



The Children's Rights of New York, Inc.

# HOTLINE

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***Annually, about 6,000 children perish from accidents, with nearly 4,000 dying from gun accidents, and the same amount from disease. Child abuse takes at least 2,000 children a year. But the federal government does not fund one cent to any child abuse hotline or "clearinghouse."***

## Is Child Safety Ignored by Politicians and the Press? By Don Austen

When we, the general public, think of missing children, images come to mind of Adam Walsh, Polly Klaas, Samantha Runyon, Jessica Lunsford, Shasta Groene and Danielle Van Dam. We envision children being snatched from their bedrooms, raped and murdered. We fear for the safety of our own children.

We fear to the tune of \$31 million per year.

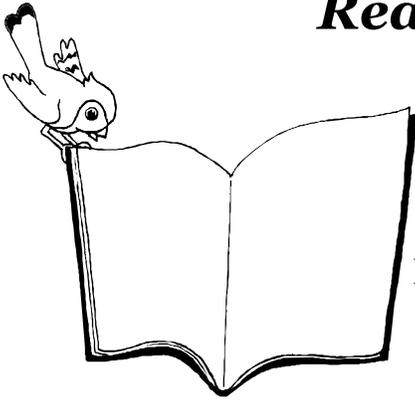
That's what the federal government funds for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). John Walsh, host of the television show "America's Most Wanted", helped found NCMEC because of the alleged abduction of Adam Walsh, his six-year-old son, in the early 1980s. Adam's remains were later found and no one has ever been charged with his disappearance and death. In fact, there is no proof

the boy was abducted or murdered. He might have vanished with a family friend and perished by accident. Yet so few children are abducted by complete strangers that each and every time it DOES happen it makes national press.

Congressional testimony in the early 1980s gave rise to the National Center with misleading "facts" that approximately 50,000 children were stranger-abducted annually, a figure that was later disproved. In fact, a newspaper out west, The Denver Post, won a Pulitzer Prize in the mid-1980s for revealing that those figures were false. The U.S. Justice Department later reduced that stat to 200-300 children per year. Yet that figure is still about 20-30 times higher than the true number, because the figure is muddled by children that are molested and let go,

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# ***Introduction To Suggested Reading***



**Written by  
Laura Algieri**

This Fall 2007 issue of Hotline includes a strong focus on education in its many dimensions. Re-creating the academic world to connect with the innate human intelligence of every child is the inspiring theme of Resa Steindel Brown's *The Call to Brilliance*. As the mother of a uniquely talented son whose special needs were not being met by conventional education, Resa created an alternative program that helped him and numerous other children develop skills beyond anyone's expectations.

In a different way, through enchanting fiction and highly imaginative, color-full artwork, *The Magic Gown* by J.L. Kimmel guides pre-teens toward self-reflection and wholesome inner growth, in a supportive way.

## ***Tolerance and Humor***

Tolerance and humor are themes in *Mommy Has a Tattoo* by Phil Padwe. Written for very young children, it sets the stage early in life for cultivating essential values.

Then there's the joyful expansion of embracing diversity. Brigitte Benchimol's *Jadyn and the Magic Bubble: Discovering India*, leads the way into a delightful journey for young and old into the richness of multicultural education. The theme is continued in early childhood literature through Chris Lin's *Mandy and Pandy* series. His first book, *Mandy and Pandy Say, "Nǐ Hǎo Ma?"* is based on experiences with his three year-old daughter. Mandy and her friendly panda-playmate, Pandy, speak Mandarin Chinese and English so simply that toddlers will easily pick up conversational Chinese phrases. Accompanying CDs, dolls and puppets add to the fun.

These and other worthwhile materials await you in the following book reviews. A number of the authors are also available for speaking engagements. Read on...



***A wondrous world of reading awaits....***

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## SUGGESTED READING

### *How All Children Can Succeed*

Reviewed by Laura Algieri

Put simply, Resa Steindel Brown's *The Call to Brilliance* is a true story written to inspire parents and educators. Yes, it is a book about education. No, it is not about programs or curriculum. *The Call to Brilliance* is about people and process. You will not find pat answers here. You **will find fire** – the kind that lights up the murky places in education's history, exposing its impurities with clarity, the kind that eats away unsound foundations and shoots sparks of passion that fan the flame readily.

### *Inspiring Memoir*

If you're a parent, educator, or learner who's anxious, frustrated, angry or aware that our educational system is off-track, begin reading *The Call to Brilliance* at Chapter 15. You'll find adventure of an unusual sort, unfolding from the Browns' response to having their youngest son labeled "slow, delayed, dyslexic, dysgraphic and speech delayed." Follow all three Brown children as they lead their parents, and particularly their Mom, into the thick of school visits, interviews with education professionals, home schooling as a solo parent, cooperative efforts at alternative schooling, and finally the creation of an award-winning school, whose students contribute brilliantly and creatively to society. How? By first tapping into their own unique potential, being supported in it by their intergenerational learning community, and by finding ways to nurture and foster it for themselves as they mature.

### *Overturms Conventional Educational Labeling*

As stated on the book's back cover, *The Call to Brilliance* "shows concerned parents and educators how to turn children's challenges into strengths and their gifts into passions. It devastates the concepts of learning disabilities. It dissolves the artificial barriers of grade level. It unveils the pretense of standardized testing and reveals how our children really learn. But above all, it shows us how all children can succeed to brilliance."

This is Resa's recurring theme in *The Call to Brilliance*: find the passion that leads to brilliance – in all our children and in ourselves. "We must listen intently to what they say and what they cannot yet tell us. This is how they learn who they are."

### *Mistaken Viewpoints*

The pitfall of encouraging children to look outward for validation, instead of developing their internal sense of what works for them is one of conventional education's weaknesses examined in Part I. External validation, whether expected from a teacher, a parent, or a peer, only discounts children's inner development in the name of "socializing" them. Resa insists on a shift in perspective: Children are not "empty vessels to be filled." They are "already complete and engaged in the process of blossoming from the inside out."

Part II contains an excellent explanation of children's withdrawal from, rebellion against, or unhealthy compliance with educational structures, when those very structures ignore the human relationships on which all learning is built, and so deprive

children of developing an identity through love and self worth. The process leading from deadly compliance to eventual self-alienation is poignantly and powerfully described.

### **For Those Who Question**

If, by now, you feel your resistance rising, and you're sure that Resa's advice is not practical, do yourself the favor of reading the first half of *The Call to Brilliance*.

Through a unique interspersing of philosophical quotes in the midst of memoir you may hear a wake-up call within yourself.

Perhaps you'll find it a difficult read – as I did – bringing you face-to-face with the inadequacies and failure of your own education. *The Call to Brilliance* provides a precious opportunity for self-reflection. Years of struggle within the educational system, both as learner and teacher, form the backdrop of Resa's personal story. Yes, for her, education fell short, but in responding to her sense of inner truth when it manifested in her children's experiences, she allowed herself to be led in a new direction. Find new fire, as a person, a parent, an educator or as an educational administrator.

### **Author Available for Consults and Coaching**

More good news! Resa's educational philosophy and practice are tremendously successful – not just for her own children, but for so many others. View the website and see for yourself. And the gift is available for you and your children, too! You can begin to discover, fuel, ignite your child's passion by taking advantage of **Free Teleseminar Coaching**.

Simply articulate what is your most important question about your child's education and potential, and send your question to: **[passion@thecalltobrilliance.com](mailto:passion@thecalltobrilliance.com)**.

Schools and corporations will be interested to know that Fredric Press books are available at quantity discounts with bulk purchase for educational, business, or sales promotional use. Resa is also available as a speaker. She may be contacted through e-mail or through phoning Fredric Press management at the number listed below.

## ***The Call to Brilliance***

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