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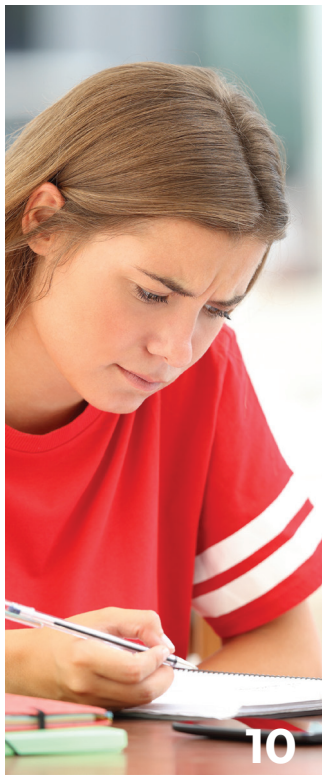
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**ON THE COVER:**  
Student at Reston  
Montessori school in  
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## SMART STUDY & ORGANIZATIONAL HABITS FOR THE NEW YEAR P. 10-12

*"Many kids don't know how to take advantage of very small chunks of time, which is exactly when they have the opportunity to develop a good study habit."*

Ann Dolin

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*"When students who are not diagnosed with ADHD choose to take Adderall for the purpose of doing better academically, they are only cheating themselves."*

Amanda Socci

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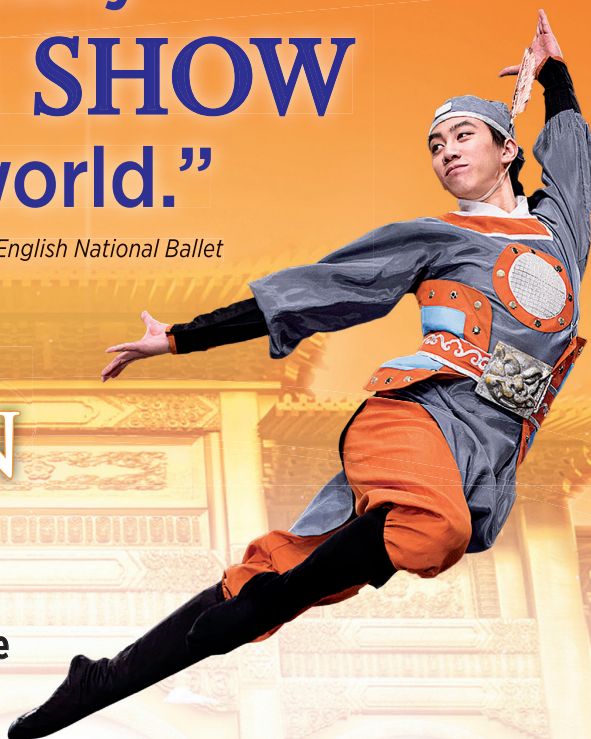
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## New Year's Resolutions: Family Style

We all know how hard it is to stick to New Year's resolutions. Life moves fast and being a parent means not always having the time or the energy to meet certain goals. I wish I could say I'm the type to always achieve my yearly resolutions, but that's unfortunately not the case. For all of the resolutions I've made over the years, a few proved successful, some pushed through the two-month mark and most never even made it out of January.

If you've followed similar suit, but are determined to make this the year your resolutions stick, check out our list of top goal-tracking apps on pg. 32. With the busyness of everyday life, these trackers can make achieving your goals so much easier.

While you might have your own goals, I'm sure you have some resolutions you'd like your kids to conquer. Maybe it's less texting, more face-to-face talking or less junk food and more greens. Or, maybe you'd like your kids to amp up their studying. Ann Dolin shares some expert tips on pg. 10 to help your child study better and get more organized. With some simple strategies that can be practiced at home, you can help your child make good organizational skills a regular habit.

And if you'd like your little one to do a bit more reading this year, start by checking pg. 30 for some new children's books that are full of fun and wintertime wonder.

Now I'm sure when you think about New Year's resolutions, you're probably not thinking about your pet, right? But, maybe you should!

If little fluffy is carrying a little extra belly fat, it might be time to set a goal for your pet to lose some weight. Melanie Switzer-Reilly talked to a local veterinarian on pg. 26 about the dangers and risks of pet obesity, which is commonly overlooked. She discusses how our pet's health should be a family affair and offers advice for keeping them healthy.

As for a family affair, instead of strictly making your own goals or your pet's goals this year, it might be nice to make New Year's resolutions as a family. Exercise together, go on more adventures together, read together, try out new things together, volunteer together — whatever you decide, the emphasis is on together. Setting goals as a family not only helps keep everyone more accountable, but it also brings everyone closer. And really, I think that might be the best 2019 goal of all.

Keep on reading for much more parenting resources inside!



*Britni*

Britni Petersen

Managing Editor

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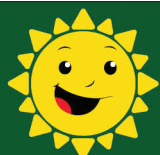
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# SMART STUDY

## ORGANIZATIONAL HABITS FOR THE NEW YEAR

BY ANN DOLIN



It's a new year, which means we are all trying to develop habits that we can sustain for the next 12 months or longer. As you know, this is often easier said than done, especially when it comes to helping our kids develop habits to help them succeed in school.

### MAKING HABITS STICK

The key to making habits stick is that you have to tie them to something you already do; otherwise, you're relying on willpower. And let's face it: Willpower doesn't always work as well as we would like it to, and it works even less with kids.

It's unrealistic to expect your kids to sit down and study for extended periods of time, especially if they have poor attention. Yet when kids don't do something or don't study as much or as hard as they need to, we often attribute this to a character deficit. This means that the kids are often thought of as lazy or unmotivated. But actually, that's not accurate.

What's really going on is that they haven't incorporated what they need to do into a habit. When habits are automatic, you don't have to think about them — it's like being on autopilot. Truly having a habit means that the willpower side of the story gets kicked out the door because you no longer have to rely on willpower to accomplish what you need to.

Below are some strategies you can implement in your household to help make your child's organizational and study habits more effective and long-term.

### USE SMALL CHUNKS OF TIME

Many kids don't know how to take advantage of very small chunks of time, which is exactly when they have the opportunity to develop a good study habit. Research shows that studying in small chunks as opposed to long stretches is more beneficial to remembering. Here's what this study habit might look like:



Your child's schedule is packed with school and extra-curricular activities, but she has 20 minutes before practice or 15 minutes on the bus or car ride home. These small gaps of time between school and activities are precisely when she should study. Bus rides work best for high schoolers who play a sport and are in and out of the bus all afternoon and evening long. She may not be able to complete her entire study guide or review all of her notes, but studying in these small chunks of time will be most effective for her retention of

information. This is because she will be repeating the information every day before practice and putting it into long-term memory by sleeping on it between studying.

Why will developing this habit work? Because it's tied to something she already does in her daily routine: waiting for practice to start or riding home on the bus or in the car.

### CONNECT STUDYING WITH HOMEWORK

A lot of kids don't like to study for exams. They will do homework, since it's a concrete assignment with a due date and is short enough to complete in one sitting. However, since studying isn't a set assignment, they will often procrastinate.

What can they do to stop the procrastination cycle and develop an effective study habit? Tie studying to homework, a task that they already perform each night. Here's how it can work:

- Encourage your student to set aside 10-20 minutes for studying before starting homework each night.
- Encourage your child to set a timer to hold himself accountable. After the timer buzzes, the student should move on to homework that is due the next day. Soon enough, a routine will be set.

The key is to attach the new activity of studying to something the child does every night anyway, like completing homework.



**Encourage your child to set a timer to hold himself accountable. After the timer buzzes, the student should move on to homework that is due the next day. Soon enough, a routine will be set.**

### ORGANIZATIONAL HABITS: GIVE YOURSELF VISUAL CUES

Let's be honest, if you have cookies on the counter, sooner or later, you'll eat them. This is why willpower is not good enough to form a habit! But if there is fruit on the counter, you might not eat it, but at least you won't eat cookies.

Surrounding yourself with an environment overflowing with visual cues and reminders of whatever habit you want to develop will help you stick with something long enough to incorporate it into your routine.

What does all this mean with regard to organization? It means that you can surround your child with a home full of visual cues

that prompt him to stay organized. Here are some examples:

- Place a calendar in a public family space. Making a calendar of weekly homework assignments and long-term projects is a great way to visually remind your child of when things are due and most



importantly, when your child needs to start working in order to complete the assignment. Placing this in a public family area that the child walks by repetitively each day introduces an organizational tool into his everyday environment. This means the chances of getting into the habit of planning ahead are high. It also helps hold your child accountable for completing his work, since multiple members of the family can view his tasks.

- Get a launching pad. Put a bin or box by the door your child will exit in the morning or a spot that she walks by multiple times each day — maybe even near the kitchen island. At night, all materials that need to go to school the next day, such as the binder, backpack, lacrosse stick, etc. should be put in the launching pad. The next morning, your child launches into a new day in an organized way! Seeing the launching pad every day will signal to

your children that they need to fill it up before they can unload it as they walk out the door.

- Use labels and signs. Labels and signs are an effective way to conquer chaos. Because visual reminders are far superior than verbal ones, try placing sticky note labels near your child's launching pad or homework desk when you want to remind him of something. When you make a verbal correction, after about 12-15 words, your child has tuned you out. So instead of saying, "Did

you clean out your backpack yet?" place a note on their homework desk with a reminder, not an order.

With these strategies, you can help your child kick off the new year with better study and organizational habits that actually last. And the best part? You'll soon no longer have to nag them about staying on top of their studies.

---

*Ann Dolin is a former Fairfax County teacher and current founder and president of Educational Connections Tutoring, serving the D.C. area.*

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# THE RISE



## of the “STUDY DRUG”

### *Adderall misuse and its effect on students without ADHD*

BY AMANDA M. SOCCI

**E**ach year, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a division of the U.S. Department of Human Health and Human Services, conducts national surveys of drug usage and summarizes its findings as indicators of national trends. In its 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) report, SAMHSA included statistics on estimates of teens and young adults who had used illicit drugs, including Adderall, a prescription drug classified as a stimulant and commonly prescribed to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

SAMSHA estimated that 30.5 million teens aged 12 or older used an illicit drug at least once last year. Of those 30.5 million, 1.8 million teens misused prescription stimulants at least once. Approximately 123,000 teens aged 12 to 17 were reported

to be current misusers of stimulants and 715,000 young adults aged 18 to 25 were current misusers. The most alarming of those numbers is the 715,000 young adults who classified themselves as current misusers of prescription stimulants, including Adderall. This high number accurately confirms the troubling recent trend that the number of college students misusing Adderall is on the rise.

Though the numbers paint a grim picture of the realities facing college students today, parents of high schoolers should take things in stride and help prepare their teens for college by talking to them about the dangers of misusing Adderall.

#### **ADDERALL USED BY COLLEGE STUDENTS DIAGNOSED WITH ADHD**

According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), college students (and others) with ADHD

generally exhibit the following symptoms: difficulty paying attention, overactivity (hyperactivity) and acting without thinking (impulsive behaviors). To treat ADHD, doctors prescribe stimulant drugs, including Adderall, to help people manage their symptoms and have productive days.

as Adderall, are effective in treating ADHD because they increase dopamine, a chemical in the brain that acts as a neurotransmitter by sending messages, inspiring people to act or not act in certain ways. Dopamine plays essential roles in thinking and attention. Psychologists today have determined that dopamine

**Dr. Lieberman believes the illicit use of Adderall among college students is increasing, as evidenced by the surge in emergency room visits reported across the nation.**

Approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 1996, Adderall is the trade name given to a class of drugs called psycho stimulants. It is a mixture of amphetamine salts (distinguished from methamphetamines, which are more potent). It is believed that stimulants, such

as Adderall, are effective in treating ADHD because they increase dopamine, a chemical in the brain that acts as a neurotransmitter by sending messages, inspiring people to act or not act in certain ways. Dopamine plays essential roles in thinking and attention. Psychologists today have determined that dopamine

is also responsible for our expectations in life. Adderall may produce various side effects, according to George Washington University professor and psychiatrist, Dr. Daniel Z. Lieberman. Those side effects include: an increase in mood, such as happiness or extreme



happiness (euphoria), an increase in energy and motivation and weight loss.

As long as college students are seen by a doctor, diagnosed with ADHD, prescribed Adderall for treatment and follow the dosage and exact regimen prescribed by the doctor, that is all considered lawful use of the Adderall drug.

### ADDERALL USED BY COLLEGE STUDENTS NOT DIAGNOSED WITH ADHD

Misuse of Adderall is reported when college students who have no diagnosis of ADHD and were not seen by a doctor illegally obtain Adderall under the misguided beliefs that it will help them better achieve tasks in school and improve academic performance. This suggests that students illegally obtain and use Adderall, expecting it to increase their dopamine levels and therefore, do better in school.

In his work in psychiatry and behavioral sciences, Dr. Lieberman has learned that roughly one out of three college students currently take Adderall, despite the fact that none of those students had seen a doctor or have been formally diagnosed with ADHD. Dr. Lieberman believes the illicit use of Adderall among college students is increasing, as evidenced by the surge in emergency room visits reported across the nation.

When asked why he believes non-ADHD-diagnosed college students voluntarily choose to take Adderall, Dr. Lieberman commented: "Adderall is a study drug, not a recreational

drug. It makes it easier [for students] to study and get their work done." He emphatically noted that Adderall is "a great medication if used properly," however, when students who are not diagnosed with ADHD choose to take Adderall for the purpose of doing better academically, "they are only cheating themselves."

Dr. Lieberman noted a recent medical study from "Pharmacy" journal, which documented the effects of Adderall in non-ADHD-diagnosed college students. The study concluded that college students without a formal diagnosis of ADHD who choose to take Adderall without a prescription do not gain improvement in focus, concentration, or long-term memory. In fact, Adderall does just the opposite, causing otherwise healthy college students to have decreases in short-term memory.

Interestingly, Dr. Lieberman refers to Adderall as a "lazy drug" because it causes people to believe and act as if they don't have to put forth the same mental effort to do things, supporting today's modern expectation theory on dopamine. He compares the laziness to the analogy of using the escalators every day. If a person chooses to use the escalator every day instead of using their legs to walk up and down the stairs, over time, increased escalator usage will weaken the legs, making it difficult to use the stairs.

After extensively researching the results of dopamine in a person's brain



and the effects of using the Adderall drug to increase dopamine (and therefore treat the person diagnosed with ADHD), Dr. Lieberman concluded that "if a person does not have ADHD, Adderall will not improve performance."

Parents and teens alike need to be aware of the information and dire statistics of non-ADHD-diagnosed college students taking Adderall illegally for the purpose of having extra energy to work more efficiently in school. It could be something as simple as talking to your teen's pediatrician and school counselors and keeping abreast of current social trends. (An excellent source of information for parents is the *Addiction Blog*, written by the American Addiction Centers.)

It's always appropriate to ask questions. Always. If parents and teens hear about a college student who is taking Adderall and has exhibited erratic behavior, ask how that student obtained Adderall. Was it illegally obtained?

Dr. Lieberman refers to this as "students getting [Adderall] on the sly, usually from a friend who gets it from a doctor." The American Addiction Centers refers to this as "prescription diversion."

As with any other social problem facing teens today, the first barrier to the problem lies with the parents. Parents must open all channels of communication with their teens. Talk to them freely and openly about anything going on in the teens' lives. If parents hear about trends in illicit drug use, share those findings with your teen children. Help prepare your teens for college by opening their eyes to the real current dangers of illicit use of the Adderall drug.

Open communications with a loving, gentle approach with teens may stop teens from becoming a part of the statistic of college students who use Adderall without a prescription.

---

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



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2019: Jan. 11

#### BEAUVOIR, THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

[beauvoirschool.org](http://beauvoirschool.org); [margaret.hartigan@cathedral.org](mailto:margaret.hartigan@cathedral.org)  
202-537-6493  
3500 Woodley Rd., N.W., Washington, D.C.  
Grades: PreK-3rd  
Open House:  
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#### BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON

[biswashington.org](http://biswashington.org); [admissions@biswashington.org](mailto:admissions@biswashington.org)  
202-829-3700  
2001 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.  
Grades: PK2-12  
Open House:  
Individualized visits available Monday-Friday.

#### SMITHSONIAN EARLY ENRICHMENT

[si.edu/seecnrollment](http://si.edu/seecnrollment); [mcmahonm@si.edu](mailto:mcmahonm@si.edu)  
202-633-1395  
10th and Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.  
Ages: Preschool and Kindergarten  
Open House (Kindergarten):  
2019: Jan. 15, 10:15-11:30 a.m.; Jan. 31, 3:30-5:30 p.m.  
Open House (Preschool):  
2019: Jan. 10, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

#### THE MANOR MONTESSORI SCHOOL

[manormontessori.com](http://manormontessori.com)  
301-299-7400  
10500 Oaklyn Dr. Potomac, MD  
5450 Massachusetts Ave. Bethesda, MD  
11200 Old Georgetown Rd., Rockville, MD  
Ages: 2-9  
Open House:  
Call to schedule a tour.

#### ROCHAMBEAU - FRENCH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

[rochambeau.org](http://rochambeau.org); [admissions@rochambeau.org](mailto:admissions@rochambeau.org)  
Forest Rd Campus (Elementary, Secondary):  
9600 Forest Rd., Bethesda, MD  
301-530-8260  
Rollingwood Campus (Elementary):  
3200 Woodbine St., Chevy Chase, MD  
301-907-3265  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 11  
Bradley Campus (Maternelle, Preschool):  
7108 Bradley Blvd., Bethesda, MD  
301-767-1683  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 12

#### SPRING BILINGUAL MONTESSORI ACADEMY

[spring-bilingual.org](http://spring-bilingual.org); [info@spring-bilingual.org](mailto:info@spring-bilingual.org)  
301-962-7262  
3514 Plyers Mill Rd., Kensington, MD  
Ages: 2 1/2-6  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 5, 10 a.m.-Noon.

#### SPRINGDALE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

[springdaleps.org](http://springdaleps.org); [admissions@springdaleps.org](mailto:admissions@springdaleps.org)  
443-671-0050  
500 Main St., New Windsor, MD  
Grades: 5-12  
Open House:  
2019: Feb. 9, March 9, April 6, May 18, 1-3 p.m.

### Maryland

#### FEYNMAN SCHOOL

[feynmanschool.org](http://feynmanschool.org); [admissions@feynmanschool.org](mailto:admissions@feynmanschool.org)  
301-770-4370  
11810 Falls Rd., Potomac, MD  
Grades: PreK-8  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 10, 7-8:30 p.m.

# Virginia

## BASIS INDEPENDENT MCLEAN

[mclean.basisindependent.com](http://mclean.basisindependent.com); [mclean-info@basisindependent.com](mailto:mclean-info@basisindependent.com)  
703-854-1253  
8000 Jones Branch Dr. McLean, Virginia  
Ages: 2 - Grade 12  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 12, 10 a.m.-Noon

## BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL

[brooksfieldschool.org](http://brooksfieldschool.org); [brksfield@aol.com](mailto:brksfield@aol.com)  
703-356-Kids  
1830 Kirby Rd., McLean, VA  
Ages: 2-6  
Open House:  
Call to schedule a tour.

## GREEN HEDGES SCHOOL

[greenhedges.org](http://greenhedges.org); [kvazquez@greenhedges.org](mailto:kvazquez@greenhedges.org)  
703-938-8323  
415 Windover Ave., N.W., Vienna, VA  
Ages: 3 through Grade 8  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 31, 9 a.m.; Feb. 21, 9 a.m.  
Admission Tours offered daily. Call to schedule a tour.

## MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF MCLEAN

[mcleanmontessori.org](http://mcleanmontessori.org)  
703-790-1049  
1711 Kirby Rd., McLean, VA  
Ages: 2 ½-12  
Open House:  
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## NYSMITH SCHOOL FOR THE GIFTED

[nysmith.com](http://nysmith.com); [ebalberde@nysmith.com](mailto:ebalberde@nysmith.com)  
703-713-3332  
13625 Eds Dr., Herndon, VA  
Grades: 3 Yrs-Grade 8  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 24, Feb. 21

## PINECREST SCHOOL

[pinecrestschool.org](http://pinecrestschool.org); [admissions@pinecrestschool.org](mailto:admissions@pinecrestschool.org)  
703-354-3446  
7209 Quiet Cove, Annandale, VA  
Ages: 3-12  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 13, 1-4 p.m.; Feb. 10, 1-4 p.m.; Mar. 10, 1-4 p.m.

## SAINT ANN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

[stann.org](http://stann.org); [stann@stann.org](mailto:stann@stann.org)  
725-525-7599  
980 North Frederick St., Arlington, VA  
Ages: PK3-4 years & K-Grade 8  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 27, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Jan. 29, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

## RANDOLPH-MACON ACADEMY

[rma.edu](http://rma.edu); [admission@rma.edu](mailto:admission@rma.edu)  
540-636-5484  
200 Academy Dr., Front Royal, VA  
Grades: 6-12  
Open House:  
2019: Jan. 21, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Feb. 18, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.;  
March 24, 2 p.m.; April 28, 2 p.m.

## RESTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

[restonmontessori.com](http://restonmontessori.com); [office@restonmontessori.com](mailto:office@restonmontessori.com)  
703-481-2922  
1928 Isaac Newton Sq. W, Reston, VA  
Ages: 3 months-12 years  
Open House:  
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[westminsterschool.com](http://westminsterschool.com); [admissions@westminsterschool.com](mailto:admissions@westminsterschool.com)  
703-256-3620  
3819 Gallows Rd., Annandale, VA  
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Open House:  
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[registration@imaginationstage.org](mailto:registration@imaginationstage.org)

301-280-1636

Hours: 9-3:30 p.m.

4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda, MD

### KIDS FIRST SWIM SCHOOLS

[kidsfirstswimschools.com](http://kidsfirstswimschools.com); [contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com](mailto:contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com)

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301-540-SWIM

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Hours: 3:45-6 p.m.

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### SILVER STARS GYMNASTICS

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# A Place that Nurtures

## UMMC's delivery unit undergoes rebirth

BY **ADRANISHA STEPHENS**

About 80 percent of the maternity cases seen at University of Maryland Medical Center's labor and delivery unit are high risk.

Parents there are often understandably anxious, and for this reason, medical personnel and caregivers take special care to make them feel welcome. This past fall, the hospital opened a new, state-of-the-art 30,000 square foot labor and delivery unit, more than two years in the making.

The new maternity space features advanced equipment and facilities to provide world-class care to new moms and babies. In the unit, there are five recovery beds, five triage beds, 12 labor rooms and three operating rooms.

"We have the unique perspective of getting a lot of people who come in here for not always the greatest reasons.

So, if the baby's sick or when there's a concern before delivery, we know we have a place where baby care and mom care kind of equal in acuity," says Sarah Crimmins, director of labor and delivery. "People who have a scheduled cesarean section for delivery will have the ability to have their private room to get ready, to recover and to have their support person be there as well."

There is also in-room neonatal care and direct access to Level IV neo-natal intensive care center, bathtubs for pain management, beds for partners to stay the night, as well as evaluation of the newborn right at the mother's bedside, so the family is part of the experience, Crimmins adds.

"We have now created a state of the art medical center for completely centered care, so we have the ability for everybody to have their baby with them in the room

at all times," she says. "They can have their family member have a place to be at all times as well, which is great for us and great for families. So we're trying to make a true family-centered birthplace for everybody."

The labor and delivery unit features large, broad labor rooms to accommodate both mother and baby.

"All rooms are sized so that they are zoned appropriately for three different people with the idea of really being a family-centered space," Crimmins says.

"There is a zone for the mom, zone for family and zone for baby.

All rooms have bathrooms equipped with showers that you could labor in for pain management."

All the rooms also now have lifts and emergency response systems to make transportation and evaluation easier. "We

is Stock/Getty Images Plus/KulkovaN; Getty Images Hospital photos courtesy of the University of Maryland



New labor, delivery and recovery rooms



deal with high-risk things every single day that some other hospitals would see once a year, so we have to have those emergency response [systems] built in because it's our standard," she says.

Work on the unit began more than two years ago, Crimmins adds. "Our prior unit was finished in the eighties, so our prior unit is 30 plus years old," she says. "We have three times the space that we had now."

Caryn Zolotorow, nurse and unit manager, says the new facility is filling a critical need. The unit will have upgraded old facilities and individual rooms for patient comfort and privacy. "Not everyone has happy outcomes, and we can help patients and families cope with whatever they are here for, for any reason," Zolotorow says. "About 80 percent of our patients are high risk, so Hopkins and ourselves are where patients need to go either for babies that need the intensive care nursery or for moms that need high-risk care."

A bereavement room was also added to the unit, a first of its kind, according to Zolotorow.



"If the doctors need to talk to patients with not so great outcomes, they can come to the room to talk to them in a private space," she says. "We have a bereavement room because we do have losses. So, we can prepare the baby in here, and family can see them in here. We do molds, handprints and footprints, things like that. It's hard for families and hard for us. But we didn't have a great space before, so this is wonderful for us to be able to offer that for families."

Another offering that makes the new unit unique is the more homelike

care setting utilizing midwives and emphasizing wellness.

"It's nice to have a group of midwives so if a mom does want a natural labor and wants to walk around during labor and be on a birthing ball, we have a group of practitioners who will take care of those patients," she says.

Crimmins says the aesthetics and equipment of the labor unit also needed an upgrade. Now, patients will see walls awash in bright blues and yellows. In the architecture and finishing, there are a lot of wings and curving, both in the walls and floors, all meant to soothe and relax patients.

"The idea was for this to be a calming place, so everything here is in the theme of calmness and serenity," Crimmins says. "You will see pictures of wind, water and light on the walls in certain areas. On each of the labor room walls, there are pictures of nature scenes to be focusing devices for pushing. Two pictures in every labor room have just a beautiful symmetry of colors."

The end result is a space the team is very proud of, in part, because so many details have been well-planned. "Everybody is very proud and passionate about this place," Crimmins says. "Everyone wants to make sure this is the best it can be for the people in Maryland."



New operating room

# DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE ? Seasonal Affective Disorder

BY BECKI LEDFORD

**Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), known colloquially as seasonal depression and winter blues, has become more widely discussed in recent years. Despite this increase in awareness, the discussion about SAD, its symptoms and how to deal with it primarily focuses on adults. Children and adolescents can also be affected by SAD, and while the presenting symptoms can be different, dealing with SAD is no less difficult for children.**

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) uses the following criteria to identify or diagnose depression with a seasonal pattern:

- Depression that begins during a specific season every year for at least two years
- Depression that ends during a specific season every year for at least two years
- No episodes of depression during the season in which you experience a normal mood for at least two years
- Many more seasons of depression than seasons without depression over the lifetime of your illness

In general, when most people think of depression, they think of how it presents in adults: depressed mood, tearfulness, lack of pleasure in activities, low energy, feelings of worthlessness, etc. In children and adolescents, however, the symptoms of depression may look a little different.

For instance, rather than overt feelings of sadness or observed tearfulness, children and adolescents may be irritable or aggressive. Rather than being identified as fatigued, children or adolescents experiencing a depressive episode may be pegged as “lazy” by their parents or teachers. The

diminished ability to think or concentrate or the indecisiveness we see in adults with depression may be viewed as being off-task and disruptive at school in children and adolescents.

This misidentification of children and adolescents with SAD as being lazy, disruptive or irritable may be even more common. If a child is displaying these symptoms year-round, parents and teachers may find it easier to identify depression as the underlying cause. On the other hand, a child who only displays these symptoms from November to March may be seen as a child who just doesn’t like school and isn’t putting in the effort.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, more than 1 million children and adolescents suffer from SAD each year. So what causes some people to develop symptoms of depression only during certain times of the year?

The specific cause of SAD has not been identified, but several factors are theorized to be at play, including one’s own biological clock (circadian rhythm), serotonin levels and melatonin levels.

## Circadian Rhythm

This theory posits that the decrease in the amount of sunlight in fall and winter may be the cause of fall/winter-onset SAD because the decrease in sunlight disrupts the body’s internal clock. A red flag for this in children and adolescents is sudden oversleeping in the fall and winter months with no such issues in the spring or summer.





## Serotonin Levels

Reduced sunlight can cause a drop in serotonin production in the brain. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter associated with mood, and many studies have shown that reduced serotonin can lead to a depressed mood.

## Melatonin Levels

This theory is related directly to the circadian rhythm theory, and it suggests that decreased light in the fall and winter disrupts the balance of melatonin in the body, leading to feelings of fatigue. Normally melatonin peaks at bedtime and reduces throughout the day, but a decrease in sunlight can disrupt this pattern, leading to more melatonin during the day.

The symptoms of SAD are particularly prevalent in fall and winter, when the days are shorter and sunshine decreases. For many children and adolescents, the sun may just be coming up as they are heading to school and starting to set once they get home.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT SAD MAY BE THE CAUSE OF YOUR CHILD'S IRRITABILITY, FATIGUE AND POOR CONCENTRATION AT SCHOOL?

### Get Them Moving

Exercise increases energy levels and leads to more restful sleep. For children and adolescents with SAD, exercise can help counter the effects of melatonin disruption, and several studies have shown that exercise boosts serotonin production. Indoor play places like trampoline parks

or bounce houses are great for keeping kids active in the winter. Or, if the weather allows it, some fun winter activities might include sledding, snowball fights, ice skating, building a snowman or making snow angels.

### Go Outside

Take advantage of what sunshine you can, especially on the weekends. Even if it's cold, the sunshine will still help restore your child or adolescent's circadian rhythm. Just remember that even if the sunshine is minimal, sunscreen is still a must (and don't forget to bundle up!)

### Eat Healthy

Many adults talk about craving comfort food when the days get short and the weather turns cold. Sometimes this leads to not-so-healthy choices. For your and your kid's sake, focus on healthy eating during winter. Eating fruits and vegetables that are in season will help ensure that you get the hearty foods we are designed to crave during the cold months without turning to unhealthy alternatives. Proper fuel can do wonders for energy. Incorporating foods that are high in Omega-3 fatty acids is also a good way to help fight SAD. Some studies suggest that SAD is less common in those who consume more Omega-3 fatty acids, such as Icelandic people, who eat plenty of coldwater fish. You can increase your intake of Omega-3 fatty acids with flax seeds, walnuts, sardines, salmon, soybeans, shrimp, tofu and tuna.

## SYMPTOMS OF "SAD"

### CLASSIC SYMPTOMS

- Oversleeping
- Daytime fatigue
- Carbohydrate craving
- Weight gain

### OTHER SYMPTOMS

- Lethargy
- Hopelessness
- Suicidal thoughts
- Lack of interest in normal activities and social interactions



### Bring the Light to Them

If exercise, going outside and eating healthy aren't enough to combat the effects of SAD, light therapy may be a great non-pharmaceutical option. Light therapy consists of sitting close (usually within 18–24 inches) to a special light box for around 30 minutes a day, right after waking up. These boxes, which have become less expensive over the past decade, provide light intensity around 100 times brighter than usual home lighting and about one-fifth as intense as the light on a particularly sunny day. To get the positive effects, you need to have your eyes open, but don't look directly at the light. This may be a great time for your children to finish up homework from the night before.

While light boxes can be a great option, it is important to consider several factors:

- Get a box designed to treat SAD. Not all light boxes are created equal.
- Consider brightness; the brighter the box, the less time you'll need in front of it. But a box that's too bright will make sitting in front of it uncomfortable.

Light boxes to treat SAD should be designed to filter UV rays for your safety.

- Some commercially available light boxes emit blue light, while most emit white light. The effectiveness and risk of each can vary, so do your research to find the one that is best for you.
- Talk to your doctor. While light boxes are generally considered safe, some conditions make the use of a light box inappropriate. Always discuss your treatment plan with your doctor, and find out if he or she has recommendations.

While SAD in children and adolescents can lead to fatigue, irritability and an inability to concentrate, there are many ways to combat the winter blues.

*Becki is a marathoner, weight lifting enthusiast and ACSM-certified personal trainer with a master's degree in mental health counseling.*

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# MAKING NEW YEAR'S DIET

## Don't Forget Your Pets!

BY MELANIE SWITZER REILLY

Now that the season of indulging on holiday treats is over, many of us have made a resolution to shed a few pounds. While it's a great personal goal, you might want to take a look at your pet's waistline, too.

Recent studies show that a whopping 59 percent of cats and 54 percent of dogs in the U.S are overweight or obese. We sat down with Alexandria-based veterinarian Dr. Katy Nelson to discuss this surprising trend. She offers some great advice on helping our furry friends fight the flab.

### Q&A WITH DR. KATY NELSON



#### HOW CAN WE FIRST TELL IF OUR PET IS OVERWEIGHT?

Ideally, you want to see that waist tuck, which means that you want to be able to differentiate between their ribcage and their hips. If you're looking down at their back, and it's "totally tubular," you probably have a fat pet on your hands. For a quick and easy test, take your two hands and press down on their rib cage. If it takes some pressure to feel the bones, they probably have a significant fat layer, and that could spell trouble.

#### WHAT KINDS OF HEALTH CONDITIONS CAN PET OBESITY LEAD TO?

Sadly, it can have so many repercussions on their entire life. We used to look at being overweight as just a fat storage issue, but we now know that fat cells

are actually tiny hormone factories that produce almost 60 different kinds of dangerous hormones. And by allowing them to sit and breed in our bodies and our pet's bodies, we are letting them wreak havoc by causing inflammation, which can lead to cancer and diabetes. It can also lead to arthritis, heart disease, hyperthyroidism, breathing and joint problems and more.

#### WHAT ARE SOME BAD FEEDING HABITS PET OWNERS ENGAGE IN?

Just like we control what goes into our mouths, we have to remember that we also control what goes into our pet's mouths. Unfortunately, we are often overzealous in the ways we feed them. "Rounding out the food" may make it easier for you and your busy day, but it's doing



#### WHAT DEFINES PET OBESITY?

While humans rely on the body mass index (BMI) scale to measure fitness, we use what is called the body condition score (BCS) for pets. The BCS has a scale from one to nine. If your pet scores a one, they'd be emaciated, while a nine would mean severe obesity. The sweet spot you want to aim for is a five. If I see any pets that are a six, I urge my clients to address it immediately before it gets even worse.

Cat: iStock/Getty Images Plus/iridi; Other: Provided



# RESOLUTIONS?



your pet a huge disservice. If you consistently round out the food, that's roughly 25 percent more food per day than they need. The extra calories will soon add up, just like how those extra cookies do for us. Additionally, table scraps, extra treats and unintentional snacks can be horrible diet choices for your pet, not to mention toxic. If you want to give an occasional treat, make sure it's healthy and

that it factors into their daily caloric intake. If possible, homemade treats are best — try some boiled chicken, fresh sardines or even a spoonful of peanut butter.

## HOW CAN PET OWNERS GO ON A JOURNEY OF WELLNESS WITH THEIR PETS?

There is no better exercise buddy than your dog! A tired dog is a happy dog, and

completing a workout can make a huge difference in both your days. Even on those lazy weekends that you don't feel like getting off the couch, trust me, your pet will! Also, we should remember that our pet's health is a family affair. Everyone who cares for our pet during the day has a role to play — whether it's the dog walker, the nanny, friends or relatives. We all need to take our pet's health seriously and communicate to each other what we are feeding them.

## ANY FINAL TIPS?

I'd love to see pet owners work closely with their veterinarian to determine their pet needs, while also rethinking the idea of treating. A treat could be a walk outside, a run to the post office, window-shopping or whatever gets both of you up and moving. When our pets are long gone, what we'll regret is not having spent more time with them, not the extra biscuits we held back!

If you think your pet might be overweight, make an

appointment with your veterinarian to check their weight and determine their body condition score. Be sure to also bring your pet food label so your vet can see exactly what they're eating. They will be your best defense at getting "Fido" back into fighting shape. It's never too late to start on a journey of health and wellness, even for our four-legged friends!

---

*Melanie Switzer Reilly is a Northern VA-based mom, television producer and print journalist.*



"We should remember that our pet's health is a family affair."



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# Please Stay and Here's Why: A Note to Parents of Toddlers

BY ELIANA JAOUDE



Science tells us that the majority of brain development happens by age three. We know that the interactions and relationships a child experiences with her parents and teachers form the foundation of her learning and development when it comes to her thinking, social skills and emotional development. Secure relationships help children develop in these ways:

- They learn to trust others.
- They develop better coping skills in stressful situations.
- They're better able to describe their feelings with words and communicate with others.
- They are more confident about exploring the world around them.
- They develop a sense of self-worth, and are better at cooperating with others and understanding the feelings of others, which help them to form strong relationships with peers in the future.

The Montessori Method further implements and maximizes the development of secure relationships through consistency in early childhood education in several ways. Why parents should keep their child in a Montessori program at least for the first crucial three years through the capstone year (kindergarten) was explained fully in an article by P. Donohue Shortridge called "Please Stay ... Here's Why" published in the fall 2018 issue of "Montessori Life." Here are some excerpts:

**1.** "In her first year at Montessori, all those 'big kids' seemed so, well, big. They could do amazing things. Your child was in awe of them — in fact, she may have mentioned an older child or children in the classroom, a 5- or 6-year-old she idolized. Just as in real life, children learn from their elders. Now, your child will get to be one of those 'big kids.' The capstone year is also known as the leadership

or consolidation year, in which your third-year child takes great pride in solidifying all she has learned over the past two years and assumes greater responsibilities in the classroom. This happens naturally, because it was modeled for her when she was younger. She will expect to be (and will look forward to being) this new role of 'big kid' in the classroom."

**2.** "Your child will have the same teacher for three years. The teacher truly knows your child. And you get to know the teacher over the longer cycle; the relationship between school and family builds on trust and mutual respect."

**3.** "The 3-year cycle allows your child to acquire skills and academic knowledge at his own pace. Perhaps reading came to him more quickly than math, or fine-motor skills seemed second nature while gross-motor skills took longer. The Montessori early childhood environment has no set timetable for mastery, but instead offers him three full years to acquire capability. Not all 5½-year-olds are expected to be fluent readers or understand multiplication. Would you be comfortable being held accountable for a skill simply because a statistical model or a test stated 'you should know this by now?' Over the years, we Montessorians have observed children who, having completed the full early childhood cycle, matriculate confidently into first grade in a non-Montessori program or into lower elementary in a Montessori school. Consider this an appeal to offer the gift of time to your child."

Now here's a real-life example of a student, which illustrates how the mixed-age grouping and the 3-year-cycle can work:

One of my students walked into my classroom a few years ago as a 3-year-old. She was very bright with great potential but was extremely

shy, very hesitant to work and interact with her teachers and had a very hard time letting go of her parents in the morning. She spent the first year adjusting to the morning transition, the routine and work flow and classroom expectations. She very rarely spoke or expressed her needs to her teachers independently without being prompted. Her second year was better, but she still had trouble letting go in the morning and remained shy and a bit hesitant to approach new situations.

Now, as a kindergarten student, she has blossomed over the course of four months. She became an independent learner and is highly motivated by the work in the classroom. She walks in proudly every morning with a big smile on her face, greeting her teachers and friends. She has become the leader of the whole class — helping out and giving lessons to her fellow students. She shines during our monthly Senior Center visits. She approaches strangers with great confidence, introduces herself then sits and reads a book aloud with great expression and without any hesitations. She expresses herself very clearly and assertively.

I truly believe that the Montessori environment allowed her to reach her fullest potential and flourish. Now she can explore any environment and thrive because she has developed a solid and unshakable foundation, both academically and socially. I'll never forget watching her say goodbye to her mother during "Parents Observation Week." She assertively told her mom that her time was up, her observation was done and that she could go. It was priceless! This is the moment every teacher looks forward to experiencing. And witnessing the positive transformation of a child within these three years was remarkable.

*Eliana Jaoude is the Head of School at Reston Montessori School Reston, VA.*

# Snowy Stories

By WF Staff

## 8 NEW WINTER-INSPIRED BOOKS FOR KIDS

*There's nothing like a good snowy tale to show off the best aspects of winter. From snow day adventures and ice-skating fun to hibernating animals, these cozy reads will warm your little ones up and get them excited about the new season.*



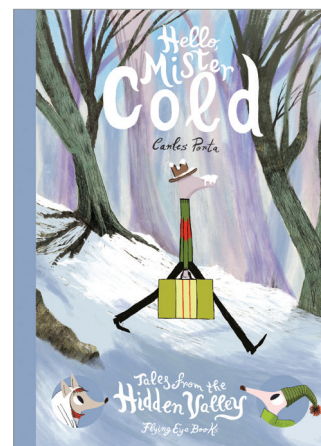
**1. "The Little Snowplow" by Lora Koehler**

*Ages Infant-3.*  
On the Mighty Mountain Road Crew, the trucks come in one

size: big! That is, until the little snowplow joins the crew. None of the other trucks think that the little snowplow can handle the big storms, but he knows he can do it. And just to be sure, he trains hard to get ready. But when a blizzard arrives, will the little snowplow's training be enough to clear the streets and handle unexpected trouble?

**2. "Hello Mister Cold" by Carles Porta**

*Ages 3-5.* It's winter in the hidden valley and Maximus Cold has fallen into the valley, completely by mistake. Everyone thinks he's a strange, trumpet-playing monster who has kidnapped their wolf





friend Yula. So the gang of friends band together, including the rabbits, Reindeer, the pixie onion-headed ballerina and Yula's best friend Sara to save the day with some trumpeting of their own.

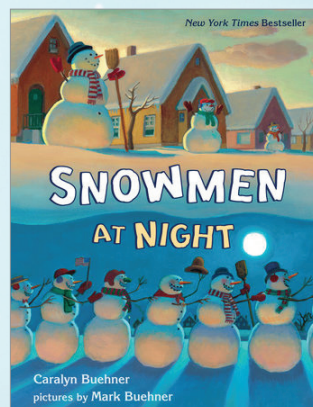
### 3. "Little Owl's Snow" by Divya Srinivasan



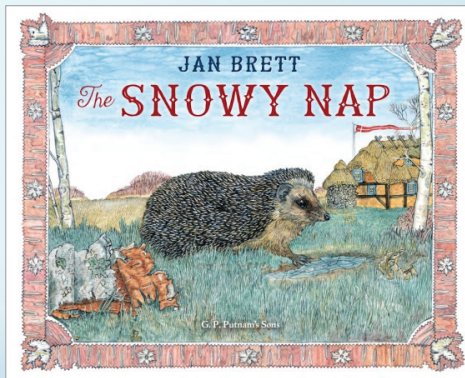
Ages 3-5. "Winter's almost here!" says Little Owl, as he observes leaves falling, animal friends hibernating and a chill from his feathers to his feet. And just as he and his friend racoon are watching their breath make fog in the cold air, it happens ... snow! This story showcases the changing of the seasons.

### 4. "Snowmen at Night Lap Board Book" by Caralyn Buehner

Ages 3-5. This delightful wintertime tale reveals all! Follow along through an imaginative adventure to discover amusing details about the secret life of snowmen and where they go at night.



### 5. "The Snowy Nap" by Jan Brett



Ages 4-8. Snow is on the way, and all of Hedgie's friends tell him of the wintertime fun he will miss as he hibernates. So Hedgie decides to stay awake instead

of going to his burrow, but then a snowstorm starts. Luckily, Hedgie's friend Lisa finds him and brings him inside so he gets to see the wonders of winter from inside the cozy house.



### 6. "Little Fox in the Snow" by Jonathan London

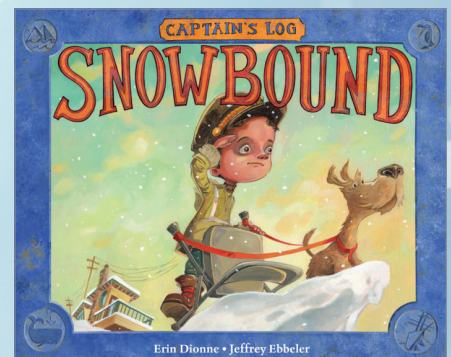
Ages 4-8. A red fox emerges from its burrow one wintry morning, a fiery streak against stark white surroundings, driven by hunger

and curiosity to investigate its world. Encountering a mouse, a hare and a wolverine, the little fox takes on the role of both hunter and hunted before returning to the safety of its den, where, perhaps, it dreams of something more.

### 7. "Captain's Log: Snowbound" by Erin Dionne

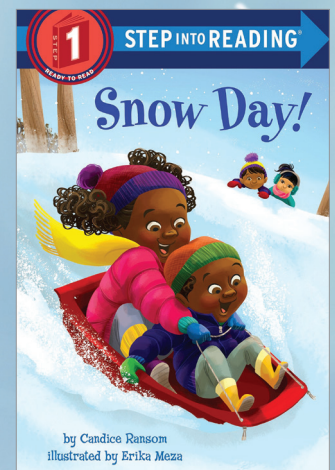
Ages 4-8. When his Ernest Shackleton report is ironically quashed because of a snowstorm, a school cancellation-celebrating elementary schooler chronicles his adventures

at home with hilarious log entries and read-aloud-friendly results. The story highlights the antics that can ensue when the weather prevents students from heading to class.



### 8. "Snow Day!" by Candice Ransom

Ages 4-6. The brother and sister from "Pumpkin Day!" and "Apple Picking Day!" have woken up to a winter wonderland: a snow day! Read along as they engage in favorite winter activities with their neighborhood friends on their day off from school.





# 5 Goal-Tracking Apps

TO HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

## 1. Strides: Habit Tracker

Strides is the ultimate habit and goal tracker. Simply input a goal or choose one from their list, then set a specific date for achieving your goal. Set up reminders and track your progress daily, weekly or monthly. View charts of your history including streaks, success rate and more. To help you stay on track, the app displays a green/red pace line system of your progress.



## 2. Coach.me - Goal Tracking

This goal tracking app helps you stay motivated with unique community support and world-class coaches. You can choose to be your own coach, get coaching from the community or hire a coach for a small fee. It lets you track your goals, see your progress and celebrate milestones. By experiencing



the motivational force of external accountability, users can accomplish their goals in a highly efficient and effective way.

## 3. Habit-Bull: Daily Goal Tracker

Habit-Bull lets you track all your habits, routines and repeated to-do's. Input goals, set up reminders, join discussion forums and more. But what makes it unique is that it puts an extra focus on helping you cut the bad habits from your life like nail biting, smoking or poor food choices. And it shows you patterns of these bad habits to keep you accountable. The app also sends you inspiring quotes per category from people who are working on the same goals as you, which is a nice touch.



## 4. NoLimit-App

With NoLimit-app you can create specific and challenging goals and set

up relevant tasks and deadlines.

You can track your progress in six life areas, and you will constantly have a full picture view of your goals and progress. The app includes an interval timer, relevant tests, stress reduction exercises to get you through your goals and easy milestones. Plus, it keeps you motivated with statistical feedback.



## 5. Productive - Habit Tracker

Productive is a free tool that helps you build a routine of life changing habits. Set personal goals, track your progress and motivate yourself to achieve new heights. The app is fully customizable and has an easy-to-use interface, making it ideal for users who are looking for the most simple and no-frills way to track goals.



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# COLD WEATHER CRAFTS FOR KIDS

BY WF STAFF

When it's too cold to head outside, let your kids enjoy the wonders of winter inside with some fun and easy winter-inspired crafts.

## SUGAR CUBE IGLOO

Source: [thecraftyclassroom.com](http://thecraftyclassroom.com)

### Materials:

- Sugar Cubes (one box = one igloo)
- Cardboard
- White Glue
- White Paint

**Step 1:** Cover your cardboard with white paint. (If you're feeling extra crafty, use Puffy Paint.)

**Step 2:** Pour your sugar cubes into a dish for easy access.

**Step 3:** Draw out the shape of your igloo. You can use a plate or upside-down cup to make a circle. Don't forget a doorway.

**Step 4:** Put down a layer of glue along your igloo shape and begin to build your igloo.

**Step 5:** When you start your second layer, build a little bit inwards so that eventually your igloo will come together.

**Step 6:** Continue to build up and in, being careful. If you can stagger the cubes a bit, it will be somewhat sturdier.

**Step 7:** Let your layers dry overnight, using glue bottles and other household tools as props.

Once dry, you can add to the Arctic scene by filling up the cardboard area with little props and figurines.



## GLITTER SNOW GLOBE

Source: [diynetwork.com](http://diynetwork.com)

### Materials:

- One-pint Mason jar
- Animal figurine
- Waterproof super glue or epoxy
- Glitter flakes
- Water
- Glycerin

**Step 1:** Gather your materials, and choose an animal figurine or any plastic toy to display in your glitter globe.

**Step 2:** Use super glue, epoxy or any other waterproof adhesive to attach the animal figurine to the bottom of the Mason jar lid. Ensure that the







animal is centered or positioned to fit inside the jar. Allow to dry, referring to glue instructions.

**Step 3:** Fill jar almost completely with water, keeping in mind that the figurine's head should be covered when inserted. Once filled, add a few drops of glycerin and as much glitter as you like.

**Step 4:** Use waterproof glue to secure the top of the jar to the inner lip of the lid's metal ring, then allow to dry. Once dry, squeeze a thin line of waterproof glue onto the lid's inner edge, and tightly screw it onto the jar. Allow to dry before turning over and shaking.

## SNOW PAINT

Source: pbs.org

### Materials:

- School glue
- Shaving cream
- A container for mixing
- Paintbrushes
- Construction paper

**Step 1:** Begin by making your snow paint. Mix one part school glue with two parts shaving cream. Use a glass jar (or a mixing bowl) to mix the ingredients.

**Step 2:** Once the paint is mixed, spoon some into a smaller bowl, if that makes it more accessible for your little ones.

**Step 3:** Dip paintbrushes into the mixture and paint on dark construction paper. The paint will dry fluffy and spongy, giving it the perfect snow texture.





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## OVERNIGHT CAMPS

### Camp Tall Timbers

[camptalltimbers.com](http://camptalltimbers.com)  
[info@camptalltimbers.com](mailto:info@camptalltimbers.com)  
301-874-0111

1115 Reflection Lane, High View, WV

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[rma.edu/summer](http://rma.edu/summer); [admission@rma.edu](mailto:admission@rma.edu)

200 Academy Drive, Front Royal, Virginia

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## DAY CAMPS WASHINGTON, D.C.

### Camp Levine – Levine Music School

Camper Age: 3 1/2-12

Teen Apprentice Age: Rising 7th-12th Graders

[levinemusic.org/camp-levine](http://levinemusic.org/camp-levine); [camp@levinemusic.org](mailto:camp@levinemusic.org)

202-686-8000

The Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Ln.,  
North Bethesda, MD

*Teens, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, CIT Program, Dance, Drama, Educational Activities, Music.*

### Camp SheEO – SheEO Academy

Ages: 7-16

[beasheeo.com/camp](http://beasheeo.com/camp)

[contact@BEaSheEO.com](mailto:contact@BEaSheEO.com)

Check website for various locations in Maryland

866-697-4336

Girls only, Teens, Educational Activities

### German International School Washington, D.C. Summer Classes

[giswashington.org/glc](http://giswashington.org/glc)

8617 Chateau Dr., Potomac, MD

*Educational Activities.*

### Glen Echo Park Aquarium

Ages: 4-7, 8-12

[gepaquarium.org](http://gepaquarium.org)

[info@gepaquarium.org](mailto:info@gepaquarium.org)

301-955-6256; 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, MD

*Arts, Educational Activities, Hiking.*

### Imagination Stage Summer Camps

Ages: 3 1/2 -18

[imaginationstage.org/camps/summer-camps](http://imaginationstage.org/camps/summer-camps);

[registration@imaginationstage.org](mailto:registration@imaginationstage.org)

301-280-1660; 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda, MD

*Drama, Theatre.*

### International School of Music

Ages: 3-12

[ismw.org](http://ismw.org)

[info@ismw.org](mailto:info@ismw.org)

301-365-5888; 10450 Auto Park Ave., Bethesda, MD

*Drama, Music.*

### Kids First Swim Schools

Ages: 2 months-Adults

[kidsfirstswimschools.com](http://kidsfirstswimschools.com)

[contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com](mailto:contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com)

Check our website for a list of all 35 locations.

*Educational Activities, Sports, Swimming.*

### Manor Montessori Summer Camp

[manormontessori.com/summer-camp](http://manormontessori.com/summer-camp)

10500 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, MD

11200 Old Georgetown Rd., Rockville, MD

5450 Massachusetts Ave., Bethesda, MD

*Educational Activities, Arts, Music, Swimming, Sports.*

### Silver Stars Gymnastics

Ages: 3 1/2-15

[gosilverstars.com](http://gosilverstars.com)

[classregistration@gosilverstars.com](mailto:classregistration@gosilverstars.com)



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

### Spring Bilingual Montessori Summer Camp

Ages: 2½-6  
spring-bilingual.org  
info@spring-bilingual.org  
301-962-7262; 3514 Plyers Mill Rd., Kensington, MD  
*Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, Educational Activities.*

### Springdale Preparatory Summer Program

Ages: 6-16  
springdaleps.org  
johnny.graham@springdaleps.org  
855-405-8600  
500 Main St., New Windsor, MD  
*Residential Camp, Teens, Sibling Discount, Transportation, Arts, Computers Cooking, Dance, Drama, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Hiking, Music, Overnight Camping, Photography Special, Sports – Extreme, Swimming, Travel.*

### Tiny Chefs

Ages: 5-12  
tinychefs.com  
info@tinychefs.com  
Locations in Northern Virginia  
*Residential Camp, Boys only, Girls only, Boys & Girls.*

## DAY CAMPS MARYLAND

### Camp Levine – Levine Music School

Camper Age: 3 1/2-12  
Teen Apprentice Age: Rising 7th-12th Graders  
levinemusic.org/camp-levine  
camp@levinemusic.org  
202-686-8000  
The Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Ln., North Bethesda, MD  
*Teens, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, CIT Program, Dance, Drama, Educational Activities, Music.*

### Camp SheEO – SheEO Academy

Ages: 7-16  
beasheeo.com/camp  
contact@BEaSheEO.com  
Check website for various locations in Maryland  
866-697-4336  
*Girls only, Teens, Educational Activities*

### German International School Washington, D.C. Summer Classes

giswashington.org/glc  
8617 Chateau Dr., Potomac, MD  
*Educational Activities.*

### Glen Echo Park Aquarium

Ages: 4-7, 8-12  
gepaquarium.org  
info@gepaquarium.org  
301-955-6256; 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, MD  
*Arts, Educational Activities, Hiking.*

### Imagination Stage Summer Camps

Ages: 3 ½ -18  
imaginationstage.org/camps/summer-camps;  
registration@imaginationstage.org  
301-280-1660; 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda, MD  
*Drama, Theatre.*

### International School of Music

Ages: 3-12  
ismw.org  
info@ismw.org  
301-365-5888; 10450 Auto Park Ave., Bethesda, MD  
*Drama, Music.*

### Kids First Swim Schools

Ages: 2 months-Adults  
kidsfirstswimschools.com  
contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com  
Check our website for a list of all 35 locations.  
*Educational Activities, Sports, Swimming.*

### Manor Montessori Summer Camp

manormontessori.com/summer-camp  
10500 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, MD  
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gosilverstars.com  
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spring-bilingual.org  
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301-962-7262; 3514 Plyers Mill Rd., Kensington, MD  
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springdaleps.org; johnny.graham@springdaleps.org  
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**tinychefs.com**

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## **DAY CAMPS VIRGINIA**

### **Brookfields Summer Camp**

**Ages:** 3-10

**brookfieldschool.org**

**camp@brookfieldschool.org**

**703-356-5437 ext. 2; 1830 Kirby Rd., McLean, VA**

*Extended Day, Arts, CIT, Cooking, Dance, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Hiking, Horseback Riding, Music, Sports, Swimming, Yoga.*

### **Camp Achva powered by Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia**

**Ages:** K-10

**jccnv.org/camp**

**8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax, VA**

**703-537-3091**

*Teens, Extended Day, Transportation, Arts, CIT Program, Dance, Drama, Field Trips, Gymnastics, Martial Arts, Music, Needs Sports, Swimming, Yoga.*

### **Green Hedges Summer Camp**

**Ages:** 3-7

**greenhedges.org/summer-camp**

**summer@greenhedges.org**

**415 Windover Ave., N.W., Vienna, VA**

*Music.*

### **Camp Levine – Levine Music School**

**Camper Age:** 3 1/2-12

**Teen Apprentice Age:** Rising 7th-12th Graders

**levinemusic.org/camp-levine, camp@levinemusic.org**

**202-686-8000**

**1125 N. Patrick Henry Drive, Arlington, VA**

*Teens, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts and Crafts, CIT Program, Dance, Drama, Educational Activities, Music.*

### **Camp MSNV - Montessori School of Northern Virginia**

**msnv.org/page/programs/summer-camp**

**703-256-9577**

**6820 Pacific Lane, Annandale, VA**

*Extended Day.*

### **Camp SheEO – SheEO Academy**

**Ages:** 7-16

**beasheeo.com/camp**

**contact@BEaSheEO.com**

**Check website for various locations in Virginia**

**(866) 697-4336**

*Girls Only, Teens, Educational Activities.*

### **Encore Stage & Studio – Scenes for Tweens**

**Ages:** 8-12

**encorestage.org**

**info@encorestage.org**

**703-548-1154; 4000 Lorcom Ln., Arlington, VA**

*Extended Day, Dance, Drama.*

### **Encore Stage & Studio – Stage Door & Tech Camp**

**Ages:** 11-15

**encorestage.org**

**info@encorestage.org**

**703-548-1154; 200 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA**

*Teens, Extended Day, Dance, Drama.*

### **Harmonia School of Music & Art**

**Ages:** 4-18

**harmoniaschool.org**

**harmonia@harmoniaschool.org**

**703-938-7301; 204-F Mill St., N.E., Vienna, VA**

*Teens, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, Drama, Music.*

### **Kids First Swim Schools**

**Ages:** 2 months-Adults

**kidsfirstswimschools.com**

**contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com**

**Check our website for a list of all 35 locations.**

*Educational Activities, Sports, Swimming.*

### **Mason Game & Technology Academy – George Mason University**

**Ages:** 9-18

**mgta.gmu.edu**

**mgta@gmu.edu**

**703-993-7101**

**10900 University Blvd., Bull Run Hall 147, MS 1J2, Manassas, VA**

*Teens, Computers, Cooking, Educational Activities.*

### **Perfect Point Dance Studio**

**Ages:** 3-11

**perfectpointe.com**

**staff@perfectpointe.com**

**703-533-8830; 2499 N. Harrison St., Ste. I-LL, Arlington, VA**

*Dance, Drama, Gymnastics.*

### **Perfect Pointe (formerly HeartBeats) Music & Dance Studio**

**Ages:** 3-16

**hbeats.com; staff@hbeats.com**



703-440-9000; 8060 Rolling Rd., Springfield, VA  
Teens, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, CIT Program,  
Dance, Drama, Gymnastics, Martial Arts, Music.

### Pinecrest Pavilion at Pinecrest School

Ages: 4-12  
pinecrestschool.org  
camp@pinecrestschool.org  
703-354-3446; 7209 Quiet Cove, Annandale, VA  
Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, Computers, Cooking,  
Drama, Educational Activities, Field Trips.

### Randolph-Macon Academy Summer Programs

Ages: Rising sixth through twelfth grade for residential;  
rising fifth through twelfth for day  
rma.edu/summer  
admission@rma.edu  
540-636-5484  
200 Academy Drive, Front Royal, Virginia  
Residential Camp, Teens, Educational Activities, Field Trips,  
Music.

### Reston Montessori School

Ages: 3-9  
restonmontessori.com  
office@restonmontessori.com  
703-481-2922; 1928 Isaac Newton Sq. West, Reston, VA  
Extended Day, Arts, Field Trips.

### Robotics Summer Camps

Ages: 6-16  
robotworksacademy.net  
robotworks@cox.net  
703-364-5418; 8992 Fern Park Dr., Ste. 2, Burke, VA  
Sibling Discount, Computers, Educational Activities.

### Roer's Zoofari - Junior Safari Summer Camp

roerszoofari.com  
703-757-6222; 1228 Hunter Mill Rd., Vienna, VA  
Educational Activities.

### Summer Dance Camp/Intensive at The Center for Ballet Arts

Ages: 3-Adult  
thecenterforballetarts.com  
ctrbalarts@aol.com  
703-273-5344; 3955 Pender Dr., Ste. 105, Fairfax, VA  
Teens, Sibling Discount, Arts, Dance, Drama.

### YMCA Fairfax County Reston

Ages: 3-15  
ymcadc.org/locations/ymca-fairfax-county-reston; Ben.  
runyon@ymcadc.org  
703-652-8006  
12196 Sunset Hills Rd., Reston, VA  
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# What We Learned About Parenting at Starbucks

BY KATHRYN STREETER

When our son was four-years-old, he fell in love. The object of his affection was voluptuous — and far too old for him. He saw her constantly. She had long flowing hair and intense eyes. He called her his “little love.” The fact that our son was smitten by the Starbucks Mermaid was our fault.

One of our oldest family traditions is spending Saturday mornings at the local coffee shop. Started long before kids came along, this easy-going tradition was a sweet opening to weekends. Wherever we lived, we targeted the local coffee shop, indie or chain, just as long as we could reach it by foot. When we started having kids, going out for coffee Saturday mornings was a tradition we were determined to continue. We selfishly coveted this entrée into the weekend as a young couple and didn’t want kids to change this beloved routine.

Looking back, it was inevitable that our son’s first love would be the Starbucks logo. At our neighborhood location, we’d wolf down our weekly dark-roast coffee and cinnamon scone with our baby son and his slightly older sister in tow. It was exhausting. No longer a peaceful, relaxing way to begin the weekend, our treasured tradition had been turned upside-down. It would have been easy to let this tradition die with the arrival of kids. Yet, we persisted, trying to roll with the times. When the kids morphed into



fidgety toddlers, we’d pull out toys. We started talking about what restaurant manners looked like because coffee shops offered a forgiving environment. As they grew, we adapted, stashing coloring books and crayons for doodling. We’d eventually watch our little ones work with letters and spelling.

Their tastes changed with their age, resulting in them branching out, trying new items on the menu. Previously, they had faithfully ordered chocolate chip cookies because they knew that on Saturday mornings, we lifted parental law regarding what made for an appropriate breakfast.

Time sped by and one Saturday we suddenly realized that the day we had been pining for had arrived: we were having conversations with our kids. We realized we could actually finish our sentences without meltdowns or an impatient, “Is it time to go yet?” In fact, we were

experiencing intentional, meaningful time together regardless of the topic of conversation. Sometimes we’d just chill and review the week, or talk current events and big ideas. Sometimes we’d have a rare moment when our blooming tweens needed to really talk, letting us into their world. Away from the distractions of the home, there was more space.

And this basic tradition was mercifully adaptable, able to accommodate the various seasons of family life. An old friend, this was a tradition we came to count on, a comfort during often painful adjustments. Yet, from its infancy, the core point of this family tradition — to hang out, celebrate and support each other — remained unchanged. With amazement, I watched as we grew closer to our kids through our steady and persistent Saturday habit. We intentionally had built a routine which had serendipitously brought

ease to our parent-child relationships.

Today we have high schoolers, and Saturday morning coffee starts much later, or sometimes not at all because teens need their sleep. And that is OK. There’s no question good things are happening because the kids will often text us, asking to meet up after school for coffee. By this, we know that our kids are choosing to hang out. There’s an element of trust. They know we’re not going to ask for deep conversation in exchange for buying them a coffee. Our little inexpensive outings — whether coffee or something else — are going to be whatever they end up being, no strings attached. Together, just hanging out as a little family.

We all want close family relationships. And we all hope for strong relationships with our teens. Yet, if not careful, we can find ourselves going from day to day, week to week, living under the same roof, but disconnected from one another. I realize now that this simple coffee shop tradition started something in motion long ago. Though I’m still trying to appreciate its fullness, its richness, its direct contribution to building the relationships we have today with our young adults, I’m thankful. Starting with Starbucks, this coffee shop routine helped our kids want to be with us — their parents. And that’s no small thing.

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



# January

## FAMILY CALENDAR

### TUESDAY 1

#### **Billy Elliot the Musical**

**7:30 p.m. | \$40-\$106.** All 11-year-old Billy wants to do is dance. While the 1984 miners strike squeezes his family and splits his town, Billy's passion for ballet first divides, then ultimately unites the community and changes his life in extraordinary ways. Based on the powerful and acclaimed film, Billy Elliot swept the Tony, Drama Desk and Olivier awards for "Best Musical," by combining a dynamic score by the legendary Elton John with sensational dance to create a heartwarming, inspirational and triumphant experience for the entire family. Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington, VA.

### THURSDAY 3

#### **FREE Lego Club**

**4:30 p.m.** Do your kids like Legos? Then have them come to the library to build their own creations! Legos will be provided, but all materials must stay at the library. So bring a camera to capture your adventures. Dale City Neighborhood Library, 4249 Dale Blvd., Dale City, VA.

### FRIDAY 4

#### **Pop Georgetown: A Locally Made Winter Pop-Up Shop**

**11 a.m.** Pop Georgetown is a retail pop-up store featuring art, accessories, apparel, home decor, personal care and packaged food products from local makers and businesses located within Washington, D.C. Come experience D.C.'s local favorites and discover new brands in our local neighborhoods. 1631 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.

### SATURDAY 5

#### **Infant Investigators: Winter Animals**

**10 a.m. | \$30.** The weather is turning cold and your infant is likely noticing the changes. This workshop will focus on this shift in their environment and introduce your child to animals that are good at keeping warm during these cold months. This workshop offers a variety of hands-on experiences that introduce young children to concepts in engaging ways. Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center, 10th and Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.

### SUNDAY 6

#### **Cinderella**

**1:30 p.m. | \$15-\$35.** This wacky retelling of the beloved fairy tale takes Cinderella on a royal adventure

complete with a wisecracking rat, evil stepsisters and a smitten prince. When Cinderella's stepmother forbids her from attending the ball, her fairy godmother convinces her that if the shoe fits, wear it! True love may await her if only she can put down her sword. Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda, MD.

### MONDAY 7

#### **FREE Baby Storytime**

**10:30 a.m.** Storytimes are more than just books! They're interactive experiences that engage children with short stories, action rhymes, songs and finger plays. This storytime event focuses on pre-reading skills that all children need to become good readers. Central Community Library, 8601 Mathis Ave., Manassas, VA.

### TUESDAY 8

#### **BYOB: Bring Your Own Baby to the SEEC**

**10 a.m. | \$15.** Learn about the artist and apprenticeship relationship that developed in the Italian Renaissance. Compare and contrast this dependent relationship with your developing relationship with your baby. This is a specially-designed Smithsonian program for adult audiences who are looking for a rich learning experience and an opportunity to meet other caretakers. Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center,



10th and Constitution Ave., N.W.,  
Washington, D.C.

## WEDNESDAY 9

### Dancing with the Stars: Live!

**\$45-90 | 8 p.m.** TV's biggest dance show returns on tour this winter with "Dancing with the Stars: Live!" featuring fan favorite professional and troupe dancers in a brand-new production showcasing every type of dance style as seen on ABC's hit show "Dancing with the Stars," ranging from ballroom and jazz to modern and hip-hop. MGM National Harbor, 101 MGM National Ave., Oxon Hill, MD.

## FRIDAY 11

### Wake Up, Brother Bear

**11:15 a.m. | \$12.** Sister Bear and Brother Bear are back from hibernation to take your little ones on an interactive journey through the seasons. Meet a curious butterfly, play in a rushing waterfall and catch lightning bugs as the bears frolic through the forest in this unforgettable live theatre experience. Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda, MD.

## SATURDAY 12

### FREE Project Create Family Art Day

**1 p.m.** Come out to Project Create Studio for an artistic afternoon! During this all ages program, attendees can create art projects and crafts while enjoying refreshments and mingling with other families in the community. Project Create Studio, 2028 Martin Luther King Junior Ave., S.E., Washington, D.C.

### Toddler Trailblazers: Polar Bear, Polar Bear

**10 a.m. | \$43.** January is one of our coldest months and a perfect time to read Eric Carle's famous "Polar Bear, Polar Bear!" This lesson will combine the classic book with the National Museum of Natural History's collection of Arctic specimens. The class includes playful activities that are intentionally chosen to support your child's development. Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center, 10th and Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.



**Dec. 13 | 11 a.m. | \$4-\$7**

### Me Jane: The Dreams & Adventures of Young Jane Goodall

Before she was a renowned humanitarian, conservationist and animal activist, Dr. Jane Goodall was a little girl with a very special toy chimpanzee named Jubilee. Together, Jane and Jubilee went on outdoor adventures and observed all the miracles of nature around them. Jane soon dreamed of spending the rest of her life living with and helping animals — and, one day, she would go on to do just that. In this brand-new musical adaptation, join young Jane and her special friend as they learn about the world around them and the importance of protecting all living species. Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center, Rockville, MD.

### The Enchanted Bookshop

**11 a.m. | \$12-\$15.** During the day, A Likely Story looks like any other bookshop, but at night, the characters inside the books come alive. Classic characters including Dorothy Gale, Pollyanna, Tom Sawyer and more long to help Margie, the scatterbrained owner, save her struggling store. When a pair of smugglers come looking for a stolen necklace hidden inside one of the books, the characters must find a way to rescue the bookshop without being seen. Join in on this magical mission to celebrate the enchantment and joy of reading. Ages 4+. Gunston Arts Center Theater One, 2700 S. Lang St., Arlington, VA.

## TUESDAY 15

### FREE Toddler Tuesday: Tent Tales for Tykes

**10:30 a.m.** Come hang out in the L.L.Bean tent for a free story time! The session includes exploring a nature

or outdoor theme followed by related activities, games or crafts. Caretakers must remain on-site and are welcome to join in the fun or spend the time shopping. Ages 3-6. L.L.Bean, 925 Rose Ave., North Bethesda, MD.

## WEDNESDAY 16

### FREE Preschool Storytime

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

## SATURDAY 19

### FREE Reading to Dogs

**11 a.m.** Practice reading aloud while you make a new friend by reading to a therapy dog at the library. Reading to dogs helps young readers improve their skills in a relaxed, friendly environment. Bring your own book or read one of theirs. For readers in grades K-5. Dale City Neighborhood Library, 4249 Dale Blvd, Dale City, VA.

### Parent & Me Class: Winter Wonderland Cupcakes at Fran's Cake and Candy Supplies

**11 a.m. | \$90.** Learn how to work with fondant and create six Woodland fondant cupcake toppers. Each team will receive six cupcakes ready to be decorated with a buttercream swirl and their fondant toppers. Toppers include: owls, foxes, acorns and deer. The workshop will include a box to take the cupcakes home in. Ticket includes admission for both parent and child. Ages 4-9. 10927 Main St., Fairfax, VA.

## SUNDAY 20

### Hylton Presents: We Shall Overcome: A Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**3 p.m. | \$26-\$44.** Hear the compelling words of the great Martin Luther King, Jr. interwoven with incredible music created by African-American artists during the Civil Rights movement in this inspired production. Conceived and created by the accomplished musical artist Damien

Sneed, "We Shall Overcome" blends actual recordings of Dr. King's speeches with music from African-American traditions, tying together a lineage of music and culture that includes traditional gospel, modern gospel, classical, jazz, Broadway and spirituals. Hylton Performing Arts Center, 10960 George Mason Cir., Manassas, VA.

## TUESDAY 22

### **FREE Music & Motion**

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

## FRIDAY 25

### **Image China: Xuanzang's Pilgrimage**

**7:30 p.m. | \$70-\$200.** China Performing Arts Agency brings the U.S. premiere of Xuanzang's Pilgrimage to The Kennedy Center Opera House. Performed by the China National Traditional Orchestra (CNTO), the production is China's first traditional concert drama. It tells the story of the Buddhist monk Xuanzang, who traveled the length of the Silk Road across China on a pilgrimage to India. Xuanzang's 17-year journey was driven by his desire to discover religious texts that had not yet come from India to China. The story is brought to life with an 80-piece traditional Chinese orchestra, 24 featured performers and elaborate costumes. The Kennedy Center Opera House, Washington, D.C.

### **Friday Mornings with Rocknoceros**

**10:30 a.m. | \$5.** As every family with youngsters in the D.C. area knows, Rocknoceros is three guys: Coach, Williebob and Boogie Bennie. They have been making award-winning music together since 2005 and are celebrating their 10th year together with a brand-new album. The new batch of songs entertain and educate in equal measure. So join in for a musical morning your kids will love! Jammin Java, Vienna, VA.

## SATURDAY 26

### **An Old Lady Who Swallowed A Fly**

**11 a.m. | \$17-\$32.** Join Hilary Morrow (known most recently for her role as Detective Fix in APO's Around the World in 80 Days) in a madcap retelling of this classic children's story. Watch as this old woman's appetite for strange objects transforms her quiet afternoon into a wildly spectacular tale! Arena Stage, The Mead Center for American Theater, Washington, D.C.

### **Hylton Family Series: Enchantment Theatre Company Presents The Phantom Tollbooth**

**2 p.m. | \$10-\$15.** This beloved and inventive childhood classic book, *The Phantom Tollbooth*, is brought to life in an original stage adaption. Norton Juster's original story begins with Milo, who is very bored until a tollbooth mysteriously appears in his room. He decides to drive his toy car through it, and everything changes! Once on the other side, Milo is thrilled to find a fantastical world where he is welcomed, and his help is desperately needed. Using puppets, masks, magic, inventive scenic effects and original music, Enchantment Theatre Company recreates Milo's adventures as he travels the "Lands Beyond" in his exciting quest to rescue Princesses Rhyme and Reason. Recommended for ages 6-11. Hylton Performing Arts Center 10960 George Mason Cir., Manassas, VA.

### **FREE Haymaker STEAM Expo**

**11 a.m.** The STEAM Expo is more than your average science fair. It is a unique opportunity to explore the various aspects of science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics. In this annual event, invited companies, both small and large, share their knowledge with the community. The STEAM Expo includes a plethora of organizations, such as students, schools, large corporations and local businesses. Activities include logic puzzles, simulations, arts and crafts and technological demonstrations. Battlefield High School, 15000 Graduation Dr., Haymarket, VA.



**Dec. 18 | 8 p.m. | \$64-\$104**

### **School of Rock the Musical**

Based on the hit film, this hilarious new musical follows Dewey Finn, a wannabe rock star posing as a substitute teacher who turns a class of straight-A students into a guitar-shredding, bass-slapping, mind-blowing rock band. This high-octane smash features 14 new songs from Andrew Lloyd Webber, all the original songs from the movie and musical theater's first-ever kids rock band playing their instruments live on stage. National Theatre, Washington, D.C.

## SUNDAY 27

### **Preschool Pioneers: Cave Art**

**10 a.m. | \$43.** Thousands of years ago, early humans drew on the wall of caves all over the world and at different times. This class will give children the chance to explore the life of early humans and explore these mysterious symbols, how they were made and what they might have meant. Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center, 10th and Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.

## THURSDAY 31

### **FREE Preschool Storytime**

**10:30 a.m.** Storytimes are more than just books! They're interactive experiences that engage children with short stories, action rhymes, songs and finger plays. This storytime event focuses on pre-reading skills that all children need to become good readers. Bull Run Regional Library, 8051 Ashton Ave., Manassas, VA.



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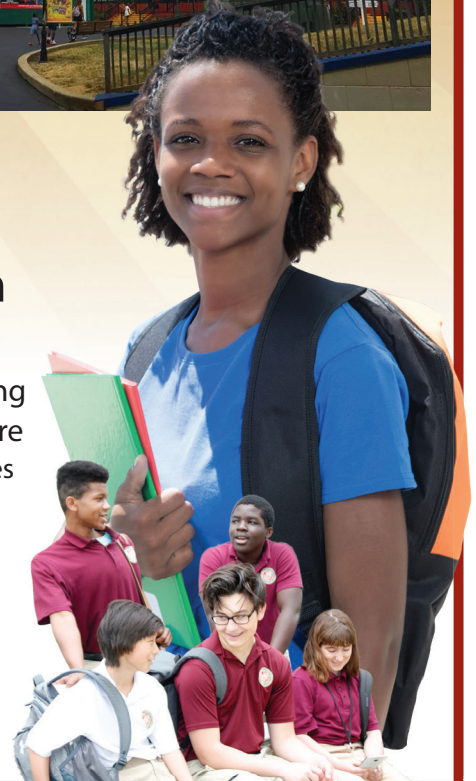


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