

JUNE/JULY 2017



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Letter from the Editor: Towards a Bright Future

By Kirsten Pflieger



After over five years on the magazine staff, Kirsten is looking forward to her next adventures in parenting, her profession, and life in general.

In the fall of 2011, I had foot surgery. It was supposed to be a quick procedure followed by six weeks of partial weight bearing. Except that things didn't go quite as planned: instead, I was non-weight bearing for almost two months. With a five-month-old. Living in a third floor walk-up. Our only car a stick shift. Although my husband and parents were

wonderfully supportive, I was basically homebound and unable to carry my child. I felt lost and disconnected from the world. Then I saw that the GGMG magazine was looking for someone to

It has been an amazing journey and I have learned so much—about putting together a magazine, about managing dedicated volunteers, and about myself.

fact-check their calendar. I had found a way to be productive sitting on the couch with my foot in the air.

Eventually, my mobility improved and I was able to meet the rest of the volunteers who brought the GGMG magazine to life every month. I was impressed by the talented, dynamic group of

women, and was honored to count myself as one of them. During my time on the magazine, nearly the entire team has turned over and every time we bring on a new person, I am amazed by the skills and enthusiasm that GGMG members bring to this labor of love. Over the past five and a half years, I have held a variety of positions on the magazine, culminating in being the editor-in-chief for the past three years. It has been an amazing journey and I have learned so much—about putting together a magazine, about managing dedicated volunteers, and about myself. It is, however, time for me to move on. This issue will be my last as the editor of the magazine. I will hand the reins to Sonya Abrams, who has been an integral part of the staff for four years. I have the utmost confidence that she, along with an editorial team that includes senior staff members Megan Bushnell, JoJo Rhee Chevalier, and Jenny Shaw, will take the magazine to new heights.

I love that my last issue as editor is about looking toward a brighter future—how to instill hope (page 20) and resilience (page 10) in our children, moving forward in the face of an unexpected outcome (page 39), enjoying those magical, but really hard, first months with a new baby (page 14), how to find the magic if your world has turned dark with depression (page 24), and what worked for me five years ago, volunteering (page 16).

Although you won't see me in the magazine anymore, I will still be around. I look forward to running into many of you around the city as we all continue to muddle our way through parenthood.

K Pflieger

Housekeeping

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: moms' weekend away, Future Islands singalongs, teething, potluck madness, "Billions" marathons, family visits and four teeth at once, unicorns and rainbows everywhere in preparation for our little girl turning 5 in two weeks...Mama went overboard again this year,

musical hacking up a lung, fighting a depression while photographing the PPD article, preschool "graduation," Sally Yates, Lyme disease, pinworms, sinus infection, and the stomach flu, plus dry rot and termites, vacation (not just a trip!) with the kids, late season skiing, Grandparents Day at school, hormones, never enough time.

COMING NEXT: August/September—Relationships

CONTEST: Congratulations to **Criselda S. Ruiz**, the winner of beauty and skincare services from the Hayes Valley Medical & Esthetics.

Have an idea for an issue theme or article? Please email editor@ggmg.org.

Letter from the Board: Reaffirming the Goals of Diversity and Inclusion

By Cathy Tran

At the end of 2016, which doesn't feel that long ago, the board met for a planning retreat to talk about our goals for 2017. One of those goals was to build up the Diversity and Inclusion Committee in making GGMG a diverse and inclusive community for all.

I know that recent events on our online forums have been difficult for members. I want to reassure you that we are deeply committed to making all members feel welcome and represented in GGMG. When we created the board of directors, we sought to assemble a diverse group of women who see the value of a diverse community and who would commit to making GGMG a welcoming and safe space for each and every member. I myself grew up extremely poor, and while I feel grateful every day to no longer be in that situation, I remember well the stress and anxiety that come with financial insecurity. I am also a person of color, and whenever I hear that a minority member feels unwelcome in

I want to reassure you that our entire board is deeply committed to making all members feel welcome and represented in GGMG.

GGMG, it breaks my heart. To any of our members who have ever felt like they did not belong: I hear you, I have been in your shoes, and the board and I are working to build a community where you feel welcome and represented. This work will take time, but we now have an amazing Diversity and Inclusion Committee that is working hard on many initiatives.

To that end, I want to remind members that the approval of any

anonymous race-related posts will be temporarily suspended until the board, webteam, and members of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee receive training on race-related matters and revise the forum guidelines as needed. We have set a deadline of August 1 by which we plan to complete these steps or provide an updated timeline of completion.

Please keep in mind that any non-anonymous posts appear on the forums immediately and do not require approval by a moderator. If you ever feel a post is inappropriate or inflammatory, please bring it to our attention by flagging it or emailing webteam@ggmg.org so it can be reviewed by members of both the webteam and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

The board is also in the process of drafting our annual all-member survey, which will include questions on whether members want to allow anonymous posts related to race and ethnicity on the forums. Your opinion matters to us; please take the survey when you receive it!

We want GGMG to be a safe, welcoming space for all of our members. We welcome any and all feedback. Questions can be directed to the board (board@ggmg.org) or the Diversity and Inclusion Committee (diversity@ggmg.org).



Cathy Tran is mom to two boys, Charlie and James, and wife to a supportive husband, Peter. She is the co-host of the parenting podcast The MomVent. She enjoys dinners out with friends, nights in watching Bravo, and finding the best breakfast burrito in SF.

Cathy

Cover Outtakes



Only one shot can make it to the cover. Here are some of our other favorites.

Family Fun on the Fourth

Grab a sparkler and don your best red, white, and blue: the Bay Area (and beyond) has Independence Day celebrations sure to dazzle any kid—or kid at heart.

By Stephanie AuWerter

NEARBY

Jack London Square

www.jacklondonsquare.com

Spend the day on Oakland’s waterfront while taking in live music, tasty backyard BBQ, a beer garden, and kids’ activities.

When: 12 to 6 p.m.

Cost: FREE

Marin County Fair: Let the Funshine In

www.marinfair.org/2017

Help yourself to a slice of Americana: carnival rides, petting zoo, live music, culinary delights, fireworks, and the baby derby for the crawling crowd.

When: June 30 through July 4, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; fireworks at 9:30 p.m. daily

Cost: \$20/adult (ages 13 to 64), \$15/child (ages 4 to 12) at gate; advance tickets sold online at discount

Sausalito’s Parade, Picnic & Fireworks

tinyurl.com/sausalitofourthofjuly

Zip over the bridge to Sausalito to cheer for parade participants, then head to Dunphy Park for the famous egg toss and tug of war. At 9 p.m., enjoy fireworks in Gabrielson Park.

When: 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Cost: FREE

USS Hornet Sea, Air & Space Museum

www.uss-hornet.org

Get your patriotic fill on Alameda’s aircraft carrier, a national historic landmark. Enjoy a flight simulator, live music, jump house, and kids’ zone with crafts.

When: 2 to 10 p.m.; fireworks at 9:15 p.m.

Cost: \$25/adult, \$15/child (ages 6 to 17), kids 5 and under free

FURTHER AFIELD

Santa Rosa: 4th of July Fireworks Spectacular

tinyurl.com/santarosasymphonyjuly4th

Start with carnival games, bounce houses, and face painting, then listen to Grammy-winner Kathy Mattea and the tunes of the Santa Rosa Symphony.

When: Lawn festival 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.; concert 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.; fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

Cost: varies; lawn seats \$25/adults, \$12/child (ages 3 to 12)

Santa Cruz: Wilder Ranch State Park’s Old Fashioned Independence Day

tinyurl.com/oldfashionedjuly4th

Ready to time travel? Celebrate in early 1900s-style with a parade, games, kids crafts, live big-band music, and living history demonstrations.

When: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Cost: FREE (vehicle fee is \$10)

South Lake Tahoe: Lights on the Lake

tinyurl.com/lightsonthelake

South Lake Tahoe’s July 4th fireworks show is considered by many to be one of the best in the nation. Spectacular views are available from sandy shorelines or via boat.

When: 9:45 p.m.

Cost: FREE (additional cost for boat rides)

HOMETOWN

Fourth of July Celebration at Pier 39

www.pier39.com/fourth-of-july

Delight in 180-degree views of the spectacular fireworks over the Bay. Arrive early to claim your spot and dust off your moonwalking skills while enjoying music by ’80s band Tainted Love.

When: Tainted Love from 5 to 8 p.m.; fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

Cost: FREE

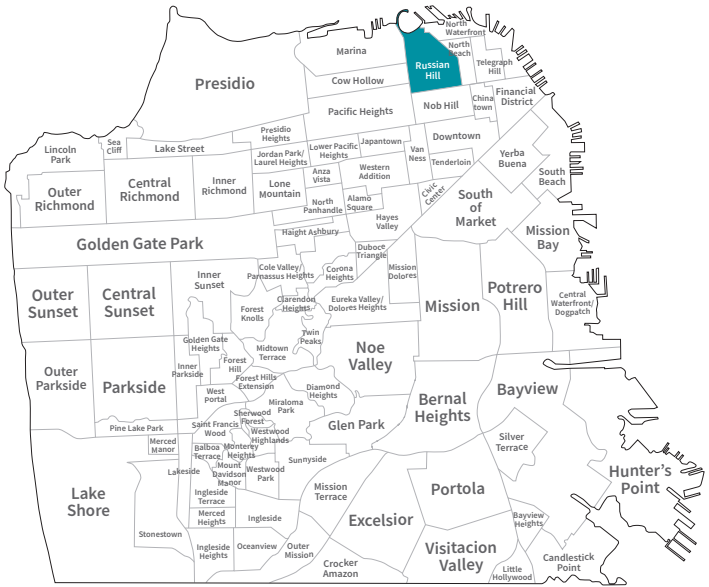
Blue & Gold Fleet: Fireworks Cruise

tinyurl.com/july4cruise

Stand as a proud San Franciscan while taking in the glorious sights of the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz before reveling in the fireworks overhead.

When: Various times; 8:15 p.m. departure from Pier 39 is alcohol-free

Cost: \$85 per person, \$300 for two adults and two kids (ages 5 to 11)



Li'l Kid, Big City: Russian Hill

By Stephanie AuWerter

Nestled between North Beach, Fisherman’s Wharf, and the Marina District, **Russian Hill** is often outshined by its flashier neighbors. However, the stunning views and the charming, largely tourist-free shops and restaurants are bound to delight.

If driving, start by zig-zagging down the eight hairpins turns of “**The Crooked Street**” (1000–1099 Lombard St.), then park and explore hidden gem **Fay Park** (2366 Leavenworth St.).

Caffeinate and grab a croissant at hip **Saint Frank Coffee** (2340 Polk St.). Swing by **Bird School of Music** (1924 Polk St.), which offers \$22 drop-in music classes for kids (check blog.bird-sf.com/class-early-bird for details). Then head to **Helen Wills Park** (Broadway & Larkin).

Browse the nearby stores: At **Cole Hardware** (2254 Polk St.) partake of the free helium balloons and 25-cent bags of fresh popcorn, then peruse the robust selection of children’s literature at the **Russian Hill Bookstore** (check location: the store is scheduled to move from 2234 Polk St. to 2162 Polk St. in June). Next, take your candy connoisseur to the vintage-style sweets shop, **The Candy Store** (1507 Vallejo St.).

Later, grab a slice at quirky **Za Pizza** (1919 Hyde St.) with a visit to nearby **Swensen’s Ice Cream** (1999 Hyde St.). Alternatively **Gioia Pizzeria** (2240 Polk St.) or **Blue Barn** (2273 Polk St.) have kid-friendly fare and are tantalizingly close to **Loving Cup** (2356 Polk St.), known for its delicious frozen yogurt and rice pudding. ❖

Fruit Picking

By Catherine Symon

Celebrate California’s produce bounty and support local farms by taking your kids fruit picking! Strawberries are a perennial favorite, but peaches, Asian pears, apples, and more are ripe for the taking in the summer and fall. Some farms have limited u-pick times or require reservations, so always check online or call before you go to confirm openings and availability of fruit. Get your pie tins ready!



Chileno Valley Ranch

mikeandsallygalebeefranch.com

5105 Chileno Valley Rd., Petaluma

Apple u-pick takes place on Sundays in late August, September, and sometimes October. Reserve a time slot online before your visit to get the discounted entry. Bonus: pick up some of the ranch’s grass-fed beef for dinner.

Gabriel Farm

gabrielfarm.com

3175 Sullivan Rd., Sebastopol

707.829.0617

U-pick at Gabriel requires a \$36 CSA membership but includes 3 gallons of juice and the opportunity to pick multiple varieties of apples and Asian pears throughout the 6-month harvest season. Non-members can buy fruit, juices, and jams at the weekend farm store from late August to late October.

McKinney Farms

mckinneyfarms.weebly.com

25221 Marsh Creek Rd., Brentwood

925.634.7830

They don’t call McKinney “a peachy place” for nothing! Get your fill of peaches and nectarines with daily picking in June and July. Call ahead to see which of the 19 varieties grown on the farm are ripe.

Swanton Berry Farm

swantonberryfarm.com

Farm Stand and U-Pick:

25 Swanton Rd., Davenport

Coastways Ranch and U-Pick:

640 Highway 1, Pescadero

831.469.8804

A Bay Area staple, Swanton offers two u-pick locations with loads of strawberries. You can supplement your visit with pie, lemonade, and soup at the Davenport site.



Catherine is a medical writer who dreams of having fruit trees in her yard. And her own yard.

Stephanie is a freelance writer and editor. She’s written for Parents Magazine, Real Simple, The Wall Street Journal, DailyWorth and more.

Ask the Expert

Hope and Smiles With Chad M. Christensen



GGMG: Tell us about SF Smiles—what do you do and who do you serve?

CC: We collect items people are finished with and turn around and give them to people in need at no charge. SF Smiles collects donations of new and gently used baby and kid items, household items, toys, clothing, and basic necessities. I have found that people love to give, but sometimes feel lost when it comes to figuring

out how to help. One of the first jobs we tackled was getting to know the local organizations to find out who they serve and what they need. By networking with the organizations, we take the guesswork out of figuring out how to make sure your donations get directly to people. We work very closely with the Homeless Prenatal Program, Hilltop High School, Bay Area Women's and Children's Center, Black Infant Health Improvement, and public health nurses from the SFDPH. Most of the donations from local moms and families go to clients of these programs. We also do drives for programs like Lava Mae, Dolores Street Community Services, the Pomeroy Recreation and Rehabilitation Center, and more. By the way, I do this out my garage in the Inner Sunset—it's just me and a couple of volunteers.

GGMG: What inspired you to start SF Smiles?

CC: I was inspired to start SF Smiles during the holiday season years ago. I love the giving spirit during the holidays, but I've always wished that spirit could last throughout the year. While on vacation, I spotted a collection bin for shoes in a shop and was inspired by the simple act of collecting used goods to help people in need. My original vision for SF Smiles was a bit different from where we are today, but the basic idea has always been the same—connecting people who have something to give with people in need and generating more smiles and happiness all around.

GGMG: Do you get to meet the people who receive the donated items? What do you think the donated items mean to them?

CC: Yes. Being the founder, I felt it was necessary to deliver the items myself to better understand what families are going through and give a personal touch to our service. It's one thing to get an emailed wishlist for items, and a completely different experience to have a face-to-face conversation with someone

about what they need and what is going on in their life. In most cases, the family needs far more than what they asked for. So many families are struggling to make ends meet, working long hours, or looking for a job while caring for their kids, moving, or getting out of a bad situation. I believe when I deliver items with love and caring heart, it gives some relief to a mother or family that has a lot of stress.

GGMG: What kinds of items are you collecting now?

CC: We collect every baby item that you can think of: diapers, clothing, bottles, breast pumps, swings, jumperoos, toys, you name it. We always have a huge need for infant car seats and all kinds of strollers, especially umbrella strollers and snap-and-go style. We also collect clothing for men, women and children, blankets, sheets, towels, toiletries, and sleeping bags. If you want to get involved, host a drive! There are so many ways to do this: have friends bring something to your next party, get your child's school involved, or collect items at your workplace. Pick anything from our list to collect and we'll make sure it all goes directly to people in need. In addition, we are always in need of funding, volunteers, fresh ideas, and a bigger space!

GGMG: How has running SF Smiles shaped your personal view of hope?

CC: By doing what we do

both in receiving donations and giving back, the response has been very positive on both sides. On the donation side, I believe it gives the donors hope that their items will brighten someone's day, uplift them, and give them one less thing to worry about. It gives them hope that we as a society will work hard so these items don't end up in the dump and instead go to someone in need. It gives them hope that SF Smiles works hard to make sure baby/children's items are shared to a wide range of programs all working hard to make a difference. Donors are not just giving a thing to someone, they are giving a bit of hope. For the client receiving, I believe it gives them hope that someone cares for their well-being and helps them feel more comfortable asking for help and support because there are so many people that want to help. My hope is that this uplifts them, fills their buckets with love, and that love trickles to their family. ❖

Chad is typically spotted dressed in colorful clothing and a smile, taking his daughter on after-school adventures and snapping photos, documenting SF life in an infinite photo essay. He loves helping others and worked with adults with disabilities for 20 years before starting SF Smiles. His motto: peace, love, and kindness.

SF Smiles is our community support drives partner for June/July. See page 9 for more information.

GGMG: Helping Others, Treating Yourself

Community Support

GGMG and SF Smiles—Supporting Families in Need



GGMG is excited to partner with SF Smiles to support San Francisco families. We are collecting the following clean and gently used items from June 15 through July 15.

- Car seats (with at least one year left before expiration)
- Strollers (double strollers especially needed)
- Snap n' Go style strollers
- Children's clothing

Visit GGMG.org for information on drop-off location and hours. Want to help but don't have any used items on hand? You can purchase from SF Smiles' Amazon Wish List and items will be shipped directly to SF Smiles: <http://a.co/jlpoYXb>. See page 8 for more details about the mission of this local, grassroots effort. **Thank you all for your support!**

Contest

The Ultimate Family Photoshoot: Katie Hanrahan Photography

One lucky GGMG member will receive a full family photoshoot complete with two beautifully framed images of your choosing, as well as 20 to 30 high-res digital images at no additional cost. Total value \$550.

Katie Hanrahan has been working with families she met through GGMG for many years, forming wonderful relationships with both little ones and their grownups. She has photographed from maternity through newborn on to toddler and beyond. Katie is originally from Ireland where she grew up with seven siblings and a camera around her neck. Please see www.KatieHanrahanPhotography.com or email Khanrahanphotography@gmail.com for additional information.

TO ENTER THE CONTEST, SEND AN EMAIL WITH THE SUBJECT LINE "PHOTOSHOOT" TO CONTEST@GGMG.ORG BY JULY 31.



DADLANDS

Raising an Optimist

By Matthew Gubiotti

I’ve always been an optimist. I tend to be positive in dealing with life’s everyday frustrations—the delayed train, the sour co-worker, the ill-timed diaper fail. Not always, but most times, I assume good intentions in others.

But as it happens, age and experience dulled my rose-colored spectacles. Entering middle age, I’ve become much more pragmatic. I temper my optimism with a healthy dose of realism—hedging bets to avoid disappointment.

That’s why my resolution for 2017 was to be more hopeful.



Even knowing the impact my behavior has on my kids, it took an unexpected event for me to recapture some of my youthful optimism. After more than a century of being an also-ran, the Chicago Cubs improbably won the World Series.

I should clarify that my optimism does occasionally teeter into the irrational, and my sports loyalties are the most acute example.

You see, I am a Cubs fan. And, until quite recently, those four words revealed quite troubling insights into my character. A tragically high capacity for anguish, a willingness to turn a blind eye to inconvenient facts, some ill-defined notion of Midwestern exceptionalism. But, it’s not all bad. Being a Cubs fan also means having passion and an irrational sense of loyalty.

For much of my first four decades, “wait until next year” was the hope-filled mantra and prevailing sentiment about my beloved team. Every spring, despite the decades of losing seasons, hope bloomed eternal in the Windy City amongst the faithful.

The hope for each new season propelled much of the city through the bleak and frigid winter. It sustained us through months of gray skies and sub-zero temperatures. And each April loyal supporters would shake off their winter doldrums with dreams that this was the year to overcome a long, losing legacy and create something magical.

The baseball season began each spring with joy and energy. The optimism would last a month into the season—perhaps two—

before the relentless schedule began to expose problems our magical thinking couldn’t solve. Each year, the Cubs would break our hearts, sometimes sooner in the season, sometimes later. But, come September, the Cubs would leave their loyal fans to face the cold, gray winter alone.

Hope. Disappointment. Hope. It was a ritual of my Midwestern heritage.

That cycle was spectacularly broken last November, when the perpetual, loveable losers became World Champions. It was a rare moment of unmitigated joy—the simultaneous release of decades of frustration and heartache from millions. The Second City was now second to none. In the weeks after that beautiful moment of redemption, I remembered the joy that my optimism brought me each year.

I remembered that the hope I felt each spring was always more powerful and pervasive than the passing sense of disappointment I felt each fall. My hope was made stronger by being shared with others. And, in the end, that victory was made that much more sweet by an appreciation for the struggle that preceded it.

Odd as it sounds, my experiences as a hopeful baseball fan helped me face real adversity to deal with life’s larger disappointments. It taught me the resilience of hope, and more importantly, the fleeting nature of despair. My experience has taught me that there will be setbacks, but the struggle is an essential part of the experience.

These are important lessons, and ones I’d like my children to learn. That perseverance is a better measure of character than success, and the path to greatness defines us more than the

Every spring, despite the decades of losing seasons, hope bloomed eternal in the Windy City amongst the faithful.

victory. And that failure is to be met with grace and grit. These are the lessons that being a hopeful Cubs fan have taught me.

The world is miraculous, and to be approached with wonder and awe. There will be disappointment and hurt. But fueled by hope and passion, each of us can be a positive force of change in the world.

Go Cubs! ❖

Matthew has sired one pleasant, rule-abiding human child and one fiery, Tasmanian devil. He’s a patent lawyer for a technology giant and aspiring bullpen catcher for the Chicago Cubs. In his spare time, he suddenly remembers something pressing he forgot to do.



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Hope can take many forms in young children, whether it’s looking forward to making new friends, being optimistic about a new school, or hoping for the best when the situation is less than ideal. Some of these books function as how-tos while others tell stories of overcoming struggles, but they all inspire us to seek a better world where hope and understanding prevail.



Sleepy Toes

Written and illustrated by Kelli McNeil

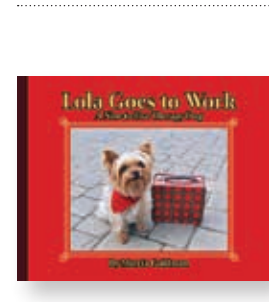
Falling asleep can be a scary thing for little ones, but this book will help them become aware of their body as it prepares for sleep. The book asks if each body part is getting sleepy and then refers to simple happenings of the day for each. Step by step, children will give permission to their body parts to feel sleepy. It’s a yogi bedtime ritual in the making and a book that your children will hope to read regularly. *Ages: 0 to 3 years*



Ishi, Simple Tips from a Solid Friend

Written and illustrated by Akiko Yabuki

If your child needs a smile and a hug, Ishi can help. Ishi means “rock” in Japanese and it’s also a rock in this book, but not just any old rock. Ishi is a happy rock that makes good choices in life, overcomes challenges, and turns despair into hope. This clever little book has few words, but can ameliorate almost any bad day with mindfulness and a positive attitude. *Ages: 2 to 5 years*



Lola Goes to Work: A Nine-to-Five Therapy Dog

Written by Marcia Goldman

For young and old, hope is embodied by an adorable little terrier with a great attitude. The story of Lola the therapy dog illustrates how therapy dogs are trained and what they do for work. Whether visiting elder care centers, bookstores, or classrooms, Lola brings comfort to people who need it. Using real-life pictures and simple text, this book is a great early reader to prompt questions about how we can help others feel better and find hope when they are sad. *Ages: 3 to 8 years*



The Kraken’s Rules for Making Friends

Written by Brittany R. Jacobs

Poor Kraken has lost all hope of making friends in the ocean; it’s not easy being terrifying to others. When he tries passing as a friendly koi with a home-knitted costume, his trickery backfires and other sea creatures swim away. The only one who is willing to share some friendly advice is the great white shark. With witty puns and thoughtful wisdom, this book is for anybody who has a hard time making friends. *Ages: 3 to 7 years*



Isaac and His Amazing Asperger Superpowers!

Written and illustrated by Melanie Walsh

When your brain works a little differently than other kids’, you can have superpowers to help you cope with the outside world. For young Isaac, assistance comes from his incredible memory or his extraordinary sensitivity to sounds. Told from Isaac’s perspective with superhero-themed illustrations, this book goes a long way to inform readers about Asperger’s Syndrome and how kids like Isaac see and feel the world. A great tool to help children with Asperger’s cope socially. *Ages: 2 to 7 years*



Lucía the Luchadora

Written by Cynthia Leonor Garza, illustrated by Alyssa Bermudez

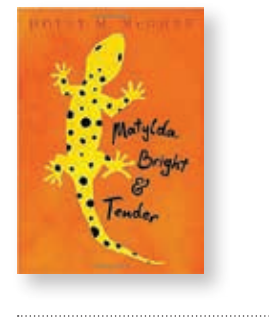
Can girls be superheroes? It’s not enough to wear a red cape at the playground and jump off the monkey bars like a boss; Lucía is disheartened when boys at the playground ignore her best efforts, saying that girls are just made of sugar, spice, and everything nice. Thanks to her abuela, she turns up at the playground the next day with a full luchadora costume and a mask. Her secret identity and swift moves get everyone’s attention. Pretty soon, she’s a star and the playground fills with other luchadores and luchadoras. This is a fantastic girl-power book against bullying. *Ages: 3 to 7 years*



How to Be Human

Written and illustrated by Florida Frenz

This autobiographical account of autism provides a detailed insight into an autistic child’s head. From figuring out feelings to matching feelings to facial expressions, Florida had to define emotions in a way that she could understand, such as color illustrations and textures. What’s wonderful about this book is how Florida creates strategies to overcome her inner struggles. Now an articulate young adult, she shares excerpts from her therapy journal so others can find hope in her experience. *Ages: 7 to 12 years*



Matylda, Bright and Tender

Written by Holly M. McGhee

Like spaghetti and meatballs, Guy and Sussy are inseparable fourth grade friends who share everything, even a pet gecko named Matylda. When tragedy strikes and Guy dies in a bicycle accident, Sussy feels lost, angry, and confused. In Sussy’s grieving journey, Matylda becomes a beacon of hope. This is an emotional story of friendship, loss, and hope that remains sweet and endearing with a positive message. *Ages: 8 to 12 years*



Wonder

Written by R.J. Palacio

Auggie is a 10-year-old boy who’s been homeschooled all his life because of craniofacial anomalies. When he starts fifth grade at a local school, he just wants to be accepted as a normal kid, but it’s difficult for his classmates to get past his appearance. The story follows Auggie’s journey from black sheep to school superstar, featuring realistic episodes of middle school life. This amazing book conveys an inspiring story of acceptance and friendship. *Ages: 8 to 12 years*

Laure is the author of the mommy blog Frog Mom (www.frogmom.com), as well as the book Best Hikes with Kids: San Francisco Bay Area. She writes for several parenting websites and lives in London, where she peppers adventures with her husband and two daughters with compulsory cream tea stops. You can reach her at info@frogmom.com.

From Womb to World

Surviving the Newborn Phase

By Neha Mandal Masson

Months before my baby was born, people kept telling me to go out and live my life before it was “all over.” Enjoy your husband! Go on vacations! As if everything I enjoyed would suddenly come to a screeching halt, only to be replaced by the incessant screeching of a baby. I’d like to tell you that those notions are preposterous and utterly false, except I can’t. The truth is, it is incredibly easy to give up friends, free time, hygiene, and sanity when baby comes along. But the good news is that with some preparation and prioritization, you actually can have it all.

Prioritize your recovery

Moms are on the hook for a lot in those first months. We are often food sources, primary nurturers, and the ones who remember what needs to be done. But don’t forget—you’re recovering from a major trauma to your body, a surge of hormones, and adjusting to a huge life change! You need rest, nutrition, and proper care for a healthy and complete recovery. It’s also critical to pay attention to signs of postpartum depression or anxiety and seek help if needed. Make sure those around you understand this priority, and give you the space and support needed.

Outsource and optimize

Hire a night nurse to let you rest, ask a family member to cook meals for a week, or utilize SF’s many on-demand services to keep your life in order. Start by choosing two to four things you want to get off your plate and prioritize getting help from family and friends, or paid help within your budget. Also, make sure your partner is engaged in meaningful tasks, as well as sharing the work and stress load.

Trust your instincts

The realization that you’re now responsible for a human being can be unnerving. Trust that Mother Nature has given you instincts to take care of your new baby. Before delivery, take a few classes on safety, CPR, and other skills you feel are important. Start a GroupMe or WhatsApp chat with a few trusted mom friends to help each other in a pinch. These skills and resources can greatly reduce stress in the event anything goes wrong. But day to day, you’ll learn as you go, just as humans have done for centuries.

This too shall pass

After my son was born, I remember feeling like a failure when breastfeeding wasn’t working right away. I thought my life

was in shambles every time a new challenge popped up. Looking back, I realize these challenges were temporary, and things almost always got better. Sleepless nights pass after a few months (hopefully). Breastfeeding usually becomes easier in a matter of weeks, and if it doesn’t, you figure out another solution and then, bam! That phase is totally over. These difficulties are small blips in our lives, and realizing that can ease the pressure.

Learn to walk away

As cute as your baby is, that moment will come when she has been screaming for an hour without reprieve, and you’re at the end of your sleep-deprived rope. Put her down somewhere safe and walk away. Take a moment to breathe and collect yourself before going back, or hand her off to a trusted person and go for a run or take a bath. Having the self-awareness to do this is very important to avoid getting so frustrated that you accidentally harm the baby or do something rash.

Get sleep

You will probably hear this advice most often, but it is with good reason. Loss of sleep affects you physically, mentally, and emotionally. Fortunately, newborns sleep a fair amount, often in short spurts throughout the day. Install blackout curtains in your room if needed, log off Facebook, turn off your phone, and get those critical zzzs whenever (and wherever) you can.

Motherhood is not a competition

You’ll see other mom friends glammed up and slimmed down on Instagram days after having their babies. Or you’ll run into that couple whose designer nursery is being featured in a magazine. Smile, congratulate them, and move on. Don’t let anyone influence you to focus on anything other than what’s right for you and your family. The first six to twelve weeks are all about bonding, basic survival, and your recovery.

Enjoy your bundle of joy!

Many new mothers get so consumed with what needs to get done that we forget to stop and enjoy the little people we just brought into the world. That’s a special feeling that is worth stopping to revel in. Remember, the baby stage is fleeting. In a moment, they’ll be off and running, throwing tantrums, and asking for allowances. Of course every stage is special, but take time to enjoy your sweet, innocent baby while it lasts! ♦

Neha is a GGMG Magazine contributing writer and mom of a delightful 1.5 year old boy. In her spare time, she tries to read but ends up napping.

New Arrivals



To announce your new arrival in the magazine and for a chance to win a Babyganics gift set, fill out the form at www.ggmg.org/community.html.

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Monica Lara-Cordoba | Baby Valentina Emilia |
| Jennifer L. | Baby Rhys Michael |
| Genevieve W. | Baby Zoe |
| Anyar. | Baby Alexa Rasulova Frot |
| Katrina D. | Baby India Florence |
| Dru Garza | Baby Gabriel William |
| Richa Mann | Baby Mahi |
| Minna F. | Baby Noah Daniel |
| Gabriella Solar | Baby Wyatt Peter |
| Remi Isaacs Andrada | Baby Reese Ari |

Congratulations to **Jennifer Lashua**! She will be pampering her little one with products from Babyganics. These plant-based, tear-free, hypoallergenic cleansers and lotions clean and protect skin from head to toe.



Volunteers of the Month

Congratulations to **Lauren McDowell** and **Krupa Antani**, our June and July volunteers of the month! Lauren serves on both the Playgroups and Membership Committees. She and husband Dave are parents to George and William (4), and Colette (1). Krupa serves on both the Diversity and Inclusion and Playgroups Committees. She and husband Snehal are parents to Aaryav (2).



LAUREN, WE WANT TO KNOW YOUR FAVORITE...
Pastimes: Cooking, swimming, trying new restaurants; **Reading Material:** *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls; **Film:** *Legally Blonde*; **Restaurant:** Spruce; **Destination:** France; **Parenting Advice:** Consistency is key, including a regular date night!



KRUPA, WE WANT TO KNOW...Something about you that might surprise people if they knew it: I taught English in Korea; **What you miss most about your hometown:** Seasons, New York-style pizza; **Place in the world you would most like to visit:** Dubrovnik, Croatia à la *Game of Thrones*!

Lauren and Krupa will each enjoy a 60-minute massage at International Orange Spa (2044 Fillmore St.). Book yourself a massage today at www.internationalorange.com.



Volunteering for Hope

There are many ways to contribute to the world around you. Bring joy to others and ultimately yourself.

By Shaheen Bilgrami Photography by Aviva Roller Photography

At a time when many are feeling low on hope, the knowledge that you are investing time to help make the world a better place can help improve your outlook on life and give you hope for the future.

A long-time volunteer and mother of 1- and 6-year-old boys, Beth Jansson says that volunteering “shows me and my kids that there are really good people out there that want to do good, that want to give back.” She adds, “in a time where people are feeling afraid of change, seeing that there are really good people doing great work in this community is a really powerful thing to show your kids.”

Kim Mitchell, mom of a toddler, volunteers with GGMG and Talkline. She says that although she has been involved in volunteer work for a long time, recent political upheavals acted as a catalyst to make her “step out and do something a lot more deliberate and a lot less easy.”

Kim says that Gandhi’s belief that “You must be the change that you wish to see in the world” is what motivates her to be more constructive. When she encounters a situation which upsets or angers her, she asks herself, “What things do I not like? What am I complaining about? Why am I unhappy about it?” and then considers, “How am I going to be that change?”

Give and gain

Kim advises would-be volunteers to choose a cause and an activity that really interests you, because, if you are engaged and interested, “it will make you want to do it again.”

She adds that when you’re starting out, to start small, so that you are not overwhelmed. She continues, “You don’t have to jump in and do the biggest thing ... You can be the one who sits at the table and greets people or ... breaks down tables, because everything that you do contributes to a positive outlook.”

If you are a stay-at-home mom or are taking a break from full-time work, or if you are thinking of a career change, volunteering can also help you to expand your employment horizons, give you a sense of purpose, and help you develop new skills.

Beth says of her volunteer experience, “It helped me ... gain a greater appreciation of other people in the community and have an outlet to give back ... to feel like I had a purpose and could help somebody.”

There are a huge number of opportunities available in a variety of areas, ranging from mentoring and tutoring kids to visiting and delivering food to seniors to working on

coastal conservation projects. In addition to finding a cause that motivates you, Kim advises that people choose a role or activity that they feel comfortable in. If you like meeting people, volunteer to man the front desk at a community event. If you feel awkward talking to strangers, volunteer to work behind the scenes.

Instilling the volunteer spirit in your children

Getting your children involved in volunteering can boost their sense of self, teach them social responsibility, and teach them to appreciate what they have. Ashley Scatena, mom of a 1-year-old, has been volunteering with Meals on Wheels since before motherhood. She and her husband deliver food to seniors at one location in the Tenderloin, with their daughter in tow. Ashley says of her daughter, “She brings joy to the seniors. She gets to interact with them and through that she gets to broaden her experiences and have new experiences. Ultimately we hope this will lead to an increase in her compassion (for others) and gratitude for what she has.”

Corinna Lu, currently GGMG’s Director of Community Support, also wants to instill a sense of gratitude in her children through volunteering. She says, “We’re trying to work on gratitude, and I feel like it’s a good thing for them to be part of the community and give back to it.”

Beth took her son to his first volunteering gig, visiting a senior center, at the age of 2. She says, “I wanted to make sure that he understood that there are people who need help and that we have to be informed and engaged citizens in this country and ... help other people. I really wanted him to have a sense of connection with the community.”

Beth, who has worked for nonprofits in a management capacity with volunteers, recommends that before going ahead and volunteering with your young child, you need

...volunteering can also help you to expand your employment horizons, give you a sense of purpose, and help you develop new skills.

to be aware of their interest level, attention span, capacity, and limitations. Some kids might not be ready to volunteer when they are young.

Even if you don’t think your children are quite ready for formal volunteering, you can find ways to imbue them with the volunteerism spirit. Even very young children can easily grasp the idea of helping others. Kim doesn’t involve her 20-month-old daughter in any formal volunteering activities yet, but she does incorporate an awareness of others and the community into her family life. She talks about how her family makes it a

point to pick up trash that they find when they’re out and about. “We call it MOOP, Matter Out of Place, or the Mess of Other People.” On a recent family trip to Baker Beach, each person in their group, young and old, picked up garbage that they found on their way out and put it in the trash can.

Kim continues, “With young children, it’s not necessarily that they’re thinking of making a difference for someone else ... It starts with, ‘what’s in it for me’ and grows from there.” So, with regard to cleaning up at

the beach, she tells her daughter, “You like to play in nice clean sand, so you can help to keep it nice and clean.”

Practical tips for getting involved:

- Start by thinking about the time that you have available and the level of commitment you can make. Are you able to commit to specific hours at a specific time every week or month, or would you prefer to commit yourself to one-off projects and/or activities?
- Decide if you want to volunteer as an individual, as part of an adult group, or



with your kids or family. Some nonprofits offer opportunities in all these areas; others are better suited to a particular type of volunteer work.

- Talk to volunteer managers if you have specific requests or limitations. They may be able to accommodate your requests.
- One benefit of a consistent commitment is that you get to build a relationship with the people you are working with. However, don't be put off if your life and schedule do not allow for an ongoing commitment. There are lots of opportunities, such as service days and drives, that don't require any commitment beyond attending one-off individual events.
- If you are overwhelmed by the possibilities, it might be worth getting in touch with an organization that matches volunteers to organizations that need them, such as Hands on Bay Area (www.handsonbayarea.org), The Volunteer Center of San Francisco

(www.thevolunteercenter.net), VolunteerMatch (www.volunteermatch.org), or One Brick (www.onebrick.org).

- The GGMG Community Support Committee manages a number of drives and volunteer events throughout the year, many of which are suitable for families with young children. Keep an eye out in the GGMG forums and magazine for specific events.
- You can volunteer any professional skills you have, in areas such as art and design, finance, law, and medicine, to organizations that need them.
- Becoming a mentor to youth in the local community can be life changing for you and the young person you mentor. Any time invested in mentoring is time invested in enriching the future of a child.

Give hope, get happy

When you volunteer your time to help others or to improve the environment, you enrich

your own life and may inspire others to do so too, including your children. It doesn't take much to get started. Many organizations will try to accommodate any limitations you may have (as a mom, time is probably a big one). If you choose opportunities that you are truly interested in, you will have fun and reap additional rewards, such as acquiring new skills. And the sense of fulfillment you get may have broader implications for your life. When researchers at the London School of Economics and Political Science looked at the relationship between volunteering and happiness, they found that the more people volunteered, the happier they were. So there you have it—volunteer and have a happier life! ♦

Shaheen Bilgrami is freelance writer and editor. She is also the mom of an energetic preschooler. Contact her through her website, www.shaheenbilgrami.com.

Places to volunteer locally

FOOD AND SHELTER

Habitat for Humanity www.habitatgfsf.org

Local volunteer activities include new home construction, area revitalization, home repairs.

Meals on Wheels Good Neighbor Program

www.mowsf.org/volunteer-us

Volunteer opportunities include providing food and help to seniors in need. Children are welcome to accompany adult volunteers.

SF Marin Food Bank www.sfmfoodbank.org/volunteer

Sign up online to volunteer on a Saturday (aged 8+) or a Sunday (aged 4+). Work involves sorting, packaging, and assembling food for distribution.

POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS

Larkin Street Project

larkinstreetyouth.org/how-you-can-help/for-volunteer

This nonprofit aims to get homeless and at-risk youth off the streets. Volunteers, aged 21 and above, can help with outreach, administrative and food preparation, tutoring, training, counseling, resumé assistance and helping prepare youths for job interviews.

Glide glide.org/serveameal

Volunteers (aged 8+) can help with food prep and service at the Daily Free Meals Program. Longer-term volunteer opportunities working with youth or children, in finance or administration, or in HIV services are also available.

St. Anthony's www.stanthonyssf.org/individual-volunteering

Help provide critical services, including providing clothing, meals, and support, to get the impoverished back on their feet. There are longer-term as well as one-off volunteer opportunities available for older teens and adults.

826 Valencia



Reading Partners



Big Brothers Big Sisters



EDUCATION, COMPANIONSHIP, AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Golden Gate Mothers Group www.ggm.org/volunteer.html

GGMG is run entirely by volunteers, and donating time to our group is a great way to get to know other moms and to give back to your mom community! There are opportunities in all areas from business development to playgroups.

826 Valencia www.826valencia.org/get-involved/volunteer

Opportunities for adults include working with students, as well as design, photography, and editing work. Corporate group volunteering opportunities available.

Children's Book Project www.childrensbookproject.org

This nonprofit provides books to children who need them. Volunteers (aged 18+) are needed to count and sort donated books. You can also donate books to the organization.

Reading Partners

www.readingpartners.org/location/sf-bay-area/schools

Volunteers commit at least an hour a week for a full semester to help struggling students become proficient readers.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Bay Area www.bbbsba.org

Enter into a strong and enduring, professionally supported relationship with a child facing adversity. A minimum commitment is needed of 2 to 4 hours a week for a year.

Bay Area Mentoring www.bayareamentoring.org

A great resource for general information about mentoring with links and descriptions of mentoring organizations in the Bay Area.

Janet Pomeroy Center www.prrcsf.org/volunteer

This center provides education and activities for adults and children with disabilities. Volunteers can fundraise, provide administrative support, or assist staff in helping program attendees.

Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly littlebrotherssf.org/volunteers

Volunteers offer help and companionship to seniors in need. Children are welcome in some of the programs.

Urban Sprouts www.urbansprouts.org/get-involved/volunteer

Urban Sprouts aims to build communities through garden-based education. Community Sprouts are monthly Saturday work days in the community garden. Group Work Days are available for groups of 5+ volunteers.

ENVIRONMENT

Presidio Trust www.presidio.gov/volunteer-internal

Transform and maintain San Francisco's historic Presidio by planting seeds, maintaining trails, leading tours, and maintaining the rich flora of this beautiful area.

Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

www.parksconservancy.org/get-involved/volunteer

Maintain, preserve, improve, and protect the 80,000 acres of Golden Gate National Parks. Volunteer activities include growing and caring for native plants, identifying and removing invasive plants, and preserving and maintaining vulnerable areas of the parks.

Nature in the City www.natureinthecity.org

This organization is dedicated to eco-literacy, restoration, and stewardship of San Francisco's wild places. Twice-monthly workdays are great to do with older children (5+). They also organize nursery days, which are better for including younger children.

Save the Bay www.savesfbay.org

Volunteer opportunities include restoring wetland habitats and shoreline clean-ups.

SF Recreation and Park Department

www.sfrecpark.org/support-your-parks/volunteer-program

There are a number of opportunities in 225 parks, including garden restoration and a docent program.

SF Surfrider www.sf.surfrider.org

Working to protect and preserve San Francisco's beaches, projects include three beach cleanups a month (two at Ocean Beach and one at Baker Beach).

Janet Pomeroy Center



OTHER PRACTICAL WAYS TO SUPPORT GREAT CAUSES

- Buy and fill tote bags with comfort items for children in homeless shelters for **Project Night Night** www.projectnightnight.org/get-involved
- Donate goods to **SF Smiles**, www.sfsmiles.org, and the **Homeless Prenatal Project**, www.homelessprenatal.org/donate
- Donate to mom-owned **Hunter's Threads** (www.huntersthreads.com). A percentage of their proceeds go towards providing free or subsidized therapy for kids with developmental delays.
- Make thrift donations to **Community Thrift** at 17th and Valencia in the name of a preferred nonprofit and the proceeds will go to them.
- Patronize businesses that contribute back to their non-profit communities, including the **826 Valencia Pirate Store**, **King Carl's Emporium** (the new 826 Valencia satellite store), **Crossroads Café** and **Delancey Street Restaurant**.

Instilling Hope in Children

Enabling our children to see the glass as half full is a life skill worth teaching

By Tara Hardesty
Photographs by Jill Baker Photography



A few weeks ago, I asked my 3.5 year-old son what he wanted to be when he grew up. He turned his face up towards me, brow furrowed in serious thought and answered emphatically, “An oppopus!” (translation, “an octopus”). The answer was hilarious, and adorable. But what struck me more was the look on his face. He was beaming—hopeful and excited all at once. His young mind had quickly scanned the options, which I can only imagine included dinosaur, firefighter, or train engineer, before landing on what he considered the best choice.

Children are naturally full of hopeful ideals like this. But I think about how my son can keep that hope as he grows up and is faced with challenges. As a parent, I have to foster his sense of hope as he grows, to teach him that he can choose optimism and a positive attitude to get him through the rough spots.

We’re living in fairly trying times and everyone reading this article knows what it’s like to struggle with hope. When it comes to helping our children, that experience can be a good thing. As parents, we provide our children with their first examples of hope. The way we move through life and how we face adversity is closely observed by our little ones. Maintaining optimism and resilience through tough times isn’t easy, and it is okay for our kids to see this.

Teaching optimism

Research shows that optimistic children perform better in school, form stronger friendships, are more creative, and are better at problem solving. They are also likely to have lower levels of depression and anxiety. Fortunately, optimism is a teachable “skill”, or outlook.

It’s no surprise that children who have optimistic parents are more inclined to be optimistic themselves. More than just their outlook, optimists have a way of explaining things that



transfer to their children. Optimists look at things that happen in their lives as permanent and attributable to a personality trait, like hard work or being likeable. Pessimists tend to attribute positive experiences to something temporal, like a good mood or a one-time effort. How we react to and interpret events in our children’s lives are also important. They look to us to figure out how to react, and when we provide positive and real feedback,

it makes them more likely to build optimism and resilience.

Kids whose parents are more affectionate and caring are also more hopeful. When given affection from parents, kids develop more trust in the world, allowing them to feel more secure and ultimately take risks and explore.

Mercy, mom of three kids under 6, is very physically affectionate with her kids, especially when they are struggling with

Maintaining optimism and resilience through tough times isn’t easy, and it is okay for our kids to see this.



something. “My son will often feel sad when I travel for work; he starts to cry and says he doesn’t want me to go. I assure him I am coming right back, and give him lots of hugs and kisses and physical connection.”

Most moms I spoke with mentioned affection, especially getting down on their children’s level, looking them in the eye and making some type of physical contact. When one of Mercy’s kids is hurt or reprimanded, she gets down on their level. “My response is always to kneel down, look them in the eye, acknowledge their feelings and frustrations and give them a hug,” she shares.

Coping with challenges and frustration are key components of developing optimism. Research shows that kids who are protected from adversity are less likely to develop optimism. When given the opportunity to take a risk that has challenges to overcome, children develop a sense of accomplishment and a comfort level with risk-taking. One note:



when allowing kids to take risks and fail, it’s important that the challenges are developmentally appropriate. Continual failure to meet a goal can result in being overwhelmed.

Olivia Adams, GGMG mom of a 3- and 7-year-old, says that she and her husband find this aspect of helping their children develop very important. “We can help set up scenarios where our kids feel hopeful, but we make sure that the challenge is not overly difficult.” They think of this as a “just right challenge”, meaning if a goal is unreachable, don’t set them up for it. “For example, if they don’t know how to kick a soccer ball, [we] don’t encourage them to try to make a goal.”

Building resilience

When talking about hope, the conversation inevitably turns to resilience. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity, stress, and the wide range of emotions and experiences children have as they grow. Like



“I often invoke the sage bard, Daniel Tiger. When something seems sad, turn it around and find something good.”

optimism, resilience is something that we can teach our children. My son will learn sooner or later that he cannot be an octopus. Given his personality, he is likely to be upset by this news. So how can I support him through this disappointment, and nurture his sense of resilience?

- **Start a mindfulness practice.** Mindfulness creates the ability for children to calm themselves, which allows for a healthier response to stress.
- **Exercise.** Exercise reorganizes the brain and builds feelings of empowerment in children.
- **Help them learn how to reframe.** In difficult times, help your children learn to focus on what is working, rather than what’s going wrong.
- **Don’t rush to the rescue.** This is tough but important. Of course, it’s natural to pick your children up or come to the rescue when they’ve had a tough day. The important thing is for rescuing not be the

response every time. Allowing your children to find their own strength helps build resolve and grit.

Working through feelings and building hope

I reached out to our GGMG community to hear how moms are helping their children learn about hope, optimism, and resilience. Below are some of their responses:

Jessica*, mother of a 4-year-old, talks about an event where her daughter was feeling blue. “My daughter had a conflict with a peer saying mean things recently. We took the opportunity to empathize and put ourselves in the shoes of the person. This peer had a lot of changes in her family (new sibling, new home) and having just added a new family member ourselves we know how hard that can be. We then examined the behavior and determined some alternate

*Last name withheld for privacy.

ways to handle ourselves (i.e., take space, use words, etc.)

Another mom says, “I often invoke the sage bard, Daniel Tiger. When something seems sad, turn it around and find something good.”

Olivia says she does several things to help her kids: 1) Acknowledge and validate feelings, 2) hold them, as physical touch is calming and comforting, 3) share a personal story about when she felt sad about something to normalize the feeling. Maybe there was a happy ending or maybe not, depending on the message/situation, 4) offer to talk about it more or give space and/or change activity, letting the kid decide. She also frequents the AHA Parenting website by Dr. Laura Markham for guidance on how she can best handle situations.

Kate*, mom to an 18-month-old girl and a 4-year-old boy, says she works with her children to try to identify the feeling, then name it and offer strategies to work through that feeling. For instance, she has used “Sometimes when I feel frustrated, I stomp my feet,” or “When I am sad, I tell Daddy I need a hug.” Kate asks questions and tries to relate. “It seems like you feel sad right now;

sometimes I feel sad too. It will pass and you will feel happy again.” A ritual that works for Kate is to have snuggles or quiet time in the kids’ fort (i.e., the bottom of their closet).

Amber Johnson, mom of two, also tries to help her 3-year-old label his emotions. She often finds that sitting down and giving her son a big hug helps. “He often likes to sit and be quiet. I find that trying to talk too much about it in the moment makes him upset, so sometimes I’ll bring it up later when the mood has passed. We often read a book to relax or will go sit outside or take a walk around the block.”

Ideas for instilling hope

The natural hope of children is awe inspiring. For me, watching my sons react to the world around them reinvigorates my sense of hope. While instilling hope and teaching resilience is a complicated process, the bottom line for parents is something we’ve all heard before. Love your children, show them you love them, and listen to their little spirits. A few thought starters:

Be spontaneous

Put down your phone and play ball. Spring a

surprise trip to the zoo on your kids. Being spontaneous lends itself to optimism because you anticipate having a good time.

Take time to enjoy life

Find the things that bring you joy and share them with your children. From something as simple as appreciating spring flowers blooming on your block to a family vacation, sharing your enthusiasm is contagious.

Focus on the positive

There are a lot of things in today’s world that are worrisome. While you shouldn’t avoid talking to your kids about these things, place more of your energy on positive activities and events.

Encourage dreaming

Encourage your little ones to dream and share in their enthusiasm. My child won’t be an octopus, but I feel no need to tell him that just yet. At his age, he can dream of life as an octopus with me. ❖

Tara is a mom of two boys, a marketing professional who specializes in commercial real estate ventures, and a freelance writer. She blogs at TheDailyWrites.com about the things she is passionate about, the hairy underbelly of life, motherhood, and entrepreneurship.



Resources Recommended by Parents

Blogs and Online Sources

AHA Parenting: A Parenting blog by Linda Markham www.ahaparenting.com

Respectful Parenting: A website about respectful parenting by Janet Lansbury www.janetlansbury.com

UC Berkeley’s Greater Good: A site about the science of meaningful life www.greatergood.berkeley.edu

Television and Music

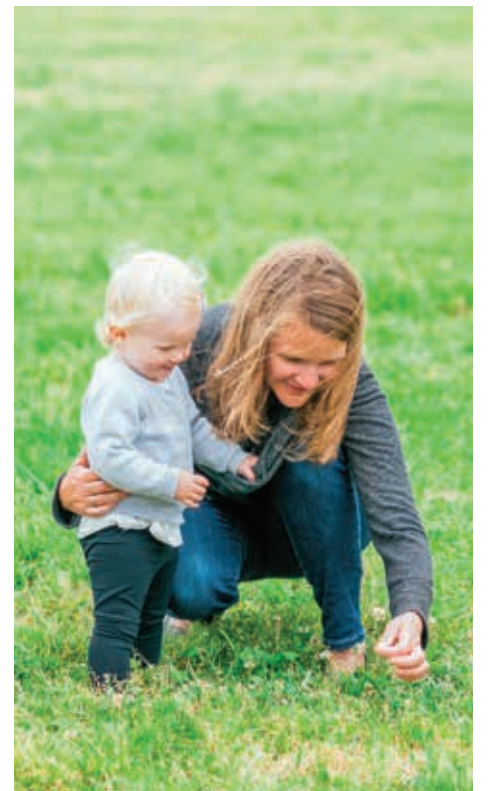
Daniel Tiger (and the Daniel Tiger App)

Sesame Street episodes: What I Am–Will.i.am, Don’t Give Up–Bruno Mars, Belly Breathe–Common & Colbie Caillat

Books

What Do You Do With A Problem, by Kobi Yamada

The Rhino Who Swallowed the Storm, by LeVar Burton





Moving Through PPD

It's important to talk openly and honestly about postpartum depression and related maternal health issues

By Juli Fraga

Photographs by Anna Psalmond Photography

Annabelle* had an amazing, “glowing” pregnancy, but after her baby was born, the sleep deprivation, hormonal fluctuations, and around-the-clock newborn care took a toll on her mental health.

“My son was a difficult baby. I had to rock him to sleep, and he didn’t nap for more than 30 minutes at a time. Whenever he wasn’t crying, I was so grateful for a break that I didn’t want anything to do with him,” she says.

Annabelle was suffering from postpartum depression (PPD), the number one medical complication of pregnancy. In recent months,

celebrities like model Chrissy Teigen and actress Hayden Panettiere have spoken up about their experiences with this maternal mental health concern. Even though more women are talking about PPD, many mothers are still unaware of the signs and symptoms of this mood disorder.

According to Postpartum Support International, almost 20 percent of women suffer from PPD. A woman can develop PPD anytime during the first year of her baby’s life (also known as the postpartum period). Signs and symptoms include crying, feelings of hopelessness, fear of being alone with the baby, sleeping concerns, appetite changes, and feelings of irritability. A small percentage of women also have thoughts about hurting themselves or harming their children.

“I felt irritable and emotionally detached,” says Annabelle. “I cried a lot for the first 10 days after my son was born, but after that, I felt numb.”

It was difficult for Annabelle to bond with her baby during this painful time. She stayed home a lot because her son was colicky, which caused her to feel very isolated. Despite feeling so awful, it wasn’t until her son was 6 months old that Annabelle finally went to see a psychotherapist. Unfortunately, her story is not uncommon.

Research conducted by the 2020MOM project shows that many new mothers are never properly screened or diagnosed with PPD. Because the postpartum period is a stressful time when women feel overwhelmed, it can be difficult to tell how the typical “baby blues,” which affects up to 85 percent of mothers, differs from PPD.

“I tell new moms that if they’re feeling tearful, sad, and overwhelmed one week after the baby’s birth, it’s a good idea to reach out to a healthcare provider for a PPD screening,” says Melissa Whippo, LCSW, a social worker in the Pregnancy and Postpartum Mood Clinic at the University of California, San Francisco.

While the US Preventive Task Force recommends screening all women for prenatal and postpartum depression, Whippo says it’s important for new mothers to tell their healthcare providers if they are sad or anxious. With a proper postpartum mood screening, the doctor can help mom receive the support that she needs.

The truth about maternal health issues

After birth, mom’s hormones progesterone and estrogen plummet. For some women, these hormonal shifts significantly affect their moods, and they become depressed and anxious. A previous history of depression or anxiety, lack of social support, financial hardships, nursing difficulties, traumatic birth, or a difficult pregnancy can also impact a mother’s mood during the postpartum period.

Recent research conducted at Northwestern University discovered that many women develop symptoms of depression during pregnancy. They found that prenatal depression is just as concerning as postpartum depression and that when

Even though more women are talking about PPD, many mothers are still unaware of the signs and symptoms of this mood disorder.

women are not diagnosed during pregnancy, their mood concerns may worsen after giving birth. For this reason, they recommend that expectant mothers inform their doctors if they experience sadness, sleeping concerns, anxiety, or irritability before their babies are born.

A lot of the education surrounding maternal mental health concerns focuses on PPD. But women can also experience anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), and in rare instances, psychosis, after giving birth.

Postpartum Anxiety: Postpartum anxiety is also a common maternal mental health concern. It’s estimated that between 20 to 25 percent of new mothers experience anxiety. Symptoms include extreme worries and fears about the baby’s safety, feelings of being overwhelmed, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, insomnia, and appetite changes.

Postpartum OCD: This is one of the most misunderstood and misdiagnosed of the postpartum mood concerns. According to Postpartum Support International, 3 to 5 percent of new mothers and fathers experience symptoms of postpartum OCD. These symptoms include intrusive thoughts, compulsive “checking behaviors” such as cleaning, hand washing, and counting.

Postpartum Psychosis: Postpartum psychosis is very rare. It occurs in 0.1 percent of births; however, it is severe. Symptoms generally emerge within 1 to 2 weeks after giving birth and include delusions, hallucinations, paranoia, and lack of contact with reality. Postpartum psychosis requires immediate medical attention, psychotropic medication, and often hospitalization.

Treatment

“I saw an amazing psychotherapist who taught me how to have compassion for myself and the importance of self-care,” says Annabelle. Her therapist also validated how difficult new motherhood had been for her, which helped soften her “mom guilt.”

The recommended treatments for postpartum mood concerns involve psychotherapy with a maternal mental health psychologist, group support, and antidepressant or antianxiety medication. Many women respond well to a brief course of psychotherapy (8 to 10 sessions). The GGMG crisis-resource page also provides a list of PPD psychotherapists and psychiatrists in San Francisco.

Outline your emotional map

During pregnancy, it can be difficult to see beyond the birth of the baby. But motherhood is a huge identity change, and women learn to care for their children largely from the ways they were parented. Emotional nesting during pregnancy can provide some insight into how you are likely to approach this role transition. You might reflect on some simple questions, such as: “What is one thing I wanted from my parents that I did not receive?” “How will this impact me as a mother?” “What is it like for me to feel out of control?” “How might this affect me during motherhood?”

By outlining an emotional map, you can become familiar with the range of feelings





that may accompany new parenthood. Because our culture focuses on the presumption that pregnancy and motherhood are "joyful," there's not a lot of discussion about the feelings of grief that this life change brings. It's normal for families and mothers to experience feelings of shock and sadness as they say goodbye to their freedom and adjust to the profound responsibility that caring for a newborn requires. It's an enormous adjustment to have a small person depending on you for his or her growth and survival 24 hours a day, and it's common for mothers and parents to have difficulty adjusting to this type of dependency. Reflecting on these questions before the baby's arrival can help to distill feelings of shame and mom guilt when they arise.

San Francisco resources

UCSF and CPMC hospitals in San Francisco have several resources for women suffering from postpartum mood concerns. At UCSF, the Pregnancy and Postpartum Mood Assessment Clinic provides mental health services, and UCSF also sponsors a six-week postpartum support group, "The Afterglow" at the Mission Bay Campus, as well as a three-week pregnancy support circle, "The New Nest." CPMC also has a perinatal health and wellness program. Here, patients are triaged via phone and connected to a variety of services, such as psychotherapy and peer group support.

One practice in San Francisco is bringing behavioral health services into the setting where women seek care: doctor's offices. At Pacific Gynecology & Obstetrics Medical Group (PGOMG), patients can schedule

in-house psychotherapy appointments with myself or Dr. Meg Earls. Earls says, "By integrating mental health services into medical practices, women receive timely access to care during new motherhood, one of the most transformative times in a woman's life. Timely access to care is hugely impactful when it comes to ensuring robust support and a full recovery from PPD."

DayOne Baby, Carmel Blue, and Natural Resources also provide new mom support groups, working mom support groups, breastfeeding support groups, and new parenting resources.

Complementary and alternative medicine

Though complementary and alternative medical treatments are not the first line of recommended therapies for postpartum mood concerns, they can be helpful. Acupuncture, yoga, and naturopathic remedies are all holistic treatments that may provide additional support for new mothers. The Root and the Branch acupuncture clinic in Pacific Heights specializes in women's health concerns especially related to pregnancy and the postpartum period. There are also community acupuncture clinics in the Mission where women can receive group treatments. Yoga Tree and The Mindful Body both offer prenatal and postnatal yoga classes. ❖

*Name has been changed for privacy.

Dr. Juli Fraga is a maternal mental health psychologist in San Francisco. She leads a pregnancy support circle, "The New Nest" at UCSF and "The Afterglow," a 6-week postpartum support group. She has written about women's health concerns for NPR, Time, The Washington Post and The New York Times.

Five Ways Partners Can Help

PPD impacts the entire family, yet partners are often at a loss about how they can help during this vulnerable time. Here are five ways that partners can provide support:

Know the symptoms. Familiarize yourself with the symptoms of PPD. If symptoms last for more than two weeks, you should schedule a postpartum mood screening with your physician or a psychotherapist. If mom is feeling extra irritable, it might be a sign of a postpartum mood concern: 25 percent of moms with a mood concern feel extra irritable during the postpartum period.

Normalize her feelings. Let her know that you understand her concerns, and offer emotional support by acknowledging that she's undergoing an enormous transition, and that it's okay to feel overwhelmed. If you're concerned that she's experiencing depression, be gentle. Moms with postpartum depression often feel ashamed. Let her know that she's not alone and that postnatal depression is nothing to feel ashamed of.

Consider reaching out for support.

Sometimes getting someone to help with the baby is supportive for the entire family. You might find a postpartum doula or a mother's helper—someone who can help care for mom and the baby during the day. If sleep deprivation is taking an emotional toll, consider hiring a night doula.

Be patient and reassuring.

Let her know that, although she may feel terrible and even hopeless, PPD is very treatable, and she doesn't need to continue to suffer. Help her get help. The sooner, the better—early treatment will minimize the impact on her and your family. Treatment can come in many forms, such as individual psychotherapy, group support, or couples therapy. Even a handful of sessions can provide immense relief.

Make sure she gets plenty of sleep.

Lack of sleep can be one of the causes of PPD. Do everything you can to help her get the rest she needs. Research shows that two to three-hour stretches of uninterrupted sleep are crucial for mood regulation.

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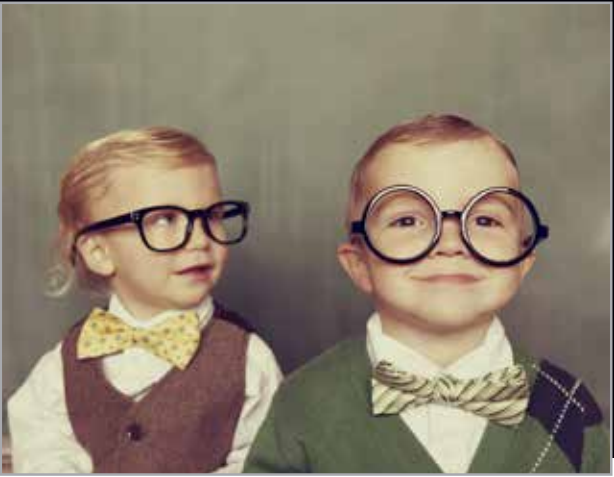
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NEIGHBORHOOD MEETUPS: SOMA/MISSION BAY

The SOMA/Mission Bay community is growing quickly, with new friendships forged at playgrounds, mommy and me classes, coffee shops, restaurants, and, of course, on Facebook. Our GGMG subgroup can be found at www.facebook.com/groups/982933085071775 and anyone near to our 'hood is welcome. Not only is our community a great place to coordinate meetups, but it's also a good place to score deals on baby things, get local recommendations on childcare, and discuss what's going on in the neighborhood (like the new Mission Bay Elementary!).

We have a mix of working and stay-at-home moms with kiddos primarily aged 0 to 5 years. Currently, three dedicated volunteers plan and host a variety of events.

Director Kwanua Robinson (mom to Kaiden and Kaila) loves this up-and-coming 'hood and says it's perfect for the urban parent, with lots of green space, playgrounds, and museums to keep growing bodies and minds busy!

Ambassador Rachael Fenton (mom to Brayden) enjoys meeting new moms and helping them identify resources to navigate the amazing challenges of motherhood.

Ambassador Shehrose Rehmani (mom to Ariana) is a foodie at heart and loves discovering and sharing the culinary delights that this neighborhood has to offer.

If you'd like to join these fantastic ladies and volunteer please contact Kwanua at kwanuar@gmail.com.

Recurring Events

- Join us at our popular monthly Family Happy Hour! Usually at 4 p.m. on Saturdays, please join our Facebook group to learn the secret location.
- Every Monday at 290 Channel St. enjoy Art and Story Time at 9:30 and Music and Movement at 10:30 a.m.
- Attend our weekday meetup at Spark Social SF (601 Mission Bay Blvd.)



Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. hosted by GGMG mom Rachael Fenton.

- Fitness and movement classes are hosted by GGMG mom Sarah Woodford in the neighborhood (visit PowerPlaySF.com to register).
- If fun, intense workouts are your thing, join us on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. for Powercamp. You get to burn calories while the littles socialize! Hosted by GGMG mama Kwanua at 66 Townsend St. Visit PowerPlaySF.com to register. GGMG members receive the first class free and 25 percent off a package of four classes.

Hope to see you there!

Get Connected

Connect with other moms in your neighborhood by joining your Neighborhood Meetup subgroup on BigTent. From wine nights to playgroups, there are 11 neighborhoods hosting events every week! Contact Yanina at yanina.markova@gmail.com for more information on what's happening in your neighborhood.

PLAYGROUPS

Playgroup Formation Event at Gymboree

Here's your chance to find that special circle of mamas to help you survive motherhood. Get connected and start building friendships for you and baby. Pastries, coffee, and free parking are offered as enticement

DATE: Sunday, July 9
TIME: 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.
PLACE: 1530A Sloat Blvd.
COST: FREE

REGISTRATION: ggmg.org

KIDS ACTIVITIES

Father's Day Craft Play Date at Mother's Meadow Playground

Join kids activities for a Father's Day craft play date! We will have crafting materials and snacks to fuel your creativity. Meet some new playmates and enjoy this playground for all ages.

As always, we encourage families to bring gently used books and toys to trade or donate. Any leftovers will be donated to the Homeless Prenatal Program. Looking forward to seeing you there.

DATE: Tuesday, June 13
TIME: 10:30 a.m.
PLACE: 573 Martin Luther King Jr Dr.
COST: Free

REGISTRATION: ggmg.org

Morning Ukulele Concert at Recess

Join us for a weekly concert in the Recess playspace with our friend Uni and her ukulele! Geared toward kids 0 to 4 years, Uni plays an exciting variety of popular music, kid's classics, and sing-alongs for the whole family. Enjoy the performance, play, and explore our expansive playspace after class.

DATE: Thursday, June 8
TIME: 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
PLACE: 470 Carolina St.
COST: special GGMG rate \$25/family

REGISTRATION: email.info@recess-sf.com to register

Mom Workout and Teacher Training at Midtown Terrace Clubhouse (with Kid Playtime!)

Want to explore getting your fitness instructor certification for mommy and me and kid-friendly fitness classes? Take your teacher certification training with Jungshin Fitness at this all-day training event, or just come for the fun morning program with your kids. Demo the workout while your kids enjoy supervised professional activities with Dancing Jammies from 10 a.m. to noon, then train to become a certified instructor for kids class formats after lunch. Price includes a 40 percent GGMG discount. Pre-registration required. Babysitting for the afternoon arranged upon request.

DATE: Sunday, June 25
TIME: 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
PLACE: Clarendon & Olympia Way
COST: \$40 to \$170

REGISTRATION: ggmg.org



Tie Dye Party at Artist & Craftsman Supply

Artist & Craftsman Supply is excited to team up with GGMG Kids Activities to celebrate SF's Summer of Love 50th anniversary. Bring your own t-shirts, bandanas, bags, etc. to tie dye. We'll have helpers on hand as well. All ages are welcome. Space is limited so please leave your strollers at home.

DATE: Saturday, July 8
TIME: 1 to 3 p.m.
PLACE: 555 Pacific Avenue
COST: FREE

REGISTRATION: ggmg.org



PARENT EDUCATION

Sleep Like a Baby: Establishing Healthy Sleep Habits

Have a new baby and wondering if you will ever get more than 40 winks of sleep? Certified Sleep Consultant and mom Melissa Zdrodowski will help you and your baby establish healthy sleep habits and avoid common problems. This proactive approach will enable your family to ease into a healthy sleeping pattern as your baby grows. Ideal for families with babies age 0 to 6 months.

DATE: Wednesday, June 7
TIME: 10:30 a.m. to noon
PLACE: 200 Brannan St., Community Room
COST: FREE, but please RSVP to reserve your spot

REGISTRATION: ggmg.org

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Two Opportunities to Donate to and Volunteer with Our Drives Partner, SF Smiles

Come on over to the SF Smiles collection space to drop off your clean and gently used items or stay to help sort clothes. Adults only during this weeknight evening opportunity.

DATE: Wednesday, June 21
TIME: 6 to 9 p.m.
PLACE: 1380 16th Ave.

REGISTRATION: ggmg.org/calendar/event/65515/2017/06/21

Special donation drop-off day! Bring your gently used items and learn more about SF Smiles. Mingle and enjoy refreshments in the yard. There will be two volunteer shifts to receive and sort items: 9 a.m. to noon and noon to 3 p.m. Kids are welcome.

DATE: Saturday, June 24
TIME: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
PLACE: 1380 16th Ave.

REGISTRATION: ggmg.org/calendar/event/65516/2017/06/24

Committee Spotlight: **The GGMG Board of Directors**

Describe the personality of your committee.
Fun, thoughtful, collaborative, dedicated, and compassionate.

Why do you do what you do? What has been an unexpected benefit of being involved with the board?
We all love GGMG and care deeply about it. We love helping moms make connections and give back to the community. One huge benefit is that we have become friends while being on the board and really love hanging out together and having fun!

What types of activities or projects do you undertake?
We steer the overall direction of the organization and help plan for its future. We handle things like copyrights, insurance, keeping our organization fiscally healthy, taxes—the works. We also oversee any major policy changes or initiatives such as any changes to membership criteria or increasing the diversity of our membership.

How do you know when you are making a difference?
When we get feedback from members about how much GGMG has helped them!

Who are your current volunteers?
Cathy Tran, Sasha Fahimi, Kristen McGuire, Kaitlin Kertsman, Addie Bjornsen, Virginia Green, Shikha Goyal-Allain, Sarah Soto, Karen Brein, Emily Jenks, Rebecca Andersen, Laura Kim, and Corinna Lu.

What's next for the board?
For 2017, we are focusing on launching the new website www.ggm.org and helping to increase the diversity and inclusiveness of GGMG.

How can interested GGMG members get involved with the board?
Volunteer with GGMG! It is a great way to learn about the organization and get to know the board and how we work. We are always open to feedback and happy to answer any questions! If you want to reach out to us you can email us at board@ggm.org.

Are You a Natural Born Leader?

Are you the type of person who enjoys taking charge? Do you have amazing ideas and love to see those ideas brought to fruition? GGMG is looking for volunteers to fill leadership roles within a number of committees across the organization. Perks include deeper discounts with GGMG partners (such as Peekadoodle and UrbanSitter), as well as a co-chair appreciation event each May. If you are interested in learning more, please contact the Recruiting Committee at volunteer@ggm.org.



The magazine is looking for a talented wordsmith to join our staff. Staff writer responsibilities include attending our super fun monthly editorial/ brainstorming meeting and enthusiasm for the written word. Staff writers have first dibs on authorship of feature-length articles and columns, writing 3 to 6 pieces a year. Submit writing samples and a CV to editor@ggm.org if you are interested in joining us and seeing your byline in print.

Exciting Events with Careers and Entrepreneurs!

In July, we'll be hosting a Real Estate Lunch and Learn for moms thinking of starting a career in the real estate business. In August, we are expanding our popular Baby Business Event to moms who want to pitch their ideas and products to experts working in the baby industry (think "Shark Tank for Baby + Family Products"). In September, we're bringing back our popular Headshot Event for moms who want to get an edge up on LinkedIn with a fresh new look. The Career Change Workshop with Life and Career Coach Julie Houghton will be back by popular demand in September as well, with tips to help you find more meaningful work.



Earlier this year, we asked what you wanted more of and we listened! You told us that you would like more webinars on important topics such as finance, and we're happy to say that our recent webinar with Mosaic Financial Partner Sheila Schroeder was our most popular event of the year! Please continue to provide your great feedback by emailing us at entrepreneurs@ggm.org.



Showing Empathy

There are many times we wish we could better respond to our friends in pain. Whether it's facing a loss, financial difficulty, or a rough week, we can be afraid of saying the wrong thing or further upsetting the people we love rather than offering them comfort and support. Sheryl Sandberg's new book, *Option B*, discusses the loss of her husband and inspired the GGMG Member Support team to offer some suggestions on how to be supportive:

- A kind word is always welcome. You will not remind friends of their loss; it's already on their minds.
- When feelings are raw, they want words relating to their pain. Don't say that things were meant to be or that everything will be ok.
- Offer specific help, such as bringing a meal (and not staying to join), or taking their children for a play date. They cannot always think of ways you can help.
- Call, message, or email to check in on them. Oftentimes, people disappear when loved ones are down because they don't know what to say, further exacerbating a sense of loss. Don't worry about saying the perfect thing, just show you care.

Make Sure You Are Taking Full Advantage of Your Membership

Whether you are a new member or a longtime veteran, the Membership Committee wants to thank you for your loyalty to GGMG. Remember to take advantage of ALL your membership benefits!

For the amazing list of partner perks offered by Gymboree, JCCSF, Peekadoodle, Recess, and UrbanSitter, visit www.ggm.org/partnerships.html. Additionally, download the entire list of local business discounts on ggm.org.

Use GGMG to meet other moms and families face to face and turn online connections into real-life friendships. Eleven Neighborhood Meetup subgroups hold events regularly all over the city; join your nearest neighborhood subgroup on ggm.org to receive more information about what's going on near you! For expectant moms and mothers of infants, GGMG playgroups can be a lifesaver. The next Playgroup Formation Event will be held on July 9 at Gymboree (see page 32 for details).

Our rockstar Community and Member Support groups facilitate donation drives and support members in need. Know another mom—even yourself—who could use a little help? Reach out to membersupport@ggm.org; that's what they are here for!

Thank you for being part of THE BEST mom community in the city. Questions? Email membership@ggm.org.

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I ♥ Mom

Reflections on Election Day

By Jennifer Kuhr Butterfoss

It was June 2016, and Hillary Clinton had just become the first female candidate to be nominated for president by a major U.S. political party. I stared at the television, recalling an editorial piece that had claimed our country was more likely to elect an African-American man as president before a woman.

That prophecy had already come true. So now the world is finally ready for our first female president, I thought. Our time has come too!

The summer of 2016 found me coming to grips with my own personal leadership and identity crisis, having just made the difficult decision to step down as the principal of Alvarado Elementary School. A combination of motherhood, life circumstances, and what felt like unrealistic personal and professional expectations propelled me to seek other options. Looking around, there were quite a few of us mothers with young children in school leadership positions bowing out at the same time, or talking about it. I began a fruitless search for part-time work while my male colleagues excitedly shared their latest professional accomplishments. The main decision makers who held my professional fate in their hands were all male, and I naively thought the perfect part-time or flexible role would eventually appear. Surely the higher-ups and I would find a way to keep me engaged in the fight for educational equity. But somehow we didn't. If there was ever a time that my once bright-eyed, change-the-world, yes-we-can, female school-leader self was losing hope, it was 2016.

That summer I returned to my favorite form of therapy: wandering through bookstores, hoping for the perfect book with all the answers. Instead, I left with a children's paperback, *Who is Hillary Clinton?* I might have been lost in my own leadership crisis, but the least I could do was engage my daughter in the historic moment I thought was just on the horizon. Lilly would be old enough to remember the day we elected the first woman president. My own struggles as a woman and mother in public service could wait; I needed to make sure my daughter knew what "I'm with her!" really meant. I got to work explaining what a president is, what elections are, why a woman candidate is a big deal, and then tying this all into the fact that my daughter can do anything she puts her mind toward. I wanted to make Election Day special and something to remember forever.

As November 8 grew closer and campaign antics more absurd, I kept my daughter excited about the historic day to come. We built a White House-shaped gingerbread structure, complete with red, white, and blue candies on top, planning to eat it while watching

the results on TV. Lilly wore her American flag summer dress over a white turtleneck, with a matching bow in her hair. The promise of her own "I Voted!" sticker sent her skipping out the door with her little brother and me. Just outside the voting area, an elderly man offered to take our photo in the warm San Francisco sun.

Like the end of Titanic, the results of the 2016 election are seared into memory. What ensued included several bottles of wine, an entire package of oatmeal cookies, and a Facebook page that went silent for weeks after I posted that sunny, hopeful photo with my two children. For many women, including myself, this overtly public and extreme example of a white man getting a promotion over a woman who was vastly more experienced, eloquent, and qualified hit home on the most visceral level.

The next time I decked my daughter out in themed clothing, it involved a hot pink, crocheted hat with tiny ears. I forced her to trudge through the rain so she could experience resistance firsthand at the SF Women's March in January. Lilly might have seen Mommy lose hope, but she also got to witness her pick up the pieces and show up.

My daughter knows Hillary Clinton lost but she doesn't fully grasp what this means. I know the only way for me to keep going, for our country to keep going, is to keep hope alive. I have faith that one day the school district I know and love will embrace creative and flexible work options that will better enable us to

I know the only way for me to keep going, for our country to keep going, is to keep hope alive.

attract and retain top performing female talent. I firmly believe that we will see a female president in our lifetime. Maybe I won't be lugging two tiny people to the voting booth the day it happens, but the thought of my daughter entering college one day with endless career choices in front of her keeps me hopeful. And no matter how old she is, that little round sticker will hold special significance. In America, we vote. We each get a say. We just need to keep showing up, pink hat and all. ❖

Jennifer Kuhr Butterfoss is the author of an upcoming book The Ultimate Survival Guide for New Principals: Setting Up Effective Listening Tours and More. She is hopeful this will launch her into a new flexible work arena and her daughter will someday eat more than just pasta.



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