

North Shore **&** Children Families

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MAY 2016

From the Publisher & Editor

Summer is Just Around the Corner

by Suzanne Provencher, Publisher/Editor

It's hard to believe, but summer will soon be here! Have you made plans for your kids' summer yet? **Check out pages 8 & 9 in this issue for more great summer options for your children.** We urge you to register for camp today and before the final slots are filled for this summer. **Visit our online Camp Directory** at www.northshorefamilies.com/camp-directory-2016/ – click on a camp – and get connected to our camps' websites to learn more and to register.

For those camps that may still have a few slots to fill, our **9th Annual Summer Camps & Programs Showcase Series concludes in our Summer issue**, which covers June AND July. This will be your last chance to share your summer offerings with our readers throughout the North Shore this year. **To participate, please contact me by noon, Wed., May 11, to secure your space and your summer.**

Our next issue is our Summer issue and it covers two months, June AND July; we do not have a separate July issue. And then we'll resume our regular monthly publishing schedule with our August issue, just in time for the Back to School season.

Check out our Summer Advertising Special on page 10 and \$ave!

In closing, I'd like to wish all North Shore area mothers, grandmothers, caregivers and others a very **Happy Mother's Day!** May you find yourself



surrounded by family, friends and love on this special day.

**Until next time ~
Suzanne**

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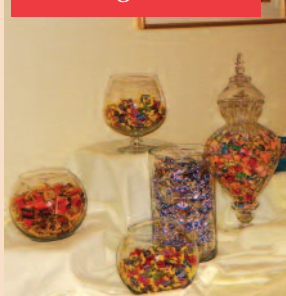
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With Longer Days of Spring, Break the Co-sleeping Cycle

by Dr. Kate Roberts

Recent studies indicate that a near epidemic proportion of children are co-sleeping with parents today. According to *Parenting's MomConnection*, a surprising 45% of moms let their 8 to 12 year olds sleep with them from time to time, and 13% permit it every night.

And according to the *Canadian Pediatric Society* “behavioral insomnia” is a medical diagnosis used to describe 20-30 percent of kids who have trouble falling or staying asleep, and who end up in their parents’ bed at one point during the night. The impact of chronic co-sleeping on a person’s functioning—younger and older—can run the gamut from increased dependency and anxiety to memory loss, fatigue, low energy, depression and obesity.

Why are children co-sleeping with their parents into their early teen years? Anxiety seems to be a major part of the reason. Recent research on childhood anxiety and prevalence rates indicates that children today suffer anxiety more than ever before. The causes for this increase in anxiety are unclear, but theories include divorce rates, social pressure over scheduling with two parent working families, the lack of downtime for children that does not involve technology, and our culture of materialism.

Many children who have anxiety suffer from Generalized Anxiety Disorder or symptoms of GAD. GAD symptoms include: a child who is worried about life,

worried about being alone, worried about what others think of them, worried about how they will perform and worried about trying new things. Often these children have not learned effective strategies for self-soothing and therefore when they try to sleep alone at night, they are alone with their anxiety and they don’t know how to cope. As a result, they develop a fear of sleeping because they don’t know how to distract themselves at night, alone in bed where their anxiety floods them. The anxiety takes on a life of its own and they begin to fear sleeping itself. As a result, they end up sleeping into their double digit years with their parents, in their parents’ beds.



Continued on page 4

North Shore Children & Families



www.northshorefamilies.com
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for our upcoming deadlines.

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2016 PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

Issue	Ad Space Deadline* (for ads that need production help)	Ad Space Deadline (for completed ads**)
Summer (June/July)	noon, 5/11	noon, 5/13
August	noon, 7/20	noon, 7/22
September	noon, 8/24	noon, 8/26

*Also the due date for ad materials/ad copy changes for ads that we produce or revise.

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**See page 10
for our Summer Advertising
Special!**

Co-sleeping

Continued from page 3

When I inquire about this sleeping arrangement, parents report that they attempt to end the co-sleeping, but that their child is just too anxious at nighttime to go to bed and stay in bed alone. It's important to note that these are not families that are opting to sleep with their children because of philosophical reasons. Rather, these parents want their child to sleep alone and they feel helpless to change the co-sleeping pattern and are hostage to their child's fears.

As a result of co-sleeping into later years, children today are less self-reliant. Many preteen children don't yet know how to be alone at bedtime and thus lack self-reliance. When kids haven't learned how to self-soothe, they experience control as outside themselves and find safety in their parents' bed instead of their own. The emotional challenges that develop as a result of underdeveloped coping strategies include anxiety, low self-esteem and even personality disturbances as the children develop into adults without having learned how to cope with stress using internal resources, and without relying on resources outside themselves, like their parents' beds.

In addition to inadequate coping skills, older children who co-sleep suffer secondary social challenges such as not feeling comfortable at sleepovers with friends and avoiding overnight class trips. Parents suffer from the impact of living with chronic sleep deprivation. And then there's the obvious stress on the marital relationship and the physiological and psychological well-being of parents that is compromised after years of living without a restful night of sleep.

Here are 6 actions that parents can take today to break the co-sleeping cycle:

1. Recognize the severity of the problem and commit to changing it. Spring is a

great time to commit to breaking the co-sleeping cycle because the longer days make nighttime less scary for anxious children.

2. Expect resistance and be prepared to endure the stresses of dealing with an anxious child at night until the cycle of co-sleeping is broken. For example, have friends or relatives who are not part of the negative cycle put the children to bed at night.
3. Use a behavioral retraining model with gradual removal of parental comfort and presence at bedtime, replaced with parental attention and nurturing before and after bedtime. Help children to develop self-soothing skills before and during bedtime. A relaxation tape for children and nighttime reading of a fun book can help alleviate anxiety and distract a worried child. Breathing techniques like those shared by Dr. Andrew Weil aid in relaxation (see <http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/ART00521/three-breathing-exercises.html>).
4. Discuss the importance of changing the behavior with the children. Emphasize parents' needs to improve their own sleep and that their marital bed is for parents only. Discuss the importance of children being able to sleep independently as related to their ability to participate in age appropriate activities.
5. Recognize that a child's anxiety, lower self-esteem and dependency behaviors during the day are related to their co-sleeping at night. Know that breaking the nighttime cycle will help to improve daytime difficulties.
6. Consistent limits and strategies will break the co-sleeping habit for most children within a month of introducing a new program. Parents should seek professional help if co-sleeping persists despite parents' unfailing efforts aimed at limit setting and supporting children to self-soothe.

Dr. Kate Roberts is a licensed child and school psychologist and family therapist with offices in Salem and Hamilton. She specializes in cognitive-behavior therapy, family therapy, anxiety and learning disabilities. Reach Dr. Kate at kate@drkateroberts.com and www.drkateroberts.com.

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Ask Dr. Kate

Q&A for North Shore Parents

For Some Children, Spring Brings More Clouds than Sun

Question: Dr. Kate, is it true that spring can be a time of increased depression?



Answer: For some, this is very true and researchers pose several explanations for this increase. One explanation is that after the long winter, most people look forward to the spring. They are hopeful that the suffering they experienced during the harsh, dark winter will be lifted with the arrival of the lighter and brighter days of spring. When this fails to occur, a mildly depressed person can become more despondent and hopeless than when they had the harsh winter to blame for their blues. Social media may worsen this for some as they see others enjoying the nice weather and sunshine in ways that they are not.

Physical explanations exist for spring depression, too. While many people expect to feel more energetic, with the longer days and nicer weather, seasonal allergies can have the reverse effect on people. People that are depressed don't have a chance to become physically energized before allergies make them lethargic, congested and feeling generally poor.

It's important to notice if your child is exhibiting signs of depression. Determine if they feel that spring has let them down and that they have

nothing to look forward to.

Signs that a child may experience spring depression include:

1. A pattern of consistent complaints of mental or physical discomfort with no identified cause
2. A tendency to spend more time alone than with others
3. A change in grades, friendships, priorities or appearance
4. A pattern of subtle lying, stealing or cheating
5. A generally flat, irritable or negative mood
6. Sleep and appetite changes or disturbances
7. A vague reporting of their lives, i.e., parents guess what they are doing, but don't really know
8. Avoidance of conflict
9. Low energy
10. Avoidance of challenges

Technology can be a place where a depressed child gravitates to hide and distract themselves from spring depression. Don't allow your child to hide their suffering or distract from their sadness. Address the depression and it will lift. Children often don't recognize their depression and will attempt to avoid talking about negative feelings for fear of upsetting their parents. Parents need to enter spring willing and able to embrace whatever mood their child presents with. It would be great if every child could be happy and energetic in spring, but many are not. So parents need to be aware and be able to provide their child with needed help and support or seek professional help for their child when needed.

Dr. Kate Roberts is a licensed child and school psychologist, parent coach and family therapist with offices on the North Shore. Questions can be directed to kate@drkateroberts.com. We may anonymously publish your question and Dr. Kate's answer in a future issue.

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Healthy Eating

Tomato Time!

by Mary Higgins

Flowers unfold their pretty petals after a period of dormancy during winter months. New growth is everywhere: trees, lawns and even your backyard garden. With the warmer weather, it's time to savor many fruits and vegetables, including red and orange tomatoes.

We see tomatoes in pasta sauces and drink juice made from them. We dice them into spicy salsas and pop grape tomatoes into our mouths.

History of the Tomato:

Though we enjoy the bright and juicy orbs we know as tomatoes and we feed them to our family to keep them healthy, our ancestors had great apprehension about eating them. In nature, plants with bright berries are often poisonous, one of the ways they protect themselves from predators and so they are avoided. At first, people feared the tomato plant for this reason. With inedible stems and leaves, only the fruit of the tomato plant can be safely eaten.



Originating in the Aztec culture in Mexico in 700 A.D., tomatoes were yellow and small and called *xitomati*. Over time, the *xi* was dropped and an *o* replaced the *i*. They belong to the nightshade family along with some truly poisonous plants, including the nightshade plant itself, *belladonna*, which is used only for medical use. If you read or watched any of the *Harry Potter* series, you were introduced to some members of the *Solanacea* family such as the *mandrake* and the *belladonna* plants. There are other non-poisonous plants belonging to this group as well that we love to eat, including peppers, potatoes and eggplant.

Tomatoes are a highly acidic food, often sold in glass jars. When canned, they require a plastic liner in the can to keep the lead solder used in the can's seam from leaching its lead into the food. In colonial times, people ate off pewter plates that contained lead and would experience seizures from eating acidic foods, like tomatoes, off these plates. For this reason, in England, tomatoes were considered poisonous and only revered as ornamental.

By the 16th Century, the Spaniards embraced cooking tomatoes, along with peppers and sweet potatoes, in a colorful *ratatouille*, where tomatoes enjoyed popularity. When tomatoes reached both Italy and France, they were viewed as very special and as aphrodisiacs. Those that are golden in color were referred to as the *golden apple* or *apple of love*. We see reflections of this in Italian restaurant menus when we see *poma d'oro* accompanying pasta or on pizza.

In the U.S., the tomato is a relatively new food, eaten for less than 175 years. The colonists, like in Great Britain, grew tomatoes in their gardens to add beautiful color and variety, but they were not deemed safe to eat.

Nutrient Profile:

With the current knowledge, that tomatoes are both safe to eat and indeed beneficial, we recognize that cooked tomatoes are high in a nutrient called *lycopene*, which protects the tissues of prostate glands in males from cancer. They are also a source of vitamins C and A, as well as the B vitamin, *folate*, which keeps the heart healthy while preventing neural tube defects in pregnant women. In addition to their vitamin content, tomatoes are full of minerals, including iron,

Continued on page 10

Shore Country Day School

With its emphasis on conceptual, integrated, and creative learning within a strong liberal arts tradition, Shore Country Day School, located on a 17-acre campus in Beverly, MA, serves 440 Pre-K through Grade 9 students from 40 communities across the North Shore. Families seek out Shore's programs and state-of-the-art facilities for academic challenge, innovative teaching, and a balance of scholastic, artistic, physical, and personal growth. Students graduate with exceptional breadth, independence, and preparation for future learning.

Shore Country Day School, 545 Cabot Street, Beverly, MA – www.ShoreSchool.org

Beverly School Sees Benefits in 'Whole Child' Education Model

Leaders at Beverly's [Shore Country Day School](#) have spent much of the past school year conducting intensive focus-group research into the ways parents, faculty members, students, and outside community members perceive the institution. Working with consultants and experts from leading independent schools across the country, they've been surprised to discover that these highly varied groups all share similar views of the school. From the very youngest students to the most experienced teachers and parents, research participants have all identified three major areas they say distinguish Shore: its emphasis on experiential learning and risk-taking, its tradition of encouraging deep connections between teachers and students, and its insistence on the central role of community and caring in the culture of the school.

Asked to explain the unusually consistent feedback from such diverse audiences, Shore's new Lower School Head, Sara Knox, offers, "It all comes back to the students."



Sara Knox, Head of Lower School

Knox—formerly a classroom teacher, language and literacy specialist, and administrator at the Francis Parker School, San Diego's largest independent day school—is a proponent of "whole child" education, which emphasizes emotional and physical health alongside



Lower School students enjoying some quiet reading time

academic inquiry. "What our parents, teachers, and students showed us by their responses is that focusing on the whole child works, and it's what we all want." For evidence, says Knox, just look at the students. "They are curious. They are eager. They are happy. They look for challenge, and they persevere. Hearing about it is one thing, but seeing it in action speaks volumes for what Shore does for students and for what students do for Shore."

Whereas many schools allow arts and athletics to languish in an elective structure, Shore requires that students "go outside their comfort zone" to participate in everything the school has to offer, especially at the younger grade levels. From taking their place on the big stage in Shore's Theatre for the first time, to jumping into a new sport, Shore wants children to try, according to Knox. "We want them to struggle and also succeed. We want them to find their passions by experiencing so much. And once they do, we see them blossom."

Founded in 1936, Shore has from its very beginning emphasized balance in education. Today, the school is known just as much for its robust offerings in

athletics and the arts as for its rigorous academics. Yet "balance" at Shore does not mean pushing all students along the same path. "We are not a school that breeds one type of child," asserts Knox, "and we pride ourselves on that. Year to year, our graduates leave us with very different sets of skills and passions. At the core, they are good kids. But one is a violinist, another a mathematician, another a lacrosse player, and yet another an environmentalist."

"Attending to the whole child means not asking students to conform to a narrow set of academic standards and outcomes," Knox continues. "Instead, it requires us as educators to meet children 'where they are,' engaging individual learners with highly individualized instruction that nurtures emotional well-being, physical health, and intellectual growth."

This type of philosophy is seen by experts as essential in today's world, where rote learning and the accumulation of knowledge no longer measure up in society and workplaces where character skills such as creativity, resilience, teamwork, curiosity, and time management are ever more valuable.

According to the Whole Child Initiative, "The demands of the 21st century require a new approach to education to fully prepare students for college, career, and citizenship. Research, practice, and common sense confirm that a whole child approach to education will develop and prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow."

Shore's teachers and administrators seem to agree. Through new facilities such as the Innovation Lab and Theatre, through community experiences such as Shore's House system and service days, and through plentiful opportunities for genuine inquiry and collaboration, Knox says, "The school ensures children develop those critical skills we know correlate with success—and happiness—in life."

Schools are changing, and Shore is surely helping to lead the way. Areas of focus such as mindfulness and movement are now finding their place across the curriculum. Student-led discussions are becoming central to learning as early as fourth grade. Concern for the community is a theme students of every age explore throughout their Shore experience.

"All of these innovations, while perhaps not unique to our school, mean that we can offer a uniquely comprehensive whole child approach that is made stronger by deep and powerful relationships between students and faculty—a hallmark of our school," says Knox.

A whole faculty, passionately dedicated to the whole child—Shore's proven model may well be one more schools should study.

The information contained in this education feature was submitted by Shore Country Day School, www.shoreschool.org, and published in partnership with North Shore Children & Families; www.northshorefamilies.com.



8 North Shore Children & Families

Summer Camps & Programs Showcase Series

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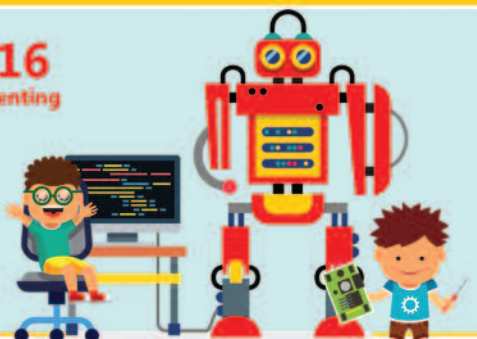
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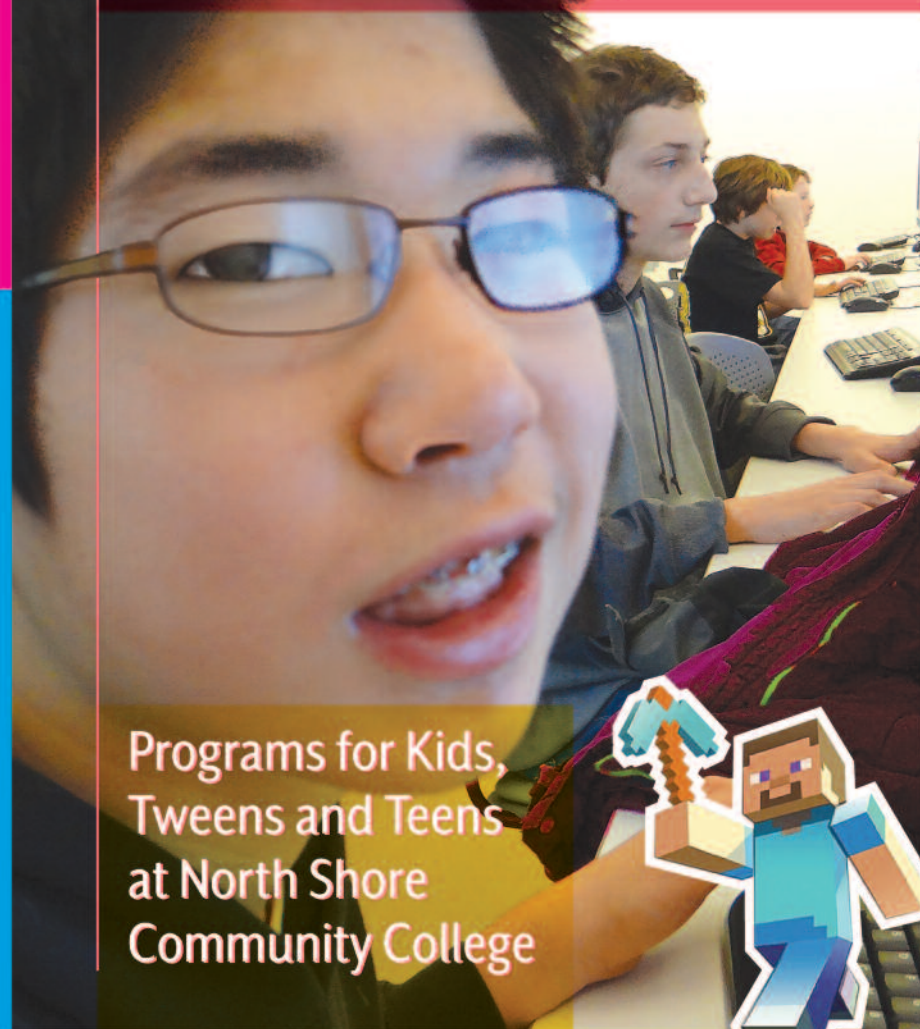
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Tomato Time!

Continued from page 6

and are a good source of fiber. People who eat many tomatoes are found to have a decreased level of C-reactive protein, a marker of inflammation. Served pureed and chilled, we find them in refreshing gazpacho soup in the summer, diced and added to grains such as bulgur wheat or quinoa in tasty tabouleh and boiled down to a sauce and spread on the dough we make for peppery pizzas. They can also be stuffed with other foods such as tuna fish salad.

There are many varieties of tomatoes, but they fall into three basic categories: the Italian plum tomato, more oval shaped than regular tomatoes and used for making sauces; smaller round cherry and oval grape tomatoes. Rather than slicing, sprinkling grape tomatoes on a salad is much faster and they work great as snacks.

While we think of tomatoes as red and yellow, they are actually available in many different colors. Orange, purple, white, green and even black and tomatoes can be up to 19 inches in diameter.

If you are making a sauce with pureed tomato, choose organic as the pectin has now been genetically modified in some brands. And there are no labeling laws for GMOs in place yet. By purchasing organic, we are also avoiding the usage of pesticides and genetically modified herbicides that are reportedly linked to stomach lesions and pre-cancerous changes.

Mary Higgins, M.Ed., is a nutrition educator who writes about food for several websites. She has a Bachelor's degree in both Nutrition and Education. She studied exercise science and received her M.Ed. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She has worked as a Sports Nutritionist and personal trainer at YMCAs in the greater Boston area and is certified by both the American Council on Exercise and the American Academy of Sports Dietitians and Nutritionists. Mary is also the author of Daddy Trains for the Marathon, a book written about the Boston Marathon and available on Amazon.com.

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Spotlight Projects: Helping Up, M.A.S.H. Recovery Wishes and Baskets for Belief

by Leah Okimoto

Sixth graders on the North Shore are on fire this spring! They are finding such creative, meaningful ways to give of themselves, and they make us so hopeful for the future (if they end up in charge)! They are bringing so many community members together for good, and their gifts are bouncing back to them in the form of healing, happiness and purpose. We couldn't be prouder of them, and want to thank all of you who are continuing to support them as they bring their visions to life. Here are three wonderful examples to inspire you and your kids this month:



Helping Up: Nick & Brady, 6th graders at the Higgins Middle School in Peabody, got together and made several fleece tie blankets to be donated to The Kaplan Family Hospice House (now called Care Dimensions) in Danvers, in honor of Nick's late grandmother who passed away there about a year ago. When Nick had visited his grandmother, he remembered her having a prayer blanket and that it had brought her comfort in her last days.

The staff was overjoyed when they learned of this project and how meaningful it was to Nick to do something in honor of his grandmother. They wanted to meet the boys personally to say 'thank you' and to give them a tour of the facility. We met there on a Saturday morning and the boys got to meet some of the staff, including the chaplain who talked to them about how comforting their blankets will be to both the patients and their families. He then took the boys to the chapel to say a special prayer for Nick's grandmother. It was an emotional and unforgettable experience and so touching to see the bond between the boys and the friendship they share.

M.A.S.H. Recovery Wishes: Maddy (M), Alyssa (A), Sarah (S) & Hannah (H), 6th graders at the Holten Richmond Middle School in Danvers, are part of the DanversCARES program and wanted to do a project that would support their mission of benefitting both adolescents and adults in treatment for drug and



alcohol addiction. The girls came up with the idea of making caring notes for people in recovery. They hope that their notes will provide encouragement for these individuals to get well.

We supplied the girls with cardstock, colored pencils and pens. They worked on their cards over a period of a few weeks, creating inspirational and

motivational cards which will be delivered in the next couple of weeks to recovery programs on the North Shore. Sarah noted that she was very proud of the work they did on the cards and hopes that they help someone get well.

Baskets for Belief: Alexa, Hannah & Jacki, 6th graders at the Higgins Middle School in Peabody, are very passionate about helping kids that have to spend long periods of time in the hospital. The girls decided to make two treasure boxes for Boston Children's Hospital's Epilepsy Monitoring Unit, where the patients don't have a lot of mobility as they are being monitored 24 hours a day, sometimes for a week or more at a time.



The girls learned that the patients in this unit have special wires taped to their heads, then wrapped, in order for the staff to monitor their brain activity, looking for signs of seizures. This process can take time, so the staff likes to offer the kids rewards for being cooperative and for not pulling on the wires or their head wraps.

The girls decided to make a treasure box for the staff to use to give out small items, and they filled it with collectable cards, stickers, paper, crayons and small toys such as *Hot Wheels*, *Shopkins*, *Minions* and *Pretty Ponies*. In addition, they picked out cute hair clips that can be clipped to the head wraps.

Alexa said, "I am proud that we were able to give back and make a difference in the lives of kids who are in the hospital, and I hope that the small gifts make them feel appreciated".

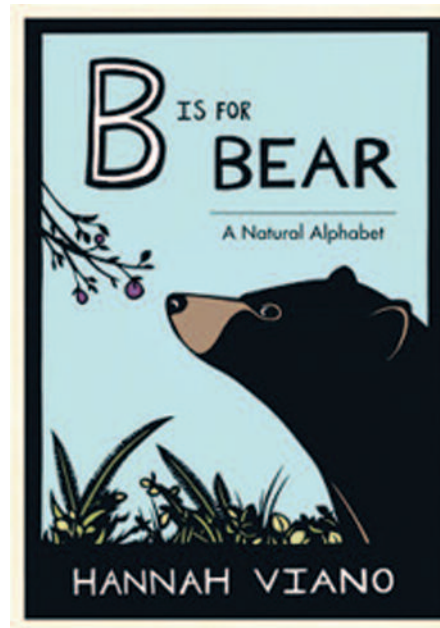
Please visit www.aaronspresents.org to browse our *Projects Gallery* and to learn more about how a child you know can apply to participate, or to express interest in volunteer opportunities. As always, we welcome the opportunity to present to kids at more schools, after-school programs and other youth groups throughout the community, so please get in touch if you would like to help connect us with more kids.

Kimberly LaBonte-Kay is the North Shore Regional Director of Aaron's Presents, a 501(c)(3) youth development organization providing a unique child-initiated, child-led and non-competitive program that empowers children in 8th grade and below to dream up and lead a positive project that benefits others. She is mentoring all of the kids mentioned in these projects and loves helping them realize what they are capable of doing for their communities. Aaron's Presents was founded by Leah Okimoto of Andover in memory of her infant son, Aaron. Feel free to contact Kim at kimberly@aaronspresents.org or Leah at lokimoto@aaronspresents.org or (978)809-5487 to schedule a presentation for your school, youth program, team or troop.

Children's Book Review

B is for Bear: A Natural Alphabet

Written & illustrated by Hannah Viano
(Little Bigfoot/Sasquatch Books,
\$16.99, Ages 2-5)



by Cathy Ballou Mealey

Most alphabet books are simple and straightforward, designed to introduce little children to the letters A, B, C. Most are organized around a particular theme, such as animals, foods or holidays, and teach a target word or two by featuring bright, colorful images. Rare is the alphabet book that can appeal to slightly older readers as well by highlighting beautiful artwork or an especially interesting alphabet concept.

B is for Bear: A Natural Alphabet is one of those books that merits a closer look for both of these reasons.

Hannah Viano, a cut paper artist originally from Maine, dedicates her alphabet book to "...all of those who let children run a little wild, climbing trees and splashing in puddles. It is worth all the laundry and lost mittens." It is easy to assume that Viano spent hours of time in the wilderness herself in preparation for creating this book, which guides readers young and old to a renewed appreciation for the natural world.

The illustrations in ***B is for Bear*** are perfectly stunning. Although they

appear to be woodcuts at first glance, the process is even more interesting. Viano uses a graceful paper cutting technique, carving thick outlines from black paper with an X-Acto knife. She then adds soft pastel colors digitally in a rich range of tones from gold to olive to amethyst. The look is at once classic and contemporary, as the bold lines capture the energy and motion inherent in her natural subject matter.

The alphabet letters, upper and lowercase, are suspended at the top of each page, punched in a white font onto the thick black border around each illustration. The natural keywords that she selects range nicely from animals (J for Jackrabbit) to natural objects (P for Pebble). Below the bottom border, Viano provides clear but poetic descriptions of the image, as well as a few additional fascinating facts. For example, from L for Lightning Bug: "Call them fireflies or lightning bugs or *Lampyridae*. They fill a summer night with magical lights."

Viano adeptly shows natural objects of all sizes, from massive mountains and soaring waves to tiny dandelion puffs and Queen Anne's lace florets. The variety of topics keeps the A to Z alphabet format interesting and surprising, with a fair mix of unusual versus familiar subjects for children. The book as an object itself is lovely, with sturdy proportions perfect for small hands. The pages are printed on thick, smooth, semi-matte paper that lends a sophisticated, organic feel.

B is for Bear and for book, beautiful and breathtaking! Celebrate springtime and warmer weather by looking for the natural alphabet in your own backyard.

Cathy Ballou Mealey is a picture book writer and mom to two great kids. She lives in Lynnfield and shares book reviews through Twitter via @CatBallouMealey. Cathy borrowed *B is for Bear* from her local library, where she discovers wonderful new stories every week.

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