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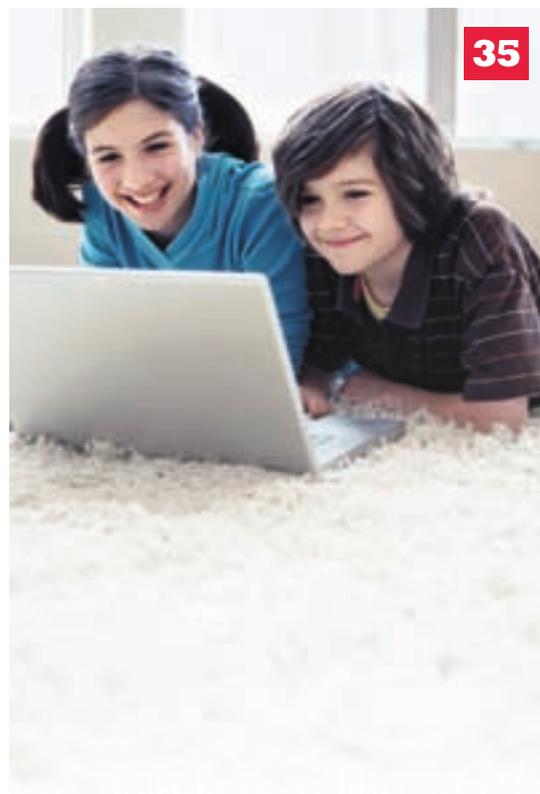
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Letter from the publisher

March musings

A few weeks ago we were happily informed that our publishing group had been selected as Finalists in a variety of categories in the Parenting Media Association's 2013 Editorial & Design Awards. Once again we were able to



congratulate our many writers and creative contributors and can only hope that we will take home some winning Silver or Gold Awards at the upcoming Conference and Awards Dinner in Atlanta this month.

It's a wonderful feeling to be acknowledged for excellence and for having worked hard. Life is loaded with competitions and competitive spirit and most of it is highly healthy and motivates us to do more than we

might if we were able to rest on our laurels and coast with a guarantee.

This competitive spirit is often personified for children in its purest and more innocent form in the wonderful activities they engage in while attending summer camps and programs. Sports,

games, hikes, hunts, and other such activities are wonderful vehicles to teach children the techniques of competition and of competing with good cheer, generosity and teamwork.

So many terrific programs abound around our city and within our various communities. This issue presents many of them, as will the issues in the months to come. Summer is a great time to be a kid, at least for most of our children. I remember my own joys

of summer and of camp activities, beach going, waiting for the ice cream truck, ball playing and hanging out with my friends as the long daylight hours enabled later group behavior.

For my daughter it was a day camp here in our city and the great pleasure of making new friends, both in other campers and in the wonderful young people who become their counselors. As the years passed it was she who became a counselor and years later she still is a part of that "family" that began 15 years ago.

We've started this issue out with an article asking us, "What kind of parent are you? It's a good question and I don't think there's any simple answer, but I've certainly been asking myself that question for many years and still do. I think it's integral for us to give ourselves that evaluation and to examine how our behavior can and

will shape the lives of our children. Self-evaluation is mostly positive unless administered too harshly. There's little doubt that this is the most important job we ever have in our lives with almost no training and modest guidance. Where are the parenting classes that everyone needs and should be given as a matter of importance?

That's why we do these magazines, to try to bring support and a sense of community to the often-dizzying role of parenting. We can only hope it's making a difference.

Wishing you all a good month. Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
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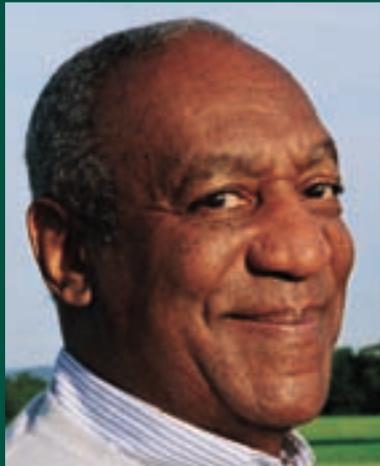
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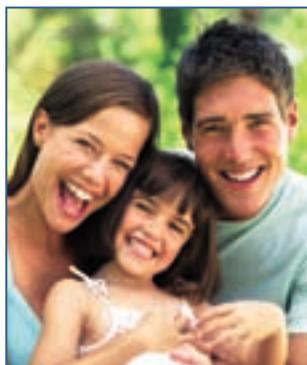
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"THE PLACE EVERYONE IS RAVING ABOUT"

What kind of parent are you?

The type of parent who you are today shapes who your child will become tomorrow

BY DANA J. CONNELLY

Parenting is truly an art form comprised of what we have learned in the past with what we would do differently in the future. With each passing generation, there is a certain underlying goal to either improve upon or completely revamp the style of parenting we were raised with. The task seems daunting, especially while every move you make, the little ones are watching. It can be helpful to know what type of parent you are.

Baumrind distinguished the four parenting styles as “Authoritarian,” “Authoritative,” “Permissive,” and “Uninvolved” (1991). Essentially, the kind of parenting style you employ shapes the type of child you are raising.

- The authoritarian. This would be considered to be the strict parent, the one that puts forth rules and boundaries and punishes any and all infractions. This parent would have a “do-as-I-say” attitude to parenting. Having such a rigid approach to child rearing could result in an obedient child, but one that lacks an overall sense of contentment. The child is more likely to suffer from poor self-image and would struggle to feel confident in social situations.

- The authoritative. This would be considered to be the “ideal” parent. This parent would implement rules and boundaries, but would be open to the child’s input. Punishments are delivered not as intimidation, but as an opportunity for the child to learn from his mistakes. An open dialogue is maintained without sacrificing the rules or consequences. A child reared by an authoritative parent would likely be well-adjusted and

successful. He would have the ability to cope with changes, feel an overall sense of security and pride, and also respect authority.

- The permissive. This would be the parent that “spoils” a child. This parent is overly sensitive to her children’s reaction to the rules and boundaries. She may even cover for her child if he gets in trouble at school. This is the parent who allows the child to shape her behavior as a parent, when it should be the other way around. When rules are not consistently enforced, the child begins to behave inconsistently. At times he can be compliant and cheerful, but can also engage in tantrums and can be quite defiant when things do not go his way. A child raised by a permissive parent tends to have low levels of contentment, has great difficulty regulating his emotions, and displays problems with authority.

- The uninvolved. This is the parent who meets the basic needs of a child (food, shelter, medical care, education), but spends minimal time involved in the other aspects of child development. This could be a parent who suffers with addiction or releases her children into the custody of the state, or the parent who places the child rearing into the hands of a nanny while she travels, works, shops, or lunches. Children need rules and structure in order to feel successful and appropriately stimulated. When their lives lack such ingredients and the parent is distant or neglectful, it

can result in a child who lacks self-control. Children raised in this parenting style tend to have lower levels of intelligence and low self-esteem.

The following are role-play scenarios designed to illustrate how one common, every day parent-child interaction would be handled by each parenting style:

Scenario: Eight-year-old Lilly lives with both of her parents and is an only child. Lilly is very excited about the party that her best friend Amelia is having this weekend. Lilly has not been cleaning up her room and needs to be repeatedly reminded to do so. Lilly’s mom and dad feel that if Lilly cannot do a better job with cleaning up after herself, she should not go to Amelia’s party.

Authoritarian parenting style

Dad: Lilly, come into the kitchen now, please.

Lilly: Dad, five more minutes, please, I just want to see the end of the show.

Mom: Your father said “now” Lilly. You have five seconds to turn off that TV.

Lilly: Fine, I’m coming. (Walks into kitchen) What’s going on?

Dad: You have not cleaned up your room, again. Your dirty clothes are all over the floor.

Mom: The beads from your jewelry kit are scattered everywhere and it broke the vacuum today.

Dad: Your mother and I are not allowing you to go to Amelia’s party this weekend.



Lilly: No, wait. I'll go clean it right now. Please let me go.

Mom: Absolutely not. You are right that you will go clean up right now, but the party is out of the question. Maybe you will remember how disappointed you are and will clean up after yourself in the future.

Authoritative parenting style

Dad: Lilly, come into the kitchen please, your mother and I need to talk to you.

Lilly: Dad, five more minutes, please. I just want to see the end of the show.

Mom: Lilly, you are watching a DVD. Press pause and come in here.

Lilly: OK. OK. (Walks into the kitchen) What's going on?

Dad: Your mom and I have a deal to make with you. Take a look at this list. (Hands Lilly the cleanup list).

Lilly: One, put dirty clothes in the hamper. Two, pick up all toys and put them in the bin. Three, put all books on bookshelf. Four straighten the sheets and pillows on your bed. I know, I'm sorry, I forgot.

Mom: We know. That's why we made this list. Today is Tuesday and Amelia's party is on Saturday. Every night between now and the party you will need to use this checklist to help you remember what we mean when we say "Cleanup your room." If you do these things every day you can go to the party. If we check your room and the four things on the list aren't done, we're sorry, but you won't be able to go to the party this time.

Lilly: Aw, man. But what if I forget to do it a day or two?

Dad: Lilly, you are a big girl now and I think your Mom and I are being

very fair. Because you left your toys out one of them got caught in the vacuum and now it is broken. So you can either pay for the vacuum (jokingly) or follow this list.

Lilly: Dad, you know I don't have money.

Mom: So this list is looking pretty fair, don't you think?

Lilly: Yeah, OK.

(Lilly understood what was expected of her and understood the consequences. She adhered to the deal she made with her parents and enjoyed her time at Amelia's party.)

Permissive parenting style

Dad: Lilly, your mom and I want to talk to you. Please come into the kitchen.

Lilly: Five more minutes, Dad. I want to see the end of this show.

Mom: Fine. You have five more

minutes.

(15 minutes later)

Lilly: Hey, what's going on?

Dad: Your room is very messy and your mother and I want to know why you haven't cleaned it yet.

Lilly: Mom, Dad, I had so much homework. Ms. Stevens is so hard on us. She said that if we don't finish our work then we won't get to play outside during recess.

Mom: Well, what if we say "If you don't clean up your room, then you won't go to Amelia's party?"

Lilly: (Starts crying) Oh Mommy, no. Please, I'll be good. I'll clean up now. I didn't have the time.

Dad: Lilly, please don't get upset. We didn't want you to cry. We just want you to clean up your room. One of your toys broke the vacuum today.

Lilly: I am so sorry. I'll do a better job. But please let me go to Amelia's. All of my friends will be talking about it on Monday and I won't have anything to say because I wasn't there.

Mom: I will help you with your room between now and Saturday. If you are a good helper then you can go to the party.

Lilly: Oh, thank you. I will help. I promise.

(Lilly had to be reminded everyday to help her mother clean her room. She had a great time at the party.)

Uninvolved

This parent would care little as to whether the room was clean or not. She might clean it herself or have another caregiver do it. She may not even know who Amelia is or that there is a party to look forward to this weekend.

• • •

We all want to succeed in our parenting as we all want our children to succeed in life. How we approach discipline and how we nurture our children directly impacts the type of people they become. It's important to recognize what we do right as parents, but also what we do wrong, and realize that we all have something we wish we were doing better.

Dana J. Connelly holds dual Master's Degrees in education and special education, working as an educational evaluator for a New York-based agency. She specializes in applied behavior analysis and is the proud single mother of a 5-year-old boy.

Reference:

Baumrind D. (1991) The Influence of Parenting Style on Adolescent Competence & Substance Use - Journal of Early Adolescence p. 56-95.

A healthy weight

Here are some tips to help your child

BY JAMIE LOBER

New York parents often wonder if their children weighs too much, too little, or are just right. When you have proper insight, you can judge where your child stands and what action, if any, he needs to take to stay at a healthy number.

“For kids in general, we use body mass index to measure where they fall in the healthy weight range,” said Despina Hyde, dietician and diabetes educator with the New York University Langone Weight Management Program.

Acting appropriately when tackling body image and weight issues with your child can make a difference.

“Especially for children who are still growing and developing, it is important that parents understand that the goal is not necessarily to lose weight, but to slow down the rate of weight gain and still allow normal growth and development,” said Hyde.

It is not usually recommended to put kids on a weight-loss diet.

“It is important to encourage plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains,

and to drink lots of water and not caloric beverages, and to reinforce reasonably sized portions,” said Hyde.

The American Heart Association suggests aiming for four to five servings each of fruits and vegetables daily if you consume a 2,000-calorie diet (vegetable or 100-percent fruit juice counts!). The American Heart Association names brown rice, whole-grain cereal, whole-wheat bread, and rye bread as foods with whole grains that are good for you because they are low in saturated fat and cholesterol, but rich in fiber. Chicken and fish are encouraged over red meats because they are lower in saturated fat and cholesterol.

Healthcare professionals find that kids are eating more than they used to in past years, which means it is even more important that parents take a stand.

“You can cut out or reduce calorie-rich treats like high-fat, high-sugar treats or salty snacks in your house, and have fresh fruit and vegetables that are kid-friendly, like grapes, carrots, apples, and bananas around your household instead,” said Hyde.

Parents can use canola, corn or safflower oil as their main kitchen fat.

Also, make sure that dessert is in the evening, rather than all day long.

“Kids need to understand that ice cream is a treat, and not something that should be a normal part of the diet everyday,” said Hyde.

Obesity is not just a health problem, but a psycho-social risk as well.

“Obese children are a target of social discrimination, which can put psychological stress on kids and affect their self-esteem, academic performance, and social life,” said Hyde. These children and adolescents typically carry that on with them into their adulthood, which is dangerous. “Obesity is a predictor for cardiovascular risk, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure,

and abnormal glucose tolerance, so if these issues are treated or prevented in childhood, it will lead your child to live a healthier life overall as adults and prevent the development of some of these diseases.”

Keeping your child at a healthy weight comes down to common-sense math — and limiting screen time.

“You want to make sure your kid is getting adequate nutrition by balancing those calories with the calories he is expending, which means increasing physical activity and limiting screen time,” said Hyde. “The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend television viewing for children below age 2, and it is recommended that it is less than two hours a day, which includes video games, television, and internet.”

Find healthy alternatives to screen time and make having an active lifestyle a family affair.

“You want to try to encourage your child to do more active activities, which will help him in turn expend more calories because what is happening now is that kids are taking in way more calories than they used to, and using less because they are sedentary,” said Hyde.

And keep in mind that kids like to imitate adults, so be a good role model.

“Develop an overall healthy relationship with food, which sets the stage for years to come,” said Hyde. Paying attention to the food labels and asking your doctor for guidance on how to interpret them can also be helpful.

Let your child know that positive lifestyle choices, as well as an annual physical, are important to your family — and to his health. If you are having trouble coming up with practical ideas to make a change, consider consulting with a pediatrician or dietician who can offer some expert guidance as to an approach that will work well for your family.

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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Young & bipolar

Controversial diagnosis in pediatric and adolescent psychiatry

BY ALLISON PLITT

Doctors for years believed that the onset of a mental illness called bipolar disorder could only begin in early adulthood. But in 1995 two psychiatrists observing children in a psychiatric clinic found that children could exhibit symptoms of the disorder, and doctors began prescribing medications approved for adult use to young children.

According to “The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,” which professional psychiatrists use in order to look at their patient’s symptoms and diagnose their illnesses, bipolar disorder, also known as “manic depression,” is characterized by mood swings between two different, intense states — a “manic” phase in which the patient is hyperactive, shows reckless behavior, acts grandiose, and has racing thoughts, and a “depression” in which the patient is sad, lacks energy, has difficulty concentrating, and can even be suicidal. The length of time that a manic or depressive episode usually lasts is at least one or two weeks.

New findings

In 1995 psychiatrists Dr. Joseph Biederman and Dr. Janet Wozniak were observing children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in a psychiatric clinic at Massachusetts General Hospital, the primary teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder — the most commonly diagnosed childhood behavior disorder, which affects three to five percent of school-aged children — is when kids have problems with inattentiveness, over-activity, and impulsivity.

Doctors Biederman and Wozniak found, however, that some children were having periods of extreme aggressiveness, depression, or anger, and were not getting better by taking stimulants, which are psychoactive drugs that improve concentration and focus for sufferers of the disorder.

Dr. Biederman felt that there was a portion of the kids in his clinic

whose problems with anger seemed to go way beyond normal attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. He and Dr. Wozniak observed these children more closely and saw kids who continued to struggle with intense, uncontrollable outbursts of anger — violent hitting, screaming, and kicking — even after they passed through their preschool years.

While Dr. Wozniak believed children suffering from attention deficit

PART ONE of a series

hyperactivity disorder had difficulty with impulse control, she thought that the other kids dealing with difficult-to-treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder had serious mood problems, which could be defined as bipolar. She wrote up her observations in 1995, in a now-famous paper in which she proposed that some of the kids originally diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder were actually bipolar. Her paper won awards and many physicians believed her insights helped transform their practices.

Dr. David Shaffer, professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Columbia University Medical Center, explained the findings.

“The defining feature of [adult] manic-depression was that it was episodic. You had episodes of depression and episodes of mania and episodes of normal mood, and that was really [bipolar disorder’s] defining characteristic,” he says.

According to Dr. Shaffer, the kids Dr. Wozniak described rarely, if ever, had these kinds of week-long or month-long episodes. In order to make these children fit the traditional concept of bipolar disorder, Dr. Wozniak and Dr. Biederman made the argument that the children experienced these episodes in a different context.

“They said, maybe in childhood the episodes would be very brief and very frequent,” says Dr. Shaffer. “These are called ‘ultra diem,’ you

know, ‘many times a day.’ If you regarded every time children changed their mood, every time they lost their temper or became over excited, as a mood episode, then they were really being misdiagnosed and were really cases of bipolar disorder.”

Critics countered that bipolar disorder should look the same in kids as in adults, and that there were bipolar adults who did not suffer uncontrollable anger issues when they were younger. Nevertheless, the pediatric bipolar disorder diagnosis took off.

Controversial prescriptions

Once psychiatrists learned they could diagnose children as bipolar, the number of cases of children with the illness exploded. Based on a study published in the Archives of General Psychiatry that measured national trends in outpatient visits that resulted in a diagnosis of bipolar disorder, there was a 4,000-percent increase in the number of children diagnosed with bipolar disorder from 1995 through 2010. Suddenly, children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, who were becoming more agitated by taking stimulants, were being treated with antipsychotic medicines, which adults took for bipolar disorder.

“The initial reports from Joseph Biederman and Janet Wozniak started a very controversial period when kids started getting antipsychotics all over the country for disruptive behavior,” stated Dr. Jess Shatkin, an associate professor and director at New York University’s Child Study Center.

Consequently, some doctors began prescribing to children a new breed of antipsychotic medicines that had just come onto the market in 1993 — Geodon, Zyprexa, Abilify, Seroquel, and Risperdal.

Antipsychotic medications are primarily used to manage psychosis, which is when a patient loses touch with reality by having delusions or hallucinations that are often caused by schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Some physicians, on the other hand,



found that when the kids with difficult-to-treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder took these medications, they seemed to settle down and had fewer aggressive outbreaks.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the use of antipsychotics in youth for treating bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, Tourette's syndrome, and irritability stemming from autism. Other physicians, nevertheless, began in the mid-1990s to prescribe these powerful drugs to young children and adolescents to treat conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, and insomnia.

In a 2008 study conducted at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill's School of Public Health, two doctors found that patients under 19 years old accounted for 15 percent of antipsychotic drug use in the U.S. in 2005, compared with seven percent in 1996.

According to Stephen Crystal, a Rutgers University professor who studies the drugs, more than 70 percent of the antipsychotic use in young children

and teenagers has been for off-label mental disorders, like attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a nonpsychotic condition. In other words, the doctors were prescribing these drugs to treat illnesses that the Food and Drug Administration did not approve the medications to be used for.

"In 2010 antipsychotics were one of the most prescribed classes of drugs in the United States. That's remarkable. If you had told us 10 years ago that antipsychotics would soon be one of the most prescribed medications in the U.S., we [psychiatrists] wouldn't have believed you," Dr. Shatkin explained. "Antipsychotics are being increasingly used because so many doctors, most often non-psychiatrists, are prescribing them for sleep, anxiety, agitation, irritability, and to augment an anti-depressant. These medicines are expensive and have great promise, and they also have significant side effects and should be used with great caution."

Unfortunately, the children who have benefited from taking the drugs have also often suffered many docu-

mented side effects. In 2009 the Journal of the American Medical Association conducted a study of young children and adolescents from ages 4 to 19. These patients took four different antipsychotic medications.

In less than 12 weeks the young patients added eight to 15 percent to their body weight after taking the pills. The study concluded that when children and adolescents took certain antipsychotic medications, they risked rapid weight gain and metabolic changes that could lead to diabetes, hypertension, and other illnesses.

The two most severe side effects from taking antipsychotic drugs are a life-threatening nervous system problem called neuroleptic malignant syndrome, and an uncontrollable movement problem called tardive dyskinesia. One mother recounted that her son had taken an antipsychotic medicine for three months before he experienced tardive dyskinesia.

"The muscles in his face were contorted and he looked like a different kid, like frozen in a way," she said. She complained that the doc-

tor who prescribed the medication had never even mentioned the side effects to her.

There is also a decade-long history of lawsuits against pharmaceutical companies that manufacture antipsychotic medications by the patients who use them and experience unreasonably dangerous side effects. Patients also sue the pharmaceutical companies, pharmacies, and physicians for not providing sufficient warnings or instructions regarding the use of these drugs.

Future of disorders

"The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders" does not address pediatric or adolescent bipolar disorder in children, since it was published in 1994, one year before the controversial Massachusetts General Hospital study. An updated manual to be published in May 2013 will define bipolar disorder in children, but psychiatrists have insisted on including a new term for children who do not classify as bipolar.

The newly proposed category is called temper dysregulation disorder, which is seen as a brain or biological dysfunction but not necessarily a lifelong condition. Kids who can be diagnosed with the condition are between the ages of 6 and 18 and have temper outbursts three or more times a week that are grossly out of proportion in intensity or duration to the situation.

By adding this new entry, the American Psychiatric Association is trying to help curb the use of the pediatric bipolar label, which is a lifelong label that some physicians seem hesitant to diagnose in young children.

However, critics think temper dysregulation disorder, also referred to as disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, is too vague a diagnosis and will turn temper tantrums into mental disorders. Its defenders, though, believe there are irritable kids who get excited and overreact, most likely by having tantrums, and whose parents and teachers have trouble dealing with them. If these children are diagnosed with disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, they won't be labeled bipolar, which, according to proponents of the use of the term, can often lead to stigma and the likelihood of taking powerful drugs.

Allison Plitt is a freelance writer who lives in Queens with her husband and daughter. She is a frequent contributor to NY Parenting Media.

SPARK of activity

A program works to improve gym class and fight childhood obesity

BY MARY CARROLL WININGER

The epidemic of childhood obesity is well on the rise: 17 percent of children are obese today as opposed to five percent 30 years ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. And in 2010, the Centers for Disease Control reported that more than a third of children and adolescents were considered overweight or obese.

Budget cuts have left some schools with few teachers and less equipment for traditional gym class. This means kids may have gym only once a week — barely enough time to work up a sweat, let alone burn off any significant calories. How did this happen, and what can be done to fix it? A public health organization in San Diego is working to change this, and to revolutionize the way physical education is taught and experienced in this country.

Obesity is defined as having an excessive amount of body fat to the detriment of one's own health. It's a medical condition that is hard enough to face as an adult, with all of the physical and emotional challenges that come with it. But there is something altogether more poignant about a child being overweight, because he's experiencing these same challenges at a time in his life that should be joyful and carefree.

Food intake is a major part of the problem, of course. Portion sizes have ballooned in the last 50 years, and the increased reliance on sugary drinks and fast food isn't helping. According to the book "Fast Food Nation," people spent \$6 billion on fast food in 1970. In 2000, it was more than \$110 billion.

Lack of physical activity, however, seems to be inflicting the most damage upon America's kids, which is even more distressing when you realize that children are no longer naturally doing what they've always done — playing. As a result of overloaded schedules, too much homework, or a preponderance of video games, kids today aren't getting nearly enough activity. And nowadays kids can no longer rely on even school-sanctioned activity like physical education.

Originally created with the goal of building a better physical education class, Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids, known as SPARK, is a program that trains teachers and other recreation leaders on how to lead children and teens through research-based curriculum that fosters wellness.

It was implemented in 1989 as a "solution to the then-growing childhood obesity epidemic," says Billy Beltz, the marketing manager. "The National Institutes of Health decided to do a research project to find out if a better physical education program was possi-

ble, and to see the positive outcomes that could result."

The original SPARK task force noticed in its research that most of gym class time consisted of kids doing a lot of waiting. Waiting their turn in line during kickball. Waiting for the ball to come to them when playing fullback in soccer. Waiting to be picked for a team. There were — and are to this day — "physical education programs that were not as active and engaging as they should [have been]," says Beltz. "It was such that the level of activity in class time was not optimized."

In order to maximize class time, the SPARK staff sought out to make gym "active, inclusive, and fun" and engage every kid — even the least athletic — from the minute they walk in. In SPARK-driven gym classes, kids work in small groups, doing vigorous physical activities that are disguised as fun for the duration of class. The ultimate aim of the program is to foster a lifelong love of exercise and physical activity.

"By helping kids to be more active and engaged during class time, we find they enjoy physical education class more, and [then] it spills over into after-school activity and beyond. They're more inclined to stay physically active throughout their lives," says Beltz.

So how do parents get involved, especially if they notice their child's school's gym program is lacking?

"It starts with asking the right questions, and engaging," says Beltz. "Sometimes the school doesn't know, and even the parents may not know what kind of situation they're in. Have the physical education programs at the child's school been assessed? How often is P.E. being offered, and for how long? It starts by making sure you have [the] answers and everyone's aware. Then you advocate for a quality physical education program that is evidence-based and is proven to work."

Mary Carroll Wininger is a writer based in New York City. She is a frequent contributor on topics ranging from etiquette to feng shui.

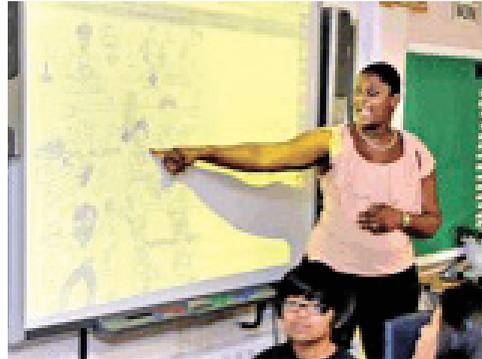


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Ten tips for finding the right day camp

BY DENISE MORRISON
YEARIAN

Summer day camp is a place where children can learn new skills, acquire new interests, and make new friends. But there is no one-size-fits-all camp. To find the right day camp for your child, consider these 10 tips.

Consider your child

Talk it over and narrow down the options based on your child's interests and needs. Find out what he wants from the experience and work together to make a list of things he might like to do.

Also consider his developmental needs. Is he ready for an all-day program? Would he be more comfortable in an intimate versus large group setting?

If your child likes sports, but has shown some interest in drama or art, encourage him to step out of

his comfort zone. It just might spark a new passion.

Gather information

Attend camp fairs, or pick up a local camp guide. Circle programs of interest, then comparison shop.

Call each prospective camp to inquire about philosophy, daily schedule, and other topics important to you. Invest this time up front and you may find a camp to stay with for several years.

Traditional or specialty?

When choosing between a traditional versus specialty program, consider this rule of thumb: the younger the child, the more varied the activities should be.

Children between the ages of 7 and 11 thrive in a setting where they can sample a variety of subjects. As their attention span develops, they may want to focus on a

single activity.

If you go with a specialty camp, find out how intense the program is. It may be labeled "specialty," but only have a one- or two-hour component with other activities scheduled in.

Look at location

Find a camp close to your job or home to shorten travel time and allow quick access to your child in an emergency.

Convenience, however, shouldn't be the primary factor. Balance your decision with what the camp has to offer. If your child really wants to participate in a given camp, consider your willingness to drive out of the way. Or, see if there's a neighbor with whom you can carpool.

Ponder program length

Program length should be viewed in light of the family and child's needs. If your schedule dictates him having to stay a full day, ask about before- and after-care. If he's younger, find out about naps or quiet times.

It's also important to find out who runs the before- and after-care program. Is it the same staff your child has all day? What activities will he be engaged in during this time?

Scout out schedules

Before enrolling, ask about the daily schedule. What themes and related activities are planned? Will there be field trips or special guests coming in to keep camp exciting and extend theme-based learning? Will your camper receive any reading, writing, or math experiences? Done properly, kids can enjoy games and activities that keep those academic skills sharp.

Also look at resources the camp has to offer and inquire how often

Questions to ask before choosing a day camp

- Are you licensed by the state or do you hold an accreditation or certification? What exactly does that credential mean?
- What kind of background, training, and experience do counselors and staff have? How are they chosen?
- What is the counselor-to-camper ratio? How many students are in each group? How often are the groups together?
- What kind of medical response is on hand? Camp nurse, or CPR- and first aid-certified staff?
- Are you able to administer medicine?



- What is a typical day like?
- How often will the campers take field trips? Where do they go? Is there increased supervision in populated setting?
- What other resources are available to campers, such as a pool, ice arena, farm, hiking trails, ropes course, archery, etc.? How often will my child be able to participate in these?
- Are lunches or snacks provided?
- Do you offer before- and after-care? Will it be the same staff caring for my child?
- How often are the facilities cleaned?

- What alternative plans do you have for inclement weather?
- What does the camp fee cover? What extra fees will I be required to pay?
- Do you offer scholarships or financial aid?
- What is the refund policy and rules regarding transfer of weeks?
- What is your policy regarding cellphones and other technology items brought to camp?
- How do you handle home-sickness and other adjustment issues?
- What is the discipline policy?
- How do you handle bullying?
- What are your drop-off and pick-up policies?
- Will you provide references?



your child will participate in them. Don't assume that just because there's a pool, ropes course, or archery field on the brochure it will be part of your child's session. Ask to make sure.

Ask about staff

Find out how staff and counselors are chosen, their experience, background, age, and training, as well as counselor-to-camper ratio. The American Camping Association's day camp recommendations are one to six staffers for campers ages 4 to 5, one to eight for ages 6 to 8, one to 10 for ages 9 to 14, and one to 12 for ages 15 to 17. Also ask how counselors are screened and what background checks are done. If you're going with a specialty camp,

what kind of in-depth knowledge and experience do the counselors have teaching the subject?

Consider costs

Compare program costs and find out what the fees actually cover. Some camps include field trips, materials, meals, and T-shirts into their initial fee, with others it's an add-on. Also find out the camp's refund policy and rules regarding transfer of weeks if your plans change or your child gets sick. If the camp is out of your price range, is a scholarship or financial assistance available?

Explore open houses

Visiting an open house can get children acclimated to the environment and give you a better perspec-

tive of the staff, facilities, and activities. Are the staffers smiling and friendly? Do they immediately bond with the children? Are the facilities well maintained, clean, and free of safety hazards?

Peruse policies

Eliminate future problems by reviewing the camp's policies and procedures before you sign up. You don't want to learn after the fact that your child can't turn on his cellphone during camp hours, or that drop-off and pick-up policies differ from what you thought. Share pertinent information with your child, too, so there are no surprises on his end.

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

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Summer Camps/Programs

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Continued on page 18



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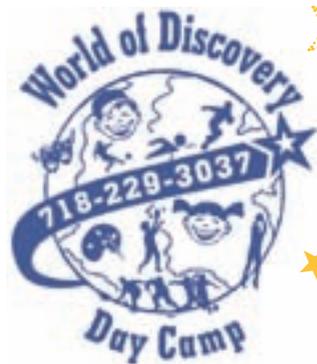


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Continued from page 16

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Continued on page 20

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Summer Camps/Programs

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Queens Zoo Summer Program

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World of Discovery Day Camp

718 228 3037 or www.worldofdiscovery.org

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Young People's Day Camp of Queens

1-800-856-1043 or www.queenscamp.com or www.yfdc.com

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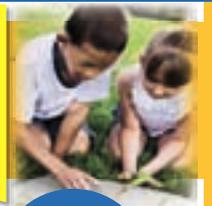


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Should your child go to camp with a friend?

A big question without an easy answer

BY LAURIE ROBERTS KAROL

Heading off to sleep-away camp can be a fearful time for both parent and child. In many instances, a child simply will not agree to go without the comfort of a friend or acquaintance.

It's one of the most frequently asked questions I hear as a professional summer camp advisor. The answer is never absolute. Let me provide some food for thought to guide you through making the best decision for your child.

In a perfect world, camp directors would prefer that each new camper come to camp without a current buddy, thereby putting all new campers on a socially even play-

ing field. Without the security of knowing a friend is by your child's side, the general consensus is that he will be more open and available to forge new relationships. It also gives him leeway to re-invent his persona without question or judgment from someone who may perceive him differently based on their existing relationship. So much for the perfect world — now let's move on to reality!

This is a time where a parent should listen to her gut instinct and proceed in the manner she feels is best for her child — not the child's friend, or the other child's parents. Take time to play out some of the scenarios that can occur.

Let me present a few:

Brittany and Nicole are good friends who go to school together and can't imagine being separated for the summer. Their families went through the search process together and have mutually agreed on a camp for the girls. Summer arrives and both girls happily board the bus, feeling quite comfortable sitting next to one another. Once at camp and settled into their new summer environment, it is inevitable that one of the girls will make a new connection first. How will the other girl feel? Will one feel left out or abandoned if she hasn't made a new friend yet? Will she feel like a tag-along in the wake of her friend's excitement? Will she write a letter home reflective of her feelings? How might this impact your relationship with the other child's mother?

Michael and Jared have been in day camp together since they were 3. The boys were reluctant to go to sleep-away camp, but the prospect of going away together provided enough security for each of the boys to agree. The families mutually select a camp for the boys and after months of shopping and packing, the camp buses will be leaving in a week. Jared has an unfortunate accident on the soccer field, breaks his foot, and has to stay home. Is Michael prepared to go without him?

Take the time to think these and other scenarios through. Discuss them with your spouse, your child, and the friend's parents. If your gut still tells you that this is the best formula for success, then by all means, sign them up together.

Keep in mind that together does not always mean they have to be in the same bunk. Most camps will have more than one bunk of campers in a division, and may have more than one division within an age group. Requesting separate bunks or divisions can give each child a different core to his experience, yet still provide the comfort of having a friend nearby.

Sleep-away camp is a time to grow as an individual, gain independence, participate in new activities, and learn to be part of a community of peers. Your ultimate decision on what camp to choose for your child and whether or not he should go with a friend should consider maximizing the benefits of the total camp experience.

Laurie Roberts Karol is a professional camp consultant with The Camp Experts and Teen Summers, a free summer camp and teen program advisory service that guides families through the decision-making process and assists in planning summer camp visitations. For more information, visit www.campexperts.com or contact her at (718) 766-8005 or (516) 780-6464.



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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

The health benefits of owning a pup

When parents consider getting a pet, many tend to look at the negatives, such as cleaning up after the animal, while others claim that living with animals is merely unsanitary at best. There has been much said about the ways that pets cause health hazards to people. From pregnant women emptying dirty cat litter, to allergens in pet dander, to dog bites, to eczema brought on by fur, pets take the blame for a host of health hazards.

However, there are also specific ways in which pets — and dogs in particular — improve our health. (And there is nothing quite like the unconditional love that a dog can bring to a family!)

Here are five definite instances in which dogs rescue us in the health department:

Exercise: It's a no-brainer that when you have a dog, you just walk more than you would if you didn't have one. The American Journal of Public Health and the American Journal of Preventive Medicine have both confirmed that "children with dogs spend more time doing moderate to vigorous activity than those without dogs, and adults with dogs walk on average almost twice as much as adults without dogs."

Cardiovascular benefits: Besides the effects of exercise on cardiovascular health, owning dogs brings a sense of calm and peace that enhance a person's cardiovascular condition over the long run. There is also a reduced risk of high blood pressure and cholesterol levels for dog owners. Plus, a study published in the American Journal of Cardiology reports that "male dog owners were less likely

to die within one year after a heart attack than those who did not own a dog."

Doctor visits: In general, people who own dogs go to the doctor less. In a study out of Australia, dog and cat owners made significantly less visits to the doctor than those who didn't own pets.

Illness: When people are hospitalized for long periods of time, they benefit dramatically from visits with dogs trained in pet therapy, as well as visits from their very own pups at home. Luckily, more hospitals are realizing this, and with help from pet organizations, are creating programs in which sick children and adults can have hospital visits from their own pets. The results have been amazing.

Anxiety: There is perhaps nothing better than taking care of a dog, and giving and receiving the unconditional love that only a pup

can bring to person who is worried or anxious. When my daughter was first diagnosed with an autoimmune disease at the age of 9, we adopted an adult chihuahua mix who had encountered a lifetime of suffering herself. Hayley had been abused and required a lot of attention and pampering. My daughter desperately needed something to take her mind off her ailments and there was no better remedy for her anxiety and panic attacks brought on by her disease than to care for this abused little dog. Five years later, they have helped each other very much to heal and retain a very special, loving relationship.

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.



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Questions to ask the pediatrician

BY JAMIE LOBER

The pediatrician is one of the most valuable players in your child's life. It is critical that you feel comfortable talking with your doctor and sharing the most intimate details of your child's life, growth, and development. This way, your doctor can help your child stay well.

If you do not already have a pe-

diatrician that you like and trust, take the time to interview a few. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests asking about the doctor's background and training, general office procedures, medical school, residency, finding someone who is conveniently located, learning the office policy on taking and returning phone calls, and deciding if you want someone in a group practice with other physicians.

Other important deciding factors may include whether you can make an appointment on short notice if your child has a sore throat or infection, if the doctor communicates clearly about illnesses and treatments, and what the fees are for sick visits, routine examinations, and immunizations.

Once you have identified who this essential player in your child's life will be, try to give a holistic picture of your child's overall wellness.

"First and foremost, make sure your pediatrician thinks your child is developing normally in terms of physical development, mental health development, and social and emotional development," says Dr. Kirsten Cullen Sharma, clinical assistant professor in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at New York University Langone Medical Center. For some, language development may be a concern and

Allowing the pediatrician to get to know your child makes it easier for him to be counseled on healthy living.

a developmental pediatrician may come in handy.

"They can comment on whether children are hitting language or motor milestones, and if further evaluation is required, they can take the extra step and do more of an in-depth evaluation," says Dr. Sharma. The pediatrician should not just be someone you see when your child is sick.

"You should have a relationship with the pediatrician from the time you come home from the hospital with your baby, and you should have a schedule so you feel like you are getting regular checkups annually and making sure whatever vaccines, hearing, and vision screenings are followed according to the time table," she adds.

Allowing the pediatrician to get to know your child makes it easier for him to be counseled on healthy living.

"Recommendations can be given on healthy eating, physical activity, and how much media and technology access kids should have," says Dr. Sharma.

Parents should pay attention to their kids and point out any changes to the pediatrician.

"If you see your child is not talking much, maybe he is shy or quiet and that is within the normal range, or maybe he needs more clinical support to help him speak more in public," says Dr. Sharma. "If a child is anxious in general or has specific fears about things, find out if that is within normal limits or something that requires help, strategies, and support for the family and child."

If you suspect your child has a delay, address it and seek therapeutic support so you can have the best outcome. The pediatrician will let you know if he is on par in all aspects of growth and development, both physical and otherwise.

"There is a growth and weight chart of what is considered nor-

mal, but there is also a range for other domains like language and fine motor skills, and parents need to be aware of those things," says Dr. Sharma.

Help your child view the pediatrician as a friend and advocate, rather than someone to be feared.

"It is helpful for families to have a support person in the medical field who can pay attention to those things that parents might not pick up on their own," says Dr. Sharma, adding let nervous children know that everyone sees a pediatrician. "It is important for them to know that all kids go and the pediatrician helps them stay healthy, gives the family good advice on how to live a healthy lifestyle, and is a support person who really cares about children."

Of course, it is normal for children to feel anxious about visits.

"Some kids are scared to go because a common fear is getting shots, so one of the best things the pediatrician can do is explain to the child and parent exactly what is happening before he does it," says Dr. Sharma. This means if your child is getting a shot, the pediatrician should tell what it is, why it is being done, how long it will take and what it feels like.

"It is about helping the child to be comfortable and let them know what is going to happen at every step along the way because it eases anxiety for a lot of them," she says.

Let your child do some talking.

"It is helpful for kids to bring questions to the pediatrician because it helps them feel involved," says Dr. Sharma.

Take a journal with you and write down your child's measurements and how he is doing. Ask questions about medications, vaccines and vitamins. Remember that your child does not want to spend a lot of time with the pediatrician, and time is limited.

"If you come in with your list of questions in advance and maybe tell the nurse what concerns you want answered, the doctor can focus that time on your concerns and it is helpful," said Dr. Jennifer Shu, spokesman for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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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DIVORCE & SEPARATION

LEE CHABIN, ESQ.

More collaborative divorce suggestions

Leslie and John decided to end their 14-year marriage.

Joint counseling had helped them speak more openly to each other than they had in many years, but rather than bringing them closer together, their discussions highlighted how far apart they had grown. Both were angry and, ultimately, neither wanted to stay married.

The usual process:

Most couples, when getting divorced, hire litigators — because what else is there to do?

Often, the lawyers file threatening motions with the court, motions likely filled with exaggerations, if not outright lies about the other partner. Each spouse blames the other and

demands more than the other can accept.

The lawyers take depositions, perhaps hoping to intimidate the other spouse and discover weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

You pay for experts with the expectation that they will report or testify in a way that is favorable to you. Of course, your spouse is likely to hire his own experts for the same purpose.

The judge appoints a forensic psychologist to report on who should get custody of the children — a terrifying win or lose proposition for many parents.

Most spouses never question their lawyers. After all, their lawyers are the experts, aren't they? If there were another way to proceed, the attorney would tell them, wouldn't they?

Well, no, most litigators don't discuss the different ways to divorce with their clients. Some litigators don't know about collaborative divorce. Others are afraid of it because it poses challenges to their way of doing things.

A better way:

Unlike most couples, Leslie and John learned that they had a choice when it came to getting divorced, because their therapist knew about collaborative divorce (and mediation).

They knew that if they chose collaborative divorce, each of them would be represented by an attorney, and both of the lawyers would agree in writing to work together in good faith to reach mutually beneficial agreements, and *to not go to court*.

With their lawyers present, Leslie and John would have opportunities to communicate directly with each other. Rather than threatening and blaming, they would be assisted in examining their needs for the future, and how best to get those needs met.

Instead of sitting through depositions and giving away as little information as possible, in collaborative divorce John and Leslie would freely share financial information to allow for a better understanding of how

they are currently situated, and to use this understanding as the foundation for creating workable options to consider.

Collaborative lawyers spend no time at all preparing for trial, and the chances are very good that the spouses, with the help of their attorneys, will succeed in reaching an agreement. Statistically speaking, 86 percent of collaborative divorce cases end with a settlement agreement.*

John and Leslie have also learned that one of the greatest differences between court battles and collaborative practice involves the use of experts.

In collaborative divorce, an accountant or financial planner will provide balanced information of, say, what a small business is worth, or the value of other property such as retirement accounts. He will help you weigh your decisions and the potential implications. Often, the spouses split the cost of fees between them.

Also in collaborative divorce, the therapist you may decide to consult won't report to a judge. Instead, *he would work with you*, perhaps helping you deal with the sadness at the loss of the marriage, and with the fears of going forward.

Your collaborative lawyer will help you work through the divorce in a way that is much less stressful and adversarial than going to court. Collaborative divorce is faster, more efficient, and more constructive than litigation. You may find it to be less expensive as well.

*Statistics compiled by the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals

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>.

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The nightly grind

Don't lose sleep over nighttime tooth grinding

BY MALIA JACOBSON

Deep, even breathing. Blankets softly rustling. The occasional sigh. These sweet sounds of children asleep are music to a weary parent's ears — until the serenity is pierced by the unmistakable noise of grinding teeth!

When I tiptoed past my slumbering preschooler's bedroom one night, I heard her peaceful sleep sounds shattered by the bone-rattling, fingernails-on-a-blackboard racket of her tiny teeth, gnashing away.

I lapsed into a moment of parental panic. Surely, this would damage her teeth! Did she do this every night? Was she overstressed? Should I wake her?

The grinding noises tapered off after a few minutes, but my questions continued.

Many parents will hear their children's teeth grinding at some point. A study in *Journal of Dentistry for Children* found that more than a third of parents report the condition

in their children.

"It can get pretty loud," admits Dr. Paul Bussman, spokesperson for the Academy of General Dentistry.

Though teeth grinding, or bruxism, may be alarming or worrisome, it's generally a normal part of the growing process, he says.

Grinding can begin in babyhood — as soon as children have teeth to grind — and generally starts to subside as the permanent teeth begin to erupt, says Dr. Bussman. The condition commonly disappears on its own in childhood, but a small percentage of kids will continue to grind as adults. Severe or persistent grinders may suffer facial pain, ear aches, jaw-joint disorders, damaged teeth, and disturbed sleep.

According to Dr. Khaleel Ahmad of the Iowa Sleep Disorders Center, researchers haven't pinned down a cause for bruxism. Genetics may play a role — if either parents grinds their teeth at night, children are 1.8 times more likely to grind their own.

Daytime stress and medicines like amphetamines have been associated with bruxism. Interestingly, nearly a third of grinders also bite their nails, and more than 20 percent suck their thumbs, says Dr. Ahmed.

If your child's teeth have become nighttime noisemakers, here are some tips for coping:

Do not disturb

"Don't wake a child engaged in nighttime teeth grinding," says Dr. Bussman.

"They're not aware of it, so bringing it to their attention will probably confuse them."

Stress less

Grinding can be associated with daytime stress, so help kids relax. Ask them to talk about any stressful events they may have encountered during their day, and encourage them

to unwind in the hours before bedtime with a bath, books, and quiet activities.

Practice healthy habits

Help your child maintain good sleep habits, with an age-appropriate bedtime, a regular bedtime routine, and a cool, dark, quiet, and comfortable sleep environment.

Back off

Bruxism occurs more commonly during back sleeping. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends back sleeping for infants, but older children who grind may be more comfortable sleeping in another position.

Get a move on

Encourage kids to get adequate exercise. Physical activity helps kids fall asleep faster, promotes deep, restful sleep, and eases stress, which can contribute to teeth grinding.

Turndown service

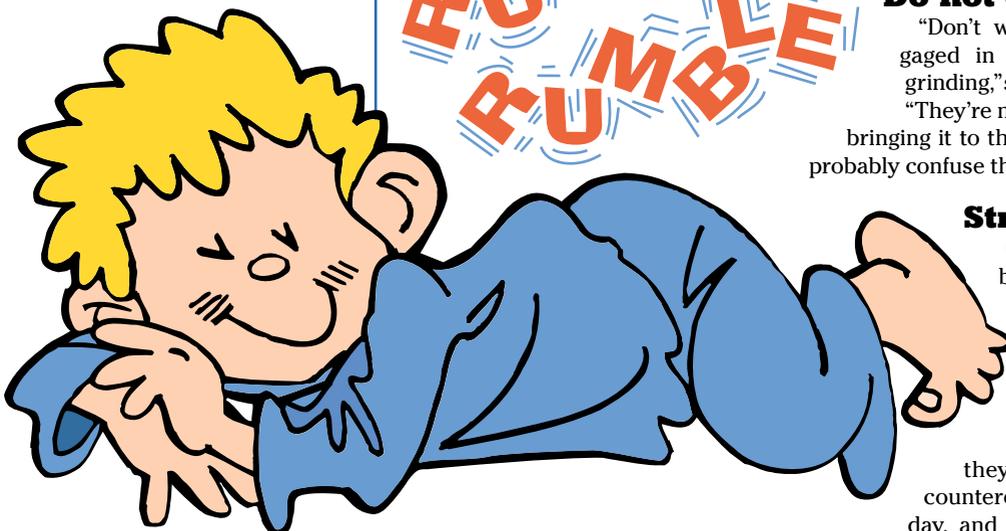
As difficult as it may be, try not to become overly concerned with the occasional episode of bruxism. Dr. Bussman advises parents to turn down the volume on monitoring devices so they aren't tuned in to every little sound.

If grinding regularly interferes with sleep or if a child complains of pain in his teeth or face, see a dentist. In severe cases, a dentist may prescribe a nightguard made of soft plastic to protect the teeth and the jaw joint. Occasionally, grinding is associated with a misaligned bite. If that's the case, a pediatric dentist will refer your child to an orthodontist.

Thankfully, my little bruxist has eased up. But if I hear more teeth-gnashing noises coming from her room, I'll be better prepared — and I'll worry a lot less.

Malia Jacobson is a freelance journalist and mom who writes frequently about children's sleep and health topics. Her latest book is "Sleep Tight, Every Night: Helping Toddlers and Preschoolers Sleep Well Without Tears, Tricks, or Tirades."

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OVERVIEW

More than 25 Conference sessions
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ADHD	Emotional Intelligence
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Common Core Curriculum	Social Skills Development
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The Young Child Expo & Conference will provide early childhood professionals and parents the latest information about early childhood development, services, resources, and products to help all children reach their full potential. In one unique event, this conference integrates learning about a wide variety of important topics affecting typically developing children as well as those with special needs, including autism.

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THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Reading for a young sleuth

Your teen is aching for a good mystery, but she has already read all of your old Nancy Drew books.

Then Kimberly Reid's "Sweet 16 to Life," which follows 16-year-old amateur detective Chanti Evans — a modern-day Nancy Drew — might be right up her alley.

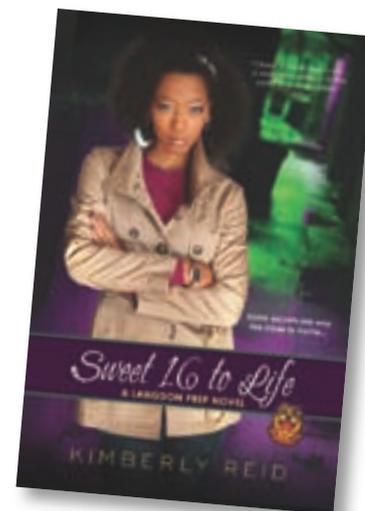
Chanti didn't look for crimes to solve, they found her. Case in point, the night her friend MJ's house caught fire. Thankfully, nobody was home and the blaze was easily extinguished, but Chanti was suspicious: MJ was more worried about the contents of the basement than the rest of the house. Add in the creepy hoodie-wearing dude who stood smiling as he watched the house burn, and something wasn't right.

Neither was the fact that MJ seemed to be awfully close to

Hoodie Dude. She said it was nothing, that she was just creeping on her boyfriend, but Chanti thought it was more than that. And if there was trouble, it could jeopardize MJ's parole.

But watching her friend's back wasn't the only drama in Chanti's life. It seemed, for instance, that her ex-boyfriend Marcus was always nearby, and he was too tempting. Plus, there was the stress of keeping her mother's job under wraps. It wouldn't do for everybody to know that Lana was an undercover cop.

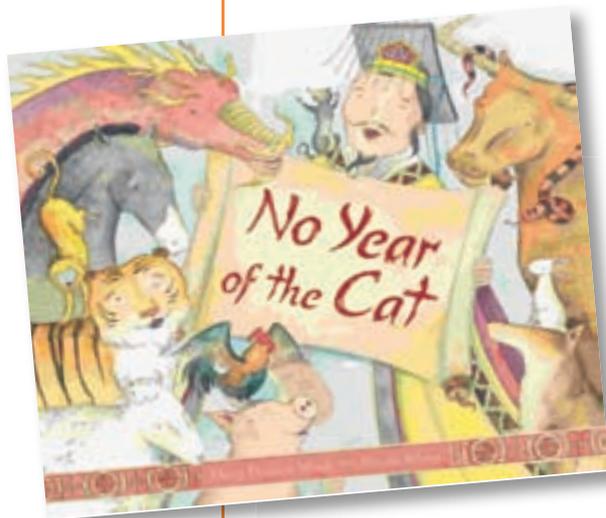
Reid's main character, Chanti, is like Nancy Drew in the 'hood: same savvy sleuthing, but with the bite of modern realism and a good amount of humor. There's keen danger depicted here, but no profanity. Teen gumshoes will find a fun, not-so-easily-solved, mystery without the



hard-core violence. That makes this a perfect whodunit for readers ages 12 to 17.

This book is part of a series, so you'll probably be happier if you get up-to-speed by grabbing one of the earlier installments first. Once you do, then "Sweet 16 to Life" is a great book to have your nose in.

"Sweet 16 to Life" by Kimberly Reid [256 pages, 2013, \$9.95].



Learn about animals of the Chinese New Year

named for them."

On the big day, all the animals gathered on the shores of the river. Cat and Rat were there, and they were scheming. They decided to ask Ox to carry them across on his wide, strong back.

Ox agreed, and Cat and Rat scrambled up. They all plunged into the river and Ox began to swim hard and fast. He was way ahead of all the other animals, so when he stumbled up on the other side of the water, the emperor declared that Rat was first and Ox was second.

Tiger arrived with a droopy tail. Rabbit took the easy way across. Dragon stopped to help some farmers, so he was fifth. Snake slithered in, then Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, and Dog. Pig trotted up and took last place, telling the emperor that he was late because he was hungry.

The emperor smiled. His empire now had a way to remember the years (especially the auspicious ones!). All the animals were very happy — except for Cat. She had totally missed being counted. Where

had she been all that time?

Kids will giggle when they find out the answer and what happens, because "No Year of the Cat" is a very likeable book. Author Wade offers children an explanation for the 12-animal cycle in the Chinese calendar and why those specific animals were chosen, basing her story loosely on an ancient traditional Chinese folktale that's familiar in the Chinese culture.

I loved the different personalities that each animal gets here, and I loved the way the story is woven in with Wong's Asian-inspired illustrations. I think that if your 3- to 6 year old enjoys a good animal story (and what kid doesn't?), or if he loves folktales, this is a book to grab. "No Year of the Cat" is one you'll be reading aloud all year round.

"No Year of the Cat" by Mary Dodson Wade and Nicole Wong [32 pages, 2013, \$16.95].

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.



LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

Giving teens that leadership quality

Have you ever asked your teen the age-old question, “If your friends were jumping off a bridge, would you?” You may have been exasperated with your teen blindly following a friend straight into a troublesome situation. Perhaps he dared to take the car out past curfew because a friend called and begged to be picked up for a party. Maybe your teenage daughter decided to start dressing like a group of friends whose school garb looks like it belongs on a beach.

Teens follow the crowd because

teens can seek in both the school setting and their larger communities, such as team captain, class president, or scout leader. These types of positions give teens hands-on experience in leadership.

Kuczarski advises that teens learn their leadership style in order to become an effective leader. They also need to develop their best qualities and use them. If a teen is adept at organization, she might develop a list of specific tasks for officers in student government to increase efficiency, for instance. Kuczarski explains that teens should also understand the needs of the group they are leading and discern which individuals are best suited for various assignments based on their strengths.

Six qualities of a successful leader:

- Honesty
- Respect for others and their opinions
- Superb communication skills
- Decisiveness
- Courage
- Confidence

Can parents ‘raise’ a leader?

Carole Lieberman, MD, a psychiatrist on the Clinical Faculty of University of California, Los Angeles’s Neuropsychiatric Institute, believes that parents can encourage leadership qualities in their teens.

“Go to the movies with your teens that tell stories about teen or young adult heroism, not through violence, but through using their intelligence, creativity, and courage.” She also recommends that parents encourage hobbies and sports in which teens can feel proud of their accomplishments and start to teach others what they’ve learned.

Kuczarski agrees.

“Extracurricular activities are ideal places for teens to explore and practice what it means to be a group leader.” She reports that these activities nurture social learning and can

provide a balance to an academically focused schedule. In addition, group activities help teens learn how to be leaders by providing a set of tangible responsibilities and deadlines.

“You will be amazed at their rapid rate of growth and maturation,” she says.

Parents can also encourage a positive self esteem by showing pride in their teens’ accomplishments.

“Praise with a new level of enthusiasm,” instructs Kuczarski.

Matthew Smith, owner and director of Longacre Leadership, a summer leadership camp for teens in Newport, Pa., urges parents to give their teens freedom and responsibility.

“Kids should be given responsibility well before adolescence. This builds work ethic and self-confidence. If parents want to encourage leadership qualities in their teens, they must build their teen’s self-confidence.”

If parents nurture self-esteem and confidence while providing opportunities to lead in social situations, their teens will develop invaluable life skills and learn to believe in themselves.

Tips and tales

“If you encourage your child to believe in her own ideas and make her feel good about herself, she will be less likely to be a follower.” — Robert Babcock, Hyde Park, NY

“If they want to lead, they must learn to serve others.” — John Kelle, Earlville, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic: How to help your teen cope with the death of a friend.

Please send your full name, address, and brief comments to myrnahaskell@gmail.com, or visit www.myrnahaskell.com.

Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer, columnist and author of “Lions, Tigers and Teens: Expert advice and support for the conscientious parent just like you” (Unlimited Publishing LLC, 2012). For details: www.myrnahaskell.com. Also available at: Amazon.com.



they want to be accepted, but parents want their teens to make good choices and avoid succumbing to peer pressure. It takes a teen with an exceptionally strong personality — a leader — to oppose a peer group and have faith in his individual ideas and values.

Becoming a leader

Is leadership learned or an inherent part of someone’s personality?

“Leadership is learned behavior,” says Susan Kuczarski, EdD, author of “The Sacred Flight of the Teenager: A Parent’s Guide to Stepping Back and Letting Go.”

“It is developed through experience. The most effective way of learning leadership is through doing.”

There are many leadership roles



ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,
ESQ.

Ensuring my kids will be protected

I want to make sure that someone is appointed as the guardian of my minor children if both me and the child's mother pass away. How can I ensure that my kids will be protected?

Many of my clients are new (and not so new) parents who want to ensure their minor children are cared for in the event that both parents die. It is every parent's right, but also their responsibility, to take care of this issue and to express their wishes in legal writing. There are two circumstances to consider: what would happen to the care and raising of minor children if both parents were to die, and what would happen if both parents become disabled while the children are minors. This is critical for single parents, and stepparents or non-biological parents who live with but have not adopted the child.

The procedure to name a guardian for minor children is to nominate an individual or individuals in your will to take legal custody of your child. This can, but does not need to, be

the same individual as the minor's trustee, who will oversee the management of any finances left to the minor child.

A guardian nomination is just that — a suggestion to the court that, in most cases, will be upheld if the individual qualifies as a fiduciary, meaning a person in a position of trust. In the State of New York, a person is not eligible to be a fiduciary if he is a "non-domiciliary alien [...] except [...] one who shall serve with one or more co-fiduciaries, at least one of whom is resident in this state," S.C.P.A. 707. That said, the court may still appoint a non-domiciliary alien or a New York resident as a fiduciary in its discretion. An individual who is mentally incompetent, a felon, or who otherwise "does not possess the qualifications required of a fiduciary by reason of substance abuse, dishonesty, improvidence, want of understanding, or who is otherwise unfit for the execution of the office," is also unfit to serve as a fiduciary, as is anyone else who is ineligible in the court's discretion. The court may also declare as ineligible to act as a fiduciary "a person unable to read and write the English language."

What does this mean? For international clients, it means that while they should nominate the guardian of their choice based on substance (i.e., their true qualifications to provide the best care for their children). The choice is a mere nomination and is subject to the judge's approval and order of who will raise a child and have legal custody. Second, for the many expatriates living in New York City, it means that extra care must be taken to communicate to the court why the appointment of a non-domiciliary individual as guardian is in the best interest of your minor children. These specifics can be spelled out in the will itself or in a separate writing that

should be properly executed.

The other thing to consider is that many non-U.S. citizen parents reside in the U.S. with no real intention to leave, but are insistent that their children be raised in their home country. The thing they fail to consider is that a child who is raised in the U.S. her entire life may not want to leave the U.S. when she is older, because her entire life is based here. It is a very different situation when the child is an infant or toddler and could easily adjust. If a parent wants the child to be repatriated to the home country, the child's citizenship may be a factor bearing on the judge's decision. If the parent applied for or obtained dual-citizenship from the home country for the child, this may be deemed evidence by the judge of the parents' intent for their child to keep a connection to the parents' country of origin. It has the added impact of providing a basis for which the guardian in the home country can request assistance from his own state department or diplomatic agency to repatriate the child. In the absence of dual citizenship, the home country's state department lacks standing to assist. This, together with basic border-control issues, poses an obstruction to relocating a child to another country either temporarily, pending the proceeding, or permanently.

In short, international clients with minor children living in the U.S. must pay particular attention to making clear in the will who will raise their child and where.

Alison Arden Besunder is the founding attorney of Arden Besunder P.C., where she assists new and not-so-new parents with their estate planning needs. Her firm assists clients in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties. You can find Besunder on Twitter @estatetrustplan and on her website at www.besunderlaw.com.



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GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

Your family's privacy

Privacy is a value that develops over time. Anyone who has toilet trained a child understands this truth. At first, kids actually want witnesses — look what I did! Then they decide they'd rather have the door closed on certain occasions. And, at some point, they are likely to be outraged if anyone knocks on the door during a marathon grooming session.

This progression is worth remembering when parents think about protecting online privacy online. Young people are likely to be impulsive, willing to trade away information about themselves for quick access to a game, a product, or a social network. The assumption that you get to decide who knows what about you

other content are vulnerable to this kind of manipulation. So are tweens and teens who may be capable of thinking about these distinctions but often don't.

New rules from the FTC may do a better job of protecting children under 13 — Common Sense Media has started a petition in support of the new rules at <http://tinyurl.com/8j7dyod>. In the meantime, parents need to become familiar with strategies they can use right now to protect online privacy.

Track the trackers. The problem with big data isn't simply that information is being collected. Without effort on your part, you won't know who's gathering it or what they plan to do with it. To get a glimpse into what's happening behind the scenes, consider a program called Do Not Track (available at albine.com). They do not collect anything except what they need to make the program work. In return, you get a little icon that sits at the top right corner of your browser. When you visit a website, the icon tells you which social networks, ad networks and companies are tracking your visit.

Diversify. In Europe, tough laws require companies to get explicit consent before collecting data and to delete information at a customer's request. In this country, consumers have to protect themselves with guerilla tactics. Opt out of data collection and sharing whenever you can. And avoid using the same company for search, e-mail, and social networking. Companies may claim that cross-referencing your data is for your benefit because it customizes your online experience. The reality is that it also creates bulging files of information about purchases, searches, and communication that may find their way into the hands of insurers or even law enforcement.

Don't be misled by privacy policies. Most experts on privacy tell you to read a website's privacy policy before clicking "agree". This is good advice only if you have an advanced law degree! Also, don't be reassured by a statement like, "We will not share information about you." Such statements are often followed by a lengthy list of exceptions that

are anything but transparent.

Browse wisely. All major web browsers include a "private browsing" option. When go into this mode, your computer rejects cookies and doesn't keep a history of what you've done. (Parents may not want to share this option with younger kids because it deletes the cache and history files, so you can't see what websites your child has visited.) For details about how private browsing works in Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox and Safari, visit <http://tinyurl.com/cycfpee>.

Keep an Eye on Facebook. Privacy on social networks is tricky because, of course, the whole point is sharing information. SecureMe (www.secureme.com) is a tool that helps you become more deliberate about what you (and your children) decide to disclose by monitoring posts and photos that show up on your wall and in your network. Even more important, the program monitors how apps are handling and managing data, and it flags apps that aren't trustworthy.

Look for Privacy Icons. In response to the prospect of FTC regulation, an industry group called the Association for Competitive Technology is encouraging app developers to use a simple set of icons that give parents at-a-glance information about whether an app is suitable for children. Developed with the help of Lorraine Akemann of Moms with Apps, the App Privacy Icons answer several key questions: Does the app include ads? Does it interface with social media? For more information, visit aptrustproject.com.

Ideas about privacy are evolving and the next generation will have different standards about what should and shouldn't be shared. Parents who implement safeguards help preserve choices so that, when children start thinking seriously about protecting privacy, there will be something left to protect.

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

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is very much at risk in the era of big data. Recently, the way companies compile and sell dossiers based on how people interact with websites has attracted government scrutiny. The FTC in particular has become concerned about how websites track children as they wander around online. COPPA, a law passed in 1998, requires websites to get parental permission before children under 13 fill out forms including personal data like name or address, but it doesn't begin to address the subterranean information websites routinely collect. Data about where a child clicks and how long they linger on a site is often used to determine what ads will pop up as the child browses. Young children who can't easily distinguish between advertising and



Can we talk?

Six reasons you should get your tween a cellphone

BY PAM MOLNAR

When my oldest daughter was in fifth grade, she started asking about cellphones. Evidently, some of her friends had recently acquired a cellphone of their own.

My first reaction was to assume

that their parents were crazy and were simply giving in to the wants of a spoiled tween. Why did a fifth-grader need a cellphone?

According to a report for the National Consumer League, conducted by Opinion Research Corporation International in 2012, nearly six out of 10 parents of tweens (ages 8 to 12) got

cellphones for their children. Thankfully, the majority of the parents did not take their decision lightly. The report showed that parents take the steps to phone ownership slowly by reading articles, talking with other parents, and comparing cellular service before taking the plunge. The result was a better understanding of

It is a comfort to a parent to know that she can call her children to see if they arrived safely, or to tell them of a change of plans to pick them up.

the benefits of buying a cellphone for their tween.

• **Peace of mind.** The most obvious reason to get a cellphone for your tween is the security of being able to reach her when she is not at home. Many middle-school kids take a bus to school for the first time and prefer to walk to the bus stop alone. As your children get older, their activity level increases, taking them away from home more often. It is a comfort to a parent to know that she can call her children to see if they arrived safely, or to tell them of a change of plans to pick them up.

• **Comfort for your child.** It is reassuring for parents to be able to reach their children, but the kids also feel more secure. Your tween is trying to spread her wings and gain a little independence, but she still finds comfort in the fact that her parents are a phone call away. When my son — my youngest child — got a phone, he felt better knowing that if he didn't see me the moment practice got out, he could call to see if I was on my way. He could also call to ask for permission to go home with a friend after school, knowing I would worry if I didn't see him by 3:45 pm.

• **A way to communicate with friends.** A cellphone is very handy to use as a phone, but most of the communication from your child's phone will be in the form of texting.

"We got our son a cellphone for safety reasons first, but also because using technology to communicate, learn, and play has become the way of the world," explains Tamara Ortegel, a mother of three.

Unlike our generation, our children don't have to wait in line to use the kitchen phone to get the math assignment from a friend. Your tweens can simply send their friends a text. As a parent, you can monitor who they are texting by sporadically checking the old mes-

sages, or when the phone is left in the charger at night.

• **Teaches responsibility.** Having a cellphone gives your tween the chance to try a little responsibility. Letting your child out the door with her cellphone does not guarantee that it will come back in working condition, or at all. Tell your tween that she get one phone and she has to take care of it. My oldest child is notorious for losing and breaking her phone, but I refuse to carry insurance on it. Her punishment for irresponsibility was to use grandma's old phone with the antenna and no key board.

• **Strengthen relationships with family.** One of the benefits that you may not expect is better communication with the extended family. Lisa Yore, a mother of four, believes her son has become more connected to family members.

"My son has the phone numbers of aunts, uncles, and his grandmother. They have had conversations and told him that if he ever needs to talk or needs anything, he shouldn't hesitate to call them."

Getting a simple, "Good luck at your game" text from Grandma tells the kids that she is thinking of them.

• **Save money.** With the addition of cellphones in your house, your landline will become obsolete.

"We got Jack a phone because we switched our TV and internet provider and got rid of the land line because no one used it except him," explains Stacy Bella, a mother of four. "His sisters all had cellphones and it was cheaper to do that than it was to keep the land line."

With the addition of each new cellphone in the house, the few calls that come into your home phone are telemarketers. To balance the increasing cellphone bill, many eliminate their landline completely.

As the parent, it is up to you to set the rules regarding limits and expectations. Teach your tween about the responsibility that goes with owning a phone, and explain the repercussions for losing or damaging it. Above all, remind your tween that having a phone is not a right, it is a privilege.

Pam Molnar is a freelance writer and mother of busy a teenager and two active tweens. Their activities often keep them away from home, but it is a comfort to all to know that they are only a phone call (or text) away.



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A TEEN'S TAKE

AGLAIA HO

A good night's sleep

A teacher walks into his first-period class to find his students slouching over their desks. Some have their faces buried in their arms. Others fight to keep their eyelids from fluttering shut. Even the low rumble of snores is augmented by the otherwise silence of the room. It is just another typical day at high school.

Most high school students today do not get enough sleep. A typical day can start as early as 6 am and end well after midnight. Rising expectations and increased competition at school has caused students to forgo sleep in order to juggle their heavy workload and extracurricular activities. Excelling in school does not mean just merely passing, it also means acing the most challenging courses. Students are now expected to have not one or

two extracurricular activities, but a wide variety of music, sports, community service, and leadership positions. Additionally, more students are attending school in a borough other than the one in which they live. The commute to and from school is often time-consuming and draining.

Lack of sleep for teenagers is a major concern. Sleep deprivation will not only harm a student's health and well-being, but it can also be dangerous and counterproductive. With less sleep, students may be without a clear mind, and may be less active in class. A lot of my friends

catch up on sleep in class, rather than paying attention to the teacher.

As a student, I see the symptoms and effects on a daily basis. I have even experienced the consequences at times. As with most high school students, I have a busy schedule inside and outside of school. Yet, for the most part, I have fortunately been able to avoid sleep deprivation during my high school years. Knowing my limitations, smart planning, time-management skills, and setting priorities have been my guide to getting enough sleep.

How much sleep do you need?

For me, it was important to know my own limitations and needs. Find out how much sleep you need and how you function with little sleep. Some students need more sleep than others. I need at least seven hours each night. Knowing your boundaries is important to getting sufficient sleep and also learning how to cope when you don't. Without sufficient sleep, I am literally a zombie, roaming the school hallways half lost. I can trip over my own feet and even go to the wrong classes! I rarely do well on a math test without enough sleep. I'm also prone to headaches and usually feel lightheaded. Knowing about how much sleep I need has allowed me to plan ahead and avoid these unwanted effects.

Planning ahead

Most students stay up late finishing last-minute projects, studying for exams, and doing homework. This is a lot for one night. It is no wonder why many high school students do not get enough sleep. Spreading out your workload and learning how to better manage your time can help you complete your work and get enough rest.

Scheduling and organization are extremely important. When I have a lot of work and a very limited time, I need to visualize my workload. I write down all my assignments on a calendar, sometimes color-coding deadlines, exams, and special events. This helps me to get my bearings. A checklist is also helpful and reminds me of my status.

Once you have figured out all your work, try to plan ahead. I like to get a head start on projects and studying for exams. Avoid procrastination! Starting early on a project will allow you to work at your own pace without having to rush. Studying ahead of time, even just a little bit each day, actually helps to reinforce the information and saves you from cramming the night before.

Setting priorities and avoiding temptations

High school students often get distracted easily. They can spend

hours talking to friends, watching YouTube videos, playing online games, or wasting time on Facebook. This often contributes to why many students do not get enough sleep during the school year. Prioritizing your activities and needs is important.

Sleep should always be a priority. Maintain a focus on schoolwork and put off whatever social networking and games until the weekend or until you have more time.

Dealing with lack of sleep

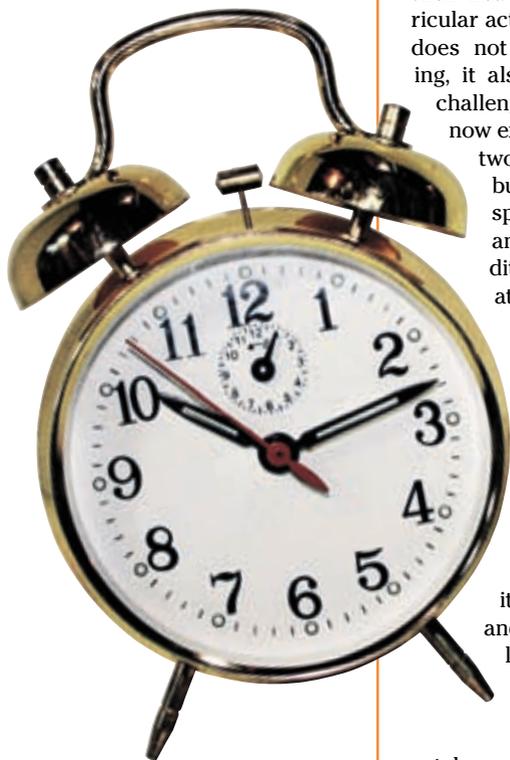
No matter how hard we try, once in a while, we will find ourselves up late finishing work. Sometimes our schedules fail or we underestimate everything we need to do. How can we deal with the occasional lack of sleep?

Stimulants like caffeine can be tempting. A cup of coffee can definitely keep you awake. However, I would suggest avoiding caffeine, sugar, and energy drinks, if possible. It is easy to become addicted. Many of my friends come to school with coffee every day. One boy even takes caffeine pills in order to stay awake in school. These provide a temporary burst of energy, but withdrawal and after effects are usually more devastating than helpful.

When I'm tired, I try not to think about how tired I am. I focus on my day and what I need to achieve. I distract myself by answering questions in class and taking a lot of notes. At home, I sing or play the piano in order to give myself a natural high. If I have time, I might sneak a in a power nap after school. It is invigorating and allows me to finish my day comfortably and faster.

Today's city culture revolves around the lack of sleep. Students are not the only ones who deal with sleep deprivation. In a fast-paced world, adults seem to put all their work before sleep. It is a problem that we really need to change.

Aglaia Ho is a 17-year-old student from Queens who enjoys writing. Her work has been published in Creative Kids, Skipping Stones, Daily News/Children's Pressline, and The State of the Wild.





DEATH BY CHILDREN

CHRIS GARLINGTON

Sick notes that can cure any sickness

My son misses school a lot. Or, he did, until I discovered the awesome power of sick notes.

Now, he won't stay home even if he's bleeding and on fire. He'd rather expire in the nurse's office than have to turn in one of these:

"To whom it may concern, Please excuse Connor for his absence Nov. 1, as he was working on his port de bras. Allow him extra time between classes as he will be practicing his battement fondu. Also, do you sell tutus in school colors? Go Tigers! Entrechat!"

"To whom it may concern, Please excuse Connor's absence Oct. 9; Connor was severely ill after eating a significant volume of library paste."

"To whom it may concern, Connor was absent Sept. 14 after receiving multiple needle gun wounds in Halo 3. He respawned later in the day, alas, too late to make it to school on time."

"To whom yadda yadda yadda, Connor was late today because he was trapped in the shower by a spider. I urge caution when approaching him, he's kind of jumpy."

"People, listen: Connor was late Tuesday because we couldn't find a McDonald's that had cinnamon buns. We went to four different drive-thrus. Also, we ran out of gas."

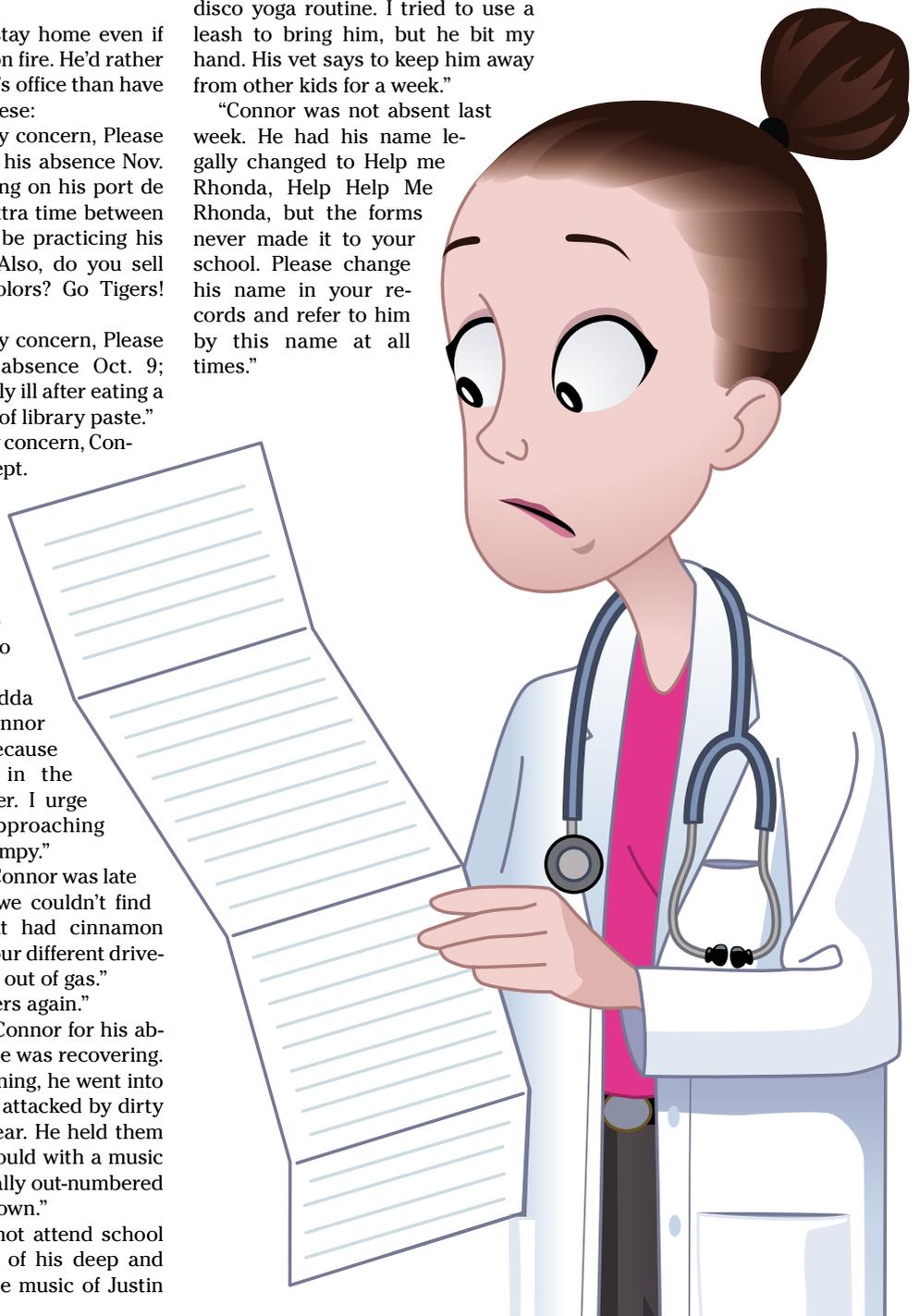
"To whom, spiders again."

"Please excuse Connor for his absence Monday as he was recovering. Early Monday morning, he went into his closet and was attacked by dirty jeans and underwear. He held them off as long as he could with a music stand, but they finally out-numbered him and he went down."

"Connor could not attend school Thursday because of his deep and abiding love for the music of Justin Bieber."

"Connor was late Monday after getting stuck in the 'Downward Facing Dog' pose during his morning disco yoga routine. I tried to use a leash to bring him, but he bit my hand. His vet says to keep him away from other kids for a week."

"Connor was not absent last week. He had his name legally changed to Help me Rhonda, Help Help Me Rhonda, but the forms never made it to your school. Please change his name in your records and refer to him by this name at all times."



Calendar

MARCH



Courtesy Theatre by the Bay

Follow the Yellow Brick Road — to Bay Terrace

Shine up those ruby-red slippers because the Wizard of Oz is coming to Bay Terrace Jewish Center on March 2, 9, and 16.

Theatre by the Bay players travel the Yellowbrick Road to find the Wizard in this Muni version based upon the books of L. Frank Baum. The score is from the classic big-screen movie, starring Judy Garland as Dorothy. Dorothy and her pooch Toto find themselves transported to Munchkin Land on the winds of a Kansas twister. In order to find their way back home, they need to visit the Wizard. Along

the way, they meet crowd-pleasers the Tin Man, Scarecrow, and the Cowardly Lion!

Children and adults will find themselves cheering Dorothy and crew as they fight their way through the enchanted forest, taking on flying monkeys and the wicked witch.

Performances are at 3 pm, and tickers are \$20 for adults, and \$18 for seniors and children under 12. Visit the website for reservations.

Bay Terrace Jewish Center [13-00 209th St. in Bayside, (718) 428-6363; www.theatrebythebayny.com].

Calendar

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!

MON, FEB. 25

Craft club: Broadway Library, 40-20 Broadway; (718) 721-2462; www.queenslibrary.org; 12:30 pm; Free.

Teens and tweens meet and learn how to make fun projects. Materials supplied.

TUES, FEB. 26

"Sleeping Beauty Dreams": Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 10 am and noon; \$5 with museum admission (\$10 theater only).

Mexico's Marionetas de la Esquina Family Puppet Theatre performs the classic fairytale. For children 3 years old and up.

Explorer workshop: Queens Museum of Art, New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; (718) 592-9700; www.queensmuseum.org; 11 am-noon; Free with museum admission.

For families affected by autism, explore the museum and register for afternoons of art, crafts and making connections.

WED, FEB. 27

"Sleeping Beauty Dreams": 10:30 am and 12:30 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Tuesday, Feb. 26.

Online test prep: Long Island City Public Library, 37-44 21 St. at 43rd Avenue; www.queenslibrary.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Teens get helpful hints on strategies to pass city wide tests.

THURS, FEB. 28

"Sleeping Beauty Dreams": 10:30 am and 12:30 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Tuesday, Feb. 26.

Girls workshop: Rosedale Public Library, 144-20 243rd St. at 145th Avenue; (718) 723-4440; www.queenslibrary.org; 3:45 pm; Free.



Easter egg hunt

Hop right to it and get yourself to the Barnyard Easter Egg Hunt at the Queens County Farm Museum on March 30.

Whiskers, the resident Easter Bunny, sets toes tapping by jumping around in a rousing rendition of the Bunny Hop — and of course, he'll pose for pictures while leading kids in egg-toss and egg-rolling games on the lush lawn of the orchard.

Teen girls 11 to 19 years old talk about major distractions that face girls today and how to prevent them from interfering with life goals.

FRI, MARCH 1

"Wreck-It Ralph" in 3D: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 5 pm; \$9

Families can also take a hayride and visit the farm animals just waking up for spring. Don't forget your camera for all those Kodak moments.

Barnyard Easter Egg Hunt on Mar. 30, from noon to 4 pm. Admission is \$5 per person (free with Membership Plus).

Queens County Farm Museum [73-50 Little Neck Pkwy. in Floral Park, (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org].

(\$7 children, seniors and students; \$5 members).

From Walt Disney comes the arcade game-hopping journey in 3D. Wreck-It Ralph longs to be as beloved as his games' good guy Fix-It Felix, but nobody ever loves the bad guy.

SAT, MARCH 2

Garden Open House: Queens Bo-

tanical Garden, 43-50 Main St.; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 10 am-noon; Free.

Get your green thumb on! The second season of Intergenerational Garden is opening. Learn about the program, walk through the facility, and meet coordinator Maureen Regan. Plots are suited to motivated gardeners and require fees for supplies and maintenance. The Garden is open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 9 am to noon through the spring, summer and fall, and open to all ages.

National girls day: Al Oerter Recreation Center, 131-40 Fowler Ave.; www.wnycgovparks.org; 11 am-3 pm; Free.

Celebrate women in sports in this annual event. The day long event allows girls and women to enjoy athletic and health and fitness demos.

Explorer workshop: 11 am-noon. Queens Museum of Art. See Tuesday, Feb. 26.

Read Across America: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; Noon-4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Join in with fellow readers and celebrate the birthday of Dr. Seuss. Have fun making creative crafts and activities.

Historic New York: Unisphere, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Urban Park Rangers lead a workshop on Ice-age glaciers, Native Americans and Dutch traders.

"The Wizard of Oz": Bay Terrace Jewish Center, 13-00 209th St.; (718) 428-6363; www.theatrebythebayny.com; 3 pm; \$20 (\$18 seniors and children).

The classic children's favorite will be performed by local residents in this production presented by Theatre by the Bay production. Reservations required.

Family Day: Far Rockaway Public Library, 1637 Central Ave. at Mott Avenue; (718) 327-2549; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Enjoy the library and have loads of fun.

SUN, MARCH 3

Lunar New Year Print: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 1 pm; \$10 (\$8 members and children).

The workshop allows hands-on experience and teaches the beauty of prints and understanding Chinese culture.

Lantern making: Flushing Town

Continued on page 42

Calendar

Continued from page 41

Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtowhall.org; 5 pm; \$10 (\$8 members and children).

Learn how to make a beautiful lotus lantern. All materials provided.

The night sky: Fort Totten Visitor's Center, Ordinance Rd. at Shore Road; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 7 pm; Free.

Learn about the history and folklore of the solar system and use the naked eye to locate the stars above.

MON, MARCH 4

Teen zone: Queens Village Public Library, 94-11 217 St. at 94th Avenue; (718) 776-6800; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Use a laptop, make friends and just hang out.

WED, MARCH 6

Rubik's Cube: Queens Village Public Library, 94-11 217 St. at 94th Avenue; (718) 776-6800; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Do you like puzzles? Then join in and help solve the Rubik's cube. Pre-registration required.

Talent show: Lefrak Public Library, 98-30 57th Ave. at Junction Boulevard; (718) 592-7677; www.queenslibrary.org; 5 pm; Free.

If you are between the ages of 5 and 18 and have talent, come on down and audition. Winners of the audition will compete again on March 8 and then go on to the borough wide-competition. Winners will be invited to perform at Lefrak's monthly program, Cultural Breakout.

FRI, MARCH 8

Chapter book club: Howard Beach Public Library, 92-06 156th Ave.; (718) 641-7086; 4 pm; Free.

If you are a middle or high school student who loves to listen to stories, come and listen to chapter books. The first selection is "The Graveyard Book" by Neil Gaiman.

"Wreck-It Ralph" in 3D: 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Friday, March 1.

SAT, MARCH 9

Wilderness workshop: Alley Pond Park Adventure Center, Alley Pond Park; (718) 217-6034; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 11 am; Free.

The program features hands-on activities in an outdoor setting and teaches participants how to be prepared. Dress appropriately.

History fun and games: King



Photo by Shari Romar

Spring at Queens Botanical Garden

Yippee! It's back, the HSBC Children's Garden Family Day has arrived, and it's just in time for spring on March 9 at the Queens Botanical Garden.

Moms, dads and children enjoy a day of giveaway treats, seed plantings, and crafts, in addition to learning all about the exciting New

York City Compost project, and a host of other hands-on activities.

So come on down on March 9 from 2 to 4 pm, and greet spring. The event is free.

Queens Botanical Garden [43-50 Main St. at Elder Avenue in Flushing; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org].

Manor Museum, 150th Street and Jamaica Avenue; (718) 206-0545 X 13; Noon-3 pm; Free.

Tavel back in time and learn all about the games and activities that kept children amused way back when.

Radical Tricks: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1:30 - 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Queens native Rodney Torres shares his skateboard tricks. Demos and a meet and greet with Torres.

Family Day: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 2-4 pm; Free.

Children enjoy giveaway treats, seed plantings and crafts.

"The Wizard of Oz": 3 pm. Bay Terrace Jewish Center. See Saturday, March 2.

"The Wizard of Oz": Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd.; (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Plaza Theatrical Productions presents this sure to please version of the

classic.

SUN, MARCH 10

Orienteering: Bayswater Park, Beach 35th St. and Beach Channel Drive; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Learn how to use a navigation system and a compass and search for hidden prizes.

"Sleeping Beauty": Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtowhall.org; 1 pm; \$6 (\$4; children and members free with tickets).

Interactive workshop with David Gonzalez, games, vocal warm ups and lots of fun.

Snapshots of Queens: Queens Historical Society, 143-35 37th Ave.; (718) 939-0647 X 17; 2:30-4:30 pm; \$5 (\$8 non-members).

Professor Nicholas Hirshon highlights the defining moments of the history of Forest Hills, through snapshots.

TUES, MARCH 12

Special needs seminar: Rosemary Kennedy Center, 2850 N. Jerusalem Rd.; (516) 781-4046; www.nas-sauboces.org/parentseminars; 6:30-8:45 pm; Free.

The Department of Education is offering this seminar to help parents and families of special needs students to plan for their future. Experts will be on hand to answer questions.

WED, MARCH 13

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

Learn movement, gesture and improvisation. Led by lanthe Demos, artistic director of the innovative theater company One Year Lease.

THURS, MARCH 14

Family resource expo: Al Oerter Recreation Center, 131-40 Fowler Ave.; (718) 530-5919; www.nycgovparks.org; 10 am-2 pm; Free.

Families enjoy a day of fitness demos, dance performances, salsa aerobics, health and fitness information and spa treatments. Sponsored by Well Care.

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

If you are between the ages of 11 and 14 years old and you want to act, come and down and try your hand and appear in a live show. Musicians, scenery artists, sound effects and more.

Calendar

FRI, MARCH 15

"Wreck-It Ralph" in 3D: 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Friday, March 1.

SAT, MARCH 16

Girl Scout Stem Day: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10 am to 2 pm; \$20 per person.

See rockets fly 30 feet in the air, learn about the history of space travel, and solve design challenges using everyday materials. Preregistration is required.

New York City Saint Patrick's Day Parade: Fifth Avenue and 44th Street; nycstpatrikspatrol.org; 11 am; Free.

Everyone is Irish at this largest and oldest St. Paddy's parade!

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

Queens native Anson Li is a 19-year-old pop sensation.

"The Wizard of Oz": 3 pm. Bay Terrace Jewish Center. See Saturday, March 2.

Astronomy Safari: Alley Pond Environmental Center, 228-06 Northern Blvd.; (718) 229-4000; 7:30-9:30 pm; \$10 (\$12 non-members; \$7 children 7-12).

Join the center's very own astronomer Mark Freilich for an exciting evening of start gazing.

SUN, MARCH 17

Winter art: Fort Totten Visitor's Center, Ordinance Rd. at Shore Road; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Drawing workshop, suitable for older children. All supplies provided.

"The Wizard of Oz": 3 pm. Bay Terrace Jewish Center. See Saturday, March 2.

MON, MARCH 18

CHADD support group: East Meadow Jewish Center, 1400 Prospect Ave.; (516) 932-0903; www.chadd.net; 7:30-8:30 pm; Free.

Children and adults with attention deficit disorder meet to discuss topical issues.

TUES, MARCH 19

Mosaics: Poppenhusen Public Library, 121-23 14th Avenue; (718) 359-1102; 4 pm; Free.

Tweens and teens make a picture



Associated Press / Chitose Suzuki

'Year of the Snake' workshop

Celebrate the new Chinese New Year in this Lunar New Year Print workshop and Lunar Lantern Workshop at Flushing Town Hall on Mar. 3.

Families learn how to create beautiful lotus lanterns and learn about the history of lunar New Year prints. Hands-on experiences allows participants to ex-

plore the beauty and creativity of Chinese culture.

All materials provided.

Lunar New Year Print and Lunar Lantern Making on Mar. 3 at 1 and 5 pm. Admission is \$10, and \$8 for members and children.

Flushing Town Hall [137-35 Northern Blvd. in Flushing, (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org].

using tiles.

WED, MARCH 20

Free speech unleashed: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Teens learn the meaning of free speech.

Spring Peeper frog walk: Alley Pond Environmental Center, 228-06 Northern Blvd.; (718) 229-4000; 6:30

pm; \$5 (\$7 non-members).

Join with Dr. Aline Euler in searching out and listening to a chorus of the spring peeper frogs.

THURS, MARCH 21

The Untold story of American Superheroes: Al Oerter Recreation Center, 131-40 Fowler Ave.; (718) 530-5919; www.nycgovparks.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

View the film "Wonder Woman,"

and then learn the evolution of comic book heroes.

FRI, MARCH 22

"Wreck-It Ralph" in 3D: 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Friday, March 1.

SAT, MARCH 23

March for the Earth: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 10 am-1 pm; Free.

Celebrate the vernal equinox and help out at the gardens, followed by a march to the Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Unisphere.

Explorer workshop: 11 am-noon. Queens Museum of Art. See Tuesday, Feb. 26.

Skate day: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Noon to 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Design your own skateboard, experiment with ramps and learn about the basics.

The history of Fort Totten: Fort Totten Visitor's Center, Ordinance Road at Shore Road; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Learn all about the fort from Urban Park Rangers.

EGGstravaganza: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 224-5800; www.limc.org; 6-9 pm; \$12.

Hop on over for a special night. Meet Peter Cottontail, explore traditional Ukrainian egg decorating, create bunny ears and other craft stuff. Enjoy face painting and egg relay games, plus a visit from performers from the National Circus Project.

SUN, MARCH 24

Scavenger Hunt: Kissena Park, Rose and Oak avenues; (718) 846-2713; www.nycgovparks.org; 10 am - 2 pm; Free.

Join with the Urban Park Rangers and search for clues.

Tree House Shakers: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 1 pm; \$12 (\$10 members; \$8 children; \$6 children members).

An introduction of theater to the youngest audiences; life on the farm with chicks, roosters, and dancing chicks. Told through puppets, dance and music.

Continued on page 44

Calendar

Continued from page 43

MON, MARCH 25

Bubblemania: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 11 am–2 pm; Small fee with museum admission.

Science and art with Casey Carle.

Build a straw bridge: Queens Village Public Library, 94-11 217 St. at 94th Avenue; (718) 776-6800; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens create spans using straws and learn about engineering.

TUES, MARCH 26

Art workshop: Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Dr. at Northern Blvd. Rt. 25A; (516) 484-9337; www.nassaumuseum.org; 11 am–2 pm; \$8 materials fee plus museum admission.

Enliven the spring break week with an art drop off. Children take tours and then create their own art inspired craft.

Bubblemania: 11 am–2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Monday, March 25.

WED, MARCH 27

Art workshop: 11 am–2 pm. Nassau county Museum of Art. See Tuesday, March 26.

Bubblemania: 11 am–2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Monday, March 25.

THURS, MARCH 28

Art workshop: 11 am–2 pm. Nassau county Museum of Art. See Tuesday, March 26.

Bubblemania: 11 am–2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Monday, March 25.

Origami workshop: Sunnyside Library, 43-06 Greenpoint Ave.; 4 pm; Free.

Learn the ancient art as taught by expert paper folder Karen Wellington.

FRI, MARCH 29

Bubblemania: 11 am–2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Monday, March 25.

Build a roller coaster: Pomonok Public Library, 158-21 Jewel Ave. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 591-4343; www.queenslibrary.org; 2:30 pm; Free.

Try your hand at creating this iconic ride for a marble, but you can only use paper and tape.

Celadon Youth Music ensemble: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200;



Big top revels at Morgan Library

“Itsy Bitsy Big Top” is setting up tents at the Morgan Library and Museum on Mar. 9.

Clowns, acrobats, jugglers, magicians, lions, horses, and elephants all come to life in the ring during this fun, interactive workshop led by educator Lisa Libiki.

After a visit to the exhibit, families build a small circus using a slew of materials, including wire, fabric, and paper — and of course a whole lot of imagination. The

tour and workshop is just right for families with children ages 6 to 12.

“Itsy Bitsy Big Top: Build a Mini Circus,” Mar. 9 from 2 to 4 pm. Admission is \$6 (\$4 for members) and \$2 for children. The workshop is for families with children, with a limit of two adults per family.

The Morgan Library and Museum [225 Madison Ave. between W. 36th and W. 37th streets in Midtown; (212) 685-0008; www.themorgan.org].

www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

The non-profit music group performs.

SAT, MARCH 30

Egg Hunt: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main St.; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 11 am–2 pm; \$5 per child.

Enjoy the first day of Spring and search for Easter Eggs. Bring your own basket to collect the ones you find.

Bubblemania: 11 am–2 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Monday, March 25.

Barnyard Easter Egg Hunt: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy.; (718) 347-3276;

www.queensfarm.org; Noon–4 pm; \$5 (free with Farm Membership Plus).

It's the annual egg hunt in the orchard, and a visit from Whiskers the bunny, who will be dancing the Bunny Hop and playing egg toss on the lawn. You can also take a hayride.

Weather workshop: Fort Totten Visitor's Center, Ordinance Road at Shore Road; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgov-parks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Learn all about clouds.

LONG-RUNNING

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; Suggested

admission \$19, \$10.50 children, \$14.50 seniors and students.

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

The Butterfly Conservatory:

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 – Mon, May 27; Suggested admission \$19, \$10.50 children, \$14.50 seniors and students.

The annual exhibition, “Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter” returns and celebrates its 15th year.

Laptop time: Hollis Public Library, 202-05 Hillside Ave.; (718) 465-7355; www.queenslibrary.org; Mondays – Thursdays, 3 pm, Now – Tues, April 30; Free.

Teens learn how to use a laptop.

Story time: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpke.; (718) 380-7077; Mondays, 7:30 pm, Now – Mon, March 18; Free.

Each week children enjoy a selection from a different author.

The Last Reef: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 11 am–2 pm.; \$6 (\$5 students and seniors) plus museum admission.

Fly across tropical reefs, brush through a cloud of a million jellyfish and visit an alien world where the tiniest creatures live in this 3D theater presentation. Recommended for children 6 years and older.

Sunflowers: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; Tuesdays – Fridays, 2:30–4 pm, Tues, March 5 – Fri, March 22; Free with museum admission.

Children celebrate the life of artist Vincent Van Gogh and use assorted materials to create their own unique arrangements. Great for all ages.

Family Sundays: Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Dr. at Northern Blvd. Rt. 25A; (516) 484-9337; www.nassaumuseum.org; Sunday, March 10, 2:30 pm; Sunday, March 17, 1:30 pm; Sunday, March 24, 1:30 pm; Sunday, March 31, 1:30 pm; Sunday, April 7, 1:30 pm; Sunday, April 14, 1:30 pm; Sunday, April 21, 1:30 pm; Sunday, April 28, 1:30 pm; Sunday, May 5, 1:30 pm; Sunday, May 12, 1:30 pm; Sunday, May 19, 1:30 pm; Sunday, May 26, 1:30 pm; \$10 (\$8 seniors; \$4 students and children; Free for members).

Take a docent led tour and enjoy supervised art activities.

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DEAR
DR. KARYN
DR. KARYN GORDON

Seven tips to give feedback effectively

Dear Dr. Karyn,

Are there some special kinds of tips a parent should use to give feedback well? I've been told by my husband and two kids that I'm not very good at it! Help!

Dear Parent,

Great question! The topic of feedback is definitely one of those topics where the tools are exactly the same for parents, young adults, employees, or managers! Feedback done well strengthens relationships and is one of the best ways we can improve personally and professionally, so learning how to give and receive it are essential skills! Below are seven tips below on how to give feedback effectively!

Understand that no one can read your mind

Many people shy away from giving feedback thinking, "they should know this," or, "I shouldn't have to tell them." The reality is that no one can read our minds, so it's our responsibility to tell them our thoughts. Keep in mind that there is no such thing as reality, only perception. So when sharing your feedback, be sure to say "From my perspective," or, "the way I see it." Remember that people will see (and remember) different perspectives.

Pick your timing carefully

When giving feedback, you want to make sure that the receiver will hear it, so to help this, make sure you choose the timing carefully! The best time is when you are relaxed, the receiver is relaxed, and you have the time to discuss it further (employees will often say lunchtime works the best, and parents often say evening is the ideal time).

Be sure to use 'I'

When having the courage to voice your thoughts, be careful with your language and be sure to use "I" (I think, I feel, I value, I need). Using the word "you" will often trigger a



defensive reaction in others, and as a result they won't hear what you are trying to say. The key is that you want to respect yourself by voicing what you really think, while respecting your listener in the process.

Start positive

Before bringing up an issue, be sure to first tell the person what he is doing well (give authentic examples). Some people find this manipulative, sneaky, or "a waste of time" (so I've been told). I find this tip essential for two reasons: First, while we all have areas to work on, there are likely other areas that we are doing well in, so it's more of a full picture to tell a person both sides. Secondly, anyone who has studied human motivation knows that most people are far more motivated to change, and more likely to listen, when they are told first what they are doing well! For this tip to work, though, praise must be given regularly! If people only hear positive encouragement at the time of critical feedback, they will start to resent it.

Be specific about what needs to change

When addressing the criticism, be specific with what needs to be

changed. A lot of people use negative statements, which are very ineffective ("You never clean your room"). Focus on telling the person what you do want, not just what you don't want (it's more clear and it's more positive). For example, "I really need you to tidy your room before you watch TV"

Get to the point

These type of conversations can be difficult (and draining for many) so you want to get to the point as quickly and effectively as you can! Don't beat around the bush or give five examples — stay focused!

Ask for feedback

The most effective types of conversations around feedback are when they are two-way, not one-way. So be sure to give time to ask the receiver his thoughts on what you've said. It allows you to know what he is thinking, strategize possible solutions, and also helps him to clarify what you need from him.

Dr. Karyn Gordon is the best-selling author of "Dr. Karyn's Guide to the Teen Years" (Harper Collins), a relationship and parenting expert, speaker, and founder of dk leadership, www.dkleadership.org. Follow her on Twitter and Facebook.



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