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Letter from the publisher

Parenting teens

It is somehow assumed that parents of very young children largely read our magazines. I dispute that with certainty. I look at the demographic information we get from readers and it tells me otherwise. It tells me that parents of children from 0 to 18 are in the mix and of course, why not? We regularly publish articles and columns on pre-teen and teen issues and being a parent myself, I can tell you first hand that the real parenting questions begin when your 12 year old is straining to be 13.

At just about that time they begin to ignore you in every way they can and the mad rebellion begins. Their friends begin to take on more credibility than you do and peer influ-



ence seems to take over. Then there are the marketing folks and the digital reality that programs them to shop and buy and run in a pack with their friends toward every new trend that hits the street for their age group.

Having a teen is much harder than having a 2 year old, even one who's adept at pitching fits. With the 2 year old it will soon be over and they will get in the groove and be your fabulous little kid, but with the 12 year old each passing day brings on more independence from you and from your established order.

The messiness, lack of articulate response, friends whose opinion overrides yours, can be some of the negatives one can experience with

the teen(s) in your family. On the other hand, newfound maturity, a person with valid opinions, the almost grown-up you imagined your newborn would become someday is an amazing thing to behold. In my case from the moment my daughter got taller than me, she stopped seeing me as the elder and our roles often started reversing. In looking down at me, her attitude drastically changed and our battle for control began.

It's very challenging to be a parent. It's particularly challenging to try to be a good competent parent to a teenager. They're on their way out and they know it. Still, our responsibilities go on and we have to steel ourselves with determination to steer the course. They may be tall, but they are not yet truly "grown" and we still need to remain vigilant and keep our ears and eyes open

and be watchful. Boundaries are necessary although they will try our patience over and over as they cross them repeatedly. Consequences then become very important follow-ups. Lessons learned over and over hopefully help to cement character in our youngsters and help prepare them for the big wide world out there.

There are very good articles in this issue. I genuinely hope you read them, even if your family's teen years are way in the future. It's not too early to get prepared. It's a big job.

Thanks for reading!

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
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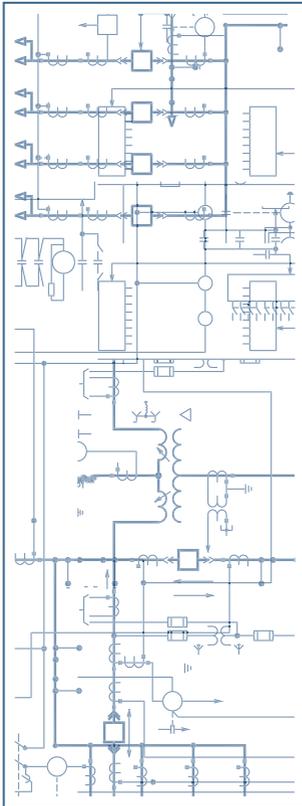
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MESSY

teen rooms

What's hiding behind that door? Experts explain how to cope

BY RISA C. DOHERTY

Moms like me have found themselves sitting on the floor of their child's room picking up every Lego, Transformer piece, or Barbie accessory our youngster failed to place in the proper bin or box. After all, we paid for all of those expensive toys.

Fast forward 10 years and the toys which once covered the floor are replaced with all manner of clothing, footwear, books, papers, wrappers, glasses of old milk, bags of chips, dirty plates, toiletries, food packaging, water bottles, and wet towels: welcome to a teenager's domain.

The struggle

Frustrated parents demand teens neaten up, and teens, promising to comply "later," never seem to get to it. Too often the dialogue digresses into yelling and nagging and more yelling, culminating with a territorial conflict the likes of which has not been seen since the colonies declared their independence.

"This is my house!" the parent asserts, followed by the teen staking a claim of his own to the room itself.

Carl Pickhardt, author of "Surviving Your Child's Adolescence," writes that, to parents, "the messy room can feel like an affront to domestic order, representing a 'disrespect' for the more neatly kept home they value."

Mary, whose son Jack attends the Academy of American Studies in Queens, claims her requests that he clean his room "go in one ear and out the other" until she threatens to call his coach, preventing him from attending a game. She settles for dusting and vacuuming the room once a week.

Linda, parent of a Brooklyn high school teen, is resigned to closing the door to her son's room

"for her own sanity."

Parents like Mary and Maxine, also of Queens, clean up when their teens are not in their bedrooms. The boys temporarily grouse about the trespass, but never offer to help. Yet, there is anger and resentment, because the moms recognize that the boys should be responsible for caring for their own possessions.

Mary says, "if he has time to play video games, he has time to clean his room."

Maxine has come to recognize that her son Peter, a student at Archbishop Molloy High School, always has excuses and something more important to do. She also says that he seems to have "an acute awareness of everything in the room" and points out that even a discarded napkin could contain notes for the start of his first novel. She also says Peter, like many teens today, has too much stuff and runs out of space to stow it.

Peter tells his mother she is a nag for begging, whining, and pleading with him to clean up. She is aggravated by his indifference and says, "it takes effort, as does everything else in life."

What's going on?

Unfortunately, parents have an entirely different perspective than teenagers, who often do not prioritize neatness. Parents see red when teens find time to relax amidst their busy schedules, but can't find time to neaten up, and teens don't understand why cleanup cannot wait indefinitely. At the same time, teens look at their rooms as sanctuaries, where they can unwind and escape other people's rules.

Although a parent may view teens' lack of compliance to tidy up as selfishness, Lori Hiller, a Brooklyn social worker, says teens don't understand why parents care so much about

their rooms. Although they tend to be self-centered, they aren't setting out to upset their parents. "They just feel parents should have nothing to do with it," says Hiller.

So-called "lazy" teens may just be "chronically messy, well-intentioned, and poorly organized," Adele Faber, Long Island co-author of "How to Talk So Teens Will Listen & Listen So Teens Will Talk," tells me.

Pickhardt correlates a neat room with an organized, productive life.

"A room reflects a disorganized internal state: it is an expression of his world."

He tells me the state of a teen's room is not an insignificant issue and is a reflection of who is in control. Young adolescents make a statement of independence by insisting on living according to their own rules, he says, but they need to understand they must live on their parents' terms until they are on their own.

He notes that parents never really have control over their children, they just have an ever-decreasing ability to obtain consent as the child passes through adolescence.

Problems with just shutting the door

Direct consequences can result from constant disarray.

Crunching noises may surprise the parent who enters a teen's inner sanctum unprepared, inadvertently rupturing CDs hidden under layers of clothing.

While Jack struggles to find his bus pass in the morning rush, other teens stress over misplaced car keys or matching shoes. If they are tardy, they can make other family members late for school or work and put everyone in a foul mood at the start of the day.

Pickhardt firmly believes that parents who allow themselves to be barred from their teen's room are giving teens license to experiment with illicit activities. He says closing the door is self-serving and such a laissez-faire attitude sends a strong signal that more serious infractions will not be addressed.

He also does not condone random searches without a strong suspicion that something is very wrong based on uncharacteristic behavior or problems at school. If a parent finds troubling material in the room, it is because the teen left it there for her to find and did not have the courage to ask for help dealing with it, he adds.

He tells me the challenge is to manage our expectations and give our children the tools they need to organize themselves. He says teens feel



as if they are more in control of their world when their rooms are in order.

In extreme cases, a filthy room can actually be unsanitary if mold, bacteria, or fungus begin to grow or if leftover food and dishes attract mice, ants, or cockroaches.

Other common mistakes and real solutions

Hiller doesn't think a parent should clean a teen's room any more than she should be doing a teen's homework or calling his employer.

"Part of teens learning independence is taking care of their things," she says.

She adds that doing it for them will lead them to believe that a parent will always be there to clean up their mess and teach them that they are not responsible for the consequences of their own actions. It is up to the parent to decide how far she wants the conflict to go if the teen refuses, and at some level, the conflict can cause a permanent rift. At the same time, she says direct threats to spur teens to act won't help either.

Neither Faber nor Pickhardt condone yelling or punishing teens for a messy room. Pickhardt warns that, "yelling shows helpless disrespect in not getting their way [which] can

lead to use of intemperate words as weapons," as parents sometimes "shoot from the hip" and threaten unreasonable punishments in anger.

In place of punishment, which he believes should be reserved for serious infractions, Pickhardt suggests "an exchange," where the parent will only agree to do a favor for the teen, like driving her to the mall, in exchange for some cleanup. Pickhardt also says that parents who want that room clean cannot abnegate all responsibility, but need to make an effort to supervise. Even if the parent knows that the room is likely to return to its post-apocalyptic look in a half hour, it will not have been a waste of time, because the teen will see that cleaning up is not an insurmountable task, he says.

Parents who may be too angry should remove themselves from the situation for a short time, says Faber. Sound advice, as parents may be tired, stressed, and short on patience. Pickhardt tells emotional parents to talk to a friend or spouse and otherwise model anger management techniques before they hit a boiling point in front of their teenager.

Faber says parents should figure out some ground rules together with their teen since "cleanup is a constant

factor in all our lives." She suggests that parents empathize with their teens' concerns and organizational challenges before brainstorming together. This helps to avoid repetition of the same old argument and gives teens some ownership of the solution, which might include the addition of new shelves, bookcases, or bins.

When parents stress over the lack of care teens afford their pricier possessions, Faber encourages them to discuss it. For example, if a teen contributed towards the price of hard-worn designer jeans and the parent finds them rolled in a ball under a wet towel, the parent can tell the teen that such a sight discourages her from wanting to participate in similar purchases in the future.

Faber disapproves of nagging and advocates for a creative non-authoritarian approach, with a little humor thrown in, when possible. In contrast, Pickhardt would have parents persevere, even if it is perceived as nagging. He tells me parents' repetition will wear down their teens' resistance.

"Nagging is honorable work," he says, recommending parents gently remind teens about an earlier request and ask again.

If the teen continually refuses to

clean up, Pickhardt advises the parent to put the mess in a large trash bag (or several, as the case may be) and place it by the rubbish. He says that will motivate the teen to awaken from his lethargy and ask about alternatives.

Will they ever reform?

According to Hiller, "there are sloppy people and neater ones — and sloppy ones that clean up ever so often."

Others agree, though Pickhardt regards teens' ability to overcome this problem as an important anchor for adolescent growth and development. So, maybe there is hope.

Fighting with your teen over this each day just causes tension. If you try to deal with this only once a week or at another agreed upon regular interval, the teen is less likely to react negatively.

We all know teens are encountering a more complicated world. Still, in this child-centric age, it would be nice if more teens made an effort to adhere to parents' rules without prodding or creative intervention. A parent can dream, can't she?

Risa C. Doherty is an award-winning writer who survived her children's teen years.

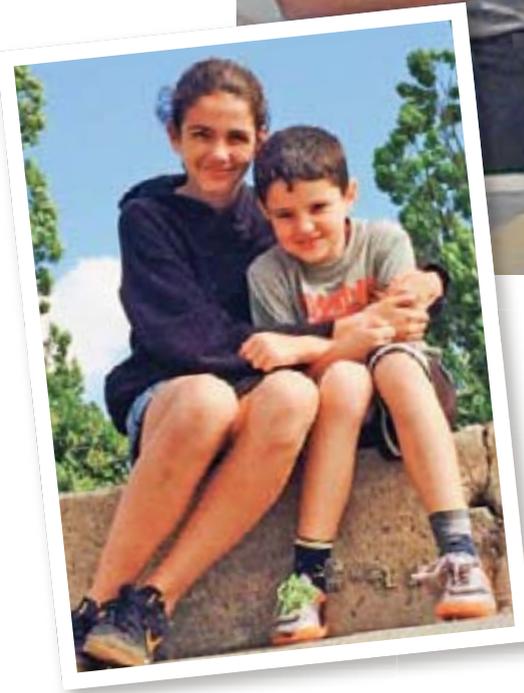
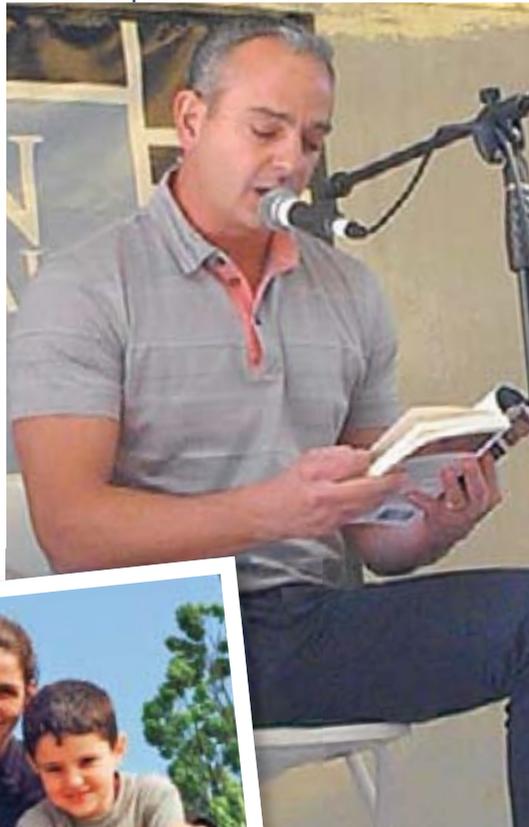
About the author

Andrew Cotto reflects on juggling writing career and family

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

Being a great writer requires tons of imagination and creativity, and the same goes for great parenting.

In this exclusive interview, Brooklyn writer, teacher, and self-proclaimed “silly dad,” Andrew Cotto tells NY Parenting readers about his family life and comical, laid-back parenting style, as well as the two gripping, New York City-based novels he penned while he and wife Pamela were busy raising their children: daughter, Sophia,



Andrew Cotto (above), center, reading from his work at the 2012 Brooklyn Book Festival. (Left) Cotto's children Sophia and Julian.

12, and son, Julian, 8.

Cotto's first novel, “The Domino Effect” is a “Catcher in the Rye”-esque coming-of-age story about the plight of a tough, charismatic kid who grows up by the seat of his pants on Queens streets. It was followed by another book, a sort of urban noir, about a drifter who gets embroiled in a series of weird situations and unexpected twists and turns, titled “Outerborough Blues: A Brooklyn Mystery.” Both tales feel real and gritty, like the neighborhoods they're set in.

Cotto, 46, said he and his wife — an admissions associate at Mary McDowell Friends School in Brooklyn — have “bounced around Brooklyn since 1997, from Downtown to Clinton Hill to Carroll Gardens,” where they have been for the past seven years. He says they like their neighborhood's feeling of community and the easy access to Manhattan.

Tammy Scileppi: When did you first start writing?

Andrew Cotto: I began writing late in life. I discovered a love of literature and a knack for storytelling in college, but I didn't dedicate myself to creating and completing narratives until I was in my mid-30s, and I just knew it was something I needed to do, so I wrote in my spare time until I was convinced my talent was developed enough to give it a go, full-time. I had been working in the entertainment industry and living in New York City since graduating college, and I decided to quit my job and pursue writing, which began formally with a year living in Italy.

TS: How did your year in Italy inspire you?

AC: Living in Italy was a dream for me. So much of what they cherish — the pleasures of company and food and wine — happen to be what I'm passionate about, as well. I'm from an Italian-American background, but I never felt particularly akin to fellow Italians until living there for a year.

I went there with my wife and daughter (who was 18 months at the time), with a novel already in mind to write (“The Domino Effect”), so I wasn't so much inspired narratively, but I was certainly inspired to create among all the beauty. It was like the greatest writer's retreat I could ever imagine.

TS: Tell us about your children.

AC: My daughter is all about dance. She goes to MS 51. My son loves sports. He attends PS 58. Neither of them are so into writing at this point, but I could imagine them picking it up some day, since they both love narratives, especially those of Roald Dahl. We also have a much-loved super-mutt named Ally.

TS: In “The Domino Effect,” you paint a touching and humorous picture of protagonist Danny Rorro's life. The story tugs at the reader's heartstrings as it reveals the damage that can happen when an innocent gets tainted by a family's checkered past and unresolved conflicts, which inevitably spill over and shape an already challenged childhood. So, what's the meaning behind the title?

AC: The book is about a kid from Queens whose nickname is “Domino.” Through social and familial challenges, both at home and at a boarding school, he discovers how one's behavior has an effect on others, like dominoes falling. It's a coming-of-age story, which I've always loved since the subject matter is familiar and vital to anyone who has survived adolescence. It seems to me more of a book for adults than young adults, though I'm happy to have readers of all ages.

TS: What was your family life like growing up?

AC: Until I was 12, we lived in a middle-class neighborhood in northern New Jersey that was full of kids from disparate backgrounds, and we ran wild, on our own, all the time. My kids' lives in Brooklyn are much more orchestrated and supervised, and I think this makes our home life a little difficult, since they tend to still have energy to burn at the end of the day.

On the other hand, my sibling was of the same gender, and much closer in age; he was older and a pretty difficult kid (to put it mildly), so we had many more physical confrontations in our home, which creates its own complications and stress.

We also ended up moving around the country throughout my adolescence, which always makes things interesting, since relocating and being a teen go so well together.

TS: Why has “Outerborough Blues” been described as “Brooklyn noir?”

AC: “Outerborough Blues” is definitely only for adult readers. It is set in Brooklyn, [at] the dawn of gentrification in the '90s. Its protagonist is a young drifter from a broken family of Italian and Irish descent, who settles in a predominantly African-American neighborhood where he finds himself immersed in a mystery. Publishers Weekly wrote that it “reads like Raymond Chandler taking dictation from Walt Whitman,” which exceeded anything I could have possibly imagined in the form of a compliment. If I ever get a tattoo, that would be it — right across my chest.

TS: So, how do you feel about Brooklyn's growing gentrification in areas like Williamsburg and Greenpoint, etc.?

AC: I'm ambivalent about gentrification. It's the dominant theme of “Outerborough Blues,” though I don't attempt any statements about its evil or inevitability, or whatever, though I do think it makes a fascinating subject matter since it generates conflict on so many levels.

TS: What was your dad like growing up and how is your parenting style different from his?

AC: My dad was (and still is) a very supportive father, who provided a terrific model in many ways. He always seemed to be on the right side of things, in a very practical and moral way. He also happens to be the smartest person I've ever known, which is kind of cool and kind of annoying.

I'm not as consistent. I'm on point for the most part, but with my dad, there was a clear expectation as to acceptable behavior, and a clear consequence when those lines were crossed. I tend to be a lot more outrageous with my kids than my father ever was with me. I can be kind of crazy at times, and not overly concerned with appearances, so I end up doing stupid or shameless things that my kids often (not always) find hysterical. I love cracking them up and instilling a sense of silliness in them, but it's also hard to switch hats to “serious dad” since I've, in some ways, undermined myself as an authority figure. It's a tough thing to balance, and often my wife has to get involved in ways which makes her life more difficult.

TS: What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

AC: My spare time is fairly limited since I teach English full-time at LIM College in Manhattan and part-time at St. Francis in Brooklyn Heights.

And then there's all the writing, which is both fiction and journalism. That said, when I do have free time, my favorite thing to do is cook and eat with family and friends. I'm clearly in love with Italian food and wine, so if you're coming to my house, there's a pretty good chance you'll get plenty of both.

TS: What do you do for fun with your family?

AC: My family spends a lot of time in Brooklyn Bridge Park. For me, the perfect family day is a quick train ride to Chinatown for dim sum, followed by a walk home over the Brooklyn Bridge.

TS: What have you been working on lately?

AC: I've been doing a lot more non-fiction writing since “Outerborough Blues,” including regular contributions to the New York Times, which I take great pride in. I did, though, conceptualize and write a few episodes of a Brooklyn-based TV drama called “Kingsborough,” which my agent is shopping now. I'm also about to start a new novel about an American living in Italy for a year, so maybe I can finally draw some autobiography into my work.

TS: What makes a great writer?

AC: Great writers understand a combination of language, storytelling, characters, and insight into the human condition.

TS: How did you meet your wife?

AC: My wife and I lived in the same New Jersey town where I had spent my early childhood. After my family moved away, I'd visit frequently and got to know her through mutual friends. After college, we crossed paths as Manhattanites and ended up in a relationship. We've been married since 1996.

TS: Do parts of your books reflect your own life experiences?

AC: Neither of my books are particularly autobiographical narratively, though there are certainly consistent themes which have been inspired by my experiences and interests: displacement, family strife, the urban experience, acceptance, privilege, class, race, violence, morality, father-son bonds, music, movement, food, friendship.

I think, ultimately, what I'm after in each novel is a sense that, for most people, life is difficult, yet there's great hope and possible satisfaction through perseverance.

Andrew Cotto's books are available on KINDLE or in paperback at Amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com.

District 28 MAGNET Schools



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PS 354 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Magnet Institute of Queens
126-10 Bedell Street, Jamaica, NY 11434
Tuesday, October 7, 2014
10:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. & 5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.
Wednesday, November 19, 2014
10:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. & 5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

PS 160 Walter Francis Bishop Magnet School of the Arts
109-59 Inwood Street, Jamaica, NY 11435
Wednesday, October 15, 2014
9:00 A.M. - 10:00 A.M. & 5:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Wednesday, November 12, 2014
10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. & 6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

PS 80 Thurgood Marshall Magnet School of Multimedia & Communication
171-05 137 Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11434
Tuesday, October 21, 2014
9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. & 4:30 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.
Tuesday, November 18, 2014
9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. & 4:30 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.

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Buying her first bra

Tips for parents and their tweens

BY KELLY O'BRIEN

A girl's first bra is a rite of passage for both her and her parents — and one that's occurring at younger and younger ages. For some girls, it's a turning point fraught with anxiety; for others, it's a celebration. Either way, parents have a hard time ensuring their daughters have good memories of shopping for and wearing their first bra.

Trying on your first bra in a big discount retail store can be unnerving for an 8- or 9-year-old who may already feel shy about the experience. And those stores have limited selections, both in sizes and styles.

The average Caucasian girl now enters puberty, which is marked by breast development, at 9.7 years old — about four months younger than just 17 years ago, according to an ongoing study as part of the Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Program. For African-American girls, the age is 8.8 years and the number of girls developing breasts in first grade has tripled since 1997.

The most well-known lingerie shop is Victoria's Secret, a place most parents don't feel comfortable taking their young daughters to shop. But there are other options out there. And once you've found a comfortable place to shop with a good selection of choices, follow these tips to ensure your daughter is comfortable and happy in her first bra:

One size does not fit all. If your tween is average sized, bras labeled "one size fits all" may work. If you're looking at bras with cups and band sizes, you'll need to measure. For the band size, wrap the measuring tape around your daughter just under the breasts, where the band sits. Add 5 to that number, and that's the size. (Tape says 23 inches, band will be 28 inches.) For cup size, measure around the fullest part of the chest and subtract that number from the band size. The difference is the cup size — so 0 to 1 inch is a size A; and



2 inches is a B.

Check the strap length. Straps are very important to consider for fit — especially if your tween is petite. If the strap is a traditional adjustable strap, such as those on most women's bras, be sure it can be shortened sufficiently. Elastic or stretchy straps are usually a safe bet.

Consider a lined bra. It's not about making her look more developed than she is! Generally speaking, tween padding is not meant to increase cup size. If a tween bra appears to have some padding, it's typically a thin layer of foam used to smooth over the nipple area so nothing is visible under the shirt. It's a modesty measure that also helps some girls feel less self-conscious.

Go with a different cut. Camisoles and sports bras are popular options for shy girls who worry a bra will call attention to them. A short or full-length camisole provides a bit of coverage and isn't as noticeable under a blouse. For the same reason, some girls like to start with bras cut in a sporty style that don't feel like a traditional bra.

Kelly O'Brien is the owner of Linger, an upscale lingerie shop, and blogs about lingerie at ShopLinger.com. A former teacher, digital marketing executive, adjunct college professor, and part of the team that launched glossy.com, the first website for teen girls, O'Brien founded LingerTween (Tween.ShopLinger.com) to address a glaring marketplace absence.

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Halloween safety

Kids should use caution when trick-or-treating

BY ALEXA BIGWARFE

Halloween can be a really fun and enjoyable evening, but not all Halloween facts are fun. The harsh reality is this: on Halloween, children are two to four times more likely to be hit and killed by a car than any other day. That is a scary fact. There is potential for injury during Halloween activities, but with these tips, parents can ensure everyone has a safe Halloween.

Trick-or-treating safety

- Children under 12 should not be out alone. They should be supervised

by an adult, and if at all possible, traveling in a group. Older children should plan a route with their parents and have an established return time.

- Walk on sidewalks or other paths and make sure to check before crossing any streets.

- Only visit homes with the porch light on.

- Ensure your children are carrying glow sticks or flashlights so that drivers can see them better.

A note to drivers: most children trick-or-treat between 5:30 and 9:30 pm, so slow down and be vigilant if driving during those hours.

Costume safety

- Select a costume that fits well. If your child's costume is too big, there's a good chance he will trip and fall.

- Pick out flame-resistant costumes and do not walk too closely to lit candles.

- Use reflective tape on children's costumes and bags.

- Avoid masks that can obscure their vision.

- Test out makeup first to make sure your child does not have a sensitivity.

- Don't use over-the-counter, decorative contact lenses.

Pumpkin carving safety

- Allow the kids to draw on the pumpkins, but never cut them. Young children should not handle knives.

- Make sure pumpkins with candles are placed far from anything that may catch on fire.

- Keep matches or lighters stored safely out of reach.

- Candles in a votive is the safest route, but consider glow sticks rather than a lit flame.

Stranger safety

- Never accept rides from strangers.

- Do not enter a stranger's house.

- Stay in familiar areas.

- Do not accept treats or candy that are not factory wrapped.

Food safety

- If you're going to parties, don't forget common food safety. Don't leave food out that needs to be refrigerated.

- Feed your child a meal prior to parties to help him avoid overeating candy and other foods that may lead to stomach pains.

- Have an adult sort through all of the candy once the children are home, and throw out any candies that are unwrapped.

- Finally, ration that candy over the next 30 days.

Have a fantastic, spooky, and safe Halloween!

Alexa Bigwarfe is the mother of three little ghouls. They enjoy darting into the street and eating too much candy on Halloween.

Four fun and healthy Halloween snacks

- Halloween "Ghosts": Strawberries dipped in white chocolate and decorated with ghost faces.

- Deviled "Spider" eggs: Deviled eggs served with a plastic spider.

- "Mummy" dog: A hot dog wrapped like a mummy in Pillsbury dough and baked.

- Veggie "Skeleton" platter: On a big plate, place vegetables in the shape of a skeleton.

Other great resources for safety tips

- www.cookinglight.com/entertaining/holidays-occasions/healthy-halloween

- www.pbs.org/parents/kitchenexplorers/2011/10/18/healthy-halloween-snacks/

- www.usa.gov/Topics/Halloween.shtml

- www.safekids.org/halloween#sthash.hH1GRr5D.dpuf

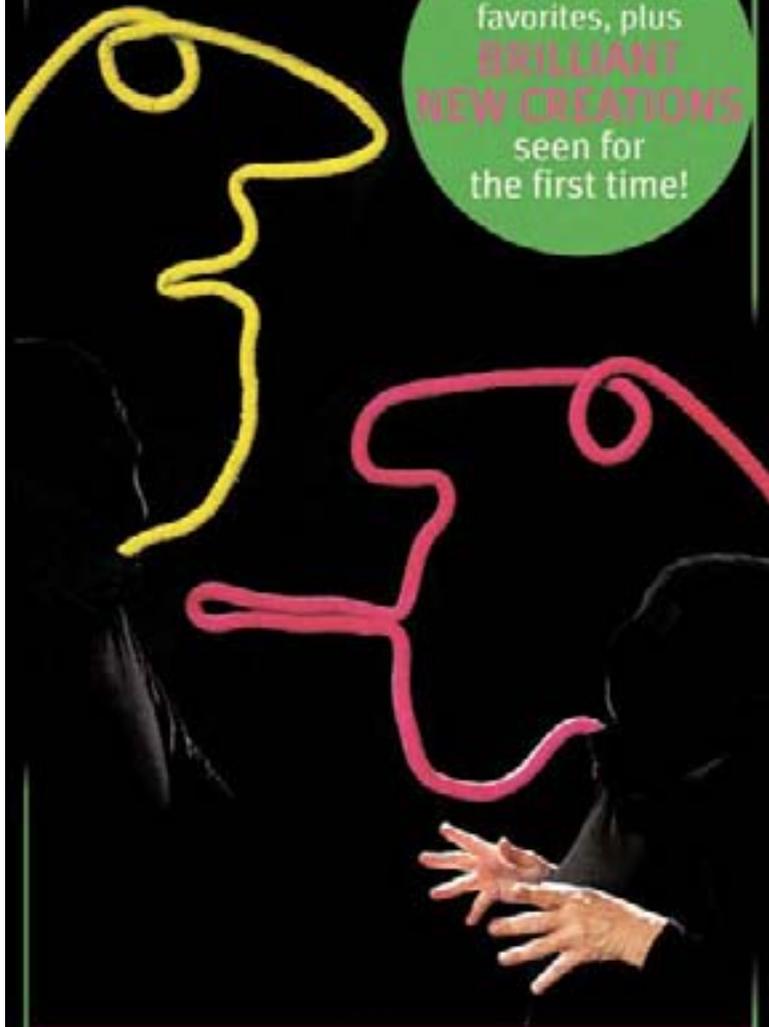
- www.safekids.org/tip/halloween-safety-tips

- www.cdc.gov/family/halloween

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The big test

Understanding admission to top city specialized high schools

BY DR. SHAHID SHAIKH

Admission to elite colleges and universities is an extremely arduous task for every student, including the top students. It is even rare to be noticed by admission officers of elite colleges simply by attending a high school. However, that's not the case for students who attend one of the New York City's specialized high schools. There are nine specialized high schools in the city, with at least one specialized high school in each borough. These elite schools strive to serve the needs of academically and artistically gifted students who are goal-oriented and highly self-motivated. These schools are ranked among the nation's most prestigious public schools. The top four schools are: Stuyvesant High School, Bronx High School of Science, Staten Island Tech, and Brooklyn Tech.

Admission to these schools requires the acing of Specialized High School Admission Test, which is highly competitive as well as standardized. This test is recommended for students who have a 90-plus av-

erage in seventh grade and have scored a level four on both their sixth and seventh grade New York State English Language Arts and math exams.

Approximately 30,000 eighth graders take the specialized exam every year. Their numbers are increasing every year, owing to the fact that most people are becoming familiar with the admission process of these top schools. In 2012–2013 school year, only 6,435 students gained admission in these nine schools. Only 2,350 students gain admittance to the top three schools: Stuyvesant High School, Bronx High School of Science, and Staten Island Technical High School.

The Specialized High School Admission Test tests students' academic knowledge, study skills, as well as a higher-level critical thinking skills acquired over past several years. The biggest challenge associated with the test is that it does not just test students' knowledge (in fact, most problems require only basic knowledge), but that it tests students' ability to understand and interpret complex

texts, think logically, look for non-standard solution methods, use spatial reasoning, answer intermediate questions on the way to a solution, and the ability to separate necessary and extraneous information.

The test is usually given in the last week of October right after students enter eighth grade. It is a timed multiple-choice test with two sections — verbal and math — which must be completed in a total of two hours and 30 minutes.

Here's the breakdown:

Verbal: three parts, 50 points.

Scrambled paragraphs: five questions, worth two points each.

Logical reasoning: 10 questions.

Reading comprehension: 30 questions.

Mathematics: 50 multiple choice questions covering various topics, such as, arithmetic, algebra, probability, statistics, and geometry.

Dr. Shaikh runs Leadership Academy on Staten Island. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's academic needs, please feel free to contact (718) 477-5705 or aeriusa@hotmail.com.

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Learning styles

Identifying them can transform life at home, school, and the office

Dear Dr. Karyn,

I overheard two moms talking this week about how learning styles impact how their kids feel about school. I realize it's a big topic, but can you give me an overview on why it's important, how it impacts my kids (I have four, ages 5 to 19), and how I can tell what style they have?

If you've ever heard me speak, you will know that I'm extremely passionate about understanding learning styles, because it has dramatically impacted my life both personally and professionally. At 13 years old, I was diagnosed with a learning disability and told that I would be lucky to finish high school. (I'm not kidding.) I was strong-spirited (others would say stubborn) and refused to get help, so my wise and loving parents did what I often recommend other parents do today — they allowed me to fail. Tough love, but it wasn't until I failed that I was willing to get help from others (which was a defining moment for me), and only then did things start turning around.

I was never taught about learning styles (I had to figure it out myself in high school) — but through trial and error, I noticed that I learned differently from most other students. And as I tried different strategies (which I will share with you next month), I quickly noticed that my grades started dramatically increasing from the low 60s to high 80s.

As a teen, I looked at my disability as a curse, but today I see it as a blessing. I fully believe that understanding how I learn has been one of my greatest assets for my success professionally. I understand how people think, learn, and process, and what they need to be fully engaged! As a speaker and coach, I know what a

person needs to hear for him to get it and understand it. This inside information has been invaluable!

Last year, I did a speaking series at The New York Times and one of my speaking keynotes focused specifically on learning styles. Many of the employees were shocked at the stats. Did you know that 70 to 80 percent of the population are either visual (they learn best through seeing) or kinesthetic learners (they learn best through hands on), but, most



**DEAR
DR. KARYN
DR. KARYN GORDON**

high schools in North America (90 percent!) are oriented toward just auditory learners (those who learn best through hearing)? This means that there are millions of students who fall through the cracks, because how they learn is not how they are being taught.

This is NOT about blaming teachers (I am a huge advocate of teachers and the enormously complex job they have) but rather understanding that, unfortunately, many of them have not been taught this critical information themselves. We can all probably think of a brilliant teacher who knows the information but doesn't know how to teach it, versus the exceptional teacher who knows how to engage her students by tapping into all three learning styles.

The truth is, there are almost certainly people in your life that have struggled with understanding their learning style, whether they realize it or not (kids, students, employees, clients, spouses). And when you start digging deeper with this topic, you realize how many parts of our life it impacts: from our kids' motivation to communication between spouses, and collaboration within teams at work to engagement with business clients. When we better understand how to reach these people, our communication has the poten-

tial to dramatically improve!

This month I want to focus on identifying the three main learning styles (and how you can tell what yours is, as well as the styles of those around you). Next month, we'll focus on how to maximize your learning style in all parts of your life!

As we kick off this school year, I hope this information will inspire you to help those around you be fully engaged!

Here are four keys to understanding learning styles and engagement at home and at work!

Understand the visual learner

Visual learners learn best through seeing. They are engaged with charts, colors, metaphors, acronyms, videos, and stories that they can picture in their mind. As a parent or manager and an auditory learner dealing with someone who is a visual learner, you may find that he starts to zone out if you talk too long. You may think that he doesn't care — but the truth is that just listening is extremely draining for a visual learner.

On a personal level, my husband is a highly auditory learner (and I'm highly visual and kinesthetic), so if he's asking me to do something, and he starts going into too much detail, I can sense myself starting to zone out or disengaging. Thankfully, after 13 years of marriage, he's learned to say, "Karyn, you know what — I think I'll e-mail you what I need instead," which is a lot easier on both of us!

Understand the auditory learner

Auditory learners learn best through hearing. They can hear a song once and remember the words, and they overall find school quite easy. Auditory students are the ones who can just show up in class, do minimal work, and still pull off amazing grades! Since 90 percent of high schools cater to auditory learners, most of these individuals do not struggle academically.

However, the one area they need

to make sure they focus on is their motivation and self-discipline. Because school comes easily to them, some of them learn to just show up to school, not doing work, but still achieving fairly decent marks. Unfortunately, this lack of motivation will often catch up to them in college, where many of them do what I call “coasting and crashing,” if they haven’t learned key self-discipline, motivation, and time-management skills to get the work done, they may end up failing courses.

The great news is that this type of learner, when motivated, has enormous possibilities in front of him! I’ve learned from working with thousands of auditory learners that to be engaged, they need to be challenged! If things move too slowly (or teachers, bosses, parents speak too slowly), or they don’t have enough challenging work, they get bored and disengage. At one of my “Dare To Dream” events, one 17-year-old male student said to me at the end of the event, “Karyn, I love your style because you talk fast —

you kept me engaged the whole time. I didn’t have any time to think about anything else!” After speaking longer with him, it was clear he was an auditory learner who needed information, communication, and projects to be moving at a fast speed to keep him tuned in!

Understand the kinesthetic learner

The kinesthetic learners learn best through doing. They are engaged by working with their hands, doing activities and moving around — because just talking and listening by itself will be draining for them! Visually see-

ing something will be more engaging than hearing something, but ideally they need to be doing something physical in order to be fully engaged. Kinesthetic students have also taught me that listening to a parent, teacher, or manager that just stands there (not moving) is draining, but if they can see the person moving around (even using their hands!) while they talk, it helps them stay connected.

You can usually tell if a student is kinesthetic based on his notebook. If there is a lot of doodling, it’s a clear sign that he is a kinesthetic, since doodling helps him to stay engaged — it is NOT a sign of disrespect! At the end of a

motivational key-

note I gave to a small group of company presidents a couple of years ago, one participant had left behind a sheet that he had been doodling on. Speaking with him later, I realized his primary learning style was auditory (he found school extremely easy) but his second mode was kinesthetic and to help his brain stay engaged he would often doodle.

Learn the learning style secret

So how can you tell how you learn and also those around you? There are numerous ways to discover it, but one shortcut I use is noticing where a person’s eyes go when you are trying to retrieve something from his memory. The next time you are trying to think way back in your memory for something (ex. what did you wear in your first grade class photo?), try to notice this: did your eyes look up, to the side, or down?

The way our eyes are connected to our brain often tells us what kind of learner we are: visual learners look up, auditory learners look to the left or right, and kinesthetic learners look down. Another way to tell is when someone gives you verbal directions (and you happened to have a pen and paper and NOT a navigation system). Would you write it out (ex. turn right / turn left); would you draw a map; or say, “I’ll just figure it out?”

Visual learners usually draw a map; auditory learners will write it out; while kinesthetic learners want to just do it. The reality is that we are each a combination of all three learning styles, but the key is to identify what your primary mode of learning is, and then understand how that impacts your engagement and motivation!

Next month I’ll focus on how to maximize your learning style (and the styles of those around you). Stay tuned!

Dr. Karyn Gordon is one of North America’s leading relationship and parenting experts. She is a regular contributor to “Good Morning America,” founder of dk Leadership, best-selling author of “Dr. Karyn’s Guide To The Teen Years” (Harper Collins), and motivational speaker to a quarter of a million people. Visit her at www.dkleadership.org and on Twitter: @DrKarynGordon.



Apple picking not far from the Big Apple



BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

The colorful autumn foliage is lush, and apples are in their prime, ripe and ready for plucking as it is peak harvesting time. A variety of apples are grown in the tri-state area — including Cortland, Empire, Gala, Golden Delicious, Honeycrisp, McIntosh and Rome — and there are numerous family-friendly farms and orchards in the area where you can witness and take part in the harvesting process with your family.

Through late October, orchards offer families the chance to pick their own apples. The orchards and farms also sell cider, homemade baked goods, and offer tried-and-true attractions, like hayrides, petting zoos, and mazes (either hay and corn). The homemade treats could be a great addition to a picnic lunch, which many orchards allow during harvest time. Considering that this is a popular activity amongst families,

it is always best to call ahead and confirm hours, apple availability, and attractions that may a-peel to your family.

Here are the best spots for apple picking near the Big Apple:

New York:

- Applewood Orchard [82 Four Corners Rd. in Warwick, NY, (845) 986-1684]

In addition to apple picking, Applewood Orchard offers wagon rides, puppet shows, a country store, and a picnic area.

- Dubois Farms [209 Perksinville Rd. in Highland, NY, (845) 795-4037]

In addition to apple picking, Dubois Farms offers pumpkins and fall activities on-site like a corn maze and pony rides.

- Jenkins-Lueken Orchard [69 Yankee Folly Rd. in New Paltz, NY, (845) 255-0999]

In addition to apple picking, Jenkins-Lueken Orchard offers pumpkin picking and sells apple cider from their own cider mill.

- Masker Orchard [45 Ball Rd. in Warwick, NY, (845) 986-1058]

In addition to apple picking, Masker Orchards sells honey, which is quite popular.

- Outhouse Orchards [130 Hardscrabble Rd. in North Salem, NY, (914) 277-3188]

In addition to apple picking, Outhouse Orchard offers pumpkin picking and hayrides.

- Stuart's Farm [62 Granite Springs Rd. in Granite Springs, NY, (914) 245-2784]

In addition to apple picking, Stuart's Farm offers pumpkin picking and an area for picnics.

New Jersey:

- Mackey's Orchard [284B County

Route 519 in Belvidere, NJ, (908) 475-1507]

In addition to apple picking, Mackey's Orchard has miniature golf, a greenhouse, a farm stand, and Mackey's Ice Cream Barn.

- Wightman's Farms [1111 Mt. Kemble Ave. in Morristown, NJ, (973) 425-9819]

In addition to apple picking, Wightman's Farms offers pumpkin picking and autumn activities like hay rides and a corn maze.

Connecticut:

- Bishop's Orchards [1355 Boston Post Rd. in Guilford, CT, (203) 453-2338]

In addition to apple picking, Bishop's Orchards has a market, winery, bakery, and plant store.

- Silverman's Farm [451 Sport Hill Rd. in Easton, CT, (203) 261-3306]

In addition to apple picking, Silverman's Farm offers a hayride and a petting zoo.

If you're driving, review the route as well as construction notifications and estimated driving time. There will likely be crowds descending upon the orchards and farms during the peak season. Most orchards and farms are well equipped to handle the amount of visitors during the apple-picking season. Whether you own a car, rent one, or use public transportation to make your day trip, this family activity is — at its core — about making wonderful memories (however, leave your pets at home because most farms do not allow four-legged friends).

Shnieka Johnson is an education consultant and freelance writer. She is based in Manhattan where she resides with her husband and son. Contact her via her website: www.shniekajohnson.com.

Apple pie

After you and the kids have visited the orchards and farms, bring your apples home to share with friends and neighbors, as well as make tasty treats — like apple crisp, pie, muffins, and cake. One of my go-to apple pie recipes is here:

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 to 4 medium apples (Cored, peeled, sliced)
- 3/4 c raw sugar
- 1 tsp of cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp of nutmeg
- 1 lemon (zest and juice)

1 store-bought pie shell

DIRECTIONS: In a mixing bowl, add apples, lemon juice, and zest, and sprinkle with sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Make sure apples are coated. Pour apple mixture into pie shell. Place topping. (See topping recipe below.)

Bake 400 degrees for 50 minutes.

TOPPING:

- 1/2 c brown sugar
 - 1/2 c flour
 - 1/2 c butter (cubed)
- Mix together the sugar and flour. Blend in butter with a fork or stand mixer just until the topping is crumbly.

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University of Notre Dame. At Holy Cross High School students are free to discover and develop their own intellectual, religious, ethical, athletic, creative and leadership abilities, in smaller classes, under the guidance of teachers and mentors who specialize in educating adolescent boys. Our personalized approach ensures that no one falls through the cracks here. Everybody knows your name, and at the end of the day, it's about how we have cared for one another that counts the most.

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Continued on page 20



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High School Choices

DIRECTORY

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High School Choices

DIRECTORY

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Exercise your options

Discovering the value of exercise after breast cancer diagnosis

BY SANDRA GORDON

Studies show that regular exercise can help breast cancer survivors live longer and reduce the risk of recurrence. It can also help reclaim your sense of well-being. Here, three inspiring women reveal how pushing themselves after their breast cancer diagnosis made them stronger on every level.

"My teammates inspired me."

— Dale Parenti, 52

Seven years ago, while undergoing radiation treatments for ductal carcinoma in situ, the earliest form of breast cancer, Dale Parenti began dragon boating three days a week with a team of local breast cancer survivors, who call themselves Hope Afloat.

"I had heard about dragon boat teams for breast cancer survivors and thought it sounded like fun," says the 52-year-old creative services manager.

Dragon boating, a sport originating in China, involves 20 paddlers in a large boat, all rowing to cross the finish line first. Boats are adorned with a dragon head and a tail at race time. The sport is easy to learn, you don't have to have good hand-eye coordination like you would for a sport like tennis.

"I went to the first practice thinking, 'I'm athletic. How bad can it be?'" Parenti says, underestimating the effort required. "Afterwards, I felt like such a wimp." Parenti realized that with working long hours and taking care of her

two kids, she was out of shape.

"In my spare time, I had been doing more knitting than anything else," she says. But after just four dragon boat team practices, she could feel the years melting away. "I felt happier and more energetic, like I was 20 years younger. And I never experienced fatigue from my radiation treatments, which is a common side effect," she says. "The push from my teammates spurred me on."

Parenti was hooked. She now competes in dragon boat races across the U.S., Canada, and Australia.

"It's hard on the upper body, because dragon boating requires shorter strokes than regular rowing. There's also a lot of twisting and core work. I'm always sore, but in a good way," she says.

Life lesson: "When you get breast cancer, you want to be the fighter for your family. You don't want to look weak. But deep down, you're always afraid it's going to come back. The dragon boat team is one place where it's okay to say, 'I got a scare today,' and everyone understands. I'm motivated by my team. We strengthen ourselves and support each other."

Interested in dragon boating? Visit the International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission at www.ibcpc.com.

"Cycling helped me get my groove back." — Rachel McLeod, 42

While recovering from a bilateral mastectomy in 2007, Rachel McLeod, a casual gym-goer, returned to spinning class at her local gym, because her friends insisted on it.

"At a time when I just wanted to

give up on everything, my friends encouraged me to just go to class and listen to the music," says the 42-year-old, stay-at-home mom. Soon enough, though, McLeod, with a scarf tied around her head and bloated from steroid medication, was spinning again right along with her pals several times a week. In time, a friend suggested that McLeod participate in the Pan-Massachusetts Challenge, a 163-mile annual bike-a-thon cancer fund-raiser that supports cancer research and treatment at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. The two-day bike race transverses the state of Massachusetts, from Wellesley to Provincetown.

"The idea lodged in my head. The Pan-Mass Challenge became a goal." For the next five months, McLeod attended spinning class three to four times each week with a purpose, to train for the challenge while also bicycling outdoors regularly for 25-mile rides. McLeod wasn't out to win.

"My objective was to do the race at my own pace," she says.

The race, which is held every August, proved to be grueling, especially toward the end of the second day, as McLeod tackled the undulating hills and dunes around Provincetown.

"It was boiling hot, and there was a crosswind," she says. Memories of her cancer treatment, including "big red needles" and the blue chair she sat in during chemo treatment bubbled up. But other cyclists, especially those with photos of deceased loved ones fastened to their backs, encouraged her to keep peddling.

OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH



“It made me realize that what I was dealing with, and even my own experience with cancer, was nothing compared to what they had been through,” she says. When McLeod finally crossed the finish line, “I definitely felt a huge sense of physical achievement.”

Life lesson: “Cycling gave me the mental well-being to deal with the memories of cancer treatment and put them behind me.”

Want to cycle for a cause? Find out about charity bike rides in your area at www.bikingbis.com.

• • •
“I always wanted to ride.”

— Risa Hoag, 50

After a ductal carcinoma in situ

diagnosis in 2005 followed by two lumpectomies and radiation, the 50-year-old public relations executive began to re-evaluate everything.

“I thought about my kids, my husband, and my mother, and how my diagnosis affected all of them, and what I really wanted to do with my life. I realized that I’ve always wanted to ride horses,” Hoag says. “By accident, getting a horse became a priority.” She soon bought a thoroughbred mare, Abbey, at a rescue barn.

“Thoroughbreds are usually wild and mares are notoriously difficult, so Abbey was everything I didn’t want in a horse,” she says. “It was a

classic ‘what not to do if you want a horse’ scenario. But when I sat on her, I fell in love,” Hoag says.

It turns out that Abbey, who Hoag kept at a horse barn near her home, had been on good behavior that day. She proved to be as difficult as Hoag suspected.

“It took me four months to be able to walk her out of her stall by herself,” Hoag says. “People had to get behind her and push her out. And when I sat on her, she would just whinny and her whole body would shake. She didn’t have any brakes either, except for the fence.”

Nonetheless, Hoag took Abbey out every day and began riding her

regularly. Slowly, Abbey began to trust her.

Life lesson: “Abbey got me exercising and wanting to get in better shape, so I could ride competitively,” Hoag says. “She also gave me something to focus on besides my diagnosis. She rescued me as much as I rescued her.”

Want to get in the saddle? For more information on the healing power of horses and ways to get involved with horseback riding and breast cancer research, visit www.pudarideforlife.org.

Sandra Gordon is an award-winning freelance writer who delivers expert advice and the latest developments in health, nutrition, parenting and consumer issues.



LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

Stop the slob

Help your teen stay organized

So, your teen is a slob. Join the club! My oldest is a quintessential pack rat; although, his piles are not neatly distributed in a small hole. My son claims he knows where everything is in that nightmare he calls a room. He says that if I move something, he won't be able to find it. Find it? You couldn't find an elephant in that mire! Sometimes I just cringe and shut the door. Then, when it's time to vacuum, I go zany and start screaming that I'm going to throw out everything that's on the floor!

When it looks as if an F5 tornado has struck your teen's room and you are exasperated beyond measure, sometimes it's easier just to close the door. However, this might not be the best solution because this doesn't help your teen to learn how to organize his clutter. Charging in to clean it yourself, or simply ignoring the mess, won't make the problem go away.

Taming tornadoes

Determine the root of the problem. Sometimes it's just an inability to purge memorabilia or a simple case of laziness. It may be a personality trait or an actual disability in-

hibiting his ability to organize.

If there is a Department of Health issue with used string cheese wrappers growing mold in his book bag or ants nesting in old candy wrappers under the radiator, an overhaul is necessary. Analyze the effects of the state of his belongings. Is the condition of his room and belongings affecting his life in a negative way? If your teen's goals, commitments or grades are suffering due to his mess, then it's time to insist on change.

Dr. Robert Epstein, author of "TEEN 2.0: Saving Our Children and Families from the Torment of Adolescence" (Quill Driver Books, 2010) and former editor-in-chief of *Psychology Today* says, "Teens are young adults, not children. Picture your teen as a young boarder in your home. How would you treat him or her if he or she were a slob? You wouldn't take away the iPod or car keys; you would negotiate and try to stay calm. You might draw a line indicating where his or her messy territory stops."

Chances are he may need help, but it's important for him to take ownership of the overhaul. Help him to realize that the mess is making

things more difficult for him.

Many teens don't know where to begin. Set realistic expectations and don't expect that he won't have setbacks or need reminders. Initial clean up should be done in stages. He can start with the floor, and then move to the closet on another day. If the task is in manageable pieces, it will be less daunting.

Epstein suggests, "Be a great role model. Show them how to do it. Sometimes it's helpful to take them shopping for organizational aids, such as storage cubes or shelves. Always watch for any signs, even small signs, of neatness, and praise and reward like crazy."

Encourage responsibility in your teen. If your teen loses a pair of sneakers, have him purchase a new pair with his own money. Set up a reward system for report cards free of comments about missing assignments. Avoid rushing to his rescue when his lack of organization gets him into trouble. If he has to fix his own mistakes, he will be less apt to repeat them.

If your teen has been diagnosed with attention deficit disorder or another disability that makes it difficult for him to get organized (such as an autism spectrum disorder), you should seek advice from a professional.

Other ways to help:

- Insist on weekly clean-ups so things don't get out of hand.
- Encourage clearing out book bags and reorganizing notebooks each marking period.
- Suggest daily list making.
- Grant a new freedom (i.e. extension of a curfew) if your teen demonstrates responsibility.

Tips and tales

"I think many messy teens lack the organizational skills to be neater. If it is a problem at school, have them work with a guidance counselor or student support staff to help them keep things organized during the school day."

Sharon Squire, Hyde Park, NY

"Close the door and walk away!"

Pam Todd, Salt Point, NY

Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer, columnist and author of, "Lions And Tigers And Teens: Expert Advice and Support for the Conscientious Parent Just Like You" (Unlimited Publishing LLC, 2012). For details, visit www.myrnahaskell.com.





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Tips for teens traveling solo

Lessons in independence, with help from mom and dad

BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL

My son traveled to England, Brussels, and Germany with some friends this past spring break. This was not the first time he had traveled solo, but it was his first time overseas. My son is mature and quite worldly for his age, but that didn't stop me from being worried sick.

He seemed to have everything in check, including a current passport

and EMV card (credit card with security chip). He even applied for Global Entry, which allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers entering the US.

We decided to communicate via e-mail. I waited with bated breath for those notes. As I peered at a photo of my son in front of Big Ben, I felt a pride like no other. Here was my 19-year-old taking advantage of his youth and exploring places I had yet to visit myself. His trip concluded

sans glitches and with a multitude of publication-worthy photos and stories about all of the fascinating people he had met along the way.

Most parents fret over their children traveling solo, but detailed plans and regular communication before and during his absence will ease your mind.

Readiness

Parents should ask themselves the following questions when considering sending their teen off unchaperoned:

- In general, does he handle new situations well?

- Would she panic if an unavoidable change to travel plans (e.g. delayed or canceled plane) occurs, or will she remain calm?

- Is he generally cautious and aware of safety issues and potential health issues?

- If traveling by car: Has she demonstrated safe vehicle handling and good decision-making skills all along? Does she consistently avoid distractions (e.g. cellphone usage, eating while driving, distractions from passengers)? Does she have a good sense of direction and stellar map skills?

No matter how mature or prepared, your teen still needs your guidance.

According to Susan Kuczmariski, parenting expert and award-winning author of "The Sacred Flight of the Teenager: A Parent's Guide to Stepping Back and Letting Go" (Book Ends Publishing, 2004), "The fact is that controls do act as a source of unacknowledged security for teens. Total responsibility for one's life, or trip in this case, is a scary thing. It brings stress, and teens have enough going on in their lives to bear the full brunt of worrying about what is best for them. They still need support, guidance, and direction, as infuriating as this is for them."

Parents should work collaboratively with their teen to develop travel plans and any contingency plans. This way your teen will know that you trust his judgment, and he will take ownership of the rules you set together.

"Give them the opportunity to come up with ideas as you put travel plans in place," Kuczmariski suggests. "Reach an agreement together as to what to do in different situations (e.g. plane is late, person meeting them doesn't show up, weather delays, etc.)"

Jay Fitter, a licensed marriage and family therapist, parenting expert, and author of "Respect Your Children: A Practical Guide to Effective

Useful advice

Additional travel tips provided by Jay Fitter:

- Wear comfortable clothing and shoes.
- Don't wear expensive jewelry.
- Use a money belt that can be concealed underneath clothing.
- Don't carry excessive amounts of cash — bring a credit card.
- Use downtime wisely (waiting in airports, etc.): catch up on schoolwork or reading
- Don't break the law. Smoking weed in a foreign country can land you in prison, even for miniscule amounts.

Parenting" (iUniverse, 2010), warns that teens traveling alone are easy targets for sexual predators or adults looking to take advantage of a teen's inexperience and youth.

"For female teens, never get into a conversation with someone of the opposite sex," says Fitter. He cautions that male teens can also be targets. "Teen males are targets for scam artists and predators, too," he continues.

Therefore, parents should remind their teens that they should only request help or guidance from company employees (e.g. train conductor) or security personnel, and should not engage strangers by communicating their plans or any type of personal information, no matter how friendly that stranger may seem.

For younger teens

If it is necessary that your young teen (ages 13 to 15) must take public transportation (e.g. plane, bus, train), to visit a relative at a distant location for the holidays, for example, be sure to check the company's "unaccompanied minor" policies. For instance, United Airlines only allows you to use its "Unaccompanied Minor Service" for nonstop flights (www.united.com). Also, some bus lines do not allow children under the age of 16 to travel solo. Therefore, it is imperative that parents check all guidelines ahead of time.

Enlist a relative or friend to meet your child at the airport, bus terminal, or train station upon their arrival. Be sure that your child has

this person's number and a contingency plan if she does not show up for any reason.

Overseas travel

Traveling overseas can raise additional concerns due to language and cultural differences. Keen research and savvy planning are imperative in this case. Not all teens can make this leap. Trust your intuition when it comes to allowing your teen to travel solo overseas.

In my son's case, he did all of the planning on his own and then communicated his plans to us prior to his departure. The following is a list of tips and advice from Trevor Haskell:

Have an organized travel plan for visiting sights. Without one, you will lose valuable time at the destination trying to figure out what to do.

Alert all your credit card companies that you are traveling and specify the exact dates you will be away. Failure to do so will likely trigger account freezes and the inability to access funds.

Change currency before you go. Although convenient, airport and hotel currency exchange rates will likely be a rip-off.

Make extra copies of all your travel documents. Put copies in separate parts of your luggage.

Write down the phone number and address of the US Embassy or Consulate nearest your destination. If you lose your passport or need any kind of emergency assistance, they will be able to help you.

*Check www.usembassy.gov for US Embassies/Consulates near your destination or for travel warnings and alerts.

Spring break travel safety tips

Perhaps your teen will be traveling with friends to a distant location for spring break. There are a wealth of travel guidelines you should go over with your teen before she seeks respite from her college workload. Here are just a few:

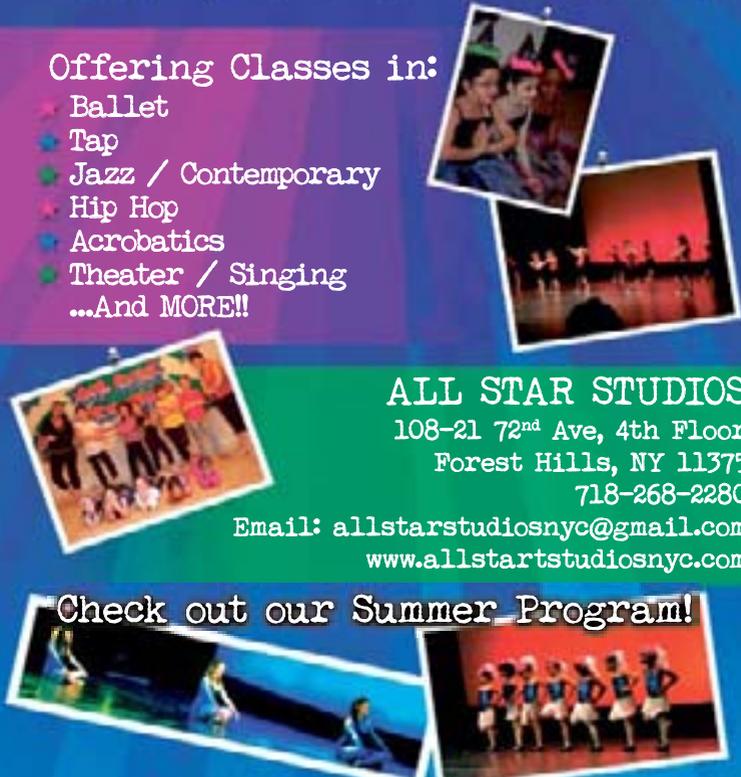
- Legal drinking age at your location? NEVER drink and drive (Inebriation = poor judgment, even for those not behind the wheel).
- Be sure to use licensed cabs or vans for transportation.
- Research food and water safety prior to travel.
- Road trips: Use the buddy system and take breaks from driving.
- Check crime rates and tourist safety information before traveling.



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America the beautiful

Young man creates an organization to give teens a chance to see more of their country

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

Great role models are few and far between these days.

A group of lucky city students spent an unforgettable part of their summer enjoying a trip of a lifetime — on the house — thanks to a young man who created a very special organization when he was just 16. Trip of a Lifetime is the brainchild of Stan Rosenberg, now 22, who has been an inspiration for young adults. He's passionate about providing student travel scholarships to qualifying, underprivileged teens, and his organization has been empowering them through travel experiences that expand their horizons.

The shy kid from Scarsdale said he was transformed after going on a trip.

"I started Trip of a Lifetime after going on a teen tour myself, in the summer of 2007. I was a freshman in high school, and the experience changed my life, making me more confident and allowing me to develop my leadership skills," Rosenberg recalled. "After my trip, I spoke with family and friends about my idea for the organization and in the fall of 2008, the organization was officially born."

When he's not involved with Trip of a Lifetime, Rosenberg is a consultant at Deloitte.

"Some people are surprised that I also have a full-time job, but part of the reason is to let students that have been on trips before take the lead with this organization. I aspire Trip of a Lifetime to be 'for students by students,' where each group trains the next to run every facet."

He says family and friends have been extremely supportive.

"Almost everyone has had a memorable travel experience, whether it has been in school, at work, or for a family vacation," says Rosenberg. "Tapping into the power of travel has helped make our message uni-



Stan Rosenberg, 22, started an organization called Trip of a Lifetime, which provides underprivileged students with travel scholarships for free trips.

versal."

Rosenberg explained how the organization works. "Every accepted student travels on a trip with 30 to 40 other students that lasts two to three weeks. These trips are organized by our partners: Rein Teen Tours and American Trails West, two of the most established teen travel companies in the country, and vary slightly by age and when the student departed for their trip.

"On their trips this summer, students experienced destinations such as the Grand Canyon, Golden Gate Bridge, and Mount Rushmore during the day and participated in social events and team-building activities at night. When it was time to go to sleep, students stayed in a variety of name-brand hotels, camping grounds, and college campuses."

Trips are funded through a combination of grants, individual donations, and corporate sponsors, including American Express Travel.

It all starts with filing an application between November and mid-

March, followed by an essay and brief phone interview, then hopefully, an e-mail that says, "Congratulations, you have been selected as a finalist for the Trip of a Lifetime scholarship."

Just ask Bria, Selina, and Wilmaris, local students who traveled together and couldn't wait to share their adventure stories with family and friends, as well as NY Parenting readers and their teens. The following excerpts are from their post-trip essays in which the girls talk about the application process, some of their trips' highlights, and what they learned from their travels.

Selina Asamoah, 14, from the Bronx writes:

This summer can truly be called an unforgettable summer. The trip was an amazing experience which taught me a lot about myself, my goals and people from different backgrounds. It began on a boring October school day in history class. I remember the teacher on the intercom saying "Come down to room 306 to get an application for Trip of a Lifetime." Every teacher was saying how much of a good experience it would be and that we should all apply.

Around February break, I was really giving up on the idea, but there was a little spark of hope still left in me. The deadline was quickly approaching, March 15, 2014. I mailed the (pre-trip) essay on time.

At that point, I can't even explain the amount of excitement that filled me. Stan called me, and I had my interview for like five minutes. About two weeks later, while decorating the gym for a school dance, I got the e-mail that I was accepted into the Trip of a Lifetime program. I was so grateful that Stan actually saw something in me and accepted me. I couldn't wait for the summer to arrive, so I could be on the trip.

My favorite places that we visited were Park City, Utah and Lake Tahoe. First and foremost, the bus ride to Utah was really beautiful. When we got to the resort, the counselors gave us our roommates.

The next day was very adventurous — we went mountain biking and Alpine sliding. The next day, we took a jet to Reno, Nev., then a bus to Lake Tahoe.

This trip has taught me to be confident, has restored my self-esteem and made me realize that there's more in the world than just the South Bronx. But the most important thing that it has shown me is to be open minded and to always try and experience new things.



Bria Taylor, 16, and her twin sister, Brianna are from Jamaica, Queens. They flew to Denver with the group, then it was off to South Dakota, where they visited Mount Rushmore and went hiking.

The next day, everyone bused down to Jackson, Wyo., then to Reno, Nev. and Lake Tahoe, where they went tubing and wakeboarding before heading off to San Francisco. Bria writes:

Every time we left a new city, I picked up new traditions, cultures, friends, etc. This trip brought out the best in me, and it actually gave me the opportunity to branch out to new things ... and [I] stepped out of my comfort zone to where I know that I am willing to go the distance.

Wilmaris DeLaCruz, 16, from Washington Heights writes:

Travel for free? I got an e-mail from the organization, and I couldn't believe that I was a finalist! I cannot thank you guys enough for giving me the chance to not only have fun and travel, but to make a difference and help others that have so much less than I do.

I have never traveled before or even been on an airplane. This was a huge step for me ... getting out of my comfort zone and going out into the real world to discover things that I never knew existed. I grew ecstatic and eager to learn and travel.

The day I [had] been waiting for finally arrived. It was June 29, the day I left everyone and everything behind for two entire weeks and ventured out into the world.

Looking around in JFK airport and seeing not one familiar face (other than my mom who was with me) wasn't at all easy. But I kept on thinking positively. I waved goodbye to my mom with tears in my eyes, walking away towards the Rein Teen Tours group. Thankfully, I was able to see two people that I saw recently at the Trip of a Lifetime meeting: Kalifala and Zairia. I also sat next to Zairia on the plane, and I was excited that we would be going to California together!

I was stunned by how different California was from New York City, with its big, beautiful palm trees and breathtaking landscapes. One of my favorite places was the Santa Barbara

Beach because of how beautiful the scenery was. I also loved going bowling, roller blading, kayaking, the improv club in Los Angeles, and I even learned how to swim! On top of all that, we had the chance to dorm at UCSB (University of California, Santa Barbara) and get a glimpse of how college life really is.

However, what made this trip a lot more memorable for me was waking up at 7:30 am every morning, eating breakfast, and leaving by 9:15 am to do community service for three hours every day at a place called Unity Shoppe. It is an organization that helps provide food, clothing, and basic necessities to low-income, working families, their children, and the elderly. It's unique because it allows families and individuals who are going through a tough time to get back on their feet.

Being a volunteer at this shop was the highlight of my entire trip. I learned so much. I had many roles and learned how to do each and every one of them. I was a cashier, I learned how to put tags on clothing, I organized the clothes, as well as put

them on hangers, I put bar codes on cans and other foods, I packaged food ... and my favorite one of all: I helped take the customers around and helped them feel at home, so that they won't feel ashamed having to receive help. Seeing the brightness in their eyes and the smile on their faces and the way they would hold my hand and say, "thank you so much," really touched my heart and made me want to continue helping others ... which I will, after this life-changing experience.

Unity Shoppe also helped me appreciate my own life, because I finally realized and saw it with my own eyes, that there are others who have so much less than I do. Now, I am immensely thankful for what I have and as soon as I got home, I hugged my mom and told her, "Thank you so much for all that you have done for me!"

Knowing that I can have fun while helping low-income families get back on their feet, was a blessing. I didn't want to leave, but I promised I'd be back.

• • •

For more info on Trip of a Lifetime, visit www.projecttoal.org.



ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,
ESQ.

What is a Q.P.R.T.?

What is does the acronym Q.P.R.T. mean, and what is it?

There was once a video game in the 1980s called Q-Bert. This is not that game. A Q.P.R.T. is an acronym (pronounced “cue-pert”) for a sophisticated estate planning technique that allows a person to reduce the value of his estate — and therefore minimize estate taxes — by moving an asset out of his estate at a lower value than the asset might actually have at the time of transfer or at death.

A Q.P.R.T., or “qualified personal residence trust,” is an estate tax savings technique. Although the trust loses popularity in low-interest rate environments, it is still a very effective and economical mechanism for mitigating your estate

tax exposure, especially in light of the expected return to a limited \$1 million federal and state tax exemption in 2011.

A qualified personal residence trust is a form of irrevocable trust, whose sole asset is the interest in your personal residence and other related assets if you so choose. It must comply with the requirements of I.R.C. Regulation 25.2702-5(c). The donor makes a gift of the residence to the trust — effectively to his descendants or the beneficiaries of the trust — and retains the right to occupy the residence for the term of a set period of time. At the expiration of that term, ownership of the residence passes to the beneficiaries of the trust. If the donor dies before the expiration of the trust’s term, the trust terminates and ownership of the residence returns to the estate of the donor (effectively losing the gamble). In short, the beneficiaries only receive the trust property at the end of the term — and only if the donor is still living at that time.

Why would someone make such a strange gift, and why would he jump through so many hoops to do so?

The structure of the U.S. gift tax system offers a tax bargain for the donor in the qualified personal residence trust. The donor gets a discount in computing the value of his taxable gift for the interest he retains in the personal residence when he transfers it to the trust. If he survives the trust’s term, the entire property is out of his estate — even though he paid gift tax on only a discounted value. If he does not survive the term, the residence comes back into his estate and the trust did not save any taxes; but the taxes in that case are no higher than if the donor had never made the gift at all. In other words, the qualified personal residence trust is a gift tax bet that the donor can’t lose. Either the

donor wins or he gets his money back. The trust discounts offer a highly tax-efficient way to make use of the client’s gift tax exemption, which is now \$5.34 million and will increase each year with a cost of living adjustment (previously the Federal exemption was only \$1 million and had incrementally increased to \$5 million until it automatically reverted back to \$1 million in 2010; however, Congress amended the law). The “gift” is complete when the residence is transferred to the trust and the value is fixed as of that date, discounted because of the donor’s retained interests.

Most qualified personal residence trust donors want to remain in their personal residence after the term expires. The donor must understand that he can do so but will need to pay rent. This is a formality that must be observed, otherwise the Internal Revenue Service could unwind the transaction. Many people balk at the idea — pay rent for my own home? But if you want the benefits, you have to pay the price. The residence technically belongs to the donor’s children (or remainder beneficiaries) or even the trust after the expiration of the term. If the donor continues to reside there without paying rent, the residence could be brought back into the donor’s estate, thus negating the tax-saving purpose of the trust.

The qualified personal residence trust is a complicated estate tax technique, and there are many facets that can only be explained and implemented by an attorney.

Alison Arden Besunder is the founding attorney of the law firm 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 Alison Besunder on Twitter @estatetrustplan and on her website at www.besunderlaw.com.



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Family fun, close to home

Crystal Springs Resort offers year-round activities

BY STACEY ZABLE

Amere 90 minutes from New York City in northwestern New Jersey is Crystal Springs Resort, where the choices in accommodations and activities are abundant any time of year. This fall or winter, you can save time and money

Package It

Fall and winter packages are available that include accommodations with time at the spa, on the golf course or lift tickets to Mountain Creek depending on the time of year. Packages for guests of both Grand Cascades and Minerals also include complimentary access to Minerals Sports Club's pools and fitness classes; guests of Grand Cascades get complimentary use of the 18-hole putting course (weather permitting) and access to the Biosphere Pool Complex as well.

on the air fare, pack up the kids and be where you want to be in no time.

Crystal Springs, located in Vernon and Hamburg, N.J., is actually three properties in one, plus a whole lot of recreational choices. The luxury Grand Cascades Lodge or Minerals Hotel are the two resort choices, while Mountain Creek offers slope-side accommodations and town homes at the base of Vernon Peak. The resort's complimentary shuttle service — available on-demand — takes you wherever you want on the expansive property, and even to a few restaurants located right outside its environs.

We stayed at Grand Cascades in a one-bedroom suite, which was perfect for our family of four. It comes

with a bedroom with a King-size bed, living room with Queen-size sleeper sofa, fireplace, and oversized balcony and a full kitchen, which even includes a washer and dryer. The large bathroom with separate tub and stall shower is accessible from both the living room and bedroom.

We took full advantage of the kitchen, stocking up on breakfast and snack items at the nearby supermarket. Crystal Springs has 12 restaurants ranging from casual to gourmet, with kid's menus available. DJ and dancing adds to the fun of dinner on weekends at Kites at Minerals Hotel. There is an official tour of Grand Cascade's 135,000 bottle Wine Cellar, or you can request ac-



D. Becker Photo

At Crystal Springs resort, the Biosphere features heated pools, a hot tub, aquarium, and more. (At left) In the winter kids can enjoy skiing.

cess at other times. Kids may not be impressed with the wine, but will like the cavernous cellar, which has a very "Harry Potter" feel to it.

The major kid-friendly attraction at Grand Cascades is the glass-enclosed Biosphere, perfect for cold weather inside fun. The indoor pool complex features an aquarium, heated pools, hot tub, caves, lush foliage and a 140-foot water slide. The Biosphere is also the site for kid-friendly, dive-in movies on a big-screen. A heated outdoor pool is adjacent to the Biosphere, which also opens many of its own windowed walls in the summer. The 18-hole natural grass putting course provides more outdoor fun.

Numerous outdoor seating areas with couches surrounding fire pits and oversized cabana beds provide cozy nooks for relaxing. At night, the amphitheater's fire pit is the place to roast marshmallows, weather permitting. Reflections Spa is reserved for pampering for adults only at Grand Cascades. However, Elements Spa at Minerals Hotel welcomes guests 13 and older. My 15-year-old older daughter and I enjoyed turning the spa's "Couples" massage into a "Mother-Daughter" massage. All treatments end with time in the lounge in a hot water foot soak to help continue the relaxation. This was a lovely way to sit and talk to my daughter without electronic devices distracting us.

Minerals Sports Club at Minerals Hotel was our recreational destination for much of the trip. In addition to three indoor and outdoor heated nature pools and hot tubs, there is a children's spray

ground, racquetball and indoor basketball, running track and tennis. The 6,000-square-foot fitness center and the selection of more than 80 weekly exercise classes (included in the rate for Grand Cascades and Mineral Hotel guests) helped burn off all those snacks in our kitchen.

For more exercise, we walked the Grand Cascades Nature Trail Hike. Crystal Springs also provides a brochure and information on how to access eight local hiking trails that range from easy to strenuous, and we spent one morning exploring beyond the property. Depending on the season, guests have a choice of seven championship golf courses and can improve their game at the David Leadbetter Golf Academy.

Mountain Creek offers skiing and snowboarding (including lessons) in the winter, with 167 acres of trails on four mountain peaks, 100 percent snowmaking and night skiing coverage. The area transforms into Action Park in the summer, where you can hike, bike, canoe, zip-line or enjoy the waterpark, with more than 24 different rides, slides and attractions; one of many reasons to plan a return visit this summer.

Crystal Springs Resort [Vernon and Hamburg, N.J., (855) 977-6473, crystal-golfresort.com]

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

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A-maze-ing action flick

Teens love the adventure of 'The Maze Runner'

Opening last weekend, "The Maze Runner" received rave reviews from the teen film critics. The story involves a teen who is deposited into a community of boys with no memory of his past, save his own name. The world he is deposited to is comprised of 60 teen boys who have learned to survive in this completely closed-off environment, subsisting on their own agriculture and supplies. The original group has been in "The Glade" for two years, have tried to escape and have, for the most part, given up hope. Their world begins to change with the latest boy and then, the first girl arriving.

KIDS FIRST! Film Critic Raven D, age 17, and Willie J, 15, share their thoughts on the film.

"The Maze Runner" is an action-packed, visually stunning new film that made hold my breath and kept me on the edge of my seat till the very end. "The Maze Runner" tells the story of Thomas, played by Dylan O'Brien, who wakes up in a giant crate with no memory of his past. He is taken

to "The Glade," a place full of boys who were taken and had their memories erased as well. Thomas soon learns that they are trapped in a giant maze, and once you're stuck inside, you never make it out alive. Everything begins to change when a girl is brought to The Glade, and so Thomas decides it is time to face the maze and find the whole truth about the people who placed them there. But the truth they find might be even more horrible than the maze itself.

I absolutely love this film. It is so intense and visually stunning. It kept me on the edge of my seat and made my heart race through the entire film. Every time Thomas is inside the maze, I felt as if I was there with him, running for my life. But this isn't just an adrenaline-packed adventure. "The Maze Runner" also moved me

to tears and made me think about the way we can work together when we are truly faced with a challenge. The visuals are incredible as well. The maze is so complex and ever changing and it's so cool to be able to "explore" it in a sense and see all of the detail put into the CGI.

The entire cast is incredible. All the characters are so unique and have their own personalities and quirks, but they work together in such a seamless way. My favorite character is the main character Thomas, who really makes the whole thing come to life. The boys that live in The Glade have been there for three years and, of course, they have tried to find a way out. But, most of them have essentially decided that they will live out the rest of their days there. When Thomas shows up, he tests the system and refuses to accept his fate of being stuck in the maze. I admire his character because he thinks outside of the box and finds his own way. He looks past his fear and is a strong leader despite the doubts people may have in him.



It's been very interesting seeing the theme of films that have been coming out recently. "Hunger Games," "Divergent," "Enders Game," "The Giver," and now "The Maze Runner" all have something in common: they tell the story of young adults, children really, who have to group together and take on some very serious situations, sometimes things even adults can't handle. It shows youth questioning authority, standing up for what's right, and making their own way. These strong themes send out a message of empowerment to the youth of our generation, but this can also be a bit overwhelming. I know it's difficult watching adults fight for their lives, kill, and be killed, and have their worlds torn apart. But it's even more shocking to see children go through these trials.

Because of this, I recommend "The Maze Runner" for ages 13 and up, because of the intense situations and violence. It kept me on the edge of my seat and made me hold my breath during the intense situations, and I love when a film gets me so involved, but that may be too much for some to handle. I give "The Maze Runner" 5 out of 5 stars and can't wait to see it again. Catch it in theaters near you now!

— Raven D.

See Raven's video review here: <http://youtu.be/ouprOgTen38>

...

In a generation where the "teenagers face adversity in a dystopian future" is the popular piece of entertainment, "The Maze Runner" is a refreshing entry. Using the element of surprise and leaving unanswered questions, this film proves to be a very formidable mystery, action-thriller.



The acting in this film isn't much different than many other films with teen or child ensembles. They give good performances and they all come off as veterans, especially Blake Cooper (Chuck) who, in only his second feature film, seems like he's been acting on-screen for years. I found him very impressive. The leading performance by Dylan O'Brian is also very good, but is limited to his rather conventional

and predictable character. The most impressive performance in the cast comes from Will Poulter, who plays Gally. His performance earlier this cinematic season in "The Giver" was also impressive and his performance in "We're the Millers" was hilarious, so he is really showing his range. His character is wonderfully written and wonderfully portrayed, so props to him.

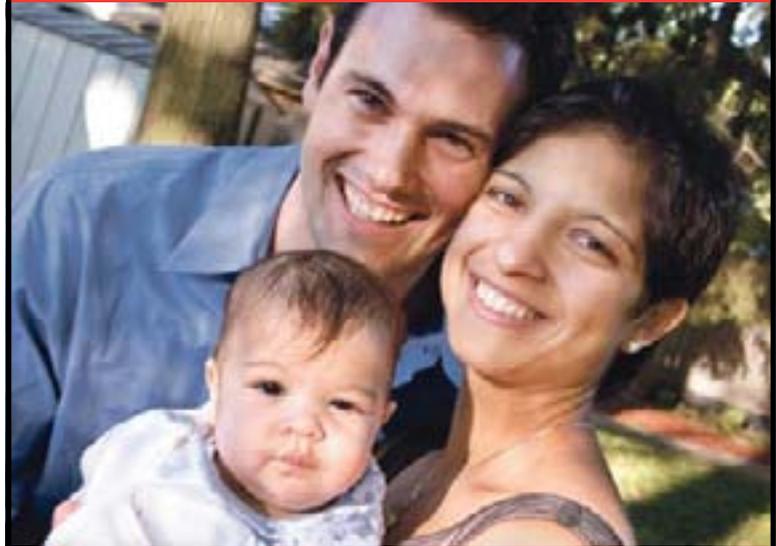
The visual effects in the film are also quite amazing. Enrique Chediak, whose beautiful cinematography was at its best in "127 Hours," gives this film a very crisp look. He doesn't over do his shot composition, nor does he try to give unnecessary landscape shots. He lets the beauty of the film come from the special effects, which is a smart move (although there are some genuinely stunning shots). The seemingly effortless movement of giant set pieces is a testament to the great work of the visual effects team.

But, the best aspect of this film is the writing. The secret this film has is what Alfred Hitchcock famously called the "MacGuffin." It is a plot device that the main protagonist pursues with little or no explanation. This film starts with a boy entering the world, but we don't know why. We get to the middle of the film and we still don't know why these kids are isolated, who is keeping them there, or how big their obstacle is and what stakes are attached. Usually, in a movie of this kind, those questions are all answered in the exposition of the film. But even when this film ends, we are still uncertain about why what we just saw happened. What is the motivation and who is behind it? Then, in a wonderful plot twist, we leave with questions that only a next installment can answer — or maybe not.

This is the rare case of a film that makes us wish for a sequel not because more books were written and a bunch of producers feel the need to adapt every book in a series, but because we are generally interested in what happens next. That is why I give this film 4 out of 5 stars. I recommend it for anyone age 14 and up, as it is a little bloodier and more profane than your average PG-13 thriller.

"The Maze Runner" is a tense, suspenseful mystery thriller, that keeps you asking and on the edge of your seat. — Willie J.

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Calendar

OCTOBER



Hunt for your perfect pumpkin

It's pumpkin-picking time at the Queens County Farm Museum from Oct. 4 through 26, where countless pumpkins are waiting to be taken home and decorated. Families are invited to walk the patch and select their own gourd to bring home. The prices vary depending on size. If you can't make it weekends, you can purchase a pumpkin in the gift shop at the museum.

There is no admission fee to enter the patch.

Pumpkin picking on the farm, Saturdays and Sundays, Oct. 4 through Oct. 26 from 11 am to 4:30 pm. Free with admission to the farm. Pumpkins priced separately.

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

Submit a listing

This calendar is dedicated to bringing our readers the most comprehensive list of events 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!

WED, OCT. 1

IN QUEENS

Lego Building Club: Bellerose Public Library, 250-06 Hillside Ave. at 249th Street; (718) 831-8644; www.queenslibrary.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Children in grades first through sixth can be creative and have fun with Lego building blocks.

Chess Club: Queensboro Hill Public Library, 60-05 Main St. at 63rd Avenue; (718) 359-8332; www.queenslibrary.org; 4-5:30 pm; Free.

Chess club for children and teens is for all player levels. Intermediate and advanced players interested in volunteering as teachers are also welcome.

THURS, OCT. 2

IN QUEENS

Autumn Storytime: Bay Terrace Public Library, 18-35 Bell Blvd. at 23rd Avenue; (718) 423-7004; www.queenslibrary.org; 11:30 am; Free.

Preschoolers and toddlers (ages 18 months to 4 years) enjoy fingerplays, music, rhymes and stories with their parents or caregivers.

FRI, OCT. 3

IN QUEENS

Mother Goose Time: Richmond Hill Library, 118-14 Hillside Ave.; (718) 849-7150; www.queenslibrary.org; 1:15-1:45 pm; Free.

Infants and toddlers and their caregivers are invited for stories, songs, rhymes and playtime.

SAT, OCT. 4

IN QUEENS

Moo At The Zoo: Queens Zoo, 53-51 111th St.; (718) 271-1500; queenszoo.com; 11 am-4 pm; Free with zoo admission.

Check out animal keeper chats, cheese-making demos, hands-on butter making, a cow-milking simulator,



A barking good time

Halloween is for the dogs at Socrates Sculpture Park on Oct. 25.

Don't miss the annual canine contest and Halloween festival — featuring live music, a special art-making workshop with Free Style Arts Association, and face painting by Agostino Arts. There will also be a canine contest for

the best costumed pooch, and foods from local restaurants.

Halloween Festival on Oct. 25 from 11 am to 3 pm. Admission is free admission.

Socrates Sculpture Park [32-01 Vernon Blvd. in Astoria; (718) 956-1819; www.socratessculpturepark.org].

farm-themed crafts, feeding time with the animals, and special giveaways.

Bee Garden: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 2-4 pm; \$20.

Children, ages 5 through 12, learn about local resident bees at QBG, taste some of their honey and make a rolled beeswax candle to take home.

Carnivores, Herbivores, and Omnivores – oh my!: Alley Pond Environmental Center, 228-06 Northern Blvd.; (718) 229-4000; 2-4 pm; \$18.

Children, ages 7 and up, learn about animal teeth, see a live animal presentation, then take a walk to observe and identify nature's animals and what they might be consuming.

FURTHER AFIELD

Pumpkin-carving workshop: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; 10 am-noon; Free with admission to the grounds.

Budding masters 8 years and older explore the carved pumpkins on display, learn about the amazing gourd

family, and then design a creepy pumpkin to take home.

Motion Lab: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 11:30 am-12:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Unlock the mysteries of motion. Children 2 to 5 years old experiment with ramps and tracks, wings, and wheels and things that glide and slide.

Octoberfest benefit: Hillside Swim Club, 151 Signs Rd. between Arlene and Dinsmore streets, Staten Island; noon; \$40 for adults 21 and up; \$20 for ages 14-20; kids 13 and under free.

Fund-raiser for children of Firefighter Lt. Gordon "Matty" Ambelas, who died in a fire earlier this year. Activities include bouncy house, pumpkin painting, dunk tank, and more.

Mixed up vehicles: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Create and color a fantasy vehicle, an amphibious buse or a train with

wings. Children 4 years and older use their imagination in this bookmaking workshop.

SUN, OCT. 5

IN QUEENS

Paint Party: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10:30 am - 12:30 pm; \$8 per family, plus NYSCI admission.

Children, ages 18 months and older, mix up a batch of washable paint from everyday ingredients to make a work of art. Pre-register online at nysci.org/little-makers.

Kickoff To Fall: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy.; (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; 11 am - 4 pm; Free (no gate admission).

Come on out today — or any October weekend — to buy a variety of Hudson Valley apples, donuts, fresh cider, and apple pie.

Moo At The Zoo: 11 am-4 pm. Queens Zoo. See Saturday, Oct. 4.

Huangé Tiange Piano Recital: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Blvd.; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 3 pm; \$15/\$10 students.

In celebration of the Golden Season in Beijing, a stunning concert with 10-year-old composer and pianist Huangé Tiange.

Full Moon Drumming Workshop: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Blvd.; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 7 pm; \$20.

Celebrate the Harvest Moon with a drum circle in Flushing Town Hall's beautiful garden with master drummers from Brazil. Drums provided. All are welcome from beginner to professional.

FURTHER AFIELD

Submerge! NYC's Marine Science Festival: Pier 26 on the Hudson River, Manhattan; 11 am - 3 pm; Free.

This daylong festival provides a hands-on view of ocean and marine science, interactive demonstrations, presentations by scientists, sustainable food vendors, touch tanks, music, catch-and-release fishing, kayak lessons, and more.

Nano Art: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 12:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children get the nitty gritty of the itty bitty and bring small things into focus.

Mixed-up Vehicles: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday,

Continued on page 40

Calendar

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

Continued from page 39

Oct. 4.

Garden tour: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., at Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; (718) 623-7220; www.bbg.org; 2-3 pm and 3:30-4:30 pm; \$12 (\$15 non-members).

Family-friendly peek inside the gardens, learn about garden plots, and make a tasty treat. Pre-registration required and online. Cancelled in case of inclement weather.

"I'm Not Scared": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Tots 2 years and older listen to how Baby Owl and his stuffed friend face their fears with a reading of Jonathan Allen's book.

MON, OCT. 6

IN QUEENS

Board Games: Windsor Park Public Library, 79-50 Bell Blvd. at 73rd Avenue; (718) 468-8300; www.queenslibrary.org; 4-5:30 pm; Free.

Children, ages 5-12, make new friends and have fun playing a variety of board games and doing puzzles.

TUES, OCT. 7

IN QUEENS

ArchForKids Community Workshop: Seaside Public Library, 116-15 Rockaway Blvd.; (718) 634-1876; www.queenslibrary.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Participants explore building facades, the components of greenhouses and the elements of sustainable community design.

WED, OCT. 8

IN QUEENS

Crafts for Kids: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Children in kindergarten through sixth grade make seasonal crafts.

Chess Club: 4-5:30 pm. Queensboro Hill Public Library. See Wednesday, Oct. 1.

Book Discussion and Activity for Girls:

Douglaston/Little Neck Public Library, 249-01 Northern Blvd. at 249th Street; (718) 225-8414; www.queenslibrary.org; 5-6:15 pm; Free.

Mrs. Tina and volunteers lead a book discussion on Roald Dahl's "Matilda." After the discussion, the girls, ages 7-10, create a small art project based on the book.



Photo by Justina Wong

Spooky adventures

Join in and take the trip with Hansel and Gretel on their Halloween Adventure at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre, Oct. 1 through Nov. 1.

Could there be anything more appropriate than a performance of Hansel and Gretel just in time for Halloween?

City Parks Foundation brings back "Hansel and Gretel's Halloween Adventure" at the perfect time of year. Recommended for children ages 3-9, the show picks up where the original Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre production leaves off; with the children's pet swan Samantha flying them back home, just as they begin having wild dreams of Central Park blossoming into an

action-packed Halloween night, complete with mermaids, monsters, pirates, vampires and, of course, a witch!

Performances run from Oct. 1 through Nov. 1, Tuesdays through Fridays at 10:30 am and noon, with an additional show on Wednesdays at 2:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday at 1 pm. On Friday, Oct. 31 — Halloween! — there will be two additional shows at 2:30 pm and 4 pm. Tickets are \$7 for children under 12, \$10 for all others.

The Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre [Central Park at 81st Street and Central Park West, (212) 988-9093; www.cityparksfoundation.org/arts/swedish-cottage-marionette-theatre/]

rhymes and playtime.

Project! World's Fairs: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 8-11 pm; \$20 per person.

Enjoy a night illuminated by images of the past, present and future, inspired by the 1964-65 World's Fair. Against the backdrop of rockets, visitors will be treated to large-scale artist projections and installations on and around NYSCI's building and exhibits.

SAT, OCT. 11

IN QUEENS

Storybook Discovery Day:

Voelker Orth Museum, 149-19 38th Ave.; (718) 359-6227; www.voelkerorthmuseum.org; 11 am; \$5 donation

suggested.

In celebration of National Tell a Story Day, this Storybook Discovery session celebrates stories, books, and book-making. After reading together, children, ages 6 and up, learn to make their own accordion books to share their own stories.

FURTHER AFIELD

Pumpkin carving workshop: 10 am-noon. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Oct. 4.

Motion Lab: 11:30 am-12:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Oct. 4.

Columbus Day: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; 1 and 3 pm; Free with garden admission.

Celebrate the explorer the whole weekend with bats, bats, and more bats. Meet a big brown bat from North America, the endangered Rodrigues bat, and come face-to-face with the largest bat in the world — the Gigantic Flying Fox of Malaysia. Rob Mies, a conservation biologist and bat expert, shares interesting facts about the night flyers in a child-friendly way.

Transit mysteries: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children of all ages are invited to check out the mystery relics from the museum's collection and uncover history.

Go Away! Big Green Monster:

Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Tots 2 years and older listen to the story of Ed Emberly's classic and find out why monsters don't have to be so scary after all. Then make a googly-eyed monster to take home.

SUN, OCT. 12

IN QUEENS

Sink Float Flink: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10:30 am - 12:30 pm; \$8 per family, plus NYSCI admission.

Children, ages 18 months and older, experiment with a variety of materials and design boats to sail in their bathtubs. Preregister online at nysci.org/little-makers.

FURTHER AFIELD

Kid's Abilities Day: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718)

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

735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 10 am; Free with museum admission.

Children with special needs enjoy a day of jumping, swinging and touching.

Columbus Day: 1 and 3 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Oct. 11.

Transit mysteries: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Oct. 11.

Movie Matinees: BAM Kids, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place, Brooklyn; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 2 pm; \$7 children 12 and younger (\$10 adults; \$9 for BAM members).

The BAM series offers the perfect opportunity for families to introduce their children to the classics on the big screen. The first of the series is "Little Fugitive."

MON, OCT. 13

IN QUEENS

The Amazing Maize Maze:

Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy.; (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; 11 am - 4:30 pm; \$5 for children, \$9 for adults, children ages 3 & under free.

Spend Columbus Day getting lost in this three-acre interactive corn maze. The adventure begins with a "Stalk Talk" to prepare you for the challenge of finding clues, solving puzzles and making your way out of the maze.

FURTHER AFIELD

Columbus Day: 1 and 3 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Oct. 11.

TUES, OCT. 14

IN QUEENS

ArchForKids Community Workshop: 4-5 pm. Seaside Public Library. See Tuesday, Oct. 7.

WED, OCT. 15

IN QUEENS

Chess Club: 4-5:30 pm. Queensboro Hill Public Library. See Wednesday, Oct. 1.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Wild Grass": BAM Harvey Theater, 651 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place, Brooklyn; (718) 636-4100; www.bam.org; 7:30 pm; \$20 and up.

Presented by the Beijing Dance Theater.

THURS, OCT. 16

IN QUEENS

Autumn Storytime: Bay Terrace



Day of the Dead & more

Come and celebrate all things ghoulish at the re-mixed festival of Dia de Los Muertos, Halloween, and All Saints' Day at Flushing Town Hall on Oct. 31.

Families celebrate and learn all about the Mexican holiday of Dia de los Muertos, the American tradition of trick-or-treating on Halloween, and the religious significance of All Saints' Day all in one day at this hands-on festival workshop.

Children of all ages are invited to wear their costumes and take part in mask making, All Saints' Day medallions, Mexican sugar skulls, and ghost stories. Halloween treats are available for all participants.

Re-Mixed Festival workshop on Oct. 31 from 4 to 7 pm. Free

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

Public Library, 18-35 Bell Blvd. at 23rd Avenue; (718) 423-7004; www.queenslibrary.org; 11:30 am; Free.

Preschoolers and toddlers (ages 18 months to 4 years) enjoy fingerplays, music, rhymes and stories with their parents or caregivers.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Wild Grass": 7:30 pm. BAM Harvey Theater. See Wednesday, Oct. 15.

FRI, OCT. 17

IN QUEENS

Mother Goose Time: Richmond Hill Library, 118-14 Hillside Ave.; (718) 849-7150; www.queenslibrary.org; 1:15-1:45 pm; Free.

Infants and toddlers and their caregivers are invited for stories, songs, rhymes and playtime.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Wild Grass": 7:30 pm. BAM Harvey Theater. See Wednesday, Oct. 15.

SAT, OCT. 18

IN QUEENS

Astronomy Adventure: Alley Pond Environmental Center, 228-06 Northern Blvd.; (718) 229-4000; 7:30-9:30 pm; \$16; \$7 for children 9-12.

Children, ages 9 and up, join professor and astronomer Mark Freilich for an exciting evening of star gazing.

FURTHER AFIELD

Carving demonstrations: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; check for time; Free with admission to the grounds.

Master carver Ray Villafane transforms the gentle giant pumpkins into unearthly spooky creatures. A Q&A follows the demonstrations and snacks.

Pumpkin-carving workshop: 10 am-noon. New York Botanical Garden.

See Saturday, Oct. 4.

Baby Loves Salsa: BAM Cafe, 30 Lafayette Ave. between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street, Brooklyn; www.bam.org/programs/bamcafe-live; 10:30 am; \$9.

Songwriter Jose Conde, is a bilingual, cross cultural, rhythmic concert that teaches children 2 to 6 years old the basics of salsa, featuring original music, and audience participation.

Motion Lab: 11:30 am-12:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Oct. 4.

The Great Pumpkin: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Explore the wonderful world of gourds. Children 2 years and older learn all about the history and then watch "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" and have snacks and do a pumpkin printing.

Shadow puppet stories: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Transport your imagination by creating silhouette puppets and a nighttime cityscape. For children 4 years and older.

Nighttime adventure: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; 6:30-8:30 pm; \$20 (\$15 members).

Grab a flashlight and explore the pumpkin sculptures as you travel along the Trick-or-Treat Trail, listen for critters, or sit in on a spooky story. Capture a skeleton and be on the look out for ghosts. Children also dig around for decomposers and decorate a Halloween pumpkin. Advance tickets

recommended.

"Wild Grass": 7:30 pm. BAM Harvey Theater. See Wednesday, Oct. 15.

SUN, OCT. 19

IN QUEENS

Shrinky Dinks: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10:30 am - 12:30 pm; \$8 per family, plus NYSCI admission.

Children, ages 18 months and older, design a work of art on recycled plastic and shrink it down into a homemade shrinky dink. Preregister online at nysci.org/little-makers.

Calligraphy Workshop: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 1 pm; \$10 adults/\$8 children.

Participants the different styles of Arabic calligraphy and have their names rendered in calligraphic script.

FURTHER AFIELD

Carving demonstrations: check for time. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Oct. 18.

The Great Pumpkin: 11:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Oct. 18.

Shadow puppet stories: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Oct. 18.

MON, OCT. 20

IN QUEENS

"Find the Feeling" Story Hour: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd.; (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Children age 5 and under enjoy stories that highlight common feelings and encourage children to express and understand their emotions.

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Calendar

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

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TUES, OCT. 21

IN QUEENS

"Read for the Record" Story and Craft Program: Bellerose Public Library, 250-06 Hillside Ave. at 249th Street; (718) 831-8644; www.queenslibrary.org; 3:30-4:30 pm; Free.

Children ages 4-7 will enjoy the picture book "Bunny Cakes," by Rosemary Wells, and do a related craft activity.

ArchForKids Community Workshop: 4-5 pm. Seaside Public Library. See Tuesday, Oct. 7.

WED, OCT. 22

IN QUEENS

Chess Club: 4-5:30 pm. Queensboro Hill Public Library. See Wednesday, Oct. 1.

Scattered Light Opening Celebration: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscienc.org; 5-8 pm; Free with NYSCI admission.

The evening is inspired by the Celebration of Mind festival, and features magicians, music, and activities that puzzle, raise mathematical concepts and tease ideas of perception.

THURS, OCT. 23

IN QUEENS

Autumn Storytime: Bay Terrace Public Library, 18-35 Bell Blvd. at 23rd Avenue; (718) 423-7004; www.queenslibrary.org; 11:30 am; Free.

Preschoolers and toddlers (ages 18 months to 4 years) enjoy fingerplays, music, rhymes and stories with their parents or caregivers.

FURTHER AFIELD

Mystery ride: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 6 pm; \$7 (\$5 children 2-17 and seniors).

Climb aboard for underground fun. Families are invited to take the spooky subway challenge and search for clues, while listening to music, do crafts and games and have yummy refreshments. Dress up in your ghoulishly clever costume for maximum Halloween fun. Advanced registration recommended.

FRI, OCT. 24

IN QUEENS

Mother Goose Time: Richmond Hill Library, 118-14 Hillside Ave.; (718) 849-7150; www.queenslibrary.org; 1:15-1:45 pm; Free.

Infants and toddlers and their caregivers are invited for stories, songs, rhymes and playtime.

Halloween Haunted House:

Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy.; (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; 4-7 pm; \$4.

Hayrides, Halloween treats, mulled cider, pumpkins and apples on sale, and more, for children ages 6-12.

FURTHER AFIELD

Happy Halloween: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 10 am; Free with museum admission.

Celebrate and listen to spooky tales, create a fun craft to take home and have fun the whole day.

Monster Mash: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 4-8 pm; \$13 (\$8 members).

Calling all ghosts, ghouls, goblins and witches. Come dressed and face your fears of all that is creepy and crawly. Tickets may be purchased in advance.

Nighttime adventure: 6:30-8:30 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Oct. 18.

SAT, OCT. 25

IN QUEENS

Halloween Harvest Festival: Socrates Sculpture Park, 32-01 Vernon Blvd.; 718-956-1819; www.socratesculpturepark.org; 11 am-3 pm; Free.

Make a costume with Socrates artists and enjoy live music, art-making workshop, face painting and enter your dog in the ever popular, annual Juried Canine Costume Contest!

Pumpkin Chucking: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscienc.org; 1 & 3 pm; Free with NYSCI admission.

Watch NYSCI's catapult, Chuck, toss pumpkins in the air.

Halloween Haunted House: 4-7 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Friday, Oct. 24.

FURTHER AFIELD

Halloween Ball Kids Costume Cruise: Circle Line, Pier 83 at W. 42nd St, Manhattan; (212) 563-3200; www.circleline42.com; \$28 adults, \$20 children 3-12.

The 75-minute tour is an opportunity for kids to cruise to the Statue of Liberty and back while enjoying live entertainment, interactive tour guides, and kid-friendly food and drinks available for purchase. Boarding at 9:30 am, cruise begins at 10 am.

Family Puppet Workshops: BAM Kids, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place, Brooklyn; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 10 am-12:30 pm; \$7.

Participants will learn about the different kinds of puppets with How to be a Puppeteer for children 4 to 8 years old.

Pumpkin-carving workshop: 10 am-noon. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Oct. 4.

Happy Halloween: 10 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Friday, Oct. 24.

Puppets on Film: BAM Kids, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place, Brooklyn; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 11 am; \$7 children 12 and younger (\$10 adults, \$9 BAM members).

The fourth annual festival offers the of puppetry on film. Shortstack! Kids Shorts Program is the first of the series. The fourth annual festival offers the of puppetry on film also features "Muppets Most Wanted."

Motion Lab: 11:30 am-12:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Oct. 4.

Spooky Subway stories: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Join with fellow detectives to solve an interactive 100-year-old mystery involving missing keys, squeaky wheels, and subway spirits. Children over age 5 will enjoy searching for clues and a hidden stash of candy.

Monster Mash: 4-8 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Friday, Oct. 24.

Nighttime adventure: 6:30-8:30 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Oct. 18.

SUN, OCT. 26

IN QUEENS

Spook-tacular Monster Making: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscienc.org; 10:30 am - 12:30 pm; \$8 per family, plus NYSCI admission.

Kids transform socks, buttons, fabric and everyday household materials into a spook-tacular monster to call their own, for children ages 18 months and older. Preregister online at nysci.org/little-makers.

Children's Fall Festival: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy.; (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; 11 am - 4 pm; \$5.

Wear your costumes and enjoy free children's games & bounces, professional character look-a-likes, pig races, kids' pony rides, food, live country music, and more.

National Chemistry Day: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [\[science.org\]\(http://science.org\); Noon - 5 pm; Free with NYSCI admission.](http://www.ny-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

The event will showcase chemistry principles using demonstrations performed by local college students and volunteers from local industries.

Pumpkin Chucking: 1 & 3 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Oct. 25.

Bee Garden: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 2-4 pm; \$20.

Children, ages 5 through 12, help put the vegetable beds to sleep and learn about the seasonal changes. Then they plant something in the garden, take a walk around the Garden to see the changing leaves and make a leaf collage.

Halloween Haunted House: 4-7 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Friday, Oct. 24.

FURTHER AFIELD

Family Puppet Workshops: BAM Kids, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place, Brooklyn; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 10 am-12:15 pm; \$7.

Participants will learn about the different kinds of puppets including animal marionettes. For children 6 to 9 years old.

Puppets on Film: BAM Kids, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place, Brooklyn; (718) 636-4129; www.bam.org; 11 am; \$7 children 12 and younger (\$10 adults, \$9 BAM members).

The fourth annual festival offers the of puppetry on film, featuring "Davy Jones' Locker."

Spooky Subway stories: 1:30 pm. New York Transit Museum. See Saturday, Oct. 25.

MON, OCT. 27

IN QUEENS

Board Games: 4-5:30 pm. Windsor Park Public Library. See Monday, Oct. 6.

TUES, OCT. 28

IN QUEENS

"Find the Feeling" Story Hour: Seaside Public Library, 116-15 Rockaway Blvd.; (718) 634-1876; www.queenslibrary.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Children, ages 6 and under, enjoy stories that highlight common feelings and encourage children to express and understand their emotions.

WED, OCT. 29

IN QUEENS

Chess Club: 4-5:30 pm. Queensboro

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Calendar

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

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Hill Public Library. See Wednesday, Oct. 1.

Halloween Family Fun: Voelker Orth Museum, 149-19 38th Ave.; (718) 359-6227; www.vomuseum.org; 5-7 pm; \$5 donation suggested.

Arrive in costume and enjoy Halloween-themed art projects, spooky terrarium making complete with hungry, live Venus fly traps, not-too-scary stories, treats and surprises.

Haunted Halloween Hike: Alley Pond Environmental Center, 228-06 Northern Blvd.; (718) 229-4000; 6:30-8 pm; \$13.

Children, ages 8-12, enjoy haunted activities, a spooky trail walk, hot chocolate and ghost stories.

THURS, OCT. 30

IN QUEENS

Autumn Storytime: Bay Terrace Public Library, 18-35 Bell Blvd. at 23rd Avenue; (718) 423-7004; www.queenslibrary.org; 11:30 am; Free.

Preschoolers and toddlers (ages 18 months to 4 years) enjoy fingerplays, music, rhymes and stories with their parents or caregivers.

FRI, OCT. 31

IN QUEENS

Teeny Tiny Trick O'Treaters: Alley Pond Environmental Center, 228-06 Northern Blvd.; (718) 229-4000; 1-2:30 pm; \$18.

Children, ages 18 months to 4 years can create not-so-scary crafts, play Halloween games, eat a haunted snack, and more.

Halloween Festival: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Blvd.; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 4-7 pm; Free.

Celebrate Dia de los Muertos, Halloween and All Saints' Day with hands-on festive fun for all ages. Arrive in costume and enjoy mask making, All Saints' Day medallions, Mexican sugar skulls, and ghost stories.

FURTHER AFIELD

BAMboo!: BAM Peter Jay Sharp Building, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn; (718) 636-4100; www.bam.org; 4-7 pm; Free.

The Brooklyn Academy of Music's annual Halloween celebration with treats, games, a costume contest and more. This year's theme is Around the World.

Nighttime adventure: 6:30-8:30 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Oct. 18.

SAT, NOV. 1

IN QUEENS

Pumpkin Chucking: 1 & 3 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Oct. 25.

FURTHER AFIELD

Subway safety: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Ever wonder about the people that work underground? Children learn how subway workers keep us safe on and off the trains.

Train school: New York Transit Museum, Boerum Place at Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn; (718) 694-1600; www.mta.info/mta/museum; 2-4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Future conductors and motormen take control of a train in the Computer Lab and travel over virtual track miles learning the ins and outs of operating a train. Suggested for children over 10 years old. Limited space, register in advance.

LONG-RUNNING

IN QUEENS

Science Playground: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Weekdays, 9:30 am-5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm, Now - Wed, Dec. 31; \$4, plus museum admission.

Children are encouraged to explore science through slides, seesaws, climbing webs, a water play area, sand boxes, and more, weather permitting.

Rocket Park Mini Golf: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Weekdays, 9:30 am-5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm, Now - Wed, Dec. 31; \$6 (adults), \$5 (children and seniors), plus museum admission.

Golfers of all ages can learn about key science concepts such as propulsion, gravity, escape velocity, launch window, gravitational assist, and more!

"Galapagos: Nature's Wonderland in 3D": New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Weekdays, 11 am & 2 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 & 3 pm, Now - Sun, Dec. 21; \$6 adults; \$5 children.

In this 3D movie, travel to the Galapagos archipelago to meet giant half-ton tortoises and marine iguanas that spit sea-salt from their noses, hunt fishes with the colorful blue-footed boobies, and swim with tiny penguins.

Farmer's Market Fridays: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street;

(718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; Fridays, 8:30 am-4 pm, Now - Fri, Nov. 21; Free.

Peruse local produce and specialty products at this seasonal market.

Youth Adaptive Swim: Roy Wilkins Family Center, Baisley Blvd & 177th St.; Fridays, 4 pm.; Free with recreation center membership.

Children and teens with disabilities can practice swimming skills in this adaptive swim program.

GrowNYC Greenmarket: Socrates Sculpture Park, 32-01 Vernon Blvd.; 718-956-1819; www.socratessculpturepark.org; Saturdays, 8 am-4 pm, Now - Sat, Nov. 22; Free.

Large selection of seasonal produce, orchard fruit and juice, meat, poultry and eggs and multi-ethnic artisan breads. Free cooking demonstrations and family friendly activities.

The Amazing Maize Maze:

Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy.; (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 am - 4:30 pm, Now - Sun, Oct. 26; \$5 for children, \$9 for adults, children ages 3 & under free.

Enjoy getting lost in this 3-acre interactive corn maze. The adventure begins with a "Stalk Talk" to prepare you for the challenge of finding clues, solving puzzles and making your way out of the maze.

Pumpkin Patch: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy.; (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 am - 4:30 pm, Sat, Oct. 4 - Sun, Oct. 26; Free with museum admission.

Enjoy wandering through the planting fields to find your perfect pumpkin.

FURTHER AFIELD

Traveling in the World of Tomorrow: The Future of Transportation at New York's World's Fairs: New York Transit Museum Gallery Annex at Grand Central Terminal, 42nd Street and Park Avenue, Manhattan; (212) 878-0106; www.grandcentralterminal.com; Monday - Friday, 8 am-8 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 10 am-6 pm; Free.

This exhibition celebrates the 50th and 75th anniversaries of the 1939 and 1964 Fairs. With a variety of postcards, photos, ephemera and souvenirs, the exhibition shows how transportation was a symbol for the future, its potential effect on modern American life, and the technological advancements in transportation that American corporations claimed would make a better world possible.

Dinosaur Safari: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road, The Bronx; (718) 220-5103; www.bronx-zoo.com; Weekdays, 10 am-5 pm,

Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-5:30 pm, Now - Sun, Nov. 2; \$20.95 (\$16.95 children; Free for children under 3; \$18.95 seniors).

Mysteries Revealed features more than 30 dinosaur species and how scientists reconstruct the fossil pieces. The ride runs through the zoo and has fully animatronic dinosaurs as they move and snarl. The 40 foot T-Rex is joined by deinonychus, prodohadros, stegosaurus and edmontonia.

Touch tank: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-3:30 pm, Now - Sat, Nov. 1; Free with museum admission.

Children of all ages touch a starfish, a horseshoe crab, or a sea snail.

Haunted Pumpkin Garden: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Mondays - Thursdays, 1:30-5:30 pm, Fridays, 1:30 - 5:30 pm, Saturdays, 10 am to 5:30 pm, Sundays, 10 am-5:30 pm, Now - Fri, Oct. 31; Free with garden admission.

Youngsters experience guided activities, play inside a pumpkin house, go on a scavenger hunt for fall fruits and nuts; look for worms, put on a show at the Pumpkin Puppet Theater, read spooky stories, watch seeds sprout. On Saturday and Sunday children participate in a costumed parade that travels throughout the Children's Adventure Garden.

Dragons, dinosaurs and boo at the Zoo: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road, The Bronx; (718) 220-5103; www.bronx-zoo.com; Saturday, Oct. 4, 10 am; Sunday, Oct. 5, 10 am; Saturday, Oct. 11, 10 am; Sunday, Oct. 12, 10 am; Monday, Oct. 13, 10 am; Saturday, Oct. 18, 10 am; Saturday, Oct. 25, 10 am; Sunday, Oct. 26, 10 am; Friday, Oct. 31, 10 am; Saturday, Nov. 1, 10 am; Sunday, Nov. 2, 9 am; Activities included with general admission.

It's that time of year again for scary spirits, garish ghouls, and pretty pumpkins. There is also a costumed parade, music, magic and crafts.

Creepy Creatures of Halloween: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Saturdays and Sundays, Noon and 2 pm, Now - Fri, Oct. 31; Free with garden admission.

Youngsters meet slithering snakes and scaly reptiles, and learn why they are scary at all. Each weekend features a different creature from small snakes, snapping turtles and a Tegu Lizard.

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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Lost sleep linked to weight gain in kids

Most kids don't get enough sleep, plain and simple. Lack of sleep leads to sluggishness and inattention, and it can cause kids to pack on the pounds. Chronic sleep deprivation may also have other long-term effects — everything from catching more colds and viruses to anxiety and depression.

Most children between the ages of 4 and 10 do not get the recommended amount of sleep. The National Sleep Foundation recommends that preschoolers between the ages of 3 and 5 sleep 11 to 13 hours daily and that children ages 5-10 sleep 10 to 11 hours. But this can be a hard task when some moms don't make it home from work by that time, or many kids have afternoon activities that aren't over until 6 pm or later — and then it's dinner time. Yet, regardless of schedules, sleep needs to be a priority. There have been many

studies on children's sleep and they all have similar findings.

The correlation

Harvard School of Public Health found that lack of sleep contributes greatly to obesity in children and adults. In addition, the number of adults getting adequate sleep measured as at least eight hours each night has drastically dwindled from 35 percent to 28 percent within a seven-year time frame.

Columbia University performed a study that found that teens (16 or younger) who got less than six hours of sleep each night were at a 20 percent greater risk of being obese by the time they reached age 21.

In New Zealand, a study showed that for every hour of lost sleep in childhood, adults were at a 50 percent greater risk of being obese by the time they reached age 32.

While the individual studies and

their subjects differ, all of them suggest that lack of sleep causes weight gain. Let's also remember that in addition to weight gain, it also causes low performance in school, anxiety, poor judgment, and more. Just consider how we get through a day when extremely tired ourselves, and how easy it can be to overeat when we grab a snack to combat our fatigue.

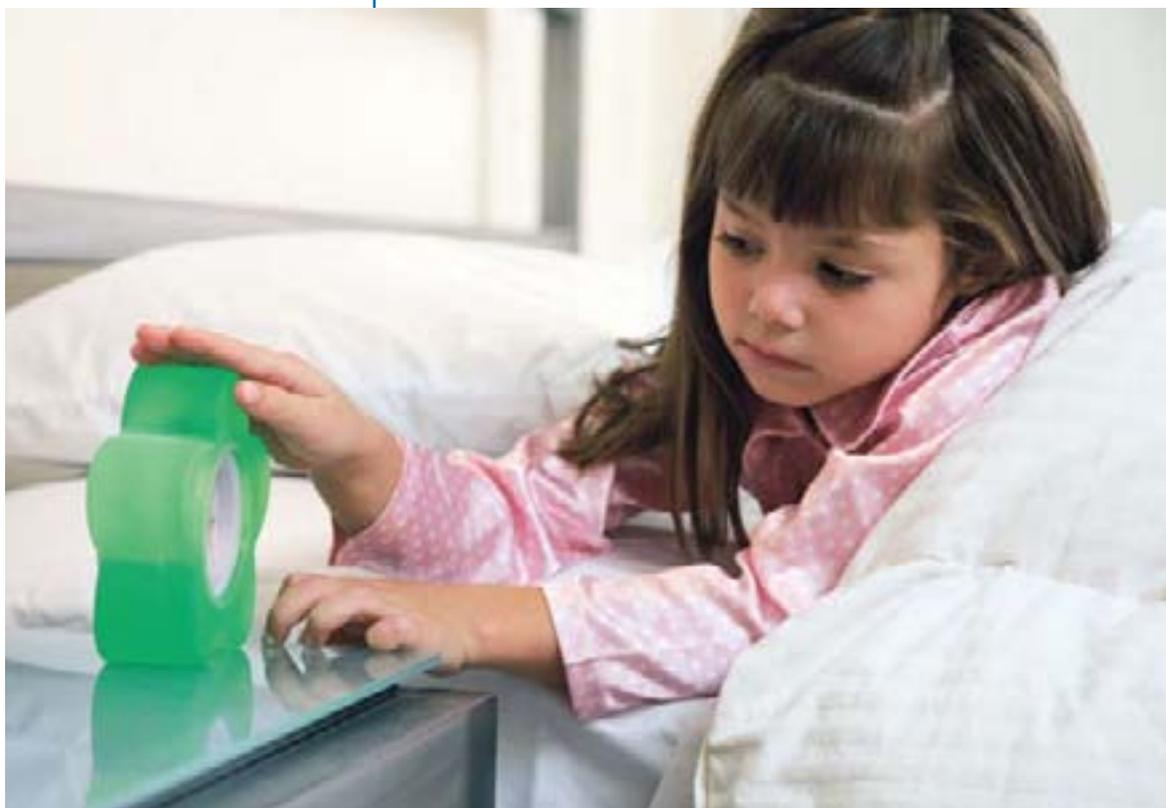
Can you catch up on lost sleep?

Researchers at the University of Chicago say that if kids catch up on weekend sleep, it may help prevent them from gaining extra weight. This study published in the journal *Pediatrics* suggests that it's beneficial to let our kids sleep in on weekends. It shows that obese children did sleep less overall, their sleep schedules were more irregular, and they were less likely to experience "catch-up" sleep on the weekends. Compared to children who slept about nine hours a night, children who slept an average of seven hours and had the most irregular sleep patterns had a fourfold greater risk of being obese.

Kids who maintained irregular weekday sleep schedules but made up for lost sleep during weekends were less likely to be obese than children who missed out on the catch-up sleep. Parents must be careful not to let children sleep too late though, which can throw off their ability to fall asleep at bedtime. An hour is a good catch-up time allotment.

So try your best to keep a regular sleep schedule for your kids, but when they just can't get those hours of uninterrupted snooze time, it might be beneficial to let them sleep in a bit during the weekend.

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 Sullivan on her blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.



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