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Letter from the publisher

This year has been an enormous transition year for much of our city. High levels of unemployment, loss of property, property values and investments have all contributed to a state of unease and uncertainty, and people have been revamping their budgets and trying to figure out how to make their dollars stretch further.



Continuing to provide for our children and their welfare is every parent's primary goal, and we sacrifice elsewhere in our lives to make sure our children are given all they need to grow and prosper.

It's been a rough year for the many schools and businesses that provide education, care and services for our children. Budgets have been slashed and everyone is trying hard to hold on.

Looking ahead to 2011 we cross our fingers and hope we will return to prosperity and a better economic climate for everyone.

Personally, I have much to be grateful for. I have a super teenage daughter who is a dedicated student and a thoughtful human being. I have a terrific staff with which to collaborate on work I thoroughly enjoy. I have good health, loving friends and relations, and an appreciation of a lot that life has to offer. All this I was taught by my parents and I am trying to pass on this same love of living to my next in line. That's what we, as parents, must do.

And now, I must thank the wonderful people I work with who make these magazines happen. I want to thank our writers — both staff and freelance — our design people and our distributors. I especially want to thank Tina, Cliff, Linda, On Man, Arthur, Irene, Yvonne, Leah, Vinnie, Nikki, Courtney, Joanna, Earl, Patti, Pat and Paul.

The biggest thank you of all goes to my partner in effort and intellect and my fondest collaborator, Sharon Noble. Without her, it wouldn't be fun and it wouldn't be possible.

Happy holidays to all of you. Happy New Year and thanks for reading!

Susan Weiss

Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher

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NEWBIE DAD

BRIAN KANTZ

Sensing the holidays

Traditions trigger memories for this father

As a parent, I want to do everything I can to make sure that my two boys have a memorable childhood. Memorable in a good way, of course. Not in a my-dad-made-me-star-in-“Home Alone”-then-squandered-all-of-my-earnings way. So, my wife and I take them to interesting places, encourage them to try different foods, and snap about a bazillion photos to document our experiences together.

Still, for all of the “memorable” stuff that we do, I can’t help but wonder how much my kids will actually remember. After all, they are only 6 and 3, and unless you’re Junie B. Jones, it’s kind of tough to write first-grade memoirs with any great detail. I’m 37 and those closets in my brain that hold 30-year-old memories are filled with a lot of, ahek-ahkek, dust.

There is hope, however. In my humble, non-scientific — but always correct — opinion, the brain best remembers those things that, at a moment in time, inundated one of your five senses: taste, sight, hearing, smell, or touch. And, it seems to me, that kind of attack on the senses is bound to happen each year when the holidays roll around. That’s the time when colors are a tad sparklier (yes, I said sparklier), songs are a bit zazzier (yes, zazzier), and cakes taste more rum-my (no, not yummy, rum-my).

That’s why, for me, a good percent-



age of the early childhood memories that do still exist revolve around the holidays and the senses. And I’m making a concerted effort to pass those memories on to my two sons. Here’s a sample:

Taste

I know you’ll be right with me on this one: candy canes. One lick of a candy cane and you’re immediately transported to the holidays of your childhood. My favorite version of candy canes is the seasonal special, peppermint stick ice cream. It’s mint ice cream with crushed candy canes. My boys prefer mini-candy canes, which turn their fingers red.

Sight

Watching holiday specials on TV is a great memory. Seeing the

Dolly Madison ice cream commercial that accompanied “A Charlie Brown Christmas” was a sure sign that the holidays were here. “How the Grinch Stole Christmas,” “Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” and “Frosty the Snowman” endure to this day.

Hearing

Two words: Bing Crosby. No album will ever top Bing’s “White Christmas” for direct association with the holidays. In my mind, I can hear Bing singing, “I’m dreaming...” and my dad singing, “... of a ...” and my grandfather singing, “... white Christmas ...” Who doesn’t love to impersonate the bub-a-dub-bub sound of der Bingle?

Smell

The smell of the holidays is pine. I’m told my father once tried to put up an artificial tree in our house, but one look at my mother’s face told him that he better throw it in the trash and drive, as fast as he could, to the lot down the street to pick up a real tree. Once inside a house, a pine tree’s scent dominates everything.

Touch

The holidays always recall the feeling of squishing cookie dough in my hands. One of my family’s great traditions was the annual baking of a cookie called, “Winter Rainbows.” The recipe calls for the dough to be colored red, yellow and green. My mom would squeeze a few drops of food coloring on the dough and then let my brothers and I have at it. I remember going to school with green fingers. Now, it’s my sons’ turn to squish dough.

And since it is the season of giving, I’d like to offer the gift of the “Winter Rainbows” recipe. Spend some time with your kids making memories and making some really great cookies. Enjoy — and happy holidays!

Brian Kantz really wants you to make these cookies. They’re good. Seriously. Visit Brian online at www.briankantz.com or drop him a note at thenewbie-dad@yahoo.com.

Winter Rainbows

Makes six dozen cookies. (Yes, you’ll want at least that many.)

INGREDIENTS

2 cups all-purpose flour
 ½ tsp. baking powder
 ½ tsp. salt
 1/8 tsp. baking soda
 10 tbsps. (1-¼ sticks) butter, softened
 ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
 ¼ cup granulated sugar
 1 egg
 1 tsp. vanilla
 Yellow, green and red food coloring
 Milk

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large bowl, mix or sift together flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda. In another bowl, beat butter with sugars until fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture, a third at a time, blending well to make a soft dough. Divide dough into three equal portions, tinting one green, one red and one yellow.

Roll each portion of dough into a nine-by-five rectangle between sheets of wax paper. Chill in freezer 10 minutes. Cut each piece of dough in half lengthwise, cutting through wax paper. Peel off top sheets.

Brush top of one strip lightly with milk; place another strip, paper side up, on top. Peel off paper. Repeat procedure with remaining dough strips, alternating colors, to make six layers. Press lightly together. Cut finished stack lengthwise to make two narrow stacks. Wrap in plastic wrap, foil, or wax paper; chill in refrigerator three hours or overnight. Unwrap dough. Cut into 1/8-inch slices with a sharp knife. Place on greased cookie sheets. (They won’t spread much, so you can put them pretty close together on the cookie sheet.) Bake in moderate oven (350 degrees) for eight minutes, or until edges are golden.

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Gifts for less

Personalized presents will win children's hearts

BY BELINDA MOONEY

Holiday time is also gift-giving time, especially for children. Buying presents for everyone in the family can stretch your budget to the limit, if you're not careful. Deciding what to buy for all of those kids — your own, nieces and nephews, grandchildren — is a challenge when you're not only trying to get the most from every dollar, but also trying to give a gift that has the individual in mind. But it can be done! Here are some thoughtful and fun ideas that will make every child — from toddlers to teens — feel special and save you some money as well.

Gift baskets

While we often think of gift baskets as for adults, they are enjoyed by kids, too. And if you put them together yourself, you can save money while creating a customized present that says, "You're important to me." A gift basket is as fun to make as it is to give. Start with a container to hold your gifts in. This can — but doesn't have to — be a basket. You can use wicker baskets; storage containers; a large, colorful bowl; a plastic bucket; or even an upside-down cowboy hat. They can be filled inexpensively with items from the local dollar store, with homemade treats or even thrift store finds. Most retail stores sell the cellophane wrappers you see around gift baskets. Just slip yours in, tie it off with a colorful ribbon and — voila! — a beautiful gift.

Here are some fun themes for kids' gift baskets:

- **Artsy gift basket** — This theme is just right for the child who likes crafts or creating in any form. For those who like to draw, include colored and drawing pencils, a pad of paper, erasers and an instruction book. For younger kids, anything that lets them be creative works — paint sets, coloring books, crayons, safety scissors and glue sticks. Add whimsical items like glitter glue, stickers, construction paper and foam cut-outs.

- **For the sporty type** — A gift basket for the sports enthusiast is easy

to make and can be created for any type of athletic activity. It might be a soccer, swimming, football or golf theme. You can also create a gift basket around her favorite sports team, if she enjoys that, but doesn't actually play sports. Products that work well in this type of basket are mugs, sports bottles, hats, pencils, a rolled up sweatshirt or gym shorts with a team logo.

- **Just for girls** — These gift baskets are perfect for when your child needs a present for someone you may not know very well. Kids especially enjoy shopping for their friends or cousins and the dollar stores are perfect for this. You can use a pretty wire basket or even a small plastic bin that you can personalize with permanent markers. Fill with toiletries such as shampoo, bubble bath and body wash, or whimsies such as barrettes, inexpensive jewelry, a small stuffed animal or lip gloss.

- **For the guys** — Just like a basket for the girls, this is a quick-and-easy gift idea for friends. A mini crate works great as a "basket." Toss in some toy cars, squirt guns, army men, small model kits or an inexpensive, hand-held electronic game, and you are ready to go.

Personalize it!

Kids love anything that has their name on it or tells the world who they are, such as shorts that say "Big Sister" or "Favorite Niece." You can purchase items like this easily through many local stores or over the Internet, or you can consider making them yourself. Beach towels, mugs, dinnerware, name plaques, shirts and wall hangings can all be personalized with a child's name. Teens especially enjoy shirts, purses, jewelry and other items that have their names or initials on them. Local embroidery and T-shirt shops are affordable, and china markers and fabric paint make decorating on your own easy.

The teenage crowd

Teens can be tough customers to buy for without breaking the bank,

but it is possible. Gift cards for this age are a fool-proof idea.

Get one to his favorite book or music store, sporting goods emporium or game shop. Put the gift card in a cute mug with a candy bar, and you have a simple-but-sweet surprise. Gift certificates to fast food restaurants are always a perfect idea for any teen; after all, eating is what they do best! Or fill a gift bag with a DVD, microwave popcorn and a two-liter of pop. Teens are often easier to please than we think they are.

Get creative

With a little ingenuity and planning, you can shop for kids without going broke. Just like older folks, kids enjoy gifts that say you thought about them and let them know they are special.





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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Latest guidelines for your child's diet

Have you ever wished for a dietary roadmap to assist you in your family's meal planning? How about one using a science-based approach by our nation's top nutrition experts and updated to align with the latest research? The recently released Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's report is just that.

First developed in 1980, the Dietary Guidelines are updated every five years. In addition to helping Americans navigate the nutrition world, they're used for federal nutrition programs and building consumer messages. For example, the National School Lunch Program utilizes the recommendations in order to feed over 30 million children every day.

Report highlights

Its new focus is on children's health. Preventing childhood obesity is the most powerful public health initiative to combat our country's obesity epidemic in the long term.

It says:

- Children and teens should accumulate at least one hour of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day.

Q: What are "SoFAS?"

A: SoFAS refer to the solid fats and added sugars that contribute too many calories — about 35 percent — to the American diet for kids, teens and adults. You, likely, understand the meaning of added sugars. Solid fats are the fats in butter, cheese, stick margarine, vegetable shortening and the fats in meat.

- Kids should be discouraged from drinking sugar-sweetened beverages.
- We should eat a more plant-centered diet that emphasizes vegetables, cooked dry beans, fruits, whole grains, nuts and seeds.
- The benefits of cooked seafood outweigh the risks from mercury and other possible contaminants. Aim for two 4-ounce servings per week.
- Healthy patterns of eating include the Mediterranean diet and the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet.
- Daily vitamins don't benefit healthy people. An exception is peo-

ple who have a calcium or iron deficiency who may wish to supplement their diet.

Environment change

The report acknowledges the difficulty in changing your diet unless changes are made to the overall food environment. How do you eat a nutrient-dense diet at the same time supermarkets, schools, restaurants and other food venues offer myriad food and beverage choices high in fat, sugar and sodium?

The report recommends that we:

- Improve people's nutrition literacy and cooking skills.
- Motivate families with children to prepare and enjoy more home-cooked meals.
- Encourage the food industry to offer smaller portions of foods that promote health. These include foods low in sodium, added sugars, refined flours and solid fats.

A bit of controversy

The committee suggests people reduce sodium to just 1,500 milligrams each day, and cut out foods with added sodium. Some nutrition experts dismiss this as being unrealistic in today's society. The report also recommends upping potassium in the diet — plentiful in produce — which helps cut sodium's effect on blood pressure.

According to Toby Smithson, RD, LDN, CDE, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, some groups feel there should be more definitive guidelines for the amount of fat in the diet and more emphasis on vitamin D. She adds that some critics want, "more focus on choosing whole grains instead of making half your grains whole."

The committee's recommendations will be considered when the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services develop the final Dietary Guidelines early next year.

To read the full report, go to www.dietaryguidelines.gov.



Grape Tomato Bruschetta

Makes eight bruschetta

INGREDIENTS

- 4 Arnold® Honey Wheat Sandwich Thins® rolls, separated
- 2 pints grape tomatoes, sliced in half lengthwise

- 1 tablespoon aged balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons garlic-infused extra-virgin olive oil
- 12 fresh basil leaves
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS: Toast Sandwich Thins® halves to a light golden brown. In a bowl, mix tomatoes with balsamic vinegar, olive oil, salt and pepper, to taste. Stack basil leaves and roll them in the shape of a log. Slice the rolled basil, making ribbons. Toss most of the cut basil with the tomatoes, reserving a bit of fresh basil to garnish. Spoon dressed tomatoes on top of each toasted Sandwich Thins® half and garnish with a few fresh basil ribbons.

NUTRITION FACTS: 100 calories, 14 grams carbohydrate, 3 grams protein, 4 grams fat, 0.5 grams saturated fat, 0 trans fat and cholesterol, 3 grams dietary fiber, 3 grams sugar, 115 milligrams sodium, 15 percent DV vitamins A and C, 2 percent DV calcium, 4 percent DV iron.

Recipe courtesy of Claire Robinson of "Five Ingredient Fix."

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Holidays with heart

Spend less
and savor
more this
holiday
season

BY KATHY SENA

With the holidays approaching, I've found myself chatting with friends about how we often regret spending too much money, running around like lunatics with our to-do lists, and stressing out during a season that should be spent enjoying family and friends. So this year, I'm planning to make my family's holidays more meaningful — and less crazed and costly. Want to join me? Here's how:

Plan ahead

First and foremost, make a list of every person you plan to buy a gift for, then create a budget. Don't wait until the 11th hour to shop — when you're more likely to feel desperate and spend too much on that fancy doodad the kids saw on TV on Dec. 23. You know the one. It's just like that thingamajig they got tired of by Dec. 27 last year.

Give gifts that help others

The possibilities here are endless, but here's one fun example: My family and I started giving gifts from Heifer International (www.heifer.org) a few years ago, and that has been a great experience. In your loved one's honor, you can give the gift of a share of a sheep, a flock of baby chicks, or a goat that will provide income and food for a needy family. Kids love to help pick out the gift. You buy as many shares of an animal or a flock as you like, so this gift idea works even for young kids who want to contribute some of their own money. The organization provides beautiful gift cards to give to your recipients.



Give experiences, not things

Does your sister really need another scarf? Instead, buy movie tickets for a fun girls' night out and spring for the popcorn. Want to include the nieces and nephews and not break the bank? Make a gift of a movie night at your house and go all out with movie-style candy, popcorn, soda — maybe even hot dogs. When you buy the goodies yourself and serve them at home, you can treat everyone for dimes on the dollar compared with those insane

movie theater prices (Plus, you can plan this event for January, after the craziness of the holidays is over). Even more fun — make everyone a star and show old family movies as the “previews” before the show.

Say no to new decorations

You already have boxes full of decorations — and if you're like me, you whine about a lack of storage space — right? Is it all that important to buy the new “must-have” decorations this year? Another option: Make decorations with the kids. I still

You'll support your community and you'll often find one-of-a-kind gifts at craft fairs and school auctions. (And there's usually a bake sale nearby!)



remember the fun I had sitting with my mom and making elves out of pipe cleaners, styrofoam balls, and red felt when I was a kid.

Create photo gifts

They're something only you can give. Grandparents love calendars and photo books featuring the grandkids. My brother and I exchange CDs featuring high-res photos of our families from the past year. We e-mail photos to each other during the year, of course, but we usually send low-res versions. To have all the best photos on a CD is a wonderful (and inexpensive) gift. Another winner: we visited my parents for spring break one year and for Christmas that year, we gave them a photo book that included the photos from our visit.

Be a savvy online shopper

Check out PriceGrabber and other price-comparison sites to find the lowest price. And search Google for online coupons. If you want to buy something at a particular store, just Google the store name and "coupon." I've found coupons for everything from free shipping to 20 percent off my entire order.

Consolidate your online purchases

You'll save time, minimize shipping costs and help the environment. When shipping gifts yourself, re-use boxes and packing peanuts. Also, watch those shipping deadlines and order early to avoid higher costs for faster shipping as the holidays approach.

Buy local

You'll support your community and you'll often find one-of-a-kind gifts — at great prices — at craft fairs and school auctions. Plus, this kind of shopping can be relax-

ing and fun! (And there's usually a bake sale nearby!)

Choose useful gifts

They don't have to be expensive. A car-care kit for a new driver. A gardening-magazine subscription for a new homeowner. A selection of spices or a fun cookbook for a budding young chef.

Get creative with gift wrap

Try to re-use materials rather than buy new wrap. Use gift bags and fabric ribbons and bows that can be reused year after year. For gifts wrapped in paper, have fun with Sunday comics or brown paper bags colored or stamped by the kids. My favorite: have little ones make hand prints with non-toxic paint on inexpensive butcher paper or brown paper bags and use as wrap. The grandparents may love the wrap more than the gift! Leftover scrapbooking paper and stickers are great for wrapping small gifts, too. Use extra scraps of wrapping paper as gift tags.

Focus on what counts

Whether it's attending a religious service, enjoying the school holiday play, making thumb-print cookies with your preschooler or playing Monopoly with the whole family, be sure to stop and really focus on the true blessings of the season. This year, my son is going to be playing piano in church, along with other young musicians, on Christmas Eve. For me, there's no present that could appear under the tree that will be more wonderful than that.

Kathy Sena is a freelance journalist and essayist. The best gift she ever received was Matthew Benjamin Sena, who was born Dec. 22, 1995, and came home from the hospital on Christmas Day.

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KERRY DONELLI

Cross-dressing kid

Dear Twins,

I think my son is a cross-dresser. As a young boy he loved watching me do my makeup (and I let him try my lipstick once or twice). And since the age of 11 (he is now 14) he has always dressed as a girl for Halloween. Finally, the other day I found a bag in the back of his closet containing women's undergarments. I'm appalled. Is it my fault? What can I do?

— *Distraught*

Jacqueline says: No, it's not your "fault." Plenty of women put on makeup with zero interest from their sons. If your son is a cross-dresser (which we are jumping to conclusions), then there is nothing you can do but let him know you love him no matter what. There is no magic pill that stops cross-dressing.

Kerry says: I disagree with Jackie about you jumping to conclusions because it appears your son IS a cross-dresser. However, I agree that you should begin now to accept and embrace him fully; he is who he is and he is not going to change.

• • •

Dear Twins,

I came home the other day and caught my 16-year-old son having sex with his 17-year-old girlfriend. I was appalled and forbade them to have sex in my house. I can't even stand the sight of her anymore and I want him to dump her. What should I do?

— *Disgusted*

Jacqueline says: Mid-adolescence is often more often than not when teens explore sex. Your son is one of them and you're not going to stop him. What you can do, however, is educate him on the importance of safe sex. Be glad you found out now before you turn into a grandmother.

Kerry says: I agree with Jackie in that you should absolutely educate your son about safe sex. That said, what century are you from? This is about the age when kids lose their virginity. Please, mother, get with



the program. Besides, where should they have sex? On the roof? If you really want to estrange yourself from your son, then keep being unreasonable and hysterical, and then forbid him to see his girlfriend.

• • •

Dear Twins,

My ex-husband and I have two young children ages 7 and 10 whom I have custody of. We share them for holidays, when we take them to see their grandparents. We try to be fair so that each set of grandparents will have the kids for Thanksgiving dinner with one of us each year. However, the children really favor one set of grandparents over the other because the other set is so strict. I know I can force them to go, but they are so miserable there ... is it really fair?

— *Thankful*

Kerry says: One meal out of the year is not going to kill them. Besides, they may appreciate the fact that they got to know both grandparents when they get older. Instead, why not have them visit their favorite grandparents more often?

Jacqueline says: I agree with Kerry. When their grandparents are long gone, they will value the time they spent with them.

Dear Twins,

My husband and I believe our 6-year-old is being bullied either on the school bus or at school, but he won't tell us. He cries every school morning that he doesn't want to go on the bus and he doesn't want to go to school, and he used to love going to school. I've spoken to the school bus driver, his teacher, and to some of his friends and no one seems to have seen anything, but I know something is going on. What should I do?

— *Afraid*

Kerry says: Have a sit down conversation and very calmly get to the bottom of this. Have a talk with the school counselor as well to see if she can help. If he is being bullied I would take immediate action, such as speaking with the principal, the teacher and the bully's parents. I don't want to be an alarmist, but with bullying these days, it's best to err on the pro-active side.

Jacqueline says: And if this approach doesn't work, try a child psychologist. Your child is uncharacteristically expressing anxiety and fear. It's good that you saw this. There is a problem, so get to the bottom of it before it gets worse.

• • •

Dear Twins,

Another young mother in my neighborhood (who is a friend of mine) and I decided that we would alternate babysitting for each other's child for one day a week so the other has some time to herself. This past week was my second time sitting for her 4-year-old for the day, and I was ready to hang myself by the end of the day. That child was into everything and had temper tantrums if I tried to stop him — including kicking furniture, walls, breaking dishes, and anything else he could get his hands on that was breakable. He is utterly spoiled, and I want to get out of this arrangement. What do I say to his mother?

— *No More Monsters!*

Jacqueline says: Why not tell her the truth? Two children are a bit much for you to handle every week. And be done with it.

Kerry says: I agree with Jacqueline. Tell her it's more than you could handle and leave it at that.

Jacqueline and Kerry Donelli, twin sisters, are multi-award winning filmmakers. They are currently getting their *Masters in Mental Health* and have a radio show on WBCR-AM also called, "Twice the Advice" — where one twin gives advice and, often, the other completely disagrees! Please e-mail them at TwiceTheAdvice2@gmail.com.



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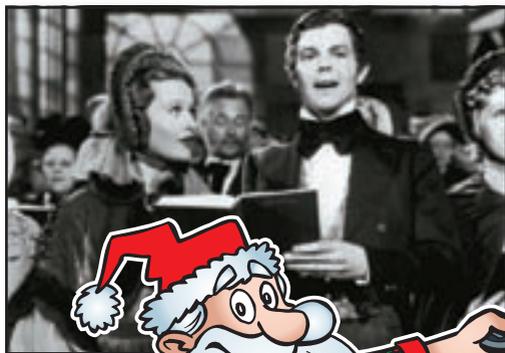
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REEL HOLIDAY FUN: (Clockwise from top left) "A Christmas Carol;" "How the Grinch Stole Christmas;" "A Christmas Story;" "Home Alone;" and "Home for the Holidays."

Hollywood Rx for the holidays

Classic movies to revive weary parents

BY CHRISTINA KATZ

Feeling humbug this holiday season? Here's a sure-fire prescription for kick-starting your holiday spirit. Tuck the wee ones into bed, grab a cup of seasonal cheer, and settle down for a festive movie marathon that will put the "hush" back into your holiday rush.

Detach from family drama

In Jodie Foster's 1995 film, "Home for the Holidays," Claudia Larson (Holly Hunter) flies home to spend Thanksgiving with her wildly dysfunctional family. How many of us

empathized with the family reunion drama that prompts Claudia to explain, "Nobody means what they say on Thanksgiving, Mom. You know that. That's what the day's supposed to be all about, right? Torture."

Whether this year's drama is your aging grandmother deciding she can't tolerate your spouse, your drunken uncle knocking over the heirloom china or your youngest child coming down with the worst kind of flu, you can remain unruffled regardless of what happens. Family drama is not usually the problem — it's our response that determines how much we will or won't enjoy the holidays. A brisk walk or a quick

call to a supportive friend can make the difference between a happy or a hopeless holiday season.

Opt for more fun and less stuff

"And he puzzled three hours, till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, he thought, means a little bit more." If an over-emphasis on the material aspects of the holidays has you feeling as crabby as "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas," then maybe you need a refresher on the 1966 Dr. Seuss TV film. Or, if you're a Jim

Carrey fan, try Ron Howard's 2000 feature film version.

Before frustration drives you over the grinchy edge, seek relief at the Center for a New American Dream. It's a national non-profit foundation helping people challenge the "more is better" definition of the American Dream. "More Fun, Less Stuff" is its motto. The brochure about simplifying the holidays contains frugally creative and eco-friendly gift ideas, perfect for downsizing your holiday celebrations without skimping on the fun.

Check out the brochure at www.newdream.org/holiday/brochure.php.

Do a good deed

In "It's a Wonderful Life," perennial do-gooder George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart) is devastated when the financial security of his family's Building and Loan business is threatened by a missing \$8,000 deposit. But all is not lost because George can't resist helping others in greater distress than himself. Instead of plunging to his own death, he rescues angel-in-training, Clarence, who beat him to the jump. Clarence illuminates that without George's good deeds, Bedford Falls would be a much bleaker place indeed.

Making a charitable gesture towards someone less fortunate than yourself will add satisfaction to your holiday season. Is there a soup kitchen where you and your family can volunteer for an afternoon? How about asking your children to donate some of their old toys to a worthy cause before asking Santa for new ones? Could you spearhead an impromptu fund-raiser at your office or social group? You may decide to donate locally or abroad.

For some ideas, visit www.altgifts.org or www.heifer.org/.

Cultivate an attitude of gratitude

In the 1938 big-budget version of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," we witness a ghostly tour of Ebenezer Scrooge's (Reginald Owen) stingy past, present and future. Subsequently, you may be inspired to cultivate a more loving and generous attitude of your own. Think back to every kindness offered to you in times of struggle or despair. I distinctly remember a college friend listening to my broken-hearted sob story and telling me afterward that I was beautiful. I remember a former

boss offering a kind word instead of criticism, although I'd royally messed up some important documents. Next thing you know, you may look more kindly on the person who jostles you on the street, the car that rudely cuts you off, or the telemarketer who dares to invade your hallowed holiday home. An attitude of gratitude reminds us that we have been wretched and have still been worthy of love.

Spend time 'Alone'

In the comedic family classic, "Home Alone," 8-year-old Kevin McCallister (Macaulay Culkin) declares, "This house is so full of people, it makes me sick. When I grow up and get married, I'm living alone." When his extended family leaves for Paris without him, he discovers that his wish has come true. Does he crumble with fear? Does he run for the nearest sensible adult? No, in fact, he relishes his new-found freedom, at least for a little while.

This holiday season, there will be plenty of well-meaning messages touting the benefits of "spending time with loved ones." Of course, while it's always wonderful to spend time with family and friends over the holidays, there is something to be said for taking time to be alone, too. Certainly, when we don't spend time alone, we can become irritable and exhausted. Like Kevin, when you take time to be with yourself, you will find that you can better appreciate time with others.

Buy yourself a present

Still feeling a little blue this holiday season? All right, let's pull out the secret weapon movie. Sometimes there's nothing to brighten up your holidays quite like that gift you deeply long for but have never received. In Bob Clark's 1983 hilarious comedy, "A Christmas Story," little Ralphie Parker (Peter Billingsley) is dying for a Red Rider BB gun. Although his parents and teachers warn that he will "shoot his eye out," Ralphie is relentless in imagining his dream coming true. The dozen or so universally hilarious childhood memories will perk you up enough to grab your car keys, drive to the mall, sit on Santa's lap and ask for that ridiculous childhood toy you always longed for. It's never too late.

Happy holiday movie season, everyone!

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OUR RELATIONSHIPS

JOAN EMERSON, PhD

Relating to in-laws

You may try to keep the holidays about family, love and giving, but what if you (secretly or not) can't stand certain members of the family?

Unfortunately, the holidays can remind us just how difficult extended family relations can be.

You love your spouse and support him, but to you, his family may have totally different views, seem to be very judgemental, or act in crazy ways. You may even feel that they treat you, your spouse or your kids, in ways that cause intense discomfort. Part of that discomfort may come from noticing that your spouse is less observant and more accepting of his family's behaviors than you are, even though he is — at least in your eyes — often the victim.

If some of these situations hit close to home, remember that there are ways you can see past it and enjoy the holidays.

If your spouse has kids from a previous marriage, his loyalty to those kids is something that is unwaveringly deep and non-negotiable. Guilt, and ways of compensating for it, juggling the custodial arrangements, and, often, dealing with the ex-spouse, can be very difficult for you to watch.

With your spouse's family coming over, you might be trying to prepare yourself for a barrage of abuse from his (in your opinion) crazy parents or siblings. Here, again, is something that can upset you more than him. He'll tell you he's used to it, he can handle it, and not to worry. Yet, it can be consistently galling to watch the person you love receiving and reacting to, what you clearly see as, a kind of emotional victimization.

Your spouse's ultra-close relationship with his parents (by spending too much time with them or being too dependent on their help) could also make you feel uncomfortable — especially if you have a different set of ideas about the desirable adult child and parent relationship. Although you can admire the strong bond your spouse has with his parents, sometimes you might feel secretly threatened by it and



wonder (childishly, you admit) who would win if it came to a question of "it's me or them."

And then, of course, spouses' families have different values when it comes to the style of relating during get-togethers. Some families talk openly about members' lives — who's going through a depression, who's going through a divorce, or children with particular issues. Other families prefer small talk, focusing on the food or keeping too busy during the visit to personally connect to each other. Both are, of course, fine, but may be difficult for the spouse who is more comfortable with one and now has to deal with the other.

While issues may be bothering you, what doesn't work is getting more upset than your spouse is about extended family. Even though the intent is to be helpful by pointing out how things could be handled better, how to take or give less abuse or how to stand up for oneself, once your spouse has listened and acknowledged the usually valid point, he'd like you to just let it go. If you stay more upset about the situation than your spouse, and consistently bring up the topic, it can cause intense pain and a deep anger that begins to flare up toward you, and not toward the family in question.

So what's the most constructive path to take? The answer is easier said than done: containment.

After describing some of the difficulties with the in-laws or step-kids, and feeling that your discomforts and requests have been heard and understood, and that your spouse has expressed the desire to try to accommodate you the best he can, you must keep further feelings contained. You must deal with them yourself, and bring them up again only when the timing is right and you can be gentle and positive. You must avoid being a barrier between your spouse and his family; it just causes intense hard feelings and, often, a desire to get back at you by criticizing or rejecting your family.

When it comes to holidays and gift giving, being willing to honor your spouse's wish that you'd kept your feelings from causing conflict and divided loyalties between him and his family is one of the best gifts you can give. Holiday times, when these stressors often emerge, can be a reminder to look inward and check with yourself that you're taking the high road and giving your spouse the best gift you can: acceptance.

Dr. Joan Emerson is a New York psychologist who specializes in couples therapy. Visit her website at www.Joan-Emerson.com.

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Seasonal minefield

Some tips for
special needs
families
navigating
the holidays

BY REBECCA MCKEE,
MSED, BCBA

For those of us who have the joy of sharing our lives with a family member who has Autism Spectrum Disorder or another special need, we know the feeling of living Halloween way before autumn arrives, or having to listen to Christmas carols the first day of October.

For many, the idea of happy holiday happenings can quickly turn into too-much-too-soon and lead to a downward spiral. Here are some simple strategies that may ease the overwhelming excitement, and allow one to celebrate the holidays in a timely, successive order:

- Always keep a calendar, not only for listing appointments and birthdays, but for also listing what people generally do during specific times of the year. For example, in October, I would write at the top of the page: "People decorate their homes with pumpkins. Maybe we can go apple picking. People talk about baking and eating apple pie and pumpkin bread. We can watch 'The Wizard of Oz' and scary movies. Everyone looks at Halloween costumes and buys bags of candy." You should continue this throughout the year.

- When each major holiday ends, prepare for the next holiday. When Thanksgiving ends, write the following the day after: "Start taking down Thanksgiving decorations and talking about Christmas. Start writing a list about what Christmas decorations to get."

- Include your family member in functional tasks during the busyness of the holiday season as much as possible, such as creating a food shopping list pertaining to Thanksgiving dinner or Christmas cookie recipes, or having him push the cart and find the items in the supermarket. In other words, try to use his excitable, nervous energies as much as possible in a positive, proactive way.

- As each holiday ends, have your family member recycle the catalogs and magazines, as this is a physical way to symbolize its ending.



- Limit his choices of music and movies to a seasonal selection or those that are relevant all year. Lay-out the "TV Guide" to demonstrate when most people watch Christmas movies. A good rule to follow is: in someone's bedroom anything can happen, but in the living room we have to follow certain rules. So, on Christmas Eve, nobody in the family wants to watch a movie about Easter!

- Proactively preparing each person about the upcoming changes in his or her schedules is the best

bet. Letting them know the location of the holiday dinner is a must. If visitors are coming over, please let them know. Making these changes known via a written note and/or photographs are gladly appreciated.

- Always provide items and activities to keep your family members occupied during these holiday meals. We can amuse ourselves with conversation but sometimes others cannot. Keep that in mind.

Follow these rules so that YOU and the rest of your family can enjoy yourselves!

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GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

An iPhone for baby?

These days, cellphones are for more than just calls. But are the devices good for toddlers?

This holiday season, there will be lots of delighted squeals when someone in the family opens a package containing a new mobile digital device. Often, those squeals are from toddlers and even babies who are as mesmerized by new technology as their parents and older sibs.

Little kids have an uncanny ability to manipulate touch screens, and programmers are responding with a robust collection of so-called “baby apps.” All of this begs the question:

Is mobile access to interactive

technology good for toddlers? In the meantime, parents can draw on what we do know about child development to make wise decisions on behalf of kids. Here are some suggestions:

Defer to development

Common sense says you shouldn't give electronic equipment to a child who drools or reflexively puts things in his mouth. Ditto for the child who is still conducting if-I-drop-this-what-will-happen experiments.

Pick time & place

Little kids often have to accompany their parents to places that strain their patience.

Even a car ride can be a trial for a toddler. In these settings, a mobile device may be a merciful way to pass the time. It's also an opportunity for parents establish limits: “You can hold Mommy's phone while we're in the car and then you'll give it back to Mommy.” Like other limits, this one will work only if you enforce it. The best way to create a cellphone junkie is to give your child random access to the device. Instead, think through the rules you want to establish and keep them simple. Be consistent.

Encourage mobility

Despite their name, mobile devices actually discourage mobility. Kids who use them tend to stay planted firmly on their fannies, staring at a tiny screen. The American Academy of Pediatrics continues to recommend that children under the age of 2 have no time in front of screens of any size. For children over 2, the recommended daily allowance is one hour. Both of these rules are regularly violated even by very conscientious parents, in part because everyone — including those parents — needs a little downtime now and then. Kids, however, need much, much more uptime. A child who is running, climb-

ing, bouncing and playing may need more supervision than one who is glued to a screen, but research shows that active play promotes both physical and mental development. Screen time may also promote certain kinds of development but the benefits are unclear and unconfirmed, so moderation makes sense.

Talk!

Of all the things children learn in their first six years, language is one of the most important. Here the research is crystal clear. Talking to little children — even infants — encourages more rapid and more complex neural development. Fooling with a mobile device or, for that matter, any other toy, is more enriching if parents talk about what's happening and, with older children, encourage them to talk, too. Not only is this fun but it lays the ground work for the idea that, instead of being the main event, technology is valuable because it supports relationships.

Maintain ownership

Unless the kid is paying the bills, the phone belongs to the parent (older children should be reminded about this rule, too). You set limits about lipstick, sharp knives, and the TV remote, so spend some time thinking about whether, and when, you want to allow access.



Despite all the innovations in technology, the ingredients for a good childhood remain surprisingly constant: loving, engaged parents; sensible, consistent limits; safe and abundant opportunities to explore the world. For children who have those essentials in place, a little time spent with — or without — a mobile interactive device won't much matter.

Carolyn Jabs, MA, has been writing about families and the Internet for over 15 years. She is the mother of three computer-savvy kids. Other Growing Up Online columns appear on her website www.growing-up-online.com.

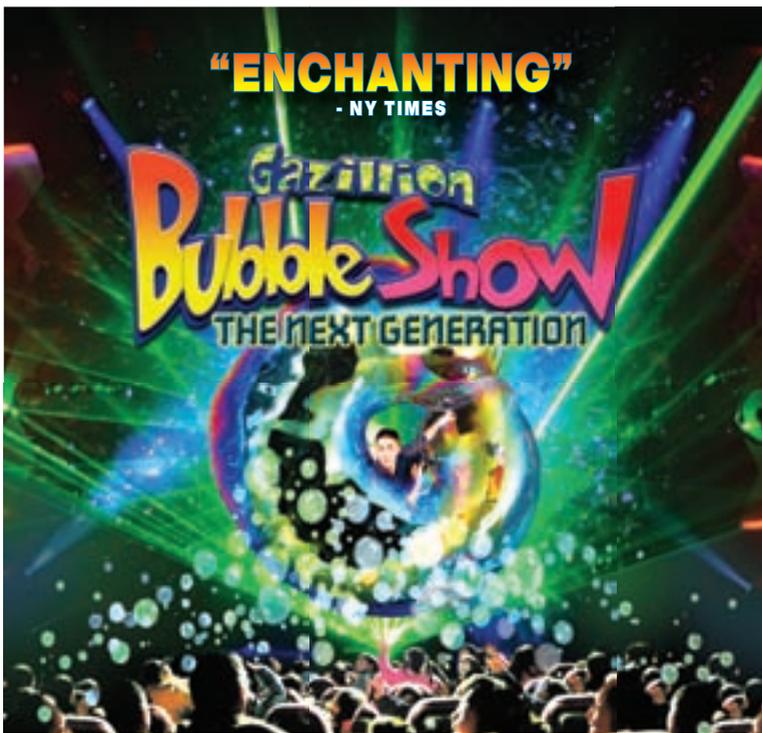
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technology good for tots?

For many parents, a first rush of pride — look what he can do! — gives way to unease, especially when kids clamor constantly for the phone. A recent article in the New York Times told the story of one tot who hid her mom's phone under her bed so she would be able to use it whenever she wanted.

The research about how cellphones and other mobile devices impact young brains



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Affordable child care is possible

Finding the best care for your child when you're on a budget

BY CANDI SPARKS

One of the most difficult — and most important — decisions a parent can make is finding reliable and safe child care. Unfortunately, child care can become a budget buster, and finding affordable care in these tough times is difficult. When you cannot be the caregiver, the choice of how your child spends his day guides the search for child care. So will family finances.

It helps to identify what type of program is needed, and then figure out how to work that into your budget. Although a paid position generally creates higher expectations of what will and will not be done with your child and in your home, the different positions — nanny, au pair, sitter, casual sitter, family friend, relative, or child care programs — all have different pay scales and infrastructures.

If you don't have a huge budget, try to craft a position for a child care provider and add perks to go with the job. If the caregiver has access to the family car, gets a ride after sitting, or can use your swimming pool

or art studio, it might be attractive enough that she will lower her fee. If your position comes with paid sick days, vacation days, and holidays, these perks may put you in a better negotiating position. Leverage whatever perks you can during the interview process.

Relatives

A relative — for instance, a mother-in-law — may assist for free, but then might feel comfortable to criticize parenting skills (but not yours, of course). Or, you may not be overjoyed that Uncle Jim still smokes cigarettes in the house. Yet, you don't want to take any chances with your precious child, so what's available for free may not always be the best choice. If you can find someone good for free, consider yourself lucky. Adela, in Queens, had to opt out of free family child care when her son, Gian, starting using some unsavory language he picked up at his cousin's house.

Nanny

The most popular type of child care for working families with young children, which has been popularized by reality TV, is the nanny. Brooklyn resident Mary was able to keep her nanny at a lower price for several years by throwing in benefits like vacations with the family.

"She is one of the family," said Mary. "The boys love her and she is very good to us."

Mary found that the child care relationship turned into "family care." Her situation beautifully illustrates that the search for child care can also consider what other needs the family may have in connection with this person. If a mother's helper is needed to assist with shopping, laun-

dry and child care, this is a different position than one that will focus solely on child care. Some nannies will cook and clean for the child, but may not be willing to do so for the entire family. Most nannies are hired by referrals.

Day care

When you don't have room in your budget for full-time care with paid vacations, an affordable option is drop-in day care, which provides flexible and part-time care. This option allows you to pick and choose the day and time slot combination that is needed. It is ideal for those who work at home or stay at home and only need a few random hours of child care. A drop in center provides a safe and healthy environment and usually has some creative activities for the children. The drop-in day care also provides a chance for your child to socialize with others, and many are connected with nursery schools or summer day camps.

Casual sitter

A legal live-in or nanny will need to be paid on the books with health insurance and regularly scheduled time off. On the opposite end of the spectrum is the person who is looking for immediate cash without the hassles of it being a job on the books — like high school and college students. The student may be most affordable, but may not be the most reliable in keeping to a schedule. Exams, social obligations and lack of interest may eventually clash with your expectations. The potato chips on the sofa may someday irritate your sensitivities. But your reactions may pale in comparison to the savings in child care expenses. The easiest place to find a student

Resources

Check out these websites for finding child care options:

- A good resource for finding a variety of child care workers who run the gamut from casual sitters to live-ins is www.care.com.
- There are two agencies that will assist parents in locating community-based child care and educational programs: Office for Children and Fam-

ily Services (212) 383-1788, www.ocfs.state.ny.us and Administration for Children's Services (877) 543-7692, www.nyc.gov.

- For finding nannies in New York, www.nycnannyfinder.com is great.

- If you're considering hiring a nanny, you'll want to be aware of the nanny tax and employment guidelines, and www.4nannytaxes.com is a great resource.



is in the neighborhood, or even at a local college. Many schools have employment and career offices that will keep a list of students available for child care services. To cover yourself and your child, interview more than one person and keep a list of five alternate candidates that you have interviewed at all times. You never know when you need backup for the backup.

Interviews

Unfortunately, child neglect and abuse lingers in the back of every parent's mind when selecting child care. Providers should pass at least a minimal background check and

you should check more than one reference before any hiring decision is made. Make a list of interview questions for this person as well. For example, questions like, "Have you ever had a medical emergency on the job, and what did you do?" "What would you do if there was a blackout while you are sitting?" Also, lay down your ground rules and expectations during the interview process. The more you talk about things, the clearer they will become and will help solidify your position for the candidate.

These are tough times, but a family can easily go from family care to full-time nanny to a sitter and on to

a nursery school program over the course of the child's development. I recommend negotiating at every step in a way that will not compromise the quality of care, but won't break the banks, either. If you feel that you need to transition from one provider to the next, try to keep a good relationship going and line up your replacement nanny before you fire the current one. Remember what is best for your child. After all, your child is priceless, but your budget is limited.

Candi Sparks is the author of the "Can I Have Some Money?" book series. You can follow her on Twitter and Facebook as Candi Sparks (writer).

It helps to identify what type of program is needed, and then figure out how to work that into your budget.



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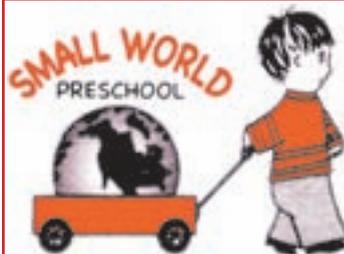
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LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

Teens & gift giving

I had just turned 13 when I came home with this beautiful bracelet from a boy who admired me. When my mother saw it, she freaked out and told me that I had to give it back immediately. She said that she doubted he bought the bracelet and that it was an inappropriate gift for him to be giving me anyway. So much for that little bauble!

As it turned out, he had taken the bracelet from his older sister's jewelry box because he overheard that she would "never wear it again." Supposedly, she was fighting with

her boyfriend.

There are simpler ways for teens, even for those who don't have jobs yet, to show their appreciation for peers, coaches, or family members — and these ideas won't break the bank!

The act of giving

Your teen will likely get more out of the act of "giving" than the person receiving the gift. But not if a parent does the purchasing. Teens need to do the buying themselves, even if funds are running low. After all, it's the thought that counts; and for many, this adage is oh so true. Some of the most modest gifts I've received are those which I cherish the most.

The holidays are a great time for teens to think about giving to their favorite charity as well.

"Small acts of purposeful kindness and giving to charity (not necessarily money, but time) should be part of every teen's life," explains Dr. Jodi Stoner, a psychotherapist and co-author of "Good Manners are Contagious" (Spinner Press, 2009). She stresses that giving to others "develops integrity, boosts self-esteem, and adds meaning to children's lives no matter what age."

Make it Personal

My daughter took a photograph of an art piece she created for a contest in which she had to express the theme, "Beauty is ..." She put the photograph in an inexpensive, magnetic photo frame and printed out the words, "Beauty is ... a teacher who cares."

For that special someone

If your teen is giving something to a "significant other," be sure that it is appropriate in nature and that her feelings are reciprocated. Explain to your teen that gift giving is over the top for a new crush, but is a nice way to express feelings if a relationship has formed.

Overdoing it with expensive jewelry or electronics is not the answer. Making things by hand or personalizing the gift are great ways to express your affection for someone. Is

your teen creative? She might draw a portrait of her boyfriend from a photograph of him participating in his favorite sport or pastime. If your son likes to cook, suggest that he invite his girlfriend to dinner and make the meal himself.

"Sit down with your teens and help them come up with a budget," suggests Stoner. "This is a great time to talk about what the gift means. Big ticket items are not appropriate — small, meaningful gifts are."

Stoner also points out that teens should be responsible for the cost. If teens are not working, Stoner believes that gifts should come from their allowance.

"Otherwise, teens tend to lose perspective on the monetary commitment," she says.

Tips and tales

"Collage is a great gift. All you need are magazines, photos, glue sticks, and a surface to glue everything to. Teens love collage because they are using pop culture images mixed with their likes or a friend's likes. It's a great gift for their friend's bedroom wall."

Jessica Galkin, Woodstock, NY

"My 15-year-old daughter and her friends bake cookies and give them out at school to their closest friends for their birthdays."

Deb Ciccone-Yaeger, Saugerties, NY

"Every year, my daughter makes her own Christmas present for her grandmother and aunts. We have a file folder for crafts that catch our attention throughout the year. She chooses one of those crafts to make as gifts."

Gretchen Burnett, Salt Point, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic:

Your teens are old enough, but can you trust them to stay home alone?

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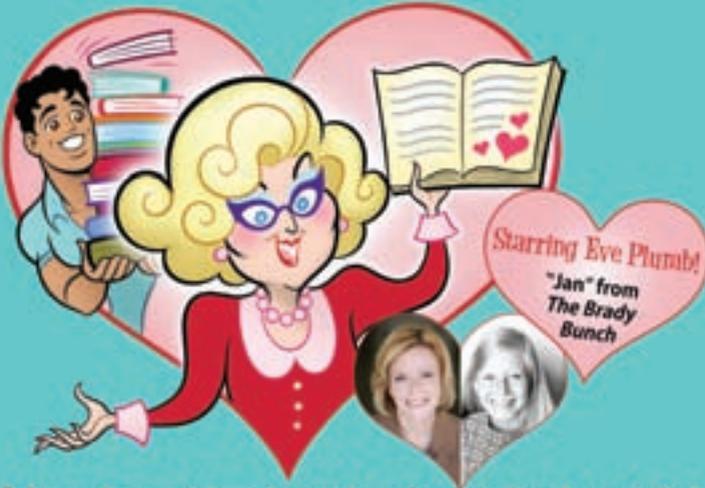
Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer and columnist specializing in parenting issues and children's development. She is the mother of two teenagers.



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FAMILY HEALTH

BY PHILIP ROTH, MD, PHD,
Chairman, Department of
Pediatrics, Staten Island
University Hospital

Make sure their new toys are safe

The holiday season is upon us, and that means it's time to shop for the kids. While they may want every toy in the toy store, selecting the right toys must include attention to safety issues. Here are some ideas to keep in mind for making sure your family enjoys a safe and happy holiday season:

Before even going to the store,

of toys, choose those that are appropriate for the age, abilities, skills and interests of your kids. It's a good idea to keep toys meant for older kids away from their younger siblings.

Children under 3 years old tend to put things in their mouths, and are, therefore, susceptible to choking on small objects. Government regulations specify that toys for 3-year-olds should not have parts less than 1.25 inches in diameter and 2.25 inches in length. A simple rule of thumb — if the toy can fit through a toilet paper roll tube, it's too small.

Watch out for long ropes or cords attached to toys, as they could pose risks of strangulation for infants and children. And make sure toys do not have sharp edges or points, and are well-made with tightly secured parts, such as eyes and noses on dolls.

For children under 10, avoid electrical toys that can cause burns and shocks, and instead, buy battery-operated toys. But,

check the toy recall and hazardous toys lists. Two good places to start are www.CPSC.gov and www.ToySafety.net.

Once you're at the store, get in the habit of reading the labels on toys. These labels will list important information, including suitability for young children, flame retardant or resistant properties for toys with fabric, and washability.

As you explore the endless array

of toys, be sure that batteries cannot easily be removed, because ingesting them can cause serious gastrointestinal injuries and even death.

Also, watch for the level of sound the toy produces. Signs of hearing loss have been seen in a significant number of children under 10, and new standards require that handheld toys not exceed 90 decibels. Another rule of thumb — if the toy is too loud for your ears, it's prob-

ably too loud for a child.

Excessive levels of lead have been found in many toys produced in China, resulting in many recalls. In addition, phthalates — chemicals that may be used in plastics, play cosmetic sets and polymer clays — have been linked to cancer and reproductive problems. Look carefully for the term, "phthalate-free" on the toy label. In general, search for the designation, "ASTM D-4236," which tells you that the product has been reviewed by a toxicologist and, when necessary, cautionary information is provided.

Before your children rip their new toys from their boxes and start playing with them, make sure to read all instructions. Be sure to purchase all the necessary safety equipment recommended for each toy, like a safety helmet to go with a new bike. Also, from the start, train your children to put toys away so that they do not become a tripping hazard.

While making sure these new gifts are safe for your children, do not overlook checking the amount of violent content in video games. Based on extensive research, the American Academy of Pediatrics has concluded that playing video games increases violent behavior in adolescents. As parents, you must take the initiative by limiting the time spent playing video games, and encouraging outdoor play.

Familiarize yourself with the rating system for games. Those under 21 years should not be allowed to play games rated "M." If you cannot review the contents of the games rated "T" yourself, consult websites such as ChildrensSoftware.com, ReviewCorner.com and Lionlamb.org. Remember, you are the parent and must take charge!

Following these tips and guidelines should result in a safe home and holiday. The bottom line is, you can't have a happy holiday unless it's a safe holiday.



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Journey to Broadway

Will long trip exhaust little theater-goer?

BY LISA J. CURTIS

For this Staten Island mom, there has always been so much anticipation about how much more we would be able to enjoy New York City when my son was just a little bit older.

And then, all of a sudden, he was half as tall as me.

He was completely potty-trained.

He could sit still.

There was nothing stopping us. Last month, we got tickets to Baby's First Broadway Show!

While some parents are guilty of pressuring their kids to get into show

biz, this “stage mother” has been training her son to be an audience member since birth. The Boy has endured, er, enjoyed all of his oldest cousin’s lengthy dance recitals. He’s been to circuses everywhere, from Lincoln Center to Midland Beach. And last year, we made the trek — with extended family in a minivan — to see The Radio City Christmas Spectacular. Now, my baby was Broadway bound.

Or was he?

After the tickets to “The Pee-wee Herman Show” had been procured, the question loomed: Would my almost-four-year-old behave and enjoy a show after a journey on public transportation from Staten Island to the theater district? (After all, what parent would still have money left to pay for gas, the Verrazano Bridge toll and parking?!) Happily for us, the answer seems to be that half of the fun is getting to the seats.

While I made sure my son was wearing comfy loafers, The Boy conserved his shoe leather on the first leg of the journey with a stroller ride to St. George. He was dazzled by the enormous fish in the ferry terminal’s aquariums. He eagerly boarded the orange boat, whose fog horn we often hear from our Tompkinsville home. He was delighted by the view of the ships in the harbor and the Brooklyn and Governor’s Island skylines. He recognized a buoy bobbing on the waves and pointed it out to his father and me with glee.

Everything was going so well. Could our luck hold out? After docking, my husband carried the umbrella stroller as we descended the stairs into the subway. I was stunned that nothing could dampen The Boy’s excitement about boarding a train, not even the ear-splitting squealing of wheels. But it was a challenge for him to remain sitting, because he was straining to look

out of the train’s windows, too. When I was momentarily separated from him and his dad, he did let out a quietly heartrending “Where is my Mah-ahm?” to which the other passengers responded with smiles — not eye-rolling — and made room for me to scooch closer. Still, his enthusiasm was unwavering.

When we got to the theater, we picked up the tickets for the 2 pm matinee (I would not advise this epic journey before or after an evening show!) and were able to check the stroller along with the coats. To my delight, an usher spotted us at the coat-check counter and asked us if we needed a booster seat. What service!

“The Pee-wee Herman Show” does not have an intermission and our orchestra seats were in the center of a row. I silently thanked God that I had thought to ask my son if he had to go to the bathroom before we started sidling towards our seats, as it was suddenly clear that if he did have to get up during the performance, we would have had to watch the rest of the show on our feet in the back row.

The Boy was riveted by the performers and glittering, vibrant set. He wanted to talk with me about what he was seeing, but it took a couple of tries before he mastered a stage whisper. Luckily, his first Broadway show was a raucous one where audience participation was encouraged.

After the curtain calls, we stopped by the stage door and I held him high to see Pee-wee’s alter ego, Paul Reubens, regaling the crowd with a bullhorn and later, co-star Lynne Marie Stewart — also still in full costume as Miss Yvonne — signing autographs and being photographed with her fans.

In the days and weeks that followed, The Boy would recall moments from the show. “Hey Mom, remember when ...?” I can’t believe he’s old enough to ask me that. And I can’t wait to make more big city memories with my little man.

Lisa J. Curtis is a freelance writer and editor based in Staten Island, and is Mom to the best boy in the world.



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Learn the lingo

New book offers tips for parents hoping to communicate with baffling teens

BY JOANNA DELBUONO

Whatever. Fine. Not. Don't despair parents! Your children haven't been taken over by an alien race; it's just teen speak that you are left to decipher. And just like any foreign language, you only need patience and a good dictionary to get you through the rough times. Enter Barbara Greenberg, PhD and Jennifer Powell-Lunder, PsyD, authors of "Teenage as a Second Language, A Parent's Guide to Becoming Bilingual," a must-have for any parent that has suffered through hours of one-word responses and frustrating attempts at conversation.

Their sensitive approach to navi-

gating the turbulent waters of "teen-dom" gives parents hope that all is not lost, just a little misplaced.

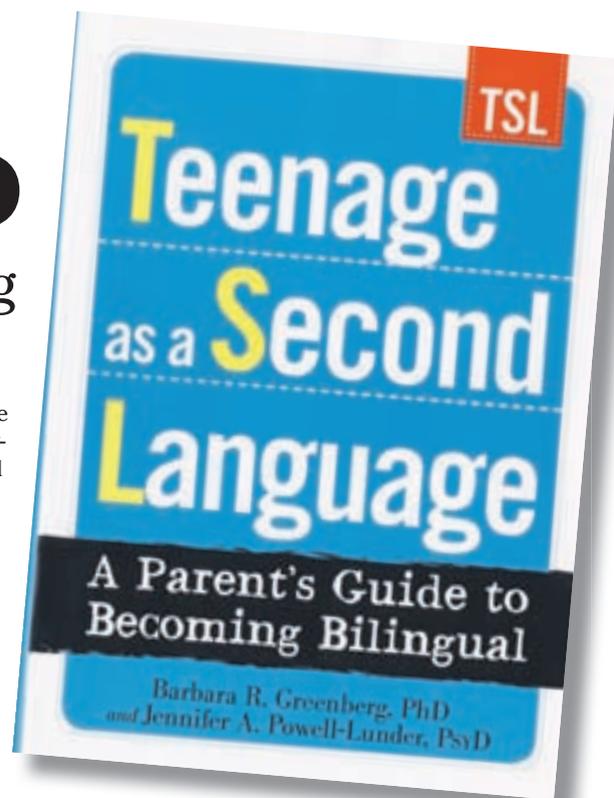
The guide addresses every situation from how to successfully approach conversations regarding sensitive topics to avoid falling into the trap of "Because I said so."

You will also find segments which serve as quick conversation starters and easy ways to understand the most commonly misunderstood words, phrases and nonverbal language that your teen can throw at you.

Remember that as with learning any new language, practice is key and the more teenage you speak, the more comfortable you will become on the road to fluency.

So the next time the frustration levels make your head want to explode, chillax and reach for your copy of the guide. The insightful strategies you learn will keep the lines of communication open and your home from becoming a battleground.

"Teenage as a Second Language, A Parent's Guide to Becoming Bilingual," by Barbara Greenberg, PhD and Jennifer Powell-Lunder, PsyD (243 pgs. \$14.95. Adamsmedia).



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Santa's reindeer return: Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway; (718) 442-3100; www.statenislandzoo.org; Daily, 10 am–4:45 pm, Now – Tues, Jan. 4, 2011; \$8 *(\$5 children 3-14 years old).

Caribou will take up winter residence at the zoo, or at least until Santa's big day.

Tree tots: High Rock Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; naturecenter@sigreenbelt.org; Wednesdays, 9:30–10:15 am, Now – Wed, Dec. 22; \$6 (\$4 members).

Children three and four years old and their caregivers explore the forest through hands on activities, finger plays, games and stories. Registration required.

Greenbelt Peepers: High Rock Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; naturecenter@sigreenbelt.org; Wednesdays, 11:30 am–noon, Now – Wed, Dec. 22; \$6 (\$4 members).

Children two years old and their caregivers explore the forest through hands on activities, finger plays, games and stories. Registration required.

FRI, NOV. 26

Day After Turkey Day: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Terrace at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; 10 am–5 pm; \$8 per tour.

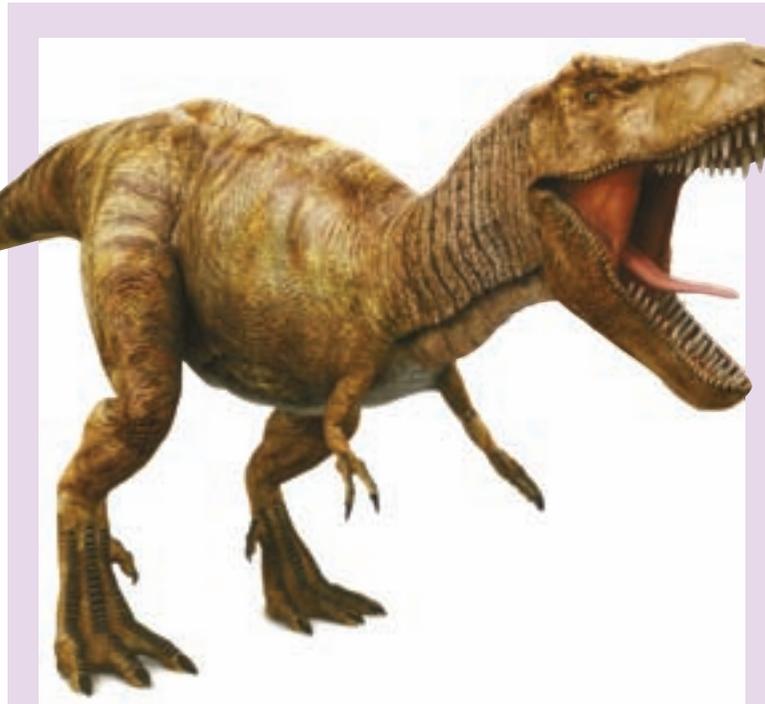
Presented by Northfield Bank Foundation, kids enjoy a cool school holiday.

Kidz Cook: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Terrace at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; www.statenislandkids.org; 2, 3 and 4 pm; \$6 (members free).

Kids create culinary masterpieces.

SAT, NOV. 27

Saturday's tots: Staten Island Chil-



Dino-mite lesson

Stegosaurus, Barroasaurus and Tyrannosaurus, oh my!

On Dec. 27 at the Staten Island Zoo, join dinosaur enthusiast and zoo employee Richie Mirissis as he teaches children all about their favorite extinct carnivores and herbivores.

Kids will get to see real fossils, three-dimensional models and

dren's Museum, 1000 Richmond Terrace at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; www.statenislandkids.org; 11 am–12:30 pm; Admission plus \$5 per child.

Toddler time with singing and playtime.

Kitchen tours: Historic Richmond Town, Richmond Road and Clarke Avenue; (718) 351-1611 X281; www.nycgovparks.org; 1–5 pm; \$5 (\$3.50 students and children 5-17; \$4 seniors; Children under 5 and SIHS members free).

memorabilia presented by Mirissis as he teaches the wonder of dinosaurs. Clay fossil making will also be available under the guidance of the zoo's volunteers.

Dinosaurs and more at the Staten Island Zoo [614 Broadway in Staten Island, (718) 442-3101], Dec. 27 from 1:30-3:30 pm. Admission is \$8, \$5 for children ages 3-14. For info, visit www.statenislandzoo.org.

Tour the oldest kitchens on the site to discover the recipes and sources of Thanksgiving traditions.

Supper with Santa: Historic Richmond Town, Richmond Road and Clarke Avenue; (718) 448-6636; www.nycgovparks.org; 5–8:30 pm; \$15 (\$10 children, Children 3 and under free).

King Henry the Magician provides entertainment until Santa arrives. Reservations required. no refunds. Dinner is Mixed Green Salad Basket of Bread and Rolls Pasta with Meatballs Soda, Water,

Submit a listing

Going Places is dedicated to bringing our readers the most comprehensive events calendar in your area. But to do so, we need your help!

All you have to do is send your listing request to calendar@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!

Coffee or Tea Cupcakes and Home baked chocolate chip cookies.

SUN, NOV. 28

Kitchen tours: 1–5 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Saturday, Nov. 27.

WED, DEC. 1

Drop spindle group: Historic Richmond Town, Richmond Road and Clarke Avenue; (718) 351-1611; <http://www.nycgovparks.org>; 6–7 pm; \$5.

How do you learn to use a spinning wheel? Carding wool and drafting evenly are first steps. Learn all that and more in friendly company in the courtroom.

THURS, DEC. 2

The Story Museum: Historic Richmond Town, Richmond Road and Clarke Avenue; (718) 351-1611 X 280; <http://www.nycgovparks.org>; 11:30 am–12:30 pm; \$3 (adults free).

Step inside a world filled with the magic of stories, crafts, music, dancing and singing. Great for preschool children up to age 5. Reservations required.

Wii: Tottenville Library, 7430 Amboy Rd at Yetman Avenue; (718) 984-0945; 2:30 am; Free.

Challenge your friends or improve your skills.

Mistletunes: The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718) 982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$8 (\$7 group).

Squeaky Clean perform Rock and Roll holiday tunes for children of all ages.

Holiday open house: Garibaldi-Meucci Museum, 420 Tompkins Ave.

Going Places

Continued from page 31

at Chestnut Avenue; (718) 442-1608; 1 pm; Free.

Sing Italian Christmas carols and enjoy holiday treats.

"Jacob Marley's Christmas

Carol": Conference House, 7455 Hylan Blvd. 1-888-71TICKETS; www.showclix.com; 7 pm; \$20.

Classic tale presented by The Staten Island Shakespearean Theatre Company.

FRI, DEC. 3

"The Christmas that Almost

Wasn't": The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718) 982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$8 (\$7 group).

This delightful presentation is a special behind-the-scenes peek at the hustle and bustle and near disasters of the Christmas season. For children of all ages.

Grand Illumination: The Conference House, 298 Satterlee St. (718)984-6046; www.conferencehouse.org/index.html; 7:00 pm; Free.

Traditional Colonial holiday kick off. Hot mulled cider and cookies served.

"Jacob Marley's Christmas

Carol": 8 pm. Conference House. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

SAT, DEC. 4

A Sunny Day Family concert: Peter J Sharp Theater, 155 West 65th St. at Broadway; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org/justkidding; 11 am; \$13-\$27.

Elizabeth Mitchell and Family perform folk standards.

Kids and kitters: Blue Heron Park, Poillon Ave., between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; 917-751-0071; 11 am-12:30 pm; Free.

Children ages 5-7 with parent or caregiver enjoy an outdoor activity and a craft, story and game. Dress weather appropriate.

Krafty kids: Blue Heron Park, Poillon Ave., between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; 917-751-0071; 1-2 pm; Free.

Children 4-10 with caregiver enjoy arts and crafts. Pre-registration required.

Nature crafts: Blue Heron Nature Center, 222 Poillon Ave. between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Create holiday decorations with natural pinecones, evergreens.

"Jacob Marley's Christmas

Carol": 7 pm. Conference House. See Thursday, Dec. 2.



A beary fun bash

These bears sure know how to party.

The talented people at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre in Central Park invite you to get in the holiday spirit with the marionette production of "The Three Bears Holiday Bash," now through Dec. 30.

Experience all the fun and error that occurs when Baby Bear invites Santa to Mama and Papa Bears' Christmas Show. With song, dance and puppetry, the story draws inspiration from Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanza.

"As one of the most fascinating children's theatres in the country,

the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre in Central Park is the perfect place to tell this vibrant seasonal story," said David Rivel, executive director of City Parks Foundation.

This spin on the classic "Goldie Locks and the Three Bears" brings a diverse community together to celebrate the holidays.

"The Three Bears Holiday Bash" at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre in Central Park [81 Street and Central Park West in Manhattan, just south of the Delacorte Theater, (212) 988-9093], now through Dec. 30. Reservations required. \$5/children and \$8 adults. For info, visit www.cityparksfoundation.org.

SUN, DEC. 5

Art and Healing: Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Gardens, 1000 Richmond Terrace; (646) 458-2815; www.stathhc.org; Free with donation of unwrapped new toy.

Holiday tree lighting, local artisan market and a performance by Repeat Offenders.

Christmas fair: St. Theresa School and Church, 1632 Victory Blvd. at Fairview Avenue; (718) 877-6569; al-bano728@aol.com; 9 am-6 pm; Free. Gift and handmade items.

Tree lighting: Historic Richmond

Town, 441 Clarke Ave. (718) 351-1611; www.historicrichmondtown.org; 10 am-5 pm; \$2 (children under 12 free).

Watch tinsmiths make ornaments, take photos with santa and sing traditional carols, then enjoy a traditional tree lighting ceremony.

"Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol": 3 pm. Conference House. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

Winter concert: St. Peter's Church, 53 St. Mark's Pl. at Westervelt Avenue; (718) 448-3656; www.richmondchoral.com; 4 pm; \$25 (\$20 seniors; \$5 students, children under 5 free).

Missa Brevis of J.S. Bach, under the direction of Marina Alexander, musical director, performs Psalmkonzert of Heinz Werner Zimmermann, the Jubilate of Felix Mendelssohn, and selected holiday fare.

"Shalom Sesame": JCC Staten Island, 1466 Manor Rd. (718) 475-5224; jhoward@sijcc.com; www.sijcc.org; 10 am; \$5.

"Chanukah: The Missing Menorah," story time, arts and crafts and special guests.

MON, DEC. 6

Christmas fair St. Theresa School and Church, 9 am-4 pm. See Sunday, Dec. 5.

St. Nicks's Holiday Fair: Christ Church, 76 Franklin Ave. at Eadie Place; (718) 727-6100; 10 am-4 pm; Free.

"Jack Frost": The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718) 982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$8 (\$7 group).

Classic tale of the snowman that comes to life.

Tree Trimming day: Blue Heron Park, 222 Poillon Ave. between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; 1-4 pm; Free.

Make seasonal decorations with natural materials and then decorate the center's tree.

TUES, DEC. 7

The Great Russian Nutcracker: The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718) 982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$8 (\$7 group).

Classic holiday favorite.

WED, DEC. 8

Drop spindle group: 6-7 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

Magic of Science: The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718) 982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$8 (\$7 group).

Tricks and circus sills explain the atoms, molecules and the elements in everyday life, from balloons to changing liquids to steam.

THURS, DEC. 9

The Story Museum: 11:30 am-12:30 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

Wii: 2:30 am. Tottenville Library. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

FRI, DEC. 10

Magic of Science: 10 and 11:30

Going Places

am. The College of Staten Island. See Wednesday, Dec. 8.

SAT, DEC. 11

Tree lighting: St. Theresa School and Church, 1632 Victory Blvd. at Fairview Avenue; (718) 877-6569; albano728@aol.com; 5 pm; Free.

SUN, DEC. 12

Colonial Christmas: Conference House, 7455 Hylan Blvd. (718) 984-6046; 10 am–4 pm; \$3 (\$2 seniors) suggested donation.

Children visit with Father Christmas and adults shop in the kitchen marketplace filled with country crafts and baked goods.

MON, DEC. 13

Holiday Tales: The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718) 982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$9 (\$8 group).

A musical multicultural collection of holiday tales.

TUES, DEC. 14

Holiday Tales: 10 and 11:30 am. The College of Staten Island. See Monday, Dec. 13.

WED, DEC. 15

Drop spindle group: 6–7 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

Holiday Tales: 10 and 11:30 am. The College of Staten Island. See Monday, Dec. 13.

THURS, DEC. 16

The Story Museum: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

Wii: 2:30 am. Tottenville Library. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

“Cinderella”: The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718) 982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$9 (\$8 group).

Musical interpretation.

Holiday open house: CDC Studios, 568 Bay St. 4–7 pm; donations suggested.

Benefiting CDC Kids N Teens, dance performance and refreshments.

FRI, DEC. 17

The Christmas Show: St. George Theater, 35 Hyatt St. (718) 442-2900; www.stgeorgetheater.com; 7 pm; \$10, \$20, \$30, \$40.

A magical experience of holiday



New ‘Christmas Carol’

“A Christmas Carol” gets turned on its head this holiday season.

See another side of the famed Dickens tale, through the eyes of Scrooge’s business partner, Jacob Marley, as the Staten Island Shakespearean Theatre presents “Jacob Marley’s Christmas Carol,” from Dec. 3-12.

In the play written by Tom Mula, audience members see Marley try to save old Ebenezer’s soul before it’s too late. This funny and ultimately heartwarm-

ing tale, staged in Tottenville’s historic Conference House, will reinforce the meaning of Christmas in the hearts of even the biggest of Scrooges.

Staten Island Shakespearean Theatre presents “Jacob Marley’s Christmas Carol” in the Conference House kitchen [7455 Hylan Blvd. at Satterlee Street in Tottenville, (718) 984-6046], Dec. 3-12. Tickets \$20.

For tickets, visit www.showclix.com or call 1-888-71TICKETS. For info, visit www.conferencehouse.org.

family fun.

SAT, DEC. 18

Holiday breakfast with Santa: The Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway; (718) 442-3100; www.statenislandzoo.org; 8:30–10 am; \$13 (\$15 non-members).

Children five and up watch Santa feed the animals at the zoo.

Nature crafts: 1 pm. Blue Heron Nature Center. See Saturday, Dec. 4.

The Christmas Show: 3 and 7 pm. St. George Theater. See Friday, Dec. 17.

SUN, DEC. 19

“What Child is This”: AME Zion church, 584 Bloomingdale Rd. (718) 356-0200; 11 am; Good will donation.

Sunday school children perform. Dinner served after service.

The Christmas Show: 3 and 7 pm.

St. George Theater. See Friday, Dec. 17.

MON, DEC. 20

“Christmas Carol”: The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718) 982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$8 (\$7 group).

Visit with Scrooge, the three ghosts and Tiny Tim in this timeless classic.

TUES, DEC. 21

“Christmas Carol”: 10 and 11:30 am. The College of Staten Island. See Monday, Dec. 20.

WED, DEC. 22

Drop spindle group: 6–7 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

“Twas the Night Before Christmas”: The College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (718)

982-5678; 10 and 11:30 am; \$8 (\$7 group).

The famous poem comes to life.

THURS, DEC. 23

The Story Museum: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

TUES, DEC. 28

Zoofari Break Camp: The Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway; (718) 442-3100; www.statenislandzoo.org; 10 am–2pm; \$35 (\$45 non-members).

Mini camp for ages Pre-K, K-1. Children meet animals and play games.

WED, DEC. 29

Drop spindle group: 6–7 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

Zoofari Break Camp: 10 am–2pm. The Staten Island Zoo. See Tuesday, Dec. 28.

THURS, DEC. 30

The Story Museum: 11:30 am–12:30 pm. Historic Richmond Town. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

Zoofari Break Camp: 10 am–2 pm. The Staten Island Zoo. See Tuesday, Dec. 28.

MON, JAN. 3

Teen cafe: New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln. 2:30 pm; Free.

Children 12 to 18 have fun in the community room. Just come and hang out with your friends! Bring your snacks, soda, coffee, homework, iPod, check out a laptop and browse the internet. Play your favorite games on the PS3 and Wii.

WED, JAN. 5

Read aloud: New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln. 4 pm; Free.

For children three and up.

THURS, JAN. 6

Winter Stories and movies: New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln. 4 pm; Free.

Stories, rhymes and songs for children four and up.

SAT, JAN. 8

SAT practice test: New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln. Noon–4 pm; Free.

The 3.5 hour Combo Practice Test helps students decide which test is right for them. Students receive feedback that compares their performance on each of the analogous test sections of the two exams.

It figures

BY CYNTHIA WASHAM

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS



75 Number of years Coca-Cola has been using Santa Claus in its ads.

80 Percent of children visiting Santa Claus that psychology researcher John Trinkaus discovered are indifferent toward him.

87 Percent of their parents who appeared happy during the Santa visit.

1957 Year a woman baking peanut butter cookies in Ohio stuck a Hershey's Kiss in the middle to create the first Peanut Blossom, one of the holiday season's most popular cookies.



600 A.D.

Approximate year Pope Gregory first encouraged the tradition of bringing greenery indoors to celebrate Christmas.

1917 The year Boys Town, for homeless boys — now Girls and Boys Town — was founded in Omaha, NE, on Dec. 12, by Father Edward Flannigan.

2 million Number of people who pay \$13.99 a year for American Greetings' e-card service featuring 30,000 e-cards, including many for the holidays.

25 Percent of people who consider "A Christmas Carol" their favorite Christmas show.

12 Percent who picked either "It's A Wonderful Life" or "Charlie Brown's Christmas."



13 Percent of Jewish couples who had an interfaith marriage before 1970.

47 Percent who have an interfaith marriage now.



75 Percent who exchange Christmas presents.

50 Percent of interfaith couples who put up a Christmas tree.

Sources: Marketing Week, Improbable Research, Interfaithfamily.com, University of Connecticut, Boystown.org, Associated Content, Bugwood.org, Notmuch.com, Mother Nature Network

Community Marketplace

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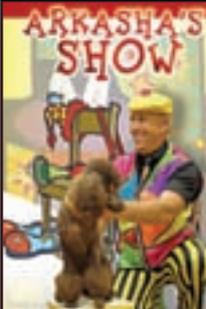
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New & Noteworthy

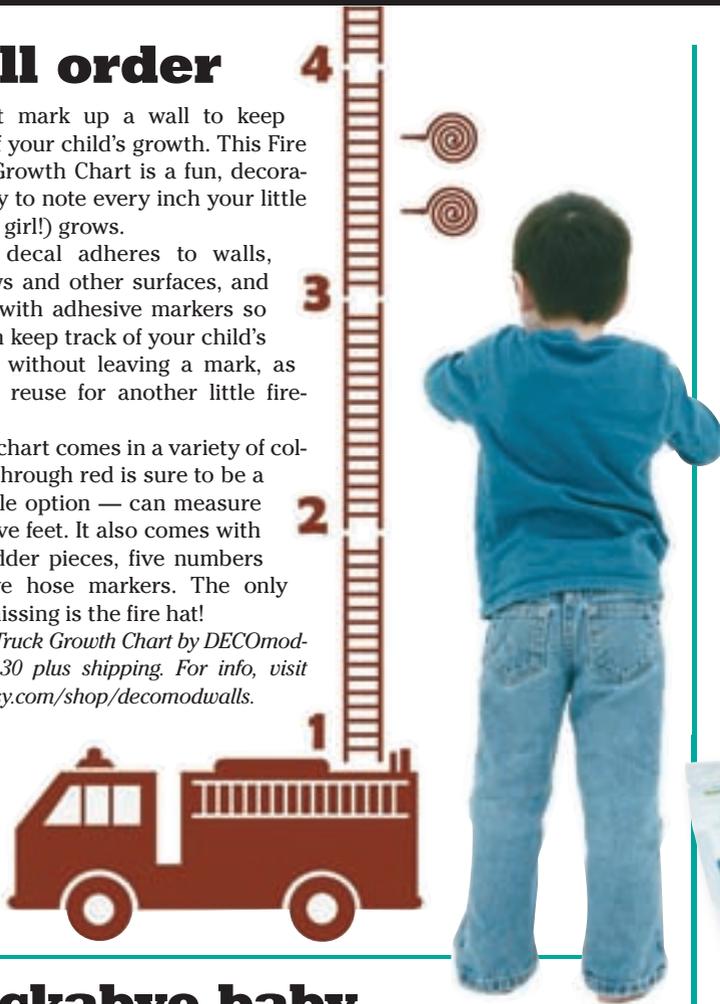
Tall order

Don't mark up a wall to keep track of your child's growth. This Fire Truck Growth Chart is a fun, decorative way to note every inch your little boy (or girl!) grows.

The decal adheres to walls, windows and other surfaces, and comes with adhesive markers so you can keep track of your child's growth without leaving a mark, as well as reuse for another little fire-fighter.

The chart comes in a variety of colors — through red is sure to be a desirable option — can measure up to five feet. It also comes with four ladder pieces, five numbers and five hose markers. The only thing missing is the fire hat!

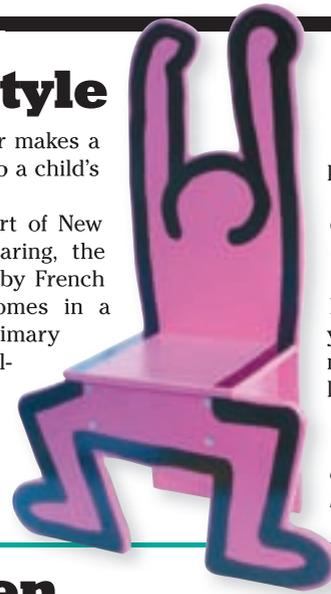
Fire Truck Growth Chart by DECOMODWALLS. \$30 plus shipping. For info, visit www.etsy.com/shop/decomodwalls.



Chair style

This colorful chair makes a wonderful addition to a child's room.

Inspired by the art of New York artist Keith Haring, the wooden seat, made by French designers Unica, comes in a variety of bright, primary colors, including yellow and orange — but just the one, fun shape, which is perfect for sitting.



Haring, who was prominent during the 1980s, was first recognized for the chalk drawings he created in the subways. At least with this chair, you can have a permanent piece of the collection.

For more information on the Keith Haring chair, visit www.unica-home.com.

Go green

You dress your kids in all-natural clothing, use all-natural body lotions, and your toys are all handmade. But how green are your cleaning products?

GrabGreen has your covered.

Patricia Spencer developed the line of eco-friendly home cleaning products when her two daughters were younger after she was shocked to learn

that the detergent she used on their clothing failed to meet her health standards — with her concerns ranging from rashes resulting from use to un-needed plastics in the detergents.

GrabGreen products include laundry detergent, bleach alternative, dishwashing detergent, fabric freshener sprays, and more, and are made with naturally derived ingredients, are free of phosphates and chlorine, and are 100 percent cruelty free, with no animal testing involved. So you can clean your house with a clean conscious.

For info on GrabGreen, visit www.grabgreenhome.com.



Rockabye baby

Cramped for space in your apartment but still want a baby swing? The mamaRoo has you covered.

This hi-tech product doesn't take up as much room as your typical baby swing, primarily because it isn't really a baby swing — it sways from side to side, or up and down, mimicking the movements of parents — perfect for comforting and calming your baby when you don't have your hands free.

The mamaRoo has five motions, ranging from "Car Ride" (a figure eight) to "Ocean Wave" (around in a big circle). It also comes with a toy mobile with plush toy balls decorated in the style of classical artists (Van Gogh, Monet and Seurat), built-in nature sounds, or a hookup for mp3 players so you can choose your own music.

The mamaRoo is suitable from birth to 25 pounds. \$199. For more info, visit www.4momsonline.com/mamaroo.

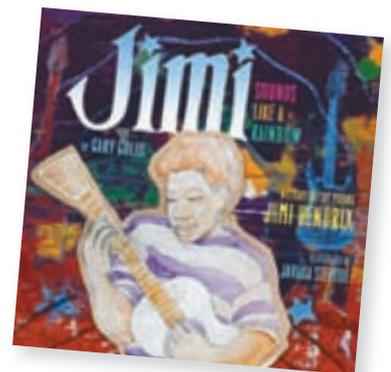


Jimi lives on in new book

A new generation can meet legendary guitarist Jimi Hendrix in a bold new picture book for kids.

In "Jimi: Sounds Like a Rainbow: A Story of the Young Jimi Hendrix," author Gary Golio and illustrator Javaka Steptoe show how a quiet boy from Seattle with a love of sound and color became one of the greatest guitar players of all time.

Golio brings the young Hendrix to life, revealing how passion, friendship, and a father's love helped Hendrix make a connection with music that would one day set the world on fire. Steptoe's full-color original art uses mixed media on recycled plywood to create arresting visuals perfectly suited to this story of a



groundbreaking musician.

"Jimi: Sounds Like a Rainbow: A Story of the Young Jimi Hendrix" is suitable for ages 6-9. For info, visit www.garygolio.com.

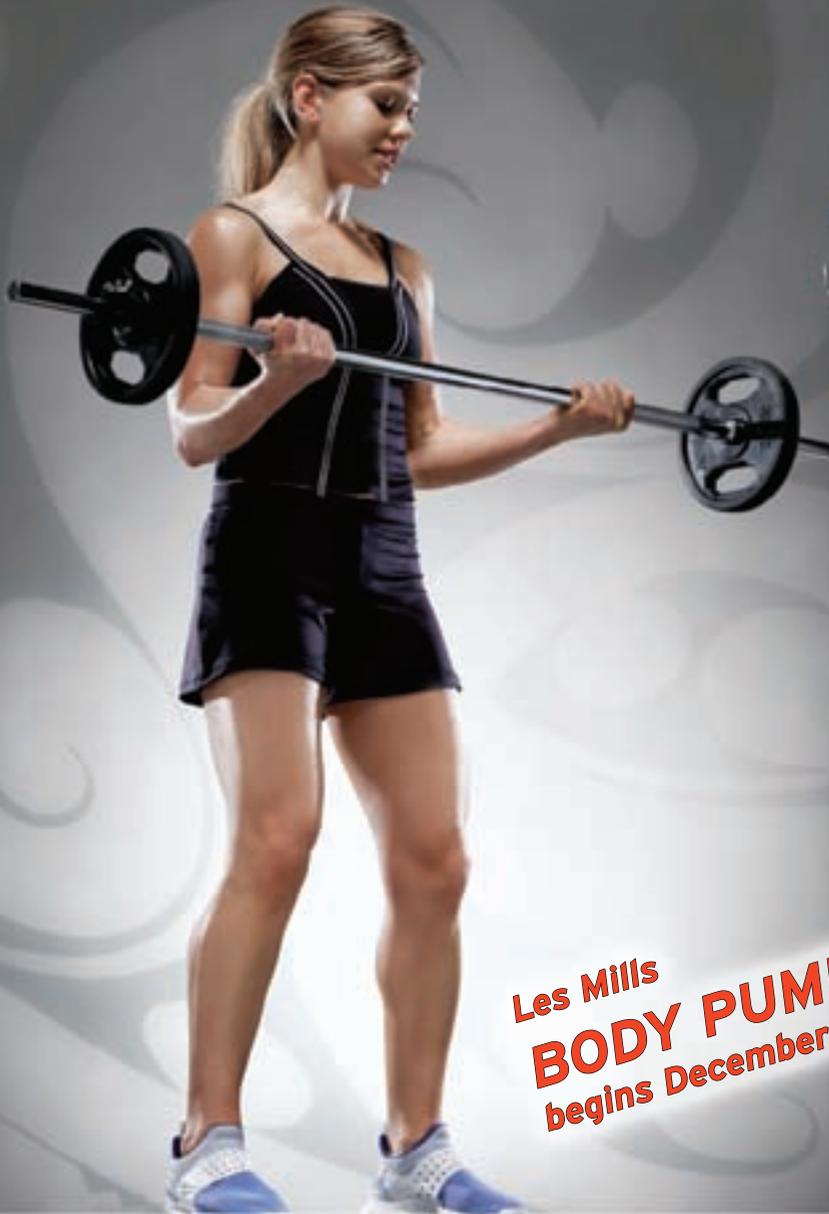


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