

# FAMILY

WASHINGTON

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September 2018

## Healthy Lunchboxes

Local Food  
Experts' Advice

## Time Management Tips for Teens

## EDUCATION GUIDE

## TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Meet Six of  
the Area's  
Top Educators

PICTURED: EVA M. AND HAYA A. AT  
BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON (SEE PG. 6)





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**TEACHERS  
OF THE YEAR**



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of the Year by Washington  
Family! Thank you, Mr. Peter,  
for inspiring our students!



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## Back to the Backpack

My favorite back-to-school activity growing up was shopping with my Mom for a new backpack. My go-to favorite brand: Lisa Frank. Paired with some fresh Birkenstocks, I felt too cool for school.

So Moms, here's your check list: New backpack? Check. Overflow of shiny school supplies? Check. Instagram-worthy bento box lunches? Check. Bright-eyed and well-rested child? ... semi-check?

While kids might be heading into months of schoolwork, the new school year brings work for parents, too. Let our September issue be a study tool to help not only your children, but also yourself.

In this issue, we have our annual Education Guide on pg. 38. You can find resources for schools, enrichment activities, tutoring centers, field trip destinations and more!

Are you looking to shake-up your school lunch packing routine, or want to know how to prevent healthy foods from finding their way back home? Check out the "What's in Your Lunchbox?" article on pg. 26 to get some healthy lunch planning ideas and tips from local chefs.

Does chronic procrastination describe the state of your teen's study habits? If so, don't worry. You're not alone. Get some tips from a local tutor on how to help your teen improve their time-management skills and tackle schoolwork on pg. 18.

We have a list of newly-released children's books on pg. 32 to check out this fall. For parents of children with dyslexia who fear their child might not ever enjoy the act of reading, see pg. 36. The experts

at Lindamood-Bell can alleviate your concerns as they answer some frequently asked questions on this topic.

The biggest heroes of every school year are teachers. They're the inspiring men and women who help our children learn, dream, create and grow. After receiving nominations from our readers, we chose six incredible local teachers to tell their stories. Read about our second annual Teachers of the Year winners starting on pg. 10. You'll soon discover why these dedicated individuals are among the area's best educators. Bonus: You'll also get plenty of invaluable parent-teacher insight!

When the kids are finally off to school, happy with their new Eastpak tropical print backpack, I hope you enjoy a moment of solitude. One that includes whipping up your own specialized bento-box lunch creation and "studying" all the education-focused resources in this issue.

Happy new school year!



*Britni*

Britni Petersen  
Managing Editor

Washington FAMILY Magazine  
bpetersen@midatlanticmedia.com



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TEACHERS  
OF THE  
YEAR

# TEACHERS — OF THE YEAR —



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**T**he most important superheroes don't wear capes; they stand in front of a whiteboard teaching our children topics, from the ABCs to quadratic equations. Teachers empower our children and play a meaningful role in their lives.

Washington FAMILY is honoring DMV area teachers with our second annual Teachers of the Year issue! We asked our readers to nominate an extraordinary

and influential local teacher to be recognized for this honor. After a stream of nominations, we selected six remarkable teachers to be featured in this issue.

With an array of backgrounds and specialties, each of our Teachers of the Year winners embody the passion, devotion and selflessness that make for a great educator. We are excited to share their stories with you. Meet our Teachers of the Year!



# CHRISTOPHER PETER

## TEACHERS — OF THE — YEAR

**“Teachers are important as role models. They help to inspire learning, instill good values and build self-confidence.”**

### **What originally got you interested in teaching?**

I had a lot of great teachers that peaked my interest in the profession. My parents also helped guide me. My mother spent countless hours patiently doing homework with me, and my father constantly read, watched and discussed history with me.

### **Why do you think teachers are important?**

Teachers are important as role models. They help to inspire learning, instill good values and build self confidence. Teachers help to develop leadership skills, and assist in the overall character development and education of young people.

### **What is the single best piece of advice you can give parents of middle schoolers?**

Be involved daily.

### **What's your funniest teaching moment?**

Splitting the back of my pants open. When I knelt down to do some filing during my fourth period, I thought I heard a slight rip. Fortunately for me, it was my planning period. So I was able to rush home and change pants, avoiding



an embarrassing moment in front of the students. Turns out, I ripped my pants on the way to school that morning. The tear I heard during fourth period was just the last thread breaking loose. My pants had been split all morning long. Luckily, my underwear happened to be the color of my slacks that day.

### **Do you have any tried and trusted ideas or activities for motivating students?**

Building positive relationships is key. I do this through positive interactions in the halls, on the athletic fields and in the cafeteria. I give a lot of positive feedback. I tell students constantly when things are going well, and I question the “how’s” and “why’s” when things are off track.

### **How can parents and teachers work together to empower and engage children?**

Communication is key. Parents should let teachers know how they

have managed successful teaching moments with their children. Teachers must keep parents in the loop when things are going great and/or poorly.

### **What is the best thing about teaching in your area/school district?**

I love the friendly and helpful environment at Randolph-Macon Academy. The administration and teachers have been wonderful to work with. I am thankful for all the advice and help I’ve received over the years in building meaningful lesson plans, brainstorming fun ways to incorporate technology and building hands-on projects that resonate with the students.

### **Finish this sentence: If I weren’t teaching, I’d be ...**

coaching soccer. I previously owned and operated the Shenandoah Soccer Academy, and I have a great time teaching the sport. ■

MIDDLE SCHOOL  
TEACHER AT  
RANDOLPH-MACON  
ACADEMY IN FRONT  
ROYAL, VA

NOMINATED BY:  
CELESTE BROOKS

“Mr. Peter is not your typical history teacher. When the school opened an Innovation Lab this past fall, he jumped in with his students.

“They used the various tools and technology available to make history come alive in a way that his students will remember forever. For example, they built chariots (no Lego wheels allowed) and held races in the ‘Hippodrome’ he created in the gym.

“Mr. Peter engages his students in discussions, listening and guiding them. He encourages them to speak up, and his lack of ego has made them comfortable enough to do so. Outside the classroom, he continues to listen to and care for his students, always making the time when someone needs him. He is also a phenomenal soccer coach, instilling not just skills into his players, but sportsmanship and motivation as well.”

## TEACHERS — OF THE — YEAR

SECOND-GRADE  
TEACHER AT HORACE  
MANN ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL IN  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

NOMINATED BY:  
JEN DRYER.

"David Magee works incredibly hard to not just provide the opportunities and inspiration for children to grow academically, but also socially and emotionally. He thinks deeply about the whole child, and works to help children in this important emotional year begin to understand themselves as learners. David also helps his students learn how to advocate for themselves in how they best learn.

"To help destigmatize learning differences, he provides 'Tier 1' interventions for all children, like offering any child a set of noise cancelling headphones to help maintain focus during individual work time. David really knows his students as people, as learners and as citizens of his classroom and the school. He sets high expectations and helps students better understand themselves. This is not something I've seen many teachers do, and it's incredibly powerful for children at this age and stage in their lives."

# DAVID MAGEE



### **What originally got you interested in teaching?**

After college, I spent time exploring professions in healthcare and consulting. While I enjoyed the collegiality and the challenges that come with these environments, I never felt like my full suite of skills were being employed. I had this gnawing feeling that I could, and should, be doing more with myself. I wanted to find my calling, and spoke to my family and friends. Much to my shock, people kept saying the same thing, "You would be an amazing teacher!" As soon as that idea was introduced, I knew I had found my path.

### **Why do you think teachers are important?**

Everyone remembers their teachers in great detail, don't they? We can still hear their voices in our minds from time to

time, their specific praise or discreet criticism, their jokes or sincere advice, their empathy and tough love. It was those moments that changed us the most, because it was those moments where we felt known and cared for. Teachers are guides who prepare children for a world that they are beginning to discover. In this capacity, we can change how people view themselves relative to their world.

### **What is the single best piece of advice you can give parents of second-graders?**

Children start to struggle and push back when they feel acted upon, so I try to make every choice theirs. In tough situations, I offer two positive choices and let the child decide between those: "Do you want to clean up before your snack or after?" In the same vein, allow your

child some autonomy by offering your student opportunities to make small, but important choices every day. Let them pack their own snack, choose a time to set their alarm or pick out their own clothes the night before. Giving a second-grader responsibility helps supply them with a positive sense of control.

### **Heading into this new school year, what are you most excited for?**

I love the moment when our students come up with and vote on our class names. Last year, we were the "Helpful Potato Bugs," and before that, we were the "Red Eared Sliders." Our students also come up with a new name for the tarantula, which is our class pet. Last year, she was "Octavia," and before that, the kids voted to call her "You know who ..."

### **Do you have any tried and trusted ideas or activities for motivating students?**

At the start of the year, we create collage self-portraits after reading Todd Parr's book, "It's Okay to Be Different." During this time, the students start to celebrate what makes them unique and special, while appreciating the differences that we all bring to the classroom. This activity is a perfect way to do guided discovery of our materials. At the end of the project, we use the students' faces to decorate our classroom! ■



# JOANNA MCBRIDE

## TEACHERS — OF THE — YEAR

**“Children are motivated when they’re engaged. So find a way to hook them in by using what you know about them and their personal interests.”**

### **What originally got you interested in teaching?**

For as long as I can remember, I have wanted to be a teacher.

### **Why do you think teachers are important?**

Teachers spend so much time with their students. Therefore, they can make a huge impact on their development — in both their learning and as young people.

### **What is the single best piece of advice you can give parents of fourth-graders?**

Help your children develop a variety of interests by giving them access to a wide range of activities.

### **What’s your funniest teaching moment?**

As a teacher of 9- and 10-year-olds, every day is fun, funny and different.



### **Heading into this new school year, what are you most excited for?**

New colleagues, new students and new opportunities.

### **Do you have any tried and trusted ideas or activities for motivating students?**

Children are motivated when they are engaged. So find a way to hook them in by using what you know about them and their personal interests.

### **What are three things you use in your classroom every day and could never live without?**

This changes so often. Right now: iPads, super sticky Post-It notes and hand sanitizer!

### **How can parents and teachers work together to empower and engage children?**

Teachers and parents need to communicate. We use an app called Seesaw, which has been transformational for parental involvement in learning in our school.

### **What is the best thing about teaching in your area or school district?**

At the British International School of Washington, we are so lucky to have such an internationally diverse student body. We learn so much from each other’s contrasting experiences every day.

### **Finish this sentence: If I weren’t teaching, I’d be ...**

incomplete. ■

FOURTH-GRADE  
TEACHER AT BRITISH  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL OF  
WASHINGTON IN  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

NOMINATED BY:  
KATIE BENSON.

“Joanna is a passionate teacher who deeply cares about each child in her class. She treats all children as individuals, diligently supporting and challenging them in their unique learning journey. Joanna fosters very strong relationships with her class, modeling respect, cooperation and effective communication.

“Using her gentle sense of humor, she empowers children to become curious, independent thinkers and resilient learners. Joanna is innovative in her approach, and is determined to prepare her students for the rigors of the 21st century. So she incorporates technology into her lessons in a purposeful way. Joanna knows how crucial parental involvement is for student success, and she involves them continually by celebrating successes and identifying areas that parents can help support at home. Beyond the classroom,

“Joanna supports the professional development of colleagues, sharing her expertise in technology and STEAM learning.”

# TEACHERS — OF THE — YEAR

KINDERGARTEN  
TEACHER AT MOUNT  
EAGLE ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL IN  
ALEXANDRIA, VA

NOMINATED BY:  
LAURA MCCARTHY.

"Katie goes above and beyond to create a dream learning environment for her students. She has a fully loaded art studio, open seating, a pet hamster, an imagination center and a fully stocked classroom library. Student artwork hangs everywhere, and the imagination station is based off of the kids' latest interests. Katie strongly believes that kindergarteners need to learn through play. She organizes multiple field trips to farms, performances and local parks. Her students have two recesses a day: one on the playground, and the other in the front garden to encourage imaginative play. But what really makes Katie a standout educator is her ability to connect with her students and their families. She sends parents photos in her weekly newsletter and does home visits.

"Thanks to Katie, my daughter had the most amazing kindergarten experience. She immersed the students in hands-on learning. There were caterpillars to observe, pumpkins to measure, homemade play dough and sculptures inspired by Calder. These students thrived! They learned how to problem solve! But most importantly, they were happy kiddos! Katie deserves to be recognized because she does what every teacher should do — she fosters a love for lifelong learning."

# KATIE KEIER



## What originally got you interested in teaching?

I've always wanted to be a teacher. I can't imagine doing anything else! I remember playing "school" from a very early age. I loved my second grade teacher, Miss Allen, and enjoyed being her helper. I would stay in from recess to grade papers and help get the room ready for the afternoon. My high school French teacher, Mme. Waters, influenced me tremendously and ultimately inspired me to choose education as my major in college.

## Do you have any tried and trusted ideas or activities for motivating students?

I believe children are motivated from within when they are engaged. They're engaged when they're following their

interests, passionate about what they're learning and involved in inquiry and projects that excite and challenge them. I believe in listening carefully to children, building strong relationships, following their interests and creating provocations and experiences that reflect who they are. Going beyond the curriculum, we've explored monarch butterflies, gardening, peace, Pokemon, dinosaurs, Minecraft, maps, engineering, ramps, various art forms and more. Who knows what this year might bring? Children are capable, brave human beings that can do so much — more than we can even imagine.

## What are three things you use in your classroom every day and could never live without?

1. Books. We read books all day! Our learning is anchored in the texts of our favorite authors, characters and books that are "windows, mirrors and sliding glass doors." This is so we can see ourselves, each other, new and different worlds and people, and be able to journey to these places through our reading.

2. Blank paper books and flair pens. We write and illustrate books every day. Our stories, our knowledge and our learning experiences are shared on the pages of books we create.

3. Art and play. Children thrive when they're in a beautiful space that celebrates their creativity. Having many opportunities to create art, enjoy art by famous artists and each other, listen to and make music, dance, create make-believe worlds and play (a lot!) makes our classroom a joyful place to live and learn together. Through art and play, kids can learn to express themselves, connect with others, solve problems, develop empathy, kindness and imagine what's possible.

## Finish this sentence: If I weren't teaching, I'd be ...

living a life without joy. Teaching brings me so much joy, possibility and hope for our future. I can't imagine ever not being a teacher. It's who I am. ■



# MADELINE JACOBS ROSENWALD

**“The natural curiosity that children have about the world around them is what really got me into teaching.”**

## **What originally got you interested in teaching?**

The natural curiosity that children have about the world around them is what really got me into teaching. I did some outdoor education work before getting into the classroom, and I realized that there is so much for our students to take in about how the world works. I felt like I could do a decent job to help them make sense of it all. And in that sense, teaching found me.

## **Why do you think teachers are important?**

Teachers hold the keys that open the doors of possibilities for their students. It is our job to foster a love of learning in each one of our students.

## **What is the single best piece of advice you can give parents of middle schoolers?**

Give your child the tools and skills necessary to advocate for themselves. This is a life skill. Students need to learn how to communicate their struggles and needs, because at some point, they will be ready to fly and leave the nest.



## **Do you have any tried and trusted ideas or activities for motivating students?**

Getting your students to want to succeed is no easy task. I always encourage a little friendly competition in the classroom. But when all else fails, “Music Mondays” are definitely encouraging when there is independent work to be done.

## **What are three things you use in your classroom every day and could never live without?**

1. My students. They're what make coming to work so incredible, and they're what keep me going throughout the day.
2. A silly rubber ball that I throw around with the kids when we need to take a brain break.
3. My tea mug ... caffeine is a necessity.

## **How can parents and teachers work together to empower and engage children?**

Become a partner with your children's teachers. We both want what is best for them. A strong partnership between parents and teachers can help foster student success.

## **What is the best thing about teaching in your area or school district?**

I love our school community — we're like one big family. There are few words to describe what we have. It is just something you have to experience by being a part of it.

## **Finish this sentence: If I weren't teaching, I'd be ...**

the principal of a middle school. If I weren't in education, I'd be a personal chef for dinner parties and events. ■

## TEACHERS — OF THE — YEAR

FIFTH THROUGH  
EIGHTH GRADE  
SCIENCE TEACHER AT  
GESHER JEWISH DAY  
SCHOOL IN  
FAIRFAX, VA

NOMINATED BY:  
SARA LAFOUNTAIN

“Madeline Rosenwald is an amazing teacher and leader at our school. She teaches science to students in fifth through eighth grade, and also helps the kindergarten through second grade teachers integrate science into their classrooms. Madeline also volunteers as the ‘T’ part of our PTO. She comes to all of our meetings and shares communications with all the teachers.

“Madeline also pulls off one of the most exciting events of the year: the middle school dance. She singlehandedly transforms the school into a theme. This year, she turned our school into a ‘50s sock hop. Last year, she transformed it into ‘The Wizard of Oz.’ Besides being an incredible leader, Madeline makes science fun for all the students. She creates hands-on experiments, and also teaches the kids how to be prepared for high school and beyond.”

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NOMINATED BY:  
MARY RADCLIFFE

"Molly Leithart embodies a delightful and joyous love of learning that captures the minds and imaginations of her fourth-grade students. It is a wonderful experience to witness Molly's classroom joyfully abuzz as students enthusiastically learn poetry — just imagine learning Walt Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" complete with jumping up on chairs and then down to the ground. Or to witness as they explore history and architecture in teams and create their own replicas of famous buildings. She has a wonderful ability of engaging her students in each new project and subject.

"Molly also takes on leadership roles within the ILS community, serving as the lower school lead teacher. This year, she helped introduce a new aspect to the lower school experience: a house system, complete with competitions and lunches with integrated grades. Also, as a talented musician, singer and dancer herself, Molly directs student musical theater numbers for the annual talent show. She is an enthusiastic and inspiring teacher, a wonderful leader and overall, a tremendous asset to the ILS community! We are blessed to have her."

# MOLLY A. BARNETT



### Why do you think teachers are important?

In an otherwise ever-changing and unpredictable world, certain aspects of familiarity and constancy help to anchor our lives and order our days in peace, turning us to what is higher and enduring. Knowledge lovingly imparted may be forgotten, but love directs the students to their end. Students can enter a classroom each morning knowing they are loved, expecting to learn, read, discuss, write, compute, think, perhaps sing, jump and even laugh. Teachers not only share wonderment of the art they teach, but they motivate and support each child. And this, in my opinion, is of the noblest of work of our time.

### What is the single best piece of advice you can give parents of fourth-graders?

Let them be children, but guide them into adulthood. Fourth-graders are easily excited during classes. They participate readily and love to laugh and play. Their minds and bodies are also rapidly growing, and it's amazing to see how much they can memorize and recall. Witnessing this impressive cognitive activity, however, might wrongfully lead us adults to think that they need more stimulation or challenge. But they also need to be bored and think up a game, or splash in puddles left over from last night's thunderstorm. In other words, they need to be children. And while they often emote about the injustices of childhood (bed times, yucky healthy food, etc.), they need this sort of love to lead them into the joys of adulthood.

### What's your funniest teaching moment?

My first year teaching at ILS was special in many regards, and in part because of the spectacular group of students I taught. During one wintry month when stuffy noses were aplenty, every present student breathed with some audible difficulty. I could not speak a full sentence without a sneeze, sniffle or cough interrupting the flow of words! One clever student uttered, "Ah, the 'Sound of Mucus.'" And with that, the entire class, including myself, burst into uproarious laughter.

### How can parents and teachers work together to empower and engage children?

This question is definitely an important one in education, and I appreciate how our school actively seeks parental involvement throughout the year. From sending home weekly newsletters that include what we are learning to calling parents in order to share a positive story from the day, we want to emphasize the unified efforts in educating children. In this way, children know that their parents are on the teacher's team, and we're all working together for the good of the child. I think there is comfort there for everyone involved.

### Finish this sentence: If I weren't teaching, I'd be ...

jobless. ■



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## Congratulations, Mrs. Barnett!



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# YOUR PROCRASTINATING TEEN: 9 TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR TACKLING SCHOOLWORK

BY ANN DOLIN

**M**ost school nights play out as if they were cribbed right out of a family sitcom script.

Mom: "Hi son, did you get your math homework done after you got home from school like you said you would?"

Son: \*Looking up from his Xbox controller\* "Oh, it's not that much, so it'll only take me like 10 minutes later."

Then, when "later" rolls around ...

Mom: "Are you done yet? It's getting close to bedtime!"

Son: "I will, I will ... Just five more minutes, I promise!"

We all know where that conversation goes from here. And although it may be infuriating and all too common, one

thing is exceedingly clear: Instilling a strong sense of time management for teens is a huge challenge as a parent.

When it comes to time management and planning ahead, there are two types of kids:

Type 1: Kids with a loud internal clock. They have a fabulous sense of time, and can self-monitor how long things are



taking and make adjustments. These are the kids where if their alarm clock goes off at 7 a.m., they're able to shower, eat breakfast and get out the door to meet the bus at 8 a.m. without fail.

**Type 2: Kids with a soft internal clock.** They struggle to be on time, maintain deadlines and plan ahead appropriately. These kids are much less aware of passing time, and are usually the kid you have to poke, prod and micromanage in the morning to get them out the door and on time.

For kids with a soft internal clock, strong routines and strategies to help them manage time more effectively are needed. So here are 10 tips to help your child with time management and tackling schoolwork in the new school year:

#### **TIP #1: WEAR A WATCH**

Research shows that when kids wear an analog watch (not a digital watch) it helps them better understand elapsed time.

#### **TIP #2: MAKE SURE THERE ARE ANALOG CLOCKS IN THE HOUSE**

Additionally, when there are analog clocks in the area where they're working, that's helpful as well. So if they do their work in your home office, the dining room or the kitchen, make sure there's an analog clock in that space that is easily visible to them.

#### **TIP #3: WORK ON EACH CLASS EVERY DAY, NO MATTER WHAT**

Now, many area middle and high school students are on block scheduling these days. For some kids, this is great! For others, especially those who struggle with time management, it's much more difficult for them to plan ahead and avoid doing their homework at the last minute for a class they have every other day.

For example: Let's say your child's

math teacher routinely assigns homework on Monday, which is then due Wednesday. If you have a soft internal clock kid, chances are they won't start this homework until 10 p.m. on Tuesday night!

Instead, encourage your child to get started the night it's assigned. This could be as simple as pulling it out, putting their name on it and only working on the first two problems. That way, the wheels have started turning, and maybe they've identified some questions they need to ask their teacher. And, they already have some momentum going on that task, so it's smaller and more manageable on Tuesday.

In fact, the easiest thing to do might be to encourage working on every subject, every day (even if it's just five minutes) to keep this process going.

#### **TIP #4: USE THE RIGHT TOOLS**

A huge time management for teens principle is simply having the right tools available. And this benefits soft internal clock kids the most. These include:

Using a planner or an assignment book to look ahead and plan out their work

Using a to-do list to break down their assignments into smaller pieces so they can more accurately predict how long they will take

Using alarms or digital calendar reminders (if they mostly work off of a computer)

Establishing a distraction-free study space, and organizing their environment

#### **TIP #5: REMOVE THE BARRIER TO ENTRY**

Many times students feel overwhelmed and underprepared. And in order to ease this anxiety, have them break larger tasks into smaller tasks and make the "barrier to entry" almost

nonexistent. By setting the threshold for getting started incredibly low so that it is almost positive that he or she will be successful in completing the task, this will help get the ball rolling. It will make the student feel a sense of confidence that they can move forward. Two different ways to do this are to focus on either time or task.

To focus on time, set a timer for five to 10 minutes. Have them commit: "I'm going to read for 10 minutes, then I can take a short break before restarting." And then step through that process, bit by bit.

Alternatively, you can choose to focus on task. For example, maybe it's Wednesday and your child has a Spanish test on Friday. Like usual, he or she wants to put off studying until the night before. The problem with this method is it hasn't really worked out in the past. It causes your child to feel overwhelmed, so they stay up late cramming, and then they are exhausted on test day.

**Solution?** Encourage your child to start studying on Wednesday by tackling one easy task that he or she knows can be accomplished. For example, an easy task might be to start studying only 10 of the 30 vocabulary words, or just one section of the material that is the easiest part for your child. This will help give your child an immediate sense of accomplishment so that the next day of studying is less overwhelming and more manageable. It also just gets them to begin the studying process earlier than usual, which is the biggest battle.

Another example is if your child has an English essay due the following day, but they struggle to get started right away because they have problems with putting their good ideas onto paper. And most likely, they see essay writing as an "all or nothing" process ... so they delay.

Instead of waiting until right before bed when he or she is then pressured

to finish (a common method among procrastinators), encourage your child to simply write the first sentence right before dinner. It might seem too little of a task, but it has a big impact. Just getting the first sentence down is often the hardest part, but if it's the only task for the moment, your child will see it as an easy accomplishment. Plus, it will get the process going, and more than likely, your child will continue working on and completing the essay much sooner than usual.

#### TIP #6: SET SMALL GOALS

To go off of the previous tip, help your student prioritize their assignments and tasks and set goals! And make sure they celebrate each small win.

Then, the better they become at setting small goals and accomplishing them, the easier and less scary those big goals will seem in the future. It will also help them get better at estimating what they can achieve and planning ahead accordingly.

#### TIP #7: WRITE IT OUT

For many students, just getting their plans down on paper can do a number of positive things.

First, it helps them get organized by getting all of the information out of their head. When everything is written down in front of them, it's easier to see how much they have to do, and whether they'll have enough time to do it all.

Second, as mentioned earlier, it helps "lower the barrier" to getting started. All they need to do is go to their planner where they wrote it down, and pick out the first thing on the list to get started on.

And third, it facilitates the goal setting process. Having to write down tasks that have to be done requires them to start thinking about how

they will do it, how long it will take and when they'll get it done. As your child realizes what is and isn't able to be accomplished, their predictions will get better and better over time.

#### TIP #8: ENCOURAGE "TIME TRAVEL"

Researcher Fuschia Sirois from Bishop's University identified a mindset approach called "time travel," which can be beneficial for students. She studied 4,000 people and found that those who could project themselves into the future and think about how great it would feel to finish a task were more likely to ward off procrastination.

They were also trained to imagine how awful they would feel if they chose to put off their work, to anchor them against a future negative emotion. This type of visualization proved to be an effective strategy, and it may just work for your procrastinating student as well.

#### TIP #9: USE 80 PERCENT POSITIVE/20 PERCENT NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

Finally, kids generally don't like to do things they feel poorly about. And one of the most reliable predictors of how a child will feel about their performance in any domain, is the ratio of positive to negative feedback they receive.

As it turns out, kids with weak executive functioning, ADHD and other academic struggles receive negative feedback about 80 percent of the time they are at school. This doesn't bode well for feeling positive about their schoolwork.

So try to flip the script and give positive reinforcement 80 percent of the time when they're at home. Don't avoid pointing out their mistakes, but do make sure to balance that by pointing out all of the good things they're doing as well. Slowly but surely you'll shift the balance of their attitude towards their work if you maintain this practice over time.

---

*Ann Dolin is a former Fairfax County teacher and current founder and president of Educational Connections Tutoring, which serves the D.C. area. She has over 25 years of experience in education, teaching and tutoring students from kindergarten to college.*





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# What's in Your Lunchbox?

By **MICHELLE BLANCHARD ARDILLO**

**P**acking school lunches has changed quite a bit over the recent decades. An acceptable lunch from the '70s — a ham and cheese sandwich on supermarket white bread, a bag of chips, a soda and a candy bar — has morphed into a challenge for today's parents who want to give their children a healthy school lunch that will leave them satisfied, energized and most importantly, happy. Throw in the goal of using less paper and plastic disposable products, and working moms and dads are left feeling overwhelmed. With just a little time spent brainstorming, shopping and prepping, today's parents can quickly and efficiently create nutritious eco-friendly lunches that will be the envy of the lunch table!

## Get Your Child's Input

Take a few minutes to sit down with your child and talk about school lunches. Even though you prepare

meals for them every day, ask your child what they'd like in their lunch bag. The answer may surprise you. Negotiations may be needed to reach a middle ground of something you can pack that will meet your nutrition goals, but their input will result in a more positive response to even the healthier food choices. This can be accomplished even with picky eaters if you spend the time.

However, this might not be the easiest solution for parents with multiple school-aged children. Customizing three or four different lunches is not ideal. So in this case, ask for their lunch inputs in order to try to establish a common denominator among them.

Paige Rienzo, a Kensington, MD author, decorator and mom of four shared her philosophy on this: "Making lunches is much easier when all four of my kids eat the same thing. They agree on almost nothing

except the main — they all like pasta. I invested in good thermoses, and I often boil pasta before school. It's no more time-consuming than it is to make four different sandwiches. If I am feeling particularly motivated, I will add cooked peas or diced meats."

## Consider the Lunch Setting/Time Frame

When new to a school, find out in advance the lunch setting and time frame. In order to extend academic time or recess time, some elementary schools have reduced the amount of time students have for lunch. If this is the case, lunches that require assembly or the opening and closing of multiple containers may prove to be difficult for younger students. Inquire whether students are permitted to access a microwave to warm leftovers, pasta dishes or soup. While convenient, this may also add to a problem with timing.



## Think Outside of the “Bag”

When shopping for suitable lunch bags and containers, think outside of the “bag.” Try out these two alternatives:

**Thermos.** A wide-mouth thermos will enable you to pack pasta, casserole leftovers or soups. Caren Garayta, a Montgomery County Public School teacher and mom of six says of her oldest, “A thermos that could keep food warm was his best friend. He loved having dinner for lunch! With his Cuban-American roots, he loved having rice, of course. But anytime I made a soup or his favorite Asian noodles, it was so easy to heat up in the morning and pop in the thermos. I also didn’t have to pack as much because the food was so filling.”

But a thermos isn’t just for hot foods. You can also pre-chill the thermos by filling it with ice water while you blend up a smoothie to pack. Frederick teacher and mom of two Maria Shumaker knows that smoothies are the way to more sneak in greens. “One thing I’ve done to get them to eat more greens is by throwing spinach or kale into the blender when making smoothies. They don’t taste the greens at all.” Pack a few deli meat and cheese roll-ups along with the smoothie for added protein. Use the pre-chilled thermos to pack a cold pasta salad tossed with leftover diced chicken and fresh veggies.

## Bento Box-Style Containers

This type of container allows for packing smaller portions of a variety of items, sure to please even the pickiest of eaters. Cut-up deli meats and cheese, veggies ready for dipping, fresh fruit and crackers or pita wedges all in their separate compartments will be more appetizing — and fun — to dive into. Some of these containers also come with a section that can be sealed for packing

hummus, ranch dip or salad dressing. Annapolis teacher and mother of three Heather Sowell admits, “Use dips as a means to encourage healthy foods. Pack some light ranch if it will get them to eat carrots.” For creative packing containers, Grace Lovelace recommends Kelly Lester’s website and products, Easy Lunchboxes, [easylunchboxes.com](http://easylunchboxes.com). Sign up for a free newsletter for lunch ideas or watch her videos. Grace also recommends Laura Fuentes’s website MOMables for more ideas.

## Purchase Healthy Snacks in Bulk

For healthy snacks that everyone agrees on, purchase in bulk, if possible. Once home, sort and store them in small bins or baskets in the pantry or, if possible, a cabinet or drawer dedicated to school lunches. For a more economical method of buying snacks, purchase a large “party-size” bag of mini-pretzels or popcorn and re-package in single-serving sized baggies or reusable containers. Having grab and go containers with approved snacks makes it easy for even younger children to help pack their own lunches.

## Variety is Key

The saying that variety is the spice of life is key here. Kensington mom of four Maria Welsh said, “I will tell you that my thoughts on lunch is variety. I never packed the same thing two days in a row for the kids. I remember Rob [her husband] saying how he hated his lunch because his mother always made a bologna sandwich: two pieces of bread, one slice of bologna, and then maybe

an apple ... so my kids looked forward to seeing what was in their lunch every day. Some were hits and some were fails, but they definitely let me know that when they came home.” Maria continued, “I also always tried to have a ‘meal’ with protein, always a piece of fruit, and then a small treat. If they got a bag of chips, then they didn’t get a sweet dessert-type treat or vice versa.”

Packing healthy and nutritious school lunches can be manageable even for the busiest of parents. To make unpacking an appetizing and appealing lunch at school really special, slip in a little note to brighten your child’s day!

---

*Michelle Blanchard Ardillo is a freelance writer and middle school language arts teacher who tries most days to pack herself a healthy lunch to take to school. Follow her @michardillo on Twitter or Goodreads, or on her website at [www.michelleardillo.com](http://www.michelleardillo.com).*



# ASK THE FOOD EXPERTS

## School Lunch Q&A



While moms and dads are on the front lines of packing school lunches, chefs and nutritionists can approach this daily task from a different point of view informed by their professional experiences. We asked three food experts to weigh in on the topic:

**Q. What is your philosophy for packing school lunches? Do you focus on health and nutrition, or something that your child will actually eat? Is it possible to achieve both?**

**Chef Lee:** "Lunches should be fun and delicious. If it isn't delicious, it doesn't matter how healthy it is, your child won't eat it anyway."

**Chef Tang:** "It has to be easy to whip up but still able to provide nutrition that he needs with a good balance. It is possible to achieve both, it is just that parents need to spend a little more time exploring different foods with your kid and showing them that food can be fun."

**Dr. Kantor:** "The key to a perfect school lunch is balance and it also has to appeal to your child. Children truly eat with their eyes and if it does not look good then they probably will not eat it. Try to include protein, healthy fats, and color with a fruit or veggie in each meal."

**Q. How much does your child participate in the packing of school lunches? Choice? Variety? Actual packing for themselves?**

**Chef Lee:** "I try to get her involved as much as possible. If she feels like she 'chose' her lunch, she is more likely to eat it."

**Chef Tang:** "I think involving the kid from grocery shopping at

supermarkets or farmers markets to preparing the food helps educate them and makes them more aware of what they are eating and this generates interest to try new or different foods."

**Dr. Kantor:** "If your child is actually involved with the planning process they will feel like they 'own' the lunch and will be less likely to throw away things that they do not want. Teachers and cafeteria staff report that fruits and vegetables end up in the trash in most school cafeterias."

**Q. Should kids have a dessert-type addition to their lunch, such as a pudding pack or candy? What about chips? Soda?**

**Chef Lee:** "No chips, no soda, no candy but I always pack a dessert, maybe a chocolate covered pretzel or a bran cookie with chocolate chips. Dessert can be sweet but some of them also have ingredients other than just sugar. Whole wheat cookies are a good option."

**Chef Tang:** "I think kids should have a dessert type addition to their lunch! I have a sweet tooth and most meals will need to end with dessert. We try to limit his sugar intake. It takes a conscious effort but after a while we realize that we ourselves are also cutting down on our sugar intake. I think chips are fine if eaten not every day and we don't drink sodas so that's not really a problem right now."

**Dr. Kantor:** "When you are packing the lunch, keep balance in mind. Limit processed grains and empty calories like cookies, crackers, and juice. If they like dessert, then pack a piece of dark chocolate. Removing items that are high in sugar like juice and cookies will increase their ability to focus in classes after their lunch period. It has been reported that over 12 million American children are medicated for Attention Deficient Disorder (ADD). Sugar and excessive carbohydrates magnify symptoms of ADD in children, healthy fats like nuts, and oils help reduce symptoms of ADD. Always pack water over juice. Packing a large water bottle is the best thing you could send with your child every day."

**Q. What is your child's FAVORITE thing to find in their school lunch?**

**Chef Lee:** "Hot dog with ketchup on the side."

**Chef Tang:** "His favorite thing to find is a banana."

Chef Edward Lee, culinary director for Succotash in National Harbor, MD and Penn Quarter, D.C., and father of five-year-old Arden Rose.

Chef Nicholas Tang, executive chef of DBGB in D.C. and father of three-year old Elijah and five-month old Micah.

Dr. Keith Kantor, a leading nutritionist and CEO of the Nutritional Addiction Mitigation Eating and Drinking (NAMED) program.



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# 5 Myths of AUTISM

WHAT WE KNOW AND  
WHAT WE ARE STILL LEARNING

By ERIN STAUDER

iStock / Getty Images Plus/nambitomo



**A**utism spectrum disorder (ASD) is one of the fastest-growing developmental disorders in the United States with a growth rate of more than 1,100 percent, according to the Autism Society. But ASD is still greatly misunderstood by the public.

## What is ASD?

Autism is a complex developmental disability and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism, which typically appears during the first three years of life, is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals to varying degrees. There is no known single cause of autism.

According to the Autism Society, a few signs to look for are:

- delay in or lack of spoken language
- repetitive use of language and/or motor mannerisms
- little or no eye contact
- lack of interest in peer relationships
- lack of spontaneous or make-believe play
- persistent fixation on parts of objects

While autism is not curable, it is treatable. Early diagnosis and intervention, including behavioral treatments or medication, can significantly improve social and educational outcomes.

## MYTH NO. 1: Individuals with autism are intellectually disabled and lack communication skills.

ASD affects people in different ways, especially with communication. Some children may be nonverbal or nearly nonverbal; others may be extremely verbal with rich vocabularies and high reading skills.

For children with autism who are unable to verbally engage, there are alternative forms of communication available. A recent study supported by the group Autism Speaks concluded that the use of American Sign Language for children with autism can be an effective form of communication.



Approximately 10 percent of children with ASD also can show extremely high abilities in specific areas, such as math, music and memorization. Over the last 20 years, college enrollment rates among students with disabilities have tripled, and almost half (about 44 percent) of children identified with ASD have average-to-above-average intellectual ability.

**MYTH NO. 2: Autism affects both boys and girls at the same rate.**

Based on genetics and diagnosis, autism does not affect boys and girls the same way or have the same percentage rates. Autism is about 4.5 times more common among boys (one in 42) than among girls (one in 189), according to the Centers for Disease Control. However, diagnosis referrals for boys versus girls are closer to 10-to-1, likely meaning many girls are not being tested at a young enough age to benefit from early intervention.

ASD also displays differently in girls than boys and affects the rate of diagnosis, especially for girls on the higher-functioning end of the spectrum. Genetics may also explain why boys are more likely to be on the spectrum. One model studied by the CDC suggests that “girls have a higher tolerance for harmful genetic mutations and therefore require a larger number of them than boys to reach the diagnostic threshold of a developmental disorder.” At the same time, because the female mutation threshold is higher, girls tend to fall on the more severe end of the spectrum when they are diagnosed.

**MYTH NO. 3: Most autism care costs are covered by insurance.**

Autism therapy is excluded from coverage by many insurance plans. If families do have a plan that covers some of the physical cost of autism, there are still significant behavioral costs and other economic burdens that

add up to thousands of dollars.

Intensive behavioral interventions can cost \$40,000 to \$60,000 per child per year. There are also a number of direct and indirect costs with medical care, special education, lost parental productivity and more that cause a significant economic burden on families.

Roughly half of the U.S. currently requires coverage for treatments of autism spectrum disorders; but medical costs for children with ASD are estimated to be six times higher than for children without ASD.

**MYTH NO. 4: Autism is caused by “bad parenting.”**

In the ‘50s, a theory called the “refrigerator mother hypothesis” arose suggesting that autism was caused by mothers who lacked emotional warmth. Medical and behavioral care providers told parents the reason their child displayed poor social skills was because the child failed to receive warm and loving interactions with the parents, particularly the child’s mother. It is now understood that this is not true — autism is not caused by a failure to properly bond to a parent. Yet, some parents still encounter the stigma.

There is no proven correlation between vaccinations and autism, but many myths about autism still lie in the hypothesis that vaccinations cause autism. The increased rate of autism diagnosis has fueled fears that environmental exposures might be to blame.

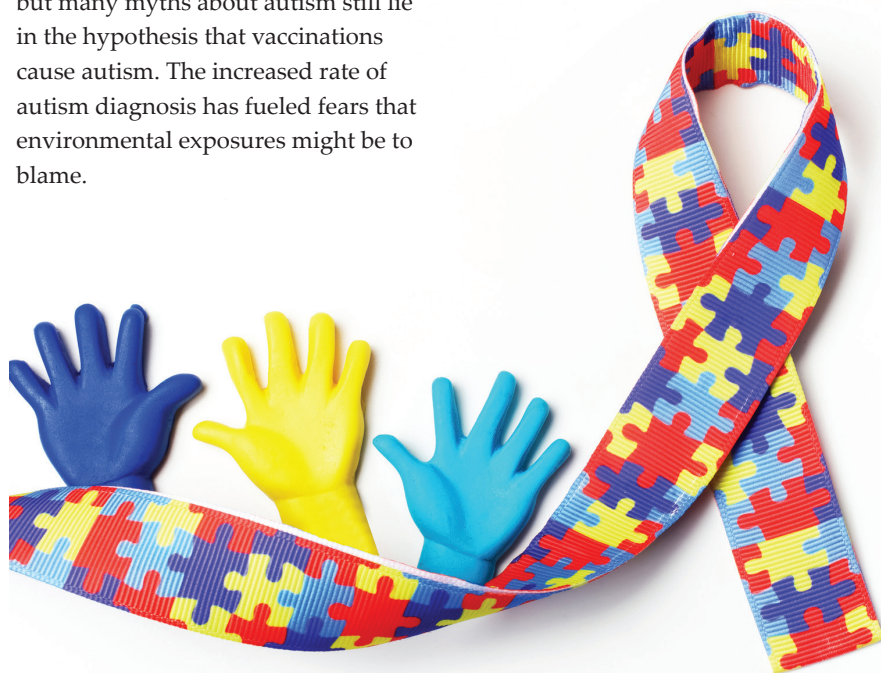
Medical professionals are working to understand the neurological disorder, but to date, there is no one known cause of autism.

**MYTH NO. 5: Autism Spectrum Disorder is uncommon.**

The increased rate of autism likely is driven by a broadened diagnostic criteria and increased awareness. We are now seeing more and more children being diagnosed on the autism spectrum, with 23 percent of households having at least one child receiving Individualized education program services in his or her local school.

The Centers for Disease Control’s Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring reported that approximately one in 68 U.S. children has been identified with ASD, and it can be more common among individuals with affected relatives. Parents who have a child with ASD have a 2 to 18 percent chance of having a second child who is also affected.

*Erin Stauder, M.S., CCC-SLP is a licensed speech-language pathologist and executive director of The Hearing and Speech Agency, a nonprofit organization that provides hearing, speech and language services and advocates for people of all ages with communication disorders/disabilities.*



# FALL INTO READING

## 12 NEWLY RELEASED CHILDREN'S BOOKS

BY: **BRITNI PETERSEN**

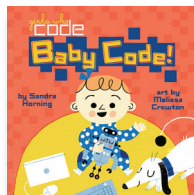
From autumnal farm fun to baby coding and Minecraft expeditions, here are some of the latest and greatest children's books to check out this fall.

### Infant

#### "BABY CODE!"

by Sandra Horning

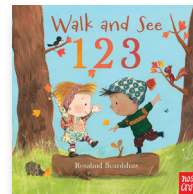
This board book shows the youngest of readers that coding is all around them, and how they can take part in it. Making use of experiences common in a baby's world, like holding a teddy bear or playing with an electric train, this charming book is the perfect introduction to coding in many different forms.



#### "WALK AND SEE: 123"

by Nosy Crow

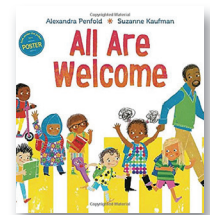
This counting board book will teach little ones all about nature. With beautiful illustrations and visual storytelling, this story follows two children on an autumnal day in the countryside, bringing a narrative feel to this simple book.



#### "ALL ARE WELCOME"

by Alexandra Penfold

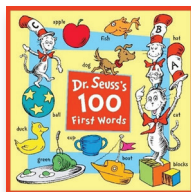
Follow a group of children through a day in their school, where everyone is welcomed with open arms. A school where kids in patkas, hijabs and yarmulkes play side-by-side with friends in baseball caps. A school where students grow and learn from each other's traditions. This book lets young children know that no matter what, they have a place, they have a space and they are welcome in their school.



#### "DR. SEUSS'S 100 FIRST WORDS"

by Dr. Seuss

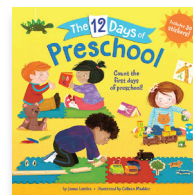
This super-sturdy board book introduces babies and toddlers to 100 essential first words and the artwork of Dr. Seuss! Illustrated with images from his most beloved books, it also features the Little Cats — the tiny cats from "The Cat in the Hat Comes Back" — doing something fun on every spread!



#### Ages: 2-5 "THE 12 DAYS OF PRESCHOOL"

by Jenna Lettice

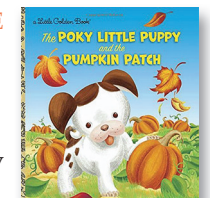
On the first day of preschool, all the kids learn how to share one fuzzy teddy bear. On the second day, the kids share two toy trains. The third day? Three tricycles! These first 12 fun-filled days of preschool are illuminated in this cumulative rhyming storybook based on "The 12 Days of Christmas."



#### "THE POKY LITTLE PUPPY AND THE PUMPKIN PATCH"

by Diane Muldrow

The poky little puppy and his siblings discover a bright-red tractor pulling a wagon and end up on a hayride in the cool fall air! Bumping along past an apple orchard and a cornfield, they arrive at a pumpkin patch. There they get to play in a corn maze, drink apple cider and choose a pumpkin to take home.

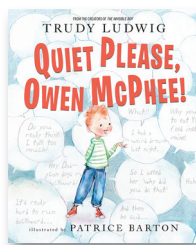




## Ages: 6-9

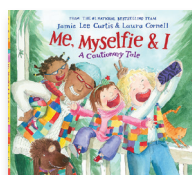
### "QUIET PLEASE, OWEN MCPHEE"

by Trudy Ludwig and Patrice Barton  
Owen McPhee doesn't just like to talk, he LOVES to talk. He spends every waking minute chattering away at his teachers, his classmates, his parents, his dog and even himself. But all that talking can get in the way of listening. And when Owen wakes up with a bad case of laryngitis, it gives him a much-needed opportunity to hear what others have to say.



### "ME, MYSELFIE, & I: A CAUTIONARY TALE"

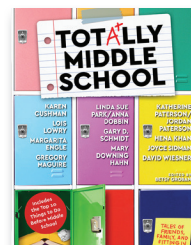
by Jamie Lee Curtis  
For Mom's birthday, her kids are excited to teach her how to take selfies with her new smartphone. At first, it's lots of fun for the whole family. Soon, driven to take the perfect selfie, Mom begins to document everything, from ski team practice to dance class, and even photo-bombing someone's wedding — until her daughter reminds her that maybe this smartphone wasn't the best gift after all.



### "TOTALLY MIDDLE SCHOOL: TALES OF FRIENDS, FAMILY AND FITTING IN"

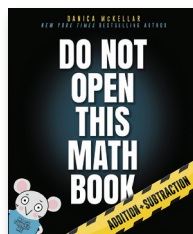
by Karen Cushman, Lois Lowry, Margarita Engle & Contributors

With eleven short stories told in text messages, emails, formal letters, stories in verse and even a mini graphic novel, this book tackles a range of important subjects, from peer pressure, family issues, and cultural barriers to the unexpected saving grace of music, art, friendship and reading.



### "DO NOT OPEN THIS MATH BOOK"

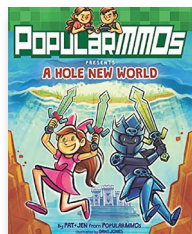
by Danica McKellar  
Addition and subtraction are as easy as  $1 + 2 = 3$  in this funny and educational book that will have children embracing math instead of fearing it. Entertaining lessons on addition and subtraction involve muffins, turkey sandwiches, kittens, googly eyes and more!



## Ages: 10-13

### "POPULAR-MMOS PRESENTS A HOLE NEW WORLD"

by PopularMMOs  
Minecraft-inspired YouTube star PopularMMOs brings everyone's favorite characters to life in a thrilling adventure to save their friend, battle the undead and escape the hole new world they've crashed into with one unfortunate misstep.



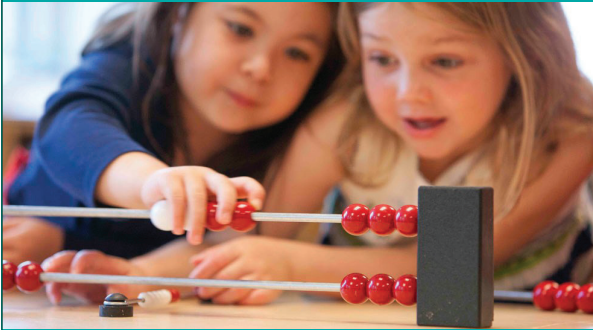
### "RAD GIRLS CAN: STORIES OF BOLD, BRAVE AND BRILLIANT YOUNG WOMEN"

by Kate Schatz  
This inspiring book features stories

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# “WILL MY CHILD *EVER* LEARN TO LOVE READING?”

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA

BY LINDAMOOD-BELL

## SPONSORED CONTENT:

**F**or nearly three decades, Lindamood-Bell has worked with thousands of individuals with various learning struggles and disabilities. Sitting with a child or an adult who struggles to read a word provides unique insight into the learning process. Lindamood-Bell's success with students is due to their unique approach, including their research-validated, sensory-cognitive instruction. Below they've answered some questions parents of students with dyslexia often have.

### Q: “MY CHILD HATES READING. HOW DO I GET HIM TO DO IT?”

**A:** For struggling readers, books don't yet bring joy. Rewarding him for the reading he's done can help motivate him while also providing needed fluency practice. Track the number of pages or minutes read with stickers, points or something he enjoys (i.e. printed “Minecraft creepers”). Decide as a family what the reward will be — it could be a toy or game, extra screen time, one-on-one time with a favorite adult or getting to choose what's for dinner on Friday night. Work with your child to find something that works for your family.

### Q: “CAN I JUST READ TO HER?”

**A:** There are lots of benefits to reading to your child, but doing so won't help develop her fluency skills. Set up a system where you both can read.

Maybe she reads from something that's at a comfortable level, and then you read a chapter of “Lemony Snicket.” You can also take turns reading: switch every paragraph, you read two pages, she reads one, etc.

### Q: “WHAT IF HE MAKES A MISTAKE? DO I INTERRUPT?”

**A:** You can let some small errors go! Changing “the” to “a” is something that happens even to good readers. As long as it doesn't change the meaning of the text, there's no need to stop him. For errors that affect meaning (i.e. reading “protect” as “project”), you can ask a question to help him monitor his own accuracy. “Did that make sense?”

### Q: “ALL OF THE BOOKS AT HER LEVEL ARE BORING. SHOULD I LET HER READ “HARRY POTTER”? WHAT IF SHE GETS FRUSTRATED?”

**A:** Children with dyslexia often are very bright with strong comprehension, which can make finding a “right fit” book challenging. Having her read a book that is far above her reading ability will most likely lead to frustration and dampen her desire to read. More challenging, higher-level books can be the kind you read to her. Having her practice her fluency with more manageable books may allow her the confidence and skill to find out what's happening at Hogwarts on her own soon enough. Once you find a book she likes, check in with your local librarian to find some suggestions of other books she might enjoy.

### Q: “HE KEEPS SAYING HE'S STUPID. DO I JUST IGNORE IT?”

**A:** When a child continually works harder than his peers to read — and doesn't feel successful — it's easy to see why his self-esteem might plummet. Listening to and acknowledging his feelings is as important as reminding him of all his strengths and talents.

### Q: “IS IT *EVER* GOING TO GET EASIER?”

**A:** Some dyslexic students may need more than extra time on tests or being able to hear the questions orally. A cause of difficulty in establishing sight words and contextual fluency is difficulty in visualizing letters in words. This is called weak “symbol imagery.” A significant number of students — even those who have well-developed phonemic awareness — have difficulty with rapidly perceiving sounds in words, and are slow to self-correct their reading errors. It can be helpful to get a picture of your child's individual strengths and weaknesses through a learning ability evaluation in order to know the best way to support him.

---

*Lindamood-Bell® Learning Processes is committed to helping all individuals learn to their potential. Since 1986, Lindamood-Bell has been a leader in the education field in meeting the language, literacy and math needs of all students. For more information, visit them online at [LindamoodBell.com](http://LindamoodBell.com) or call (800) 300-1818.*



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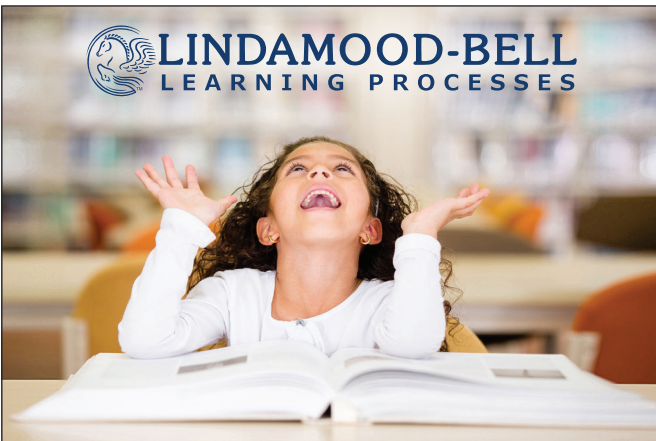
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# GUIDES & RESOURCES.

## EDUCATION GUIDE

### Private/Independent School

#### ACORN HILL WALDORF KINDERGARTEN & NURSERY SCHOOL

[acornhill.org](http://acornhill.org); [info@acornhill.org](mailto:info@acornhill.org)  
301-565-2282

9504 Brunett Ave., Silver Spring, MD

Play-oriented Waldorf school with singing, crafts, gardening and storytelling. Parent-Infant/Toddler, Parent-Child, Half & Full Day and summer programs. Certified nursery/kindergarten. 45+ years experience. Rolling admissions.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

#### AIDAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

[aidanschool.org](http://aidanschool.org); [admission@aidanschool.org](mailto:admission@aidanschool.org)  
202-387-2700

2700 27th St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

Ages: 18 months-Grade 6

Aidan Montessori School is a co-ed independent school located in Woodley Park. Aidan has served children's natural development, innate curiosity and pursuit of independence since its founding as one of the nation's first Montessori schools in 1952.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

#### THE AUBURN SCHOOL - FAIRFAX CAMPUS

[theauburnschool.org](http://theauburnschool.org); [admissions.fairfax@theauburnschool.org](mailto:admissions.fairfax@theauburnschool.org)  
703-793-9353

3800 Concorde Pkwy, Ste. 500, Chantilly, VA

Grades: K-12

Hours: 8:15 a.m.-5:15 p.m.

We offer a dynamic educational program for intellectually curious students with challenges in the areas of communication, socialization, pragmatic language and organization.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

#### THE AUBURN SCHOOL - SILVER SPRING CAMPUS

[theauburnschool.org](http://theauburnschool.org); [mivey@theauburnschool.org](mailto:mivey@theauburnschool.org)  
301-588-8048

9545 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD

Grades: K-8

Hours: 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

The mission of The Auburn School is to grow the social and academic potential of bright students with social and communication challenges.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

#### BARRIE SCHOOL

[barrie.org](http://barrie.org); [admission@barrie.org](mailto:admission@barrie.org)  
301-576-2800

13500 Layhill Rd., Silver Spring, MD

Ages: 18 months-Grade 12

Barrie, a community of learners from age 18 months through grade

12, empowers individual students to expand their intellectual abilities, develop their creative talents, and discover their passions to make a positive impact in a rapidly changing world.

#### BEAUVOIR, THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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

202-537-6485

3500 Woodley Rd., N.W., Washington, D.C.

Ages: 4-9

Grades: Pre-K- Grade 3

Activities: Various after school enrichment classes throughout the year

Field Trips: Various throughout the year

Hours: 8:15 a.m.-3 p.m.; After Care to 6 p.m.

An independent elementary school located on the picturesque grounds of the Washington National Cathedral in Northwest Washington, D.C. A pre-kindergarten through third grade elementary school serving a co-ed population of close to 400 students, Beauvoir focuses exclusively on the early childhood and early elementary years. All curricular goals, projects and community decisions, as well as the scale of the classrooms and Beauvoir Outdoors, are designed specifically for children under the age of 10. Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

#### THE BETHESDA MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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

301-986-1260

7611 Clarendon Rd., Bethesda, MD

Ages: 3-6

Hours: 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

An AMI school, beginning our 36th year of operation, we serve children 3-6 years of age. Offering a high academic experience to provide the best start for your child.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour. We will begin scheduling tours on Oct 1, 2018 for those families interested in enrolling for the 2019-2020 school year. You may submit an application as early as Sept 1, 2018.

#### BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON

[biswashington.org](http://biswashington.org); [admissions@biswashington.org](mailto:admissions@biswashington.org)  
202-829-3700

2001 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.

Washington, DC

Ages: 2-18 (IB Diploma)

Hours: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

At British International School of Washington, our individualized learning plans and experienced teachers help guide each student to a successful future through challenging international curricula and inspirational learning experiences, both inside the classroom and around the world.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.



## BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL

brooksfieldschool.org; brksfield@aol.com

703-356-KIDS

1830 Kirby Rd., McLean, VA

Ages: 3-9

Grades: Pre-K-5th

A unique Pre-K-5th eco-friendly, Montessori School idyllically situated on 5 secluded acres in McLean, VA.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

## BURGUNDY FARM COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

burgundyfarm.org; info@burgundyfarm.org

703-329-6968

3700 Burgundy Rd., Alexandria, VA

Ages: 4-year-olds-Grade 8

Activities: We offer a variety of after-school enrichments including STEAM and outdoor classes.

Hours: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Burgundy Farm Country Day School is a progressive school on a 25-acre campus just off the beltway in Alexandria. Burgundy believes children learn best in an inclusive, creative and nurturing environment that engages the whole child.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

## CAPITOL HILL DAY SCHOOL

chds.org; admissions@chds.org

202-386-9920

210 South Carolina Ave., S.E., Washington, D.C.

Grades: PK4-Grade 8

Preschool Age: 4 by Oct. 1st

Hours of Operation: 8:10 a.m.-3:10 p.m.; After School Program available until 6 p.m.

Activities: French, Spanish, Visual and Performing Arts, Library, Physical Education, and After School Program with optional enrichment activities (soccer, yoga, mad science, computer programming, music and ensemble lessons, and more). Weekly summer camps for a variety of ages and interests.

Field Trips: An unparalleled Field Education Program, with approximately 300 field experiences school-wide each year.

Capitol Hill Day School deeply engages a diverse community of students in connecting the classroom to the larger world, supporting each child in developing the confidence, compassion, and intellectual capacity to live a life of purpose and value. In 2019, the Capitol Hill Day School middle school program will expand into nearby Farren's Stable, a space being designed with middle school learners in mind.

Open House:

Oct. 12, Nov. 7, Dec. 7

## THE CONGRESSIONAL SCHOOLS OF VIRGINIA

schools.org; admissions@csov.org

703-533-9711

3229 Sleepy Hollow Rd., Falls Church, VA

An independent day school on 40 acres serving infants through grade 8, just minutes from the nation's capital.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

## EDLIN SCHOOL

edlinschool.com

703-438-3990

10742 Sunset Hills Rd., Reston, VA

Grades: K4, K5-8

Open House:

Sept. 22, Oct. 20, Nov. 10

## FAIRFAX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

fairfaxchristianschool.com; admissions@studyfcs.com

703-759-5100

22870 Pacific Blvd., Dulles, VA

Grade: K-12; Ages: 4-19

Activities: Competitive Sports, Art & Music, Enrichment Programs

Fairfax Christian School is an award-winning, independent, university-preparatory school serving Kindergarten through 12th grade since 1961. Call today for your private tour and educational consultation.

## FEYNMAN SCHOOL

feynmanschool.org; admissions@feynmanschool.org

301-770-4370

11810 Falls Rd, Potomac, MD

Grades: Preschool-Middle School

Ages: 3+

Hours: 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Activities: Destination Imagination, Robotics, Chess, Piano Lessons, Chinese Classes

The area's leader in educating academically gifted children, Feynman School features extraordinary programs in science, math, language arts, theater, and music designed to maximize your child's potential.

## FRIENDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

friendscommunityschool.org; connie@friendscommunityschool.org

301-441-2100

5901 Westchester Park Dr., College Park, MD

Ages: K-8

Offering the joy of an extraordinary Quaker education, FCS nurtures life-long learners, courageous risk-takers, and joyous peacemakers. Students thrive in its diverse, dynamic, inquiry-based setting, and enjoy success in high school and beyond.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour

## FRIENDSHIP CHILDREN'S CENTER

202-244-5115

friendshipchildren.org

5411 Western Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.

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Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

## GESHER JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

gesher-jds.org; admissions@gesher-jds.org

703-978-9789

Gesher JDS is a Jr. Kindergarten through 8th grade pluralistic Jewish independent school. We proudly serve students from Fairfax County, Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax City, Manassas, Falls Church City, Vienna, Burke, and Loudoun County. Our signature programs create an educational experience that is truly unique: GesherGreen - an interdisciplinary scientific and values-based approach to studying and caring for the environment, GesherTravel - extending the classroom well beyond our walls, Gesher students experience life and learning in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, TEVA at Pearlstone Retreat Center, Israel and more, GesherTech - Gesher proudly offers cutting edge cloud-based integrated learning with one-to-one devices, a S.T.E.A.M. Lab, coding, and 3D printing. In partnership with committed parents, we provide an outstanding education anchored in Jewish values that enables our children to grow into adults engaged in healthy relationships. creative work, ethical leadership, and communal involvement. We are building the vibrant future of our community

CONTINUED ON PG. 40

## EDUCATION GUIDE

and our world one child at a time- join us!

Open House:

Tour Tuesdays! (9-10:30 a.m.) – Oct. 16, Nov. 13, Dec. 18

### IMMANUEL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

[immanuelalexandria.org](http://immanuelalexandria.org); [school@immanuelalexandria.org](mailto:school@immanuelalexandria.org)

703-549-0155

1801 Russell Rd., Alexandria, VA

Teaching the next generation of classical thinkers. Serving families for more than 70 consecutive years, Immanuel Lutheran School inspires in students a genuine love for learning through a strong liberal arts curriculum, Lutheran catechesis, and a rich academic environment that encourages subject mastery. Our teachers emphasize academic excellence, the development of curiosity, consistency, perseverance, and discussion. Together, teachers and students in Jr. Kindergarten through 8th grade embark on a shared journey to experience the beauty in the complexity of the natural world, great literature, history, and the Creator who made us all.

Open House:

2018: Oct. 11 (9 a.m.), Nov. 8 (9 a.m.)

2019: Jan. 10 (9 a.m.)

### KENWOOD SCHOOL

[kenwoodschool.com](http://kenwoodschool.com); [admissions@kenwoodschool.com](mailto:admissions@kenwoodschool.com)

703-256-4711

4955 Sunset Ln., Annandale, VA

Ages: 2-13, K-Grade 6

Preschool Ages: 2-5

Hours of Operation: 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Activities: Soccer, Martial Arts, Gymnastics

Kenwood School is dedicated to educational excellence, individual achievement, and social development of each student. With small classes, dedicated teachers and an exciting curriculum, Kenwood School offers a favorable climate for learning.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

### LEPORT SCHOOL ALDIE

[leportschools.com/nova](http://leportschools.com/nova); [aldie@leportschools.com](mailto:aldie@leportschools.com)

703-810-7160

24328 Marrwood Dr., Aldie, VA

Ages: Toddler-Kindergarten

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

### LEPORT SCHOOL BROADLANDS

[leportschools.com/nova](http://leportschools.com/nova); [broadlands@leportschools.com](mailto:broadlands@leportschools.com)

703-810-7808

42945 Waxpool Rd., Ashburn, VA

Ages: Toddler-Grade 3

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

### LEPORT SCHOOL CHANTILLY

[leportschools.com/nova](http://leportschools.com/nova); [chantilly@leportschools.com](mailto:chantilly@leportschools.com)

571-222-4728

4550 Walney Rd., Chantilly, VA

Ages: Toddler-Grade 3

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

### LEPORT MONTESSORI SCHOOL RESTON

[leportschools.com/nova](http://leportschools.com/nova); [reston@leportschools.com](mailto:reston@leportschools.com)

703-810-7811

11579 Cedar Chase Rd., Herndon, VA

Ages: Toddler-Kindergarten

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

### LINDAMOOD-BELL LEARNING PROCESSES

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

202-237-7695

4900 Massachusetts Ave. N.W. #220, Washington, DC

Grades: K-12

Lindamood-Bell believes that all children and adults can learn to their potential. At our learning centers, we provide highly individualized instruction in reading, comprehension, and math utilizing the programs developed by our founders. The research-validated programs we utilize are unique because they focus on the sensory-cognitive processing necessary for reading and comprehension. We are the only organization globally to address this with our instruction. Our instruction has been proven successful for individuals with learning challenges, including dyslexia, hyperlexia, ADHD, and autism spectrum disorders. Lindamood-Bell and all of its Learning Centers are accredited by AdvancED.

### THE MANOR MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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

301-299-7400

10500 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, MD

5450 Massachusetts Ave., Bethesda, MD

11200 Old Georgetown Rd., Rockville, MD

Ages: 2-9

We're Maryland's first Montessori School; teaching generations of children since 1962. School day, extended day and summer day camp.

### MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF CEDAR LANE

[preschoolmontessori.com](http://preschoolmontessori.com); [info@cedarlanemontessori.com](mailto:info@cedarlanemontessori.com)

703-560-4379

3035 Cedar Ln., Fairfax, VA

Ages: 3-5

Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

Montessori School of Cedar Lane has been providing over 40 years of Montessori tradition to Northern Virginia. We offer a complete educational and social environment and utilize the discoveries and methods of Dr. Montessori to help the child develop more fully the potential within him.

Open House:

Call to schedule a tour.

### MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF MCLEAN

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

703-790-1049

1711 Kirby Rd., Mclean, VA

Ages: 2 ½-12

Preschool and Elementary classes. Spanish, French, Science, drama, music, P.E., computer, art, summer school, transportation available.

### MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

[msnv.org](http://msnv.org); [info@msnv.org](mailto:info@msnv.org)

703-256-9577

Hillbrook Campus: 6820 Pacific Ln., Annandale, VA

Valleybrook Campus: 3433 Rose Ln., Falls Church, VA

Ages: 2-12

Activities: Yoga, Gymnastics, Drama, Drumming, Arts, Maker Club, Dance and more.

Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

MSNV is a leading independent school in the Washington Metropolitan area providing authentic Montessori education for



children ages 2 through 12. Our mission is to inspire and guide children to love learning, to love one another and to love the world around them.

### **NYSMITH SCHOOL FOR THE GIFTED**

*nysmith.com; ebalberds@nysmith.com*  
703-713-3332

13625 EDS Dr., Herndon, VA

Ages: 3-Grade 8

The award winning Nysmith School for the Gifted is committed to making school fun. We nurture your student's love of learning and help your child learn to their potential. Our 1:9 ratio allows us to differentiate the academic program up to 4 grade levels above grade.

### **PINECREST SCHOOL**

*pinecrestschool.org; admissions@pinecrestschool.org*  
703-354-3446

7209 Quiet Cove, Annandale, VA

Ages: 3-12

Grades: PK-Grade 6

Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

Stimulating preschool program for 3- & 4-year olds includes Spanish, music & P.E enrichment classes. Special presentations and field trips, too. Before- & after-care until 6 p.m. Nurturing curiosity, confidence and a love of learning since 1957.

Open House:

2018: Nov. 12, 12:30-2 p.m., Dec. 9, 1-4 p.m.

2018: Jan. 13, 1-4 p.m.; Feb. 10, 1-4 p.m.\*; March 10, 1-4 p.m.

\*The open house on Sunday, February 10, is for prospective school families to learn more about our school as well as prospective camp families to learn more about our summer camp.

### **RANDOLPH-MACON ACADEMY**

*rma.edu; admission@rma.edu*  
540-636-5484

200 Academy Dr., Front Royal, VA

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Open House:

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

1928 Isaac Newton Sq., W, Reston, VA

Ages: 3 months-12 years

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*thesienaschool.org; info@thesienaschool.org*  
301-244-3600

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

3514 Plyers Mill Rd., Kensington, MD

Ages: 2-6

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Open House:

2018: Nov. 3, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

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

### **SUNSET HILLS MONTESSORI SCHOOL**

*sunsethillsmontessori.com*

703-476-7477

11180 Ridge Heights Rd., Reston, VA

Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Open House:

Sept. 23, 2-4 p.m.

### **WESTMINSTER SCHOOL**

*westminsterschool.com; admissions@westminsterschool.com*

703-256-3620

3819 Gallows Rd., Annandale, VA

Grades: Preschool-Grade 8

Ages: 3-14

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Activities: Music, Art, Drama, Daily PE, Chess, Chorus, Orchestra, Clubs

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Open House:

2018: Preschool- Grade 8 – Oct. 17th, 6-7:30 p.m., Nov. 12th, 9-10:30 a.m.; Preschool only – Oct. 12th, 9:30-11 a.m.

2019: Preschool- Grade 8 – Jan. 15th, 9-10:30 a.m.; Preschool only – Apr. 12th, 9:30-11 a.m.

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[ncacbsa.org](http://ncacbsa.org); [info@ncacbsa.org](mailto:info@ncacbsa.org)

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[centerforballetarts.com](http://centerforballetarts.com); [ctrbalarts@aol.com](mailto:ctrbalarts@aol.com)

703-273-5344

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### ENCORE STAGE & STUDIO

[encorestage.org](http://encorestage.org); [info@encorestage.org](mailto:info@encorestage.org)

703-548-1154

4000 Lorcom Ln., Arlington, VA

Ages: 0-5

Hours: 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Activities: Drama Classes

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[fencingsports.net](http://fencingsports.net); [fencingtoday@gmail.com](mailto:fencingtoday@gmail.com)

888-300-5095

10310-A Main St., Fairfax, VA

### HARMONIA SCHOOL OF MUSIC & ART

[harmoniaschool.org](http://harmoniaschool.org); [harmonia@harmoniaschool.org](mailto:harmonia@harmoniaschool.org)

703-938-7301

204 F Mill St., NE, Vienna, VA

Activities: Music lessons, Musical Theatre and Acting Classes and shows

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### INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC

[ismwv.org](http://ismwv.org); [info@ismwv.org](mailto:info@ismwv.org)

301-365-5888

10450 Auto Park Ave., Bethesda, MD

Ages: 4+

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Activities: Music Lessons

Music lessons in all instruments and voice offered to students of all ages and abilities. Optional performances and recitals available.

### KIDS FIRST SWIM SCHOOLS

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

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Ages: 2 months-Adult

Hours: 9 a.m.-8 p.m.

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[littlehands.com](http://littlehands.com); [info@littlehands.com](mailto:info@littlehands.com)

703-631-2046

P.O. Box 3, Centreville, VA

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[perfectpointe.com](http://perfectpointe.com); [staff@perfectpointe.com](mailto:staff@perfectpointe.com)

703-533-8830

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hbeats.com; staff@hbeats.com  
703-440-9000

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## POTOMAC ARTS ACADEMY

potomacacademy.org; potomac@gmu.edu  
703-993-9889

4260 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax, VA

Ages: 3 - Adult

Hours of Operation: Monday & Thursday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.; Tuesday & Wednesday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Fridays, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Activities: Music, Theatre, Visual Arts, Computer Game Design

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rockinjump.com/gaithersburg; Gaithersburg-MD@RockinJump.com  
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robotworkscademy.net  
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703-364-5418

Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Mon-Sat

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schoolofrock.com  
Vienna: vienna@schoolofrock.com  
703-242-2184; 111 Center Street South, Vienna, VA  
Silver Spring: silverspring@schoolofrock.com  
301-589-7625; 8634 Colesville Rd., Silver Spring, MD  
Ashburn: ashburn@schoolofrock.com  
703-858-0820; 20660 Ashburn Rd., Ashburn, VA

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skatequest.com; info@skatequest.com  
703-709-1010; 1800 Michael Faraday Ct., Reston, Virginia  
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gosilverstars.com  
301-589-0938  
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## STUDIO OF BALLET ARTS

studioofballetarts.com; studio@studioofballetarts.com  
301-260-2626

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## Field Trips

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ticonderoga.com  
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gepaquarium.org; info@gepaquarium.org  
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mountvernon.org  
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roerszoofari.com; groups@roerszoofari.com  
703-757-6222  
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## 1. CREATE A DEDICATED HOMEWORK SPACE OR A MOBILE HOMEWORK CART.

If you have the space in your house for an extra desk (think about a window nook or unused corner of a playroom), create an inviting but clutter-free area for your kids to do their homework. Since space can sometimes be an issue, consider purchasing an affordable tiered mobile homework cart, which can be found at places like Target or Michaels. It's perfect for keeping all of your child's homework supplies in one place, and it can easily be rolled out to a kitchen table during homework time.

## 2. FIND A DEDICATED SPACE TO KEEP BACKPACKS AND LUNCH BOXES.

If you don't have a mudroom, you can still easily create a space for

your kids to stash their backpacks and lunch boxes. Adding simple wall hooks near the door they enter, at a height easily accessible to them, makes it easy for them to hang their belongings up as soon as they get home from school.

## 3. POST A WEEKLY DINNER CALENDAR.

During the school week, your family's schedule can get a little hectic. So make dinnertime much easier by creating a weekly dinner menu. Make sure to write it down on a calendar for the entire family to see. This will save you time, help with your meal planning and your family will know what to expect each night!

## 4. LABEL EVERYTHING.

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---

*Dara Friedson lives in Potomac, MD with her family and is the owner and chief organizing officer of Orderly Method Professional Organizing ([orderlymethod.com](http://orderlymethod.com)).*





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# Blog It Out

How blogging improved my child's writing

BY KATHRYN STREETER

**M**y then-9-year-old son was a great student — in presentations, he was fluent and eloquent when debating an issue. But his ease vanished when he had to write a short response to the material.

As I racked my brain, searching for a method to help grow his capacity to write, my eyes wandered over my shoulder into my husband's home office where he sat, typing furiously. There, an idea came to mind: blogging!

As editor of an online publication, my husband blogged, so it was a familiar concept around our home. So on a whim, when I suggested to my son that he should try blogging, too, his eyes lit up.

As I suspected, blogging, even longhand on paper, conveyed fun, while writing a short essay did not. Perhaps your child will feel the same way. To get started, here are some guidelines to give to your little blogger:

1. Choose a topic, something you absolutely love. The NFL, politics, cars and sneakers were my son's topics of choice. Since I gave him control over the subject, he owned his work in a new way. He felt energized and motivated. It was still an assignment, but it felt less like "school" for him.
2. Mentally lay out your argument. What is it? Narrow your angle. Is it clear, rational? Psst, it's not enough for your child to write about their love affair with fast cars. They'll need to dive into why Lamborghinis are superior to Ferraris, for example. You want them to be invested in their opinion. They need to feel skin in the game.
3. Defend your argument. In the "body" of this blog post (flanked by a mini-introduction and conclusion), your child should state their case, using three main points to defend their view.
4. Focus on building a cohesive argument. Don't worry about getting spelling, grammar and punctuation perfect. I told my son, "I'll only pay attention to your argument and

how effectively you state your case. I don't care about spelling, grammar or punctuation in these blog posts." With this reassurance, my son's shoulders relaxed. I could sense him exhaling the tension. Friction between us over writing assignments abruptly came to a halt. I could breathe more easily, too. This exercise, after all, is about ideas, not mechanics.

### How Writing Comes to Life Over Real Issues

My son's weekly assignment quickly became a hit because it released him to write freely without fear of messing up. As I did, you may also benefit from some surprising revelations, giving you a deeper window into your child. In my case, I recognized how my son's quick and unwavering resolve on a host of subjects revealed raw leadership material. Unlike me, my son was endowed with decisive intuition. He didn't waffle as he played judge over disparate controversies. He didn't see both sides; with certitude, he declared a winner.

### Reflections on How Writing Energized My Son

When I look through this old file of my son's blog posts handwritten in his laborious cursive, I'm struck by how these exercises helped teach him the art of developing an argument, whether for a paper or a speech. Equally significant, he wrestled through issues he may not have confronted at all were it not for these blogging assignments.

If you've successfully sold this writing hack to your child as a fun activity, you'll also appreciate its liberating versatility. As a parent, you can assign blog posts judiciously, on evenings when homework is light, over the weekend or even on family vacations since it only requires a pencil and paper.

Blogging proved an effective writing hack back when I was groping for answers for my child. Turns out, it exceeded my expectations as I hope it will yours.

---

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





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# September Family Calendar

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## SATURDAY 1

### **FREE** 2018 Library Congress National Book Festival

**9 a.m.** At this 18th annual festival, amazing authors, illustrators and poets will make presentations on stages dedicated to kids, fiction, history, biography, poetry, graphic novels and more. Many fascinating thematic programs, panel discussions and family-friendly activities will be offered as well! *Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.*

## SUNDAY 2

### **FREE** Community Day at the National Museum of Women in the Arts

**Noon.** Visit the museum on Community Day for free admission! Take this opportunity to explore their collection and current exhibition: "Heavy Metal — Women to Watch 2018," which showcases contemporary artists working in metal. And check out their "Fierce Women" tour,

which celebrates women artists who blazed trails as artists, activists and innovators. *National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1250 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.*

## MONDAY 3

### **FREE** 64th Annual Greenbelt Labor Day Parade & Festival

**10 a.m.** This parade will entertain you with a variety of bands, fire trucks, community organizations and a color guard, demonstrating the city's community spirit and accentuating its diverse cultural background. After the parade, stay for the Greenbelt Labor Day festival and enjoy an array of activities, including amusement rides, carnival games, live entertainment, art exhibits, contests and more! *Roosevelt Center, 101 Centerway, Greenbelt, MD.*

## WEDNESDAY 5

### **FREE** Carousel Kids

**10:30 a.m.** Presented by Georgetown Hill Early School, Carousel Kids is a family entertainment event that

brings out the kid in everyone! Stop by the carousel at RIO Washingtonian for some musical fun with performer Eric Energy. *RIO Washingtonian, 209 Boardwalk Pl., Gaithersburg, MD.*

## FRIDAY 7

### Stephen Gregory Smith's "Inspired By"

**8 p.m. | \$18-\$110.** Matt Conner and Stephen Gregory Smith have written over a dozen shows together, and in this evening of cabaret, Stephen will shine a light on the things that inspired each of these shows, tracing threads throughout their shared history together. *Creative Cauldron at ArtSpace Falls Church, 410 S. Maple, Falls Church, VA.*

## SATURDAY 8

### **FREE** Robotics Family Day Family

**Noon.** Discover how the Marine Corps Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) robots function and try your hand at operating one. Speak with Marine



Corps robotics experts and enjoy other crafts and hands-on activities as well. National Museum of the Marine Corps, 18900 Jefferson Davis Highway, Triangle, VA.

#### SUNDAY 9

##### 3rd Annual Barn Blast

**2 p.m. | \$15-\$30.** Family Fun for Families in Need join INMED Partnerships for Children for its annual Barn Blast to support the Family & Youth Opportunity Center in Sterling, VA, which serves disadvantaged children and low-income families. Featuring live music by local favorite Juliana MacDowell and her band, a heaping plate of BBQ and sides by ResQ BBQ, libations, dancing, live and silent auctions, games and other activities. *Murray Hill Estate, Leesburg, VA, 42904 Edwards Ferry Rd., Leesburg, VA.*

#### TUESDAY 11

##### FREE Patriot Day Ceremony

**6 p.m.** Join the American Legion Post 364 for their 9/11 ceremony to remember those lost from the area on that day. All ages are welcome. *American Legion Post 364, 3640 Friendly Post Ln., Woodbridge, VA.*

#### WEDNESDAY 12

##### Crybaby Matinee

**Noon | \$12.50.** Crybaby Matinee is a movie for YOU in a baby friendly environment. Enter a judge-free zone where babies can be babies and you can enjoy the latest film in the company of other parents who "get it." We provide a comfortable theater environment for you and your little one so you can enjoy a movie without worrying about unexpected tantrums or feedings in the dark. Children under age 5 get in free! *Angelika Pop-Up at Union Market, 550 Penn St., N.E., Washington, D.C.*



**September 29-30 | 10 a.m. | FREE**

##### 2018 Fall for Fairfax KidsFest

Enjoy exciting, interactive and education programs, entertainment and activities at Fall for Fairfax KidsFest. Activities include scarecrow and pumpkin painting, public safety and recycling-themed exhibits, pony rides, a petting zoo, model trains and more. Plus, there will be more than 75 additional exhibits and tons of festival food! The event is specially designed for families with elementary and Pre-K aged children. *Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Pkwy., Fairfax, VA.*

#### THURSDAY 13

##### 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 Chinn Park Dr., Woodbridge, VA.*

#### FRIDAY 14

##### FREE Child and Me Yoga

**10:30 a.m.** Breathing exercises, poses, music and story time will be used to guide you through a fun time together. Please bring a yoga mat or beach towel. First come, first served until capacity is reached. *Bull Run Regional Library, 8051 Ashton Ave., Manassas, VA.*

#### SUNDAY 16

##### The Race for Recovery 5K Run/Walk

**8 a.m. | \$40.** The Race for Recovery 5K is an annual run/walk event that is based on providing immediate action to those threatened from addiction and overdose. This event is to promote awareness, break down stigmas associated with addiction, honor those that have been lost and support those who currently are in the fight. Other event activities include live music, a DJ, giveaways, food, prizes and gift bags. The mayor, county council members and local sponsorships will also be in attendance. *Rio Washingtonian Center, 9811 Washingtonian Blvd., Gaithersburg, MD.*

#### TUESDAY 18

##### FREE Build a Lego EV3 Robot

**4:30 p.m.** Using Lego iPad apps, attendees will get to work in pairs to build a Lego EV3 robot and program



it to follow basic commands. Register online beginning one week before the program starts. Open to children in grades 3-5. *Central Community Library, 8601 Mathis Avenue, Manassas, VA.*

#### WEDNESDAY 19

##### **FREE** Pirate Bingo

**4:30 p.m.** Ahoy, matey! Did you know that September 19 is International Talk Like a Pirate Day? Join in on the fun with pirate bingo and lingo to celebrate. Register in person, via the phone, or online beginning at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 5. *Central Community Library, 8601 Mathis Ave., Manassas, VA.*

#### THURSDAY 20

##### **FREE** Yappy Hour

**6 p.m.** Wind down from the week and enjoy the company of your dog while listening to live music and enjoying food and drinks from Bethesda restaurants at Yappy Hour. The event will include a pop-up dog park with a small dog and a large dog enclosure for well-socialized dogs. Downtown Bethesda restaurants Ruth's Chris Steak House and World of Beer will be on-site selling favorites from their menus along with selected beer and wine. *Elm Street Urban Park, 4600 Elm St., Bethesda, MD.*

#### FRIDAY 21

##### **The Pianist of Willesden Lane**

**8 p.m. | \$25-\$75.** Set in Vienna in 1938 and London during the Blitzkrieg, *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* tells the true and inspiring story of Lisa Jura, a young Jewish pianist whose dream of making her concert debut at the storied Musikverein concert hall is dashed by the onset of World War II. Despite

devastating personal loss, music enables Jura to endure and pursue her dreams. This performance combines enthralling story telling with breath-taking live musical numbers from the works of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Rachmaninoff and more. *The Kennedy Center, 2700 F St., N.W., Washington, D.C.*

#### SATURDAY 22

##### **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 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 23

##### **FREE** 2018 D.C. State Fair

**11 a.m.** The D.C. State Fair is a free showcase of the District's agricultural and creative talents and a day-long celebration of all things homegrown. The fair holds competitions like finding the tastiest mumbo sauce, best honey and most creative hula hoopers in the city. Expect traditional fair foods and games, but also many other activities specific to D.C.! *Waterfront Station in Southwest D.C.*

#### TUESDAY 25

##### **FREE** Banned Books Week: Banned Book Bingo

7 p.m. Celebrate your freedom to read! Join in for a few rounds of Banned Books Bingo. You might win a prize, but you will definitely discover some new books you'll want to read! Welcome to children in grades K- 5.

*Central Community Library, 8601 Mathis Ave., Manassas, VA.*

#### THURSDAY 27

##### **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. Come out for a short 15-minute program on breathing and meditation followed by a time to meet other new parents. First come, first served until capacity is reached. *Montclair Community Library, 5049 Waterway Dr., Montclair, VA.*

#### FRIDAY 28

##### **BBQ, Boots & BINGO Event to Support Neighbors in Need**

**11 a.m. | \$10-\$50.** The family-friendly event, hosted by Arlington Thrive, will include picnic fare, moon bounces, face painting, crafts, bingo, music and more. The ticket price includes admission, food, beverages, activities and a chance to win prizes. All funds raised will go directly to support Arlington neighbors in need. *Knights of Columbus, 5115 Little Falls Ct., Arlington, VA.*

#### SUNDAY 30

##### **Striking Out Childhood Cancer D.C.**

**1 p.m. | \$90.** The inaugural Striking Out Childhood Cancer D.C. event will be a great time for all ages while helping kids fight cancer. Benefiting Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, the afternoon will feature a lively bowling party at Pinstripes complete with a plethora of their fantastic food and drinks. Participants can also enter to win spectacular raffle prizes. Children 12 and under are free! *Pinstripes, 1064 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.*

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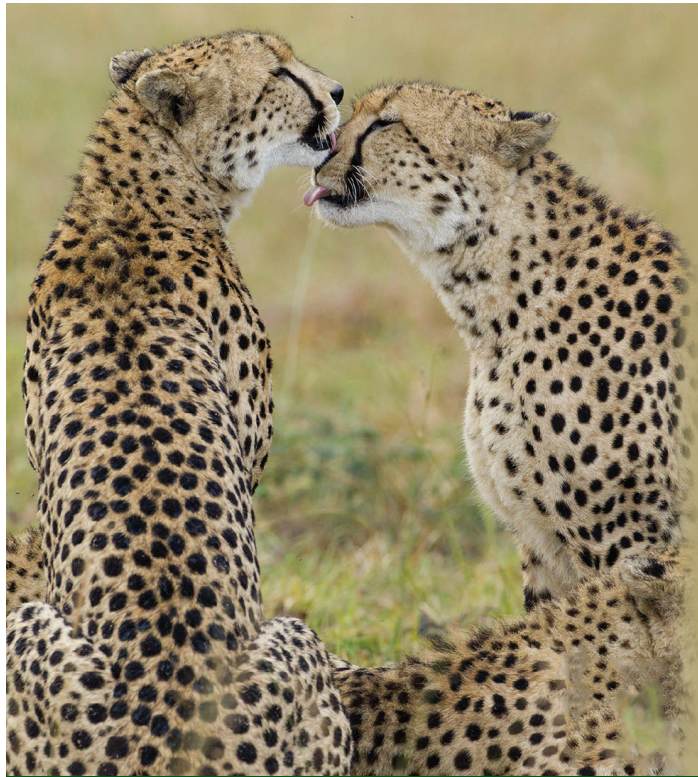


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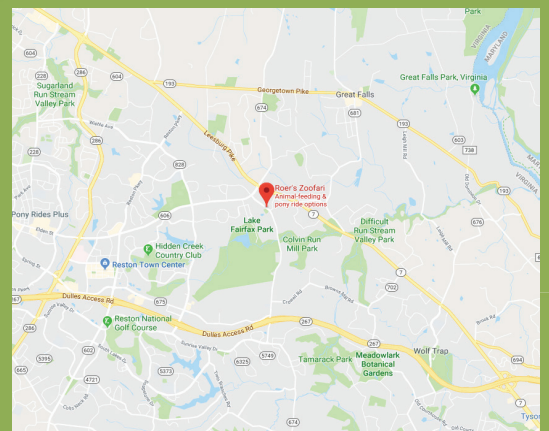
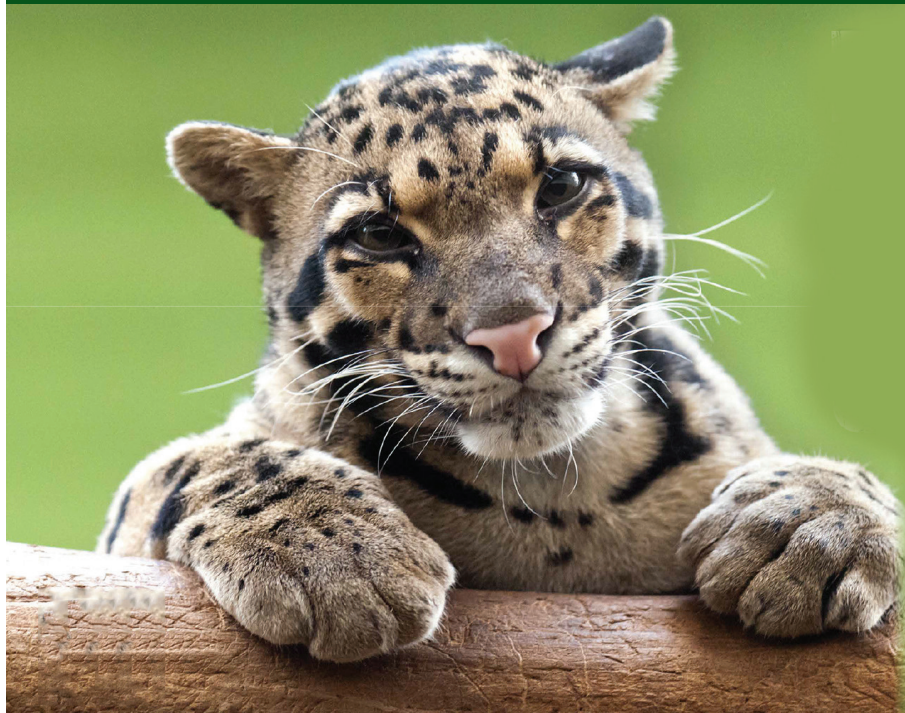


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