

TODAY'S family

February 2024

Lake Geauga

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Parents Do When
Potty Training
Their Kids**

The Kindness Games

Compete to be recognized
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Girl Scout Cookie Season

Private School Guide

- Tips for choosing the right school
- Listing of local schools

Summer Camp Preview

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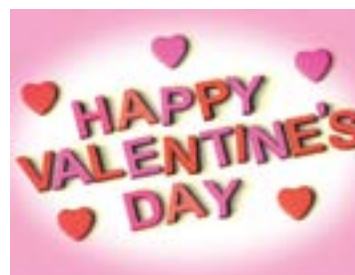
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6 Things Your Teen Needs But Doesn't Know How to Ask For

By Rebecca Hastings

My daughter's eyes were filled with tears and my voice was louder than it needed to be. We were arguing over something trivial and small.

Or so I thought.

We had gone round and round about the homework she was struggling with. She was convinced she wouldn't be able to do it, and I was confident she could if she just pushed through. It was a moment when I could see her potential more than she could. She felt like she was sinking, and all I saw was her refusal to stand up in the shallow water.

After going round and round we were both exasperated. Heels dug in tight, I realized I needed to be the one to move first. All I could think was to ask a question:

"What do you need?," I pleaded.

"I don't know, Mom." And the tears came.

At that moment I knew she had no idea what she needed and it was my job to figure it out with her. This wasn't about helping her with homework; this was about helping her find her way.

Teens often don't know what they need. Most kids don't, but we step in more willingly when they're young. Now that our babies are more at eye

level we look at them expecting adult choices, forgetting that sometimes they don't know how to figure things out on their own.

Here are 6 things your teen may not have a clue he or she needs.

1. Physical Touch – As our kids get older we are less likely to hug them, snuggle with them, or give them physical reassurance. This is especially true with boys because of gender expectations. While much research has been done on the effects of physical contact on babies and young children, we forget that some of the same benefits apply to teens.

"Hugging triggers the release of feel-good hormone, oxytocin that can lower the level of stress hormone and counter its anxiety effects." (parentingforbrain.com) This dual benefit helps teens in a way they cannot verbalize, making the situation they are facing easier to handle.

When my daughter is spiraling emotionally and I gently pull her into a hug she immediately collapses against me, letting the burden leave her as she falls into me. For some, hugs may be too much, but other types of physical touch can benefit them. A hand on the shoulder or a few minutes sitting side by side is enough to bring the same benefits.

2. Sleep & Rest – The need for and benefits of sleep for teens has been highlighted recently with studies showing that teens are not getting enough sleep for proper development. While much of the recent research has focused on the sleep/school connection for teens, there is far more concerning the need for adequate rest.

Thinking back to those crazy years when I had three kids in as many years, everything is a blur. I spent five years sleep-deprived, and some days were difficult as a person who doesn't function well without her eight hours. I was irritable, unable to solve problems well, and couldn't think clearly.

Now, think of those same effects on the physically and emotionally developing teen brain.

I don't need a study to confirm that my kids function better with good sleep. This can feel tricky with teens as changing physiology, more homework, and seeking independence keep them up later and later. Shifting the focus from actual sleep time to rest has helped in our household.

Encouraging kids to get stressful tasks requiring a lot of thinking done earlier in the evening allows them to use later times for unwinding. This can be with some electronics, but research is clear that the use of

electronic devices late at night is not good for anyone.

Finding things that are relaxing like a shower, reading, listening to audiobooks, journaling, drawing, or other non-stressful, quiet tasks are a great way to ease into a better sleep routine.

3. Expression – Teens often struggle with appropriate ways to express feelings. At times their feelings are new and foreign or mixed up in a way that leaves them uncertain about what they feel at all. Giving them ideas for ways to express themselves helps. And the best way to do that is by modeling.

It's no secret that telling a teen to do something doesn't always work, but if they see people they love and trust doing something, they may try it. Modeling a variety of ways to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings will help them see they have many options. Much like a buffet, when they are presented with an assortment of possibilities, they may try a few until they find what they like.

Talking is the most obvious way we express ourselves, but there are many more possibilities. Writing, drawing, creating, cooking, and building are a few ways you can foster expression. Some need something more physical so things like running, hiking, swimming, sitting at the beach, or even swinging on the swings can help.

The key is to try many things and be okay when they don't work. When teens see you finding your way, even with a struggle, it helps them know there is nothing wrong or unusual with their own.

4. Exercise – Very similar to expressing your feelings, exercise presents positive benefits that are often overlooked because we don't know how to incorporate it into our lives. Teens especially struggle with this, even teens who play sports. While playing a sport is a physical activity that will benefit them, it can also become a responsibility or burden associated with pressure.

I don't love exercise. But I try to walk or hike regularly. It has little to do with physical health benefits and more to do with the clarity and mental well-being it fosters. Much study has been done on the benefits of exercise. It is proven that people who exercise "feel more energetic throughout the day, sleep better at night, have sharper memories, and feel more relaxed and positive about

themselves and their lives.” — (Helpguide.org)

All of these benefits will help teens in ways they often cannot pinpoint. Giving them ample opportunity to try different types of exercise will also help them develop habits that will serve them later in life.

Even if they groan and complain, drag the family out for a hike or take them to the pool. Head to the trampoline park, shoot hoops, or challenge your teen to a 5K. Teens tend to let exercise go at a time when they may need it most. You can make sure they still have the opportunity to get moving. Plus, they may love the chance to beat you in a race.

5. Listening – This tip is the one most parents roll their eyes at and brush past. They often find themselves in the “my-kid-never-tells-me-anything” camp or the “my-kid-never-stops-talking” camp. Neither of which sounds very fun.

We are often surprised to learn that teens want better communication with their parents. As parents, we sometimes lack the time, interest, or skills necessary to effectively listen to our teens.

Listening is not always easy, and sometimes the results may not be noticeable, but fostering an environment of caring about what your teen has to say is helpful. Even if it is about the latest basketball team or what someone said to someone else that made another girl cry, this environment will benefit both you and your teen.

For great tips on effective communication with teens, don't miss the “Focus on the Family” series “Parent-Teen Communication.”

6. Grace – This idea is one you won't find many places, but I have found it to be one of the most

important things to teach my teen. Teens today are growing up in a high-pressure society. AP courses, college, grad school, and high-paying jobs all feel like necessities to make it in this great big busy world. Sometimes teens are so busy trying to be the best and to get ready for the next step that they are miserable.

Simple reminders and parental behavior make a big difference here. If the only things we ask about school have to do with grades, sports, and college applications we are showing our kids that those are the most important things. When they lose a game or get a low grade it suddenly becomes devastating. We have the power to change that.

My daughter came home one day upset about her math quiz grade. She was crying because she wanted it to be higher, to be better, to be perfect. After listening to her talk for a few minutes I asked one question: “Do you know what I got on my math quiz in 7th grade?”

She looked at me with wide eyes, eager to see how we measured up against one another. “No.”

“Neither do I.” She may have rolled her eyes when I said this, but it showed her that it's okay to let things go sometimes. We need to give ourselves grace when we make mistakes. That is what enables us to learn well and move forward without anger or bitterness.

Look for ways you can teach your teen about grace today. It may mean the difference between a stressful meltdown and a small bump in the road.

And one final note, this idea of grace works for you, too. As parents, we want so much to get it right, but the truth is sometimes we will miss the mark. Give yourself grace in those moments and move forward. It's worth it.

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10 funny things a parent potty training their kid would do

By Cheryl Maguire

I think we can all agree that there is nothing glamorous about potty training. Besides the obvious ick factor, all the “potty lingo” is enough to make you want to let your kid wear diapers for the rest of their life. BTW why can’t we just call it a toilet? My spell check doesn’t even recognize potty as a real word. The whole process makes parents a little crazy and causing them to do things they didn’t think they would ever do. Here are a few examples:

1. Spending hours searching for potty training reward charts, then spending a ridiculous amount of money on stickers and new underwear.

The massive amount of potty training books all suggest reward charts and new underwear are a good idea to get your kid excited about the wonderful world of using the potty. You are going to have to do something to entice them because why would your child want to give up his diaper? They are living a comfortable life in their diaper—never needing to stop what they are doing to go to the bathroom. So it is understandable why some parents might invest a large amount of time and money to cajole their young one to give up their diapers.

2. Allowing your kid to drink a gallon of juice.

Most parents know that juice is filled with sugar so they will limit the amount their kid drinks. But all bets are off when it comes to potty training. If drinking juice helps increase their chance that they might successfully pee in a toilet (or anything resembling one) then it’s possible a parent might let their kid exceed their juice limit for the day.

3. And then you end up allowing your child to eat a bag of M&Ms.

So the juice worked and your kid actually sat on the toilet, nothing happened but you are so excited you let your kid have an M&M even though it’s nine o’ clock in the morning. This continues all morning and before you know it most of the bag of M&Ms are gone. Even though your kid didn’t

pee (you are amazed at his camel-like bladder) you are thrilled your kid sat on the toilet 10 times.

4. You bring a portable potty wherever you go.

There are a bunch of different portable potties—some are just a seat while another potty has a pot at the bottom so it’s like traveling with a real toilet. Whichever one you own it becomes your new must-have item that is with you and your child at all times. I bet you never thought you would want to carry around a potty seat before you had kids.

5. You map out all the public restrooms within a 30-mile radius.

When your child begins the delightful process of potty training you will quickly learn, when they tell you they have to go to the bathroom they mean right now, not a minute to spare to figure out where the restroom is located. One inexperienced mom learned the hard way when her daughter peed in the middle of the aisle at Target. After that you can bet that she mapped out every public restroom with a 30-mile radius of her house and could be at the nearest one within seconds.

6. You clean the public restroom as if you were getting paid to do it.

For some unknown reason, toddlers (and some older kids) love touching the walls, floor, toilet paper, toilet and anything else you don’t want them touching in a public restroom. When they go to touch any of these items all you can do (besides screaming NO) is envision the germs multiplying on the surface and now your kid’s hands. So you end up pulling out your gallon size antibiotic wipes, cleaning everything in sight, almost giving your kid a shower in the process.

7. You bring a pad of Post-it notes with you to cover the automatic flush sensor.

Those automatic flush sensors found in some public restrooms are a parent’s worst nightmare. It’s hard enough with your kid touching every germ-infested surface and now the toilet flushes

out of the blue scaring your kid to the point they would never want to attempt using it again. The best way to prevent this situation is to put a Post-it note over the sensor. Now you end up carrying with you a toilet seat, a bottle of anti-bacterial wipes and Post-it notes.

8. You bring an entire suitcase of clothes to prepare for “the accident.”

Since it is all a learning process your kid is most likely going to have an accident at some point. In order to prepare for the inevitable you find yourself packing a whole wardrobe of clothes. What if they have more than one accident? What if they are hot/cold? You just never know, so you pack it all.

9. You refuse to leave the house for two weeks because you are tired and just can’t use another public restroom.

Potty training is exhausting. When you leave the house you bring a toilet seat, a bottle of anti-bacterial wipes, Post-it notes, and a suitcase filled with clothes which are tiring just thinking about it. You don’t have the energy to map out the public restrooms and then clean/cover the toilets so it’s easier just to stay home.

10. Celebrate like you won the billion dollar lottery when your child actually uses the potty.

When your kid finally uses the potty you find yourself jumping up and down, screaming as if you just won the lottery. Because in a sense you have, the freedom to leave the house again.

Us parents that have been there, feel your pain. Just know that you will get through this traumatic parenting endeavor and it will all be a distant memory (sort of). Hopefully, you will finally be able to call it by its real name—a toilet and leave all that “potty talk” behind you.

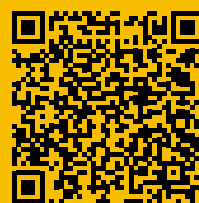
Cheryl Maguire holds a Master’s Degree in Counseling Psychology. She is married and the mother of twins and a daughter.



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When your child's BFF is the opposite gender

By Katy M. Clark

"Is that her boyfriend?," the stranger asked, winking.

I looked at my 10-year-old daughter and her best friend standing next to me in the grocery store.

"No, he's just her friend," I replied, damping down my exasperation.

My daughter's best friend is a boy. They are fourth graders who are not dating nor thinking about dating. They are best friends who just happen to be the opposite gender. My daughter and her best friend see friendship, not gender, and they have since their relationship started.

The beginning

When she was 6 years old, my daughter cemented her relationship with her male best friend.

It happened by chance. My husband was out of town and I had to take my oldest child to the emergency room for an injury. In desperation, I reached out to an acquaintance with a child the same age to watch my daughter.

My daughter had known this little boy her whole life. His mom and I had been pregnant at the same time and the kids had attended a Sunday school class together since they were three. Still, they had never had a playdate together.

When I arrived three hours later to pick her up, I had to pry her away

from him. They had an amazing time.

And so it began.

The present

Over the last four years, the kids have been inseparable. Their standing play dates on Sunday afternoons are one of their favorite parts of the week.

My daughter and her best friend create imaginative worlds with stuffed animals. The kids study books on the abyss and bioluminescent creatures. They wrestle each other, laughing and giggling, on the living room floor.

Their temperaments are similar, their attention spans compatible, and their silliness on point.

Yet, these are not the attributes that pique people's interest when I mention my daughter's best friend. Usually, I get asked, even in jest, about their romance. It is as if people cannot think about males and females in a platonic relationship, even children.

When the dating jokes annoy my daughter or me, I draw on noteworthy opposite gender relationships from literature to reinforce that being best friends with a boy is normal.

Indeed, there are best friends like Beezus and Henry from the Ramona books, Judy Moody and Rocky from the Judy Moody books, and Jo and Laurie from Little Women. Plus, family movies like Dolphin Tale cele-



brate boy-girl friendships.

The message these books and movies send, and that I hope to reinforce, is what my daughter already knows: boys and girls can be great friends.

The end?

I do wonder what middle school and the teen years will bring to their friendship. Puberty will change their bodies and how they think about the opposite sex. They may start to care what their peers think of their pairing. It makes me sad that these

forces could dull the brightness of their friendship.

Still, I am grateful for the strength of their bond and hopeful that, regardless of their gender, they can weather the changes coming their way.

There is a comfort and strength from knowing someone your whole life and genuinely liking that person. I hope my daughter and her best friend, who just happens to be a boy, will have that for the rest of their lives.

The Great Big Home + Garden Show returns to I-X Center February 2–11

The Great Big Home + Garden Show, presented by Carrier, is set to inspire homeowners with more than 450 exhibits at Cleveland's I-X Center, February 2–11. Find fresh ideas from hundreds of experts in kitchen and bath, landscaping, décor, flooring and more during the 10-day event.

Visitors will enjoy a hint of spring in the holiday-themed Garden Showcase and experience the latest in home design trends as they walk through the Idea Home, Backyard Oasis, and Italian-Inspired Villa. Leslie Davis and Lyndsay Lamb of HGTV's Unsellable Houses will also be

appearing on the Main Stage.

The latest show information including daily hours will be posted online at www.GreatBigHomeAndGarden.com.

Ticket Information

- \$15 box office (adult admission)
- \$13 online (adult admission) at GreatBigHomeAndGarden.com
- \$11 seniors 65+ with ID (Monday-Thursday only, tickets must be purchased at show box office)
- \$10 group tickets (minimum 20)
- \$5 children ages 6–12 years
- FREE children 5 and under

Just walk up! Fewer Geauga Park District programs now require registration

Do you prefer to attend events or programs for which preregistration is not required?

Good news for you: many more Geauga Park District programs no longer require registration! This should expand opportunities for you and your family and friends to experience naturalist-led hikes and similar programs on a moment's notice, keep you off some lengthy waiting lists, and alleviate the stress of needing to call to cancel when something else comes up.

To easily find a list of all upcoming programs that don't require registration, visit www.geaugaparkdistrict.org under Programs & Events, then filter by "No

Registration Required/Walk-Up." (Note that registration is still always required for programs with fees or limited attendance.)

We hope you like the change – and to see you a little more often in the parks going forward! If you plan to attend a program without registration, just please remember to mark your calendars or set an alarm, as reminder emails cannot be sent for those programs.

For more on Geauga Park District offerings, please call 440-286-9516 or visit www.geaugaparkdistrict.org, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or YouTube.

The Kindness Games

Compete to be recognized as the kindest school in the nation

Kindland™ is hosting The Kindness Games to heighten student and staff awareness to the importance of kindness and the positive impact it can have in their lives and the lives of others.

Schools compete nationwide to log the most acts of kindness performed and/or witnessed on the Just Be Kind® App. Those with the highest number of participants and/or acts logged will be recognized nationally and receive monetary awards.

How your school can participate in The Kindness Games:

- 1) Choose one educator to visit www.BeKindland.com to register your school as a Kindness Games participant.
- 2) Share the Kindness Games information with your entire staff and student body and ask that everyone download the Just Be Kind® App. The app is available in both Apple and Android device app stores. When registering, students and staff will be asked to enter basic contact information. They must enter your school's name to be associated with your school's results.
- 3) Throughout The Kindness Games, encourage use of the app to log in as many acts of kindness that they see or do including examples found in the news or social media.
- 4) At the end of The Kindness Games, the number of participants and the number of acts of kindness logged on the app by each school will be tallied and winners will be recognized in the provided categories.

Winners will receive cash prizes in two categories — total percentage of participants and total percentage of acts of kindness. (Percentages allows schools of every size to compete fairly against each other.

First place receives, \$5,000, second place receives \$2,500 and third place received \$1,000 in EACH category. Sign up today!

Girl Scouts of North East Ohio kicks off 2024 Girl Scout Cookie season

On January 4, Girl Scouts of North East Ohio (GSNEO) kicked off the 2024 Girl Scout Cookie season. This is an annual event in which Girl Scouts unbox their futures as young, female entrepreneurs through the world's largest entrepreneurial program for girls.

During this highly-anticipated time of the year, Girl Scouts flex their entrepreneurial muscles and acquire important life skills like money management, team building, public speaking, and decision making. All proceeds from cookie sales stay with local councils and troops to power Girl Scouts' amazing experiences year-round.

This year's theme, Unbox the Future, aims to remove social barriers that often keep girls boxed in. When bold, goal-setting Girl Scouts sell a package of cookies, they're doing much more than what's seen at face value. Girl Scouts do more than sell delicious treats— they're entrepreneurial powerhouses creating a more equitable future for themselves and the world. Every box of cookies sold provides invaluable experiences for Girl Scouts such as service projects, troop travel, and summer camp.



More than 12,000 Girl Scouts participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program across northeast Ohio, which provides vital girl-led entrepreneurial skills that build courage, confidence, and character. As a result, they obtain limitless barrier-breaking futures with transferable life skills through the program.

How to purchase Girl Scout Cookies this year

- If you know a registered Girl Scout, reach out to her to find out how she's selling cookies.
- Don't know a Girl Scout? Visit gsneo.org/findcookies and submit a Customer Cookie Request Form to be connected with a local Girl Scout troop.
- Beginning February 16, enter your zip code into the Girl Scout Cookie Finder at gsneo.org/findcookies to order online from a local troop, or to find a local cookie booth happening in your community from March 8–24.

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Easter Brunch

March 31, 2024 | 10 AM–3 PM
Last seating at 1 PM

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You must be present to win



By Stacy Turner

I was reminded of this sentiment when I bought a raffle ticket for a handmade quilt at a local festival a few months ago. But I'm learning it applies just as much in our day-to-day lives, too.

You might say that being present is a gift – one you give to yourself and those you love. It's something you can choose to do to make even the most monotonous tasks feel better. Like after a string of cold, gray days that you think will never end, try taking a few minutes to sit quietly and watch the sun rise, spreading golden light and hope across the winter sky. It only takes a minute or two to savor this gift before rushing on to the next item on your list.

Sometimes being present means freezing your butt off in the bleachers to watch your kid compete in their favorite sport, seeing their face light up when they scan the crowd to catch your eye. Sometimes, it means stepping away from your phone or computer to look your child (or spouse) in the eye and ask them how their day went, giving your full attention to their reply. Sometimes, it means noticing what they don't say is just as important as what they verbalize. I'm still learning, and I don't always get it right. I may not be perfect, but I'm persistent, at least.

With young kids, especially, it's

easy to get stuck in an “on-to-the-next-thing” mentality. We're advised to take notice of the milestones, after all. As a momma of little ones, the days were hectic and full, but often it felt like nothing got done. I blinked, and they were in school, and our days were hectic in a brand new way. Throughout all my seasons of parenting, I've realized it's crucial to be present. It not only helps us savor those quickly disappearing days of childhood but also serves as a guide to make the most of day-to-day life.

Savoring those pleasant things feels natural – who doesn't want to focus on what makes us happy? It's not quite the word we consider when things are hard, and we'd rather distract ourselves from pain and discomfort. Ironically, being present and working through the hard stuff is where we learn the most. And while we don't savor those times, being present in them is how we make the most of those hard-won lessons.

It's especially hard to see our not-yet-grown kids learn life's lessons the hard way, especially if we navigated a similar path in our youth. But weathering things like false friendships and learning to set boundaries in little ways gives them the skills to work through larger issues later. As much as we'd like to protect them, all those mini battles they slug their way through are how they find their own strength.

Like all parents, I've made my share of parenting mistakes. Parenting is hard. Despite this, I trust that no matter where my children venture and what they do, they know that I'm present for them. And that they will always be two of my most cherished wins.

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Today's Family **BOOK** — CLUB —



Tennyson's **Big Secret**

By A.H. Benjamin (author)
 Peter Trimarco (illustrator)
 Notable Kids Publishing
 Ages 3–5

Tennyson's Big Secret follows the story of a young boy with playfulness and energy to spare. Tennyson demonstrates one "secret talent" after another, with his highly confused kitten in tow, prompting children to ponder what might be his superpower. Is it pulling an elephant out of a hat? Building a tower of blocks taller than a skyscraper? Painting a museum-worthy masterpiece? Maybe not, but whatever it is, is sure to cause a giggle-out-loud moment.

Through simple dialogue and a smattering of outlandish and comical illustrations, this picture-walk, early-reader adventure keeps young minds guessing until the very end. The story takes a heartwarming turn as Tennyson shares his secret talent in the final pages.



Lost Stick

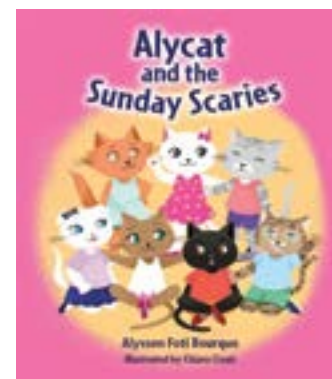
By Anoocha Syed
 Viking Penguin
 Ages 3–7

(On sale March 26, 2024)

Milo the dog loves his best friend Louise and will do anything to make her happy. During a fun day at the park, Louise and Milo start playing a fun game of fetch until the fetching stick goes missing. The eager-to-please pup's new mission becomes

clear—find his beloved Louise's stick to make her smile again. While he searches high and low for the stick, Louise looks for Milo! While all sticks might look the same, there's only one Louise, and he misses her terribly. He soon realizes that home with Louise is where he wants to be.

Milo's heartwarming witty story in Lost Stick emphasizes home is truly where the heart is. Syed's hilarious and tender friendship story is cleverly displayed through her whimsical paintings, making this a great option for dog lovers and young readers



Alycat and the **Sunday Scaries**

By Alysson Foti Bourque
 Pelican Publishing
 Ages 6–8 years

(On sale March 18, 2024)

It's Sunday, the day before the school week begins, and Alycat is nervous. She just knows that Monday is going to be the Mondayest Monday ever! On the playground, Alycat realizes she isn't the only one suffering from the Sunday Scaries. It's hard to ride a bike. What if Kit falls? The treehouse is so high. Will Spotty make it safely back down? The kittens band together to overcome their fears, but can they turn the Sunday Scaries into a Sunday Funday? The themes of the books in the Alycat Series all reflect a reliance on friendships, imagination, and creativity towards problem solving. Fans of Alycat and her friends will enjoy spotting references to the kittens' daily adventures within these pages. Tips for a successful lemonade stand are included!

Check out www.alycatseries.com for more book titles in this series.

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Eugene.Tetrick@jfs.ohio.gov

Lake County Department of Job and Family Services

Fine Arts Association Presents CATS

A musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber

The Fine Arts Association (FAA) is presenting CATS, the beloved, family-favorite musical that has captivated audiences since its premier over 40 years ago. It opens Friday, February 16 and runs through Sunday, March 3, 2024.

CATS is based on T.S. Eliot's whimsical collection of poems, "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats." Andrew Lloyd Webber's popular musical brings together a tribe of Jellicle cats on a moonlit evening, who must make the "Jellicle choice" to decide which of them will ascend to the mysterious Heaviside Layer to be reborn.

Featuring such celebrated standards as the haunting "Memory," CATS was an international phenomenon and its original production is still the fourth-longest-running show on Broadway.

CATS runs two hours with one 15-minute intermission.

The Corning Auditorium is barrier free. Free on-site parking available.

Visit FineArtsAssociation.org for more info and to purchase tickets.



Production dates and times

- Fridays: February 16, 23, & March 1 @ 7:30 pm
- Saturdays: February 17 & March 2 @ 7:30 pm
- Saturday, February 17 @ 2:00 pm (Sensory friendly - This performance is designed for individuals who may have challenges to sudden shifts in light or loud sounds.)
- Saturday, February 24 @ 2:00 pm
- Sundays: February 18, 25 & March 3 @ 2:00 pm

Ticket prices

(not including processing fees):

- Child: 10 and under, \$15
- Student: 11-18 yrs., \$25
- Adult: \$27
- Senior: 60+, \$25

Cleveland's beloved orchid show returns to warm your spirit

Be amazed by orchids at every turn at the Cleveland Botanical Garden's annual flower show, Orchids Forever: Golden Hour. Now through Sunday, March 17, you can immerse yourself in the striking hues of sunrise and sunset to wipe away the winter blues.

This year's show will highlight the serene feeling of sunrise and sunset. Species like Phalaenopsis, Dendrobium, and Oncidium come in hues of pink, purple, orange, and yellow—the sky's color palette. Guests will be surrounded by orchids located throughout the indoor gardens and glasshouses, a dreamscape for flower lovers, and endless photo opportunities for all.

Showcasing over 100 different types of orchids, Orchids Forever: Golden Hour will display more than 3,000 flowers from exotic blooms to well-known varieties.

Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays 10 am-5 pm, Saturdays 10 am-8:30 pm, and Sundays noon-5 pm. The Botanical Garden will be closed on Mondays except for Monday, February 19,



Photo credit: Cleveland Botanical Garden

Presidents Day, when they are open from 10 am-5 pm. Please note hours are subject to change, visit holdenfg.org for updated information.

Admission is \$20 per adult and \$14 per child ages three to 12 (free for children two and under). Admission is FREE for Holden Forests & Gardens members. The Botanical Garden is at 11030 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio. Indoor parking is available for a fee based on availability. For complete details about Orchids Forever and to purchase advance tickets visit holdenfg.org.

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Fun Valentine's Day parties for kids – at school or home

By Kimberly Blaker

Whether you're helping with your child's Valentine's Day party at school or planning one at home, there are so many fun, creative ways to keep kids busy and make their party a blast. Try some of these ideas kids are sure to love.

CRAFTS

Heart suncatcher. Lay a sheet of wax paper in front of each child. Then have the kids cut red, pink, and white tissue paper into squares or other shapes. Next, lay a tissue square on the wax paper and brush it with liquid starch. Continue by overlapping the pieces of tissue to create an 8" x 8" collage. When the collage is dry, carefully peel the tissue away from the wax paper. Cut the collage into a big heart. Then put a single hole punch in the heart, and thread a piece of yarn or ribbon through it to hang it.

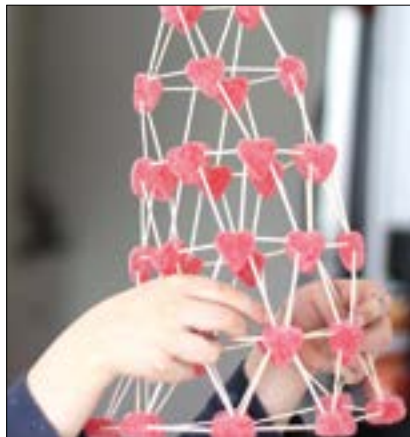
Heart structures. Provide each child a supply of gummy hearts or gum drops and toothpicks, and let their creativity take over. They can build a house, sphere, rocket, airplane, or whatever their imagination desires. (Pictured.)

Finger paint Valentine. Fold a piece of paper in half, and cut out a large heart. Next, place the paper with the big heart-shaped hole on top of another piece of paper. Dip a thumb or finger into the paint, and make a finger impression within the heart-shaped area. Alternate colors and fingers until the whole area is filled with colorful fingerprints. When done, remove the top sheet, and you'll have a colorful heart image underneath.

Valentine candle holder. Give each child a glass jar. Have them start by cutting red, white, and pink tissue paper into small hearts or other shapes. Using a mixture of one part flour to two parts water and a paintbrush, paste the tissue shapes onto the jar overlapping each other until the jar is completely covered.

GAMES

Musical hearts. This game is played similar to musical chairs. Cut out enough hearts for the number of players. On each heart, write an action such as "rub your belly," "dance,"



and "pretend you're an elephant." When the music stops, everyone must act out the heart they landed on.

Pin the heart on the Tin Man.

Draw the Tin Man on a large sheet of poster board, then cut it out. Have each kid cut out a heart from construction paper. Then blindfold and spin each child around, and have them try to place the heart on the Tin Man's chest.

Candy heart bingo. Buy a Valentine's Day bingo game available through many online retailers. Then use candy hearts for the markers.

Valentine's Day word find. Have each kid write 'Valentine's Day Cupid' on a sheet of paper. Then have them write down as many words as they can make from it. Offer prizes for the most words, longest word, and the most rhyming words.

BOOKS

What would Valentine's Day be without a special Valentine's story or two? Read aloud to younger kids. If they're readers, have each kid take a turn reading a page.

"Happy Valentine's Day, Charlie Brown"
Charles M. Schulz, Ages 5-7

"Amelia Bedelia's First Valentine"
Herman Parish and Lynne Avril, Ages 4-8

"Junie B. Jones and the Mushy Gushy Valentine"
Barbara Park and Denise Brunkas, Ages 6-9

"Happy Love Day, Daniel Tiger!"
Becky Friedman and Jason Fruchter, Ages 3-7

"Thomas in Town: Valentine's Day in Vicarstown"
Rev. W. Awdry, Ages 3-7

"Dumpy's Valentine"

Julie Andrews Edwards and Emma Walton Hamilton, Ages 4-7

"Happy Valentine's Day, Mouse"
Laura Numeroff and Felicia Bond, Ages 4-8

"Ruby Valentine and the Sweet Surprise"
Laurie B. Friedman and Lynne Avril, Ages 5-9



Youth Spring Sports at LNSP East!

Lil Kickers - Soccer



Winter Session: runs through March 2
Register Today!

Spring Session: March 11 – June 2
Registration opens February 4!

- Choose one day per week (Mon., Tue., Thur. or Sat.)
- Innovative child development program based on soccer
- Focuses on kids ages 18 months – 7 years old
- Classes run 50 minutes per session, once a week
- Class fee of \$17/week
- Sign up for a FREE TRIAL TODAY!

www.lostnationsports.com/youth-program/lil-kickers-east/

Skills Institute - Soccer



NEW PROGRAM BEGINNING THIS SPRING!

Spring Session: March 11 – June 2

Registration opens February 4!

Skills Institute is where soccer takes center stage. Rooted in child development theory, kids have a blast learning and improving technical and tactical soccer skills.

Players will walk away more confident, equipped for their next right step, and ready for life's challenges on and off the field. Players enjoy 30 minutes of age-appropriate instruction and 20 minutes of small-sided scrimmaging. Classes meet weekly for 50 minutes. Class fee of \$19/week.

Read more about the program at:

www.lostnationsports.com/youth-program/skills-institute

Little Sluggers - Baseball



Winter Session: runs through March 2

Register Today!

Spring Session: March 11 – June 2

Registration opens February 4!

- Choose one day per week (Mon. or Sat.)
- Introduction to baseball ages 2 – 6 years old
- Class fee of \$17/week

www.lostnationsports.com/youth-program/little-sluggers

Mike Moran Basketball Camps



June 17-21 & June 24-28

Time: 9:00am-3:15pm

To find out more details and pricing, please visit:

www.morancamps.com



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www.LostNationSports.com

Camp Quiz

What type of summer camp should your child attend?

When we were kids, life was simpler. Many of us just hung around the house during the summer and played with neighborhood friends or maybe attended a local day camp sponsored by our school or city. Well, nowadays there are camps for everything you can imagine! It can be quite confusing, and even stressful, trying to find the right camp for our kids. Sometimes we even have to choose different camps for each child based on their interests.

Finding the best camp is essential for our children's comfort and growth. Camps can offer them experiences and tools to go out in the world and discover who they are and what they want to become. A child can only truly grow if given the freedom and chance to gain confidence by exploring new ideas and activities,

and eventually finding their passion.

If you are struggling to find the right camp for your child this summer, take this fun and easy quiz. You'll be able to discover which type of camp is the best fit for your child.

Please only choose one answer.

1. How would you best describe your child?

- A. Artistic
- B. Athletic
- C. Brainy
- D. Adventurous

2. What is your child's favorite subject in school?

- A. Music
- B. Physical education
- C. Math or science
- D. My child likes a variety of classes



3. What is your child's favorite activity after school?

- A. Music lessons
- B. Playing a sport
- C. Robotics or science club
- D. Participating in a bunch of different activities with friends

4. Which type of birthday party would your child most likely choose?

- A. Dance party
- B. Indoor soccer or gymnastics
- C. Science museum
- D. Every year it's different

5. What does your child usually do on weekends?

- A. Goes to theater rehearsal
- B. Has a game
- C. Competes in a robotics or math tournament
- D. Mixes it up with bike rides, art projects, and shooting hoops

6. What is your child's favorite role in a group project?

- A. Presenter
- B. Collaborator
- C. Researcher
- D. Fills in wherever needed

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7. What's your child's favorite rainy day activity?

- A. Listening to music
- B. Running around the house
- C. Playing a video game
- D. Inviting a friend over to hang

8. Which would be your child's dream vacation?

- A. Seeing Broadway shows in New York City
- B. Touring sports stadiums around the country
- C. Visiting science museums
- D. Doing something different every day including hiking and amusement parks

9. What would your child hope to achieve at summer camp?

- A. Starring in a musical
- B. Being team captain
- C. Creating an app
- D. Trying new things

10. What does your child want to be when he/she grows up?

- A. Movie star
- B. Coach
- C. Engineer
- D. No clue

Tally up your answers and match the letter you mostly chose to the type of camp below.

A. Creative/Performing Arts Camps

Specialty art and musical theater camps focus specifically on the arts. Some may offer a variety of art forms to choose from, such as pottery, woodworking, painting, and photography. Others focus solely on one type of art, such as sewing camp or band camp. Musical theater camps are quite popular and typically showcase a production after a few weeks of rehearsals. Art camps come in all lengths and locations. You can sign your child up for a one-week-long art camp at your local recreational center or find multi-week overnight art camps where they can truly hone their craft.

B. Sports Camps

Sports camps usually consist of only one sport that a child plays throughout the day. The main goal is for participants to improve their skills by focusing extensively on a

sport they love. Depending on where you live, you can find all types of sports camps like tennis, golf, soccer, baseball, lacrosse, or gymnastics. It is also a way for your child to try a new sport or something only offered during the summer, such as surfing and sailing.

C. Science/Tech Camps

If your child loves to code, build, and tinker, then a tech camp may be the right fit. These types of camps make learning about science and technology fun and exciting for kids. They also provide an opportunity for kids to dive deeper into a subject they love, such as working on a science experiment, designing a website, or programming a robot. You can find science and tech camps through local schools, colleges, and museums.

D. Traditional Camps

Traditional camps are what you think of when you envision summer camp—canoeing, hiking, archery, relay races, swim lessons, and crafts. They can be considered “jack-of-all-

trades” camps because they offer all types of activities for children to try. If your child enjoys exploring and experiencing new things and has not yet found one specific activity that they are passionate about, then a traditional camp is a wonderful choice. They are very common and can be found all over. Some are day camps, while others are overnight experiences where your kids can also learn more independence skills. Overnight camps also offer a more rustic, outdoorsy experience with campouts, cabins, campfires, and activities on the lake.



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www.lakecountnymca.org



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summer camp preview

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www.mentor.busybeesart.com
mentor.busybeesart.com/
kids-camp

Busy Bees Pottery & Arts Studio in Mentor offers Art Camp during the summer, Monday through Friday, from 9 am–4 pm, or 9 am to noon, or 1 pm to 4 pm. You can enroll for five full days or five half days per week. Children must be between ages of 6–13 (your child must have completed kindergarten and know how to cut with scissors).

Each day of the week revolves around a specific medium. Your child will create one to three pieces of artwork each day using but not limited to the following mediums; clay, pottery, glass fusing, and mosaics pieces. When they are not creating, they are candle making, playing games, journal-

ing, and having lots of fun! Space is limited. Sign up now!

Gilmour Day Camps

34001 Cedar Road, Gates Mills
gilmour.org/summercamp
(440) 473-8000 ext. 2267
summercamp@gilmour.org

The official camp of summer fun! With offerings that include baking and cooking, STEM, drone, sports, entrepreneurship and the arts, Camp Gilmour has something for everyone! Camps offered June 3–August 2.

Preschool Camp (9 weeks available) delights children ages 3–5 as they explore an exciting theme each week.

Day Camp (9 weeks available) is for children ages 5–12. Full and half days offered (can combine with other half-day specialty camps). Daily math, reading, science and writing enrichment provided at no cost.

Hockey, volleyball, soccer, football, basketball and cross country camps, hosted by coaches from

Gilmour's state-ranked programs, provide campers the opportunity to hone skills.

Before- and after-care options from 7:15 am until 6 pm.

Register at www.gilmour.org/summercamp. Questions? Contact (440) 473-8000 ext. 2267 or summercamp@gilmour.org.

Gilmour Academy is an independent, Catholic, coed school in the Holy Cross tradition. Grades K-12 and Montessori preschool (18 months-preschool).

Lake County YMCA

(440) 354-5656

www.lakecountyyymca.org

At the Y, they value the unique personalities and potential of every child and teen. Summer camp creates an environment where kids are encouraged to explore and discover new things, cultivate friendships and make memories that last a lifetime.

The Lake County Y Central, East End, and West End offer a variety of summer day camp and adven-

ture camp experiences for preschoolers and children ages 4–14. Through hands-on experiences, children gain self-reliance, a love of nature and develop attitudes and practices that build character and leadership—all amidst the fun of camp songs, crafts, swimming, sports, talent shows and meaningful friendships.

Lost Nation Sports Park

38630 Jet Center Dr., Willoughby
(440) 602-4000
www.LostNationSports.com

Mike Moran Basketball Camps

Open to boys and girls ages 6–14

Session #1: June 17–21

Session #2: June 24–28

- Week-long program (M–F) 9:00 am–3:15 pm.
- Weekly tuition is \$195.
- Early registration discount is only \$180 (by May 1, 2024).
- All campers receive a T-shirt.



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SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM JUNE 10-28, 2024

The Summer Enrichment Program has served the greater Cleveland community since 1968, accounting for more than 50 years of **academic, social, cultural** and **athletic** enrichment opportunities for young men who are entering the eighth grade

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summer camp preview

Love's Learning Loft

www.loveslearninglofts.com

Mentor

6720 Center Street
(440) 534-1025

Chesterland

7976 Mayfield Road, Suite #200
(440) 688-5683 (LOVE)

This year, Love's Learning Loft is offering in-house and off-site field trips. In-house field trips include things like a petting zoo, pony rides and a magician. Off-site includes a trip to the Children's Museum of Cleveland, Great Lakes Science Center, and the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo just to name a few. Their goal for 2024 is to focus on family and to make Love's the most enjoyable experience for all children and their families.

They will limit their summer school age to 50 children (per day) total between Mentor and Chesterland. All field trips are included in the cost of tuition, with only a transportation fee for each of the off-site field trips. They will pack lunches at the center to take on all the field trips! See their ad for more information or visit www.loveslearninglofts.com.

Saint Ignatius High School

1911 West 30th Street, Cleveland
(216) 651-0222
www.ignatius.edu

Saint Ignatius High School, Cleveland's Catholic Jesuit high school for young men, is rooted in Ignatian spirituality and has formed leaders since 1886. Through outstanding academics, exceptional athletics and arts, and a deep commitment to faith and service, Saint Ignatius students are open to growth, in-

tellectually competent, religious, loving and committed to social justice.

The Saint Ignatius Summer Enrichment Program (SEP) has served the greater Cleveland community since 1968, accounting for more than 50 years of academic, social, cultural and athletic enrichment opportunities for young men entering the eighth grade. Through a combination of academic instruction and athletic opportunities, SEP creates a competitive, yet friendly atmosphere that adequately prepares students for the challenges of high school. SEP is the perfect opportunity for young men to become acquainted with life at Saint Ignatius

The Summer Enrichment Program is eligible for reimbursement through the Ohio After-School Child Enrichment (ACE) program.

Western Reserve Grief Services

(216) 486-6838

Western Reserve Grief Services is hosting grief support camps this summer to help children coping with the death of a loved one. Led by trained bereavement professionals from Hospice of the Western Reserve, who combine art, music, play and nature exploration to help with the healing process. The camps bring together children, who have experienced the death of a loved one, in a safe, supportive environment. All camps are open to the community and offered at a nominal cost.

For information about the camps call (216) 486-6838 or email thebereavementcenter@hospicewr.org.

Summer Camp Jokes

Why don't mummies go to summer camp? They're afraid to relax and unwind.

How do you keep your sleeping bag from getting stretched out? — Don't sleep too long in it!

At summer camp, what did the lake say to the sailboat? Nothing, it just waved.

Why do fish at camp swim in salt water? Because pepper makes them sneeze!

What do you call a camper without a nose or a body? Nobodynose.

At camp what does the sun drink out of? Sunglasses.

Writers are unknown



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- Lake Metroparks (Adopt an animal—Apollo the Eagle)
- Carnival
- Dunk tank
- Pizza party

Off-Site Field Trips

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Packed lunch included. Transportation fee applies.

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- Greater Cleveland Aquarium
- The Jump Yard
- Kalahari (family outing)
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- COSI
- Children's Museum of Cleveland

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www.loveslearninglofts.com

Six reasons your teen might love to be a camp counselor

By Janeen Lewis

Did your teenager love summer camp as a child? Does he or she need a job but can't work during the school year because of homework and activities? Maybe you're ready for your teen to get employment experience but still have some carefree time outdoors away from electronics. Day or sleepaway camp is the perfect place for teens to transition to the world of the employed. The paycheck is nice, but being a camp counselor has other rewards, too.

Time away from technology

Most day camps and sleepaway camps either have a no-device policy or have only short scheduled times with technology. Camp is the perfect place to do a "digital detox" and get back to nature, sports and face-to-face socialization.

The gift of responsibility

As much as teens sometimes protest about it, learning responsibility is the gateway to more independence as they grow into adults. Camp is an ideal place to build accountability because teens are in charge of other kids or activities, but they are still being supervised. If they work at a sleepaway camp, they must keep their cabin quarters neat and guide younger children to do the same. If they

work at a day camp, they must show up on time, care for children and lead activities. Working at camp is fun, but it also gives teens a glimpse into the adult world with the guidance they still need.

Opportunity to be a role model

Do you remember a teen you looked up to when you were a kid at summer camp? Maybe he or she helped you perfect your back stroke, taught you how to throw a curve ball or gave the perfect advice for dealing with disagreements between friends. Teens can connect to kids in ways that adults sometimes can't, and when teens work at camp, they experience the fulfillment of helping younger kids meet their goals and develop new skills.

Preparation for being away at college

If your teen works at a sleepaway camp, he or she may get a taste of what college life is like. He or she will be responsible for meals, getting up on time or using a coin laundry. These are all valuable lessons that will prepare him or her for college. Also being away from home for an extended period of time for the first time can take some adjusting to and it can create some homesickness. Teen camp counselors have experienced these feelings and dealt with them before they go to college.

Resume building

Working at camp is great experience to put on a resume when your teen is ready to enter the adult world of work. Camp experience is beneficial if your teen wants to teach or coach, but working at camp also builds communication, collaboration and problem-solving skills, all worthy resume additions that may catch a future employer's interest.

A new appreciation for their parents

Being a teen counselor is indeed hard work. It involves stamina, patience and responsibility. Oh, and teen counselors must also teach, guide and care for children younger than themselves. It sounds a teeny bit like parenting, right? Teens who are camp counselors may begin to recognize how hard parenting is. With that recognition, they may have a new appreciation for all their parents do by the end of the summer.

Being a camp counselor is a great start for teens who want to join the world of work. If your teen is interested in beginning the adventure that comes with being a camp counselor, you can find more information at the American Camp Association website at <https://www.acacamps.org/staff-professionals/job-center>.



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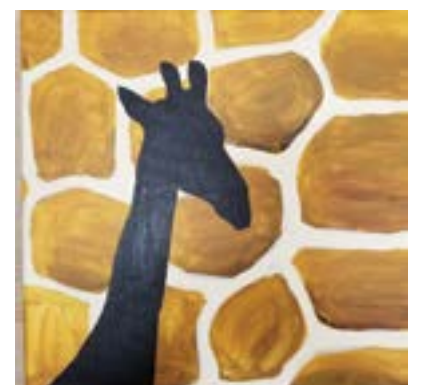
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www.mentor.busybeesart.com

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Like us for updates and specials!



Seven reasons to send your child to summer camp

By Mary Ann Blair

With summer calendars quickly filling up, it can be hard to try and squeeze in one more thing. But if you have never sent your kids to a summer camp, here are seven reasons why you should consider it!

1. With so many options, it's easy to find a great fit for your child.

From sports camps and art camps to STEM-based camps and more traditional overnight options, summer camps are designed to serve a variety of ages and interests. The length of camp can range from a few mornings for younger kiddos to week-long sleep-away camps for older kids. Local churches, school districts, and other organizations like the YMCA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and 4-H offer a wide range of camps. With a little bit of research, you can easily find a camp well-suited for your child.



2. Camps provide kids with experiences they might not have access to in "everyday" life.

Horseback riding. Paddling a canoe across the lake. Wilderness survival. Conquering a ropes course. Sleeping under the stars. Adventures are endless at camp, and your child will have an opportunity to try something brand new. For the youngest campers, trying a new craft activity or learning a new camp song can be so much fun!

3. Camps are a safe place to practice social skills.

It might be awkward or uncomfortable for your child during those first few hours of camp when they don't know a single soul. After all, stepping into a new social environment can be challenging. But the ability to comfortably communicate with new people is a life skill that all kids need, and a camp is a great place to practice! Camps also provide kids an opportunity to form friendships with a whole new

group of peers they might never have met otherwise.

4. Camps give kids a much-needed technology break.

No matter how old your child is, they could probably benefit from a screen hiatus, especially during the summer months. Spending time outdoors, learning a new skill, having fun, and forming new friendships is good for the body and soul!

5. Sending kids to camp is beneficial for you, too.

Driving away from your child(ren) on the first day might be a little gut-wrenching. But entrusting your kids to someone else for a while can be truly beneficial. Maybe it will free up time for some overdue self-care, or give you and your partner time to reconnect. Maybe it will provide an opportunity to hit the reset button with your tween or teen. After all, absence makes the heart grow fonder! Parenting is tough work, so don't

feel guilty if you enjoy this time to yourself. Chances are, your kids are having a blast without you!

6. Your child's experience as a camper could help land a summer job in the future.

Camps are staffed by amazing counselors who provide kids with all kinds of good, clean fun. Most of these counselors were campers once, too. Now they get to help a new set of youngsters make unforgettable summer memories, all while sharpening their own teamwork and leadership skills. Your child might have that same opportunity one day. What great way to spend a summer!

7. Camp is just plain fun.

So many adults have fond memories from their days spent at camp, and kids who have been to camp often say it's a favorite part of their summer. Odds are, your kids are going to love it! And for that reason alone, it's worth sending them to camp.

Looking for a summer camp to support a grieving child? Consider one of our bereavement day camps for children who have experienced a loved one's death. Campers will share stories, laugh together, shed some tears and celebrate the life of their special person.



WESTERN RESERVE
GRIEF SERVICES



Stein
Hospice

AN AFFILIATE OF HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE



For more information or to receive a registration packet, email thebereavementcenter@hospicewr.org or call 216.486.6838. Scholarships are available.

Riding Through Grief

Fieldstone Farm

July 8 - 12; ages 9 - 16
\$75 registration per camper

This camp is offered in collaboration with Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center and is for children and teens who have experienced the death of a loved one. Through riding and working with horses, campers explore grief issues supported by trained counselors.

Red Oak

Red Oak Camp

August 6 - 8
\$25 registration per camper

A three-day bereavement day camp for children ages 6-13 who have experienced the death of a loved one. Transportation is available from our Lakeshore campus.

Camp
Good Grief

Camp Good Grief is a day camp for kids ages 6 - 13 who have experienced the death of a loved one.

For more information, contact Kathy Failor at kfailor@steinhospice.org or 419.625.5269.

June 10 - 13
Osborn Park, Huron

July 8 - 11
Lakeview Park
Port Cliton

July 14-18
Lakeview Park
Port Cliton

July 22 - 26
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Email: admissions@oslpainesville.org



PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

Parents considering private school for their children have an overwhelming number of choices. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, there are over 34,500 private schools in the USA. Some major metropolitan areas have well over 1,000! These schools belong to dozens of different associations, religious and nonreligious. Each association has its own feel or flavor, and the schools within them do, too.

Selecting the right private school is worth the time it takes to research, visit and make your selection. This is the place your children will learn, grow, make lifelong friends and pave the way to their bright futures.

Read on for tips on selecting a school for your child and for a listing of participating schools.

Finding the right private school for your family

You want a top-notch education for your children and choosing the perfect school is probably one of the biggest decisions you'll ever make. Depending on your location, you may find your public schools offer everything you want. If not, you'll need to embark on a search for the right private school.

In general, private schools exist to provide smaller class sizes with greater individual attention to each student and a safe, focused environment free of discipline problems. They tend to set a higher bar than public schools in academics, and build a culture of shared values. They offer a strong sense of community and may tailor lessons to the needs of the student.

In reality, each private school is a world unto itself. It may or may not hold accreditation with a national education association, or hire credentialed teachers. It may have many extracurricular offerings or just a few. It may charge a very large tuition plus additional fees, or may be more affordable, offering scholarships and sliding scales. It may have a long history in your community or be a brand new charter school.



To find the right private school for you, you'll need to consider the following:

1. What are your educational priorities?

Some private schools are faith-based and some are not. You'll want to decide as a family your basic priorities. Is it most important to find high academic standards, or more important to support your family's faith? Do you expect accelerated programs such as advanced placement classes or extensive ac-

cess to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) programs? How important are extracurricular activities? Are you comfortable with homework policies and school rules?

2. What is the culture of the school?

In a faith-based setting the culture of the school will place religion at the forefront. There will be religious studies as part of the curriculum. The school may be all boys or all girls. Does this suit your goals? What is the relationship of staff to students? Is it casual and friendly, formal and strict? How are parents involved? What is the balance of academics to sports, the arts, clubs and other activities? Does the culture "feel right" for your children?

3. What role do parents play in the school?

Some private schools make great use of parent volunteer time and emphasize whole family participation in their programs. Others minimize parent involvement to occasional visits or conferences to report progress. Which best suits your family's needs? **cont'd** →



Visit Our Spring
Open House
March 13th - 6pm

* Learn about our challenging curriculums for both preschool and K-8th grade

* Collect information on the various scholarships we have available, including EdChoice

* Personal tours can be scheduled any time by contacting the school office



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PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

4. Is the staff credentialed and the school accredited?

Some faith-based schools and newer charter schools don't require their teachers to be credentialed. How important is this to your family? In addition there are many different education associations nationwide offering accreditation. If a prospective school has received accreditation, they've shown the initiative to meet high standards.

5. What are the costs? Are there scholarships available?

It's a sacrifice to pay for your child's education when public schools are free. And there are huge variations in the expenses involved. When researching possible schools, be sure to check not only the tuitions, but also book fees, sports or other extra-curricular expenses and possible transportation fees. Check on scholarships available and the possibility of a sliding scale based on family income.

6. Is the curriculum up to date?

In this technological age, you'll want to be sure your private school has kept up with the times. Do they offer appropriate college preparation standards in science, math, languages, writing and more? Do they offer a well-rounded education in art, drama and music? Are textbooks current and in good condition? Are computer labs or individual screens available to students?

7. Does the school provide transportation?

Do buses transport students to school? Are they available for after-school activities? Does the school coordinate carpools? Are there extra expenses charged for transportation?

8. How well do students transition into or out of the school?

If a particular school offers classes such as K-6 or K-8, do they work closely with a sister high school? What provisions are

made to make a smooth transition from one school to another? If students transfer into the school either at the beginning of a year or mid-year, what provisions are made to welcome them? How do children fare when they need to move from this school to another?

9. What is the school's reputation?

Most private schools have a reputation to uphold. Are they the best in college prep? Are they known for a friendly, family community spirit? Who do you know with firsthand information and experience with the school? What recommendations can you find amongst friends/acquaintances?

10. Is the school open to visits and drop-in observations?


All schools need to make sure their campus is secure and will have procedures to follow when visiting. But as a parent, you want to feel comfortable visiting the building to observe or take care


of business. You'll want to find a school that makes parents welcome and is proud to show them around.

When you've narrowed your search to several schools, be sure to take the time for a personal visit. Talk with an administrator, take the tour and gather any written information they've prepared for prospective students. Discuss pertinent questions and voice any concerns you may have about your child's specific needs. Above all, gauge your "feel" of the school. Is it the right place for you and your family?

Selecting the right private school is worth the time it takes to research, visit and make your selection. This is the place your children will learn, grow, make lifelong friends, and pave the way to their bright futures.







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PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

GILMOUR ACADEMY

34001 Cedar Road, Gates Mills
(440) 473-8050
admissions@gilmour.org
www.gilmour.org

As an independent, Catholic school, Gilmour Academy stands alone in its ability to prepare students who thrive. Its mission is rooted in educating the mind and empowering the heart, ensuring that every student develops to their fullest potential.

From 18 months to 18 years, everything at Gilmour — from the curriculum to the academic extension programs to extracurriculars — is focused on cultivating their seven graduation outcomes, designed to develop students as leaders of their generation. These outcomes call the students to be people of hope on a journey of:

- Faith
- Reflective, analytical thinkers
- Innovative, resilient problem-solvers
- Authentic, effective communicators
- Courageous, collaborative leaders
- Empathetic, engaged global citizens
- Curious, resourceful lifelong learners.

These are introduced in the Montessori preschool programs, and then expanded upon and developed throughout the Lower, Middle and Upper Schools.

Gilmour graduates emerge primed for the next step and confident in their ability to make the world a better place.

Call (440) 473-8050 or email them at admissions@gilmour.org for info.

DID YOU KNOW?

Research has shown that private school students are often primed for success in their futures — evidenced by higher test scores, better graduation rates, college attendance and successful college graduation. —NAIS

HAWKEN SCHOOL

www.hawken.edu

Lyndhurst Campus
(Preschool–Grade 8)
5000 Clubside Road
(440) 423-2950

Gates Mills Campus
(Grades 9–12)

Mayfield and County Line Roads
in Gates Mills
(440) 423-2955

The Birchwood School of Hawken

(Preschool–Grade 8)
4400 West 140th Street
Cleveland
(216) 251-2321

The Mastery School of Hawken

(Grades 9–12)
11025 Magnolia Drive Cleveland
(440) 423-8801

Hawken School is an independent, coed day school of over 1,600 students, toddler through grade 12, located on two campuses in the eastern suburbs of Cleveland, a campus on Cleveland's west side, and a campus in University Circle that is home to the Mastery School of Hawken, which takes the school's problem-based programming to scale.

Hawken was founded in 1915 as an educationally progressive school, and remains academically progressive—because that's what it takes to prepare students to thrive in a changing world. From recognizing the value of a coeducational environment to designing programs, learning spaces, and innovative schedules that support learning by doing, Hawken boldly adapts to prepare students for a promising future.

Hawken's nationally-recognized programming and nontraditional schedules support partnerships with world-renowned institutions that provide real-world learning opportunities, including interdisciplinary honors-level courses and STEMM internships. These experiences instill in students the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and dynamic world.



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Preschool - Grade Eight

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- Families come from 21 cities
- STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, Math) integrated throughout the curriculum



6850 Mayfield Road, Gates Mills 44040
440-442-7450
www.sfaschoolgm.org

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

HERSHEY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

(440) 357-0918

www.Hershey-Montessori.org

Concord Campus

10229 Prouty Road

Huntsburg Campus

11530 Madison Road

Hershey Montessori School's approach to education allows students to master the skills needed to adapt as the world changes, careers shift, and the demand on human ingenuity evolves. The transformative outcomes demonstrated by Hershey students exemplify why Hershey is revered as a world leader in Montessori education.

In conjunction with Hershey's robust academics, students learn about leadership, practical life, business, culture, and important societal issues, including embracing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Their Montessori model inspires students to learn — not memorize, to thrive academically, and to expand their interests. Hershey students are resilient, articulate, open to change,

and ready to be challenged.

For 45 years, Hershey's education model has supported the scientific process of child development and serves students from two months of age through twelfth grade.

Contact Hershey Montessori School to learn more about how this education model can benefit your child.

LAKE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

6733 Reynolds Road, Mentor

(440) 578-1020

www.lakecatholic.org

Life at Lake Catholic High School is more than classwork and exams.

It's building you into the person you want to be spiritually, academically, physically, emotionally, and socially.

It's meeting friends who you will talk to long after you graduate. It's participating in classes that are not only good for your future, but also good for your soul: religious classes where discussions ground you, academic classes that challenge you, PLUS all those little extras that spark

your interests: athletics, drama, robotics, music, art and more. And it takes you out of the classroom too. Football on Friday nights. A world-class play on Saturday. A service project on Sunday with fellow Cougars by your side.

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LAWRENCE SCHOOL

www.lawrenceschool.org

Lower School Campus

(Grades K–6)

1551 E. Wallings Road

Broadview Heights

(440) 526-0003

Upper School Campus

(Grades 7–12)

10036 Olde Eight Road

Sagamore Hills

(330) 908-6800

Lawrence School is a vibrant coed, independent K–12 school in north-east Ohio designed specifically for

students who struggle with reading, writing, or math. This can include learning differences, such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and challenges with executive function. Lawrence School serves over 350 students from over 90 communities while maintaining a 9:1 classroom ratio. For over 50 years, Lawrence has been the school of choice for students who learn differently to achieve personal and academic success.

MATER DEI ACADEMY

29840 Euclid Avenue, Wickliffe

(440) 585-0800

www.materdeiacademy.us

Mater Dei Academy, an ODE STEM designated school, is committed to providing an excellent education in a safe, loving, faith-filled environment. Students aged 3 years through grade eight are given the opportunity to discover and achieve while building on their Catholic moral values.

The well-rounded, innovative and challenging curriculum provides students the opportunity to discover

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St-GabrielSchool.org/Admissions
Call Alicia Henrikson: 440-354-7858

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

Mater Dei cont'd

their own unique talents while in a nurturing environment. With the help of dedicated educators, students are prepared spiritually, intellectually, and socially to achieve in the classroom and become active in the community. Their junior high students are offered the opportunity for honors classes, which can earn high school credit. They also include supplemental classes such as robotics, psychology, TedTalks and health. Mater Dei students are accountable for their actions while caring for others and demonstrating responsibility for the world around them.

In addition, after-school activities help students further broaden their horizons. Mater Dei is proud to offer CYO sports and a variety of other activities.

Campus tours can be scheduled by calling the school office at (440) 585-0800.



NOTRE DAME ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

13000 Auburn Road, Chardon
(440) 279-1127
(440) 279-1129 (Admissions)
www.ndes.org

On the 450-acre campus of the Sisters of Notre Dame, Notre Dame Elementary and Middle School, as well as, Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin, educate over 1100 students in preschool-12th grade.

Launched in the fall of 2022, Notre Dame Middle School features dedicated space for their sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. The middle school curriculum rigorously prepares their students to be successful in high school and offers honors classes in all three grades in ELA and math. Enriched learning opportunities are offered in academic core classes, as well as the special classes, to offer a rich and wide variety of learning experiences.

Thanks to a gift of 25,000 square feet of space from the Sisters of Notre Dame, Notre Dame Middle School

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Birchwood School: **216-251-2321**

Upper School: **440-423-2955**

Mastery School: **440-423-8801**

hawken.edu

HAWKEN
SCHOOL
Coed Toddler - Grade 12



Lyndhurst  Cleveland-West  Gates Mills  University Circle



Lawrence School

Great minds *don't* think alike.

Empowering students with diverse learning styles to excel and thrive through small class sizes, evidence based instruction, assistive technology, and an encouraging environment.



Join us for one of our upcoming Open House events to see why Lawrence School is the school of choice for students who learn differently.

Lower School (K-6) : February 26 | Middle & High School (7-12): February 29

To RSVP, go to lawrenceschool.org/visit

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

Notre Dame cont'd

is expanding its footprint into the third floor of the existing building. The new wing will include six large classrooms including a state-of-the-art science lab, STEM lab, and collaborative and creative spaces for grades six through eight.

Please contact Barbara Williams in admissions at (440) 279-1129 to schedule a tour or shadow day.

OUR SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL

508 Mentor Avenue, Painesville
(Across from Lake Erie College)
(440) 357-7776
www.oslpainesville.org

Joyfully serving the communities of Lake, Geauga, and Ashtabula for four decades, Our Shepherd Lutheran School's highly-educated and caring staff engages students with new and innovative programs, ideas, instruction, and hands-on learning while remaining dedicated to the faith formation of students in a loving, Christ-centered environment.

They are a private K-8 Christian

school located across the street from Lake Erie College and housed in the Zion Lutheran Church campus. A low teacher-student ratio means greater focus on individual student's needs.

They are nationally accredited by the NLSA and recognized by the Ohio Department of Education. They feature full-day, five-day kindergarten; weekly STEAM programs; computer technology with robotics, iPads, Chromebooks, and a dedicated computer lab; new, Interactive TVs in the classrooms; library/media center; and middle school enrichment programs.

Contact them today at admissions @oslpainesville.org or 440-357-7776.



SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL

6850 Mayfield Road, Gates Mills
(440) 442-7450
www.sfaschoolgm.org

Saint Francis of Assisi School, a 3-year-old preschool to eighth-grade school, is centered on their helping students grow in faith and academics. Students learn about God's world and all they can do to make it an even better place. As a result, their students help drive programs such as the broadcast studio, the aquaponics garden, the sustainability club, and service projects.

Differentiation is more than a word at St. Francis. They strive every day to reach every child through classroom interventions, enrichment, and advanced courses. This year, the seventh grade students are participating in an entrepreneurial program where they submit a business plan, design, and sell products in a school pop-up shop.

St. Francis of Assisi School's classroom teachers are fully certified, but even more, they are chosen for

their vision of guiding academic, social, and spiritual growth. To set up a private tour, call Cindy at (440) 442-7450.

SAINT GABRIEL LEARNING LOFT PRESCHOOL & ST. GABRIEL SCHOOL

9935 Johnnycake Ridge Road
Concord Township
(440) 352-6169
www.St-GabrielSchool.org

St. Gabriel School and Learning Loft Preschool have been molding students in Lake County through faith, learning, and love for 60 years. Both are award-earning schools staffed with teachers who make a difference in their students' lives. Their compassion, dedication, and expertise, challenge students to think independently and ignite their love of learning.

St. Gabriel School is celebrating 60 years of being a leader in Catholic education in Lake County. A proud participant in Cleveland Diocese's "Better Together" initiative, they



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PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

St. Gabriel cont'd

strive to serve all students and meet each child's individual needs. The St. Gabriel Learning Loft Preschool has been voted best of Mentor six years running. They foster a warm and nurturing environment for students just starting their educational journey.

Discover these award-earning schools and how St. Gabriel Learning Loft and St. Gabriel School will enrich your child's future. For My Buddy & Me (2yo) and part time 3-5 yo preschool call (440) 354-7574. For full-day preschool (4/5 yo) and grades K-8 call (440) 354-7858 or visit St-GabrielSchool.org.

SAINT IGNATIUS HIGH SCHOOL

1911 West 30th Street, Cleveland
(216) 651-0222
www.ignatius.edu

Saint Ignatius High School, with its Catholic tradition rooted in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, prepares young men for their adult lives by challenging them to

academic excellence and the desire for lifelong learning; nurturing them to be open to growth, intellectually competent, religious, loving and committed to work for peace and justice; and inspiring them to know, love and serve Jesus Christ.

Located close to downtown Cleveland in Ohio City, the school has 19 buildings and three athletic fields. The school has 112 faculty members, 90 percent of whom hold advanced degrees. Saint Ignatius is a regional leader in National Merit finalists and advanced placement scholars. Nearly 100 percent of students go on to four-year colleges. Thanks to generous alumni and benefactors, nearly 70 percent of students receive some form of tuition assistance. Through the Christian Action Team, students perform approximately 15,000 hours of nonrequired service annually.



VILLA ANGELA-ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL

18491 Lakeshore Blvd., Cleveland
(216) 481-8414
www.vasj.com

When you become a student at Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School, you become a member of a family where everyone knows you. It is a place where you can grow in your faith, be challenged academically, follow your passions, and create high

school memories and friendships that will last a lifetime.

As the only school in the world that is cosponsored by the Ursuline Sisters and Marianist Brothers, a VASJ education is uniquely different. Their students proudly embrace the diversity, and it shows in their school pride and the family spirit that makes our Viking Village something truly special.

Learn more about VASJ by attending their upcoming open house on Wednesday, March 6, 2024.



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Birth - 6th Grade: (440) 357-0918

7th -12th Grade: (440) 636-6290

admissions@hershey-montessori.org

Ask about our transportation & boarding options!

OPEN HOUSE DATES

Registration is required

Concord Campus

(Birth-6th Grade)

10229 Prouty Rd.

Concord Township, OH 44077

Sat., Feb. 24, 10 am-12 pm

Sat., Mar. 23, 10 am-12 pm

Sat., Apr. 20, 10 am-12 pm

Huntsburg Campus

(7th-12th Grade)

11530 Madison Rd.

Huntsburg, OH 44046

Fri., Feb. 9, 11 am-2:30 pm

Mon., Mar. 4, 9 am-11 am

Fri., Mar. 8, 11 am-2:30 pm

Fri., Apr. 12, 11 am-2:30 pm

Virtual tours are available on our website.



Visit our website at www.Hershey-Montessori.org

Humorous Stories From Teachers



Just before the final exam in my college finance class, a less-than-stellar student approached me.

“Can you tell me what grade I would need to get on the exam to pass the course?” he asked.

I gave him the bad news. “The exam is worth 100 points. You would need 113 points to earn a D.”

“OK,” he said. “And how many points would I need to get a C?”

Performing Mozart should have been the highlight of my middle school chorus class. But after a few uninspired attempts, an exasperated student raised her hand and said, “Mrs. Willis, we want to sing music from our generation, not yours.”

A police car with flashing lights pulled me over near the high school where I teach. As the officer asked for my license and registration, my students began to drive past. Some honked their horns, others hooted, and still others stopped to admonish me for speeding.

Finally the officer asked me if I was a teacher at the school, and I told him I was.

“I think you've paid your debt to society,” he concluded with a smile, and left

without giving me a ticket.

I recently asked a student where his homework was. He replied, “It's still in my pencil.”

When our school librarian announced she was changing schools, my fellow teacher asked a student, “Why do you think Ms. Richardson is leaving?”

The third grader opined, “Because she's read all our books?”

I had finished my English lecture and my class had filed out, a tenth grader stayed behind to confront me.

“I don't appreciate being singled out,” he told me.

I was confused. “What do you mean?”

“I don't know what the 'oxy' part means, but I know what a 'moron' is, and you looked straight at me when you said it.”



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Inspirational Quotes for Students

“A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.”
—Albert Einstein

“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.”
—Malcolm X

“Teachers can open the door, but you must enter it yourself.”
—Chinese proverb

“Genius is 10% inspiration, 90% perspiration.” —Thomas Edison

“The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be ignited.”
—Plutarch

“Never let the fear of striking out stop you from playing the game.”
—Babe Ruth

“The man who does not read books has no advantage over the one who cannot read them.”
—Mark Twain

“Procrastination makes easy things hard and hard things harder.” —Mason Cooley

“You don’t have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.” —Zig Ziglar

“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.”
—Walt Disney

“I think it’s possible for ordinary people to choose to be extraordinary.” —Elon Musk

“The best way to predict your future is to create it.”
—Abraham Lincoln

“You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem and smarter than you think.”
—A.A. Milne

“The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.” —B.B. King

The Rink at Wade Oval

New experiences, and new food and beverage offerings highlight a full season of fun at The Rink at Wade Oval. The Rink’s season runs through February 25. Admission is \$5 before 5 pm and \$10 after 5 pm. Skaters will experience a new all-inclusive ticket package, complete with skates, a wide array of immersive activities and exclusive discounts to explore the wonders of Wade Oval’s museums.

“We’re transforming the Rink at Wade Oval into the neighborhood’s central hub for outdoor winter entertainment,” said David Robinson, UCI’s director of events & engagement. “With new season-long programming, expanded food and beverage offerings and unique experiences for all ages, we invite the community to embrace the magic of winter.”

Ugly sweater nights, stand-up comedy and other unique elements have been added to elevate The Rink at Wade Oval total experience.

“PNC has a longtime relationship with University Circle and we share



their commitment to supporting the economic vitality of the communities where we live and work,” said Pat Pastore, PNC regional president for Cleveland.

In February, a familiar favorite, Pink the Rink, returns with a twist. In addition to pink illuminated ice, February 10 and 17 will feature fun and festive Galentine’s and Valentine’s Day celebrations, respectively.

The Wade Oval Information Center will host an expanded menu of café and beverage offerings including warm desserts and baked goods, specialty winter-themed cocktails and hot cocoa bombs with expanded coffee offerings.

For hours of operation, ticket reservations, special events, private event rentals and more information on The Rink at Wade Oval, visit universitycircle.org/rink.



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