatre, 4140 Broadway at 175th St. (212) 568-6700; [hiphopnutcracker.com/#tours](http://hiphopnutcracker.com/#tours); 7:30 pm; \$30 to \$140.

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

**Winter Solstice Celebration:** Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street; (866) 811-4111. 8 pm; \$40/\$60 General Admission ( \$100 Reserved Seating; \$150 Premium Seating). Paul Winter's 38th annual celebration features The Pletenitsa Balkan Choir and a dazzling extravaganza of music and dance.

## FRI, DEC. 15

### IN MANHATTAN

#### Holiday Tea with American Girl:

3pm-4pm. American Girl Place New York. See Friday, Dec. 1.

**"The Nutcracker:"** Florence Gould Hall, 55 East 59th St. between Park and Madison avenues; (800) 982-2787; [www.nytb.org](http://www.nytb.org); 6 pm; \$34 (\$24 for children 12 years and younger).

Keith Michale's production of the timeless ballet comes again for the holiday season, bringing enchanting and inventive choreography set in an Art Nouveau style.

**"The Nutcracker:"** Schimmel Center, 3 Spruce St; (212) 346-1715; [info@schimmelcenter.org](mailto:info@schimmelcenter.org); [schimmelcenter.org/event/the-state-ballet-theatre-of-russia-nutcracker](http://schimmelcenter.org/event/the-state-ballet-theatre-of-russia-nutcracker); 7:30 pm; \$29.

Pass on a classic holiday tradition to your family with The State Ballet Theatre of Russia's traditional staging of the perennial classic The Nutcracker.

**Holiday Music concert:** The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, 12 W. 12th Street; [info@ncchorus.com](mailto:info@ncchorus.com); [nationalchildrenschorus.com/index.php](http://nationalchildrenschorus.com/index.php); 7:30pm; Tickets starting at \$25.

This showcases presented by the National Children's Chorus is among the most favorite event of the year, celebrating the talents and achievements of all its ensembles in the Junior and Senior Divisions. From the Prelude Level featuring children as young as five, through the Premier Ensemble with young adults as old as eighteen, the Fall Showcase will highlight the progression of vocal skills from beginner to advanced in a uniquely loving and supportive environment.



## Beloved holiday tradition

All aboard!

The New York Botanical Garden presents its annual Holiday Train Show now through Dec. 31, 2017.

Over 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. The magic

of New York City during the holidays is conveyed with G-scale model trains zooming by miniaturized city landmarks decked out in twinkling lights.

Holiday Train Show now through Dec.31. Daily, 11 am to 5 pm. Included with an All Garden Pass.

*New York Botanical Garden [200th Street and Kazimiroff Boulevard in Bronx Park, (718) 817-8700; [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org)].*

**Winter Solstice Celebration:** 8 pm. Cathedral of St. John the Divine. See Thursday, Dec. 14.

## SAT, DEC. 16

### IN MANHATTAN

#### LMC Kids Storytime - "The Little

**Train:"** David Rubeinsein Atrium at Lincoln Center, Broadway between 62nd and 63rd streets; (21) 875-5350; [www.lincolncenter.org/show/lc-kids-artists-at-the-atrium-duke](http://www.lincolncenter.org/show/lc-kids-artists-at-the-atrium-duke) otherwise; 11 am; Free.

In this endearing story of a tiny toy train, the creator of the hit series Dinotrax now breathes life into more than a half-dozen trains that climb, haul, chug, zip, and zoom. In a small room, down a short flight of stairs, there lives a little toy train...about to have a BIG adventure! There's an endless world to explore and awe-inspiring new friends to meet. Mighty Max, Chloe Cogs, Sara Speed-

ster, and Farley Freighter can reach all the best sights, lickety-split. But when the day is done and the sun goes down, will the lit-tlest train find his way home? Calling all train lovers: All aboard! For Children 2 to 5 years old. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Family Day:** Scaffolding — Connect and Construct: Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place; (212) 358-6133; [info@cfa-foundation.org](mailto:info@cfa-foundation.org); <https://cfa.aiany.org>; 11 am; \$12 (\$6 adults).

You likely encounter scaffolding every day in New York City. In fact, there is an estimated 280 miles of scaffolding occupying New York City at any given time. That's enough scaffolding to stretch from NYC to Portland, Maine! Join us to learn more fun facts and explore our current exhibition: Scaffolding. Families will then create their own scaffolding inspired project to take home. Family Day Programs are designed for chil-

# Calendar

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

dren ages 5 and up, accompanied by an adult.

**"The Polar Bears Go Up:"** 11 am and 2 pm. The Clarke Studio at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. See Saturday, Dec. 9.

**"My City, My Song:"** Carnegie Hall – at Zankel Hall, 881 Seventh Avenue at 57th Street; (212) 247-7800; Noon and 3 pm; Free.

Carnegie Hall is hosting this Family Concert featuring three New York City-based artists performing a colorful, participatory experience that provides children with the opportunity to discover music from different parts of the world that can be found right in their own city. Imani Uzuri shares Freedom Songs from the Civil Rights Movement, as well as her own songs of protest. Emeline Michel gets audiences to dance to pulsating rhythms and tunes from Haiti. Free pre-concert activities take place in Zankel Hall one hour prior to each performance.

**Winter Solstice Celebration:** 2 pm and 7:30 pm. Cathedral of St. John the Divine. See Thursday, Dec. 14.

**"The Nutcracker:"** 6 pm to 9 pm. Florence Gould Hall. See Friday, Dec. 15.

## SUN, DEC. 17

### IN MANHATTAN

**"The Nutcracker:"** 11 am, 1 pm and 3:30 pm. Florence Gould Hall. See Friday, Dec. 15.

**"The Polar Bears Go Up:"** 11 am and 2 pm. The Clarke Studio at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. See Saturday, Dec. 9.

**Hanukkah Concert with Mister G:** The Jewish Museum, 1109 5th Ave. at 92nd St. (212) 423-3200; [thejewishmuseum.org](http://thejewishmuseum.org); 11:30 am; \$16 (\$13 for members).

Mister G's joyful and energetic concerts span genres from bluegrass to bossa nova and funk to folk, with children and parents singing and clapping along from the first infectiously catchy song. For his Hanukkah show, Mister G will present new twists on traditional holiday favorites, with songs from his Parents' Choice® Gold award-winning album, *The Mitzvah Bus*. Missus G (Mister G's partner onstage and in life) will lead the crowd in dancing to "Challahlala," "Holla Shalom," "Tokhes" (a Yiddish take on Simon Says), and of course, "Hanukkah," his skating ode to the Festival of Lights.

**Kids 'N Comedy:** Gotham Comedy Club, 208 W. 23rd St. and Seventh Avenue; (212) 877-6115; [www.kidsncomedy.com](http://www.kidsncomedy.com); 1 pm; \$18 (Plus one item) Children's Menu available.

The Yucks start here – Local talented tweens and teens perform original material which is screened to be free of profanity and abrasive or cheap "low" humor (like fart jokes) and no knock/knock jokes. Topics on the table include politics, getting old, and even death. Each show features 6-10 kids

from the troupe including, Julian Gerber, Sophia Harber, Spencer Kahn, Martin Kramer, Ben Jenkins, Avery Lender, Evan Oberstein, Carson Spuma, Molly Winiarski, Eric Zhu plus new faces. Hosts include stand-up comedians and teachers: Ashley Brooke Roberts, Nick Maritato and Robert Dean. Suitable for children 9 to 18.

**The Rob Mathes Holiday Concert:** Schimmel Center, 3 Spruce St; (212) 346-1715; [info@schimmelcenter.org](mailto:info@schimmelcenter.org); [schimmelcenter.org/event/rob-mathes-holiday-concert](http://schimmelcenter.org/event/rob-mathes-holiday-concert); 3 pm; \$29.

The holidays have found a new rocking tradition! Emmy winner and Grammy-and-Tony-nominated Rob Mathes returns to the Schimmel stage with his band of all-star musicians including instrumentalists from Saturday Night Live and the Late Show with David Letterman. Come for an afternoon of funk- and R&B-laden original tunes, holiday classics, and audience favorites to put you in the spirit of the season. Rob Mathes has worked professionally with U2, Beyonce, Bruce Springsteen and Sting. With friends like his, you never know who could show up!

**Holiday concert:** Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. at 89th Street; (212) 423-3500; [www.guggenheim.org](http://www.guggenheim.org); 7 pm; \$40 (\$35 Friends of Works & Process & Museum members; \$20 ramp standing; \$15 Friends of Works & Process and Museum members).

Celebrate the season with the joyous sounds of holiday music and a new Works & Process commission by composer Nico Muhly in the museum's iconic rotunda. George Steel conducts the Vox Vocal Ensemble in what has become a revered annual tradition. (Enter at 88th St. and Fifth Avenue).

## MON, DEC. 18

### IN MANHATTAN

**Holiday concert:** 7 pm. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. See Sunday, Dec. 17.

## WED, DEC. 20

### IN MANHATTAN

**Jon Stetson:** Schimmel Center, 3 Spruce St; (212) 346-1715; [info@schimmelcenter.org](mailto:info@schimmelcenter.org); [schimmelcenter.org/event/jon-stetson](http://schimmelcenter.org/event/jon-stetson); 3 pm; \$20 Adults, \$10 Children.

Discover your sixth sense! Master mentalist Jon Stetson knows what you and your kids are thinking, he really does. This fourth generation mentalist has spent years reading minds across the nation and worked as the main consultant on the hit CBS show "The Mentalist." Your entire family will be amazed by his extreme powers of intuition and his unique blend of humor and mysticism is sure to leave even the toughest of skeptics slack jawed in amazement.

## THURS, DEC. 21

### IN MANHATTAN

**Storytime:** 3:30 pm. Museum of Jewish Heritage. See Thursday, Dec. 7.

## FRI, DEC. 22

### IN MANHATTAN

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

## MON, DEC. 25

### IN MANHATTAN

**"The Sorceress:"** Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place at First Place; (646) 437-4202; [www.mjhnyc.org](http://www.mjhnyc.org); 2 pm; \$25.

Presented by the National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene – Written in 1879 by Abraham Goldfaden known as "the father of Yiddish theatre," *The Sorceress* was the first Yiddish Theatre production ever produced in the United States. Its US premiere, presented in 1882, was conceived and directed by a then 14-year-old Boris Thomashefsky, who went on to become one of the preeminent names of the Yiddish theatre. This production has restored the operetta, word by word, note by note. This December will be the first time in over 80 years that *The Sorceress* will be presented in a workshop form with its fully-restored text and music — accompanied with costumes, lights, and projections.

## TUES, DEC. 26

### IN MANHATTAN

**School Week Vacation:** 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.

All ages will enjoy their school week vacation with fun activities including an I spy with my little eye: a dog, a ship, and even a flying machine! Pick up an "I Spy" scavenger hunt to get the whole family started on an adventure through the special exhibition Holiday Express. Kids and adults alike will delight in discovering unexpected surprises tucked amongst all the toys and trains!

**"The Sorceress:"** 7 pm. Museum of Jewish Heritage. See Monday, Dec. 25.

## WED, DEC. 27

### IN MANHATTAN

**Watson Adventures' Whodunnit at the Met Family Scavenger Hunt:** Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue, NY NY 10028; (877) 946-4868; [rsvp@watsonadventures.com](mailto:rsvp@watsonadventures.com); [www.watsonadventures.com/public/event/met-whodunnit-family-scavenger-hunt](http://www.watsonadventures.com/public/event/met-whodunnit-family-scavenger-hunt); 02:00pm; \$31.00-\$42.00 (includes museum admission).

Join Watson Adventures on a unique mur-



## Princess in outer space

“Interstellar Cinderella” is coming to the Beckett Theater, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays now through Dec. 18 with a special Sensory Performance on Dec. 9.

In this futuristic retelling of one of the world’s most beloved stories, Cinderella is a space engineer looking to revolutionize space travel with her new invention. When the prince holds a space parade, Cinderella knows it’s the perfect opportunity to show him her hyper warp-speed engine. But first, she’ll have to keep her evil stepmother from throwing a wrench in her plans!

From beloved singer-songwriter Laurie Berkner and Barbara Zinn Krieger, the creators of the hit shows “Wanda’s Monster” and “The Amazing Adventures of Harvey and the Princess,”

comes a new musical about making your dreams come true.

New York City Children’s Theater is excited to offer a sensory-friendly performance of *Interstellar Cinderella*. This performance is designed to create a welcoming environment for all families with children on the autism spectrum and related conditions. Dec. 9 at 11 am

“*Interstellar Cinderella*,” Now through Dec. 18; Friday, Saturday, Sunday; performance times are 11 am and 2 pm; tickets are \$29.25 general seating and \$49.25 for premium seating.

Sensory Production, Dec. 9 at 11 am.

*The Beckett Theatre at Theatre Row [410 West 42nd St. and Broadway in the Theater District; (212) 947-8844; [telechargeoffers.com](http://telechargeoffers.com)]*

der mystery scavenger hunt for kids 10 and up! A killer is on the loose at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and it’s up to you to stop him! The killer has created a scavenger hunt that, when completed, reveals his name, the weapon he used and where he hid the body in the museum. You’ll get a list of suspects, weapons and hiding places that are all in the museum. By following the trail of clues and answering tricky questions, you’ll provide the police with the evidence they need to catch and convict the killer. Can you figure out whodunnit? Kids must be accompanied by an adult. Price includes museum admission.

**“The Sorceress:”** 7 pm. Museum of Jewish Heritage. See Monday, Dec. 25.

**Pianist Katya Grineva- Holiday Concert:** Carnegie Hall, 7th Avenue/57th Street;

(212) 247-7800; [www.carnegiehall.org](http://www.carnegiehall.org); 8 pm; \$35-95 (Free for children).

Acclaimed Russian pianist Katya Grineva returns to Carnegie Hall for her highly anticipated annual holiday concert for one night only. The seasonal tradition for local New York City families and tourists alike, Katya’s lush, warm, and festive concert is a highlight of the holiday season. Known for her deep connection to the Romantics, Katya mixes seasonal repertoire such as I’ll be Home for Christmas and The Nutcracker Suite with Romantic virtuosos by Chopin, Liszt, Gershwin, and more.

## THURS, DEC. 28

### IN MANHATTAN

**Watson Adventures’ Whodunnit at the Met Family Scavenger Hunt:**

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

## FRI, DEC. 29

### IN MANHATTAN

**“The Sorceress:”** Noon. Museum of Jewish Heritage. See Monday, Dec. 25.

**School Week Vacation:** 3:30 pm. New-York Historical Society. See Tuesday, Dec. 26.

## LONG-RUNNING

### IN MANHATTAN

**Santaland at Macy’s Herald Square:** Macy’s Herald Square, 151 West 34th Street; (212) 695-4400; <https://l.macys.com/new-york-ny>.

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

**Earthflight:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at West 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); Museum Plus One includes one special exhibition, giant-screen 2D or 3D film, or Space Show: \$27 (adults), \$22 (students/seniors), \$16 (children).

Narrated by Academy Award-winning actress Cate Blanchett, *Earthflight* is a totally immersive experience, taking the audience on an incredible flight across the world on the wings of birds. Filmed in four continents and 11 countries, the film took four years to make. Revolutionary aerial techniques and state-of-the-art 3D cameras deliver the reality of flight as viewers join a variety of different avian species on their seasonal journeys. The audience will discover the fascinating science of flight: how they maneuver simultaneously in flocks a million strong; manage immense journeys; navigate across whole continents; and collaborate with other animals to find food. LeFrak Theater, first floor BBC Earth presents a John Downer Productions and BBC Earth Production *Earthflight* distributed by BBC Earth and Giant Screen Films.

**Santiago Ribeiro at Times Square NY:** Times Square, 4 Times Square, New York, (212) 401-8700; [santiagoribeiropainting@gmail.com](mailto:santiagoribeiropainting@gmail.com); <https://santiagoribeiro.exposure.co/art-from-santiago-ribeiro-at-times-square-ny>; Weekdays, 00.00, until Sun, Dec. 31; free.

The presentation of the works of art will be alternately. Santiago Ribeiro, Portuguese surrealist painter, who has been dedicated to promoting the Surrealism of the 21st century, through exhibitions held in various parts of the world: Berlin, Moscow, Dallas, Los Angeles, Mississippi, Warsaw, Nantes, Paris, Flor-

# Calendar

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ence, Madrid, Granada, Barcelona, Lisbon, Belgrade, Monte Negro, Romania, Japan, Taiwan and Brazil.

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

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

**"The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show:"** DR2 Theater (Union Square), 103 East 15th Street; (800) 982-2787; Thursdays, 10 am, Fridays, 10 am and noon, Saturdays, 10 am, noon, 2 pm and 4 pm, Sundays, 10 am, noon, and 2 pm, until Sun, Feb. 4, 2018; \$25-\$100.

The production features 75 puppets, adapting four of Eric Carle's stories, "Brown Bear, Brown Bear," "10 Little Rubber Ducks," "The Very Lonely Firefly," and "the Very Hungry Caterpillar" For all ages.

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

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

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

The special presentation is a variety show that celebrates the holiday season in song, dance and puppetry. The production quickly becomes a comedy of errors when Baby Bear

invites Santa to star in Mama and Papa Bear's annual Christmas Eve holiday show. The audience also gets to join in on the fun with sing-alongs during the performance of holiday favorites "I Have a Little Dreidel" and "Feliz Navidad."

**George Balanchine's The Nutcracker®:** NY Public Library of the Performing Arts, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza; (917) 275-6975; <http://nypl.org>; Mondays - Saturdays, 10:30 am, until Sat, Jan. 27, 2018; Free.

George Balanchine's The Nutcracker® is so much a part of the holiday. The exhibition Winter Wonderland: George Balanchine's The Nutcracker® charts the early years of the ballet's life from its premiere in February 1954 to the success of the remounted production in 1964. Through treasures from the archives of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division, including photographs, set models, costume designs, and original film footage, the story of the work emerges, as do the thematic qualities which make Balanchine's version of the ballet unique and so enduring: namely nostalgia, faith, love, and childhood innocence and wonder.

**Seaport Exhibit:** Southstreet Seaport Museum, 12 Fulton St. 212-748-8600; [www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org](http://www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org); Wednesdays - Sundays, 11am-5pm, until Sun, Jan. 7, 2018; \$12 adults, \$6 children.

The South Street Seaport Museum has a new exhibition, "Millions: Migrants and Millionaires aboard the Great Liners." The exhibit features ship models, artifacts and memorabilia from ocean liners, giving visitors an in-depth look at the dramatic differences between ship travel for millionaires in First Class and immigrants in Third Class.

**"Interstellar Cinderella:"** The Beckett Theatre at Theatre Row, 410 West 42nd St. and Broadway; (212) 947-8844; [telechargeoffers.com](http://telechargeoffers.com); Fridays - Sundays, 11 am and 2 pm, until Sun, Dec. 17; \$29.25, General Seating (\$49.25 Premium Seating).

In this futuristic retelling of one of the world's most beloved stories, Cinderella is a space engineer looking to revolutionize space travel with her new invention. When the prince holds a space parade, Cinderella knows it's the perfect opportunity to show him her hyper warp speed engine. But first, she'll have to keep her evil stepmother from throwing a wrench in her plans! From beloved singer-songwriter Laurie Berkner and Barbara Zinn Krieger, the creators of the hit shows Wanda's Monster and The Amazing Adventures of Harvey and the Princess, comes a new musical about making your dreams come true. Presented by the NYC.

**Migrants and Millionaires aboard the Great Liners, 1900-1914:** South Street Seaport Museum, 12 Fulton St. (646) 765-4773; [lilli@michelletabnickpr.com](mailto:lilli@michelletabnickpr.com); <https://southstreetseaportmuseum.org>; Daily, 11am; until Sun, Jan. 7, 2018; South Street Seaport Museum members: FREE, \$12 for adults, \$8 for students and seniors, and

\$6 for children ages 2 - 17.

Millions: Migrants and Millionaires aboard the Great Liners, 1900-1914 is one of the first exhibitions to examine, side-by-side, the dichotomy between First Class and Third Class passengers aboard ocean liners in the early 20th century. Ships like Titanic, Olympic, Lusitania, Mauretania, Aquitania, and Imperator dominated transatlantic travel. On each voyage, they transported thousands of people, First-Class passengers sailed across the Atlantic in the lap of luxury while Third-Class passengers made the voyage in the stuffy lower decks. From 1900 to 1914, nearly 13 million immigrants traveling in Third Class arrived in the United States. During this same period, America's wealthiest citizens, totaling no more than a hundred thousand passengers each year, traveled to Europe in First Class, spending over \$11.5 billion (2017) on luxury vacations. Even though First Class and Third Class sailed on the same ships, their journeys were worlds apart.

**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, until Fri, Dec. 22; 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 littlest New Yorkers with age-appropriate readings and engaging hands-on activities. Ages 3 to 5 years old.

**Teen nights:** Battery Park, 6 River Terrace; (212) 267-9700; [bpcparks.org/whats-here/6-river-terrace](http://bpcparks.org/whats-here/6-river-terrace); Weekdays, 4 pm, until Fri, Dec. 15; Free.

Drop by for a few hours to meet friends and make new ones. Play table tennis, foosball, life-size chess, and more! Also introducing special activities, such as trivia, karaoke and Community Center night. Great place to hang and relax! Check [www.bpcparks.org](http://www.bpcparks.org) for the latest information. Grades 7-12.

**Here Now:** Lincoln Center of the Performing Arts, 10 Lincoln Center Plaza; (212) 875-5374; <http://www.lincolncenter.org>; Tuesdays - Thursdays, 7:30 pm, Fridays, 8 pm, Saturdays, 2 pm, Sundays, 3 pm, until Sat, March 3, 2018; \$30 to \$185.

Reprising last season's Here/Now Festival, this 21st-century program combines breakthrough works and recent premieres. Peck's sneaker ballet, one of the most buzzed about ballets of 2017, and the latest from Ratmansky join two Wheeldon works: a contemplative pas de deux evoking an introspective mysticism and an ensemble work for four couples who wind their way through eerily melodious piano selections, including music made famous by Stanley Kubrick's "Eyes Wide Shut."

**George Balanchine's "The Nutcracker:"** David H. Koch Theater, 20 Lincoln Center Plaza; (212) 870-5570; [www.lincolncenter.org/venue/david-h-koch-theater](http://www.lincolncenter.org/venue/david-h-koch-theater); Thursdays, 7 pm, Fridays, 8 pm, Saturdays, 2

# Calendar

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

pm and 8 pm, Sundays, 1 pm and 5 pm, until Sun, Dec. 31; Tickets begin at \$25.

As the clock chimes midnight, a brave young girl turns the tide in a battle between toy soldiers and mischievous mice, and a blizzard of ballerinas reveal a wonderful world of confection. All 90 dancers, 62 musicians, 32 stagehands and two casts of 50 young students each from the School of American Ballet join forces to make each performance as magical as possible. Children of all ages from New York City and the nation are captivated by the lure of Tchaikovsky's music, Balanchine's choreography, Karinska's sumptuous costumes, and Rouben Ter-Arutunian's magical sets.

**"The Snow Queen:"** Galli Theater, 357 W. 36th St. #202; (212) 731-0668; [www.gallitheaternyc.com/shows](http://www.gallitheaternyc.com/shows); Saturdays and Sundays, 2 pm, Sat, Dec. 2 – Sat, Dec. 23; \$20 (\$15 children).

A story of enduring friendship and the journey of a young girl who travels through many lands to rescue her friend Kay. Kay has been whisked away by the enchanting Snow Queen. Gerda sets off an adventure to find him and bring him back home. For children 5 years and older.

**Peter & the Wolf with Isaac Mizrahi:** Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. at 89th Street; (212) 423-3500; [www.guggenheim.org](http://www.guggenheim.org); Saturday, Dec. 2, 2:30pm & 4pm; Sunday, Dec. 3, 2:30pm & 4pm; Friday, Dec. 8, 6:30pm; Saturday, Dec. 9, 2:30pm & 4pm; Sunday, Dec. 10, 2:30pm & 4pm; \$40, \$35 Guggenheim Members and Friends of Works & Process.

Fashion designer and TV presenter Isaac Mizrahi narrates the children's classic "Peter & the Wolf" as it comes to life on stage at The Guggenheim. The story tells how Peter, against his grandfather's will, opens the park gate, ventures into the big green meadow,

and ultimately manages to liberate the City from the scary wolf. Children are sure to enjoy the beloved tale and beautiful music in this 30-minute show.

**History Detective Briefcase:** New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; [nyhistory.org](http://nyhistory.org); Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm to 4 pm, Sun, Dec. 3 – Sun, Dec. 24; Free with museum admission.

Calling all history detectives! Check out a History Detective briefcase on our fourth floor to accompany you on your visit, and start exploring our expansive new Luce Center. Families will be on the case discovering the past through games, sketching, and activities in our new fourth-floor galleries. Each free briefcase provides a variety of fun, interactive family centered challenges.

**Discovery room:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at West 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; [www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org); Mondays – Thursdays, 1:30 pm to 5: 10 pm, Free with museum admission.

Families, and especially children ages 5-12, enjoy an interactive gateway to the wonders of the Museum and a hands-on, behind-the-scenes look at its science. Children, accompanied by adults, can explore an array of artifacts and specimens, puzzles, and scientific challenges. Hunt for animals in a majestic two-story replica of an African baobab tree filled with specimens of birds, insects, reptiles, and small mammals. Create your own collection of minerals, skulls, or arthropods from a cabinet full of fascinating specimens. Assemble a life-sized cast skeleton of Prestosuchus, a 14-foot long reptile from the late Triassic Period and handle real fossils. Track real-time earthquakes anywhere in the world on a three-drum seismograph and explore the natural world with sophisticated microscopes.

**Arsenal Gallery:** 35th Annual Wreath Interpretations Exhibition: The Arsenal in Central Park, 830 Fifth Avenue and E. 65th Street; (212) 360-8114; <https://www.ny-cgovparks.org/events/2017/12/07/arsenal-gallery-exhibition-wreath-interpretations>; Weekdays, 9 am to 5 pm, Thurs, Dec. 7 – Fri, Jan. 5, 2018; Free.

This exhibit features creative, unconventional wreaths. Employing an array of uncommon materials, more than 40 participating fine artists, designers, and imaginative individuals celebrate this timeless holiday symbol.

**NYC Autism Charter Schools Board Meetings:** NYC Autism Charter Schools, 433 E. 100th Street Manhattan; 977 Fox Street, The Bronx, (212) 860-2580; [csecharan@nycacharterschool.org](mailto:csecharan@nycacharterschool.org); [www.nyc-autismcharterschool.org](http://www.nyc-autismcharterschool.org); Monday, Dec. 11, 5 pm; Monday, Jan. 22, 5 pm; Monday, Feb. 12, 5 pm; Monday, March 19, 5 pm; Monday, April 16, 5 pm; Monday, May 14, 5 pm; Monday, June 18, 5 pm; Free. The NYCA Charter Schools Board Meetings are open to parents, staff and any other members of the public.

**Elf the Musical:** The Theater at Madison Square Garden, 2 Penn Plaza; (212) 465-6741; [www.thegarden.com](http://www.thegarden.com); Wednesdays, 7 pm, Thursdays and Fridays, 11 am and 7 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 pm and 6 pm, Wed, Dec. 13 – Fri, Dec. 29; \$39 to \$150.

Elf the Musical is the hilarious tale of Buddy, who crawls into Santa's bag of gifts as a child and is mistakenly transported to the North Pole. Buddy grows up thinking he's an elf, but between his lousy toy-making abilities and enormous size, he begins to realize he's not like the others. With Santa's blessing, Buddy sets off on a whirlwind journey through New York City to find his birth father and learn about his past. "Cheers" cast member George Wendt stars as Santa Claus.

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## Holiday scents are the spice of life

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

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

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

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

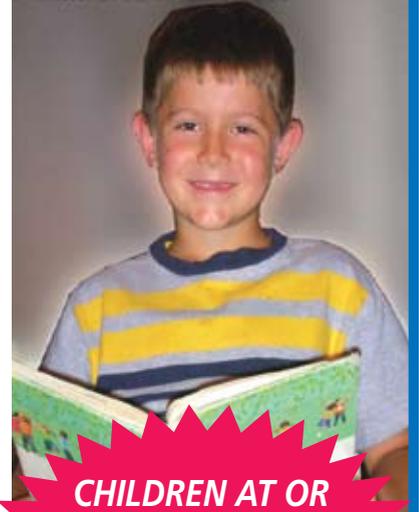
Finally, many recipes for baked goods call for more sugar than is really necessary. Try cutting the amount by one-quarter. Compensate by adding half as much again of the various "sweet" spices.

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

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

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