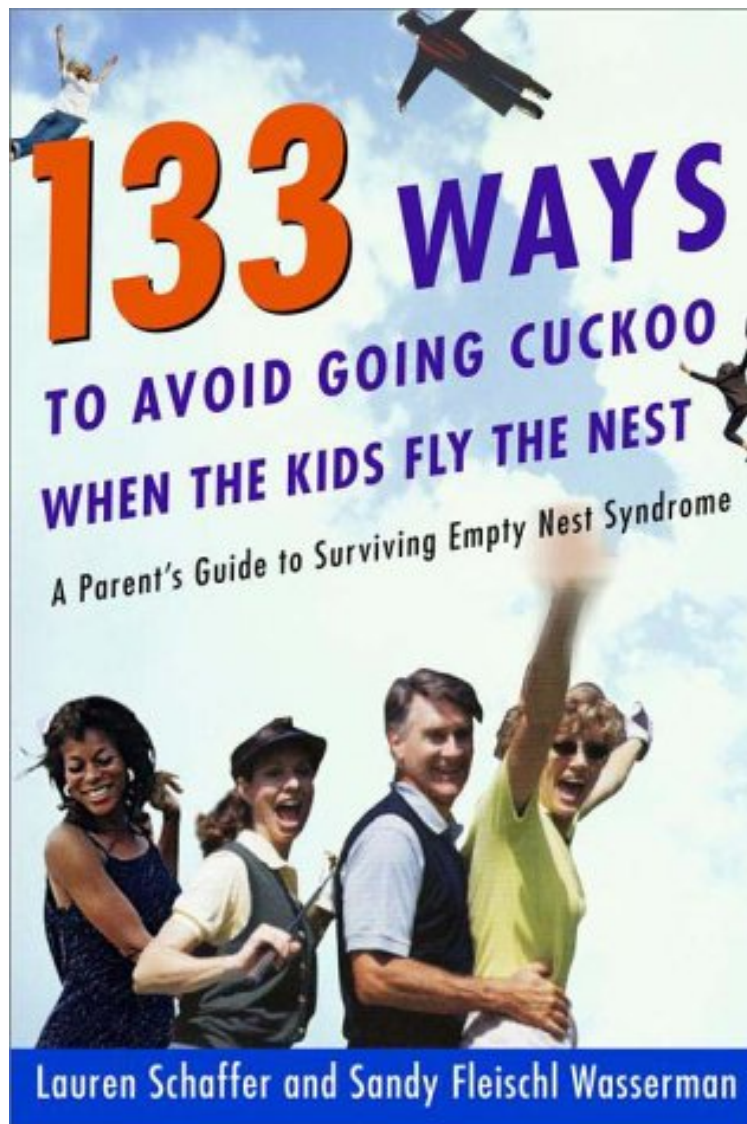


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133 Ways to Avoid Going Cuckoo When the Kids Fly the Nest: A Parent's Guide for Surviving Empty Nest Syndrome

Lauren Schaffer, Sandy Fleischl Wasserman
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Lauren Schaffer, Sandy Fleischl Wasserman : 133 Ways to Avoid Going Cuckoo When the Kids Fly the Nest: A Parent's Guide for Surviving Empty Nest Syndrome before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 133 Ways to Avoid Going Cuckoo When the Kids Fly the Nest: A Parent's Guide for Surviving Empty Nest Syndrome:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Not helpful at all
By catloverntx
This book is neither funny nor informative. In fact it is super boring. It seems like the authors didn't have enough information on the subject, so it includes large type, a lot of pictures, and WAY too many stupid lists. If you truly need advice, due to being down about empty nest syndrome like I am, then keep looking as this book will not help.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Book!
By Glenna Hendricks
A common sense book on an old problem. Practical suggestions to work through the emotional roller-coaster ride experienced when the kid flies the coop. Despite knowing you raised them to become independent, self-sufficient adults, it leaves a whole different role to assume after so many years devoted to being in the role of parent. Don't think there's anything to prepare you for the emotions, but this book has common sense do's and don'ts to help you through. Easy to read, full of practical advice.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Classics Fannice
book

The Perfect Graduation Gift-for Parents!
What's a parent to do when the kids leave home? Mixing humor with practical advice, Lauren Schaffer and Sandy Fleischl Wasserman's *133 Ways to Avoid Going Cuckoo When the Kids Fly the Nest* is a good friend to laugh with, a shoulder to cry on, and a manual of sound advice to help those in need keep their sense of humor while riding the emotional roller coaster of Empty Nest Syndrome. Their essential, indispensable tips and strategies encompass everything from the painful first days to return visits to expressing your new empty-nester self, including:
* Why you shouldn't immediately convert your kid's room into a studio, bordello, or workshop*
* The right movies for a good laugh or cry*
* How to keep the lines of communication open (use good old-fashioned guilt to keep the phone calls coming)*
* How to stuff a wild care package*
* Return visit diplomacy (do not take personally her overwhelming desire to reconnect with friends instead of cozying up to you for a long pajama-clad chat)*
* How to fight maudlin memories (go to Toys "R" Us between Thanksgiving and Christmas and eavesdrop on some tantrums)

From the Inside Flap
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About the Author
Lauren Schaffer is a high-school French teacher and a nationally known teacher-trainer who loves to travel, garden, and dabble in graphology. Sandy Fleischl Wasserman is a speech-language pathologist, mountain biker, skier, and fledgling mandolinist. Between them, three children have flown the nest and one's departure is imminent. They are nested in a small mountain town in southern Oregon with their husbands and assorted animals.
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Chapter 1
Taking Care of Yourself or From Treadmills to Tranquilizers
This is a time to control what you can, and let go of what you can't. Don't expect your kids to understand your feelings; they want out! You need to stay sane as they leave the nest. There's no magic fix, but the following are some don'ts and do's that have been tested in the trenches.
LAND MINES (Don'ts)
1. Don't go into your kid's room right after he leaves. This is a total setup, to be avoided no matter how you're feeling. You risk any of the following scenarios:
* crawling into his empty bed, pulling the covers over your head, and crying for two days.*
* indulging the inadvisable urge to prematurely convert his room into an exercise room, guest room, art studio, or workshop.*
* risking a coronary when you see the residual mountains of trash, the piles of childhood memorabilia, cracker boxes, soda cans and molding dishes, the stacks of unreturned videos, the accumulation of unmatched shoes and mateless socks, the lost remote or cordless phone, and the complete collection of your presumed-missing CDs.
2. Don't sell the house or make a major move immediately. Your friends, neighbors, and family can be valuable support systems.
3. Don't start a diet. Need we say more?
4. Don't organize the family photo album. The pictures have been waiting in the drawer for years, possibly decades; they can wait a little longer.
5. Don't play the radio when you're feeling down-it's fraught with maudlin songs. To avoid having to pull off the road because you're sobbing hysterically, buy or rent audio books on tape. These don't have to be great literature. Get sucked into a Tony Hillerman or Agatha Christie mystery, a Tom Clancy thriller, or Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* for a nostalgic return to the 1960s (remember Middle Earth?).
6. Don't make bedroom changes or upgrades without her involvement. If she's going to lose her room to shifting sibling logistics, or if you're planning to convert it into a sewing room, den, or bordello, be sure she takes part in the decision before she leaves. This will prevent feelings of displacement during her initial visits home.
7. Don't revisit special memory-filled places you went with your kids. During the early phases of ENS, this is emotional quicksand, unless we're talking about the orthodontist or family planning clinic.
8. Don't be a stoic. If you've eaten your weight in chocolate, you don't want to get out of bed-ever-and hokey TV commercials make

you cry, it may be time to think about seeking some sort of help. If retail therapy and schlocky movie therapy don't do the job, consider professional counseling, Prozac, St. John's wort, a good glass of wine (not Ripple), a consultation with a Himalayan guru, crystal therapy, aromatherapy, color therapy, or aura therapy. SANITY SAVERS (Do's)9. Do plan for the departure. Have something specific planned to do with an empathetic someone right after your child leaves. Make reservations for dinner at the new restaurant you've been wanting to try. (Or if your austerity budget is already activated, a potluck picnic in the park with friends is an acceptable alternative.) Take a long walk with a bipedal friend. (Your dog is invited, but you'll need somebody with pockets for Kleenex.) Schedule a marathon-length session in a sensory deprivation tank. (Tell them to wake you in about six months.)10. Do exercise regularly. Mind and body are connected. Find a way to keep this commitment. Get a workout buddy, or pay money to join a gym.11. Do get a puppy now if you have a geriatric dog.12. Do buy yourself fresh flowers once a week. (This is not just a girl thing.)13. Do eat out more often. Justify this by thinking about the money you are saving on groceries. (Conveniently forget about that pesky tuition and room and board you're shelling out.) If your child is a boy, the difference might be substantial enough to allow you to dine at a four-star restaurant in Paris.14. Do commit to attending a film festival or concert series, or buy season tickets to the theater or for athletic events. You now have the freedom to do so.15. Do form a support group. Get together with other empty nesters; misery loves company. Talk, chat, yak, gab, schmooze, locute, communicate, discuss, discourse, prattle, confer, converse, rap, or, in New Age speak, engage, share, dialogue, process, do lunch.16. Do make a customized happy-music tape for when you feel a sadness attack coming on. Pick a theme song, and belt it out in your car or in the shower. You will feel better. Here are some upbeat ENS favorites that made their way onto our tape: "Don't Worry, Be Happy" (Bobby McFerrin) "Happy Talk" (South Pacific) "I'm Free" (Rolling Stones) "I'm Still Standing" (Elton John) "It's My Turn" (Diana Ross) "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning" (Oklahoma!) "Peaceful Easy Feeling" (The Eagles) "Respect" (Aretha Franklin) "What a Day for a Daydream" (The Lovin' Spoonful) "Whistle a Happy Tune" (The King and I) "Zippity Doo Dah" (Song of the South)17. Do forge new, low-maintenance relationships with household appurtenances that can be left with a house sitter with a minimum of separation anxiety on your part. Silk houseplants and pet rocks are reasonable considerations. *Beware of goldfish, bonsai, and outdoor bird feeders. They are deceptively demanding.18. Do rent upbeat videos routinely. We guarantee you'll find something to cheer you up on our categorized list: Classic Funny Duck Soup The Graduate His Girl Friday The Odd Couple The Pink Panther A Shot in the Dark When Harry Met Sally . . . You Can't Take It with You Foreign Funny The Full Monty La Cage aux Folles Mama, There's a Man in Your Bed My New Partner Noises Off The Visitors (2000) any Monty Python film Funny-Funny All of Me (1984) Bulworth Dave Dick In and Out (1997) Midnight Run My Cousin Vinny Outrageous Fortune Ruthless People Three Men and a Baby What About Bob? Quirky Funny Beetlejuice The Big Lebowski Down and Out in Beverly Hills Flirting with Disaster I Love You to Death The Muse There's Something About Mary any Woody Allen comedy Stupid Funny Ace Ventura: Pet Detective Airplane Animal House Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure Billy Madison Bowfinger Caddyshack Dumb and Dumber A Fish Called Wanda George of the Jungle The Jerk Pure Luck Romancing the Stone See No Evil, Hear No Evil Stripes The Three Amigos Wayne's World any Mel Brooks film Sweet Funny Bye Bye, Love Crossing Delancey Melvin and Howard A New Leaf Shakespeare in Love Sixteen Candles Tootsie The Wedding19. Do talk to your own parents about how they coped with your departure. *Don't get offended if they tell you that they popped a bottle of champagne and danced a jig when you walked out the door. LET THE BAD TIMES ROLL (Was It Really All That Great?) Reality checks are really important. In case your memory of the bad times fades, here are some useful blasts from the past that just might cheer you up:20. Go to Toys "R" Us between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Spend at least thirty minutes fighting your way through the aisles and be sure to eavesdrop on a minimum of two parent-child interactions.21. Offer to baby-sit the two-year-old from hell. Baby-sit the two-year-old from hell.22. Borrow a really obnoxious, obscenity-ridden rap CD from one of your friends' kids. Crank up the volume.23. Visit someone nine months pregnant during an August heat wave.24. Build a pyramid of wet towels on the bathroom floor. Wait for the Mold Fairy to arrive.25. Put childproof catches on the cabinets you use most frequently. (Leave them on a minimum of one week.)26. Be diligent about appreciating not having to suffer through The Saturday Game. In the fall, wait for the most brutally inclement day, and go to a high-school soccer match. Take mental note of the hypothermic parent spectators just before leaving for the steamy warmth of the nearest Starbucks. Refresh your memory of how much you don't miss these activities in the spring. During a record-breaking heat wave, go to a Little League baseball game. Waltz through the bleachers, staying just long enough to relish the pervasive smell of sweat, the flushes of sunstroke, the tear- and dust-streaked players, and the escalating cacophony of parental belligerence. Leave for the lake.27. Crawl out of bed at an uncivilized predawn hour and pretend you have to drive early-morning carpool. Dive back into bed and go to sleep again.28. Set your alarm for 3:00 a.m. Establish the mood: She's an hour late, she hasn't called, and you don't know where she is. Now visualize: frantic pacing, listening for the car engine or the wail of the ambulance siren, the sneaky creaking of the bedroom window, your urge to call the emergency rooms of every hospital in the vicinity. We don't miss waiting up for her; neither will you.29. Seize the opportunity, when at friends' houses, to indulge in vicarious nagging. Smugly sit back as you observe the parents standing with arms akimbo as they admonish their still-in-the-nest offspring to do their homework, clean their

bedroom, get off the phone, or (God forbid) take out the trash. **EMOTIONAL PURGE (Let It All Hang Out)** Sometimes you just can't fight the sadness, so go with the flow. Indulge yourself in a good emotional purge. Unplug the phone and don't answer the door. There's nothing worse than reveling in a good depression, only to have it interrupted by a well-meaning, cheery friend. Include a time limit for each of these activities. This is a catha...