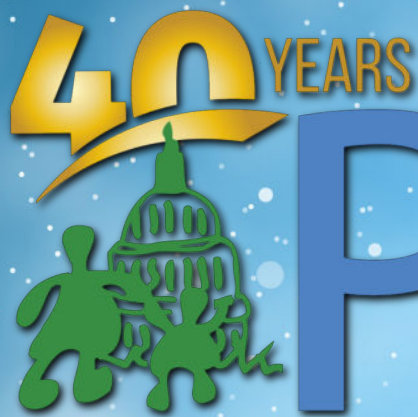




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MOM
WHITNEY
WARD**

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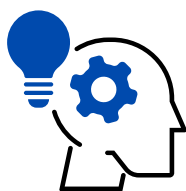
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What's inside this issue:

5 THINGS

YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS

Winter settles in with plenty of reasons to slow down, warm up and spend time together — and this issue is packed with cozy inspiration, practical help and powerful stories from across the DC region. From comforting seasonal treats and active cold-weather outings to meaningful reads and real-life heroes, these features are designed to help families make the most of the season ahead.



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WARM UP WITH THE BEST HOT COCOA IN THE DC REGION

Cold days call for something sweet and comforting, and this guide highlights some of the richest, coziest cups of hot cocoa around. From bakeries and chocolatiers to neighborhood cafés, these local spots serve indulgent mugs that turn winter errands into a treat — perfect for kids, parents and anyone craving a little warmth.



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MEET DC FIREFIGHTER MOM WHITNEY WARD

This powerful profile introduces readers to DC Fire & EMS Sergeant Whitney Ward — a leader, mentor and mother who has spent nearly two decades serving her community. Her story of resilience, service and leadership shines a light on the women shaping the future of fire service.



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HOW HEALTHY FRESH MEALS CAN HELP YOU FREE UP YOUR SCHEDULE IN 2026

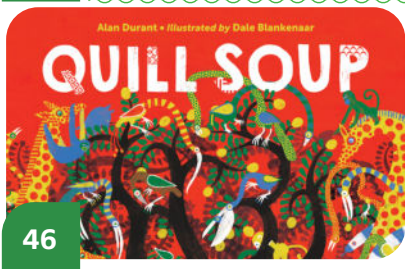
Busy families don't need perfection — they need realistic solutions. This feature explores how Healthy Fresh Meals makes healthy eating easier with chef-prepared, ready-to-eat dishes that save time, reduce stress and support long-term nutrition goals without complicated planning or cooking.



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THE BEST PLACES TO LACE UP YOUR ICE SKATES IN THE DMV

From festive outdoor rinks to dependable indoor ice houses, this roundup spotlights the best family-friendly places to skate across DC, Maryland and Virginia. Whether you're gliding under twinkling lights or helping beginners find their balance, these rinks make winter active and fun.



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WHAT TO READ: WARM UP A COLD DAY WITH SOUP — AND BOOKS

Chilly weather pairs perfectly with a steaming bowl of soup and a great story. This curated reading list spans picture books, folktales and teen cookbooks that celebrate food, culture and comfort — with some titles even inspiring young readers to cook along.



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PHOTO COURTESY DC FIRE & EMS

MEET DC'S REAL-LIFE SUPERMOM

How a single mother turned firefighter is inspiring the next generation of women in fire service.

By Jenna Dolch

For nearly two decades, DC Fire & EMS Sergeant Whitney Ward has been serving the community she grew up in, protecting families, leading emergency response teams and paving the way for women in a historically male-dominated profession.

Her journey began in 2006 through the Fire Cadet Program, where she was offered an opportunity that changed her life and gave her the chance to build a better future for herself and her young son. Today, Ward is a respected leader, mentor and advocate for women in fire service, known not only for her skill on the job but for the resilience and compassion she brings to her work every day.

Building confidence and capability

On the morning the now-iconic training photo was taken, Ward was detailed to Truck 10, where she discovered that her crew for the day was entirely female. Knowing how rare and important that moment was, she organized ladder and forcible-entry drills to strengthen confidence and teamwork.

"I wanted to make sure everyone felt comfortable and capable without assistance," she says. The crew practiced ladder throws, entry techniques and strategic planning, preparing for any scenario they might face that day. "If we caught a fire, I wanted us to go home safely but also be on our A-game. As an all-female crew, all eyes were on us."

Ward calls it an honor to work alongside strong women firefighters, many of whom she mentors directly.

A calling founded in community and motherhood

Before entering the fire service, Ward was a young single mother working at the DC Credit Union when firefighters who frequented her teller window encouraged her to apply to the Cadet Program. At 19, raising a toddler and searching for stability, she saw the program as a life-changing opportunity.

"It was something I could retire from, something that would give me more time with my son and allow me to provide a better life," she reflects. She started training in April 2006 and quickly discovered that firefighting was more than a job, it was her purpose. "My son has always been my motivation. I wanted more for him, and this career gave me the chance to make that happen."

Nearly 19 years later, Ward continues to serve with pride, grateful to give back to the city that raised her.

Balancing motherhood and the firehouse

The early years of Ward's career were demanding; probationary studies, long shifts and parenting a young child alone. But with determination and a strong support system, she made it work.

"When I'm at work, my focus is on serving the community

and returning home safely. When I'm off duty, my focus is my son," she says. Weekends were spent cheering at games, visiting museums or making memories outdoors. With unwavering support from family and her son's great-grandparents, she built balance in a career that rarely slows down.

Her son, now grown, calls her the GMOAT: Greatest Mom of All Time, inspired by her drive to rise through the ranks, from Armed Fire/Arson Investigator at age 27 to her current role as Sergeant.

Women in fire service: Mentorship, visibility and growth

Although the fire service remains largely male, Ward is committed to being part of meaningful change. Women currently make up about 13% of DC Fire & EMS, and she is proud to help that number grow. She serves as a mentor, CPAT instructor, adjunct academy instructor and recruiting volunteer.

"Leadership is about integrity and influence, not rank," she says. "Being seen matters. Women need to see other women doing this job." Her approach centers on honesty, example and encouragement, especially for new or younger firefighters building confidence in their skills.

Caring for mental and emotional wellbeing

Firefighting demands physical strength, but the emotional weight of trauma, loss and adrenaline can be equally heavy. Ward prioritizes movement, journaling, faith and quality time with loved ones to stay grounded.

"I leave work at work so I can decompress," she explains. She travels often, spends time outdoors and attends Jummah with her son when she's off shift. These routines help her stay mentally strong and fully present.

Her message to young women — especially mothers

Ward speaks honestly about the challenges of fire service, but she encourages women not to let fear stop them.

"If you want to do this, go for it. It won't be easy, but it will be worth it. Women may have to work harder, but firefighting is a team effort; you don't do it alone." She emphasizes the importance of support systems, discipline, and belief in oneself: "Anything is possible if you keep going and never give up."

Sergeant Whitney Ward's story is one of determination, service and resilience—proof that strength and compassion can exist side by side. She continues to make history in DC Fire & EMS while helping shape the next generation of firefighters and empowering young women to see possibilities where others saw limits. Through leadership, mentorship and heart, she reminds us that heroes come in many forms and sometimes, they're moms in turnout gear.



PHOTO BY IWAN BAAN

A PEACEFUL DAY OF ART AND NATURE AT GLENSTONE

Where art, architecture and nature come together for a peaceful and inspiring family outing just outside Washington, DC.

By Jenna Dolch

Just a short drive from Washington, DC, Glenstone in Potomac, Maryland, offers families a refreshingly calm and immersive museum experience unlike anything else in the region. Spread across more than 300 acres of meadows, sculpture fields and minimalist gallery spaces, Glenstone invites visitors to slow down, observe and connect with art in a natural environment. Designed with intention at every turn.

From architecture and landscaping to how guests move through the space, this free, reservation-based museum is ideal for older children that are 12+, teens and adults who appreciate thoughtful experiences. This guide highlights Glenstone's must-see areas, family-friendly tips and everything you need to plan your visit.

WHY GO AND FAMILY HIGHLIGHTS

Glenstone blends contemporary art, modern architecture and natural landscapes into a quiet, reflective environment perfect for families wanting a calmer, more meaningful outing. The grounds include over 300 acres of walking paths, restored meadows, wooded trails and large-scale outdoor sculptures, ideal for movement and fresh air.

Thoughtfully designed indoor galleries allow families to experience major post-World War II art at a slower, more intentional pace. Works from world-renowned artists, including Jeff Koons, Ellsworth Kelly, Alexander Calder, Charles Ray and more, are displayed in open, spacious settings.

Tips for families:

- Tickets are required. Reserve free timed-entry tickets in advance as weekends fill quickly.
- Children under 12 are not admitted, so this outing is best for teens and older kids.
- Wear comfortable walking shoes; much of the experience is outdoors.

- Bring jackets or layers, the grounds are breezy and open.
- Encourage kids to sketch, take photos or reflect on how the environment affects the art.
- Plan at least two or three hours for your visit to walk the grounds and see the galleries.

WHAT TO EXPERIENCE AT GLENSTONE

THE PAVILIONS AND WATER COURT

The Pavilions serve as Glenstone's main indoor gallery space, featuring a sequence of minimalist rooms that house rotating exhibitions and permanent works. Natural light, quiet surroundings and reflective architecture set the tone for slow looking.

At the center is the stunning Water Court, a peaceful reflecting pool framed by native plantings and open-air views. It creates an ideal moment for families to pause together and take in the beautiful space.

OUTDOOR TRAILS AND SCULPTURE INSTALLATIONS

One of Glenstone's biggest draws is its expansive outdoor environment. Families can wander along miles of groomed paths, passing meadows filled with native plants, woodland stretches and iconic sculptures.

Highlights include:

- Split-Rocker by Jeff Koons, a massive floral sculpture beloved for its color and scale.
- Architectural outdoor works that feel like hidden discoveries along the trails. This open-air component makes Glenstone feel more like a nature preserve with art woven in.

Architecture that inspires

Glenstone's minimalist design, created by architect Thomas Phifer, gives families a new way to explore how buildings shape the experience of art. Concrete surfaces, natural stone, warm wood and oversized windows allow the changing weather and seasons to influence each visit. Even teens who may not gravitate toward traditional museums often find the architectural environment engaging.

VISITOR INFORMATION AND LOGISTICS

- **Location:** 12100 Glen Road, Potomac, Maryland
- **Admission:** Free, but timed-entry reservations are required via glenstone.org
- **Best for:** Families with teens or older children (12+ only)
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday-Sunday; schedule varies, check online before visiting
- **Parking:** On-site, free with reservation
- **Accessibility:** Trails and galleries are accessible; consider calling ahead if using strollers or wheelchairs
- **Food:** A limited on-site café is available; visitors may enjoy snacks outdoors where permitted

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Sonia De Los Santos

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Feb. 7 | Family Theater

MOST ENJOYED BY AGES 5+



The Sea Beyond the Ocean

A boy named Scooter goes on a quest to find the author and missing ending of his favorite book series in this world premiere play written by **Doug Robinson** and directed by **KenYatta Rogers**.

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PLAY ALL DAY IN POTOMAC

Family-friendly activities for every season in and around the area.

By Jenna Dolch

Potomac is packed with beautiful outdoor spaces, interactive museums and delicious treats that kids love. Whether your kids enjoy exploring nature or discovering something new indoors, these local favorites offer fun for the whole family. To make sure these recommendations are accurate and current, we checked official websites and community resources.

GREAT FALLS OVERLOOK & BILLY GOAT TRAIL

Great Falls Park offers amazing views of the Potomac River and impressive waterfalls that always wow kids. The Billy Goat Trail includes different sections with varying difficulty, making it a great choice for adventurous families. There are spots along the way to rest, explore and take photos. Rangers are on hand for safety tips and information, but because of the terrain, this activity is best for older children able to hike confidently. Bring sturdy shoes and pack snacks to enjoy along the trail.

- **Address:** 11710 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac
- **Hours:** 7 a.m.- dusk daily
- **Phone:** (301) 739-4200

CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK

Cabin John Regional Park features multiple playgrounds, sports courts, picnic areas and paved trails that work well for strollers. Younger kids love the Adventure Playground with its large slides and climbing structures, and families can make a full day of it by adding a nature walk or lunch under the covered shelters. The park is clean, well-maintained and easy to navigate. In warmer months, the mini-train ride adds extra fun.

- **Address:** 7400 Tuckerman Lane, Bethesda
- **Hours:** Sunrise-sunset daily
- **Phone:** (301) 495-2595

GLENSTONE MUSEUM — OUTDOOR SCULPTURES AND PATHS

Glenstone Museum blends art and nature, offering outdoor sculptures and walking paths that are beautiful to explore. The peaceful setting encourages curiosity as kids look closely

at large-scale works. Indoor areas are more suitable for older children, but outdoors is relaxed and stroller-friendly. Tickets are free, but reservations are required. Staff are friendly and available to guide visitors through the grounds. It's a calm, unique way to introduce kids to contemporary art.

- **Address:** 12100 Glen Road, Potomac
- **Hours:** Reservation times vary
- **Phone:** (301) 983-5001

LOCUST GROVE NATURE CENTER

Locust Grove Nature Center offers hands-on nature programs for kids of all ages. Families can explore forest trails, see seasonal exhibits and enjoy guided educational events. It's a great place to learn about local wildlife and ecosystems while staying active outdoors. The staff hosts regular nature programs that often involve crafts or exploration challenges. The space is budget-friendly and easy to navigate with little ones. It's especially fun for curious kids who love bugs, plants and animals.

- **Address:** 7777 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday
- **Phone:** (301) 765-8660

BULLIS SCHOOL — FAMILY-FRIENDLY THEATER & PERFORMANCES

Bullis School regularly hosts performances in the Blair Family Center for the Arts that are open to the local community. Families can enjoy musicals, concerts and dance showcases put on by talented students in a professional theater environment. It's an affordable way to introduce kids to live performances. Seating is comfortable, and the venue is easy to navigate for younger audiences. The productions are high quality but still casual enough that families with little ones feel welcome. Check their events calendar online for upcoming shows throughout the school year.

- **Address:** 10601 Falls Road, Potomac
- **Hours:** Showtimes vary by event; check online
- **Phone:** (301) 299-8500

KID MUSEUM — DAVIS LIBRARY

KID Museum's Davis Library location gives families a creative indoor option where children can design, build and explore hands-on STEAM activities. Kids can try simple robotics, crafting projects and interactive maker challenges designed to spark curiosity and problem-solving. The space is bright, friendly and run by educators who help guide younger learners through each project. Parents appreciate that the activities rotate throughout the year, so every visit feels new. Weekend workshops and school-break programs make it a great go-to when the weather turns cold. Reservations are recommended for special sessions.

- **Address:** 6400 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sundays
- **Phone:** (240) 777-0922

PINSTripES — BOWLING & BOCCÉ

Pinstripes offers a polished but family-friendly environment where adults can enjoy great food while kids bowl or play bocce. It's quieter and more relaxed than loud arcades, making it good for multi-generational outings. Families love the comfortable lounge seating and the ability to reserve lanes ahead of time. The menu includes kid favorites as well as upscale options for adults and this spot works well for birthdays, weekend fun or school-break afternoons. It's just a quick drive from Potomac at Pike & Rose.

- **Address:** 11920 Grand Park Ave., North Bethesda
- **Hours:** 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday; 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday; 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Sunday
- **Phone:** (240) 630-3222

AMC MONTGOMERY 16 — FAMILY MOVIE NIGHTS

This movie theater at Westfield Montgomery Mall is a perfect indoor escape for all ages. Families can catch new releases, including kid-focused films and holiday favorites. Recliner seating makes longer movies more comfortable, especially for younger viewers. The arcade-style lobby games offer extra fun before showtime. It's conveniently located near restaurants for dinner and movie outings.

- **Address:** 7101 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda
- **Hours:** Showtimes vary daily
- **Phone:** (301) 547-3197

IFLY INDOOR SKYDIVING

If your family likes adventure, iFly is an unforgettable experience for both kids and adults. Trained instructors guide flyers in a safe wind tunnel that simulates skydiving. It's a memorable birthday or celebration choose-your-own-adventure activity. Spectators can watch from viewing areas, making it fun even for kids who sit out. Easy online booking available.

- **Address:** 9400 Gaither Road, Gaithersburg
- **Hours:** Noon-8 p.m. Monday-Friday; 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturday-Sunday
- **Phone:** (202) 883-4359

SPRINKLES POTOMAC VILLAGE

Sprinkles is a local favorite for cupcakes, cookies and special-occasion treats. Kids love picking their own flavor from the display window and options change often. The shop is small but cozy, and quick service means you're in and out fast. Parents appreciate the gluten-free and seasonal selections. Holiday-themed baked goods make visits extra fun.

- **Address:** 10148 River Road, Potomac
- **Hours:** 4-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 4-10 p.m. Friday; Noon-10 p.m. Saturday; Noon-9 p.m. Sunday
- **Phone:** (301) 299-8415



PHOTO COURTESY ZAVAZONE

6 INDOOR PLAY SPOTS FOR KIDS IN ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

Where kids can run, jump, climb and play during your Rockville outing.

By Maggie McIntyre

When the weather doesn't cooperate and you need a way for kids to burn off their extra energy, Rockville, and nearby Gaithersburg, have plenty of options. You can find everything from soft-play toddler zones to epic adventure courses offering year-round fun. We've put together an inclusive list of indoor play places for you to check out so you can enjoy some playtime with your kiddo!

HYPER KIDZ ROCKVILLE

Hyper Kidz in Rockville is a beach-themed indoor playground designed for kids ages 0-13. Its 16,000-square-foot space has three age-specific zones. The mini zone is made for babies and toddlers with soft ocean-related play items. The kid zone, for little ones ages 2-7, has plenty of fun features, like a two-story balloon house, a building block room, a ball pit and slides. Lastly, the big kid zone consists of a three-story pavilion for children over 3 with tons of interactive play activities. Hyper Kidz encourages imaginative play in a safe soft-foam environment. Parents stay for free with paid admission, and infants 0-12 months also play free with a sibling ticket.

- **Location:** 7301 Calhoun Place Suite 400, Rockville
- **Hours:** 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Saturday; 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Sundays
- **Phone:** (240) 889-3224

ZAVAZONE

ZAVAZONE's high-energy, active environment is perfect for kids over 5. It's an indoor adventure park that features way more than just trampolines. If you have any Ninja Warrior fans in the house, they will love tackling all 30,000 square feet of ZAVAZONE. The facility has everything from ziplines to ropes courses to giant slides and climbing walls — there is truly something for everyone. And if parents don't feel like joining the fun, there is a designated parent zone where adults can relax with the healthy snacks on offer.

- **Location:** 40B Southlawn Court, Rockville
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday; closed Tuesday; 4 p.m.-8 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; 4 p.m.-9 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturday; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday
- **Phone:** (800) 376-9282

THE TOT SPACE

Focused on imaginative play, The Tot Space promises creativity, connection and healthy development in children. The play studio offers open play sessions, private playdates, playgroups and parties. Their trained instructors lead engaging activities while parents are free to join or relax and enjoy the parent lounge.

- **Location:** 1321A Rockville Pike, Rockville
- **Hours:** Play times vary by booking availability
- **Phone:** (301) 712-9206

SKY ZONE TRAMPOLINE PARK

A classic for many families, Sky Zone is an action-packed indoor trampoline park where kids can burn off steam in an active and safe environment. This location features wall-to-wall trampolines, a bouncy basketball court, dodgeball, a foam pit, a Ninja Warrior course and a mega launch slide among other attractions. Staff monitors are always on hand to keep play environments safe so parents can relax or join in on the jumping worry-free. Along with daily jump passes, Sky Zone is a great space to host parties or family events.

- **Location:** 15813 Gaither Drive, Gaithersburg
- **Hours:** 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturday; 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday
- **Phone:** (240) 454-9768

ME LAND GAITHERSBURG

Me Land is a soft indoor playground built for kids up to age 12. It features slides, games, structures and courses to jumpstart imaginative play. With four designated areas — from a toddler zone to big kids zone — Me Land has plenty of opportunities for kids to explore, crawl and create. They host drop-ins, offer party packages and have field trip and group event options too.

- **Location:** 831 Russell Ave., Gaithersburg
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Sunday
- **Phone:** (240) 477-4856

WE ROCK THE SPECTRUM

Founded with children of all ability levels in mind, We Rock The Spectrum is a kids gym that fosters safe sensory experiences and encourages discovery and creativity. Their 12 pieces of uniquely-designed sensory equipment are made specifically for children with sensory processing disorders but provide a fun space for all kids. We Rock The Spectrum has open play sessions, parties and classes that equip kids with social skills groups and nurturing activities.

- **Location:** 7601 Airpark Road, Suite E, Gaithersburg
- **Hours:** 9:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday; 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday; 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday
- **Phone:** (301) 355-8486

FUN THINGS TO DO WITH KIDS IN THE DMV

Did you know ...
You can list your kid-friendly events **FREE** on washingtonparent.com?

HERE'S HOW TO CREATE AN EVENT:

- Go to WashingtonParent.com/calendar
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- Provide details of the event

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- Find our **Top Things to Do with Kids in the DMV This Week** featured events

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DMV NIGHTS ARE BETTER UNDER THE STARS

From rural overlooks to observatories and waterfront hideaways, these accessible DMV spots offer clear night skies without long drives.

By Jenna Dolch

Finding a dark, quiet place to look at the stars can be challenging in a metropolitan area like Washington, DC, but not impossible. Many of the DMV's best stargazing locations aren't big parks at all, but instead quiet overlooks, open fields, observatory grounds, waterfront areas and rural pull-offs far from city glow. Some locations even host their own stargazing events.



These spots don't close at dusk and often attract local astronomy clubs, photographers or hobbyists looking for clear skies. Whether you're hoping to catch a meteor shower or simply want a peaceful night outside with family, the places below offer reliable darkness within 20–90 minutes of the District. Each location is chosen for accessibility, minimal light pollution and good visibility, not just beautiful scenery during the day.

1. TURNER FARM OBSERVATORY PARK — GREAT FALLS, VA

Turner Farm is one of the most reliable places near DC where stargazing is both permitted and encouraged after dark. The observatory grounds include telescopes run by the Analemma Society, and visitors are welcome during scheduled public viewing nights that often continue well past dusk. Even outside of events, the surrounding equestrian fields offer wide, unobstructed skies with surprisingly low light pollution for Northern Virginia. Families can learn about the night sky in a hands-on way thanks to volunteers who help identify planets and constellations. The atmosphere is calm and community-focused, making it ideal for beginners and casual skywatchers.

- **Address:** 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls, VA
- **Hours:** Public access varies; astronomy nights typically run after dark
- **Tips:** Bring chairs, dress warmly and check the Analemma Society calendar for public telescope nights

2. THE NATIONAL MALL (REFLECTING POOL AREA) — WASHINGTON, DC

While the National Mall has moderate light pollution, it offers one of the clearest, widest sky views in the city, with no tree canopy and long sightlines. Many amateur stargazers

appreciate the Mall because major celestial events (like planetary alignments, lunar eclipses or bright meteor showers) are still easily visible. The open lawn areas around the Reflecting Pool create an unobstructed skyline that makes stargazing surprisingly enjoyable despite being downtown. Families, photographers and astronomy groups often gather here for special sky events. Because the Mall stays active well into the evening, it's a comfortable and safe place to linger after dark.

- **Address:** 2 Lincoln Memorial Circle NW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** Open 24 hours
- **Tips:** Bring binoculars, avoid weekends if you want quiet, aim for nights with bright planets or eclipses

3. CARDEROCK RECREATION AREA (ROCK OUTCROPPING OVERLOOKS) — MARYLAND

Located just outside the Beltway, Carderock offers a string of rock outcroppings and open river overlooks that remain accessible after dark. Because the Potomac River creates natural separation from surrounding development, this area has noticeably darker skies than most places this close to DC. The rocky ledges attract night photographers and astronomy hobbyists who enjoy the open horizon lines. It's a peaceful, quiet location where families can bring blankets and observe stars reflected on the water. The area provides a good balance of accessibility and darkness without requiring a major drive. Nights with clear weather and low humidity offer surprisingly sharp views.

- **Address:** 9500 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, MD
- **Hours:** Open 24 hours
- **Tips:** Bring a flashlight for navigating trails, stick to well-known overlooks, check weather for river fog

4. ALDIE & MIDDLEBURG BACK ROADS — LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA

The rural back roads between Aldie, Middleburg and The Plains are beloved by local astrophotographers for their wide-open farmland and extremely low light pollution. With long stretches of country roads and rolling hills, this region offers some of the darkest skies within an hour of DC. There are numerous safe pull-offs and gravel farm entrances where people park to observe meteor showers or photograph the Milky Way. On clear nights, bright stars and even faint galaxies are visible to the naked eye. It's quiet, peaceful and ideal for those who want a true dark-sky feel without going deep into the mountains. The area's elevation and low humidity often give surprisingly crisp visibility.

- **Address:** General region: Aldie, Middleburg and The Plains, VA
- **Hours:** Open rural roads; accessible anytime
- **Tips:** Choose wide pull-offs, avoid blocking private drives, bring blankets and a red-light flashlight

CONTINUED...



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5. EASTERN SHORE FARMLAND OVERLOOKS — KENT ISLAND & QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY, MD

Maryland's Eastern Shore offers big-sky landscapes that are hard to find near the city. Farmland areas around Kent Island, Grasonville and Queen Anne's County feature long flat horizons perfect for stargazing. Away from urban glow and with the Chesapeake Bay nearby, the skies are much darker than inland suburbs. Stargazers often choose quiet pull-offs, boat launches or small waterfront parking lots where overhead stars are reflected across the bay. This is an excellent spot for catching meteor showers or watching the Milky Way rise during summer months. Families enjoy it because the area feels safe, peaceful and easy to access late at night.

- **Address:** General region: Kent Island, Grasonville and Queen Anne's County, MD
- **Hours:** Accessible 24 hours depending on exact location (public boat ramps and overlooks).
- **Tips:** Bring bug spray in summer, check wind conditions, waterfront areas give outstanding visibility

6. SHENANDOAH VALLEY OVERLOOKS (FRONT ROYAL ENTRANCE REGION)

While Shenandoah National Park itself closes most overlooks at dusk, the areas just *outside* the Front Royal entrance offer several public pull-offs and rural fields that remain open late. These spots benefit from the valley's naturally dark skies and mountain air but without the strict closing times of Skyline Drive. On clear nights, visitors can see a dense cluster of stars and even occasional satellites or the Milky Way. The region is popular among night photographers due to its open views and minimal traffic after dark. It's a great choice for anyone wanting a darker experience without traveling into deep mountainous terrain.

- **Address:** Route 340 and rural roads near the Front Royal entrance, Front Royal, VA
- **Hours:** Rural roads accessible 24 hours
- **Tips:** Park only in paved or safe gravel pull-offs, bring warm layers, visit on moonless nights for best results.

7. BREEZY POINT BEACH & MARINA — CHESAPEAKE BAY, MD

Breezy Point offers a wide-open shoreline with excellent east-facing sky views perfect for moonrises, meteor showers and Milky Way observations. With minimal commercial development nearby, the night sky is darker than most waterfronts within an hour of DC. Visitors often bring blankets and sit directly on the sand to watch stars reflected across the bay. Because the location is away from major highways, the atmosphere is calm and ideal for stargazing with older kids or teens. It also tends to stay breezier, which helps reduce haze and humidity, providing clearer visibility. Local astronomy enthusiasts often gather here during major sky events.

- **Address:** 5300 Breezy Point Road, Chesapeake Beach, MD
- **Hours:** Open 24 hours off-season, check seasonal gate restrictions in summer
- **Tips:** Bring extra layers since bay breezes get cold, check tides, avoid bright lights

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BIGSTOCK/INARIK

HELPING EVERY CHILD THRIVE

These are some of the top-rated programs supporting students with special needs in Virginia.

By Jenna Dolch

Finding the right school for a child with special needs can be one of the most important (and tough) decisions a family makes.

Virginia is home to several private schools fully dedicated to serving students with autism, learning disabilities, communication challenges and other developmental needs.

To build this list, we relied on verified school websites, such as Niche.com, parent reviews and state-recognized support services to ensure accuracy and relevance for families.

THE NEW COMMUNITY SCHOOL — RICHMOND, VA

The New Community School specializes in educating students with dyslexia and related language-based learning differences. Teachers use evidence-based reading instruction tailored to each learner's strengths. Small classes allow for strong student-teacher relationships and increased confidence. In addition to academics, students explore athletics, arts and leadership opportunities. Social-emotional learning is built into the daily routine. Families consistently praise the school's ability to unlock student potential.

- **Grades:** 5-12
- **Address:** 4211 Hermitage Road, Richmond
- **Phone:** (804) 266-2494

SOUTHEASTERN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL — MIDLAND, VA

This school serves students with emotional, behavioral and learning challenges who benefit from a more supportive and therapeutic environment. Staff include educators, behavior specialists and counselors who collaborate closely with families. The academic program emphasizes progress at a steady, personalized pace. Students also receive guidance on coping skills, social development and self-advocacy. The school aims to prepare each learner for a successful return to a less restrictive setting when appropriate.

- **Grades:** K-12
- **Address:** 4484 Catlett Road, Midland
- **Phone:** (540) 422-7390

PHILLIPS PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES — FAIRFAX, VA

Phillips School supports students with behavioral and learning needs through highly personalized instruction. Its Fairfax campus offers therapeutic intervention, vocational training and strong family involvement. Students receive services such as speech therapy, counseling and transition planning. The learning environment is structured to keep students engaged while helping them manage emotions and build confidence. Staff help students work toward academic success and future independence.

- **Grades:** K-12; Ages 5-22
- **Address:** 11230 Waples Mill Road, Suite 100, Fairfax
- **Phone:** (703) 591-1146

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THE FAISON CENTER — RICHMOND, VA

The Faison Center is dedicated to supporting individuals with autism with a full continuum of educational and therapeutic services. Students benefit from ABA-based learning and integrated speech, occupational and behavioral supports. Classrooms are highly structured with a strong focus on communication and life-skills development. The school provides work-based learning opportunities for older students.

- **Serves ages:** 5-22
- **Address:** 5311 Markel Road, Richmond
- **Phone:** (804) 612-1947

MATTHEW'S CENTER FOR VISUAL LEARNING — MANASSAS, VA

Matthew's Center supports students with autism, intellectual disabilities and emotional or behavioral needs through individualized instruction. The school uses a multi-sensory teaching approach and small class sizes to help each student learn at their own pace. Students receive academic instruction alongside life-skills and social development. The environment is structured, calm and designed to help learners build independence. Licensed by the state, the school works closely with public school districts for placement.

- **Serves ages:** 5-21
- **Address:** 10651 Lomond Drive, Manassas
- **Phone:** (703) 369-2967



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RAISING LITTLE MUSICIANS

Six top-rated spots for music lessons and group classes in the Washington, DC area.

By Jenna Dolch

Whether your child is picking up an instrument for the first time or you're looking for a fun, structured music program, the DC metro area offers a wide variety of quality options. For this article, we reviewed each school's website, class offerings and recent reviews to highlight family-friendly, well-regarded programs. Here are six excellent choices for children and teens (and sometimes adults, too).

MASON COMMUNITY ARTS ACADEMY

Mason Community Arts Academy, part of George Mason University in Fairfax, offers music classes for ages 4 to adult including group beginning violin, piano lessons, private instruction and ensemble opportunities. For younger beginners, they have "Violin Beginnings" for ages 4-6, taught using Suzuki, Rolland and traditional methods. The environment is university-linked yet community-focused, making it a solid pick for families who want quality instruction in a friendly setting.

- **Address:** 4260 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday
- **Contact:** (703) 993-9889

MUSICFULLY

Musicfully specializes in private music lessons in-home or virtual around the McLean/Falls Church/Arlington area, covering instruments like piano, guitar, voice, ukulele and more. The flexible in-home or online format is ideal for busy families, and the broad instrument offering means siblings or multi-age learners can each find their match.

- **Address:** 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Friday; 1-4 p.m. Saturday
- **Contact:** (571) 310-1881

COHEN VIOLIN STUDIO

Founder Harriet Geraldine Cohen brings decades of teaching experience to this private violin studio in West Springfield. Lessons are tailored to each student, and include performance opportunities, chamber music and group mini-classes for beginners. This studio is a great choice for families seeking focused violin training with performance-driven results.

- **Address:** West Springfield, VA (private studio)
- **Hours:** By appointment weekly lessons
- **Contact:** hgcohen@yahoo.com

LEVINE MUSIC

Levine Music is a nonprofit community music school with multiple campuses in the DC area. It offers private lessons, group classes, ensembles, early-childhood music and adult programs. The variety makes it excellent for families with multiple children or different skill levels. Students also benefit from performance opportunities, workshops and recitals held throughout the year.

- **Address:** Sallie Mae Hall, 2801 Upton St. NW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** 1-8 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 1-6 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday
- **Contact:** (202) 686-8000

SCHOOL OF ROCK

School of Rock uses a performance-based model combining private lessons and weekly band rehearsals, so kids get to play live with peers. Programs span guitar, drums, keyboards, vocals and more for ages 6-18 (and adult options too). This is a fun and engaging option for families whose kids are eager to perform and collaborate.

- **Address:** 3529 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** 3-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday
- **Contact:** (202) 893-8765

TUNES 4 TOTS

Designed for the youngest musicians (infants to age 4) along with a participating caregiver, Tunes 4 Tots offers music and movement classes that build early rhythm, song, play and music discovery skills. It's ideal for families looking to introduce toddlers to music in a fun and age-appropriate setting.

- **Address:** 201 I St. SW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** Class times vary by location and schedule; see website for upcoming sessions
- **Contact:** (443) 617-6887





BIGSTOCK / MONKEY BUSINESS

DC'S BEST PRIVATE COLLEGES

A data-driven look at Washington, DC's highest-ranked private colleges, based on 2026 Niche scores.

By Stacker

Almost all the oldest universities in the United States are private colleges. Harvard and St. John's College, for example, were both founded before the 18th century and boast alumni and founders, respectively, who signed the Declaration of Independence.

Though these schools may be esteemed, numerous other private colleges also provide students with a top-tier education. [Stacker](#) compiled a list of the best private colleges in Washington, DC using [2026 Niche rankings](#). Niche ranks schools based on various factors, including academics, value for money, professors, campus, and diversity. See the complete methodology [here](#).

Private institutions today remain distinguished by their source of funding. While public colleges and universities are at least partially subsidized by state government funding, private institutions are funded by tuition dollars, endowments, grants, and donations. As a result, private schools tend to be more expensive. According to the College Board's 2024 [Trends in College Pricing and Student Aid report](#), average tuition for students attending private four-year institutions was \$43,350 during the 2024-2025 school year. Meanwhile, the average tuition for full-time in-state undergraduate students at public four-year colleges was \$11,610, and \$30,780 for out-of-state students.

Private and public schools play important roles in the postsecondary landscape, offering rigorous courses and valuable opportunities outside the classroom. However, some characteristics of private institutions—namely, size, reputation, and flexibility—make them more appealing to prospective students.

Private colleges, which tend to be more selective, generally offer smaller class sizes and, by extension, more direct instruction and support. Large lectures with around 100 students are more of an exception at private schools than at public colleges. Private colleges may also attract more distinguished faculty based on prestige.



SHUTTERSTOCK/ MANGPOR

While the quality of education students receive at private institutions is not necessarily better than that at public schools, [graduates of private colleges](#) earn 3.5% more than public school grads on average, according to a 2023 analysis from Degreechoices.

However, within specific majors, the institution that a student attends may significantly affect earnings outcomes. For students entering college without a well-defined idea of what discipline they want to pursue, the flexibility to explore various subjects at a liberal arts institution often makes private colleges an appealing option.

Read on to see the highest-ranked private colleges in Washington, DC.

1. GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

- **Niche Grade:** A+
- **Location:** Washington, DC
- **Acceptance Rate:** 13%
- **Full time undergrad enrollment:** 7,220 (4:1 student to faculty ratio)
- **SAT Range:** 1390-1550

2. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

- **Niche Grade:** A
- **Location:** Washington, DC
- **Acceptance Rate:** 44%
- **Full time undergrad enrollment:** 10,386 (6:1 student to faculty ratio)
- **SAT Range:** 1350-1500

3. AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

- **Niche Grade:** B+
- **Location:** Washington, DC
- **Acceptance Rate:** 47%
- **Full time undergrad enrollment:** 7,533 (7:1 student to faculty ratio)
- **SAT Range:** 1300-1450

4. HOWARD UNIVERSITY

- **Niche Grade:** B+
- **Location:** Washington, DC
- **Acceptance Rate:** 35%
- **Full time undergrad enrollment:** 9,361 (8:1 student to faculty ratio)
- **SAT Range:** 1100-1300

5. THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

- **Niche Grade:** B+
- **Location:** Washington, DC
- **Acceptance Rate:** 84%
- **Full time undergrad enrollment:** 2,885 (7:1 student to faculty ratio)
- **SAT Range:** 1020-1230

6. GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

- **Niche Grade:** B+
- **Location:** Washington, DC
- **Acceptance Rate:** 61%
- **Full time undergrad enrollment:** 823 (5:1 student to faculty ratio)
- **SAT Range:** 750-930

7. TRINITY WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

- **Niche Grade:** B-
- **Location:** Washington, DC
- **Acceptance Rate:** 99%
- **Full time undergrad enrollment:** 973 (8:1 student to faculty ratio)
- **SAT Range:** not available

HOT COCOA FOR COLD DAYS

Indulge in the richest, coziest cups of cocoa at local bakeries, cafés and chocolatiers.

By Stacker

The temperatures drop, the scarves come out — and suddenly the only thing that matters is finding the perfect cup of hot cocoa. If you're looking for a cozy cup to warm up with, or your little one is wanting to enjoy a fun hot cocoa experience this winter, the DMV area offers plenty of indulgent options beyond your usual coffee shop. These spots combine warmth and deliciousness in every mug.



BIGSTOCK/ANCHALEEVATES

TATTE BAKERY

A Washington Parent Picks winner, Tatte Bakery offers a wide selection of beverages, but their hot chocolate is definitely a favorite. The bakery environment is bright and modern, a perfect place to enjoy a sweet treat. Tatte also serves a variety of baked goods and brunch-style foods to accompany your tasty beverage.

- **Address:** 1200 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Sunday
- **Hot chocolate price:** \$5.80

LA POTERIA LOCAL

This Colombian-inspired café lists a hot chocolate on its menu described as “rich, comforting, and lightly spiced with cinnamon, served hot and frothy.” If you like hot chocolate with a hint of spice and a café that isn’t super busy, this is a great option.

- **Address:** 19116 Montgomery Village Ave., Montgomery Village, MD
- **Hours:** 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Sunday
- **Hot chocolate price:** \$6

QUARTERMAINE COFFEE ROASTERS

While they’re primarily known for coffee and espresso, Quartermaine serves hot chocolate that’s well-liked among customers. If you prefer a hot chocolate in a cozy coffee-roaster setting, this is an excellent choice.

- **Address:** 4817 Bethesda Ave., Bethesda, MD
- **Hours:** 6 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, 6:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday
- **Hot chocolate price:** \$4.55

BETHESDA CHOCOLATES

This artisan chocolate shop specifically notes its “signature house-made hot chocolate” alongside handcrafted chocolates. It’s a great spot if you want a rich, specialty hot cocoa paired with luxurious treats.

- **Address:** 8003 Woodmont Ave., Bethesda, MD
- **Hours:** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday
- **Hot chocolate price:** Not listed online

DOLCEZZA

Although they’re known for their fantastic gelato, Dolcezza also serves high quality hot chocolate. This spot is great for a midday or evening treat, and the hot chocolate even pairs nicely with the gelato.

- **Address:** 904 Palmer Alley NW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** Noon-10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday, noon-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday
- **Hot chocolate price:** \$6.20 regular, \$8.70 large

CAMERON'S COFFEE & CHOCOLATES

Located in Fairfax, Cameron’s lists “Hot Chocolate” among its menu items and is described as offering a “smooth delicious creamy hot chocolate.”

Cameron’s is no doubt a strong option for a rich hot chocolate in a relaxed café setting.

- **Address:** 9639 Fairfax Blvd, Fairfax, VA
- **Hours:** 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday
- **Hot chocolate price:** Not listed online



COURTESY CAMERON'S COFFEE & CHOCOLATES



LACE UP YOUR ICE SKATES FOR THESE FUN SPOTS IN THE DMV

Family-friendly ice skating destinations in Virginia, DC and Maryland.

By Maggie McIntyre

The DMV has no shortage of places to glide, spin and laugh your way through the winter season. From festive outdoor rinks with twinkling lights to dependable indoor ice houses with options for skating lessons, each spot offers a fun outing for your family. Here are some of the best places to skate through the region this year.



VIRGINIA

Outdoor Options

WESTPORT OUTDOOR ICE RINK

At 7,200 square feet, the Westport Outdoor Ice Rink is the largest outdoor ice skating rink in Northern Virginia. It is located in the Plaza at Pentagon Row with shops, restaurants and coffee shops flanking the rink for a fantastic family outing. Reservations open two weeks in advance and are highly recommended.

- **Location:** 1201 S. Joyce St., Arlington
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday-Monday; noon p.m.-10 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; noon p.m.-11 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturday
- **Pricing:** Admission is \$12 for skaters 12 and under and \$13 for adults. The rink offers a \$1 discount for reservations made online in advance. Skate rentals are available for an additional \$6.

RESTON TOWN CENTER ICE RINK

Families can skate under the twinkling pavilion at Reston Town Center all through the winter season. The rink also offers private and semi-private lessons for skaters of all ages. The rink's skate shop stocks over 500 pairs of skates from toddler to adult sizes so you're sure to find your perfect fit!

- **Location:** 1818 Discovery St., Reston
- **Hours:** 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday; 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday
- **Pricing:** Admission is \$9 for kids under 12, \$11 for adults and skate rentals are available for an additional \$8. The rink also offers special pricing for groups, seniors and military families.

Indoor Ice Houses

ASHBURN ICE HOUSE

The Ashburn Ice House has two full-size skating rinks open year-round for figure skaters, hockey players, and of course, families looking for a fun outing. They host a public skate session daily plus a fun Friday night skate every week. Registration is required for all skating events.

- **Location:** 21595 Smith Switch Road, Ashburn
- **Hours:** 6 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Monday-Friday; 5:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Saturday-Sunday
- **Pricing:** Public skate admission is \$15 per person and skate rentals are available at an additional cost.

FAIRFAX ICE ARENA

Established for over 50 years, the Fairfax Ice Arena was Virginia's first year-round ice rink. Still a beloved skating location, the Fairfax Ice Arena offers beginner lessons, hockey and figure skating clinics and camps for kids. They have a themed public skate the first Wednesday of the month from 8:30-9:45 p.m. and daily general public skate sessions.

- **Location:** 3779 Pickett Road, Fairfax
- **Hours:** 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Saturday; 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday
- **Pricing:** Weekday public skate admission is \$10 per person and weekend prices are \$11 per person. Skate rentals are available for an additional \$4.

CONTINUED...



PHOTO COURTESY WASHINGTON HARBOUR



PHOTO COURTESY RESTON TOWN CENTER ICE RINK

DC

Outdoor Options

CANAL PARK ICE RINK

Located on the Capitol Riverfront, Canal Park Ice Rink is almost a city block wide and uniquely in the shape of a figure eight, making it feel more like an ice trail. Their learn-to-skate series is perfect for want-to-be hockey players and figure skaters or kids who just want to feel comfortable on the ice. Opening in late November, the rink offers public skating daily.

- **Location:** 200 M St. SE, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** 2 p.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Friday; noon-10 p.m. Saturday-Sunday
- **Pricing:** Admission for children under 13 and seniors is \$12. Adult admission is \$15. Skate rentals available for \$6.

WASHINGTON HARBOUR ICE RINK

As the largest outdoor ice rink in DC, the Washington Harbour Ice Rink is a great spot to enjoy views of the Potomac River and the Georgetown Waterfront. The surrounding area has plenty of restaurants and cafes to make your ice skating adventure a fun family outing.

- **Location:** 3050 K St. NW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday; 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Sundays
- **Pricing:** Admission for children 12 and under is \$9, adult admission is \$11 and skate rentals are available for \$7. Special pricing for seniors and military families available.

THE WHARF ICE RINK

Sitting along The Wharf — a mile-long stretch of DC's waterfront filled with shops and restaurants, The Wharf Ice Rink is a great place to soak river-side views while gliding on ice. The rink reopened Nov. 26 for the winter season.

- **Location:** 970 Wharf St. SW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** 4 p.m.-10 p.m. Wednesday-Friday; noon-10 p.m. Saturdays; noon-8 p.m. Sundays
- **Pricing:** Admission for children 12 and under is \$15, adult admission is \$20 and skate rentals are available for \$5. Special pricing for seniors and military families available.

MARYLAND

Outdoor Options

ROCKVILLE TOWN SQUARE

One of the largest outdoor skating rinks in the region, Rockville's town square boasts an impressive ice rink open from October to March each year. With weekend group lessons, it's a great spot to learn to skate or just try lacing up some skates for fun during their opening hours.

- **Location:** 131 Gibbs St., Rockville
- **Hours:** noon-10 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturdays; 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Sundays
- **Pricing:** Admission for children 12 and under is \$11, adult admission is \$12 and skate rentals are available for \$6. Discounts available for tickets booked in advance online.

MERRIWEATHER DISTRICT ICE RINK

Just inside Color Burst Park in Columbia, you can bring the whole family for a fun day of skating, shopping and dining at Merriweather District. They regularly host themed celebrations and events and have a season pass option for folks who just can't get enough time on the ice.

- **Location:** 6100 Merriweather Drive, Columbia
- **Hours:** 4 p.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 4 p.m.-10 p.m. Fridays; noon-10 p.m. Saturdays; noon-8 p.m. Sundays
- **Pricing:** Admission is \$12 per person and skate rentals are an additional \$3 per person.

Indoor Ice Houses

BOWIE ICE ARENA

The city of Bowie's Ice Arena is a year-round skating facility offering ice skating for all levels. With lessons, camps and clinics, it's a great place for kids to try something new. On Tuesdays, they also have a great two-for-one admission deal.

- **Location:** 3330 Northview Drive, Bowie
- **Hours:** 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Friday; 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturdays
- **Pricing:** Admission is \$9 per person for public skate and \$3 per person for skate rentals. Discounts available for city of Bowie residents.



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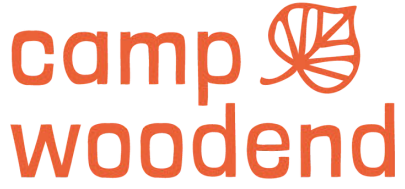
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2026 CAMP FAIRS YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS

Free 2026 Camp Fairs coming to the DMV.

Summer might feel far away, but February brings something kids and parents can look forward to right now: Washington Parent, together with KOJAM Events, will host four free Camp Fairs at major shopping centers that are easy to reach for families across the DC, Maryland and Northern Virginia region. These events return with hands-on fun, upbeat energy and dozens of camps ready to share what they have planned for 2026.

The fairs give families a fast, enjoyable way to explore programs in person before registration fills up. Camps come ready to talk about everything from sports and art to STEM, outdoor exploration, theater, dance, cooking and sleepaway programs. Many families arrive with a few questions—and leave feeling clear, confident and excited about their child's summer.

Walking into a fair feels like stepping into a preview of camp season. Kids jump into mini activities at the booths, pick up giveaways or chat with counselors. Parents often say that in-person conversations help them understand a camp's approach far better than scrolling through websites.

"We love seeing families arrive and instantly feel the buzz," said the Washington Parent events team. "Parents want real answers, and kids want something fun to check out. The fairs offer both."

Each venue offers easy parking, an inviting setup and plenty

for kids to explore. Whether your child is brand-new to camp or returning for another season, the fairs make planning feel simple rather than overwhelming.

2026 CAMP FAIR DATES

- **Tysons Corner Center** — Feb. 7, 2026
- **Dulles Town Center** — Feb. 14, 2026
- **Springfield Town Center** — Feb. 21, 2026
- **Fair Oaks Mall** — Feb. 28, 2026

Admission is free for all four events.

Because many camps fill early, attending the fairs gives families a head start. Parents can ask about schedules, themes, pricing, safety, staff training and daily routines—all in one stop.

Think of the fairs as your launch pad for a summer your kids will talk about long after it ends.

More details, including exhibitor lists and planning tips, will appear online and in the February digital edition of Washington Parent. Camps interested in exhibiting at any of the fairs are welcome to reach out to the Washington Parent team for details on participation.

For more information on KOJAM Events, visit <https://kojamevents.com>.

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ACE THE GAME WITH THESE TOP TENNIS CLASSES

Family-friendly clinics and programs in the DC area to help young players build skills and confidence.

By Jenna Dolch

Tennis is a fantastic year-round sport for kids helping to build coordination, focus and confidence both on and off the court. Families in the Washington, DC, area have many options when it comes to youth clinics, workshops and beginner lessons that make learning the game approachable and fun.

We explored community programs, professional coaching centers and local recreation facilities to highlight some of the top choices for young players. Whether your child is picking up a racquet for the first time or leveling up their skills, these tennis programs offer supportive environments for growth and active play.

WASHINGTON TENNIS & EDUCATION FOUNDATION (WTEF) - WASHINGTON, DC

WTEF offers high-quality tennis instruction combined with life skills and academic support for local youth. Their clinics help young players improve skills through structured lessons and games. The atmosphere emphasizes accessibility, teamwork and confidence building. Families also appreciate the focus on character development alongside athletic growth. Programs are available throughout the year for a range of ages and experience levels.

- **Address:** 200 Stoddert Place SE, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Daily
- **Phone:** (202) 291-9888

ROCK CREEK TENNIS CENTER — WASHINGTON, DC

Located in Rock Creek Park, this well-known tennis center offers youth programs from beginner to competitive levels. Kids learn fundamentals like forehand, backhand and serving with drills designed to keep them engaged and active. The facility's outdoor clay courts make it a popular spot in spring and summer. It's also home to the annual Mubadala Citi DC Open, helping spark excitement for future players.

- **Address:** 5220 16th St. NW, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** Times vary, check website for updates.
- **Phone:** (202) 722-5949

JTCC (JUNIOR TENNIS CHAMPIONS CENTER) — COLLEGE PARK, MD

JTCC is known for developing young talent, but it's also a great place for beginners to learn the game. Their "Game



BIGSTOCK/FAMVELDMAN

On" and junior development programs help children build foundational skills with supportive coaches. The center includes both indoor and outdoor courts for year-round training. Many families love that JTCC meets kids where they are. From recreational players to those working toward competitive goals.

- **Address:** 5200 Campus Drive, College Park, MD
- **Hours:** 6 a.m.-11 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 6 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday; 7 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday-Sunday
- **Phone:** (301) 779-8000

MONTGOMERY TENNISPLEX — BOYDS, MD

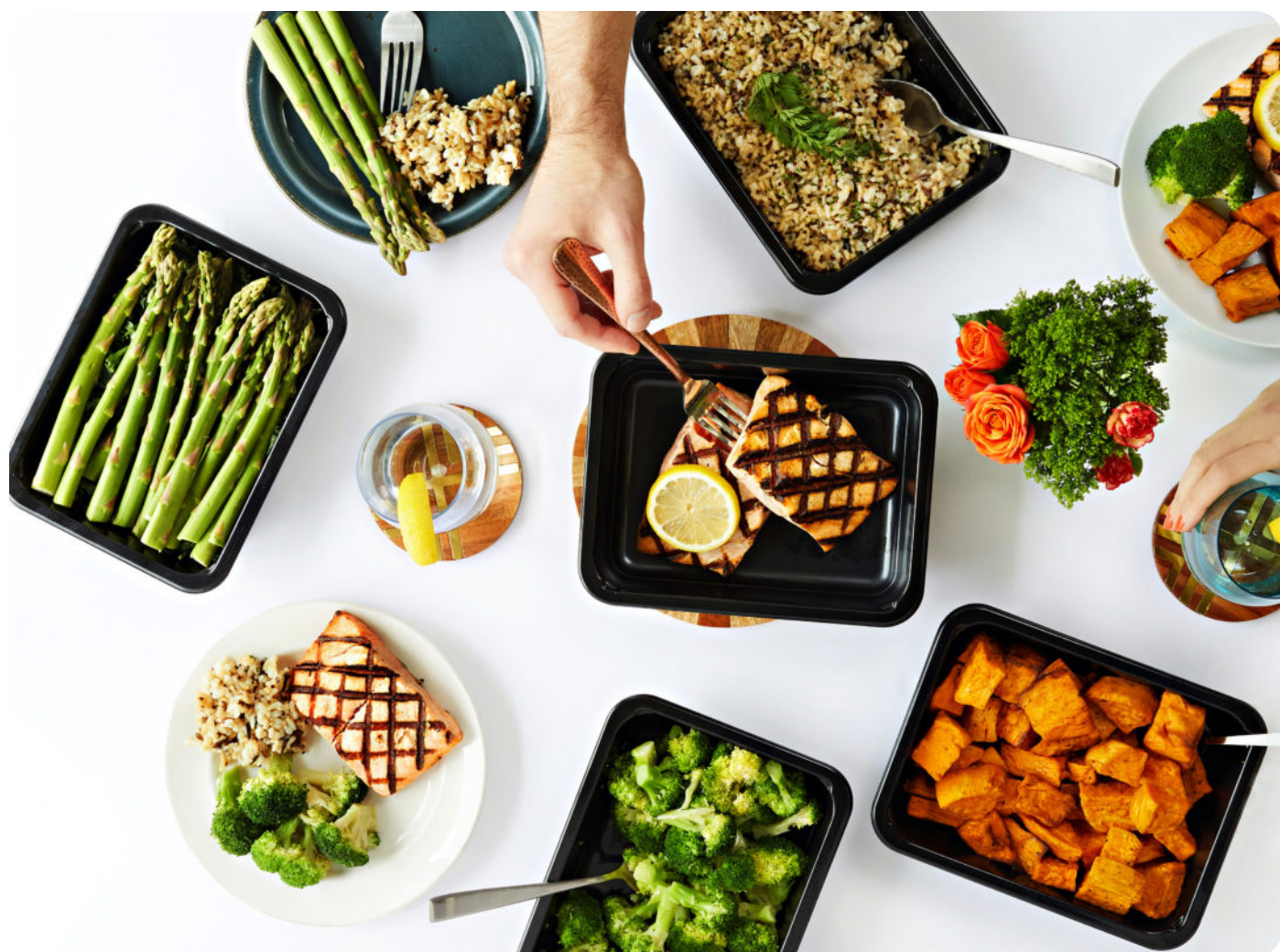
Tucked inside the Maryland SoccerPlex campus, Montgomery TennisPlex offers youth group lessons with an emphasis on fun and movement. Coaches use age-appropriate equipment like low-compression balls and smaller courts to help kids succeed early. Programs are available for preschoolers through teenagers, including weekend classes popular with busy families.

- **Address:** 18010 Central Park Circle, Boyds, MD
- **Hours:** 6 a.m.-11 p.m. Daily
- **Phone:** (240) 477-4430

BURKE RACQUET & SWIM CLUB — BURKE, VA

Burke Racquet & Swim Club offers beginner-friendly youth clinics that focus on the basics: strokes, scoring and sportsmanship. Small class sizes help coaches provide tailored feedback and keep kids active on the court. Families appreciate the flexible schedules and indoor courts, making this a convenient choice for year-round tennis education.

- **Address:** 6001 Burke Commons Road, Burke, VA
- **Hours:** 6:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Friday; 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday; 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Sunday
- **Phone:** (703) 250-1299



PHOTOS COURTESY HEALTHY FRESH MEALS

CREATE HEALTHY HABITS THAT LAST

Discover how Healthy Fresh Meals' chef-made, ready-to-eat dishes make long-term healthy eating realistic for busy families without the stress of cooking or planning.

By Emily Hedrick

If you're trying to eat a healthier diet this year, you may be tempted to try a crash or fad diet going viral on social media to get the best results. However, people who try dieting frequently struggle to keep it up for a variety of reasons. Also, the crash and fad diets themselves may only work temporarily or cause unintended health issues of their own. These problems can make the idea of changing one's eating habits seem hard. Fortunately, there are plenty of easier, more effective and less stressful ways to accomplish this goal and make sure it sticks.

This fall, families and older adults across the Washington, DC, region are finding relief in [Healthy Fresh Meals](#), a Hyattsville-based meal prep company dedicated to making nutritious eating realistic — not restrictive. Its founder, Shana Greenbaum, built the business to solve the problems she saw firsthand.

“I know all too well how difficult getting healthy meals on the table can be for families, and how important it truly is,” said Greenbaum. “This is why I started the company. I want to help solve the problem for families and seniors alike, ensuring they have access to healthy meals without putting in all the effort to go get or make them.”

Her philosophy aligns closely with modern nutrition research and habit-building strategies: meaningful change happens through small, sustainable steps, not dramatic overnight transformations.

WHY HEALTHY FRESH MEALS WORKS

Healthy Fresh Meals provides fully prepared, chef-made meals delivered to customers' doors. For parents trying to get dinner on the table or seniors who want balanced meals without the hassle, this eliminates the biggest barrier to healthy eating — time.



Shana Greenbaum

Research published by the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics confirms that families influence children's long-term eating

habits, and shared healthy meals boost kids' fruit and vegetable intake. But the reality is that many households simply can't manage regular meal prep due to conflicting schedules, stress or limited resources.

Healthy Fresh Meals fills that gap with solutions that support real-life habit building:

- **Save time and reduce stress:** Delivered meals that are ready to heat and eat free families from meal planning, grocery shopping, prep and cleanup.
- **Eat well, effortlessly:** The rotating menu offers high-protein, low-carb, gluten-free, dairy-free, vegan and athlete-focused options developed by professionally trained chefs.
- **Support long-term healthy habits:** Healthy Fresh Meals aligns with expert guidance that encourages small swaps, reasonable limits and adding healthy foods before eliminating favorites.



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- **Portion control without the mental load:** Meals arrive portioned appropriately, helping customers avoid overeating and reduce food waste — two key challenges in maintaining healthy habits.
- **Cost savings over time:** Between reduced food waste, fewer impulse grocery buys and less takeout, many customers find weekly delivery is surprisingly cost-effective.

“The feedback we get from our customers is wonderful. By using our meal prep service, they are eating healthier, saving time and money, and have a variety of dishes to choose from. They are loving it!” shares Greenbaum.

HOW HEALTHY FRESH MEALS SUPPORTS NUTRITION GOALS FOR 2026 AND BEYOND

Pairing Healthy Fresh Meals' convenience with simple nutrition habits creates a plan people can actually maintain. Practical strategies from the “Healthy Habits” guide align naturally with what the company offers:

- **Start small, not perfect:** Trying to overhaul everything at once often leads to burnout. Choosing ready-to-eat meals with balanced ingredients helps people ease into new rhythms without the pressure of mastering new recipes.
- **Plan ahead:** Healthy Fresh Meals' weekly ordering system is meal planning made easy. Customers choose meals in advance, eliminating daily decision fatigue.
- **Add before you subtract:** Because Healthy Fresh Meals dishes include vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains, customers naturally incorporate nutrient-dense foods into their week — no restriction required.
- **Meet specific health goals:** Weight management, heart health, higher protein intake or simply eating more vegetables — Healthy Fresh Meals offers menu categories designed to support these individual goals.

A GROWING LEADER IN HEALTHY EATING SOLUTIONS

Healthy Fresh Meals is recognized not just by its customers but also on a national stage. The company was named one of the [2025 U.S. Chamber of Commerce Culture Champions](#), a testament to its innovation, employee culture and impact.

Since its founding in 2016, the business has expanded to serve Maryland, Washington, DC, Virginia and soon, Alexandria, offering deliveries to counties including Charles, Montgomery, Howard and Prince George's. With more than 20 employees and a constantly evolving menu, the company continues to redefine what accessible healthy eating looks like for busy households.

For families hoping to bring back weeknight dinners, seniors wanting independence, and anyone striving to build healthier habits in 2026, Healthy Fresh Meals provides a bridge between good intentions and real-life follow-through.

To learn more or view the latest menu, visit healthyfreshmeals.com.



BIGSTOCK/ DRAGON IMAGES

A FAMILY TOUR OF ASIAN FLAVOR

Kid-friendly Asian restaurants across DC, Maryland and Virginia.

By Jenna Dolch

Exploring new flavors can be one of the most fun family activities especially in the DMV, where incredible Asian cuisine is pretty easy to find. These restaurants offer delicious dishes that appeal to both adventurous eaters and picky kids, with relaxed environments and affordable menus. To build this list, we fact-checked details using official restaurant websites and current hours. Here are some top spots worth visiting with your crew.



KURA REVOLVING SUSHI BAR — WASHINGTON, DC

Kura Sushi adds an element of excitement with a conveyor belt that delivers colorful sushi plates right to your table. Kids love picking their own dishes and watching the system move, while parents appreciate the range of fresh options. There are plenty of cooked, vegetarian and kid-friendly choices. The atmosphere is lively without being overwhelming.

- **Address:** 614 H St. NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC
- **Hours:** 11:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday; 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday; 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Sunday
- **Phone:** (202) 629-2709

MAMA CHANG — FAIRFAX, VA

Mama Chang focuses on comforting homestyle Chinese recipes with flavors kids can ease into. With a sleek and modern dining room, it's a great spot for a family night out. Plates are shareable and arrive quickly, keeping young diners happy and entertained. The scallion bubble pancake and noodle dishes are always a hit with kids. The atmosphere is welcoming for families and the menu has something for everyone. It gets busy so arrive early to avoid a wait.

- **Address:** 3251 Blenheim Blvd., Suite 101, Fairfax, VA
- **Hours:** 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 5-9:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday; 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Sunday
- **Phone:** (703) 268-5556

A&J RESTAURANT — ROCKVILLE, MD

A&J is known for its Northern Chinese and Taiwanese street-style classics. Families enjoy ordering multiple small dishes like dumplings, buns and handmade noodles to share. The casual layout makes it easy to bring toddlers or large groups. This is a great option for kids who prefer milder tastes. Service is quick and the menu is approachable even for first-timers.

- **Address:** 1319-C Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD
- **Hours:** 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m. daily
- **Phone:** (301) 251-7878



PHOTO COURTESY OF PHO 75

PHO 75 — ARLINGTON, VA

Pho 75 keeps the focus on one thing done very well: Vietnamese noodle soup. Bowls come out hot and fast, a win for parents with hungry kids. Broth is flavorful without being too spicy, and kids can customize their bowls with basil, lime and extra noodles. It's budget-friendly and seating is comfortable for families. Note: Pho 75 is cash-only.

- **Address:** 1721 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA
- **Hours:** 10 a.m.-9 p.m. daily
- **Phone:** (703) 525-7355

SISTERS THAI — POTOMAC, MD

Sisters Thai is a cozy spot in Cabin John Village that serves flavorful and comforting Thai dishes perfect for families. Kids often love the pad Thai, fried rice and chicken satay, while adults enjoy the curries and noodle soups. The dining room is colorful and casual, making it easy to relax with young children. Staff are welcoming and helpful when recommending kid-friendly menu items. Portions are generous and food comes out quickly, even during busier dinner hours.

- **Address:** 7995 Tuckerman Lane, Potomac, MD
- **Hours:** 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday; 11 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday
- **Phone:** (301) 299-4157

KUSSHI SUSHI — BETHESDA, MD

Kusshi Sushi offers a comfortable dining space that works well for families trying sushi for the first time or sticking to cooked options. Bento boxes, teriyaki and tempura dishes are great choices for younger diners. Parents appreciate the fresh sushi rolls and sashimi selections, while kids enjoy simpler rolls like avocado or shrimp tempura. The service is friendly and the atmosphere is lively but not too loud. Its location near shops and parking makes it easy to plan a full evening out in Bethesda. Reservations are recommended for weekend dinners.

- **Address:** 7820 Norfolk Ave., Bethesda, MD
- **Hours:** 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday; 11 a.m.-Midnight Friday-Saturday
- **Phone:** (301) 654-7851



BIGSTOCK/DUSAN PETKOVIC

ASK WASHINGTON PARENT: DOES MY CHILD GET FREE PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDES IN THE DMV?

**What parents need to know about public transit
fares for kids in the DC metro area.**

By Maggie McIntyre

Ask Washington Parent is a new Washington Parent series that helps families explore the city and answer kids' curious questions along the way. From underground tunnels to zoo facts, we break it down so parents feel ready — and maybe even a little cool — explaining it. Does your curious kid have a question? Send it to us at contactus@washingtonparent.net and it might be featured in our next edition.

In the DMV, families have the opportunity to use public transit all the time. Between commuting to school and work, transporting kids to after-school activities, school trips or even local family adventures, it's important to make sure families are making transportation as affordable as possible.

Free or discounted rides for kids vary by jurisdiction and transit provider. This is your guide to the rules across the region so you can get your family from point A to point B as efficiently as possible.

HOW TRANSIT FARE PROGRAMS WORK

Depending on the transit provider, discounted or free rides can be available based on age, enrollment in school and residency. Different forms of transit may be included, such as buses, Metro or commuter rail. Here is a breakdown by region of reduced and free ride rules:

WASHINGTON, DC

The Washington DC Metro offers free rides for students ages 5 to 21 that are enrolled in an elementary or secondary public, charter, private or religious school located within DC. The [Kids Ride Free SmarTrip card](#) should be requested from your school's ID administrator. Cards must be replaced every September and can be added to your child's phone wallet if they are over 13.

- **Who:** Ages 5-21
- **What:** [Kids Ride Free SmarTrip card](#)
- **How:** Request the card from your school's ID administrator
- **What you need:** Your school should have all the information it needs for you to receive your card

MARYLAND

Montgomery County

In Montgomery County, kids ride free on all Montgomery County Department of Transportation buses and most Metrobuses in the county. Kids ages 5 to 18 can get a Youth Cruiser SmarTrip card to participate in the [Kids Ride Free](#) program. At participating schools, you can apply for and collect your card on-site, otherwise, you can go to a county location, such as a public library to get a card.

- **Who:** Grades K-12
- **What:** [Youth Cruiser SmarTrip Card](#)
- **How:** At school or an alternative county location
- **What you need:** Application, proof of age and proof of residency in Montgomery County

Prince George's County

Starting June 30, 2025, all county-operated transit services are [free for everyone](#).

VIRGINIA

Arlington County

The [Student iRide Program](#) in Arlington County enables students ages 5 to 18 to ride Arlington Transit buses and select Metrobuses for free. Students in high school can contact their school's transportation coordinator to receive an iRide Student SmarTrip card. Elementary, private and homeschooled students can go to any Arlington [Commuter Store](#).

- **Who:** Grades K-12
- **What:** [iRide Student SmarTrip card](#)
- **How:** Request the card from your schools' Transit Coordinator or visit an Arlington Commuter Store
- **What you need:** Proof of school enrollment in Arlington County such as a student ID card

Fairfax County

Middle and high school students in Fairfax County can ride the Fairfax Connector and City of Fairfax CUE bus for free when they sign up for a student bus pass [SmarTrip card](#). The pass is valid seven days per week from 5 a.m.-10 p.m. and students can sign up at their school.

- **Who:** Grades 7-12
- **What:** Student bus pass [SmarTrip card](#)
- **How:** Request a bus pass at any county school or by emailing mlphillips@fcps.edu
- **What you need:** Proof of school enrollment in Fairfax County

TIPS ON GETTING PASSES/CARDS

- Call the school or location ahead of time for current hours and possible wait times.
- Double check what information is needed before heading to your location.
- Check to see if appointments are needed ahead of time.
- Don't forget to register the card!
- Know the age-based rules — each system handles children differently.
- If your child will be traveling independently, make sure they know how the card works and the rules for each transit system they'll be on.
- Save the customer service numbers in your phone (and your child's, if they have a cell phone.)



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CAN'T AFFORD COVERAGE? HERE'S WHAT'S NEXT

**If health insurance becomes unaffordable in 2026, you still have options.
Learn how to navigate cash-pay healthcare, compare alternatives and avoid medical debt.**

By Cindy George for GoodRx

Costs happen. And price increases on everything could be the most life-impacting development of 2025. Looking ahead, millions of people are expected to decide that health insurance is unaffordable for them in 2026 — and they'll likely cancel their health coverage.

But health insurance is not the only way to pay for healthcare. Many people are uninsured and face healthcare costs out of pocket. They are known as cash-pay customers. This option can be daunting for people with serious conditions such as cancer, but there are ways to successfully navigate costs without health insurance while avoiding medical debt.

GoodRx, a platform for medication savings, shares how you can handle your healthcare costs if you drop your insurance for the 2026 coverage year.

Key takeaways:

- For the 2026 coverage year, every health insurance option available to you may be unaffordable.
- Whether you typically have a health plan or your coverage is sporadic — but you had health insurance in 2025 — you may opt to become a cash-pay healthcare consumer in 2026.
- If you can't afford insurance or decide to go without a plan for 2026, you have many healthcare options.

What are your options for healthcare without insurance?

In the U.S., most people have health insurance. This coverage comes through Medicaid, Medicare, or individual and family plans offered by employers. In 2025, more than 24 million people were covered by a plan offered on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace. But enrollment is expected to plummet if the income-based ACA premium subsidies (also known as premium tax credits) aren't continued at the same levels in 2026. These subsidies are what made plans affordable for about 22 million people in 2025.

Healthcare options that don't involve insurance

If you can't afford health insurance in 2026 — or you've decided to drop coverage for any reason — here are some self-pay healthcare options you might use.

- **Direct primary care:** Direct primary care (DPC) is an alternative healthcare model for accessing medical care without insurance. You make the care and payment arrangements with a healthcare professional and pay out of pocket. DPC may be offered by a

physician, a physician associate (PA, also known as a physician assistant), or an advanced practice nurse, such as a nurse practitioner. Your DPC arrangement typically covers routine care, management of chronic conditions, acute-care visits, and care coordination. Emergency and hospital services aren't included.

- **Cash-pay care with a good faith estimate:** If you're not using insurance to pay for your care, you are entitled to a good faith estimate (GFE), which is an itemized list of expected costs for a scheduled service. If your bill is \$400 or higher than the GFE, you can dispute the bill.
- **Concierge care:** Concierge care is a membership-based model, often with an annual retainer fee that gives you direct access to a physician. Same-day appointments are usually available. Concierge care offices usually limit the number of patients and offer longer appointments than a typical practice. Concierge care often attracts higher-income consumers and may also be called concierge medicine, retainer-based medicine, a platinum practice, or boutique medicine.
- **Medical cost-sharing:** Sometimes called healthcare sharing plans, medical cost-sharing programs are communal models where group members pool their money to collectively cover everyone's approved medical costs. Medical cost-sharing programs are not insurance and member costs may not be paid. There are financial risks and members can end up with unpaid bills, leading to hefty medical debt.
- **Saving your premiums to pay for care:** Many people have been paying hundreds of dollars monthly for health insurance premiums. What if, just for 2026, you redirected that cash to a savings account and used the funds to pay directly for healthcare? Healthcare facilities and hospital systems are signaling that more people are cash-pay customers. Increasingly, patient forms and healthcare professional search tools are offering specific guidance for self-pay and uninsured consumers.
- **Tax-advantaged healthcare accounts:** Your workplace may offer a health reimbursement arrangement (HRA) in lieu of health insurance. (You can also have an HRA with health insurance or use the funds to pay premiums for a plan you acquire yourself.) Only your employer contributes to an HRA. You typically don't have to pay state or

federal taxes on the money reimbursed to you from the account for qualified healthcare expenses. If offered by your employer, you can also have a flexible spending account (FSA) without enrollment in a health plan.

- **Cash care:** There are healthcare facilities and other convenience locations that have transparent and/or flat-free pricing for services, such as retail clinics — often found in pharmacies or grocery stores — and urgent care centers.
- **Sliding-scale care:** Care at community clinics is typically low cost, but not free. There are also free and low-cost healthcare options available nationwide.
- **Patient assistance programs:** If you don't have insurance, you can qualify for free healthcare and prescription medications from patient assistance programs.
- **Charity care:** Also known as indigent care, you may qualify if you are medically indigent. This means medical bills make up a significant share of your income and medical debt threatens your financial stability. You're financially indigent when you're uninsured or underinsured and your household income falls below a certain threshold. Nonprofit hospitals are legally required to offer this type of financial assistance and some for-profit hospitals do too.

What about the ACA premium subsidies?

As of Dec. 5, 2025, ACA premium subsidies have not been approved for the 2026 coverage year. The question about whether these premium tax credits will continue has greatly impacted the open enrollment season. Even though the 43-day federal government shutdown ended on Nov. 12, 2025, the White House and Congress continue to negotiate about these healthcare subsidies.

Without the subsidies, premiums are expected to double, on average, in 2026. If they disappear, that means people with ACA plans must cover the full rate for their insurance. Many people who depend on these discounts to afford health plans have not enrolled in plans or renewed coverage for 2026 on the federal and state marketplaces.

In addition, premiums are spiking in 2026 for Medicare Part B as well as for many Medicare Advantage and employer-based plans.

CONTINUED...

Pros and cons of self-pay healthcare

There are advantages and disadvantages of self-pay healthcare. It can be less costly, but not always. If you have even moderate health concerns, it is rarely less costly — especially if you develop an unexpected health issue. Before deciding to go this route, you may also want to consider [options for accessing healthcare](#) without insurance, such as:

- Cash-pay facilities near you.
- Having a strategy for comparing costs.
- Having the resources to pay for the healthcare — including prescriptions — that you or your family members may need while weighing the reality that not having insurance can expose you to massive medical debt.

Here’s a snapshot of some positive aspects of skipping insurance versus why dropping coverage might not be a good idea for you and your family.

Pros and cons of self-pay healthcare

Advantages of self-pay healthcare	Disadvantages of self-pay healthcare
The potential of cost savings.	The likelihood of higher costs without negotiated insurance prices for care, including no out-of-pocket maximum for spending.
The ability to skip the cost of having health insurance and redirect funds that would have been spent on premiums for healthcare.	The possible exposure to catastrophic costs if you need services, such as hospital admission or cancer care, and the responsibility to pay for preventive care that would be included in most insurance plans.
You’re able to keep funds not spent on the cost of care or premiums if you don’t have any high-cost healthcare needs. Often, insurance companies collect more in premiums than is spent on your care.	If you need more care than your resources will cover, you might end up racking up credit card debt or unpaid medical bills.
You will grow your healthcare cost literacy by paying more attention to costs upfront and learning skills to manage your healthcare and medical expenses.	Even without a major health episode, you could accrue hefty medical debt and a long-term hit to your credit score if your bills go unpaid.



BIGSTOCK/ SHADE LITE

Who might be able to risk going uninsured?

Lacking insurance has risks, including medical debt — which can lead you to medical bankruptcy. But being uninsured is also common. In 2023, an estimated 8% of the total U.S. population did not have insurance and more than 9% of people ages 0 to 64 were uninsured.

It's important to note that choosing a year or more of cash-pay care is not ideal for most people. Those who might risk the least by choosing self-pay healthcare include:

- Healthy people who don't have chronic conditions.
- Young people.
- People who are not prone to accidents.
- People with higher incomes.
- People who plan to sign up for insurance the following year (or sooner).

Why would you want to drop your health insurance?

Often, people don't want to drop health insurance, but circumstances — chiefly cost — are why they can no longer continue with a plan. Reasons why you may want to drop your health insurance include one or more of the following:

- Premiums are unaffordable.
- The deductible is too costly for your budget.
- ACA subsidies might not be offered in 2026.
- The coverage does not meet your needs.
- The prescription coverage does not include the medications you take.
- You have access to another health plan that meets your needs and/or costs less.
- You move out of the coverage area.

How to cancel health insurance

You can cancel your health insurance by contacting your plan or if you (or your employer) are no longer paying premiums. Here's how to cancel your coverage:

1. Determine whether you are stopping coverage just for yourself or for everyone covered by your plan. This is especially important if you are canceling COBRA health insurance.
2. Determine what coverage you want to stop. You may want to drop a comprehensive healthcare plan, prescription coverage only, dental coverage only, or just a vision plan.

3. Determine whether you can cancel coverage. If you have an employee or group plan, you typically need to have a qualifying life event (QLE) or leave your employment to cancel coverage. If you have a Medicare Advantage plan, you can drop coverage during the Medicare open enrollment period, the Medicare Advantage open enrollment period, or if you qualify for a special enrollment period (SEP). You can disenroll from a standalone Medicare Part D plan during Medicare open enrollment, if you have a standalone Part D plan and a Medicare Advantage plan, or if you qualify for an SEP.
4. If you have an ACA marketplace plan, you can contact the national or state marketplace that provided your plan — or the insurance company. You can also log into your marketplace account and cancel.
5. A health insurance plan can be canceled by the insurance company if you fail to pay the premium.
6. If you don't sign up for health insurance during your open enrollment period — or take whatever action signals you want to drop your insurance for 2026 — you will cancel your coverage.

Is there a penalty for canceling health insurance?

A nationwide mandate set after the ACA law passed in 2010 was eliminated in 2019. You could face a requirement (some with a financial penalty) for not having health insurance if you live in certain states or Washington, DC

- **California:** Residents have a penalty for not having coverage, but the amount varies annually. For the 2024 tax year, the penalty was at least \$900 per adult and \$450 per dependent under 18 in a household. (This is the most current information available at the time of publication.) Residents can use the state's Individual Shared Responsibility Penalty Estimator to determine the potential amount owed for the current tax year.
- **Massachusetts:** The Massachusetts healthcare individual mandate doesn't apply to anyone under the age of 18. It also doesn't apply to people with a qualified hardship or an exemption and those whose incomes are equal to or less than 150% of the federal poverty level

(FPL). The penalty is assessed on a sliding scale. For instance, for the 2025 tax year, individuals without insurance must pay \$300 per year if they earn 150.1% to 200% of the FPL and \$588 per year if they earn 200.1% to 250% of the FPL.

- **New Jersey:** The New Jersey Shared Responsibility Requirement is assessed based on how many months people in the household did not have minimum essential coverage or a coverage exemption. For the 2025 tax year, the amount ranges from \$695 to \$4,908 for an individual taxpayer and increases based on the number of additional uninsured people in the household as well as household income.
- **Rhode Island:** The RI Health Insurance Mandate is whichever of these amounts is greater: 2.5% of annual household income or \$695 per adult and \$347.50 per dependent under 18.
- **Washington, DC:** The Individual Responsibility Requirement for anyone who goes without coverage for all of 2025 is the greater of: 2.5% of annual household income over the federal tax filing threshold or \$795 per adult and \$397.50 per dependent under 18, with a cap of \$2,385 per family.
- **Vermont:** There is no financial penalty, but residents must report whether they have health insurance when they file their state taxes.
- **Maryland:** Residents are asked about health insurance status when they file state taxes as an avenue to enrollment.

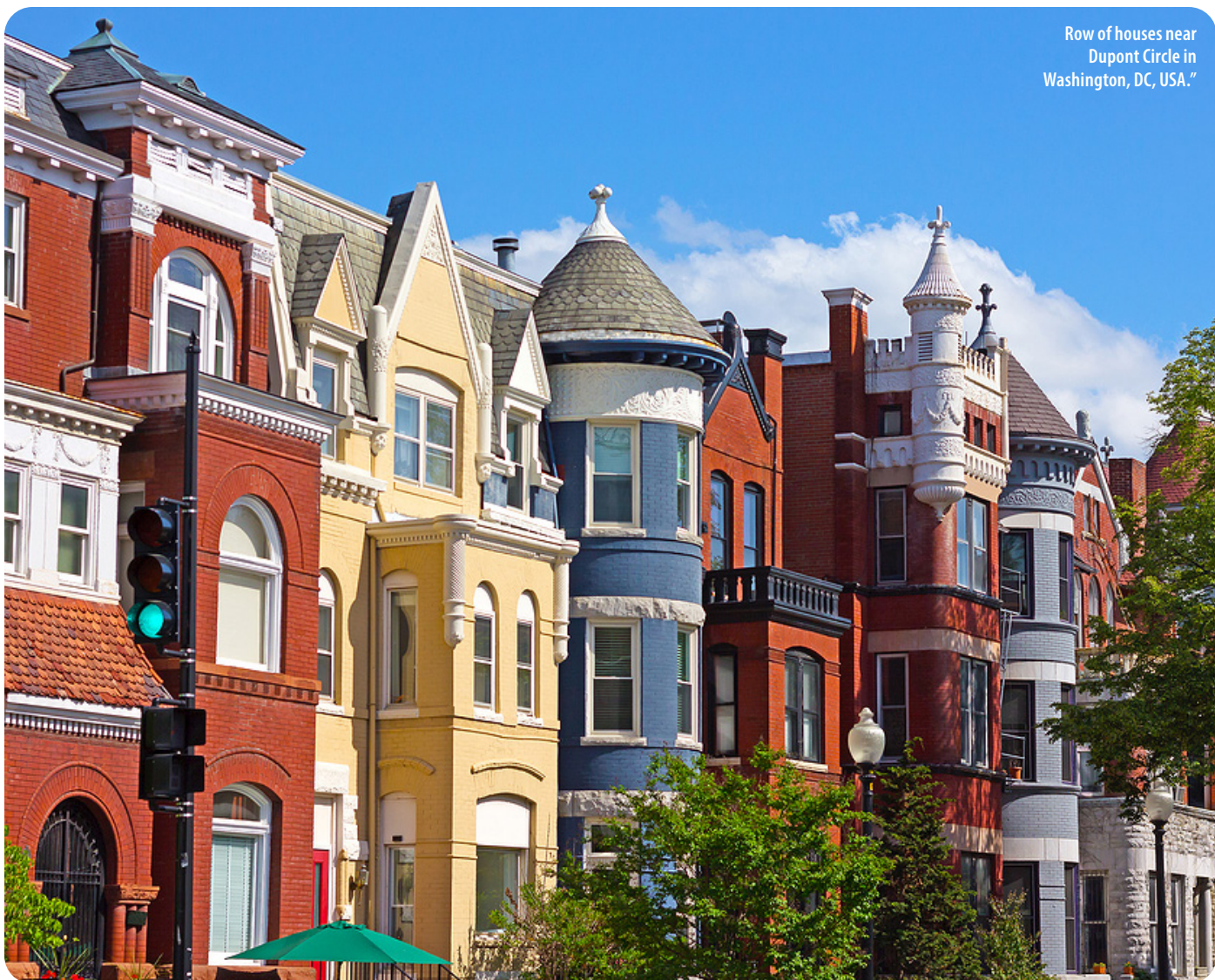
The bottom line

Health insurance is not the only way to cover healthcare costs. People who access healthcare without insurance are known as cash-pay customers. This can be a tricky option for people with chronic conditions or very costly care, such as for cancer. But there are ways to successfully handle the costs of healthcare without insurance while sidestepping hefty medical debt.

Options used alone or in combination include: direct primary care, cash clinics, tax-advantaged healthcare accounts, sliding-scale care, patient assistance programs, and hospital charity care. Many people will decide whether to cancel health insurance in 2026 based on whether the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplaces have premium subsidies available.

This story was produced by GoodRx and reviewed and distributed by Stacker.

Row of houses near
Dupont Circle in
Washington, DC, USA."



BIGSTOCK/AVMEDVED

THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS AREA CODE

Discover why this legendary area code still signals prestige, power and city pride, and how it compares to other iconic codes like 212 and 310.

By Tara Mier for Spokeo

In the digital age, a phone number is more than just a way to connect — it's a reflection of where you come from, who you are, and sometimes, what you've achieved.

Certain area codes have become status symbols, signaling affluence, influence and regional pride. Whether it's a Manhattan 212 number or a Washington, DC, 202 number, these codes carry weight. In this story, Spokeo explores 10 of the most prestigious area codes in the U.S. and why they matter.

Below, we break down some of America's most prestigious area codes — including how Washington, DC, stacks up.

RATED AT NO. 5: AREA CODE 202 IN WASHINGTON, DC

Assigned in 1947 and never split or overlaid, 202 is one of the rare area codes that has maintained total geographic exclusivity for nearly eight decades. It covers only the District, reinforcing its identity as the nation's political heart.

A 202 number often signals proximity to federal agencies, policy circles, diplomatic offices, media networks, and long-established DC families. Legacy 202 numbers are so limited that residents and businesses actively hold onto them — even when changing carriers — because the code itself communicates credibility and insider access.

Why locals care about these area codes

All 10 codes are tied to some of America's major economic, cultural or political centers. Their longevity and geographic exclusivity help signal trust, status or regional identity:

- **Businesses** benefit from perceived credibility and geolocal branding.

Individuals may gain implied prestige or societal alignment, even in a digital-first world, these numeric identifiers continue to reflect influence, community identity, and aspirational lifestyle, making them more than mere dial codes. In fact, for anyone trying to reconnect with someone from a specific place — say an old friend with a Chicago or Beverly Hills number — a [people search](#) can make that process a little easier.

What other major cities made the list?

212 - MANHATTAN, NEW YORK

As one of the original North American area codes (1947), 212 now exclusively serves Manhattan. Renowned for its perceived prestige, businesses report that it boosts marketing effectiveness — direct mail featuring 212 numbers sees a [15-20% higher response rate](#) than other NYC codes. In comparison, listings with 212 numbers are easier to remember and more clickable online.

310 - BEVERLY HILLS / WEST LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

[Created in 1991](#) from a split with 213, 310 covers affluent coastal communities, including Beverly Hills, Santa Monica, and Malibu. A 2005 Los Angeles Times feature noted that actors and agents actively seek 310 numbers “because 310 is synonymous

with the area of Santa Monica, Brentwood, Beverly Hills ... [When you have that 310 number, it says something about you.](#)” Furthermore, the Los Angeles Almanac adds that 310 holders “are seen as one to be admired... [connected to Hollywood.](#)”

415 - SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Also among the original codes from 1947, [415 remains emblematic of San Francisco](#) and the broader Bay Area, used by many large, influential tech companies. With companies like Google, Facebook, and Apple residing in this area code, its credibility is strengthened.

617 - BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

One of the 1947 original area codes, [617, still covers Boston.](#) Its long-standing association with the city's academic, financial, and historical institutions is well-established, though not as frequently backed by data.

312 - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Introduced in 1947, the 312 code was split in 1989 to focus on [downtown Chicago](#). It still signals a prominent business presence, as confirmed by telecom data indicating it remains central to core Chicago operations.

305 - MIAMI, FLORIDA

Miami's original area code, 305, has existed [since 1947](#) and is strongly linked to the city's beach culture, nightlife, and Latin-American commerce, according to local telecom overviews.

404 - ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Assigned in 1947 to Atlanta and still serving the metro core, 404 is the default for many major companies and headquarters in the region.

213 - DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

In 1947, the 213 was launched as California's first area code and remains iconic within downtown Los Angeles. [Legacy 213 numbers are highly desirable and iconic.](#)

646 - MANHATTAN, NEW YORK (OVERLAY)

Introduced in [1999](#) as an overlay with 212 over Manhattan. While it lacks 212's cachet, 646 still signals a Manhattan presence without the premium, and is now common among local businesses and residents.

This story was produced by [Spokeo](#) and reviewed and distributed by [Stacker](#).



BIGSTOCK/RADACHINSKY

"IS THIS AUTISM?": AN INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR SARAH WAYLAND

What does subtle autism look like and how can parents better understand their child's internal experience?

By Jackie Beach

As a teacher and educational consultant, I have worked over the past 20 years to support families as they navigate the world of special education. I am always looking for additional resources for families. So, when I came across the book "Is This Autism? A Guide for Clinicians and Everyone Else," I was eager to see if this book was truly for "everyone else," especially parents.

If you are autism-curious, this book could help you better understand your child.

To learn more, I recently sat down with [Sarah Wayland, Ph.D.](#), who co-wrote “Is This Autism?” with [Donna Henderson, Psy.D.](#) and [Jamell White, Ph.D.](#) Dr. Wayland is the founder of [Guiding Exceptional Parents](#) and co-founder of [The Survival to Success Accelerator](#). She provides neurodiversity-affirmative support, education and community for parents of neurodivergent children.

Jackie Beach: Can you describe a parent who should read this book?

Sarah Wayland: If you are autism-curious, this book could help you better understand your child. Parents of children who struggle to connect with others, who don't seem to understand how the world works or who are exhausted after the school day may have an underlying issue that requires a deeper understanding. This book can open a dialogue between parents and their children about what the child's experience is really like.

JB: Why is it important to identify and understand less obvious presentations of autism?

SW: Psychology—and the “Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders” (DSM) in particular—relies on external manifestations for diagnosis. But what shows up on the outside is often not what is going on inside. We wrote this book for the people who have learned to show others what they think they want to see. We all do this to some extent. Constant masking, however, can be exhausting for people with autism. They may have learned to hide what is going on inside so others won't get upset with them. If you don't have those differences, it is hard to understand how much work this can be. A parent may not realize all of the internal strategies that their child has put into place and how hard that can be for them each day. That is where curiosity comes in for parents. It is helpful to have empathy and compassion for our kids.

JB: Can you talk about the structure of the book?

SW: We worked to make this book easy to read. We describe the diagnostic criteria in the first part of the book. In each chapter, we first describe what people think those criteria look like. Then we describe what you may actually see and other ways they could show up for someone with autism. This is where the internal experience matters. We provide real life examples, and quotes from autistic people to make it relatable.

JB: What advocacy skills do you hope parents gain, especially when co-occurring conditions exist?

SW: Every body-system is more vulnerable in an autistic person. One of the challenges I had as a parent is that my kids have had perplexing co-occurring conditions. Three conditions that are prevalent and every parent needs to know more about are [anxiety](#), [ADHD](#) and [depression](#). My older son had an alphabet soup of diagnoses, many of which were not autism specific. If a parent feels like their child is showing a bunch of these differences, maybe think about whether autism could be part of the picture.

JB: The book has a chapter dedicated to autistic strengths. Why was it a priority for you to include this chapter?

SW: People don't discuss autistic strengths enough - with the exception of a few individuals, like the creator of the [Survey of Autistic Strengths, Skills, and Interests \(SASSI\)](#) and [Temple Grandin](#). We wanted to spotlight autistic talents and skills because people are just not talking enough about them.

JB: How can someone be a better friend to a parent of a child with neurodevelopmental differences?

SW: Part of the journey for many parents of a child with neurodevelopmental differences is losing friends. People don't get your world. There is already so much self-imposed shame for parents; these differences add a whole new layer. If your friend's children are behaving in a way that doesn't make sense to you, I would say, “Get curious!”

Jackie Beach, M.Ed., is a Family Resiliency Program (FRP) facilitator for the Parent Encouragement Program (PEP) and an educational consultant with more than 20 years of experience in educational leadership and family support. She is also the founder and director of Rally Family Support LLC.

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WHAT TO READ

Enjoy these flavorful reads

Chilly weather calls for soups — and stories! From classic picture books to multicultural tales and teen-friendly cookbooks, here are the best soup-themed reads to warm up your winter.

By Mary Quattlebaum

When chill winds blow, what perks appetites and spirits more than a steaming bowl of soup? With these books, you can have your soup — and read it too! Those wishing to make their own are in luck. Easy-to-follow recipes are often included. As these tales testify, soup can link families and heritage, connect community and inspire your own chopping and stirring. But most delectably, it can soothe and nourish when served for supper on a winter evening.



BIGSTOCK/YASNESONE4KO

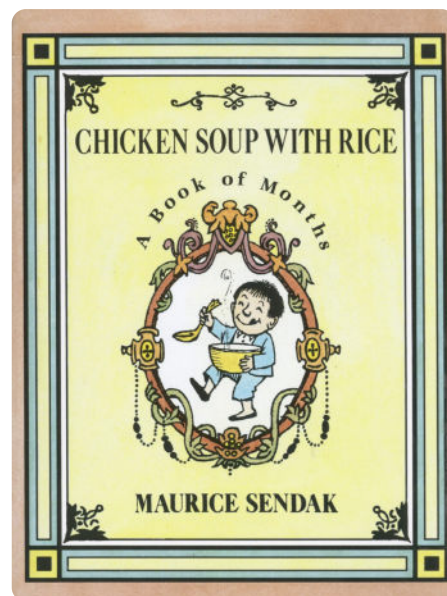
TOTS TO AGE 7

"Chicken Soup with Rice"

By Maurice Sendak
HarperCollins, 1962, \$9.95 paperback

As this exuberant classic demonstrates, chicken soup is the perfect dinner for any season — and for more than 64 years. By turns rollicking, absurd and deliciously down-to-earth, this book follows an adventurous child and the titular dish for 12 months. The lively rhymes and refrain, brilliantly crafted by the late Maurice Sendak, simultaneously tickle tongues, tummies and funny bones.

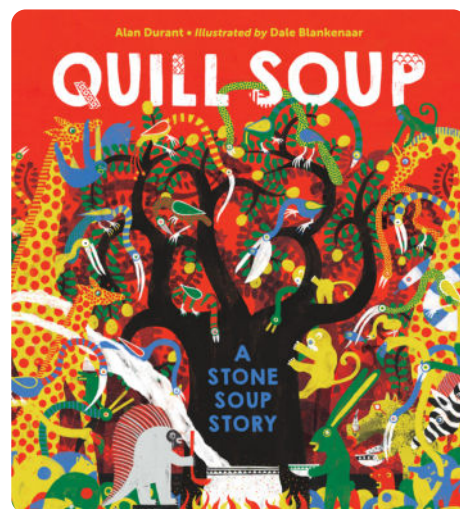
Youngsters begin the year with "slipping on the sliding ice," spend September riding down the "chicken soupy Nile" and close with a Christmas tree "baubled and bangled" with soup bowls. What fun!



"Quill Soup: A Stone Soup Story"

By Alan Durant
Illustrated by Dale Blankenaar
Charlesbridge, 2020, \$16.99

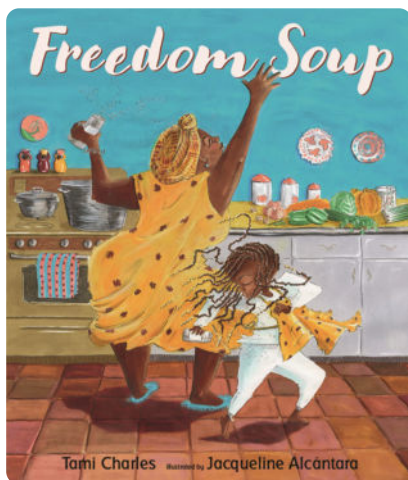
Cultures around the world have adapted the folktale about a pot of boiling water, a stone and the resulting feast to reflect their own unique traditions. This vibrant version, set in South Africa, substitutes quills for the original stone. It follows Noko, a tired traveler, who is denied food when he asks in a small village. The resourceful porcupine then requests a pot of water and adds a few quills. With each taste, he declares the need for a specific item — carrot, beans — which the other animals rush to procure. At the end, Noko shares the flavorful soup with his new, grateful friends.



"Freedom Soup"

By Tami Charles
Illustrated by Jacqueline Alcantara
Candlewick, 2019,
\$16.99

It's New Year's Day, and Belle and her grandmother, in a snowy American city, are steaming something that represents more than a change in calendar. As pumpkin, herbs and other ingredients dance in the big pot, Ti Gran shares the story behind Freedom Soup. It recognizes the hard-won freedom of the enslaved people of Haiti, who rebelled against their European oppressors. In 1803, after 12 bloody years, slavery was abolished, and they claimed independence for their island nation. To this day, Haitians worldwide celebrate Jan. 1 as their Independence Day, with bowls of this fragrant soup.

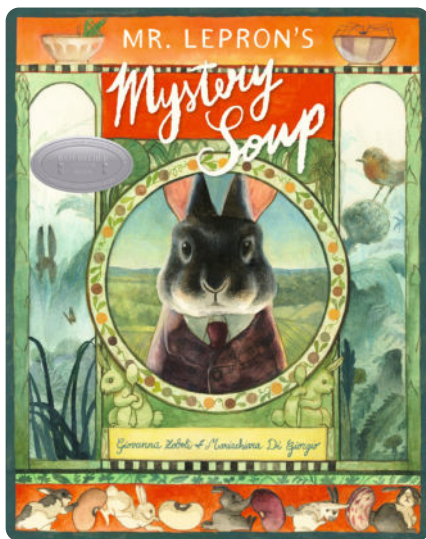


PRETEENS

"Mr. Lepron's Mystery Soup"

By Giovanna Zoboli
Translated from the Italian by Denise Muir
Illustrated by Mariachiara Di Giorgio
Candlewick Studio, 2024, \$18.99

This beautifully illustrated fable explores the tension between art and commerce, well-being and wealth. Mr. Lepron, a benevolent hare, loves making tasty soups for his large family. With their help, he gathers fresh vegetables, tosses them into a bubbling pot, and adds a pinch of salt. Then he takes a nap, dreaming of "magical spoons" and "secret gardens growing mysterious vegetables." Upon awakening, he happily serves his creation to appreciative family, animal neighbors, a local child and even the baker. But others clamor for a taste, and so he opens a factory "where soup will be made around the clock." The demand grows, from Spain to the South Pole, and soon Mr. Lepron is weighted with work. His dreams fill with worry and fear: garden-destroying hailstorms, green soup floods, enormous, gaping mouths. Customers begin to complain — his soup is bland and overpriced. What should he do? Mr. Lepron

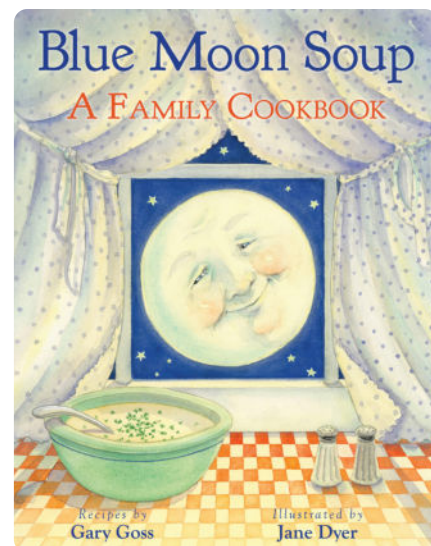


closes the factory and returns to his simpler life with loved ones. And over time, he begins to dream, once more, of the joy experienced in the process of creating and giving. This wise cautionary tale seems ripe for our anxious times. It honors the transformation of the ordinary into the sublime, not through acclaim and riches but through contentment and care.

"Blue Moon Soup"

By Gary Goss
Illustrated by Jane Dyer
Sky Pony Press, 2021,
\$14.99 paperback

Thanks to Sky Pony Press, this 25-year-old classic is available once again. Recipes by Chef Gary Goss pair delightfully with artist Jane Dyer's whimsical watercolors. Who can resist the lure of dancing celery or of the fancifully named Best Buddy Soup? Thirty recipes feature yummy soups and related snacks for all seasons.

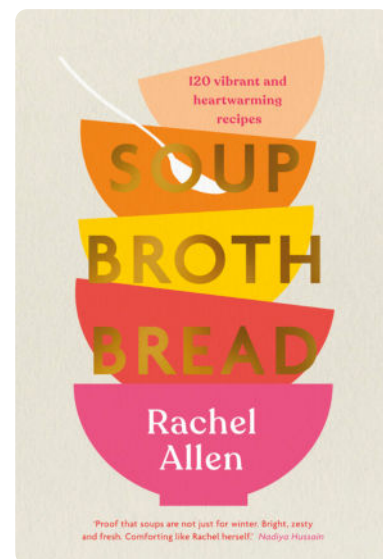


TEENS

"Soup Broth Bread"

By Rachel Allen
Michael Joseph/
PRH, 2022, \$35

Looking for a cookbook more substantive than the usual glossily photographed but slim offerings? I'm a big fan of Irish chef Rachel Allen. Here, she starts with the basics — essential equipment — but then moves quickly to recipes for soups both familiar (tomato basil) and from other countries (Hungarian goulash, Japanese chicken and udon noodle broth). And what makes the perfect accompaniment? Why, fresh bread, course! Allen includes a hefty section on yeast breads but also the scones, muffins and soda breads especially geared for budding bakers.



Mary Quattlebaum lives in Washington, DC, 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 the Vermont College of Fine Arts, writes frequently for the *Washington Post* and is a popular school and conference speaker. For more information, visit maryquattlebaum.com.

DC KIDS EVENTS CALENDAR JANUARY 2026

Discover Holiday Magic at ICE!

Jan. 1-4. Celebrate the holiday season at Gaylord National Resort, with wondrous ice sculptures, festive bites, ice slides and colorful displays.

■ **Location:** 201 Waterfront St., National Harbor, MD

Folger Frost Fair

Jan. 1-4. Visit the Folger Shakespeare Library and celebrate the holiday season with the Folger Frost Fair, a winter festival featuring festive decorations, holiday music, free activities and more.

■ **Location:** 201 E Capitol St. SE, Washington, DC



COURTESY FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY

Winter Walk of Lights

Jan. 1-4. Take a literal walk in a winter wonderland of lights at the Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna. Hot chocolate will be available to accompany you through the light display.

■ **Location:** 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna, VA

Holiday Art Show & Sale

Jan. 1-4. This is Glen Echo Park's annual Holiday Art Show & Sale, featuring unique gifts and a showcase of resident artists and instructors. Art types include glass, ceramics, photography, painting, jewelry, holiday ornaments and more.

■ **Location:** 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, MD

Garden of Lights

Jan. 1-4. Visit The Garden of Lights display at Brookside Gardens for a stroll through a winter wonderland. The walk includes different exhibits, lights displays and flowerbeds. The gift shop will offer special gift items.

■ **Location:** 1800 Glenallen Ave., Wheaton, MD

Ice Skating at Reston Town Center Ice Skating Pavilion

Jan. 1-31. The Reston Town Center Ice Skating Pavilion is offering seasonal ice skating with discounted group rates (10 or more skaters) and private rentals available.

■ **Location:** 1818 Discovery St., Reston, VA



COURTESY WASHINGTON WIZARDS

Washington Wizards SpongeBob SquarePants Night

Jan. 4. Join the Wizards for SpongeBob Night at 6 p.m., where the first 10,000 fans score a limited-edition SpongeBob-themed Wizards hat and can upgrade the fun by purchasing a matching special-edition jersey with select tickets. Get ready for a night of nautical nonsense as the Wizards take on the Timberwolves!

■ **Location:** Capital One Arena, 601 F St. NW, Washington, DC

Winter Concert with the Woodbridge Flute Choir

Jan. 10. The Woodbridge Flute Choir will be performing popular winter selections, after which there will be a Winter Open House for crafts and fun.

■ **Location:** 7415 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church, VA

In The Round

Jan. 10. The Mead Center for American Theater invites you for an unforgettable performance by the Chamber Dance Project, DC's premier contemporary ballet company, accompanied by their string quartet.

■ **Location:** 1101 6th St. SW, Washington, DC

BIGSTOCK/MONKEYBUSINESSIMAGES



Storytime for Young Readers

Jan. 11. Join People's Book on Sundays for a free children's storytime and accompanying craft or activity. People's Book hosts authors and illustrators each week.

■ **Location:** 7014-A Westmoreland Ave., Takoma Park, MD

Pokémon Casual Play

Jan. 11. Game Kastle at College Park invites kids of all ages and expertise to come play Pokémon TCG with other fans.

■ **Location:** 4748 Cherry Hill Road, College Park, MD



BIGSTOCK/MBRUXELLE

Crafty Kids: Tuesday Paper Crafts at Glencarlyn

Jan. 13-27. Elementary school kids are invited for arts and crafts at the Glencarlyn Branch Library. January is all about winter-themed crafts, and materials will be provided by the library.

■ **Location:** 300 South Kensington St., Arlington, VA

Stomp

Jan. 16-18. Stomp at the Broadway National Theater is a fun, inventive family-friendly show centered around producing percussion music through unconventional tools used as instruments, like wooden poles, brooms and matchboxes.

■ **Location:** 1321 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC



BIGSTOCK/DEMERZEL21

Cub Corner

Jan. 17-18. A special reading of "Almost Underwear" by local teacher and author Jonathan Roth, followed by a craft session where kids can make their own canvas or fabric pals.

■ **Location:** 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park, MD

Kennedy Center Chamber Players: Winter Concert

Jan. 18. The Kennedy Center in DC presents this acclaimed ensemble of classics, performed by the National Symphony Orchestra.

■ **Location:** 2700 F St. NW, Washington, DC

Gabby's Dollhouse Live! Presented by Walmart

Jan. 21-22. "Gabby's Dollhouse Live!" brings the hit DreamWorks series to the stage in a colorful, high-energy musical adventure. Kids can join Gabby, Pandi Paws and the Gabby Cats as they journey through fan-favorite worlds like the Cat-O-Sphere and Mermaid-Lantis to rebuild a broken rainbow. The show features lively puppetry, vibrant sets and popular songs including "Hey Gabby" and "Sprinkle Party," making it a purrfect holiday outing for families.

■ **Location:** National Theatre, 1321 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC



COURTESY DREAMWORKS

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Jan. 23. London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is returning for an amazing program of musical masterpieces: Nielsen, Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich.

■ **Location:** 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax, VA

Get the USA 250th Party Started!

Jan. 24. Celebrate America's 250th at the National Postal Museum from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., with a free, drop-in family festival featuring curator-led kids' tours, Story Time sessions (ASL-interpreted), a Future Inventors Tinker Station, trivia, hands-on activities and more. Open to all ages; no registration required.

■ **Location:** Smithsonian National Postal Museum, 2 Massachusetts Ave. NE, Washington, DC



COURTESY NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

UpSpring Aerial Studio Presents: In Light Of...

Jan. 25. Joe's Movement Emporium presents this aerial dance performance about light by UpSpring Aerial Lab.

■ **Location:** 3309 Bunker Hill Road, Mount Rainier, MD



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(301) 942-9561
Ages 18 months- Kindergarten
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OnenessFamily.org

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brooksfieldschool.org

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McLean, VA 22101
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mcleanmontessori.org

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HERE'S HOW TO CREATE AN EVENT:

- Go to [DC Kids Events Calendar](#)
- Click on blue ADD EVENT button
- Provide details of the event

LOOKING FOR THINGS TO DO WITH THE KIDDOS?

Go to 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 Weekend](#) featured events

