A Birthday at the NY Foundling Hospital
By GLENN S. HIRSCH, M.D.

As I get older it feels like the summers get busier and shorter each year. And so it is time to talk about getting the kids ready to go back to school.

For most children the return to school is greeted with eager anticipation combined with a mild dose of anxiety. Greeting old friends, sharing their summer experiences, and wondering who the new teacher(s) will be are all part of the mix of thoughts leading up to the first day of class. The new school year presents new possibilities and opportunities, a chance to start fresh, and make new friends.

A minority of children, however, approach school with trepidation and fear, and some will be so paralyzed by their anxiety that they will refuse to go to school.

Preschoolers’ fears are often due to separating from their parent. They will often cry and plead for their mother or father to stay with them when being dropped off at daycare or preschool. For most children this anxiety is transient, but for some this may be part of a pattern that includes anxiety and fearfulness going to sleep at night, going to a peer’s house for a play date, or being left with an unfamiliar person.

By the time children get to elementary school we no longer expect them to experience sustained separation issues. However, some will continue to have the same anxiety they had in the preschool years, and others will develop severe anxiety for the first time. Anxiety can be triggered simply by the start of the school year, a move, or change in school. Children who are reluctant to attend school often express some upset in the evening before school, especially after a weekend, and many children with separation anxiety complain of stomach upset or headaches on school days. When asked, these children may tell you that they are worried about something bad happening to their parents or that they fear being kidnapped or their home being burglarized.

Often they will call home several times a day to ‘check-in.’ If your child does express some anxiety at the start of the school year, the following suggestions are offered by the clinical faculty of our Institute for Anxiety and Mood Disorders:

- If your child expresses concern about starting school, accompany your child on a visit to the school and meet the teacher before school starts.
- Do not deny the child’s anxiety or worries, but acknowledge them and reassure him/her. For example: “I know you’re worried I won’t be there” then gradually reduced. It is most important to tell the child exactly what s/he is to expect. There should be no “tricks” or surprises.
- A child with separation anxiety breaks the heart of any compassionate person. Yet, the best remedy is to help the child to not give in to anxieties. As much as possible, you should prevent accommodating the child by allowing him/her to avoid separations.

But, you may ask, how can I do that if my child is so unhappy? Try to find ways to help the child to go to school. For example, a child is likely to feel reassured if times are set for him or her to call the parent from school. In extreme cases, a parent may stay with the child in school, but only for a specified length of time, which is then gradually reduced. It is most important to tell the child exactly what s/he is to expect. There should be no “tricks” or surprises.

Do not quiz the child about why s/he feels scared. The child often does not know why. Reiterate that the fears make no sense and that the child has to fight them. If your child is not flourishing, is visibly unhappy, has physical symptoms before leaving for school, or develops sleep problems it is time to seek professional help.

I hope the end of the summer and beginning of the school year are enjoyable and successful.

This monthly column provides educators, parents and families with important information about child and adolescent mental health issues. Please submit questions for ASK THE EXPERT to Glenn S. Hirsch, M.D., Medical Director at the NYU Child Study Center at glenn.hirsch@med.nyu.edu. To subscribe to the ASK THE EXPERT Newsletter or for more information about the NYU Child Study Center, visit www.AboutOurKids.org or call 212-263-6622.

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The International Dyslexia Association New York Branch

INFORMATION Contact us at 212.691.1930 or visit www.nybida.org.

Taking Giant Baby Steps: Early Intervention Services Under Part C

According to recent statistics done by the Developmental Disabilities Branch from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA, about 17 percent of children under the age of 18 develop and cope with learning, behavioral and developmental disabilities. Out of these children less than 3 percent of those under the age of three are participating in the federally funded Early Intervention programs. Early intervention, with proper diagnosis and support, is crucial in these kids development.

Educational law expert Randy Chapman has answers for parents and educators on how they can use Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to enhance their child’s development and minimize developmental delay. In his new article, “Taking Giant Baby Steps: Early Intervention Services Under Part C,” Randy answers some commonly asked questions regarding early intervention services for infants, toddlers, and their families. Some of the questions that he covers in his article include:

- What is Part C of IDEA? 
- What early intervention services are available when a child is eligible for them?
- What are the signs of a child with a disability and steps to take after diagnoses?

Randy Chapman is the Director of Legal Services at The Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People, Colorado’s Protection and Advocacy System. He is the author of three books, including The Everyday Guide to Special Education Law, (The Legal Center 2005). The Everyday Guide is also available in the Spanish/English version, Guía de la Ley de Educación: Especial. For 29 years, he has been promoting and protecting the rights of people with disabilities.

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A UNIQUE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT THE NEW YORK FOUNDLING HOSPITAL

By DR. POLA ROSEN

Gillian Granoff, a Brown graduate, had celebrated her 10th reunion at Brown University, when she decided she would have her birthday party with 15 children, ages 4 to 12 whose birth- 
days, and indeed existence, had been ignored by absentee parents for years. With her customary thoughtfulness and concern for others, Gillian (a reporter for Education Update) planned the party with the Foundling Hospital’s director William Baccaglini Jr., arranging for 6 huge pizzas, salad, bottles of soda, cake, pin the tail on the donkey, hokey pokey and prizes for all. Gillian asked friends and family to bring small stuffed animals and toys in lieu of gifts for her. There was lots of fun and good old fashioned cuddling and hugging of all the children interspersed with the excitement of the games, good- 
ies and toys.

One of the Sisters had the children say a blessing before eating and Gillian shared a bib-

lical Hebrew prayer before eating as well. The warmth and love in the room was palpable, the exchange of prayers made each person aware and accepting of religious differences.

Covenant House, founded in 1859 by the Sisters of Charity, was to provide shelter and respite to poor orphans as well as abused and abandoned children. Today, there is an acute unit for ill children as well as the unit where Gillian had her party which contains a Department of Education School, and in addition, a unit for pregnant teens where their babies can be born in safety.

Are you having a birthday soon? Follow Gillian’s tradition; consider sharing your spe-
cial day with children less fortunate who will remember your birthday forever and treasure the small toys that no one else cares to give them.

Contact Gillian at gilagran@aol.com for more information.

Adoptive Families’ Summer Reading Guide

It’s July, and time for Adoptive Families’ yearly crop of summer reading picks. Below, you’ll find powerful adoption memoir excerpts. To the right, you’ll see our first annual Best Adoption Books list. Visit AF’s bookstore for even more recommendations. Happy reading!

Love in the Driest Season by Neely Tucker

“She blinked again. Then she reached out and, in a wobbling gesture, wrapped her hand around my little finger....” Read more.

China Ghosts by Jeff Gammage

“These kids, with their wan smiles and growling stomachs, follow you across the ocean, move into your house....” Read more.

The Mistress’s Daughter by A.M. Homes

“I have allowed this because I understand the need for proof, for some true measure of our relationship....” Read more.

AF PICKS: Best Memoirs

• The Waiting Child, by Cindy Champnella
• In Search of a Beautiful Life, by Sara Davov
• Borrowed Finery, by Paula Fox
• ITHAKA: A Daughter’s Memoir of Being Found, by Sarah Jaffin
• The Kid, by Dan Savage
• In Their Own Voice, by Rita J. Simon and Rhonda M. Roorda
• Secret Thoughts of an Adoptive Mother, by Jana Wolff

AF PICKS: Best Adoption Storybooks

• Sam’s Sister, by Juliet C. Bond; illustrated by Dawn Majewski
• How I Was Adopted, by Joanna Cole; illustrated by Maxie Chambias

“A life of homelessness and poverty is devastating for a child. The stigma of being a social outcast erodes a child’s sense of self-worth. For a home-

less child, education offers probably the only road out of his seemingly hopeless situation. It offers contact with a stable, sheltered world; it provides examples of strength and courage; it teaches self-worth and initiative. And it provides badly-needed skills.”

The Brooklyn Museum Conservation Laboratory is beginning a study of the human and animal mummies in the Museum’s collection using the tools of modern scientific investigation to reveal new information about mummification practices in ancient Egypt thousands of years ago. The project will bring together scientists from three New York-based institutions, the Brooklyn Museum, the Getty Conservation Institute, in Los Angeles and the University of Bristol in England. It will begin with the X-ray fluorescence (XRF) of the first-century C.E. mummy known as Demetrios, which will be a part of the forthcoming exhibition To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum.

X-ray fluorescence will allow analysis of the painted surfaces associated with the wrapping of mummies, including painted linen bandages and shrouds. Preliminary results have shown that the red paint used on the Demetrios mummy may have been made, in part, from components imported from Spain. The lead in the paint is expected to have come from a Spanish silver mine, but it remains unclear whether the paint itself was manufactured there or, alternatively, whether if the lead ingredient was traded to Egypt with the mummy produced locally.

In addition to X-ray scanning, the team will use CT scanning: this will permit a non-invasive examination of the mummy interiors, providing medical information related to, for example, the condition of the bones, as well as examining other burials that might have been included within the wrapped linens. Carbon 14 dating will also be used to help provide an accurate date of the mummies’ creation. Finally, an analytic method known as GC Mass Spec, will help determine which chemicals were employed in the technical process of mummification and how their composition changed during the three thousand years these techniques were in use.

The Brooklyn Museum’s world-renowned collection of ancient Egyptian material includes five human mummies and nearly fifty animal mummies, among them cats, crocodiles, and birds.

THE STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM
Youth Program

The Studio Museum in Harlem is dedicated to creating a safe environment for youths to express themselves creatively. The Museum hosts free programs for high school students outside the school environment. These programs offer students opportunities to meet and converse with prominent visual artists, express their ideas through discussions, facilitate tours and hands-on workshops and develop important communication and critical thinking skills.

• Hands On: Design with Gregory Grey, Tuesday, August 14th—Friday, August 17th, 2007, 11:00am - 3:00pm

This fun filled, four-day workshop exclusively for middle school students will provide an opportunity to work with a professional New York designer who will introduce the basics of design practice. Students will be guided through the process of creating their own functional interior-designed spaces based on their own needs, interests and personalities.

This is a great summer opportunity to meet other creative teens, learn from a professional artist and develop new skills! Space is limited so please RSVP by August 1, 2007 to (212) 864-4500 x264

Family Programs

Are you looking for something fun to do with your kids instead of watching Saturday morning cartoons? Bring the family to the Studio Museum and experience art in new and exciting ways! The Studio Museum acknowledges the need for families to spend time together. Nurturing bonds between parents and their children through art, the Museum offers programs and activities that allow families to share in the creative process. Bring the family and explore our exciting exhibitions. Become an artist in a hands-on workshop and create works of art with your kids!

Family programs are designed for families with children ages 4 to 10 years old. Family programs are FREE. Pre-registration is required. Please call (212) 864-4500 x264 to register.

Family Programs are funded in part by public funds from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, made available through the office of Assemblyman Keith L. Wright.

This NEW MUSEUM SECTION will be a monthly feature.

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Working with Special Needs Adults in Residences

By SKiP HoliDay

Autism is a perplexing neurodevelopmental disorder that has befuddled the medical community for many years. It is a disorder that surfaces before a child turns three years old and is more prevalent among males than females. Piaget's disorder (that can affect anybody regardless of race, social class or gender). What makes autism so complex is that the medical community still can't pinpoint the causes and while there are various methods to treat autism, there is still no cure for it.

I have been working with the autistic population for over three years in a residential setting. When I work as a direct care counselor for a mental health/social services agency in New York City in what is called an IRA (Individualized Residential Alternative). An IRA is similar to a group home but there are differences between an IRA and a traditional group home such an ICF (Intermediate Care Facility). In an IRA you typically work with a small number of consumers compared to an ICF. Also, an IRA is designed for high functioning consumers who can complete their ADL skills (Activities of Daily Living) independently. An ICF tends to be for low functioning consumers who need assistance in completing tasks of daily living that we take for granted such as washing and drying their own laundry, cleaning their homes, cooking their breakfast, bath and so on. We are also responsible for tasks such as maintaining a personal log of their behavior and daily activities as well as administering their medications.

Their autism is treated primarily with ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) therapy. Since their functioning level varies so much, the therapy can also vary their treatment as well as their behavior and goal plans are different. We have consumers that have tooth brushing and showering goal plans because their functioning is behind the other high functioning consumers. We also have high functioning consumers who are on community awareness and socialization goal plans so they can learn to socialize and integrate themselves in a community setting. We have consumers who are on money management goal plans to learn how to manage their money effectively.

Unfortunately these medications are designed to control and modify behaviors and pears. There is no magic pill that can stop these consumers from behaving violently when they are upset or stop making them behave hyperactively when they are in a community. There is no miracle cure. The only difference: the average age of the oppositions is 16.

The boardroom is in Marsh & McLennan Companies (MMC) New York office, site of the recent culmination of the firm’s collaboration with the students of Brooklyn High School for Social Sciences’ nascent Legal Academy. For five months, attorneys from MMC came to Legal Services’ nascent Legal Academy on a regular basis to work with students for the final simulation and for encounters with law later in life. Attorneys had visited the school, encouraging students to learn law via games such as the wheel of misfortune, which entailed matching insurance options to fortune events.

Corporate Legal Diversity Pipeline made the match. Pipeline is an initiative of Street Law and Association of Corporate Counsel that matches corporate law firms with local high school students in order to engage diverse people to pursue a legal profession early in life.

Legal Diversity Pipeline—on side one significantly more money than the other—the lawyers and students reflected on the negotiation process. They all recognized that bargaining skills and basic concepts are only applicable to law. Kevin Crowley, an MMC attorney, said he saw “fire in everyone’s eyes,” during the process.

After each side negotiated—one side made an offer to the students to engage in teaching law skills that are applicable to daily life, such as dementia. But I have found that if the methodology of ABA isn’t executed properly than it can be useless. That is one of the criticisms that I have about this field and the agencies that are entrusted to treat the autistic population.

In the agency in which I work, we are trained to administer medications and learn how to appropriately handle situations of crisis but we have trained our staff on how to execute these behavior and goal plans properly and that is a problem if we are the ones that work with them in a education and community setting.

When implemented and executed properly ABA therapy can be a wonderful method to treat autism; when not executed properly, the results can be mediocre. These consumers didn’t have a chance in being afflicted with this disorder so the least the hierarchy of these mental health and social services agencies can do is provide these consumers with the best chance to succeed and part of that is starting with integrating direct care counselors in the implementation of these treatments and methodologies that fall under ABA therapy.

Skip Holiday is a pseudonym for an employee that has worked with autistic individuals for many years.
The Rebecca School offers a model program promoting the education and development of children ages 4 - 18 with neurodevelopmental disorders including PDD and Autism. Curriculum based on educational and developmental model of Drs. Stanley Greenspan and Serena Wieder.

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Admission for Fall 2007 continues through November 2007

Contact Tina McCourt, Director tmccourt@rebeccaschool.org
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Jessica Tibbets, a graduating senior at The City College of New York (CCNY), has received a 2007-2008 Fulbright Scholars Award to study Arabic and learn about the deaf community in Yemen.

As part of her research, Ms. Tibbets will produce an ethnography and documentary about deaf people in Yemen to show to hearing and non-hearing people in Yemen and abroad. The Wichita, Kan. native is expected to graduate from CCNY magna cum laude June 1 with a B.A. in International Studies with a concentration in Culture and Communications.

“This is really exciting,” she said of her Fulbright award. “I spent six months in Yemen last year teaching English so that I could fund my stay while improving my fluency in Arabic and learning Yemeni sign language and I loved it. I can’t wait to return to my friends there!”

“The award gives me an opportunity to continue my study of Arabic as well as my research and work with the deaf community in that country,” she added. “I started learning Arabic in my freshman year at City College and fell in love with it. That’s the main reason I went to Yemen last year.”

While there, she decided to apply for the Fulbright. Yemen’s Ministry of Social Affairs, the Deaf Association in Aden and a research center in Sana’a, Yemen’s capital city, backed her application. The three organizations provided the supporting letters required from all applicants by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, which administers the Fulbright Scholarship Program.

Ms. Tibbets wrote her senior thesis on the possibility of a global sign language. She says she believes a more cohesive and broadly understood sign language would empower deaf people who currently use different methods of signing.

At CCNY, Ms. Tibbets received the Anne S. Kheel Scholarship from the College’s Colin Powell Center for Policy Studies. The scholarship paid her tuition since her junior year.

She also received the Winston Fellowship from CCNY’s International Studies (IS) Program for a study trip to Brazil in 2004 through Columbia University, and taught English in El Salvador in summer 2005 with the Presidential Scholarship.

The latter was in conjunction with the school’s International Studies “Service Learning in El Salvador” program. In addition, she was a member of the women’s soccer team and was named All City Player in 2005.

Currently living in the Bronx, Ms. Tibbets teaches Arabic to second graders at an After School Program at the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center and interns at AFS, a not for profit intercultural exchange program for high school students.

Ms. Tibbets says she chose to study at CCNY in 2003 because of the College’s highly regarded International Studies Program, beautiful campus and diverse student body. She plans a career in health care policy, particularly as it would benefit citizens of underdeveloped countries.

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IN MEMORIAM
PEGGY BENJAMIN

Only 26 years old, she was a heroine to her mother, Josette, her husband Alix and her 3-year-old son Junior. Battling for years with lupus, suffering pain and numerous hospital admissions, she never complained. Tall, slender and beautiful, her radiant smile and large brown eyes were full of compassion.

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Knowing Peggy has enriched all our lives.

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MSPinNYC at Hunter College: A Model Educational Program

Stanley Blauser

Dr. Faith Muirhead

By LIZA YOUNG

With mass media exploding with news of the latest innovations in technological devices, it’s refreshing to see the mentor-mentee model used with dramatic success to enable failing HS students to score high on regents exams after a summer at Hunter College. Education Update visited Hunter College to see the New York City Mathematics and Science Partnership (MSPinNYC) summer program at work, hosted by Dr. Faith Muirhead, project director of the program, accompanied by guests Ernest Logan, president of the Council of Supervisors and administrators (CSA), Dr. Charlotte Frank, Senior VP, McGraw-Hill, and Marianita D.Damari, NYC Department of Education MSP Liaison. At the meeting we observed the comprehensive and successful summer program in action with lively class discussions, intense teacher planning sessions, and a tutor analysis meeting with respect to student performance.

The MSPinNYC five and a half week summer program is a productive learning experience for teachers, tutors, and of course for students, with 2006 data revealing a stunning 70 percent pass rate on the chemistry regents compared to the traditional city summer school pass rate of 27 percent; a 90.6 percent pass rate on living environment compared to 35.8 percent for public school summer programs; 58.8 percent passing rate compared to 30.6 percent on the Math B regents exam; and a 56.7 percent pass rate compared to 32 percent on the Math A regents exam.

Several complementary factors differentiate MSPinNYC from traditional summer school programs including the heavy role of professional development, where teachers collaboratively discuss and analyze lesson plans; use debriefing sessions after classes for further analysis; and incorporate feedback from students to modify teaching methods. Tutors, comprised of high school and undergraduate students excelling in math and science, are an essential element of the program and play the role of “co-facilitators” during class sessions, Muirhead indicated, with more traditional tutoring on a three-to-one level during the afternoon.

Participating teachers underscored the uniqueness of MSPinNYC as collaborative teacher planning. Stanley Blauser, math teacher at the Gateway School for Environmental Research, appreciates the opportunity at MSPinNYC program “to see the subject from other teachers’ points of view.” He has additionally been able to test creative approaches to teaching math, and bring them to his regular classroom during the school year.

Hassan Aarousi, participating math teacher from Truman HS also enjoys being able to share ideas with other teachers, and experiment with new teaching methods. He described the program as a place in which “wherever kids turn they will find help. If they turn to the left they will find tutors; forward they will find teachers.”

He, as well, has been able to import techniques he practiced during the summer program to his classroom at Truman HS.

Four teachers involved in a science planning lesson shared how students, working on a metal reactivity task, engage in inductive reasoning; while not being told the point of their task, they discovered on their own a determination of chemical hierarchy through data collection and examination.

Muirhead further explained that students use a program and play the role of “co-facilitator” during class sessions, and a tutor analysis meeting with respect to student performance.

The MSPinNYC at Hunter College: A Model Educational Program

Innovative Teaching Methods At Hunter College Summer School

By ALBERTO CEPEDA

The two most interesting things that I observed taking place in these classrooms were the teaching techniques used by the teachers and tutors to get these at risk students to comprehend the material being taught in these classes and the number of tutors who were in the classroom to provide support to these students.

The first classroom visited was a living environment class that consisted of about thirty students with three teachers and three tutors on hand to teach them the material. The lesson was centered on taking scientific terms and breaking them down into concepts from the biggest to the smallest.

It was startling to see that the teaching techniques being applied by the professors weren’t limited to writing on the blackboard. The teachers challenged the students to explain the terms and how they got their answers. A simple right or wrong answer would not suffice in this class. Memorizing these concepts and terminologies weren’t the goal of the lesson. The teachers and tutors demanded that their students thoroughly comprehend the material through reviews that took place every ten to fifteen minutes within the classroom.

I was also surprised how proactive these students were as they participated and how thoroughly they explained their answers. It was clear that they fully grasped the lesson which consisted of scientific terms such as nucleotides, chromosomes and DNA.

The teachers as well as the tutors challenged these students to fully grasp the material which is the key to getting the students to succeed.

Dr. Faith Muirhead, Program Director of MSP in NYC and her staff are on the right track to meeting the goal of MSP and fulfilling the dreams of success that every student deserves.

Alberto Cepeeda is a student at CCNY & an intern at Education Update.

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By REVA COOPER
Usdan Center for the Creative and Performing Arts (www.usdan.com), called by Time Magazine “One of the most unique camps in America,” is now celebrating its 40th Anniversary Season of introducing young people to the arts, and addressing children’s educational needs in exciting new ways. In addition to its annual seven-week summer season offering more than 40 programs in the visual and performing arts, Usdan, America’s largest summer arts day camp, presents its second annual Summer in September intensive-workshop weekend on September 29-30, 2007. Summer in September will include “Essay Writing” for high school students, designed to prepare high school juniors and seniors for their college admissions applications; “The Craft of Broadway” for aspiring high school stage actors, consisting of audition workshops and lectures on “the business of show business” and a day of study on Broadway; and the “Audition and Admissions Workshop for Advanced Conservatory-Bound Musicians”.

Annually attended by 1,600 children ages 6 to 18 from throughout the Tri-State area (including Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, The Bronx, Westchester, Northern New Jersey and Southern Connecticut) Usdan students are picked up five days a week by air-conditioned charter buses, and transported to the Center’s 200-acre woodland campus in Huntington, Long Island. No audition is needed for most classes, as the essential prerequisite is interest—the Center, in other words, is open to all. In addition to their studies in the arts, students attend Usdan’s daily on-site “Festival Concerts,” educational performances by world-famous artists such as the Tokyo String Quartet, the Limon Dance Company, jazz singer Jane Monheit and members of major symphony orchestras, Broadway shows and dance ensembles. August 1 will be the 40th Anniversary Usdan Gala Concert, an evening featuring Jane Monheit and students in performance, and Alumni Awards will be given to the many achieving former students.

The Usdan season runs through August 10 at 185 Colonial Springs Road in Wheatley Heights (Huntington), and registration for the following season begins immediately afterwards. For information and registration for Summer in September and the 2008 season, call 631-643-7900 (also, beginning in September, call Usdan’s New York City office, at 212-772-6060 or visit www.usdan.com).
Harry Potter 5: A Treatise on Education

By JOY RESMOVITS

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix is not about magic. The tricks, stunts, special effects, sweeping panoramic shots of wizards flying on broomsticks over London, and the ascent of the dark wizard Lord Voldemort (Ralph Fiennes)—they’re all secondary to education.

The movie begins as Harry (Daniel Radcliffe) uses a complex Patronus spell outside of his school, Hogwarts, to fend off soul-sucking dementors in the presence of his muggle, non-wizard, cousin Dudley. Technically, it is forbidden for wizards under the age of 17 to use magic outside of school. Despite the life-threatening circumstances, Harry is tried in front of the Ministry of Magic, facing expulsion from Hogwarts. Harry’s mastery of the spell he learned in school seems to have gotten him in trouble with the very people who oversee the curriculum.

A major aspect of the movie was the ministry’s overreaching intervention at Hogwarts, and the consequences of leaving educational control in the hands of government personnel who have no background in education. This motif is personified by Dolores Umbridge (Imelda Staunton), a Ministry of Magic representative who lands the coveted, yet cursed post of Defense against the Dark Arts teacher.

The film’s narration includes some choice facts: For instance, polar bears can smell three feet below snow and ice to catch prey, and a young walrus remembers its mother’s face by brushing whisker to whisker. A real accomplishment of the film is how the principal creatures are perfectly made composites of several animals over periods of time. Drama is heightened by the undeniable changes in weather patterns depicted over time and how it affects the interdependent creatures at risk. It’s a cool movie on a hot summer day.

by saying real applicable knowledge isn’t important. After all, school is all about standardized testing according to Umbridge.

The students, however, know better. Unwilling to face the dark world unprepared, the students take their education into their own hands by forming Dumbledore’s Army. Dumbledore’s Army is a student-lead—and Umbridge-banned—enrichment program in which Potter teaches practical defense spells. Umbridge becomes so paranoid about her power that she uses truth serum on students to locate the meetings.

Later in the year, Umbridge sits on a throne in front of a giant pendulum as she administers the Outstanding Wizarding Levels, standardized tests comparable to the Regents. By this point, Umbridge has been appointed as High Inquisitor of Hogwarts, a position that provides the power to discipline and fire professors. After deciding they weren’t meant to remain in the academic realm, the notorious class clowns Fred and George Weasley spark an astounding show of the wizard equivalent of fireworks during the test. “You know, I really hate children,” Umbridge said shortly following the spectacle.

Harry’s involvement in education comes to fruition when he and his friends go on a mission to save his godfather. The adolescents use their newly acquired spells to fend off full-grown Death Eaters. Voldemorts followers. Voldemort, partially a spirit, possesses Harry’s body for a few moments in this battle of consciousness. But Harry’s memories of friendship separate him as the victor this time, for Harry has something Voldemort doesn’t—not only friendship, but more importantly, friends concerned enough to help each other seize control of the course of education.

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AUGUST 2007 • FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS • EDUCATION UPDATE
When I was sworn in as Speaker, I did so surrounded by children, because they must be the center of our work here. But it is time to update our policies, recognizing the connections between neurons and neighborhoods and that children who grow up healthy and happy become contributing citizens as adults.

Our job is to take the critical science we will be presented with today from the halls of academia to the homes of America’s families. We must match every aspect of our current policies on early learning, health and mental health, and family and income support against the wealth of information produced by our leading scientists and scholars.

Great strides have been made in understanding how children’s brains are shaped and developed, how positive behaviors can be encouraged, and how investments in early childhood create success in later years. We must ensure that our policies match the latest research and that families are given what they need to take advantage of these scientific advances.

Democrats will set a new direction for the next generation by prioritizing legislative initiatives that strengthen the future of America’s children. They include: reauthorizing Head Start, with a focus on Early Head Start for children three and under—Head Start has helped ensure some of our most vulnerable children become successful adults for more than 42 years, and Early Head Start is doing the same for infants and toddlers; improving early childhood workforce quality through the Higher Education reauthorization act; expanding SCHIP—9 million children in America have no health insurance, even when we know that healthy kids do better in school and are better prepared for a bright future; and making housing affordable for families, because a good start in life begins with a place to call home.

For too long, America’s children have come in last in the competition for government investments. For too long, we have allowed outdated ways of thinking to determine our policies regarding our children. And for too long, there has been not enough political will to make children our number one priority in our work in Congress.

I pledge to you today that those days are over. We take seriously our responsibility to America’s children. As the brilliant author and activist Pearl S. Buck said: ‘If our American way of life fails the child, it fails us all.’

Pearl S. Buck said: ‘If our American way of life fails the child, it fails us all.’

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49-Year-Old Weill Cornell Graduate Shows New Diversity in Medical School Classes After Naval and Business Careers

One graduate of Weill Cornell Medical College’s Class of 2007 did not take the usual route to gain his degree. Louis Cooper, of Brooklyn, recently earned his medical degree at the age of 49, following a long and diverse career.

"Many students are coming to medicine after they have gained expertise and life-experience," says Dr. Antonio M. Gotto Jr., dean of Weill Cornell Medical College. "A wealth of experience in other fields helps to add to the diversity of the class, and even to one’s ability as a physician."

This holds true for the newly anointed Dr. Cooper, who decided to go back to medical school after a varied and remarkable career. He says that he has always been drawn to fields that required both a facility with the sciences and strong interpersonal skills. Medicine seemed an obvious choice to him from an early age, but he explains that he decided to postpone medical school in order to take advantage of other unique opportunities.

Before enrolling at Weill Cornell, at 46, he was drawn to other fields, including service as a submarine officer in the U.S. Navy, where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree with distinction and a double major in physics and history from Amherst, and a Master of Business Administration degree from Harvard University, which he put to use working for more than 10 years on Wall Street.

But after witnessing the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York, Dr. Cooper felt a strong desire to devote the rest of his life to helping people. “Like all New Yorkers who witnessed the September 11 attacks, I felt a sense of helplessness,” says Dr. Cooper. “I wanted to be of service to my fellow man, but I was not equipped to do so. The best way I thought I could help others was to become a physician.”

Dr. Cooper, a U.S. citizen, spent a large part of his childhood in Europe. His father was in the movie industry, which took his family overseas to France, Norway, Italy and England. After finishing secondary school, he moved back to the United States.

In New York, Dr. Cooper began an internship at New York University, studying blood disorders. However, after years living as an American abroad, he felt out of touch with the American lifestyle and culture. He decided that the best way to regain his connection with the United States was to join the U.S. Naval Academy.

After attending Annapolis and serving more than five years as a submarine officer during the height of the Cold War, Dr. Cooper left the U.S. Navy to pursue a career in business. He earned an MBA at Harvard Business School, and went on to pursue a successful career as an investment banker in mergers and acquisitions at Morgan Stanley & Co., Inc. and Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, Inc. in New York.

Dr. Cooper graduated from Weill Cornell Medical College with “academic distinction” and “honors in research.” He is now a resident physician in Emergency Medicine at New York University/Bellevue, because he feels that in the ER he can help the most people with the widest range of problems.

“The emergency room is a unique environment where a physician is called upon to help individuals at the moment of their greatest need and anxiety,” says Dr. Cooper. “One is challenged to treat both body and soul and to quickly diagnose an extraordinarily wide range of problems,” he explains.

“Compared to many other medical colleges, Weill Cornell is more open to enrolling older applicants and students with a wide array of backgrounds and experiences. The customary path of going from undergraduate straight to medical school is less common here,” says Dr. Charles Bardes, dean of admissions at Weill Cornell. “Our students’ average age is older than many other medical schools—25 to 30 percent of each class is older than 25, which was not unusual when I was here.”

In addition to his leadership and management experience in the Navy and on Wall Street, Dr. Cooper is a glassblower and sculptor. In 2006, he was awarded the “David Clayson Prize for Creativity” as the third year medical student who best demonstrated the ability to balance ongoing involvement in the creative process with the rigors of a medical education.

Adds Dean Gotto, “Louis is a wonderful person whom I met on the student boat trip, as we were the oldest people aboard. He will be a superb physician.”

Weill Cornell Medical College boasts a long history of diversity in gender, race, religion, ethnicity and background of experience.

The first day of school always requires preparation—notebooks, pens and a new set of clothes. But don’t forget to prepare for your child’s health, says Dr. Pamela F. Gallin, a pediatric ophthalmologist with the Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital of New York-Presbyterian, a mother of four, and the author of The Savvy Mom’s Guide to Medical Care. Dr. Gallin provides parents and caregivers with tips to help their kids get a smart start to the academic year.

• Have your child’s vision screened. It is important for children to have an annual vision screening because young children, especially, often don’t know if they can see adequately. If your child wears glasses, be sure that the prescription is current. If your child cannot see, they cannot learn properly.
• Earned your child’s hearing tested. Most states now mandate hearing tests for babies. Many school-age children have not been tested. If your child is listening to the television or music at a very high volume, or tends to favor one ear over the other when listening to you speak, it may be a sign of hearing loss.
• Be equipped for sports. For children who wear glasses, the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends one-piece wraparound polycarbonate sports frames for all contact sports, including soccer, field hockey and basketball. All children wearing spectacles need sports frames for gym. All children are being urged to use sports frames for contact sports.
• Are your child’s immunizations up-to-date? The last thing you want is for your child to be turned away from school on the first day because he or she was not properly immunized. New immunizations, such as Hepatitis B, are now required. Check with your child’s pediatrician.
• Have you noticed your child scratching his or her scalp since camp ended? It may be a sign that a case of lice was contracted during the summer.

Back to School Tips from Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital

Head lice will not go by itself, but can be treated with over-the-counter remedies.
• Is your child anxious and apprehensive? Most children are naturally anxious about the new school year. It normally takes about a month for children to adjust to new situations. A new school, fear of a class bully, or taking a school bus for the first time may cause anxieties. If after a few weeks, your child continues to be anxious and apprehensive, bring this to the attention of his or her teacher so that you can identify the source of his anxiety and work out a solution.
• Do you suspect a learning disability or dyslexia? If you suspect that your child is not processing information as he or she should, speak to the teacher or learning center in your child’s school as soon as possible.
• Does your child eat breakfast? Studies show that children who eat breakfast are more alert in class. Also, be sure that your child has a balanced, nutritious lunch, whether it is one you send or one provided by the school cafeteria.
• Are your up-to-date emergency phone numbers on file? Make sure that both the school and your child know how to reach you or another caregiver at all times.
• Does your child eat lunch at school? School nurses and teachers must be aware of your child’s needs, especially if they are the ones who administer the medicine. Make sure emergency medications are close at hand—that your child, their teacher and the nurse know where they are.
• Do you suspect your child’s anxiety is caused by another thing? Do you want your child to know how to reach you or another caregiver at all times.
• Your child will have a great year in school if you make sure that the teacher understands all your child’s special needs,” says Dr. Gallin. “But remember, just as a child may be overwhelmed by school the first day, often so are the teachers.”

For more information, parents may call (866) NYP-NEWS.
redo time. Let us have 100 minutes in an hour and go metric as he proposes in ‘It’s 4:40-How About Lunch’. He writes about an interesting leaflet about food and her body image), I realize I shouldn’t take what Martin writes personally.

The title piece deals with the time the author, as correspondence secretary for his Yale class introduced a committee unknown to the rest of his class: Dave Henderson, a man always traveling on several boats around the world, throwing parties and avoiding disasters. Nelson goes on to talk more about Henderson until he passes out of the alumni news. An interesting tidbit is that the author is somewhat of a baseball fan and follows the Oakland Athletics (A’s), a local team. At one point in time, the A’s had an outfielder named Dave Henderson. Another humorous account is that of the author trying to sell commercial art correspondence courses, announcing he was from the Bureau of Engraving causing the sales prospect to think that he was from the government as he presented the student art sample book to the prospective customer while admitting that a subsidiary of the Bureau of Engraving, Art Instruction, Inc. was the maker of the samples. James Nelson, avid watch collector as revealed in A Brief History Of Time would also like to

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Killing Dave Henderson, Etc.
By James Nelson
RSR Books, $17.95

You are not sure whether you want to read fiction or nonfiction? Why not read a book that had both and of which you read about it in *Killing Dave Henderson, Etc.* fits the bill. The title piece deals with the time the author, as correspondence secretary for his Yale class introduced a committee unknown to the rest of his class: Dave Henderson, a man always traveling on several boats around the world, throwing parties and avoiding disasters. Nelson goes on to talk more about Henderson until he passes out of the alumni news. An interesting tidbit is that the author is somewhat of a baseball fan and follows the Oakland Athletics (A’s), a local team. At one point in time, the A’s had an outfielder named Dave Henderson. Another humorous account is that of the author trying to sell commercial art correspondence courses, announcing he was from the Bureau of Engraving causing the sales prospect to think that he was from the government as he presented the student art sample book to the prospective customer while admitting that a subsidiary of the Bureau of Engraving, Art Instruction, Inc. was the maker of the samples. James Nelson, avid watch collector as revealed in *A Brief History Of Time* would also like to

**Review of Learning Like A Girl: Educating Our Daughters In Schools Of Their Own**

By MERRI ROSENBERG

Learning Like A Girl: Educating Our Daughters In Schools Of Their Own
By Diana Meehan

As an academic who specializes in media and its messages, Meehan is especially smart at explaining precisely why a single-sex school is needed to counteract the predominant consumer culture that values brand names, shopping and popularity rather than academic achievement and intellectual pursuits. Founding a girls’ school is, quite simply, a provocative counter-cultural move, especially in an era when educators were beginning to worry about how well they were leaving behind. Meehan and her colleagues understood that there needs to be a place where “there must be acceptance and support for taking a challenge.” (p.190)

She’s also good at explaining the research into how girls learn, and what those differences may be, within the chapters. The take-home message is simple: “Girls’ schools are good for girls.” (p. xvi).

The results are impressive. The first graduating class earned acceptances to some of the nation’s most prestigious colleges, such as Harvard, Vassar, Princeton, Stanford, and the NYU Tisch School of the Arts. Even more important, perhaps, Meehan writes poignantly and eloquently how the model girls’ schools, including the Archer School for Girls, exemplifies many of the students underdog, thriving in the school’s unique atmosphere to emerge as academically strong students and impressionable leaders. These portraits are vividly brought to life through Meehan’s deft descriptions—one wants to meet each and everyone of these students to find out more about them.

And the school community, as led by school head, Arlene Morgan, absorbs and integrates the unswerving mission of the school. As Meehan writes, “At Archer, students adopt honesty, respect, and responsibility as official shared values, and they talk about applying those values to interactions with teachers and among themselves in the classroom, in peer counseling, on the sports court, on the bus. There are unstated values, too, shared by this communal body, which include a commitment to hard work and high expectations to become a girl who named Sofi identified as “tomorrow’s dreamers and tomorrow’s leaders.” (p. 172).

As the product of a historically single–sex high school (Brooklyn’s Berkeley Institute, now known as the Berkeley Carroll School) that went co-ed my sophomore year, as well as Barnard College, I am biased in favor of education that supports girls’ specific development.

Read this. I defy you to read it without getting a lump in your throat or a tear in your eye. It will may you believe in the power of education, as demonstrated by gifted, caring teachers who Meehan notes are “the main event” for their students, and the transformations that can result when students and teachers are truly allowed to do their best.

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Perfect Girls, Starving Daughters: The_Frightening New Normalcy Of Hating Your Body
By MERRI ROSENBERG


Frightening New Normalcy Of Hating Your Body
Perfect Girls, Starving Daughters: The

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Anorexia Reexamined

Perfect Girls, Starving Daughters: The Frightening New Normalcy Of Hating Your Body
By Courtney E. Martin

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By JOY RESMOVIT

In September, Staples will overflow with eager youngsters eying the star-shaped post-its, flanked by frenzied parents, frantically checking the school supply lists.

But for Leo Nacovich, age 3, Number 2 pencils and Marble notebooks have little to do with education. Many parents in the New York area, such as Leo’s parents, are opting to guide their children’s learning outside a classroom, by home schooling them.

Leo’s six-year-old husband Wade Nacovich both have vocational backgrounds in public education. When Bay became a parent, she thought the family would be aligned with “progressive schools.” But conversations with friends convinced her that home schooling was the best choice for Leo. “We felt excited about the possibility of learning alongside our son and the ability to tailor his education to his needs,” Bay wrote in an email.

Bay said she declined mainstream schooling because she was turned off by the volume of standardized testing in public schools and the unbalanced student-teacher relationship. “When I worked in the schools I was always uncomfortable with the management of time and the academic agenda. We go to the park, we go to museums, he plays with his trains and blocks and toys, we read a lot of books... we tend to garden in our back yard, we cook real food, we cook pretend food, we meet friends, we ride the subway around...” Bay wrote. “We don’t actually believe in benchmarks, nor do we believe in the tests that are there because there are certain subjects that are more important than other subjects. We believe that living life provides so many opportunities for learning in the way we choose to add them.”

Although home schooling is not the most popular option in New York, there are many support groups, such as New York City Home Educator’s Alliance. The organization supplies information to parents and organizes events for home-schooled children, compensating for the lack of social interface that students might experience in traditional schools.

But Bay said socialization in schools alone is artificial. “I believe that socialization is really about developing a comfortable level with people of all ages, so in this way, the socialization in schools is really limiting. At the moment, Leo has friends who are his age and friends who are older and younger. His oldest friend is a woman in her 80’s who lives across the street from us,” she wrote. Bay says she sees herself as “a facilitator” of Leo’s education, not an instructor. She added that down the line, if Leo is interested in something Ms. Bay doesn’t know much about, she would contact an instructor or a counselor for help.

As a facilitator, Ms. Bay encountered surprises in her son’s learning methods along the way. “Leo is a ‘child-led’ at-home education with no unbalanced student-teacher relationship. “When we started home schooling was the best choice for Leo. “We would be aligned with “progressive schools.” But although home schooling is not the most popular option, there are many families who choose this path. “It seemed to me that there was not a suitable option in New York, there are many support options for learning all kinds of things,” she added.

Leo, a “child-led” at-home education with no unbalanced student-teacher relationship. “When I worked in the schools I was always uncomfortable with the management of time and the academic agenda. “When we go to the park, we go to museums, he plays with his trains and blocks and toys, we read a lot of books... we tend to garden in our back yard, we cook real food, we cook pretend food, we meet friends, we ride the subway around...” Bay wrote. “We don’t actually believe in benchmarks, nor do we believe in the tests that are there because there are certain subjects that are more important than other subjects. We believe that living life provides so many opportunities for learning in the way we choose to add them.”

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