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JANUARY 2020

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Help your kids get hooked on civics. **Page 24**



ON THE COVER

Students at the British International School of Washington

FEATURES

- 14 HOW TO WORK WITH A CAMP CONSULTANT**
Let the experts help you choose the right camp for your kid
- 16 NEXT-LEVEL CAMPER**
The many benefits of being a counselor-in-training
- 24 CITIZEN KID**
How to raise civic-minded children while avoiding the ugly side of politics

GUIDES

- 17 SUMMER CAMPS**
- 28 SCHOOLS/OPEN HOUSES**
- 36 MONTESSORI SCHOOLS**

READERS' RESPONSES

We welcome your comments on specific articles, overall themes and anything else related to editorial content. Share your thoughts using the "Feedback" tab on our website: www.washingtonfamily.com.

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

DEPARTMENTS

- 8 CALENDAR**
- 12 FAMILY FUN**
A recipe for hot chocolate slime that smells as delicious as it looks
- 13 AT A GLANCE**
Take a walk in Dr. Jane Goodall's shoes at the National Geographic Museum
- 38 FAMILY TALK**
Local parents share the New Year's resolutions they wish their kids would make
- 40 HEALTHY FAMILY**
How one mom learned to reframe her children's tantrums when tempers are flaring
- 42 YOUR SPECIAL CHILD**
Special needs families often struggle to accept help, even when they need it the most
- 44 BOOKMARKED**
New books to inspire your kids to become readers in 2020
- 46 MOM LIFE**
Angie Goff, a Fox 5 DC anchor, talks about creating family traditions and more

**WE WANT
YOUR
FEEDBACK**

Making a World of Difference

Learning and service are core components of school trip to Tanzania

SAHER AHMED, YEAR 13,
AT THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON

Every year the British International School of Washington (BISW) offers an incomparable opportunity for all our high school juniors to travel abroad and help communities and schools in rural areas of Tanzania as part of their IB Diploma Programme. During the 10-day trip, our students work collaboratively with students from other Nord Anglia schools to install solar panels and build desks, benches, classrooms, goat sheds and smokeless stoves.

"It was incredible being able to see the tangible effects of the work we were doing, like bringing the desks we had built into a classroom for children to use or watching a family experience having lights in their home for the first time after installing solar panels," says Annamaria McHugh, a BISW senior who participated last year.

In preparation for the trip, which strengthens the school's partnerships with the Seeway Tanzania charity, students raise money to pay for the supplies they will use to develop infrastructure in Arusha, Tanzania. The fundraising helps them to build valuable leadership, project management and organization skills while allowing them to empathise with those they will help when they arrive in Tanzania.

Minna Abdel-Gawad, a BISW junior, is looking forward to making an impact when she travels with the school in February. "My



Students from the British International School of Washington, and other Nord Anglia schools, stand in front of a completed goat shed they built.

expectations for the trip are that of any community service, but in a much larger scale," she says. "I am especially excited to be working in schools to promote education and build desks and chairs to provide children with the necessary commodities to further their learning."

Abdel-Gawad adds, "I am fully aware how lucky I am to be receiving an amazing education and cultural awakening, and I hope that others experience the same elsewhere in the world."

BISW students are also given the chance during the trip to appreciate the beauty and natural diversity of Tanzania. They go on a safari through Tarangire National Park and have the rare opportunity to camp

overnight, hike on Mount Meru and learn to cook traditional dishes.

"We found our expedition to Tanzania invaluable and unforgettable," says BISW student body co-president, Isabella Impavido. "For many of us, it was our first time visiting the continent of Africa and we had no idea what to expect. Though everyone that attended the trip enjoyed themselves and learnt so much."

Impavido's co-president, Thomas Pierce Jones, says, "I knew going into the trip that we would encounter poverty, but the experience made me fully realise how little some people have and what lengths they go to for things we take for granted. It was surreal helping people."

According to Principal Ian Piper, attending the Tanzania trip allows students to engage with global issues and develop the ten IB learner profile characteristics. They return with first-hand knowledge that they can make a difference.

"The students who go on this trip are all positively impacted by helping others in less fortunate situations. Even if only 10 percent of those students are inspired to make continued change, their impact in their community, and the world, is exponential. That's the true power of a global experience at an international school like ours," he says.



Jordy Oranje delivers a family a goat for their newly constructed goat shed. The goat provides milk for the family and excess milk can be sold to generate income.



Annamaria McHugh builds a student desk outside a school in Tanzania.



Jordy Oranje talks with some local children about their new goat shed.



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Table of
Contents



Single Page
Design



Calendar of
Events



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Planning Ahead

Two months after school started, I began receiving texts from my friends about summer camp.

"Will you be sending your boys back to the same camp next year?" they wanted to know.

At the time, I couldn't possibly think about next year. My kids were still adjusting to elementary school, and I was preparing for my new job here at Washington FAMILY. Things were chaotic, to say the least, and considering summer camp options in early November just wasn't priority.

But now that it's 2020, I don't think I'll be able to put off making summer plans for my boys much longer. Registration is now open for most camps in the area, and my friends aren't letting up on those text messages!

It's decision-making time.

If you're in the same boat, we're here to help. We asked camp consultants about finding the perfect camp for every kid and talked to local camp directors about hiring teens for their counselor-in-training programs.

And speaking of decisions, there's a big election

coming up in 2020. Your kids may not be able to vote, but that doesn't mean they can't be engaged little citizens! We asked child development experts for tips about getting kids interested in politics as well as book recommendations for future political junkies.

Also this month, Hannah Grieco talks about better understanding her children's tantrums, and Erica Rimlinger explores why special needs families are often resistant to accepting help — and how to change that.

We're also sharing a DIY slime recipe that looks — and smells! — like hot chocolate and new books that'll inspire your children to read more in 2020.

I'm thrilled to kick off a new year and a new decade with you! Please send me your questions, comments and ideas via email or find me on Twitter and Instagram at @pjfeinstein. ■

PJ Feinstein



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WEDNESDAY 1

First Hike of the Year

Kick off 2020 with a breath of fresh air! Take a guided hike along the Underground Railroad Experience Trail with conductors who can provide historical context. Ages 8 years and up.

Woodlawn Manor Cultural Park, Sandy Spring, MD at 12 p.m. \$8. montgomeryparks.org

THURSDAY 2

Tiny Tot

Explore the wonders of nature with your toddler through songs, crafts, finger plays and hikes.

Gulf Branch Nature Center & Park, Arlington, VA at 10 a.m. \$5. parks.arlingtonva.us

FRIDAY 3

Parent and Tot Skate

Make a skate date with your toddler! All skill levels are welcome, and pushing skate aids are available for no additional fee.

Cabin John Ice Rink, Rockville, MD at 11:15 a.m. \$5 for one parent and one child (age 4 and under). montgomeryparks.org

SATURDAY 4

MAKER Morning:

New Year, New Color

Celebrate the New Year with a musical color parade around the Hirshhorn! Then stop by hands-on MAKER stations around the museum to build noise-makers, create art using light and make a photographic print.

Hirshhorn National Museum of Modern Art, Washington, DC at 10 a.m. **FREE**. hirshhorn.si.edu

Family Scavenger Hunt and Hike

Explore the winter wonders of the great outdoors while keeping an eye out for trees and wildlife listed on scavenger hunt sheets. All ages are welcome.

Maydale Conservation Park, Colesville, MD at 3 p.m. **FREE**. montgomeryparks.org

'Alice in Wonderland'

Don't miss the final performance The British Players' seasonal pantomime, a slapstick retelling of the classic story. Children in the audience are encouraged to boo at the bad guys and cheer for the heroes. Ages 4 and up.

Kensington Town Hall, Kensington, MD at 7 p.m. \$15-\$26. britishplayers.org

SUNDAY 5

Elephant & Piggie: We Are Doing Yoga!

Children ages 3-7 will enjoy this silly yoga class, which uses yoga poses to act out Elephant and Piggie stories like "I Am Frog" and "Today I Will Fly!"

Shining Kids Yoga at Early Intervention Associates, Rockville, MD at 9:30 a.m. \$25. shiningkidsyoga.com

Adapted Ice Skate Night

Individuals of all ages with disabilities have exclusive use of MedStar Iceplex, home of the 2018 Stanley Cup Champions. A limited number of BOB strap-on ice skates will be available or participants can bring their own skating aids.

MedStar Iceplex, Arlington, VA at

4:10 p.m. **FREE** admission, \$1 skate rentals. parks.arlingtonva.us

MONDAY 6

Read to the Dog

Kids in grades 1-5 can bring a book or borrow one from the library to read aloud to a therapy dog. This is a fantastic way to practice reading skills in a safe and relaxed environment. Registration required 30 minutes before program starts

Montclair Library, Dumfries, VA at 4 p.m. **FREE**. pwcgov.evanced.info

WEDNESDAY 8

Mommy, Daddy & Me Art Classes

Infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their parents are invited to discover the world of color through introductory art at this drop-in class. Smocks, canvases, paint, brushes and other supplies are provided.

Tychelle Mosely Art, Silver Spring, MD at 10 a.m. \$30 for one child and one parent. tychellemosleyart.us

FRIDAY 10

Kids Concert & Family Happy Hour with King Bullfrog

King Bullfrog performs high-energy acoustic music for kids that will have your little ones on their feet. Pizza is included in admission price.

Hill Center at the Old Naval Hospital, Washington, DC at 5 p.m. \$5-\$10. hillcenterdc.org

'Narnia'

A musical adaptation of the C.S. Lewis story, this Encore Stage & Studio production follows four brave kids on an adventure through the magical world of Narnia. Through January 19.

Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre, Arlington, VA at 7:30 p.m. \$15. encorestageva.org

SATURDAY 11

Nationals Winterfest

This two-day event at Nationals Park provides baseball fans of all ages the opportunity to meet, take photos with and get autographs from their favorite players and coaches. Also January 12.

Nationals Park, Washington, DC at noon. \$25-\$35. mlb.com/nationals

'MOUSE ON THE MOVE'

Jan. 11 | 10 a.m. | \$12



In this interactive play for children ages 1-5, two adventurous mice, Nellie and Amelia, decide to leave their mouse-hole and explore the moon, which they believe is made of cheese. Register for a free workshop following the show. Through February 16.

Imagination Stage, Bethesda, MD at 10 a.m. \$12. imaginationstage.org

SUNDAY 12

Hibernation & Winter Animal Homes

Where would you sleep if you hibernated in the winter? Children ages 3-8 will learn about the hibernation habits of local animals, enjoy a story and go on a short guided hike.

Locust Grove Nature Center, Bethesda, MD at 1 p.m. \$7 for one adult and one child.

montgomeryparks.org

Progressive International Motorcycle Show

In addition to checking out the hottest new bikes and custom rides and watching stunt shows with you, children ages 3 and up can ride battery-assisted balance bikes on a closed course in The Kids Zone. Also Jan. 10-11.

Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC at 10 a.m.

FREE for kids 12 and under. \$17 for adults. motorcycleshow.com/washingtondc

MONDAY 13

Music & Motion

Children ages 1-5 and their caregivers will sing and dance with scarves, beanbags, parachutes and more. Arrive 30 minutes early to receive a token to participate.

Haymarket Gainesville Library, Haymarket, VA at 10:30 a.m. **FREE**. pwgov.evanced.info

SATURDAY 18

Origami + Bonsai: Ancient Arts Collide

After a private tour of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum's bonsai collection, children ages 6 and up will learn how to make four origami animals under the guidance of an experienced origami teacher and artist.

U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, DC at 10 a.m. \$15. bonsai-nbf.org

Nature Makerspace: Recycled Art Wall

Help build a wall from recycled materials such as egg cartons and newspapers that will be on display in the visitor center for the rest of the month. Supplies will be provided. Registration is required.

Black Hill Nature Programs, Boyds, MD at noon, **FREE**. montgomeryparks.org

Family Production: 'The Pied Piper'

The American Pops Orchestra takes children (Pre-K - 3rd grade) on a journey in this musical retelling of the well-known fairy tale.

Arena Stage, Washington, DC at 11 p.m. and 2 p.m. \$17 - \$32. theamericanpops.org

SUNDAY 19

Family Fun: Groovy Nate

Children's entertainer and Wolf Trap Teaching Artist, Groovy Nate, exposes kids to various genres of

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music using exotic instruments and puppet skits. Full food and drink menus are available.

Capitol Cider House, Washington, DC at 10:30 a.m. \$5. capitolciderhouse.com

Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood LIVE!

Daniel Tiger, the beloved PBS KIDS television character, and his friends are coming to the district for a live performance with music, dancing and fun!

Warner Theatre, Washington, DC at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. \$30-\$52. danieltigerlive.com

Wasington FAMILY Camps and Summer Programs Fair

Meet with reps from local day and overnight camps and find the perfect summer experience for your child! Enjoy family fun activities, raffles and prizes, giveaway bags and more.

Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax VA at noon. FREE. washingtonfamily.com

LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

Jan. 26 | 11 a.m. | FREE

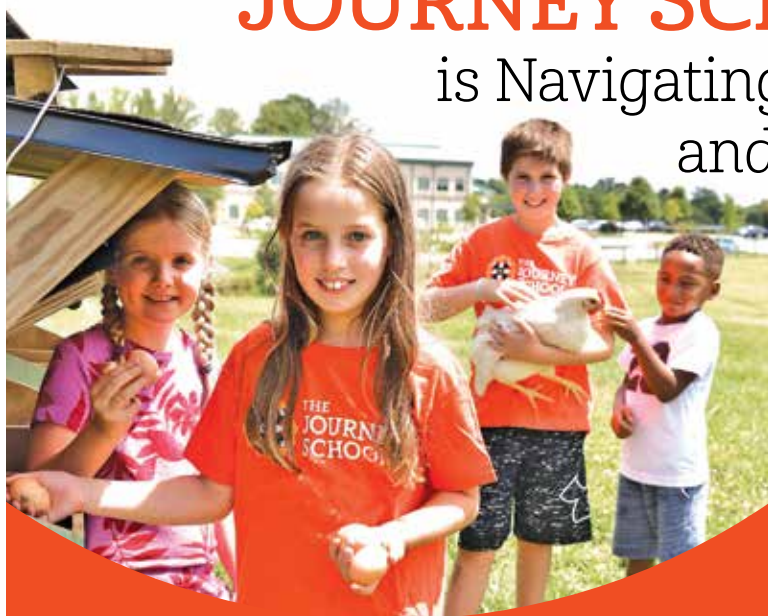


The sixth annual Lunar New Year celebration will ring in the Year of the Rat with interactive art demonstrations plus live magic and musical performances. Food is available to purchase.

While you're there, explore two special Sackler exhibitions and the Freer's permanent collection of Asian art.

Freer and Sackler Galleries, Washington, DC at 11 a.m. FREE. asia.si.edu

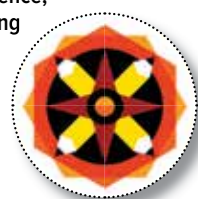
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MONDAY 20

Winter Wonderland Workshop

Kids ages 5-7 can spend the afternoon learning dances and making crafts inspired by the sights and sounds of winter. The event will conclude with a short performance for families.

Local Motion Project, Alexandria, VA at 1:30 p.m. \$45. localmotionproject.org

TUESDAY 21

Bring Your Own Baby: Gems & Minerals

Learn some of the science behind the stones housed in the Smithsonian's Janet Annenberg Hooker Hall of Geology, Gems, and Minerals while your baby takes in their exciting colors and shapes.

National Museum of Natural History, Washington, DC at 10:15 a.m. \$15. seecstories.com

THURSDAY 23

Tip-Tapping Maple Trees

Using drills, spiles and metal buckets, children ages 5 and up will learn the old-fashioned way of

tapping a maple tree.

Brookside Nature Center, Wheaton, MD at 3 p.m. \$3. montgomeryparks.org

FRIDAY 24

Strong Start DC Community Playgroup

Learn about early childhood development, developmental screenings and the Strong Start DC Early Intervention Program referral process while engaging in age-appropriate play with your 2-3 year old. Registration required.

Northeast Library, Washington, DC at 10 a.m. FREE. dclibrary.org

SATURDAY 25

Pokémon Day

Bring your Pokémon cards and Nintendo DS games for a morning of playing and trading as your kids try to catch them all! Ages 5 and up.

Dale City Library, Dale City, VA at 10:30 a.m. FREE. pwcgov.evanced.info

Bedtime Games Workshop

Learn how to make bedtime smoother by revamping your child's nightly routine. Parents and

kids ages 1-5 years will practice connective games led by a holistic sleep coach.

Birth Club, Alexandria, VA at 11:30 a.m. \$35-\$50. thebirthclub.com

Monster Jam Triple Threat

"The hottest show on wheels" is back in town! Young fans can meet the massive trucks in person and get autographs and photos with drivers and crews at the post-show Pit Party! Also January 26.

Capital One Arena, Washington, DC at 1 p.m. & 7 p.m. Tickets start at \$20. monsterjam.com

SUNDAY 26

'Matilda'

Based on Roald Dahl's popular children's book, the Tony Award-winning musical tells the story of a special little girl with an extraordinary imagination. Presented by Levine Music Theatre.

Arena Stage, Washington, DC at 2 p.m. \$15-\$25. levinemusic.org

MONDAY 27

Disney Dance

This one-day camp for kids ages 4-9 focuses on Disney numbers and includes time for stories, arts and crafts, games, lunch and a much-needed rest.

Salsa with Sylvia, Washington, DC at 8:30 a.m. \$100 - \$120. Salsawithsylvia4kids.com

FRIDAY 31

Paw Patrol Live!

Race to the Rescue

Mayor Goodway has gone missing before the Great Adventure Bay Race against Foggy Bottom's Mayor Humdinger! In this new live show, it's up to the Paw Patrol to find the mayor while taking her place in the race. Through February 2.

Eagle Bank Arena, Fairfax, VA at 6 p.m. \$19 - \$175. pawpatrollive.com ■



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How to Make Hot Chocolate Slime

Your kids will love this gooey and delicious-smelling DIY

BY LINDSAY PONTA



It's only January, but it's been cold long enough that you might be running out of ways to keep the kids busy indoors. Fortunately, I have a solution: hot chocolate slime!

Slime can be tons of fun for a wide range of ages. For toddlers, it's a sensory activity. Put it in a muffin pan with a few tiny toys and your little one will have a blast stretching, squeezing and transferring the goo from one compartment to another. Or dump it onto a plate and let them stamp shapes into it and then watch as the impressions disappear.

Slime also makes a fantastic STEM activity for older children. It's chemistry in action! A non-Newtonian fluid, slime responds like a solid when squeezed but acts like a liquid when released. If you want to really dig into the science behind slime with your kids, ACS.org has a great resource on its website.

This recipe makes enough hot chocolate slime for two to four kids, but it can be easily doubled for a larger group. As the slime sits, the foam beads will float up to the top slowly, so it looks just like a mug of hot chocolate with marshmallows! You can expect to get at least a few weeks of play from your slime if you store it in an airtight container.

Almost all the supplies for this slime recipe can be found at your local grocery and craft stores or online. While it's safe to play with, please remind your kids that Borax is a soap and shouldn't be consumed. If you're making a batch with toddlers, you may want to skip the yummy chocolate fragrance oil so they aren't tempted to eat the slime.

Bonus: Slime makes an adorable gift or party favor when packaged in nonbreakable container with a bright bow. ■

SUPPLIES:

- ◆ White school glue
- ◆ Warm water
- ◆ Borax
- ◆ Brown gel food coloring
- ◆ White craft foam beads
- ◆ Plastic jar or container
- ◆ Optional: chocolate fragrance oil (available online)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Use a fork to mix together ½ cup white glue and ½ cup of water in a bowl.
2. Add enough brown gel food coloring to achieve the look of hot chocolate and about 10 drops of chocolate fragrance oil. Stir until the color is evenly mixed.
3. Dissolve Borax into ½ cup of warm water in another bowl.
4. Pour half the Borax solution over the glue mixture and stir with the fork. It should start to stick together and clump up a bit.
5. Continue adding the Borax solution a little at a time, stirring constantly, until it all sticks together in one big blob.
6. Use your hands to knead the slime until it's smooth and no longer sticky. You may need to add a bit more Borax solution to get rid of stickiness. I like to dip my fingers into the Borax solution and then knead them into the slime.
7. Pour some foam balls onto the finished slime, kneading them in with your hands.

8. Separate the slime into plastic jars or another type of airtight container for storage.

THIS RECIPE CAN BE ADJUSTED IN SO MANY WAYS TO CREATE DIFFERENT SLIME CONCOCTIONS. HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS TO STRETCH OUT THE FUN ALL WINTER LONG:

- ◆ Use an extra ¼ teaspoon of Borax for a more putty-like consistency.
- ◆ Use different colors to explore color mixing.
- ◆ Add glitter for some fun sparkle.
- ◆ Mix in pom poms or water beads for different textures.
- ◆ Add a generous dollop of shaving cream for fluffy slime.
- ◆ Use clear glue for a transparent version.

Please share pictures of your hot chocolate slime on social media with the hashtag **#washingtonfamilymag** so we can see your creativity. Happy crafting, friends! ■

Lindsay Ponta created the DIY and lifestyle website Shrimp Salad Circus in 2009 to inspire busy women to live perfectly-imperfect creative lives. Find easy DIYs and recipes at shrimpsaladcircus.com.

A WALK IN JANE GOODALL'S SHOES

"Becoming Jane" Now Open at the National Geographic Museum

Twenty-five years before Dr. Jane Goodall traveled from England to Africa to study chimpanzees, a chimp at the London Zoo gave birth to a baby. Born the same year as King George's Silver Jubilee, celebrating the 25th anniversary of his reign, the baby chimpanzee was named Jubilee. Plush chimpanzees were produced to commemorate the birth of Jubilee, and Goodall's father brought one home for his 1-year-old daughter.

Jubilee the plush animal is just one of many artifacts from Goodall's childhood on display at a new National Geographic Museum exhibition, "Becoming Jane: The Evolution of Jane Goodall." When she returned to her family home to retrieve Jubilee for the exhibit, Goodall also brought back the Tarzan and Doctor Doolittle books that, as a young girl, inspired her to want to work with wild animals as well as a handmade doll she received from her mother.

A partnership between the National Geographic Society and the Jane Goodall Institute, "Becoming Jane" is an interactive multimedia exhibition that takes visitors on a journey through the life of the celebrated animal behavior expert, conservationist and activist. Goodall is best known for her behavioral research on chimpanzees and her then-unorthodox approach to field research: She immersed herself in their habit in what is now Gombe, Tanzania.

When it opened at the end of November, visitors were surprised by how such an immersive experience could still feel so personal. That's because Goodall herself was involved in the project scope, sharing her thoughts not only

on what artifacts to display but also on which stories to tell. For example, she was particularly passionate about including a video on animal intelligence featuring Piggasso the Painting Pig, a South African rescue pig with a knack for landscapes.

The kid-friendly exhibit also includes a replica of Goodall's research tent, where visitors can explore her supplies and jot down their own observations in a field journal. They can take a virtual reality expedition to Tanzania's Gombe Stream National Park, learn how to pant-hoot like a chimp in an interactive augmented reality (AR) activity and watch a hologram-like projection of Goodall take a trip down memory lane.

At the end of the exhibition, visitors can pledge to help Goodall in her mission to ensure a more sustainable future by choosing to use less plastic, avoid palm oil or take a nature walk. Each pledge appears as a leaf on an interactive Tree of Hope.

"This exhibition allows us to experience [Goodall's] amazing life story in a highly personal and powerful way," says Kathryn Keane, vice president of public

INTRODUCE YOUR KIDS TO DR. JANE GOODALL AND HER INSPIRING WORK BY READING THESE RECOMMENDED CHILDREN'S BOOKS BEFORE YOU GO.

- *My Life with the Chimpanzees* by Jane Goodall
- *Me...Jane* by Patrick McDonnell
- *I am Jane Goodall* by Brad Meltzer
- *Who is Jane Goodall?* by Roberta Edwards
- *The Watcher* by Jeanette Winter

programming at the National Geographic Society. "Through immersive media, authentic scenic and interactions, this exhibition takes visitors into the field and around the world with Jane, walking in her shoes and experiencing her powerful message of hope firsthand."

"Becoming Jane" is open at the National Geographic Museum (1145 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036) through the summer of 2020. Tickets cost \$15 for adults; \$12 for seniors, students and military; and \$10 for children ages 5-12. For more information, visit natgeoevents.org or janegoodall.org. ■

— PJ FEINSTEIN



Children can explore artifacts on display at "Becoming Jane: The Evolution of Jane Goodall," organized by National Geographic and the Jane Goodall Institute.



BY ADRANISHA STEPHENS

Finding the right camp for your child can seem daunting. After all, there are so many choices! Luckily, there are experts who can help.

471388422
TX 8917326

Think of camp consultants as expert advisors who makes it their mission to match each child with the camp that is the best fit, all while offering free information to families.

Tips on Trips and Camps in Baltimore shares summer options from a group of screened and selected residential summer lineups — more than 600 — based on a child's interests and a family's needs. It is, in essence, a matchmaker for summer programs.

And for director Eve Eifler, the consultant process is simple. Based on a call, her advisors research programs they think are right for that individual child.

"There are thousands of programs on the web, and the process can become very confusing. Our goal is to do the research and vetting for a family," she says. "A Tips advisor will email websites of about four to six options that we think will match what the family wants. Then we discuss the options to make sure we are on the right track and if not will suggest more. It is a partnership, and often, we will introduce a kind of experience that the family did not even know existed."

But if parents want some face-to-face planning, they have that covered, too.

"We have advisors in 12 cities and offer camp fairs as well as personal consultations. We are always happy to meet in person," she says.

Laurel Barrie, co-owner of Camp Connection, a consulting business that serves families throughout Delaware, Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Virginia, also shares her tips for first-time campers looking for help.

"I think it's important that parents do their due diligence and research when looking into where they should send their kids to camp," she says. "What are their interests? Are they competitive or noncompetitive? Do they have special activities they would like to pursue? What kind of distance are you looking for?"

Once you know that, you can begin the camp-planning process, she says.

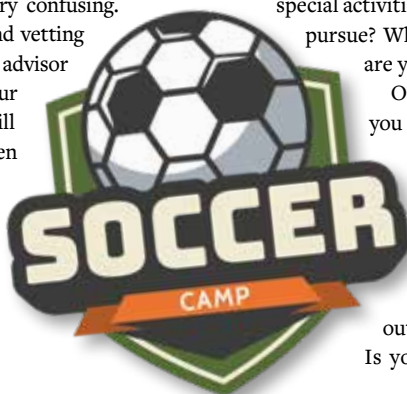
Another thing to keep in mind is what you want your child to get out of the experience.

Is your child extremely

active and athletic? Then perhaps a sports camp is the right fit. If you want your child to gain more hands-on learning, then an overnight camp or other specialty camp might be the best choice.

From campfires to water skiing, there are all sorts of diverse activities that have some instructional and recreational component to it, Barrie says. But it's bunking in a cabin 24/7 with others that builds self-control and empathy. It's helping carry someone else's equipment on a hike, making a fire and cooking together, trying new foods and overcoming homesickness that builds independence, she adds.

Eifler agrees, adding that summer camp can help kids become more liberated, learn resiliency, build self-esteem and self-reliance and absorb social skills. "Camps offer the opportunity to learn new skills, but perhaps more importantly, [they] teach kids to advocate for themselves, problem solve and learn to get along with other kids who may be quite different from them," she says. "It also encourages kids to try new things and teaches them that it is OK to fail the first time and persevere. It teaches kids to be good losers and also good winners — all without parents who often jump in to fix things."





Another bonus? Camps are now generally “media-free” zones. While many parents cannot get their children to turn off electronics, especially during the summer, most camps today provide a space that is electronics free. This leads to campers learning better communication skills, Barrie says.

“At traditional camps, they can’t bring their cellphones or iPads. They actually have to string words together and talk to one another,” she says. “As difficult as it might seem for kids in today’s digital world, they also seem to appreciate the way camp used to be. You’re not only learning activities, you’re also learning social skills and appropriateness. You’re remembering to say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ and to show consideration.”

What also usually happens is the feeling of creating a new family, says Meridith Jacobs, a Montgomery County mom. She has two elementary school-aged kids and has been using Summer365, a camp consultant service, for years.

Jacobs says that camp has become a “community” for her kids.

“It’s their home away from home,” she says. “We wanted our daughter to have another life and other friends outside of her world

here. Now, when she’s having a bad day, she FaceTimes one of her friends from camp. That’s what she lives for. Camp has become very much a part of our entire family.”

As for how the camp consultant process benefited her family? Jacobs says that using a consultant has produced some happy campers each summer.

“When we first started looking for camps, we went in open-minded,” she says. “We knew we wanted either a four-week camp or a seven-week camp. We didn’t know which would be a better fit.”

That’s where Andrea Grinspoon of Summer365 came in.

Jacobs set up a time to speak with Grinspoon by phone, at which time she shared her child’s background, likes and dislikes and what they were looking for in terms of location, duration, activities and general ambiance. Grinspoon then talked all things summer camp and how to find the best sleep-away spot for her two children.

From there, Grinspoon emailed Jacobs a list of eight camps.

“She was completely neutral. She would not tell me where her kids went camping; she would not give opinions,” Jacobs says. “It was more just factual information because she wanted to make sure we made the right decision for us.”

“I think it’s a really helpful resource for parents, and using a camp consultant was a phenomenal experience, honestly,” she adds. ■

When Adranisha Stephens isn’t chasing down a story, she is traveling, blogging, photographing or spending time with family and friends. She has a bachelor’s degree in mass communication from Frostburg State University and a master’s degree in journalism/digital storytelling from American University.



Next-Level Camper

Learning leadership as a counselor in training

BY PJ FEINSTEIN



Given the choice, the typical 10th grader would likely choose to have a carefree summer as a camper at sleepaway camp rather than work at one as a counselor. But 15-year-old Lukas Kroner of Burke, Virginia, isn't your typical 10th grader.

While most of his friends will be traveling or playing video games, Kroner will be returning to Camp Twin Creeks in Marlinton, West Virginia for his ninth summer — and his first as a counselor-in-training, or CIT. "I'm looking forward to making memories with my fellow CITs and working with the junior campers," he says. "I can't wait to teach them new things and to help them have a great time at camp."



Kroner is confident in his abilities because he believes he works well with kids and knows what they think will be fun. Although he won't be getting paid to be a CIT, tuition for the CIT program costs less than camper tuition, which, Kroner says, "I know my parents like." Plus he'll have the opportunity to participate in camp activities when he isn't working as a CIT.

Not every camp charges 14 and 15 year olds to be part of their counselor-in-training program, but not all camps provide camper-like experiences for CITs either.

At Camp JCC in Rockville, Maryland, daily hour-long training sessions for CITs may include an activity led by a specialist, but they mostly participate in camp activities alongside

the kids in their assigned group. They also don't pay (or get paid) to work, instead earning service-learning hours towards graduation.

What makes a good CIT?

While CIT programs vary from camp to camp, the qualities that camp directors seek out in teenage hires tend to be similar, starting with the desire to work with children. "We can teach a lot of skills. We can teach them how to do most of their day-to-day things, but we can't teach them to want to interact with kids," says Phil Liebson, camp director at Camp JCC.

Ramzi Sifri, director of McDonogh Summer Camps in Owings Mills, Maryland, agrees. "We're looking for people who are sincere in their desire to work with kids, as opposed to just getting a job," he says.

Flexibility and patience are two additional key characteristics of a good counselor. "We plan everything every single day of camp, and then every possible change that could happen, does happen," says Camp JCC's assistant director, Aliza Glatter.

Interestingly, most camps aren't just looking to hire super extroverted teens. As Liebson explains, campers who are less outgoing or may have wallflower tendencies aren't likely to bond

with loud, boisterous CITs.

"It takes all sorts of different personalities and style to make sure we're able to reach every kid," he says, using his own Pokémon-loving son as an example of the type of camper who connects with counselors who also aren't as interested in sports.

The benefits add up

The most obvious benefit of being a CIT is that your teen will already know the camp's culture and traditions when they return later on as a paid counselor — and that knowledge often fast tracks the interview process. "If we're going to hire a young person, we'd like to hire somebody who's taken our CIT program, who's already

been integrated into our camps and knows a lot about them," says Sifri, explaining that CITs at McDonogh Summer Camps are given priority for interviews.

However, "there's so much you can learn from being a camp counselor that is applicable to school life and job life," says Sharon Rosenberg Safra, assistant director at Camp Ramah in Germantown, Maryland. She highlights communication skills, such as talking to kids, peers and supervisors as well as crucial problem-solving skills like the ability to think on one's feet.

Then there's the ability to put oneself in someone else's shoes. "When some of our teens come to us, they're maybe focused on themselves as the priority," explains Liebson. "Whereas once they've worked with kids, and once they've been part of camp, they have that perspective of 'Well, this is why they're saying this.' Now they might be able to mediate conversations between friends or maybe they can help facilitate something that's a little bit more collaborative."

Camp JCC CITs also have the added responsibility of running the camp carnival, which teaches them program design. They're learning everything from creating a budget and acquiring supplies to running the program and debriefing at the end, Liebson explains.

Sifri says that working at camp provides younger Generation Z kids the opportunity to put down their phones, spend some time in the sun and enjoy eclectic experiences such as art and science, computers and sports. "It just kind of helps them develop their personality and . . . as they get closer to the college level what their future interests might be," he says.

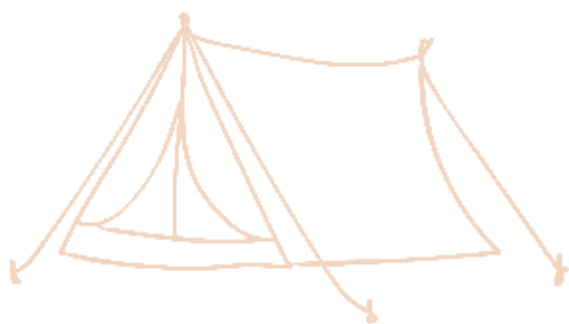
For Michael Thompson, 19, working as a CIT at Camp Levine in Washington, D.C., and then as a counselor at Roundhouse Theatre and Imagination Stage camps, both in Bethesda, Maryland, helped him decide what he wanted to pursue as a career.

"It really solidified for me the fact that I want to work with kids for a living, most likely as a music teacher as I'm currently majoring in music at college and plan to get a master's in education after," he says. ■



2020 Summer Camp Guide

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



OVERNIGHT CAMPS

CAMP HORIZONS

Ages: 6-16

camphorizonsva.com
camp@horizonsva.com
540-896-7600
3586 Horizons Way,
Harrisonburg, VA

Categories: Residential Camp, Boys & Girls, Teens, Sibling Discount, Arts and Crafts, Cooking, Dance, Drama/Theatre, Hiking, Horseback Riding, Music, Overnight Camping, Photography, Swimming

CAMP TALL TIMBERS

Ages: 7-16

campalltimbers.com
info@campalltimbers.com
301-874-0111
1115 Reflection Lane, High View, WV

Categories: Residential Camp, Boys & Girls, Teens, Sibling Discount, Transportation, Arts & Crafts, Boating, CIT Program, Dance, Dance/Drama, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Gymnastics, Hiking, Horseback Riding, Martial Arts, Overnight Camping, Swimming, Sports, Sports – Extreme

BURGUNDY CENTER FOR WILDLIFE STUDIES

Ages: 8-15

burgundycenter.org
703-842-0470
Capon Bridge, WV
Categories: Swimming

DAY CAMPS WASHINGTON, D.C.

BEAUVOIR SUMMER - BEAUVOIR, THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**Ages 3-11; CIT program for
grades 6 to 12**

beauvoirschool.org/summer;
beauvoirschoolsummer@cathedral.org
202-537-6485
3500 Woodley Rd., N.W.,
Washington, D.C.

Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Extended Day, Arts and Crafts, CIT Program, Dance, Drama/Theatre, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Music, Swimming

CAMP ARISTOTLE AT THE AUBURN SCHOOL

scott.swick@catapultlearning.com
201-588-8048
9115 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD
larissa.vlassich@catapultlearning.com
703-793-9353
3800 Concorde Parkway,
Chantilly VA

CAMP LEVINE

Ages: 3.5-12

levinemusic.org/camp
camp@levinemusic.org
202-686-8000
2801 Upton Street, NW
Washington, District of
Columbia 20008

Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts and Crafts, Drama/Theatre, Music

SMITHSONIAN SUMMER CAMP

Ages: K-9

smithsonianassociates.org/camp
customerservice@
smithsonianassociates.org
202-633-3030
Smithsonian's S. Dillon
Ripley Center
1100 Jefferson Drive SW
District of Columbia Washington

Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Extended Day, Educational Activities

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.

GLEN ECHO PARK AQUARIUM

Ages: 4-7, 8-12

gepaquarium.org
info@gepaquarium.org
301-955-6256
7300 MacArthur Blvd.
Glen Echo, MD

Categories: Arts, Educational
Activities, Hiking

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Ages: 3-12

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

Categories: 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.

Categories: Educational
Activities, Sports, Swimming



CAMP GUIDE



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SPRING BILINGUAL MONTESSORI SUMMER CAMP

Ages: 2½-6

spring-bilingual.org
info@spring-bilingual.org
301-962-7262

3514 Plyers Mill Rd., Kensington, MD
Categories: Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, Educational Activities

BARRIE CAMP

Ages: 4-14

barrie.org; camp@barrie.org
301-576-2815
13500 Layhill Rd., Silver Spring, MD
Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Teens, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Transportation, Arts and Crafts, Boating, CIT Program, Drama/Theatre, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Horseback Riding, Martial Arts, Overnight Camping, Swimming

BASIS INDEPENDENT SUMMER

Ages: 2 - 18

Affiliation: BASIS Independent
McLean
mclean-summer@basisindependent.com
basisindependent.com/summer
703-854-1253
8000 Jones Branch Drive
McLean, Virginia 22102
Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Teens, Arts and Crafts, Dance, Drama/Theatre, Educational Activities, Field Trips, 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
The Music Center at Strathmore,
5301 Tuckerman Ln., North
Bethesda, MD

Categories: 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
866-697-4336

Check website for various locations in Maryland

Categories: Girls only, Teens, Educational Activities

CONGRESSIONAL CAMP

Ages: 4-14

congocamp.org
info@congocamp.org
703-533-0931

School Affiliation:

Congressional School
3229 Sleepy Hollow Road
Falls Church, VA 22042

Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Extended day, Transportation, Arts and Crafts, CIT Program, Computers, Cooking, Field Trips, Horseback Riding, Swimming

GLEN ECHO PARK AQUARIUM

Ages: 4-7, 8-12

gepaquarium.org
info@gepaquarium.org
301-955-6256

7300 MacArthur Blvd.,
Glen Echo, MD

Categories: Arts, Educational Activities, Hiking

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Ages: 3-12

ismw.org
info@ismw.org
301-365-5888
10450 Auto Park Ave.
Bethesda, MD

Categories: 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.

Categories: Educational Activities, Sports, Swimming

MANOR MONTESSORI SUMMER CAMP

manormontessori.com/summer-camp
10500 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, MD
11200 Old Georgetown Rd.,
Rockville, MD
5450 Massachusetts Ave.,
Bethesda, MD

Categories: Educational Activities, Arts, Music, Swimming, Sports

RAMAH DAY CAMP OF GREATER WASHINGTON, DC

Ages: Children entering Kindergarten through 5th grades.

11411 Neelsville Church Road
c/o Wellspring Conference Center
Germantown, Maryland 20876
301-658-6627

ramahdcdaycamp.org
dcdaycamp@campramahne.org

Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Extended Day, Transportation, Arts and Crafts, Computers Cooking, Dance, Drama/Theatre, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Music, Special, Needs Sports, Swimming

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Maryland:
Sunday, February 9, 2020
Noon-4pm
Westfield Montgomery Mall

Register:
[WFCampFair2020MD.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/WFCampFair2020MD)

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Washington
FAMILY

WF CAMP GUIDE

SPRING BILINGUAL MONTESSORI SUMMER CAMP

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

VALLEY MILL CAMP INC.

Ages: 4-14
valleymill.com; valleymill@valleymill.com
301-948-0220
15101 Seneca Rd., Darnestown, MD
Category: Day Camp

DAY CAMPS VIRGINIA

ART CAMP AT THE ART LEAGUE

Ages: 5-teen
theartleague.org/classes
school@theartleague.org
703-683-2323
305 Madison St., Alexandria, VA 22314
Categories: Day Camp, Boys

& Girls, Teens, Arts and Crafts, Boating, Educational Activities, Photography

BROOKSFIELD SUMMER CAMP

Ages: 3-10
brooksfieldschool.org
camp@brooksfieldschool.org
703-356-5437 ext. 2
1830 Kirby Rd., McLean, VA
Categories: Extended Day, Arts, CIT, Cooking, Dance, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Hiking, Horseback Riding, Music, Sports, Swimming, Yoga

BURGUNDY FARM SUMMER DAY CAMP - GRACE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

Ages: 4-16
burgundyfarm.org/summer-programs; admissions@graceschoolalex.org
703-549-5067
Alexandria, VA
Categories: Arts and Crafts

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scott.swick@catapultlearning.com
201-588-8048
9115 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD



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CAMP GUIDE



larissa.vlassich@catapultlearning.com
703-793-9353
3800 Concorde Parkway,
Chantilly VA

CAMP GRIFFIN

Ages: 3-14 Years

westminsterschool.com/
kmock@westminsterschool.com
703-340-7268
Westminster School
3819 Gallows Road
Annandale, Virginia 22003

Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts and Crafts, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Swimming, Travel

CAMP KAY - KAY SCHOOL

Ages: 2 1/2-12

kayschool.org; info@kayschool.org
703-264-9078

3005 Dower House Rd., Herndon, VA

Categories: Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Transportation, Arts, CIT Program, Cooking, Dance, Drama, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Hiking, Music, Sports, Extreme Sports, Swimming, Travel, Yoga

CAMP LEVINE - LEVINE MUSIC SCHOOL

Ages 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

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

ENCORE STAGE & STUDIO - IT'S ELEMENTARY

Ages: 4-9

encorestage.org;
info@encorestage.org
703-548-1154
5800 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA
Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Drama/Theatre

ENCORE STAGE & STUDIO - SCENES FOR TWEENS

Ages: 8-12

encorestage.org
info@encorestage.org
703-548-1154
4000 Lorcom Ln., Arlington, VA
Categories: 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
Categories: 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

Categories: Teens, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, Drama, Music

IT'S ELEMENTARY

Ages: 3-9

encorestageva.org/camps/
summercamps/
info@encorestage.org
703-548-1154

Swanson Middle School

5800 Washington Blvd.

Arlington, Virginia 22205

Categories: Day Camp, Extended Day, Drama/Theatre

INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS

Affiliation: Fairfax County Public Schools
8270 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive
Fairfax, VA 22031

Categories: Extended Day, Transportation, Arts and Crafts, Dance, Drama/Theatre, Educational Activities, Music, Photography Special, Yoga

KIDS FIRST SWIM SCHOOLS

Ages: 2 months-Adults

kidsfirstswimschools.com
contact@kidsfirstswimschools.com
Check our website for a list of all 35 locations.

Categories: Educational Activities, Sports, Swimming

PERFECT POINT DANCE STUDIO

Ages: 3-11

perfectpointe.com
staff@perfectpointe.com
703-533-8830
2499 N. Harrison St., Ste. I-LL,
Arlington, VA

Categories: Dance, Drama, Gymnastics

PERFECT POINTE (FORMERLY HEARTBEATS) MUSIC & DANCE STUDIO

Ages: 3-16

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

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WF **CAMP** GUIDE

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

RESTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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

SCENES FOR TWEENS

Ages: 8-12
encorestageva.org/camps/
summercamps/
info@encorestage.org
703-548-1154
Encore's Main Campus
4000 Lorcom Ln.,
Arlington, Virginia 22207
Categories: Day Camp, Extended Day, Drama/Theatre

STAGE DOOR & TECH CAMP

Ages: 11-15
encorestageva.org/camps/
summercamps/

info@encorestage.org
703-548-1154
Kenmore Middle School
200 S. Carlin Springs Rd.
Arlington, Virginia 22204
Categories: Day Camp, Boys & Girls, Drama/Theatre

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
Categories: Teens, Sibling Discount, Arts, Dance, Drama

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL (CAMP GRIFFIN)

Ages: 3-14
Camp Griffin at Westminster School
westminsterschool.com
campgriffin@westminsterschool.com
703-340-7268
3819 Gallows Rd., Annandale, VA
Categories: Teens, Sibling Discount, Extended Day, Arts, Cooking, Dance, Drama, Educational Activities, Field Trips, Hiking, Martial Arts, Music, Sports, Swimming, Yoga. ■

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301-230-2222
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CITIZEN KID

POLITICS AND PARENTING: WE NEED HELP!

BY JESSICA GREGG

After the contentious 2016 elections, every one of Alison Bomba's clients brought up the topic of politics and how fearful it made them.

Bomba is a Frederick-based psychologist who specializes in child and adolescent anxiety — the clients who were feeling so overwhelmed were actually kids.

"It came up in all of my sessions," she says. "I had a lot of kids coming in with very high anxiety and a lot of fear."

This year, of course, brings another round of elections. There is also a presidential impeachment inquiry unfolding in our capital. And a 24-hour news cycle that has increased its reach from our own phones and

TVs to Snapchat, TikTok and the other places our children like to inhabit.

How can today's parents educate their kids about the political process and at the same time shield them from the tumultuous Twitter tit-for-tat that feels so demoralizing? We asked media and parenting experts for their navigational advice.

FIND THEIR FEARS

When Bomba talked with her clients about their post-election anxiety, she found out that many had been exposed to news they were not ready for. It's hard to shelter kids in today's news-saturated world, she admits. Even if parents succeed at doing this, there

is another influencer: kids at school.

"Kids talk at school and information gets skewed, like that old-fashioned telephone game," she says.

If a child is worried, find out what he or she heard, and ask about the "what if" scenarios that are going through their minds.

"Ask them, 'What are you afraid of?'" Bomba says. "If it's something ridiculous or absurd, you can squash that right away."

Younger children might think that news they heard will lead to a catastrophic result, such as war. Parents can tell them that's really unlikely to happen, and using collaborative problem solving, they can brainstorm with a child for five reasons why, she says.



ENGAGE YOUR KIDS



Getting kids involved in elections can happen without anxiety, says Marie Heath, an assistant professor of education at Loyola University Maryland

Indeed, kids can "shape the world they live in and make it better," says Heath, who researches online and offline civic engagement. Believing they matter is what she hopes for her students and her own kids, ages 12, 10 and 8.

Here's how it can be done.

First, find out what your kids care about, she says. If it's the environment, for example, encourage your children to find out how this year's candidates feel about climate change.

Ask your children what they would like to hear from the candidates on these issues. They can go directly to the candidates' websites to find out what they have said or written.

If they can't find this information, kids can reach out to the candidates themselves. Then they can share what they've found with their friends.

When her 8-year-old son pointed out that he can't vote, Heath told him, to his surprise, that he is still a citizen — "It's not something that magically happens when you turn a certain age" — and that he has an opportunity and obligation to get involved.

"It's important to help kids feel that they can make a difference," she says. ■



**HOW CAN
TODAY'S PARENTS
EDUCATE THEIR KIDS
ABOUT THE POLITICAL
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THEM FROM THE
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TIT-FOR-TAT THAT FEELS
SO DEMORALIZING?**



FACT-CHECKING TOOLS



Your teen finds a news item on social media and doesn't know if it's true or not. What next?

There are several sites that Common Sense Media recommends for fact-checking. The complete list is available at commonsensemedia.org, but here are three you can check out now.

All of the sites are rated for educational value, positive messages and other factors. They also include reviews from both parents and kids.

>> **FACTCHECK.ORG**

Recommended for kids ages 13 and older, this site looks into political speeches, Facebook posts, science stories and more.

>> **POLITIFACT.COM**

Also for kids ages 13 and older, the site has a truth-a-meter, among other features, that evaluates recent statements from politicians.

>> **POYNTER.ORG**

This journalism organization offers MediaWise, a digital initiative to help teens become more media savvy. ■

Finally, keep it simple, Bomba says. Tell children the news (“we’ve had an election, and here’s who won”), and then ask them about the questions they have.



child’s interest in social media, Knorr says, but use it as another opportunity.

Find out how media literate your child is, she advises.

Common Sense also has a checklist to help teens fact-check the news they consume (see sidebar).

DON’T SHUN SOCIAL MEDIA

“Twitter is our public conversation now, but it can be very inappropriate for children,” says Caroline Knorr, senior media editor for Common Sense. The organization is a national nonprofit that provides families and schools with tech and entertainment recommendations.

But what’s said on Twitter makes its way quickly to other news outlets. This can provide parents with many teachable moments, Knorr says. The most obvious one for 2020 is that politics is a “contact sport.” Political comments are often emotional and designed to get attention — two great points to make with children.

“It’s a good time to talk about your own family values,” she says. Parents can say, “When we disagree in our family, we are respectful, and we use facts to support our views,” she suggests.

A Common Sense survey revealed that kids get most of their news from their families and other kids, but they like to get news from social media. Parents should not trivialize a

to verify information.

Reputable news sources also print corrections when they get something wrong.

“That’s the process of news that leads us to put our trust in an organization,” she says.

The third question to consider is whether there is evidence to support this news. What do other sources say? This is particularly important to evaluate as kids view videos, photos and infographics, which they consider to be reliable even when they are not, McGrew says.

“One of the strengths of the internet is that there are always other sources,” she says. “We do not have a scarcity of information.”

A study from the Stanford History Education Group released in 2016 revealed that 82 percent of middle schoolers can’t tell the difference between an online news story and an online advertisement. It’s good then for parents to review with children the different types of content on a website — news story, opinion, advertisement and more, says McGrew, who was one of the study’s co-authors.

“An informed citizenry is the bedrock of democracy,” she says. “And we are increasingly informing ourselves on the internet.” ■

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ RAISING A POLITICAL JUNKIE? ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Here are four books for kids hooked on civics, thanks to Keren Joshi, children’s librarian at D.C. Public Library’s Deanwood Neighborhood Library. Visit baltimoreschild.com for more book suggestions as well as website suggestions from Maryland Public Television.

“WHAT’S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT ELECTIONS” BY RUBY SHAMIR | NONFICTION, GRADES K-4

Did you know that Election Day is on Tuesday because that was the best day for farmers to vote? Or that George Washington was our only elected president who ran unopposed? Or that Native Americans were only given the right to vote in 1924? It’s all true! Find out more election fun facts.

“BOOK UNCLE AND ME” BY UMA KRISHNASWAMI | FICTION, GRADES 2-5

Every day, 9-year-old Yasmin borrows a book from Book Uncle, a retired teacher who has set up a free lending library next to her apartment building. But when the mayor tries to shut down the rickety bookstand, Yasmin has to take her nose out of her book and do something.

“THE GREAT GREENE HEIST” BY VARIAN JOHNSON | FICTION, GRADES 5-8

Jackson Greene swears he’s given up scheming. Then school bully Keith Sinclair announces he’s running for Student Council president, against Jackson’s former friend Gaby de la Cruz. Gaby wants Jackson to stay out of it, but does he?

“YOUR OWN WORST ENEMY” BY GORDON JACK | FICTION, GRADES 9-12

For fans of Andrew Smith and Frank Portman and movies such as “Election” and “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off” comes a hilarious and satirical novel about the highs and (very low) lows of the electoral process, proving that the popular vote is the one that matters most. ■



Teaching Shakespeare in Middle-School Wherefore, forsooth?

SUSAN GLAZIER, ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL, WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

William Shakespeare died more than 400 years ago. His language seems archaic, if not downright foreign. Most of his characters and plots were borrowed. What possible appeal could his works have for middle-school students today?

Although the Bard was an inveterate borrower, his dazzling language and fascinating characters transformed musty histories and half-forgotten legends into fresh, exciting stories. As Marchette Chute wrote, “Shakespeare told every kind of story – comedy, tragedy, history, melodrama, adventure, love stories and fairy tales – and each of them so well that they have become immortal.” Shakespeare’s stories shine past the boundaries of time and culture. Modern writers and film makers continue to adapt his plays because they touch on deeply meaningful relationships and life challenges. Think of *The Lion King* (*Hamlet*), *West Side Story* (*Romeo and Juliet*), *Throne of Blood* (*Macbeth*) or *10 Things I Hate About You* (*The Taming of the Shrew*).

Inseparable from his stories are the characters whose personalities drive the plots. Events don’t just happen to the protagonist; they spring from his or her own character. Romeo’s romantic fancy leads him to crash a party at the Capulet’s home, where he falls hard for his enemy’s daughter. Juliet’s passionate nature catches fire and, from a bright but forbidden beginning, their impetuous love spirals ever downward into darkness and death. Macbeth, an honored general, meets three weird sisters who foretell an even more glorious future. Macbeth’s deep-seated ambition is ignited by their prophesy, exploding into murder, tyranny, and ultimately, despair. Even in a romantic comedy, such as *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, the fickleness of young lovers is translated into a madcap night of love turned topsy-turvy. This intertwining of character and fate rings true to our minds and hearts. These people seem real to us, and we believe the things that happen to them.

Of course, any lover of language must embrace Shakespeare’s genius. His eloquence, originality and skill in poetry are unsurpassed. Not only does his imagery capture reality in startling and vivid detail,



but the words and phrases he invented still course through modern English.

But how can we expect 12, 13, and 14 year olds to embrace him? Because Shakespeare’s breakthrough revelation of his characters’ multi-faceted inner lives corresponds profoundly with adolescents’ most pressing developmental challenge. Just at the time when children are striving to transform into young adults, when they are seeking to define their own personhood distinct from their peers and independent of their parents, Shakespeare shows them that each person is not a single entity represented by an impermeable façade (cool guy, rich girl, brainiac, nerd), but comprises many conflicting, and even unknown, parts.

By revealing characters with complex inner worlds, Shakespeare demonstrates the crucial process of self-discovery. Witness Hamlet, who is buffeted by so many conflicting thoughts and emotions that he becomes nearly incapable of the action that his situation demands of him. Hamlet appears to others as a madman, to himself as a coward and to his audience as completely vulnerable. That may be the most perfect description of an adolescent we can find! Shakespeare’s characters make it clear that the transformation young people seek is only possible if they are willing to look within and discover and express their own complexity.



That doesn’t mean Shakespeare is an easy sell to middle-schoolers. At Westminster School, where classics form the heart of the literature program, students are introduced to Shakespeare gradually. In younger grades, they gain familiarity with Shakespeare by watching older students perform one of his plays (a traditional part of Westminster’s K-8 drama program). In their required summer reading, rising 7th graders read Lamb’s *Tales from Shakespeare*, followed by an early school-year enrichment class highlighting Shakespeare’s life, plays and sonnets. Then they begin study and rehearsals for their own Shakespeare play.

As they master the language and strive to bring to life a unique and challenging character, each student finds new depths and broader scope for expression of their own personality. Through studying and performing Shakespeare, these youngsters discover the value of giving up a protective façade in order to discover the real, multi-faceted person they have the potential to be.

Citations

Mabillard, Amanda. “Why Study Shakespeare?” *Shakespeare Online*. August 2000.

Fitzsimmons, Declan. “Shakespeare’s Characters Show Us How Personal Growth Should Happen.” *Harvard Business Review*. January 2017.



2020 OPEN HOUSE GUIDE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BASIS Washington, D.C.™

basisdc.org
malika.walters@
basisdc.com
202-804-6390
410 8th St. NW, Washington,
D.C., 20004

Grades/ages range: grades 5-12
• Founded year: 2012 • Coed/
boys/girls: coed • Enrollment: 640
• Enrollment: 640 • % Minorities:
43% • Average Class Size: 25
• Student-Teacher Ratio: 10:1
• Entrance Exam: N • Grading
System: (A-F or Number) Varies
by grade level and subject,
primarily A-F • Uniforms: N
• Foreign Languages: Latin,
French, Spanish, Mandarin
• Grade Foreign Language •
Begins: 5th grade – Latin only; 7th
grade – student choice • Tuition
Range: \$0--FREE • Number of
Computers: 150 • AP Classes: Y
• Gifted/Talented Program: N •
Learning Disabled Program: Y
• Special Needs Program: Y •
Enrichment Activities: Y • Sports:
Y • Enrichment Activities: Y •
Transportation: N • Extended
Day: Y • Summer Program: N
• Additional Programs: The
Extracurricular Program offerings
change year-to-year based on the
interests of the teachers, students
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margaret.hartigan@
cathedral.org
202-537-6493
3500 Woodley Road, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Grades: PreK-3rd • Year Founded:
1933 • Religious: Cathedral School
• Coed • Enrollment: 390 • % of
Minorities: 41% • Average Class
Size: 21 • Student-Teacher Ratio:
6:1 • Foreign Language: Spanish
beginning in PK • Tuition Range:
\$36,655 • Enrichment Activities •
Extended Day • Summer Program
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BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON

biswashington.org
admissions@biswashington.org
202-829-3700
2001 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Grades PK2-12 • Year Founded:
1998 • Coed • Enrollment: 500 •
Average Class Size: 14 • Uniforms
• Foreign Languages: Spanish
beginning in PK2, French for non-
beginners • Tuition Range: \$13,000
- \$34,000 • Enrichment Activities •
Sports • Transportation • Extended
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info@theauburnschool.org

410-617-0418

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301-588-8048

9545 Georgia Ave., Silver
Spring, Md.

Grades K-8th • Year Founded:
2010 (Silver Spring), 2011
(Lutherville) • Coed • Average
Class Size: 8 • Student-Teacher
Ratio: 8:2 • Grading System: A-F •
Foreign Languages (Silver Spring):
Spanish, Mandarin • Internet
Access • Learning Disabled
Program • Enrichment Activities •
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BARRIE SCHOOL

13500 Layhill Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20906
301-587-2800

barrie.org

admission@barrie.org

Ages: 12 months - Grade 12

**Open House Dates: Saturday,
January 11 at 10:00am, and
Saturday, April 25, at 10:00am**

BETHESDA MONTESSORI SCHOOL

bethesdamontessori.com

admissions@

bethesdamontessori.com

301-986-1260

7611 Clarendon Road
Bethesda, Md.

Ages 3-6 • Extended Day

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American Montessori Teachers
Association and other educational
organizations. It leases its facility
from the Bethesda Presbyterian
Church, but it has no religious
affiliation with the church. It is
centrally located
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district on Wilson Lane near the
intersection of Old Georgetown
and Arlington Roads, three blocks
from the Bethesda Metro station.
**Open House: Call to schedule
a tour.**

FEYNMAN SCHOOL

feynmanschool.org

admissions@

feynmanschool.org

301-770-4370

11810 Falls Road, Potomac, Md.

Grades: PS-8th • Year Founded:

2009 • Coed • Enrollment: 107 •
Average Class Size: 14 • Student-
Teacher Ratio: 7:1 • Entrance Exam
• Foreign Language: Spanish
beginning in PS • Tuition Range:
\$12,910-\$28,565 • Number of
Computers: 15 • Internet Access
• Gifted/Talented Program •
Enrichment Activities • Extended
Day • Additional Programs: Music,
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Basketball, Chinese
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connie@friendscommunityschool.org

301-441-2100

5901 Westchester Park Dr.

College Park, MD

Grades: K-8 • Year Founded: 1986

• Religious • Coed • Enrollment:

248 • % of Minorities: 51% •

Average Class Size: 14 • Student-

Teacher Ratio: 8:1 • Grading

System: Progress Reports Only

• Foreign Languages: Spanish

beginning in K • Tuition Range:

\$20,200-\$22,400 • Computers •

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htrinity.org

admissions@htrinity.org

301-464-3215 or 301-262-5355

11902 Daisy Ln., Glenn Dale, MD

and 13106 Annapolis Road

Bowie MD 20720

Grades: Preschool-Grade 8 •

Year Founded: 1963 • Religious

• Coed • Enrollment: 444 • % of

Minorities: 95% • Average Class

Size: 20 • Student-Teacher Ratio:

10:1 • Entrance Exam • Grading

System A-F • Uniforms • Foreign

Languages: Spanish beginning

in Kindergarten • Tuition Range

\$9,690-\$13,370 • Number of

Computers: 1:1 • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Extended Day • Summer Program • Drama • Art • Music • Technology

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Friday, April 24, 9:30-11:30am

THE JOURNEY SCHOOL

thejourneyschool.net

cthomas@thejourneyschool.net

240-324-6160

2430 Spencerville Road

Spencerville, MD 20868

Grades/ages range: Grades 1 - 8

Founded year: 2015 • Coed/boys/ girls: Coed • Average Class Size: 15 • Entrance Exam: N • Uniforms: N • Tuition Range: 15,000.00 - 17,000.00 • Enrichment Activities: Y • Extended Day: Y • Summer Program: Y • Additional Programs: Outdoor education, farm education, electives by interest, field experiences and overnight trips

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Bethesda, Md.
11200 Old Georgetown Road,
Rockville, Md.

Ages: 2-9

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

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spring-bilingual.org
info@spring-bilingual.org
301-962-7262

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Open House: January 11



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THE AUBURN SCHOOL

theauburnschool.org

info@theauburnschool.org

703-793-9353

3800 Concorde Parkway
Chantilly, Va.

Grades K-8th • Year Founded: 2009 • Coed • Average Class Size: 8 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 8:2 • Grading System: A-F • Foreign Languages (Silver Spring): Spanish, Mandarin • Internet Access • Learning Dis-abled Program • Enrichment Activities • Summer Program

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703-854-1253
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Grades: Twos Program-Grade 12 • Year Founded: 2016 • Coed • Enrollment: 470 • Student-Teacher Ratio 8:1 • Entrance Exam • Foreign Languages: Mandarin, Latin, Spanish, and French beginning in PK1 • Tuition Range: \$25,500 - \$30,000 • AP Classes • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Transportation • Extended Day • Summer Program Students, age 2-grade 12, receive a well-rounded, liberal arts

curriculum with a STEM focus.

Open House: January 11

BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL
brooksfieldschool.org
brksfield@aol.com
703-356-5437

1830 Kirby Road, McLean, Va.
 Grades: Toddler-Kindergarten • Year Founded: 1987 • Coed • Enrollment: 100 • Average Class Size: 20 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 5:1 (Toddlers) 10:1 (Primary) • Foreign Language: Spanish beginning as Toddler • Tuition Range: \$14,220-\$23,907 • Number of Computers: 6 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Transportation (for before/after FCPS care program) • Extended Day • Summer Program • Junior Achievement • Robotics • Organic Gardening • Outdoor Adventure Program
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Open House: Tours run Monday through Thursdays at 9:30 or 10:30am.

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congressionalschool.org
admission@congressionalschool.org
703-533-1064

3229 Sleepy Hollow Road
Falls Church, VA 22042
 Grades/ages range: Infants – Grade 8
 Founded year: 1929 • Coed/boys/girls: Coed
 Enrollment: 350 • Average Class Size: 13 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 6:1 • Entrance Exam: N • Uniforms: Y • Foreign Languages: French, Spanish, Latin • Grade Foreign Language Begins: Kindergarten • Tuition Range: \$25,000 - \$30,000 • Number of Computers: 1:1 • Enrichment Activities: Y • Sports: Y • Enrichment Activities: Y • Transportation: Y • Extended Day: Y • Summer Program: Y •

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WF OPEN HOUSE GUIDE

Ages: Infant to elementary
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Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

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204 F Mill St, NE

Vienna, Virginia 22180

202-909-3412

harmoniaschool.org

harmonia@harmoniaschool.org

Ages: All ages

Open House Dates: January 11th at 2 p.m.

KAY SCHOOL

kayschool.org

director@kayschool.org

703-264-9078

3005 Dower House Drive

Herndon, VA

Ages: 2 1/2 through kindergarten

Kay School provides a safe, loving and caring environment for children ages two-and-a-half through kindergarten, as well as for school-age children through middle school in our before and after school programs.

Open Houses: All from 9-11 a.m. January 18, February 1

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF CEDAR LANE

preschoolmontessori.com

info@cedarlanemontessori.com

703-560-4379

3035 Cedar Ln., Fairfax, Va.

Grades: PreK-K • Year Founded:

1971 • Coed • Enrollment: 100 •

Average Class Size: 25 • Student-

Teacher Ratio: 12:1 • Foreign

Language: Spanish • Tuition

Range: \$9,312-\$17,405 • Internet

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13625 EDS Drive

Herndon, Virginia 20171

703-713-3332

nysmith.com

ebalberde@nysmith.com

Grades: 3 years - 8th Grade •

Founded: 1984 • Religious: No •

Enrollment: 550 • % Minorities: 49

• Average Class Size: 18

Entrance Exam: Yes • Foreign

Languages: French/Spanish/

Latin • Grade Foreign Language •

Begins: 3 Years • Tuition Ranges: \$27,750 - \$37,900 • Number of Computers: 400+ • Sports Programs: Yes • Enrichment Activities: Yes • Transportation: Yes • Extended Day: Yes • Summer Program: Yes

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Open House: Tour and Information Session every Thursday at 9 am.

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pinecrestschool.org

admissions@pinecrestschool.org

703-354-3446

7209 Quiet Cove, Annandale, VA

Grades: Preschool-6th •

Year Founded: 1957 • Coed •

Enrollment: 80 • % of Minorities:

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• Student-Teacher Ratio: 9:1 •



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Open House: January 12, 1-3 p.m., February 9, 1-3 p.m., April 19, 1-3 p.m.

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restonmontessori.com
office@restonmontessori.com
703-481-2922

1928 Isaac Newton Sq. West, Reston, Va.

Grades: Infant-6th • Year

Founded: 1986 • Coed • Enrollment: 200+ • Average Class Size: 24 • Uniforms: K and up • Foreign Language: French beginning at Toddler • Number of Computers: 12 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Extended Day • Summer Program • Academic Therapy Services • Additional Programs: Music, PE, Art

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

westminsterschool.com
admissions@westminsterschool.com
703-256-3620

3819 Gallows Road
Annandale, VA

Grades: Pre-K-8 • Year Founded: 1962 • Coed • Enrollment: 270 • Average Class Size: 14 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 7:1 to 18:1 • Entrance Exam • Uniforms • Foreign Languages:



French, Latin beginning in K • Tuition Range: \$10,926-\$23,466 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Transportation • Extended Day • Summer Program • Drama • Arts • Orchestra • Daily PE • Odyssey of the Mind • Math Counts • Science Olympiad
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Open House: Monday, January 27th, 9 - 10:30 a.m. ■



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admissions@
bethesdamontessori.com
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Ages: 3-6

301-986-1260

VIRGINIA

BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL

brooksfieldschool.org
brksfield@aol.com
1830 Kirby Road, McLean, Va.
Ages: 2-6
703-356-KIDS

COMMUNITY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

cmsreston.com
bonnieredcms@gmail.com
1700 Reston Pkwy., Reston, Va.
Ages: Infants-6 years
703-478-3656

HOLLY BROOK MONTESSORI SCHOOL

preschoolmontessori.com
info@hollybrookmontessori.com
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 preschoolmontessori.com
 info@huntermillmontessori.com
 2709 Hunter Mill Road
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 preschoolmontessori.com
 info@cedarlanemontessori.com
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 Ages: 3-6
 703-560-4379

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 Ashburn, Va.
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 office@restonmontessori.com
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 Reston, Va.
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 703-481-2922

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If you could make a New Year's resolution for your child, what would it be and why?

BY PJ FEINSTEIN

"I would be so happy if they (daughter, 5 & son, 8) stopped fighting. My husband and I have to be constant referees. It can be exhausting."

—Gabriela Christie, Vienna, VA

"My New Year's resolution would be for my daughter who is 9. I would love to see her take a theater class even though she has stage fright! She's so dramatic and funny and would even be great at set design with her love of art. And I think she would enjoy it so much!"

—Hannah Grieco, Arlington, VA

"I wish my 5-year-old son would be willing to try sports! He has decided that he is not good at sports, so he won't even do it for fun."

—Dorothy Matlis, Potomac, MD

"I wish my 10 year old would make a resolution to NOT put every article of clothing that she may have worn or just tried on in her hamper. This creates so much unnecessary laundry, and, while it's great she uses her hamper rather than the floor, and clean clothes are better than dirty clothes, she often thinks she has nothing clean because everything is in the hamper."

I wish my toddler would show some interest in using the potty. We're waiting until he's ready to potty learn, but between him and our newborn, we are up to our ears in buying and changing diapers!"

—Summer Jones, Arlington, VA

"I would love for my boys, ages 5 and 7, to willingly change into a new pair of underwear each day and understand this is just a part of life. I would love for them to not put their clothes inside out in the hamper so I don't have to fix it all before washing. And I would love for them to appreciate the wonderful life they have and not whine about the little things that don't matter. Like, why don't I have a surprise donut for them today after school?"

—Lauren Forbes, Vienna, VA

"For my 5 year old to get his own milk in the morning!"

—Jamie Maier, Rockville, MD

"He (son, age 2) washes and dries his own dishes!"

—Motrya Hanas Calafiura, Washington, DC

“ My 23 month old's New Year's resolution is to stop chewing on his toothbrush and use it for brushing. He is going to learn that it's about cleaning his teeth and not eating the toothpaste.”
—Ali Shein, Arlington, VA

Next question...

If you could go anywhere with your family to escape the cold weather, where would you go and why?

Send your answer to editor@washingtonfamily.com and your response could be featured in our February issue!

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2. Draw a rounded nose to the traced shape. Then **draw** two rounded triangles for wings.



3. Cut out the shape.



4. Trace the bottom of a toilet paper tube on top of another. Then **cut** out the round shape.

5. Glue your cut tube on top of the cardboard in the shape of a spacecraft, and let it dry.



6. Color or paint your spacecraft. You can also **decorate** it with stickers. **Place** a small toy inside and go for a ride. **Tell** a story about where you're going!



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NOMINATIONS HAVE STARTED

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

Nominations close March 9

Voting for the winners start on April 1. Winners will be contacted in June, and the results will be in the July issue of Washington FAMILY magazine.

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Contact Jeni Mann
for more information
jmann@midatlanticmedia.com



"My parenting approach changed when I began to view my children's tantrums as physical responses to big emotions."

Reframing Your Child's Tantrums

How one local mom learned to stay calm when tempers are flaring

BY HANNAH GRIECO

"I'M NOT GOING TO SCHOOL!" my 6-year-old screamed, running upstairs and slamming her door. The cause of her meltdown? I asked her to clean up her dolls before we left for school.

I was already guilty of yelling that morning, too. Both of my daughters had argued almost continuously since their pre-6 a.m. wakeups, and my 9-year-old daughter erupted like a volcano because of a forgotten homework assignment. When her cereal went flying (one more thing for me to clean up), I exploded in anger.

Eventually, I managed to settle everyone down and get us all in the car. But on the way to school, an SUV in the next lane abruptly swerved into our lane, its front bumper aimed at me and my older daughter in the seat behind me. I slammed on the brakes and honked, and the driver braked and skidded, stopping less than an inch from us. The entire street of traffic stopped, too, as if an actual accident had taken place.

My 9 year old screamed. Her little sister, strapped in a booster seat next to her, began to wail. I moaned as adrenaline rushed through my body, cramping my muscles and flooding me with nausea. The other driver got out of her car and crouched down in the street, her hands over her face in shock. I sat paralyzed, not injured but overwhelmed by the experience.

It took several minutes for me to snap out of it and restart the car, wave in acknowledgment of the other driver and continue driving.

"Mom, what..."

"I'm sorry. I need a minute."

When my breathing regulated and my muscles loosened, I tried to alleviate my daughters' concern and confusion. We began to talk about how accidents happen and how our bodies and brains respond when we're scared.

As we spoke, it hit me: The adrenaline rush, increased heart-rate and upset stomach I felt must be how my children feel when they're in the midst of a tantrum. And just as I couldn't respond to them after the near-accident while I was experiencing such intense emotions, they aren't able to process what I'm saying to them while they're melting down.

That's why therapists advise against arguing with or lecturing a child during a tantrum. Meltdowns are caused by overload, explains Laura Baker, a clinical psychologist from Fairfax, VA, and the mother of two boys. When her sons start to lose it, Baker stops talking. She stays present but doesn't make any demands. Once they're ready to talk, she asks them what they need.

"They may not know what they really need, but it's a way of helping them think," she says.

We adults have these moments, too. Moments where we make impulsive decisions we later regret, decisions fueled by emotions instead of logic.

This is not an easy thing to admit, but yelling is my go-to response when I'm feeling panicked or angry, when adrenaline floods my body like it did that morning on our way to school. It took a huge effort on my part not to scream at the other driver, and even my own daughters, as the stress hormones raced through my body.

My parenting approach changed when I began to view my children's tantrums as physical responses to big emotions. Even if the tantrums themselves are absurd and abrasive, like the time I wouldn't let my toddler stick a fork in the electrical outlet, children need to be calm before they can process and learn. And I need to be calm before I respond.

Recently, while my 6 year old and I were listening to music as we baked cookies, I made a casual comment about the song's lyrics: "It's 'moves like Jagger,' not 'moves like a jaguar!'" I wasn't expecting her to meltdown

over something so silly, but my daughter was outraged. When she called me a name and knocked over a chair, I found myself quickly rising to her emotional level.

How dare she treat me this way?

I was ready to yell and send her to her room. Then I remembered that yelling and taking away privileges never actually deescalates an emotional situation or redirects my kids into compliance.

So I took a step back and breathed deeply. There would be time to discuss respect and rules later. Right then, it was my job to help her calm herself. I apologized for raising my voice and knelt down with my arms open. She immediately came over and sunk into me, her small body shaking.

I sang the lyrics her way. She laughed. We talked about funny songs. And after a few minutes, we talked about acceptable behavior when we disagree with others.

A mother-daughter lesson learned. ■

Hannah Grieco is a parent advocate and writer in Arlington, VA. She can be found online at www.hgrieco.com.



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Taking the time to come up with a list of concrete tasks ahead of time allows parents to accept help offers when they arise, and it can lessen a family's reliance on the go-to response of "we're fine."

Help Is On the Way

Here's how to accept it

BY ERICA RIMLINGER

Caring for Jen and Clark Hudak's son Joe is not a casual undertaking. Their 9 year old suffers from multiple diagnoses, and to explain the intricacies of his schedule to a potential babysitter, "You could write a novel," says Jen.

"There is such a precision in how to handle Joe that unless you live it and see it, you don't fully understand what you have to do," she adds.

That's why the Hudaks are often reluctant to accept help when it's offered.

"Sometimes, it's just easier for us to do it ourselves even though we really want the break and really want the rest," says Jen. "I always like to ask for help, but then in the end, it's so much easier to do it myself."

Friend who are fellow parents may say, "I've done this before," but Jen feels compelled to reply, "You did it before, but you didn't do it with Joe before."

Patricia Shepley, director of social work at Kennedy Krieger Institute, says families of kids with disabilities and special needs feel the need for a break "acutely," but there are barriers — both psychological and medical — that stand in the way.

'We're not fine'

Michele P., whose daughter has hearing loss, says people offered to help after her daughter had surgery, but she was reluctant to accept because she didn't want to inconvenience them. Instead, she told those who offered, "We're fine."

Shepley advises parents who may feel their lives are too complicated for outside help to "remember that people ask to help because they want to help."

The first step in accepting help is honestly acknowledging you need a strong support system. Shepley suggests families sit down and inventory types of situations in which they feel overwhelmed.

Taking the time to come up with a list of concrete tasks ahead of time allows parents to accept help offers when they arise, and it can lessen a family's reliance on the go-to response of "we're fine."

Determine parameters

Shepley advises saving "the big asks" for regular helpers or family members, recognizing that not everybody who offers to help is willing (or able) to take on a regular commitment or get specialized training.

But that doesn't mean the offer can't be accepted.

Shepley recommends asking follow-up questions to find out "the comfort level of the person. Some people may be totally fine and say, 'Just show me what to do,' or they have a medical background." These helpers can be placed in the role of child-care — a position that parents of children with disabilities often find difficult to fill.

Kayla S. has a 3-year-old daughter with Down syndrome. "If someone asks how they can help us or offers us help, I usually say the biggest thing is helping us find sitters to hang out with [our daughter] so we can get some date nights," she says. "A lot of times it feels like any alone time we do get is spent catching each other up on information from daycare or preschool or private therapy. Having someone offer to let her spend the night so we can get dinner and talk about something other than Down syndrome is the biggest help on earth."

Shepley suggests helpers who have a trusted relationship with a child take on duties that can overwhelm a parent's day. "Would a relative be willing to come and, maybe for one time or regularly, do physical therapy exercises with a child?" Shepley asks. "Maybe they could take the afternoon shift three times a week."

People who aren't comfortable getting hands-on can nonetheless provide an extra set of hands to help pick up siblings or run errands like getting groceries and prescriptions. Or maybe a friend can come along to the movies with the family, so if a child needs to run around in the hallway, there would still be an adult with the other kids.

Parents can get creative and think in terms of their ultimate goals, Shepley says. Maybe, she suggests, parents don't necessarily need babysitting during a stressful time of day.

Maybe having someone to help siblings with homework or start dinner would help alleviate stress.

"Holidays are always really stressful," she says. Family members can help simply by allowing parents of a child with a disability to eat a meal. During dinner, family members could alternate "taking the child for a walk in the stroller or even to the other room to read a book," she suggests.

Small gestures can add up to real stress relief, and sometimes, "you've just got to take help in aggregate."

Model inclusion

When people ask Anna F. how they can help, she says, "What I'd like is for people to invite [my child] over for a drop-off play date."

Shepley says that while many "people want to be inclusive, they don't always know

how." She suggests parents plan or come up with suggestions for activities they know their child can enjoy with another child or accompany their child to drop-off playdates until the other family knows the child well enough to feel comfortable.

Offering concrete, easy ways with instructions to access your family's world makes it "a lot less overwhelming" for the potential helper, she says. "Specific lists do matter." ■



Small gestures can add up to real stress relief, and sometimes, "you've just got to take help in aggregate."

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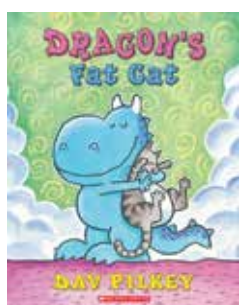
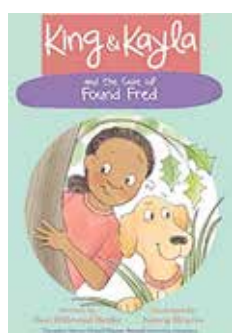
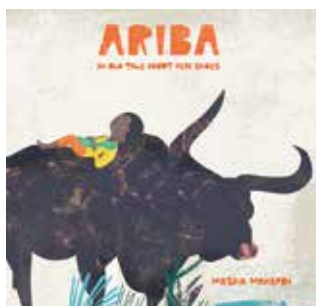
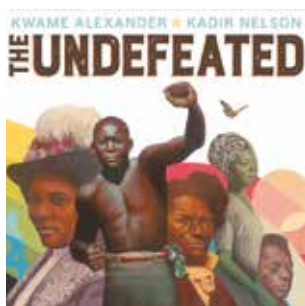
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New Year, New Books

12 Books To Inspire Your Kids To Develop A Reading Habit

BY THERESA WANG, EARLY LITERACY COORDINATOR, D.C. PUBLIC LIBRARY

PICTURE BOOKS

'The Undeclared'

By Kwame Alexander, illustrated by Kadir Nelson

A love letter to black life in the United States, this poem highlights the unspeakable trauma of slavery, the faith and fire of the civil rights movement as well as the grit, passion and perseverance of some of the world's greatest heroes.

'A Stone Sat Still'

By Brendan Wenzel

In this brilliant companion to the Caldecott Honor-winning "They All Saw a Cat," the author tells a moving story about how different perspectives and the passage of time can turn a seemingly ordinary rock into a site of infinite possibility. Young children are introduced to concepts like color, size and time in easy-to-understand ways.

'Ariba: An Old Tale About New Shoes'

By Masha Manapov

Marcus's joy over his new pair of shoes reminds his grandfather of an old story about a boy named Ariba who has the most unusual relationship with an extraordinary pair of shoes.

YOUNG READERS

'King & Kayla and the Case of the Found Fred'

By Dori Hillestad Butler, illustrated by Nancy Meyers

Trying to communicate with his human owner (and detective partner) can be frustrating for King, a golden retriever, as he uncovers clues in a missing dog case.

'Dragon's Fat Cat'

By Dav Pilkey

The endearing blue Dragon is back in bestselling author Dav Pilkey's humorous story

about friendship and taking care of pets. When Dragon finds a stray cat, he brings it home and learns to take care of it through many silly mishaps.

'Harold & Hog Pretend for Real'

By Mo Willems and Dan Santat

Can the friendship of Harold and Hog, a carefree elephant and a careful hog, survive a game of pretending to be Mo Willems's Elephant and Piggie?

MIDDLE GRADE

'Mighty Jack and Zita the Spacegirl'

By Ben Hatke

Jack and Lilly have befriended dragons, battled giants and even earned the loyalty of a goblin army. So when they meet Zita the Spacegirl, fresh from her interplanetary travels and seeking their help to face a new threat, they're more than ready for another adventure.

'Look Both Ways:

A Tale Told in Ten Blocks'

By Jason Reynolds

A National Book Award finalist, this wickedly funny yet poignant novel weaves together 10 stories (one per block) about the different directions a walk home from school can take.

'Twinchmentment'

By Elise Allen

In a kingdom where potentially-magical beings are outlawed, princesses Flissa and Sara have had to pretend to be one person since they were born, trading off royal duties like attending balls and making friends with other nobles. But when a magical attack puts their mother's life in danger, they must break the rules to save her with the help of a brave servant boy and his kitten.



YOUNG ADULT

'Thirteen Doorways, Wolves Behind Them All'

By Laura Ruby

From the author of Printz Medal-winner "Bone Gap" comes the unforgettable story of two young women — one living, one dead — dealing with loss, desire and the fragility of the American dream during WWII.

'Call Down the Hawk'

By Maggie Stiefvater

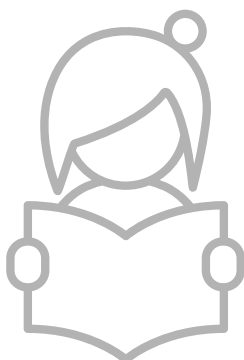
The first book in a spin-off series from Stiefvater's best-selling Raven Cycle quartet, this mesmerizing story follows a dreamer, a thief and a hunter with competing priorities as the end of the world approaches.

'I Am the Night Sky & Other Relections by Muslim American Youth'

By Next Wave

Muslim Initiative Writers

During an era characterized by both hijabi fashion models and enduring post-9/11 stereotypes, 10 Muslim American teenagers came together to explore what it means to be young and Muslim in America today. These teens represent the tremendous diversity within the American Muslim community, and their book, like them, contains multitudes. ■



IF READING FOR PLEASURE ISN'T A HABIT IN YOUR HOUSE, HERE ARE SOME TRICKS TO MOTIVATING KIDS TO READ FOR FUN.

- Let your children choose their next great read. Graphic novels, books about sports and fantasy are all great forms of reading.
- Read together and to each other. Even big kids like being read to! Encourage older children to read to their younger siblings or the family pet. Reading together also gives parents an opportunity to talk with their kids about a book or its themes.
- Focus on fun. A good story at any level can motivate kids to read more.
- Make it easy for kids to find books. Put them in the rooms kids frequent. If they keep seeing books around the house, they just might pick one up!

Not sure where to begin or what books will interest your children? Many libraries offer book lists by topic online. Or visit your local library, where librarians can help you find the right book. ■

Meet Angie Goff

BY PJ FEINSTEIN



OCCUPATION: Co-anchor of "5 at 4 p.m." and co-host of "Like It Or Not" at 7 p.m. on FOX 5 DC. Creator and host of the weekly podcast, "The Oh My Goff Show."

LIVES: McLean, VA

SPOUSE: Robert

CHILDREN: Adora, 9; Bob, 6; and Wren, 2

What are five things you can't live without?

Coffee! I start my day with coffee, and end my night with coffee. In my world of chaos, it's the constant in my life. Hands down my favorite thing on this planet.

Dolly Parton is a close second. She is my "Dolly Lama." Her songwriting and quotes motivate me, especially when I'm worn slap out.

I have an affinity for pencils. I love the grip and the sound of lead against paper. When it's time to sharpen, it's a reminder things are getting done. Whether it's checking off a list, writing down ideas or working on a story.

Velvet scrunchies. I can't stand having my hair down. Never have liked it. I know scrunchies are in style now, but I've never stopped using them.

My diary I've kept since childhood to protect my life secrets, including all my boy crushes starting in 3rd grade.

What do you love about being a mom?

The hugs, the kisses, the snuggles, the "I love you to infinity" declarations are feelings unmatched by anything I've ever felt before. I try so hard not to take those instant good feelings for granted. My favorite thing to do with the kids is just laugh with them. It is so good for the soul. I also love carrying on traditions from both sides of our family. It's so important to teach our kids where they come from.

What do you find challenging about raising kids?

As the children get older, I find they really yearn for one-on-one time together. It's easy to get used to doing everything as a unit and forget that each child is an individual who has individual needs. Robert and I do our best to set aside special time for each child.

It takes some planning usually, but it is always worth it. It's amazing how much you learn from your child in a small amount of time when it's just the two of you.

What's something your family loves to do together?

In addition to carrying on family traditions, we are also fans of creating traditions. For example, every fall we host a family feast filled with sweets, treats and breads. We wear paper crowns and do crafts. With the start of the school year and the kiddos entering a new season, we spend time mapping out their biggest goals. Since we started this, I've given each child a glass star with a their name, year and quote to guide them. We call it a "collection of stars," and it's so fun to see it get bigger every year.

How do you take care of your mental and physical health?

My trainer Christa at Breakaway Fitness is amazing. I honestly should pay her for the therapy session I get with her every time I work out. When I reach a point where I need to decompress, I'll occasionally take a super long hot shower, too. I literally turn my brain off and won't think about anything the entire time.

What do you love about raising kids in the D.C. area?

Location, location, location. We are never short of places to go, shows to see or museums to visit in this town. We're a train ride away from NYC and a plane ride away from South Carolina. We're in a perfect spot. Plus, nothing beats having your parents and sisters close by. I'm so thankful for their support. They all live in Northern Virginia, too. ■

Read our extended interview with Angie Goff at washingtonfamily.com.

We're looking for local parents who are juggling multiple priorities to feature in our new Mom/Dad Life column. Send us your nominations by emailing us at editor@washingtonfamily.com.



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