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Letter from the publisher

Teen awareness

When my daughter became a teenager it seemed as if she was possessed with a new internal structure. Gone was the sweet, mostly compliant, cuddly, good girl, and replacing her was a person with much more cunning. Not a bad girl by any means, but a different temperament and a more personal agenda.

Her friends seemed to matter more than ever and our relationship went through a definite change. I began to be somewhat excluded from her plans, and instead of being the director, I morphed into being her personal chauffeur, driving her back and forth from our house to her various friends and hangouts.

It's odd how that change from 12



to 13 really changes so much. There were certain friends of hers that stayed sweet and obedient, but not many. Most of them turned into typical teen "club members." They dressed alike and often moved in a pack wherever they could congregate. It's not easy to find places to "hang out," especially in the winter, and since teens seldom wear sensible things like hats and gloves, they were usually freezing and coming down with colds.

What happens when that magic birthday is reached? What force reaches inside of them and alters their inherent nature and turns them into teens?

Is it hormones? Does it happen in other cultures too, or only in ours? I

have often wondered, but I have the answer.

In cultures where childhood ends early and adult responsibilities like work and children take over, there is no opportunity for the teen phenomenon that seems to have largely begun here in the US in the 20th Century, as our society formed protective labor laws and unions. With no demanding need to send our children out to work, they were free to develop in other social ways and to become this newly named teenage demographic.

Me too, I was the same. I wore club jackets and followed the boys in a pack with my girlfriends, and whereas today's teens text each other, in my day we "hung" on the corner or talked on the phone for hours. The boy thing hits almost all girls at the same time and puberty's an amazingly scary experience sometimes.

In this October Issue we do a focus on teens and there is ample reason why. Teens present very real problems and struggles, both for themselves and for their parents too. Sex, smoking, drugs, cutting classes, lying, eating disorders, and a possible drop in grades are some of the new issues that parents may have to deal with. It's a foolish parent who doesn't think their kid is possibly going to need some special attention.

I hope these articles will be interesting and helpful. Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
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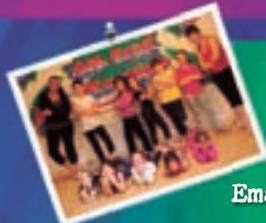
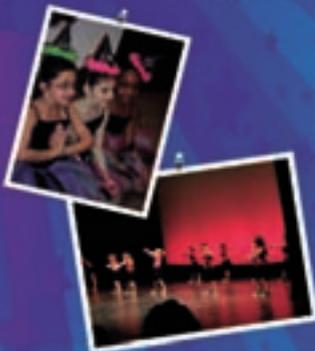


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Harvest & Halloween

celebrations

BY DENISE MORRISON
YEARIAN

Planning a bountiful harvest celebration or a creepy crawly Halloween party? You may want to consider these craft, game, and food suggestions.

Crop of crafts

When doing crafts with kids in a group setting, plan a main craft with a short, second activity — coloring pages or stringing popcorn — for early finishers. Whatever crafts you choose, pick ones that are easy to clean up so you can move on to the next activity.

- **Black cat candy jar.** Place black electrical tape over the sharp edges of a tin can. Cover the can with black construction paper and glue in place. Glue two wiggly eyes to the can, then use a thin paintbrush and white paint to draw a mouth, nose, and whiskers. Draw and cut out a black tail shape and two triangular-shaped ears. Cut two smaller triangles from pink paper for the insides of the ears; glue to black triangles. Glue ears to the top inside edge of the can and the tail to the back side of the can. Fill with treats.

- **Jack-o-lantern pots.** Buy various-sized terracotta pots and turn them upside down so the drainage hole is facing up. On yellow construction paper, draw and cut out two eyes, a nose, and a toothy grin — the wackier the better. Apply Mod-podge with a paintbrush under and over the facial features, then attach them to the pot. Place a short, wide stick out of the hole to

resemble a pumpkin stem.

- **Pumpkin noisemakers.** Paint a 12- by half-inch dowel rod black; let dry. Trace and cut out two leaves using green craft foam, then cut a small slit in the center of each leaf. Draw a face onto the bottom side of an orange paper plate with a black permanent marker. Line up the face plate with a second orange plate, rims together and bottoms facing out. Use a hole punch to create holes one-inch apart around the perimeter of both plates. Place dried beans and small jingle bells between the two plates. Also put the dowel between the plates, moving a short end of the stick above the facial features to represent the pumpkin stem and a long end below for the handle. Sew plates together





items. Teammates line up at the other end of the room. To play, teammates take turns running to the scarecrow and dressing him with one clothing item, then tag the next player, who does the same. When the scarecrow is completely dressed, each teammate returns a second time to stuff straw in his clothing. The first team to finish making its scarecrow wins.

Seasonal snacks

Food is more fun when kids are involved in the preparation process. Stick with things children like to eat and add a seasonal twist to it.

- Floating faces. Core and peel an apple, then cut it in half. Lay one half on the table and use a paring knife to create facial features. Repeat these steps until you have enough apple halves for each party guest. Place apples in cider punch bowl. When the cider is labeled, give each child a floating face.

- Itsy-bitsy caramel apples. Cut lollipop sticks in half. Use a melon baller to scoop little balls out of medium-sized apples, making sure each ball has a section of the apple peel. Push a lollipop stick into the peel of each apple ball. Blot apples dry with a paper towel. Melt a 14-ounce package of caramel candies with two tablespoons of water. Have children dip and swirl their apple balls in caramel, then roll in crushed Oreo cookies, nuts, sprinkles, nonpareils, or mini-chocolate chips. Place on waxed paper to cool for 15 minutes.

- Pumpkin pancakes. Mix dry ingredients: one cup flour, one tablespoon sugar, two teaspoons baking soda, one-quarter teaspoon salt, and one-half teaspoon cinnamon. Set aside. Separate two eggs. Mix yolks with half a cup of plain pumpkin puree, one cup milk, and two tablespoons canola oil. Add dry ingredients. Beat egg whites until fluffy, then fold into the batter. Pour one-quarter cup of batter onto a greased griddle; flip when bubbles form on top. Kids can make jack-o-lantern faces using raisins, dried fruit, nuts, chocolate chips, and whipped cream.

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

by lacing yarn through the holes. Push leaf slits through the short end of the dowel rods and secure with a glue gun.

Gathering for games

Games are a staple at kids' gatherings. Choose ones every child can participate in, where no one is eliminated. With a little forethought and creativity, any game can be adapted to fit the fall theme.

- Broom ball. Purchase half-sized brooms for each party guest and two different colors of seasonal garland. Decorate half of the brooms with one color of garland and the remaining half with the other garland to specify teams. Establish goals at opposite ends of the yard, and divide the children into teams. Place a kickball in the center of the yard, then give each child a broom to sweep the ball to his team's goal. The first team to score five goals wins.

- Ring around the pumpkin. Place three large pumpkins with stems in a line several feet apart. Gather four hula hoops. To play, children should take turns standing behind the designated tossing line and try to ring the pumpkins with the hula hoop. The child with the most rings wins.

- Scarecrow relay. Separate children into two teams. Choose one child from each team to be the scarecrow. Place scarecrows at one end of the room, along with hay and oversized scarecrow-type clothing

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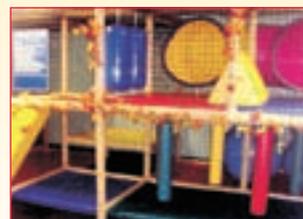


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The road to becoming a better stepmother

Five tips for success on the stepmom journey

BY GAYLA GRACE

Parenting stepchildren can feel more like a burden than a privilege at times. We have the responsibility of a parent with few parental rights. Fold the laundry. Cook dinner. Run the carpool. Despite our efforts toward mundane parenting tasks, we get little regard as a parent, or appreciation for our help.

So, how do we learn to embrace our roles as stepmothers? A few key steps can help us thrive and gain confidence with the expectations placed on us.

- Be your own person. Don't try to replace the biological mom. Don't compete with her, either. It's okay to be different. When my stepdaughter

was young, she thought I was weird because I didn't know how to French braid hair. Spending a lot of time styling hair wasn't important to me but she hurt my feelings with her comments. Her biological mom was a wonderful hairstylist and I felt inferior to her. I now recognize the importance of accepting my differences and being comfortable with who I am.

- Work harder at being a friend, rather than a parent, particularly in the beginning. Developing a relationship with your stepchild is the primary goal for a new stepparent. Find common ground that allows time together comfortably. Let the biological parent take the lead in disciplining during the relationship-building period. Moving into a parental role too soon results in

anger and resentment.

- Forgive yourself when you fail. You will mess up as a stepparent. During the early years of my new marriage, I was easily irritated with the shortcomings of my stepchildren. I reacted in favor of my biological children during times of conflict and was frustrated with my lack of patience and fairness toward my stepchildren. As I sought to forgive myself for my mistakes and learn from my failures, I could pick myself up and begin again with positive strides in my stepparenting role.

- Make your marriage a priority. It's easy to allow struggles with the kids to interfere with your marital relationship. Stay connected in tough times by taking intentional steps to work through conflict and create a united front. Recognize the challenge of blending a family and seek professional help if you reach an impasse in your relationships.

- Allow plenty of time for new relationships to develop. Continuously strive for love and acceptance of one another, but don't expect harmony overnight. The average stepfamily takes seven years to integrate. Complex stepfamilies (when both parents bring children to the marriage) can take longer. But there are rewards on the stepmothering journey as we learn to love and be loved by our stepchildren.

After more than 17 years as a stepmother, I experience far more rewards than burdens. I can honestly say, "It's been a privilege to take part in raising my stepchildren." I'm thankful for the healing that has occurred in our relationships and look forward to the years ahead as our family continues to grow and mature, and I embrace my role as a stepmother.

Gayla Grace is a wife and mom to five children in her blended family. She ministers to stepfamilies through her website, www.stepparentingwithgrace.com.





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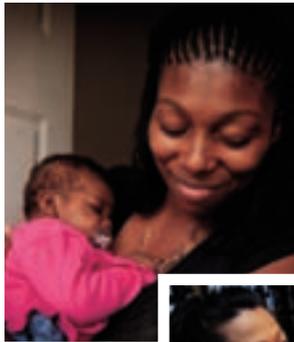
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Circumcision

Small cut, big decision

The health benefits of male infant circumcision

BY KIKI BOCHI

To circumcise or not to circumcise? If you are the parent of a baby boy — or expecting to be one soon — this little question can be a huge issue.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recently issued a statement saying new scientific evidence shows that the health benefits of newborn male circumcision outweigh the risks of the procedure, but the benefits are not great enough for them to recommend routine circumcision for all newborn boys.

In other words, parents should decide.

Hospitals once circumcised newborn boys routinely, but the practice is becoming less and less common in the United States. While it is routinely done for religious and cultural reasons among groups such as Jews and Muslims, the overall numbers have dropped — from around 79

percent of newborn boys in 1980 to around 55 percent to 58 percent in 2010, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Some parents are opposed to circumcision, viewing it as mutilation. For some parents, such as Hispanics, it is not part of their culture. But others who are ambivalent or uncertain may have turned away from the practice because some insurance and public health programs are declining to pay for the procedure. Eighteen states, including Florida, have stopped paying for circumcision under Medicaid, the state-federal health program for the poor. The American Academy of Pediatrics believes the health benefits are great enough that infant male circumcision should be covered by insurance, which would increase access to the procedure for families who choose it.

“Ultimately, this is a decision that parents will have to make,” Susan Blank, MD, chair of the task force that authored the Academy policy statement, said when it was released. “Parents are entitled to medically accurate and non-biased information about circumcision, and they should weigh this medical information in the context of their own religious, ethical, and cultural beliefs.”

The issue arises every few years. The last time the organization of pediatricians tackled the question was in 2005, and before that in 1999.

Since the last policy was published, scientific research has shown clearer health benefits to the procedure than had previously been demonstrated, the Academy says. According to a systematic and critical review of the scientific literature, the health benefits of circumcision include lower risks of acquiring HIV, genital herpes, human papilloma virus, and syphilis. Circumcision also lowers the risk of penile cancer over a lifetime, reduces the risk of cervical cancer in female sexual partners, and lowers the risk

of urinary tract infections in the first year of life.

Recently, a team of Johns Hopkins University disease experts and health economists warned that that steadily declining rates of U.S. infant male circumcision could add more than \$4.4 billion in avoidable health-care costs over the next decade. In a report published in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, it said the added expense stems from new cases and higher rates of sexually transmitted infections and related cancers among uncircumcised men and their female partners.

Already, the decline in circumcision rates has cost upwards of \$2 billion, it said.

“Our economic evidence is backing up what our medical evidence has already shown to be perfectly clear,” health epidemiologist and pathologist Aaron Tobian, MD, said when the study was released. “There are health benefits to infant male circumcision in guarding against illness and disease, and declining male circumcision rates come at a severe price, not just in human suffering, but in billions of healthcare dollars as well.”

The medical data shows that the procedure is safest and offers the most health benefits if performed during the newborn period. The Academy policy recommends infant circumcision be performed by trained and competent providers, using sterile techniques and effective pain management. Parents who are considering newborn circumcision should speak with their child’s doctor about the benefits and risks of the procedure, and discuss who will perform the circumcision.

It’s a good idea to have this conversation during pregnancy, and to learn whether your insurance will cover the procedure, so you have time to make the decision.

Kiki Bochi is the mother of two and an award-winning writer and editor who specializes in family topics.





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The best way to acknowledge dangers to promote safer habits for kids

BY MEAGAN J. MEEHAN

It's not good to threaten people, nor is it nice to frighten others. However, sometimes a little fear is what works best to keep us safe. Communication scholars and psychologists have cited motivation as

a key component in humans' need to protect themselves.

Protection Motivation Theory notes that people will act based on the fear of disaster, whether or not an actual disaster is taking place. Most people are likely to alter their behavior in order to decrease the risk of experiencing misfortune.

How then, can parents prepare their children for the potential dangers in life?

It seems like an insurmountable conundrum: How to make children aware of all the terrible things that can happen to them without actually traumatizing them?

Research has proven that self-efficacy — defined as our perceived ability to perform a specific task — correlates with our capability (or lack thereof) to meet obstacles head on.

We respond to fear in different ways. If we know that something is bad for us — like smoking — we will refrain from doing it in order to lower our risk of disease in the future.

This kind of protection motivation is gener-

ally low key and low stress. However, if we found ourselves in a tree-filled park during a lightning storm, we would respond to the threat more urgently since the danger would be far more imminent.

Emergency scenarios such as those that are perceived as being immediate threats are therefore much more stressful.

Of course, fear can sometimes become so overwhelming and constant that the human mind shuts down or “tunes out” in order to protect itself.

People who have experienced great traumas sometimes block the events out and those who live in war-torn countries simply learn to take their chances whenever they leave their homes. If people feel completely helpless against a threat, their protection motivation will be quite low.

Considering this “shut down” phenomenon in the face of fear, it is generally not a good idea to threaten people into acting a certain way.

Threats lead to stress and stress, in turn, can lead to psychological turmoil, or even to apathy, which subsequently produces no change in behavior.

However, fear can indeed serve as a motivator for behavior changes as long as it is applied appropriately. Direct threats produce negative consequences, and warnings produce generally positive reactions.

Acknowledging what could happen helps people cope with the possibility of danger by teaching them ways to avoid it.

Even from an early age, most children understand the difference between a definite and a possibility. Thus, even small children are able to differentiate between a threat and a warning. Offering an explanation of what the risk of danger is and why it exists helps to validate it in a youngster's mind, and therefore makes it concrete. “Because I said so” is not a



Even from an early age, most children understand the difference between a definite and a possibility. Thus, even small children are able to differentiate between a threat and a warning.



solid or reasonable explanation for why a child must hold an adult's hand when he crosses the street or why he cannot wander off alone in public places. When you set rules, it is always best to be clear about WHY those rules are in place. Even in the adult world, if lawmakers want people to be respectful of rules, they must make it clear why the rules exist and ensure that the reasoning is valid in order to achieve maximum compliance.

Take, for example, a conversation I recently heard between a mother and her young son at a mall parking lot. The mother asked the little boy to hold her hand.

"Why?" he demanded.

"Because I don't want you to get hurt," the mother replied calmly. "I'm bigger than you are and if you hold my hand people driving their cars will be able to see me easily and you'll be safer, too. If you crossed alone a driver might not see you and you could get hurt. Mommy doesn't want that to happen."

I was extremely impressed by the mother's response and her patient approach. Her demeanor was gentle yet firm and her words were truthful. She had explained the dangers of crossing the road in detail, but she did so in a way that would not frighten her son.

Children are really just tiny adults and, like their older counterparts, they have a broad range of feelings and emotions.

Young people are capable of understanding and processing far more information than most adults give them credit for. Explaining the reasoning behind fears is the first step to teaching children how to measure legitimate dangers.

Of course, children's minds are

in a constant state of information gathering — hence the old adage about their minds being like sponges — so they are more susceptible to becoming more fearful than adults are because they have a less developed sense of proportion.

What is considered mildly menacing to an adult could be perceived as a deadly threat to a child. Telling a child: "If you don't hold my hand when you cross the street you will be run over!" is not the ideal way to teach traffic safety because it relies on aggressive and fear-inducing tactics to convey the message.

Meanwhile, a warning is a sure-fire way to produce enough awareness in a child to motivate him to unquestionably hold an adult's hand when crossing the street: "If you're not careful and hold my hand you could get hurt."

We fasten out seatbelts and lock our doors to decrease our chances of getting hurt in an accident or getting robbed. We get injections and annual physicals to decrease the chance of getting sick. In small ways like this we protect ourselves on a daily basis.

We might never be able to completely guarantee safety, but we strive to do our very best. Fear as a motivator works in moderation. The key is to promote the logic behind "safety first" messages and to instill a strong sense of self-sufficiency and confidence in children.

Meagan Meehan is a published author of poems, short stories, novels, and articles in numerous publications. She is also a cartoonist and an award-winning modern artist. Meehan holds Bachelors in English literature from New York Institute of Technology and a Masters of Communication from Marist College.

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Getting organized

Mastering the daunting challenge of a busy new school year

BY JENNY GRACE TORGERSON

Facing a new school year can be a daunting task for both parents and children — even a month in, when children are still getting settled and parents are working out schedules. Organization can help the whole family feel more prepared to take on the challenge.

Starting from that first shopping trip for notebooks and folders, you and your child can work together to get organized. By giving children some ownership over their supplies, they may be more inclined to use

and take care of them. Even very young children can have a hand in selecting what they need for school.

Now that you have all the supplies, make sure that everything is labeled clearly with your child's name. Pencil boxes, lunch boxes, notebooks, and food containers are much more likely to find their way home again if they are easily identifiable. Sites like namebubbles.com provide easy-to-customize labels that are both dishwasher- and washing-machine safe.

If you don't have it already, you should come up with a morning routine that can help prevent those last minute searches for homework and

sneakers. Consider having children pack their bags and lay out their clothes (including shoes, socks, and underwear) the night before to save time in the morning. A laminated tag on your child's bookbag with a verbal or picture list of every item that needs to go in each day will help both you and your child remember important details like water bottles or math worksheets. Planning lunches for the whole week on Sunday can be another morning time-saver. Lastly, consider creating a photo book for young children to help them remember everything that needs to be accomplished in the morning. Laminate pictures of getting dressed, brushing teeth, eating breakfast, putting on a backpack, and any other morning tasks onto a metal binder ring to help children navigate the morning more independently, and free up your time for other chores.

Also, create a similar routine for the afternoon. Consider designating a special homework spot where children have the space, quiet, and all the supplies they need to successfully and peacefully complete their work daily. Fun, brightly colored homework-only supplies can help to add special appeal to the task. Similarly, there should be a designated area for school papers — permission slips, parent notices, and activity schedules. Make sure to check your child's bag every night for important papers. Many of these often come home at the beginning of the school year.

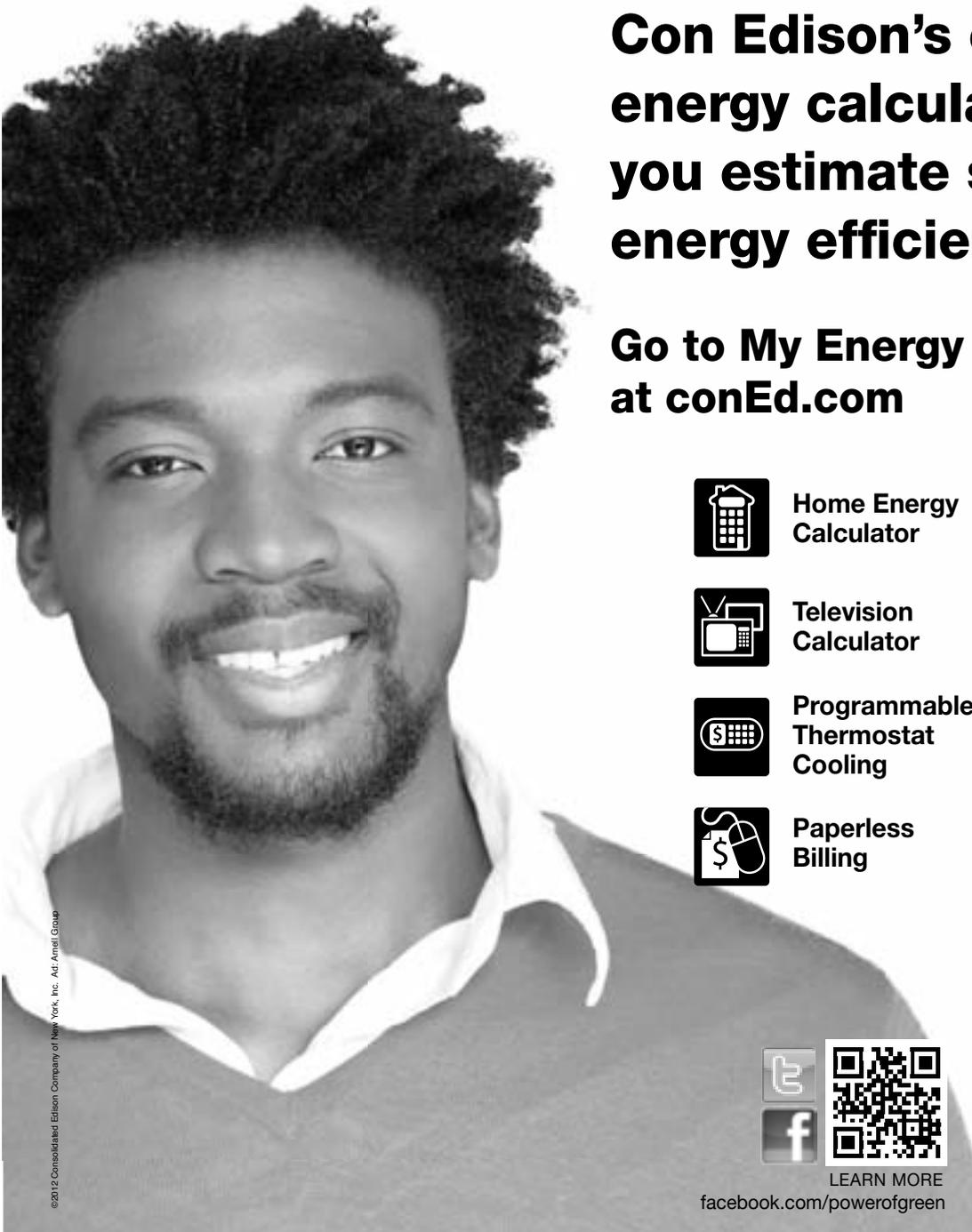
Lastly, if you haven't done so already, send your child's teacher a short e-mail to say hello and introduce yourself. This is a great way to introduce yourself or to reintroduce yourself if you met during a chaotic parent's night with many other families. An e-mail can help to make a connection and establish a relationship for the rest of the year.

Jenny Grace Torgerson is a head pre-school teacher at an independent school in New York City and is finishing her masters degree in early childhood at Bank Street.



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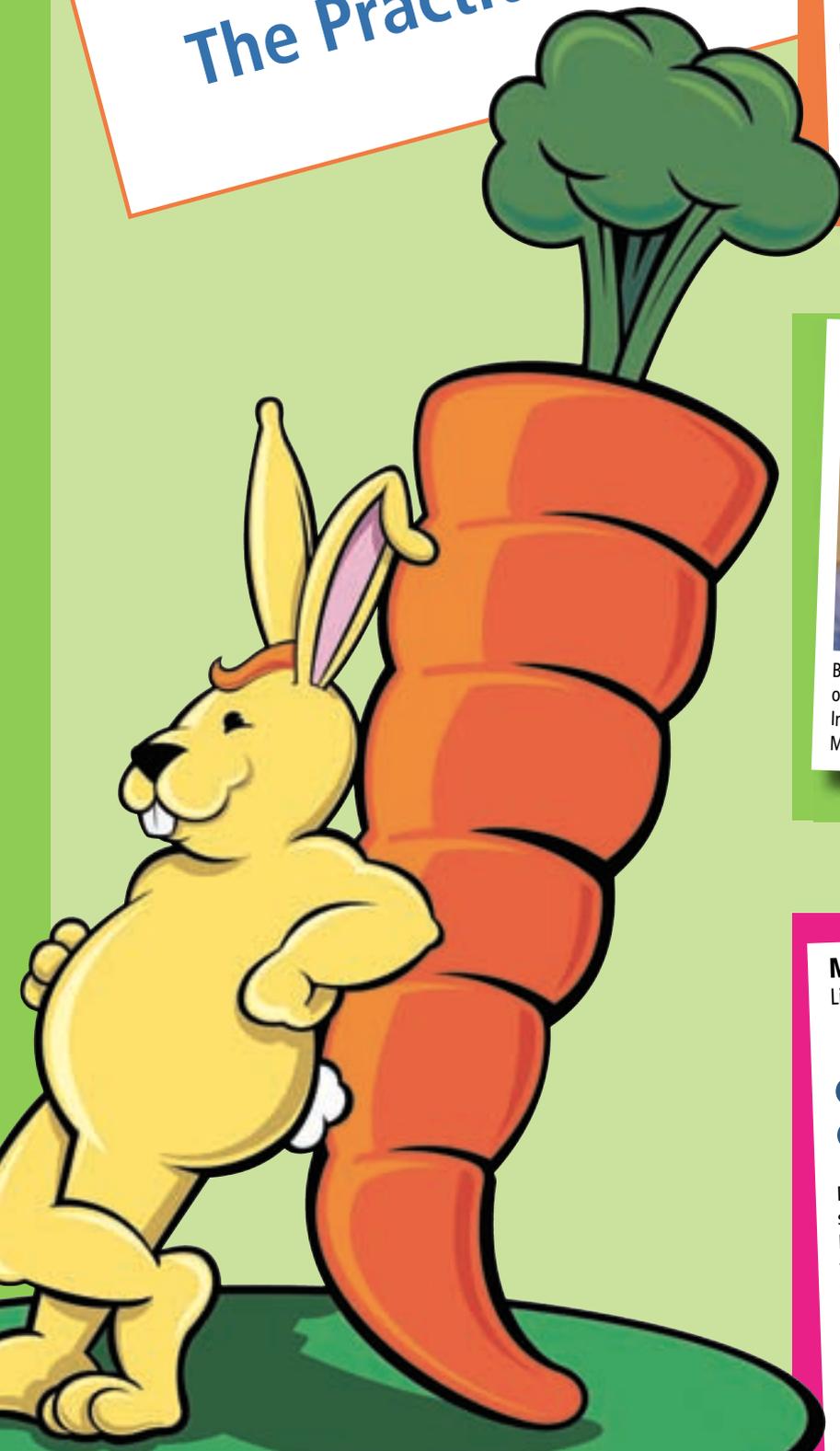


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Dr. Milchman received his Doctor of Dental Medicine degree from the University of Pennsylvania where he graduated with Honors and received two additional awards in the specialty of Periodontics. He expanded on his training with a one year General Practice Residency at Montefiore Medical Center. Dr. Milchman went on to complete a dual degree Orthodontic Residency Program at Temple University. In addition to his certificate in Orthodontics, Dr. Milchman has also earned a Masters of Science in Dentistry. In pursuit of the highest standards in his specialty, Board Certification, Dr. Milchman has successfully passed the American

Board of Orthodontics Written Board Exam and Clinical Case Exam. Dr. Milchman serves the needs of the pediatric, adolescent, and adult community in his two private offices in Queens, New York. In addition, he is currently an Attending Orthodontist at St. Barnabas Hospital and Wyckoff Heights Medical Center.

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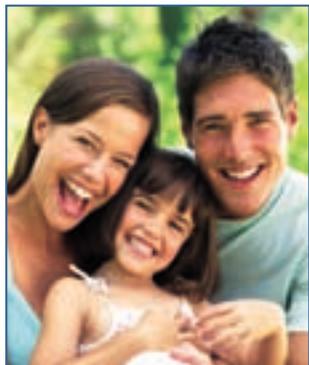
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DEAR
DR. KARYN
DR. KARYN GORDON

20 things teen guys want moms to know

I have two teen sons (ages 14 and 18), and I often find it difficult to know how to connect to them or know what they are thinking. Since you work with teens so much, could you shed some light on simple things mothers should know about raising boys?

Several years ago I had a radio talk show and I enlisted several teen guys to give me some specific tips for parents! It's always a privilege to be able to get into the "headspace" of teens in order to really understand what they need and want. So I asked a teen named Eric Acosta and his friends to create a list called things they want their mothers to know. Enjoy reading and ask your son how many of these apply to him.

The Top 20 things teen guys want their mothers to know

- Stop telling us to pull up our pants.
- Don't take it personally that we don't want to go shopping with you anymore.
- What may be "just a game" to you — e.g., sports, video games —

could be extremely important to us.

- You'll never think that a girl is good enough for us but we need to find out for ourselves.
- Leave "The Talk" to Dad.
- Try to bite your tongue when our voices crack.
- What may sound like noise to you is great music to us.
- Reminding is different than nagging.
- If you think something's wrong, you're probably right, but please don't press the issue. We'll come to you when we're ready.
- We eat a lot.
- Just because video games weren't around when you were a kid doesn't make them any less fun.
- My room isn't messy, it's "lived-in."
- Our first shave should not be considered a Kodak moment.
- If you give us too much freedom we might abuse it. If you give us too little, we'll definitely abuse it.
- My cellphone is not a 24-hour personal Walkie-Talkie.

• It's not just good decisions we learn from.

• Assuring us that our current problem is "not a big deal" won't change our minds.

• It's one thing to introduce yourself to our friends but another to interrogate them.

• Schoolwork is obviously important. That doesn't mean that other things aren't.

• Even if we don't say it enough, we do appreciate you.

• • •

My firstborn just left for college this fall and I'm really scared that I'm going to lose this great relationship I have with her. What can I do to ensure our connection?

Your question is one that many parents can relate to! I did a recent survey with young people going off to college and asked them what their parents could do to be helpful during this transition. Most impor-

tantly, they said, "Tell them not to worry so much." I realize this is easier said than done! However, they also suggested the following five tips:

Send personalized care packages: Receiving a customized care package away from home is always a treat! Make sure it's practical and fun. Think about what magazines, music, or hair products they like.

Take them out for dinner: If you are within driving distance, take them out for a meal occasionally. Everyone likes a break from residence food. However, I must caution you — talk with them in advance about how often they would like this to happen. Some young people would prefer one time per week, but I find that most really need their space (especially at the beginning) and may only want to do the dinner date monthly or bi-monthly. Talk about expectations!

Text, Skype, and send phone cards: With today's technology it makes it much easier to stay connected. Some parents and teens like to text mostly (it's quick and fast), others prefer phone or Skyping (you can actually hear and see how they are doing). Be sure to mail phone cards to make connecting that much easier and cheaper!

Ask open questions: When you finally talk to them, ask specific questions: What is the best part of university? What is the worst part? Avoid asking, "How is university?" You'll get "good" or some other one-word answer. Be focused on really getting an idea of how their new life is away from home.

Respect their space and don't take it personally: Remember that they have entered a new chapter of their life. Make it clear you are there for them, but also respect their space. Try not to take this personally if they don't want to talk with you daily — this has nothing to do with how much they love you — they are growing up, and living independently is a great way to boost their confidence!

Do you have a question for Dr. Karyn? E-mail her at karyn@drkaryn.com!





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Finding the upside of parenting teens

Seeing the joy and savoring this phase amid the challenges

BY MICHELE RANARD, MED

Living with teenagers can have its challenging moments for parents. Teens frequently want more freedom than what they are prepared to handle. There are boundary issues, rebellion, and identity crises. Parents may experience their own identity crises as well. Experts say it's dangerous and unhealthy for parents to take on the role of "friend," as teens must see you as an authority. Yet there are plenty of moments when it feels more than natural to do so — to laugh, share music, and learn new things together.

In spite of the rollercoaster adolescence can feel like, I am not a fan of simply trying to "survive" this developmental chapter. There is much to celebrate about parenting these young adults, and the trick is becom-

ing more intentional about savoring them. It's easy to forget things were not always so rosy when they were younger and more dependent.

Six reminders to stay optimistic

- There's a whole world of sweet things to enjoy together now that your teen is older. Don't forget that many activities you both like — whether it's a sitcom you both love, baking, a sports team, Scrabble, cars, a book series, or pilates — were not options when she was little. You likely yielded to her child-related interests and developmental needs at the time (and Dora!). Now there's new, fun stuff for both of you.

- You both navigated childhood successfully. Cue the confetti. It's worth celebrating. Really. It wasn't always unicorns and rainbows — remember chronic ear infections, all those meals when she couldn't cut up her pork chop, and the demonic temper tantrums in the grocery cart? Bravo. You made it.

- Her identity crisis makes you more accountable. At first blush, this may not sound savor-worthy, but think about it: because she is forming opinions and making discoveries about herself, you are probably held more accountable. And that's good for both of you. Are you worried about the dangers of alcohol and drug-use for her? If so, you are likely modeling better behavior since you know she is watching. Part of teens' process as they clarify who they are morally and ethically is influenced by interactions with their parents and what

they observe at home.

- You have more time. And time is money. Teens are less dependent on parents, so you likely have extra time now for your own personal interests. Suddenly, you are freed up to explore what makes your heart sing, devote more time to church, and spend uninterrupted time with your spouse. The pressure to rush home to the sitter or carve out "mommy and daddy time" is over and probably a welcome change. If your kids made you feel guilty about doing anything fun without them, this is probably history. Traveling or entertaining at home? Suddenly much less stressful.

- You have the opportunity for meaningful discussions. It's one thing to discuss matters of faith with your kids when they are 10. But as young adults, the ongoing dialogue about faith, philosophy, and character has life-altering potential. They may come to you for spiritual guidance or ethical dilemmas, and engaging them in such conversations (with compassion and understanding) can have soulful consequences.

- You may have more household help. It's nice when there are strong arms around — arms that are capable of operating a vacuum, the microwave, and the washing machine. Even if you have to nag, sending them to the grocery store is a perk. And it's easy to forget that just a short time ago you had to drag them with you on those boring errands, but now they can stay behind happily.

If you pay attention only to the media and the latest best-selling nonfiction, you may be horrified and convinced our teens belong to Generation Slut, Generation Me, or worse. You could be misled, since there are plenty of wonderful qualities emerging in adolescence. We just have to be sensitive enough to notice.

Michele Ranard has a husband, two children, and a master's in counseling.



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Real world math

How to use tangible tools for teen math success

BY HEATHER SHANKS

American students sometimes display dismal performances when they make the leap from elementary to upper-level math. In the areas of creative problem solving, fluency of ideas, and mental agility, some students are falling short. Why?

Could it be that we are expecting teens to give up an important part of the learning process? In early years, we use pattern blocks and toothpicks to give our students pictures of new math concepts. Yet, when students graduate to algebra, geometry, or calculus courses, more “mature” learning techniques are favored rather than the tangible tools of math (manipulatives, games, and hands-on activities).

Unfortunately, what gets lost in that transition is a matter of brain function. More complicated math operations call more of the brain into action. Even though the sequential processing needed to perform a calculus problem may come from the left hemisphere, the right hemisphere is needed to access the big picture. Removing the tangible tools for seeing that big picture inhibits the student from tackling the problem with both sides of the brain.

A question of outcomes

Exceptional educators know that

by attacking a problem or concept from the concrete to the abstract to the theoretical, students are able to interact with the material in a 360-degree fashion. My husband’s high school physics teacher was a genius at taking the abstract algebraic and calculus concepts used in physics and making them meaningful to the teenage mind. He used architecture, footballs, and model rockets to generate interest and make them think. He understood that math games don’t become obsolete when students reach a certain age. Instead, they simply morph from beans and teddy bear counters into activities with more of a “wow” factor.

That physics professor’s example forms a compelling case for the use of tangible education tools in the upper grades. It also raises the question of ultimate outcomes: what are we really trying to accomplish through math education? The discipline of math rests on a foundation of analytical abilities. Three of these — problem-solving competence, reasoning ability, and flexible thinking in application — are skills that cultivate a quick and agile brain by utilizing both hemispheres. Let’s take a closer look at how tangible math provides that type of 360-degree comprehension.

Creative problem solving

Mathematical concepts occur in relationship to one another. They

build on each other, parlay off of one another, and because math is a step-dependent discipline, each step requires a correct answer to move the problem forward. Relationships like these are best discovered and analyzed with the help of symbolic representation. This is where tangible tools shine. As students are given a pictorial peg to hang a concept on, they can work through each step and see relationships they may otherwise overlook. In this way, manipulative tools accelerate understanding and let the mind process relationships, leading to creative solutions.

Fluency of ideas

Real success in upper-level math courses rests on the student’s ability to think mathematically rather than plugging numbers into formulas. Evidence of mastery involves explaining why a solution is valid. Hands-on activities provide an impetus for students to take a concept, internalize it, and bring it to a logical conclusion. After solving a problem in this manner, students have the confidence and understanding to defend their position.

Every time a student has access to symbolic representation of a problem, his brain is being conditioned to look for all possibilities. After he has examined alternatives and verified that his answer makes sense, he can better articulate reasons for those answers.

Mental agility

Mental agility is demonstrated when a student can switch between concepts to determine the most appropriate fit for a problem. Tangible math is a great tool for training the brain to wrap itself around the situation presented and apply the optimal concepts. Students begin by identifying known and unknowns using concrete tools. Then, they can take inventory of which concepts may apply, assess the information they have, and analyze what information they may need to look up. When new scenarios are presented,

Tangible math toolkit

Here are some books, movies, and courses that can help teens with math.

- “A Mathematical Mosaic: Patterns & Problem Solving” by Stanford math professor Ravi Vakil, National Library of Virtual Manipulatives (www.amazon.com/Mathematical-Mosaic-Patterns-Problem-Solving/dp/1895997046)

- Visual Calculus (archives. math.utk.edu/visual.calculus)

- Geogebra — free open-source software; winner of the National Technology Leadership Award 2010 (www.geogebra.org)

- “Algebra in the Real World” movies (www.thefutureschannel.com/algebra/algebra_real_world_movies.php)

Top Tips

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology — open course materials including lecture notes, PDF files, practice sets, exam questions, and experiments tied to mathematical thinking (ocw.mit.edu/high-school/calculus)

- Thinkwell Math — upper-level math courses using visual teaching techniques and illustrations (www.thinkwell.com)

- Mathematica for Students — math graphing and visualization program (www.wolfram.com/solutions/education/students)



tangibles allow students to think of concepts as flexible and apply them appropriately. Flexibility in application demonstrates depth of comprehension.

Bring back the beans?

Maintaining the use of tangibles throughout the transition from elementary math gives you an opportunity to reframe upper-level math. If your teen understands that math is pictures, and that those pictures evidence concepts, then he has a basis on which to tackle more complicated math material with confidence. Turning complex problems into pictures in the mind by using manipulatives, games, and riddles makes the study of mathematics more personal, dynamic, and creative.

Leave the beans in the pantry,

though, because you are no longer limited to elementary tools. A wide variety of creative and age-appropriate techniques are available to solidify complex mathematical concepts in the minds of your teenage students. Tangible tools for higher math have come a long way in recent years. Programs such as Mathematica are designed to create animations that help students play with and visualize concepts such as tessellations and spirographs. Prestigious universities utilize open-source software to make portions of their coursework available online. Riddles, games, and illustrations are bound together in subject-specific volumes, and are terrific resources for extra practice when necessary.

Put it into practice

If all of this seems a little too

theoretical for comfort, check out some of the resources listed in the sidebar for more in-depth ideas on how to make math come to life for your high school student. In the meantime, here are a few examples to illustrate how you can implement tangible math in your current coursework:

- Use a Frisbee to determine different variables, such as wind speed.
- Pump up the water rockets and use triangulation to calculate height or speed.
- For the student whose mind is on driving, let him calculate the financing for that all-important first car.
- Take helium balloons (tied to strings) outdoors, and release them in order to study differing rates of climb.

- Let your more artistic student create a work of art using trigonometric functions.

- Use Riemann sums to estimate the area under the curve of an arch in your student's favorite piece of architecture, or determine the volume of a cone using huge waffle cones (and calculus).

The Internet is a terrific resource for activities to integrate with whatever mathematical concept your student is currently studying. Simply type in a math term, for example, implicit differentiation, with the word activity or illustration, and you will be directed to many hands-on or electronic idea sources, including many that have been contributed by major universities.

Better yet, have your student do this research to design his own practical work. By taking this initiative, your student will become more familiar and comfortable when the time comes for the more self-directed nature of study he will encounter in college.

Final thoughts

Tangible math tools are critical for activating the entire brain in the quest to tackle the complex math concepts of high school. As your teen graduates to upper-level math courses, don't underestimate the valuable role of tangible tools in the development of analytical skills.

Being able to creatively solve a problem, defend ideas, and apply concepts to new and different situations are skills that will help your students rise above and put them on the path to math success.

Heather Shanks, aka Professor Mom, is an author and researcher specializing in best practices in academic curriculum, character education, and learning styles. The Professor Mom website (www.professormom.net), is an education planning ministry for moms, providing low or no-cost resources and coaching to help families create an authentic home education. Shanks enjoys living and homeschooling with her husband, Professor Dad, and their two sons.

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Continued on page 26

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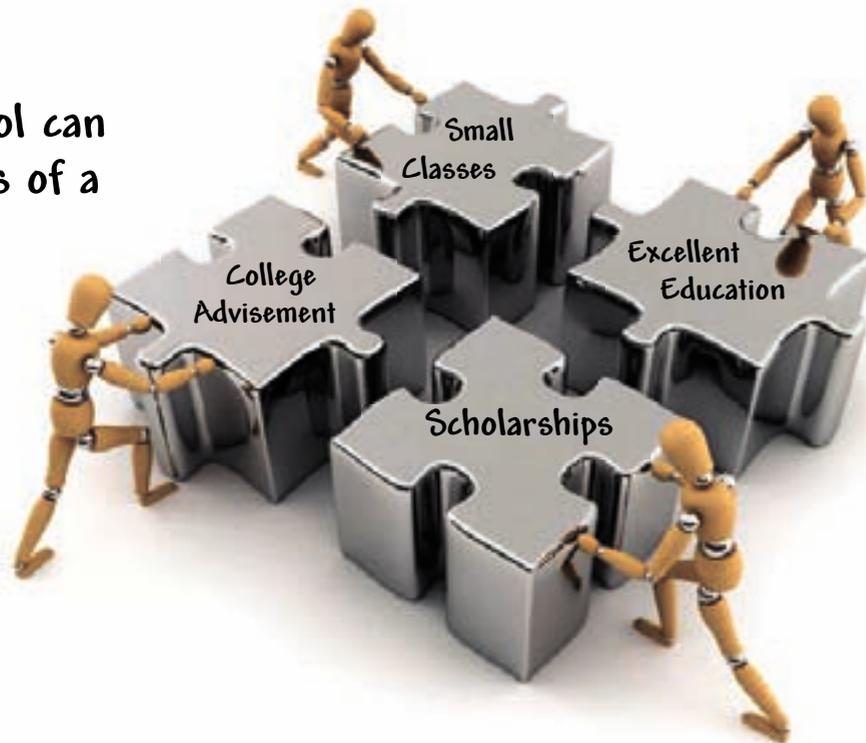
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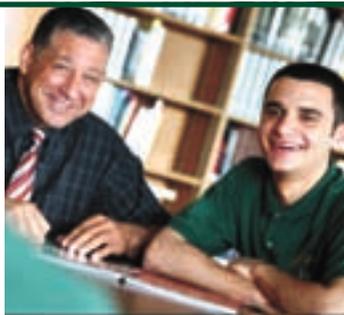
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*Holy Cross was established in 1955 by the
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High School

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 24

tion has provided students from Kindergarten through grade 12 with an academically challenging curriculum in a small, caring environment. Among its hallmarks are a diverse student body, small classes, a low student/teacher ratio and an outstanding record with college placements. There is a Lower (K-4), Middle (5-8) and Upper School (9-12).

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The School's co-curricular program of clubs and activities offers students the opportunity for social, cultural and creative experiences. Msgr. McClancy's athletic teams are highly competitive and have their share of city titles.

Celebrating over 50 years of Catholic education in Queens, McClancy is permanently chartered by the State of New York and fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. [TACHS CODE:#017]

St. Francis Preparatory School

6100 Francis Lewis Boulevard,

Continued on page 28

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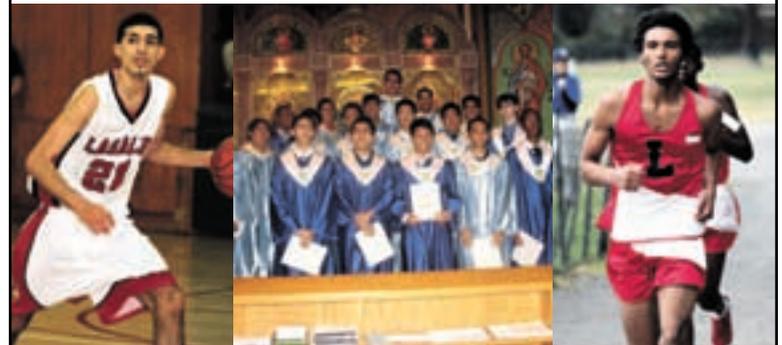
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High School DIRECTORY

Continued from page 26

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173 East 75th St., Manhattan
212-288-1645 or www.stjean.org

St. Jean Baptiste High School, a Catholic girls' school, was founded by the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame in 1929. The School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Secondary Schools.

The school partners with St. Joseph's College and student earn college credits in Writing, French Literature and Spanish Literature. Advanced Placement courses in English, social studies, math, science and Spanish, as well as advanced science and math electives are offered.

Students participate in programs such as The Cornell Weill Medical Research Internship, the Futures and Options Career Essential Program, the Cooper Union Summer Research Institute in Science and Engineering, The Telluride Association Summer Seminar at Indiana University, the Hugh O'Brien Leadership Conference at Adelphi University.

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National Honor Society, French and Spanish Honor Societies, Ambassadors, softball, soccer, track, step team, as well as clubs in art and photography, cooking, Latina dance, public speaking, French, and Global Concern.

Enrollment: 350. 100 percent of graduates attend college. Principal: Sister Maria Cassano, CND; tuition: 2012-2013 - \$7,100, \$500 fees; information: (212)288-1645, ext. 134. Open House: Sunday, October 21st, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. www.stjean.org.

St. John's Preparatory School

21-21 Crescent St. Queens
718-721-7200 or www.stjohnsprepschool.org

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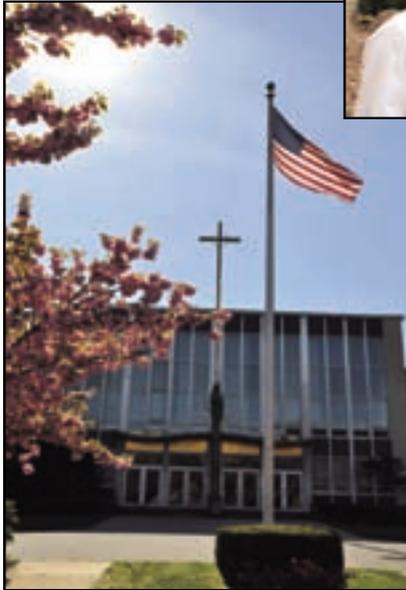
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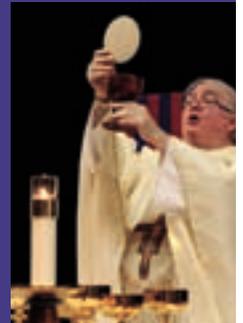
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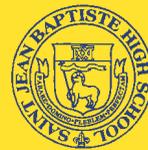
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Teens and dishonesty

Eye-opening truths parents need to hear

BY MICHELE RANARD, MED

Parents often desire emotional closeness with their teens, which should cultivate honesty in their relationships. But research shows that a shockingly high percent of teens lie, and not always for the reasons you may think.

In their 2009 book, "Nurture Shock," authors Po Bronson and Ashley Merryman summarize the

findings of Dr. Nancy Darling as they deconstruct the science of teen rebellion in an eye-opening chapter about lying.

One of the most shocking statistics revealed is the sheer number of teens who lie: 96 percent!

Does that mean parents are misjudging the quality of the relationship or love shared with their teen? Probably not.

To understand the discrepancy, we must understand a little more

about why kids are lying and what — if anything — parents can do.

Why they lie

Darling, of Penn State University, studied high schoolers and learned that 96 percent of them hid the truth from their parents. What were they lying about? She found that teens lie about what they spend allowance on, whether their homework is done, whether they are dating, the clothes they wear away from home,

Dr. Nancy Darling, of Penn State University, studied high schoolers and learned that 96 percent of them hid the truth from their parents. What were they lying about?

the movie they're seeing, and with whom they're spending time. They also lie about drinking and drug use, what music they listen to, how they spend afternoons, whether a party is being supervised, and riding in a car driven by a drunk teen.

Are you thinking that your honor student probably lies less? Well, it turns out that kids who lie don't fall into one demographic — honor students, overscheduled kids — they all reported deception. Of 36 potential topics, the average teen lies to his parents about 12 of them.

Bronson and Merryman report that:

- Teens reported telling an outright lie 25 percent of the time.
- Teens reported avoiding the topic 25 percent of the time.
- Teens reported simply withholding relevant details about 50 percent of the time.

Before her research, Darling admits that she believed kids probably lied to avoid getting into trouble. So, she says, it was surprising to learn that the most common reason for the teens' deception was actually: "I'm trying to protect the relationship with my parents; I don't want them to be disappointed in me."

They do love you. But in their mind, loving you might mean protecting you — by lying.

And Darling says she was surprised by the number of parents with anxiety about pushing their kids into rebellion.

"Many parents today believe the best way to get teens to disclose is to be more permissive and not set outright rules," she indicates.

However, being permissive does not open the door to learning more about a teen's life! When parents lower their standards, teens interpret the lack of rules to mean par-

ents don't care and don't want the job of being a parent. It definitely does not pay to be permissive.

Should you be worried?

For many parents who fear that their already rebellious tweens will be more rebellious in their teenage years, you may actually not have to worry.

Research in Bronson and Merryman's book suggests that teens objecting to their parents' authority peaks at around age 14 to 15. What is shocking is that this need for autonomy is stronger at age 11 than at age 18! So if you've been thinking the high school years are the high-risk years, think again.

Most parents get stressed out by arguing with their teens, but Bronson and Merryman note that it appears that in families with the least amount of lying, there is a higher ratio of arguing or complaining. Why? Teens don't necessarily see arguing and fighting as harmful or destructive.

The authors suggest the flip-side to arguing for many teens is lying! So, a teen can lie to the parent and then go do what he wants behind the parent's back, or argue — in his mind, negotiate with his parent — and avoid lying. More than anything else, it seems to be most important to the teen how an argument gets resolved and whether he feels heard.

Encouraging honesty

The research suggests teenagers are destined to lie about some things, but there are some ways parents can create a climate so their teens lie about less.

"The parents who are the most consistent in enforcing rules are the same parents who are most warm and have the most conversations with their kids," indicates Darling. Such parents set a few key rules (it's too unrealistic and impossible to enforce 20 rules) and explain why the rules are in place. By doing so, these parents demonstrate flexibility.

This spirit of collaboration encourages teens not to lie. Extend freedom to your teen so he can make his own decisions. Instead of hiding 12 areas from you, he might only be hiding as few as five.

Michele Ranard has a husband, two teens, and a master's in counseling.

Resources:

Bronson, Po and Merryman, Ashley. "NurtureShock." Hachette, 2009.

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Teenage smoking

Six helpful tips for parents trying to prevent teens from taking up a bad habit

According to the Surgeon General's 2012 report on "Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults," each day in the U.S., approximately 3,800 young people under 18 years of age smoke their first cigarette.

The overwhelming majority of smokers, experts estimate approximately 90 percent, started smoking before they were 18 years old.

About 20 percent of American teens smoke.

One-third of smokers who began smoking as teens will die prematurely due to a smoking-related illness.

According to Shahriour Andaz, MD, FACS, lung cancer specialist and director of thoracic oncology at South Nassau Communities Hospital, it is important to proactively try to prevent teen smoking.

Nicotine, one of the more than 4,000 chemicals in tobacco, is highly addictive.

Among teens who do smoke, three out of four say they keep smoking because it's really hard to quit. A nearly equal number say they wish they had never started smoking.

"Someone who begins smoking as a young adolescent will have a far more difficult time quitting, can have more serious health problems, and may die younger than a person who begins to smoke in adulthood. It's important that parents and teachers do everything they can to dissuade teens and help them realize the health dangers and negative effects of smoking," said Dr. Andaz.

"Adolescents and young adults are extremely vulnerable to social and environmental influences promoting the use of tobacco," notes Gina Kearney, RN, South Nassau's



director of community education. "Add to that the fact that tobacco companies spend billions of dollars on cigarette and smokeless tobacco advertising, and it can be a true challenge for any parent to help their child stay tobacco-free."

Kearney offers the following prevention tips for parents:

1 Be a good role model: Smoking is more common among teens whose parents smoke. The earlier you can stop smoking, the less likely your teen will become a smoker. A parent who successfully quits also provides an equally strong positive message. It's not only a way to show your child

“Someone who begins smoking as a young adolescent will have a far more difficult time quitting, can have more serious health problems, and may die younger than a person who begins to smoke in adulthood.”

how much you care about him, it also demonstrates that you understand the challenge he faces.

2 Appeal to your teen’s vanity: Since most teens believe they are invincible and will not die from cancer or any other disease associated with tobacco use, parents should appeal to a teen’s vanity. Reminding them that smoking makes their clothes, hair, and breath smell bad, and that it can also turn their teeth yellow and cause wrinkles, can be extremely effective.

3 Talk dollar and cents: Teens are big consumers and generally enjoy buying clothes or electronic gadgets with whatever money they have. Explaining the current high cost of tobacco products and the effect it will have on their purchasing power can be a reality check. Do a simple math problem — if the cost of cigarettes is \$10 a pack and if you smoke a pack a day, how much money will you spend in a year? In 10 years?

4 Discuss the glamorization of smoking: When you see actors smoking in TV or movies, or see ads featuring adults smoking, discuss it with your teenager. Make sure he understands that advertising and

other media depictions are not real and are misleading. The majority of actors who smoke in movies are non-smokers off the screen. Smoking does not add reality to the film — it generates revenue for the film industry.

5 Become an expert on smoking: Making the case against smoking isn’t hard, but having a full grasp of all the facts and using them in ways that are relevant to your child is important. For example, discussing how smoking affects a young smoker versus the health effects on older smokers is more relevant.

6 Be a supporter and sounding board: Lecturing and ultimatums do not work; empathy and understanding are the better options. It’s unlikely that your teen will find peers who will quit with him or with whom he can even discuss quitting.

“Parents are the single biggest influence in the lives of their children and it’s never too early to start warning your kids against smoking and other forms of tobacco use. It’s important to get into the habit of talking openly with your children when they are younger. Eight percent of middle school students are already cigarette smokers!,” Dr. Andaz concludes.

Find out more...

For more information, educational tools, and preventive assistance, Kearney recommends:

- The US Department of Health and Human Services, National Cancer Institute’s “Quit Now TXT Program,” teen.smokefree.gov (a mobile support, 24-7 assistance for quitting and social media pages, “a must for teens that truly speaks their language in a way they are comfortable communicating,” she says);

- www.notobacco.org
- www.tobaccofree.org

- www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tips4youth.htm

- www.fda.gov/tobaccoproducts/resourcesforyou

- American Lung Association’s smoking cessation program Freedom From Smoking, ffonline.org

- NY Smoker’s Quitline: www.nysmokefree.com – (866) 697-8487

In addition, South Nassau periodically offers smoking cessation classes. For more information contact the Department of Community Education at (516) 377-5333.

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Beach treat

Family fun grows up at Beaches Turks and Caicos

BY STACEY ZABLE

The first time my family visited Beaches Turks and Caicos my girls were ages 3 and 6 years old. Imagine how thrilled they were to mingle with such beloved “Sesame Street” favorites such as Big Bird, Elmo, and Zoe. Our return visit, when the girls were then 7 and 10, held equal excitement with the characters and the long list of kid-friendly activities designed for the youngest guests. But when we made our third visit this August to the all-inclusive beachfront resort, I wondered if Beaches Turks and Caicos could deliver for my now “sophisticated” tween and teen, ages 10 and 13.

The answer is “yes!” Families with newborns to college-age children will find a stress-free vacation at Beaches Turks and Caicos, where

virtually everything is included in the package rate. The resort is one that your family can grow with, and is ideal for multi-generational family reunions where all ages can have fun doing what they love. The list of included activities in the water and on land is long, and even your picky-eaters will find something to please them with the resort’s 16 restaurants.

The resort offers an extensive children’s program divided by age group from newborn to age 17. Dedicated programming featuring age-specific activities include sandcastle-building, crafts, scavenger hunts, and boat rides.



Families with young kids will be delighted by all the “Sesame Street” specials: the weekly parade, stage shows, a twice-weekly breakfast where kids sing and dance with seven characters (at an additional cost), and the chance to “Bake with Cookie Monster.” The characters are often seen walking around the resort, where they provide hugs for kids and the coveted photo op.

Tweens and older kids will want to spend time at the Shadow Lounge, a game room with a pool table and foosball, and home to Scratch DJ Academy, where they can learn how to mix and blend music. The Xbox 360 Game Garage provides free-play video games. Pirate’s Island Water Park features nine slides, a lazy river, surf simulator, water cannons, cranks, and spray features.

Our tween and teen found happiness at the Shadow Lounge and water park, and, yes, even spending time with us. We had epic family foosball games (the one “sport” I excel in), and spent long fun-in-the-sun days. The resort fronts the Caribbean Sea bordered by a 12-mile pristine white beach. The water was so calm and clear that you could spot fish even without use of the complimentary snorkeling gear. We spent most days dividing our time between the beach, where we tried kayaking and aqua trikes, and relaxing or participating in family activities, such as water balloon toss and



Photo by Steve Sanacore



Photo by Steve Sanacore

relays, at one of the seven resort pools. The girls loved the never-ending virgin pina coladas available at the swim-up bars, and lounging on rafts in the pools. My husband played tennis each morning with the resort pro, and my 13-year-old and I were pampered at the Red Lane Spa with a “Couple’s Massage.” It was her first and long-anticipated massage, and needless to say, she is hooked for life.

The resort is made up of three “villages,” creating an intimate feel, despite its large size of 614 rooms and suites on more than 65 acres. A guest room in any village allows for the use of amenities at all three. The Italian Village, where we stayed, is the most-recently added accommodations with spacious Family Suites with separate kid’s rooms with bunk

beds with trundles, flat-screen TVs, Xbox, and lower-sized vanity sinks, all of which the kids will love.

Kid-friendly fare is easy to find among the 16 restaurants, which feature a range of cuisine including Caribbean, Japanese, Italian, French, and seafood with a la carte, buffet, and casual- to fine-dining choices. Our favorite was Barefoot by the Sea, due to its unique setting literally in the sand seated at upscale picnic tables. Children even have their own picnic tables sized for them so parents can eat on their own. Evening entertainment beyond the “Sesame Street” shows included beach and swim parties, family karaoke, and live entertainment poolside.

We ended every night of our trip with dessert at Bobby Dee’s. Open

19 hours a day, the 1950s-style diner offers kid-friendly food staples, as well as made-to-order sundaes and milkshakes. And for us, no matter what age the kids are, nothing says family togetherness more than sharing a banana split sundae under a moonlit sky.

Stacey Zable is an award-winning veteran travel writer and family travel expert who has written about destinations, resorts, and cruise lines around the world. Her favorite trips are those that she shares with her husband and two daughters. Send travel questions and comments to Stacey at info@familytraveltrails.com.

At Beaches Turks and Caicos, nothing beats the soft sand and clear water at the beach (above). But you can also enjoy a boat ride, take a dip in the pool, or enjoy kids activities at Bobby Dee’s.

Beaches Turks and Caicos

Here are some family fun facts about Beaches Turks and Caicos, Providenciales

- Ideal for families with children of any age.
- Nightly starting rate for a family of four is \$761 including accommodations, dining, unlimited

premium brand wine and spirits, nightly entertainment, water-sports (including snorkeling and scuba diving for certified divers), airport transfers, and all resort taxes and fees.

• Contact: www.beaches.com; (888) BEACHES [(888) 232-2437].



MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SERADOVA

Tough love

Watching another mother discipline her son isn't easy



I was sitting at the subway platform recently, waiting for my morning train, when I noticed a little boy sitting next to me playing with a toy car. He was pushing it along the armrests of the platform seating, and being scolded by his mother.

"Don't you dare drop that car!" she told him. "If you drop that toy on the floor, it's going to stay there!"

From the tone of her voice, I knew that this mom meant business. She was clearly annoyed with the boy and, apparently, he had a habitual problem of dropping things on the floor. At least that's the conclusion I came to from hearing her yell about how he "always drops his toys on the floor." What's the big deal? That's what kids do, they drop things, or worst, fling them at you.

But I secretly hoped that he wouldn't drop the toy. I feared what would hap-

pen if he dropped it. What would she do? Was she really going to leave the toy on the floor? Would she throw it onto the subway tracks to try and teach him a lesson? Or would she hit him? These were the thoughts racing through my head as I sat there pretending to be interested in my iPad. Ironically, I was reading a book on French parenting, "Bringing Up Bebe," by Pamela Druckerman. According to this book, a French parent would tell the child once not to drop the toy, ask if the child understood, and expect him not to drop it.

As luck would have it (or just plain-old carelessness of a child), he dropped the toy car. Ugh! The mother yelled and said, "You see! That's why you're not getting it back!"

I felt sympathy for the little boy as he cried and begged his mother to give him the toy. He didn't yell back or kick or scream. He simply asked her, through his tears and puppy-dog eyes, if he could get it from the floor. An older woman who was sitting beside me picked up the toy car and handed it to the boy. She was on my side and she, too, was secretly cheering the boy on. He immediately grabbed it from the woman and soon after, his mother snatched it and threw it back on the floor, where it had originally fallen. This was definitely a case of mean mommy.

I wanted to tell her that she was being mean and cruel. "He's just a baby!" I wanted to shout at her. But I decided to mind my own business. The older woman next to me and I exchanged looks of annoyance toward the mother. The mother obviously believed in tough love. Or, maybe, the kid has a serious problem of dropping toys on the floor and she had had enough. The truth is, the mother was trying to teach her son a lesson, even if it was a harsh one. Maybe she wants him to have a higher regard for his things, or maybe she's tired of him losing toys all over the city (which no doubt, us parents work hard to pay for).

As the boy and his mother got on the train, I felt sad for him. But, like most children, he'll probably forget the trauma of losing his toy by lunchtime, and hopefully the lesson will last much longer than that.





Buck up!

Study shows good posture makes you tougher

BY KIKI BOCHI

Mothers have been telling their children to stop slouching for ages, and it turns out they're onto something.

Poor posture not only makes a bad impression, it can actually make you physically and emotionally weaker.

Research published in the Journal of Experimental Social Psychology has shown that by standing up straight, people feel more

powerful and in control — and are able to tolerate more distress. Among the individuals studied, those who used the most dominant posture were more comfortably able to handle pain than those assigned a more neutral or submissive stance. Dominant postures also made remembering an unhappy, emotional event less painful.

The research suggests that crawling up into a ball when things go bad just makes things worse by leaving you feeling like you have no control over your circumstances.

Instead, try sitting or standing up straight, pushing your chest

out, and expanding your body to create a sense of power. Adopting an expansive posture rather than constricting your body may also lead to elevated testosterone, associated with increased pain tolerance, and increased cortisol, which can make experiences less stressful.

Don't wait until things are difficult to adopt a stand-tough stance.

Practice makes perfect. You'll be better able to withstand the stresses of everyday life if you adopt a stronger backbone.

Kiki Bochi is an award-winning freelance writer and editor who specializes in health and family topics.

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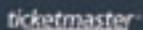
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THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Teens can learn from 'Charly's Epic Fiascos'

Your teen may not like hearing the word “no,” but she needs to know that sometimes you don’t get where you want to in life if you don’t yield to the negative response every once in a while.

If this sounds like your daughter, she might learn something by reading Kelli London’s “Charly’s Epic Fiascos,” about a young woman who has never met a “no” she likes.

Charly has a crush on Mason, but she’s been lying to him about everything. She’s from the South Side of Chicago, not New York, and she isn’t just going to visit her father in Brooklyn — she hasn’t seen him since she was 5. And despite her new phone, she’s not wealthy — Charly bought it with money she made at her part-time job at Smax’s BBQ. And it was money she had to hide from her recently laid-off mother, Brigette who claims every cent Charly makes!

Bridgette is nasty — she stole her daughter’s bankroll and lost it at a

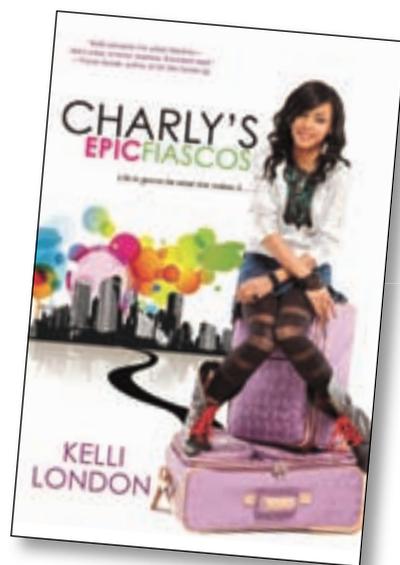
casino. So Charly is packing her belongings and leaving town on the first bus out.

Charly’s aunt lives in the Big Apple too, and she’s sure that her auntie will help her get an audition for a reality show that will hopefully start filming soon. In Charly’s head, it’s practically a done deal. They’ll be no more frontin’ for Charly — there’d be fame and fortune in her near future, fo’ sure.

That is, as long as she can keep away from dealers, juvie, scammers, creeps, thieves, and other haters.

When I first picked up “Charly’s Epic Fiascos,” I was surprised at what I was reading. It seemed to be about a lying, young hustler who manipulated everyone around her to get what she wanted. It didn’t seem like an appropriate book for young women.

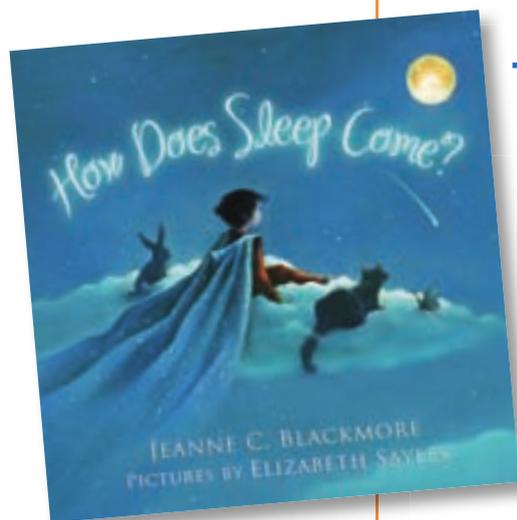
But “yes,” it is. London gives her main character plenty of reasons for doing what she does, as well as a bit of regret. Because of the situations



in which London places her charmingly cheeky character, readers will fall in love with her. I know I did.

Parents should be aware that “Charly’s Epic Fiascos” does romanticize the idea of running away. And is that good? I think that depends on who is reading this book. For 13-to-17-year-olds who can see the story as a story, I think it’s a really fun read. But for teens that struggle to recognize fiction, “Charly’s Epic Fiascos” is a big NO go.

“Charly’s Epic Fiascos” by Kelli London [288 pages, 2012, \$9.95].



A bedtime story that will make sleep come easily

It may be difficult for your child to catch the train to Dreamville without a bedtime story. If so, “How Does Sleep Come?” by Jeanne C. Blackmore is a story she’ll want you to read.

The book tells the story of Jacob, who knows it’s bedtime but isn’t very sleepy. His eyes are wide open.

Still, he climbs into bed and his mommy tucks the covers around him tight. It’s dark. Jacob should be sleeping, but he isn’t ready yet. That’s when he asks Mama, “How does sleep come?”

She imagines a quiet, snowy night filled with snowflakes falling softly. Sleep sometimes comes quietly, she tells Jacob as he snuggles under the covers, his eyelids sagging just a little.

Jacob’s mom thinks for another

minute — about a silent night along the water and tells him that sleep sometimes comes creeping in like fog. She tells him that it’s big and wraps itself around you.

Jacob listens, and yawns. He stretches and rolls over.

His mom tells him that sleep can come in like a cloud in the sky, just floating along with nothing to say. You can’t hear clouds, and you can’t call them to come to your house. Sleep comes like that — just like floating along on a breeze.

Jacob is still awake, but he starts to curl up under the warm blankets. Maybe he is a little sleepy after all.

Sleep comes comfortably, Jacob’s mother says, like a kitten curled up in front of a fire, purring happily, and then snoozing on its pillow. Sleep comes softly, like a butterfly’s wing brushing gently on the petals of a tiny, white flower.

And now Jacob is very sleepy. He closes his eyes and starts to dream.

Can you guess what he dreams about?

Blackmore writes sparingly, using very few words but lots of simple ideas that little sleepyheads won’t have any trouble grasping. Kids who love to ask “just one more question” will readily identify with young Jacob.

But while the story in this book is perfect for nap or bedtime reading, I thought that the illustrations by Elizabeth Sayles are the real appeal. Done in lush, soft, shadowy blues and grays, Sayles’s artwork is quietly soothing, like a calming backrub. They even made this adult long for some shut-eye.

Meant for kids ages 3 to 5, I think a quiet 2-year-old might enjoy this book, so find it and keep it around. When it’s time for a bedtime story, “How Does Sleep Come?” will surely come in handy.

“How Does Sleep Come?” by Jeanne C. Blackmore [32 pages, 2012, \$16.99].

Terri Schlichenmeyer has been reading since she was 3 years old, and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill with two dogs and 12,000 books.



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Healthier choices for trick-or-treat snacks

As soon as back-to-school season begins, it seems like Halloween is just right around the corner. We purchase new decorations and plan pumpkin-picking trips, but we also think about what our own kids will get while trick-or-treating, because that's when the sugar-infused inundation begins.

Due to the large amount of candy acquired that night, many parents limit the number of sugary items that their kids are allowed to ingest in the days following the big event. Others let their kids enjoy their loot on Halloween night but ship it out to shelters and food pantries the day after. (Of course, many parents steal a few treats here and there, which lightens the load considerably.)

Whatever method you choose for Halloween candy consumption, remember that too much of a good thing can have residual effects. Sugar overload can make

kids hyper after they eat it, and sluggish and groggy the next day.

Are you wondering what are the best treats to give out to trick-or-treaters at your door? Here are some things to consider:

Keep it safe

First and foremost, make sure that what you give out is age-appropriate and as non-allergic as possible.

Try to avoid handing out candy with peanuts in it. Parents of allergic children are cautious, but it's nice when you can have the peace of mind that any child who comes to your home will be able to safely enjoy your snack.

Avoid handing out large hard candies and gumballs, which pose a choking risk, especially to small children. There is nothing worse than seeing people hand out oversized rock-like circular candies to toddlers. It happens every year.

It goes without saying that parents need to inspect each piece of candy before giving any to their child. Throw out anything with opened wrappers or looks otherwise old or tainted. Watch out for candy from foreign countries where there is no Food and Drug Administration mandate for food quality.

Make it nutritious (or at least less junk-like)

Calorie wise, there are a few things you can give out if you are looking to avoid adding to the pure sugar overload: fruit-based snacks, pretzels, or individual packs of Goldfish and Cheez-its are a few. Apples are still an option, of course, but you'll surely lose points with the neighborhood kids in the "cool" department.

It also doesn't have to be food-based. Brightly colored pumpkin and witch pencils, stickers, and rings are always a big hit with kids.

Mind those teeth

Chocolate is better than anything sticky for teeth, so avoid gummy worms and bears, Starbursts, and anything else that causes a glue-like bond between the teeth, which can loosen fillings and crowns. Don't give out any sour candy because even though kids love them, some dentists compare it to battery acid on the enamel. Sour and gummy is a recipe for disaster!

Dentists also tend to agree that a one-time candy splurge on Halloween night won't hurt a child's teeth. It is repeated exposure that will cause damage.

Have a happy and safe Halloween!

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find her on Facebook and Twitter @DanniSull-Writer, or on her blog, Just Write Mom.





DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

For Tom vs. Katie, values in divorce

I'm not much for the gossip columns or celebrity news, but as a professional who specializes in divorce, there was one article that caught my eye recently, entitled something like "Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes settle divorce, and Katie gets no spousal support."

Here's a quote from the article: "As for the final divorce settlement ... sadly for ladies and fans of Holmes, Katie did not fare too well."

of Tom Cruise's \$250-million fortune."

- "Their daughter cannot attend boarding school, or any school that has anything to do with Scientology."

Is this result really sad for ladies and unfortunate for Holmes? Or, is it possible that Holmes is satisfied with the agreements? Consider the following:

- Cruise will be paying \$400,000 a year for the next 12 years or so for expenses when Suri is with her mother. Additionally, he will pay a good portion of Suri's educational, health, and other expenses. Suri will be well provided for.

- In barely dealing with the courts, Cruise and Holmes avoided a toxic battle between themselves and over Suri. The process was very quick. Emotionally, they are all winners as far as divorces go.

- There are indications that Holmes wanted to limit their daughter's exposure to Scientology. If so, she accomplished this goal.

- Perhaps Holmes doesn't want anything from her ex. Many women don't. (Caution: a hasty decision based on such feelings may lead to later regrets). A Google search reveals that Holmes has a net worth of \$25 million — not that I can vouch for the accuracy of this amount. Regardless, she has resources, and

appears to have a high-earning potential in the future.

Different people have different values. In fact, when spouses have different values, it may be easier for both to get their respective needs met. Think of a house that is marital property. If one wants to keep it and the other spouse wants to "start fresh" someplace else, reaching a deal on the house is often possible.

If Holmes values money and only money, she is probably disappointed in her settlement. But let's say that she values freedom and indepen-

dence; privacy; the ability to help determine Suri's educational upbringing; her own emotional well-being and that of her daughter, and maybe Cruise's well-being as well; being able to move on with her life without bitter and lengthy court proceedings before her; and enough money to provide for Suri in the manner that Suri has been accustomed to.

If so, is Holmes disappointed? Or did she get exactly, or close to, what she was looking for?

Who could argue here that mother and daughter are not financially secure?

Whether Holmes and Cruise made the choices you or I would have made is unimportant. What matters is if they were able to reach agreements that reflect their own values, and whether the agreements provide for Suri's welfare. I would like to think that the couple's agreements did so.

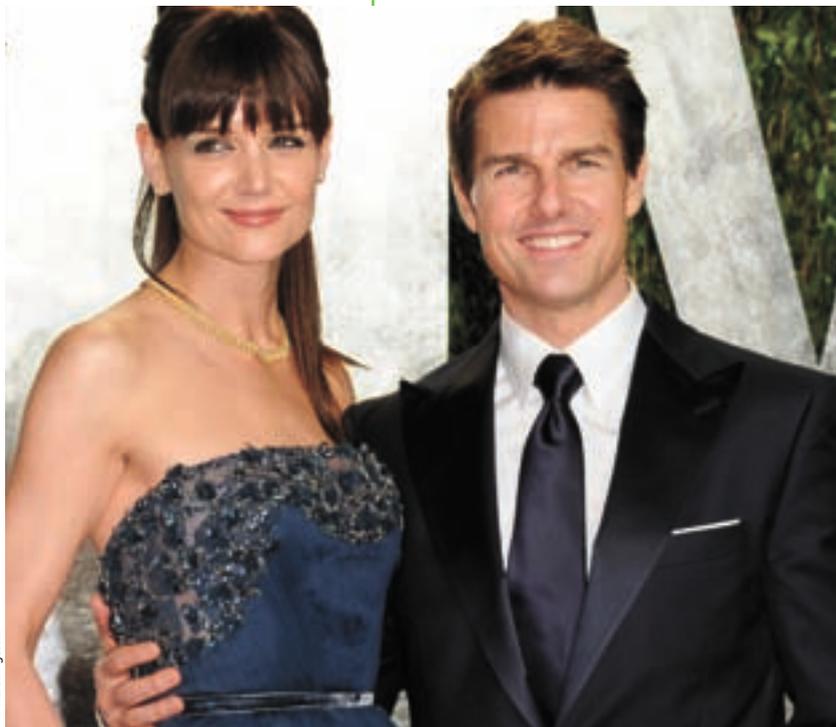
If this is the case, Katie fared very well indeed.

As a mediator and collaborative divorce lawyer, I work with couples, assisting them to better understand what they and their children need — and how these needs may be met. The goal is the same whether the couple is rich like Holmes and Cruise, or, like most of us, just managing: to facilitate a fair, affordable agreement that both parties can live with.

Here, with so much at stake, the parties chose a fast, mutually respectful way to dissolve their marriage, out of court.

New York City and Long Island-based divorce mediator and collaborative divorce lawyer Lee Chabin, Esq., helps clients end their relationships respectfully and without going to court. Contact him at lee_chabin@lc-mediate.com, (718) 229-6149, or go to <http://lc-mediate.com/home>.

Disclaimer: All material in this column is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Discussing your particular case and circumstances with a legal professional before making important decisions is strongly encouraged to safeguard your rights.



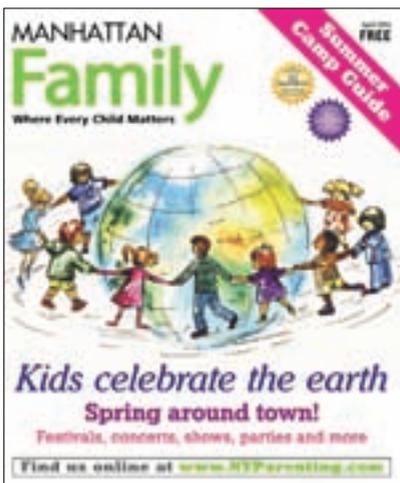
AP / Evan Agostini

My gut reaction upon reading this sentence was to imagine asking the author, "How do you know the private feelings and needs of someone you have probably never met or spoken to?" And, "Who are you to judge?"

The article sets out the following information:

- "Holmes will only get child support from Cruise, totaling \$33,333.33 a month, according to celebrity gossip source, TMZ. This amount is to be paid for the daughter's welfare till daughter is 18..."

- "Holmes cannot get one dime out



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Visiting the gynecologist

What your daughter can expect on her first trip

BY JAMIE LOBER

According to the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, girls should have their first gynecologic visit between ages 13 and 15. Depending on your family doctor, some prefer that girls go earlier or later depending on their health issues, concerns, and personal circumstances, such as if a teen is going off to college. You know your child best.

It is normal for a young girl to feel nervous and it can ease some of her stress if she understands what to expect. Basically, the first visit may simply be a conversation between your daughter and her gynecologist, in which she discovers what to anticipate at future visits and gathers information about how to stay healthy. Your daughter should be prepared to answer some personal questions about her menstrual period or sexual activities including vaginal, oral, or anal sex.

“Heavy periods, heavy menstrual bleeding, missing periods, and irregular menstrual cycles are all reasons to see the gynecologist,” says Dr.

Leslie Hayes, chief of adolescent medicine in the department of pediatrics at New York Methodist Hospital. Young girls may feel relief just to know that changes in their body are normal.

“During the first two years or so, it is not unusual for the menstrual cycle to be irregular and it is not really anything to

worry about,” said Hayes. Young girls are encouraged to keep a menstrual calendar so they can see their pattern. “Write down the first day you start bleeding and the date you stopped, and do that monthly,” says Hayes. They will find that everybody’s period is not the same and does not come on the same day every month.

Your daughter may have her own agenda for the first visit and the gynecologist will be accommodating.

“Your daughter may want to start on some sort of birth control, may have a vaginal discharge, or may be having abdominal pain,” says Hayes. She may want to find out about screenings or just be reassured that she is developing normally. “Depending on the sexual history of the patient, we may need to do what we call anticipatory guidance with someone who is not sexually active to talk about their level of knowledge about protection, preventing sexually transmitted diseases, and preventing pregnancy, and if someone is active, we want to find out if they are interested in using protection or adding another birth control method,” she says.

Girls are often worried about confidentiality and should be reassured that information shared is kept private. If they feel more comfortable, they may have a nurse or family member accompany them for any part of the general physical exam or external genital exam that are often performed. A pelvic exam is not typically part of the first visit unless the girl complains of abnormal bleeding or pain. If she is sexually active, tests for sexually transmitted diseases may be advised, but most can be done by a urine sample. Sometimes vaccinations are addressed.

During the physical exam, the gynecologist checks the girl’s height, weight, and blood pressure. In the

external exam, she looks at the vulva and may give the girl a mirror so she can look as well, and learn about her body. The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists states that the pelvic exam involves looking at the vulva, looking at the vagina and cervix with a speculum, and checking internal organs with a gloved hand.

If your daughter understands the purpose of the Pap test, she will be more likely to comply.

“The Pap smear is a screening test for cervical cancer, as well as any sort of cervical cell abnormality, and it is also a way to test for certain infections, primarily HPV,” says Hayes. During a Pap test a sample of cells is taken from the cervix with a small brush and the doctor may put one or two lubricated fingers into the vagina, up to the cervix, and the other hand will press on the abdomen from outside.

“The Pap smear is recommended to be done three years after you have started being sexually active or if you have what we call high-risk sexual behavior, which would include early sexual activity, history of sexually transmitted diseases, or pregnancy,” explains Hayes.

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists urges girls to talk about cramps, problems with menstrual periods, acne, weight, sex, sexuality, birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, alcohol, drugs, smoking, and emotional ups and downs. The gynecologist promotes maintaining a healthy weight through a well-balanced diet and frequent exercise. The doctors ask that girls avoid smoking, drinking, and using illegal drugs. If a patient is having emotional ups and downs or feels depressed, she is asked to turn to a mental healthcare provider. If girls are having sex, birth control is suggested, as well as protection from sexually transmitted diseases by using a latex condom. The gynecologist asks that girls know their partners, limit sexual encounters, and most importantly, keep up with routine exams, screenings, and immunizations. The gynecologist is meant to be a young girl’s partner and advocate for good health.

Jamie Lober, author of Pink Power (www.getpinkpower.com), is dedicated to providing information on women’s and pediatric health topics. She can be reached at jamie@getpinkpower.com.

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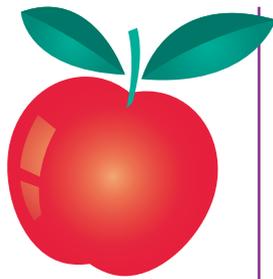


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DEAR TEACHER

PEGGY GISLER AND
MARGE EBERTS

Can classroom walls be too busy for kids?

Dear teacher,

Our daughter's fourth-grade teacher scarcely has a free space on her walls. She has hung up all kinds of charts, pictures, and examples of the children's work. The doors, and even the blinds, have stuff on them. Is this visual overload? Does it affect students' ability to concentrate?

Dear parents,

Teachers are usually encouraged to have bright colorful displays on classroom walls. But when a classroom

situation of visual overload. Teachers should be aware that too-small print size and little spacing between letters do slow down the students' reading rate.

Is text messaging considered reading?**Dear teacher,**

I am really puzzled about what counts as reading today. My children feel that they are reading when they read text messages or comments on social-networking sites. Are they correct?

Dear parents,

Reading on electronic devices is reading. Your children are right about this. However, a survey by Scholastic and the Harrison Group points out one big downside to this view: they found that from age 6 to 17, the time children spend reading books for fun declines, while the time they spend going online for fun and using a cellphone to text or talk increases. Incidentally, most parents do not consider reading on social-networking sites reading.

The survey also found that technology could motivator kids to read. Fifty-seven percent of the children in the survey said they were interested in reading an e-book, and a third of the children said they would read more books for fun if they had access to them on an electronic device.

This year, the sale of e-books has dramatically increased — especially in the children and young adult category.

Parents understandably have concerns about the amount of time their kids spend on electronic or digital devices, but e-books do offer a way to get more kids to read. The survey also found that the more time struggling readers spend reading e-books for fun, the more proficient readers they become.

Should children use assignment books?**Dear teacher,**

You often mention that children should have assignment books. However, in my experience, children fail

to use them regularly. Or, if they do, they invariably lose them. Fortunately for our children, all the teachers in their school put all their assignments on the school website. The children never have the excuse of not knowing what their assignments are, and parents always know if their children have homework.

Dear parents,

We'll admit that it is handy to have assignments put up on websites. It is decidedly helpful for parents, children who are absent, and those who may or may not have written the assignment down accurately.

But there is a big negative to not having to write down assignments: it doesn't prepare students for high school or college, where the responsibility for knowing what the assignments are, is usually the responsibility of the students.

Ways to make test taking easier**Dear teacher,**

My children do well in school — even on most tests. Are there any tricks that they can use that will help them do even better?

Dear parents,

The book, "The Simple Way to an A," lists three steps that can make test taking easier. You might suggest that your children try them. Plan: find the questions with the highest point value and do them first. Prioritize: if children are unsure on an answer, they can use a number system to show their level of confidence in an answer and go back and check the answer again. Strategize: for example, when matching answers, read the longer column first, as it will give more clues to the answer. Then look for the correct answer in the shorter column.

In addition to these steps, we would add the necessity of reading the directions more than once.

Parents should send questions and comments to dearteacher@dearteacher.com or ask them on the columnists' website at www.dearteacher.com.

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takes on the appearance of a supermarket, some educators believe that it can make it difficult for children to concentrate. They believe that when teachers are presenting a lesson, students need to pay close attention to the teacher — and not the wall.

On the other hand, more educators think this is a ridiculous view and that students need to be stimulated. There is no solid research on this subject. Why don't you ask your daughter if she finds all the things on the wall bother her concentration? If so, you might ask the teacher to evaluate how other students regard the classroom walls.

One area in which some research has been done is on worksheets, handouts, and tests that are crowded. Students will look at a math test with 10 problems and think that they can handle it. Seeing 50 problems on a page can them believe the task is impossible to accomplish. This is a



GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

Why casino games are risky for kids

Gambling provokes powerful emotions. Winning makes people feel euphoric and even invincible. Losing can lead to discouragement and even desperation. Such strong feelings call for maturity, so gambling has traditionally been regarded as something only adults should do.

The Internet changed all that by making casino games readily available to children. In 2006, Congress tried to put the genie back in the bottle. The Unlawful Internet Gam-

bling Enforcement Act made it harder for Americans to wager online and, at first, casinos took their business elsewhere. Eventually, they found ways around the law. By 2008, the Annenberg Public Policy Center estimated that, despite age restrictions, 700,000 young people were gambling for money online.

bling Enforcement Act made it harder for Americans to wager online and, at first, casinos took their business elsewhere. Eventually, they found ways around the law. By 2008, the Annenberg Public Policy Center estimated that, despite age restrictions, 700,000 young people were gambling for money online.

Today that figure is likely to be higher because of a flood of social apps that mimic casino games. Popular Facebook games like Jackpotjoy, Slotomania, and DoubleDownCasino appeal to children because they use the same colorful graphics and engaging cartoon characters that are prevalent in other kid-friendly games.

Supporters of the games insist that they are harmless because no

money changes hands. Bets are placed with virtual currency and rewards exist only within the games. Many experts, however, believe such games normalize gambling, making it seem like harmless fun.

"It's well-established that the younger children start gambling, the more likely they are to become habitual gamblers," notes Dr. Carolyn Downs, a British researcher who took an interest in online gaming after her own daughter experienced a meltdown provoked by virtual losses in her favorite game.

How should parents respond to these chancy new games? Here are a few suggestions:

Set your own age limits. Every state prohibits offline gambling by children under 18. Consider establishing the same in-house rule for online games of chance. Or tie access to casino games with other benchmarks of maturity, such as handling time and money responsibly.

Distinguish between luck and skill. A child who shoots a hundred baskets increases the likelihood that she will score on the next shot. A child who reads a hundred books has a better vocabulary, which makes winning at word games more likely. Contrast those accomplishments with the random events at the heart of gambling. No matter how many times you flip a coin, roll the dice, shuffle the deck, or pull the handle on a slot machine, you can't increase the likelihood of getting the outcome you want. Help your child understand that, even though luck is often a factor in life, the rewards to be had from personal effort and hard work are more reliable and durable.

Understand the appeal. Some young people play casino games simply because their friends play. Others turn to the games because they are bored or want an escape from stressful situations or emotions. Adolescents who can't yet think about long-term consequences may find the instant rewards of gambling attractive. Young men, in particular,

may be susceptible to the "get rich quick" appeal of gambling, especially if they are involved in sports where betting is prevalent. Understanding why your child is drawn to these games will help you steer him toward more wholesome alternatives.

Talk about risks. Online games separate gambling from consequences. Point out to your child that real life casinos make money, lots of money, and all of it comes from people who thought they would win and didn't. Adults can gamble responsibly only if they use "extra" money that would have gone to entertainment, and stop when the money is gone. Children also need to know that for a small number of people — experts estimate between four and six percent — gambling can become compulsive. For these people, the "high" of winning becomes addictive and, like alcoholics or other addicts, their lives begin to revolve around getting their next fix. If you or your child are worried that someone has developed a gambling problem, help is available at the National Council on Problem Gambling (npgaw.org) and Youth Gambling International (youthgambling.com)

Control credit cards. Many online games allow players to convert virtual gaming into real gambling with a credit card. Although there are supposed to be age restrictions, motivated kids can get around them. Don't give your child unrestricted access to credit cards and check statements every month for unauthorized charges. When you pay bills, talk about the importance of a good credit rating. Be sure your child understands that, if someone goes deeply into debt, he may not be able to borrow money for a car or a college education.

Carolyn Jabs, MA, raised three computer-savvy kids, including one with special needs. She has written Growing Up Online for 10 years and is working on a book about constructive responses to conflict. Visit www.growing-up-online.com to read other columns.

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Calendar

OCTOBER



Copyright 2011 Bubblemania!

Bubblemania at Queens Theatre

That bubb-licious, bodacious, bubble artist Casey Carle returns to amaze and delight with bubbles, bubbles, and more bubbles at the Queens Theatre on Oct. 21.

Brilliant bubbles, spontaneous comedy and fog blobs of helium-filled foam are the earmarks of bubble artist Carle's entertaining show. Children of all ages enjoy a game of bubble ping-pong, getting

trapped in a gigantic soap bubble, and being surrounded by thousands of bubbles filling the stage.

The fun, giggles, and bubbles never stop.

Don't miss either of Bubblemania's two shows at 1 and 3 pm. Tickets are \$14.

Bubblemania at Queens Theatre [Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Box Office 718-760-0064, www.queens-theatre.org]. Oct 21 at 1 and 3 pm.

Submit a listing

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

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

THURS, SEPT. 27

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

Children learn how famous artists like Picasso used throwaway things and turned them into masterpieces. Then children use buttons, beads and recycled toys to make their own creation.

Open mic: East Elmhurst Public Library, 95-06 Astoria Blvd. at 95th Street; (718) 424-2619; www.queenslibrary.org; 6 pm; Free.

Writers, musicians, comedians and orators are invited to share the stage.

FRI, SEPT. 28

Toddler time: Queens Zoo, 53-51 111th St. (718) 271-1500; queenszoo.com; 10:30-11:30 am; \$125 (\$150 non-members) for all six classes.

Children 2 to 3 years old meet the furry, scaly and feathery denizens of the zoo. Must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration required.

Arts and crafts: East Flushing Public Library, 196-36 Northern Blvd. at Francis Lewis Boulevard; (718) 357-6643; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children 4 years old and up make fun projects. Limited to 15 children. Pre-registration required.

Annual Steak and Lobster Dinner: United Methodist Church, 35 Verben Ave. 516-354-4969; umcfloral-park.org; 7 pm; \$35.

Includes dinner and a pick-a-prize auction.

SAT, SEPT. 29

Bug Superheroes! Queens Zoo, 53-51 111th St. (718) 271-1500; queenszoo.com; 10-11:30 am; \$35 members, \$40 non-members.

Children will go on an insect hunt with staff urban ecologists to learn about many super-powered insects. Ages 7 to 10.



Spooktacular thrills at Alley Pond

Calling all boys and ghouls! The time has come for trick-or-treaters and all things eerie to have some spooky fun at the Alley Pond Environmental Center on Oct. 29 and 31.

Adventurous children 5 to 12 years old can dress up and enjoy the festive Haunted Halloween Hike on Oct. 29. After the uphill trek, kids dressed up as their favorite Trekkie (our fave is Spock!) can listen to spooky stories, create creepy crafts, and sip on a hot chocolate to keep the chills away. Wear your scariest costumes, bring a flashlight, and don't forget plenty of courage! The Haunted Walk is offered in two sessions, children ages 5 to 7 from 4:30 to 6 pm and children ages 8 to 12 from 6:30 to 8 pm.

Alley Pond doesn't leave the toddlers out. Tiny terrors-in-

training, 18 months to 4 years old, can enjoy Teeny Tiny Trick-or-Treaters on Oct. 31, from 1 to 2:30 pm, and have a fun-filled day of carnival capers, not-so-scary hands-on activities, games, and a delightfully devilish snack.

Admission to the Haunted Halloween Hike is \$13 for non-members and \$7 for members. To get into Teeny Tiny Trick or Treaters the cost is \$16 and \$10 for members.

Space is limited, so sign up early. Pre-registration is required for both events.

Haunted Halloween Hike at the Alley Pond Environmental Center [228-06 Northern Blvd. in Douglaston, (718) 229-4000, www.alleypond.com]. On Oct. 29 from 4:30 to 6 pm and 6:30 to 8 pm; Teeny Tiny Trick-or-Treaters on Oct. 31 from 1 to 2:30 pm.

Invention convention: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; info@makerfaire.com; www.nyscience.org; 10 am-6 pm; \$5-\$25.

The World Maker Faire is an all-ages gathering of tech enthusiasts, crafters, educators, tinkerers, hobbyists, engineers, science clubs, authors, artists, students, and commercial exhibitors to show what they have made and share what they have learned.

Fall festival: Wildwood State Park,

Hulse Landing Rd. (631) 929-4262; www.nysparks.com; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Enjoy a fun day out in the country.

"Dora's Pirate Adventure": Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 599-6870; www.licm.org; 11 am and 1 and 3 pm; \$12 (\$10 for members).

Dora the Explorer joins her best friend Boots the Monkey and embarks on a trip to Treasure Island. Suitable for children 4 years old and older.

Moving Image workshop: Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave. (718) 777-6888; www.movingimage.us; Noon-5 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 7 and older accompanied by an adult (12 on their own) visit the museum and learn about moving images.

Toddler time: Queens Zoo, 53-51 111th St. (718) 271-1500; queenszoo.com; Noon-1 pm; \$125 (\$150 non-members) for all six classes.

Children 2 to 3 years old meet the furry, scaly and feathery denizens of the zoo. Must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration required.

Garden in the fall: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 2-4 pm; \$15 (\$12 members) per session.

Children enjoy the changing seasons in four separate workshops. Go to one or all four, the choice is yours. Events include making a scarecrow friend, learning about healthy snacks, learning about birds and their nests, and how to reap the veggies from the garden and get the earth ready for spring.

Kinder kitters: Queens Zoo, 53-51 111th St. (718) 271-1500; queenszoo.com; 2-3 pm; \$125 (\$150 non-members) for all six classes.

For children 4 and 5 years old with an adult. Hands-on activities, animal guests and scavenger hunts. Pre-registration required.

SUN, SEPT. 30

Invention convention: 10 am-6 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

"Dora's Pirate Adventure": 11 am and 1 and 3 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

Autumn Moon festival: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 4-6 pm; Free with Garden admission.

Celebrate the ancient holiday of bounty, harvest and the fullness of the moon and learn all about the myth of the immortal moon Goddess. Bring picnic blankets and summer chairs; enjoy moon cakes, arts, crafts and activities.

TUES, OCT. 2

Changing seasons: Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center, Jones Beach, Bay Parkway; (516) 785-3614; 10:30-11:30 am or 1:30-2:30 pm; \$4 (children under 3 free; plus parking fee).

Let's Discover Nature allows children 3 to 5 years old to explore the environment through hands-on activities. Reservation required.

Continued on page 48

Calendar

Continued from page 47

WED, OCT. 3

Veterans day: Douglaston/Little Neck Public Library, 249-01 Northern Blvd. at 249th Street; (718) 225-8414; www.queenslibrary.org; 2:45 pm; Free.

Celebrate the day by making cards for our service members.

THURS, OCT. 4

Along Came a Spider: Caleb Smith State Park, W. Jericho Turnpike; (631) 265-1054; 10-11 am; \$4 (\$3 children; Free for children under 3; \$8 parking fee per car).

Let's Discover Nature offers children 3 to 5 years old the opportunity to explore the natural world with hands-on activities. Reservations required.

Flower dance: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 6:30 pm; Free.

Ying Dance Center presents ballet and Chinese folk dance, Flower, Rain and Maternity. For all ages.

FRI, OCT. 5

Toddler time: 10:30-11:30 am. Queens Zoo. See Friday, Sept. 28.

SAT, OCT. 6

Fall Festival and Pumpkin Patch: All Saint's Church, 214-35 40th Ave. (718) 229-5631; 9 am.

Enjoy the weather, the golden leaves, and pick the best pumpkin ever.

Scavenger hunt: Caleb Smith State Park, W. Jericho Turnpike; (631) 265-1054; 10-11:30 am; \$4 (\$3 children; Free for children under 3; \$8 parking fee per car).

Fun for the whole family to follow the course and find clues. Reservations required.

Fall festival: Bayard Cutting Arboretum, S. Country Road and Ruland Road; (631) 581-1002; www.nysparks.com; 10 am-4 pm; Free with an \$8 vehicle fee.

Take garden tours, see demos, presentations, soil testing, hayrides, a petting zoo, pony rides, wool spinning and weaving.

Suzi Shelton: Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org; 11 am; \$20 (\$17 members; \$13 children; \$11 children members).

The Brooklyn-based kindie artist will be performing as part of the Just Kid-ding Saturday series.

Star Wars Reads Day Storytime: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpke. (718) 380-7077; 11 am.

Join us in celebration of Star Wars Reads Day! Come dressed as your fa-



Rev your engines!

Start your engines, the Long Island Auto Show is roaring its way to the Nassau Coliseum from Oct. 12 through Oct. 14.

Don't detour, take the family on a fantasy ride through dream highway and stroll through the newest models of mechanical marvels for 2013. More than 200 of the latest and greatest selections — including crossovers, trucks, alternative fuel vehicles, family-friendly sedans and sports utility vehicles, and hot-and-sassy hot rods — will be on display. Come on down and take the chance to sit behind the wheel of your

dream car.

Representatives from leading manufacturers will also be on hand to answer any and all automotive questions. The Long Island Auto Show is produced by Motor Trend Auto Shows. Visitors will receive a free one-year subscription to Motor Trend magazine, thanks to the dealers at Subaru Distributors Corp.

Long Island Auto Show at Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum [1255 Hempstead Tpke. in Uniondale, (516) 794-9300, www.autoshowlongisland.com]. Oct. 12 from 5 to 10 pm, Oct. 13 from 10 am to 10 pm, and Oct. 14 from 10 am to 6 pm. Free.

favorite characters from any of the movies and enter to win a prize.

Art day: Heckscher Museum, 2 Prime Ave. (631) 351-3250; www.heckscher.org; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Children are invited to design and imagine their own whimsical boat.

Batten down the hatches: The Heckscher Museum of Art, 2 Prime Ave. (631) 351-3250; www.heckscher.org; 11 am-4 pm; Free.

Inspired by the museum's Robert S. Neuman's Ship to Paradise exhibit, children of all ages are invited to imagine, design and create their own whimsical boat on the terrace.

Glass painting: Lewis H. Latimer House, 34-41 137th St. and 32nd Avenue; (718) 961-8585; 1:30-2 pm; Free.

Cristina Cipriani demonstrates the art of glass painting.

Halloween at the Addams' House: BayWay Arts Centre, 265 E.

Main St. (631) 581-2700; www.broadhollow.org; 2 pm; \$10 (\$22 tea party and show).

They're creepy and they're spooky, they're altogether kooky, they're the Addams Family. Come and enjoy Halloween with the spookiest family around.

Kinder Kritters: 2-3 pm. Queens Zoo. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

Overnight adventure: Queens Zoo, 53-51 111th St. (718) 271-1500; queenszoo.com; 5 pm; \$100 (\$85 members) per person.

Families can explore the zoo after hours and learn all about the animals. Recommended for children 5 years old and older. Bring your own tent, sleeping bags and picnic dinner. Beverages, dessert, late-night snack and breakfast provided. Pre-registration required.

SUN, OCT. 7

Fleamarket: St. Raphael's church,

35-20 Greenpoint Ave. (718) 729-8957; 9 am-4 pm; Free.

Outdoor event featuring new and used items.

Autumn discovery: Caleb Smith State Park, W. Jericho Turnpike; (631) 265-1054; 10-11:30 am; \$4 (\$3 children; Free for children under 3; \$8 parking fee per car).

Children 5 years old and up take a short hike followed by an indoor craft. Reservations required.

Overnight adventure: 10 am. Queens Zoo. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

Fall festival: 10 am-4 pm. Bayard Cutting Arboretum. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

Apple Festival: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy. (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; 11 am.

Watch as the nation's largest apple cobbler bakes on site.

Art day: 11 am-4 pm. Heckscher Museum. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

Batten down the hatches: 11 am-4 pm. The Heckscher Museum of Art. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

Glass painting: 1:30-2 pm. Lewis H. Latimer House. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

Halloween at the Addams' House: 2 pm. BayWay Arts Centre. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

Garden in the fall: 2-4 pm. Queens Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

MON, OCT. 8

Fall festival: 10 am-4 pm. Bayard Cutting Arboretum. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

Ship Signals: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 2:30, 4:30 pm; Free with museum admission. Children discover Columbus.

TUES, OCT. 9

Health forum: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Teens learn to take care of themselves in a healthy way. Topics include Nutrition; Self Empowerment; Healthy Relationships.

WED, OCT. 10

Portfolio advice: The Heckscher Museum of Art, 2 Prime Ave. (631) 351-3250; www.heckscher.org; 7-8 pm; Free.

An admission counselor from the School of Visual Arts will be on hand to help prospective college students work on their portfolios and admission process.

Calendar

FRI, OCT. 12

Toddler time: 10:30–11:30 am. Queens Zoo. See Friday, Sept. 28.

Long Island Auto Show: Nassau Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk. www.nassaucoliseum.com; 5–10 pm; Free.

Take a gander and stroll through new 2013 models.

SAT, OCT. 13

Walk for epilepsy: Eisenhower Park (Field 6/6A), Park Blvd. and Hempstead Turnpike; (516) 739-7733; www.efli.org; 9 am–1 pm; \$30 (Free for children under 12).

Fund-raiser begins with early registration, then the walk, followed by a concert by "The Vinyl Plane."

Fishing festival: Hempstead Lake State Park, Eagle Ave. and the Southern State Parkway; (631) 321-3510; 10 am–4 pm; Free.

Join fellow anglers for a day of freshwater sport.

Long Island Auto Show: 10 am–10 pm. Nassau Coliseum. See Friday, Oct. 12.

Toddler time: Noon–1 pm. Queens Zoo. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

Rat Pack Birthday celebration: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 1 pm; Free with museum admission.

Join Frankie and Sammie for a Rat Pack-themed celebration, with a special birthday cake.

Fall fun: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 2 pm; \$4 with museum admission (\$3 for members; \$10 theater only).

Alice and Connie are back on the stage to entertain and celebrate fall. Recommended for children 3 and older.

Kinder kritters: 2–3 pm. Queens Zoo. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

Halloween at the Addams' House: 2 pm. BayWay Arts Centre. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

SUN, OCT. 14

Hispanic heritage month: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10 am–5 pm; Free with museum admission.

Celebrate La Ciencia y Yo with hands-on activities.

Long Island Auto Show: 10 am–6 pm. Nassau Coliseum. See Friday, Oct. 12.

Harvest fest and pumpkin patch: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296;

Discover childhood

Artist Marc Chagall shared his childhood in Russia through fantastical paintings where memory and fantasy combine. To celebrate the work of this master artist, the Nassau County Museum of Art is presenting "Discover Chagall's Childhood World" on Oct. 20.

Families can tour the exhibit, interact with the animals in a petting zoo, and collaborate

on pastel drawings that record their own memories of childhood, dreams, and fantasy.

"Discover Chagall's Childhood World" at the Nassau County Museum of Art [1 Museum Dr. on Route 25A in Roslyn Harbor, (516) 484-9338; www.nassaumuseum.org]. On Oct. 20 from 11 am to 2 pm. General museum fee, plus \$5 per family material fee and a \$2 parking fee. Members free. No reservations necessary.

botanical.org; 11 am–4:30 pm; Free with garden admission.

Join in the fun-filled afternoon of music, good, crafts and, of course, pumpkins.

Family hour: Heckscher Museum, 2 Prime Ave. (631) 351-3250; www.heckscher.org; 1–2 pm; \$5 plus museum admission.

Take a friendly tour of the museum and then do a project. RSVP requested.

Sea turtles: Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center, Jones Beach, Bay Parkway; (516) 785-3614; 1:30–3 pm; \$4 (children under 3 free; plus parking fee).

Biologist from Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Education leads discussion on this creature and what you can do to volunteer. Recommended for older children. Reservations required.

Build it!: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 3 pm; \$3 with museum admission (\$2 for members).

Children 5 years old and up discover how things are built.

TUES, OCT. 16

Five senses: Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center, Jones Beach, Bay Parkway; (516) 785-3614; 10:30–11:30 am or 1:30–2:30 pm; \$4 (children under 3 free; plus parking fee).

Let's Discover Nature allows children 3 to 5 years old to explore the environment through hands-on activities. Reservation required.

The perfect pillow: Pomonok Public Library, 158-21 Jewel Ave. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 591-4343; www.queenslibrary.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Teens use a variety of materials to create the perfect cuddle partner in this workshop.

WED, OCT. 17

Portfolio review I: The Heckscher Museum of Art, 2 Prime Ave. (631)

351-3250; www.heckscher.org; 6–9 pm; Free.

Students can bring in their works for a one-on-one evaluation.

THURS, OCT. 18

Arts and crafts: Ridgewood Public Library, 20-12 Madison St. at Forest Avenue; (718) 821-4770; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens create the perfect tote bag to carry all their stuff.

Italian celebration: Howard Beach Public Library, 92-06 156 Ave. at 92nd Street; (718) 641-7086; 6:30 pm; Free.

Viva Italiano and make a stained-glass candle holder, and then listen to ethnic music performed by AcquAria.

Star gazing: Old Westbury Gardens, 71 Old Westbury Rd. (516) 333-0048; www.oldwestburygardens.org; 8:30 pm; \$5 (Children 17 and under accompanied by an adult free).

Grabe a flashlight and take a stroll through the gardens, then take a view of the moon and stars above.

FRI, OCT. 19

Toddler time: 10:30–11 am. Queens Zoo. See Friday, Sept. 28.

SAT, OCT. 20

Family Day: Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Drive; (516) 484-9338; www.nassaumuseum.org; 11 am–2 pm; \$5 materials with museum admission.

Discover the works of Marc Chagall and enjoy an entire day full of art, petting zoo, art workshops and a tour of the museum.

Halloween blood fest: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; Noon–4 pm; Free.

Music, magic, and mayhem; Blood Moon Rising horror magazine presents this ghoulishly good affair.

Toddler time: Noon–1 pm. Queens Zoo. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

Kinder kritters: 2–3 pm. Queens Zoo. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

Halloween at the Addams' House: 2 pm. BayWay Arts Centre. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

SUN, OCT. 21

Deedle Deedle Dees, Moona Luna, and Babe the Blue Ox Concert: 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 11 am; \$15, babies under 2 free.

Pack up the posse and come on in for
Continued on page 50

Calendar

Continued from page 49

a bagel, a coffee, or juicebox and some tiny tushy-kicking tunes. It's not your granny's kids' music (unless she's one of those hip New York City grannies).

Bubblemania: Queens Theatre, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office (718) 760-0064; www.queentheatre.org; 1 pm, 3 pm; \$14.

The show returns with brilliant works of bubble art and feat of trickery.

Sea turtles: 1:30-3 pm. Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center. See Sunday, Oct. 14.

TUES, OCT. 23

Health forum: 3:30 pm. Central Library. See Tuesday, Oct. 9.

Monster making: Hillcrest Public Library, 187-05 Union Tpke at 188th Street; (718) 454-2786; www.queenslibrary.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Calling all artists to create their own original mask. All materials provided. For children 6 to 14 years old.

Roadmap to College Admissions: The Princeton Review, 104-70 Queens Blvd. at Yellowstone Boulevard; (800) 273-8439; www.princetonreview.com; 7 pm; Free.

An admissions expert will advise students and parents on the college admissions process, including topics such as admissions factors, selectivity, college searching, standardized tests, and timelines. Registration required.

WED, OCT. 24

Portfolio review I: 6-9 pm. The Heckscher Museum of Art. See Wednesday, Oct. 17.

Roadmap to College Admissions: The Princeton Review, 4513 Manhattan College Pkwy. at W. 242nd Street; (800) 273-8439; www.princetonreview.com; 7 pm; Free.

An admissions expert will advise students and parents on the college admissions process including topics such as admissions factors, selectivity, college searching, standardized tests, and timelines. Registration required.

FRI, OCT. 26

Halloween: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10 am-5 pm; Free with museum admission.

Create edible tricks and treats with candy makers, molecular gastronomists and food scientists.

SAT, OCT. 27

Chemistry day: New York Hall of



Don't miss this fancy musical

“Fancy Nancy the Musical” is singing and dancing its way into the McGinn Cazale Theatre for an extended stay until Nov. 12.

Based on the children's picture book series by Jane O'Connor, this musical production has Fancy Nancy and friends, Bree, Rhonda, Wanda, and Lionel, competing for the coveted role of mermaid in their very first ever performance of “Deep Sea Dances.” When the role goes to another girl, Nancy is stuck with the role

of the dreary old tree. Will Nancy bring her usual “fancy-flair” to her role, even though it isn't the one she wanted?

“Fancy Nancy the Musical” is suitable for children 3 to 10 years old.

“Fancy Nancy the Musical” at *The McGinn-Cazale Theatre, [2162 Broadway at 76th Street on the Upper West Side, (212) 579-0528, <http://vitaltheatre.org>]. Saturdays and Sundays through Nov. 12. Performances at 11 am and 1 pm. Tickets from \$29.50 to \$45.50.*

Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 11 am-4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Get out your goggles and explore the wonderful world of science.

Halloween: 10 am-5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Friday, Oct. 26.

Halloween: Beach 84, Beach Channel Drive and Beach 84th St. (718) 318-4000; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am-1 pm; Free.

Dress up your canine companions for this annual costume bash. Prizes, games and pet adoption.

Plundering pirates: Caleb Smith

State Park, W. Jericho Turnpike; (631) 265-1054; 1:30-3 pm; \$4 (\$3 children; Free for children under 3; \$8 parking fee per car).

Families learn about history. Reservations required.

Halloween bash: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Exit 63 Long Island Expressway; (631) 207-1681; www.protectallergickids.org; 2-4 pm; \$10 per child.

Sponsored by Protect Allergic Kids; come in costume, DJ entertainment, craft table, play area for toddlers and face and body painting. Children 18 and younger must be accompanied by an adult.

Garden in the fall: 2-4 pm. Queens Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

Kinder Kritters: 2-3 pm. Queens Zoo. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

Halloween at the Addams' House: 2 pm. BayWay Arts Centre. See Saturday, Oct. 6.

“And Then There Were None”:

Houghton Hall at Trinity Episcopal Church, 130 Main St. (631) 732-2926; www.minstrelplayers.org; 8 pm; \$15 (\$12 seniors children).

Agatha Christie's novel is performed by the Minstrel Players of Northport. For children 5 years old and older.

SUN, OCT. 28

Halloween: 10 am-5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Friday, Oct. 26.

Franken fish: Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center, Jones Beach, Bay Parkway; (516) 785-3614; 1:30-3 pm; \$4 (children under 3 free; plus parking fee).

Children 7 to 12 years old learn about the anatomy of fish. Reservation required.

“And Then There Were None”: 3 pm. Houghton Hall at Trinity Episcopal Church. See Saturday, Oct. 27.

TUES, OCT. 30

Happy Halloween: Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center, Jones Beach, Bay Parkway; (516) 785-3614; 10:30-11:30 am or 1:30-2:30 pm; \$4 (children under 3 free; plus parking fee).

Let's Discover Nature allows children 3 to 5 years old to explore the environment through hands-on activities. Reservation required.

Halloween craft: Lefrak City Library, 98-30 57th Ave. (718) 592-7677; www.queenslibrary.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Children create holiday projects using pony beads. Pre-registration required.

WED, OCT. 31

Teeny Tiny Trick O'Treaters: Alley Pond Environmental Center, 228-06 Northern Blvd. (718) 229-4000; 1 pm; \$16 per child.

Please join us for a special festival for the little ones ages 18 months to 4 years old. Join us for a not so scary craft, play Halloween games, eat a haunted snack, and more!

Halloween party: Seaside Public Library, 116-15 Rockaway Blvd. (718) 634-1876; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

For children 4 to 18 years old. Come in costume, and party down.

THURS, NOV. 1

Halloween Spooktacular: Caleb Smith State Park, W. Jericho Turnpike; (631) 265-1054; 10-11 am; \$4 (\$3 children; Free for children under 3; \$8 parking fee per car).

Let's Discover Nature offers children 3 to 5 years old the opportunity to explore the natural world with hands-on activities. Reservations required.

LONG-RUNNING

Science Playground: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; \$4 per person, plus general NYSCI admission.

Weather permitting. The nation's largest science playground features 60,000 square feet of exhibits for children of all ages. Slides, seesaws, climbing webs, a water play area, drums, mirrors, sand boxes and more allow kids to explore science by playing.

Intrepid Air and Space Museum: Intrepid Sea Air and Space Museum at Pier 86, 12th Ave. at 46th Street; www.intrepidmuseum.org; Weekdays, 10 am-5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm, Now - Wed, Oct. 31; \$30 general admission (\$26 seniors and college students; \$23 children 7-17 and veterans; \$16 children 3-6; Free for active and retired military and children under 3).

Come aboard and explore the 12,240 square foot interactive Explorem, featuring a variety of hands on exhibits as well as the Space Shuttle Enterprise which now has a permanent home in the museum.

Fair: Soho, 100 Varick St. (914) 295-4794; varicksflea@gmail.com; www.meetup.com/varicks; Daily, 10 am-4 pm; Now - Sat, Dec. 29; \$55/Space.

Enjoy shopping and schmoozing in the all day market.

Creatures of Light: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; awang@amnh.org; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am-5:45 pm; Now - Sun, Jan. 6, 2013; \$24, \$14 children, \$18 seniors and students.

This interactive exhibit explores organisms that produce light, from the flickering fireflies to alien deep-sea fishes.

Le Carrousel: Bryant Park, W. 40th St. between Fifth and Sixth avenues; www.nycgovparks.org; Daily, 11 am-8 pm; Now - Wed, Oct. 31; \$2 per ride.

Fashioned to complement the park's French style, this classic ride features brightly colored animals and French cabaret music.

Orbis Pictus: The Gallery of the Czech Center New York, 321 E. 73rd St. (646) 422-3399; info@czechcenter.com;



Rocking out with the Suzie Shelton Band

Rock out at Symphony Space as it kicks off its "Just Kidding Saturday" series with a special performance by the Brooklyn-based indie group (indie rock for kids under 10), the Suzie Shelton Band, on Oct. 6. The Suzie Shelton Band delights audiences with a musical mix of sounds that illustrate a world full of slumbering lions, squishy jellyfish, and slithering serpents. Her catchy, snappy tunes stay with

you long after the concert is over.

Symphony Space also offers music, theater, dance, and a whole lot more for children of all ages.

The Suzie Shelton Band at "Just Kidding Saturdays" on Oct. 6 at 11 am. Tickets are \$20, (\$17 members) and \$13 children (\$11 children members).

The Suzie Shelton Band at Symphony Space [2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street in Midtown, (212) 864-540, www.symphonyspace.org].

www.czechcenter.com; Daily, 6:30-8:30 pm; Now - Wed, Oct. 17; Free.

Play Well is a series of site-specific installations in which artists and children collaborate to create experiences in visuals, sound and motion.

Poetry workshop: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpke. (718) 380-7077; Mondays, 7:30 pm, Now - Mon, Nov. 26; Free.

Budding poets perfect the craft with Bob Trabold and Amanda Konstantine Perlmutter.

Yak Packers: Rubin Museum of Art, 150 W. 17 St., between Sixth and Seventh avenues; (212) 620-5000 X 344. www.rmanyc.org; Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 am, Now - Thurs, Oct. 25; \$10 (\$5 seniors and students; Free for children under 12 and members).

Children 2 to 4 years old explore the exhibits and collections, play, listen to stories, and crafts.

Game day: Howard Beach Public Library, 92-06 156 Ave. at 92nd Street; (718) 641-7086; www.queenslibrary.org; Wednesdays, 4 PM, Now - Wed, Oct. 31; Free.

Teens and tweens partake of friendly competition on Nintendo Wii, checkers, chess, and other board games.

Rocket mini-golf: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm, Now - Mon, Dec. 31; \$6 (\$5 children and seniors) plus museum admission.

Putt your way through a nine-hole course and learn all about spaceflight.

Farmer's market: Roy Wilkins Family Center, Baisley Blvd & 177th St. Saturdays, 10:00am, Now - Sat, Nov. 17; Free.

Fresh fruits and veggies along with health screenings.

Winged Tapestries Moths at Large: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am-5:45 pm; \$24(\$14 children, \$18 seniors and students).

This exhibition features 34 striking images of moths, displaying the beauty and surprising diversity of moths from Ottawa-based photographer Jim des Rivieres. Runs through September 2013.

Beginner's trainer program: Long Island Aquarium & Exhibition Center, 431 E. Main St. (631) 208-9200, X H2O; reservations@amwny.com; www.longislandaquarium.com; Saturdays, 10:15 am & 2:00 pm, Now - Sat, Sept. 29; \$150 (Members: \$125).

Children 10 years old and above have an opportunity to learn how to be a trainer and work with seals and sea lions.

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, Now - Sat, Dec. 29; Free.

Children 3 and up create fun projects.

The Amazing Maize Maze: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy. (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 am, Now - Sun, Oct. 28; \$9 (\$5 children 4-11, under 3 free).

Enjoy getting lost in our three-acre interactive corn maze.

Basketball clinics: North Meadow Recreation Center, 97th St. Transverse Rd. (212) 348-4867; www.nycgovparks.org; Saturdays, Noon-2 pm, Now - Sat, Oct. 27; Free.

Children 9-17 get help with the B-ball game.

Family Sundays: Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Drive; (516) 484-9337; www.nassaumuseum.org; Sunday, Sept. 23, 1 pm; Sunday, Sept. 30, 1 pm; Sunday, Oct. 7, 1 pm; Sunday, Oct. 14, 1 pm; Sunday, Oct. 21, 1 pm; Sunday, Oct. 28, 1 pm; Sunday, Nov. 4, 12 pm; Free (\$2 parking fee).

Take a docent-led tour of the museum and then be creative and make fun art projects.

Pick Your Own Pumpkin: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy. (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 am, Sat, Oct. 6 - Sun, Oct. 28.

Wander through the patch to find the perfect one.

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New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

Wild thing

Inspired by the classic 1963 children's book "Where the Wild Things Are," this sensational Halloween costume will have your mischief maker playing the character Max, "king of all wild things," in no time. Manufactured by Pottery Barn Kids, it brings to life the imaginative boy, who is already disguised as a wolf. It's made of soft polyester chamois with polycotton lining (for warmth and comfort), and it's topped with a regal, shimmery crown. The separate, lined headpiece does not obscure a kid's vision, increasing the odds that he will keep it on longer. Both the bodysuit and headpiece have Velcro closures, so the costume is easy to put on and take off. It's a beautiful tribute to beloved "Wild Things" author-illustrator Maurice Sendak, who died in May at age 83, to unleash the latest generation of his fans (sized 12-24 months, 2-3T, and 4-6) disguised as one of his best-known characters for a Halloween rumpus.

Max costume, \$79, and *Where the Wild Things Are* monster treat bag, \$14.50, www.potterybarnkids.com.



A dog's 'tail' of friendship

Celebrate this spooktacular season by popping in a DVD of "Vampire Dog," and you may find it's just the ticket to getting your whole family howling with laughter. There's nothing scary about the pooch in question, Fang (given a hilarious, sarcastic voice by "Saturday Night Live" alum Norm MacDonald). Instead, Fang delivers one-liners and sage advice to his owner, a tween named Ace (Collin MacKechnie), who needs all the help he can get as the awkward new kid at the Lugosi Public School, where the monsters are the "cool" students,



who tease, bully, and put down the academic achievers.

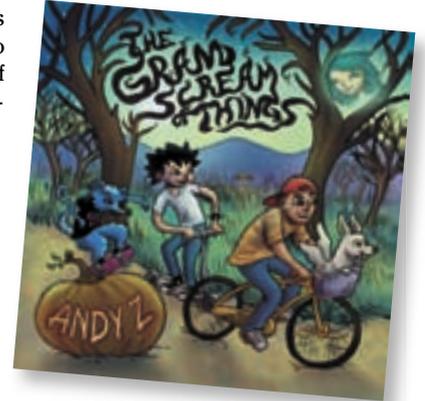
Don't worry, parents — despite the moniker of "vampire," Fang is not a blood-thirsty hound, but rather a red-gelatin-dessert-craving canine, who happens to have an allergic reaction to direct sunlight. Although the sweet-toothed pooch catches the eye of mad scientist Dr. Warhol (Amy Matysio), there's a happy ending for the boy and his dog.

The tale, directed by visual effects expert Geoff Anderson, is followed by comic bloopers and outtakes.

"Vampire Dog" DVD, \$14.98, www.amazon.com.

It's storytime for tweens

Indie kids musician Andy Z has recorded a not-too-spooky audio play on CD, "The Grand Scream of Things," just in time for everyone's favorite haunting holiday. "The Grand Scream" tells the tale of Andy Z on a Halloween quest to find Sandy Witch. Joined by his talking chihuahua Reggie, he hopes to return her magic wand to her — and catch the eye of an intriguing alien. The story joins narration with songs in a variety of musical styles. One of the highlights is Jam Master Z and the Baking Fools singing "How We Roll," a pumpkin bread recipe set to hip-hop music, with an unexpectedly sweet message calling for all people to show respect and love



towards each other. Recommended for children ages 8–12.

"The Grand Scream of Things" CD by Andy Z, \$14.99, www.cdbaby.com.

Whooo wins this tall tale?

If there's anything city dwellers love, it's our views, so urban families can't help but appreciate Gianna Marino's new book about Rabbit and Owl, who vie for light and scenery. In "Too Tall Houses" (Viking), Owl and Rabbit find themselves in a race to build the highest home after Rabbit's corn obscures Owl's view, and the



angry bird's counter-attack shades Rabbit's garden. By putting their own needs before each other's, the animals create towers that are hilariously lofty. Recommended for children ages 3–5, "Too Tall Houses" is as well written as it is beautifully illustrated.

"Too Tall Houses" by Gianna Marino, \$16.99, www.barnesandnoble.com.

Elbow wrap curbs germs

Cold season is upon us, so parents need to remind kids to sneeze into their elbow — not into their hand where the germs can easily be spread. It seems difficult for kids to remember this healthy suggestion, but if they were wearing a colorful reminder, like My Sneezee, it could jog their memory. My Sneezee is similar in design to a leg warmer, but the brightly colored band is pulled up on



the arm like a knitted sleeve. When the child coughs or sneezes, they can direct their germ-riddled spray into the machine-washable Sneezee. They are soft, absorbent, and are offered in 19 designs, including sports (pictured).

My Sneezee arm band three-pack, buy one pack for \$14.95 plus \$4.95 postage and get one pack free, www.mysneezee.com.

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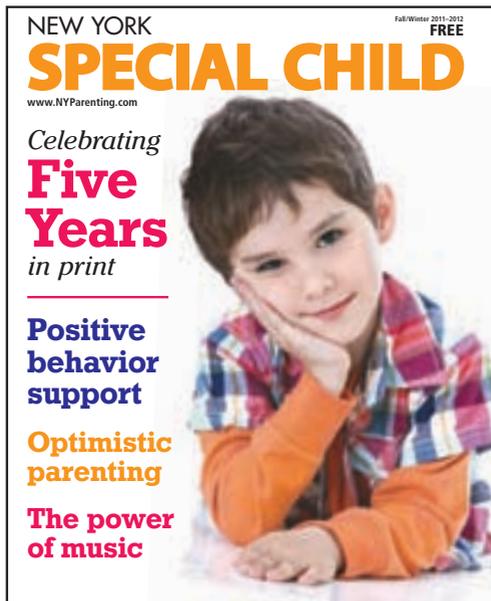
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