

# Washington FAMILY

washingtonFAMILY.com

APRIL  
2019

**EASTER &  
PASSOVER EVENTS**  
SEE PAGE 44

**Get Moving**  
KEEP YOUR FAMILY  
ACTIVE and HEALTHY

**Spring Cleaning**  
GET KIDS INVOLVED

**DIVE INTO BRITISH SWIM SCHOOL  
& ALL IT HAS TO OFFER** SEE PAGE 11

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**APRIL 2019**



Get your family moving this season. **Pg. 16**



**ON THE COVER**  
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*Please note we reserve the right to edit or refrain from publishing comments we deem inappropriate.*

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FEEDBACK**





Earth's April

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# Time to Get Active

I think it's safe to say we've all been waiting for this moment: spring! The birds are chirping, the weather is warmer, and the cherry blossoms are once again making their grand D.C. debut. And for us at Washington FAMILY, we are totally here for it. So, how are we celebrating? We're getting outside, of course, as much as possible. And we're hoping you and your family will join in for some active outdoor adventures this month, too.

To get you ready to head out under the sun, we have our "Get Moving!" feature on pg. 16. Amanda Socci talks about all the great local ways you can keep the family active and healthy outdoors. From hiking and biking trails to fun outside games, there's so much you can do to keep your family moving while also raising those feel-good vitamin D levels through the roof.

In the spirit of activeness, we also have a special emphasis on sports in this issue. Our "Hockey in This Lacrosse Town?" article on pg. 20 talks about the rising popularity of the sport as well as the multitude of benefits.

Because we are heading into the final months of the school year, Michelle Ardillo shares on pg. 25 how to get your child prepared for the fourth quarter and tips on finishing out the school year strong.

Now, it wouldn't be springtime without talk of quintessential spring cleaning. Our decluttering article on pg. 24 is here to help you defrost from the winter and get rid of all the excess stuff that might be lying around your home since — dare we say it — the holidays, perhaps? Plus, writer PJ Feinstein also shares how to get your kids to help out in the cleaning process.

It's going to be a fun, fresh new season in the DMV, and we've got you covered on everything you need to start spring off on the right foot. And, as always, check out washingtonfamily.com daily for even more parenting resources, stories and local family-friendly events happening all month.

Happy spring! ■

*Britni*



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# Washington FAMILY

**APRIL 2019**

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Single Page Design



Calendar of Events



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{ april }

## MONDAY 1

### FREE Baby Story Time

10:30 a.m. Story times are more than just books! They're interactive experiences that engage children with short stories, action rhymes, songs and finger plays. This story time event focuses on pre-reading skills that all children need to become good readers. Chinn Park Regional Library, 13065 Chinn Park Dr. Prince William, VA.

### Revels After-School Workshops (Grades 2-3)

4:15 p.m. | \$30/session. Children in the Hobby Horses class work together to act out folk tales, forging a supportive group identity and learning valuable leadership and teamwork skills. Your child will explore the changes of the season through nature walks, crafts and the traditions of music and dance that cultures across the globe have used to mark the arrival of Spring for centuries! Washington Revels, Silver Spring, MD.

## TUESDAY 2

### FREE PW Board Gaming

5:30 p.m. Are you interested in experiencing the fun, exciting and rapidly growing world of modern hobby board games and card games? Perhaps you enjoy classic board games best but would consider trying something new? Games you might see include King of Tokyo, 7 Wonders, Coup, Castles of Mad King Ludwig, Legendary, Ticket to Ride, Bloodrage and many more. For teens and adults. Potomac Community Library, Woodbridge, VA.

## WEDNESDAY 3

### The Jewish Queen Lear

7:30 p.m. | \$30-\$70. If it's not one thing, it's your mother! Written in 1898, Gordin's story of power and pride revolves around Mirele Efros, a wealthy widow and clever business woman who wants to find a good wife for her son. When her children turn against her, Mirele experiences a fall of Shakespearean proportions. Davis Performing Arts Center, N.W. Washington, D.C.

## THURSDAY 4

### FREE Breathing, Meditation for Parents and Children

10:30 a.m. Being a parent can be a joyful, but stressful time. Join us for a short 15-minute program on breathing and meditation for parents and children of all ages followed by a time to meet other parents. Montclair Community Library, Dumfries, VA.

### FREE Parenting Series from The Ross Center

6 p.m. Join in for a free parenting

series that teaches practical, proven strategies that will improve your child's behavior. Learn to set limits and develop reward systems that inspire positive change. The Ross Center - Northern Virginia, Vienna, VA.

## FRIDAY 5

### 2019 Washington Auto Show

12:00 pm | \$12. Designated one of the nation's top five Auto Shows by the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers, The Washington Auto Show, is a world class event that includes cutting-edge exhibits, latest model cars and display of historical vehicles. Walter E. Washington Convention Center, 801 Mt. Vernon Place N.W., Washington, DC.

## SATURDAY 6

### FREE Women in Computing

9:30 a.m. Next Century Corporation is hosting its 9th Women in Computing Day. Girls aged 8-12 can come out and learn about machine learning, 3D design, robotics and user experience! Lunch included. Next Century, 3120 Fairview Park Dr. Ste., 700 Falls Church, VA.

### Virginia Touch-A-Truck

10 a.m. | \$5. See the "big trucks," take a turn in the driver's seat, put your imagination in gear and go! Kids will have a chance to get behind the wheel and rub elbows with their hometown heroes. Climb on and explore your favorite vehicles including big rigs, fire engines, cement mixer, school bus, utility vehicles and so many more. Kid-friendly food will be available for purchase. StoneSprings Hospital Center, Dulles, VA.

### Winnie the Pooh

4:30 pm | \$20. Winnie the Pooh would spend every day of life humming tunes and stopping frequently to eat "a little something." But today, Pooh and Piglet have to find the Heffalump, watch Rabbit scheme to rid the forest of Kangas dreaded bathtub, and help Eeyore search for his tail. Pooh's intentions are always the best, but his passion for honey and condensed milk keeps getting him into trouble. Adventure Theatre, Glen Echo, MD.

## SUNDAY 7

### Aquarium

10 a.m. | \$12. Enter a fantastical island world where fish soar through the air, lemons light up the sky, and sheep go parading by. With gentle music, puppets and props, guides Jack and Calypso lead children and caregivers in an interactive journey to a magical place of play. Imagination Stage, Bethesda, MD.

### Peter Rabbit's Garden Party

10:30 am | \$8-\$15. The Ballet Tales

## JURASSIC QUEST

APRIL 26-28 | 3 P.M. | \$20-\$36



Come out to Jurassic Quest, the largest and most realistic dinosaur event in the U.S. Enjoy over 80 life-size dinosaurs, walking dinosaur rides, fossil digs, fossil stations, a dinosaur petting zoo and much more! Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, VA.

of Peter Rabbit & Friends is a quirky, fun dance interpretation of Beatrix Potter's beloved stories. Peter Rabbit, Benjamin Bunny, Jemima Puddle-Duck and Tom Kitten come to life and help teach important lessons through dance. Arts Barn, Gaithersburg, MD.

## MONDAY 8

### FREE Prince William County an Aerial Perspective

For those whom reside in Prince William County, this is a unique opportunity to see the area from a large scope. Come out to see Robert Snyder present an aerial perspective of Prince William County. 10 a.m. Hylton Performing Arts Center, Manassas, VA.

### Health's Angels II: Personal Stories about Women's Health

7 p.m. | \$10. Women share personal stories about reproductive health, body positivity, living with chronic pain, traumatic hospital visits, illness, mental health and more! Join in for an emotional, heartfelt and hilarious night. Songbyrd Music House & Record Café, Washington, D.C.

## TUESDAY 9

### FREE Preschool Playdate - Super Science Kids

10 a.m. Children five and younger will be exploring science through hands-on discovery stations, story times, and crafts! National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, VA.

## WEDNESDAY 10

### FREE Afternoon Anime

3:30 p.m. Teens can catch up on some anime, enjoy some snacks

and hang out with other anime and manga fans. Funded by The Friends of the Library. Chinn Park Regional Library, Prince William, VA.

### FREE Reading to Dogs

6:30 p.m. Practice reading aloud while you make a new friend by reading to a therapy dog at the library. Reading to dogs helps young readers improve their skills in a relaxed, friendly environment. Bring your own book or read one of theirs. For readers in grades K-5. Central Community Library, Manassas, VA.

## THURSDAY 11

### FREE Teen Crafternoon

4 p.m. Let's get crafty! Teen Crafternoon will have different projects at each meeting for your teen to make. All craft materials will be supplied. Haymarket Gainesville Community Library, Haymarket, VA.

### DC Comedy Festival: Eddie Bryant

9:30 p.m. The DC Comedy Festival is meant to introduce the public to the comedy scene here in D.C. and give back to the Community that has given so much to comedians and their art form. On this day, join in for a great night of laughs with Eddie Bryant. Drafthouse Comedy Theater, Washington, D.C.

## FRIDAY 12

### Movie Night: Trolls

7 p.m. | \$2. Lights, camera, action! Enjoy a family-friendly screening of Trolls indoors! Bring a cushion or blanket to get cozy, and concessions are available for purchase. Recommended for ages 3+. Casey Community Center, Gaithersburg, MD.



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“  
My son has been a student with BSS for over a year and he really enjoys it. As a parent, I really appreciate the professionalism, patience, and genuine care that his teacher exhibits. It has been a great experience and I look forward to seeing my future Olympian's progress. - Keisha C.



## SATURDAY 13

### Alice in Wonderland

2 p.m. | \$14-\$18. Come join Alice on her fantastical journey through Wonderland. The White Rabbit, the Cheshire Cat, the Caterpillar, the Mad Hatter, the Queen of Hearts and all your other favorite characters are here in this musical adaptation of the classic Lewis Carroll tale. Creative Cauldron at ArtSpace Falls Church, Falls Church, VA.

## SUNDAY 14

### Aquarium

10 a.m. | \$12. Enter a fantastical island world where fish soar through the air, lemons light up the sky, and sheep go parading by. With gentle music, puppets and props, guides Jack and Calypso lead children and caregivers in an interactive journey to a magical place of play. Imagination Stage, Bethesda, MD.

### Learning on the Move! Brain Camp (ages 5 and 6)

10:00 am | \$55. This event is filled with awesome action, creative learning and fun challenges! Brain Camp reinforces essential classroom academics through physical

movement, and uses a mind and body activated approach to create an exciting, effective learning experience. Sky Zone Gaithersburg, Gaithersburg, MD.

## MONDAY 15

### FREE Music & Motion

10:30 a.m. Come and experience all the fun that Music & Motion brings! Each session offers a variety of music, dancing and other movement activities you're sure to enjoy. Central Community Library, 8601 Mathis Ave., Manassas, VA.

## WEDNESDAY 17

### FREE Lego Club

6:30 p.m. Do your kids like Legos? Then have them come to the library to build their own creations! Legos will be provided, but all materials must stay at the library. So bring a camera to capture your adventures. Grades K-5. Potomac Community Library, Woodbridge, VA.

## THURSDAY 18

### Winnie the Pooh

11 a.m. | \$20. Winnie the Pooh would spend every day of life humming tunes and stopping frequently to eat "a little something." But today, Pooh and Piglet have to find the Heffalump, watch Rabbit scheme

to rid the forest of Kangas dreaded bathtub, and help Eeyore search for his tail. Pooh's intentions are always the best, but his passion for honey and condensed milk keeps getting him into trouble. Adventure Theatre, Glen Echo, MD.

## FRIDAY 19

### Daddy Daughter Date Night

6:30 p.m. | \$7-\$25. Every third Friday of the month make it a special night out with your little Princess(es). Make memories by having a monthly date night with your little girl(s). Enjoy a night of music, snacks, games, crafts and more! The Zen Lounge, 9042 Hornbaker Road Manassas, VA.

## SATURDAY 20

### FREE Breakfast with the Easter Bunny & Egg Hunt

9 a.m. Hop over to Lutheran Church of the Covenant for a free pancake breakfast with the Easter Bunny and his friends, followed by an egg hunt, crafts and other activities. Enjoy prizes and treats galore, so spring into action and bring the whole family! Lutheran Church of the Covenant, 15008 Cloverdale Road Dale City, VA.

## MONDAY 22

### FREE Baby Story Time

10:30 a.m. Story times are more than just books! They're interactive experiences that engage children with short stories, action rhymes, songs and finger plays. This story time event focuses on pre-reading skills that all children need to become good readers. Chinn Park Regional Library, 13065 Chinn Park Dr. Prince William, VA.

## TUESDAY 23

### FREE Fiber Therapy in the Reading Room

6:30 p.m. Join us on Tuesday evenings for a relaxing form of therapy: yarnning. Bring your new or old needlework and enjoy our Fireside Reading Room. For adults. Montclair Community Library, Dumfries, VA.

## WEDNESDAY 24

### FREE Reading to Dogs

6:30 p.m. Practice reading aloud while you make a new friend by reading to a therapy dog at the library. Reading to dogs helps young readers improve their skills in a relaxed, friendly environment. Bring your own book or read one of theirs. For readers in grades K-5.



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Central Community Library, 8601 Mathis Ave., Manassas, VA.

### THURSDAY 25

#### FREE Family Story Time

11 a.m. Join us for a fun family story time at Chick-fil-A. Chick-fil-A will provide a free beverage (coffee, soda, or tea) for caregivers attending the story time. All ages are welcome with caregiver. Chick-Fil-A, 3880 Fetter Park Dr., Dumfries, VA.

### FRIDAY 26

#### FREE 16th Annual Georgetown French Market

10 a.m. One of the most anticipated shopping weekends arrives when Book Hill merchants, restaurants, salons and galleries display their wares in an inviting open-air market. Evoking the outdoor markets of Paris, guests can wander between shops and galleries, tempted by the aroma of fresh coffee and croissants while enjoying the sounds of strolling musicians. Wisconsin Avenue, Washington, D.C.

### SATURDAY 27

#### Jane Franklin Dance: Complete Dogness

4 p.m. | \$10-\$15. A family-friendly

performance about a dog with bad habits who learns new tricks. The performance incorporates spoken word, movement, music, kinetic imaging and animation by Hong Huo and interactive participatory activities for young children. Theatre on the Run, Arlington, VA.

### SUNDAY 28

#### FREE 30th Annual Rockville Science Day

Noon. This event features a variety of science and technology-related exhibits, activities, games and demos. Activities and exhibits include rocket-building (and launching), telescope viewing, a traveling planetarium, all kinds of robots, backyard wildlife, ship models, microscopes, snakes, oyster farming, Botball, stream science and much, much more! Montgomery College, Rockville, MD.


### MONDAY 29

#### Cherry Blossoms in Peak Bloom Exhibit

10 a.m. | \$8-\$20. Enter a sweeping, ever blooming world of digital spring at this ARTECHOUSE exhibit. Watch and listen as your presence, movements and connection to others cause everything around

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# Get *moving!*

KEEP YOUR FAMILY  
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with some local outdoor fun

BY AMANDA SOCCI

## **SPRING HAS ARRIVED.**

Cold, wintry days are now replaced by sweetly chirping birds, tiny flower buds and extra daylight hours to enjoy it all. It's the perfect time to get back outside and be active. And what better way to do this than as a family?







When prompted to exercise as a family, many parents balk at the thought, complaining about lack of time due to school commitments or activities or even feeling daunted because of a preconceived notion that it must be done in a gym with formal classes. The reality is that being physically active with your family is easy, fun and limitless. And, of course, it's essential for good health! So why not try some outdoor fun to get your family moving this season?

Here are some ideas to get you started.

### **WALKING, HIKING, BIKING AND NATURE TRAILS**

Families at all levels of physical fitness can enjoy the rich layers of greenery and wooded areas found throughout the DMV. There is something for everyone with the breadth and variety of scenic, historic and visually stunning walking, hiking, biking and nature trails.

One of the most notable local walking trails is technically a state park and is revered as the area's premier wetland and sanctuary for unique species of flora and

fauna. Huntley Meadows Park in Alexandria, VA offers visitors peace and serenity among the tallest of trees, an ever-changing physical landscape of wetlands and a meandering wooden boardwalk to help families get close to nature without touching it. This gorgeous walking trail is suitable for all ages and baby strollers are welcome!

In Maryland, the National Park Service (NPS) offers a slightly challenging hiking course. Spanning eight miles starting from the Great Falls Overlook and winding along the Potomac River, the Billy Goat Trail is known for its massive rock formations and technical challenges. However, the NPS assures visitors that "The Billy Goat Trail, one of the busiest trails in the D.C. area, contains three different sections that total eight miles and provide[s] fun and adventure for all ages."

In the District, families have plenty of options for biking trails. The congested city makes it easy for families to ride their own bikes, participate in paid bike sharing and take guided tours with Bike and Roll DC, a unique and educational sightseeing service that guides families along a tour of the monuments and places of historic interest.



Huntley Meadows Park in Alexandria, VA



Turtle in the C&O Canal Pond



Paddle boating on the Tidal Basin

**THE DMV has something for everyone with the breadth and variety of scenic, historic and visually stunning walking, hiking, biking and nature trails.**

## RUNNING OPPORTUNITIES

For those who want a stronger physical fitness challenge than just walking, running is a great way to get moving, get outside and get the family going on long-distance adventures! According to Runners World, scientific research supports the many benefits of running, including: creating happiness, helping with weight management, strengthening bone mass, promoting mental sharpness, reducing risks of cancer and prolonging a person's life.

In Maryland, the Montgomery County Road Runners running club is committed to "community, family and friendship" while helping people train for marathons and participate in smaller races.

Throughout the D.C. area, families can easily find family-friendly races and related fun activities sponsored by local places of worship, schools and civic organizations. These are generally 1K to 5K races and are intended to be mild, fun races for runners as young as five up through adults. In some

cases, parents with strollers may also race in the spirit of fun! The motivation in these family races is not to win prizes or for the glory of being the best in any specific category, but rather to promote active lifestyles in a way that is friendly and engages all members of a family.

## ENCOURAGEMENT

According to Inova Hospital, federal health guidelines recommend that children and adults get a minimum amount of physical activity each week, adding that "one of the best ways to meet [those] goals is to work on them as a family."

Families are encouraged to exercise and do physical activities outdoors as much as possible. There is no need to feel pressured or be in a comparison mode with friends or neighbors who follow stricter, more regimented fitness plans. Though there are benefits to teamwork and weekly schedules, spontaneity is wonderful, too. Keeping things simple is helpful in

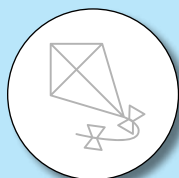
addressing the various skill levels and interests of all age groups.

By thinking outside the box and enjoying the moment without too many plans, families can enjoy each other's company while working on physical fitness outdoors. Things like playing frisbee in the yard, walking the dog or doing a combination of walking, scooter trips and jogging are all great ways to do fitness.

There are also plenty of old-fashioned activities that are ready for some family fun. Things like potato sack races, throwing horseshoes, playing bean bag toss, lawn bowling and even flying a kite are all creative ways to get moving and enjoy the fresh outdoors!

If there are babies and very young children in the family, it's great to keep the little ones in mind by bringing along wagons, strollers or tricycles. No matter the age, every member of the family can participate. ■

Amanda M. Socci is a mother and freelance writer living in Alexandria, VA.



**play**

Have a potato sack race, throw horseshoes, play bean bag toss, lawn bowl, or fly a kite.



**hike**

Enjoy the rich layers of greenery and wooded areas found throughout the D.C. area.



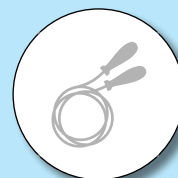
**bike**

Take a guided tour with an educational sightseeing service that guides families along the monuments and places of historic interest.



**run**

Families can easily find family-friendly races and related fun activities.



**move**

There is no need to be in a comparison mode with friends or neighbors who follow stricter, more regimented fitness plans.



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# HOCKEY

## IN THIS LACROSSE TOWN?

*A slick sport gains traction,  
notably among girls*

BY CASSIDY RAFSOL

Youth sports in the DMV have long been ruled by lacrosse and soccer. However, kids around the area have taken a shine to ice hockey, a sport that their Mid-Atlantic parents may have had little opportunity to play.



**T**oday's hockey programs are attracting a diverse group of young players and families, and as more girls' programs emerge and players join from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, the future of hockey below the Mason-Dixon Line continues to get brighter. Throughout the last decade, big changes have been made in hockey — especially for girls. Joanna Nagle, an under-14 girls' team coach for the Baltimore Stars, a youth hockey program, has been playing hockey for the past 16 years. When she was growing up, there weren't many teams or clubs for her and her friends. Now she is amazed by how many girls' programs are thriving.

"These new programs give girls the ability to build a little more camaraderie, and they are able to have fun and just be girls," Nagle says. "It's been amazing just to see how many girls' programs have started up and continue to change the stereotype that hockey is a male-dominated sport."

**"It's been amazing just to see how many girls' programs have started up and continue to change the stereotype that hockey is a male-dominated sport."**

— JOANNA NAGLE

To understand the sport's new popularity, consider that this summer, Nagle will be one of two coaches who will host "Girls Night Out" skates for hockey players each month, from May to August, at the Reisterstown Sportsplex. Not only is hockey growing, but like lacrosse, it is becoming year-round.

After Team USA won the women's ice hockey gold medal at the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea, little girls all around the country had an increased interest in learning to play this competitive icy sport. "The Olympic victory has encouraged girls to shoot for the stars," says Megan Donahue, head coach of the under-12 girls' team for the Stars.

Donahue feels that the Olympic victory not only inspires girls who play hockey, but it also inspires young girls all over the country to take a chance and try something new. "They are able to look around and say, 'Wow, that's incredible, I see a girl who looks just like me, and I want to play that sport,'" she says. "That's what all coaches should support."

Also contributing to the growth of hockey and diversity in both the men's and women's game is Hockey is for Everyone, a National Hockey League-run initiative in which the main goal is to use the NHL's platform and influence to positively change and foster more inclusive hockey communities.

One proud hockey mom is Jen Zamchiya, an African-American, whose 11-year-old son, Taurai, plays for the Fort Dupont Ice Hockey Club in Washington, D.C. Zamchiya believes the Hockey is for Everyone initiative has helped make hockey a more diverse and inclusive sport.

"Teams are encouraged to help make hockey accessible and affordable to groups who have traditionally shied away from the sport because of the 'we don't do that' attitudes and expenses," Zamchiya says. "[The initiative] has helped break down those barriers through the donation of equipment, funds for ice time and free or low-cost introduction to hockey clinics."

As a result, teams are more diverse than ever before. Donahue says she is proud to coach a team filled with players from different racial backgrounds.

Nagle agrees. "To be able to see different races on the Stars and on the different

teams we play has been really impressive and really inspiring."

Hockey also teaches young players, boys and girls, the importance of teamwork, setting goals and having fun. It gives them opportunities to play with players of different skill levels and learn how to succeed as a team.

Each time Zamchiya's son steps foot on the ice he practices different techniques. "He learns something new each time," she says, and he loves it.

Nagle has seen hockey give her players heightened levels of self-esteem as well as new friendships. "It instills so much confidence in the girls," she says. "They are out there every day trying to learn a whole new way of mobility, and this confidence is built from meeting new girls who are learning this new sport that is crazy and awesome."

To all the young girls and boys who want to play hockey or any other new sport, Nagle says, "just try it. You won't know the rush and the fun and the camaraderie that comes with it until you just take the plunge." ■

Adranisha Stephens contributed to this story.



## \$UIT UP!

**IN 2018, THERE WAS A RECORD NUMBER OF 562,145 KIDS PLAYING ICE HOCKEY**, according to USA Hockey, which oversees youth hockey in this country. Be warned the cost of participating comes with an expensive price tag, and there are more equipment requirements for children than adults who play the sport. Hockey parents often trade tips on where to find sales or quality used equipment. But top to bottom, it can still add up:

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# KIDS AND BOOZE

**VICTORIA HARVEY IS A BALTIMORE'S CHILD INTERN** and a high school senior. As part of our series on teens and partying, we asked her to interview other teenagers about their thoughts on drinking. Most of the students interviewed are seniors or older, and at a point in their lives when underage drinking is more accessible. For all teens interviewed, it is an issue they have considered, whether to drink or not.

It has been a longtime American ritual for teens and young adults to participate in underage drinking. From drinking at parties to "pre-gaming" before football games or school dances, underage drinking is often seen as a rite of passage. But is it a given?

Recently, I had the opportunity to talk with some teenagers in and around Baltimore and the Washington, D.C. suburbs to find out their thoughts on underage alcohol use, and immediately it was apparent that not all of today's teens engage in underage drinking. High school senior Elyse, for example, says she chooses not to drink because she doesn't "like the feeling of being drunk." "It messes up your functional system," she says and is simply something that has never interested her.

The Centers for Disease Control, in a 2017 study of risky youth behavior, found that about 30 percent of high school students had consumed alcohol within the survey's previous month, and 14 percent had participated in binge drinking. Teenagers BC spoke with gave a variety of reasons for drinking. Some said it was simply to have a good time.

"I drink at parties sometimes," says Maria, senior. "I'm not sure why, it's just good."

Another student said she started when she was 16, "because I wanted to."

Ethan, a freshman at Case Western University, said he chooses to drink "because I trust myself to know my limits" and added that drinking is not a necessity to having

## TEENS SHARE THEIR VIEWS ON UNDERAGE DRINKING

BY VICTORIA HARVEY







**I THINK THERE IS TOO MUCH OF A stigma surrounding alcohol and that contributes to the mysticism and draw of alcohol. If you allow kids to drink freely – lowering the drinking age to 18 – you dispel the stigma, and eventually the draw of alcohol as a tool of rebellion will be dissolved.”**

– ETHAN –

**“DRINKING AT HOME WHILE underage may be wrong, but nothing can be done if no one is aware. It’s a rule that’s placed but not necessarily enforced, unless caught.”**

– HARSHITHA –

**“I DRINK AT PARTIES SOMETIMES. I’m not sure why, it’s just good.”**

– MARIA –



fun. “I think there is too much of a stigma surrounding alcohol and that contributes to the mysticism and draw of alcohol. If you allow kids to drink freely — lowering the drinking age to 18 — you dispel the stigma, and eventually the draw of alcohol as a tool of rebellion will be dissolved.”

For now, of course, the legal drinking age is 21. So, where does most of this generation’s underage drinking take place? Most said at parties, fraternity houses and college athletic events.

Maria said while she mainly drinks at parties hosted by friends, there are also times where she enjoys the occasional glass of wine or champagne over dinner at home or at family parties, which according to Maria, her parents condone.

Just because underage drinking is illegal does not prevent kids from having access to booze, says senior Harshitha. “Drinking at home while underage may be wrong, but nothing can be done if no one is aware. It’s a rule that’s placed but not necessarily enforced, unless caught.”

Despite their young age, many students say it is possible for them to manage drinking with schoolwork and other activities. “I’ve seen people at school participate in underage drinking and still manage to get good grades, and maintain a steady after-school activity life,” says Aneisa, a high school senior.

Kaylee, another senior, agrees. “I think it is very possible for someone to drink underage and it not affect their school work solely because some people are good at hiding their habits, and as long as the drinking and partying doesn’t replace the time used for school work, I think there can be a balance. That doesn’t mean I think it’s right, but I do think it’s possible.”

type of drug. “Then you have a problem,” he says. “Everything in moderation is the key to a healthy mix of fun and business.”

But Elyse says drinking “messes with how you think,” and that kids still do it because they don’t think about that when they are at parties or other events where alcohol is introduced.

Though these comments may come as a shock to some, Irene Khaksari, a guidance counselor at a Howard County high school says, the responses collected here are not shocking or surprising to her in the slightest.

They are “a micro evaluation of the macro issue,” she says.

Khaksari says that parents can start a conversation with their teens on this issue by removing “the anxiety” teens often associate with talking about underage drinking.

“Approach it openly, honestly and genuinely” she says. “Punishing them for their open honesty is not going to get the conversation moving.”

The teens who do drink see it as a stage of life rather than a major issue, Maria says, adding that the decision to partake in teenage drinking may be more thought out than parents expect. Today’s teens care about and consider the facts behind the issue, Maria adds, reiterating the view that as long as drinking is not an everyday occurrence, it’s not a problem.

“It’s all good as long as you keep the alcohol in the parties and are able to focus on schoolwork when necessary,” she says. ■

“I believe you can balance it because I consume it, but not heavily enough that it would prevent me from any day-to-day activities,” Doyinsola says.

And Ethan says students shouldn’t feel the need to “get blackout drunk” every time they drink or use any

# YOUR KID DRINKS.



## NOW WHAT?

**1 So, we have heard from the teens about partying.** Now, how can parents get involved in the conversation? Dr. Jack Gladstein, director of the Pediatric Headache Clinic at University of Maryland Medical Center, weighs in.

“Start talking, the earlier, the better,” he says. “Be nonjudgmental when your kids tell you stuff, so that conversations can go two ways. You want to be able to let kids know what your value system is, and you want to tell them what you accept and what you don’t accept.”

Tell your kids what you expect of them, Gladstein adds. Be consistent with this, and stay involved in their lives.

“If kids find themselves in an unsafe place or are not comfortable, they should feel comfortable for you to say, ‘I am coming to get you, no questions asked,’” he says. “They should not feel like they will be judged.”

Societal factors are there, and they play a big factor in teenage alcohol consumption.

“When you think about it, almost every commercial is for a beer or some kind of drink,” he says. “Kids feel invincible, they want to fit in, and society condones it. It is important that you talk to your kids about what all is out there and to educate them on the risks.”

**If parents feel that their child’s health or future may be at risk due to the consumption of alcohol, Gladstein says they should be on the lookout for these three risk factors:** change in mood or behavior; poor school performance; or simply hanging out with “the wrong crowd.”

**3 There is one other important factor to consider:** the effects of parental drug use in the family. “If a parent struggles from an alcohol or drug problem, it is important for them to be honest and to open up to their kids about what they are struggling with,” Gladstein says.

The bottom line is that the subject of teen partying may be uncomfortable but not one that parents should avoid. ■

—ADRANISHA STEPHENS

# How to Make Spring Cleaning a Family Affair

BY PJ FEINSTEIN



Busy parents should schedule spring-cleaning sessions as they would doctor or dentist appointments so that they don't get "pushed to the side when weekends get busy."

See if this sounds familiar: Motivated by your New Year's resolution to declutter, you binge-watched "Tidying Up with Marie Kondo" on Netflix in January and dutifully thanked a few pieces of outdated clothing and random kitchenware that no longer sparked joy in your life. You may have even inspired your significant other to part with some well-worn socks and your children to say goodbye to a small selection of toys they've outgrown.

Then, sometime between Groundhog's Day and today, your eagerness to "KonMari" your entire home waned as the number of items on your to-do list grew. Now that it's spring, the increase in activities for the family — soccer practice, baseball games, playground playdates — means a decrease in desire to stay indoors and tidy up. Besides, who has the time to clean?

Before you hit the season running, it's important to evaluate what you've accumulated over the winter and decide what to do next. "Spring is a great time to pause," says Rachel Rosenthal, an organizing expert in Bethesda. "Without stopping, your house will become a breeding ground for continued clutter."

Rosenthal recommends that busy parents schedule spring-cleaning sessions as they would doctor or dentist appointments so that they don't get "pushed to the side when weekends get busy." However, you'll want to be realistic with your time to prevent the process from becoming overwhelming. "Start with 30 minute chunks at a time and then give yourself a reward," she suggests.

Before attempting to tackle a decade's worth of clutter in the basement, Rosenthal advises families to begin in spaces that are more manageable. "Starting in the easiest place will give you motivation to continue," she says. The kitchen, bedrooms and bathrooms will be less daunting than, say, the garage.

And when Rosenthal refers to "families," she means the entire family. Involving your children teaches them that tidying up "is how you live, not a just a one-time event" and sends the message that "we are an organized family," she explains.

Katherine Reynolds Lewis, author of "The Good News About Bad Behavior" and a certified parent educator with the Parent

Encouragement Program (PEP), agrees that it's important to include kids in the cleaning process. Participating in chores, Reynolds says, gives them "a sense of themselves as capable and mattering to the family." When children put away their toys, for example, they immediately feel a sense of accomplishment and can see how their effort helps out the family.

After you block off time to organize the kitchen and task the kids with checking the expiration dates on everything in the pantry, you may feel tempted to stock up on bins and baskets. However, Rosenthal recommends completing the decluttering phase of the spring cleaning process before running to Target or The Container Store. Once you're ready to shop, look for products that can help you create organizing systems rather than ones that simply match your home decor. (And remember, always measure your spaces first!)

Although every family's organizational needs will be different, below are a few of Rosenthal's favorite products for creating a tidy home.

- **Drawer dividers** allow you to neatly separate items by category in bedroom dressers and kitchen drawers.
- **Clear shoe boxes** make it easy to find what you're looking for and can be stored under the bed, on shelves or in a closet.
- **Vertical file folders** are ideal for categorizing mail and preventing important paperwork from getting lost in piles.
- **Hanging sweater bags** create additional vertical space and are a handy way to store board games, hats and gloves, purses and, of course, knitwear.
- **Shoe organizers** that hang over the door can be used in kids' bedrooms or bathrooms to hold hair accessories and small toys.

Rosenthal understands that decluttering can seem like a chore for those who haven't done it before, so she encourages families to think of it as a way of life instead. "Spring cleaning is just part of the process," she says. ■

PJ Feinstein, a writer and the mother of two young boys in Potomac, is guilty of making piles of paper around the house.

ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS/BOWDENIMAGES



# End in Sight

## Tips for Fighting the Fourth-Quarter Blues

BY MICHELLE BLANCHARD ARDILLO



### Recommended Hours of Sleep for School Children

- Preschool and kindergartners: 10-13 hours
- Elementary and middle schoolers: 9-11 hours
- High schoolers: 8-10 hours

### And how about parents?

- 7-9 hours

Source: Mayo Clinic

**A**pril 1 may be April Fools' Day, but there's no time for fooling around, as the long-awaited fourth quarter of the school year is finally here. Summer is right around the corner. But before you can head to the beach or plan all those backyard barbecues, pay attention to these five tips to end the school year with success.

### Sleep on it

**Prepare for a shock:** The Mayo Clinic's recommended amount of sleep by age group is posted on its website and included here. It's safe to say that most school-age children (and adults) are not getting the recommended amount of sleep. Researchers know that people who don't get quality sleep or enough sleep are more likely to get sick after being exposed to a virus. And if they do get sick, a lack of sleep can also affect how fast they recover. Make sure your children are sticking to a school-year bedtime and not a summer-break schedule.

### Take it outside

With springtime temperatures and longer hours of daylight, children should spend some time after school getting exercise and fresh air. Not only will it help them sleep better (and longer) at night, it will improve their concentration for completing homework and studying for tests and quizzes. You also can set up a work station for your child on the back deck or patio for them to do homework while enjoying the outdoors during this time of year.

### Organization is key

It's only natural to feel weighed down if every piece of paper from the whole school year is still in your child's backpack or binder. Start by taking out anything from the first semester. Most middle schools that give final exams only assess students on the second semester, the third and fourth quarter. If in doubt, send a quick email to your child's teacher to verify what materials are still needed, then sort your child's graded work and notebooks accordingly.

### Call for help

If your child is struggling with staying focused, you don't have to tackle that alone. Email your child's teacher and request a short meeting. If grades are falling, ask for extra-credit assignments or inquire about after-school assistance in

the more challenging subjects. For students with learning differences, schedule a meeting with the school resource teacher or guidance counselor; these educational professionals can help get your student back on track. Don't wait until the last few weeks of the quarter to seek help if you need it.

### Keep your eye on the ball

Create a special, end-of-the-school-year calendar. Get out colored markers and a piece of poster board. Mark any important school dates, upcoming field trips, class parties, final exams and graduation ceremonies. Use colorful stickers to count down the days until the last day of school. It's easier to work toward a goal when you have a clear picture in mind, especially with younger children who haven't yet developed a keen sense of time.

The fourth quarter and its mad dash to the end of the school year don't have to be stressful. Using these five tips will help the fourth quarter fly by with good results and a successful end of the school year. ■

Michelle Blanchard Ardillo is a freelance writer and middle school language arts teacher.

If your child is struggling with staying focused, you don't have to tackle that alone. Email your child's teacher and request a short meeting.





**A plant-based diet reduces the risks of:**

- Heart disease
- Obesity
- Type 2 diabetes
- Cognitive decline
- Hypertension
- Certain cancers

**Source:** Healthline

# Plant-Based Eating

## What does it mean and should you try it?

BY MARISSA DONOVAN

**A**ccording to recent polls, plant-based eating is one of the hottest food trends in 2019, and for good reason! Science shows that those who follow plant-based eating patterns have a reduced risk of developing many health conditions including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, hypertension and even certain cancers.

When we dive into this eating pattern, it makes sense why it would translate to better health outcomes. Plants — think fruits, veggies, nuts, seeds, beans, legumes — are packed with fiber and nutrients. Most of us don't get enough produce on our plates or fiber in our diets. By making plants the focus of a meal, we are ensuring we get these crucial nutrients. In fact, one American Dietetic Association study using National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey data found that vegetarian diets were higher in fiber, vitamins A, C and E, thiamin, riboflavin, folate, calcium, magnesium and iron compared to non-vegetarian diets.

The term "plant-based" is broadly defined as a diet centered around plants (produce, nuts, seeds, legumes, whole grains, etc.) with little or no animal products. However, under that definition, there is a full spectrum of plant-based eaters such as vegans, vegetarians, pescatarians and flexitarians. Vegans do not consume any animal products while vegetarians do not eat meat but may consume dairy or eggs. Pescatarians do not eat meat except seafood, and flexitarians only eat small amounts of certain meats and other animal products.

For many people, plant-based eating seems intimidating, unfamiliar or even impossible. But the keyword here is "based," meaning plants are the base of what you're eating every day. While meat can be a part of your meals if you choose, it does not have to be the center. Typically, when we think, "what's for dinner?" our response is always "chicken" or "pork chops" or another meat staple. We can incorporate plant-based eating into our daily life by reframing our

thinking and building our meals around plants. A common misperception about plant-based diets is that you won't get enough protein. The truth is, plant foods contain protein, too. Studies show that the average protein intake among plant-based eaters meets the protein guidelines. Another myth is the notation that you must combine plant proteins during your meal to get a complete protein. More recent science shows that as long as you're eating a variety of plant proteins in your diet, you will get all the essential amino acids your body needs.

In addition to benefiting our health, plant-based diets are also more environmentally sustainable. Considering Earth Day is in April, it's the perfect time to be thinking about how our actions can affect the planet. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, plant-based diets are more Earth-friendly because they use fewer natural resources and are associated with much less environmental damage.

People have different reasons for following plant-based diets: ethics, animal treatment, environmental concerns, health, finances, religion, preference, the list goes on. If you're interested in adopting some plant-based eating practices for any reason, it's easiest to start small. Many people find it helpful to pick one night a week to try a plant-based meal like a "meatless Monday." Others may find it easy to use plant-based alternatives (like veggie burgers) and swap them in for meat or other animal products during their meals.

The great news is that you don't have to cook complicated or elaborate meals to be a plant-based eater. To start, think about dishes that you already make that you can easily alter. For example, if you're making chili, make the base beans or lentils, add lots of chopped veggies and canned tomatoes. If you're making lasagna, you can use a meatless sauce and add sautéed spinach, onions and garlic to boost the nutrients. Another versatile plant-based meal is burrito bowls — simply add a grain (brown rice, quinoa,





Most of us don't get enough produce on our plates or fiber in our diets. By making plants the focus of a meal, we are ensuring we get these crucial nutrients.

barley, etc.), beans, veggies, avocado and dressing to a bowl for a tasty, balanced meal.

With the increase of this trend, comes a surge of products, recipes and even plant-based restaurant entrees, which make it easier. Do a quick search and you'll find there are plenty of plant-based recipes online. Keep in mind, however, that just because something is "plant-based" doesn't automatically make it a more nutritious option. For

example, vegan brownies likely contain the same calories, sugar, fat, etc. as non-vegan brownies. So as with anything, consider the whole food and its ingredients. If you're concerned about getting adequate nutrients, like vitamin D or B12, look for plant-based products that are high in those nutrients.

Plant-based eating is a great way to get more produce and fiber into your diet and has proven health benefits. As with any eat-

ing pattern, find something that works for you and your body. ■

Marissa Donovan, MS, RD, LDN is a D.C.-area resident, registered dietitian and in-store nutritionist for Giant Food. For more on plant-based eating or nutrition, check out Giant's "Nutrition Made Easy" podcast, available at [giantfood.com/nutrition](http://giantfood.com/nutrition) and on iTunes.

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# 2019 Camp Directory

With each new milestone that our children reach comes the need for information to guide them (and us) through this stage. This is particularly true when our children are old enough to attend summer camp. How do we know which camp is right for them? In an education-centered community like ours, there can be a lot of options — where do we even get started? Right here, actually, with these listings. Read about these camps, what they offer and the ages they serve. Then visit their websites to learn more. On our website, WashingtonFamily.com, you can find even more listings to help you in your search. Be sure to check back on our website and in our magazine in upcoming months for more stories and helpful tips. Good luck! Here's to a great summer.



## OVERNIGHT CAMPS

### CAMP HORIZONS

Ages: 6-16  
camphorizonsva.com  
camp@horizonsva.com  
540-896-7600  
3586 Horizons Way, Harrisonburg, VA  
Residential Camp, Boys & Girls, Teens,  
Sibling Discount, Arts and Crafts, Cooking,  
Dance, Drama, Hiking, Horseback Riding,  
Music, Overnight Camping, Photography,  
Swimming

### CAMP TALL TIMBERS

camptalltimbers.com  
info@camptalltimbers.com  
301-874-0111  
1115 Reflection Ln., High View, WV  
Residential Camp, Teens, Sibling Discount,  
Transportation, Arts, Boating, CIT Program,  
Dance, Drama, Educational Activities, Field  
Trips, Gymnastics, Hiking, Horseback Riding,  
Martial Arts, Overnight Camping, Swimming

### RANDOLPH-MACON ACADEMY SUMMER PROGRAMS

Ages: Rising sixth through twelfth  
grade for residential rising fifth through  
twelfth for day  
540-636-5484  
rma.edu/summer admission@rma.edu  
200 Academy Dr., Front Royal, VA  
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Activities, Field Trips, Music

## DAY CAMPS

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#### LINDAMOOD-BELL

4900 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C.  
lindamoodbell.com/  
contact.us@lindamoodbell.com  
800-233-1819  
Types: Day Camp, Boys & Girls,  
Educational Activities

#### THE THEATRE LAB SUMMER ACTING CAMP FOR KIDS

Grades: 1 - Grade 8  
theatrelab.org contact@theatrelab.org  
202-824-0449 733 8th St., N.W.,  
Washington, D.C.  
Extended Day, Drama

## DAY CAMPS

### MARYLAND

#### AVENTURAS SUMMER CAMP

Whole Kids Academy  
6006 Executive Blvd.  
Third Floor  
North Bethesda, MD

wkasummer.com  
aventuras@wholekidsacademy.com  
(240) 242-4957  
Ages: Rising Kindergarten - 5th Grade  
Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Sibling  
Discount, Extended Day, Arts and Crafts, CIT  
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Sports - Extreme, Swimming

#### CAMP ARISTOTLE AT THE AUBURN SCHOOL

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#### CAMP KAH

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kidsafterhours.com  
bob@kidsafterhours.com  
(301) 933-6888  
Ages: Entering K-7  
Swimming

#### CAMP OLYMPIA

5511 Muncaster Mill Rd.  
Rockville, MD  
camp-olympia.com  
alingwood@comcast.net  
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Ages: 3.5-15  
Types: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Teens,  
Sibling Discount, Extended Day,  
Transportation, Gymnastics, Hiking,  
Horseback Riding, Swimming

#### CAMP ACCOMPLISH

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melwood.org/recreation/camp  
recreationcenter@melwood.org  
301-870-3226 9035 Ironsides Rd.  
Nanjemoy, MD  
Day Camp, Residential Camp, Boys & Girls,  
Teens, Extended Day, Transportation, Arts  
& Crafts, Drama, Horseback Riding, Special  
Needs, Swimming

#### CAMP SHEEO - SHEEO ACADEMY

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**ARTS**

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Arts, Educational Activities, Hiking

**IMAGINATION STAGE SUMMER CAMPS**

Ages: 3 ½ -18  
imaginationstage.org/camps/summer-  
camps registration@imaginationstage.org  
301-280-1660 11325 Seven Locks Rd.  
Ste. 255, Potomac, MD  
Drama, Theatre

**INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

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ismw.org  
info@ismw.org  
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bob@KidsAfterhours.com  
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**KIDS FIRST SWIM SCHOOLS**

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contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com  
Check our website for a list of all 35  
locations.  
Educational Activities, Sports, Swimming

**SILVER STARS GYMNASTICS**

Ages: 3 ½-15  
gosilverstars.com  
classregistration@gosilverstars.com  
301-589-0938  
2701 Pittman Dr., Silver Spring, MD  
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Gymnastics

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Falls Church: 703-594-SWIM

Bowie: 301-262-SWIM  
Sterling, VA: 703-444-9673  
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Arts, Educational Activities, Hiking

## **IMAGINATION STAGE SUMMER CAMPS**

Ages: 3 ½ -18

imaginationstage.org/camps/summer-camps registration@imaginationstage.org  
301-280-1660 4908 Auburn Ave.  
Bethesda, MD  
Drama, Theatre

## **INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

Ages: 3-12

ismw.org  
info@ismw.org  
301-365-5888 11325 Seven Locks Rd.  
Ste. 255, Potomac, MD  
Drama, Music

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Ages: 2 months-Adults

kidsfirstswimschools.com  
contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com  
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Educational Activities, Sports, Swimming

## **MOED - A JEWISH AFTERSCHOOL COMMUNITY**

orna@moedcommunity.org  
moedcommunity.org  
8300 Meadowbrook Ln.  
Chevy Chase, MD  
240-450-0689

Ages: 5-14

Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Extended Day, Arts and Crafts, CIT Program, Computers Cooking, Dance, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Swimming

## **MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION**

Ages: 4-21

montgomerycountymd.gov/rec  
240-777-6840  
4010 Randolph Road  
Silver Spring, MD  
Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Teens, Arts & Crafts, CIT Program, Dance, Drama/Theatre,

Educational Activities, Field Trips, Horseback Riding, Special Needs, Swimming

## **SILVER STARS GYMNASTICS**

Ages: 3 ½-15

gosilverstars.com  
classregistration@gosilverstars.com  
301-589-0938  
2701 Pittman Dr., Silver Spring, MD  
301-352-5777  
14201 Woodcliff Ct., Bowie, MD  
Gymnastics

## **SPRING BILINGUAL MONTESSORI SUMMER CAMP**

Ages: 2½-6

spring-bilingual.org  
info@spring-bilingual.org  
301-962-7262  
3514 Plyers Mill Rd., Kensington, MD  
Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, Educational Activities

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johnny.graham@springdaleps.org  
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Day Camp, Teens, Sibling Discount, Field  
Trips, Travel

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Sandy Spring, MD  
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Dance, Drama, Music

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## ART CAMP AT THE ART LEAGUE

Ages: 5-1,8-11, 12+, Teens  
school@artleague.org  
theartleague.org/content/art\_camp  
703-683-2323  
305 Madison St., Fairfax, VA  
Day Camp, Teens, Arts and Crafts

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BASIS Independent McLean  
8000 Jones Branch Dr. McLean, VA  
basisindependent.com/summer  
mclean-summer@basisindependent.com  
703-854-1253  
Ages: 2 - 18  
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Activities, Field Trips, Music

## BRITISH SWIM SCHOOL

britishswimschool.com/dmv  
swimdmv@britishswimschool.com

833-486-3250  
Virginia  
Ages: 3 months and up  
Boys & Girls, Teens, Sibling Discount,  
Swimming

## BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP

Ages: 3-10  
brooksfieldschool.org  
camp@brooksfieldschool.org  
703-356-5437 ext. 2 1830  
Kirby Rd., McLean, VA  
Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Extended Day,  
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The Campagna Early Learning Center  
campagnacenter.org/  
programs/early-childhood  
pshannon@campagnacenter.org  
571-982-3924  
5140 Fillmore Ave.  
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jccnv.org/camp  
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academy@gmu.edu  
703-993-9889  
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MS 1J2, Manassas, VA  
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(703) 790-1049  
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ymcadc.org/locations/ymca-fairfax-  
county-reston Ben.runyon@ymcadc.org  
703-652-8006  
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An IEP meeting brings together the entire IEP team assisting your child – educators, treatment providers, parents, the local education agency (LEA) representative and others.

# Make Your Child's IEP Meeting a Success:

## 9 Questions for Parents

**I**ndividualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings are very important for children coping with special needs.

"These meetings are very important because the IEP guides how the child will be educated and outlines goals for the child, interventions and any accommodations and services that will be provided," says Dodd White, president and CEO of the Episcopal Center for Children, a D.C.-area non-profit organization providing therapeutic and special education services to children.

"An IEP meeting brings together the entire IEP team assisting your child—educators, treatment providers, parents, the local education agency (LEA) representative and others," White says. "Parents and guardians are an important part of that team. You are there to be an advocate for your child."

It's important for parents and guardians to ask the right questions before, during and after an IEP meeting. Here are some questions to help:

### **When is the IEP meeting, and how will I participate?**

At least 10 days before the IEP meeting, you should receive a letter of invitation. RSVP for the meeting in writing. Inform the school if you will attend the meeting in person or by phone. If you are not available to attend the meeting at the proposed time, suggest alternative dates and times.

### **What documents will be discussed at the IEP meeting?**

At least five business days before the IEP meeting, you should receive draft documents. These may include the IEP, a behavior intervention plan (BIP) or evaluations of your child. Review these documents carefully before the meeting.

### **Does this plan clearly address my child's education and treatment needs?**

Before the meeting, carefully review draft documents and write down your questions and notes. Review the diagnosis and examine the plan carefully to see how it addresses your child's needs.

### **When will services be offered?**

Make sure you understand start date(s), how long services are offered, and the procedures involved.

### **Is my child progressing toward a goal in the plan?**

If your child is not progressing toward a goal as you had hoped, ask how this will be addressed, or if a goal should be revised.

### **What else can be done to assist my child?**

If you think something else might help your child, come prepared to discuss it. Write down any proposed changes to the IEP and any information you would like to add.

### **Should anyone else attend?**

Invite additional people to the IEP meeting if you think they can contribute. An IEP meeting takes a "team" approach to helping your child. Take the initiative to invite individuals who have relevant knowledge or expertise regarding your child.

### **How can I have a healthy working relationship with the IEP team?**

Developing healthy and professional relationships with the school and treatment providers can help your child. Be open to discussing issues promptly, directly, honestly and courteously. Ask questions and listen carefully to answers. This will allow you to respond appropriately and avoid misunderstandings.

### **How can I support my child at home?**

Ask what you can do at home to support and reinforce what your child is learning at school. Realize that home also needs to be a place of respite — a place to recover from the hard work that may have occurred at school.

With a little preparation, you can feel confident in making your child's IEP meeting a great success. ■

The Episcopal Center for Children is a D.C. area non-profit school and treatment program for children ages 5-14 contending with emotional challenges.



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# 2019 Party Guide

## LET'S GET THIS PARTY STARTED!

Whatever you're celebrating — birthdays, graduations, anniversaries — Washington FAMILY's Party Guide has all of the resources you need to make your party memorable. From fantastic locations and party planners to entertainers and musicians, you're sure to find that special something to make your party spectacular.

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### LEESBURG ANIMAL PARK

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admin@leesburganimalpark.com  
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571-283-2408; 12780 Aden Rd.  
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Pony rides, petting zoo, & ice cream truck for any occasion. Smiles are our specialty!

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## SMITHSONIAN EARLY ENRICHMENT CENTER

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(202) 633-9587  
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harmoniaschool.org  
harmonia@harmoniaschool.org  
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# HOP into FUN!

## 12 Family-Friendly Things to Do This Easter and Passover BY WF STAFF

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

#### EASTER MONDAY AT THE NATIONAL ZOO

**April 23, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

Throughout the day, the zoo will offer family-focused activities, including an Easter egg hunt with prizes for participating kids, field games, special animal demonstrations and live entertainment. Don't miss a chance to meet Easter Panda! **FREE**, National Zoo, 3001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., D.C.



#### 19TH ANNUAL DOWNTOWN SEDER AT CITY WINERY

**April 7, 6 p.m.**

Come out to City Winery's wildly imaginative and interactive 19th annual Passover seder dinner. Guests will be seated at elegant, long family-style tables which are set with the traditional accoutrements.

Performers, who are seated with guests throughout the room, will creatively expound on various sections of the Passover Haggadah. \$70, City Winery DC, 1350 Okie St., N.E., Washington, D.C.

#### SIXTH & I COMMUNITY SEDER

**April 19, 7 p.m.**

Spend the first night of Passover celebrating freedom at Sixth & I's festive Passover seder. Chazzan Larry Paul and musician Robyn Helzner will lead participants through a traditional seder, complete with reflection and singing. \$36-\$54, Sixth & I Historic Synagogue, 438 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.

#### WHITE HOUSE EASTER EGG ROLL 2019

**April 22, 7:45 a.m.-4:45 p.m. (various time slots)**

Get ready to rock and roll at the White House! Hunt and race for Easter eggs on the White House Lawn as part of their annual Easter Egg Roll. Families will also enjoy storytelling, fun activities and a visit with the Easter Bunny. A lottery is available for families to access free tickets. **FREE**, White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, D.C.

#### TUDOR PLACE'S 13TH ANNUAL EGGSTRAVAGANZA!

**April 18 & 19, 10 a.m.**

Rolling green lawns, bright spring blooms and the elegant mansion on a hill serve as the backdrop for this festive annual attraction. Join the Easter Bunny for a special day as children of all ages enjoy games, crafts, an egg hunt and the "Egg Roll Contest" on the grand South Lawn. Crafts include paper chick "pets" and colorful butterflies. \$10-\$15, Tudor Place, 1644 31st St., N.W., D.C.

#### JEWISH FLAVOR: PASSOVER PREP

**April 2, 6:30 p.m.**

If you're hosting a Passover seder, this event is for you. Learn to cook delicious kosher-for-Passover recipes by in-house chef Vered Guttman. Menu includes Moroccan haroset with dates, wine and nuts, gluten free tahini bread, quinoa, sweet potato and Tuscan kale salad, roasted chicken with pomegranate and date



molasses and more. \$40, Sixth & I, 600 I St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

### MARYLAND

#### GREEN MEADOWS PETTING FARM EASTER EGG HUNTS

**April 13, 14, 18, 19, 20 & 21, 10 a.m.**

Search for eggs and take a photo with the Farm's Easter Bunny, Whiskers! Enjoy other spring-themed activities throughout the event like pig races and a wagon ride. \$14, 10102 Fingerboard Rd., Ijamsville, MD.



#### BUNNYLAND AT BUTLERS ORCHARD

**April 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 22, 27 & 28, 9:30 a.m.**

Bunnyland is the place to be this April! You can take a hayride down the Bunny Trail, or participate in the "Rubber Duck Derby." There's an Easter egg hunt (baskets provided) and a visit from the farm's very own Country Bunny! You can even ride in pedal-tractors, have a hopping good time in a bounce house, visit with live farm animals ... and so much more! Butler's Orchard, 22200 Davis Mill Rd., Germantown, MD.



**PASSOVER DINNER AT SUMMER HOUSE****April 19 & 20, 5 p.m.**

Join Summer House for their annual Passover dinner. Enjoy a traditional menu featuring a variety of staples, including matzo ball soup, housemade gefilte fish and chicken liver pâté, followed by slow-braised beef short rib and warm flourless chocolate cake for dessert. Dinner is served family-style. \$12.95-\$39.95, Summer House Santa Monica – North Bethesda, 11825 Grand Park Ave., North Bethesda, MD.

**VIRGINIA****SECOND NIGHT SEDER****APRIL 20, 5:30 P.M.**

This Second Night Seder at Temple Rodef Shalom is a family-friendly, lively and



captivating event. Enjoy a retelling of the miracle of liberation from Egypt through story, song and dance while exploring the meaning of the Exodus story. Enjoy the traditional foods of the seder meal as well. \$15-\$70, Temple Rodef Shalom, 2100 Westmoreland St., Falls Church, VA.

**GREAT COUNTRY FARMS EGG HUNT & MARSHMALLOW HARVEST****April 6 & 7, 11 a.m.**

There's something rejuvenating about visiting a farm in the springtime — from baby animals to fresh spring buds. There will be multiple egg hunts each day, with over 18,000 treat-filled

eggs. Children can also roast marshmallows on a bonfire! Come see the spring chicks and baby animals, take a wagon ride and rejoice that it is spring! \$10-\$12, 18780 Foggy Bottom Rd., Bluemont, VA.

**FALLS CHURCH EASTER EGG HUNT****April 20, 10 a.m.**

Children dressed in their spring finest can hunt for candy and special eggs in Cherry Hill Park and have their photo taken with their special guest, the Easter Bunny! Bring a basket and they'll supply the candy, fun and happy springtime memories! FREE, Cherry Hill Park, 312 Park Ave., Falls Church, VA. ■

**THE PARTY ISSUE****May HIGHLIGHTS...**

- ✦ Our Annual Party Guide
- ✦ Birthday Party Ideas
- ✦ Kids' Party Planning: Tips from Local Moms

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# Want a Healthier Family Life?

## Consider These Good Habits

BY KATHRYN STREETER

**A**re you looking at your calendar shaking your head, wondering, how did this happen? It's an ongoing challenge, to set boundaries so that the oxygen in our homes isn't sucked dry by the endless stream of obligations, events and invitations creating exhaustion and unhappiness. Perhaps busyness, one of modern-day families' greatest enemies, can be beaten back by resolving to make changes in our approach and practices.

### 1. Reconsider: Many of these activities are actually optional

Very often, school notices are invitations. As kids grow, parents should incrementally step back to be less present in their academic world. Sorry, but your child will outgrow the thrill of seeing you in school halls! But surely, we may say, sporting events are different, requiring any supportive parent to be in the bleachers 100 percent of the time. Sports psychologist Dr. Richard D. Ginsburg, however, pushes back, noting that continually bending the family calendar to accommodate the sports schedule communicates that kids are "playing for us and not for themselves."

### 2. Even during the busiest seasons, sit down and dine together

This alone requires resolve, but go further and avoid the

temptation to turn weeknight dinners into moments of interrogation, putting kids on the defense. Instead, think of this as a quick time of debriefing before they split to get homework done. After all, we want them to willingly show up. Dr. Samantha Boardman, a clinical instructor in psychiatry, describes it well: "Dinner together should come as a welcome break to punctuate your day and not a dreaded chore or additional source of stress." Chilling out around the dinner table, even for 15-minutes, and allowing organic conversation to happen will put your kids at ease and increase the likelihood they'll enjoy time together with you. And that's no small thing.

### 3. Learn to love our kids' passions and encourage their pursuits

Mine has grown to be a foodie. Food and nutrition interests him so much so that I solicit his input for meal planning. This surprising development, one I couldn't have anticipated, has put us side-by-side in the kitchen, experimenting with new foods and recipes.

In the U.S. News & World Report, Dr. Gail Saltz highlights the dangers of micro-managing the direction your kids take. "Children who are overscheduled tend to feel highly stressed and have no mental energy left for exploration, curiosity and creative thinking, the very



building blocks for developing a true talent," she says.

In short, we'll need to protect our growing kids from excessive busyness to provide them bandwidth to explore hobbies and interests. They may have our DNA, but the best parenting will allow them space to be who they are, a completely different person, not mini versions of ourselves.

### 4. Take walks together

On walks, life slows down, giving way to spontaneous conversation. It could be walking the dog together or parking a few blocks from our destination to enjoy the fresh air, blue sky and general public life on the sidewalk. The point is, to step away from our screens and be in the company of our blossoming children no matter if conversation happens or not will always take us forward relationally—and, physically.

In Prevention Magazine, authors Sari Harrar and Erin Verkler point out the importance of an ordinary walk. They mention the multitude of health benefits including incidental calorie-burning effects and relieving the mind of stress and depression. So don't hesitate: Go on a walk with your family!

This unwieldy thing called time which we see rapidly coming and going, week after week, isn't going to change. But we can. Deciding to establish healthy parameters and fresh rhythms in our homes will help create a more connected family life. It may also provide a memorable picture of health and happiness for our kids to imitate when they are out of the house, managing their own homes. ■

Kathryn Streeter is a D.C.-based mom and blogger.



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