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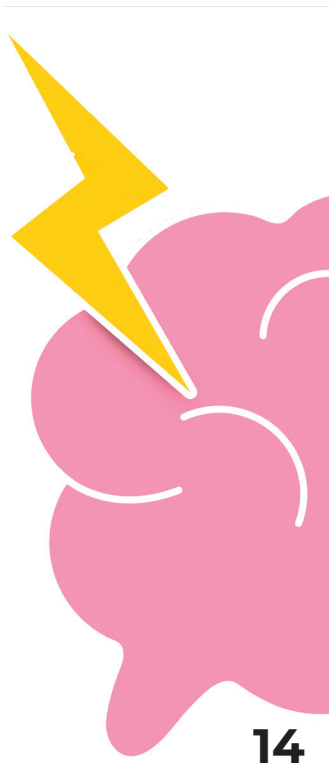


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Turkey, Trots & Traditions

Every family has different Thanksgiving traditions. My family's tradition? Turkey Trotting. Not the dance, but organized long-distance runs/walks/trots, which usually raise money for a good cause.

Every Thanksgiving, we head down to the Tidewater area to visit extended family and run in a local Turkey Trot. It's a great way for us to spend more quality time together, help a good cause, get some exercise and have fun! And the kids enjoy it because there are usually games and prizes. Plus, who doesn't welcome the chance to burn off some extra calories before diving guilt-free into an extra slice (or two) of Grandma's decadent pumpkin pie?

You don't need to trek down to Tidewater for a great Turkey Trot. There are so many in the DMV. Check out our list of top runs and 1-mile walks on pg. 36. The events support a variety of causes and organizations like local fire departments, research for Autism and providing clothes, food and shelter for the homeless. Giving back and giving thanks is what this holiday is about.

Sandi Schwartz's article, "The Science of Giving and How it Can Help Your Kids" on pg. 24 explains how giving not only boosts our happiness, but improves our health and other areas of our life.

Our November issue also has a special focus for new parents and parents-to-be. Please refer to our annual Baby & Maternity Guide on pg. 32, which

includes health care providers, child care centers, parenting classes and more. On pg. 30, we have a list of the best and FREE baby-tracking apps so new parents will never miss a single special moment of their baby's first developmental year. Our feature this issue, "Recognizing and Reducing the Risk of Postpartum Depression" on pg. 10, sheds light on this — more-common-than-you-think — topic and offers insight worth reading.

There are tons of more helpful resources inside. And, as always, check WashingtonFAMILY.com for even more parenting-related coverage and fun local things to do this fall.

I hope your November is a special month full of giving thanks, tasty meals, old (and new) traditions, lasting, memorable time spent with your loved ones and most of all — Turkey Trotting!

Happy Thanksgiving!



Britni

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Managing Editor

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Recognizing and Reducing the Risk of Postpartum Depression

BY JENNA HATFIELD



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Thanks to the honesty of celebrity stars such as Brooke Shields, Hayden Panettiere and Drew Barrymore, postpartum depression (PPD) now shows up more in the news. While increased discussion is great, many moms still may not understand what the disorder is and how it can affect them.

PPD is a mood disorder that affects mothers in the weeks and months after the birth of a baby. Normal baby blues — the hormonal shift after birth that results in crying, uneasiness and mood swings — should dissipate within two weeks. After that point, any lingering, worsening or drastic changes in mood may indicate that a woman is experiencing postpartum depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) or another perinatal mood or anxiety disorder. Additionally, while

perinatal mood and anxiety disorders can start after that initial hormonal shift, PPD can start any time during the baby's first year.

Approximately 10 to 15 percent of women suffer from postpartum mood disorders, though the numbers may actually be higher due to underreporting, misdiagnosis and lack of awareness. While there's no single test used to diagnose PPD, doctors sometimes ask mothers to complete a depression-screening questionnaire. Some places are making this screening mandatory both before the baby is born and at the six-week checkup. Other doctors may not be as proactive, and some women may need to request a screening. Blood tests are typical as well to rule out thyroid problems or other medical issues that can have symptoms similar

to those of PPD. Read on for common symptoms and how you can prepare yourself or someone you know for the disorder.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

PPD can present itself in many different ways. Not all moms experience every symptom associated with the disorder, and a mother who was diagnosed with PPD after a previous birth may experience completely different symptoms after a subsequent birth — or no symptoms at all. These are some of the symptoms moms with PPD may experience.

IRRITATION, ANGER OR RAGE

When a baby cries, women with PPD often feel more irritated than moms without PPD. They can get angry at the



baby when it's time to change another diaper or feel unadulterated rage when the baby won't go to sleep. Anger can extend outward to a woman's partner, friends, family and even strangers.

OVERWHELM

Women with PPD often feel overwhelmed by motherhood and the arduous task of parenting. Instead of recognizing this as a time of change and transition, they may view it as a personal failure. They can feel like an unfit mother because they struggle to stay on top of cooking, cleaning and new parenting duties.

LACK OF CONNECTION

Women with PPD often feel withdrawn or like they are not bonding with their baby. They don't feel like doing things with other people and may cancel plans or avoid phone calls or texts. PPD sufferers may feel nothing at all or a total apathy about absolutely everything.

SADNESS

Sadness is a more recognizable sign of depression, but this type feels bone deep. It feels like it may never end, and women with PPD fear they will never feel happy again.

SLEEP PROBLEMS

The old adage, "Sleep when the baby sleeps" isn't always feasible for women with PPD. They struggle to sleep at night or nap during the day. Or, on the flip side, all they want to do is sleep, but it feels like no amount of sleep will help get them caught up.

LACK OF CONCENTRATION

Women with PPD have difficulty focusing on tasks at work or at home. Completing a simple to-do list can feel insurmountable.

ANXIETY

PPD and anxiety often go hand-in-hand. PPD sufferers may find themselves afraid to walk down stairs with their baby or may contrive worst-case outcomes for every scenario. They may feel paralyzed by fear.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

While not every new mom experiences PPD, mothers (and their babies) are best off when they consider whether they have a predisposition for it. Risk factors include young age, unplanned pregnancy, previous mental illness

such as depression, bipolar disorder or anxiety, a stressful delivery, family history of mental illness, a poor relationship with the baby's other parent, money problems and a poor support system.

If you check any of these risk factor boxes, let your doctor know while you're still pregnant so everyone is on the same page. You can also connect with a therapist during pregnancy to set up a plan for after birth. Planning ahead allows time to research the effect of certain medications on breastfeeding, set up steps to seek help and lessen some of the chaos that can ensue when PPD hasn't been discussed and becomes an emergency.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

Postpartum depression will not just go away on its own. It is not a "Pull yourself up by your bootstraps and power through" type of illness. But with proper help and guidance, you can get better. Perinatal mood disorders are temporary and treatable with professional help. Speak with an OB/GYN, a primary care physician or a therapist. If you don't have a therapist, ask your doctor or trusted friends for a referral or recommendation. Not every mom needs antidepressants or anti-anxiety medication, though some do. Therapists trained in postpartum mood and anxiety disorders help many mothers get through this difficult time.

PRACTICE SELF-CARE

Initially, it may seem impossible, but taking time for self-care is of the utmost importance. It looks different for each mom, but in time you'll find something that works for you. Ideas include taking a nap when you can, showering regularly, reading or journaling, art therapy, exercise and eating well. Nutritious meals and snacks help keep energy levels up and provide the proper nutrients to get through the day. This is especially applicable to women who are breastfeeding. A quick tip is to always have a snack on hand, such as a

protein bar, a piece of fruit or some nuts. Additionally, carry a bottle of water with you to make sure you stay hydrated.

ASK FOR HELP AT HOME

This is different than seeking medical help: it means asking for help at home and with the baby. If you need a break to take a shower and practice some self-care, ask your partner or a friend to care for the baby for an hour. If you need some meals delivered, ask. If you could use a ride to a therapy appointment, ask. People want to help, but they don't know how to help if you don't ask. There is no shame in asking for help.

SLOW DOWN

Don't view your maternity leave as a time to tackle house projects or other big items on your to-do list. You just birthed a baby, and you're dealing with a mood disorder. Slow down. Turn off the ringer on your phone, relax and rest when you can and stop putting pressure on yourself to get all the chores done. Focus on getting to know your baby and getting well.

Postpartum mood disorders such as PPD are temporary and treatable. Just know that you will get through this hard time.

Jenna Hatfield is a writer, wife and mother of two boys. Her extended "pet" family includes a dog and backyard chickens! She has a passion for writing, with a particular interest in the topics of mental health and parenting.

DID YOU KNOW?

PPD FACTS AND FIGURES

- Postpartum depression (PPD) is the most common complication of childbirth.
- Up to one in seven women experience PPD.
- Approximately 600,000 women get PPD each year in the U.S. alone.
- For half of women diagnosed with PPD, this is their first episode of depression.
- About half of women who are diagnosed with PPD experienced symptoms during pregnancy.
- Only 15 percent of women with postpartum depression ever receive professional treatment.
- It has been recorded that approximately 10 percent of new fathers experience depression symptoms as well during the postpartum period.
- Half of men who have partners with postpartum depression will go on to develop depression themselves.





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PARENTING A Perfectionist CHILD

BY ANN DOLIN

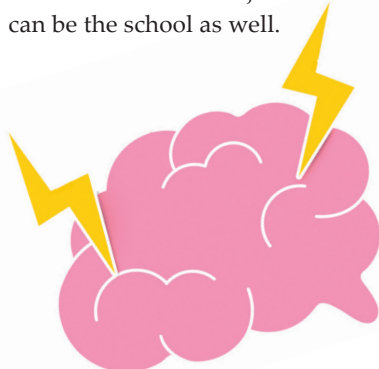
Does your child erase and redo homework over and over again until it's just right? Is anything less than 100 percent not good enough? Welcome to the world of perfectionism, where unrealistic expectations are daily and unrelenting. Perfectionists engage in frequent hypercritical self-talk, bringing themselves down and creating a whole lot of stress within the family.

With the heightened pressure on kids to perform well academically in the D.C. area, it is no surprise that this behavior is becoming increasingly common. To provide more insight about perfectionism and what parents can do about it, we interviewed Dr. Sarah Berger, a perfectionist psychology associate from the Center for Cognitive Therapy and Assessment in Falls Church, VA. Read on to get her advice.

Q&A WITH DR. SARAH BERGER

Q. WHAT CAUSES PERFECTIONISM? ARE KIDS BORN WITH IT OR IS IT A PRODUCT OF PARENTING?

A. It's a mix of both. We don't know for certain exactly what causes it, but research does show that it can be genetic as well as the environment. But the environment isn't just the home; it can be the school as well.



Q. LET'S SAY A PARENT HAS A SEVENTH-GRADER WHO CONSTANTLY REWRITES AN ESSAY SHE'S BEEN ASSIGNED. HOW SHOULD THE PARENT HANDLE THIS TYPE OF BEHAVIOR WHEN THE CHILD NEVER THINKS HER WRITING IS GOOD ENOUGH?

A. The main thing a parent can do is to be empathic, but also provide limits. For example, the parent may say, "I know this is hard for you. Instead of six drafts like last time, how about getting it done in four drafts?" Cutting down on the behavior, even just slightly at first, is helpful. Later on, you can cut down to maybe two or three drafts, but take it slow. It's also OK to put a time limit on work in the evening so that your child isn't working into all hours of the night.

If your child is pushing back and is insisting on perfecting the homework, ask questions like, “What have you done in the past that has helped you get it done? How can you move forward?” Students don’t realize that they are hearing a “worry brain” talking, not a “smart brain.”

Q. WHAT IS A “WORRY BRAIN” VERSUS A “SMART BRAIN?”

A. The worry brain is the brain that focuses on the “what ifs” and constantly thinks of the worst-case scenario, such as getting an F or the teacher not liking the project or homework. It becomes a negative cycle. The smart brain asks, “What can we do about this?” The smart brain is the problem solver and doesn’t get wrapped up in the cycle of negativity.

Q. HOW CAN THERAPY HELP?

A. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy stems from the idea that thoughts, behaviors and feelings all interact and feed on each other. So, in the case of a child with perfectionism, the student is thinking, “I can’t do this” or “I’m going to fail.” Those kinds of thoughts perpetuate the anxiety and make the behaviors worse. In therapy, we meet the student at the level of those thoughts and we challenge the thoughts. So the language becomes “I’m going to work on this for 30 minutes and see where I’m at,” which is far different than “I can’t do this well enough.” Kids need parents to help them set those limits. At the 30-minute point, a parent can check in to see how it is going.

Q. IT SEEMS LIKE KIDS ARE OFTEN SO SCARED OF THE “WHAT IF’S” THAT THEY WORK THEIR FINGERS TO THE BONE IN ORDER TO MAKE THE ASSIGNMENT PERFECT. IS THERE EVER A TIME WHEN YOU, AS A THERAPIST, SAY, “LET’S SEE WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO TURN IN

AN ASSIGNMENT THAT’S NOT PERFECTLY DONE?”

A. Absolutely! Some of that is learning to live with uncertainty, which is part of life. We also want them to see what it feels like to not get an A. It’s called exposure therapy. We have them do it for homework, but we also practice it in session. Although we can’t practice it exactly how it will be in the classroom, we can model it to some degree. For example, I might say, “I know reading perfectly aloud is important to you. This time, I want you to read aloud and make mistakes and then let’s sit for a moment and see how that feels.” This type of exposure is something that we encourage parents to practice with their child as well.

Q. CAN PERFECTIONISM EVER BE FIXED OR IS IT TYPICALLY A LIFE-LONG PROBLEM, TO SOME DEGREE?

A. People have tendencies towards perfectionism. However, it can absolutely be modified. The issue is how much it affects day-to-day life. Sometimes the student doesn’t see the impact, but the parents do. When a child is doing hours upon hours of homework, it is a problem. The parent has a right to say, “This is interfering with our lives and we’re going to do something about it as a family.” Parents have the right and responsibility to help their child learn differently.

Q. ONE ISSUE THAT IS OFTEN SEEN IN TUTORING IS AVOIDANCE. SOMETIMES, KIDS ARE SO AFRAID OF MESSING UP THAT THEY WON’T EVEN START IN THE FIRST PLACE. CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THIS AVOIDANCE MECHANISM?

A. Avoidance looks like laziness, but it is not laziness. Kids are afraid to get started and just try the work. When they’re feeling very anxious, they won’t even begin the task. Here, the parent can say, “I want you to work for

15 minutes, and then I’ll answer any questions you might have.” Set a very reasonable and realistic goal that the child can obtain.

Q. HOW DOES A PARENT KNOW IF THIS BEHAVIOR IS JUST GARDEN-VARIETY OR A REAL ISSUE THAT REQUIRES OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE?

A. There are two key indicators. One is whether the behavior is interfering with day-to-day functioning. Is the stress level so high that daily tasks are impacted? If so, that’s a sign. And this stress doesn’t have to be just with the child, it can be the family, too. If families are on the fence, they have to ask themselves whether this is a priority, because it will not get better without intervention. Sometimes, parents will say, “This isn’t a priority now, but we’ll keep an eye on it.” And that’s OK, too.

Q. WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU RECOMMEND FOR PARENTS?

A. One of my favorite websites is worrywisekids.org. It’s not specific to perfectionism, but is a great resource for dealing with anxiety. Dr. Tamar Chansky and her group run the site, and she is also the one who uses the term “worry brain.”

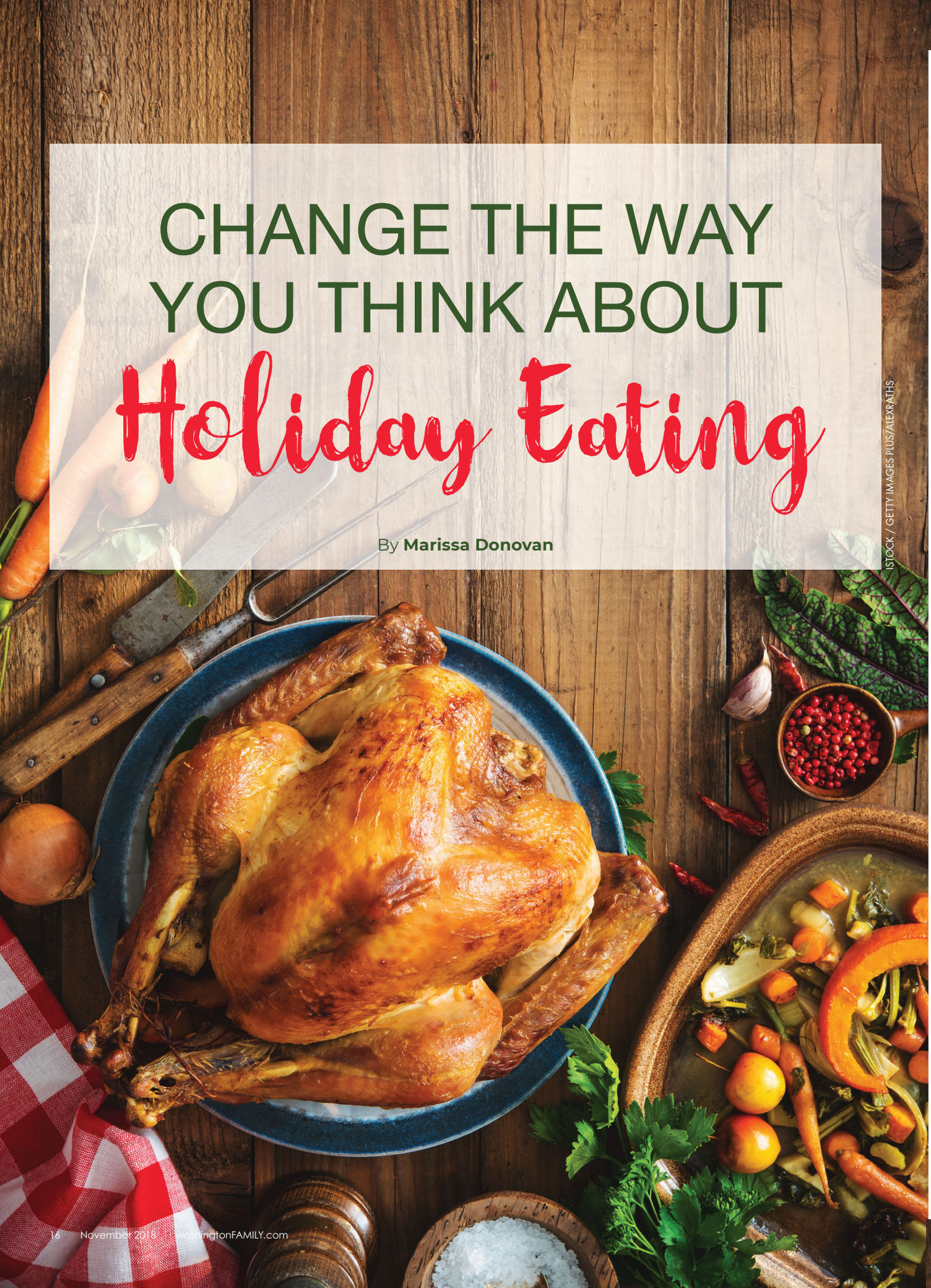
With perfectionist children, the goal is to change their mindset. As Dr. Berger suggested, there are many helpful strategies and practices you can use to help your child with perfectionism. But if your child’s symptoms are severely interfering with homework completion on a regular basis, don’t be afraid to consider seeking therapy. A good therapist can tackle the “all-or-nothing” thinking that hampers your child.

Ann Dolin is the founder and president of Educational Connections Tutoring, serving Northern VA, D.C., and MD. She and her tutors travel to students’ homes to help them improve their confidence and grades through 1-to-1 tutoring and organization/time management coaching.

CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT *Holiday Eating*

By Marissa Donovan

ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES PLUS/ALEXRATHS



The holiday season is an exciting time — from catching up with family and friends to delicious eats and giving thanks. But it can also be a stressful time. Staying healthy during the holidays (and throughout the year) goes beyond tracking numbers on a scale. Checking in with your body and mind — focusing on self-care — is the best thing you can do for yourself.

GRACE IS MORE THAN SOMETHING YOU SAY BEFORE EATING

Offer grace to someone new this holiday season: yourself. Your eating will not be perfect. It's OK to indulge in holiday favorites and spend the day curled up in front of the fire. Linger in guilt over every cookie you eat is not healthy and can actually lead to worse behaviors like overeating. Be fair to yourself!

DROP THE "ALL OR NOTHING" MENTALITY

You can go for a run, drink a green smoothie and eat apple pie all in one day! Healthy eating doesn't mean a week of abstinence followed by a week-long binge. The people who have the best success reaching their health goals have a balanced, realistic approach. Extending the holiday season into multiple days of poor eating will leave you feeling drained.

PICK THE DISHES YOU TRULY ENJOY

Is Grandma's sweet potato pie something you look forward to every year? Have a slice. Is there another dish on the table you could take or leave? Then leave it. Have the foods you truly enjoy, and only those. Not only will you have a better experience, but it can save you from overeating. As you look at those dishes you're skipping, just remember that those "holiday" dishes

are available anytime you feel like making them. Thwart the fear of not having a holiday dish by making plans to make it the next month.

BUILD A BALANCED TABLESCAPE

If plates need to have a balance of fruit, veggies, whole grains, lean protein and healthy fat, then tables do too. Hosts should include dishes that feature each of these groups. If you're bringing something to a party, bring a vegetable dish. They are often left off or limited in table planning. And when making your plate, start with the vegetables to keep from running out of room on the plate and skipping the veggies entirely.

"THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE THE BEST SUCCESS REACHING THEIR HEALTH GOALS HAVE A BALANCED, REALISTIC APPROACH."

EMBRACE THE FLAVORS OF THE SEASON

It's easy to add fresh fruits and vegetables to meals when there's fresh, seasonal produce to inspire you. Roast some sliced delicata squash with olive oil, salt and pepper for a hearty side dish that bridges fall and winter. For a tasty dessert, combine sliced apples, lemon juice and cinnamon in a slow cooker to make homemade applesauce (add water for moisture!). Spruce up your holiday beverage or morning yogurt with colorful pomegranate seeds.

Buying in-season produce can lead to trying new foods at their very best — when they're freshest and most flavorful. You'll also save money!

DON'T BE FOOLED INTO OVEREATING

At any party, standing around the appetizer or snack table just leads to,

well, snacking. Instead of mindlessly munching, put your food on a plate and walk away. Use the smallest plate available and never "save up calories" by fasting all day.

Instead, try to slow your eating pace. If you can, pace yourself with the slowest eater at the table or put your fork down between bites. Buying this extra time makes you conscious of your body and more likely to know exactly when you've had enough.

KEEP SNACKS ON HAND

Hunger can strike at any moment, especially when traveling, shopping or working. Packing a snack in your bag before you're hungry makes it easy to choose something that will actually do the job. Planning and being prepared is half the battle when it comes to balanced snacking. Simple snacks like nuts, seeds, whole fruit or granola bars are easy to stash in your bag or your car.

Having a healthy holiday season goes beyond swapping in cauliflower mashed potatoes or running a turkey trot. It is about recognizing what you need to be your best self. Some days, that might mean prepping your lunches to save you time and stress. Other days, it may mean carving out some alone time before the holiday festivities begin. Many of us, especially parents, focus so much on tending to others that we often forget to care for ourselves. Show yourself some love this holiday season by taking care of your body and your mind.

Marissa Donovan, MS, RD, LDN is a D.C. area resident, registered dietitian and in-store nutritionist for Giant Food. Giant's in-store nutritionists offer one-on-one counseling, store tours and community classes aimed at improving the health of customers and the community. For more information, visit giantfood.com/nutrition.

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2019: Jan. 5, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

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2019: Jan. 27, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Jan. 29, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

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703-256-3620
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The Science of Giving

and How It Can Help Your Kids

By **Sandi Schwartz**

Want to really make your kids happy? Teach them the importance of giving to others. Contrary to common belief that kids need and want more “stuff” to be happy, science tells us that it is the act of giving to others that actually boosts happiness and can even improve health and other areas of their lives.

CHILDREN WERE BORN TO GIVE

Believe it or not, children enter this world with a natural instinct to be compassionate to others. Scientists at the Max Planck Institute discovered that infants help others even though they are too young to have learned about being kind and polite. The children take action because of their own motivation, and not because they expect a reward.

Actually, humans have evolved over time to be compassionate, and our brains are now wired to respond to those who are suffering. Kindness has become a “survival of the fittest” trait, as Charles Darwin even advised

that “communities which included the greatest number of the most sympathetic members would flourish best, and rear the greatest number of offspring.” In other words, the better we get along and help each other out, the more successful our society will be.

Do children continue to show compassion as they grow? A breakthrough study by psychologists, posted online by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), determined that young children are happier to give than to receive. Toddlers who were asked to give away their own treats expressed greater happiness when they shared with others. The researchers interpreted the results of this study to mean that anytime people participate in pro-social behavior, such as volunteering and giving charitable donations, we experience an increase in happiness.

Children have the foundation to be kind, but it’s our job as parents to continue to nurture this part of them as they grow. If we neglect to

do so, negative life experiences can unfortunately tear down this beautiful instinct.

5 WAYS GIVING TRANSFORMS OUR KIDS

1. BOOSTS HAPPINESS

When we make others happy by giving a gift or our support, we experience a physiological change called a helper’s high. It is a euphoric physical sensation resulting from our brain releasing chemicals called endorphins. According to *Psychology Today*, the helper’s high is a literal “high,” similar to a drug-induced sensation. It makes us feel good naturally, giving us a rush that leaves us elated and excited. This positive energy is similar to how we feel after exercising.

2. IMPROVES HEALTH

In his book, “Why Good Things Happen to Good People,” Stephen Post, a professor of preventative medicine explains that giving to others has been

shown to increase health benefits in people with chronic illness. In addition, a 2006 joint study by Johns Hopkins University and the University of Tennessee indicated that people who helped others had lower blood pressure and less feelings of stress than participants who did not.

3. PROMOTES SOCIAL CONNECTION

When we give, our generosity is ultimately rewarded by others. These positive actions promote a sense of trust and cooperation that strengthens our relationships. Moreover, we feel a bond towards those who we help. All of this is important because having positive social interactions is central to good mental and physical health.

4. ENCOURAGES AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

When we give to those in need, we feel a sense of gratitude because it puts things in perspective. Volunteer work is a great opportunity for our children to appreciate what they have and gives them a glimpse of the broader world. Meanwhile, gratitude is another very important ingredient for happiness and good health.

5. GIVES CHILDREN THE OPPORTUNITY TO INSPIRE OTHERS

Those who are on the receiving end of a good deed typically want to pass along that positive feeling and help others. Researcher James Fowler found that just one act of kindness can inspire several more acts of kindness by others. In this case, children have the opportunity to be a mentor to others, inspiring a chain of kindness and compassion.

HOW TO TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT GIVING

Teaching our children how to pay it forward is easier than you may think. There are endless opportunities to volunteer as a family and to give our children meaningful experiences that will enhance both their lives and the individuals they help. Here are some tips on how to incorporate giving into your children's lives.

Discuss how they can help. Find a few minutes during your day to ask your children who they would like to help. Provide some options like babies, animals, people without homes, children who do not have families, students who need books or the elderly. Talk about the different types of projects you can do to help those in need. For some inspiration, read books about giving and kindness to your children.

Talk about the importance of charitable giving. If you choose to start a monetary collection for charity, consider creating or buying giving boxes for each child. Ask them to set goals about how much they would like to give throughout the year and which organizations they would like to donate to. Check in weekly or monthly throughout the year to see how close they are to reaching their goal.

Help your children discover their passion. Our passion should drive how we give because when we are excited about a project, we can put all of our heart and soul into it. Also, when we care about what we are working on, we will get more out of it and feel happier. Help your children identify their talents, skills and interests that they can put to good use.

Give as a group. Volunteering during a community service event with others accentuates the happiness boost because you are also building social connections.

Choose projects close to home. Giving to a place locally where you

can actually see and experience the results is most effective. Studies have also found that we are happiest when we give to a charity through a friend, relative or social connection rather than simply making an anonymous donation to a cause halfway around the world.

Find ways to volunteer as a family. By volunteering as a family, you make giving a priority and build it into your children's daily routine. There are so many ways that you can give together, and if you don't find something out there that you love, create it yourself. Here are some wonderful resources to identify family-friendly volunteer opportunities.

- Doing Good Together's Start Your Kindness Practice Worksheets (doinggoodtogether.org): They offer printable worksheets to guide your family in identifying your interests, priorities and talents so you can choose the best volunteer projects.

- PBSkids.org's Family Guide to Volunteering: Check out their comprehensive printable booklet online that explains how to choose a project, provides important reminders while on-site at a project, and offers ways to reflect and share your experience.

- Idealist (idealist.org): This is one of the best sites for searching volunteer opportunities all over the world. The best part is they have an option to locate projects that are appropriate for families to do together.

There is certainly no shortage of ways to help others. The next time you feel like your child's playroom or bedroom closet is going to explode, ask them to fill a bag with items to give to kids who could really use them. By providing our children with opportunities to give, they will be happier and healthier and have the power to pass along that goodness to so many people.

READING THE CLASSICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

HOW CLASSIC LITERATURE COMBATS NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SCREEN OVERLOAD

BY WESTMINSTER SCHOOL



Once upon a time in a land far, far away, a tired young girl climbs into her bed with her favorite, dog-eared copy of “Little Women,” excitedly turning to the chapter where Jo wishes she were a boy and could go fight in the war with her father. This young girl barely gets to chapter three, but she falls asleep with the beloved book beside her. Tomorrow, she will carry the book around with her like an old friend.

This does sound much like an old fairy tale, doesn’t it? With today’s video games, iPads, smartphones, social media, computers and Netflix, the days of voracious reading seem to be long gone. In fact, a recent multi-year study by the American Psychological Association shows that high school-aged teens spend more time texting and on social media than reading. Many of the teens polled reported that they are spending four hours a day or more texting, on the Internet or on social media. Conversely, teens say that they are only reading for about 19 minutes a day, which is significantly less time than teens spent reading in the previous generation.

More time on screens means that children are growing up with a number of significant challenges, like moody behavior, less focus on academics and — perhaps especially disturbing — an overall lack of empathy for others. It’s not realistic to think that the distractions of screen devices are going to disappear, so parents and teachers are searching for ways to combat the ill effects of too much

time in front of screens. One answer? Reading — especially classic works of literature — is the perfect antidote to many of the negative effects of screens, and it is an activity that can have immediate benefits.

In reading classic literature, rich in stories of compelling characters facing and surmounting difficult challenges, children will discover and explore their own humanity, and the empathy they have been lacking will be reignited. Other benefits include an expanded vocabulary, a better understanding of historical and cultural references and improved social skills. In addition, a regular diet of high-quality literature such as classic books can improve students’ writing in all subjects. Reading is also a very inexpensive pleasure, and it is something families can do together.

Contemporary authors have much to offer students today. However, reading classic literature can provide lifelong advantages. What sets classic books apart from current picks?

- A classic book is one that has endured the passage of time and continues to speak to modern readers.
- It has a historical impact and furthers knowledge of a particular time, people or place.
- It has a moral/emotional message that is often provocative, even transformative.
- It has questions that may never be finally answered, but challenge the reader to ponder deeply.

- Often, the complexities and subtleties of a classic work mean that a reader has a different response or understanding every time it is read, and it begs to be reread.

Of course, contemporary literature may contain some of these elements, but true classics are books that involve the reader in a great literary conversation among curious and thoughtful minds down through the years. This is a deeply meaningful relationship that today’s children deserve and need to be a part of. Literature today has only been informed by and made great because of the classics.

The words and stories found in classics are challenging, and this is why they should be savored. They have the power to expand horizons and awaken the child to the reality of worlds very different from his own, far away or long ago. Children feel both enriched and accomplished after tackling such compelling works, which stimulate understanding and empathy that cannot be gleaned from any video game. Perhaps carrying around well-loved books written long ago won’t be as common as it once was, but then again, old things often become new again ... just like the classics.

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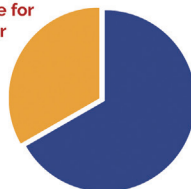


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6 Best Apps

to Track Your Baby's First Year

By **Britni Petersen**

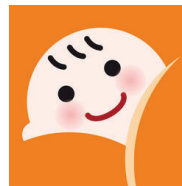
The first year of your baby's life is an exciting time! And it's also a crucial period of remarkable development. So capture your little ones precious milestones and special moments with a little help from one of these free baby-tracking apps below.

BABY TRACKER



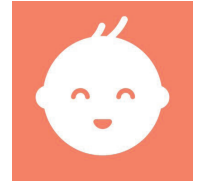
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Technology: Bounty and Boundaries

By **Oakcrest School**

Are smartphones a godsend or a danger? How can schools incorporate technology into their curricula without letting it dominate students' lives? Schools everywhere are scrambling to figure out the answers to these questions. At Oakcrest, our technology policies are informed by the basic premise that we want students to focus on learning, academics, growing in virtue and forming healthy relationships with those around them. In practice, this means giving students the practical resources they need while drawing healthy boundaries around technology use.

Since smartphones have become such a huge part of our teens' lives, the most burning question is what students should be allowed to do with them during the school day. Oakcrest's general rule is that cell phones should be out of sight and out of mind during school hours. Students are always encouraged to use the time before and after school to socialize with each other rather than be on their phones. While a cell phone free environment may seem counterintuitive in today's online social media milieu, we believe we are ahead of the curve. By teaching constructive use of time with others, organizational skills for a full day of classes, study techniques for homework designed to develop thoughtful critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities, it keeps our students and faculty partnering in not just hard work, but deep work.

Beyond phones, our students are encouraged to learn how to use technology in a manner that encourages purposeful learning. Oakcrest students take a technology class where they learn how to explore and use technology effectively and responsibly. The course covers topics such as best practices for

research, privacy issues and concerns, social media and impacts on digital footprint, women's role in technology and computer science and light coding. For those students who want to delve deeper, the Upper School curriculum offers classes in computer programming and AP computer science principles. Students frequently use the Microsoft Office Suite in their homework and learn how it can be a tool for productivity and data processing and presentation. Technology instructor Sanaz Noorbakhsh (Oakcrest Class of '00) describes the Oakcrest vision of good technology practices in the classroom: "Technology in the classroom is a privilege. Used appropriately, it can increase engagement and enhance teaching and learning." "In our classroom, we focus on the concept of digital citizenship, which helps to learn how to use technology appropriately," says Noorbakhsh.

This moderate approach makes sense in light of what we know about the effects of smartphone use on teenagers and the concerns that have been raised about technology's effects on children in general. An article published in *The Atlantic* last year reported on a number of studies on these effects. Of particular note was a striking survey conducted amongst teens by the National Institute on Drug Abuse that found, without exception, that all screen activities are linked to less happiness, while non-screen activities are linked to more. In Northern Virginia, where many public schools use iPads, laptops and other forms of technology as a matter of course in their curricula, parents are expressing concerns about their children being on screens all day and spending little to no time in creative play outside or with friends. And an April 2018 Gallup poll of U.S. teachers revealed

that 69 percent of educators believe digital devices actually hurt students' mental and physical well-being.

As smartphones' effects have become clearer, other schools are following the same general route that Oakcrest has taken. Across the Atlantic, the French government recently passed a national law banning students ages 3-15 from using smartphones in school at all. The hope is that this practice will encourage students to engage more with their studies and the world outside the screen.

Here at Oakcrest we encourage our students to take advantage of the goods that technology has to offer, while also recognizing that technology is simply a means to an end — the end being the discovery of truth and a greater engagement with reality. While we want our students to be technologically savvy, our first and foremost priority is to help them participate more fully in the truth, beauty and goodness of the world around us and the happiness found in face-to-face relationships. Ultimately, we've found that establishing boundaries around technology unlocks a bounty of riches in the social, intellectual and moral life of the entire community.

About Oakcrest: Oakcrest School is an independent school for girls in grades 6-12 guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church. For over 40 years, the school has provided an exceptional liberal arts education to girls of all faiths while fulfilling its mission to grow, challenge and inspire its students to thrive in college and throughout their lives. You are invited to learn more at an Admissions Information Session on Nov. 27 at 8:15 a.m. Visit Oakcrest.org.



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Run, Turkey, Run!

12 Local Turkey Trots

By Victoria Harvey

Before you sit down to gobble up a decadent Thanksgiving feast, lace up your shoes, get moving and help support a good cause! These community races offer a variety of distance runs, plus walks and kids' events to get the family outside burning off that extra slice of pumpkin pie.

D.C.

CRANBERRY CRAWL 10K AND 5K

Nov. 17, 2018, 7:50 a.m. | \$10; PVTC members, \$5

Come out to the Cranberry Crawl! Run or walk in either a 10K or 5K race, and enjoy refreshments after you cross the finish line. Plus, the top three racers will receive delicious cranberry bread. East Potomac Park, 972 Ohio Dr., S.W. Washington, D.C.

2018 TURKEY TUMBLE FOR AUTISM

Nov. 18, 2018, 8 a.m. | 5K, \$25; 10K, \$40; 10-Miler, \$50

Support the Organization for Autism Research by racing in this year's Turkey Tumble for Autism. Bring your family, friends and even (leashed) pets for some exercise and festive fun. Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Path, 3700 Water St., Washington, D.C.

TROT FOR HUNGER

Nov. 22, 2018, 8:30 a.m. | Kids, \$15; Adults, \$40 (Timed), \$45 (Untimed)

Give back this season by joining the Trot for Hunger Thanksgiving Day Race to help provide food, healthcare and clothes to over 10,000 people in need. Freedom Plaza, Washington, D.C.

MARYLAND

CLOVERLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TURKEY TROT 1 MILE AND 5K

Nov. 10, 2018, 4:30 p.m. | \$10

Walk, run and join the fun at Cloverly Elementary School! Come on out and participate in this year's Turkey Trot 5K. Not up to the lengthy race? Run the mile race instead. Bring the whole family for a fun-filled evening. 800 Briggs Chaney Rd., Silver Spring, MD.

GOLDS GYM TURKEY TROT

Nov. 17 2018, 7 a.m. | \$20

Take part in Golds Gym Ritchie Station's first ever Turkey Trot! Not only will you enjoy running the 5K, but you'll also be able to enjoy a turkey basket giveaway and a free concert following the race. Golds Gym Ritchie Station, 1723 A Ritchie Station Court Capitol Heights, MD.

THANKSGIVING DAY 5K TURKEY TROT

Nov. 22 2018, 7 a.m. | Adults, \$30; 12 and Under, \$25

Come out to Project ECHO's annual Turkey

Trot! Start your Thanksgiving day off right by running or walking this 5K in support of their organization's mission: "Hope for the Homeless." 355 West Dares Beach Rd., Frederick, MD.

TURKEY CHASE

Nov. 22, 2018, 8:30 a.m. | 10K, \$46; 2-Miler, \$22; 1K, \$20; Kids 50-Meter, \$10
Join the Bethesda-Chevy Chase YMCA in a Thanksgiving Day celebration. With plenty of race options, there's fun for everyone! 9401 Old Georgetown Rd., Bethesda, MD.

TURKEY BURNOFF 2018

Nov. 24, 2018, 8:15 a.m. | Under 18, \$5; Adults, \$10

Racers come on out for the Turkey Burnoff race! Choose from either a 5 or 10 mile race. Enjoy the lovely views of Seneca Creek State Park, and keep your eye out for deer during your run! Seneca Creek State Park, 11950 Clopper Rd., Gaithersburg, MD.

VIRGINIA

MARINE CORP GOBBLE UP TURKEY TROT

Nov. 17, 8:30 a.m. | 10K, \$40; 1-Miler, \$16

Runners of all ages are invited to gobble up the Turkey Trot 10K or Mile Run alongside the creek aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico. The festive finish includes a petting zoo and award presentations of frozen turkeys and pumpkin pies. Marine

Corps Base Quantico, 3250 Catlin Ave., Quantico, VA.

ARLINGTON TURKEY TROT - 5K FUN RUN/WALK

Nov. 22, 8 a.m. | Adults, \$45; Ages 6-17, \$25

This run goes through Lyon Park and Ashton Heights and raises money for local Arlington charities, including Arlington Food Assistance Center, Arlington Street People's Assistance Network, Arlington Thrive, Bridges to Independence and Doorways for Women and Families. Christ Church of Arlington, 3020 North Pershing Dr., Arlington, VA.

43RD ANNUAL ALEXANDRIA TURKEY TROT

Nov. 22, 9 a.m. | 12 and Under, \$5; 13-21, \$15; 22 and Over, \$20

Started in 1975 with 244 runners, this popular event now has thousands of participants and offers generous cash and gift prizes to top finishers! Mt. Vernon and E. Spring St., Alexandria, VA.

FAIRFAX TURKEY TROT

Nov. 22, 9 a.m. | \$40

Join Pacers Running for the most fun you can have on turkey day. Held in the heart of Old Town Fairfax, the fourth annual Fairfax Turkey Trot will benefit the City of Fairfax Fire Department Benevolent Fund. Next to Fairfax Fire Station #3, 4081 University Dr., Fairfax VA.



POPPED!

DIY THANKSGIVING PIE-INSPIRED TREATS



When it's time for a sweet treat, look for seasonal goodies that complement the essence of fall. For example, reach for an option like whole-grain, fluffy and crisp popcorn which can be an easy, DIY snack.

Combine sweet and salty flavors to create something delicious and festive to devour like Coconut-Popcorn Crunch Pie, Peanut Butter Pie Popcorn Squares, Key Lime Popcorn Clusters or delightful Down Home Apple Pie Popcorn — all inspired by your Thanksgiving favorites.

DOWN HOME APPLE PIE POPCORN

Yield: 10 cups

- 3 tablespoons melted butter**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 8 cups popped popcorn**
- 1 cup dried apple chips, broken into large pieces**
- 1/4 cup toffee bits**

Heat oven to 300F. Whisk melted butter with vanilla. Toss brown sugar with cinnamon, allspice and nutmeg.

Toss popcorn with butter mixture. Sprinkle evenly with brown sugar mixture. Stir.

Transfer to baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

Sprinkle apple chips and toffee bits over top. Bake 15 minutes, or until toffee bits start to melt. Cool before serving.

Tip: Add chopped pecans for extra crunch.

KEY LIME POPCORN CLUSTERS

Yield: about 32 clusters

- 8 cups popped popcorn**
- 4 whole graham crackers, finely chopped, divided**
- 1 jar (7 1/2 ounces) marshmallow creme**
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine**
- 2 tablespoons grated lime peel**
- 1 tablespoon key lime juice**

Line 9-inch square pan with foil.

In large bowl, combine popcorn and all but 2 tablespoons graham cracker pieces.

In large glass bowl, microwave marshmallow creme and butter on high 1 minute. Stir until butter is melted. Stir in lime peel and lime juice.

Pour marshmallow mixture over popcorn, mixing thoroughly.

Using damp hand, firmly press mixture into prepared pan. Sprinkle with reserved graham cracker pieces. Refrigerate 2 hours until firm.

Lift foil from pan. Break popcorn mixture into clusters.

PEANUT BUTTER PIE POPCORN SQUARES

Yield: 12 squares

- 1 cup light corn syrup**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup brown sugar**
- 1 cup reduced-fat peanut butter**
- 3/4 cup raisins**
- 8 cups air-popped popcorn nonstick cooking spray**

In large saucepan, combine corn syrup, sugar, brown sugar and peanut butter.

Bring to boil over low heat, stirring constantly; boil 2-3 minutes. Remove saucepan from heat.

In large bowl, combine raisins and popcorn; pour hot mixture over popcorn and toss carefully with wooden spoons until well-coated.

Spray 9-by-13-inch baking dish with cooking spray; press popcorn mixture into pan and cool completely.

Cut into squares and serve.

COCONUT-POPCORN CRUNCH PIE

Yield: 12 servings

- 2 quarts popped popcorn, unsalted**
- 1 can (4 ounces) flaked coconut, toasted**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 cup light corn syrup**
- ½ cup butter or margarine**
- ¼ cup water**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla**
- 1 quart vanilla, spumoni or butter pecan ice cream**
- fresh fruit, for topping (optional)**
- chocolate sauce, for topping (optional)**

In large, buttered bowl, mix popcorn and coconut. In saucepan, combine sugar, syrup, butter, water and salt. Bring to boil over low heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Continue cooking until syrup reaches hard crack stage (290-295 F).

Stir in vanilla. Pour syrup in fine stream over popcorn mixture; stir until particles are evenly coated with syrup.

On buttered, 12-inch pizza pan, spread half of popcorn mixture in thin layer, covering bottom of pan. Mark off into wedge-shaped servings; set aside. Repeat using remaining popcorn mixture; cool.

Cover one layer with ice cream; top with second popcorn layer. Store in freezer. To serve, cut in wedges. Serve with fruit or chocolate sauce, if desired.

For more creative, DIY popcorn recipe ideas, visit popcorn.org.

Source: Family Features



GUIDES & RESOURCES

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571-223-3110

Ashburn Campus: 43629 Greenway Corporate Dr., Ashburn, VA

571-223-3113

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Ashburn, VA

BeanTree offers Holiday Camp for students in kindergarten through fifth grade on days when elementary schools are closed for holidays or teacher workdays. Inclement weather days, when public schools may be closed, are another opportunity for us to serve both parents and children through fun 'last minute' activities, movies and fun! Parents are so grateful for this convenience that allows their workdays to remain productive and students are always happy to reconnect with "old" friends!

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encorestageva.org/camps/

info@encorestage.org

703-548-1154

4000 Lorcom Ln., Arlington, VA

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revelsdc.org/revels-kids/education/

info@revelsdc.org

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Washington Revels' Workshops connect children with each other, their communities, and the natural world through traditional games, songs, stories, and dances. These timeless activities instill in children the confidence to lead, the respect to listen, and the empathy to care for others and the world around them.

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By Kathryn Streeter

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Her designer
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A collection of various cosmetic products is displayed on a white background. The items include a tall, orange tube of cream or lotion; a red lipstick in a gold and silver tube; a bottle of bright pink nail polish with a black cap; an open black compact of pink blush; a closed black compact of pink powder; a large, fluffy brown brush; a small jar of cream with a white lid; and a small jar of cream with a yellow lid. The products are arranged in a cluster, with some overlapping.

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NOVEMBER

Family Calendar

THURSDAY 1

FREE Farm & Forest Explorers

10 a.m. Calling all young explorers! Join Butler Montessori's Farm & Forest Explorers program and experience farm life and nature through fun, hands-on activities. From harvesting carrots to collecting chicken eggs, each class introduces children to key environmental concepts. Learn and grow while you explore their organic, student-run farm and 22-acre nature-filled campus. Ages 2-5. Butler Montessori Campus, 15951 Germantown Rd., Germantown, MD.

FRIDAY 2

Hairspray

8 p.m. | \$24-\$28. The Reston Community Players presents Hairspray! The winner of eight Tony Awards, including "Best Musical," Hairspray is a dancing, romancing musical-comedy treat piled bouffant-high with enough toe-tapping, show-stopping songs to fill a nonstop platter-party! Reston CommunityCenterStage, 2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston, VA.

SATURDAY 3

Pumpkin Chucking Weekend

10 a.m. | \$6. Clark's Elioak Farm has a special catapult that will launch your pumpkin across the farm. Bring your own pumpkin and see how far it will go! Then, experience one last visit with your favorite animals, take one more pony ride and enjoy the fall scenery on a hayride. Clark's Elioak Farm, 10500 Clarksville Pike, Ellicott City, MD.

SUNDAY 4

Green Meadows Petting Farm

10 a.m. | \$14. The goal at Green Meadows Petting Farm is to educate children of all ages about farm animals while providing a day of fun for everyone. Come out to the farm and get up close with approximately 200 farm animals, as well as the opportunity to milk a cow and feed sheep and goats for free. Also enjoy slides, duck races and more! A pumpkin is also included with each paid admission in October. Green Meadows Farm, 10102 Fingerboard Rd., Ijamsville, MD.

MONDAY 5

Billy Elliot the Musical

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

TUESDAY 6

FREE Story Time with DC Public Library

10:30 a.m. Explore books and the built world in everyday life with a D.C. public librarian. Storytimes for children are packed full of reading, songs and activities designed to promote language and literacy skills

and a lifelong love of reading and learning. National Building Museum, 401 F St. N.W., Washington, D.C.

THURSDAY 8

FREE Breathing, Meditation, Connection for New Parents

10:30 a.m. Being a first-time parent can be a joyful, but daunting and isolating time. Join in for a short 15-minute program on breathing and meditation followed by a time to meet other new parents. First come, first served. Montclair Community Library, 5049 Waterway Dr., Montclair, VA.

FRIDAY 9

Parent Night Out

6 p.m. | \$45. Need a night away? Do your children love Zava Zone? Leave them with us for a safe, fun-filled evening of play while you paint the town red. Drop off your adventurers for a few hours of Zava Zone madness! They will enjoy 1 ½ hours of supervised play, followed by dinner, a movie and then more play! Ages 5-14. Zava Zone, 45685 Oakbrook Ct. Ste. 110, Sterling, VA.

SATURDAY 10

FREE American Girl Tea Party

2:30 p.m. Have tea and snacks with the library's American Girls (bring your own special dolls, too!). There will be a big surprise at the end! Central Community Library, 8601 Mathis Ave., Manassas, VA.

MONDAY 12

FREE Baby Storytime

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

TUESDAY 13

FREE Creative Kidz

6:30 p.m. Have fun and learn through building, playing and getting creative! If your child likes to work with others and make creative projects, he or she will love this open-ended program. Ages 7-10. Haymarket Gainesville Community Library, 14870 Lightner Rd., Haymarket, VA.



Friday, Nov. 23 | 11 a.m. | **Free**

Reston Holiday Parade

On the day after Thanksgiving, a full day of cheer and charity at Reston Town Center is highlighted with the 28th Annual Reston Holiday Parade featuring Macy's-style balloons, marching bands, dancers, characters, antique cars, community groups, dignitaries and the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus in a horse-drawn carriage. The Grand Marshal for 2018 is actress Sissy Sheridan, and the MC's at two grandstand locations are Angie Goff and Doug Kammerer of NBC News4. 10,000 commemorative jingle bells will be distributed to children along the route, and Santa and Mrs. Claus will stay after the parade for visits and photos. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston, VA.

THURSDAY 15

FREE Lego Club

5 p.m. Do your kids like Legos? Then have them come to the library to build their own creations! Legos will be provided, but all materials must stay at the library. So bring a camera to capture your adventures. Grades K-5. Central Community Library, 8601 Mathis Ave., Manassas, VA.

FRIDAY 16

The 2018 Maryland Folk Festival **7:30 p.m. | \$30-\$40.**

Frederick is proud to host the 2018 Maryland Folk Festival featuring Folk Music legend Tom Paxton. Tom will be performing with the Grammy Award winning duo The Don Juans as well! Come out for a musical night of classic folk tunes. Weinberg Center for the Arts 20 W. Patrick St., Frederick, MD.

SATURDAY 17

Turkeypalooza

10:30 a.m. | \$15. Back by popular demand, VF Dance Theater takes children on an exciting adventure that explores Thanksgiving. This interactive show encourages children to count, read, move and solve problems. Known for their athleticism and comedy, VF Dance Theater engages young audiences with this unique holiday performance. Performance is followed by a craft. The Arts Barn, 311 Kent Sq. Rd., Gaithersburg, MD.

SUNDAY 18

Sip and Shop Sundays

11 a.m. | \$110. Local fashionistas are invited to unwind with Leesburg Corner Premium Outlets Sip and Shop Sundays. With transportation provided by Cork and Keg Tours from the center, shoppers can spend the afternoon in Loudoun Wine

Country and return to shop sought-after brands, such as Lululemon Athletica, Kate Spade and Vineyard Vines. Tours include a free Leesburg Corner Premium Outlets Savings Passport to receive additional deals on top of everyday savings of up to 65 percent. Leesburg Corner Premium Outlets 241 Fort Evans Rd., N.E., Leesburg, VA.

TUESDAY 20

FREE Baby Storytime

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

THURSDAY 22

17th Annual Trot for Hunger **8:30 a.m. | \$40**

SOME's Thanksgiving Day Trot for Hunger is now in its 17th year! It brings thousands of people together on Thanksgiving Day to run or walk to help SOME end homelessness and hunger in our nation's capital. By registering, you are helping to provide much-needed food, clothing, healthcare and more to the over 10,000 people in need that SOME serves each year. Freedom Plaza. Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. between 13th and 14th Streets, Washington, D.C.

SATURDAY 24

Family Day at Bobby McKey's
Noon | \$20. Looking for a place that is fun for the entire family? A place where kids are actually encouraged to wiggle in their seats and get up and move? Introduce your child to an appreciation for live music and the arts at Bobby McKey's! Come out



Friday, Nov. 30 | 5 p.m. | \$17-\$25

Mount Vernon by Candlelight

Join the Washington family for a festive evening at Mount Vernon. The experience begins in the Ford Orientation Center, where you can enjoy the sounds of the holiday season and view spectacular Christmas trees highlighting the lives of the Washingtons and their home. Inside the Mansion, Martha Washington and other Mount Vernon residents will welcome you into their home and share stories of past Christmases. Continue the experience by visiting the Greenhouse and participating in 18th-century dancing, enjoy cookies while sipping warm cider by the fireplace and pay a visit to Aladdin the Christmas camel. George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon, VA.

for an afternoon of musical fun with singing, clapping and dancing along to your all-request musical selections. Bobby McKey's, 172 Fleet St., National Harbor, MD.

SUNDAY 25

Symphony of Lights

6 p.m. | \$25. Howard County General Hospital Symphony of Lights, a drive-through spectacle of more than 100 larger-than-life holiday light displays, opens in Merriweather Park at Symphony Woods. Presented by M&T Bank, Symphony of Lights benefits Howard County General Hospital. Light displays, both animated and stationary, glow with a total of 300,000 LED lights on a 1-mile scenic drive through downtown Columbia. Visitors can listen to seasonal music on the HCGH Symphony of Lights FM radio station while driving through the lights. Merriweather Park at

Symphony Woods Park, 10475 Little Patuxent Pkwy., Columbia, MD.

TUESDAY 27

FREE Story Time with DC Public Library

10:30 a.m. Explore books and the built world in everyday life with a D.C. public librarian. Storytimes for children are packed full of reading, songs and activities designed to promote language and literacy skills and a lifelong love of reading and learning. National Building Museum, 401 F St. N.W., Washington, D.C.

WEDNESDAY 28

FREE Reading to Dogs

4 p.m. Practice reading aloud while you make a new friend by reading to a therapy dog at the library. Reading to dogs helps young readers improve their skills in a relaxed, friendly environment. Bring your own book or read one of ours. For readers in grades K-5. Chinn Park Regional Library, 13065

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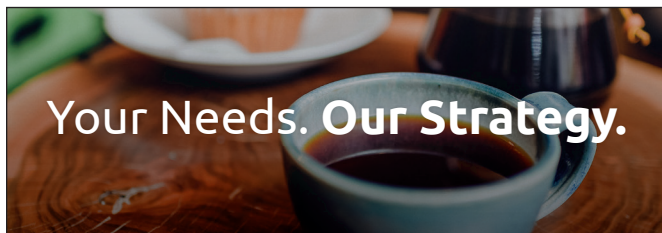
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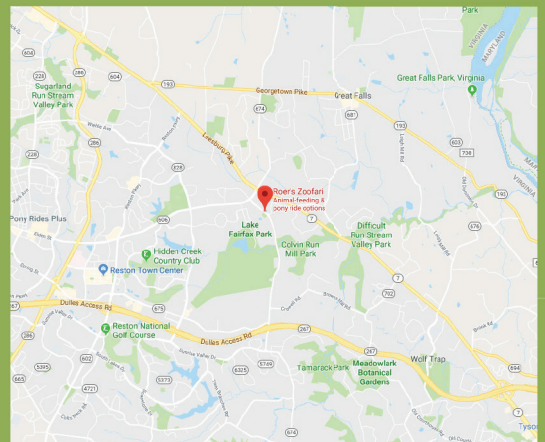
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