

Washington FAMILY

**CAMPS &
SPORTS**
GUIDES
INSIDE

washingtonFAMILY.com

APRIL 2022

Washington
FAMILY **30** YEARS

**Smart. Local.
Parenting for the DMV.**

Get in the
game.

SQUASH
for kids!

Easter, Passover & Spring Events

Diagnosing Autism

**'Ready or Not' Parenting in a
Rapidly Changing World**



closet

home office

garage

laundry room

pantry

mudroom

wall bed



ClosetAmerica®

BEAUTY IN ORGANIZATION

LOCALLY MANUFACTURED | HIGHLY RATED | LIFETIME WARRANTY

240-913-6516 • closetamerica.com

MHIC #127711, VA #2705158787, DC Perm #8236

APRIL 2022



DORIAN2013/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS



DAVID STUCK

Kids who don't participate on sports teams can still find ways to stay active. **Pg. 22** **On the Cover:** Lior Baskir Freedman

FEATURES

- 14** **'READY OR NOT': PARENTING IN THE MODERN AGE**
Psychologist Dr. Madeline Levine shares insights on how to prepare children to thrive in rapidly changing, stressful environments.
- 16** **GETTING ON THE SPECTRUM**
How can an early diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and access to care help kids on the spectrum achieve their potential?
- 18** **THE SPORT OF SQUASH**
Discover how kids of all ages can benefit from this activity promoting fun and fitness.
- 22** **MOVING BEYOND THE TEAM**
Learn ways to promote healthy activity for kids who shy away from organized sports.

DIRECTORIES

- 26** **SPORTS**
- 28** **SUMMER CAMPS**

READERS' RESPONSES

We welcome your feedback — on specific articles, overall themes and anything else related to editorial content. Enter your comments on the Feedback tab of our website: info@washingtonfamily.com.

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

DEPARTMENTS

- 06** **TOP 10 APRIL CALENDAR**
Mark your calendar for spring fun.
- 08** **EDITOR'S PICKS**
Delight your kids with this season's top toys.
- 10** **FAMILY FUN**
Explore the joys of gardening with family.
- 12** **DIY**
Make easy and elegant place cards for spring celebrations with family.
- 13** **PARENT YOU SHOULD KNOW**
Meet Tony Korson, CEO and founder of Koa Sports.
- 34** **HEALTHY FAMILY**
What should parents know about children and antidepressants?
- 36** **BOOK MARKED**
Take a look at books about spring holidays and sports.
- 38** **MY TURN**
Najia Hasan of Koa Sports shares how her experiences with sports teaches youth life lessons about perseverance and being part of the team.

**WE WANT
YOUR
FEEDBACK**

Washington FAMILY

APRIL 2022
VOL. 30, NO. 4
WashingtonFamily.com/
301-230-2222

Craig Burke, Publisher

Jeni Mann Tough,
Associate Publisher



©2022 Washington FAMILY. Distribution of this magazine does not constitute an endorsement of information, products or services. The publisher reserves the right to reject any advertisement or listing that is not in keeping with this publication's standards. All rights reserved.
11459 Cronhill Drive, Suite A, Owings Mills, MD 21117.

EDITORIAL

Michael Vyskocil, Editor
mvyskocil@midatlanticmedia.com

Leenika Belfield-Martin, Staff Writer
lbelfield-martin@midatlanticmedia.com

Alex Krutchik, Staff Writer
akrutchik@midatlanticmedia.com

Lindsay VanAsdalan, Staff Writer
lvanasdalan@midatlanticmedia.com

Contributors

Megan Conway, Elena Epstein
Laura Farmer, Najia Hasan
Rudy Malcom, Mimi Markopoulos
Courtney McGee, Kerri McLoughlin

ADVERTISING

Craig Burke, CEO/Publisher
cburke@midatlanticmedia.com

Sales Consultants

Lisa Gaglia
Alan Gurwitz
Pam Kuperschmidt
Jodi Lipson
David Pintzow
Sara Priebe
Mary Ramsdale
Kim Schofield
Stacie Shapero
Sylvia Witaschek

MARKETING

Julia Olaguer
Audience Development Coordinator

BUSINESS

Pattie-Ann Lamp
Accounting Manager
410-902-2300
plamp@midatlanticmedia.com

CIRCULATION

301-230-2222, ext. 1

CREATIVE

Jay Sevidal, Art Director
Rachel Levitan, Art Director
Paul McGuigan, Graphic Designer
James Meskunias,
Digital Media Manager
Carl Weigel, Graphic Designer

MID-ATLANTIC MEDIA

Craig Burke, CEO/Publisher
cburke@midatlanticmedia.com

Jeni Mann Tough, Associate Publisher
jmann@midatlanticmedia.com



Overall Writing



Overall Design



**Publisher's/
Editor's Note**



**Briefs/
Short Stuff**



**News
Feature**



**Feature
Layout**



**Single-Page
Design**



Profile



**Column:
Family Fun**



**Personal
Essay**



**Q & A
Interview**



**Feature
Layout**

**EXPANDING
PRIMARY
PROGRAM**

EXPLORE • WONDER • GROW

**Brooksfield
School**

**Now Enrolling Ages 2 to 6
Toddler Program • Before & After Care**

Montessori Kindergarten & Preschool
Advanced Academic Curriculum

McLean, VA • 703-356-5437 • www.brooksfieldschool.org

**Washington
FAMILY**

**Advertise in our
May Issue!**

PARTIES

Teachers of the Year, Mother's Day
and more news that parents need.

EMAIL us
at advertising@washingtonfamily.com

OR CALL us
at 301-230-2222,
EXT. 2

SMART. LOCAL. PARENTING FOR THE DMV.
Print | Digital |



Michael Vyskocil
Editor
mvyskocil@midatlanticmedia.com

Facebook
@WashingtonFamilyMagazine

Twitter
@FAMILYMagDC

Pinterest
@familymagazine

Instagram
@washingtonfamilymag

Email us
Let us know what's on your mind.
info@thefamilymagazine.com

Return to Spring, Return to Sports

As we were creating the stories for this April issue of *Washington FAMILY* amid late winter's unpredictable temperature swings and precipitation types, we couldn't help but think about spring's return to the DMV. With the return to spring comes the return to sports.

Squash may not come top of mind when you think about sports for kids, but for the young athletes of squash clubs across our region (see story on page 18), squash offers kids more than physical activity alone. Learn how this all-ages activity promotes positive self-confidence and self-esteem in children.

Child development experts agree that regular physical activity offers tremendous benefits for children and teens, but what about kids who shy away from participating in organized sports? Contributing writer Courtney McGee shares advice for parents on ways to encourage kids to get up, get moving and cultivate healthy habits to last a lifetime (page 22).

Each April, the Autism Society recognizes Autism Acceptance Month in its efforts to ignite change and ensure children affected by autism attain the highest quality of life. Contributing writer Laura Farmer explains how an early diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and access to care can help kids on the spectrum achieve their potential (page 16).

Spring celebrations abound this month. Turn to our Top 10 calendar on page 6 for Easter and Passover events taking place in our area. Have an event that you'd like to share with our readers? Visit washingtonfamily.com and add your event to our events calendar. While you're visiting us on the web, sign up for our newsletters so that you don't miss stories, events announcements and more dynamic ideas for things to do with your kids. Happy spring and happy reading! ■

Michael Vyskocil



Theater
Ages 12+

WORLD PREMIERE

Beastgirl

By **C. Quintana**

Adapted from the chapbook by **Elizabeth Acevedo**

Composed by **Janelle Lawrence**

In this exciting world premiere for young adults based on the chapbook *Beastgirl* and *Other Origin Myths* by New York Times bestselling author **Elizabeth Acevedo**, playwright **C. Quintana**, composer **Janelle Lawrence**, and director **Rebecca Aparicio** bring this collection of folkloric poems to the stage with live music.

The play explores the mythological and geographic adventures of three first generation American sisters. From the border in the Dominican Republic to an apartment rooftop in New York City, *Beastgirl* considers what it means to walk the world as "beastly" beings and how the myths that make us can be both blessing and birthright.

April 7–22, 2022 | Studio K

Tickets: \$20.00



Dance
Ages 5+

WORLD PREMIERE

The Other Side

Adapted from the book by **Jacqueline Woodson**

Illustrated by **E.B. Lewis**

Directed and Choreographed by **Hope Boykin**

Original score by **Ali Jackson**

Clover's mom says it isn't safe to cross the fence that segregates their African-American side of town from the white side where Anna lives. But when the two girls strike up a friendship, they'll find a clever way to get around the grown-up rules together.

Twenty years after its first publication, Education Artist-in-Residence **Jacqueline Woodson's** simple yet powerful book *The Other Side* comes to life with movement from choreographer and Kennedy Center Artistic Advisor for Dance Education **Hope Boykin**. When literal and figurative fences keep us apart, can we find the courage—and creativity—to knock them down?

April 21–30, 2022 | Family Theater

Tickets: \$20.00

Kennedy-Center.org
(202) 467-4600

Groups call (202) 416-8400
For all other ticket-related customer service inquiries, call the Advance Sales Box Office at (202) 416-8540

Kennedy-Center.org/COVID

The Kennedy Center 50

{TOP 10}

BY LINDSAY C. VANASDALAN

Family Events for April

Explore these fun spring activities in and around the DMV.



THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

Witness the annual blooms of Washington, D.C.'s cherry trees—a gift from Yukio Ozaki, who served as the mayor of Tokyo in 1912. The city is hosting festival events through April 17 to celebrate the season.

Free.

nationalcherryblossomfestival.org



APRIL 3

LITTLE PASSOVER NOSHERS

Join the Bender JCC of Greater Washington in Rockville for a party that will delight your family's taste buds, with food handed out by one of your kids' favorite furry cookie-loving monster. Learn Passover facts, create crafts and enjoy the PJ Library story time. 4-5 p.m. \$15 per family.

benderjccgw.org



APRIL 3

JCS & ALL MACHAR PESACH/PASSOVER CELEBRATION

Commemorate Passover at the Milton Gottesman Jewish Day School in Washington from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Visit the website for more details.

machar.org/event/jcs-adult-ed-37

APRIL 3 TEENS AND TWEENS EASTER BUNNY CAKE DECORATING CLASS

Let your kids hone their baking skills with cake decorating tips from a celebrity pastry chef at Fran's Cake & Candy in Fairfax. Children ages 10 to 15 will work with buttercream, fondant and piping on a crumb-coated Easter Bunny cake—which they can take home! 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets are \$125.

franscakeandcandy.com



APRIL 8

HOMESCHOOL DAY

For Architecture Month, the Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden in Alexandria is hosting students for Homeschool Day to learn about 18th- and 19th-century American architecture through special tours and activities. Hours are 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.

Tickets start at \$5; ages 3 and younger are free.

leefendallhouse.org





APRIL 9

BOOKS AND BLOSSOMS

A Carpe Librum book pop-up outside of the Van Ness Main Street office in Washington is selling books, records, CDs and DVDs for the family at prices \$6 and less. All proceeds support Turning the Page. A DIY cherry blossom crafting station will be next door from noon to 3 p.m. Free

vannessmainstreet.org

APRIL 10

KIDS FASHION WEEK DMV: RUNWAY SHOW

New in tiny fashion: a runway show from Kids Fashion Week Network at Prince George's Ballroom in Greater Landover. Doors open at 3 p.m. for the outdoor show. An annual runway show is the culmination of a yearlong program to foster youth talent and career opportunities.

Tickets start at \$40.
kfwnetwork.com



APRIL 11-15

SPRING BREAK CAMPS AT IMAGINATION STAGE

Explore a new or favorite creative skill such as hip-hop, Broadway dance, tabletop role playing, filmmaking and improvisation during spring break in Bethesda. These weeklong programs will challenge and stimulate your child's imagination.

Tuition starts at \$265.

imaginationstage.org/camps

APRIL 23

SHINE BRIGHTER TOGETHER: AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

Wheaton Regional Park will have sensory-friendly activities including a chalk hop challenge, parachute games and sensory story time. You can help paint a community mural designed by Montgomery County Elementary School students recognized in The Arc Maryland's "Together We're Better" art contest.

Free

montgomeryparks.org



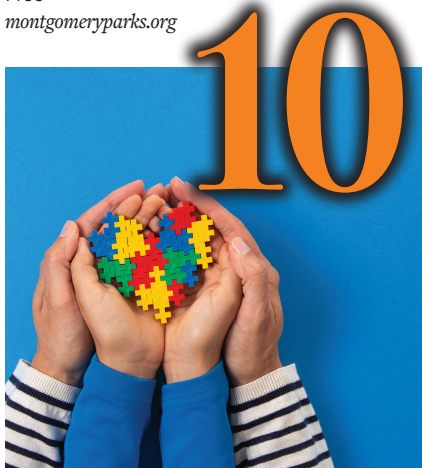
APRIL 16

EASTER AT FIREFLY CELLARS

Easter can be a family affair at Firefly Cellars in Hamilton, Virginia. Come for a morning egg hunt with treats for the little ones and mimosas for mom and dad. All will enjoy the spring animals petting zoo. Tickets include at least 10 eggs per child, one mimosa, one nut-free treat and petting zoo photos.

10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

fireflycellars.com



Puppet Shows For All Occasions (703)444-9426

- Large and colorful marionettes and hand puppets
- Lively music
- Audience participation
- Puppet-making workshops
- Goody bags



www.carouselpuppets.com



PayYourNanny.com

We're here to help families

Payournanny.com provides payroll and tax compliance services to household employers

(703) 819-9796

byudd@payournanny.com

payournanny.com

HERE'S WHAT WE'RE LOVING FOR KIDS THIS MONTH

BY ELENA EPSTEIN,
DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL
PARENTING PRODUCT AWARDS

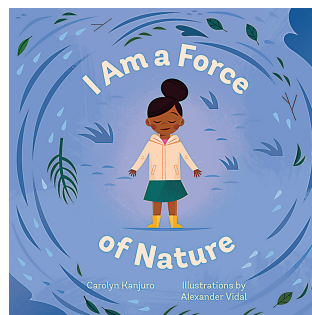
For more product reviews, visit nappaawards.com

NADYA USTYUZHANTSEVA/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS;
PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF NAPPA



The Play Kits

Discover this subscription, stage-based learning program designed to promote healthy brain development during the early years of childhood. The kits arrive every two to three months and feature age-specific toys made with sustainably harvested wood, organic cotton, nontoxic paint and baby-safe plastics. \$80, ages birth-4 years, lovevery.com



"I am a Force of Nature"

Explore this beautifully illustrated board book encouraging kids to explore their feelings and the world around them. The book communicates a memorable message that we can find the same brave, playful, colorful and crabby qualities found in animals and nature within ourselves. \$8.95, ages 1-3 years, shambhala.com

"The 12 Systems of the Body": Adventure Series Book Set

This illustrated book series brings facts, fun and learning together as it introduces the foundation of human anatomy. Kids learn about the five senses; the skeletal, muscular, nervous, respiratory, digestive and immune systems; body growth and development and more. \$120, ages 8+, knowyourself.com



Storypod

Here's a child-directed and interactive audio system that ignites imagination through read-along books, music, podcasts, learning games and more. Loveable "Crafties" yarn audio characters add whimsy for hours of screen-free fun and learning. \$109.99, ages birth-10 years, storypod.com



Rascal + Friends Sensitive Wipes

Designed for comfort, practicality and delicate skin, these wipes contain extracts of chamomile, aloe and pomegranate to provide anti-inflammatory properties and natural antioxidants. Moms will appreciate the fragrance-free, pH-balanced nature of the wipes. \$5.97, ages birth+, rascalandfriends.com



LULLA CORAL LULLA SKY LULLA LILAC

Lulla Doll

Delight in this soother and sleep companion for babies, toddlers and beyond. The doll imitates closeness to a caregiver at rest with its soft feel and soothing sounds of real-life heartbeat and breathing. \$49.99, ages birth-6, lulladoll.com



Sharks, Aliens, Zombies

It's a classic card game with a twist. Think Rock, Paper, Scissors, but with fun facts and wacky jokes. This game is perfect for family game night or when you're traveling with the kids. \$12.95, ages 6+, noveltieswholesaleinc.com

Inklings Cards

Pick up this early-learning game that uses memory and math skills to help kids quickly identify and respond to numbers in a fun, easy-to-learn way. \$24.99, ages 5+, inklingscards.com



Crawl About Ladybug

This early learning companion wobbles as it moves. A simple push on the back starts its motion. Lights and fun melodies entice your child to crawl after it as it moves across the floor. \$19.99, ages 6 months+, tlji.com



Planet Duck

Perfect for bathtime fun, these adorable, upright floating rubber ducks come in a pack of six and offer plenty of squirting, squeaking fun for kids. These rubber ducks are CPSIA-certified products. \$14.82, ages 3+, planetduck.world





Gardening with Kids: *Growing Memories*

BY KERRIE MCLOUGHLIN

I'll never forget the first time I picked a beautiful, ripe, red tomato that I helped grow. I had watered and weeded around the plant with love, and I was so proud of that tomato. Since I wasn't interested in gardening when I was a kid, this memorable gardening experience happened the summer I turned 40.

This experience made me determined to share the joy of gardening with my kids. I'm already learning that gardening alongside your kids provides valuable opportunities for them to learn, get some exercise and fresh air and spend time connecting with you. Learn my tips and ideas for gardening success, as well as a few reasons why gardening is one cool hobby.

GREEN IS IN RIGHT NOW

There's nothing greener than growing your own food. Composting is another fun, green aspect of gardening because kids get to toss eggshells, coffee grounds, fruit and vegetable shavings and rinds into the compost bin. You can make the entire garden a compost pile in the off season, and if you like, you can leave a section for composting throughout the year.

APPROPRIATE TOOLS

Make sure you have kid-size tools available for your budding gardeners to keep them interested. The website For Small Hands (forsmallhands.com) offers several child-size gardening tools such as gloves, shovels, watering cans, kneeling pads, small buckets for weeds, small aprons and totes for tools and more.

RESPONSIBILITY

Consider planting most of the plot as a family garden. Save one section for your child's garden and make your child responsible for it. If your kid doesn't fall in love with gardening, make the watering of and weed pulling in the garden chores that can earn an allowance. Be sure to relax your standards. Who cares if the rows are not planted perfectly?

DECORATE PLANT MARKERS WITH YOUR KIDS

Make stepping stones using a kit. We use lattice screen that my husband cut to make a short fence to keep animals out of the garden, and the kids can paint it themselves. These projects are ways to help your children make the garden their own.

EDUCATION (AKA DON'T TELL THE KIDS THEY'RE LEARNING STUFF)

How much will it cost to buy enough tomato plants to fill half of our space? How many feet by how many feet is our garden, and how many different things can I plant in it? Could we plant an ABC garden if we have room for 26 small plants?

NOURISHMENT

Have a garden-to-table pizza party where the toppings come from your garden. Learn how to can your goodies at freshpreserving.com so that you can save them for another day and give some as holiday gifts. Can fruits and vegetables as they are or doctor them up (salsa, pie filling,

jam and much more). Sometimes you might end up with so much ripe bounty that you need to find people to share it with.

INSECTS

Which bugs are bad (Japanese beetles), and which are beneficial? Which plants attract butterflies (wild plants)? Buy some ladybugs, let them loose and find out how long they stay to eat up aphids. Visit kidsgardening.org, search for information about insects and have fun reading about insects and the work they do.

NO SPACE?

Try the square-foot gardening method (visit squarefootgardening.org), a great system for beginners that saves time, work, water and money. You can start as small as a 1-foot-by-1-foot plot of land and grow from there by adding more feet as you are ready. It's on a raised-bed system, so weeds are kept to a minimum. You can bring in your small garden if a frost is on the horizon. Or think up by growing pole beans or gourds so you can plant more items below. Grow herbs in a pot inside. If you don't have a backyard, community gardens are all the rage these days. Visit communitygarden.org to locate one near you or learn how to start one.

GET THE KIDS INVOLVED

Take them along to pick out seeds at the garden store or spend an afternoon looking at a seed catalog before making final decisions on what to plant. Their faces will light up when they get to pick green beans for dinner or grab some mint for their lemonade. Soft lamb's ear, fragrant lavender and basil make a great addition to a fruit and vegetable garden. ■

Visit our website for a delicious pizza sauce recipe you can prepare with your homegrown vegetables.

Gardening Resources for Families

"Green Thumbs: A Kid's Activity Guide to Indoor and Outdoor Gardening"
by Laurie Carlson (Chicago Review Press, 1995)

"Grow Your Own Pizza: Gardening Plans and Recipes for Kids" by Constance Hardesty and Jeff McClung (Fulcrum Publishing, 2000)

"The Ultimate Step-by-Step Kids' First Gardening Book: Fantastic Gardening Ideas for 5- to 12-Year-Olds, from Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Having Fun with Flowers to Indoor and Outdoor Nature Projects"
by Jenny Hendy (Lorenz Books, 2010)



Make Coaster Place Cards for Spring Celebrations

BY MIMI MARKOPOULOS

Spring is here, which means longer days, flowers blooming and holidays such as Passover and Easter. My family normally hosts a small gathering for Easter with my in-laws. Even though it's an intimate affair, I like to make it feel warm, thoughtful and elegant.

If you're looking for a fun but decorative DIY for a Passover or Easter gathering, make your own place cards. Place cards not only help your guests find their seats comfortably, but they also provide a decorative element that anchors your table.

This year, instead of using the usual cardstock prints, I made some simple yet elegant place cards out of some coasters I found a few years back. You can find inexpensive coasters at any Dollar Tree or Dollar General near you.

I thought it would be fun to use them as a place card and a coaster. The best part is that your guests can take them home as favors.

You can make this project with coasters and letter adhesives from Michael's. They come in various sizes and fonts.

Without a cricut or cutting machine ...

If you do not have a cricut or other cutting machine, you will need:

- *Plain coasters
- *Letter adhesives and stickers

When you use letter adhesives from a craft store, you can stick them to your coasters and set them by each place setting.

With a cricut maker or cutting machine ...

If you own a cricut or other cutting machine, you will need:

- *Vinyl (any desired color)
- *Plain coasters
- *Contact paper

If you're using a cricut or cutting machine, design and write out the names. Choose the font you desire and cut your vinyl. Remove the excess vinyl from the lettering and use the contact paper to apply the vinyl name to your coaster.

If you have excellent penmanship or know how to letter, feel free to use a marker or some paint to write directly on the coasters. Seal them with a paint seal so that your guests can use the coasters without having the paint or marker run.

Whether you are planning to decorate a Passover Seder table or an Easter dinner table, it's important to keep your table setting uncluttered and simple. Fresh flowers make a splendid centerpiece. I like to use pretty spring colors to pull everything together but not lose focus on the food and the religious importance of the occasion. ■

XO,
Mimi

Sources: Cricut cutting machine and letter adhesives, available from michaels.com. Coasters, available from Dollar General or Dollar Tree retailers.

Tony Korson

Empowering youth through sports and parenthood

BY LINDSDAY C. VANASDALAN



FAMILY FAVORITES

Family Meal: We like Pizza Fridays. That's a favorite family tradition for us, whether we cook them or order them.

Way to Spend a Weekend with Your Family: Outside

Sport to Play Together: Soccer

Team to Root for: I can shamelessly plug the new college baseball team we're starting in Olney called the Crop Dusters.

Vacation Spot: Any beach—beach, beach, beach. We got beach kids and beach parents.

Family Outing in the DMV: Lone Oak Brewery in Olney

“When you're an athlete, you think you're going to play sports your whole life,” says Tony Korson, father of three and founder and CEO of Koa Sports.

Instead, he turned to coaching and mentoring the next generation after college. This work led to Koa Sports, a Bethesda nonprofit whose mission is shaping kids' lives through sports.

The organization strives to provide accessible instruction for students—whether they are trying a new sport or seeking coaching to help earn a spot on a middle or high school team, Korson says.

“We want to make it fun. I think that's the biggest thing. It's not all about trophies; it's not all about winning,” he says. “It's about teaching these young boys and girls good life lessons, values and giving it their all.”

Born and raised in Montgomery County, Korson now lives in Fallsmead with his wife, Nikki, and their three children, Manolis (5), Fotios (2) and Kostas (1).

What do you love about being a parent?

The best part of being a parent is seeing their excitement—whether it's you getting home from work, whether it's they've figured out a piece of a puzzle. It's just the innocence of how excited they could be over something as small as a cardboard box or something as big as a birthday or Christmas present. I think that's really cool just to see how excited and how much infectious energy they can have.

What lessons have you drawn from Koa that you have applied to your family's experience?

I think you have to give them enough. You know you have to teach them—give them enough chances to fail. I think failure is super important in life. If you micromanage and hover, they're never going to learn. I think that's one of the things we do well at Koa. We don't really have parent coaches.

We pay all of our staff. We encourage parents to work with their kids outside of Koa activities, but during the Koa activities, we try to get them to relax, step back, let them make mistakes and have the freedom to do that. That's something that I like to do with our kids—try to teach them and give them the freedom to make good decisions. Sometimes they do; sometimes they make bad decisions. That's OK. You got to tell them, “Next time, (let's) not do that again.”

What's been the greatest challenge?

I think the most difficult part about being a parent is you don't really want to let them down. It's like how can you always be there for your kids? I think that's not possible, especially when we have three kids and they have to go to school, we have to go to work and we have to watch out for the other kids. I think that's really hard, and you don't want to let them down. It's not possible to be with them 24/7.

How do you balance your career with family life?

It's hard. When the kids go down, I'm working most nights. I'm making sure that the kids are properly fed for breakfast, have a lunch before they go to school, being laser-focused on them and being laser-focused on work when you're at work. It's not scrolling through social media, not time to catch up with your buddies. There's just not enough time in the day to do that. Focus on your priorities when you have them. When you have the kids, give them (your attention) for the day, and when you're at work, be laser-focused. When they go down, if it's time to get a couple more hours of work in, you got to do it then.

What's one thing you hope your kids learn from your career?

Be active forever. It's OK to run around and chase a ball—it doesn't matter if you're 4, 44 or 84. Be active. Be outside. ■

When psychologist Dr. Madeline Levine's latest book "Ready or Not: Preparing Our Kids to Thrive in an Uncertain and Rapidly Changing World" (Harper, 2020) published at the end of February 2020, unbeknownst to her, the book's material was about to get even more relevant.

Levine, a New York Times bestselling author, has more than 35 years of experience as a clinician, consultant, educator and writer. "Ready or Not," Levine's third book, offers parents ways to best prepare children for the volatile world they will enter as adults.

We spoke with Levine about her book, her advice and the ways in which our current educational and parental systems can do more to help our children thrive in a rapidly changing, stressful environment.

Editor's Note: The following interview has been condensed for space and edited for clarity.

In "Ready or Not," you write that you believe parental anxiety and the pressure-filled parenting style that has come about as a result of upheaval politically, socially, etc.—that pushes children to excel—is epidemic. Why do you believe this phenomenon is so prominent at the moment?

Madeline Levine (ML): Well, I'm not sure that I think the same kind of pressure that parents had before the pandemic is exactly what it's like now.

I think, in a nutshell, parents are rightfully anxious about their children's prospects in a world that they don't understand. And now, it's a world that nobody understands.

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN THRIVE IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING, STRESSFUL WORLD

I think that the impetus for writing "Ready or Not" was (that) I had written two previous books on the same topic over a period of 15 years, and I traveled this entire country, as did many of my colleagues, with the exact same message: Kids need to play. Have rates (of anxiety) gone down? No!

For "Ready or Not," I didn't talk particularly to psychologists or educators. I talked to business heads (among others)—people who live in uncertainty—thinking that maybe they had more practice than we did.

Every parent says, "I want my kids to be happy." But the message in "how'd you do in school?" "how are your SATs?" "where are you going to college?" is that this is the most important thing you can do: be a straight-A student, get into a great college, and then from there, you'll go to Google or LinkedIn. But what was stunning about the research is that I went to all those places, and they were unanimous in saying, "No, that's not what we're looking for anymore."

When you were talking to leaders inside and outside of psychology, what emerged as the most important skills for kids to have as they prepare to face the years ahead?

Perseverance, flexibility, collaboration, curiosity, creativity and self-regulation. (There is also) educated risk taking—being open to seeing things differently. I'm not pushing risk taking like running out on the street, but that willingness to try something new, to see something in a different way, that comes up a lot also.

Where are we failing our kids? What exactly are we doing that's causing our kids to fall short in this rapidly changing world?

I think it goes back to this notion of success.

(Pre-pandemic,) every time I gave a talk, I had two slides. (The first was a) straight line—that's the trajectory of "you know what you want to do. You get the grades. You go to a great school ... do that work, and you're happy ever after." And no matter where in the world I presented that slide, the number of people who took that direct route is between 1% and 10%. That leaves 90%-99% of people who took a jagged—or squiggly—path.

As a parent, you've got to open up your notion about what it means to be successful in the world. My practice is made up of "highly



'Ready or

BY MEGAN CONWAY

Parenting

successful” young people who don’t have coping skills. Across the country now, there are emerging adulthood programs to help kids because parents, (while) well-meaning, have accommodated anxiety as opposed to having faith that challenge is what makes kids happy and confident.

(For example,) your kid comes home one day, and the dog down the street was barking, and your daughter is teary and afraid. That moment is a critical moment, and too many parents are saying, “Don’t worry about it, honey. We’ll take the car tomorrow, and you don’t have to walk past the dog.” That is the wrong thing to do. It teaches (the child) “You’re not capable of managing this. I don’t have any faith in you managing this. Mom knows best how to handle these things,” as opposed to what we call scaffolding, where you allow the child, little by little, to master challenge.

In my book “Teach Your Children Well,” I say think of child development as a scaffold. A scaffold needs a sturdy base to support its higher rungs. It is important that we respect this progression as our children climb rung by rung and not push them to the top prematurely or without adequate support. Good parenting skills make this climb safer, more satisfying and more successful for our kids.

ABOUT DR. MADELINE LEVINE

Psychologist Dr. Madeline Levine has spent more than 35 years working as a clinician, consultant, educator and author. Her books such as “The Price of Privilege” (Harper, 2006), “Teach Your Children Well” (Harper, 2012) and “Ready or Not: Preparing Our Kids to Thrive in an Uncertain and Rapidly Changing World” (Harper, 2020) focus on topics related to children’s social-emotional health. Levine is the co-founder of Challenge Success at Stanford University’s Graduate School of Education. Challenge Success offers families and schools practical, research-based tools parents need to raise children motivated to reach their full potential.



PROVIDED PHOTO

Learn more about Levine at madelinelevine.com. Find Levine’s books on amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com and indiebound.com.

In a reverse scenario, how would you advise parents to help kids who seemingly put the pressure to succeed in traditional ways upon themselves?

Fifteen years ago, it was not the kids. It was all the parents (being hard on their children to succeed). That has changed during the last five to seven years.

And I think that’s a much more difficult challenge than getting parents to “back off” because kids have come to define themselves so externally—that was the water they swam in for many years. You would go into a school, and what did you see in the front of the school? You’d see the honor roll, and you’d see athletic awards, and that told you right away what was

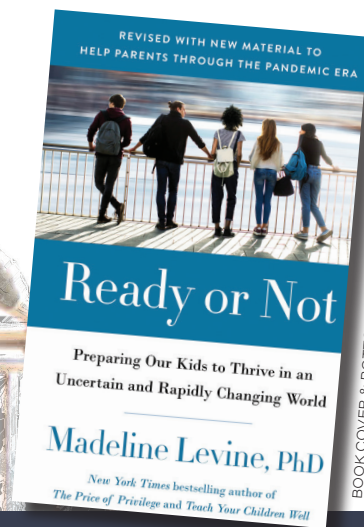
valued. I think that will only change when the cultural narrative changes—and that’s on the adults.

I think it’s parents and educators who need to start truly valuing ... commitment and perseverance. And so I think (it’s important that) we can have a bigger tent for kids—that we value other things, that we sit down and talk about our values. As a consultant, every family that I go into, we do “values” first thing.

I think this is a great time for “values” conversations. If nothing changes, this will be a tragedy. We want a different kind of education. We want less anxiety. We want our kids to develop skills that are more in line with what’s likely to be valued (in the real world). ■



IN THE MODERN AGE



BOOK COVER & BOTTOM IMAGE: HARPER (PUBLISHING)



Getting On the Spectrum

How can early diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and access to care help kids on the spectrum achieve their potential?

BY LAURA FARMER

During Maya's* first birthday celebration, her mother knew something was different.

"We were singing 'Happy Birthday,' and she had such a blank stare. In that moment, I knew something was off," recalls Elizabeth Chaillou, who perhaps had special insight into typical childhood milestones given that Maya is the youngest of her five children. Chaillou also noticed for several months that Maya didn't respond to her name, make eye contact with people outside of their family, say any words or point to her toys. Chaillou raised these concerns with Maya's pediatrician who connected the Chaillou family to their county's infants and toddlers program.

Eventually, Maya began receiving weekly visits from an occupational therapist, speech therapist and a special educator, who

expressed concerns about autism. When Maya was nearly 2 years old, she underwent a comprehensive assessment at The Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD) at Kennedy Krieger Institute.

"They diagnosed her on that very same day with autism," recalls Chaillou. "I think I knew in my heart that was what it was, but hearing those words brought a flood of emotion. I told my husband, 'She's going to be with us our whole lives.' My husband said, 'Liz, we have to take it one day at a time.' I was reminded (that) she was my daughter the day before the diagnosis and the day after the diagnosis."

Is it autism?

Like Chaillou, many parents of young children may sense something is "off" with their developing child. But how can they

tell whether the differences they notice are within the broad category of normal childhood development or something else? The first step is understanding what autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is and is not.

"Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects a person throughout the entire life span. It impacts social learning, social communication and aspects of cognitive development. Children with autism may also engage in repetitive behaviors and have sensory sensitivities," explains Dr. Anne Inge, Ph.D., a psychologist and the clinical director of the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders at Children's National Hospital.

"When you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism" is a familiar saying among those in the autism community. The disorder manifests very differently in children with ASD.

The importance of early diagnosis of ASD

DeVito explains, “In the first years of life, neural circuits, which create the foundation for learning, grow exponentially. Neural connections are made when babies



Grab a RACQUET,

Squash
appeals
to kids
of all
ages

Have a BALL



Austin Emmett

BY LEENIKA BELFIELD-MARTIN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID STUCK

BACKGROUND: ALTER_PHOTO/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS

Lior Baskir Freedman



What's the healthiest sport you can play? **Squash!** Did you know that Forbes recognized squash as the best sport to play for health? Did you know that squash is not only good for children's health but it can also be a fantastic way for them to enhance their social skills and problem solving?



Neal Seth

“KIDS WHO HAVEN'T NICHE ... CAN DO VERY

“It’s an extremely physical game; however, kids who haven’t found their athletic niche and don’t see themselves as athletes can do very well with squash because it requires as much brain as it does brawn,” says Connie Barnes, director of AussieNick, a squash experience for adults and juniors at the Chevy Chase Athletic Club.

Barnes has operated her program at the club since 2002. She notices that some of her new students get a boost in self-image when they participate in squash.

“What I’ve seen is that it’s the first time in their lives that they have gotten positive reinforcement for something other than their intelligence,” she says. “They walk away with a new sense of confidence.”

AussieNick’s junior players compete in national and international tournaments. Barnes says that traveling with her junior squash players has given them maturity and has allowed them to learn how to interact with their peers in a setting outside of school.

Emily Kimberly’s sons started playing squash at AussieNick last fall with their middle and elementary schools. She says it’s been an experience they’ve enjoyed.

“They’ve both been looking for a sport that they can feel good at. I think this type of sport is easy to learn, especially since they’ve played racquet sports before,” Kimberly says. “They’re excited to go every time.”

She adds that playing the sport has been a great outlet for her sons, particularly since squash is an indoor sport.

“Kids should be doing something active every day, especially since they tend to sit in school for such long hours. They build up

physical energy that they need a chance to get out, and that can sometimes be hard in the winter.”

A squash match is set up between two player—or four for doubles—in a four-walled room. It’s an accessible game as far as equipment goes. All you need is a racquet, some safety goggles and a small rubber ball to play.

“It’s quite easy to learn, not as difficult

as a sport like tennis. You can play a match at an earlier stage in squash, which is a big advantage for kids,” says Ronny Vlassaks, director at Squash on Fire.

His squash club in Northwest Washington hosts the youngest junior players or mini squash players between ages 5 and 7. After this age group, the junior stars program accommodates kids ages 7 to 9, followed by the middle school group.

The club also has a junior academy for more advanced players. Vlassaks says that while squash is an independent activity, kids bond through their shared interest in the sport.

“Squash is an individual sport, but because

**Left to right:
Spencer Kimberly, Austin Emmett,
Coach Lucas Norman, Neal Seth,
Lior Baskir Freedman**

FOUND THEIR ATHLETIC WELL WITH SQUASH”

— CONNIE BARNES, DIRECTOR, AUSSIENICK SQUASH



we do group training sessions, many kids became friends through being at the same training session,” he says.

Even when young athletes compete with each other in matches, they find common ground too, Vlassaks says.

“They also meet each other at tournaments and create some type of friendship,” he adds.

Squash on Fire requires no membership to play on its courts; even junior players are welcome to participate. Vlassaks says that this membership-free offering takes the pressure off parents deciding whether to sign up their children.

“Kids sometimes get bored and will change

sports. If they don’t like it anymore after a few times, they can stop,” Vlassaks says.

At Play Squash Academy in McLean, Virginia, director Jahangir (Jay) Naseem also recognizes the transformations in his junior squash students. He has seen kids go from having no interest in any type of athletics to working out at his facility nearly every day.

“Kids who are being bullied by other kids can find self-confidence through squash,” he says. “Kids come in here with no experience in a sport at all. But with passion, love and proper attention, they become super athletes.”

His program has expanded greatly over the

years with one facility at the McLean Racquet & Health Club and another in Tysons Corner that both serve a total of about 150 juniors. Naseem welcomes all types of youth to his program.

“Any kid can come and play squash,” he says. “They’ll have a lot of fun and develop a healthy lifestyle too.” ■

Promoting healthy activity for kids who shy away from organized sports

BY COURTNEY MCGEE

In an era where family schedules are jam-packed, there is so much busyness in the name of being active. Why do parents sometimes feel as though a child who isn't on a sports team is missing out on an experience compared to their peers? Not all kids enjoy organized sports, and that's OK!

Some kids find participating in team sports to be a source of anxiety and intimidation. "Competition and comparison of themselves to peers can contribute to anxiety and fear of failure," says Maria Kanakos, Psy.D., clinical psychologist and co-founder of FamilyFirst Psychological Services in Vienna, Virginia. What's most important is finding the right outlet for healthy movement.

"Regular physical activity is proven to have tremendous benefits for children and teens. It activates natural endorphins that decrease stress and negative emotions,

and it strengthens immunity," adds Kelly Theis, Ph.D., also a clinical psychologist and co-founder at FamilyFirst. "It develops persistence, frustration tolerance and self-esteem."

Building habits for a lifetime

"Adults actually learn fitness from their activity base as youth," explains Ryan Gadow, senior vice president of membership experience for The Y in Central Maryland. "If they haven't engrained a sense of activity at a young age, it becomes harder as they become older to keep up with that fitness level." He stresses connecting kids with something they can maintain over their lifetimes.

Moving BEYOND THE TEAM

Youth & Teen Art Camps at **The Art League** ages 5 & up



the
art
league

Register online at
www.theartleague.org/classes

The Art League
305 Madison St | Alexandria, VA 22314 | 703 683 2323 | school@theartleague.org

“Seventy-seven percent of kids quit sports before age 13. The two biggest reasons they report: parents and coaches. It gets too serious, too fast,” says Chief Vision Officer Andrew Simpson of Player’s Fitness & Performance in Frederick, Maryland. He’s the author of “The Youth Truth: Coaching & Parenting in Today’s Crazy Youth Sports World” (PFP Publishing, 2020).

When the activity is enjoyable, it is more likely to have staying power. “Often, when we find the right environment for a kid, we want to keep hitting that button and taking it to the next level,” cautions Gadow. “When a kid starts seeing success in a sport, and the level of competitiveness ramps up, the ‘fun’ level might go down.”

Movement is more than sports

“There are so many more activities that a child can be involved in compared to when their parents were kids,” says Jason E. Boye, Ph.D., pediatric psychologist at Nemours Children’s Hospital in Delaware.

Gadow reminds parents that sports encompass more than baseball, football and soccer. “There are activities (like rock wall climbing) that people don’t put into their traditional model of ‘sports’ but that give movement and socialization. Some adults found joy or success in a particular sport in their youth and try to duplicate the experience for their child, but self-discovery is more important. The kid that opts out of lacrosse for baseball or opts out of soccer for hiking is finding their own path.”

Your kid could spend hours hitting balls at the batting cage but never want to join a baseball team. Your son or daughter could enjoy swimming laps but not want to compete. So what? “Some children prefer solo activities,” says Boye. “Our role is to work with kids to identify their particular interests and think about how we can incorporate movement and activity.”



Kanakos says that team sports often require a high level of commitment. “The level of competition in many sports has increased such that only the best athletes and the ones training year-round are the ones to experience success.”

It can be an overwhelming prospect. “Physical fitness doesn’t have to seem daunting,” Theis advises. “Any movement in a child’s day is better than no movement: playing basketball in the driveway, walking the dog, playing hopscotch, stretching in front of the television.” Talk about what your children like to do rather than picking an activity for them.

Moderation and cessation

Even when you find the right activity, don’t be alarmed if your kids need a break from participating on a sports team. “Kids will come to it on their own when they are craving activity,” says Gadow.

Idleness isn’t all bad, in moderation. “Everyone should spend time doing things they enjoy, including video games, as it helps improve mood,” grants Boye. “It’s important to balance inactivity with activity. The AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) recommends no more than two hours of screen time per day.

ISOPHOTO/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS

per day. Parents can use this as a guide and work with children to identify activities that involve more movement.”

In more recent years, opportunities to participate in activity with other youth have been comparatively limited. “Now it might take a little more push and pull to drive kids to activities because we’ve become more isolated,” affirms Gadow, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. “You should help guide them. Taste a variety of activities, and if a kid says, ‘I don’t like this,’ don’t be afraid to say, ‘OK, we’re done,’ and move on to something else. It shouldn’t feel like punishment.”

Meet on common ground

Consider tying activity to their interests. “I’ve had teenagers who love to spend time on the phone with friends, so we incorporate spending some of this phone time walking or using the treadmill,” says Boye. “For younger kids, it’s important to have parents and caregivers involved in the activity to engage children. We think of shooting baskets or throwing a ball around, but we can also think of more game-type activities (races, playing tag) that can be done together.”

Some parents benefit from outside help with encouraging kids to be active. “Youth fitness businesses are becoming more common. Seek ones that prioritize inside-out, holistic development of physical fitness,

mindset, character, leadership and athleticism,” suggests Simpson.

“Find a mentor—only one in four kids has one—someone young enough to relate to, but old and experienced enough to impart wisdom that is influential and that they will act upon. When given the tools, resources and positive encouragement from what they’ve been craving, I’ve witnessed kids go from incredibly fearful to extraordinarily confident.”

When in doubt, sweat it out

“Some people tell their kids, ‘I don’t care what activity you are doing, but you need to get outside for 30 minutes, and when you get back you need to be sweaty,’” says Gadow.

“Running around and just being kids is beneficial.” Every kid can have fun on that team. ■



SERRNOVIK/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS

The Jewish Federation's Sara & Samuel J. Lessans

Good Deeds Week

April 3-10, 2022

Food insecurity is a critical issue across Greater Washington. Join The Jewish Federation as we proudly bring together 60+ community partners and thousands of participants across DC, MD, and Northern VA to help support individuals and families in need.

Together, we will fill the shelves of local food pantries, feed those who are hungry, and make a difference all week long.

Find a volunteer project at shalomdc.org/GoodDeedsWeek

Federation's Good Deeds Week is made possible by Drs. Ellen & Stuart Lessans, in loving memory of Sara & Samuel J. Lessans.



The Jewish Federation
OF GREATER WASHINGTON

CONNECT
WITH
PURPOSE

From squash to gymnastics, businesses and organizations throughout the DMV offer various opportunities for kids to get moving, have fun and learn something new.

Look for more recreation resources online at washingtonfamily.com.

AUSSIEKNICK SQUASH

Barlow Building (Floor 18)
5454 Wisconsin Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
301-807-9905
administration@aussienicksquash.com
conniesquash@gmail.com
aussienicksquash.com

Directed by Connie Barnes of AussieNick Squash, the Chevy Chase Athletic Club's squash program is one of the largest, most successful squash programs in the Washington, D.C. area. Calling home to the Chevy Chase Athletic Club, AussieNick Squash offers a full range of year-round squash programs, encompassing private and group instruction, clinics and round robins, junior development and coaching and tournaments.

BETHESDA BIG TRAIN

Office: 7211 Exeter Road,
Bethesda, MD 20814
301-365-1076
Shirley Povich Field:

10600 Westlake Drive
Bethesda, MD 20852
crogs@bigtrain.org
bigtrain.org

Recognizing the value of sports in the development of young people, the Bethesda Big Train's founders John Ourisman and Bruce Adams established the Bethesda Community Base Ball Club in 1998 with a mission to improve the condition of youth baseball and softball fields in Washington and Montgomery County. To ensure that Big Train baseball continues to exist for future generations, the Bethesda Community Base Ball Club turned the Big Train baseball program over to the BCC Baseball youth organization in 2012. Program offerings include Bethesda Big Train Baseball Camp. Families can also reserve picnic space with the Big Train at Shirley Povich Field.

BIG BLUE SWIM SCHOOL

Locations in Dulles, Falls Church
and Chantilly
703-433-2020

bigblueswimschool.com

BigBlue Swim Schools are open in Dulles and Falls Church at the former Tom Dolan Swim School locations and a new state-of-the-art pool in Chantilly. Big Blue offers swim lessons for kids ages 3 months to 12 years to teach the skills needed to feel confident in the water, laying the foundation for a lifetime of enjoyment. Professional, adult instructors and easy-to-schedule classes are what make up the Big Blue difference.

BRITISH SWIM SCHOOL

Multiple locations in Maryland and Virginia
britishswimschool.com

Safer swimming starts at British Swim School. The school's survival-first swimming lessons have helped to develop safer swimmers for more than 40 years, from babies as young as 3 months old to adults. Programs focus on water acclimation and gaining confidence.

CABIN JOHN ICE RINK

10610 Westlake Drive
Rockville, MD 20852
301-765-8620
montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/cabin-john-regional-park/cabin-john-ice-rink

Cabin John Ice Rink, one of two indoor skating facilities in Montgomery Parks, offers a range of ice skating and ice hockey classes and camps for all ages and skill levels, plus special events and skating exhibitions throughout the year. The facility features three ice rinks, a dance studio, three party rooms, a pro shop with skating equipment and The Cabin John Cafe.

CAPITAL GYMNASTICS NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER

10400 Premier Court
Burke, VA 22015
703-239-0044
capitalgymnasticsntc@gmail.com
capitalgymnasticsntc.com

Capital Gymnastics National Training Center is committed to providing the finest, most fun gymnastics, tumbling and cheer experiences for all ages, from preschoolers to adults. The 23,000-square-foot facility offers new floors, state-of-the-art competitive equipment and plenty of viewing area. Recreation classes for girls and boys in gymnastics are offered as well as power tumbling, cheerleading, homeschool programs, trampolines, summer camps and birthday parties.

CAPITAL WATER POLO CLUB

capitalwaterpolo@gmail.com
capitalwaterpolo.com

Established in 2011, the Capital Water Polo Club started with 18 players and today has more than 120 participants and five division teams. A dedicated girls team was added in 2021. All other teams are co-ed and include all levels of players. Capital strives to help each player reach his or her athletic potential, while participating in one of the most dynamic, demanding sports. The program builds life skills that include teamwork, respect, resiliency and leadership. The club offers year-round training for boys and girls ages 8 to 18.

DOMINIQUE DAWES GYMNASTICS & NINJA ACADEMY

22530 Gateway Center Drive
Clarksburg, MD 20871
240-690-4138
info@dominiquedawesgymnasticsacademy.com
dominiquedawesgymnasticsacademy.com

SUMMER MUSIC PROGRAM

Workshops include Vocal, Technology, and Instrumental

Register Now



4 week long sessions
starting July 11th



Grades (7th-12th)



Cost (\$300 by May 1st)



UMD - College Park &
Wise High School



301.805.5358
info@FAMEmusic.org



FAMEmusic.org



Dominique Dawes Gymnastics Academy is a safe, supportive and empowering gymnastics and ninja gym for all children. Its staff aspires to inspire today's generation of gymnasts and more through a safe, caring and uplifting atmosphere. Homeschool, ninja, preschool and recreational classes are available.

FAIRFAX YOUTH SPORTS LEAGUES

Programs in Annandale, Falls Church, Fairfax, Gainesville, Manassas, Reston, Great Falls, Vienna, McLean, Woodbridge
i9sports.com/fairfax-youth-sports-leagues
 The i9 Sports Fairfax youth sports program options include flag football, soccer, baseball, basketball, ZIP lacrosse and volleyball for kids ages 3 and older. All skills are welcome; no tryouts or drafts are held. Everyone plays in every game. Coaches focus on making play fun for kids, providing age-appropriate instruction for all players and ensuring programs are convenient for busy families.

FOCUS FAMILY MARTIAL ARTS ACADEMY

11230 Waples Mill Road, Suite 160
 Fairfax, VA 22030
 703-272-3644

focus4families@gmail.com
focus4families.com

Unleashing leaders. Empowering families. At Focus Family Academy in Fairfax, Virginia, individuals can gain powerful tools for self-defense, inner strength and a strong, healthy body. The academy offers birthday party experiences, family martial arts classes, before- and after-school programs, and school-aged camps during the summer, winter and spring.

GAITHERSBURG YOUTH AND TEEN SPORTS

City of Gaithersburg Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture
 Activity Center at Bohrer Park
 506 S. Frederick Ave.
 Germantown, MD 20877
 301-258-6350

gaithersburgmd.gov/recreation/sports/youth-teen-sports

The City of Gaithersburg Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture Sports Program is committed to supporting a variety of activities encouraging and supporting lifetime skills, personal interest and competition. Selected sports program offerings include baseball and T-ball, basketball, soccer, softball and T-softball, track and field, volleyball and various sports performance clinics. Visit the website for current programs by season.

KOA SPORTS

9801 Washingtonian Blvd., Suite #105
 Gaithersburg, MD 20878
 301-229-7529

info@koasports.org
koasports.org

Koa Sports is more than a sports outfit. This organization believes in helping to build community. Koa is committed to shaping

kids' lives through sports by using sports as a vehicle to teach life lessons of hard work, sportsmanship, self-discipline and coping with adversity. Visit the website for information about baseball, field hockey, basketball, flag football, street hockey, camps, sports pods and more.

MEDSTAR CAPITALS ICEPLEX

627 N. Glebe Road, Suite 800
 Arlington, VA 22203

571-224-0555

info@medstarcapitalsiceplex.com
medstarcapitalsiceplex.com

MedStar Capitals Iceplex is a state-of-the-art facility located atop the Ballston Common Mall Parking Garage in Arlington, Virginia. Although it serves as the official home of the National Hockey League's Washington Capitals, the facility also offers public skating, events and parties, stick-and-shoot, youth house and adult hockey leagues and more.

OLNEY BOYS AND GIRLS COMMUNITY SPORTS ASSOCIATION

4501 Olney-Laytonville Road
 Olney, MD 20832
 301-570-7049

obgcadm@obgc.com, director@obgc.com
obgc.com

The Olney Boys and Girls Club (OBGC) provides children of all ages with structured, safe sports programs that emphasize physical, social and emotional development. OBGC helps kids build confidence, self-esteem and leadership while striving to cultivate a lifelong interest in sports, health and teamwork. House sports programs include baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse, football, wrestling, basketball and field hockey. Travel sports and summer camp opportunities are also available.

PROJECT ATHLETE DC

2121 Wisconsin Ave. NW
 Washington, DC 20007

202-210-7329

info@projectathletedc.com
projectathletedc.com

Project Athlete offers sports performance training to student-athletes in the DMV. Coaches and trainers deliver private, small group and team-centered training in a safe, fun, positive training environment. Programs are available for athletes at every level.

YMCA FAIRFAX COUNTY RESTON

12196 Sunset Hills Road
 Reston, VA 20190

703-742-8800

ymcadc.org/locations/ymca-fairfax-county-reston/youth-sports

The YMCA Fairfax County Reston offers supportive and engaging team sports programs for all ages where kids can learn or enhance their skills alongside other players and caring Y staff and coaches. Visit the website for more information about current youth sports program offerings. Precision sports camps and clinic offerings include basketball, soccer and volleyball. ■



Montessori School of McLean

Where Authentic Montessori Meets the 21st Century:
 Ages 2-12



Cultivating each child's unique ability to flourish in mind, body and spirit

ENRICHMENTS

- Science • Technology • Spanish • Outdoor Classroom
- Library • Music • Drama • Art • Physical Education

Extended Day • Transportation • Summer Camp

1711 Kirby Road
 McLean, VA 22101
 703-790-1049

www.mcleanmontessori.org

Accredited by



The Center for Ballet Arts

Join us now for Spring classes!

Upcoming Summer Camps

for Children & Teens
 July 5th - August 6th

Ballet • Pointe • Modern • Jazz
 Tap • Pilates • Kinderballet
 Ages 3 thru Adults

3955 Pender Drive, Suite 105 Fairfax, VA 22030 • 703.273.5344 • thecenterforballetarts.com

For Seven Days
 and Seven
 Nights,

Gregorio's

We Make
 Passover A
 Delight!



TRATTORIA

APRIL 15 – APRIL 23, 2022

creates

PASSOVER PIZZA

EXCLUSIVE FROM OUR FAMILY, TO YOURS

Call to reserve your order. Limited quantities available.

North Point Village Center
 1428 North Point Village Center
 Reston, VA 20194
 703.689.4894

Cabin John Village
 7745 Tuckerman Lane
 Potomac, MD 20854
 301.296.6168

The Shops at Sumner Place
 4611 Sangamore Road
 Bethesda MD 20817
 301.347.6830

Beer and wine delivery available.

gregoriotrattoria.com

We also offer extensive Catering, Carry-Out and Gluten Free menus. AND WE DELIVER!

WF SUMMER CAMPS DIRECTORY



With each new milestone that our children reach comes the need for information to guide them (and us) through this stage. This point 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, parents can find many options. Use our summer camp listings presented here to learn more about the camps, what they offer and the ages they serve. Visit WashingtonFAMILY.com for even more listings to help you in your search. Be sure to check our website and our digital issues for more stories about camps for your children. Good luck! Here's to a great summer.

By Michael Vyskocil

5 TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME OVERNIGHT CAMPERS



EXPERIMENT FIRST WITH SLEEPOVERS

While camp provides a real-world experience of being away from home, you don't want overnight camp to be the first time your child has ever spent the night away from home and family.

To get your child acclimated to the idea of overnight camp, try arranging for your child to spend a night or a few nights with relatives or at the home of one of their friends. Staying with relatives and friends you trust can help kids ease into the idea of spending a night or several nights away from mom and dad.



INVITE YOUR CHILD TO BE PART OF THE CAMP SELECTION PROCESS

Parents often feel they need to make all of the decisions about camp. From researching camps and speaking with directors to organizing and packing, the most important person, your child, can get left out of the process.

Help your son or daughter take ownership in the camp experience by involving your child in the process as much as possible. Especially when it comes to an overnight summer camp, the more investment a child has in the decision, the more he or she will feel confident and comfortable with the idea of attending camp for the first time.



KEEP COMMUNICATION OPEN WITH YOUR CHILD

Camps have protocols in place for managing communication between campers and their parents. Camps generally have policies in place for handling phone calls, emails and letters from home.

Ask camp directors about the best ways to keep communication open with your child during camp. You may want to send a few letters to your child in advance of camp so that your son or daughter receives them when camp opens.



ALERT THE CAMP TO ANY SPECIAL CONCERNS OR NEEDS

Does your child need to take medication? Is your son or daughter concerned about being homesick?

Before camp begins, alert the camp about any special concerns or needs your child may have. Camps are looking out for your child as much as you are looking out for your child. The more information the camp director, the counselors and support staff have, the more they all can help your child acclimate to the camp environment and create a positive impression.



PACK SOME COMFORTS FROM HOME

Your child may be attending overnight camp for the first time, but that doesn't mean he or she should feel totally isolated from home. When you're packing for camp, include personal objects that remind your child of home. A toy, a family photo or favorite snacks are all ways to make the overnight experience more comforting and pleasant for your child.

Sending your child to overnight camp for the first time is a major milestone. You can make this experience a loving and supportive one for you and your child.

Learn more tips about sending your children to camp courtesy of the American Camp Association (acacamps.org) and on our website. ■

DAY CAMPS**MARYLAND****ATMTC ACADEMY
SUMMER CAMPS**

Ages: Grades 1-12

adventuretheatre-mtc.org

registrar@adventuretheatre-mtc.org

301-251-5766

837 D Rockville Pike

Rockville, MD 20852

Traditional day, day camps, coed camps,
musical theater, fine arts**CAMP ACCOMPLISH**

Ages: 5-18

melwood.org/recreation-programs/camp

recreationcenter@melwood.org

301-870-3226

9035 Ironsides Road

Nanjemoy, MD 20662

Day camp, residential camp, boys and girls,
teens, sibling discount, transportation, arts
and crafts, cooking, drama and theater,
educational activities, field trips, horseback
riding, music, overnight camping, special
needs, sports, swimming and yoga**CAMP SHEEO -
SHEEO ACADEMY**

Ages: 7-16

beasheeo.com/camp

contact@beasheeo.com

Check website for locations in Maryland

866-697-4336

Girls only; educational activities

**CHESTERBROOK ACADEMY
SUMMER CAMP**

Ages: 5-12

chesterbrookacademy.com/camp

877-959-3746

More than 20 convenient locations
Sibling discount, extended day, arts,
educational activities, field trips and sports**IMAGINATION STAGE
SUMMER CAMPS**

Ages: 3 1/2-18

imaginationstage.org/camps/

summer-camps

registration@imaginationstage.org

301-280-1660

4908 Auburn Ave.

Bethesda, MD 20814

Drama, theater

**INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
OF MUSIC**

Ages: 3-12

ismw.org; info@ismw.org

301-365-5888

10450 Auto Park Ave.

Bethesda, MD 20817

Drama, music

KIDS AFTER HOURS

Grades: K-6

Time: 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

301-933-6888

7 locations throughout Montgomery

County

bob@kidsafterhours.com

kidsafterhours.com

Specialties: Music, arts, swimming, sports,
archery, woodworking, etc.**SILVER STARS GYMNASTICS**

Ages: 3 1/2-15

gosilverstars.com

classregistration@gosilverstars.com

301-589-0938

2701 Pittman Drive

Silver Spring, MD 20910

301-352-5777

14201 Woodcliff Court

Bowie, MD 20720

Gymnastics

**SPRING BILINGUAL
MONTESSORI
SUMMER CAMP**

Ages: 2 1/2-6

spring-bilingual.org

info@spring-bilingual.org

301-962-7262

3514 Plyers Mill Road

Kensington, MD 20895

Sibling discount, extended day, arts and
educational activities**DAY CAMPS****VIRGINIA****ART CAMP AT
THE ART LEAGUE**

Ages: 5-teen

theartleague.org/classes

school@theartleague.org

703-683-2323

305 Madison St.

Alexandria, VA 22314

Day camp, boys and girls, teens, arts and
crafts, boating, educational activities,
photography**BASIS INDEPENDENT
SUMMER**

Ages: 2-18

Affiliation: BASIS Independent McLean

basisindependent.com/summer

mclean-summer@basisindependent.com

703-854-1253

8000 Jones Branch Drive

McLean, VA 22102

Categories: Day camp, boys and girls, teens,
arts and crafts, dance, drama and theater,
educational activities, field trips, music

SUMMER CAMPS

are now open!

**SKATE
ON 8**

Our Skate on 8 Camps are designed
with Learn to Skate in mind! We
are proud to offer a safe Summer
Camp option while still emphasizing
FUN and skill development! You are
able to select Morning or Afternoon
Camp OR combine both for a full
day at the Iceplex.

SCAN THE QR
CODE FOR MORE
INFO AND TO
REGISTER!

**HOCKEY CAMPS**

Hockey camp options are
available for players 6U and
older! Players at all levels are
welcome - young players new to
the game and experienced travel
level players will all find camps
to fit their skill level!



SCAN THE QR CODE
FOR MORE INFO AND
TO REGISTER!



MedStar Capitals Iceplex

www.MedStarCapitalsIceplex.com - Arlington, VA - 571-224-0555

THE DELAPLAINE *arts* CENTER

Everyone Deserves Art

ART Summer CAMPS

**Creative &
Fun Art
Instruction
for ages
6 - 14**

40 South Carroll St
Frederick, MD 21701
301.698.0656



**A Safe,
Healthy
Art
Experience**

Painting
Sculpture
Jewelry
Ceramics
Art History
& More

SEE THE FULL SCHEDULE
& REGISTER ONLINE

Delaplaine.org

BROOKSFIELD SUMMER CAMP

Ages: 3-10
brooksfeldschool.org
camp@brooksfeldschool.org
703-356-5437, ext. 2
1830 Kirby Road, McLean, VA 22101

Extended day, arts, CIT, cooking, dance,
educational activities, field trips, hiking, horseback
riding, music, sports, swimming, yoga

CAMP GRIFFIN AT WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

Ages: 3-14
westminsterschool.com/campgriffin

campgriffin@westminsterschool.com
703-340-7268
Westminster School, 3819 Gallows Road
Annandale, VA 22003
Day camp, boys and girls, sibling discount, extended
day, arts and crafts, dance, field trips, music, sports

CAMP MSNV - MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

msnv.org/page/programs/summer-camp
703-256-9577
6820 Pacific Lane
Annandale, VA 22003
Extended day camp



THE BETHESDA MONTESSORI SCHOOL



Join us for our
40th year

ENROLL NOW FOR 2022

IN-PERSON ACADEMICS
& AFTER CARE
8am - 6pm
7611 Clarendon Rd.
Bethesda, MD 20814
301-986-1260

Email us to learn more and tour the school
admissions@bethesdamontessori.com

www.bethesdamontessori.com



THE ST·JAMES

SUMMER SPORTS CAMPS

DEDICATED TO THE BEST SUMMER EVER
ULTIMATE SPORTS CAMPS
ADVENTURE & GAMING CAMPS
SPORT SPECIALTY CAMPS

JUNE 6-AUGUST 26
FULL & HALF-DAY CAMPS | AGES 6-15
THESTJAMES.COM/CAMPS

SCAN TO REGISTER



6805 INDUSTRIAL ROAD | SPRINGFIELD, VA 22151 | 703.239.6870

CAMP SHEEO – SHEEO ACADEMY

Ages: 7-16

beasheeo.com/camp

contact@BEaSheEO.com

Check website for various locations
in Virginia

866-697-4336

Girls only, teens, educational activities

CHESTERBROOK ACADEMY SUMMER CAMP

Ages: 5-12

chesterbrookacademy.com/camp

877-959-3746

More than 20 convenient locations
Sibling discount, extended day, arts,
educational activities, field trips and sports

CHILDREN'S SCIENCE CENTER LAB

Grades 1-5

childsci.org/plan-your-visit/camps

camps@childsci.org

703-648-3130

11948L Fair Oaks Mall

Fairfax, VA 22033

STEM Camps with 5 fun themes to choose
from including 3D printing, animal care,
and STEM Detective. The lab is reserved for
campers Monday through Friday.

CONGRESSIONAL CAMP

Ages: 4-14

congocamp.org

info@congocamp.org

703-533-0931

School Affiliation:

Congressional School

3229 Sleepy Hollow Road

Falls Church, VA 22042

Day camp, boys and girls, extended day,
transportation, arts and crafts, CIT program,
computers, cooking, field trips, horseback
riding and swimming

HARMONIA SCHOOL OF MUSIC & ART

Ages: 4-18

harmoniaschool.org

harmonia@harmoniaschool.org

703-938-7301

204-F Mill St., NE, Vienna, VA 22180

Teens, sibling discount, extended day, arts,
drama, music

MASON GAME & TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY – GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Ages: 9-18

mgta.gmu.edu

mgta@gmu.edu

703-993-7101

10900 University Blvd.

Bull Run Hall 147, MS 1J2

Manassas, VA 20110-2203

Teens, computers, cooking and other
educational activities.

MEDSTAR CAPITALS ICEPLEX

Ages: 4-14

medstarcapitalsiceplex.com

info@MedStarCapitalsIceplex.com

571-224-0555

627 N. Glebe Road, Suite 800

Arlington, VA 22203

Coed, sports programs

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF MCLEAN

Ages: 3-6 years (must be potty trained)

mcleanmontessori.org

703-790-1049

1711 Kirby Road, McLean, VA 22101

Day camp, boys & girls, educational activities

PINECREST PAVILION AT PINECREST SCHOOL

Ages: 4-12

pinecrestschool.org

camp@pinecrestschool.org

703-354-3446

7209 Quiet Cove, Annandale, VA 22030

Sibling discount, extended day, arts, computers,
cooking, drama, educational activities and
field trips

RESTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Ages: 3-9

restonmontessori.com

office@restonmontessori.com

703-481-2922

1928 Isaac Newton Square West

Reston, VA 20190

Extended day, arts and field trips

ROER'S ZOOFARI – JUNIOR SAFARI SUMMER CAMP

roerszooafari.com

703-757-6222

1228 Hunter Mill Road

Vienna, VA 22182

Educational activities

SUMMER DANCE CAMP AND INTENSIVE AT THE CENTER FOR BALLET ARTS

Ages: 3-adult

thecenterforballetarts.com

ctrbalarts@aol.com

703-273-5344

3955 Pender Drive, Suite 105

Fairfax, VA 22030

Teens, sibling discount, arts and crafts, dance
and drama



Sessions from June 21 to August 26

The Theatre Lab
SCHOOL OF THE DRAMATIC ARTS

**summer
drama
camps**
for kids entering
grades 1-8

theatrelab.org • 202-824-0449
900 Mass Ave NW, Washington, DC

Check out our
teen programs too!



children's science center LAB

It's Camp Time
Register now for spring and summer!

- The whole Lab is reserved for campers
- Single-day spring break camps and week-long summer camps
- Choose from five fun themes per season, including Slimy Science, STEM Detective, & more!

childsci.org/camps




CAMP HORIZONS
Celebrate 40 Years

**ARE YOU READY FOR THE
BEST SUMMER EVER?**

REGISTER NOW FOR A SUMMER OF DISCOVERY,
FRIENDSHIP & OUTDOOR FUN!

540.896.7600 • WWW.CAMPHORIZONSV.A.COM

Camp Horizons is a
sleep-away camp for kids,
ages 6-16
Less than 3 hours away
in Virginia's beautiful
Shenandoah Valley



Since 1950

**Virginia Ballet
Company
and School**

AGES 3 - ADULT

BALLET • MODERN • JAZZ
CHARACTER • PAS DE DEUX
TAP • HOMESCHOOL

Enrolling now for classes, camps, & intensives!

5595 Guinea Road, Fairfax, VA 22032 vaballet.org 703.249.8227

Foundation for Future Education

Sister Montessori preschools, providing Northern Virginia's preschool children with quality education for the past 50 years.



THE MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF CEDAR LANE
established in 1971
703-560-4379 • 3035 Cedar Lane
Fairfax, Virginia



HOLLY BROOK MONTESSORI SCHOOL
established in 1999
703-573-7800 • 2455 Galloway Road
Dunn Loring, Virginia



HUNTER MILL MONTESSORI SCHOOL
established in 1990
703-938-7755 • 2709 Hunter Mill Road
Oakton, Virginia



MONTESSORI SCHOOL AT GOOSE CREEK PRESERVE
571-417-3999 • 42470 Rosalind Street
Ashburn, VA 20148



TRAVELING PLAYERS

1961 Chain Bridge Road
Tysons, VA 22102
703-987-1712

info@travelingplayers.org

Traveling Players brings out the best in every performer. Acting day camps are taught in our Tysons Studio; sleepaway camps are one hour outside Washington.

VIRGINIA BALLET COMPANY & SCHOOL

Ages: 3-adults

vaballet.org

vbcinfo@vaballet.org

703-249-8227

5595 Guinea Road, Fairfax, VA 22032

Fantasy Ballet Camps, classes and Summer Intensives, ballet, modern, contemporary, jazz, character, tap, conditioning and more. VBC has many exciting opportunities for dancers of all ages this summer to condition, create and explore. The Summer Intensive program is an exciting opportunity for advanced, junior and elementary-level dancers. The program, available daily or weekly with new Saturday and evening options, trains dancers in various disciplines, with an emphasis on classical ballet technique. VBC's Fantasy Ballet Camps are designed to capture the creative spirit of our youngest dancers, with morning,



RAVPIEL/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS

afternoon and full-day options. These ballet-themed camps for the youngest dancers allow students to explore movement in ballet and creativity with themed craft projects and exposure to the music of classical composers. Adult classes and Master Class workshops for advanced and junior levels with VBC faculty and guest artists offer a range of opportunities for individuals to continue their passion or discover a new one.

DAY CAMPS

WASHINGTON, D.C.

CAMP ARENA STAGE

Ages: 8-16

arenastage.org/camp

camp@arenastage.org

202-600-4064

Georgetown Visitation

Preparatory School

1524 34th St. NW, Washington, DC 20024

Camp Arena Stage is where community and art make magic. Campers ages 8-16 choose activities in theater, dance, music, visual art, filmmaking, writing and more, taught by professional artists and educators. Two- and three-week in-person sessions begin in July at Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School. Day camp, boys and girls, teens, sibling discount, extended day, arts and



CodeWizardsHQ

SUMMER CODING VIRTUAL CAMPS AND CLASSES

CODING CLASSES

- 3-Week Sessions
- Structured Curriculum

MINECRAFT AND ROBLOX CAMPS

- 1-Week Camps
- Learn Through Gaming



AGES 8-18



ENROLL BY MAY 1ST
AND **SAVE \$50**

★ Trustpilot ★★★★★

<https://codewizardshq.com/summer/>
1-800-213-2417



crafts and more stimulating activities for children.

ONENESS-FAMILY SCHOOL SUMMER PROGRAMS

Ages: 2-8th grade

onenessfamily.org/summer
summer@onenessfamily.org
301-652-7751

6701 Wisconsin Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Day camp for preschool to middle-school students, hiking, swimming, arts and crafts, water play, field trips, crafts, dance, drama, theater, music

SMITHSONIAN ASSOCIATES

summercamp@si.edu
202-633-CAMP

1100 Jefferson Drive SW
Washington, DC 20560

With both in-person and online options, Smithsonian Associates brings the Smithsonian's ever-expanding world to life. Camps are offered for kids in first through 11th grades.

SUPER CRYPTO KIDS

Ages: Grades 6-12

shari@supercryptokids.com
supercryptokids.com
888-209-4051

Waterfront SW, Washington, DC 20024

The first Financial Literacy Program is where students can earn cryptocurrencies & NFTs while learning. We provide courses within the Metaverse (virtual) that are not taught in schools. Students are provided a unique hands-on learning experience that feels like playing a video game.

THE THEATRE LAB

Grades 1-8

theatrelab.org/camp
contact@theatrelab.org
202-842-0449

900 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001

Boys and girls, teens, extended day, drama and theatre experiences

OVERNIGHT CAMPS BURGUNDY CENTER FOR WILDLIFE STUDIES

Ages: 8-15

burgundycenter.org
bcwsdirector@burgundyfarm.org
703-842-0470

3700 Burgundy Road, Alexandria, VA 22303

Summer Location: Capon Bridge, WV 26711

Hands-on workshops with art and nature themes

CAMP HORIZONS

Ages: 6-16

camphorizonsva.com

camphorizonsva.com

540-896-7600

3586 Horizons Way

Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Residential camp, boys and girls, teens, sibling discount, arts and crafts, cooking, dance, drama and theater, hiking, horseback riding, music, overnight camping, photography and swimming

CAMP KIRCHENWALD

Grades: K-12

kirchenwald@lutherancamping.org
717-964-3121

1 Cut Off Road, Lebanon, PA 17402

Summer location: Lebanon County, PA
Residential camp, outdoor adventures

CAMP TALL TIMBERS

Ages: 7-16

camptalltimbers.com
info@camptalltimbers.com
301-874-0111

1115 Reflection Lane

High View, WV 26808

Residential camp, sibling discount, transportation, aerial adventure park, archery, arts, canoeing, CIT program, dance, drama, educational activities, hiking, horseback riding, riflery, ropes course, swimming, tennis, tubing, zip line

CAPITAL CAMPS

Second-12th grades

capitalcamps.org

301-468-2267

12750 Buchanan Trail East

Waynesboro, PA 17268

We empower campers of all abilities to lead while cultivating their boundless curiosity. From splashing in the lake to the glowing warmth of the campfire and throughout the entire spirited summer, Capital Camps is a wondrous playground for kids.

TRAVELING PLAYERS

1961 Chain Bridge Road

Tysons, VA 22102

703-987-1712

info@travelingplayers.org

Traveling Players brings out the best in every performer. Acting day camps are taught in our Tysons Studio; sleepaway camps are one hour from Washington. ■

Editor's Note: Information for the camps provided in this directory has been obtained from the camps and summer programs. All details related to camps are subject to change. Please verify information with the camps and program directors when inquiring.

Browse our online summer camps and activities directory at washingtonfamily.com.



Melwood's

CAMP ACCOMPLISH!

An inclusive summer camp for kids with and without disabilities in Southern Maryland.

Activities include:

- ★ Swimming
- ★ Sports
- ★ Crafts
- ★ Horseback riding
- ★ Ropes courses
- ★ Performing arts
- ★ Paddle boats and canoeing



Transportation is offered from multiple jurisdictions for no additional fee.

Programs run from June 19, 2022 - August 26, 2022.

LEARN MORE AT WWW.MELWOOD.ORG/CAMP



Stronger Beginnings Start Here!



Growing, connecting, trying, achieving: At Early Learning Academies, preschoolers get the tools for lifelong learning.

REGISTER TODAY:
elacommunity.com

Locations in Ashburn & Sterling



**Early Learning
Academies**



What Parents Need to Know About Antidepressants for Children and Teens

BY RUDY MALCOM

Rates of anxiety and depression among youth have soared over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Last fall, a coalition of the nation's leading experts in pediatric health declared a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health. Due to structural inequities, this mental health crisis is worst among already vulnerable groups, such as low-income youth, LGBTQ youth, youth with disabilities and youth from communities of color.

However, even before the pandemic's disruptions and fallout, youth anxiety and depression were rising. Social media has played a role by disrupting sleep and exposing youth to cyberbullying and unrealistic views of other people's lives and bodies.

For many children and teens, antidepressants are an effective way to treat anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions, but under what circumstances should they be prescribed? What should parents know before considering antidepressants?

Prescription conundrums

If a child has mild depression, psychotherapy may be enough to help with the symptoms. If the depression is moderate or severe, "that's when we consider medications," says psychiatrist Dr. Sarah M. Edwards, medical director of the children and adolescent psychiatric unit at the University of Maryland Children's Hospital.

Some signs that can signal a youth is severely depressed include having thoughts of suicide or changing eating, showering and basic grooming habits. Other signs are impaired academic performance and a pronounced loss of interest in activities the child previously enjoyed.

If left untreated, depression can lead to

self-injury, addiction and suicide attempts. "Treating with therapy and medication works the fastest to help children with depression," says Dr. Elana Neshkes, a pediatrician and child psychiatrist at Children's National Hospital.

However, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), which are considered the first-line option for youth with depression, may cause or worsen suicidal thinking or behavior in a small number of children and teens. In 2004, the FDA issued a black-box warning on SSRIs based on an extensive analysis of clinical trials.

The meta-analysis showed youth who took antidepressants had a 4% rate of suicidal thinking or behavior, as compared with 2% among those taking a sugar pill (placebo).

"There's a lot of misinformation in the news and the internet about the black-box warning that scares parents," says Dr. Josephine Elia, division chief of psychiatry at Nemours Children's Hospital in Delaware.

None of the children in any of the studies committed suicide, she says. Additionally, an expanded black-box warning in 2007 stated that depression itself was associated with an increased risk of suicide. Some experts have questioned the validity of the initial black-box warning. Newer research suggests that the pros of antidepressants outweigh the cons.

"We often think that the benefit is worth that risk as long as there's close monitoring and everyone knows what to expect," says Dr. Hal Benjamin Kronsberg, a psychiatrist for Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center's School-based Mental Health Program and the Child Mobile Treatment team.

Risk and signs of suicidality

Children should have a thorough psychiatric evaluation before starting an

antidepressant. This evaluation should cover reviewing potential risk factors for self-harm, assessing whether the child may have other mental illnesses and evaluating whether mental illness or suicide exists in the family's medical history.

The highest risk of suicidal thinking and behavior occurs during the first few months of treatment with an antidepressant (and also if the dose is increased or decreased).

Besides self-injury and talk of suicide or dying, less obvious signs of suicidal thoughts include aggressive or hostile behavior toward others, agitation, restlessness and lack of engagement.

Additional considerations

Kronsberg noted that when starting an antidepressant, common side effects include headaches and stomach upset. In the event of lasting side effects, or if symptoms worsen or don't improve after several weeks, parents can switch their child's medication under the guidance of the prescribing doctor.




If medication after medication isn't working, rethinking the diagnosis might be necessary, he says.

According to Edwards, "When youth are starting antidepressants for depression, it doesn't mean they have to take it for the rest of their lives." Antidepressant use can last for as little as six months to a year. However, antidepressants could be

used longer term in cases with multiple depressive episodes.

In any case, says Katie Krupa, a pediatric nurse practitioner at The Pediatric Center of Frederick, Maryland, the child's family needs to be involved. "It's not a magic pill that's going to make everything go away," she says. "If everyone is committed, it usually works very well." ■



JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE

A Woman's Journey®





Take Charge of Your Health


Join us and listen to three Johns Hopkins experts discuss functioning independently with vision loss, the role of artificial intelligence in the early detection of cancer and the microbiome. This information will enrich your knowledge and, for some, may be lifesaving. Presented in-person at the Bethesda North Marriott and virtually from the comfort of your home or office.

Tuesday, May 3, 2022 10–11:30 a.m.






Register today! Visit hopkinsmedicine.org/awomansjourney or call 410-955-8660 to register and learn about the program, speakers, scholarships and sponsorships. \$45

We are grateful to our sponsors for their support.

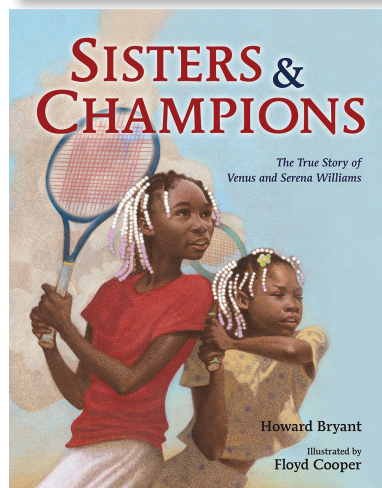
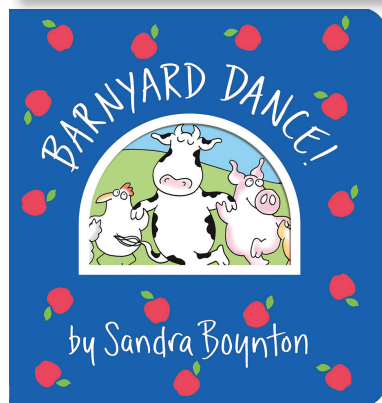
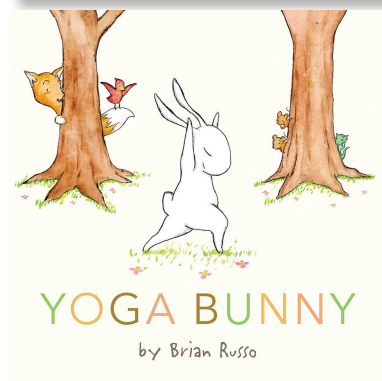
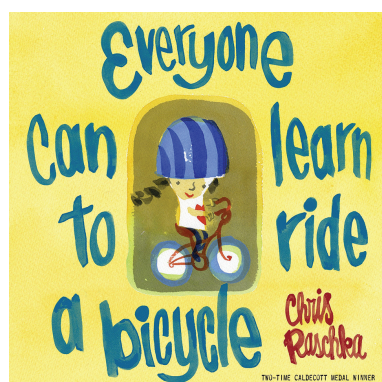







JOHNS HOPKINS
MEDICINE

#hopkinsawj



Exercise the Mind with Books

12 Titles to Get Kids Moving, Exploring and Reading

BY DC PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF

Spring, sun and sports go hand in hand. These books are sure to inspire kids to make the most of their time outdoors while keeping them reading. All titles are available at the DC Public Library.

PICTURE BOOKS

"Everyone Can Learn to Ride a Bicycle"

written and illustrated by
Chris Raschka

A father teaches his daughter all about bicycle riding, from selecting the right bike to trying again after a fall.

"Yoga Bunny"

by *Brian Russo*

Bunny is practicing his poses and wishes his friends would do yoga with him. Yoga Bunny helps readers relax and unwind as they learn beginning yoga poses, from downward dog to the tree pose.

"Barnyard Dance!"

by *Sandra Boynton*

Move along to the rhythm with a bespectacled fiddle-playing cow, a twirling pig and a strutting duck as they dance around the barnyard.

EASY READERS

"Sisters & Champions: The True Story of Venus and Serena Williams"

by *Howard Bryant*, illustrated by
Floyd Cooper

This picture book biography of the famous tennis playing siblings Venus and Serena Williams is accompanied by beautiful

illustrations from the renowned children's book illustrator Floyd Cooper.

"Swim, Mo, Swim!"

by *David A. Adler*, illustrated by
Sam Ricks

On Field Day, Mo swims a lot faster than he knew he could, not because his team might win but because a fish keeps nibbling his toe.

"Olivia Plays Soccer"

adapted by *Tina Gallo*, illustrated by
Jared Osterhold

When Olivia joins the soccer team, she wants to wear a red jersey, but the only team member that wears red is the goalie—and the goalie on her team is Francine. What will Olivia do?

MIDDLE-GRADE READERS

"We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball"

words and paintings by
Kadir Nelson, forward by
Hank Aaron

Pick up this award-winning story of the history of Negro League baseball from its beginnings in the 1920s to the beginning of integrated leagues. Nelson's portrait-style illustrations make this sports history special for readers who want to learn more about this era.

"The Crossover"

by Kwame Alexander

Fourteen-year-old twin basketball stars Josh and Jordan wrestle with highs and lows on and off the court as their father ignores his declining health. This book is a Newbery Medal winner.

"Jayla Jumps In"

by Joy Jones

After learning that her mother was a Double Dutch champion, 11-year-old Jayla forms a team, hoping to stand out in her big, quirky family, and finds her life changed in ways she never imagined. DCPL Librarian Associate Joy Jones is the author of this tale.

YOUNG ADULTS

"Starfish"

by Lisa Fipps

Ella, a teen who struggles with her weight, discovers through swimming and the support of her family and friends that her body image is only a part of what defines her. This title was awarded a Michael L. Printz honor book by the Young Adult Library Services committee of the American Library Association.

"Furia"

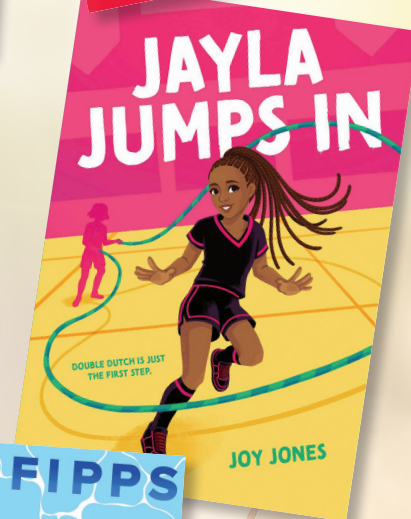
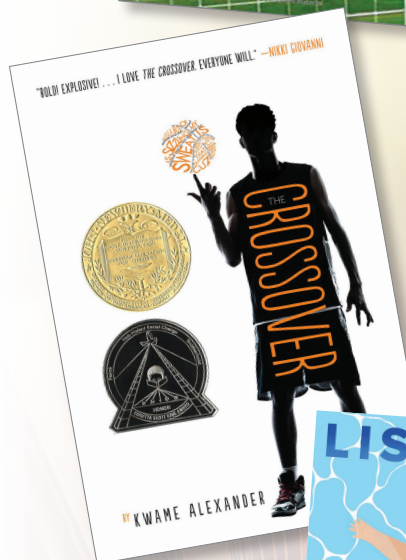
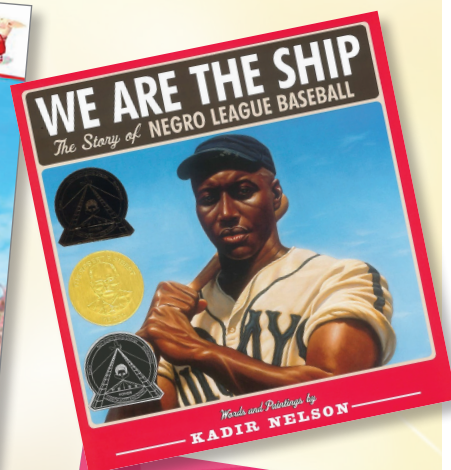
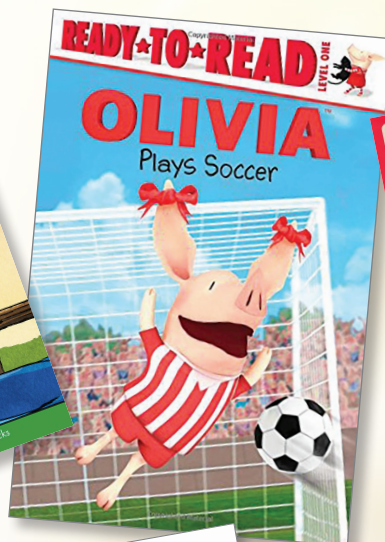
by Yamile Saied Méndez

Seventeen-year-old Camila Hassan, a rising soccer star in Rosario, Argentina, dreams of playing professionally, in defiance of her father's wishes and at the risk of her budding romance with Diego.

"Check, Please!" Book 1, #Hockey

by Ngozi Ukazu

The first book of a two-volume coming-of-age humorous graphic novel talks about hockey and trying to find yourself during your college years. ■



Being a Part of the Team

Youth sports teaches life lessons for future success

BY NAJIA HASAN



According to the Open Access Journal of Sports Medicine, an estimated 45 million children participate in sports in the United States annually. It's no secret that sports have benefits for young participants, from physical and psychological to social development. As an athlete who got started as a toddler and played through college, I have definitely experienced the benefits. I was focused, fit, confident and always ready to give it 100%—no matter the task at hand. It wasn't until I graduated college and made a break for the professional world that I recognized the skills I had developed through sports that gave me an edge over my peers.

After graduating college as an NCAA Division I athlete, I wasn't quite sure which path was right for me. Of course, I had interests and favorite school subjects, but I felt like I needed a strategy to figure out what my next steps in life should be. I needed to identify my strengths, weaknesses, interests and goals before thinking about searching for available job opportunities. After spending some time mapping out these thoughts, I felt like the picture was becoming much clearer for me. I was ready to officially begin my job search.

A process that I thought would take a few weeks turned into a few months. I hadn't realized the timeline that went along with the job search—from resume creation and searching job sites for interesting and available positions to completing pages of applications. I later found these activities were the easy part. The wait to hear back from a job application felt like an eternity. Through this process, I learned that I would need to be patient to persevere and find the perfect fit. I completed application after application with nothing but silence. I knew at this point that it was more important than ever that I keep my head up and continue to put my best foot forward. Using feedback, I continued to adjust my resume and approach to applications and interviews, and the efforts finally paid off. I got the interview!

Once I landed the interview, I knew I had to treat it like game day. I needed to prepare—do my research, impress the hiring manager and

convince the company that they needed me on their team. Throughout the interview, I did my best to focus on my leadership and teamwork skills, which had become second nature for me. The individuals who interviewed me were impressed to hear about my college sports background and ability to balance training and my schoolwork while maintaining a high GPA. I had a great feeling following the interview—a feeling like I was back on the field and had just scored the winning goal.

**YOUTH SPORTS COME WITH
A PLETHORA OF BENEFITS
FOR YOUNG COMPETITORS
THAT ARE EASILY
RECOGNIZED BY SOCIETY**

After another few weeks, I got the call! I had landed my first full-time role and was ready to be a part of a team again. I took the initiative to learn as much about the organization and my new role as possible. It wasn't long before my leadership skills allowed me to feel confident in taking on projects with my new colleagues. I wanted my team to know that I could be reliable and disciplined when we had short timelines to complete projects. I could always be held accountable for my work.

Youth sports come with a plethora of benefits for young competitors that are easily recognized by society, but it is the larger, more impactful life lessons taught through sports that truly help shape children and prepare them for their future. I am thankful for my sports journey and continue to incorporate the lessons and skills I have learned into my everyday life. ■

Najia Hasan is the chief programs and development officer for Koa Sports, a nonprofit organization dedicated to shaping kids' lives through sports. Learn more at koasports.org.

My Turn gives readers a voice. To submit a piece for consideration, email us at mvykocil@midatlanticmedia.com. My Turn opinion pieces do not reflect the views of Washington FAMILY.

PHOTO PROVIDED

VOTE FOR THE WINNERS



Vote for your favorite people, places and things in the DMV!

The winners are chosen by popular vote, so let your friends know it's time to cast their ballot. As a business, share with your audience to help you win the title of "Best" in your category!






Voting ends May 15th

Winners will be contacted in June, and the results will be in the July issue of Washington FAMILY magazine.

Go to washingtonfamily.com/bestforfamilies and VOTE TODAY!

**Washington
FAMILY**

Print | Digital |   

Contact Julia Olaguer
for more information
jolaguer@midatlanticmedia.com

Hope is Here



Comprehensive Autism Care for Life

From early diagnosis to lifelong services, Sheppard Pratt's **Center for Autism** helps you and your family access comprehensive care for life.

Our caring team of clinicians provides diagnostic services, case management, and more. Whether your loved one is 2 or 92, Sheppard Pratt is here to help.

- No months-long wait for services; schedule a diagnostic assessment fast
- Through Sheppard Pratt, you can access the range of supportive services your child needs, including outpatient treatment and special education schools
- Our team of clinicians includes psychiatrists, psychologists, behavioral specialists, and more



Hospitals | Communities | Schools | Residential | Telehealth

