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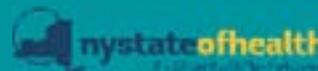
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Letter from the publisher

Desperate need of love

I'm pretty sure it was more than St. Valentine's Day that prompted a celebration of love in the month of February. Living in the Northeast means that by now we are sick and tired of winter and are looking forward to anything to help us feel warm and nurtured. Just like holiday lights at Winter Solstice, love and hearts and chocolate candy sounds pretty darned good in early February.

As we read the horrible news headlines emerging around the globe, one has little doubt that this world is in desperate need of love. We read about the horrors of children whose childhoods are sabo-



taged by an array of devastation. We pale with disbelief that any child's reality could be so shocking and so devoid of love that in its place is obscenity. Yet we also know these are truths and that the headlines don't lie.

Knowing these horrendous truths should prompt all of us who are largely blessed with prosperity, health, and opportunity, the means and skill to be profound nurturers and love givers/teachers.

We have mused on this topic of love in many ways in this issue. We have of course pointed out events around town that will help us celebrate the Cupid in us all and we

have naturally written about ways to love better and more successfully. Perhaps more importantly, we have attempted to talk about methods for teaching love to our children. We have had experts in this topic give us some sound direction to find some keys to the process. We have even touched on the topic of in-laws and it's not just comedians who understand the significance of that source of possible friction.

In thinking about love, I myself, have pondered the difficulty of letting go as well as holding on. Sometimes the better expression of love is in not being active, but in stepping back and watching from afar. For me and for most "empty-nesters" not being the parent who is loving up close anymore is hav-

ing to learn a new way of operating through this magical thing we call love. When to give and when not to becomes our new mantra and modus operandi.

Enjoy this crazy winter month and have fun in the snow and ice. For sure, we will be getting it. It's February in the Northeast. Be joyful and love each other. As Lennon and McCartney said "Love is the Answer." Without a doubt.

Thanks for reading.

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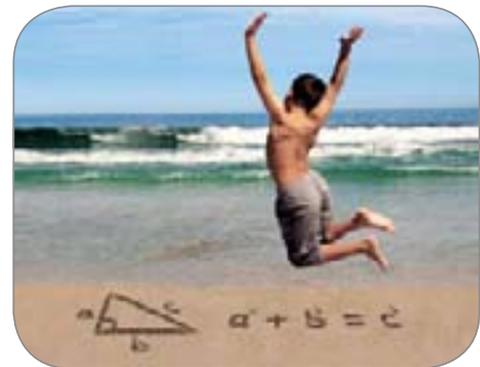
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Simple ways to show your kids LOVE

BY GAYLA GRACE

Your kids know you love them, right? I'm sure they could still use a few extra strokes or simple reminders of how important they are to you. Try some new ways this month to say, "I love you."

- Surprise them with a new game on Saturday morning. Enjoy donuts and hot chocolate while learning to play the game. Be sure to include the whole family.

- Tell them the story of their birth. Show pictures of how they looked as a newborn, and talk about who came to visit in the beginning. Make sure they know how excited you were when they entered your life.

- Love them despite their faults. Offer them grace freely and often.

- Find a unique quality about each of your children and praise them

for it. Whether it's a sensitive spirit toward a sibling or a quick-to-forgive gesture toward friends, tell them how it makes them special.

- Indulge in a child-specific treat, and enjoy some one-on-one time together. Ask for input and make plans ahead so they know it's a special occasion.

- Compliment your child in front of another adult. Be specific with an example of good behavior as you beam with pride.

- Praise their efforts, not just results. Don't expect perfection on every chore or straight-As on every report card. Let them know you notice when they do their best.

- Let them pick their favorite book and read to them, even when you don't want to.

- Play inside together on a rainy day. Make forts with chairs and blankets or play a game of hide-and-seek.

- Accompany them to walk the dog. Ask about their day at school or a budding friendship. Listen more than you talk.

- Allow them to be messy. Play with finger paints and Play-Doh. Go outside and spray Silly String on each other.

- Display their artwork on your refrigerator or window. Talk about what a great job they did and how you love to look at it every day.

- Put a surprise in their lunch. Include a note that says, "I love you."

- Get off social media and completely tune in when they're talking.

Refrain from multi-tasking and focus on their needs.

- Patiently help them with homework. Don't raise your voice when you have to explain it one more time.

- Ask for their ideas when you plan your next vacation. Look at fun places to visit on the computer and dream together for future trips.

- Sit under the stars and talk about the beauty of god's creation.

- Take off your serious hat and make them laugh. Tell jokes or watch a funny movie together. Tickle them until they cry.

- Offer a no-rules day. Let your kids stay in their pjs all day and eat and play whatever they want.

- Ask your child to sing to you. Join in and finish the song as a duet. Let your child know that you love hearing her beautiful voice.

- Surprise them with a simple gift through the mail such as a comic book, a glow-in-the-dark pencil, or their favorite player's card. Include a note of "I love you."

- Make s'mores around the fire pit or roast marshmallows in the fireplace. Include a cup of hot cocoa or favorite beverage with it.

- Start fun traditions for holidays and birthdays that your child can look forward to as a family.

- Get to know their friends and encourage healthy friendships. Take everyone out for a movie night or bowling night once in a while.

- Be their biggest fan. Let them experiment with sporting activities, music lessons, and other extracurricular activities. Cheer them on as they seek to find what fits for them.

- Allow them to be different from you.

- Treat them with respect. Don't interrupt when they're talking. Ask for their opinion as often as possible and include them in family decisions as they get older.

- Hug, kiss, and shower them with physical affection every day. Tell them at least once a day, "I love you."

Books to help your kids feel loved

"You Are Special" by Max Lucado
 "Little Things Long Remembered: Making Your Children Feel Special Every Day" by Susan Newman

"101 Ways to Make Your Child Feel Special" by Vicki Lansky

"Oh, The Places You'll Go" by Dr. Seuss

As a freelance journalist, Gayla Grace loves sharing experiences to encourage other parents. She is thankful for her five children, who love her despite her not-so-perfect parenting.



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Falling in love again

Make time for
romance with
your spouse
— over and
over again

BY CAROLYN WATERBURY-
TIEMAN

As Valentine's Day rolls around again, I find myself reflecting on love relationships in general and marriage in particular. You may be wondering why I am writing about marriage in a parent resource magazine. The answer is simple: the model for marriage (or any committed relationship) we provide for our children has implications for generations to come.

The intricate connection between marriage and parenting can perhaps best be illustrated by comparing a family to a mobile. If you have ever carefully observed a mobile, you probably noticed that all the connec-

tions make it impossible to touch one piece without moving all the others. Some may teeter wildly while others barely quiver, but they all move. The same is true of families. What affects a person in one relationship will affect all of her other relationships. In short, your parenting will be affected by your marriage and vice versa.

I have been puzzling over the question of why we assume dating and courtship are active and stimulating, whereas marriage is passive and routine? Most wedding ceremonies are chock full of action words — promises to love, honor, cherish, support, nurture. So far, I haven't attended a wedding in which one of the vows was, "I promise to become less attractive, less affectionate, uncom-

municative, distant, and to take thee for granted for as long as we both shall live."

All too often, I see couples investing more time, energy, thought, and money on planning and preparing for their wedding day than they will ever spend on their relationship again. Maybe we need to require that couples be married for at least a year, better yet five years, before they get a wedding. If only we were as committed to creating lifelong, satisfying relationships as we are to throwing perfect weddings! Then maybe all our talk about the importance, value, and even sacredness of marriage would be more than just talk.

One of the most common excuses for a marriage gone stale is lack of time. Well, I'm here to tell you that courting couples have the same 24 hours in their day as married couples. Courting couples are often full-time students who hold jobs, or are both employed full time, or employed full time and have children. Married couples who complain of having no time for each other somehow find time to chat and text or do lunch with friends or co-workers, watch television, surf the net, and participate in social media.

Clearly, what has changed are a

couple's priorities, not the amount of time available. When you care about someone, you make time to let them know it. If only couples would work as hard to keep each other as they did to get each other in the first place. The key word here being "work." Every one of us who has ever been involved in a committed relationship knows how to court. We must have been fairly good at it at one time. There is no good reason for stopping. Marriage doesn't extinguish the desire to be courted.

As a culture, we are in love with falling in love. Unfortunately, this obsession with falling in love is not conducive to long-term, committed relationships like marriage. But perhaps it could be if we changed the rules a bit. We tend to believe that falling in love with a person can happen only once. Then when you fall out of love with that person, you move on to the next. The fact is, you don't have to fall out of love to fall in love. I have personally fallen in love, on numerous occasions, with the same man: my husband of 29 years. Each time has been different, surprising, exciting, and deeply satisfying.

Falling in love is easy. Staying in love is the real challenge. Here are a few suggestions for meeting the challenge:

Continue becoming yourself. I once heard a university provost say, "Becoming is superior to being." "Being" describes a static state, while "becoming" recognizes the active, evolving nature of the self. Becoming also suggests that the process is one over which we have control. Take responsibility for knowing what your needs are, for communicating them to others, and for getting them met. Your spouse is not capable of knowing or responsible for fulfilling all your needs. And the only way he can know what you need or want is if you tell him. Have realistic expectations for yourself and others. Remember, the only person you can change is yourself. Continue becoming the best version of yourself.

Learn and practice effective communication. Increase your feeling word vocabulary. The more accurately you can identify your feelings, the more likely you are to effectively express them and get the associated needs met. Accept conflict as a natural part of any intimate relationship. Arguing does not have to be destructive.

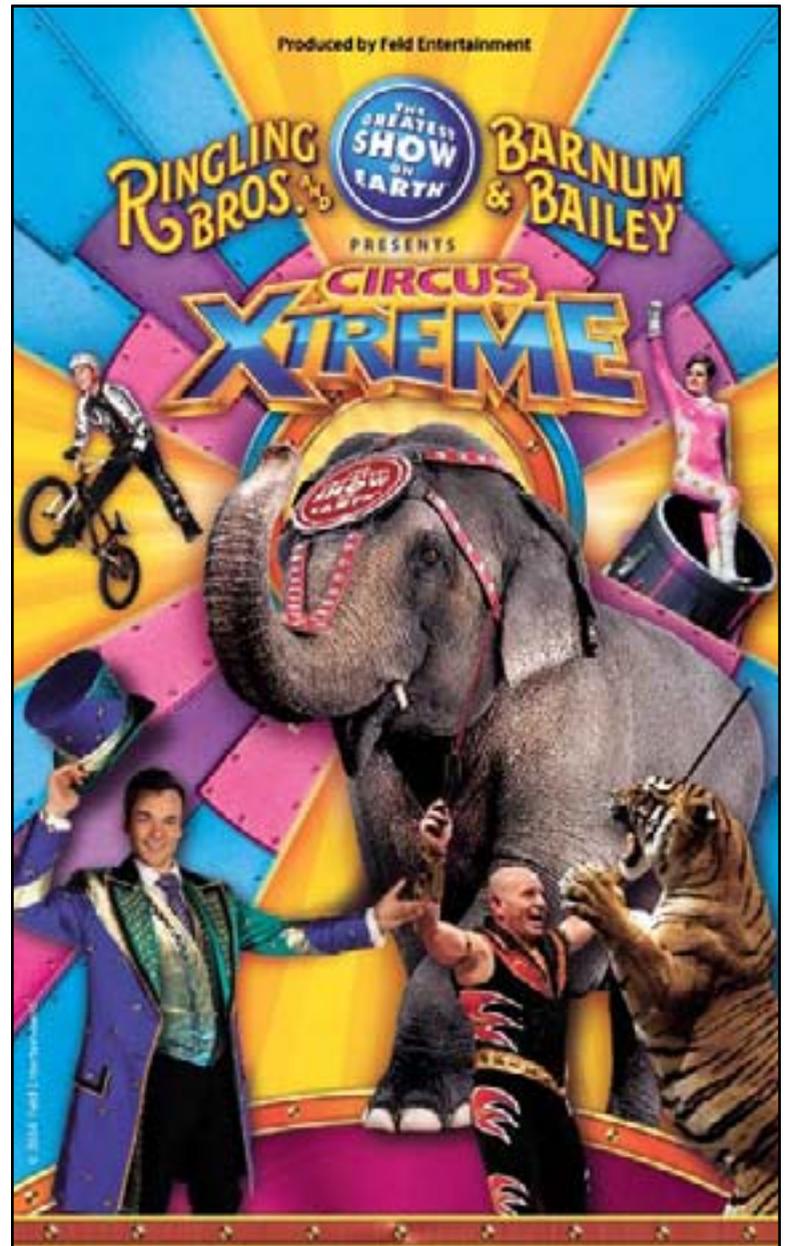
Learn and practice rules for fighting fair. Learn and practice the steps for problem solving. First and foremost, identify and define the problem. The more accurately you define the problem, the more likely you are to arrive at a mutually agreed upon, effective solution. (If you discover issues in your marriage that you are not sure how to address, get professional help. Marital therapy is not restricted to couples with serious problems. Seek help before what is simply irritating becomes a crisis.)

Revisit your courtship. Research has shown that one characteristic of couples in lasting marriages is a fond recollection of their earliest times together — their meeting and courtship. Take time to recall how you met and what you did to attract one another in the first place. If it worked then, chances are it will work now. Expressing appreciation, noticing when your partner looks especially attractive, leaving notes, holding hands, calling just to say hello — all those little things you did when you were courting are just as important now as they were then.

Create opportunities for falling in love. Schedule time to spend together regularly. Spur-of-the-moment outings are lovely, but don't depend on them happening in the fast-paced lives we live. Take a walk and talk. Learn how to do something new as a couple. Choose a book and agree to read and discuss it. Better yet, read aloud to one another. Time together doesn't have to be spontaneous or expensive to be meaningful.

Relationships that last involve two people committed to spending a lifetime falling in love again. So that is my wish for you this Valentine's Day. May you look for opportunities and find reasons to fall in love with one another over and over for as long as you both shall live. You and your children will reap the rewards.

Carolyn Waterbury-Tieman has degrees in Child Development, Family Studies, and Marriage and Family Therapy. Waterbury-Tieman has been married for 29 years and has two sons, ages 24 and 14. She spent 15 years in various agencies and clinics as a family therapist and parent educator and has written extensively on the topic of parenting. To read more, visit www.aparent4life.com or follow A Parent for Life on Facebook. To contact her, please e-mail parent4life@yahoo.com.



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Learning to love your mother-in-law ...or daughter-in-law!

How to make
the most of a
relationship
with a bad
reputation

BY JAN PIERCE

Recently, I sent a list of six questions to my women friends asking about their relationship with their mother-in-law or their daughter-in-law. The answers came back almost immediately, telling me this is a hot topic.

I remember the day my son announced his engagement. I was thrilled — just filled with happiness for him and his intended bride. But soon after came the realization that I'd be a mother-in-law. I wasn't quite as thrilled.

Why? Well, to be honest, mothers-in-law have a bad reputation. They are the butt of jokes about their heavy hand, their unwanted advice, and their tendency to see

no wrong in their precious sons, even when they're acting like rats. How to combat the stereotype? How to do better?

One place to begin in understanding this uncertain relationship is to think of our own nuclear families. Ideally, relationships between parents and children are based on a foundation of unconditional love. We love our parents and they love us. We love our children and they love us. But even in this most natural of relationships, there are tensions. Add to that a merging of two different family backgrounds and traditions, and the room for misunderstanding and animosity is multiplied many times.

So what were the findings? What themes ran through all the success-

ful relationships and what trouble spots reared their ugly heads over and over?

Here are the six questions I asked. You might want to jot down some answers of your own.

- If you have a good relationship with your mother-in-law or daughter-in-law, name three reasons why.

- If there are problems in the relationship, give the general areas of tension, e.g. parenting, holidays, communication, etc.

- Name three areas that might be "touchy" in the relationship.

- When you experience tension or misunderstandings, what helps? Conversation, heart-to-hearts, letting it go? Other?

- Talk about the role of advice in your relationship. Do you appreciate it? Feel confident in giving it? Hate it?

- What would be the ideal in-law relationship in your opinion?

The Findings

Not surprisingly, the most successful relationships were built on mutual trust and understanding. Many younger women spoke of uncertainty and lack of confidence in their role as daughters-in-law in their early years of marriage. As they were learning to be a wife, they also had to take on the responsibility of a relationship with a woman they barely knew. Those who developed a positive relationship, even a friendship, went through a time of testing, learning to trust, and deciding to "let it

Tips for daughters-in-law

- Allow your mother-in-law to continue to play a role in her son's life. She's earned it.

- Know that strong relationships take time to build. In the meantime, be willing to let things go for the sake of a future relationship.

- Don't assume your mother-in-law will be just like your own mother (or any other person you know).

- As much as possible, keep conversation positive, free of gossip, and respectful.

- Agree to disagree on touchy topics.
- Appreciate efforts to help even if you have to set boundaries.

- Learn to listen to advice without necessarily taking it.

- Be patient. You may one day become a mother-in-law.

Tips for mothers-in-law

- Accept the fact that your son has chosen another woman to love and respect.

- Display love and affection honestly. Know it may take some time for the relationship to mature.

- Overlook flaws or failings in your daughter-in-law. Try to remember what it was like to be a new wife.

- Speak positive things to her and about her.

- Understand she is young and may change some of her opinions and habits.

- Refrain from giving unsolicited advice, even if you're "right."

- Be supportive and willing to help if needed.

- Be patient. You were once a young, inexperienced woman.

Top
Tips



go” when there was the possibility of misunderstanding words or circumstances.

One of the loveliest answers I got was from a woman in her 50s who spoke of accepting her mother-in-law just as she is — a quirky, sometimes inappropriate, and seemingly unloving woman. She has learned to accept strange, random re-gifts rather than store-bought ones, she has learned to understand the woman will not play the role of a loving grandmother to her children, but still she determined to love her as she is and not as she wishes she would be.

Another young woman spoke of feeling offended and even attacked by her mother-in-law when she received unwanted advice and criticism about things such as time management, finances, and discipline of her children.

The solution to this relationship in jeopardy came when the husband stepped up and stood with his wife. Once the wife felt affirmed, she was free to see words of advice in a better light, not as condemnation, but as alternate choices and ones she was free to follow or ignore. The key was not feeling ganged up on by a mother-and-son combo.

Almost universal was the concept of mutual respect. Respect doesn't mean taking advice or believing the same ways. It doesn't mean managing another's behavior or changing their personality. What it does mean is letting the other person be themselves, warts and all.

I'd have to add that kindness and a sense of humor go a long way in any new or awkward relationship. Giving the benefit of the doubt relieves the tension of perceived competitive or jealous ambitions, the tendency to judge or be judged, and the possibility of offending without meaning to. Many pitfalls are avoided if both women see the other through eyes of love and acceptance, ascribing positive motives to their sometimes less-than-admirable behaviors.

In general, the answers to the six-question survey were heartfelt — the topic mattered to the women who answered.

Very few reported a perfectly smooth road to a healthy relationship, but rather they learned over time to build a friendship based on acceptance, kindness, and love.

Jan Pierce is a retired teacher and freelance writer specializing in education, parenting, and family-life. Find her at www.janpierce.net.

Pediatric dentists

Why growing teeth need a specialist

BY DR. TANESHA FRANCIS

As someone who specializes in the treatment and care of little people's teeth, parents often ask me how important it is to take children to a pediatric dentist. In fact, many don't realize that this is an option in the first place.

Yes, there are options! There are dentists, like me, who specialize in the unique needs of infants, children, and young teens' teeth. Alternatively, there are family dentists who are qualified to care for patients of all ages.

Naturally, I believe that pediatric dentists are the way to go when parents have the option, and here are my reasons:

Teeth development in children

Think 6 plus 6! Generally speaking, a baby's first teeth will begin to break through at 6 months; those

teeth will stay put until about age 6, when they begin to fall out and be replaced by permanent, adult teeth. Although children lose their first set of teeth, poor oral care in those early years can lead to issues and disease that lasts throughout life.

A pediatric dentist specializes in instructing families on how to care for teeth before there are even teeth!

Parents often think of troublesome sicknesses such as asthma and allergies; however, dental problems such as early childhood caries (an infectious disease also known as baby bottle tooth decay or bottle rot) are five times as common.

What sets pediatric dentists apart

Pediatric dentists have a lot to learn! Unlike general dentists, pediatric dentists are required to com-

plete up to three additional years of specialty training in the unique needs of children's teeth.

Some of the topics we study that are unique to working with children include behavior management, pediatric pharmacology, interceptive orthodontics, speech, minor oral surgery, sedation, traumatic injuries, dental care for children with developmental disabilities, and more.

Since the dental journey includes growing a first set, losing them, and then growing an adult set, there's a lot to keep up with during each stage.

We specialize in helping families make it a healthy journey from the start. We also offer key advice on maintenance through those critical candy-and-sweets-eating years.

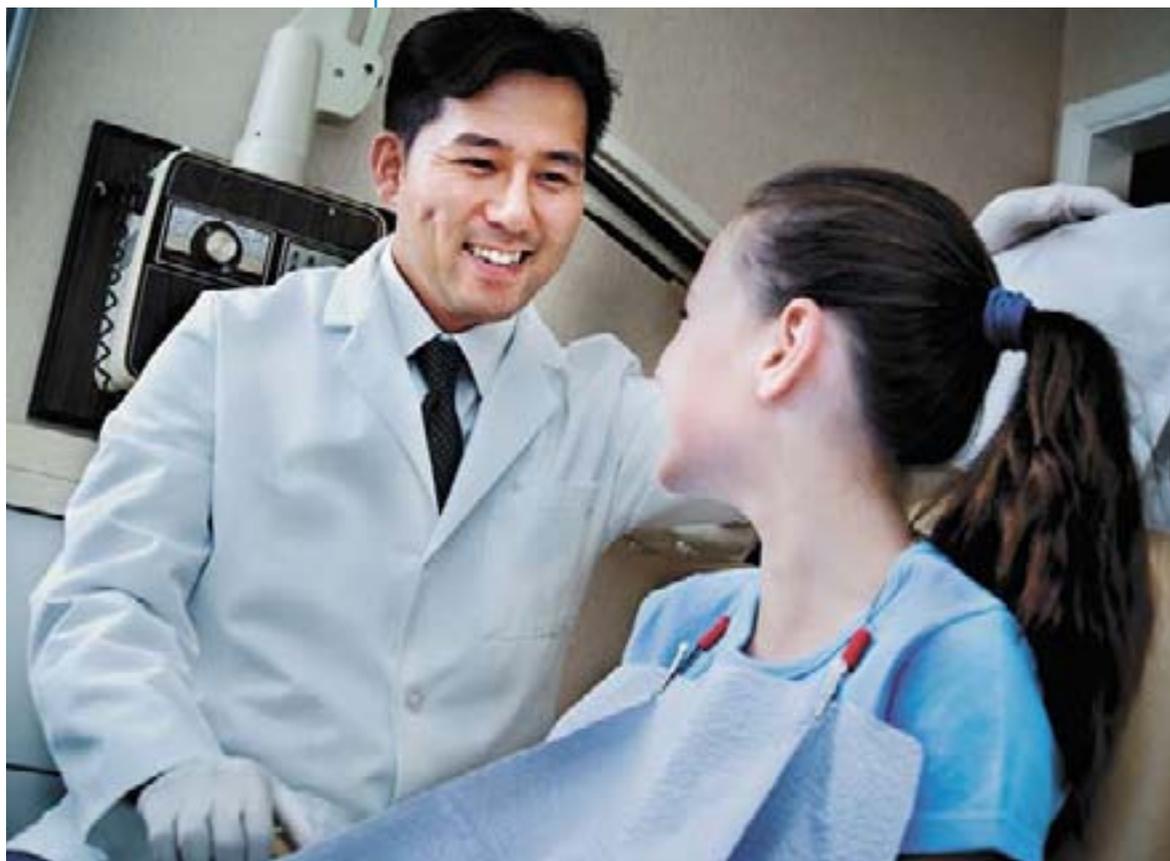
Specialized treatment options

Parents know that taking care of children — especially health exams like regular dentist visits — can be stressful at times. Pediatric dentists are great at knowing how to make visits as painless and pleasant as possible. Our offices are full of color, activities, and warmth that can make kids' experiences fun and educational, too. Dentists often recommend dental appliances and corrective treatments during the childhood and adolescent years.

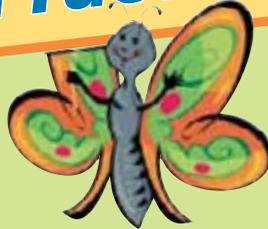
We also have the most up-to-date knowledge about treatment options and advancements in the field for children. And in the end, children and teens are all about the "cool factor" with a pediatric dentist, our finger is on the pulse of colorful and engaging tools and appliances that will keep them interested in their own dental health.

We all want the best for children. When it comes to keeping their mouths, teeth, and gums healthy for the long haul, a pediatric dentist just makes sense!

Dr. Francis can be found at Park Slope Kids Dental Care [150 Fourth Ave. between Douglas and Butler streets in Park Slope, (718) 488-0200].



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Since 1976 the goal at Staten Island Pediatric Dentistry is to provide optimum dental care to your child in a friendly environment. As pediatric dentists we are dedicated to the oral health of children from infancy through the teenage years including those children with special needs. We have special training which allows us to provide the most up-to-date and thorough treatment for a wide variety of children's dental problems. We can spot problems when they are small and manageable. We recommend that children begin routine dental treatment and preventive services by age 18 months. At Staten Island Pediatric Dentistry we believe that orthodontics plays an important role in improving oral health, and in achieving balance and harmony between teeth and face for a beautiful healthy smile. An attractive smile enhances a child's self esteem, which may actually improve the quality of the child's social environment.



Staten Island Pediatric Dentistry



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Dental health for kids

February is National
Children's Dental
Health Month

BY JAMIE LOBER

The Department of Health for New York State says that it is important for children to develop good oral health habits at an early age because practicing healthy habits can prevent or reduce tooth decay in infants and children.

"Parents often do not think of the value of what they are doing for their kid's oral health at home until an issue arises," said Dr. Jonathan Shenkin, dentist and spokesman for the American Dental Association.

Teeth tend to appear between 6 to 8 months-old and by age 3, all 20 primary teeth should be in the mouth. Starting around age 6, baby teeth are replaced by permanent teeth, but it's important to remember that both sets of teeth matter.

"When teeth first come they are exposed to saliva and the minerals that exist in the saliva and fluoride that enables minerals to be deposited completely into the tooth," said Shenkin.

You have to give the teeth time to become strong. Diet plays a big role, and soda can be one of the worst culprits.

"If you are continually consuming sugars throughout the day you are constantly reducing the acid level in your mouth



“It is important that parents monitor toothbrushing until kids tie their own shoelaces because they do not have the manual dexterity to appropriately remove plaque,”

making teeth more susceptible to decay processes, so it is about the frequency and consumption,” said Shenkin.

“Poor oral hygiene combined with poor nutrition can cause tooth decay in kids that could be easily avoided.”

Set an example of how children should take care of their teeth by taking care of your own.

“If you do not have appropriate behaviors that improve oral health you put your kid at great risk for developing disease,” said Shenkin.

To do so you’ll need to have the right tools.

“A big change we made in the last year and a half is recommending fluoride toothpaste for children as soon as the first tooth erupts in the mouth,” said Shenkin. “We used to say age 2 was the first time you would provide fluoride toothpaste, but we changed it based on the amount you use and the age of the child.”

And you should know your measurements.

“We recommend at the eruption of the first tooth to start using a piece of toothpaste the size of a piece of rice to help parents visualize the amount, which is extremely small to minimize ingestion. And then at age 3 we recommend a pea-size amount,” said Shenkin.

Your child should be brushing twice a day.

“Morning and night is imperative and it is not just about putting the toothbrush in the mouth, it is about removing the plaque on the teeth and the sugars that cause the decay,” said Shenkin. “It is important that parents monitor toothbrushing until kids tie their own shoelaces, which is at 6 to 7 years of age, because they do not have the

manual dexterity to appropriately remove plaque,” said Shenkin.

Sometimes the right toothbrush can make a big difference.

“Electric toothbrushes can inspire children to brush their teeth and they do a better job if they are excited about the process,” said Shenkin.

You’ll also need a trustworthy dentist who can help with the cleaning.

“We typically recommend at age 1 or within 6 months of the eruption of the first tooth to have the first visit to find out what kind of risk factors exist,” said Shenkin. “We recommend seeing the dentist based on your risk level so some kids go once a year and some need to go 4 times a year.”

The dentist may have some individualized recommendations that consider your child’s needs.

“Parents do not realize the importance of dental sealants at the age of 6,” said Shenkin. Evidence shows they work wonders. “The most decayed tooth in the mouth for all of us is the adult first molar on the biting surface and the most effective way of reducing risk for tooth decay in young kids is to put a dental sealant or a little plastic coating on it to dramatically reduce the incidence of tooth decay,” said Shenkin. It is advised to do that on all permanent molars for kids.

If your child wants sugar, it is best with a meal.

“Do not have sugars in between meals because having it with meals would expand the time period that there are higher levels of acidity in the mouth,” said Shenkin. “Mistakes parents make are putting kids to bed at night with a bottle with fermentable sugars, juices, or milk because it can result in decay.”

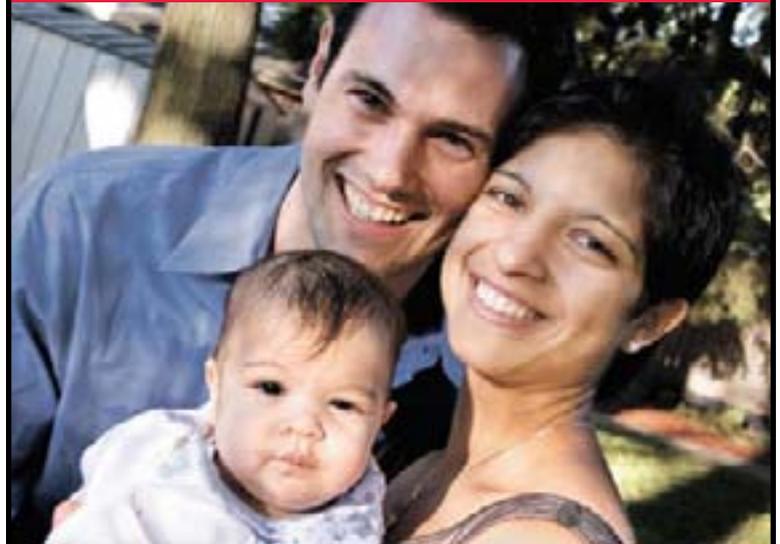
February is National Children’s Dental Health month, making it the perfect time to talk with your child about why taking care of his teeth matters. And it may sound basic, but folks easily overlook the importance of dental health.

“The most important thing we have recognized is how kids can come to the dentist earlier to reduce disease levels, educate parents, and redirect behaviors in the household,” said Shenkin.

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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BEHAVIOR & BEYOND

DR. MARCIE BEIGEL

Ending a tantrum before it even starts

Kids are like sponges; they absorb everything. Even when you think they are fully immersed in the latest version of “My Little Pony,” a piece of their mind is watching every step you take and listening to every word that comes out of your mouth. Your behavior is a model for their behavior. This is both a good thing and something to be concerned about.

If you’re dealing with tantrums in your kids, I’m going to have to ask this question: what behaviors have you been modeling? I would bet there are times when you lose your cool and engage in behaviors that could be defined as an adult tantrum, including: yelling, screaming, grabbing, and pounding your fist against a table. If your “small being” (my word for “kids”) is in the room, she is learning that those behaviors are appropriate ways to deal with a challenging situation.

The absolute best way to stop your child from having tantrums is to stop throwing your own tantrums! That’s right — stop your adult tantrum!

Stop yelling at your kid when he accidentally spills juice on his shirt. Stop yanking your daughter’s arm to leave the park when she simply won’t get off the swings. Stop rolling your eyes when you get annoyed at the slow cashier at the supermarket. Most certainly, stop fighting with the other adults in your home.

Yes, this is all *much* harder to do than to say, but it’s a critical key to stop explosive behavior in your child. You will still get angry, frustrated, or annoyed in countless situations. Changing behavior is not about changing or denying how you feel. It is about changing your behavior while acknowledging your feelings.

What will you do with those big emotions? Right now the tantrum is letting emotions dictate your behavior. Control your behavior in the face of challenging or overwhelming emotions. I’m not asking you to deny your feelings when they occur.

You know the usual suggestions: take a deep breath, walk away until you’re calm, close your eyes and count to 10. Start applying these techniques — or any relaxation techniques — in your life. It’s not important what you do, but rather that you do something to avoid the explosive behavior. Need motivation to make this change? Do it for your children! Model the behavior you want them to have now and in the future.

Changing behavior is hard. Before you ask your kiddo to change her behavior, you need to change yours. You can’t expect your child to handle her emotions better than you do. Start putting the tools in place to make it happen. My favorite is actually talking (calmly) about my feelings. This shows your small being that emotions don’t dictate behavior. Say something like, “I’m so frustrated that I am going to be late because this line is moving so slow.” Maybe even take the next step and say, “Let’s

find a way to take my mind off the time. How about we sing a song (or practice our spelling words or play I-Spy)?” This models what you want your kids to do when they are upset, tell you how they are feeling and do something to change it.

Be the model for the behavior you want to experience. Talking about how to have good behavior will only go so far. Your actions truly makes a difference!

Dr. Marcie Beigel is a behavioral therapist based in Brooklyn. She has worked with thousands of families for more than 15 years, and has condensed her observations into her practice and programs.

For more on her, visit www.BehaviorAndBeyond.net.



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www.olss-si.org

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www.sacredheartschools.org

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www.stadalbertschool.com

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www.stannschoolstatenisland.com

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Catholic Schools

DIRECTORY

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www.sjva.org

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Aftercare

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50 Maguire Avenue
(718) 356-3344
www.sjstparish.org/school

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Aftercare, Band, Choir

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3560 Richmond Road
(718) 979-8815
www.stpatricksi.org

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Art, Choir, Before & Aftercare, CYO
Sports

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www.stpeterstpaulsi.org

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www.saintteresaschool.com

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Marist High School was founded in 1954 by the Marist Brothers; Marist High School is a private Catholic, coeducational, four-year college preparatory school, which is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Marist is located in Bayonne New Jersey. This urban community is directly west of New York City and reflects broad ethnic and economic diversity. Marist High School offers three academic tracks: Advanced Placement, Honors and College Preparatory. A Study Skills Program is integrated into the freshman curriculum. Likewise, a Writing Program is incorporated into the sophomore year. The New England Prep SAT program is incorporated into all year levels. Electives are offered in a variety of departments including art, music, science, technology, and social studies. Seniors may elect to take high school and/or college online courses or an Independent Study under a faculty mentor. Marist also offers a variety of Athletics and Extracurricular Activities.

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- ✦ College credit opportunities available through numerous Advanced Placement, St. John's University, and Syracuse University courses
- ✦ Impressive college placements in which the class of 2014 earned \$23,279,608 in scholarships to top colleges, including Cornell University, Princeton University, University of Pennsylvania, Macaulay Honors College at CUNY, Boston University, College of the Holy Cross, University of Notre Dame, US Naval Academy, US Military Academy at West Point, and US Coast Guard Academy
- ✦ A robust college guidance and internship program (see www.xaverian.org/ipax for a full list of internship partners)
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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Pet safety in winter

The frigid temperatures around the country are not just inconvenient; they can be incredibly dangerous for our pets. Experts say frostbite can set in in less than 15 minutes, and animals are not exempt from this, despite their furry coats.

Hypothermia is the most dangerous hazard when the weather gets this cold. Signs of hypothermia include "violent shivering followed by listlessness, a rectal temperature below 95°F (35°C), weak pulse, lethargy, and coma." It can become fatal very fast.

It goes without saying that every dog and cat needs to be indoors during cold temperatures like these. I would argue, however, that dogs and cats need to be indoors during any cold temperatures. If you are cold, they are cold, simple as that. Out-

doors is no place for pets.

Here are 10 cold-weather tips for your pets:

Anti-freeze can be fatal

Anti-freeze is poisonous. Even a lick or two on a quick walk can add up to distress for your dog. Keep an eye out for any liquid on sidewalks and steer clear of it. Also, do not let your dogs roam freely where you cannot monitor their activity. If there is any doubt that your dog may have ingested anti-freeze, take him to the vet immediately.

Pay extra attention to puppies

Puppies are more susceptible to the cold than dogs due to their tender age. They will suffer from the harsh realities of the cold quicker and should not spend much time outdoors in harsh weather conditions. In addition, they may have some issues potty training during cold spells. Understandably, puppies may have more accidents in this weather.

Cars and feral cats

Cats are particularly vulnerable to the cold and can freeze to death. They are also crafty and smart and will do what they have to do to stay warm and alive. When left outside, many cats seek to find warmth in car hoods and engines, and can easily be killed when cars are turned on. Take a peek under your hood and tires before turning on your car.

Leash and collar

When walking puppies and dogs, make sure their collars are secure and never let them off the leash. Getting lost in sub-zero temps is deadly. Their scent trails are compromised in the snow, and frostbite and hypothermia can set in quickly, leaving them unable to find their way back home.

Frostbite

Frostbite most often occurs on the thin, exposed areas of a dog such as their ears, tail, scrotum, and paws. The skin may look blue or white, but will appear red and inflamed when circulation comes back. The surface

of the skin may peel and eventually turn black. Use warm (not hot) compresses on the affected areas and then seek medical care.

Cars can be death traps

It's worth remembering that a cold car can be just as deadly as a hot car for a dog. They can freeze to death in a vehicle with no heat. Not only are they already at freezing temps, but cars can act as a refrigerator, keeping all the coldness inside.

Stay away from salt

Be on the lookout for salt on sidewalks and driveways, which can irritate and even burn your pup's paws. Wipe their paws off with a paper towel or warm cloth when you return from a walk.

Check on neighboring pets

It's imperative to remember that if we see an animal left outside in this weather, we must report it to the proper authorities ASAP. Dogs left outside in cold temperatures suffer needlessly and can easily die. It is a form of abuse. We are the protectors of animals and need to be vigilant about their well being at all times.

Indoor comfort

When indoors, try to let your dog sleep in a warm spot. Ideally, every dog should have a bed (or share yours) and not sleep on a hardwood floor. Make sure to place the bed away from doors and drafts.

More food

Dogs that are kept outside often need extra food in the winter months to keep warm. If you must keep your dog outside for periods in the daytime (not recommended), make sure you are supplying them with extra calories all day long (and a sheltered, cozy doghouse). And never, ever leave your dogs out at night!

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find Sullivan on her blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.



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D. Cruz for Visit Philadelphia

Family fun in Philly

Full of history
and so close
to New York!

BY SHNIEKA L. JOHNSON

Known as the birthplace of American democracy or, more affectionately, the “city of Brotherly Love” — Philadelphia is just an hour and a half from New York City by train. If you are looking to take a day trip or long weekend for fun family experiences that involve history, arts, and culture, then Philadelphia is the city for you.

From an educational perspective, Philadelphia has a lot to offer, so leave the history textbooks and packets at home. The entire city presents United States history in an experiential way for its visitors, and provides the whole family a compelling way to learn about the

foundation of our country. In fact most of Philadelphia’s historic sites and attractions are free. For instance, the National Historical Park — an urban park that includes famous landmarks and icons, such as Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell — provides a preserved model of history right in the heart of the city. You can also utilize The Constitutional’s maps and guides to embark upon your own self-guided walking tour around historic Philadelphia. The tour goes through a square mile of historic sites, and is a free and fun-filled activity for the entire family. Remember to dress accordingly and wear comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing and shoes.

Philadelphia also offers a lively

arts scene with a young, creative culture in the city. Day and night, you can walk around the city and find treasures like public art, galleries, museums, restaurants, and shops — all of which are located in or within walking distance of downtown. Beginning in the spring of 2015, visitors can purchase a day pass and bike around downtown, when Philadelphia introduces its bike-sharing program, which will include more than 600 bikes at more than 60 stations. A nice alternative to biking (and walking) is the Victorian-style trolleys that travel to most of the notable sites and attractions in the city.

There are a number of places to see and things to do in Philadelphia, including the great cuisine in the

city to experience that stretches far beyond cheesesteaks (although quite delicious). There are also renowned performing arts and museums, and, for sports lovers, there are professional basketball, football, hockey, and baseball teams. There are so many things to see and do, and you'll want to visit again and again.

Provided below is a list of 10 of my favorites things to do in Philadelphia.

Franklin Institute

Interactive exhibits, touchable attractions, and science exploration is abound at the Franklin Institute. A favorite component of the permanent collection is "The Sports Challenge," which illustrates the physics of sports with strategically placed multimedia.

[222 N. 20th St. between Race and Winter streets, (215) 448-1200, www.fi.edu]

Liberty Bell

Considered a symbol of freedom, all are welcomed to view this massive artifact. There are no tickets required to visit the Liberty Bell Center. Please note, visitors must go through security screening.

[526 Market St. at N. Fifth Street, (215) 965-2305, www.nps.gov/inde/liberty-bell-center.htm]

Mural Arts

Founded as an anti-graffiti program in 1984, Mural Arts has become an internationally recognized community-based public arts organization. You and your kids can view contemporary art throughout the city. Take a free tour of the many vibrant murals.

[901 Market St., Level 2, between N. Ninth and S. 10th streets, (215) 925-3633, www.muralarts.org]

National Constitution Center

This museum is an interactive space centered upon the document on which our nation was founded. It is a fun, multimedia experience for the entire family.

[525 Arch St. between N. Fifth and Sixth streets, (215) 409-6700, <http://constitutioncenter.org>]

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Visitors can tour 80 period rooms in this museum space. Free family programs are offered

throughout the calendar year. There is also a trolley shuttle (included in the admission price) to take you to other cultural institutions.

[2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, (215) 763-8100, www.philamuseum.org]

Philadelphia Zoo

The 42-acre Victorian garden was the first zoo chartered in the United States. With its petting zoo and tree house, it is always a great family-friendly outing.

[3400 W. Girard Ave. off N. 34th Street, (215) 243-1100 www.philadelphiazoo.org]

Philly Phlash

Service returning in the spring, the shuttle costs \$2 per person per ride (\$5 for an all-day pass). Some children (4 and under) and seniors are free.

[20 stops through Philadelphia, (484) 881-3574, <http://phlvisitorcenter.com>]

Please Touch Museum

The 38,000-square-foot space boasts interactive exhibits for children of all ages. Kids are encouraged to dress up, create, laugh, and to play.

[4231 Avenue of the Republic Memorial Hall between W. and E. roads, (215) 581-3181, www.pleasetouchmuseum.org]

Rodin Museum

There are more than 120 sculptures, drawings, paintings, and studies of Rodin on display at this museum. Several large pieces are on view in the garden and there is a nearby reflecting pool.

[2157 Benjamin Franklin Parkway and N. 22nd Street, (215) 763-8100, www.rodinmuseum.org]

Reading Terminal Market

Offering a variety of foods, the market showcases more than 80 vendors. Kids will like watching the cooking demonstrations and the other events taking place in the market.

[51 N. 12th St. at Arch Street, (215) 922-2317, www.readingterminalmarket.org/]

...

Shnieka Johnson is an education consultant and freelance writer. She is based in Manhattan where she resides with her husband and son. Contact her via her website: www.shniekajohnson.com.

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JUST WRITE MOM

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Save-at-home mom

Deciding to stay at home as a mom is a huge undertaking, and not one taken lightly. Many are just not able to accomplish it financially, and not everyone wants to, but if you are already a stay-at-home mom or think you might want to be and may possibly be able to swing it financially, consider that there are quite a few ways to save money.

In my career, I have been a full-time worker, part-timer, and freelancer, and I've also been a stay-at-home mom, too.

Here are some of my tips to help you save money:

Shopping

Plan to spend some time planning to shop. Every time I plan out exactly what I will purchase and do my homework by staking out the best deals at the stores, I save money. You can learn a lot of stuff just browsing circulars and websites. For example, did you know that Toys 'R' Us has a "price match guarantee" that not only says if you find an item cheaper at another store, it will match that price, but also if you find it cheaper on ToysRUs.com or BabiesRUs.com, it will also match.

Think ahead

Last-minute shopping equals paying more nearly every single time. When I was working full-time, I lost a lot of money that way. Now that I freelance, I have more time to pick and choose and plan ahead for every holiday and occasion. It also helps to get those reward store cards, and it's only an extra five minutes to fill out the application for them. The next time you visit that store, you'll already have the card and be on your way to earning reward points.

Another tip? If you buy a blouse, shirt or bag you love, ask yourself if anyone on your birthday or holiday gift list would also like it. Then buy another at the sale price. Even if the birthday is months away, you save money. When shopping online, before you place any order, Google the word "coupon" and then "code" along with store's name. Eight out of 10 times, I'll find a code that allows free shipping or a percentage off my order.

Groceries 101

Supermarkets these days can eat your money like no other type of store. When that weekly circular comes to your door, mark off what is on sale and stock up. Note the fine print, however, because sometimes, it will say you must buy three, or four, or five of the items to get the deal. Buy things you'll always need in bulk, but if you only need one of that item over the next six months, it probably isn't a good deal for you.

Cook at home more

When I was working full-time, there were many nights where I'd get home late and we'd order out. Huge money eater! By planning a week's worth of dinner on Sunday night (while perusing your supermarket circular and tailoring the dishes around the sales), you will save.

Small grocery savings tips? Buy a long-term traveling water bottle for your child, instead of weekly juice packs for the lunchbox, and refill at night. When it comes to buying meat, choose the thicker cut pieces, and slice and dice at home. Thinner cuts cost more.

Extra income

If you have the time to take on additional tasks and are looking for some extra income, chat it up at your child's school. Often, working moms are looking for someone local to pick up their kids and watch them for a few hours each day. If you like to write or are good at technology, a quick daily perusal of Mediabistro.com just might result in a gig here and there. There are many of these out there now, especially in blogging and social media.

Consider the instant savings

Even if you don't gain an extra income, just think about all the money you can save from the daily keep up while working. From day-care costs, clothing, and dry cleaning to lunches, dinners, and coffees out (not to mention guilt gifts for the kids), you may be saving more than you think. Some moms report that when they factor in the costs it takes to work outside the home, they almost negate the costs of staying home. And that's where the above supermarket and shopping tips come in handy!

Danielle Sullivan, a mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find Sullivan on her blogs, Just Write Mom and Some Puppy To Love.



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Secrets to earning extra money

Six ways to
earn free
goods, prizes,
and cash

BY ALEXA BIGWARFE

Are you looking for a few ways to either earn some extra cash or receive free products just for trying them out? With a small investment of time, there are plenty of opportunities to earn some cash and products on the side. For free.

Why would companies spend the money to provide free products and rewards? First, it builds trust and loyalty, keeping their custom-

ers returning. And secondly, in 2010 McKinsey and Company released a statistic that 92 percent of consumers trust word of mouth more than any other marketing on products, catapulting the social marketing and word of mouth companies. This creates a win-win situation for companies looking to spread the word about their product, while allowing consumers to try products free of charge.

Six tried and true ways to earn some extra cash, free gifts and other prizes:

Social marketing companies. Also known as “word of mouth” companies, these are a fantastic way to get free goods for your family. Companies like House Party and BzzAgent rely on marketing through word of mouth. So, in exchange for your word of mouth via social marketing platforms, these companies send you full-size sample products to try and tell your friends about.

Online surveys. Take surveys online, share your opinion, and you earn cash and gift cards. Ipsos-I Say (i-say.com) is a great option for anyone who enjoys taking surveys and giving her opinion on products. There are many survey sites out there, but this is my favorite. The surveys cover a wide variety of topics and products. Sometimes you may even review fun products like

new movie previews. The surveys can range from five minutes to 30 minutes, and the reward points reflect the time spent on the survey. You trade your points for rewards including Amazon gift cards, PayPal cash, Visa cards, and more.

Cash for shopping online. It's really that easy. Shop online at the stores you already shop and earn cash. Here are two of many options:

- Ebates is a must if you do a lot of your shopping online. It is free to join, and when you make your first purchase, you will get a \$10 gift card to your choice of a selection of major department stores. The concept is easy. If you're already shopping online at Macy's, Kohl's, the Gap, Amazon, Living Social, and many more stores, you simply log onto ebates and shop via the ebates website. As you shop, you earn a percentage back in cash. You can also receive cash for referring friends and family.

- Sign up and shop through the UPromise site for a percentage back of your purchases. You can also apply for a credit card and receive an additional percentage when you shop with that or use it at one of the participating restaurants or grocery stores. UPromise also offers an online tool — the Turbo Saver, which will prompt you if you are on a web-

Practice your name-dropping

Four popular social marketing companies:

BzzAgent <https://www.bzzagent.com>. Provides products to consumers and facilitates the sharing of the consumer opinions with friends and family via reviews, Facebook posts, photos and videos, blog posts and more.

House Party <http://www.houseparty.com>. Join for free, fill out surveys about the products you use, and then sign up to be selected to host a party at your house. House Party sends all materials needed to host, as well as a “party pack” filled with items for you to share with your

guests. You receive product, coupons, and more. In exchange, you spread the word about these products.

Crowd Tap <http://www.crowdtap.com>. “Tap In” to the products marketed through Crowd Tap by answering surveys. These surveys may or may not result in selection to try products and host parties.

Influenster <http://www.influenster.com>. Gain badges by answering questions and reviewing products you use. Earn points to qualify for a “Vox Box” full of complimentary samples from brands you love.



site of one of its stores to ensure you get your bonus on your purchase.

Coupons for cash programs. These are easy and user-friendly programs. Create your free account and link your grocery store loyalty cards. Earn cash.

- Saving Star is one of my favorite ways to earn cash. The concept is simple. You log onto your account and “activate” any of the savings deals you want. For example, save \$3 when you buy \$10 of Classico sauces before Dec. 31. Your grocery rewards cards are linked, and the website keeps track of your purchases. Once you’ve purchased the \$10 of Classico sauces, \$3 is added into your account. At \$5 or more in your account, you receive a payout. The Saving Star coupons usually align with the current local coupons as well, so you get double coupons and cash in your account. Win-win. It has recently also begun a “Cashback Mall,” which operates like Ebates.

- With Cellfire.com, simply select your coupons and they are automatically loaded to the loyalty card of your choice. It’s an easy way to save money with coupons without having to keep up with any paper coupons.

Rewards programs. Earn cash, gift cards, coupons, free promo codes, and more by saving your rewards codes. You may have noticed the codes for beverage program rewards and diaper rewards on different consumable items. Set up your free account for any of these products online, log in your codes, and exchange the points for coupons, free products, or charitable donations.

Consignment. Do your spring cleaning a little early and get rid of unnecessary items around your house by consigning them. If you are cleaning out children’s clothing and toys, check to see if you have a “Once Upon A Child” consignment store. This store gives you cash upon acceptance of your items. Traditional consignment stores give a percentage of sale price, but it can still be a great way to get rid of unused items and earn some cash.

These are six of many ways to earn or save some money with little to no effort. You may be amazed at what you can get for “free” by investing a little bit of time.

Alexa Bigwarfe is the mother of three. She spends her “free time” finding ways to stretch the budget and earn things for free. Alexa also enjoys writing, shopping, and saving money.

Calendar

FEBRUARY



A stroll through the park

Come and enjoy an outdoor adventure walk at Clove Lake Park on Feb. 17.

Hosted by the Staten Island Museum, families can take a mid-winter break with a hike through the park and a stroll through his-

tory. Wear appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes.

Outdoor Adventure, Feb. 17 from 11 am to 12:30 pm. Free

Clove Lake Park [Martline Ave. Bridge in Clove Lake; (718) 727-1136; www.statenislandmuseum.org

Submit a listing

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

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

SUN, FEB. 1

FURTHER AFIELD

Quilting kids: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Discover the art of using quilts to share stories and symbols. Learn the meanings of some popular West African "adinkra" symbols, then decorate a quilt square to hang at home.

To the Moon: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children discover why some traditions are based on the moon and touch a real rock from outer space.

MON, FEB. 2

ON STATEN ISLAND

Toddler time: Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; www.nypl.org; 11-11:45 am; Free.

Little ones 18 months to 3 years old with a caregiver listen to interactive stories, fingerplay and spend time with other tykes. Pre-registration required.

Baby and me: Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; www.nypl.org; 1:30-2:30 pm; Free.

From birth to 18 months old parents and caregivers share a book, songs and rhymes.

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

Take your child in for a day of reading and fun. Suitable for children 3 to 5 years old.

Homework help: Mariners Harbor Library, 206 South Ave. at Arlington



A walk on the beach

Come and explore the beach in a Winter Beach Walk and workshop on Feb. 18 at The Conference House.

School's out, so give the kids something to do with a walk and workshop in which they'll learn all about the natural shoreline at the historic Conference House. After the outing the

children can make a fun project with found treasures from the shore walk.

The event takes place on Feb. 18 from 11 am to 1 pm and is free.

Conference House [Hylan Boulevard at Satterlee Street in Tottenville, (718) 227-1463; www.conference-house.org]

Place; (212) 621-0690; nypl.org; 5 pm - 6 pm; Free.

Staff and volunteers assist children in grades one to six on assignments.

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

For children 7 to 12 years old.

TUES, FEB. 3

ON STATEN ISLAND

Sewing workshop: Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; www.nypl.org; 3:30-5:30 pm; Free.

Teens 13 to 18 years old explore their designer skills. Registration is required.

Tutoring: New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org; 3:30-5:30 pm; Free.

Students in pre-K through eighth grade get help with math and reading by Staten Island High School volunteers. In-person registration is required.

Kiddie Game Time: Mariners Harbor Library, 206 South Ave. at Arlington Place; (212) 621-0690; nypl.org; 4-5 pm; Free.

Children 6 to 11 years old develop strategic thinking and gaming skills while having fun.

Friendship bracelets: Dongan

WED, FEB. 4

ON STATEN ISLAND

"Charlotte's Web": Center for Performing Arts at CSI, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Morani Street; (718) 982-5678; www.enrichmentthroughthearts.com; 10 am and 11:30 am; \$9.

The classic story of friendship comes to life on the stage as Wilbur the pig learns the most valuable lesson of love from Charlotte the spider. Presented by Enrichment Through the Arts.

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

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

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

Teens enjoy a day of caped crusaders.

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. 5

ON STATEN ISLAND

"Charlotte's Web": 10 am and 11:30 am. Center for Performing Arts at CSI. See Wednesday, Feb. 4.

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

Preschoolers make a fun project to take home.

FRI, FEB. 6

ON STATEN ISLAND

Toddler Time: Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 10:30 am; Free.

Little ones birth to 5 years old with a parent or caregiver.

Fun Fridays: Great Kills Library, 56 Giffords Ln at Margaret Street; (718) 984-6670; www.nypl.org; 3:30-4:30 pm; Free.

Children 5 years and older listen to stories, play games, fun crafts, and sing songs.

SAT, FEB. 7

ON STATEN ISLAND

Scientific Saturdays: Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; 11 am; Free.

Children learn from hands-on experiments.

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

Kathleen Hagen leads tots 18 months to 4 years old with a caregiver in stories, songs, crafts. Registration required. Series 1.

FURTHER AFIELD

To the Moon: 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Feb. 1.

Janice Marie Robinson: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Cultural Connection presents a live performance with "Melodic Magic."

Continued on page 30

Calendar

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

Continued from page 29

This interactive event entertains children of all ages.

SUN, FEB. 8

ON STATEN ISLAND

Explorers of the Wild: Blue Heron Nature Center, 222 Poillon Ave. between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; q; www.nycgovparks.org; 2-2:30 pm; Free.

Explorers 6 to 12 years old learn about the environmentalist Clay Wollney learn about nature.

Owl Prowl: Blue Heron Nature Center, 222 Poillon Ave. between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; www.nycgovparks.org; 6:30-8 pm; Free.

Join Ranger Cliff Hagen and search for resident owls; Flashlights are suggested. Suggested for older children accompanied by an adult.

FURTHER AFIELD

Free to Dance!: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11 am; Free with museum admission.

Children of all ages learn to jump like Pearl, stretch like Alvin Ailey, and be inspired by African-American dancers. RSVP required.

To the Moon: 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Feb. 1.

MON, FEB. 9

ON STATEN ISLAND

Toddler time: 11-11:45 am. Great Kills Library. See Monday, Feb. 2.

Baby and me: 1:30-2:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Monday, Feb. 2.

Wildlife at the library: New Dorp Library, 309 New Dorp Ln at Clawson Street; (718) 351-2977; www.nypl.org; 2:30 pm; Free.

Andrew Simmons from the SI zoo introduces pythons, alligators, eagles and more to children 12 to 18 years old.

Homework help: 5 pm - 6 pm. Mariners Harbor Library. See Monday, Feb. 2.

TUES, FEB. 10

ON STATEN ISLAND

Objects in Motion: Center for Performing Arts at CSI, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Morani Street; (718) 982-5678; www.enrichmentthroughthearts.com; 10 am and 11:30 am; \$8.

Juggling plus math plus science equals fun. Presented by Enrichment Through the Arts.

Tutoring: 3:30-5:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 3.

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

For children 7 to 12 years old.

Support Group: Rossville AME Zion Church, 584 Bloomingdale Road; (646) 765-6531; playitforwardny.com; 4-6 pm; Free.

Play it forward is an anti-bully support workshop for children and teens who have been bullied. Parents welcome. Free refreshments.

WED, FEB. 11

ON STATEN ISLAND

Teen club: 2-4 pm. New Dorp Library. See Wednesday, Feb. 4.

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

No matter what the holiday, you can always decorate. Children 12 to 18 years old use beads, baubles and their own imagination to craft a special treasure to take home.

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

Make a special gift to celebrate the day. For children 5 to 12 years old.

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

THURS, FEB. 12

ON STATEN ISLAND

"Guess who signed the Constitution": Center for Performing Arts at CSI, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Morani Street; (718) 982-5678; www.enrichmentthroughthearts.com; 10 am and 11:30 am; \$8.

This high-energy presentation showcases all you need to know about our Constitution. Presented by Enrichment Through the Arts.

Kiddie tech time: Mariners Harbor Library, 206 South Ave. at Arlington Place; (212) 621-0690; nypl.org; 4 pm-5 pm; Free.

Children can join in for a STEM-focused play with computer games, building supplies, legos and other crafts and games. For children 5 to 11 years old.

FRI, FEB. 13

ON STATEN ISLAND

Toddler Time: 10:30 am. Dongan Hills Library. See Friday, Feb. 6.

Play time: Mariners Harbor Library, 206 South Ave. at Arlington Place; (212) 621-0690; nypl.org; 11 am-noon; Free.

Children birth to 36 months old with a caregiver listen to stories, do interactive activities, and join with other babies and toddlers.

SAT, FEB. 14

ON STATEN ISLAND

Kids craft time: Mariners Harbor Library, 206 South Ave. at Arlington Place; (212) 621-0690; nypl.org; 11 am; Free.

Young crafters make a Percy Jackson-themed project. For children 3 to 12 years old. First come, first served. Care-givers welcome.

Scientific Saturdays: 11 am. Dongan Hills Library. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

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

Fall in love with the forest and the animals during a short hike geared to children 4 to 8 years old with an adult. Registration and pre-payment are required.

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

Children are invited to put their thoughts to paper in this nature event and begin a journal.

Saturday showtime: Mariners Harbor Library, 206 South Ave. at Arlington Place; (212) 621-0690; nypl.org; 2 pm; Free.

Children 12 years old and younger view a screening of "Shrek."

FURTHER AFIELD

The Year of the Sheep: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 12:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Celebrate Lunar New Year and learn about sheep in art from around the world.

To the Moon: 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Feb. 1.

Chinese New Year: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Puppetry in Practice presents this celebration with a telling of the story about the Chinese zodiac told with shadow puppets. A Dragon Parade

follows.

3, 2, 1, Happy Chinese New Year: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 and younger celebrate the holiday and then create a New Year's craft to take home.

SUN, FEB. 15

FURTHER AFIELD

The Year of the Sheep: 12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Feb. 14.

To the Moon: 1:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Sunday, Feb. 1.

3, 2, 1, Happy Chinese New Year: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children 5 and younger celebrate the holiday and then create a New Year's craft to take home.

MON, FEB. 16

ON STATEN ISLAND

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

Children join in an inter-active game where they will simulate hawks, eagles, and owls migrating back and forth as well as take part in a hike which takes them to different ponds in the park.

TUES, FEB. 17

ON STATEN ISLAND

Presidents behind the parks hike: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; 10:30 am; Free.

Talke a hike and learn about the presidents who preserved park land across America. Suitable for children 7 years and older. Registration required.

Outdoor adventure: Clove Lake Park, Martling Ave. Bridge; (718) 727-1135; 11 am-12:30 pm; Free.

Hosted by the Staten Island Museum, families can enjoy mid-winter break with a hike through the park and take a stroll through history. Wear appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes.

Animal track: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Bri-

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

elle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; 1 pm; \$8 (\$6 Members).

Children 5 to 9 years old search for clues to find where the animals are hiding in winter.

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

Children are divided into groups and go on a scavenger hunt around Spring pond. The first group back with all their answers and observations correct will win.

Tutoring: 3:30-5:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 3.

Kiddie Game Time: 4-5 pm. Mariners Harbor Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 3.

Friendship bracelets: 4 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 3.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Anansi the African Spider-man": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am; Free with museum admission.

Listen to tales of the mischievous Anansi and discover how this African tale traveled around the world. Children 2 and older make a spider to take home.

WED, FEB. 18

ON STATEN ISLAND

The History of Games: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; 10:30 am; Free.

Learn what type of games our Founding Fathers played. Registration required.

Winter Beach Walk and workshop: Conference House, Hylan Blvd. at Satterlee; (718) 227-1463; 11 am-1 pm; Free.

Children have an opportunity to explore the natural shoreline at the Conference House collect sea treasures and then create a fun project.

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

Join with rangers and learn how to use a compass and navigate the park with ease.

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



Photo by Eugenia Eleieva

A princess adventure

"Floating Around Like A Princess" floats into the New Victory Theater from Feb. 27 through March 8.

After a young princess is cursed by a wicked witch to float through life forever, she must find a way to come back to earth by her 16th birthday or be doomed to defy gravity forever. The show features the princess twirling above the stage, through the kingdom and into a magical forest. Directed by Allegra Libonati, the production showcases the bright-

est talents of Harvard's graduate acting program. This funny and romantic musical features original songs, and is suited for ages 6 and up.

"Floating Around Like a Princess," Feb. 27 through March 8. Tickets are \$10, \$13, \$18 or \$25 for members, with full price tickets starting at \$15.

The New Victory Theater [209 W. 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues in Times Square, (646) 223-3010; www.newvictory.org]

Join with rangers and learn how to use a compass and navigate the park with ease.

Kwanzaa lessons: Staten Island Museum, 75 Stuyvesant Pl. corner of Wall Street; (718) 727-1135; www.statenislandmuseum.org; 1 pm; Free with museum admission.

Join with the Kwanza Lady Janet Robinson and learn how the seven principals can be lived all year. For older teens.

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

FURTHER AFIELD

3, 2, 1, Blast Off!: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children take a journey and learn about African-American women in space. Dr. Mae Jemison tells of her trip into space. Children then make a

space craft to take home.

THURS, FEB. 19

ON STATEN ISLAND

Hike to Bucks Hollow: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; 10:30 am; Free.

Learn about the Chinese Zodiac and the year of the Sheep. Suitable for children 7 years and older. Registration required.

Outdoor Adventure: Conference House, 298 Satterlee St. at Hylan Blvd.; (718) 727-1135; 11 am; Free.

Hosted by the Staten Island Museum, families can enjoy mid-winter break with a hike through the park and take a stroll through history. Wear appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes.

Owls and pellets: Blue Heron Nature Center, 222 Poillon Ave. between

Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; www.nycgovparks.org; 1 pm; Free.

Older children break open owl pellets to discover what owls hunt for food. Owl habitats and calls will be discussed.

Gung Hay Fat choy: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; 1:30 pm; \$8 (\$6 members).

Happy new year. Children create fun projects and celebrate the Year of the Sheep. Suitable for children 5 years and older with an adult. Registration and pre-payment required.

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

The puppet Pond Town comes to the library with Frankie the Frog and friends. For children 3 to 5 years old.

FURTHER AFIELD

Traffic Lights: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Red means stop, green means go. Then, make a traffic craft to take home.

Sing-a-Long: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 6 pm; Free with museum admission.

Gwen Sumpter tells a tale and then invites all to a sing-a-long featuring songs from the African-American spiritual tradition.

FRI, FEB. 20

ON STATEN ISLAND

Toddler Time: 10:30 am. Dongan Hills Library. See Friday, Feb. 6.

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

Encourage your child's artistic abilities and powers of observation in this class. For children 8 years and older. Registration and pre-payment required.

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

Rangers lead a hike to find animal tracks in the mud on the trails and near the ponds and streams of the

Continued on page 32

Continued from page 31

park.

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

Tweens 7 to 13 years old make a craft to celebrate the Year of the Sheep.

Fun Fridays: 3:30-4:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Friday, Feb. 6.

FURTHER AFIELD

Jammin' Out: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Black History Month is explored by learning about traditional African instruments.

SAT, FEB. 21

ON STATEN ISLAND

Jr. Science Club: Staten Island Museum, 75 Stuyvesant Pl. corner of Wall Street; (718) 727-1135; www.statenislandmuseum.org; 10 am-noon; \$8 (\$5 for members).

Tweens and teens experiment and explore their artistic talents.

Scientific Saturdays: 11 am. Dongan Hills Library. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

Bubbles the Clown Kids Show: Dongan Hills Library, 1617 Richmond Rd. at Liberty Avenue; (718) 351-1444; www.nypl.org; Noon; Free.

Little ones birth to 10 months old enjoy a fun show.

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 enjoy a craft, registration required.

Winter stroll: Greenbelt Nature Center, 700 Rockland Ave. at Brielle Avenue; (718) 351-3450; www.nycgovparks.com; 2 pm; Free.

Enjoy nature and uncover the hidden treasures in the greenbelt. For children 7 years and older. Registration required.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Unbought and Unbossed": Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Tells the story of Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman to be elected to Congress.

Arts of the African Diaspora:

Fun with Cinderella

Bippity, boppity, boop, "Cinderella" toe-tips in to the Florence Gould Hall on Feb. 7 and 8.

The New York Theatre Ballet's classic "Cinderella" braves the New York cold with a two-day performance of this perennial favorite.

Children will enjoy the dancing clock, the madcap sisters,

and everyone's favorite princess, Cinderella.

"Cinderella" on Feb. 7 and 8 at 11 am, 1 pm, and 3:30 pm each day. Tickets are \$35 for children and \$40 for adults.

Florence Gould Hall [55 E. 59th St. between Madison and Park avenues in Midtown East; (212) 355-6160; www.nytb.org]



Photo by Richard Termine

Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 12:30 pm; Free with museum admission.

Children connect to the past and learn about the traditional and contemporary customs of the African people.

Grace Drums: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 1 and 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

This performance introduces children to African percussion instruments, music, and vocals from the African and Caribbean culture.

SUN, FEB. 22

ON STATEN ISLAND

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

Children learn how to read the bark of the tree and then make a fun project. Registration and pre-payment required.

Owl Prowl: 6:30-8 pm. Blue Heron Nature Center. See Sunday, Feb. 8.

FURTHER AFIELD

"Unbought and Unbossed": 11:30 am and 2pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Feb. 21.

Arts of the African Diaspora: 12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Feb. 21.

MON, FEB. 23

ON STATEN ISLAND

Toddler time: 11-11:45 am. Great Kills Library. See Monday, Feb. 2.

Baby and me: 1:30 - 2:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Monday, Feb. 2.

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

Explore your artistic talents in this painting workshop for children 5 to 13 years old.

Homework help: 5 pm - 6 pm. Mariners Harbor Library. See Monday, Feb. 2.

TUES, FEB. 24

ON STATEN ISLAND

Tutoring: 3:30-5:30 pm. New Dorp Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 3.

Lego workshop: 4 pm. Dongan Hills Library. See Tuesday, Feb. 10.

WED, FEB. 25

ON STATEN ISLAND

"I Have a Dream": Center for Performing Arts at CSI, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Morani Street; (718) 982-5678; www.enrichmentthroughthearts.com; 10 am and 11:30 am; \$8.

The play chronicles the life and times of Martin Luther King Jr.

Teen club: 2-4 pm. New Dorp Library. See Wednesday, Feb. 4.

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

THURS, FEB. 26

ON STATEN ISLAND

Omni Ensemble: The Center for Performing Arts at CSI, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Morani Street; www.theomniensemble.org; 2:30 pm; Free.

Celebrate the 32nd season of concerts with a performance by Soprano Charlotte Dobbs.

Kiddie tech time: 4 pm - 5 pm. Mariners Harbor Library. See Thursday, Feb. 12.

FURTHER AFIELD

Free Thursday!: Brooklyn Chil-

dren's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 3-6 pm; Free.

Join in for a afternoon at the museum.

FRI, FEB. 27

ON STATEN ISLAND

"Four Score and Seven Years Ago": Center for Performing Arts at CSI, 2800 Victory Blvd. at Morani Street; (718) 982-5678; www.enrichmentthroughthearts.com; 10 am and 11:30 am; \$8.

The history of the Civil War. Presented by Enrichment Through the Arts.

Toddler Time: 10:30 am. Dongan Hills Library. See Friday, Feb. 6.

Play time: 11 am-noon. Mariners Harbor Library. See Friday, Feb. 13.

Fun Fridays: 3:30-4:30 pm. Great Kills Library. See Friday, Feb. 6.

SAT, FEB. 28

ON STATEN ISLAND

Kids craft time: 11 am. Mariners Harbor Library. See Saturday, Feb. 14.

Scientific Saturdays: 11 am. Dongan Hills Library. See Saturday, Feb. 7.

Kids & 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 old with caregiver enjoy a craft, story or game; along with a walk outside (weather permitting); Appropriate dress required; registration required.

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

Kathleen Hagen leads tots 18 months to 4 years old with a care-

Calendar

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

giver in stories, songs, crafts. Registration required. Series 2.

Saturday showtime: 2 pm. Mariners Harbor Library. See Saturday, Feb. 14.

Natural Science Club: Blue Heron Nature Center, 222 Poillon Ave. between Amboy Road and Hylan Boulevard; (718) 967-3542; www.nycgov-parks.org; 2-2:30 pm; Free.

Inquisitive tweens 8 to 12 years old meet with resident naturalist Clay Wollney and explore the natural world. Registration required.

FURTHER AFIELD

Cosmic creations: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 11:30 am and 2 pm; Free with museum admission.

Learn about astronomy and the planets, stars, and space with Dr. Neil Degrasse Tyson, a contemporary African-American astrophysicist. Make a shooting star to take home.

The Phantazia String Players: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; 3 pm; Free with museum admission.

The Noel Pointer foundation presents this jazz, classical, and gospel concert celebrating Black History Month.

SUN, MARCH 1

FURTHER AFIELD

Cosmic creations: 11:30 am and 2 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum. See Saturday, Feb. 28.

LONG-RUNNING ON STATEN ISLAND

Dinosaur encounter: Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway at Martling Avenue; (718) 442-3174; www.statenislandzoo.org; Daily, 10 am-4 pm, Now - Wed, April 1; Free with zoo admission.

Meet eight mighty dinosaurs including Dilophosaurus, Triceratops, and Oryctodromeus from the Seacaus Field Station: The dinos are spending the winter at the zoo. Realistically animated characters created by scientists, engineers and artists delight children of all ages.

Art Studio: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenilandkids.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 1-4 pm, Now - Sun, May 24; Free with museum admission.

Children create fun projects.

Storytime: Barnes & Noble, 2245 Richmond Ave. at Travis Avenue; (718) 982-6983; www.barnesandnoble.com; Tuesdays, 11 am-1 pm, Saturdays, 11 am, Now - Tues, March 24; Free.

Stories, crafts and fun activities.

Story Museum: Historic Richmond Town, 441 Clarke Ave. at Tysen Court; (718) 351-1611; www.historicrichmondtown.org; Thursdays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm; \$3.

Toddlers and pre-schoolers with a caregiver listen to stories, do crafts, listen to songs, dance and sing and have play with other children.

Kidz cook: Staten Island Children's Museum, 1000 Richmond Ter. at Tysen Street; (718) 273-2060; statenilandkids.org; Fridays, 2, 3 and 4 pm, Now - Fri, May 1; Free with museum

admission.

Children experiment with all types of food.

FURTHER AFIELD

Ice skating: Lefrak Center in Prospect Park, Parkside and Ocean avenues, Brooklyn; (718) 594-7439; info@brooklynice.org; www.brooklynice.org; Tuesdays - Thursdays, 11 am-6 pm, Fridays, 11 am-8 pm, Saturdays, 10 am-9 pm, Sundays, 10 am-6 pm, Now - Tues, March 31; \$6 (\$8 on Sat. and Sun) plus \$6 skate rental.

Families have a great time twirling and skating and enjoying the rink.

Needlework and games: Leferts Historic Homestead, 452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; (718) 789-2822; www.prospectpark.org; Saturdays and Sundays, 1-3 pm; \$3.

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

Ice skating school: Lefrak Center in Prospect Park, Parkside and Ocean avenues, Brooklyn; (718) 594-7439; info@brooklynice.org; www.brooklynice.org; Mondays and Wednesdays, 4-6:30 pm, Now - Tues, March 10; Free.

Instructions, fitness, homework help and lots more. Preregistration required.

Tropical discoveries: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., The Bronx; (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; Tuesdays - Fridays, 10 am-5 pm, Now - Fri, Feb. 27; Free with garden admission.

Children explore the differences between tropical and temperate plants in the Everett Children's Garden, where they can pot a tropical

plant to take home. They will also make bark rubbings, count tree rings and fill up a field notebook with interesting facts.

From Here to There: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Tuesdays - Sundays, 10 am-5 pm, Fri, Feb. 6 - Sun, May 10; Free with museum admission.

This innovative exhibit teaches the science of how things move by land, sea and air. Visitors can heat up and launch a hot air balloon, operate an authentic canal lock system to move a boat and experiment with pneumatics, pulleys, hydraulics, and levers to move objects mechanically.

Art Kids: Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn; (718) 735-4400; www.brooklynkids.org; Fridays, 11:30 am and 2:30 pm, Now - Fri, March 6; Free with museum admission.

Children explore a new style of art and discover the artistic process while developing artistic skills.

"Galapagos - Nature's Wonderland in 3D": New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., Queens; (718) 699-0005 X 353; www.ny-science.org; Weekdays, 11 am & 2 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 1 & 3 pm, beginning Sat, Feb. 14; \$6 adults; \$5 children.

In this 3D movie, travel to the Galapagos archipelago to meet giant half-ton tortoises and marine iguanas that spit sea-salt from their noses, hunt fishes with the colorful blue-footed boobies, and swim with tiny penguins.

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GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Playing with food

Study reveals benefits to toddlers' messy eating

Morgan Delack was at her wit's end when her daughter was 1.

"Almost every time I put her in the highchair to feed her, she would throw her food on the floor," she says. "She was trying to play with me and get my attention. She knew she'd get a response."

Whether your child is throwing food or making a spectacular mess with it, it's difficult to see a good result. After all, this mess-making is creating more work for you!

Believe it or not, there is a silver lining in this developmental stage. According to a study published in the journal *Developmental Science*, the messier a toddler gets while eating, the more he's learning. And eating in a highchair is the best place for that learning.

The study explored how well 16-month-olds learned the names of non-solid foods and other objects while seated either in a highchair or



at a table. The researchers offered the toddlers foods such as pudding, applesauce, juice, and soup, but gave them made-up names.

The toddlers who most enthusias-

tically explored the foods by poking, throwing, and picking them up were more likely to correctly identify them when the researchers put foods out in different sizes or shapes.

And the tots seated in highchairs were better at correctly identifying the objects compared to those seated at tables. Because the foods vary in shape and size, the context in which the child touches it matters.

"It turns out that being in a highchair makes it more likely you'll get messy, because kids know they can get messy there," says lead author Larissa Samuelson.

So the next time your little one smears mashed peas all over, reframe it as a "learning experience."

"The study shows the cascading influence that the context of everyday activities — such as mealtimes — has on children's exploration, attention, and word learning," wrote the authors. "When young children messily eat and explore food at each meal, they are learning both about individual foods and also about non-solid substances more generally."

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

Swedish pea soup

ACTIVE PREPARATION TIME: Seven minutes

TOTAL PREPARATION TIME: One hour 30 minutes to two hours (not including soaking)

SERVINGS: Eight servings (almost 1 cup each)

Pea soup dates back to ancient Roman times, when it was a nutritious, peasant food staple, but it eventually became one of the time-honored foods of Sweden. Made with yellow peas, this simple soup is prepared with sweet, zesty mustard.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound (454 g) dried yellow peas
- 6 cups water
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 tbsp. reduced sodium vegetable broth base
- 1 tbsp. prepared mustard (e.g., Swedish, whole grain, or Dijon)
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

1 tsp. low-sodium herbal seasoning blend

- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp. marjoram
- 1 tsp. thyme

DIRECTIONS: Cover the dried yellow peas with water and soak overnight. Drain the peas and place them in a large heavy pot. Add the remaining ingredients, stir well, cover with a lid, and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer for 1½ to 2 hours, stirring occasionally, until the peas are tender. Add water as needed to replace moisture lost to evaporation. Remove the bay leaf before serving.

Traditional Swedish pea soup uses whole yellow peas (not split). If you are unable to find whole yellow peas, substitute split yellow peas, but reduce the cooking time by about 30 minutes.

To make this in a slow cooker, soak and drain the peas, then combine with the other ingredients and cook



for 4 to 6 hours on high or 8 to 10 hours on low.

NUTRITION FACTS: 203 calories, 14 g protein, 36 g carbohydrate, 1 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 15 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 59 mg sodium, 28% DV thiamine, 39% DV folate, 10% DV calcium, 16% DV iron, 17% DV magnesium, 16% DV potassium, 12% DV zinc

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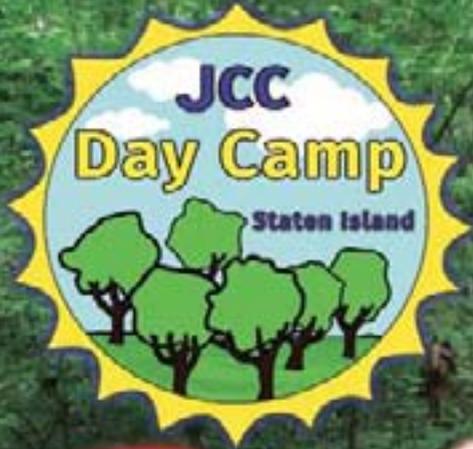
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