

QUEENS

November 2015

FREE

Family

Where Every Child Matters

13 ways to get kids on track

8 reasons to go back to work

Teens healing from abuse

Part 2 of our series



Find us online at www.NYParenting.com



laugh • learn • explore

718.838.9243 213-54 35th Ave
7:30am-6:30pm Bayside, NY 11361
www.littleapplepreschool.com

At Little Apple Preschool, we believe that an early education is key to **Social, Cognitive, and Emotional Success** for a child. We provide a well-rounded creative curriculum that will allow your child to flourish in things that he/she innately knows with the guidance of **NYS Certified Teachers!**

Enrichment Program:

DANCE • YOGA • MUSIC • ART • INDOOR GYM

SPECIAL PROMOTION:

**ENROLL NOW THROUGH JANUARY AND RECEIVE
\$200 OFF THE FIRST TWO MONTHS TUITION**



Infants



Toddlers



Preschool

**MAT
Certified**

**Age-Specific Classrooms • Potty Training • Small Ratios
Gifted and Talented Program Available**

**Meals
Included**

Family November 2015



28



14

FEATURES

- 6 Healing scars**
Part two in our series on teens and domestic violence
BY TAMMY SCILEPPI
- 8 Boys, guns, violence**
Taking a look at how we raise our sons to deal with anger and frustration
BY STEWART J. FRIMER
- 10 Why I loved returning to work**
After years as a stay-at-home mom, a refreshing experience
BY SUE LEBRETON
- 12 A brave new world**
Looking at options and resources for same-sex couples pursuing adoption
BY TAMMY SCILEPPI
- 14 Put an end to your child's procrastination**
How to get ahead of them running behind
BY DENISE YEARIAN
- 18 After a miscarriage: How to provide support**
Helping a loved one with a very private pain
BY JUDY M. MILLER
- 20 Understanding premature births**
November is Prematurity Awareness Month
BY JENNIFER DEGL
- 26 Divorce: How to tell your kids**
BY CHRISTINA MELNYK HINES

COLUMNS

- 22 Good Sense Eating**
BY CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD
- 34 Just Write Mom**
BY DANIELLE SULLIVAN

CALENDAR

28 November Events

SPECIAL SECTIONS

- 16 Birthday Party Directory**
- 24 The Special Child Directory**
- 33 The Marketplace**



26



34

Giving thanks every day

A must-read essay is in this issue: Stewart J. Frimer, a local clinical social worker, has written a provocative piece on how we raise our sons. "Boys, Guns and Violence" is an important and timely serious look at how we raise men. This ties in very well with Part II of our series on Teen Girls and dating violence. How we raise our men affects how they interact not only with women, but with the whole world around them. Parents need to be more and more educated about the important role they have in the ultimate social development of their children. Our writer, Tammy Scileppi, has once again taken on a topic of enor-



Our future depends on it. We are here to evolve and it takes guts and determination to step outside of the status quo.

Another important reality is divorce. More and more prevalent, the question remains, how to talk with your children when the decision has been reached? When marriage is over, the conversation is not. Children are not exactly blind to the realities, especially if they

are older. The younger children, however, may not be acknowledging the signs around them and communication is key. Then again, when is it not?

Violence inhabits the nightly news and the daily headlines. It is our duty as parents to educate ourselves to the best of our ability to raise a healthy and functional family.

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday and I think I'm not alone. Even when I was a vegetarian, we made a super holiday feast, just minus the turkey. With all the hype from the media, it almost seems as if Thanksgiving is about the turkey and the holiday shopping. It's good to try and keep in mind what it's really about, the crops coming in and having sustenance for the winter ahead. Every culture has their own version of our Thanksgiving and as a result it's perhaps the most inclusive of our holidays. Celebrating the harvest is an important acknowledgment of our good fortune and something we must never take

for granted.

This year my daughter will not be at our table for the first time. I am feeling a bit weird about that although I knew eventually it was coming. The chicks leave the nest. This Mama bird wishes sometimes that they didn't.

Every day is reason for thanks, but setting aside a special day to do it is, I think, a great priority deserving of our attention and respect. Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,
Publisher/Executive Editor
Family@cnglocal.com

Community News Group

CEO: Les Goodstein
PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER: Jennifer Goodstein

New York Parenting

PUBLISHER / EXECUTIVE EDITOR:
Susan Weiss

PUBLISHER / BUSINESS MANAGER:
Clifford Luster

OPERATIONS ASSOCIATE:
Tina Felicetti

SALES REPS: Alexis Benson, Erin Brof, Jay Pelc, Stephanie Stellacio, Shanika Stewart

ART DIRECTOR: Leah Mitch

WEB DESIGNER: Sylvan Migdal

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS: Arthur Arutyunov, Daria Avvento, Gardy Charles, Raymond Cho, Yvonne Farley, Earl Ferrer, John Napoli

MANAGING EDITOR: Vince DiMiceli

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Courtney Donahue

COPY EDITORS: Lisa J. Curtis, Shavana Abruzzo

CALENDAR EDITOR: Joanna Del Buono

Contact Information

ADVERTISING: WEB OR PRINT
(718) 260-4554
Family@cnglocal.com or
SWeiss@cnglocal.com

CIRCULATION
(718) 260-8336
TFelicetti@cnglocal.com

EDITORIAL
(718) 260-4554
Family@cnglocal.com

CALENDAR
(718) 260-2523

ADDRESS
New York Parenting Media/CNG
1 Metrotech Center North
10th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

www.NYParenting.com



The acceptance of advertising by New York Parenting Media does not constitute an endorsement of the products, services or information being advertised. We do not knowingly present any products or services that are fraudulent or misleading in nature.

Editorial inquiries, calendar information, advertising rates and schedules and subscription requests may be addressed to New York Parenting Media, One Metrotech Center North, 10th Floor, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

New York Parenting Media can also be reached by calling (718) 260-4554, emailing family@cnglocal.com or by visiting our website, NYParenting.com.

Join the conversation on Facebook.

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.



WE KNOW THE MOMENTS...

The ones that define us
and give meaning to our lives.
The moments that make us breathe deeply
and then take our breath away...
the ones when having our health
makes everything possible.

This is what we're made of.

At Fidelis Care, we provide quality, affordable
health coverage for children and adults of all
ages and at all stages of life.

Compassion. Commitment. Community.

And a mission to always care for you
and the ones you love –
moment by moment.



FIDELIS CARE®

Quality health coverage. It's Our Mission.

Estimate Costs:

It only takes a minute to view product choices and estimate costs with the Fidelis Affordable Care Advisor at fideliscare.org/enroll

Meet with a Representative:

Call 1-888-FIDELIS to meet with a Representative or visit fideliscare.org/offices to find a community office close to you

1-888-FIDELIS (1-888-343-3547)

TTY: 1-800-421-1220

fideliscare.org



To learn more about applying for health insurance, including Child Health Plus and Medicaid through NY State of Health: The Official Health Plan Marketplace, visit www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov or call 1-855-355-5777.

Healing scars

Part two in
our series
on teens and
domestic
violence

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

In 1967, Aretha Franklin said it all when she belted out her hit song about wanting a little R-E-S-P-E-C-T.

In their heated quest for love (or sex), many young people seem to ignore or forget that basic notion — one that's at the core of every healthy relationship. Perhaps we parents should keep reminding them that "old-school" values are always cool and never go out of style.

According to recent statistics, one in 10 teenagers reported experiencing violence in their romantic relationships in the last year, and one in three say that they've been verbally, emotionally, sexually or physically



(Above) Rainy survived an abusive older boyfriend. (Below) Former Bronx resident Mari Santos got help for her sister.

abused by a dating partner.

In September, WNYC's Radio Rookies program — a New York Public Radio initiative that provides teenagers with the tools and training to create radio stories about themselves, their communities, and their world — partnered with Day One, an organization that aims to end dating abuse and domestic violence, to help illuminate the pressing issue of teen dating abuse and take listeners behind the scenes.

Rainy shared her story of survival, and Mari spoke about help-

ing her sister end an abusive relationship.

Rainy

On her high school ID card, Rainy has a black eye. When her guidance counselor inquired, Rainy just told her, "It's a long story, you'll get to know me."

Rainy's first-person audio diary spanning two years chronicles her sad and painful but, ultimately, positive journey. It aired nationally on the acclaimed public radio show and top iTunes podcast "This American Life," over the weekend of Sept. 19 and 20. The young teen talks about her roller-coaster relationship: separating, reuniting, and separating again from her older, abusive boyfriend.

Rainy, now 19, hails from Brooklyn but currently lives out of state. She met "Tony" when she was just 14 and he was 21. She says at first, he was sweet. On their first date, he didn't even try to kiss her. But suddenly, his behavior changed dramatically and he became verbally abusive. Rainy withdrew; she wouldn't go to school and stopped hanging out with her friends, even her mom. By the time Tony became physically abusive, the scared teen was isolated from anyone who could have helped her.

Rainy opened up about her experience and started reporting her story in 2013, when she and Tony had been broken up for five months. As the piece progressed, she got back together with him then quickly disappeared. Occasionally, she'd show up at school and kept a diary. She was so confused about why she felt compelled to stay. It took a lot of gumption and courage to get out of that messy relationship, especially because she was so young, but Rainy finally left. Even when you're older, leaving a bad



relationship can be hell when you're a victim of abuse.

Hear Rainy's story, "Why Do I Stay?" at <http://www.wnyc.org/story/why-do-i-stay/>

Mari

How do you help someone in an abusive relationship? Figuring that out can be scary and frustrating for a teen. Mari Santos's older sister Alison always went out with the same type of guys: controlling, possessive, and self-centered. At 18, Mari just figured that when you're dating someone, you cry, argue, and break up every few weeks. She knew something wasn't right with that idea, so she joined Relationship Abuse Prevention Program, a school-based, peer education group run by the city. Mari, who now lives in Florida, was living in the Bronx at the time.

Knowledge empowered her, and she soon realized her sister was actually in an abusive relationship. Although terribly worried, she was afraid to talk to Alison, but the sisters wound up having their first open and honest talk on tape.

Listen to Mari's account, "We Just Don't Talk: One Family's Silence About Dating Abuse" at <http://www.wnyc.org/story/we-just-dont-talk-one-family-s-silence-about-dating-abuse/>

The entire series can be found at: <http://www.wnyc.org/shows/rookies/series/crushed/>

Young women at risk

According to a June 2015 report by the U.S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics:

- Twenty-five percent of women have experienced domestic violence.
 - Women ages 20 to 24 are at the greatest risk.
 - On average, three women and one man are murdered by their partner each day.
 - Two out of 10 female high school students reported being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.
 - Fourteen percent of teens reported threats from their boyfriend or girlfriend to harm them or themselves to avoid a breakup.
- And youth who experience dating violence are more likely to experience the following (according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention):
- Symptoms of depression and anxiety.
 - Engagement in unhealthy behaviors, i.e. tobacco, drug use, al-

cohol.

- Involvement in antisocial behaviors.

- Thoughts about suicide.

Young people who are victims of dating violence in high school are at higher risk for victimization during college.

How to help

How can you help? Parents and guardians should do the following:

- Tell your teens and young adults that abusing someone is a choice. People commit domestic violence because they choose to do so, not because they can't stop themselves.

- That positive, healthy relationships are all about trust and respect. And in time, if that special someone genuinely cares about you, he will show you that he's sensitive to your needs and feelings.

- Explain that controlling behavior isn't love.

- Finally, if you or your teen notice that a family member or peer is in a violent relationship, help her get help. Pursuing a protective order reduces the likelihood of a physical attack by about 80 percent.

Teens, remember that no one deserves to be abused. The abuse is never your fault. Everyone has the right to a safe, healthy relationship. In order to protect yourself, you should know the warning signs of an abusive dating partner (see dayoneny.org):

- Extreme jealousy or insecurity.
- Constant put-downs.
- Possessiveness or treating you like property.
- Telling you what to do.
- Constantly checking in on you.
- Explosive temper.
- Making false accusations.
- Isolating you from your friends and family.
- Preventing you from doing things you want to do.

Dating relationships are complicated, especially for teens — and things can easily spiral out of control, so knowledge is power. At Day One, young people between the ages of 16 and 24 learn how to identify and maintain healthy relationships. They can obtain legal protection when necessary and assist others experiencing abuse.

Day One toll-free hotline: (800) 214-4150.

Tammy Scileppi is a Queens-based freelance writer/journalist and parent and a regular contributor to *New York Parenting*.



Health care is about you. So are we.

Staying in good health means:

- Being there for life's important moments
- Having health care you can afford and
- Getting the care you need when you need it

With Essential Plan coverage through Empire BlueCross BlueShield HealthPlus, we'll help you:

- See the right doctor
- Get checkups and preventive care, plus prescription drugs
- Talk to a nurse 24/7, if you need to

We also offer dental and vision care and over-the-counter drugs, if you qualify.

Empire BlueCross BlueShield HealthPlus. Quality health care that's all about you.

Choose Essential Plan from Empire today!
Call 1-888-809-8009 (TTY 711).

www.empireblue.com/nyessentialplan

Empire 
BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD

An Anthem Company

Visit NY State of Health, The Official Health Plan Marketplace, at nystateofhealth.ny.gov or call 1-855-355-5777.

Empire BlueCross BlueShield HealthPlus is the trade name of HealthPlus, LLC, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

ENYMKT-0063-15 10.15

Boys, guns, violence

Taking a look
at how we
raise our sons
to deal with
anger and
frustration

BY STEWART J. FRIMER

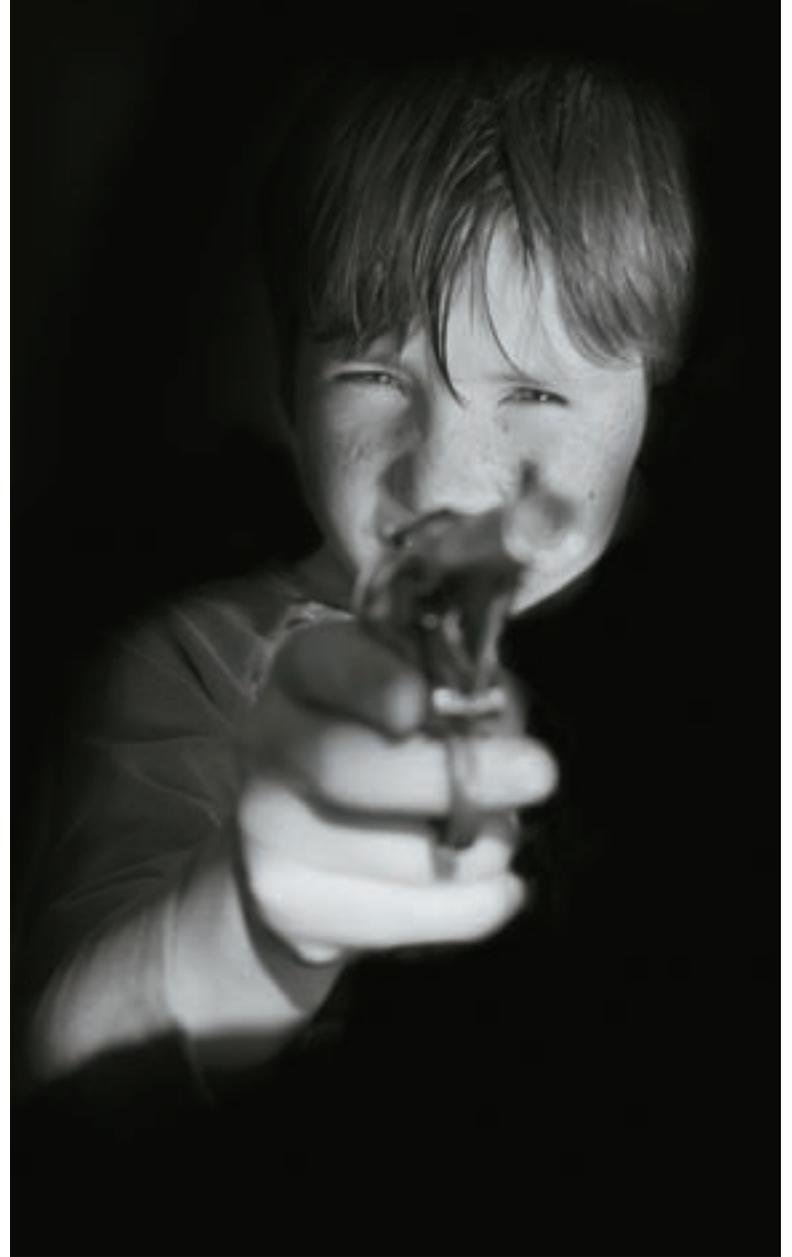
The recent and unfortunately recurring mass shootings by mostly white males is not, to me, an issue of gun control, but rather a sign that we have to take a more serious look at how we, as parents, teachers, and society, raise men.

Boys are taught that to take on the “man” role, they are not supposed to show their feelings, that they are not supposed to cry. To do so would bring on shame, as a boy who is emotional is weak — a baby, a sissy, and, heaven forbid, “a girl.” Boys are stuck in limited behavioral and emotional repertoires in becoming a man.

But repressing feelings is pretty dangerous. Think of the body as a box — the box, like the body, has a shape and size. We put things — feelings — inside it, and things also come out — expressing emotions. But if the box is expected to continually hold emotions inside, at some point, the box can’t contain them anymore, and it explodes. That’s what happens to our boys. We all have our limits, and for boys, it’s pretty toxic.

The issue of shame is a huge one here. When a man cries, we hear, “He broke down and cried.” I remember how ridiculed Dan Rather was when he expressed feelings when 9-11 broke. This whole concept has to change — crying is a *breakthrough*, not a *breakdown*. Guilt is feeling bad about something you did (a good thing) and is correctable. Shame is a sense that there is something wrong with you and is not correctable — which means there is no hope.

I can’t tell you how many boys I have worked with — in my job as a social worker — who acted out in school out of frustration that they couldn’t do their work and felt hopeless, and out of shame, got themselves out of those situations. Show me an oppositionally defiant kid, I will



show you a shame-based one.

We keep hearing about men blaming women for their behavior and why they acted out. (A perfect example of this was the recent hearings on Planned Parenthood where the committeemen bullied Cecile Richards.) A huge part of it is about power, control, and men struggling with their own “unacceptable” feelings. Several things happen to boys here: the inability to control the girls’ behavior connects to the sense of male entitlement (an issue we see in spousal abuse). Another issue for the young boy is how a wider range of feelings are allowed in girls. They can cry, and it is accepted, they will even get nurtured for it (though thinking of all girls as overly emotional can hurt just as much). But as teachers and parents comfort girls when they cry, boys crave the same nurturing attention, and when they don’t get it, they are further hurt. By not being taught how to deal with his emotions and

shame, the boy expresses his rage at — guess who? — the girl who rejected him and “made him do it.”

Shame becomes blame — and that is dangerous, as we’ve been seeing. We need to make it a part of our parenting, schooling, and culture to validate and accept a wider range of feelings in our boys, making sure we do not let the “box” fill up. I do have some sense of hope. The New York Mets’ Wilmer Flores became a sports folk hero when he showed tears upon thinking that he had been traded from the only home he’s had since age 16. Our hearts went out to him — to me he was the most-valuable player in baseball.

We need to do the same for all of our boys.

Stewart J. Frimer has been a clinical social worker for more than 40 years, working in child welfare, education, and in the prevention of child abuse and neglect using role theory and role play in his work.



Garden School

Cultivating Success in Every Child



Open House & Merit Scholarship Exam

Saturday, December 5th
9:00 am

Nursery to Grade 12, Independent, College Prep School

- Strong academics, small classes, character education
- Accredited, AP classes, athletics, college counseling
- Merit exam for current Grades 5 to 10, pre-register by 12/2/15
- Merit award recipients receive 25-100% tuition discounts
- Open House for all Nursery to Grade 12 families, children welcome

33-16 79th Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

Tel: (718) 335-6363 | www.gardenschool.org



68-60 Austin Street, Forest Hills, New York 11375
1-877-TUTORNY • 718-268-0092 • 718-268-0133

www.tutorsonwheels.com

Conveniently located near E and F trains

TEST PREP

- ACT Test Preparation
- Advanced Placement (AP) Test Preparation
- SAT Subject Test Preparation
- SAT Test Preparation
- Test Preparation

SPECIAL EDUCATION

- Certified Special Education Services
- Reading Skills for Students with Dyslexia

ONLINE TUTORING

- Academic Subject Tutoring
- Online Tutoring

HOME SCHOOLING

- K-12 Home Schooling

GENERAL TUTORING

- Academic Subject Tutoring

We Give Thanks...

To all our loyal customers from your friends at The Bay Terrace Shopping Center



THE BAY TERRACE
At Bayside



Enjoy the best from more than 50 premier shops, fine restaurants, entertainment venues, professional services and plenty of free parking.



Find us on
Facebook

Cord Meyer Development LLC
26th Ave. & Bell Blvd., Bayside

VISIT US AT:
<http://www.bayterrace.com>

Why I loved returning to work



After years as a stay-at-home mom, a refreshing experience

BY SUE LEBRETON

When I began to tell people that I was returning to work full time in a downtown office after 14 years as a stay-at-home mom, their eyes would widen, and after congratulating me they would inevitably say, "Oh your life is about to change." Their tone implied that my life was not about to change for the better.

On my optimistic days, I reassured myself that I had once successfully returned to work after a six-month maternity leave and this was just a very long maternity leave. On my less optimistic days, I considered calling to say I'd made a mistake and would not be arriving for my first day of work. I reminded myself that the people who hired me knew about that big hole in my resume and wanted me anyway.

In the days before my official start date, I felt like I was about to bungee jump off a cliff. Would the thrill of the jump overcome my fears?

I put on a brave face, determined not to let my anxiety show to my children. It was time to heed the advice I had always given to my children, now teens, who have faced so many new teachers and

new schools with my assurance that all would be well, once they settled in.

Six months later, I can admit, yes, some parts are difficult. As every mom has heard more times than she can count, there is no such thing as having it all, but for me, the pleasures have outweighed the burdens.

As I step off the train in the morning, I weave between people threading in all directions. I lift my face up to the skyscrapers greeting me. Each day a slightly different hue bounces off that hammered glass blue building that it is my current favorite. I soak in the sights that still feel foreign to me after so many years in the suburbs. I want to spin and fling my hat exuberantly into the air like Mary Tyler Moore did in the opening credits of her old television show.

As it turns out, all of those wide-eyed, "life is going to change" people were right. My life has changed since returning to work, but mostly in ways that I love:

1 I feel like a grown up again. I know, it sounds weird. My teenagers don't get it either. For more than a decade I've been living life immersed in theirs, some days feeling like I was stuck in whatever developmental age they were.

2 I actually have less responsibility at home. Now that I'm commuting to downtown, my husband is the closest parent to the children's schools. Bonus! When I leave the house every morning, I shed my parenting responsibility to a degree that's not been possible for many years.

3 I feel valued and validated. Mothering may be the most important job in the world, but I sometimes struggled to feel valued. I no longer need to wait for Mother's Day to get a pat on the back. My colleagues' praise fills my self-esteem bucket, and I enjoy being on the receiving end after so many years of giving daily encouragement.

4 I earn money. Let's face it, for many of us, working is about the money. We live in an expensive city, and university is only three years away from my oldest. When I see the bank

account growing, I feel as if I can finally relax a little about the future. Every deposit increases my sense of personal power.

5 I have a new wardrobe. Building a wardrobe beyond yoga pants is time-consuming and challenging, but also fun. I still love my yoga pants, but now I also have a professional wardrobe. And who doesn't love great shoes? My teen daughter, who is usually quick to curl her lip and ask, "Are you wearing that?" now sometimes even gives me a nod of approval. She recently commented, "You are more fashion forward since you went back to work."

6 I learn something new every day. When my children would moan and complain about homework, or chorus that "school is boring," I would tell them I wished I could go to school. "Yes, we know you love to learn," they would say with a heavy sigh and a headshake. Going back to work feels like getting paid to go to school.

7 I have more personal time. When I worked at home, I often felt guilty about sitting down to read. Chores beckoned all day long. Now I have a total of 60 minutes every day on a commuter train where I read guilt free.

8 I have more confidence. I have been pleasantly surprised at how quickly my professional skills and my confidence have returned. In the past, my husband's work functions picked away at my self-esteem when people slithered away to seek more interesting conversation after hearing I was a stay-at-home mom. Now when people ask what I do, I am excited to tell them.

...

As it turns out, all those eyebrow-raisers were right. My life has completely changed — but for the better.

And I was also right during all those years when I coached my kids through tough situations. I told them everything would be fine once they settled in. And as it turns out, this was the best advice of all.

Sue LeBreton is a health and wellness writer and mother to two teens.



Established 41 Years

Registration NOW

Newly Expanded 7,000 sq. ft. Studios!

Ballet • Tap • Jazz • Hip Hop
Modern • All Boys Hip Hop • Drama • Vocal
Creative Movement • Mommy & Me • Contemporary
Acrobatics • Musical Theatre • Ballroom

ADULT CLASSES:
Zumba • Ballet • Tap
Belly Dance • Ballroom • Latin

Online Registration Now Available
www.americandanceanddrama.net



188-22 Union Tpke
Fresh Meadows
68-02 Metropolitan Ave
Middle Village
718-479-8522

CALL NOW to ask about our FREE TRIAL CLASSES!!

BIRTHDAY PARTIES:



**For all ages:
Disco, Gymnastics, Dress Up,
Princess Parties, Arts and Crafts.**

1 Party at a time • Huge Party Room (over 3,000 sq. ft.)
Disco Laser Lights • Bubble/Fog Machine • Face Painting • Arts/Crafts
Tattoos • Cotton Candy • Magicians • Gymnastics • Disco • Dress-Up
Princess Parties - Hostesses become your favorite fairytale princess!

A brave

new world

Looking at options and resources for same-sex couples pursuing adoption

BY TAMMY SCILEPPI

Just a half decade ago, same-sex marriages were considered quite controversial. We've come a long way since, and in this new "age of enlightenment," laws are gradually changing in favor of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities. The conversation is expanding and now veering toward a thornier, more complex topic: same-sex couples and adoption.

A couple's desire to grow their family and have children of their own — by whatever means possible — is one that transcends gender and sexual orientation. It's an intrinsic human need that's embedded in our DNA.

Manhattan-based, licensed Clinical Psychologist Dr. Melissa Robinson-Brown, agrees that the process of conceiving a child can be stressful between two heterosexual people, but she points out that with same-sex couples, there are inevitably other parties involved that ultimately add to those stress levels.

"Whether that be the adoption agency, a surrogate parent, a sperm or egg donor, another biological parent, or a lawyer, someone else is necessary to make having a child possible," she says. "These processes are often time-consuming, monetary burdens, and emotionally-laden affairs." She notes that while the outcome is often worth the stress, "it's important to recognize the emotional toll that this can have on any couple."

According to recent statistics, approximately four percent of adopted children are being raised by gay and lesbian parents. Dr. Robinson-Brown notes that literature

"It's been an amazing journey getting to help people experience the joy of becoming parents. Some didn't feel it was an option until recently, as marriage equality spread and services for LGBT people building families became more available."

suggests that when compared to children of heterosexual parents, children of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer parents show no differences in adjustment, peer relationships, depression, or anxiety. In fact, in some instances, Dr. Robinson-Brown said children of lesbian and gay parents tend to have better outcomes in terms of social and academic functioning. Moreover, they tend to have less behavioral difficulties. Overall, though, these children may face more external challenges from peers and society versus in their own homes.

"Probably one of the most important aspects of this process is seeking out legal counsel that is well-versed in the laws of the state in which the parents reside and attending to all necessary points as identified by the couple's attorney," she adds.

Brooklyn-based adoption lawyer Brian Esser, who regularly works with same-sex New York City couples, is raising two happy, high-energy sons with husband Kevin O'Leary in Park Slope.

"The fact that I'm an adoptive dad really resonates with people — gay and straight," says Esser, 40, father of Keith, 4, and Jason, 17 months, both adopted at birth.

Esser has been a lawyer for more than 15 years. He started his career at large law firms handling complex litigation matters for major corporations. About three years ago, he started doing adoption-related work, after he and his husband adopted Keith, he launched his solo practice two years ago.

Tammy Scileppi: You say you empathize with your clients, because you've been in their shoes.

Brian Esser: When I started my practice, I was surprised to learn that there were no out LGBT lawyers who worked with families pursuing independent adoption in New York City. There are many who do second-parent adoptions, but none who focus on birth parent placement adoption. They see that I understand where they are coming from, and that I can sympathize with their concerns, without them having to articulate them, because I've been in their shoes.

It's been an amazing journey getting to help people experience the joy of becoming parents. Some of my clients always knew they wanted to be parents, and it was just a question of when and how. Others didn't feel it was an option until recently, as marriage equality spread and services for LGBT people building families became



Park Slope husbands Brian Esser and Kevin O'Leary adopted sons Keith, now 4, and Jason, now 17 months, at birth.

more available.

Living in New York, we're fortunate that there are services for LGBT people, and our courts are generally welcoming to these families. We like Brooklyn, because

there are all kinds of families here and our children don't stand out because they were adopted, or because they have two gay dads.

As my clients network with potential birth parents and deal with

professionals in other states, I see firsthand the discrimination families face in other states.

I really found my calling when we began the process of adoption. I felt I could take the information I'd learned

— and the empathy I had developed as an adoptive parent — and share it with the world. I immersed myself in family building information — not just adoption, but also surrogacy, sperm, egg, and embryo donation. I wanted to learn all the different ways people build families.

TS: What was your adoption process like?

BE: We were waiting for a match for about seven months with our older son and about six months for the younger ... really quick wait times by most standards, but it didn't feel fast.

Then there is a whirlwind of activity. You try to learn everything you can about the child that might be your baby. You want to know everything about the birth-parents. Then you meet them — which was amazingly emotional.

Then comes another wait. The wait from when you think you have a match until the baby is actually born. We were mostly certain that neither of our sons' birth mothers would re-think their adoption plan, but you never know. The births of both boys were truly amazing!

TS: What has the adoption process been like for other families?

BE: A recent success was obtaining a second-parent adoption for a Brooklyn gay male couple who welcomed their son via surrogacy in India. My most recent independent adoption placement was for a gay male couple in Queens.

When we started the process of adopting, we didn't know a lot of people who were adoptive parents. Since then, people have "come out" to us as adoptive parents and as we've been at various preschools and day cares, we've met other adoptive parents, with kids our boys' ages.

My two boys are the light of my life. They give me purpose and make me want to be a better person. People were incredibly supportive of us becoming parents. I think people could see that we were very happy together and wanted us to share that love with a child.

For families looking for adoption information, contact the Law Office of Brian Esser [540 President Street, third floor, between Third and Fourth avenues in Park Slope, (718) 747-8447, www.esserlawoffice.com]

Tammy Scileppi is a Queens-based freelance journalist and parent.

Put an end to your child's procrastination

How to get ahead of them running behind

BY DENISE YEARIAN

Many parents grow weary of prodding their children to do homework, get ready for school, or complete household chores. But it doesn't have to be that way. Kids who procrastinate can break the habit if parents teach them the skills and self-discipline needed to start and complete tasks. Here are 13 tips to help:

Consider the source. Think about why your child is procrastinating. Could he be challenged by a lack of motivation, distractions, disorganization, or fear of failure driven by perfectionist ten-

dencies? Once this is determined, you can help him begin breaking the habit.

Stick with the S.T.I.N.G. approach.

"S": Select one task you want your child to do. If it is a large, overwhelming job, break it down into smaller, manageable tasks.

"T": Set a timer in keeping with your child's developmental level — five or 10 minutes if he's younger, longer if he's older.

"I": Ignore everything else while the timer is ticking. Help him stay focused and free from distractions. Don't let him start another task until the first one is done.

"N": No breaks allowed until the timer goes off.

"G": Give him a reward when the timer sounds. This can be a snack, a break to play outside, or special time to read a book with Mom or Dad.

Maintain rules. Establish house rules and follow through with consequences when rules are broken. Even if your child never sees the value of a clean room, he needs to know it's a rule.

Teach technique. Don't just assume your child knows how to do something. He may need to be taught how to organize a closet, clean out the toy box, or tackle a long assignment. Discuss the project with your child and guide him toward successfully completing it. Check in with him from time to time to see how he's doing.

Reinforce positive behavior. Recognize when your child is taking steps toward being responsible and proactive. Praise the progress along the way.

Maintain daily routines. This is particularly true for young children. They will be less likely to procrastinate if their structure is familiar.

Make a list. Some children feel a sense of accomplishment and stay on task when they make a list and cross items off.

Consider teachable times. Wait until your older child is feeling the

natural consequences of his procrastination — being late for school, having to miss an activity, or getting a poor test score. Then, rather than chastising him, suggest and encourage use of tactics to break the procrastination habit.

Work as a team. If you are a procrastinator, suggest teaming up and breaking the habit together. Share successes and mistakes in the journey.

Add variety and options. If your child procrastinates because of chores, rotate jobs on different days of the week or with different family members to give kids some flexibility and options.

Look at the long haul. Realize the long-term impact of procrastination on your child's self-esteem and confidence. Young people form their identity based on experiences and beliefs. If they continually see failing grades, get punished, or are yelled at for procrastinating, it becomes a vicious cycle that chips away at their self-esteem.

Allow trial and error. Remember there is no one-size-fits-all technique when it comes to motivating children to break the procrastination habit. Discuss with your child what method works best for him and allow some trial and error until he settles into a routine.

Gradually turn over the reigns. Breaking the procrastination habit is a gradual process that occurs over time and many children need to be taught how to do it. Once they learn how to break down tasks or organize information, gradually up the level of expectation and let your child become more independent while you continue to provide guidance and coaching.

Most important, remember, whatever effort you invest now in breaking the procrastination habit will positively impact every area of your child's life — now and in the future!

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





Enrolling Now • Spaces Available

**Private Pre-Kindergarten Program
for 3 & 4 Year Olds**

Full-Day Program • Mon.-Fri. 7:45am-2:30pm
Small Groups / Reasonable Rates

Our Curriculum:

Prepares Students For Kindergarten | Follows Common Core Learning Standards | Multicultural Program | Project-Based & Stem Activities
Math & Technology | Science | Cooking | Music and Movement
Community Walks | Field Trips | Special Events & Celebrations

AFTER-SCHOOL AVAILABLE

HAUP LITTLE EXPLORERS

197-25 Hillside Ave., Hollis, NY 11423 • 718-749-5865
haupupk@gmail.com

Like us on

facebook

or follow us on **twitter**

Facebook Search: NYParenting



Kimmy Ma ARTStudio

“Launch Creative Minds”

ENROLL NOW!!!

Comic/Cartooning Workshop

10/24/2015 – 1/24/2016 • SUNDAY 2:30-4:00

(Seats are limited!)

12-week session: Explore 4 various units of comic fundamentals,
Learn to design characters, layout & settings, storytelling & ink/watercolor application



Fine Arts Instructions: 16 weeks session

with medium based curriculum & ability level instructions
5 units: illustration, charcoal, pastel, watercolor & paintings

Young Beginner (age 6-7-8)

Mon 4:15-5:45, & Sun 10:45-12:15

Young Artist I (Age 9+)

Tuesday-Thursday 3:30-5:30

**Beginner Artist
(3rd grade-middle school)**

Sun 12:30-2 & Sat 3:45-5:15

Young Artist with basic portfolio

Friday & Saturday 3-hr. classes

Download detailed curriculum in fine arts or in comics:

www.kimmyma-artstudio.com

190-19 Union Turnpike, Fresh Meadows • 646.209.9352

[bALLET Tech] The NYC Public School for Dance

- A rigorous academic education and intensive dance training, **tuition-free**
- Student test scores rank in the **top 20%** in NY State
- **City-wide** admissions
- Grades **4-12**

NEXT AUDITION:

Saturday, December 5

Students ages 7-13 are eligible to audition

Call now to register: 212-777-7710



BALLET TECH, THE NYC PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR DANCE
*A partnership between the NYC Department of Education
and the Ballet Tech Foundation*
890 Broadway, New York, NY 10003

www.ballettech.org

Photo by Christopher Duggan



Kid's Birthday Party

DIRECTORY

Bounce 'N Play

20-21 Steinway St.
Astoria, NY 11105
718-777-PLAY (7529)
www.BounceNPLAYNY.com

Voted Best Kids' Playroom of the Year in 2015 by NY Magazine, Bounce 'N Play strives to make every child WOWED! We are not just an inflatable fun center. We have rock climbing, a two level jungle gym, bounce houses, a 22 foot high slide, a smaller slide for your less adventurous child and even a designated toddler area with a carousel. All our parties are private and are kicked up a notch with our laser and club lights that are turned on when our hosts get in the groove and play games and dance with the kids! Everything from parachute games to the latest dances, our parties are aimed to please kids from 1-13. Our play space is built for adults and kids, so parents, get ready to play too or play with our interactive arcades! We have many packages to choose from. Want a longer party than 2 hours, we offer 3 hour VIP parties that include a catered hot buffet for your guests. We can transform your party and add any theme, character, piñata, cotton candy, glitter tattoos, face painting, Karaoke and more! We also offer Open Play times. Please check our website for our schedule and party samples or call for any information.

Denise Makes Cakes

917-689-4857 or
www.denisemakescakes.com

Whether it's a wedding, birthday, anniversary, thank you, or just for fun, we have the perfect cake for you. Creating delicious memories one cake at a time! Celebrate in style with a beautifully designed cake from DeniseMakesCakes. We offer formal and whimsical designs, all baked with the finest ingredients to ensure that your cake tastes as good as it

looks. We are conveniently located in Queens and serve the NYC metropolitan area. In addition to cakes, we also make custom cupcakes, cookies, cake pops, chocolate party favors, and more!

Gym-azing

27-14 23rd Avenue
Astoria 11105
347-455-3661 Email:
info@gym-azing.com
www.Gym-azing.com

Gym-azing specializes in birthday parties for all ages!

All packages include invitations, theme decorations, bounce house, face painting, twisty animal balloons, bubble machine, dancing and activities, pizza and juice for kids! We offer specialty parties! Zumba, Yoga, Pajama, Capoeira, Magic Show parties! Only Gym-azing offers A Glamour Girls Spa Party in Astoria!

Check out our 5 Star reviews on Yelp! Check us out on Facebook!

LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Westchester

39 Fitzgerald Street
Yonkers, NY 10710
866-243-0770 or
www.legolanddiscoverycenter.com/westchester/

LEGOLAND Discovery Center Westchester is a 32,300 square-foot indoor attraction featuring millions of LEGO bricks, geared towards children ages 3-10 and their families. We are an indoor attraction featuring a range of educational and interactive experiences, including: hands-on play areas, a 4D cinema, master classes led by Model Builders, two LEGO amusement rides, special birthday party rooms and MINILAND — the center's signature re-creation of landmark locations and buildings throughout Westchester County and New York City, made entirely out of LEGO bricks.



- VOTED BEST KIDS PLAYROOM OF THE YEAR BY NY MAGAZINE
- PRIVATE PARTY
- AGES 1-13
- INFLATABLES
- OBSTACLE COURSE
- GIANT SLIDES
- JUNGLE GYM
- TODDLER AREA
- ARCADES
- THEMES
- CHARACTERS, PINATAS, COTTON CANDY
- FACE PAINTING, GLITTER TATTOOS
- VIP PARTY
- KARAOKE, LASER DANCE PARTY
- CATERED HOT BUFFET, FULL MENU



WE ALSO HAVE OPEN PLAY TIME

BOUNCE N PLAY - 20-21 STEINWAY ST - ASTORIA, NY 11105
718-777-PLAY (7529) - BOUNCENPLAYNY.COM -   

Featuring
New Spa Room
for Girls Spa
Parties





Kids Classes:
Ballet • Jazz • Capoeira
Hip Hop • Music Together

Specialty Parties:
Spa Party • Zumba Party
Yoga Party • Magic Show
Princess Runway Show

Birthday Parties Include:
Invitations • Theme Decoration
Bounce House • Face painting
Bubble machine
Dancing & Activities
Pizza & Juice



27-14 23rd Ave., Astoria, NY 11105
347-455-3661 • info@gym-azing.com • www.gym-azing.com



Online Activity Guide

Check it out on
www.NYParenting.com



"Creating delicious memories
one cake at a time!"

917.689.4857 • DeniseMakesCakes.com
DeniseMakesCakes@gmail.com

Advertise with us!

MANHATTAN
Family



BROOKLYN
Family



QUEENS
Family



BRONX/RIVERDALE
Family



To place an ad in any of our monthly titles,
please call **718.260.4554**



LEGOLAND

DISCOVERY CENTER



Indoor Attraction • LEGO® Rides • LEGO® MINILAND
LEGO® Studios 4D Cinema • Play Zone • Shop and Café
LEGO® Master Builder Academy • LEGO® Factory Tour
LEGO® Racers: Build & Test • Birthday Parties

\$10 Off

on One Adult Ticket

Coupon Disclaimer: Offer valid for \$10 off one standard adult admission ticket price at LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Westchester. May not be combined with any other discounts, coupons, or offers. Not valid with pre-booked, online tickets, and birthday parties. Original coupon must be presented at the time of purchase. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Adults may only visit with a child, or on select Adult Evenings. Duplication or sale of this offer is prohibited. No cash value. Not redeemable for cash or credit. Valid thru 8/30/2016. GC: 151059

WESTCHESTER

RIDGE HILL

www.LEGOLANDDiscoveryCenter.com/Westchester

866.243.0770



LEGO, the LEGO logo, the Brick and Knob configuration, the MiniFigure and LEGOLAND are trademarks of the LEGO Group. ©2015 The LEGO Group.

After miscarriage

How to provide support

Helping a loved one with a very private pain

BY JUDY M. MILLER

A miscarriage happens in an instant or over days, however, its lasting effects can continue through the years. I am now blessed and wonderfully busy with four amazing kids, but pinches of sorrow revisit me every year: on the anniversaries of the day I discovered I was pregnant, the day I lost my child, Mother's Day, and the day I would have given birth. I view these days of grief and my consum-

ing mother's joy as two branches of the same tree, as intertwined reminders to be present and grateful.

What would have been, could have been, proved the most challenging to reconcile. I found it tough to cope with my grief over my miscarriage 18 years ago, along with the dreams of giving birth to and knowing my child, in part because I had virtually no support at the time.

My husband did not want to talk about the baby. In fact, for months he denied she had ever existed, and this distressed me deeply until I realized how much he hurt. He lost a child, too.

Family members and friends were often silent after they expressed their condolences. I desired more, expected more, but did not know how to ask others for what I needed. I did not have the emotional strength to ask. I stewed in the silence until I realized they did not know what to do.

I share this advice that follows from my perspective as a woman who has miscarried, to help you support your family member or friend who has miscarried. These are the things I would have expressed 18 years ago, if I only knew:

Encourage her to talk

Your family member or friend needs to talk; she may tell you her story over and over. Be patient. She is processing. Be attentive. Connect with your eyes, gestures, and touch. Be compassionate. Know when to remain quiet. Listen, listen, listen.

Encourage her to express and name the emotions she feels

I experienced denial, bargaining, anger, sadness, guilt, and shame. I felt hollow and adrift. My arrival to acceptance took many, many months.

Accept all feelings. What she feels are part of her grief process. Validate your friend or family member's emotions and feelings by having

conversations with her about her miscarriage and about her dashed hopes and dreams. Acknowledge her spouse or partner; be sure to ask how he is doing.

Ask about the baby

Your friend or family member was pregnant. The baby, regardless of its gestational age at the time of the miscarriage, was real. Acknowledge and respect her sense of loss. She may have named the baby; refer to the baby by name if she did. Just hearing you say the baby's name validates that it existed; this can help her heal.

Encourage her to take care of herself

Grief takes a toll on the mind and body. Accompany your friend or family member on a walk in a beautiful area. Watch a happy or funny movie with her, and encourage her to laugh by laughing yourself. Make dinner for her and her spouse or family. Hold her hand or put your arms around her shoulders when she cries. Inquire about her sleep, activity, and diet.

Stay in touch

Grief has a way of hanging around; it ebbs and flows, sometimes more pronounced during an anniversary or a milestone. A card, hand-written note, or time spent together talking communicating your remembrance will be much appreciated.

Take care of you

Supporting someone who is grieving can be emotionally and physically taxing. Be sure to take care of yourself. Have someone you can talk to, eat well, drink a lot of water, exercise, and get plenty of sleep.

Judy M. Miller is a freelance writer living in the Midwest with her husband and four children. She is a Certified Gottman Educator, and the author of "What To Expect From Your Adopted Tween" and "Writing to Heal Adoption Grief: Making Connections & Moving Forward."



TRANSPORT GROUP THEATRE COMPANY



JACKIE HOFFMAN



JOHN "LYPSINKA" EPPERSON

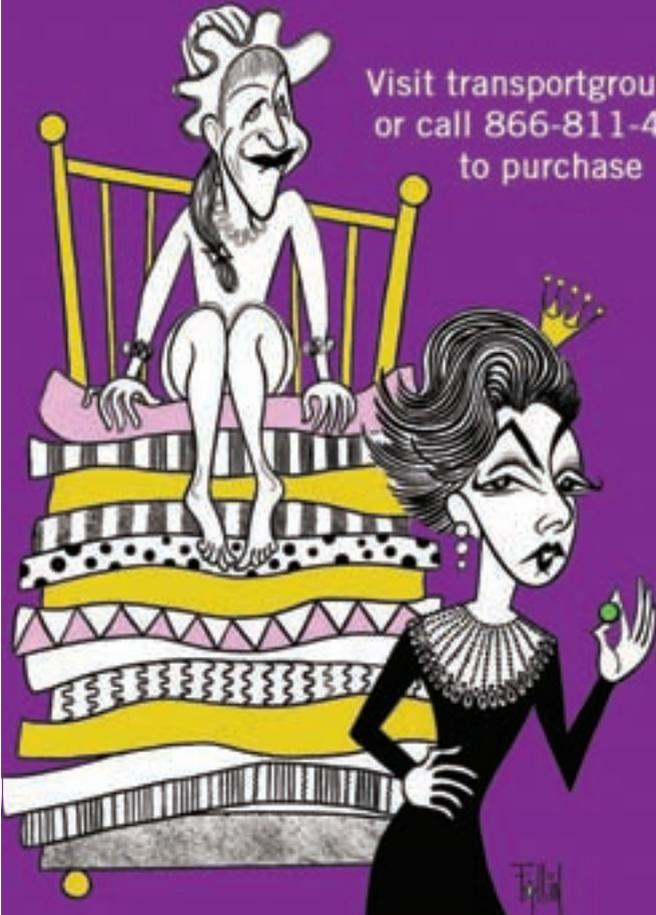
STARRING IN

ONCE UPON A MATTRESS

NOVEMBER 23 - JANUARY 3, 2016

ABRONS ARTS CENTER 466 GRAND ST

Visit transportgroup.org
or call 866-811-4111
to purchase



RENANIM ACADEMY

Pre-school & Summer Camp

A Unique Year-Round Program For Children Ages 1 Year-6 Years

Small Classes by Age Group with Individual Attention

Open from 7:30AM-6:00PM

(After School Academic Program Available)

- Warm, Nurturing Environment
- Certified, Experienced Teachers
- Art and Crafts, Music & Movement
- Gymnastics and Yoga Classes
- Computer, Science and Cooking
- Tutoring Programs
- Certified Russian, Israeli and American Teachers
- Instruction in Hebrew Language
- Pickup Services Provided
- Safe & secure outdoor playground
- Spacious Air-Conditioned

All food is Glatt Kosher
We serve Breakfast, Lunch and Snack
For more information please visit us at:

www.renanimpreschool.com

141-29 84th Drive, Briarwood, NY 11435 718-206-4400

Your child will Discover a World of Learning & Adventure!



Stephanie Buck-Haskin,
MD, FACOG

Dr. Stephanie Buck-Haskin enhances the high level of care provided to her patient population by sharing her individual brand of medical and surgical expertise.

Obstetrics and Gynecology:

- Evaluation and treatment of gynecologic health concerns
- Hysterectomy options and alternatives
- Menopause wellness, perimenopause
- Personalized obstetrics
- In-office ultrasound, and bloodwork for your comfort and convenience
- Procedure room, colposcopy. LEEP, Procedures, Ablation.

62-54 97th Pl
Rego Park, NY 11374
(718) 263-2986

40-08 Forley St.
Elmhurst, NY 11373
(718) 396-3241

TO PLACE AN AD IN OUR LINE
OF FAMILY PUBLICATIONS,
PLEASE CALL

718.260.4554

Understanding premature births

November is Prematurity Awareness Month

BY JENNIFER DEGL

My daughter, who we named Joy, was born at 23 weeks gestation in 2012. She weighed just one pound and four ounces, and was only 11 and three-quarters inches long. The reason for her premature birth was a condition I suffered from, called placenta percreta (a severe type of placenta previa) and both of us almost lost our lives. However, I am happy to report that today, more than three years after her delivery, we are both doing very well!

A premature baby is generally categorized as one that is born before 37 weeks gestation. A micro preemie, as my daughter was, is a baby born between 23 and 26 weeks gestation. Micro preemies suffer the most complications from their early birth, and also have the highest mortality rate of premature babies.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2012, the year my daughter was born, preterm birth affected more than 450,000 babies — that's one of every nine infants born in the United States. These premature babies will spend weeks or months hospitalized in the neonatal intensive care unit. According to the March of Dimes — an organization that strives to fund lifesaving research and programs and works to end premature birth, birth defects, and infant mortality — premature births are the number one killer of babies.

Not all premature babies experience complications, but being born too early can cause short-term and long-term health problems for preemies. Generally, the earlier a baby is born, the higher the risk of complications.

Problems to watch for

Some problems may be apparent at birth, while others may not develop until later.

According to the Mayo Clinic, many

premature babies will suffer from the following short-term complications:

Breathing problems. A premature baby may have trouble breathing due to an immature respiratory system. If the baby's lungs lack surfactant — a substance that allows the lungs to expand — she may develop respiratory distress syndrome, because the lungs can't expand and contract normally.

Preemies may also develop chronic lung disease known as bronchopulmonary dysplasia. In addition, some preemies experience prolonged pauses in their breathing, known as apnea.

Heart problems. The most common heart problems premature babies experience are patent ductus arteriosus — a persistent opening between two major blood vessels leading from the heart — and low blood pressure.

Brain problems. The earlier a baby is born, the greater the risk of bleeding in the brain, known as an intraventricular hemorrhage. Most hemorrhages are mild and resolve with little short-term impact. But some babies may have larger brain bleeding, which causes permanent brain injury, including cerebral palsy.

Temperature control problems. Premature babies can lose body heat rapidly; they don't have the stored body fat of a full-term infant and can't generate enough heat to counteract what's lost through the surface of their bodies. If body temperature dips too low, hypothermia can result.

Gastrointestinal problems. Preemies are more likely to have immature gastrointestinal systems, leaving them predisposed to complications such as necrotizing enterocolitis. This potentially serious condition, in which the cells lining the bowel wall are injured, can occur in premature babies after they start feeding. Premature babies who receive only breast milk have a much lower risk of developing necrotizing enterocolitis.

Blood problems. Preemies are at

risk of blood problems such as anemia and infant jaundice. Anemia is a common condition in which the body doesn't have enough red blood cells. All newborns experience a slow drop in red blood cell count during the first months of life, but the decrease may be greater in preemies, especially if the baby has had a lot of blood taken for lab tests.

Metabolism problems. Premature babies often have problems with their metabolism. Some preemies may develop an abnormally low level of blood sugar (hypoglycemia).

Immune system problems. An underdeveloped immune system, common in premature babies, can lead to infection. Infection in a premature baby can quickly spread to the bloodstream causing sepsis, a life-threatening complication.

Also according to the Mayo Clinic, a high number of preemies will suffer from the following long-term complications:

Cerebral palsy. Cerebral palsy is a disorder of movement, muscle tone, or posture that can be caused by infection, inadequate blood flow, or injury to a preemie's developing brain either during pregnancy or while the baby is still young and immature.

Impaired cognitive skills. Premature babies are more likely to lag behind their full-term counterparts on various developmental milestones. Upon school age, a child who was born prematurely might be more likely to have learning disabilities.

Vision problems. Premature infants may develop retinopathy of prematurity, a disease that occurs when blood vessels swell and overgrow in the light-sensitive layer of nerves at the back of the eye (retina). Sometimes the abnormal retinal vessels gradually scar the retina, pulling it out of position. When the retina is pulled away from the back of the eye, it's called retinal detachment, a condition that, if undetected, can impair vision and cause blindness.



Jennifer with premature baby Joy.

Hearing problems. Premature babies are at increased risk of some degree of hearing loss. All babies will have their hearing checked before going home.

Dental problems. Premies are at increased risk of developing dental problems, such as delayed tooth eruption, tooth discoloration, and improperly aligned teeth.

Behavioral and psychological problems. Children who experienced premature birth may be more likely than full-term infants to have certain behavioral or psychological problems, such as attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. However, more recent research suggests that — at least for late preterm babies — the risk may be the same as it is for

children who were born at full term.

Chronic health issues. Premature babies are more likely to have chronic health issues — some of which may require hospital care — than full-term infants. Infections, asthma, and feeding problems are more likely to develop or persist. Premature infants are also at increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome.

Joy suffers or has suffered from nine of those listed above, but considering how early she was, she is amazing!

My daughter spent 121 days in the neonatal intensive-care unit at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital in Valhalla, N.Y., and has returned to the emergency room and pediatric intensive care unit several times due

Not all premature babies experience complications, but being born too early can cause short-term and long-term health problems for premies.

to the effects of respiratory viruses on her lungs. Most common colds will evolve into pneumonia for Joy, and she will be rehospitalized and put back on oxygen. These are always dark days, but the clouds eventually break, and Joy is back home once again.

Prematurity is something that can be overcome, but its scars are always visible.

My goal in writing this article is to spread awareness about the reality of premature births, and the effects it has on both babies and their families. No premie makes it through the neonatal intensive-care unit unscathed.

I also want to mention that many parents of very premature babies (micro premies) will later be diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, due to the fact they watched their child suffer and almost lose her life on many occasions, and also may have come close to losing their own life during pregnancy or delivery.

Organizations that help

World Prematurity Day is on Nov. 17 — in fact, the entire month of November is recognized as National Prematurity Awareness Month — and I would like to highlight some of the top organizations, both locally and nationally, that either help to prevent premature births or support the families of premature babies and medical research being done on how to lessen the effects of prematurity:

The March of Dimes. It began as an organization to prevent the spread of polio, but it has evolved into one that supports research into preventing premature births. It also funded the research that led to the development of surfactant therapy, which allows premature babies to have a better shot of surviving by increasing their lung capacity after birth.

Hailey's Hope Foundation. A New York-based foundation that not only financially supports families of premature babies while they are in the neonatal intensive-care unit, but also purchases needed equipment for hospitals.

The Tiny Miracles Foundation. A Connecticut-based organization that supports families of premature

babies both financially and emotionally. It offers parent mentor programs and support groups for parents struggling with the reality of premature births, as well as provide them with financial assistance.

The Morgan Leary Vaughan Fund. A Connecticut-based group that raises money for medical research into the prevention of and treatment of necrotizing enterocolitis in premies. I am on the Board of Directors for this organization, and I can say that it is contributing to medical progress in the area of necrotizing enterocolitis research.

Nurtured By Design. This company makes The Zaky and the Kangaroo Zak, products that help soothe a baby confined to an isolette and ease the stresses of kangarooing a premature baby. These products are both purchased for and donated to many area hospitals.

Graham's Foundation. Graham's Foundation empowers parents of premature babies through support, advocacy, and research to improve outcomes for their premies and themselves.

Hand to Hold. Hand to Hold provides ongoing support, education, and navigation resources to parents, and serves to fill the service gap that currently exists for families who have had a child in the neonatal intensive-care unit, or who experienced a loss.

NICU Helping Hands. It has not only served its local Texas community, it has also served families all across the country who are looking for education, support, and a helping hand during one of the most difficult journeys they will ever make.

Premature babies are some of the strongest humans in the world that can teach us all a lot of lessons. Let's use November to spread awareness on the reality of premature births, and maybe one day, with your help, they can all be prevented!

Jennifer Degl is a mother of four — including a 23-week micro premie — and author of "From Hope to Joy: A Memoir of a Mother's Determination and Her Micro Premie's Struggle to Beat the Odds." For more, visit www.micropremie.net. You can also connect with Degl at www.facebook.com/jenniferdegl and www.twitter.com/jenniferdegl.



GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Keep it or toss it?

My friend, Gail, called me with a question: “I have a container of eggs in my refrigerator with a sell-by date of two weeks ago. Are they safe to eat?”

I get a lot of food and nutrition questions from friends and family. But how long food can be kept is the top query. Cooks want to stay safe, yet, they don’t want to throw away perfectly good food.

Surprisingly, food scientists agree that many foods, if stored properly, can be consumed for days or even weeks past the package date.

A 2013 study out of Harvard Law School and the Natural Resources Defense Fund found consumers falsely believe sell-by and best-by dates indicate food safety.

Fact: It’s the manufacturers that often decide on their own how to calculate shelf life — and they’re basically a guess. These dates confuse consumers, leading many to throw out food before it actually goes bad.

What the terms mean:

Sell-by. These are used to tell retailers how long to display a food. You should purchase it before this date, but the food can still be eaten after it. For example, milk has no off-flavor up to five days after its sell-by date and can be consumed until then.

Best-by. These are based on sensory evaluations by product developers and do not reflect food



safety.

Use-by. These dates indicate the last day of peak food quality. Food stored properly is not necessarily unsafe to eat after this date according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

How long is it good?

Lunch meat. Three days for fresh-sliced meats. Ditto for prepackaged deli meats once you open them.

Ground meat. Cook within one to two days of purchase. After cooking, three to four days.

Leftovers or prepared foods. Four days in the fridge. *Listeria monocytogenes*, a bacteria linked

to food-borne illness, can grow at refrigerator temperatures as low as 40 degrees.

Packaged cookies and crackers. If they have a paint-like smell or taste, their oils have turned rancid and should be tossed.

It’s important to note foodborne illness (a.k.a. food poisoning) comes from bacterial contamination and not spoilage. Eyeballing and sniffing just detects the presence of spoilage microorganisms, not necessarily food pathogens. Most of the organisms in food that can make you sick do not create slime, stink, and smell.

Common sense dictates if a food looks moldy or smells awful, it’s time to toss.

Gail was relieved when I reassured her that eggs, if kept refrigerated, should last at least three to five weeks after the sell-by date stamped on the carton.

Christine Palumbo is a Naperville-registered dietitian nutritionist who is a new Fellow of the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Follow her on Twitter @PalumboRD, Facebook at Christine Palumbo Nutrition, or Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com.

Spinach wild rice salad

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pouch Uncle Ben’s Ready Rice Jasmine Rice
- 1 pouch Uncle Ben’s Ready Rice Brown, Red, Black Rice
- 1 pouch Uncle Ben’s Ready Whole Grain Medley Brown & Wild

- 4 cups baby spinach
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 1 cup crumbled goat cheese
- 6 Tbsp balsamic vinaigrette

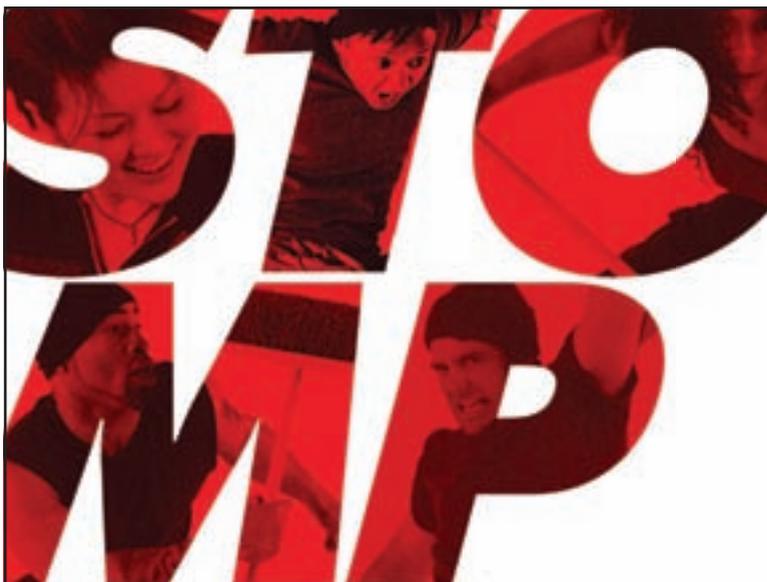
DIRECTIONS: Prepare rice according to package directions. Refrigerate and cool until just before serving.

For each serving of salad, toss 1/2 cup cooled rice with 1 cup baby spin-

ach, 1/2 cup cherry tomato halves, 2 ounces crumbled goat cheese, and 1 tablespoon balsamic vinaigrette.

NUTRITION FACTS: 310 calories, 43 g carbohydrate (2 g sugar), 9 g protein, 12 g fat (3.5 sat), 4 g fiber, 670 mg sodium, 60 percent DV vitamin A, 30 percent DV vitamin C, 10 percent DV iron and eight percent DV calcium.

Adapted from UncleBens.com



**"EXUBERANT!
A SURE-FIRE CROWD PLEASER"** - THE NEW YORK TIMES

STOMP
ESTABLISHED IN 1994 NYC

ticketmaster® or 800-982-2787
ORPHEUM THEATRE 2ND AVENUE AT 8TH STREET
STOMPONLINE.COM

BROADWAY'S TONY®-WINNING
HIT COMEDY!

39 STEPS

**"ABSURDLY ENJOYABLE...
DELIGHTFULLY DIZZY!"**
-Ben Brantley, The New York Times

4 INSANELY TALENTED ACTORS, 150 ROLES
100 BREAKNECK MINUTES OF SHEER THEATRICAL FUN
FOR EVERYONE FROM 9 TO 99

ALL MEZZANINE SEATS \$39!

39STEPSNY.COM
TICKETMASTER 877.250.2929
UNION SQUARE THEATRE 100 EAST 17TH ST.



QUEENS
Family
Where Every Child Matters

13 ways to get kids on track
8 reasons to go back to work
Teens healing from abuse
Part 2 of our series

Find us online at www.NYParenting.com

If you like the magazine, you'll love the site.

Check us out!

NYParenting.com

Where every family matters and where
New York parents find help, info and support.



**Gazillion
Bubble
Show**

"IT WILL BLOW YOUR MIND"
-OPRAH

Telecharge.com · 212.239.6200
GazillionBubbleShow.com
New World Stages, 340 W. 50th St.
For groups or birthdays call 866.642.0849

The Special Child

DIRECTORY

Applied Behavioral Interventions

2625 East 14 St, Suite 200
Brooklyn, NY 11235
329 East 149th Street (Fourth floor)
Bronx, NY 10451
641 Lexington Avenue #622
New York, NY 10022
646-666-3088 or www.abisvc.com

We empower our staff, families, and other team members through extensive training and support as they collaborate creatively to change the lives of the individuals we serve. ABI utilizes a family-centered approach to encourage generalization and independence. ABI provides office based diagnostic evaluations and developmental assessments, as well as on-going behavioral health services for individuals on the autism spectrum in their homes and communities, mainly through private insurance for ages three to adulthood.

ABI clinicians use techniques including Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to achieve measurable outcomes, while also incorporating naturalistic and social modeling based methods tailored to the needs of each individual. ABI's team includes multi-lingual professionals who serve families from various cultural backgrounds. ABI sees teaching as a science rather than an art, with children needing effective and efficient therapists to optimize learning time. Programs have been developed by a team with over 15 years of direct clinical experience.

Janine Stein Speech-Language Pathology, P.C.

444 Lakeville Road, Lake Success, NY
718-640-6767 or
www.lispeechandmyo.com

Janine Stein, Speech-Language Pathologist, is owner and operator of the Suffolk Center for Speech and Myofunctional Therapy. Along with her exceptional group of therapists, she supports families and children across Long Island and Queens, specializing in: PROMPT, Myofunctional Therapy, Voice Disorders, Fluency, Augmentative Communications, Articulation, Auditory Processing Disorders and Expressive/Receptive Language Disorders (adults and children). Also offered is Feeding Therapy for individuals who suffer from texture and consistency aversions. There are 6 affiliated offices across Long Island, all participating with most major health insurance companies and offering flexible hours and scheduling; including evenings and Saturdays.

Positive Beginnings Preschool

71-25 Main St, Flushing,
718-261-0211
72-52 Metropolitan Ave,
Middle Village, 718-326-0255

Evaluation Center: 72-60 Metropolitan Ave, Middle Village

718-894-8400 or www.posbegin.org

We are a special education preschool in Queens servicing children ages 3 to 5 years. Located in both the Flushing and Middle Village areas, we are centrally located and easily accessible by major highways and public transportation systems. Our nurturing environment caters to children with special needs, and their families to provide quality educational programs tailored to enhance the child's development. We are committed to providing a safe, caring and stimulating environment. We provide a developmentally appropriate environment ensuring successful opportunities for exploration and growth while respecting each child's culture, language, religion, and learning style.

All aspects of your child's development are assessed by the following professional departments and programs: Special Education Teachers, Speech/Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, School Psychologists, Social Work, Music Therapy, Art Education, Adapted Physical Education, Classroom Computer Programming, Literacy Enrichment Program

Family collaboration is very important to us! We support and encourage the team approach through our special programs.

Stepping Stone Day School, Inc.

2826 Westchester Ave; 718-554-2025
77-40 Vleigh Place,
Kew Gardens Hills 718-591-9093

Established in 1983, is a private, not for profit, infant and preschool program for children with and without special needs for children ages 3-5. The agency's mission is to provide collaborative evaluation, education, therapy and family support services so young children can develop to their full potential and join with their families and friends as members of the community. As a barrier free school, they are able to provide services to children with varying degrees and severity of disability, and they have been in the forefront in providing integrated classrooms for children with and without disabilities since the early 1990's. Licensed/certified Special Educators, Therapists, Social Workers and Psychologists are part of a multidisciplinary team dedicated to their philosophy that all children are entitled to an education that is safe, nurturing and in an enriched environment. They are fully licensed to provide services to young children with and without disabilities. Please call for more information.



EXPERT HELP FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

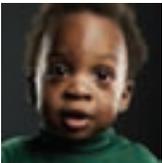
Comprehensive, flexible, and individualized home based and community ABA therapy.

Office based diagnostic evaluations & developmental assessments.

Serving families in their homes in all NYC boroughs and Westchester with 3 Convenient office locations in Brooklyn, Bronx and Manhattan

An in-network partner with most major insurances. Private pay or school based SETTS services also available.

Now accepting new referrals.



Applied Behavioral Interventions

abisvc.com
(646) 666-3088
intake@abisvc.com

Private/Independent School Guide



Check it out on NYParenting.com



**71-25 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11367
Tel: 718-261-0211
Fax: 718-268-0556**

**72-52 Metropolitan Ave.
Middle Village, NY 11379
Tel: 718-326-0055
Fax: 718-326-0637**

We Provide:

- Classes in English, Spanish, Hebrew, Russian & Chinese
- Integrated Classes
- Comprehensive Evaluations
- School Psychologist
- Counseling
- Social Work Services
- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Family Support Groups and Training
- Adaptive Physical Education
- Fully Equipped Playground
- Music, Art, Library & Science

POSITIVE BEGINNINGS IMPACTS A LIFETIME

**Funded by
NYS Educational Dept.**



**SPEECH PATHOLOGY & SWALLOWING
DISORDER SERVICES OF LONG ISLAND**

Specializing in the Treatment and Correction of:

Language Disorders • Memory & Auditory Processing Difficulties
Fluency • Voice Disorders • Motor Planning Disorders
Deviate Swallowing which Contributes to Orthodontic, Pedodontic and Periodontic Problems
Tongue Thrust • Feeding and Swallowing Problems / Aversions
Thumb and Finger Sucking • Articulation Disorders • Oral Facial Muscle Weakness

Specialized Therapy Approaches Including
PROMPT Therapy • Individual Feeding Therapy
Augmentative Communication Evaluations & Therapy

**PARTICIPATING WITH MOST MAJOR
HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANIES**

**444 LAKEVILLE ROAD
LAKE SUCCESS, NY 11042
718-640-6767
WWW.LISPEECHANDMYO.COM**



STEPPINGSTONE DAY SCHOOL, INC.

A Preschool Program for Children With and Without Disabilities
Not for Profit — Established in 1983

Queens/Bronx
Preschool Programs - CPSE Evaluations
Therapies - Physical, Occupational, Speech/Language, Feeding
Family Support Services

- Preschool self-contained and integrated classrooms
- Nurturing, child-friendly learning environments
- Ongoing communication between parents and professionals
- Meeting the needs of the families through concrete and social work services

To find out more about SteppingStone Day School

For the Queens Location, call Nancy Rybacki 718-591-9093 • For the Bronx location, call Sheri Bushansky 718-554-2025

SteppingStone Day School's Preschool Program is Funded and Regulated By The New York State Department of Education, The New York City Department of Education and Licensed by The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Bureau of Daycare



Divorce

How to tell your kids

BY CHRISTINA MELNYK HINES

Your marriage is over and now you have the heart-wrenching task of telling your children.

How should you break the news?

Tell them together. Barring a

harmful or abusive situation, your children need you both to continue parenting together.

Even if your children are at different ages or maturity, they need to hear the announcement as a family, says Dr. Martye Barnard, a pediatric psychologist.

After that, you and your spouse should talk to each individual child. When you discuss your break-up, keep in mind that different age groups typically require different approaches:

Preschoolers

"It's amazing how much (preschoolers) understand," Barnard says. "They're pretty insightful, but

they don't understand the time element quite like the grade schooler or high schooler would. When you say this is going to happen this month, it doesn't make sense to them."

Adrienne Dreher, a family counselor, suggests using a calendar to help your preschooler count the days to when she will see each parent.

"Children need to have stability and know what to expect. The sooner a regular parenting plan that works for everyone can be set up, the better," she says.

Wondering what your child is feeling? Children often express feelings through play, Dreher says. Also, read age-appropriate books together, like "The Way I Feel" series, to help your child learn to share his feelings, including anger, sadness, and loss.

School-age

Define what divorce means by explaining that you and your spouse will no longer be living under the same roof. Again, explain that the divorce is not about your child, but avoid blaming the other parent for the divorce.

"None of the adult stuff should be shared with the kids," Barnard says.

Questions to anticipate

When preparing to tell children you and your spouse are divorcing, expect to hear the following, or variations of these common questions:

- Does this mean that Daddy (or Mommy) isn't going to live with us?
- Does this mean we won't see him (her) anymore?
- Does this mean we won't do things as a family anymore?
- Did I do something wrong? (Your child might not ask this question aloud, but she may wonder if she's somehow to blame.)

Source: Dr. Martye Barnard, University of Kansas Hospital

Children's books about divorce

Need additional resources? Local bookstores, your library, and Amazon.com have an assortment of helpful books geared for both adults and children. Look for these titles:

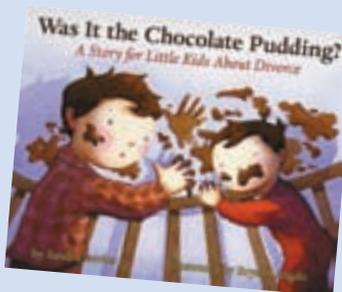
"Two Homes" by Claire Masurel

"It's Not Your Fault, Ko Ko Bear" by Vicki Lansky

"Was it the Chocolate Pudding? A Story for Little Kids about Divorce" by Sandra Levins

"Standing on My Own Two Feet: A Child's Affirmation of Love in the Midst of Divorce" by Tamara Schmitz

"Dinosaurs Divorce (A Guide for Changing Families)" by Marc Brown and Laurie Krasny Brown



Films dealing with divorce

Movies can help facilitate conversation between parent and child. Check out these flicks:

- "Because of Winn Dixie"
- "Mrs. Doubtfire"
- "Hope Floats"
- "Step-Mom"
- "Trevor Romaine: Taking the 'Duh' out of Divorce"

Check out CommonSenseMedia.org for comprehensive reviews of movies and to decide if a film is age-appropriate for your child.

"Those kids really need to be reassured that they have parents that love them."

Adolescence

As children enter adolescence, parents may be tempted to explain the divorce. Barnard urges parents to avoid sharing details of why the divorce happened.

"I know adults that aren't old enough to understand it," she says.

Address guilt

Reassure your children that they did nothing to cause the divorce. Explain to them that even though you are no longer married, you are their parents first and your love for them won't change.

Grief is normal

Grief associated with divorce occurs without closure since, unlike death, there's no funeral.

"Children grieve very much like they grieve if one of the parents had died or if they had lost a sibling," Barnard says.

If your child's grief doesn't lessen over time or if she expresses a wish to die (even a preschooler), consult with a counselor or child psychologist. The most common sign of depression among school-aged children is irritability, including acting out, disrespect, and mis-

behavior at home and school.

Manage wishful thinking

Children often fantasize about their parents getting back together and may continue to harbor these hopes for years.

"It's very, very difficult for kids to put closure on that and to understand that that's not going to happen," Barnard says. Gently remind your children periodically that you and your ex won't be remarrying.

Help children cope

Whenever possible, continue to partner as parents to your children by attending school activities, parent-teacher conferences, and birthdays together. And, don't turn your child into the go-between messenger.

"If you have a message to give your former spouse, that should be done by phone. If that's not possible because of anger, then e-mail or text," Barnard says. If possible, avoid dating for at least a year to help your children adjust.

Freelance journalist Christa Melnyk Hines specializes in family communication issues. She is the mom of two boys and the author of "Happy, Healthy & Hyperconnected: Raise a Thoughtful Communicator in a Digital World."

NEW YORK SPECIAL CHILD LONG ISLAND SPECIAL CHILD

Trusted since 2008



Informing & Enriching "Special Needs" Families throughout NYC & Long Island

For more information about distribution or how to get your free copy, please e-mail us at family@cnglocal.com.

Visit us online at

www.NYParenting.com

Like us on our Facebook page, NYParenting or follow us on Twitter



To advertise your business and or services
contact us at 718-260-4554
or e-mail us at family@cnglocal.com

New York Parenting/CNG
1 MetroTech Center North - 10th Fl. • Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-260-4554 • family@cnglocal.com

Calendar

NOVEMBER



Stroll through Gingerbread Lane

Take a walk through Gingerbread Lane at the New York Hall of Science from Nov. 14 through Jan. 10, 2016. Visitors stroll through the display of homemade gingerbread houses made entirely out of edible gingerbread, royal icing, and candy. The creative confections are made from the imagination of chef John Lovitch.

Gingerbread Lane from Nov. 14

through Jan. 10, 2016. Mondays through Thursdays 9:30 am to 5 pm; Fridays 9:30 am to 5 pm; Saturdays and Sundays 10 am to 6 pm. Tickets are free with museum admission. The museum is closed on Nov. 29.

New York Hall of Science [47-01 111th St. in Corona/Flushing Meadows, (718) 699-0005 X 353, www.nyscience.org]

Never miss a great event!

Sign up for our FREE newsletter and get twice-a-week ideas for you and your family right in your mailbox. NYParenting.com

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!

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

SUN, NOV. 1

IN QUEENS

Cheering station: Cheering Station, 44th Drive and 21st Street; 10 am – 10 pm; Free.

Hosted by the Queens Economic Development Corp, the booth will provide water and live music to cheer on the runners.

Native American workshop: Alley Pond Park Adventure Center, Alley Pond Park; (718) 217-6034; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 11 am – 12:30 pm; Free.

Rangers discuss the history of our city and the Native American culture. For older teens.

The great Autumn Paint out: Boardwalk, Beach 86th Street and Shorefront Parkway; (718) 318-4000; nycgovparks.org; 3 pm to 6 pm; Free.

Bring your easels, paint, brushes and pastels and come out to the Boardwalk and create beautiful sunsets on canvas. Materials for children will be provided.

FURTHER AFIELD

New York City Marathon: Verrazano Narrows Bridge, Bay Street, Staten Island; 8 am to 9 am.

Get ready to run! The world's biggest and most popular marathon with 50,000 finishers is set to take off at 8 am at the foot of the Verrazano Bridge and ends in Central Park at the 79th Street transverse.

Ascarium weekend: New York Aquarium, 602 Surf Ave. between W. Eighth and W. Fifth streets, Brooklyn; (718) 265-3448; www.nyaquarium.com; 11 am – 5 pm; Free with admission to the aquarium.

Halloween fun at the funnest place. Enjoy a marine-themed magic show, 3D pumpkin carvings, undersea mysteries, sea lion celebration, spooky crafts, and treat stations.

"Incredible Tale of Sleepy Hollow": Vanderbilt Museum Planetarium, 180 Little Neck Rd., Long



Great holiday music

'Tis the season for an early holiday concert by the Laurie Berkner Band at Theatre at Westbury on Nov. 15.

The queen of indie rock is releasing her latest album, *Favorite Classic Kids Songs*, and treating the audience to a live holiday concert. Bring your dancing shoes and a stuffed animal (for your head!). This show features a mix of winter and holiday songs, plus many of the greatest hits from the

Laurie Berkner Band.

The Laurie Berkner Band, Nov. 15 at 3 pm (doors open at 2 pm). Tickets are \$29.50, \$39.50 and \$100 for VIP passes, which includes preferred seating, an after show meet-and-greet, and photo opportunity with Laurie and the band!

Theatre at Westbury [960 Brush Hollow Rd. in Westbury on Long Island, (516) 247-5200, www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/907417?utm_medium=bks]

Island; (516) 293-0674; 1 pm; \$10 (\$8 children).

Ichabod Crane and the Headless Horseman visit for a spooky good time. Presented by the Arena Children's Theater.

MON, NOV. 2

IN QUEENS

Snack and chat: Roachdale Village Library, 169-09 137th Ave.; (718) 723-4440; www.queenslibrary.org; 2:30 pm; Free.

Tweens and teens grab a chip and gab with each other.

Page to stage: Langston Hughes Public Library, 100-01 Northern Blvd.; (718) 651-1100; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

A 12-week program for teens to adapt a piece of literature for the stage.

"Othello": Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd.; (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 5:30 pm; Free.

Teens enjoy readings of Shakespeare's plays presented by the Titan Theatre Company.

TUES, NOV. 3

IN QUEENS

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

Teens interested in furthering their education learn tips and tricks to get into a good college.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Aesop's Fables": Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road, Long Island; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 11:30 am and 2 pm; \$9 with museum admission (\$7 members/ \$12 theater only).

Aesop's well-known and beloved fables come to life on the stage to motivate and challenge children and adults alike! Fables presented include such classics as the "The Tortoise and the Hare," "The Boy Who Cried Wolf," "The Lion and the Mouse,"

and more. Meet the cast as they entertain you and bring these tales and many more to life. For children 3 years and older.

WED, NOV. 4

IN QUEENS

Animals Alive: Lefferts Public Library, 103-34 Lefferts Blvd. at 103rd Avenue; (718) 843-5950; www.queenslibrary.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Tweens learn about animals with a visit from staff at Alley Pond Environmental Center.

Preview screening and live event: Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave.; (718) 777-6888; www.movingimage.us; 7 pm; Free with museum admission.

"The Peanuts Movie" is on tap with Blue Sky artists Nash Dunningham and Jeff Gabor.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Aesop's Fables": 10:15 am and noon. Long Island Children's Museum. See Tuesday, Nov. 3.

THURS, NOV. 5

FURTHER AFIELD

"Aesop's Fables": 10:15 am and noon. Long Island Children's Museum. See Tuesday, Nov. 3.

FRI, NOV. 6

IN QUEENS

Teen origami: Queens Village Public Library, 94-11 217 St. at 94th Avenue; (718) 776-6800; www.queenslibrary.org; 3 pm; Free.

The art of Japanese Folding Paper.

Teen happy hour: Flushing Public Library, 41-17 Main St. at Parsons Boulevard; (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm.

Teens are invited to hang out in the Teen Room with our Nintendo Wii U, Xbox360, and a variety of board games and card games.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Aesop's Fables": 10:15 am and noon. Long Island Children's Museum. See Tuesday, Nov. 3.

SAT, NOV. 7

IN QUEENS

Pumpkin Smash: Sunnyside Greenmarket – Torsney Playground, 43rd St. and Skillman Avenue; www.nycgovparks.org; 10 am to 2 pm; Free.

Bring your gourds, jack-o-lanterns and pumpkins for a smashing good time. You smash them and NYC Compost Project turns them into compost

Continued on page 30

Calendar

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

Continued from page 29

for city parks and greenspaces.

Wildlife weekends: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy.; (718) 347-3276; www.queensfarm.org; 11 am to 4 pm; \$9 (Free for farm members).

Have fun learning about critters, and watch a prey show, frogs, bugs and a hayride, pony ride and animal feeding.

Nature at night: Kissena Park, at Rose and Oak avenues; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 6 pm to 7:30 pm; Free.

The city has an amazing variety of wildlife, especially the ones that come out at night. Join with rangers to visit the best places to view the urban jungle and explore the wildlife in the parks. For older tweens and teens.

FURTHER AFIELD

Fall Forest workshops: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; 11 am to 5 pm; Free for admission.

Explore the 50-acre Thain Family Forest, take a canoe trip, and bird boxing.

"Incredible Tale of Sleepy Hollow": 1 pm. Vanderbilt Museum Planetarium. See Sunday, Nov. 1.

SUN, NOV. 8

IN QUEENS

Little Makers: NYSCI New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th Street. Queens, NY; (718) 699-0005; 10:30 am to 12:30 pm; \$8 (\$5 family members).

Children discover the fun of aerodynamics in Glider Planes.

Wildlife weekends: 11 am to 4 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Saturday, Nov. 7.

Second Sundays: Queens Museum, NY City Building; (718) 592-9700; www.queensmuseum.org; 1 pm to 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Families explore the exhibit Chinese Popscares: Exploring the Col-lages and Landscapes of Zhang Hong.

Poetry open mic: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd.; (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Teens explore and share their love of poetry.

FURTHER AFIELD

Fall Forest workshops: 11 am to 5 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Nov. 7.

"Incredible Tale of Sleepy Hol-low": 1 pm. Vanderbilt Museum Planetarium. See Sunday, Nov. 1.



Photo by Heinz Klutmeier

Classics get colder

"Disney on Ice" comes to the Barclays Center on Nov. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15.

Grab your Mickey ears and get ready to celebrate 100 years of magic.

All your favorite Disney characters are live and on the ice skating to Disney's best music.

Selections include "Frozen Heart" from "Frozen," "Hakuna Matata" from "The Lion King" and "You've Got a Friend in Me"

from "Toy Story," plus many others.

"Disney On Ice" is presented by Stonyfield YoKids Organic Yogurt.

"Disney on Ice," Nov. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. Shows are 11 am, 1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm, and 7 pm. Tickets start at \$21.

Barclays Center [620 Atlantic Ave. at Pacific Street in Prospect Heights, (917) 618-6100; www.barclayscenter.com]

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

Join us as we commemorate all the brave men and women that serve our country on a daily basis. Veterans Day was once called Armistice Day, celebrating the day when all countries signed the armistice that signaled the end of World War I on Nov. 11, 1918. Help us honor our heroes by sending special letters of thanks. For children 3 and older.

MON, NOV. 9

IN QUEENS

Grow your own mushrooms: Sunnyside Library, 43-06 Greenpoint Ave.; 6 pm; Free.

Tweens and teens discover gardening.

TUES, NOV. 10

FURTHER AFIELD

"Disney On Ice": Barclays Center, 620 Atlantic Ave. at Pacific Street, Brooklyn; (917) 618-6100; www.barclayscenter.com; 7 pm; Tickets begin at \$21.

Grab your Mickey ears and get ready to celebrate 100 years of magic. All your favorite Disney characters are live and on the ice skating to Disney's best music, including themes from "Frozen," "The Lion King," and "Toy Story." Presented by Stonyfield YoKids Organic Yogurt.

WED, NOV. 11

IN QUEENS

Speech and language screenings: MKSA, 214-26 41st Ave. Suite 130; (516) 731-5588 X 216; baboff@mksallc.com; 9 am - 4 pm.

If you have concerns with your child's understanding, listening, vo-

cabulary, eating, articulation, language or behavior, please call to schedule a screening with a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist. By appointment.

Introductory class: Queens Historical Society, 143-35 37th Ave.; (718) 939-0647 X 17; www.eventbrite.com/e/queens-historical-society-sylvan-learning-introductory-class-tickets-19000060693; 10 am; Free.

Students and parents will learn the inspiring story of Queens native Lisa Randall, leading expert on particle physics and cosmology, through an interactive presentation on her life and her work. Working with a partner, students will build and program their very own robot. Reservations required.

FURTHER AFIELD

Veterans Day: 2 pm to 4 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Sunday, Nov. 8.

"Disney On Ice": 7 pm. Barclays Center. See Tuesday, Nov. 10.

THURS, NOV. 12

IN QUEENS

Decoupage crafts: Cambria Heights Public Library, 218-13 Linden Blvd. between 218th and 219th streets; (718) 528-3535; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Diamond glitter and glue!

FURTHER AFIELD

"Disney On Ice": 10:30 am and 7 pm. Barclays Center. See Tuesday, Nov. 10.

FRI, NOV. 13

IN QUEENS

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

Teens discuss the workings of the library.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Disney On Ice": 7 pm. Barclays Center. See Tuesday, Nov. 10.

SAT, NOV. 14

IN QUEENS

Wildlife weekends: 11 am to 4 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Saturday, Nov. 7.

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

Crafting and history fun.

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

FURTHER AFIELD

"Disney On Ice": 11 am, 3 pm and 7 pm. Barclays Center. See Tuesday, Nov. 10.

Fall Forest workshops: 11 am to 5 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Nov. 7.

"Pinkalicious": Adelphi University Performing Arts Center, 1 South Avenue, Long Island; (516) 877-4927; www.aupac.adelphi.edu; 2 pm; \$20.

Pinkalicious just can't stop eating pink cupcakes, no matter what her parents warn. Enjoy this fun musical production that is suitable for children 2 to 10 years old.

SUN, NOV. 15

IN QUEENS

Little Makers: NYSCI New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th Street. Queens; (718) 699-0005; 10:30 am to 12:30 pm; \$8 (\$5 family members).

Children celebrate the last day of Diwali and make a fun lantern using tissue paper.

Wildlife weekends: 11 am to 4 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Saturday, Nov. 7.

The Doo Wop Project: Queensborough Performing Arts Center, 222-05 56th Ave.; (718) 631-6311; VTicali@qcc.cuny.edu; www.visitqpac.org; 3PM; \$40.

Back by popular demand! Charl Brown, Dominic Nolfi and their fellow "Motown The Musical" and "Jersey Boys" performers comprise the cast of "The Doo Wop Project," and return to celebrate the songs of the great vocal groups of the 1950s. Artists subject to change.

FURTHER AFIELD

Fall Forest workshops: 11 am to 5 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, Nov. 7.

"Disney On Ice": 1 pm and 5 pm. Barclays Center. See Tuesday, Nov. 10.

TUES, NOV. 17

IN QUEENS

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

Teens use debate style to answer questions.

T-day craft: Richmond Hill Library, 118-14 Hillside Ave.; (718) 849-7150; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Use feathers, foam, and glass jars to create Thanksgiving centerpieces.



Associated Press / Diane Bondareff

Thanksgiving magic

Get ready for the 89th annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on Nov. 26.

The giant event features balloons, floats, marching bands, performance groups, and loads of entertainers.

The 2.5-mile march kicks off at 77th Street, winding its way downtown to the viewing stands in front of the world famous Macy's of Herald Square.

Children of all ages will love

watching the marchers and ogling the giant balloons floating high above the avenue. Bringing up the rear is always the ever popular Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus, with Rudolph at the head. Santa and sleigh heralds the end of the parade and the beginning of the holiday season.

Thanksgiving Day Parade, Nov. 26 from at 9 am to noon. Free *Macy's Herald Square (Broadway and W. 34th Street in Manhattan).*

WED, NOV. 18

IN QUEENS

College Fair: Queens Library for Teens, 2002 Cornaga Ave.; (718) 471-2573; www.queenslibrary.org; 5 pm; Free.

Get all the information you need for teens and parents.

THURS, NOV. 19

IN QUEENS

Introductory class: 5:30 pm. Queens Historical Society. See Wednesday, Nov. 11.

SAT, NOV. 21

IN QUEENS

Diwali celebration: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Blvd.; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 1 pm to 4 pm; \$20 (\$15 members; \$10 students and children).

The Indian holiday is celebrated with traditional food, music, and clothing.

The night sky: Boardwalk, Beach 116th Street and the Boardwalk; (718) 352-1769; www.nygovparks.org; 6 pm to 7:30 pm; Free.

Rangers lead you on a journey of the night sky and discuss the folklore of our solar system. Older children.

FURTHER AFIELD

"The Princess Frog – A Musical Fairy Tale": Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road, Long Island; (516) 224-5800; www.lcm.org; 11:30 am and 2 pm; \$9 with museum admission (\$7 members and \$12 theater only).

Mix three wild boys, who happen to be princes, one frustrated (Queen) mother, three magic rocks, and an enchanted frog and you have the makings of a modern fairy tale; set to come to life on the LICM stage! Based on an Italian folktale, "The Princess Frog" has been re-created by Lena Pennino-Smith, author of last season's break-out family musical, "Happy As Clams." For children 3 and older.

SUN, NOV. 22

IN QUEENS

Holiday centerpiece: Skyview Center, 40-24 College Point Blvd.; (718) 460-2000; www.queensbotanical.org/programs/events; Check for time; Free.

Try your hand at creating your own centerpiece using seasonal materials.

Little Makers: NYSCI New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th Street. Queens; (718) 699-0005; 10:30 am – 12:30 pm; \$8 (\$5 family members).

Children create mini gingerbread houses in this two-hour workshop.

Outdoor workshop: Alley Pond Park Adventure Center, Alley Pond Park; (718) 217-6034; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 1 pm to 2:30 pm; Free.

Rangers teach survival skills and how to make fire. Recommended for children over 8 years old.

Floral workshop: Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main St.; (718) 539-5296; www.queensbotanical.org; 1 to 2:30 pm; \$20 materials fee.

Surprise your family with a beautiful floral bouquet centerpiece that you made yourself. For older teens. Registration is required.

FURTHER AFIELD

"The Princess Frog – A Musical Fairy Tale": 11:30 am and 2 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Saturday, Nov. 21.

MON, NOV. 23

IN QUEENS

Hip-hop DJ: Queens Library for Teens, 2002 Cornaga Ave.; (718) 471-2573; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Learn how DJs create successful careers.

WED, NOV. 25

IN QUEENS

Science club: Laurelton Public Library, 134-26 225th St. at Merrick Boulevard; (718) 528-2822; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Science lovers in fifth through eighth grades experiment with science.

THURS, NOV. 26

FURTHER AFIELD

Thanksgiving Day Parade: Macy's at Herald Square, Manhattan; 9 am to noon; Free.

Presented by Macy's, the 89th annual event heralds the holiday season with a fun parade. The 2.5-mile march kicks off at 77th Street and

Continued on page 32

Calendar

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

Continued from page 31

ends in front of the store at Herald Square.

FRI, NOV. 27

FURTHER AFIELD

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

Celebrate the joy of family and Thanksgiving with The Remarkable Renaldo, the ringmaster clown of Circus Renaldo. One of the most popular circus clowns to visit LICM, Renaldo communicates with the audience, young and old alike, in a language all his own. Witness the juggling, pranks, magic and humor of this world-class clown and maybe even join him on-stage. His alter ego, Al Calienes, the author and illustrator of the children's story book "Renaldo Joins the Circus" will be present too. Ages 3 and up.

SAT, NOV. 28

FURTHER AFIELD

Meet Renaldo of Circus Renaldo: 11:30 am and 2 pm. Long Island Children's Museum. See Friday, Nov. 27.

SUN, NOV. 29

IN QUEENS

Worlds Fair Adventure Quest: Flushing Meadows Corona Park, 111th Street; (718) 352-1769; www.nycgovparks.org; 10 am to noon; Free.

Learn about the World's Fair and Flushing Meadows-Corona Park as you've never experienced before. This challenge leads teams through the park on a part scavenger hunt, part walking tour combining easy physical challenges, photo clues, and searches while testing your knowledge of local history. Participants are chosen by lottery.

FURTHER AFIELD

Art workshop: Long Island Children's Museum, 11 Davis Ave. at West Road, Long Island; (516) 224-5800; www.licm.org; 2 pm to 3 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 and older discover the history of the Native Americans and do a fun craft.

LONG-RUNNING

IN QUEENS

Alley Pond Park Adventure Course: Alley Pond Park, Cross Island Pkwy & Grand Central Pkwy; (718)



Train extravaganza!

Come aboard the Holiday Express at the New York Historical Society on Nov. 7 and Nov. 22.

Budding train enthusiasts take a ride and learn fascinating facts about the history of transportation and trains, and families will play with toy trains, lay wooden tracks, and work together to solve a special train-themed matching game. All participants will take home a special train souvenir!

217-4685; www.nycgovparks.org; Sundays, 9:30 am to noon, 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.

Drop-in Sundays: Queens Museum, NY City Building; (718) 592-9700; www.queensmuseum.org; Sundays, 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm, Nov. 29; Free with museum admission.

Children ages 5 to 12 years old and their adult companions are invited to explore art-making inspired by different exhibitions each week. Children with special needs are welcome and adaptations are available. No fee or advance registration is required, you can show up and stay for as long as you like.

Greenmarket: Socrates Sculpture Park, 32-01 Vernon Blvd.; 718-956-1819; www.socratessculpturepark.org; Saturdays, 8 am - 4 pm, Nov. 14; Saturdays, 8 am - 4 pm, Nov. 21; Free.

Recommended for children 3 to 6 years old. The event coincides with the Toy and Train exhibit of the Jerni Collection that is on view now through Feb. 28, 2016.

Holiday Express, Nov. 7 and 22 at 2 pm; tickets are \$8 plus museum admission.

New York Historical Society [170 Central Park West at 77th Street on the Upper West Side, (212) 873-3400; <http://nyhistory.org>]

Get fresh local produce and many other artisanal food products. Family activities and demonstrations.

Workshop: Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave.; (718) 777-6888; www.movingimage.us; Saturdays, Noon, Nov. 19; Free with museum admission.

Children learn how cats took over the internet in this purrfect afternoon drop-in studio session. Activities include making a cat in space animation, designing your own cat celebrity, and more. Recommended for ages 7 and up, accompanied by an adult. (The museum will be closed Nov. 28.)

Gingerbread Lane: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St.; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; Mondays - Thursdays, 9:30 am - 5 pm, Fridays, 9:30 am - 5 pm, Saturdays, 10 am - 6 pm, Sundays, 10 am - 6 pm, beginning Sat, Nov. 14; Free with museum admission.

Visitors marvel at the homemade gingerbread houses made entirely of

edible gingerbread, royal icing and candy. The houses are the creation of chef John Lovitch. (The museum is closed Thanksgiving.)

Family Friendly Comedy Show:

Creek and the Cave Comedy Club, 10-93 Jackson Ave.; (718) 706-8783; guesswhatpgcomedy@gmail.com; www.facebook.com/guesswhatPG; Saturday, Nov. 21, 12:30 pm and Saturday, Dec. 19, 12:30 pm; free.

A PG-rated family-friendly comedy show at the famous Creek and Cave Comedy Club featuring great comics from clubs and TV. See top comedians tell their best PG-rated family-friendly jokes. In between comedians all kids get a chance to get on stage and tell a joke. No drink or food minimum.

FURTHER AFIELD

Heart and Seoul: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays - Sundays, 10 am to 5 pm, Nov. 3 - Sun, Jan. 3, 2016; Free with museum admission.

The Brooklyn Children's Museum will ride Hallyu (the Korean Wave) with a new exhibit that brings modern-day South Korea to New York City.

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, Nov. - Mon, Dec. 28; \$3.

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

Mario Batali's Kitchen Gardens:

New York Botanical Garden, 200th Street and Kazimiroff Boulevard, The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Mondays and Tuesdays, 5 pm to 7:30 pm, Wednesdays - Sundays, 1:30 pm to 6 pm, Nov. 1; Included with an All Garden Pass.

Children explore the "Dinner del Giorno" garden beds with classic Italian ingredients; Have fun with Mario's mystery menu game and hear Kitchen tales from the staff at Batali & Bastianich Hospitality group.

Holiday Train Show: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Daily, 11 am - 5 pm, Sat, Nov. 21 - Mon, Jan. 18, 2016; Included with an All Garden Pass.

The annual event returns with more trains and more tracks with an additional 3,000 square feet of exhibition space. Displays include: Grand Central Terminal, Radio City Music Hall, the historic Hudson River Valley houses, Brooklyn Bridge, and Rockefeller Center.

theMarketplace

CHILD CARE

Child Care

Experienced mother of one will care for your child in my Forest Hills home.

929-325-4787



CHILD CARE

The Learning Station Montessori Inc.

Infants, toddlers and school age

NOW ENROLLING!

- Montessori Preschool: 18 months – 4 years
- Afterschool Program
- Tutoring
- Enrichment Classes
- Flexible Full and Part Time



Reserve your child's spot today!

Call to schedule a tour: 347-523-0906
thelearningstationastoria@gmail.com
tlsmontessori.com • 31-32 47th St. 1st Fl. Astoria

PARTY PLANNING

Best Clowns

Clowns • Costume Characters
Princess Parties • Magicians
Face Painters • Balloon Art
Caricaturists • Toddler Games
Cotton Candy & More

1-800-75-CLOWN or 212-614-0988

Bi-Lingual Performers Available
Private & Corporate Events
All Boros, L.I. & Westchester

www.bestclownsnyc.com



PARTY PLANNING

Clown Town



Clown For Birthday Parties
Includes

Magic Show • Animal Balloons
Face Painting • Music And Dancing
Also Available Caricaturist
For All Parties

Call Now To Book!
Call 917-459-4923

PARTY PLANNING

DENISE MAKES CAKES

"Creating delicious memories one cake at a time!"

917.689.4857 • DeniseMakesCakes.com
DeniseMakesCakes@gmail.com

PARTY PLANNING

MAGIC AND COMEDY with Rico



PARTY PLANNING

Party Pets.com

We'll Bring the Zoo to You!

Call today 516-766-1100

Party Pets of New York

Experience hands-on learning about animals from around the world!

PARTY PLANNING

PARTY TIME EXPRESS

Let us bring the party to you!

www.party-time-express.com
917-771-1259

- Clowns
- Princesses
- Super Heroes
- Costume Characters
- Pop Stars
- Magicians
- Silly Magic
- Balloon Art
- Face Painting
- Glitter Tattoos
- Dance Games
- Cotton Candy

PARTY PLANNING

PUPPIES BROUGHT TO YOUR NEXT BIRTHDAY...

Really, Really Fun
Totally Interactive!!

Great for ages 10 to adults

call 718-258-2342
to book your next puppy party

www.PUPPYPARTY.com
pick the puppy you want

PARTY PLANNING

Sabrina's Play Studio

- Open Play
- Birthday Parties
- Class Trips
- Special Events

52-07 Queens Blvd., Woodside, NY 11377 • 929-522-0104

STAY CONNECTED

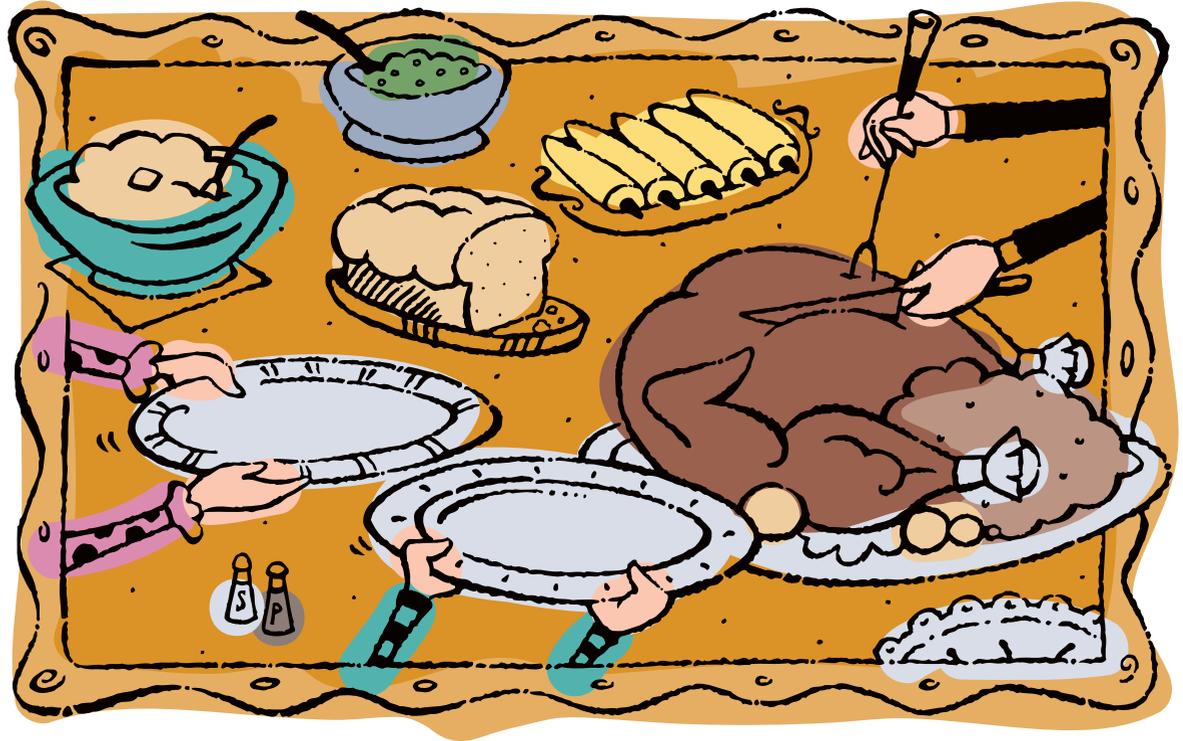
To advertise with us please call 718-260-2587

PARENTING
MEDIA ASSOCIATION
2015 Bronze
Award Winner
Editorial Awards
Competition



JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN



Hostess with the mostest memories

With Thanksgiving just days away, most parents have already made their dinner plans. Many moms I know are attending family functions, and others are hosting.

Some of my friends declare they will never host and are fully content with making their one special holiday dish or dessert to bring to the party and then go home when they choose. They would never host a holiday, they say.

Then there are others who typically host. I fall into that category. Ever since we bought our house, we tend to host the holiday functions. Even when we were still living in our apartment, we hosted a lot.

I don't know what it is about hosting that I like the most, but I enjoy when people come over and have fun in our home. It has become more important since we have lost family members in recent years. I remember having them over for special events, and specific stories that happened, remembering the particular

room in our home where they occurred.

The year before my uncle passed away, we celebrated a crowded Thanksgiving in our little Park Slope apartment with my parents, my uncle, and my mother-in-law. My uncle proceeded to tell a story about how he saw a TV show where they taught you how to sharpen a knife with a plate. He demonstrated the whole technique and repeatedly told us all how fascinating it was. So much so, in fact, he had to tell the stories a few times throughout the day whenever someone new arrived.

By the end of the night, I jokingly asked him at the table, "Tell me again, how do you sharpen a knife with a plate?" and he started the story again until he realized I was fooling around, and then it was a joke that day that we kept up. It was silly, and not even really that funny, but it remains a special memory I have.

When I think of it, I clearly recall how our modest, black dining

room table was filled to the rim with dishes, and we gathered as many chairs as possible around it. It was intimate and despite being in a packed space, despite the lack of a beautiful home or a perfect picture setting, it was a memory I would not trade for the world.

And isn't that what the holidays are about, families coming together and getting through the inconveniences that sometimes come along with having families together all at once, and creating memories?

In the end, it doesn't matter what you eat, serve, or have, if you host or not, or if anything is perfect. It only matters that you are together, making more memories each year.

Wishing you and yours a memorable holiday season!

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.

FLUSHING HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER

OUTPATIENT OB/GYN SERVICES

**Extended hours for
your convenience**

MONDAY	8:00am - 4:30pm
TUESDAY	8:00am - 8:00pm
WEDNESDAY	8:00am - 5:00pm
THURSDAY	8:00am - 4:30pm
FRIDAY	8:00am - 4:30pm
SATURDAY first and third Sat of each month	9:00am - 5:00pm

**Free pregnancy tests, all
gynecological, contraceptive
and prenatal services available**

on-site retail pharmacy
is open on evenings and
weekends to fill all of your
prescription needs

**To make an appointment,
please call (718) 670-8992**

**Flushing Hospital Medical Center
4500 Parsons Blvd., 5th floor
Flushing, NY 11355**



 FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @FHMC_NYC

 LIKE US ON FACEBOOK
www.facebook.com/FlushingHospital



Empire  
BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD

An Anthem Company

Same people. Same benefits. Now Blue.

HealthPlus Amerigroup is now Empire BlueCross BlueShield HealthPlus.

You still have all the same benefits you've always had. And you'll work with the same people. For more information, call us toll free at **1-800-300-8181 (TTY 711)**.

www.empireblue.com/nymedicaid

Empire BlueCross BlueShield HealthPlus is the trade name of HealthPlus, LLC, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

To learn more about applying for health insurance including Child Health Plus and Medicaid through NY State of Health, The Official Health Plan Marketplace, visit nystateofhealth.ny.gov or call 1-855-355-5777.

ENYMKT-0013-15 09.15