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Twentieth year of publishing

This year we are entering the 20th year of publishing Brooklyn Family. At the time I was completely new to this business but extraordinarily enthusiastic about the idea of creating a parent guide that could help moms like me. My daughter was then 6 and in the first grade at a public school in the Boerum Hill section of Brooklyn where we managed to get her in on a variance and then win a place in the lottery. We wanted her to go there because they offered such a great multi-cultural program with a human rights core curriculum, things that were important to our family and important to me as a soon to be publisher.

So as a busy multi-tasking working Mom, I was also a parent seeking information about programs, schools, support groups, etc. that I hoped would be the backbone of the magazine I would cre-



ate. Additionally, I wanted it to be completely reflective of the whole of Brooklyn, not just “some neighborhoods” and set about to make sure it was distributed everywhere and that it didn’t cater to a readership of largely top-end parents.

Apparently it worked. With a lot of hard work, consistency and distribution in the right places, it flourished and was soon followed by a magazine in Queens, the Bronx and my original borough of Manhattan. The Special Child magazines came next, then NYParenting.com and now an Annual Guide and a soon to be published Summer/Camp Guide.

It’s been a real labor of love and I’ve had the pleasure of working with many talented and committed people over these years. Parenting small children united us all. Some of us don’t have “small” children anymore. Many of us have children who

are now taller than us and call us things like “little mommy” which is what my taller than me daughter sometime calls me. Whether taller or smaller, the parenting experience never really ends. They are our children forever just as we were to our parents.

2018. It’s amazing where the time and years go and how fast they move from one to the other. Hopefully, we’ll all have a great year and that our children will grow and flourish with the good nurturing that we, as engaged and concerned/loving parents will be giving them.

Thanks for reading! Happy New Year to all.

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Homework helper

Supporting their studies at home

BY JAN PIERCE

Whether you love it or hate it, homework is a component of your children's education. It is a given. In our busy lives with schedules full of sports, dance, music lessons, and the like, families may find it difficult to set educational responsibilities as a high priority. Although parents everywhere want their children to succeed in school, according to Sharon P. Robinson of the U.S. Department of Education, many parents err more on the side of slighting the importance of nightly homework than in giving too much help. There are those parents who make the mistake of doing the work themselves for a variety of reasons, but they are in the minority, and teachers will always spot such activity.

So what are the proper ways to deal with nightly homework assignments for our children? First of all, be sure that you understand the purpose of homework. It offers a number of benefits, but foremost are review and practice of new material, practice in independent research and study, developing good habits and attitudes toward learning, going further in a subject than can be done in limited class time, and preparing for the next step in learning which will be presented during the upcoming class session.

Once adults see the purpose of homework, it is easier to properly support it.

The amount of nightly homework should vary according to age. Most experts agree that for grades 1-3 there should be about 20-30 minutes of homework per night. For grades 4-6 it should increase to about 40 minutes to an hour, and from grade 7 and upward it may reach two hours or more.



Clearly, by age 11 or 12 children need to be able to do independent work and quite a lot of it. This is where parents can play a huge role in starting from the early years to support good homework habits.

The entire family should be on board with support of nightly homework routines. Here are some tips for setting expectations from the beginning of a school career:

- Set regular study times. You may need to be flexible, but never skip it.
- Provide a place to study with proper lighting, materials, and resources.
- Remove distractions. Some can study with soft music, but television, loud music, or other children playing will distract from quality work.
- Be a good example by reading and modeling a lifelong learning attitude.
- Monitor assignments, know what your child is doing, and check over completed assignments.
- Keep lines of communication open with teachers and schools.

Success in training children to become independent learners begins at an early age with parental interest and support. The difference between supporting and

doing too much for children is really quite easy to determine. It is appropriate to review information with children by asking them questions and listening to their answers. It is helpful to step in when children are "stumped" and discover together where they need help. It is helpful to train them to break large assignments into smaller chunks. It is fine to allow them to take a break when the going is tough and then try again. But it is never fine to do their assignments for them.

If homework is a problem for any reason, it is a good idea to talk with teachers quickly before the problem grows. Perhaps together you can work out the problems of too much work, assignments that don't seem to challenge, or any other problem which may arise. Teachers have a purpose for their homework assignments, and teacher-parent cooperation helps children realize you think it's important, too. Setting sound homework practices now will pay dividends for years to come.

*Jan Pierce is a retired teacher, reading specialist, and a freelance writer. She is the author of *Homegrown Readers and Homegrown Family Fun*. Find Jan at www.janpierce.net.*



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Be vigilant about food allergies

BY JUDY M. MILLER

Growing up, I was not aware of any friend that was allergic to a food. However, upon becoming a parent, I quickly became aware of a number of children with food allergies, several so acute that I now routinely ask about food allergies prior to having any child in my care.

Food allergies in children have doubled in the past decade; www.foodallergy.org states that one in every 13 children under age 18 has a food allergy, and among preschoolers, the incidence is one in 10. More than one-third of children with food allergies are allergic to multiple foods. These numbers are alarming.

During a recent interview on NPR (<http://www.npr.org/2013/04/15/177319365/the-doctor-trying-to-solve-the-mystery-of-food-allergies>) Dr. Kari Nadeau, a scientist at the forefront of food allergy research, shared that it is suspected that the reason food allergies have exploded is multifactorial. In other words, there is no single reason or simple answer. She is conducting clinical trials on desensitizing children who have multiple food allergies. The results look promising.

The most common food allergens are tree nuts, peanuts, milk, eggs, soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish. These eight food sources account for 90 percent of food allergies. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not require labeling on trace amounts (trace contaminants) up to 200 milligrams. Although 200 milligrams does not sound like a lot, it is roughly the equivalent of a peanut. But a parent of a child with a severe food allergy will tell you otherwise. Those 200 milligrams can throw their child into a severe reaction, anaphylactic shock or worse. These trace amounts can kill.

Sarah, mom to a middle-school-aged son who was diagnosed with a severe milk allergy when being weaned from breastfeeding at one year old, lives with this knowledge. She has had to learn how to manage her son's food allergies. She has

Learn More: Signs of anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening allergic reaction. It can occur suddenly and escalate quickly, usually within minutes of a person eating. Mild symptoms can be a runny nose, a funny feeling, or a sudden rash, but these can swiftly escalate to more serious issues, such as:

- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling, hives or swollen lips
- Hoarseness
- Constriction of the throat
- Nausea and vomiting
- Abdominal pain and cramping
- Diarrhea
- Low blood pressure
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Rapid heartbeat
- Cardiac arrest



done a remarkable job, effectively advocating for her son and other children who have food allergies — educating her son, faculty and staff, students, and parents of students about the basics of food allergies, and how to manage them.

One-third of kids with food allergies are bullied. Sarah's son is not. Her openness has encouraged other parents of kids with food allergies to join in. Together they have educated adults and children on how critical reactions to food can range from itchy throats and skin reactions to stomachaches, burning tongues, and signs of anaphylaxis. They have created a clear understanding of food allergy management and garnered strong support for kids with food allergies within the school population. My son is a close friend of her son and is hyper-vigilant and respectful about his friend's dietary restrictions. He is aware of what his friend cannot have and what is safe. He knows this because he has been taught.

Please teach your child about the seriousness and life-threatening truths about food allergies. If you do not know, ask a parent who has a child with food allergies. What is inconvenient for you — not having that food allergen in their presence or wiping your counters down before they visit your home — can be life-threatening

Learn more: Great parent resources

- Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE) is a comprehensive site for becoming educated about food allergies and food allergy advocacy. It works on behalf of 15 million Americans with food allergies. www.foodallergy.org

- The Nadeau Lab in Stanford University School of Medicine's Immunology and Allergy Division provides research findings regarding food allergies, as well as other areas. Dr. Karen Nadeau is exploring the role of suppressor T cells (Tregs), a subpopulation of T cells that modulate immune systems, and tolerance mechanisms of allergic disorders. <http://nadeaulab.stanford.edu>

- The Nut-Free Mom <http://nut-free-mom.blogspot.com>, an archived blog. Jenny Kales is a mom who shares her experience of having a daughter with

life-threatening nut allergies. She provides a broad range of ideas for being a proactive parent, or friend, of a child with any food allergy.

- ClinicalTrials.gov, a service of U.S. National Institutes of Health, lists the clinical trials in progress (active, recruiting) or completed. The results of the trials, if available, are posted when clicking on the links. <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/results?term=food+allergies&Search=Search>

- "The New Nut-Free Mom: A Crash Course in Caring for Your Nut-Allergic Child" by Jenny Kales is available in an e-book format. The book is available for download to e-book devices through Amazon and Barnes & Noble, and via the Kindle and Nook apps for phones, tablets, Mac, and PCs.

- MedicAlert has medical IDs for all ages. They also provide services to protect people in the event of emergencies, worldwide. <http://www.medicalert.org>

to another.

Writer and author Judy M. Miller savors time with her kids. She is a Certified Gottman Educator and the author of "What To Expect From Your Adopted Tween," "Writing to Heal

Adoption Grief: Making Connections & Moving Forward," and "For Families and Friends: Advice, Suggestions, and Honest Dialogue About How to Best Support Parents on Their Adoption Journey."

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Parents, what's in YOUR fridge?

In January, who doesn't have the urge to turn over a new dietary leaf? For inspiration, I've turned to the experts — young moms and dads — about what's in their fridge, their plans for next year, and tips for getting dinner on the table fast.

Participants include Caroline Cook, Cathy Derus, Liz Heywood, Joshua Petru, and KT Speetzen.

What's currently in your fridge that you're proud of?

- Homemade chicken noodle soup, flaxseed plus leftover oatmeal that I will use to make oatmeal pancakes. — *Cook*

- Roasted veggie pasta, cheese sticks, beets, and a whole bunch of fruit. — *Derus*

- Fruit, veggies, hummus, whole grain bread, and wraps and leftovers. — *Heywood*

- Red wine-braised beef short ribs cooked in the slow cooker. It's a tasty, limited effort meal with bonus points for having a simple shopping list (ribs, red wine, stock, mirepoix and herbs). — *Petru*

- I'm buying as much organic as possible — and grass-fed dairy. I just made the switch over to grass-fed butter. OMG. Yum. — *Speetzen*

What's in your fridge that you're not-so-proud of?

- A lot of fruits and vegetables that I've

been intending to chop and cook. — *Cook*

- Too many expired leftovers. — *Derus*

- Juice boxes, kids' yogurt tubes with more added sugar than I'd like, and string cheese that I use too often as a go-to snack. — *Heywood*

- The big bag of string cheese. It's one of a few things my toddler will consistently eat, so we always have it handy for either snacks or to supplement the dinner he didn't eat. — *Petru*

- There's a Velveeta chili dip that was made in the slow cooker two weeks ago. I'm legit scared of it. To be fair, my husband is from Minnesota, and he made it. Yes, I'm totally throwing him under the bus, but I also ate it. — *Speetzen*

What do you plan to stock in your fridge in 2018?

- Almond meal, so I can make Superhero Muffins, which are secretly healthy muffins made with maple syrup, zucchini, and carrots that my preschoolers like to make and eat! — *Cook*

- More vegetables, even if it's sneaking them in somehow. — *Derus*

- I've recently challenged myself to cooking less meat and more plant-based dinners. It has forced me to change the way I think about meal planning, but I've discovered that my kids often like these even more than meat. — *Heywood*

- A veggie that my 2-year-old son will



GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

eat. I don't know what that is yet, but will hopefully find it! — *Petru*

- My goal is to start batch cooking, because so much of my weeknights turn into "What am I going to feed these people?" — *Speetzen*

Your best tip on getting dinner on the table on a busy weeknight?

- Chopping veggies on Sunday, so that everything is ready to go. — *Cook*

- Prepping on Sunday. That day we'll do a big meal, then have our "planned 'overs" so we can eat those during the week. If we cook during the week, sometimes it's something with the slow cooker. — *Derus*

- Meal planning! I plan five to six dinners per week and make my grocery list based off of that. Also, I try to do a few minutes of meal prep for the next day after the kids are in bed. It makes the next day's meals so much easier when I know what I'm cooking for dinner and have some food prepped a bit already. — *Heywood*

- Only one cook in the kitchen. One of us will have a meal planned and focus on executing that, while the other parent occupies the kiddos. — *Petru*

- Scrambled eggs, Trader Joe's frozen naan, and a quick steamed veggie. My kids only eat broccoli, so in my house it's broccoli. — *Speetzen*

Christine Palumbo is a Naperville-registered dietitian nutritionist who is a new Fellow of the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Follow her on Twitter @PalumboRD, Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition, or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.



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Getting in shape in the new year

Welcome to the #FabULysss New Year 2018! I hope everyone had a very Happy New Year's Eve filled with lots of love, family, and friends.

New Year, new you, and I want to introduce you to a new #FabULysss workout created by #divamom Tatiana Boncompagni. She created the class to teach other moms what she knows about the secret to gaining your pre-baby body back. At 40, and after having three kids, she is in better shape than she was in her twenties, and it's all because she stopped killing herself with cardio and started lifting weights. She had always been afraid of weights because she didn't know how to use them and was afraid of hurting herself or getting bulky. But once she started lifting weights, the opposite happened. She got her waist back, toned her arms, and lifted her backside. There isn't crazy jumping around and the size of the class is small, so she can check form.

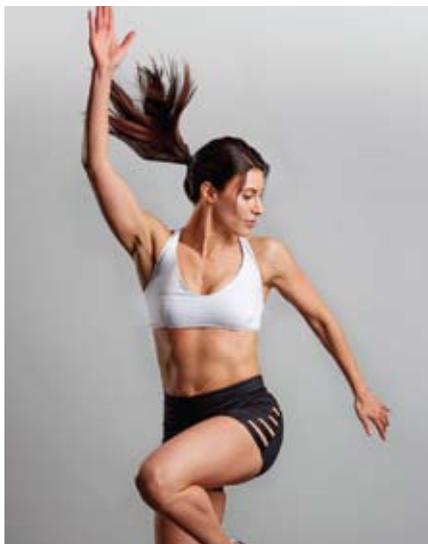
Tuesdays at 9 am are Booty Sculpt — glutes and hamstrings are the focus — and Thursdays at 9 am are Arms and Abs Sculpt, focusing on biceps, triceps, shoulders, and abs.

Each class ends with a mindfulness practice. Most of the time it's an intention-setting practice, but sometimes, it's breathwork or meditation. The idea is that we connect the dots between the work we are doing in the class to get stronger and how you can apply that to everything else in life — empowering women through fitness is at the core of what Boncompagni is doing. Strong inside and out. Fitness as feminism. Moms putting themselves and their health back on the list.

NYSCLab, 71st Street between Second and Third avenues. Sign up via MindBody or the website www.sculptologie.com.

Here's more info about the classes:

Arms and Abs Sculpt: Boncompagni's hour-long, challenging workout will help you tone and tighten your arms and core muscles. Using heavy dumbbells, body-weight exercises, and mat work, increases your upper body and core strength, revs your metabolism and improves your overall level of fitness. Each class ends with a mindfulness practice to help you gain greater clarity about your life goals and harness the power of intention to turn



Tatiana Boncompagni's exercise class is great for moms.

your dreams into your reality.

Booty Sculpt: Boncompagni's hour-long, challenging workout will help you tighten, lift, and sculpt a better backside. Using heavy dumbbells, plyometric drills, and targeted mat work, she focuses on strengthening and toning your glutes and legs to burn maximum calories and improve your overall fitness level and performance ability. Each class ends with a mindfulness practice to help you gain greater clarity about your life goals and harness the power of intention to turn your dreams into your reality.

A new #DeLysscious personal chef service I want to introduce you to in the new year is M.M. Meals. A recently launched personal chef service based in New York City, the company aims to be a weekly solution for families who are looking for healthy meals while highlighting the local flavors that New York state has to offer. As a personal chef service, they believe in the importance of connecting their clients to the direct source of their food and teaching children about healthy eating.

M.M. Meals, stands apart from its competitors on the Upper East Side through its community-supported agriculture coordi-



FABULYSS FINDS

LYSS STERN

nation package, by supplying clients with local produce that is harvested just hours prior. Community-supported agriculture has become an increasingly popular way to have direct access to local, organic produce in exchange for being a shareholder of a farm. M.M. Meals streamlines this process by arranging and picking up their clients shares on a weekly basis.

Menu selections are tailored to your family's food preferences and dietary restrictions while highlighting the produce from the week's share. Having a chef then come to cook these selections in your own home allows for further learning about the farm itself and vegetables, and it's an opportunity for your children to learn along the way.

M.M. Meals is accepting new clients for the 2018 season. To learn more, please visit their website at www.mmealsnyc.com.

A lot of moms ask me about the #fabULyssbows I put in my daughter's hair. I want to introduce you to Zelda Matilda, the must-have accessories for #divadahlings, a chic and affordable line for children — from birth. ZeldaMatilda's designs include a variety of trendy and comfortable hair accessories, bandana bibs, wash cloths, and pacifier clips. Zelda Matilda rethinks the way moms buy accessories. The women behind the brand are a community of #fabULyssmoms, who believe every mom should be able to experience the joy of accessorizing. Zelda Matilda allows you to have a choice of color and style for every outfit, every mood, every day. All products are currently under \$20, and available on ZeldaMatilda.com.

Lyss Stern is the founder of Divalysscious Moms (www.divamoms.com).

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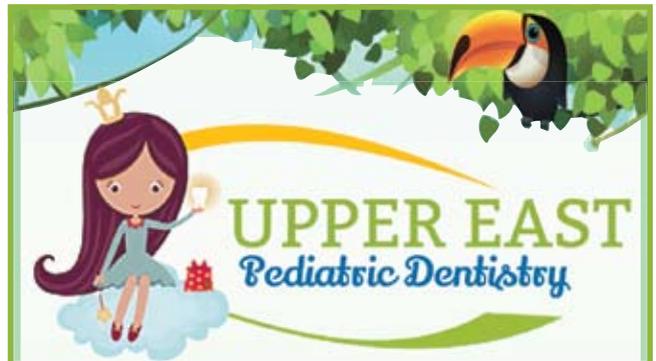
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WORD DECODER



Den just wrote a song. Can you figure out the title?

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For example, the first letter in the message is R.

A spiral counts for 10, a star counts for 5, and each dot counts for 1, so 10+5+3=18 and the 18th letter of the alphabet is R.

1 = • 5 = ★ 10 = ☉

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Continued on page 16



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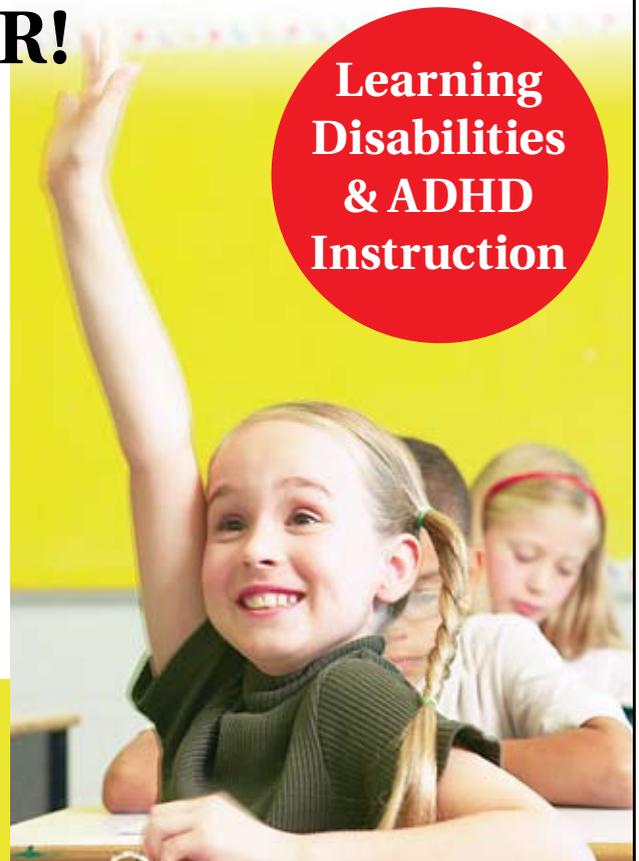
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Kids Activities

DIRECTORY

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Think

before you speak — verbally or digitally

BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-TIEMAN

My older son has been after me to start a blog for a couple of years now. At first I resisted because, frankly, I didn't like the word "blog." It sounds like something that happens when you have an upset stomach.

But then I googled it (another cyberese term that sounds like what happens when someone tickles you too hard — Oops, I googled!) and discovered "blog" is simply short for web log. Now a log is an official record, typically associated with a voyage or travel. So a blog is a record of one's personal-professional journey that is posted in cyberspace. Having overcome my aversion to the word, the next issue was to decide what to blog about. Anything, he told me, just write whatever's on your mind. And that got me thinking.

There seems to be an epidemic of people saying and writing what's on their minds. And that is fine, so long as it is clear to them, and their audience, that that is all it is — what's on their mind. That doesn't make it true, right, or factual. It is what's on their mind, which is the same thing as their opinion. Unfortunately, we become very attached to our opinions. So much so that we seek verification of our opinions by listening only to those who share them and ignoring those who do not; only attending to information that supports our position; and interpret new information in a way that supports our existing beliefs or theories. This is called confirmation bias.

Honestly, that's a real thing. You can google it.

So here's what's on my mind — my opinion. Words are powerful. They can be constructive or destructive. In order to avoid the latter, they should be selected carefully and thoughtfully. That is why we have a brain — so we can think before we speak. A good test for deciding

whether or not we should or should not say what is on our mind is to consider how we would feel if someone said it to us. I believe there would be much less talking and blogging if this test were practiced more often.

In the previous paragraph, I wrote that words are powerful. After thinking about that statement, I would like to modify it. More accurately, words can be powerful. Words, in and of themselves, have no power. Just because words are spoken, doesn't make them true.

Saying them louder doesn't make them truer. Words can only have the power we afford them.

Currently, words are being tossed around as weapons. Fortunately, words cannot cause physical damage. Words cannot kill. However, they can be destructive to our mental, emotional, and social well

being, if we choose to accept the words being tossed to us and grant them the power they were intended to have. But we can refuse to give credence to the words thrown at us. We can let them fall harmlessly around us. We possess the power to determine the effect of their impact. In turn, we choose whether to use words as weapons or as balm. Choosing to use them as the latter takes great courage.

Standing at about five foot nothing, my grandmother was a woman of few words. But her face — especially her piercing, slate-blue eyes — spoke volumes. I don't ever remember her saying, "I love you," but I will never forget how her face lit up when my two sisters and I walked through her door. Or that she always had Juicy Fruit in the wardrobe. Or how whenever she took a notion to make something, there were always three of them. Her actions revealed what she did not verbalize. Her economy of words taught me that those who say the least, often have the most to say, and vice versa.

Mindful of grandma's reticence, I listened that much more carefully when she did speak. One day, while sharing a hurtful encounter with a classmate that rendered me speechless, incapable of producing a witty retort, she took my hands in hers and said, "Carolyn, if you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." That advice has saved me countless times from the pain of remorse. The regret from what is not said is easier to bear than the regret from what is.

Holding my tongue has provided the opportunity to observe that what a person says reveals so much more about them than it does about the person to whom they are speaking. The eyes may be the windows to our soul, but words are the mirrors of our mind. In these days of attempting to excuse hurtful, cruel, malicious, ugly talk with the simple justification, "I'm just saying what's on my mind," I can't help but wonder what that says about our minds?

Oftentimes, the first thing that comes to mind is not worth expressing. Thinking twice before speaking yields more favorable results. Gandhi wrote that our thoughts, expressed through our words and actions, reveal our character and determine our destiny. My new year's resolution is to ponder my thoughts and mind my words.

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.





What to know before you adopt an adolescent

BY JUDY M. MILLER

Are you an adoptive parent or considering adoption? Has your child reached adolescence or coming close to it? Here are some insights about parenting adopted adolescents.

Loss is always part of adoption

Regardless of circumstance or age, be it minutes or years old, the child who joins their family through adoption, has suffered profound loss. The initial loss is separation from the child's birth mother, and that loss expands outward to encompass birth family, culture or origin, and birth history.

Loss is the "hub" of the inherent issues in adoption.

Loss must be considered, understood, and honored by parents so that they can support their child as they navigate from

childhood into adulthood. Loss accumulates, one layer stacking upon another.

The hub can be quite deep

Varying degrees of grief, guilt, and shame, rejection, identity, intimacy, and control are often experienced throughout the adopted person's lifetime. These feelings tie into loss and extend from it, like the spokes of a wheel. These feelings are known as the inherent issues in the adoption "landscape." Inherent issues affect many adopted people, as well as the majority of birth parents and adoptive parents. For this article, though, I only address the issues as they pertain to an adopted person.

Inherent issues ebb and flow all life-long

Feelings tied to being adopted typically begin to make themselves known with

the onset of adolescence, as early as the age of 6, just when the hormones start to fluctuate in preparation for puberty. Children also begin to understand much more about adoption and how it has and will forever impact them.

Often, adoptive parents find themselves dealing with puberty and one or more adoption issues. As any parent who has raised a child can share, no one ever feels quite ready to parent a teenager. And parenting the adopted child requires even more preparation: knowing the child's history (and historical framework if adopted internationally) and how that can affect them, understanding the core issues and how to use them as tools in parenting, and having a level of genuine empathy for the child.

There might be more going on than the core issues

Depending on circumstances, the child

may also have suffered neglect, exposure to drugs and alcohol, experienced or witnessed sexual, emotional, or physical abuse. These truths are painful for parents to share, but necessary to discuss with their child. This information is part of the child's story, and it is essential for parents to share and review all of their child's birth history and related facts with them prior to adolescence, in age-appropriate language.

Yes, any "hard truths" are difficult to share. Parents have invested lots of emotion in their adoption journeys. They love their children profoundly and do not want to inflict pain. Parents find that sharing why their child could be adopted or not having the answers to their questions challenging. But, not sharing the difficult truths leave children unprepared and open to injury by others as well as wondering why their parents, who love them and have their best interests at heart, did not provide them with The Truths.

Education about loss in adoption empowers parents to help their children. Loss, neglect, abuse, attachment, and a whole range of other topics can be examined and discussed during adoption preparation education with "waiting" parents.

Advice for adoptive parents

Education promotes understanding. Understanding encourages empathy, which in turn grows patience. These tools are necessary to effectively parent the adopted child.

If seeking therapy for your child, address your own first. Think of airplane cabin decompression: put your oxygen mask on before your child's. If you do not, you cannot possibly help your child.

Work with a therapist well-versed in adoption and adoption issues. Therapists unfamiliar with adoption and inherent issues in adoption will be ineffective.

Adoption preparation education was not available when my husband and I adopted. We were unprepared. Concern over our daughter's apparent distress mingled with profound joy when she joined us in her infancy. The enormity of what adoption meant — forever uprooting and separating our daughter from the rich, ancient culture she was born into — became crystal clear in that instant. Resilient as humans are, she grieved for

some time while she adjusted to parents, family, and a society that did not look, sound, feel, or smell like that with which she was familiar. She did attach, but sadness and grief lingered. Her psychosocial development stalled. We committed to educating ourselves when seeking therapy for our daughter.

Our love was not enough. Our love served as a huge bandage that kept her wound from becoming infected further. This bandage did not and could not address the underlying cause of the wound and, therefore, why it was not healing. Part of the education we received was about loss and how it affects the adopted child — feelings of grief, guilt and shame, rejection, identity, intimacy, and control. By understanding what she was facing, we were able to better support her needs and help her resolve and eventually talk about what she felt.

Writer and author Judy M. Miller savors time with her kids, three who are adopted. She is a Certified Gottman Educator and the author of "What To Expect From Your Adopted Tween," "Writing to Heal Adoption Grief: Making Connections & Moving Forward," and "For Families and Friends: Advice, Suggestions, and Honest Dialogue About How to Best Support Parents on Their Adoption Journey."

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The value of Catholic schools

Why parents choose this thriving, effective alternative

BY CANDI SPARKS

St. Patrick's Cathedral is a world-famous New York landmark, known for its neo-Gothic architectural style. Built in 1879, this structure embodies a long-standing tradition of Catholic faith, ministry, and education that is very much alive today.

At a time when New York City public schools are undergoing massive restructuring with struggling schools slated to close, working families have an alternative in the Catholic school system. The neighborhood Catholic school is a pillar of strength and culture in many communities, offering a wide variety of services, from financial aid, to academics and sports, as well as spiritual development.

The Catholic education model, combining faith-based development and future-focused education, has historically offered many a way out of poverty. During the early-to-mid-20th century, neighborhood public schools were largely overcrowded and not necessarily providing top-notch education. In the early days of the immigration wave, it was primarily Irish and Italian immigrants that sent their children to Catholic schools. To ensure that their children would be taught their values, they opted for a parochial school education.

This reasoning resonates today with many parents in search of a "good school." Joe and his wife send their children to Sacred Heart in Queens. In his words: "I feel that Catholic schools offer more of a family and community-oriented atmosphere. The smaller class sizes and smaller student body ensures that everyone knows each other and can form relationships. The principals and teachers know all of the students and therefore can make more in-

formed decisions for each individual."

The Catholic school demographic has shifted with each new wave of immigrants, and one didn't necessarily have to be Catholic to choose this option. As a result, many Catholic schools have continued as an integral part of our citywide school landscape of ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity.

"Catholic schools are not just meant for the faithful. We are here to grow faith by building community and reaching out to those in need," says Tom O'Brien of the Brooklyn Diocese, which is involved in raising scholarship funds to help families offset tuition costs.

"But not every Catholic school family is in great economic need," O'Brien said. "Our demographic is changing. We have seen an influx of middle income families who choose Catholic school because of the class size, excellence in education, and for a safer environment than what most parents think the neighborhood public school would offer."

Patty, a public school teacher from the Bronx, sends her son Ronald to a Catholic elementary school.

"The environment stresses academics and doing the right thing," she says. "The teachers set high standards for the children. They are expected to do well and they rise to the occasion."

Many Catholic school students are the first in their families to graduate from college. In low-income neighborhoods, this means that the school is providing the lion's share of educational support for children who do not have access to private tutoring or help at home.

There is a 99 percent graduation rate for Catholic high schools, compared to the 41 percent public high school graduation rate. And 97 percent of Catholic

high-school students go on to graduate college. Overall, Catholic school seems to outperform public school and is a viable, less-expensive system of education in the private sector.

In fact, in 2011, only two private schools in New York State were designated by the U.S. Department of Education as "Blue Ribbon," a program that honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools whose students achieve at high levels, or schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap. Both were both Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York — St. Ignatius Loyola School on E. 84th Street and St. Ignatius on Mott Street, both in Manhattan.

The incentives for getting a Catholic school education are different than what they used to be, and this is changing the demographics of Catholic school students.

"Families that don't have money don't usually have many choices. We needed to find a school with the right mix for Benny," says Elizabeth, a Brooklyn mother of two, who chose to send her son to a Catholic school with solid academics and a baseball program. "He really wanted to play baseball. The only school that we could find to bridge the gap was a Catholic school."

Likewise, Patty, of East Harlem, sends her daughter Amber to a bilingual Catholic school.

"My daughter goes to a school that gives her [education] in both languages," says Patty. "Sure, they speak the same languages in the public school around the corner, but it is unofficial. The public school does not have the same structure."

Amber's Catholic school is also closely related to other parish activities and offers bilingual Masses, events, and service



projects for the community. This makes the Catholic school a great way for Patty and Amber to meet people of similar backgrounds and build a community.

Unfortunately, keeping these schools open has become a challenge. The Catholic school sector is no different than any other, and closings have been publicized. In response, Catholic schools are researching and developing new educational business models. Some Catholic schools have closed their doors, only to reopen as academies.

For example, in South Ozone Park, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School and St. Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr School closed, only to be succeeded by the Divine Mercy Catholic Academy. Because the school involves more than one parish, it is called an academy, to differentiate it from a single-parish school. Since 2005, the Brooklyn Diocese has opened many Catholic academies in Brooklyn and Queens.

The Brooklyn Diocese has also implemented the program “Preserving the Vi-

sion.” The name means exactly what it says: preserving what has always been an integral part of Catholic life — the education of children. This vision includes developing schools that will be better able to meet the diverse and changing needs of students and parents.

The Archdiocese has also initiated the “Pathways to Excellence” program, aimed at professional development for principals, teachers, and staff at schools that already do outstanding work. Because of the diverse population, there is still more than can be done to close the achievement gap. The program is aimed at raising standardized test scores and providing teachers with new classroom tools, such as the digital teaching program for fourth and fifth grade math, “Time to Know,” which provides online learning, data collection, and feedback for the school.

For families who are interested in learning more about Catholic education and whose children are (or will be) in grades pre-K through grade eight, New York City Catholic schools are hosting “Touring

Tuesdays” from January through April. Look up the schedule online at <https://catholicschoolsny.org>. Or, for those families who would like to apply, you may do so online at www.ApplyCatholicSchoolsNY.org as well as by phone at (646) 794-2885, between 9 am and 5 pm Monday through Friday. The applications include financial aid for qualified applicants.

Personally, I am proud to share that my fondest childhood memories revolve around a humble beginning, in a humble neighborhood. My siblings and I attended a Catholic elementary school, Our Lady of Victory, for eight years. I am pleased that Catholic schools are committed to remaining vibrant institutions for generations to come.

Candi Sparks is a licensed financial professional and the author of children's books about money including “Can I Have Some Money? Educating Children About Money,” “Max Gets It!” and “Nacho Money.” She is a Brooklyn mother of two and is on Facebook (Candi Sparks, author) and Twitter (Candi Sparks, author). Her website is www.candisparks.com.

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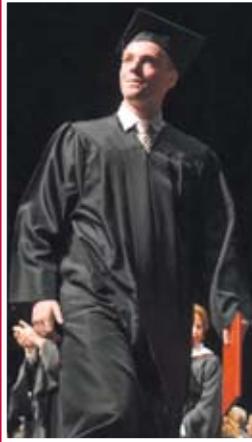
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Resolving to take control financially

New Year's resolutions have been around for thousands of years. According to history.com the ancient Babylonians promised to repay debts and return borrowed items to keep in good graces with the gods. Romans believe the god Janus was two-faced, looking both to the past and the future. Romans would make promises of better behavior in the new year to keep the god happy.

In modern times, New Year's resolutions aren't made to the gods, but to one's self. That may be why, according to statistics-brain.com, less than 10 percent are kept.

So how do we make resolutions we can keep? Psychologist Edwin Locke's goal-theory states that to increase the likelihood of reaching your goals, they must be specific, clear, realistic, and challenging. So, if you want to increase the chances of reaching your goals next year, instead of telling yourself this year, you want to lose some weight, say something like, "I want to lose 20 pounds by June." A goal like that is achievable with hard work and has a specific time frame.

With that in mind, here are some financial New Year's resolutions for 2018:

Calculate your net worth

Recalculating your net worth at the beginning of each year helps you visualize your progress towards retirement, college funding, or other goals. For most people, it is a simple process. Collect your Dec. 31 statements from your bank, brokerage account, credit cards, mortgage, 401(k), IRA, and add up how much you have in assets and subtract what you have in debt. These calculations will give you a general net worth.

With this information you should be able to tell if you're on track to reach your goals or need to make any course corrections. Has your credit card debt increased? Are your savings growing? Are you contributing regularly to your 401(k) plan? A review of your net worth will expose areas of your spending where there might be areas to cut back or save more.

Reset retirement savings

The beginning of the year is the perfect time to review your retirement accounts. If you're involved in your employer's retire-

ment plan, review the percentage of your salary you're contributing and consider increasing that amount. If you haven't joined the plan, consider doing so. An extra \$50 or \$100 per pay period can improve chances of a more successful retirement.

The most common reason people tell me they don't increase their 401(k) contributions is they won't have enough take-home pay to live their lives if they contribute. In my experience, most people are surprised by the small difference in their take-home pay even when they max out their retirement contributions. To help you determine how much you can save each period, incorporate your retirement savings into your regular budget.

Don't forget your IRA

Even if you participate in your work retirement plan, you and your spouse may still be able to contribute to a Traditional IRA or Roth IRA, depending on your wages. Discuss these and other retirement strategies with your financial advisor to keep on top of ever-changing tax regulations.

Review debt-reduction goals

The beginning of the year is a good time to set new savings goals, review your mortgage, credit card, and other debt, and create a plan to pay these amounts down.

If you owe money on your credit cards, determine how much you can realistically afford to pay off during the year. A good rule of thumb is to pay off your highest-interest rate credit cards first, then concentrate on the lower interest rate cards. This strategy decreases your interest costs and eventually leads to more money in your pocket and not the credit card company's pocket. When following this strategy, avoid or limit additional purchases on those cards.

If you have money left over after paying off your credit cards and adding to your savings, consider making payments towards the principal on your mortgage. This strategy shortens the length of your mortgage and will pay off your mortgage faster. However, if you must choose between adding to your retirement nest egg and paying extra on your mortgage, talk to your financial advisor to determine which option is more suitable for you.



FAMILY FINANCIAL PLANNING

ANTHONY N. CORRAO

Review your credit report

This is a good idea after the breaches at the credit reporting agency Equifax and other companies this year. Order your report (you may be able to get a copy for free) and take steps to repair any negative entries. A poor credit report affects your ability to borrow money, might lead to higher interest rates on loans, and have could have other negative effects.

Review insurance needs

Over your lifetime your need for life insurance, disability, long-term care, and other insurances will change. A young family may need life insurance to protect against the premature death of one or both income earners. Older couples may need to consider long-term care insurance to care for their needs when they can no longer take care of themselves. A review with your financial advisor can help you protect your family against unforeseen life events.

Setting realistic New Year's resolutions leads to greater success in reaching your goals. The steps in this column are manageable and can be broken into bite-sized pieces to increase the likelihood of success. Make a checklist with simple tasks to keep track of how you are doing, and if needed, make changes throughout the year. Review your plans with your financial advisor now and throughout the year and the chances of your success greatly increase.

Anthony N. Corrao, an independent advisor with Corrao Wealth Management, has a website at www.corraoowm.com.

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Accentuating the positive with kids

There are lots of moments when you are positive when with your child. You tell him you love him. You point out to her what a great job she did. There are hugs at bedtime and kisses to make boo-boos better.

Then there is the rest of the time. Perhaps the majority of the time you are with your children it's not so positive. When you don't see another choice but to yell. When it feels like there is nothing to celebrate. When you are so frustrated, you can't see straight.

What if there was a way to increase the positive moments? A way to shift the challenging moments into something more fun, engaged, and connected.

I'm here to tell you there is a way to do just that! I have helped families do this over and over again. Now it's your turn, so keep reading.

The first step to building more positive moments is to set your kiddos up for success by telling them what you want to see happen. You know when and where your child has a hard time. Occasionally it's a surprise, but most often, you could have predicted it.

For those predictable moments, don't wait for the failure. Before the situation happens, talk to your child about what you want to see and what actions need to happen so that success is possible.

For example, let's say your small one does not always say "Hi" when guests come over, and this is important to you. Have an ongoing conversation about how to act when guests come over.

Tell him that when the doorbell rings, you run to the door, wait for a grown up to open the door, and then wave or greet the doorbell ringer.



BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

You could even practice it. You stand on one side of a closed door, your kiddo on the other. Knock and walk in. If your child says "Hello" or waves, give him a big hug or tickle. If he does not, walk out the door and try again without much conversation.

Keep trying until he does say "Hi" or wave. Then celebrate with a hug or tickle or song or dance. The celebration is critical for all of you.

When practicing, keep your language action-based. Tell him what you want him to do and what you want him to say; paint the picture.

Also, keep the language positive. If you tell him what you don't want to see, you leave him guessing what is acceptable behavior. Your clarity of direction is an important component in his success. Don't talk about the six times that he did it wrong, just talk about the time he got it right!

Then when company comes over, you all will be ready. Simply remind your child of the practice and how great he did. Then open the door and get ready to be excited to visit with your guests and child.

If you're looking for more tips like this, get Dr. Marcie Beigel's new book "Love Your Family Again," available on Amazon.

Dr. Marcie is a behavior specialist based in Brooklyn. Since 1998, she has worked with thousands of clients and is the founder of Behavior and Beyond, a company dedicated to behavior change. She teaches Behavior Bootcamps and Boosts as live events and online, does educational trainings, and counsels individual families.

Visit DrMarcie.com/freegift.

Student loans: Until death do us part?

I have a lot of student loans that I am still paying off after 20 years. My spouse guaranteed a student loan of her niece. What happens if either of us dies? Will my estate be required to pay my student loan in full? Will the lender look to my spouse's estate (or me) if her niece defaults on her student loan?

Today's students are graduating college and graduate programs with an unprecedented amount of student loan debt. There are 44 million Americans with student loan debt, an increase from 37 million in 2014. According to the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau, that student loan debt amounted to \$1.31 trillion as of Dec. 31, 2016 (an increase of \$31 billion; about \$770 billion more than the total U.S. credit card debt). The average Class of 2016 graduate had \$37,172 in student loan debt, a six percent increase from the prior year (as reported by www.federalreserve.gov and www.newyorkfed.org). According to the American Bar Association, nine out of 10 law students use student loans to pay for their education, with an average law school loan debt of \$88,000.00 for public universities. According to the latest release from the Congressional Budget Office (<https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/recurringdata/51310-2016-03-studentloan.pdf>), the federal student loan program will cause a loss of \$170 billion over the next 10 years. And that's before you get to the current tax proposal (which, as of the date of writing, has not been presented for vote).

And how much of these trillions in loans are repaid? Do they extinguish when you die? Is someone else responsible? Should you purchase insurance to cover the debt? You may be surprised to learn that many of these loans are forgiven and discharged based on various programs or on death.

Federal student loans

If a borrower on a federal student loan dies, the loan is automatically canceled and the debt is discharged by the government. Recipients of private student loans



do not enjoy the same debt forgiveness on death. For private student loans, forgiveness on debt depends on the terms of the individual loan and the lender's policies. Some private lenders might offer death insurance, whereby the debt is discharged on death. For lenders such as Sallie Mae (Sallie Mae's Smart Option Student Loan, New York HESC's NYHELPS loans, and Wells Fargo private student loans), these programs offer death and disability forgiveness policies. Some private lenders might offer a death discharge, but not all do. If the loans are only in the decedent's name, the heirs or other relatives are not necessarily liable.

If the loan is forgiven, however, they will likely issue a 1099-C, meaning the amount of the forgiveness is taxable on the estate's income tax return, and Uncle Sam may come looking to you for the appropriate tax rate on that forgiveness.

There are tax implications to debt forgiveness, which is treated as income. Even where the debt is forgiven due to disability or death, the tax authorities will impose a tax on the amount of the forgiven debt. In other words, the estate could owe as much as 35 percent on the full unpaid amount of the loan.

Can a spouse be liable for the debt?

A spouse does not have repayment li-



ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER, ESQ.

ability on a federally-backed education loan. If a spouse is not on the student loan as a co-signer or joint borrower, the surviving spouse is not legally liable for the debt. (If the decedent and spouse lived in a community property state like California or Texas, the result might be different. It would depend on the type of loan and the laws of the individual state.) However, the same result might ensue if the debt can be collected from the decedent's estate, thereby reducing the spouse's share. That said, if the decedent took out the loan before marriage, the spouse is not likely to be liable unless he or she was a cosigner or a guarantor of the loan.

However, if the loan has a cosigner, the cosigner is legally responsible for the debt when the debtor passes away. If there is a provision in the loan agreement itself, the creditor (lender) could accelerate the debt and seek repayment immediately. The death of the borrower could thus trigger a default.

How much debt is repaid and how much is forgiven?

The number of students in default of their student loans hit a new high in 2016 of 8 million borrowers defaulting on more than \$137 billion in education debts, up from 14 percent (5.4 million) with approximately \$85 billion past due in 2014.

Alison Arden Besunder, is founding attorney of the law firm of Arden Besunder P.C. Follow her on Twitter @estatetrustplan.

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Music can soothe and motivate kids

Have you ever entered a doctor's waiting room to hear cartoons blasting, loud chatter, phones beeping, and handheld games playing? Ever feel overwhelmed in those moments? Even the most sophisticated adults can feel overstimulated in noisy and chaotic environments, so consider how young children feel.

More importantly, the sound and noise level in your own home helps determine the stress factor. Creating a soothe and calm environment depends a lot on the sound influence. By intentionally using music as a tool, you can set or reset the tone of your home. Here are 5 ways how:

Homework time: Playing some soothing tunes in the background while deciphering math problems is not only soothing but aids in brain stimulation. Known as the Mozart Effect, listening to music not only increases cognitive function in general, but also specifically aids in performing mathematical computations, in particular, spatial-temporal reasoning.

Clean up: Looking to find a fun way to clean up before or after dinner? Try a

musical cue. By putting on a song that the kids enjoy, you will help get little hands in the mood to pitch in. If you play the same song each day but specifically for clean-up time only, you soon won't even need to tell the kids that it's time to tidy up. Once they hear the first few notes of the song, they will spring into action.

Explore topics: What older kids listen to might reflect what they are thinking, but it also might just be a song that they really enjoy because it's popular or has a good beat. You don't know until you ask. Talking about lyrics is an awesome way to broach subjects, and even art and writing and life in general. Get to know what your kids listen to without feeling the need to censor them all the time. And don't be afraid to introduce them to the songs you like and explain why. Some of the best times with my kids have been deciphering the lyrics of a song.

Get moving: Who says you need to do a formal and boring exercise routine every day? Turn up the tunes and dance. Show the kids your fun side and get them moving at the same time. It's not only incred-



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

ibly fun, it's an activity that helps release the day's stress and reinvigorates you and your kids for the rest of the day.

No more television: You don't need to come home and mindlessly turn on the television. The noise from a blaring television can quickly become grating and does not usher in tranquility. On the contrary, when you walk in the door and turn on some music, you instantly set a soothing mood.

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

Calendar

JANUARY

Taking flight

Soaring Wings flies into the David H Koch Theater at Lincoln Center, Jan. 5 to Jan. 7.

China Arts and Entertainment Group presents the New York premiere of the Shanghai Dance Theatre — in a new dance drama about “the bird of good fortune” — the crested ibis, and the interdependence between human beings and nature. The story focuses on the issues of environmental protection for these international preserved rare bird species.

Soaring Wings, Jan. 5, 6, and 7. Friday and Saturday 8 pm; Sunday 1 pm. For all ages; ticket prices are from \$22, up to \$167

David H Koch Theater at Lincoln Center [20 Lincoln Center Plaza on the Upper West Side; (212) 496-0600; www.DavidHKochTheater.com]



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Calendar

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MON, JAN. 1

IN MANHATTAN

Arsenal Gallery: 35th Annual Wreath Interpretations Exhibition: The Arsenal in Central Park, 830 Fifth Avenue and E. 65th Street; (212) 360-8114; <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2017/12/07/arsenal-gallery-exhibition-wreath-interpretations>; 9 am to 5 p; 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. This year's wreaths draw inspiration from a range of themes ranging from the personal to the universal. This exhibition is an inspired and fun way to experience the holiday season.

"The Sorceress:" Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place at First Place; (646) 437-4202; 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 Thomshefsky, 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, JAN. 2

IN MANHATTAN

Arsenal Gallery: 35th Annual Wreath Interpretations Exhibition: 9 am to 5 pm. The Arsenal in Central Park. See Monday, Jan. 1.



Where families get fit

Hit that pause/play button and enjoy a Family Fit Day at the 14th Street Y on Jan. 6.

Pause/Play invites attendees to hit the pause button in their busy lives and experience all the Y has to offer. All are welcome in the community, Jewish or not, to join for a day of relaxation and renewal.

Jump in to the Family Fit Day! Everyone's favorite bounce house will be set up all afternoon in the Gym, with Family Swim and yoga for all ages downstairs. End the day with a

Disco Dance Party— the grooviest way to burn off those holiday calories!

Family Fit Day, Jan. 6 from 2 pm to 6 pm; free for members; (non-members- children (\$5), adults (\$10)) family ticket (Up to five members \$35); Day of tickets: children (\$10), adults (\$15), Family Ticket (Up to five members \$45).

14 Street Y - Downtown Jewish Life [344 East 14th St. between First and Second avenues in the East Village; (212) 780-0800; www.14streety.org]

WED, JAN. 3

IN MANHATTAN

Arsenal Gallery: 35th Annual Wreath Interpretations Exhibition: 9 am to 5 p. The Arsenal in Central Park. See Monday, Jan. 1.

Sing: 92Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 9:15 am; \$10.

Join Rebecca Schoffer and Parenting Center staff for a fun sing-a-long of old time favorites, folk songs and childhood classics. This is a drop-in class, no registration required, payable at door. Cash, credit cards and Shababa cards accepted.

Seaport Exhibit: Southstreet Seaport Museum, 12 Fulton St. (212) 748-8600;

www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org; 11am-5pm; \$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.

THURS, JAN. 4

IN MANHATTAN

Arsenal Gallery: 35th Annual Wreath Interpretations Exhibition: 9 am to 5 p. The

Calendar

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

Arsenal in Central Park. See Monday, Jan. 1.

Seaport Exhibit: 11am–5pm. South-street Seaport Museum. See Wednesday, Jan. 3.

Cross-Stitch Circle: New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873–3400; nyhistory.org; 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Drop in to try your skills at one of the oldest forms of embroidery in the world. Beginning cross-stitchers will learn the basic stitch and create a bookmark with their new skill. More seasoned stitchers can continue working on their bookmark or branch into more complicated designs — make a handcrafted gift for someone! Younger kids may also enjoy coming along and contributing to our community weaving using recycled fabrics and ribbons. Please contact familyprograms@nyhistory.org for more information and pricing.

Storytime: Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place at First Place; (646) 437–4202; 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.

FRI, JAN. 5

IN MANHATTAN

Arsenal Gallery: 35th Annual Wreath Interpretations Exhibition: 9 am to 5 pm. The Arsenal in Central Park. See Monday, Jan. 1.

Shababa Fridays: 92Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415–5500; www.92y.org; 9:30 am to 10 am and 10:45 am to 11:30 am; \$10.

Get ready for Shabbat with a joyous and active musical experience! Children, parents, grandparents and nannies are all a part of our Shababa Friday family. Join us for this playful and soulful experience of singing, dancing, jumping and celebrating as a community!

Three Kings Day Parade: El Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave. and East 106th St. (212) 831–7272; www.elmuseo.org; 11 am to 12:30 pm; Free.

Our favorite time of the year is upon us! Enjoy live camels, colorful puppets, parandas, music and dancing on this magical day. In honor of the 41st anniversary, we celebrate Freedom Fighters who have made significant contributions to the Latino community. The parade route begins on 106th Street and Lexington Avenue and ends on 115th Street and Park Avenue.

Seaport Exhibit: 11am–5pm. South Street Seaport Museum. See Wednesday, Jan. 3.



Storytime in Mandarin too

MOCAKids Storytime comes to the Museum of Chinese America on Jan. 11 and 25.

Drop into the Museum of Chinese America for stories, finger-plays, songs, and more in English and Mandarin! Interactive songs, nursery rhymes, and arts and crafts will accompany this bilingual storytime. A lively 30-minute combination of fun activities and language exploration will enhance your young child's word skills and vocabulary, both of which are important for a strong, growing

reader.

Appropriate for children 3 to 6 years old, but younger and older siblings are welcomed. The program is open to everyone from native speakers to those seeking their first exposure to a new language.

MOCAKids Storytime, Jan. 11 and 25, 3:30 pm to 4 pm; free with museum admission; \$10; \$5 for seniors, students, and children 2 and up.

Museum of Chinese America [215 Centre St., in Lower Manhattan; (855) 955–6622; www.mocanyc.org/storytime]

Bull riding: Madison Square Gardens, 4 Pennsylvania Plaza, (800) 745–3000; www.ticketmaster.com; 8 pm; Starting at \$38.

The Professional Bull Riders are coming back for the 25th anniversary of this extreme sport — The PBR's brand of thrilling, high-flying rides and jaw-dropping wrecks will buck into Madison Square Garden on January 5-7 for the Monster Energy Buck Off at the Garden. The three-day event is the first of four PBR Majors in 2018 that will offer increased prize money and bonus points to the world's 35 top bull riders, as well as a unique format that will test the sport's best in a punishing competition in which one in 15 rides ends in injury. Tickets are on sale now for this hotly-anticipated event. The action begins with the top-35 bull riders in the world taking on their 2,000-pound bovine opponents atop 750 tons of dirt spread 8 inches deep across to strive to win their share of the \$140,000

event purse as well as valuable world standings points that count toward the season's overall \$1 million PBR World Championship title.

Soaring Wings: David H Koch Theater at Lincoln Center, 20 Lincoln Center Plaza; (212) 496–0600. www.DavidHKochTheater.com; 8 pm; \$22 to \$167.

China Arts and Entertainment Group presents the New York premiere of the Shanghai Dance Theatre -in a new dance drama about “the bird of good fortune” — the crested ibis, and the interdependence between human beings and nature. The story focuses on the issues of environmental protection for these international preserved rare bird species.

SAT, JAN. 6

IN MANHATTAN

Shababa Saturdays: 92Y, 1395 Lexington

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ton Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 10:30 am; Free.

A playful and soulful Shabbat experience for the whole family, filled with music, puppets, art and creative prayer. No experience celebrating Shabbat necessary!

Artists at the Atrium: Soul Science Kids: David Rubenstein Atrium, 61 W. 62nd St. (212) 875-5000; atrium.lincolncenter.org; 11 am and 2 pm; Free.

The innovative Afrofuturist griots of Soul Science Lab translate stories into soul-stirring sounds and dynamic visuals perfect for young audiences.

Family Day: Building Bridges: New York City Center, 131 West 55th Street; 212-581-1212; info@cfafoundation.org; 11:00am - 1:00pm or 2:00pm - 4:00pm; \$12/Child and \$6/Adult.

New York City has fascinating bridges, from the historic Brooklyn Bridge to moving bridges on working waterways, to futuristic pedestrian bridges. What kind of bridge would you design for NYC? Families will learn about different types of bridges and how they work, then create their own bridges to span one of NYC's rivers, canals or busy streets.

Milo the Magnificent: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am and 2 pm; \$17.

Part of the Just Kidding series, this fun show is about a bungling puppet magician can't get things right.

Seaport Exhibit: 11am-5pm. South-street Seaport Museum. See Wednesday, Jan. 3.

Pause/Play - Family Fit Day: 14 Street Y - Downtown Jewish Life, 344 East 14th St. between First and Second avenues; (212) 780-0800; www.14streety.org; 2 pm to 6 pm; Free, members; (Non-Membes- Children (\$5), Adults (\$10)) Family Ticket (Up to 5 members \$35); Day of Tickets: Children (\$10), Adults (\$15), Family Ticket (Up to 5 members \$45).

Pause/Play invites attendees to hit the pause button in their busy lives and experience all the Y has to offer. All are welcome in the community, Jewish or not, to join for a day of relaxation and renewal. Jump in to the Family Fit Day! Everyone's favorite bounce house will be set up all afternoon in the Gym, with Family Swim and yoga for all ages downstairs. End the day with a Disco Dance Party - the grooviest way to burn off those holiday calories!

"Snow White:" Galli Theater, 357 W. 36th St. #202; (212) 731-0668; www.gallitheaternyc.com/shows; 2 pm; \$20 (\$15 children).

Snow White is a young woman whose stepmother is jealous of her beauty. When the magical mirror on the wall says that



Cooking up some friends

"The Perfect Monster" is invading the stage at TADA Youth Theater, Jan. 19 to Feb. 19.

TADA! Youth Theater presents "The Perfect Monster," the tale of Sybil, a young science nerd who compares herself to so-called "perfect" people. A perfect friend is what she needs, or so she thinks. To solve this issue, Sybil sets out on a mission to create the perfect friend in the basement of her castle. With a few bumps along the way, Sybil

is left with a room full of marvelous, yet mischievous monsters.

This original production is a book by Janine Nina Trevens with music and lyrics by Deirdre Broderick.

"The Perfect Monster," Jan. 19 to Feb. 19; Fri, 7 pm, Sat. and Sun. 2 pm; tickets are \$15 and \$25; reservations not required.

TADA! Youth Theater [15 W. 28th St., in Midtown; www.tadatheater.com/shows/buy-tickets/]

Calendar

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

Snow White is the “fairest of them all,” the stepmother makes a plan to get Snow White out of the castle and out of her life forever! Suitable for children 4 years and older.

Bull riding: 7:45 pm. Madison Square Gardens. See Friday, Jan. 5.

Soaring Wings: 8 pm. David H Koch Theater at Lincoln Center. See Friday, Jan. 5.

SUN, JAN. 7

IN MANHATTAN

Boot Camp for Dads: 92Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 10am-1pm; \$65.

Expectant and new dads and their babies connect with veteran dads for a practical discussion about becoming a father, led by Lance Somerfeld and NYC Dads.

Seaport Exhibit: 11am-5pm. South-street Seaport Museum. See Wednesday, Jan. 3.

Teddy Bear Tea: Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden, 421 East 61st St. at York Avenue; (212) 838-6878; <http://www.mvhm.org>; 1 pm to 3 pm; \$10.

Raise your pinky and enjoy a Teddy Bear Tea and banish post-holiday boredom. Children ages 3 to 6 can bring their favorite teddy (or doll) to meet Mrs. Woodhull, the proprietor's wife, and role-play the daily activities at the Mount Vernon Hotel in 1830. You'll have an opportunity to try out William's toys and help Sarah with the laundry. Afterwards, enjoy fruit tea and cookies. Reservations recommended.

Soaring Wings: 1 pm. David H Koch Theater at Lincoln Center. See Friday, Jan. 5.

Bull riding: 1:45 pm. Madison Square Garden. See Friday, Jan. 5.

“Snow White:” 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 6.

WED, JAN. 10

IN MANHATTAN

Sing: 9:15 am. 92Y. See Wednesday, Jan. 3.

Dance Commission - Battleground: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. at 89th Street; (212) 423-3500; www.guggenheim.org; 7:30 pm; \$45 (\$40 members; \$10 students with valid ID).

Following the sold-out premiere of Battleground in 2016, Works & Process presents an encore of this one-of-a-kind “Cosplay-Battle-Ballet” made in and for the museum's Frank Lloyd Wright-designed theater. Three squads of performers—the Red Choir Loft, the Green Balcony, and the Blue Stage-battle for dominance with audience members acting as embedded witnesses.



Andy Watson

Cowboys ride in midtown

Come on down — it's the 25th anniversary of the extreme sport — bull riding — at Madison Square Garden, Jan. 5 through 7.

The Professional Bull Riders are bringing their brand of thrilling, high-flying rides and jaw-dropping tricks, and buck for the Monster Energy Buck Off.

The three-day event is the first of four bull riders' events in 2018 that will offer increased prize money and bonus points to the world's 35 top bull riders, as well as a unique format that will test the sport's best.

The action begins with the top-35

bull riders in the world taking on their 2,000-pound bovine opponents atop 750 tons of dirt spread 8 inches deep across to strive to win their share of the \$140,000 event purse as well as valuable world standings points that count toward the season's overall \$1 million World Championship title.

Professional Bull Riders, Jan. 5 through 7; 8 pm on Friday; 7:45 pm on Saturday and 1:45 pm on Sunday. Tickets start at \$38. For all ages, reservations not required.

Madison Square Garden [4 Pennsylvania Plaza, in Midtown Manhattan; (800) 745-3000; www.ticketmaster.com].

THURS, JAN. 11

IN MANHATTAN

Museum of Chinese in America: MOC-AKIDS Storytime!: Museum of Chinese in America, 215 Centre Street, (855)-955-6622; www.mocanyc.org/storytime; 3:30 - 4 pm; Event is free with museum admission. Regular admission is \$10; admission for seniors, students, and children 2 and up is \$5.

Come to the Museum of Chinese America for stories, finger-plays, songs, and more in English and Mandarin! Interactive songs, nursery rhymes, and arts & crafts will accompany this bilingual storytime. A lively 30-minute combination of fun activi-

ties and language exploration will enhance your young child's word skills and vocabulary, both of which are important for a strong, growing reader. Appropriate for ages 3-6, but younger and older siblings are welcomed. Our program invites everyone from native speakers to those seeking their first exposure to a new language.

Cross-Stitch Circle: 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm. New-York Historical Society. See Thursday, Jan. 4.

Dance Commission — Battleground: 7:30 pm. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. See Wednesday, Jan. 10.

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

FRI, JAN. 12

IN MANHATTAN

Shababa Fridays: 9:30 am to 10 am and 10:45 am to 11:30 am. 92Y. See Friday, Jan. 5.

Dance Commission — Battleground: 7:30 pm. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. See Wednesday, Jan. 10.

SAT, JAN. 13

IN MANHATTAN

Journey to Oz: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am; \$17.

Part of the Just Kidding series, the Experiential Theater Company presents this highly interactive adventure based on the classic tale.

Breaking Silence: Dr. King and the “Beyond Vietnam” Speech: New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Special event featuring Reverend Richard Fernandez & Author Tonya Bolden—On April 4, 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech about the Vietnam War at Riverside Church in Manhattan that made huge waves in the Civil Rights Movement across the United States. In honor of our groundbreaking exhibition *The Vietnam War: 1945–1975*, join us for this unique family event featuring an on-stage conversation and audience Q&A with one of the speech’s organizers, Reverend Richard Fernandez, director of the Clergy and Laity Concerned about Vietnam in 1967 and author Tonya Bolden.

“Snow White:” 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 6.

Underwater Bubble Show: 14th Street Y Preschool (formerly known as Gani), 344 East 14th Street New York, NY 10003; (646) 395-4325; 7 pm; \$16-\$40.

Plunge into a glistening blend of laser technology, snow cannons, soap-bubble tornadoes, and optical illusions as the effervescent Mr. B is transported to Bubblelandia, a blissful ocean utopia where colors explode and dreams take flight. Inspired by the artistry of Cirque du Soleil, this lavish Latvian production uses drama, mime, dance, puppetry, juggling, sand art, and theatrical magic to whisk families to an imaginary bubble world bursting with possibilities.

SUN, JAN. 14

IN MANHATTAN

“Snow White:” 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 6.



Share a cuppa with teddy

Chase those winter blues away with a Teddy Bear Tea at the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum and Garden on Jan. 7.

Children ages 3 to 6 years old can bring their favorite teddy (or doll) to meet Mrs. Woodhull, the proprietor’s wife, and role-play the daily activities at the Mount Vernon Hotel in 1830. Children will have an opportunity to try

out William’s toys and help Sarah with the laundry. Afterwards, enjoy fruit tea and cookies.

Teddy Bear Tea, Jan. 7, 1 pm to 3 pm; \$10; reservations strongly recommended.

Mount Vernon Hotel Museum and Garden [421 East 61st St. at York Avenue in the Upper East Side; (212) 838-6878; www.mvhm.org]

Stam-Pede: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 3 pm; \$17.

A blockbuster afternoon of the best in percussive dance by seven celebrated companies. From lively tap dance to innovative body percussion, and from exhilarating Irish dance to gorgeous Indian Kathak, this impressive collection of companies offers a one-stop feast for those who love the power and precision of this dynamic genre. Appropriate for ages 5 and up; expected run time is 120 minutes.

Dance Commission — New Bodies: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave. at 89th Street; (212) 423-3500; www.guggenheim.org; 7:30 pm; \$45 (\$40 members; \$10 students with valid ID).

Works & Process — presents an ensemble of choreographer Jodi Melnick’s sold-out 2016 commission, *One of Sixty-Five Thousand Gestures/NEW BODIES*. This workweaves together dance, spo-

ken text, and moderated discussion with live music, featuring New York City Ballet dancers Jared Angle, Sara Mearns, and Gretchen Smith, with harpsichord by composer György Ligeti, violin by composer Heinrich Biber, and commissioned music by Robert Boston.

MON, JAN. 15

IN MANHATTAN

Martin Luther King Jr., Story time: New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

In honor of our exhibition *The Vietnam War: 1945–1975*, come listen to a read-aloud of Walter Dean Myers’ children’s book *Patrol: An American Soldier in Vietnam*, which tells the story of a black soldier in Vietnam encountering, and rethinking, his enemy.

Calendar

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

The Music of Sir Karl Jenkins: Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave. at 57th Street; (212) 707-8566 X 330; BoxOffice@DCINY.org; <https://www.carnegiehall.org/Calendar/2018/1/15/0700/PM/The-Music-of-Sir-Karl-Jenkins>; 7 pm; \$20-\$100.

DCINY honors UK composer Sir Karl Jenkins with an evening comprised of both new and lauded compositions by the honoree. The program includes Sing! The Music was Given, a new work commissioned for DCINY's 10th Anniversary, and The Armed Man, which is presented with film.

Dance Commission - New Bodies: 7:30 pm. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. See Sunday, Jan. 14.

WED, JAN. 17

IN MANHATTAN

Sing: 9:15 am. 92Y. See Wednesday, Jan. 3.

THURS, JAN. 18

IN MANHATTAN

Cross-Stitch Circle: 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm. New York Historical Society. See Thursday, Jan. 4.

Storytime: 3:30 pm. Museum of Jewish Heritage. See Thursday, Jan. 4.

FRI, JAN. 19

IN MANHATTAN

Shababa Fridays: 9:30 am to 10 am and 10:45 am to 11:30 am. 92Y. See Friday, Jan. 5.

SAT, JAN. 20

IN MANHATTAN

Shababa Saturdays: 10:30 am. 92Y. See Saturday, Jan. 6.

LC Kids: Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History: David Rubenstein Atrium, 61 W. 62nd St. (212) 875-5000; atrium.lincolncenter.org; 11 am; Free.

Based on her popular Instagram posts, debut author/illustrator Vashti Harrison shares the stories of 40 bold African-American women who shaped history. For children 2 to 5 years old. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Gustafer Yellowgold Show: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am and 2 pm; \$17.

Morgan Taylor performs his one-of-a-kind, music and animation show featuring material from his new album "Brighter Side" alongside classic fan favorites. Taylor's funny and touching multimedia pre-

sentation about a little guy from the Sun who landed in the Minnesota woods has loads of adult crossover appeal, making Gustafer Yellowgold's show a truly all-ages experience.

"Snow White:" 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 6.

SUN, JAN. 21

IN MANHATTAN

Maps and compasses: Dana Discovery Center, 110 St. between Fifth and Lenox avenues; (212) 304-2277; <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2018/01/21/finding-your-way-maps-and-compasses>; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Use provided maps and compasses to locate hidden markers in the park. Through this program, you won't just learn navigational skills, but you will also develop a sense of adventure and confidence in unfamiliar terrain. For teens.

"Snow White:" 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 6.

MON, JAN. 22

IN MANHATTAN

NYC Autism Charter Schools Board Meetings: NYC Autism Charter Schools, 433 E. 100th Street Manhattan; 977 Fox Street, Bronx, NY 10459; (212) 860-2580; csecharan@nycacharterschool.org; www.nycautismcharterschool.org; 5:00pm; Free.

The NYCA Charter Schools Board Meetings are open to parents, staff and any other members of the public.

WED, JAN. 24

IN MANHATTAN

Sing: 9:15 am. 92Y. See Wednesday, Jan. 3.

THURS, JAN. 25

IN MANHATTAN

Museum of Chinese in America: MOCAKIDS Storytime!: 3:30 - 4 pm. Museum of Chinese in America. See Thursday, Jan. 11.

Cross-Stitch Circle: 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm. New York Historical Society. See Thursday, Jan. 4.

FRI, JAN. 26

IN MANHATTAN

Shababa Fridays: 9:30 am to 10 am and 10:45 am to 11:30 am. 92Y. See Friday, Jan. 5.

Dance on a Shoestring: St. Mark's Church in the Bowery, 131 East 10th Street; (212) 679-0401; admin@nytb.org; 7 pm;

\$15.

Dance on a Shoestring is an intimate evening of dance held in the company's home at St. Mark's Church-in-the-Bowery. The community series showcases ballets from New York Theatre Ballet's current season, works in progress by contemporary and emerging choreographers, and children of Ballet School NY.

SAT, JAN. 27

IN MANHATTAN

Shababa Saturdays: 10:30 am. 92Y. See Saturday, Jan. 6.

Best of Family Music Showcase:

Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; <https://www.symphonyspace.org/event/9831/Family/best-of-family-music-showcase>; 11 am; \$20 (\$17 members).

Just Kidding presents this special event hosted by SiriusSM's Kenny Curtis, highlighting some of the very best music of the year, featuring artists nominated for the 2018 Grammy Award for Best Children's Album. Nominees and performers include: Alphabet Rockers, Gustafer Yellowgold, Lisa Loeb, and Justin Roberts and the Not Ready for Naptime Players Proceeds from the concert benefit Education Through Music (ETM). ETM partners with urban schools to provide music as a core subject for all children, and utilizes music education as a catalyst to improve academic achievement, motivation for school and self-confidence. For children 2 to 7 years old. For families with children on the autism spectrum or with sensory sensitivities, this performance features: brighter lighting in audience, lowered sound levels; and patrons are free to move about the theater during the show. Expected run time is 60 minutes.

Winter Jam NYC: Naumburg Bandshell, Central Park, East 72nd Street and Fifth Avenue; <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2018/01/27/winter-jam-nyc>; 11 am to 3 pm; Free.

A winter sports festival for New Yorkers of all ages! Our partners at Gore Mountain will blow lots of snow in the heart of Manhattan, creating a snow field for all to enjoy! Featured Venues Lake Placid Snow Field Learn to Ski and Snowboard Snowshoeing by REI Sledding Arctic Golf Live Ice Sculpting Taste NY Winter Market/Warming Hut Please note: Participants in the Learn to Ski and Snowboard, Sledding, and Snowshoeing activities must sign a waiver and provide photo identification before participating in any of these activities. The waivers will be provided at the event. Participants under the age of 18 must have a legal guardian present with photo identification to sign the waiver. Waiting lines for the activities are subject to close early. *



Family music highlights

Enjoy the morning with the Best of Family Music showcase at Symphony Space at the Leonard Nimoy Thalia Theater on Jan. 27.

Just Kidding presents this special event hosted by SiriusXM's Kenny Curtis, highlighting some of the very best music of the year, featuring artists nominated for the 2018 Grammy Award for Best Children's Album. Performers and nominees include: Alphabet Rockers, Morgan Taylor's Gustafer Yellowgold, Lisa Loeb, and Justin Roberts and the Not Ready for Naptime Players.

Proceeds from the concert benefit Education Through Music, which partners with urban schools to provide music as a core subject for all children, and utilizes music education as a cata-

lyst to improve academic achievement, motivation for school and self-confidence.

For children 2 to 7 years old. For families with children on the autism spectrum or with sensory sensitivities, this performance features: brighter lighting in the audience, lowered sound levels; and patrons are free to move about the theater during the show. Expected run time is one hour.

Best of Family Music showcase, Jan. 27 at 11 am; \$20, \$17 for members.

Symphony Space — Leonard Nimoy Thalia Theater [2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street on the Upper West Side; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org/event/9831/Family/best-of-family-music-showcase/]

Rain Date: Feb. 3, 2018.

Family Music Showcase: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am; \$17.

Part of the Just Kidding series, this year's GRAMMY nominees for Best Children's Album perform a concert benefiting Education Through Music.

Little Red Riding Hood: Galli Theater, 357 W. 36th St. #202; (212) 731-0668; www.gallitheaternyc.com/shows; 2 pm; \$20 (\$15 children).

Little Red Riding Hood sets out through the forest to bring food to her grandmother. But who is in grandmother's bed when she gets there? Can a little girl in a red cape outfox a big bad wolf? For children 4 and up.

Dance on a Shoestring: 7 pm. St. Mark's Church in the Bowery. See Friday, Jan. 26.

SUN, JAN. 28

IN MANHATTAN

Story time: New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Down in the Subway -Join us this week to celebrate our exhibition Holiday Express: Toys and Trains from the Jerni Collection. We'll be reading *Down in the Subway* by Miriam Cohen, illustrated by Melanie Hope Greenberg, and discussing the New York City subway system. Children will create a subway car craft to take home.

Little Red Riding Hood: 2 pm. Galli Theater. See Saturday, Jan. 27.

WED, JAN. 31

IN MANHATTAN

Sing: 9:15 am. 92Y. See Wednesday, Jan. 3.

LONG-RUNNING

IN MANHATTAN

Earthflight: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at West 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; 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

Calendar

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

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.

16th Annual Holiday Transit Show: NY Transit Museum at Grand Central Station, 89 East 42nd St. at Park Avenue; (212) 878-0106; 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.

Mummies: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at West 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; enicholas@amnh.org; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10am-5:45pm; until Sun, Jan. 7, 2018; \$27 for adults, \$16 for children ages 2-12.

Mummies offers 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 explores the intersection between societies, their environment, and the preparations they made for their dead. Through high-resolution CT scans and forensically reconstructed sculptures, visitors 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.

Our Senses: An Immersive Experience: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at West 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10am-5:45pm; Mon, Jan. 1 - Tues, Jan. 30, 2018; General: \$23 adults, \$13 children ages 2-12. One special exhibition, film and Space Show, \$28 adults, \$16.50 children ages 2-12.

In this new, highly experiential exhibition a series of 11 funhouse-like galleries dare



Elena Olivo

Celebrating Dr. King

Celebrate the life of civil rights activist Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Peter Jay Sharp Building on Jan. 15.

New York City's largest public celebration in honor of iconic civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. returns to BAM for the 32nd year. This event brings world-renowned activists, intellectuals, and civic leaders together with musicians and other

performers to pay tribute to King's legacy and keep his message alive. Join us for full day of free events, including a movie screening, a talk, and an art exhibition.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., celebration, Jan. 15, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm; free.

BAM Peter Jay Sharp Building [30 Lafayette Ave. between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street in Fort Greene; www.bam.org]

visitors to rely on their senses—and then reveal how and why what we perceive is not all, or exactly, what's actually occurring around us. Explore hearing, balancing, touch, smell and more.

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.

Migrants and Millionaires aboard the Great Liners, 1900-1914: South Street Seaport Museum, 12 Fulton St. (646) 765-4773; 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 trans-

atlantic 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.

Holiday Express: Toys and Trains: New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; Tuesdays – Thursdays and Saturdays, 10am–6pm, Fridays, 10am–8pm, Sundays, 1am–5pm, Tues, Jan. 2 – Sun, Feb. 25, 2018; Free with museum admission, \$21 adults, \$6 children ages 5-13. \$.

Featuring immersive scenes and hundreds of toy trains, figurines, and miniature models from the renowned Jerni Collection, this holiday tradition transports young and old alike to a bygone era. Holiday Express begins at the West 77th Street entrance, where trains appear to roar through the Museum with the help of four large-scale multimedia screens, and extends through large swaths of the first floor.

Little New-Yorkers: New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West at 77th Street; (212) 873-3400; nyhistory.org; Tuesdays and Fridays, 3:30 pm, until Wed, Feb. 28, 2018; 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 activi-

ties. Ages 3 to 5 years old.

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*.

Winter games: BPC Ball Fields, West Street between Murray and Warren Streets; (212) 267-9700; bpcparks.org/event/winter-games-2/all; Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 3:30 pm to 5 pm, Wed, Jan. 3 – Wed, Jan. 31, 2018; Free.

Keep active outdoors and play soccer, flag-football, hockey and more; organized by Ballfields staff or play on your own. Equipment provided. For ages 7 and older.

"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.

Story time: Bryant Park – Winter Village, Sixth Avenue and W. 40th Street; (212)

768-4242; <https://www.nycgovparks.org/events/2018/01/13/storytime>; Saturdays, Noon to 1 pm, Sat, Jan. 13 – Sat, Feb. 24, 2018; Free.

Read-to-Skate with Cali Co Cat! Free books at every event, while supply lasts. Presented in partnership with Penguin Random House.

"The Perfect Monster:" TADA! Youth Theater, 15 W. 28th Street; andrea@andreaandassociates.com; www.tadatheater.com/shows/buy-tickets; Fridays, 7:00 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 2:00 pm, Fri, Jan. 19 — Mon, Feb. 19, 2018; \$15-\$25.

TADA! Youth Theater will present "The Perfect Monster," which tells the tale of Sybil, a young science nerd who compares herself to so-called "perfect" people. A perfect friend is what she needs, or so she thinks. To solve this issue, Sybil sets out on a mission to create the perfect friend in the basement of her castle. With a few bumps along the way, Sybil is left with a room full of marvelous, yet mischievous monsters.

FURTHER AFIELD

All Aboard with Thomas and Friends: New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Daily, various times, until Sun., Jan. 21, 2018; \$30 (\$28 seniors; students; \$18 children 2 to 12; free for children under 2) plus garden admission.

Thomas & Friends™ are pulling into the station. Don't miss the opportunity to meet the Really Useful Engine and get your photo taken. Join Thomas on a fun-filled, sing along performance, Thomas' Budding Adventure, where kids will help Thomas discover the steps to grow a beautiful garden! Be sure to bring your camera to capture the special day.

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New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

What a doll

Positively Perfect is a line of 10 dolls from Dr. Lisa Williams — including the confidently bespectacled Kennedy — that encourages children to dream and celebrates smarts as well as the “beauty in diversity,” according to its empowering packaging. Kennedy stands 18-inches tall, and is beautifully made with sparkling eyes, molded arms and legs, and a soft, cloth body. Her black curls will delight brush-wielding stylists ages 3 and older. Kennedy’s hobbies include writing plays, acting, drawing, and painting, making her an especially thoughtful gift for children with those passions. Her well-crafted, trendy outfit includes a lined, sequined, pink skirt; a jersey with glittered flower; hot pink flats; and a denim jacket. Kennedy just needs a home with a creative child who will delight in imagining her next artistic adventure.

Positively Perfect Kennedy doll by Funrise, \$29.99, www.amazon.com.



One ‘Wild’ game night

Dark January evenings will transform into fun family game nights with the Miss Bernard is a Wild Card! game by All Things Equal. Inspired by Dan Gutman’s My Weird School book series this game gets kids — ages 6 to 10



— to hone their rhyming skills, practice good sportsmanship, burst out with laughter, and much more. The concept is that the newest weird teacher at Ella Mentry School, Miss Bernard, is encouraging students to complete a sentence about one of the other educators. Players compete to score the most points by collecting cards in five categories to complete a comical, (partially) rhyming sentence. After three rounds, the player with the most points wins.

The game’s directions are a quick read, but your kids may prefer watching game creator MC EZ Rulez, aka comedian Eric Schwartz, rap the how-to-play on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OYwf-fQEUE>.

Miss Bernard is a Wild Card!: The My Weird School Game by All Things Equal, Inc., \$19.99, www.toysrus.com.



Resume ‘Command’

My husband’s sixth grade social studies project on the history of video games didn’t win any prizes — because it was ahead of its time. But now you can take your vid-kid back to the Asteroids Era (which predated the Pac Man Era, but came after the Pong Era) with Basic Fun’s Atari Plug & Play Joystick.

Cartridges and consoles are a thing of the past with this all-in-one that’s shaped like the legendary system’s controller — with 10 games built in. Just pop in four double-A batteries and connect two

jacks into your television, and you’re ready to go.

In “Missile Command” you protect your cities from nuclear destruction with a Reagan-era Star Wars defense system. “Centipede” has you shooting the eponymous creature that may have come to life thanks to nuclear fallout. And “Volleyball” lets you play on a beach that may or may not still exist thanks to global warming.

Best of all, these vintage games don’t require hours of screen time to have fun. Twenty minutes at a clip with your Mini Me is all it takes.

Atari Plug & Play Joystick by Basic Fun, \$19.99, www.Target.com.

Wheel-y useful

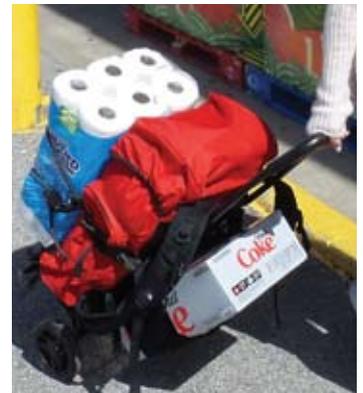
Parents can always use a little more help, and the Urban Mule promises to lighten their load.

Urban Mule is a combination backpack and shopping cart that’s an earth-friendly alternative to using grocery store plastic bags. And it can transport a lot more weight than your hands alone, allowing city parents to stock up and reduce their trips to the market. When the backpack is converted into a wheeled pull cart, it can carry up to 100 pounds.

What sets the Urban Mule apart from its flimsy competitors is that it can be worn as a hiking-style backpack when it’s empty or when you’re carrying lightweight items. It has deep, zippered side pockets. Wear it to work, and shop on the way home, because it has matching wheel covers that easily cinch closed over the wheels, protecting your clothes from dirty treads.

It comes in five water-repellent colors: black, purple, red, green, and blue. Bungee cords, for attaching big awkward items like a family’s worth of toilet paper, are also included.

Urban Mule Backpack Shopping Cart, \$59.99, www.urbanmule.com.





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