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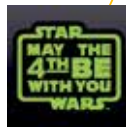
KEEP YOUR PARENTS BUSY

March For Babies-
Middlesex County is
today, at Johnson Park
is Piscataway, NJ!

Happy National
Brothers and Sisters
Day!

Go on an Early Bird
Walk at Mercer County
Meadows! 8:00 am
until 10:00 am

Happy Star Wars
Day!



The Sky Show: Come see
this planetarium show for
families with children on
the autism spectrum or
with other developmental
disabilities, at Raritan
Valley Community
College.

Opening night of The
Little Mermaid at the
Count Basie Theater in
Red Bank, NJ!

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Photography
Workshop, 10:00 AM,
Tulpehaking Nature
Center in Hamilton, NJ.

Happy Mother's
Day! Make your mom
breakfast in bed.



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Lost Sock Memorial
Day, to honor all those
pairs of socks that
were washed and never
reunited.

See rockstar Alice
Cooper live in concert!
Tonight at 8 at the
State Theater in New
Brunswick, NJ.

National Eat What You
Want Day! You know
what to do.

Happy International
Nurses Day!



Campfire Night at the
Plainsboro Reserve in
Cranbury, NJ, from 7:30
to 8:30 pm.

WILD CHILD BEACH
RUN: For kids 12 and
under, 12:00 PM until
02:00 PM at Morey's
Pier in Wildwood, NJ.

Geocaching with LL
Bean at the Plainsboro
Preserve, 2:00 to 3:00.

National Love a
Tree Day.



MOVIE: Neighbors 2:
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projects, stories,
games, scavenger
hunts, performances,
and refreshments!

The Jersey Shore
Festival is today! A
free admission music
and arts festival that
kicks off the summer, at
Seaside Heights Beach.

National Lucky
Penny Day!



The State Museum's
newest exhibition,
Silver Shell Glass,
examines the way
beads were made, at
the State Museum in
Trenton, NJ!

Happy National Tap
Dance Day!

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Adventure is open in
May! Visit today.

MOVIE: Alice Through
the Looking Glass is
released today.



Memorial Day BBQ at
Sesame Place!!



National Learn About
Compositing Day!

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Memorial Day!

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ice cream cone at
Baskin Robbins today!

Meet Sesame Street's Newest Neighbor!

Her name is Julie and she has autism.

By Mia Ingui

Julia, is the first special needs muppet to join Elmo, Big Bird and friends with an aim to "reduce the stigma of autism."

In the U.S., 1 in 68 children is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). In fact, almost every school and university in the country has students with autism. While the diagnosis is common, public understanding of autism is not. The lack of understanding around the condition contributes to discrimination, verbal abuse, even physical violence. A recent study reveals that children with autism are five times more likely to be bullied than their peers—treatment no child should endure. While the differences between people with autism and their peers may seem significant, children share something far more important: unique qualities and talents that make the world an interesting place.

That's why Sesame Workshop created Sesame Street and Autism: See Amazing in All Children, a nationwide initiative aimed at communities with children ages 2 to 5. Developed with input from parents, people who serve the autism community, and people with autism, See Amazing in All Children offers families ways to overcome common challenges and simplify everyday activities. At the same time, the project fosters an affirming narrative around autism for all families and kids.

The initiative, includes a free downloadable app that incorporates video, digital story cards designed to make daily life tasks easier for families of children with autism and storybook materials for providers, organizations and caregivers. This initiative is sure to change lives and help in the understanding and caregiving of families.



The history of Father's Day

By Joely Phenes

On the third Sunday of June, which is June 19 this year, we celebrate our fathers. Father's Day was created after Mother's Day, because many people felt that there should also be a day to honor fathers, rather than just having a holiday for mothers.

The first official event that honored fathers was in 1908, which was sponsored by a West Virginia church. The next year, a woman named Samara Smart Dodd from Spokane, Washington began a campaign to make the celebration a national holiday. Dodd was one of six children, and was raised by her father, a widower. She rallied support for her campaign from local churches, YMCAs, shops, and government officials.

This campaign was successful; the first Washington statewide Father's Day was held on July 19, 1910. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge starting urging other state governments to observe the holiday as well.

Like Mother's Day, many opposed Father's Day due to its commercialization by companies looking to profit off its popularity. During the Great Depression, retailers promoted goods such as ties, hats, pipes, and greeting cards in desperate attempts to gain customers. During World War II, advertisers played up the holiday by saying it was to honor American troops.

Father's Day finally became a federal holiday in 1972 under Richard Nixon's approval.

Don't forget to honor your fathers and show them how much you appreciate them this Father's Day!

An advertisement for Keansburg Amusement Park and Runaway Rapids Waterpark. The top half features a man and a young girl in a blue car on a roller coaster, with the text "Everyday is Fun Day!" in a stylized font. Below this is a circular inset showing a person on a water slide. The bottom half is a blue box with white text that reads "BUY ONE 200 TICKET BOOK GET 100 TICKETS FREE! EXPIRES 9/15/16". It also includes the logos for "KEANSBURG AMUSEMENT PARK" and "Runaway RAPIDS KEANSBURG FAMILY WATERPARK", and the text "FAMILY TIMES". At the bottom, it provides the address "275 Beachway | PO Box 189 | Keansburg, NJ 07734", the website "www.keansburgamusementpark.com", and the phone number "732.495.1400 x12".

Smart Ways to Spend the Summer: Keep Kids off the “The Summer Slide”

By Michael Ginsberg

Third grade teacher Alyssa Call got a bit of a shock when she returned to her classroom in the fall and saw the test scores of her students. She had taught several of the children the year before, as a second grade teacher, and she knew their scores had fallen considerably after taking nearly three months off for summer vacation. It's a phenomenon so well known that teachers across the nation refer to it as the “Summer Slide.”

“It's just kind of accepted in the teaching world,” says Call. “Most of us know the students are going to come back in the fall, and they're not going to be at the level they were when they left in the spring, but it's still sometimes shocking when you look at their test scores and see just how far they've fallen. The first month of school is usually spent refreshing what they should have remembered.”

Studies confirm what Call and other teachers see in millions of American school kids each fall:

- The average student loses approximately 2.6 months of grade-level equivalency in mathematical computation skills over the summer months. (Research compiled for an Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Conference report.)
- Teachers typically spend four weeks reteaching or reviewing material that students have forgotten over summer break, according to John Hopkins Center for Summer Learning.
- Research shows ALL young people experience learning losses when they don't engage in educational activities during the summer.

“It doesn't have to be that way,” says Dr. Ken Gibson, author of *Unlock the Einstein Inside: Applying New Brain Science to Wake up the Smart in Your Child* (www.unlocktheeinsteininside.com). “Think of it like this: The brain is like the body. If you exercise it, you improve it, but if you let it sit idle, it's going to lose ability.” To avoid the Summer Slide, Gibson recommends brain games and exercises that target cognitive skills, the underlying skills needed to learn.

Thirteen-year-old Tyler Walner knows the power of building those cognitive skills. He was labeled “special needs” and tried more than a dozen reading programs before he took an intensive brain training course at LearningRx (www.learningrx.com). His family says they saw life-changing improvements.

“Before the training, I would sit right beside him for at least three hours a night making sure he did his homework,” says his mom, Marti Walner. “Now, he does it all on his own!”

One way to target weak mental skills quickly and effectively is through an intensive LearningRx brain training program, says Tanya Mitchell, Vice President of Research & Development for LearningRx. “With our intense game-like exercises we work on brain skills like logic & reasoning, attention, memory, processing speed, and visual and auditory processing. But, to help prevent the summer slide, parents and kids can use free, fun games and exercises at home, in the car, and even online.”

Here are just a few of the free and fun brain training games Mitchell recommends:

- **Mental Tic Tac Toe:** Similar to traditional Tic Tac Toe, this game uses a “mental” grid numbered 1 to 9. Players remember where their opponent has already been and call out an unoccupied space. The player who calls an occupied space loses.

What it helps: Attention, logic & reasoning, and working memory

- **Needle in a Haystack:** Take a page from a newspaper and time your child as she circles all occurrences of a specific letter. Focus on increasing both accuracy and speed.

What it helps: Visual processing speed

- **20 Questions:** Think of a person or object and give your child 20 chances to narrow down what you're thinking of by asking yes or no questions. To help them improve their logic & reasoning, teach them to strategize by using questions that will significantly narrow down the categories, such as “Are they alive?” or “Is it bigger than you?”

What it helps: Logic, reasoning, memory

- **Poetry:** Have your child choose four words that rhyme and then ask them to use those words to create a poem or a rhyming song. Or say a word, then have them come up with another that rhymes. Keep this pattern going as long as possible, then start with a new word.

What it helps: Auditory analysis, verbal rhythm, memory

Simply getting your child to read every day is another powerful way to slow the Summer Slide. According to Scholastic Parents Online, research shows that reading just six books during the summer can keep a struggling reader from regressing. When choosing the six, make sure they're the right level—not too hard and not too easy.

Call says she'll stress the importance of summer reading to her students before they head out for vacation. She also says that any reading or learning program that rewards or excites the kids will be beneficial.

Michael Ginsberg is the executive director of LearningRx centers in Marlboro and Red Bank, NJ. LearningRx brain training specializes in addressing the cause—not the symptoms—of learning struggles. In 2015, LearningRx celebrated its 90,000th student completing the cognitive skills training program. To learn more or to schedule a cognitive skills learning profile test you can call 732-444-8579.



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Cupcake Liner Flowers

Making these fabulous flowers is a great way to introduce your child to art work and patterns. Paper cupcake liners filled with various textures create a floral theme and can be a perfect addition to a bright card, which would be great for Mother's Day, or simply as a lovely gift for a friend.

What You Need:

- Cupcake liners
- Glue stick
- Construction paper, green and another color of your choice
- Small decorative objects of different textures: beads, sequins, cotton balls, buttons, candies
- Pencil
- Green pipe cleaners
- Scissors



What You Do:

Lay out a piece of construction paper. Fold it in half if you're making a card.

Ask her to place cupcake liners onto the paper to see how many she will need. She can place the cupcake liners where her flowers will be and mark a dot at the base of them to show where the stems will be placed.

Encourage her to fill the inside of her cupcake liner flowers with various textures including beads, sequins, cotton balls, buttons, candies or anything you can think of. Glue the textures in place. While these dry, she can work on the stems.

Have her glue the green pipe cleaners in place starting from the dot she drew to the bottom of the paper. If they go over the bottom of the card, have her cut them flush to the base of the paper.

She can now use the green construction paper to cut out the leaves for her flower stems and glue them in place.

Finally, have her glue the bottom of the cupcake liners into place at the top of the stems.

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A Holistic Guide To help Children Cope with Stress and Anxiety

By Pam Teel



Millstone resident Kelly McMahon Brown is a certified Student Assistant Counselor and President of the New Jersey Association of Student Assistant Professionals. She also earned a Masters of Arts Degree from Georgian Court University in Holistic Health Studies. As a certified child/adolescent life coach, she helps students cope with anxiety, depression, school avoidance, substance abuse, bullying, school motivation, relationship and confidence problems, and many other issues. She uses a holistic approach, focusing on the mind, body, and spirit, to help these children work out their issues.

Arlene Curcio Ambrecht is a registered nurse who works at the same High School as Ms. Brown. Ms. Ambrecht also has a Masters Degree in Holistic Health. She has been a certified school nurse for the past sixteen years using her holistic health knowledge in workshops incorporating art, wellness, and healing, in the school setting. She also works with grief groups and addiction recovery.

When the two of these women got together, they always had a lot to talk about. It was easy to see how they combined their knowledge and experience and put forth their first book in a series of books geared not just for children, but for adults as well; a book that explains and shows ways of coping and dealing with stress and anxiety. The book starts out with a story about James and how he looks like a regular boy on the outside, but on the inside he has butterflies in his stomach, his heart beats way too fast, and his brain won't sleep because he can't stop worrying; with a note on the opposite page to adults explaining the symptoms that James is feeling.

The book is an easy reader for children and can offer ways for parents and adults to help identify the problems and use the different techniques offered to help alleviate anxiety. For example, the book goes on to talk about ways to help calm anxiety through breathing exercises, which can help bring the nervous system back in balance causing a relaxing response. It also talks about how simple yoga poses can help alleviate anxiety. Yoga is a mind-body practice that combines physical poses, controlled breathing, and meditation or relaxation. Yoga may help reduce stress, lower blood pressure and lower your heart rate. It then goes on addressing anxiety by eating right; drinking plenty of water, and avoiding packaged foods, empty calorie drinks or snacks loaded with sugar. There are many others techniques explained in the book to help your child cope with their anxiety and stress. Some include, art therapy, guided imagery, being one with nature, tension release, and more.

Ms. Brown emphasizes the fact that there are many students who have major anxiety problems, some to the point where they fear to be in school. These homebound students are taught on a one to one basis, usually by teachers after school hours. The costs could be forty dollars or more an hour for their tutoring services. This also can lead to more social isolation, thus compounding the problem.

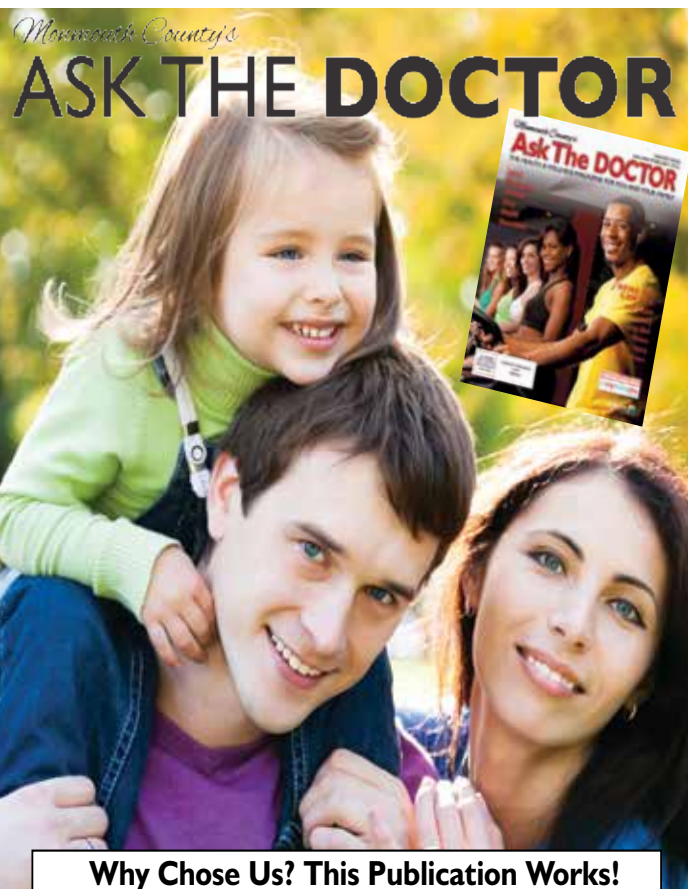
Most importantly, students should know that there are people that you can approach, both in school and out of school, who could help you when you are feeling stressed and anxious. Talk to your teacher, your school nurse, your school counselor, or even your principal. They are there to help you. Tell your parents, a friend, a sibling, or your doctor what's bothering you. Don't keep it bottled up. You don't need to go through this alone.

This book is geared more towards elementary to young adults and should be a staple in every elementary and middle school library. The stress relieving techniques are easily demonstrated. It's both a children's story and a guide for adults concerning a boy's journey coping with anxiety; created by two Professionals with an obvious love and devotion for helping children. You can find, *I Can't Stop Worrying! A Holistic guide to helping children cope with stress and anxiety*, at Amazon.com. Visit online at Twohealthychickspublishing.com/ Illustrations by Adam c. Ambrecht.

Coming soon - *My Name is Violet and I'm Roaring Mad as a Rhino*



Kelly McMahon Brown (l),
Arlene Curcio Ambrecht (r)



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Children's Recording Artist Laurie Berkner to Perform at iPlay America's Event Center this May

People Magazine dubbed Laurie Berkner the "Queen of children's music," and now a royal treat awaits fans of all ages as the Laurie Berkner Greatest Hits Tour comes to iPlay America's Event Center for two shows on May 7, at 12:00 p.m. and 4 p.m. Tickets start at \$27.50. VIP Meet & Greet tickets with preferred seating are \$75. Tickets are on sale at: iPlayAmerica.com/Laurie.

"It's an awesome experience. There will definitely be dancing in the aisles," said Jessica Schwartz vice president of sales and marketing for iPlay America. "The Laurie Berkner band is magical in their ability to engage and create a relaxed atmosphere of fun for everyone in the audience. That's why her fans never

miss an opportunity to see her live at iPlay America. Kids, dads, grandparents... they all sing... they all dance. Everybody loves Laurie Berkner."

Laurie Berkner, lauded as a "Pied Piper of Pre-Schoolers," has been a longtime fixture on TV's Nick Jr. and Sprout channels, and her original songs, CDs (nine so far, including the new The Ultimate Laurie Berkner Band Collection) DVDs, music videos, and books have left no doubt: Laurie Berkner is the uncrowned queen of children's music and the power behind the progressive "kindie rock" movement. What sets her apart? Her music speaks to kids without talking down to them, charming youngsters and delighting grown-ups. Laurie will be joined by her longtime collaborators Susie

Lampert, Bob Golden, and Brady Rymer—the "band"—in old and new hits, including songs from her Rocketship Run CD and her DVD, Party Day.

Fans across the country describe a Laurie Berkner concert as being a great show, a perfect first concert for children, and a show that makes kids dance. Dedicated followers know that the level of performance the Laurie Berkner Band delivers to their audience is fun filled, interactive, and totally fresh. Fans who've seen them once, twice, or ten times, know the joy and family-friendly fun of a Laurie Berkner concert is something special for music lovers of every age. To get tickets go to: iPlayAmerica.com/Laurie.



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How To Manage Nitmares

By Joely Phenex

Many parents wonder what to do when their children wake up screaming after a nightmare.

The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests:

Quickly go to your child's room and offer reassurance that you are there for protection.

Talk to your child about what happened during the dream, but explain that dreams are not real.

Leave a light on in your child's room if it provides comfort, but help your child get back to sleep.

If possible, eliminate anything in the room that your child finds frightening, such as something that casts a shadow.

1. mSpy

mSpy is the top used cell phone tracking app worldwide, according to TopTrackingApps. Its main selling point is that you can monitor multiple things with it — who they call, what they text, which apps they use, the number of contacts, GPS location, etc. And according to SpyParent's founder Sedgrid Lewis, "it works." While the field of spying apps isn't limited, simplicity of use and reliability are factors to be considered. The average American teen spends up to seven hours a day in contact with others on electronic devices, and a recent survey by online security firm AVG found that by the time they are 16, one in three has regretted something they did online.



2. The Spy Bubble

The Spy Bubble is another jack-of-all-spying-trades, also suitable for monitoring the phone of your suspected cheating spouse. Its site does offer some cautionary, if frightening, state-of-the-world information you might find useful. We are still reeling from this one about online photos and Photoshop: "Never let your kids share their photos online on an open forum. Why? They will ask. Everyone does that. Yes, everyone does that and about eight percent of those experience harassment due to photoshop effects on their photos. The worst bullying of this sort is seen by the girls, especially because female reputation is one of the most fragile things in the world."



3. The Phone Sheriff

One nice feature of the Phone Sheriff is that it allows you to set time limits on your teen's device. Want "OK, you can play with your phone for an hour" to really mean just 60 minutes? This app will shut down and lock the phone when you tell it to.



4. Mobicip

Mobicip isn't so much a tracker app as one that restores a bit of control over your teen's online life. The middle school level blocks online shopping, gambling, dating, liquor, and chat sites. The high school level blocks content that is adult, sexual, or involves weapons and violence. Good luck with your kid not using a friend's phone.



5. MamaBear

For parents of new drivers and parents of teens with friends who have had their licenses for 20 minutes, MamaBear will let you know the speed of the vehicle your teen is traveling in. Just don't text them to slow down, OK?



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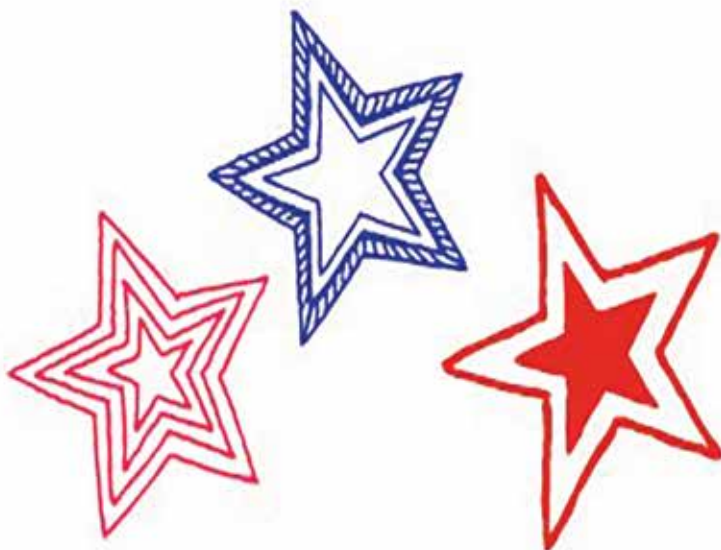


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As parents, you're the number one influence on what kind of driver your teens become. Help them develop a lifetime of good driving habits by following these simple steps:

Have the Talk

Driving is a serious responsibility. Discuss what it means to be a safe driver with your teen and set ground rules for when they're behind the wheel. If your teen is on the road, they should stay off the phone.

Make a Family Pledge

Use the pledge form below and have every member of your family commit to distraction-free driving. Set a positive example for your kids by putting your cell phone in the glove compartment every time you drive.



TAKE THE PLEDGE

The fight to end distracted driving starts with you. Make the commitment to drive phone-free today.

Distracted driving kills and injures thousands of people each year. I pledge to:

- Protect lives by never texting or talking on the phone while driving.
- Be a good passenger and speak out if the driver in my car is distracted.
- Encourage my friends and family to drive phone-free.

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____



Sportika's Special Needs Soccer Program Levels the Playing Field Further

By Susan Heckler

Parents and their kids have been enjoying team sports, especially soccer, for years. Parents love to watch their children learn, grow and achieve while having fun with peers and it is also a lot of fun and social to be a parent on the sidelines.

Special needs parents and children have a hard time finding a like experience. Their children typically do not meet the requirements or just feel like they won't fit in. Whether it's Autism, Asperger's, Down Syndrome or physical handicap, there is a need and a place for your child. It is for this reason that Sportika is reaching out to the community and forming a Special Needs Soccer Program. They feel that every single child, teen and adult has the right to enjoy the fun of playing sports.

The program is open to 8-21 year olds. They have set up a buddy system where your special needs athlete-in-training is paired with one of their players to provide a unique social environment with peer interaction. They will learn skills, develop self-confidence, coordination, flexibility, muscle strength, body awareness and build relationships. This program is a much a plus for the non-

special needs children who will also benefit from helping their peers, and building relationships and understanding of those who have challenges.

Sportika is hoping to inspire these children that they can participate in all sports as well, and our ultimate goal is to host a Special Olympics in our facility. Sportika now and in the future will provide engagement of different sports to these special children while making sure they are part of the community.

Location: Sportika 323 Fairfield Rd. Unit 10 Freehold, NJ 07728

Saturday May 7 1:00pm-2:30pm - meet your team and learn the game of soccer. Socialize and get everyone all enthused and educated on the game.

Sunday May 8 1:00pm-2:30pm - 3v3 tournament with their buddies on the field. 3 special needs kids partnered with 3 soccer players challenging a like team. 15 minute games to get the feel of soccer.

Pre-registration is needed. For information, contact Jenny at (732)577-1745 ext 5 or JSarf@sportikasports.com.



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SPECIAL NEEDS Soccer Program

For Ages 8 to 21 years old



Location: **SPORTIKA** 323A Fairfield Rd., Ste. 10, Freehold, NJ 07728

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Meet your buddy, meet your team and learn the game of soccer in a fun and encouraging environment.

Sunday, MAY 8, 2016 1:00pm - 2:30pm

Soccer Tournament 3v3 Match with Buddies

Every child, teen and adult has the right to enjoy the FUN of playing sports!

SPORTIKA provides children and adults a new opportunity to play, learn, grow and succeed in life.

The **SPORTIKA Special Needs Soccer Program** will provide support (Buddy System) and interaction in the sport of soccer within a unique social environment featuring peer interaction.

The program will help instill a sense of self-confidence and improve skills in relationship building and working as part of a team.

The program will provide a sense of satisfaction and achievement in scoring a goal, making a pass in the game to a team player and catching a ball in the net for the first time.

We will provide a positive and non-judgmental environment through the game of soccer for individuals with special needs and their families.

\$20.00 BOTH DAYS!
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Register online at www.sportikasports.com/info-form/

For more information contact JENNY SARF at 732-577-1745, ext. 5, or email jsarf@sportikasports.com



SPORTIKA sportikasports.com



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family recipe *eating together matters*

The 5 C Smart Cookie Recipe

(Chocolate Chip Cream Cheese Cookie)

Enjoy eating this “Smart Cookie” when you need a little sweetness! At only 40 calories each with less than 2 grams of fat each, these absolutely irresistible cream cheese cookies are soft, light and delicious!

Makes 12 cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 1/3 cup plus 1/4 cup oat flour
OR just process rolled oats in a blender until you get a fine flour
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 2-5 tbsp chocolate chips, as desired
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar or xylitol
- 3 tbsp full-fat cream cheese
- 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp vegetable or melted coconut oil



DIRECTIONS

Combine the first 5 ingredients in a bowl. In a cup, stir together the remaining 3 ingredients, gently heating if the cream cheese is too firm to stir. Pour wet into dry, then stir together and do not add extra liquid. It will look a bit dry, but keep stirring and scraping off the spoon as you stir. After a few minutes, it will moisten into a cookie dough batter. Form a big ball, then roll into cookie dough balls. Place balls on a plate and freeze at least 30 minutes (or up to a month). When ready to bake, preheat oven to 325 F and grease a cookie tray. Place balls on the tray, press down if desired, and bake 8 minutes—they will look quite underdone when they first come out, so do not even touch them for at least 10 minutes, during which time they will firm up.

Shrimp and Avocado Salad

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1-1/2 limes
- 1-1/2 pounds large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 hass avocados, diced
- 1 5-ounce package baby kale salad mix (about 8 cups)
- 1 small bunch radishes, thinly sliced



DIRECTIONS

For the dressing: Combine the mayonnaise, celery leaves, 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro, 1 tablespoon water, 1/2 teaspoon salt and a few grinds of pepper in a large bowl. Grate in the zest of 1 lime and squeeze in the juice.

Shrimp: Toss the shrimp with the vegetable oil, 1/4 teaspoon salt and a few grinds of pepper in a bowl. Arrange the shrimp on the grill and cook until pink and just firm, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer to the bowl with the dressing; squeeze in the juice of the remaining 1/2 lime.

Add the sliced celery, avocados, salad mix and radishes to the bowl with the shrimp; toss to coat. Top with the remaining 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro.



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Zika And Pregnancy

Zika virus disease (Zika) spreads to people mainly through the bite by two species of infected mosquitoes, one of which is more likely to transmit Zika. In past outbreaks, most people have not gotten sick, so people may not even know they are infected. Based on current knowledge, the greatest risk for complications from Zika is to a pregnant woman's fetus. If a pregnant woman is infected with Zika, she can pass the virus to her fetus. Zika has been linked to cases of microcephaly, a serious birth defect, and is a sign that the baby is born with a smaller brain, which can result in medical problems and impaired development. Researchers are working to understand more about how Zika affects pregnant women and fetuses.

To protect the pregnancy, couples can:

Check CDC travel guidance; pregnant women should avoid travel to any area with Zika. www.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information.

Talk to her doctor or other healthcare provider first, if she must travel to an area with Zika.

Prevent mosquito bites, including covering up arms and legs and using EPA-registered insect repellent, which is safe to use during pregnancy.

Use latex condoms, the right way, every time or choose not to have any type of sex if the male partner has been in an area with Zika during the pregnancy.

What we know.

There is no vaccine or medicine for Zika.

Zika may spread through mosquito bites in some states later this spring and summer. Based on US experiences with similar viruses (dengue and chikungunya), we know that states, like Florida, Hawaii, and Texas, may well have cases or small clusters of diseases that are spread by infected mosquitoes. Additional states may also be at risk.

Some infected people will get mild symptoms (fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes) for up to a week but most people won't even know they are infected.

Zika has been linked to microcephaly, a serious birth defect, and is a sign that the baby is born with a smaller brain, which can result in medical problems and

impaired development. www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/microcephaly.html

Zika can be passed from an infected man during sex. To date, we have not seen transmission from a woman during sex. The man gets infected by mosquito bite and spreads it to his partner through unprotected sex. This is preventable by using condoms, the right way, every time during all types of sex.

What we don't yet know yet.

If you're pregnant: How likely is it that your fetus will have birth defects if infected? When during a woman's pregnancy is the fetus most vulnerable and when can the virus be detected? How likely are you to get infected with Zika and pass it on?

How often does a man spread Zika through sex and how long does the virus stay in semen?

Which states, with certainty, may be affected by Zika?

For updated information about areas with Zika, go to www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html.



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When should I take my child for their first eye exam?



Dr. Steven Linker, OD

Most parents are diligent when it comes to routine well visits to the pediatrician. They understand about preventative medical treatment. What most parents don't realize is that the same applies to the health of the eye and vision.

During infancy, a baby's vision changes constantly. At first they can only focus on objects near-by and high contrast colors like black, white and red. By six months, their visual ability should be sharper. Most would be shocked to know that a six-month old should have an eye exam. At this age, your eye doctor can monitor the development of the eyes. In some cases, they are not working together, which will affect vision.

Another optical milestone is for the pre-kindergarten child. By ages 3 to 4, the eyes have done their developing and an eye exam is expected prior to school admission. Other exams should be in the 3 to 4-year-old range because the eyes have basically done their growing and developing by then. It is from this point that an annual eye exam is essential.

Early detection of vision issues can curtail bigger problems later. An eye exam can detect and identify nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism. These can be remedied with prescription glasses very easily. Conditions such as 'lazy eye' can be corrected with something as simple as an eye-patch.

To make a trip to the eye doctor less intimidating for your child, find one who has a great manner with children, one who will put them at ease.

Schedule your appointment with us. I invite you to visit my office for an exam to discuss your eye care health and the same for your family. We take most medical insurances and have a wonderful selection of frames should you need glasses. A visit to us may be your first line of ocular defense!

Check out our website for more information <http://monmouthvision.com/>. Dr. Steven Linker, OD Monmouth Vision Associates, 50 Route 9 North, Suite 206, Morganville, NJ, 07751 • Tel: 732-617-1717. ■



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About Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is a leading killer in the US with nearly 400,000 deaths per year. Unlike other deadly diseases, with SCA - YOU can be the hero! Nearly one in three victims survives when the arrest is witnessed by a bystander and the AED is used. That is hope, and it is in your hands. The truth is, the victim you save with CPR is most likely going to be someone you know – a child, spouse, parent or friend – as 70% of SCA's happen in the home.

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Sleep Yourself to Better Health

Are you bright-eyed and bushy-tailed today or beat down and just plain bushed? Being chronically tired to the point of exhaustion translates to decreased performance in nearly every physical and mental activity.

If we do not recharge our brains and rest our muscles, our body is not given the chance to fully recover from various activities. Sleep plays a critical role in our health across immunity, metabolism, memory, learning and other vital functions.

Sleep & Learning

Researchers at the Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School are conducting studies that suggest various sleep stages are involved in the consolidation of different types of memories and that being sleep deprived reduces one's ability to learn.

You'd probably guess that the better rested you are, the more likely you are to focus and learn new information. But what about after you learn?

Slow-wave sleep, which is defined as deep, restorative sleep plays a signification role in processing and consolidating newly acquired information, according to Harvard's sleep researchers. REM sleep, on the other hand, is necessary for our ability to consolidate the memory of how to perform repetitive tasks.

How to Get More Sleep

In today's 24/7 world of information-sharing, socializing and working, sleep is getting harder to come by. The fact is, our bodies still require an ample amount of sleep to most effectively get through the day. How much sleep depends on your age. A study by the National Sleep Foundation found that sleep needs vary across populations.

The National Sleep Foundation offers these tips for maximizing your mattress time:

- Choose one consistent bedtime and maintain it, even on the weekends;
- Avoid napping late in the afternoon if you want to catch your Zs at night;
- Daily exercise is beneficial, as long as it doesn't cut into your sleep time;
- Design a sleep-friendly room with the noise and darkness levels best suited to your personal sleep preferences; and
- Reach out to your physician if sleep deprivation is impacting your daily life.

Carpooling to School Has Benefits

By Mia Inqui

For many families, the school year is a very busy time. Between making lunches and taking the children to and from school, it may feel like you're always in a hurry.

According to Kids.gov, it demonstrates that weekdays can be more manageable if you share the school driving responsibilities with other families, otherwise known as "carpooling."

What is carpooling?

Carpooling is a type of ride-sharing that allows busy people to take turns with other neighborhood parents. Carpooling helps you:

Save time and money.

Minimize the wear and tear on your car.

Reduce traffic during peak hours.

Get to know other parents and community members.

Choosing carpool drivers

Share the idea of carpooling with responsible parents also interested in participating.

Try to make sure that participating drivers have cars that are in good condition and all valid documents (registration, insurance, etc.).

Figure out how many children can safely ride in the car, depending on its capacity.

Keep the phone number and address of each parent in case of emergencies.

Recommendations for drivers

Leave your house early, with enough time to pick up all the children on time.

Have children under age 13 sit in the back seat, and make sure they wear their seat-belts. Children younger than 8 years old must ride

in a booster or car safety seat.

Before driving to school, make sure that all the car doors are closed properly and use the child safety locks if your car has them.

Never leave children alone in the car, not even for a minute.

Advice for driving in school zones

Drive slowly when you're in a school zone and always obey the speed limit.

When driving behind a school bus, make sure to stop when the red lights flash. Never try to pass a bus.

Try not to block or park in front of the school entrance or exit.

Drop off the children in specified loading/unloading zones. Wait until you see them go into school before leaving. Notify the teacher who will be picking up the children after school each day.



College Prep Guide | Social Life

Sororities and Fraternities

Many college students choose to live the "Greek life" during their educational pursuits. But is it right for you?

While you're deciding, you should try to put aside the stereotypes – hazing and parties, most notably – often portrayed in the movies and media. Like any other big decision during your college career, an impartial outlook and some personal research can go a long way in your choice.

Pros: Community and Engagement

From housing to solid leadership opportunities, fraternities and sororities can offer all kinds of benefits to their student members. But it is the social advantage that convinces many students to join.

These organizations often stand on brotherhood and sisterhood as their founding principles, giving members a strong support group throughout their commitment.

Public service and a dedication to the community are a couple of cornerstones of "Greek life." Sororities and fraternities often make major impacts on their campus and in surrounding areas through fundraisers, volunteering and event planning.

Putting their faces into the public spotlight is also a great way of spreading the word about their organizational values and goals.

Many members can also benefit from scholarship opportunities, not to mention the network of alumni ready to offer a helping hand. These connections can serve as invaluable ways to land employment after college, as well as lifelong mentor-student relationships.

Cons: Time Commitment and Cost

Aside from the sometimes negative stigma attached to members of fraternities and sororities, there are other cons to consider for any student looking to join.

Many organizations can be huge time commitments, making it difficult to fully focus on studies, work or other activities. Find out before joining exactly how much time can be expected of you, both during the week and at special events over the weekends.

Membership dues are also something to take into consideration. Many fraternities and sororities require regular monthly payments to keep up with facilities and programming improvements. Make sure you can cover these extra costs before you commit to take the pledge.

So while you're considering pros and cons, remember that research is key. Don't be afraid to seek information on all campus houses you are eligible to join. Set up interviews and ask your adviser for recommendations. The more questions you ask, the better the chance that you will find the fit that is right for you.



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Don't Feel Guilty About Taking Your Child To Daycare

By C. Leis

Academic Excellence Isn't The Only Benefit Of Child Care

Modern society tends to place greater emphasis on academic and financial excellence, with less concern on social and personal development. In fact, from such a perspective, you would assume that academic and financial excellence would easily make up for any deficiency in social and personal development. However, this is not the kind of lop-sided perspective that you would find in a professional child care facility.

Such a well-organized facility would always have a balanced emphasis on all aspects that are pivotal in all-round development of young children. Indeed, proven research has clearly shown the indisputable link between emotional development and financial/ professional success. This is clearly seen from a study by the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) that shows just how powerful this aspect of emotional development is, to the extent of being even more valuable than IQ and experience.

As you can clearly see, an early learning center must provide a conducive environment for all-round development of all kids. This means that ample opportunities must be created for children to socialize and build their personal and social skills, apart from receiving well-organized academic training.

For working families, early learning facilities would offer a much-needed service. It would definitely be a challenge for both parents to remain committed to their jobs while taking care of their kids.

Moreover, such child-minding facilities are so well-organized that

your kids would derive even more benefits from them as compared to what you might be able to offer within your own home. The exposure to a social environment, combined with educational guidance by professionally trained personnel will ensure that your child gets the best start in life.

Considering all these benefits, you shouldn't feel guilty as a parent having to take your child to such a facility. You might feel that you have failed your child in some way by not being the one to guide your child in his/ her early years; however, you should realize that the trained professionals may offer your child much more than you are capable of. Hence, instead of being a sign of failure, it would be the best thing to do for your kid.

Just because you've decided to place your child in the care of someone else, doesn't mean that you wouldn't have any way of influencing exactly how your child is treated or the experiences he/ she goes through. On the contrary, there are a whole host of things that you can do to ensure that your son or daughter gets exactly the kind of care you want him/ her to get.

If you don't really want your child to spend whole days in daycare, you can actually look out for facilities that offer flexibility in the hours children spend under their care. Perhaps, you just need your child to be there only in the afternoon or morning hours, or you might not want it to be a daily arrangement. This might be the case if you normally have your child under your care, but would need a bit of help once-in-a-while if you happen to get some appointment.

Tricks Are For Dogs

Dog Tricks: Where To Start

By Mia Ingui

When it comes to teaching your dog new tricks, this can be great fun for all involved. You can start off by doing something simple like fetching some article by name or teaching your dog to give a paw.

Dogs love learning and especially being appreciated. By learning to do something new it will cover both of these needs. Whatever you are going to teach your dog, both of you will benefit from the experience and it will be a time that you will learn more about each other.

Some favorite and common tricks are:

- Close the door
- Roll over
- Catch
- Give a paw
- Open a box
- Find members of your family or toy by name
- Bark on command
- Weave through your legs
- Jump over objects
- Crawl under a low object or a chair

With any trick, split it into small sequences and teach each one a step at a time. If the task is complicated start with the last

sequence first and then add the previous element to the beginning and build up from there. This method is called reverse chaining. It is excellent as it helps the dog learn as he always ends with the familiar part. Rather than waiting until the whole sequence is learned, reward every step for getting closer and closer to your goal. Each step you are asking a little more of your dog.

The use of clickers can work extremely well as you are able to reward your dog at the correct time even if he is still some distance away from his goal. While tricks can be fun, they can also be a benefit to anyone that is disabled and are not able to pick something up off the ground. The dog can fetch an item to aid the disabled person.

There are many people that are sight impaired that use seeing eye dogs. These dogs began their training with simple to learn tricks and then graduated to more advanced training. The whole process should be imaginative; think of what your dog enjoys and develop this to include a whole collection of tricks.

The dog will enjoy learning something different and will certainly enjoy all of the praise in getting something right. All that is needed is a dose of persistence and time invested in her training, and by doing this you will be rewarded.

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Animal Rescue Adopt A Thon at the Park

Animal Rescue
Adopt-A-Thon



On Sunday, June 5th 2016, the Horse Park of New Jersey in Allentown will be hosting the very first Animal Rescue Adopt A Thon! From the hours of 9am to 4pm over 50 animal rescues and 501c3 groups as well as over 35 vendors from the community will gather together for an amazing event. "Our Mission is to help local businesses, animal rescues and the community as a whole to come together for a successful animal adoption and networking event," stated Gina Schneller-Rand, event coordinator. The event is sharing the park that day with the NJ Pony Club Horse Trials which will bring in animal lovers from the community. In addition to rescues, there will be over 30 vendors of all kinds. Local businesses and artists will be showing off and selling their items as well as promoting their company.

Of the 50 rescues there will be dogs, cats, birds, reptiles, horses, rabbits and small critters for adoption. Imagine meeting all the amazing pets and rescue groups that work so hard to rehome and treat animals in need. As you are walking through the park you will meet over 16 horse rescues from NY, NJ and PA, 34 cat and dog rescues as well as bird, reptile, rabbit and small critter rescues. Joining the event will be Danielle Montgomery, Program Administrator from Turning for Home Racehorse Retirement Program. "TFH is pleased to have a few of its Partner Farms participating in this Adopt A Thon and appreciates the opportunity to showcase some of the horses they have available for adoption."

Perhaps you are looking for a new best friend of the canine or feline variety. Ralph Pellecchia from, It's a Dog's Life Rescue of New Jersey will be there with some awesome dogs and cute kittens that would love to join your family! "We are so excited about attending the Adopt A Thon and bringing our adoptable pets. This is a great opportunity for the community to come together for a wonderful cause." Besides adopting, Laura Juliano

explains her rescue, "Sugar Skull Pittie Rescue strives to make the most out of each special event we are invited to attend. Whether we are advocating for foster homes, educating people about the misconceptions of bully breeds, stressing the importance of positive training or just receiving donations. It's not always about monetary donations. Volunteers and foster homes are the backbone of what we do. Every bit of that contributes to successfully running a rescue." If you prefer a winged pet, For the Love of Birds avian rescue will also be part of the day's attendees. Volunteer Patty hopes to teach the community that "Domesticated birds, especially larger species, live long lives when cared for properly, and will end up having to be placed in at least 2-3 homes throughout their lifespan, so someone needs to be there and help them transition as easily and as stress-free as possible. That's where we come in!"

Throughout the day there will be demonstrations by In the Company of Horses EAGALA, FBI/Police dog Training, Dog Agility, Cold Blooded Encounters as well as a very special and entertaining doggy adoption parade! There will be a petting zoo, pony rides and other activities for children as well as local food vendors including Vesuvios and American Way Catering.

For a full list of rescues and vendors attending or for additional information please visit and like the event on www.facebook.com/AdoptAThonHorseParkofNJ or you can obtain a vendor registration form at www.horseparkofnewjersey.com/calendar. Since each rescue has different guidelines for the adoption process, please take a look at each rescue's website to see their adoptable pets as well checking on the adoption requirements.

RABIES: What is the risk for my pet?

Any animal bitten or scratched by either a wild, carnivorous mammal or a bat that is not available for testing should be regarded as having been exposed to rabies.

Unvaccinated dogs, cats, and ferrets exposed to a rabid animal should be euthanized immediately. If the owner is unwilling to have this done, the animal should be placed in strict isolation for 6 months and vaccinated 1 month before being released.

Animals with expired vaccinations need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Dogs and cats that are currently vaccinated are kept under observation for 45 days.

Small mammals such as squirrels, rats, mice, hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, chipmunks, rabbits, and hares are almost never found to be infected with rabies and have not been known to cause rabies among humans in the United States. Bites by these animals are usually not considered a risk of rabies unless the animal was sick or behaving in any unusual manner and rabies is widespread in your area.

However, from 1985 through 1994, woodchucks accounted for 86% of the 368 cases of rabies among rodents reported to CDC. Woodchucks or groundhogs (*Marmota monax*) are the only rodents that may be frequently submitted to state health department because of a suspicion of rabies. In all cases involving rodents, the state or local health department should be consulted before a decision is made to initiate postexposure prophylaxis (PEP).

Each state collects specific information about rabies, and is the best source for information on rabies in your area. In addition, the CDC publishes rabies surveillance data every year for the United States. The report, entitled Rabies Surveillance in the United States, contains information about the number of cases of rabies reported to CDC during the year, the animals reported rabid, maps showing where cases were reported for wild and domestic animals, and distribution maps showing outbreaks of rabies associated with specific animals. For more info visit www.cdc.com/rabies.

Kind Heart Rescue will be attending the adoption event at the Horse Park of NJ, bringing with them a few bunnies that will display the different sizes and types of bunnies available for adoption. (No adoptions will be held the day of the event, unless potential adopters have been screened prior to event.) We will have info on rabbit care, housing, and behavior. Visitors will have the opportunity to see the bunnies up close and pet and snuggle them!

Many people don't realize that bunnies are awesome house pets and litter train just like a cat.

For the bunny lovers out there, we will have lots of bunny items for sale that benefit the critters at Kind Heart!

Kind Heart Rescue (www.kindheartrescue.com) is a NJ Non-Profit corporation, and all donations are tax-deductible.

We have been doing quality rescue for over 35 years! When you visit the show, please ask "Where is Kind Heart Rescue?" as we will be tucked away in a quiet place away from the dogs and cats, so as not to scare the bunnies. But we WILL be there - so stop by to see us!



MOVIES TO CATCH IN MAY

By Joely Phenes

The weather in May is beautiful and you're probably going to want to be outside most of the time. But on a rainy day or on a day you just need to relax indoors, take a trip to the movies! We know a few that you won't want to miss:

Alice Through the Looking Glass

Release date: Friday, May 27, 2016

This sequel to Tim Burton's amazing "Alice in Wonderland" is about Alice's second trip to Underland through a magical looking glass. Upon her arrival, she finds that the Mad Hatter has been upset because he lost his Muchness, and she is sent on a quest to help him. The movie features Mia Wasikowski as Alice, Sacha Baron Cohen as the villainous Time, Johnny Depp as the Mad Hatter, and many more of your favorite actors!

The Angry Birds Movie

Release date: Friday, May 20, 2016

In this family-oriented animated comedy, the characters from the beloved game Flappy Bird appear on the big screen! On an island of flightless birds, there is a group of outsiders named Red (Jason Sudeikis), Chuck (Josh Gad), and Bomb (Danny McBryde) who must save the island from a force of mysterious green piggies.

Captain America: Civil War

Release date: Friday May 6, 2016

The third installment of the Captain America series is coming out in 2D, 3D, and IMAX! In the film, the Avengers team splits into two groups after they start getting monitored by the government. One side, led by Steve Rogers, wants the team to remain free, while the other side, led by Tony Stark, supports the government's supervision.



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ALL ABOUT MY MOM



A picture of Mom & me

My mom is _____ years old.

My mom has _____ eyes and _____ hair.

My mom is funny when she _____
and she laughs when I _____

My mom's favorite color is _____

My mom's favorite food is _____

My mom's favorite game to play is _____

My favorite memory with my mom is _____

My mom always forgets _____

My favorite thing to do with my mom is _____

WHAT IS CONSUMER FRAUD?

As we swing into the springtime, many people have work performed on their homes. Fortunately, under New Jersey state law there is protection for homeowners who enter into contracts with home improvement contractors. New Jersey has promulgated the Consumer Fraud Act for the protection of consumers in various types of transactions. One type of transaction to which consumers are entitled to protection under this Act is home improvement contracts.

"Home-improvement contracts" are any type of contract in which improvements are made to the home of a consumer. When such a contract is entered into between a consumer homeowner and a "home improvement contractor," certain information and language must be contained within the form of the contract to ensure that consumers within the State of New Jersey are adequately protected from potentially fraudulent and/or "fly-by-night" companies.

The most important aspect of the Consumer Fraud regulations as they apply to home improvement contracts is the necessity for the contract to be in writing and for the written contract to include various pieces of information. The contract shall contain the contractor's legal name, address and registration number; a copy of the contractor's certificate of insurance; the total price of the contract including any finance charges; the right to cancel within a three day period; and a full and complete detailed description of the work with part numbers and manufacturers' names if any equipment is to be installed. If the work under the contract requires permits from the local municipality, it is the obligation of the home improvement contractor to obtain same and insure that any such permit applications are closed out at the completion of the job. Importantly, the regulations prevent any home improvement contractor from demanding final payment of the contract unless and until any such permit applications are closed out to the satisfaction of the local municipality. Basically, all of these requirements are to prevent any confusion as to the terms and nature of the contract between the homeowner and the contractor.

The good news for homeowners is that, in the event a home improvement contractor violates any of the terms of these regulations and such violation causes monetary damages to the homeowner, the homeowner may be entitled to triple the amount of damages together with counsel fees in the event the homeowner is required to bring a lawsuit against the contractor. Unfortunately, as I have seen many times in my practice, despite the fact that regulations are in place to protect the homeowner, oftentimes the contractor does not have sufficient assets to pay to the homeowner even if the homeowner wins their case in court.

Importantly, based on all the above, I recommend to my clients that they utilize a home improvement contractor who has been in business for a number of years and has a long-lasting reputation in the community. First and foremost, if the contractor has such a reputation, the chances are that the work will be satisfactory. Second, in the event something does go wrong with the job, the contractor will have the assets to make the homeowner whole.

If you believe you have been the victim of some type of consumer fraud, please do not hesitate to contact my office to discuss this matter with an attorney.

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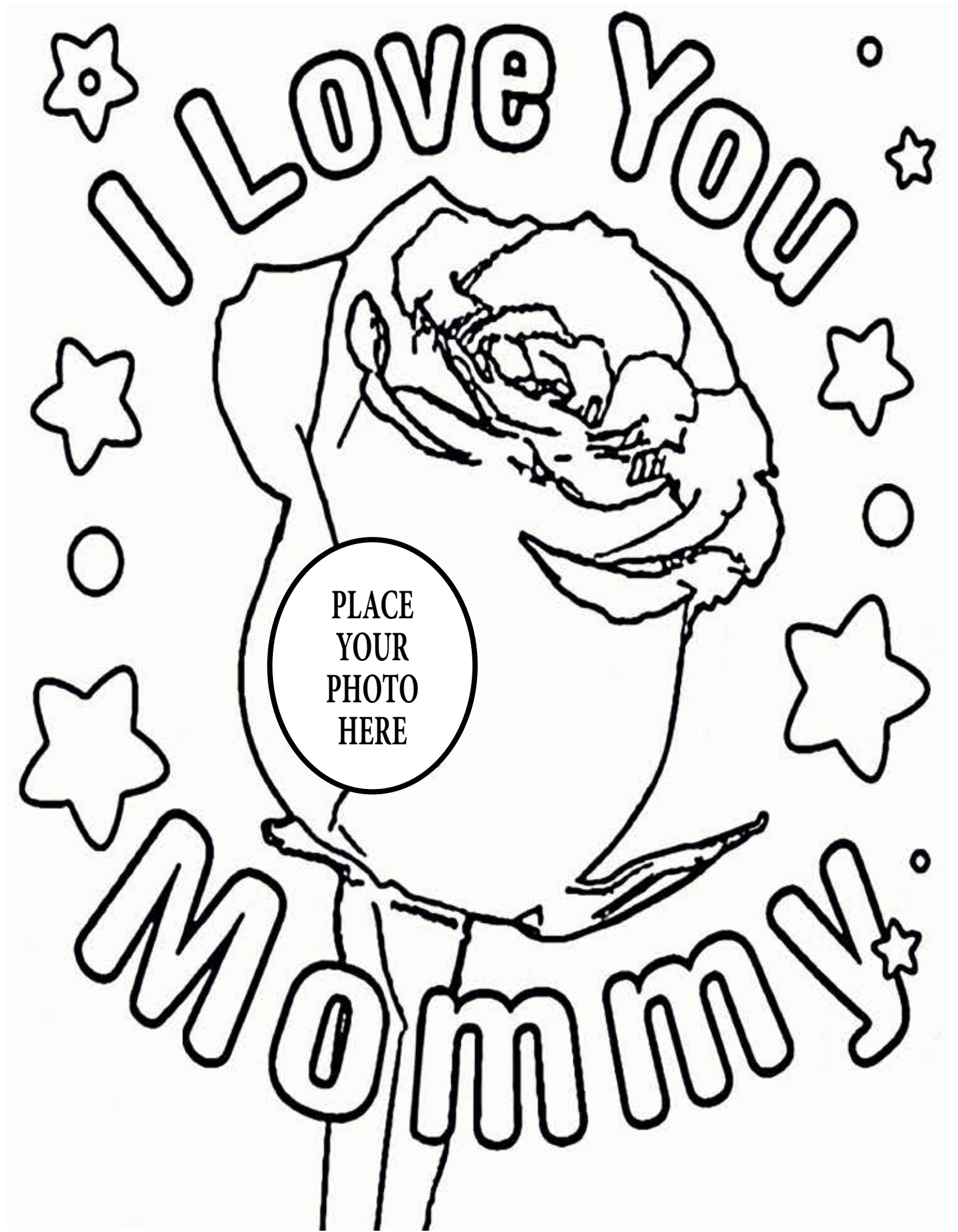
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Raising a Confident Girl

By Mia Inqui

Being a confident girl is to grow up feeling secure in themselves. Young girls need to learn to take action by making positive choices about their own lives and doing positive things for others. Girls with confidence feel good about themselves and grow up with a "can-do" attitude. Here is some advice in regards to parenting that will help young ladies grow up to be confident and happy.

Encourage your daughter to pursue a passion or hobby.

Let her have a voice in making decisions for herself.

Identify and role-model the values most important to your family.

Encourage her to solve issues on her own rather than fixing things for her.

Show your daughter that you love her because of who she is, not because of what she weighs or how she looks.

Allow you and her to disagree and discuss each others view openly.

Address teen fighting and gossip.

Make regular time to listen to your daughter rather than lecturing her.

Help her process the messages in the media such as the differences between sex in the movies and loving relationships in real life.

Always acknowledge her struggles and point out ways that she can fix them herself.

Spending time together too is something every mother and daughter needs. Find activities you both enjoy and do them regularly together. Keeping a connection with your daughter and creating memories that are positive will help your child feel, loved and valued which is important and builds self-esteem and self-worth, which is necessary for a fulfilling life.



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