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Cover photo: Tracey Anderson Moses/Trey Thomas Images

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by Marilyn Honeywill

Has your family watched much football recently? In many homes it is like a second religion.

It used to be an adult male "thing, but now, fathers consider it a "right of passage" for their sons from infancy and on.

If they weren't blessed with sons, daughters have become savvy enough to master the lingo and the stats and sport the jerseys and hats and jump right in.

Also, we women aren't dumb...we soon realized if we were going to be included in the fun, we would have to "join the team!"

Pittsburgh being the sports area that it is, this mania doesn't evolve just around professional sports and/or football, we have a renowned hockey team, a wonderful baseball team and great college and high school athletic programs for both men and women.

The Western PA area has been the birthplace and training ground of many of the sporting world's greatest athletes.

Keeping all this in mind, I was alarmed last month reading this headline in the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review...**Steroids loom large in college football...!**

If this is going to cause a media blitz like the Barry Bonds, Sammy Sosa, Roger Clemens, Lance Armstrong and others were involved in, I think the whole controversy is going to make steroid use front page news once again.

There are many well known sports personalities who believe steroid use should be allowed in order to enhance the abilities of all athletes.

However, there are more proponents, teachers, coaches, parents who believe that steroids have no place in sports.

Unfortunately, fame and money have become the ultimate goal of so many of

today's popular, charismatic sports professionals and their lifestyle is alluring and enticing to our high school and college athletes.

If you think about it, the so called level playing field does not really exist anymore.

I took the opportunity last week to ask a Pine-Richland Middle School teacher I know and respect, Robert Aglietti, what he thought about young athletes using steroids and/or performance-enhancing drugs such as creatine.

He let me know in no uncertain terms, that in every possible way they are bad, wrong, unethical, unfair and dangerous. "An athlete using anabolic steroids to outperform his team mates is like the butcher putting his thumb on the scale when weighing your meat. And the physical and mental side effects from these drugs can be devastating."

The 15 minutes of fame one may achieve is so fleeting...is it worth a lifetime of back aches, head aches, pain, bad health and possibly early death?

Far better we encourage *all* young athletes to eat well, workout and exercise sensibly and get plenty of sleep. Then they will create that level playing field.

I decided to google some questions about the subject of steroid use in sports, especially by young, developing, growing bodies and the answers were eye-opening!

If you are interested in learning more and are concerned for the athletes in your family, google atlas-and-athena programs in high schools.

MH

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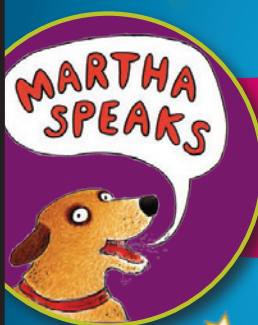
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Tips for teen skin care

by Leslie Doyle

Teenagers have much to worry about: grades, clothes, social activities and looking good. The condition of a person's skin leaves a lasting first impression, so it is important to have good information and know where to get help to have healthy, smooth skin.

There are many components to skin care, including diet, rest, proper cleaning and being proactive with health care if skin care issues, such as acne, do surface. All teenagers get some skin problems in varying degrees, because of their naturally increasing hormonal levels, and perhaps 75 percent of teenagers may need to be seen by a physician for treatment. One local pediatrician, Dr. Anthony Kovatch, of Pediatric Alliance-Arcadia Division, in Mc-



Candless, has seen many patients with skin problems and offers this advice: early intervention. The unfortunate problem of poor skin is that it is "highly hereditary", but there are many roads to improvement.

What is happening hormonally with a teenager's skin is that the amount of testosterone, even in girls, is raised, which in turn, raises the amount of fatty acids, which causes the acne. According to Dr. Kovatch, "stress plays a major role in acne because it also promotes the increase in fatty acids." This is the reason that the blemishes appear for prom or school pictures. The fatty acids block the pores and cause whiteheads, then blackheads. Bacteria on the skin, combined with the already

blocked pores can create nodules and cysts, if left untreated. These untreated nodules can turn into facial pocks. At this

level, the acne cannot heal on its own and it can also cause permanent scars. "If a person starts seeing tiny whiteheads and blocked pores, it is time to start treating it and unblock the pores," Dr. Kovatch says.

The good news is that there are times during adolescence that acne peaks, and then decreases. For girls, the peak time is prior to their first menstruation, around the age of 12- 13. For boys, the peak age for acne is about 14 to 16, when the testosterone levels are at their highest. This is the time of the most rapid growth, muscle development, and the deepening of the voice.

Daily maintenance for acne requires the use of a good antibacterial soap, with benzoyl peroxide, morning and night. Other types of topical therapy are also effective, but "oral antibiotics are the ace in the hole for bad acne." There are also products called retinoids, which are "pore smoothers" which microscopically peel and turn the skin over. There are also retinoid/ antibiotics which are called "topical combination" products. These prescriptions are costly and medical insurance may not cover the newer treatments.



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The main objective is to treat the acne aggressively as it arises, in order to avoid using Accutane, which has numerous, possible side effects.

Other problems that can cause acne are excessive sweating and pressure. This is seen mostly in athletes, who wear caps, chin straps and helmets, and have "compressed skin" which presses the hair to the skin. This is the perfect environment for the acne to thrive. For this reason, athletes should bathe after workouts. This problem also manifests itself in the excessive use of makeup. Hot tubs can induce folliculitis, which is the inflammation of the hair follicles.

Diet has always been a debated issue in the acne discussion. Dr. Kovatch says, "Current research supports reduction of foods in the diet with a sugary content, or a high glycemic index, as these foods result in higher fatty acids, and thus, acne. Increased levels of caffeine also stimulate adrenaline, and thus cause higher levels of androgens (testosterone)." The best diet for skin care is plenty of fiber, fruits and vegetables. It is also imperative to have plenty of moisture in your skin, so drinking plenty of water is important.

The use of year-round sunscreen is also important, with the rule of thumb to use "as high an SPF as you can, any time there is a glare," says Dr. Kovatch. This is

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Divorce – how to tell the kids

by Christa Melnyk Hines

Your marriage is over and now you have the heart-wrenching task of telling your children. How should you break the news?

Tell them together.

Barring a harmful or abusive situation, your children need you to continue parenting together. Even if your children are at different stages of maturity, they need to hear the announcement as a family, says Dr. Martye Barnard, a pediatric psychologist and chief of Behavioral Pediatrics at the University of Kansas Hospital. Then, you and your spouse should talk to each individual child.

Address guilt.

Reassure your children that they did nothing to cause the divorce.

Explain to them that though you are no longer married, you are still their parents first and your love for them won't change.

Preschoolers.

"It's amazing how much (preschoolers) understand," Barnard says. "They're pretty insightful, but they don't understand the time element quite like



the grade schooler or high schooler would. When you say this is going to happen this month, it doesn't make sense to them."

Adrienne Dreher, a family counselor, suggests using a calendar to help your preschooler count the days to when she will see each parent. "Children need to have stability and know what to expect. The sooner a regular parenting plan that works for everyone can be set up, the better," she says.

Wondering what your child is feeling? Children often express feelings through play, Dreher says. Also, read age-appropriate books together like *The Way I Feel* series, to help your child learn to share his feelings of anger, sadness and loss.

School-age.

Define what divorce means by explaining that you and your spouse will no longer be living under the same roof. Explain that the divorce is not about them, but avoid blaming the other parent for the divorce. "None of the adult stuff should be shared with the kids," Barnard says. "Those kids need to be reassured that they have parents that love them."

Adolescents.

As children enter adolescence, parents may be tempted to explain the divorce. Barnard urges parents to avoid sharing details of why the divorce happened. "I know adults that aren't old enough to understand it," she says.

Grief is normal.

"Children grieve very much like they would if a parent had died or they had lost a sibling," Barnard says. Grief associated with divorce occurs without closure since unlike death, there's no funeral. If your child's grief doesn't lessen over time or if she expresses a wish to die (even a preschooler), consult with a counselor or child psychologist. The most common sign of depression among school-aged children is irritability, including acting out, disrespect and misbehavior at home and school.

Questions to anticipate

- Does this mean that Daddy (or Mommy) isn't going to live with us?
- Does this mean we won't see him (her) anymore?
- Does this mean we won't do things as a family anymore?
- Did I do something wrong?
- (Your child might not ask this question aloud, but she may wonder if she's somehow to blame.)

Source:

Dr. Martye Barnard
University of Kansas Hospital

Manage wishful thinking.

Children often fantasize about their parents getting back together and may continue to harbor these hopes for years. "It's very, very difficult for kids to put closure on that and to understand that that's not going to happen," Barnard says. Gently remind your children



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Amazing Arrivals

by Sandra Gordon

Most women plot out their pregnancy to a T. But Mother Nature's truly in charge. Take it from these moms-to-be, whose birth plans took a last-minute detour to a tunnel, a fire station, and other weird places.

"I went into labor on my kitchen floor"

When Joanna Neal started having painful contractions two weeks shy of her due date, the mom of two visited her ob/gyn. The doctor assured Joanna that she had plenty of time before her baby arrived. So Joanna got some work done (she's an online social sciences professor), took care of her daughters, Mia, 5, and Morgan, 2, and went to bed. At 4:35 the next morning, her water broke. "I ran to the bathroom, shouting to my husband, David, that we needed to leave for the hospital," Joanna says. But when her contractions began coming one right after another and she felt the need to push, she changed her mind. "Forget the hospital," Joanna shouted. "Call 911!"

While waiting for the ambulance, Joanna made her way to the kitchen and lay down on her left side (she'd read that the position might slow down labor, though experts say it's an old wives' tale).

"But after a couple of minutes, the baby's head started to emerge and I realized he was coming no matter what," she says. Fortunately, Joanna had read up on how to deliver her own baby (see "The Art of the DIY Delivery"). She instructed her spouse to guide out the shoulders one at a time, but David just stood there, frozen, so Joanna guided them out herself.

David finally snapped out of his shock and finished delivering the baby. Then, following the directions of the 911 dispatcher, he tied the umbilical cord with a clean shoelace to separate the baby from the placenta. The ambulance, which initially went to the wrong house, showed up about ten minutes later and escorted Joanna and her new addition, Ethan, to the hospital. The Neals estimated that he was born at 4:56 AM, a mere 21 minutes after her labor began. "Delivering Ethan was scary, and we know we were lucky there were no complications," Joanna says. "But it was an incredible experience we'll never forget."

continued on page 12

“My whole family delivered my baby”

Jenny Komenda woke up last December 24 and whispered to her husband, Michael, “This is going to be the day.” Her third child was already a week overdue. “I felt guilty that my mom, dad, and sister had come to visit and were leaving soon,” says Jenny, who is an interior designer. “We all wanted this baby to come out.” They got their wish. Five minutes later, Jenny started having contractions about seven minutes apart. Still, the hospital was only two blocks away, so she took a shower and chatted with her family before leaving. By then it was too late. They barely made it out the front door when her water broke. Frozen in pain on the porch, Jenny blurted out “I need to push—now!”

“It looks like we’re having this baby right here,” announced her dad, Alan DeWitt, a family doctor who has done his share of deliveries. He and Michael laid Jenny down on the living-room ottoman. As she pushed, her sister, Heather, supported her back, while Jenny’s mom, Linda, and Michael held her legs. Within a few minutes, Evelyn Jane (nicknamed Evie), arrived. Then the crew drove to the hospital.

Within three hours, Jenny and Evie were given the all-clear to return home. Her family spent Christmas Eve playing games with Jenny and Michael’s other kids, Grace, 5, and Claire, 3, and getting to know the child they had all helped deliver. “I’m not a home birth kind of gal,” Jenny says, “but there was something special about being with everyone as Evelyn Jane arrived. We all felt a special connection to her—and to each other.”



“I gave birth in a taxi”

When Maya Polton was awakened by contractions around 12:30 one morning last March, the soon-to-be first-time mom recalled what she’d been told in childbirth class: Don’t show up at the hospital too early because you’ll be sent home. So the senior marketing executive went back to sleep. Finally, at 5:30, she nudged her husband, Eric. Since the pain wasn’t awful, they decided to wait another two hours. Then her contractions intensified. Maya’s water broke as Eric was on the phone with the ob/gyn. “Come to the hospital now,” the doctor said.

Thinking a shower would slow down labor, Maya stepped into the tub. “Then I reached down and felt the crown of my baby’s head between my legs,” she says. Eric phoned for a taxi, which arrived within minutes. The fastest route to the hospital was to take a tunnel that goes under a major river. But it didn’t turn out to be fast enough. “By 8:30 AM, I was in the back of the cab trying not push and Eric on the phone asking the doctor if there was any way to slow down my labor,” Maya says. Then they lost cell service. With Maya crouching in the backseat, Eric calmly took over, delivering the baby in the still-moving vehicle. “It’s a boy,” he said.

Once they exited the tunnel, Eric spotted the driver of a fire truck and waved to the driver. He was instructed to pull over and wait. Fireman gave Maya oxygen and wrapped the baby up. EMTs then arrived, cutting the cord and taking the couple to the hospital.

It wasn’t exactly how Maya planned her child’s birth, though as she points out, “I did want Eric to catch the baby and announce his sex all along.”

“A funny thing happened on the way to the hospital”

Alicia Weintraub knew the five-mile drive from her new home to the hospital where she was scheduled to give birth to their second child might be a super-slow ride. After all, it was rush hour. But as she and her husband, Adam, got in the car at 5 PM, her contractions were still six minutes apart. “We thought my delivery was hours away,” says Alicia, a public-policy project manager.

Alicia and Adam were wrong about the traffic (there was none) and the timing. As they reached the freeway, her contractions narrowed to every three minutes. Adam opted to take a back way through their old neighborhood. “I drove as fast as I could without getting into an accident,” he says.

But Alicia, in excruciating pain, told him she wasn’t going to make it. She remembered that a fire station was coming up. Adam spotted it, pulled into the parking lot, and ran for help. Firemen and

paramedics rushed out with a stretcher and helped Alicia onto it, but they didn’t have time to move her inside. With their assistance, she delivered her daughter, Lauren, in the driveway. “There was almost no coaching,” she says. “It happened that fast.”

Right after the birth, the paramedics rushed Alicia and Lauren to a nearby hospital. Although Lauren was born four weeks premature and weighed only 4 pounds, 14 ounces, she was given a clean bill of health and left the hospital five days later (Alicia went home after two nights). About a week later, the Weintraubs visited the fire station to thank the battalion. It was only then that they learned this fact: The men on duty that evening had never delivered a baby before. “I’m glad I didn’t know that at the time,” says Alicia, “but they did an amazing job of keeping everybody calm, including me.” ■

Sandra Gordon is a freelance writer from Weston, CT.



Unique birth for a unique boy *by Sandra Gordon*

Noah Lahm was in a hurry to get where he was going. Five years ago, Jeanette and Eric Lahm of Cranberry were expecting their third child and anticipated that the baby would come quickly, just like their older children, Ellie, now fifteen, and Keegan, now thirteen. Jeanette originally had planned to have the baby at Magee Women’s Hospital, but she decided to use the same doctor at Butler Memorial Hospital, which was closer. On June 27th, Jeanette was having contractions, but they slowed down and she was sent home later that evening. The next day, Jeanette’s contractions returned, but they were stronger. Jeanette and Eric took the children to their friends’ house, “on the other side of Cranberry” before going to the hospital.

As they confronted rush hour traffic on Highway 228, Jeanette’s water broke and she felt that the baby was coming too fast. She called the paramedics, as her husband attempted to maneuver through the gridlock by flashing his lights and honking his horn. For a moment, Jeanette felt concerned, but then she was comforted by a sign they happened to pass on the road that read, “With God, all things are possible.”

The Lahms managed to get as far as Route 8, when Noah decided to make his hasty debut, in the Days Inn parking lot near the Pizza Hut and Burger King. Eric parked the car and literally caught Noah, Jeanette’s “spitfire”, in his hasty rush into the world. Fortunately, Eric had been encouraged to practice his catch by

The Art of the DIY Delivery



Labor generally takes a few hours and often longer than that—enough time for the vast majority of women to get to the hospital or a birthing center. But in case you don’t make it, you should know the drill.

- **Call 911.** EMTs are trained in childbirth and the dispatcher can talk you through the basics.
- **Stay calm. Remember: Giving birth is natural.** “When things go quickly, everything is usually fine,” says Marjorie Greenfield, M.D., author of *The Working Woman’s Pregnancy Book* and director of general obstetrics and gynecology at UH MacDonal Women’s Hospital, in Cleveland, Ohio.
- **Check the ABCs (airway, breathing and circulation).** If your baby isn’t crying, put your hand near his nose to feel whether he’s breathing, and check for a pulse by putting your hand on his chest. If any of these signs are negative, try rubbing his back or flicking his feet with your finger. “That’s will often get a newborn crying,” says Dr. Greenfield.
- **Grab clean blankets, towels, or sheets.** You’ll need at least one to catch the baby and wipe away the blood and one to keep you and your newborn warm.
- **Forget about the cord.** Wait for trained professionals—with sterilized instruments—to do the clamping and cutting. If you deliver the placenta, place it in a bowl or a plastic bag, and take it to the hospital so doctors can check that there’s none remaining inside you.

the midwife who delivered their older son, Keegan. Noah arrived, wide-eyed and healthy, right before the paramedics. After Jeanette’s “do it yourself” delivery, the paramedics took mom and her newborn straight to the hospital.

One year later, on Noah’s birthday, the family went out for a celebration at the Burger King, near the parking lot where he was born. They tried to imagine what would have been seen in the previous year, and they decided that the people in the restaurant had gotten quite a show. Noah’s arrival into the world was nothing short of spectacular, which was par for the course for the Lahms’ “feisty little guy.” Jeanette says it was a “unique birth for a unique boy.” ■

Leslie Doyle is a freelance writer from Wexford, PA.



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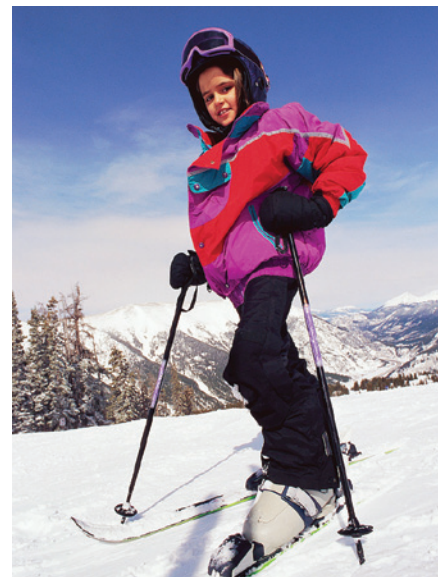
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Playing nice – in the snow & ice

by Malia Jacobson

Crisp winter air, brisk exercise and rosy cheeks; cold-weather activities like skiing, sledding, snowboarding and ice hockey seem to epitomize wholesome winter fun. It's true; these activities promote fitness and allow kids to burn off pent-up winter energy. But according to Dr. Kevin D. Walter, M.D., Sports Medicine program director at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, parents are often shocked to learn about the dangers involved.

The American Academy of Pediatrics reports that injuries are the leading cause of death for children in the U.S. With rates for winter sports injuries climbing, Walter and other health experts are now warning parents to take precautions to keep their children safe when they participate in



time-honored winter pastimes like skiing and sledding. According to the Medical University of South Carolina, skiing, snowboarding and sledding injuries lead to 45,000 emergency-room visits each year for children under the age of 14.

Why are winter sports so potentially dangerous? "Any time you have kids traveling down slick snow and ice at high speeds, there's a risk of injury," says Dr. Joe Guettler, M.D., orthopedic surgeon at Beaumont Hospitals in Michigan. Children are more susceptible to falls than adults because their heads are relatively large in proportion to their bodies, and their



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center of gravity is higher, he says. And young bones have growth plates—areas of fibrous material where new bone is generated—that make them more prone to break than adult bones.

Don't let fear of injury keep your family inside this winter. Some general safety precautions can help prevent injuries for all winter athletes, from casual sledders to daredevil snowboarders. To stay safe, all kids should wear proper protective gear—especially a well-fitted helmet—and play by the rules of their respective sport. Warming up for 10 to 15 minutes also reduces the likelihood of injury by preparing muscles, tendons and ligaments for work.


To further protect your children from winter sports injuries, follow these sport-specific strategies:

Skiing

According to Walter, skiing-related injuries often involve the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). Tears or injuries to this ligament are often painful and can put kids out of commission for the season. "I'm seeing more ACL injuries in young skiers these days," says Walter. "Children are being pushed harder to play and train more aggressively at a younger age in all sports."


continued on page 35

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Special needs – inclusive communities

by Julia Garstecki

Parents long for their children to be accepted as ‘one of the kids,’ and for parents of children with special needs, this may feel impossible. Fortunately, there are more programs designed for students with disabilities that also involve their neurotypical peers, with benefits that serve all involved.

Helen Rizzi is the mother of Dominic, a seventeen-year-old with epilepsy. His daily seizures have a significant impact on his ability to navigate within the community.

“It’s hard to go into the mainstream world, it’s awkward and frustrating sometimes. Some people are nice, but not always. People are looking at you. When you aren’t sure what’s going to happen, how Dominic will be, it can be tough,” Rizzi says.

Fortunately, Dominic and his mother discovered the Miracle League in Cranberry Township. “Here,” Rizzi states, “none of these things matter. You can just go and everybody cheers for each other. People are laughing, but not at each other. We’re all laughing because the kids are having so much fun.”

She’s referring to the athletes and their buddies. While the athletes have various disabilities, the buddies are ‘able bodied’ peers that help the athletes in whatever capacity they need.

The athletes enjoy various aspects of Miracle League. For Dominic, it’s the chance to hit the ball and play the sport. For others, like Chloe Wiseman, it’s the opportunity to socialize and hear her name over the loudspeaker.

Buddies, the ‘able bodied’ volunteers who help the athletes, join for various reasons as well. Some of the buddies are family members or friends of a player, but others just want to give back to their community.

Chloe’s father Mike believes there are numerous benefits to inclusive programs like Miracle League. “For the buddies, it teaches them that they can be friends with people with special needs and that they don’t have to treat them with a hands off approach. They see that these kids have different personalities and they like to goof around and have fun just like any other kid.”

The Merck Therapeutic Summer Inclusion Program allows children with special needs to attend summer camp with neurotypical peers while working



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towards various social and behavior goals created by their school. The camp is offered in two locations, Monroeville and South Hills, and runs like typical summer camp with games, activities and crafts. In conjunction with Allegheny County schools and the Jewish Community Center, students requiring extended summer services in the special education program can be paired up with another child with a special need as well as a trained teacher or therapist.

The Woodlands Sports Camp at Miracle League Field



These students begin their camp day practicing social and behavioral skills before joining other campers in regular summer camp activities.

It benefits all campers; those with disabilities receive immediate feedback with peer interactions from trained staffers like Jodi Toscolani and Becky Burkley. Campers that don't have a special need may offer natural consequences as the child with the disability may act inappropriately.

"If one of our campers is sitting too close and invading the personal space of another camper, it's very effective to have that camper tell him or her to leave her alone. Then as a staff member, we can discuss the proper behavior in that situation," offers Burkley.

The experience is a positive one for all involved. Toscolani adds, "The kids with disabilities feel good that other kids want to be near them, helping them. It really boosts their self-esteem, particularly in the higher age groups. For those campers without a disability, they have more of a tolerance for those with disabilities. A lot of kids look forward to helping others and want to be one of the 'buddies'."

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Special needs...continued from page 17

Donni Aaron's three children, who do not have special needs, have been attending the camp for three years and love it. When the opportunity presents itself to help their fellow campers, they enjoy being able to do so.

The biggest observation Aaron makes is that "...it's not strange for the 'regular' campers to see and interact with those that might have a disability. They understand that people have different needs in different areas, but it really doesn't come up very much. They might ask questions when something is new to them, but that's about it. It would probably be stranger for them to see somebody with a disability being treated differently."



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The Woodlands Sports Camp at Miracle League Field



Does your child have frequent anxiety, worries, and fears?

Is your child between the ages of 9 and 14?

Investigators at the University of Pittsburgh are interested in learning how talk therapy may help children, ages 9 to 14, with frequent anxiety.

Symptoms of anxiety may include:

- Excessive worry or fears about numerous events or activities
- Difficulty controlling worry
- Excessive concern about separation from home or important person
- Refusal to go to school or sleep alone because of fear of separation
- Fear of social or performance situations
- Irritability, fatigue, trouble concentrating, and/or trouble sleeping because of worry
- Repeated complaints of physical symptoms such as headaches and stomachaches

All children receive therapy from highly trained professional clinicians. Families will be asked to come to Oakland for several research-related assessments. Families will be compensated for their participation in this research study.

For more details, and to see if you and your child qualify, call Sherri Karas at 412-383-8182 or visit www.wpic.pitt.edu/research/cats.



University of Pittsburgh

By 'hanging out' with their typical peers, students with disabilities will learn what is age appropriate in social situations; how to dress, what TV shows are popular, and how to fit in.

"It's not about changing who they are, it's about showing them more acceptable behaviors so they can make friends," says Burkley.

Joy Nix of Three Rivers Rowing also sees the benefit in helping those with disabilities take part in activities some may never expect. At Three Rivers Rowing, athletes can learn to row for fun, though many become very competitive. For some athletes, it is possible to move from an adaptive rowing team to one that isn't, though this is dependent on the individual and the nature of the disability. Some of the athletes on the adaptive team compete in Regattas both locally and internationally.

Regardless of ability level, people 12 and older are welcome, and most fall in love with the sport that practices on the Allegheny River. Like others who provide inclusive programs, Nix also sees the

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A Valentine

by Rick Epstein



“Dad, tell me about the first time you ever kissed a girl.” I had just turned out the lights for bedtime when my 11-year-old daughter’s question whisked me back 30 years.

I sat down on Marie’s bed and told her about my 15th summer, the season I spent haunting Peggy Johnson’s house under the vigilant supervision of Mrs. Johnson and her able lieutenant, Eddie, age ten. Whatever Eddie had been doing with his time before I came along, he put it on hold so he could give me his full attention. My interest in his sister made me as interesting to Eddie as a bearded lady or a dog-faced boy. Mrs. Johnson was religious and strict and practically kept Jenny under house arrest, but I was allowed to hang around there day after day, holding her hand, drinking iced tea and playing game after game of Risk.

Mrs. Johnson was a religious woman who would not permit her daughter to play cards or go to dances or movies. Eventually, on a made-up errand, Peggy and I went down into the cool darkness of her cellar, and my first kiss was applied to the side of her lovely face. She kissed me back. Bliss. Those were the days. MY days, anyway. Marie’s days are impending.

This will be the first Valentine’s Day likely to bring a valentine to Marie from a guy who means it. Brian is a fifth-grade boy who treats girls with gentleness and respect. But he seems normal otherwise.

A couple of weeks ago, he and Marie had a rendezvous at the roller rink. It was a near-dating experience at a place where several times each Saturday afternoon only couples are allowed to



skate. The lights go dim, a spotlight hits the mirror-ball, and for a few minutes the world is made hospitable to young love.

When I went to retrieve her at five o’clock, she and a girlfriend were sitting on a bench, chattily unlacing their skates. Brian was about four feet away from Marie, leaning against the cinder-block wall with the exaggerated innocence of an arsonist at the scene of his latest six-alarm blaze. “Hi, Brian,” I said.

He tried to melt into the cinder blocks like a ghost. When that failed, he gave me a shy nod. I’m sure his parent-handling will improve.

Some months ago, when a poster appeared on Marie’s ceiling of a teen heart-throb whose

name I don’t know and I was getting the first favorable reports on Brian, I made Marie a promise. “I’m not going to tease you about boys,” I said. “That’s because

I want you to be able to talk to me about them. I used to be one, and I can tell you things about them that you’d never guess.” I know I’m seeking an unnatural, foredoomed alliance, but I’ll see how far I can go with it.

I got home from work one day and checked the answering machine in my bedroom for messages. Instead I found an accidentally recorded conversation between our babysitter Heather and her boyfriend. Her cell-phone battery must’ve gone dead.

Him: “Hello?”

Her: “Hi, it’s me.”

Him: “I got soaked waiting for you in the rain.”

Her: “I didn’t ask you to wait for me.”

Him: “If I got pneumonia, you wouldn’t even care, would you?...”

I didn’t want to hear any more; this was painful stuff. But I had to find out if any messages had come in for me, so I let the machine run as I changed my clothes.

Him: “I saw you talking to Troy today in the lunch line; you LIKE him, don’t you.”

Her: “He was borrowing a dollar.”

Him: “Do you always laugh that much when you lend somebody a dollar? ...”

A thought struck me. “Marie! Come here. I want you to hear something.” I

The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center is looking for parents of children age 10-16 to participate in a research study on depression. Parents with a history, and children with no history may qualify.

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Dear Teacher

by Peggy Gisler and Marge Eberts

Assessing reading accomplishments

Q: How do I know if my young children in kindergarten and third grade are reading on grade level? Also, can you give me a list of books for these grades? – *Want to Know*

A: Report cards and teacher conferences should already have told you about your children's reading level in both grades. If not, ask their teachers for this information. Be aware that reading on grade level can mean different accomplishments at different schools. Plus, you should expect bright children to be reading one or more years above their grade level.

On our website (www.dearteacher.com), you will find the San Diego Quick Assessment that will let you quickly gauge your children's reading ability. It is the first item under "Checklists." All you have to do is to have your children read lists of words. This is a first-step screening procedure. However, research has confirmed that it is a fairly accurate estimate of children's ability to read. Not only will it tell you the grade level where your child is actually reading. It will also tell you the grade levels where they can read independently and those where they will struggle.

The best way to get a list of suggested books for your children to read is to request one from your child's teacher or the school librarian. It also can be helpful to ask friends about books their children are enjoying.

Is my middle schooler being socially accepted

Q: How can I tell if my middle-schooler is being accepted socially by his peers? He spends a lot of time in solitary pursuits. – *Loner*

A: Simple observation should largely answer your question. Are friends calling him on the phone? Is he calling others on the phone? Is he asked on outings with other children? Does he interact with neighborhood children his age? Does he participate in sports formally or in-



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formally? Does he belong to scouts or any clubs? Does he ever do school projects or homework with others in his class? What does he say about having friends? What does his teacher say about his socialization at school?

Caution: Are excessive online activities limiting personal contact with his peers?

Child is labeled a trouble maker

Q: Since third grade my child has been labeled as a trouble maker. He is currently in fifth grade and everything he does no matter what he gets a detention. We have a meeting scheduled with his teacher because I have heard that this information is being sent over to his middle school – labeling him even before he arrives? – Concerned

A: You have been hearing about your son's behavior for several years now. Why did he start acting this way in third grade? What happened in third grade to make the year different from first and second grade before he had a label? And the big question: Why hasn't something been done to change his behavior by you or the school?

As far as his records go, you will not be able to take out any information that teachers have put into them. However, you can look at the records and put in information expressing your take on his behavior for the middle school teachers to see.


Realistically it is past time for your son to change his image. When you meet with his teacher, ask what can be done right now to help your son eliminate the troublemaker label. Suggest that a behavior modification plan be developed immediately so some improvement in his behavior can begin to take place at once.

Helping a child who is a "disorganized mess"

Q: My daughter is in the second grade, and the teacher says that she is a disorganized mess in class. The child often can't find missing books and is not willing to look for them. – Needs Organization

A: Organization is a skill that young children usually learn at home. Is she organized at home? We are guessing the answer is "no." Getting your child to be more organized needs to

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Camp Guide



Sleep away camp experiences

by Ellen Warren

Between school, homework and extracurricular activities, even young children are suffering from stress and over-scheduling. With calendars closely maintained by parents often through the teen years, they may also become over-dependent, losing critical decision-making skills that contribute to success in college, work and life.

Research by the American Camp Association (ACA) conducted with independent youth development experts in 2005 shows that a summer camp experience is an excellent antidote to a school year that leaves little time for relaxation or developing self-reliance. In the first large-scale national research study designed to measure outcomes of the camp experience, campers ages 8-14 attending even a one-week session at an ACA-accredited resident camp showed growth in positive identity, social skills, physical and thinking skills, environmental awareness, positive values and spirituality* — all good reasons to make time for camp when planning children's summer activities.

Zach Hoffman, Interim Executive Director of the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh's Camp Kon-O-Kwee Spencer in Fombell, believes that a sleep-away camp experience helps kids grow by balancing independence with lessons in group living. "Campers that share a cabin with bunkmates must learn to function as a family when making group decisions, taking care of their living space and sharing meals," he says. "Individually, campers make personal choices to build their own activity schedules and to

decide how they want to present themselves at camp. The full-immersion nature of an overnight camp experience allows campers to experience a life-changing and life-building adventure in a relatively short period of time."

"I have a conviction that a few weeks spent in a well-organized summer camp may be of more value educationally than a whole year of formal school work." — Charles Eliot, former president of Harvard University, in his 1922 treatise on education.

At Shekinah Western Ranch Camp, a Christian camp founded and directed by Pastor Tom Ravasio in Charleroi, the majority of campers attend one-week sessions. But Ravasio, his staff and parents say that even in just one week, campers become more respectful and make better lifestyle decisions. "We see children coming out of their shells, discovering who they are and liking it," says Ravasio.

"The remarkable experience of having kids together at the same location 24/7 for 5-1/2 days, immersed in an amazing spiritual atmosphere combined with activities that teach and promote team building skills is the answer," Ravasio adds.

In recent years, camp directors across the country have responded to busy family summer schedules and tighter budgets with shorter sessions and more registration options, while preserving the

developmental benefits of a traditional summer camp experience.

Most campers still register for three or four-week sessions at Emma Kauffman Camp, operated by the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh in Morgantown, West Virginia, but two and one-week sessions held at the beginning or end of summer are increasingly popular. Assistant Director Adam Baron notes that the two-week program for children entering 2nd through 5th grades is in high demand; one-week campers often attend day camp during the previous weeks to prepare them for their first overnight experience, then graduate to the two-week program the following summer.

"Shorter sessions help campers become comfortable staying away from home. Campers are building new skills, learning how to live in a group, following daily routines and expectations, developing independence, appreciating nature and developing respect for oneself and others," says Baron. "Two week campers have more time to get acclimated with their surroundings and more opportunities to participate in camp activities and programs. Many families also take advantage of our 'add-on' option, which allows two-week campers to stay for an extra two weeks to experience a full four-week session."

More than half of YMCA Camp Kon-O-Kwee Spencer campers ages 7-13 attend one-week sessions, which have

continued on page 36

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All About Camp 2013

Camps	♥Special Needs	Ages	Dates	Fees	Comments
*ACA (American Camp Association) Accredited					
CAMP DEER CREEK P.O. Box 305 Indianola, PA 15051	Wes Weitzel 412-767-5351 www.campdeercreekonline.com	Co-ed ages 7-15	Aug. 11 thru Aug. 17	\$500	Camping experiences in a rustic outdoor setting • Pgh's oldest and finest, day and residential camp • Riding • Tennis • Archery • Swimming • Crafts • Field games
CAMP ERIN 126 Nagel Road Frombell, PA 16123	Erin Middleton 1-800-720-2557 www.good-samaritanhospice.org	ages 6-17	June 14 Thru June 16	free	Overnight camp to cope with a loved one's death. Crafts • Sports • Swimming • Nature • Pet Therapy • 30 miles north of Pittsburgh
CAMP R - CATHOLIC YOUTH ASSOCIATION Laurel Hill State Park Somerset, PA	412-621-3342 www.cyacampr.com	ages 7-14	July thru August	\$300 + \$40 riding	Traditional, co-ed, residential camp in Laurel Hill State Park • Operated by the Catholic Youth Association of Pgh • Only 1.5 hrs from Pittsburgh
CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY C-MITES 5136 Margaret Morrison Street Pittsburgh, PA 15213	412-268-1629 x1 www.cmities.org	Co-ed K- Grd. 10	varies	varies	One day (Saturday or Sunday) Weekend Workshops • Week-long Summer programs • Hands-on science, math and technology • Fun classes for bright kids
CARNEGIE MUSEUMS OF ART AND NATURAL HISTORY ♥ 4400 Forbes Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15213	412-622-3288 www.carnegiemnh.org/camps	ages 4-18	June 10 to Aug. 23	varies	Nowhere else can you get this much art, science, architecture and culture all in one place! Weeklong camps go behind-the-scenes and offer unique field trips.
CARNEGIE SCIENCE CENTER One Allegheny Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15212	412-237-1637 www.CarnegieScienceCenter.org	Co-ed ages 4-13	June thru August	varies	Awesome camps, classes and workshops all about robots, outer space, trains, sports, chemical concoctions, engineering and much more.
CHATHAM MUSIC AND ARTS DAY CAMP Shadyside Campus 412-365-1174	Alicia Danenberg daycamp@chatham.edu www.chatham.edu/daycamp	Co-ed ages 3-15	June 17 thru Aug. 9	varies	Day camp features Music, Visual & Performing Arts • Swimming and traditional camp activities • 1, 3 & 6-week sessions available • Half day pre-k program new for 2013
FALCON CAMP* 4251 Delta Road S.W. Carrollton, OH 44615	Dave Devey 800-837-CAMP info@falconcamp.com	Co-ed ages 6-16	June 23 thru Aug. 17	\$2190 per 2 wks	80 miles west of Pittsburgh • Private, traditional camp with a wide range of activities • 1 wk intro for younger campers • Great fun, great time! • www.falconcamp.com
iD TECH CAMPS & iD TEEN ACADEMIES Held at Carnegie Mellon & 60+ universities nationwide www.internalDrive.com	1-888-709-TECH (8324)	Co-ed ages 7-18	June thru August	varies	Create iPhone® apps, video games, C++/Java programs and more at week-long, day and overnight camps • Also 2-week Teen Academies • info@internalDrive.com
NEW STORY STAP CAMPS♥ Greensburg, Indiana, Monroeville, Cranberry Twp. & Mt. Lebanon	Sarah Woodward 412-373-5235 x 113 sawoodward@NewStory.com	ages 5-18	June thru August	MA	New Story STAP Camps offer therapeutic environments for children with the most serious and complex behavioral challenges. www.NewStory.com
PITTSBURGH CENTER FOR THE ARTS ART CAMP 1047 Shady Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15232	Claire Marcus 412-361-0455	ages 5-17	June July August	\$130 and up	Full-day & half-day camps, ages 5-17 • Parent/child camps, ages 2-5 • Saturday classes, ages 2-17 • Filmmakers at the Center, ages 5-17 • www.pittsburgharts.org
SNAPOLOGY LEGO® CAMPS 70 Ft. Couch Rd., 2nd Floor Pittsburgh, PA 15241	Charlene Zuggler 412-295-1545 www.Snapology.com	ages 4-12	June thru August	varies	If you like Lego® bricks, you'll love this! Half-day, full-day and evening camps with different Lego® themes. Camps are inclusive!
SONSHINE CAMP/BEULAH CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL & CC 2500 McCrady Road Pittsburgh, PA 15235	beulahpscc.org Cindy Mathieu 412-242-4424	ages 5-10	June 10 thru Aug. 9	varies	Themed, Christian-based learning experiences • Certified teachers & experienced counselors...first-aid & emergency trained • Arts/Crafts/Sports/Music/Recreation/Swimming.
THE WOODLANDS*♥ 134 Shenot Road Wexford, PA 15090	Jesse Solomon 724-935-5470 www.MyWoodlands.org	ages 8-adult	June 9 thru Aug. 2	varies	Overnight camp for children and adults with disability and chronic illness. Camps divided by age. Music, sports, archery, golf course, creative arts, nature, swimming.

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Camp builds self-reliance by Ellen Warren

Among the traits that psychologists and youth development experts identify as critical to a child's successful transition to adulthood, "resilience" has become a key indicator of future well-being.

Dr. Michael Ungar, a professor and Co-Director of the renowned Resilience Research Centre at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, says, "Resilience depends much more on what others do to shape the world around us than our own rugged individualism. When it comes to resilience, nurture trumps nature."

Traditional summer camps, which create communities where children are supported by nurturing adults in a safe environment, are well-positioned to help kids of any age build skills that promote resilience. In the September/October 2012 issue of the American Camp Association's *Camping Magazine*, Ungar says, "Camps, like good schools and loving families, immunize children against adversity by giving them manageable amounts of stress and the supports they

need to learn how to cope effectively...The better a child succeeds at finding the experiences that bolster his well-being, the better he will be able to cope with life stressors."

At summer camps like Falcon Camp, a coed, overnight camp serving children ages 6-16 in Ohio since 1959, counselors and staff are extensively trained to create experiences that foster children's well-being. Director/Owner Dave Devey says, "We train staff to encourage campers in trying first-time experiences and reaching out beyond themselves. We work on recognizing and appreciating differences in ourselves, while finding common bonds."

"Whether a camper is facing his first night in a wilderness setting without video games or cell phones, or his first swimming lesson, or his first time in a harness zip-lining through the trees, camp offers many opportunities for growth," says David Paul, Director of Howe Summer Camp, an overnight camp for boys ages 9-15 run by The Howe School in Howe, Indiana.



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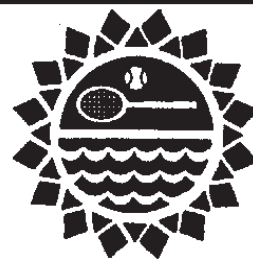
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Camp builds self reliance...*continued from page 26*

“One of the greatest challenges facing campers and staff every year is homesickness,” adds Father Anthony Yazge, Camp Director at Antiochian Village Camp, a two-week overnight camp for ages 9-17 operated by the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America in Bolivar, PA. “We teach that it is normal to miss home and the people we love, and help campers to understand that this is a time for their own personal growth and a chance to learn some independence. Our staff works hard to enable campers to be resilient and overcome obstacles by putting them in perspective, affording campers the chance to make the most of what camp has to offer.”

At Howe Summer Camp, where military training is a regular part of camp life, campers develop leadership skills, teamwork, self-discipline and self-confidence while also engaging in traditional camp activities. Paul says, “Boys learn to rely on themselves and one another as they encounter entirely new and sometimes quite foreign experiences. They swim, dive, build robots, learn archery and pick up weekend basketball games as teams. Within those teams most of them take a turn as an advisor or leader of the group. They learn that



they can help themselves and can help others, and they learn that they can rely on others.”

Yazge believes that overcoming occasional adversity is a part of experiencing independence at camp. He says, “Campers learn to problem-solve for themselves instead of relying on parents. Our staff helps children look at all sides of

a problem to independently make good choices in their lives. Sometimes the solutions they choose work and sometimes they fall short, but our campers know they can go to their counselors and seek guidance without being judged, and they gain the confidence to try another approach in resolving their dilemma. This process equips campers to understand that they might not always succeed, but that perseverance is a valuable quality. We enjoy watching our campers grow and mature in even just two weeks of camp.”

Ethan Sprunger believes that his eight summers at Falcon Camp best prepared him for college life, says his mother, Cathy, whose younger son is also a Falcon camper. In a letter to Devey she wrote, “I am not surprised, knowing a new college student must figure out how to live their life with others, navigate new territory, decide which groups and activities to join, find where the food is, take care of their clothes, clean their living quarters,

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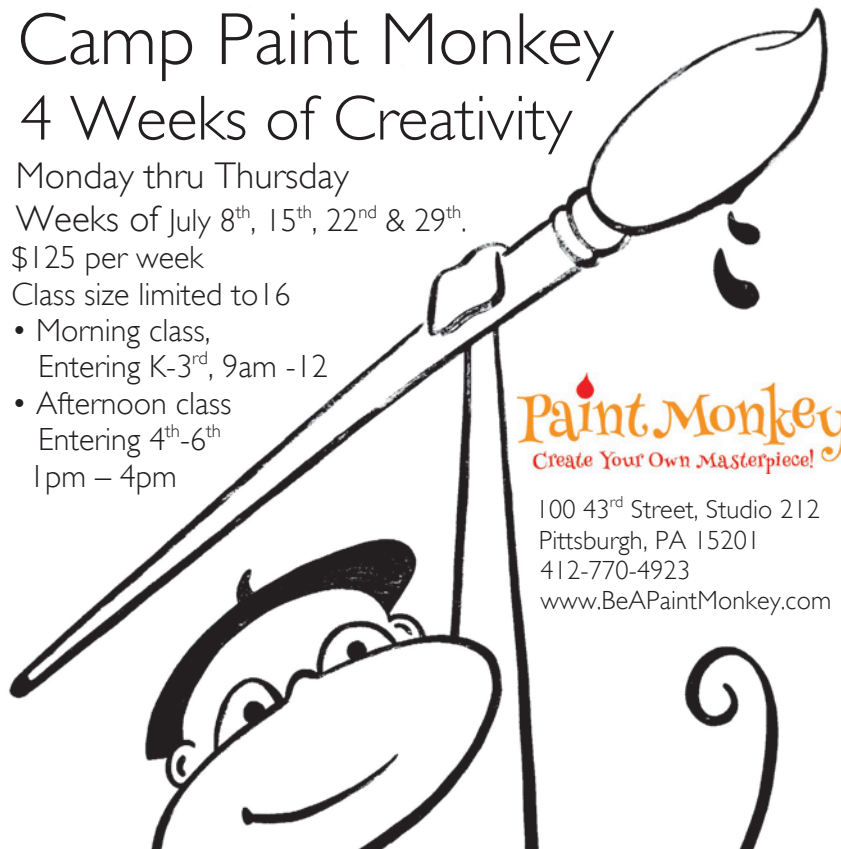
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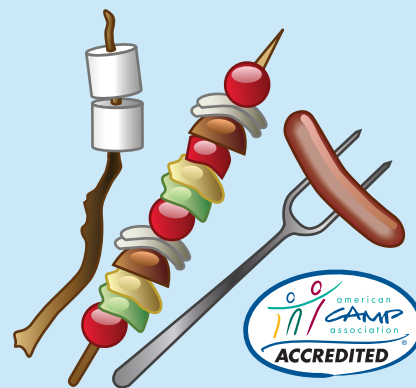
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ACA & parents partner for safe camps

by American Camp Association



When choosing activities and experiences, safety continues to be a parent's number one priority. The best camp experiences are borne out of strong partnerships between parents and camps as they work together to make sure children and youth experience learning and fun in safe environments.

Camps and ACA form a partnership that promotes growth and fun in a nurturing environment committed to safety. In addition, ACA has an enormous amount of guidance available online to help camp families find a beneficial, positive, and safe camp experience. ACA's family resources site, www.CampParents.org

Why an ACA-Accredited Camp?

ACA Accreditation means that your child's camp cares enough to undergo a thorough (up to 300 standards) review of its operation — from staff qualifications and training to emergency management. American Camp Association collaborates with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, and other youth-serving agencies to assure that current practices at your child's camp reflect the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation.

ACA helps member camps provide:

- Healthy, developmentally appropriate activities and learning experiences
- Discovery through experiential education
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- Service to the community and the environment
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What's the difference between state licensing of camps and accreditation by ACA?

Accreditation is voluntary and ACA accreditation assures families that camps have made the commitment to a safe, nurturing environment for their children. If a state requires licensing, it is mandatory; licensing requirements vary from state to state. ACA standards are recognized by courts of law and government regulators as the standards of the camp community.

How do ACA standards exceed state licensing requirements?

ACA goes beyond basic requirements for health, cleanliness and food service into specific areas of programming, including camp staff from director through counselors, emergency management plans, health care, and management. ACA applies separate standards for activities such as waterfront, horseback riding, and adventure and travel.

What are some of the ACA standards that camps rely on?

- Staff to camper ratios are appropriate for different age groups
- Goals for camp activities are developmentally based
- Emergency transportation available at all times
- First-aid facilities and trained staff available when campers are present.

Does ACA accreditation require criminal background checks?

ACA accreditation standards require a staff screening system which may include criminal background checks where permitted by law. When talking to a camp director as you consider enrolling your child, ask what the screening process for that camp includes.

How can I verify that my child's camp is ACA accredited?

Parents can (and should) verify the accreditation status of any camp at any time by visiting ACA's Web site at www.ACACamps.org or by calling 1-800-428-CAMP.

If your child's camp isn't ACA-accredited, ask WHY NOT?

Keep in Mind — Informed parents are best prepared to select a camp that meets their standards for staff, programs, safety, and facilities and strives to promote the welfare of every child. ■



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Night of the Carnegie An evening safari overnigher for girls ages 6 & up, Friday, 7pm to Saturday, 9:30am • (*PR) www.carnegiemn.org click on overnight adventures.

2 Saturday

Fiddlesticks Family PSO Concert Celebrate Pittsburgh, 11:15am, Heinz Hall • 412-392-4900 or www.pittsburgsymphony.org.

Tarzan & Jane A Gemini Children's Theater production, S & S, 1 & 3pm, thru February 2, Point Breeze • 412-243-5201.

Winterfest Snowshoeing, cross country skiing and horse drawn sleigh rides/snow or no snow, 11am-4pm, Sugarloaf Sledding Area, Ohiopyle • 724-238-5661.

Parenting Class Series Parent 2 Parent: Training on AD/HD, a must for any family with an AD/HD child, every Saturday, thru March 23, 12-2pm, FSWP Office, Greensburg • (*PR) 724-837-5410 x 702.

GPR Classes (Infant, Child & Teen) 9am-noon, Monroeville; Feb. 16, Wexford • (*PR) 412-692-7105.

3 Sunday

CMU School of Music Concert Featuring the Carnegie Mellon Chamber Orchestra, Feb.

• 3, 2pm and Feb. 17, 7:30pm, Carnegie Music Hall, Oakland • 1-888-71-TICKETS

4 Monday

First Aid For Kids 6:30pm-8:30pm, Monroeville • 412-692-7105

Baby Basics Classes For new and expectant parents, Children's Community Pediatrics, Feb. 4, Bellevue, 6pm; Feb. 5, Bethel Park, 7pm; Feb. 7, South Hills, 6pm and Sarver. 7pm; Feb. 8, Gibsonia, 6pm; Feb. 11, Norwin, 5:30pm; Feb. 13, CCP-Allegheny, 6pm; Feb. 14, Richland, 6pm; Feb. 21, Wexford, 7pm • (*PR) www.childrenspeds.com/babybasics.

For Foodaholics Can you control your eating? Are you obsessed with food? Mondays, 7:30pm, Squirrel Hill • 412-867-6992—Fridays, 10am, Highland Park • 412-874-5159 • www.foodaddicts.org.

Parenting Class Series Raising Safe Kids, an anti-violence program, every Monday, thru March 11, 6:30-8:30pm, FSWP Office, Greensburg • (*PR) 724-837-5410 x 702.

5 Tuesday

Parent Workshop For parents of children ages 4-8 with reading problems, 11am, Allegheny County Literacy Council, North Hills • (*PR) 412-364-3777.

7 Thursday

PNC Pops Concert *My Funny Valentine* featuring Rebecca Luker and Doug LaBrecque

• as well as the All-Star College Chorus, February 7-10, Heinz Hall • 412-392-4900.

8 Friday

A Tuna Christmas A hilarious comedy, February 8-24, Annex Stage, New Castle Playhouse • 724-654-3437.

Pinkalicious the Musical A comedy about a girl who turns pink from eating pink cupcakes!, February 8 & 15, 7:30pm; Feb. 9 & 16, 12 & 4pm and Feb. 10 & 17, 2pm, Stage 62, Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall, Carnegie, PA • 412-429-6262.

9 Saturday

Winter Special Needs Family Fun Day Crafts, food, sports and fun regardless of abilities, noon-2pm, Ross Twp. Community Center • 412-364-4115 x 318.

Early Childhood Parenting Made Fun Parents of toddlers & preschoolers explore techniques to develop smooth AM & PM routines, 9am-12pm, UPMC South, Bethel Park • 412-692-7105.

Calliope Concert Seldom Scene, a popular bluegrass group, 7:30pm, Carnegie Lecture Hall, Oakland • 412-361-1915.

Brown Bag Concert Pittsburgh Opera presents operatic arias, Broadway and musical theater, free for all ages, 12 noon, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters in the Strip • www.pittsburghopera.org/pages/community#Brown-Bag.

Windows Through History The 1820's, a hands-on historical series for girls ages 7-14, dress, eat, weave, sew, play and cook like girls in the 1820's, 10am-1:30pm, Beaver County Historical Society • (*PR) 724-775-1848.

Butler County Symphony Concert

Passionate Russians, 7pm, Butler Intermediate High School • 724-283-1402.

Cat show

Sponsored by Steel City Kitties, Inc., household pets welcome, Feb. 9-10, 9-5, Circuit Center, Five Hot Metal Street, South Side • www.SteelCityKitties.com. or 412-432-1420.

10 Sunday

Pittsburgh International Children's Theater

Presents *Martha Speaks*, February 10-17 Byham Theater and various locations • trustarts.org/kids.

Heinz Chapel Choir Concert

Chamber Choir Festival, 3pm, Heinz Memorial Chapel, Oakland • 412-624-4508.

Black, White and Read All Over

Special Teen Event, featuring Christopher Paul Curtis who will celebrate Black History month with his latest book, *The Mighty Miss Malone*, 2:30pm, Hill House Kaufmann Center • 412-622-8866 or www.pittsburghlectures.org.

11 Monday

Sibling Rivalry Strategies for maintaining peace at home, 7-8:30pm, Pine Center, Wexford • 412-692-7105.

12 Tuesday

Parent Workshop For parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing, am session, 9:30-11am; pm session, 6:30-8pm, babysitting provided, DePaul School for Hearing and Speech • (*PR) www.speakmiracles.org or 412-924-1012.

Reality Tour Of Armstrong Co. Jail

For ages 10 & up with parent...a drug awareness and prevention program showing the life of a teen heroin addict...it creates a lasting impact on all who attend, 6-9pm • (*PR) 724-548-7607.

14 Thursday - Valentines Day



5th Annual 2013 Pittsburgh Parent Education Expo

www.pittsburghparent.com



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Call for advertising rates
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15 Friday

Daddy & Daughter Valentine's Dance

Dinner, dancing and fun for Dads & daughters ages 5-9, 6-8pm, Pine Community Center • for info and reservations, 724-625-1636 x 3.

16 Saturday

Attack Theatre + Cello Fury

Local superstars give an innovative and energetic performance featuring an interactive intermission, 7:30pm, Richard Rauh Theater, Shady Side Academy • 412-968-3040.

Renaissance & Baroque Concert All-Around Love featuring La Donna Musicale voice and instrument ensemble who bring life to music created by women of the past, 8pm, Synod Hall, Oakland • 412-361-2048.

Pittsburgh Symphony Rachmaninoff & Tchaikovsky, Scottish Rite Cathedral, New Castle • 412-392-4900.

17 Sunday

Tamburitzans Famous folk entertainment for all ages, 3pm, Legacy Theatre, Passavant Hospital, Allison Park • 412-394-3353.

Pittsburgh Youth Chamber Orchestra A winter concert, 5pm, Ingomar United Methodist Church • 412-630-9535.

20 Wednesday

Tiny Tots Concert *Harold and the Purple Crayon: The Giant Garden*, a Pittsburgh Symphony free event for ages 3-6pm, 9:30 & 11:30am, Heinz Hall, (*PR)
• www.pittsburghsymphony.org/reservations.

World Class Dance *The Lula Washington Dance Theatre*: a teacher, dancer and choreographer who fuses African and Afro-Haitian dance, 8pm, Succop Theater, BCC
• 724-284-8505.

21 Thursday

Tech's Car Seat Inspection 10am-1:30pm, Pittsburgh EMS, 22nd St. & Liberty Ave.
• 412-881-9221 or www.patechs.com.

Gustafer Yellowgold's Show 7pm, Upper St. Clair Township Library, ages 3-10
• 412-835-5540.

22 Friday

Night of the Carnegie An evening safari overnighter for coeds ages 6 & up, Friday, 7pm to Saturday, 9:30am • (*PR) www.carnegiemn.org click on overnight adventures.

Seussical The Musical A Vincentian Academy presentation, Feb. 22-23 & Mar. 1-2, 7:30pm and Feb. 24, 2pm, Greater Pittsburgh Masonic Center, Pittsburgh, 15237
• 412-364-1616 x 219

23 Saturday

Annual Cherry Pie Hike Walk in George Washington's footsteps on the Old Venango Trail, hike, learn history and eat lots of pie, 8am, The Old Stone House, Butler County
• 724-283-0191.

Rapunzel A Gemini Children's Theater production, S & S, 1 & 3pm, thru March 17, Point Breeze • 412-243-5201.

Concert Series Asteria, Eric Redlinger and Sylvia Rhyne, 8pm, St. Vincent College
• 724-805-2565.

Babysitting 101 For ages 11 & up, 9am-3pm, Bethel Park • (*PR) 412-692-7105.
35

25 Monday

The Happiest Baby on the Block UPMC Children's Hospital Program, 7-8:30pm, Wexford • 412-692-7105.

Most Every Day

Air Heritage Museum Restored planes from all over the world, Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Beaver County Airport, Chippewa Twp. • 724-843-2820.

Angora Gardens Rabbits, gardens and a restored Victorian farmhouse, FREE, White Oak Park • 412-675-8556.

Animal Friends Classes and special activities for all ages, for you & your pets, Camp Horne Road • 412-847-7000.

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Free programs for all ages year-round. Library information • 412-622-3114.

Carnegie Museums

Museum information • 412-622-3131.

Museum of Art • (*PR) 412-622-3288.

Museum of Natural History Programs, classes, exhibits for all ages, ask about the day's events for free family activities, Thursday; Fun & exciting overnights; Exhibits: Exploration Basecamp: Charlie and Kiwi's Evolutionary Adventure, thru May 12, 2013; Empowering Women, thru May 12, 2013; BugWorks, get up close & personal with six-legged friends thru July 2013; call about Family Museum Bags containing hands-on materials for exploring selected museum exhibits
• 412-622-3289.

Carnegie Science Center OMNIMAX®: IMAX Tornado Alley; Born to be Wild. Exhibits: roboworld™; Highmark SportsWorks®; SpacePlace. Buhl Planetarium: Buhl Digital Dome Shows—Laser Shows: Laser Gaga; Pink Floyd; Van Halen; Led Zeppelin. Special programs for ages 4-6; Party Packages for ages 5-14 • 412-237-3400 or www.CarnegieScienceCenter.org.

Fort Pitt Museum Open daily, 10am-5pm, Point State Park • 412-281-9284.

Inclines Duquesne • 412-381-1665
Monongahela • 412-442-2000.

National Aviary Now playing daily: Raptors, 11am-3:30pm; Helen M. Schmidt Theater "Wings", daily; 1:30pm; Little Peepers story time, Tuesdays; Jr. Veterinarians program, Mon's & Thur's; Jr. Chefs, Wed's & Fri's; Experience Raptors (ages 12 & up w/paying adult), 8-11am; call or click for interactive feeding times; Parrots of the Caribbean, daily noon & 2:30pm; Condor Court, a new outdoor environmental education area just for early learners and parents, daily; Special group programs for all ages, North Side, for more info

• 412-323-7235 or www.aviary.org.

Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium Visit the Kids Kingdom and the PPG Aquarium, 9am-5pm, adults-\$10; 60 plus-\$9; Ages 2 thru 13-\$9; under age 2 & Zoo Members-Free; parking is free, Highland Park • 412-665-3640.

Please submit Info for our March Calendar by February 4th.

724-443-1891 Fax: 724-443-1877

ICE SKATING



Airport Ice Arena • 412-264-2222

Beaver County Ice Arena • 724-770-2060

Center Ice Arena, Delmont • 724-468-1100

Lynch Field, Greensburg • 724-834-4880

Mt. Lebanon Ice Rink • 412-561-4363

North Park • 724-935-1280

Schenley Park • 412-422-6523

South Park • 412-833-1499

The Rink/PPG Place, (11am-midnight) • 412-394-3641

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 Info & Weather


PA... Blue Knob • 800-458-3403

Boyce Park • 724-733-4665

Mystic Mountain • 800-422-2736

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Whitetail • 717-328-9400

Willowbrook • 724-929-2294

WV... Alpine • 570-595-2150

Canaan Valley • 800-622-4121

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Better Business Bureau

IF IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE...IT PROBABLY IS! Pittsburgh Parent advises all readers to beware of investing up-front money for unsubstantiated employment opportunities. Ask for references and business license numbers. Call the Better Business Bureau at 412-456-2700.

Tips for teen skin care...continued from page 7

not only applicable for summer, but also in winter, when reflection from the snow is high, as well. The most important rule is to “apply it faithfully, equally and diligently.” Dr. Kovatch says he has not seen an increase in skin cancers, but in the number of “atypical moles with dysplastic changes”, which means, suspicious looking bumps on the skin, that “might bear watching and need removal.” This rise is also due to the use of tanning beds.

Other recommendations Dr. Kovatch makes for good skin is that if the teenager decides to get a tattoo or piercing, always go to a reputable place and use good hygiene to avoid infection. According to the American Academy of Dermatology, there are many risks associated with these procedures, including blood borne illnesses such as HIV and hepatitis, impetigo, allergic reactions and abscess formations. Any congenital moles that a child has had should be removed before puberty before they change and become a concern later. Stretch marks can also be an issue for some teenagers and can usually be attributed to stretching collagen, which is from a quick gain of weight, or muscle, as with lifting weights. The solution is loss of excess weight.

It is best, Dr. Kovatch notes, to find the treatment that is best for you. Too many times, there is a “herd mentality” when it comes to buying acne medicine and drugs are purchased because everyone is buying them. These medications might just benefit a few and be expensive, when a less expensive option might have worked just as well. The bottom line for good skin care is to take the pre-emptive approach, have a maintenance

routine, and in order to clear up any uncertainty (and your skin!), see a physician. ■

Leslie Doyle is a freelance writer from Wexford.

Divorce-how to tell the...continued from page 8

periodically that you and your ex won't be remarrying.

Help children cope.

Whenever possible, continue to partner as parents to your children by attending school activities, parent-teacher conferences and birthdays together. And, don't turn your child into the go-between messenger. “If you have a message to give your former spouse, that should be done by phone. If that's not possible because of anger, then email or text,” Barnard says. And if possible, avoid dating for at least a year to help your children adjust.

Need additional resources?

Local bookstores, the library and Amazon.com have an assortment of helpful books geared for both adults and children. ■

Christa Melnyk Hines is a freelance writer from Olathe, KS.

Playing nice-in the snow...continued from page 15

Play it safe: All equipment, including skis, boots and bindings, should be properly fitted. Kids should avoid walking around too much in ski boots, as this can compromise their snug fit, and be extra attentive when getting on and off the ski

lift, a time when many injuries happen. It's also a good idea to end the day on an easier run to avoid skiing fatigue.

Sledding

Collision is the biggest injury risk for sledders, says Guettler. And collisions can lead to catastrophic head injuries. “Parents think of sledding as a relatively benign activity,” he says. “But there are real risks. Bones and ligaments—we can put those back together. But a head injury can cause lifelong damage.”

Play it safe: Because most collisions occur when sledders lose control of their sled, always choose a sled with a steering mechanism. Never allow sledding in wooded areas or near streets, and don't allow children to walk across the sledding path. And helmets are a must.

Snowboarding

Because of the way snowboarders fall, knee injuries are seen less frequently with snowboarders than with skiers, says Guettler. Upper body injuries are a bigger concern, particularly wrist fractures, he says. And, as with other downhill sports, head and neck injuries like concussion are a possibility.

Play it safe: Along with a protective helmet, snowboarders should wear wristguards to protect against fractures. Kids shouldn't attempt tricks or runs that exceed their ability level—particularly late in the day when fatigue sets in. All gear, especially bindings, should be checked regularly.

continued on page 36

Ice hockey

With more than 500,000 young participants nationwide, hockey is one of country's fastest-growing youth sports. Hockey helps develop hand-eye coordination and packs a vigorous cardiovascular workout, but its fast pace can set the stage for injuries to the head, mouth, limbs, and groin.

Play it safe: Skating proficiency is vital to hockey safety, according to Orthopedic Associates of Michigan. Young players should be able to confidently skate both forward and backward before suiting up to play. Protective gear is particularly important in this quick-moving contact sport. Never let your child play without a protective helmet, hockey-specific shoulder, elbow, knee and shin pads, hockey pants with built-in padding (also called "breezers"), gloves, an athletic supporter or cup, and a mouthguard.

Taking a few extra minutes to stay safe is worthwhile, because winter sports are fitness boons for kids and families. Just ask Guettler, who skis regularly with his four young children. "Unlike other sports like football and gymnastics that relegate parents to the sidelines, winter sports allow families to have fun and stay fit together," he says. "The positive family time and the fitness benefits certainly outweigh the potential risk for injuries." ■

Malia Jacobson is a freelance journalist specializing in children's health topics.

Special needs...continued from page 18

benefits.

"Our volunteers learn they do not have to act differently around people with disabilities, they don't need to get nervous or uncomfortable. For people with disabilities that require equipment, they get to leave their supplies on the shore when they get in the boat. Then they're just like everybody else."

Which, as participants in inclusive programs learn, is exactly the point. Kids of all abilities learn they have much more in common than that not, and everybody can have a great time. ■

For information about the Miracle League of Southwestern PA visit mlswpa.org.

To speak to Jodi Toscolani from the The Merck Therapeutic Summer Inclusion Program, call 412-235-5405.

Three Rivers Rowing information is available at www.threeriversrowing.org/ or call 412-231-8772.

explained, "It's wrong to eavesdrop, but I think your education is more important than Heather's privacy. I want you to listen carefully to her boyfriend. He's not interested in Heather. He's interested in his own power. He's doing everything he possibly can to make Heather feel guilty and sorry. Avoid this kind of guy. Look for a boy who is on your side and wants to make you feel good, not bad." She nodded and I re-played the dialogue.

A week later, my wife and I attended a school concert. Marie's class was on stage, having just finished singing, when the principal announced Marie's name, crediting her for the artwork on the program cover. Brian, sitting behind Marie, leaned forward, patted her on the back, and whispered something. She smiled.

I like that boy. I'd like him better if he and Marie were 21, but no one has asked me my preference yet. ■

Rick Epstein is a freelance writer from Frenchtown, NJ.

Dear teacher...continued from page 21

be a two-pronged attack by you and the teacher.

Let's first focus on the classroom and the missing book situation. If the child does not have a desk to keep her things in, books not being used always must be placed in a basket or cubby. At the start of the day, all books are to be taken from her backpack and stored appropriately. Your daughter needs to have a chart that she can check when this is done. She must also check the chart that a book has been put away when another is opened. The teacher should check the chart frequently and insist on this organization before other activities can be started. The chart can be taped to the top of the child's desk or table where she sits.

At home, choose just one aspect of your daughter's life that ties in with school – possibly getting her backpack organized before 8 o'clock each evening. You can use an alarm clock to remind her about this. You also will need to supervise this activity for some time. ■

Parents should send questions to Dear Teacher, in care of this publication, PO Box 395, Carmel, IN 46082-0395.

Sleep away camp...continued from page 22

grown in popularity over the past decade. The camp also offers two-week sessions for boys and girls ages 7-17 – including High Adventure and Teen Wilderness trips—and a mini 3-night session for children ages 7-9 that continues to grow in attendance and demand. But regardless of session length, Hoffman sees children

grow in positive ways as a result of the camp experience.

"We see the biggest change in campers' own self-reliance, general confidence and belief in their own abilities and personal resources," Hoffman says. "Campers can come away from a session at camp feeling as though they are good at making friends and can do things on their own, they can help others and, in some cases, resolve conflict. We want all campers to return home from a session at sleep-away camp with a renewed and positive outlook on the world and confidence in their own life through friendships, accomplishments and memories for which they can take personal responsibility."

Hoffman adds that even in short sessions, the camp's principles of Belonging, Accomplishment, Adventure and Leadership are intentionally woven into the entire camp program. The goal of every summer camp experience, he says, is for "campers to become happier, more confident, more remarkable versions of themselves." ■

Ellen Warren writes for the American Camp Association (ACA) Keystone regional office serving Pennsylvania and Delaware. Learn more at www.acacamps.org/keystone and www.camp-parents.org.

Camp builds self...continued from page 28

manage their time between studies and activities, and decide when to turn out the lights. Falcon Camp taught my boys that they could do all of these things with some independence. They were also surrounded by kids their own age and neighbored by kids a few years older and a few years younger. They were allowed to make activity choices at camp, thereby learning how to make their own decisions. By living at Falcon, my boys learned a lot about their own capabilities, gained self-confidence, and learned how to live in a community."

Dave Devey says that he receives many letters from parents such as Cathy Sprunger. "Camp is such a wonderful environment for children to learn how to be resilient in so many ways and it carries over into their lives long after camp," he says. "Camp provides the opportunity to meet new friends, deal with minor conflicts, try things for the first time, encounter diverse people, find important role models, and so much more in an environment where people care about the results." ■

Ellen Warren writes for the American Camp Association (ACA) Keystone regional office serving Pennsylvania and Delaware. Learn more at www.acacamps.org/keystone.

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