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# Letter from the publisher

## Teen awareness

**W**hen my daughter became a teenager it seemed as if she was possessed with a new internal structure. Gone was the sweet, mostly compliant, cuddly, good girl, and replacing her was a person with much more cunning. Not a bad girl by any means, but a different temperament and a more personal agenda.

Her friends seemed to matter more than ever and our relationship went through a definite change. I began to be somewhat excluded from her plans, and instead of being the director, I morphed into being her personal chauffeur, driving her back and forth from our house to her various friends and hangouts.

It's odd how that change from 12



to 13 really changes so much. There were certain friends of hers that stayed sweet and obedient, but not many. Most of them turned into typical teen "club members." They dressed alike and often moved in a pack wherever they could congregate. It's not easy to find places to "hang out," especially in the winter, and since teens seldom wear sensible things like hats and gloves, they were usually freezing and coming down with colds.

What happens when that magic birthday is reached? What force reaches inside of them and alters their inherent nature and turns them into teens?

Is it hormones? Does it happen in other cultures too, or only in ours? I

have often wondered, but I have the answer.

In cultures where childhood ends early and adult responsibilities like work and children take over, there is no opportunity for the teen phenomenon that seems to have largely begun here in the US in the 20th Century, as our society formed protective labor laws and unions. With no demanding need to send our children out to work, they were free to develop in other social ways and to become this newly named teenage demographic.

Me too, I was the same. I wore club jackets and followed the boys in a pack with my girlfriends, and whereas today's teens text each other, in my day we "hung" on the corner or talked on the phone for hours. The boy thing hits almost all girls at the same time and puberty's an amazingly scary experience sometimes.

In this October Issue we do a focus on teens and there is ample reason why. Teens present very real problems and struggles, both for themselves and for their parents too. Sex, smoking, drugs, cutting classes, lying, eating disorders, and a possible drop in grades are some of the new issues that parents may have to deal with. It's a foolish parent who doesn't think their kid is possibly going to need some special attention.

I hope these articles will be interesting and helpful. Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis,  
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# Harvest & Halloween celebrations

BY DENISE MORRISON  
YEARIAN

**P**lanning a bountiful harvest celebration or a creepy crawly Halloween party? You may want to consider these craft, game, and food suggestions.

## Crop of crafts

When doing crafts with kids in a group setting, plan a main craft with a short, second activity — coloring pages or stringing popcorn — for early finishers. Whatever crafts you choose, pick ones that are easy to clean up so you can move on to the next activity.

- **Black cat candy jar.** Place black electrical tape over the sharp edges of a tin can. Cover the can with black construction paper and glue in place. Glue two wiggly eyes to the can, then use a thin paintbrush and white paint to draw a mouth, nose, and whiskers. Draw and cut out a black tail shape and two triangular-shaped ears. Cut two smaller triangles from pink paper for the insides of the ears; glue to black triangles. Glue ears to the top inside edge of the can and the tail to the back side of the can. Fill with treats.

- **Jack-o-lantern pots.** Buy various-sized terracotta pots and turn them upside down so the drainage hole is facing up. On yellow construction paper, draw and cut out two eyes, a nose, and a toothy grin — the wackier the better. Apply Mod-podge with a paintbrush under and over the facial features, then attach them to the pot. Place a short, wide stick out of the hole to

resemble a pumpkin stem.

- **Pumpkin noisemakers.** Paint a 12- by half-inch dowel rod black; let dry. Trace and cut out two leaves using green craft foam, then cut a small slit in the center of each leaf. Draw a face onto the bottom side of an orange paper plate with a black permanent marker. Line up the face plate with a second orange plate, rims together and bottoms facing out. Use a hole punch to create holes one-inch apart around the perimeter of both plates. Place dried beans and small jingle bells between the two plates. Also put the dowel between the plates, moving a short end of the stick above the facial features to represent the pumpkin stem and a long end below for the handle. Sew plates together





items. Teammates line up at the other end of the room. To play, teammates take turns running to the scarecrow and dressing him with one clothing item, then tag the next player, who does the same. When the scarecrow is completely dressed, each teammate returns a second time to stuff straw in his clothing. The first team to finish making its scarecrow wins.

### Seasonal snacks

Food is more fun when kids are involved in the preparation process. Stick with things children like to eat and add a seasonal twist to it.

- **Floating faces.** Core and peel an apple, then cut it in half. Lay one half on the table and use a paring knife to create facial features. Repeat these steps until you have enough apple halves for each party guest. Place apples in cider punch bowl. When the cider is labeled, give each child a floating face.

- **Itsy-bitsy caramel apples.** Cut lollipop sticks in half. Use a melon baller to scoop little balls out of medium-sized apples, making sure each ball has a section of the apple peel. Push a lollipop stick into the peel of each apple ball. Blot apples dry with a paper towel. Melt a 14-ounce package of caramel candies with two tablespoons of water. Have children dip and swirl their apple balls in caramel, then roll in crushed Oreo cookies, nuts, sprinkles, nonpareils, or mini-chocolate chips. Place on waxed paper to cool for 15 minutes.

- **Pumpkin pancakes.** Mix dry ingredients: one cup flour, one tablespoon sugar, two teaspoons baking soda, one-quarter teaspoon salt, and one-half teaspoon cinnamon. Set aside. Separate two eggs. Mix yolks with half a cup of plain pumpkin puree, one cup milk, and two tablespoons canola oil. Add dry ingredients. Beat egg whites until fluffy, then fold into the batter. Pour one-quarter cup of batter onto a greased griddle; flip when bubbles form on top. Kids can make jack-o-lantern faces using raisins, dried fruit, nuts, chocolate chips, and whipped cream.

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

by lacing yarn through the holes. Push leaf slits through the short end of the dowel rods and secure with a glue gun.

### Gathering for games

Games are a staple at kids' gatherings. Choose ones every child can participate in, where no one is eliminated. With a little forethought and creativity, any game can be adapted to fit the fall theme.

- **Broom ball.** Purchase half-sized brooms for each party guest and two different colors of seasonal garland. Decorate half of the brooms with one color of garland and the remaining half with the other garland to specify teams. Establish goals at opposite ends of the yard, and divide the children into teams. Place a kickball in the center of the yard, then give each child a broom to sweep the ball to his team's goal. The first team to score five goals wins.

- **Ring around the pumpkin.** Place three large pumpkins with stems in a line several feet apart. Gather four hula hoops. To play, children should take turns standing behind the designated tossing line and try to ring the pumpkins with the hula hoop. The child with the most rings wins.

- **Scarecrow relay.** Separate children into two teams. Choose one child from each team to be the scarecrow. Place scarecrows at one end of the room, along with hay and oversized scarecrow-type clothing

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## HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

# Healthier choices for trick-or-treat snacks

**A**s soon as back-to-school season begins, it seems like Halloween is just right around the corner. We purchase new decorations and plan pumpkin-picking trips, but we also think about what our own kids will get while trick-or-treating, because that's when the sugar-infused inundation begins.

Due to the large amount of candy acquired that night, many parents limit the number of sugary items that their kids are allowed to ingest in the days following the big event. Others let their kids enjoy their loot on Halloween night but ship it out to shelters and food pantries the day after. (Of course, many parents steal a few treats here and there, which lightens the load considerably.)

Whatever method you choose for Halloween candy consumption, remember that too much of a good thing can have residual effects. Sugar overload can make

kids hyper after they eat it, and sluggish and groggy the next day.

Are you wondering what are the best treats to give out to trick-or-treaters at your door? Here are some things to consider:

### Keep it safe

First and foremost, make sure that what you give out is age-appropriate and as non-allergic as possible.

Try to avoid handing out candy with peanuts in it. Parents of allergic children are cautious, but it's nice when you can have the peace of mind that any child who comes to your home will be able to safely enjoy your snack.

Avoid handing out large hard candies and gumballs, which pose a choking risk, especially to small children. There is nothing worse than seeing people hand out oversized rock-like circular candies to toddlers. It happens every year.

It goes without saying that parents need to inspect each piece of candy before giving any to their child. Throw out anything with opened wrappers or looks otherwise old or tainted. Watch out for candy from foreign countries where there is no Food and Drug Administration mandate for food quality.

### Make it nutritious (or at least less junk-like)

Calorie wise, there are a few things you can give out if you are looking to avoid adding to the pure sugar overload: fruit-based snacks, pretzels, or individual packs of Goldfish and Cheez-its are a few. Apples are still an option, of course, but you'll surely lose points with the neighborhood kids in the "cool" department.

It also doesn't have to be food-based. Brightly colored pumpkin and witch pencils, stickers, and rings are always a big hit with kids.

### Mind those teeth

Chocolate is better than anything sticky for teeth, so avoid gummy worms and bears, Starbursts, and anything else that causes a glue-like bond between the teeth, which can loosen fillings and crowns. Don't give out any sour candy because even though kids love them, some dentists compare it to battery acid on the enamel. Sour and gummy is a recipe for disaster!

Dentists also tend to agree that a one-time candy splurge on Halloween night won't hurt a child's teeth. It is repeated exposure that will cause damage.

Have a happy and safe Halloween!

*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 her on Facebook and Twitter @DanniSull-Writer, or on her blog, Just Write Mom.*





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# Circumcision

## Small cut, big decision

### The health benefits of male infant circumcision

BY KIKI BOCHI

**T**o circumcise or not to circumcise? If you are the parent of a baby boy — or expecting to be one soon — this little question can be a huge issue.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recently issued a statement saying new scientific evidence shows that the health benefits of newborn male circumcision outweigh the risks of the procedure, but the benefits are not great enough for them to recommend routine circumcision for all newborn boys.

In other words, parents should decide.

Hospitals once circumcised newborn boys routinely, but the practice is becoming less and less common in the United States. While it is routinely done for religious and cultural reasons among groups such as Jews and Muslims, the overall numbers have dropped — from around 79

percent of newborn boys in 1980 to around 55 percent to 58 percent in 2010, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Some parents are opposed to circumcision, viewing it as mutilation. For some parents, such as Hispanics, it is not part of their culture. But others who are ambivalent or uncertain may have turned away from the practice because some insurance and public health programs are declining to pay for the procedure. Eighteen states, including Florida, have stopped paying for circumcision under Medicaid, the state-federal health program for the poor. The American Academy of Pediatrics believes the health benefits are great enough that infant male circumcision should be covered by insurance, which would increase access to the procedure for families who choose it.

“Ultimately, this is a decision that parents will have to make,” Susan Blank, MD, chair of the task force that authored the Academy policy statement, said when it was released. “Parents are entitled to medically accurate and non-biased information about circumcision, and they should weigh this medical information in the context of their own religious, ethical, and cultural beliefs.”

The issue arises every few years. The last time the organization of pediatricians tackled the question was in 2005, and before that in 1999.

Since the last policy was published, scientific research has shown clearer health benefits to the procedure than had previously been demonstrated, the Academy says. According to a systematic and critical review of the scientific literature, the health benefits of circumcision include lower risks of acquiring HIV, genital herpes, human papilloma virus, and syphilis. Circumcision also lowers the risk of penile cancer over a lifetime, reduces the risk of cervical cancer in female sexual partners, and lowers the risk

of urinary tract infections in the first year of life.

Recently, a team of Johns Hopkins University disease experts and health economists warned that that steadily declining rates of U.S. infant male circumcision could add more than \$4.4 billion in avoidable health-care costs over the next decade. In a report published in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, it said the added expense stems from new cases and higher rates of sexually transmitted infections and related cancers among uncircumcised men and their female partners.

Already, the decline in circumcision rates has cost upwards of \$2 billion, it said.

“Our economic evidence is backing up what our medical evidence has already shown to be perfectly clear,” health epidemiologist and pathologist Aaron Tobian, MD, said when the study was released. “There are health benefits to infant male circumcision in guarding against illness and disease, and declining male circumcision rates come at a severe price, not just in human suffering, but in billions of healthcare dollars as well.”

The medical data shows that the procedure is safest and offers the most health benefits if performed during the newborn period. The Academy policy recommends infant circumcision be performed by trained and competent providers, using sterile techniques and effective pain management. Parents who are considering newborn circumcision should speak with their child’s doctor about the benefits and risks of the procedure, and discuss who will perform the circumcision.

It’s a good idea to have this conversation during pregnancy, and to learn whether your insurance will cover the procedure, so you have time to make the decision.

*Kiki Bochi is the mother of two and an award-winning writer and editor who specializes in family topics.*



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# Getting organized

## Mastering the daunting challenge of a busy new school year

BY JENNY GRACE TORGERSON

**F**acing a new school year can be a daunting task for both parents and children — even a month in, when children are still getting settled and parents are working out schedules. Organization can help the whole family feel more prepared to take on the challenge.

Starting from that first shopping trip for notebooks and folders, you and your child can work together to get organized. By giving children some ownership over their supplies, they may be more inclined to use

and take care of them. Even very young children can have a hand in selecting what they need for school.

Now that you have all the supplies, make sure that everything is labeled clearly with your child's name. Pencil boxes, lunch boxes, notebooks, and food containers are much more likely to find their way home again if they are easily identifiable. Sites like [namebubbles.com](http://namebubbles.com) provide easy-to-customize labels that are both dishwasher- and washing-machine safe.

If you don't have it already, you should come up with a morning routine that can help prevent those last minute searches for homework and

sneakers. Consider having children pack their bags and lay out their clothes (including shoes, socks, and underwear) the night before to save time in the morning. A laminated tag on your child's bookbag with a verbal or picture list of every item that needs to go in each day will help both you and your child remember important details like water bottles or math worksheets. Planning lunches for the whole week on Sunday can be another morning time-saver. Lastly, consider creating a photo book for young children to help them remember everything that needs to be accomplished in the morning. Laminate pictures of getting dressed, brushing teeth, eating breakfast, putting on a backpack, and any other morning tasks onto a metal binder ring to help children navigate the morning more independently, and free up your time for other chores.

Also, create a similar routine for the afternoon. Consider designating a special homework spot where children have the space, quiet, and all the supplies they need to successfully and peacefully complete their work daily. Fun, brightly colored homework-only supplies can help to add special appeal to the task. Similarly, there should be a designated area for school papers — permission slips, parent notices, and activity schedules. Make sure to check your child's bag every night for important papers. Many of these often come home at the beginning of the school year.

Lastly, if you haven't done so already, send your child's teacher a short e-mail to say hello and introduce yourself. This is a great way to introduce yourself or to reintroduce yourself if you met during a chaotic parent's night with many other families. An e-mail can help to make a connection and establish a relationship for the rest of the year.

*Jenny Grace Torgerson is a head pre-school teacher at an independent school in New York City and is finishing her masters degree in early childhood at Bank Street.*



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DEAR  
DR. KARYN  
DR. KARYN GORDON

# 20 things teen guys want moms to know

*I have two teen sons (ages 14 and 18), and I often find it difficult to know how to connect to them or know what they are thinking. Since you work with teens so much, could you shed some light on simple things mothers should know about raising boys?*

Several years ago I had a radio talk show and I enlisted several teen guys to give me some specific tips for parents! It's always a privilege to be able to get into the "headspace" of teens in order to really understand what they need and want. So I asked a teen named Eric Acosta and his friends to create a list called things they want their mothers to know. Enjoy reading and ask your son how many of these apply to him.

## The Top 20 things teen guys want their mothers to know

- Stop telling us to pull up our pants.
- Don't take it personally that we don't want to go shopping with you anymore.
- What may be "just a game" to you — e.g., sports, video games —

could be extremely important to us.

- You'll never think that a girl is good enough for us but we need to find out for ourselves.

- Leave "The Talk" to Dad.
- Try to bite your tongue when our voices crack.

- What may sound like noise to you is great music to us.

- Reminding is different than nagging.

- If you think something's wrong, you're probably right, but please don't press the issue. We'll come to you when we're ready.

- We eat a lot.

- Just because video games weren't around when you were a kid doesn't make them any less fun.

- My room isn't messy, it's "lived-in."

- Our first shave should not be considered a Kodak moment.

- If you give us too much freedom we might abuse it. If you give us too little, we'll definitely abuse it.

- My cellphone is not a 24-hour personal Walkie-Talkie.

- It's not just good decisions we learn from.

- Assuring us that our current problem is "not a big deal" won't change our minds.

- It's one thing to introduce yourself to our friends but another to interrogate them.

- Schoolwork is obviously important. That doesn't mean that other things aren't.

- Even if we don't say it enough, we do appreciate you.

• • •

*My firstborn just left for college this fall and I'm really scared that I'm going to lose this great relationship I have with her. What can I do to ensure our connection?*

Your question is one that many parents can relate to! I did a recent survey with young people going off to college and asked them what their parents could do to be helpful during this transition. Most impor-

tantly, they said, "Tell them not to worry so much." I realize this is easier said than done! However, they also suggested the following five tips:

**Send personalized care packages:** Receiving a customized package away from home is always a treat! Make sure it's practical and fun. Think about what magazines, music, or hair products they like.

**Take them out for dinner:** If you are within driving distance, take them out for a meal occasionally. Everyone likes a break from residence food. However, I must caution you — talk with them in advance about how often they would like this to happen. Some young people would prefer one time per week, but I find that most really need their space (especially at the beginning) and may only want to do the dinner date monthly or bi-monthly. Talk about expectations!

**Text, Skype, and send phone cards:** With today's technology it makes it much easier to stay connected. Some parents and teens like to text mostly (it's quick and fast), others prefer phone or Skyping (you can actually hear and see how they are doing). Be sure to mail phone cards to make connecting that much easier and cheaper!

**Ask open questions:** When you finally talk to them, ask specific questions: What is the best part of university? What is the worst part? Avoid asking, "How is university?" You'll get "good" or some other one-word answer. Be focused on really getting an idea of how their new life is away from home.

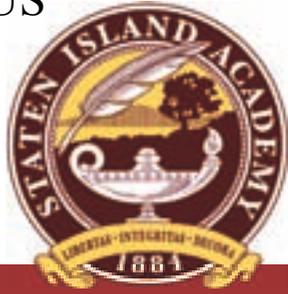
**Respect their space and don't take it personally:** Remember that they have entered a new chapter of their life. Make it clear you are there for them, but also respect their space. Try not to take this personally if they don't want to talk with you daily — this has nothing to do with how much they love you — they are growing up, and living independently is a great way to boost their confidence!

*Do you have a question for Dr. Karyn? E-mail her at [karyn@drkaryn.com](mailto:karyn@drkaryn.com)!*



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pirit is not measured by awards that line our mahogany bookshelves, but by the number of smiles we elicit. Let us always remember that there is always someone who looks up to us so let us lead by example, for our success as a society is measured by the outcome of tomorrow, not by the events that happen at present. Let spirit bridge the ignorance that divides us. Let spirit knock down the walls of ignorance that imprison us and

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# Real world math

## How to use tangible tools for teen math success

BY HEATHER SHANKS

**A**merican students sometimes display dismal performances when they make the leap from elementary to upper-level math. In the areas of creative problem solving, fluency of ideas, and mental agility, some students are falling short. Why?

Could it be that we are expecting teens to give up an important part of the learning process? In early years, we use pattern blocks and toothpicks to give our students pictures of new math concepts. Yet, when students graduate to algebra, geometry, or calculus courses, more “mature” learning techniques are favored rather than the tangible tools of math (manipulatives, games, and hands-on activities).

Unfortunately, what gets lost in that transition is a matter of brain function. More complicated math operations call more of the brain into action. Even though the sequential processing needed to perform a calculus problem may come from the left hemisphere, the right hemisphere is needed to access the big picture. Removing the tangible tools for seeing that big picture inhibits the student from tackling the problem with both sides of the brain.

### A question of outcomes

Exceptional educators know that

by attacking a problem or concept from the concrete to the abstract to the theoretical, students are able to interact with the material in a 360-degree fashion. My husband’s high school physics teacher was a genius at taking the abstract algebraic and calculus concepts used in physics and making them meaningful to the teenage mind. He used architecture, footballs, and model rockets to generate interest and make them think. He understood that math games don’t become obsolete when students reach a certain age. Instead, they simply morph from beans and teddy bear counters into activities with more of a “wow” factor.

That physics professor’s example forms a compelling case for the use of tangible education tools in the upper grades. It also raises the question of ultimate outcomes: what are we really trying to accomplish through math education? The discipline of math rests on a foundation of analytical abilities. Three of these — problem-solving competence, reasoning ability, and flexible thinking in application — are skills that cultivate a quick and agile brain by utilizing both hemispheres. Let’s take a closer look at how tangible math provides that type of 360-degree comprehension.

### Creative problem solving

Mathematical concepts occur in relationship to one another. They

build on each other, parlay off of one another, and because math is a step-dependent discipline, each step requires a correct answer to move the problem forward. Relationships like these are best discovered and analyzed with the help of symbolic representation. This is where tangible tools shine. As students are given a pictorial peg to hang a concept on, they can work through each step and see relationships they may otherwise overlook. In this way, manipulative tools accelerate understanding and let the mind process relationships, leading to creative solutions.

### Fluency of ideas

Real success in upper-level math courses rests on the student’s ability to think mathematically rather than plugging numbers into formulas. Evidence of mastery involves explaining why a solution is valid. Hands-on activities provide an impetus for students to take a concept, internalize it, and bring it to a logical conclusion. After solving a problem in this manner, students have the confidence and understanding to defend their position.

Every time a student has access to symbolic representation of a problem, his brain is being conditioned to look for all possibilities. After he has examined alternatives and verified that his answer makes sense, he can better articulate reasons for those answers.

### Mental agility

Mental agility is demonstrated when a student can switch between concepts to determine the most appropriate fit for a problem. Tangible math is a great tool for training the brain to wrap itself around the situation presented and apply the optimal concepts. Students begin by identifying known and unknowns using concrete tools. Then, they can take inventory of which concepts may apply, assess the information they have, and analyze what information they may need to look up. When new scenarios are presented,

## Tangible math toolkit

Here are some books, movies, and courses that can help teens with math.

- “A Mathematical Mosaic: Patterns & Problem Solving” by Stanford math professor Ravi Vakil, National Library of Virtual Manipulatives ([www.amazon.com/Mathematical-Mosaic-Patterns-Problem-Solving/dp/1895997046](http://www.amazon.com/Mathematical-Mosaic-Patterns-Problem-Solving/dp/1895997046))

- Visual Calculus (archives. [math.utk.edu/visual.calculus](http://math.utk.edu/visual.calculus))



- Geogebra — free open-source software; winner of the National Technology Leadership Award 2010 ([www.geogebra.org](http://www.geogebra.org))

- “Algebra in the Real World” movies ([www.thefutureschannel.com/algebra/algebra\\_real\\_world\\_movies.php](http://www.thefutureschannel.com/algebra/algebra_real_world_movies.php))

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology — open course materials including lecture notes, PDF files, practice sets, exam questions, and experiments tied to mathematical thinking ([ocw.mit.edu/high-school/calculus](http://ocw.mit.edu/high-school/calculus))

- Thinkwell Math — upper-level math courses using visual teaching techniques and illustrations ([www.thinkwell.com](http://www.thinkwell.com))

- Mathematica for Students — math graphing and visualization program ([www.wolfram.com/solutions/education/students](http://www.wolfram.com/solutions/education/students))



tangibles allow students to think of concepts as flexible and apply them appropriately. Flexibility in application demonstrates depth of comprehension.

### Bring back the beans?

Maintaining the use of tangibles throughout the transition from elementary math gives you an opportunity to reframe upper-level math. If your teen understands that math is pictures, and that those pictures evidence concepts, then he has a basis on which to tackle more complicated math material with confidence. Turning complex problems into pictures in the mind by using manipulatives, games, and riddles makes the study of mathematics more personal, dynamic, and creative.

Leave the beans in the pantry,

though, because you are no longer limited to elementary tools. A wide variety of creative and age-appropriate techniques are available to solidify complex mathematical concepts in the minds of your teenage students. Tangible tools for higher math have come a long way in recent years. Programs such as Mathematica are designed to create animations that help students play with and visualize concepts such as tessellations and spirographs. Prestigious universities utilize open-source software to make portions of their coursework available online. Riddles, games, and illustrations are bound together in subject-specific volumes, and are terrific resources for extra practice when necessary.

### Put it into practice

If all of this seems a little too

theoretical for comfort, check out some of the resources listed in the sidebar for more in-depth ideas on how to make math come to life for your high school student. In the meantime, here are a few examples to illustrate how you can implement tangible math in your current coursework:

- Use a Frisbee to determine different variables, such as wind speed.
- Pump up the water rockets and use triangulation to calculate height or speed.
- For the student whose mind is on driving, let him calculate the financing for that all-important first car.
- Take helium balloons (tied to strings) outdoors, and release them in order to study differing rates of climb.

- Let your more artistic student create a work of art using trigonometric functions.

- Use Riemann sums to estimate the area under the curve of an arch in your student's favorite piece of architecture, or determine the volume of a cone using huge waffle cones (and calculus).

The Internet is a terrific resource for activities to integrate with whatever mathematical concept your student is currently studying. Simply type in a math term, for example, implicit differentiation, with the word activity or illustration, and you will be directed to many hands-on or electronic idea sources, including many that have been contributed by major universities.

Better yet, have your student do this research to design his own practical work. By taking this initiative, your student will become more familiar and comfortable when the time comes for the more self-directed nature of study he will encounter in college.

### Final thoughts

Tangible math tools are critical for activating the entire brain in the quest to tackle the complex math concepts of high school. As your teen graduates to upper-level math courses, don't underestimate the valuable role of tangible tools in the development of analytical skills.

Being able to creatively solve a problem, defend ideas, and apply concepts to new and different situations are skills that will help your students rise above and put them on the path to math success.

*Heather Shanks, aka Professor Mom, is an author and researcher specializing in best practices in academic curriculum, character education, and learning styles. The Professor Mom website ([www.professormom.net](http://www.professormom.net)), is an education planning ministry for moms, providing low or no-cost resources and coaching to help families create an authentic home education. Shanks enjoys living and homeschooling with her husband, Professor Dad, and their two sons.*

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# Teens and dishonesty

Eye-opening truths parents need to hear

BY MICHELE RANARD, MED

**P**arents often desire emotional closeness with their teens, which should cultivate honesty in their relationships. But research shows that a shockingly high percent of teens lie, and not always for the reasons you may think.

In their 2009 book, "Nurture Shock," authors Po Bronson and Ashley Merryman summarize the

findings of Dr. Nancy Darling as they deconstruct the science of teen rebellion in an eye-opening chapter about lying.

One of the most shocking statistics revealed is the sheer number of teens who lie: 96 percent!

Does that mean parents are misjudging the quality of the relationship or love shared with their teen? Probably not.

To understand the discrepancy, we must understand a little more

about why kids are lying and what — if anything — parents can do.

## Why they lie

Darling, of Penn State University, studied high schoolers and learned that 96 percent of them hid the truth from their parents. What were they lying about? She found that teens lie about what they spend allowance on, whether their homework is done, whether they are dating, the clothes they wear away from home,

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Dr. Nancy Darling, of Penn State University, studied high schoolers and learned that 96 percent of them hid the truth from their parents. What were they lying about?

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the movie they're seeing, and with whom they're spending time. They also lie about drinking and drug use, what music they listen to, how they spend afternoons, whether a party is being supervised, and riding in a car driven by a drunk teen.

Are you thinking that your honor student probably lies less? Well, it turns out that kids who lie don't fall into one demographic — honor students, overscheduled kids — they all reported deception. Of 36 potential topics, the average teen lies to his parents about 12 of them.

Bronson and Merryman report that:

- Teens reported telling an outright lie 25 percent of the time.
- Teens reported avoiding the topic 25 percent of the time.
- Teens reported simply withholding relevant details about 50 percent of the time.

Before her research, Darling admits that she believed kids probably lied to avoid getting into trouble. So, she says, it was surprising to learn that the most common reason for the teens' deception was actually: "I'm trying to protect the relationship with my parents; I don't want them to be disappointed in me."

They do love you. But in their mind, loving you might mean protecting you — by lying.

And Darling says she was surprised by the number of parents with anxiety about pushing their kids into rebellion.

"Many parents today believe the best way to get teens to disclose is to be more permissive and not set outright rules," she indicates.

However, being permissive does not open the door to learning more about a teen's life! When parents lower their standards, teens interpret the lack of rules to mean par-

ents don't care and don't want the job of being a parent. It definitely does not pay to be permissive.

### Should you be worried?

For many parents who fear that their already rebellious tweens will be more rebellious in their teenage years, you may actually not have to worry.

Research in Bronson and Merryman's book suggests that teens objecting to their parents' authority peaks at around age 14 to 15. What is shocking is that this need for autonomy is stronger at age 11 than at age 18! So if you've been thinking the high school years are the high-risk years, think again.

Most parents get stressed out by arguing with their teens, but Bronson and Merryman note that it appears that in families with the least amount of lying, there is a higher ratio of arguing or complaining. Why? Teens don't necessarily see arguing and fighting as harmful or destructive.

The authors suggest the flipside to arguing for many teens is lying! So, a teen can lie to the parent and then go do what he wants behind the parent's back, or argue — in his mind, negotiate with his parent — and avoid lying. More than anything else, it seems to be most important to the teen how an argument gets resolved and whether he feels heard.

### Encouraging honesty

The research suggests teenagers are destined to lie about some things, but there are some ways parents can create a climate so their teens lie about less.

"The parents who are the most consistent in enforcing rules are the same parents who are most warm and have the most conversations with their kids," indicates Darling. Such parents set a few key rules (it's too unrealistic and impossible to enforce 20 rules) and explain why the rules are in place. By doing so, these parents demonstrate flexibility.

This spirit of collaboration encourages teens not to lie. Extend freedom to your teen so he can make his own decisions. Instead of hiding 12 areas from you, he might only be hiding as few as five.

*Michele Ranard has a husband, two teens, and a master's in counseling.*

### Resources:

Bronson, Po and Merryman, Ashley. "NurtureShock." Hachette, 2009.



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# Teenage smoking

Six helpful tips for parents trying to prevent teens from taking up a bad habit

**A**ccording to the Surgeon General's 2012 report on "Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults," each day in the U.S., approximately 3,800 young people under 18 years of age smoke their first cigarette.

The overwhelming majority of smokers, experts estimate approximately 90 percent, started smoking before they were 18 years old.

About 20 percent of American teens smoke.

One-third of smokers who began smoking as teens will die prematurely due to a smoking-related illness.

According to Shahriour Andaz, MD, FACS, lung cancer specialist and director of thoracic oncology at South Nassau Communities Hospital, it is important to proactively try to prevent teen smoking.

Nicotine, one of the more than 4,000 chemicals in tobacco, is highly addictive.

Among teens who do smoke, three out of four say they keep smoking because it's really hard to quit. A nearly equal number say they wish they had never started smoking.

"Someone who begins smoking as a young adolescent will have a far more difficult time quitting, can have more serious health problems, and may die younger than a person who begins to smoke in adulthood. It's important that parents and teachers do everything they can to dissuade teens and help them realize the health dangers and negative effects of smoking," said Dr. Andaz.

"Adolescents and young adults are extremely vulnerable to social and environmental influences promoting the use of tobacco," notes Gina Kearney, RN, South Nassau's



director of community education. "Add to that the fact that tobacco companies spend billions of dollars on cigarette and smokeless tobacco advertising, and it can be a true challenge for any parent to help their child stay tobacco-free."

Kearney offers the following prevention tips for parents:

**1 Be a good role model:** Smoking is more common among teens whose parents smoke. The earlier you can stop smoking, the less likely your teen will become a smoker. A parent who successfully quits also provides an equally strong positive message. It's not only a way to show your child

“Someone who begins smoking as a young adolescent will have a far more difficult time quitting, can have more serious health problems, and may die younger than a person who begins to smoke in adulthood.”

how much you care about him, it also demonstrates that you understand the challenge he faces.

**2 Appeal to your teen's vanity:** Since most teens believe they are invincible and will not die from cancer or any other disease associated with tobacco use, parents should appeal to a teen's vanity. Reminding them that smoking makes their clothes, hair, and breath smell bad, and that it can also turn their teeth yellow and cause wrinkles, can be extremely effective.

**3 Talk dollar and cents:** Teens are big consumers and generally enjoy buying clothes or electronic gadgets with whatever money they have. Explaining the current high cost of tobacco products and the effect it will have on their purchasing power can be a reality check. Do a simple math problem — if the cost of cigarettes is \$10 a pack and if you smoke a pack a day, how much money will you spend in a year? In 10 years?

**4 Discuss the glamorization of smoking:** When you see actors smoking in TV or movies, or see ads featuring adults smoking, discuss it with your teenager. Make sure he understands that advertising and

other media depictions are not real and are misleading. The majority of actors who smoke in movies are non-smokers off the screen. Smoking does not add reality to the film — it generates revenue for the film industry.

**5 Become an expert on smoking:** Making the case against smoking isn't hard, but having a full grasp of all the facts and using them in ways that are relevant to your child is important. For example, discussing how smoking affects a young smoker versus the health effects on older smokers is more relevant.

**6 Be a supporter and sounding board:** Lecturing and ultimatums do not work; empathy and understanding are the better options. It's unlikely that your teen will find peers who will quit with him or with whom he can even discuss quitting.

“Parents are the single biggest influence in the lives of their children and it's never too early to start warning your kids against smoking and other forms of tobacco use. It's important to get into the habit of talking openly with your children when they are younger. Eight percent of middle school students are already cigarette smokers!,” Dr. Andaz concludes.

## Find out more...

For more information, educational tools, and preventive assistance, Kearney recommends:

- The US Department of Health and Human Services, National Cancer Institute's "Quit Now TXT Program," teen.smokefree.gov (a mobile support, 24-7 assistance for quitting and social media pages, "a must for teens that truly speaks their language in a way they are comfortable communicating," she says);

- [www.notobacco.org](http://www.notobacco.org)
- [www.tobaccofree.org](http://www.tobaccofree.org)

- [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tips4youth.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tips4youth.htm)

- [www.fda.gov/tobaccoproducts/resourcesforyou](http://www.fda.gov/tobaccoproducts/resourcesforyou)

- American Lung Association's smoking cessation program Freedom From Smoking, [ffsonline.org](http://ffsonline.org)

- NY Smoker's Quitline: [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com) - (866) 697-8487

In addition, South Nassau periodically offers smoking cessation classes. For more information contact the Department of Community Education at (516) 377-5333.

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## MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SERADOVA

# Tough love

## Watching another mother discipline her son isn't easy



I was sitting at the subway platform recently, waiting for my morning train, when I noticed a little boy sitting next to me playing with a toy car. He was pushing it along the armrests of the platform seating, and being scolded by his mother.

"Don't you dare drop that car!" she told him. "If you drop that toy on the floor, it's going to stay there!"

From the tone of her voice, I knew that this mom meant business. She was clearly annoyed with the boy and, apparently, he had a habitual problem of dropping things on the floor. At least that's the conclusion I came to from hearing her yell about how he "always drops his toys on the floor." What's the big deal? That's what kids do, they drop things, or worst, fling them at you.

But I secretly hoped that he wouldn't drop the toy. I feared what would hap-

pen if he dropped it. What would she do? Was she really going to leave the toy on the floor? Would she throw it onto the subway tracks to try and teach him a lesson? Or would she hit him? These were the thoughts racing through my head as I sat there pretending to be interested in my iPad. Ironically, I was reading a book on French parenting, "Bringing Up Bebe," by Pamela Druckerman. According to this book, a French parent would tell the child once not to drop the toy, ask if the child understood, and expect him not to drop it.

As luck would have it (or just plain-old carelessness of a child), he dropped the toy car. Ugh! The mother yelled and said, "You see! That's why you're not getting it back!"

I felt sympathy for the little boy as he cried and begged his mother to give him the toy. He didn't yell back or kick or scream. He simply asked her, through his tears and puppy-dog eyes, if he could get it from the floor. An older woman who was sitting beside me picked up the toy car and handed it to the boy. She was on my side and she, too, was secretly cheering the boy on. He immediately grabbed it from the woman and soon after, his mother snatched it and threw it back on the floor, where it had originally fallen. This was definitely a case of mean mommy.

I wanted to tell her that she was being mean and cruel. "He's just a baby!" I wanted to shout at her. But I decided to mind my own business. The older woman next to me and I exchanged looks of annoyance toward the mother. The mother obviously believed in tough love. Or, maybe, the kid has a serious problem of dropping toys on the floor and she had had enough. The truth is, the mother was trying to teach her son a lesson, even if it was a harsh one. Maybe she wants him to have a higher regard for his things, or maybe she's tired of him losing toys all over the city (which no doubt, us parents work hard to pay for).

As the boy and his mother got on the train, I felt sad for him. But, like most children, he'll probably forget the trauma of losing his toy by lunchtime, and hopefully the lesson will last much longer than that.



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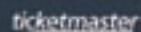
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# Visiting the gynecologist

What your daughter can expect on her first trip

BY JAMIE LOBER

**A**ccording to the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, girls should have their first gynecologic visit between ages 13 and 15. Depending on your family doctor, some prefer that girls go earlier or later depending on their health issues, concerns, and personal circumstances, such as if a teen is going off to college. You know your child best.

It is normal for a young girl to feel nervous and it can ease some of her stress if she understands what to expect. Basically, the first visit may simply be a conversation between your daughter and her gynecologist, in which she discovers what to anticipate at future visits and gathers information about how to stay healthy. Your daughter should be prepared to answer some personal questions about her menstrual period or sexual activities including vaginal, oral, or anal sex.

“Heavy periods, heavy menstrual bleeding, missing periods, and irregular menstrual cycles are all reasons to see the gynecologist,” says Dr. Leslie Hayes, chief of adolescent medicine in the department of pediatrics at New York Methodist Hospital. Young girls may feel relief just to know that changes in their body are normal.

“During the first two years or so, it is not unusual for the menstrual cycle to be irregular and it is not really anything to

worry about,” said Hayes. Young girls are encouraged to keep a menstrual calendar so they can see their pattern. “Write down the first day you start bleeding and the date you stopped, and do that monthly,” says Hayes. They will find that everybody’s period is not the same and does not come on the same day every month.

Your daughter may have her own agenda for the first visit and the gynecologist will be accommodating.

“Your daughter may want to start on some sort of birth control, may have a vaginal discharge, or may be having abdominal pain,” says Hayes. She may want to find out about screenings or just be reassured that she is developing normally. “Depending on the sexual history of the patient, we may need to do what we call anticipatory guidance with someone who is not sexually active to talk about their level of knowledge about protection, preventing sexually transmitted diseases, and preventing pregnancy, and if someone is active, we want to find out if they are interested in using protection or adding another birth control method,” she says.

Girls are often worried about confidentiality and should be reassured that information shared is kept private. If they feel more comfortable, they may have a nurse or family member accompany them for any part of the general physical exam or external genital exam that are often performed. A pelvic exam is not typically part of the first visit unless the girl complains of abnormal bleeding or pain. If she is sexually active, tests for sexually transmitted diseases may be advised, but most can be done by a urine sample. Sometimes vaccinations are addressed.

During the physical exam, the gynecologist checks the girl’s height, weight, and blood pressure. In the

external exam, she looks at the vulva and may give the girl a mirror so she can look as well, and learn about her body. The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists states that the pelvic exam involves looking at the vulva, looking at the vagina and cervix with a speculum, and checking internal organs with a gloved hand.

If your daughter understands the purpose of the Pap test, she will be more likely to comply.

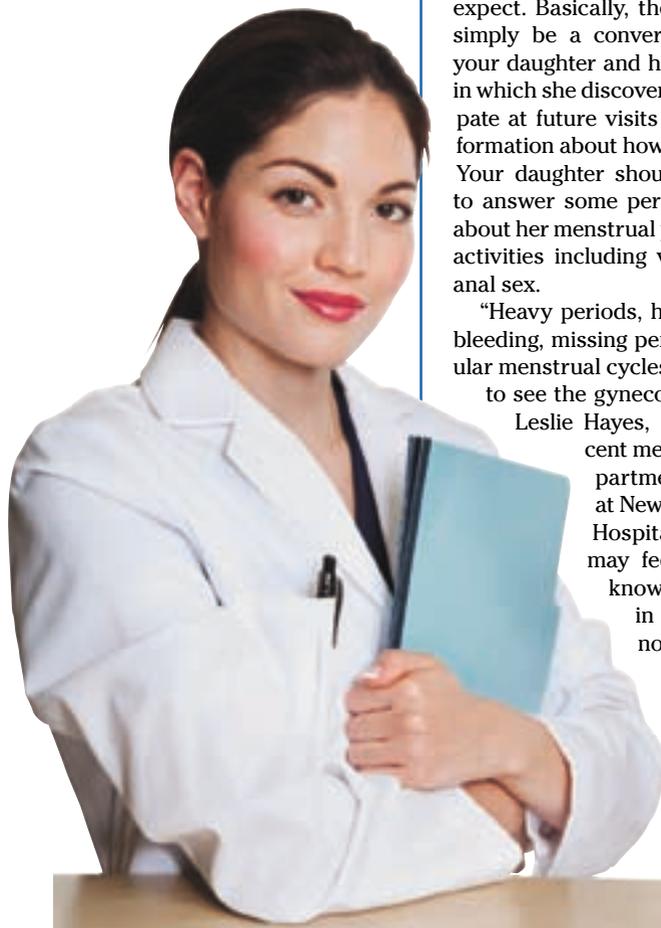
“The Pap smear is a screening test for cervical cancer, as well as any sort of cervical cell abnormality, and it is also a way to test for certain infections, primarily HPV,” says Hayes. During a Pap test a sample of cells is taken from the cervix with a small brush and the doctor may put one or two lubricated fingers into the vagina, up to the cervix, and the other hand will press on the abdomen from outside.

“The Pap smear is recommended to be done three years after you have started being sexually active or if you have what we call high-risk sexual behavior, which would include early sexual activity, history of sexually transmitted diseases, or pregnancy,” explains Hayes.

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists urges girls to talk about cramps, problems with menstrual periods, acne, weight, sex, sexuality, birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, alcohol, drugs, smoking, and emotional ups and downs. The gynecologist promotes maintaining a healthy weight through a well-balanced diet and frequent exercise. The doctors ask that girls avoid smoking, drinking, and using illegal drugs. If a patient is having emotional ups and downs or feels depressed, she is asked to turn to a mental healthcare provider. If girls are having sex, birth control is suggested, as well as protection from sexually transmitted diseases by using a latex condom. The gynecologist asks that girls know their partners, limit sexual encounters, and most importantly, keep up with routine exams, screenings, and immunizations. The gynecologist is meant to be a young girl’s partner and advocate for good health.

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

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THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

## Teens can learn from 'Charly's Epic Fiascos'

**Y**our teen may not like hearing the word "no," but she needs to know that sometimes you don't get where you want to in life if you don't yield to the negative response every once in a while.

If this sounds like your daughter, she might learn something by reading Kelli London's "Charly's Epic Fiascos," about a young woman who has never met a "no" she likes.

Charly has a crush on Mason, but she's been lying to him about everything. She's from the South Side of Chicago, not New York, and she isn't just going to visit her father in Brooklyn — she hasn't seen him since she was 5. And despite her new phone, she's not wealthy — Charly bought it with money she made at her part-time job at Smax's BBQ. And it was money she had to hide from her recently laid-off mother, Bridgette who claims every cent Charly makes!

Bridgette is nasty — she stole her daughter's bankroll and lost it at a

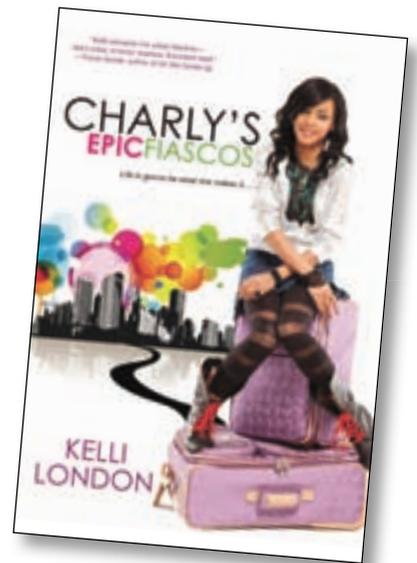
casino. So Charly is packing her belongings and leaving town on the first bus out.

Charly's aunt lives in the Big Apple too, and she's sure that her auntie will help her get an audition for a reality show that will hopefully start filming soon. In Charly's head, it's practically a done deal. They'll be no more frontin' for Charly — there'd be fame and fortune in her near future, fo' sure.

That is, as long as she can keep away from dealers, juvie, scammers, creeps, thieves, and other haters.

When I first picked up "Charly's Epic Fiascos," I was surprised at what I was reading. It seemed to be about a lying, young hustler who manipulated everyone around her to get what she wanted. It didn't seem like an appropriate book for young women.

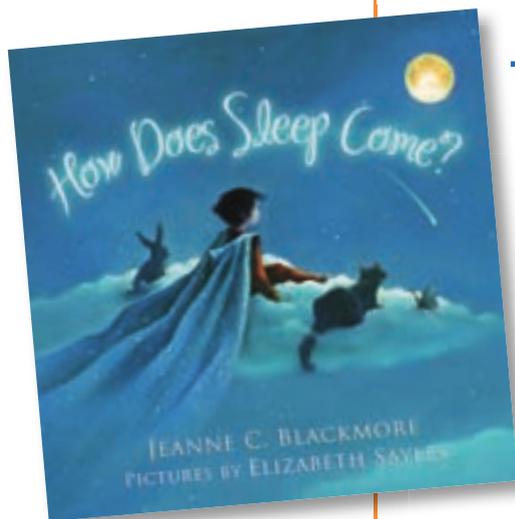
But "yes," it is. London gives her main character plenty of reasons for doing what she does, as well as a bit of regret. Because of the situations



in which London places her charmingly cheeky character, readers will fall in love with her. I know I did.

Parents should be aware that "Charly's Epic Fiascos" does romanticize the idea of running away. And is that good? I think that depends on who is reading this book. For 13-to-17-year-olds who can see the story as a story, I think it's a really fun read. But for teens that struggle to recognize fiction, "Charly's Epic Fiascos" is a big NO go.

"Charly's Epic Fiascos" by Kelli London [288 pages, 2012, \$9.95].



## A bedtime story that will make sleep come easily

**I**t may be difficult for your child to catch the train to Dreamville without a bedtime story. If so, "How Does Sleep Come?" by Jeanne C. Blackmore is a story she'll want you to read.

The book tells the story of Jacob, who knows it's bedtime but isn't very sleepy. His eyes are wide open.

Still, he climbs into bed and his mommy tucks the covers around him tight. It's dark. Jacob should be sleeping, but he isn't ready yet. That's when he asks Mama, "How does sleep come?"

She imagines a quiet, snowy night filled with snowflakes falling softly. Sleep sometimes comes quietly, she tells Jacob as he snuggles under the covers, his eyelids sagging just a little.

Jacob's mom thinks for another

minute — about a silent night along the water and tells him that sleep sometimes comes creeping in like fog. She tells him that it's big and wraps itself around you.

Jacob listens, and yawns. He stretches and rolls over.

His mom tells him that sleep can come in like a cloud in the sky, just floating along with nothing to say. You can't hear clouds, and you can't call them to come to your house. Sleep comes like that — just like floating along on a breeze.

Jacob is still awake, but he starts to curl up under the warm blankets. Maybe he is a little sleepy after all.

Sleep comes comfortably, Jacob's mother says, like a kitten curled up in front of a fire, purring happily, and then snoozing on its pillow. Sleep comes softly, like a butterfly's wing brushing gently on the petals of a tiny, white flower.

And now Jacob is very sleepy. He closes his eyes and starts to dream.

Can you guess what he dreams about?

Blackmore writes sparingly, using very few words but lots of simple ideas that little sleepyheads won't have any trouble grasping. Kids who love to ask "just one more question" will readily identify with young Jacob.

But while the story in this book is perfect for nap or bedtime reading, I thought that the illustrations by Elizabeth Sayles are the real appeal. Done in lush, soft, shadowy blues and grays, Sayles's artwork is quietly soothing, like a calming backrub. They even made this adult long for some shut-eye.

Meant for kids ages 3 to 5, I think a quiet 2-year-old might enjoy this book, so find it and keep it around. When it's time for a bedtime story, "How Does Sleep Come?" will surely come in handy.

"How Does Sleep Come?" by Jeanne C. Blackmore [32 pages, 2012, \$16.99].

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

## FAMILY HEALTH

BY CYNTHIA CHANG, MD,  
 director of the Pediatric  
 Residency Program at Staten  
 Island University Hospital

# How do vaccines protect my child?

**A**s parents, we are naturally concerned about the health and safety of our children. Just walking into a baby store and seeing all the different types of safety products, from child-proof door latches to outlet covers, are evidence of our concerns. One important step in making sure your child is protected from sickness is by getting him necessary vaccines.

Sickness and death are still caused by infectious diseases. While not as widespread as half a century ago, they are still a danger. Vaccines protect children by preparing their bodies to fight many potentially deadly diseases.

When your child becomes infected with germs, his body relies on his immune system to fight the invading organism. White blood cells activate and begin making proteins called antibodies that seek out the “intruder” to attack and kill it.

However, by this time, the germs may have already had time to cause a few symptoms. In some cases, the antibody response will be too late to be helpful, and the invading organism can cause a severe or life-threatening infection. Even so, by going on the attack, the immune system and its antibodies can eventually fight off many infections and help your child get well.

The important — and good — part of this whole process is that even after they’ve done their work, these antibodies don’t just disappear! They remain in your child’s blood, always on the lookout for the return of the same invaders.

If these germs do reappear,



When a child receives a vaccine, the body reacts by making antibodies against the particular germ the vaccine was made from. These “defense” antibodies remain in the body and are ready to fight if the real germ or infectious agent attacks. In other words, vaccines expose people safely to germs, so that they can become protected from a disease but not come down with the actual disease.

Simply put in a nutshell, the vaccine tricks our bodies into thinking they’re under attack by germs, and our immune systems make weapons (antibodies) that will provide a defense when a real infection becomes a threat.

Most of the vaccines your child receives are given by shots. One can be given in a nasal spray (a version of the flu vaccine).

But no matter how they are given, the general ideas of all vaccines are the same.

Sometimes one dose of a vaccine is enough to protect a person, but often more than one dose is needed. Some antibodies protect for a lifetime, but others need boosting. For example, measles antibody lasts a lifetime, but antibody to tetanus can fall below a level that protects you, so booster doses are needed.

Some viruses such as the flu can change enough to make the existing antibodies ineffective. That’s why the flu vaccine is needed every year.

Hopefully, this helps you understand how vaccines work to protect your child. And don’t forget to always talk to your child’s pediatrician if you have any questions or concerns.

whether it’s a few weeks or many years later, the antibodies are ready to protect and fight. They can often prevent the infection altogether or stop the infection before the first symptoms appear. That’s why, if you had the measles or mumps as a child, you never got it again, no matter how often you were exposed to the same infectious agent.

So what does all of this have to do with vaccines? Well, the principle is very similar even if the details are somewhat different. Here’s how vaccines use our own immune system to protect us.

A vaccine contains a killed or weakened part of a germ that is responsible for infection. Because the germ has been killed or weakened before it is used to make the vaccine, it cannot make your child sick.

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# The road to becoming a better stepmother

## Five tips for success on the stepmom journey

BY GAYLA GRACE

**P**arenting stepchildren can feel more like a burden than a privilege at times. We have the responsibility of a parent with few parental rights. Fold the laundry. Cook dinner. Run the carpool. Despite our efforts toward mundane parenting tasks, we get little regard as a parent, or appreciation for our help.

So, how do we learn to embrace our roles as stepmothers? A few key steps can help us thrive and gain confidence with the expectations placed on us.

- Be your own person. Don't try to replace the biological mom. Don't compete with her, either. It's okay to be different. When my stepdaughter

was young, she thought I was weird because I didn't know how to French braid hair. Spending a lot of time styling hair wasn't important to me but she hurt my feelings with her comments. Her biological mom was a wonderful hairstylist and I felt inferior to her. I now recognize the importance of accepting my differences and being comfortable with who I am.

- Work harder at being a friend, rather than a parent, particularly in the beginning. Developing a relationship with your stepchild is the primary goal for a new stepparent. Find common ground that allows time together comfortably. Let the biological parent take the lead in disciplining during the relationship-building period. Moving into a parental role too soon results in

anger and resentment.

- Forgive yourself when you fail. You will mess up as a stepparent. During the early years of my new marriage, I was easily irritated with the shortcomings of my stepchildren. I reacted in favor of my biological children during times of conflict and was frustrated with my lack of patience and fairness toward my stepchildren. As I sought to forgive myself for my mistakes and learn from my failures, I could pick myself up and begin again with positive strides in my stepparenting role.

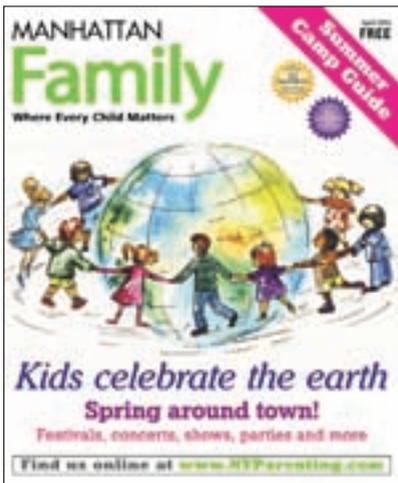
- Make your marriage a priority. It's easy to allow struggles with the kids to interfere with your marital relationship. Stay connected in tough times by taking intentional steps to work through conflict and create a united front. Recognize the challenge of blending a family and seek professional help if you reach an impasse in your relationships.

- Allow plenty of time for new relationships to develop. Continuously strive for love and acceptance of one another, but don't expect harmony overnight. The average stepfamily takes seven years to integrate. Complex stepfamilies (when both parents bring children to the marriage) can take longer. But there are rewards on the stepmothering journey as we learn to love and be loved by our stepchildren.

After more than 17 years as a stepmother, I experience far more rewards than burdens. I can honestly say, "It's been a privilege to take part in raising my stepchildren." I'm thankful for the healing that has occurred in our relationships and look forward to the years ahead as our family continues to grow and mature, and I embrace my role as a stepmother.

*Gayla Grace is a wife and mom to five children in her blended family. She ministers to stepfamilies through her website, [www.stepparentingwithgrace.com](http://www.stepparentingwithgrace.com).*





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# Beach treat

## Family fun grows up at Beaches Turks and Caicos

BY STACEY ZABLE

**T**he first time my family visited Beaches Turks and Caicos my girls were ages 3 and 6 years old. Imagine how thrilled they were to mingle with such beloved “Sesame Street” favorites such as Big Bird, Elmo, and Zoe. Our return visit, when the girls were then 7 and 10, held equal excitement with the characters and the long list of kid-friendly activities designed for the youngest guests. But when we made our third visit this August to the all-inclusive beachfront resort, I wondered if Beaches Turks and Caicos could deliver for my now “sophisticated” tween and teen, ages 10 and 13.

The answer is “yes!” Families with newborns to college-age children will find a stress-free vacation at Beaches Turks and Caicos, where

virtually everything is included in the package rate. The resort is one that your family can grow with, and is ideal for multi-generational family reunions where all ages can have fun doing what they love. The list of included activities in the water and on land is long, and even your picky-eaters will find something to please them with the resort’s 16 restaurants.

The resort offers an extensive children’s program divided by age group from newborn to age 17. Dedicated programming featuring age-specific activities include sandcastle-building, crafts, scavenger hunts, and boat rides.



Families with young kids will be delighted by all the “Sesame Street” specials: the weekly parade, stage shows, a twice-weekly breakfast where kids sing and dance with seven characters (at an additional cost), and the chance to “Bake with Cookie Monster.” The characters are often seen walking around the resort, where they provide hugs for kids and the coveted photo op.

Tweens and older kids will want to spend time at the Shadow Lounge, a game room with a pool table and foosball, and home to Scratch DJ Academy, where they can learn how to mix and blend music. The Xbox 360 Game Garage provides free-play video games. Pirate’s Island Water Park features nine slides, a lazy river, surf simulator, water cannons, cranks, and spray features.

Our tween and teen found happiness at the Shadow Lounge and water park, and, yes, even spending time with us. We had epic family foosball games (the one “sport” I excel in), and spent long fun-in-the-sun days. The resort fronts the Caribbean Sea bordered by a 12-mile pristine white beach. The water was so calm and clear that you could spot fish even without use of the complimentary snorkeling gear. We spent most days dividing our time between the beach, where we tried kayaking and aqua trikes, and relaxing or participating in family activities, such as water balloon toss and



Photo by Steve Sanacore



Photo by Steve Sinescore

19 hours a day, the 1950s-style diner offers kid-friendly food staples, as well as made-to-order sundaes and milkshakes. And for us, no matter what age the kids are, nothing says family togetherness more than sharing a banana split sundae under a moonlit sky.

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

At Beaches Turks and Caicos, nothing beats the soft sand and clear water at the beach (above). But you can also enjoy a boat ride, take a dip in the pool, or enjoy kids activities at Bobby Dee's.

relays, at one of the seven resort pools. The girls loved the never-ending virgin pina colodas available at the swim-up bars, and lounging on rafts in the pools. My husband played tennis each morning with the resort pro, and my 13-year-old and I were pampered at the Red Lane Spa with a "Couple's Massage." It was her first and long-anticipated massage, and needless to say, she is hooked for life.

The resort is made up of three "villages," creating an intimate feel, despite its large size of 614 rooms and suites on more than 65 acres. A guest room in any village allows for the use of amenities at all three. The Italian Village, where we stayed, is the most-recently added accommodations with spacious Family Suites with separate kid's rooms with bunk

beds with trundles, flat-screen TVs, Xbox, and lower-sized vanity sinks, all of which the kids will love.

Kid-friendly fare is easy to find among the 16 restaurants, which feature a range of cuisine including Caribbean, Japanese, Italian, French, and seafood with a la carte, buffet, and casual- to fine-dining choices. Our favorite was Barefoot by the Sea, due to its unique setting literally in the sand seated at upscale picnic tables. Children even have their own picnic tables sized for them so parents can eat on their own. Evening entertainment beyond the "Sesame Street" shows included beach and swim parties, family karaoke, and live entertainment poolside.

We ended every night of our trip with dessert at Bobby Dee's. Open

## Beaches Turks and Caicos

Here are some family fun facts about Beaches Turks and Caicos, Providenciales

- Ideal for families with children of any age.
- Nightly starting rate for a family of four is \$761 including accommodations, dining, unlimited

premium brand wine and spirits, nightly entertainment, water-sports (including snorkeling and scuba diving for certified divers), airport transfers, and all resort taxes and fees.

• Contact: [www.beaches.com](http://www.beaches.com); (888) BEACHES [(888) 232-2437].

# Calendar

OCTOBER



## Where kids learn about dinosaurs

**P**terodactyls, and raptors, and triceratops, oh my! Staten Island Zoo employee and dinosaur enthusiast Richie Mirissis teaches children all about their favorite extinct carnivores and herbivores on Oct. 7 during Dinosaurs and More.

Does a flamingo really descend from a barrosasaurus?

Find out as Mirissis teaches kids ages 4 to 12 all about the majestic, prehistoric, and “possible” ascendants of birds with real fossils, three-dimensional models, and

memorabilia from his T-Rex-sized collection of artifacts.

Crafts and activities such as clay fossil making will also be available under the guidance of the zoo’s volunteers.

Your kids won’t want to miss this. The event is free with zoo admission of \$8 for adults and \$5 for children.

*Dinosaurs and More at the Staten Island Zoo [614 Broadway at Martling Avenue in West Brighton, (718) 442-3101, [www.statenislandzoo.org](http://www.statenislandzoo.org)]. Oct. 7 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm.*

# Calendar

## 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!

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

## SAT, SEPT. 29

**St. George Greenmarket:** Saint Marks Place, Hyatt St. [www.americantowns.com](http://www.americantowns.com); 8 am–2 pm; Free.

Fresh veggies, fruits, baked goods, hand-made items and more.

## SUN, SEPT. 30

**Busy bees:** Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; [www.nycgovparks.com](http://www.nycgovparks.com); 1–3 pm; \$8 (\$6 members).

Rangers teach children 7 years old and older about the busy bees that make honey, and beeswax. Children can make lip balm to take home.

## MON, OCT. 1

**Teen cafe:** New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln. at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 2:30–4:30 pm; Free.

Young adults 13 to 18 years old, hang out with friends, play games and have snacks.

**Teen lounge:** Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln. at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 3:30 pm; Free.

For children ages 12 to 18 years old.

**Wii Gaming:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 3:30 pm; Free.

Children 13 to 18 years old.

## TUES, OCT. 2

**Tech time:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 3:30 pm; Free.

Teens 13 to 18 years old get computer time.

## FRI, OCT. 5

**Kids Yoga:** The Willow Pilates and Yoga Inc, 649 N. Railroad Ave. (718) 351-0011; 4–5 pm; \$15.



## It's Old Home Day!

**C**ome on home for Old Home Day at Historic Richmond Town on Oct. 21.

The tradition of Old Home Day started well over 100 years ago in New England and served as a way to welcome residents back to their home, sweet, homes. Townspeople prepared feasts to welcome old and introduce new friends.

Guests who visit Historic Richmond Town on Old Home Day are invited to explore its country houses, take a hay ride, search for the perfect gourd in its pumpkin patch, and watch demonstra-

Children are encouraged to explore the mind and body experience through breathing and visualization techniques and improve their concentration and focus.

## SAT, OCT. 6

**St. George Greenmarket:** 8 am–2 pm. Saint Marks Place. See Saturday, Sept. 29.

**Farm stand and Pumpkin Picking:** Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; [www.historicrichmondtown.org](http://www.historicrichmondtown.org); 9 am–4 pm; Free.

Organic farm-fresh produce grown on site at Decker Farm. Take a guided tour of the farm house, take a hayride and then pick that perfect pumpkin.

tions at the only working farm in New York — Decker Farm. Sightseers can also wheelbarrow back in time with traditional crafts, spinning, colonial cooking demonstrations, and ye olde storytellers. Expert quilters and old-fashioned beekeepers will also be at work.

So, make Richmond Town your home away from home on Old Home Day. Come on out for this free, daylong celebration.

*Old Home Day at Historic Richmond Town [441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court, (718) 351-1611, [www.historicrichmondtown.org](http://www.historicrichmondtown.org)]. Oct. 21 at 11 am.*

**Soap box derby:** Westerleigh Park, Willard Avenue at Springfield Avenue; (718) 442-0336; [www.nycgovparks.org](http://www.nycgovparks.org); 10 am; Free.

Start making those cars for this annual children's event.

**Suzi Shelton:** Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street; (212) 864-5400; [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org); 11 am; \$20 (\$17 members; \$13 children; \$11 children members).

The Brooklyn-based kindie artist will be performing as part of the Just Kid-ding Saturday series.

**Music for Healing:** Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 1000 Richmond Ter. between Snug Harbor Road and Tysen Street; (718) 448-2500; [\[ets.com\]\(http://ets.com\); 8 pm; \\$12 \(\\$15 at the door; children and students free\).](http://www.richmondcountyorchestra.brownpaperpick-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

Concert featuring the Richmond County Orchestra and violinists Alison Crowther and Kenneth Gordon.

## SUN, OCT. 7

**House tour:** Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; [www.historicrichmond-town.org](http://www.historicrichmond-town.org); 1–5 pm; \$8 (\$5 children; Free members).

Visit Guyon-Lake Tyson house and experience cooking demos over open hearths and then sample some of the desserts made from original recipes.

**Dinosaurs and more:** Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway at Martling Avenue; (718) 422-3174; [www.statenislandzoo.org](http://www.statenislandzoo.org); 1:30–3:30 pm; Free with zoo admission (donations requested).

Richie Mirissis shows children 4 to 12 years old fossils, three-dimensional models and items from his vast collection.

## MON, OCT. 8

**Cool School:** Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; [statenisland-kids.org](http://statenisland-kids.org); 10 am–5 pm; Free.

Have fun at the museum for the whole day thanks to Macy's.

**Teen cafe:** 2:30–4:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Monday, Oct. 1.

## TUES, OCT. 9

**Tech time:** 3:30 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Oct. 2.

## WED, OCT. 10

**Math tutoring:** Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); Noon–3:30 pm; Free.

School-age children get help with two plus two. For children in grades Pre-K to eight.

**South of the Border tales:** Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 4 pm; Free.

Children 6 to 12 years old listen to stories.

**Science stories:** Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 4 pm; Free.

Tweens and teens 12 to 18 years old listen to Comets for Young Adults.

## THURS, OCT. 11

**Toddler story time:** Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 11 am; Free.

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# Calendar

## Continued from page 35

Children one and 1 1/2 to 3 years old with caregivers hear a story with finger play and activities. Pre-registration required.

**Read aloud:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

For children 3 to 12 years old.

**Ribbon dance:** New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children 3 to 12 years old enjoy a performance of the Red Silk Dancers and learn the age old Chinese Ribbon dance. All materials provided.

## FRI, OCT. 12

**Ecology workshop:** Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; 1-5 pm; Free.

Greenbelt naturalists lead older children, (over 16 years), through the marsh to explore non-native plant species. Registration recommended.

**Doodlebug fun:** Blue Heron Nature Center, 222 Poillon Ave. between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; \$1 material fee.

For children 18 months to 4 years old with care giver. Kathleen Hagen reads stories, hosts sing-alongs and helps with crafts. Registration is required.

**Long Island Auto Show:** Nassau Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk. www.nassaucoliseum.com; 5-10 pm; Free.

Take a gander and stroll through new 2013 models.

## SAT, OCT. 13

**Long Island Auto Show:** 10 am-10 pm. Nassau Coliseum. See Friday, Oct. 12.

**Kids and Kritters:** Blue Heron Nature Center, 222 Poillon Ave. between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am-12:30 pm; Free.

Children 5 to 7 years with caregiver explore nature. Dress appropriately, plus a craft and story. Registration required.

**Krafty Kids:** Blue Heron Nature Center, 222 Poillon Ave. between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; www.nycgovparks.org; 1-2 pm; Free.

Children 4 to 10 years old with caregiver make their own natural creations. Registration required.

**"Lady and the Tramp":** New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org;



## Don't miss this fancy musical

**"F**ancy Nancy the Musical" is singing and dancing its way into the McGinn Cazale Theatre for an extended stay until Nov. 12.

Based on the children's picture book series by Jane O'Connor, this musical production has Fancy Nancy and friends, Bree, Rhonda, Wanda, and Lionel, competing for the coveted role of mermaid in their very first ever performance of "Deep Sea Dances." When the role goes to another girl, Nancy is stuck with the role

of the dreary old tree. Will Nancy bring her usual "fancy-flair" to her role, even though it isn't the one she wanted?

"Fancy Nancy the Musical" is suitable for children 3 to 10 years old.

"Fancy Nancy the Musical" at The McGinn-Cazale Theatre, [2162 Broadway at 76th Street on the Upper West Side, (212) 579-0528, <http://vitaltheatre.org>]. Saturdays and Sundays through Nov. 12. Performances at 11 am and 1 pm. Tickets from \$29.50 to \$45.50.

2-3 pm; Free.

Young children will enjoy a screening of this Disney classic.

## SUN, OCT. 14

**Hispanic heritage month:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.nyscience.org; 10 am-5 pm; Free with museum admission.

Celebrate La Ciencia y Yo with hands-on activities.

**Long Island Auto Show:** 10 am-6 pm. Nassau Coliseum. See Friday, Oct. 12.

## MON, OCT. 15

**Teen cafe:** 2:30-4:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Monday, Oct. 1.

**Tween craft:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

For children 5 to 18 years old.

**Teen lounge:** 3:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Monday, Oct. 1.

## TUES, OCT. 16

**Tech time:** 3:30 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Oct. 2.

## WED, OCT. 17

**Math tutoring:** Noon-3:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Wednesday, Oct. 10.

## THURS, OCT. 18

**Movie night:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 3 pm; Free.

The whole family enjoys a PG-rated flick.

## FRI, OCT. 19

**Toddler time:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 1 pm; Free.

Children 3 to 5 years old listen to stories and play with other toddlers. Pre-registration required.

**Doodlebug fun:** 1 pm. Blue Heron Nature Center. See Friday, Oct. 12.

## SAT, OCT. 20

**Pooch Parade:** Wolfes Pond Park, Hylan Blvd. and Cornelia Avenue; (718) 816-5558; Noon-3 pm; Free.

Bring your pet in costume. Prizes for best costume and longest tail.

**Krafty Kids:** 1-2 pm. Blue Heron Nature Center. See Saturday, Oct. 13.

**Spooktacular:** Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway at Martling Avenue; (718) 422-3174; www.statenislandzoo.org; 6-9:30 pm; \$14 (\$17 non-members).

Walk through the zoo and experience its transformation into Candyland, listen to fairy tales, see aliens, play a game of Family Feud and dress up for the annual costume contests.

## SUN, OCT. 21

**Making Strides Against Breast Cancer:** Clove Lakes Park, 1150 Clove Rd. (800) 227-2345; staten.island.strides@cancer.org; makingstrides.ac-sevents.org/statenland; 9 am - noon; Free.

Fund-raising walk.

**Day of the Dead:** Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 1000 Richmond Ter. between Snug Harbor Road and Tysen Street; (718) 448-2500; www.snug-harbor.org; 10 am-5pm; Free with admission.

Celebrate the holiday before the holiday.

**Deedle Deedle Dees, Moona Luna, and Babe the Blue Ox Concert:** 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. at E. 91st Street; (212) 415-5500; www.92y.org; 11 am; \$15, babies under 2 free.

Pack up the posse and come on in for

# Calendar

a bagel, a coffee or juicebox and some tiny tushy-kicking tunes. It's not your granny's kids' music.

**Old Home Day:** Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; [www.historicrichmond-town.org](http://www.historicrichmond-town.org); 11 am; Free.

Celebrate the old tradition with bee-keeping, rope making, spinning and chair making.

**Spooktacular:** 5:30-9 pm. Staten Island Zoo. See Saturday, Oct. 20.

## MON, OCT. 22

**Baby and me:** Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 11 am; Free.

Infants from birth through one and one-half with their caregivers.

**Teen cafe:** 2:30-4:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Monday, Oct. 1.

**Teen lounge:** 3:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Monday, Oct. 1.

**Wii Gaming:** 3:30 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Monday, Oct. 1.

## TUES, OCT. 23

**Tech time:** 3:30 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Oct. 2.

## WED, OCT. 24

**Math tutoring:** Noon-3:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Wednesday, Oct. 10.

**Story time:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 3:30 pm; Free.

Children 5 to 12 years old listen to "Katcha and the Devil" and other Czechoslovakian tales.

## THURS, OCT. 25

**Toddler story time:** 11 am. Great Kills Library. See Thursday, Oct. 11.

**Read aloud:** 3:30 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Thursday, Oct. 11.

## FRI, OCT. 26

**Halloween party:** Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 3:30 pm; Free.

Children 3 years old and up put on a costume and celebrate the spookiest day. Pre-registration required.

**Crafternoon:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 3:30 pm; Free.

For children 5 to 12 years old. Pre-registration required.



## Rocking out with the Suzie Shelton Band

**R**ock out at Symphony Space as it kicks off its "Just Kidding Saturday" series with a special performance by the Brooklyn-based indie group (indie rock for kids under 10), the Suzie Shelton Band, on Oct. 6. The Suzie Shelton Band delights audiences with a musical mix of sounds that illustrate a world full of slumbering lions, squishy jellyfish, and slithering serpents. Her catchy, snappy tunes stay with

you long after the concert is over.

Symphony Space also offers music, theater, dance, and a whole lot more for children of all ages.

The Suzie Shelton Band at "Just Kidding Saturdays" on Oct. 6 at 11 am. Tickets are \$20, (\$17 members) and \$13 children (\$11 children members).

*The Suzie Shelton Band at Symphony Space [2537 Broadway at W. 94th Street in Midtown, (212) 864-540, [www.symphonyspace.org](http://www.symphonyspace.org)].*

**Halloween:** Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; [www.historicrichmond-town.org](http://www.historicrichmond-town.org); 3:30-5 pm; \$10 (\$5 adults; \$9 children members Adult members free).

Trick or treat through the village. Wear your costumes and bob for apples, play games, and enjoy an old-fashioned spooky day.

**Halloween stories:** New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 3:30 pm; Free.

Children 3 to 12 enjoy a spooky story.

**Spooktacular:** St. George Theatre, 35 Hyatt St. between St. Mark's Place and Central Avenue; (718) 442-2900; [www.stgeorgetheatre.com](http://www.stgeorgetheatre.com); 8 pm; \$15-\$25.

The ultimate Halloween and magic show. Recommended for teens. Take a stroll through the haunted theater, but

don't get caught in the cobwebs.

## SAT, OCT. 27

**Chemistry day:** New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X 353; [www.nyscience.org](http://www.nyscience.org); 10 am-5 pm; Free with museum admission.

Get out your goggles and explore the wonderful world of science.

**Halloween party:** Conference House, Satterlee St. at Hylan Boulevard; (718) 984-6046; 11 am-4 pm; \$5 (\$10 hayrides).

Come on down for a day of spooky fun, magic tricks, balloon animals and a haunted house.

**Pumpkin carving:** Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway at Martling Avenue; (718) 422-3174; [www.statenislandzoo.org](http://www.statenislandzoo.org);

6:30-8 pm; \$16 (\$13 members).

Calling all artists, grab your tools and create a creepy, creative pumpkin. Enjoy a pizza dinner and listen to a spooky story. For children 5 years old and up. Pre-registration required.

## MON, OCT. 29

**Teen cafe:** 2:30-4:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Monday, Oct. 1.

**Teen lounge:** 3:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Monday, Oct. 1.

## TUES, OCT. 30

**Tech time:** 3:30 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Oct. 2.

**Monster Mash:** Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; [www.nycgov-parks.com](http://www.nycgov-parks.com); 4:30-6 pm; Free.

For children 2 years old and up. Haunted house, apple picking, egg on the spoon race, face painting, arts and crafts and more. Registration required.

**Roadmap to College Admissions:**

The Princeton Review, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Loop Road; (800) 273-8439; [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com); 7 pm; Free.

An admissions expert will advise students and parents on the college admissions process including topics such as admissions factors, selectivity, college searching, standardized tests, and timelines. Registration required.

## WED, OCT. 31

**Math tutoring:** Noon-3:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Wednesday, Oct. 10.

**Fright movie night:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org); 3 pm; Free.

Children 13 to 18 years old enjoy a scary movie in honor of the holiday.

## FRI, NOV. 2

**Doodlebug fun:** 1 pm. Blue Heron Nature Center. See Friday, Oct. 12.

## LONG-RUNNING

**Intrepid Air and Space Museum:**

Intrepid Sea Air and Space Museum at Pier 86, 12th Ave. at 46th Street; [www.intrepidmuseum.org](http://www.intrepidmuseum.org); Weekdays, 10 am-5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am-6 pm, Now - Wed, Oct. 31; \$30 general admission (\$26 seniors and college students; \$23 children 7-17 and veterans; \$16 children 3 to 6 years old; Free for active and retired military and children under 3).

Come aboard and explore the 12,240 square foot interactive Exploreum, fea-

*Continued on page 38*

# Calendar

## Continued from page 37

turing a variety of hands on exhibits as well as the Space Shuttle Enterprise which now has a permanent home in the museum.

**Fair:** Soho, 100 Varick St. (914) 295-4794; varicksflea@gmail.com; www.meetup.com/varicks; Daily, 10 am–4 pm; Now – Sat, Dec. 29; \$55/Space.

Enjoy shopping and schmoozing in the all day market.

**Creatures of Light:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; awang@amnh.org; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am–5:45 pm; Now – Sun, Jan. 6, 2013; \$24, \$14 children, \$18 seniors and students.

This interactive exhibit explores organisms that produce light, from the flickering fireflies to alien deep-sea fishes.

**Yak Packers:** Rubin Museum of Art, 150 W. 17th St. between Sixth and Seventh avenues; (212) 620-5000 X 344. www.rmanyc.org; Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:30–11:30 am, Now – Thurs, Oct. 25; \$10 (\$5 seniors and students; Free for children under 12 and members).

Children 2 to 4 years old explore the exhibits and collections, play, listen to stories, and crafts.

**Le Carrousel:** Bryant Park, W. 40th St. between Fifth and Sixth avenues; www.nycgovparks.org; Daily, 11 am–8 pm; Now – Wed, Oct. 31; \$2 per ride.

Fashioned to complement the park's French style, this classic ride features brightly colored animals and French cabaret music.

**Story museum:** Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; www.historicrichmond-town.org; Thursdays, 11:30 am–12:30 pm and 2:30–3:30 pm, Now – Thurs, Nov. 15; \$3 (Adults free).

Pre-schoolers listen to stories, do crafts, dance and sing.

**Orbis Pictus:** The Gallery of the Czech Center New York, 321 E. 73rd St. (646) 422-3399; info@czechcenter.com; www.czechcenter.com; Daily, 6:30–8:30 pm; Now – Wed, Oct. 17; Free.

Play Well is a series of site-specific installations in which artists and children collaborate to create experiences in visuals, sound and motion.

**Carousel:** Willowbrook Park, Eton Pl. and Richmond Avenue; (718) 477-0605; Fridays – Sundays, 11 am–5:45 pm, Now – Sat, Oct. 27; \$1.50.

The painted ponies, lions and tigers go up and down and round and round.

**House tours:** Conference House, 298 Satterlee St. at Hylan Blvd. (718) 984-6046; www.conferencehouse.org; Fridays – Sundays, 1–4 pm, Now – Sun, Dec. 9; Free.



## 'Legendarium' at the circus

**T**ake a bite out of the Big Apple Circus as it opens its 35th season at Lincoln Center's Damrosch Park from Oct. 20 through Jan. 13, 2013.

Big Apple Circus somersaults back in time with its brand new show "Legendarium," which highlights the history of the big top with incredible feats. There will be a flying trapeze act, jugglers, majestic horses, death-defying stunts on bicycles, and high-wire performers. The muscled men of the Quinterion Troupe will also

mystify children of all ages as they demonstrate unparalleled power and strength by flipping, throwing, and catching a fearless maiden.

"Legendarium" runs daily from Oct. 20 through Jan. 13, 2013 with performances running approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes. Ticket prices start at \$25.

*Big Apple Circus at Lincoln Center's Damrosch Park [62nd St. between Amsterdam and Columbus avenues in Central Park West. (888) 541-3750, www.bigapplecircus.org]. Oct. 20 through Jan. 13, 2013.*

Visit and explore the house and the grounds.

**Kidz Cook:** Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenisland-kids.org; Fridays, 2–3 pm, Now – Fri, Nov. 2; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Children explore the culinary arts at this fun event.

**Fun Fridays:** Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; www.nypl.org; Friday, Oct. 5, 3:30 pm; Friday, Oct. 12, 3:30 pm; Friday, Oct. 19, 3:30 pm; Friday, Oct. 26, 3:30 pm; Free.

Children 3 years and older hear stories, sing songs, and do a fun craft.

**Winged Tapestries Moths at Large:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am–5:45 pm; \$24 (\$14 children, \$18 seniors and students).

This exhibition features 34 striking and dramatic images of moths, displaying the arresting beauty and surprising diversity of moths from Ottawa-based photographer Jim des Rivières. Runs through September 2013.

**Beginners trainer program:** Long Island Aquarium & Exhibition Center, 431 E. Main St. (631) 208-9200, X H20; reservations@amwny.com; www.longislandaquarium.com; Saturdays, 10:15 am & 2:00 pm, Now – Sat, Sept. 29; \$150 (Members: \$125).

Children 10 years old and above have an opportunity to learn how to be a trainer and work with seals and sea lions.

**Storytime:** Barnes & Noble, 2245 Richmond Ave. at Travis Avenue; (718) 982-6983; www.barnesandnoble.com; Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10:30 am, Now – Sat, Nov. 24; Free.

Children listen to a different story each week.

**Tutoring:** New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org; Tuesdays, 3:30–5:30 pm, Saturdays, 11 am–1 pm, Now – Sat, Sept. 29.

Children pre-K to eighth grade get assistance in math and reading from Staten Island Tech volunteers.

**Basketball clinics:** North Meadow Recreation Center, 97th St. Transverse Rd. (212) 348-4867; www.nycgovparks.org; Saturdays, Noon–2 pm, Now – Sat, Oct. 27; Free.

Children 9-17 get help with the B-ball game.

**Resources:** Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; Monday, Oct. 1, 4 pm; Wednesday, Oct. 3, 4 pm; Wednesday, Oct. 10, 4 pm; Monday, Oct. 15, 4 pm; Wednesday, Oct. 17, 4 pm; Monday, Oct. 22, 4 pm; Wednesday, Oct. 24, 4 pm; Monday, Oct. 29, 4 pm; Wednesday, Oct. 31, 4 pm; Free.

Teens 13 to 18 years old learn all about what the library has to offer in homework help and research.

**After school book club:** Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; www.historicrichmond-town.org; Wednesdays, 3:30–4:30 pm, Now – Wed, Dec. 26; Free (plus cost of book).

It's back. Students in grades four to seven read and discuss selected books covering major periods in history.

**The Butterfly Conservatory:** American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5200; awang@amnh.org; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am–5:45 pm; beginning Sat, Oct. 6; \$24, \$14 children, \$18 seniors and students.

The annual exhibition "Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter" returns and celebrates its 15th year.

**Square dancing:** Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; www.historicrichmond-town.org; Mondays, 4:30–5 pm, Mon, Oct. 15 – Mon, Dec. 17; \$5 (Free for one child under 16).

It's easy, fun and do-si-do. No experience necessary. (No class Nov. 12.)

**Tot Shabbat:** Temple Israel Reform Congregation of Staten Island, 315 Forest Ave. (718) 727-2231; tmplisrael@aol.com; Friday, Oct. 19, 6 pm; Friday, Nov. 16, 6 pm; Friday, Free.

Little ones enjoy a service filled with music and song that's just right for their level of understanding and participation.

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Photo by Gene Schiavone.

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ABT highly recommends *The Nutcracker* for children at least 4 years old. No refunds or exchanges. Casts and prices are subject to change.  
**David H. Koch is the Lead Underwriter of *The Nutcracker*.** LINDA ALLARD IS THE ORIGINAL UNDERWRITING SPONSOR OF *THE NUTCRACKER* COSTUMES.

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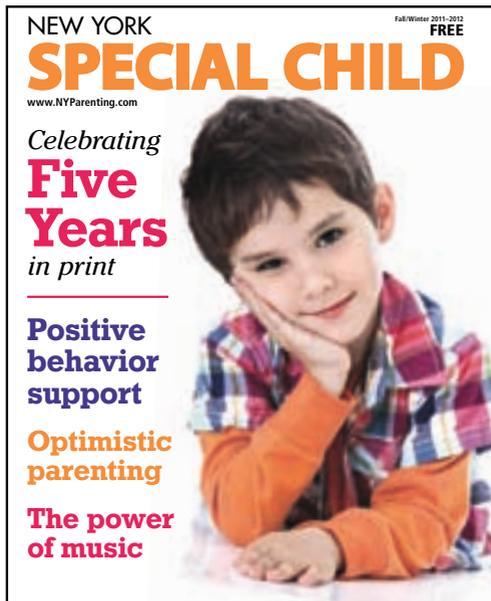
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# New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS

## Wild thing

Inspired by the classic 1963 children's book "Where the Wild Things Are," this sensational Halloween costume will have your mischief maker playing the character Max, "king of all wild things," in no time. Manufactured by Pottery Barn Kids, it brings to life the imaginative boy, who is already disguised as a wolf. It's made of soft polyester chamois with polycotton lining (for warmth and comfort), and it's topped with a regal, shimmery crown. The separate, lined headpiece does not obscure a kid's vision, increasing the odds that he will keep it on longer. Both the bodysuit and headpiece have Velcro closures, so the costume is easy to put on and take off. It's a beautiful tribute to beloved "Wild Things" author-illustrator Maurice Sendak, who died in May at age 83, to unleash the latest generation of his fans (sized 12-24 months, 2-3T, and 4-6) disguised as one of his best-known characters for a Halloween rumpus.

Max costume, \$79, and *Where the Wild Things Are* monster treat bag, \$14.50, [www.potterybarnkids.com](http://www.potterybarnkids.com).



## A dog's 'tail' of friendship

Celebrate this spooktacular season by popping in a DVD of "Vampire Dog," and you may find it's just the ticket to getting your whole family howling with laughter. There's nothing scary about the pooch in question, Fang (given a hilarious, sarcastic voice by "Saturday Night Live" alum Norm MacDonald). Instead, Fang delivers one-liners and sage advice to his owner, a tween named Ace (Collin MacKechnie), who needs all the help he can get as the awkward new kid at the Lugosi Public School, where the monsters are the "cool" students,



who tease, bully, and put down the academic achievers.

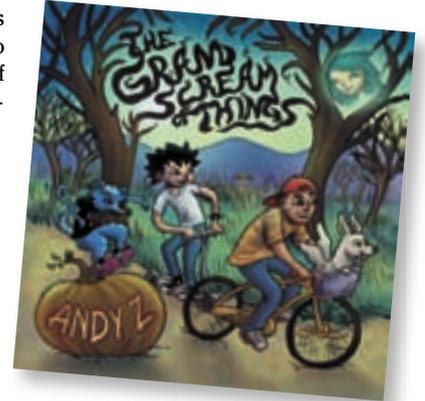
Don't worry, parents — despite the moniker of "vampire," Fang is not a blood-thirsty hound, but rather a red-gelatin-dessert-craving canine, who happens to have an allergic reaction to direct sunlight. Although the sweet-toothed pooch catches the eye of mad scientist Dr. Warhol (Amy Matysio), there's a happy ending for the boy and his dog.

The tale, directed by visual effects expert Geoff Anderson, is followed by comic bloopers and outtakes.

"Vampire Dog" DVD, \$14.98, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

## It's storytime for tweens

Indie kids musician Andy Z has recorded a not-too-spooky audio play on CD, "The Grand Scream of Things," just in time for everyone's favorite haunting holiday. "The Grand Scream" tells the tale of Andy Z on a Halloween quest to find Sandy Witch. Joined by his talking chihuahua Reggie, he hopes to return her magic wand to her — and catch the eye of an intriguing alien. The story joins narration with songs in a variety of musical styles. One of the highlights is Jam Master Z and the Baking Fools singing "How We Roll," a pumpkin bread recipe set to hip-hop music, with an unexpectedly sweet message calling for all people to show respect and love

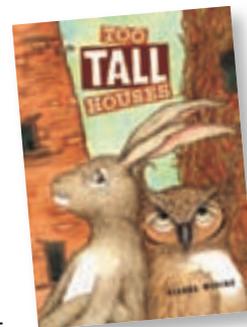


towards each other. Recommended for children ages 8–12.

"The Grand Scream of Things" CD by Andy Z, \$14.99, [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com).

## Whooo wins this tall tale?

If there's anything city dwellers love, it's our views, so urban families can't help but appreciate Gianna Marino's new book about Rabbit and Owl, who vie for light and scenery. In "Too Tall Houses" (Viking), Owl and Rabbit find themselves in a race to build the highest home after Rabbit's corn obscures Owl's view, and the



angry bird's counter-attack shades Rabbit's garden. By putting their own needs before each other's, the animals create towers that are hilariously lofty. Recommended for children ages 3–5, "Too Tall Houses" is as well written as it is beautifully illustrated.

"Too Tall Houses" by Gianna Marino, \$16.99, [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com).

## Elbow wrap curbs germs

Cold season is upon us, so parents need to remind kids to sneeze into their elbow — not into their hand where the germs can easily be spread. It seems difficult for kids to remember this healthy suggestion, but if they were wearing a colorful reminder, like My Sneezee, it could jog their memory. My Sneezee is similar in design to a leg warmer, but the brightly colored band is pulled up on



the arm like a knitted sleeve. When the child coughs or sneezes, they can direct their germ-riddled spray into the machine-washable Sneezee. They are soft, absorbent, and are offered in 19 designs, including sports (pictured).

My Sneezee arm band three-pack, buy one pack for \$14.95 plus \$4.95 postage and get one pack free, [www.mysneezee.com](http://www.mysneezee.com).



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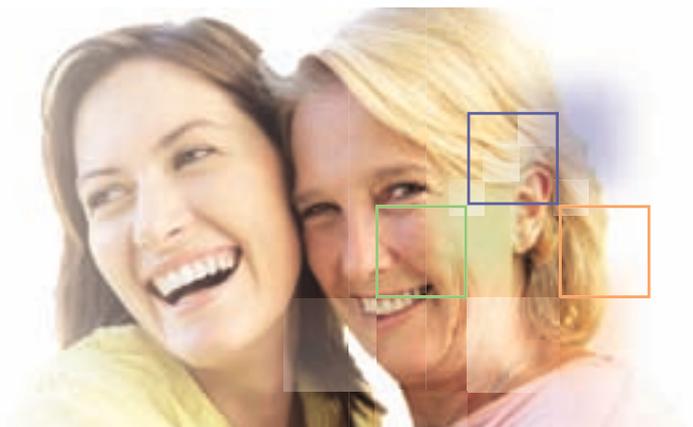
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