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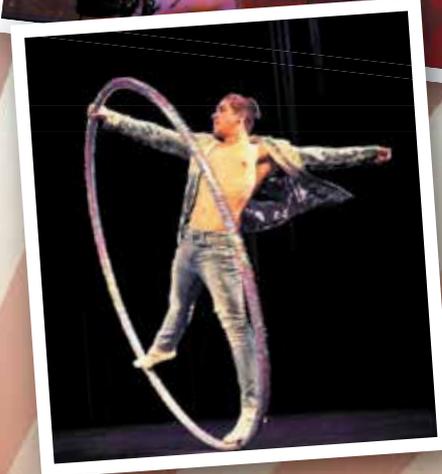
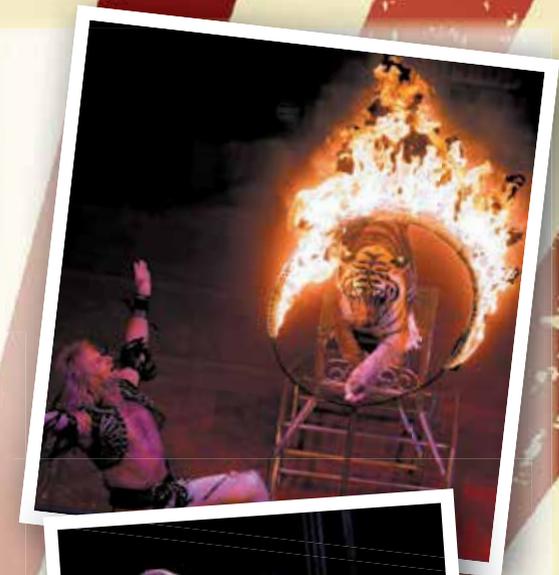
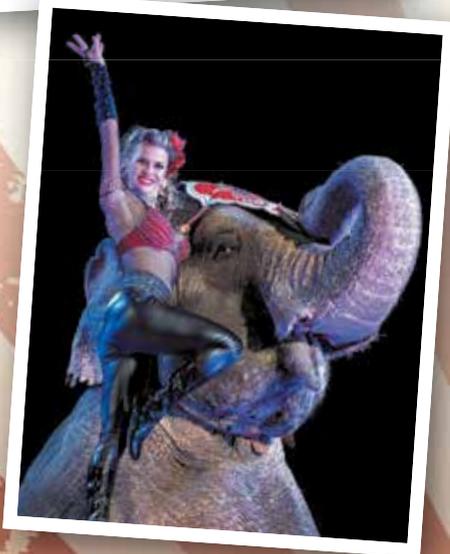


**Devastating diagnosis
inspires advocacy**

Help available for grieving children



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Moms

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Altoona Mirror
Making It Happen For You

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On the cover:

Jen Marasco-Kuhn and her husband Chris Kuhn with their two daughters. Their youngest Cora was diagnosed with Dravet syndrome, a rare, life threatening seizure disorder.

SPEECH SPOTLIGHT

Help for concussion concerns

The blue sky shimmered with golden sunlight, a beautiful day for a drive to visit a friend — dry and clear — but I never reached my destination. Instead, a large SUV crashed into me, cutting my trip short. The last thing I remembered before the reckless driver's vehicle slammed into mine was the sound of his squealing tires.

I briefly lost consciousness, was taken by ambulance to the ER, and then later diagnosed with mTBI — a mild Traumatic Brain Injury, also known as a concussion. After three and a half months off work and a round of physical therapy, I returned to my job with only a few residual concussion symptoms. Luckily, my issues (migraines, difficulty concentrating, and vertigo) were lingering but mild and slowly resolved over the years. Yet, paradoxically, on the same day as my car accident, an acquaintance tripped and hit his head in a parking lot. In stark contrast to my outcome, he still deals with serious physical and cognitive issues over a decade later.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), sometimes referred to as "concussion" or Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), is caused by all types of accidents, like falls, car crashes, a ball hitting the



Jennifer D.
Diamond

head, or sports-related injuries. Getting the correct diagnosis can be difficult because sometimes symptoms aren't immediately noticeable. In children, any bump on the head needs an evaluation. Whether you take your child to their pediatrician, to the emergency room, or to the nearest urgent care center, get a medical assessment as soon as possible.

It's a true emergency if the child loses consciousness, becomes confused, dizzy, nauseous, or begins vomiting. If your child shows one or more of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 or take him/her to the ER immediately.

Children with TBI present challenges because concussion symptoms may seem different for a child compared to adults. Also, as my personal story shows, the symptoms, severity, and recovery time can vary wildly from one person to the next. And then, navigating recovery can be very frustrating for concussion survivors and caregivers alike. It can be even more challenging for young children because it's harder for them to

understand what's happening. Frustration for the child usually means frustration for their caregivers.

Fortunately, studies show that "approximately 70% of [children] should recover from their concussion within four weeks," according to the BrainSTEPS Brain Injury School Consulting Program.

Recovery can be unpredictable for the 30% whose concussion lingers a month or more. The Brain Injury Association of America lists a wide range of possible symptoms on their website at www.biausa.org/brain-injury. Children with these ongoing issues, like difficulty reading or writing, trouble concentrating, shortened attention span, and changes in mood, may qualify for physical, occupational, speech, and mental health therapy services. It's no wonder it can be an overwhelming journey for parents and caregivers.

But you don't have to navigate the recovery process alone. In Pennsylvania, concussion specialists have teamed with the educational community to help children return to school after a TBI/ABI or concussion. Evaluating the child's learning strengths and needs using a team approach is essential as they go back to school. First, be sure to notify

your child's school about any head injury. You may write a note, make a phone call, or email school personnel to inform them of the incident.

As your child gets ready to return to school after a concussion, ask for help. Schools have proven strategies to assist students in the classroom. With appropriate educational supports, outcomes improve. And be sure to take your child to all follow-up appointments as the medical team recommends. Remember, a full recovery is possible. But also remember healing takes time and is different for every individual.

For more information, please visit the website for BrainSTEPS (Strategies Teaching Educators, Parents & Students, A Brain Injury School Re-Entry Consulting Program) at www.brainsteps.net or the website of the Brain Injury Association of America at www.biausa.org/brain-injury.

Jennifer D. Diamond, MS/CCC-SLP, is a speech therapist/reading specialist turned award-winning author. Diamond lives with her husband, two college-aged kids, and their rescue dog in the northeast corner of Cambria County. For more, visit <https://jenniferddiamondwriter.wordpress.com>

WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

Sports specialization fails children

Youth sports have been an essential part of childhood development for decades. However, over the past ten years or so, participation has been on the decline. Programming numbers for sports such as basketball, baseball, soccer, and football have been on a steady decline. The obvious question you ask is why? Based on my research and opinion there are multiple reasons why these numbers seem to be declining.



Mike Hofer

I believe one of the major factors we are seeing is a specialization in one sport. Many parents have convinced their children to specialize in a specific sport and sacrifice so many other opportunities for athletic growth. This specialization consumes 100% of the athletes' commitment and dedication to their craft. Coaches emphasize this commitment through travel ball and the athlete's dedication of time and money. There are families spending thousands of dollars a year for registration fees, equipment, and travel expenses. As a parent when you are making this financial commitment you are going to listen to that coach, and most of the time the coach's expectations comes with a 12-month commitment to them and that sport.

I also believe there is a lack of dedication and commitment from our young athletes and their parents today. The attitude that I have witnessed far too much lately is, when it gets hard, just quit. Parents are encouraging this behavior and allowing kids to just quit when it's not easy anymore. This provides both the parents and their children with an escape plan that

encourages laziness and a sense of entitlement during their most impressionable years of development. What ever happened to hard work? I was always taught the harder you work, the better you will get. Practice, practice, practice, and when you think practice is over practice some more. We need to encourage our kids to work hard and earn the reward that comes along with that hard work at the end. Instead, we are teaching our kids

when they don't like the outcome and just walk away. Unfortunately, we are seeing this trend in today's workforce as well, and I believe this lack of dedication will be with them for their entire lives.

Finally, I believe the lack of sufficiently trained coaches are creating a negative environment and turning our kids off to sports in general. One bad experience at 10 years old could ruin that kid's athletic career forever. We need to do a better job of finding and training our coaches and making them understand, it's not about winning and losing, but development and fun. Too many coaches only care about winning, team stacking, and adding another championship to their resume.

I am sure there are many other reasons for this decline, but ultimately the ones I listed above are the biggest, in my opinion.

Mike Hofer serves as the executive director of the Central Blair Recreation Commission, 2101 5th Avenue, Altoona. The CBRPC is supported by tax dollars from the City of Altoona, Logan Township and the Altoona Area School District as well as program registration fees and special events. For more information, call 814-949-2231 or visit www.cbrpcparks.org.

THE BOOKWORM SEZ

Astronaut's tale encourages, inspires

Liftoff is in three ... two ... one ... And from that point, you're off to your future. No matter what your situation or your age, when you start something new, there's a kind of catapult that you feel, like a rock from a slingshot or like being propelled into a whole different world. And as in the new book "Ready for Launch: An Astronaut's Lessons for Success on Earth," (2022, Crown; 119 pages, \$17.99) by astronaut Scott Kelly, that goes for your someday success, too.



Terri Schlichenmeyer

If you had known Scott Kelly when he was a kid, you might've been surprised at what became of him. Though he was "fearless," by his own admission, Kelly was a lousy student in school because he "couldn't pay attention in class" and didn't focus on anything a teacher said to him. Even when he started college and promised himself that he'd do better, his mind wandered in the classroom. It wasn't until he was 18 and stopped by a bookstore "for gum or something" that he found his calling on the check-out counter: the book *The Right Stuff* by Tom Wolfe gave him direction that he'd never had before.

In his life and career, he says he's learned a thing or two that can translate into success for others. The first is that "Change is scary ..." but mastering it and learning to risk again is the only way to

move forward. On that note, don't fear failure; remember that it's "only when you're willing to risk failure are you aiming high enough."

Don't get "too comfortable when things aren't perfect," he says, and don't stop making "small adjustments" on the path to success. Look for unusual places to learn how to be a leader, and seize them – but remember that there are different "styles" of leadership, and you'll want to employ them all with empathy. Meetings are nice, but crowdsourcing your decision "could be deadly." Diversify your teams and learn how to tap into the experiences and viewpoints

of everyone in the room. Own your mistakes. Insist that facts matter.

Plan on doing the impossible.

At first glance, "Ready for Launch" doesn't look like enough.

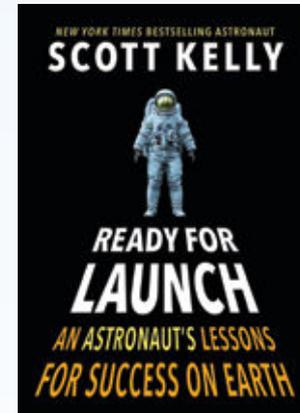
It's a skinny book, and small in surface area; there are a lot of pictures inside here, and short-short chapters that can probably be read in just a few minutes. In a way, it reads more like the transcript for a graduation speech or a board meeting: succinct, spare

in words, and loaded with advice that's useful, if not quite commonsensical.

But a glance isn't going to tell you (here's that word again) enough. You'll be glad when you dig a little deeper because what makes these pages work is that author Scott Kelly uses his own stories to illuminate his advice and, because his early life wasn't like you might surmise it to be, the tales become more impactful.

The size of "Ready for Launch" makes it handy to slip in a jacket pocket or purse, so you can browse the chapters as needed, and learn. When you need over-the-moon advice, this book is the one.

An avid reader, Terri Schlichenmeyer writes from La Crosse, Wisconsin. When she's not reviewing books for 220-plus newspapers, she's writing her own, most recently: "The Big Book of Facts."



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Devastating diagnosis inspires advocacy

By **Patt Keith**

pkeith@altoonamirror.com

Former Altoona resident Jen Marasco-Kuhn has “always had a big heart,” said her father Ralph Marasco, an Altoona dentist.

Marasco-Kuhn and her husband Chris Kuhn’s second daughter Cora, now 2, was diagnosed with a rare, life-threatening seizure disorder, Dravet syndrome. The couple has channeled their fear and uncertainty into raising awareness of Dravet, helping other impacted families and raising funds to fuel research for treatments.

Marasco-Kuhn, 36, lives in Verona, near Pittsburgh and needed a pick-me-up so she scheduled an appointment at the PRIM Beauty Bar in Shadyside in October where she met stylist and a former Altoona resident Kelsey (Morgan) Kuhn. The two women are unrelated but realized they’d met years earlier at Indiana University of Pennsylvania through a mutual friend. Marasco-Kuhn asked Kelsey to cut and dye her hair purple in recognition of National Epilepsy Month in November and shared her daughter Cora’s story which inspired the stylist to begin fundraising for the Dravet Syndrome Foundation.

By April, the two successfully pitched a new national fund-raiser “Dye It for Dravet” which raised more than \$14,000 in less than two months. The fund-raiser continues through August. To donate and learn more

visit <https://dravetfoundation.org/dye-it-for-dravet/>

Marasco-Kuhn also serves as a Parent Ambassador for the organization.

“She has really jumped into it 100%,” said DSF co-founder and executive Director Mary Anne Meskis. “She’s been remarkable and has a ‘what can I do to help’ attitude. Our caregivers are under a lot of stress and yet she’s prepared to fight to help Cora and the others in our community.”

Meskis is the parent of a 22-year-old son with Dravet, who functions at a 3-4-year-old level. She and other parents founded the national nonprofit to push for better diagnostic testing, research into treatments and support for families. Although much about Dravet remains unknown, the majority of patients carry a mutation in the sodium channel gene SCN1A.

Marasco-Kuhn described living with a child with Dravet as “living with a ticking time bomb” because seizures happen at any time so they live in “a hypervigilant state. You never know if she’s going to wake up ... at any moment our baby girl could be stolen from us.”

Cora experienced her first seizure at five months old and was diagnosed with Dravet in February 2021. Since then she’s experienced over 12 hospitalizations due to unstoppable and life threatening seizures that needed medical intervention, including being intubated and on life support.

Marasco-Kuhn said her purple hair helped her talk with others about her daughter’s condition and ignited a fire in her caring heart as she used her skills as a former social worker and her empathy as an impacted parent to make a difference. As a DSF ambassador she connects others who have a recently diagnosed child.

Jen’s father said, “She has a big heart. She’s the type of person who when she gets involved and becomes a big advocate for that cause. She’s always been that way. I have to give her and her husband Chris a helluva lot of credit. It’s a mutual involvement even as they have a lot of stress.”

Marasco-Kuhn’s maternal aunt Maureen McGough of Altoona called her niece “a remarkable woman. She’s turned this into her purpose.”

Dravet syndrome is a rare form of hard-to-control, severe epilepsy that begins in infancy and proceeds with accumulating morbidity that significantly impacts individuals quality of life, according to the Dravet Syndrome Foundation. Dravet has an estimated incidence rate of 1 in 15,700 children. Patients face a 15%-20% mortality rate due to Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy.

“I have to take this pain I’m experiencing and use it for good. If I wasn’t, it would be crippling,” Marasco-Kuhn said.

Patients require constant care, close



Courtesy photo

Kelsi Morgan and Jen Marasco-Kuhn

monitoring and frequent emergency treatment which impacts the individual and family’s quality of life, said Meskis.

Cora’s family has had the support of neighbors, friends and family..

“You see the love that comes out of tragedy and it warms my heart and keeps us going. That’s why I give back. I give back by helping other families and supporting the foundation.”

Today, Marasco-Kuhn said, Cora is “excelling as a 2-year-old who walks and talks and has a big, loving personality. We’re very blessed every day to have her in our lives. What the love of a child will propel a parent to do.”

Circus returns to Jaffa Shrine

From **Mirror staff reports**

The 82nd annual Jaffa Shrine Circus comes to Altoona Oct. 19 and tickets are on sale now.

This year’s circus shows are slated for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 19; 11:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20; 11:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 21; 10 a.m., 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 22, and 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 23.

As Mirror Moms went to press, Shriner and circus chairman Jeff Putt said the full lineup was coming together. Confirmed

acts include a new show by Bello Nock, a daredevil clown and circus performer, an internationally-acclaimed unicyclist Wesley Williams, and a Polynesian fire dancer/manipulator/juggler.

Nock is best known for his thrill acts and stunt performances and has appeared on “America’s Got Talent” and “Britain’s Got Talent” TV shows whom Putt described as “an outstanding performer.”

Williams is the Guinness World Records holder for riding the “World’s Tallest Rideable Unicycle” 29 Feet 1 Inch on Feb.

11, 2020, in Girona, Spain.

Other fun will be provided by costume quick-change act Dulce & Benito and the Jaffa’s Calliope Clowns.

Animal acts are limited, Putt said, as many acts closed during the pandemic and from increasing protests by animal rights activists. So the entertainment focus has shifted to high talent acts like Nock and Williams.

The circus will have pony rides during intermission, plus face painting as well as circus merchandise. Funds raised support

operational expenses and the Shriners mission to serve children through their 22 hospitals.

Tickets can be purchased at the box office starting Sept. 26 in advance or on the day of the show. Prices are \$14 for children, seating above the walkway; \$18 for children, seating below the walkway; \$20 for adults, seating above the walkway; and \$22 for adults, seating below the walkway.

More information can be found on the Jaffa’s website at jaffashriners.org/circus.



~ Special Advertising Feature ~



How to help kids adjust to starting daycare

Children reach many milestones throughout their lives. While a child's first step and first tooth may garner the bulk of the milestone glory, other moments are just as significant.

One milestone that parents may not look forward to is their kids' first day away from mom and dad. For many children, that day is spent at daycare. Parents may get emotional when dropping their young children off at daycare for the first time, and those emotions might only grow stronger if children cry when Mom and Dad walk away. Fortunately, there are ways to help kids adjust to starting daycare.

- Drop by before the first dropoff day. Many daycare facilities encourage parents to visit the facility with their children before youngsters' first official day at daycare. This allows kids to meet their teachers as well as other children who will be in their class. That familiarity can make first-day dropoff that much easier.

- Speak with kids about daycare in advance of their first day. As kids' first day at daycare approaches, parents can speak with them about what to expect. Discuss changes in routine as well as more exciting things, like the chance to play with other kids. If you were able to visit

before the first day, mention teachers and other children your child met during the visit. That can help calm their nerves about leaving Mom and Dad.

- Practice leaving your child with someone else. Much of the fear kids have when being dropped off at daycare for the first time is seeing mom or dad leave the facility. Kids who have seen this before, whether they're left with a babysitter or a relative for a couple of hours, are more likely to smoothly adjust to being left at daycare. Parents who haven't yet enjoyed a date night or time away from their children can book some time away together so their children can get used to spending time with someone other than Mom and Dad.

- Invite other children from the daycare over for play dates. Another way to help kids embrace their first days at daycare is to invite some of their prospective classmates over for a play date. If parents who live nearby recommended the facility, invite their children over for a play date. Familiar, friendly faces can help the transition to daycare go smoothly.

- Let kids take a comfort item with them. A favorite blanket or stuffed animal can calm kids' nerves as they transition to daycare. Before telling kids they can bring such an item along, confirm if it's allowed with the program director. The first day at daycare is a milestone for kids. Parents can take various steps to make that day go as smoothly as possible.

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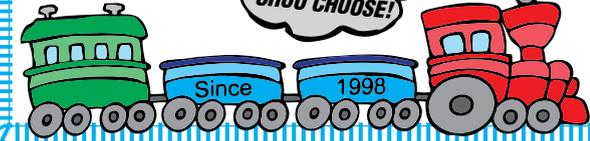
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Aging In Teeth and Associated Issues

Submitted by: Total Health Dentistry

Various theories have been discussed in an attempt to understand the deterioration of structure and function of teeth, but the truth is, there is no need to look any further than the simple process of wear and tear. The wear and tear we put on teeth as children will have a strong impact on adult teeth.

Attrition is a form of frictional wear induced during movements by repeated contact with opposing teeth. Attrition occurs by teeth wearing on one another and is greatly influenced by the consistency of one's diet. Attrition is one of the major sources of tooth structure loss.

Abrasion describes the condition in which tooth substance is lost along the gum line due to stresses caused by a traumatic occlusion. It is often mistakenly explained as toothbrush abrasion.

Erosion, describes the loss of enamel by the action of ingested or regurgitated acids. The main source of ingested acid is from citrus fruits, vinegars and medications.

It is important to know that restorative procedures will do nothing to prevent either dental decay or periodontal

disease. The only function of restorations (fillings) is to replace diseased or missing tooth structure and in some cases to protect the remaining dental hard tissues from fracturing. The following are some important needs that the team at Total Health Dentistry, want to emphasize:

1.) Oral Hygiene- Plaque in all patients, young and old, can present a problem. As children learn to brush, one must pay close attention to learning appropriate brushing skills. As children mature and become adults, increasing loss of manual dexterity and reduction of the ability to concentrate, inevitably reduce the efficiency of controlling plaque buildup challenges. The exposure of root surfaces increases the difficulty of plaque removal. A further difficulty is the sensitivity of the root surfaces when brushing exposed dentin which may discourage brushing altogether. All of these factors combine to make the prevention of dental disease difficult.

2.) Good Home Care- The use of disclosing solutions can help the patient know what they can do and what they should be trying to achieve. It may be that the patient's dexterity will not support flossing or the use of wood points but the use of small brushes with handles may be possible.

3.) Fracture of Teeth- It is important for patients to know that they can often suffer from fracture of the teeth without a history of trauma. These may range from chipping the edge of a front tooth to the loss of a single cusp of a back molar or to complete loss of the crown of a tooth. Several factors can be responsible such as: Age changes the dental tissues; the effect of previous restoration and old fillings; and Biting/Occlusal Factors.

4.) Missing Teeth- Loss of teeth at any age can be demoralizing or a welcome relief from pain. When teeth are missing the remaining ones can change positions and drift into the surrounding space.

Dental care starts at an early age and affects oral health as we age. *At Total Health Dentistry, we want to help all patients SMILE, from baby teeth to adult teeth. Please give the team at Total Health Dentistry a call with any questions and to see how we can best help you or your family. Altoona: 814-944-1300, Huntingdon: 814-643-9414, State College 814-231-7700*

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

Check Up Time

What to know about dental cleanings while wearing braces



Braces are used to correct any number of dental issues that affect both children and adults. The Canadian Association of Orthodontists says more than four million Canadians and Americans wear braces and are in the care of orthodontic specialists. The reward for wearing braces is straighter teeth that are less vulnerable to decay and injury. A beautiful smile also may boost self-esteem.

While patients' specific needs will determine how long braces must be worn, the average time spent in braces is anywhere from 18 months to three years. During that time, patients must maintain optimal oral health.

Cleaning one's teeth while braces are on can be tricky but it's highly necessary. Failure to clean teeth effectively while braces are in place can cause white spot lesions, which are white stains around the brackets caused by decalcification. This is just one reason to stay on top of oral health. Here's how to do it successfully.

Consult with your dentist

Dental hygienists and dentists are experienced at cleaning teeth that have braces. Typical visits for routine cleanings will not be much different than visits without braces. The staff will take X-rays and conduct a thorough examination of the teeth. Hygienists know how to manipulate cleaning tools around braces to clean effectively. Very often, cavities can be filled and even root canals performed with braces on teeth,

so there's no need to worry. Should braces be in the way, the dentist can work with the orthodontist and have a bracket temporarily removed and replaced to facilitate treatment.

Clean at home

The Baltimore-based Orthodontic Associates advises braces wearers to purchase a high-quality toothbrush. Ask the orthodontist for a recommendation. While brushing, hold the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle. Brush the outer surfaces of the teeth and braces, remembering to scrub around each bracket. Use the same angle to brush the backs of the teeth. Pay special attention to the molars and the gumline where tartar builds up.

Special "pipe cleaner" brushes can get in between the wires and brackets, pushing out any food particles that are missed by larger toothbrushes. Floss can be snaked under wires to get in between teeth as well; it just requires some finesse. Waxed floss generally is easier to use as it less likely to get stuck.

Some orthodontists recommend brushing three times per day instead of two while wearing braces. The extra time comes after eating lunch. A water flosser also may be a handy investment. Water flossers are easier to use than traditional floss while wearing braces and they can remove food particles and plaque effectively.

Individuals who wear braces should bring any cleaning or oral health concerns to their dentists' or orthodontists' attention.

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Christopher W. Pine, D.M.D., M.S.

Drs. Pine and Goddard have over 40 years' combined experience providing exceptional orthodontic care to the families in Central PA. Chris Pine is a native of Tyrone, and Lyndsey lives in Hollidaysburg – Pine Orthodontics supports many community and high school programs. They will listen to you and your child's concerns and then create a plan to help create the natural, beautiful smile that you want for yourself or your child.



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Help available for grieving children

By Mary Haley

Grief from the death of a loved one is hard to bear, but even tougher when you're also helping a mourning child.

But you don't have to struggle alone, said local experts. There are several options that can help both you and your child navigate the loss of a loved one.

One option is the Healing Patch Children's Grief Program, which is part of UPMC's Home Nursing Agency.

According to Melody Ray, who coordinates the Healing Patch program in both Blair and Cambria counties, the program brings families together who are experiencing grief to talk about their shared experiences.

"We are the only local, free children's bereavement program that provides supportive services to the child(ren) and the family," she said. "Children and teens get to meet others that have also suffered a deep loss due to death. They realize they are not alone, and others are struggling just like they are."

The purpose of the program isn't to provide counseling or therapy for the families, but to help them form long-lasting relationships that will guide them through their grief and continue beyond the walls of the Healing Patch meeting place.

"There is a camaraderie that is built among members," Ray said. "They find a place they belong and fit in. The adults bringing the children also build supports while they are here as well."

Children who enroll in the Healing Patch program may choose to have a memory bear made to commemorate their deceased loved one. The bear is actually made by one of the program volunteers and given to the child. In addition, the Healing Patch families create fabric squares to remind them of their loved ones that are made into pillows by program volunteers.

"The community has stepped forward with 17 new volunteers finishing up summer training to ensure these free services can continue," Ray said.

Sometimes people feel individual therapy is a better alternative for them, or they need counseling in addition to the services offered by the Healing Patch. That's where a licensed professional counselor like Heather Resh of Altoona may help with outpatient therapy.

"I would advise seeking therapy or a support group if your child starts to demonstrate an extended period of depression (longer than 2 weeks) in which he or she loses interest in daily activities; eating too much or too little; sleeping too much or an inability to sleep;

Here are a few tips to help you help your child with grief:

Communicate using language that's on their level. Tell them what to expect as far as funeral arrangements, schedule changes, etc. Use I-statements mixed with positive statements like, "I feel sad because Grandpa died and I need a hug," said therapist Heather Resh.

■ Be patient with both you and your children. There's no set way or specific timeline for the grief process. It happens on an individual basis according to how each person is coping. "Be honest with them," Resh said.

■ Make sure that you practice self-care, so that you can take care of your children. Self-care includes taking care of your mental and spiritual self as well as maintaining your physical wellbeing.

■ Establish clear expectations. It's OK to give space to children acting out because they're in pain from the death

of a loved one but be sure they know there are limits that must be maintained. "It is important to acknowledge their feelings, but also to establish clear and consistent rules and expectations," Resh said.

■ Avoid projecting your own thoughts and feelings onto your children. "Allow them to feel what they feel and give them a safe and nonjudgmental space for doing so. It is important to remember that not all children are going to respond to grief in the same way," Resh said.

■ Don't insist that children attend a funeral if they're afraid or don't want to go. There are other ways to honor a deceased person, such as lighting a candle, writing a letter or sharing stories. If they do want to go, tell them what to expect beforehand.

and withdrawing from friends," Resh said. "Therapy is also likely to be beneficial if your child starts to display behavioral changes, such as making repeated statements about wanting to join the deceased person; regressive behaviors, such as thumb sucking; excessively imitating the deceased person; believing that they are seeing, talking to, and/or hearing the deceased person; and/or physical aggression."

Therapy or joining a support group would also be helpful "if a loved one's death was sudden, violent, or otherwise deeply stressful," she said.

When it comes to helping kids deal with grief, it depends on their age and stage of development.

"Children with learning disabilities, for example, may find it harder to understand abstract concepts, such as death," Resh said. "Meet them wherever they are and respond accordingly."

While babies and toddlers usually don't understand the concept of death, they will grasp that their parent or caregiver is no longer with them and they'll perceive the sorrow of the surviving parent. Preschoolers may be curious about death and may think that it is temporary, she said. They may think that the deceased person left because they were "bad" and that if they are "good" the person will come back. Babies and preschoolers may have sleep problems and preschoolers may also have aggression and anger

outbursts.

"School age children are generally aware of death and may worry that you or others may die too," Resh said. "They may demonstrate a curiosity about what happens after death. At the age of 7, most children understand that death is permanent and inevitable, but it is important to note that this may take longer for some children. They can show compassion for others; may worry about the effect that their sadness has on you and may try to hide their feelings."

Teenagers will view death in terms of the impact on their lives, Resh said.

"They may worry about who will care for them and take care of the household," she said. "They may worry about finances or the future. They may react in various ways, such as experiencing intense feelings of sadness, guilt, or anger; wishing that (the death) had not occurred or that it had happened to them instead; worrying that they may develop an illness or perish in a similar manner; decreased self-esteem/ feelings of self-worth; and/ or decreased school performance."

To help support its free programs, the Healing Patch holds fundraisers during the year. They include the Decades Club Raffle Drawing and Evening of Dancing on Oct. 8 and Patched Together: A Day of Music to Benefit the Healing Patch on Nov. 19. For more details, go to the Home Nursing Agency at homenursingagency.com.

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FAMILY CRAFTS

Becoming one with art

By **Melanie Ramsey**

In this craft activity, enjoy creating pictures and patterns that are purposely missing an important ingredient — your own fingers! Don't worry, we'll explain in a minute!

What You Will Need:

- Paper (standard copy paper is fine)
- Scissors (regular school scissors)
- Pens or pencils (can be fine or broad tip, any color you like)
- A well-lit work space with a flat surface (protect it with newspapers or a plastic tablecloth)

For young crafters: Your grownup might prefer to help you to cut holes or slits in your picture.

What You Will Do:

Take a piece of paper and your pen or pencil, and put them on your work space. Get comfortable.

Before you draw anything, take a look at your hands in a creative way. Have you ever pretended that your fingers are animals or people, or a part of an animal or person? Four of your fingers could be the running or walking legs of a dog or horse. Two of your fingers could be the walking legs of a person or a two-legged animal. You could open and close two fingers to make the beak of a bird or the mouth of an animal like an alligator. One wiggly finger could be an inchworm, a long nose, or a tail. How could you make wings, or ears?

Now that you've had some practice thinking creatively, let's make some pictures.

One of the simplest fingerplays is a picture of *most* of an animal or person. Draw whatever you like, but stop your drawing before you get to the legs. Cut holes or slits in your picture where the legs should meet the body (make each hole

or slit big enough for a finger to poke through) and then use your own fingers to fill in the missing legs of the picture. This idea is often used to make puppets. For a puppet, you would cut out the whole figure to make it easy to move around.

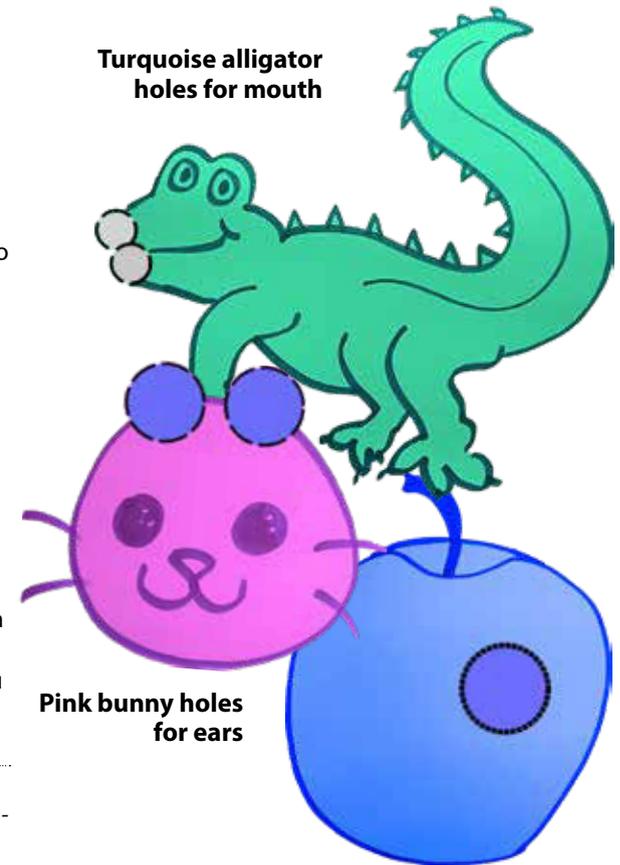
Now give your fingers another picture to finish. You choose whether you want your fingers to act as a tail, ears, mouth, beak, horns, wings, or something else.

Advanced ideas: Draw a picture that includes something that moves but is not an animal or a person. Your fingers could be a flag flying in the wind, the flames of a campfire, a moving part of a machine like a car or a boat, or something else that you think of yourself.

Enjoy, experiment, and have fun!

Melanie Ramsey loves libraries, music and making fun times happen as director of Community Relations and Events for Hollidaysburg Borough

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Making late summer meals fun

By Denise Weaver

I love late summer when life feels a little slower and easier, as if on a vacation.

Additionally, two of my favorite foods are wrapping up their season: corn and tomatoes. A steaming hot, tender-crisp ear of corn slathered with rich, creamery butter and then lightly salted with a slice of tomato alongside can't be beat.

I've always looked forward to the availability of local corn. As a child, I enjoyed helping to pick it directly from the field, almost like a guessing game as to which was going to be the best ear of corn for dinner that night. I hoped for the fullest, longest, and sweetest pick of the day. My uncle often planted several rows of sweet corn on the perimeter of his field corn. He and my dad commiserated about how the raccoons inevitably seemed to have a knack for getting to the sweet corn the night before it was at its peak and ready to be harvested.

As a kid, one of the best parts of having corn on the cob for dinner was the competitive eating, that is, who could eat the highest number of ears at one sitting. I rarely won, but it certainly was a competition I thoroughly enjoyed. Perhaps your children or grandchildren enjoy doing the same.

Corn can be prepared in a variety of ways. You can cook it by boiling the ears in a large kettle or soup pot, roasting it in the husks placed in a campfire, grilling it, or even making it in the microwave oven. Recipes using corn abound, including side dishes, entrees, condiments, and desserts.

There are numerous varieties of corn, but all basically fall into one of three groups: yellow, white, or bi-colored. At times, I preferred one over the others, but today I think they are all equally good. Familiar names are Silver Queen (white), Kandy Korn (yellow), and Bread and Butter (bi-colored).

Have fun with the kids in determining who has the best style while eating an ear of corn. Do they go from left to right, right to left, or round and round. And how are you going to hold your ear of deliciousness--will you use corn holders, or be a purist like I am and dig in barehanded?

Recently I learned of the Roasting Ears of Corn Festival held at the Museum of Indian Culture near Allentown, Lehigh County. The festival, and museum, honors the tradition of Native American Indians. The festival takes

place mid-August each year and looks to be fun and educational. This year the festival will be held August 20-21. For more information, visit <https://www.museumofindianculture.org/roasting-ears-of-corn-festival>.

Whether you like to eat it directly from the cob, cut off, or used in recipes, I hope you acquire some delicious local corn and savor one of the best flavors of summer. This recipe is quick and easy, and a good way to use up fresh corn and tomatoes. It can be made from leftover corn as well. Enjoy!

Somerset resident Denise Weaver is an accomplished author with a special talent for making, photographing and writing about delicious food. Find her on Instagram at denise-weaverwriter

Chargrilled Corn Salad with Tomatoes and Basil

Ingredients

6 ears of corn, husked
3 T olive oil, divided
1/3 cup thinly sliced garden onions
1 large, red ripe tomato, cut into small cubes
1/2 cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves, torn
3 T. fresh lime juice
Salt and Pepper to taste
Optional: 2 fresh avocados, chopped

Instructions

1. Grill cleaned ears of corn, which have been lightly rubbed with a small amount of olive oil. Turn frequently until nicely charred and heated through, about 12 minutes.
 2. Remove corn from the grill and allow to cool slightly.
 3. Cut kernels from the cobs and place in bowl.
 4. Place onion slices in a strainer and run cold water over briefly. Let drain.
 5. Stir onions, remaining oil, tomatoes, basil, and lime juice into corn.
 6. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add avocados just before serving, if using.
 7. Serve at room temperature for best flavor. Leftovers can be refrigerated and served cold.
- Makes 4 to 6 servings
Note: Salad can be made with boiled corn, if preferred.



Chargrilled corn salad



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GUIDE TO PREPARING FOR COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Continuing Education

Junior year is a pivotal time in the lives of high school students. Junior year marks a transition to upper classmen, and students begin to ponder their post-high school academic careers around this time as well.

The college preparatory process can seem daunting, particularly if a student does not have a sibling who recently went through the steps and can offer advice. Well-meaning parents may want to share their own experiences, but much has changed since parents were looking ahead to their own college experiences. That doesn't mean parents can't offer important assistance, particularly when they learn the ropes of today's college preparatory process.

Speak with a guidance counselor to plan courses

Parents and students can meet collectively with a guidance counselor to talk about goals and coursework. Many high schools offer Advanced Placement classes or dual enrollment courses that enable students to earn college credit.

Discuss extracurricular activities

Colleges and universities do not just look at grade and test scores; they consider the entire applicant. Therefore, high schoolers should dabble in various clubs, organizations and sports to make them more appealing to admissions departments.

Enroll in a test preparation course

Though a growing number of American colleges and universities have abandoned ACT and SAT scores as part of their admissions process, many schools still require those scores. Students can benefit from taking test prep classes either in school or through outside tutoring businesses. Learning strategies for the tests as well as seeing sample questions can remove some of the anxiety associated with the tests.

Visit schools and attend college fairs

Parents and students should make appointments to visit several college campuses that offer courses students are interested in. Getting one's name in admissions departments' databases also opens up students to emails about upcoming events and application deadlines.

Learn about The Common Application

The Princeton Review says most schools will use The Common Application as part of the admissions process. This enables students to enter all of their information and apply to multiple schools using the same account. However, schools will typically have different supplemental essay topics or test score requirements. Essays typically are required to be around 650 words.

Get financial paperwork in order

Applying to college and applying for financial aid (which every student should do regardless of in-



come) are two separate processes. In the United States, students will start with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA will help determine eligibility for grants, scholarships, federal work-study, and student loans. The FAFSA requires information taken from federal income tax statements.

Parents can help guide their students further by following up on school transcripts, teacher recommendations and providing application cost fees, which vary from \$50 to \$100 per school. The road to college may seem confusing, but a few simple strategies can make it easier to navigate.

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15	13	12	

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2	4	0
7	8	9

Solution

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ANSWER: Car care

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