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Back to School is Calling You

Don't answer! It's just too early. You've still got one foot relaxing in the warm beach sand as you hear the surf pounding and you breathe in the ocean air. But the other foot knows it needs to shake off that sand and get the kids ready for back-to-school mode ...

August is such a conflicting month.

It's sad as the dog days of summer start to slip away this month, but there's good news: In just one calendar-flip away, there will be less exclamations of "I'm bored!" coming from your vacationed-out kids and more of a steady, scheduled routine. To get you ready for this transition, we packed our August issue with helpful back-to-school resources.

For back-to-school shopping, we asked local moms to share some tips and tricks on cutting down shopping time and expenses on pg. 36. Plus, if you want your kids dressed to impress this school year without breaking the bank, we included a list of some of the best local children's consignment shops.

For parents of children, especially of preschoolers who suffer food allergies, the start of school can be cause for concern. It's easy to control potential allergy issues at home, but less so once your little one is in the classroom. Food allergy expert, Rachel Ornstein Packer discusses what questions to ask your child's school and how to create a classroom food allergy management plan on pg. 10.

Finding the right school or after-school activities can be a chore. To make it easier, check out our annual Back-to-School Guide on pg. 28. You will find a variety of resources on schools, tutoring services, after-school programs and more! But before you sign your kids up for every college-application-worthy activity, be sure to read "The Overscheduled Child: How Many After-School Activities are Too Many?" on pg. 22. It can give you some insight and signs on whether or not your child is overbooked.

And for even more back-to-school tips and resources, go to washingtonfamily.com. But don't feel rushed! It's still summer. Go on a few more summer hiking trips, play tourist in D.C. or grab one of the books on pg. 18 to keep your summer vacation vibe going a little longer. And then, with both feet out of the sand, follow along with Washington FAMILY as we get you and your family prepared for the school year ahead!



Britni

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The ABC's of Food Allergies & Preschool

BY RACHEL ORNSTEIN PACKER

How to create
a food allergy
management and
prevention plan
for your child

Preschool is simultaneously exciting and nerve wracking. It's a brand new social and learning experience that serves as your child's educational foundation. For many parents, the start of preschool can be an emotional time as you begin to slowly let go of your child and encourage them to grow, but for a food allergy parent, letting go has an added layer of complexity.

Food allergies can be very daunting, especially when you have no daily control over your child's environment. Preschool structure in terms of classroom management, set-up and protocol often require more specific parameters. Preparation and planning are paramount for food allergy parents. And though the parenting burden is great, it is well worth it — especially when that first art project comes home and is proudly displayed on the refrigerator. Follow these three steps to help make the preschool and food allergy process easier for you and your little one.



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STEP 1: ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Whether your child is already enrolled in a preschool, or you are still in the process of finding one, it's important to make sure it is the right fit for your child's needs. Here are some targeted questions to ask the school in order to get the dialogue rolling.

- What have you done in the past for kids with food allergies?
- Do you have any specific guidelines?
- How is a child identified as a food allergy child?
- Is there a food sharing policy?

- Are there any food activities in class?
- Are there out-of-school field trips? How is food handled?
- Who will be responsible for my child every day?
- Who has access to Epi Pens?
- What type of training does the staff have? Who does the training? Content?
- What types of snacks are provided?
- Are the classrooms nut-free?
- Who else uses the classrooms? (Many preschools operate out of churches or synagogues, and the classrooms are used for other purposes. How are they maintained/cleaned before the next morning?)
- Are you open to a food allergy plan?
- What is the staff return rate? (Look for senior staff who will be educated on a regular basis and will develop a relationship with you and your child.)

STEP 2: CREATE YOUR OWN MANAGEMENT PLAN

Creating a food allergy management and prevention plan is integral to your child's safety and your peace of mind. There are varying levels of knowledge amongst preschools in terms of food allergies, so developing your own management plan is imperative. Schedule a meeting with the preschool director prior to the school year to review the plan along with any documentation from your health provider regarding diagnosis, your child's allergens and reaction history. This provides an opportunity for an open dialogue in which to problem solve. Your goal is to aim for an honest and healthy relationship with the preschool staff. If they aren't receptive to a plan and/or dialogue, or it appears to be a contentious experience, you may want to consider a different school.






Below are suggestions of what to include in a food management plan. Every child has different needs, and while there isn't a one-size-fits-all allergy plan, many of the points below are universal. But every plan should include both a section on classroom management for food allergies and a detailed emergency plan.

Classroom Management for Food Allergies

- Strategies to prevent exposure to allergens (hand washing, wipes, covering tables with paper for lunchtime, stowing lunchboxes in personal cubbies or backpacks as opposed to a big basket for all lunches where your child's lunchbox could be contaminated).

- Hidden Culprits -

Be aware of potential food allergies in these common classroom items and preschool activities.

ITEM/ACTIVITY	EGG 	WHEAT 	DAIRY 	SOY 	PEANUT/TREE NUT 
Tempera Paint	*				
Macaroni Art	*	*			
Egg Carton/ Craft Projects	*				
Finger Paint		*	*		
Crayons				*	
Soaps		*	*	*	*
Paper Mache		*			
Craft Paste					
Bird Feeders					*
Bird Seed					*
Potting Soil				*	*

- Reducing exposure to allergens (non-food prizes, appropriate snacks, hand washing, no food projects, washing down tables and chairs).
- Make sure wipes are available.
- If possible, make it a nut-free zone.
- How to include your child in all aspects of the program — paying close attention to the psychological factors that accompany food allergies.

How to Handle Food Allergy Emergencies

- Set up a communication chain.
- Access to Epi. Discuss where will it be stored.
- Use Epi, then call 911 (ask your doctor for more specific emergency procedure guidelines and give this to the school).
- Identify role of staff in a food allergy emergency.

🧠 STEP 3: ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN TO ADVOCATE

Even though preschoolers are young, teaching them to advocate for themselves is smart. Here are a few things to discuss.

- Let them know there's a plan in place and point out

who's in charge of their care. This reduces their anxiety and yours.

- Teach them what an Epi Pen is and how to use it.
- Stress a no food sharing policy.
- Kids may not be able to articulate certain things, but they do understand things intuitively. So tell your child that if something doesn't look and/or feel right, like a snack that's being provided, it's OK to say no and let the teacher know.
- If they are having reaction symptoms, instruct them to immediately alert a caregiver. Here are some common descriptions by preschool children.
 - Tongue feels itchy/heavy/tingling/burning/hot.
 - Something in the back of the throat/throat feels thick.
 - Mouth and/or tummy feel funny/weird.

For parents, the most difficult thing to master in the food allergy management and prevention process is to stay calm. Nothing is ever perfect or foolproof and more often than not, you are the educator for the teacher and/or director. Always remember to look at the situation critically and calmly.

Rachel Ornstein Packer is an Annapolis-based writer focusing on food allergies, nutrition and diet.

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Should Schools Start Later?

BY BETH ROESSNER

Ask a teenager whether or not they want to sleep a little bit longer, and they'll happily turn around without a sound and crawl back into their cave of 500-threadcount sheets.

As emerging research suggests that today's teenagers need more sleep, advocacy groups and local school districts are leading the charge to give teens a bit more shut eye.

When children reach puberty, there is a shift in their circadian rhythm, the so-called biological clock. Their bodies naturally want to go to bed later and sleep later. Because many schools start before 8 a.m., students often go to class sleep-deprived, not fully awake and not ready to learn.

"International research suggests that as puberty progresses, there develops a greater delay in the spike of the 'sleep hormone' melatonin and the onset of sleep," explained Dr. Laura Finkelstein, assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. "Adolescents in early stages of puberty have a shorter lag, and older adolescents have an increasingly longer lag."

Meaning, it takes longer for the release of melatonin to happen in teens.

In addition to early-morning alarms and biological factors, other reasons why many teenagers aren't getting enough sleep include lack of structured bedtime, electronic use and social factors like after-school activities or jobs, said Finkelstein.

Because many students are not getting enough sleep, they're in a state of "social jet lag," said Maribel Ibrahim, co-founder and operations director for Start School Later, based in Annapolis, MD. The organization advocates for an 8 a.m. or later start time for schools.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and American Academy of Sleep Medicine both recommend that high school and middle school should not start before 8:30 a.m.

"A student is in a chronically sleep-deprived state and because they're fighting against their biology, they're going to school at a time where their brains are not prepared to learn," said Ibrahim.

Their brains are still in a mode of deep sleep, so memory retention, judgment and cognitive abilities have all been impaired, Ibrahim explained.

But the issue of later start times goes beyond simply a few more hours of sleep. It's also a socioeconomic issue, too.

Research suggests that a change to a later start time benefits low-income and disadvantaged students the most.

Students who may have access to a car, or have parents who are able to drive them to school are able to grab a few more

minutes of sleep: They do not need to wake up early to wait for a bus.

"Kids who live in underprivileged areas that don't have access to a parent or extra vehicles don't have that choice. They have to take the buses," said Ibrahim.

If a disadvantaged student misses the bus, they often have no other way of getting to school, which can lead to truancy.

These same students often work and work late into the night to help support their families, said Ibrahim. With a later start time, they'll be able to catch up both in sleep and academics, "putting them on equal footing."

There is also a community benefit. As start times get pushed later, so do school end times. Many students end their school day before 3 p.m., well before parents are home. This creates a few-hours gap in which many students do not have access to quality after-school programming and care.

While some students may be working, participating in after-school activities and sports, or going to a local teen center or club, many students are unsupervised. This could lead to an increase in risky behaviors.

By shortening the gap in which school is released and parents get home, the community sees a benefit in fewer teens partaking in these behaviors.

"Here's where the equity issue plays into it again," said Ibrahim. "For the privileged students who have access to sports, after school activities or a ride home, there is not as much of an impact for them. Underprivileged students may not have access to those activities."

This is seen especially during the summer months, and is reflected by the summer achievement gap.

As school shifts to a later start time, the end time gets pushed back as well. This creates a shorter gap from when students

leave school and when parents arrive home. There is also community benefit, said Ibrahim, because students will be less likely to be unsupervised or take part in risky behaviors.

But with later start times, comes the feasibility: How possible is it? Logistics and cost becomes a growing concern for parents and taxpayers.

Parents worry over how to get their children, who may be in different school buildings, to and from school. Taxpayers worry how this will affect transportation costs.

Look to our very own Montgomery County. After years of debate, the Montgomery County Public School system instituted delayed start times in the 2015-2016 school year, continuing it into the 2017-2018 school year. Through planning, they were able to stay budget neutral with the shift. Both the middle and high schools shifted their start and end times by 20 minutes.

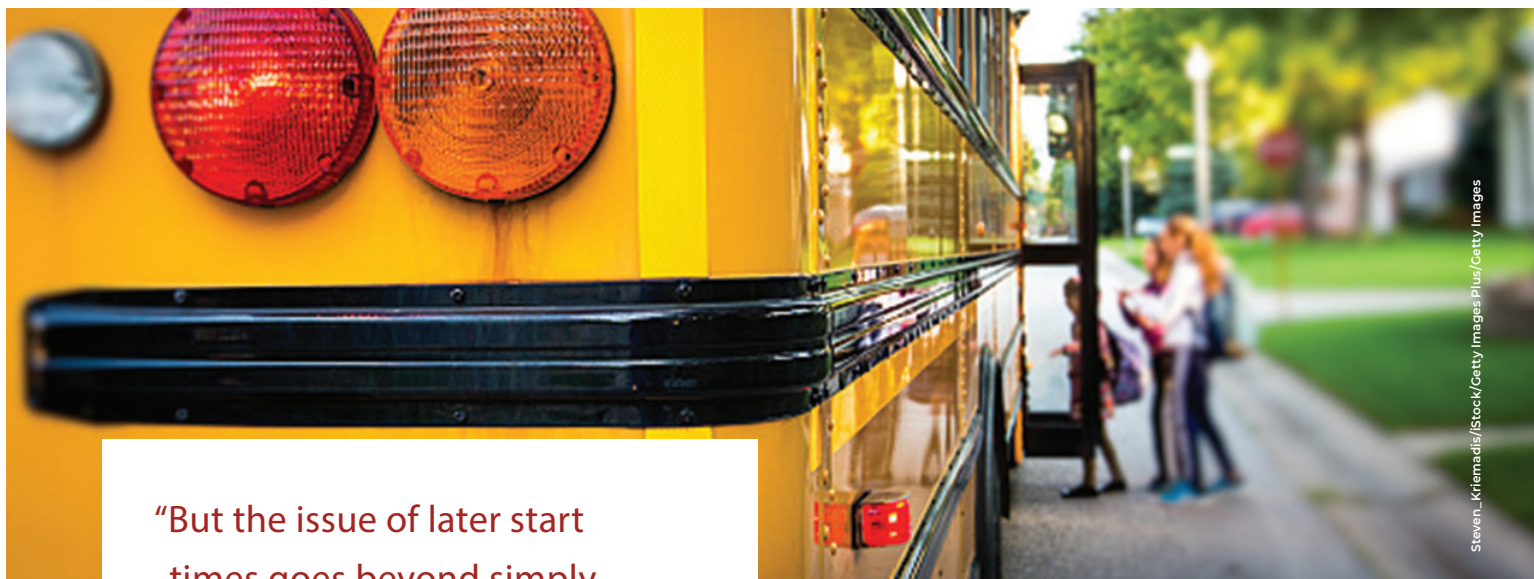
Right now, explained MCPS public information and web services director, Derek Turner, the results are merely anecdotal.

"We've had lots of feedback from high school students and their families that this has been a huge benefit for them, but I don't know we've matched that up to performance data. We're not at that point yet," said Turner, who is the director of public information for MCPS.

An unintended consequence was a longer school day for elementary school students. Their start and end times were

"Because many schools start before 8 a.m., students often go to class sleep-deprived, not fully awake and not ready to learn."





Steven_Kriemadis/Stock/Getty Images Plus/Getty Images

“But the issue of later start times goes beyond simply a few more hours of sleep. It’s also a socioeconomic issue, too.”

also shifted, giving them a slightly longer school day. The elementary schools’ times were adjusted because of bussing logistics.

“It’s creating a little bit of stress on those schools and on those families,” Turner said. “In some cases with long bus rides, they’re not getting home until 5 p.m. or after.”

It was the Montgomery County parents who initially advocated to adjust school start times a couple years ago. Working as a community with the school board and the then superintendent, the 20-minute shift was created.

“The hope was that it would benefit those parents and the high school community who felt that it would improve student outcomes,” said Turner.

While some parents believe the time change is beneficial, other parents believe it negatively impacts their daily commutes and schedules.

“There are hundreds of factors,” said Tuner. “And I don’t think we’re ready to say that anything is directly related to bell times. I think we’re going to continue to look at this issue, but it will be hard to pinpoint specific things when some many things change.” New principles and staff, a new superintendent and other factors can all impact performance data.

But for now, there is no movement to switch the school times in either direction, said Turner.

“There is no simple solution. There is no one answer that solves everyone’s concerns without setting up a big financial

burden on the school system and directly to the tax payers,” Turner said.

Arlington Public Schools began pursuing later start times in 1999, and later times were enacted in 2001. While all schools received a shift in start times, the high schoolers had an extra 45 minutes of sleep in the mornings. Similarly to MCPS, anecdotally, students, families and community members were all happy with the change. Attendance also rose.

Alexandria City Public Schools first made the shift two years ago and now their high school students currently start at 8:35 a.m.

But couldn’t an afternoon nap just settle this issue once and for all?

Not so, said Dr. Laura Finkelstein.

“Napping may have the effect of delaying onset of nighttime sleep and thus canceling the benefits of the nap. An afternoon nap will take time away from other activities, like homework, and encourage staying up late to complete those tasks.”

So what can parents do to ensure their teen is getting enough sleep? Finkelstein recommends setting a structured bedtime, limit evening use of electronics and discourage the use of caffeine.

Finkelstein also recommends that parents advocate for later start times for middle schools and high schools.

“Sleep is undervalued,” said Ibrahim. “You’ll be hard pressed to find many adults who sleep for eight hours a day. ... A person who gets eight hours of sleep is typically viewed as a weakling. It’s a negative connotation to be healthy when it comes to sleep.”

Beth Roessner is a D.C.-based writer and health coach.

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ARMCHAIR TRAVELER:

BOOKS THAT LET YOU TRAVEL THE WORLD (WITHOUT LEAVING YOUR HOME)

BY MICHELLE BLANCHARD ARDILLO

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Sometimes the ability to travel abroad is just not possible. If health issues, budgetary concerns, work obligations or family responsibilities are preventing you from traveling to far away places, there's always a second option: Pick up a good book!

Books allow you to experience the culture, customs and traditions of foreign lands right at home. Here are some novels to enjoy during those quiet moments away from kids that will sweep you away to another place, and in some cases, another time. No need for a passport or foreign currency, just grab your e-reader, or take a trip to your nearest public library or bookstore.

1. "A GENTLEMAN IN MOSCOW"

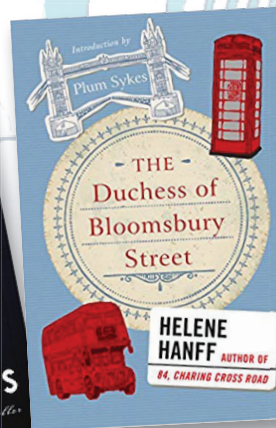
by Amor Towles

The current political climate aside, pre-revolutionary Russia, with its splendid architecture and royalty, was a place of grandeur. Towles takes the reader to the Metropol Hotel in 1922 Moscow, post-revolution, where the protagonist has been sentenced to house arrest. This novel of historical fiction, heavily reliant on actual public figures and historical events, is as rich and colorful as a Fabergé egg.

2. "THE DUCHESS OF BLOOMSBURY STREET"

by Helene Hanff

This charming, slim non-fiction book is a travel journal of author Hanff's first trip to England. It was written after the publication and great success of its prequel, "84, Charing Cross Road," which was a series of letters between Hanff and British bookseller Frank Doel over the course of twenty years about post-war London, literature and more. A feminist well before her time, Hanff's sharp prose and quick wit is a window into a London that is long gone.



3. "A WEEK IN WINTER"

by Maeve Binchy

Binchy was a prolific writer, and at the time of her death in 2012, was still producing excellent work such as this character-driven novel where the very setting is almost a character itself. Set on Ireland's west coast in the fictional town of Stoneybridge, the novel explores the tenacity and sheer determination of one woman's drive for independence and acceptance. Reading this book made me yearn for a week in an Irish country inn, taking long walks on the rocks overlooking the sea with the wind in my hair.

4. "BEL CANTO"

by Ann Patchett

Known for her unusual plots and quirky characters, Patchett does not disappoint in this psychological drama set in an unnamed South American country. Drawn loosely from the headlines of political unrest and a hostage situation that actually took place in Lima, Peru in 1996-97, this novel makes housemates of terrorists, foreign diplomats, international businessmen and a world-renown opera singer. Add to that a classic case of Stockholm syndrome, and you have a story that doesn't miss a beat.

5. "CIRCLING THE SUN"

by Paula McLain

A great storyteller, McLain wowed readers with her historical fiction based on Hemingway's early years living in Paris, told from the perspective of his first wife, Hadley. This novel takes the reader to the '20s, to Kenya and Great Britain's early colonization of parts of Africa. Aside from bringing to life Beryl Markham, one of the first bush pilots in Africa's history and the first female to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean from east to west, McLain's descriptive and flowing prose paints a picture of the African plains, the tribal customs and the animals.

6. "SOY SAUCE FOR BEGINNERS"

by Kirstin Chen

Before stumbling upon Chen's debut novel, I knew very little about soy sauce and even less about Singapore. The protagonist leaves her unfaithful husband, her San Francisco home of 15 years and her music studies to return home to Singapore, where she becomes embroiled in two familiar battles: her mother's drinking and the family artisanal soy sauce business. After immersing yourself in the Asian culture of this novel, you will think twice next time you ask for soy sauce to add to your Chinese takeout.

7. "THE MARTIAN"

by Andy Weir

No passport required for travel to this setting, although a full physical and a science background may be necessary for approval by NASA. This science fiction blockbuster tells the story of a NASA astronaut left behind on the surface of Mars. His ingenuity and problem-solving skills, including growing potatoes in outer space to stay alive, keep the plot moving at the speed of light.

If hopping on an international flight to Russia, the UK, South America, Africa or Singapore is out of the question for you, be an armchair traveler instead. Head on down to your local library and check out one of these books. Download one on your e-reader. Mason Cooley said it best, "Reading gives us someplace to go when we have to stay where we are."

Michelle Blanchard Ardillo is a local freelance writer and middle school language arts teacher whose literary passport is chock-full of stamps from foreign destinations. Follow her @michardillo on Twitter or Goodreads, or on her website at www.michelleardillo.com.



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THE OVERSCHEDULED CHILD

HOW MANY AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ARE TOO MANY?

BY **SANDI SCHWARTZ**

When was the last time your children came home from school and had a couple hours to play freely in the backyard or go out for a bike ride before starting on homework? If your kids' schedules consist of multiple after-school activities like dance classes, art school, swim lessons, religious school, soccer practices, volunteering and tutoring sessions, then after school down time might seem like a foreign concept. If that's the case, you might want to ask yourself: Are my children overscheduled?

THE OVERSCHEDULED CHILDHOOD CULTURE

In today's competitive world, it's not uncommon for children to feel overwhelmed and pressured because of their overscheduled lives. Alvin Rosenfeld, M.D., a child psychiatrist and author of "The Over-Scheduled Child: Avoiding the Hyper-Parenting Trap," explains, "Enrolling children in too many activities is a huge problem. Parents feel like they aren't doing a good job if they don't sign their children up for a variety of activities exposing them to sports, culture,

religion and everything else under the sun starting at a young age." But then, "the children are under so much pressure to compete with their peers and achieve success," says Rosenfeld.

WHAT DO WE SACRIFICE WHEN WE OVERSCHEDULE OUR CHILDREN?

Yes, we want our kids to socialize and learn new skills. However, when we overbook them, they suffer. Here are just three aspects of our children's lives that get pushed aside when we overschedule their days.



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1. MENTAL HEALTH

Stress and anxiety play a big role in our children's lives today. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA), it's estimated that one in eight children suffer from an anxiety disorder. More worrisome, the National Institute of Mental Health reports that 25 percent of teens ages 13-18 will experience some form of anxiety.

Much of this stress is because children are not getting enough down time. They're being carted around from one activity to another, unable to calm their mind and simply play. Peter Gray, author of the book "Free to Learn," ties this lack of free play to the increase in children suffering from anxiety, depression and other mental health disorders.

2. CREATIVITY

Being creative involves having the time to explore and grow. When we're creative, we become so absorbed in our work that we reach a meditative state of flow. How will our children have the chance to be creative if they are constantly rushing between structured activities?

Diane Ehrensaft, a developmental and clinical psychologist, believes that "children these days are so overscheduled that they have almost no 'nothing time.' They have no time to call on their own resources and be creative. Creativity is making something out of nothing, and it takes time for that to happen. In our efforts to produce Renaissance children who are competitive in all areas, we squelch creativity."

3. SELF-AWARENESS

Children need time in their day to simply be themselves. This allows them to get in touch with their

emotions and to ultimately figure out who they are and what they want to become. They need calm, quiet moments for mindfulness and introspection. They also need time to explore topics in depth without time constraints, curriculum and scores.

When children are involved in too many different activities, they sacrifice breadth for depth and miss out on opportunities for authentic self-discovery.

HOW TO NAVIGATE OUR CHILDREN'S SCHEDULES

In the end, it's all about balance. As parents, we need to learn what our children can handle and what they want — not what we think is best for their college applications. This does not mean you need to take your children out of all their activities. Talk to your child. Choose wisely. Realistically evaluate what extracurricular activities are necessary and which ones are just taking up unnecessary time. For example, maybe a certain activity requires a bigger commitment than the rest of your child's activities, such as basketball practice three days per week. If this is a priority, then consider eliminating another "filler" activity. Quality over quantity is key here. Another example is if your child is taking dance or theater classes at both a studio and school, then maybe one of those could be eliminated to lessen an already packed schedule. It would also alleviate unnecessary travel time.

The bottom line: Check in with your children, keep tabs on what makes them happy, and be sure they're getting plenty of unscheduled down time.

Sandi Schwartz is a freelance writer



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WARNING SIGNS

WORRIED ABOUT YOUR CHILD BEING OVERBOOKED AND BURNT OUT? THESE ARE THE SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

- Exhaustion, and regular complaints about being tired
- High stress levels
- Sudden decline in school performance
- Frequent headaches and other body pains
- Anxiety, depression, irritability
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Change in eating and sleeping patterns
- Sudden lateness and missing scheduled activities

FLYING TO INFINITY AND BEYOND

MEET THE LOCAL 11-YEAR-OLD BOY WHO BECAME AN INSTANT INDOOR SKYDIVING STAR

BY MICHELLE BLANCHARD ARDILLO

Ask any 11-year-old boy what he wants to be when he grows up and his first answer will often be, “I don’t know,” followed by professional athlete, video game tester or police officer. Ask 11-year-old Parker Davis from Silver Spring what he wants to be when he grows up and the answer is crystal clear: indoor skydiving trainer.

A relatively new sport, indoor skydiving, also called body flight, is “flying” above a “smooth cushion of air” inside an enclosed, vertical wind tunnel. It’s becoming increasingly popular, as evidenced by the brand-new iFLY facility, which opened recently in Gaithersburg.

Parker, a rising sixth-grader, only started indoor skydiving in August 2017, but has quickly become a local sensation within the iFLY community. “It’s amazing that (Parker) has already done as well as he has in such a short time. They are creating their own sport, inventing new moves,” says iFLY Montgomery’s Elizabeth Sturrock, who works as an instructor and a “wind driver.” Parker is currently working on an original move he calls the tornado, which is going around the tunnel in a circular motion while spinning vertically. One of his best moves is the infinity breaker, which is a barrel roll from stomach to back.

Making his National Indoor Skydiving competition debut at the 2018 U.S. Indoor Skydiving Artistic & VFS National Championships held in Virginia Beach in May 2018, Parker finished second with teammate Ben Roane in the Dynamic 2-Way Advanced, and first in the Freestyle Junior Intermediate. Commentators noted his “textbook flip twist” and called Parker’s infinity breakers “ridiculous,” saying that “they rival pretty much anybody, even adults.” His quick progress in the sport was called “extremely impressive.”

Before being introduced to indoor skydiving by his grandfather last year, Parker’s favorite sport was motocross racing, as shown by his Instagram account, which has over 4,600 followers. Outside of indoor skydiving and motocross, Parker doesn’t participate in any other sports or watch sports on TV because he finds it boring. With his quiet and reserved demeanor, it’s easy to see that this is a young man who would rather “do” than “watch” or “talk.”

When not training at iFLY, Parker likes to train on a trampoline or do slacklining, which is doing tricks on flat, stretchy webbing suspended between two anchors such as trees. For now, his training is done at iFLY facilities in Gaithersburg or Loudoun, usually once a week with an additional training session on the weekends.

On a recent weekend, Parker was at iFLY Montgomery training with Josh Ruiz-Velasco of Seattle in preparation for his next two competitions: the Rosemont Rumble in Chicago in November and the H-Town Throwdown in Houston in December. Ruiz-Velasco is a two-time world champion in indoor skydiving and for the last six years has traveled the world coaching and training. Using hand signals inside the tunnel because speaking is impossible amidst the fast-moving wind, Ruiz-Velasco worked with Parker to fine-tune his skills and moves, such as outface carving.

“It’s fine,” says Parker, a young man of few words, when asked if he minded being called a “tunnel rat,” the nickname for indoor skydivers. His father, Steven Davis, fills in the blanks on most of the conversation, including Parker’s favorite food, Chinese, specifically Orange Chicken from Panda Express. It was somewhat easier to coax out his favorite movies — recent blockbuster Ready Player One and much older Major Payne. When asked about the 2016 gold medal winner in the junior freestyle category, Singaporean Kyra Poh, whose shoe flew off during her routine, Parker shared that girls are more flexible than boys, which is a good thing in this sport. He also commented that his shoes have elasticized no-tie “Lock Laces” to prevent them from flying off.

A recent post on Parker’s Instagram account shows a fortune from Panda Express, “Your talents will earn you the highest status and prestige.” Given his short time training in the sport of indoor skydiving, Parker’s talents and fearlessness in the tunnel will indeed help him soar above his competitors.

Michelle Blanchard Ardillo is a freelance writer and middle school language arts teacher who prefers to keep both feet on the ground. Follow her @michardillo on Twitter or Goodreads, or on her website at michelleardillo.com.



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UP, UP AND AWAY!

WORLD-WIDE SPORT: There are approximately 250 indoor skydiving locations across the world, with about 20 being closed to the public. Private locations are most often used for military purposes.

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AGE REQUIREMENTS: iFLY is open to anyone ages 3 to 103!

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HEALTH RESTRICTIONS: Due to the pressure of the wind on the upper body, those who have had a shoulder dislocation are prohibited from flying. Pregnant women are also prohibited from flying.

Find out more about iFLY and their programs at iflyworld.com.

Photo provided by Steve Davis

iFLY
INDOOR SKYDIVING



Photo provided by Michelle Ardillo

Make Playtime, STEM Time!

BY KIMBERLY BLAKER

16 STEM toys so fun, kids won't realize how much they're learning

Today, it's more crucial than ever for boys and girls alike to develop a keen interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). That's because the pace of scientific and technological advancement over the coming decades is expected to continue climbing at an exponential rate. And that means bringing an increased demand for STEM related careers along with it.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, STEM jobs have already increased by 14 percent since 2008, while non-STEM jobs have grown only 1.7 percent. So it's smart for parents to prepare their kids for this changing job market — even at an early age.

But on a broader scope, STEM education offers great value by helping kids develop critical thinking and problem solving skills — competencies that go a long way in any career and in life.

So how do you help your child develop an appreciation for these subjects and boost their knowledge and understanding in these areas? Play is often the best way for children to learn where they can apply concepts and skills. Fortunately, there are numerous games, toys and kits on the market that make learning STEM lots of fun.

TOYS THAT TEACH STEM



1» CURIOUS SPACE for ages 3+. This 4-in-1 family card game teaches kids about the solar system, Milky Way galaxy and more. Kids will learn simple strategy and creative problem solving skills, while developing vocabulary and enhancing their memory.



2» MAGFORMERS for ages 3+. These magnetic geometric construction kits come in a variety of choices. Kids can build 3-D structures such as houses, pyramids and balls out of colorful magnetic triangles, diamonds, trapezoids and squares.



3» MUDDWATT STEM KIT: CLEAN ENERGY FROM MUD! for ages 8+. Kids will love conducting experiments with soil by adding ingredients from the fridge to build a living fuel cell. A free app will then allow kids to measure the power and track microbe growth.

4» SNAP CIRCUITS for ages 7+. More than 100 projects will keep kids busy and learning with these electronics discovery kits. Snap Circuit kits have won numerous awards and come in several variations. Contents of various kits include phototransistors, LEDs, resistors, ICs, DC motors, flying propellers, electromagnets, lamps, switches and much more. Projects kids can make include an AM radio, burglar alarm, doorbell, flying saucer and voice recorder, to name a few.



5» SEQUENCE FOR KIDS for ages 4 to 7. In this strategy-building card and board game, the goal is to be the first to place four chips in a row. The challenge is to think strategically and finish before their opponent uses a unicorn card to remove a chip.



9» IQ FIT for ages 6+. This spatial reasoning and problem solving game boasts 120 challenges in which kids must fill the board with the missing 3-D pieces. It's a compact travel size game and a great value.



13» ETI TOYS LIL' ENGINEERS ENGINEERING BLOCKS for ages 3 to 6. This box of colorful various size and shape blocks, screws, nuts, plates, wheels and connectors will keep kids engrossed for hours. Kids can build 12 different toy designs while developing their motor skills, hand-eye coordination, logical thinking and problem solving skills.



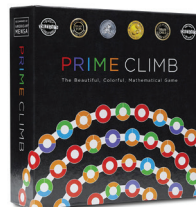
6» GRAVITY MAZE for ages 8+. Kids will use spatial reasoning skills to arrange towers that create a path for a marble to go from its start position to its target tower. It includes 60 challenge cards ranging from beginner to expert.



10» DOUGHLAB STEM KIT: BAKE AND LEARN for ages 6+. This yummy bread making experimentation kit includes five experiments in which kids discover the perfect recipe and learn about the power of yeast.



14» PRIME CLIMB for ages 10+. Learning to add, subtract, divide and multiply is a breeze with this award winning mathematics board game.



15» GOOBI CONSTRUCTION SET for ages 3+. Kids will learn about magnetism while constructing 3-D structures out of colorful plastic bars, iron balls and tripods. Children will develop a sense of proportion while improving eye-hand coordination, problem solving skills and learning the basics of physics, geometry and architecture.



7» OSMO GENIUS KIT for ages 5 to 12. This kit boasts five games that turn an iPad into a hands-on learning experience. Osmo, on the iPad, interacts with every real-live move. This kit enhances kids' visual thinking and creative problem solving skills and self-expression.



11» ROCK ON! GEOLOGY GAME for ages 5+. Kids will explore earth's geological treasures in this fun science game. It comes complete with a nice assortment of rock and mineral specimens.



8» THINKFUN RUSH HOUR for ages 8+. Winner of a national Mensa award, Rush Hour is a game of logic that sharpens kids skills in planning and sequential reasoning. In this traffic gridlock game, there are 40 challenges from beginner to expert. The goal is to move cars through the puzzle until the red car can escape the traffic jam.



12» BIG BAG OF SCIENCE for ages 8+. More than 70 fun activities can be performed with this kit in the areas of chemistry, physics, biology, geology, magnetism, weather and flight. Kids will use the real scientific tools that are included in the kit in their experiments to amaze family and friends.



16» GREEN KID CRAFTS, RAINFOREST DISCOVERY SCIENCE BOX for ages 3 to 10. This kit embraces kids' creativity while providing scientific exploration. Kids can conduct a rainforest pollution experiment, create a rain stick and build a rainforest terrarium, among many other activities.

GUIDES & RESOURCES.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL GUIDE

Academic Enrichment & Field Trips

BAROODY CAMPS

baroodycamps.com; info@baroodycamps.com
703-864-2318; 343 Gundry Dr., Falls Church, VA

We provide programs for schools in Northern Virginia that encourage a love of learning, creativity, and fun. Programs include animation, coding, cooking, dance, Innovation Lab, Legos, music, Spanish, sports, theater, yoga and more!

BARRIE SCHOOL

barrie.org; admission@barrie.org
301-576-2800; 13500 Layhill Rd., Silver Spring, MD

Barrie School inspires intellectual curiosity, emotional resiliency, and social engagement for students age 18 months to Grade 12. Students from 18-month old Toddlers through Grade 5 Upper Elementary are taught using the Montessori Method, a child-centered educational approach. Students in Grades 6-12 engage in Project Based Learning, a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. All students enjoy small class sizes and make use of our 45-acre wooded campus on a daily basis. Barrie is located in Silver Spring, Maryland, minutes from the ICC and Glenmont Metro. Our close proximity to downtown Washington, D.C. enables students to take full advantage of the cultural and educational resources available in the area.

GLEN ECHO PARK AQUARIUM

gepaquarium.org; info@gepaquarium.org
301-955-6256; 7300 Macarthur Blvd., Glen Echo, MD
Celebrate with the fishes! The Glen Echo Park Aquarium, a Chesapeake Bay Discovery Center, offers a unique party experience. Follow the flow of water from local streams, to rivers, the Bay and the ocean. Tour the exhibit hall, touch live sea creatures, craft and celebrate in a party room.

LINDAMOOD-BELL LEARNING PROCESSES

lindamoodbell.com
800-300-1818; 900 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Ste. 220, Washington DC
Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes is an organization dedicated to helping children and adults learn to their potential. Their research-validated instructional programs strengthen reading, comprehension, and math skills.

RESTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

restonmontessori.com; office@restonmontessori.com
703-481-2922; 1928 Isaac Newton Square West, Reston, VA
Hours: 7 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Established in 1986, Reston Montessori School is a private, coeducational school for children from 3 months through 3rd grade. RMS provides academic school day, enrichment programs and before/after school activities.

SUNSET HILLS MONTESSORI

sunsethillsmontessori.com
703-476-7477; 11180 Ridge Heights Rd., Reston, VA
Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

At SHMS we are committed to recognizing and cultivating the uniqueness of each individual child. We have a community of educators, and wonderful families, that have chosen SHMS because of a shared vision for early childhood and elementary education.

WASHINGTON REVELS

revelsdc.org; info@revelsdc.org
301-587-3835; 531 Dale Dr., Silver Spring, MD
WasKids learn, play, and grow in our World Story Time and After-School Workshops. Children/Teens can audition in September for The Christmas Revels, seen by 10,000 each December! And enjoy monthly family fun at our co-presented Community Sings and Dances.

After School & Enrichment Activities

ABRAKADOODLE

abrakadoodle.com
Northern VA: *swalia@abrakadoodle.com*; 703-538-4278
Prince William County: *emoore@abrakadoodle.com*; 571-589-8133
Loudoun County: *ysmith@abrakadoodle.com*; 571-367-3100
Montgomery County: *ndelasos@abrakadoodle.com*; 301-564-0389
Prince George's County: *chazelton@abradadoodle.com*; 301-464-0700

ACTING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

afyp.org
4260 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax, VA; 703-554-4931
Celebrating 20+ years of fun, challenging classes for ages 5 to adult taught by theater professionals. After-school, student showcases, summer acting camps, and school tours.

BAROODY CAMPS

baroodycamps.com; info@baroodycamps.com
703-864-2318; 343 Gundry Dr., Falls Church, VA
We provide programs for schools in Northern Virginia that encourage a love of learning, creativity, and fun. Programs include animation, coding, cooking, dance, Innovation Lab, Legos, music, Spanish, sports, theater, yoga and more!

BARRIE SCHOOL

barrie.org; admission@barrie.org
301-576-2800; 13500 Layhill Rd., Silver Spring, MD
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working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. All students enjoy small class sizes and make use of our 45-acre wooded campus on a daily basis. Barrie is located in Silver Spring,

Maryland, minutes from the ICC and Glenmont Metro. Our close proximity to downtown Washington, D.C. enables students to take full advantage of the cultural and educational resources available in the area.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL

NCACBSA.org; info@ncacbsa.org
301-530-9360; 9190 Rockville Pike; Bethesda, MD
Hours: Mon-Fri: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Scouts make the most of right now. With fun & discovery at every turn, they build a foundation they can stand on to embrace opportunity, overcome obstacles & make new discoveries. Make Scouting the foundation of your future; build an adventure today! Now for boys AND girls ages 5-11!

THE CENTER FOR BALLET ARTS

thecenterforballetarts.com ctrballetarts@aol.com
703-273-5344; 3955 Pender Dr., Ste. 103, Fairfax, VA
Ages: 3-Adult

The Center for Ballet Arts provides a well-rounded curriculum and pleasant encouraging environment for dance training in many different disciplines. Classes are designed to promote flexibility, strength, artistry, coordination and technique.

CLARK'S ELIOAK FARM

clarklandfarm.com; clarkselioakfarm@hotmail.com
410-730-4049; 10500 Clarksville Pike, Ellicott City, MD

DAVID HUGHES ORTHODONTICS

drhughesortho.com; info@drhughesortho.com
703-451-0502; 8314-A Traftord Ln., Springfield, VA

Invisalign Preferred Provider. Call for a complimentary exam and diagnostic records. Records are for our use only.

ENCORE STAGE & STUDIO

encorestage.org; info@encorestage.org
703-548-1154; 4000 Lorcom Ln., Arlington, VA
Encore offers learning opportunities for students in K-12. Our after-school programs and year-round classes help students develop creativity and self-confidence. They are targeted to all levels of experience, from introductory to advanced. Course offerings for grades 8-12 include topics in acting, movement, music and playwriting for bilingual/ESOL students. Encore can also work with you to customize a class based on your school's needs or help direct or produce your school's play or musical.

HARMONIA SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND ART

harmoniaschool.org; harmonia@harmoniaschool.org
703-938-7301; 204-F Mill St. NE, Vienna, VA
Hours: 12-8:30 p.m. (Monday-Friday); 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (Saturday)
Harmonia provides music lessons in all instruments and voice, as well as musical theater instruction and productions. Our quality programs and experienced teachers make our school the best choice for performing arts education, all under one roof.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ismwv.org; info@ismwv.org
301-365-5888; 10450 Auto Park Ave. Bethesda, MD
4701 Sangamore Rd. #LL-03 Bethesda, MD
Hours: Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Voted best in music instruction, the International School of Music offer music lessons in all instruments and voice to students of all levels and ages. Preschool music classes and adult music instructions is also available in addition to the optional performances and certificate programs. Book your trial lessons today.

IFLY INDOOR SKYDIVING

iflyworld.com; info.montgomery@iflyworld.com
202-883-4359; 9400 Gaither Rd., Gaithersburg, MD
Hours: Mon.-Thurs.: 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri.: 10 a.m.-11 p.m., Sat.: 8 a.m.-11 p.m., Sun.: 8 a.m.-9 p.m.
Under the brand names iFLY and Skyventure, the Company has flown more than 9,000,000 since launching the vertical wind tunnel industry in 1998. iFLY has more than 70 facilities and utilizes the safety and training rules set by the International Body Flight Association (IBA). Visit www.iflyworld.com.

KIDS FIRST SWIM SCHOOLS

kidsfirstswimschools.com; contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com
Check website for list of all locations.

The Kids First Swim Schools are America's largest provider of year round warm water swimming instruction, operating 20 locations across 5 states, teaching over 100,000 students annually.

ROBOT WORKS, LLC

robotworksacademy.net
703-364-5418; 8992 Fern Park Dr. Burke, VA
Hours: Monday-Saturday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Robot Works offers after-school and in-school programs and workshops in basic and advanced robotics and robotics programming for K through 12th graders, as well as tailored robotics workshops for home-schoolers. Our programs are fun, hands-on STEM learning experiences where students get to design, build and program robots and test them against other students' robots in our exciting competitions. We also conduct hands-on Saturday Robotics Workshops where students not only get to build and program robots all day but can also participate in unique one-hour classes. The classes cover a wide variety of robotics topics.

ROER'S ZOOFARI

roerszoofari.com
703-757-6222; 1228 Hunter Mill Rd., Vienna, VA
Birthday parties and Summer Camps, Roer's Zoofari is open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. to explore, encounter and connect. General admission includes all major experiences in the park: open air bus ride, animal feedings and budgie adventure.

SUNSET HILLS MONTESSORI

sunsethillsmontessori.com
703-476-7477; 11180 Ridge Heights Rd., Reston, VA
Hours: 7:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

At SHMS we are committed to recognizing and cultivating the uniqueness of each individual child. We have a community of educators, and wonderful families, that have chosen SHMS because of a shared vision for early childhood and elementary education.

WASHINGTON REVELS

revelsdc.org; info@revelsdc.org
301-587-3835; 531 Dale Dr., Silver Spring, MD
WasKids learn, play, and grow in our World Story Time and After-School Workshops. Children/Teens can audition in September for The Christmas Revels, seen by 10,000 each December! And enjoy monthly family fun at our co-presented Community Sings and Dances.

Indoor Swimming

KIDS FIRST SWIM SCHOOLS

kidsfirstswimschools.com; contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com
Check website for list of all locations.

The Kids First Swim Schools are America's largest provider of year

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BACK-TO-SCHOOL GUIDE

round warm water swimming instruction, operating 20 locations across 5 states, teaching over 100,000 students annually.

Music, Art & Performing Arts

HARMONIA SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND ART

harmoniaschool.org; harmonia@harmoniaschool.org
703-938-7301; 204-F Mill St. NE, Vienna, VA
Hours: Monday-Friday 12-8:30 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Harmonia provides music lessons in all instruments and voice, as well as musical theater instruction and productions. Our quality programs and experienced teachers make our school the best choice for performing arts education, all under one roof.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ismw.org info@ismw.org
301-365-5888; 10450 Auto Park Ave. Bethesda, MD
4701 Sangamore Rd. #LL-03 Bethesda, MD
Hours: Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Voted best in music instruction, the International School of Music offer music lessons in all instruments and voice to students of all levels and ages. Preschool music classes and adult music instructions is also available in addition to the optional performances and certificate programs. Book your trial lessons today.

NOTES N BEATS

notesnbeats.com
844-687-4220; 44190 Waxpool Rd., Suite 162, Ashburn, VA
Notes n' Beats and Science Cosmos are vested partners in bringing a very strong foundational AFTERCARE program that leverages the same teachers and curriculum as their private lessons. The first ever afterschool that brings a STEM & ARTS program that is truest to the spirit of S.T.E.A.M education.

PERFECT POINTE DANCE STUDIO

perfectpointe.com; staff@perfectpointe.com
703-533-8830; 2499 N. Harrison St., Ste. 1-LL, Arlington, VA
Offering classes in ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, modern, musical theater, dance and acrobatics for ages 18 months through adult! Qualified and caring staff, family-friendly atmosphere, fun performance opportunities.

PERFECT POINTE (FORMERLY HEARTBEATS) MUSIC & DANCE STUDIO

hbeats.com; staff@hbeats.com
703-440-9000; 8060 Rolling Rd., Springfield, VA
Offering classes in ballet, tap, jazz, hiphop, modern, acrobatics, contemporary & musical theater dance styles. Private music lessons include guitar, ukulele, violin/viola, drums, voice and more! Highly qualified staff, family-friendly atmosphere and fun performance opportunities.

SCHOOL OF ROCK

schoolofrock.com
Vienna: *vienna@schoolofrock.com*
703-242-2184; 111 Center Street South, Vienna, VA
Silver Spring: *silverspring@schoolofrock.com*
301-589-7625; 8634 Colesville Rd., Silver Spring, MD
Ashburn: *ashburn@schoolofrock.com*
703-858-0820; 20660 Ashburn Rd., Ashburn, VA
School of Rock is Music School reimagined. Our music programs are designed to encourage learning in a supportive environment where students of all skill levels are comfortable and engaged. We take the music school concept to the next level for kids, teens and adults. There's no place like School of Rock.

ULTRAZONE

ultrazonebaileys.com
800-309-1876; 3447 Carlin Springs Rd., Bailey's Crossroads, VA

WASHINGTON REVELS

revelsdc.org; info@revelsdc.org
301-587-3835; 531 Dale Dr., Silver Spring, MD
WasKids learn, play, and grow in our World Story Time and After-School Workshops. Children/Teens can audition in September for The Christmas Revels, seen by 10,000 each December! And enjoy monthly family fun at our co-presented Community Sings and Dances.

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

westminsterschool.com; admissions@westminsterschool.com
703-256-3620
K-8: 3819 Gallows Rd., Annandale, VA
Preschool (3 and 4-year-olds): 6800 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA
Hours 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Westminster School provides a unique Preschool-Middle School education based on a classical curriculum; accelerated academics enhanced by the arts; and an emphasis on personal responsibility and good character. Students enjoy small classes taught by teachers who specialize in their field.

ZAZZY PEACOCK STUDIOS

jill@zazzypeacock.com
301-633-4714; 12280 Wilkins Ave., Artists and Makers Studio A1, Rockville, MD
Zazzy Peacock Studios offers art and crafts classes, parties, after school and summer camps for kids, teens and adults. Fun and creative activities for everyone!

Private Schools & Preschools

ACORN HILL WALDORF KINDERGARTEN & NURSERY

acornhill.org; info@acornhill.org
301-565-2282; 9504 Brunett Ave., Silver Spring, MD
Open House: Call to schedule a tour.
Play-oriented Waldorf school with singing, crafts, gardening and storytelling. Parent-Infant/Toddler, Parent-Child, Half & Full Day and summer programs. Certified nursery/kindergarten. 45+ years of experience. Rolling admissions.

AIDAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

aidanschool.org
202-387-2700; 2700 27th St, NW, Washington DC
Aidan Montessori School is a co-ed independent school located in Woodley Park. Aidan has served children's natural development, innate curiosity, and pursuit of independence since its founding as one of the nation's first Montessori schools in 1961.

THE AUBURN SCHOOL

theauburnschool.org; admissions@theauburnschool.org
703-793-9353, 301-588-8048
3800 Concorde Parkway, Suite 500, Chantilly, VA
9115 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD
7401 Park Heights Ave., Baltimore, MD
Open House: Call to schedule a tour.
The Auburn School is an independent day-school with a specialized program which offers a stimulating educational program for intellectually engaged students with challenges in the areas of communication, socialization, language, and organization. Auburn's program simultaneously supports the development of academic skills, social competency and pragmatic language in an engaging educational environment. Our program is appropriate for students who can learn successfully and appropriately in a small classroom setting.

BARRIE SCHOOL

barrie.org; admission@barrie.org

301-576-2800; 13500 Layhill Rd., Silver Spring, MD

Barrie School inspires intellectual curiosity, emotional resiliency, and social engagement for students age 18 months to Grade 12. Students from 18-month old Toddlers through Grade 5 Upper Elementary are taught using the Montessori Method, a child-centered educational approach. Students in Grades 6-12 engage in Project Based Learning, a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. All students enjoy small class sizes and make use of our 45-acre wooded campus on a daily basis. Barrie is located in Silver Spring, Maryland, minutes from the ICC and Glenmont Metro. Our close proximity to downtown Washington, D.C. enables students to take full advantage of the cultural and educational resources available in the area.

BEANTREE ASHBURN CAMPUS

beantreelearning.com

571-223-3110; 43629 Greenway Corporate Dr. Ashburn, VA

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

BeanTree Learning in Ashburn provides unparalleled care and nurturing for infants through PreK. Led by a team of experienced and caring educators, BeanTree provides children with a safe and stimulating environment for academic success and provides parents with peace of mind. Year-round enrollment available for fully-accredited academic and specialty programs.

BEANTREE WESTFIELDS CAMPUS

beantreelearning.com

703-961-8222; 5003 Westfields Blvd., Chantilly, VA

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

Fully accredited, discover the BeanTree difference at our Westfields/Chantilly Campus! Offering unprecedented educational offerings for your child in every stage of academic development, BeanTree offers infant care through full-day private kindergarten, before/after school and summer camp. Year-round enrollment for full and part-time academic and specialty programs.

BEAUVOIR, THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

beauvoirschool.org

202-537-6493; 3500 Woodley Rd., NW Washington, D.C.

Open House: Thursday, Oct. 18th, 9:15-11 a.m., Sunday, Nov. 11th, 1-3 p.m.

Beauvoir provides an educational environment fostering a lifetime of enthusiasm for learning and growth while nurturing the spiritual, ethical, intellectual, emotional, physical and social development of every child.

BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL

brooksfieldschool.org; sarah@brooksfieldschool.org

703-356-5437; 1830 Kirby Rd. McLean, VA

Ages Served: 3-10; Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

Mindfulness, nutrition, Spanish, dance, music & art, outdoor adventure program, extracurricular activities and summer camp.

CAPITOL HILL DAY SCHOOL

chds.org; admissions@chds.org

202-386-9920

Open House Dates: Oct. 12, Nov. 7, Dec. 7, (all 9-11 a.m.)

CONGRESSIONAL SCHOOL

congressionalschool.org; gherbst@congressionalschool.org

703-533-1064; 3229 Sleepy Hollow Rd., Falls Church, VA

A co-ed independent day school for infants to eighth graders in Falls Church, VA. Congressional School prepares young learners for future success, inspiring them to question, collaborate, create, and lead.

EDLIN SCHOOL

703-438-3990; 10742 Sunset Hills Rd., Reston, VA

Edlin is an academically gifted private school for K4-8th grade established in 1989. The school emphasizes a classic curriculum in combination with STEAM to create the best learning conditions for gifted students in small class sizes.

FAIRFAX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

fairfaxchristianschool.com; admissions@studyfcs.com

703-759-5100; 22870 Pacific Blvd., Dulles, VA

Ages: K-12th Grade

Fairfax Christian School is an independent, university-preparatory school. Call today for your private tour and educational consultation.

FEYNMAN SCHOOL

feynmanschool.org; admissions@feynmanschool.org

301-770-4211; 11810 Falls Rd., Potomac, MD

Grades: Preschool-Grade 5

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

The area's leader in educating academically-gifted children, Feynman School features extraordinary programs in science, math, language arts, theater and music designed to maximize your child's potential.

GLENBROOK COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL

glenbrookschool.org; membership@glenbrookschool.org

301-365-3190; 10010 Fernwood Rd., Bethesda, MD

Hours: 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

At Glenbrook, we nurture our children in the early, formative years so they can define themselves as individuals. We strive for this through spontaneous play in a controlled and time structured environment. We believe that children can feel secure only when they understand and trust a set of limits. Their imagination, curiosity, and interests need time to wander, expand, and develop within these limits. Cooperative nursery schools are administered and maintained by the parents, allowing everyone to grow and learn together. The special nature of Glenbrook is the close working relationship between parents and teachers. Our approach builds a sense of community and togetherness for parents and children.

KENWOOD SCHOOL

kenwoodschool.com; admissions@kenwoodschool.com

703-256-4711; 4955 Sunset Ln., Annandale, VA

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

Kenwood is a charming environment to learn in. The students receive an individualized experience which helps them grow and learn more than is possible in a large classroom setting. We pride ourselves on our home-like atmosphere and loving faculty.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF CEDAR LANE

preschoolmontessori.com; info@cedarlanemontessori.com

703-560-4379; 3035 Cedar Ln., Fairfax, VA

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

Montessori School of Cedar Lane has been providing over 40 years of Montessori tradition to Northern Virginia. We offer a complete educational and social environment and utilize the discoveries and methods of Dr. Montessori to help the child develop more fully the potential within him.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF MCLEAN

mcleanmontessori.org

703-790-1049; 1711 Kirby Rd., McLean, VA

Ages: 2 ½-12; Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

Preschool and elementary classes. Spanish, French, science, drama, music, P.E., computer, art, summer school, transportation available.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

msnv.org; info@msnv.org

703-256-9577; MSNV Hillbrook - 6820 Pacific Ln., Annandale, VA

MSNV Valleybrook - 3433 Rose Ln., Falls Church, VA

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

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BACK-TO-SCHOOL GUIDE

MSNV is a non-profit, parent cooperative school, providing a comprehensive Montessori education for children ages 2-12. With two campuses set in peaceful residential neighborhoods, MSNV offers challenging, self-paced instruction guided by Montessori certified faculty.

NYSMITH SCHOOL FOR THE GIFTED

nysmith.com; ebalberde@nysmith.com
703-713-3332; 13625 EDS Dr., Herndon, VA
Ages Served: 3 yrs.-8th Grade; Hours: 7 a.m.-6:30 p.m.
Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

The award winning Nysmith School for the Gifted is committed to making school fun. We nurture your student's love of learning and help your child learn to their potential. Our 1:9 ratio allows us to differentiate the academic program up to 4 grade levels above grade.

THE PAVILION AT BEANTREE

beantreelearning.com
571-223-3113; 43635 Greenway Corporate Dr., Ashburn, VA
The Pavilion at BeanTree in Ashburn offers a rigorous academic curriculum that exceeds the Virginia Standards of Learning. Currently expanding through 2nd grade beginning in fall 2017, The Pavilion at BeanTree offers an advanced accredited curriculum, STEM coursework and small classes for individualized instruction. The Pavilion at BeanTree provides an unparalleled environment for academic excellence.

PINECREST SCHOOL

pinecrestschool.org; admissions@pinecrestschool.org 703-354-3446; 7209 Quiet Cove, Alexandria, VA Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
Small classes; hands-on curriculum emphasizes problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. Individualized approach; each child grows academically, socially and emotionally within caring and positive environment. Summer camp. Before and after-care.

RESTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

restonmontessori.com; office@restonmontessori.com
703-481-2922; 1928 Isaac Newton Sq. West, Reston, VA
Hours: 7 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; Open House: Call to schedule a tour.
Established in 1986, Reston Montessori School is a private, coeducational school for children from 3 months through 6th grade. RMS provides academic school day, enrichment programs and before/after school activities.

THE SIENA SCHOOL

thesienaschool.org; info@thesienaschool.org
301-244-3600, 1300 Forest Glen Rd., Silver Spring, MD
Open House: Call to schedule a tour.
The Siena School provides highly individualized, research-based, multisensory instruction and curriculum-related field trips. Our students develop critical thinking skills and acquire the tools and strategies needed to become successful and independent learners, prepared for college.

SPRING BILINGUAL MONTESSORI ACADEMY

spring-bilingual.org
301-962-7262; 3514 Plyers Mill Rd., Kensington, MD
Ages: 2-6; Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.
Montessori preschool with Foreign Language programs.

SUNSET HILLS MONTESSORI

sunsethillsmontessori.com
703-476-7477; 11180 Ridge Heights Rd., Reston, VA
Hours: 7:00 am - 6:30 pm
At SHMS we are committed to recognizing and cultivating the uniqueness of each individual child. We have a community of educators, and wonderful families, that have chosen SHMS because of a shared vision for early childhood and elementary education.

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

westminsterschool.com; admissions@westminsterschool.com
703-256-3620; K-8: 3819 Gallows Rd., Annandale, VA

Preschool (3 and 4-year-olds): 6800 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA
Hours 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Open House Dates: Oct. 17th (6:00-7:30 p.m.); Nov. 12th & Jan. 15th (9:00-10:30 a.m.)
Westminster School provides a unique Preschool-Middle School education based on a classical curriculum; accelerated academics enhanced by the arts; and an emphasis on personal responsibility and good character. Students enjoy small classes taught by teachers who specialize in their field.

Sports & Fitness

BAROODY CAMPS

baroodycamps.com; info@baroodycamps.com
703-864-2318; 343 Gundry Dr., Falls Church, VA
We provide programs for schools in Northern Virginia that encourage a love of learning, creativity, and fun. Programs include animation, coding, cooking, dance, Innovation Lab, Legos, music, Spanish, sports, theater, yoga and more!

IFLY INDOOR SKYDIVING

iflyworld.com; info.montgomery@iflyworld.com
202-883-4359; 9400 Gaither Rd., Gaithersburg, MD
Hours: Mon.-Thurs.: 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri.: 10 a.m.-11 p.m., Sat.: 8 a.m.-11 p.m., Sun.: 8 a.m.-9 p.m.
Under the brand names iFLY and Skyventure, the Company has flown more than 9,000,000 since launching the vertical wind tunnel industry in 1998. iFLY has more than 70 facilities and utilizes the safety and training rules set by the International Body Flight Association (IBA). Visit www.iflyworld.com.

KIDS FIRST SWIM SCHOOLS

kidsfirstswimschools.com; contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com
Check website for list of all locations.
The Kids First Swim Schools are America's largest provider of year round warm water swimming instruction, operating 20 locations across 5 states, teaching over 100,000 students annually.

SKATEQUEST


skatequest.com; info@skatequest.com
703-709-1010; 1800 Michael Faraday Ct., Reston, Virginia
Hours: 8 a.m.-9 p.m.
SkateQuest is a twin sheet indoor ice skating center in Reston, with full service pro shop, café, and party rooms. Open year round, SkateQuest has been home to recreational skaters, figure skaters, and hockey players since 1993.

Tutoring, Therapy & Special Needs

LITTLE LEAVES BEHAVIORAL SERVICES

littleleaves.org; info@littleleaves.org
202-420-8359
9727 Georgia Ave, Silver Spring, MD
11480 Sunset Hills Rd., Suite 220W, Reston, VA
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– Dona C.

"We always like to 'shop' from home first. They may have asked for three dozen pencils last year, but one dozen came back home at the end, or we have an extra pair of scissors in an old pencil box. I also like to pre-buy the stuff we need every year, like composition notebooks or loose-leaf paper when it goes on clearance after back-to-school shopping ends. Lots of times it's cheaper than the actual back-to-school sales."

– Sheila S.

"I start a back-to-school supply list very early on — checking and adding to it until I know for sure that everything needed is on there. Then, I make one big trip to the stores. It prevents me from having to waste time with multiple trips because of forgotten supplies!"

– Rebecca L.

"With five kids, but only four in public schools, I make everyone get their own cart at the store and go on a scavenger hunt themselves (I still help if they get stuck). During checkout, I make sure to keep their items separate in the checkout lane so they don't get mixed up when placed in the bags. This saves SO much time by not having to sort their stuff later on."

– Anh N.

"I purchase basic school supplies at Value Village thrift shop. If you go on a discount day you can spend even less. They often have new, packaged supplies. Since I'm a teacher, I also shop there throughout the year to replenish items in my classroom."

– Bonnie G.

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– Kate B.

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529 Kids Consign is an upscale children's consignment boutique specializing in the latest trends. They call themselves, "A boutique for hip moms and cool kids!" You can find items here from brands like Gymboree, Jacadi, Janie and Jack, Juicy Couture, Mini Boden, Oilily, Petit Bateau and more.

Little Birdies Boutique

1526 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.
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Little Birdies Boutique is located in the heart of Georgetown. They offer super stylish children's clothing, shoes and accessories, as well as in-house custom monogramming. You'll find high quality and fun brands like Bella Bliss, Chloe, Darling Betty, Pixie Lily, Stella Cove, Magnolia Baby and Moschino Kids. You can also shop online at shoplittlebirdies.com.

The Growing Years

10303 Kensington Pkwy.
Kensington, MD

The Growing Years has a wide-variety of gently used clothing and shoes — from adorable infant clothing to trendy pre-teen styles. They also offer new and unique monogrammed jewelry and accessories. Bonus: As you shop, your kids can stay entertained for hours in the play area with non-stop Disney movie showings.

Little Lords & Ladies

14155 Sullyfield Circle
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Little Lords & Ladies is the largest children's consignment shop in the area. They have thousands of items to choose from, sorted by color/size/style. New items are placed on the floor daily, and prices for items go down after every 30 days, so you can always find extra savings!

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What happened when I quit helicopter parenting and let my kids choose their own path

BY KATHRYN STREETER

I'm a safety mom. A safety person, in fact. In life, as on a ski slope, I continually find myself helplessly speeding downhill trying to keep up with my tweens, while silently screaming, "Watch out for the trees!"

Releasing control doesn't come naturally for most. For me, personally, the learning curve for parenting tweens-to-teens has been steeper than I'd expected. I want my kids to mature into independent young adults who can make wise choices on their own. I know that means I must let go. But in practice, I've found my convictions tested.

For example, schoolwork used to be a big power struggle around our home. I found myself offering nonstop directives and reminders. By sixth grade, I felt that overseeing assignment deadlines would only enable dependence and laziness. I knew a hands-off approach was the right one, but it still pained me when my kids innocently forgot their homework and received a lower grade. I realized that coddling would only hurt them, though.

It's still hard to stay in the shadows and watch my kids successfully dodge one bad decision only to perform a dramatic face-plant when the next major obstacle reveals itself.

But how else will they learn?

Just like with homework, it was also hard to resist micromanaging after-school activities. I knew an influential D.C. couple who required their kid to learn a stringed musical instrument and a foreign language. My eyes lit up at the idea; it sounded like an insurance plan to turn out accomplished, polished children. My husband disagreed, and we ended up not taking this approach. In the end, our daughter found her own way.

A natural linguist, she became an advanced French student completely of her own choosing. When she was little, she

elected to take piano lessons. But after a few years, she tearfully confessed that she loved her teacher, not the piano. With our blessing, she quit and later picked up the guitar for fun. Her story ended up including a foreign language and music. Had we forced things, though, she'd possibly have resented us and done less.

Similarly, our son, with no encouragement, has invested hours in educating himself about supercars, affording him an impressive knowledge base. He's motivated from within, and as his parents, we take absolutely no credit for it. We can't know now if this will play any part in his future, and that's not the point. The point is that he chose it for himself.

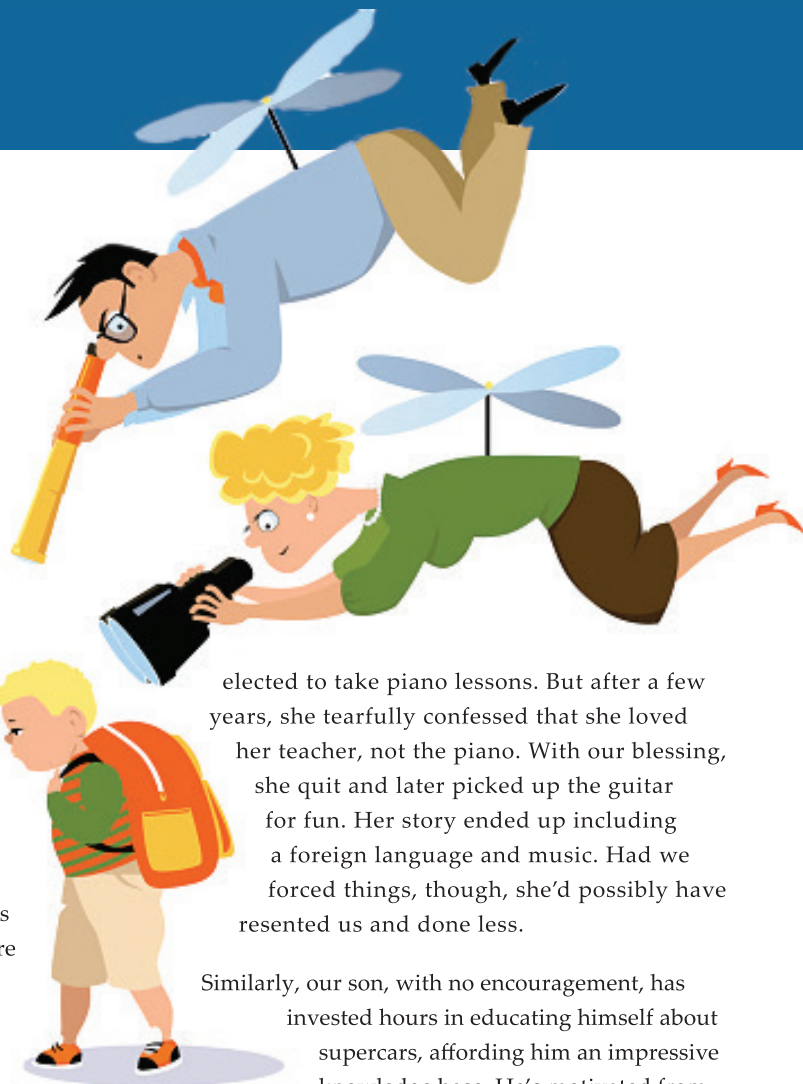
Giving our kids lots of space to explore electives and hobbies has allowed them to "own" their interests; they haven't been coerced into satisfying what we put in motion for them.

And they have flourished.

Handing over general decision-making authority to my blossoming youth has been uncomfortable. But holding on in an effort to keep them on a supposedly safe path would have only hampered their growth and contentment.

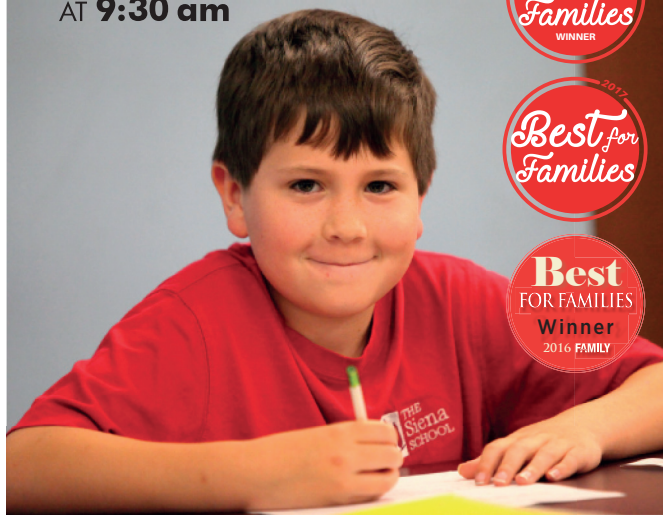
It's true that I'm still a safety mom. Sometimes I snow-plow. I have been known to hover. But by opening my trembling fists and letting my kids find their own path, at their own speed, I've given them the freedom to grow up on their own terms. And it's worth it, no matter how uncomfortable it is for me.

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



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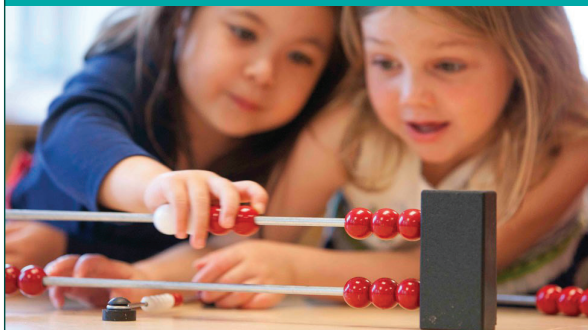


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WEDNESDAY 1

Rainbow Puppets: Creatures Great & Small

10 a.m. | \$5. There's an acrobatic flea, a giant stegosaurus and practically everything in between in this Rainbow Puppet production! Meet a Blue Crab, a Fiddler Crab, Bert the Blue Heron and a pair of singing dinosaurs. Grandpa leads audience members on a musical review of animal songs and stories. Ages 2+. *Franklin Park Arts Center, 36441 Blueridge View Ln., Purcellville, VA; franklinparkartscenter.org.*

THURSDAY 2

Dive into Dumbarton

10 a.m. | \$5. Dive into Dumbarton and grow your little ones' love of history! Take a mini-tour of our historic property, then interact with fun activities, crafts and games. Ages 3-5. Free for museum members. *Dumbarton House Museum, 2715 Q St. N.W., Washington, D.C.; dumbartonhouse.org.*

FREE Musical Instrument Petting Zoo

10:30 a.m. Enjoy this lively introduction to orchestra with this engaging combination of storytelling, a small orchestra performance, and an instrument petting zoo where children will be able to touch and see actual instruments up close. First come,

first served until capacity is reached. Ages 2+ with a caregiver. *Chinn Park Regional Library, 13065 Chinn Park Dr., Woodbridge, VA; pwcgov.org/government/dept/library.*

FRIDAY 3

FREE Child and Me Yoga

10:30 a.m. Breathing exercises, poses, music and story time will be used to guide you through a fun time together. Please bring a yoga mat or beach towel. First come, first served until capacity is reached. *Chinn Park Regional Library, 13065 Chinn Park Dr., Woodbridge, VA; pwcgov.org/government/dept/library.*



FREE Laser Tag in the Library

6 p.m. After the library closes, kids get the whole place to themselves to play laser tag! Register in person by picking up a required parental permission form beginning one week before programs start. Form must be submitted on or before the date the program occurs. Grades 6-12. *Haymarket Gainesville Community Library, 14870 Lightner Rd., Haymarket, VA; pwcgov.org/government/dept/library.*

SATURDAY 4

Justin Roberts and the Not Ready for Naptime Players

10:30 a.m. | \$12. Wear your PJ's and join in the fun as 2018 Grammy-nominated Justin Roberts and the Not Ready for Naptime Players deliver a rockin' performance of all-new music from their latest album, *Lemonade*. *Wolf Trap Children's Theatre-in-the-Woods, 1551 Trap Rd., Vienna, VA; wolftrap.org.*

FREE Family Nature Walk

9 a.m. Come outside and explore at Audubon Naturalist! On the first Saturday of each month, join their Master Naturalists for a nature hike around Woodend Sanctuary. Each hike will have a unique and engaging natural history theme. Programs are appropriate for members of all ages. *Audubon Naturalist Society, 8940 Jones Mill Rd., Chevy Chase, MD; anshome.org.*

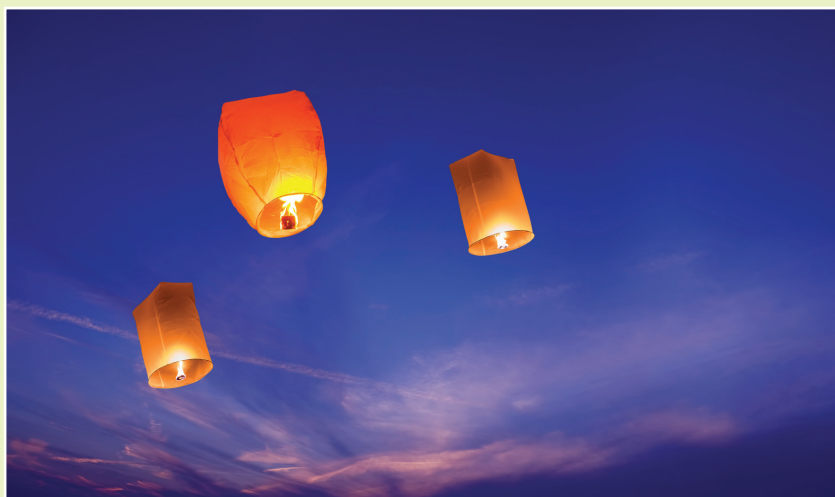
SUNDAY 5

Infant Investigators: Wings of Fancy

10 a.m. | \$30. Butterflies and birds are a source of delight for all children. At the Wings of Fancy workshop, come play, explore and discover the beauty and wonder of these beautiful, winged creatures! For this lesson, participants will draw on resources from the National Museum of Natural History. *Ages 4-12. Smithsonian National*

Tanabata: A Japanese Celebration

Sunday, August 6 | 6 p.m. | \$10/person; \$35/family



Celebrate this traditional festival with song, origami, story telling and a planetarium show. Hiroya Tsukamoto, a one-of-a-kind composer, guitarist and singer-songwriter from Kyoto, Japan, will perform in the lobby. After a short break for tea and egg rolls, enjoy a planetarium show in the theater that explains the astrological story tied to this celebration. The evening's finale is a trip to the Franklin Park pond to release floating lanterns. *Franklin Park Arts Center, 36441 Blueridge View Ln., Purcellville, VA; franklinparkartscenter.org.*

Museum of Natural History, 10th & Constitution Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C; naturalhistory.si.edu.

MONDAY 6

FREE Life-Sized Candy Land

4 p.m. Bring your family and friends, and play your way through a life-sized version of Candy Land! Enjoy moving through the different lands in the game, while collecting treats on your way to the enchanted castle. Drop in anytime. First come, first served. *Potomac Community Library, 2201 Opitz Blvd., Woodbridge, VA; pwcgov.org/government/dept/library.*

WEDNESDAY 8

FREE VALS Pals Kids Club: Mad Science

10 a.m. Join us for a morning of free fun on Wednesdays this summer! Enjoy live music, magicians, puppet shows, petting zoos and more. At this August 8 event, grab your lab coat for exciting hands-on experiments with Mad Science! *Village at Leesburg, 1602 Village Market Blvd. S.E., Leesburg, VA; villageatleesburg.com.*



Disney's Broadway Hits Featuring Broadway Stars Live In Concert with Wolf Trap Orchestra

Thursday, August 9 | 8 p.m. | \$25-\$65



In celebration of 20 years on Broadway, audiences can experience the magic of Disney's Broadway Hits with an unforgettable night of music. Performed by a live symphony orchestra, this major concert event features beloved songs from nine Tony and Academy Award-winning scores by some of the greatest composers and lyricists in the world including Alan Menken (*Beauty and the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin*, *Newsies*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*), Phil Collins (*Tarzan*), Elton John (*Aida*, *The Lion King*) and Richard & Robert Sherman (*Mary Poppins*). *Wolf Trap*, 1551 Trap Rd., Vienna, VA; wolftrap.org.

FRIDAY 10

Chicago

8 p.m. | \$18-\$22. Other Voices

Theatre presents *Chicago!* Chicago has everything that makes a musical great: a universal tale of fame, fortune and all that jazz; one show-stopping song after another. Reserve tickets online at Showtix4U.com. *The Performing Arts Factory*, 244 South Jefferson St., Frederick, MD; performingartsfactory.com.

SATURDAY 11

FREE American Red Cross's Touch a Truck

10 a.m. Bring the family out and see all of the Red Cross emergency vehicles, bloodmobiles, fire engines, police vehicles and much more! Enjoy games, including a bounce house, food and fun for the entire family. Rain

or shine. *American Red Cross in the National Capital Region Headquarters*, 8550 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax, VA; redcross.org.

WEDNESDAY 15

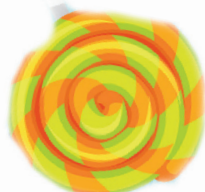
FREE Kids in Canal!

10:30 a.m. Bring your little ones to the middle block of Canal Park to enjoy magic shows, kids tunes, science demonstrations, and puppet shows. Dance along to children's pop music from the Rainbow Rock Band. Then top off your day with a refreshing splash in the Canal Park dancing water fountains. *Canal Park*, 200 M St. S.E., Washington, D.C; capitolriverfront.org.

FRIDAY 17

Main Street Theater Productions: Winnie the Pooh, KIDS

1 p.m. | \$5. Young campers from MSTP welcome you to the Hundred Acre Wood, where Winnie the Pooh is once again in search of honey. He meets his pals, Tigger, Piglet, Rabbit and Owl, but soon discovers that Christopher Robin has been captured by the mysterious Backson! As they prepare for a rescue operation, the animals learn about teamwork, friendship and, of course ... sharing snacks. *Franklin Park Arts Center*. 36441 Blueridge View Ln., Purcellville, VA; franklinparkartscenter.org.



SATURDAY 18

FREE HIPS Fitness Family Expo & School Supply Drive!

11 a.m. This great community event will be held at the Workhouse Art Center! There will be tons of activities for everyone including fitness demonstrations (Zumba, Yoga, etc.), kids activities (soccer goals, bounce house, etc), food and local business vendors! The goal of this event is to collect school supplies for Woodlawn Elementary located in Fairfax County. Admission is free with a school supply donation. *Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd., Lorton, VA; workhousearts.org.*

SUNDAY 19

The GIZ

6 p.m. | \$50-\$150. Premiering this August to the MGM National Harbor is The Giz, the Go-Go Musical. Set in D.C., this twist on the classic story of The Wiz will embody the diverse culture and spirit of D.C. Paying homage to the godfather of Go-Go, Chuck Brown, this musical will have you out of your seat and dancing in the aisles. *MGM National Harbor, 101 MGM National Ave., Oxon Hill, MD; mgmnationalharbor.com.*

MONDAY 20

Museum Kid Monday!

10 a.m. | \$5. Bring your child to Ben Lomond this summer to explore history through sight, sound, smell and touch with hands-on activities and crafts! Topics vary each month and will include subjects such as archaeology, plants and 19th century toys. An adult must stay to participate with the child. Ages 3-7. *Ben Lomond Historic Site, 10321 Sudley Manor Dr., Manassas, VA; pwvcgov.org.*



THURSDAY 23

FREE Shakespeare Theatre Company: Romeo & Juliet

Enjoy a free performance of one of the most famous love stories in the world and one of Shakespeare's early poetic masterworks, *Romeo & Juliet*. Caught tragically between two feuding families, Shakespeare's immortal young lovers try to fashion a new world amid the violence of the old, but cataclysmic choices and tragic twists propel them toward a final confrontation with fate. For tickets, enter the online lottery at shakespearetheatre.org. *The Shakespeare Theatre Company, 610 F St. N.W., Washington, D.C; shakespearetheatre.org.*

FRIDAY 24

Parent Night Out

6 p.m. | \$45. Need a night away? Do your children love Zava Zone? Leave

them with us for a safe, fun-filled evening of play while you paint the town red. Drop off your adventurers for a few hours of Zava Zone madness! They will enjoy 1 ½ hours of supervised play, followed by dinner, a movie and then more play! Ages 5-14. *Zava Zone, 45685 Oakbrook Ct. Ste. 110, Sterling, VA; zavazone.com.*

SATURDAY 25

FREE Reels on the Ramp: Sully

8 p.m. Bring the family out for a free outdoor showing of Sully on the outdoor airplane ramp at the National Air and Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center. Don't forget your chairs, blankets and insect repellent! Food is allowed, but alcohol is prohibited. *14390 Air and Space Museum Pkwy., Chantilly, VA.*

Kidz Bop Live 2018

Saturday, August 25 | 6 p.m. | \$30-\$70

Head out to Wolf Trap for the ultimate family concert experience: KIDZ BOP Live 2018! "Sung by kids for kids," watch the KIDZ BOP Kids perform some of today's biggest hit songs that have also kept them at the top of the U.S. kids charts for over 15 years! *Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Rd., Vienna, VA; wolftrap.org.*



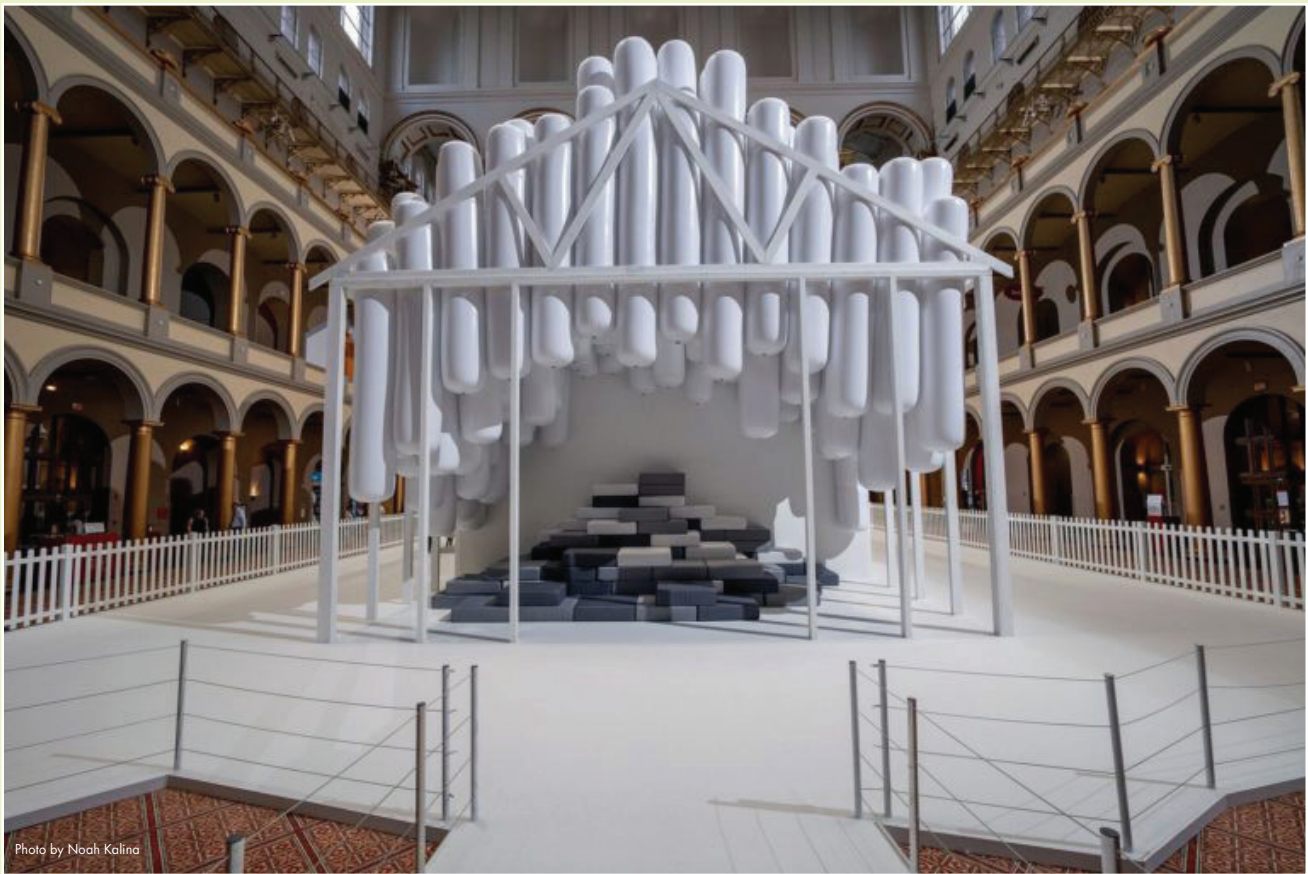


Photo by Noah Kalina

Fun House at the National Building Museum

Tuesday, August 28 | 10 a.m. | Adults: \$16; Youth: \$13

Enjoy an explorative day at the National Building Museum for their new Fun House exhibition! Fun House is Snarkitecture's first comprehensive museum exhibition, examining the prolific activities of the studio throughout the entirety of the Great Hall. It includes a sequence of Instagram-worthy interactive rooms featuring well-known Snarkitecture environments and objects. Tickets include one hour in Fun House and access to all other museum exhibitions. 401 F St., N.W., Washington, D.C; nbm.org.

SUNDAY 26

FREE Portrait Discovery Kits

Come out to the National Portrait Gallery and pick up a Portrait Discovery Kit for some fun museum exploration. Portrait Discovery Kits are an interactive and imaginative way for visitors to learn more about people who are in the National Portrait Gallery and their contributions to American history. *Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, 8th and F Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C; npg.si.edu.*

FRIDAY 31

FREE Friday Night Live Concert Series

Head out to Rockville Town Square for an early dinner with the family, then hang out on the The Square for some live summer concert fun! This August 31 event includes Americana and roots rock musical entertainment from the Billy Coulter Band. *Rockville Town Square, 200 East Middle Ln., Rockville, MD; rockvilletownsquare.com.*



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