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Family February 2013



24



30



26

FEATURES

6 Flu: Learn how to stay safe

The flu has hit the city hard this year. Keep yourself and your family healthy
BY JAMIE LOBER

8 Everyday love

Show love to your children with these simple tips
BY KIKI BOCHI

10 Hover charge

'Helicopter parents' can keep their kids from taking off
BY LAURA J. VAROSCAK

18 Sparkling smiles

How to protect and promote your child's dental health
BY KIKI BOCHI

24 Calling young artists!

There's lots to explore at the Children's Museum of Art
BY MARIE HUESTON

28 The right to know

Is there a way to tell if your home is really smoke-free?
BY SHEELAH A. FEINBERG

COLUMNS

12 Just Write Mom

BY DANIELLE SULLIVAN

14 Healthy Living

BY DANIELLE SULLIVAN

16 Mommy 101

BY ANGELICA SERADOVA

22 Good Sense Eating

BY CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

26 Lions and Tigers and Teens

BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL

34 Family Health

CALENDAR

30 February Events

SPECIAL SECTIONS

20 Catholic Schools Directory

33 The Marketplace



14



16

Letter from the publisher

Call for love

A number of our columnists in this month's issue have turned their attention to this "thing" called love. Of course, it's February and the time of year when so much focus is on romance and expressions of tender feelings.



So what is love? How do we know it when we have it or find it? How do we avoid the pitfalls of love, the false alarms and wrong choices that break our hearts and waste our time?

These are the questions that parents wish so much to be able to answer when their tweens and teens face the inevitable break-ups or heartbreaks or unrequited love experiences. We recall as parents looking back on the hurts of our

own youth the disappointments and sorrows. If only we could have the formula to give our youngsters that would help them through the pathways of love and longing. But we can be bracing and understanding and comforting even when

we hear things like, "If you loved me I wouldn't have to go to school", recently said to a member of our staff by her young son.

We need more love in this world, that's for sure. We need to love the ones who have no love, we need to spot the need for love in the unloved around us and help them feel secure, safe and untroubled. As parents we need to reach out for help for our children when and if we

recognize they are facing issues we are incapable of handling for them on our own. This is also a part of love. It is our responsibility to instill love and trust and security in those babies who come into our arms as brand new people and if they are in trouble, it is loveable to reach out for help.

In spite of horrible headlines from time to time, I believe we all are becoming more loveable. I see incredible changes sociologically with far less polarization, anger, revenge and separation. I see a growth in tolerance, understanding and acceptance and huge changes that make me know that many of us humans have come a long way. We are moving forward and there is progress on every front and that is because of love.

So we love our children, our pets,

our family, our friends, and if we're very fortunate, we get a partner to experience it all with that makes us less on our own. Some do and some don't. That's just the way it is. Not an easy thing to explain to one's children who are all hoping and dreaming of love everlasting and the bells and the banjos ringing.

Love is the answer. I say that every year and I mean it. We can't have enough. We must treasure every piece of it that comes our way.

Thanks for reading.

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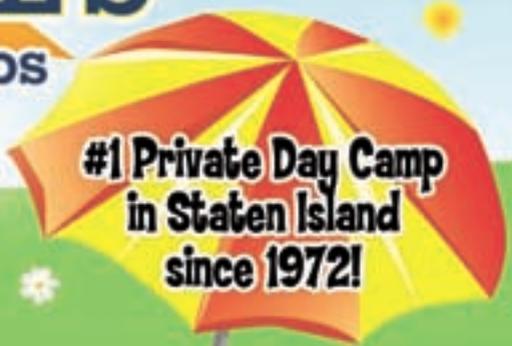
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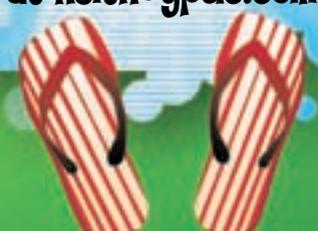
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FLU

Learn how to stay safe

The flu has hit the city hard this year. Keep yourself and your family healthy

BY JAMIE LOBER

The flu has hit New York hard this year and has the city's parents talking.

Word out is that this season's vaccine is not as effective as it should be, making some patients hesitant about getting the flu shot for them and for their children. But doctors are stressing that getting the shot is better than nothing.

"Initially, patients refused flu vaccines because they were concerned about side effects and getting the flu from the vaccine, so it is important for people to know that it is not a live virus," said Dr. Nieca Goldberg, clinical associate professor of the Department of Medicine at Leon H. Charney Division of Cardiology, and director of the Joan H. Tisch Center for Women's Health at New York University Lagone Medical Center. "Although it is not 100-percent effective, it is 62-percent effective and that is better than nothing," said Goldberg.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the flu is a contagious respiratory illness that can infect the throat, nose, and lungs, causing





Regardless of your decision to get vaccinated, you should take proper precautions.

mild to severe illness.

For some people, the flu is more dangerous than for others.

"People who are particularly at risk for getting the flu are people with heart disease, lung disease, and illnesses that lower their immunity, like cancer," said Goldberg.

Scientists try to stay ahead of things by changing the vaccine each year depending on what the epidemiologists see as the trend.

"Last year's vaccine does not help you," said Goldberg.

Sometimes, people do not realize they have the flu at first.

"You start to feel achy all over, your muscles ache, you are very tired, and you may have a cough, diarrhea, or vomiting," said Goldberg. "Sometimes, the flu requires hospitalization. If you are dehydrated, not eating, dizzy, or feel like you are going to faint, you may be given intravenous fluids."

Symptoms are different in terms of intensity compared to your routine cold. It is important to remember that not everyone with the flu has a fever. Being prepared is the key to fighting the virus.

"A thermometer is a good piece of medical equipment to have in your house, and you should have acetaminophen on hand to take for muscle aches," advised Goldberg.

WebMD states that Americans are turning to cold and flu supplements in greater numbers this year. Instead of over-the-counter medications, people are considering natural remedies such as taking vitamin C, echinacea, and zinc, because the Food and Drug Administration has released reports about some over-the-counter cold and flu treatments being ineffective.

Studies show that while vitamin C can improve the immune system, it does not prevent colds when given in doses of one gram per day. But, it has proven to be beneficial as a treatment, reducing the duration of colds by as much as 24 to 36 hours.

Regardless of your decision to get vaccinated, you should take proper precautions. If you are exposed to someone who has the flu, you should talk to your doctor about antiviral drugs, which are typically between 70 and 90 percent effective at preventing you from getting sick. It is helpful to stay out of crowds and close quarters as best you can during flu season.

If you suspect you have the flu, take action.

"The fastest way to get rid of the flu, if you are having the most severe case, is to talk to your doctor so he can prescribe an antiviral medication known as Tamiflu, which shortens the course. The other thing you can do is stay home and rest," said Goldberg. If it seems to get worse instead of better, seek medical attention.

If you are feeling very sick, you should not go to work. If your child is sick, do not send her to school. Try to avoid sharing utensils, glasses, and personal items. Common surfaces like telephones, computer keyboards, and doorknobs should be wiped down regularly to decrease the spread of germs.

Washing your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water is also a good means of prevention. Even better, you can get your child in the habit of washing for the duration it takes to sing "Happy Birthday."

Lifestyle choices like managing stress, getting adequate sleep at night, eating a balanced diet, and staying hydrated can make a difference in your flu-fighting potential.

Do not think you are immune to this epidemic. Be safe rather than sorry by consulting your pediatrician or family doctor about what you can do today.

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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Everyday Love

Show love to
your children
with these
simple tips

BY KIKI BOCHI

Valentine's Day gets many people thinking about love. But in truth, love is something you show your children every day, through actions big and small.

Our actions speak more of love than all the candy, cards, and grand gestures in the world.

"While we mark holidays, children count every day as a reminder of how much they are valued, loved and respected," says Peter A. Gorski, MD, an advisor to the American Academy of Pediatrics' website, HealthyChildren.org. "Seemingly small efforts to give a child our full attention, to appreciate a child's interests, to acknowledge a child's genuine feelings — these have huge effects and rich rewards well beyond the moment."

Here, from the American Academy of Pediatrics, are some ideas on how to be a more loving parent. Better than a bouquet of roses, these dozen tips will bring smiles to your child's face all year long.

- Use plenty of positive words with your child. Try to avoid using sarcasm, as children often don't understand it, and if they do, it creates a negative interaction. Banish put-downs from your parenting vocabulary.

- Respond promptly and lovingly to your child's physical and emotional needs. Remember, there is amazing power in a simple hug.

- Make an extra effort to set a good example at home and in public. Use words like "I'm sorry," "please," and "thank you."

- Make plans to spend time alone with your child or teen doing something he enjoys. There is nothing more



valuable you can give your child than your time and undivided attention.

- When your child is angry, argumentative, or in a bad mood, give him a hug, or other gesture of affection. Don't escalate things by getting mad as well. A simple statement like, "I see you are feeling angry today" can help validate him and defuse the situation. When he calms down, talk with him about his feelings.

- Use non-violent forms of discipline. Structure, rules, and limits are important to all children. Punishments can include time-outs or suspending privileges, such as television time or other activities. Allowing children of any age to constantly break important rules without discipline only encourages more rule violations.

- Your child's health depends on the care and guidance you offer during the early years. By taking your child to the doctor regularly, keeping him safe from accidents, providing a nutritious diet, making sure he gets enough sleep, and encouraging exercise, you help protect and strengthen his body.

- Help your child foster positive relationships with friends, siblings, and members of the community. Encourage cooperation in your home rather than competition between siblings. Organize get-togethers with extended family, and make your child's friends feel welcome in your home.

Help your child connect with a larger community through sports and activity programs, community groups, or your church or synagogue.

- Mark family nights on your calendar so the entire family can be together. Put a different family member's name under each date, and have that person choose the game or activity for the evening. Choices can include board games, playing basketball, taking a walk together, or even doing a creative craft.

- Let your child cook with you to familiarize him with good food choices. Involve your child in the entire process, from planning the menus, to shopping for ingredients, to the actual food preparation and serving. Not only will your child eat better, but you will also turn a daily chore into a fun, shared experience.

- Help your child develop self-esteem. Your child needs your steady support and encouragement to discover his strengths. He needs you to believe in him as he learns to believe in himself. Loving him, spending time with him, listening to him, and praising his accomplishments are all part of this process.

- Don't forget to say, "I love you," every day to children of all ages.

KiKiBochi, an award-winning journalist, reads hundreds of reports monthly to bring readers the latest insights on family health and child development.

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Hover charge

'Helicopter parents' can keep their kids from taking off

BY LAURA J. VAROSCAK

Nancy was thrilled to receive an acceptance letter from her top-choice Ivy League school. For years, she researched the best college programs and studied how to produce a winning application package.

She hired one tutor to help with SAT preparation and another to help write a successful personal essay. She visited many campuses, touring and networking with deans, admissions directors, and professors. It was now time to share the good news with her son, Will — the one going off to college.

Will is among the thousands of young people, born between 1982 and 1995, who fall victim to a “helicopter parent.” The term first appeared in the 1990s to describe a specific group of baby boomers who hover over their children throughout every stage of their development. Despite good intentions, these parents do more harm than good.

This ineffective parenting style usually begins in preschool (with over-programmed kids attending karate, piano, ballet, yoga, gymnastics, swimming, art, and cooking classes after their regular school day) and escalates to college and beyond.

Lisa, a recent business school graduate, has always appreciated her father’s involvement in her life. A few months before graduation, he wrote her resume, embellishing it with impressive (albeit exaggerated) information, and spent big money on designer business cards. Now, he accompanies his 21-year-old daughter to career fairs and job interviews, often intervening when the delicate subject of salary comes up.

“She’s a bright girl, but I don’t want anyone taking advantage of her. I want her to start out comfortably.”

Lisa graciously accepts his help. “It’s nice to have someone who

cares so much about me and my future. I’m very lucky.”

It’s typical for parents to micromanage their young children. Babies rely on their caregivers to nourish and protect them. But for many parents, letting go becomes an emotional challenge — even when the child is ready for independence. As children grow older, they deserve opportunities to become more self-reliant and responsible. These are basic, but crucial, life skills. But helicopter parents interfere with every aspect of their child’s life, giving a very clear message: “You cannot succeed without me.”

They do not allow their kids to fail, or succeed, without their help. Children cannot learn to trust themselves if their parents do not trust them to handle their own affairs. Crossing the line from parental guidance to predominance can lead to negative consequences for the children by:

- Weakening their decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Undermining their confidence
- Instilling a fear of failure.
- Encouraging dependence on parental approval.
- Increasing anxiety
- Decreasing self-motivation.
- Blurring the boundary between childhood and adulthood.
- Slowing social and emotional development.
- Fostering a negative self-image.
- Robbing them of valuable opportunities to learn from their own experiences.

Rise of the helicopter parents

Overprotective parents have existed since the beginning of time. However, with the rapid rise of technology, hovering has become much easier. Computers, e-mail, web cams, cellphones, and text messaging can collectively be called “the longest umbilical cord in the world.” They make it possible for parents and children to access each other around the

clock. The business of information technology is booming, and new products are being developed to target the helicopter parent population.

“These new products will significantly expand the monitoring and tracking capabilities of parents, enabling them to keep track of whom their children meet online, monitor kids’ movements and location, and keep tabs on their behavior and lifestyle,” according to senior analyst Kevin Osborn.

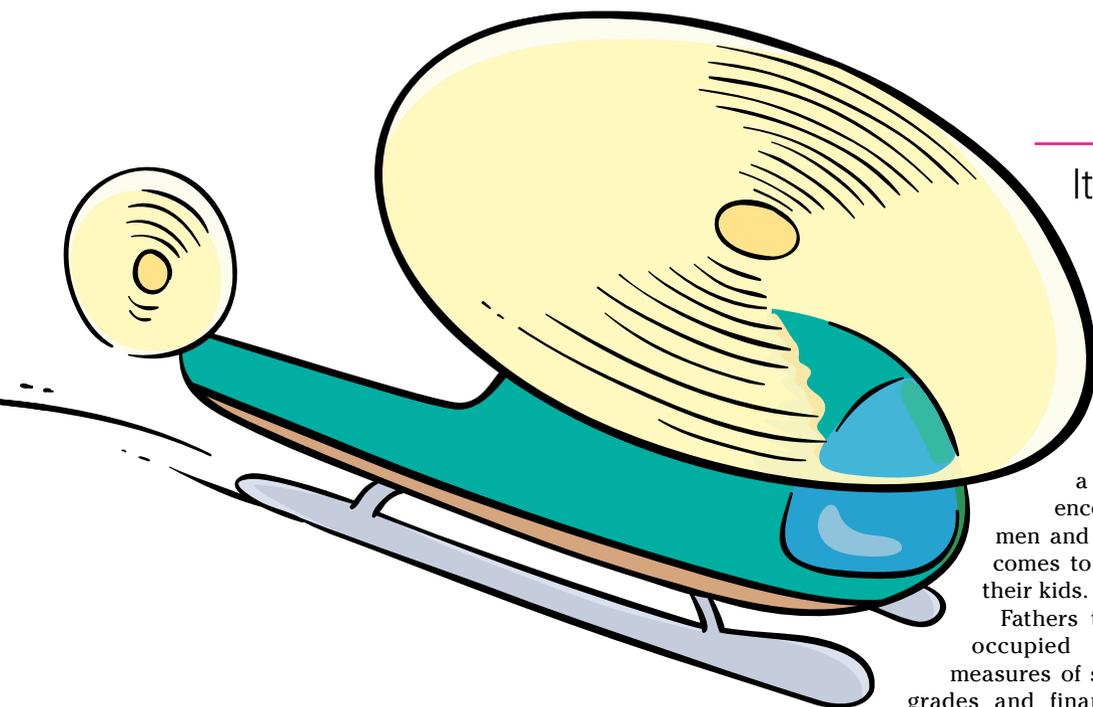
This growing trend may also be a result of today’s critical economic situation.

The uncertainty of the job market creates anxiety for both parents and their children. Desperately wanting their sons and daughters to land secure, well-paying jobs, helicopter parents may push too hard, especially during college years. Academic excellence is important, but it does not compare to the knowledge gained from living independently, which includes making mistakes and learning from them. That freedom is invaluable, because it enables young men and women to explore the entirety of what it means to be an adult.

Some helicopter parents encourage their children to attend prestigious universities, believing that the degree will result in a successful career, but then they strain to pay their child’s tuition. Parents can come to see their children as investments and believe they deserve to be involved.

Moms vs. dads

Helicopter parenting is prevalent among all racial and ethnic lines, as well as socioeconomic status. Recent studies indicate that nearly 70 percent of college students’ parents cross the line between supporting and controlling their children. Yet,



It's typical for parents to micromanage their young children. But for many parents, letting go becomes an emotional challenge — even when the child is ready for independence.

a marked difference exists between men and women when it comes to micromanaging their kids.

Fathers tend to be preoccupied with concrete measures of success such as grades and finances. They are more aggressive in their approach and go straight to the top to resolve problems.

Ben arranged for his daughter to attend a nearby university so she could live at home while taking classes.

Each night, he helps her with her homework, often re-writing papers for her. He carefully monitors her grades, expecting no less than a 3.08 average.

After she scored an 87 on a statistics exam, Ben visited the professor, demanding that the grade be changed. When the professor refused, he spoke with the head of the department and wrote a letter to the Dean until the grade was raised three points.

Mothers, on the other hand, tend to become more overly involved with their son's lives. Theirs is more of an emotional attachment, a desperate need to be needed.

Beverly drives more than two hours to her 20-year-old son's dormitory three times a week to cook him meals and do his laundry and housecleaning. She schedules his doctor's appointments and gets up early to give him a daily wake up call.

Whatever happened to autonomy — not to mention alarm clocks?

Common types of helicopter parents

The academic watchdogs: carefully monitor homework and grades, often completing assignments for their children; speak to teachers, professors, and administrators on behalf of their chil-

dren, often arguing over grades or deadlines.

The safety monitors: worry excessively about every aspect of their children's lives, including health, eating, and sleeping habits, living arrangements, relationships, exposure to sex, drugs, and alcohol; constantly keep tabs on children's whereabouts.

The enablers: provide unlimited money and domestic services, although their children are old enough, and capable enough, to take care of themselves.

The best friends: strive to maintain constant contact with their children, preventing independence and freedom; establishes no healthy boundaries.

The agents: organize, schedule, and sort out difficulties, while going to great lengths to give their children an advantage over their competition.

Stay grounded

As children develop, they need practice making their own decisions. Facing challenges builds self-esteem and confidence.

Too much parental participation can interfere with the development of autonomy, detrimental to self-reliance and independence.

A parent's duty is to respect her children's needs, while serving as a positive role model.

As tempting as it may be to jump in to prevent disappointment or failure, allow your children to learn from their mistakes. In the end, the lessons they learn will be invaluable.

By the time they reach their college years, young adults will be strong, ready to face the world with gusto.

Laura Varoscak-DeInnocentiis is a writer, educator and mom living in Brooklyn. A regular contributor to New York Parenting Media, she has won several editorial awards for her articles.



JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Why romance is dead

What are we teaching our girls about love?

It was a fitful night at best. Colds and runny noses were running rampant among my brood and my youngest couldn't sleep.

So together, we retreated to the living room couches at 4 am hoping to rest while watching TV. As he settled onto the sofa and pulled his Super Mario blanket up to his face, I knew he had dozed off, so I grabbed the remote as fast as I could because those Cartoon Network voices were grating on my clogged ears.

Switching to the OWN Network, I'd hoped to catch a good Dr. Phil repeat or something else that would distract me before my day would officially begin an hour later. I tuned into "The Nate Berkus Show" with his guest "Millionaire Matchmaker" Patti Stanger.

Stanger dished out dating advice at a moment's notice, but grew visibly sullen when she was asked why she wasn't married and where her millionaire was. Interesting. If I were single, that would probably be a clue that I shouldn't follow her advice.

I noticed her tone and instructions were harsh. For example, one woman in the audience had been

out on a first date and it apparently went well until the guy

said he was interested in bird-watching. The

woman was evidently so horrified that she

didn't know how to respond so she let

him ramble about his sightings.

Stanger's advice: "Get up and say, 'I

can tell this won't work, but if I find

a friend who may be interested, I'll

give them your number,' and then

run away." Stanger said the young lady

was "too hot and single" to listen about

bird-watching.

Yikes.

Was I in bizarro land? What happened to meeting someone you found interesting and sharing a quick bite to eat or a coffee? Now, it's turned into abandon a person mid-meal if you don't like his hobby. If you met a friend, a colleague, hell, even an acquaintance for a meal, you'd give him more courtesy than what she was advising.

Speaking of "hot," in a mock-date improvement segment, one young man began his would-be date by telling her she was "hot" (after creepily staring her up and down). Mind you, this was the first thing he did and said.

I let out a quiet "eeww" in my darkened living room, but Stanger said, "Hot means sex, so he is looking at you sexually." Then the woman replied, "Thank you."

I couldn't watch much after that, as I scratched my head wondering if this is really the advice that young people are getting now. I will accept neither my daughter saying "thank you" for being called hot, nor my son using the word "hot" in the first sentence he utters to a girl (unless it's something like, "watch out, that pan is hot!").

People wonder why romance is dead, and maybe it's because so many of us have allowed common courtesy and decency to go by the wayside. Also, the fact remains that we teach people how to treat us, so if we settle for less, that is what we will get.

It reminds me of recent memo making the Internet rounds that says, "I often wonder if more girls were willing to be ladies, more guys would be challenged to be gentlemen."

The challenge lies for both genders, and I hope it's a challenge that we teach our next generation to take.

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 @DanniSullWriter, or on her blog, www.justuritemom.com.





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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

The science of love

Love protects us from loneliness, poor health, and even helps us live longer. This month, while love is in the air and people are doing their best to find and keep love, could their efforts be in vain?

After all, you can date as much as you like and meet a whole lot of people, but if the chemistry just is not there, you cannot force the attraction.

Maternal love, of course, is a whole other story. It's primitive and fierce. That unique bond between mother and child does not end with delivery. In fact, the change is life-lasting. Some moms feel that instinctively from the get-go. However, the change is not only emotional, it's biological. There is a real science behind the concept of love.

Here are three distinct ways love can be explained through science:

Pregnancy

Research performed by psychologist Laura M. Glynn of Chapman University and Curt A. Sandman at the University of California proposes that pregnancy hormones help prepare a woman's brain for the stresses of motherhood. This includes everything from giving her more patience and becoming more resilient to stress, to becoming fine-tuned to her baby's needs.

Brain change

During pregnancy, just as the mom passes oxygen and nutrients to her baby via the placenta, it seems that a baby can pass DNA to his mother. Recent research out of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle has discovered that male DNA has been found in the brains of mothers who have given birth to boys. This strange phenomenon is also believed to ward off certain types of cancer, such as bowel and skin cancer. One of the oldest women studied was a 93-year-old woman who was found to have male DNA in her brain after death.

Romantic love

When talking about romantic love, it is simply like a drug — some



say it's addictive. A study from the State University of New York at Stony Brook suggests you can crave the person you fall in love with much in the same way you would a drug. Author of the study, psychologist Arthur Aron, says the change occurs in the brain, not the heart.

"Intense passionate love uses the same system in the brain that gets activated when a person is addicted to drugs," he explains.

Whether we see love as purely emotional, wholly scientific, or a happy blend of both, love is a wonderful thing to have in our lives and a reason for celebration.

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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MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SERADOVA

The terrible twos

I think the terrible twos have arrived early. My sweet little girl has developed a whole other side to her that's not so sweet.

A few months ago, a friend asked several other moms for tips on how to deal with her toddler who had taken a liking to repeatedly biting her. Most moms advised on biting him back! Understandably, she didn't want to do that, nor spank him. Eventually, she decided just to ignore him, although ignoring the bite marks was a lot more difficult.

Luckily, Olivia is not a mini-Dracula. She prefers whining, hitting, and throwing herself (I'm not sure which situation is worst).

There's a ton of parenting advice and tips on how to discipline toddlers — everything from spanking to time-out, to talking and encouraging positive behavior rather than punishing bad. I'm not against spanking. I think it can work and if you pick your battles, it may be very effective.

However, when I've attempted to spank Olivia, she does it in return or does it to the dog. It's sad to see my pit bull being bullied by my 1-year old. And isn't it counter-productive to punish my child for hitting by hitting her? At this stage, I don't think a time-out is very effective, she's too young to understand. She doesn't understand that she is being punished. To her, mommy is leaving her all by herself. No lesson learned.

I do talk and encourage positive behavior as much as I can, but what I've also found to be effective for temper tantrums, whining, frustration, and other annoying toddler behaviors is distracting her. I read somewhere that when your child is acting up, the best thing to do is to distract her. That sounded genius and when I tried it, it was! The next time I felt a tantrum coming on, I brought her attention to something else, my cellphone. I focused on the phone like it was the most intriguing thing ever, and she followed my lead. Sometimes when she's being fussy

I'll just tickle her, and as much as she wants to be upset, she can't help but laugh and forgets her frustration, or even better, tries to tickle me back.

Another tantrum-fighting tactic: singing and dancing.

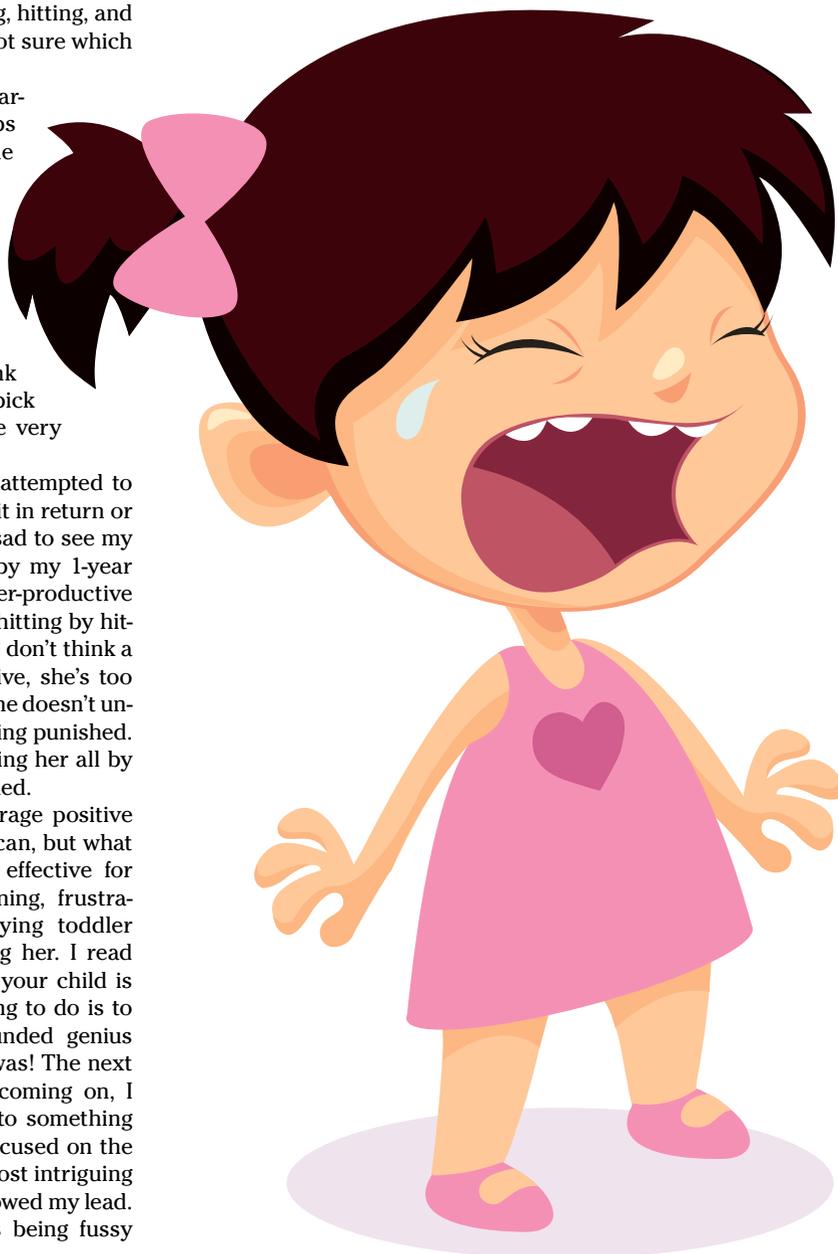
When Olivia is being uncontrollably fussy and moody, I'll engage her in a song and dance. Sometimes it's a nursery rhyme and sometimes it's something I've just made up. The more upbeat and silly, the better.

I try to look at things from her point of view — although there are some things she can

communicate to me: bottle, book, eat, bath time (she's very smart), but there are other things she hasn't mastered yet and that must be frustrating. Trying to understand the toddler brain is not always so easy.

Fortunately, we haven't had any public tantrums yet, but I'm sure we will. If and when that happens, I'll be prepared to tickle my daughter and break out into a ridiculous dance in front of strangers.

I'm sure the other parents will be able to relate, and if I'm lucky, they might just join in.





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Sparkling smiles

How to
protect and
promote your
child's dental
health

BY KIKI BOCHI

Could there be anything more precious than your child's smile?

Preserving and protecting that smile should be on the top of your list of priorities, yet oral health is often overlooked by many parents. It's understandable — you have so many things to deal with, and worrying about preventing cavities just seems to get away from you. Besides, they're just baby teeth, right?

Wrong.

Even baby teeth are important. Baby teeth serve as spacers to maintain the proper alignment for permanent teeth. And that's not all: children with healthy mouths chew more easily and gain more nutrients from the foods they eat. They learn to speak more quickly and clearly. Plus, a healthy mouth is more attractive, giving children confidence in their appearance.

If you're not taking the best care of your child's teeth, you are certainly are not alone. For the first time in 40 years, dentists are seeing an increased number of children with multiple cavities, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Along with this alarming trend is an increased number of children who require hospital admittance and general anesthesia to treat their extensive cavities and tooth decay.

Teaching your child proper oral care at a young age is an investment in his health. To mark Children's Dental Health Month in February, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry offers this advice:

- Set a good example. Taking good care of your own teeth sends a message that oral health is important. In addition, cavity-causing germs can be transmitted through contact — like when your baby puts his hands in your mouth and then in his own mouth, or if you share cups or utensils. That's why it's so important to keep your own teeth and gums healthy.

- Be smart at bedtime. Do not nurse a young child to sleep or put him to bed with a bottle of milk, formula, juice, or any sweetened liquid. As a child sleeps, any unswallowed liquid in the mouth feeds bacteria that produce acids and attack the teeth. Protect your child from severe tooth decay by putting him to bed with nothing more than a bottle of water or a pacifier. And never dip a pacifier in sugar or honey — day or night.

- Attack plaque. Plaque is a sticky film of germs that forms on teeth and gums after eating or drinking,

which is why brushing twice a day is so important. To ensure children's teeth are properly brushed, parents of toddlers should do it for them with a soft brush by using a circular or wiggling motion on all tooth surfaces, especially where the tooth meets the gum line. Even once kids are old enough to do their own brushing, parents should watch over the process until children are at least 8 years old.

- Use the right tools. Clean a baby's gums regularly with a clean gauze pad even before any teeth have erupted. This will accustom your baby to an oral care routine, plus reduce the bacteria in your child's mouth. For toddlers, use a small, soft-bristled brush with only a smear of toothpaste so that they don't swallow it. Once children can spit, use a pea-sized portion of toothpaste so they don't absorb too much fluoride. Remember to replace toothbrushes every three to four months — and even sooner if the bristles are worn out, or if your children have been sick.

- Floss daily. It is important to remove plaque from between the teeth and under the gum line before it can harden into tartar. Flossing removes food and plaque between teeth that brushing misses. You should floss for your children beginning at age 4. By the time they reach age 8, most kids can begin flossing for themselves.

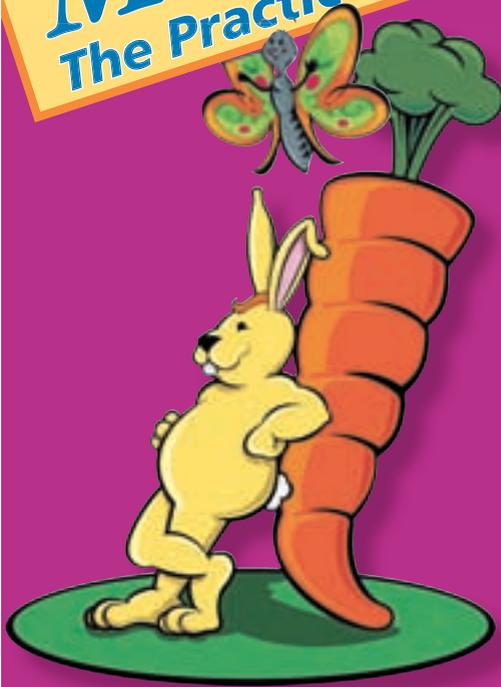
- Eat well. Children must have a balanced diet for their teeth and gums to develop properly. Equally important is a diet high in certain kinds of carbohydrates. Other foods, such as sugar and starches, may place your child at dental risk. Limit starchy or sugary foods, which produce plaque acids that cause tooth decay.

Choose wisely. Use dental products that contain fluoride, including toothpaste, and visit a dentist regularly.

Kiki Bochi, an award-winning journalist, reads hundreds of reports monthly to bring readers the latest insights on family health and child development.



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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Organic food: Worth all that extra cost?

Shopping for organic foods is an individual choice for your growing family.

“For me, personally, my top priority is making sure that my family is eating the recommended five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables per day, whether it be from organic produce or not,” says Elizabeth Zawila, a mother of two young children.

Organic defined

On food labels, the term “organic” is legally defined as:

- 100 percent organic: The product must contain only organically produced ingredients.
- Organic: The product must contain at least 95 percent of organically produced ingredients.
- Made with organic ingredients: Processed foods may bear this label if they contain at least 70 percent of organic ingredients.

Why choose organic?

There’s increasing concern about the safety of exposure to synthetic pesticide residues, especially for

pregnant women and young children. What has captured parents’ attention is the emerging research linking pesticide exposure to children’s attention, cognition, and behavior, as well as sensory issues.

A clinical report published by the American Academy of Pediatrics in November 2012 came out in favor of buying organic produce and meat, but suggested you can skip the organic milk. The report, which analyzed existing scientific evidence, found there’s little difference in the vitamin and mineral content between organic and conventional foods.

The report does cite lower pesticides in organically grown produce and a likely lower risk of exposure to drug-resistant bacteria.

In one study cited, switching to organic produce for five days reduced the levels of pesticide residue in the urine of children accustomed to eating conventional produce.

“It remains unclear whether such a reduction in exposure is clinically

relevant,” the report states.

Organic milk is popular with parents due to concerns about growth hormone and estrogen often given to conventionally raised cows. The report concluded, “Ingestion of milk from estrogen-treated cows appears to be safe for children,” as there is little difference in the sex-hormone concentrations in organic and conventional milk.

Be strategic

Organics cost 10-to-40 percent more than conventionally grown produce. Save money by choosing store brands or shopping at warehouse clubs. Or you can purchase many organic grains, pastas, flours, dried fruit, and nuts in the bulk sections of stores for less.

“Labeling a food as ‘organic’ can give you a false sense of security. Even organic snack foods can be just as high in sugar, sodium, fat, as their non-organic counterparts,” reminds Zawila, a registered dietitian who is a clinical nutrition specialist at the University of Illinois Medical Center.

The debate continues about which is healthier, but consider this: eating more fresh fruits and vegetables in general is the point.

If buying all organic isn’t a priority or a financial reality for you, consider taking a strategic approach. Insist on organic versions of what retains the most pesticide residue, like apples, grapes, or celery. Skip it for produce with skins or peels you would not consume such as bananas, pineapples, and onions.

Zawila adds, “Having young children brings many expenses, and I know pigeonholing myself into only buying organic produce would limit the amount and variety that I would be able to buy and prepare for my family.”

Dietician Christine Palumbo is based in Naperville, Ill. and is a frequent speaker on health and wellness. Contact her at Chris@ChristinePalumbo.com. Her Facebook page is Christine Palumbo Nutrition and her Twitter handle is @PalumboRD.

Citrus-Yogurt Sundae

Makes six servings with one cup of fruit per serving

INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz. lowfat vanilla yogurt
- 1 tsp. freshly grated Sunkist® orange peel
- 1 tsp. freshly grated Sunkist® grapefruit peel
- 2 Sunkist® grapefruit, peeled and sectioned
- 2 Sunkist® oranges, peeled and cut into half-cartwheel slices
- 2 bananas, sliced
- 1 cup blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, or seedless grapes
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine the yogurt, orange and grapefruit peels; cover and chill. In a large bowl, combine all the remaining ingredients; cover and chill. To serve, spoon fruit mixture into individual dessert dishes and top with the yogurt.

NUTRITION FACTS: 150 calories, 0.9 g total fat, 0.4 g saturated fat, 4 g protein, 35 g carbohydrates, 2 mg cholesterol, 5 g dietary fiber, 26 mg sodium

Recipe courtesy of Sunkist®



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Calling young

There's lots to explore at the Children's Museum of Art

BY MARIE HUESTON

Charlton Street between Hudson and Greenwich streets is an unassuming Manhattan block, populated by parked cars and passersby. But step inside the Children's Museum of the Arts, and you are transported to a world of bright color and boundless energy. There, you'll find kids of all ages looking at art, learning about art, making their own art, and bouncing gleefully on giant rubber balls.

Clearly, this is no ordinary museum.

It has been just more than a year since the archive moved to its new location at 103 Charlton St. from its previous home on Lafayette Street. Having nearly triple the amount of space has allowed the curatorial and educational staffs — as well as their young visitors — to really spread their wings.

"It was a great opportunity for us to be able to design a new space to meet all our imperatives," says Lucy Ofiesh, the museum's director of Development. "We were able to expand and update our exhibition space, and add classrooms to offer more after school and weekend workshops."

Enter the museum to find a 2,000-square-foot exhibition space, where artwork is just as likely to be suspended from the ceiling as it is hung on the walls. This month, for example, 26 sculptural "Letter Racers" by legendary graffiti artist RAMMELLZEE float overhead, while his found-object figurines fill a display case and his large-scale paintings line the walls.

The imaginative RAMMELLZEE

February events at the Children's Museum of the Arts

Lunar New Year Festival, Feb. 2 and 3 from 10 am to 5 pm. Ring in the Year of the Snake with special art demonstrations, music, and performances, including the classic Chinese Lion Dance.

ARTY Gras, Feb. 16 from 10 am to 5 pm. Enjoy the festive sounds of a New Orleans jazz band and construct fanciful masks, costumes, and noisemakers — then show off the creations in a parade!



Photo by Junero Mitchell

Galaxseum is on view through Feb. 3, and will be followed on Feb. 7 by Face to Face, an exploration of children's self-portraits from around the world. The main gallery will be closed from Feb. 4 to 6 for installation of the new show, with an opening reception on Thursday, Feb. 7, from 4 to 6 pm, during the museum's pay-as-you-wish hours.

As with all of the museum's exhibitions, interactive stations invite children to try their hand at the media they see around them. After viewing Face to Face, children will be able to take pictures of themselves in the Media Lab to be projected onto the wall, or they can stop by the self-portrait table, where different kinds of mirrors offer different perspectives of facial features: realistic, cubist, and abstract.

"What's special for kids visiting our museum is that it's about more than just looking at art," observes Valerie Kharchenko, manager of Ed-

ucation Programs. "It's about looking and then making their own creations based on what they have seen, and learning that their art is just as important as what's in the exhibits."

Open workshops held during museum hours in the light-filled Fine Art Studio let kids experiment further with a variety of materials. Professional artists are on hand to teach techniques and offer guidance. A Clay Bar offers yet another opportunity for hands-on learning with tactile materials. Children 5 and under will want to stop by the WEE Arts Studio, where tables and chairs are scaled specifically for them, and projects and materials are better suited for tiny hands.

Parents of children with special needs will find a number of inclusive programs at the museum, including Stripes, for children on the autism spectrum. Held three Saturdays a month from 9:30 to 11 am (before the museum's regular — and more

artists!



Photo by Hannah Sawhney

hectic! — hours), Stripes helps improve motor skills while offering an outlet for self-expression. Inclusive weekend classes, held most Sundays from 1 to 3 pm, invite physically challenged kids and their siblings or friends to make art in a social setting. This month's themes are Stop-Motion Animation: Quiet Winter World on Feb. 10 and Sculpt It: Clay Works on Feb. 17. ARTogether invites families receiving preventive care, or in the foster care system working toward reunification, to bond and play in a safe, fun environment. Appointments for ARTogether are made on an individual basis, so anyone interesting in participating can contact the museum directly.

"Our aim is to provide an immersive experience to young artists of all backgrounds and abilities," Lucy Ofiesh points out.

The museum also has a wide range of classes taught by working artists. WEE Arts attracts the 5 and under set with morning and afternoon classes that frequently incorporate music and storytelling. There is a drop-in option for WEE Arts as well, allowing parents and caregivers greater flexibility. After-school classes for kids 5 to 12 are held from 4 to 5:30 pm on Monday through



Thursday. Illustration, Exploring Media Lab, and Drawing and Sculpture are a sampling of the spring 2013 schedule. The At 5 Program for 13- to 15-year-olds meets on Monday evenings from 5 to 7 pm.

During school breaks and summer vacation, the museum offers "Art Colony" Day Camp, with themes that change from week to week. For the upcoming private school spring break (March 18 to 22) kids 6 to 12 can choose between Claymation and Bookmaking. Animated Shorts

and Printmaking will be taught during public and private school spring break (March 25 to 29). Week-long summer sessions are held from June 10 to Aug. 30, both at the museum, for children 6 to 13, and on Governor's Island, for kids 8 to 15. Ceramics, Fashion Design, Fairy-Tale Films, Landscape Painting, and Origami are just a few of the subjects to be covered.

And what about those giant rubber balls? You'll find them in the museum's popular "Ball Pond," a great place for kids to burn off energy after

focusing intently on colorful exhibitions and creative projects. Each hour, the Ball Pond is divided into three 20-minute intervals, grouping children by age for safety. Children 4 and under bounce at the top of the hour, followed by 5 to 7, and finally ages 8 and up enjoy the final 20 minutes.

If all of this isn't enough to convince you to visit the Children's Museum of the Arts, consider the reviews given by my own children during their first trip to the museum last month.

My 9-year-old son, Ian, summed it up in a word: "Awesome!" His 5-year-old sister, Sage, while happily smudging pastels in the style of Mark Rothko, proclaimed, "Ian, isn't this so fun?"

The Children's Museum of the Arts [103 Charlton St. between Greenwich and Hudson streets in Manhattan, (212) 274-0986; cmay.org]. Admission \$11; free members, infants, and ages 65 and older. Pay-as-you-wish Thursday, from 4 to 6 pm.

Marie Hueston is a freelance writer who lives in Brooklyn.



LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

Teens eating healthy

It was the fall of 1978 when my 14-year-old friend and I decided to join America's newfound fitness craze. We devised a plan during sixth period lunch: we would bike clear across town without stopping. Here was the problem: fast-food restaurants galore along the way. My memory tells me we stopped at McDonald's, Dunkin' Donuts, and a hot dog joint before landing at the Caldor parking lot. After 12 miles, a large order of fries, two Bavarian cream donuts, and an over-stuffed chili dog, we gave each other a high five to celebrate our accomplishment. I get indigestion just thinking about it!

For decades, teens have been devouring fast food and salty snacks as part of their daily diets. Let's be honest: how many 14-year-olds do you know who opt for carrot sticks over a handful of salty fries? Is it hopeless, or can parents suggest healthy options that their teens will actually enjoy?

General guidelines

Dr. Howard M. Shapiro, a Manhattan-based weight loss specialist and best-selling author of the "Picture Perfect Weight Loss" series, urges teens to avoid certain foods.

"Limit foods high in cholesterol, saturated fat, and trans-fat, such as fatty meats, egg yolks, and foods prepared with hydrogenated oils and shortenings."

Shapiro suggests that teens include some "good fat" in their diets: olives, avocado, nuts, seeds, and olive or canola oil. Soy foods help to reduce the risk of heart disease.

"Include a couple of servings a day of any of the following: tofu, soy milk, or soy yogurt," he says. Also, soy protein powder can be added to shakes or smoothies — an added health benefit for these popular teen drinks. Teens might also try veggie or turkey burgers and veggie sausages.

Healthy eating habits include healthy eating schedules. Lauren Graf, a nutritionist for the Department of Pediatric Nephrology and the Pediatric Heart Healthy Program at the Montefiore Medical Center in New York City, advises, "Teenagers should eat multiple, small meals throughout the day and a good breakfast, because it will help them do better on exams."

Graf also warns about eating heavy meals too close to bedtime, a problem for many teens who are involved in after-school activities. Eating heavy meals late at night can lead to disrupted sleep and an inability to "work off" the calories.

Encourage the good stuff

Graf instructs parents to limit the amount of processed foods on hand.

"Stock up on frozen fruits. These won't go bad, and teens can use them as toppings on frozen yogurt. Parents should model healthy eating. Believe it or not, this will eventually click with your teenagers."

Quick tips:

- Prepare healthy casseroles on weekends and freeze for later in the week.
- Pack a snack to avoid fast-food stops.

- Opt for fresh over packaged and canned.

Quick snacks for active teens

The food has to look and taste good, or your teen won't eat it. Since many teens are constantly on the run, healthy snacks play an important role, and easy preparation is a must.

Healthy snack alternatives suggested by Dr. Shapiro:

- Soy chips with guacamole or hummus — instead of potato chips and sour cream dip.
- Whole-grain crackers and peanut butter — instead of a bagel with cream cheese.
- Roasted pumpkin seeds — instead of a bag of milk chocolate pretzels.

Graf says teens will be pleased to hear, "Dark chocolate is actually good for the heart. It provides antioxidants and doesn't have the levels of sugar and fat found in milk or white chocolate."

Graf also suggests slathering hummus or mustard on sandwiches in lieu of mayonnaise.

Tips and tales

"I only keep healthy snacks at home. My daughter learned to like celery and peanut butter. She'll also sprinkle cinnamon on apple slices."

Susan Cerulli, school nurse at Haviland Middle School, Hyde Park, NY

"Heart-healthy breakfast sandwiches: egg whites, mushrooms, and low-fat cheese on wheat bread. Use olive oil cooking spray for frying."

Maria Hoskins, Hyde Park, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic: Tips for making the most of that first job at a fast-food restaurant or grocery store.

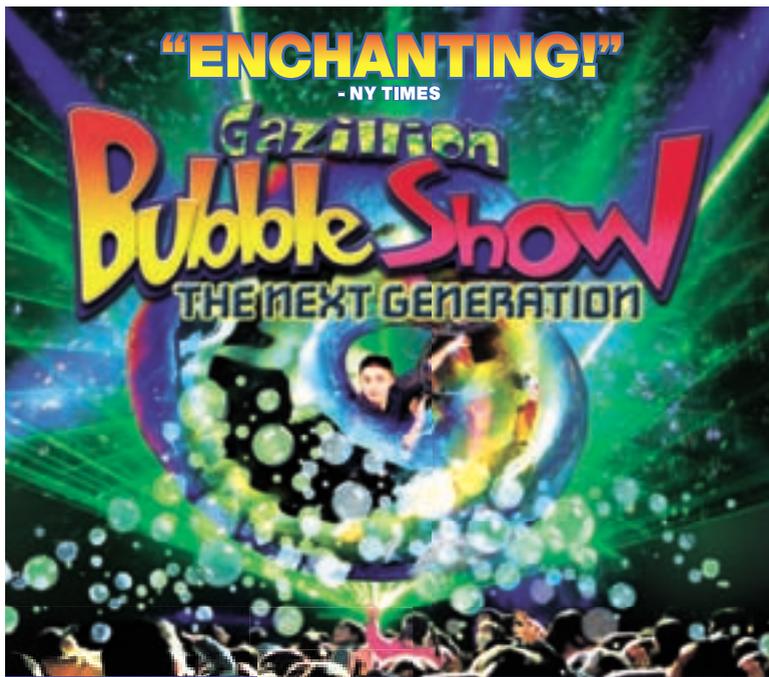
Please send your full name, address, and brief comments to myrnahaskell@gmail.com, or visit www.myrnahaskell.com.

Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer, columnist and author of, "Lions and Tigers and Teens: Expert advice and support for the conscientious parent just like you" (Unlimited Publishing LLC, 2012), available at Amazon.com. For details, visit www.myrnahaskell.com.



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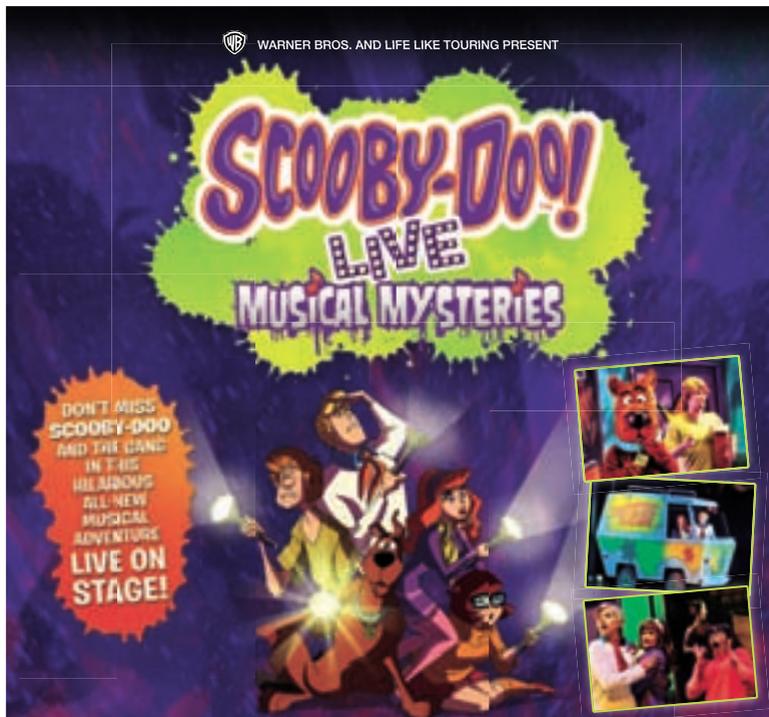
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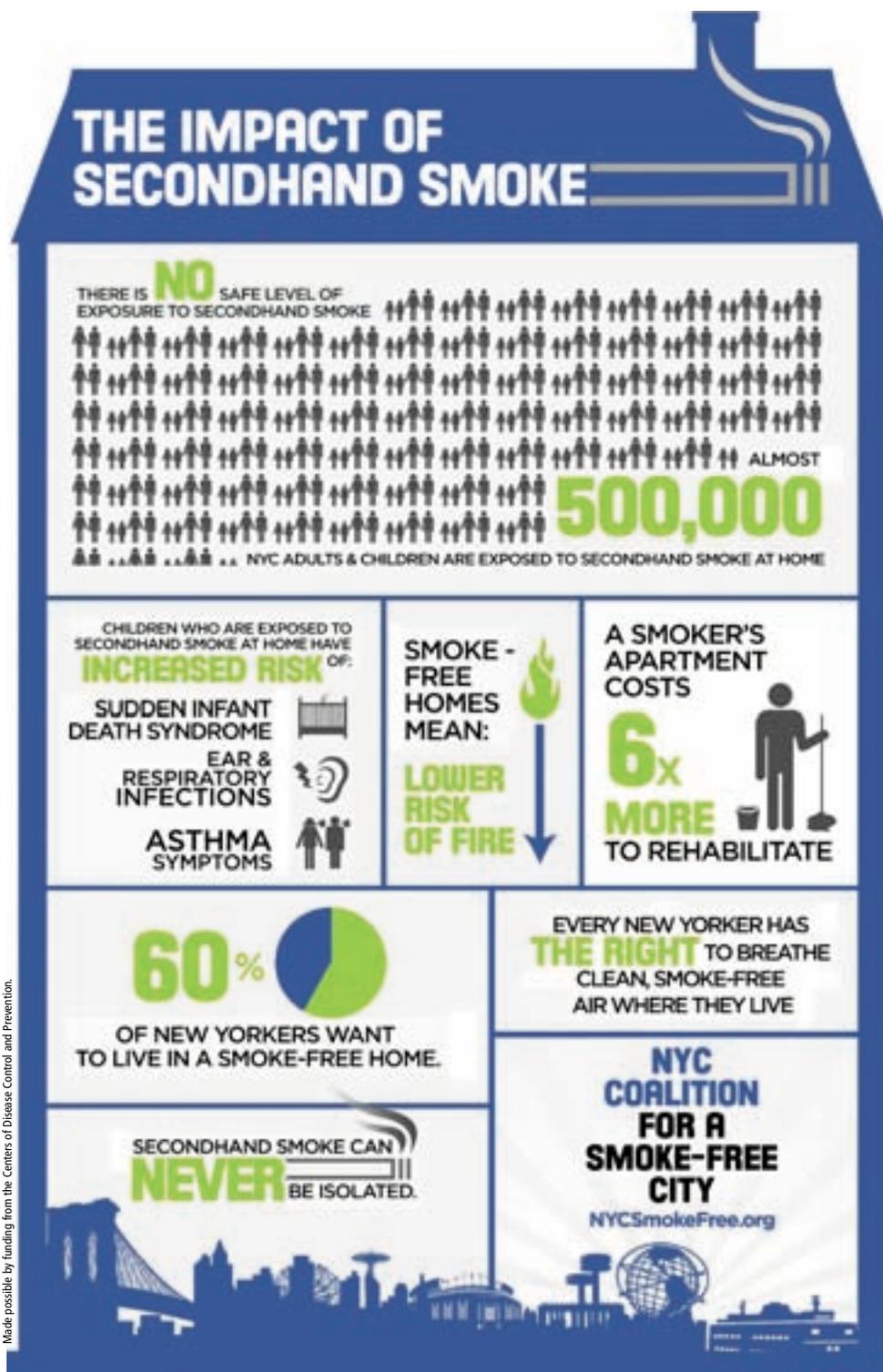
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The right to know

Is there a way to tell if your home is *really* smoke-free?



BY SHEELAH A. FEINBERG

All parents want to protect their children from potential health risks, especially at home.

We childproof our homes to prevent household injuries, install window guards, and use carbon-monoxide detectors. If any remodeling is done, we're sure not to use lead-based paint, and many parents insist that their homes are smoke-free.

But are they?

Multi-unit housing

New York City has the highest concentration of multi-unit housing in the country at almost 70 percent of homes.

That means most of us share walls, stairwells, lobbies, and most importantly, the air we breathe. Studies show that secondhand smoke travels between units and floors, and through cracks in piping, ventilation, and flooring. Secondhand smoke can never be entirely contained.

On average, up to 60 percent of the air in multi-unit buildings is shared. So, when one person smokes, the whole building smokes.

Children at risk

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, there is absolutely no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Even brief exposure can cause health problems, especially for children and the elderly. Secondhand smoke kills 42,000 Americans each year, including nearly 900 infants.

Approximately 200,000 New York City children are exposed to secondhand smoke at home. Children spend more time at home, so when they are exposed they have increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome, ear and respiratory infections, and worsening asthma



On average, up to 60 percent of the air in multi-unit buildings is shared. So, when one person smokes, the whole building smokes.

symptoms.

For those children who suffer from asthma, exposure to secondhand smoke leads to more frequent asthma attacks and more trips to the Emergency Room.

Clearly, children face a greater risk than adults of the negative health effects of secondhand smoke.

When secondhand smoke is in the air, young, developing lungs receive a higher concentration of inhaled toxins because a child's breathing rate is faster than that of an adult.

Parents can protect their children by voluntarily adopting a smoke-free policy in their homes, but for those who live in an apartment building, secondhand smoke can be a constant threat to your children's health, especially if you live near a smoker.

Smoking disclosure policies

Most people don't know if their building allows smoking, or if they will be exposed to secondhand smoke in their home, until they are already residents.

We all have the right to be free of hazardous conditions in our home, especially when it comes to our children's health. Why should our children be involuntarily exposed to secondhand smoke?

We have a right to know if the home we're choosing will be affected by secondhand smoke that could put our children's health at risk. Why shouldn't parents know if their building allows smoking before moving in?

Smoking disclosure policies would give prospective tenants and buyers the facts they need in order to make an informed choice when deciding where to live. Landlords and building own-

ers would need to disclose their building's smoking policy to anyone who is considering moving in.

We already have disclosure policies in place for many similar residential health hazards, such as lead-based paint, radon, and bed bugs.

Why not simply add tobacco smoke to this list? These disclosure policies appear to have contributed to reducing the health consequences resulting from exposure to these health hazards. When you consider all the facts, smoking disclosure policies just make sense.

New York City parents would then be able to choose to live in a building that has voluntarily gone smoke-free and know their children would be protected from secondhand smoke.

New York City stopped smoking in bars and restaurants almost 10 years ago, and last year, our parks and beaches became smoke-free.

If we can protect our health in these public places, why can't we protect our health in our homes? As concerned parents, we have a right to know if smoking is allowed in a building before we move in.

The NYC Coalition for a Smoke-Free City strongly supports smoking disclosure policies.

New Yorkers have a right to know if they will be involuntarily exposed to secondhand smoke and choose to live in a building that is 100 percent smoke-free to protect their children's health.

For more information, visit www.NYCSmokeFree.org/housing and www.SmokeFreeHousingNY.org

Sheelah A. Feinberg is the executive director of the NYC Coalition for a Smoke-Free City.



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Calendar

FEBRUARY



Courtesy of the Center for the Arts, CSI

Acrobats take a whirl at CSI

The Peking Acrobats twirl, tumble, and twist onto the stage at the Center for the Arts at the College of Staten Island for a premier performance on Feb. 23.

Since its debut in the United States in 1986 the troupe has redefined the art of acrobatics with daring maneuvers, precision tumbling, trick cycling, amazing displays of contortion, and death-defying acts

of gravity.

Along with Chinese music and the pageantry of a Chinese Carnival, the Peking Acrobats will have audience members sitting on the edge of their seats and holding their breath from one minute to the next. The Peking Acrobats, Feb. 23 at 2 pm. Tickets are \$15 to \$18.

Center for the Arts at the College of Staten Island [2800 Victory Blvd., (718) 982-2787; www.cfashows.com].

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 stateniscalendar@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!

THURS, JAN. 31

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

Teens between 13 and 18 years old get to use the library's laptops and computers for research.

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

For children ages 12 to 18 years old.

FRI, FEB. 1

Board games: Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 4 pm; Free.

Children 5 to 12 years old play standards like Candy Land, Sorry, and more.

SAT, FEB. 2

Groundhog day: Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway at Martling Avenue; (718) 442-3174; www.statenislandzoo.org; 6:30 am; \$10 (\$5 children) breakfast.

Staten Island Chuck will again be called upon to prognosticate the weather. After Chuck gives his forecast, join in for a breakfast. Reservations for breakfast required. Patrick Raftery will perform.

Groundhog day: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgov-parks.com; 11 am; \$8 (\$6 members).

Children 4 to 8 years old discover Phyllis the Groundhog and learn if there is six more weeks of winter. Registration and pre-payment required.

Meet the firefighters: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; stateniskids.org; 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Members of the Metropolitan Volunteer Fire Department will be teaching fire safety.



Courtesy of Artie Bennett

Poop-tastic literacy day

It's the one, it's the only, it's the greatest book around — it's "Poopendous," the "number one" book on everything "number two."

Author Artie Bennett brings his scatological tome to the Staten Island Children's Museum on Feb. 9 for Literacy Day.

Whether you like it or not, poop happens, and children want to learn about it. Bennett's newest book teaches kids all about doo-doo, from the droppings of animals big and small, to how hu-

mans in different cultures make use of the waste.

So bring your little ones, ages 5 to 7 years old, and share some giggles with Bennett's rhyming rap about ca-ca, doo-doo, flop, guano, scat, and dung.

Artie Bennett at the Staten Island Children's Museum on Feb. 9 from noon to 4 pm. Free with museum admission.

Staten Island Children's Museum [1000 Richmond Terr. at Tysen Street in Randall Manor, (718) 273-2060; www.stateniskids.org].

SUN, FEB. 3

Groundhog day: Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway at Martling Avenue; (718) 442-3174; www.statenislandzoo.org; 1:30-3:30 pm; Free with zoo admission.

Encore performance and related crafts and activities. With highlights of Chuck's predictions.

MON, FEB. 4

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

Children 5 to 12 years old create a project to take home.

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

Young adults 12 to 18 years old meet

and hang out with friends. Bring snacks, soda, or homework.

TUES, FEB. 5

Resources: Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 4 pm; Free.

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

WED, FEB. 6

Pre-K non-attendance day: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; stateniskids.org; 10 am-5 pm; Free with museum admission.

Tots have a full day of fun at the museum.

Teen club: New Dorp Library, 309

New Dorp Ln. at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org; 2:30-4 pm; Free.

Young adults 12 to 18 years old discuss anime, draw, play games and even do homework.

Read aloud: New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln. at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org; 4-4:30 pm; Free.

Children 3 years old and up finger play, learn action rhymes and color.

THURS, FEB. 7

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

Teens between 13 and 18 years old get to use the library's laptops and computers for research.

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 of age.

Craft time: Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens 13 to 18 years old create an art project.

FRI, FEB. 8

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

For children 3 to 5 years old. Registration required.

Kidz Cook: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; stateniskids.org; 2, 3 and 4 pm; Free with museum admission.

Velvet cupcakes — yummo!

Board games: 4 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Friday, Feb. 1.

Valentine's dinner: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; reservations@sichildrensmuseum.org; stateniskids.org; 6-8 pm; \$8 (\$10 per adult).

For members only. Enjoy dinner, create bejeweled valentines, and dance the night away. Reservations required.

SAT, FEB. 9

"Poopendous": Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; stateniskids.org; Noon-4 pm; Free with museum admission.

The much-heralded sequel to Artie Bennett's bestselling "Butt Book" will be read along with Sabrina Panfilo's

Continued on page 32

Calendar

Continued from page 31

"Tomey and the Caterpillar" at Family Literacy Day. Join in with arts, crafts, and raffles.

Snake day: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenisland-kids.org; Noon; Free with museum admission.

Meet, greet, and touch exotic snakes. Eek!

"Pokemon the Movie": New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln. at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org; 2-4 pm; Free.

When Ash and friends battle competition in Eindoak Town, they meet the mythical Pokemon Vicini.

SUN, FEB. 10

Chinese New Year: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgov-parks.com; 1 pm; \$8 (\$6 for members).

Gung hay Fat Choy. Celebrate the Year of the Snake by meeting the resident reptiles, create fun crafts, and enjoy traditional snacks. Suitable for children 5 years old and older, with adult chaperone. Per-registration and pre-payment required.

Sunday sing-a-long: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Bring your instruments or use the museums and join in the silly fun with Patrick in Portia's Playhouse.

MON, FEB. 11

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

Children 13 to 18 years old.

Teen cafe: 4 pm. New Dorp Library. See Monday, Feb. 4.

TUES, FEB. 12

Resources: 4 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 5.

WED, FEB. 13

Members-only mornings: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; 10 am-noon; Free with membership.

Enjoy the museum for two full hours before it opens to the public.

Read aloud: 4-4:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Wednesday, Feb. 6.



Photo by Fred Porter

Join Scooby and the gang

Scooby-Dooby-Do, where are you? We've got some work to do now!

Zoinks — Scooby and friends will solve a mystery at the Beacon Theatre, Feb. 22 through Feb. 24.

Scooby, Shaggy, Fred, Velma, and Daphne pile into the Mystery Machine van to track the criminals

and crack the case. Crazy ghosts, perplexing puzzles and a whole lot of Scooby snacks will be on hand. Come and sing along to the original groovy tune, plus meet new wacky characters as the gang romps through this live performance full of Scooby shenanigans and riotous antics. You'll laugh until you cry!

"Scooby-Doo Live" performances: Feb. 22, 11 am and 5 pm; Feb. 23, 11 am, 2 and 5 pm; and Feb. 24, 11 am, 2 and 5 pm. Tickets are \$40 to \$75.

Beacon Theater [2124 Broadway at W. 74th Street on the Upper West Side, (212) 465-6500; www.beacontheatre.com].

THURS, FEB. 14

Tech Time: 3 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Thursday, Feb. 7.

Craft day: New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln. at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Children 3 to 12 years old can have fun while making projects with hearts, hearts, and more hearts for a special someone for Valentine's Day.

FRI, FEB. 15

Board games: 4 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Friday, Feb. 1.

SUN, FEB. 17

Herb garden: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgov-parks.com; 2-4 pm; \$10 (\$8 members).

Plant the seeds for next year's spice rack, veggies, and learn all about healthy eating. Pre-registration and pre-payment required.

MON, FEB. 18

Cool school day: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; 10 am-5 pm; Free.

Empire State Bank and the Lois and Richard Nicotra Foundation sponsor the

entire day.

Recess fun: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; 10 am-5 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children won't get bored at the museum with so much fun to do.

TUES, FEB. 19

Recess fun: 10 am-5 pm. Staten Island Children's Museum. See Monday, Feb. 18.

Door hangars: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; 2 pm; Exhibit is free with

Calendar

museum admission.

Most doors are hard to open without a door knob, but these people featured opened doors for all us, particularly those seeking freedom through the Underground Railroad.

Resources: 4 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 5.

WED, FEB. 20

Read aloud: 4–4:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Wednesday, Feb. 6.

THURS, FEB. 21

Tech Time: 3 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Thursday, Feb. 7.

Read aloud: 3:30 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Thursday, Feb. 7.

FRI, FEB. 22

Board games: 4 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Friday, Feb. 1.

SAT, FEB. 23

Sensational snakes: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; 1–2 pm; \$8 (\$6 members).

Enjoy the slithering scaly snakes at the Greenbelt. Make a fun headband, wear a snake scarf, and make a craft to take home. For children 4 to 8 years old with an adult. Pre-registration and pre-payment required.

The Peking Acrobats: Center for the Arts at the College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd. (718) 982-2787; www.cfashows.com; 2 pm; \$15 to \$18.

Don't miss the twisting, twirling, leaping, and balancing as the world-renowned acrobat troupe hits the stage

for its New York appearance.

"Don't Touch That Channel":

Lower Hall Theater at Holy Family Church, 366 Watchogue Rd.; www.fpp.homestead.com; 8 pm; \$15.

The Holy Family Parish Players present this walk back to the past, when Carol Burnett, Sonny and Cher, and Donny and Marie ruled the airwaves.

MON, FEB. 25

Teen cafe: 4 pm. New Dorp Library. See Monday, Feb. 4.

TUES, FEB. 26

Resources: 4 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 5.

WED, FEB. 27

Members-only mornings: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; 10 am-noon; Free with membership.

Enjoy the museum for two full hours before it opens to the public.

Teen club: 2:30–4 pm. New Dorp Library. See Wednesday, Feb. 6.

Read aloud: 4–4:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Wednesday, Feb. 6.

THURS, FEB. 28

Tech Time: 3 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Thursday, Feb. 7.

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

Stories with Bob-a-Loo and his flute and drums. Recommended for children 5 to 12 year old.

LONG-RUNNING

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.

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; \$24 (\$14 children, \$18 seniors and students).

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

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, March 7; \$3 (Adults free).

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

Kidz Cook: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; Fridays, 2–3 pm; Now – Fri, Feb. 1; Free with museum admission.

Children explore the culinary arts.

Storytime: Barnes & Noble, 2245 Richmond Ave. at Travis Avenue; (718) 982-6983; www.barnesandnoble.com; Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10:30 am; Now – Sat, March 2; 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 pm, Saturdays, 11 am; Now – Sat, Feb. 2; Free.

Children in Pre-K through eighth grade get homework help in math and English. First come, first served.

Up4Art: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenislandkids.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 1, 2 and 3 pm; Now – Sun, Feb. 24; Free with museum admission.

Children create fun projects.

Tree tots for toddlers: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; Wednesdays, 9:45–10:30 am and 11–11:30 am; Wed, Feb. 6 – Wed, March 20; \$6 per class.

Children 3 and 4 year old have a fun time with hands-on activities, observations, finger play, and stories.

Greenbelt peepers: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; Wednesdays, 11–11:30 am; Now – Wed, March 20; \$6 (\$8 non-members).

Children 3 and 4 years old enjoy hands-on-activities, play games, and learn about the forest.

After-school book club: Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; www.historicrichmondtown.org; Wednesdays, 3:30–4:30 pm; Now – Wed, March 6; Free (plus cost of book).

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

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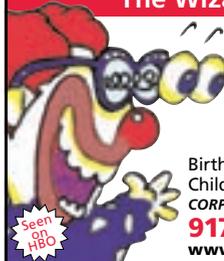
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A burn care center helps rebuild lives

“A burn can change a life forever,” explains Dr. Michael Cooper, the surgeon who heads Staten Island University Hospital’s Jerome L. Finkelshtein Regional Burn Center.

This insight into the nature of burn injuries is at the root of the facility’s family-centered care philosophy, as is the belief that each burn patient is unique.

First effected 14 years ago by the center’s namesake, family-centered care means giving loved ones 24-hour access to the patient’s bedside and involving the family in every aspect of the healing process, claims Dr. Cooper.

“Burns represent two different types of disease,” said Dr. Cooper.

Local burns are smaller, requiring pain medication, dressing changes, and possible antibiotics. Larger burns cover more than 15 percent of the body, with a higher-risk of complications, including breathing, and damage to the lungs and heart with a high-risk of infection.

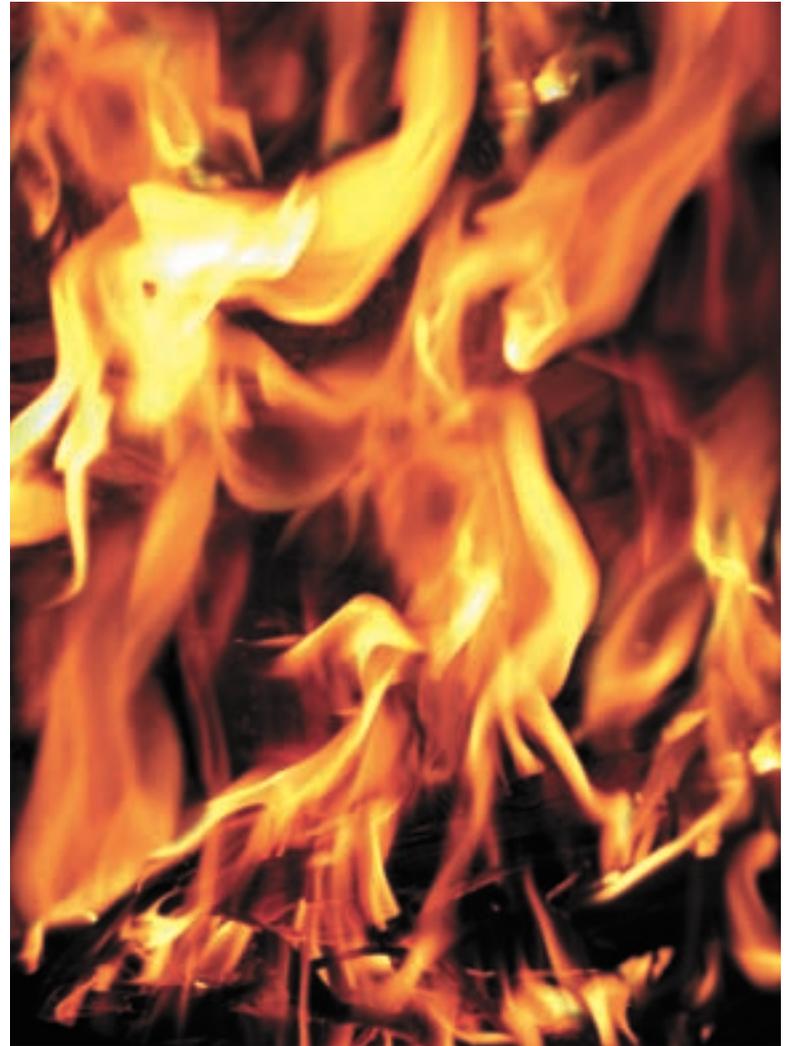
“Taking care of burn patients requires delicate care and a compassionate team of healers,” Dr. Cooper says, adding treating youngsters with burn injuries is extremely difficult, but ultimately rewarding.

The hospital’s 10-bed unit admitted nearly 500 burn patients in 2011. Approximately 170 of them were children.

The comprehensive approach taken by the clinical team is viewed as a natural extension of the hospital’s trauma services, with most burn patients admitted from the Emergency Department.

The burn-trauma room in the new Elizabeth A. Connelly Emergency Trauma Center provides the burn team with everything necessary to provide care for all types of burn patients who enter through the Emergency Department.

“Everything we need is at our finger tips. When a burn patient is brought into the Emergency Department, everyone knows where to re-



port and exactly what their role is. It’s almost muscle memory,” says Dr. Cooper.

The helipad is what makes the burn center truly a regional resource, and proved essential in the evacuation of burn patients during Hurricane Irene.

“We recently supported a Coast Guard rescue operation bringing an injured seaman here for life-saving care,” says Dr. Cooper.

Since opening in 1998, the center’s staff pursues a true-team concept that includes anesthesiology, pediatrics, nursing, psychiatry, re-

habilitation medicine, pulmonary care services, and case management.

“We are constantly examining and improving their process,” says Marc Tempesta, administrative director of burn services.

Dr. Cooper says the future of the burn center lies in its past.

“We’re beginning to look back through our case findings to publish our experiences with our colleagues in the burn community,” he adds. “This type of information sharing allows the burn community to care for patients the world over.”

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