



HomeschoolNYC Newsletter

Celebrating Child-led Learning

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I salute the New Year! May it bring us all blessings and peace. And new learning, of course!

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[Laurie Block Spigel](#)

**Building Self-Esteem at
HomeschoolNYC**

Building Self-Esteem

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**Recommended Animal
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Quote by A. A. Milne

Building Self-Esteem

"I often work with schooled students who are afraid to create. They raise their pen in hand, poised above a sheet of paper, but they cannot touch pen to paper. They are convinced that whatever they write will be terrible. In art, they are convinced that they cannot draw. ..."

In our overfed American culture we are often accused of spoiling our children. Homeschoolers, and unschoolers in particular, are routinely regarded as overly permissive, as if we let our kids get away with anything, like watching TV all day long, or eating cheese puffs for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Americans sometimes have a skewed sense of entitlement, and this type of

freedom is viewed as enabling that false idea of entitlement. Arrogance and selfishness is not self-esteem, even if it is proud, and, in fact, these traits may be the result of low self-esteem.

I am not a trained psychologist, only a parent and educator who works with children every day. I know what it takes to build a child's self-esteem. It is a simple formula: [READ MORE...](#)

Preventing Winter Burn-Out

This is the time to try something new! Do it for yourself, and not just for your child! It's easy to get the blues when you are a hard-working homeschooling parent facing endless daily responsibilities, especially if you are stuck indoors during cold weather. Now is the time to make something new! Learn a new craft (like [jewelry-making](#) or [origami](#)), start a project (the [family scrapbook](#) or a [memory quilt](#)); listen to some new music; create something new in the kitchen. Many projects can recycle old materials, like making paper beads, or creating a memory quilt out of old T-shirts. Focus on a small task that gives you pleasure and make something beautiful, just for the fun of it!

[Click here for more craft ideas.](#)

Animals! Animals!

Every child loves animals, and there is a seemingly unlimited supply to choose from. Encourage your child to select one animal to study and do a project on. Last year I taught ages 6-8 everything from math and science to poetry and art, all with the focus of animals. We learned about animal classifications, how to research animals facts, how certain animals move and hear and hunt, world geography for habitat and migration, and so much more.

[Click here to see photos of this class.](#)



Komodo Dragon Facts,
by Mason

Animal Exhibits in NYC

Aside from our fabulous zoos and aquarium, animals are a part of cultural life in New York City. Here is a [list of animal exhibits](#) that your children will love, and which you will all find entertaining and educational.

Recommended Animal Books for Kids



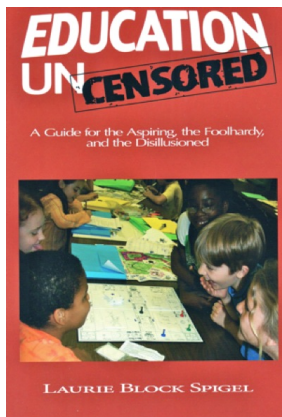
For a selection of recommended animal fiction and nonfiction for kids, including some of my favorite classics, [click here](#).

Quote by A. A. Milne

"Just because an animal is large, it doesn't mean he doesn't want kindness; however big Tigger seems to be, remember that he wants as much kindness as Roo."

~~ A. A. Milne, English author of *Winnie-the-Pooh* and children's poetry

Education Uncensored



Laurie Spigel is a leading educator in the New York City homeschooling community, teaching popular group classes and inspiring parents to create their own curriculum. Her approach is informal, creative, and child-led. Here she shares her innovative ideas and original techniques for every subject. She explains why our current educational system has it all backwards and shows how exciting learning can truly be. A real source of inspiration as well as a practical guide, this is an eye-opening book for every parent and teacher.

Available now at HomeschoolNYC.com

Price: \$12.95 plus shipping & handling

[Read an excerpt.](#)

E-mail comments and suggestions to Laurie@HomeschoolNYC.com.

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