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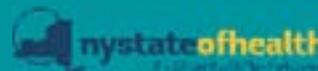
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Letter from the publisher

Desperate need of love

I'm pretty sure it was more than St. Valentine's Day that prompted a celebration of love in the month of February. Living in the Northeast means that by now we are sick and tired of winter and are looking forward to anything to help us feel warm and nurtured. Just like holiday lights at Winter Solstice, love and hearts and chocolate candy sounds pretty darned good in early February.

As we read the horrible news headlines emerging around the globe, one has little doubt that this world is in desperate need of love. We read about the horrors of children whose childhoods are sabo-



taged by an array of devastation. We pale with disbelief that any child's reality could be so shocking and so devoid of love that in its place is obscenity. Yet we also know these are truths and that the headlines don't lie.

Knowing these horrendous truths should prompt all of us who are largely blessed with prosperity, health, and opportunity, the means and skill to be profound nurturers and love givers/teachers.

We have mused on this topic of love in many ways in this issue. We have of course pointed out events around town that will help us celebrate the Cupid in us all and we

have naturally written about ways to love better and more successfully. Perhaps more importantly, we have attempted to talk about methods for teaching love to our children. We have had experts in this topic give us some sound direction to find some keys to the process. We have even touched on the topic of in-laws and it's not just comedians who understand the significance of that source of possible friction.

In thinking about love, I myself, have pondered the difficulty of letting go as well as holding on. Sometimes the better expression of love is in not being active, but in stepping back and watching from afar. For me and for most "empty-nesters" not being the parent who is loving up close anymore is hav-

ing to learn a new way of operating through this magical thing we call love. When to give and when not to becomes our new mantra and modus operandi.

Enjoy this crazy winter month and have fun in the snow and ice. For sure, we will be getting it. It's February in the Northeast. Be joyful and love each other. As Lennon and McCartney said "Love is the Answer." Without a doubt.

Thanks for reading.

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Simple ways to show your kids LOVE

BY GAYLA GRACE

Your kids know you love them, right? I'm sure they could still use a few extra strokes or simple reminders of how important they are to you. Try some new ways this month to say, "I love you."

- Surprise them with a new game on Saturday morning. Enjoy donuts and hot chocolate while learning to play the game. Be sure to include the whole family.

- Tell them the story of their birth. Show pictures of how they looked as a newborn, and talk about who came to visit in the beginning. Make sure they know how excited you were when they entered your life.

- Love them despite their faults. Offer them grace freely and often.

- Find a unique quality about each of your children and praise them

for it. Whether it's a sensitive spirit toward a sibling or a quick-to-forgive gesture toward friends, tell them how it makes them special.

- Indulge in a child-specific treat, and enjoy some one-on-one time together. Ask for input and make plans ahead so they know it's a special occasion.

- Compliment your child in front of another adult. Be specific with an example of good behavior as you beam with pride.

- Praise their efforts, not just results. Don't expect perfection on every chore or straight-As on every report card. Let them know you notice when they do their best.

- Let them pick their favorite book and read to them, even when you don't want to.

- Play inside together on a rainy day. Make forts with chairs and blankets or play a game of hide-and-seek.

- Accompany them to walk the dog. Ask about their day at school or a budding friendship. Listen more than you talk.

- Allow them to be messy. Play with finger paints and Play-Doh. Go outside and spray Silly String on each other.

- Display their artwork on your refrigerator or window. Talk about what a great job they did and how you love to look at it every day.

- Put a surprise in their lunch. Include a note that says, "I love you."

- Get off social media and completely tune in when they're talking.

Refrain from multi-tasking and focus on their needs.

- Patiently help them with homework. Don't raise your voice when you have to explain it one more time.

- Ask for their ideas when you plan your next vacation. Look at fun places to visit on the computer and dream together for future trips.

- Sit under the stars and talk about the beauty of god's creation.

- Take off your serious hat and make them laugh. Tell jokes or watch a funny movie together. Tickle them until they cry.

- Offer a no-rules day. Let your kids stay in their pjs all day and eat and play whatever they want.

- Ask your child to sing to you. Join in and finish the song as a duet. Let your child know that you love hearing her beautiful voice.

- Surprise them with a simple gift through the mail such as a comic book, a glow-in-the-dark pencil, or their favorite player's card. Include a note of "I love you."

- Make s'mores around the fire pit or roast marshmallows in the fireplace. Include a cup of hot cocoa or favorite beverage with it.

- Start fun traditions for holidays and birthdays that your child can look forward to as a family.

- Get to know their friends and encourage healthy friendships. Take everyone out for a movie night or bowling night once in a while.

- Be their biggest fan. Let them experiment with sporting activities, music lessons, and other extracurricular activities. Cheer them on as they seek to find what fits for them.

- Allow them to be different from you.

- Treat them with respect. Don't interrupt when they're talking. Ask for their opinion as often as possible and include them in family decisions as they get older.

- Hug, kiss, and shower them with physical affection every day. Tell them at least once a day, "I love you."

Books to help your kids feel loved

"You Are Special" by Max Lucado
 "Little Things Long Remembered: Making Your Children Feel Special Every Day" by Susan Newman
 "101 Ways to Make Your Child Feel Special" by Vicki Lansky
 "Oh, The Places You'll Go" by Dr. Seuss

As a freelance journalist, Gayla Grace loves sharing experiences to encourage other parents. She is thankful for her five children, who love her despite her not-so-perfect parenting.

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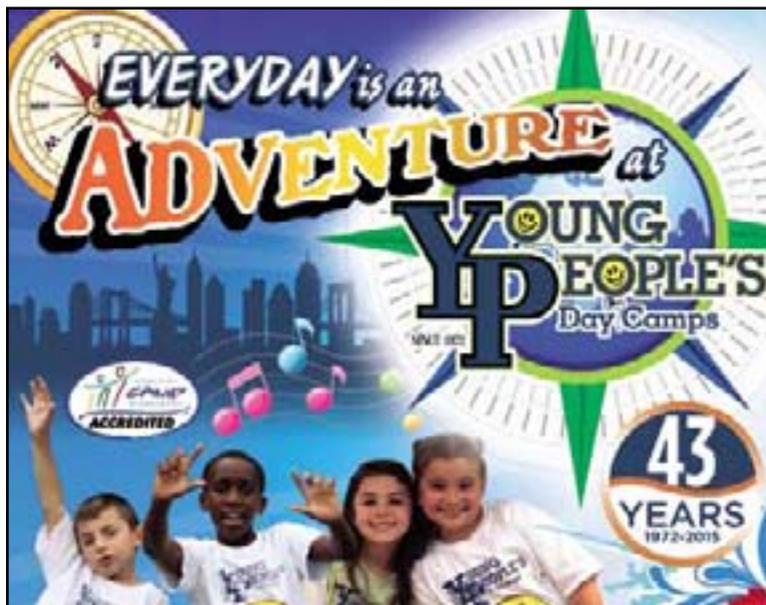


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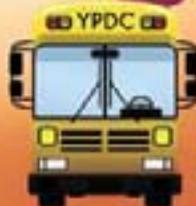
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Falling in love again

Make time for
romance with
your spouse
— over and
over again

BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-
TIEMAN

As Valentine's Day rolls around again, I find myself reflecting on love relationships in general and marriage in particular. You may be wondering why I am writing about marriage in a parent resource magazine. The answer is simple: the model for marriage (or any committed relationship) we provide for our children has implications for generations to come.

The intricate connection between marriage and parenting can perhaps best be illustrated by comparing a family to a mobile. If you have ever carefully observed a mobile, you probably noticed that all the connec-

tions make it impossible to touch one piece without moving all the others. Some may teeter wildly while others barely quiver, but they all move. The same is true of families. What affects a person in one relationship will affect all of her other relationships. In short, your parenting will be affected by your marriage and vice versa.

I have been puzzling over the question of why we assume dating and courtship are active and stimulating, whereas marriage is passive and routine? Most wedding ceremonies are chock full of action words — promises to love, honor, cherish, support, nurture. So far, I haven't attended a wedding in which one of the vows was, "I promise to become less attractive, less affectionate, uncom-

municative, distant, and to take thee for granted for as long as we both shall live."

All too often, I see couples investing more time, energy, thought, and money on planning and preparing for their wedding day than they will ever spend on their relationship again. Maybe we need to require that couples be married for at least a year, better yet five years, before they get a wedding. If only we were as committed to creating lifelong, satisfying relationships as we are to throwing perfect weddings! Then maybe all our talk about the importance, value, and even sacredness of marriage would be more than just talk.

One of the most common excuses for a marriage gone stale is lack of time. Well, I'm here to tell you that courting couples have the same 24 hours in their day as married couples. Courting couples are often full-time students who hold jobs, or are both employed full time, or employed full time and have children. Married couples who complain of having no time for each other somehow find time to chat and text or do lunch with friends or co-workers, watch television, surf the net, and participate in social media.

Clearly, what has changed are a

couple's priorities, not the amount of time available. When you care about someone, you make time to let them know it. If only couples would work as hard to keep each other as they did to get each other in the first place. The key word here being "work." Every one of us who has ever been involved in a committed relationship knows how to court. We must have been fairly good at it at one time. There is no good reason for stopping. Marriage doesn't extinguish the desire to be courted.

As a culture, we are in love with falling in love. Unfortunately, this obsession with falling in love is not conducive to long-term, committed relationships like marriage. But perhaps it could be if we changed the rules a bit. We tend to believe that falling in love with a person can happen only once. Then when you fall out of love with that person, you move on to the next. The fact is, you don't have to fall out of love to fall in love. I have personally fallen in love, on numerous occasions, with the same man: my husband of 29 years. Each time has been different, surprising, exciting, and deeply satisfying.

Falling in love is easy. Staying in love is the real challenge. Here are a few suggestions for meeting the challenge:

Continue becoming yourself. I once heard a university provost say, "Becoming is superior to being." "Being" describes a static state, while "becoming" recognizes the active, evolving nature of the self. Becoming also suggests that the process is one over which we have control. Take responsibility for knowing what your needs are, for communicating them to others, and for getting them met. Your spouse is not capable of knowing or responsible for fulfilling all your needs. And the only way he can know what you need or want is if you tell him. Have realistic expectations for yourself and others. Remember, the only person you can change is yourself. Continue becoming the best version of yourself.

Learn and practice effective communication. Increase your feeling word vocabulary. The more accurately you can identify your feelings, the more likely you are to effectively express them and get the associated needs met. Accept conflict as a natural part of any intimate relationship. Arguing does not have to be destructive.

Learn and practice rules for fighting fair. Learn and practice the steps for problem solving. First and foremost, identify and define the problem. The more accurately you define the problem, the more likely you are to arrive at a mutually agreed upon, effective solution. (If you discover issues in your marriage that you are not sure how to address, get professional help. Marital therapy is not restricted to couples with serious problems. Seek help before what is simply irritating becomes a crisis.)

Revisit your courtship. Research has shown that one characteristic of couples in lasting marriages is a fond recollection of their earliest times together — their meeting and courtship. Take time to recall how you met and what you did to attract one another in the first place. If it worked then, chances are it will work now. Expressing appreciation, noticing when your partner looks especially attractive, leaving notes, holding hands, calling just to say hello — all those little things you did when you were courting are just as important now as they were then.

Create opportunities for falling in love. Schedule time to spend together regularly. Spur-of-the-moment outings are lovely, but don't depend on them happening in the fast-paced lives we live. Take a walk and talk. Learn how to do something new as a couple. Choose a book and agree to read and discuss it. Better yet, read aloud to one another. Time together doesn't have to be spontaneous or expensive to be meaningful.

Relationships that last involve two people committed to spending a lifetime falling in love again. So that is my wish for you this Valentine's Day. May you look for opportunities and find reasons to fall in love with one another over and over for as long as you both shall live. You and your children will reap the rewards.

Carolyn Waterbury-Tieman has degrees in Child Development, Family Studies, and Marriage and Family Therapy. Waterbury-Tieman has been married for 29 years and has two sons, ages 24 and 14. She spent 15 years in various agencies and clinics as a family therapist and parent educator and has written extensively on the topic of parenting. To read more, visit www.aparent4life.com or follow A Parent for Life on Facebook. To contact her, please e-mail parent4life@yahoo.com.

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Learning to love your mother-in-law ...or daughter-in-law!

How to make
the most of a
relationship
with a bad
reputation

BY JAN PIERCE

Recently, I sent a list of six questions to my women friends asking about their relationship with their mother-in-law or their daughter-in-law. The answers came back almost immediately, telling me this is a hot topic.

I remember the day my son announced his engagement. I was thrilled — just filled with happiness for him and his intended bride. But soon after came the realization that I'd be a mother-in-law. I wasn't quite as thrilled.

Why? Well, to be honest, mothers-in-law have a bad reputation. They are the butt of jokes about their heavy hand, their unwanted advice, and their tendency to see

no wrong in their precious sons, even when they're acting like rats. How to combat the stereotype? How to do better?

One place to begin in understanding this uncertain relationship is to think of our own nuclear families. Ideally, relationships between parents and children are based on a foundation of unconditional love. We love our parents and they love us. We love our children and they love us. But even in this most natural of relationships, there are tensions. Add to that a merging of two different family backgrounds and traditions, and the room for misunderstanding and animosity is multiplied many times.

So what were the findings? What themes ran through all the success-

ful relationships and what trouble spots reared their ugly heads over and over?

Here are the six questions I asked. You might want to jot down some answers of your own.

- If you have a good relationship with your mother-in-law or daughter-in-law, name three reasons why.

- If there are problems in the relationship, give the general areas of tension, e.g. parenting, holidays, communication, etc.

- Name three areas that might be "touchy" in the relationship.

- When you experience tension or misunderstandings, what helps? Conversation, heart-to-hearts, letting it go? Other?

- Talk about the role of advice in your relationship. Do you appreciate it? Feel confident in giving it? Hate it?

- What would be the ideal in-law relationship in your opinion?

The Findings

Not surprisingly, the most successful relationships were built on mutual trust and understanding. Many younger women spoke of uncertainty and lack of confidence in their role as daughters-in-law in their early years of marriage. As they were learning to be a wife, they also had to take on the responsibility of a relationship with a woman they barely knew. Those who developed a positive relationship, even a friendship, went through a time of testing, learning to trust, and deciding to "let it

Tips for daughters-in-law

- Allow your mother-in-law to continue to play a role in her son's life. She's earned it.
- Know that strong relationships take time to build. In the meantime, be willing to let things go for the sake of a future relationship.
- Don't assume your mother-in-law will be just like your own mother (or any other person you know).
- As much as possible, keep conversation positive, free of gossip, and respectful.
- Agree to disagree on touchy topics.
- Appreciate efforts to help even if you have to set boundaries.
- Learn to listen to advice without necessarily taking it.
- Be patient. You may one day become a mother-in-law.

Tips for mothers-in-law

- Accept the fact that your son has chosen another woman to love and respect.
- Display love and affection honestly. Know it may take some time for the relationship to mature.
- Overlook flaws or failings in your daughter-in-law. Try to remember what it was like to be a new wife.
- Speak positive things to her and about her.
- Understand she is young and may change some of her opinions and habits.
- Refrain from giving unsolicited advice, even if you're "right."
- Be supportive and willing to help if needed.
- Be patient. You were once a young, inexperienced woman.

Top
Tips



go” when there was the possibility of misunderstanding words or circumstances.

One of the loveliest answers I got was from a woman in her 50s who spoke of accepting her mother-in-law just as she is — a quirky, sometimes inappropriate, and seemingly unloving woman. She has learned to accept strange, random re-gifts rather than store-bought ones, she has learned to understand the woman will not play the role of a loving grandmother to her children, but still she determined to love her as she is and not as she wishes she would be.

Another young woman spoke of feeling offended and even attacked by her mother-in-law when she received unwanted advice and criticism about things such as time management, finances, and discipline of her children.

The solution to this relationship in jeopardy came when the husband stepped up and stood with his wife. Once the wife felt affirmed, she was free to see words of advice in a better light, not as condemnation, but as alternate choices and ones she was free to follow or ignore. The key was not feeling ganged up on by a mother-and-son combo.

Almost universal was the concept of mutual respect. Respect doesn’t mean taking advice or believing the same ways. It doesn’t mean managing another’s behavior or changing their personality. What it does mean is letting the other person be themselves, warts and all.

I’d have to add that kindness and a sense of humor go a long way in any new or awkward relationship. Giving the benefit of the doubt relieves the tension of perceived competitive or jealous ambitions, the tendency to judge or be judged, and the possibility of offending without meaning to. Many pitfalls are avoided if both women see the other through eyes of love and acceptance, ascribing positive motives to their sometimes less-than-admirable behaviors.

In general, the answers to the six-question survey were heartfelt — the topic mattered to the women who answered.

Very few reported a perfectly smooth road to a healthy relationship, but rather they learned over time to build a friendship based on acceptance, kindness, and love.

Jan Pierce is a retired teacher and freelance writer specializing in education, parenting, and family-life. Find her at www.janpierce.net.



HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Pet safety in winter

The frigid temperatures around the country are not just inconvenient; they can be incredibly dangerous for our pets. Experts say frostbite can set in in less than 15 minutes, and animals are not exempt from this, despite their furry coats.

Hypothermia is the most dangerous hazard when the weather gets this cold. Signs of hypothermia include "violent shivering followed by listlessness, a rectal temperature below 95°F (35°C), weak pulse, lethargy, and coma." It can become fatal very fast.

It goes without saying that every dog and cat needs to be indoors during cold temperatures like these. I would argue, however, that dogs and cats need to be indoors during any cold temperatures. If you are cold, they are cold, simple as that. Out-

doors is no place for pets.

Here are 10 cold-weather tips for your pets:

Anti-freeze can be fatal

Anti-freeze is poisonous. Even a lick or two on a quick walk can add up to distress for your dog. Keep an eye out for any liquid on sidewalks and steer clear of it. Also, do not let your dogs roam freely where you cannot monitor their activity. If there is any doubt that your dog may have ingested anti-freeze, take him to the vet immediately.

Pay extra attention to puppies

Puppies are more susceptible to the cold than dogs due to their tender age. They will suffer from the harsh realities of the cold quicker and should not spend much time outdoors in harsh weather conditions. In addition, they may have some issues potty training during cold spells. Understandably, puppies may have more accidents in this weather.

Cars and feral cats

Cats are particularly vulnerable to the cold and can freeze to death. They are also crafty and smart and will do what they have to do to stay warm and alive. When left outside, many cats seek to find warmth in car hoods and engines, and can easily be killed when cars are turned on. Take a peek under your hood and tires before turning on your car.

Leash and collar

When walking puppies and dogs, make sure their collars are secure and never let them off the leash. Getting lost in sub-zero temps is deadly. Their scent trails are compromised in the snow, and frostbite and hypothermia can set in quickly, leaving them unable to find their way back home.

Frostbite

Frostbite most often occurs on the thin, exposed areas of a dog such as their ears, tail, scrotum, and paws. The skin may look blue or white, but will appear red and inflamed when circulation comes back. The surface

of the skin may peel and eventually turn black. Use warm (not hot) compresses on the affected areas and then seek medical care.

Cars can be death traps

It's worth remembering that a cold car can be just as deadly as a hot car for a dog. They can freeze to death in a vehicle with no heat. Not only are they already at freezing temps, but cars can act as a refrigerator, keeping all the coldness inside.

Stay away from salt

Be on the lookout for salt on sidewalks and driveways, which can irritate and even burn your pup's paws. Wipe their paws off with a paper towel or warm cloth when you return from a walk.

Check on neighboring pets

It's imperative to remember that if we see an animal left outside in this weather, we must report it to the proper authorities ASAP. Dogs left outside in cold temperatures suffer needlessly and can easily die. It is a form of abuse. We are the protectors of animals and need to be vigilant about their well being at all times.

Indoor comfort

When indoors, try to let your dog sleep in a warm spot. Ideally, every dog should have a bed (or share yours) and not sleep on a hardwood floor. Make sure to place the bed away from doors and drafts.

More food

Dogs that are kept outside often need extra food in the winter months to keep warm. If you must keep your dog outside for periods in the daytime (not recommended), make sure you are supplying them with extra calories all day long (and a sheltered, cozy doghouse). And never, ever leave your dogs out at night!

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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Our graduating classes received scholarships totaling more than \$20 million.

Student talents are developed and interests cultivated through participation in more than 50 extracurricular clubs and activities.

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718-896-7220 or www.ourladyoftheangelus.org

Our Lady of the Angelus Catholic Academy strives to assist parents in the Christian formation and education of their children. We provide a warm, friendly learning environment in which a child may grow.

We offer an excellent academic program for children from nursery to 8th grade.

Many of our graduates have gone on to the specialized high schools and have received numerous scholarships to excellent Catholic high schools.

Our students represent a variety of linguistic, cultural, racial, ethnic and religious groups. Please call for an appointment to schedule a tour.

St Sebastian School

39-76 58th Street
Woodside 11377
718 429-1982 or www.stsebastianschool.org

St. Sebastian School is a Catholic School of Excellence serving the parishes of Blessed Virgin Mary Help of Christians (St. Mary's), Queen of Angels and Saint Sebastian.

We are dedicated to teaching the virtues and values taught by Jesus Christ and His Church.

Each student is recognized as a unique individual with special talents and abilities.

This is particularly highlighted in the wonderfully diverse cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds of our students.

St. Sebastian School follows the curriculum guidelines of the New York State Education Department and is Middle States Accredited.

We strive to differentiate learning in order to meet the needs of each child.

Please schedule a visit to learn about the many programs we offer. You may be eligible for tuition assistance for the 2015-2016 school year.

Saint Stanislaus Kostka School

61-17 Grand Avenue
Maspeth 11378
718-326-1585 or www.ststansschool.org

At Saint Stanislaus Kostka School in Maspeth, teaching is done with respect, sensitivity, compassion and concern for all students who enter its doors. Knowledge and its application to everyday life, character building, and a strong foundation in Christian values are the attributes that are imparted to our students.

Saint Stanislaus School offers a comprehensive instructional program for a nursery program for three year olds, a free half day UPK and a full day PreK program for 4 year olds, a full day Kindergarten, and instruction for students in grades 1-8.

Continued on page 14

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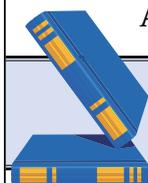
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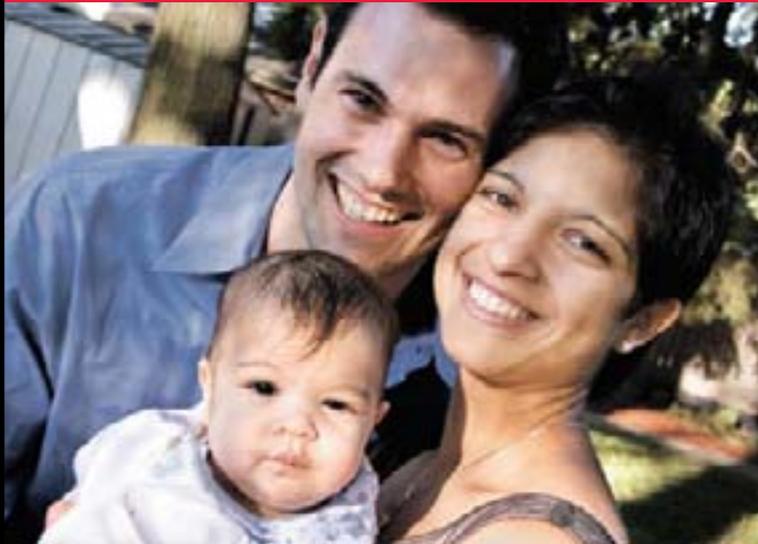
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Catholic Schools

DIRECTORY

Continued from page 13

Instructional programs include a second language program, computer/laptop/iPad instruction, physical education, and music theory and art education programs for its students in Kindergarten through grade eight.

A diverse and abundance of activities and programs are provided to all students at St. Stanislaus Kostka School aimed at enriching the academic lives of the students.

Students achieve above national average scores on standardized tests and 100% of St. Stanislaus Kostka's students are accepted into high schools such as Regis, Xavier, Archbishop Molloy, Saint Francis Prep, The Mary Louis Academy, Dominican Academy, and Monsignor McClancy among others.

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- ✦ College credit opportunities available through numerous Advanced Placement, St. John's University, and Syracuse University courses
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Dental health for kids

February is National
Children's Dental
Health Month

BY JAMIE LOBER

The Department of Health for New York State says that it is important for children to develop good oral health habits at an early age because practicing healthy habits can prevent or reduce tooth decay in infants and children.

"Parents often do not think of the value of what they are doing for their kid's oral health at home until an issue arises," said Dr. Jonathan Shenkin, dentist and spokesman for the American Dental Association.

Teeth tend to appear between 6 to 8 months-old and by age 3, all 20 primary teeth should be in the mouth. Starting around age 6, baby teeth are replaced by permanent teeth, but it's important to remember that both sets of teeth matter.

"When teeth first come they are exposed to saliva and the minerals that exist in the saliva and fluoride that enables minerals to be deposited completely into the tooth," said Shenkin.

You have to give the teeth time to become strong. Diet plays a big role, and soda can be one of the worst culprits.

"If you are continually consuming sugars throughout the day you are constantly reducing the acid level in your mouth



"It is important that parents monitor toothbrushing until kids tie their own shoelaces because they do not have the manual dexterity to appropriately remove plaque,"

making teeth more susceptible to decay processes, so it is about the frequency and consumption," said Shenkin.

"Poor oral hygiene combined with poor nutrition can cause tooth decay in kids that could be easily avoided."

Set an example of how children should take care of their teeth by taking care of your own.

"If you do not have appropriate behaviors that improve oral health you put your kid at great risk for developing disease," said Shenkin.

To do so you'll need to have the right tools.

"A big change we made in the last year and a half is recommending fluoride toothpaste for children as soon as the first tooth erupts in the mouth," said Shenkin. "We used to say age 2 was the first time you would provide fluoride toothpaste, but we changed it based on the amount you use and the age of the child."

And you should know your measurements.

"We recommend at the eruption of the first tooth to start using a piece of toothpaste the size of a piece of rice to help parents visualize the amount, which is extremely small to minimize ingestion. And then at age 3 we recommend a pea-size amount," said Shenkin.

Your child should be brushing twice a day.

"Morning and night is imperative and it is not just about putting the toothbrush in the mouth, it is about removing the plaque on the teeth and the sugars that cause the decay," said Shenkin. "It is important that parents monitor toothbrushing until kids tie their own shoelaces, which is at 6 to 7 years of age, because they do not have the

manual dexterity to appropriately remove plaque," said Shenkin.

Sometimes the right toothbrush can make a big difference.

"Electric toothbrushes can inspire children to brush their teeth and they do a better job if they are excited about the process," said Shenkin.

You'll also need a trustworthy dentist who can help with the cleaning.

"We typically recommend at age 1 or within 6 months of the eruption of the first tooth to have the first visit to find out what kind of risk factors exist," said Shenkin. "We recommend seeing the dentist based on your risk level so some kids go once a year and some need to go 4 times a year."

The dentist may have some individualized recommendations that consider your child's needs.

"Parents do not realize the importance of dental sealants at the age of 6," said Shenkin. Evidence shows they work wonders. "The most decayed tooth in the mouth for all of us is the adult first molar on the biting surface and the most effective way of reducing risk for tooth decay in young kids is to put a dental sealant or a little plastic coating on it to dramatically reduce the incidence of tooth decay," said Shenkin. It is advised to do that on all permanent molars for kids.

If your child wants sugar, it is best with a meal.

"Do not have sugars in between meals because having it with meals would expand the time period that there are higher levels of acidity in the mouth," said Shenkin. "Mistakes parents make are putting kids to bed at night with a bottle with fermentable sugars, juices, or milk because it can result in decay."

February is National Children's Dental Health month, making it the perfect time to talk with your child about why taking care of his teeth matters. And it may sound basic, but folks easily overlook the importance of dental health.

"The most important thing we have recognized is how kids can come to the dentist earlier to reduce disease levels, educate parents, and redirect behaviors in the household," said Shenkin.

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

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Pediatric dentists

Why growing teeth need a specialist

BY DR. TANESHA FRANCIS

As someone who specializes in the treatment and care of little people's teeth, parents often ask me how important it is to take children to a pediatric dentist. In fact, many don't realize that this is an option in the first place.

Yes, there are options! There are dentists, like me, who specialize in the unique needs of infants, children, and young teens' teeth. Alternatively, there are family dentists who are qualified to care for patients of all ages.

Naturally, I believe that pediatric dentists are the way to go when parents have the option, and here are my reasons:

Teeth development in children

Think 6 plus 6! Generally speaking, a baby's first teeth will begin to break through at 6 months; those

teeth will stay put until about age 6, when they begin to fall out and be replaced by permanent, adult teeth. Although children lose their first set of teeth, poor oral care in those early years can lead to issues and disease that lasts throughout life.

A pediatric dentist specializes in instructing families on how to care for teeth before there are even teeth!

Parents often think of troublesome sicknesses such as asthma and allergies; however, dental problems such as early childhood caries (an infectious disease also known as baby bottle tooth decay or bottle rot) are five times as common.

What sets pediatric dentists apart

Pediatric dentists have a lot to learn! Unlike general dentists, pediatric dentists are required to com-

plete up to three additional years of specialty training in the unique needs of children's teeth.

Some of the topics we study that are unique to working with children include behavior management, pediatric pharmacology, interceptive orthodontics, speech, minor oral surgery, sedation, traumatic injuries, dental care for children with developmental disabilities, and more.

Since the dental journey includes growing a first set, losing them, and then growing an adult set, there's a lot to keep up with during each stage.

We specialize in helping families make it a healthy journey from the start. We also offer key advice on maintenance through those critical candy-and-sweets-eating years.

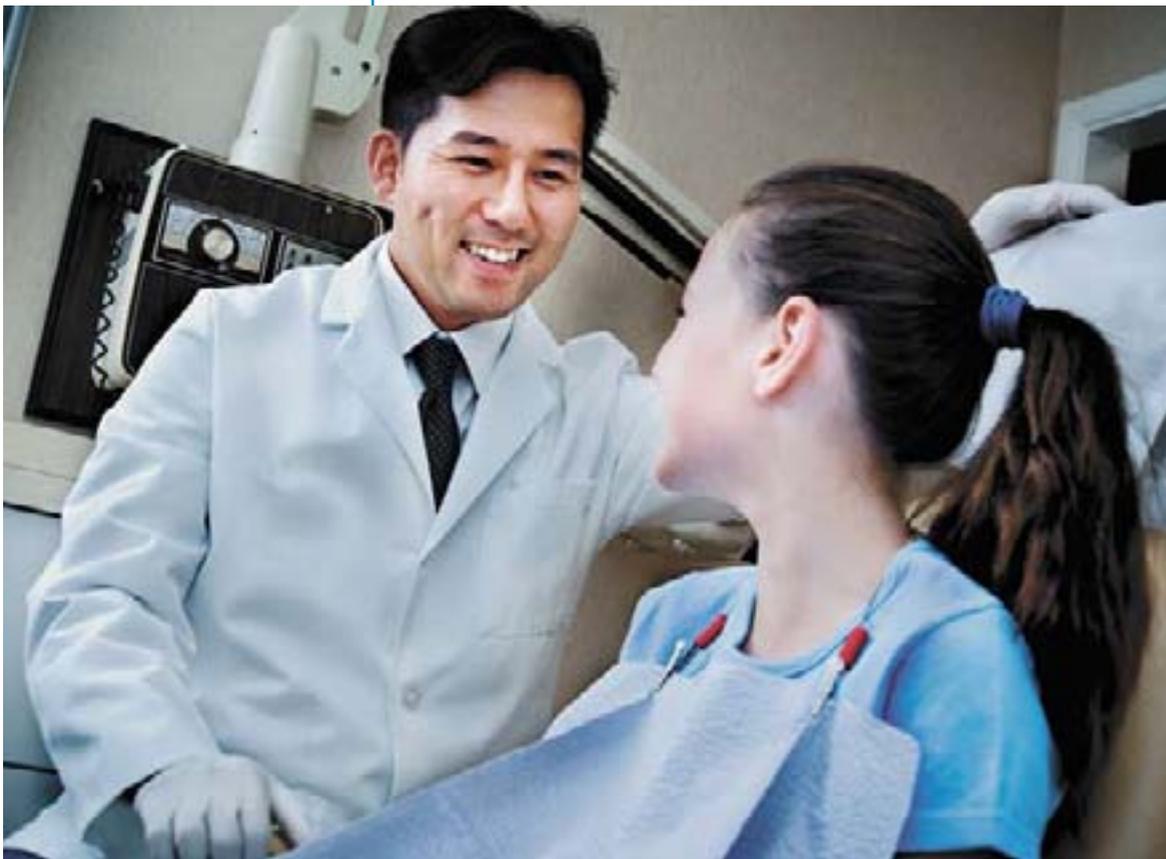
Specialized treatment options

Parents know that taking care of children — especially health exams like regular dentist visits — can be stressful at times. Pediatric dentists are great at knowing how to make visits as painless and pleasant as possible. Our offices are full of color, activities, and warmth that can make kids' experiences fun and educational, too. Dentists often recommend dental appliances and corrective treatments during the childhood and adolescent years.

We also have the most up-to-date knowledge about treatment options and advancements in the field for children. And in the end, children and teens are all about the "cool factor" with a pediatric dentist, our finger is on the pulse of colorful and engaging tools and appliances that will keep them interested in their own dental health.

We all want the best for children. When it comes to keeping their mouths, teeth, and gums healthy for the long haul, a pediatric dentist just makes sense!

Dr. Francis can be found at Park Slope Kids Dental Care [150 Fourth Ave. between Douglas and Butler streets in Park Slope, (718) 488-0200].



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Dr. Despina Pappas has been practicing pediatric dentistry for over 30 years. She graduated from Columbia University School of Dental and Oral Surgery and completed the post graduate program there. She established her office in 1979. Her primary goal was and is to provide quality dental care in a warm caring environment. She likes to spend time with her patients and their parents, explaining treatment options and goals. Her daughter Elayne, a graduate of Stony Brook's School of Dental Medicine and the Hospital's Pediatric Dental Residency Program, has recently joined the practice. Their main objectives, aside from providing their dental treatment, are to instill in their patients a good preventive regimen and to make them feel comfortable in the dental setting.

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Block out the badmouthing

Seek support that really helps

“You’re right not to let him spend time with the kids. He didn’t take care of you; he didn’t take care of them. You don’t owe him anything. The kids are better off without him.”

Statements like this one — supportive of one spouse or partner and very antagonistic toward the other — are common when a relationship ends. Friends and relatives are there for us, taking our side no matter what, against a partner who has hurt or betrayed us. They help us keep going when we are exhausted and feeling hopeless. Where would we be without them?

Probably better off, if bashing our partners is all they do.

Yes, most friends and relatives are well-intentioned. But listening to them badmouth the other person can worsen problems rather than solve them.

What’s the problem with a friend standing by me?

There are many ways for people to be supportive. They can listen

when we are angry or afraid. Take us out when we are lonely. Pick up groceries. Have our kids over for a play date so that we have more time to handle what we need to.

These actions and countless others are constructive and lessen our burdens. But relentless criticism of the significant other is something else altogether.

Why? To be blunt, many of those close to us don’t know what they’re talking about or have a skewed view of the partner. That’s because most of us — even when a relationship is good — tell others many more negative things regarding our partners than positive ones. Over time, supporters may become hostile to the partner. When the split occurs, they understandably blame the partner and don’t have anything good to say. Often, this is to our detriment.

What’s wrong with hearing what we already believe?

Consider a president and his or her cabinet. The cabinet members, in speaking to him, only say what they

know he believes. This president won’t learn anything from them, and may come to believe that his view is the only valid one. That there are no alternatives.

Now imagine the president surrounded by cabinet members who share various ideas, and discuss the merits and disadvantages of numerous and perhaps opposing courses to follow. This president would hear about different options and their consequences.

Now consider yourself the president. Which advisors would you want on your team? The ones who tell you only what you want to hear — or the ones who help you clearly see the situation so that you can make the best decisions possible?

During my own divorce, Steve, a close friend from out of state, never had anything bad to say about my wife. He didn’t tell me what I was entitled to or to fight for it. He did, though, ask me these questions:

“How’s your daughter doing?”
“Are you taking good care of her?”

That second question made me angry.

True, I was broken up. My work for a publishing company suffered. I was terribly sad.

But when it came to caring for my child, I didn’t miss a beat; a source of pride even now, many years later.

I wondered how could my friend ask me that question?

After a moment, it hit me that Steve was an even better friend than I had realized. Steve cared about me, and my daughter as well. Living elsewhere, he couldn’t know if I was doing a good job as a father at that difficult time. So he asked me a hard question.

Thankfully, I was holding it together as a parent. But what if I wasn’t? Fortunately, I had a friend who was ready to help me face that problem and deal with it. For me, that was tremendous, and infinitely more supportive than if he had said nasty things about my spouse.

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

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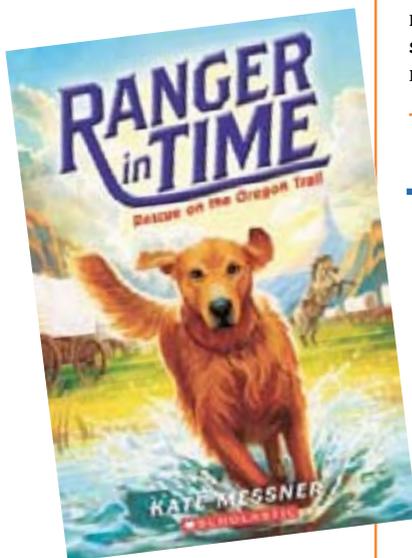
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Have you ever wanted to do something big — but you didn't know how?

It might have been a small action, and it might have been something great, but never giving up was the way to go. In the new book “Stella by Starlight” by Sharon M. Draper, for instance, a young girl wanted to become a writer. Her daddy wanted to vote.

When Stella Mills saw the sparks from across Kilkenny Pond that night in 1932, she knew there was nothing good about the nine hooded men surrounding it. Quickly she and her brother ran to wake their parents because they knew that everybody in their neighborhood was in danger when the Klan was about.

Normally life in Bumblebee, North Carolina, was a safe place for Stella and her friends. Yes, it was true that there were places they couldn't go because they weren't white and no, their blacks-only school wasn't nearly as nice as the whites-only school, but Stella loved her schoolmates and neighbors because they

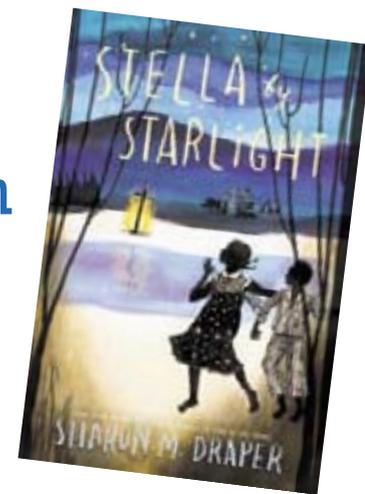
always watched out for one another. When one lacked, the others shared, and that made her proud.

But the Klan was another matter, and every black person in Bumblebee knew it. Even Stella's teacher, Mrs. Grayson, understood the seriousness of what was happening and she tried to keep her students calm and safe by distracting them with writing and with stories. Stella loved stories, and she loved writing but she didn't think she was any good at either of them.

That would change, though, when her friend, Tony, told her to write what she knew — and so Stella did. She wrote about the Klan and their dragons; about airplanes and books and grown men making boys bleed. She wrote about gifts, her father's reason for celebration, and the courage it took to stand up for your rights.

Yep, I loved “Stella by Starlight,” and there are many reasons why.

Its authenticity is at the top of the list. Author Sharon M. Draper gives this story a historical basis, yet she keeps it fictional so young readers can understand and identify with the



characters.

Those characters are second on the list: I loved Stella! She's sunny and smart, and her determination will make it easy for your child to want to know what happens to her and her family.

I also liked the way Draper lends child-friendly, not-too-detailed, not-too-scary action in this chapter book, and the anti-racism theme really struck me as timely.

And then there's the ... well, I could go on and on, but let's just say that this is the perfect book for a 7-to-12-year-old reader who enjoys a good historical novel. For that kid, “Stella by Starlight” is a book she'll want.

“Stella by Starlight” by Sharon M. Draper [336 pages, 2015, \$16.99].

Action, adventure, history, & pooches

Your dog is always finding things to chew on.

Sometimes, he even asks you to throw those things for him, just so he can find them again.

Normally that leads to a fun game. But what if he found something that was important? What if, as in the new book “Ranger in Time: Rescue on the Oregon Trail” by Kate Messner, his discovery could save a life?

Squirrels were the main reason Ranger the golden retriever flunked out of Rescue Dog training. He was really good at finding people with his nose, but Ranger just couldn't stop chasing squirrels.

Luke, Ranger's boy, knew that and he loved Ranger just the same. Ranger was a good dog, he just didn't pay attention — and sometimes, neither did Luke. Luke didn't notice that when Ranger was digging in the dirt, he'd found a metal box. And therefore, Luke didn't see Ranger disappear.

The box hummed and a white light came from the edges of it. Ranger

couldn't look at the light, but when he finally opened his eyes, he was in a dusty, loud place with big animals, funny smells — and a woman's frantic voice. Someone was lost, and Ranger heard a familiar word: “Find!”

Sam Abbott knew he was going to miss his family. He hated leaving the farm, too, but his pa made the decision to move. Now there was a long trip ahead of them: it would take weeks and weeks to get to Oregon by foot and by wagon train. Leaving everything behind would make it seem even longer.

And now there was this dog tagging along, but Sam didn't mind. The dog had found Sam's little sister when she wandered off. He warned the family when a herd of buffalo stampeded. He was a good dog but where did in the world — or out of it — did that dog come from?

Action, adventure, history, and pooches. If this sounds like the perfect recipe for a new chapter book series, then “Ranger in Time: Rescue on the Oregon Trail” is exactly what

your child will want you to dish up.

It's easy to get caught up in this story because Messner makes her characters so likeable and the scenes so authentic. Kids, I think, will like the flow between then and now, and I think they'll be clinging to the edges of their seats once they get to the big finale. Be sure, too, that they read the author's note at the back. It's a nice wrap-up.

All together, this book is a great introduction to a new hero that 7-to-10-year-olds will look forward to seeing again. If your child is ready for a fantasy-history-non-fiction-based chapter book, then “Ranger in Time: Rescue on the Oregon Trail” is the one to find.

“Ranger in Time: Rescue on the Oregon Trail,” by Kate Messner [144 pages, 2015, \$17.99 hardcover, 5.99 paperback].

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



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BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

Ending a tantrum before it even starts

Kids are like sponges; they absorb everything. Even when you think they are fully immersed in the latest version of “My Little Pony,” a piece of their mind is watching every step you take and listening to every word that comes out of your mouth. Your behavior is a model for their behavior. This is both a good thing and something to be concerned about.

If you’re dealing with tantrums in your kids, I’m going to have to ask this question: what behaviors have you been modeling? I would bet there are times when you lose your cool and engage in behaviors that could be defined as an adult tantrum, including: yelling, screaming, grabbing, and pounding your fist against a table. If your “small being” (my word for “kids”) is in the room, she is learning that those behaviors are appropriate ways to deal with a challenging situation.

The absolute best way to stop your child from having tantrums is to stop throwing your own tantrums! That’s right — stop your adult tantrum!

Stop yelling at your kid when he accidentally spills juice on his shirt. Stop yanking your daughter’s arm to leave the park when she simply won’t get off the swings. Stop rolling your eyes when you get annoyed at the slow cashier at the supermarket. Most certainly, stop fighting with the other adults in your home.

Yes, this is all *much* harder to do than to say, but it’s a critical key to stop explosive behavior in your child. You will still get angry, frustrated, or annoyed in countless situations. Changing behavior is not about changing or denying how you feel. It is about changing your behavior while acknowledging your feelings.

What will you do with those big emotions? Right now the tantrum is letting emotions dictate your behavior. Control your behavior in the face of challenging or overwhelming emotions. I’m not asking you to deny your feelings when they occur.

You know the usual suggestions: take a deep breath, walk away until you’re calm, close your eyes and count to 10. Start applying these techniques — or any relaxation techniques — in your life. It’s not important what you do, but rather that you do something to avoid the explosive behavior. Need motivation to make this change? Do it for your children! Model the behavior you want them to have now and in the future.

Changing behavior is hard. Before you ask your kiddo to change her behavior, you need to change yours. You can’t expect your child to handle her emotions better than you do. Start putting the tools in place to make it happen. My favorite is actually talking (calmly) about my feelings. This shows your small being that emotions don’t dictate behavior. Say something like, “I’m so frustrated that I am going to be late because this line is moving so slow.” Maybe even take the next step and say, “Let’s

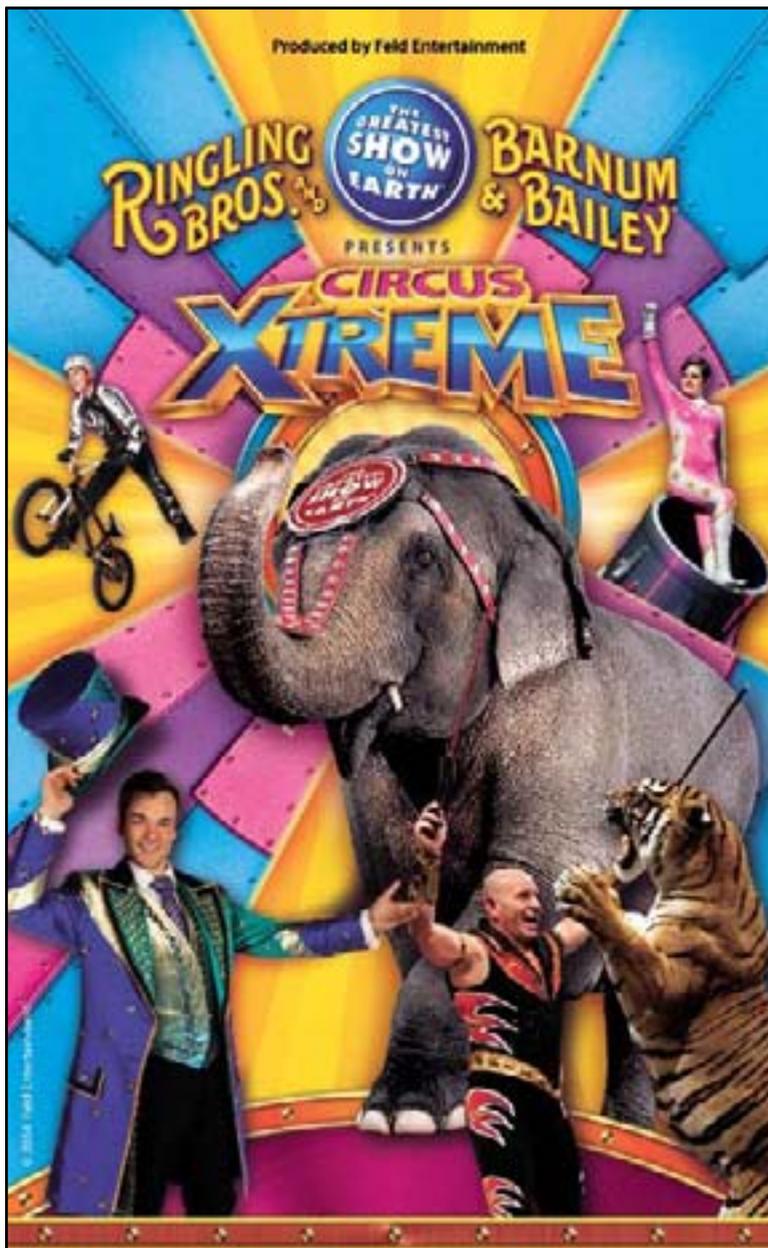
find a way to take my mind off the time. How about we sing a song (or practice our spelling words or play I-Spy)?” This models what you want your kids to do when they are upset, tell you how they are feeling and do something to change it.

Be the model for the behavior you want to experience. Talking about how to have good behavior will only go so far. Your actions truly makes a difference!

Dr. Marcie Beigel is a behavioral therapist based in Brooklyn. She has worked with thousands of families for more than 15 years, and has condensed her observations into her practice and programs.

For more on her, visit www.BehaviorAndBeyond.net.





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JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Save-at-home mom

Deciding to stay at home as a mom is a huge undertaking, and not one taken lightly. Many are just not able to accomplish it financially, and not everyone wants to, but if you are already a stay-at-home mom or think you might want to be and may possibly be able to swing it financially, consider that there are quite a few ways to save money.

In my career, I have been a full-time worker, part-timer, and freelancer, and I've also been a stay-at-home mom, too.

Here are some of my tips to help you save money:

Shopping

Plan to spend some time planning to shop. Every time I plan out exactly what I will purchase and do my homework by staking out the best deals at the stores, I save money. You can learn a lot of stuff just browsing circulars and websites. For example, did you know that Toys 'R' Us has a "price match guarantee" that not only says if you find an item cheaper at another store, it will match that price, but also if you find it cheaper on Toys-RUs.com or BabiesRUs.com, it will also match.

Think ahead

Last-minute shopping equals paying more nearly every single time. When I was working full-time, I lost a lot of money that way. Now that I freelance, I have more time to pick and choose and plan ahead for every holiday and occasion. It also helps to get those reward store cards, and it's only an extra five minutes to fill out the application for them. The next time you visit that store, you'll already have the card and be on your way to earning reward points.

Another tip? If you buy a blouse, shirt or bag you love, ask yourself if anyone on your birthday or holiday gift list would also like it. Then buy another at the sale price. Even if the birthday is months away, you save money. When shopping online, before you place any order, Google the word "coupon" and then "code" along with store's name. Eight out of 10 times, I'll find a code that allows free shipping or a percentage off my order.

Groceries 101

Supermarkets these days can eat your money like no other type of store. When that weekly circular comes to your door, mark off what is on sale and stock up. Note the fine print, however, because sometimes, it will say you must buy three, or four, or five of the items to get the deal. Buy things you'll always need in bulk, but if you only need one of that item over the next six months, it probably isn't a good deal for you.

Cook at home more

When I was working full-time, there were many nights where I'd get home late and we'd order out. Huge money eater! By planning a week's worth of dinner on Sunday night (while perusing your supermarket circular and tailoring the dishes around the sales), you will save.

Small grocery savings tips? Buy a long-term traveling water bottle for your child, instead of weekly juice packs for the lunchbox, and refill at night. When it comes to buying meat, choose the thicker cut pieces, and slice and dice at home. Thinner cuts cost more.

Extra income

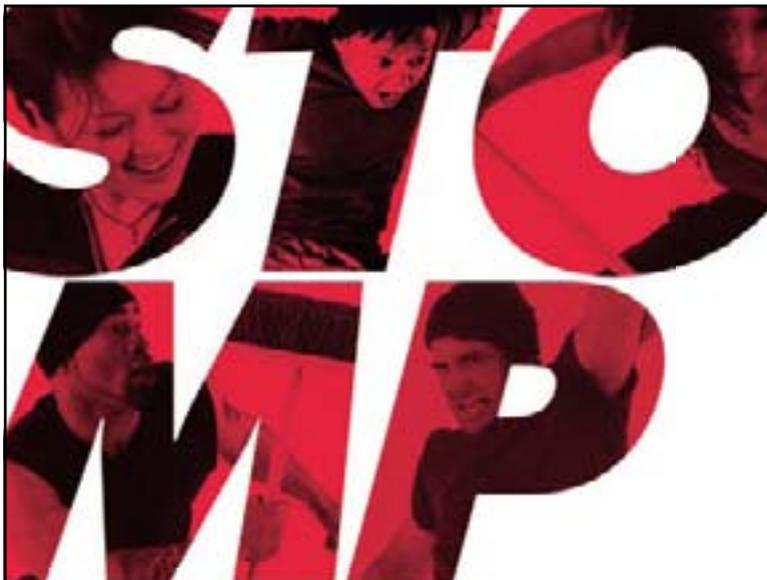
If you have the time to take on additional tasks and are looking for some extra income, chat it up at your child's school. Often, working moms are looking for someone local to pick up their kids and watch them for a few hours each day. If you like to write or are good at technology, a quick daily perusal of Mediabistro.com just might result in a gig here and there. There are many of these out there now, especially in blogging and social media.

Consider the instant savings

Even if you don't gain an extra income, just think about all the money you can save from the daily keep up while working. From day-care costs, clothing, and dry cleaning to lunches, dinners, and coffees out (not to mention guilt gifts for the kids), you may be saving more than you think. Some moms report that when they factor in the costs it takes to work outside the home, they almost negate the costs of staying home. And that's where the above supermarket and shopping tips come in handy!

*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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Calendar

FEBRUARY



Photo by Jean Marie Guyaux

Some pig!

Charlotte spins her web and saves the day in "Charlotte's Web" at the Queens Theatre on Feb. 8.

EB White's classic story comes to life on the stage as part of the Family Series at Queens Theatre.

Theatreworks performs a production of the classic tale of bravery, selfless love, and the true

meaning of friendship. Suitable for children of all ages.

"Charlotte's Web" on Feb. 8 at 1 and 3 pm. Tickets are \$14, \$12.60 for members, and \$100 Family Flex Pass for 10 tickets.

Queens Theatre [Flushing Meadows Corona Park; (718) 760-0064; www.queentheatre.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!

SAT, JAN. 31

IN QUEENS

Give a voice workshop: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Blvd.; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtown-hall.org; 2-4 pm; Free.

What if all objects have a soul, and they become living creatures at night when you are asleep? They have plenty of stories to tell. Children 3 to 7 years may bring old objects and give them a voice in this workshop. Following participants make a short play play together.

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

Children 9 to 14 years old work in groups and learn about science, match, art, reading and technology.

Craft workshop: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 3 pm; \$3 plus museum admission.

Toy Hacks allows children to work with parents and learn how to create wooden Lego Minifigures heads or a pencil pet. Recommended for children 6 years and older.

FURTHER AFIELD

Quilting Kids: 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.

Discover the art of quilts, share stories, and decorate a quilt square to take home.

To the Moon: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children discover why some traditions are based on the moon and touch a real rock from outer space.



Stories for Valentine's

It's a very special Storybook Discovery Day at Voelker Orth Museum to celebrate Valentine's Day on Feb. 14.

Children are invited to come and share the love and friendship of the day, listen to a Valentine's Day tale, and create their

very own valentine to share with friends and family.

Storybook Discovery Day on Feb. 14 from 11 am to noon. Admission is \$5 per family.

Voelker Orth Museum [149-19 38th Ave. in Flushing; (718) 359-6227; www.vomuseum.org]

SUN, FEB. 1

IN QUEENS

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

Tots 18 months and older discover the fun of paper-making.

Toy Hacks workshop: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1:30 pm; \$3 plus museum admission.

Children 6 years and older and their parents learn how to make a wooden Lego Minifigures head or a pencil pet using simple tools.

Craft workshop: 3 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Jan. 31.

FURTHER AFIELD

Quilting kids: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Discover the art of using quilts to share stories and symbols. Learn the meanings of some popular West African "adinkra" symbols, then decorate a quilt square to hang at home.

To the Moon: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children discover why some traditions are based on the moon and touch a real rock from outer space.

TUES, FEB. 3

IN QUEENS

Explorer program: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd.; (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 4:30 pm; Free.

Hosted by the New York Police Department, teens meet each week.

THURS, FEB. 5

IN QUEENS

National African American read-in: Hollis Library, 202-05 Hillside Ave.; (718) 465-7355; 4:30 pm; Free.

Children in grades one through six read and share books by African-American authors including Langston Hughes, Lucille Clifton, and Patricia McKissack.

FRI, FEB. 6

IN QUEENS

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

Invigorate the gray matter.

SAT, FEB. 7

IN QUEENS

"Ready Rabbit Gets Ready": Barnes and Noble, 23-80 Bell Blvd.; (718) 224-1083; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11 am; Free.

With so many other interesting things to do Ready Rabbit doesn't want to get ready.

Nature Hike: Forest Park Visitor Center, Woodhaven Blvd. and Forest Park Drive; (718) 352-1769; 11 am; Free.

Teens will enjoy this walk into the wilderness to discover the urban forest. This is a moderate hike, wear appropriate clothing.

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

Visitors 7 years and older engage in hands-on-activities and make projects ranging from flipbooks to stop-motion and computer animations.

The Civil Rights Movement: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 1 pm; Free.

Teens watch a video and then take the "Jeopardy" quiz challenge.

Animation workshop: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1:30 pm; \$5 plus museum admission.

Make it! teaches children 6 years and older how to use different stop-motion techniques to create a short film.

FURTHER AFIELD

To the Moon: 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Feb. 1.

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

Cultural Connection presents a live performance of "Melodic Magic." This interactive event entertains children of all ages.

Dancing Dragons: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road, Long Island; (516) 224-

Continued on page 30

Calendar

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

Continued from page 29

5800; www.licm.org; 2 pm to 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Celebrate the Lunar New Year by creating a dragon puppet.

SUN, FEB. 8

IN QUEENS

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

Tots 18 months and older use crayons for bath time fun.

Birds of Prey: Unisphere, Flushing Meadows Park; (718) 352-1769; 11 am; Free.

Rangers lead you to the best place to explore raptors, hawks, and owls. For older teens.

Puppet show & workshop: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Blvd.; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 1 pm and 2:15 pm; Workshop \$7 non-member adults, \$4 children (free for members). Show is \$13 non-member adults, \$8 children; \$10 member adults; \$6 children.

"The Man Who Planted Trees" is the story of a shepherd who plants a forest, acorn by acorn. The workshop offers tips on how to make your puppet come to life and is led by guest leaders from the Puppet State Theatre Company of Scotland. Recommended for children 5 years and older.

"Charlotte's Web": Queens Theatre, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box office (718) 760-0064; Administration (718) 760-0686; www.queensstheatre.org; 1 pm and 3 pm; \$14 (12.60 members).

Based on the EB White story of the friendship between a pig and a very smart spider.

Animation workshop: 1:30 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

FURTHER AFIELD

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

Children of all ages learn to jump like Pearl, stretch like Alvin Ailey, and be inspired by African-American dancers. RSVP required.

To the Moon: 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Feb. 1.

"Sid the Science Kid Live!": Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, 720 Northern Blvd. (Rt 25A), Long Island; (516); www.tillescenter.org; 2 pm; \$15, \$30, \$50.

Let's Play brings the popular PBS



Celebrate day of love

Celebrate the holiday of love in this month's Hands-On History event, Be My Valentine, at King Manor Museum on Feb. 14. Families come together and learn all about this loving holiday and then decorate a picture frame and create a 19th-century-inspired project

to give to that special someone.

All ages are welcome to come and feel the love.

Be My Valentine, Feb. 14. from noon to 3 pm. Free.

King Manor Museum [150-03 Jamaica Ave. in Jamaica, (718) 206-0545, X 13; www.kingmanor.org]

Kids show to the stage. Sid, May, Gabriela, and Gerald come to town to discover the excitement of the world around them.

TUES, FEB. 10

IN QUEENS

Explorer program: 4:30 pm. Central Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 3.

THURS, FEB. 12

IN QUEENS

Celebrate Lunar New Year: Windsor Park Public Library, 79-50 Bell Blvd. at 73rd Avenue; (718) 468-8300; www.queenslibrary.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Hong Kong-born origami artist Nesta Wu helps you create a craft to take home.

FRI, FEB. 13

IN QUEENS

Taylor 2 Dance Company: Adelphi University Performing Arts Center, 1 South Ave.; (516) 877-4000; www.boxoffice@adelphi.edu; 7:30 pm; \$35.

Classical and new works of dance.

SAT, FEB. 14

IN QUEENS

Storybook discovery: Voelker

pm; Free.

Celebrate the holiday of love and decorate a picture frame and create a 19th-century-inspired valentine to give to that special someone. Children of all ages welcome.

Grace Drums: Langston Hughes Public Library, 100-01 Northern Blvd.; (718) 651-1100; www.queenslibrary.org; 12:30 pm; Free.

Percussion and vocal ensemble celebrates Black History Month and performs African and Caribbean rhythm and blues selections.

Democracy: Queens Historical Society, 143-35 37th Ave.; (718) 939-0647 X 17; 1-2 pm; Free.

The topic this month for Community Conversations for Kids features the book "Pearl Moscovitz's Last Stand" by Arthur A. Levine.

Animation workshop: 1:30 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

Ballet Hispanico: Queens Theatre, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office (718) 760-0064; Administration (718) 760-0686; www.queensstheatre.org; 2 pm and 8 pm; \$42 (\$38 member; \$25 rear seating).

World renowned dance troupe returns to Queens.

Badminton: Lost Battalion Hall Recreation Center, 93-29 Queens Blvd. at LI Expressway; (718) 263-1163; 2:30-4:30 pm; Free.

Grab a racket and birdie and join in for a day of badminton, popcorn and fun. Membership to recreation center required.

FURTHER AFIELD

The Year of the Sheep: 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.

Celebrate Lunar New Year and learn about sheep in art from around the world.

To the Moon: 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Feb. 1.

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

Puppetry in Practice presents this celebration with a telling of the story about the Chinese zodiac told with Shadow Puppets. A Dragon Parade follows.

3, 2, 1, Happy Chinese New Year: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400;

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

www.brooklynkids.org; 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 and younger celebrate the holiday and then create a New Year's craft to take home.

SUN, FEB. 15

IN QUEENS

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

Families have fun learning how to transform pieces of fabric with swirls of color in Tie Dye Fabric. For children 18 months and older.

Animation workshop: 1:30 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

Ballet Hispanico: 3 pm. Queens Theatre. See Saturday, Feb. 14.

FURTHER AFIELD

The Year of the Sheep: 12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Feb. 14.

To the Moon: 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Feb. 1.

3, 2, 1, Happy Chinese New Year: 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.

Children 5 and younger celebrate the holiday and then create a New Year's craft to take home.

MON, FEB. 16

IN QUEENS

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

Urban rangers lead children in fun hands-on activities during mid-winter break.

The Red Balloon Animation Adventure: Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave.; (718) 777-6888; www.movingimage.us; 2 pm; \$5 materials fee.

Hour-long workshop provides children with the inspiration they will need to create their own animated production.

FURTHER AFIELD

Once Upon a Line: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road, Long Island; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 11 am, 1 pm and 3 pm; \$3 with museum admission (\$2 for members).

Children discover how lines can make you feel.

Fun with Cinderella

Bippity, boppity, boop, "Cinderella" toe-tips in to the Florence Gould Hall on Feb. 7 and 8.

The New York Theatre Ballet's classic "Cinderella" braves the New York cold with a two-day performance of this perennial favorite.

Children will enjoy the dancing clock, the madcap sisters,

and everyone's favorite princess, Cinderella.

"Cinderella" on Feb. 7 and 8 at 11 am, 1 pm, and 3:30 pm each day. Tickets are \$35 for children and \$40 for adults.

Florence Gould Hall [55 E. 59th St. between Madison and Park avenues in Midtown East; (212) 355-6160; www.nytb.org]



Photo by Richard Termine

TUES, FEB. 17

IN QUEENS

Kids week: 1 pm. Fort Totten Visitor's Center. See Monday, Feb. 16.

George Washington Carver: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main St.; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 1:30 pm to 3 pm; \$5.

Children celebrate Black History Month and learn about the "Wizard of Tuskegee," Dr. Carver. Advanced registration and payment required.

The Red Balloon Animation Adventure: 2 pm. Museum of the Moving Image. See Monday, Feb. 16.

Explorer program: 4:30 pm. Central Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 3.

FURTHER AFIELD

Once Upon a Line: 11 am, 1 pm and 3 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Monday, Feb. 16.

"Anansi the African Spider-man": 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.

Listen to tales of the mischievous Anansi and discover how this African tale traveled around the world. Children 2 and older make a spider to take home.

WED, FEB. 18

IN QUEENS

Kids' week: Forest Park Visitor Center, Woodhaven Blvd. and Forest Park Drive; (718) 352-1769; 1 pm; Free.

School is out so let the Rangers lead you in fun programs and interactive events.

The Red Balloon Animation Adventure: 2 pm. Museum of the Moving Image. See Monday, Feb. 16.

Lunar New Year Celebration: Hillcrest Public Library, 187-05 Union Tpke at 188th Street; (718) 454-2786; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Celebrate the year of the sheep with refreshments and hands-on activities for children 6 and older.

FURTHER AFIELD

Once Upon a Line: 11 am, 1 pm and 3 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Monday, Feb. 16.

3, 2, 1, Blast Off! Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children take a journey and learn about African-American women in space. Dr. Mae Jemison tells of her trip into space. Children then make a space craft to take home.

THURS, FEB. 19

IN QUEENS

Kids' week: 1 pm. Forest Park Visitor Center. See Wednesday, Feb. 18.

Storytime & Craft: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main St.; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 2-3:30 pm; Free with garden admission.

Little gardeners will enjoy an afternoon of nature inspired stories and projects.

I Heart Worms: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main St.; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 2-4 pm; \$5.

This hands-on workshop introduces children ages 5 and older to indoor composting and those little wigglers. Must be accompanied by an adult. Registration required.

The Red Balloon Animation Adventure: 2 pm. Museum of the Moving Image. See Monday, Feb. 16.

Diva tribute: Whitestone Public Library, 151-10 14th Road; (718) 767-8010; 3 pm; Free.

Enjoy the pop music of Adele, Beyonce, Alica Keys, Shania Twain, and Jennifer Hudson.

FURTHER AFIELD

Once Upon a Line: 11 am, 1 pm and 3 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Monday, Feb. 16.

Traffic Lights: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Red means stop, green means go. Then, make a traffic craft to take home.

Lunchtime, crunch time: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road, Long Island; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 11:30 am and 12:30 pm; \$5 plus museum admission (\$10 theater only).

Children help Joey the Kangaroo prepare a healthy lunch.

Sing-a-Long: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 6 pm; Free with museum admission.

Gwen Sumpter tells a tale and then invites all to a sing-a-long featuring songs from the African-American spiritual tradition.

FRI, FEB. 20

IN QUEENS

Kids Week: Alley Pond Park, Cross Island Pkwy & Grand Central Pkwy; (718) 217-4685; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

School is out, so take the children to the park and let Rangers lead them on a nature related adventure.

The Red Balloon Animation Adventure: 2 pm. Museum of the Moving Image. See Monday, Feb. 16.

Taylor 2 Dance Company: 7:30 pm. Adelphi University Performing Arts Center. See Friday, Feb. 13.

FURTHER AFIELD

Once Upon a Line: 11 am, 1 pm

Continued on page 32

Calendar

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

Continued from page 31

and 3 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Monday, Feb. 16.

Jammin' Out: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Black History Month is explored by learning about traditional African instruments.

The Okee Dokee Brothers: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road, Long Island; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 11:30 am and 12 pm; \$5 plus museum admission (\$10 theater only).

Kindie rock band shares traditional folk music and original tunes.

SAT, FEB. 21

IN QUEENS

"Click, Clack, Peep": Barnes and Noble, 23-80 Bell Blvd.; (718) 224-1083; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11 am; Free.

This special storytime introduces Farmer Brown, and the new and loud adorable duckling.

Lunar New Year: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 1-4 pm; Free with garden admission.

After the parade come to the garden for crafts and activities to celebrate the Year of the Sheep.

Animation workshop: 1:30 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

The Magic of Bill Blagg: Queens Theatre, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office (718) 760-0064; Administration (718) 760-0686; www.queens theatre.org; 2 pm and 8 pm; \$30 (\$27 member; \$25 rear seating).

Be amazed with this spellbinding stage performance of sleight of hand and incredible illusions.

The Red Balloon Animation Adventure: 2 pm. Museum of the Moving Image. See Monday, Feb. 16.

Night sky: Fort Totten Visitor's Center, Ordinance Rd. at Shore Road; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 6 pm; Free.

Urban rangers take you on a journey through the universe.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Unbought and Unbossed": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Tells the story of Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman to be elected to Congress.

Arts of the African Diaspora: 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 connect to the past and learn about the traditional and contemporary customs of the African people.

Grace Drums: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1 and 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

This performance introduces children to African percussion instruments, music and vocals from the African and Caribbean culture.

SUN, FEB. 22

IN QUEENS

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

It's a paint party using washable paints made from everyday ingredients to create works of art. For children 18 months and older.

Knot workshop: Forest Park Visitor Center, Woodhaven Blvd. and Forest Park Drive; (718) 352-1769; 1 pm; Free.

Children learn the different techniques of knot tying and their various uses. Recommended for children 8 years and older.

Animation workshop: 1:30 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

Dance sampler: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 2 pm; Free.

Celebrate the Year of the Ram with Asian dance curated by Dr. Hsing-Lih Chou, presenting movements from China, Korea, Taiwan, India, and Mexico.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Unbought and Unbossed": 11:30 am and 2 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Feb. 21.

Arts of the African Diaspora: 12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Feb. 21.

MON, FEB. 23

IN QUEENS

Hygiene workshop: Queens Library for Teens, 2002 Cornaga Ave.; (718) 471-2573; 3:30 pm; Free.

Teens learn all about good health practices.

TUES, FEB. 24

IN QUEENS

"The African Drum": JPAC, 153-10 Jamaica Ave. and 153rd Street; (212) 724-0677; www.shadowboxtheatre.org; 10 am and 11:30 am; \$10 in advance (\$15 at the door; \$8 group rates).

Listen to the wit, wisdom, and humor of traditional folk tales and learn how the turtle got its shell, and three more African fables woven into an interactive shadow puppet adventure of little Kjana and her animal friends. Presented by the Shadow Box Theatre.

Explorer program: 4:30 pm. Central Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 3.

WED, FEB. 25

IN QUEENS

"The African Drum": 10 am and 11:30 am. JPAC. See Tuesday, Feb. 24.

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

Celebrate Black History Month and the Civil Rights Movement.

Compost project: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 6-8 pm; \$5.

Hands on inquiry based activity teaches children biology, recycling, and responsibility of composting. Registration required.

THURS, FEB. 26

FURTHER AFIELD

Free Thursday! Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 3-6 pm; Free.

Join in for an afternoon at the museum.

FRI, FEB. 27

IN QUEENS

"The African Drum": 10 am and 11:30 am. JPAC. See Tuesday, Feb. 24.

SAT, FEB. 28

IN QUEENS

Lunar New Year: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 9:45 am; Free.

Celebrate the Year of the Sheep with music, food, dance and arts.

Black History Month: Barnes and

Noble, 23-80 Bell Blvd.; (718) 224-1083; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11 am; Free.

In celebration of Black History children read "I am Rosa Parks," and "I am Jackie Robinson."

Drop in studio: Noon-5 pm. Museum of the Moving Image. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

Music and Workshop: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 1 pm and 2:15 pm; Workshops \$7 (\$4 children; members free; \$13 \$10 members; \$8 children; \$6 member children).

EastRiver Ensemble presents a program of Chinese folk music and dance. Performers demonstrate instruments such as the yangqin, the pipa, flutes, fiddles and more.

Propeller Powered Cars: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1:30 pm; \$5 plus museum admission.

Children and their parents learn the powers of the simple rubber band and create a car that can go the distance. Recommended for children 7 years and older.

FURTHER AFIELD

Cosmic creations: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Learn about astronomy and the planets, stars, and space with Dr. Neil Degrasse Tyson, a contemporary African-American astrophysicist. Make a shooting star to take home.

The Phantazia String Players: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 3 pm; Free with museum admission.

The Noel Pointer foundation presents this jazz, classical, and gospel concert celebrating Black History Month.

SUN, MARCH 1

IN QUEENS

Propeller Powered Cars: 1:30 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Feb. 28.

FURTHER AFIELD

Cosmic creations: 11:30 am and 2 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Feb. 28.

LONG-RUNNING

IN QUEENS

Happy Hour: Flushing Public Library,

Calendar

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

41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; Fridays, 4 pm, Fri, Feb. 6 – Fri, March 27; Free.

Teens enjoy time in the library with friends.

Youth Adaptive Swim: Roy Wilkins Family Center, Baisley Blvd & 177th St.; Fridays, 4 pm, Now – Sat, Feb. 7; Free with recreation center membership.

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

Digital Media workshop: Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave.; (718) 777-6888; www.movingimage.us; Friday, Feb. 6, 4 pm; Friday, Feb. 27, 4 pm; Friday, March 13, 4 pm; Friday, March 27, 4 pm; Friday, April 17, 4 pm; Friday, May 1, 4 pm; Free.

Teens hang out and experiment with different media making activities. For children 14 years and older only.

"Galapagos – Nature's Wonderland in 3D": New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005

X 353; www.nyscience.org; Week-days, 11 am & 2 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 & 3 pm, beginning Sat, Feb. 14; \$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.

"The Lego Movie": New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Daily, 3 pm; Sat, Feb. 14 – Sun, Feb. 22; \$7 (\$6 children) plus museum admission.

An ordinary guy named Emmet is mistaken as being the Master Builder, the one who can save the universe. 101 minutes. Rated PG.

FURTHER AFIELD

Ice skating: Lefrak Center in Prospect Park, Parkside and Ocean avenues, Brooklyn; (718) 594-7439; info@brooklynice.org; www.brooklynice.org; Tuesdays – Thursdays, 11 am–6 pm, Fridays, 11 am–8 pm, Saturdays, 10 am–9 pm, Sundays, 10 am–6 pm, Now – Tues,

March 31; \$6 (\$8 on Sat. and Sun) plus \$6 skate rental.

Families have a great time twirling and skating and enjoying the rink .

Needlework and games: Lefferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 1–3 pm.; \$3.

Join in with staff and make a small sampler and play board games.

Ice skating school: Lefrak Center in Prospect Park, Parkside and Ocean avenues, Brooklyn; (718) 594-7439; info@brooklynice.org; www.brooklynice.org; Mondays and Wednesdays, 4–6:30 pm, Now – Tues, March 10; Free.

Instructions, fitness, homework help and lots more. Preregistration required.

Tropical discoveries: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Tuesdays – Fridays, 10 am–5 pm, Now – Fri, Feb. 27; Free with garden admission.

Children explore the differences between tropical and temperate plants in

the Everett Children's Garden, where they can pot a tropical plant to take home. They will also make bark rubbings, count tree rings and fill up a field notebook with interesting facts.

From Here to There: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 am–5 pm, Fri, Feb. 6 – Sun, May 10; Free with museum admission.

This innovative exhibit teaches the science of how things move by land, sea and air. Visitors can heat up and launch a hot air balloon, operate an authentic canal lock system to move a boat and experiment with pneumatics, pulleys, hydraulics, and levers to move objects mechanically.

Art Kids: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Fridays, 11:30 am and 2:30 pm, Now – Fri, March 6; Free with museum admission.

Children explore a new style of art and discover the artistic process while developing artistic skills.

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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Playing with food

Study reveals benefits to toddlers' messy eating

Morgan Delack was at her wit's end when her daughter was 1.

"Almost every time I put her in the highchair to feed her, she would throw her food on the floor," she says. "She was trying to play with me and get my attention. She knew she'd get a response."

Whether your child is throwing food or making a spectacular mess with it, it's difficult to see a good result. After all, this mess-making is creating more work for you!

Believe it or not, there is a silver lining in this developmental stage. According to a study published in the journal *Developmental Science*, the messier a toddler gets while eating, the more he's learning. And eating in a highchair is the best place for that learning.

The study explored how well 16-month-olds learned the names of non-solid foods and other objects while seated either in a highchair or



at a table. The researchers offered the toddlers foods such as pudding, applesauce, juice, and soup, but gave them made-up names.

The toddlers who most enthusias-

tically explored the foods by poking, throwing, and picking them up were more likely to correctly identify them when the researchers put foods out in different sizes or shapes.

And the tots seated in highchairs were better at correctly identifying the objects compared to those seated at tables. Because the foods vary in shape and size, the context in which the child touches it matters.

"It turns out that being in a highchair makes it more likely you'll get messy, because kids know they can get messy there," says lead author Larissa Samuelson.

So the next time your little one smears mashed peas all over, reframe it as a "learning experience."

"The study shows the cascading influence that the context of everyday activities — such as mealtimes — has on children's exploration, attention, and word learning," wrote the authors. "When young children messily eat and explore food at each meal, they are learning both about individual foods and also about non-solid substances more generally."

Christine Palumbo is a Naperville-registered dietitian nutritionist. Follow her on Twitter @PalumboRD, Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition, or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.

Swedish pea soup

ACTIVE PREPARATION TIME: Seven minutes

TOTAL PREPARATION TIME: One hour 30 minutes to two hours (not including soaking)

SERVINGS: Eight servings (almost 1 cup each)

Pea soup dates back to ancient Roman times, when it was a nutritious, peasant food staple, but it eventually became one of the time-honored foods of Sweden. Made with yellow peas, this simple soup is prepared with sweet, zesty mustard.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound (454 g) dried yellow peas
6 cups water
1 medium onion, diced
1 tbsp. reduced sodium vegetable broth base
1 tbsp. prepared mustard (e.g., Swedish, whole grain, or Dijon)
½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

1 tsp. low-sodium herbal seasoning blend
1 bay leaf
1 tsp. marjoram
1 tsp. thyme

DIRECTIONS: Cover the dried yellow peas with water and soak overnight. Drain the peas and place them in a large heavy pot. Add the remaining ingredients, stir well, cover with a lid, and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer for 1½ to 2 hours, stirring occasionally, until the peas are tender. Add water as needed to replace moisture lost to evaporation. Remove the bay leaf before serving.

Traditional Swedish pea soup uses whole yellow peas (not split). If you are unable to find whole yellow peas, substitute split yellow peas, but reduce the cooking time by about 30 minutes.

To make this in a slow cooker, soak and drain the peas, then combine with the other ingredients and cook



for 4 to 6 hours on high or 8 to 10 hours on low.

NUTRITION FACTS: 203 calories, 14 g protein, 36 g carbohydrate, 1 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 15 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 59 mg sodium, 28% DV thiamine, 39% DV folate, 10% DV calcium, 16% DV iron, 17% DV magnesium, 16% DV potassium, 12% DV zinc

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