

Tips On Entertaining Kids

(NAPSA)—When vacation time comes and kids have more free time, there could be good news for parents searching for interesting and unique activities.

Lance Burton, world-renowned magician and magic adviser on “Oz the Great and Powerful,” recommends practicing magic as a fun option for engaging kids at home. Magic has been enjoyed by many as a compelling hobby over the years—even by some celebrities including Neil Patrick Harris, Jason Alexander and Johnny Carson.

Burton notes, “While the vast majority of kids who take up magic as a hobby are not going to become professional magicians, magic is great for helping kids develop many different life skills while having fun. Mastering the tricks helps them develop self-esteem, strengthen mental focus and enhance physical coordination. Magic is also a great way to interact with people and gain new friends. Kids can learn cool tricks to share with their peers and at the same time gain confidence for future life experiences.”

Burton recalls that he had so much fun and success teaching magic to James Franco, who stars as a great magician in “Oz the Great and Powerful,” that he started thinking about how he could create some simple tips for parents to encourage their kids to try magic at an early age.

He suggests:

•**Help arouse the young magicians’ curiosity:** The gift of a magic set is what got many magicians started. Watching a movie such as “Oz the Great and Powerful” on Blu-ray™ or DVD at home can also inspire. Other films with magical appeal include “Bed-



Learning magic can be a great way for kids to have fun at home.

knobs and Broomsticks,” “The Chronicles of Narnia,” “The Sword in the Stone” and “Mary Poppins.”

•**Take a trip to the library:**

A very simple way to start learning about magic is by visiting the library. Look for books for beginners.

•**Search online:** Another inexpensive way to begin is to sit together at the computer and search through the array of basic tricks that include easy step-by-step directions.

•**Start with simple tricks:** Begin with simple tricks that do not require difficult sleight of hand or expensive props. For card tricks, Burton recommends using a miniature deck that is made specifically for kids.

•**Practice, practice, practice:** Devote some time to helping your children practice. Encourage them to keep trying even if success isn’t immediate.

•**Provide an audience:** Once your child has mastered a few tricks, provide the opportunity for him or her to proudly show off some newfound skills. Set up a magic show for the whole family or friends. You’ll also be helping to encourage your child and to build confidence. Burton notes, “The No. 1 fear among adults is fear of pub-



Actor James Franco learned from world-renowned magician Lance Burton while making “Oz the Great and Powerful.”

lic speaking. If a child learns to perform magic for an audience, he/she is much more likely to also feel comfortable speaking in public, whether on stage or in the boardroom.”

•**Find others who like magic:** Visit magic shows and shops. Look for a nearby magic club. The International Brotherhood of Magicians has chapters in many communities.

•**Have fun:** Remember, the primary objective is to provide youngsters with a challenging, engaging way to have fun. Keeping it simple makes it easy to have fun doing magic.

Learn More

For further information about the movie, you can visit www.disney.go.com/thewizard. For more information on Lance Burton, visit www.lanceburton.com.