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upon these instances as potentially affecting his sensitivity. It has made a world of difference.

Live and learn

"Sleepovers can be free-for-all. I recently allowed my young son to attend a sleepover birthday party and that will be the last one for awhile, perhaps for life. It seems they showed PG-13 movies without our permission. Thinking that was bad enough, I found out when I picked him up the next morning they had transported the boys to a second location without any advance mention of this to me or his dad. I thought I knew this family! I realized you can never presume to "know" someone quite enough.

At another overnight party, the birthday boy's parents allowed each boy to take a turn target shooting with a BB gun. In this age when weapons all too often fall into children's hands with devastating results, I firmly believe it is my decision if when and where my son will use a gun, BB or otherwise. Again, this was done without parental consent.

Getting too angry - and showing it - doesn't help in most situations and particularly, with children. Realizing I was constantly yelling about the same things, usually clothing or toys scattered on the bedroom floors, I decided to take a new approach. I would tell them to maintain their rooms in a reasonable degree of order. If they could not do it, I would gladly (this was the part I had to fake) clean up for them. I warned that when I clean I tend to do a bit

more thorough job than they would, and that unused or uncare-for items would be discarded.

They called my bluff. I cleaned their rooms. They didn't like it, but things have begun to change. They now realize I am not kidding. Fifteen bags on the porch for a charitable organization didn't hurt in driving my point home, either.

Cleaning out excess

Pack rattling is addictive, but so is purging one's shelves, cabinets, closets, attic and car of excess baggage. I have a friend who throws everything away; for most of my life I have been the opposite. Lately, I have begun a transformation. While my friend takes the heat for throwing out receipts immediately after a purchase, I realized I no longer needed the receipt for that wall unit I bought six years ago or the bunkbeds that have been atop it for four years. I have really started to enjoy getting rid of the clutter though I never thought I would hear myself say those words. Now, life would be copasetic if only I could find a way to pass on this mentality to my offspring, because they definitely didn't inherit neatness genes.

The "I've got more important things to worry about" category. I no longer choose to worry about my sensitive child. I have found quiet, sensitive kids have a LOT to offer. My third child, who I always assumed internalized everything, quietly listens, regards the situation objectively, then comes up with some of the

most enlightened suggestions I've ever heard. I observed this last year as well when I taught religious education to a class of fifth-graders. One girl was typically quiet while her classmates were chatty. I realized she had skillfully learned to listen and frequently offered insights well beyond her years. The squeaky wheel may get the grease more often than the silent one, and that can be a mistake. What you observe with a quiet individual may be the proverbial tip of the iceberg.

Mood affects all

How I am is how my family will be. It has taken me some time to realize if I am stressed out and unhappy, this is how my family will be. Conversely, if I take time out to do things important to me, if I care enough to nurture my interests and nourish my self-concept, my family will reflect these qualities as well. Like a recent cliché I have seen: "If Momma ain't happy, nobody's happy!"

In a nutshell, what I've learned is that in the great laundry hamper of life there are some unmatched socks that just need to be accepted. When a situation arises that makes no apparent sense, just file it for reference and move on. Obsessing about the missing sock won't bring it about; discarding the "kept one may. Life is filled with learning experiences, a continuous wellspring of information for those who make themselves available to it.

Kathie O'Donohue is a mother of five children who resides in Farmington Hills.

Sarah Fisher Center names director

Shannon McGuire Bowman was recently named director of agency relations at the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center in Farmington Hills.

Bowman, a resident of Lake Orion, comes to the center from Providence Hospital where she worked as the manager of major gifts. She recently earned a certificate of Fund Raising Management from the Fund Raising School at Indiana University Center on Philanthropy. She is also a graduate of Ferris State University where she earned a bachelor's degree in business with a major in public relations and a minor in interpersonal communication.

Bowman's responsibilities include raising more than \$1 million annually for the center's operating budget, increasing the center's endowment, developing

a major gifts program and managing a staff of five employees. She brings five years of experience in fund raising to her new position.

The St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center is a non-profit human service agency that has been providing programs for children and families in crisis for 70 years.

The center's services include residential treatment and crisis stabilization for severely abused and traumatized children, foster care, respite and adoption services for children with special needs, and outreach support and residential services for high risk young mothers, fathers and their babies.

Together these programs provide care and treatment to over 1,000 infants, youths and families throughout metro Detroit



Shannon McGuire Bowman annually.

Seminars focus on adult Jewish education

■ SAJE will offer the largest selection of adult Jewish education courses ever held in the area

Since its announcement, SAJE Seminars for Adult Jewish Enrichment, has had overwhelming support from the community. Since it is the first program of its kind in metro Detroit, the concept has already generated hundreds of registrations.

Starting at the end of January, SAJE will offer the largest most diverse selection of adult Jewish educational courses ever held in the area. There are 66 courses being taught by metro Detroit rabbis, cantors, educators, scholars and community leaders in the Jewish Community Centers in West Bloomfield and Oak Park. Conservative, Humanistic, Orthodox, Reform, Secular and the unaffiliated will all come together.

The Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit and the Agency for Jewish Education are presenting SAJE, with co-sponsorship from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit and Detroit Jewish News. Chairpeople of the SAJE program are Irwin Alterman, chair of Judaic Enrichment at the JCC, Sharon Hart, chair of the program steering committee at the JCC, and Lynda Giles, president of the Agency for Jewish Education.

Courses will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays at the D. Dan and Betty Kahn JCC in West

Bloomfield, and Wednesdays at the Jimmy Prentiss Morris JCC in Oak Park for two three-week terms beginning Jan. 26. Both 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. classes will be offered with children's programming available for the 7:30 p.m. class period.

Advance registration is required and there is a fee. Jewish educators and professional staff of Jewish agencies and congregations may register free of charge. For more information or to receive a SAJE brochure, call the Jewish Life and Learning department at the Jewish Community Center, 661-7649.

Alzheimer's support group meets locally

The city of Farmington Hills senior adult division beginning Jan. 20 and continuing the third Wednesday of the month there-

after from 1:30-3 p.m. will host an Alzheimer's support group for caregivers, family members and friends of people who have

Alzheimer's disease.

Share problems, gain information through speakers and support one another. For more information, call Beth Falkenstein at 473-1822.

SENEX, the Adult Day Respite program, will be available for a nominal fee to bring your loved one while you attend the support group. For more information on adult respite care, call Heather, SENEX coordinator, at 473-1830.

This group is sponsored by Farmington Hills senior division and the Alzheimer's Association, Detroit area chapter.

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directionally impaired. Grekin also studied first- and second-year medical students at U-M and discovered those with no sense of direction scored lower grade - in anatomy class.

Empathy for others

Grekin has empathy for others in her position.

"At school, I'll see a look of panic in a child's face as his class

goes back to the classroom and he's still waiting to check out a book," she says. "I'll offer to walk him back to the classroom."

Grekin has come to terms with her directional problem.

"I feel more comfortable with it," she said. "I can go where I want to now. If I get lost, I know I'll get found. Fear will get you nowhere."

Grekin will sign copies of her

book 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, at Nicolas Bookstore, 2513 Jackson Ave. in the Westgate Shopping Plaza, Ann Arbor, and 2-4 p.m. Saturday Jan. 23 at Webster's Books, 2607 Plymouth Road, Ann Arbor. Her book is also available at Book Beat in Oak Park, Round-McNally in the Somerset Collection, Troy and all Little Professors outlets.

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