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Family January 2011

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Letter from the publisher

A GREAT YEAR AHEAD

As of this writing, we have been lucky and haven't had any blizzards or massive rains like the West Coast or Western Europe. My college-age daughter was one of those travelers who flew into the craziness of the European airports in mid-December for winter college break and to travel with her big brother. What a mess!

But here in New York, we passed through the shortest days of the year with an amazing lunar eclipse and relative ease, although cold. But that's winter, and we're used to it and accustomed to being bundled up and cozy. Now it's a new year and with many weeks of our winter still in front of us, we will be watching the



days grow longer as the weeks pass, and hoping that it's a sign of positive things to come in our economy as well.

With that in mind, this January issue presents an article by our award-winning contributing writer Candi Sparks about the pressures put on families when Dad has lost his job and Mom is the sole working partner. Who does the shopping, cooking, and cleaning and takes care of the children? It's so typical for men to look to women to fulfill those roles. An out-of-work Dad is depressed anyway, and not usually expansive or open to taking on new duties. He's coping with his own innermost feelings of inadequacy, and she's left holding the

bag — and everything else.

Finances are on everyone's mind and budgets are being slashed and watched in every home and every business, and the stress for families when incomes are reduced so drastically is enormous. Everyone pays, including the children who have to be nurtured in an atmosphere often tense with problems that never were there before.

And now, speaking of business, I want to take this opportunity to thank not only you, our thousands of readers throughout the boroughs of our four magazines in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx/Riverdale, and Staten Island (our newest member of the family!), for your continued support and for your letters and good wishes throughout the years, but also our hundreds of advertisers, who are also struggling through

these pressured economic times. Their trust in us and their loyalty to our brand has enabled us to continue to continue. We are very grateful for these marvelous relationships and for the response you, our readers, give to them, making this marketing choice a successful one.

We hope for a brighter year for everyone and a more prosperous one.

Happy New Year to all! We promise to continue to work hard to produce the very best parent guides for your communities with the most interesting and relevant editorial. We wish you a great month and thanks for reading! Happy New Year!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher

STAFF

PUBLISHER / ADVERTISING / EDITORIAL:

Susan Weiss

PUBLISHER / BUSINESS MANAGER:

Clifford Luster

SALES MANAGER / ADVERTISING:

Sharon Noble

SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:

Tina Felicetti

SALES REPS: Linda Smith, Stephanie Stellaccio, Jay Pelc

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Keith Oechsner

ART DIRECTOR: Leah Mitch

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: On Man Tse

LAYOUT MANAGER: Yvonne Farley

WEB DESIGNER: Sylvan Migdal

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS: Arthur Arutyunov, Patty Coughlan, Mauro Deluca, Earl Ferrer, Irene Liberman

MANAGING EDITOR: Vince DiMiceli

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Meredith Deliso

COPY EDITOR: Courtney Donahue

CALENDAR EDITOR: Joanna Del Buono

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Risa Doherty, Helen Klein, Allison Plitt, Candi Sparks, Mary Carroll Wininger

CONTACT INFORMATION

ADVERTISING: WEB OR PRINT

(718) 260-4554

Family@cnglocal.com or

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CIRCULATION

(718) 260-8336

TFelicetti@cnglocal.com

EDITORIAL

(718) 260-4554

Family@cnglocal.com

ADDRESS

Family Publications New York/CNG
1 Metrotech Center North
10th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

www.webfamilyny.com



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Family Publications New York has been recognized for editorial and design excellence by PPA.

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Beat math angst

Tackling the emotions behind poor grades can equal success

BY MICHELE RANARD, M.ED.

As a math tutor, I once received a phone call from a parent feeling so desperate for help that she held out the phone, so I could hear the shouting match between her son, Chase, and her husband as he attempted to help him with math homework. It sounded like the chaotic bedlam of a Jerry Springer soundstage!

Tearful homework dramas are common. Chase became overly emotional, said he hated math, and his frazzled parents said they were “los-

ing it,” while trying to help. They felt that hope was nowhere. Throw a demanding teacher or challenging math curriculum into the mix, and it can add up to math mayhem.

Math angst

The majority of the students I tutor are like Chase. They may have lost all joy for math, fallen behind, and then feel hopeless about catching up. Many students find it difficult to engage in the abstract thinking expected at advanced levels of math. There is also the “cool” factor. It may be socially acceptable to be bad at math. Few students brag they cannot read, yet there is little stigma attached to “I can’t do math.”

Parents feel discouraged, too. Your own struggle with math may have left you feel-

ing helpless or thinking that some folks get it and some don’t. In my experience, when students learn to do math and start to experience success with it, they begin to like it.

While a magic bullet for math angst has yet to materialize, there is always hope for your child — even if he is failing. Everyone can get better at math!

High anxiety plus low confidence

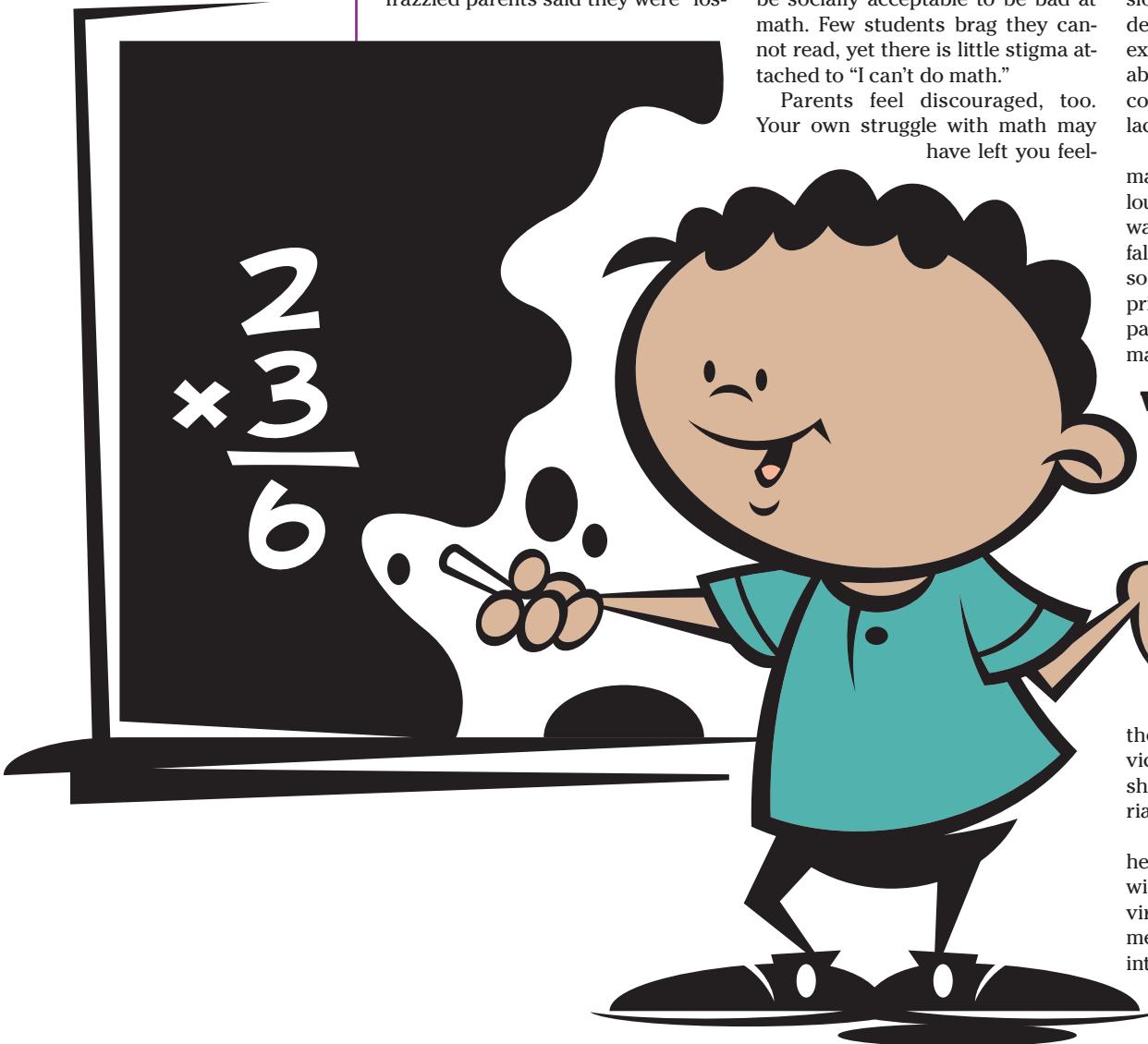
Taylor Swenson could barely speak during our first tutoring session. Her eyes filled with tears as she described feeling overwhelmed on exam days. She said she felt clueless about where to begin. Test anxiety is common for students like Taylor who lack confidence.

Confronted with repeated failure, math anxiety may be masked with callousness (“I’ll never use this stuff anyway”), anger (“It’s too difficult!”), or false indifference (“Whatever”). With so many mixed feelings, it is no surprise that even the most easygoing of parents finds it unnerving to help with math. Sometimes tutoring can help.

Why kids shut down

Children who struggle with math often “shut down” in math class to avoid painful feelings and defeat. They have trouble seeing the meaningfulness of solving abstract problems so removed from their real life. They have not lived long enough to develop an appreciation for the beauty of the logic in math. So it becomes a vicious cycle of poor performance, shutting down, failure of new material to get anchored, etc.

If your child is caught in the cycle, he may need to feel safe before he will open up. A warm, friendly environment is essential for improvement in math. Instead of diving right into solving problems or rehearsing math facts, a good tutor will take time to build trust with your student. The tutor will



explain why investing effort into math is worthwhile. If this sounds touchy-feely ("I want my child to PERFORM better in math, not necessarily FEEL better about it,") be assured that addressing anxiety and safety is a critical step toward improved performance and grades.

Eight strategies to build math confidence

While tutoring sessions are tailored to meet the needs of each individual student, the following strategies are always woven into my work. They may be used as a framework for discussions with a math tutor or teacher.

- Engage students in a working relationship. Most students need an answer to "Why bother with math?" The objective in tutoring is not to pour into the student all the formulas, theorems, and math expertise of the tutor. Better performance in math is more often a result of seeds planted in tutoring, hard work, and a strong relationship with the tutor.

- Explore strengths and obstacles to learning. Frequently, math teachers have suggestions for how a student may improve. Chase's teacher reported his tendency to drift off during lecture time and his inability to get started on assigned work. Tutoring sessions will reveal a student's learning style (such as visual or auditory), his impairments (never mastered math facts, bad note taking, disorganized), and his strengths (abstract thinker, good at mental math, etc.).

- Set them up for success. When possible, students should be given choices. Rather than articulating immediately how a math problem should be approached, students may be asked, "What math operation could be applied here?" It becomes deeply satisfying for them when they can truly own their success. This is different than being the submissive recipient of a tutor's help.

- Improve math vocabulary. Math teachers are sometimes pressured to squeeze a math lesson into a half hour, leaving little time for vocabulary instruction. However, students perform better

when they understand terms such as product, quotient, equivalent fraction, average, etc.

- Provide tools to seek help. Vocabulary for math is a valuable tool for soliciting help and answers quickly and effectively from teachers and textbooks. When vocabulary is weak, a student may say to the teacher, "I don't know what to do with these fraction thing-ies," whereas a developed vocabulary helps him express, "I keep forgetting how to find a common denominator."

- Explore self-image. With repeated failure in math, students may become vulnerable to negative "self-talk." They may tell themselves, "I'm just dumb" or "My teacher thinks I'm bad at math."

Chase's negative catch phrase was "I've NEVER been good at math." Parents may unwittingly reinforce such negativity when they say "I was never good at math, either." Instead, give productive encouragement such as: "Nobody is perfect, a math grade does not reflect intelligence, and math can be learned in different ways."

- Restructure counter-productive self-talk. Taylor's reading comprehension skills were unfortunately weak for word problems. However, the negative "I'm horrible at word problems!" became "Reading comprehension is tricky for me, so I have to draw pictures to get what the problem is asking." If a student's memory is poor for recalling the rules about adding decimals, "I'll never remember all this!" can become "Until I master adding decimals, I'll refer to my notes." Even subtle shifts in thought patterns re-shape math attitudes.

- Acknowledge that there is no substitute for hard work. If there is one mantra my students hear more than any other in tutoring, it is this one: There is just no substitute! Conquering math angst is an honorable quest and never a waste of time.

By the way, Chase won a math achievement award at school last month, and Taylor has a solid A-in the subject!

Michele Ranard is an academic tutor/counselor. She has two children, a master's degree in counseling, and a blog at cheekychicmama.com.

Few students brag they cannot read, yet there is little stigma attached to "I can't do math."

agreement such as: "Nobody is perfect, a math grade does not reflect intelligence, and math can be learned in different ways."

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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Food labels & you

Are you a label reader? If you are, you're in good company. A survey by the American Dietetic Association found that nearly 62 percent of grocery shoppers read the nutrition facts panel.

What are they looking for? The top five items shoppers are interested in are calories, total fat, calories from fat, and sugar and sodium levels, according to a recent report from the NPD Group's Dieting Monitor.

The nutrients shoppers are trying to avoid? Number one is fat, followed by sugars, cholesterol, sodium and trans fats. The Dieting Monitor also identified the nutrients people are trying to maximize: whole grains, fiber, calcium, vitamin C and protein. Consumers are also seeking out foods with a short list of recognizable ingredients with minimal processing, according to the Natural Marketing Institute.

Mistakes parents make

Two terms on the front of a package could sabotage weight management efforts: "Low fat" and "organic." Both are linked to overeating. The term "low fat" can lead people to infer that a food has fewer calories. And consumers even associate the term "organic" with low calories, according to a 2010 study in the journal "Judgment and Decision Making." In the study, college students who read labels for organic Oreo cookies described them as having fewer calories than the conventional Oreos. They also thought the organic cookies could be eaten more often than the non-organic ones.

Bonnie Taub-Dix, a dietitian from



Q: Where do food companies come up with these portion sizes? A pizza clearly meant for one was actually labeled "two servings."

A: Serving sizes were developed by the Food and Drug Administration based on portions consumers supposedly eat. There is a movement to make serving sizes more realistic as part of food labeling reform.

New York, and author of "Read It Before You Eat It: How to Decode Food Labels and Make the Healthiest Choice Every Time," points to three other common mistakes:

- Only checking calories without looking at the nutrient value: A 150-calorie pack of jelly beans does not compare to a 150-calorie yogurt. Yogurt is rich in calcium, protein and a medley of other vitamins and min-

dients; add ice cubes (make ice cubes with some whole pomegranate seeds in them for a festive touch).

*One medium pomegranate (about 9 ounces) yields 1/2 cup juice

NUTRITION FACTS: 70 calories, 18 grams carbohydrate, 0 grams fat, cholesterol and fiber, 1 gram protein, 10 milligrams sodium, 40 percent DV vitamin C.

Adapted from pomegranates.org/recipes

erals, while jelly beans are nearly pure sugar.

- Not looking at the serving size: Remember to multiply every number on the package by the number of servings in each package.

- Being duped by the flashy front of the package: Don't be fooled by a word like "natural." Flip that box over to see what you're really getting.

Getting kids started

Taub-Dix, a mother of three sons, says children can start to scan a label with your help as soon as they know what numbers look like and represent.

What foods are best to start with? Little ones can look at breakfast cereals and milk. For example, show milk's calcium and protein levels. Older kids can critique energy bars and note how some are higher in sugar and/or fat with little fiber or protein value.

In addition to becoming nutrition smart, children who read food labels gain the benefit of improving their reading and math skills. Try this: If your kids love a breakfast cereal that's high in sugar — say 13 grams — combine it with one that's low in sugar — one gram. Together you can do the math and bring the sugar down to seven grams per serving.

Christine M. Palumbo is a Naperville-based registered dietitian and mother of three. There's nothing more exciting to her than curling up with a good food label and ingredient list. She can be reached at (630) 369-8495 or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.

Pomegranate Pink Jade

Fresh pomegranate juice turns into a simple spritzer. You can mix the juices up to a day ahead (store it sealed in the refrigerator) but don't add the sparkling water until just before serving.

Makes one serving

INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup pomegranate juice (purchased or freshly squeezed)*
1/4 cup orange juice
1/4 cup sparkling water

Ice cubes

3 tablespoons vodka (optional, for adults only)

INSTRUCTIONS: In a large glass (pitcher for six servings), mix pomegranate juice and remaining ingre-

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New beginning

Families dealing with the loss of a loved one can find help in Queens



BY ALLISON PLITT

For a family grieving over the loss of a loved one, ringing in the new year can signal a time of renewal. But for those still grappling with the emotions of having celebrated the holidays without a family member, two organizations in Queens offer bereavement assistance to help manage that lingering sense of sorrow.

St. Adalbert Church

Although St. Adalbert in Elmhurst is a Catholic Church, people of any faith are welcome to attend the ministry's bereavement groups.

The bereavement sessions at St. Adalbert's are for both children and adults and are broken down into five specialized support groups based on age and circumstance of

death. The meetings are held once a month at the church.

"When a death happens in the family—whether it be a sibling, parent or grandparent—everybody in the family is grieving in their own way," Eileen Pesek, the director of bereavement ministry for the last 26 years, explained. "It's almost like a mobile over a baby's crib. When you take one of the figures off, it's unbalanced and they have to become a new family. It really just changes the dynamics of the family forever. They will never be the same family again. It might make them more sensitive to each other."

When a parent dies, the more a child is included in the grieving process, the less frightening it is to him.

"That's why if children want to go to a funeral or a memorial service,

it's a good idea," said Pesek. "They see people crying, but they understand why."

According to Pesek, when a parent dies, children usually ask three questions: "Did I cause it?"; "Is it going to happen to me?"; and "Who's going to take care of me?"

She has found that kids of all ages, including teenagers, tend to blame themselves.

"They have magical thinking. They think that if they had a disagreement with that person or in their mind they thought badly of that person and then the person died, that their magical thinking caused the death."

In the event of a death of a child, Pesek recommends that parents attend a bereaved parents support group.

"Nobody understands the loss



"Death changes the dynamics of the family forever. They will never be the same family again. It might make them more sensitive to each other."

of a child compared to other bereaved parents. Other people say they know, but they don't know. That's a light in a time

of darkness for the parents. They see other people who've lost their child, and they're moving forward in their grief, and they're able to enter back into life again, able to smile again, able to talk. It does offer them a lot of hope that just maybe I'll be able to do that, too."

Pesek also advises that parents appoint a shepherd, or a trusted person who will be emotionally available to the other children while the parents deal with their own grief.

"Parents are in a very fragile state when a child dies. [It would be helpful] if they could ask someone, 'You know, I'm fragile, I'm not myself. Can you be especially attentive to my children if they want to talk about it?'" She believes that parents must deal with their own grief as a role model for their children. After all, if a family does not confront each other's emotions and communicate each other's anguish to one another, the members of the family will never be able to heal themselves.

"My motto is, 'Grief does not go away. It will wait and demand your attention.'"

The Hospice Care Network

The Hospice Care Network in Fresh Meadows offers a vast network of bereavement support services to the community, including phone counseling, professional referrals, educational seminars, and consultations to civic organizations in crisis settings.

Support group counseling is moderated by licensed social workers and mental health workers. While participants in the support groups are required to pay a minimal fee, individual therapy is free of charge to any member of the community.

"Each person grieves differently, and as many individuals as there are, that is how many ways there are to grieve," said Barbara McGuire, a bereavement counselor at the network, who encourages group therapy, but also believes in individual counseling. "Healing is also individualized and specific to that person and how they cope."

McGuire said that the network offers support groups for both children and adults, yet the therapeutic approaches within each group are different.

"We started the children's bereavement program, because we recognize that they have unique needs," she explained. "It gives children a safe place to be with their peers who have gone through something similar. We do storytelling, art, creative writing, puppetry and game-playing. It's all done in a multi-therapeutic mode. With adults, it's more geared towards education and conversation."

Most importantly, McGuire says, grief counseling has taught people how to ask for help outside of their families.

"The stigma of receiving support isn't as strong as it was years ago, but I do think it's good for people to know that seeking help is a good way to go through this," she observed. "People often say 'time heals,' but it's what we do with that time that's more important. It's important for people to know that it's OK to seek support in this time. Their pain and heartache cannot be dissipated but going through the journey with someone helps to make it a little less lonely and a little less difficult."

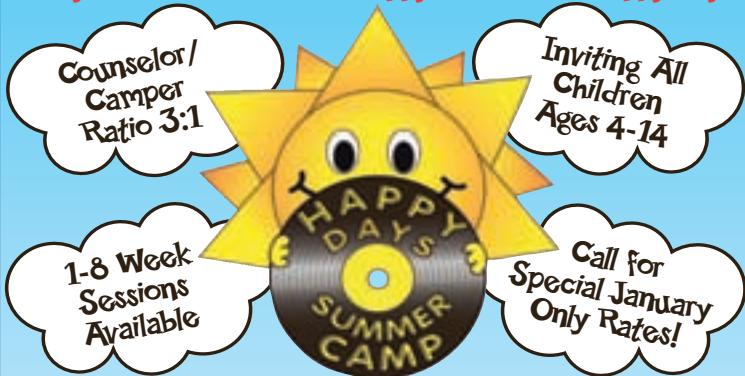
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St. Adalbert Church [52-29 83rd St. in Elmhurst, (718) 639-0212], ask for Eileen Pesek, Director of Bereavement Ministry.

Hospice Care Network [59-07 175th Pl. in Fresh Meadows, (516) 832-7100], ask for the Bereavement Department.

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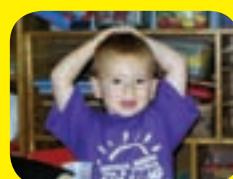
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My girl's getting fat!

Dear Twins,

I know this sounds bad, but my daughter is 18 and is getting really fat. Over the holidays she ate everything in sight. I'm her dad, and a little overweight myself, but heck, I'm not looking to find a young male suitor. She gets mad and storms out if I say anything to her. What should I do?

— *The fat family*

Jacqueline says: Your daughter is at a sensitive age — the way she looks is very important to her. And I'm sure she is aware of her eating. Perhaps you should work another angle, like gently talking to her about what might be going on in her life that is causing her to dull her feelings with food. For you to tell her she's fat is only adding salt to the wound. Also, inspire her to join the gym by you doing it first. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Kerry says: I agree with Jackie. You already spoke to her about it, so there's nothing more to say. What you should do is set the example, especially since you have a weight problem, too. Doing something about it for yourself will show her that you're not a hypocrite and there are no double standards. More important, however, if she sees good results with you, this will encourage her to follow suit. Being a good role model is far more effective than badgering her to change.

• • •

Dear Twins,

At a recent PTA meeting, our daughter's teacher was speaking to all the parents in her classroom in an open discussion. It was very interesting and going very well until she said to one set of parents, "Well, at least your son and the rest of the class aren't having the same problems as Lisa M _____," who just happens to be OUR daughter. We were so embarrassed that we just walked out. Should we report her to the principal, or just let it go? — *Humiliated*

Jacqueline says: In most cases I would say talk to the teacher first



and explain how you felt and give her a chance to explain. In this case, she was completely unprofessional and damaging. I would report the incident to the principal immediately.

Kerry says: I disagree with Jackie. The reason being, I find it even more disconcerting that your daughter is having problems to begin with! While the teacher was totally and completely out of line — and you should mention that you wished she had come to you first instead of announcing it — nonetheless, I think it's much more important getting to the bottom of what's going on with your daughter. I suggest that you leave communication wide open with this woman, as you will need to continue conversing with her until your daughter's problems are resolved.

• • •

Dear Twins,

Our 16-year-old son is an excellent athlete, and has played soccer on championship teams for the last two years, but his grades have paid a price for it. His father and I finally told him that he had to maintain A and B averages in all his subjects, or we were going to pull him off the soccer team. So when his report card came, he had some As and Bs, but he had two Cs and one D. We don't want to go back on our word, but if we pull him off the team now, they probably won't win the championship this year. We feel like we're letting the whole team down! What should we do? — *Waivering*

Kerry says: You and your husband should sit down with your son and tell him your exact sentiments. Tell him you made a deal, he broke it, and

work out with him a fair agreement between the three of you. Pulling him off the team isn't going to motivate him to work any harder at school and will only leave resentment. If you act fair and reasonable and treat him like an adult, I believe he will not only appreciate you both, but will come up with a fair solution and will stick to it. Give him a chance.

Jacqueline says: I would agree that you should not go back on your word, however, this punishment will not only affect your son, but all those on the team who have worked hard all season to get this shot at the championship. Kerry is spot on; let your son decide on an appropriate punishment that you all agree upon. You will have done right by the team, without backing down on your threat of a consequence for his actions.

• • •

Dear Twins,

My husband works full-time, and I've recently had to go back to work, as finances have become very strained. We have a 4-year-old daughter who is very shy and tiny for her age. We had to put her into a daycare program, and she is just terrified every day to go there! She starts to vomit usually just as we arrive, and the ladies who run it tell me that she usually vomits at least one more time in the morning, and won't play with anyone. I know they are nice to her, as a neighbor's child goes there, and he loves it. I have to keep working, so what am I to do? She is breaking my heart. — *Broken*

Kerry says: It might just be a matter of time that she needs in order to adjust to not having mommy around all day to care for her. I suggest you get her used to being around other people, by making play dates with other children or taking her to the park to play with the other kids. You can also opt to have a nanny care for her instead of placing her in daycare.

Jacqueline says: Take the plunge and bring her to another daycare center. She doesn't like where she's going now, and her reaction to it may have more to do with that particular program than just separation anxiety from her mother. You may just be pleasantly surprised when she actually can't wait to go to daycare.

Jacqueline and Kerry Donelli, twin sisters, are multi-award winning filmmakers. They are currently getting their Masters in Mental Health and have a radio show on WBCR-AM also called, "Twice the Advice" — where one twin gives advice and, often, the other completely disagrees! Please e-mail them at TwiceTheAdvice2@gmail.com.

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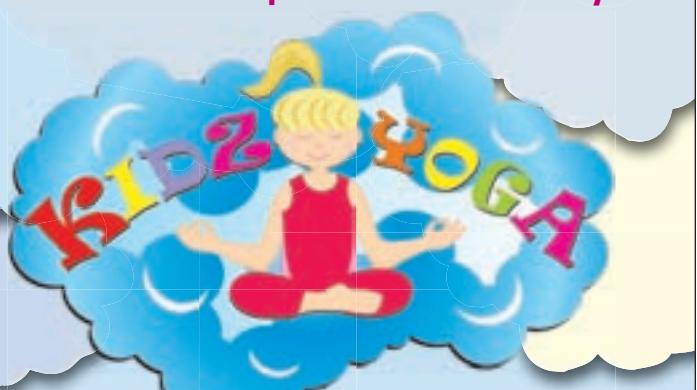
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10 reasons to goof off

Studies confirm kids need more free-play time

BY MICHELE RANARD, M.ED.

With school in full swing, homework, studying, and a steady diet of rigidly structured activities are standard fare for many kids. Soccer, ballet, and piano broaden the horizon and set the stage for personal growth, but over-scheduling our children to beef up their competitiveness on college resumes has a downside.

While academics, lessons, and organized sports are important, kids need goof-off time, too. Studies show that in order to remain healthy, children of all ages need plenty of unstructured playtime.

Playtime is critical to the emotional, social and cognitive health

of our children, according to Dr. Stuart Brown, clinical researcher and author of "Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul" (Avery, 2009). He studied the play behavior of animals and more than 6,000 people from all walks of life — from serial killers to Nobel Prize winners — and found that everyone needs to let loose and play.

Everyone understands that play is pleasurable and a good distraction from stress, but studies show that play is also a biological process crucial to our survival. In rats, play reduces impulsivity — which is similar to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in humans. We are simply hard-wired to play.

Unfortunately, recess and physical education classes are disappearing from schools at a time when kids need unstructured free-play more than ever.

So, what constitutes play? Brown says it is much more than games and sports — play involves books, music, art, jokes, movies, drama and daydreaming. It is part of our daily lives and is critical to us feeling fulfilled as happy, successful human beings.

Here are 10 important reasons to create more time for play:

Happier kids: Sometimes we trivialize play or fail to see its usefulness. But it's more than fun. In addition to improving emotional health, it serves a biological pur-



Play is part of our daily lives and is critical to us feeling fulfilled as happy, successful human beings.

pose. When social mammals, such as rats and monkeys, are deprived of rough-and-tumble play, they enter adulthood emotionally fragile. Play helps them distinguish friend from foe, handle stress better, and form better skills with which to mate properly.

Social competence is enhanced: Play teaches people to master and adapt to changing circumstances. Even dealing with or avoiding being excluded from games like tag or dodgeball are helpful social skills to learn.

It may lessen the symptoms of mild ADHD: Parents of children with ADHD should make time for them to run around outside before school, and be sure that recess is never taken away as a punishment for poor behavior, says Dr. Laura Honos-Webb, author of "The Gift of ADHD" (2005). She says it is important to remember that being out and active in nature can act as medicine for the child.

It burns calories: Trends for childhood obesity are staggering. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the prevalence of childhood obesity for 6- to 11-year-olds has increased from 6.5 percent from 1976 to 1980, to 17 percent from 2003 to 2006. Obese kids have increased risk for cardiovascular disease, asthma, sleep apnea, and Type 2 diabetes.

The idea is not to raise rigid, humor-less adults: Play deficiencies can lead to closed-mindedness, inflexibility and unhappiness, according to Brown. Lifelong play is part of the antidote, and may even prevent depression. Play is not just a trivial escape — it provides a vehicle for learning to problem solve.

Rough-and-tumble play is developmentally critical: We knew it was helpful to development, but Dr. Brown's research revealed that for young homicidal males and drunk drivers, rough-and-tumble play was missing from their childhoods.

Stronger academic performance: This may be especially relevant for boys. Successful peer interaction at recess is an excellent predictor of success on standardized tests, according to Anthony Pellegrini, an educational psychology professor at the University of Minnesota, and author of "Recess" (2005). When boys establish competence on the playground, they also do better in the classroom and pay attention better.

Play keeps curiosity and wonder alive: Kids today spend 50 percent less time outside than they did just 20 years ago. The lure of animation, video games, and online networking is so tempting and culturally reinforced that the beauty of nature and fresh air is often overlooked.

Successful people play a lot: Playfulness sparks creativity and innovation. Analysis of the play histories of successful adults revealed that they all had a rich play life.

It is honorable: Play is not just a mindless activity — it is active learning.

"From an evolutionary perspective," says Brown, "the smarter the animal, the more they play ... it gets us in touch with our core selves and the joy of life."

Michele Ranard has a husband, two children, and a master's degree in counseling. She is passionate about helping parents and children lead richer lives.



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January 2011 • QUEENS FAMILY 17

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BY SENSEI VLAD DAVYDOV

What ever happened to exercising?

Kids would rather be in front of a computer or TV screen than be outside, and will usually have an excuse for not working out, like, "It's too hard," "It's boring," or "I hate sweating."

But, without physical activity, they can become obese, easily tired, anti-social and depressed. It is extremely important that you encourage your child to stay off the computer and TV screens, and get outside and exercise. Alternatively, there are plenty of indoor activities he can do on a weekly basis, such as martial arts. So get your child active today.

What can martial arts do for my child?

There are many benefits martial arts can offer your child, including helping him with self-discipline. Karate classes teach kids dedication, perseverance and self-dependence, which transfers over to school, homework and other sports and activities. Before you know it, he'll be doing his homework without being told, finding answers to hard questions without asking for help, and being helpful at home and in the classroom.

Martial arts, and being active in general, will also help sharpen your child's memory. Kids need to practice and memorize their martial arts moves. The more they work on learning and memorizing their moves, the more it will get easier to remember dates for exams and keywords and information from reading materials — ultimately leading to higher grades.

Karate highly values respect toward each other and elders. Students respect their instructor, their classmates and the equipment by not interrupting while the instructor is talking, bowing to each other and the instructor, and helping to clean up after practice. From this, kids learn to respect their parents, teachers and other adults with a different type of tonality and maturity. They start to realize that interrupting a conversation is rude, talking back is



wrong, and helping out is great and very much appreciated.

Is karate good for those with ADHD?

Yes, it is. Impatience, lack of focus, difficulty controlling behavior — all signs of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) — can't be cured by karate, but can be curbed. A new, fun, challenging activity turns on kids' attention — they are unconsciously required to focus and pay attention. Martial arts helps kids become more active and aware of their surroundings. They also learn to control themselves and their actions, think before they attempt to do something, and pay attention.

Exercising is necessary to ensure children are healthy and happy. All changes happen in time. For some children, it just takes more time than others.

Sensei Vlad Davydov is the owner of AmeriKick Martial Arts in Staten Island. He is a former head instructor of two martial arts studios and is a second dan Kenpo Karate black belt. He has taught more than 1,000 students and has won a 2009 International Excellent Instructor Achievement Award, as well as a 2005 Heisman Award.

AmeriKick Martial Arts [341 A Sand Lane in Staten Island, (718) 524-0244]. Currently offering a two-for-one special for the month. For more information, you can visit www.AmeriKickSI.com.

Winter Activities

DIRECTORY

Christy's Gymnastics

150-50 14th Road, Whitestone
718-767-0123 or www.christysgymnastics.com

Christy's Gymnastics is a full hour-and-a-half of fun with an hour of supervised, organized gymnastic games and activities, and 30 minutes in the party area! The party includes invitations, two hostesses/instructors, a promotional gym goody bag to all participants, a gold medal for the birthday child, all paper goods, pizza, soda or juice, rock climbing wall, and a complimentary pot of coffee.

Please call for more information or to book your party.

Great Neck Arts Center

113 Middle Neck Road
516.829.2570 or www.greatneckarts.org

Great Neck Arts Center has been growing artists since 1993. GNAC, proudly serving Queens and Nassau County, offers visual and performing arts classes to children & adults of all ages and levels. We offer Mommy & Me classes, Vacation Programs and Birthday Parties too.

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Also, select classes will focus on an animal art project about saving wildlife and wild places. These classes will culminate with an art show featuring each child's work at the Bronx Zoo this spring. For more details go to www.greatneckarts.org. Check out our complete course guide online.

In Motion

at "A New Me"- Speech & Language

Pathology

25-02 Francis Lewis Blvd Whitestone, NY, (347) 234-0677 Website: www.InMotionGroups.com
Email: InMotionGps@yahoo.com

Creative self-expression through music, movement and play is imperative for the physical, emotional, communicative, social and cognitive development in children. Being able to offer joy through the exploration of music, movement and play provides children with an opportunity to safely express their feelings in a creative way and develop positive and meaningful relationships, which enhances their childhood. In Motion offers groups and classes that are facilitated by a Board-Certified Dance/Movement Psychotherapist and New York State Licensed Creative Arts Therapist. There are groups and classes for all children which run throughout the entire year, including summers. Mommy and Me, for newborns to 4 years old, and Creative Movement Classes for 3 to 5 years old are offered to all children. For special needs children, there are several classes, including: Movement/Play-Based Social Groups for children 3 years and older, as well as — Individual, Dyad (two children), Sibling, Parent(s) and Child Sessions. Social groups are kept small to accommodate the needs of each child. A variety of gross motor play, movement exploration, rhythmic interaction, social games, , sensory stimulation and relaxation activities are utilized to work on improving social interaction skills and separation anxiety, and to increase self-expression, focus, impulse control, body and self-awareness, eye contact, and self-esteem — just to name a

few — all while having fun playing with friends. Call and inquire about the trial.

Kent Prep

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718 423-5757 or www.kentprep.com

Looking for a program that will evaluate your child's qualifications for the Gifted and Talented Program? KENT Prep is an entrance exam specialist with over 20 years of educational consulting service in NYC for kindergarten to college bound students. Our Gifted & Talented Open Mock Test includes evaluating your child through personal interview and written exam. Evaluations are available by appointment only. Please call for an appointment.

Kidz Yoga

27-14 23rd Avenue, Astoria
347-455-3661 or www.kidzyoga.com

Kidz Yoga is designed to help young people counter pressures, release stress, pay attention to how they feel, and build focus and concentration. Children are learning techniques to help their bodies become stronger, healthier, and more relaxed. Starting a healthy lifestyle early will help benefit their future. We also offer a variety of birthday parties, tutoring, Mommy, Music & Me classes, Capoeira, Zumba, and various adult classes! Come see our beautiful, brand new facility!!

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718-350-1535 or www.superkickers.com

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their child, therefore they plan on giving their child only the very best. The last thing you need is for your child to become inactive that is why SUPER KICKERS invites you and your child to be a part of our family and participate in our Winter Soccer Program. SUPER KICKERS is a serious company that focuses on your child's physical and mental health. We work together with the parents to develop a fun class for the kids. Our classes explore the best of soccer in a non - competitive environment. We work with children from 18 months to 14 years old, in age appropriate classes, and you don't have to pay much to be a part of our wonderful program. We run an inexpensive, high-quality program. Our coaches are passionate about children and soccer and are trained to teach your child the skills they need to become SUPER KICKERS!!! We also do Birthday parties, after school and private classes in your neighborhood for your convenience.

Triumph Gymnastics Center

79-41 Cooper Avenue, Glendale
718-417-1216

Triumph Gymnastics Center notes that gymnastics is a wonderful way to build confidence and raise self-esteem, while also building strength and endurance. The facility boasts over 5,000 square feet of gym space packed with equipment including bars, trampolines, springfloors, rings, beam, vault and pommel horses. They have recently completed a brand new spring floor. Let the staff of T.G.C. help your children realize their full gymnastics potential.

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She works, he doesn't

When moms go to the office, will the dads keep the home fires burning?

BY CANDI SPARKS

Although any employee is grateful to have a job in this economy, a relationship can suffer when a husband loses his job and his wife becomes the household's primary breadwinner. This is especially true when he believes that his purpose is to provide for his family. Unfortunately, among the couples having to switch roles, clinging to these traditional ideas of family life can lead to their "love bank" going bankrupt during the role reversal.

Women are usually the keepers of the household budget. When the additional pressure of job security is also a concern, they are much more vulnerable to the ramifications of having a bad day at work. A husband who stays at home may help take care of the kids, but may expect his wife to still cook dinner, clean the house and do laundry after coming home from work. On the other hand, the wife may expect that her husband would do those chores while at home — and it can hurt her when her husband refuses.

"I wish I had enough money to pay someone else to do the housework — spouse or otherwise," says Susan,



who lives in Manhattan. "It's hard to find a man who wants to be kept at home with a vacuum and a duster in his hands."

Donald, who makes less money than his wife, doesn't mind the monetary imbalance, and still pays his share of the bills and cooks. But, the Staten Island-based freelance computer repairman prefers that his wife do the housework.

"Most men feel that they can help out and do chores once in awhile," he said, while his wife was not in the room. "But housework is really a woman's job. They are genetically programmed for these tasks."

Lynn, a working mother who lives in Whitestone, is the sole breadwinner in her home — and the housekeeper.

"For me, the upside is that [my

A husband who stays at home may help take care of the kids, but may expect his wife to still cook dinner, clean the house and do laundry after coming home from work.

husband] Bill gets to spend more time with [our son] Matthew, during the day and after school," she says, happy in the belief that Bill is developing a strong emotional bond with Matthew. But, their situation is not without problems — the problems are just simply not financial. Bill gets stressed about his job situation and his role in the marital relationship. He helps with Matthew's homework, doctor visits and recreation, but will not help with household chores that do not involve Matthew. He won't pick up his own dry cleaning, cook, or clean.

Lynn also finds it difficult when Bill decides that he needs to do "guy stuff" with his friends on the weekends. She admits she can't wait for him to find a job, so he can get out of the house and return to being the man she married.

When their roles become reversed and their wives are supporting the families, some men can feel emasculated — particularly when they are expected to help with chores, or they feel they are not getting the attention they think they deserve when their wives come home from work.

"In these tough economic times, most couples are simply trying to make it all work, regardless of the added social pressures of holding new or old roles in their domestic lives," says John Gray, relationship expert and author of "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus."

"You both need to be more sensitive and accommodating to each other's needs. You've built a life and a family together. Your shared future at every point is more important and certainly more lasting than any daily pressures you feel."

Promises to help out and be more supportive are not as important as actually doing what is needed to improve the family's situation.

"Actions speak louder than words. My family is pulling together to work things out until the economy gets better," says Anne, a working mother in Queens.

She makes what she calls "good money" as a medical assistant. But, she says, it wasn't enough to support the family's lifestyle when her husband Kurt lost his job 18 months ago. Her family has found ways to dramatically cut back on spending. When he couldn't find work after several months, Kurt decided to return to school. Their young children needed to go to daycare, so Kurt now stays at home with the children during the day and goes to school at night.

Anne had been working at three different sites but had to cut back her hours, because she felt she was missing her rapidly growing children's daily progress, and the company of her spouse. So the family sold the car and cut out cable TV and other luxuries. Currently, their condo is on the market, but they haven't yet found a buyer.

Bronx resident Lydia is the primary breadwinner in her household. Her long-time spouse works on a part-time basis in a field that he enjoys. He is openly supportive of his wife's career on a cognitive level, but on a primal level, he doesn't seem to understand why she is not more motivated to do more cooking and cleaning in the house. They joke about their expectations of one another — her husband pounding his chest while yelling, "I'm a man," while Lydia copies him and says, "I need a wife."

We should remember the victories women have made in the business world and offer them real support when they are ready, able and willing to step up and provide for their families. Be glad for those who can pinch hit, financially, because we don't know how many innings the downturn will last. But one thing is certain: Everyone will be a lot happier when this job market rebounds. Hopefully it will — and can — end the war between finance and romance.

Candi Sparks is the author of the "Can I Have Some Money?" book series. You can follow her on Twitter and Facebook as Candi Sparks (writer).

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SCIENCE MATTERS

MARGARET HONEY

The ever-changing wonders of science

The history of science is the story of how ideas travel. Science is not just a litany of facts and formulas. It is an ever-evolving story, with new characters and subplots adding complexities at every turn.

Every era of discovery leaves a legacy of scholarship that inspires and challenges successive generations. Nicolaus Copernicus, who first asserted that the sun is the center of our universe, is regarded as one of the founders of modern astronomy. But Copernicus did not develop his theory in a vacuum. He was not only influenced by the other great Renaissance scholars of his time, but he also acknowledged his indebtedness to the great minds who came before him, whose texts

he consulted, and whose experiments laid a foundation for his own work.

Among those who came before him was al-Battani, whose work Copernicus cited in his landmark book, "On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres." Al-Battani, a ninth-century astronomer who worked most of his life in Antioch and Syria, catalogued 849 stars and determined the solar year as being 365 days, five hours, 46 minutes, 24 seconds. Similarly, his breakthroughs were facilitated through his study of the ancient civilizations that preceded him — the Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians, among others. This thread of discovery passes through all ages and civilizations.

Scientific discovery happens on a

continuum. Inventions of the Middle Ages paved the way for the Industrial Revolution. And the mobile devices we are becoming more and more dependent upon are made possible by algorithms that were first proposed by mathematicians centuries ago. As long as humans possess an innate curiosity about the world, there will always be advancement and new ideas.

In our modern age, science is truly a global enterprise. New technologies and societies that are more interconnected than ever provide an environment in which innovation flourishes, and the potential to improve our world is limitless. The stories of scientific achievement are an encouragement to all of us.

That is why science centers like the New York Hall of Science present exhibitions and programs that not only explain scientific concepts, but also tell the stories of the great men and women who made these important advancements. At the Hall of Science, your family can play miniature golf to learn about rocketry, and learn geometry from catapults. The exhibits are accessible to a wide audience, so everyone can understand that revolutionary scientific breakthroughs are made possible because scholars are curious about the way the world works.

A quest for understanding leads to a theory, and a series of experiments designed to test that theory. Ultimately, a new way of seeing the world emerges, and new theories develop in that context.

So, the next time a child asks you to explain something, don't just give him the facts. Tell him the story. The information is all around, and the stories are waiting to inspire.

Margaret Honey is President and CEO of the New York Hall of Science [47-01 111th St. near 47th Avenue in Corona, (718) 699-0005], where the U.S. debut of 1,001 Inventions is currently on view. The exhibition tells the story of the scientific legacy of the Middle Ages, and its influence on scholars of the Renaissance.



The 1,001 Inventions exhibit at the New York Hall of Science.

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The parochial school education

Your guide to getting the most out of a Catholic school

Every child is a unique gift from God. Similarly, while all Catholic schools share a common mission as part of the Church's educational ministry, every Catholic school is a unique community.

As a parent or guardian, one of your most important responsibilities is to choose a school that "fits" your child's personality and learning needs, as well as your family's practical needs and educational priorities.

In electing to send your child to a Catholic school, you have already made some very important choices. Most importantly, you have chosen to blend your child's academic and spiritual development in accordance with the educational mission and ministry of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.

A vital premise underlying that mission is that every child has

strengths, talents, and interests to be encouraged and developed. Equally important is the commitment to an educational approach that nurtures "the whole child" in an environment of spiritual development, academic excellence, moral values, respect and safety. Catholic schools provide that environment, treating each child as a special "gift" that will flourish with individual care and attention.

Keep in mind that tuition costs do vary from school to school. While financial assistance is often available, it is important to consider how much of your family's budget will be dedicated to education. Remember to consider other costs such as supplies, school uniforms and fundraising requirements.

All Catholic schools provide an opportunity for children to grow

in their faith and develop personal spirituality. How does your family practice the faith, and what do you want the school's role to be in the spiritual growth and development of your child? What opportunities does the school provide for students to learn about their faith? What opportunities do students have to pray and to receive the sacraments? What opportunities do students have to be involved in Christian service? What is the relationship between the school and the parish? What values does your family hold that you want the school to reinforce? What type of educational philosophy and priorities does the school possess? How does the school involve families?

If your child has any special educational needs, you'll want to make sure that any school you consider has the necessary resources to meet

those special needs.

Once you have considered your family's practical and philosophical needs, you should develop a list of schools that "qualify" and have a solid idea of the values and special services your family requires.

Depending on how many schools "qualify," you may want to narrow your list down to a few "target" schools that you will investigate and evaluate more thoroughly.

Choosing the right school can be a big project, so let's simplify it by starting with the basics. That means deciding what your family's values and priorities are when it comes to education. There are two main areas to consider: practical issues and philosophical issues.

The practical issues are things like location and cost. The philosophical

Continued on page 26

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Registration

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Continued from page 24

issues are value oriented, such as opportunities to grow in faith, strong academic programs, and the overall school climate.

Some simple things to look for that can help you build your foundation based on practical and philosophical considerations include choosing a school that is located conveniently near either your home or work. While not all parish elementary schools require the family to be a registered member of the parish, most Catholic families do send their children to their parish school.

Some areas to explore include:

- What are the principal's priorities and goals for students?
- What goals do teachers have for their students?
- How does the principal interact with teachers, students and parents?
- What is the principal's educational philosophy? Is he or she knowledgeable about current educational practices and trends?
- Does the principal seem open to questions, and are the responses direct

and empathetic?

- How does the school communicate with its families? How often?
- Ask for any newsletters or calendars that the school distributes to families. These will help you get an idea of what types of activities are held throughout the year.
- What does the school/principal view as the parents' role in education?
- What are the teachers' qualifications? Do any teachers specialize in teaching particular subjects or providing particular services?
- What indicators of parent satisfaction does the school have? What proportion of parents express satisfaction with the school?
- There are several ways that you can get valuable information about your "target" schools:
- To get a general introduction to the school, schedule a meeting with the school's principal.
- To learn how the school community works on a daily basis, you'll want to visit classrooms and talk with teachers.
- To get a parent's perspective, talk to other parents who have children in the school.
- What is the registration and enrollment procedure? Are there any special requirements?

• How many students are enrolled in the school?

- How many children are in each classroom? What is the ratio of classroom teachers to students?
- Does the school offer before- and after-school care programs?
- Is transportation available for students who need to go to an off-site before- and after-care program?
- What is the school's behavior code? How are disciplinary problems handled? Ask for a copy of the current parent handbook.
- Are parents welcome to visit their children's classrooms? Is an appointment needed?
- What opportunities do parents have to become involved in the school? How much volunteer time is asked or required of parents?
- How do parents interact with each other?
- How do the goals other parents have for their children compare with yours?
- Are there any financial requirements beyond tuition?

Other questions to ask include:

- What are the main concepts, skills, and values that will be taught at each grade?
- What proportion of students com-

plete the curriculum successfully?

- How is religion integrated into other subjects and woven into school life?
- How often are textbooks reviewed and updated?
- What role does technology play in the students' learning? Is there a computer lab? A science lab for older students?
- Are art and music treated as important subjects in the curriculum?
- Are there programs and services for children with special needs, both for students who are academically talented and for students who have difficulty learning?
- How do teachers address students' individual learning styles?
- What extracurricular programs (i.e. scouts, athletics, band, etc.) are available?
- How extensive is the athletic program?
- Does the instructional program provide for the interests and needs of your child?
- How does the school foster growth and development in children, regardless of the level at which they begin?

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Everyday battles

Strategies for
being a better
parent to an
ADHD kid

BY CINDY GOLDRICH, ED. M.

Do you feel as if your day never ends and you are constantly on alert? Living with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is not easy for the child with ADHD, the siblings, or the parents. The environment that surrounds the family of a child with ADHD is often full of stress and chaos.

So, how can you, as the parent, stay grounded, alert, and ready to deal with each day's new challenges? It isn't easy, but there are certain steps you can take to make the road a little more smooth and manageable.

Take comfort in the fact that you can cope and thrive by following these guidelines:

Understand ADHD

ADHD is a complex condition. There is so much more to know and truly understand beyond the diagnosis. Most people recognize the main traits of impulsiveness, hyperactivity and inattentiveness, but few realize that having ADHD often involves other character traits, such as impaired sense of time, emotional disregulation, and difficulties with short-term memory, to name just a few. There are also a number of common coexisting conditions that often occur, such as learning disabilities, anxiety and sleep disorders.

Each person's ADHD manifests itself differently, and, as in all areas of life, knowledge is powerful. Knowing what goes along with your child's

ADHD allows you to make decisions based on facts. It is helpful to communicate your needs and that of your child to others who interact with him. You must also be prepared to answer to the naysayers who still profess that ADHD is just an excuse for laziness, poor parenting, and an overly-stimulating society.

Agree on rules

Make sure you and your spouse, or any other significant caretakers, are all in agreement, and working together, regarding how you work with your child. One of the greatest roads to discord and chaos is when a child has different or inconsistent rules and expectations placed upon him. Many children, and especially those with ADHD, will look to test limits. By

having consistent rules and expectations established, there is less room for chaos and confusion.

The most important key is to stay calm and let the rules do the talking. Don't allow yourself to enter into a debate unless it's truly an open issue and you can have a constructive conversation about it. Bear in mind, though, that each child is different and needs different parenting. It can be very tricky to establish and maintain appropriate guidelines and boundaries for your children, especially as they mature. If you are unsure about what reasonable and appropriate structures to put into place, or are having difficulty following through on the plan, outside support and guidance might be helpful.

Have a support system

Surrounding yourself with a support system is not just about having friends and family to spend time with. The support you need is from people with whom you can share some of the true stresses and strains life with your child brings about. Your friend with whom you enjoy shopping may be a fun and interesting person and may truly care about you, however, this same person may not, for now, be the person with whom you want to share the challenges you and your child face. Perhaps she has a child who is your child's age and you want to respect your child's privacy. Or, perhaps, this friend doesn't quite understand your struggles and you are not yet ready, or able, to help her understand.

Find other parents, perhaps through your local support group, or your school's Special Education Teacher Association, with whom you can let your hair down and share war stories. It may relieve stress and give you needed support as well.

Take time for yourself

Notice how your day is spent. Is there any time that you have that is not about everyone else? Realistically, it is neither easy nor practical to have an abundance of time to devote to yourself while you are raising a family. However, there are two solid reasons why you must take care to pay attention to yourself. First, to avoid emotional burnout and physical illness, you

One of the greatest roads to discord and chaos is when a child has different or inconsistent rules and expectations placed upon him.

should take some time to let your mind truly take a break from your daily demands. Just as a person training for a distance run will take walk breaks at intervals, you will recharge your emotional and physical battery if you take true breaks.

Second, it is always important to recognize that you are, at all times, modeling how to be an adult to your child. It is valuable for him to see that you have interests and needs, and that you know how to take care of yourself. Take up knitting, running, or some activity that you do independent of being a parent. Try to find a way to have your spouse, your family, or a friend, watch over your children for a short while.

Have fun

Finally, one of the best ways to fight the fatigue that often goes along with raising a child who has ADHD is to have fun with your child. Set the stage by explaining that this is your special time together to just enjoy being together. Let your child choose an activity that you can agree upon. Keep the time limited to about half an hour when it can be one-on-one time. Don't worry about teaching or accomplishing anything. Just enter his world and be with him. The more you can build upon the positive experience with your child, the more you can build a connection between the two of you that will lead to his trust and growth in the years to come.

Cindy Goldrich, Ed. M., is a parent and teen coach with a specialty in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) coaching. She helps parents learn specific strategies to help their children thrive independently and successfully. She works directly with teens to help them create the structure, time management and goal-setting skills they need. She also lectures and runs a parent coaching workshop series. Visit www.PTScoaching.com for more information.



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It's cold outside!

Keep your
kids safe
when winter
winds howl

BY KATHY SENA

What's not to like about winter when you're a kid? As a first grader, I looked forward to sledding, snowball fights with my brother, and, of course, the cup of hot chocolate that followed. And, according to my mom, it was easy for me to love the snow because "[I] didn't have to drive in it."

Now that I'm a mom, I realize that my parents had more practical matters on their minds: How thick is the

ice on that pond? Those kids aren't sledding toward the street, are they? How many layers should the kids be wearing? Did they go to the bathroom before they put on all those layers?

As parents, we can all use a few tips when it comes to winter and kids. Even families who live in warmer climates often travel to see snow. So, I checked with the American Academy of Pediatrics, Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital in New Haven, Conn., and the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in Ohio for some tips on keeping kids safe during winter's coldest months.

Keeping kids cozy

- Think layers: The rule of thumb for older babies and young children is to dress them in one more layer

of clothing than an adult would wear in the same conditions. Clothing for older kids during very cold weather should include thermal long johns, turtlenecks, one or two shirts, pants, sweater, coat, warm socks, boots, gloves or mittens, and a hat.

- Keep your baby warm — and safe — at night: Blankets, quilts, pillows, sheepskins and other loose bedding may contribute to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and should be kept out of an infant's bed. A one-piece sleeper is preferred.

- Avoid hypothermia: This condition develops when a child's temperature falls below normal due to exposure to cold. It often happens when a youngster is playing outdoors in extremely cold weather without wearing proper clothing. As hypothermia sets in, the child may shiver and become lethargic and clumsy. His speech may become slurred and his body temperature will decline. If you suspect your child is hypothermic, call 911 at once. Until help arrives, take the child indoors, remove any wet clothing and wrap him in blankets or warm clothes.

- Prevent frostbite: Frostbite develops when the skin and outer tissues become frozen. Fingers, toes, ears and nose are most at risk, and they may become pale, gray and blistered. The child may complain that his skin burns or has become numb. To protect against frostbite, set reasonable time limits on outdoor play. Have children come inside periodically to warm up. Young children should be checked every half hour when playing outside in cold weather. If frostbite occurs, bring the child indoors and place the frostbitten parts of her body in warm — not hot — water. Warm washcloths may be applied to frostbitten areas. Do not rub the frozen areas. After a few minutes, dry and cover the child with clothing or blankets. Give him something warm to drink. If the numbness continues for more than a few minutes, call your doctor.

- Don't forget sunscreen and lip balm: The sun's rays can still cause sunburn in the



winter, especially when they reflect off snow. Make sure to cover your child's exposed skin with sunscreen.

Avoiding winter health woes

• Nix nosebleeds: If your child suffers from winter nosebleeds, try using a cold-air humidifier in his room at night. Saline nose drops may help keep tissues moist. If bleeding is severe or recurrent, consult your pediatrician.

• Don't bathe baby too often: Many pediatricians feel that bathing two or three times a week is



The rule of thumb for older babies and young children is to dress them in one more layer of clothing than an adult would wear in the same conditions.

enough for an infant's first year. More-frequent baths may dry out the skin, especially during the winter. (After all, you're already cleaning certain areas with every diaper change, right?)

• Wash up to fight winter colds and the flu: Despite old wives' tales to the contrary, cold weather does not cause colds or the flu. But, both tend to be more common in the winter, when children are in school and are in closer contact with each other. Frequent hand washing and teaching your child to sneeze or cough into his elbow may help reduce the risk of catching and spreading colds and the flu.

Keeping winter sports safe

• Ice skating: Allow children to skate only on approved surfaces. Check for signs posted by local police or recreation departments, or call your local police department to find out which areas have been approved. Advise your child to skate in the same direction as the crowd, avoid darting across the ice, never skate alone and not chew gum or eat candy while skating, to avoid the risk of choking.

• Skiing and snowboarding: Helmets are recommended. Kids should be taught by a qualified instructor in a program designed for children. They should never ski or snowboard alone and young children should always be supervised

by an adult. Older children's need for adult supervision depends on their maturity and skill. If they are not with an adult, they should at least be accompanied by a friend. They should never ski or snowboard alone. Snowboarders should wear gloves with built-in wrist guards. Children under the age of 7 should not snowboard.

• Sledding: Helmets are recommended, although no specific sledding helmet is available, so wear a properly fitted helmet designed for higher impact. Keep sledgers away from motor vehicles. Supervise young children and keep them separated from older kids.

Instruct children to sled feet-first or sitting up instead of lying down, head-first. Use steerable sleds, not snow disks or inner tubes. Sledding slopes should be free of obstructions, should be covered in snow (not ice), should not be too steep (a slope of less than 30 degrees) and should end with a flat runoff. Kids should avoid sledding in overcrowded areas, and should never ride a sled being pulled by a moving vehicle. To stop a sled kids should drag their feet or make a sharp turn. Discourage them from stopping a sled by steering into a snow bank, since snow could be hiding dangers such as sharp rocks or branches. Teach them to roll off a sled that's sliding out of control.

• Snowmobiling: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under the age of 16 not operate snowmobiles and that children under age 6 never ride on snowmobiles. For parents who choose to allow their older child to ride with an adult: Do not use a snowmobile to pull a sled or skiers. Wear goggles and a safety helmet approved for use on motorized vehicles such as motorcycles and travel at safe speeds. Stay on marked trails, away from roads, water, railroads and pedestrians.

Kathy Sena is a freelance journalist specializing in health and parenting issues and is the mother of a 15-year-old son. Visit her blog at www.parenttalktoday.com.

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LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

No jacket required

Doesn't your teen *know* it's cold outside?

Does your teen leave for school without a jacket when his breath is visible in the chilly morning air? News flash: Your teen is not the only one who has lost his sense of sanity when it comes to dressing appropriately for the weather. All you have to do is look around on a cold, winter morning. Chances are, you'll see several jacket-less teens standing at bus stops, seemingly half frozen.

Parents with younger kids might think that the parents with teens are sleeping at the wheel. Did we not see that our teenagers left in this state? Most of us probably did, but we've given up on this one. Or, maybe some of us shoved a jacket in our teen's hand as he ran out the door, but it was instantaneously stuffed in the backpack. Are you frustrated with your teen's apparent ignorance when it comes to the weather? Does he don shorts in late February? Some parents feel that at this point in our children's lives, there are more important things to grouse about.

What's up with this?

Why don't teens like to wear jackets? I've heard varying responses from my own teens, including: "They don't fit in the locker," "The bus is hot," "It's just another thing to carry," "It's not cool," and so on. Most of my friends have heard the same sorts of stories.

And now, even retailers have caught on. Many of the stores that cater to teens now carry heavy sweatshirts lined with fur. They call them "sweat jackets," which satisfies both the parent and the teen — not to mention sales at the stores!

Whose problem is it anyway?

When you feel the need to say something that you know will lead to an argument, think to yourself: Does this problem directly affect me?

"Pick your battles. Know when



who will be cold, not me," she says. "Hand your teen a jacket. What is important is to use motion, not emotion. Don't talk, just act."

You should take control, says Weinhaus. Meaning, control of the problem, not your teen.

Let it go

Let him be cold. His doctor will tell you that being cold doesn't cause a winter virus. If we're truthful with ourselves, there has been a time or two when we've opted out of the jacket thing as well. I know I've gone without one on formal occasions when I just didn't have the coat that worked with the fancy dress. So, don't bother getting cranky — in 40 years or so, we'll all have sweaters on when it's 90 degrees outside!

Tips and tales

"My 14-year-old wears shorts all winter. I have to chase him out of the door with a sweatshirt! Makes me crazy!"

Paula Auringer, Kingston, NY

"I choose my battles. Kids don't get sick from not wearing jackets. If they choose not to wear a jacket and are freezing, chances are they'll wear one the next time."

Kristine Wiedemann-Williams, Hyde Park, NY

"Buy the sweatshirt with the fur, if they'll wear it! Even if you see them leave with a coat on, chances are they'll just take it off and stuff it into a locker ... or, if they drive to school, under the backseat."

Leslie Quick, Poughkeepsie, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic:

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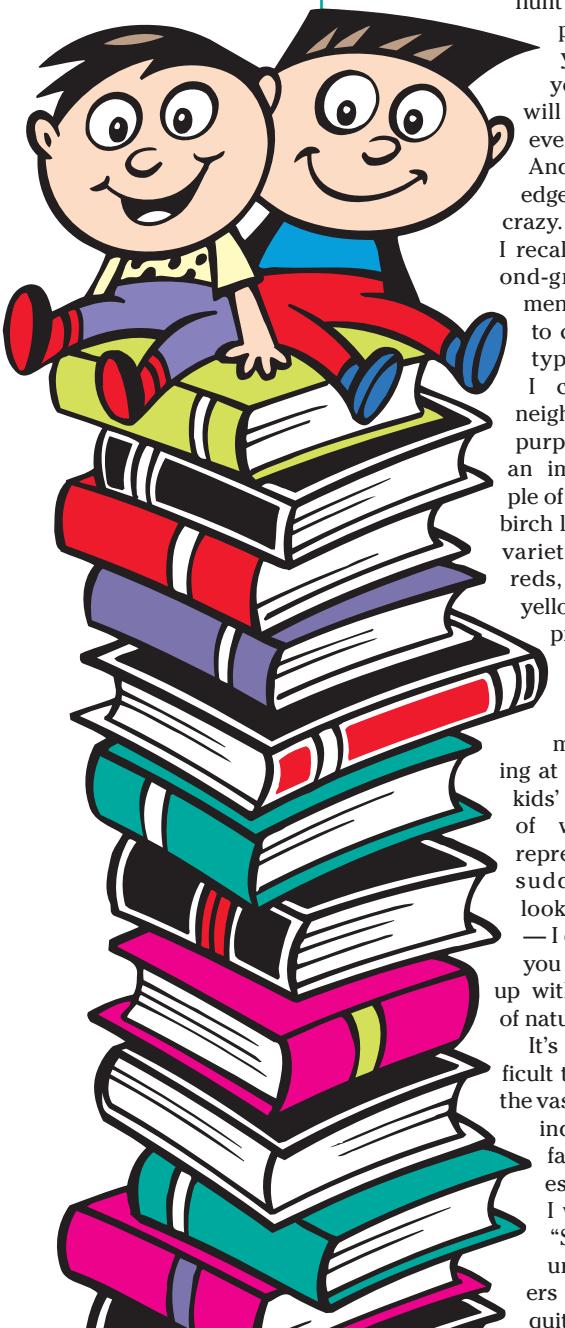
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Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer and columnist specializing in parenting issues and children's development. She is the mother of two teenagers.



NEWBIE DAD

BRIAN KANTZ



Turning the page

Author passes down the joys of collecting

BY BRIAN KANTZ

When you're a kid, collecting things can be an exhilarating — and sometimes exasperating — adventure. After starting a new collection, the thrill of the hunt often leads to a point at which you realize that your collection will never, ever, ever be complete. And that knowledge can drive you crazy.

I recall a simple second-grade assignment I was given to collect different types of leaves. I canvassed the neighborhood with purpose, collecting an impressive sample of maple, oak and birch leaves in a wide variety of greens, reds, oranges and yellows. I was quite proud of myself. Until I walked into the classroom the next morning. Looking at all of the other kids' leaves — most of which weren't represented in my suddenly-meager-looking collection — I discovered that you just can't keep up with the vastness of nature.

It's also very difficult to keep up with the vastness of the toy industry's manufacturing prowess. As a child, I was hooked on "Star Wars" figures. My brothers and I acquired quite a collection,

which we stored safely inside one of those large Darth Vader carrying cases. Yes, it was cool.

Still, for all of the figures that we did own, there were even more that we didn't. George Lucas's mind for weird-looking space characters ran too deep. Despite receiving "Star Wars" figures as gifts for birthdays, holidays and every occasion in between, there was no way that we would ever collect every "Star Wars" figure. That's the harsh reality of collecting.

Recently, my two young sons started their first big collecting adventure. I'm proud to report that their collection revolved around books. In particular, they became dedicated to an absolutely terrific set of books called, "The Nature Series" by North Carolina-based author, Suzanne Tate.

Wonderfully illustrated by James Melvin, each book in the series tells the story of a different creature. Some are sea creatures, some are land creatures, all are fascinating creatures. The stories promote the conservation of nature in a fun, engaging way. They're anything but heavy-handed.

We've found "The Nature Series" books to be the best bedtime reading material around. Each book is the perfect length for bedtime: not too long, not too short. And they're written at an age-appropriate level — and by that I mean that Suzanne Tate knows that little kids are capable of understanding some higher-level stuff. Our 3-year-old can now tell you what a mollusk is, thank you very much.

The collection started out innocently enough. The boys' grandma discovered the series in the gift shop of her local zoo in Florida. She thought the books looked interesting, so she bought a copy of "Oozey Octopus: A Tale of a Clever Critter," and mailed it to her grandsons. Oozey's wild adventures — highlighted by being devoured, then spit out by a large fish and losing a tentacle in the process — totally

captivated the boys. And the book totally captivated me.

Immediately, I called the phone number listed on the back cover — a direct line to Suzanne Tate's studio — and ordered three more books. They arrived a few days later and were just as good as "Oozey." We repeated this process and the book collection grew. At the same time, Suzanne Tate kept publishing new books in the series and the boys added them to their collectors' wish list.

The mania became so great, in fact, that the boys began making up their own titles for new "Nature Series" books. I suggested that they let the author in on their ideas. So they wrote her a letter. And to their delight, Ms. Tate quickly replied with a handwritten note thanking them for their enthusiasm.

Eventually, my kids collected 31 of the 32 books in the series. It all came down to one book about a wise fish, "Old Reddy Drum." We discovered, however, that the book had gone out of print. Suzanne Tate's studio didn't have it. Online bookstores didn't have it. The boys were out of luck. Like many of my boyhood collections, this one seemed destined to remain agonizingly incomplete.

But then the miracle happened. On a family vacation to Myrtle Beach, we happened upon a small country store with a long dirt driveway. I pulled in. We perused all the usual country store fare: watercolor paintings, scented candles, and old-fashioned hard candies. Then, suddenly, our older son let out a whoop and jumped up and down as if he had just found the needle in the haystack. He did. There in his hands was a copy of "Old Reddy Drum." With their collection complete, the boys are enjoying sweet satisfaction ... until Suzanne Tate writes another book.

Brian Kantz doesn't collect anything anymore, except the bills for his kids' collections. Visit Brian online at www.briankantz.com or drop him a note at thenewbiedad@yahoo.com.

Prevent gay teen suicides

**How to be
the difference
between life
and death**



BY MONICA BROWN

The suicide of Rutgers University freshman Tyler Clementi in September — and several other young adults and teens in recent months — is anything but a distant memory. Clementi and these other young people ended their lives because of people bullying them about their sexuality.

The tragedy of these suicides, and the headlines they generated, shed

some light on the fears and insecurities faced by gay youth, particularly in the era of the Internet, where, through social networking sites, their business can sometimes become everyone's business. In Clementi's case, he jumped off the George Washington Bridge after a gay sexual encounter of his was posted online by classmates.

The deaths moved a nation to act. In several states across the country, lawmakers are drafting anti-bullying legislation, and more stringent regulations on college campuses, in an effort to protect our young people — especially those who are lesbian,

bisexual, and transgender. Now, new research finds that acceptance and support from the homefront could help protect gay youth.

Support begins early

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, homosexuality is defined as the persistent sexual and emotional attraction to someone of the same sex. It is not a mental disorder, and the Academy says it is not a matter of choice.

Some parents feel deeply conflicted about having a gay teen, whether it be for religious or societal reasons. But experts say it's important for families to realize that many LGBT individuals first become aware of, and experience, their sexual thoughts and feelings during childhood and adolescence, so the support process can sometimes begin well before those difficult teenage years. It may also be helpful to recognize that societal attitudes have evolved into more accepting norms, and that can help LGBT youth feel more comfortable with their sexual orientation.

Recognize distress

Certainly, all teenagers can be moody and withdrawn at times, but LGBT youth have particular concerns that may lead them to think they are fighting an uphill battle alone. The Academy says parents need to be on the lookout when LGBT teens begin to exhibit socially isolated behavior — withdrawing from family and friends — have trouble concentrating, and act as if they have low self-esteem. The child's worries and concerns can often stem from:

- Feeling different from his peers
- Rejection and harassment by friends and family
- Discrimination when joining sports clubs, seeking admission to college, and finding employment
- Feelings of guilt about his sexual orientation
- Concerns about AIDS, HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Family acceptance

Studies suggest the attitude of

family members can also have a dramatic impact on a teen's ability to cope and to be protected.

Two years ago, a study in the journal "Pediatrics" concluded that LGBT teens and young adults — as a group — had one of the highest rates of suicide, as well as some health and mental problems, including substance abuse.

The good news is this: that very same study suggested that parental acceptance, and even neutrality, with regard to a child's sexual orientation, can play a large role in reducing that statistic.

Recently, a separate study was published in the "Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing," which found a clear link between family acceptance of LGBT youth and better overall health in adulthood. The study included 245 white and Hispanic LGBT young adults in California, ages 21 to 25, who were open about their sexual orientation to at least one caregiver during adolescence. The results? Positive family attitudes and behaviors toward LGBT teens can reduce their risk of depression, drug abuse and suicidal thoughts when they become young adults. Examples of positive parental acceptance included supporting gender expression, and advocating for children when they're mistreated because of their LGBT identity.

Families can use the media attention given to cases like Clementi's as a catalyst for discussion.

"At a time when the media and families are becoming acutely aware of the risk that many LGBT youth experience, our findings that family acceptance protects against suicidal thoughts and behaviors, depression and substance abuse, offer a gateway to hope for LGBT youth and families that struggle with how to balance deeply held religious and personal values with love for their LGBT children," said Caitlin Ryan, the director of the Family Acceptance Project at San Francisco State University.

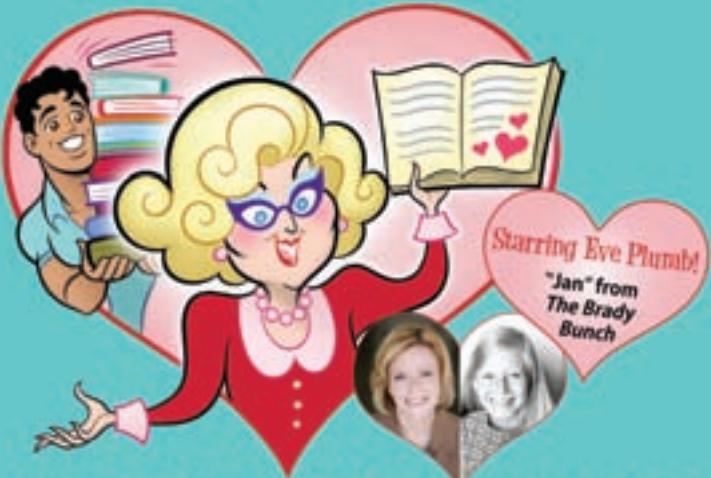
For more on the study, visit familyacceptanceproject.sfsu.edu.

Monica Brown is a cable television news anchor and freelance journalist who writes for several publications throughout the tri-state area.

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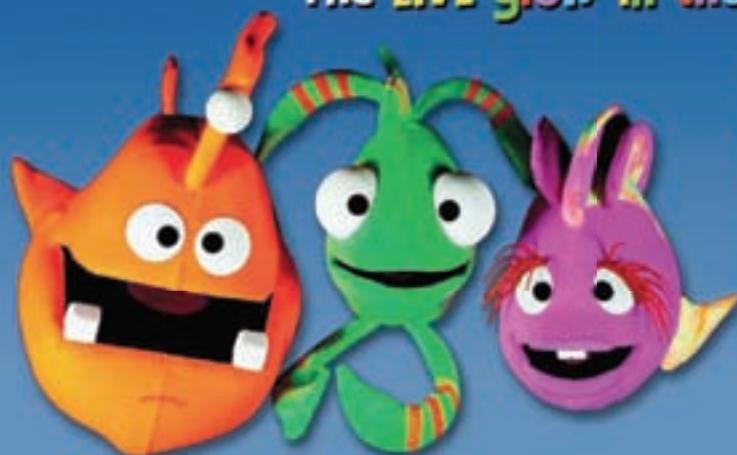
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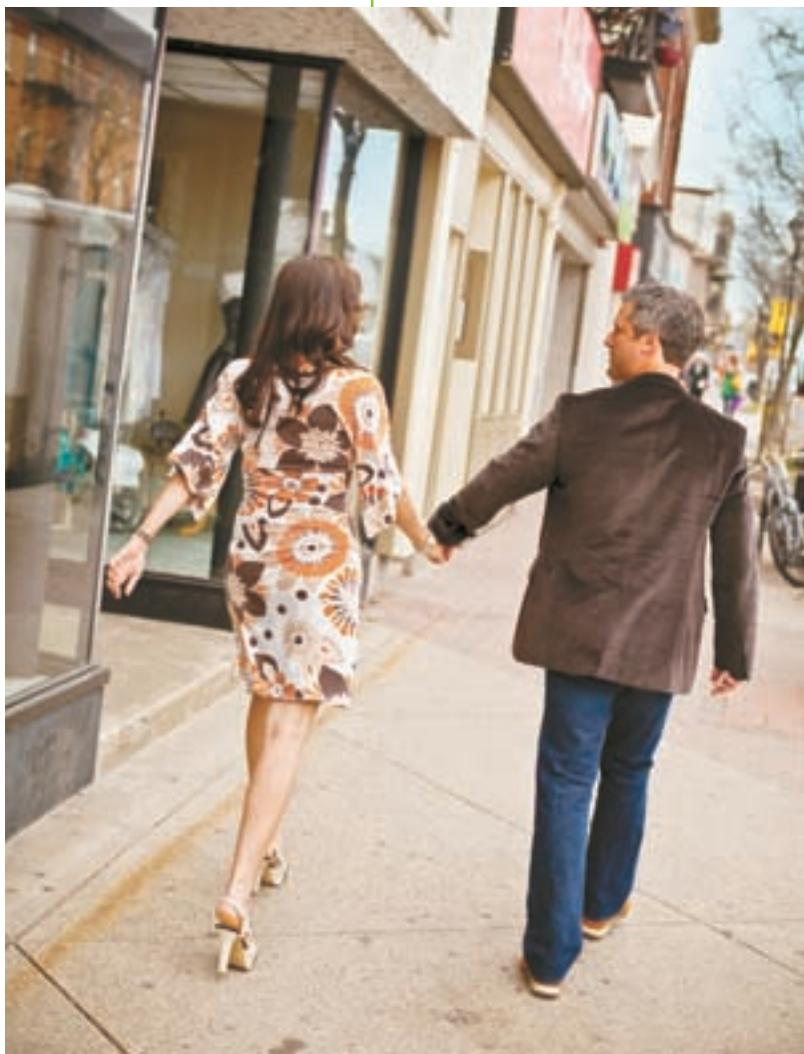
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OUR RELATIONSHIPS

JOAN EMERSON, PhD



One of the ways caveman needs can get filled today is for the man to simply take his woman's hand when they're out for a walk together.

Caveman cometh

How our ancient past defines our actions

BY JOAN EMERSON, PHD

Gender differences help explain why, in this age of couple's equality and open communication, we are still plagued by primitive needs from each other. Gender theories look way back to when humans belonged to tribes and lived in caves. We can picture women sitting around the fire cooking, making clothing, caring for children and sharing joys, woes and vulnerabilities with each other as the men roamed the hills, often alone, guarding against danger, and bring-

ing home the spoils from a successful hunt.

A family's survival depended on the male's ability to keep it safe and content and this is how the men were judged by the rest of the tribe and how they judged themselves. A woman's comfort came from the community, yes, but mainly from feeling valued and protected by her man and from the tribe recognizing his loyalty and attachment to her. Gender theory says those ancient dynamics are still part of our DNA and affect our behaviors and needs, resulting in clashes between our primitive and more evolved needs.

These days, women are fiercely independent and competent. Yet, they still have needs from their men which don't seem rational. What seems to be hard-wired into women's brains from caveman days is a need to have a man clearly indicating ownership, pride in them, and taking a protective stance.

One of the ways this need can get filled today is for the man to simply take his woman's hand when they're out for a walk together. Although I first noticed this desire on my own and felt silly about it, I really took note when conducting couples sessions and "taking my hand when we're out walking" was often on the woman's list of easy things the guy could do to make her feel loved and cared for. When we're inside, having our man sit with his arm around us actually releases hormones that relax and calm us. Men are often not aware of the power of these acts, so I encourage women to speak up.

When it comes to men, the gender-based theory says that for a man to feel happy with himself, he needs to feel competent and successful in regard to protecting, pleasing and satisfying his mate. If he feels he can't get it right, the resulting feeling is deep shame. Not intellectually maybe, but emotionally, if a man

senses his woman's dissatisfaction with his efforts, he internalizes it as his failure and incompetence. The shame he experiences is so strong that he'd rather withdraw, attack, escape — anything but confront, or talk about this devastating feeling. The tendency in men to feel that they alone must know how to solve all problems in the family no longer makes sense in the age of equality and communication that modern marriage strives for, yet gender theory says their well-being depends on feeling success in this regard. This goes for satisfying his mate sexually, all the way to knowing how to dress the kids, and amusing the family with stories about local sports or the less-than-gripping details about his day.

If this theory is true, that the primitive part of us still yields this power (and that's what I have observed), we can try to use this awareness to meet each other's deepest needs. When it comes to a man's happiness, his woman must build his confidence and make him feel able and competent. So, for example, his wife can allow time for him to relax when he comes home from work, even though women also work, do most of the childcare, and never relax. Women can step aside when the men are caring for the children and not interfere with advice. Women can freely show affection, so that the men know they are physically pleasing. This is a true gift: behaviors that help men feel good about themselves.

To please these deep female needs, the men can take their women out in the world and attend to them in a protective, yet affectionate, way, showing the world how they value them. At home, he can invite his woman to sit next to him and reach out and hold her for a while.

Talk to each other and see how these gender differences play out in your relationship.

Dr. Joan Emerson is a New York psychologist who specializes in couples therapy. Visit her website at www.JoanEmerson.com.

It figures

BY CYNTHIA WASHAM



1986 Year the Rev. Kevin Zaborney of Caro, Mich., named Jan. 21 National Hugging Day.

69 Percent of public high school teachers who support a ban on students hugging and kissing on school grounds.

6,623 Number of participants in the world record largest group hug, on Sept. 25, 2005, in Juarez, Mexico.

24 hours, one minute

Time Paul Gerrard and Sandra Brooke spent hugging in a London train station from Feb. 13-14, 2008, to set a world record.

2 Number of days 13-year-old Illinois student Megan Coulter was suspended in 2007 for casually hugging two friends at Mascoutah Middle School.



JANUARY FACTS

151 Average hours per month Americans spend watching TV.

60 Increase in the risk of obesity in people who watch 60 hours of TV per month.

51 Percent of adults whose biggest goal of the year is to lose weight.

11 Percent whose biggest goal is to spend more time with family and friends.

11 Percent of children who say their greatest wish for their parents is that they "spend more time with me."



150 Calories in two Peanut Butter Patties, Girl Scouts' most fattening cookie.

100 Calories in a snack pack of Daisy Go Rounds, its least fattening.



More than 700

Number of Girl Scout cookie orders 8-year-old Wild Freeborn of Asheville, NC, sold in two weeks in 2009 through a YouTube video, before the Scouts enforced its ban on online sales.

How to break your family's bad habits

Replace your old ways with healthy ones this year

BY SHARON MILLER CINDRICH

The kids do their homework on their way to piano lessons, your family meal is often eaten in front of the TV, and the floor of the family room is covered with shoes, game pieces, and newspapers. Most families don't strive to serve fro-

zen TV dinners every night or purposely ignore the clutter that builds up at home. But busy schedules, growing kids, and any change in lifestyle can trigger the onset of a bad habit. So, how do we teach our kids good habits in the midst of all our bad ones?

"It's really not the kids that are the issue," says Laura Gauld, a parent of three, who coordinates national parenting workshops derived from her book "The Biggest Job We'll Ever Have." "Once we get parents where they need to be, their children will be inspired

by their parents' growth."

Gauld's book is built around 10 core beliefs on how families can find a balance between character and achievement, and offers families strategies to tackle their most difficult family challenges.

"What we try to do is help parents focus on themselves as the primary teachers and the home as the primary classroom," says Gauld, who adds that families who can confront their bad habits can



change their ways and influence their children.

Recognize any of these bad habits in your family? If so, try these suggestions for turning them around:

Bad habit: The kids eat in the car on the way to soccer practice, standing at the kitchen counter, or in front of the TV. "We can't beat ourselves up for being on the go, but the action of making an effort to sit down as a family, even once or twice a week, is really up for success," says Gauld.

New habit: Plan family meal times and make an effort to sit down together at least half the nights each week. Have kids help find Crockpot recipes or easy soup and sandwich menus they

can help prepare and cook. Assign each family member a task (Dad is in charge of dessert, Mom makes the main course, and the kids can place biscuits on a pan, set the table or pour the beverages). Turn off the phone, light candles, bring out the china, and make it special at least once a week.

Bad habit: Mom works late most nights, Dad is drowning in home improvements, and Junior is signed up for five extracurricular activities. "We aren't very good at saying 'no,'" says Gauld. "But when you get going and put too many things on your calendar, you become a slave to that schedule and no one is served."

New habit: Families need to schedule time for each other. Before your monthly agenda books up, set aside some time for R & R in permanent marker, just like you would for one of your other obligations. Making a commitment to zone out in front of the TV together, read a book at night or play a family game of Monopoly is just as important as any meeting you have during the week.

Bad habit: You drive to school, the grocery store, even your neighbor's home just two blocks away. The kids could walk home from a friend's house, but they call you for personal limo service every time.

New habit: Each time you set off on an excursion, ask your fam-

ily if you can walk instead. Encourage children to walk to school, the park, even to the convenience store for a gallon of milk to keep your family exercising and teach kids to appreciate the ride. If you have to drive, build in some extra time, park halfway to your destination, and get some fresh air as you walk across the parking lot.

• • •

Bad habit: Dad's birthday came and went. Your anniversary passed by without a card. It's easier to deal with the guilt of missing special days than the pressure of planning a big celebration. "Some of the most special things are done when people work together," comments Gauld, who adds that

the achievement culture drives us to think that special events need to be big.

New habit: Think small when planning a party and ask for help from other family members. Develop a family celebration day that

fits into everyone's schedule each month to honor special events: anniversaries, sports victories, birthdays, and good grades.

• • •

Bad habit: The dining room table is stacked with papers. The fish tank is dirty, and you can't see the floor in the children's rooms. "The home needs to be a cherished place," says Gauld, who notes that the home is often treated as a way station. "There is a principle of ownership and respect for our things that we need to teach," and parents need to lead the way for kids.

New habit: Dedicate one or two hours each weekend to a whirlwind tidy-fest. Get kids together, turn on music and hand out assignments. Dust and vacuum bedrooms, clean out backpacks and briefcases, and organize your closet so you'll have clean clothes for the coming week. Each time, add one major chore — like raking leaves or organizing the toy chest — that the whole family can do together.

Sharon Miller Cindrich is the author of the "American Girl" books "A Smart Girl's Guide to the Internet," "A Smart Girl's Guide to Style" and the column "Plugged In Parent." Learn more at www.pluggedinparent.com.

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Frog for breakfast

Four tips to ensure more time for you in 2011

BY GAIL LOWNEY ALOFSIN

Feeling overwhelmed? Is your schedule jam-packed? Do you find yourself lamenting, "If only I had more time?"

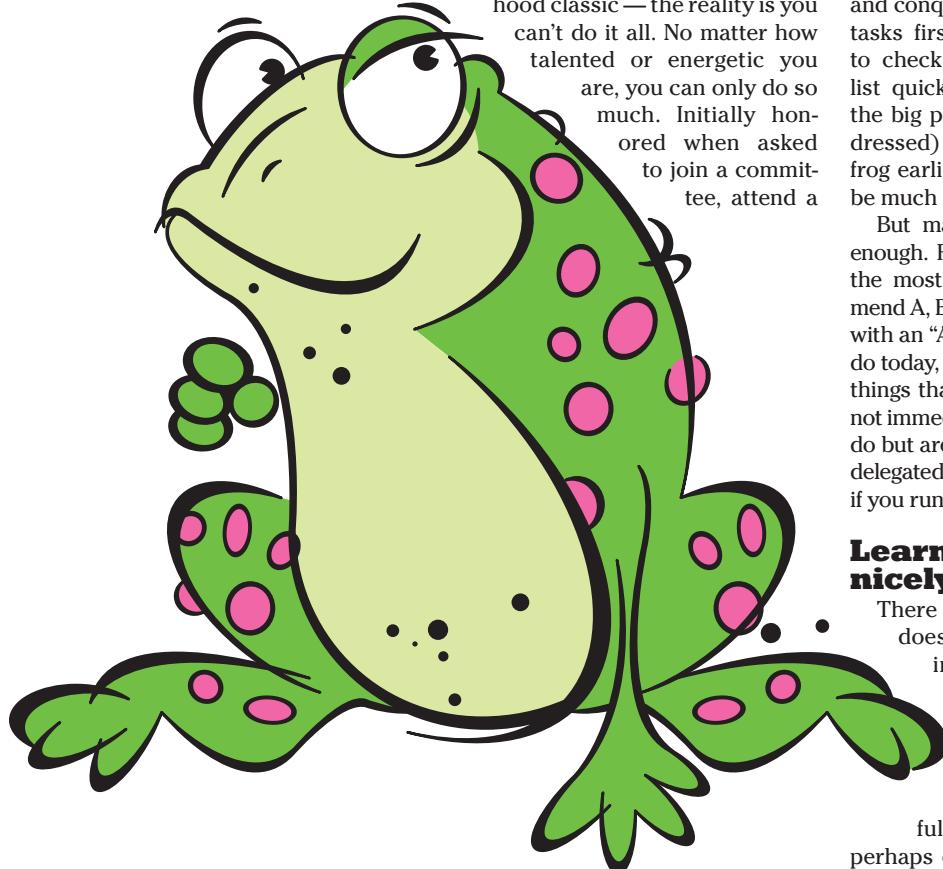
You are not alone. Even with 24 hours, many women still find it difficult to manage their time and choices — and can't accomplish a great deal each day.

Luckily, time management is a learnable skill, and, as my son, Samuel, says, "Nothing begins until you start."

So, start. Take your first steps this new year by implementing four key strategies into your life. They're sure to create more time for you and the things you want to achieve in 2011.

Recognize your limitations

Even though you think you can — as the little engine said in that childhood classic — the reality is you can't do it all. No matter how talented or energetic you are, you can only do so much. Initially honored when asked to join a committee, attend a



meeting or lead a school project, you later find yourself overwhelmed after that early elation.

So, before you launch into a new project, identify other projects, responsibilities or tasks you can STOP doing. Review your calendar. Ask yourself what the consequences will be if you say "yes" or "no" to the requests that are being asked of you. What is the consequence of spending time on this request rather than spending it on something else?

This is called your "opportunity cost" and, with only 24 hours in your day, you must make your decision accordingly.

Eat a frog for breakfast

"If you eat a frog first thing in the morning, this will probably be the worst thing you do all day," said author Mark Twain.

Do you make your "to do" lists and conquer them by doing the easy tasks first? No doubt it feels good to check multiple actions off your list quickly. However, the frog (i.e. the big project that needs to be addressed) is looming. If you eat that frog earlier in the day, your day will be much more productive.

But making a "to do" list is not enough. Rank your list and focus on the most important items. I recommend A, B, C, D, E steps. Items marked with an "A" are the things you have to do today, if not right now. "Bs" are the things that you need to get done but not immediately. "Cs" would be nice to do but are not necessary. "Ds" can be delegated; and "Es" can be eliminated if you run out of time.

Learn to say 'no' nicely

There is a way to say "no" that does not make the person asking feel insulted or hurt. We've all had times in our lives when we have said "yes" to too many things, resulting in a very full plate. While a full plate is attractive, and perhaps comforting, we want to do

our best to avoid regretting that we signed up for an activity or program for which we do not have time.

When you do say "no," say it nicely and succinctly, without a dissertation on how busy you are. No one cares how busy you are — busy is not a contest! We all know people who rant on and on about what they are doing. In the time it takes to listen to such a speech, the person could have pitched in to help you.

Here's an example: As a parent, you may be asked to chair or assist with an event at your child's school. If you don't have a great deal of time to commit, there may be something else you can do that requires less time than what was originally requested of you. Perhaps you can procure a few great prizes for the silent auction or beverages for the event, rather than organize the entire function. Do not apologize. Just offer to do what you can.

Make appointments with yourself

Make appointments with yourself to focus on you! Carve out time for what you want or need to do and add them to your calendar. Prioritize these appointments — and activities with your family — as if they are mandatory meetings. Spend quality and focused time with your family and friends.

Any activity that is worth doing requires practice — learning an instrument, a language or how to cook. Practice time management and it will become second nature. Research shows it takes 21 days to start a new habit. Get into the habit of eating frogs, and after 21 days, it will become second nature! The result? Feeling more accomplished with the things that matter the most to you.

As a sales and marketing executive, adjunct professor, active member serving on five boards, national educational and inspirational speaker and "the best" mother and wife, Gail Lowney Alofsin practices balancing work and life on a daily basis. Between "eating frogs," she can be reached via her website at GailSpeaks.com.

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Going Places

LONG-RUNNING

Race to the End of the Earth: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5100; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am–5:45 pm; Now – Sun, Jan. 2, 2011; Donations suggested.

The exhibit recounts the most stirring tales of Antarctic exploration: the contest to reach the South Pole in 1911–1912. Highlights include photographs, paintings, and rare historical artifacts as well as actual items of clothing and tools; life-sized models of portions of Amundsen's and Scott's base camps; and a diorama featuring the largest of all penguin species alive today, the emperor penguin. There are also interactive and hands-on activities for all ages.

New York Botanical Garden Train Show: New York Botanical Gardens, Bronx River Pkwy (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road; (718) 817-8716; www.nybg.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 am–7 pm, Now – Sun, Jan. 2, 2011; \$20 (\$10 children, children under 2 free).

More than one dozen large-scale model trains running on nearly a quarter-mile of track along with replicas of Manhattan landmarked buildings.

Storytime: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk at Utopia Parkway; (718) 380-7077; www.bn.com; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 am & 7 pm, Free.

Children enjoy stories and a cookie break.

Friendship Group: Friedberg JCC, 15 Neil Ct. at Fireman's Memorial Drive; (516) 766-4341; www.friedberg.org; Daily, 2–3 pm; Now – Thurs, Dec. 30; Call for Fees.

Middle school students with disabilities swim in the indoor pool, hang out in the renovated teen lounge and participate in exciting art projects.

Support Group: Mid-Island Y JCC, 45 Manetto Hill Road; (516)-822-3535 X 326; www.miyjcc.org; Wednesdays and Fridays, 10 am – 2 pm, Now – Fri, Dec. 24.

Shabbat Respite program provides a supportive and nurturing environment for your loved one who is suffering from Alzheimer's disease or early onset dementia including socialization, cognitive stimulation activities, art therapy and more. Led by licensed social workers, coffee tea and a nutritious kosher lunch provided. To schedule an appointment



Uno, dos, tres!

In a new production by Teatro SEA, "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" gets a Spanish twist.

On Jan. 29 at Queens Theatre in the Park, join Recitos (Spanish for "Goldilocks") on her hilarious adventure into the woods, where she meets the Bear family and learns the value of friendship.

Even if your child's Spanish skills are *cero*, he can still follow

along without missing a beat, as the play is performed so that even English-only speakers can keep up. And who doesn't know how this one ends, anyway?

"*Goldilocks and the Three Bears*" at *Queens Theatre in the Park* [Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Claire Shulman Playhouse, (718) 760-0064], Jan. 29 at 11 am and 1 pm. Tickets \$12. For info, visit www.queenstheatre.org.

or additional information call Doreen.

Wild Holiday Party: Queens Zoo, 53-51 111th St. (718) 271-1500; queenszoo.com; Saturday, Dec. 25, 11 am; Sunday, Dec. 26, 11 am; Free with zoo admission.

Visitors are invited to watch as frisky felines Felix and Cleo and playful Andean bears Cisco and Spangles devour special holiday treats.

Support Group: Parkway Commu-

nity Church, 95 Stewart Ave; (516)-395-8303; Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, Now – Wed, Dec. 29; \$7.

A dynamic discussion and support group for 40 plus individuals, who are widowed, divorced or single.

"The Ohmies, Morning Wish Garden": The Daryl Roth Theater, 101 E. 15th St. at Park Avenue South; (212) 239-6200; ohmies.cmail1.com; Thursdays – Sundays, 11 am and 1:30 pm,

Submit a listing

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

All you have to do is send your listing request to calendar@cnglocal.com — and we'll take care of the rest. Please e-mail requests more than three weeks prior to the event to ensure we have enough time to get it in. And best of all, it's FREE!

Thurs, Jan. 6 – Sun, Jan. 30, 2011; \$36.

Children three to eight enjoy an interactive musical experience.

SAT, DEC. 25

Nature stroll: Alley Pond Park, 76th Ave. & Springfield Blvd. (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 10 am; Free.

Enjoy a winter wonderland.

SUN, DEC. 26

Duck, duck, goose: Baisley Pond Park, Baisley Blvd. at 155th Street; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am; Free.

Explore and meet the winter fowl that inhabit the park.

Holiday open house: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy. (718) 347-3276; www.nycgovparks.org; Noon–4 pm; Free.

Children and adults take a tour of the decorated farmhouse, enjoy a craft activity and have mulled cider.

"The Nutcracker": The Golden Auditorium at Queens College, Service Rd. between Exit 23 and Exit 24 Long Island Expressway; (718) 544-2996; www.KupferbergCenterArts.org; 3 pm; \$18 (\$12 children 12 and under).

Performed by the Brighton Ballet Company.

MON, DEC. 27

Holiday open house: 4–8 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Sunday, Dec. 26.

TUES, DEC. 28

Holiday open house: Noon–4 pm.

Going Places

Queens County Farm Museum. See Sunday, Dec. 26.

"The Nutcracker": Queens Theatre in the Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office 718-760-0064; Administration 718-760-0686; www.queenstheatre.org; 1 and 4 pm; \$12.

Holiday classic.

WED, DEC. 29

"The Nutcracker": 1 and 4 pm. Queens Theatre in the Park. See Tuesday, Dec. 28.

THURS, DEC. 30

"The Nutcracker": 1 and 4 pm. Queens Theatre in the Park. See Tuesday, Dec. 28.

SUN, JAN. 2

Animal tracking: Cunningham Park, Union Tpk at 197th Street; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; Noon; Free.

Discover the different markings of the park's furry residents.

MON, JAN. 3

Quadrantids Meteor Shower: Fort Totten, Fort Totten; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 6:30 pm; FREE.

Witness this unique shower of stars. Weather permitting. Call day of program to confirm.

THURS, JAN. 6

"The Three Kings": Teatro SEA, 107 Suffolk St. between Delancey and Irvington streets; (212) 529-1545; www.teatrosea.org; 3-5 pm; Free.

Children of all ages celebrate one of the most important Latin American holidays of the year. The first 1000 children meet the three kings and receive a free gift. Parents can take pictures of their children with the three kings.

SAT, JAN. 8

Scavenger hunt: Fort Totten, Fort Totten; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am; Free.

Take a stroll through the historical site and find interesting natural items.

"Strega Nona": Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, Campus of CW Post, Route 25A; (800) 745-3000; www.tillescenter.org; 2 pm; \$20.

Tomie dePaola's whimsical folk tale comes to life with music. Recommended for children three to 9.

Owl prowl: Alley Pond Park Adventure Center (APPAC), Alley Pond Park, Little Neck, NY; (718) 846-2731; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 3 pm; Free.



Now say Ohmies

Come join the ultimate play date, as you dance, stretch and giggle with The Ohmies.

Get your kids moving and let their imaginations run wild as they sing along to original music, hop like a grasshopper, slither like a snake, fly like a butterfly and help The Ohmies shake off the worries in the show, "Morning Wish Garden," all month long at the Daryl Roth Theater.

Grow and glow with Bella But-

terfly, Carlin Caterpillar and all of their friends on their way to surprise Mr. Sun and see their wish garden bloom.

It's much more than theater — it's a one-of-a-kind interactive musical experience.

"The Ohmies: Morning Wish Garden" at the Daryl Roth Theater [101 E. 15th St. between Park Avenue and Irving Place in Manhattan, (212) 239-6200], Jan. 6-30, Thursdays-Sundays at 11 am and 1:30 pm (only 11 am on Jan. 6). Tickets \$36. For info, visit theohmies.com.

Discover the great horned owls.

SUN, JAN. 9

Scavenger hunt: Kissena Park, Rose and Oak avenues; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am; Free.

Kids of all ages hunt for hidden treasures throughout the park and earn prizes.

Winter survival: Fort Totten, Fort Totten; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Learn how to survive in below freezing temperatures; what clothing to wear, finding food and building shelter.

MON, JAN. 10

Open mic night: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 7:30 pm; Free.

Share original works.

SUN, JAN. 16

International Guitar Night:

Queens Theatre in the Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office 718-760-0064; Administration 718-760-0686; www.queenstheatre.org; 3 pm; \$37.

The line-up includes the world's foremost acoustic guitarists performing in their own styles.

MON, JAN. 17

Movies and music: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 7:30 pm; Free.

Book discussion with writer and professor William Torgerson.

TUES, JAN. 18

Poetry workshop: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 7:30 pm; Free.

Budding writers get tips from Bob Trabold and Amanda Konstantine Perlmutter.

FRI, JAN. 21

"The Music Man": Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, CW Post Campus, Route 25A; 516.299.3100; www.tillescenter.org; 8 pm; \$65, 50, 40.

SAT, JAN. 29

"Goldilocks and the Three Bears":

Queens Theatre in the Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office 718-760-0064; Administration 718-760-0686; www.queenstheatre.org; 11 am and 1 pm; \$12.

The classic with a Spanish twist.

Camp Fair: Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Columbus Ave. at West 60th Street; (212) 677-4650 X 20; www.resourcesnyc.org; 11 am-3 pm; Free.

Parents and caregivers of children and teens with disabilities obtain information from 70 New York City day camps and sleepaway camps and receive a Camps 2011 Directory.

Arts and crafts: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 11:30 am; Free.

Children create snowflake art.

Survival guide: 1 pm. Forest Park Visitor Center. See Saturday, Jan. 15.

SUN, FEB. 6

Animal tracking: Albert H. Mauro Playground, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 10 am; Free.

Examine the different markers of the park's wildlife.

Going Places

January events at Queens Libraries

Tots and teens can enjoy exciting and educational events all month long at the Queens Library, and — best

LONG-RUNNING

Laptop for teens: Queens Library at Hollis, 202-05 Hillside Ave. (718) 465-7355; Mondays – Thursdays, 4:30 pm, Mon, Jan. 3 – Thurs., Feb. 24, 2011; Free.

Learn how to use a laptop and play games. Closed 1/17/11 Martin Luther King Day and 2/21/11 President's Day.

Girl Scouts: Queens Library at Queens Village, 94-11 217 St. at 94th Road; (718) 776-6800; www.queenslibrary.org; Thursdays, 4 pm, Free.

Informational meeting.

Teen happy hour: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; Fridays, 3 pm, Fri, Jan. 7 – Fri, Feb. 25, 2011; Free.

Friends, board games, video games and music.

Math help: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; Saturdays, 10 am, beginning Sat, Jan. 8; Free.

Tutoring for children in grades four to 8.

Drama Posse: Queens Library at Hillcrest, 187-05 Union Tpke. (718) 454-2786; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; Thursdays, 3 pm, Thurs, Jan. 13 – Thurs, March 24, 2011; Free.

Get your acting chops on. Weekly rehearsals required. Performance 3/24/11.

MON, JAN. 3

Canned food drive: Hillcrest Library, 187-05 Union Tpke. (718) 454-2786; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 1 pm; Free.

Donate non-perishable food. Kids bring in can goods and get candy.

College club: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens learn how to navigate the path to college.

TUES, JAN. 4

Canned food drive: 1 pm. Hillcrest Library. See Monday, Jan. 3.

WED, JAN. 5

Canned food drive: 1 pm. Hillcrest Library. See Monday, Jan. 3.

Meet a graphic novelist: Queens Library at Far Rockaway, 1637 Central Ave. (718) 327-2549; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

of all — it's all free.

For additional information visit a branch near you or online at www.queenslibrary.org.

www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Author Neil Numberman gives art tips.

THURS, JAN. 6

Canned food drive: 1 pm. Hillcrest Library. See Monday, Jan. 3.

Action Racket Theater: Queens Library at Kew Gardens, 72-33 Vleigh Pl. (718) 261-6654; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens are introduced to theater arts.

Cyber-Bullying Workshop: Queens Library at Ridgewood, 20-12 Madison St. (718) 821-4770; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Henry Smart teaches teens how to handle internet bullying. Pre-registration required.

FRI, JAN. 7

Canned food drive: 1 pm. Hillcrest Library. See Monday, Jan. 3.

Wii Challenge: Queens Library at Lefrak City, 98-30 57th Ave. (718) 592-7677; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4:30 pm.

Compete against friends in bowling, baseball, football and other games.

SAT, JAN. 8

Symphony 101, Shake, Rattle and Roll: Queens Library at Forest Hills, 108-19 71st Ave. (718) 268-7934; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 1 pm; Free.

Queens Symphony Orchestra members teach children about the different instruments played.

Canned food drive: 1 pm. Hillcrest Library. See Monday, Jan. 3.

Symphony 101, Shake, Rattle and Roll: Queens Library at Sunnyside, 43-06 Greenpoint Ave. (718) 784-3033; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

Queens Symphony Orchestra members teach children about the different instruments played.

SUN, JAN. 9

Kaissa: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

The artist is known for her blend of African, reggae, jazz and R&B sounds.

MON, JAN. 10

Resume workshop: Queens Library at Broadway, 40-20 Broadway; (718) 721-2462; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Teens get tips in writing technique and what employers want to see.

Teen Advisory Board: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

The library wants to hear your opinions.

Family night: Queens Library at South Jamaica, 108-41 Guy R. Brewer Blvd. (718) 739-4088; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 6 pm; Free.

For for all ages, board games or Wii. Light refreshments served.

Zumba class: Queens Library at Lefrak City, 98-30 57th Ave. (718) 592-7677; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 6 pm; Free.

Get your body in shape and have fun too.

TUES, JAN. 11

Meet a graphic novelist: Queens Library at Bay Terrace, 18-36 Bell Blvd. (718) 423-7004; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Author Neil Numberman gives art tips.

Action Racket Theater: Queens Library at Lefferts, 103-34 Lefferts Blvd. (718) 843-5950; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens are introduced to theater arts.

Nutrition Workshop with Live Sip: Queens Library at Long Island City, 37-44 21st St. (718) 752-3700; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Students learn how to make foods appropriate for the time of day and their skill level and manage weight, maintain energy and develop life long healthy eating habits. Pre-registraiton required. For children 11 to 14.

WED, JAN. 12

Magic workshop: Queens Library at Queens Village, 94-11 217 St. (718) 776-6800; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Learn tricks of the trade with Jeremy the Magician.

History of Cinema: Queens Library at Steinway, 21-45 31st St. (718) 728-1965; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens explore movies from silent films to contemporary offerings.

THURS, JAN. 13

Meet a graphic novelist: Queens

Library at Richmond Hill, 118-14 Hillside Ave. (718) 849-7150; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Author Neil Numberman gives art tips.

Find your Rhythm: Queens Library at Lefferts, 103-34 Lefferts Blvd. (718) 843-5950; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Learn about drums with musician and teacher Tony Genovese.

Self defense: Queens Library at Sunnyside, 43-06 Greenpoint Ave. (718) 784-3033; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Women and girls learn the skills to protect themselves. Sifu Paula Wong, 8th degree black belt in Kung Fu teaches the basics.

Nutrition Workshop with Live Sip: 4 pm. Queens Library at Long Island City. See Tuesday, Jan. 11.

All things zombie: Queens Library at Pomonok, 158-21 Jewel Ave. (718) 591-4343; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 6 pm; Free.

Teens discuss the current literary and media genre.

Cyber-Bullying Workshop: 6 pm. Queens Library at Ridgewood. See Thursday, Jan. 6.

FRI, JAN. 14

Wii Challenge: 4:30 pm. Queens Library at Lefrak City. See Friday, Jan. 7.

History workshop: Queens Library at Langston Hughes, 100-01 Northern Blvd. (718) 651-1100; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 7 pm; Free.

Dr. Adelaide Sanford leads a talk on Martin Luther King, Jr.

SAT, JAN. 15

Science fair: Queens Library at Ridgewood, 20-12 Madison St. (718) 821-4770; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 1 pm; Free.

Get help in preparing your project.

"Las Posadas": Queens Library at Elmhurst, 86-01 Broadway; (718) 271-1020; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

Radio Jarocho celebrates this Mexican Christmas tradition.

Book club: Queens Library at Long Island City, 37-44 21 St. (718) 752-3700; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 3:30 pm.

Read paranormal and mystery titles.

SUN, JAN. 16

Open mic: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; www.queenspubliclibrary.org.

Going Places

slibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Featured readers, Norman Stock, Tim Suermondt, Pui Ying Wong.

TUES, JAN. 18

SAT prep: Queens Library at Kew Gardens Hills, 72-33 Vleigh Pl. (718) 261-6654; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens get tips from Kaplan professionals.

Magic show: Queens Library at Middle Village, 72-31 Metropolitan Ave. (718) 326-1390; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Jeremy the Magician shares tricks of the trade.

Nutrition Workshop with Live Sip: 4 pm. Queens Library at Long Island City. See Tuesday, Jan. 11.

WED, JAN. 19

Meet a graphic novelist: Queens Library at Whitestone, 151-10 14th Rd. (718) 767-8010; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Author Neil Numberman gives art tips.

History of Cinema: 4 pm. Queens Library at Steinway. See Wednesday, Jan. 12.

THURS, JAN. 20

Nutrition Workshop with Live Sip: 4 pm. Queens Library at Long Island City. See Tuesday, Jan. 11.

FRI, JAN. 21

Arts and crafts: Queens Library at Peninsula, 92-25 Rockaway Beach Blvd. (718) 634-1110; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children six to 14 make fun projects.

Super memory workshop: Queens Library at Pomonok, 158-21 Jewel Ave. (718) 591-4343; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Improve and build skills.

Intergenerational plant project: Queens Library at Hollis, 202-05 Hillside Ave. (718) 465-7355; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children six and older along with senior adults participate together in writing, memories and plants. Pre-registration required.

Wii Challenge: 4:30 pm. Queens Library at Lefrak City. See Friday, Jan. 7.

MON, JAN. 24

College club: 4 pm. Central Library. See Monday, Jan. 3.

Karaoke: Queens Library at Seaside, 116-15 Rockaway Beach Blvd. (718) 634-1876; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Teens 13 to 17 can sing their hearts out.

Zumba class: 6 pm. Queens Library at Lefrak City. See Monday, Jan. 10.

TUES, JAN. 25

Action Racket Theater: Queens Library at Broadway, 40-20 Broadway; (718) 721-2462; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens are introduced to theater arts.

WED, JAN. 26

Action Racket Theater: Queens Library at South Jamaica, 108-41 Guy R. Brewer Blvd. (718) 739-4088; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens are introduced to theater arts.

Wii tournament: Queens Library at Windsor Park, 79-50 Bell Blvd. (718) 468-8300; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Prizes awarded for first and second place. For children ages 9 to 13. Pre-registration required.

THURS, JAN. 27

Introduction to Power Point:

Daring to design

Reality TV gets real at the New York Hall of Science this month.

On Jan. 15, engage your creative and inventive side with tabletop design challenges, just like in the PBS Kids! show "Design Squad Nation."

In addition to hands-on activity challenges, you and your child can view clips from upcoming episodes of "Design Squad Nation," participate in trivia time, get photos and autographs with the show's hosts, and cheer on a large-

scale design challenge.

"*Design Squad Nation*" Family Day at the New York Hall of Science [47-01 111th St. near 47th Avenue in Corona, (718) 699-0005], Jan. 15 from noon-5 pm. Admission. For info, visit www.nysci.org.



FRI, JAN. 28

Intergenerational plant project: 4 pm. Queens Library at Hollis. See Friday, Jan. 21.

Wii Challenge: 4:30 pm. Queens Library at Lefrak City. See Friday, Jan. 7.

SAT, JAN. 29

Peking Opera performance: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Concert to celebrate the new year.

A tribute to Johnny Mercer: Queens Library at Bayside, 214-20 Northern Blvd. (718) 229-1834; www.queenspubliclibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

Diane Hoffman performs Mercer selections.

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GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS



true years ago when cookies were used primarily to remember passwords or the contents of a shopping cart.

Today, cookies are both more prevalent and more powerful, allowing marketers to target ads based on what a person does online. For adults, this might be inconsequential or even helpful. If you're researching a new car, you may be OK about seeing ads for comparable models. Yet, even adults often feel uneasy about customized advertising related to personal issues, such as weight loss or fertility.

Targeting kids raises even more concerns because their defenses against marketing aren't fully formed. The current law protects children under 13, who are supposed to get adult permission before registering

Should you give a child a cookie? That's the question privacy experts have been asking ever since an exposé in the Wall Street Journal revealed that many popular websites for children surreptitiously download dozens of cookies and other tiny programs that track what kids are doing online.

Cookies have always been controversial. The companies that use them insist they are benign, bits of software that allow them to customize visits to their websites. That may have been

with any website. Now, Common Sense Media has asked that legal protection from tracking software be extended to anyone under 18. A full explanation of its campaign is available at www.commonsensemedia.org/privacy, but here are the highlights: Simplify privacy policies so it's easy to understand what's being collected and how it will be used. Instead of the prevailing opt-out policies, sites aimed at minors should adopt opt-in policies so teens can make deliberate decisions about sharing information.

Those ideas do sound like common sense. Unfortunately, marketers are unlikely to abandon such lucrative practices without a fight, so parents must help children think through and manage their privacy. Online privacy is easier to understand if parents differentiate between personally identifying information and personally embarrassing information, suggests Danah Boyd, a researcher at Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society. To get a grip on cookies and other tracking software, parents may also want to add personal behavior information to that list. Here are some issues that need to be considered:

Personally identifiable information

This is the information that allows someone else to identify — and locate — your child. In addition to name, address and phone number, it may include the name of your child's school or travel team. Children who aren't mature enough for social media should have a simple rule about this information: Don't give it out online without permission.

Personally embarrassing information

Once a child joins a social network, sharing some identifiable information is inevitable, though teens should use every available privacy setting on sites like Facebook. At this age, dis-

cussions should focus on information that could be embarrassing, the kind of information that will make your child — or you — cringe if it falls into the wrong hands. Talk often about how information that's shared online can take on a life of its own because other people can replicate, distribute, and search for it. Google your child so she can see what's leaking through despite her defenses.

Personal behavior information

Doing anything online leaves clues about personal interests. Marketers are eager to have this information, particularly about young people who haven't yet made firm commitments to products. In fact, the opportunity to collect information about prospective customers is part of what makes so much of the web free. Instead of paying for what a website offers with money, people pay by offering up bits of information about themselves.

If a young person understands this, she can make informed decisions about when to share information. For example, a teen searching for college information may want to see ads from similar schools. Teach your child to check for a privacy policy before using a new website. Unless there's a compelling reason, encourage your child to use the most conservative settings, if only to minimize the number of cookie crumbs clogging your computer.

Obviously, the conversation about cookies is part of a larger discussion about what kind of information should be kept private. If, as Boyd observes, privacy means having control over who knows what, parents will want to be sure their children have access to the very best privacy tools so they can decide for themselves whether they really want that cookie.

Carolyn Jabs, MA, has been writing about families and the Internet for over 15 years. She is the mother of three computer-savvy kids. Other Growing Up Online columns appear on her website www.growing-up-online.com. Copyright, 2010, Carolyn Jabs. All rights reserved.

Cookie monsters?

Making sense of your child's online privacy

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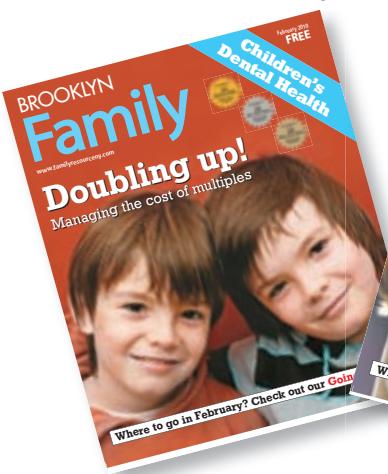
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New & Noteworthy



Look of Lazoo

Get the look! Your child will be super warm — and adorable — in these playful sets by Lazoo.

From hats with playful monkeys to pretty ballerinas to matching scarves and gloves, your little one will be coordinated to a tee.

The line, inspired by the company's popular children's books, features more than just outerwear, including clothes, backpacks, and finger puppets that incorporate different tactile experiences on each — from sewn-on appliques on one shirt to varying textures on others.

Find it at Babies 'R Us. If you like the look, you can also stock up on Lazoo's stuffed animals and activity books.

For info, visit www.lazoo.com.

'Pop-Up' and listen

This is a must-have.

The Brooklyn-based Pop-Ups, fronted by the smiley Jacob Stein and Jason Rabinowitz, have gained buzz recently for their new album, "Outside Voices," which tells musical tales of whimsy and childhood adventure in a range of influences, from '80s synth-pop and reggae dancehall to indie-pop and classic soul. It's a journey through New York's synth-beat subway trains, a balloon ride over Prospect Park, a big wheel rally down your childhood block.

It's not just fun to listen to, but educational, in a silly way, as it teaches how to draw an ape with shapes, the names of over 40 different pastas, and the difference be-



tween indoor and outdoor voices.

If these kinds of things are important to you, the album was recently recognized with a National Association of Parenting Publications Award for best music, and is on the Top Ten of 2010 lists of Time Out New York Kids, The Fids and Kamily Awards, Out with The Kids, and one of the Top Ten Kids Debut Albums by Zoogobble.

For info, visit www.thepopups.com.



Monkeying around

For an eco-friendly, colorful version of the traditional sock monkey, check out this green offering from Blackbird Fashion.

Made from recycled sweaters, each aptly named Sweater Monkey is one of a kind.

They come in a variety and mix of colors, from green and red to pink and purple to red, yellow and orange, and are simply adorned with stripes. For easy cleaning, just throw in the wash inside a pillowcase.

At 12 inches tall, they're sizeable, but still small enough to hold. Your little one won't want to let go!

Sweater Monkey by Buy Green (\$22). For info, visit www.buygreen.com/sweater-monkey.aspx.

Giddy up!

Is your littlest future rodeo queen going barefoot?

Get her some stylish cowgirl booties hand-crocheted out of soft 100-percent cotton yarn.

These booties for kids up to 6 months old, are hand washable, hang dry because even the daintiest cowgirls make a mess. Pair them



with Western wear for portraits, costumes, or just hanging around the ranch.

If pink isn't your thing, there are other cowboy booties to choose from, including traditional tan.

Pink cowgirl booties by Curious Workmanship (\$15). For info, visit www.etsy.com/couriousworkmanship.

Leave no wall bare

It's a jungle in there!

With these wall decals by Simple Shapes, that's a good thing.

The fun designs feature trees with hanging monkeys, fawns and perched birds and owls. The tree decals can even be coordinated with standard shelves so that the branches and shelves align for a fun, fresh look in any room.

Other designs include snowflakes, for a wintry theme, and a city skyline. There's even decals for grown-ups, including vintage photo frames and a dry erase calendar.

Don't find one you like? The decals can be customized, too, so they



can fit any wall and taste.

Simple Shapes wall decals range from \$68-\$88. For info, visit www.etsy.com/shop/SimpleShapes.



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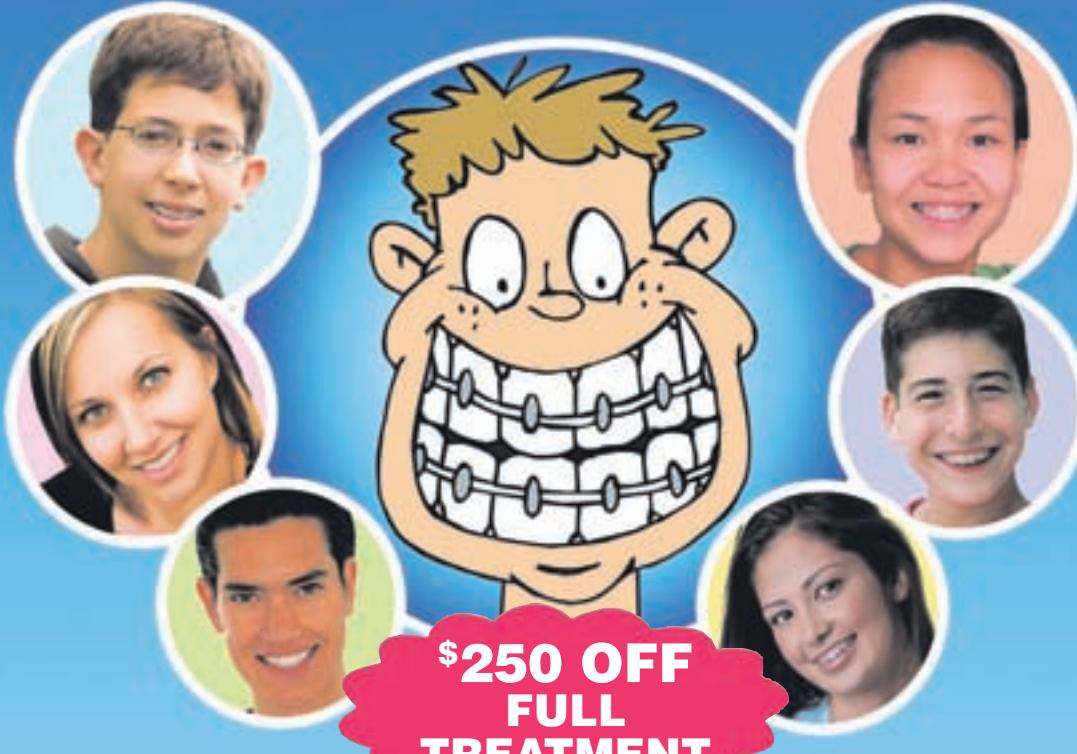
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