Busy parents, schedule a house call!
GGMG Members Receive a 20% Discount.

- Trust & Probate Administration
- Business Succession Planning
- Joint Tenancy vs Community Property Title
- Advance Healthcare Directives
- Powers of Attorney
- Medi-Cal Asset Protection Trust
- Special Needs Planning
- Wills & Trusts
- Appoint Guardian for minor children

We are here to help you plan for those who depend on you.
Estate Planning

Gain peace of mind by contacting us today.
Let our team tailor a plan to match your life and family needs.

Award Winning Bass Note Sangria is made here in California by a GGMG Family.

Try our Unique Sangria Flavors this Spring
Cherry Lime Almond & Blackberry Sage
Peach Tarragon, with family and friends!

Bass Note Sangria is made here in California by a GGMG Family.

FREE SHIPPING on 3 bottles or more when you use the offer code: GGMG (Valid Until 9/30/2018)

Visit: www.BassNoteSangria.com for locations or to order online.

Table of Contents

4 Letter from the Editor: D I Why?
   Taking ownership is its own reward
   Sonya Abrams

5 Letter from the Board:
   Taking on a New Challenge
   Taking risks and looking forward to 2018
   Karen Breen

6 Out and About
   Searching for spring blooms in the bay
   Shoshen Bilgram
   Lil’ Kat, Big City, Haught
   Veronica Reilly-Gronich
   Earthquake Prep
   Catherine Symon

8 Ask the Expert: Photograph
   Like a Pro
   Take better photos of your family
   Jennifer Loams

10 Dadlands: On Woodworking
   and Parenting
   Life lessons from the woodshop
   JJ Stein

11 Member Profile: Julie Watts
   A look inside the life of a GGMG member
   Tara Hardesty

12 Books for Kids: DIY
   Fresh ideas for enterprising parents and kids
   Laure Latham

14 From Womb to World: DIY
   Baby Food Made Simple
   Firsthand tips on making your own baby food
   Christine Chen

16 Spring Cleaning for Modern Moms
   Tips for taming those dust bunnies
   Stephanie Auslander

20 Home Birth: Not Exactly A DIY Project
   The down and dirty of home births
   Sandy Who

24 How to Write a Fairy Tale
   About Your Child
   Help your child’s imagination soar with a magical, personalized story
   Khea St. Julian

28 Refurbishing the Soul
   The time has never been better to DIY
   Juliana Egley

30 1 ♥ Mom: Keeping the Party Going
   Letting go and encouraging creativity through party planning
   Jennifer K. Butterfoss

34 GGMG at Work
   4 Housekeeping
   9 Community Outreach Drive & Contest
   15 New Arrivals & Forum Tips
   32 GGMG Events
   34 GGMG Committees

For information regarding how to advertise in this magazine, contact advertising@ggmg.org
For questions or comments regarding magazine content, contact editor@ggmg.org
For questions or comments regarding other aspects of GGMG, including how to advertise or to our membership, please contact feedback@ggmg.org

GGMG at Work

4 Housekeeping
9 Community Outreach Drive & Contest
15 New Arrivals & Forum Tips
32 GGMG Events
34 GGMG Committees
I’m not crafty. Or handy. My motto tends to be if God wanted us to DIY then why did He give us Amazon? I don’t own my Valentine’s cards, I only sew my own costumes after exhausting all internet alternatives, and I can’t figure out how to set up my home computer network if my life depends on it. (And when a dying modem keeps me from accessing my archived “Real Housewives” shows, sometimes it feels like my life does depend on it). So it was supremely out of character that I recently found myself in Safeway at midnight, covered in green frosting, cradling an armful of confectioners’ sugar. I was five hours into an error-riddled attempt to construct my 4-year-old’s monster truck birthday cake, which my son had asked me to make, his pleading face blissfully ignoring my sloppy impatience and lack of baking related critical thinking skills. By midnight, one sticky, undercooked cake had already been relegated to the compost bin, and its successor was faring only marginally better.

I woke up the next morning groggy from having finally gone to bed at 2 a.m. and fearful that my frosting monster truck ramp would be laughed at or, worse, receive an awkward, pitying silence when publicly revealed. But even though my icing penmanship was barely legible and my cake was questionably lumpy, the guests happily dug in, nodding with approval. My son’s eyes sparkled with pleasure that I’d followed his instructions meticulously. As I pondered my second (or, maybe third) serving, I felt a sense of contentment, even pride, that I’d tamped down my fears of failure. Though the product might not have been perfect, I was proud of the process: I was willing to do something technically demanding, time-consuming, tiring, and way outside my comfort zone.

Our writers in this issue face the world fearlessly, thinking, sure, I can do that. On page 20 Sandy Woo presents a primer on home safety—the birth—the process, the pros, and the potential pitfalls. Stephanie AuWerter reminds us all on page 16 that winter is behind us and we’re running out of excuses for not having flipped our mattresses in years. She takes control of what can seem like an overwhelming process and lays out a spring-cleaning plan that’s practical and achievable. Juliana Egley, on page 26, shares a few resources for attempting our own home and car repairs, underscoring her advice with a reminder that it’s important to challenge ourselves but to know our limits. And we mined the GGMG Magazine archives to present a classic piece by Rhea St. Julien on page 24, who gives us a handy template for crafting our own fairy tales to help activate our children’s imaginations...and hopefully usher them into dreamland.

Opinions expressed in this issue are those of the contributors. Acceptance of advertising does not constitute endorsement by GGMG of any products or services. The editors reserve the right to accept, edit, or reject any content submitted to the magazine.

ADVERTISING: Advertisements are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. For submission information, email advertising@ggmg.org.

THIS ISSUE MADE POSSIBLE BY: Endless sniffs, the drowsy flu season, getting paid to write, the last thin mint and a weekly bulletin standiff, pinworms, old folks birthday bonanza, a full classload of child development classes at City College, a month-long vacation to Japan and Indonesia.

COMING NEXT: June/July: Health

CONTEST: Congratulations to Sarah Koszyk, winner of a bundle of Nest Happy services. Have an idea for an issue theme or article? Please email editor@ggmg.org.

My cautious and clumsy son is probably not going to become an athlete. He didn’t walk until 18.5 months, and just a few weeks after he finally took off, he tripped, fell, and broke his leg. He’s now almost 3, and I’ve been trying to teach him to ride a balance bike for several months. Here’s how our bike outings usually go: (1) he gets really excited to try, (2) he falls after 10 seconds, and (3) he cries and says he doesn’t want to ride anymore. I sit him down and explain that it’s okay to be scared, it’s okay to fall, and that the most important thing is that he tries. This pep talk is similar to the one I gave myself when I became GGMG vice chair. I had already been on the GGMG board for one year, but becoming an officer felt like “next level” responsibility, and I admittedly was a bit scared to let GGMG down. So I put on my “mom” hat, looked myself in the mirror, and remembered that taking risks is one of my family’s core values. Plus, this is GGMG—a community that has made such a tremendous impact on my life. What a privilege to have this rewarding opportunity!

In the beginning of 2018 we welcomed four new members to our board. We are thrilled to introduce veteran volunteer Heather Beckstead as the director of volunteer engagement, previous Diversity and Inclusion Co-Chair Krupa Antani as director of member engagement, magazine writer Christine Chen as director of external communications, and Erin Cahill (a new mom and new volunteer) as director of partnerships.

Additionally, Adgie Bjornsen, former director of external communications, and Erin Cahill are thrilled to introduce two new board members to our board. We are excited to welcome four new members to our board. We are thrilled to introduce veteran volunteer Heather Beckstead as the director of volunteer engagement, previous Diversity and Inclusion Co-Chair Krupa Antani as director of member engagement, magazine writer Christine Chen as director of external communications, and Erin Cahill (a new mom and new volunteer) as director of partnerships.

As you can see, 2018 is already off to a great start with lots more excitement to come. I’m hoping, too, that 2018 will be a big year for my son and his balance bike. We’re going to keep practicing, and I’m sure that one of these days he will start zooming around the park with his friends.
Search for Spring Blooms in the Bay

Although the seasons in San Francisco are not as pronounced as in other places, spring does bring more sunshine and flowers. Whether you want to escape the urban grime in one of the many tiny, tucked away city gardens, or prefer to enjoy a family hike among the wildflowers outside city limits, options abound to enjoy spring in bloom.

By Shaheen Bilgrami

Flowering Gardens in Golden Gate Park:
Spring brings blooms in many parts of our largest park. Not sure when to see different flowers in bloom? Check out the SF Rec and Park website for an online guide at tinyurl.com/GGParkInBloom

The Living Roof at the California Academy of Sciences
Spring is a great time to check out the living roof, which boasts “the densest concentration of wild flowers in San Francisco.”

The Queen Wilhelmina Tulip Garden
Early spring is the perfect time to check out the tulips near the North (Dutch) Windmill in Golden Gate Park.

Japanese Tea Garden
Check out the cherry blossoms and azaleas in early spring in this little oasis of zen and enjoy a pot of tea and snack at the tea house inside.

San Francisco Botanical Garden
In April, everything starts to bloom in this beautiful garden where you will find native and international flora. Enjoy free entry for city residents. Enhance your visit by joining a free wildflower docent tour, or download the free smartphone app to identify the flowers you spot.

Wildflowers in the City: Lake Merced
For a chance to see all the flowers in bloom around the lake, try the 4.5-mile Lake Merced Trail.

The Presidio
The Presidio boasts pockets of blooming wildflowers. The 2.4-mile California Coast Trail offers some of the best blooms and epic views.

Spring in Bloom Outside the City:
Mount Tamalpais State Park, North Bay
Venture across the bridge to enjoy blooming wildflowers including California poppies and iris. Child-friendly hikes include the 2.7-mile Cataract Falls Trail and the 4.7-mile Templeia Trail.

Mount Diablo State Park, East Bay
Known for its amazing views, rock formations, and wildlife, as well as stunning wildflowers, this state park caters to visitors of all ages.

Henry Coe State Park, South Bay
This huge state park is over 87,000 acres. The 3.7-mile Spring and Forest Trail loop is a good one to catch the blooms. Pro-tip: you must pay for parking in cash.

Filoli Gardens, Peninsula
From February to April the landscaped gardens at Filoli are filled with spring flowers. In addition to the gardens, tour the 100-year-old manor house or take part in one of the events that are run throughout the season.

Earthquake Prep: Reducing the Risk of Injury at Home

By Catherine Symon

Thousands of earthquakes rattle California each year. Most are inconsequential, but the Bay Area is overdue for a temblor large enough (predicted to be 6.7 or above on the Richter scale) to cause damage and injuries. Assessing the risk of damage to your building requires an inspection by a structural engineer, who may recommend retrofitting. But you can take simple steps any time to reduce the risk of injury in your home.

Being struck by falling objects is the most common cause of earthquake-related injury. When researchers at UCLA studied the 1994 Northridge earthquake (6.7 on the Richter scale), they found that 55 percent of injuries were caused by falling objects compared to less than 1 percent caused by a building’s structural failure. The remaining injuries were due to people falling during the shaking (22 percent) and taking unsafe actions such as trying to catch a falling television or jumping out of a window (15 percent).

Here are a few ways to lower the risk of getting hurt at home during an earthquake:
1. Secure items that can topple, including bookshelves, dressers, speakers, televisions, vases, framed photos. For items that are impractical or difficult to secure (countertop appliances, books, pots and pans), store them low to the ground.
2. Practice “DROP, COVER, HOLD ON” drills. You are more likely to get hurt if you try to move around during the shaking of an earthquake.
3. Know how to shut off gas, electric, and water. Keep working fire extinguishers on hand and know how to use them.

Even if you and your family escape injury, keep first aid supplies in your to-go bag and learn how to treat common earthquake-related injuries (cuts, bruises, sprains, and burns) so you can help neighbors.

For lots more information on earthquake preparation and safety, visit earthquakecountry.org.

Sources: US Geological Survey (USGS), UCLA, Earthquake Country Alliance

Catherine is a medical writer.

By Veronica Nolly-Granich

Li’l Kid, Big City: Haight Ashbury

The Haight is a vibrant, walkable neighborhood that keeps the 1960s alive with eclectic eats and quirky shops. Got the munchies? Stop by Street Taco (1607 Haight St.) for flavorful Mexican-style tacos. If Caribbean and Cuban tapas is more your groove, hit Cha Cha Cha (1767 Waller St.) with over 30 machines. Feeling creative? Head into Mendel’s (1556 Haight St.) to score some dragon scale vinyl and inspiration. If your little ankle biter still has energy to burn, jam up to Buena Vista Park Playground (Buena Vista Ave. & Waller St.).

Before you leave, pop by Ben and Jerry’s (3400 Haight St.) at the storied intersection of Haight and Ashbury, then stroll around the corner to the Grateful Dead House (710 Ashbury St.) where the legendary band crashed for a few far out years. You’re definitely in for a groovy time.

Veronica is mom to two young girls and works full time for San Francisco Unified School District. She digs novels, tea, and Zen Buddhism.

There is an unparalleled abundance to explore in San Francisco and the surrounding Bay Area. How and where do we start? This section of the magazine aims to answer that question. Any tips? Do share at editor@gmg.org.
Photograph Like a Pro

Jennifer is an award-winning fine art photographer, author, and teacher who has been capturing women and their families since 2001. She has studios in San Francisco, Seattle, and New York. She loves her 3-year-old son, laughing, creating, and good coffee. Find her at www.jenniferloomis.com.

GGMG: What are some general tips for photographing kids?

JL: We all have things we love about our kids, whether it’s how they laugh, a certain expression, or something they do all the time. Spend a few minutes watching them down. These are the starting images you want to try to catch. Next, make sure to pick a time when they are in a good mood, which is often the first thing in the morning and just after a nap or a meal.

Once you’ve taken care of those two things, you need to find the ideal location and the best light. We used to say in graduate school that amazing light can make even the most boring situation look amazing.

We used to say in graduate school that amazing light can make even the most boring situation look amazing.

GGMG: What is some good general advice for taking photos with a smartphone?

JL: Taking good photos with a smartphone is quite similar to taking good photos with a professional camera—it’s all about the light, location, clean backdrops, and a child in a great mood. Even though smartphones have gotten so much better in the past 20 years, you still need great light or you won’t catch the moment. A good rule of thumb is to have the light source at your back. The light source can be a window, or the sun, or even an overhead light or a kitchen light. When the light is at your back, it is probably illuminating your subjects’ faces.

For the advanced photographer, try using your phone to pan, which means to photograph while you are moving the camera the same speed as your child. As your kids are running, follow him at the same speed and snap photos as you go. You might get some fun images of your child with blurred backgrounds.

Also, my favorite app for the iPhone is the Hipstamatic app. It has great filters and retro borders that add some variety to photos.

GGMG: What programs do you recommend for storing and editing photos?

JL: For storing photos, I use multiple hard drives that I name after my favorite cities, and everything is automatically backed up every day. I recommend making this process automatic so that you don’t even have to think about it. In addition, I keep three backup copies and two hard drives in my safe deposit box because with maternity photography, there is no such thing as a reshoot. I have never lost an image, and I don’t ever want to. Lastly, I do not store any of my professional images in the cloud because I photograph celebrities and other clients who have privacy concerns, and I don’t want to risk their personal images getting into the wrong hands.

I use Lightroom to import, name, and put images in a specific folder, usually by client name and date. I highly recommend setting up a good naming structure. For my professional work, I use LastName_FirstName_YearMonth_Imagemumber. For organizing personal photos, I use EVENT_Location_Imagemumber and then in the metadata or the keyword tag area of Lightroom, I enter key words like year, where it was taken, name of client, event, or age of my son or key details about where we were, which helps me search for it.

Like many parents, I have thousands of photos of my child, which I use to create books or calendars for relatives. For iPhone photos, I use iTunes to backup my phone to my computer and to iCloud. I try to plug my phone into my computer once a month and back up that way. I also use Dropbox to store photos temporarily, though it does have good long-term storage options. It’s handy to use the Dropbox app for uploading. 

Any questions or challenges? Email Jennifer at info@jenniferloomis.com.

GGMG: How can we take better photos with a smartphone?

JL: Getting good photos with a smartphone is quite similar to getting good photos with a professional camera—it’s all about the light, location, clean backdrops, and a child in a great mood. Even though smartphones have gotten so much better in the past 20 years, you still need great light or you won’t catch the moment. A good rule of thumb is to have the light source at your back. The light source can be a window, or the sun, or even an overhead light or a kitchen light. When the light is at your back, it is probably illuminating your subjects’ faces.

For the advanced photographer, try using your phone to pan, which means to photograph while you are moving the camera the same speed as your child. As your kids are running, follow him at the same speed and snap photos as you go. You might get some fun images of your child with blurred backgrounds.

Also, my favorite app for the iPhone is the Hipstamatic app. It has great filters and retro borders that add some variety to photos.

GGMG: What programs do you recommend for storing and editing photos?

JL: For storing photos, I use multiple hard drives that I name after my favorite cities, and everything is automatically backed up every day. I recommend making this process automatic so that you don’t even have to think about it. In addition, I keep three backup copies and two hard drives in my safe deposit box because with maternity photography, there is no such thing as a reshoot. I have never lost an image, and I don’t ever want to. Lastly, I do not store any of my professional images in the cloud because I photograph celebrities and other clients who have privacy concerns, and I don’t want to risk their personal images getting into the wrong hands.

I use Lightroom to import, name, and put images in a specific folder, usually by client name and date. I highly recommend setting up a good naming structure. For my professional work, I use LastName_FirstName_YearMonth_Imagemumber. For organizing personal photos, I use EVENT_Location_Imagemumber and then in the metadata or the keyword tag area of Lightroom, I enter key words like year, where it was taken, name of client, event, or age of my son or key details about where we were, which helps me search for it.

Like many parents, I have thousands of photos of my child, which I use to create books or calendars for relatives. For iPhone photos, I use iTunes to backup my phone to my computer and to iCloud. I try to plug my phone into my computer once a month and back up that way. I also use Dropbox to store photos temporarily, though it does have good long-term storage options. It’s handy to use the Dropbox app for uploading.

Any questions or challenges? Email Jennifer at info@jenniferloomis.com.
I
not for Norm Abrams, I probably wouldn’t have tried to build my kitchen table. Not sure who Norm Abrams is? I’ll clue you in. Abrams was the flannel-clad host of “The New Yankee Workshop,” a woodworking program that aired from 1989 to 2009 on PBS. For years, I watched Abrams effortlessly create beautiful furniture, generally within 30 minutes. Federal style game table: no problem. Greek revival bookcase: easy. Victorian kitchen table: child’s play. It was mesmerizing programming.

Over the last decade, my wife has sought to rid our home of my bachelorhood furniture. She denies this, but she would have been justified in purging our home of such furnishings; early-twenties me had shockingly terrible taste. I shopped for replacements but found prices justifiable only if the tables were made of gold and assembled by skilled unicorns. The path forward slowly began to emerge: I would build a table. Perhaps I would not be able to produce a table in 30 minutes like I had watched Abrams do, but how hard could it be?

I learned woodworking from an extraordinarily relaxed guy named Tim. After taking a couple of classes from him, I “graduated” to open shop, where I could build anything I wanted. Tim’s advice was to keep my first solo project manageable. That was great advice that I promptly ignored, instead embarking on my table.

It quickly became apparent that my cavalier attitude was misguided and that, in a shocking turn of events, what television programming made look easy was not, in fact, easy. Problems arose early.

It turns out that being a parent is significantly harder than building a table.

and often. How do I design a massive table to fit down the narrow hallway in my apartment? Which boards, in which order, will make the table was completed. The table, besides being a source of pride, has become a place where my family regularly gathers. It is truly a family focal point. In fact, as I write this, my daughter is at the table, jabbing her fork into it while giggling uncontrollably. As each jab leaves a small dent in both the table and my soul, I realize the lesson that helped me with my woodworking-induced stress also helps me as a parent.

It turns out that being a parent is significantly harder than building a table. Or at least, it is easy to worry about all the problems that may come up and whether a particular fix I’ve implemented will create new ones. Occasionally, I even find myself worrying about things I know are not really problems. I know as well as you do that it’s crazy to think the only preschools worth going to are the ones that require three generations of SAT scores and a credit report. Then again, what if I’m wrong?

But like woodworking, no matter how hard you try and how good a parent you are (and of course, any Dadlands reader is beyond reproach), parenting will still be hard, things are still going to go wrong, and, generally speaking, they will be fixable. I cannot help but feel that keeping this lesson in mind allows me to keep working, but may also be good to remember that there will always be some problems that cannot be fixed.

On Woodworking and Parenting

By JJ Stein

I'm lucky to have an unconventional Wednesday to Sunday work schedule so I get to be home with the kids two days a week. On weekends I anchor the morning show, so I get afternoons with the family. But honestly, I couldn’t do it without help. I have an amazing husband. He is a Mr. Mom when he is at home, super hands-on. And we have an amazing nanny. I love her like a mother and consider her a co-parent. We feel blessed to have found someone we trust with our children when we are at work.

BIGGEST SURPRISE OF MOTHERHOOD?

I think the biggest surprise was how much it changed me. Being an investigative journalist is my work and my passion. When I was planning my first maternity leave, I thought I would be bored at home and desperate to get back early. Boy, was I surprised at how hard it was to leave my daughter and how much becoming a mother changes you. I can honestly say I’m a different person—both personally and professionally.

FAVORITE PARTS OF RAISING A CHILD IN SF?

The culture, the people, the vast opportunities, and places to go. My daughter came home from preschool recently and asked to go see the Stuart Davis exhibit at the de Young. My husband regularly takes her to museum; I imagine this is unique to children growing up in a city. There are also infinite opportunities to learn about diversity. There have been several occasions on our “Mommy and me Mondays” where my daughter and I will buy lunch for a homeless person and sit and chat for a bit. It leads to conversations about how everyone is human and being different doesn’t mean being less.

WHEN’S THE LAST TIME YOU DID SOMETHING FOR YOURSELF, AND WHAT WAS THAT?

While I was pregnant with my 4-month-old, I scheduled a pregnancy massage. It was a good week and a half before my due date, but my ankles had swollen for weeks and I’d been dreaming about a good foot massage. Oops! About 30 minutes after that massage, my water broke in a parking lot—near the Tenderloin! There I was, stuck in traffic, dodging shopping carts and joggers, trying to get to the hospital. That was the last thing I did for myself. But I do have more maternity leave coming and am hoping to finish the book I have been working on.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT THE BOOK?

Well, the working title is The Consumer Reporter’s Guide to Parenthood. It’s easy to become a paranoid parent when you read the headlines and marketing claims that prey on our fears. I’ve investigated a lot of those topics and products for CBS and my NewsMom.com blog (@NewsMomDotCom on Facebook and Twitter). What I’ve found has shaped the way I parent—and helped me let go of some of my irrational fears.

THREE WORDS OR PHRASES TO DESCRIBE MOTHERHOOD?

Inspirational, all-consuming, and life-altering.

This month’s mom, Julie Watts, may be a familiar face to many. A KPIX news anchor and investigative journalist, Julie lives in the Outer Richmond with her husband and two children, a 4-year-old daughter and 4-month-old son. Dadlands writer Tara Hardesty had a conversation with Julie about mothering and working in San Francisco.

JJ lives and works as a lawyer in San Francisco. He is most often joined at his

Know a mom you want to spotlight in the next issue? Email editor@ggmg.org with her name, email, and a few sentences about what makes her an awesome mom for our next Member Profile.

GGMG MAGAZINE

APR/MAY 2018

11
I n our world, we can find almost anything ready-made in stores, from unicorn wigs to customized dolls. There is, however, one thing that we can’t buy, and that’s our imagination. The power of DIY is to make something yourself with your kids, something that doesn’t exist in a million copies on a shelf. Enjoy this exploration into the world of DIY and find your creative freedom!

**Books for Kids**

**DIY**

By Laura Latham

Top 100 Baby Purées

Written and illustrated by Annabel Karmel

British television personality and children’s nutrition expert Annabel Karmel’s creations will go down in a generation of parents’ memories as the gold standard for baby food and baby purées. Budget-friendly and guaranteed 100% homemade without chemicals, DIY baby purées lay a solid foundation for your little one’s healthy nutrition. You will be amazed at the range of purées that exist out there. **Ages: 6 months and older**

Fingerprint & Draw: On the Farm

Written and illustrated by Marie Boulart

Drawing with fingers can be a lot more exciting than making smileys on a foggy car window. These farm animal art ideas come illustrated with step-by-step tutorials and, as the title implies, require no paintbrushes or crayons. Preschool kids will love tracing shapes with their bare hands and seeing them come to life—often in a way that feels unexpected! **Ages: 3 to 6 years**

The Pocket Scavenger

Written and illustrated by Keri Smith

Guerrilla artist Keri Smith inspires older kids and teens with this free-spirit journal that includes 72 challenges. Part pocket project, part scavenger hunt, The Pocket Scavenger may be thin on pages, but it might still take a few years for any reader to complete the list. Rather than a structured how-to, the book encourages kids to push their creative boundaries and experiment. Perfectionists, abstain. This book encourages you to look at the world in a different way, not to create a conventional masterpiece. Above all, have fun! **Ages: 10+ years**

The Star Wars Cookbook: BB-Ate: Awaken to the Force of Breakfast and Brunch

Written by Lara Starr, Illustrated by Matthew Carden

Jedi chefs need to train from a young age to reach the mastery of their elders, even in the kitchen. With this Force-inspired cookbook, you can finally enjoy the whole grain goodness of C-3PO pancakes, the no-cook efficiency of BB-8 energy balls (what Jedi doesn’t need energy for physical activity?), or the golden power of Luke Skywaffles at home. With easy instructions and Star Wars references, this cookbook is sure to please any young Padawan. **Ages: 8 to 12 years**

A Kid’s Guide to Sewing: 16 Fun Projects You’ll Love to Make & Use

Written and illustrated by Sophie Kerr, Bill Kerr, and Weeks Ringle

Written from a kid’s perspective, this fun sewing book includes simple and not-so-simple sewing projects for crafty school-age kids. With tips on how to choose a fabric (always a tricky choice), how to use a sewing machine, and how to fix mistakes, this will get any young sewing enthusiast on a lifelong track of DIY fashion. It’s easy to get lost in the world of sewing, but this book uses simple language and, more importantly, heavily illustrates the basics of sewing. Whether you’re in for a comfy pillow, a blanket, or a pool cover-up, this kid’s guide is a great starter book. **Ages: 8 to 14 years**


Written and illustrated by John Miller and Chris Fornell Scott

For school-age kids, Minecraft is a wonderful virtual world that keeps reinventing itself, and its iconography is part of their everyday life. This activity book connects the virtual world with our physical world with fun and engaging activities that kids (and parents) can do together. Whether it’s electrical experiments or hands-on crafting, this clever book will keep you busy a long time. **Ages: 8 to 11 years**

STEAM Kids: 50+ Science / Technology / Engineering / Art / Math Hands-On Projects for Kids

Written and illustrated by Anne Corey and the STEAM Kids Author Team

Weekly planners, field trip ideas, STEAM journal pages—this book gathers more than 50 experiments for curious young minds in a fun and colorful format. Written by an MIT engineer, award-winning bloggers, and designers, STEAM Kids will inspire young makers to create exciting STEM projects with an art angle. Perfect for homeschoolers, after-school, or rainy days. **Ages: 4 to 16 years**

STEAM Kids: 50+ Science / Technology / Engineering / Art / Math Hands-On Projects for Kids

Written and illustrated by Anne Corey and the STEAM Kids Author Team

Weekly planners, field trip ideas, STEAM journal pages—this book gathers more than 50 experiments for curious young minds in a fun and colorful format. Written by an MIT engineer, award-winning bloggers, and designers, STEAM Kids will inspire young makers to create exciting STEM projects with an art angle. Perfect for homeschoolers, after-school, or rainy days. **Ages: 4 to 16 years**

The Artful Parent: Simple Ways to Fill Your Family’s Life with Art and Creativity

Written and illustrated by Jean Varr Hut

Connecting with your kids through art is one of the best ways to spend quality time with your little ones. Even when they enter preschool and elementary school, art remains a great way to have fun together and to be creative. Providing supply lists, instructions, challenges, and group activities, this book features ideas for a range of abilities and will inspire you to get started as soon as possible. **Ages: 3 to 6 years**

**Books for Kids**

**STEAM Kids: 50+ Science / Technology / Engineering / Art / Math Hands-On Projects for Kids**

Written and illustrated by Anne Corey and the STEAM Kids Author Team

Weekly planners, field trip ideas, STEAM journal pages—this book gathers more than 50 experiments for curious young minds in a fun and colorful format. Written by an MIT engineer, award-winning bloggers, and designers, STEAM Kids will inspire young makers to create exciting STEM projects with an art angle. Perfect for homeschoolers, after-school, or rainy days. **Ages: 4 to 16 years**
DIY Baby Food Made Simple

By Christine Chan

Contrary to popular belief, homemade baby food can be easy and practical, especially if you make it in bulk and freeze it. Overpriced equipment and storage containers are unnecessary. You’ll only need a small juicer or blender that purées well (I like the BELLA Personal Size Rocket Blender), and ice cube trays that easily dislodge individually frozen cubes. I discovered the hard way that most baby food freezer storage trays are ridiculously difficult to remove individual portions from.

Veggies are usually the first solids introduced after oatmeal or rice cereal. Carrots, sweet potatoes (and regular potatoes), and butternut squash can all be boiled, sautéed, or baked until soft then puréed in a blender and frozen in bulk to be defrosted later. To salt or not to salt? I chose not to salt to let my kids appreciate the sweetness of the orange veggies. Breastmilk and formula can also be added to the purée, but note that freezing is not advised if you add breastmilk or formula. Green vegetables can be problematic since they turn color once frozen, and they never seemed to taste as good after defrosting. Peas, in fact, were the bane of my existence: no matter how long I puréed them or how much milk I added, I never attained the smoothness of store-bought baby food peas in a jar, and my son gagged on the tiniest bit of my homemade baby peas. I had a similar problem with green beans. Puréed zucchini, on the other hand, froze well.

You can blend more than just fruits and veggies. Meat purées are surprisingly easy, something I didn’t realize until my second child. To this day, I feel terrible my son ate jarred peas. I had a similar problem with green beans. Puréed zucchini, on the other hand, froze well. I chose not to salt to let my kids appreciate the sweetness of the orange veggies. Breastmilk and formula can also be added to the purée, but note that freezing is not advised if you add breastmilk or formula. Green vegetables can be problematic since they turn color once frozen, and they never seemed to taste as good after defrosting. Peas, in fact, were the bane of my existence: no matter how long I puréed them or how much milk I added, I never attained the smoothness of store-bought baby food peas in a jar, and my son gagged on the tiniest bit of my homemade baby peas. I had a similar problem with green beans. Puréed zucchini, on the other hand, froze well.

White fruits (apples, pears, and bananas) tend to be the first fruits introduced and are easy to make yourself. Bananas are the easiest to purée though they brown quickly and do not defrost well. If your child is a good eater, mashing them with a spoon will suffice.

Apples are easy to purée raw but turn an unappetizing brown color (think apple juice) though they taste fine. Cooking them first fixes the discoloration but removes the convenience factor. So, instead of puréeing apples, just serve unsweetened applesauce—an easy substitute. Pears, cooked or raw, can be puréed and do not brown. (Additionally, they can help sooth a rough and sore throat!) You can also add yogurt or milk to any fruit purée for a homemade smoothie. Berries, however, are difficult to purée to complete smoothness because of their seeds (strawberries, raspberries, blackberries) or skin (blueberries). For first-time eaters, the seeds also could provoke a gag reflex. Avocados—yes, they are a fruit—are wonderful convenience foods as they mash easily with a spoon and are portable enough to take in a diaper bag. To use, leave unripe avocados on the counter until slightly soft to the touch and then refrigerate to stop the ripening process. Avocados can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks, providing nutritious, instant baby food. Once cut, they do brown quickly, so refrigerate the avocado, cut-side down, in a sealed container or Ziploc to reduce browning. Christine has analyzed and advised consumer companies for a career. She is said that her 4-year-old son is now a picky eater despite eating everything as a baby, which she supposes is offset by her 2-year-old daughter who eats almost anything though she wanted nothing do with baby food. Homemade or from a jar.

Fruits should be introduced last so babies eat their vegetables and meat. White fruits (apples, pears, and bananas) tend to be the first fruits introduced and are easy to make yourself. Bananas are the easiest to purée though they brown quickly and do not defrost well. If your child is a good eater, mashing them with a spoon will suffice.

Meat purées are surprisingly easy, something I didn’t realize until my second child. To this day, I feel terrible my son ate jarred peas. I had a similar problem with green beans. Puréed zucchini, on the other hand, froze well. I chose not to salt to let my kids appreciate the sweetness of the orange veggies. Breastmilk and formula can also be added to the purée, but note that freezing is not advised if you add breastmilk or formula. Green vegetables can be problematic since they turn color once frozen, and they never seemed to taste as good after defrosting. Peas, in fact, were the bane of my existence: no matter how long I puréed them or how much milk I added, I never attained the smoothness of store-bought baby food peas in a jar, and my son gagged on the tiniest bit of my homemade baby peas. I had a similar problem with green beans. Puréed zucchini, on the other hand, froze well.

Still trying to figure out how things work on the new GGMG website? You’re not alone. Here are some questions and answers from a recent online thread.

Q: How do you request to have a [forum] comment of your own removed?
A: You can copy/paste the link and forward it to the Web Team (webteam@ggmg.org) and they can remove it.

Q: How do you request to have a [forum] comment of your own removed?
A: You can copy/paste the link and forward it to the Web Team (webteam@ggmg.org) and they can remove it.

Q: How do you request to have a [forum] comment of your own removed?
A: You can copy/paste the link and forward it to the Web Team (webteam@ggmg.org) and they can remove it.
Spring Cleaning for Modern Moms

No time to clean? Here are ways to make that overwhelming task more manageable.

By Stephanie AuWerter

Your home—even one with the chaos of kids—should be a source of comfort and contentment. “It should be the place you return to and feel good,” says Beth McGee, author of Get Your House Clean Now. “Having it be clean is a big part of that.”

So while most of us are unlikely to achieve a Martha Stewart-level of organizing and cleaning perfection, many of us will get a meaningful mood boost by decluttering at least some surfaces and knowing that, for a short period of time, the dust bunnies under the couch have been banished. “I hate cleaning,” says Melissa Maker, host of the YouTube channel “Clean My Space” and author of the book of the same title. “[But] I don’t regret the time I spend on it. There really is a good feeling when you’ve accomplished that work.”

Assemble your cleaning crew

For simplicity’s sake, I’m using the word “you” here, but that doesn’t mean spring cleaning involves a cleaning crew of just one. You can—and should—get your kids involved. Sure, they might be ridiculously ineffective, but they will get the message that caring for their home and possessions is part of their family responsibilities. Eventually, the annual ritual of spring cleaning will “become part of their memory and personal story,” says Maker. Be sure to assign duties that are age-appropriate and short in duration. For example, what toddler doesn’t love a good spray bottle? Fill it up with water and a touch of soap and have him hit the baseboards. Finally, if finances permit, don’t be ashamed to hire out tasks that seem unmanageable. When it comes to deep cleaning rugs, for example, you can either rent a carpet cleaning machine or you can skip a dinner out and hire a pro instead.

“Some things make sense to do yourself and some don’t,” says Maker.

Create a game plan

For most of us, spring cleaning will involve two phases: decluttering and then cleaning. “You first need to get to your surfaces and spaces,” says Dana K. White, author of Decluttering at the Speed of Life. “Once you get the stuff out that doesn’t need to be there, the cleaning doesn’t seem so daunting.”

Break large tasks into a series of small ones. “If I have five minutes, maybe I can take care of a few items before I’m interrupted because someone is bleeding and needs help,” says White. Dedicating a few minutes per day to tackling one drawer or one pile can yield satisfying results and will help establish the habit of squeezing in a quickie clean when opportunity arises. And when you do have a bigger chunk of time, go ahead—have a little fun. Light a candle that smells fresh and listen to a podcast or crank up those ’80s pop hits.

Phase one: declutter

Decluttering can be surprisingly hard for many people—often because getting rid of items that are still theoretically useful can feel wasteful. But too much stuff renders a space useless, says Cassandra Aarssen, author of Real Life Organizing. So if you aren’t using it or enjoying it, donate it. The mistake was buying in the first place—hanging onto it now doesn’t make it better.

...many of us will get a meaningful mood boost by decluttering at least some surfaces...

Begin with “garbage bag therapy,” says Aarssen. Grab a garbage bag and tackle those items that you are unlikely to have any sort of sentimental attachment to such as expired medications and food, old magazines and catalogs, and freezer-burned food. “It’s painful purging,” she says. Next, tackle your most visible areas, says White. Go to your front door and see what clutter people first see when they first walk into your home. Is it the pile of papers on the kitchen counter? A tangle of backpacks, jackets, and shoes in your entryway? Reduce and organize it. Taming your most noticeable mess first provides immediate gratification and offers results that everyone will see, likely inspiring you to do more. Once your entryway is tidied-up, move on to the living area, then kitchen and so on.

Phase two: clean

Cleaning can be easy. If you have a bigger chunk of time, go ahead—have a little fun. Light a candle that smells fresh and listen to a podcast or crank up those ’80s pop hits.

Spring Cleaning Checklist*

Spring Cleaning

Wash window tracks
Wash curtains + draperies
Defrost + clean freezer
Deep clean oven
Clean + organize pantry
Wipe doorknobs
Wipe switches
Wash throw rugs
Wash all floors
Wash baseboards
Vacuum/wash vents
Vacuum all floors
Vacuum edges
clean bathmats
Wash windows
Vacuum lampshades
Wash doors
Clean carpets
Clean ceiling fans + lights
Clean fireplace + hearth
Clean under appliances
Dust door tops
Vacuum lampshades
Wash doors
Deep cleaning
Clean+ organize pantry
Deep clean oven
Dofrost + clean freezer
Oil furniture
Switch out winter clothes for spring
Wash curtains + draperies
Wash windows inside + out
Wash window tracks
Vacuum/wash porch

Make sure every item in your house has a home, says Aarssen. If you like a minimalist look, this means that most everything is tucked away somewhere—or, if you like to be able to see and enjoy your things, have items on display, but in a way that’s organized and calming. Pay attention...
to where clutter accumulates, and try new solutions for organizing to keep it from gathering.

**Phase two: clean**

The internet abounds with spring-cleaning checklists, including the one mentioned here. Take them as suggestions, not required tasks. “I am yet to meet one person who does all of that each year,” says Maker.

Go around your home and see what genuinely needs to get done. Do the chores really need to be washed? “If it’s not obviously dirty, don’t worry about it,” says Maker. Figure out what your priorities are for Spring 2018. “Sure it might be good for Martha [Stewart] to clean her window screens, but literally no else I know does that every year,” she says. “Just do what there is a good reason to do.”

Put together a cleaning caddy so you’re ready to spring into action when a small window of time opens up. (You can make a small one for your kids, too, if you’re hoping for some “assistance.”) Making your own cleaning solutions is actually super simple and the products work great, says Reichert. “And then be really freaking proud of it.”


When cleaning an entire room, operate methodically. First, open the windows to let in fresh air, says Samara Geller, a database analyst at the Environmental Working Group. Doing so will reduce cleaning fumes and also lower the moisture level in your home, inhibiting the growth of mold and mildew. Then, while working in a circle, go around the room, cleaning surfaces from top to bottom and back to front, says Reichert. Finally, clean the floors.

**Job well done**

Given all that you have on your plate, are you likely to achieve an Instagram-worthy level of cleaning perfection? Probably not—and that’s okay. Praise yourself for what you did do, rather than criticizing yourself for what you didn’t. “Do what you can handle,” says Maker. “And then be really freaking proud of it.”

**DIY Green Clean**

Here are some recipes for non-toxic cleaning options with your credit card on file. These recipes work, but there’s no scientific evidence that they work. (Check out our website to find these items.)

**All-Purpose Liquid Cleaner**

Can be used on countertops and floors. Good for all-around cleaning.

- 16 oz. club soda
- 1 tbsp. baking soda
- 4 drops dish soap
- 6 drops any essential oil for fragrance
- Mix dish soap and baking soda together and then add the club soda. Place in spray bottle. To make it stronger, add 3 tbsp. borax.

**Green Gentle Scrub**

For cleaning stains from countertops and sinks:

- 1 cup borax
- ½ cup salt
- Olive oil or dish soap to create paste
- 6 drops essential oil for fragrance
- Create a paste. Rinse thoroughly after use.

**Tile Cleaner**

- 1 cup vinegar or hydrogen peroxide
- ¼ cup borax
- 1 gallon hot water
- Heat the vinegar until boiling. Dissolve the borax into the vinegar. Mix entire solution into one-gallon bucket. Use a stiff brush to clean.

Why birth at home?
Birth, of course, is not a project per se, but a natural process that some people argue has been over-medicalized. In 2009, researchers at University of Illinois interviewed 160 women in the United States about their reasons for considering home birth. The top five reasons included: believing home births were safer than hospital births, a previous negative hospital incident, desire to avoid unnecessary interventions, control over birth decisions, and having a comfortable environment.

In a documentary about her and other midwives, Ina May Gaskin, one of the founders of The Farm Midwifery Center in Tennessee, described “making our own culture about birth, in which fear wasn’t going to be a big part. If a woman’s afraid, she won’t be relaxed.”

What does it cost?
Contrary to popular belief, insurance will cover some costs of home birth, with some plans paying the entire amount. In the Bay Area, the going cost of a home birth is somewhere between $5,500 and $8,000. Some states allow licensed midwives to be reimbursed by Medicaid; because a home birth usually costs significantly less than a hospital birth, it saves the government money.

How to physically and mentally prepare
Almost any place can work so long as it is “appropriate and safe for a baby to be born,” according to Maria Iorio, California Licensed Midwife & EMT with 32 years of experience.

For someone who values the experience of a home birth more, calculating risks and benefits will be different than someone who is programmed to think about...the worst-case scenario.

Laura Swaminathan, a mother of three, described how she knew she wanted to have a home birth as soon as she became pregnant with her first child. “My desire was driven by fear of the hospital rather than love of home birth. To be clear, I am not generally afraid of hospitals or medical procedures, but harbor a strong belief that obstetric care in the US is wildly misguided. In an ideal world, women could be safely supported in a hospital environment. I wish that were an option in 2008, but it just wasn’t.”

On the other hand, home birth may be less expensive depending on insurance or lack of insurance coverage. Susan Schreibstein talked about an era in which insurance unfairly discriminated against women, leading her and her husband to consider home birth because it was half the cost of a hospital birth. They were also turned off by the sterile hospital rooms where only ice chips were available to birthing moms. Home birth with a doctor and midwife was “a more inviting way to do it. The comfort of having the baby at home was amazing. This was before husbands/fathers stayed in the [hospital] room overnight.”

The necessary safety talk
In parsing through the dizzying array of limited data (it being difficult to conduct randomized clinical trials) on the safety of home births, I came to one conclusion: this controversial topic is saddled with confounding information, and how data are interpreted depends on the lens through which the statistics are viewed. Elizabeth Kiehn, mother and emergency physician explains, “For someone who values the experience of a home birth more, calculating risks and benefits will be different than someone who is programmed to think about the ‘what ifs’ and the worst-case scenario.” To briefly summarize, some studies were

Home Birth: Not Exactly a DIY Project
Exploring the rising trend of birthing at home

By Sandy Woo

Early Christmas morning some five years ago now, I wet the bed. My water broke, unexpectedly, about five weeks too soon. Confused and in denial, I laid down a thick towel, called my doula, and went back to sleep. Fortunately, my doula’s saner head prevailed, and she roused me to check myself into the hospital. I begrudgingly took her advice as I had planned on staying home until the last possible minute. After the quick, uncomplicated hospital birth, I went back to sleep. Fortunately, my doula’s residence. The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) reports that 0.9 percent of all births happen at home. This number has steadily increased in recent years, with high-profile celebrities such as Gisele Bundchen delivering in her bathtub. Nearly one in four home births is unplanned or unattended. Most are attended by a midwife, occasionally by a physician, and some include family members or medical professionals such as EMTs.

Please note that not one expert or literature reference I consulted recommends actually attempting a do-it-yourself birth. Even so, part of the desire for home birth is perhaps explained in the sentiments of Mark Frauenfelder, the editor-in-chief of MAKE, who wrote that one of the reasons people are drawn to DIY projects is because they offer “a deeper connection to the things that keep us alive and well.”

For someone who values the experience of a home birth more, calculating risks and benefits will be different than someone who is programmed to think about...the worst-case scenario.

Laura Swaminathan, a mother of three, described how she knew she wanted to have a home birth as soon as she became pregnant with her first child. “My desire was driven by fear of the hospital rather than love of home birth. To be clear, I am not generally afraid of hospitals or medical procedures, but harbor a strong belief that obstetric care in the US is wildly misguided. In an ideal world, women could be safely supported in a hospital environment. I wish that were an option in 2008, but it just wasn’t.”

On the other hand, home birth may be less expensive depending on insurance or lack of insurance coverage. Susan Schreibstein talked about an era in which insurance unfairly discriminated against women, leading her and her husband to consider home birth because it was half the cost of a hospital birth. They were also turned off by the sterile hospital rooms where only ice chips were available to birthing moms. Home birth with a doctor and midwife was “a more inviting way to do it. The comfort of having the baby at home was amazing. This was before husbands/fathers stayed in the [hospital] room overnight.”

The necessary safety talk
In parsing through the dizzying array of limited data (it being difficult to conduct randomized clinical trials) on the safety of home births, I came to one conclusion: this controversial topic is saddled with confounding information, and how data are interpreted depends on the lens through which the statistics are viewed. Elizabeth Kiehn, mother and emergency physician explains, “For someone who values the experience of a home birth more, calculating risks and benefits will be different than someone who is programmed to think about the ‘what ifs’ and the worst-case scenario.” To briefly summarize, some studies were
limited by size, others by how they selected control populations, and others by how data were “massaged” to fit a conclusion. Based on data used by the American College of Obstetrics (ACOG), the absolute risk of neonatal death is about 0.4 per 1000 births for planned hospital births. For planned home births, there can be more than a two-fold increase in risk (1-2 per 1000 births).

Essentials to safely include that a home birth is planned, a skilled attendant is present, and medical intervention/backup is readily available. Some of the best studies cited by both midwives and the medical community include articles in a British Medical Journal paper published in 2011 and one in The New England Journal of Medicine published in 2015. Both conclude that planned home births result in lower maternal interventions, and that home birth is as safe as hospital birth when nothing goes wrong.

Notable are studies from the Netherlands, where one third of women routinely have hospital births, there can be more than a two-fold increase. First-time moms showed universally lower intervention rates when one third of women routinely have hospital births, and planned hospital births. For planned home births, there can be more than a two-fold increase. First-time moms showed universally lower intervention rates and that home birth is as safe as hospital birth when nothing goes wrong.

CONTRAINDICATIONS FOR HOME BIRTH
- Serious medical conditions (heart disease, kidney disease, blood clotting disorders, type 1 diabetes, gestational diabetes managed with insulin, pre eclampsia, or bleeding)
- Placenta previa at beginning of labor
- Active genital herpes
- Thick meconium
- The American College of Obstetrics (ACOG) considers prior c-sections and breech presentation absolute disqualifiers

Source: Evidence Based Birth and ACOG Committee Opinion, April 2017

Parents who have support, space & community are better equipped to raise kids in an urban environment. Recess is designed to help your family flourish.

LEARN MORE AT: recess-sf.com/ggmg
420 Carolina St
San Francisco
415-701-7529

Concerned about your child's speech and language development?

The Hearing and Speech Center of Northern California can assist children in reaching their communication potential.

- Interdisciplinary services and Kids Academy Preschool on site
- Parent observation windows promote collaboration in therapy
- English and Cantonese speaking therapists
- Free parking

For more information, visit www.hearingspeech.org or call 415.921.7658.
How to Write a Fairy Tale About Your Child

Want to stoke your child’s imagination but feeling creatively uninspired? Here’s a handy fairy tale template to get you started.

By Rhea St. Julien  
Photographs by Aviva Roller Photography

For all of human history, storytelling has been a vital way to pass down knowledge about how to face problems, build courage, and stoke imagination. Albert Einstein is widely quoted as having said, “If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.”

However, if you have even a cursory knowledge of common fairy tales, you already know their many glaring issues. First, there are the abysmal parents: Rapunzel’s mom sold her to a neighboring witch for radishes. Cinderella and Snow White were apparently raised by woodland animals after their parents shunned them. And Hansel and Gretel? Sheesh, call Child Protective Services.

Gretel? Sheesh, call Child Protective Services. And Hansel and apparently raised by woodland animals after their many glaring issues. First, fairy tales, you already know more fairy tales. Want them to be more intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you problems, build courage, and stoke knowledge about how to face...

Second, if you have even a sensitive kid like mine, fairy tales are scary! Just one mention of a giant, witch, or dragon in a story and my daughter wants to close the book. G.K. Chesterton, however, makes the case for keeping the story going in the face of fear: “Fairy tales do not tell children the dragons exist. Children already know that dragons exist. Fairy tales tell children the dragons can be killed.”

Why are stepmothers always so evil—and where are the fathers in those scenarios?!

Finally, the gender-normative stereotypes that abound in fairy tales are restrictive. Does every story really need to end with a wedding? Can’t Cinderella’s Fairy Godmother give her more than just fancy clothes and a sweet ride? Why are stepmothers always so evil—and where are the fathers in those scenarios?!

A few months after my daughter started attending a Waldorf-inspired school, which relies heavily on folk tales and puppet shows for learning, she came home and started acting them out for me. She carefully set a table, found a lifting cadence with her voice, and told me that day’s story, from start to finish. It didn’t always make perfect sense, but it was her way of telling me what it was like to be at school that day, and I was in awe of how much she retained.

Soon after this, she started requesting of me and her father, “Tell me a story with your mouth.” We spun wild yarns of improvised adventure; the ones she liked best starred her and her friends. On some days, I had the required energy, but on others, I felt like I lost my magic wand in the pile of dishes in the sink. So I decided to develop a fairy tale structure to rely on, for those days I couldn’t quite hack it as Fairy GodMama.

Here is one template I created:

Once upon a time, there was a child named (insert your child’s name here), and in any place further in the story where I use They, Them, or The Child in reference to your child. They were living in the land of (insert locale: San Francisco, the country of ethnic origin of your family, or a made-up place). One day, they decided to go on a journey. They were sure to pack their (magical implement: a wand, a sword, or cape), on the road, they encountered a magical creature (a fairy, a troll, or unicorn). The magical creature said, “Hurr! Your friend, (insert name of your child’s friend), needs your help! Here, hop on my (fairy wing, troll wagon, unicorn back), and I’ll help you get there.”

They reached a rushing river, but the bridge was broken. “Oh no! How are we going to get across?” The child remembered their magical implement, and pulled it out of their bag. “I know! I’ll use this!”

“Be careful,” the magical creature counseled. “For you can only use it three times today, and you can only use it on yourself! I cannot follow you across the bridge, but I know you can do it on your own.”

The child used their magical tool to get to the other side of the river, shouting a magic word to activate it: “Abracadabra, Nexus Pocus, or something silly that will make your child laugh!”

Up ahead stood a castle from which they heard their friend screaming, “Help! Help!”

They ran in and found their friend, who was doing a headstand. “Oh, I’m so glad you are here! I’m stuck in this headstand and I can’t get down!” The child helped them down, and their friend said, “Oh, thank heavens! Now you can help me fight the dragon!”

“The dragon? Why were you in a headstand when there is a dragon around?”

“Keeps me limber. Let’s go.” The kids ran out to the backyard, where they encountered a dragon pacing in front of a cage, containing the magical creature that helped them earlier!

“Hey! Your magical creature! How did you get in there?”

“Help! I’m trapped! And that dragon looks hungry!”

The dragon said, “Hahahaha! I’m going to eat well today! This magical creature, washed down with two human children!”

“Not if we can help it!” the kids said. The child used their magical tool to make a magical tool for their friend, and then they both used their magical tools together to pluck the cage off their creature friend and deposit it on the dragon.

The dragon said, “Yuck! I can’t eat those! What else do you have? Maybe a kitten?” he said.

“You can’t have the puppy, but I will bring the rest;” the child said and went into the castle to cook it. The friends shared a big meal with the dragon, who they released from the cage once he was well-fed and promised never to try to eat them again.

“Now I am full enough to fly home! I’m sorry I tried to eat you. I get grouchy when I am tired and hungry. I’m going home to take a nap!”

The dragon flew away, and they all lived happily ever after. The End.

I suggest writing out that entire story, personalizing it for your child in all the places I prompted. Then, let your child illustrate it! A collaborative, imaginative effort from parent and child is truly a magical experience. Once you’ve got the hang of this, create your own story from scratch. Be sure to include challenges, magical helpers, problem solving, and a bit of humor.

Send your little prince or princess on valiant adventures and ride right along with them, on your trusty unicorn.

This article originally appeared in our July/August 2014 issue.

Rhea, MFT, is an Expressive Arts Therapist in San Francisco. She is mama to a 7-year-old, and due in May with her second child.

“Start at the very beginning. It’s a very good place to start.” – Maria, The Sound of Music.
FEATURETTE:

Refurbishing the Soul  By Juliana Egley

I grew up in Alaska, where almost everyone is a DIY-er out of necessity. Living in one of the most isolated states in the country, parts or materials were rarely a few blocks or one mouse click away. I’ve re-grouted our bathtub, replaced the car radiator, and planted vegetable gardens in raised beds that I built myself. All this I did without much prior experience or guidance.

These days, it seems everyone and their sister has a DIY blog or YouTube channel, with topics ranging from repurposing mason jars to building entire houses. With video tutorials and Pinterest boards on any subject under the sun, the time has never been better to take on a project of your own.

But why should you DIY? Wouldn’t it make more sense to pay a professional to install a range hood or rotate your tires? Not necessarily. For projects completely outside of your expertise or that you just don’t have the time for, it may be worth it to have someone else do it. But for the vast majority of home repairs, refinishing, and vehicle maintenance, doing it yourself not only saves you money, but equips you with a host of new skills. Not to mention the pride in what you accomplish. Travis J. Carter, a psychology professor, coined the phrase the “IKEA Effect,” which suggests that you will value anything you put together with your own hands over something that you just go out and purchase.

Home repair
Is there something about your home that you’d like to fix? Maybe the carpets are an unappetizing oatmeal shade that shows every speck of dirt, and you really want hardwood floors. Or perhaps you’d like to finally put up curtains instead of the cheap vinyl shades that were there when you moved in. Whatever the project, odds are there’s a blog post or tutorial to walk you through.

Brittany Bailey of Pretty Handy Girl (prettyhandygirl.com) has loads of ideas, guides, and encouragement on her site. Her mission, as stated on her blog, is “to break stereotypes and empower you to take on your own DIY project.” Brittany is also adamant about being prepared before starting any project by watching or reading tutorials, gathering the correct tools ahead of time, wearing proper protection, and not taking unnecessary risks.

Make it go vroom
Vehicle maintenance and repair is consistently listed as a major source of stress for most people, especially women. Being able to accurately diagnose vehicular issues is a skill that will save you time and money, and will allow you to either make the repair at home, or clearly communicate with the repair shop. Audra Ferdin, on her blog Women Auto Know (womenautoknow.com), recommends that every vehicle owner should read the owner’s manual. It should give you a broad overview to understand your vehicle’s correct fluid levels and where things should be. She also recommends that the annual budget for vehicle maintenance should be around $800; consistent maintenance will reduce the amount spent on emergency repairs. The website RepairPal (repypal.com) is a great resource for estimating what repairs and maintenance should cost in your area. If you want to learn how to work on your vehicle yourself, Pat’s Garage (potsgarage.com) has Women’s Auto Clinics for your car, and Moto Guild (motoguild-sf.com) has space and instructors for you to work on a motorcycle or scooter.

Passing it down
If not for yourself, do it for the kids. Watching my parents and grandparents fix our home and vehicles gave me the confidence to not only tackle my own home projects, but to take on almost anything life chooses to throw at me. If you know what to do in a repair situation, you’ll be calm and collected, and your kids will pick up on that. They’ll see your creativity and resourcefulness in solving the problem, and if they can help out, they’ll get a great feeling of achievement. DIY is an excellent way to boost your creativity, improve your self-confidence, and bond with your kids.

Juliana Egley lives in North Beach with her husband, daughter, and two cats. A lifelong DIY-er, her next home project is refinishing the kitchen cabinets.
**Celebrate communication! May is Better Hearing & Speech Month**

Is your child’s speech and language development on target? Find out this May at Sound Speech and Hearing Clinic, where we are celebrating with free pediatric speech and hearing screenings!

**Sound Speech & Hearing Clinic**
251 Rhode Island #101, San Francisco
Schedule a screening by contacting 415.580.7604 or info@soundshc.com
Visit us online at www.soundshc.com

**Live and Learn in Marin**

Marin public schools are among the highest rated in California, with national and state academic awards received annually.

Please visit DomainMarin.com where you’ll find great resources to help you learn more about life on the golden side of the bridge!

Marin is our domain. We can help make it yours!

**Pinnacle Kidz**

Pediatric Physical Therapy

Andrew Roth
TOP 10 Zephyr Agent
Lic# 01373928
Andrew@DomainMarin.com
415.786.6548
www.DomainMarin.com

**Promoting Strength and Development for Infants and Children through Physical Therapy**

Our Services:
- Comprehensive pediatric physical therapy evaluations
- Individual treatment plans
- Gross motor developmental support
- Tummy time training
- Home program instruction
- Preventative care and education

Conditions we work with:
- Gross Motor Developmental Delay
- Torticollis and Plagiocephaly
- Abnormal Muscle Tone
- Gait Disorders (Toe-walking, In-toeing, Flat feet)
- Balance and Coordination Issues
- Musculoskeletal, Neurologic, and Genetic diagnoses

Kids of all ages and abilities can benefit from physical therapy. We work with infants and children with identified conditions as well as those who are typically developing. Contact us for more information or to request an appointment.

1772 Church Street, San Francisco  Ph: (415) 654-5324  www.Pinnaclekidz.com
It is a common dilemma among young families living in San Francisco, to stay in the City or venture across the bridge to Marin.

Meet SF expert, Emily Beaven, Marin expert, Lori Docherty.
We’re here to guide you home.

Lori Docherty
415.254.7016 | lori.docherty@compass.com | DRE 01370723

Emily Beaven
415.730.9759 | emily.beaven@compass.com | DRE 01972840

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

———

LIMITED TIME OFFER

5 FREE PHOTOS

MOTHER·BABY·FAMILY·PETS

hello@annasalmond.com
www.annasalmond.com
GGMG AT WORK: EVENTS

PLAYGROUPS

Playgroup Formation Event at Sports Basement

Are you a new mom looking to build your mom village? Join us to meet and mingle with other new moms while we help to organize you into playgroups based on your neighborhood and child’s age. Bring your pre-crawling baby, or just bring yourselves. We'll provide the mimosas! This event is targeted to moms with babies 0-12 months old, but all moms are welcome. Ultimately this event is about building those friendships that will support you during this most joyful, sleepless, heart wrenching, bewildering time of your life.

DATE: Saturday, April 3
TIME: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
PLACE: 610 Old Mason St., "Big room"
COST: FREE
REGISTRATION: www.ggmg.org

CAREERS AND ENTREPRENEURS

Working Moms Downtown April Lunch at Cafe Venue

Come join us for lunch with other working moms at Cafe Venue. Look for our GGMG sign on the table. Please keep your RSVP current.

DATE: Tuesday, April 3
TIME: Noon to 1 p.m.
PLACE: 70 Laidlendorff St.
COST: FREE
REGISTRATION: www.ggmg.org/calendar/event/275816/2018/04/03

Working Moms Downtown May Lunch at Specialty’s Cafe

Come join us for lunch with other working moms at Specialty’s Cafe. Look for our GGMG sign on the table. Please keep your RSVP current.

DATE: Tuesday, May 1
TIME: Noon to 1 p.m.
PLACE: 100 California St.
COST: FREE
REGISTRATION: www.ggmg.org/calendar/event/275613/2018/04/03

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Member Mixer at Yerba Buena Bowling Center

Thursday is the new Friday! Come unwind with fellow moms and make new friends while bowling. No bowling experience necessary. We will have reserved lanes, bowling shoes, appetizers, and drinks to help everyone’s game! Reserve your spot early and see you there!

DATE: Thursday, April 19
TIME: 7 to 9 p.m.
PLACE: 750 Folsom St.
COST: $5
REGISTRATION: www.ggmg.org

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETUPS: NEIGHBORHOOD 3

GGMG Neighborhood Meetup Group 3 has hosted playdates at Presidio Playground, a Valentine’s Day card-making event, a wine night at Tofino Wines, and regular visits to the elderly at Providence Place. These have proven to be fun and incredibly rewarding opportunities for our members.

In the coming year, we are planning more wine nights for moms to socialize, a preschool primer over the summer, and a variety of playdates.

All are welcome to participate in our events, even if you do not live in this area! If you are interested, join our group at www.ggmg.org/groups to receive a monthly email summary of events.

We are always looking for volunteers to bring new ideas to the group! Have a passion for exercise? Start a workout or walking group in the Presidio. A regular at JCC Kindergym in Laurel Heights? Invite others to meet you there. Enjoy planning social events? Set up a wine night or yoga event.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact the Heights Director, Kelly Owinells at kellywdinells@gmail.com.
Join GGMG as a Volunteer

Contact recruiting@ggmg.org if you are interested in helping in the largest and best parenting organization in the Bay Area. Meet new mom friends, make GGMG even better, and give back! As a volunteer with GGMG, your membership dues will be waived after the first year of service. The following positions are open:

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**
1 co-chair (Events)
6 volunteers

**KIDS ACTIVITIES**
2 co-chairs, 5 volunteers
JUST FOR MOMS
2 co-chairs, 2 volunteers

**MEMBERSHIP APPROVALS**
1 co-chair
MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT
[INCLUDES PLAYSCHOOL FORMATION EVENTS]
2 co-chairs, 2 moderators, 1 roster specialist, 1 volunteer

**MEMBER SUPPORT**
1 co-chair, 2 forum volunteers, 3 resource list volunteers, 2 support group volunteers

**MAGAZINE**
Designer

**NEIGHBORHOOD MEETUPS**
Directors for Neighborhoods 1, 5 & 7

**PARENT EDUCATION**
1 volunteer

**PARTNERSHIPS**
1 Business Development Manager

**PR/MARKETING/BRANDING**
1 chair

**RECRUITING**
2 co-chairs, 1 volunteer

**SOCIAL EVENTS**
3 volunteers

**WEB TEAM**
1 co-chair, 2 moderators, 1 roster specialist

**PR/SOCIAL MEDIA**

**BROADEN YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK**

GGMG is here for you in person, on our private online forum on the “Discussion” page of ggmg.org, and online on whatever platform you prefer. Find us, socialize with us, and stay connected to get the most out of your GGMG membership!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ggmgsf
Twitter: @ggmgsf
Instagram: @ggmgsf
LinkedIn: Golden Gate Mothers Group

---

**CAREERS AND ENTREPRENEURS**

Attention Working Mamas: GGMG is on LinkedIn

We’ve created a brand new LinkedIn group! We will share news, events, facilitate conversations, and engage you in all things related to career and entrepreneurship. We hope you will use this space to connect, recruit, learn, and share with your fellow GGMG moms. Please go to www.linkedin.com/groups/1209591 to join, or search for GGMG under “Groups,” and then introduce yourself.

Meet your chairs leading the Careers and Entrepreneurs group this year:

**Emily Beaven**

“I’m in my second year as co-chair of the Careers and Entrepreneurs Committee. Like many of you, I’ve had several careers: pro chef, food and wine marketer, and now realtor at Compass. I work with buyers and sellers in SF and Marin County. My background in marketing has been essential to my success as a real estate agent, and I love the flexibility it gives me as I raise my 2-year-old son and new daughter (arriving this spring)!”

**Julie Houghton**

“I’m a mom to two girls, ages 5 and 6, and a life and career coach who specializes in helping other moms find the courage to do work they love. Prior to launching my business in 2013, I spent 15 years in marketing and strategy and have my MBA from UC Berkeley. This is my fourth year on the Careers and Entrepreneurs Committee and my second year as co-chair.”

Our committee has seven active volunteers. We aim to put on one to two events a month ranging from panels and webinars, talks with CEOs and other Bay Area leaders, to working moms’ lunches. We are planning more mixers, tech events, and skill-building workshops for you in 2018. We will also be bringing back our popular headshot sessions. Contact us on LinkedIn or email entrepreneurs@ggmg.com if you’re interested in volunteering or have an idea for a future event.

---

**MEMBER SUPPORT**

School Daze

Preschool decisions and SFUSD and private school kinder letters have recently been delivered, a process that can mean stress levels reach an all-time high. With much of the process out of your control, the impact on your child’s future feels magnified. Those who do not receive their school(s) of choice may struggle with depression as their friends pore over multiple acceptances and complain about their difficult decisions. Our team has been through it all and has supported many of you coping with the process. Whether you received no options or a school too far from home to be practical, we listen with a kind ear and encourage all members to reach out.

While you are stressing, try to keep a positive outlook and not share your stress with your child. Though it’s challenging to answer your child’s, “Where am I going to school next year,” with an, “I don’t know,” try adding, “there are so many great schools that we haven’t decided yet.” Remember that families move over the summer. Children delay school. And yes, some folks actually hold more than one school.

To those in the last category: please don’t! This is our annual reminder, begging parents to please not hold more than one school. While you can theoretically hold a public school without financial impunity, even while planning to attend a private school or charter, remember your fellow parents who need a spot.

If you need support while you wait, reach Member Support via email or post on the forums. We are your village. We promise to listen when you need to get off your chest, it’s better to do it in front of us than elsewhere on the web.

If you need help with planning more mixers, tech events, and skill-building workshops for you in 2018. We will also be bringing back our popular headshot sessions. Contact us on LinkedIn or email entrepreneurs@ggmg.com if you’re interested in volunteering or have an idea for a future event.

---

Who are your current volunteers?

What’s next for the magazine?
We have recently launched a Member Profile feature and are taking new steps to include and reflect the diversity of voices and backgrounds among our membership.

How can interested members get involved in your committee?
Email editor@ggmg.org.
Join other GGMG families at the Bay Area Discovery Museum for a morning of fun as we celebrate spring! In addition to full access to the museum’s regularly scheduled activities and exhibits, GGMG will have exclusive use of the Discovery Theater where your family will enjoy:

- Jumping around in a big bounce house
- Face painting
- Tactile Table and Play Corner
- Musical entertainment by Music for Aardvarks ([www.musicforsf.com](http://www.musicforsf.com))
- Child care information from the Children’s Council San Francisco ([www.childrenscouncil.org](http://www.childrenscouncil.org))
- Coffee and fruit from Good Eggs ([www.goodeggs.com](http://www.goodeggs.com))
- Crafting with Urban Sitter ([www.urbansitter.com](http://www.urbansitter.com))
- Light bites provided by GGMG
- Goodie bags to the first 50 members
- Raffle prizes (must be present to win)

GGMG’s Annual Spring Fling
at the Bay Area Discovery Museum

Save the Date – Sunday, May 6!
10 a.m. to 1 p.m. • Fort Baker, 557 McReynolds Rd., Sausalito

Come Bowl with Us

Need another reason to volunteer for GGMG? We’ve added more opportunities to meet and build relationships with your fellow mom volunteers. GGMG sponsors monthly volunteer get-togethers, and in 2018 we will have a team-building outing every other month, in lieu of a traditional meeting. This effort launched on February 5 when volunteers racked ‘em up and knocked ‘em down in a fun evening of comfort food and bowling at Presidio Bowl. Thanks to our Operations team for making this possible!

GGMG could use more dedicated, community-spirited volunteers on our team, so if you’d like to find the role that’s perfect for you and enjoy all the benefits of being a volunteer, email volunteer@ggmg.org. Bowling skills not required.

Speech & Language Therapy Programs
- Receptive & expressive language delays and disorders
- Articulation & phonological disorders
- Motor speech disorders (apraxia & dysarthria)
- Social pragmatic deficits
- Nonverbal communication using AAC (alternative & augmentative communication)
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Auditory processing disorders
- Oral motor and feeding disorders
- Stuttering disorders
- Reading disorders

Jennifer Katz, Inc.
Jennifer Katz, Inc. provides individualized speech and language services to children of all ages. Realizing that one therapy approach doesn’t fit all, our team provides customized therapy plans to support each family’s unique needs.

- Contracted with all major insurance companies
- Clinic, home and school visits
- English, Spanish & Cantonese Speaking therapists
- Individual and group therapy
- Four convenient locations

Contact Us Today
415-255-9395
jennifer@katzspeech.com
katzspeech.com
Your Golden Gate Mothers Group membership opens the door to activities for you and your child, and our partnership with the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco enhances those benefits even further. GGMG members receive exclusive discounts on a variety of their programs. Visit jccsf.org to discover all the exciting activities happening at the JCCSF!

Summer Camp

Another exciting summer of camp is ready to go, where preschoolers to teens will explore a wide variety of camps and make exciting new memories. Whether it’s robotics or gymnastics, skateboarding or volunteering, the JCCSF caters to your camper’s unique passions and thirst for discovery.

Summer camps run June 7 – August 17 and GGMG members get 10% off any JCCSF camp (valid for up to four weeks of camp per child). Register today at jccsf.org/camp!

How to Redeem

GGMG members may redeem their benefits by registering in person at the JCCSF with proof of GGMG membership, which can be either:
• A recent copy of the GGMG Magazine showing member’s name and address
• GGMG homepage on BigTent showing member’s name and address

GGMG members are eligible for the above discounts through February 28, 2019.

Keeping the party going

By Jennifer KUhr Butterfoss

What’s that point in throwing a birthday party if there’s no clown? Every good birthday party has a clown. At the age of 5, this was my thinking. On the day of my sister Michelle’s eighth birthday party, I had the perfect plan: my mother helped my best friend and me hide in the basement, throw on some wigs and white face paint, and “surprise” the party guests. Michelle was mortified. I felt like a hero.

My mother has always been a party enthusiast. For as long as I could remember, she was the most fun-loving and hard-working host, and I, her trusted creative sidekick. No idea was too wild. Can I turn my bedroom into Santa’s Workshop for our holiday party? Yes! Can we make a haunted house for our October dinner party? Go ahead! Can I be the entertainment for my sister’s birthday, despite her objections, because every birthday girl needs a couple of kindergartners in white face paint running around making fart noises? Absolutely!

Throughout college and my twenties, I continued this party-planning habit. From classy shrimp cocktail and Cosmopolitans in my dorm room to epic Halloween food competitions featuring cake pops frosted into bloody eyeballs, I was the first to jump into a toga, space suit, superhero cape, and even a Snuggle for various themed events.

The birth of my daughter brought a whole new world of creative possibility. Friends scoffed at her elaborate Minnie Mouse first birthday, complete with a “Minnie Bar” and homemade felt mouse ears for each guest. She won’t even know what’s going on, they pointed out. I was not fazed. Since then, we’ve thrown a luau, a pirate extravaganza, a Frozen adventure, and last Memorial Day, a unicorn event that capitalized on the trend taking the city by storm.

My over-the-top DIY kid birthday parties are an act of love and a way I celebrate my own mother, who filled our home with magic, play, creativity, and spontaneity. Her encouragement and validation of my ideas has shaped my psyche and the way I tackle other areas of my life: career, family, even a book I’m writing.

The other day my daughter spent several hours cutting paper in her room, assembling individual blobs with limbs and a tail and stuffing them into envelopes. “They’re invitations to my next birthday,” she explained. “We’re having a unicorn party.” My daughter is getting older and clearly has opinions beyond whatever party themes are trending that year (mermaids, anyone?). I must learn to loosen my creative grip if I am to truly follow in my mother’s footsteps. Now if you’ll excuse me, it’s time to get to work planning this year’s Monkey Spectacular…

Jennifer KUhr Butterfoss is a school leader, speaker, writer, Pinterest enthusiast, and mother of two very energetic party animals. Find out more at jenniferkuhrbutterfoss.com.
Are you a San Francisco mom?
Want to receive this magazine?
Join GGMG today at www.ggmg.org.

Golden Gate Mothers Group
P.O. Box 475866
San Francisco, CA 94147

statement of purpose:
nurture ourselves, our children, our partners, and our community; create an environment of support, information sharing, and connection; learn, teach, create, have fun, and provide balance in our lives and in the lives of our growing families.

As your family grows, so do your real estate needs. At Vanguard Properties we realize that clients have busy lives, with work, the kids, commutes, schools and neighborhoods to consider. Omari Williams is an expert in helping families navigate the San Francisco market and has been successfully serving clients for over a decade.

If you are considering buying, selling, or trading up, give him a call today.

Peace of mind is everything.

Omari Williams
VANGUARD TOP PRODUCER
415.205.8101
omari@vanguardsf.com
DRE# 01787427
@omariwilliams

Because Where You Live Matters

SAN FRANCISCO  MARIN  SONOMA  EAST BAY

Vanguard Properties
1801 Fillmore Street
San Francisco, CA 94115