

TODAY'S family

October 2024

Cuyahoga

FREE!

**Questions to
ask teachers
at conferences**

YAY! Fall Fun

New one-day festival
in University Circle

**Halloween and
fall-themed
events!**

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projects
for kids

Test Anxiety

7 tips to help kids
and teens cope with
test-taking nerves

Private School Guide

Virtual Reality

Helping children with
developmental disabilities



University Circle celebrates the fall season with YAY! Fall Fun

New one-day festival for the entire family

University Circle Inc. (UCI) is excited to announce YAY! Fall Fun, a new one-day festival. This exciting fall celebration will take place on Saturday, October 19, 2024, from 1–6 PM at Wade Oval. This year's festival will feature a range of free activities and educational experiences, food vendors, and live entertainment.

"We're excited to bring the community together for a day of fall-themed fun at YAY! Fall Fun. This event offers something for everyone, from the costume parade and petting zoo to interactive educational zones for kids. It's a great opportunity for families to relax, enjoy the season, and create lasting memories right here in University Circle," said Heidi Clevinger, chief marketing & experiences officer at UCI.

Event highlights include:

- **Costume parade:** Families can showcase their creativity in their favorite costumes. Those who register in advance will receive a swag bag filled with delightful fall surprises.
- **Petting zoo:** Enjoy interactive fun with a variety of friendly animals.
- **Face painting:** Kids can get their faces painted by a variety of artists, including some from the Cleveland Institute of Art.
- **Rock wall climbing:** Guests can test their strength at the University Circle Police Department rock wall.
- **Educational zones:** Four interactive areas designed to engage and educate families and kids K–8.

- o **STEM Zone:** Hands-on science experiments and creative activities
- o **Arts & Culture Zone:** Live performances and artistic endeavors
- o **Discovery Zone:** Activities focused on nature and history
- o **Play Zone:** An open-air area with games and activities for all ages
- The event will end with a screening of the Halloween classic *Hocus Pocus*, starting at 4:30 PM.

YAY! Fall Fun will also feature participation from local institutions and organizations, including The Music Settlement, NASA Glenn GVIS, the Hathaway Brown Robotics Team, Food Strong, Cleveland Metroparks, 10K Movement, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Cleveland Museum of Art, and Sears think[box] all who will provide engaging activities and performances throughout the day.

"We are so excited for our first YAY! Fall Fun Festival," said Sheffia Randall-Nickerson, Chief Engagement & Collaboration Officer at UCI. "It is a great way to deepen our commitment to our neighbors and community members while also offering fun learning experiences for youth and families through arts and culture activities and partnerships."

Admission to YAY! Fall Fun is free, but registration for the Costume Parade is recommended.

For more information and to register for the parade, visit them online at universitycircle.org/yayfallfun.

TODAY'S family
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YAY!

fall fun

**Food, Free Activities, Outdoor
Movie, and a costume parade!**



***Saturday,
October 19***
WADE OVAL

1:00 - 6:00 PM

[UNIVERSITYCIRCLE.ORG/YAYFALLFUN](https://universitycircle.org/yayfallfun)

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CIRCLE INC



Virtual reality helps children with developmental disabilities

They can practice scenarios in VR and use their newfound skills in real life

By Sophia Filipiak

Navigating everyday social situations might seem like second nature to most, but can prove challenging for those living with developmental disabilities. The Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Cuyahoga DD) is working passionately to ease the burden of anxiety and social inexperience for Ohioans with special needs. Through the use of virtual reality (VR) technology, Ohio families are helping their loved ones gain independence and the confidence to interact with others.

Virtual reality is an interactive, computer-generated simulation made possible through the use of equipment such as electronic goggles and is most frequently used for recreational purposes. As this incredible technology has progressed, leaders in the industry quickly realized that VR can be a useful tool to improve the human experience and make our lives

easier. Floreo, a company that offers therapy programs which “uses virtual reality to teach social, communication, behavioral, and life skills to neurodiverse individuals of all ages,” has been a groundbreaking development utilized by the Cuyahoga DD for the past few years.

Kelly Rainey, the assistive technology and children’s services manager with the Cuyahoga DD, describes how Floreo’s partnership with the board has positively impacted local families. “They’ve just been an excellent partner for our agency,” states Rainey, “I can’t rave enough about them.”

Floreo is helping people of all ages who need assistance with communication or behavioral skills due to developmental disabilities, ADHD or anxiety. People can participate in modules to prepare them for life experiences ranging from getting lunch in the cafeteria to visiting a doctor’s office. One family in particular used a TSA module to prepare their child for an upcoming flight. “It really provides



All of Floreo’s lessons are built with thoughtful consideration given to pacing, lighting, soundscapes, and interactive elements, ensuring that the learning experiences are engaging and enjoyable for both the learner and the coach. Pictured are Nathaniel Caban using a Floreo headset along with an illustration of Floreo screens. *Photo credit: Ingrid Caban*

families an opportunity to have their child experience something in a safe environment before having to do it in the real world and then it was more transferable and adaptable for their individual,” explains Rainey, “You don’t know what you don’t know until you experience it.”

Using Floreo, the Cuyahoga DD conducted a trial with the Middleburg Police Department in order to cultivate an understanding of appropriate behavior in the presence of police. “We were trying to promote good, safe interactions with police officers,” explains Rainey, who points out that some of the people her organization helps occasionally have run-ins with law enforcement.

Ingrid Caban says that her nine-year-old son, Nathaniel, is learning how to successfully address bullies at school. One of Floreo’s modules simulates an unpleasant altercation between the user and a bully saying hurtful phrases, with hopes of teaching its user how to properly address bullies in real life. “It just really helps,” says Caban. “That’s the only thing I can say. It’s been a helpful tool.” The bully simulation has been widely successful among students who struggle with unkind peers in class. “Normally the first

day of school is very rough for us, but he’s been coming home happy, smiling and more alive,” exclaims Caban. She mentions how easily Floreo is embraced by its users, especially when she saw how quickly her son adapted to it. “I don’t think he realizes that he’s also learning... he’s playing a lot. He sees it as a game.”

The Cuyahoga DD recently contributed \$25,000 toward the development of a new module designed to teach people about Internet safety as they explore online relationships. “We are very hopeful that this will help stop any scams from happening to people with disabilities moving forward if they are empowered with the skills that we learn through these modules,” says Rainey. Like the rest of Floreo’s modules, it will provide “another safe place to talk about or explore difficult things.” For many, VR exists to provide the latest and greatest gaming experiences. For others, it is making life easier to navigate.

For more information about BCIS services from Cuyahoga DD, people can visit CuyahogaBDD.org. The general information number is 216-241-8230. The eligibility number is 216-736-2673.

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October 11-13, 18-20, 25-27
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Encourage Curiosity

10 fall STEM projects for kids

By Pam Molnar

Hey Mom and Dad! You know the fun doesn't end just because summer is over. If your kids are curious, like to get dirty and enjoy the magic of science, we have 10 great seasonal science experiments for you to try with your kids.

Where does the water go? – Before the leaves change colors and start to fall, grab a few green leaves directly off the tree. Place the stems of the leaves in a mixture of water and red food coloring. You can see how the leaf absorbs the water as the color moves through the leaf. Photograph and document the progress over the next 24 hours.

Candy corn lava lamp – Pour one cup of water into a large mason jar. Add orange food coloring and mix. Slowly pour in three cups of vegetable oil and let the mixture settle for 20 minutes. Then add an effervescent tablet into mixture and watch the colored bubbles move around

like a lava lamp.

Apple volcanoes – If you are looking for ways to use up the bad apples this fall, why not make a volcano? Cut out the center of a whole apple and fill with 1½ tablespoons of baking soda and a few drops of different food coloring. Place the apple on a plate to catch the “lava”. Slowly pour vinegar into the center of the apple and watch it erupt.

Seed bombs – Gather newsprint, tear into small pieces and cover it with water. After it has soaked for 30 minutes, add the mixture to a blender to create a pulp. Mix with seeds you harvested from your summer flower garden and squeeze out excess water. Form into small balls and let dry completely. In the spring, drop seed bombs in areas that need a little color and they will plant themselves. They also make great gifts!

Pumpkin science – Compare two or more similar-sized pumpkins by weighing, measuring the circumference, comparing the color, the thick-



Use up bad apples by creating your own apple volcanoes!

ness of the shell and the number and size of the seeds. Before cutting them open, you can also see if they will sink or float by placing them in a bucket of water. Let the kids make predictions before each comparison.

Candy corn buildings – Use leftover candy corn (they usually go on sale right after Halloween) and toothpicks to create buildings, towers, bridges or whatever your engineer desires. You can even “bling up” your creations by adding beads to the toothpicks before adding the candy corn to contain them.

No one likes brown apples – There are so many methods for preventing sliced apples from turning brown, but which one works the best? Place a cut apple in each of these solutions: ginger ale, salted water (½ teaspoon salt to a cup of water), vitamin C crystals or chewable C vitamin, apple juice, lemon juice, honey water (1 tablespoon honey to a cup of water) and plain water. Compare the results.

Make pumpkin gut slime – Create a simple sensory toy with the pumpkin guts and seeds, two bottles of clear Elmer's Glue, 1½ teaspoons of baking soda and 2 tablespoons of contact solution. Knead it together

until it is no longer sticky. Refrigerate when not using and don't keep for more than for a few days.

Oozing jack-o'-lantern – Carve a face into a pumpkin, removing the pieces from its eyes, nose and mouth. Next, cut a hole in the bottom of the pumpkin, large enough to fit the pumpkin over a disposable cup. Fill the cup with 1 cup of water, a squirt of dish soap and 3 tablespoons of baking soda. Place the pumpkin over the cup. When you are ready, quickly pour ¼ cup of vinegar into the cup, replace the top of the pumpkin and stand back. The solution will ooze from the pumpkin face. This is definitely an outdoor project!

Fire pit color – Soak two pine cones in a mixture of water and one pound of salt. At the same time, soak two pine cones in water and one pound of Borax. Take them out after 30 minutes and let them dry completely. When they are dry, place the pine cones into a fire pit and watch the color differences. (Salt burns yellow and Borax burns green.)

Pam Molnar is a writer and mother of three curious kids. Follow her creativity on Etsy at Pam's Party Printables.



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Test Anxiety

7 tips to help kids and teens cope with test-taking nerves

By Gina Rich

It's a classic nightmare: you're sitting at your desk, about to take an exam, and it dawns on you that you completely forgot to study. There's a reason this dream still rattles many of us long past our years in the classroom. It's rooted in an often anxiety-laden childhood rite of passage – the standardized test.

Both of my children have taken standardized tests at their elementary school, and until recently, I hadn't noticed any problems around testing week. Then one afternoon earlier this year, my 9-year-old suddenly burst into tears in the middle of unpacking her school bag. "Tomorrow is testing," she sobbed, "and I know I'm going to do horribly!"

Her worries felt frustratingly familiar. I was the definition of a nervous wreck during my school's testing days, managing to convince my mother on a few occasions that I was too sick to attend classes.

My daughter and I aren't alone. The American Test Anxieties Association estimates that roughly one-third of students experience either moderate or high test anxiety, or feelings of distress before or during an exam. These worries aren't limited to older students taking high-stakes exams like the SAT or ACT; some children in first and second grade are already showing evidence of test anxiety.

To identify some strategies to help my daughter, I reached out to Eva Igler, a clinical psychologist. Igler notes that "anxiety in younger children, especially those in elementary school, can look quite different from how we traditionally think of anxiety in adults."

While test anxiety can manifest itself in telltale physical symptoms like stomachaches and difficulty sleeping, children may also appear defiant, irritable, or willful. Some might display emotional lability, or rapid, exaggerated mood changes, from calm to extremely upset – similar to my daughter's sudden meltdown after school.

How can we empower our kids to cope better with test anxiety? Here are a few tips to consider.



First, identify how test anxiety affects your child

Are there physical symptoms, emotional, or both? If you know, for example, that your child always experiences stomachaches on test morning, you can plan to respond appropriately – not by letting them stay home and in bed – but by offering some anxiety-coping strategies. Similarly, if you tend to notice increased bouts of crying or moodiness during test week, you can respond by addressing test anxiety as the root cause.

Encourage your child to practice anxiety-reduction techniques regularly

Strategies like deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation are helpful, but for maximum effectiveness, kids should practice these exercises when not feeling anxious. It's important to practice on a regular basis, explains Igler, so that children can easily call upon these tools during the really stressful moments.

For guided exercises, Igler recommends YouTube (try a search for "mindfulness for kids") as well as the Headspace app, which offers age-appropriate meditation exercises.

Model coping skills

We all experience anxiety. If parents successfully model coping skills, kids will learn by example, says Igler. This means we allow our children to see when we're feeling anxious and verbalize how we'll manage the situation.

For example, imagine you and your kids are stuck in traffic on the way to an appointment. You might

say, "I'm feeling anxious that we'll be late because of traffic." Talk your kids through how you will cope with the momentary distress – can you do some deep breathing or choose some fun music to listen to together? – then show them. This strategy also enables our children to learn empathy by helping them see that adults experience anxiety and worry too.

Use physical activity to channel nervous energy

While meditation and deep breathing help lower anxiety, physical activity harnesses those nerves. Abby Collier, a mom whose son experiences severe test anxiety, notes that exercise is one of her family's coping strategies. "On days when we think my son will be anxious about school, we go for a long dog walk in the morning," she says.

When test day is looming, get outside into nature for a family walk or a bike ride. If it's cold or rainy, turn up the music at home and have an impromptu dance party.

Be mindful of how you discuss standardized testing

Schools often emphasize that students be well rested and eat a good breakfast on test day. This advice, while sound, can signal the test's importance and increase performance anxiety.

To counter this effect during testing week, I now encourage my daughter to give her best effort but remind her that preparing for test day is no different than getting ready for a regular school day. Collier coaches her son to think about the test as a snapshot of how he is doing

on that one day, rather than as a permanent measure of ability or potential. "We talk about testing as just one part of our performance at school," she explains, "with effort, honesty, and kindness being more important."

Talk with your child about other ways to show effort at school. Emphasize that the tests are a tool for teachers and schools in making the learning experience better for everyone.

Allow your kids to experience anxiety, and express confidence in their ability to cope

It's normal for us to want to protect our kids from upsetting or frightening situations. While it feels uncomfortable to know our kids may experience anxiety, delaying – or worse, allowing them to forgo – a stressful situation will magnify its fear factor in their minds.

Letting our kids muddle through a tough experience, while supporting them through it, shows them we believe they're capable and strong and helps them learn self-efficacy. Think of this as a kinder, gentler version of the "Suck it up, kid!" approach. Remind your child that they have gotten through tough experiences before and can manage this, too.

Decades ago, my mother wisely employed just this strategy. After a few rounds of my mysterious test week affliction, my mom pulled me out of bed, drove me to school, and told me, not unkindly, that she understood I didn't love testing, but this was a part of life and I needed to just deal with it. Then she gave me a hug and kiss and drove away, leaving me to battle my evil Scantron sheets.

Looking back, I wonder how my mom was feeling in those moments after she dropped me off. Was she worried about me, uncertain about how I'd cope in my heightened emotional state?

Maybe.

But she never displayed a hint of unease, and the confidence she showed at that critical moment made a lasting impact on me. Even though my stomach was in knots, I managed to complete my test that day, and the next ones after that. When I realized

See TEST ANXIETY on page 8

Decisions, Decisions

By Stacy Turner

Grandma enjoys shopping and when my daughters were young, she'd have a ball hitting the mall with some of her besties to pick out fancy dresses for them. She'd select several for each in preparation for our visit prior to the Easter or Christmas holidays. Some dresses she loved, and others she selected based on what she thought they'd each prefer. Rarely did she select the same dress for each of them, knowing that big sis didn't like to match little sis.

At some point during the visit, the girls would have a fashion show for Grandma, trying on each dress, taking turns striking a pose on the raised brick fireplace hearth that served as a stage in her living room. Often, before she even removed a dress from the hanger, my older daughter would make up her mind. "Cut the tags off – I like this one." We'd get her to hold off with the scissors until she could try it on to make sure it fit. She'd put it on, turn in a circle so Grandma could see. She'd grudgingly try on the others to appease us. Most times, she'd triumphantly return to her first choice, but every so often, she'd swerve and select a new favorite, realizing that sometimes, the first choice isn't always the best one.

Little sis, however, would take her own sweet time deciding. For her, even the selection of



which dress to try on first required careful consideration. She'd lay them out on the bed side by side, scrutinizing each for color and style before selecting the first one to try on. She'd feel the fabric to make sure it wasn't too scratchy, an immediate disqualifier. When she finally tried a dress on, she watched our faces, trying to gauge our preferences. Then she'd head into Grandma's bedroom to con-

sult the full-length mirror for her own assessment. After careful consideration of every option, she'd eventually make her choice.

As grown-ups, we make so many decisions each day – both consciously and unconsciously. Some we can make quickly, but others require thoughtful consideration. It may seem like a small thing to give our little ones the opportunity to make a choice, even if it's what to wear or what to eat. While these decisions certainly aren't life-changing, they give our kids the opportunity to learn to decide for themselves.

Could they wear that special bathing suit they love so much instead of fuzzy pajamas on a cool night? Sure, but it probably won't be as warm and comfy. Let them wear the bright red ladybug boots to run errands on a hot summer day. When they trade them later for flip flops, they may learn that even though you can do something, it may not be the best option for that moment in time.

Each little choice we empower our kids to make helps them learn how to make decisions, and to come to terms with the result. Whether they're quick to choose or are more of a slow decider doesn't really matter, if they're comfortable with the outcome.

So, take your time considering those options. Or don't. Just make sure to try it on before you cut the tags off.

Test anxiety from page 7

I'd made it through without fainting or otherwise embarrassing myself, I felt almost giddy. My test anxiety decreased significantly after that.

Coping with something difficult, notes Iglar, "doesn't mean acing the test or getting first place. It means simply getting through it, no matter how rocky, despite feeling anxious."

After the test, celebrate together in a way that feels special to your child. Go out for ice cream, watch a movie, or cook a favorite meal.

Consider therapy and other resources when appropriate

"Therapy is a gift," says Iglar. "If you think that your child could benefit, even if you don't necessarily know how, start your search for a therapist sooner rather than later." Therapy

for kids often involves the entire family. Contrary to popular opinion, it's not just sitting on a couch and talking; it can involve playing games and making up stories.

Iglar also recommends the book, "You and Your Anxious Child: Free Your Child from Fears and Worries and Create a Joyful Family Life," by Anne Marie Albano, PhD.

There's a silver lining for kids who struggle with test anxiety: research indicates that students who learn to better manage test anxiety may cope more effectively with other types of anxiety.

Standardized tests may be inevitable, but with the development of coping skills and resilience, the anxiety surrounding them does not have to be.

Dogs! A Science Tail exhibit to open in November 2024

Dogs! A Science Tail, a hands-on science exhibition that highlights the dynamic nature of the bond between humans and dogs, and enables guests to experience the extraordinary way that dogs see, hear, and smell the world will open on November 8, 2024.

This exhibition will show how the ability to understand and communicate with each other lies at the heart of the unique relationship between humans and dogs, and what makes this one of the most successful interspecies partnerships of all time.

Guests will be able to explore the world from a dog's perspective through a variety of hands-on exhibits. Experiences will range from listening to hidden sounds that dogs can hear but humans can't, excavating replicas of actual fossils to determine if they belong to wolves



or dogs, walking a dog through an interactive neighborhood to understand how pets strengthen the community, or testing your pop-culture knowledge during a game of "Jeopardy!" based on the show Jeopardy!

Dogs! A Science Tail is included with a general admission ticket to Great Lakes Science Center. Tickets are \$19.95 per adult and \$14.95 per youth (2-12). For tickets and more info visit www.greatscience.com.

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7 questions to ask teachers at conferences

By Rebecca Hastings

As a parent I get excited about that fifteen-minute slot allotted to have a one-on-one with my child's teacher. I look forward to hearing about the progress my child has made as well as their struggles and strengths. I see a fraction of this in their homework, but I want to know more. Sometimes a conference goes great, but sometimes we walk away thinking we just heard a script that is being repeated for every student.

Starting the conference with specific questions allows you to focus on what is important regarding your child. Areas of study covered or assessment scores can be done quickly and even in other communications. Addressing the following questions will give both you and the teacher a better understanding of the child throughout the year.

Here are seven questions you can ask to help you get the most from those minutes with the teacher.

1. What do you see as an area of strength for my child?

This question focuses the discussion on your child specifically while still allowing the teacher to evaluate all subjects. Sometimes parents find this answer surprising as kids can show different abilities in the classroom than at home. Fostering a love of learning can help bring these hidden strengths out in the home as well as at school.

2. If you could pick one area to focus on improving for my child, what would it be?

Sometimes it isn't easy to think about all areas of learning at once. Focusing on one area at a time for improvement helps define the priorities within the classroom. It also gives something concrete to work on at home.

It is great to update this question with the teacher throughout the year. Sending an email or utilizing school communication apps is a great way to check in regarding progress and allow the teacher to shift the focus to something new as your child improves.

3. Is my child following the school guidelines and rules?

Every school and classroom have different policies in place. Under-

standing how your child is following the guidelines is important to maximize his or her learning time.

This also gives you a chance to ensure you fully understand and are comfortable with the guidelines. It is important to note that a conference is not an invitation to argue about the rules. Likely, the teacher has little say in what the guidelines are; those discussions are between you and the administration. It is helpful, however, to make sure you and your child understand and follow the daily guidelines in the classroom so his or her learning is uninterrupted and as successful as possible.

4. How does my child contribute to the class atmosphere?

This may seem like an unusual question, but it can provide a lot of information. Different personalities shine in different ways independently, but as you blend twenty of those unique personalities new things can be revealed.

This will give you an idea of how much your child may contribute to class discussions or how they may be a great helper for another student. Maybe you'll discover that your child is great at following directions and modeling good behavior for other students or even that they provide a funny idea to give everyone a laugh.

Asking this question gives insight into how your child's personality comes through in an academic environment. This is especially useful to understand as kids approach middle school and issues like popularity can impact their learning experience.

5. Who does my child work well with?

Allowing the teacher to look at the social element of learning is just as important as academics. This can be a good barometer of how a child is doing socially as well as give parents insight.

Understanding who your child can work well with at school versus who they have fun with but can be a distraction when it comes to school work will help everyone create a more successful learning environment.

Vanderbilt University has shown that increasing social skills results in students who are more responsive to academic learning.



6. How is my child handling the emotional elements of school?

Beyond following rules and learning, asking specifically about the mental health components of your child is essential. Frequent, open discussion about his or her mental health has never been more important.

Talk about any emotional struggles you see and ask the teacher what they see in the classroom. This is a great opportunity to discuss resources like school counseling or lunch groups that may help your

child process complex feelings.

7. Do you have any concerns about my child?

This question can never be asked too much. Sometimes we are so busy getting through the list of assessments, reading levels, and academic achievements that we can miss the bigger picture.

Giving teachers and parents both the pause to consider any areas of concern emotionally, socially, or developmentally addresses the whole child in his or her learning environment.

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- New Re-Designed Pre-School Space

These are exciting times for families of preschool-age children, and the Little Falcon Learning Center can be a valuable resource to you during your child's important formative years. Parents can customize their child's preschool schedule and even add on special programs like our Falcon Friday or Lunch Bunch.

Discover for yourself how the Little Falcon Learning Center is changing the way we prepare our students for a lifetime of success, continued learning, and service to others!



SAINT RITA SCHOOL

Saint Rita School offers K-8 Enrollment

Saint Rita Parish Mass times

Sat 5pm; Sun 7:15, 8:45, 10:30 & 12:15

33200 Baldwin Rd, Solon, OH 44139

440-248-1350 | stritaschool.com



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** →



COME TO LAKE CATHOLIC
CREATE YOUR EXTRAORDINARY FUTURE

VIP Days - Ongoing

Admissions Exams - Oct. 12 (9a), Nov. 9 (9a)

Open House - Nov. 10 (1p)

SCAN THE QR CODE TO DISCOVER ALL THE WAYS YOU CAN VISIT LAKE CATHOLIC



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.



The Whole Child. Every Child. Your Child.

Meet Ruffing's exceptional faculty, talk with our Head of School, explore our beautiful and spacious classrooms, and discover for yourself why so many of your friends, neighbors, and colleagues have fallen in love with Ruffing and made it the school of choice for their children.

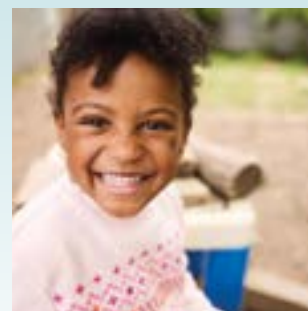
Visit ruffingmontessori.net or call the Admissions Office at 216.321.7571 to schedule a personal tour or register for Ruffing's Fall Open House.

Admissions Open House

Saturday, November 9

12 noon to 2 PM

18 months to 8th Grade



 **Ruffing**
Montessori School

3380 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights ♦ 216.321.7571

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

CLEVELAND MONTESSORI

12510 Mayfield Road, Cleveland
(216) 421-0700
www.clevelandmontessori.org

Authentic Montessori in the heart of Little Italy. Now in their 30th anniversary year, Cleveland Montessori joyfully serves students ages 3–14. To enhance their classroom experience, students utilize the culturally rich University Circle area, home to the city's world-renowned orchestra and museums.

A Cleveland Montessori education looks at each child's individual potential academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. Their students become independent thinkers with compassionate hearts.

Limited preschool spaces available for the 2024-25 school year. To arrange a personal tour of this charming school nestled in a historic building, email admissions@clevelandmontessori.org or call (216) 421-0700.

Open house dates: October 30 & January 22 from 5–7 PM.

CORPUS CHRISTI ACADEMY

5655 Mayfield Road, Lyndhurst
(440) 449-4242
www.corpuschristiacad.org

Corpus Christi Academy is a family-friendly pre-K through 8th grade school serving Lyndhurst and the surrounding communities. At CCA, your child will develop the foundational knowledge to deepen their curiosity in learning, while enhancing their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The school boasts a 1:1 technology program that supports student creativity and innovativeness in the classroom. Intimate class sizes encourage individualized learning plans for each student to deepen their spiritual, social-emotional, and academic accomplishments guided by a caring and dedicated faculty.

Full- and part-time pre-K options are available.

For info call (440) 449-4244.



HAWKEN: SCHOOL REDEFINED

Get ready to do school differently!



Plan your visit this fall!

Early Childhood, Lower, and Middle School

Thursday, 10/17/24, 9:00 am, Parent Visit
Saturday, 11/23/24, 10:00 am, **OPEN HOUSE**
Toddler – Grade 8 | Lyndhurst Campus

Upper School

Tuesday, 10/9/24, 9:00 am, Parent Visit
Saturday, 11/2/24, 1:00 pm, **OPEN HOUSE**
Grades 9 – 12 | Gates Mills Campus

Birchwood School

Sunday, 10/20/24, 2:00 pm, **OPEN HOUSE**
Preschool – Grade 8 | Cleveland-West Campus

Mastery School

Wednesday, 10/16/24, 9:00 am, Parent Visit
Tuesday, 10/29/24, 7:00 pm, Parent Visit (virtual)
Saturday, 11/9/24, 1:00 pm, **OPEN HOUSE**
Grades 9 – 12 | University Circle Campus



COEDUCATIONAL,
TODDLER – GRADE 12

hawken.edu

Lyndhurst Cleveland-West Gates Mills University Circle

Grow with Us This



At our 6 locations in the Cleveland area, children build the school-readiness skills necessary for a lifetime of learning.

**Infants • Toddlers • Preschool
Montessori • PreK • School Age**



Creativeplayrooms.com
440-349-9111

NOW ENROLLING!



PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

CREATIVE PLAYROOMS MONTESSORI & CHILD CARE CENTERS

Solon (440) 248-3100
Independence (216) 524-8008
Parma (216) 898-9520
Strongsville (440) 572-9365
Westlake (440) 835-5858
Maple Hts. (216) 475-6464
www.creativeplayrooms.com

Creative Playrooms Montessori and Child Care Centers have been a part of the Greater Cleveland community for over 50 years. These unique learning centers provide families with Montessori and traditional programs, swimming lessons, cafeteria-like lunchrooms, and expansive outdoor play spaces.

They understand that today's active families need a partner that really understands the need for safe, reliable, and loving care. At the core of their schools, you'll find dedicated and highly-trained staff who are deeply committed to providing children with the skills they need to reach their individual potential.

Additionally, Creative Playrooms is part of the Early Learning Academies (ELA) family, a network of trusted early childhood learning centers led by a team of seasoned and committed child-care professionals.

For more information about their six locations and program offerings, visit creativeplayrooms.com.

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 eight graduation outcomes, designed to develop students as leaders of their generation. These outcomes call their 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; and 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 admissions@gilmour.org.



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 St., 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 1,500 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 prob-

An environment for active and engaged learning.

At University School, boys thrive in an environment with the freedom to explore, create, and play. **Register today for our All-School Family Open House on Sunday, October 20!**

www.us.edu/visit



**UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL**

For Boys, Junior K - Grade 12

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

Hawken School cont'd

lem-based programming to scale.

Hawken was founded in 1915 as an educationally progressive school, and they remain 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.



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.

To be a Cougar means being a part of it all and building mem-



Lawrence School
Great Minds Don't Think Alike

**Opening Doors,
Changing Lives.**



OPEN HOUSE EVENTS:

Lower School (K-6):
Wednesday, October 23
9:00 - 10:30 AM

Upper School (7-12):
Thursday, October 24
9:00 - 10:30 AM



"Lawrence School was the key that opened the door to our child's success. He feels confident and inspired to learn."

- Parent of a Lawrence School student

GRADES K-6 BROADVIEW HEIGHTS | GRADES 7-12 SAGAMORE HILLS | LAWRENCESCHOOL.ORG/VISIT



A Cleveland Montessori education looks at each child's individual potential academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. Our students become independent thinkers with compassionate hearts.

www.clevelandmontessori.org



Authentic Montessori in the Heart of Little Italy

PRE-K - GRADE 8



PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

Lake Catholic cont'd

ories that last a lifetime. This is their green & gray family. Come discover all the ways you can create your extraordinary future.

LAUREL SCHOOL

www.LaurelSchool.org

(216) 464-0946

Lyman Campus

1 Lyman Circle, Shaker Heights

Butler Campus

7420 Fairmount Road, Novelty

Laurel School, founded in 1896, is a nationally-recognized college preparatory, independent day school for girls, kindergarten through grade 12, with a coeducational early childhood school. Laurel is the #1 Best All-Girls School in Ohio as ranked by Niche.com. Its 11-acre Lyman Campus is in Shaker Heights and its 150-acre Butler Campus is in Novelty. The Butler Campus is home to competitive athletics, full-time outdoor experiential learning for grades 3–5, northeast Ohio's first outdoor prekindergarten, and the Environmental Justice Semes-

ter for 10th and 11th grade girls.

Laurel's Center for Research on Girls (LCRG) was established in 2007, drawing on the school's long history as a site of pioneering research on girls. LCRG conducts and sponsors original research on girls, harnesses existing research to shape the day-to-day education of girls, and connects parents and teachers with research findings relevant to raising and educating girls.

LAWRENCE SCHOOL

www.lawrenceschool.org

(440) 526-0717

Lower School (K–6)

1551 East Wallings Road

Broadview Heights

Upper School (7–12)

10036 Olde Eight Road

Sagamore Hills

Ethan D. Schafer Center

for Learning Differences

(Tutoring & assessment services

for the greater community)

1551 East Wallings Road

Broadview Heights

Lawrence provides a compre-

hensive Lower School program, as well as an Upper School program serving students in grades 7–12, that features specialized and personalized attention, organizational strategies and aids, mutual accountability, encouraged self-advocacy, and an engaged faculty of learners.

Lawrence School is widely considered to be among the best schools in the United States for students with dyslexia and language-based learning differences. Students are at their best when learning differences are understood and accepted, when appropriate accommodations are made available and, most importantly, when their strengths as learners are defined, affirmed, and cultivated.



MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

23599 Cedar Road, Lyndhurst

(216) 381-8388

www.ms-uh.org

The Montessori School of University Heights, established in 1968, is a preprimary school dedicated to helping the child become the unique person his/her Creator intended in a Christian atmosphere of peace, love, and respect. Their approach involves:

- Providing comprehensive, individualized opportunities for growth. Each child is introduced to the materials as the child becomes ready for the concepts that the material embodies. Children develop order, concentration, coordination, independence, and self-discipline.
- Engaging children in a caring, supportive community. Their multi-age environment, serving children ages 3 through 6 years old, provides a family-like atmosphere. Children develop compassion and confidence.

Cont'd on page 18

Proudly Accepting EdChoice Scholarships!



**Excellence in
Catholic Education.**

(Pre-K - 8th)

5655 Mayfield Road

Lyndhurst

(440) 449-4244

corpuschristiacad.org



Tours Available - Register Now!

MONTESSORI

SCHOOL OF
UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

FOUNDED 1968

WWW.MS-UH.ORG

23599 CEDAR ROAD | BEACHWOOD, OH

CALL FOR A PERSONAL TOUR

216-381-8388



**Apply now for
the 2025-2026
school year.**

**Classes fill
up fast!**

THREE YEAR PROGRAM
BEGINNING AT AGE THREE



Montessori School of UH cont'd

- Respecting each child's developmental abilities and personality. Montessori children enjoy choosing their own work each day guided by adults who are sensitive to each child's unique personality. Children experience joy in learning.

They warmly encourage interested parents to schedule an in-person or virtual tour.

RUFFING MONTESSORI SCHOOL

3380 Fairmount Boulevard
Cleveland Heights
(216) 321-7175

www.ruffingmontessori.net

Ruffing Montessori School in Cleveland Heights is more than just a school for children ages 18 months through 8th grade. It is a beloved community where bright and curious children are guided by experienced Montessori-trained faculty and immersed in a rigorous curriculum that prepares students to become independent thinkers and creative problem solvers.

Walking through Ruffing's classrooms, you will see students working with purpose and joy, and excelling academically with confidence and compassion. A Ruffing education offers children a global perspective with an understanding of the profound impact they can have on the world, preparing them for high school, college, and life beyond.

Learn why Ruffing is the compelling school of choice by attending their fall Open House on November 9 or by scheduling a tour at ruffingmontessori.net/tours and events.

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL

6850 Mayfield Road, Gates Mills
(440) 442-7450

www.sfaschoolgm.org

Saint Francis of Assisi School, a preschool through eighth-grade school, is centered on helping students grow in faith and academics. Students learn about God's world and what they can do to make it a better place. As a result, St. Francis of Assisi School offers students opportunities to

participate in an entrepreneurial class, aquaponics gardening in which students raise trout and release them into the Chagrin River; the sustainability club, where the students reuse items for a new purpose, and service projects to help others in need.

Due to the opportunities offered through St. Francis of Assisi School, students view themselves as partners in their education and express how they would like to help shape the school and parish community. St. Francis of Assisi School is committed to ensuring that their students have all they need for success including dedicated teachers who are fully certified and chosen for their vision of guiding academic, social, and spiritual growth.

They encourage you to set up a private tour by calling Cindy at (440) 442-7450.

SAINT PASCHAL BAYLON CATHOLIC SCHOOL

5360 Wilson Mills Road
Highland Heights
(440) 442-6766

www.saintpaschal.net

Recipient of the Governor's Thomas Edison Award for Excellence in STEM Education and Student Research for eleven years, Saint Paschal Baylon Catholic School educates students in pre-K through grade 8. Its mission is to focus on Christ-centered values and to develop the unique potential of each student through a rigorous and engaging curriculum.

Offering a program that prepares students for their secondary education and beyond, the faculty and staff recognize each student as an individual with unique gifts. They truly care about their students and are dedicated to helping each child succeed and attain his or her academic and spiritual potential.

The academic program is aligned with diocesan, state, and national standards. In addition, Saint Paschal Baylon offers daily religion instruction, Spanish (pre-K through 8), fine arts, service learning opportunities, cocurricular activities, gifted education classes, as well as psychological,

St. Francis of Assisi School

Preschool - Grade 8

With solid academics at our core, our mission is to serve the needs of every student and grow their God-given talents.

- A Caring Catholic Community
- A Dedicated Faculty and Staff
- Faith-Based Lessons and Service Projects
- Advanced Mathematics Classes in the Middle School
- Academic Competitions
- Unique Clubs such as The Science of Baking, Sustainability Club, and Aquaponics
- CYO Athletics

Interested in
learning more
about our school?

Call to schedule a
private tour.



440-442-7450



www.sfaschoolgm.org



6850 Mayfield Rd.
Gates Mills 44040

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

Saint Paschal Baylon cont'd
speech/language, intervention,
and learning disability services.
Call to schedule a tour.

SAINT RITA SCHOOL

33200 Baldwin Road, Solon
(440) 248-1350
www.stritaschool.com
www.facebook.com/stritasolon

For more than 75 years, St. Rita School has proudly provided an exceptional academic and spiritual education. A National Blue Ribbon School, St. Rita School has emerged as the area's top Catholic School for students preschool–eighth grade.

St. Rita School was awarded the prestigious Governor's Excellence in STEM Education Award! Chrome Books, Apple TV, iPads, online textbooks and interactive whiteboards are all part of the St. Rita students' daily curriculum.

St. Rita School offers a full- and part-time preschool program, before- and after-care for all grades, afterschool clubs and activities,

and a wonderful lunch program provided by Aladdin Food Service. Schedule a tour to see how St. Rita School can exceed your families expectations. Call today to schedule a tour, (440) 248-1350, ext. 256, or visit www.stritaschool.com and www.facebook.com/stritasolon.

UNIVERSITY SCHOOL

www.us.edu

Junior kindergarten–grade 8

20701 Brantley Road, Shaker Heights (216) 321-8260

Grades 9–12

2785 SOM Center Road
Hunting Valley
(216) 831-2200

Young boys have boundless energy and a natural tendency to explore. At University School, boys thrive in an environment with the freedom to explore, create, move, and play. Their teachers understand and support the needs of young boys and small class sizes allow students and teachers to build close and trusted connections.

The 32-acre campus in Shaker Heights, for boys junior kindergarten through grade 8, includes outdoor learning and play areas, including a newly renovated arborum and amphitheater, plus an exciting new play park with climbing structures and a turf field. Indoors, their facilities include a pool, auditorium, cozy libraries, and a modern makerspace. Their renovated and expanded middle school wing opens in fall 2025.

University School is a vibrant and welcoming community where each boy is known and loved. A visit to their campus is the best way to get to know US. Join them for an open house on October 20 or schedule a family tour. Learn more at www.us.edu/visit.

More listings on page 20 →



V Villa Angela-St. Joseph
HIGH SCHOOL
Faith. Family. Future.

**FEEL THE
VIKING
SPIRIT!**

**JOIN US AT A FALL
OPEN HOUSE:**

Sunday, October 13 • 12-2 PM
Wednesday, November 6 • 6-8 PM

VASJ.COM/ADMISSIONS

**We teach the child.
We reach the heart.**

Gilmour empowers students to achieve
their goals and discover their passions.



As Northeast Ohio's only independent and Catholic school, Gilmour creates endless possibilities for students to not only learn about the real world, but how to positively impact it.



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



SAINT PASCHAL BAYLON CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*A National Blue Ribbon
School of Excellence*



**Governor's Thomas Edison
Award for Excellence in STEM
Education and Student
Research for 11 years!**




Fall Open House

Wed., November 20, 2024
6:00–7:30 p.m.

Enriching Minds...Nourishing Souls
Preschool through 8th Grade

To register, contact us at 440-442-6766 or office@saintpaschal.com

 5360 Wilson Mills Road, Highland Heights, OH 44143 • www.saintpaschal.com

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

VILLA ANGELA- ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL

18491 Lakeshore Boulevard
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 Viking Village something truly special.

Learn more about VASJ by attending their upcoming open house on Sunday, October 13 from noon–2 PM or Wednesday, November 6 from 6–8 PM.

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

"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



Leaders are made at Ohio's #1 All-Girls School.

Explore a Laurel education for your daughter. Learn about how Laurel's Center for Research on Girls puts cutting-edge research into action to create an environment in which girls thrive.

SHAKER HEIGHTS | NOVELTY | est. 1896

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A K-12 OPEN HOUSE:

Tuesday, October 8 | 5:00-7:00 pm
Lyman Campus • Shaker Heights, Ohio

Wednesday, October 23 | 4:00-6:00 pm
Butler Campus • Novelty, Ohio

Scan the QR code to RSVP today!



LAUREL
LaurelSchool.org



Patterson Family Fun Fest runs September 14 – October 27

When it comes to nature at its best, the beautiful days of autumn speak to our senses. Crisp fresh air and colorful scenes with leaves ablaze wherever you turn welcome you to celebrate the climax of the growing season at Patterson Fruit Farm. Harvest is in full gear with an abundance of apples leading the way. Stop by the farm market to shop and to enjoy the scenes overlooking Lake Erie on Caves Road or bring the family to the Family Fun Fest on the Mulberry Road farm to play for a while — both in Chesterland.

While the market is open year round, Patterson's adds their Family Fun Fest to the action

September 14 through October 27, 2024. This area costs \$7 per person Monday-Thursday (10 AM-6 PM) and \$11 per person Friday-Sunday (10 AM-5 PM). Seniors are \$6 every day. Children 2 and under are free every day.

This gives families of children preschool through elementary ages a place to enjoy hiking, sliding, playing in straw, climbing and "driving" tractors, viewing the world from the top of their tree house, disappearing in the silo and, in general, enjoying the out-of-doors filled with fun. No reservations needed.

For more info, call 440-729-1964 or visit pattersonfarm.com.

Shoppin' day 'n night at Holly Days

Revel in a premier selection of juried nature-themed gifts by a variety of regional artists at Geauga Park District's annual, ever-popular Holly Days Artisan Boutique — the perfect place to find quality hand-made items for anyone on your list!

Taking place at The West Woods, this year's premier nature-themed craft show in the park features the festive "Holly Night" evening market on Friday, November 1, from 5-8 PM, as well as daytime shopping on Saturday, November 2, from 10 AM-4 PM. So many vendors will be available to shop, dress for the weather to take advantage of some set up under tents in the great outdoors!

Shoppers may also look forward to perusing this event's charming Mistletoe Market, a room full of youth artisans selling their handmade gifts at typically lower price points.

Gifts sold at these popular events traditionally include heirloom-quality ornaments and holiday décor, all-natural bath and beauty products, gourmet food



Photo credit: Sonny Williams

and snacks, unique jewelry and accessories, beautiful and functional pottery and glass items, gifts hand-turned from wood, holiday wreaths and much more.

Regional artisans and their selections of handmade nature-themed items will be listed in advance online at www.geaugaparkdistrict.org/activity/special-events-art-shows. Guaranteed you will leave with something you love, or something you will love to give!

The West Woods Nature Center is located at 9465 Kinsman Road (Route 87) in Russell Township, and its nature center is fully wheelchair/stroller accessible.

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

Fall Fun!

at

Century Village Museum

Apple Butter Festival | October 12-13, 2024 • 10 AM-5 PM

THE OX ROAST RETURNS! Celebrating our 76th year! We will have apple stirring for our homemade apple butter, entertainment, vendors & crafters, food vendors, games and crafts for the kids, house tours, pumpkin carving and much more.

Ghost Walk Tours | October 26, 2024 • 5-10 PM

Admission is \$10 and you can preregister on our Century Village website.

Trick or Treat | October 31, 2024 • 6-7:30 PM

Explore the historic grounds and collect candy from nonprofit groups. There will also be a costume judging contest in the Bond Building.

14653 E. Park St. Burton, OH

centuryvillagemuseum.org • 440-834-1492

Explore the rich history of Geauga County's pioneers and discover the resilience and determination of those who shaped the American dream. Step back in time through our exhibits, artifacts, and interactive experiences to learn about the challenges and triumphs of early settlers.



Greater Cleveland Aquarium's underwater Halloween

Don a costume at Pumpkins & Piranhas
without worrying about the weather!

As the fall season burns into the Cleveland skyline, pint-sized ghosts, ghouls and goblins make their way to Greater Cleveland Aquarium.

Pumpkins & Piranhas, the Aquarium's annual after-hours Halloween celebration, creeps back underwater October 24-28.

During this time, the attraction's historic powerhouse home takes on a haunted tone, with not-too-spooky décor and hand-carved jack-o'-lanterns in and out of the water. As tiny vampires don their fake fangs for a night of fun, sandtiger and sandbar sharks show off their real toothy grins swimming overhead in a 175-foot seatube. All the while, costumed divers, live animal encounters and supernatural entertainers engage with a parade of young superheroes and monsters.

Of course, don't forget your goodie bag on the way out. "No child wants to pull a coat on over their costume, so we're excited to offer a Halloween event that's perfect for any weather," says Aquarium GM Stephanie White. "Our indoor venue ensures a warm and dry experience and, with access to the entire Aquarium, there's something for everyone to enjoy."

Need just a little less input? The Aquarium accommodates guests with sensory and similar needs during its sensory friendly Pumpkins & Piranhas experience on Monday, October 28, with limited noise, softened



lighting and adjusted activities to ensure a comfortable environment.

Of course, there's always the online Wild, Weird & Creepy program, where an Aquarium educator walks you through some of nature's most interesting creatures while you're safe in the comfort of your home—just wait till you see the sea lampreys' sharp rings of teeth.

For parents in need of something exciting, educational and fun for the little creatures in their lives, join the Aquarium for several nights of curiosity-inspiring frights. Advance registration is strongly recommended to ensure entry. Visit them online at greaterclevelandaquarium.com.



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**Open Daily
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BOO-tanical Bash at Cleveland Botanical Garden

Join in on Friday October 18 from 5:30–8:30 PM, for a celebration of scarecrows and skeletons at the annual Boo-tanical Bash event. Little wizards and witches will meander their way from the seasonally decorated White Oak Walk, gathering treats along the way. Ghoulish games and activities will await them on the Terrace. Your kiddos can plan

to dance their hearts out to tunes provided by popular DJ Kris Koch.

Registration required. Tickets are \$30 per nonmember child, \$25 per nonmember adult, \$10 per member adult and \$15 per member child.

Cleveland Botanical Garden is located in the University Circle cultural district. For more information, visit holdenfg.org.

I-X Trick or Treat Street returns

The I-X Center is thrilled to announce the return of the beloved I-X Trick or Treat Street, set to enchant families and kids alike on October 19-20 and 26-27.

The I-X Trick or Treat Street will be brimming with fun and festive activities, including themed trick or treating houses, 15 thrilling kiddie rides, engaging games, special features, live entertainment, and so much more.

Tickets for this year's event are now on sale, and families can take advantage of the newly enhanced Pumpkin Family 4-Pack. This spe-

cial package, available online only while supplies last for \$60, includes admission for four and new for 2024, parking, making it easier than ever for families to enjoy the festivities.

Online General Admission - \$16
(savings of \$4 per ticket)

Pumpkin Family 4-Pack - \$60
(online only)

I-X Box Office

General admission - \$20

Seniors 60+ (box office only) - \$12

Military and first responder - \$12

(Valid ID must be shown
at box office.)



*Just For
Laughs*



**"And be late for the Compassion
Conference?"**



Trick-or-Treat Fest at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

The Zoo's daytime Halloween celebration Trick-or-Treat Fest includes meet-and-greets with costumed characters, access to over a dozen trick-or-treat stations, the Monster Mash Dance Party, and discounted pricing at the Boomerang Line train, Circle of Wildlife Carousel, and 4-D Theater. Each ticket includes access to the Zoo's Dino Cove experience, featuring a fossil dig pit. The first 1,000 guests each day receive a complimentary trick or treat bag.

Trick-or-Treat Fest runs from 10:30 AM–3 PM on Fridays, Satur-

days and Sundays in October from October 4–October 27 as an additional ticketed experience. General admission sold separately.

General admission pricing is \$20.50 for adults and youth ages 12–17, \$18.50 for seniors age 62 and up, \$16.50 for youth ages 2–11. Children under 2 years of age are free.

Nonmembers are \$11, members are \$9, and children under 2 are free.

For more info call 216-661-6500 or visit www.clevelandmetroparks.com/zoo to purchase tickets.



Photo credit: Earl Linaburg

Halloween Drive-thru Lake Metroparks Farmpark

Halloween Drive-thru returns for another season of family-friendly thrills, chills and adventure at Lake Metroparks Farmpark. On select evenings during the month of October, visitors of all ages and abilities can enjoy festive fun after dark from the comfort of their own vehicles.

Farmpark's winding roadways will be adorned with twinkling lights and oversized decorations, providing an immersive environment for guests to drive through. Sets and characters will vary from enchanting to spine-chilling, with brand new themes and returning favorites planned.

"We're excited to bring visitors another year of festive Halloween

fun," says Seth Begeman, Lake Metroparks' chief of outdoor connections. "It takes months of planning and setup to ensure that every year is more memorable than the last. This year, we're planning to bring Halloween to life with both classic and modern themes."

Halloween Drive-thru runs October 11–13, 18–20 & 25–27 from 6:30–8:30 PM. Tickets (\$27.50 per carload) must be purchased in advance and are only available online at <https://www.showclix.com/tickets/halloween-drive-thru-2024>. Terms and conditions apply.

Lake Metroparks Farmpark is located at 8800 Euclid Chardon Road in Kirtland.

join our team!

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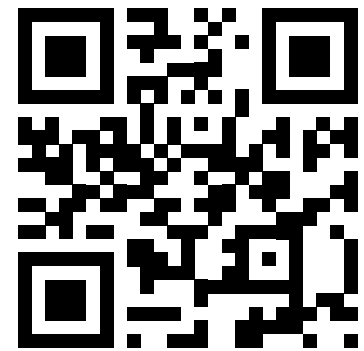
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Fun

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