

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2018



GGMG

GOLDEN GATE
MOTHERS GROUP®

magazine

SPACE



Life begins at home.

With over 30 years of combined experience, the Costa Group is a top-producing Real Estate team ranked in the top 1% of Bay Area Realtors.

From Noe Valley, to Mill Valley to Napa Valley, we take pride in providing you with extraordinary, hands-on service and the utmost care — to find you and your family the perfect home.

Your Home Awaits.



REAL ESTATE SERVICES

San Francisco | Marin | Wine Country

Franck Costa & Sara Werner Costa | 415.730.2604

sara@thecostagroup.com | TheCostaGroup.com

DRE#01853603 | DRE#01772972

Find us on Instagram @the.costa.group



www.ggmg.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair	Sasha Fahimi
Vice Chair	Karen Brein
Secretary	Kristen Marsh
Treasurer	Liz Nakamoto Singer
Community Support	Corinna Lu
External Communications	Christine Chen
Internal Communications	Virginia Green
Kids Events	Emily Jenks
Member Engagement	Krupa Antani
Volunteer Engagement	Heather Beckstead
Parent Education	Rebecca Andersen
Partnerships	Erin Cahill
Technology	Addie Bjornsen

COMMITTEES

Careers and Entrepreneurs	Parent Education
Community Outreach	Partnerships
Diversity & Inclusion	Playgroups
Just for Moms	PR/Marketing
Kids Activities	Recruiting
Magazine	Social Events
Membership	Volunteer Engagement
Member Support	Web Team

MAGAZINE

Editor-in-Chief	Sonya Abrams
Managing Editor	Megan Bushnell
Senior Editor	Jenny Shaw
Art Director	Lani Schreiberstein
Writers	Stephanie AuWerter, Shaheen Bilgrami, Jennifer Butterfoss, Christine Chen, Gail Cornwall, Tara Hardesty, Laure Latham, Veronica Reilly-Granich, Catherine Symon
Copy Editors	Sarah Brandstetter, Emily deGrassi, Anna Gracia, Arwen Griffith, Neha Masson, Jessica Williams, Sandy Woo
Advertising	Sarah Arestia
Designers	Jessica Franklin, Lora Tomova, Yvonne Tsang
Photographers	Marissa Ho'okano-Briel, Marie Hamonic, Anna Psalmond, Aviva Roller
Contest Editor	Gabriella Judd Cirelli

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

Table of Contents

4

Letter from the Editor:
Lost in Space

Space: We can't get enough of it
Sonya Abrams

5

Letter from the Board:
GGMG—A Space for All Moms

Find your mom tribe in GGMG
Karen Brein

6

Out and About

San Francisco's Hidden Outdoor
Public Spaces
Christine Chen

Li'l Kid, Big City: Bernal Heights
Yanina Markova

Bay Area Telescope Viewing
Catherine Symon

8

Ask the Expert: What Is
Separation Anxiety?

Easing your child's separation anxiety
Louise Brodie, MFT

10

Dadlands: The Force

Childhood passions can shape the adult
you become
Eric Steuer

11

Member Profile: Katie Fones

A look inside the life of a GGMG member
Tara Hardesty

12

Books for Kids: Who Am I?

Books about self-reflection and identity
Laure Latham

13

Books for Parents

How parents can foster independence in kids
by loosening the reins
Gail Cornwall

14

From Womb to World: Becoming
a Stepmom

Building a stepfamily takes time, effort,
and love
Stephanie AuWerter

16

Making Space for Family by
Dialing Down Elsewhere

Contemplating stovetop life philosophy
Jennifer Kuhr Butterfoss

20

Feeling Cramped?

Maximize your home to minimize stress
Jessica Williams

24

Cohousing: Creating a
Community that Works for
Modern Lifestyles

Exploring new models of families living
together
Veronica Reilly-Granich

39

I ♥ Mom: The Final Frontier

The impact of space on one mom's journey
Becca Klarin

GGMG at Work

4

Housekeeping

9

Community Outreach & Contest

15

New Arrivals & Volunteers of the Month

32

GGMG Events

34

GGMG Committees



IT'S TIME
TO GET BACK THAT
"Clearly" Incredible Smile!



The Clear Alternative to Braces

Stanford & Harvard trained Orthodontist
Treats both Children & Adults
Top Invisalign provider in the Bay Area
We have an iTero Scanner;
no more impressions!

First Consultation Free!



390 Laurel Street · Suite 100 · San Francisco · CA 94118
Phone (415) 292-2345

20 Page Street · San Francisco · CA 94102
Phone (415) 865-1122

www.bellasmile.com

Letter from the Editor: Lost in Space

By Sonya Abrams



An editor, photographer, and mom to three, Sonya has an improbable love for the cheesy 1980s Dennis Quaid vehicle Inner Space but admits to still having no idea what 2001: A Space Odyssey was trying to say.

There's a frequently repeated weekend scene in my home: It's early in the morning and light streams in through the windows, gently waking me. Shortly thereafter, a child wanders into my room and asks to snuggle. I oblige, and the child wiggles into my arms, soft body pressed against mine. I breathe in the smell of baby shampoo and pull the tiny person tighter, closing up all the space

between us. Soon, another child tiptoes in and asks to get in bed. Child number two wedges himself between my husband and child number one, forcing me backward toward the edge of the bed. The situation is now slightly perilous, but I'm still enjoying the sweet tenderness of the moment. Then, inevitably, child number three enters, climbs into bed, forces himself into our lineup, and the tableau breaks apart into flailing limbs, fingers in eyes, and bodies tumbling off the bed, usually mine first.

Our lives are never-ending quests for space. In our homes, we seek out ways to reclaim our space, taming clutter and fighting the forces of inadequate closets. In our relationships, we strive to close the gulfs between each other, to find a place of intimacy without feeling smothered or hemmed in. And we all dance along the space-time continuum, searching for space in our lives to practice self-care and follow our passions—if we can even

remember what they are anymore. Our authors in this issue gaze at space as a challenge that requires organization, sacrifice, and cleverness to manage. On page 20, Jessica Williams tackles, if not the final frontier, then certainly a frustrating one: the space limitations of the urban home. Luckily, she discovers space-saving tricks and products to save our sanity and keep the household running smoothly. Jennifer Butterfoss peers into our emotional space on page 16 in a quest to find balance between career, health, family, and friendships. Do we have enough bandwidth to equally attend to what one theory determines are the four major quadrants of our lives? And

[W]e all dance along the space-time continuum, searching for space in our lives to practice self-care and follow our passions...

Veronica Reilly-Granich, on page 24, investigates ways in which contemporary families are sharing space in cohousing communities. Embarking on a radical yet ancient way of organizing our homes comes with a unique set of advantages and challenges.

Mothers are often the last to attend to our own needs, so as the warm, hazy days of summer near their end and relaxing memories get pushed out in the frantic run-up to the start of the school year, I hope you're able to carve out some space for yourself. As for me, I'll be teetering on a precipice, gripping the duvet and wondering if there's a bed size wider than king.

Sonya

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.

COMING NEXT: October/November: Education

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

THIS ISSUE MADE POSSIBLE BY: FIFA World Cup; the North Carolina tooth fairy; preschool orientation no tears; packing for a month on the east coast with a newborn, toddler, and dog; packing, more packing, moving, and unpacking; a weeklong visit with a college roommate; renovation; bats; camping, sandcastles; desperately searching for good news in the world; a super fun road trip to reset my spirit; a trip to Denmark.

Letter from the Board: GGMG—A Space for All Moms

By Karen Brein

I admit that I was a cocky pregnant woman. I thought I knew everything. After all, I took a ton of childbirth and breastfeeding prep classes, read dozens of parenting blogs, and spent countless hours researching the perfect bassinet (because of course my baby was going to sleep through the night on his own from day one). As we all know, there is nothing quite as sobering as parenthood. When my son finally arrived, I was completely lost and felt very alone. I was desperate to find my tribe and a community of moms to help me figure out my new life.

Several weeks after my son's birth I discovered GGMG and found my space as a mom. I met my two best friends at a Neighborhood Meetup event and a Playgroup Formation mixer

It's so important for women to find their tribe as they navigate the complexities of being a mom.

when my son was a few months old. I am forever grateful to the GGMG volunteers who host these events to bring us together. I am still amazed at the fascinating conversations that take place daily on the GGMG forums. Thanks to all of you who contribute to making our GGMG forums so robust. You may not realize how meaningful a quick reply can be.

GGMG events just keep getting better. This is GGMG's second year hosting Preschool Preview Night. This is a can't-miss event! Save the date for September 20, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., San Francisco County Fair Building. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet representatives from dozens of local preschools and

kindergartens. Get answers about teaching philosophies, costs, schedules, pre-admission visits, and more. In October we will host our signature Fall Fest (October 13, 2018). This year's event is at a soccer field next to Spark Social in Mission Bay. Stay tuned for details.

I encourage all of our members to check the GGMG event calendar frequently, since new events are added all the time.

If you are still seeking your space as a San Francisco mom, I encourage you to get involved in GGMG—reach out via the forums, show up to events, and volunteer. GGMG is a 100 percent volunteer-run nonprofit organization, and we rely on volunteers to keep our operation humming. There are many different volunteer opportunities and we can help you find the perfect role! The first step is to email recruiting@ggmg.org.

It's so important for women to find their tribe as they navigate the complexities of being a mom. Motherhood is not always an easy journey, but GGMG and its incredible community help me feel more grounded in my "mom space," and I hope it does the same for you.



Karen is mom to two adorable and spirited kids, Adam and Ava. Her favorite pastimes include drinking coffee, drinking wine, indoor cycling, and taking long walks around San Francisco.

Karen

Cover Outtakes



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

Cover Photo by Marie Hamonic Photography
Cover model: Diane Nivette Hamonic (8 months)

San Francisco's Hidden Outdoor Public Spaces

There are many outdoor spaces that can serve as an oasis from the busy activity downtown. Use these places to find peace and quiet for yourself during the week or take the kids on the weekend when most spots are deserted.

By Christine Chen

Transamerica Redwood Park

Financial District
7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., M-F
Bring city kids to see majestic redwoods under an SF landmark in a park that is often empty.

Sydney Walton Square

Financial District
Rarely crowded, a green landscape, benches, and sculptures make this a great place to take a stroll or have lunch.

Empire Park

Financial District
7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., M-F
Once an alleyway where Chinatown meets the Financial District, it now has seating in front of a fountain.

Embarcadero Center Walkways

Financial District
Kids love to use the deserted escalators and run in the open space on weekends.

101 California St.

Rows of planters on terraced podiums are a kid magnet and safe to climb on weekends when the business crowd is away.

343 Sansome St. Roof Garden

10 a.m. to 5 p.m., M-F
One of the best downtown lunch spots with partial bay views, flower planters, and plenty of tables and benches.

100 First St. Rooftop Garden

Open 24/7
On the roof of the garage, a serene maze of water features (including a water garden) and sculptured grass areas awaits.

Westfield Mall Sky Terrace

10 a.m. to 9 p.m., M-Sat, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sun (similar to mall hours)
Enter 835 Market Street, next door to the main entrance. Walk a bit and you'll come across a guard who will take you to the elevator to the 8th floor; take a second elevator to the 9th floor.

525 Market St. Plaza

A huge fountain and rock sculpture block street noise, making it easy to enjoy lunch from the many food choices on the plaza.

555 Mission St. Plaza Sculpture Garden

Open 24/7
Johnathan Borofsky's colorful "Human Structures" and Ugo Rondinone's "Moonrise" bust heads are entertaining for both kids and adults.

560 Mission St.

Open 24/7
Modern sculpture, a bamboo grove, and massive water feature make this a serene lunch spot.

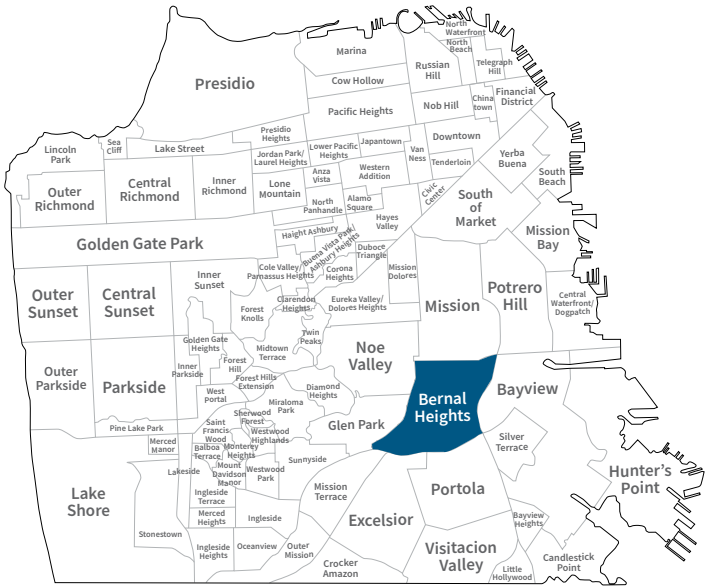
Tenderloin National Forest

Tenderloin
This dead-end alley is now an artists' space with trees, murals, and a wattle and daub house.

Transbay Transit Center Rooftop Park

SOMA
Opening date: August 12
When it is finally complete, this will be worth visiting, especially with kids who love anything transportation-related.

Christine has 2 city kids: a 4.5-year-old son and 2.5-year-old daughter, both of whom love climbing up and down steps and running on ramps and in any open spaces..



Li'l Kid, Big City: Bernal Heights

By Yanina Markova

Bernal Heights is a truly family-friendly neighborhood: diverse, beautiful, and fairly quiet but with lots of shops, parks, and yummy food. Cortland Avenue is the commercial corridor and backbone of the neighborhood. **Bernal Star** is a must for brunch, as is the locally-owned **Little Bee Bakery** for dessert. **Progressive Grounds** is a chill, comfy coffee shop with great wraps and **Mitchell's** ice cream. Down the street, **Pinhole Coffee** offers fancy coffee and pastries alongside kid-friendly perks like a letter magnet wall and toddler music shows.

The **New Wheel** carries electric bikes with toddler seats and has been known to fix a stroller wheel *gratis*. **Chloe's Closet** carries used children's everything. The lovely **Bernal Branch Library** offers regular arts and crafts for kids, baby playtime, and LEGO nights, plus there's a sandy playground out back and a big blacktop below for wheeled exploration.

Holly Park has lots of grass and is especially great for smaller kiddos. Further south is the bell-shaped St. Mary's Neighborhood and **St. Mary's Park**, popular with slightly older kids and birthday parties. ♦

Yanina is a political junkie living in St. Mary's neighborhood with her husband, two daughters, two cats, and a constantly increasing number of conveyances with wheels.

Bay Area Telescope Viewing



By Catherine Symon

Several Bay Area organizations offer telescope viewing to the public so stargazers of all ages can get a close-up view of gleaming planets, luminous moons, and twinkling stars. Pro tip: telescope viewing starts when the sky is dark, so go on a clear fall or winter night for earlier evening viewing times. Observatories with daylight hours offer safe viewing of the sun. In all cases, telescope viewing requires clear skies—check weather conditions before you visit.

Chabot Space and Science Center (Oakland)

Chabot features hands-on educational exhibits and kid-friendly planetarium shows, making it one of the most family-oriented space programs in the area. For a special space adventure, bring the whole family (ages 4+) for an indoor/outdoor sleepover with Slumber with the Stars.

- *Daytime telescope viewing*: included with general admission (adults, \$18; kids 3-12 years, \$14) on Saturdays and Sundays, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- *Evening telescope viewing*: complimentary on Fridays and Saturdays, 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
- *Slumber with the Stars*: check website for schedule and cost, includes dinner and breakfast

San Jose Astronomical Association (Houge Park, San Jose)

The SJAA, a nonprofit group dedicated to educating the public about astronomy, hosts monthly beginners classes ("Astronomy 101" and "Intro to the Night Sky") geared toward kids. Classes start with an introduction indoors and then move outside, where visitors can use telescopes to explore different constellations each month.

- *Evening classes and telescope viewing*: free to everyone, check website for schedule

Peninsula Astronomical Society (Los Altos Hills)

The PAS, a group of Bay Area astronomy enthusiasts, offers weekly telescope viewings for visitors of all ages at the observatory on the campus of Foothill College.

- *Daytime and evening telescope viewing*: free, but parking on campus costs \$3; Fridays 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to noon. ♦

Catherine is a medical writer. Her favorite nighttime sky memory is reading by moonlight during a childhood whitewater rafting trip in Utah.

Ask the Expert

What Is Separation Anxiety?

With Louise Brodie, MFT



Louise is a San Francisco psychotherapist who works with children and parents, as well as individual adults and couples. She has offices in the Castro and in Union Square. Parents can reach her through her website at louisebrodie.com.

What is separation anxiety?

Separation anxiety is the worry that young children experience

about being separated from their caregivers. Separation anxiety is much more intense and difficult to soothe than the passing pangs of sadness that older children and adults feel when missing someone. Young children sometimes feel tremendous distress even during routine or brief separations. This is because they're still learning that when loved ones are out of sight, they haven't disappeared entirely and will almost certainly return again.

Between 6 and 12 months old, babies become aware that their parents are separate beings who can actually leave, and this is a frightening realization. But with repeated experiences of parents returning again, children develop the capacity to trust that even when a parent is gone, the parent still loves and remembers the child and will come back soon. This knowledge helps children feel safe in the world.

Young children...[are]...still learning that when loved ones are out of sight, they haven't disappeared entirely and will almost certainly return again.

When children feel insecure, they express it in various ways. Some kids may cling or cry when you leave, while others may become withdrawn. Some may act out to prevent you from leaving, like making a big mess you have to clean up. Others get physical symptoms such as upset stomachs or headaches. Insecurity can also affect sleep—your child may be unable to fall asleep or have bad dreams when experiencing this kind of anxiety. **What are some effective ways parents can handle separation anxiety?**

Investigate the feelings. Your relationship with your child is your best tool here. Use what you already know about him to talk about the worry. General, open-ended statements tend to work well, such as, "Some kids get really worried that something bad is going to happen when their mom goes out of town for work...do

you feel that way?" You might also share personal stories of a time you felt worried or missed someone to help your child share his feelings in return. Getting clarity about the source of the worry can guide you.

Paint a mental picture. Children feel worried when their parents are out of sight because they can't conjure a mental image of where their parents are. Walk your child through what you'll be doing while you're apart, including details about things that are familiar to her. Remind her that you'll be reunited again soon. "After I drop you off, I'm going to drive home and walk the dog, and then I'll sit at the computer and work for a while, and then it will be time for me to come pick you up again!" Let her know that you'll also be thinking of her and imagining what she's doing while you're gone. You're modeling how holding a relationship in one's mind makes being apart bearable.

Transition into another relationship. Talk to your child beforehand about who he will be spending time with when you're away. As you walk him into preschool, you might ask who he plans to play with first. Caregivers can assist with this by welcoming your child when he arrives and having a task ready for him to help with as you depart.

Monitor your own anxiety. If your child's anxiety feeds your anxiety, you may be inadvertently signaling back to her that there is something serious to worry about. Instead, demonstrate that you fully trust the environment you're leaving her in; keep your goodbyes brief and light. Don't linger before leaving or come back to check-in after you've already said goodbye. Staying calm helps your child see that goodbyes aren't scary.

Don't sneak away. Parents whose children really fall apart at goodbyes are sometimes tempted to leave when their kids aren't looking to prevent a meltdown. This can be counterproductive in the long run because you reinforce your child's fears that separations are unpredictable and that if he isn't vigilant, you might disappear unexpectedly.

Is separation anxiety common? When should a parent seek help?

Some separation anxiety is a normal part of development. It typically settles down around age 2 and then can pop up again from time to time through elementary school. Unexpected separations and big life changes (like the death of a grandparent or even the arrival of a new baby) may exacerbate the anxiety. Occasional bouts of insecurity are not cause for concern, but if a child consistently gets anxious and is difficult to soothe, consult with a child therapist. A therapist will help you think about what might be contributing to your child's distress and will help you help your child feel more secure. ♦

GGMG AT WORK

Community Outreach

Donate new or gently used books to help students create their own reading library

Reading Partners envisions a future where every student has access to the resources he/she needs to be a confident reader. By empowering community volunteers with an evidence-based curriculum, the program provides one-on-one tutoring to elementary students who are reading below grade level at under-resourced schools. A book drive for **Reading Partners** supports more than 1,500 readers across the Bay Area.

Types of books needed: new or gently used children's books (Grades K-3). The books will be used for the *Take Reading Home* program so that the students can start creating their own personal library at home.

You can purchase from the Amazon wishlist at <http://a.co/22NnKZy> or use the list as a guide for the best books to donate. Any donation is appreciated, but **Reading Partners** recommends each book donation be around \$10 to \$15.

Email communityoutreach@ggmg.org to coordinate donation drop-off. The drive runs through September 30.

Suggested authors:

1. Dr. Seuss
2. Eric Carle
3. Kevin Henkes
4. Leo Lionni
5. Bill Martin Jr.
6. Maurice Sendak
7. P.D. Eastman

Suggested books:

1. Beginning Readers (books with 1 to 2 sentences per page, and 2- to 4-letter words)
2. *I Can Read!* titles (especially the My First, Level 1 and Level 2 books)
3. All level children's books with multicultural subjects
4. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* and *Captain Underpants* chapter books



Contest

Back to School Pizza Party!



Gather a few friends you haven't seen over the summer and head to **Pasquale's Pizza at 700 Irving St.**, a San Francisco institution for decades. Family-owned and operated, Pasquale's offers a variety of salads, pizzas, and pasta dishes for your gang to enjoy. This contest prize consists of a \$100 gift certificate to use on any items on the menu, including wine and beer. The prize expires December 31, 2018 and has no cash value.

ENTER THE CONTEST BY EMAILING CONTEST@GGMG.ORG WITH "PASQUALE'S" IN THE SUBJECT LINE BY AUGUST 31, 2018.

Congratulations to **Minna Folkman**—winner of the June contest prize—car detailing at Infiniti.

The Force

By Eric Steuer

One of my clearest and dearest early childhood memories is of the afternoon I got my first *Star Wars* toys. My mom picked me up from a happy day at preschool and told me she'd bought something for me that she thought I'd really like. I hoped with all of my heart that it was a Luke Skywalker action figure—*Star Wars* was the one and only movie I'd seen so far in my three years, and I hadn't stopped thinking about how cool it was since we left the drive-in (actually, I still haven't stopped). I begged her nonstop to tell me what the surprise gift was. She surely regretted not having waited until we were home to mention it.

The phone was ringing when we walked in the door, and my mom rushed to the kitchen to answer it. I could tell by her voice that my grandma was on the other end. Their conversations always went on and on, lasting forever. While they chatted, I sat at the foot of the stairs, picking impatiently at a patch of our extremely 1978 burnt orange carpet, thinking about how awesome lightsabers are. I wondered why grown-ups spent so much time talking about very boring things.

Finally my mom hung up and brought over a white paper shopping bag. When I think back now to that moment, I picture her moving in super slow motion as she revealed the bag's contents. In my memory, it's as if she were unveiling a holy heirloom or a journal full of secret wisdom. I'm sorry to be so dramatic, but that really is how I remember it.

She removed not one but three (!) toys from her bag. The first was, indeed, Luke Skywalker (in his extra slick X-wing fighter pilot flight suit, no less). Total score. The others were Princess Leia and C-3PO—no slouches at all in the superstar hero action figure department. "I didn't get you Darth Vader," my mom said. "Because I think you should only play with good guys to start with." Even at three, I understood what she was getting at, and I totally agreed.

I've thought about that day many times over the years and much more often since I became a dad. For me, that first set of toys from my mom was a launchpad for years and years of imaginative play and world-building. And maybe it sounds silly, but I know for certain that the many hours I spent watching, playing, and writing stories about *Star Wars* were hugely important in shaping who I am as an adult. Just ask my wife,

who graciously allowed the end title theme from *A New Hope* to be the recessional music at our wedding.

My son Franklin is just about the age I was when I first discovered my love for *Star Wars*, and I frequently wonder what he will come across that completely thrills him the same way

that George Lucas's stories and characters captured my imagination. Will it be some movie I take him to? Or maybe a set of toys my wife and I already gave him? What will be the things (and I hope there are many) he looks back on as an adult that feel foundational to him the way those action figures do for me?

There are very many things I look forward to in my dad journey, but one thing I'm especially excited about is seeing how my son finds himself through his childhood fascinations. I picture him discovering a sport he connects with and builds his whole world around. Or a series of books he reads over and over and never wants to put down. Maybe it will be drawing, or animals, or some genre of music that hasn't even been invented

yet—one that I will find entirely unlistenable but will inspire him like nothing else.

Whatever it is, I can't wait for Franklin to find his own *Star Wars*—the hobbies and stories, collections, and experiences that excite his mind, showing him how rewarding it can be to feel invested in creating his own fun, and possibly even end up

...that first set of toys from my mom was a launchpad for years and years of imaginative play...

defining his childhood. Who knows—he might even discover that his *Star Wars* is actual *Star Wars*. It's possible! I hear those movies are still pretty popular with the kids. If that ends up happening and he becomes a gigantic *Star Wars* nerd like his father before him, I know a guy with a box full of old action figures that are ready to be put to good use. ❖

Eric writes for magazines and is the creative director of Creative Commons, a nonprofit that works to expand public access to artistic works and educational resources. He has seen each of the "original trilogy" Star Wars movies more than 100 times.



MEMBER PROFILE: Katie Fones

Photograph by Aviva Roller Photography

Baltimore native Katie Fones moved to SF in 2010. Her career hats include attorney, realtor, and vintner. She and her husband, John, live in the Outer Sunset with 4-year-old son Brooks (named after Baltimore Orioles player Brooks Robinson). She spoke with writer Tara Hardesty.

HOW DO YOU JUGGLE BEING A MOM, A REAL ESTATE AGENT, AND BEING IN THE WINE-MAKING BUSINESS?

One of the reasons I quit my job as a lawyer was so that I could have more flexibility with a realtor schedule. We are creative with the ways we spend time as a family. The three of us don't spend a lot of time sitting around having a beach picnic, but we may bring our son along to open houses, and sometimes if we host someone at the winery for an hour, he comes with us. It is a lot of fun.

YOUR LAST "LOST IT" MOMENT?

Brooks likes to blow spit in the air. We were driving and he would not stop, so I just stopped the car in the middle of the road. As if that would do anything. I'd just had it.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE ADOPTING A CHILD?

We were a little bit older, that's what led us to adoption. Not that we wouldn't have chosen adoption, even with biological children of our own. We know the birth mother and were there the morning he was born in Denver—it was great.

ANYTHING TO SHARE ABOUT THE ADOPTION PROCESS?

For this agency, you had to attend weekly support meetings as you waited for the match. We found that our ability to control our stress about when/whether and all the million things that creep into your head as you are waiting was important. For us it was a very positive experience. If you want it to happen it really will, it just may not happen as fast as you want it to. The

other part is to be really open-minded as to what happens after you've come home with your baby and to be mindful of how the birth mother is feeling.

WITH YOUR OPEN ADOPTION, DO YOU MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE BIRTH MOTHER?

Yes, we do. Generally speaking, the birth mother wanted specific things, like pictures at holidays, to occur over the years. We do hear from her a few times a year, but she doesn't seem as interested as she was early on. You have to be open-minded as to what the birth mother wants and realize that things will change for both sides of the equation. Don't overanalyze things—it's an extremely difficult time. One of the things the counselor at the agency we worked with was very good at was helping us see the big picture.

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

John was on a business trip to LA to sell wine last week. I watched James Corden's "Carpool Karaoke" with Paul McCartney before bed. I finished watching it, thinking I'm texting John, "Have you watched this? I laughed, cried, and loved it!" Only I had mistakenly texted a real estate agent I barely knew and was negotiating an offer with. She wrote me back immediately, saying she had just watched it as well. The next morning, she called me and said she appreciated the personal connection we had made. In the end, I got the deal for my client.

THREE WORDS YOU WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE MOTHERHOOD

Fun. Maddening. Exciting. ❖

Know a mom you want to spotlight in the next issue?

Email editor@gmg.org with her name, email, and a few sentences about what makes her an awesome mom for our next Member Profile.



BOOKS for Kids Who Am I?

By Laure Latham

Kids love to ask questions, whether or not the subject is their business. Who is that man? What are you doing? Who am I? These books will open family conversations about personal identity, what it means to be this way or that way, why it's OK if you don't know, and why it's great to be who you are.



Goodnight Everyone

Written and illustrated
by Chris Haughton

It's not easy being the only one awake. As the sun goes down, all the animals are going to sleep, except Little Bear. He's not tired and wants to play. "Yawn," say the mice, "Yawn," say the hare and deer, but

still Little Bear isn't tired. Kids will love this story showing many different animals going to sleep (except Little Bear) but the real star of the book is the amazing artwork. Described by the publisher as "a series of exquisitely coloured cut pages of increasing size [that] introduce woodland families," the art is so gorgeous that some families buy two books—one for reading, one for tearing pages apart and framing on the wall. *Ages: 6 months and older*

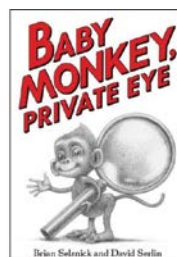


Goose

Written and illustrated
by Molly Bang

Ever had the feeling that you don't belong? This little goose has been adopted by woodchucks after leaving home but the goose feels like it doesn't belong. Turns out, little goose is quite right, and

one day she discovers she can fly. This story with a message of hope can be interpreted in many ways by many people, from adopted children to children who don't fit in, and the realistic illustrations make the message stand out. *Ages: 2 to 5 years*



Baby Monkey, Private Eye

Written by David Serlin, illustrated by Brian Selznick

Baby Monkey may be a baby (and a monkey), but he is also a private eye. In this book, he solves five cases using visual clues—that is, he will if he can manage to put on his pants, which seems to be a recurring problem. With simple text, repetition, humor, and beautiful black and white (and red) illustrations, the text will not only win over the preschooler crowd transitioning to elementary school, but the elementary school crowd as well. It's a really big book that even the smallest kids can read, and that's why it's so much fun. *Ages: 3 to 6 years*

Sunny (Track)

Written by Jason Reynolds

The third offering in the Track series, this book follows 12-year-old Sunny Lancaster, the number-one middle distance runner of the Defenders. He's one of four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics. Eccentric and goofy Sunny is a great character and, like many 12-year-olds, he's trying to find out who he really is. In this book written in the form of diary entries, he confides his fears, his thoughts, and his worries. *Ages: 8 to 12 years*



Square (Shape Trilogy)

Written by Mac Barnett,
illustrated by Jon Klassen

What does it mean to be an artist? "Every day, Square goes down into his cave and takes a block from the pile below the ground. He pushes the block up and out of the cave. He brings the block to the pile at the top of the hill. This is his work." Circle, a likable guy, comes around and thinks that Square is a genius artist and asks for a statue of himself. Can Square do it? Deceptively simple, this book will have young ones reflect on the meaning of art and could prompt a visit to your local museum to carry on the conversation. *Ages: 5 to 9 years*



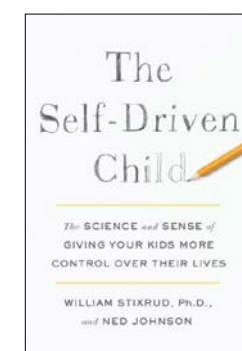
Laure is the author of the mommy blog *Frog Mom* (frogmom.com), as well as the book *Best Hikes with Kids: San Francisco Bay Area*. She writes for several parenting websites and lives in London, where she peppers adventures with her husband and two daughters with compulsory cream tea stops. You can find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

BOOKS for Parents

By Gail Cornwall

A new trio of books focuses on how to raise self-motivated kids—by backing off. All three tie decreasing independence to climbing rates of juvenile anxiety and depression, and each argues for giving children space to take risks, experience stress, and solve their own problems. That means more unscheduled time, more real responsibility, and less coercion (not a sticker-chart or homework fan among them).

The Self-Driven Child: The Science and Sense of Giving Your Kids More Control Over Their Lives



By William Stixrud and Ned Johnson

Stixrud and Johnson believe you should act as a "consultant to your kids rather than their boss or manager," recommending you set rules together and then within those parameters say, "It's your call." They provide loads of practical advice such as mental strategies for setting and visualizing goals, "thinking of what you will do if what you want doesn't come through," and avoiding "catastrophizing." Though

their examples often concern older children, most of the lessons apply to littles, too. When my 9-year-old called herself "stupid, stupid, stupid" for misplacing a folder, I used the authors' words: "Imagine if we were on a softball team together. A routine ground ball is hit right at me but goes between my legs. What would you say? Probably something like, 'It's all right. You'll get the next one.'"

I suggested talking to herself like she would to a friend and got my money and time's worth in that little gem alone.

I'd be remiss, however, not to note two flaws with *The Self-Driven Child*: The writing never manages to shake an eating-of-the-vegetables vibe, and the authors draw unsupported distinctions along gender lines ("Girls generally have more empathy").

The Good News About Bad Behavior: Why Kids Are Less Disciplined Than Ever—And What to Do About It

By Katherine Reynolds Lewis

The Good News About Bad Behavior provides evidence of a dramatic decline in children's ability to control their behavior—and a roadmap for how parents and schools should respond: by giving kids responsibility within a framework of consequences agreed upon by adult and child in advance. If this sounds a lot like *The Self-Driven Child's* parent-as-consultant system, that's because it is, but Reynolds Lewis adds to her "Apprenticeship Model" a process for addressing misconduct: (1) connect with the child, (2) communicate about the problem, and (3) impart "practical and social and emotional skills."

Reynolds Lewis offers up a massive amount of guidance applicable to all ages (my favorite tidbit: when a child hits someone but claims it was an accident, it might very well have felt involuntary, big emotions having hijacked her brain and all). She includes the major do's and don'ts of positive parenting and profiles four alternative discipline frameworks. Though one could argue it tries to do too much, *The Good News About Bad Behavior* is easily the best read of the bunch, delivering all you need to know about self-reliance with smooth transitions from research to engaging story and back again.



Achtung Baby: An American Mom on the German Art of Raising Self-Reliant Children

By Sara Zaske

In the U.S., we use the label "free range" to describe parenting practices that "place a high priority on fostering self-reliance, independence, and responsibility in children," Zaske writes, "but in Germany, it's normal." German parents worry, too, "but they refuse to let fear drive their interactions with their kids."

Achtung Baby provides illuminating observations about how children in Berlin walk to school and hang out at playgrounds alone, and I appreciated Zaske's willingness to call out over-parenting without apology ("[R]elax a little on the attachment issue"). That said, her tone and storytelling felt flat, and some anecdotal generalizations rankled ("[German mothers I talked to] had almost no guilt about putting their young children into child care...vastly different from...the mothers I knew in the United States"). Those who already offer their kids sharp knives rather than flashcards can safely take a pass on this book, but if you find yourself saying "be careful" all the time, yours may be well spent on *Achtung Baby*.

Gail is a freelance writer in San Francisco. You can find her on Facebook (@gailisalwayswrite) and Twitter (@gailcornwall), or read more at gailcornwall.com.

From Womb to World

Becoming a Stepmom

By Stephanie AuWerter

In February 2008, my future husband and I were set up on a blind date. A love connection seemed unlikely: I lived in New York City, he lived in San Francisco. If that wasn't enough of a deterrent, my match-making friend explained that Jim was currently dating other people and that he wanted to know if I was open to moving across the country. He wasn't going anywhere: he had two young sons.

I rolled my eyes, crossed my fingers behind my back, and assured her that all of this sounded positively dreamy.

But a few months later, Jim and I were traveling back and forth between NYC and San Francisco every weekend we could. I'd never met someone so romantic, charming, funny, smart, and kind. So in November, madly in love, I quit my job and moved to San Francisco.

My greatest fear? Meeting his boys. I desperately wanted to dazzle them like Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music*. But the truth was, dad's new girlfriend knew nothing about kids. I'd spent the previous decade focused on my career: my idea of a home-cooked meal was a handful of almonds and a Diet Coke.

"Be patient," advised a friend. "And show interest in whatever they're into." The advice was spot-on, but it wasn't all that fulfilling. I'd gone from romantic weekends to playing "vegetable stand" in a Costco box with a toddler for hours on end. I worried that I was somehow missing a maternal instinct that would make this all easy.

But a few months after my move, a seasoned stepmom admitted to me: "being a stepmother can be incredibly lonely." While not exactly a ringing endorsement of the job, this gave me hope. (Certainly more so than the giddy "you're an insta-mom!" comments I received.) Truth is, I often felt like an outsider. But knowing that it wasn't just me—that perhaps many stepmoms struggled to establish their role in the family—made me feel less alone.

It took a whole lot of patience, honesty, vulnerability, managed expectations, and a great therapist for me to deeply understand that stepfamilies are messy. But along with this understanding came a genuine love for Jim's boys. Today, when I see my stepsons (now a preteen and teen) rolling on the floor with our 4-year-old daughter, I am so proud of what we've created. Loving Jim came easily, but loving our stepfamily took more time and effort. Yet here we are, my beautiful stepfamily of five. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Building a Stepfamily

More than 40 percent of American adults have a steprelative (defined as a child, parent, or sibling), according to the Pew

Research Center. Here's some advice on how to make it work.

Don't Assume You'll Blend

Stepfamilies are often referred to as "blended families," but that term can create unnecessary expectations, according to Wednesday Martin, author of *Stepmonster: A New Look at Why Real Stepmothers Think, Feel, and Act the Way We Do*. Respect that each member approaches the stepfamily with his or her own history and loyalties. The stepfamily may never feel fully blended, and that's okay.

Loving Jim came easily, but loving our stepfamily took more time and effort.

Don't Play Mom

Whether mom lives across town, across the country, or has passed away, your stepkids already have a mother figure. Your job is not to replace her. I liken the role of stepmom to being more like an aunt—the love and family connection is there, but you're not first in the line of authority.

Spouse Needs to Put You First

A stepfamily must have a clear hierarchy, says Martin: parent and stepparent at the top, kids below. The parent needs to support the stepparent in front of the kids. A household where the kids call the shots, often out of guilt from a divorce, is confusing for everyone.

Spend One-On-One Time with Your Stepkids

It can be hard to bond when the parent is around since it can trigger feelings of who's an insider and who's not, says Martin. Take time for individual outings with each stepchild.

Leave the Discipline to their Parent

Many stepmothers have valid opinions on how to run a household. But if you swoop in, imposing order, your stepkids will likely resent you, says Rachelle Katz, author *The Happy Stepmother*. Let the parent take the heat.

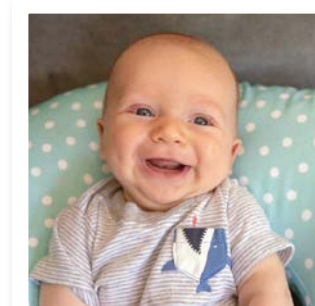
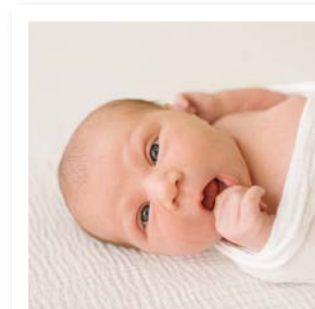
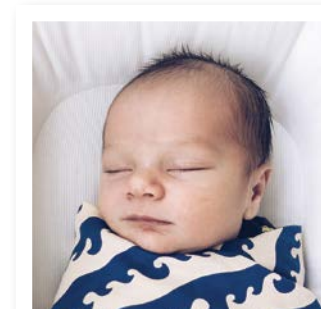
Be Gentle on Yourself

Most stepmothers have good intentions but feel like they are failing miserably at times, Katz says. Don't let stepmother-hood define you. Focus on other aspects of your life that make you happy. ♦

Stephanie is a freelance writer whose work has appeared in Parents Magazine, Real Simple, The Wall Street Journal and more.

GGMG AT WORK

New Arrivals



Alana R. **Baby Alder Diaz**
Emily Beaven **Baby Frances Rose**
Michelle Senn **Baby Helen Jane**
Stephanie G. **Baby Benjamin Ulysses**

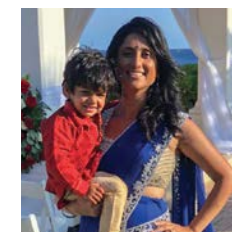
Congratulations to Alana R.! She will be pampering her little one with products from Babyganics. These plant-based, tear-free, hypoallergenic cleansers and lotions clean and protect skin from head to toe.

To announce your new arrival in the magazine and for a chance to win a Babyganics gift set, fill out the form at <http://tinyurl/ggmgnNewArrivals>.



Volunteers of the Month

Congratulations to **Preeya Dabir** and **Jennifer Fish**, our volunteers of the month! Preeya is co-chair of the Volunteer Engagement Committee and Jennifer is a volunteer for Neighborhood Meetups in Neighborhood 7 (part of the Playgroups Committee). Preeya and husband Pramod are parents to Deven (2). Jennifer and husband Ryan are parents to Sierra (19 months).



PREEYA, WE WANT TO KNOW...
Something about you that might surprise people if they knew it: I have been to all 7 continents! I love to travel.
Place in the world you would most like to visit: Iceland.



JENNIFER, WE WANT TO KNOW YOUR FAVORITE...
Pastime(s): Yoga, watching Bay Area sports, cooking/baking;
Book: All the *Harry Potter* books;
Film: All the *Harry Potter* films;
Restaurant: Ocean Ale House;
Destination: Lake Tahoe;
Parenting advice: When they're babies, nap when they nap. I didn't do this all the time, but it did really help when I did.

Preeya and Jennifer will enjoy a gift card to International Orange Spa (2044 Fillmore St.). Book yourself a massage today at www.internationalorange.com.

Making Space for Family by Dialing Down Elsewhere

Is balance in life truly achievable, or must we make huge sacrifices on the path to fulfillment?

By Jennifer Kuhr Butterfoss Photographs by Marissa HB Photography



In a recent *New Yorker* article, personal essayist David Sedaris recounted a friend's theory on the secret to success. The friend asked Sedaris to picture a stove whose four burners represented family, friends, health, and work. In order to be successful, she said, "You have to cut off one of your burners. And in order to be really successful, you have to cut off two."

Is this simple yet jarring view really what it takes to be truly successful? I pondered the question and reflected on my own personal burners, wondering which ones I could ever "cut off" in the interest of keeping the others

burning as brightly as possible. Without a doubt, my health and family connections have been on a high since assuming a part-time role at work with far less responsibility. A steady stream of punctually attended doctor appointments, regular yoga and boot camp classes, parent volunteering events, and perfectly executed family celebrations have me patting myself on the back for making time for what I've deemed most important.

However, a barrage of Facebook photos of a recent destination wedding that I was not invited to, showing old friends frolicking poolside in Costa Rica, suggested that my

friendships have experienced more of a flame-out. The four-burner theory suggests my friendship burner has taken a steeper dial down than I've been willing to admit, in order to continue on my positive health and family trajectory and even begin to reignite a once shining career. But is this really the wisest way to organize one's life, to squeeze out space in one or two areas entirely? The theory left me curious to find out how others engage their careers, friends, and health when they dial up their family burners. How well do we function with an only partially utilized stovetop?

Dialing Down a Career

A woman's career is often one of the first areas to face scrutiny during preparations for motherhood, either from the pregnant woman herself, opinionated family members, or nervous coworkers anticipating her leave. Some women with financial, family, and housing security are able to confidently extinguish the career flame from the outset and make a choice that works for them and their growing families, while others toss, turn, and struggle to figure out the best next move. For some, the choice is not so simple: their paycheck is necessary for survival. Some moms finesse a part-time job or one with an option to telecommute so they are able to enjoy the best of both worlds. But all of these options often come at a cost.

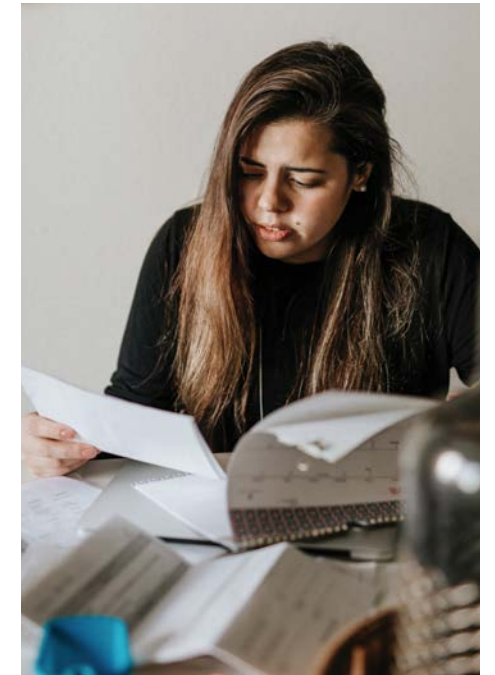
A 2005 study by the Center for Innovation Talent Five found that 37 percent of highly qualified women voluntarily leave their jobs for a period of time, while 66 percent slow down

Most women find it nearly impossible to sustain enough gas in their metaphorical stoves to keep all the pots at a full boil.

their careers, working flexibly from home or part-time for period of time. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, mothers in the workforce are five times more likely than fathers to work part-time (24.7 percent versus 4.8 percent). Subsequently, women often pay a large price in terms of both earning power and possibilities for promotion in the long run.

I asked local moms to share their experience. Laura*, mother of two boys ages 2 and 5, reflected, "Someone once told me that there's a time to push in your career and a time to cruise, and it's okay to cruise. For the last couple of years I was in a good role that was pretty easy for me, but I felt like I wasn't pushing myself hard enough career-wise. This helped me step back, see the forest for the trees, and realize that this is a long journey. There are definitely ways to manage stepping back well and play the long game."

What might playing the long game look like? For starters, it might mean taking a break from work but continuing with contract assignments, staying current with trends in the field, maintaining professional contacts and LinkedIn relationships, or taking a few courses. Part-time work is a great option if you're lucky enough to be able to afford, find, or negotiate it. Re-establishing some parameters of working hours, asking for some work-from-home days, or cutting back on work travel are also some ideas many moms bring to the table with their managers.



Dialing down on friends

In a 2017 study involving more than 270,000 people in nearly 100 countries, researcher William Chopik found that both family and friend relationships were associated with better health and happiness overall. But at advanced ages, the link remained only for people who reported strong friendships. I wondered: since studies show no reported benefits to friendships that are not "strong enough," should parents of young children step back from our social lives in the interest of preserving and strengthening the other three areas? Or are there creative ways of nurturing a social life without making sacrifices?

Without a doubt, new moms struggle with not just maintaining old friendships but also making new ones that are enduring and meaningful. Old friends who haven't yet "settled down" become increasingly harder to connect with as life's demands pull everyone in different directions. Brief playground chats fretting about the kindergarten lottery process don't really lead to the same emotional connections forged from youthful secret sharing and "Sex and the City" binge-watching sessions.

"It is hard," states Dilek Barlow, mom to 3-year-old Zeki. "I have a lot of single, childless friends in the city and they seemed to pull back on inviting me to things after my



son was born. To counter that, I host a lot of brunches and invite everyone. They come to me, which is so much easier, and we all hang out. I also trade nights out with my partner to spend time with friends about two to three times a month.”

There are other ways to combine family and friends. For many Bay Area moms, the on-ramp to mom friendships seems to occur either once kids hit preschool or kindergarten and the birthday party and school event circuit begins. Volunteering at a child’s school can reap tremendous rewards both in the feel-good family department and in the mom-dating world. Without a doubt, making, keeping, and deepening friendships takes work. If family life has gotten complicated and work keeps you up into the wee hours of the night, it might have to be OK to pass on drinks with the girls or let your phone go to voicemail. You may experience FOMO, but it may be preferable than dialing down your other three life burners.

Dialing down on health

Mahatma Gandhi reportedly said, “Your health is your real wealth.” Essentially, without it we have nothing. Pregnancy ramps up the urgency for women to do a real intake of nutrition, fitness, and general health status.

It can also have long-lasting, unexpected effects on everything from blood sugar to weight and physical ability even long after baby is born. Add to this the sheer exhaustion and time suck of a new baby, and we see a recipe for disaster in the health department. If friendships often take the first cut when embarking on parenthood, then exercise is a close second.

Amy*, mom of two, sums up her experience: “I occasionally run for the bus. That’s about the extent of my exercise. I’ve resolved that I just can’t fit it in my life right now. I’m not, have never been, and never will be a morning person. So it’s just not realistic or sustainable for me to get up at 6 or whatever to do it. Even though I do feel badly that I have gotten so out of shape, I trust that in another phase I will have room for a slice of exercise.”

For other moms who have made peace in the lack-of-exercise department, some have found that focusing on better meal choices, and cutting back on sugar, carbohydrates, and alcohol can have surprisingly more dramatic, positive effects on overall health, mood, and physique with very little to no extra time needed. A 2010 study in the *Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness* showed just how poorly people who exercise are able to estimate their caloric equivalent of calories burned. They typically ended up eating two to three times the recommended amount of calories following a rigorous workout if they wanted to lose weight.

Yes, exercise is important, but with childcare as an issue, time getting to and from a gym, and sheer energy levels not being what they used to be pre-kids, maybe structured, intense exercise isn’t the specific aspect of the health burner that needs tending to. Maybe incorporating regular movement into your family routines—doing lunges at the playground or taking your children on nature hikes up steep city streets—or simply tweaking the menu and adding a second veggie side instead of rice or pasta is where the focus needs to go for now.

Stephany Rodriguez, mom of three kids ages 4, 6 and 8, offered a different take: “I think one of the best ways of coping with stress and motherhood is finding time to

exercise. I spent a lot of years trying to work it in and being completely unsuccessful. I finally figured out I had to wake up extra early. It made me a much happier person to carve out the time, even if meant less sleep.” Rodriguez may have figured out the secret to dialing up both her friendship and her health burners at the same time. “Finding another group of moms to support you through it is key. One of my best friends and I signed up for a 12-week online program exercising in our living rooms but we’re accountable to each other. We’re not 100 percent successful, but at least we talk about it at work.”

Having it all?

Admittedly, I’ve dialed down and even extinguished one or more of the four life burners since having kids. I’ve made career-sabotaging moves that movies are made of, blown off some doctor appointments, let a few gym memberships expire, and had my fair share of blow ups and breakups with my besties. But a few recent contracting gigs, an epic 5-mile run this morning, and an upcoming girls’ weekend with fellow mom friends also indicate that I’m dialing up those same three burners that have dimmed in the name of motherhood.

It’s true: Most women find it nearly impossible to sustain enough gas in their metaphorical stoves to keep all the pots at a full boil. The four-burner theory initiates reframing the need to be and do it all, reminding us to make peace with life’s ebbs and flows. The key for moms everywhere is to get to a place of truly owning our own choices, whatever those may be. In the end, it’s about being secure and confident in ourselves and the choices we make, taking ownership of which areas we dial up or down, and the degrees to which we do so that will help define our true success in the end. ❖

Jennifer Kuhr Butterfoss is an SFUSD school site leader, consultant, and writer. She is proud to be kicking butt in the mom department and faking it until she makes it in all other life burners. Find out more at jenniferkuhrbutterfoss.com.

*Last name withheld



From the founder of Recess, in Potrero Hill, we're thrilled to announce the opening of:

recess collective

A NEW, NONPROFIT
COMMUNITY SPACE IN THE OUTER SUNSET

COMING FALL 2018!

Help build this inclusive space for
new & expectant parents
from the ground up.

LEARN MORE
www.recesscollective.org





**PREP & MINI-PREP
RUN QUARTERLY**

Rolling Admissions

prep@peekadoodle.com | 415.440.PEEK



PLAY with PURPOSE

PREP & MINI-PREP - PRESCHOOL PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMS

Art + Music + Outdoor Play + Circle Time

APPLY ONLINE AT PEEKADOODLE.COM

Flexible Schedules | Low Student : Teacher Ratios | Extended Day Options | Starting at 20 Months

Feeling Cramped?

By Jessica Williams Photographs by Anna Psalmond Photography



Space, especially storage space, is a precious commodity in San Francisco. Learn how to maximize your small home to minimize stress.

If there's one thing I love to hate, it's our laundry basket. It's such a necessary evil: a carryall for clothes, a depository for dry cleaning, a ride for our preschooler. But why on earth does it take up so much space? Determining where to store that plastic eyesore confiscates an inordinate amount of my time. So you can imagine my surprise when, after all these years, I learned collapsible laundry baskets exist. What else had I been missing?

I've always been one to sniff out space wherever I could find it in our apartment. But my struggle with space—or lack thereof—took on new meaning after having a kid. With a kid

came more stuff: endless rotations of outgrown clothes, toys, and books. Space? There was just never enough. But after one too many toddler sparkle shoes toppled from the overstuffed shelf in our overstuffed closet, the time came to learn, finally, how to make the most of our limited space.

Psychology of space

You're not imagining it: cramped living quarters full of stuff can indeed stress you out. In a first-of-its-kind, multiyear study, researchers at UCLA's Center on Everyday Lives and Families (CELFL) found that managing a home's large volume of

possessions was linked to elevated stress hormone levels, particularly in mothers. Yes, mothers. In the study, the researchers followed the home life of 32 middle-class, dual-income families in Los Angeles, ultimately publishing their findings in the 2012 book *Life at Home in the Twenty-First Century: 32 Families Open Their Doors*. And unfortunately (and probably to no one's surprise), our generation is on the receiving end of "stuff" cranked out by a consumer-driven culture.

Other studies link clutter with stress. A 2010 study published in the journal *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* found that women

who described their homes as "cluttered" or full of "unfinished projects" had higher levels of cortisol, the hormone associated with stress, and were more likely to be depressed and tired than women who described their homes as "restful" or "restorative." Sound familiar?

Clearing the clutter

By now you've probably guessed the first step to making more space is clearing the clutter. "Clutter closes a room in, making it appear smaller," writes interior designer, HGTV host, and author Kimberly Seldin in *500 Ideas For Small Spaces*. In other words, all those books on your nightstand, the toys piled in the living room corner, and the cute crayon drawings on your fridge are mentally and emotionally closing you in.

One longtime witness to the benefits of decluttering is Sarah Hembree, mother to two boys, ages 4 and 6, and founder of San Francisco-based Nest Happy (nesthappysf.com), a company that helps families declutter and organize. Clearing the clutter is one of the easiest ways to make more space in a small home, says Hembree, explaining that you must rid yourself of objects that aren't serving you. Coming from a family of hoarders, Hembree says that she, herself, had to learn to let go of things after having her kids. "I was living in a tiny footprint of a loft with two kids...and feeling overwhelmed with the stuff." When she stopped taking her kids' pictures because of all the mess in the background, she knew she had to make a lifestyle change. "I really have learned there's an unconscious burden of stuff," she says.

Entire books have been written on best practices for decluttering, such as Marie Kondo's *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*. And a current lifestyle movement promoted by Joshua Fields Millburn and Ryan Nicodemus of theminimalists.com focuses on ridding lives of unnecessary objects and clutter. What's the easiest way to organize your stuff? According to Millburn, it's to "get rid of most of it."

Similarly, Zoë Kim, author of the 2017 book *Minimalism for Families*, says "when we shed our excess possessions, we're making room for something better. *Everything has a cost*" she writes. "When we say yes to one thing we are saying no to another. A minimalist life is

about trading a life filled with clutter, busyness, and noise for a life filled with meaning, connection, and purpose." Clearing the clutter, writes Kim, allows us to focus on what matters most—like experiences and time with family or time spent pursuing passions—rather than being distracted by and taking care of possessions. She explains that minimalism is partly about changing your relationship with your belongings but acknowledges that "most of us don't have an organization problem, we have an own-too-much-stuff problem."

Thinking about function

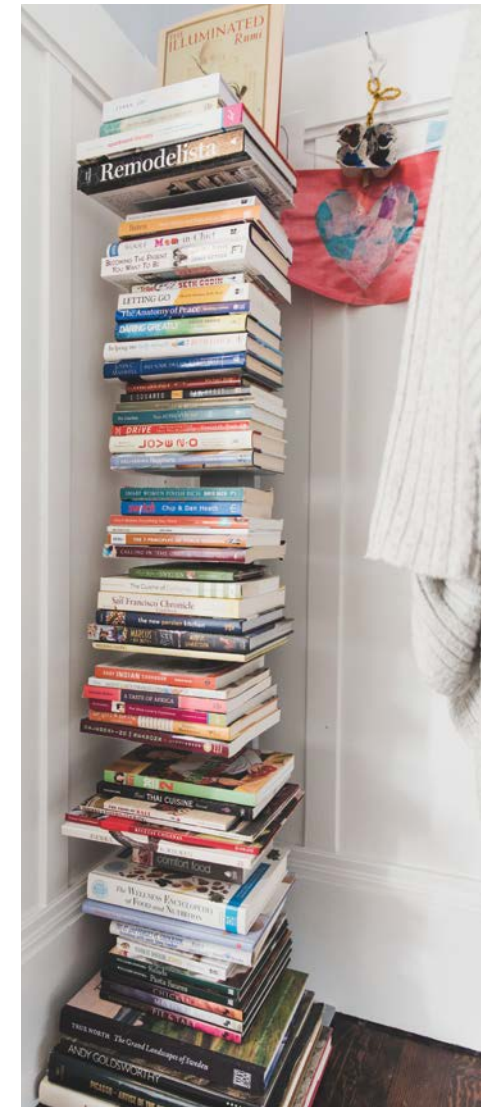
Whether you're ready to dive right in to a minimalist lifestyle or just dip in a toe, you're likely going to need to get rid of some belongings. After doing so, thinking about the function of your remaining items and creating proper homes for them at their points of use can help maximize space and efficiency, says Hembree. Take socks, for instance. Instead of housing socks in bedroom dresser drawers, Hembree stores them in a basket next to the shoes by the front door. "That creates amazing efficiency," she says, explaining that she and her kids had been going up and down stairs to their bedroom before streamlining.

Likewise, be clear about the function of each space in your home. Ask "what is this room here for?" says Hembree. If you've designated part of your living room as a play area, for instance, you can purchase a nice-looking toy bin to contain the toys to help keep toys from migrating to other areas of your home.

Furniture pieces like shelving and bookcases can help physically separate a room into different areas. However, before setting up your space with those shelves and bookcases, be sure to measure. "When trying to maximize a space, especially a small space, a few inches matter," says Rachel Seldin, owner and principal designer of San Francisco-based Seldin Design Studios (Seldindesignstudios.com) and mom to a 5-month-old daughter, explaining that one of the worst things you can do is stuff a new, small home with oversized furniture. "It's crucial to make sure you know all clearances, including doorways and hallways, to confirm what pieces of furniture will fit and where."

Finding more space

One of the easiest ways to find more space is by going vertical. Installing vertical file folders for mail, using wall-mounted cubbies for shoes and wall-mounted holders for towels are all ways to make use of vertical space, says Hembree. Decorative or functional hooks are another space-saving product. "Use hooks in the entry for bags and coats, instead of a coat rack sitting on the floor, or hooks in the bedroom or bathroom for jewelry, instead of a jewelry box taking up important counter space," explains Seldin, whose favorite use of hooks are on the insides of bathroom cabinets or kitchen cabinets, such as for hanging measuring cups and spoons. "The best hook I have installed my house is one under the kitchen cabinet that I use to hang my bananas from!"



Here are some other ways to find space, room by room:

Kitchen

- Consider storing pots and pans in your oven (if you don’t use it much). Or, install a hanging or wall-mounted pot rack to use instead of precious cabinet space.
- Another easy trick to make the most of cabinet space is to store tapered glassware so that every other glass is upside down, writes Seldon in *500 Ideas for Small Spaces*.
- Products like a colander combined with a cutting board or an over-the-sink roll-up dish drying rack can help free up some space.
- A banquette in the kitchen can provide seating and storage space for storing small items like napkins, placemats, and tablecloths or bigger items like appliances that you don’t use every day, says Seldin of Seldin Design Studios.

Living/Family Room

- A round storage ottoman, rather than a coffee table, will give you storage space and peace of mind knowing that your children won’t have sharp corners to navigate.
- Wicker storage cubes or a large, upholstered storage trunk can also act as a coffee table and storage. If you want a hard surface to rest your glasses, use a serving tray with handles to rest on top, says Seldin of Seldin Design Studios.
- Look for space under your couch and upholstered chairs to store puzzles and board games. Flat storage bins beneath sofas and chairs can store puzzles, board games, magazines, and DVDs.
- Pretty storage boxes can act as memory boxes. Hembree notes, “For each of my kids, I have one for each stage of their lives: baby, toddler, preschool.”

Bedroom

- If you have room at the foot of your bed, a wicker hamper can act as both an end table and a place to store blankets and sheets, recommends Seldon in *500 Ideas for Small Spaces*.
- Small dressers used as side tables can give you more room to store clothes: the top drawer can be used for normal nightstand knickknacks and the bottom two drawers can be used for clothing, says Seldin. Use a wall sconce as a light source instead of a table lamp whenever possible.
- An over-the-door laundry hamper, whether placed in the bathroom or bedroom, can free up floor space.

Closets

- Maintaining a capsule wardrobe can greatly reduce the amount of closet space you need. *Minimalism for Families* author Zoë Kim defines a capsule wardrobe as “a mini-wardrobe of essential and interchangeable clothing pieces,” with an upper limit of 40 clothing pieces.
- Even without a capsule wardrobe, organizing your clothes and accessories will maximize space. Hembree suggests adding drawers to the bottoms of closets, as hanging rods are inefficient, and using garment organizers to separate clothes according to function. Janet Lee of *livinginanutshell.com* suggests using magazine file folders to store clutches, purses, and wallets.
- GGMG member Kelly Dwinells suggests nesting suitcases and travel bags inside one another to make the best use of space and keeping any off-season clothes in tubs in less-accessible storage areas.

Let’s face it. If I can find more space (and, in so doing, promote my own health and wellness) by clearing our apartment’s clutter and creating proper homes for our laundry basket and our daughter’s sparkle shoes, I’m all for it. Now, if only I could find some more time to make that space... ❖

Jessica Williams is a freelance writer whose work has appeared on sites including Mother, Lucie’s List, and The Huffington Post. After trading in her plastic laundry basket for a collapsible one, she’s going to trade in her plastic bucket for a collapsible one (those exist, too!).



Handy Space-saving Products

Items can be found on *Amazon.com* or at the website indicated.

1. Collapsible Laundry Basket by Roaming Cooking
Stores flat to fit anywhere.



2. Collapsible Bucket by Infusion Living
A durable 2-gallon bucket when you need it, a fraction of the size when you don’t. And it’s made of silicone, so it’s both lightweight and rust-proof.



3. Over-the-door Laundry Hamper by Urban Mom

With fun colors that will appeal to kids, this fabric hamper will fit in even the slimmest of spaces. You can put one in every room and gather them up on laundry day.



4. Magnetic Ironing Mat by Walter Drake

This ironing mat sticks to the top of your dryer to make that surface multi-use. Best of all, it rolls up to be put away when not needed.



5. Towel Holder by mDesign

This clever shelf stores bath and face towels in one compact hanging rack.



5. Over-the-Sink Roll Up Dish Drying Rack (Bed Bath & Beyond)

tinyurl.com/oversinkdishdryer

This brilliant drying racks fits over the sink when needed and stores in next to no space when not.



6. Rinse & Chop Strainer and Cutting Board Combo

Not only can you chop and rinse in one step, the locking hole also serves as a hanging hole so you can save much-needed cabinet space.

7. Simple Division Garment Organizers

When you’re jamming too many clothes into a small closet, it’s easy to lose clothes for months (or years!). These organizers and labels keep coat hangers spaced and remind you of what you have and where it is.



8. Yoga Rat Towels

ratbrands.com/collections/yoga-mat-towel

Sure, they’re technically for your yoga mat, but nothing is stopping you from using these absorbent towels at the beach or in the bath! They fold up super flat, so they take up minimal space in your suitcase or closet.





Co-housing: Creating a Community that Works for Modern Lifestyles

Exploring what it means to live in a cohousing community

By Veronica Reilly-Granich

Photos courtesy of It Takes A Community

Do you have a neighbor you would feel comfortable borrowing a cup of sugar from, or would you rather do a 9 p.m. grocery run for that missing cupcake ingredient? Can you walk 30 feet to share a cup of coffee with a friend? Do you wish that someone had done your laundry and grocery shopping for three months after your baby arrived? All of these scenarios are not only realistic, they are part of the integral fabric of interdependence and care that people seek when choosing to live in a cohousing community.

The modern-day cohousing movement started in 1970s Denmark. Twenty-seven families outside of Copenhagen decided to find a different way to live together, support

each other, and create day-to-day community in a world where many of us live far from family and close friends. Although humans have lived in close-knit communities since the dawn of civilization, modern lifestyles are undermining this type of organically occurring intergenerational lifestyle. The modern cohousing movement is in many ways a return to the community-based living that was once common around the world. In this style of living, which is suitable not only for families but a diverse range of household compositions, people have private homes within a larger, interdependent community. There are quite a few of these developments around the Bay Area, and each one is unique. Some communities are as small as three

households, while others include more than 32 households. Many are intergenerational, some focus on providing low-income housing, while others have formed around a shared aspect of identity, such as Christian or LGBTQ communities. There are also communities exclusively for seniors.

What makes a cohousing community?

There are two main ways these communities come about—they're either designed as cohousing neighborhoods from the ground up on a vacant piece of land, or existing buildings are retrofitted to become cohousing friendly. Most groups in the Bay Area are living in retrofit communities, but a few were built

from scratch, such as Pleasant Hill Cohousing and Mountain View Cohousing Community, and a few more are on the way, notably in Marin County.

In their book *Creating Cohousing: Building Sustainable Communities*, Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett identify six common characteristics of cohousing communities. First is a **participatory process**, wherein members are involved in planning the development and making all final decisions about the design. The next key factor is a **design that facilitates community**. Whether retrofit or built from the ground up, the physical space purposely fosters interaction. Closely related to this is the third factor, **extensive common facilities**, which typically include a common house, workshops, a children's play room, and other spaces the community agrees on. There is an opportunity for everyone to eat at least one or two meals together in the common house each week, sometimes as many as six. Once the community is built, **residents manage the development themselves**—there is no property management company or embattled HOA board. All adult residents participate in running the community. Additionally, there is a **non-hierarchical structure** to share responsibility for decisions, typically using some variation of consensus-driven decision making. Finally, each household has a **separate income source**, and the community

does not generate income itself. There are wide variations in other aspects of cohousing communities, but they generally share these six characteristics.

Life inside a cohousing community

Hannah, a mother of two, lives in a small retrofit cohousing community in the East Bay. She lived in co-ops when she was in college and enjoyed having a large home base of people and sharing meals. However, once she met her partner, they decided they didn't necessarily want to share a house with other people, but they still wanted that sense of support and community. So she and her partner migrated to a cohousing community. Both of their children were born there, and Hannah said the support they received was amazing. She said, "This was before Instacart—if we needed anything from the grocery store, people would just ask and go get it. This was so important especially in the first days and weeks of each baby. I remember having this tiny newborn baby and there were all these experienced moms who could help me."

What Hannah likes best about cohousing is the ready access to social opportunities. "It is so hard to hang out when you have to plan [around] children," she said. "I am very social and I really enjoy being able to hang out with people outside my family without texting and



planning. Our baby monitors all extend to each other's homes. After our business meeting last night, we were sitting around the living room of one house, and some of us wanted some ice cream. We could leave the two people who didn't want to go at home with the baby monitors while we went out. If we were a two-parent household, we would have to get a babysitter or not go. But here, we can just go." This sentiment was echoed by many parents.

Kim Seashore lives in a large retrofit cohousing community in the East Bay and spoke about the perks of shared social responsibility in cohousing communities. "I had a network of friends [outside cohousing] who would have done things for me," she says. "But I would have had to ask. In our community, I get my laundry into the shared washing machine, and someone [will] put it into the dryer and it [will] end up folded and back on my doorstep. That sort of thing is huge."

Emily Howard lives in a smaller retrofit cohousing community in the East Bay with her two children. Moving to the cohousing community "was like having family," she said. "People took the baby so I could shower every day. It was amazing." She added, "When we bought our house, the people who sold it to us told us that in a few years our daughter would be able to run around outside by herself." Sure enough, by age four, her





daughter could comfortably roam the community on her own.

The challenges of cohousing

As with any community, the benefits of cohousing come with some challenges. David Burwen is one of the co-founders of Mountain View Cohousing Community, which focuses on seniors. “The first thing you need to have a successful community is that people have to be willing to put the needs of the community in some ways above their own interests,” he said. “People who live in separate houses can make their own decisions. When you live in a [cohousing] community, you have people who have different ideas about issues and you’ll have to decide as a group what to do.” Every single person I spoke to echoed this sentiment in one way or another. One thing that makes cohousing different than your average condominium association is that the community is entirely run by the residents, who all serve on committees. There are typically monthly meetings, although some places meet more frequently.

Steve O’Neal is a father of three young children and spent three years traveling around the world visiting cohousing communities. He witnessed that these communities tend to have a lot of

interpersonal challenges, even the award-winning ones. “We are so conditioned to be independent and to raise our children independently,” he said. “We have a blind spot around our lack of preparedness to live in community.” He believes that once they acknowledge this challenge, cohousing communities are able to grow, and he is currently working on starting a new community in Marin County, after successfully

The modern cohousing movement is in many ways a return to the community-based living that was once common around the world.

founding a small urban cohousing community in Madrid.

In *Creating Cohousing*, McCamant and Durrett call these interpersonal challenges the “Cohousing Tax.” It is the price one pays to live in a close-knit community with all its benefits. Sometimes there is someone who annoys you, never agrees with you, or just makes you roll your eyes at least once during each monthly meeting. Hannah summed it up this way: “Cohousing is a really great choice for parents

if they are willing to make compromises. Cohousing nudges you in the direction of flexibility and rolling with it, and that is the direction you should be going as a parent.”

Ready to go for it?

Modern life can be alienating for many people, especially when we live far from our own families. Living in a community that is focused on slowing down and enjoying time together, despite differences in lifestyle or opinion, can be a true balm. If you think that cohousing might be the right fit for your family, check out the Cohousing Association of the United States at www.cohousing.org. David Burwen suggests that you spend some time in one (or more) before moving in. You can visit for a meal or go on a tour. Many places also have guest rooms available for visitors. Other communities have rental units in addition to owner-occupied units, so you can test the waters first. As Susan Burwen said, “It’s hard to describe it... But there is something really special about knowing my neighbors. Sometimes when I go to my car it takes me 15 minutes because I’m stopping to talk with my neighbors. There is something about it that is a very welcoming, enriching feeling.” ❖

Veronica lives in a traditional condo complex in San Francisco. She is strongly considering learning how to put the needs of the group above her own so someone other than her husband will cook her dinner six nights a week. Contact her to talk cohousing at very23@gmail.com.



A mom from GGMG knows the perfect sitter for you.

UrbanSitter unlocks your personal network to find sitters and nannies of people you trust.

Get your 2018-2019 GGMG member discount today!

35% + \$50

off all UrbanSitter membership fees

credit for new customers

Visit:
urbansitter.com/promo/ggmg



*Subject to UrbanSitter Inc.'s Terms of Service. New customers receive 35% off UrbanSitter fees and \$50 credit to be used toward babysitter payments. Returning customers receive 35% off UrbanSitter fees (not valid for babysitter payments). Redempt must become a registered user of UrbanSitter with valid credit card on file to redeem offer. Restrictions include sitter availability and service to requested location (not all areas served). For GGMG Members only - Please note that your name and email will be shared with GGMG to confirm eligibility. UrbanSitter reserves the right to modify these terms. Valid through June 30, 2019.





Patricia De Fonte

Estate Planning Attorney

www.defontelaw.com
patricia@defontelaw.com
(415) 735-6959



Use code ggmg for 50% off tickets bought on or before 8/31/18



Nature Artwalks

Short guided walks in SF parks to collect leaves, flowers, bark, sticks, rocks and other natural treasures found on the ground and use them for art activities.

Experience nature and art in a new way – together!



colorexplorerssf.com @colorexplorerssf info@colorexplorerssf.com



The Mountain School

CORTE MADERA, CA • EST 1990

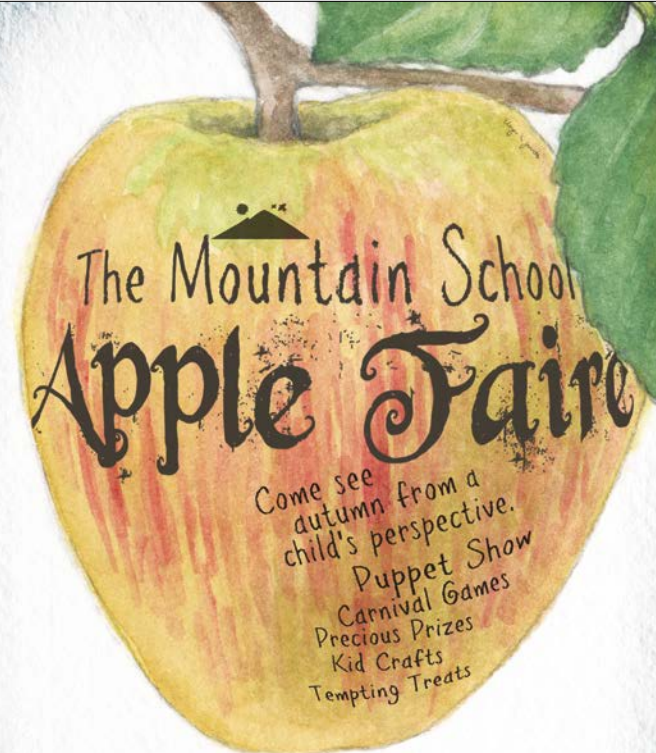


Where children **DISCOVER** their potential through **PLAY**

Visit us today to learn how our preschool promotes self-reliance and creative play to support your child's confidence and lay a foundation for future success, socially and academically.

- Storytelling & seasonal songs
- Nature walks & outdoor play
- Organic vegetarian snacks
- Waldorf-certified teachers
- Ages 2.9 to 5 years old
- Extended care, 8am to 6pm

www.marinmountainschool.org 415.924.4661



The Mountain School Apple Faire

Come see autumn from a child's perspective.
Puppet Show
Carnival Games
Precious Prizes
Kid Crafts
Tempting Treats

Saturday, October 13, 10 – 1 o'clock
A fabulous faire for threes to sevens (all ages welcome)
50 El Camino Dr. Corte Madera • www.TheMountainSchool.net

Vol. 1

PERSONAL ADS

www.AskSherriHowe.com

OUTGOING REALTOR ISO FUN FAMILIES to hang out with on Saturdays & Sundays from 2:00-4:00pm

ABOUT ME: I'm a self-professed data geek and just a wee bit OCD. As a straight shooter who protects her clients' money like a pit bull, I'm not afraid to advise you to walk away from a house, or point out its flaws. I take my job very seriously, but I love to have fun while I'm doing it. I love breaking down the often complicated process of home buying and selling into clear steps, and calculating risk for each decision. I've been told that I'm "the best explainer". 8 of my 10 years as a Realtor in San Francisco have been conducted with my "mom goggles" on. I'm looking for long term relationships, not one night stands. I'm open to polyamory if you have friends who want to buy a multi-unit with you.

ABOUT YOU: You're an awesome mom who needs a new home for your growing family. You are careful and make solid investment decisions. You love Excel spreadsheets, bulleted lists and online project management systems. You enjoy asking stupid questions (that aren't actually stupid) and receiving clear, thoughtful answers. You like it when people tell you what you need to know, because you might not even know what to ask. You dream of someone who will show you the math behind their price suggestions; someone who enjoys ripping through a disclosure package just daring it to have an inconsistency or unclear answer so they can clarify it; someone to delegate all of your worrying to, because you know that they are capable, competent, and they have your back without a shred of doubt.

LIKES:

- Measuring things
- Climbing on the roof
- Furry animals

DISLIKES:

- Monday offer dates
- Crooked wall art
- Crawl spaces

NICKNAMES:

- Queen of Comps
- Disclosure Decimator
- Mom

FAVORITE SAYINGS:

- You only get what you inspect, not what you expect.
- There are no stupid questions.
- Trust but verify.
- Make it happen!



SHERRI'S 2017 SALES STATISTICS:

- 56% of clients were GGMG families
- 74% of clients had young children
- 28% were off-market transactions
- 55% of buyers and 84% of sellers were first-timers
- 45% of buyers had their 1st offer accepted
- 70% of buyers were in contract within 3 months
- Prices ranged from \$850,000 - \$6,995,000

AGENT RANKINGS:

- #1 Team Companywide at Zephyr - 2017
- Top 1% of all Realtors in San Francisco - 2017
- Top 10 Zephyr Agent in 2013, 2015, 2016 and 2017
- Top Producer since 2009
- A total of 55 past & present GGMG families served!



Whether you are venturing into the market for the first time, or you are a real estate veteran, Sherri has the proven expertise and enthusiasm to guide you to a solid investment decision. Not sure where to get started? No worries—contact Sherri today!

Sherri Howe

REALTOR® & GGMG Mom
a.k.a [askhowe](#) — look for me on the message boards!
415.640.4664 BRE# 01816621
sherri@asksherrihowe.com





GetzWell
personalized
pediatrics

We don't just talk the talk,
we walk the walk.

Our care is one-of-a kind.
We don't just treat symptoms. We
treat your child from the inside out.

We find the right remedy.
We gladly offer safe alternatives to
antibiotics when appropriate.

We offer newbornhouse calls.
We show you the ABCs of infant care
and expert breastfeeding support.

We're always here.
Your GetzWell pediatrician is available 24/7.
Just call or email. We'll answer.

415.826.1701 WWW.GETZWELL.COM
1701 CHURCH ST & 1800 UNION ST, SAN FRANCISCO



Music Together of San Francisco **SHAKE IT!**

LOCATIONS IN
GLEN PARK
SOMA
PACIFICA
ST FRANCIS WOOD
& THE HEART
OF NOE VALLEY



PROVIDING RESEARCH-BASED,
MUSICAL FUN FOR FAMILIES SINCE 2001
musictogethersf.com



JESSE RECOR
PHOTOGRAPHY
JESSERECOR.COM

**IT STARTS
HERE.**



BACH ARCHITECTURE

modern buildings/additions/renovations for light, livability and comfort



*projects published in Dwell, Inhabitat, and San Francisco Magazine

www.bach-architecture.com

JUST FOR MOMS

Mani-Pedi Night
Relax and get your nails done at our private GGMG event at Sunset Nails.

DATE: Tuesday, August 21
TIME: 5:30 p.m.
(confirm time on ggmg.org)
PLACE: 1810 Irving St.
COST: \$33 (subsidized, but please tip)

Movie night—Crazy Rich Asians
While money can’t buy love, it can definitely complicate things. Filmed in Singapore and Malaysia, *Crazy Rich Asians* features an exclusively Asian cast, including Constance Wu and Michelle Yeoh.

DATE: August. Check ggmg.org for date, time, and place.
COST: \$8 (subsidized)



Cannabis and Women’s Health—Tasting and Education Event
A growing number of moms use cannabis for many reasons—insomnia, back pain, anxiety, to enhance desire, elevate mood, heal, and relax. Join us if you’re interested in getting educated about cannabis. Tasting is optional.

DATE: September. Check ggmg.org for date, time, and place.
COST: TBD

KIDS ACTIVITIES

GGMG at the Sunset Community Festival
Come visit the GGMG table during this day of family fun where the neighborhood showcases everything it has to offer. There will be food, drinks, kids’ activities, live entertainment including local music and dance performances, shopping with Sunset Mercantile vendors, and more.

DATE: Saturday, September 24
TIME: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
PLACE: West Sunset Playground
COST: FREE

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Coastal Cleanup Volunteering
During Coastal Cleanup Day 2017, volunteers removed 800,000 pounds of trash and recyclables from California’s coast in only three hours. There’s truly power in numbers.

This is a perfect volunteer opportunity for little kids because they can see the garbage they collected and know that they have helped protect the environment.

DATE: Saturday, September 15
TIME: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
PLACE: Ocean Beach, meetup point TBD
COST: FREE

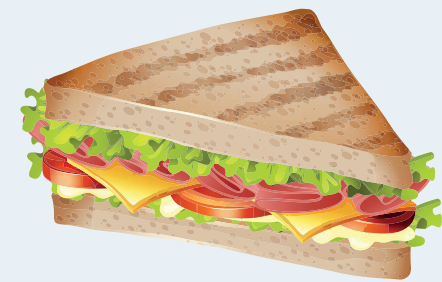


CAREERS AND ENTREPRENEURS

Career Change Workshop
Do you feel stuck in a soul-sucking job and long to do something that feels more fulfilling? Know you’re in the wrong career but feel paralyzed by fear when you think about making a change? Whether you’re returning to work after maternity leave, thinking about returning after a break, or are currently in a job and know you’re meant to do something more, this workshop is for you.

Join career coach and GGMG mom Julie Houghton for this event (back by popular demand) and take the first step towards finding work that aligns with who you are!

DATE: Friday, September 21
TIME: 12 to 1 p.m.
PLACE: 564 Market St., 3rd Flr., Ste. 300
COST: FREE



Moms August & September Networking Lunches at Boudin Bakery & Cafe Downtown
Everyone is welcome, from pregnant moms to working moms to stay-at-home moms, and everyone in between! We look forward to seeing you there. We usually sit in the back corner; we will have our Moms Downtown Lunch Group sign on the table.

DATES: Wednesday, August 1 and Wednesday, September 5
TIME: 12 p.m.
PLACE: 4 Embarcadero Center
COST: FREE

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETUPS

LGBTQ family group
Whether it’s busting out the ball pit, singing songs with local musicians, or having a dance party, the LGBTQ family group knows how to have fun! We meet every first Saturday of the month at Community Well (78 Ocean Ave.), providing a safe space for queer families to meet and discuss topics that are unique to the queer community. Our meetups often include a potluck, facilitated discussions on LGBTQ topics, and socializing for parents and kids alike.



Neighborhood 5
Every Friday, mamas and babies meet at Noe Children’s Playground (Douglass St. and 24th St.). The meetup is a playdate for babies, toddlers, and older children to explore the playground together and meet new friends. It is also a meetup for mamas to connect and build a real-life network. Expecting moms are welcome as well!

Neighborhood 5
Duboce Triangle, Noe, Castro, Mission, and surrounding neighborhoods.



Neighborhood 6
Dru Garza is the neighborhood director and hosts our quarterly family playdates at the beautiful Botanical Gardens (1199 9th Ave.). Lupe Amador and Semmantha Chie are our newest volunteers, and they have recently taken on our Moms Only Wine Night, which falls on the fourth Tuesday of the month. They have hosted events at several neighborhood hot spots, from an SF Giants margarita-themed

night to tiki cocktails and comedy. Kate Bartenwerfer continues to host our book club every six weeks, which is open to anyone who has read the book or just wants a night out with some fun ladies. We’re always looking for incredible mamas to join our team. Let us know if you’re interested in a volunteer position!

Neighborhood 6
Balboa Terrace, Forest Hill, Golden Gate Heights, Laguna Honda, Lakeshore, Inner/Upper/Lower Sunset, St. Francis Wood, Miraloma Park, Parkside, West Portal, Clarendon Heights, Cole Valley, Lower & Upper Haight, Midtown Terrace, Panhandle, Twin Peaks, and surrounding neighborhoods.

REGISTER FOR EVENTS AT GGMG.ORG/CALENDAR

COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT: CAREERS AND ENTREPRENEURS

Who are your current volunteers?

Emily Beaven and Julie Houghton

How do you know when you are making a difference?

We know we’re making a difference based on the level of engagement from our members. When we have a good turnout at our events or receive emails from members thanking us for an event, it always makes us feel good!

What advice would you give to a working mom who wants to “lean out” for a while?

Emily: I had my second child in June and am definitely leaning out at the moment. As a realtor at Compass, I have a tremendous amount of flexibility. Right now, that means a shorter list of clients and streamlining my marketing and branding for the coming year. My advice for moms is to keep one foot in the door—maybe that means attending our bi-monthly networking lunches, staying involved in professional organizations, or getting coffee with co-workers. Maternity leave can be a great opportunity for reflection, giving you the space to identify goals and the time to explore other careers.

Julie: Follow your gut and trust that things will work out. Before kids, I spent 15 years in the corporate world. Deep in

my heart I always knew it was not the right fit for me, but I was too scared to make a change. When our older daughter was born 6 years ago, I finally found the courage to find work that was more in alignment with who I am and that would give me more time to be with her and with our younger daughter, born a year later. I became a career coach working primarily with other moms, and I got a transition job that gave me the financial freedom to build my coaching business while having time with the kids. It was a leap and was scary at times, but being a mom gave me the courage and determination to make it work. I also wanted to be a role model for our girls so they could see that it is possible to do work that you love and have time for your family.

What’s next for the Careers and Entrepreneurs Committee?

We received great feedback from our 2017 survey, and we are implementing that into our programming. As busy moms and professionals, time is our biggest hurdle. We would love to expand our volunteer roster so that we can provide our members with MORE resources, events, and webinars. If you’re interested in helping in any capacity, let’s talk! entrepreneurs@gmg.org.

PARTNERSHIPS

Maximize Your GGMG Membership

Your GGMG membership comes with amazing perks offered through the **GGMG Partners and Friends Programs**. Make sure to take advantage of these exclusive GGMG benefits!

Partners of GGMG: GGMG has partnered with the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco (JCCSF), Recess Urban Recreation, Peekadoodle Kidsclub, and UrbanSitter to provide exclusive benefits to our members. Here are some of the amazing benefits available:

- **UrbanSitter** offers new members a \$50 credit toward babysitting fees, and all GGMG members get 35 percent off UrbanSitter fees (does not include babysitter fees).
- New **Peekadoodle** members get three months of free access to the playspace, and all GGMG members receive free access the first Saturday (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and third Friday (2 to 5 p.m.) of the month.
- New **Recess** members receive one month of free access to the playspace, and all GGMG members receive free access every Thursday (1 to 3 p.m.) plus the last Sunday of the month (9 to 11 a.m.).
- **JCCSF** offers 40 percent off classes that remain open after registration, a free trial week in its Club 18 afterschool program (grades 6 to 8), and three free passes to the KinderFunKlub.

For a full list of GGMG Partner benefits, visit www.gmg.org/member-perks/partners.

Friends of GGMG: Receive discounts at local businesses including adult and kid classes, beauty and wellness services, child care, professional photography, and retail, through the Friends of GGMG program. For a full list of local discounts, visit www.gmg.org/member-perks/friends

Save the Date



GGMG Fall Festival!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2018

10 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

We’re excited to announce a new location for this year’s Fall Festival—the SFF Soccer Field behind Spark Social in Mission Bay!

Mark your calendars and plan on celebrating the season at this new venue with food trucks, bounce houses, a pumpkin patch, live music for the little ones, family photo booth, raffle and goodie bags, and many other fun activities sponsored by our local business partners.

For even more fun, consider a volunteer shift for the day of the event. It’s a great way to meet other moms and the only way to enter the volunteer raffle! Please contact us at rsvp@gmg.org for details.

Fall Festival is free to GGMG members and their immediate family. A limited number of additional tickets for non-members will be available for purchase. Look for the Eventbrite registration details to be posted the first week of September on the GGMG calendar.

Looking forward to seeing you and your families and creating a lot of fun memories!

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Making a Difference Locally

The Diversity & Inclusion Committee has recently focused on building synergistic relationships with local organizations to work toward common goals, including providing educational opportunities and supporting mothers and families in our broader community. We are pleased to count among our community partners Our Family Coalition (OFC), Homeless Prenatal Program (HPP), Children’s Council, SF Smiles, and Safe and Sound. This year we have:

- Co-sponsored OFC’s event on how to talk to tweens about race and gender.
- Collaborated with the GGMG Kids Events Committee to provide admission for several HPP staff to enjoy the GGMG Spring Fling.
- Co-sponsored a special reading of “47,000 Beads” and discussion with local Native American authors—a joint effort with Bay Area American Indian Two-Spirits, Showing Up for Racial Justice SF, OFC, and Natural Resources.
- Partnered with Children’s Council to offer GGMG members an exclusive opportunity to learn how to navigate the preschool process.
- Held meetings with the Founder/Director of SF Smiles and the Volunteer/Donations Manager of HPP to develop methods to support their efforts.

We are extremely optimistic about what we can accomplish in partnership with these passionate organizations. If you feel strongly about creating a welcome and safe place for all mothers, please lend a hand and help us do even more! Simply email diversity@gmg.org to get involved with our small but mighty team.

MAGAZINE

Copy Editor Wanted!

Love dotting i’s and crossing t’s? Love GGMG Magazine? Love working in comfy pants? Then join our team!

Copy editors work with staff writers to shape articles for style, grammar, and clarity.

Candidates must have basic editing experience. Specific knowledge of style guides (AP, Chicago, etc.) is desired. We require meticulous attention to detail, eagerness to learn the house style, and encourage attendance at our monthly, fun-filled editorial meetings where we brainstorm over pizza and wine.

Email editor@gmg.org if you are interested in joining us!

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Introducing the Volunteer Engagement Committee

The Volunteer Engagement Committee, previously known as the Operations Committee, has been busy changing up the ten annual GGMG volunteer meetings to ensure more variety than the typical roundtable gathering. We held well-attended events at Presidio Bowl, the Emporium SF Arcade, and a special meeting that focused on race and diversity as it applies to parenting. One of the year’s highlights was our fabulous co-chair event in June where we screened *Bridesmaids* in a private theater at the Alamo Drafthouse. The event was a huge hit with lots of food, free-flowing champagne, souvenir glasses, and take-home children’s books.

Generous donors and GGMG community partners have helped make our 2018 meetings a great success so far. We look forward to continuing the momentum for the rest of the year. Upcoming volunteer meeting dates are September 4 and November 5. Save the date for our annual volunteer appreciation event on December 3 at Le Colonial. Stay tuned for details; it is an event you won’t want to miss. If you are interested in volunteering with GGMG, please feel free to attend one of our upcoming meetings or contact the Recruiting Committee at recruiting@gmg.org.

We love our volunteers



GGMG’s Preschool Preview Night

DETAILS: Meet and talk with representatives from dozens of local preschools. Get the answers you need to questions about philosophies, costs, schedules, pre-admission visits and more.

Meet representatives from a diverse group of family-focused organizations and learn about their programs, services and products.

New this year—limited childcare will be available!

DATE: Thursday, September 20, 2018
TIME: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
PLACE: County Fair Building, Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave and Lincoln Way
COST: \$15/person, \$20 at the door; ONLY \$5 for GGMG members & guest, \$10 at the door
REGISTRATION: <https://gmgppn2018.eventbrite.com>

Play. Learn. Grow.



Apply Now!

Visit petersplace.org
or call 415.752.1444



PETER’S PLACE
Nursery School

IRISH EXPRESS®
MOVING & STORAGE INC

FREE ESTIMATES
415-282-4889
irishexpress@gmail.com

****GGMG DISCOUNT****
call or email for details

- Moving Families In The San Francisco Bay Area For 22 Years
- Quality & Professional Full Service Company
- Family Owned & Operated by John O’Donoghue
- Full-Time, Long-Term Professional Employees
- Fully Licensed & Insured (CAL-T 181706)
- BBB Rated A+

Irish Express - Don’t move home without us!



Screenings, assessments, and effective speech therapy for kids of all ages.
Some insurance plans accepted.

2166 Union Street, San Francisco
hannah@talkshopspeech.com
(650) 468-6478
www.talkshopspeech.com

ARE YOU FRUSTRATED WITH ALL YOUR CLUTTER?



GET 10% OFF

IT’S TIME
to call in a professional organizer!

I will help you organize your living spaces and gently guide you through the purging process. Together we will create a customized sustainable organization system that will fulfill your needs. In your newly organized live or work spaces, you will find harmony and therefore, reduced stress increased productivity.

Call Me (415) 944-7765
Lauren Winters West
LaurenWintersWest.com LaurenWintersWest@gmail.com



FRENCH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

WHERE YOUR CHILD WILL THINK, ACT, AND FEEL IN MORE THAN ONE CULTURE

LEARN MORE AT WWW.FRENCHAMERICANSF.ORG

I ♥ Mom

The Final Frontier

By Becca Klarin

Space, in its multitude of forms, has influenced my life for as long as I can remember. It started with *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and everyone's ultimate shiny-headed hero, Captain Jean-Luc Picard. It seemed like *Star Trek* took all the lessons and morals I had absorbed from *Sesame Street* and Saturday morning cartoons and blew them up to epic proportions. So while my friends were watching *The All-New Mickey Mouse Club*, *Family Matters*, and *Saved by the Bell*, I snuggled up to *Star Trek*. The show crept into my everyday, too; I played *Enterprise* in the backyard: steering the ship, meeting new lifeforms, and brokering peace treaties. I even dressed up as Uhura for Halloween, complete with her signature red and black dress with knee-high black boots and an earpiece. Instead of board games and Barbies, I spent my time wondering what it would be like to go into space.

I got my chance the summer I was 11 (sort of). I spent a week at Space Camp at the Kennedy Space Center, where I was one of only three girls in the entire camp. As my Milli Vanilli cassette spun in the tape deck, I spun in the multi-axis trainer, practiced walking on the moon, and commanded a successful shuttle launch. I ate freeze-dried peas and curry and ice cream, cried myself to sleep at night when I missed my mom, made sure I always had on clean underwear, and met kids from all over the country. It wasn't quite as cool as the movie *SpaceCamp*, but I did walk away with the message that being different was OK. So what if soccer, dance, archery, or cooking camp didn't interest me like the other kids at school? My parents supported me in my interests, however varied from the expected.

Fast forward to now. My fascination with space hasn't died, though it has changed its shape. I spend my time thinking of the

space around us—of those around me, of doing good because it's the right thing to do, of listening to my heart. With incredibly rich and overwhelming experiences zipping past us at the speed of light, we grasp onto the fleeting moments of self, discovery, and connection with abandon.

Since becoming a mom three years ago, I've challenged myself to question what I think is expected of me as a parent: who am I and how does that fit with the wants of my partner and child? Life chasing a toddler feels like there's no time to pause, but sometimes I find a moment, a parental black hole, to wonder: What space do I want to carve out for myself? How do I want to be in this space? And how do I support my own child as she navigates her own space?

I dropped my daughter off at preschool the other morning, and as I walked to the bus, I imagined her floating through an infinite space of endless possibilities throughout her day, and it filled me with intense joy. As a mama,

I want to enjoy, protect, and push my little girl, but also embrace and support whoever she is and wants to be, quirks and all, like my parents did for me all those years ago.

This is hardly my final frontier, but each discovery I've made

along this incredible, intangible voyage has been worthy of pursuit. So when my child sticks her finger deep up her nose while going through rigorous airport security, I will embrace her journey of

discovery, and we will boldly go there together, hand in hand (but with tissues). ♦

A resident of San Francisco for 17 years, Becca still embraces her inner nerd and justice seeker; she currently manages a research integrity program at an education nonprofit. She's also mama to Naomi (3).



Life chasing a toddler feels like there's no time to pause, but sometimes I find a moment, a parental black hole, to wonder: What space do I want to carve out for myself?



GGMG | GOLDEN GATE
MOTHERS GROUP

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

Are you a Bay Area mom?
Want to receive this magazine?
Join GGMG today at www.ggmg.org.

Presorted
First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Oakland, CA
Permit #2319

statement of purpose:

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

RH
BABY&CHILD

FURNITURE | BEDDING | DÉCOR | REGISTRY
The Village at Corte Madera, 1816 Redwood Highway | 415.927.2659
rhhbabyandchild.com