

Washington FAMILY

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AUGUST 2019

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School*
ISSUE

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

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End of Summer Vs. Back to School

Wait, summer's almost over? How did this happen? Feels like yesterday we were kicking off the summer festival season, planning our vacations and getting ourselves ready for weekly neighborhood pool hangouts with the family.

Now it's August, which we all know means we'll be seeing those hip, dancing and stylish Target kids commercials showing off the trendiest looks in children's back-to-school wear any day now. Ah, it never fails to make us sigh at the television as we commentate aloud, "Back-to-school time ... already?"

But, it is still August. So, it's still that in-between time between summer and school. That month that gently transitions families into the starkly different routine that is the school year without dropping us into it head-on come September 1st.

So, that's kind of what we're doing for you readers this month. A mix of end-of-summer fun and a bit of back-to-school transition.

Because the end of summer is always a popular time to head out camping, we have a great camping

with families guide on page 24 to make sure kids and parents leave with smiles and an overall feeling of togetherness, not frustration.

We also have some tasty popcorn treats to try out on page 33 for a fun outdoor movie night, and a list of picturesque local pick-your-own fruit farms when the summer boredom hits.

New school lunches and kids with food allergies can always be an issue during this time of the year, so we have some helpful advice for parents on page 28. And we have our annual "Back-to-School Guide" on page 13, which includes local school and after-school resources.

We hope you enjoy the rest of the summer, taking in some last few pool days, reading that summer book you've been wanting to finish and remembering that full-on school mode can hold off for just another day longer ... if you'd like it to. Either way, we're always here to give you just the right family content you're looking for.

Happy reading! ■

Britni



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{ august }

THURSDAY 1

FREE Library of Congress Summer Movies on the Lawn: 'Jaws'

Watch the classic thriller and heart stopper on the North Lawn to kick off the last month of summer. Library of Congress, 8:30 p.m. culturecapital.com

FRIDAY 2

FREE 2019 Asian American Literature Festival

Experience English classes, children's literature panels and spooky ghost stories all focused around this year's theme of care and caregiving. Library of Congress and Smithsonian Freer/ Sackler Galleries, 10:45 a.m. smithsonianapa.org

FREE United States Airforce Band Concert

Listen to music ranging from patriotic melodies to foot-tapping jazz or even classical. Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, 11 a.m. airandspace.si.edu

SATURDAY 3

FREE Dixie Power Trio

Dance to interactive music including Louisiana-influenced jazz, Cajun, blues and more. Reston Town Center, 10 a.m. culturecapital.com

SUNDAY 4

2019 Summer Georgetown 5K, 10K, & 10-Miler

Run, walk or stroll along the scenic Chesapeake & Ohio Canal path. Walter Street, Washington, D.C. 7:30 a.m. \$15- \$50. bishopsevents.com

TUESDAY 6

FREE 'Mouse in House'

This family-friendly play is about a mouse who makes an unlikely friendship with a poet. Sit back and enjoy the show with your family. Arlington Public Library, Columbia Pike Branch, 7 p.m. culturecapital.com

THURSDAY 8

The Three Billy Goats Gruff

See the classic fairy-tail in a 40-minute marionette puppet show. The Puppet Co. Playhouse, Glen Echo. 11 a.m. \$12. culturecapital.com

FRIDAY 9

Rossini's 'The Barber of Seville' with the Wolf Trap Opera

Come watch this comedy and listen to the classic tune of "Figaro, Figaro, Figaro" being belted out over the audience. Wolf Trap, 8:15 p.m. \$25-\$75. culturecapital.com

Mission Impossible: Party Protocol

Bring your secret identity to the first ever after-hours party at the ISM and get an insider look at the new building and exhibits. The International Spy Museum, Washington, D.C., 8:30 p.m. \$65- \$80. spymuseum.org

SATURDAY 10

FREE Artist Talk with Shani Shih

Shani Shih works primarily with illustrations, painting and street art. Come listen to her journey through the art world and about her exhibit, A Right to the City. Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, 11 a.m. anacostia.si.edu/Events

TUESDAY 13

Shawn Mendes

Come hear Shawn Mendes perform hits, such as "In My Blood" and "If I Can't Have You" on Tuesday night. Capital One Arena, Washington, D.C., 6:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$26. songkick.com

WEDNESDAY 14

FREE Conservation Conversation: Preserving SAAM's Collection

Learn how conservators use science, art history and skill to preserve the museums precious works. Smithsonian American Art

Museum, Washington, D.C., 3 p.m. americanart.si.edu

THURSDAY 15

Jonas Brothers

Rock out with the Jonas Brothers along with Bebe Rexha and Jordan McGraw on Thursday night. Capital One Arena, Washington, D.C., 7:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$85. songkick.com

FRIDAY 16

FREE Movies at the Mansion

Grab a blanket and your kids and settle in for a moonlit film under the stars at Kentlands Mansion. This week's entertainment on the lawn is "The Greatest Showman" and will start at sunset. Light concessions, as well as adult beverages, are available for purchase, cash only. 7-11 p.m. gaithersburgmd.gov

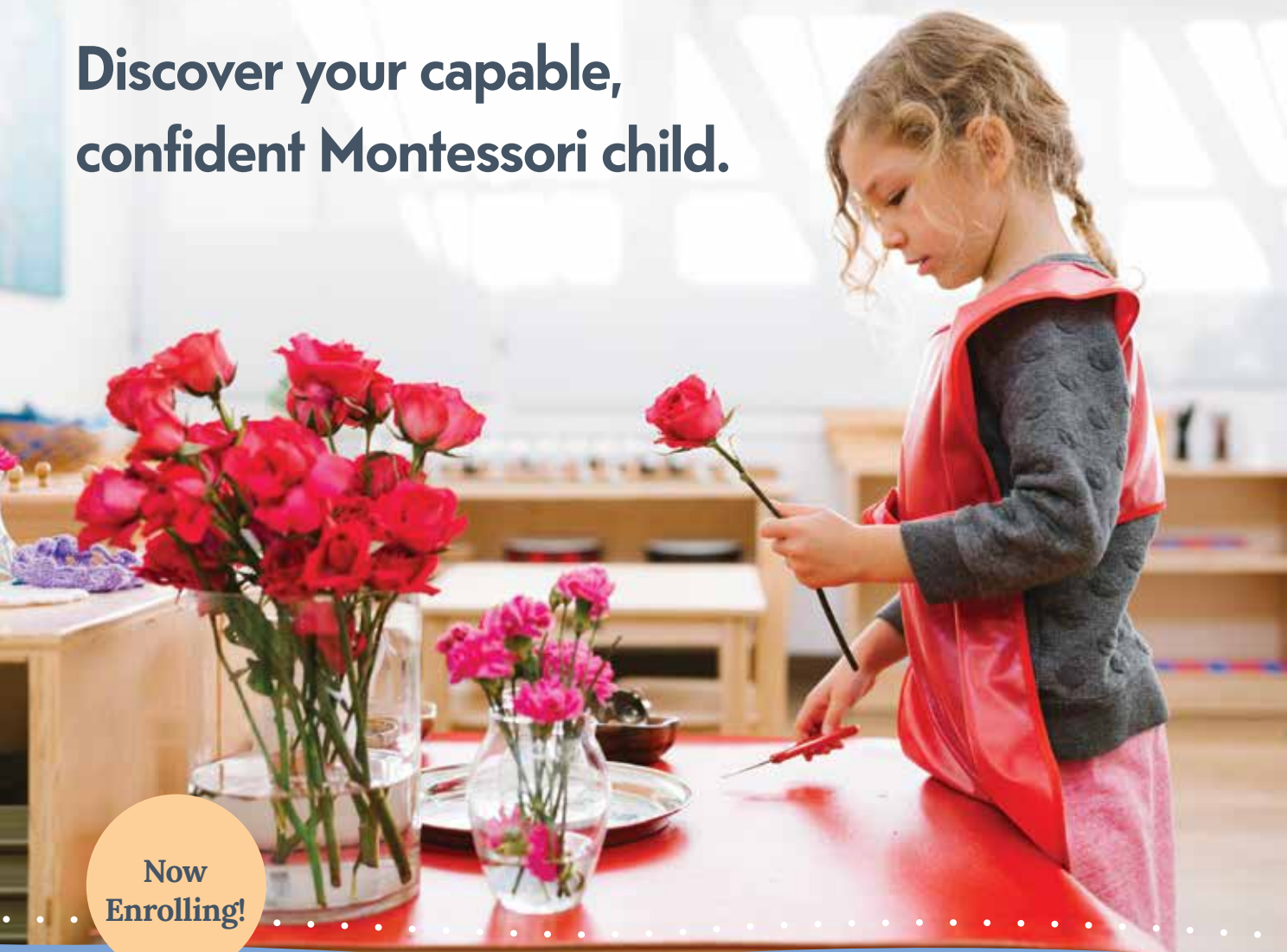
Lake Anne Cardboard Boat Regatta

Saturday, August 10 | FREE | Noon-6 p.m.



Over 70 teams will construct and decorate life-size cardboard boats and race them on Lake Anne in timed heats. Perfect for a family-fun afternoon outing, there will also be kids' activities as well. Lake Anne Plaza, Reston, Va.

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SATURDAY 17

FREE Tour: Portrait Party for Young Learners

This fun and educational tour, exclusively for children ages 3 to 6 and their guardians, is designed to get little bodies moving, brains working, hands making and mouths talking about works of art. Little learners will also study about the museum, practice museum manners, and discover art concepts through various hands-on activities. 10-11 a.m., Washington, D.C., nmwa.org/events

SUNDAY 18

FREE The Arlington County Fair

The Arlington County Fair, one of the biggest in the region, takes place this year at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center. Adventure happens both indoors and out, with an interactive aquarium, arts and crafts, jewelry vendors and competitive displays in the cooled exhibit hall. Outside you can also find thrill rides and kiddie activities like pony rides, an obstacle course and animal races. Times vary, admission. arlingtoncountyfair.us

MONDAY 19

FREE Family Yoga

Unwind and relax with this family-friendly yoga class, where members practice together, no matter their age, level of experience, or disability. Participants should bring a mat and towel. 7-8 p.m. Sterling, Va., library.loudoun.gov

TUESDAY 20

FREE Reading to Dogs-Saturday Edition

Attention all dog lovers, this one is for you. Children in grades K-5 can have fun learning to a special PAL (People Animals Love), aka registered therapy dogs. Prince William County Library, Chinn Park Branch, 11 a.m. pwcgov.org.

WEDNESDAY 21

FREE Live from the Lawn: UkeFest Finale

It's time to rejoice in the wonderful musicality of the ukulele. This year's 11th annual UkeFest features ukulele

World Heritage Festival & Festival of Kites

Saturday, August 24 | FREE | 11 a.m.-6 p.m.



Taste delicious ethnic food, get refreshed with a scoop of ice cream or shaved ice or even a fresh smoothie while enjoying a cultural show on the main stage! There will be more than 60 artists displaying everything from fine art to jewelry, ceramics to crafts and every creative item in between. The kids' zone will have activities and games throughout the day. Ida Lee Park Recreation Center, Leesburg, Va.

superstars Cathy Fink, Marcy Marxer, Daniel Ho, and Peter Luongo along with a mass strum-along. The Mansion at Strathmore. strathmore.org

THURSDAY 22

FREE Baby Storytime

Experience a pre-reading interactive program designed for babies 6-24 months and their caregivers. Caregivers will also get the chance to talk, read, play, and learn together with their children after the program. Prince William County Library, Central Community Branch, 10:30-11 a.m. pwcgov.org

FRIDAY 23

FREE Family Math Night

Enjoy an exciting and educational STEM night where children explore math at their levels through interactive games and activities. Sponsored by

Mathnasium. Montclair Regional Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. montclairlibrary.org

SATURDAY 24

Sing-Along 'Sound of Music'

Give those vocals a warm up and get ready to celebrate a 50-year-old family classic with this one-of-a-kind sing-a-long event. The film returns to the screen in Technicolor ... with a twist. Chant along using on-screen lyrics and become a singing superstar with the kiddos. A costume contest follows the performance. 7:15 p.m. \$25-\$45. wolftrap.org

SUNDAY 25

Tricks Are For Kids

Grab the kids and enjoy a day of family fun with some magic, laughs and plenty of audience participation. This event is hosted by award-winning magicians Brian

Curry and Barry Wood. 3 p.m., \$30-\$40. Washington, D.C., catchmeshow.com

MONDAY 26

FREE Doughnuts Storytime and decorating Workshop

Who doesn't love doughnuts? Add in some reading, singing, rhyming, decorating donuts, and you have a fun and dynamic story time, all morning long. This one is sure to be a hole lot of fun, trust us. All ages welcome. Prince William County Library, Chinn Park Regional Branch, 10:30-11:30 a.m. pwcgov.org.

TUESDAY 27

FREE Sketching: Draw and Discover

Sketch inspiration from the thousands of objects on display in the Luce Foundation Center. Some materials are provided, but young artists are encouraged to bring small

sketchbook and pencils. 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. americanart.si.edu

WEDNESDAY 28

FREE Live-Concert Series on the Plaza

Get to grooving with lunchtime performances featuring the area's best entertainers. There's a genre for everyone, including jazz, neo-soul, bluegrass, reggae, country, pop rock and more. Woodrow Wilson Plaza, noon to 1 p.m. downtownD.C.org

THURSDAY 29

FREE A Garden at Zero G

Lettuce, peas and radishes are just a sample of popular veggies that can be found in a growing garden. But did you know they can also be grown in space? Crewmembers aboard the International Space Station have been growing such plants for years in their "space garden." Learn from the best as the Master Gardener volunteers host an "out of this world" lesson. For grades 1-5. Montclair Library, 10:30-11:30 a.m. montclairlibrary.org

FRIDAY 30

FREE Movie Night on the Museum Lawn

Explore the adventures of young Riley, who is uprooted from her Midwest life, and shipped to San Francisco. Watch as she tries to navigate a new city, house and school in the kid-friendly film *Coco*. Downtown Manassas, starts at dusk. manassascity.org

SATURDAY 31

FREE DinoRoars

Get ready for a summer of prehistoric fun and learning. Dino-lovers can take a self-guided safari around the Zoo to meet dinosaurs that travel, roar and even dribble water. Be sure to search for all six animatronic dinosaurs, from a baby stegosaurus to an enormous T. rex weighing more than 5,000 pounds and measuring roughly 40 feet long. National Zoo, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. nationalzoo.si.edu ■

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2019 BACK-TO-SCHOOL, AFTERCARE AND OPEN HOUSE Guide

After a summer of fun, are your kids ready to try something new this fall or eager to restart something they love?

Our Back-to-School Guide is filled with listings of academic enrichment, musical instruction and after-school activities. You'll also find helpful aftercare programs and information on local private schools.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT & FIELD TRIPS

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barrie.org; admission@barrie.org
301-576-2800; 13500 Layhill Road,
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theauburnschool.org
admissions@theauburnschool.org
703-793-9353, 301-588-8048
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9115 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, Md.
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barrie.org; admission@barrie.org
301-576-2800

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glenbrookscool.org
membership@glenbrookscool.org
301-365-3190; 10010 Fernwood Road
Bethesda, Md.

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

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northern-virginia
866-202-8593

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42945 Waxpool Road, Ashburn, Va..

4550 Walney Road, Chantilly, Va.

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Ages: Infant to elementary

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info@cedarlanemontessori.com
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nysmith.com; ebalberde@nysmith.com
703-713-3332

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admissions@pinecrestschool.org
703-354-3446

Ages: 3-12
7209 Quiet Cove, Alexandria, Va.
Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
Open House: November 11, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
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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.
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thesienaschool.org
info@thesienaschool.org
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admissions@westminsterschool.com
703-256-3620
Grades: K-8
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Preschool (3 and 4-year-olds):
6800 Columbia Pike, Annandale, Va.

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Open House Dates:
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Nov. 12th & Jan. 15th 9-10:30 a.m.
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SKATEQUEST
skatequest.com; info@skatequest.com
703-709-1010
1800 Michael Faraday Ct. Reston, Va.
Hours: 8 a.m.-9 p.m.
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202-420-8359
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11480 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 220W Reston, Va.

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BY ADRANISHA STEPHENS



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But not every family is fortunate enough to be able to buy all the school supplies needed at the beginning of the year. Families with children in elementary through high school can spend an average of \$685 on back-to-school supplies, including electronics, clothing and shoes for their growing brood, according to a recent survey from the National Retail Federation.

This is a significant reason why this August, organizations such as The Neediest Kids program, United Way of Central Maryland and The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Washington D.C. will host fun back-to-school events throughout the region to help children in challenged neighborhoods start the school year right.

Each organization has its specialized mission, with supplies to spare.

The Neediest Kids program in Bethesda, which is an entity of National Center for

Children's and Families, aims to provide resources to students across Maryland, D.C. and Virginia, says program director Jermaine Lemons. On average, it serves 40,000 students, he says.

"This is something that has been around for 40 years. We work with nine local school districts, and we help the homeless and economically disadvantaged students in those districts receive some of the basic necessities that they need to thrive," he says. "Anything a child needs to focus and stay in school — we try to remove that barrier."

In addition to school supplies, children can receive haircuts, new clothing, school uniforms, an eye examination and eyeglasses, personal care items and bedding, among other services. Volunteers help fill backpacks with school supplies and distribute them to young students who are eager to learn, he adds.



"Everything is done discreetly. We mostly work with social workers and pupil personnel workers inside the schools to pass along the vouchers to the students," he says. "We are all about making sure that the family who needs this service is not singled out."

Beth Littrell, who has been with United Way in Maryland for six years as the assistant director of community relations and volunteerism, also agrees that school supply drives are needed.

"We have done this for the past six years and it has grown into something quite enormous, which is a good thing," Littrell says. "Last year, we had about 35 drives that we ran. We collect the school supplies through different outlets. One is we have a lot of corporate partners. I reach out to them to say hey, we need school supplies, here are the supplies we need, who is interested in running a drive? We have partners who will put things in their lobbies, or internally to gather donations."

Another way to collect school supplies is through the schools and online registries, Littrell adds.

"Last year, we even had some high school kids who wanted to run a drive through their school. In addition to that, we have added a component where people can do an online registry, where people can go out and get supplies. They can order straight to our site, and those items get shipped directly to us. Right now, we have a registry set up at Target, she says.

Last year, the United Way gave out supplies to 1,200 students. Volunteers drove a colorful back-to-school shuttle around the city to pick up supplies from organizations participating in the drive, including Under Armour, Miles & Stockbridge, T. Rowe Price and Johns Hopkins Medicine. And they hope to provide just as many backpacks to students this year, Littrell says.

"With the backpack drives in particular, there is nothing cuter than seeing a kid get a brand new backpack full of supplies, throwing it over their shoulder and just seeing them so excited," she says. "You wouldn't think that something that small would be a big impact, but it is."

The organization also hosts back-to-school giveaways in Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore County, Carroll, Harford and Howard counties.

The Ronald McDonald House's school supply drives are one of the most popular ways to mobilize a community and help students in need, says Sarah Quillen, vice president of development and marketing.

The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile/KIDS Mobile Medical Clinic provides free healthcare to children in D.C. Wards 4 to 8. The second Care Mobile, which was successfully piloted in D.C. in 2017, is home to the FITNESS (Fun in Teaching Nutrition and Exercise to Successful Students) program. What does it do? It partners with schools across D.C. to deliver a curriculum focusing on healthy eating and the importance of physical activity to students grades K-8, Quillen says.

In addition to the mobiles backpack drives, families can also receive food, toiletry and toys from the organization's donation drives.

The Ronald McDonald Care Mobiles currently serve 4,254 patients, with more than 1,237 medical visits and has hosted 34 outreach events across the area.

And across the three core programs, including housing for families in D.C. and Virginia, approximately, 7785 children were served in 2017, Quillen explains.

"We partner with MedStar Georgetown University Hospital with the two Care Mobiles, and they are the ones that drive the 40-foot medical unit around and come to schools. Over the summer, they also go to community centers. They park them there, and they serve where the kids are, which is much more convenient for them. We also do certain drives through the houses, when children and their families are staying with us."

As for other ways, the community can help? Some options include donating time, supplies and vehicles as well as participating in a wish-list drive. Donations can even be dropped off to either the D.C. or Virginia house.

"What I enjoy most is raising money and raising awareness for a stellar cause," she says. "The beauty of this organization, especially in the D.C. area where there are so many charities, is that we are small but mighty. We have a small staff and an army of volunteers that donate, and I am always so honored and proud to be a part of this effort and continue this effort of helping families." ■

READY TO DONATE?

THE NEEDIEST KIDS PROGRAM SUPPLY DRIVE

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Location: 6301 Greentree Road,
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"There is nothing cuter than seeing a kid get a brand new backpack full of supplies, throwing it over their shoulder and just seeing them so excited."

BETH LITRELL
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY
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Cool Acceptance

How I Learned to Tolerate 'Frozen'

BY DANIEL LEADERMAN



When my oldest daughter was born, and even before, I worried about princesses the way people worry about bedbugs. I was afraid that once they got into our lives, they would never leave and that the child would be obsessed by the celebration of wealth, beauty, privilege and the need to be rescued by men that I felt (perhaps unfairly) these characters embodied.

More specifically, I was worried about "Frozen," a film that I had yet to see but whose defiant, show-stopping anthem-that-shall-not-be-named I had already heard — and dismissed as embarrassing, sub-Lloyd-Webber drivel. But I had witnessed the hypnotic power this movie has over children and had seen, on multiple non-Halloween occasions, little girls walking around in public — in public! — wearing their Elsa costumes.

No way, I thought. Not my kid.

For three years, I actively kept this film from my daughter, steering her instead toward fare that was more tolerable (to me), such as "Moana" and the Pixar library. Was it her I was trying to protect, or was it me? I plead the Fifth. But the week after our second

I had been the father of a daughter. Now, I was the father of sisters. Luckily, older girl thought — and still thinks — younger girl is wonderful and has taken a mostly protective attitude toward the baby since day one. The baby seems to adore her big sister, who is often the greatest show in town. It's been moving to watch them interact and see their relationship develop.

"Frozen," for the blissfully uninitiated, is about two strong, confident sisters trying to protect each other. There's a bit of romance, too, but it's mostly subplot; it doesn't drive the action of the story the way the bond between the two young women does.

And so, driving my oldest to school, listening to "Do You Want to Build a Snowman" for the three-dozen-th time, I suddenly found myself getting, well, a little emotional.

Those sisters are so devoted to each other, I thought with a burst of clarity. All they want is for the other to be safe and happy! That's what I want for my girls. That's all I want!

Resistance, it would appear, was futile. From then on, my objections to the film have more or less evaporated. The Song is still

I was afraid that once [princesses] got into our lives, they would never leave and that [my daughters] would be obsessed by the celebration of wealth, beauty, privilege and the need to be rescued by men.

daughter was born, while I was awash in the rekindled joy and exhaustion of bringing a newborn home, I let down my guard for a few crucial minutes. Older daughter heard the song when it began playing after the "Lion King" clips we'd been watching on YouTube, declared "I want to watch that movie," and, too weak to fight it any longer, I relented.

The first few viewings were hard. So were the next few mornings on which she wanted to hear only "Frozen" songs on the drive to school. Weeks passed. Elsa sang.

"This is your life now, you dumb bastard," I thought to myself. But life had also changed in more important ways. Before,

mediocre, Olaf the Snowman still feels like he was hastily dreamed up so the team in the writers' room could break early for lunch, and the movie is still about princesses in pretty clothes rather than ordinary-looking people with regular jobs. But ... it's OK.

It's got two great sisters, and that will do for now. I've learned that sometimes you just have to ... I mean, you have to take your anger and ... we've all just got to let ... sigh ... Oh, reader, don't make me say it. I still can't bear to type the words ... ■

Daniel Leaderman is author of the blog, Dad Reckoning.

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C•A•M•P LIKE A PRO

Tips to make your end-of-summer family camping trip a success

BY AMY WHITLEY

Ah, the family camping trip: fun-filled days at the lake or by the river, restful afternoons lying in a hammock slung between two trees, roasting marshmallows by the fire and snuggling into cozy sleeping bags at night. At least, that's what campground brochures would have you believe about the experience. If this idealized version of events doesn't exactly mirror your own camping experiences, you're not alone. Often, excursions into the great outdoors with kids involves more work than play, more chaos than relaxation and far more dirt (on everything) than bargained for. But there are some tricks of the trade that can turn your camping trip into an (almost) postcard version.

Want to ensure that your next camping trip is relaxing, stress free and focused on the fun, not the chores, in the outdoors? The following camping tips will ensure

more time in the hammock and less time over a camp stove.

- Simplification is the key to creating a relaxed camping atmosphere. Reduce clutter around the campsite and shorten your packing list by bringing a few ordinary objects that can double as useful camping tools.
- Instead of hauling bags of ice (and dealing with the mess), freeze plastic water bottles and let them slowly melt, first cooling your food, then ensuring hydration.
- Skip the bulky camping lantern. Instead, simply wrap a standard headlamp around a clear plastic water jug. It will light up the entire picnic area for games of cards after dark.
- No need to bring sleeping pads and water toys. Sleep on plastic blow-up air mattresses that can go straight from the tent to the lake. Float on them during the day (or take a nap!), then return them to the campsite each night.

- Don't buy an expensive camp kitchen set. Bring a hanging shoe organizer to store camp kitchen supplies such as spices or grilling tools.
- Why buy fire starter or chemical-based gel? Use dryer lint as your fire-starter: simply save lint in cardboard egg carton pockets, pour wax over each pod and then bring along to start your fire.
- If you buy coffee at home, there's no need to buy a toilet paper roll container. Store toilet paper rolls in your empty plastic coffee containers (the big ones work best). The toilet paper will stay dry and be easy for kids to find when they need it.

Unfortunately, not every camping item can be "MacGyvered" from items you already own. A few camping "luxury" items can go a long way toward ultimate comfort and fun in the outdoors.

- A good hammock: The Grand Trunk double hammock (PracticalTravelGear.





C•A•M•P
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HOME

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dnr.maryland.gov

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Greenbelt, Maryland
nps.gov

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nps.gov



OFTEN,

excursions into the great outdoors with kids involves more work than play, more chaos than relaxation and far more dirt (on everything) than bargained for.



com) is a quality choice. It's easy to set up, comes in a compact stuff sack and fits two people comfortably.

- **Headlamps for everyone:** A headlamp can be picked up for under \$10 and allows for hands-free illumination. You'll never return to clumsy flashlights again.
- **Hydration packs:** Want kids to stay hydrated? Outfit them with small hydration packs (one liter will do). Most day packs now fit hydration pack bladders, which can be purchased solo for under \$30.
- **Water shoes for the family:** Say goodbye to stubbed toes and splinters in little feet. Water shoes can be worn in and out of water, performing double duty as light hiking shoes.
- **A dining set for every family member:** Check out Light My Fire. This camping product company makes individual meal kits that include a plate, bowl, cup and utensils that all fit together. Kids take pride in ownership, which means they'll do their own dishes.
- **Mosquito bands, candles, or clothing:** Mosquitoes are an unfortunate evil of outdoor recreation, and repellent spray is often unhealthy and smelly. Mosquito bands are a nonintrusive alternative, and they can be bought for just a few dollars. Ditto for citronella candles, which can be set out on picnic tables after dark. If you want to go high tech, try insecticide-treated clothing, with repellent infused directly into the fabric. Exofficio.com and Columbia.com both make shirts, pants and bandanas in this fashion, but they won't come cheap.

- **Sun and shade shelter:** Everyone remembers a tent, but many campers overlook the convenience and comfort offered by a sun and shade shelter. Simple canopies like ones from REI can be set up over picnic tables for shaded meals and card games or brought to the lakeshore to protect kids from the sun.

DINING HACKS

Families can have all the right gear and convenient household items, but if you're still slaving over the camp stove, your trip won't be relaxing. The following dining hacks make meal prep and planning a breeze. Cooking most of your meals over the campfire or on the barbecue makes food fun and clean-up simple.

- **Grill fruit on the barbecue:** Fruit is more appealing than grilled veggies to kids, and with a little whipped cream, you can skip the marshmallows. Try creating fruit kabobs with stone fruit such as peaches, pineapple, grapes (cut in half for young children) and strawberries. Local berries bought at farm stands or even picked by the family work well, too.
- **Make "pocket" dinners:** Create pockets of tin foil and fill with sliced potatoes, zucchini, onions and other veggies, and then let them cook in the coals. It's best to use heavy-duty foil to ensure that ashes don't get into your meal. Each pocket is customizable and fun to eat.
- **Pack milk substitutes instead of cow milk:** Milk substitutes like soy, almond and rice milk don't have to be refrigerated, and vanilla or chocolate flavors

are appealing to most kids, so there's no need to worry about keeping milk cold for breakfast cereal.

- **Skip the dishes:** Use empty snack-size chip bags as individual serving "bowls" for chili, stew or even oatmeal. Kids love these "on-the-go" containers.
- **Don't get fancier than boiled water:** If you really want to simplify mealtime, buy dehydrated backpacking single- or double-serving meals. They taste just fine in the wilderness, require only boiling water and take about five minutes to prepare.

CAMP CLOSE TO HOME

There is no need to drive hours for a family camping trip. Find a campground close to home to keep stress at a minimum. Plus, being near home allows for spontaneous camping or quick returns home for forgotten items. There are a lot of options for camping around the DMV. Check Maryland and Virginia state park listings and then search for available sites online. KOA.com is a good resource for campsites with kid-friendly amenities such as pools or mini golf courses. A short drive and familiarity with the surroundings helps campers to relax more quickly. ■

Amy Whitley is a travel writer who specializes in planning outdoors adventures for kids. She founded the family travel site PitStopsForKids.com.

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New Rules

ON FOOD ALLERGIES



HERE'S THE LATEST ON
TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

BY MELANIE SWITZER REILLY

As parents these days, we are constantly being reminded about the dangers of food allergies. We have to be careful not only about what our kids eat at home, but also about what is served at birthday parties, play dates, and even school with the snacks that are provided.

At some summer camps, children wear color-coded bracelets to indicate specific allergies. A by-product of helicopter parenting? It would be easy to dismiss it as that, until we hear that one in every 13 children, or roughly two in every classroom, has a food allergy. And about 40 percent of kids with food allergies are allergic to more than one food.

There has been some research to suggest that our modern-day need to germ proof absolutely everything has led to an overuse of hand sanitizers and antibacterial soap — and that this kills off too much good bacteria, leaving us susceptible to more allergies. This is what's known as the "hygiene hypothesis," says Dr. Theodore Kim, principal physician at Allergy Partners of Northern Virginia.

"Around the turn of the last century, humans used to get a lot sicker on a regular basis, and our bodies were constantly fighting off major infection," Kim says. "Now that we have such effective vaccines and advances in modern medicine, our immune system is 'confused,' which can result in immune system overreaction such as in allergies."

In May of this year, the American Academy of Pediatrics turned what we thought we knew about kids' food allergies on its head. It has confirmed, as a result of ongoing studies, that now expectant mothers do not need to avoid peanuts or other foods known to cause allergies, or avoid giving those foods to infants, even if there is a family history of allergies.

This erases the guidelines set in 2000 that advised giving hydrolyzed (broken down) infant formulas to babies at risk for food allergies and avoiding allergenic foods like milk and nuts until after age 1.

"The latest studies support introducing foods early to babies to help prevent future food allergies," Kim says. "Introducing eggs between 4 to 6 months of age and peanuts between 4 and 11 months of age to children without high risk for food allergies can help prevent egg and peanut allergies, respectively."

Although these new findings are both promising and exciting, if one has high-risk factors, such as a family history of food allergies or moderate to severe

eczema, then these recommendations may not apply. Best bet: Always check with your doctor first.

Thankfully, if your child suffers with food allergies, time can also be on your side, as kids can outgrow allergies, but little is still known as to why. Just as suddenly as they can develop, they can inexplicably vanish, and the body ceases reacting to the allergen.

Research has shown that one in five kids will outgrow their peanut allergies, one in 10 will outgrow their tree nut allergy, and many kids eventually outgrow their milk, egg, soy and wheat allergy. Kim suggests retesting your child for allergies once a year in your allergist's office. Recently, he and his colleagues have seen great success with food oral immunotherapy, where they give the patient small amounts of the allergen over time to help the body outgrow it.

"With our oral immunotherapy program for peanuts, the patients start out eating very tiny amounts of peanut protein," Kim says. "The amounts steadily increase until they have reached a maintenance dose, which is typically eight peanuts a day after 10 months of treatment. The main goal is to prevent anaphylactic reaction from an accidental exposure."

ONE IN EVERY
13 CHILDREN,
OR ROUGHLY
TWO IN EVERY
CLASSROOM, HAS
A FOOD ALLERGY.

It is always a good idea to check with your pediatrician if you think your child is having any bad reaction to something they are eating or drinking. Your doctor may have the answers you need or they may refer you to an allergist to see if there is something more targeted going on. Then you will know what the next course of action should be while keeping the health and safety of your child at the forefront. ■

Melanie Switzer Reilly is a Washington, D.C.-based mom, television producer and print journalist.





Having something positive to look forward to after the appointment may make them less anxious during the visit.

Is Your Child Afraid of the Doctor?

Five ways to ease their fears

BY IRENE-MYERS THOMPSON

While children's reactions to the doctors can vary depending on age and temperament, the doctor's office can be an unfamiliar, stressful and scary place for a young child. During the toddler and preschool years, healthcare visits are more frequent with regular well visits and preventative care such as vaccinations and if illnesses or injuries hit.

The experience can be stressful for both the kids and parents, making it difficult for a youngster to understand why these visits are important.

Fear of the doctor is an issue that resonates with many families. A C.S. Mott Children's Hospital national poll surveyed parents of kids between the ages of 2 to 5 and found that half said their child is afraid of going to the doctor. Further studies show that children ages 2 to 5 have most fear of getting a shot, have stranger anxiety or have bad memories of a previous illness.

If you are struggling to get your child in for checkups, you're not alone. Consider these five tips for putting their anxiety at ease—as well as yours.

Prepare your child for what to expect.

Be clear and talk about what may happen at their next checkup. For kids, knowing what to expect can be a big help, but avoid making promises that may be broken during the visit, like whether they are getting a shot or not. Lay out how the appointment will go step-by-step by reading a book or watching a show to help manage a child's anxiety.

Build patient-doctor trust.

Although seeing a different doctor from the child's normal pediatrician might be inevitable, to avoid stranger anxiety, try to see the same doctor so your child can get to know him or her over time. If kids are able to put a face to their doctor, it may make the experience less scary.

Ensure you'll be together.

Many children worry they will be separated from their parent during a doctor's visit. Explain to them ahead of time that you'll be there the whole time to ease any concerns. And if they have a favorite toy or stuffed animal that brings them comfort, bring that along.

Plan a rewarding experience.

Incentivize your child with good behavior at the doctor's with a treat or a trip to the park after the exam. Having something positive to look forward to after the appointment may make them less anxious during the visit.

Be calm.

While it is natural to feel nervous or upset when your child is, he or she likely senses your energy. It is important to manage your anxiety in the appropriate way as not to further heighten their anxiousness. If you are calm and comfortable, they're more likely to mirror those feelings.

Your child may struggle to get over their fear of the doctor, but these tips may make the next visit easier. If you're concerned with your child's level of anxiety, talk with their pediatrician. Creating positive affiliations with healthcare can help create healthy habits and attitudes toward medical care that children carry throughout their life. ■

Irene-Myers Thompson is the wellness director for UnitedHealthcare of the Mid-Atlantic.



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Fruit Picking Fun

BY WF STAFF



Pools and parks aren't the only outdoor places to take kids this summer. One great way to get outside is to do some fruit picking. Here are seven local farms that offer pick-your-own opportunities in August and September. Take a bite of this fun and follow up with an afternoon of pie baking. Enjoy!

BUTLER'S ORCHARD, GERMANTOWN, MD.
Tuesday through Sunday, pick black raspberries and blueberries starting at 8:30 a.m. Take a hay-filled tractor ride around the farm or reserve a space to roast marshmallows with your friends. You can even come back in September and October for their Pumpkin Festival, which includes hayrides and cider. Visitors can also pick peas, strawberries, tart cherries, blackberries, red raspberries and apples within the summer and early fall months as well as choose Christmas trees in late November through December. The farm market has even more choices, including veggies and kitchen décor — not to mention a bakery. Day pass, \$3; season pass, \$25.
butlersorchard.com

BURNSIDE FARMS, NOKESVILLE, VA.
From mid-June through Labor Day, cut sunflowers or explore one of the nation's only sunflower mazes. There are also gardens of gladiolus and clouds of cosmos to be cut and paired with those

freshly cut sunflowers. Burnside Farm also has a bounce house, a two-story slide, a bubble station, cornhole games and more. Season pass, \$15; flowers are priced by stem and run from 50 cents a stem for cosmos to \$1.50 a stem for sunflowers.
burnsidefarms.com

GREAT COUNTRY FARMS, BLUEMONT, VA.
On Tuesdays, pick blackberries and peaches through the month of August. The farm hosts the Big Potato Dig on Aug. 18-19 for all the spuds fans out there (and who isn't a fan?). Apple picking starts in late August and goes through September, when you can head to the fields to pick grapes and then pumpkins. The farm market offers all of this produce as well as eggs, local honey and cider doughnuts. Children, \$8; adults, \$10.
greatcountryfarms.com

WEGMEYER FARMS, HAMILTON, VA.
Wegmeyer Farms is known for its strawberries in the spring and its pumpkins in the fall. In the fall, go to its Wayside Farm playground

for a corn maze, hay rides and even pig races on Saturdays and Sundays. Free.
wegmeyerfarms.com

HOMESTEAD FARM, POOLESVILLE, MD.
Pick peaches, blueberries and blackberries seven days a week this summer. During other seasons, the farm grows apples, pumpkins and tart cherries. In its market, you can purchase pre-picked fruits and veggies, preservatives and local honey. \$2 per person. **homestead-farm.net**

HOLLIN FARMS, DELAPLANE, VA.
During the summer months, pick from a large variety of fruits and veggies, including peaches and

plums, through August. The fall months offer apple and pumpkin picking as well as digging your own peanuts and potatoes. The farm also gives customers the option to purchase local Angus beef with the next slaughter date being Aug. 12. Free.
hollinfarms.com

MARKER-MILLERS ORCHARDS FARM, WINCHESTER, VA.
Monday through Saturday, pick your own peaches, red raspberries, blackberries, tomatoes and apples through August. In September and October, you can pick from 12 types of apples, pumpkins and winter squash. Besides the market, the Sweet Shop offers 12 kinds of handmade fudge, eight varieties of ice cream and fresh fruit slushes. When you are not picking your own fruits and veggies, you can explore the playground, take a wagon ride or try out the farm's cow train activity. Free.
markermillerorchards.com ■





Pop Up a Movie Night

Invite your friends and neighbors over, spread out some comfy seating and dim the lights. We all know that August is the time when “summer boredom” hits. So, why not try something new like hosting an end-of-summer movie night in the comfort of your own home or on a projector in the yard? Of course, tasty snacks only add to the fun.

Light and airy popcorn is a movie watching staple and one you can feel good about eating. At only 30 calories per cup, whole-grain, freshly popped popcorn is naturally low in fat and calories, non-GMO, gluten-free, contains no artificial additives or preservatives and is sugar-free.

Enjoyed a handful at a time or as part of creative, flavorful snack recipes – like Popcorn Pepperoni Pizza Dippers, Sweet and Salty Popcorn Party Mix and Truffle Popcorn – popcorn offers plenty of versatility to fit nearly any theme.

Popcorn Pepperoni Pizza Dippers

Yield: 16 squares

Nonstick cooking spray

2 eggs

½ cup tomato and basil reduced-fat cooking cream

1 tablespoon grated parmesan cheese

⅛ teaspoon coarse ground black pepper

10 cups popped popcorn

1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

⅓ cup thinly sliced pepperoni, coarsely chopped

marinara sauce, for dipping

Heat oven to 350 degrees.

Spray 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In large bowl, whisk eggs, cooking cream, parmesan cheese and black pepper. Stir in popcorn, mozzarella cheese and pepperoni.

Spread mixture in prepared pan, patting down with spatula or spoon.

Bake about 15 minutes until set and lightly browned. Let sit 5 minutes. Cut into 16 bars. Serve warm with marinara sauce.

Sweet and Salty Popcorn Party Mix

Yield: 14 cups

10 cups popped popcorn

2 cups miniature pretzel twists

1 cup pecans

1 cup peanuts

2 cups rice, wheat or corn cereal squares

½ cup butter (1 stick)

½ cup packed brown sugar

¼ cup corn syrup

½ teaspoon baking soda

Heat oven to 300 degrees.

In large bowl, combine popcorn, pretzels, pecans, peanuts and cereal squares; set aside.

In medium saucepan over medium heat, heat butter, brown sugar and corn syrup. Stir mixture until it begins to boil. Boil 3 minutes without stirring. Remove from heat and stir in baking soda. Note: Mixture will foam.

Pour syrup over popcorn mixture and stir until evenly coated. Pour mixture onto large, rimmed baking sheet or roasting pan. Bake 30 minutes, stirring twice during baking. Stir mixture several times as it cools. Store in airtight container.

Truffle Popcorn

Yield: 10 cups

1 ½ tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon, plus 2 teaspoons, white truffle oil, divided

½ cup popcorn kernels

1 tablespoon butter

3 tablespoons shredded parmesan cheese

½ teaspoon sea salt
freshly ground black pepper

In large, heavy-bottomed pot with lid, combine olive oil and 1 tablespoon truffle oil. Add about three popcorn kernels.

Heat medium-high until one kernel pops. Add remaining popcorn kernels; cover.

Once corn begins to pop, shake pot constantly over heat.

When popping slows, remove pot from heat and transfer popcorn to large serving bowl.

Melt butter and mix in remaining truffle oil. Pour mixture over popcorn; toss.

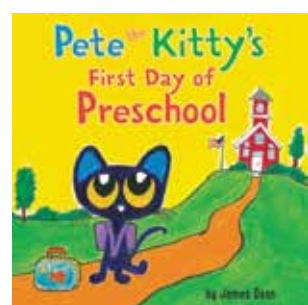
Sprinkle parmesan cheese, salt and pepper over popcorn; toss to distribute evenly.

Serve immediately or store in airtight container. ■

Find more recipes perfect for serving at your next movie night at popcorn.org.

— Family Features





11 Books to Get Your Kids Excited About Back to School

BY WF STAFF

With the new school year approaching, get your kids excited for their first day back with one of these newly released books that focus on themes like making new friends, starting new routines, gaining confidence in school subjects and having fun in the classroom!

'The Pigeon HAS to Go to School!'

By Mo Willems

Why does the Pigeon have to go to school? He already knows everything! And what if he doesn't like it? What if the teacher doesn't like him? What if he learns too much? Discover what Pigeon learns about the importance of school. Ages 4-7.

Who knew preschool could be so much fun? Just don't forget your groovy backpack and your yummy snack, Pete the Kitty! Preschoolers and little ones getting ready to go to preschool for the first time will enjoy cheering Pete the Kitty's fun entry to preschool. Ages 3-6.

'The King of Kindergarten'

By Derrick Barnes

Starting kindergarten is a big milestone, and this kindergartener is ready to make his mark! He's dressed himself, eaten a pile of pancakes and can't wait to be part of a whole new kingdom of kids. The day will be jam-packed, but he's up to the challenge. And afterward, he can't wait to tell his proud parents all about his achievements. Ages 3-6.

'When Pencil Met Eraser'

By Karen Kilpatrick

Ever wonder why there's a little pink eraser on every pencil? Find out in this funny, clever picture book that tells the true story of how Pencil and Eraser became the best of friends. When Pencil draws on the pages of this book, Eraser erases parts of Pencil's work, and the book itself becomes a canvas for their different takes on creativity — until the two discover their artwork is even better when they work together. Ages 3-6.

'I Will Be Fierce'

By Bea Birdsong

This is a powerful picture book about courage, confidence, kindness and finding the extraordinary in everyday moments. It's a brand new day, and a young girl decides to take on the world like a brave explorer heading off on an epic fairy-tale quest. From home to school and back again, our hero conquers the library, forges new friendships and leads the victorious charge home on her school bus. Ages 3-6.

'First Day of Groot!'

By Brendan Deneen

Just like the rest of us, Groot's learning that there's a first time (and a first day!) for everything. Follow Rocket and Groot as they set off across the galaxy learning new lessons, developing new skills and making new memories with friends along the way. With so many new experiences on the horizon, Groot's sure to have a first day rooted in spectacular fun, heroics and everything in between. Ages 4-7.

'Pete the Kitty's First Day of Preschool'

By James Dean

It's a big day for Pete the Kitty: his first day of preschool! He meets his cool teacher, sings a few fun songs and even gets to paint.

'Life According to Og the Frog'

By Betty G. Birney

Og the Frog has just moved into Room 26 at the school, and the place is hopping. There are lively kids, new routines and a

Happy Birthday, Suzanne Collins!

Each month, we celebrate a birthday of literary significance.

"What I need is the dandelion in the spring. The bright yellow that means rebirth instead of destruction. The promise that life can go on, no matter how bad our losses. That it can be good again," Katniss Everdeen says in the final chapter of "Mockingjay," the third and final installment of much-loved "Hunger Games" series by Suzanne Collins. Her words revealed the long-awaited conclusion of a series-long love triangle between Katniss, Peeta and Gale, characters who became household names. The 2008 novel once reigned at the top of the bestseller lists of *The New York Times*, *USA Today* and the *Wall Street Journal*. It was read by teens and young adults alike and became a popular movie in 2012. In addition to this series, Collins is known for her "Underland Chronicles" series about sewer-dwellers in New York City which, like "The Hunger Games" series, created a fascinatingly grim universe in which young people could immerse themselves.

Collins' father was in the military which required her family to move frequently — she lived in Indiana and Belgium before graduating high school Alabama — and inspired her writing. She told *Scholastic* that her father's storytelling made her feel like she was at the battlefield herself, which she tries to mimic in her writing. Since the conclusion of "The Hunger Games" series, Collins has focused on authoring children's books like "Year of The Jungle" and "When Charlie McButton Lost Power." ■

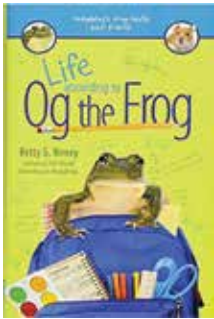


furry neighbor who seems to squeak all day. Luckily, everyone seems friendly. But just as Og is getting used to this new life, there is talk of sending him back to the pond. But will his classmates decide to keep Og as their classroom pet or take him back to his old life at the pond? Ages 6-9.

'Take Your Pet to School Day'

By Linda Ashman

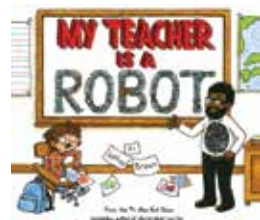
When pets show up with their kids at Maple View Elementary, it's total chaos! These animals have no respect for school rules, and every class quickly gets out of hand. But why did they show up in the first place? Who said they could come? Could it have been ... the pets themselves? It turns out they just wanted in on the fun! Now, if they want to stay, they'll just have to behave. Ages 3-7.



'My Teacher is a Robot'

By Jeffrey Brown

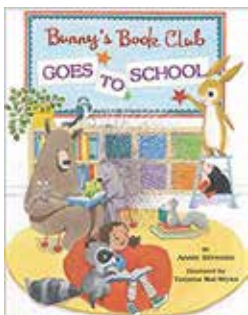
Fred does not want to go to school because it's boring. Especially since he thinks his teacher is a robot. If only Fred could imagine a way for his day to be more exciting. This inventively funny picture book celebrates the boundlessness of a child's imagination and celebrates the teachers, families and friends who get wrapped up in the fantastic worlds of children. Ages 3-7.



'Bunny's Book Club Goes to School'

By Annie Silvestro

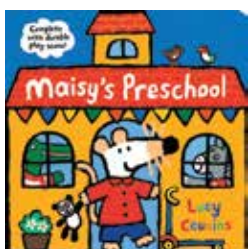
Bunny and his forest friends meet at the town library every Saturday morning for book club. But one summer day, their library buddy, Josie, confesses to Bunny that she's nervous about starting school. Bunny has an idea: He'll go with her! Soon, Bunny's friends, Bear, Raccoon, Bird, Porcupine, Squirrel, Mole, Mouse and Frog, decide to join him — and Josie's first day of school turns into a critter-filled adventure. Ages 3-7.



'Maisy's Preschool'

By Lucy Cousins

It's time for school! Maisy and her friends play with building blocks, practice their counting and sit down for story time. A pop-up classroom scene waits at the end of the book with paper press-outs of Maisy and her pals. Kids will relish the chance to play teacher and decide the lessons, all while putting their imaginations to the test and learning about the routines that make up a day at school. Ages 3-5. ■



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Dealing with the Chaos Called School Recess

BY KATHRYN STREETER

As school commences and kids enjoy the organized chaos on the playground at recess, you're probably not alone in thinking, "What about my kids playing with kids who don't share the values we're teaching them at home?" I'll never forget my firstborn, a kindergartener, asking after school about the word she'd heard at recess — starting with an "f" and ending with a "k." I reminded myself what I brazenly told friends about my parenting approach: I strive to equip, not shelter my kids. Yet it's a real tension, to raise kids in today's messy world without the added pressure of them engaging on the playground daily with kids who come from very different home environments, some which may hold directly opposing world views.

I approached syndicated columnist Lori Borgman, national speaker, author of "I Was A Better Mother Before I Had Kids" and most importantly, she says, proud grandmother of 11 grandkids, to address this concern.

Why should I put my kids in a play environment where their values may be confronted?

Borgman: The ability to smoothly navigate difficult situations is a sign of maturity. Such maturity is built on communication skills, confidence, grace and, yes, experience. Our young people need exposure to the sharp edges of life. What better time to get exposure to and experience worldviews different from our own than under the watchful eyes of caring parents?

But I'd like to protect my child from negative influences. How can I justify them playing with kids whose speech is laced with swear words or who may blatantly cheat in games?

Borgman: As parents, we often undervalue the benefits of conflict. Our instinct is to be in protection mode 24/7, always ready to put on our helmets and shoulder pads and run defense for our kids. But the truth is, there is value in the struggle.

Dr. Paul Tough, author of an excellent book titled "How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character" unpacks a growing concern over young people's inability to cope with difficulties. Tough writes, "American children, especially those who grow up in relative

comfort, are, more than ever, shielded from failure as they grow up. If this new research is right, their schools, their families and their culture may all be doing them a disservice by not giving them more opportunities to struggle."

Tough contends that what matters most in children's development is not how much information we can stuff into their brains, but whether we are able to help them develop a very different set of qualities, such as persistence, self-control, curiosity and self-confidence.

How do I use these playground encounters as teaching moments?

Borgman: Perhaps the greatest benefit of young people experiencing conflict, adversity and a clash of worldviews under a parent's watchful eye is the discussion that follows. How did you handle that situation and would you handle it differently next time?

And you can be sure there will be a next time: on the ballfield, in the neighborhood, with a new group of friends or even in your extended family. Each encounter is an opportunity to discuss when to say something and when to hold your tongue, how to offer an opposing opinion, the value of asking questions over making statements, how to diffuse another person's anger and when you should simply find the nearest exit and run.

Our young people need exposure to the sharp edges of life.

Interacting with those with different worldviews and worldviews hostile to our own is inevitable. Practice may not make for perfect, but it can make for a well-adjusted young person.

I don't expect perfect kids, but well-adjusted sits well with me as it probably does you. That's what I'm hoping will come of all this practice my kids—and likely yours—are going through on the playground. ■

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

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