



JANUARY 2025

WASHINGTON Parent™

THE TRUSTED SOURCE FOR PARENTS IN DC, MD & VA



PARENTS UNDER PRESSURE

**ADVENTURE
CAMPS**

**OUTDOOR
WINTER FUN**

**AI IN
EDUCATION**

INSIDE: CAMPS & SUMMER PROGRAMS GUIDE



WASHINGTON
Parent



SUMMER
CAMP
CENTRAL
E-PUB

camp CENTRAL

Coming in mid-February, Washington Parent presents
a new interactive way for parents to discover great
residential and day camps for kids this summer!



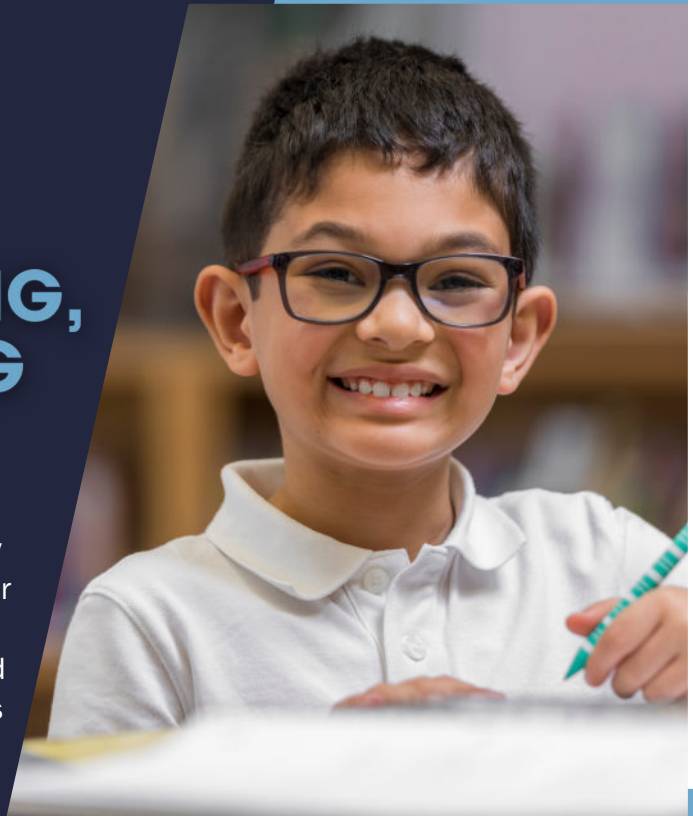
WashingtonParent.com

TLC

THE TREATMENT AND LEARNING CENTERS

TESTING, TUTORING, AND COUNSELING

The Testing, Tutoring, and Counseling Department at TLC utilizes a multidisciplinary approach to working with individuals. We offer full comprehensive assessments, individual, group, and family counseling, and specialized tutoring. In addition, we also offer screenings to help you or your child determine when interventions and/or comprehensive evaluations might be necessary.



PROGRAMS

- Evaluations (child & adult)
- Counseling
- Social & Emotional Groups
- In-Person & Online Tutoring (child, adolescent, & adult)

OUR STAFF



- Clinical Psychologists
- Social Workers
- Counselors
- Dance & Movement Therapist
- Educational Diagnostician



Our Tutors have a bachelor's degree or higher, & some are current or retired teachers



All staff have multiple years of experience working with both children & adults

Email

testingtutoringcounseling@ttlc.org



The Treatment and
Learning Centers

TLC



(301) 424-5200 x306



www.ttlc.org

Our Location: 1390 Piccard Dr, Ste 210 Rockville, MD 20850



DECEMBER 2024

Inside Washington Parent



ON THE COVER:
Parents Under Pressure, see page 34

FEATURES

- 8 LANGUAGE ARTS**
Support Your Kids in Language Arts: Family-Friendly Ideas
- 12 TECHNOLOGY & EDUCATION**
AI in Your Child's Education: What Parents Need to Know
- 14 MATH**
A Little Parent Math Talk With Kids Might Really Add Up
- 21 STEM**
How Science Fairs Set Kids Up for Success
- 22 CAMPS**
Is Adventure Camp Right for Your Child?
- 24 CAMPS**
16 Key Questions to Ask Sleepaway Camp Directors
- 26 WINTER FAMILY FUN**
Winter Wisdom Outdoors: Things to Do in the Snow
- 32 SPORTS**
You Might Be a Hockey Mom If ...
- 36 TEENS**
How to Foster Your Teen's Friendship Skills
- 40 PUBERTY**
Supporting Physical Changes in Your Adolescent
- 42 REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**
Understanding Secondary Infertility
- 44 SINGLE PARENTING/TRAVEL**
Passports Please! How to Navigate International Travel as a Single Parent

GUIDES

18 CAMPS & SUMMER PROGRAMS



10

12



22

DEPARTMENTS

- 6 EDITOR'S NOTE**
- 10 WHAT TO READ**
Corralling Cowboy and Cowgirl Poetry
- 28 BRAIN TALK**
Brain Talk 101: A Framework for Empowering Growth in Children (and Their Adults, Too)
- 34 PARENTING INSIGHTS WITH PEP**
Nurturing the Nurturer: Parents Under Pressure
- 38 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**
Mamatoto Village: Collaborative Community Care for Black Maternal Health
- 46 MORE FOR MOMS & DADS**
Setting Positive & Possible Intentions for the New Year
- 48 IN OUR OWN BACKYARD**
Can You Name 5 Women Artists? Celebrating Female Creators with Your Kids
- 50 ALONG THE POTOMAC CALENDAR**
- 52 MINDFUL PARENTING TIPS**
Test Anxiety: How to Manage It With Mindfulness



OMNIUM CIRCUS® BRINGS DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY TO THE WARNER

By Lisa Lewis

Omnium Circus®, hailed as “America’s most inclusive and accessible circus,” fresh from a successful fall 2024 tour, is taking its extraordinary show, *I’m Possible*, on the road this spring. Beginning on February 22 at Washington, D.C.’s historic Warner Theatre, Omnium’s spring tour brings the magic of their limit-defying performances across the United States. Ticketing information for all shows is available at OmniumCircus.org.



THE CIRCUS OF THE FUTURE

Omnium’s *I’m Possible*, which just took home Gold recognition in the 2024 Anthem Awards’ Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – Community Event category, has been called “truly the circus of the future” by DC Metro Arts, and “genuinely extraordinary” by The New York Times. The show features an inspiring lineup of talented performers, including aerialists, contortionists, jugglers, acrobats, dancers, musicians and comedians. With its uplifting message of perseverance and joy, the production is designed to offer a fun and meaningful experience for the whole family. This jam-packed performance brings together generations of multitalented, multi-abled and culturally diverse artists in a spectacular show that transcends traditional circus expectations.

ALL ARE WELCOME

At the heart of Omnium’s mission is its dedication to inclusion and representation. As the only circus in the world presented bilingually in both English and American Sign Language (ASL), Omnium is breaking down barriers to create a more accessible circus experience for all. The circus offers a wide range of accommodations to ensure every audience member feels welcomed, including live audio description, tactile experiences for individuals with visual impairments and relaxed seating for



neurodivergent and sensory-sensitive attendees. This relaxed seating option allows audience members to express themselves freely, with extra space, movement and vocalization welcomed.

ENTERTAINMENT, EMPLOYMENT, AND EDUCATION

Omnium Circus® is leading the charge toward a more inclusive culture in the performing arts. ALL people deserve the joy and wonder of this iconic family experience: Omnium Circus® makes sure that is possible! As a nonprofit organization built on the pillars of Entertainment, Employment and Education, Omnium Circus® not only provides world-class entertainment but also creates meaningful employment opportunities, helping to ensure that the circus stage is representative of the diverse world in which we live and advancing a culture of inclusivity in the arts.

Since its inception in 2020, Omnium has been beyond thrilled to take its exciting journey on the road and share its special brand of circus magic with new audiences across the country. Omnium Circus® is committed to building a new kind of circus that is welcoming and accessible to everyone, regardless of ability or background, and continuing the mission of building unity and spreading joy. To learn more, visit OmniumCircus.org.

Lisa B. Lewis is founder & executive director of Omnium: A Bold New Circus. Lisa began as a graduate of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College and has a bachelor’s degree from Brandeis and a master’s in clown/circus history from NYU. She cofounded the Super Scientific Circus and worked for the Big Apple Circus. Her mission with Omnium is including and welcoming the world’s beautiful human mosaic, creating joy for all regardless of the body they inhabit or the skin they are in.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Hello January!

There has been a lot of rightful alarm and discussion and research on the crisis in kids' and teens' mental health in recent years, but where are the parents in all of this? The late 2024 report *Parents Under Pressure: The U.S. Surgeon General Advisory on the Mental Health and Well-Being of Parents* shows that parents, too, are in crisis. Be sure to read our cover story this month as our Parenting Insights With PEP department explores the Surgeon General's findings on how parents are struggling, how that affects the health of their families, and what parents and caregivers can do. It also looks at what kind of support parents need and how they can get it.

With our sights set on snow (and kids' sights set on snow days) Washington Parent shares winter fun ideas from the book *Winter Wisdom Outdoors*, where families can explore together things like exquisite snowflake shapes, fascinating patterns in nature and an intriguing phenomenon among winter trees demonstrating their intelligence and intuitiveness.

It may be cold now, but we know you're in the thick of thinking about summer camp, so we've got articles on adventure camps – whether it's right for your child or teen and what the options are – and questions to ask camp directors to help you with your decision-making.

This month Washington Parent is introducing a new column, Brain Talk. As author Gabriele Nicolet explains, "Brain Talk isn't just a method; it's a mindset ... By combining neuroscience, positive self-talk and practical strategies, Brain Talk transforms challenges into opportunities for growth. It equips children to approach their actions with curiosity and control, rather than frustration or defeat." Nicolet's insightful perspective and helpful strategies can be used both by parents of kids who are neurodivergent and of those who are neurotypical.

We're featuring two revealing education and STEM articles this month: the first on a very hot topic for both educators and parents – the use of AI in education, and the second on how parents can help their kids lay the foundation for success in math.

In this issue Washington Parent also continues our exploration begun with our The Doctor is In article on *Girls and Earlier Puberty* last September, with a new article, *Supporting Physical Changes in Your Adolescent*.

I asked our longtime book reviewer Mary Quattlebaum to share with our readers this month some good reads about cowboys and cowgirls, especially about the art of cowboy poetry. I had never heard about cowboy poetry till my son was very little and we were exploring beautiful Palo Duro Canyon State Park in Texas. This art form began with cowboys herding cattle back in the 1870s, storytelling around the campfire and in their bunkhouses, and it has survived and evolved, and the culture is still vibrant today. Check it out for an unexpected treat!

For our In Our Own Backyard department this month, we're highlighting the important work National Museum of Women in the Arts is doing in promoting equity in the arts, with a fun quiz "Can You Name 5 Women Artists." Read it with your kids and then go visit the museum on some dreary winter day for lots of colorful and kid-friendly discoveries.

Of course, we can't ignore the fact that we're launching a New Year, so we have an article on setting not just positive but achievable intentions to mark the passage. Don't try to be perfect; just stay true to who you are!

Karen

STAY CONNECTED.

Receive weekly updates in your inbox on the latest news, trends, and advice related to parenting, education, health and much more.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to stay connected and informed –

SCAN THIS CODE TO SUBSCRIBE.

 WashingtonParent.com/subscribe/



EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER
Deborah W. Benke

PUBLISHER
Ronell Hentschel

EDITOR
Karen Kullgren

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Liam McCrickard

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
Karen Washburn
Djinni Field

COVER, ADVERTISING
AND EDITORIAL DESIGN
Meredith Hancock

Washington Parent is published 12 times a year by Knollwood Publications, Inc. Washington Parent reserves the right to refuse advertisements and does not necessarily endorse its advertisers.

All contents of Washington Parent are protected under copyright. Reproduction of any content requires permission of the publisher.

We Want to Hear From You!

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES
advertise@washingtonparent.com

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE
editor@washingtonparent.com

BILLING MATTERS
ar@washingtonparent.com

EVENTS
events@washingtonparent.com

GENERAL QUESTIONS
contactus@washingtonparent.com

FOLLOW US
facebook.com/washingtonparent
instagram.com/washingtonparent

5825 Highland Drive
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

WashingtonParent.com

COPYRIGHT 2024. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.





Smithsonian National Postal Museum

**Smithsonian's
Hidden Gem**

Family Friendly. Fun. Educational. Unique.

- Vintage Planes, Stagecoaches & Trucks
- Interactive Journeys & Hands-On Activities
- Free Collectible Stamps



Next door to Union Station
2 Massachusetts Ave. NE
(Metro Red Line)
postalmuseum.si.edu



CONGRESSIONAL  **SCHOOL**

OPEN HOUSE

Kindergarten-8th Grade

Wednesday, January 15 at 9:00 AM

Come to our open house and learn more about the admission process.
We can't wait for you to see our 40-acre campus and meet our students and teachers.
We want you to experience first-hand this place we call home!

Preschool - Grade 8 Co-ed, Independent School in Falls Church, VA

Contact us about our Infant and Toddler Program



Support Your Kids in Language Arts: **FAMILY-FRIENDLY IDEAS**

By Gina Hagler

You want your child to have a strong social and academic start. Playdates and team sports provide fun social interactions, but fitting in academics is hard. Since the critical thinking and analysis skills developed through the language arts disciplines of reading, writing and vocabulary will serve your child well in advanced math and science, too, it's well worth the effort.

Reading Skills

At the very least, your child needs the skills to comprehend the information they receive and to craft a meaningful response.

- **Ability With Narrative.** The first step to writing clearly or working through a problem is being able to think sequentially. Start by asking your child to tell you what they did that day. At first, you'll get a looping recitation of events. With time, they'll tell you what happened in a clear narrative. Then, ask questions to encourage them to notice and share details.
- **Recognizing Story Structure.** Once your child has mastered sequential storytelling at its simplest, you can play some story structure games while driving or at the dinner table. You start a story, then have the other people with you continue it, one section at a time. Playing this way keeps everyone focused. Providing a detail that fits with the story helps them recognize which details "belong." You can also give your child an ending to a story and ask them to tell you what happened at the beginning and middle.

Writing Skills

There's a lot more to writing than knowing how to hold the pencil and where to put the period.

- **What Belongs in a Paragraph.** One of the biggest "jumps" in writing occurs when kids move from one sentence to a paragraph. You can tell your child that a basic paragraph is five sentences (Opening, Support1, Support2, Support3, Closing) and find yourself looking at a blank stare. Give them an example, too, like, "I love pizza. It's got gooey cheese. I love ice cream, too. I like cones best. Pizza is great," and your child will "get" what works after just a few!
- **Prompt to Opening.** Another big hurdle for most kids occurs when they are asked to write a paragraph from a prompt. Playing a game to turn prompts into opening sentences is simple and fun. It also helps your child organize their thoughts and get that paragraph written without a lot of trouble.

Vocabulary Skills

Your child's ability to comprehend what they're reading in a report or a work of literature depends on their working vocabulary. If your child often says that something is "very X" or "almost y," there's a gap to fill.

- **No More Very-Almost.** Make vocabulary into a game by introducing several words that are degrees of each other. For example: cool, cold, frigid. Have your family line up in a number line. Help your child equate "a little cold" with cool, "cold" with cold, and "very cold" with frigid by seeing it this way.
- **Concept Vocabulary.** For most of what we read, a general understanding of the meaning of a word is enough. Your child doesn't need to know the definition of "tent" to follow a story where someone pitches a tent; what they need to know is that "tent" is included with the concept of house. Play a game where kids name the concept for a word. Or put cards for more than one concept in a pile and have them sort the words by concept. As your child gets older, you can spiral up on these basic skills, providing them with the support they need as they become avid readers, confident writers and word lovers.

Gina Hagler is a freelance STEM writer and author. She also provides parents with family-friendly language arts ideas and materials at KidWrite!



METROPOLITAN
NURSERY SCHOOL

Growing Together

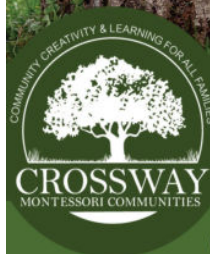
Children ages 18 mo. To 5 • Small Classes
Experienced Teachers • Family Oriented
Parent Support and Programs
Open to all Faiths



3401 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016
202.362.8746
www.metropolitannurseryschool.org

OPEN HOUSE
AND DIRECTOR Q&AS
RUNNING THRU JANUARY
Visit our Open House
webpage for more
details.

NOW ENROLLING: Infancy to Age 6



A hands-on learning experience in
nature guided by the philosophy
of Maria Montessori

CONTACT US FOR A TOUR:
(301) 929-2505

Learn more at www.crosswayschool.org



EXPLORE • WONDER • GROW


**Brooksfield
School**

Now Enrolling Ages 2 to 6
Toddler Program • Before & After Care
Outdoor Education Classroom

New! Stepping Stones Classroom

Montessori Kindergarten & Preschool
Advanced Academic Curriculum

McLean, VA • 703-356-5437 • www.brooksfieldschool.org



CORRALLING COWBOY AND COWGIRL POETRY

Rhymes about spurs and the open range fit the mythos of the American cowboy of old. But the poetry from and children's literature related to today's cowgirls and cowboys celebrate a culture that is diverse, inclusive and broader geographically than one might expect.

Since 1985, the annual National Cowboy Poetry Gathering has showcased the talents and themes of booted bards. This year's 40th anniversary gathering – January 27 to February 1, 2025, in Elko, Nevada – promises readings, open mics, workshops, dances and exhibits. The Western Folklife Center, which sponsors the gathering, also offers youth programs to encourage the next generation to “explore the living artistic traditions of the rural West and beyond.”

Though a road trip to Nevada may not be feasible, you can still embrace the spirit. Read some poems, learn more about cowpokes, past and present, apart from Hollywood romanticization. These books offer solo and family-read-aloud adventures, from the Old West to modern Philadelphia.

All Ages

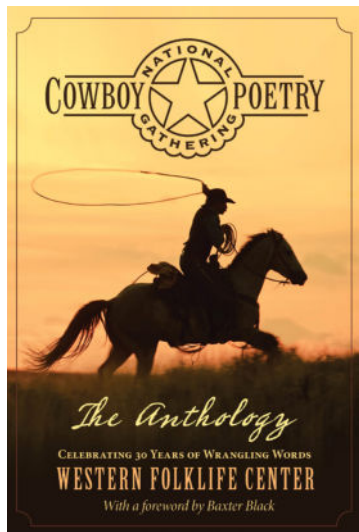
National Cowboy Poetry

Gathering: An Anthology

Edited by the Western Folklife Center

Lyons Press/Global Pequot, 2014, \$16.95

This anthology features a wealth of cowboy and cowgirl voices and moods, including humorous, reflective and poignant. Ballads and odes abound, with mention of horses, cattle and rodeos as well as laundry and Grandma's advice. Especially noteworthy is the introduction, which provides a fascinating history of this dynamic genre. It references the folk music of early Mexican vaqueros and locates a golden age (1890-1930) for cowboy poetry. And it charts changes, such as inclusion of free verse along with traditional rhyming forms.



Tots – age 7

Real Cowboys

By Kate Hoefler

Illustrated by Jonathan Bean
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016, \$19.99

This lyrical paean to cowboys honors their patient care of the cattle and herding dogs in their charge. Cowboys (and cowgirls) may be strong and tough, but they also get homesick and miss their loved ones. This book avoids the usual stereotypes as it pays clear-eyed tribute to these dedicated men and women from many races and cultures.



I Wanna Be a Cowgirl

By Angela DiTerlizzi

Illustrated by Elizabet Vukovic

Beach Lane Books, 2017, \$17.99

In rhyming verse as smooth as a cowboy poem, a little girl plans her future as a

cowgirl, where "the grass grows high, the sun hangs low." With "trusty pup" in tow, she acts out barn chores – galloping horses, shearing sheep – in her suburban backyard. And at day's end, she dreams of being a cowgirl under "starry skies." This delightful ode helps young readers imagine the actual work done by cowhands of all genders.

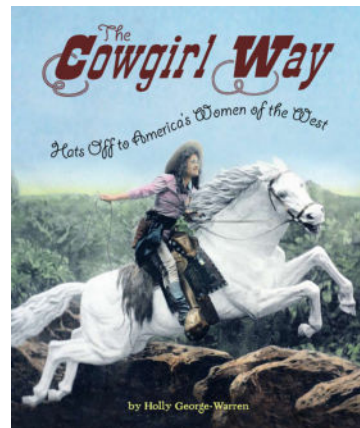
Preteens

The Cowgirl Way

By Holly George-Warren

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010, \$9.99 pbk.

Who were the real women behind the Wild West legends and movie images? This rich trove introduces readers to army scout Calamity Jane, trick rider Annie Oakley and Western balladeer Dale Evans. These women relished bucking gender norms even as many dealt with real bucking broncos. The final chapter on 21st century cowgirls reveals that – whether competing in rodeos, training horses or keeping their ranches in order – today's cowgirls continue to embody the strength and ingenuity of their sisters of the past.



Teens

Concrete Cowboy

By G. Neri

Candlewick, 2021, \$7.99 pbk.

Are there cowboys in the urban East? Yes, and for this compelling novel, G. Neri drew on the Black cowboy community and riding stables in Philadelphia. To keep him from trouble, teenaged Cole is sent to live with his father, who is one of these cowboys. His initial anger gives way to grudging respect and eventual embrace of the cowboys' ethos and mission to engage young people and provide alternatives to drugs. The novel, first published in 2011, was the basis for the 2021 Netflix movie *Concrete Cowboy*, starring Idris Elba. This new version includes an author's note about the making of the movie.



Best Shot in the West

By Patricia McKissack and Frederick McKissack Jr.

Illustrated by Randy DuBurke
Chronicle, 2022, \$9.99 pbk.

Nat Love, the legendary Black cowboy, leaps to life in this riveting graphic biography. It begins with him as an older man and railroad Pullman porter, and then flashes back to the first-person account of his birth in 1854 in Tennessee, his prowess with horses as a boy and his adventures in the West with the Comanche chief Yellow Dog, Bat and Jim Masterson and other historic figures.

Mary Quattlebaum lives in Washington, D.C. and is the author of 30 award-winning children's books, most recently Queen Elizabeth II, an early reader biography. She teaches in the graduate program in writing for children at Vermont College of Fine Arts, writes frequently for The Washington Post and is a popular school and conference speaker.



AI in Your Child's Education: What Parents Need to Know

By Cheryl Feuer Gedzelma

Now that many of us are using artificial intelligence (AI) regularly, we can find almost anything with the touch of a button. As an educator, I find this groundbreaking but concerning. Do children still need to learn math and writing skills?

Calculators

When the calculator started to become a household item, many educators worried that students would no longer know how to do arithmetic. How did this work out? Most educators agree that students should still learn arithmetic and mental math, and most classrooms don't allow calculators until this skill is mastered, in sixth or seventh grade. Overall, calculators have been extremely beneficial, allowing us to focus energy on math concepts rather than the drudgery of arithmetic. Are there pitfalls? Sure. A greater percentage of students never memorize their multiplication tables or learn mental math fluently, relying too much on their calculators. However, overall, the calculator is a win.

Essays

Currently, many students find it tempting to have AI write essays for them. However, not only will they learn nothing by

doing this, but there is also a good chance of being caught. If I were a classroom teacher grading an essay, I would look for AI red flags: is this essay different from what the student writes in class? Are the word choice and sentence structure appropriate for this student? Do I notice a personal voice? Many teachers use these methods and AI-detecting software to flag AI-generated essays. However, teachers can't always tell, and they can't necessarily prove their suspicions. According to Marc Watkins in his opinion piece in *The Washington Post* titled [*AI is forcing teachers to confront an existential question*](#), "Here's the bottom line: It's likely impossible to catch kids using AI to cheat. The detection tools lauded at first ... do a poor job identifying cheaters where they do exist – and yet somehow often seem to identify them where they don't."

As a teacher, I think it is important that students learn how to write essays independently of AI. As with calculators, most teachers agree that students should not use AI to help with essay writing until they master writing skills. When they do, they must be taught how to use AI responsibly.

Restrictions

Schools set their policies for AI use. For essays, except spell-check and grammar-check, which students have been using for

years, AI use is generally restricted. For example, according to the website for [Langley High School](#), part of Fairfax County Public Schools:

"Teachers will specify when it is acceptable for students to use AI on any part of an assignment. Teachers will ... review expectations for citing AI as well as how students should show their work and explain their use of AI. Students should not use AI on an assignment unless the teacher has given permission. AI tools can produce false information called 'AI hallucinations.' Students should always check what AI creates. Students should make sure it matches the needs of the project and audience. Students remain responsible for the content they submit."

AI may supply fake or biased sources and may give wrong information. Students should be instructed about how to verify facts and locate and recognize reputable sources.

Using AI Responsibly

■ Writing

Help brainstorm ideas, create outlines and organizational charts and assist with word choice, grammar and sentence structure.

■ Math

Create personalized math problems, step-by-step instructions and visual guides to solve problems. Break down material and explain confusing problems.

■ All Subjects

For years, students have been able to access history and science more easily by viewing videos through YouTube. [Quizlet](#) has also been around for quite a while, enabling students to create quizzes

in any area to help prepare for a test. Students can now use AI for interactive study sessions. They can ask questions, receive answers and then ask more detailed questions. They can ask AI to summarize any historical event or scientific reaction or clarify complex concepts. They can ask AI anything they want to know at any level of detail for whatever grade level is appropriate. This is truly revolutionary in the potential to understand concepts and enhance knowledge.

■ Planning and Organization

According to [Joan Green](#), an internationally known specialist in using technology to help with education, AI is also excellent at helping students with organization and planning. [Goblin Tools](#) helps students break down items, create to-do lists and organize and manage tasks, notes and projects. She also recommends [magicschool.ai](#) for students and teachers. The most widely used AI platform is [ChatGPT](#), which assists with almost anything. Green suggests having a conversation with it to pinpoint areas of need. She also recommends considering the paid version, which is more accurate and precise.

AI tools such as ChatGPT have the potential to expand learning, offer accommodations and level the playing field for students who need extra assistance. It is the role of teachers and parents to help students find the balance between learning basic skills without AI and using AI as an assistant.

Cheryl Feuer Gedzelman is the president of [Tutoring For Success](#), a northern Virginia-based company that has been providing in-person and online tutoring, academic coaching and standardized test preparation since 1994. She has a master's degree in curriculum & teaching.

Montessori School of McLean



Cultivating each child's unique ability to flourish in mind, body and spirit

1711 Kirby Road, McLean, VA 22101
Phone: 703-790-1049

www.mcleanmontessori.org

An Exceptional Montessori Education for
Toddlers through Upper Elementary: Ages 2 - 12

ENRICHMENTS

- Science • Technology
- Spanish • Outdoor Classroom
- Library • Music • Drama
- Art • Physical Education

Aftercare • Transportation
Summer Camp



Accredited by

cognia





A LITTLE PARENT MATH TALK WITH KIDS MIGHT REALLY ADD UP

By Jill Barshay

Mentioning numbers during everyday activities could be more beneficial than workbooks and exercises

It's common knowledge that parents should talk and read to their young children. But are there similar things that parents can do to lay the foundation for success in math?

A new wave of research says yes. Here are three takeaways from 22 studies conducted over the past dozen years:

THE LINK BETWEEN PARENT MATH TALK AND HIGHER MATH SKILLS

Researchers found that the more parents talked about math with their children, the stronger their children's math skills. In these studies, researchers typically observed parents and children interacting in a university lab, a school, a museum or at home and kept track of how often parents mentioned numbers or shapes. For example, "Hand me three potato chips." Researchers also gave children a math test and found that children who scored higher tended to have parents who talked about math more during the observation period.

The link between parents' math talk and a child's math skills was strongest between ages 3 and 5. With older children, the amount of time that parents spent talking about math was not as closely

related to their math achievement. Once children start school, their math abilities are influenced more by the instruction they receive from their teachers, researchers believe.

None of these studies prove that talking to your preschooler about math causes their math skills to improve. Parents who talk more about math may also have higher incomes and more education. Stronger math skills could be the result of all the other things that wealthier and more educated parents are giving their kids – nutritious meals, a good night's sleep, visits to museums and vacations – and not the math talk per se.

"What the research is showing at this point is that talking more about math tends to be associated with better outcomes for children," said Alex Silver, a psychologist at the University of Pittsburgh whose [paper about the new wave of research was published in the July 2024 issue of the Journal of Experimental Child Psychology](#). "It's an easy way to bring math concepts into your day-to-day life that doesn't require buying special equipment or setting aside time to tutor your child and try to teach them arithmetic."

KEEP IT NATURAL

The strongest link between parent talk about math and a child's math performance was detected when researchers didn't tell parents to do a math activity. Parents who naturally brought

up numbers or shapes in a normal conversation had children who scored higher on math assessments. When researchers had parents do a math exercise with children, the amount of math-related words that a parent used wasn't as strongly associated with better math performance for their children.

Silver, a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Pittsburgh's [Learning Research & Development Center](#), recommends bringing math into something that the child is paying attention to, rather than doing flashcards or workbooks. It could be as simple as asking, "How many?"

Here's an example Silver gave me: "Oh, look, you have a whole lot of cars. How many cars do you have? Let's count them. You have one, two, three. There [are] three cars there."

When you're doing a puzzle together, turn the shape in a different direction and talk about what it looks like. Setting the dinner table, grocery shopping and keeping track of money are opportunities to talk about numbers or shapes.

"The idea is to make it fun and playful," said Silver. "As you're cooking, say, 'We need to add two eggs. Oh wait, we're doubling the recipe, so we need two more eggs. How many is that all together?'"

I asked Silver about the many early childhood math apps and exercises on the market, and whether parents should be spending time doing them with their children. She said they can be helpful for parents who don't know where to start, but that said parents shouldn't feel guilty if they're not doing math drills with their kids. "It's enough to just talk about it naturally, to find ways to bring up numbers and shapes in the context of what you're already doing."

QUALITY MAY MATTER MORE THAN QUANTITY

Researchers are unable to advise parents on exactly how much or how often to talk about math during the day. "Right now, the evidence is that more is better, but at some point, it's so much math, you need to talk about something else now," Silver said. Ultimately, the quantity of math talk may not be as important as **how** parents talk about math, Silver said. Reading a math textbook to your child probably wouldn't be helpful. It's not just about saying a bunch of math words. Still, researchers don't know if asking questions or just talking about numbers is what makes a difference.

Perhaps the most inspiring conclusion from Silver's analysis is that the association between a parent's math talk and a child's math performance was as strong for a low-income child as it was for a high-income child.

"That's a happy thing to see that this transcends other circumstances," she said.

While there are many questions left to answer, Silver is already putting her research into practice with her own 3-year-old son. She's asked counting questions so many times that her little one has begun to tease her. Every time he sees a group of things, he pretends to be Mommy and asks, "How many? Let's count them!"

"It's very funny," Silver said. "I'm like, 'Wow, Mommy really drilled that one into you, huh?' Buddy knows what you're up to."

This story about math with preschoolers was written by Jill Barshay and produced by [The Hechinger Report](#), a nonprofit, independent news organization focused on inequality and innovation in education. Sign up for [Proof Points](#) and other [Hechinger newsletters](#).

CAMP WORLD CUP: *Summer of Champions*



LowellSchool.org/Camp

Inspired by DC being the host site for the 2025 FIFA Club World Cup, Lowell's summer camp will be full of wacky and wild games. Campers will face off in friendly competitions that bring out their inner champions!

Ages 3 to 13



LOWELL
SCHOOL

SESSION 1 June 16 to 27 (no Juneteenth)

SESSION 2 June 30-July 11 (no July 4)

SESSION 3 July 14-25

SESSION 4 July 28-August 8

Lowell is a co-ed PK–8th school in Washington, DC.

SUMMER CAMPS AT THE NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM

By Kelly Cole

This summer, the National Building Museum is doubling the fun with two exciting camps for rising second to fifth graders! After a successful return to in-person camps last year, we're offering up to two weeks of hands-on exploration in architecture and engineering, filled with creative challenges, LEGO® building and more. Whether your child is a budding architect or an aspiring engineer or simply loves to build, our camps provide the perfect mix of education and fun.

Campers can choose from two distinct themes – “Brick City: World Architecture Brick by Brick” and “Invention Lab: Build, Create, Innovate!” – offered in six weekly sessions from July 7 to August 15, 2025. Each week, kids will dive into one of these dynamic themes, learning through interactive projects and hands-on building. And with the option to register for back-to-back weeks, they can explore both themes in whichever order works best for their summer schedule.

WHY CHOOSE OUR CAMPS?

Each camp offers a unique opportunity for children to develop critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity in a fun, hands-on environment. Kids will have exclusive access to the museum's exhibitions, engaging with stunning architecture and engineering marvels in a way that the public never can. Whether they're designing buildings with LEGO® bricks



or inventing Rube Goldberg machines, campers will leave inspired and eager to explore more.

With only 20 campers per session, each child will receive plenty of individual attention in a small, focused group. Our experienced educators and museum staff work closely with each camper, ensuring that they not only learn but also have an unforgettable time. The camp's setting inside one of Washington, D.C.'s most iconic museums adds to the excitement, allowing children to learn in an inspiring environment that sparks their creativity.

CAMP OPTIONS

BRICK CITY: WORLD ARCHITECTURE BRICK BY BRICK

Back by popular demand, this camp invites kids to explore iconic global architecture using LEGO® bricks! Through guided lessons and hands-on activities, campers will “travel” the world—visiting cities in Mexico, China, India, and England—and take part in design challenges inspired by the buildings they encounter. After learning about architectural styles like Brutalism, Art Deco, and Neoclassical, kids will build their own LEGO® structures in those styles, testing their new knowledge and learning professional building techniques.

For example, one day, campers might learn how to design and

build a building using the simple shapes found in a typical Art Deco skyscraper, while another day could see them exploring the unique characteristics of Brutalist architecture, such as geometric forms and raw concrete. They'll put their creativity to the test by designing and constructing buildings of their own in each style.

"My son rated it his favorite camp of the summer," said one parent, capturing the spirit of this engaging and educational experience.

In addition to LEGO® projects, kids will explore novelty architecture from around the world, from a giant toad museum to oversized boots. They'll discuss the benefits and challenges of designing such unique buildings. They'll also engage with architectural concepts like arch and bridge engineering, and apply them to their own designs, learning firsthand how engineers think through challenges like structural integrity and landscape integration.

INVENTION LAB: BUILD, CREATE, INNOVATE!

New this year, our Invention Lab camp is a hands-on introduction to engineering through Rube Goldberg machines. Campers will dive into the world of engineering, using simple machines and physics to solve complex problems in the most creative ways. Imagine a system where a spoon pulls a string, which knocks over a toy car, which triggers a domino effect that eventually feeds the dog. That's the magic of Rube Goldberg!

Using levers, pulleys, inclined planes and other basic mechanical principles, campers will work together to design and build their own machines that perform everyday tasks in the most elaborate (and fun) way possible. The camp encourages kids to think outside the box, be curious and experiment with different approaches to problem-solving.

Throughout the week, campers will experiment with tension and compression in structures, learning about materials and how they behave under stress. They'll design and build bridges, testing different types of construction, like arches and trusses. They'll also explore transportation and engineering challenges, like designing vehicles or boats to move from point A to point B.

At the end of the week, campers will put their knowledge to the test by collaborating to create their own Rube Goldberg machines and other inventions, showcasing everything they've learned.

A DAY AT CAMP

Each day starts with free play, offering flexibility for parents who can drop their children off between 8:30 and 9 a.m. Once the kids arrive, the group gathers to discuss the day's schedule. Each morning session introduces new architectural or engineering concepts through exciting, interactive lessons. Afterward, campers dive into building projects where they get to try out what they've just learned.

Campers then take a break with a snack provided by the museum before heading out to explore one of the museum's exhibitions. Whether they're admiring the towering columns in the Great Hall or exploring exhibitions that showcase amazing feats of design and engineering, kids get a chance to engage with the built environment around them.

After lunch, campers will have some time for outdoor play (weather permitting), followed by an afternoon dedicated to hands-on projects. Whether they're designing a cityscape or testing out their Rube Goldberg machine, campers will apply what they've learned in creative ways. The day wraps up with reflection time, where kids share their projects, talk about what they learned and bond with fellow campers. Parents can pick up their kids at

3 p.m. or choose aftercare until 5:30 p.m. for even more time to build, create, and play.

"They did something new every day. My son learned about architecture in a very fun way," shared one parent, reflecting the enthusiasm of the campers.

WHY OUR CAMPS ARE SPECIAL

What sets our camps apart is the unique, in-depth access campers get to the museum's architecture and exhibitions. With only 20 campers per session, children explore the museum's stunning design and engineering feats in a way that goes beyond a typical field trip. From the Great Hall to our temporary exhibitions, kids will engage with architectural details, observe engineering techniques first hand and find inspiration for their own creations. This small-group format ensures personalized learning, where each child's voice is heard and their creativity is nurtured.

As one parent put it, "My son LOVED it. Said he wanted to go to camp until he was too old and then become a counselor."

REGISTRATION & DISCOUNTS

Ready to join the fun? Family-level museum members get early access to registration, starting January 8, 2025 – two weeks before general registration opens to the public on January 22, 2025. Members not only get early access but also receive \$100 off each week of camp. In addition, Family-level members get exclusive access to children's birthday parties, discounts on other museum programs throughout the year and free admission to museum exhibitions.

CAMP DETAILS:

- **Price:** \$500 per week for nonmembers, \$400 per week for Family-level members and higher
- **Aftercare:** \$100 per week
- **Camp Dates:** July 7–August 15, 2025

Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity for your child to explore the world of architecture and engineering. Sign up early at nbm.org/programs-events/kids-programs/summer-camp/ to secure your spot and give your child the chance to create, build and learn in a fun and inspiring environment.

Kelly Cole is the director of youth programs and engagement at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.



CAMPS & SUMMER PROGRAMS GUIDE



Acting for Young People Summer Acting Camps

AFYP has provided award-winning programs in the Northern Virginia area since 1997. Our summer programs, for ages 5-18, include production showcases and fun, fast-paced camps taught by professional teaching artists. Acting, on-camera, musical theater, improvisation and more! Weekly sessions with final showcase performances. Presented in conjunction with Mason Community Arts Academy. *Fairfax, Va. 703-554-4931.*

Barrie Camp

Barrie Camp provides a range of traditional and new activities that make each summer unique. Through hands-on experience, collaboration and diversity of thought and culture, campers are encouraged to be themselves, try new things, explore, accept challenges and find joy in all that they do. *13500 Layhill Rd., Silver Spring, Md. 301-576-2818.*

Camp Accomplish

We proudly serve campers with and without disabilities and chronic health conditions while promoting fun, safety, challenge and friendship for everyone. From climbing walls to nature trails to therapeutic riding activities, every child is welcome to explore, learn and grow. *9035 Ironsides Rd., Nanjemoy, Md. 301-870-3226.*

Camp Shakespeare

June 23-August 16. Ages 6-18. Under the guidance of theatre professionals, participants unlock Shakespeare's plays with text analysis; transform into characters through voice, movement and improvisation; learn the safety and storytelling of stage combat; and develop fundamental acting skills. Multiple sessions. *610 F St. NW, Washington, D.C. 202-547-5688.*



Camp Woodend

Day, travel and overnight camps for D.C. metro area families. Camp Woodend is on a 40-acre nature sanctuary in Chevy Chase, Md. Our nature-themed camps provide high-quality environmental science education led by experienced outdoor educators committed to your child having the best possible experience and good old-fashioned camp fun! *Chevy Chase, Md. 301-652-9188.*

Congressional Camp

With over 80 years of experience, Congressional Camp prides itself on a wide variety of program offerings for campers ages 4 to 14. We are located on a beautiful, 40-acre campus in Falls Church, Virginia at Congressional School. Our diverse programs include day camp, travel camps and specialty camps. *Falls Church, Va. 703-533-0931*

DC Fencers Club Summer Fencing Camps

Discover the Olympic sport of fencing at DC Fencers Club summer fencing camps. Fencing camp activities include games, footwork, fencing technique and tactics, group lessons, fencing videos, competition, training with nationally ranked fencers and new friendships. *9330 Fraser Ave., Silver Spring, Md. 301-562-1990.*

Lowell School Summer Camp

Camp World Cup: Summer of Champions – Children 3 to 13 can build confidence, make new friends and explore their interests. Small groups and a low counselor-to-camper ratio create a relaxed environment to purposefully and safely expand their horizons. Aftercare and swimming are available. Questions? Contact programs@lowellschool.org. *1640 Kalmia Rd. NW, Washington, D.C. 202-577-2000.*

National Building Museum Summer Camps

Rising 2nd to 5th graders can choose from two themes, each offered in a week-long camp session: "Brick City: World Architecture Brick by Brick" invites kids to explore iconic global architecture using LEGO® bricks and "Invention Lab: Build, Create, Innovate!" is a hands-on introduction to engineering through Rube Goldberg machines. *401 F St. NW, Washington D.C. 202-272-2448.*

Round House Theatre

At Round House, young artists of all ages and backgrounds can experience the joy of creating theatre and film. Our programs inspire creativity, exercise imaginations and promote artistic risk-taking in a supportive and fun environment. *Bethesda and Silver Spring, Md. 301-585-1225.*

Space Adventure Camp

Virginia's premier and only residential space camp! A week-long camp featuring aerospace, coding and robotics, combined with exclusive behind-the-scenes access to NASA's Wallops Flight Facility and surrounding aerospace facilities. Through this residential camp experience, students learn essential 21st-century STEM skills to become the innovators of tomorrow! Ages 11-16. *Wallops Island, Va.*



Summer Enrichment Academy at UMBC

The Summer Enrichment Academy (SEA) at UMBC offers engaging one-week workshops for middle and high school students. Led by UMBC faculty, industry professionals, and graduate students, SEA explores science, engineering, technology, the arts, and humanities, providing a stimulating learning experience. *Baltimore, Md. 410-455-8607*

Woodberry Forest Summer Camps

Woodberry Forest summer camps are designed for boys to have fun, grow as young men and get to know Woodberry's incredible campus, students and faculty. Whether it's for the camaraderie, competition and skill building or to grow as a leader and adventurer, it will be the best summer of his life. *Woodberry Forest School, 898 Woodberry Forest Rd., Woodberry Forest, Va. 540-672-6025.*

REGISTRATION FOR 2025 IS NOW OPEN!



**HELLO,
EARLY BIRD
PRICING!**



SAVE \$50 WHEN YOU REGISTER BY 3/31!

Register today at sea.umbc.edu

camp woodend

GRADES

K-9

SUMMER DAY CAMPS

WOODEND NATURE SANCTUARY
CHEVY CHASE, MD

Day, Travel, Specialty
& Overnight Camps

High-quality environmental
science education and
good old-fashioned camp fun!

See all camps and register now at
natureforward.org/campwoodend

Calling all

2nd-5th

graders

Dive into architecture and engineering this summer with the National Building Museum! Push your creativity to the limit with week-long summer camps offered July 7–August 15.

Registration opens to Museum members January 8 and to the public January 22 at tinyurl.com/2025Camps.

\$500/week for nonmembers

\$400/week for Family-level members and higher

\$100/week after care

401 F Street NW

Washington, DC 20001

NATIONAL

BUILDING

MUSEUM

BLAST OFF TO YOUR
BEST YEAR YET!

SPACE ADVENTURE CAMP

Virginia's premier and only residential space camp!

Week-long summer camp featuring aerospace, coding, and robotics combined with exclusive behind-the-scenes access to NASA's Wallops Flight Facility and surrounding aerospace facilities!

Ages 11-16

NEW

Advanced Camp Option for 2025! (details on website)

STEM ACADEMY

Interactive Learning Delivered to You!

Year-round, high-quality learning experience featuring engaging live + on-demand instruction, specialized materials kit, ongoing access to STEM professionals, careers, and mentorship. Ages 8-14

2025 Registration Launches Saturday,
January 4th at 8 AM

VASFA.ORG

VASFA

VIRGINIA SPACE FLIGHT ACADEMY

Here we're all
able to grow.

We proudly serve campers with and without disabilities and chronic health conditions.

Join us for a summer of fun, safety, challenge, and friendships for everyone.

camp accomplish

melwood

Children's National

LEARN MORE



1,200 ACRES OF
Choose-Your-Own Adventure
WOODBERRY FOREST Summer Camps

FATHER-SON WEEKEND
June 6–8, 2025
Boys ages 6–10

WOODBERRY COMPASS
June 14–21, 2025
Rising 7th–9th grade boys

WOODBERRY FOREST SPORTS CAMP
June 13–July 2, 2025
Boys ages 10–14

FOOTBALL CAMP
July 8–11, 2025
Boys ages 12–16

BASKETBALL CAMP
July 12–16, 2025
Boys ages 9–16

woodberry.org/camps | 540-672-6025

CONGRESSIONAL SUMMER CAMP
SINCE 1940
A division of CONGRESSIONAL SCHOOL

2025 SUMMER PROGRAMS



Ages 4-14 **Pool on Site**

9 Weeks of Programs **Lunch & Snacks Included**

40 Acre Wooded Campus inside Beltway **Extended Care & Bus Available**



CongoCamp.org

BEST OF ARLINGTON 2024 WINNER

2024 Northern Virginia MAGAZINE BEST Summer Camps

2024 BEST FALLS CHURCH 2024 WINNER

DC Fencers Club

FENCING CAMPS

Home of 2023 Junior Worlds Medalists

Beginner to advanced
All gear is provided
July & August • Ages 7-16
Monday-Friday, 10-4

DC Fencers Club
301-562-1990
9330 Fraser Ave. | Silver Spring, MD

Register at www.dcfencing.com



ROUNDHOUSE THEATRE EDUCATION

THEATRE CAMPS GRADES K-12
in Silver Spring and Bethesda
SUMMER 2025



EXPRESS YOURSELF

301.585.1225
Explore sessions and register at RoundHouseTheatre.org/Camp

WASHINGTON Parent PICKS

Washington Parent Picks
CAMP & SUMMER PROGRAMS

Plan an unforgettable summer with Parent Picks for the best camps and seasonal activities.

SCAN TO FIND LOCAL TOP PICKS



40 YEARS WASHINGTON Parent



HOW SCIENCE FAIRS SET KIDS UP FOR SUCCESS

By Sarah Lyons

Is your child considering participating in a school science fair? Are you wondering if the benefits are worth the time commitment? Participating in a science fair is a great way for kids to explore their world and how things work. Science fairs first became popular in the 1950s when the invention of the television and atomic bomb piqued the interest of budding scientists all over America. Today, with the growing popularity of STEM education (focusing highly on the study of science, technology, engineering, and math) in our schools and the potential for a drastic increase in STEM-related jobs in the future, science fairs are more popular than ever. Kids who participate in science fairs will learn skills that can be used for problem-solving and critical thinking throughout their lifetime.

Investigation

The first step in participating in a science fair is to come up with an idea. Kids will have the opportunity to choose a topic they are curious about, plan an experiment that will help answer their questions and conduct an experiment. This fosters their creativity and problem-solving skills. It will also encourage them to question how things work and make them aware of scientific principles all around us.

Project Management

Once the child has planned their science experiment, they will need to manage their project. This is no small task. Kids will need to use time management, stay within a budget, acquire the materials needed, conduct the experiment, and meet deadlines. The ability to successfully manage a project is an invaluable skill that kids can use now and in the future as they continue their education and enter the workforce.

Analysis

When the science experiment is complete, the child will need to compile the data, analyze it and create a chart or graph of the findings. The answers to their questions will not be from a textbook but will come from their own hard work and experience. Reflection is key as they have an opportunity to think about what they would do differently, what they have learned and why. The ability to analyze and problem-solve will be skills they use throughout their lifetime.

Communication

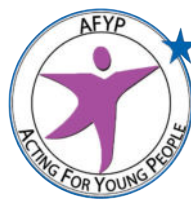
Once the science experiment has been completed and analyzed, kids will be expected to communicate their results through writing, speaking and materials such as storyboards or other displays. Communication is one of the most important skills a child can develop. Even as our culture moves more towards digital



communication, such as texts and emails, good public speaking skills are an asset they will rely on throughout the rest of their school and professional careers.

Most would agree that hands-on learning leads to better understanding, which is what participating in a science fair offers to students. When time is spent researching, developing a project, analyzing the results and studying it thoroughly in order to communicate the findings to others, we are much more likely to understand and retain the information we have learned. Teachers and parents would agree that science fairs help develop benefits that last a lifetime and kids will tell you that science fairs are a lot of fun too.

Sarah Lyons is a mother of six children, including 8-year-old triplets.



YEAR ROUND & SUMMER PROGRAMS



Thanks to our families for naming
AFYP Washington Parent Pick 2024
for Children's Theatres, Performing
Arts Classes, Arts Camps & More!



www.afyp.org
703-554-4931

SHAKESPEARE
THEATRE COMPANY



**CAMP
SHAKESPEARE**

JUN 23–AUG 16, 2025
Ages 6–18

REGISTER TODAY
ShakespeareTheatre.org
202.547.5688

STC

Is Adventure Camp Right for Your Child?

By Dakota Kim



BIGSTOCK/MACSIM

Outdoor camps offer kids exciting learning opportunities. A subsector of outdoor camps, called adventure camps, provides an even more rigorous, daring experience, including rock climbing, horseback riding, backpacking, mountain biking, rafting, kayaking, canoeing, wilderness fishing and sailing. While a bicycling camp might last one week, adventure camps are usually structured as longer-term sleepaway camps that hone skills over a series of weeks or even months.

The DMV and the East Coast provide camps aplenty, with options across North Carolina, Virginia and New England, but if your child is ready, camps extend to Alaska, Canada and abroad. From climbing 100-foot pitches to barreling down steep mountainsides on two wheels, adventure camp offers your child exciting learning opportunities and technical skills galore. It can be difficult to gauge whether your child is ready for adventure camp, and if so, which camp to choose. Here are a few considerations when selecting your child's camp experience.

Deciding Whether Adventure Camp is Right for Your Kid

You as a parent may have reasons for wanting your kiddo at adventure camp. Maybe they're too attached to screens and video games, and you'd like them to benefit from fresh air and exercise. Perhaps you'd like to get them away from the city and into a more rural environment, or to teach them the skills of cooperation, consensus and leadership. Maybe you went to adventure camp yourself and it was the best summer of your life, learning to ride horses and building campfires together.

"Sign your kid up for camp if you want your child to have fun and develop skills at same time," David Bell, camp director at Mondamin Camp in Tuxedo, North Carolina, says. "If your first grader has slept at a friend's house, they may be ready to go to a five-day camp."

Find out which camps offer programs your child might already be interested in, but don't limit your search to those. Determine where your child fits as far as age requirements – there are adventure

camps for as young as 4 to older teens. Visit camp websites with your child or teen: talk about the information there, look at photos and watch camp videos. Next, submit an inquiry or interest form on the website, or schedule a call with camp staff. If possible, tour the camp virtually or in person together with your child. If you're planning far enough ahead, you may be able to tour when camp is in session; otherwise during the school year will work.

Last, trust your child when they say they're not ready, it's not of interest or they'd like to see one or two more camps before deciding. While it may be positive to push your child to have new experiences in certain situations, empowering them to select their experience may help their passion for the outdoors to blossom.

If your child is neurodivergent or disabled, check to see which adventure camps focus on an inclusive and equitable experience. The National Ability Center offers a four-night camp for neurodiverse teens at a Park City lodge or a Camp Oakley yurt in Utah, while SOAR takes kids with ADHD and learning disabilities to the Blue Ridge Mountains, Florida Keys, Wyoming, California and Belize for trekking, horsepacking and canoeing camps for kids and adults aged 8 to 25.

Which Adventure Camp is Right for Your Child?

There's a camp to suit almost every child, but finding the right one may take some research, as well as trial and error. First, look to see whether the camp accepts all genders, or only one, and ensure your child fits the age requirements. Check camper-counselor ratios and consider how much attention your child needs in learning a new

activity (a 3-to-1 counselor to camper ratio offers a more attentive experience from a 10-to-1 ratio). Examine the device and screen time policy, ensuring it aligns with your own philosophy.

Next, study the different types of adventure camps. While Surf Camp, Sportrock and Mulford Riding School focus on sharply honing one outdoor skill, others offer a wide variety of outdoor expeditions and experiences. "What our type of camp does is give kids an opportunity to start coming at a young age and be exposed to these activities, and continue to come for five, six or seven years, growing and developing outdoor skills continually for those years," Bell says.

Location and camp options are important, as you may want to stack camps for a kid looking for multiple adventures or for dropping off one kid while picking up another. Some camps, like Maryland and Virginia's Calleva, offer dozens of options for both day and overnight camps. A sample week at Calleva – learning surfing, spelunking, camping, kayaking, rafting, fishing and mountain biking, plus outdoor filming and art in nature – might be just the thing for your first-time or unsure camper. As Calleva administrative director Julie Clendenin notes, "Adventure camp selection can seem overwhelming ... and [this] will give them an opportunity to test a variety before jumping into a full week of one activity."

Take a look at the well-rounded fun of Terrapin Adventures in Savage Mill, Maryland, which offers an aerial adventure course, zip lining, archery, kayaking on the Chesapeake Bay and hiking on the Appalachian Trail. At western North Carolina's Rockbrook Camp for Girls, where you'll get most of the same outdoor activities as Terrapin, plus white-water rafting.

Other camps are more adventurous, even offering rappelling, mountaineering and rock climbing. At Adventurelore, based in Danville, New Hampshire, campers can mountain-bike up to 45 miles a day on a multiday journey on the back trails of Maine from the Canadian border to Acadia National Park, or sail, canoe and kayak the islands of Frenchman Bay, Mt. Desert Island and Acadia National Park. Camp Pinnacle in Flat Rock, North Carolina, offers a two-week camp that includes expeditions, with every camper learning to whitewater raft, summit a mountain, mountain bike in the forest and camp out overnight. For your junior marine biologist, Sea Turtle Camp in Wilmington, North Carolina brings a hands-on experience to your teen fascinated with science, conservation and scuba diving.

Some camps are more rigidly structured, while others allow children to choose programming on the fly, or on the particular day.

Choose the length of camp, from five days to several weeks or even a couple of months. Consider also whether the adventure camp can accommodate your child's allergies and dietary needs, such as Rockbrook's vegetarian and gluten-free options. Perhaps the adventure camp has a religious focus or a sustainability pledge, so debate how important that is to you and your child.

You may also want to consider which camps have leadership programs, which allow campers to grow those skills as they become teenagers. "They're in that transition age when they're starting to want a little more responsibility and are showing a knack for leadership, so at 13, 14 and 15 they can start learning leadership skills by becoming aides," Bell says.

How to Prepare for and Adjust to Adventure Camp

In the first week or two, your child may experience an adjustment period, including sadness or homesickness. This is normal—up to 90% of young people away from home feel sadness.

In the weeks leading up to camp, reading a book on homesickness and discussing what to do if you're feeling it may be

helpful. Bug Bites and Campfires: A Story for Kids About Homesickness by Frank J. Sileo is a great choice. If you as a parent are struggling with letting your child go to camp, consider checking out Homesick and Happy: How Time Away from Parents Can Help a Child Grow by Michael Thompson.

Adventure camp isn't easy: It's often very challenging. Failure may be a big part of your child's experience, which can be tough for perfectionist or sensitive children. Prepare them by discussing how failure teaches you resilience.

"Adventure is activity on one's personal frontier," Bell says. "Many kids are coming to camp with no experience at all, so the first summer may look very different from the fourth summer."

Prepare kids by teaching them that the first summer of learning outdoor skills may be tough, but that in subsequent years they may find themselves teaching new campers what they once struggled to do.

Once your little kids, big kids and teens have mastered local camps, they may be ready to travel further. In that case, check out Sail Caribbean, where no experience is necessary to learn how to sail, but campers must know how to swim; global Adventure Treks for preteens and teens in Alaska, Norway and Colorado; ActionQuest's sailing and scuba in the British Virgin Islands, Australia, Iceland, the Caribbean and the Mediterranean; or Bold Earth, which includes European, African, Asian and Latin adventure experiences.

Happy camping!

Dakota Kim is a food, parenting, travel and lifestyle writer. In a past life, she owned a diner and made delicious patty melts. She considers herself an expert in cranky old cats, distracting a frustrated baby during tummy time, Gilmore Girls one-liners and cleaning various substances off her microfiber sofa.

BarrieCamp

Barrie Camp is an extraordinary environment for summer experiential education, exploration, making new friends, and having fun with on-site swimming, canoeing, archery, arts and crafts, sports, coding and more!



Ages
3.5 - 14



Camp Dates:
June 16 -
August 8



Registration
Opens Jan 8!

Open Houses: Jan 5, Feb 2, Mar 2 | 12 - 2pm



13500 Layhill Road
Silver Spring, MD 20906
camp@barrie.org
301.576.2818



Bus Transportation and Extended Hours Available
Minutes from ICC & Glenmont Metro



16 Key Questions to Ask Sleepaway Camp Directors

By Tanni Haas, Ph.D.

You've gone online, asked everyone you know for recommendations and otherwise searched for sleepaway camps for your kids. How do you find the one that's just right for them? When you've narrowed down the options to a handful or less, it's time to speak to the camp directors by phone or email. Below is a list of some of the most important questions to ask.

The Camp

1. *Is the camp accredited, how old is it, and how long have you owned or managed it?* It's a good sign if the camp is licensed by the American Camp Association (ACA). To earn accreditation, a camp must satisfy 300 industry standards for health, safety and program quality. Every three years, the ACA visits the camp to verify that it's in compliance. It's also a good sign if the camp has been in existence for many years (kids are coming back year after year), and if the director is experienced at running camps.
2. *What's your philosophy?* Camps can be very different. Some camps, especially ones focused on specific sports, can be quite competitive. Other camps are more aimed at instilling certain values in kids, like comradery, cooperation and conflict resolution. Make sure that the camp's philosophy matches your own values and that it's a good fit for your kids.
3. *How do you build community?* One of the most satisfying parts of being at camp is to feel a part of a larger community. Ask about its community-building activities, like whether there are nightly camp fires or sing-alongs for the entire camp.
4. *What are the accommodations like?* Ask whether the kids sleep in cabins or tents, whether there are bathrooms and showers nearby and, most importantly, whether your kids can ask to room with friends from home. Whether your kids are first-time or seasoned campers, it's always comforting and great fun to room with one or more of their regular friends.
5. *How much does it cost?* You probably don't need any reminders to ask about the camp fee. But don't forget to ask whether that fee is all-inclusive, or whether there are additional costs for day or overnight trips, transportation to and from camp, special activities, etc. Also ask if there's a refund policy should your kids get sick, what the deadline is for registration and, in case you miss the deadline, if there's a waitlist. It's also a good idea to ask if financial aid or need-based scholarships are available, perhaps a sibling discount, whether you need to pay everything up front, or whether you can pay in installments. Finally, don't forget to get the camp's Tax ID number. The camp fee can be tax-deductible.

The Program

6. *How long are the sessions, can they be lengthened or shortened and how long do most campers stay? Most camps offer sessions of a specific length, often two, four, or eight weeks. However, if you have other things planned for the summer, it can be useful to either shorten or lengthen a session to fit your schedule. Most kids like to stay as long as the other kids: assuming they're having a great time, no kid wants to be the one getting picked up before everyone else.*
7. *What do the kids do on a typical day? Try to get a sense of what your kids will be doing on a typical day, including how much time is devoted to indoor and outdoor activities and what they'll be doing in the evening. This'll help you decide whether it's the right camp for them.*
8. *How do you handle discipline and conflicts between campers? Ask questions that help you decide whether the camp's parenting philosophy and practices agree with your own. You also want to make sure that your kids are aware of who they're supposed to speak to in case they have conflicts with other campers, and what kind of behavior can result in serious consequences, up to and including dismissal.*
9. *What's your communication and visiting policy? It's always a good idea to find out how the camp prefers that you communicate with your kids. By phone or email? How often? Also ask how many care packages you're allowed/ encouraged to send, and whether there are designated visiting days.*
10. *How do you accommodate special needs? A high-quality camp is one where all the campers' different needs are met. Ask how the staff accommodates special needs with respect to activities, behavior, learning and dietary restrictions.*

The Staff

11. *How do you hire, train and supervise your camp counselors, and what's the counselor-camper ratio? One of the best signs that the camp is of a high-quality is that it has strict procedures for hiring, training, and supervision of camp counselors. This includes criminal background checks, first aid training, and regular feedback sessions. It's also a good sign if most of the counselors return for several summers (they're obviously enjoying the experience). ACA standards generally require the ratios at residential camps "range from: One staff member for every five campers ages 4 and 5; one staff member for every six campers ages 6 to 8; one staff member for every eight campers ages 9 to 14; and one staff member for every 10 campers ages 15 to 17."*
12. *Is there a medical facility with qualified personnel? A high-quality camp will either have a licensed physician or nurse on the premises, a well-stocked supply of commonly used medications and procedures in place for dispensing medication to all the kids who need them. Also ask how far away the closest hospital, doctor's office and dental clinic are and how the kids will get there, if needed.*
13. *What are your emergency procedures? Ask who will contact you in case of an emergency, and who you should contact in case an emergency occurs on your end.*

The Campers

14. *How many campers do you have, and how many of them return every year? Generally speaking, the larger the camp the more activities, and the smaller the camp the more intimate it feels. Likewise, the higher the return rate, the more satisfied the kids are with the whole camp experience.*
15. *How do you deal with homesickness? Even the most seasoned campers can get homesick. Ask how the camp deals with it. Do they encourage campers to call home? Do you get to visit them outside official visiting days?*
16. *How can your kids stay in touch with their counselors after camp has ended? Kids often develop strong bonds with their counselors. Ask whether they're encouraged to stay in touch after the camp has ended (who knows, your kids' favorite counselor could end up being their babysitter). Some camps also host events throughout the year for counselors and campers. It's a great way to keep in touch until next year's camp.*

Tanni Haas, Ph.D., is a professor of communication arts. He is the author of many books and articles, including many articles on parenting. He is married and the proud dad of a son. When he is not writing parenting articles, he can be found with a table tennis paddle in his hand ready for a game with friends.

Winter Wisdom Outdoors

Things to Do in the Snow



From *50 Things to Do in the Snow*
by Richard Skrein

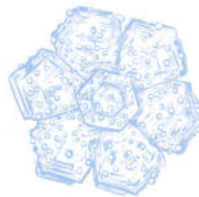
Here's a fun and fascinating exploration of winter snow and scapes you can share with the whole family!

Snow Under The Microscope

We can all conjure the classic image of a snowflake in our minds. But did you know there are a vast number of different snowflakes? They are both surprising and utterly breathtaking in their diversity and beauty. Let's look at some of my favorites and how you can spot them.

Which magnifier?

A simple, cheap magnifying glass of at least 5x magnification will work well for most snowflake hunting and fits in your pocket. A jeweler's loupe will cost more but will give you a clearer, more defined image. Go for at least a 7x rating. The most expensive option, but one that will yield the most detailed and impressive results, is a microscope, which gives you a field of vision of around 3 mm and at least 20x magnification across two eyepieces. You can catch your snowflakes on a piece of cardboard or colored packaging before having a closer look. [Here's] a guide to some of the extraordinary shapes you might find.

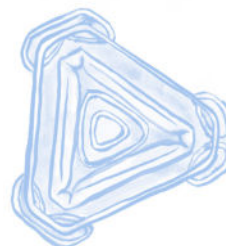


Diamond dust crystal

Also known as ice crystals, these form close to the ground in extremely cold weather and sparkle magically in the sunlight.

Stellar dendrite

This star-shaped snow crystal has six branches and lots of smaller branches coming off each of those. "Dendrite" means treelike.



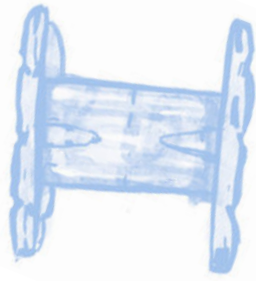
Triangular crystal

These are wonderful and mysterious – science has still not entirely worked out what conditions cause the formation of these cool crystals.



12-sided snowflake

These occur when two six-sided snowflakes collide in midair and stick together!



Capped column

These wonderful shapes form when the snowflake travels through different temperatures as it grows.



Rimed snowflake

These are snowflakes that have collided with tiny water droplets, called rime.

Finding Nature's Numbers

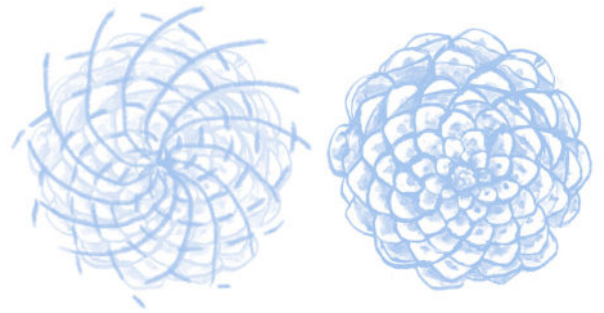
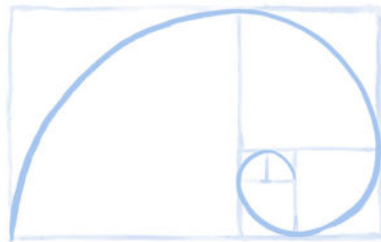
Out in the snowy winter, the magic of nature's repeating patterns is all around. Let's look a bit closer...

The Fibonacci sequence

This fascinating sequence was presented in 1202 by Leonardo Fibonacci and is very simple: start with number 1 and add the previous number (1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34 and so on).

We can also see the Fibonacci spiral emerge as we draw quarter-circle arcs across the numbers from his famous sequence. The number sequence and spiral crop up everywhere in nature, from the number of petals on flowers to shells, cobwebs and even galaxies! In the snowy winter landscape, find a pine cone, look at it from the bottom and count the spirals going in each direction. You will find that the number of spirals going in both directions can be found in Fibonacci's sequence.

Where else can you find these magical numbers in nature?



Tree fractals

Fractals are geometric shapes that repeat their patterns in ever-finer scales. Think of a river. Its natural branching form, splitting off into smaller and smaller streams, is a fractal pattern, just like the shape of a cauliflower or the branches of a tree. A deciduous tree, when viewed in the winter without leaves, reveals its glorious fractal architecture. The pattern is simple: the trunk splits into two branches, which then split into two smaller ones and so on. Fascinatingly, most trees have no more than 11 of these splits on any one branch. Head out and count them!

Da Vinci's Rule for Branches

Leonardo da Vinci wrote, "All the branches of a tree at every stage of its height when put together are equal in thickness to the trunk." Put another way, if you cut the branches at any one height on the tree and added them together, they would add up to the same size as the tree's trunk. This is mind-blowing: it means that if the tree were squeezed upward with all the branches brought into the center, it would be the same thickness throughout! It has since been shown not to be true in absolutely every case but is still very cool!



Spot Crown Shyness

As your boots crack through a frozen puddle and crunch through the snow on a winter walk in the woods, take a moment to look up and spot one of nature's many wonders – crown shyness. This occurs in a forest when the crowns of trees avoid touching each other, creating boundaries and clear channel-like gaps in the canopy. There are a number of different theories as to the cause of crown shyness, such as trees minimizing harmful competition for light or inhibiting the spread of leaf-eating insect larvae and disease. Whatever the reason, the results are quite beautiful. Enjoy.

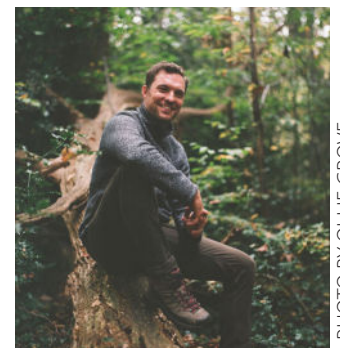


PHOTO BY OLLIE GROVE

Excerpted with permission from ***50 Things to Do in the Snow*** by Richard Skrein © 2024. Published by Princeton Architectural Press, a division of Chronicle Books. Illustrations by Maria Nilsson.



Brain Talk 101: A Framework for Empowering Growth in Children (and Their Adults, Too)

Parenting and teaching young children are as much about helping them develop emotionally as they are about teaching them skills. One revolutionary tool that bridges these two goals is something I developed and call Brain Talk. It's a concoction of lots of different modalities, rooted in respectful parenting, [Internal Family Systems](#), mindfulness meditation, self-compassion literature, attachment research, trauma-informed approaches, holistic thinking and parental intuition. Brain Talk nurtures positive self-talk, builds a healthy self-concept, and promotes self-advocacy and a [growth mindset](#). And when kids have those, they are unstoppable.

Let's explore what Brain Talk is, why it matters, and how you can use it in everyday interactions with children of all ages.

What is Brain Talk?

Brain Talk creates a distinction between the **SELF** (the person), their **THOUGHTS** (the mind) and the **ACTIONS** of their body. This separation empowers children (and adults!) to see themselves as capable, whole individuals who can direct their bodies to learn new skills.

For example, instead of a child thinking, "I can't talk," Brain Talk reframes it to, "I am teaching my brain and mouth to work together." This shift promotes self-awareness, self-esteem and self-control while also fostering skill-building. It also keeps the SELF out of the mess: SELF gets to hang out and be whole and wonderful while Brain and Body figure stuff out.

Thinking this couldn't possibly matter? Read on!

Why Brain Talk Matters

Children who internalize their struggles as flaws in their identity – rather than areas of skill development – can develop [negative self-concepts](#). Consider the difference between these statements:

Negative Self-Talk would say, "I am impulsive."

Brain Talk says, "Sometimes my body acts impulsively." or

"Sometimes my mouth talks before I have a chance to stop it."

Can you feel the difference as you read those two statements?

By acknowledging that behaviors are separate from the person, Brain Talk creates space for growth and learning. It allows for a person to maintain agency and wholeness even when their brain or body isn't doing things "correctly."



BIGSTOCK/PRO-STOCK STUDIO

Similarly, a child saying, "I can't do this," may feel hopeless. But with Brain Talk, they can say, "I'm helping my brain and body work together to learn this," which reinforces perseverance and optimism. It's a small shift with big results.

How Brain Talk Works

Brain Talk teaches children about the body as a collection of parts that receive directions from the brain. For example, body parts have specific roles (you've heard 'em before): Feet are for walking, hands for holding things, ears for listening, eyes for seeing.

When our parts are in sync, we can use Brain Talk to thank our parts for doing what we've asked them to do. One of my favorite things to say is (thank you to my son's pre-K-4 teacher long ago!): "We gotta kiss your brain! It's doing such a good job telling your parts what to do!" It seems silly maybe, but it is a **powerful** lesson in self-appreciation for deeds well done.

But we can also use Brain Talk when the brain and body parts don't communicate effectively. Challenges arise when the brain struggles to imagine what to do, when signals are incomplete or incorrect or when a body part misinterprets or cannot act on the signal. In those cases, we can help point out where the miscommunication occurred by labeling it. "Oh no! Your hand wasn't listening to your brain! Your hand forgot to be gentle with the baby."

Do you see how this is subtly, yet completely, different from "You aren't being gentle with the baby"?

By focusing on how the SELF directs the body and brain, Brain Talk highlights that while we **have** a body, we **are not** our body.

Likewise, although we **have** thoughts, we **are not** our thoughts. (And yes, that is [Mindfulness 101](#). Imagine if we learned that as very young children!) These distinctions help children see themselves as empowered individuals, separate from their challenges.

Applying Brain Talk

Brain Talk can be used to reframe and guide many areas of learning and behavior. Here are specific examples and scripts to apply this method:

I use Brain Talk all the time in speech therapy. I say things like: "Oops! Your mouth said /s/ instead of /f/. Did your ears hear the /s/ sound or the /f/ sound?" Or "yay! Your tongue said /k/ just like your brain told it to! We gotta kiss your brain! AND we gotta kiss your tongue!" (This inevitably gets a funny look and a grin from the kids, who nevertheless will take their fingers and "chef's kiss" themselves. It's super cute.)

We can use Brain Talk to acknowledge when being flexible is hard for our kiddos. "Your brain really wants it to be this certain way, doesn't it? That's so hard. Let's show your brain some love for wanting it the way it wants it." (See the [self-compassion](#) baked in there?)

Using positive, body-focused language encourages cooperation and reduces resistance. Here are some examples:

You've definitely heard this before, but instead of saying "Don't run," try "Can your feet stop at the next tree?" Instead of "No throwing," try "Your hands want to throw. Can they hold onto the ball instead?"

Why Brain Talk Is Effective

Brain Talk empowers children by teaching them to understand their body and actions without tying mistakes to their identity. This alone would be enough. But in addition, Brain Talk also helps kids recognize their own ability for growth and learning and be able to advocate for themselves using compassionate, self-directed language.

While originally developed for toddlers (yes! it works with really young ones), Brain Talk's principles are equally effective for older children, teens and even adults.

Brain Talk in Action

By combining neuroscience, positive self-talk and practical strategies, Brain Talk transforms challenges into opportunities for growth. It equips children to approach their actions with curiosity and control, rather than frustration or defeat.

As parents, teachers and clinicians, adults can use Brain Talk to foster resilience, self-awareness and a belief in the power of learning in the children we're with (and – added bonus! We can use it on OURSELVES). The next time your child encounters a challenge, invite their brain and body to work together – and watch their confidence soar.

Brain Talk isn't just a method; it's a mindset. Through small, intentional shifts in how we speak to and about ourselves, we can create a ripple effect of empowerment that lasts a lifetime.

Gabriele Nicolet is a toddler whisperer, child development specialist, parent coach and host of the Complicated Kids Podcast. She is passionate about showing families how to help their complicated kids thrive and not just survive. Reach her at gabrielenicolet.com



ROSEMOUNT CENTER

*Children and Families
Ready for the World*

**Early Childhood Education
for children birth - 5 years**

- Year round program with optional aftercare
- Dual language curriculum (English/Spanish)
- NAEYC accredited
- Recognized as "high quality" by the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education



2000 Rosemount Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20010
202.265.9885

www.rosemountcenter.com

Grade 3 in Silver Spring is now open!

Weekly
Tours
Available!



For bright students with language-based learning differences like dyslexia



INQUIRE



www.thesienaschool.org

CAMPUSES

Northern Virginia

Grades 3 - 11

Silver Spring

Grades 5 - 12

Silver Spring Satellite

Grades 3 - 4

NOW OPEN!



Sunset Hills Montessori School

Voted BEST
Montessori School
2022 through 2024



Offering exceptional private education for students 21-months through 4th grade since 1994.



11180 Ridge Heights Road
Reston, VA 20191

703-476-7477 sunsethillsmontessori.com



nurture.
inspire.
empower.

Your Family's Mental Health Matters

C.A.S.E. offers specialized, trauma-informed mental health services for adoptive, foster, kinship, and guardianship families.

Contact our intake team for an initial appointment today!

866-217-8534

adoptionsupport.org/washparent





The Importance of Adoption-Competent Therapy for Adoptive, Foster, and Kinship Care Families

By Avi Burstein, LCPC

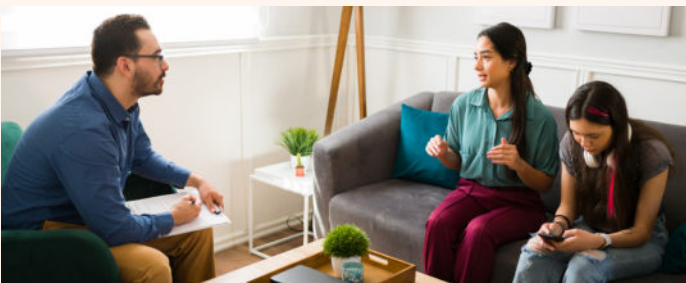
Seeking therapy can be daunting, especially for those with past negative experiences. For adoptive, foster and kinship care families, adoption-competent therapy offers a tailored approach to meet their unique needs, fostering understanding, healing and growth.

What Is Adoption-Competent Therapy?

At the Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.), our therapists receive specialized adoption-competent training through the nationally accredited Training for Adoption Competency (TAC) Program. This training specifically addresses the challenges faced by members of the adoption, foster and kinship care constellation, including adoptees, birth parents, foster parents, kinship caregivers, adult adoptees and adoptive families. These challenges can include mood disorders, anxiety, depression, identity challenges, struggles with grief and loss, behavioral challenges, poor school performance and family conflict.

With adoption-competent expertise, our therapists:

- Understand the impact of pre-placement history, loss, grief, and complex trauma on a child's emotional, cognitive, and social development.
- Recognize that behaviors often viewed as problematic—such as defiance or emotional outbursts—may stem from fears of rejection, loss, or a lack of trust.
- Collaborate with families to uncover the roots of a child's behaviors and promote healing through compassionate, trauma-informed care.



Our Strengths-Based, Family-Oriented Approach

Adoption-competent therapy emphasizes a strengths-based, inclusive approach. Unlike traditional therapy, which some families report left them feeling blamed or excluded, this model emphasizes partnership and empowerment. Parents are integral to the therapeutic process and receive psychoeducation to better understand their child's behaviors and challenges.

Families often learn that traditional parenting strategies or behavioral interventions, which may work for some children, can be ineffective or even harmful for children with histories of trauma. Understanding the neurological impact of early neglect or loss, parents gain insights into behaviors like tantrums or emotional

dysregulation. Armed with this knowledge, they are more receptive to trauma- and attachment-focused parenting techniques that build trust and promote healing.

Supporting Adolescents Through Identity and Self-Esteem Challenges

Adolescence can be especially challenging for adoptees and youth in foster or kinship care as they navigate identity and the unique losses tied to their histories. Adoption-competent therapy equips parents and caregivers with a deep understanding of these experiences, fostering stronger connections within families and across the systems that shape their lives. Therapists help families create supportive environments where youth can process their feelings and thrive.



The Power of Early Intervention

Addressing concerns early is a game changer in adoption-competent therapy. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to seek support at the first signs of difficulty, such as a child struggling with friendships or exhibiting behavioral changes. Early intervention can prevent these challenges from worsening as the child grows older.

For example, a child who struggles to form lasting friendships may benefit from targeted support in developing social skills and understanding boundaries. Without this intervention, these difficulties could lead to isolation, depression or risky behaviors in adolescence. By being proactive, families can tackle potential challenges head-on, reducing stress and preventing crises.

Moving Toward Healing and Growth

Adoption-competent therapy offers a lifeline for families navigating the complexities of adoption, foster or kinship care. For parents and caregivers, it provides the tools and confidence to address their child's needs with compassion and understanding. For children and teens, it creates a safe space to explore their feelings, feel validated and develop a stronger sense of self.

While the journey may feel overwhelming, the right support can make all the difference. It's never too late to seek therapy tailored to the unique experiences of adoption, foster, or kinship care – and the rewards of healing and connection are well worth the effort.

If you are ready to take the next step on your family's healing journey, we are here to help you get started. Contact our caring intake team for an initial appointment today by visiting adoptionsupport.org/washparent.

Avi Burstein is a licensed clinical professional counselor and chief operating officer at the Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.). C.A.S.E. is national leader transforming the mental health of the adoption, foster, and kinship community. Learn more at adoptionsupport.org.

YOU MIGHT BE A HOCKEY MOM IF

By Katy M. Clark

I never thought I would grow up and become a Hockey Mom. After all, I grew up in a warm climate without an NHL team in sight.

I spent my days outside playing soccer and riding my bike, not chasing a puck around an ice rink.

Yet both my son and daughter play ice hockey. Their dad got them started early. Turns out they absolutely love the sport! And because they love ice hockey, I love it, too.

As our family has embraced the game, I have noticed certain characteristics I've taken on in recent years that identify me as a bona fide Hockey Mom.

Here's my fun list of reasons you might be a Hockey Mom. I hope other Hockey Moms can relate.

You might be a Hockey Mom if...

You carry a blanket with you at all times. There's at least one in your trunk or backseat, ready to wrap around your body to stave off the chilly rink temperatures.

You know the really, really cold rinks from the just plain cold rinks. Isn't it odd that not all ice rinks are the same level of freezing? Good thing you always have that blanket in your car.

Your car seems to drive itself to the rink. Yup, you've driven your player back and forth so many times, in all kinds of weather, that your vehicle could easily navigate there itself. In fact, I bet the self-driving cars in development were inspired by a Hockey Mom and her never-ending rink runs!

You'd buy a new stick for your child before you'd buy a new outfit. And it probably doesn't bother you, either. You know someone who owns a cowbell. There's at least one parent on every team (maybe it's you) that rings it with gusto when cheering for their team. More cowbell indeed.

You think the refs are all crazy (even as you practice good sportsmanship of course.) Because they are crazy every time they call a penalty against your child or team that really wasn't a penalty. And what about all those other penalties the other team committed that the refs missed?

You think the other team's parents are all crazy. Because let's face it, those other parents ringing their cowbells and complaining that the refs missed a call are crazy.

You know what phrases like "bar down" and "two and ten" mean. In fact, you are proficient in hockey slang, sprinkling words like "biscuit," "five-hole" and "celly" throughout your conversations.

You refer to your child by their birth year or age division. "Oh, he's a 2012," you might say. Or "My daughter's playing U10."

You know all the kids' nicknames on the team, but you can't remember their parents' first names.

"Oh, there's Jame-O," you say as your child's teammate arrives at the rink. "And Jame-O's parents," you finish sheepishly, even though you've sat next to Jame-O's parents for 24 games this season.

You've lost entire weekends sitting in ice rinks watching games. Whether you're watching your child play in another tournament, or just watching league games on Saturdays and Sundays, you get nothing done most weekends besides cheering for your favorite players.

You've spent gobs of money on hockey equipment, hotels and let's not forget skill cranes, vending machines and snack bars to keep younger siblings entertained. Once they're old enough, though, they'll be able to join their own hockey team. Then you can spend hundreds of dollars on their ice fees and tournaments. At least you'll already have the equipment to pass down!

Finally, you might be a Hockey Mom if you love to watch your child play hockey.

That last one is my favorite, obviously. I might never have guessed that I'd grow up to be a Hockey Mom, but I wouldn't change it for the world.

Katy M. Clark is a writer and mom of two who celebrates her imperfections on her blog [Experienced Bad Mom](#).





Breathing Space Family Yoga

Mindful movement from birth to adulthood

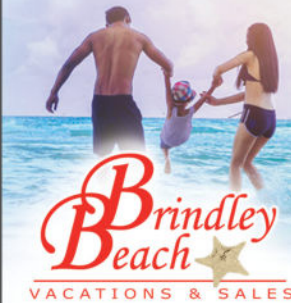
Our yoga classes and camps foster mindfulness, resilience, and emotional regulation while encouraging joy and creativity through play.



Now enrolling for the winter semester.
Click to learn more!

breathingspacedc.com

OUTER BANKS north carolina



VACATION RENTALS

1-22 Bedrooms
All Price Ranges
Most with Private Pools
Some Pet Friendly

Brindley Beach
VACATIONS & SALES

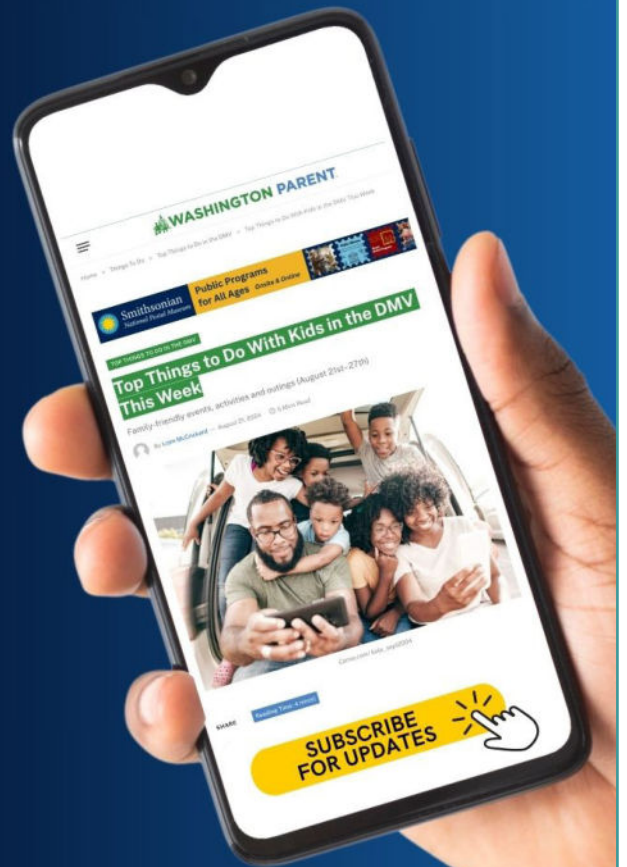
877-642-3224
brindleybeach.com

Get our best things to do with
kids, parenting tips,
giveaways and more



CHECK OUT FUN THINGS TO DO WITH KIDS IN THE DMV

Family-friendly events,
activities and outings are
right at your fingertips!



40 YEARS
**WASHINGTON
Parent**
washingtonparent.com

Nurturing the Nurturer: Parents Under Pressure

By Lynne Ticknor

Today's parents are stressed. Even if we don't identify it as stress, the effects are clear when we get angry over little things, yell at our kids, get headaches, suffer stomach pain, feel tired all the time, have difficulty concentrating and face a host of other physical and emotional conditions. In late 2024, [Dr. Vivek Murthy](#) released [Parents Under Pressure: The U.S. Surgeon General Advisory on the Mental Health and Well-Being of Parents](#) an official advisory on the mental health and well-being of parents. The report highlights the critical role that parents' mental health plays in influencing the well-being of their children.

[Studies reveal](#) that children who have a primary caregiver with poor mental health are **two times** more likely to have mental, behavioral, or developmental concerns. Those children are also **four times** more likely to have physical health problems.

Here Are Just a Few of the Key Points from the Advisory:

■ Parents' mental health affects the whole family

The mental health of parents directly impacts their children's emotional and mental well-being. Struggling with stress, depression or anxiety challenges parents' ability to care for their children. Parents who are overwhelmed or in poor mental health may find it harder to meet their children's emotional and physical needs, which can affect their children's development. A parent's ability to provide a stable and nurturing environment is key to a child's growth. [Supportive, emotionally available](#) parents are essential for children to develop secure attachments, self-esteem, and resilience.

■ Mental health issues are common among parents

Approximately 1 in 5 parents in the U.S. suffer from mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety or stress. These conditions are particularly prevalent during times of transition, like pregnancy, the early years of raising children or periods of caregiving for aging relatives. If mental health issues in parents go untreated, they can lead to long-term difficulties for both the parents and their children. Addressing these issues early on can prevent them from becoming more severe.

■ Parenting is stressful and burdensome

Parenting is a [demanding and stressful job](#), especially when parents are also juggling work, financial pressures and caregiving responsibilities. For many parents, the stress of balancing these responsibilities can lead to burnout. This is particularly true for parents who don't have access to support systems or affordable



BIGSTOCK/IZIKES

resources. High stress and burnout can undermine a parent's ability to be present for their children or make sound decisions, which can negatively affect family dynamics and child development.

■ Parents face barriers to getting help

Despite the prevalence of mental health challenges among parents, many don't seek the help they need due to stigma, lack of time or lack of access to mental health services. For example, parents may feel ashamed of their mental health struggles or fear judgment from others, preventing them from reaching out for support. Without access to proper mental health care, untreated issues can spiral and affect the parent-child relationship. When parents don't seek help, the risks of long-term mental health problems increase, and so do the risks to the children in their care.

■ Parents need social support

Strong social networks – whether it's family, friends or community resources – are crucial for parents' mental health. Parents who feel isolated or lack support are at higher risk for depression and anxiety. Social support helps parents cope with daily stress, share caregiving responsibilities and reduce feelings of isolation. Parents need emotional and practical support to manage the demands of raising children. When parents feel supported, they are more likely to have a positive outlook and healthier mental well-being, which benefits their entire family.

What Parents and Caregivers Can Do:

■ Resist the pressure to compete with others

The pressure-cooker environment needs a release valve. Many parents fall into the trap of [excessively focusing on their child's achievements](#). There is no race to success. Children learn and grow at their own pace. Grades, athletic ability, musical talent and other accolades should not be more important to you than who your child is on the inside. When we monitor our children's grades, fix their problems, pack their schedules with extracurricular activities and pressure them to always perform at the highest standards, we exhaust our children – and ourselves. Additionally, we deprive our kids of the opportunity to gain some important experiences, like boredom, failure and discomfort. We also risk sending them the message that we don't believe they are capable and competent.

■ Be a "nonanxious" presence

Dr. William Stixrud and Ned Johnson, coauthors of several books including [The Self-Driven Child](#) and [What Do You Say?](#), emphasize that one of our primary jobs as parents is to be a nonanxious presence in our child's life. Imagine if we worked on calming ourselves down first,

then we assisted our kids. It's in our human nature to think, "Once I get this kid's anxiety under control, I'll be under control." But we must help ourselves first. Stress is contagious and we give it to our kids when we're experiencing anxiety and frustration.

■ Fake it

You know how this goes: "Fake it until you make it." Amy Cuddy, social psychologist, bestselling author and acclaimed keynote speaker, rewrote that quip. She prefers "fake it until you become it." Even when you have doubts or experience negative self-talk, learn to convey confidence. In her [TED Talk](#), Cuddy explains her research about nonverbal body language and explores how posture has a physiological effect on the brain. Years later, when subsequent research didn't always mimic her findings, she said, "It's not just about standing like a superhero for two minutes; it's about carrying yourself with power and pride and poise, as you deserve to do." Read [Cuddy's response to criticism](#) on this.



ADOBESTOCK/ JENKOATAMAN

■ Join a parenting program

Just like childbirth classes help prepare an expectant parent for that process, parenting programs provide education, support and skills to make parenting a little easier. Positive parenting programs, such as those offered by the [Parent Encouragement Program](#) (PEP) in Kensington, Md., help to strengthen parental skills around effective communication, emotion coaching and encouragement. These programs equip parents to help their children become more capable and resilient – and they alleviate parental stress, too.

While parents have had to deal with stressors and challenges for generations, today's parents are more isolated, without the benefit of important support networks. Parenting programs help create a community, bringing parents and caregivers together to share experiences and support each other. In 2023-24, PEP's research partner NORC at the University of Chicago found that the [PEP Family Resiliency Program](#) had a large effect on strengthening the parent-child relationship, parent-child communication, cooperative child behavior and parent adjustment.

PEP will offer a free webinar, *Nurturing the Nurturers: Prioritizing Parent Well-Being for Stronger Families*, on Wednesday, January 29 from 7:30-9 p.m.

■ Trust in yourself

Taking your child to have a behavioral assessment has become commonplace among many parents today. Before taking your child to a doctor, therapist or other professional to "diagnose" your child, try helping them yourself. Trust your own intuition and talk with your child about how they are feeling.

Even if your child's behavior is less than you or others expect, ask yourself if those expectations are reasonable. Children who explode at home over a seemingly minor situation may just be blowing off steam. Sitting for long hours at a time focusing on schoolwork is difficult. It's normal and developmentally appropriate for kids and teens to act out. They have little experience in understanding and modifying their behavior. Their brains aren't even close to being [fully developed](#). If research shows that the human brain is not fully developed until the mid-20s, why would we expect children and teens to act like grown adults?

The Surgeon General's advisory calls for a societal approach to support the mental health of parents. Let's focus on programs and services that strengthen and support parents so that they don't feel so alone and overwhelmed as they go through their parenting journey. Improving the wellness of our next generation depends on nurturing the generation of parents suffering today.

Lynne Ticknor is the Director of Education at the Parent Encouragement Program (PEP) in Kensington, Md. She is a certified parent educator and has been teaching parenting classes since 2006. For more information about classes, visit [PEPparent.org](#).

PEP PRESENTS

Critical Topics in Parenting

Webinar

PEP Educating parents. Enriching families.

Nurturing the Nurturers: Prioritizing Parent Well-Being for Stronger Families

January 29, 2025
7:30 - 9 pm

Join us for a conversation with PEP parent educators to:

- Reflect on the current state of parenting and the pressure to perform
- Connect with each other to know that we're not alone in our parenting journeys
- Share insights to see challenges through a more can-do lens
- Build confidence in our own parenting abilities

Let's connect to discuss parental stress and what we can do about it.

FREE!

More info
& register:
PEPparent.org

Educating parents.
Enriching families.



Helping Teens Develop Close Friendships: Tips For Parents

By Tanni Haas, Ph.D.

Few things are as important to teens' emotional development and maturity as having friends that they can rely on and confide in. But teens aren't all equally good at developing close friendships. What can parents do to help them along? August 1 is National Friendship Day, a great occasion to ask this important question. Here's what the experts suggest:

Teach Them About Friendship

The first and most important thing parents can do is to teach their teens about friendship. "Parents can and should talk to their teens about what friendships should feel like," says social worker Heather Monroe, "and help them understand how to be a good friend." She suggests that parents ask their teens to reflect on the qualities that are important to them in a friendship, since friendships are more likely to last when teens share similar values. Family therapist Cheryl Somers adds that parents should encourage their teens to reflect on questions like: "how do you let people see what you value, what's important to you, and who you really are?"

Involve Them in Extracurricular Activities

One of the best ways for teens to find friends who share the same values and interests as them is to participate in extracurricular activities like school clubs, sports and volunteer work. "This way they can meet people with common interests and provide a springboard for conversation," says Jan Hamilton, the founder and CEO of Doorways, a youth counseling service. Simply put, extracurricular activities give teens something to bond around and talk about.

Have Realistic Expectations

Explain to your teens that even if they've common interests with other people, it can take a long time to develop a really close relationship. They learn that every person they meet and like isn't necessarily going to be their next BFF. Somers suggests that parents help their teens distinguish between different types of friends, like "the difference between a friend you sit next to in class and chit-chat with, and a friend who really understands and values you." Deb Dunham of *Grown & Flown*, a well-known parenting blog, agrees. She says that parents should teach their teens to be realistic and not expect any one friend to satisfy all their needs: "There are many flavors of friends. Friends for fun times, for confiding in, for challenging you and supporting you. Know which is which." Adults know this is true; teens need to learn this too so that they don't

have unrealistic expectations and get disappointed when they meet someone new.

The Importance of Adult Relationships

Encourage your teens to develop close relationships with adults other than you, like coaches, teachers and their bosses if they have a part-time job. "Teens who have a positive relationship with the adults in their lives," says professor of education Michael Chambers, "are more likely to have good relationships with their peers." When teens feel love and support from trusted adults, they develop the confidence to meet new people and develop close relationships with them.

Be A Role Model

Finally, remember that, ultimately, your teens learn more from seeing what you do than from anything you tell them to do. So, be a role model and show them what a good friend is like. As clinical psychologist Dr. Justin Coulson puts it "show your children how friendships should function by having good friends around you who're trustworthy, loyal, fun and who share your values and goals."

Tanni Haas, Ph.D. is a Professor in the Department of Communication Arts, Sciences, and Disorders at the City University of New York – Brooklyn College.

The advertisement features a dark blue background with a pattern of small, light blue stars. On the left, there is a circular logo with a scalloped edge, containing the text "WASHINGTON Parent PICKS" in white, with three stars above and three below. To the right of the logo, the text "Washington Parent Picks" is written in white, followed by "PARENT EDUCATION & SUPPORT" in large, bold, white capital letters. Below this, a white text box contains the message: "Every parent should have access to help and advice. Connect with resources, support groups, and more that help you navigate through parenthood." In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for "40 YEARS WASHINGTON Parent" with a green silhouette of the Washington State Capitol building. On the right side, a woman with long brown hair, wearing a light pink button-down shirt, is smiling and looking at a laptop. The laptop screen displays a QR code with the text "SCAN TO FIND LOCAL TOP PICKS" above it. A pair of black-rimmed glasses is on the desk next to the laptop.



Mamatoto Village cofounders, Cassietta Pringle, left, and Aza Nedhari, right.

Mamatoto Village:

Collaborative Community Care for Black Maternal Health

By Erin Snowden

For many, the journey to parenthood is a mix of joyful anticipation and a sprinkle of anxiety surrounding the unknown. While most pregnancies end in minimally eventful births and healthy babies, some can take an unexpected turn. In the United States, Black women are more likely to experience pregnancy- or birth-related complications than any other racial or ethnic group, regardless of their income, social status or education. These complications range from preterm birth and babies with low birth weight to maternal morbidity and mortality. During a time that should be filled with excitement and joy, these realities leave many Black women feeling vulnerable and unsure.

While the outlook can be frightening, according to the CDC, 80% of pregnancy-related deaths are preventable. Situated in the northeast quadrant of Washington DC, Mamatoto Village



is a community-based organization that supports pregnant and postpartum women and their families across the District and surrounding areas. The organization, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2023, is the brainchild of cofounders Aza Nedhari and Cassietta Pringle, who dreamed of creating a culturally affirming space for Black women to actualize the vision of healthy mamas, healthy babies and healthy communities.

The mission is twofold: to create a space that offers career pathways in maternal health and provides access to perinatal support services (perinatal being defined as the period of time from when you become pregnant and up to a year after giving birth).

Mothers Rising, the organization's flagship program, prioritizes the needs of Medicaid-eligible pregnant and postpartum parents.

“Black women can be strengthened by one another, giving rise to a more radical, collective and supportive environment for wellness and thriving.”

It matches clients with a team of highly skilled professionals to provide evidence-based care that is also inclusive of cultural values, beliefs and practices (or “culturally congruent”) to address pregnancy, labor and delivery, parent education, lactation, health and wellness, mental health and stress management and intervention on any pervasive social determinate issues such as housing and food security.

The Power of Community

More than 3,000 parents have been welcomed into Mamatoto Village by a staff that reflects their culture and lived experience. The founders and women who provide administrative support and services within the program are all women of color living in the greater D.C. area, many of them navigating parenting themselves. This social proximity, along with authentic touches of cultural celebration, including original works of art and photographs adorning the walls, the laughter of sister-friends catching up with one another or the fragrance of familiar dishes coming from the kitchen, make the space feel like home. Mamatoto Village is exactly that – a welcoming village happy to provide families with the care they need and deserve throughout pregnancy, postpartum and beyond!

Mothers Rising participants often reflect that once they joined the program, they felt our staff became added family members to their lives. Participant T.Y. had both her babies with Mamatoto Village. Being involved with Mamatoto, she said, “really helped, especially the first time. The birth support, for me, was the most important part. The education on childbirth was especially helpful. I also got a lot of help with social services. Seeing a group of Black women who looked like me, giving back to the community ... it’s inspiring. The advice, the day and overnight support definitely helped.”

Not only is their experience with the program positive, but there is also evidence to support that the model of care is working. Implemented by a staff that has completed hundreds of hours of training through the organization’s workforce development program, participants largely avoid preterm birth, successfully begin breastfeeding and maintain a 0% maternal mortality rate. These statistics that are staunchly different from community women of a similar background not receiving services.

Building a Workforce

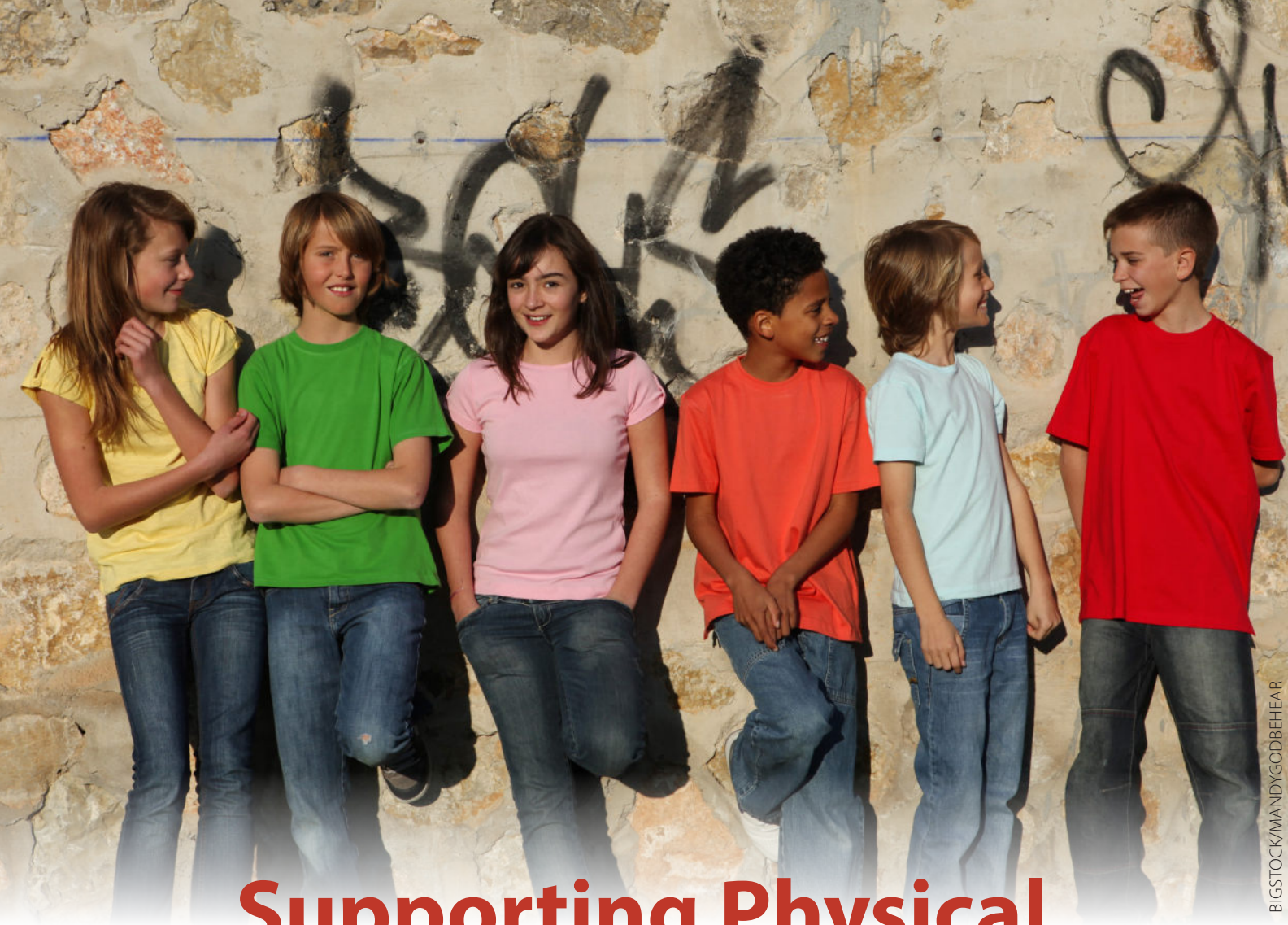
The experience of being cared for, affirmed and validated during such a pivotal time in their lives often inspires women who were once clients to enter the workforce program with the goal of delivering the same care they received to other women in their communities. They spend many months training in how to provide culturally resonant, respectful, linguistically appropriate and healing-informed care. In the past, participants have gone on to work as OB-GYNs, family doctors, licensed social workers,

midwives, nurses, doulas, program directors, home visitors and lactation consultants. In this way, Mamatoto Village is helping create financial stability for families and entire communities, while deploying skilled perinatal providers grounded in the knowledge and skills necessary to deliver life-changing and lifesaving care. To date, more than 200 people have been trained, and countless others benefited as a result, potentially changing the Black birthing experience throughout the District.

“Black women can be strengthened by one another, giving rise to a more radical, collective and supportive environment for wellness and thriving.” Mamatoto Village believes that every woman and every family have a fundamental right to health and safety through unlimited access to education, resources and quality care. Learn more about Mamatoto Village [here](#).

Erin Snowden, MPH (she/her), is the director of data and social impact at Mamatoto Village. With 20 years of experience in health education and public health, Erin has worked as an educator, led health outreach at universities and developed community-based public health interventions. She is passionate about helping Black-led organizations create data stories that reflect Black lived experiences and values qualitative data that honors Black ways of knowing.

A promotional poster for Washington Parent Picks Pregnancy & Baby. The background is dark blue with yellow stars. In the top left is a circular seal with three stars and the text 'WASHINGTON Parent PICKS'. In the top right is a QR code with an arrow pointing to it and the text 'SCAN TO FIND LOCAL TOP PICKS'. The main title 'PREGNANCY & BABY' is in large white letters. Below it, the text 'Discover all of the best essentials for parents and your new arrival!' is in white. At the bottom left is a close-up of a smiling Black baby's face. At the bottom right is a pregnant woman with long brown hair, wearing a purple cardigan over a white top, holding her belly. At the bottom center is the '40 YEARS WASHINGTON Parent' logo, featuring a stylized green figure.



BIGSTOCK/MANDYGODBEHEAR

Supporting Physical Changes in Your Adolescent

By Ariel Frager

The seemingly sudden metamorphosis that comes with puberty may trigger worries for kids and teens about their looks and how their bodies have changed, and continue to change, as they grow. The vast variation in the timing of the onset of puberty can feed kids' anxiety as each child/adolescent matures at a different rate. According to John Hopkins Medicine, the beginning of puberty for males ranges from 9½ years old to 14 years old. For females, the range begins as young as 8 years old and extends to 13 years old. Some girls are very cognizant of their new need to wear a bra, and boys are hyperaware of their growth spurts or lack thereof.

Understanding Adolescent Development

The Department of Human Services Office of Population Affairs publishes a free pdf document entitled *Adolescent Development Explained* that offers important insights into all the different ways adults can support young people as they navigate puberty, from physical changes to emotional changes, including brain development as well as social and moral development.

The lives of modern adolescents vary greatly from the experiences of previous generations. Parents and other caring adults are well-served to educate themselves about the complexities of the lives of teens, to best support the physical changes and the emotional impact of those changes on kids as they move through puberty.

Teen Need Clothes that Fit and are Stylish

One thing parents can do is to make sure their child is wearing clothes that fit their body now. When students wear clothes that are too small, their self-consciousness about their body changes will be heightened. If the clothes they're wearing are ill-fitting hand-me-downs, or are too large, that can lead to

discomfort as well. Keeping up with quickly changing bodies makes clothes shopping a real challenge, not to mention a significant expense. The need to buy a whole new wardrobe for one's children every couple of months can feel overwhelming, as it is very hard to keep them in right-fitting clothes that also meet the current demands of fashion. For some teens in the throes of puberty, though, their self-esteem may be tied to what they wear and how they wear it. Helping your teen take the lead in clothes shopping can bridge the gap. Try giving them a quarterly budget for shoes and clothes and letting them decide what to buy that will make them feel confident and good in what they are wearing.

Puberty Arrives in Its Own Time for Everyone

Another great topic of conversation to have with older elementary and middle school kids is to talk about how puberty comes at different times for each person. Some early developers might struggle because emotionally they are the same age as their peers, but their body looks much older. The same is true for kids who may be lagging behind their friends with the onset of hormonal changes and growth spurts. Make sure to share with your child that these changes are normal and that every person reaches puberty in their own time.

Body changes are expected as puberty begins, as are emotional changes. The combination of hormonal and physical changes can produce feelings of irritability, sadness and withdrawal. The

Adolescent Development Explained guide recommends that parents model healthy emotional regulation so their teens can see how to navigate their own identity development, manage big emotions like anger or sadness and how to resolve conflicts in a respectful manner. Helping your teen develop emotional literacy by asking questions about their feelings and seeking to help them guess how other people feel by looking at nonverbal cues will aid your teen in learning how to navigate the complicated world of their own emotional development.

As puberty continues, no matter where your teen lands on the physical/ developmental spectrum, many kids are highly sensitive to comments about their bodies. Boys who have grown 5 inches in less than a year typically do not appreciate hearing over and over again how tall they are. Young women are equally attuned to comments about their looks and how mature they are now. Helping adult friends and family members remember to curb comments about your teen's physical appearance will help set your young person at ease. This will also help the other adults in their lives understand that while the changes in puberty might be noticeable, making comments about them can turn an adult's well-intentioned observation into an embarrassing interaction for your adolescent.

Ariel Frager loves to get outside to surf, play and travel the world. She is a mental health therapist who specializes in working with kids. Ariel writes about outdoor and family adventures for *Travel + Leisure*, *Gear Junkie*, *Girl Camper* and other publications.



**Bookmark the
2024 Washington
Parent Picks list
at [washingtonparent.com](https://www.washingtonparent.com)**

40 YEARS WASHINGTON
Parent

Understanding Secondary Infertility

By Dr. Emma Basch

Like many parents of toddlers, Hannah and Zeke* were excited but apprehensive about trying to have a second child. Their 2-year-old daughter Bea was delightful but challenging in all the typical ways young children can be. Nonetheless, they had always imagined having two children and really wanted their daughter to have a sibling. They had conceived spontaneously and quickly with Bea and planned to start trying for a second child when she turned 2 1/2, so their kids would be about three years apart. After almost a year of trying to conceive on their own, Hannah and Zeke were referred to a reproductive endocrinologist who diagnosed them with secondary infertility.

Defining Secondary Infertility

Secondary infertility refers to the inability to conceive a child or carry a pregnancy to term after having previously conceived and given birth without the intervention of fertility treatment. Hannah and Zeke, like the nearly 11% of patients diagnosed with secondary infertility, were shocked by their diagnosis. Many patients report never being told about the risk factors for secondary infertility and some have never even heard of the diagnosis. In reality, secondary infertility is about as common as primary infertility and can have similar causes. The most common reasons couples are diagnosed with secondary infertility include advanced maternal age, impaired sperm count, health changes or certain health conditions or medications and complications from previous pregnancies such as scar tissue – and, for some couples, the cause is unexplained.

Emotional Impact of Secondary Infertility

Couples navigating secondary infertility often experience a range of feelings and reactions. For example, Hannah and Zeke described feelings of shame for wanting a second child, and a sense of isolation from peers, many of whom were growing their families. Hannah often spoke about how hard it was to see so many of her friends from the mom's group she joined when Bea was born, as several were pregnant again when she was struggling to conceive. Their experience is not unique, as secondary infertility comes with its own emotional challenges and, unfortunately, with its own stigma. Many parents who have successfully conceived before might feel a profound sense of shame or guilt, isolation, anger or frustration. Grief is also common after receiving a diagnosis of secondary infertility. This grief is best understood as disenfranchised grief, meaning grief that goes publicly unacknowledged, understood and unsupported.



BIGSTOCK/DIEGO CERVO

Caring For Your Mental Health

Navigating the emotional journey of secondary infertility can be challenging but it is essential to prioritize your mental health along the way. The following tools can help.

1. **Make time for your emotions:** Couples diagnosed with secondary infertility are forced to navigate the dance of parenting while grieving and processing complex emotions. It is important to give yourself space to attend to your feelings. Consider additional child care, attending support groups during school hours or trading off caregiving with a family member so you can have some time for yourself.
2. **Set and Communicate Your Boundaries:** Healthy boundaries support our relationships with others and with ourselves by making it clear on how we want to be treated, what we want to share with others and how we want to spend our time. Be direct with others on what you are willing to share about your diagnosis, what support you need and what types of comments feel intrusive to you.
3. **Say No:** It is important to give yourself permission to opt out of situations and activities that feel triggering or difficult for you. Say no to the baby shower, opt out of the newborn visit and send a card instead. You will be better able to preserve your relationships with others as well as your mental health if you take care of yourself in this way.

Communicate With Your Partner: Each member of a couple experiences secondary infertility differently – the emotions, the physical requirements, the triggers are not the same. It's important for each member of a couple to have the space to process in their own way and be able to communicate this openly to your partner. This will help you stay connected and remember you are on the same team.

Secondary infertility can be a difficult and isolating emotional experience. It's important to care for yourself, get clear information about your diagnosis and then get the support you need. In addition to the strategies described above, support groups and professional support from a trained therapist specialized in infertility counseling can help.

**All names changed to protect patient privacy.*

Dr. Emma Basch is a licensed clinical psychologist based in Washington, D.C. She is the founder and director of Dr. Emma Basch & Associates, a group practice specializing in the mental health needs of women and families. She is a vice president of the DC Metro Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative and a clinical instructor in the department of psychiatry at The George Washington University, and she teaches and writes frequently about perinatal and reproductive mental health.



Passports, Please! How to Navigate International Travel as a Single Parent

By Gina Rich

Family vacations can be exciting, hectic and memorable. But for parents traveling solo with kids abroad, the journey can be a bit more complicated.

I'll never forget being questioned by a passport agent as I prepared to fly home to the United States from Germany with my two daughters, who were then 10 and 8 years old. After I presented our passports, the agent looked at me, perhaps noticing my brown eyes and my kids' blue ones. Then he asked a simple question: "Where is the father of the children?"

The unexpected inquiry made me blush. I couldn't recall being questioned like this before, and I wondered why it was happening. Quickly, I babbled my explanation – my children's father was staying in Germany longer to complete a work project – and the agent waved us along.

In retrospect, I'm not sure what I would have done if the agent had asked me to prove I was my children's mother. Somehow, I doubt he would have accepted my reasoning that we have the

same smirk! Though my children and I had valid U.S. passports, I had not packed any other documentation.

Why Questioning Happens

Almost 1 in 4 U.S. children live in single-parent households, according to a 2019 [Pew Research Center](#) report. And unfortunately, many parents traveling solo with their kids have experienced far more intense questioning than what I encountered that day at the airport.

While such inquiries can feel intrusive, they're done for an important reason: to make sure all kids are safe. International parental child abductions occur when children are taken from their country of residence in violation of another parent's custody rights. According to the [U.S. Department of State](#), many such kidnappings take place during the summer vacation months.

In this environment, single parents traveling alone with kids can expect to face extra scrutiny.

Preparation is Key

By planning ahead, single parents can ensure the journey goes as smoothly as possible. It's best to start this process at least a few months before the departure date.



Here are tips to consider:

- 1. Ensure everyone's passports are up to date.** Some countries require that passports are valid for at least six months from the end of your trip. You can check your destination's requirements on the [U.S. Department of State's website](#). Keep in mind that normal processing times for a U.S. passport range from six to eight weeks, not including the time it takes to mail your materials to and from the passport agency.
- 2. Locate your children's birth certificates or adoption records and make copies if needed.** Pack these documents in your carry-on bag for easy access at checkpoints. If you've changed your surname following your child's birth or adoption, be sure to bring along that supporting documentation. While you don't need to travel with original documents, it's best to bring certified copies, and to have electronic versions as backups. You can purchase certified copies of birth certificates by contacting the birth state or territory's [vital records office](#).
- 3. Obtain a letter of consent from the other parent, if appropriate.** The government recommends that single parents carry a [letter of consent](#) – signed by the other parent and preferably notarized – stating that the child has permission to travel out of the country with you. To find a notary public near you, try your local bank, library or shipping/photocopy store. Some businesses also offer notary services online. In cases where no other parent is legally involved, pack any relevant paperwork

(i.e., proof of sole custody, a death certificate or the child's birth certificate listing only your name).

- 4. Talk with your children about what to expect.** Although being questioned by a uniformed agent can feel intimidating, especially to younger children, remember that the goal is to ensure their safety. Before your trip, explain to your children that border agents may ask them some simple questions, such as who they're traveling with, their name or age and where the other parent is. Remind them that it's important to answer truthfully, and that the passport control booth isn't the place to goof around. There will be plenty of time for fun and games on your trip!
- 5. Share your itinerary with a friend or family member.** Make sure someone at home is informed of your plans and can be available via phone on your travel days.

When the day of your trip arrives, focus on remaining calm. Traveling with kids can be difficult, especially when you're a single parent. Remember that border agents aren't trying to make your journey more stressful but are doing their best to ensure everyone reaches their destinations safely. Treating officials with respect and staying patient will help you navigate the experience successfully, while modeling a good attitude for your kids.

Gina Rich writes about parenting, health and the natural world. Her work appears in *The Washington Post*, *Notre Dame Magazine*, *Next Avenue* and other outlets. Connect with Rich on her [website](#).

Setting Positive & Possible Intentions for the New Year

By Sarah Lyons

A new year, a new start. Each year 62% of Americans make New Year's resolutions hoping to make positive and healthy changes. Statistics show that within the first two weeks 25% of those same Americans have given up on their goals and only 8% reach their goal by the end of the year. These numbers are not encouraging. For the coming year, try focusing on setting positive intentions rather than unrealistic resolutions that may fizzle out faster than you can say Happy New Year.

Set realistic and reachable intentions

If 36% of people give up on their New Year's resolutions by February, it is likely they are not setting goals that are realistic or reachable. When setting resolutions, choose intentions that make sense. Goals that are interesting and fun and that you are motivated to keep are more likely to end in success. If you want to read more, set a goal of reading a certain number of books or completing a challenging but interesting book series. If weight loss

is a goal, choose a fun way to reach your goal weight. If you despise running, don't plan to shed pounds on the treadmill. Pick an activity you love and incorporate it into your exercise routine while choosing healthy meal options. "I made a reading goal this year to read my age in books," says Stephanie Loux, mom of three. "It was a fun self-care resolution which made it easier to reach. It also helped me discuss books with friends."

Set measurable and specific intentions

How will you know if you have reached your goals? Many people give up on their resolutions because they don't know how to achieve them or when they have been completed. Examples of immeasurable goals include "Get healthy," "Become more organized" or "Save money." Be specific when setting intentions. How will you become healthier? Does that include changing your eating habits? Incorporating exercise? What type of exercise and how often? Your goals need to be both measurable and specific so that you know how to achieve them. Goals such as "Raise my grade in science class from a B to an A," "Read one book a month" or "Save X amount of dollars for a family vacation" are all goals that are both specific and measurable. These types of intentions are great because you know exactly how to reach them, when you have reached them and when to celebrate your success.

Reward yourself

Speaking of celebrating, don't forget to set some rewards for yourself as you are choosing your New Year's intentions. This will help motivate you to follow through when things get challenging. Some ideas could include: "If I lose 15 pounds, I will buy three new outfits." Or for your child "If you complete your reading goals, you can pick a special toy." Pick a reward that is enough to motivate you or your child and work together towards your goal.

Don't overdo it

Many people make the mistake of setting too many intentions or goals that are not attainable, setting themselves up for failure. When you are creating your intentions, list all the areas that you would like to work on. Once you have a list, narrow it down to the items that are realistic, measurable, and come with a reward. Prioritize and categorize your goals. Can you consolidate any? Do you see a theme? Which goals are you most excited about? Make your list again and try to be as specific as possible in order to give yourself the best chance of success. If you have several that you would like to achieve, keep your list around so that you can move onto another goal after you complete one of your resolutions. "I find that setting goals for shorter terms, say three months, is easier to stick to than a yearlong endeavor," says Kelly Lawton. "It allows me to reevaluate my progress and reset or restart as I need without the guilt."

While coming up with a list of intentions for the year, keep them positive. Give yourself permission to create intentions that are fun rather than a punishment or chore. When we create goals that are actually accomplishable and set rewards for our completion of them, we are much more likely to be successful.

Sarah Lyons is a mother of six children, including 8-year-old triplets.

Reframe Your Resolutions to Intentions

Most resolutions are never reached; try reframing your goals to intentions this year and make them more attainable and realistic.

- **Resolution:** Lose weight
- **Intention:** Create a healthier lifestyle by eating healthier and exercising regularly. Focus on how you feel rather than the scale.
- **Resolution:** Save money
- **Intention:** Create a budget and stick to it, buy used when possible, spend less, save more. What are you saving for? Be specific (college, vacation, pay off debt, etc.)
- **Resolution:** Spend more time with friends and family
- **Intention:** Host get togethers for friends, put it on the calendar, plan regular family game nights. Ask someone to help you plan events, so you aren't doing it alone.
- **Resolution:** Get organized
- **Intention:** Define what area feels the most unorganized and focus on that. Tackle one area at a time. Use organizational tools that are realistic and will work for you long term.

The advertisement features a dark blue background with scattered yellow stars. On the left, a circular seal with a scalloped edge contains the text "WASHINGTON Parent PICKS" and five stars. To the right of the seal, the words "ME TIME" are written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below this, a quote reads: "Every parent needs some pampering. Explore activities and places for relaxation, wellness, and personal growth." In the bottom left corner, there is a QR code with an arrow pointing to it and the text "SCAN TO FIND LOCAL TOP PICKS". Next to the QR code is a logo for "40 YEARS WASHINGTON Parent" featuring a stylized green figure of a person holding a star. On the right side of the advertisement, a woman is shown from the chest up, wearing a white bathrobe and a white towel wrapped around her head like a turban. She is smiling and looking down at a small, clear bottle of yellow liquid she is holding in her right hand. She is also applying a small, round, white cotton pad to her cheek with her left hand.



Can You Name 5 Women Artists?

Celebrating Female Creators with Your Kids

By Deborah L. Gaston



PHOTO BY DEREK BAKER

Philanthropist Wilhelmina Cole Holladay would ask this question of everyone she met: can you name five women artists? Most of the time, they could list one or two, but five? Not even close. This realization led her on a lifelong journey to support and collect art by women – and establish the first museum dedicated solely to championing women artists.

The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) is in downtown D.C., a few blocks from the White House, and is the only place in the city you are guaranteed to see artwork only by women. Statistics continually show a gigantic gender gap in gallery representation, museum exhibitions and collections, and auction results – even though more women are graduating with art degrees. This gap is also reflected in education: it wasn't until 1987 that a single woman artist was added to the standard art history textbook. So if you cannot name five women artists, it could be because you never learned about their existence.

In the quest for gender equity, a visit to NMWA is a great idea for getting started and exposing your family to the amazing achievements of women artists. Here are five women artists and artworks currently on view to get you started:



© BANCO DE MEXICO DIEGO RIVERA FRIDA KAHLO MUSEUM TRUST, MEXICO, DE/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK, IMAGE BY GOOGLE

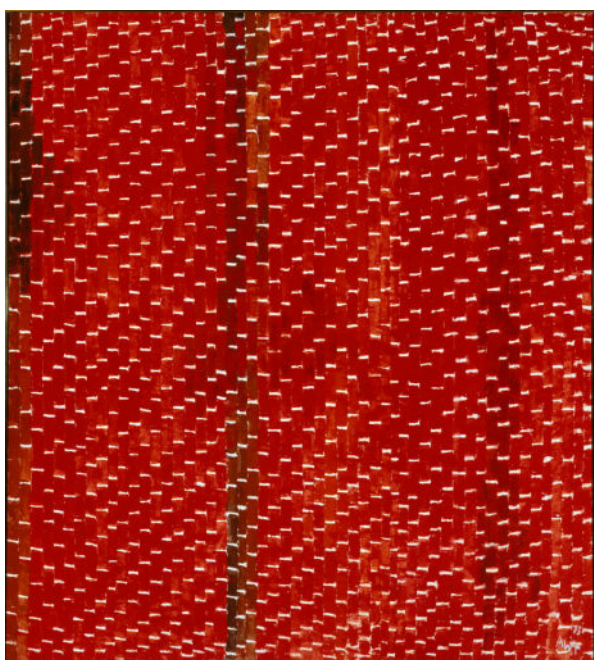
***Frida Kahlo, Self Portrait
Dedicated to Leon Trotsky, 1937***

Chances are you have heard of this artist: the Mexican painter is world-famous for her self-portraits and works inspired by the nature and artifacts of her home country. However, NMWA is the only public collection in D.C. with a Kahlo work – you can see the real thing! Here, she presents herself elegantly clothed in a long embroidered skirt, fringed shawl and delicate gold jewelry. What other details do you see?



Joana Vasconcelos,
Viriato, 2005

Woof! Meet NMWA's dog – but what is covering him up? Portuguese artist Vasconcelos is known for enveloping everyday items, such as pianos, laptops or decorative objects such as this lawn ornament, in crocheted and knitted material. The intricate needlework contrasts sharply with the mass-produced pup. What do you think of when you see the green needlework? What patterns can you find? If you like this, make sure to check out Rubra, a beautiful red chandelier by the same artist, hanging in the museum's rotunda.



Alma Woodsey Thomas, Orion, 1973

Thomas has a distinct style that has been likened to mosaics; you can see individual brush strokes repeated over and over. Here, she was inspired by NASA photographs coming from the Apollo missions and new satellites. She declared herself captivated by the "heavens and stars and my idea of what it was like to be an astronaut, exploring space." Thomas lived in D.C. for much of her life, and became an important role model for women, African Americans and older artists. How do you think you might recreate her technique at home? What would inspire you, and what color(s) would you choose?



Chakaia Booker, Acid Rain, 2001

At first glance, it is a bit hard to tell what this monumental work is made from: sliced up rubber tires. It weighs over 2,000 pounds, roughly the size of a hippo! Booker used saws and drills to make Acid Rain, which is a long way from the traditional canvas and paintbrush you might imagine when you think of artmaking. She wanted to show that women can work with tools and materials that are tough, and make large, imposing art—while still meticulous and beautiful. What kinds of materials could you use to make art?

Kiki Kogelnik,
Superwoman, 1973

Kogelnik moved to New York City from Austria in 1961 and was influenced by the pop art movement. However, instead of using soup cans or Mickey Mouse in her works, she paints large, powerful women. This is likely a self-portrait, and she wears a flamboyant jumpsuit, large aviator sunglasses and black boots. She holds giant scissors, a tool she often used to create stencils and silhouettes. This painting is quite large and sits at the bottom of a grand staircase; it is a fun one to pose with for a photo! If you were a superhero, what pose would you strike?



NMWA is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets are available online and in person. Admission is \$16 for adults, \$13 for D.C. residents and free for anyone under 21. Admission is free the first Sunday and second Wednesday of every month.

Deborah L. Gaston is director of education and interpretation, **National Museum of Women in the Arts** in Washington, D.C. Since 2005, she has supervised all aspects of the museum's educational and interpretive programming and resources, including the development of NMWA's signature Art, Books, and Creativity Teacher Institute, "Fierce Women" tours and See For Yourself interactive art cards. She regularly collaborates with NMWA's curators on exhibitions.

ALONG THE POTOMAC

Things to Do IN JANUARY



Chanukah Wonderland

Through January 1. Chanukah Wonderland is a Chanukah experience for the whole family. Admission is free, as are all of the activities. Daily activities include Chanukah-themed crafts, a Jewish Dance Machine, a toddler hour, and Guess the Dreidels. Featured events include an olive oil workshop, challah-making, a snow globe workshop and Moshe the Magician. Gaithersburg, Md.

Bull Run Festival of Lights

Through January 5th. Experience the Bull Run Festival of Lights, 2.5 miles illuminated by holiday light displays. Drive the festival route from the comfort of your car; turn off your headlights and just follow the magical glow. Centreville, Va.

Wonder of Winter

January 2. Discover the magic of winter at Watkins Nature Center. Come for a fun, hands-on program where children will explore the uniqueness of snowflakes and create their own crystal snowflake to take home. Perfect for young nature enthusiasts! Upper Marlboro, Md.



Blacksmith Campfire

January 3. The whole family is invited to the Gulf Branch fire ring for lots of old-fashioned blacksmith-themed fun. This engaging program will be filled with entertaining activities that may include stories, special animal guests, games, songs and of course, s'mores! (The park will provide marshmallows, chocolate and graham crackers). Registration required. Arlington, Va.

Amigurumi for Beginners

January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31. Come to the Fairfax County Pohick Regional Library's Maker Lab, The POD, to learn amigurumi, the Japanese art of crocheting or knitting small stuffed toys. No experience needed. Ages 13 and up are welcome. Pohick, Va.



Winter Birding Hike

January 3, 15, 31. Some of the best times to identify birds are when the trees have no leaves and there aren't any obstacles in the way of your view! In this hike families will learn about resident birds that stay with us year-round. Dress for the weather. Binoculars will be provided, but you can bring your own. Registration required. Arlington, Va.



DC Kids Sports with KEEN

January 4, 18. Kids of all ages can sign up to get some exercise and engage in sports in this biweekly program organized by Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN). KEEN provides free programs of recreation and fitness for youth with disabilities. Washington, D.C.



World Premiere: *Rebel With a Clause*

January 10. Older kids and their families can join Planet Word for the world debut of the documentary *Rebel with a Clause*, a new film by Brandt Johnson about the internationally acclaimed grammar expert Ellen Jovin. The film showcases Jovin's fun, enlightening and myth-busting journey around the country with her famed Grammar Table. Her conversations show the many ways people grapple with English grammar and its peculiarities. As a bonus, see if you can catch scenes shot at Planet Word! Washington, D.C.

Frozen Movie Sing-Along Movie Marathon

January 11. Beat the cold and enjoy a movie or two! Come to Arlington Public Library for a winter movie sing-along marathon! Free popcorn and drinks will be provided. For all ages. Bring a blanket or pillow to sit on while we watch *Frozen 1* and *2*. Arlington, Va.

Havana Hop: A Children's Tale of Culture and Confidence!

January 11-12. Young Yeila dreams of being a superstar, but she struggles with awful stage fright. Watch as she begins to find her roots, gain confidence, and be her amazing self in this dynamic participation play at the Kennedy Center written and performed by Paige Hernandez with music by Nick "Tha 1da" Hernandez. Most enjoyed by ages 2-10. Washington, D.C.

Puzzle Exchange

January 16. Come to One More Page Books for a Puzzle Swap, where you can trade puzzles that you've solved and know too well to be challenged by for new ones that will mystify your fresh eyes! Perfect to meet more local puzzlers while also trading old puzzles for new ones! McLean, Va.

The Lion in Winter

January 18-26. *The Lion in Winter*, by James Goldman, is a modern-day classic. Comedic in tone, dramatic in action – the play tells the story of the Plantagenet family, who are locked in a free-for-all of competing ambitions to inherit a kingdom. The queen, and wealthiest woman in the world, Eleanor of Aquitaine, has been kept in prison since raising an army against her husband, King Henry II and is let out only for holidays. The play centers around the inner conflicts of the royal family. As Eleanor says, "Every family has its ups and downs," and this royal family is no exception. Recommended for ages 12 and up. Gaithersburg, Md.

The Fairfax Record Riot

January 19. Show your child a bit of music history and shop as you explore this market with 40+ tables of LPs, CDs, 45s and more. Dealers from the D.C. area and beyond. Amazing music from punk to funk, hip hop to country. Meet you in the dollar bins! Fairfax, Va.



Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, Trail Clean Up

January 20. In memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., participate in the National Day of Service and help to improve your community and the environment. **Registration required.** SSL-approved activity. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Rockville, Md.



Montgomery County Youth Spring Festival

January 20. Welcome to the Montgomery County Youth Spring Festival! Come for a day filled with fun activities, delicious food and exciting performances at Thomas Wootton High School. This event is the perfect opportunity for young people in the community to come together and celebrate the arrival of spring. Don't miss out on all the games, crafts and live entertainment. Rockville, Md.

Grand Gaming Melee

January 25. Grand Gaming Melee: The Alexandria-Arlington Regional Gaming Group (AARGGH) invites you to play dice games, card games, tile games and just about any other kind of tabletop game. Alexandria, Va.

Ready, Set, Game! Mario Kart Racing

January 25. For teens ages 13-18 only. Join the Columbia Pike Branch Library for an epic Mario Kart gaming session. It's the ultimate showdown where you can challenge your friends and showcase your skills on the big screen with the library's Nintendo Switches. Registration not required. Attendees may be asked to alternate playtime to ensure everyone gets to play. Washington, D.C.



Lunar New Year Fun

January 30. Join the library to celebrate the Lunar New Year! Follow along to some relaxing tai chi or make a fun themed craft. Alexandria, Va.



BIGSTOCK/SEVENTYFOUR

TEST ANXIETY:

How to Manage It With Mindfulness

By Joy Rains

If your child is stressed about an upcoming test – or stressed by taking tests in general – mindfulness techniques can help. In addition to preparing by studying, getting enough sleep and eating a healthy diet, here are a few tips to help your child manage test anxiety.

■ **Watch your stories.** Since people like predictable results, it's human nature to make up stories about the future. If your child imagines negative outcomes about their test and reacts to what they imagine as if it's true, they're likely adding to their stress levels.

Encourage your child to pay attention to their self-talk. For example, statements such as, "I'm so bad at taking tests!" or "There's no way I'm getting a good grade on the test!" will only set them up for failure. See if they can replace a self-defeating mindset with a more positive mindset. Affirmations such as, "I'm prepared to do my best!" or "My test gives me an opportunity to show what I've learned." will help set them up for success.

■ **Envision the future.** Sports players use visualization techniques all the time, whether they imagine hitting that home run or throwing that touchdown pass. By repeatedly imagining their desired outcomes, they're creating new neural pathways in their brains that help turn their visions into realities. This same technique can be used to help manage test anxiety. To support your child, encourage them to envision calmly

and confidently taking their test. They can also envision the time prior to the test, as they awaken in the morning, eat breakfast, get dressed and go to school – all with a calm and centered mind. They can even imagine the food they'll eat for breakfast and the clothes they'll wear to school. The more details, the better, since realistic visualizations are more likely to take hold.

■ **Stay grounded.** Another way to help your child manage test anxiety is to encourage them to periodically shift their attention from their mind to their body. Rather than getting caught up in worries about the future, suggest they simply notice how their body feels. For instance, are they holding tension in their shoulders or their jaw? If so, can they release it?

Paying attention to where their body connects with the surface beneath them is another effective technique. If they start to become anxious while they're taking their test, they can take a few breaths as they focus on their feet connecting with the ground or their buttocks connecting with their chair.

Finally, if your child is experiencing test anxiety, it gives you an opportunity to strategize ways to support them. By identifying techniques to help manage their stress, you're setting them up for success now and in the future.

Joy Rains is a corporate mindfulness trainer and author of *Meditation Illuminated: Simple Ways to Manage Your Busy Mind*. Learn more at joyrains.com.

MONTESSORI EDUCATION...

...AN EXCITING APPROACH TO LEARNING!

Montessori Children:

- Learn at their own pace • Are encouraged to choose work and make decisions
- Develop to their greatest potential
- Learn spontaneously and creatively • Discover that learning is a joy that can last a lifetime



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

TOTH MONTESSORI

Navy Yard & Capitol Riverfront, DC
202-748-5930
Ages 3 mos.-6 yrs.
tothmontessori.org

MARYLAND

APPLE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Bethesda, MD 20817
301-320-8832
Ages 2-6 yrs.
applemontessorimd.com

🍎 CROSSWAY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Kensington, MD 20895
301-929-2505
Ages 3 mos.-6 yrs.
crossway-community.org

ROCK CREEK MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Silver Spring, MD 20902
(301) 942-9561
Ages 18 months- Kindergarten
www.rockcreekmontessori.com

ONENESS-FAMILY SCHOOL

Chevy Chase, MD 20815
301-652-7751
Ages 2 yrs.-Grade 12
OnenessFamily.org

THE BETHESDA MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Bethesda, MD 20814
301-986-1260,
Ages 3-6, Pre-K & K
bethesdamontessori.com

VIRGINIA

🍎 BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL

McLean, VA 22101
703-356-5437
Ages 2-6 yrs.
brooksfieldschool.org

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF ALEXANDRIA

Alexandria, VA 22310
703-960-3498
Ages 3-12 yrs.
montessorischoolofalexandria.com

🍎 MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF MCLEAN

McLean, VA 22101
703-790-1049
Ages 2-12 yrs.
mcleanmontessori.org

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Annandale & Falls Church, VA
703-992-0255
Ages 2-15 yrs.
msnv.org

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF OAKTON

Fairfax, VA 22030
703-715-0611
Ages 3-12 yrs.
oaktonmontessori.com

🍎 SUNSET HILLS MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Reston, VA 20191
703-476-7477 *
Ages 21-months through 4th grade
sunsethillsmontessori.com

🍎 See advertisement in this issue. EACH SCHOOL INDEPENDENTLY GOVERNED.

FUN THINGS

TO DO WITH KIDS IN THE DMV

Did you know ...

You can list your kid-friendly events
FREE on [washingtonparent.com](https://www.washingtonparent.com)?

HERE'S HOW TO CREATE AN EVENT:

- Go to [WashingtonParent.com/events](https://www.WashingtonParent.com/events)
- Click on blue ADD EVENT button
- Provide details of the event

LOOKING FOR THINGS TO DO WITH THE KIDDOS?

Go to [WashingtonParent.com](https://www.WashingtonParent.com):

- View our **Calendar of Events**
- Sign up for our weekly
Top Things To Do This Weekend e-news
- Find our **Top Things to Do with Kids in the DMV This Week** featured events



40 YEARS
WASHINGTON
Parent
[washingtonparent.com](https://www.washingtonparent.com)