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August 2024

Lake Geauga

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Lake-Geauga Habitat for Humanity launches Playhouse Project

The Playhouse Project is a new Lake-Geauga Habitat for Humanity program that partners with businesses and organizations to build a playhouse for a local Lake or Geauga county family. "Playing house" is often the first-time children start to think about what a home means to them. Funds raised from each playhouse go towards building new houses right here in Lake and Geauga counties.

Playhouse Project offers companies, organizations, and groups a unique opportunity to engage employees in a collaborative, hands-on project that promotes teamwork, creativity, and community spirit. This is not just a team-building exercise, but a chance to make a real difference in the lives of local families. Participating teams will work together to design, build, and decorate playhouses that will be donated to families in our area, giving their child or children a safe and imaginative space to play and grow.

In addition to building playhouses, participants have fun, use their creativity, and will see first-hand the



joy as the child receives their playhouse in the "big reveal" at the end of the day.

Companies interested in participating in Playhouse Project can find more information online at Lake-GeaugaHabitat.org. They are also seeking volunteers interested in construction and prepping playhouse kits for team-build days.

Families interested in receiving a playhouse can visit www.Lake-GeaugaHabitat.org/playhouseproject to get an application.

Expand your horizons at Fairmount

Fairmount Center for the Arts, situated just north of Bainbridge in Novelty and now with a new location in Chardon, welcomes you to explore the realms of performing and visual arts. Whether you're an adult or youth, this fall offers an ideal opportunity to try something new.

Fairmount offers a variety of ballet, tap, hip hop, and contemporary jazz classes for all skill levels taught by professional instructors and dancers. Students can even learn Taylor Swift choreography from our Pop Choreography class. Dancers interested in performing at local events have the opportunity to join the Fairmount Dance Company, Hip Hop Crew, or Spanish Dance Company.

The growing music program includes private lessons in piano, violin, trumpet, guitar, voice, and more at the Novelty or Chardon locations. Students wanting to be part of a group can join the Youth Chorus or Youth Chamber Ensemble for performance opportunities. Theatre offerings include the Fairmount Drama Club, Shakespeare for Kids, Fairmount Youth Theatre productions, and more.



Youth and adults can choose from art classes that span different mediums including drawing, watercolor, ceramics, crocheting, and sculpture for all skill ranges. Teens can explore creative expression through Teen Zines, where they'll experiment with paper folding, cutting, stapling, sewing, and illustration.

Register for classes today at fairmountcenter.org or by calling 440-338-3171. Save 5% on all fall bookings using the code "EarlyReg" through August 5.



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Fall classes at Rabbit Run

Fall in love with the arts this autumn at Rabbit Run Community Arts Association (RRCAA) in Madison. Registration for fall classes and lessons is now open.

Dance classes are available in creative movement, ballet, tap and jazz from preschoolers, who just love to move, to adults looking to get back into shape. Also available are classes in hip hop, modern dance, contemporary and lyrical and ballroom dancing.

RRCAA also offers visual art experiences, including the very popular Canvas Art Workshops offered throughout the year. In these virtual

workshops participants enjoy painting a seasonal acrylic painting using an original as inspiration.

RRCAA provides a full range of private music instruction from beginner to advanced students in voice, brass, beginning band instruments, acoustic and electric guitar, woodwinds, piano/keyboard, viola/violin/Suzuki violin, cello and fiddle.

For specific class information or to register visit www.rabbitrun.org or call 440-428-5913. RRCAA is a nonprofit organization that receives partial funding from the Ohio Arts Council and is located at 49 Park Street in Madison.

Museum of Illusions now open

The new Museum of Illusions is located at 186 Euclid Avenue in the May building adjacent to Public Square in the heart of downtown Cleveland.

Its 9,200 square feet of exhibit space offers a unique and unconventional spin on art, education and entertainment through interactive and immersive experiences. Highlights include a Cleveland-themed “reversed room” where visitors will seemingly levitate upside down on a basketball court and “building illusion” where they can appear as if they are hanging from a Cleveland building. Other popular and visually striking exhibits include the walk-in kaleidoscope, vortex tunnel and Infinity room.

Exhibits are intentionally interactive and are designed to be touched,



experienced and photographed, creating memorable moments and encouraging social sharing. The museum is ADA accessible and welcomes families with strollers.

Tickets prices start from \$20. While walk-ins are welcome, visitors are encouraged to reserve their tickets online at www.moicleveland.com and follow the museum on social media at @moi_cleveland for more information.

Maltz Museum exhibition explores diversity of families

The Maltz Museum is now showcasing a new exhibition celebrating the rich framework of families found in America. The Museum’s “A Celebration of Family” exhibition combines two collections with interactive children’s activities, on view now through September 1, 2024. “Growing Up Jewish – Art & Storytelling” and “Love Makes a Family: Portraits of LGBTQ+ People and Their Families” presents paintings, photographs, and interviews from families of all walks of life.

An essential aspect of the Museum’s mission is to educate visitors on the lived experiences of Jewish and other minority populations to foster

a more inclusive world for all. This exhibition acts as a firsthand account that brings the stories of individuals and families to life. In that sense, this exhibit honors the foundation of American life: the family.

Both exhibitions include interactive children’s activities designed by globally-recognized exhibit designer, Karen Katz. Throughout the galleries, interactive components invite visitors on a creative journey. Younger visitors can also immerse themselves in play activities connected with exhibition themes.

For tickets visit maltzmuseum.org or call 216-593-0575.

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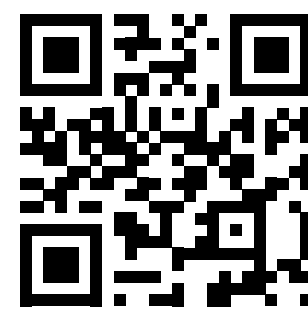
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Grief and joy go together

By Stacy Turner

Recently it's occurred to me that grief and joy, emotions that seem like polar opposites, are actually like two sides of the same coin. When a wife loses her loving partner without warning, or a child is given a terminal diagnosis, grief comes crashing in. When kids lose a loving parent, or an elderly one we love is suddenly gone, grief can feel raw and joy seems non-existent. But even in the midst of our grief, joy is there too, tempering our pain with loving memories.

I was reminded of this while attending calling hours for the dad of one of my daughter's closest friends. The sudden shock of the unexpected loss sent waves of grief through his close-knit community. The strength the immediate family members each displayed as they spoke with those offering condolences was admirable. Even in the middle of this difficult day, laughter bubbled up in small groups as they shared stories of their father, husband, and friend. Those

gathered could savor the memories of vacations, holidays, births, and the regular moments of a life cut short yet filled with tremendous love and laughter.

It's the incredible joy we share with our loved ones that makes our grief at their loss so intense. And although grief and joy are often viewed as opposing forces, it seems that without a firm understanding of one, the other can't be fully realized. In that way, both grief and joy in turn give us the ability to know the other in a much deeper sense.

Joy according to dictionary.com is "the emotion of great delight or happiness caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying; keen pleasure; elation." Grief, on the flip side, is defined by Merriam-Webster as "very great sadness, especially at the death of someone."

There's no denying that death and grief are part of all our lives. Lucky for us, so is joy. But during a season of grief, it's normal to feel lost, weak, angry, and alone; such are a few of the raw emotions that can be trig-



gered. It's natural – and human – to want to avoid that pain. But if it was possible to just turn off our grief like flipping a switch, then our joy would be diminished, as well. Without the pain of our grief, we wouldn't recognize extraordinary joy when it comes our way. So, while we don't often consider our difficulties as beautiful, they do have a purpose, though it's difficult to discern during a storm. The beauty is that we can trust God

to carry us through whatever our struggles.

The only certainty as we move through our lives, is that we can't escape suffering. I've seen firsthand that in during those difficult times, we find glimpses of light shining through the darkness. It's then, in finding purpose and connection during uncertainty and pain that our grief and joy will hold hands, leading us forward.



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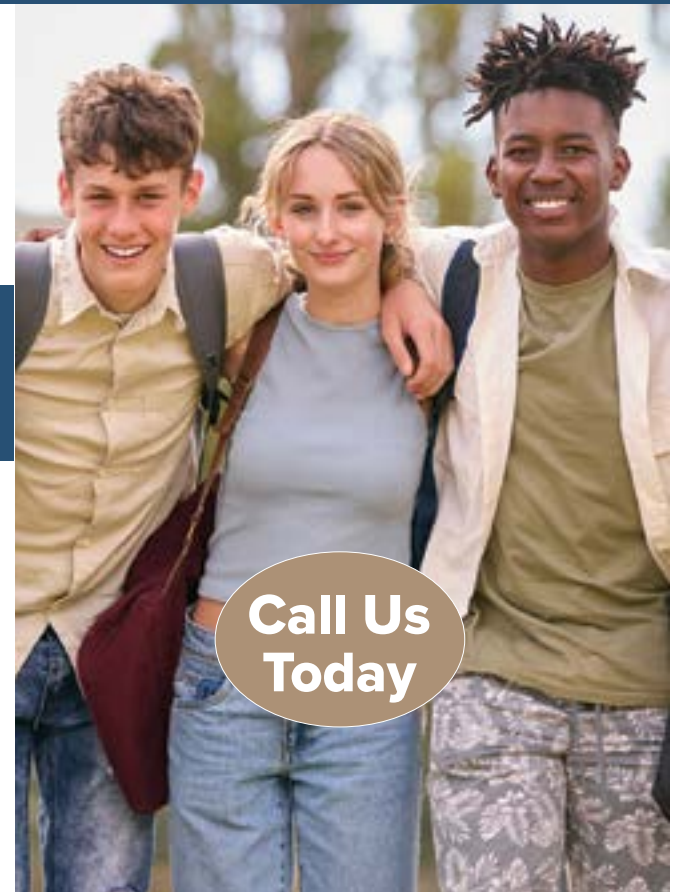
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An unexpected way to free yourself from the busyness trap

By Rebecca Fellenbaum

"It was busy." "I'm so busy." "I can't believe how busy we've been." How often have you answered with "busy" when a friend asks about your weekend, your neighbor asks about your summer, or your husband asks about your day?

Sometimes we say "busy" to summarize that we did things without going into the details. However, in our society where productivity is rewarded and getting things done equals purpose, being busy can be a badge of honor.

Some of our busyness is built into our lives from our jobs, kids, homes, pets, extended families, and wider communities. We have meetings on our calendars, our phones constantly notify us of messages and calls, and we have many obligations that keep our lives full.

If we aren't true to ourselves about it, some of us may use busyness as a distraction to keep from slowing down and living with a greater sense of ease. As a life coach, I see this pattern play out with my clients. They fill their days to the brim because they believe busy equals important. They overcommit, overschedule, and don't delegate enough at work and home. This leads to overwhelm and burnout. They are also afraid if they slow down, they will be forced to face the things they are avoiding, perhaps a tough conversation,



strained relationship, grief, or dissatisfaction in an area of their life.

By stopping the busyness cycle and slowing down, we are left with ourselves, in the moment, and that can be uncomfortable. Ask yourself: what am I avoiding by keeping myself busy? Am I enjoying my packed schedule, or do I feel overwhelmed by it? What am I missing out on by not slowing down? What would it feel like to approach my life from a place of ease and presence, rather than constant motion?

How do you feel when you are too busy? For me, being too busy feels like a rush of blood to my head and a flurry of activity in my stomach. I take shallow breaths, react quickly, and miss the

moment completely.

If you are curious about unlearning chaotic busyness, here are some ways to combat the busy mentality:

- Notice how you feel when you are busy
- Become aware of how often you fill your day with tasks that keep you busy
- Pause
- Take a deep breath
- Feel your feet on the floor
- Scan your environment to return to the present moment
- Ask yourself, what do I need at this moment?

Claiming ease and releasing the busyness mindset is where the work begins. It starts with setting clear boundaries, saying no when we need to, and making time for the things that nourish our souls. It also means slowing down and doing less with greater appreciation. Instead of packing the whole family up for a full day at the beach, what about a quiet morning and a picnic in the backyard? What fun activity feels stressful but can be made simple and still tick the same memory-making box?

By approaching our lives from a place of ease and presence, we open ourselves up to a deeper level of fulfillment and joy. We become more attuned to our own needs and desires, and we are better able to show up fully for the people and

Cont'd on page 11

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One of their flagship offerings is a comprehensive music instruction program. With personalized lessons tailored to each student's needs, they nurture talent and encourage a lifelong love of music. Their state-of-the-art facilities and supportive environment make learning both fun and fulfilling.

Beyond individual classes, FAA is a vibrant community hub. Seasonal performances, and art show and community events provide enriching



cultural experiences for everyone. They believe that the arts are a vital part of a thriving community and strive to make them accessible to all.

Join the Fine Arts Association and become part of a tradition that celebrates creativity and inspires excellence. Visit today and discover how they can help you or your child embark on an artistic journey that will last a lifetime.

For more information, visit www.fineartsassociation.org or call 440-951-7500.

Mentor CityFest returns in August

Mentor CityFest returns to Mentor Civic Center Park on Friday, August 16, 2024, 5–11 PM and Saturday, August 17, 2024, noon–11 PM.

This two-day family-friendly festival is packed with activities, games, entertainment, food and more!

Enjoy live music on the Mentor Civic Amphitheater stage Friday night with Led Zeppelin tribute, ZOSO, and Saturday night with Pink tribute, Just Like Pink. Both concerts start at 8 PM.

The CityFest Kids Zone features bounce houses, giant slides, a warrior dash, 70' obstacle run, rock wall, zip line, an extreme trampoline, and a mobile ninja warrior course.

The Kids Entertainment stage has a full schedule of kid-friendly entertainment planned.

The Adult Party Patio features a beer trailer, cornhole and other party games.

Mentor CityFest will feature all-day interactive entertainment and activities including strolling performers, the "Fest Money" game, plus community sponsored activities and games. Be sure to come hungry! With over 20 food vendors on site,



there will be every type of festival food that your taste buds desire including favorites like sausage sandwiches, funnel cakes, and lemonade as well as unique sweet treats and everything in between.

The Mentor CityFest parade will kick off from Shore Middle School Saturday at 10 AM and make its way to the festival grounds via Hopkins, Center Street and Civic Center Boulevard. The parade will feature over 100 groups, the Mentor High School Marching Band, and our City of Mentor float.

Free admission and parking to the event. Bounce houses and some activities will require a wristband which will be available for purchase at the event. Mentor Civic Center Park is located at 8600 Munson Rd.



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Enhancing indoor air quality

The role of high-end HVAC systems in NE Ohio

Maintaining healthy indoor air quality is crucial for the well-being of residents in northeast Ohio. While various factors can affect air quality, high-end HVAC systems play a significant role in mitigating health risks and ensuring cleaner indoor environments. In this article, we will explore how these advanced systems contribute to improving indoor air quality in NE Ohio.

1. Filtration efficiency

High-end HVAC systems are equipped with HEPA filters or MERV 13 or higher filters, effectively capturing pollutants, allergens, and airborne particles. This helps remove contaminants from the indoor air, creating a healthier living space.

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3. Proper ventilation

Well-designed HVAC systems ensure proper ventilation, promoting the circulation of fresh air throughout the building. This ventilation process



helps remove indoor air pollutants and replenish the air with clean, oxygen-rich air.

4. Air quality monitoring

Advanced HVAC systems include air quality monitoring capabilities, allowing real-time tracking of indoor air quality parameters. By continuously monitoring air quality, the system can detect any issues promptly and trigger appropriate actions to maintain optimal conditions.

5. UV lights

Some high-end HVAC systems incorporate UV

lights to neutralize airborne pathogens, viruses, and bacteria. This additional layer of disinfection contributes to improved indoor air quality and promotes a healthier living environment.

6. Customized zoning

HVAC systems with zoning capabilities enable customized control of temperature and airflow in different areas of a building. This feature helps maintain consistent air quality and prevents the spread of contaminants between different zones.

High-end HVAC systems in NE Ohio play a vital role in enhancing indoor air quality and promoting healthier living environments. Through advanced filtration, fresh air exchange, proper ventilation, air quality monitoring, UV lights, and customized zoning, these systems ensure cleaner and safer indoor air for residents. Investing in such HVAC systems is essential for maintaining optimal indoor air quality and supporting the well-being of individuals and families throughout NE Ohio.

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Communication is key for co-parents

Putting differences aside can ease anxiety and help children thrive in school

By Celina Colombo, Esq.

When I think of the first day of school, I remember myself at 9 years old, opening my sleepy eyes to a video camera my mom could barely hold in one hand, and her smiling, "Celina, wake up! It's your first day of fourth grade!" I wasn't as tired as I would be the rest of the mornings to come. How could I be tired when there was so much to be excited about?

While my mom curled my hair, my dad put on his work boots and waited for me so we could all take a picture together before they waved me onto the bus. I was happy, curious, and excited for a new beginning. I didn't have a care in the world.

Almost 30 years later, as a family law attorney, the first day of school means something very different to me. It means my phone will be ringing, and while the business owner in me has grown to appreciate that reality, it breaks my heart to think about all the children whose first day of school isn't so simple.

I think about the child who leaves for school from one house and has no idea which house he is going home to, about the child who doesn't understand why both parents can't see her off to school, and the child who starts the year at a new school



because that's what the court decided was best.

The first day of school is overwhelming for any child, but the beginning of a new school year is uniquely challenging for children with two households.

I had the opportunity to sit down with someone with first-hand knowledge of those challenges, Eastlake North High School Principal Eric Frei, and he offered some great advice for co-parents to help ease the transition. Principal Frei's advice was simple: communication.

Frei wants parents to understand that they have equal rights to records/information concerning their child's education, unless explicitly restricted by court order, so parents have every right to be their own advocate when it comes to school

involvement.

He described how common it is for parents to assume, without confirmation, that teachers have their contact information, and as a result, one parent is often left in the dark as to information necessary to facilitate their child's academic success.

"Parents are encouraged to register and sign themselves up for all school communication, whether it be regular newsletters, text alerts, apps, and/or email groups," explained the principal. He then went on to stress how critical it is that parents read this information daily.

While it's important for parents to communicate with the school, Frei warned how hard it is for "school staff to effectively communicate with co-parents when they aren't effectively communicating with each other."

Something as simple as a shared calendar with the parenting schedule, that also identifies activities/school events, goes a long way to minimize confusion. Going a step further, co-parents who can determine common educational goals for children, as well as consistent evening routines, are providing their children with the foundation necessary to thrive academically.

Going into a new school year brings big change-

Cont'd on page 11

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Tackle hunger September 16 at Taste of the Browns benefit

Join the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and the Cleveland Browns in celebrating 26 years of our city's love of sports and our acclaimed culinary talents at Taste of the Browns on Monday, September 16 at Cleveland Browns Stadium. This event is the major annual fundraiser for the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, the region's largest hunger relief organization, raising more than \$3 million since 1999. Every dollar raised helps the Food Bank provide three nutritious meals to the community.

Honorary event co-chairs, Cleveland Browns All-Pro guard Joel Bitonio, Cleveland Browns legend Hanford Dixon, and Chef Rocco Whalen of Fahrenheit will be joined by other current Cleveland Browns players and alumni to raise awareness and funds for local northeast Ohio families. This year's fundraiser features some of the region's finest

restaurants, including Blue Point Grille, Sora, Lago East Bank and Morton's The Steakhouse Cleveland.

Not only are guests able to sample the city's best cuisine and mingle with current Browns players and alumni, but a silent auction will also be available to bid on throughout the evening to benefit the Food Bank.

The event will be in the 7UP City Club at Cleveland Browns Stadium from 6–9 PM. General admission tickets are \$225 and VIP tickets are \$300. Tickets include all food and beverages, a complimentary souvenir glass and valet parking. The Club 25 VIP Lounge features exclusive food and beverage tastings, along with mingling with Cleveland Browns players and alumni.

For a full list of restaurants and/or to order tickets, call 216-738-2139 or visit GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org/Taste.

Co-parenting from page 10

es, and any lack of stability at home will amplify the complexity of the situation. "No matter how difficult it may seem at the time, co-parents need to put their differences aside for the sake of their kids when it comes to school," Frei emphasized.

"Your child will inevitably encounter struggles during the school year – this is natural, good, and a normal part of growing up." However, he cautioned, "When the adults in a

child's life aren't on the same page, this can add a level of anxiety that doesn't need to exist."

If you can find a way to present a united front with regard to your child's education, and demonstrate to the child that they come first, through communication, consistency, and cooperation, you will allow your child the freedom and security to focus on being the best student he or she can be.

Busyness trap from page 7

tasks that matter most. And in the end, isn't that what we all want – to feel truly connected to ourselves and our lives, rather than constantly on the move?

So as you navigate the back-to-school season, I encourage you to keep this in mind. Slow down, breathe, and remember that you don't have to be busy to be a good parent. Try slowing down with your

kids as they face a new school year. The more you can cultivate a sense of ease and presence, the more you'll be able to show up as your best self – for your family, your community, and, most importantly, for you.

Rebecca Fellenbaum is a certified life coach, blogger, and Cleveland area mom who helps parents enjoy this time in their lives. You can find her at rebeccafellenbaum.com.



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Six reasons why I'm a little bit jealous of my teen

By Katy M. Clark

"How many have you had?" I asked my sixteen-year-old son as he popped another buttered roll into his mouth. We were dining at a restaurant that serves rolls before the meal.

"Nnnnh," he replied, his mouth full of doughy goodness.

I believe he meant nine. Nine rolls.

By the time our entrees came, my teen had inhaled an even dozen. All of them were slathered in butter, too. With his super-fast metabolism, he gained nary an ounce.

Meanwhile, I ate one roll with a hint of butter and instantaneously put on five pounds around my midsection.

That's when it hit me. I might be just a little bit jealous of my teen.

It's not just because he can eat whatever he wants, either. It's hard to ignore the pang of envy I feel every time my teen experiences one of the many advantages of being young.

Eyesight

While I could see my son consume all those rolls, I couldn't see the words on the menu right in front of my face. That's because my eyesight had gone kaput one day in my mid-40s.

I was afflicted with presbyopia, which is not about church, it's about being old.

Now when I need to read a medicine bottle or look at a menu in a dimly lit restaurant, I must pass it to my teen with his bright, shiny eyes that can see everything.

The bright, shiny eyes that he usually rolls when I ask him to read aloud to me.

Technology

I went to college. I took computer classes in the last millennium. I should be able to handle technology.

Nonetheless, I'm usually in a dither as I reset passwords, confirm my identity, sign up for portals I do not want, and wonder why the Wi-Fi isn't working.



Meanwhile, my teen is captain of technology, blissfully downloading the latest app, completing all his homework online, and solving software glitches without breaking a sweat. He moves like a stealthy panther through a jungle of apps, portals, clouds, and platforms.

I want what he's got.

Friday nights

When my teen gets a group text to meet at the bowling alley on Friday night, I'm jealous.

First, I'm jealous that he has the energy to pick up and leave the house after 9 PM. Second, I'm envious that his night holds endless possibilities. I miss those evenings of utter freedom where I'd go out with friends and end up in a booth giggling over nothing while eating french fries at midnight.

Don't get me wrong. I love my Friday night pajama parties in front of the TV, but there is something so amazing about a teenager's wide-open Friday nights, boundless energy, and no responsibilities other than to stay safe.

Sleep

Oh my word, I'm jealous of the way my teen sleeps.

Deep and long.

I'm awake multiple times each night due to stress—Did I buy a yearbook yet? Do we have enough toilet paper to make it to the end of

the week?—or hormones. Thanks a lot, perimenopause.

And sleeping in? Once my teen started sleeping in I thought I could, too. Yet while my teen can slumber until noon, I'm lucky if I make it an hour past my usual wake-up time. It must be my age or a combination of the whining cats that want to be fed, my bladder, and the countless chores that won't get done by themselves.

Hair

This last one's easy. I'm jealous of my teen and the beautiful, natural highlights in his hair, the same hair that has zero gray hairs. I'm most envious every 8–10 weeks as I truck myself—and my wallet—to the salon. There I spend several hours and lots of money to get the beautiful, natural-looking highlights he grows for free.

Of course, there are lots of reasons why I am not jealous of my teen. There are SATs, break ups, and breakouts. There are insane schedules jam-packed with homework, practices, clubs, and sports. Don't forget the dangers of social media.

I realize teens are facing so many pressures and have it much harder than we did at their age.

I wouldn't trade places with my teen for the world. But that doesn't mean I won't feel a stab of jealousy the next time I watch him blissfully eat twelve buttered rolls without gaining an ounce!

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Beyond the books

20 things to love about the library

By Pam Molnar

The library is a free resource found in many communities. While you may associate the library with hard-cover and paperback books, library patrons know their local library has so much more to offer. If it has been a while since you have been to the library, stop in today and get the full experience. (Each library may differ on what they offer.)

1. Ebooks – Many readers have chosen their e-readers over paper books. To save money, check out the local library ebook catalog (which you can do online). Libraries use apps like OverDrive, Libby and Hoopla to make books available instantly.

2. Audio books – Audio books are also available through OverDrive, Libby and Hoopla or as CD sets to be checked out. Children's versions at the library usually come with a matching paper book as a great reading aid.

3. Music – Library collections include a large variety of music on CDs. Music is also available through apps like Freegal or Hoopla that work exclusively with libraries. It's a great way to extend your own music library.

4. Videos – Watch the latest release or binge-watch TV shows you have missed. Videos are available for all ages and genres. Check out free DVDs or Blu-rays or watch them via online access through free apps like Hoopla or Kanopy.

5. Story time – Most libraries offer story time in their children's section. Kids can listen to the story while you browse the adult section or parents can sit in, too. Often, the library arranges a craft to go along with the story.

6. Clubs – Several clubs meet through the library. Some clubs for adults found at my local library include a knitting club, scrabble club, English as a second language conversation groups and four different book clubs for a variety of genres and meeting times.

7. Speakers – The library schedules speakers several times a month on many subjects. Recent speakers at my local library included super couponers, historians, tax advisors and small business consultants.



8. Computers – Not only do libraries offer free Wi-Fi for your own devices, they also have computers and printers that you can use on-site. Libraries do charge a small fee per sheet for printing so bring along some pocket change.

9. Other media – Your local library might also have photo scanners, equipment to convert VHS to digital, 3-D scanners and large format printers. Check with the library about any fees associated with use or to reserve space during busy times.

10. Classes – Need to brush up on your computer skills? Check with your local library for free seminars and classes on Microsoft Office, analog converting software or graphics software. While it is not enough to make you an expert, it will help you to get your feet wet.

11. Genealogy and local history You can research various historical databases, newspapers, archives, military records and more. Libraries often carry memberships to websites like Ancestry.com, Fold 3 or Heritage Quest.

12. Online resources – Online memberships at the library are not limited to history. Ask your librarian about databases for business, legal, career assistance, medical, investments or to learn a language through Rosetta Stone.

13. Interlibrary loans – If you can't find it at your library, you can borrow it from another library through interlibrary loans. You can

Cont'd on page 14



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Libraries from page 13

request books, DVDs, CDs, magazines or journals on microfilm. It's a great resource for research not available online.

14. Business services – Libraries offer services to help you locate a job, freshen up your resume, and brush up on your computer, speaking or writing skills. They can even help you to start your own business.

15. School books – When your child forgets his book at school and the online book is having a glitch, contact your local library to see if they have a copy in their reference section. Our library carries many school district books for grades 1–12 on a variety of subjects.

16. A place for the teens – Libraries are one of the many places competing for teens' attention. Libraries offer designated spaces for socializing, homework assistance, teen book clubs, writing contests, movie nights, teen clubs like Anime, ACT/SAT prep and video game loans.

17. Homeschool resources – With more than three million homeschooled kids in the U.S. alone, libraries have stepped up to meet their needs. Ask your local library about

library events for homeschoolers like daytime speakers, workshops, writing classes, book clubs or exhibits.

18. Programs just for kids – In addition to story time, libraries offer crafts, author celebrations like Dr. Seuss' birthday, puppet shows and more. Kids also have a designated space with lower shelves and comfy spaces to sit. Computer games in the children's section offer help with grammar, spelling, and math or just for fun.

19. Book and DVD sales – "Friends of the Library" sales allow libraries to cull their collection of multiple copies or slow moving materials. Prices are usually a dollar or two and go to purchase new books and media.

20. Work spaces – People often come to the library to get away from the distractions of a home office, work with a tutor or work on group projects. Private rooms are available for small groups or larger community meetings.

Pam Molnar is a freelance writer and mother of three who wrote this article while sitting in her local library.



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10 easy ways to help the new kid in school

Teach your kids to look for the new kids, not past them

By Katy M. Clark

I adjusted my off-the-shoulder sweatshirt covered in splatter paint. Inspired by the movie Flashdance, my sweatshirt did little to distract from the fact that I was a 5'8" tall 12-year-old standing alone outside a middle school classroom. It was the first day of school and I knew no one. My family had just relocated to the area from several states away.

As I waited for the door to my classroom to open, I saw two girls whispering nearby.

"Smile," I thought to myself as my lips curled over my teeth, covered in braces. "Make new friends," I could hear my mother's voice inside my head coaching me.

They approached, with the kind of confidence reserved for kids who grow up in the same place their whole lives.

"Are you the new teacher?" one of them asked.

"No," I replied. Then I froze. I knew I was taller than the average 12-year-old, but had I just been mistaken for an adult? "I'm a new student here," I told them.

And then they walked away.

Being the new kid is a phenomenon that many children will experience in their lives. School districts and government agencies officially refer to it as student mobility, defined as any time a student changes school for reasons other than grade promotion. Student mobility can be voluntary, such as changing schools to participate in a magnet program, or involuntary, as was my case, due to a change in a parent's job.

But on that uncomfortable first day, I was not thinking about what kind of statistic I was. All I knew was that I was alone, nervous, and scared. The experience of being the new kid has encouraged me to teach my own children to look for the new students in their schools and be kind to them. In a culture that is desperate for kindness, reaching out to the new kids is a tangible way to demonstrate it.

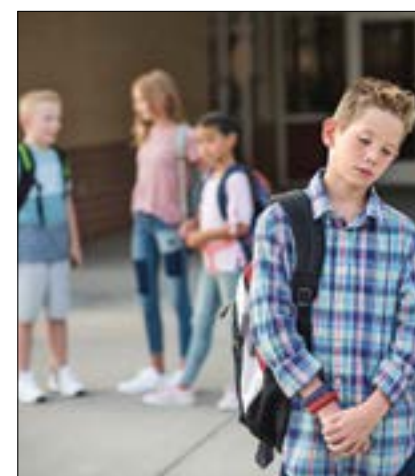
Below are 10 concrete ways I'm teaching my kids to help the new kid in school. May you find these helpful to share with your own kids as the school year begins:

1. Recognize that there will be new kids at school, kids who do not know anyone. Look for them, don't look past them.
2. Say hi. Ask where the new kid is from. Does she have any pets or siblings?
3. Sit with the new kid at lunch. Oh my word, just sit with him at lunch on the first day.
4. Invite the new kid to hang out after school.
5. Did I mention just talk to the new kid? It's okay if you're not best friends. Maybe you won't have anything in common. But if you never even talk to the new kid, then you won't find out if you have anything in common or not.
6. Tell the new kid about clubs, sports, or other activities at school. When I was invited to join the basketball team, I gained a whole team of friends.
7. Help the new kid find things like the gym and the cafeteria.

8. Sit with her on the bus or stand with him at the pickup loop. Even if it's just for a day or two.
9. Compliment the new kid. Maybe she has a cool backpack. Maybe she's wearing a shirt with a sports team that is also your favorite sports team. On my painful first day, remember those girls that walked away from me? Later that day one of them told me she liked my watch band. It was a small comment, but it meant so much to me.


10. Be welcoming and inclusive in group work in class. Remember, the new kid knows no one and things may have run differently at his old school.

Parents, teach your kids to look for the new students and take any of these concrete steps to be kind and helpful. As a result, the new kid won't feel so alone and will be one step closer to finding her way in a new school.



And if you see any new moms or dads standing alone at the pickup loop after school? Then it's your turn to say hello. Ask where they are from. If you never even talk to the new parents, then you won't find out if you have anything in common or not.

Katy M. Clark is a writer and mom of two who embraces her imperfections on her blog, *Experienced Bad Mom*.



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Expect memories, not mayhem from the middle school years – a parent pep talk

By Christina Katz

Any parent who has survived the middle school years will assure you that you can navigate them, too. Although the honeymoon period of elementary school is over and middle school comes with ample trials and tribulations for most kids, try not to expect the worst. Parents who welcome the challenges of middle school as opportunities for growth will be still be smiling by the time they attend the eighth grade promotion ceremony.

Expect your child to face and overcome hurdles in middle school. Middle school is supposed to be about making mistakes and bouncing back from disappointments. Kids who navigate turbulence with spunk will mature in middle school. Kids who struggle with self-awareness and assertiveness are going to need extra support to develop skills they will need in high school.

If you want your kids to thrive in middle school, don't leave them to their own devices. Parents who expect everything to be hunky dory all the time will likely be disappointed. Parents who think kids can figure everything out for themselves at this age with little adult supervision may want to wake up. This is middle school, the preparation for high school, which is the preparation for college, which is preparation for adulthood. Your child is going to need you each and every day.

Middle-schoolers are embarking on a two- or three-year journey and they will come out the other end of the process transformed. Whether or not they are changed for the better is largely up to you, parents. Here is a list of some of the challenges middle school kids face and how tuned-in parents can help.

Expressing individuality. At the end of the summer, sit down with your child and make a list of words that describe who he is. Do this every year before heading back to school to remind your student that he has interests and he's allowed to like whatever he chooses. This list will evolve over the years, and that's great, too.

Expanding learning abilities. Middle school is an opportunity to try new ways of learning. Kids will get to do science labs for the first time, peer edit each other's writing, work on projects with partners or in groups. Talk to your kids about how they are adjusting to these new learning modes so you can help smooth the way.

Dealing with social pressures. How much social pressure exists in middle school? Tons. So role up your sleeves, parents, and always be ready to troubleshoot. The best advice takes your child's personality into account and eschews going along with all the crowds all the time. Middle school is a great time for kids to learn how to say, "you do things your way and I'll do things mine."

Keeping up with school assignments & project deadlines. Kids tend to procrastinate. Some have



trouble understanding that projects and papers must be worked on incrementally to be adequately prepared. A little bit of planning support goes a long way until dreamy tweens can get the hang of due dates.

Navigating the online world. Your child is carrying a phone, a camera, and a computer in her pocket. Giving kids too much responsibility too soon can lead to extra expenses and shaken confidence. So trust your instincts, parents. You will know when your child is ready to embrace the job of caring for a phone.

Finding healthy tribes. Kids will be kids but no parent wants their child hanging out with a bunch of troublemakers. Your child's peer group has a huge influence on his daily life. Teach your kids to choose friends wisely and to distance themselves from those who make consistently unhealthy choices.

Communicating with teachers and coaches. You know how to do this, but now it's time to let your child step up and converse with authority figures. You can encourage her, confirm it's happening, and even follow up with adults to make sure your child isn't blowing you smoke. But let her do it or she won't learn how.

Confronting bullies. Not avoiding bullies. Not hiding from bullies. Not doing whatever bullies want so they won't pick on you. Confronting bullies means being able to stand up to someone being mean to your child whether his friends will back him up or not. Let your kids know you expect them to stand up for themselves and for others in need assistance and watch them do it.

Becoming a positive contributor. Everyone hates substitutes. No one likes the new math teacher. That kid is so weird. But guess what, kid-do? It doesn't matter because you are expected to

be kind and respectful to everyone at your school, including teachers and substitutes. Furthermore, you will actively contribute in your classes and make positive contributions to your school on an ongoing basis. Got it?

Bouncing back from failure and disappointments. Perhaps the toughest days in middle school are the not-making-the-cut days or the performing poorly on the test days or the getting sent to the principal days. How you respond to some twist on this trope is important. Kids need to process their feelings before they can bounce back and do the right thing. Be calm and patient as you help them figure it all out.

Test-driving romantic relationships. Some kids will dive right into relationships in middle school. Others will stay on the sidelines so they can speculate and speculate. Others may not seem interested at all. This is the beginning of practicing intimacy, so be sure to have lots of conversations with your child about the differences between healthy and unhealthy romantic relationships.

Prioritizing needs. Kids have needs and those needs matter even when life is hectic. Maybe your daughter needs a jog bra for gym class. Maybe she needs a new notebook for algebra. Maybe she needs you to sign a field trip form and write a check. Have a regular plan-the-week meeting on the weekend to discuss what your child is going to need from you and avoid last minute crunches that create needless stress and bickering.

Learning about the world. There is a whole wide world out there, and now your child is old enough to start learning about all of its complexities. What a great time to teach your child about respecting diversity, tolerating differences, and envisioning a more peaceful world. They can practice all of these principles right in middle school.

Remembering to rest. Taking nice long baths with soft music and candles. Pulling the blackout curtains for a three-hour afternoon nap. A six-episode, BBC *Pride And Prejudice* binge-watching sessions to recover from the sniffles. Growing kids need to unwind sometimes, but they may have trouble recognizing this. When this happens, give them a nudge in a decompressing direction.

Shining despite speed bumps. Guess what, parents? Your child is going to stumble, fall, and maybe even face-plant in middle school. But he will still have plenty of shining moments, where he is ecstatic and in his element. If your child isn't having enough moments like these, call a family meeting, put your heads together, and look for new opportunities where he is more likely to succeed.

Author, journalist, and writing coach Christina Katz is actually a bit sad that the middle school adventures are over. But she's looking forward to the challenges that high school will bring.

Back to School

Kids headed off to college?

How to survive and embrace it

By Kimberly Blaker

As you prepare to see your adolescent off to college, you flashback to all your child's milestones, special moments, and fun times you've shared together. It feels like only yesterday, your toddler said his or her first word. Soon after, you dropped your child off for the first day of kindergarten, prepared your preteen for puberty, and took your teen shopping for the high school prom.

But now, in an instant, your adolescent is headed out into the world, more or less on their own. This is a turning point at which you no longer have much oversight or say in your child's life. It can be both scary and exhilarating for parents and kids alike. Of course, you'll worry about your teen's safety and well-being. But you'll also revel in your young adult's enthusiasm, excitement, and dreams for the future.

Parents' feelings about their own life without their child's daily presence and parenting responsibilities are often met with a mix of emotions as well. Many parents look forward to this point in their lives and the freedom they haven't enjoyed in nearly two decades. Some parents may even feel conflicted or guilty for looking forward to "me" time.

At the same time, many parents (even those same parents) feel a sense of loss. After all, they've devoted 18 years to caregiving and raising their child. Many parents lose their sense of self while raising a family. In fact, being a parent can become one's identity. As a result, parents may feel an even more significant loss when their kid heads away to college.

SURVIVAL TIPS

So how do you survive this transition? Learn to embrace it.

A heart-to-heart. Write a letter or talk to your adolescent when you see him or her off to college. A letter is best because your child can save it and reread it to absorb and ponder what you have to say. You've already taught your child the importance of manners and doing their schoolwork. So skip that stuff. Instead, offer wisdom about life and your appreciation for your adolescent's admirable characteristics. Also, avoid dumping



on your teen. It's okay to say you're going to miss your kid. But don't overdo it and leave your child feeling guilty or responsible for your pain or loss.

Connection and space. Decide how to maintain communication with your college student. Phone calls, texting, email, video chat, and getting together in person offer ample opportunities to preserve your relationship. But don't overdo it. Your young adult needs time and space to experience their newfound independence and blossom.

Explore. You now have a lot more free time. Don't let that downtime become an avenue to needlessly worry or mope. Instead, be proactive and set out on a mission of self-discovery. Have you thought about going back to school, work, or changing your career? Now's a good time to explore your options. How about a new hobby, volunteer work, or focusing on your fitness and health? You can also broaden your horizons. Try out different music genres, visit art and history museums, go to plays and sporting events, or explore cultural restaurants or cooking.

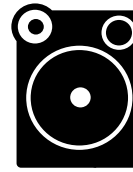
Travel. Plan something exciting. Consider a trip to someplace you've always dreamed of going. Or perhaps plan a long road trip or multiple weekend road trips throughout the year. Whatever you choose will help busy your time with the planning, give you something to look forward to, and remind you of the upside of an empty nest or one less child to raise.

It gets easier. Remember, whatever grief, loneliness, worries, or self-doubts you experience, they're a natural part of this transition. With each week and month that passes, it'll get easier. One day, you'll wake up and discover you've fully embraced your new life – and feel real joy for your child's newfound independence.

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ing experience," says Cardinal Credit Union CEO, Christine Blake. "Instant membership is quick and convenient, without the complicat-

ed application process at a typical bank."

Visit CardinalCU.com to apply for instant membership in three simple steps and learn more about the ways we support you and your family through every stage of life.

Cardinal is a member-owned, full service financial institution open to anyone who lives, works, worships, or attends school in Lake, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Ashtabula, Portage, Summit, Mahoning, Trumbull, and Columbiana counties.

**money
matters**

CALENDAR

AUGUST 2024

Chardon Arts Festival

Sunday, August 4 • 10 am–5 pm
Historic Chardon Square
100 Short Ct. St., Chardon
440-285-8686

www.chardonsquareassociation.org/events/arts-festival

Featuring over 100 artists providing an opportunity for a day of shopping and dining in a park-like setting. A great selection of restaurants will be open on the Square during the festival for your dining pleasure. Free admission and parking.

Ohio Celtic Festival

Fri., August 9 • Open at 4 pm
Sat. August 10 • Open at 11 am
Sun. August 11 • Open at 10 am
Lake County Fairgrounds
Painesville

www.ohiocelticfestival.com

Live Celtic music, traditional Irish dance performances, mouthwatering food, unique vendors offering treasures inspired by Celtic craftsmanship, and much more! Admission fee applies. See website.

Concord Community Days

Saturday, August 10 • 4–10 pm
Town Hall Campus
7229 Ravenna Road
440-354-7510

www.concordtwp.com/community

Food trucks, beer and wine, live music, basket raffle, craft vendors, fireworks and more. Kids World features bounce houses, DJ and karaoke, carnival games, face painter and Jungle Bob.

Super Star Party

Saturday, August 10 • 7–11 pm
Penitentiary Glen Reservation
8668 Kirtland Chardon Road
440-256-1404

www.lakemetroparks.com

Discover the many mysteries surrounding our universe. Featuring engaging activities for people of all ages and interest levels including:

- Cosmic craft, intergalactic games, spaced-out contests.
- Wild animal shows.
- Popcorn, soda, and snacks for purchase.
- Miniature train rides (weather permitting).

Free. Registration is required.

Mentor Cruise-In

Sat., August 10 • 10 am–2 pm
Mentor Civic Center Park
8500 Civic Center Blvd., Mentor
440-974-5735

Mentor's annual car cruise was first held in 2002 and attracts upwards of 800 vehicles and 2,500 spectators each year. All cars are welcome, from classics, street racers, vintage RVs from the 1990's, to Scooby Doo's groovy van, and more!

Featuring classic cars, door prizes, goody bag & dash plaque (first 250) food trucks.

Cruise registration begins at 8 am. No vehicles on-site before 8 am. No pets, alcohol, roller-blades or bicycles please.

Last Stop Willoughby

Saturday, August 10 • 8 am–4 pm
Downtown Willoughby
www.heartofwilloughby.com

A community event designed to showcase the Historic Downtown District of Willoughby. The day starts early at 8 am with the Willoughby Outdoor Market. There are activities throughout the day including: parade at 2pm, Kid-Zone, 10 am–2 pm, a chalk fest and continuous showing of Twilight Zone: A Stop in Willoughby 10 am–4 pm at Willoughby Library.

45th International Cleveland Kite Festival

Sunday, August 11 • 11 am–5 pm
Edgewater Park
6500 Memorial Shoreway (Rt. 2)
Cleveland

www.osekcleveland.org

The event features various competitions and games that add a competitive edge to the fun. Notably, the Rokkaku Battle, a thrilling contest where participants try to keep their kites airborne while engaging in friendly battles. The Mystery Ballet, both in solo and pairs categories, showcases flyers performing intricate maneuvers with their kites, synchronized to music they hear for the first time, judged by a panel for their creativity and skill. Free and open to the public.



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➤ **All are welcome**

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CALENDAR

Mentor CityFest

Friday, August 16 • 5–11 pm
Sat., August 17 • noon–11 pm
Civic Center Park
8600 Munson Road, Mentor
www.mentorcityfest.com
See page 8 for more info!

Willoughby Hills Music Fest

Saturday, August 17 • 1–9 PM
Willoughby Hills
Community Center
35400 Chardon Road
Featuring two stages of live music, a kids zone, food trucks, beer garden, Jeep Jam, local crafters. Bands include The Legacy Band, The BeSides, Rough Cut, Gabrielle Nicole and Sumrada. Free admission.

Milk and Honey Weekend

August 17–18 • 9 am–5 pm
Lake Metroparks Farmpark
8800 Euclid Chardon Rd., Kirtland
440-256-2122
www.lakemetroparks.com
Learn how milk becomes cheese, butter or delicious ice cream and watch the production process. Learn about bees and their role in pollination, how honey is harvested, pollinator-friendly plants, as well as how bees contribute to products that we use. Demonstrations, garden tours and more. Free with Farmpark admission. \$9 ages 12 through 59; \$8 Ages 60 and older; \$7 ages 2–11; children younger than 2 are free.

Old-Fashioned Picnic

Wednesday, August 21 • 5–8 pm
Painesville Township Park
1025 Hardy Road
www.lakemetroparks.com
Come enjoy the warm sunshine and cooling lake breezes. Join in for a hot dog cookout (or bring your own picnic). Activities include fishing off the pier, flying a kite, hopscotch and cornhole. You can also give archery a try under the watchful eye of a certified instructor. Registration required.

Painesville Township Family Fun Day

Sat., August 24 • 11 am–4 pm
Lake County History Center
415 Riverside Drive
Painesville Township
www.painesvilletwp.com
This family-oriented event

features children's games, music, face painters, Dr. Bubble, animal show, food, and much more. Bring the children out and enjoy a fun afternoon.

Eastlake Oktoberfest

Saturday, August 24 • 1–5 pm
Eastlake Senior Center
600 East 349 Eastlake
440-951-2200, ext 1001
Music by Joey & the Shotskis, vendors & kids activities. Schnitzel, bratwurst, sauerkraut and potato salad! Pretzels w/cheese & beer. Something for everyone! Free admission and parking.

Snakes, Turtles & More

Sun., August 25 • noon–4 pm
Penitentiary Glen
8668 Kirtland-Chardon Road
Kirtland
www.lakemetroparks.com
This event will feature live reptiles and amphibians, have informational and activity stations, and will help reveal what makes amphibians and reptiles so special! Miniature steam train rides will be offered, courtesy of the Lake Shore Live Steamers (weather permitting). Free admission.

78th One World Day Festival

Sun., August 25 • 11 am–6 pm
Cleveland Cultural Gardens
MLK Drive, Cleveland
216-220-3075
www.clevelandoneworldday.org
A parade of flags, naturalization ceremony, beer garden, ethnic food, cultural performances with music and dance, children's village, free admission and parking.

Geauga County Fair

August 29–September 2
(Labor Day Weekend)
Exhibits open at 10 am daily
Rides open noon daily
14373 N. Cheshire Street, Burton
440-834-1846
www.geaugafair.com
Exhibits, animals, rides, music, food, games, and shows. Ohio's oldest fair—since 1823. Daily general admission is \$10. Grandstand admission and amusement rides not included.



Night in the Museum

Thursday, September 12

Fall Fundraiser Porch Party

Saturday, September 21

Graveyard Tours

Tuesday, October 8

Lake County History Center

415 Riverside Drive, Painesville Township
(440) 639-2945
www.LakeHistory.org



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Contact the LCDJFS to learn more about becoming a foster parent.

Call the Foster Care line at:

(440) 350-4218

or email:

Eugene.Tetrack@jfs.ohio.gov

**Lake County Department
of Job and Family Services**

