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# ncpg Parent Times

December 2013

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## Pumpkin Painting Playdate!

Toddler II gathered for a pumpkin-painting playdate. The kids loved the crafts, bounce house and snacks.



north central parenting group



# 'Tis the Season Best Kids Shopping Sites

by Heidi Klum. Source: Parenting.com

These are five websites that I rely on to buy clothing and toys for my children that may also make you wish you were a kid again.



## Oompa.com

I am a huge fan of this website. It carries a large selection of toys with a concentration on toys from Europe, including Haba and Holztiger. Growing up in Germany, these were the toys of my youth and I love being able to watch my children enjoy them.



## Etsy.com

You may want to pack a snack, because you can find yourself browsing Etsy for hours at a time. In addition to amazing handcrafted items for adults, the site carries over half a million items for kids. From handmade clothing and toys to one-of-a-kind nursery furniture, it's here. Planning your child's birthday party? Check out Etsy's selection of personalized invitations, thank you notes and party favors.



## Chasing-Fireflies.com

This website is such a gem. It has kids clothing, toys, party decorations and favors, furniture... the list goes on. If you or your child can imagine it, they have it. I am quite fond of the personalized pajama sets, as well as their adorable Tooth Fairy keepsake boxes. Best of all, the children's costume selection is unrivaled. From Elvis to Marie Antoinette, your child will look incredible on Halloween.



## Amazon.com

Is there anything you can't find on Amazon? Toys, books, clothing, DVDs, video games — and most of them at a discounted price. The site's Wish List feature is like a modern day list to Santa. Sign up for the prime membership and get free two-day shipping on most items.



## Giggle.com

Moms in the know turn to Giggle for nursery items and baby gear that are both functional and über stylish. From cribs and strollers to highchairs and layettes, it is a haven for the modern mom-to-be. The site also has a great Baby Gift Registry, so finding the perfect gift is just a click away.

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## President's Corner

As we reflect on the 2013-year, and what it has meant to each of us (and to our respective families), I wanted to express my sincerest gratitude to all of you. Thank you for your continued dedication to NCPG—and thank you for wanting to be a better Mother by taking the time out of your busy schedules to attend classes. Thank you also for your generosity, which has proven so impactful in making a difference to the Jaydie Lynn King Foundation. So many families, who would have otherwise struggled, will get to celebrate the magic of the holidays because of your contributions and kindness.

The blessing of children brought us all together, and without them we would not know NCPG or have created so many wonderful and unique friendships. For that I am thankful. May we all be given the gift of being present with our families and loved ones this holiday season so that we are able to cherish and build upon these memories in the years to come.

I am wishing you and yours a very happy and safe holiday season. May the New Year bring hope, love and continued good health to you and your families.

Kori Shapiro, *NCPG President 2013-2014*



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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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## 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** – Sarah Frey and Carlie Garcia

**Designer** – Neill Fox, foxnoggin, thinking@foxnoggin.com

## On the Cover

Scarlette Shapiro was photographed by Stuart Thurkill at Eyes 2 See Photography. See Stuart's work at [www.eyes2seephoto.com](http://www.eyes2seephoto.com)

Want to see your little one on the cover? Send high-resolution photos with name, age, and photographer credit to [sarahjfrey@gmail.com](mailto:sarahjfrey@gmail.com)



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## News & Events



### 2013 Member Holiday Fair – Dec 4

Grab your friends and come join us for cocktails and shopping. Admission is free for everyone. Enjoy browsing the displays of participating local businesses, in the amazing art gallery setting.

Make it a girl's night out. Look forward to seeing you there.

Wednesday, December 4th, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
Bonner David Galleries  
7040 East Main Street in Old Town Scottsdale

### Participating Vendors

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### SAVE THE DATE – Corks for Kids, April 26, 2014

Our annual fundraiser and auction will be taking place at the Phoenix Country Club on Saturday, April 26 at 6:30 p.m.

Mark your calendar for this exciting evening. More details to follow soon...

If you are interested in helping with the planning, please contact Erica Brown, Caroline Keating, and Julie Christensen at [fundraising@ncpgaz.org](mailto:fundraising@ncpgaz.org)



### Send Us Your Photos

Share photos of your holiday celebrations.

Email jpgs to: [sarahjfrey@gmail.com](mailto:sarahjfrey@gmail.com)




## Call for Submissions from Mom Authors


Have an idea for an article for *Parent Times* or want to write one yourself? We welcome suggestions and submissions from our members. Contact [sarahjfrey@gmail.com](mailto:sarahjfrey@gmail.com) with your ideas for future issues.



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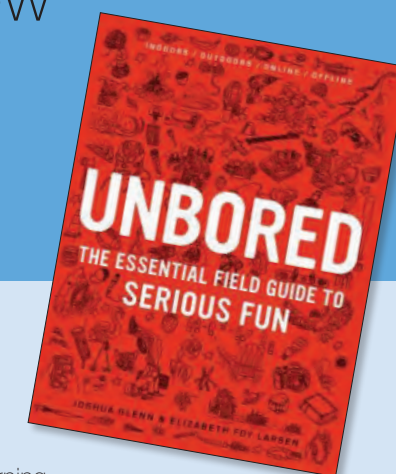
# On the Nightstand Book Review

Title: *Unbored: The Essential Field Guide to Serious Fun*

Author: Joshua Glenn and Elizabeth Foy Larsen

Reviewed by: Kristen Kemp

Source: Parents.com Blog Mom Must Read



I'm loving a brand new book called *Unbored: The Essential Field Guide to Serious Fun*. It's got a great message, "Use the world, or let the world use you." I'm down with that.

The authors, Joshua Glenn and Elizabeth Foy Larsen, show us that we can always be up to something. We just need to take time to goof off, craft, play games and prank each other. Forget tutoring and extra homework. Instead, use your hands and brains (and old batteries) with your kids to feel instantly happier and more connected.

This is the ultimate craft and curiosity book. The illustrations are vivid, funny and, best of all, super clear. *Unbored* also talks about how to roughhouse in the section called "Rules of Combat." And you know that crazy You Tube video with the exploding Coke and Mentos? *Unbored* tells you exactly how to repeat the explosive experiment at home with your kids. (Outside, preferably near a wa-

ter hose.) The balancing poses for two people, called "Circus Tricks," will keep my young children busy for hours this weekend.

From recycling old things to learning how to curse without cursing, this is the coolest activity book for all ages I've seen in a long time. Build a tipi or an igloo. Giggle while you short sheet someone's bed. Fix your bike and make a secret book safe. *Unbored* includes 344 pages of seriously fun stuff to do.

The kids will love the activities—younger ones need supervision but older ones can take this book and run. Mine will just have to pry *Unbored* away from me first. After all, I may short sheet their beds, but I don't want them to figure out how to do it to me!

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# Self-Esteem: The Best Gift You Can Give

by Barb Grady

When I ask the question, “How many of you think your parents loved you as a child?” most of the hands in my classes go up. “Now, how many of you felt loved as a child?” Just a few hands remain. No matter where I speak, the response is generally the same. What does this mean for us as parents?

Self-esteem, especially in children, is closely linked to a feeling of being loved, of being lovable. Whether we know it or not, we are “teaching” self-esteem, or a lack of it, to our children all the time. For the most part, children look to the adults in their environment, and later to their peers, for a reflection of who they are and how they are. Children are observers, who soak up every bit of information we provide—our words, facial expressions, posture, tone of voice, touch—and the conclusions they draw (“I am important,” “I don’t matter,” “I am loved,” “I’m a nuisance”) then become their “truth” about themselves and what they deserve in life.

We, as parents, have the choice to teach unconsciously—by repeating the patterns our own parents used with us—or to make a conscious choice to pass on the values we would like to see perpetuated.

**Pass on the best and throw out the rest.** An important place to begin conscious awareness is to take an honest look at your own childhood. Remember what it was like growing up in your family. What did your parents do to make you feel loved? Was their love conditional or unconditional? How did they discipline you? Did they believe children need to be controlled? How did they communicate and resolve problems with you and with each other? What helped you to feel good about yourself, and what led you to believe you were “bad,” that there was something wrong with you? Try not to idealize your experiences, but rather remember what it felt like to grow up in your family. Not remembering painful memories leaves you at greater risk of repeating those behaviors with your own children.

Our parents, being human and lacking the tools available today, made mistakes, but we can choose to learn from those mistakes rather than repeating them. Our children give us the opportunity to become the parents we wished we would have had. When my father died, I thanked him for giving me the passion to parent a different way.

**It is better to prepare than to repair.** Fostering positive self-esteem from the beginning is easier and healthier than trying to repair a negative self-concept later in life. Here are some of the major factors that contribute to self-esteem:

## High Self-Esteem

Respect (valuing), Acceptance, Affection, Attention, Being listened to, Play, Laughter, and Positive reinforcement (compliments, support, encouragement, believing in, acknowledgement)

## Low Self-Esteem

Disrespect, Rejection, Abuse of any kind, Being ignored or neglected, Not being listened to, Perfectionism and comparison, Negative reinforcement (put-downs, criticism, judgment, labeling, name calling, ridicule, humiliation)

Self-esteem begins with self-love, with respecting, accepting, and taking care of you. This love spills over to your children, who learn to love themselves and to love you. Self-esteem also depends on unconditional love: love with respect, empathy, acceptance, sensitivity, and warmth. Unconditional love says, “Regardless of what you do, I love and accept you for who you are.”

**Bite your tongue.** I have noticed that when I am stressed, preoccupied, or operating from an unconscious mode (not being present), words slip out of my mouth that I wish I had not said. My children’s self-esteem suffers and so does mine. Healthy families remind each other of their goodness; unhealthy families remind each other of their failings. Take time to regularly remind yourself of your goals and values—what you want for your children—and you will create that consciously.

**Flip your focus.** Many of us have been taught to catch ourselves and our children being “bad.” Instead of looking for shortcomings, and what is wrong, focus on the terrific aspects. Reinforce the positive and tell your children what you want, not what you do not want.

**Examine your expectations.** Expectations that are not developmentally appropriate set our children up for failure and set us up for disappointment. Expectations that are too low tell our children that we do not believe in them. Maintain a balance between high expectations for yourself and your children, and then cheer each other on.

When you are good to yourself, you feel good about yourself. I wished that my mother had told me how to take care of me, rather than valuing me as the caretaker. A large part

of self-esteem comes from feeling that we deserve to be happy, to have fun, to enjoy life, to do the things we want to do. Many times, we unwittingly provide low self-esteem models to our children by rationalizing that we no longer have the time or money to do nice things for ourselves.

Here is a good exercise in self-nourishment. Make a list of 20 activities you enjoy doing that do not require lots of money or elaborate planning (like taking a hot bath while listening to music with candlelight). It is especially revealing if you take note of the last time you actually did these activities. Make a commitment to do at least one activity from your list every day. This can become a family activity too, with each family member reminding and encouraging the others to be good to themselves.

**Get rid of what you do not want and replace it with what you do.** Listen to what you say to yourself during the course of each day. Turn up the volume and tune into your thoughts: “That was dumb.”

“I’m too fat.” “I’m not good enough.” As you hear the messages, write them down. Where did they come from? The reason most people feel bad about themselves is they keep telling themselves how awful they are. For every statement you record, think of a way to say what you really want to believe about yourself, and jot down an affirmation as a reminder. Turn your “stinking thinking” into positive self-talk. You will be surprised what happens—not only for you, but also for your children.

**When you are having fun together, love just happens.** Think about your weekly activities and how much time you spend with your children having fun. How much time to do you devote to play? Most of us have narrowed down the realm of play to a set of tennis on the weekend, or maybe renting a video. We have forgotten the delights of make-believe, building forts, setting up a toy store, and swimming with a friend. Luckily, our children are the best teachers we could possibly have to help us uncover the child within us. Play brings a special closeness to family relationships, and when you or your children are feeling out of sorts, laughter is the best medicine.

**Discipline without damage.** I often ask parents what comes to mind when I say the word discipline. The most common response is punishment. Discipline is a teaching process where we help our children to be self-regulated. When our children “misbehave” we may react as our parents did and shame or blame. When anyone feels attacked, they will shut down to protect themselves from our harmful words. “I” statements indicate clearly what we are feeling and ask for a specific change in behavior: “I feel \_\_\_\_\_, when you \_\_\_\_\_, and I need \_\_\_\_\_. Taking the time to formulate an “I” statement allows you to step back and look objectively at why your buttons are being pushed. What is coming up in you from your past? Then you can decide if this particular issue is a leftover value inherited from your parents. It may come up, for example, that you do have strong feelings about being spoken to disrespectfully, or that you don’t really care if your child’s clothes are clean enough to wear a second day.

Finding new ways to discipline involves replacing the old reward and punishment system with natural and logical consequences. The Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (S.T.E.P.) approach and the insights of Alfred Adler and Rudolph Dreikurs provide wonderful tools for parents.

**Joy shared is joy doubled; sorrow shared is sorrow cut in half.** In the past, extended families were the rule, rather than the exception. We no longer have that built-in support system and need to create our own support systems by reaching out to neighbors, coworkers, and friends when things get tough or when we just want to share our experience of parenthood. Parenting classes are an excellent way to connect with others who are sharing the parenting experience. Please visit my web site ([www.Parenting-Plus.com](http://www.Parenting-Plus.com)) for a list of classes, or to schedule your own.


**Listen, listen, listen.** We all know what it feels like to have something to say and the person we want to talk to is not listening. Most people need to improve their listening skills. I am completing my Master of Counseling degree and am grateful to this program for improving my listening skills. When you listen to your children, look them in the eye (at their eye level), set aside judgment and criticism, tune into nonverbal cues, and let them finish speaking. Then, reflect a feeling back to them, from their point of view (using their words): “You must have felt \_\_\_\_\_” or “It sounds like you were \_\_\_\_\_.” If your reply is right, they will know you heard them and understood. If your reply is wrong, they will know that their message did not get through, and they can try to restate it more clearly. This is “win-win” communication, and it enhances everyone’s self-esteem.

**Let go of perfectionism.** My Mother was a perfectionist and I am aware of how I developed that tendency. My children have helped me recover from the mistaken belief that anything must be perfect. Because perfectionists have impossible expectations, they are usually frustrated, disappointed, and angry. Perfectionism creates stress for the entire family. To let go of perfectionism, add more joy, play, and silliness to your life. Be gentler with yourself and others. A mistake does not mean you are a failure, but rather provides an opportunity to learn. When children make mistakes, their self-esteem often suffers, but when they are encouraged to “fix” those mistakes, their self-esteem rises. The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing.

**What goes around comes around.** A wonderful reward of conscious parenting is that our children give back to us the same care, support, and encouragement that we give to them. My children have been my best cheerleaders since beginning graduate school and expanding my teaching career. They remind me to release perfectionism and support my ability to succeed. They have encouraged me to take risks and we have co-created a winning family in which everyone feels like a success. It is not easy to create a “win-win” situation in our “win-lose” culture. It is worth the effort though. Happiness and connection happen when you replace old negative habits with new high self-esteem behaviors and attitudes. It all begins with self-awareness and a conscious choice.

*“The most important work you and I will ever do will be within the walls of our own homes.”*

—Harold B. Lee



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# Holiday Things to Do!

## The Velveteen Rabbit

Celebrate the 25th anniversary of Childsplay's Holiday Classic! For years, Childsplay brought holiday magic to the Valley with its production of Margery Williams' classic picture book. Now the tradition makes a triumphant return, and it's better than ever! For any child who has ever loved a favorite toy, The Velveteen Rabbit will give you a reason to believe in magic. This heartwarming story will bring holiday joy to families of all ages. Saturdays and Sundays through December 22, 2013, 1p.m. and 4p.m. \$12 - \$25 [www.childsplayaz.org](http://www.childsplayaz.org)



## The Nutcracker

A holiday celebration to share! Dancing toys, mischievous mice, waltzing flowers and sparkling snowflakes dance to Tchaikovsky's sumptuous score performed by The Phoenix Symphony. This holiday classic tells the story of Clara and her magical Nutcracker Prince as they embark on a thrilling adventure. Each year Ballet Arizona rings in the season with IB Andersen's The Nutcracker, creating memories to cherish forever. Dec. 6 through 24, 2013 at Symphony Hall. [www.balletaz.org](http://www.balletaz.org)



## Winnie the Pooh Christmas Tail

This Phoenix holiday tradition has been delighting Valley families for 17 years! Join Pooh, Piglet, Eeyore and all their friends in the Hundred Acre Wood for a celebration of sharing and caring. See it live on stage at the Valley Youth Theatre. Dec. 6 through 23. Check times and prices at [www.vyt.com](http://www.vyt.com).

## Frances Smith Cohen's "Snow Queen"

Center Dance Ensemble's magical retelling of the Hans Christian Andersen classic to music by Sergei Prokofiev. A special one-hour abridged version of this "don't-miss" Valley holiday favorite. Dec. 13 and 20, 12:10 p.m. \$6 at [www.herbergertheater.org](http://www.herbergertheater.org)



## Stillman-McCormick Railroad Park Holiday Lights

Take a train ride through thousands of lights and a variety of holiday displays. Opening night festivities will begin at 6:30pm and include a tree lighting ceremony, entertainment and a visit from Santa. Santa will be at the park through December 23rd. Train & Carousel rides are \$2 each. Children under 3 free with a paying adult. Dec. 13 through January 5th, excluding Dec. 24, 25 & 31. 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. [www.therailroadpark.com/events](http://www.therailroadpark.com/events)



## Ritz Carlton Teddy Bear Tea

This special Afternoon Tea for the young and the young-at-heart serves scrumptious holiday pastries and treats. Guests will enjoy a visit from Ted E. Bear and story time, and children will be able to select a teddy bear of their choice to take home. Seating available Fridays through Sundays at noon and 3 p.m. Reservations will begin on October 1 and may be made through Dining Reservations at 602-468-0700.

## Phoenician Breakfast With Santa

Each child will receive a complimentary digital photo as they visit with Santa. Saturday, Dec. 14 from 9 a.m. to noon. \$45 per adult, \$30 per child 3 - 12 years of age. Reservations required, call 480-423-2530.

## Phoenix Zoo Lights

Through January 12, 6-10pm nightly. 3.5 million lights, 600 displays! \$14 weekends/\$10 weekdays, children under 2 free. More info: [www.phoenixzoo.org/events/zoolights](http://www.phoenixzoo.org/events/zoolights)



## Las Noches de Las Luminarias

8,000 hand-lit luminarias, warm cup of cider, the sounds of handbells ringing and Dickens Carolers. \$30 for adults, \$12.50 for children (ages 3-12) (children under three are admitted free). Through Dec. 31 at Desert Botanical Garden.

## The Arizona Celebration of Lights

The Phoenix Event Complex located at 2209 North 99th Avenue in Phoenix— and open every night of the week through January 4. Sunday through Thursday from 5:30-9:00p.m. Friday, Saturday and holidays open until 10:00pm. [www.azcelebrationoflights.com](http://www.azcelebrationoflights.com)



## Holiday Story Time at Desert Ridge Marketplace

Free hot chocolate and cookies, story time readings of holiday classics, and special guest characters. Dec. 8 and 15 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the District Stage. Free admission.

## Wizard of Oz Gingerbread Village

The public is invited to the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa in North Phoenix to see a dazzling masterpiece of ginger-bread, gumdrops, chocolate and sugary icing. Through Sunday, Jan 4. Free.

## Winter Wonderland Express at Enchanted Island

Ride the Holiday Train ride to a snow-filled Enchanted Island. Play in tons of fresh snow and ride a sled. Visit with Santa Claus for free at the North Pole and enjoy a free cup of hot cocoa and free candy canes. Dec. 21 and 22 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day. Regular prices for rides and attractions apply.

## CityScape Holiday Ice Rink

Special deals with skate rental wristband. Purchase beer, wine and hot chocolate from Chloe's Corner to enjoy in the park while watching the skaters. \$12 rink admission includes skate rental. Through Sunday, January 13 in downtown Phoenix.



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# Thank You!

As we enter this season of giving, I wanted to express my gratitude to all of you who gave so much to me over the past few months. Thank you Team NCPG--walking beside all of you wonderful women at The Race for the Cure was so uplifting. Thank you NCPG members past and present—the delicious meals you delivered warmed my heart and our bellies. Thank you all for your kind thoughts and prayers—they were the greatest gifts of all.

Love,

Tricia,  
Randy,  
and Riley  
Rochford



## Camelback Family Counseling Gina Marianetti, MSW LCSW

Licensed Clinical  
Social Worker  
specializing in chil-  
dren and adolescents  
experiencing grief  
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depression, and  
behavioral issues.



5110 N 44th Street, L 200  
Phoenix AZ 85018

602-845-9772  
GinaMarianetti@gmail.com

## NCPG Mom To Meet Laura Golding

**Spouse:** Michael Golding

**Children:** Olivia, 18 months and we are expecting our second baby (a boy) in early May.

**Born, Raised & Lived:** I was born in Peoria, IL but my parents and I relocated to Arizona in 1999. AZ has felt like home for a long time.

**City & Years Married:** My husband and I actually met in Las Vegas (not everything that "happens there stays there" haha). After dating (long distance) for 3 years, we were married in 2010. We've been married for 3 years now.

**Career or Previous Career:** I'm currently a medical sales representative. I've worked for the same company for almost 7 years but have decided to stay at home once our second baby is born. It wasn't an easy decision, but it was the BEST decision for our family. I am looking forward to the extra quality time with my children and husband.

**Non-mother Hobby:** I enjoy wine, food, and exercise! I've recently taken up tennis and have really enjoyed learning a new sport.

**Five Words to Describe Yourself:** Optimistic, outgoing, honest, strong, caring.

**Favorite Vacation Spot:** Miami (South Beach).

**Favorite Adult Spot to Dine in Town:** The Mission.

**Favorite Children's Book to Read:** *I Love you Through and Through.*

**Favorite Family Hangout:** AZ Country Club and The Village.

**Rules to Mother By:** Being a Mom requires a woman to be both a student and a teacher. Every day presents a new challenge: Embrace it, learn from it, and appreciate the moment because it will be gone in a blink.

**Most Meaningful Mom Moment:** Holding my daughter on my chest after she was born. The moment was indescribable!

**Best Mothering Advice Given to You:** Always follow your gut instinct.

**Who introduced you to NCPG?** Kori Shapiro, Jordan Ragland, and Amy Stoney.

**Best thing learned in class this year?** I really benefited from the class on discipline and toddlers...but the absolute best thing I've gained from class this year is the support and friendship of other mothers. I'm so happy that I joined!



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# Crafts With Kids

What's easier (and messier!) than some hands and feet dunked in paint. Here is some holiday craft inspiration for you and your little ones.



Share your results with us at [Facebook.com/NCPGAZ](https://www.facebook.com/NCPGAZ).

## Keating Group Supports NCPG Holiday Giving Efforts

The Keating Group, a commercial insurance brokerage company headquartered in Phoenix with offices around the country, is supporting NCPG's holiday philanthropy by matching class donations to the Jaydie Lynn King Foundation—Phoenix Children's Hospital Adopt-a-Family up to \$7500.

A big thank you to Keating Group Partners James Keating (Caroline Keating's husband) and Donald Fleming (Kris Magin's husband).

Learn more about the Keating Group at [www.tkgins.com](http://www.tkgins.com)



*Preschool II went shopping for the family they were paired with by the Jaydie Lynn King Foundation—Phoenix Children's Hospital Adopt-a-Family.*



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