

What the Health ★★1/2

(2017) 92 min. DVD or Blu-ray: \$95; public libraries & high schools; \$395; colleges & universities. DRA. Tugg. PPR.

Co-directors Kip Andersen and Keegan Kuhn explore the links between diet and disease in this discomfiting documentary. Onscreen host Andersen, a recovering hypochondriac who grew up in a family beset by serious medical conditions such as heart disease, was inspired to make the film by the World Health Organization's claim that processed meats contribute to cancer. Noticing that major advocacy groups such as the American Diabetes Association continue to recommend these products, Andersen attempts to find the reason for the disconnect, particularly since some spokespeople refuse to talk on camera. Anderson interviews a number of doctors and authors, including clinical researcher Dr. Neal Barnard. As Dr. Milton Mills laments, "We are in the business of treating sick people. We are not in the business of trying to prevent people from being sick." All of the doctors agree that diet is a major factor in disease and that meat consumption can do more harm than sugar and carbohydrates due to the way that the body processes animal protein (even chicken presents problems, since it contains nearly as much cholesterol as red meat, and even more sodium). When the filmmakers visit a North Carolina community adjacent to a hog farm, they find high rates of asthma and cancer due to contaminants in the soil and water. Although a plant-based diet would be healthier, misleading ad campaigns and corporate sponsorship continue to be used to spur consumption of processed meats. Unfortunately, Andersen's Michael Moore-style encounters with advocacy group representatives only add distracting drama. Still, it's hard to deny that corporate America benefits more from a sick populace than a healthy one. A strong optional purchase. Aud: H, C, P. (K. Fennessy)

CHILDBIRTH & PARENTING

The Guys Next Door ★★★

(2017) 74 min. DVD: \$59.95 (\$299 w/PPR from edu.passionriver.com). Passion River (avail. from most distributors).

In this sweet and enlightening documentary, filmmakers Amy Geller and Allie Humenuk spend three years following gay married couple Erik and Sandro as they become parents to two daughters birthed by Erik's longtime friend, Rachel, who acted as a surrogate mother. Fortysomething Rachel, the mom of three teenage kids of her own, takes a loving and philosophical approach to her all-important role in the aspirations of Erik and Sandro. And her husband and children seem comfortable with the non-traditional arrangement, which is a big plus



Active Parenting: First Five Years—Video 1: You and Your Child ★★★1/2

(2017) 23 min. DVD: \$79.95. Active Parenting Publishers. PPR. ISBN: 978-1-59723-345-3.

New parents often wonder about what's going on in the minds of their babies—and how to respond in the best manner possible. Based on the concept of "active parenting" (which emphasizes bonding with children, encouragement, and non-violent discipline), *You and Your Child*—the first entry in the four-part *Active Parenting: First Five Years* series—helps parents understand why kids do some of the things they do at various ages. In an entertaining rap music segment, a teen girl and boy describe the normal behaviors and experiences of kids, including how infants explore their environment through touch (and put almost everything in their mouths), the tantrums of the terrible twos, the connection to parents through reading and story time, and more, as the tiny baby grows into a big kid. Acting out common situations, multicultural parents share their challenges and approaches. Topping the list, of course, is trying to figure out what a crying baby needs—quickly followed by learning how to function as a parent in the face of ongoing fatigue. Depicting various scenarios (including tough ones related to arguments and discipline), the program emphasizes that the challenges and triumphs in child-raising are similar for all. The other titles in the series are *Preventing Problems*, *Encouraging Positive Behavior*, and *Preparing Your Child For School Success*. Highly recommended. Aud: P. (C. Block)

since the two families become closer and are linked by more than the little girls. Geller and Humenuk spend the majority of the film shooting domestic scenes of Erik, a psychotherapist, and Sandro, a writer and Italian immigrant, as they transition from being a couple to becoming the parents of one and then two kids. The two men fall into individual roles that appear to be well-suited, with Sandro displaying nurturance that seems to come naturally. An engaging look at two modern families, this is recommended. Aud: C, P. (T. Keogh)

Understanding the Dangers of: Alcohol Use During Pregnancy, Marijuana Use During Pregnancy, and Secondhand Tobacco Smoke ★★★

(2017) 2 discs. 35 min. DVD: \$200. NTI Upstream. PPR.

Featuring segments ranging from less than a minute up to nearly four minutes, this animated collection tackles specific substance abuse health issues for expectant mothers in bite-sized clips that use simple yet effective art and text to punctuate main points. The topics are crucial to help a baby start life in the most healthy way possible, covering the biological and health dangers of alcohol and marijuana use during pregnancy, as well as the impacts of secondhand smoke (viewers are shown how a baby in a mother's womb is biologically defenseless against various intoxicants). Each subject also features a helpful segment on frequently-asked questions. Featuring both English and Spanish audio tracks, the 28 shorts compiled here would be ideal for healthcare clinics and parenting classes, but also will be helpful to individuals looking for quick, targeted information. Recommended. Aud: P. (C. Block)

FOOD & SPIRITS

The Great British Baking Show: Season 1 ★★★

(2017) 3 discs. 600 min. DVD: \$19.99 (\$49.99 w/PPR). PBS Distribution. SDH captioned. ISBN: 978-1-62789-988-8.

Billed as *Season 1* of the U.K.-aired series, this is actually a compilation of the 2014 fifth season of the BBC One reality competition called *The Great British Bake-Off*. Accompanied by jokey hosts Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins, food author Mary Berry and celebrity chef Paul Hollywood judge the contestants here, who are culled from thousands of applicants and include 12 bakers aged 17 to 69. Each of the 10 episodes is divided into three parts: the "Signature Bake," in which contestants add their own personal touches to themes; the "Technical Bake," where all follow the same recipe and are scored according to attention to detail; and "Showstopper Bake," which offers the bakers a chance to show off their best skills. Not as gut-wrenching as any of Gordon Ramsay's expletive-laden cooking competitions, this series features a lot of dry humor and talk of flavors "coming through," although the episode "Desserts" has one contestant throwing his baked Alaska in the trash after another person moves it out of the freezer to make room for her own. Including segments on "Cake," "Pies and Tarts," "Biscuits," "Bread," "Pastries," "Continental Cake," "Advanced Dough," and "Pâtisserie," this mouthwatering series is easily recommended. [Note: *Season 2*, 3 and 4 are also newly available.] Aud: P. (J. Williams-Wood)