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Keep your child learning all summer long. **Page 24**



ON THE COVER
STUDENTS AT THE
ONENESS-FAMILY SCHOOL
PHOTO: David Stuck

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

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

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The Campagna Early Learning Center at St. James is located at St. James Plaza, 5140 Fillmore Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22311.

For enrollment information, contact Paulette Shannon, Campagna Early Learning Center Director, at pshannon@campagnacenter.org.



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For the Love of Red, White and Blue

I still remember my cherished childhood Fourth of July celebrations like they were yesterday. My friends and I would decorate our bikes in red, white and blue galore, wear our best Old Navy patriotic-styled gear and giddily head out into the summer sun to ride along in our neighborhood's annual Fourth of July parade. Post-parade, we'd all join together for a watermelon feast and some spirited games such as a watermelon seed-spitting contest, which was popular in Texas. We'd then spend the rest of the day partaking in water-related activities, eating hot dogs, burgers and beloved Firecracker Popsicles with friends and family, and seeing who could best spell out their name using sparklers. We'd end the night, of course, basking in all of the good American feels, lying out on picnic blankets watching a glorious fireworks display. It always felt like the true heart of summer.

And even now, I still look forward to this holiday. I mean, who doesn't love a good Fourth of July celebration? The grilling out, the dressing up, the parades, the fireworks, the collective patriotic spirit — it's always a good time.

Luckily for us, there are many ways to celebrate Independence Day in our area that will make for

some fond childhood memories for your kiddos. We've compiled a list of local Fourth of July activities on page 11 and we've also provided some delicious red, white and blue-approved recipes to try out on page 36. Plus, our list of patriotic reads on page 26 will get your little ones excited for the big day!

We also have something pretty big this month ... our 2019 Best for FAMILIES results! From the best schools and camps to the best local restaurants and wineries, our readers, once again, chose their local favorites to be featured in this issue. Discover what locals say are our area's best people, places, activities, fun things to do and more on page 14.

Other wonderful reads in this issue are our crab-eating tutorial for kids on page 32, a sneaking-in summer learning guide on page 24 and some essential sleeping advice for worn-out moms on page 28.

We hope your Fourth of July is filled with lots of family, friends, fun and perhaps a few Firecracker Popsicles thrown in there for good measure, too.

Happy reading! ■

Britni



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{ july }

MONDAY 1

FREE Baseball Americana

Diamonds are a family's best friend, a baseball-loving family, that is. Check out the history of our nation's greatest game at this exhibit. 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Library of Congress, through July 27, loc.gov.

FREE Stories in the Park

Take the reading outside this summer in this half-hour of read-along fun. This reading program is offered at Aurora Highlands Park, so it will canceled if it rains. 10:15 a.m., Arlington Public Library, Aurora Hills Branch, arlingtonva.libcal.com.

TUESDAY 2

Tudor Tots

This weekly program provides stories, songs and crafts for toddlers with a new theme each session. This week, the theme is "independence." 10 a.m. \$5 per child, Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, tudorplace.org.

WEDNESDAY 3

'PANDAS'

Living in this area certainly gives one an appreciation for pandas and the efforts of researchers to keep the species healthy and robust. This family-friendly documentary about the Chengdu Panda Base in China follows similar efforts to do just that. Tickets start at \$8. The movie is shown three times a day, Tuesday through Sunday through Aug. 31, times vary, National Zoo, Washington, D.C., nationalzoo.si.edu.

THURSDAY 4

See our list on page 11 of festive family-friendly ways to celebrate Independence Day!

FRIDAY 5

FREE Art Walk in the Park

Stroll through the park and watch artists at work. The Popcorn, Stone Tower and Park View galleries also will be open this evening and the Washington Conservatory of Music will provide the evening's soundtrack. 6-8 p.m., Glen Echo Park, Md., glenechopark.org.

SATURDAY 6

Concert: 'Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire'

Watching Harry and his Hogwarts classmates in high definition while the National Symphony Orchestra performs the movie's score. 8:30 p.m., tickets start at \$35, Wolf Trap Filene Center, Vienna, Va., wolftrap.org.

SUNDAY 7

FREE Tysons Farmers Market

Start the week right by shopping for some local produce and food delights. It's colorful and delicious fun for the littles eaters in your family and you, too. 10 a.m.-2 p.m., The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center, community-foodworks.org.

FREE Sunday Art in the Park with GRACE

This Sunday concert series during the month of July features fun activities for all ages and is sponsored by the Greater Reston Art Center (GRACE) and Reston Community Center. Check out the current exhibit at GRACE's gallery and enjoy free weekend parking at Reston Town Center. 5:30-7:30 p.m., Reston Town Square Park, restoncommunitycenter.com.

Wild for Water Day

Come to this day of wet fun with water games, mini boat races, treasure hunts and more. Meet aquatic animals and take a guided stroll. Food trucks will be onsite and shuttles will be provided for offsite parking. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., \$8 for ages 3 and older; \$2 discount for members, under 3 free, Robinson Nature Center, Columbia, Md., howardcountymd.gov/RNC/programs.

MONDAY 8

Read, See, Do

Each Monday during the month of July, the Alexandria Library and Carlyle House will present an hour-long program with an activity for ages 4-8. This afternoon counts toward the "1000 Books Before Kindergarten" program. 2 p.m., Carlyle House, Alexandria, Va., novaparks.com.

TUESDAY 9

FREE Baseball Bash!

That summer sport shows up again in a five-day celebration of the 150th anniversary of baseball, just in time for MLB's All-Star Game. Expect games, movies, contests and more. Times vary, Fairfax County Public Library, Pohick Regional Branch, fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

WEDNESDAY 10

FREE Cocofitness: Zumba

Elementary schoolers can move their bodies and shake out that summer energy - indoors in this dance party of a class. Zumba is part of the summer reading program. 4 p.m., Arlington Public Library, Westover Branch, arlingtonva.libcal.com.

THURSDAY 11

FREE Cub Corner

Got a little one fascinated by planes? This aviation-themed story time offered every other Thursday also includes a craft activity. For children age 5 and younger. 10:30 a.m., free with museum admission, College Park Aviation Museum, collegeparkaviationmuseum.com.

'The Juliet Letters'

A musical collection of loves notes to one of Shakespeare's most famous heroines, this musical show, presented by Urban Arias, will intrigue your drama-loving teen, or make for a great adult night out. Through July 14, times vary, \$45, Signature Theatre, Arlington, Va., urbanarias.org.

FRIDAY 12

FREE The Late Shift

Spend your evening roaming through the gallery's three floors of art and enjoy pop-up performances and the chance to create some art yourself. 7-10 p.m., torpedofactory.org.

SATURDAY 13

Don't Let the Pigeon Do Storytime!

The Storytime All Stars present Mo Willems' witty and colorful picture books as a concert variety show. 1 and 6 p.m., tickets start at \$20, The Kennedy Center, kennedy-center.org.

Prince and Princess Tea

Dress in your best royal attire for this majestic morning. Ages 4 and up. 10:30 a.m., \$29, The Mansion at Strathmore, North Bethesda, Md., strathmore.org.

SUNDAY 14

Family Workshop: Robot Design Challenge

The family that builds together has fun together. Try out your engineering skills at this robot workshop. Cost includes the workshop for the entire family and admission for one child. This program is meant for first and second graders. 10:30 a.m. \$30 members, \$42 for nonmembers, KID Museum, kid-museum.org.

MONDAY 15

FREE Read, See, Do

Each Monday during the month of July, the Alexandria Library and Carlyle House will present an hour-long program with an activity for ages 4-8. This afternoon counts toward the "1000 Books Before Kindergarten" program. 2 p.m., Carlyle House, Alexandria, Va., novaparks.com.

TUESDAY 16

Jojo & the Pinecones

With their jazzed-up pop and popped-up jazz, Jojo and her group of exceptional musicians will have the whole crowd tappin' their toes. This event is a part of the Children's Theatre-in-the-Woods season at Wolf Trap! 10:30 a.m., \$12, Wolf Trap National Park, Vienna, Va., wolftrap.com.

WEDNESDAY 17

FREE Vals Pals Kids Club

Swing by for a morning of free musical fun! Let your little ones dance and sing along with the Rainbow Rock Band. 10 a.m., Tupper Way, Leesburg, Va.

THURSDAY 18

FREE Bob Brown Puppets: World on a String

Join Master Puppeteer Bob Brown on a rollicking adventure around the world! Visit Australia, Asia and Europe before you return home to Yankee Doodle and the U.S.! Pick up a free token beginning 30 minutes before the program. 10:30 a.m., Haymarket Gainseville Community Library, Haymarket, Va., pwcgov.org.

Infinite Arts: Sweeney

Todd: The Musical

Attend the dark, witty and Tony Award-winning tale of love, murder and revenge set against the backdrop of 19th century London. 7:30 p.m., \$13, Franklin Park Arts Center, Purcellville, Va., infiniteartsummerstage.weebly.com.

FRIDAY 19

The Cat in the Hat

From the moment his tall, red-and-white-striped hat appears around the door, Sally and her brother know that the cat in the hat

is the funniest, most mischievous cat they have ever met. With the trickiest of tricks and craziest of ideas, he is certainly fun to play with. And he turns a rainy afternoon into an amazing adventure. But what will Mom find when she gets home ... ? 11 a.m., \$20, Adventure Theatre, Glen Echo, Md., adventuretheatre-mtc.org.

Disney's Newsies

Set in turn-of-the-century New York City, Newsies is the rousing tale of Jack Kelly, a charismatic newsboy and leader of a band of teenage newsies. When titans of publishing raise distribution prices at the newsboys expense, Jack rallies newsies from across the city to strike against the unfair conditions and fight for what's right! 7:30 p.m., \$12-\$15, Kenmore Performing Arts Center, Arlington, Va.

SATURDAY 20

Infant Investigators: Undersea Expedition

Your infant may be too young to get their scuba diving license, but you can never be too young to learn about ocean animals. Discover what lies beneath the ocean and how we can explore the deep waters through fishing and diving. Ages 4-12. 10 a.m., \$30, Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center, Washington, D.C., si.edu/seec.

SUNDAY 21

The MD Food Truck Festival

Come out for the best food trucks around! Choose from more than 20 amazing food trucks offering a wide variety of cuisine. Shop from a multitude of local artisans and vendors as well, and let your kids enjoy face painting and a moon bounce. Kids 12 and under get in free. 11 a.m., \$7-\$10, Kinder Farm Park, Millersville, Md., eventbrite.com.

Artful Afternoons: Music

Join in for an afternoon of fun and creativity. Families are welcome to drop by the art studio Sunday afternoons where they can choose from any of the four maker stations. This afternoon includes a sounds and instruments station, pitch and frequency station, musically-inspired station and sound art station. 2 p.m., \$30, Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center, Washington, D.C., si.edu/seec.

MONDAY 22

FREE Preschool Music & Motion

Come and experience all the fun that Music & Motion brings! Each session offers a variety of music, dancing and other movement activities you're sure to enjoy! First come, first served until capacity is reached. 10:30 a.m., Haymarket Gainesville Community Library, Haymarket, Va., pwcgov.org.

TUESDAY 23

FREE Kind Kids Yoga: Child and Me

Breathing exercises, poses, music and stories will be used by a certified instructor to guide you through a fun time together. Bring a beach towel or yoga mat for your comfort. 10:30 a.m., Bull Run Regional Library, Manassas, Va., pwcgov.org.

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three of Wolf Trap's stages. Join her and the band for a musical journey through South Asia and around the globe, celebrating the diverse instruments, languages, sights and humanity of the world. 10:30 a.m., \$12, Wolf Trap National Park, Vienna, Va., wolftrap.org.

WEDNESDAY 24

The Ballad of Mu Lan

When China is forced to war with the invading Xi Xia, each family must send one man into battle. In her quest to protect her baba, our young heroine proves girls can do anything — including saving a nation. This performance is full of music, pageantry and humor. 10:30 a.m., \$15-\$25, Imagination Stage, Bethesda, Md., imaginationstage.org.

THURSDAY 25

Backyard Theater for Kids: Bee Parks & The Hornets

Welcome to the beehive! Bee Parks and the Hornets create an interactive experience full of original indie pop-rock songs and puppets — perfect for boosting your Thursday morning. Promoting kindness, self-confidence, social justice and environmental awareness, creator and lead singer Brittany Parker and her Hornets' infectious energy can't be missed. 9:30 a.m., \$8-\$10, Strathmore, North Bethesda, Md., strathmore.org.

FREE Behind the Scenes with American Girl Doll Luciana

Get to know Luciana, the 2018 American Girl Doll of the Year, and her author, Erin

Teagan. See her story from behind the scenes and discover the three things that surprised the author most while writing the books. 10:30 a.m., Chinn Park Regional Library, Prince William, Va., pwcgov.org.

FRIDAY 26

FREE Summer Art Workshop

Summer is cool at NSLM! Summer Art Workshops offer free art activities for kids aged 5 and up. Learn more color theory, shape, proportion and more while having fun and getting messy! 10 a.m., National Sporting Library & Museum, Middleburg, Va.

Main Street Theater Productions Camp: Once on This Island, JR.

Young campers aged 12 to 18 years from MSTP welcome you to the Caribbean flavored original adaptation of Once on This Island. This 60-minute show is non-stop song and dance, a quest that will test the strength of love. 7 p.m., \$10, Franklin Park Arts Center, Purcellville, Va., mainstreettheaterproductions.org.

SATURDAY 27

FREE Summer Block Party

Enjoy some Saturday summer fun in Manassas! Activities include face painting, a bounce house, live music, raffles, prizes, vendors, food and more! 10 a.m., Manassas Museum Lawn, Va.

The Cat in the Hat

From the moment his tall, red-and-white-striped hat appears around the door, Sally

and her brother know that the cat in the hat is the funniest, most mischievous cat they have ever met. With the trickiest of tricks and craziest of ideas, he is certainly fun to play with. And he turns a rainy afternoon into an amazing adventure. But what will Mom find when she gets home ... ? 11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., \$20, Adventure Theatre, Glen Echo, Md., adventuretheatre-mtc.org.

Disney Pixars Coco: In Concert Live to Film

This is a family-friendly, live-to-picture concert event featuring Michael Giacchino's beautiful musical score. Produced by Pixar Animation Studios and released by Walt Disney Pictures, audience members will follow the story of a 12-year-old boy named Miguel who travels to the Land of the Dead, where he seeks the help of his deceased musician great-great-grandfather to return him to his family. Film will be projected in HD onto big screens in-house and on the lawn. 8:30 p.m., \$40-\$65, Filene Center at Wolf Trap, Vienna, Va., wolftrap.org.

SUNDAY 28

Preschool Pioneers: Dark Side of the Moon

Have you ever looked up at the moon at night and wondered why it changes shape? Through interactive demonstrations, song, stories and art, children will explore the Earth, Sun, Moon relationship, and go on a hunt for moon shapes in the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden. 2 p.m., \$43, Smithsonian

Early Enrichment Center, Washington, D.C., si.edu/seec.

MONDAY 29

FREE Preschool Story Time

Story times are more than just books! They're interactive experiences that engage children with short stories, action rhymes, songs and fingerplays. This story time focuses on pre-reading skills that all children need to become good readers, and it helps parents practice these skills at home. 10:30 a.m., Potomac Community Library, Woodbridge, Va., pwcgov.org.

TUESDAY 30

Aaron Nigel Smith

Join this reggae rocker for some of his best-known children's songs. The island rhythms will inspire you to get up to sing, dance and play together. This event is a part of the Children's Theatre-in-the-Woods season at Wolf Trap! 10:30 a.m., \$12, Wolf Trap National Park, Vienna, Va., wolftrap.org.

WEDNESDAY 31

FREE Sterling Library Reptiles Alive! Show

Find out why reptiles ROCK at this fun and educational Reptiles Alive show! Meet a colorful variety of live reptiles presented by a fun and engaging Wildlife Educator who will tell fun animal stories and amazing animal facts. 4 p.m., Sterling Library, Sterling, Va., library.loudoun.gov. ■

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10 THINGS TO DO IN THE DMV for the Fourth of July

BY WF STAFF

When it comes to Independence Day celebrations, our area's got it covered. Classic fireworks displays, patriotic parades, live performances ... there are so many ways to enjoy this beloved summer holiday. So grab the family, don some red, white and blue and head out to one of these awesome local events below.

1 Fourth of July Fireworks on the National Mall: JULY 4, 9 P.M.

Is there any better place to watch a patriotic fireworks display than in our nation's capital? Head out to the National Mall for the grandest display of fireworks, set amongst a true backdrop of American pride. National Mall, near the Washington Monument and Reflecting Pool, Washington, D.C.

2 National Independence Day Parade: July 4, 11:45 a.m.-2 p.m.

The National Independence Day Parade is a true spectacle! Marching bands, fire and drum corps, floats, military units, giant balloons, equestrian, drill teams and more celebrate Independence Day in this patriotic, flag-waving, red, white and blue celebration of America's birthday. Constitution Avenue N.W. from 7th Street N.W. to 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C.

3 Barracks Row Fourth of July Parade: July 4, 10 a.m.

This annual patriotic event brings in a crowd of nearly 5,000 people! The parade includes floats, marching groups, little red wagons and more in celebration of our nation's birthday. So if you're looking for a great Fourth of July parade, head out to Barracks Row. Barracks Row, 8th St., S.E., Washington, D.C.

4 2019 Washington Nationals USO-Metro Beneficiary Games: July 3, 6:05 p.m.

Before you spend July 4th watching parades and cooking out, why not celebrate our nation a day early by watching one of America's greatest treasures — baseball. Head out to Nationals Park on July 3rd to see the Nats play the Miami Marlins on "Family Night." There will be patriotic gear, themed giveaways and a

post-game fireworks show. Go tousometro.org/NatsBenefit19 for discounted tickets in prime seating, including \$10 food vouchers. Nationals Park, Washington, D.C.

5 Fourth of July Musical Salute: July 4, Noon

It's going to be a true star-spangled day at The Wharf. Throughout the day, there will be live music on Pearl Street, Fish Market and Transit Pier Stages. While you're there, enjoy an afternoon lunch at one of The Wharf's many restaurants and stay to watch the fireworks show! The Wharf, 760 Maine Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C.

6 Red, White & Blue Reptiles Alive! July 4, 12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m.

A variety of colorful live reptiles — ones with red scales and white tails and some with blue tongues — will be featured during this fun and patriotic-inspired animal show! A kid-friendly wildlife educator will educate and entertain guests with animal stories and facts. Enjoy a meet and greet as well from 1-2 p.m. Claude Moore Park, Sterling, Va.

7 Fairfax City's 53rd Annual Independence Day Parade: July 4, 10 a.m.

This annual Fairfax City Independence Day Parade is always a hit! This year, nine high school marching bands will be performing along with many large inflatable parade balloons, floats and clowns. After the parade, stick around for the evening show starting at 6:30 p.m., which includes music, on-stage entertainment, dancing, face painting and a glorious fireworks display. The parade starts at 4100 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax, Va.

8 Celebrate America! July 4, 3 p.m.

Head to Manassas for one of Northern Virginia's largest fireworks displays! The fun starts early, beginning at 3 p.m. with great rides for kids, food concessions, novelty vendors, live entertainment and more. The fireworks display starts at 9:15 p.m., so don't forget to bring along your lawn chairs and blankets. Manassas Museum Lawn and Historic Manassas, Va.

9 Annapolis Fourth of July Parade: July 4, 6:30 p.m.

Celebrate our nation's birthday in lovely Annapolis! Enjoy watching a glorious parade full of marching bands, fire engines old and new, cars and vans, service clubs and scouts, music and more. Enjoy tons of food and drinks along the parade route as well. And, of course, stick around for a gorgeous fireworks display over Annapolis Harbor. Downtown Annapolis, Md.

10 Takoma Park Independence Day Celebration: July 4, parade at 10 a.m., evening program at 7 p.m.

Enjoy a wonderful Fourth of July at one of our area's oldest Independence Day celebrations! This Takoma Park event includes a lively morning parade and a full day of entertainment, including children's activities, vendors, live music, a WAU Acro-Airs tumbling performance and food trucks. The Takoma Park Community Band will perform a patriotic selection of classical and popular show tunes and an ultra-fun Motown-themed band will close out the night. Begins at the intersection of Carroll and Ethan Allen avenues, Takoma Park, Md. ■

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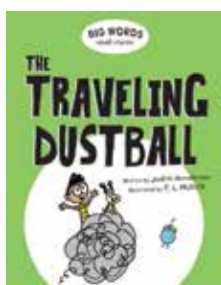
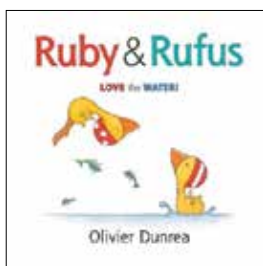
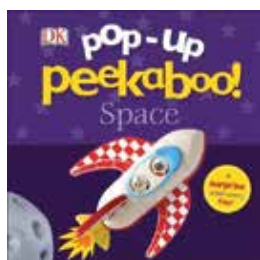
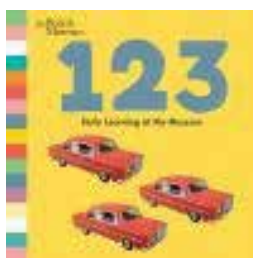
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"The Universe of Stories" is the theme of Baltimore County Public Library's summer reading program. Let your kids embrace new worlds and new characters with these series that will get them reading through the summer.

BOARD/TODDLER

National Geographic's latest series of board books introduces even the youngest children to high-quality nonfiction. Sturdy pages showcase animals with engaging photographs, simple facts and age-appropriate language to keep babies and toddlers fascinated by every colorful page.

Using objects from the British Museum, this unique series of board books encourages children to engage with early learning concepts. Curious toddlers will enjoy learning their letters, numbers, opposites and colors with beautiful photographic images on every page.

PICTURE BOOKS

'Space'

by Dawn Sirett

"Space" is the newest title in the Pop-Up Peekaboo! series from Dorling Kindersley. As parents and caregivers read along, they can help their toddler lift the flaps and guess what surprises are hiding underneath. This series has a range of titles from Bedtime to Colors to Space and are a fun and engaging way to entertain your toddler.

'Ruby & Rufus'

by Olivier Dunrea

In the newest addition to the Gossie and Friends series, Ruby and Rufus are two little goslings who love to swim and play in the pond. They swim every day whether it is sunny, rainy or windy until one day when they find the pond is frozen. Even the icy cold can't keep them from enjoying their day on the pond. Ruby and Rufus are sure

to please as are all of the other Gossie and Friends books.

YOUNG READERS

'The Traveling Dustball'

by Judith Henderson

Funny and eye-catching, the second collection in the Big Words Small Stories series is perfect for emerging readers. Davey and his dog Abigail get caught on a dustball which takes them on an international adventure. As the two travel to far-away lands, the Sprinkle Fairy appears to slip a BIG WORD in each of the five stories. With bubbly words like "lollygagging" and original comic illustrations, children won't be able to wait for the next in the series.

'Good Dog, McTavish'

by Meg Rosoff

Meet the Peacheys, a family in chaos, who luckily adopt McTavish from the animal shelter. McTavish is a wonderful character with strong opinions and secret plans to get the dysfunction out of this household. Short chapters, a relatable family and a special dog make this a charming choice for readers who will wonder who really picked whom in this situation when McTavish notes "humans make excellent pets." This is the first in the McTavish Stories series.

MIDDLE READERS

'The Serpent's Secret'

by Sayantani DasGupta

This is the first in the Kiranmala and the Kingdom Beyond series. New Jersey sixth-grader Kiranmala's parents always



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For more than 25 years, Washington FAMILY has been running our annual Best for FAMILIES survey.

Each year, we ask our readers to vote for their favorite people, places and things to do in the DMV. And now, after tallying the votes, this year's survey results are here!

From the best family-friendly restaurant to the best gym or play place, read on to discover the best of what the D.C. area has to offer.



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RUNNER UP

Bella Ballet and International School of Music

BEST BALLET OR DANCE STUDIO

Tiny Dancers

621 S. Washington St., Alexandria, Va.

10875 Main St., Ste. 113, Fairfax, Va.

2985 District Ave., Ste. 175, Fairfax, Va.

Tiny Dancers, for children ages 2-12, features a literacy-based ballet, tap, hip hop and musical theater program that provides dancers with an outstanding technical foundation in a fun, nurturing environment. Beginning with their exclusive Wiggletoes classes for ages 2-3 and continuing throughout the program, students are encouraged to learn through creative self-expression, exploration of movement and age-appropriate choreography. The curriculum uses choreographed stories — along with hundreds of custom-made costumes and props — as a teaching vehicle for dancers 2-5. As students master the fundamentals and mature as dancers, they graduate from fairy tales to a more intensive focus on technique, style, interpretation and choreography.

BEST BASEBALL CAMP

Pioneer Baseball League

RUNNER UP

Potomac Nationals



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BEST CHILDREN'S THEATRE OR DRAMA INSTRUCTION

Imagination Stage, Bethesda

RUNNER UP

Acting for Young People

BEST CHILDREN'S YOGA CLASSES

Be Free! Kids Yoga

RUNNER UP

Circle Yoga Cooperative

BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

German Language Courses at the German International School Washington, D.C.

RUNNER UP

International School of Languages

BEST DAY CAMP

Tiny Dancers

tinydancers.com

621 S. Washington St., Alexandria, Va.

10875 Main St., Ste., 113, Fairfax, Va.

2985 District Ave., Ste. 175, Fairfax, Va.

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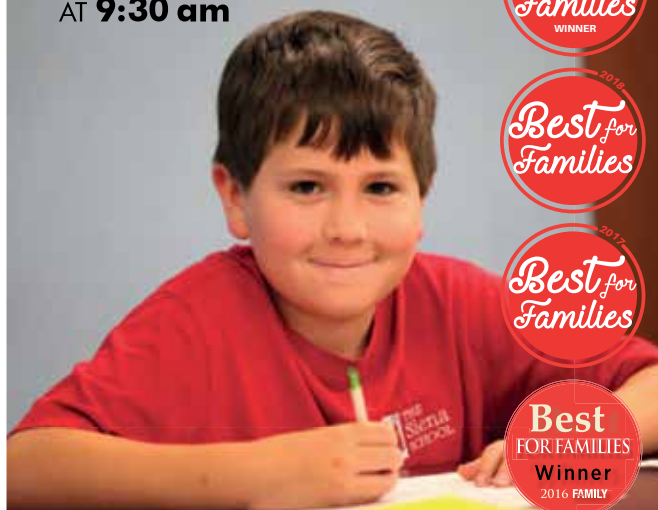
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703-521-1000

1041 S. Edgewood St., Arlington, Va.

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BEST MONTESSORI

Oneness-Family School

onenessfamily.org

6701 Wisconsin Ave., Chevy Chase, Md.

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tap into their natural passion for learning and individual interests. Oneness-Family School classrooms are alive with the spark of student engagement and initiative.

RUNNER UP

Montessori School of Alexandria

BEST MUSIC INSTRUCTION

School of Rock

schoolofrock.com

703-242-2184, 703-858-0820, 301-589-7625

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RUNNER UP

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Acorn Hill

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Pinecrest School

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thesycamoreschoolva.org

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RUNNER UP

Paul VI



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feynmanschool.org

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RUNNER UP

Pinecrest School

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703-606-6213

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Sneaking Learning

into Summer Fun

BY STEPHANIE HOSSFELD



For many families, summer is a whirlwind of road trips, family visits, camps and constantly changing sports schedules. With all of this activity, as well as your child wanting a break from school, it can be very easy to let education fall by the wayside. However, your child can lose a lot of the progress they've made! It can be very difficult to balance summer learning and family vacations.

The best way to keep your child learning over the summer is to incorporate activities that don't feel like learning. Below are some easy ways to slide in a little learning while your kids are enjoying their summer break.

The Beach

Does your family take beach trips throughout the summer? If so, your children have a living science classroom at their disposal. Have your children read articles about hermit crabs, how ecosystems work, why the ocean has tides or what species are endangered while they are actually at the beach. Then, ask them to explain what they read.

Many beach towns also have small museums or aquariums that provide activities for children. If you're headed to Ocean City, the Ocean City Life-Saving Museum is very educational and has some smaller aquariums worth exploring. Or, if you're headed down to the Virginia Beach area, the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center is a great place to spend the day learning about underwater life with over 800,000 gallons of fresh and saltwater displays. Kids really love being able to

touch, see and feel, and they will be able to remember what they experienced a lot more at these types of places than if they just talked about it in a classroom.

Lastly, you can make a quick and easy beach game using a beach ball and a permanent marker. You cover the ball with questions, and your child has to answer the question where his or her thumb has landed. Be creative with topics and levels of difficulty, and feel free to add your own point system for kids who are motivated by competition.

Car Trips

If you have some long trips ahead of you, you may consider downloading some high-interest audiobooks or podcasts to listen to with your kids. This will allow them to work on their listening comprehension skills as well as access a wide variety of content. You can alternate between fiction and nonfiction in order to mix

it up. Music is also a great audio tool, especially if your child is taking a foreign language.

If your child doesn't get car-sick, you have a whole new realm of possibilities. You can use math or word games on a smartphone or tablet, scavenger hunts, word hunts and memory games to keep them occupied and working on their academic skills.

City Exploring

We are fortunate enough to live in an area that has amazing museums that are also free. The popular Natural History Museum is always a great choice because it provides lots of hands-on experiences for kids as well as stunning visual displays. If you visit, try going to the section that is most closely aligned with last school year's curriculum to reinforce what your child has learned. You can also look ahead to the curriculum they will see in the fall so that they will have a visual representation of





what they will be learning. The same thing can be said for any of the other Smithsonian museums (and the zoo).

Another good choice is the new International Spy Museum, which provides a great opportunity to use critical thinking skills. Visitors are given a mission to carry out while they are there and have to use problem-solving skills to complete it. This museum has an admission fee, but kids absolutely love it (even big kids).

Many of the embassies hold cultural events and provide programming for children. These opportunities are great for cultural awareness, building tolerance, developing a strong knowledge of geography and learning about the arts.

Another thing to look out for is events on the National Mall. You never know what you might find there, and you can always visit the monuments to learn about history and government.

At-Home Learning

Rainy summer days inside provide a great opportunity to play educational games! This can be on a tablet or smartphone, but sometimes classic board games are a better way to engage the whole family. You can find games for virtually any theme and any age. If you are looking, Lakeshore Learning has a lot of great options. Some great board games to keep your children's minds' sharp are Jenga, Word-A-Melon, Suspend, Uno, Prime Climb and good old-fashioned Chess.

If you implement some of these ideas into your next summer vacation or just a lazy day at home, you'll be sure to keep your child learning without sacrificing any summer fun! ■

Stephanie Hosfeld is a local tutor at Educational Connections Tutoring, serving the D.C. area.

Road Trippin' Podcasts FOR KIDS



Long car rides are the ideal time to sneak in some summer learning. These educational podcasts below are so engaging, you might not even hear your kids say, "Are we there yet?"



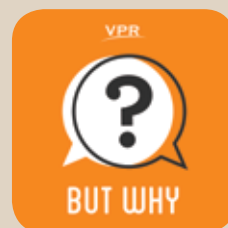
1 THE PAST & THE CURIOUS

This history podcast is full of excitement! From stories of spies and funny foods to George Washington's foibles and historical hoaxes, this fascinating podcast makes learning about the past

oh-so fun. Each episode includes themed songs and a recap quiz.

2 BUT WHY: A PODCAST FOR CURIOUS KIDS

But Why is a show that aims at answering any question your little one can imagine. Kids submit questions, and this podcast delivers answers in a fun, interesting and easy-to-understand way. It tackles a plethora of topics including nature, animals, cultural beliefs and even the end of the world.



3 PANTS ON FIRE

It's always important for kids to know how to decipher from fact and fiction. In this hilarious podcast, kids learn how to discover what is true and what is false in a game show-style setting, where kids interview adults on a particular topic. One is a genuine expert, while the other is not, so kids must spot the difference. It teaches young ones how to ask insightful questions and analyze information given — both essential skills.



4 TUMBLE

Tumble is the ultimate science podcast for kids! With the help of real scientists, this podcast tells stories about science discoveries and mysteries. In an ultra-creative way, they make learning about all aspects

of science easy and entertaining. Plus, your kids don't have to be full-on science enthusiasts to enjoy this podcast. It's amusing for all. ■

When Moms Don't Get Enough Sleep ...

AND WHAT THEY CAN DO ABOUT IT

BY PJ FEINSTEIN

If you send a text message to Jamie Maier after midnight, there's a good chance she'll respond right away. Maier, a family law attorney in Rockville, routinely stays up until 2:30 or 3 a.m. despite knowing she's going to be woken up four short hours later by her five-year-old son and almost three-year-old daughter.

Maier, 34, can deal with waking up grumpy and surviving on coffee because staying up late is the only way she can squeeze some much needed "me-time" into her non-stop daily schedule. Between working during the day and taking care of her family in the evening, "I was truly catering to everyone else's needs and not my own," she says. "I used to be creative, I used to have hobbies and I wasn't doing any of that anymore."

After her husband goes to bed around 10 p.m., Maier indulges in "trash TV," browses her favorite shopping websites or makes beaded bracelets for friends — her newest creative pursuit.

"Too many people, especially busy moms, think they can get used to getting less sleep than they need, but it doesn't work that way," says Terry Cralle, RN, a certified clinical sleep educator and



Z z z



**"Too many people,
especially busy
moms, think they
can get used to
getting less sleep
than they need, but
it doesn't work
that way."**

— TERRY CRALLE —

co-author of “Sleeping Your Way to the Top” and “Snootzy and the Great Big Bedtime Battle.” “You don’t get used to it, and trying to do so only leads to any number of problems — some very serious.”

Consider this: A new Iowa State University study found that not getting enough sleep can make you feel angrier in frustrating situations — and just think about how many times a day you get frustrated with your spouse, kids or coworkers.

“Despite typical tendencies to get somewhat used to irritating conditions — an uncomfortable shirt or a barking dog — sleep-restricted individuals actually showed a trend toward increased anger and distress, essentially reversing their ability to adapt to frustrating conditions over time,” says study co-author Zlatan Krizan, a psychology professor at Iowa State.

Sleep deprivation also increases feelings of loneliness and leads to social withdrawal, according to recent research from Nature Communications. To add insult to injury, other people are less inclined to engage with tired individuals because they’re perceived as being lonely. It’s a vicious cycle!

Cralle warns that tired moms are also putting themselves and their families in jeopardy when they drive while sleep deprived. “Drowsy driving is just as dangerous as drunk driving,” she says. Studies have found that tiredness affects concentration, memory and decision-making in ways that are similar to drinking too much.

Despite the consequences of not getting enough sleep, many moms, like Maier, are still willing to sacrifice shut-eye in order to get things done around the house or catch up on some work. That’s a mistake, Cralle says.

“Although it seems counterintuitive at first glance, a sleep-deprived person who may have a few extra hours in the day is not getting more things done. They are getting less done and not doing it well,” she says. “That is because sleep deprivation affects our performance, our productivity, our decision making, our problem solving, our accuracy, our efficiency, our motivation — so many things that essentially backfire when we trade sleep hours for more waking hours.”

So how can busy moms start getting more sleep? Here are a few strategies you might want to try:

SET AN ALARM

It’s easy to lose track of time when you’re doing the laundry, cleaning the kitchen or simply zoning out in front of the TV. Cralle recommends setting an alarm on your phone at least 30 minutes before bedtime to remind you to start getting ready for bed.



CREATE A “PRE-SLEEP RITUAL”

Bedtime routines aren’t just for kids, Cralle advises. Whether you take a warm bath, meditate, read, knit or do a jigsaw puzzle, incorporating some quiet “me-time” into your bedtime routine will help you relax — as long as your activity of choice doesn’t have a screen.

HAVE A MEDIA CURFEW

The blue light from electronics suppresses melatonin production, making it difficult to fall and stay asleep. Cralle recommends unplugging from your devices “at least one to two hours prior to bedtime.” Besides, binge-watching that new show on Netflix is time you could be catching up on zzzs.



KEEP YOUR BEDROOM CLUTTER FREE

It’s easy to neglect the master bedroom when there are so many other rooms at home to keep neat and tidy. But it’s hard to unwind in a room that feels chaotic and messy. Turn your bedroom into a “sleep sanctuary,” Cralle recommends, by avoiding bright colors, investing in a comfortable mattress and bedding, and keeping clutter at bay.

So the next time you’re tempted to stay up late, remind yourself that sleep is a biological need, not a luxury or an indulgence. “Quite simply, you are a better mother if you are not sleep deprived,” Cralle says. ■

PJ Feinstein is a mother and the editor of Wolf + Friends, an app that connects moms raising kids with special needs. She lives in Potomac and definitely doesn’t get enough sleep.



Vitamin B12 deficiency in children often presents itself in non-specific symptoms such as developmental delays, weakness, fatigue or irritability.

Is Your Child at Risk for a Vitamin Deficiency?

BY IRENE-MYERS THOMPSON

Vitamins are critical for development and are one of the most important nutrients for healthy growth in kids. They are important for resisting infections, maintaining healthy nerves and gaining energy. However, nearly one-third of certain population groups have a vitamin or mineral deficiency, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Most parents know that children need vitamins to stay healthy. The problem is knowing which nutrients they need, how much they should have and if their child is lacking the basic ones to ensure proper growth and development. Parents should first seek advice from your child's pediatrician for safe, personalized recommendations.

When you're staring down a pharmacy aisle packed with vitamin gummies for your child, it's tempting to just grab a bottle and hope for the best or assume your child is getting enough from playing outside and eating healthy. However, your child's health may lose if you play the vitamin guessing game. For example:

- Vitamin D deficiency, in particular, is widespread in our country with one in 10 children deficient and 60 percent may have substandard levels.
- More than 10 percent of Americans ages one and up have a vitamin B6 deficiency.
- Nearly 10 percent of women ages 12 to 49 have an iron deficiency.

Wondering if your child needs to strengthen their vitamin supply? Here are common signs of vitamin and mineral deficiencies to look out for and some foods to conquer it.

Cracks in the skin at the corner of the mouth.

This is most commonly seen in vegetarians but may be a sign that your child is missing some iron and zinc in their diet. For more iron, increase your child's lean meat, seafood, poultry, beans and iron-fortified cereals and breads.

Delayed growth and bone development.

Delayed growth and bone development in children might be a sign of vitamin A deficiency. If you're concerned, serve up more

green, leafy vegetables, milk and eggs that support healthy bones development.

Easy bruising and/or slow wound healing.

While many kids may get bumps and bruises, if you notice your child is bruising easily this could be one of the first symptoms of a vitamin C deficiency. Slow healing cuts or wounds can be one of the more advanced signs. Adding in more foods rich in vitamin C such as guava, yellow bell peppers, kiwi and broccoli can possibly boost levels.

Brittle hair and nails.

Brittle nails or excess hair shedding might be a sign of vitamin D or iron deficiency. To conquer it, you can absorb iron through foods such as beef, tuna, chicken and egg yolks.

Extreme fatigue or weakness.

Vitamin B12 deficiency in children often presents itself in non-specific symptoms such as developmental delays, weakness, fatigue or irritability. If your child is displaying some of these symptoms, try increasing foods like fish, meat, poultry, milk and other dairy products.

Impaired reflexes and/or coordination.

While vitamin E deficiency is not very common, difficulty walking or slow reflexes may be some symptoms. Add in more foods such as almonds, avocado, spinach and sweet potatoes that are rich sources of vitamin E to dinner or snack time.

Children are among the highest risk of several deficiencies. Closely monitoring your child's health is important. Are they getting enough physical activity? Are they getting a proper amount of sleep and consuming a healthy diet? While all of those are important, if you want to make sure your child is covered from A to zinc, check with your child's pediatrician. They can provide recommendations on children's vitamins and provide guidance on any symptoms of a vitamin deficiency you may see. ■

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



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Mallet, Please

Teaching your child how to eat crabs

STORY BY JESSICA GREGG | PHOTOS BY DAVID STUCK



Chef Nancy Longo
wears a crab tiara that
her friends gave her.

The first thing that first-time crab eaters need to know is to take their time, says Chef Nancy Longo, owner of Pierpoint Restaurant in Fells Point and a cooking instructor who has been leading summer classes for kids for close to two decades.

Crabs are a social food, a mealtime favorite when the temperature is high and the humidity higher. Don't rush, she says. And don't get discouraged. "Keep picking because you'll eventually get it right." Here are Longo's 10 steps for new crustacean consumers.

1

Cover your table in newspapers or brown paper. Paper grocery bags split open and laid flat will work as well. Assemble crab mallets. "Start feeling around the pile for the heaviest crab," Longo jokes.

2



Place a crab with its shell side up and apron side down. Most people open a crab at the apron, but “I find that to be the most useless thing on the planet,” Longo says. “It seems to work better to pull it from the corner. It just works faster.”

3



With one hand on the back fin, take the corner of the shell and begin to lift it away from the crab body.

4



Remove the fat and the yellow matter known as mustard. Remove the lungs. Place these things inside your discarded shell.

6



Take the body and break into two pieces. Take one piece, smash it down with your fingers and pull the top shell away from the body and the legs. Pull the crabmeat from this piece.

5



Take off the two claws and put them in a pile. “I’m one of those people who eat them last,” Longo says.





7



Take the bottom section of the body and twist each leg so when you pull it away from the body, a piece of meat comes with it. "The meat comes out with each leg and you have these little empty chambers," Longo says. Also, this method is more kid friendly, as it does not require knives, often a staple at the crab table. Repeat with the remaining portion of the crab.

8



Now, the claws. "There are a couple little tricks with claws, too," she says. Break the claw in half. Take the half with the pincher and crack each side and remove the shell so the meat comes out in one piece.

"Keep picking because you'll eventually get it right."

CHEF NANCY LONGO
OWNER OF PIERPOINT RESTAURANT

9



Repeat with the bottom half of the claw. "This is an old Baltimore thing: If you had a friend you liked, you picked and shared a claw with them," Longo says.

10



Eat the crabmeat and then grab another crab. ■





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flavor also
makes it a
favorite for
all ages.

Sweet, Refreshing All-American Snacks

There's no time like a hot summer picnic to let your patriotic spirit show. These all-American snacks featuring a classic favorite fruit – watermelon – are the perfect solution for nearly any summer-time celebration.

Watermelon is a patriotic picnic staple for countless reasons, not the least of which is that it's a beloved treat that many people associate with memories from childhood. However, nostalgia isn't the only reason adults are just as likely to gravitate toward watermelon at a summer event.

Its sweet, cool and refreshing flavor also makes it a favorite for all ages.

From a practical standpoint, watermelon is also quite portable, versatile and easy to serve, and with a composition of 92 percent water, it's a simple way to sneak in some extra hydration on a hot day. Another benefit is its value; watermelon is one of the best values in the produce section among fruit, and just one watermelon can feed up to three dozen people.

Serving watermelon at a party can be as simple as slicing wedges,

or you can prepare a dish such as these below:

- A fruit basket, with the rind serving as a colorful bowl to hold the watermelon and other fresh fruits.
- A charcuterie board with a selection of fruit, cheese and protein for simple snacking.
- Creamy parfaits, perfect for a summery brunch or alternative to more traditional desserts.
- A creatively colorful and patriotic “cake” that makes for a tasty centerpiece on the dessert table.

Easy Summer Thirst Quencher

A simple fruit-infused water can give your summer event an instant upgrade in no time at all. Add extra dimension and complexity to the flavor by adding some of your favorite herbs like basil and mint.



WATERMELON-INFUSED WATER

- 2 cups watermelon balls or cubes
- 1 cup other fruit, such as berries
- herbs, such as basil or mint

Place watermelon, fruit and herbs in pitcher and cover with water. For best flavor, allow to chill in refrigerator at least 30 minutes before serving.



RED, WHITE AND BLUE WATERMELON PARFAIT

- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 container (6 ounces) Greek yogurt (vanilla, lemon or coconut)
- 1 cup watermelon, plus three pieces diced watermelon
- whipped cream, for serving

In pint canning jar, layer blueberries, yogurt and 1 cup watermelon. Top with whipped cream and garnish with three diced watermelon pieces.

Note: To make ahead or make thicker, drain Greek yogurt on paper towels to absorb some liquid.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF
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PATRIOTIC FRUIT SALAD

- 1 watermelon
- honeydew
- blueberries

Slice 1/4 inch off bottom of watermelon, lengthwise, to create stable base.

Use pencil to draw zig-zag lines for basket opening. Using paring knife, make cuts through rind.

Carefully remove top section, pull out large chunks of flesh and cut them into 3-by-3-inch squares.

Trim 3/4-inch thick slices off squares to use for cutting out stars with 1 1/2-3-inch, star-shaped cookie cutters.

Use ice cream scoop to remove flesh from inside basket and cut scoops into quarters for fruit salad. Place in bottom of basket. Add honeydew and blueberries; stir to combine.

Cut out white stripes from honeydew.

Garnish top of fruit salad with watermelon stars, honeydew stripes and blueberries.



PATRIOTIC CHARCUTERIE BOARD

- 1/2 medium seedless watermelon, cut into wedges
- 1/2 cup fresh raspberries
- 1 1/2 cups fresh blueberries
- 10 strawberries (dipped in white chocolate, if desired)
- 5 ounces fresh goat cheese
- 1/2 cup toasted, salted cashews
- 2 ounces cured meats like prosciutto, pancetta, coppa, salami, soppressata, sausage or pepperoni
- 1 Honeycrisp apple, cored and sliced
- lemon juice
- fresh basil leaves

On large board or platter, arrange watermelon, raspberries, blueberries, strawberries, cheese, cashews, meat and apples. Drizzle fruit with lemon juice. Garnish with basil leaves before serving.



FLAG KEBAB CAKE

- 1 pint fresh, washed blackberries
- 12 wooden skewers
- 1 seedless watermelon, flesh cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 angel food cake, cut into 1-inch cubes (white part only)
- dips, such as yogurt, chocolate, caramel or marshmallow (optional)

Thread five blackberries on each of five skewers, followed by alternating watermelon and cake cubes.

On remaining skewers, alternate watermelon and cake so first and last cubes are watermelon. Place skewers on platter; fruit and cake will create stars and stripes when lined properly. Serve with dips, if desired.

Find more ideas for incorporating watermelon into your summer festivities at watermelon.org.

— Family Features



AUTISM

Myths and Truths

BY SARAH LYON

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines autism spectrum disorder (ASD) as “a developmental disability that is caused by differences in how the brain functions. People with ASD may communicate, interact, behave and learn in different ways.”

About one in 59 children have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, according to the CDC. While autism may be common, there are many myths and misinformation. Below are some of the most common misconceptions.

Myth # 1: Autism is caused by vaccinations.

One of the biggest misconceptions about ASD is that childhood vaccinations, such as MMR, cause kids to develop autism. According to the CDC and the Institute of Medicine, there is no link between vaccines and autism.

Myth # 2: People with autism are geniuses.

There is a common misconception that all people with autism spectrum disorder are geniuses, can do difficult math problems in their heads or have a special gift. It is true, some people with ASD do have unique talents and gifts. However, extreme cases such as the one seen in the movie “Rain-man,” are rare. As our cultural progress in the understanding of autism, it is acknowledged that many people with autism have high intelligence, great attention to detail and view the world in a different way that is valued in work environments. This opens a new set of opportunities in the workforce for people with autism.

Myth # 3: People with autism don't want friends.

It is true that many people with ASD struggle to understand social norms, which may cause them to feel isolated or to value alone time more than group settings. The myth here is that people with autism do not want friends or do not value close relationships. Everyone needs friends, attention, love and acceptance and all people deserve it as well. People with ASD may

need friends that are understanding and supportive of their social struggles and may benefit from support groups that help them build social skills.

Myth # 4: People with autism don't experience emotions.

Those who have autism may find it hard to read body language and understand other people's feelings, but that does not mean they do not have emotions themselves. They have feelings of joy, sadness and frustration just like everyone else. They may have trouble expressing their emotions or they show them differently than others, but they still experience normal highs and lows.

About one in 59 children have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, according to the CDC.

Myth # 5: Autism can be cured.

Over the years, as ASD has become more common, there have been many ideas about how it can be cured. Some examples include removing gluten from the diet, taking vitamins, eliminating mercury from the diet and other fads. Parents typically turn to these ideas because they are concerned for their children and desperate for a cure. Studies have shown that none of these fads have worked and autism cannot be cured. What is encouraging, however, is the positive changes that can come from behavioral therapy. This helps kids develop communication and social skills and gives them the right tools to succeed in school and the workforce.

People with autism do respond differently to many situations but as we learn more about ASD, we find that not all of the characteristics are negative. Those with autism can be happy, successful and maintain healthy relationships with support and understanding from others around them. ■



THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY SCREENING BY NAPSI

There is not just one kind of autism but rather many subtypes, and each person with autism can have unique strengths and challenges. A combination of genetic and environmental factors can influence the development of autism.

Though ASD can be reliably diagnosed as early as age 2, recent studies say that the average age of diagnosis in the U.S. is between 4 and 5. Furthermore, the reported prevalence among white children is 7 percent higher than for African American children and 22 percent higher than for Hispanic children — suggesting missed or delayed diagnoses in those groups.

For young children on the spectrum, early intervention is crucial; it can translate to a lifetime of impact by supporting healthy development, improving communication, decreasing challenging behaviors and leading to positive outcomes later in life.

What You Can Do:

1 Learn the Signs: Parents can learn to recognize the early signs of autism. Not all

children with autism show all signs of autism. That's why all children should be screened for autism. A diagnosis is the first step toward supporting your children to help them fulfill their potential. Here are some possible signs of autism:

- No big smiles or eye contact at 6 months
- No babbling, back and forth gestures such as pointing, and little response to their name at 12 months
- Very few words at 16 months
- No two-word phrases at 24 months
- Restricted interests
- Repetitive behaviors
- Unusual and intense reactions to sounds, smells, tastes, textures, lights or colors
- Loss of speech or social interaction at any age.

2 Take Action: If your child displays any of these signs, ask your pediatrician or family doctor for an evaluation right away. While every child develops differently, early screening improves outcomes. Studies show, for example, that early intensive

behavioral intervention improves learning, communication and social skills in young children with autism spectrum disorders.

3 Get Support: Autism organizations are great resources for families and offer a great deal of support and guidance. The nonprofit Autism Speaks, for example, is dedicated to empowering parents to help children with autism live their best possible lives, while working to increase understanding and acceptance for the 70 million people worldwide with autism. The Autism Speaks President and CEO Angela Geiger says they "hope to give families the tools they need to identify early signs, feel empowered to get their children screened and seek support if they need it." For personalized support and questions, you can email the local DMV chapter of Autism Speaks at nationalcapitalarea@autismspeaks.org.

Other great online resources worth checking out are screenforautism.org, autism-society.org and asha.org. ■

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Our therapeutic approach incorporates strategies that have been proven effective for helping children. We create a treatment program that is individualized to your child and tailored to the needs of your family. We also help families coordinate the logistics of therapy so that they can focus their time on what really matters — caring for their children.

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For more information 202-420-8359
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2019 Specialized Learning Guide

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info@theauburnschool.org
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301-588-8048
9545 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, Md.
703-793-9353
3800 Concorde Pkwy., #500
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4000 Lorcom Ln., Arlington, Va.
Ages: 4-18

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littleleaves.org
info@littleleaves.org
202-420-8359
9727 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD
11480 Sunset Hills Rd., Reston, VA 20190
Ages: 1-6

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301-986-1260

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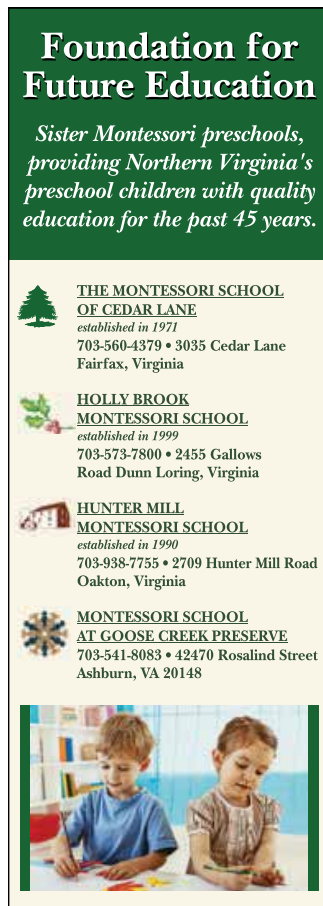
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Even if you've successfully penciled in camps and a trip to visit grandparents, there will still be slow days, hot days and blah days, when boredom rules the house like a tyrant and brings out the worst in the kids — and you.

What to Do When Summer Boredom Hits

BY KATHRYN STREETER

Whoever first penned the phrase, “the lazy days of summer” surely never had kids. Parents with young children are especially apt to be scratching their heads or on the couch in a fetal position, wondering how to manage the open, unconstructed stretch of time called summer. Even if you’ve successfully penciled in camps and a trip to visit grandparents, there will still be slow days, hot days and blah days, when boredom rules the house like a tyrant and brings out the worst in the kids — and you.

Nat King Cole’s song “Those Lazy, Crazy, Hazy Days of Summer” ends with, “You’ll wish that summer could always be here.” If that phrase rings ridiculous, here are five freshly-hatched ideas to think about implementing this summer to create enriching, memorable moments.

Surprise your kids by asking them to co-host an afternoon tea, inviting one of your girlfriends you’ve struggled to schedule time with to be the guest of honor. Conduct a reenactment based on proper etiquette to prepare the kids for the occasion. The catch being, the kids will adore this idea because it involves cookies or cucumber finger sandwiches, if you’re going to be doctrinaire about it! With the snack angle established, your kids will greet your friend at the door, help serve tea, eat and talk cordially like real grown-ups for a pre-established amount of time before they’re allowed to dart off to their rooms or a nearby stash of toys, depending on your children’s ages.

Surprise your kids by asking them to explore the internet. Yes, you read that correctly. With the computer monitor in a public area of your home, let your child loose to explore areas of interest. It’s not too unlike the old days, when having a set of Encyclopedia Britannica within easy reach for even the littlest family members was common. Does your kid have a weird obsession with turtles? Do they love World War 2 history? Harry Potter trivia and the subject of wizardry? Fast cars or popular backpacks? Let them learn as much as they can about subjects they’re wild about. Then, allow them to upload their information around the dinner table.

Surprise your kids by asking them to help plan an ethnic dinner meal. Starting a week in

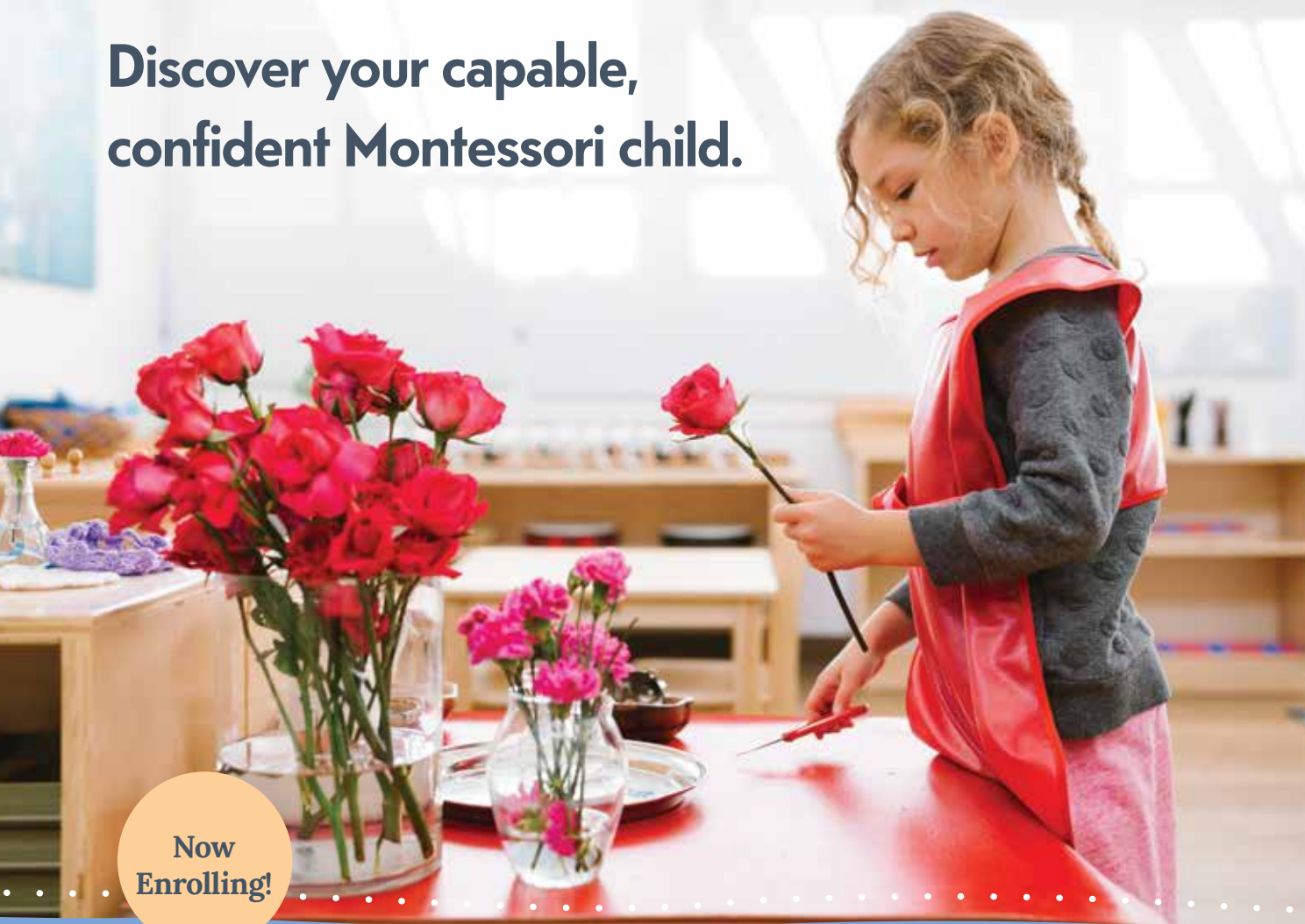
advance, ask, “What country far away would you visit if you could snap your fingers?” Using food to “travel” there, help them find this country on a map and conduct simple online searches to isolate one or more dishes which are doable for the family meal, such as all-recipes.com’s collection of easy Indian fare. Whether Moroccan, Filipino or Indian ingredients are on your grocery list, do what you can to assemble all required ingredients for your unforgettable dinner. Luckily for us, the D.C. area has tons of ethnic grocery stores to get what you need.

Surprise your kids by taking them bowling! Go to one of many AMF locations, or visit TripAdvisor to hear what people say about the many bells and whistles independent bowling alleys offer. Another great bowling (plus great food!) spot is Pinstripes, with locations in Northern Bethesda and Georgetown. Alternatively, strap on roller skates and beat the heat while bebopping to ‘80s tunes (or whatever theme you encounter). The kids will be mesmerized by the shimmering light displays and learn a new skill without once feeling like they’re exercising. A quick search will pull up over a dozen rinks, but consult Yelp’s “Top 10” listing, if you prefer. July averages high, humid temps, so when the pool is old news, head out the door for some climate-controlled, spirited movement.

Surprise your kids with pizza delivery at a new park. If the humidity and heat are manageable, take the kids to a new playground, easily discovered by using your handy Playground Buddy app. The “new” playground equipment and different layout will serve to elicit the oohs and ahhs that confirm you’re the best parent ever. To top off the excitement, in stealth, order Domino’s pizza and have it magically delivered to the playground, taking advantage of the company’s new unconventional delivery initiative which uses 150,000 outdoor hotspots. Find a shady spot, whip out a blanket and ta-da, you’ll have the best table — and probably the happiest kids — at the park. ■

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

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