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August already?

Halfway through the summer? It can't be but it is. The weeks fly by in a way they don't when there's snow and ice on the ground. Right? Whether it's vacations away or days in the park or at the beaches, summers in the city are never long enough.



Our issue this month presents our annual Fall School Guide. We hope you will take a good look at the many options around your borough for education opportunities. So many fine professionals throughout our communities are offering wonderful choices from daycare to high school. There's something for everyone.

In addition, this issue has an article I think is very important and is a must-read. Our resident writer

Tammy Scileppi has given us another wonderful insightful piece on the important world of social media and its affect on our adolescents. Through a fascinating interview with Dr. Melissa Robinson-Brown, they discuss the growing cultural phenomenon. Make sure to read "Too Connected."

I am a part of this world too. I text, I email, I have two Facebook accounts and am no stranger to social media. However, when I end my day and am in our office building elevator, I often am the only rider not holding a smartphone and either reading or typing. When I dine out with my 20-something daughter, her phone is always present and beeping with texts coming in and mine is stored

in my purse where it largely stays. Even when I'm at my desk, that's where my phone is stored. It doesn't follow me everywhere and when I get home, I seldom am aware of its presence, which is why I still have a land line, otherwise no one can reach me by phone. But I am not an adolescent and in fact, am strongly categorized as a digital immigrant. These youngsters are natives.

And don't miss reading the piece on "Older Moms" by another of our resident writers, Allison Plitt. As one of those gals myself, I am a true testament to the trend that has been developing, although I do take issue with her contention that 20 years ago it was unheard of for a woman in her 40s to be giving birth. Actually, it was just starting to be a trend and a woman over 35 having a first time pregnancy was no longer referred to as having a "change of life baby." As

women explored life, love and new careers, there was naturally often a delay in not only having children but in entering into committed relationships. Anyway, there are indeed unique issues and this is a good read.

Make sure the summer is not going by with your kids no longer reading, writing and engaging in learning activities of some kind. The loss of continuity is detrimental. Visit the libraries and read as a family. It's such a bonding pleasure.

Enjoy the final month of summer. I know I will. Thanks for reading!

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New York Parenting Media has been recognized for editorial and design excellence by PMA.

New York Parenting Media is published monthly by New York Parenting Media/CNG. Subscription rate is \$35 annually. Reproduction of New York Parenting Media in whole or part without written permission from the publisher is prohibited. All rights reserved. Copyright©2015 Readership: 220,000. 2012 circulation audits by CAC & CVC.



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10 tips to help you set fitness goals for your family

BY SARA DIMMICK

It is a warm summer day in one of our many city parks, and a few families are gathered on the lawn doing a combination of stretching exercises, an obstacle course, and sprints. They are led by an instructor who encouragingly motivates each member of the group to do his best. This scene is becoming commonplace throughout the city, as more parents are making fitness a priority for their families and incor-

porating it into their family time.

This trend could very well be a response to the increase in childhood obesity. According to the Center for Disease Control, childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years.

Children who are obese are more likely to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure — not to mention psycho-social issues related to obesity includ-

ing low self-esteem and feeling discriminated against. And, children and adolescents who are obese are likely to be obese as adults and are therefore at higher risk for adult health problems such as heart disease, type-2 diabetes, stroke, and several types of cancer.

Parents and caregivers play a critical role in shaping how their kids think about living healthy. Whether it's setting fitness goals, going regularly to the gym, or making smart food choices, it is impor-

Parents and caregivers play a critical role in shaping how their kids think about living healthy. Whether it is setting fitness goals, going regularly to the gym, or making smart food choices, it is important for children to see adults modeling healthy behaviors and routines.

tant for children to see adults modeling healthy behaviors and routines. With demanding work schedules and extracurricular activities, it can be a challenge to find the time for exercise and healthy meal planning.

Renee Eanes-Belgrave, a mom of six, says that although she and her husband Clyde struggle with finding time to exercise, they are trying to make it a part of their family routine, because it's something healthy that their kids enjoy.

"Family time is so important to us," says Eanes-Belgrave. "With such a range of ages in our family, exercise is a great activity that brings us all together. And, a little healthy competition amongst the kids motivates them to do what they can."

One of the most important ways to teach kids about living healthy is to show them that it is fun! Norman Turkowitz, a dad of two who has run the New York marathon more than 20 times, says he can still recall the special times he spent with his dad playing sports and exercising. Today, he tries to create similar experiences and memories for his kids.

"It's all about setting realistic goals and having fun while trying to reach them."

Dr. Cindy Baskin, internist at Weill Cornell Medical Center, agrees that kids are impressionable and need to be exposed to positive habits in order to adopt them.

"Children are far more likely to develop healthy habits if they see their parents making smart diet choices and living an active lifestyle," says Baskin. "That message is so much stronger than a doctor who tells a child to 'eat your fruits and vegetables and do daily exercise.'"

Want to kick-start a healthy routine for your family? Here are

10 tips to get you started:

1 Make workouts part of your family ritual and schedule the time on your family calendar, so everyone knows what to expect and when.

2 Allow kids to decide what your workout will be (jogging, bike riding, calisthenics, etc.).

3 Reward family members for their participation (movie, a trip to the toy or clothing store, screen time).

4 Use sprints and obstacle courses to create friendly competition. This makes workouts more exciting.

5 Rotate who in the family will lead a group workout.

6 Encourage kids to food shop with you. If they are part of the process of choosing what to stock the fridge with, they will more likely want to eat their selections.

7 For that picky eater in your household, keep introducing healthy food over and over. Remember it takes 10-plus times for a child to take to a food.

8 Leave your fruit bowl in a place where kids can easily grab an apple or a banana.

9 Stock your fridge with veggies and cover all the colors of the rainbow: red peppers, zucchini, broccoli, purple cabbage. Have kids help you prepare meals.

10 Plan active vacations that involve walking, hiking, or other sports-related activities. If a relaxing vacation is planned, try to do one active thing each day.

Sara Dimmick is a new mother and co-founder of Physical Equilibrium, which provides fitness and wellness experiences for New York City families. Her motto is "create balance and have fun!" Ask her your fitness-related questions at sara@physeq.com.



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Too connected

How sexting, texting, and the social media frenzy are affecting and shaping our adolescents

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

As millennials pass the torch to a new generation of amazing kids, and the social media frenzy reaches fever pitch, parents are getting even more frustrated with the amount of time their youngsters spend texting, and worry about the sexting epidemic they keep hearing about.

Even though they're all signs of the times, these issues may be creating an emotional fireball that could affect your child's psyche, and trigger negative repercussions down the road.

Kids these days!

Recent TV commercials are great examples of how our culture is evolving. One favorite shows a dad and his two teen daughters relaxing on their living room couch; he's sitting in the middle. The girls are texting away on their cellphones. Curious, dad asks them if they're texting each other. The girls respond yes matter-of-factly. He seems a bit baffled and is probably wondering: why can't they just talk to each other?!

Another popular commercial sends a similar message, but in this one, the parent seems to be taking her kids' texting craze in stride and has probably decided: If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. A family gathers at the breakfast table; they're anxiously waiting for their favorite waffles to pop out of the toaster. The adolescent daughter and her mom are texting back and forth in a funny, heated battle over who will be the waffle winner, as the youngest child snatches one and runs off with it. In real life, most parents probably wouldn't go for a one-on-one texting scenario at meal time. Would you?

Before the words internet, e-mail, instant messaging, chatting, texting, sexting, tweeting, likes, friending, and hashtag were coined, people (younger and older) connected with one another the old-school way: by simply talking face-to-face, or over the phone, and by writing notes and letters. Sure, it was boring and basic, and far less creative than today's plethora of communication options — and it also took a bit more time to

reach out to someone — but it seems back then, folks had more of it.

Everyone enjoyed chatting, gossiping, sharing and commiserating — offline. Friends and relatives would enjoy passing actual photos around and carried several in their wallet or purse. And it worked just fine. Many folks, who remember that era, talk about those days with a sense of longing. Some youngins refer to them as “dinosaurs.” Flirting and courting was done the old-fashioned way, as well, not by texting and sexting, of course. And it was so romantic! How can texts with smiley faces and flowery e-mails replace pillow talk (you and your true love chatting over the phone at bedtime) and hand- or type-written love letters sprayed with perfume?

In fact, until recent times, most of us were quite “innocent,” and didn't even know what sexting meant, until a certain local politician made headlines (several years back) when his salacious cellular escapades were suddenly uncovered.

Our information age

How lucky we are to live in an exciting era marked by constant change and possibilities; overflowing with newfangled technology and state-of-the-art gadgets, created by great minds! It's hard to believe we practically have the entire universe at our fingertips; that we can reach out to others in a variety of exciting ways in just milliseconds, and across cyberspace — without ever uttering a word or speaking to another human being if we so choose. Happily or sadly (depending on your perspective), there's no going back; the genie is forever out of the bottle, granting our collective, ever-increasing wish for speed, progress, and the next coolest thing in a culture that some say is marred by superficiality, ignorance, and self-destructive divisiveness.

We're witnessing so many wonderfully innovative developments, but at what cost to our kids?

One day, when we look back, we'll see that the Zeitgeist — the spirit of our times — was in large part defined by the high-tech revolution, speedy information gathering and

sharing, a growing desire for instant gratification (which we may be passing on to our kids), and an obsessive need to connect and reach out 24 hours a day, seven days a week, yet in limited and perhaps, less meaningful ways. These changes have gradually transformed how we and our kids relate to each other and others in our personal and professional lives.

Some signs are already there: Consider how difficult it is for many tweens and teens to converse with each other or with family members and peers one-on-one. And, why read articles and books when you can get quick info and news from the internet, they ask. We, as parents know that some of what's out there in cyberspace is misleading or inaccurate, but they don't quite get it. Putting pen to paper is becoming a thing of the past, as is cursive writing and learning penmanship. It's quicker and easier to send important messages or express certain emotions (OMG! LOL!), and even say “I love you” via text or email. #what a shame!

Undoubtedly, social media is a powerful, dynamic force in our lives. It's fun, entertaining, and extremely useful, but as we all know, it can also serve as a force for evil. Like the internet, and tweeting, it's a double-edged sword — and can be dangerous.

Friends and likes?

It's a known fact that less Facebook “likes” and cyber-bullying can cause kids to feel unpopular, depressed, and even suicidal. Parents and caregivers: keep reminding those kids that hundreds of social media “friends” aren't as important as having just a few real ones. And that sometimes, BFFs aren't your best friends forever; they can turn around and say mean things about you with a few cunning keystrokes and clicks. But it's our job to remind them that it's definitely not the end of the world! And that they aren't defined by that meaningless nonsense.

Every era and time period, like every person, has its own personality and spirit. We are all a product of our times in some ways — the culture we grew up in. That said,



In this enlightening, informative interview, the mother of two helps parents and caregivers understand a growing cultural phenomena, i.e. social media, texting, and sexting. She talks about how all this stuff affects our children as they transition into real-world relationships.

Tammy Scieppi: Why has sexting become so popular?

Melissa Robinson-Brown: Puberty and adolescence have historically been a time of change and identity development. Moreover, teens experience significant distress over these two key elements. Teens are curious and hormonal. They are trying to fit in, trying to develop relationships, exploring their sexuality, and testing limits — their own and their parents'. Today's generation does a large majority of this exploration via technology and social media.

A significant majority (if not all) of adolescents have a phone or some access to the internet, and they are constantly staying in contact with peers.

Long ago, we used the phone or in-person conversations to have suggestive or flirtatious conversations with our potential or current partners. We might have talked about sex and even suggested that the person might get to "see!" Remember that old line, "You show me yours, I'll show you mine?" Well, that hasn't changed. It's just become more technologically advanced. Teens don't have to wait until they are physically with someone to "show theirs." It can be done with a quick "snap photo" and "send." It has become a part of courting and flirting. It's all done via technology.

Given that brain development is still happening during adolescence and impulsivity is high, often, teens aren't thinking about the possible repercussions of sending pictures of their bodies via text message. It's not something that previous generations had to think about, which means parents may not always be thinking about how these discussions have to happen when they hand their teen a smartphone!

TS: How can sexting trigger emotional or mental instability in adolescents and teens?

MRB: Well, again, brain develop-

Continued on following page

many parents are now witnessing how their tweens and teens are being affected by the culture they live in, and would agree that the sexting craze and social media frenzy a bit scary. They're just not sure how to deal with it, since "everybody's doing it" and there's so much peer pressure. Sound familiar?

But there does seem to be a way to better grasp how this cultural phenomena can be dealt with and reined in.

Protecting them

We know that kids' personalities, values, and ideas are partly molded by their parents, but also by outside forces: cultural and societal influences that dictate how they think and act. Since adolescents and teens are so impressionable and vulnerable, it's up to parents and caregiv-

ers to keep them as safe as possible no matter how old they are, and keep the lines of communication open — despite their protests to leave them alone. And kids should be reminded often that inappropriate texts, sexting, and questionable social media posts can end up in the wrong hands and cause havoc in their young lives. Future employers, friends, and love interests can easily look back and view all that awkward, embarrassing, unfiltered stuff posted on kids' Facebook pages when they were younger, very naïve, and caught up in the moment. And it's going to be there forever.

Since adolescent and teen brains aren't fully developed, youngsters tend to focus only on the present; they don't think much about conse-

quences, or about cause and effect — and that's a big problem!

Dr. Melissa Robinson-Brown is an assistant professor in Pediatrics and Psychiatry, co-director of Psychology Training Program, and licensed clinical psychologist at the Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center in Manhattan. She provides individual, group, and family therapy, as well as psychological testing. The center provides medical, mental health, dental, and optical services to adolescents and young adults ages 10-24.

She lives in Edgewater, New Jersey with her family — daughters Kyah (5), Kahlia (2), and husband Antoine (a senior director and partner at an advertising agency) — but has always practiced in New York.

Continued from previous page

ment and emotional maturity are still developing during adolescence. So, already, the foundation is a little rocky. Adolescents deal with so many different emotions already. They are constantly trying to figure out who likes them, who are their friends, what group they want to be a part of, will they be a unique individual or someone that follows the crowd? All of these factors affect socialization. When that sext gets sent, it sometimes goes to the intended person and that's where it stays. But other times, it has now become a tool for someone else to use, often to bully and degrade individuals. It's used to start rumors and label individuals a "hoe" or a "thot" (that hoe over there). Once that picture has been spread, there is little that the individual can do to deny that he or she might be portraying a certain image.

At least in previous generations, if a guy claimed to have slept with a girl or guy, it would be a case of he-said-she-said and perhaps, the rumor would eventually die. Now, there is hard evidence that something happened or at least that the said individual was willing to send the sext. Being bullied or portrayed in this way when it was not the intention of the sext instantly creates feelings of anger, sadness, helplessness, and shame. When these feelings interact with an already rocky adolescent period, this is definitely a recipe for emotional instability.

TS: In some ways, has social media become the culprit for these issues?

MRB: Social media is a significant part of today's adolescent population. These public forums set the stage for socialization, popularity contests, and bullying. It's about how many "friends" you can attain and how many "likes" you get on a post. Many times, social media makes it easier to start conversations, meet people, and become bold! Teens (and adults) say things on social media that they wouldn't normally say in person. It gives you permission to take off the filters, and I believe it also interferes with the ability to learn about appropriate social cues and in-person socialization.

Text messages, messaging on Facebook, direct messaging on Instagram, creating stories on Tumblr, sending quick messages on Snapchat, etc., it all gives teens permission to take off the filters and express themselves in a way that they might not otherwise do in person! As such, individuals are more likely to send



Psychologist Dr. Melissa Robinson-Brown (pictured with daughters Kyah and Kahlia) speaks about the dangers of sexting for teens.

the message and, unfortunately, social media can help a picture or sext spread pretty rapidly!

TS: Is mental illness awareness regarding kids improving?

MRB: Mental health awareness definitely needs to improve! This is especially true in teens that often hide symptoms or lack the awareness to know that they are having significant symptoms. A teen doesn't have to express a depressed mood for you to know that he or she is depressed. Instead, parents, caregivers, teachers, counselors, coaches, and other individuals who work with teens need constant psychoeducation on what signs to look for. Adults need to become more aware of their children's habits!

Every time I first meet with a parent of a teen that I am seeing, I praise that parent for recognizing a need to seek out professional help for a problem, no matter how big or small! That means the parents were paying attention and that's where we as parents need to gain mastery! We need to know our kids and watch their movements. Are they eating? Are they sleeping? Have they become more withdrawn? How are they doing in school? Who are they chatting with on the phone or on text message? Are they on their phone until late hours?

Just pay attention! Even when

they don't want you around, parents, caregivers, counselors, teachers, should be paying attention.

A brave, complicated, and scary new world

Growing up in our fascinating, progressive, and brave new world is great; these are exciting times for everyone, but things are changing around us at lightning speed and sometimes, for the worse. And many parents worry that their children are being shaped by what some describe as an anything-goes, no-holds-barred society, which is hyper-focused on sex, hot celebs, looks, reality TV, social media, and legalizing pot. Some are concerned with a disturbing mind-set and trend among some teens, who have a get-rich-quick-without-working-for-it attitude. How all these variables manifest in our kids' lives, remains to be seen. Only time will tell.

And there's evidence that all these distractions—the electronic devices, the endless texting and preoccupation with social media are very addictive. Let's face it, we adults can't live without our cellphones, iPads, and computers either, and feel lost and disconnected without them.

Here's a no-brainer: Now that summer's here, why not spend more quality time outdoors with your family, just having good, old-fashioned fun close to home, or exploring

Gotham and doing stuff that will stimulate your kids' minds? The idea is to get them away from all those devices! And for older teens, plan regular activities that will hone their socialization skills.

As the planet turns, it seems likely that no matter how brilliant, forward-thinking, and tech-savvy our kids become, and how fast our modern culture evolves, socializing, connecting, and sharing will always remain at the core of who we are as human beings, while we search for more ways to reach out and communicate in a complex, global world that's getting smaller.

Ironically, social media was created to bring people together, but over-dosing on social media and texting tends to pull us further apart. It would be nice if our kids truly understood this concept and learned how to better interact with others in person, or over the phone, or by writing a letter and mailing it.

Unplugging and tuning out

Everybody has the ability to tune in to what's happening out there in a flash. Or, choose to unplug and tune out for a while.

Some families are experimenting with a great "new" way of interacting, based on an old-school concept—it's called family time. During dinner, or at designated times (during the week, or on weekends), all devices are turned off and put away. Instead of focusing on their phones, kids spend quality time with their family members, talking about their day or week; issues are addressed openly and hopefully resolved. Discussing current events is optional, and joke-telling is especially encouraged, as are board games. You never know, this "radical" idea could eventually become a nation-wide trend!

Another recent commercial seems to sum up the Zeitgeist that defines our crazy culture: A family of four waits in line at the airport; they're looking forward to their island getaway vacation. While their teen daughter and adolescent son are busy on their cellphones, mom and dad happen to mention that there's no wifi where they're going, so they suggest that when they get there, the kids might want to actually talk, for a change. Shocked by this news flash and visibly shaken, the siblings briefly pause, glance at each other and consider the implications. Deciding that talking isn't such a great idea, they shake their heads no, as mom turns to dad and says, "I like it!"

The art of conversation

Preschool kids are the perfect age to learn the social aspect of language

BY THOMAS C. DAUS

Have you ever wondered how children develop the ability to introduce, maintain, and also close a topic of conversation? Well, there is a great deal of learning that goes into our young children's minds within the arena of social communication. Pragmatics is the term used to describe the social aspect of language, and how we "use" our chosen words with others. Although it is essential for parents to continuously work on enhancing a young child's understanding and verbal expression, pragmatic development can be considered the icing on the cake with regard to language development.

We can all remember having interactions with people whereby either a lack of eye contact, difficulties with staying on topic, and perhaps an abrupt ending to a conversation may have left us feeling a bit awk-



ward. Pragmatic skills are learned at a very early age, and it is carried with us throughout our adult lives. Parents should take the time to have short conversations, throughout the course of one's day, to allow for opportunities to teach, through modeling of target, pragmatic goals.

For our preschool students, there are numerous pragmatic functions

to be taught which allow for greater social language expansion. The areas of requesting (yes or no questions, "who," "what," "where," "when," and "why" questions), action requests (i.e. give me), description identifications (i.e. that's my ball), responses (that's not a dog), conversational devices such as politeness markers (i.e. please, thanks), and also communication functions (i.e. the protesting of objects — "don't touch the car") are all appropriate teachings.

It is exciting to learn the pragmatic aspects of our language. The more we teach our children pragmatics, the more we increase the likelihood of molding them into well-rounded, polite, and socially integrated children.

Thomas C. Daus is a speech-language pathologist. For further information on pragmatic development strategies, and also an overall understanding of speech and language development, visit speakfromtheheart.org.

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Issues facing the older mom

As science allows births later in life, mothers face new challenges

BY ALLISON PLITT

The number of women in the United States giving birth to children after the age of 35 is rising, according to a report published in 2014 by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Twenty years ago it would have been unheard of for a woman to give birth in her 40s. Thanks to advances in assisted reproductive technolo-

gies, women have more opportunities available to them to have children after 35.

Just recently the media has focused on several women, such as singer Sophie B. Hawkins, who have decided to have a baby at the age of 50. They have been able to get pregnant through technological developments with in vitro fertilizations, such as using donor eggs or unfreezing eggs or embryos women

created in their 30s, when they were more fertile.

There are many reasons for women postponing childbirth. One motive could possibly be that people, in general, are living longer lives. Another factor is that women are finding fulfilling careers during their childbearing years. Some women have not yet found a partner with whom to have a child.

Lois Nachamie, a board-certified psychotherapist, counsels women having children later in life, as well as their families. Fifteen years ago, Nachamie, who was 42 when she had a baby, published a book called "So Glad We Waited: A Hand-Holding Guide for Over-35 Parents," with a forward by actress Debra Winger. Fifteen years later, 35 doesn't seem so old to wait and have a baby now that mothers are becoming pregnant at 50.

"I think by the time a woman is 50, she's made an active decision. You can't rely on your regular cycle. You have to make use of a lot of assisted

“The birth of a child to an older mother is a very treasured and cherished event. Setting limits is sometimes harder than when you have a child at a younger age.”

reproduction by the time you're 50, so these women have made a considered choice,” Nachamie says.

Nachamie also takes into consideration the rising life expectancy in the United States and other economically developed countries.

“Our life expectancy has certainly increased dramatically and the ability to combat disease and maintain a preventive kind of lifestyle means that a woman in her 50s in this day and age, if she's taking care of herself, is pretty healthy. She's not like a woman in her 50s fifty years ago,” she says.

She also says older mothers in good physical health should not be too anxious about the physical challenges of raising a toddler.

“I think people are often worried about the physical challenges, but even if you might have creaky knees when you're 60, if you're in good shape, the physical challenges aren't as horrendous as people fear.”

She advises older mothers to take precautions when parenting, telling them not to indulge to their child's every whim.

“The birth of a child to an older mother is a very treasured and cherished event. It's not a mistake by any stretch of the imagination. Because the child is so wanted in terms of parenting, it becomes a little trickier,” she cautions. “Setting limits is sometimes harder than when you have a child at a younger age because you're so happy to have this kid that you kind of don't want to say 'no.'”

Nachamie has also seen older mothers struggle in raising toddlers.

“I think the other thing for women over 50 is that the toddler years can be trying and exhausting. Some people find it just fabulous and they think everything their kid does is spectacular. Other women are really bored and they

don't like sitting on the floor and playing games. That depends on the personality of the mother.”

Older mothers, furthermore, can find their teenage children emotionally challenging when they reach adolescence, Nachamie believes, saying “these kids may be embarrassed by their mothers when they reach their teen years. Children start to worry that their parents are going to die, which they often don't talk about, but they certainly are aware of.”

From her work counseling families, she's seen the problem technology poses to older mothers.

“If a woman is over 50, her relationship with technology, no matter how technically savvy she is right now, is still a real, hard disconnect between how much kids use technology and how much time they spend with their family. Common sense tells you that the more a kid is involved with any kind of technology, the less they're involved with another human being,” she says.

Another obstacle Nachamie considers is the possibility of older mothers becoming grandparents.

“An older mother might be a grandparent, but if your own child wants to wait until they're 40 years old to have a baby, then the mother is 90. I don't think that should stop anybody. I just don't think it's something that hits people until they are older and their child is older.”

Despite the challenges mothers 50 and older experience, Nachamie still holds their tenacity and determination in high regard.

“The 50 year old who has decided to have a child, in my opinion, is a very brave woman. I believe from a psychological point of view, when the biological urge was upon her, she had other things going on and so now, psychologically, she is allowing love into her life,” she says.

“Clearly what a child does is bring love into the home,” she adds. “It gives us someone to love unconditionally. So I think the 50 year old who has decided to do that is a very brave human being. I admire them tremendously and they have brought something to this relationship that a younger woman may have not.”

To learn more about Lois Nachamie's books and insights into parenting, visit www.loisnachamie.com.

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

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Wheel power

How to prepare your child for riding a bike to school

BY JENNIFER WARNER

There's a group of kids that have an unfair advantage over your children. They do better in school, are more social, and have fewer health problems in childhood and adulthood than all their peers. Who are these over-achieving stars? They are the kids who bike to school.

For many adults, the idea of biking to school seems like a quaint memory of a bygone era, but the families whose children are pedaling to the classroom each morning know different. They know that daily dose of biking improves their kids' academics and attitude, and makes up for the lack of physical activity they may experience at other times.

The benefits of biking are so powerful, in fact, that a regular bike ride has actually been proven to help ease the signs of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder! A study by Specialized Bikes Foundation and RTSG Neuroscience (a team of physical education consultants) explored whether or not children diagnosed with ADHD could benefit from a bike ride. What they found was incredible.

For children with attention issues, the study found that a bike ride actually changed the neuro-electric activity of their brain to a more "normal" pattern. Study participants had

a better mood and were better able to process feelings after they biked.

A separate study published in the *Journal of Pediatric Psychology* discovered that regular exercise improves self-esteem in children, and research shows that kids who bike regularly are less likely to be overweight in childhood and nearly 50 percent less likely to be overweight as adults.

With schools devoting less and less time to physical education and sports, one in three children in the U.S. is dangerously overweight or obese, and 6.5 million kids living with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, it is more important than ever for parents to take control.

One of the most affordable and practical ways to make sure your children are thriving and getting the daily physical activity they need is to bike them to school. It's easier than you think. If you live within five miles of your child's school, getting there by bike may actually take you less time than getting there by car.

Once you have your prep down, it's a breeze, and you'll enjoy the added benefit of getting some exercise yourself! To start biking your kids to school, just remember these tips.

Air in the tires

A little prep goes a long way towards making your bike ride to

school a smooth and pleasurable experience.

Invest in a good floor pump and make sure you have everyone's tires properly inflated. Also, have a secure bike lock for each of your kids' bicycles and practice locking them up properly together. U-locks and cables are an effective combination and lightweight enough that your kid can probably tote them in a backpack without a problem.

Not sure how to lock up a bicycle? Visit mycitybikes.org/bike-to-school for step-by-step instructions.

Drive it first

The scariest parts of biking to school are intersections. What better way to know how to deal with traffic than to drive in it? Think about your family's route from a car's perspective. Where are the blind spots? Where are the crosswalks? Use this knowledge to map out the safest route, and keep in mind that you may be one of the very lucky people who can incorporate a bike path into the commute. Bike paths are separated from traffic and have fewer intersections with roads and the cars that drive on them than riding on the sidewalk or bike lane.

Check your local app on mycitybikes.org/new-york or traillink.com



to see where the bike paths are in your area.

Helmets for everyone

Make sure everyone has their safety gear on. Including you. Properly fitting helmets, front and rear blinking bike lights, and bright-colored and reflective jackets, vests or accessories will keep you safe and visible on your ride.

You are your child's example, so save yourself the hassle of an "I'm not wearing that" tantrum by showing your kids how you strap on your helmet, turn on your bike lights, and wear your safety gear. What's normal for you will become normal for them.

Divide and conquer

When you share the responsibility of driving your kids to school with neighbors or family members, it's called "carpooling." Do the same by bike and you're "bike-pooling."

Plan your route and safety protocols together with another trusted parent.

Do all the steps above together at least once, so you make sure you're on the same page.

Not only will this make everyone's

life easier, but you'll be more comfortable knowing that your surrogate bike leader has the same expectations and plans as you do. Sharing the responsibility will free up some of your mornings while ensuring that your kids are getting the best possible start to every single day.

To build up your own confidence on the bike, consider taking a maintenance class or joining a group ride hosted by your local bike shop. For example, 718 Cyclery in Brooklyn hosts regular city riding clinics to teach less-experienced riders how to maneuver their bike and handle biking in traffic scenarios.

Many shops like 718 Cyclery have free, scheduled maintenance classes where you can learn basics like changing a flat tire, adjusting the seat height, or keeping a bike's moving parts clean and lubricated. You'll feel more confident and in control when you learn how to save the day in the event of a technical mishap.

Visit mycitybikes.org to connect with a local bike shop in your area and find local bike ed opportunities for grown-ups.

Jennifer Warner is a beginner biking advocate and outreach director at My City Bikes, the first and only public health campaign dedicated to support-

SOURCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/data.html>
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/obesity/facts.htm>

Can cycling help manage ADHD in kids?
http://www.specialized.com/OA_MEDIA/pdf/Specialized_infographic_2.23.15_novideo.pdf

Children who ride a bike two or more times a week are less likely to be overweight.

Dudas, R., and M. Crocetti, 2008 – Association of bicycling and childhood overweight status, *Ambulatory Pediatrics*, 8, 392–395

Adolescents who participate in bicycling, in-line skating, or skateboarding more than four times a week are 48 percent less likely to be overweight as adults.

Menschik, D., et al., 2008 – Adolescent physical activities as predictors of young adult weight, *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 162, 23–28

Nearly two-thirds of children 9–13 do not participate in any organized physical activity outside of school, and 23 percent don't engage in any free-time physical activity at all.

Duke, J., et al., 2003 – Physical activity levels among children aged 9–13 years: *United States, 2002, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 52, 785–788

Participation in physical activity is positively related to academic performance in children.

Singh, A., et al., 2012 – Physical activity and performance at school: A systematic review of the literature including a methodological quality assessment, *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 166, 1

Regular exercise reduces depression and improves self-esteem in overweight children.

Petty, K., et al., 2008 – Exercise effects on depressive symptoms and self-worth in overweight children: A randomized controlled trial, *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*

Keep an eye out

Tips for parents on protecting their child's eyesight

BY BEHLOR SANTI

Not only is August the month of hot days and school shopping, but for the past decade it's also been Child Eye Health And Safety Month, a time to observe the health of your children's eyes. Here are seven tips to ease the stress and yet make certain your child's eyes are in good shape:

Stay up-to-date with screen time research

Traditionally, the American Academy of Pediatrics has suggested that children over age 2 watch less than one or two hours of television daily. In October 2014, the academy debated its recommendations. In an article published in Slate, Lisa Guernsey of the New America Foundation's Early Education Initiative, says, "Let's face it: Raising children turns our hair gray no matter what. But at least it moves us from a 'no screen time'

recommendation, that few parents abide, toward 'mindful screen time' in today's media-maniac world."

Get your child's eyes examined regularly

According to Prevent Blindness, an organization dedicated to educating the public about eye health, parents should first network with friends, relatives, and co-workers to find eye doctors good with children. "The best thing to have is good information," says Dr. Steven E. Brooks, chief of pediatric ophthalmology at Columbia University Medical Center in Manhattan. Just before your child's appointment, prepare questions for the eye doctor and bring a teddy bear or other toy along.

Protect your child's eyes from the sun

Make sure that your child uses sunscreen. Encourage the use of sunglasses that block excess ultraviolet, or UV, rays.

Sports and eye safety go together

Whether your child plays basketball or prefers skateboarding, emphasize the wearing of safety eyewear.

Get your kids active

If your child's a little couch potato or video-game fan, encourage him to be physically active. TV time is not connected to blindness, but researchers have found a connection between TV or computer time, called "close work," and nearsightedness. Less close work, and more time playing, can reduce the risk of causing or worsening nearsightedness, as well as maintain a normal body mass index.

Emphasize nutrition

In addition to making your child play, feed him nutritious food. Excess sugar, salt, and fat can lead to obesity, hardening of the heart's arteries, and elevated blood pressure, factors in poor eye health. Structuring a diet to prevent diabetes also will have an influence on your children's health as he grows older. Diabetes can damage vision.

Special attention for a special-needs child

If your child has such conditions as Down syndrome, developmental delay and juvenile arthritis, Brooks suggests setting up appointments with pediatric ophthalmology specialists. Children with special needs disproportionately suffer from eye problems.

• • •
"I'm an advocate of children receiving high-quality vision care," says Brooks. "Appropriate attention to safety is always important to make sure preventable injuries are prevented ... annual evaluations of vision are important to detect vision problems early, but also to raise awareness."

Regular eye checkups benefit children whether eye problems are detected or not. For conditions such as strabismus, or crossed eyes, pediatric ophthalmologists have effective treatments, such as applying demecarium bromide, or injecting Botox into affected eye muscles. Even if your child's eye health is normal, regular checkups encourage good eye care. Children see their eye health as important as dental health or fitness. Check out Eye Spy (<http://eyespy.preventblindness.org/index.php>), a free, educational website with age-appropriate information on eye anatomy and how the eye works, as well as eye safety.

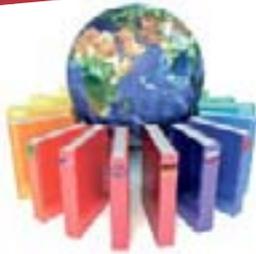
Also check out the National Center for Family Professional Partnership website (www.fv-ncfpp.org/index.php?cID=567). It has valuable resources concerning eye health for children on the autistic spectrum, as well as resources for parents of children with vision impairment.

This August, do more than stay cool and prepare your child for the school year. Protect your child's sight and allow him to see every day well.





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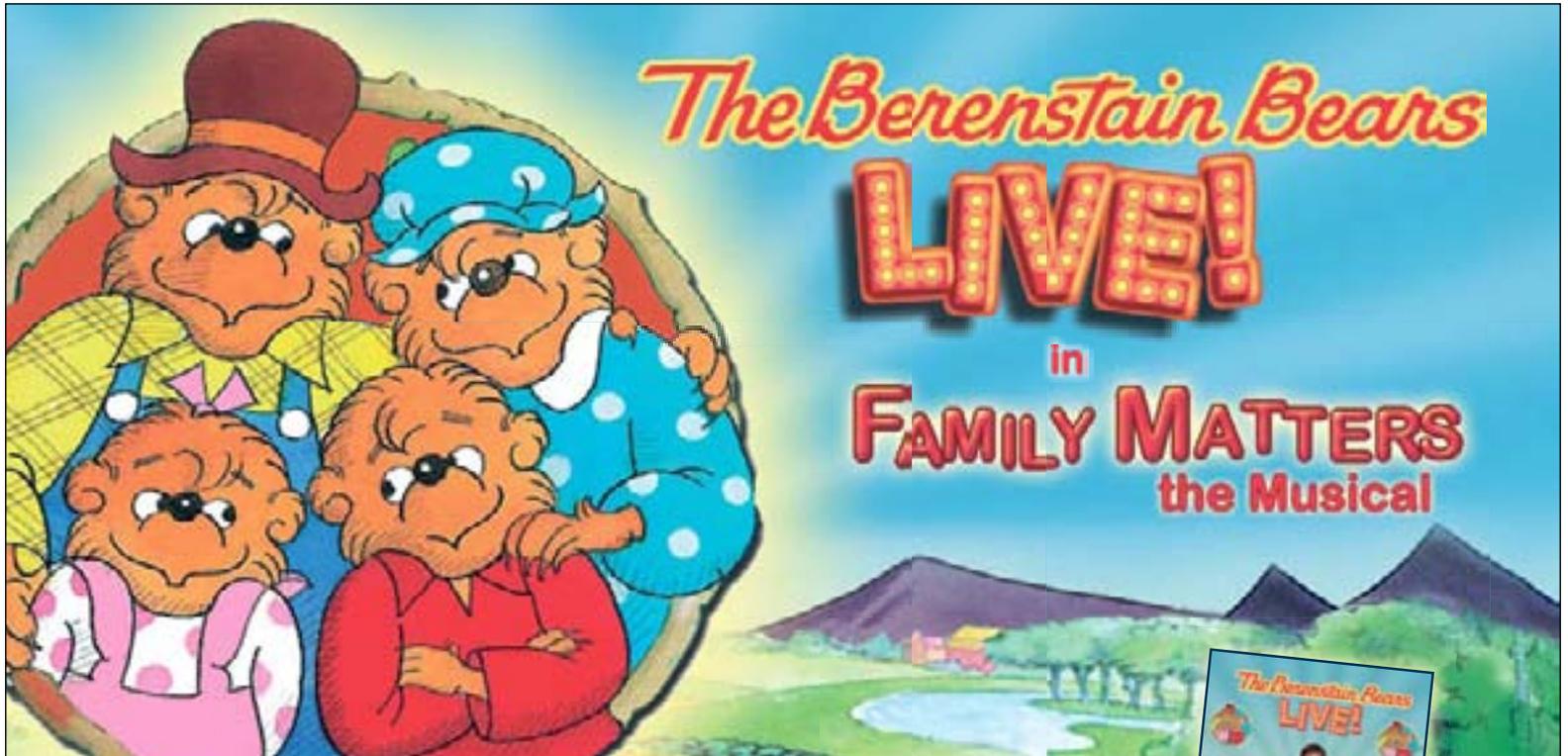
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Fight summer learning loss!

Five things
that NYC
kids should
pick up this
season

BY DR. DEBORAH ANTOINE
AND RHEA WONG

This season, most kids will experience the all-too-common phenomenon known as “summer learning loss.”

The National Summer Learning Association reports that the majority of students lose two months of grade-level equivalency in math over the summer months, with low-income students also falling behind two months in reading. Furthermore, most children gain weight more rapidly during summer break.

To help prevent this seasonal backsliding, we compiled a list of five things that New York City kids should pick up this summer:

A racquet. Everyone knows tennis is great exercise, but it is also proven to uniquely build kids’ cognitive abilities, academic performance, and character. According to a United States Tennis Association study, children who play tennis get better grades, have fewer behavioral problems, and are more likely to aspire to attend college than those who play

other sports. To learn about tennis opportunities for kids throughout New York City, visit www.nyjtl.org.

A book. Summer reading is a tried and true way to combat learning loss. One of the many benefits kids reap from reading is a more robust vocabulary, which is crucial for standardized tests. Visit www.btny.org/resources for recommended books and vocab apps. Additionally, parents should read the same books and engage their kids in conversation about the plot, characters, and themes.

A pen. Writing well is vital for success in school, and it helps kids become more analytical and expressive. The trick is to make it enjoyable. Some kids like keeping a journal, but many do not. Writing and performing spoken word poetry and music lyrics are effective ways to get kids excited about expressing themselves through words.

A MetroCard. On weekends, visit different parts of New York City. Expand your child’s worldview by embarking on outings to new neighborhoods to experience diverse cultures, hear different languages, taste ethnic

foods, and see distinctive architecture. Visit the city’s world-class museums, many of which offer cheap — or even free — admission.

A meditation practice. The positive impact that mindfulness meditation has on adults’ health and well-being is extensively documented. But studies also show that meditation helps kids calm down, focus, and can even boost their test scores. Concentration is a particularly important skill these days, as kids are increasingly bombarded with visual stimulation from TV, videogames, and mobile devices. For meditation resources for children, visit www.teachchildrenmeditation.com.

This summer, our two organizations — New York Junior Tennis & Learning and Breakthrough New York — are embarking on a new partnership. New York Junior Tennis & Learning’s brand-new Cary Leeds Center for Tennis & Learning in the Bronx’s Crotona Park will serve as the third site of Breakthrough New York’s year-round academic enrichment program.

Kids participating in summer programming at the Cary Leeds Center will boost their brains and bodies, so that they’re ready for success in school come September. For those kids who aren’t participating in this kind of enrichment programming, picking up these five things is a great way to turn learning loss into summer gain.

Dr. Deborah Antoine is president and chief executive officer of New York Junior Tennis and Learning. Rhea Wong is executive director of Breakthrough New York.

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Continued on page 22

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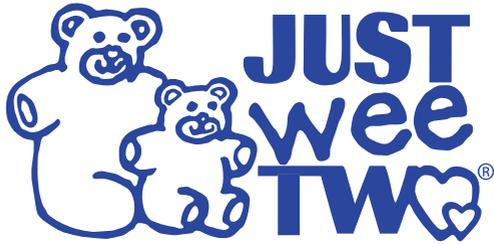
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Fall 2015 School Guide

DIRECTORY

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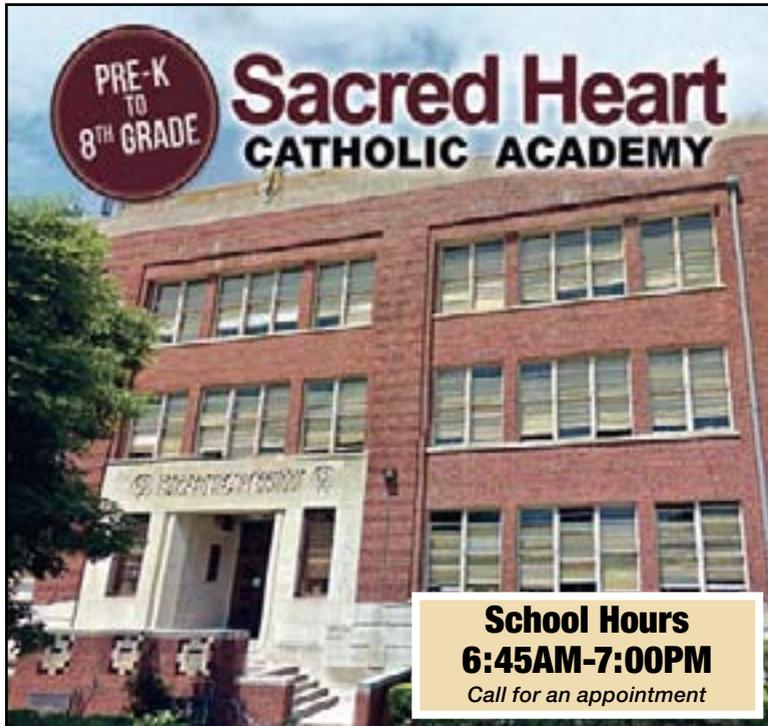
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Continued on page 24



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Fall 2015 School Guide

DIRECTORY

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St. Joseph Catholic Academy

28-46 44 Street, Long Island City, NY, 11103
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JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

When I just knew I was having a boy

When I was pregnant for the first time, I just knew that my baby was a girl. We never found out beforehand, but when the doctor said, "It's a girl!" I wasn't shocked at all. With our second daughter, we skipped knowing the gender again, wanting to be surprised at birth. In the beginning, I had no idea, but towards the end, I was 99 percent sure she was a girl. Right again.

With our third child, I had no idea initially. This pregnancy was a little different. I was nauseous 24 hours a day, seven days a week after never having any morning sickness with my first two. Thoughts of boys were on my mind (even though the idea of actually raising a boy terrified me a bit). But I still wasn't having any strong feeling either way, until one very ordinary day.

A few months into the pregnancy, I had just gotten off the subway and was on my way home. I was listening to a Dave Matthews Band song on my iPod, which I did nearly everyday on my commute home. I was enjoying a song that I had listened to about a million times before that day, "Ants Marching." I thought nothing of it, and began mentally checking my to-do list as I took each step.

And then Dave sang the line:

"Goes to visit his mommy. She feeds him well, his concerns, he forgets them. And remembers being small. Playing under the table and dreaming."

It stopped me in my tracks, literally. I slowed my pace and just smiled, wondering if what I was feeling was actually true. This baby was a boy. In that moment, I just knew it. I felt a certain warmth and happiness that I hadn't experienced before. A few weeks after that day, a sonogram confirmed he was indeed, a boy.

It was one of the few magical times I've had as an adult. Of course, whenever I hear that song it takes me

back to that very moment, crossing a quiet Brooklyn street knowing I was carrying my son. My boy is now 12 and a skilled and passionate guitar player. While he usually plays alternative and metal songs, he surprised me recently and began playing "Ants Marching," knowing the full story behind that song. You know how you always think the best moments in life are the big ones? They're really not. Sometimes they are a week-day afternoon when you are simply listening to the quiet strumming of a sweet boy who fills your heart.

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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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Picking safe foods at farmers markets

Shopping at a farmers' market not only offers some of the freshest fruits, veggies, and other foods, but it also offers the opportunity to buy locally, support small business, and connect with your community.

But as you explore farmers' markets in your area, pay attention to the vendors' food safety. Vendors often sell products outdoors where they are exposed to dirt, bugs, and pollutants. In addition, they usually have little access to water for product washing.

Most markets have their own food safety rules as well as related government regulations. But there are basic guidelines you should follow, too:

- Check the stands' overall cleanliness, including gloves and clean utensils, covered garbage cans, coolers for perishables, and clean bags.

- Be sure to use separate reusable grocery totes for raw meat and poultry and ready-to-eat foods. It's important to wash your reusable totes often. Unwashed grocery bags are breeding grounds for bacteria.

- Harmful food-borne pathogens like *E. coli*, salmonella, listeria, and norovirus may contaminate fruits



and vegetables. To reduce your risk: Go early for the best selections, wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly, and dry them with a clean cloth or paper towel. Avoid produce with mold, bruises, or cuts.

- Wash produce even if you plan to peel it. Bacteria on the outside of melons and bananas can be transferred

inside when you cut or peel them.

- Refrigerate cut or peeled fruits and vegetables within two hours.

- Only buy pasteurized milk products. Pregnant women, young children, and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for illness caused by listeria. Soft cheeses made from unpasteurized milk are one common source.

- Eggs should be properly chilled at 45-degrees Fahrenheit. Make sure eggs are clean and the shells are not cracked.

- Meat should be kept in closed coolers with ice. Perishables must be refrigerated within two hours (one hour if it's more than 90-degrees Fahrenheit), so bring an insulated bag for the way home. Separate meat from other ready-to-eat foods, so the juices from raw meat do not come in contact with other foods.

- Only buy juice or cider that has been pasteurized.

- To locate a farmers' market near you, go to www.localharvest.org.

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

Raspberry-blackberry Greek yogurt ice pops

Makes 6 to 8 (depending on the size of the mold)

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups fresh (or frozen and thawed) blackberries or raspberries

1/4 cup powdered sugar

16 ounces honey-flavored Greek-style yogurt

DIRECTIONS: Combine berries with powdered sugar in a blender or food processor, pulse until smooth to make purée. Spoon half the yogurt into a bowl and stir in 2 tbsp. of purée so it is stained pink. Spoon into ice pop molds, add the rest of the purée, then the rest of the yogurt. Push in ice pop sticks and freeze until solid.

NUTRITION FACTS: 90 calories, 16 g carbohydrate (14 g sugar), 6 g protein, 0 g fat, 25 mg sodium, 136 mg potassium, 2 g fiber

Adapted from the Oregon Raspberry and Blackberry Commission.



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Friendly advance

Volunteers are making a difference at Queens libraries

BY KAREN LEE

Do you know what a Friends of the Library Group is? If you thought it was a gathering of people who wanted to make new friends, that was my original impression, too. What I discovered was not only do you form friendships, you challenge yourself to do more and be more for the greater good of the community.

Friends Groups are comprised of library users and supporters who volunteer their time and talents to promote programs that help enrich the neighborhood. Friends Groups raise funds to purchase additional books, equipment, and other materials not included in the library budget. They also work with staff on legislative advocacy. Additionally, they create interest in, and increase public awareness of, the library by encouraging individual and community participation in cultural, educational, social, and fund-raising activities for the benefit of the library and the people it serves.

I became involved with the Friends of Library, Flushing Chapter, in 2013. I was a regular library user and saw a posting for a Mandarin language class sponsored by the Friends Group. I signed up for the class thinking I would gain some language skills and meet some new folks at the same time.

I met Annette, Edythe, and Diane on the first day. Annette serves as treasurer and Edythe as the secretary of the Flushing Library group. Annette had formed the language class by finding a teacher who was a native Mandarin speaker. The speaker helped create a curriculum that was easy to follow for a conversational course.

After getting to know Annette, Edythe and Diane, I learned that they were involved with other activities at the library in addition to the language class. Annette and Edythe started a plant-care program that has been thriving for more than a decade. The Friends volunteers regularly donate and maintain a variety of plants to help purify the air in the library. Along with watering and re-potting the indoor plants, volunteers



(Top) Students learn about science, technology, engineering, and mathematics at the Flushing Library. (Above) Back row, Kevin, Mohammed, Jiongcheng, Fahim, Jason and Alberto, middle row, Harleen, Mashaba, Katherine and Annie, seated front row, Edythe, Annette, Diane, and Karen.

also provide landscaping to the outdoor plaza of the library.

Annette and Edythe are also in charge of a weekly exercise class for seniors that emphasizes muscle toning and chair exercises. The classes were previously held in the basement of the library, but due to renovation of the main floor, had to be moved. Annette didn't want to stop the classes because of the renovation, so she found another venue to host the popular classes. She arranged to hold the classes at the Flushing House, a se-

nior residence. The new location now benefits both the regular class participants and the senior residents.

I decided to become more active with the library because of Annette, Edythe, and Diane. I see the possibilities of what could be done when like-minded folks get together, and I'll admit to being in awe of all the things these vibrant ladies have already accomplished. They are all retired and range in age from mid-70s to mid-80s, but act as if they are half their ages. I am 43 years old, and wit-

nessing their constant energy and stamina makes me feel like I am the one who is geriatric! Seeing Annette, Edythe, and Diane in action inspires me to want to be a part of their outstanding efforts.

This summer, Annette came up with the idea of introducing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) concepts to elementary-aged children by creating a free six-week program at the library. Annette, Diane and her husband Al are all retired city public school teachers. They used their collective knowledge and experience to create lesson plans and follow classroom management for this program. Edythe assisted with checking out reference books and helped with the administrative side of the process. I sent out inquiries and conducted interviews for high-school interns and publicized the program to children from elementary public schools in District 25, and the Bland and Latimer Housing Developments.

The Flushing Friends group started work on this program in June, and by July 6 we were fully operational. Annette had received \$1,500 in donations from local business contacts to help fund the project, and we hired 10 high-school interns from the Bronx High School of Science, Queens High School for the Sciences, at York College and Townsend Harris. Annette had completed a two-day orientation with the 10 interns, also known as Team Members, so everyone was well prepared. The library had given us access to a conference room three days a week to hold our program. The Queens Library Government and Community Affairs Department donated library-branded drawstring bags, notebooks, folders, rulers, buttons, bookmarks, pens, and pencils to all the students, as well as T-shirts for the Team Members to wear as a uniform. We registered 34 children on our first day and were off to a great start.

We are midway through our program and are going strong. Children come ready to learn on a hot summer day and our team members are proactive and enthusiastic. All team members wear name badges and follow protocol in maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for the children. At least three Friends volunteers provide additional oversight and support at each session so there is always supervision. After each session, Annette, Diane, and I discuss with the team members

how the presentation went, if the children understood and enjoyed the material, and what we could do to improve for the next class.

Our team members pair up and choose topics of interest to present, such as classification, numbers, time, dimensions, and also the skeletal, circulatory, respiratory and the nervous systems. Team members have the freedom and flexibility to create a presentation of their chosen topic in a way that is relatable to the children. The program's goal is to help children see that these topics are all around and within them.

Recently, our team members sang and performed the "Bones Song." There was a lot of laughter and dancing, and the children were having fun while exploring science. Our team members also play games and quiz the children on what they have learned and break down the class into teams of mixed ages and abilities so everyone gets a chance. The hardest challenge has been addressing the multi-age group since we have children from first through fifth grades; however, with 10 team members, there is enough individualized attention where needed. We pride ourselves on our nurturing teaching system while enforcing accountability and responsibility in our littlest citizens.

Our program ends on Aug. 14, and I anticipate we will go out with a big bang. From a completely grassroots project, the Flushing Friends of the Library Group was able to produce a unique and high-quality educational program to children in the community. When these children return to school, we hope many of them will be able to come up with innovative responses to the question: "What did you do over the summer?" If we have piqued any of the children's interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, then we have made a huge contribution to the next generation of explorers.

If you would like to join an existing Friends Group or start your own, check out the Friends Groups link on www.queenslibrary.org. You can also contact your local Community Library Manager or the Director of Government and Community Relations. There are currently 49 Friends of the Library Groups throughout Queens.

Karen M. Lee is a freelance writer and an educator who lives in Flushing with her husband Victor and daughter Caitlin. Lee is passionate about reading, has a whimsical sense of humor, and favors taking the road less traveled.

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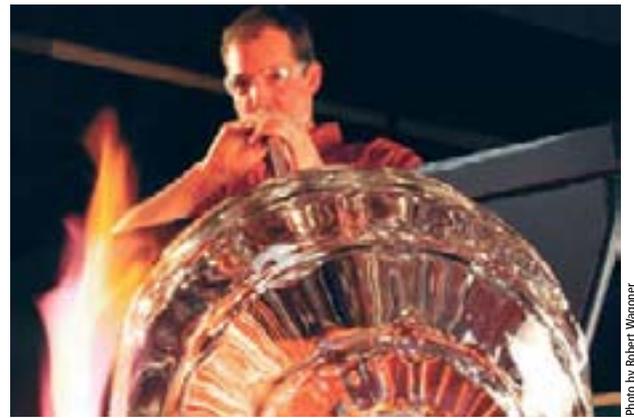


Photo by Robert Wagner



(Clockwise from left) The main draw of Watkins Glen State Park are the waterfalls. Learn all about glass at Corning Museum of Glass. The Taughannock Falls State Park offers a picturesque view.

Discover the Finger Lakes

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

The Finger Lakes region lies within the triangle between Syracuse, Rochester, and Corning in central New York and includes the 11 lakes in that area. The Finger Lakes is a family-friendly and culture-filled region that has something for every age and interest.

The region caters primarily to those interested in outdoor activities, especially those looking to escape the city for something different and a chance to sleep under the stars. There are numerous campgrounds with accommodations ranging from traditional tent camping to cabins and cottages.

Don't forget your hiking boots to explore the Finger Lakes State Parks.

There are also a number of cultural institutions accessible to the area, like the Rockwell Museum in Corning, the National Museum of Play in Rochester, or the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse.

Looking for an amusement park? Seabreeze amusement park (and waterpark) overlooks Lake Ontario, and offers roller coasters, thrill rides, and live shows for all ages. The road trip to central New York will provide lifelong memories, and now is the perfect time to go. Here's 10 of my favorite attractions from the Finger Lakes region:

Museums

The Corning Museum of Glass [1 Museum Way in Corning, (800) 732-6845, www.cmog.org]

Founded in 1951 by Corning Incorporated, this museum is dedicated to telling the story of glass. Glass is a versatile, ancient material and has been explored by artists, scientists, and historians for thousands of years. The rich history of glass is displayed in the Glass Collection Galleries. Your family can learn about the science and technology behind glass and recent innovation via hands-on exhibits in the Innovation Center. There, concepts behind optics, vessels, and windows can be explored. You will even have an opportunity to delve deeper into glassmaking with Make Your Own Glass sessions (for beginners) offered daily. The studio also offers year-round courses in all levels of glassmaking that range in length and level of difficulty.

Museum of the Earth [1259 Trumansburg Rd., Ithaca, (607) 273-6623, www.priweb.org]

The Paleontological Research Institution was founded in 1932 to care for collections of specimens and publish findings in paleontological research. The institute, for many years, boasted research, col-

Links

www.rosamondgiffordzoo.org
www.museumofplay.org
www.rockwellmuseum.org
www.seabreeze.com
www.flcheesetrail.com
www.fingerlakes.org/things-to-do/museum-trail
www.nyparks.com/regions/finger-lakes

lections, publications, and public education. It was not until 2003 that the Museum of the Earth was established to provide the general public with a unique venue to see its artifacts. The museum encourages critical thinking about life on Earth (past and present). Your family can explore a mix of natural history displays, interactive science features, and art exhibitions. There are hands-on, visual exhibitions and community outreach. The museum's permanent collection will take your family on a journey through history — billions of years.

Sciencenter [601 First St., Ithaca, (607) 272-0200, www.sciencenter.org]

Founded in 1983, Sciencenter is a nationally recognized museum, hosting guests not only in Ithaca but also worldwide through traveling exhibitions and outreach. This bright hand-on space is perfect for families. The museum itself was a community effort, operating from storefronts for nearly a decade and then taking volunteers an additional 10 years to expand a small permanent space to the now expanded Sciencenter in 2003. This is truly a beloved museum.

Parks, falls and gorges

There is an abundance of state parks in the Finger Lakes region, making for beautiful scenery. Each park has its own unique charm, with some offering a lake-front view while others boast gorges and waterfalls. Some waterfalls in the area can be seen from the street and for others you'll have to make your way along a park path or hiking trail.

Buttermilk Falls State Park (105 Enfield Falls Rd., Ithaca)

Buttermilk Creek flows down the steep valley side toward Cayuga Lake and the falls are visible just off Route 13 south of Ithaca. Your family can swim at the base of the falls during the summer months or

hike the trails — ranging from easy to moderate difficulty.

Robert H. Treman State Park (105 Enfield Falls Rd., Ithaca)

Robert H. Treman State Park is just south of Ithaca and hosts a gorge called Enfield Glen. Your family can take advantage of the hiking trails that lead to the 115 Ft Lucifer Falls.

Fillmore Glen State Park (1686 St. Rte. 38, Moravia)

Fillmore Glen State Park has dense woods that lead to a narrow gorge.

Taughannock Falls State Park (2221 Taughannock Rd., Trumansburg)

Taughannock Falls State Park's namesake waterfall is one of the highest in the region with surrounding trails for exploration. Note that there is a balcony accessible from the upper parking lot near Route 89.

Watkins Glen State Park (Route 14, Watkins Glen)

Watkins Glen State Park has not only gorges, but also 19 different waterfalls and cascades. The base entrance is available off Route 14.

Trails

Fingerlakes Cheese Trail, location varies

Renowned for its wineries and natural beauty, the Finger Lakes region is also has abundance of farms and orchards. The Finger Lakes Cheese Trail started in 2010 is a collaborative of small farms whose goal is to drive business and visitation to the farms and help bolster tourism in the Finger Lakes Region as an agri-tourism attraction. Your family can take a tour with the use of the trail's map.

Museum Trail, location varies

The Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance has partnered with nine museums, attractions, and historic homes to create the new Finger Lakes Museum Trail. The aim is for visitors (and residents alike) to explore the history and culture within the Finger Lakes region. The museums include institutions like the Womens Rights Museum and sites such as the home of Harriett Tubman. The museums of the Finger Lakes are entertaining and educational.

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.



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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN



Teenage disease nobody's heard of

Julia Swanson was a vivacious, smart, and fun-loving teen until, quite abruptly, she wasn't. One day, she felt dizzy, nauseous, and her heart was racing before leaving for school. Thinking she was coming down with the flu, she brushed it off. After a few days, the flu never set in but Julia kept having these symptoms. Then she almost passed out in school after walking up the stairs.

Doctor after doctor could not identify why a healthy teen was experiencing such debilitating symptoms. One said it was simple tachycardia — an abnormally rapid heart rate — brought on by the stress of school. Another said it could be anxiety or panic disorder. Another said it was irritable bowel syndrome. Yet another said it was a hormonal imbalance. The last one said it was allergies. Julia became unable to walk very far, be

active, concentrate, socialize, or do anything she would normally enjoy doing.

Every doctor she visited missed the diagnosis. It wasn't until her mother, Elaine, took her to a psychiatrist to rule out any psychiatric conditions, but the doctor said he didn't think she had any mental issues at all. In fact, she was reacting very normally for someone going through such terrifying physical experiences day in and day out. "She may have POTS," he said. It was the first time that Elaine had heard the term before.

Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome is a form of dysautonomia (when the autonomic nervous system malfunctions) that affects a large portion of teens. Symptoms may include heart palpitations, extreme fatigue, brain fog, nausea, headache, light-head-

edness, heat intolerance, exercise intolerance, insomnia, headaches, gastric problems, chronic pain, and near-fainting or full fainting spells, especially upon standing upright or walking. The symptoms are "severe enough to limit daily functioning" says Dr. Blair Grubb, a leading Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome specialist in the country. Many compare the quality of life to that of having congestive heart failure.

There is no cure for it, but a variety of medications and lifestyle modifications help alleviate symptoms. The first primary therapy is extra fluids and extra salt to increase the blood volume, as most people with suffer from hypovolemia, or low blood volume, which increases their orthostatic intolerance.

Postural Orthostatic Tachycar-

Resources for patients and their families:

- Dysautonomia International: A wonderful website and Facebook page, provides vital information, lists top doctors nationally and helps identify doctors in your area; www.dysautonomiainternational.org.
- DINET: A comprehensive website and organization aiming to spread awareness, doctor finder; www.dinet.org.
- DYNA: Brochures can be printed to explain Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome to family, friends, schools, etc.
- www.dynainc.org
- Standing Up To POTS: website with loads of information on living with Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome, treatments, research, and advocacy, including a letter to bring to each doctor, titled "What Every Doctor Should Know About POTS."
- POTSibilities Parents: Facebook group for parents of children with Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome; invaluable information offered and vibrant community that helps each other.
- Facebook and Twitter: each has multiple groups and pages with vital information.

dia Syndrome may be diagnosed by doing a "poor man's tilt test," in which the heart rate increases of 30 or more beats per minute (or a rate that exceeds 120 beats per minute) that occurs within the first 10 minutes of standing. A formal tilt table test or advanced autonomic testing are typically performed for official diagnosis, although some doctors do not put their patients through it and are able diagnosis clinically. Many patients become very dizzy, nauseous, and many pass out while undergoing the test.

"To imagine POTS for yourself: number one, fast for 24 hours; number two, donate a pint of your blood; number three, go home and turn your thermostat up to 100 degrees Fahrenheit; number four, stand motionless. Enjoy the symptoms," says Dr. Jeffrey Boris, a pediatric cardiologist at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

The level of disability in patients varies, from those functioning with symptoms to those rendered bedridden. Many teens, in the prime of the life, cannot endure the simplest of things, like attend school, hang out with friends, or even go shopping, without experiencing immediate symptoms and possibly passing out. The recovery period is often a long and arduous one. When Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome develops in adolescence, 20 percent of teens make a full recovery within 10 years. Recovery is typically dependent on the underlying cause, although in many cases, no identifiable cause is ever found. Some known causes are viral infections, Lyme

disease, Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, Chiari malformation, mast-cell activation disorders, mitochondrial disease, and tumors. Still many other causes exist.

Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome is not a rare disease, but it is not widely known either, even by many physicians. The top hospitals in the country in the research and treatment are Mayo Clinic, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and Cleveland Clinic. Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome is treated usually by a cardiologist and a neurologist combined, but a full treatment team may also include a gastroenterologist, infectious disease doctor, allergist, rheumatologist, geneticist, and of course, a psychologist to help the patient learn to live with such a debilitating chronic condition.

Julia and her parents are still visiting specialists and determining which treatments might work best, but are hopeful now she has been finally diagnosed.

"At least we know what we are dealing with now," says Elaine. "We are hopeful that new research will bring better treatments options and hopefully one day, a cure."

To learn more about Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome, watch "The Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome" by Dr. Jeffrey Boris on YouTube.

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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ASK AN ATTORNEY

ALISON ARDEN BESUNDER,
ESQ.

How citizenship can affect an estate plan

I am a United States citizen, but my spouse is not. Are there special requirements we need to incorporate in our estate plan or last will and testaments?

Most definitely yes. Part of a married couple's estate plan may include utilizing what is called marital deduction in the estate of the first spouse to die — in order to avoid paying any estate taxes until after both spouses are deceased. This is particularly true if each or either spouse has a gross estate more than the estate tax threshold, currently at \$5.43 million for federal taxes and \$3,125,000 in New York (for 2015). This exemption is only permitted when the surviving spouse is a U.S. citizen.

When a surviving spouse is not a U.S. citizen, the estate tax for assets exceeding the estate tax exemption would ordinarily be due. Perhaps recognizing the inherent problem in depriving the surviving spouse from the use of assets to support herself during her lifetime, the IRS allows non-citizen spouses to choose to put assets in excess of the exemption into a special type of trust, called a Qualified Domestic Trust. This allows the surviving spouse to enjoy the benefit of the marital deduction, while giving comfort to the IRS that the government will receive the taxes due on the death of the second spouse (rather than have the surviving spouse “abscond” to the home country and deprive the U.S. government of the tax on the remaining assets).

In light of the increase in the allowable exemption, fewer non-U.S. citizen couples find themselves in a situation that would require a Qualified Domestic Trust to preserve assets after the death of the first spouse.

In addition if your estate does not quite reach the federal limit,



but does exceed the New York State limit, there is no need to set up a Qualified Domestic Trust in order to take advantage of the marital deduction provisions.

Another key point to be mindful of is that U.S. domiciliaries (even if they are non-U.S. citizens), remain subject to U.S. gift and estate tax on their worldwide assets. Non-domiciliaries are only subject to the U.S. transfer tax system only to the extent of their U.S. property. Many international clients think they are “safe” if they don't declare the assets. This is a mistake, as the IRS could charge interest and penalties and also lien the assets located in the U.S.

Although “domicile” is a very fact-intensive inquiry and analysis, that very much depends on the circumstances, a foreign national is considered “domiciled” in the U.S. if he

is currently residing in the U.S. with no intention of leaving. Or, stated another way, if the evidence indicates that the U.S. is the place to which the person intends to return when they are away.

The prudent ex-pat will enlist the services of an accountant and attorney to ensure that they are positioned in the most efficient manner both for income and estate taxes. A U.S. will, with or without a Qualified Domestic Trust, can be a crucial part of ensuring efficient disposition of assets in the most tax-efficient manner possible.

Guardianship

In addition, there are important considerations for ex-pats who have children during their residence in the U.S. There are two circumstances to consider: what would happen to

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the care and raising of minor children if both parents were to die, but also if both parents become disabled while the child(ren) are minors? Frequently, the choice of guardian by a non-U.S. citizen in his Will is a family member who lives in the home country and is not a U.S. citizen. In that case, a designation of stand-by guardian is crucial to help bridge the gap between the time that the parent(s) are incapacitated or have died, up until a court has made a determination of a permanent guardian. The U.S. will also help determine the guardianship of your children upon death of both spouses, rather than leaving it up to the full discretion of the U.S. court.

The procedure to name a guardian for minor children is to nominate an individual or individuals in your will to take legal custody of your child. This can but does not need to be the same individual(s) as the "minor's trustee," who will oversee the management of any finances left to the minor child.

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

What does this mean? For international clients, it means that while they should nominate the guardian of their choice based on substance (i.e., their true qualifications in substance to provide the best care for their children), the choice is a mere nomination and is subject to the judge's approval and order of who will raise a child

and have legal custody. Second, for the many ex-patriates living in New York City, it means that extra care must be taken to communicate to the court why the appointment of a non-domiciliary individual as guardian is in the best interest of your minor children. These specifics can be spelled out in the will itself or in a separate writing that should be properly executed.

The other thing to consider is that many non-U.S. citizen parents reside in the U.S. with no real intention to leave, but are insistent that their children be raised in their home country. The thing they fail to consider is that a child who is raised in the U.S. his entire life may not want to leave the U.S. when he is 10, 14, 15, and his entire life is based here. It is a very different situation when the child is an infant or toddler and could easily adjust. If a parent wants the child to be repatriated to the home country, the child's citizenship may be a factor bearing on the judge's decision. If the parent applied for or obtained dual-citizenship from her home country for the child, this may be deemed evidence by the judge of the parents' intent for their child to keep a connection to the parents' country of origin. It has the added impact of providing a basis for which the guardian in the home country can request assistance from her own state department or diplomatic agency to repatriate the child. In the absence of dual citizenship, the home country's state department lacks standing to assist. This, together with basic border-control issues, poses an obstruction to relocating a child to another country either temporarily pending the proceeding or permanently.

Because estate tax laws constantly change, it is important to revisit your estate plan as set up in your last will and testament over time. If either or both of you are not U.S. citizens, it is important to discuss with your estate planning attorney the possibility of including a Qualified Domestic Trust in your wills.

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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THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

A hair-raising true story

In the middle of World War II, when resources and money were both scarce, a trip to the circus was a huge treat. Families sometimes saved for months for the chance to see big cats, elephants, trapeze acts, and clowns.

According to the true story in “Big Top Burning” by Laura A. Woollett, that was the case for many residents of Hartford, Conn., when the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus came to town that day in early July 1944.

“More than 6,000 people attended the circus on that hot July 6 afternoon,” says Woollett.

The Big Tent (which was “massive” and weighed more than 75,000 pounds) filled quickly with circus-goers, clowns and horses, bears and lions, tigers, chimps, and elephants. Large chutes at the entrances whisked the animals in and out, the air smelled like popcorn, and the afternoon promised to be a fun one.

It’s likely, then, that few people noticed the tiny flame on the side of the tent in the corner by the men’s room. Those who did probably thought the circus workers would take care of it; fires were pretty common at circuses at that time. The tent was wa-

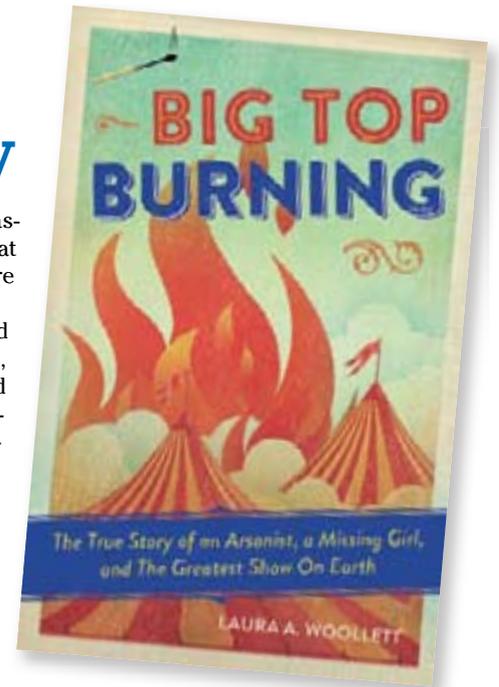
terproofed with wax and gasoline, but nobody gave that much thought — until the fire spread, and so did panic.

Screams filled the air and circus-goers raced for exits, some of which were blocked by animal chutes. A few people escaped beneath the circus tent. Others fell to the ground and were crushed. Within 10 minutes, the Big Tent had burned to the ground, injuring more than 480 people and killing 167 people, 59 of which were children under age 10.

But how did the fire start, and who were the people whose bodies were never claimed? The answers to those questions are still unknown.

It’s summertime. Who wants to read history books in the summer, anyhow? Give your child “Big Top Burning,” and rest assured that he will.

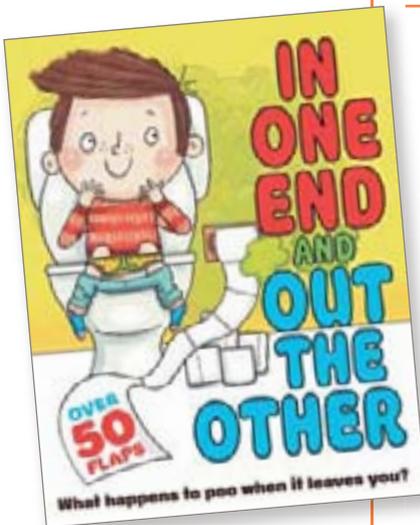
With a sense of urgency and just the right setting in time, author Laura A. Woollett presents this true story in a way that will resonate well with the age group for which this



book is intended (10 and up). I was riveted by the personal accounts of this tragedy, and I think the lingering mystery at the end will capture kids’ interest.

While the photographs inside this book aren’t terribly graphic, some of the narrative might be a bit much for sensitive young readers. Just be aware because, even for an adult, “Big Top Burning” can be a hair-raising book.

“Big Top Burning,” by Laura A. Woollett [167 pages, 2015, \$18.95].



Looking for answers to icky questions?

No, you’re not a baby anymore. You can tie your shoes, comb your own hair, and nobody needs to feed you. You can even use the potty by yourself — but what happens after you do?

You’ll find out in the book “In One End and Out the Other” by Dr. Mike Goldsmith, illustrated by Richard Watson.

Just like gasoline in a car, food is fuel for your body and the first step in making that fuel is the saliva in your mouth that helps “mush up the food.”

Once you’ve finished a bite and swallowed, the “gloopy” mixture goes down your esophagus and, 10 seconds later, it enters your stomach, where it becomes something called “chyme.” Your stomach works the chyme, then sends it to your small intestines, where nutrients are absorbed and, about seven hours later, it enters your large intestines, where

water is removed. After another day or so, digestion is complete and you’ll be ready to flush what’s left down the toilet.

Then what? Everything goes down a long pipe, under the ground, and into a sewer. There, it mixes with things that other people have flushed and heads to a sewage treatment plant where it gets dumped through screens into chambers and becomes sludge.

There, germs break down the sludge in the same way your body breaks down food.

At some plants, sludge gets dried and becomes food for plants, while “dirty water” is cleaned with “good bacteria” that makes it safe to put back into rivers.

With a mix of words kids feel comfortable using, and real technical and medical terms, Dr. Mike Goldsmith explains what happens from mouth to months later, not only for

humans but for plants and animals as well.

This information — and the trivial bits that accompany it — is helped along by illustrations by Richard Watson, both in the main part of the book and in the fun-to-find flaps that give kids even more knowledge about the everyday function of their bodies and their cities.

Even though I’m well beyond the target age of this book (5–7), I learned a lot from it, and I think your kids undoubtedly will, too. If you’re looking for answers to st-icky questions, “In One End and Out the Other” is flush with facts.

“In One End and Out the Other,” by Dr. Mike Goldsmith [14 pages, 2015, \$12.99].

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

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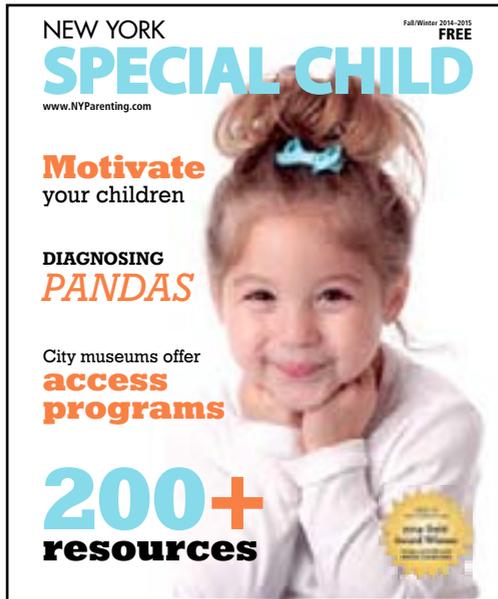
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Calendar

AUGUST



Photo by Jennifer Pottheiser

Game, set, match!

The 29th annual Arthur Ashe Kids Day swings into the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center on Aug. 29.

Presented by Hess, the event includes live performances from Rolling Stone “Artist You Need to Know” Bea Miller, “hip-pop” duo Kalin and Myles, Flo Rida protégé Natalie La Rose, MTV’s “Artist to Watch” Jacob Whitesides, and chart-topping pop-rock act American Authors.

Families can enjoy an exciting

schedule of tennis games geared toward kids, see an exhibition match and skills competitions with Novak Djokovic and Marin Cilic, and meet with the tennis greats after.

Arthur Ashe Kids Day on Aug. 29 from 9:30 am to 4 pm. Tickets are \$10 for general admission and \$25 for loge seating.

Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Arthur Ashe Stadium (Flushing Meadows Corona Park, www.arthurashekidsday.com).

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Calendar

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!

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SAT, AUG. 1

IN QUEENS

Special story time: Barnes and Noble, 23-80 Bell Blvd.; (718) 224-1083; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11 am – 1 pm; Free.

"If You Ever Want to Bring an Alligator to School, Don't!" This fun book by Elise Parsley is on the menu for children of all ages.

Arcade challenge: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1:30 pm to 3 pm and 3:30 pm to 5 pm; Free with museum admission.

Kids use Scratch and some Makey Makeys to turn fitness activities like running and jumping into fun games, having fun and enjoying a mini workout at the same time. Recommended for ages 5 and older.

FURTHER AFIELD

Slide the City: Vita Coco Beach at Foley Square Rest Stop, Duane and Centre streets, Manhattan; www.nyc.gov/summerstreets; 7 am – 1 pm; Free.

Coll off while you slush and speed down a 270-foot water slide. Yippee! This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to slide through the streets is presented by Vita Coco Coconut Water. Participants must register online in advance.

Animal Yoga: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 10:30 am; Free with admission.

Young yogis, what is your favorite animal? Explore movement as we stretch like a cat and go upside-down for downward facing dog.

SUN, AUG. 2

IN QUEENS

Make it – Tinkering: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1:30 pm to 3 pm and 3:30 pm to 5 pm; \$2 adult/child pair (members free).

Explore different activities that will



Whirligig good time

It's all about toys at King Manor Museum on Aug. 22.

It's time to play, hear stories, and join in for a fun game of hoops! Children will enjoy learning all about old-time games at Hands-on History, and then making some cool toys of their own to

take home.

Hoops, Sticks and Whirligigs on Aug. 22, from noon to 3 pm. Free.

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

encourage families to build, explore, design and create together. Recommended for ages 5 and older. Limited capacity. Registration required.

MON, AUG. 3

IN QUEENS

Story time: Barnes and Noble, 23-80 Bell Blvd.; (718) 224-1083; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11 am – 1 pm; Free.

Children enjoy story time and new books.

TUES, AUG. 4

IN QUEENS

My Reptile Guy: Alley Pond Park, Cross Island Pkwy & Grand Central Pkwy; (718) 217-4685; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am – 11:30 am; Free.

Educational show featuring a display of exotic animals. Bring your chair or blanket.

Night Out Against Crime: Juniper Valley Park, 80th Street and Juniper Boulevard North; (718) 651-5865; nycgovparks.org; 7 pm to 9 pm; Free.

Families enjoy a night of rock and roll, family time and music under the stars. Hosted by the New York City Police Department.

"Back to the Future 2": Beach Boardwalk, Beach 17th St. and Seagirt Boulevard; nycgovparks.org; 8 pm to 10:30 pm; Free.

The DeLorean takes off for the sequel.

FURTHER AFIELD

Musical romp with Steve

Weeks: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at W. Road, Long Island; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 11:30 am and 2 pm; \$5 with museum admission (\$4 for members) \$10 theater only.

An interactive family romp filled with music, humor and games. Steve will share such favorites as "Kiki Kangaroo," "Someday," and "Don't Nothing Work Around Here No More." Come prepared to laugh — and bring those dancing shoes! For children 3 years and older.

WED, AUG. 5

IN QUEENS

"My Superhero Roberto Clemente": Parking Lot, 111 Street and Corona Avenue; (718) 760-6560; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am – noon; Free.

Presented by Teatro Sea, this musical is about the legendary baseball player and humanitarian. Bilingual.

"The Lions Whiskers": Boardwalk, Beach 97th St. and Shorefront Parkway; (718) 318-4000; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am – 1 pm; Free.

Presented by the Catskill Puppet Theatre, this musical tale features masks, puppets and audience participation.

"Donkey Jote": Lower Highland Playground, Jamaica Ave. and Elton Street; (718) 235-4100; www.nycgovparks.org; 6 pm to 7 pm; Free.

The tale of "Don Quixote" from the eyes of the donkey dreaming to become a knight. Bring low chair or blanket.

FURTHER AFIELD

Musical romp with Steve

Weeks: 11:30 am and 2 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Tuesday, Aug. 4.

THURS, AUG. 6

IN QUEENS

Music with Darlene Graham:

Alley Pond Park, Cross Island Pkwy & Grand Central Pkwy; (718) 217-4685; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am – 11:30 am; Free.

Listen to a mix of folk and children's classic songs.

"Brier Rabbit": Queensbridge Park, Vernon Blvd. and 41st Avenue; (212) 639-9675; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer; 10:30 am; Free.

Presented by the City Park's Foundation and the Puppet Mobile. Follow the tales of the feisty Brier Rabbit, who is always getting into trouble.

A Ray of Elvis: George Seuffert Bandshell at Forest Park, Forest Park Drive and Park Ln South; (718) 235-4100; www.nycgovparks.org; 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm; Free.

Enjoy a concert by one of the premiere Elvis tribute bands.

FRI, AUG. 7

IN QUEENS

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

Enjoy an afternoon of scavenger hunts with prizes, demos, workshops, and fitness fun.

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Calendar

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

Continued from page 41

Parkour workshops: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 2 pm and 3 pm; \$6 per person (\$4 members).

Kids can try out parkour with a 45-minute workshop with The Movement Creative. Parkour is a playful platform of movement that encourages interaction between our bodies and environment and encourages curiosity, experimentation, strength-building, self-confidence and healthy living. Limited capacity. Advance registration recommended.

Camping: Fort Totten Visitor's Center, Ordinance Rd. at Shore Road; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 6 pm to 7 am; Free.

Enjoy a sleep out with rangers under the stars and s'mores. Families chosen by lottery.

SAT, AUG. 8

IN QUEENS

Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival: Meadow Lake North, Flushing Meadows Park; www.nycgovpark.org; 9 am – 5 pm; Free.

The whole family will enjoy this multicultural event featuring dragon boat racing, performances and ethnic food.

Bio Bus: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 11 am to 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Travel into worlds smaller than the eye can see aboard the BioBus, the world's only state-of-the-art microscope facility housed on a solar-powered 1974 transit bus. Zoom in on the tiniest of animals to find its microscopic beating heart, or use a handheld microscope to magnify your own eye and watch it pulsate in response to light. Suitable for all ages and backgrounds.

"The the Cat in the Hat": Barnes and Noble, 23-80 Bell Blvd.; (718) 224-1083; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11:30 am; Free.

Costume characters read from the many Dr. Seuss stories. Don't forget your camera.

Custom Craft Cars: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 1:30 pm to 3 pm and 3:30 pm to 5 pm; \$7 (\$5 adult/child members).

Children ages 6 and older explore the iterative design process while creating a customized toy car using simple materials such as cardstock, craft sticks and rubber bands. Recommended for ages 6 and older. Limited capacity. Advance registration recommended.

Story time and craft: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 2 pm to 4 pm; Free with admis-

sion to the gardens.

Little nature lovers listen to a nature inspired tale and do a craft.

"Holding Up Half the Sky": Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 2 pm; \$8 (Free for members).

Puppet spectacle spanning 2,000 years of Chinese history.

FURTHER AFIELD

Slide the City: 7 am – 1 pm. Vita Coco Beach at Foley Square Rest Stop. See Saturday, Aug. 1.

Animal Yoga: 10:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 1.

"Mary Poppins": Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at W. Road, Long Island; (516) 599-6870; www.licm.org; 11:30 am and 2 pm; \$12 (\$10 members).

Enjoy the enchanting tale of the nanny Mary Poppins, who takes the children in her care on an exciting and magical journey, teaching everyone important life lessons. Presented by Plaza Theatrical. Ages 5 and up.

SUN, AUG. 9

IN QUEENS

Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival: 9 am – 5 pm. Meadow Lake North. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

Bio Bus: 11 am to 4 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

Make it – Tinkering: 1:30 pm to 3 pm and 3:30 pm to 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Sunday, Aug. 2.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Mary Poppins": 11:30 am and 2 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

MON, AUG. 10

IN QUEENS

Bio Bus: 11 am to 4 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

TUES, AUG. 11

IN QUEENS

Garden Creativi-Tea: Voelker Orth Museum, 149-19 38th Ave.; (718) 359-6227; education@vomuseum.org; www.vomuseum.org; 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm; \$3 (\$6 per family).

Enjoy an afternoon of art making and refreshing iced tea including sculpting monstrous creatures, to painting treasure boxes and more.

THURS, AUG. 13

IN QUEENS

"Brier Rabbit": Alley Pond Park, Cross Island Pkwy & Grand Central Pkwy; (718) 217-4685; www.nycgovparks.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Presented by the City Park's Foundation and the Puppet Mobile. Follow the tales of the feisty Brier Rabbit, who is always getting into trouble.

FRI, AUG. 14

IN QUEENS

Craftsmen days: King Manor Museum, 153-03 Jamaica Ave.; (718) 206-0545; www.kingmanor.org; Noon-4 pm; Free.

Meet artisans and watch demos of 19th-century crafts.

SAT, AUG. 15

IN QUEENS

"If You Give a Mouse a Cookie": Barnes and Noble, 23-80 Bell Blvd.; (718) 224-1083; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11 am; Free.

The beloved children's story is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

Craftsmen days: Noon-4pm. King Manor Museum. See Friday, Aug. 14.

Custom Craft Cars: 1:30 pm to 3 pm and 3:30 pm to 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

FURTHER AFIELD

Slide the City: 7 am – 1 pm. Vita Coco Beach at Foley Square Rest Stop. See Saturday, Aug. 1.

"Mary Poppins": 11:30 am and 2 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

SUN, AUG. 16

IN QUEENS

Make it – Tinkering: 1:30 pm to 3 pm and 3:30 pm to 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Sunday, Aug. 2.

FURTHER AFIELD

Classic Car Show: Vanderbilt Museum Planetarium, 180 Little Neck Rd., Long Island; (631) 854-5562; 11 am – 4pm; \$7 (\$6 seniors and students, \$3 children under 12).

The Antique Automobile Club of America parades the beautiful classic beauties of days gone by.

"Mary Poppins": 11:30 am and 2 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

MON, AUG. 17

IN QUEENS

Story time: Barnes and Noble, 23-

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

Children enjoy story time and new books.

WED, AUG. 19

IN QUEENS

"Brier Rabbit": Alley Pond Park, Cross Island Pkwy & Grand Central Pkwy; (718) 217-4685; www.cityparksfoundation.org; 10:30 am to 11:30 am; Free.

Presented by the City Park's Foundation and the Puppet Mobile. Follow the tales of the feisty Brier Rabbit, who is always getting into trouble.

Honey harvest festival: Voelker Orth Museum, 149-19 38th Ave.; (718) 359-6227; www.vomuseum.org; 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm; \$6 (\$5 members; \$3 children; Infants/toddlers free).

The honey bees are busy in the summer and honey harvest time arrives in August! Visit the bee-keeper and learn how to harvest honey. Make some bee-inspired art. Honey-tasting table. Enjoy special house punch made with Voelker Orth garden grapes. Suitable for all ages.

FRI, AUG. 21

IN QUEENS

"The Swan": Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 7 pm; \$8 (Free for members).

Based on the fairy tale of the "Ugly Duckling" by Hans Christian Anderson. Suitable for children 2 to 5 years old.

SAT, AUG. 22

IN QUEENS

"Brier Rabbit": Astoria Heights Playground, 30th Rd. and 30th Avenue; (718) 520-5900; www.cityparksfoundation.org; 11 am; Free.

Presented by the City Park's Foundation and the Puppet Mobile. Follow the tales of the feisty Brier Rabbit, who is always getting into trouble.

Hands-on History: King Manor Museum, 150-03 Jamaica Ave.; (718) 206-0545, X 13; www.kingmanor.org; Noon-3 pm; Free.

Hoops, Sticks & Whirligigs After running around outside, cool off with indoor games and make your own toy to take home.

Seining and the Shore: Fort Totten Visitor's Center, Ordinance Rd. at Shore Road; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm to 3 pm; Free.

This marine ecology course is perfect for children to learn about the great outdoors and responsible fishing ethics.

Custom Craft Cars: 1 pm to 2 pm and 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm and 4 pm to 5

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

pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

"The Swan": 1 pm. Flushing Town Hall. See Friday, Aug. 21.

FURTHER AFIELD

Animal Yoga: 10:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 1.

"Mary Poppins": 11:30 am and 2 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

SUN, AUG. 23

IN QUEENS

Inside "Fraggle Rock": Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave.; (718) 777-6888; www.movingimage.us; 1 pm; \$12 (\$9 seniors and students).

Screening and live event featuring the puppets of Jim Hensen — this is a compilation of "Fraggle Rock" episodes and rare behind-the-scenes clips, and share their unique perspective on one of Jim Henson's most-beloved productions. 90 minutes.

Make it – Tinkering: 1:30 pm to 3 pm and 3:30 pm to 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Sunday, Aug. 2.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Mary Poppins": 11:30 am and 2 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

MON, AUG. 24

IN QUEENS

Story time: 11 am. Barnes and Noble. See Monday, Aug. 17.

"Big Hero 6": Main Park House at Cunningham Park, 196th St. and Union Turnpike; (718) 217-6452; www.nycgovparks.org; 8 pm to 10 pm; Free.

It's movies under the stars. Enjoy this animated flick with a blanket and some popcorn.

"The Incredibles": Astoria Park Lawn, 19th Street and Shore Boulevard; (718) 728-7820; www.nycgovparks.org; 8 pm to 10 pm; Free.

It's everyone's favorite super hero family — grab a lawn chair and popcorn and enjoy this oldie but goodie.

WED, AUG. 26

IN QUEENS

"Big Hero 6": Highland park, Elton St. and Jamaica Avenue; (718) 235-4100; www.nycgovparks.org; 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm; Free.

It's movies under the stars. Enjoy this animated flick with a blanket and some popcorn.



A ride under the sea

Take a ride beneath the sea in the SeaGlass Carousel opening on Aug. 20 at The Battery.

The new one-of-a-kind ride features a huge nautilus shell with 30 luminescent fish to give you the ride of your life. Unlike traditional carousels, this one has you sitting inside the fish instead of on top — letting you glide through the sights and sounds of a 360-degree aquatic adventure.

Visitors walk through the

beautiful Tiffany and Company Foundation Woodland Gardens before reaching the brand-new attraction.

SeaGlass Carousel is open daily beginning Aug. 20, from 10 am to 10 pm and costs \$5 per ride. Access to the Battery and gardens is free.

SeaGlass Carousel (The Battery at the Battery Park Underpass in Lower Manhattan; www.thebattery.org)

SAT, AUG. 29

IN QUEENS

"Brier Rabbit": Idlewild Park Preserve, 148 Springfield Ln and 147th Avenue; www.cityparksfoundation.org; tbd; Free.

Presented by the City Park's Foundation and the Puppet Mobile. Follow the tales of the feisty Brier Rabbit, who is always getting into trouble.

Arthur Ashe Kids Day: USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; (866) 673-6749 (OPEN-TIX); www.usopen.org; 9:30 am to 4 pm; \$10 general admission (\$25 loge tickets).

Presented by Hess, the 29th annual event includes live performances from Rolling Stone "Artist You Need to Know" Bea Miller, "hip-pop" duo Kalin and Myles, Flo Rida protégé Natalie La Rose, MTV's "Artist to Watch" Jacob Whitesides and chart-topping pop-rock act American Authors. Children will enjoy a host of activities and meet with tennis champs Novak Djokovic, Marin Cilic, and others for a day of tennis, music The annual event kicks-off the 2015 US Open, which runs from Aug.

31 to Sept. 13.

Custom Craft Cars: 1 pm to 2 pm and 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm and 4 pm to 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Saturday, Aug. 8.

Camping: Alley Pond Park, Cross Island Pkwy & Grand Central Pkwy; (718) 217-4685; www.nycgovparks.org; 6 pm to 7 am; Free.

Join with rangers or a night out under the stars. Families chosen by lottery.

FURTHER AFIELD

Animal Yoga: 10:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Aug. 1.

SUN, AUG. 30

IN QUEENS

Make it – Tinkering: 1:30 pm to 3 pm and 3:30 pm to 5 pm. New York Hall of Science. See Sunday, Aug. 2.

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.; \$5plus 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; Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am–6 pm.; \$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!

Summer exhibits: Socrates Sculpture Park, 32-01 Vernon Blvd.; 718-956-1819; www.socratessculpturepark.org; Daily, 10 am–8 pm; Now – Sun, Aug. 30; Free.

Come and enjoy the park and the public art projects by artist Agnes Denes, Heide Fasnacht, Gabriela Albergaria, and Verta Lutter.

Sculpture workshop: Socrates Sculpture Park, 32-01 Vernon Blvd.; 718-956-1819; www.socratessculpturepark.org; Saturdays, Noon–3 pm, Now – Sat, Sept. 26; Free.

Children 5 to 13 years old with caregiver or parent learn how to work with different artistic mediums and create sculptures.

Guerilla storytime: Socrates Sculpture Park, 32-01 Vernon Blvd.; 718-956-1819; www.socratessculpturepark.org; Saturdays, 2 pm to 4 pm, Now – Sat, Aug. 29; Free.

Pop up readings at the park's Mini Library share stories and sing songs.

Alley Pond Park Adventure Course: Alley Pond Park, Cross Island Pkwy & Grand Central Pkwy; (718) 217-4685; www.nycgovparks.org; Sundays, 9:30 am to noon, Now – Sun, Nov. 1; Free.

Test your mettle against the two-hour course, zip lines, low and high elements and obstacles. Minors must be accompanied by an adult.

Play Streets: 78th Street, Northern Blvd. and 34th Avenue; www.palnyc.org; Weekdays, 9 am to 5 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 21; Free.

City streets and other public areas, including playgrounds and schools, create a safe environment where youngsters play traditional sidewalk games, including double Dutch jump rope, hopscotch, Nok Hockey, and basketball.

Play Streets: Playground, 160th St. between 75th Rd. and 75th Drive; www.palnyc.org; Weekdays, 9 am to 5 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 21; Free.

City streets and other public areas,

Continued on page 44

Calendar

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Continued from page 43

including playgrounds and schools, create a safe environment where youngsters play traditional sidewalk games, including double Dutch jump rope, hopscotch, Nok Hockey, and basketball.

Play Streets: Louis Armstrong playground, 37th Avenue and 112th Street; www.palnyc.org; Weekdays, 9 am to 5 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 21; Free.

City streets and other public areas, including playgrounds and schools, create a safe environment where youngsters play traditional sidewalk games, including double Dutch jump rope, hopscotch, Nok Hockey, and basketball.

Play Streets: Astoria Houses, 1-25 Astoria Blvd.; www.palnyc.org; Weekdays, 9 am to 5 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 21; Free.

City streets and other public areas, including playgrounds and schools, create a safe environment where youngsters play traditional sidewalk games, including double Dutch jump rope, hopscotch, Nok Hockey, and basketball.

Play Streets: South Jamaica Playground, 110th Ave. between 160th Street and Union Hall Street; www.palnyc.org; Weekdays, 9 am to 5 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 21; Free.

City streets and other public areas, including playgrounds and schools, create a safe environment where youngsters play traditional sidewalk games, including double Dutch jump rope, hopscotch, Nok Hockey, and basketball.

Tennis in the Park: Cunningham Park, Union Tpk and 193rd Street; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Mondays – Thursdays, 9 am – noon, Now – Fri, Aug. 14; Free.

CityParks Foundation is again hosting tennis programs as part of its Summer Sports initiative. Registration is required online.

Track and Field: Astoria Park, Astoria Park So. and 18th Street; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30 am to 10:30 am and 10:30 am to noon, Now

– Wed, Aug. 12; Free.

Children 5 to 16 learn the basics of the sport, from hurdles and relay races, to long jump, shot put and javelin throw. All participating youngsters have the opportunity to display the basic skills learned at the end of the season at an organized track meet held at Icahn Stadium Randall's Island on Aug. 12. Registration online required; Two sessions — 5 to 7 years old and 8 to 16 years old.

Track and Field: Victory Field, Woodhaven Blvd. and Myrtle Avenue; (212) 360-3319; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30 am to 10:30 am and 10:30 am to noon, Now – Wed, Aug. 12; Free.

Children 5 to 16 learn the basics of the sport, from hurdles and relay races, to long jump, shot put and javelin throw. All participating youngsters have the opportunity to display the basic skills learned at the end of the season at an organized track meet held at Icahn Stadium Randall's Island on Aug. 12. Registration online required; Two sessions — 5 to 7 years old and 8 to 16 years old.

Summer Sports Experience: Det. Williams Playground, 173rd St. and Fern Place; (718) 393-7370; www.nycgovparks.org; Weekdays, 10 am – 6 pm, Now – Fri, Sept. 4; Free.

Pitch, shoot, score. Children play a variety of sports.

Tennis in the Park: Brookville Park, Brookville Blvd. and Southern Parkway; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Mondays and Wednesdays, 1 pm to 4 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 14; Free.

CityParks Foundation is again hosting tennis programs as part of its Summer Sports initiative. Registration is required online.

Tennis in the Park: Alley Pond Tennis Center, Union Tpk. and Grand Central Parkway; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Tuesdays and

Thursdays, 9 am – noon, Now – Fri, Aug. 14; Free.

CityParks Foundation is again hosting tennis programs as part of its Summer Sports initiative. Registration is required online.

Tennis in the Park: Astoria Park, Astoria Park So. and 18th Street; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 am – noon, Now – Fri, Aug. 14; Free.

CityParks Foundation is again hosting tennis programs as part of its Summer Sports initiative. Registration is required online.

Track and Field: Juniper Valley, 62nd Ave. and 80th Street; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30 am to 10:30 am and 10:30 am to noon, Now – Wed, Aug. 12; Free.

Children 5 to 16 learn the basics of the sport, from hurdles and relay races, to long jump, shot put and javelin throw. All participating youngsters have the opportunity to display the basic skills learned at the end of the season at an organized track meet held at Icahn Stadium Randall's Island on Aug. 12. Registration online required; Two sessions — 5 to 7 years old and 8 to 16 years old.

Tennis in the Park: Baisley Pond Park, 155th St. and 118th Avenue; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1 pm to 4 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 14; Free.

CityParks Foundation is again hosting tennis programs as part of its Summer Sports initiative. Registration is required online.

Tennis in the Park: Kissena Park, Rose and Oak avenues; www.cityparksfoundation.org/2015-summer-; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1 pm to 4 pm, Now – Fri, Aug. 14; Free.

CityParks Foundation is again hosting tennis programs as part of its Summer Sports initiative. Registration is required online.

Farmer's Market: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main Street; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; Fridays, 8:30 am to 4 pm, Now – Fri, Nov. 20; Free.

Fresh fruits and veggies have returned for another season where families can stock up on nutritious foods.

FURTHER AFIELD

Children's Zoo: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road, The Bronx; (718) 220-5103; www.bronx-zoo.com; Daily, 10 am – 5 pm; Now – Fri, Oct. 30; \$5 with Zoo Admission.

The newly renovated area is open and features new species, new exhibits, and a domestic petting zoo. Children of all ages enjoy learning about the giant anteaters, sloths, and mini goats.

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.

"South Pacific": The Noel S. Ruiz Theatre at the Performing Arts Center, 931 Montauk Highway, Long Island; (631) 218-2810; Saturday, Aug. 1, 8 pm; Sunday, Aug. 2, 2 pm; Friday, Aug. 7, 8 pm; Saturday, Aug. 8, 8 pm; Sunday, Aug. 9, 2 pm; Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2 pm; Friday, Aug. 14, 8 pm; Saturday, Aug. 15, 8 pm; Sunday, Aug. 16, 2 pm; Wednesday, Aug. 19, 7:30 pm; Friday, Aug. 21, 8 pm; Saturday, Aug. 22, 8 pm; Sunday, Aug. 23, 2 pm; \$20-\$29.

Enjoy the wonderful music of Rodgers and Hammerstein in this classic musical of love.

SeaGlass Carousel: SeaGlass Carousel, The Battery, Battery Park Underpass, Manhattan; www.thebattery.org; Daily, 10 am to 10 pm; beginning Thurs, Aug. 20; \$5 per ride.

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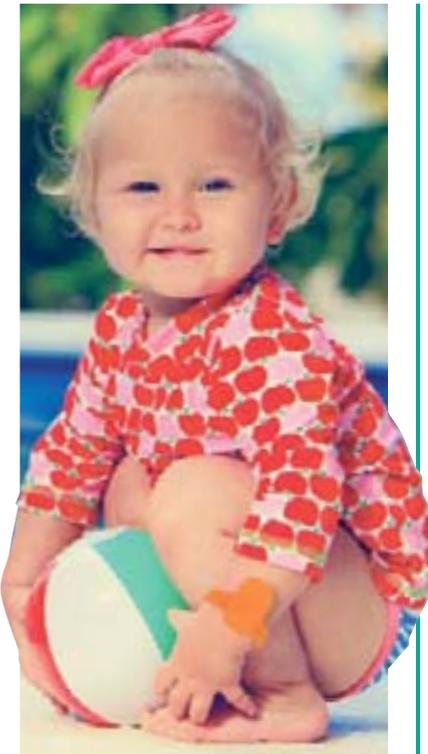
Splash safely

As the long, hot days of summer beat down, the time is ripe for pool parties and trips to the beach! For times when parents are chatting and attempting to supervise their kids, iSwimband can be an important assistant in helping maintain your vigilance. This wearable, drowning detection sensor is 1.5-inches wide and can be snapped into a rubber wristband for toddlers (or other non-swimmers) or snapped into a headband for swimmers.

The iSwimband alerts a parent's compatible Bluetooth device with a sound akin to a submarine dive alarm when a swimmer has been submerged too long or if a non-swimmer enters the water. We were able to download the free app onto our iPhone 4 and were impressed by its streamlined, helpful instructions. The parent customizes the settings for their child's swimming abilities, or lack of ability, and how soon they want the alarm to sound if the sensor is submerged.

The sensor can monitor from up to 100 feet away — as long as the parent has an unobstructed view or path for the signal. We tested the sensor in the wristband and also in the headband on kids playing in a pool and found both ways of wearing the sensor to be effective.

(For self-conscious tweens, the



headband can also attach to goggles, making the it even less noticeable.)

The manufacturer, Aquatic Safety Concepts, says the sensor is not intended as a replacement for adult supervision. And they report that the iSwimband battery should last for hundreds of hours of splash-splashing fun.

iSwimband drowning detection device, \$59.99, iSwimband.com.

Summer style 'Bee' blooming

Sunflowers evoke happy memories of summer and sunshine, so it's understandable that the new watercolor-style print on the organic cotton dress from Burt's Bees Baby would be utterly irresistible. The dress comes with a matching diaper cover and features contrasting, orchid-colored sleeves and trim around the snap-closure collar. Just as the *Helianthus* attracts bees, butterflies, and birds, the



graphic on the front of the dress is joined by an embroidered bee, and the sleeves are capped with fluttering wings of raw-edge fabric.

The sunflower dress set, which comes in sizes newborn, 0–3 months, 3–6 months, 6–9 months, and 12 months, is a sweet, eco-conscious

gift for a baby girl.

Sunflower Dress Set by Burt's Bees Baby, \$22.95, BurtsBeesBaby.com.

Cracking the 'Code'

On Aug. 2, a new board game will be released that will assuage parents' fears that they aren't doing enough to help their kids prepare for a career in a digital world — Code Master. While Code Master is a single player game, it can be enjoyed with a friend or by a parent-and-child team as they cheer each other on to solve the puzzles and get their avatar to the portal together.

In packaging that evokes Mojang's beloved Minecraft video game, Code Master inventor Mark Engelberg has assembled a board game that effortlessly introduces "while" loops, "if-then-else" conditional branching, and more while the child (ideally age 8 or older) merrily puzzles out how to help their adorably pixelated avatar pick up power crystals and ascend to the next level.

The player unwittingly "writes" a program with his action tokens by putting them in a sequence on the guide scroll that directs the avatar's actions. He even learns from his mistakes; if it doesn't work, the



instructions are encouraging, saying it's a simple matter of "debugging your program," so try again.

Rewards are built into Code Master: Every time the player reaches a portal, he is elevated to the next level, graduating from beginner, to intermediate, to advanced, and finally, to expert. There are 60 logic puzzles in the game to provide hours of brain-teasing challenges.

Code Master Programming Logic Game by Think Fun, \$19.99, www.target.com.

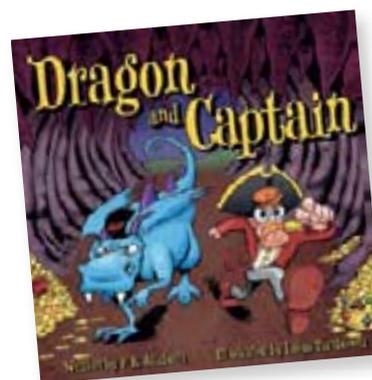
Ode to Calvin and Hobbes

Set your kids' sails for an adventure with "Dragon and Captain," the debut picture book from P.R. Allabach. It's a rollicking celebration of summer days and unleashed imaginations that will especially delight readers ages 4–8. Like Bill Watterson's Calvin and Hobbes comic

strips, "Dragon and Captain" (Flashlight Press) is a graphic novel that moves between illustrations of real life and the active imaginations of the two boys who transform into the dragon and captain. Captain's boat is missing and the lighthearted, kinetic illustrations by Lucas Turnbloom depict the two friends' thrilling journey to find the ship and infiltrate a band of pirates in order to recapture it.

In the imaginations of Dragon and Captain, a pocket watch becomes a compass and a paper towel tube becomes a telescope. It's a reminder that children don't need lots of stuff to be entertained during their vacation days; they need unstructured time, imagination, and a friend.

"Dragon and Captain" book by P.R. Allabach, \$17.95, www.barnesandnoble.com.



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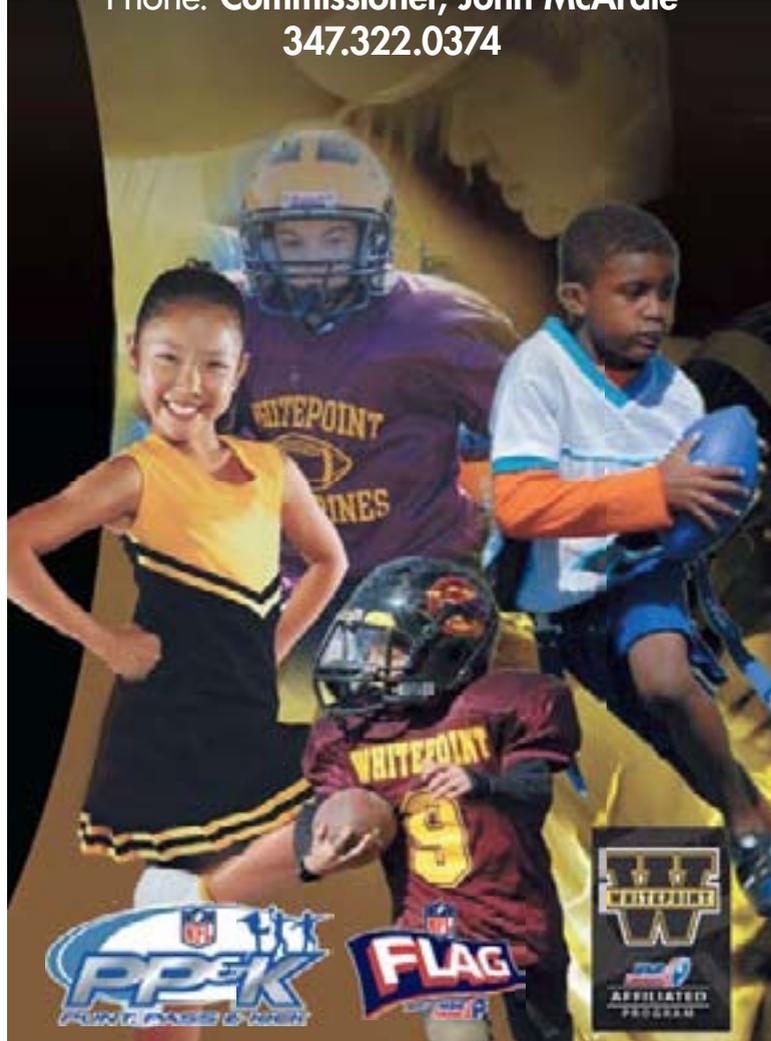
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