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Letter from the publisher

Preschool beginnings

The first day I left my daughter at daycare/preschool was quite traumatic. I had looked quite carefully for just the right program to fit our needs and our budget and one that was as convenient as possible, considering that



we lived in one community and I worked in another, and the bus was our only means of transportation. That meant the stroller, the bags and my 2 year old on a bus that only ran every 30 minutes. It meant leaving my girl with strangers and hoping/trusting that they would be as nurturing as they appeared and that she wouldn't be upset when I said good-bye.

I stayed with her for about 15

minutes, all the while watching her while she sat on "Tessie's lap." Tessie was the oldest worker there and, I thought, a very comforting and experienced child care giver. She had her own children and in fact, was a grandmother as I recall.

She oozed ease and trust. My daughter seemed to love her right away and went to her immediately after hearing the words "Come to Tessie." I was so relieved to see that, and was thrilled that I had found this wonderful place with these obviously caring and professional people on staff.

The moment had arrived when I would walk out the door and leave my baby girl there to be cared for

by others, outside of our family/our home, for the first time. My apprehension was enormous and my chest was constricting. I said good-bye to her and walked to the street outside and immediately burst into tears. She was fine. No problem at all. Hadn't even noticed me leaving, it seemed, but I was a wreck. I had been so busy worrying about her and how she would react that it hadn't occurred to me that it was me who was going to be most affected. It was a definite hurdle to leap over that day, the day my daughter began school and a life and experiences outside of our family and our surroundings.

How important was it? It was enormous for both of us. That day began the natural separation and introduction to the world of social interaction so necessary for a child's

growth and spirit and so necessary for her Mom's as well. I returned to the adult world of working and interacting with other people and she began the process of self-realization that happens to children when they go to school.

This issue has a special focus on preschool. We hope the articles and the Directory will be helpful to those of you who are sending your child for the first time and who are contemplating your options, and we wish you an easy transition that leaves both you and your child in a comfort zone.

Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher

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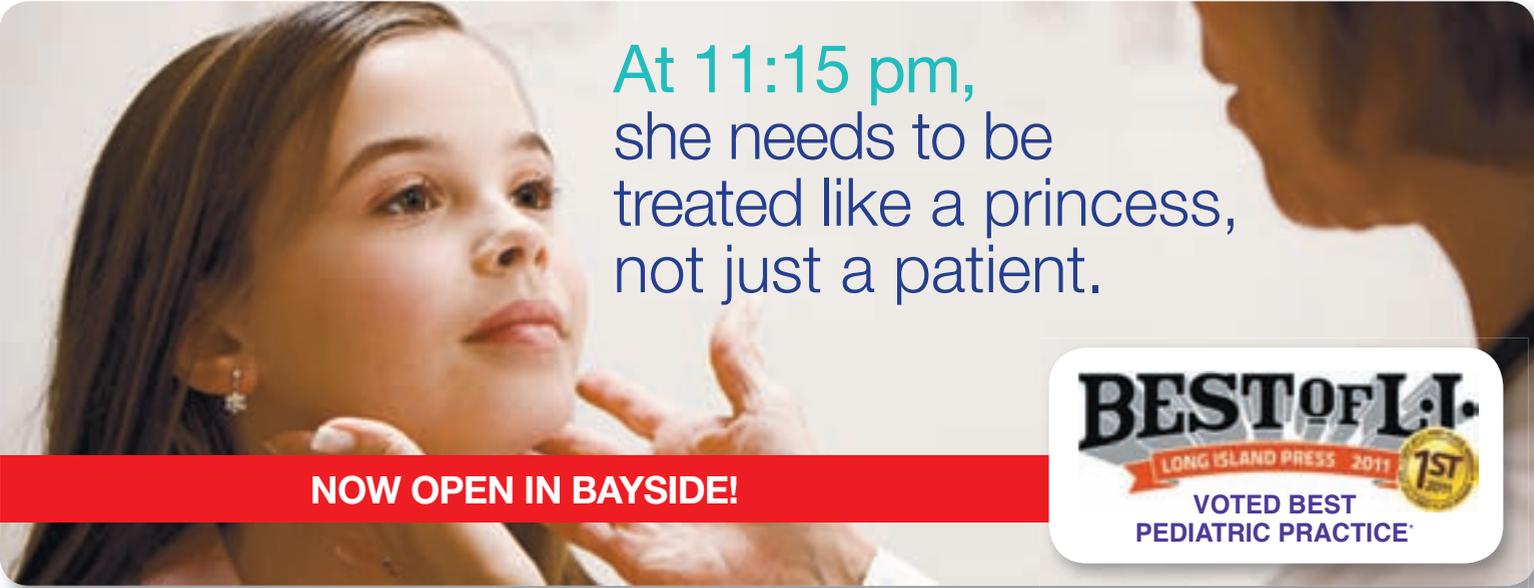
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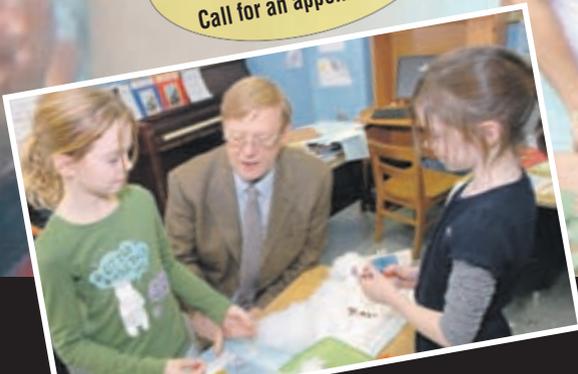
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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Take the BITE out of summer



Unfortunately, summer means bugs are abounding in the five boroughs. Although it's only the start of July, mosquitoes and bedbugs are already driving New Yorkers crazy. Here are some tips for preventing insect infestations in your home — and keeping your family healthy and itch-free this season!

Mosquitoes

"June had barely begun when my yard was inundated with mosquitoes. With the kids going in and out of the house all day, it was too easy for one or two to get in," says Michelle Goodstein, a mom of two from Bensonhurst, Brooklyn. "My son is allergic to the mosquito bites, so when he gets one, the affected area becomes inflamed and very red. I'm already sick of them, and summer has barely begun!"

While all mosquitoes are bothersome, those that carry the West Nile Virus are much more serious. The disease has even been known to be fatal in some cases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say that any mosquito which flies has the potential to be a carrier. So what can we do to protect ourselves?

Mosquito bite prevention

- Use an EPA-registered insect repellent such as those with DEET, Picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus, even if you're only out for a short time.
- When weather permits, wear long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors.
- Avoid peak mosquito-biting times — from dusk to dawn — which is when many species of mosquitoes bite the most. Be vigilant in using repellent and protective

clothing during evening and early morning. You may even want to consider avoiding outdoor activities during those times.

- Drain standing water, which is where many mosquitoes lay their eggs. Get rid of items in your yard that hold water.

- Keep mosquitoes outside with well-fitting screens on both windows and doors.

- Dead birds may be a sign that West Nile virus is circulating. Report dead birds in your neighborhood to local authorities. More than 130 species of birds have been infected with West Nile virus, but not all infected birds will die.

Bedbugs

Unfortunately, bedbugs are not only still prevalent in the city — their population is growing.

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal said that New York City is ranked number one in the nation for infestations. And according to entomologist Bob Young, the increase is two to three times of what we had last year. This summer, the population is only projected to rise. It's a bigger problem each day, and since we first started seeing them back in 2000, complaints of bedbugs have risen 10- to 15-fold, says Young.

Some of the reasons for the resurgence are the hot, humid weather that summer brings, combined with kids who go to camp, college students returning home, and people vacationing. Hotels, schools, and even gyms are all places where bedbugs proliferate. Check the bedbug registry to see which places in your

neighborhood (as well as hotels you may be traveling to) have reported bedbug infestations. Visit <http://BedBugRegistry.com>.

The flagship Niketown store, The Empire State Building,

the Time Warner Center, the Reebok Sports Club/NY (which boast patrons such as Jerry Seinfeld and Chris Rock), and the Brooklyn district attorney's office have all reported bedbug problems.

Signs of bedbugs

- Red stains on bedding or mattress
- Bedbug feces on bedding or mattress
- Dead bedbugs on bedding or mattress
- Bedbug exoskeletons on bedding or mattress
- An unusually sweet aroma. (Some people have described this smell as similar to that of raspberries, a granola bar, or almonds.)
- Unusual bite marks on body

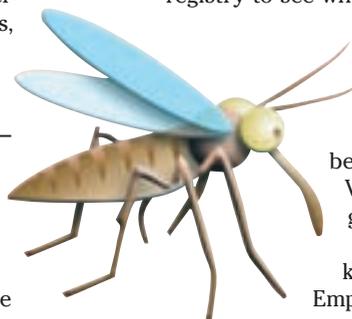
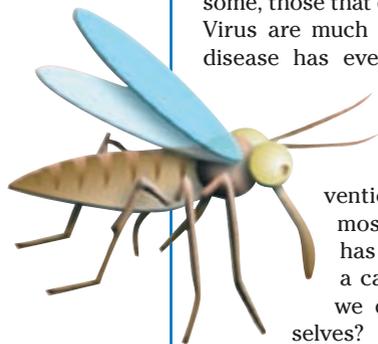
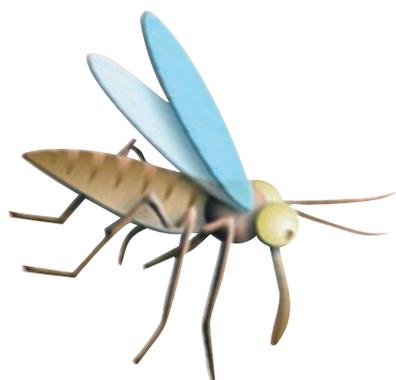
Bedbug prevention

Since bedbugs are commonly acquired when traveling, it's imperative to check for the signs of infestation after you return. It is also important to avoid buying used material from flea markets or second-hand clothing stores.

Getting rid of bedbugs

Ridding your home of these pesky creatures is not simple, and it's best to call an exterminator since they are said to be able to live up to a year without a meal! But there are some things you can do on your own. Start by thoroughly washing, vacuuming and cleaning all surfaces and bedding in hot water. Vacuum mattresses, seal them in plastic, and leave them outside in the hot sun for as long as possible. Steam clean all carpets and rugs. Spray cracks in walls, floors, and crevices with insecticides, but not on bedding where it can be harmful to humans.

Danielle Sullivan, a Brooklyn-born mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years, and was recently honored with a Gold award for her health column by the Parenting Publications of America. Sullivan also writes for Babble.



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NEWBIE DAD

BRIAN KANTZ

Choosing a new pet

Our family dog passed away last spring and our elderly goldfish met his maker shortly thereafter, and so the last year has been the first extended period of petlessness in my life. (Yes, the spell-check flagged “petlessness,” but I’m going with it anyway. You know what I mean.)

Truth be told, our two boys don’t seem overly concerned about the petlessness of our lives. They don’t beg for a dog every time they see a Purina commercial on TV, and they don’t make any melodramatic promises about feeding and taking care of a puppy if only we could get one, pretty, pretty, please. They haven’t asked to go to the pet store or to the county fair to buy or win a replacement fish. And, truth be told, part of me is kind of enjoying this little break from the daily chores associated with pet ownership. (We all know who actually feeds and cleans up after the dog — good old dad.)

Still, another part of me does think that it may just be time for a new pet. A family does need a pet, right? What kind of a dad would I be if I denied my boys the companionship of a furry, feathered or scaly creature? Who am I to stand in the way of all the cherished childhood memories that go along with owning a domesticated animal?

We always had a dog while I was growing up — and, at various times, fish, guinea pigs and hermit crabs. And I can tell you a story about each one of those special animals. In fact, as I size up what type of pet might be best for our family now, I’ll tell you a little bit about the pets of my past.

Dogs

Sorry cat owners, dogs are the classic American family pet. Our first family dog when I was a kid was a Chesapeake Bay Retriever named Lucky. Built with 120 pounds of pure muscle, Lucky was one of the last

of the suburban yard dogs. When I tell people today that my childhood dog lived in a wooden doghouse out in the backyard, and was out there in rain, sleet, and snow, they say, “Aw, how mean.” Well, let me tell you, that dog was not made for the indoors. In fact, I remember one day when my mom tried to pull him inside the house on a leash as he cut toenail tracks in the wood floor while straining to stay outside. He was a great dog.

Pro: Dogs are super fun. They’ll go with you on a walk, fetch a ball, and eat any spoiled meat — no matter how foul and nasty — from your refrigerator. Loyal to a fault, they’ll guard your house while you are at work.

Con: Loyal to a fault, they may shred your house to pieces while you are at work in a fit of separation anxiety.

Cats

I never owned a cat in my life, so I’m probably biased, but I do have to say this: when you look in a dog’s eyes, you can tell if it is friendly or mean. When you look into a cat’s eyes, you have no idea. To me, that’s a little scary.

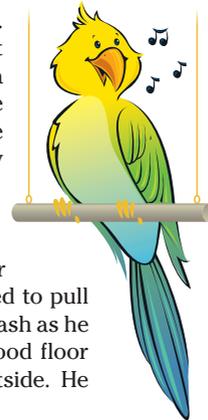
Pro: Cats go to bathroom in the same little litter box every time. That sure beats hunting for dog poop in every corner of the backyard.

Con: My wife is allergic to cats, so that’s that.

Fish

Pro: The kids did love watching their dearly departed goldfish, Grady, swim in his tank. And feeding him fish flakes was a task the kids could handle.

Con: If you introduce a few new fish to the tank, and you’re not careful, one of the fish will eat all of the other fish. Also, if you’re not careful, three months go by in a flash, and you realize that you can’t see the fish through the green algae. Is Nemo still alive in there?



Birds

Pro: They talk. My wife had parakeets as a kid, and says that they taught their birds a few words. That’s pretty neat.

Con: My sons teaching a bird a few choice words may not be so neat.

Guinea pigs

I never owned hamsters, gerbils, mice or rats as a kid, but I’m guessing that however I feel about guinea pigs can pretty much be translated to any other rodent. They’re all furry and smell like cedar chips.

Pro: Cute? Yes. Adorable? Absolutely.

Con: Cute? Yes. Adorable? Absolutely. Durable? Not so much. My childhood guinea pig, Sugar, was my pride and joy until one afternoon when our cousins visited. When I went to check on my sweet baby, I found her “sleeping” on her side, which was weird. Upon further inspection, I noticed a lollipop stick protruding from her mouth. The same lollipop stick my young cousin had been sucking on earlier in the day. Verdict: guilty.

Hermit crabs

When I was a kid, we’d visit my grandparents in Ocean City, MD, every summer. For my brothers, the highlight of the trip was time spent at the beautiful beach or at Trimper’s Amusement Park. For me, it was the eight-hour ride back home with the hermit crab I had bought for \$1.99 at the surf shop.

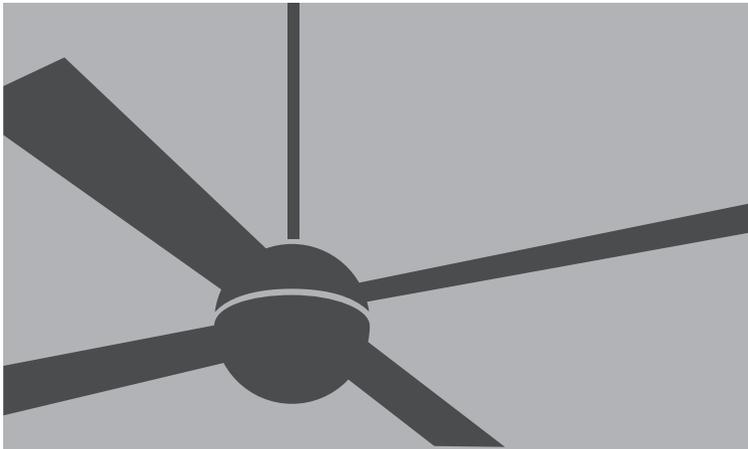
Pro: Totally easy to take care of.

Con: Short shelf life. These guys lasted just long enough for me to need to pick up a new one the following summer.

So, there you have it. Six great animals to choose from — all with pros and cons. Now, I just have to decide which is right for our family. Of course, an ant farm doesn’t sound too bad either.

Time heals all wounds, but Brian Kantz won’t forgive his cousin for murdering sweet Sugar (Just kidding!). Visit Brian online at www.briankantz.com or e-mail thenewbiedad@yahoo.com.





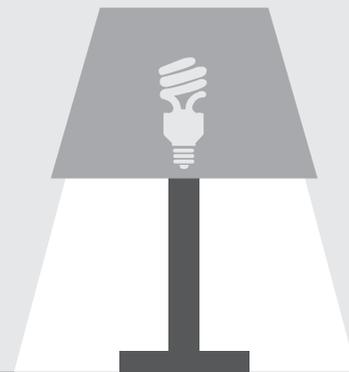
ceiling fans can improve energy efficiency...

- a. in the summer
- b. in the winter
- c. in both summer and winter

answer: c

which of these will *not* reduce your electricity use?

- a. replacing light switches with dimmers or motion sensors
- b. focusing light where it's needed instead of lighting a whole room
- c. removing lamp shades
- d. keeping bulbs and fixtures clean



answer: c

an efficient way to keep your home cool in the summer is to...

- a. close shades or drapes to keep out the sun's heat
- b. leave your a/c on all the time so it doesn't have to cool a warm house
- c. leave windows open for a breeze, even when it's hot out



answer: a

what is the recommended setting for your a/c thermostat?

- a. 80°
- b. 78°
- c. 72°
- d. 60°



answer: b

Choosing a PRESCHOOL



BY LAURA VAROSKAK-
DEINNOCENTIIS

Choosing a preschool that fits the needs of your family may seem daunting. There are many programs out there, each offering their own unique style and perspective, all claiming to be “the best.” Do not be swayed by schools that entice parents with unprecedented academic achievement, state-of-the-art equipment, or the latest educational trend. Above all, preschoolers need a safe and comfortable place in which to learn, while also building socialization skills with peers. Knowing your child, and yourself, is the key to successfully navigating your way through the process. Beginning the journey with an open mind and a clear plan will also help eliminate unnecessary stress and make the search more enjoyable.

Plan ahead

Start by making a list of local licensed preschool programs. Most New York City preschools begin their application process several months to a year before your child will start school. Call programs that you might be interested in to find out their application deadlines and minimum age requirements. This will shorten your list right off the bat.

Know the basics

Location, cost and operating hours are three very important considerations when deciding where to send your child. Some programs offer early drop-off and late pick-up options for parents who work long days. Others are not flexible with their hours. You may find a preschool with a stellar reputation, but

if the tuition costs more than you make each month and you and your little one need to travel two hours by bus, train and ferry to get there, forget it!

Research

After narrowing down programs that are affordable, conveniently located and accepting applications in your child's age group, start asking questions. Call the director and request some information about the program: Is it accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children? What is the educational philosophy? How many children are in each class? Are the teachers trained and certified? Is there frequent teacher turnover? Talk to other parents about their experiences. Hang around outside the school at dismissal and introduce yourself to others. Observe the children: Do they look like they enjoyed their time at school? Listen with an open mind. If you like what you see and hear, schedule a tour of the school.

Prepare for the tour

Think about your child. Would she benefit from a child-centered program, or one that is more teacher-directed? Does a large, active classroom seem more conducive to learning than a smaller, more nurturing environment? Do you have specific needs regarding toileting, diet or napping for your child? Make a list and write down questions to ask while on the tour. Remember, it will be your school community, too. If parental involvement and a strong family-school relationship are important to you (and they should be), inquire about opportunities for parents as well. All preschools should have an open door policy.

Tour

Visiting a school is one of the best indicators of whether the program is a good fit for your family. From the moment you walk in the door, keep your eyes and ears open. Do you feel welcome? Safety is critical in a preschool setting. Look to see if the children are well supervised. Are they happy and engaged? How are the relationships between teachers and students? Are the children playing together, practicing taking turns, or are they fighting? How does the teacher deal with conflict resolution?

Popular early childhood educational approaches

Bank Street

Less structured than some other programs, the Bank Street Development Interaction approach allows children to make their own choices in the classroom, while interacting with a wide variety of materials, ideas and people. This helps a child discover things in her own way, at her own pace.

The curriculum is based on the idea that children make sense of the world by actively studying it. Teachers encourage questioning and exploration as children start to make connections between their ideas and the surrounding environment.

Creative Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum balances both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning, with an emphasis on responding to children's learning styles and building on their strengths and interests. Play is considered children's "work," which prepares them for future academic learning. Teachers support active thinking and experimenting as children explore the world.

High Scope

Designed for children who need more individualized attention, the High Scope program implements a cognitive approach to learning, and values the working relationship between teachers and children. It stresses the idea that children need active hands-on experiences with people, materials, ideas and events in order to thrive. The curriculum is built around five main content areas: language, literacy and communication, social and emotional growth, physical development, health and well-being, and arts and sciences.

Montessori

The Montessori method encourages child independence and self-direction.

The teacher acts as an active observer, preparing the classroom to best suit the individual student's needs. Children value diversity and practice respect for self, others and the world around them.

Self-esteem is nurtured as children master skills and move on to the next developmental level in their work. In addition to language arts, mathematics, science, and cultural studies, the Montessori Method emphasizes sensorial and practical life work.

Reggio Emilia

The Reggio Emilia approach is a collaborative effort, involving teachers, students, parents, and community members. It emphasizes children's symbolic relationships.

Teachers develop a project-based curricula based on students' interests, and support learning through observation, dialogue, and documentation of children's work. Learning is an ongoing process as children build relationships with others while making connections between ideas and their environment.

Waldorf

The Waldorf approach embraces the whole child — body, mind and soul. Early childhood educators model appropriate behavior, and children are encouraged to imitate what they see. Teachers also support physical, emotional, intellectual, and artistic growth by designing curriculum based on children's stages of development and offering many opportunities for creative and imaginative play.

Is there an outdoor play space?

Take notes during your observation period to help you remember the details when you're comparing programs later on. During the question-and-answer session, gather as much information as possible — and do not leave with unanswered questions. If the tour is for parents only, be sure to schedule a time for your child to visit so you can observe her in the environment.

Decide

Each school will most likely highlight its philosophy. Do not let names like Montessori, Reggio Emilia and Waldorf confuse or overwhelm you. There are many methods of teaching, and all you need to figure out is which one would best suit your child's personality and learning style. As your child's first teacher, you are an expert at this.

Apply

Depending on where you apply, submitting an application does not mean your child will automatically be accepted. There are often waiting lists based on space availability or uneven gender or age ratios in the class. In this case, apply to a few of your top choice programs and wait patiently. If you strongly prefer one school, you may include a thank you letter, which also expresses your interest in the program.

Relax

As hard as it might be to wait for a decision, admissions directors do not like to be harassed by anxious parents. So take it easy and congratulate yourself on a job well done. If your child was accepted into a program and you have second thoughts, ask yourself why. Are you feeling guilty about sending your baby to preschool (totally normal) or does something not sit right with you? If the latter is true, trust your intuition. In the end, there are many wonderful preschool programs that will provide your child with a safe, fun and engaging learning environment.

Laura Varoscak-DeInnocentiis is a teacher and freelance writer. Her articles appear regularly in these Family Magazines and have won editorial awards from The Parenting Media Association. She holds Master's degrees in writing, education and psychology. Laura lives in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and is the proud mom of two sons, Henry and Charlie.



Preschool

DIRECTORY

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44-10 192nd Street, Flushing
718-888-9341 or www.crayonboxpreschool.com

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E.nopi

21-71 Steinway Street

Continued on page 14



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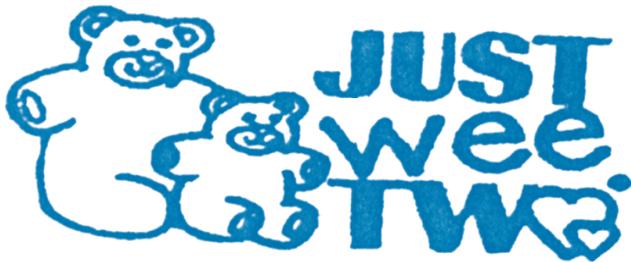
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Preschool

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Continued from page 12

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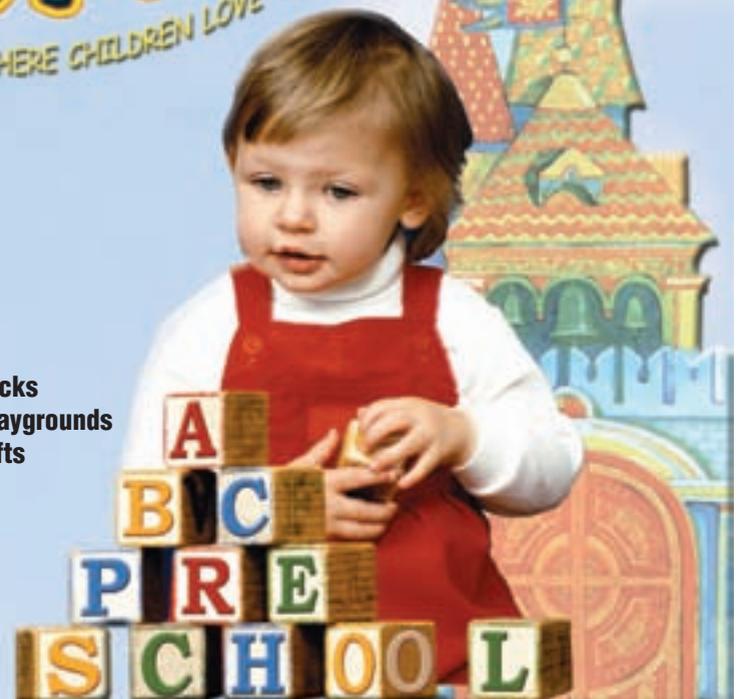
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Cultivate positivity

Some tips on how to raise happier children

BY JENNIE S. BEV

Raising children is about shaping traits and instilling values, not merely about fixing behaviors. Teaching children how to flourish should start with focusing on their strengths, not their weaknesses. By focusing on their strengths, parents and children are more motivated to work together as a team. But teaching positivity isn't synonymous with using positive reinforcements all the time. It's a tricky balance of reframing.

Every child is born with his own level of so-called "natural" happiness. Some were born with over-the-top cheerfulness, while others are born with less. This explains why some children are fussier, while others keep grinning from ear to ear, regardless of the mood of the surrounding environment. Happy kids tend to respond differently to failure than not-too-happy kids. Their strengths, however, should be distinguished from their natural level of happiness.

Whether your child has a high level of natural happiness or a low level, he must learn to fail.

"Children need to fail. They need to feel sad, anxious, and angry. When we impulsively protect our children from failure, we deprive them from learning skills," said Martin Seligman, PhD, the founding father of positive psychology and author of "Authentic Happiness."

By teaching him to fail, you actually teach him about positivity: the positive manner in which he should respond and experience the so-called "flow" state-of-mind. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, PhD examined this concept of "flow," and defined it as a state in which an individual is totally involved in a process or an activity in life that is more about pleasure or pain. Once a



child has passed the "pleasure" or the "pain" of failure, he can learn to find this feeling-free, or "flow," state.

Some children are more kinesthetic than fluent in linguistic, musical, or mathematical skills — or vice versa. Either way, it is a child's strength and parents need to acknowledge it. In "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mom," author Amy Chua said she prefers that her children focus on math or music, instead of sports — without even considering the children's strengths and interests. She would say "no" to sports, but "yes" to math or music.

In positive psychology, which is the scientific study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive, the child's strengths are respected by the parents. Parents don't weigh language, math and music skills as higher than sports, because they are all considered to teach necessary life skills. A "yes-or-no" approach is used limitedly.

In beginning to teach your children about positivity, make sure you limit the usage of the word "no" in your everyday vocabulary. Only use it when the child's actions present

danger, destruction or pain, such as when the child tries to touch a hot stove, tries to pinch another child, tries to pull a dog's tail, or tries to break a piece of furniture. You should be mindful of not overusing "no," especially when you're comparing activities, as a negative judgement has a strong long-term impact.

What you should convey, instead, is a judgement over the consequences of a choice. You should allow your children to learn from their mistakes, while always showing unconditional love.

Praises and punishments can shape and reframe a child's mind set over an action. Condemn the action, not the child. Always say, "If you keep doing it, I will take it away from you." Don't say, "You're bad. I will take it away from you."

In teaching your children right from wrong, always remember that love is unconditional, but rewards are earned. Love is priceless, but rewards are pricey.

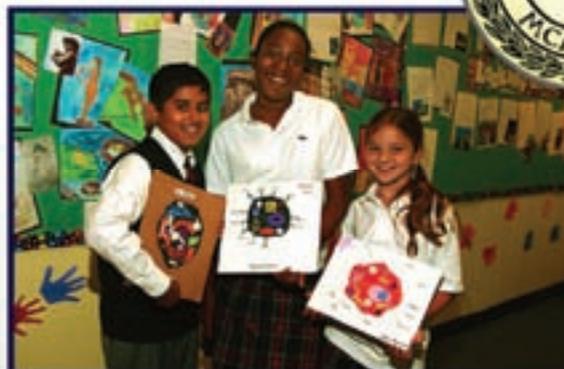
Jennie S. Bev, MS, is an educator, author and syndicated columnist based in northern California. Her website is www.JennieSBev.com.

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How to prepare your child for preschool

A little prep can avoid tears on day one

BY DENISE YEARIAN

When my son started preschool several years ago, he was in for a big adjustment. Up to that point, he had stayed home with his baby sister and me. Suddenly, he was plopped into a new environment, with a new person in charge, and lots of children all vying for the teacher's attention. The tears that followed that day told me one thing: I had not properly prepared my son for preschool.

By the time my second and third children came along, I knew how to prepare them for the experience, and it was smooth sailing.

Preschool is a wonderful time for growth in a young child's life. If the child is properly prepared, it can be an enjoyable experience. Here are a few tips to help your child ease into the routine.

•**Talk it up.** Weeks before preschool begins, start preparing your child by using positive and encouraging words. If you drive by the building where your child's school will be say, "Oh, look! There's your new school. You are going to have so much fun there!" Tell your child that he is growing up and this means he gets to spend more time learning and playing with other children his age. If you, as a parent, are ambivalent about your

child going, choose your words carefully. Even from a young age, children can pick up on what their parents are and are not saying!

•**Visit the school.** Several weeks before school begins, take your child to the preschool facility so he can familiarize himself with his new surroundings. Go as many times as your child needs to in order to feel comfortable. If you know which classroom your child will be in, visit it. If possible, let him meet the teacher and play with some of the toys in the room. Before leaving, take him to the playground, and let him spend a few minutes swinging, going down the slide and sitting



Long before formal education begins, your child should become familiar with books, puzzles, games, crayons, scissors and clay.

they meet new friends, have lots of fun and learn that their fears and worries were in vain.

• **Establish a routine.** If you haven't already, be sure your child has a daily routine. While it need not be as rigid as a day of preschool, structured play

sand in the sandbox.

• **Invite others to play.** If, up until this point, your child has had little interaction with those his own age, invite several children over to your house to play. It doesn't have to be a day-long event; one or two hours is a sufficient amount of time for children to begin learning skills such as toy sharing and peer politeness. A general rule of thumb is this: schedule a time when the children will be well-rested — early morning or after nap time. Also, plan a few activities, but allow the children some free play time. You might also include a snack for those hungry tummies.

• **Introduce school materials.** Long before formal education begins, your child should become familiar with books, puzzles, games, crayons, scissors, glue and clay. To ease into a structured environment, set aside time each day for you and your child to work on puzzles together, play games, color, cut and glue various items and mold things out of clay. Start with just a few minutes each day and gradually increase the amount of time you spend doing it. While you are participating in an activity together, tell your child that this is just one of many fun things he will be doing in preschool. Be alert for signs that your child is getting bored with a given activity, and stop before he gets too restless.

• **Read all about it.** One of the best ways to prepare your child for preschool is to read juvenile materials about first-day jitters. Library shelves and bookstores are stacked high with stories of children and/or animals that were afraid to go to school. Through books like these, your child will learn that he isn't the only one with fears and worries about attending school. Most importantly, he will be able to see the characters to the end of the story where

time in the morning, story time after lunch, and outdoor play at the same time every day will help your child establish a routine. The key here is consistency.

• **Go shopping.** Nothing builds excitement quicker than taking your child out to buy a new lunchbox, backpack, school clothes or other needed school items. Make a day of it by first stopping by the school, shopping a little, and then enjoying a fun lunch together.

• **Take a dry run.** The day before school begins, get your child up and out the door at the time he will need to be ready for school. If he is attending a morning program, take him for a doughnut after you have made the dry run to school. If he is attending an afternoon program, stop by for a special ice cream cone to celebrate his upcoming day.

• **Watch and wait...if necessary.** On the first day, if your child eagerly welcomes his new environment, give him a hug and tell him you will be back in a little while. If, however, your child seems uncertain about the experience, tell him you will stay, but only for a few minutes. During this time, introduce him to other children, show him some of the toys and pictures around the room, and help him get settled. When the time limit is up, give him a hug, reassure him of your love, and leave quickly. Although there may be tears, your child will more than likely stop crying and start enjoying himself soon.

Above all, remember that preschool is a time of growth — a time for your child to broaden his horizons, develop social skills and begin a love of learning. Keep the experience positive, and your child will have fun and eventually adjust to his new environment.

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

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SHARON C. PETERS, MA

Drama queen tween opposes her chores



Dear Sharon,

Our 12-year-old daughter is being asked to do a few household chores to help out. Nothing major, but small chores that we want her to do on a regular basis to help her learn and to give her a sense of responsibility — such as helping with the dishes, putting the laundry into the dryer from the washer, etc. She is pitching a fit about this and tells us that none of her friends have to do these things. I don't really care if that's true or not, because I feel it's important for her to contribute. What are your thoughts, and how can we successfully handle this?

Dear Parents,

Your question is on the mind of many moms and dads. There is no simple answer — as every child and family is different — but here are some ideas that might be helpful.

Twelve-year-olds often feel pressure from peers, hormonal changes and academic demands. As stressors increase, it is not unusual for tweens and teens to become emotional and “pitch fits” about many things. The refrain of “None of my friends have to do what you are telling me to do” is common and sometimes — but rarely — true.

Some parents make shared chores an important part of family life, while others choose not to for a variety of legitimate reasons. But, as you mentioned in your question, chores can be one of many ways to help children learn important life skills and de-

velop a sense of responsibility that can be useful.

Since children this age can be drawn to declare their maturity and independence through waging “power battles” with adults, it can be challenging to have discussions about chores go well. General proclamations from Mom or Dad such as: “You need to help out more around here,” “I am tired of doing everything,” or “I am not here to serve or clean up after you,” are common phrases that can easily fall on a young one's deaf ears. Such statements, although often true and/or coming from justified parental exasperation, are rarely effective.

Talks can go more smoothly if Mom or Dad begins by assigning one or two tasks at a time, rather than starting with a list of many things that need to be accomplished. It can also lower the chance of a “fit” and increase cooperation if parents explain several possible options and have the child choose which one or two she would like to try. Ongoing stress-free discussions over time can

provide the opportunity to alter one or more responsibilities, increasing the chances of having things go well for parent and child. Sometimes, it helps to set up a brief family meeting, so everyone gets a turn to discuss how chores are going.

Although chores seem like simple accomplishments — and they often are — it can still be important to offer positive feedback and appreciation for tasks that are completed well. Since one reason to assign chores is to build self-esteem, such adult response can be useful. A simple thank you with an explanation of how a child's contribution was helpful can mean a lot.

People who have read this column before know that I believe a calm and caring relationship between parent and child is the foundation for a healthy and happy adulthood. If tension increases at home because of undone chores and over time interferes with the closeness of relationships at home, I suggest postponing the distribution of chores until there is time and space to reconnect and talk anew.

Sharon C. Peters is a mother and director of Parents Helping Parents, 669 President St., Brooklyn (718) 638-9444, www.PHPonline.org.

If you have a question about a challenge in your life (no issue is too big or too small) e-mail it to Dear Sharon at SWeiss@cnglocal.com.

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Smarter summer

Tips to keep kids' reading and writing skills sharp

BY DENISE YEARIAN

Summer may be a recess from academic rigors, but it's no time for your children to take a break from written words. Here are 10 creative ways to keep kids' minds active all summer long.

•**Ignite his interest.** One key to sparking children's interests in reading is to find out what subjects and genres they enjoy. If your child likes video games, get a book on programming. If it's sports or mysteries, find authors who specialize in those areas. Carry this over to writing by encouraging your child to create a new sport. What would the rules be? Or, a new dinosaur breed — what

would its name be and what would it eat? If your child likes mysteries, suggest he write an alternative ending to a story he just read.

•**A family affair.** Don't assume your kids are self-motivated to read. Rally their interest in reading by reading to them. Children like to hear about heroes who are older than they are, but those books may be above their reading level. If your child is old enough, read a few paragraphs, pages, or a chapter, and then have him read to you.

•**Box up boredom.** Turn those books into box projects. After your child reads a book, encourage him to create a diorama of his favorite character's room, home, or a scene

that takes place in the story. He could also make an identity box filled with a character's belongings. What things would Encyclopedia Brown, for example, have in his box? A larger box makes a good puppet stage. Have your child make simple puppets from various materials and create a box stage on which to reenact the story.

•**Awesome authors.** Pick an author your child enjoys and have him read several of his books to compare and contrast themes and characters. Take this one step further by discovering the author's life, too. This will give your child insight into where the story and character ideas originated — how a character may have taken on the attributes of someone whom the author knew. Many authors have websites through which kids can e-mail questions to the authors and get responses. Some of the websites even have extension activities for the books.

•**Newspaper novelties.** Reading the newspaper seems like such an adult thing to do, but with a little creativity, it can be a non-threatening experience. Give your preschooler a crayon and have him circle certain letters in headlines — all the "A"s, for example. If he knows the entire alphabet, he can circle all 26 letters in order. Your older child may enjoy cutting out five unrelated pictures and creating a story that somehow connects them all. Don't forget to read articles that take in your child's interests — sports, animals, etc.

•**Audio adventures.** If you don't have a lot of time to sit down and read to your child, there are a number of audio books in all different genres that you can listen to together in the car. As you do, stop at a cliffhanger and speculate about what is going to happen next. This keeps the family dialogue going, and makes it a shared endeavor.

Reading and writing all summer long

Here are some additional tips to help keep kids reading and writing this summer:

•Enroll your child in a summer reading program at the library.

•Be a role model — let your child see how much you enjoy reading.

•Look for words everywhere, and encourage your child to practice reading in cookbooks, food labels, instruction pamphlets, comic books, joke books, magazines, etc.

•Provide daily reading time. Make sure your child's summer isn't so structured that he doesn't have time to read.

•Tally and record what he reads. Have him keep a list of the book titles he reads throughout the summer. This encourages him to set and attain reading goals. To

help your child synthesize what he reads, have him write a few sentences stating what character he liked best and why.

•Look for a connection between artwork and text. When your child is drawing and writing, make sure details match. If, for example, the picture has a beach umbrella, have him include it in his writing.

•Purchase special paper and writing tools to inspire embellishment.

•When reading to your child, have him act out certain scenes. When you read "Then the thunder rolled," have him make a thunder noise. When you read "And she fell asleep," have him act like he is sleeping. This engages your child's imagination and makes the story come alive.

Top
Tips



•**Discover diary.** The writing process doesn't have to be long to be fruitful, but it does need to be fun. At the start of summer, let your child purchase a journal where he can log his summer discoveries. As you take trips to various places, such as museums or science centers, have him write a bit about what he learned. A discovery made while at the store, or about a new food he tried at a restaurant can be a journal entry, too. By summer's end, he will have logged a storehouse of new adventures.

•**Wanna piggyback?** One really popular type of poetry is called "Pig-

gyback Poetry." This is when the author takes a well-known song or poem, such as "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," and translates it into something new, such as, "Take Me Out to the Bathtub," using the same rhythm and cadence. Have your child pick a song or poem he enjoys, and write his own piggyback. Novelty paper, pens and pencils may inspire him to embellish his work and create a keepsake.

•**Acting adventures.** Have your child write an adventure using the same characters from a book he's just read. Or, have him make up his own

character, or maybe project himself into his story. How will he conduct himself in the adventure? Then, create a backyard theatre with friends or siblings and put on the production. Another idea is to do a spoof of a movie or TV show with which he is familiar — something silly and fun. Bring out the video camera so he can see the finished project.

•**Tap into trips.** If you're going on vacation, have your child help plan the trip. Pick up a few travel books and let him research sites he would like to see. Also, look for materials that talk about the destination's his-

tory. Some places, such as Colonial Williamsburg, VA, may even have fiction stories associated with them, and would be a timely read. Staying local? Challenge your child to use a trip to a nearby theme park to research and compare those roller coasters with others around the country. Or, check out what is happening at local museums, science centers, or live theatres. Many of these topics can be used as springboards for reading and learning more.

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

Embody health and wealth

Save money by investing in yourself

BY CANDI SPARKS

The aphorism “the greatest wealth is health” has never been more true than now, because healthcare costs a fortune! We could all be richer if getting sick wasn’t so expensive. Each aspect of treating an illness — the doctor visits, lab work, tests, medication, hospital stays, and missing days of work — all have an effect on the patient’s recovery — especially his financial recovery.

Drug companies, insurers, doctors, hospitals, politicians, and the economy have all contributed to the higher cost of health care. Since 2007, more than half of filers for bankruptcy claimed high medical expenses as a major contributor to their financial disasters, and there are more uninsured and under-insured people than ever before. Fortunately, families are gaining some ground in the war against the high cost of healthcare. They are taking a proactive stand against illness by adopting healthier lifestyles. They are finding ways to embody health and wealth.

People everywhere are trimming the fat from their healthcare

expenses and saving money by taking better care of themselves and minimizing their risks of becoming sick, including 80-year-old Sophie, who changed her health regimen after being put on insulin injections when she was diagnosed with diabetes in 2009.

“Who needs a life of needles and popping pills, waiting for the next thing to get you? That stuff is for the birds,” says the New Yorker.

Sick of being sick, Sophie decided to take the injections and other medications while changing her condition through diet and exercise. She restricted her diet to meat, fruits and vegetables, and began working out at the gym a few times a week with a personal trainer. It took some time, but she is now off the medication. She chose to take control of her health. Needless to say, Sophie has a young attitude and does not look her age.

Elementary schools are now teaching students to sneeze and cough into their elbows instead of their palms in order to prevent the spread of germs. In addition, more hand sanitizers and tissues are being distributed by both schools and offices, since the common cold can cost an average family with insurance about \$100 — just tally the doctor co-pay, price of medicine, and lost wages for missing a day of work or paying a sitter. Without that insurance, the common cold would cost even more.

It’s well known that maintaining a healthy weight is one of the most important things you can do to keep yourself well. But a study released by “The Early Show” in 2010 shows that a person’s weight can also affect



People everywhere are trimming the fat from their healthcare expenses and saving money by taking better care of themselves.



how much money he or she makes. The study showed that women who weighed 25 pounds less than the group average earned about \$16,000 more per year. A woman 25 pounds above the average earned about \$14,000 less. On the other hand, thinner men made almost \$9,000 less than their average male co-worker.

“You can never be too thin or too rich,” says Erica, a lawyer in Queens who said she was promoted to partner after she dropped more than 10 pounds and dyed her hair blonde.

Take the first step

Walking the extra mile can help you keep your shape and stave off illness. Since there are 2,000 steps in a mile, theoretically, a person would have to walk five miles a day to burn off a pound. But of course, this doesn't seem fair to those of us who are hungrier after exercise. So try squeezing small walking sessions into your daily routine. Avoid using the phone to call a co-worker, and instead, walk to her desk. Or, take the long way to the water cooler and use the stairs instead of the elevator. It will be an adjustment at first, but you'll get used to it.

“At first, I felt a little weird, but I was motivated, so I got used to it — especially since I canceled my gym membership and needed to keep moving” says Helen, a secretary in Brooklyn who has been known to sprint around her office to burn calories. “I have been losing weight by watching what I eat and walking around more at work.”

She's also added hand weights to her office walks and is enjoying the compliments she gets while she is “circulating” at work and improving her health.

If your work day doesn't lend itself to walking five miles around the office, squeeze in as many steps as possible, and bend and stretch before and after work. It really does help!

If possible, walk or cycle at least part of the way to work, or do so during your weekend errands. Park the car a little farther away — it could be cheaper, or free. Window shopping at lunchtime can stimulate the eyes and heart rate — while saving money.

The importance of water

All this talk about new, healthy habits can drive one to drink — water, that is. Staying hydrated is an excellent way to stave off hunger and improve health. Water flushes toxins and fat out of the body. Whenever possible, keep Bisphe-nol A-free bottles filled with water on hand.

“The water comes in handy in this sweltering heat,” says Patricia, who makes it a habit to drink water throughout the day. “But, you have to map out a few restrooms along the way, just in case.”

She fills up her water bottle for the rush hour commute to her home in the Bronx. Her strategy prevents thirst and helps her to not spend money on expensive coffee drinks.

It takes 21 days to build a habit, good or bad. The way to live a healthier — and wealthier — lifestyle is by making small, healthy changes today. There are lots of free websites that can help you get started. Make healthy changes and keep the change in your wallet, where it belongs.

Candi Sparks is the author of “Can I Have Some Money?” a children’s book series sold on Amazon and Barnes & Noble. She lives in Brooklyn and is a mother of two. She is on Facebook (Candi Sparks, author) and Twitter (Candi Sparks, author). Visit her website, www.candisparks.com.

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Keep your wits when your child is in the ER

What to do —
and what to
ask — at a very
scary time

BY DR. VINCENT D'AMORE

At some point, all children are going to get sick or injured. It's an inevitable part of life. Often, it's going to occur at inconvenient times for you and your pediatrician. Murphy's Law requires that it happens at exactly 3 am, when you should be sleeping. As you can imagine, that's a time when you're not going to be the most alert; however, the cries of your child will compel you out of bed.

As a practicing board-certified emergency medicine physician, I am often the one you will see when you bring your child into the ER. I'd like to give you some advice to help navigate the experience and turn

it from a dragged-out, frightening event into a reassuring, harmless, and hopefully, painless one. Here are some tips to help you advocate for your child's care; avoid sleepless nights and large bills; and most importantly, avoid possible life-threatening harm to your child.

Often, the best advice is the one you already know, and that is, when your child has fallen or is grabbing his ear in pain, the first thing you do is call your trusted physician. Although, as parents, we'd rather not awaken anyone at 3 am, your physician would rather have you wake him and hopefully take care of the situation over the phone, if possible, than have your whole family in a crowded ER all night. So, make the

five-minute call, and hopefully, care can be initiated over the phone, and the trip to the ER avoided in the first place. We all know ERs are scary for adults, let alone children. So, if we can avoid that visit, that may be the best option. It's one of the reasons we opened Premier Care — we'd like parents to be seen by ER specialists in a friendly environment, without the long wait.

However, at some point, your physician will say: "Take him to the ER." That opens up a Pandora's box of fears — especially at 3 am — as to what's wrong with your child, and what will happen to him. Images of TV shows flash in your head as you drive to the hospital, register, and inevitably, wait to be seen. Hopefully, this advice will lessen those fears.

First, stop, take a breath, and calm your nerves. Although human nature imagines the worst, the fact is, thankfully, that 95 percent of the children who go to an ER will be discharged. That tells us that the vast majority of children will have self-limiting illnesses — such as the common cold — that will go away with the passage of time, and will not leave any lasting effects. The main job of the ER physicians is to find those really sick children who need to be admitted. Thankfully, the others (who owe a great amount of that former statistic to vaccines) can be safely discharged, possibly with medicine that will make them feel better until they actually get better. So, drive slowly and safely to the ER to avoid any accidents that can harm you and your family.

When you go to the ER and register, it would be great if the staff there had the time to focus solely on your child. It's what we parents all want; but the staff is often attending to critically ill patients, and while they would love to spend 10 minutes explaining what's going on



The first question parents should ask the doctor would be: "Is the test/treatment really necessary?"

with your child, they simply cannot. Medical and nursing school hasn't taught how to be in two places at once. Thus, parents often feel — correctly — that they have become lost in the shuffle.

Physicians tend to feel compelled to order tests and treatments that turn out to not be needed for the care of the child. I won't go into specifics for each test, but if parents can ask a few questions — as is their right — I think that the treating physician, who has their child's best interests at heart and wants to work with the parents, will often agree to do what's really needed, and avoid the pull for needless, painful, and even harmful tests and treatments. I would rather not have my child who has diarrhea stuck multiple times with a needle to "see" if he's a little dehydrated, if the treatment will be drinking Pedialyte, regardless of the blood test's results. If he's really dehydrated and cannot tolerate fluids, that's a different story. But to cause him pain from a needle — especially when multiple scientific studies show the testing doesn't clinically make a difference — would be useless and even cruel.

Thus, the first question parents should ask the doctor would be: "Is the test/treatment really necessary?" Physicians should explain the reason they are doing every test — and more importantly — what the result of that test will do to change their management. If an experienced physician truly feels that your child needs a CT scan of his abdomen because of the chance that he has appendicitis, then the result of the test really changes the plan of action. If it's positive, the child goes to the operating room; if it's negative, the child can go home. In certain instances, it's a great test. Often, some tests are falsely positive and require other tests to prove the first test was incorrectly positive!

After the physician has ex-

plained why he feels that the test is important, the next question is: "Does this test cause any harm in it's own right?" The cost of the test, aside from considerable expense, is often pain (from attempts at drawing blood) or even the likelihood of a life-threatening illness at a much later date in the child's life. We have recently been learning the effects of radiation from diagnostic tests, such as a CT scan, on children. There is a chance that the child is at an increased risk of getting cancer from the CT scan. Another study implied that the radiation to the growing child's brain might drop that child's IQ a few points. Certainly, we wouldn't want to risk those side effects on our children unless the test was truly needed.

The last question parents should ask is: "Can we try a more conservative way?" Once a physician has decided that nothing emergent is going on, then there are many courses of treatment. Often there are some that will make the child feel better until he gets better, such as anti-nausea medicine when he has a virus causing him to vomit. If an illness will go away on its own, does a child need an expensive antibiotic or a drug that will give him medicine-induced diarrhea? Sadly, physicians often feel that one way to make parents happy is to prescribe something — when really, nothing was needed in the first place. Asking this question removes the idea that the only way for the physician to make you happy is to write a prescription.

I think that if parents have a few basic questions in mind, then the physician will gladly work with them to avoid useless pain, large bills, sleepless nights, and — most importantly — possible life-threatening harm to your child when you need to bring him to the ER.

Vincent D'Amore, MD, is an emergency medical physician and author of "Common Sense: A Parent's Guide to a Harmless ER Visit." D'Amore grew up in Maspeth, Queens. He is a graduate of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and completed his post-graduate training at St. Barnabus Medical Center and Mount Sinai Medical Center. He had an emergency medicine residency at St. Lukes/Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan. D'Amore now works at Premier Care, a walk-in urgent care center in Maspeth. He currently resides in Long Island with his family.

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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Nutritious fuel for a family vacation

Life has certainly changed since you sang “Vacation, all I ever wanted, Vacation, had to get away” along with The Go-Go’s way back when. Vacation has taken on a whole new meaning. Whether you travel by plane, train or automobile, summer is the time that many of you take a break from your routine. Yet it is possible to continue to keep the family reasonably nourished while enjoying your holiday. Here’s how:

By car with the very young

Pack a variety of nutritious finger foods for children who are able to feed themselves. Containers filled with sandwich triangles, cheese cubes and cut-up fruits and vegetables can be easily pulled out of a cooler. Make sure they’re cut up into small enough pieces to prevent choking. Soft foods, such as berries, bananas and cooked vegetables are safest for children age 5 and under.

By car with school-age children

Involve your kids. “Grade school-age children can participate in the packing of healthy meals and snacks for the car ride,” says Kelly Sierra, a registered di-

etitian from suburban Chicago and mother of three. “Give each child his own set of containers to fill with food such as cheese, yogurt, vegetables, and dips — such as hummus or guacamole. Label each container with the child’s name.” Sierra recommends giving each child his own little cooler if space permits.

Give each child his own food bag. Help your child pack whole grain crackers and cereals, trail mix, and whole or cut-up fruit that can be packed into his own bag. Each child can graze as he wishes during the car ride. For example, just one quarter cup of California raisins counts as a serving of fruit, and is a tasty way to help meet recommended daily fruit servings.

Pack sandwiches.

“They hold up well, can be made in advance, and store flat in a cooler,” says Sierra, who has a private practice offering in-home nutrition counseling to families and individuals (KellySierraRD.com).

By plane with the very young

Comply with the Transportation Security Administration’s regulations. Packing snacks and meals for air travel can be tricky because of restrictions on food and liquids. Snack

foods and sandwiches must be wrapped properly and then scanned in the X-ray machine. Liquids greater than three ounces are not permitted — except for baby formula, breast milk and juice. Jarred baby food is also permitted.

By plane with school-age children

Fill up the backpacks. School-age children can use their backpacks to hold individual healthy snacks and meals. String cheese, whole or cut-up fruits and vegetables, sandwiches, and little containers of canned fruit can be packed easily.

Purchase a meal before you fly. It may be easier to buy a meal in the airport shortly before you board. There are a variety of healthy options available to you and your children. Look for restaurants that offer subs, sandwiches, and bagels — instead of fried fast foods.

Keeping food safe

However you travel, keep food safety in mind. A rule of thumb is to limit food kept at between 40 and 140 degrees to less than two hours. If the temperature is 90 degrees or hotter, this time limit changes to less than one hour. When traveling by car, the coolest place is where people sit — not in the trunk or back of an SUV.



In spite of food and nutrition challenges, you can provide your family with some semblance of healthy eats, while still enjoying good, summertime food. Bon voyage!

For more information on air travel regulations, visit www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/children/formula.shtm.

For more information on food safety, visit www.foodsafety.gov/keep/events/summervacations/index.html.

Christine M. Palumbo, RD, is the 2011 Illinois Dietetic Association Outstanding Dietetics Educator of the Year. She is also consultant to the California Raisin Marketing Board. Follow her on Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition.

Raisin Peanut Butter Spread

Just two tablespoons make a quick, healthy snack if there’s a jar of this in the fridge.

(Prep Time: 10 minutes. Cook Time: 10 minutes. Ready in 20 minutes. Yields about 1-1/2 cups. Makes 12 servings.)

INGREDIENTS:

3/4 cup raisins
1/2 cup apple juice
2 tbsp. honey
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 cup creamy peanut butter

DIRECTIONS: Measure raisins and apple juice into small saucepan and bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer for eight to 10 minutes or until raisins have absorbed all the juice. Stir in honey and cinnamon; cool slightly. Stir in peanut butter. Spread onto graham crackers, bread, mini-



bagels, apple slices or celery sticks.

NUTRITION INFORMATION: (per 2 tablespoon serving)
Calories 170, carbohydrates 16g, protein 6g, total fat 11g, cholesterol 0mg, fiber 2g, iron 2mg, sodium 100mg, calcium 21mg.



GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

Friend management

“True happiness consists not in the multitude of friends, but in their worth and choice.”

Samuel Johnson wrote that line long before Facebook was created, but the point is still worth making. In many ways, Facebook has hijacked the word “friend.” Turning friendship into something that can be created with a click makes it harder for young people to think about the subtle distinction between contacts, acquaintances, classmates, companions, buddies, mentors and authority figures. In the past, these people knew some things — but not others — about you. True

Facebook account are friends with their parents. Sixteen percent of the teens accepted a parent’s friend request because it was the pre-condition for having a Facebook account.

Having a parent as a friend may be a good idea for younger teens who are just getting the hang of social networking. At some point, however, too much parental scrutiny inhibits healthy development on Facebook, just as it does in other parts of a young person’s life. The quickest way to get a grip on this idea is to imagine your own parents lurking at the margins of your adolescent life and posting comments about whatever seemed inappropriate to them.

Making friends involves risk. In real life, you may trust someone who isn’t trustworthy, but micromanaging isn’t the best way for parents to protect kids. Instead, help kids develop the self-protective skills they need by starting conversations about the following topics.

- **Quantity.** A British anthropologist named Jill Dunbar has theorized that, because of the size of the human brain, people can sustain active social relationships with a limited number of people. Dunbar’s number is often quoted as 150, which, interestingly, corresponds with the 130 friends the average user has on Facebook. Most teens, however, accept hundreds of friends (although

few approach the 5,000 that Facebook sets as an upper limit). Often, young people have intuitive understandings that, once they reach a certain tipping point, what happens on Facebook is actually a performance in front of an audience filled with acquaintances. Your child is creating what marketing people call a “brand.”

- **Selectivity.** It might seem that the best way to keep Facebook meaningful would be to limit the number of friends a child has. That’s trickier than it seems. Research indicates that declining a friend request can lead to hurt feelings. Talk to your child about how he decides who makes the cut as a Facebook friend.

- **Boundaries.** For users between

the ages of 13 and 17, Facebook automatically sets conservative privacy settings so that much of what the users post won’t appear on their public profiles. That doesn’t mean it won’t leak into the wider world. Whatever your child posts shows up on the walls of friends — where people your child doesn’t even know can see it.

Fortunately, Facebook is developing a robust set of privacy tools. Many of the most interesting tools are in the “Customize Settings” section. Here, you and your child can fine-tune decisions not only about what information people can see on your child’s page, but also on what personal information you’ll allow on pages of friends. Suggest that your child disable the “Checking into Places” feature, which allows other people to post information about where they and your child are at any given moment.

Another feature allows users to make sub-groups of friends by going to “Create Lists” in the “Edit Friends” section. Then, you can decide whether a specific list should or shouldn’t see profile information, posts, or photos. To do this, find the “Customize” option in the categories under “Privacy Settings.” Clicking on this button will open a menu that includes “Make this Open To.” In that section, you can select “Specific People.” Just drop the “Friend List” into that slot.

• • •

Many parents want to monitor everything that happens on Facebook, but for older teens, that’s as counterproductive as insisting that you need to personally chaperone every party or outing with friends. Finding the kinds of friends that Johnson wrote about is something every child must do for himself. You can coach from the sidelines, offering plenty of advice and encouragement, but ultimately, you have to trust that your child will sort through the multitudes to find a few friends worthy of the name.

Carolyn Jabs, MA, has been writing about families and the Internet for more than 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.

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friendship depends on trust, which is something that develops over time, through shared experiences.

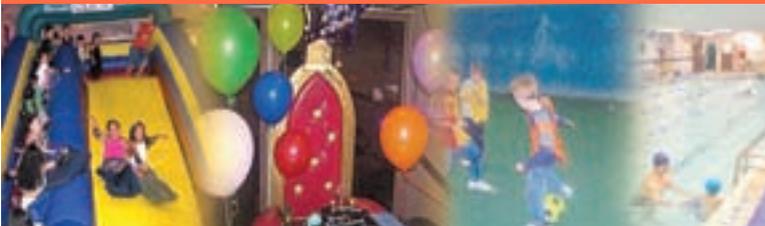
Parents know that friends who like their child as he is play an essential role in his healthy development. That’s why so much effort goes into coordinating play dates when kids are little, and supervising social occasions when they get older. These experiences give parents opportunities to talk to kids about how to recognize and nurture friendships.

Once kids go online, those conversations often end. That makes parents nervous when so many people ask to be a child’s friend on Facebook. According to a recent Kaplan survey, two thirds of teens with a

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Birthday Parties at The Brooklyn Sports Club

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Parties are affordable and you don't

have to be a club member to book! Please call for more information.

Christy's Gymnastics

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

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Continued on page 32

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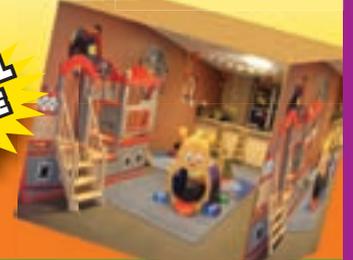
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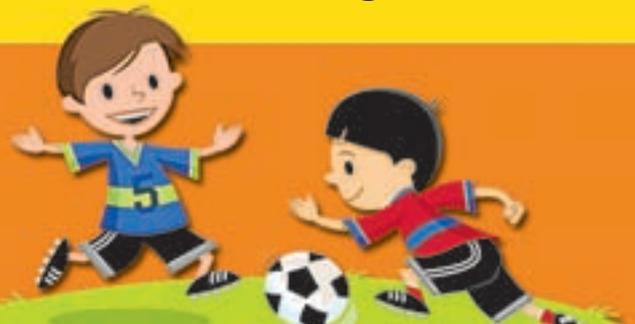
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DIRECTORY

Continued from page 30

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Break the silence

Helping children who suffer from selective mutism

BY LAURA VAROSCAK-DEINNOCENTIIS

Ellie began preschool when she was 4 years old. Each morning, she picked out her own clothes and packed a small purse filled with her favorite toys to bring with her. When she got to school, her friends and teachers greeted her, but Ellie never responded. Instead, she entered the classroom and stood motionless until someone directed her to an activity. She followed instructions, but was never engaged. Her teachers gave her time to warm up to the new environment, but after two months of school, Ellie still did not speak one word.

Her teachers were baffled. They recalled observing Ellie during a visit to her Manhattan home before school started. Although a bit shy in their presence, Ellie was quite animated — singing and dancing, telling stories to her mother, and playing peek-a-boo with her younger brother. In the classroom, her teachers couldn't get her to utter one

word. Most of the time, they said she appeared “like a frozen statue.” They contacted her parents to express their concerns.

Ellie's behavior did not make sense to her parents, and they blamed the teachers for her silence.

“What they described just wasn't our Ellie. At first, we thought she was just very shy, and it would pass as she felt more secure, but then we realized it was more serious than that,” remembers her mother. “We thought something traumatic must have happened at school to make her stop speaking. We mistakenly blamed her teachers for a lack of patience and understanding.”

At first, Ellie's parents and teachers did not realize she was suffering from a childhood anxiety disorder called “selective mutism.”

While relatively rare (affecting approximately seven out of 1,000), children diagnosed with selective mutism are unable to speak and communicate effectively in uncomfortable social situations, yet they speak in familiar settings in which they are re-

laxed. The child speaks proficiently in at least one setting, usually at home with parents or siblings. Most children who are selectively mute also experience social anxiety or have social phobia.

Mutism is highly functional for the child because it protects her from the perceived challenge of social interaction, thereby reducing anxiety. The extreme fear associated with communicating in public can paralyze a child and negatively affect her social, emotional, and physical health.

“In the beginning, Ellie said it felt like the words were stuck in her throat, choking her to the point that she got sick,” her mother recalls. “It was emotionally and socially devastating.”

While Ellie's parents first attributed their daughter's strange behavior to her teachers, another Manhattan family, Linda and Ron, misinterpreted their 3-year-old son's silence as manipulation and defiance.

“We didn't understand why Philip wouldn't answer us when we were out in public,” recalls Linda. “At home, we couldn't get him to stop talking. On the playground or at other events with extended family, he refused to speak. We tried everything, but nothing worked. We thought he was being disrespectful and stubborn because at home, we couldn't get him to be quiet.”

This is one of the many myths associated with selective mutism. Most selectively-mute children want to talk, but their anxiety is debilitating. In school, they are usually excessively shy and, generally, do not speak to teachers or peers. They may also have a fear of social embarrassment, or exhibit withdrawal, clinginess, compulsive traits, and depression.

In an attempt to control anxiety, selectively-mute children may avoid eye contact, fidget, demonstrate awkward body language, or remain immobile or expressionless when they feel uneasy.

The term “selective mutism” — which implies that the behavior is

Diagnosing it

Most children are diagnosed with selective mutism between the ages of 3 and 8 — early in the school career when children are expected to participate and interact with others. Therefore, as in Ellie's case, teachers are usually the first to recognize a problem.

While selectively mute children may exhibit signs of anxiety and inhibition as infants and toddlers, parents commonly misunderstand their behavior and think they are shy. As the expectation of speech becomes more evident, selective mutism can have a negative effect on academic performance, social relationships, and successful communication of one's needs.

In some cases, children may be misdiagnosed with developmental delays, speech and language delays, behavioral issues, or even autism, because of their silence

in the classroom. This false assessment can be detrimental to a selectively-mute child.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders outlines the following criteria:

- Consistent failure to speak in specific social situations despite speaking in other situations.
- The disturbance interferes with educational or occupational achievement or with social communication.
- The duration of the disturbance is at least one month.
- The failure to speak is not due to a lack of knowledge of the spoken language.
- The disturbance is not better accounted for by a communication disorder (e.g., stuttering) and does not occur exclusively during the course of a Pervasive Developmental Disorder, schizophrenia or other psychotic disorder.

Reports indicate that selective mutism occurs in approximately one percent of children; however, its prevalence may be higher because many cases remain undiagnosed.

According to a recent study, selective mutism is almost twice as common as autism, and is slightly more common in females.

The exact cause of the disorder is unknown, although it does have a strong genetic component. Many times, family members have a history of extreme shyness, anxiety, or social anxiety disorders, including selective mutism.

In general, children with this disorder have normal language skills and perform well, academically. They are curious, intelligent, and acutely aware of their surrounding environments — even though they have difficulty expressing themselves verbally.

not willful or defiant, but rather unable to be controlled by the child in select situations — was coined in 1994 and included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

In treatment

Ellie's mother is thrilled with her daughter's progress during the past six months.

"With the help of Ellie's doctor, therapist, and teacher, she is making small and steady strides. There is one close friend at school who she whispers to now. Overall, the other kids in the class are very supportive. They accept her and don't even seem to notice that she doesn't speak."

Philip's parents have him in therapy, but do not want him on medication.

"Putting him on drugs is the last resort. We have a much better understanding of his needs and will continue to work with him. He's in play therapy twice a week, which seems to be helping," his mother reports hopefully. "We want him to feel secure before he starts school in a couple of years."

Ellie and Philip are fortunate to have parents who did not continue to excuse their young children's behavior as shyness or defiance. The longer the mutism persists, the more a child relies on it as it develops into a conditioned response to social anxiety. If left untreated, selective mutism can have negative consequences throughout a child's life, including increased anxiety, depression, poor performance and/or underachievement in school and work.

By helping children lower anxiety levels, boost self-esteem, and provide comfortable social interactions on a regular basis, selectively mute children will gradually build the confidence and skills necessary to succeed in real world settings. Their silence will eventually be broken, and they will be on their way toward developing healthy social, emotional, behavioral and academic functioning.

Laura Varoscak-DeInnocentiis is an educator and freelance writer. Her articles appear regularly in Family Publications and have won editorial awards from Parent Publications of America. She holds master's degrees in writing, education and psychology. Laura lives in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and is the proud mom of two sons, Henry and Charlie.



Treating it

There are several treatment options, but it is imperative that the child is surrounded by a support team of parents, caregivers, teachers and therapists. As with all social anxiety disorders, it is important for the child to learn to replace negative thoughts with positive messages, especially in fearful situations.

Self-esteem-building techniques will help children concentrate on their attributes, instead of worrying about their fears of speaking. Behavioral therapy is an effective approach to treating selective mutism, because it focuses on acknowledging and understanding the child's anxiety — instead of pressuring her to speak. Becoming comfortable enough to speak in different social settings is a slow and gradual process, and is achieved through graduated exposure.

In the beginning of treatment, it is most important to de-emphasize

talking. Taking the pressure off of a child is the first step in establishing trust and building a solid foundation on which to build a treatment plan.

Let the child know that you understand her fear and want to help. If a selectively-mute child feels supported and understood before using words, she is more likely to succeed.

As selectively-mute children become more secure and familiar in a particular social setting, they may learn to communicate by non-verbal means, such as gesturing, nodding, or writing notes.

Those selectively-mute children who do speak may only use short, monosyllabic or monotone utterances, whisper, or speak in an altered voice.

Later, an individually designed hierarchy is constructed, ranging from least fearful social situation (making eye contact with a teacher during a home visit) to most fear-

ful (speaking to the teacher in the classroom). Once a selectively mute child succeeds in communicating in one situation, she can move on to the next at her own pace.

Socialization is important, and should be encouraged — as long as the interaction is not forced on the child. Frequent one-on-one or small group play dates with close friends in her own home will hopefully allow the child to practice relaxation, and ultimately, verbalization techniques in a safe environment.

In some cases, parents may decide to add medication to their child's treatment plan. Prozac is the most commonly used drug, and found effective when used in combination with treatment and a team approach from family and school. It's one of several drugs which work to increase the influence of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin has been shown to be at low levels in children who are susceptible to anxiety.



OUR RELATIONSHIPS

JOAN EMERSON, PhD

Does monogamy equal monotony?

A few things have gotten me thinking about how the idea of monogamy affects couples. For the past few weeks, I've been leafing through a book about the evolution of human sexuality, showing the expectation of monogamy is not natural for our species; while yet another public figure has risked all for sexual acting out; and a steady number of couples have been coming for counseling as a result of the husband's infidelities during the early years of marriage. It all proves that vulnerability to sexual variety is not exclusively associated with men of power, but instead is a life challenge that affects us all.

So, I delved more seriously into this book, "Sex At Dawn," which was recommended to me by a coworker, to try and better understand our ongoing battle to keep sex alive and well, and contained within our relationships. According to some heavily researched data, in early cultures, the norm for both men and women was a polygamous sexuality, and it's only in the last 10,000 years (the blink of an eye in the roughly 2,000,000 years since the emergence of our evolution-

ary lineage), that cultural pressures have forced us into an "unnatural" monogamous lifestyle.

Apparently, this adjustment takes its toll. In one study cited, 15 to 20 percent of American couples have sex fewer than 10 times per year, and the absence of desire is the most common sexual problem in the country.

The book, written by Christopher Ryan and Cacilda Jethá, says that dipping back into the old polygamous lifestyle still has the power to revive this lagging desire. For example, studies show that married men have lower testosterone levels than single men of the same age, and fathers of young children have even less. Men who are particularly responsive to their infants — irony of ironies for the moms — show even heavier testosterone declines.

For a man not feeling as strong a sex drive as in his past, even a brief chat with an attractive woman has been known to raise testosterone levels by an average of 14 percent — in spite of his love for, commitment to, and appeal of his wife. The book goes on to say that, while some cultures, like France's, recognize how unrealistic it is to think of a lifetime of sexual fidelity, and more comfortably accept affairs as just that (a strict novelty sexual experience, designed to provide excitement and passion, with no threat to the marriage) — our American culture will not take this view. Yet, affairs happen here just the same.

The theory presented in "Sex At Dawn" makes it much easier to understand — though not condone — the affairs that we read about in the news and see in many regular, loving couples. Even though the sexual escapades of public officials who have so much more to lose — most recently Rep. Anthony Weiner — seems really crazy, this same kind of sexual acting out, often via the Internet or a cellphone, is

certainly not unknown in the general, "normal" population. Reconciling these behaviors with our evolutionary history, looking outside of a marriage for novelty, makes them apparently biologically predictable.

The reckless disregard for what will happen upon discovery can be explained by understanding that our bodies' hormones respond to these temptations without our brains being fully aware of what's happening. And, in our culture, in spite of the "naturalness" of this acting out, pain and destructiveness always follow affairs and threaten the family that we are devoted to and want to preserve. A contented family with two parents is still the ideal place to raise children, and a close relationship with a trusted, loving partner is still the ideal solution to our existential and emotional needs. So, what are we supposed to do?

This is a real conundrum: If our biology really needs novelty to keep our sexual desire alive, and the realities of the child-rearing period of marriage are joyful in some spheres, but particularly challenging in the sexual arena, what is to be done when the mom is totally involved in birthing, nursing and caring for the offspring, and not even ready to resume sex, while the totally committed husband finds himself biologically responding to another? Although this is apparently normal, and even expected, it's also as painful as hell.

There's no easy answer to this problem, but the first step is probably an acknowledgment between the couple of the realities of living a monogamous life, the struggles it entails, a commitment to working it out, and an honest attempt for each to share what they need — sexually and emotionally — to get through these years. Talking brings us closer. Silence increases the chances of the unexpected taking us by surprise.

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



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Easy riders

12 travel activities to entertain and educate children

BY DENISE MORRISON
YEARIAN

If your family is traveling in the car this summer, keep boredom at bay and hone your kids' academic skills with these innovative suggestions.



1 Fortunately, unfortunately. Create a story that goes back and forth from good to bad. The first person may say, "There once was a girl who lived in a castle..." The next person continues with, "Unfortunately..." and comes up with bad news such as, "The castle was attacked by a dragon..." Then the next person says, "Fortunately..." and adds something good to the story, and so on until it reaches a happy ending.

2 Animal amusements. Name an animal, then have the next person think of a different animal whose name begins with the last sound or letter of the preceding animal. For example, if the first person says, "Tiger," the second person could say, "Rhinoceros," and the third person could say, "Snake." This activity could be done with sports teams, music groups, movies — whatever your child's interest is.



3 Practice makes perfect. Buy a small white board with an attached marker so your kids can practice writing letters and numbers, drawing pictures or playing simple games. These boards are magnetic, so bring along magnetic letters and numbers for little ones to practice counting and spell-

ing words. Also, put one letter on a page that corresponds to the place you are traveling to, then add short words and pictures that begin with that letter. If you are going to Tennessee, make a "T" page so your children can trace the letter and color the page. Give them pipe cleaners to try to shape letters, too.



4 Count me in! Put a new spin on the "Twenty Questions" game by including numbers. Pick a number, then have your kids ask: "Is it odd or even?" or, "Greater than five?" For younger children, choose a number between one and 10; for older ones, up the ante with larger figures and more difficult questions: "Is it a factor of two?" or, "Divisible by five?"

5 Tally it up. Watch for numbers on road signs and write them down. After you've found five different figures, add them up. Or, have two people put both hands behind their backs, then quickly bring them forward to show any number of fingers they want. The first person to add all the fingers correctly and shout out the answer wins. For older children, step up the challenge by incorporating subtraction, multiplication or division into these games.



6 Writing reflections. Encourage your children to write a journal entry for each day of the trip and include superlatives: the best part of the day, worst part, something unexpected, etc. List them as bullets, or write them in sentences and paragraphs. Punctuate certain items through illustrations. If you have preschoolers, record their words and let them draw corresponding pictures. Make it into a scrapbook by including small items they collected or purchased along the way.



7 Book discussions. Listen to a book on tape or CD and discuss the plot, characters and setting. Turn off the CD at critical points and discuss what will happen next: "Are you feeling uneasy about this?" "What do you think of that character?" "How do you think the story will end?" If you are visiting a historic site, find books with the setting in that location.



8 Simply stated. Print out a blank copy of a map of the United States with the states outlined. As you travel, look for license plates from each state and color that state in. Or, attach points to each state. Ones local to this region could be worth one point. Further away, five points. Hawaii or Alaska, 15 points. Who-

ever has the most points at the end of the trip wins. Also, find a map of the region you are visiting and draw the route for your kids to follow along. Maps can be printed off at www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas.



9 Scavenger hunt. Divide the game into three parts: city, suburbs and rural. Under each section, write or draw pictures of things for your children to look for. Then, they can check it off as you travel. For the city, it might be a bus or a red light. For the country, it could be a cow, barn, pond or forest. For the suburbs, a Walmart, post office or delivery van.



10 Rhyming ramble. Play rhyming rounds by starting with a word such as "ball." Everyone comes up with words that rhyme until the list is exhausted. Then, move on to a new word.



11 Word scramble. On a piece of paper, write the city and state of your destination and see how many words your children can make using those letters. Offer incentives for words that use more than three letters.



12 Science savvy. If your children are interested in a particular facet of nature — such as rocks or birds — pick up a small field guide before you leave home. When you stop at a rest area, look for those types of nature items and compare it with what's in the book: "Is this an igneous, sedimentary or metamorphic rock?" "What kind of bird did this feather come from?"

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



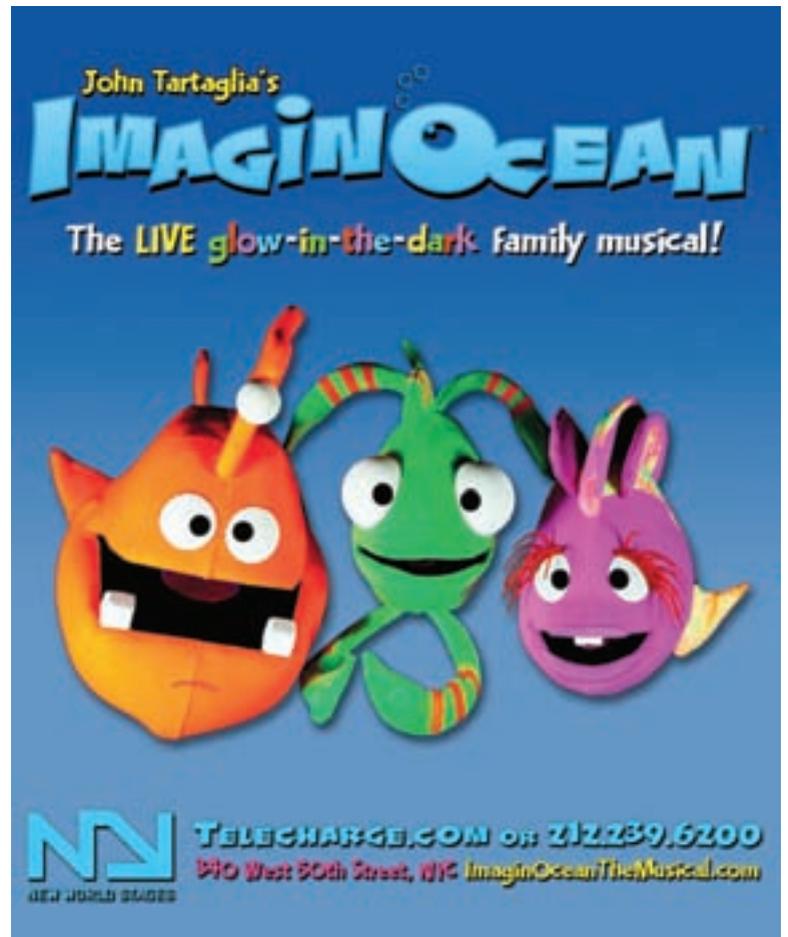
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42 Average number of paid vacation days per year that workers in Italy get.

13 Average number in the U.S.

71 Percent of summer travelers who use the Internet to plan their trips.

7 Percent who use a travel agent.

9,289,215 Number of visitors per year to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the country's most popular national park.

60 Number of visitors to Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve in Alaska, the least popular.



50 Percent of parents who say EPCOT is their favorite Walt Disney World theme park for a family vacation.

33 Percent who say the Magic Kingdom.

90 Percent growth in day camps in the U.S. over the past 20 years.



Sources: Suite101.com, Census.gov, ScienceDaily.com, Infoplease.com, DCAcamps.org, Blizzardinternet.com, Nationalparkstraveler.com, Familyvacationcriticism.com

Going Places

LONG-RUNNING

Dinosaur display: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th Street; (212) 769-5000; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am – 5:30 pm, \$24 (\$18 students, \$14 children).

Children learn about the largest dinos, the long-tailed sauropods, by examining the innovative model.

The Yak Packers: Ruben Museum of Art, 150 W. 17th Street, between Sixth and Seventh avenues; (212) 620-5000 ext. 344. www.rmanyc.org; Thursdays, 10:30 – 11:30 am, Now – Thurs, Aug. 25; \$10 child and parent (\$5 members).

Children 2 to 4 accompanied by an adult touch, explore and create projects inspired by Himalayan art.

Penguin encounter: Atlantis Marine World Aquarium, 431 E. Main St. (631) 208-9200; ndamico@amwny.com; www.atlantismarineworld.com; Daily, 11 am, 1:30 and 3:30 pm; \$50 (\$45 members) plus museum admission.

A 45 minute interactive program allowing visitors to get up close and personal with an African Penguin.

“The Ohmies: Morning Wish Garden”: Peter Jay Sharp Theater, 416 W. 42nd St. at Ninth Avenue; (212) 864-5400; theohtmies.com; Thursdays, 11 am, Saturdays, 10 am, noon and 3 pm, Sundays, noon and 3 pm, Now – Sun, Aug. 7; \$35.

Dance along to this new musical.

Dancing workshops: Arverne Public Library, 312 Beach 54th St. at Rockaway Beach Boulevard; (718) 634-4784; www.queenslibrary.org; Thursday, June 30, 2 pm; Thursday, July 7, 2 pm; Thursday, July 14, 2 pm; Thursday, July 21, 2 pm; Thursday, July 28, 2 pm; Thursday, Aug. 4, 2 pm; Thursday, Aug. 11, 2 pm; Thursday, Aug. 18, 2 pm; Free.

Dance your way to being fit.

Teen happy hour: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; Fridays, 3 pm, Now – Fri, July 29; Free.

Friends, board games, video games and music.

Book buddies: Bayside Public Library, 214-20 Northern Blvd. at 215th Street; (718) 229-1834; www.queenslibrary.org; Fridays, 4 pm, Now – Fri, Sept. 23; Free.

Children in grades kindergarten through third grade read books with a teen buddy.

Meaningful maps: Ruben Museum of Art, 150 W. 17th Street, between Sixth



Bubbles, bubbles

Summertime is the time for bubbles!

And on July 16, Socrates Sculpture Park throws a bubble-blowing session, just for the fun of it.

Using wire, pipe cleaners and fabric, make a wand of any shape or size, then dip it in a soapy mixture to create a sea of bubbles in the sky.

and Seventh avenues; (212) 620-5000 ext. 344. www.rmanyc.org; Saturdays, 10:30 am – noon, Sundays, Sat, July 2 – Sat, Aug. 27; \$10 per child/adult pair (\$5 for members; \$5 for each additional child).

For children 6 and up, accompanied by an adult. Search the museum for hidden secrets using maps.

Arts and crafts: Lakeshore Learning Store, 2079 Hillside Ave. at Marcus Avenue; (516) 616-9360; mgermain@lakeshorelearning.com; www.lakeshorelearning.com; Saturdays, 11 am – 3 pm, Free.

Children 3 and up create fun projects.

Chinese language: Laurelton Public Library, 134-26 225th St. at Merrick Boulevard; (718) 528-2822; www.queenslibrary.org; Wednesdays, 10:30 am, Now – Wed, July 27; Free.

Classes for beginners.

While you're at it, pack a picnic basket and make a day out of it at Astoria Park. Enjoy its waterfront views — and sculpture, of course.

Blowing Bubbles at Socrates Sculpture Park [3134 Vernon Blvd. at Broadway in Long Island City, (718) 956-1819], July 16 from noon to 3 pm. Free. For info, visit www.socrates-sculpturepark.org.

Heritage workshop: East Elmhurst Public Library, 95-06 Astoria Blvd. at 95th Street; (718) 424-2619; www.queenslibrary.org; Tuesdays, 1:30 pm, Tues, July 12 – Mon, Aug. 29.

Teens learn about each other's cultural backgrounds and share stories of their families, their food and national emblems.

FRI, JULY 1

“Bessie’s Big Shot”: Fort Totten, Fort Totten; (718) 352-1769; info@cityparks-foundation.org; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Root for Bessie as she accomplishes the impossible.

Canoeing: Fort Totten, Fort Totten; (718) 352-1769; 11 am; Free.

Join Park Rangers and explore the waters of the protected lakes to the open

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@cnglobal.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!

river waters. For children 8 and up with a caregiver.

Teen newspaper: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Take pictures, write articles and be a reporter for the Library's paper.

Summer concert: Beach 20th Street Overlook, Rockaway Beach and Boardwalk; (718) 318-4000; www.nycgovparks.org; 6–9 pm; Free.

Jazz, oldies, gospel, Caribbean and Latin music.

SAT, JULY 2

Musical tribute: Bayside Public Library, 214-20 Northern Blvd. at 215th Street; (718) 229-1834; www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

Support the troops cabaret style.

Family Camping: Fort Totten, Fort Totten; (718) 352-1769; 6 pm; Free.

Have some s'mores and more. Pre-registration required. Families chosen by lottery. Dinners supplied.

Fourth of July celebration: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 11:30 pm; Free.

Children make a flag and read about the country's birthday. Supplies limited.

SUN, JULY 3

History workshop: Fort Totten, Fort Totten; (718) 352-1769; 10 am; Free.

Explore the Civil War history through architecture.

TUES, JULY 5

“Bessie’s Big Shot”: Rufus King Park, 89th Ave. at 153rd Street; info@cityparks-foundation.org; www.nycgovparks.org;

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10:30 am; Free.

Root for Bessie as she accomplishes the impossible.

T-shirt art: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Teens make their own creations. Materials supplied.

Summer crochet club: Douglaston/Little Neck Public Library, 249-01 Northern Blvd. at 249th Street; (718) 225-8414; www.queenslibrary.org; 2:30 pm; Free.

Help create an afghan blanket to be donated to a local charity. Pre-registration required.

Tournament: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm.

Test your chess mettle.

Adoption workshop: Family Focus Adoption Services, 54-40 Little Neck Pkwy. (718) 224-1919; www.familyfocus-adoption.org; 7 pm; Free.

For prospective parents.

WED, JULY 6

Mommy, Music and Me: Buz O'Rourke Playground, 214th Pl at 33rd Road; (718) 352-4793; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

For children 7 and under with a parent/caregiver.

Computer art: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Children 10 to 17 find new ways to use their computers.

Lanyard craft: Richmond Hill Public Library, 118-14 Hillside Ave. (718) 849-7150; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Box, Jacob's Ladder and more designs.

"Cinderella": Highland Park, Elton St. at Jamaica Avenue; www.nycgovparks.org; 5-6 pm; Free.

Bilingual performance of the children's classic.

"How to Train Your Dragon": East Elmhurst Park, 24th Ave. at 100th Street; www.nycgovparks.org; 8:15 pm; Free.

Bring your own chair or blankets. Don't forget the popcorn.

THURS, JULY 7

Sock creations: Steinway Public Library, 21-45 31 St. at 21st Avenue; (718) 728-1965; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Make funny characters.

Story and cooking time: Langston Hughes Public Library, 100-01 Northern Blvd. at 216th Street; (718) 651-1100; www.queenslibrary.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Participants read, write and taste their culture.



Learn the art of fun

This museum day is all in the family.

On July 10, the Queens Museum of Art is back for another installment of its MetLife Second Sundays, a monthly family art workshop that engages participants of all ages in a roster of studio art, family-designed gallery tours and live music and dance performances, inspired by the museum's permanent collection and changing exhibitions.

This month, the theme is col-

laboration, and will encourage children to work together on a piece.

In keeping with the theme, the museum will also stage a dance performance of the ultimate collaborative effort — the tango — which families can sit back, watch and enjoy.

Second Sundays at the Queens Museum of Art [Flushing Meadows Corona Park, (718) 592-9700], July 10 from 1 to 4 pm. Free. For info, visit www.queensmuseum.org.

FRI, JULY 8

Lotions and potions: Elmhurst Public Library, 86-01 Broadway; (718) 271-1020; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens, sixth grade to high school, make lotions and then decorate labels for the bottles. Supplies limited, first come, first served.

"Jack and the Beanstalk": Highland Park, Elton St. at Jamaica Avenue; www.nycgovparks.org; 7-8 pm; Free.

Children's classic. Bring your own lawn chair or blanket.

SAT, JULY 9

Bike repair: Steinway Public Library, 21-45 31 St. at 21st Avenue; (718) 728-1965; www.queenslibrary.org; 11 am; Free.

Teens learn how to fix a flat.

Basic canoeing: Bayswater Park, Beach 32nd St. at Beach Channel Drive; (718) 318-4000; www.nycgovparks.org; Noon-2 pm; Free.

For children 8 and up with a parent. Canoes, lifejackets and instruction provided.

Music of Summer: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org;

org; 2 pm.

Chinese folk songs.

SUN, JULY 10

Saltwater fishing: World's Fair Marina, Pier 1, Northern Blvd. at Grand Central Parkway Entrance; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 9 am; Free.

For children 8 and older. All equipment provided, catch and release only.

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

Featuring the voice of Linda Ipanema.

MON, JULY 11

"Bessie's Big Shot": Rochdale Park, Guy R. Brewer Blvd. at 132nd Avenue; info@cityparksfoundation.org; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Root for Bessie as she accomplishes the impossible.

Craft club: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 1 pm; Free.

Learn how to knit, crochet, and cross/hatch on plastic canvas. Bring your own supplies.

Game night: South Jamaica Public

Library, 108-41 Guy R. Brewer Blvd. between 108th and 109th avenues; (718) 739-4088; www.queenslibrary.org; 6 pm; Free.

Fun for the whole family. Play board games and Wii. Light refreshments served.

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

Share your poetry and listen to other original works.

TUES, JULY 12

Adventures in Paint: Rockaway Boardwalk, Beach 95th St. at the Boardwalk; (917) 306-8729; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am-noon; Free.

Create a seascape. Supplies provided. Pre-registration required.

Storytime: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 10:30 am; Free.

Children listen to stories by Sandra Boynton and make a coloring activity.

Concert: Rufus King Park, 90th Ave. at 150th Street; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Featuring Oran Etkin, creator of Timbaloo.

Family film day: Pomonok Public Library, 158-21 Jewel Ave. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 591-4343; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Children 5 and up with a caregiver enjoy a feature length movie.

Summer crochet club: 2:30 pm. Douglaston/Little Neck Public Library. See Tuesday, July 5.

WED, JULY 13

Comic book workshop: Astoria Public Library, 14-01 Astoria Blvd. at 14th Street; (718) 278-2220; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Create your own comic using old comic books as a guide.

THURS, JULY 14

Storytelling: Buz O'Rourke Playground, 214th Pl at 33rd Road; (718) 352-4793; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am-1 pm; Free.

Children 10 and younger listen to a story and do a fun craft project.

Summer reading: Broad Channel Public Library, 16-26 Cross Bay Blvd. (718) 318-4943; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Teens and tweens read and do a craft. Supplies given on first come first served basis.

Story and cooking time: 4:30 pm. Langston Hughes Public Library. See Thursday, July 7.

Earth, Wind and Fire: George Seuffert Bandshell (Forest Park), Woodhaven Blvd. at Foret Park Drive; (718) 235-4100; www.nycgovparks.org; 7:30

Going Places

pm; Free.

The singing sensation of the '70s and '80s.

FRI, JULY 15

Teen newspaper: 4 pm. Long Island City Public Library. See Friday, July 1.

Open Karaoke: George Seuffert Bandshell (Forest Park), Woodhaven Blvd. at Forest Park Drive; (718) 235-4100; debby.kuha@parks.nyc.gov; www.nycgovparks.org; 5-8 pm; Free.

Featuring Billy C and Kitty.

SAT, JULY 16

Swap-a-thon: Sunnyside Public Library, 43-06 Greenpoint Ave. (718) 784-3033; www.queenslibrary.org; 11 am; Free.

Trade men's, women's and children's clothing, shoes and accessories.

Canine ice cream social: Rockaway Freeway/Beach 84, Beach Channel Dr. at Beach 84th Street; (718) 318-4000; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am - 1 pm; Free.

Bring your pup to the park for music, games and dog-friendly ice cream treats. Free and low cost spay/neutering (limited).

Family Camping: Alley Pond Park, 76th Ave. & Springfield Blvd. (718) 217-4685; 6 pm; Free.

Have a s'more and more. Families chosen by lottery. Dinners supplied. Pre-registration required.

"Madagascar": Bayswater Park, Bch. 35th St. at Beach Channel Drive; www.nycgovparks.org; 8:15 pm; Free.

Bring a chair or blankets and the popcorn.

SUN, JULY 17

History workshop: 10 am. Fort Totten. See Sunday, July 3.

MON, JULY 18

"SeeWe African Dance": Rochdale Park (JHS 72), Guy R. Brewer Blvd. at 161st Street; (212) 360-8290; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Traditional folk music and dance.

Family day: Queens Village Public Library, 94-11 217 St. at 94th Avenue; (718) 776-6800; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Sing-alongs, games and crafting. Pre-registration required.

Reading club: North Forest Park Library, 98-27 Metropolitan Ave. at 70th Avenue; (718) 261-5512; www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

Children 13 to 18 read, sing write poetry and draw.

Recycled art: Astoria Public Library, 14-01 Astoria Blvd. at 14th Street; (718) 278-2220; www.queenslibrary.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Artists Barbara Lubliner and Bernard Klevickas teach techniques transforming bottles into pieces of art.



Don your helmets!

This event is wheely fun. On July 10, the Tour de Queens takes you through the borough with a leisurely paced, 20-mile ride open to cyclists of all ages and skill levels.

It kicks off in Flushing Meadows Park by the Queens Museum of Art, then makes its way through parks and neighborhoods in eastern and northern Queens — maybe your own! — including Corona, Forest Hills, Glendale, Ridgewood, Maspeth, Sunnyside, Woodside and

Jackson Heights, with a rest stop in Forest Park.

So put on your helmet, pack some water and sunscreen, and show your kids Queens from a whole new vantage point.

Tour de Queens, check-in at Flushing Meadows Corona Park, July 10 at 8 am. Ride begins at 9 am. Registration is required, and is \$10, \$5 for kids. Limited day-of registration will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. For info, visit www.tourdequeens.org.

TUES, JULY 19

Thunderbird American Indian Dancers: Rufus King Park, 153rd St. at 89th Avenue; (212) 360-8290; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Traditional performances.

Teen Jeopardy: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Test your knowledge on the world of Harry Potter.

Family film day: 2 pm. Pomonok Public Library. See Tuesday, July 12.

Summer crochet club: 2:30 pm. Douglaston/Little Neck Public Library. See Tuesday, July 5.

Travel trivia: Bay Terrace Public Library, 18-35 Bell Blvd. at 23rd Avenue; (718) 423-7004; www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm.

Teens test their knowledge on geography.

Tournament: 4 pm. Long Island City Public Library. See Tuesday, July 5.

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

Budding poets get helpful hints.

WED, JULY 20

Reader's club: Arvern Public Library, 312 Beach 54th St. at Rockaway Beach Boulevard; (718) 634-4784; www.queenslibrary.org; 1 pm; Free.

For children in grades seven through nine.

Open mic: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

All teens are welcome to perform. Pre-registration required.

Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes: Queensbridge Park, Vernon Blvd. at 41st Avenue; (212) 360-2777; www.nycgovparks.org; 7 pm; Free.

THURS, JULY 21

Video game tournament: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

The ultimate in competition.

Summer reading: 2 pm. Broad Channel Public Library. See Thursday, July 14.

Story and cooking time: 4:30 pm. Langston Hughes Public Library. See Thursday, July 7.

"Bye Bye Birdie": George Seuffert Bandshell (Forest Park), Woodhaven Blvd. at Forest Park Drive; (718) 235-4100; www.nycgovparks.org; 7:30 pm; Free.

Classic American musical.

FRI, JULY 22

Darlene Graham: Alley Pond Park, 76th Ave. at Springfield Blvd. (718) 352-4793; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

The artist entertains children with folk music and children's favorites. Bring your own blanket or lawn chair.

Scavenger Hunt: Douglaston/Little Neck Public Library, 249-01 Northern Blvd. at 249th Street; (718) 225-8414; www.queenslibrary.org; 11 am; Free.

Use library resources to find answers to win the competition. Pre-registration required.

Oldies night: George Seuffert Bandshell (Forest Park), Woodhaven Blvd. at Forest Park Drive; (718) 235-4100; www.nycgovparks.org; 5 - 8 pm; Free.

Featuring Billy C, Kitty and Friends.

SAT, JULY 23

Summertime fun: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 11 am; Free.

Children first through sixth grade learn about fun summer things to do.

Canoeing: 11 am. Fort Totten. See Friday, July 1.

Jewelry workshop: Broadway Public Library, 40-20 Broadway; (718) 721-2462; www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

Take plastic bags and turn them into bangles. Pre-registration required.

SUN, JULY 24

Freshwater fishing: Kissena Park, Rose Ave. at Oak Avenue; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am; Free.

Children 8 years and older with a caregiver. Catch and release only, all equipment provided.

Family Day: Queensbridge Park, Vernon Blvd. and 41st Avenue; info@cityparks-foundation.org; www.nycgovparks.org; 3 pm; Free.

Featuring Shine and the Moonbeams; Robbie K; Matt Brown; David Gonzalez; Daniel Calton; JoSunJari; and the CityParks Puppetmobile.

MON, JULY 25

Matt Brown: Rochdale Park, Guy R. Brewer Blvd. at 132nd Avenue; (212) 360-8290; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Fiddler, banjo and guitar player performs children's favorites.

Craft club: 1 pm. Long Island City Public Library. See Monday, July 11.

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Summer reading: St. Albans Library, 191-05 Linden Blvd. (718) 528-8196; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm.

Teens explore new worlds, participate in interactive activities and find a good book.

Mosaic craft: St. Albans Public Library, 191-05 Linden Blvd. at 191st Street; (718) 528-8196; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Make a tile project to take home.

TUES, JULY 26

Family film day: 2 pm. Pomonok Public Library. See Tuesday, July 12.

Summer crochet club: 2:30 pm. Douglaston/Little Neck Public Library. See Tuesday, July 5.

WED, JULY 27

Matt Brown: Sunset Park, Fifth Ave. at 41st Street; (212) 360-8290; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Fiddler, banjo and guitar player performs children's favorites.

Magic show: Buz O'Rourke Playground, 214th Pl at 33rd Road; (718) 352-4793; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Jim McClenahan keeps kids amazed. Bring a blanket or lawn chair.

Reader's club: Arvern Public Library, 312 Beach 54th St. at Rockaway Beach Boulevard; (718) 634-4784; www.queenslibrary.org; 1 pm; Free.

For children in grades 10 to 12.

Karaoke: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 5:30 pm; Free.

Show tunes, top 40 hits and party/dance music. Bring your own CDs to sing along with.

THURS, JULY 28

"Bessie's Big Shot": Queensbridge Park, Vernon Blvd. and 41st Avenue; (212) 360-8290; info@cityparksfoundation.org; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Root for Bessie as she accomplishes the impossible.

Reading and crafts: Broad Channel Public Library, 16-26 Cross Bay Blvd. (718) 318-4943; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

For teens and tweens. Materials supplied.

Summer reading: 2 pm. Broad Channel Public Library. See Thursday, July 14.

Henna designs: Laurelton Public Library, 134-26 225th St. at Merrick Boulevard; (718) 528-2822; www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

Teens create their own temporary tattoos with a kit. Parental consent required.

Story and cooking time: 4:30 pm. Langston Hughes Public Library. See Thursday, July 7.

FRI, JULY 29

Teen newspaper: 4 pm. Long Island City Public Library. See Friday, July 1.

"The Wizard of Oz": Alley Pond Park, 76th Ave. at Springfield Blvd. (718) 352-4793; www.nycgovparks.org; 7 pm; Free.

Plaza Theatricals presents the children's classic.

Mid-Summer Pow Wow: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy. 718-347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; 7 – 10 pm; \$10 (\$5 children 12 and under).

Performances by the Thunderbird American Indian Dancers.

"Tunde's Trumpet": Springfield Park, 147th Ave. at Springfield Lane; (212) 360-2777; www.nycgovparks.org; 8 pm; Free.

Puppet presentation about children's

problems. For teens and older children.

SAT, JULY 30

Adoption workshop: 10 am. Family Focus Adoption Services. See Tuesday, July 5.

Mid-Summer Pow Wow: Noon – 5 pm and 7 – 10 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Friday, July 29.

Oldies and Pop: Ridgewood Public Library, 20-12 Madison St. at Forest Avenue; (718) 821-4770; www.queenslibrary.org; 2:30 pm; Free.

Vic Vincent Group performs.

Art contest: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

Children 6 to 12 create a monster based on a story using recycled materials.

Family Camping: Cunningham Park, Francis Lewis Blvd. at Union Turnpike; (718) 846-2731; 6 pm; Free.

Have a s'more and more. Families chosen by lottery. Dinners supplied. Pre-registration required.

"Tunde's Trumpet": 8 pm. Springfield Park. See Friday, July 29.

SUN, JULY 31

Sandcastle contest: Rockaway Beach, Beach 117th St. and the Boardwalk; (718) 318-4000; www.nycgovparks.org; Noon – 2 pm; Free.

Kids and adults compete; bring buckets and tools.

Mid-Summer Pow Wow: Noon – 5 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Friday, July 29.

MON, AUG. 1

Baseball clinic: Al Oerter Recreation Center, 131-40 Fowler Ave. at College Point Boulevard; www.nycgovparks.org; 9

am – 1 pm; Free.

Presented by Derek Jeter's Turn 2 Foundation. For boys and girls 8 to 13. Pre-registration required.

Reading club: 3 pm. North Forest Park Library. See Monday, July 18.

"Karate Kid": Cunningham Park, 196th St. at Union Turnpike; (718) 465-3341; www.nycgovparks.org; 8 – 10 pm; Free.

Wax on, wax off with Ralph Maccio. Arrive early to get your popcorn.

TUES, AUG. 2

Baseball clinic: 9 am – 1 pm. Al Oerter Recreation Center. See Monday, Aug. 1.

National Night Out: Beach 108th Street Hockey Rink, Rockaway Beach Boardwalk at Beach 109th Street; (718) 318-4000; www.nycgovparks.org; 4 – 8 pm; Free.

Families enjoy entertainment, refreshments and giveaways.

WED, AUG. 3

Baseball clinic: 9 am – 1 pm. Al Oerter Recreation Center. See Monday, Aug. 1.

THURS, AUG. 4

Baseball clinic: 9 am – 1 pm. Al Oerter Recreation Center. See Monday, Aug. 1.

Storytelling: Alley Pond Park, 76th Ave. at Springfield Blvd. (718) 352-4793; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Children 10 and younger listen to a story and do a fun craft project.

Othello: Fort Totten, Fort Totten; (718) 352-4793; 7 pm; Free.

Presented by the Hip to Hip Theater Company. Bring a lawn chair or blanket.

"The Music Man": Holy Child Jesus School, 86th Ave. at 112th Street; (718) 847-1860; hcjteendrama@gmail.com; 7 pm; \$10 (\$8 children, seniors).

Community Marketplace

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Email Resume:
Ibel.Challenge@thejnet.com
Fax: **718-972-0696**

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SAVINGS	50%

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The Fine Print

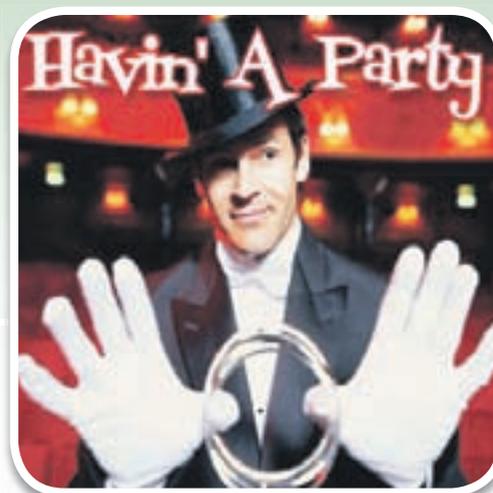
Limit per person: 1 (+1 as a gift)
Valid for one-hour magic show.
Call to book in advance.

Havin' A Party

Planning a child's birthday party is no easy feat. Between sending out invitations, setting up decorations, ordering the cake, and buying favors, it's easy to forget about the entertainment. Save your party with today's deal: **\$99 buys a one-hour children's magician party package, a \$200 value from Havin' A Party!**

The professional magicians from Havin' A Party will entertain and dazzle kids. Our talented magicians will interact with the audience and the birthday child. Along with an hour-long magic show with plenty of audience participation, birthday guests will also be treated to balloon animals and plenty of laughs.

Don't let your kid's party be a flop. Grab today's deal and add some amazing magic to the day!



Havin' A Party

718-251-0500

\$12.00

JUST \$12 FOR SKATING
AND RENTALS FOR TWO!

REGULAR PRICE	\$26
YOU PAY	\$12
SAVINGS	53%

DON'T DELAY!
You must purchase the voucher
by 7/12 at BoroDeal.com

The Fine Print

Limit per person: 2 (+5 as a gift)
Promotion Expires on September 05, 2011
Valid for two public skating admissions and two skate rentals.

Aviator Sports & Events Center

Whether you're a wobbly wall holder or a graceful skater who can do figure eights, it's never too late to have fun at the rink. Grab a friend and snag today's deal from Aviator Sports & Events Center: **\$12 buys public skating admission and skate rentals for two, a \$26 value!**

Ice skating at Aviator Sports & Events Center is a fresh way to mix it up any day of the week, an awesome activity for a big group of friends, or the perfect means to inject a little fun into your fitness life. Aviator boasts New York City's only twin NHL-size hockey rinks, smooth ice, and tons of fun activities to take part in after your time on the rink.

You may not have perfected your triple axel yet, but with today's cool deal you can have a blast on the ice!



3159 Flatbush Ave

New & Noteworthy



All tied up!

These adorable neckties require no tying whatsoever.

With tie-shaped fabric appliqueed onto a long- or short-sleeved tee or onesie by ChicCoutureBoutique, your kid can dress up without discomfort.

This cute design can be customized with a variety of fabric patterns to choose from, including polka dots (pictured), colorful stripes and swirls. There are also versions available for special occasions,

including the Fourth of July, Father's Day and St. Patrick's Day.

The ties can be further personalized with your little boy's name or monogram for an extra cute touch that's perfect for a birthday gift or baby shower.

Ties on onesies or tees (\$15.50) by ChicCoutureBoutique. Additional (\$8) for personalization. Available in sizes newborn to 24-month old. For info, visit <http://www.etsy.com/shop/ChicCoutureBoutique>.

Rock 'n' roll

Let your kid's inner rock star shine through.

With Playground Rockstar's edgy tees and onesies in fun, new prints and bold colors, your cool kid will be sure to grab the spotlight.

The shirts' decals include thunderclouds, stars, scarves, cupcakes, and the text "Playground Rockstar" — just in case anyone didn't get the message.

Playground Rockstar onesies (\$18) and shirts (\$23). For info, visit www.playgroundrockstar.com.



Onesie saver

Don't let a good onesie go to waste.

With these extenders, you can get another one, two or — even three! — months of wear out of these tops. With this small investment, you'll save money in the long run and be able to hold on to your favorite onesies a little longer.

They are made to fit any onesie thanks to high-quality snaps, and they come in a variety of patterns, including frogs, pink dots, turtles, birds, and white, too. A set comes in three sizes, ranging from small to large, and in slightly different pat-



terns, so you know which one to grab.

Onesie extenders, set of three for \$9.95. For info, visit www.etsy.com/people/kimeyates.

'Monster' manual

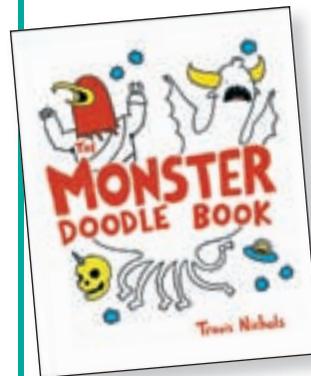
This Brooklyn illustrator takes doodling seriously.

Cartoonist Travis Nichols has put together a workbook for kids, "The Monster Doodle Book," which encourages the reader's own creativity with half-finished sketches of aliens, robots, and hybrid creatures — so your budding artist can let their imagination run wild while honing their fine motor skills.

Some of the book's exercises ask the artist-in-training to draw as many tiny monsters on a page as possible, or help them to make a moving monster "flip book," or invite them to draw the cast of a monster TV show.

Once done, your little artist will have a truly monstrous keepsake.

"The Monster Doodle Book," \$13.95. For info, visit ilikeapplejuice.com.



A perfect mess

This is the perfect bib for the messy eater. And what baby isn't a messy eater?

The cotton-flannel bib goes over your child's shoulders and ties in the back, with the front going well past her torso and keeping her clothes protected.

And she'll still look adorable in akokleyjessup's prints, which include playful mush-



rooms and a summery red-and-white pattern.

The bibs fit kids from 3 months through toddler sizes — so she'll look divine through all of the years she's learning to neatly dine.

Body bibs by akokleyjessup, \$14. For info, visit www.etsy.com/people/ayokleyjessup.



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