

Arts

A DAFFODIL OF ANY OTHER COLOR

I know I don't have to tell you, but the Daffodil Festival is this weekend. Attendance should be at a maximum since this week preceding the event is Spring Break. Maybe that's why the weather has been so Spring-like when just a few weeks ago it was cold enough to send the daffodils back into their bulbs.

Daffodil Festival is a mixed bag with toddlers. They love the cars and the costumes of some of the attendees rival a trip to the circus. However, unless you are planning on letting them ride on your shoulders for the whole trip up and down Main Street, their view tends to be blocked by taller people. If your toddler is anything like mine, he will stand back and survey the scene. When he sees his chance, he will dash between the small space left between two people, leaving you to either perform an etiquette faux pas by pushing everyone out of the way, or lose precious minutes saying "Excuse me, excuse me" as you try to get people's attention to let you through. Either way your toddler will have a head start. Luckily, Main Street is blocked off, so you do have some area in which you can make up and hopefully close the gap between you and your toddler, who is now moving as fast as he can with a look of glee pasted on his face.

My advice? Go early before the street is packed (your toddler will not know if all the cars are there or not just as long as he sees a few), let him ride on your shoulders if you have to, take breaks along the



way by dashing into Even Keel to purchase a cookie for him and some much needed coffee for yourself. On the other side of the street you can stop at The Hub for a special candy treat for him and the paper for yourself (yes, I know that's funny. When is the last time you were able to actually sit down and read the paper?). The Hub is great because they have individual candies on the left hand side of the cash register counter. Toddlers love to count and haven't quite gotten down the idea of volume. Three individual Swedish fishes mean more to them than one whole package of Swedish fishes. Reel yourself in from taking this time to teach your toddler about money management. The package may be a better deal in money terms, but the three individual candies are much better for sugar management. When dealing with a toddler, sugar management is key.

Don't plan on spending hours on Main Street. If the rest of the family is still enjoying the spectacle, walk your toddler down to Straight Wharf and take a gander at the boats. The docks are still pretty bare, but a walk from one end to the other will help work off some of that Swedish fish sugar.

If your child is now thoroughly enthralled with daffodils, there are many experiments you can do at home with this lovely flower. First, of course, you need some daffodils. If you have daffodils in your yard and are willing to part with them, you can use those. If you want to enjoy them as nature intended for a little

longer, Flowers on Chestnut and Trillium have beautiful blooms that will work well for the following experiment. I don't recommend walking next door and shopping at your neighbor's garden. As Robert Frost said, "Fences make good neighbors."

You want to get very fresh daffodils for this experiment because you will need them to last a few days. I have to give credit where credit is due and tell you that this idea came from Holbrook's daycare provider, Lizzie Hagenstein. She did this with the kids last week, and the results were so amazing that even I was enchanted. It made me wish that I could go to her house everyday and Holbrook could go to work!

Take the daffodils and put them in separate small glasses. Into each glass, put about one inch of water. Now comes the fun part. Using food coloring, put a different color in each glass. If you have a lot of daffodils you can mix the colors and the experiment becomes a lesson in primary colors. Now, don't think that the daffodils will just turn the color of the water. Since the daffodils are yellow, an interesting phenomenon takes places as the colored water is carried up into the flower. I won't spoil it for you but will only say that I did this experiment once with celery stalks and this is nothing like that. The celery stalks turned a single color and that was it. Interesting, but not earth shattering. The daffodils are different. Even though the daffodils change colors, however, they are still daffodils. Sort of like even though our toddlers drive us crazy, they are still cute. When you figure out how to explain the incongruity of that lesson, let me know. I'm still trying to figure it out. ■

SOME IMAGES ARE TOO GOOD TO LOSE

WHAT'S YOUR MEMORY OF THE DREAMLAND?



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The Dreamland crossing Nantucket Harbor, 1905

We are soliciting your photos and stories of the Dreamland Theatre. To find out more about our plans, please contact The Dreamland Foundation.

(508) 221 4031 or e-mail
progveen@ackdreamland.org



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Nantucket Handmade Daffodil Weekend Craft Show

Friday, April 25 4-7pm

Saturday, April 26 9am-4pm

Preservation Institute, 11 Centre St. Upstairs

Info. 508-228-2376