

FLATTMANN FILES

October 2019

“Quality Is No Accident”

FROM THE DESK OF *Grady Flattmann*

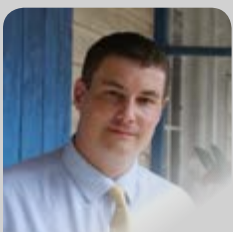
Want some scary news in time for Halloween? Hurricane season doesn't officially end until Nov. 30 this year! You've probably heard the phrase “be prepared” a million times. Of course, your family's safety takes top priority in terms of hurricane preparedness. But there are also ways to protect yourself financially.

First, talk with your insurance agent to make sure you have adequate coverage, including homeowners and flood insurance. Ensure that you have enough coverage for things like expensive furniture, artwork, etc.

Second, take inventory of the contents of your home. Take your phone out and make a video tour of your house, making sure to capture expensive items, antiques, artwork, and even items hidden in cabinets. Create a written log of any unique items that would be hard to replace.

Store the contact number for your insurance company in your phone and make a note of your policy numbers.

- Allstate: +1(877) 810-2920
- Farmers: +1(800) 435-7764
- Liberty Mutual: +1(844) 339-5299
- State Farm: +1(800) 732-5246
- Travelers: +1(866) 336-2077
- USAA: +1(800) 531-8722



Keep our number
handy as well!

-Grady



BACK TO BASICS

WHY OLD-SCHOOL TOYS MAY BE BETTER FOR YOUR BABY

Little kids are tiny balls of energy, scrambling after you from room to room and demanding constant attention. It's no wonder, then, that the temptation to sit them down with a laptop, cellphone, or tablet for a few hours can be strong for parents in the 21st century. The annoying beeps, chirps, and repetitive music electronic toys produce can seem like a good trade-off for productivity and the chance to relax.

Unfortunately, studies have shown that pacifying kids with electronic toys — even ones that claim to be educational — causes more problems than it solves. In 2015, a controlled experiment conducted by professors at Northern Arizona University (NAU) and published by JAMA Pediatrics revealed that compared with books and traditional toys like blocks, shape-sorters, and puzzles, electronic gadgets are associated with a drop in both the quality and quantity of language development in kids.

For the experiment, Dr. Anna V. Sosa and her colleagues recorded the interactions of 26 parents with their 10–16-month-old babies. The parent-infant pairs were split into three groups: one group had electronic toys, another traditional toys, and the third simple children's books. According to Neuroscience News, the researchers found that playing with electronic toys (including a baby laptop, a talking farm, and a baby cellphone) prompted interactions with fewer adult words, fewer conversational turns, less back-and-forth communication, fewer parental responses, and less content-specific word use than the other types of play. Overall, the record for electronics was dismal.

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While a missing hour or two of direct parent-to-kid communication each day may not seem like a big deal, those hours add up over time. If the pattern persists for weeks, months, or years, it can have a big impact on your toddler's language and communication skills, which are vital to academic, and eventually, professional, success.

According to the Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Child Development Institute, "Children who develop strong language and communication skills are more likely to arrive at school ready to learn. They also are less likely to have difficulties learning to read and are more likely to have higher levels of achievement in school."

An editorial published by representatives of the University of Michigan Medical School and the Seattle Children's Hospital after the NAU report was released doubled down on that message, noting that conversational turns during play also "teach role-playing, give parents a window into their child's developmental stage and struggles, and teach social skills such as turn-taking and accepting others' leads."



In short, the NAU study concluded that "play with electronic toys should be discouraged." Though, some of the adverse effects could likely be mitigated if parents play electronic games with their kids. There's no doubt that the more you talk to your kids, the better their language skills will be. Try engaging them in conversation, giving them descriptions of the world around you, naming objects, and using a variety of words and grammatical constructions for the best results. The FPG Child Development Institute also recommends activities like reading together, listening to music, and practicing sign language.

If you're ready to expand your children's horizons by replacing some of their electronic toys with traditional ones, MelissaandDoug.com is a good place to start. Melissa and Doug, parents of six, started their own toy company to help today's "overscheduled and overstimulated" youngsters get creative again. They offer fresh takes on old-school toys like blocks, art kits, and puzzles, opting for traditional materials like wood and paper over plastic, and they eschew electronics entirely. Dive into their inventory of developmental toys to get your kids on the fast-track to literacy and learning.

HAYRIDES AND HEADLESS HORSEMEN



Halloween Celebrations in Sleepy Hollow

In 1790, a school teacher named Ichabod Crane was riding home alone from a harvest festival in the village of Sleepy Hollow when he encountered a mysterious rider on horseback. Crane, horrified by the horseman's missing head, turned and ran in the opposite direction. The Headless Horseman gave chase, hurling his own decapitated head at the terrified teacher. Ichabod Crane was never heard from again ... or so goes "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" by Washington Irving.

This story, first published in 1820, has become a Halloween favorite. The legend is so beloved that in 1997, the village of North Tarrytown, New York, where many events of the story take place, officially changed its name to Sleepy Hollow. Today, the town becomes one big Halloween party during the month of October.

Sleepy Hollow is home to many historic landmarks, including the Headless Horseman Bridge and the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, where Washington Irving himself was laid to rest. Evening lantern tours of the cemetery are a popular attraction, and Irving isn't the only spooky celebrity buried there. Fans of

the Gothic soap opera "Dark Shadows" will be delighted to enter the crypt of famed vampire Barnabas Collins.

Another highly anticipated stop for many guests is Sleepy Hollow's premier annual attraction, Horseman's Hollow, an experience not for the faint of heart. During the event, the 300-year-old Philipsburg Manor is transformed into a living nightmare, where vampires, witches, ghouls, and undead soldiers lurk in the shadows. They all serve the dreaded Headless Horseman and are determined to make sure guests don't leave alive!

But it's not all scares in Sleepy Hollow. There's plenty of Halloween fun for all ages. Sleepy Hollow boasts relaxing hayrides, tours of Irving's home, live readings of famous Halloween stories, performances of a brand-new musical based on Irving's spooky tale, and the Great Jack O'Lantern Blaze, an incredible exhibition of over 7,000 hand-carved pumpkins.

If you want a real Halloween experience, you can't go wrong in Sleepy Hollow. Just be careful not to lose your head!

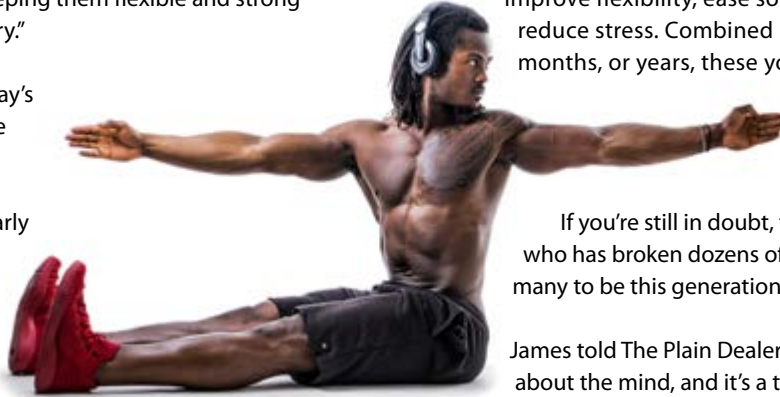
CAN YOGA IMPROVE YOUR BASKETBALL GAME?

NBA Players Say Yes

We all know that ballet is the secret behind many NFL players' footwork skills, but did you know that yoga can offer similar game upgrades to basketball players? Fitness experts agree that if you're trying to get better at shooting hoops, then you can benefit from regular yoga sessions. According to yoga instructor Karla Tafra, there are multiple payoffs to adding stretches like Crescent Lung, Tree Pose, Bridge Pose, and Warrior 2 to your exercise arsenal.

"Basketball is extremely fast-paced, with lots of jumps, twists, turns, coordination, and sprints that take a huge toll on the joints and tendons," Tafra told BodyBuilding.com. "Keeping them flexible and strong prevents injuries and aids recovery."

According to STACK, many of today's top players are already well aware of the protective powers of yoga. NBA stars like Blake Griffin, Kevin Love, and LeBron James all regularly bend themselves into pretzels to improve their game. Love integrates an hour of yoga into his workouts two or three times each week.



"Yoga teaches stretching, strengthening, and breathing, and it helps you get in tune with your body. That helps in basketball, or in any sport, really," Love's yoga instructor, Kent Katich, told STACK. As a former basketball player himself, Katich is intimately familiar with the sport and claims that even a couple of minutes of yoga can help in a pinch.


"It's not about doing an hour of yoga every day," he said. "It's about how you feel and what you need right now."

Some yoga poses are known for building strength, while others can improve flexibility, ease sore muscles, elongate the spine, and even reduce stress. Combined into an hourlong practice over weeks, months, or years, these yoga poses can make a player lighter on their feet, quicker to duck or dive, more graceful with their reach, and more relaxed.

If you're still in doubt, take it straight from All-Star LeBron James, who has broken dozens of records on the court and is considered by many to be this generation's greatest player.

James told The Plain Dealer, "Yoga isn't just about the body; it's also about the mind, and it's a technique that has really helped me."

Take a Break!

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Those who eat paleo may struggle to find a Halloween treat suitable to their diet. But no matter what your dietary restrictions are, everyone can enjoy some raw veggies with a healthy dip. Here are some tips for constructing your very own veggie skeleton — a spooky twist on a time-tested treat.

For the Head

Your favorite paleo-friendly dip makes a great canvas for a face. Pour it into a bowl and build features on top using different veggies.

For the Ribcage

Sliced cucumbers make for great vertebrae, and bell pepper slivers can be used to simulate ribs. Alternate between the two to give your skeleton some backbone.

For the Arms and Legs

Any long and straight vegetable will do the trick here. If you want to be anatomically accurate, consider using some spherical vegetables for joints.

Don't be afraid to get creative and wacky with your veggie skeleton. The whole point, after all, is to have some fun and give people a reason to smile.



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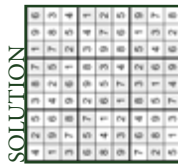
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IN CASE OF EMERGENCY: The Importance of a Go Bag

Natural disasters happen all the time. With hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, and earthquakes, our homes are never entirely safe from potential hazards. While natural disasters aren't an everyday worry, nothing is better than being prepared. Plus, hurricane season doesn't end until Nov. 30 this year. You need a go bag!

A go bag is something you can keep by the door in case of any kind of emergency. With essentials at the ready, you eliminate the possibility of a last minute scramble. Here are the most critical items to include.

BATTERIES AND FLASHLIGHTS

Not only do you want a selection of standard batteries for your devices, but you also want portable lithium-ion batteries to charge your cellphones and other mobile devices. Additionally, after you've packed these items, be sure to check them every three months. You want to ensure they are functioning and at full capacity so you can rely on them if the time comes.

FIRST-AID KIT

You can find well-stocked first-aid kits online (including on Amazon.com) that are packed

to the brim with most or all of the essentials. You may want to include baby wipes and a multitool in the kit as well.

MEDICATIONS

When it comes to go bags, medications can be tricky, but they are necessary. Include a supply of any medications you take (anywhere from a week's to a month's supply) and be sure to rotate them out on a regular basis. This ensures that any prescription medications are up to date and that there is no risk of potential expirations.



DOCUMENTATION

Make a photocopy of any and all critical documents you have and store the copies in a watertight container (such as a freezer bag) in the go bag. Include your birth certificate, driver's license, and Social Security card. You may also want to include a copy of any Medicare cards, insurance information, your will (along with any powers of attorney), and some proof of address. Some people even include marriage, adoption, and naturalization certificates.

CASH

Store enough small bills to get yourself through 5–7 days. On top of the small bills, coins are just as important, particularly quarters.