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**SAIPAN TRIBUNE
SUPPLEMENT**

SEPTEMBER 29, 2017

Opening the line to a healthy communication

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Healthy communication is the lifeline that binds the relationship between parent and child. From infancy to adulthood, having confidence that both you and your child have an open line of communication in times of laughter and tears can only make love stronger. It is hard but it can be done.

BE AVAILABLE

» Guidelines for parent-child communication

Being available is not only about providing for the basics. Be present in your child's life; a parent can't be lazy about it. This will nurture your friendship with them. Have them know that you have time for them and you have fun doing it because when your kids can always rely on you, it creates that attachment that they will not



MCT
Los Angeles Harbor City College student Brenda Soriano, left, converses with her parents Edilbertha Martinez and Victor Soriano during dinner in their apartment in Gardena on September 7, 2017.

be very tricky. It makes us feel entitled and selfish. Whatever our circumstances may be, keep your child out of it and be the better person always.

ENCOURAGE

Help your children find a hobby, a sport, a passion. Create a routine to help your child succeed. Your child may not know it but it can be something that she/he will like. When you encourage, you lift the spirit and confidence of your child. If, through the process, they find that a particular hobby, sport, or passion is not for them, that's alright. You helped them find out. This gives you another chance to go and reinforce them again with other things.

BE INTENTIONAL

A biblical quote says: "Train a child in the way he/she should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it." Be intentional in how you raise your child. Think of the character that you want your child to have. Guide them with thoughtful choices and get them involved. This will nurture healthy communication.

find anywhere else.

HAVE AN OPEN EAR

Parents often have a tendency to be in the "I'm the parent mode" which often results in having a know-it-all mentality. This is the quickest way to shut your child out. As parents, we only want the best for our children and wanting the best for them entails listening to them because it encourages children to open up. This helps your child speak to you without guile.

DO NOT WALK WITH YOUR EMOTIONS

Do not let your emotions dictate how you should treat your child today. Feeling stressed at work? Are you tired? Did you forget an important meeting? Whatever circumstance you are going through, do not unload on your child because they don't deserve it. Our emotions can

Raising resilient and confident kids



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Young children who develop strong early relationships with parents, family, friends, and teachers learn how to pay attention, cooperate, and get along with others.

Parenting style and family dynamics and interaction are the basic foundations in honing a child's emotional development.

Recent research shows that young children who develop strong early relationships with parents, family, friends, and teachers learn how to pay attention, cooperate, and get along with others. They are confident in their ability to explore and learn from the world around them.

GIVE LOVE

Start by saying and showing that they are loved. Love your child and do not be afraid to show affection. Engage them in sweet talk, touch, hug, and communicate with them throughout the day.

See RAISING on NEXT Page

By BARBARA QUINN
THE MONTEREY COUNTY HERALD

I try not to take it personally when my grandkids don't like what I cook. Vegetables? Let's just say—thanks to concerted efforts on the part of mom, grandma's and their excellent preschool staff—these little ones are expanding their nutritional horizons.

Games sometimes work. Frances: "I don't like that,

RAISING

From Page 18

ENCOURAGE

Support your child when he/she wants to try new things. Help them focus on their strengths rather than their weaknesses. Assure them that you are happy with all their accomplishments—both big and small.

LET YOUR KIDS SOCIALIZE

Exposure is a good teacher for children who are curious about their surroundings. This is a good time to surround them with good people and make them stay in an environment where they can learn and prosper. Help your children explore the world and the people in it.

BE TRANSPARENT

Grammy."

Me: "Oh good, because this food is only for grownups. When you get older, you'll really like it!"

Frances: "I want to try it!"
Me: "I'm not sure ... but ... OK!"

Frances: "I like it!"
What makes some kids pickier eaters than others? One reason may be differences in personality, according to a new study in the

It is okay to show emotions to your children. Share with them when you are happy or sad. This will help them develop empathy, sincerity, sensitivity, and kindness. In the same manner, acknowledge your child's feelings so they don't develop a feeling of repression.

ESTABLISH ROUTINES

Help make your child feel secure and confident about their schedule and surroundings. Be intentional in providing a good, positive emotional surrounding to your child that is conducive to development. If your child trusts and feels secured in his/her surroundings at an early age, then the child will be able to move on to other things like focus and learning. (Bea Cabrera)

How to deal with picky eaters



LEILA NAVIDI/MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/TNS

Customize the flavor of granola bars to suit your tastes - or the tastes of picky eaters.

Journal of Child Psychology. Researchers observed how 136 infants responded to new foods and new toys during their first 18 months of life. They discovered that infants who were reserved about new toys also tended to be less accepting of new foods. That suggests a link between personality and at-

titudes about food, say the authors.

Don't give up just because your child is less than enthusiastic about downing his zucchini. Other research consistently shows that infants and children can learn to accept new foods if their caregivers continue to offer them. It may take as many as

eight to 10 offerings before a child learns to accept certain foods.

And it's never too late to start. Flavors from what a mom eats during pregnancy and lactation get passed on to her baby, says Julie Mennella, a biopsychologist at the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia. So if a

mother eats vegetables during these early years, her infant is familiar with the taste of those foods when they are introduced.

A recent clinical trial conducted by Mennella and her research team found that breastfed infants whose moms drank carrot and other types of vegetable juices were more likely to accept the flavors of these vegetables when they began to eat solid foods. Another bonus: Moms also developed a taste for vegetables during the time they drank the vegetable juices.

Regardless of what tricks we pull to get our kiddos to eat healthier, we should not force food on a child.

"All young children are more-or-less picky about food," says child feeding expert Elynn Satter. "They warm up slowly to unfamiliar foods and may have to see, watch you eat, touch or taste a food several times before they learn to like it."

Demonstrate a positive attitude about food and your child is apt to catch that outlook. Even if you have to sometimes use reverse psychology,

The most precious of all is the gift of time.

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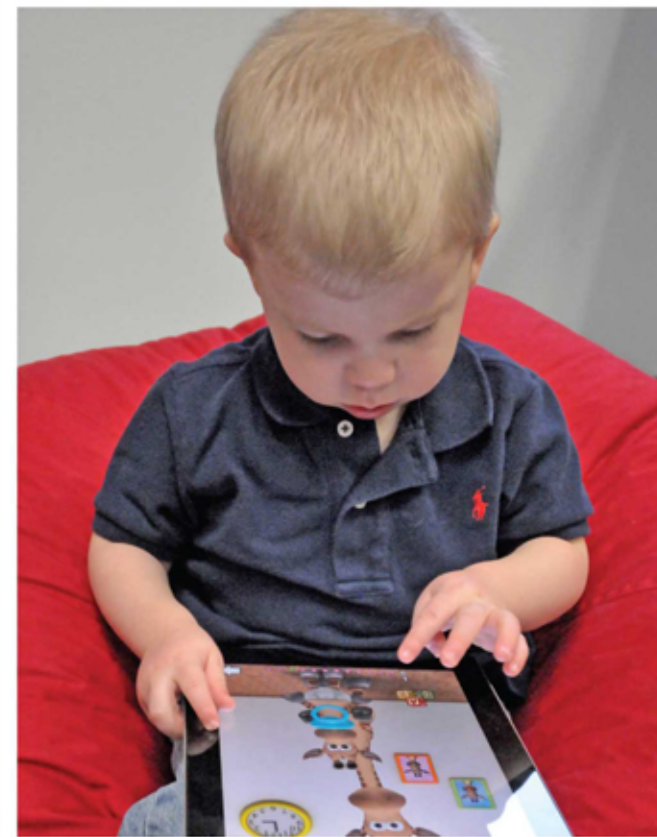
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Kids and tech



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Children seem more engaged with technology and gadgets and the presence of doodads appear inevitable.

Have you ever had that experience of having your 5-year-old teach you how to download an app on your smartphone? Or instead of a bicycle, your 10-year-old actually asked you for an iPad?

Or when flummoxed as to where the family can eat, you find your 13-year-old Googling for suggestions? That's the 21st Century reality these days.

Children seem more engaged with technology and gadgets and the presence of doodads appear inevitable. They use it both for recreation and for school.

There are many advantages and disadvantages but, whatever the case may be, try not to focus on the negatives. No matter how modern and advanced the world is today, that doesn't mean you can't be on top of it.

Managing the use of media and technology is one of the challenges rearing up a child in the 21st Century. Here are some tips for you to get along with tech.

WATCH TV WITH YOUR CHILDREN.

Make TV time a learning time, especially for young children. It is important to guide our children with what they watch on TV so that if ever they have questions and are curious about something, you will be able to educate, translate, interpret and get them to understand. Watching TV together also gives a parent and child a shared experience.

CHOOSE THE PROGRAMS. Ask family members, colleagues at work, friends who

have children and ask for recommendations on what healthy and educational programs to watch. Screen these programs first, seek out the reviews, and see how it is helpful in the development of your child.

HELP YOUR KIDS KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT FROM WRONG.

Integrating values in your child before being exposed to media is an important thing and it shouldn't stop, especially when they are exposed to the daily barrage of mass media. Having values and morals will enable them to have an internal compass that will guide them even in your absence.

REGULATE THE TIME WITH GADGETS.

TV and gadgets are convenient baby sitters but setting a certain number of hours for TV and gadget use is very important so that the child will learn parameters. Having rules such as "no phones during mealtime" and "no TV during school nights" are examples. Encouraging your children to get active outside the house like engaging in an activity or sport is ideal.

CREATE ACTIVITIES.

Organize activities that will lessen the attraction of being in front of the TV or gadget. Organize a barbecue party at the beach, create street games with other children, have a picnic at the park, or organize a book club with other kids. This way, they will be able to appreciate the time spent away from gadgets. **(Bea Cabrera)**

Teaching kids about making healthy choices

With the rampant availability of unhealthy meals, junk food, and sugary drinks that are cheap, convenient, and practically everywhere, teaching children about making healthy food choices is just another challenge for parents.

Nobody says it cannot be done but it will be hard and parents would need to be consistent.

There are two ways to go about it: Focusing on their eating habits and getting them into sports.

HEALTHY EATING

Parents can create and serve healthy and balanced meals at home following the Healthy Eating Plate created by nutrition experts at the Harvard School of Public Health.

- Make ½ of your plate meal vegetables and fruits. Aim for color and variety.

- Make ¼ of your plate whole grains—whole wheat, barley, wheat berries, quinoa, oats, brown rice and foods made with them, such as whole wheat pasta

- Make ¼ of your plate protein. Fish, chicken, beans, and nuts are all healthy, versatile protein sources. They can be mixed into salads, and



pair well with vegetables on a plate. Limit red meat, and avoid processed meats such as bacon and sausage.

- Skip sugary drinks and maximize on water. Do not buy your children those drinks that promise authentic fruit flavor. More often than not, it contains sugar and zero fruit.

All of these do not have to be expensive. Choose the right food. Real food.

Families on Saipan love dining out. If this is your source of family bonding time, no need to worry making unhealthy choices. Parents can choose to go to restaurants that serve healthy meals.

The CNMI Non-Communicable Disease Bureau of the Division of Public Health has introduced efforts to make healthy choice an easy choice for CNMI restaurant customers. The project is called REACH Biba program, where they encourage res-

taurants to make their menu healthier. There are currently several restaurants on Saipan that offer healthy plates on their menu and the number is growing.

STAY ACTIVE

Teach your child to love a sport by exposing them to a variety of activities like tennis, swimming, canoeing, football, volleyball and bas-

ketball, to name a few. This will help your child pick an activity that he/she likes and suits her physical level. Watching sports on TV is a good introduction, but it gets even better when you watch the sport live. Talk to them about what

they like and dislike about each sport and look for signs of enthusiasm. As a parent, you will need patience, time to explore sports, time to practice and teach skills, and time to support your child in his or her choice. **(Bea Cabrera)**

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING PROGRAM

Babies learn from the time they are born. One of the ways they learn is through hearing. When a baby is born with hearing loss, many sounds and voices are not heard, and the child's speech and language development can be delayed. CHCC implemented newborn hearing as a standard of care and all babies get their hearing screened shortly after birth.

Ask if your baby passed the test. If you have concerns or your baby needs follow up call 236-8709.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Printing funded by the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Grant under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Service Administration.

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Saipan Soccer School works with your children

Every year, Saipan Soccer School offers various activities and programs for CNMI children, introducing them to the sport of soccer and, at the same time, instilling in them the values of teamwork, discipline, and having an active and healthy lifestyle.

Just a few months ago, Saipan Soccer School had over 150 children in the U6, U8, and U10 age groups joining its annual summer camp.

For more than a month, these children learned the basics of soccer and basketball, found new friends, and worked with their teammates.

Instead of spending their summer vacation at home watching TV or playing with their gadgets, they were up and running at the TSL Sports Complex, kicking and dribbling balls.

You can see from the participants' faces how they enjoyed the activities, as they followed instructions from the coaches, watched and eagerly waited for their turns to play, and exchanged high-fives with their teammates when they scored a goal or a basket.

From the sidelines, their parents cheered from them, amazed at how their kids



picked up skills in just a short time.

On several occasions, when their children were done with the activities or during break, the doting parents were quick to give food and water to their children or changed their soaked clothes. While doing these, parents were either giving praise to their children or encouraging them to play better.

At the end of the summer camp, all the participants received certification of completion and gift packages from Saipan Soccer School.

Their proud parents then

watched as their children were awarded with medals for an outstanding performance during the camp. Both parents and their children promised to be back for next year's camp.

Aside from the summer camp, Saipan Soccer School also hosts futsal tournaments during Christmas holidays and visits schools to donate sports equipment and teach young students the basics of soccer.

Its futsal league caters to players in the U12 and U16 age groups and again provides children a fun and

learning activity just in time when other tournaments on island are on a break.

As for its outreach program involving schools, Saipan Soccer School, in partnership with Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, believes that one of the best ways to get its grassroots program rolling is to go to schools.

Each visit by Saipan Soccer School coaches and officials is well received by students and their teachers, with the latter using the donated equipment and basic knowledge they gained

from the visitors to conduct after-school activities for the students.

At the national level, Saipan Soccer School partners with NMIFA in providing sup-

port to CNMI national youth and adult teams. Through its collaboration with the well-known Chelsea FC Soccer School (Hong Kong), Saipan Soccer School helps bring top caliber coaches to Saipan to assist in training our national teams.

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"Promoting Family Literacy"

The goals of the Motherread/Fatheread Program is to help parents to:

1. Recognize that their own stories and stories in books are a good way to communicate with their children.
2. Understand the messages in children's stories.
3. Become familiar with the many ways to use stories as a way to improve children's academic skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, comprehension, and critical thinking.
4. Discuss important parenting skills and challenges with other adults in a supportive environment.

Motherread®, Inc. is a nationally acclaimed private, non-profit organization that combines the teaching of literacy skills with child development and family empowerment issues. Parents and children learn to use the power of language to discover more about themselves, their families, and their communities.

Motherread® offers separate classes for both the adults and children. In Motherread/Fatheread adult classes, participants learn to be story readers, writers, and tellers in a group structure that supports their own sense of worth and ability. These classes are appropriate for all adults, regardless of reading ability or prior educational experience. By teaching the "why" of reading rather than just emphasizing the "how," classes encourage parents to be reading role models for their children. For children, story exploring provides a structured environment for reading, critical thinking, and problem solving skills.

October is "CNMI Humanities Month"! Please visit www.northernmarianashumanities.org or contact 235-4785 for the latest news on Northern Marianas Humanities Council.



For questions on upcoming classes, please contact us—Viola Deleon Guerrero or Beth Demapan at Tel: 235-7319/989-8542/783-7678 or E-mail: cnmimotherread@gmail.com or like/add us on facebook/instagram: [cnmi motherread fatheread](https://sites.google.com/site/cnmimotherread/home). Visit our website at [https:// sites.google.com/site/cnmimotherread/home](https://sites.google.com/site/cnmimotherread/home)

Saipan Soccer School was created:

- To provide a venue for players' practice and games day and night, rain or shine;
- To teach beginners the rudiments of the sport; and
- To train coaches who will develop good players



2017 HIGHLIGHTS

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| January-May: | PE Support for various schools, in partnership with NMIFA |
| June: | President's Cup |
| June-July: | Summer Sports Camp |
| June-July: | Summer Training Camp in Hong Kong |
| July: | Summer Youth Futsal Tournament |
| December: | Christmas Futsal Tournament |
| December-January: | Christmas Basketball Tournament |



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When adult children move home: It's not a nightmare, if you do it right

By MARTHA ROSS
THE MERCURY NEWS

SAN JOSE, Calif.—Pat Read enjoyed life on her own in her Northern California home after her two kids left for college, graduated, started their careers and set themselves up in their own apartments.

But about a year ago, stuff happened. Her children were hit by soaring rents, and her family faced a situation that is becoming familiar to many parents in the Bay Area and is transforming how people live together in the United States.

First, 30-year-old Lisa got priced out of an apartment she was sharing with roommates in Oakland, then 28-year-old Jeff could no longer afford his jacked-up \$1,700-a-month one bedroom.

"I told them they were welcome to move back home but under certain conditions," Read said.

For Read, she knew her children weren't typical of despairing stories about the "boomerang generation." They weren't mooching millennials who have "failure to launch" issues but hard-working young adults faced with a challenging housing market.

Still, she realized it was important to talk about everyone's expectations for living together and to lay out some ground rules, including her need for them to pay rent.

It turns out that Read's demand for clarity is just what was needed, according to therapists and other experts in how families can cope with this phenomenon.

As it happens, Read found that things went much more smoothly than she expected. She hasn't missed the peace and freedom of her empty nest and in fact prizes the opportunity to get to know her kids in a new way.

"It is a joy living with people who love you unconditionally," she said. While she expects her children to move out one day, she's "enjoying the heck out of their company." She loves their energy, humor, warmth and knowledge "about all things technological."

Read isn't alone in finding the bright side to what is sometimes regarded as a modern social failure: a young person supposedly not meeting an important milestone towards adulthood by establishing an independent household. Many



It is important to talk about everyone's expectations for living together and to lay out some ground rules, including the need for adult children to pay rent. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

other parents The Mercury News talked to also say the experience has been beneficial for their families.

"We enjoy hearing about their work day, friends, ideas," said Liz Peters, a San Jose mother who's had her four children move back at various points.

"We have another partner for movie watching, coffee outings, and walking." At the same time, these positive parent-adult child experiences don't come without effort, as Read's situation shows. Other parents likewise said they talked to their kids about paying rent or giving the arrangement a deadline. "Part of the success is knowing it is temporary," added Peters.

Of course, these experiences aren't universal. Some parents also discussed how they felt disrespected by their adult children. One father said his daughter, 34, and son, 32, have decent-paying jobs, but he suspects they live at home rent free because they want to spend what they earn on "new cars, travel, other things in life."

He'd like to set deadlines for his children to leave, but he feels stuck because their mother won't change the current arrangement. Recently he was distressed to hear his son voice a true "failure to launch" sentiment, saying: "I don't know what I'm going to do when you and mom die. Who is going to take care of me?"

But conflicts usually arise over bigger issues. Ruth Kalb, an area psychologist, said these issues aren't always easy to talk about and include "money, boundaries, mutual respect, shifting roles, expectations and needs."

For Read, the big issue she wanted to get out of the way with her children was how they would relate to one another. She told them, "We would be housemates, not parent and child."

That meant she wouldn't tell them they couldn't have overnight guests or stay out all night. At the same time, she expected them to respect her feelings enough to call if they weren't coming home so she wouldn't wake at 2 a.m. worrying that something bad had happened.

Christina Newberry, the Canadian author of "The Hands-on Guide to Surviving Adult Children Living at Home," agrees that a successful arrangement with adult kids at home depends on managing expectations. She especially emphasizes the need for clarity on financial issues, saying it's important for parents to not give their children a free ride and rob them of the chance to gain independence.

Each family must decide what constitute a free ride. Dana Tucker, of San Jose, and her husband didn't see themselves as going easy on their

23-year-old son when he moved back home to start a well-paying job at Microsoft.

They charged no rent at first, but that's because they had all agreed to a specific plan: For six months, their son would focus on repaying back student loans they had co-signed. Once those were paid off, he would contribute \$500 a month in rent while paying back his other loans.

In his 16 months back under mom and dad's roof, he contributed in other ways and was good company, especially carpooling to work with his father every day, Tucker said. "He mowed the lawn without asking, bought groceries when we ran out of something, did his own laundry, didn't have parties while we were away."

By giving their son a chance to free himself from debt, Tucker believes he was better able to launch himself into the world. Ten years later, he still has his good Microsoft job, is married and owns his home.

For Pat, who didn't want her last name used, letting her adult children live with her is a return to the traditional multi-generational household, though she recognizes there is a "stigma" for young adults who are not out on their own. She currently lives with her boyfriend, as well as two of her daughters and a young grandchild. Over the years, her 3,100-square-foot home has found space for up to 11 children, grandchildren and significant others.

"As the rents got so high, I encouraged them to move back home to save some money," said Pat, who charges a nominal rent. "Thankfully, they all have very good jobs. I didn't want to see them paying astronomical rent to live nearby. ... I believe a multi-generational household can be very beneficial for all of us."

The benefits come as parents age. Pat said her children helped her provide 24/7 care for her husband, who suffered with Lewy body dementia for three years before he died in January 2016. "We never had any hired help, only hospice," she said. With her children around, she was also able to have her mother live with her before she died last summer at age 101.

In her family, they work hard to respect one another's private spaces and have worked out schedules for laundry. "But I would say that the single most important thing you need to live together like this is a sense of humor," she said. "It really helps a lot."

ATTENTION, WORKING MOMS

These are the 100 best companies to work for

By DAVID CARRIG
USA TODAY

What is it that makes a company one of the best for working mothers?

Schedule flexibility, generous paid parental leave and mentoring programs for women are key, according to Working Mother magazine and its annual list of 100 Best Companies for working moms.

The best companies have figured out and honed in on what employees really want in helping them balance work and family and many are making those benefits more generous, according to the magazine.

The average number of weeks of fully paid maternity leave at the 100 best companies rose to 10 weeks from 9 weeks last year. Among the best of the best, the top 10 companies, the average is 15 weeks.

But there is a wide gap between what the best companies offer compared to what is offered by most U.S. companies. Every one of the 100 companies on the list offer paid maternity leave compared to just 30% of U.S. companies overall, according



The best companies have figured out and honed in on what employees really want in helping them balance work and family and many are making those benefits more generous. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

to the Society for Human Resource Management.

According to Working Mother, an average of six weeks of paid adoption leave is offered by 98% of the top 100 companies and four weeks of paid paternity leave is offered by 97%.

More: 'Fortune' ranks Most Powerful Women in Business: From Mary Barra to Reese Witherspoon

The best companies "know the value of keeping their employee moms engaged and supported," Working Mother editor-in-chief Meredith Bodgas said in a statement. They use these programs "to ensure that parents can develop meaningful careers while leading satisfying

home lives." Companies that do this well know success comes from having and maintaining the best talent, Subha Barry, managing director of Working Mother Media said.

"You cannot underestimate the loyalty such policies and programs build," Barry said. To make the unranked list, companies must complete an application of more than 400 questions on leave policies, workforce representation, benefits, childcare, advancement programs, flexibility programs and more. This is the 32nd year Working Mother has done the survey.

From the list of 100 companies, Working Mother highlights the top 10 companies

but does not rank them. Here are this year's top 10 best companies for working mothers (in alphabetical order):

- * Bank of America
- * Deloitte
- * Ernst & Young
- * IBM
- * Johnson & Johnson
- * McKinsey & Co.
- * Prudential Financial
- * PwC
- * Unilever
- * Zoetis

See the entire list: 2017 Working Mother 100 best companies

Ten companies made the annual list of 100 for the first time: Adobe Systems, Boston Scientific, Broad Institute, JLL, Kimberly-Clark, L.E.K. Consulting, Lenovo, Oppenheimer Funds, SapientRazorfish and Synchrony Financial.

Workforce representation at the 100 best companies shows women make up 46% of the total employees but only 35% of senior managers and just 28% are corporate executives, Working Mother's statistics showed.

Deloitte CEO Cathy Engelbert is optimistic about the future of gender representation and believes we are poised to make a lot of progress.

The consulting firm, which has been on the list for 24 years, offers 16 weeks for both maternity and paternity leave with the potential for additional time for new mothers of up to 24 weeks.

"We have been on a journey to reimagine the workforce through innovation and talent," Engelbert said. Offering these benefits allows the company to look for and retain great talent, she said.

Tired of being asked to babysit grandchildren and granddogs?

By GAIL ROSENBLUM
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

The problem: We have become a babysitting service for our kids—and their pets. It seems like they visit only when it's time for us to babysit.

Sure, you could look at this as being manipulated to the moon and back. Or you could consider it the greatest compliment possible. On the one hand, your children seem to have forgotten, or maybe never considered, that you also have a life. And that one-sided giving feels lousy, particularly when the manipulation is by your own progeny.

On the other hand, try to remember what your lives were like when you were sucked into that emotionally, physically and financially draining sleep-deprivation chamber known as parenting. An occasional adult-only escape isn't just fun; it could save a marriage. That

your kids ask you to step up regularly shows that they know they can count on you to keep their precious cargo, on two legs and four, safe and entertained.

I imagine that you have friends who are grieving estrangement from their children and, thus, grandchildren. I'll bet they would babysit in a heartbeat. The key is to find balance. Yes, you want to help. But you don't want to grow weary and resentful. Think about how much you really can do. One night a week? Two afternoons? Once a month? Don't apologize. Explain that, to be the best and most attentive grandparents for your cherubs, that's really all you can do.

On birthdays and holidays, you might also give your kids coupons for an extra night, or even weekend, of grandparent time with the kids and pets. That reminds them that your gift of time is just that—a gift.



Child Care and Development Fund Program

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The family must be living in the CNMI.

Child's Eligibility

- Resides with the parent who is in an approved activity (working, in job training or attending school)
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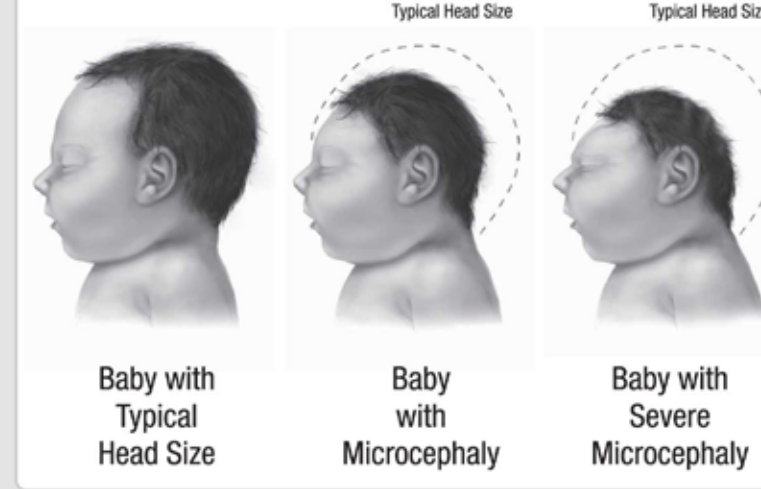
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To learn more please visit our CDC's website: https://www.cdc.gov/zika/healtheffects/birth_defects.html

This advertisement is funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services Office, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

By JOHN ROSEMOND
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Q: Over the past year, our 4-year-old has developed several fears that have become quite disruptive. It started with a fear of dogs, which is inconvenient given that there are lots of dogs in our neighborhood. Since then she's become afraid of noises at night, wind (she thinks a hurricane is coming), and dying in her sleep. Needless to say, she is anxious a lot of the time. We've talked to her, reassured her, and so on, but nothing has worked. She's becoming a wreck, and so am I. Should I take her to a counselor? If not, then do you have any advice?

A: With very selective exceptions, I generally recommend against having children—especially young children—talk to mental health professionals. First, there is no research-based body of evidence that would verify the general efficacy of any form of child therapy. Second, over the course of my now 40-plus year career, I've collected a significant body of anecdotal evidence to the effect that exposing a child to psychological counseling often (perhaps more often than not) makes matters worse. Having said that, I must add that my point of view on child therapy is not widely approved of by my colleagues, so if you'd feel better having your daughter see a therapist, then do so.

The problem is that almost invariably, therapists talk to children about fears, anxieties, and persistent thoughts as if they repre-



Facing fears is best therapy for 4-year-old

Have 4-yr-old face fears
DREAMSTIME/TNS

sent something meaningful—as in, deep-seated issues that the child is incapable of expressing otherwise. Example: A child's inability to tell her parents that they haven't been giving her enough attention since a baby brother arrived in the family is expressed in frequent tantrums (an actual account recently related to me by the parent of a 5-year-old). This is what therapists were educated and trained to do; so was I.

The fact is that a child's thinking and emotions need as much if not more discipline than her behavior. The more adults talk to a child about irrational fears and persistent thoughts, the worse they are likely to become. One such conversation is enough, and it needs to contain the message that the fears/thoughts in question do not represent reality and are not going to alter, much less dictate, parental decisions or parental behavior. In situations of this

sort, I encourage parents not to "explore" the child's fears/thoughts, not to ask lots of questions about them, but to simply tell the child, authoritatively but lovingly, that fears are common during childhood, they do not represent things that are likely, and that life will go on as usual in the family.

Your daughter doesn't want to take a walk through the neighborhood because she's afraid of dogs? You're taking her on a walk anyway.

She doesn't want to go outside because of wind? She's going anyway. She is afraid to go to bed because she thinks she's going to die in her sleep (one of my daughter's fears, around age 10)? She's going to bed anyway. And by the way, sometimes crying is a necessary purgative and needs to be allowed (if contained in the child's room) until it's run its course.

A child who has become caught up in and carried away by the sort of random-

ness that often characterizes a child's thinking and feelings needs parents who will act quickly to keep her grounded, who will continue to steer a straight course in the face of the emotional tempest.

Visit family psychologist John Rosemond's website at www.johnrosemond.com; readers may send him email at questions@rosemond.com; due to the volume of mail, not every question will be answered.

Why won't you grow up?

By ARMIN BROTT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Dear Mr. Dad: Back when I was in high school, all I wanted was to be independent. I wanted more responsibility, a job so I could have my own spending money, and I was obsessed with getting a girlfriend. Despite my parents' warnings, I experimented with drinking alcohol and, well, a few other things. I'm asking because my two teens have zero interest in any of that—and as far as I can tell, neither do their friends. Is there something different about teens today or am I imagining things?

A: You're not imagining. Teens and young adults these days are very different than we were their age when we were doing many of the things you described. San Diego State University researcher Jean Twenge and her Bryn Mawr College col-

league Heejung Park just published a study that confirmed what a lot of us have long suspected: Compared to their parents and grandparents, today's young people are much less mature, much less interested in taking on the trappings of adulthood (more on that in a minute), and are content to be dependent on their parents for far longer.

The quest for independence starts very early. Remember back when your kids were two and wanted to do everything themselves? And when they were three or four and wanted to do everything we did, whether it was talking on the phone, working on the computer, or washing dishes? That process—of seeking independence and engaging in adult-like activities—continues through adolescence and, theoretically at least, ends at actual adulthood.

But as Twenge and Park



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found, today's teens are in no hurry to grow up. Their study looked at teenage behavior going back as far as the mid-to-late 1970s and up through 2016. Let me give you a few examples.

■ From 1976-1979, 76 percent of 12th graders were earning at least some money. From 1990-1994, that number had dropped a little, to 72

percent. But from 2010-2016, only 55 percent of teens were earning any money on their own.

■ In the 1970s, 88 percent of 12th graders had a driver's license, 84 percent in the early 90s, and just 73 percent today.

■ In the early 1990s, 72 percent of 10th graders and 84 percent of 12th graders had

never had a date. Today, only 57 percent of 10th graders and 63 percent of 12th graders have dated.

■ In the 1990s, 81 percent of 12th graders, 72 percent of 10th graders, and 56 percent of 8th graders had tried alcohol. Today, those numbers have dropped to 67 percent, 51 percent, and 29 percent, respectively (which is a good thing, in my view). Over that same period, even college-age and post-college young people are refraining from drinking (from 92 percent in the 90s to 87 percent today).

■ Today's teens are less likely than those 20 years ago to go out without their parents, to go on dates, or to have sex.

The big question, of course, is "Why is this happening?" I think some of the decline—particularly in dating and going out without parents—is the result of smartphones and social media. With all the technology that's available, today's teens may actually be communicating with each

other more than we did at their age. Although, if your goal is to have sex, there's no substitute for in-person communication. But we can't blame smartphones for everything. As Twenge and Park write, it's "unclear how internet use could cause teens to work less and drink alcohol less."

I also put some of the blame on parents. Because we're having children later and we're having fewer of them, we try to "protect" our "investment" by doing things for them—like giving them money instead of expecting them to earn their own, and driving them everywhere they need to go instead of expecting them to get a license, pay for their own insurance, and drive themselves. Given that, it makes sense to stay young for as long as possible, doesn't it?

Read Armin Brott's blog at www.DadSoup.com, follow him on Twitter, @mrdad, or send email to armin@mrdad.com.



DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES

PARENT EDUCATION SERVICES



Every parent is eligible to participate



Parent education services helps promote the development and productive skills to fulfill and strengthening the lifestyle in all families and all ethnicities in our communities.

Parent education program provides classes and support group to all parents here in the CNMI. Our goal is to build and "strengthening families" here on our beautiful islands by providing these classes and support group to give parents the opportunity to gain knowledge and be more equipped in the field of a parent role.

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HPV vaccination is the best way to PREVENT many types of CANCER.

The HPV vaccine is safe and effective. It protects against 9 HPV types and 6 kinds of cancer, which can include cervical, vaginal and vulvar cancers for women, cancer of the penis for men, and cancer of mouth/throat, anus/rectum for both men and women.

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