



Apr. 2013 Vol. 38 No. 6

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## The Importance of Mom Friends

By Shell Jeanette

It's been almost 8 years since I first became a mom. Three kids later and early motherhood is not much more than a blur of dirty hair and lack of sleep.

What I really wish someone had told me was how important it was to go out and make mom friends. As soon as possible.

I went from working full-time and having most of my friends be from work to being at home alone with a baby who hated sleep and hated to be put down. It was very isolating.

By the time I had my second baby (just shy of 17 months later), I had it figured out and did make a lot of effort to find mom friends.

What I learned was that it was okay to join as many groups as I possibly could find. And that in each one, I might find one friend that I really connected with or maybe none of the other moms would be for me. If I got really lucky, there would be several moms that could be real friends.

But it took a lot of trying. Sometimes I think it took more effort and looking around and trying new things than it did to find the man I'd end up marrying!

Having a baby the same age means you have some of that typical "baby stuff" to talk about- so there's not usually a lack of small talk. But finding those moms who relate (or at least don't judge) the way you choose to parent is much harder.

But, keep trying. Because having those moms that you can vent to or hand your baby off to for a moment so that you can shower in peace or maybe just be able to talk to about something other than your baby – it's so worth it!

.....  
We found this article and thought it really spoke to one of the key reasons NCPG has been such an integral part of our mommy lives.

We are so fortunate here at NCPG to not only receive an amazing education by our knowledgeable and experienced teachers, but we also make amazing "mom" friendships. We are all going through the same thing, and it's so refreshing to be able to share the frustrations and the triumphs with our friends.

Thank you to everyone that participated in our all NCPG playdate on April 3rd. It's events like these that help build those friendships.

Your "mom" friends,

Lisa and Tricia



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# How to Make a Green Smoothie Your Toddler Will Love

<http://www.ocmommag.com/page/how-to-make-a-green-smoothie>

Green smoothies are a great way to help your little ones eat green veggies on a daily basis. This article describes how to make a green smoothie your toddler will love.

## 1. Choose your veggie and mix it with water.

There are a variety of leafy green vegetables to choose from. However, choose milder flavored ones such as baby spinach or romaine lettuce for your toddler. Take a handful of your vegetable of choice and put in the blender with one cup of cold water. Choose the “liquefy” or “puree” option on your blender to make sure the leafy greens are adequately broken down. Blend for about 15 seconds (time may vary based on your blender). This blending should result in a very green liquid with few, if any, leafy particles remaining.

## 2. Add some frozen blueberries to the veggie and water mix.

Most toddlers probably won't take too well to a smoothie that is green in color. Adding blueberries is an easy and tasty way to make the color more appealing to your little one. Simply add a cup of frozen blueberries to your greens and water mix and blend for another 15 to 20 seconds. This should result in a rich purple color.

## 3. Add additional frozen fruit that your toddler enjoys.

Before adding additional frozen fruit, you'll want to add another cup of cold water to make sure that there is enough liquid to adequately mix the remaining fruit (and not burn up your blender). At this stage, try some fruit that your child enjoys. Bananas and strawberries are delicious together. If this is a combination you think your toddler will enjoy, add one banana and blend for 15 to 20 seconds. Finally, add a cup of strawberries and blend another 15 to 20 seconds.

## 4. Serve immediately.

Following the directions above will make approximately 40 ounces of smoothie. While smoothies are best if consumed right away, you can freeze the remainder and give to your toddler later in the day or the next morning for breakfast.

Green smoothies are a great (and fun) way to make sure your toddler is consuming green vegetables each day. With green smoothies, the fruit and green veggie combinations are endless. Experiment to find one that your toddler enjoys and make it often!



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*NCPG is a non-profit, non-denominational organization providing classes to parents of infant to pre-school age children.*

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[www.ncpgaz.org](http://www.ncpgaz.org)



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## Parent Times

Members, this monthly newsletter is for YOUR benefit, so we want to ensure our team is publishing content that is valuable, useful, informative, and fun! We don't want this to be something that gets lost in your stack of mail. Please let us know if you have suggestions, comments, concerns, or any input that would help us to improve this publication. Thanks for your help!



### Editors

Lisa Barnes and Courtney Konderik  
[lisabarnes@cox.net](mailto:lisabarnes@cox.net)

### Designer

Neill Fox, Foxnoggin  
[foxnoggin.com](http://foxnoggin.com)



# Corks for Kids — A Wonderful Evening!

Thanks to our amazing Corks for Kids committee for all their hard work throughout the year to make this event a success!

Brittany Parks    Heather Maze    Erica Brown    Carla Brundige    Michelle Owens

We would like to give a special thank you to Julie Christensen, Erica Brown, and August Colosimo for working the check-in tables. Thank you also to our fabulous musician, Gregg Sherman — and a special thank you to Biltmore Pro Print for donating printing services.

## We raised a grand total of \$16,215!

Thank you to the following individuals and companies for their generous donations!

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# News & Events



## Board of Director Positions Filled!

We have been so lucky to have had so many wonderful members interested in being on the Board next year! We are very excited to have all the positions filled now and are looking forward to a great 2013-2014 NCPG year with a great group of ladies leading the organization!

## Earth Day!

April 22, 2013

Earth Day began on April 22, 1970 and has been an important day ever since. It's a day to reflect on our planet, our environment and what we can do to help keep them healthy. Children have the most important stake in keeping our planet healthy. They'll still be the caretakers long after their parents and grandparents have passed away.



Younger children can get a feel for what Earth Day is all about by singing songs, coloring pictures and making crafts. They can also start with things like using recycled items in crafting and helping sort the recycling at home.

Whatever it is you decide to do to teach your children about Earth Day--the most important part is to be aware!

## Pre-registration Starts Today!

Pre-registration opens today for the 2013-2014 year of NCPG. **You can pre-register for the entire year for only \$200.** We will have pre-registration forms at the check-in table in Nelson Hall, on our website at [www.ncpgaz.org](http://www.ncpgaz.org), or you can mail your registration form and check to NCPG, PO Box 32644, Phoenix 85064. *This price won't last, so pre-register today!*

## NCPG Class Calendar

This is just a reminder of our remaining class dates and our class schedule:

### Day Classes

- Nursery opens at 8:45am
- Refreshments are served in Nelson Hall from 9-9:25am
- Classes are held from 9:30am to 11:30am (Please be on time to participate in "Hot Topics")
- Nursery closes at 11:35am
- Pre-Infant class is from 11:45am to 1:45pm
  - April 24th
  - May 1st

### Evening Classes

- Classes are held from 6:15pm to 8:15pm
- April 17th
  - May 8th



## New Arrival!

Please welcome this new addition to our NCPG family!

### Daphne Rose Moran

January 18, 2013

Weight: 5 lbs, 13 oz

Height: 21 inches

Parents: Brittany and Jim



# Christ Church School Elementary Students to get New Differentiated Learning Community in 2013-14

*School's third grade expansion offers learning blocks after homeroom.*

Christ Church School's Elementary Division is still offering registration for the 2013-2014 school year for first through third grade students who may flourish in a Differentiated Learning Community curriculum.

In a Differentiated Learning Community, students begin the day in a homeroom class. Then they rotate to different classrooms for reading (guided, small group and independent), communication arts (journaling, spelling, writing, word attack skills and grammar) and math (centers, small group work, fact drills). All students are witnessed at their own skill level by teachers who assist with both independent and cooperative learning. This model encourages problem solving, working independently and multi-age student partnering.

Founded in 2003, Christ Church School continues to honor its mission to provide local families with "an education enriched by faith." The school campus is equipped with a state-of-the-art computer lab, a library and librarian, a Spanish program, sport court, shaded play areas and a strong fine arts curriculum.

According to Betsy Delaney, Head of School since its founding in 2003, "It is exciting to be able to offer a Differentiated Learning Community at Christ Church School for children in the early years of grade school. This type of learning, enhanced with technology, will prepare students for the ever-changing world they'll know in the future, within and outside of classroom walls. Our learning community requires students to think creatively—with their teachers, with each other and on their own."

Applications for the 2013-2014 school year are available online at [www.ccsaz.org](http://www.ccsaz.org). For additional information or to schedule a tour of the CCS campus, please contact the school office at (602) 381.9906.



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# April Things to Do!

Disney On Ice presents Treasure Trove —  
Thur-Sun,  
Apr. 11-14



Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald and Goofy embark on a fun-filled treasure hunt for some of the most popular Disney films ever. 7pm Thur, 10:30am & 7pm Fri, 11:30am, 3:30 & 7pm Sat, 1 & 4:30pm Sun. \$18-\$58. US Airways Center, 201 E. Jefferson St. **800-745-300** or [disneyonice.com](http://disneyonice.com)

Rapunzel — Wed-Sun, Apr. 10-28

Classic tales about the maiden with the really long hair and the prince who loves her. 10am Wed-Sat, 2pm Sat-Sun. \$10 adults, \$7 children under 2 free with another paid child admission. Reservations recommended. Great Arizona Puppet Theater, 302 W. Latham St. **602-262-2050** or [azpuppets.org](http://azpuppets.org)

Great Arizona Picnic —  
Sat-Sun, Apr. 13-14

All ages. Food, beverages and live music. Noon-9pm \$10, ages 12 & under free. Scottsdale Civic Center, 3939 North Drinkwater Blvd, Scottsdale. [scottsdalefest.org](http://scottsdalefest.org)



Tea Time & Stories — Sat, Apr. 13

All ages. Enjoy tea and crumpets with author/illustrator Molly Idle as she presents her newest picture book, Tea Rex. Noon. Free. Changing Hands Bookstore, 6428 S. McClintock Dr, Tempe. **480-730-0205** or [changinghands.com](http://changinghands.com)

Hubbard Sports Camp Open House —  
Sun, Apr. 14

Camp is for ages 4½ -13. Learn about this camp that offers soccer, basketball, volleyball, baseball, archery and swimming. 1-3pm. Free. Phoenix Swim Club, 2902 E. Campbell Rd; Sunnyslope High School, 35 W Dunlap; Tesseract Shea campus, 3939 E Shea Blvd and four Rancho Solano Private School campuses in Gilbert, Peoria and Scottsdale. **602-971-4044** or [hubbardsports.com](http://hubbardsports.com)

Character Dinner with Cinderella —  
Fri, Apr. 19

All ages. Play time, photo opportunity and pizza included. 5:15-6:45pm. \$29/family (2 adults and up to 3 children). Preregister. The Play Factory, 21002 N Tatum Blvd. **480-473-7529** or [playfactoryparty.com](http://playfactoryparty.com)

Earth Day Celebration — Fri, Apr. 19

Ages 2-12. Make arts & crafts projects out of recycled items such as milk cartons and egg cartons. Call for times. \$8/hr per child; discounts for siblings. KidsPark, 4848 E Cactus Rd #220, Scottsdale. **602-788-2445** or [kidspark.com](http://kidspark.com)

Pat's Run — Sat, Apr. 20

All ages. 4.2 mile run/walk, .42 mile Kids Run and a Finish Line Expo. Proceeds benefit the Pat Tillman Foundation. 6am. \$50 for the run/walk, \$10 Kids Run (discounts for early registration). Sun Devil Stadium, ASU Campus, 210 S Packard Dr, Tempe. **480-621-4074** or [pattillmanfoundation.org/pats-run](http://pattillmanfoundation.org/pats-run)



Preschool Learning on the Landing —  
Earth Day Celebration — Sat, Apr. 20

Preschoolers (with an adult). Investigate trees with magnifying glasses, crates a scientific journal about plants and take home a leaf art masterpiece. 10:30-11:30am. \$12/pair (\$10/pair members). Preregister. Arizona Science Center, 600 E Washington St. **602-716-2000 x226** or [azscience.org](http://azscience.org)



KA-POW! Superhero  
Adventure Run —  
Sat, Apr. 27

All ages. Dress as a superhero and run either a .5 mile or 2 mile course with obstacles. Includes costume contest, participant awards, inflatables, refreshments and more. 8am - noon. \$25 (\$20 before Apr 18). Freestone Park, 1045 Juniper Rd, Gilbert. **480-503-6200** or [gilberaz.gov/kapow](http://gilberaz.gov/kapow)

Spring Butterfly Exhibit — through May 12

Expect to see Giant Swallowtails, Great Southern Whites, Zebra Swallowtails, Queens, Julias, Painted Ladies and Malachites among others. 9:30am-5pm. \$3.50 with paid admission; \$18 adults, \$10 ages 13-18, \$8 ages 3-12. Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N Galvin Pkwy. **480-941-1225** or [dbg.org](http://dbg.org)





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# Earth Day Puffy Paint Craft

Here's a great Earth Day craft idea using green colored puffy paint. Make puffy paint by mixing about equal parts shaving cream and white glue, then add some green dye or food coloring.

## Materials:

- big circle cut from card stock or thick paper (or use a paper plate)
- blue paint
- green puffy paint
- scissors



## Directions:

1. Cut a big circle from card stock and paint all blue. Allow to dry.
2. Make green puffy paint right before using and paint on the continents.

<http://easypreschoolcraft.blogspot.com/2012/03/earth-day-puffy-paint-craft.html>

# Strawberry Mice

These mischievous mice will have your kids happily nibbling on a healthy snack in no time.

## What you'll need

- Fresh strawberries
- Mini chocolate chips
- Black decorators' icing
- Almond slivers
- Toothpick
- Red lace licorice
- Wedge of Cheese (Your choice)



## How to make it

1. For each mouse, slice a small section from the side of a strawberry so it sits flat.
2. Press a mini chocolate chip into the tip for a nose, using a small dab of icing to secure it in place, if needed.
3. Add icing eyes and stick 2 almond slivers into the top of the berry for ears.
4. For a tail, use a toothpick to carve a small hole in the back of the berry and push the end of a piece of licorice lace into the hole. Serve these berry cute treats with small triangles of cheese.

<http://spoonful.com/recipes/strawberry-mice>



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# Fab Playdate Ideas

from [www.whattoexpect.com](http://www.whattoexpect.com)

Need to keep a twosome of toddlers or a pair of preschoolers happily entertained? Try some of these smart suggestions for playdate fun.

With another toddler or preschooler en route for a play session with your little one, you have two options: Either let the Legos fall where they may, or equip yourself with a few activities for toddlers that'll keep even the most energetic kids engaged. Tall order? Not with these playdate ideas. With just a little bit of prep, you'll have enough tricks up your sleeve to keep boredom at bay (and the TV off) while the kids have some perfect toddler playdate fun. Some of these playdate activities are better for older tots and preschoolers — and some of them work just fine for the two-and-under set.

## 1. Outdoor Outing

When the weather cooperates, even a walk around the block can turn into a great playdate activity — if it has a purpose. Try arming the children with plastic pails in which to collect finds like leaves and pinecones. Or play an on-the-go game of I Spy. Describe neighborhood spots of interest as you go — a robin's nest, say, or a shiny red truck — then see if the kids can spot what you're talking about.

## 2. Dance Party

When all that pint-sized energy threatens to soar out of control, crank up the tunes and let the little ones boogie the wiggles out. Boost the playdate fun by playing Sit-Down Dance: When you pause the music, the kids scramble to find a seat (the floor counts). Unlike musical chairs, no one ever gets out. You can even invite a few stuffed-animal dance partners to join the hoedown. Or try musical freeze tag!

## 3. Craft Time

As long as you can live with a little mess, crafts are a reliable source of playdate fun, no matter what the age of the kids you're hosting. Help preschoolers use crayons and yarn to transform a paper plate into an animal mask. For older toddlers, pour a bit of school glue onto a throw-away plastic lid, then let the kids dip cotton balls and stick them onto a piece of construction paper. Or help them trace the outline of their hands on construction paper, cut it out, glue it to a craft stick, and call it a "high five."

## 4. Silliness Starter

Little ones love to giggle, so a no-holds-barred laugh-fest may be just the ticket for initiating some toddler buddy bonding. A surefire knee-slapper? Something oddly incongruous. So get them laughing by, say, putting mittens on your feet and socks on your hands. When you offer a few silly accessories, like hats and old suit jackets, along with a mirror to watch themselves, they'll have a great time making themselves — and each other — laugh the day away

## 5. Draw and Erase

Pulling out the scratch paper (or a dry-erase board) and washable markers is a great way to keep younger toddlers amused for a little while. But you can get more mileage out of that old artistic standby (and encourage creative play!) with this playdate idea for older tots and preschoolers: Offer a surprising drawing surface, like an unbreakable mirror they can scribble on with dry-erase markers. With a few paper towels on hand, they can draw and erase over and over. You can even help them decorate themselves by drawing mustaches or silly hats for their reflections to wear.

## 6. Container Sandbox

Even when the weather doesn't cooperate, let the kids play like they're outside by converting a large, shallow plastic storage container into an indoor sandbox. Filled with sand or even rice, and peppered with shovels, cups, and trucks, it becomes a sandy getaway. In winter try this preschool playdate idea: Bring some of the chilly weather inside by scooping fresh snow into the box and supplying the kids with mittens.

They can scoop and mold, make a miniature snowman, and even carve out a tiny igloo without freezing their tootsies.

## 7. Mixed-Up Hide-and-Seek

Virtually all kids are partial to hide-and-seek, either because they love the challenge of finding a hidden friend or they thrill to the suspense of waiting to be found. But with toddlers, the game can be a challenge: The littlest ones can't count, and they're not great at staying hidden, preferring to belt out "Here I am!" than wait to be found. For longer-lasting playdate fun, turn the game on its ear by taking turns hiding objects — think socks or small toys — rather than people. Another option: Let the little ones hide together, while you search s-l-o-w-l-y for them.


## 8. Reading Corner

When it's time to dial down the playdate energy, take a couple chairs, put them back-to-back a couple feet apart, and fling a blanket or sheet over them. Tuck some pillows underneath, and invite the little ones into their own homemade fort. While they settle in and make themselves at home, you can hold storytime with one of their favorite read-aloud books. (A few good picks include Sandra Boynton's Blue Hat, Green Hat; Margaret Wise Brown's Big Red Barn; and Don and Audrey Wood's The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry, and the Big Hungry Bear.) When you're done, your preschooler and his pal may even tell you a story of their own.

## 9. Play Ball

With all the large- and fine-motor skills it takes to pick up, hold, and toss a ball, by two years of age most toddlers are just getting the hang of the game. But while they work on perfecting their pitching arms, they'll still enjoy playing their own version of catch. For your next toddler playdate, head out to your yard with a few different kinds of tossables, everything from foam balls to beach balls to squishy bean-filled balls, and let the games begin. A gentler version of this playdate idea for the under-two set: Sit in a circle on the living room rug and practice rolling a ball to one another. It's a great way to keep your toddler active!

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### Plastic surgeon Lawrence Shaw has been on a long journey.

Born and raised in Long Island, NY, Dr. Shaw completed his residency in Arizona. Something about our state stuck with him, and he stuck with us. Dr. Shaw has been in practice for 25 years and has been board-certified... twice and included in the guide to *America's Top Plastic Surgeons*.

With 14-year-old twins, much of his free time is spent with family attending sporting events, dance recitals and school activities. His 'alone' time is found at 4:30 a.m. where he dedicates his time to physical fitness. Dr. Shaw and his wife of 17 years still feel it's important to have a date night at least once a week. A previous passion of his, golf, is now on the back burner.

Over the last 25 years, Dr. Shaw has had a particular interest in non-invasive aesthetic medicine to accentuate and prolong the effects of plastic surgery and by itself to allow men and women to 'age gracefully.' One of Dr. Shaw's most popular non surgical procedures that he offers is CoolSculpting, a non-invasive, no downtime fat reduction procedure.

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# Baby Tooth Removal Tips

by Dental on Central

A child's baby tooth will usually fall out on its own without any intervention. However, sometimes "a little assistance" is needed. Parents are sometimes unsure about what to do when it comes to extracting their child's loose baby tooth. Should the parent pull out the tooth, encourage the child to pull the tooth himself, or make an appointment with the dentist? Here are some simple thoughts to consider....

## The Wiggles

Many dentists agree that it is best to leave the loose baby tooth alone and encourage the child to deal with it himself. A loose tooth usually comes out easily as children like to play with the tooth. Before taking the step of extracting the tooth yourself, allow the child to explore the loose tooth with his tongue and fingers, which will encourage the tooth to come out without parental help. Encourage him to see how far he can move the loose tooth back and forth. If the child seems uncomfortable moving the loose baby tooth, don't force the situation.

## Take a Bite

Some kids might experience discomfort with a loose baby tooth due to irritation of the gums. In this case, you may want to administer a bit of aspirin or oral pain-relief gel and provide the child with softer foods until the tooth is extracted. Relieving pain can give the child the encouragement he needs to extract the tooth himself.



However, if a child is feeling comfortable and not experiencing any pain, providing him with harder and sticky food that might encourage the tooth to come out. Foods such as popcorn, nuts or toast with peanut butter might aid in getting the loose tooth dislodged. There is generally no harm to children if a baby tooth is accidentally swallowed other than not having the tooth to place under the pillow that night for the tooth fairy.

## Pull It Out

If a baby tooth doesn't seem to budge and the child is becoming frustrated, it might be time to have a parent intervene. Assisting the child in pulling out his own tooth is important to the whole process. Allow the child to take control of the situation with your assistance. The child is the only one who knows how much pain and discomfort he is comfortable with. Parents can provide lots of moral support and encouragement while he tries to pull out the loose tooth.

A parent might have to help if the child isn't able to pull the tooth himself. Use a tissue or piece of clean gauze and pull upward on the tooth. If the tooth is extremely loose, it should come out easily. If there is any resistance, it is best to leave the tooth alone and allow nature to do its job. It might be a couple more days before the roots are completely dissolved.

Whenever in doubt, contact your family dentist. Dental on Central is a unique dental practice that provides compassionate, specialty care for all ages. We always welcome your calls and questions!

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