

smart parenting

LONG ISLAND



From Meadow to Mom
**JAMIE-LYNN
SIGLER**
Talks LI Childhood,
Kids, More

**A GRAND
OUTING**
Historic LI Places
to Celebrate
Grandparents Day

From Meadow to MOM

BY
JENNIFER
BERGER

There's more to Jamie-Lynn Sigler than her iconic role as a mob boss' daughter.

Sure, the 39-year-old actress is best known as Meadow on the hit HBO drama "The Sopranos," but she's also a podcast host, a book author and much more. Her most rewarding role, though, is being mom to two boys, Beau and Jack, with her husband, former baseball player Cutter Dykstra, son of retired Mets player Lenny Dykstra.

Growing up in Jericho, Sigler launched her acting career at the age of 7 when she began taking lessons at Stars of Tomorrow, a nearby theater, before she attended Cultural Arts Playhouse (CAP) in Syosset. She starred in shows such as "Annie," "The Sound of Music," "Gypsy" and more. "The arts programs on Long Island were amazing," she said. "What I was able to do as a young girl locally was incredible. I owe so much of my training and my confidence as a performer to all my time spent at CAP. I was also able to live a 'normal life' by going to public school while pursuing my dream and performing on the weekends."

Although Sigler lives in Los Angeles, she visits Long Island four to five times a year. "I still call Long Island home," she said. "There are no diners anywhere in the world like there are on Long Island. When visiting my parents, my kids love eating there because of the size of the cookies."

Sigler hasn't been back to New York due to the coronavirus pandemic, but she's keeping busy working on her two podcasts: "Mama Said," with musician Jenna Parris, and "Pajama Pants," with "Sopranos" costar Robert Iler. "Although Hollywood was shut down for a few months, we were

able to continue the podcast at night after the kids went to bed," she said. "We did everything on Zoom. It's been very convenient to record from home and shave off travel time in our schedules, plus it's much easier to get certain guests from their homes."

The pandemic, more than anything, has made Sigler appreciate her "village," but was also a challenge at times adjusting to being home. "In the beginning we were kind of on a high," she said. "It was exciting to be together so much, have Daddy work from home — and I got to be part of Beau's remote school learning. But after a few weeks, there was some major burnout from all of us. The one thing that got me through was knowing that we were all in this together."

To keep her 7- and 2-year-old boys busy, Sigler spent a lot of time outside. "We also had lots of Amazon orders," she said. "We played on iPads, watched movies, worked on puzzles or art. We bought a bounce house. I also enlisted my son to help me with some housework, like he puts on rubber gloves and helps me unload the dishwasher to earn candy. I tried my best."

Sigler has also become a passionate advocate for multiple sclerosis (MS), an autoimmune disease she was diagnosed with at the age of 21. She said her son Beau always asks how she is feeling or if

she needs help. "He understands that it's something that Mommy has that doesn't make her legs work as well as other moms," she said. "He's really compassionate and conscious of people that may need extra assistance or help."

While this has been a year like no other, the time home taught her a lot about being a mother. "I learned I don't have to be perfect," she said. "I have to relinquish some control. I'm worried for what's to come, but I'm also understanding that this is a fluid situation, and we are taking one day at a time and doing the best that we can."

The late James Gandolfini, Sigler's mob boss father on "The Sopranos," taught Sigler so much about how to hold her value as an actress along with other life lessons. "Jim taught me to speak up for myself if I felt like I wasn't understanding something," she said. "On set one day he said, 'You know you can ask people and everyone's happy to help.' It's almost a gift that you give to others when you ask for help and they can share with you their expertise. It's something that I've really taken with me and try to teach my kids, as well."

Sigler's current projects include promoting the resort town of Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, and roles in the Adult Swim TV series "Beef House" and the movies "I'm on Fire" and "The Virgin of Highland Park."

Jamie-Lynn Sigler, left, and Jenna Parris teamed up to host "Mama Said," a parenting podcast.



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A Grand Outing

Celebrate Grandparents Day at Historic LI Places

BY JENNIFER BERGER



September 13 is Grandparents Day, so why not plan an engaging, educational afternoon the whole family will love? Although some places are closed due to the coronavirus pandemic, there are many historic sites on Long Island where you can spend the day outdoors (socially distant, of course) with your loved ones and learn something new. Here, discover how history connects with family fun in Nassau and Suffolk at these notable places.

Old Bethpage Village Restoration

Step back in time and experience life as it was on Long Island in the 1800s. The 209-acre recreated American village features original houses, barns and buildings dating from 1660 to 1875, with demonstrations of blacksmithing, broom and pottery making, basket weaving and more. Timed entry, self-guided tours are available from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Tickets must be purchased in advance and face coverings are required while on the property.

Price: \$15 adults, \$12 children ages 5 to 12, \$12 seniors. **Info:** 1303 Round Swamp Rd., Old Bethpage, 516-572-8401, obvnrnassau.com

Quogue Wildlife Refuge

Although the nature center is closed, families can explore 7 miles of trails at the 305-acre refuge. Stop by the Outdoor Wildlife Complex to see animals that have been injured, like foxes, groundhogs, owls, hawks and more. Masks must be worn when unable to properly social distance. **Price:** Free. **Info:** 3 Old Country Rd., Quogue, 631-653-4771, quoguewildliferefuge.org

Nassau County Museum of Art

Check out 40 sculptures throughout this 145-acre preserve that also features eight woodland nature trails and a formal garden. The arboretum and sculpture park is open daily 9 a.m. to dusk and all guests must practice social distancing and wear face coverings when this is not possible. **Price:** Admission to the grounds and parking is free. **Info:** One Museum Dr., Roslyn Harbor, 516-484-9338, nassaumuseum.org

Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery & Aquarium

Watch the grandkids' faces light up as they catch some fish (and take them home), tour eight outdoor ponds, feed hungry trout and check out a variety of turtles. COVID safety measures include hand hygiene stations and mandatory face coverings while fishing (no more than eight people on the fishing platform at a time). Open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Price:** \$7, \$5 ages 3 to 12, \$6 ages 65 and older. If you fish, it is \$16 per person and \$4 for each fish you catch. **Info:** 1660 NY-25A, Cold Spring Harbor, 516-692-6768, cshfishhatchery.org

Sylvester Manor Educational Farm

Established in 1652, this 243-acre plantation originated as a plantation for the Barbarian sugar trade, it's where baking soda was created and is now an educational center. The manor house is closed, but the grounds and walking trails are available from dawn to dusk. Download the free app in the App Store for a self-guided tour



LEFT TOP: Old Bethpage Village
Photo credit: John Dunn

MIDDLE: Quogue Wildlife Refuge
Photo credit: Rande Daddona

BOTTOM: Nassau County Museum of Art
Photo credit: Barry Sloan

TOP RIGHT: Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery
Photo credit: Newsday/Raychel Brightman

MIDDLE: Sylvester Manor House
Photo credit: Sylvester Manor Educational Farm

BOTTOM: Fire Island Lighthouse
Photo credit: Asia Lee

map, which can also be found on the farm's website. Visit the farmstand from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday through Monday for fresh produce, skincare products and more. **Price:** Free. **Info:** 80 North Ferry Rd., Shelter Island, 631-749-0626, sylvestermanor.org

Fire Island Lighthouse

Explore the trails and the Keeper's Quarters, and then climb up the 182 steps to take in the views of the Atlantic Ocean, Fire Island and New York City. Masks are required in the lighthouse and social distancing is enforced. The grounds are open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the tower is open 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **Price:** \$10 adults, \$5 children ages 12 and younger, \$5 seniors. **Info:** Captree Island, 631-661-4876, fireislandlighthouse.com



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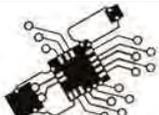
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