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Local organization helps young adults who have aged out of the foster care system

Chair-ity helps provide furniture and mattresses to help get them started

By Sophia Filipiak

Many of us have spent a night or two lounging on an old hand-me-down couch. It might have a few mystery stains here and there—maybe some unsightly scratches from an ornery cat, but it’s comfortable, sturdy and, most importantly, reliable. This chair, couch or other possibly outdated heirloom furniture was probably passed down from a parent, aunt or other family member who decided to upgrade to something more fashionable. This is a classic story familiar to college students and newlyweds, but for many, the simple necessity of functional furniture is out of reach. Countless young adults in northeast Ohio find themselves struggling to acquire basic home-furnishing necessities after aging out of the foster care system. One organization is on a mission to furnish the homes of these recent foster graduates.

Maria Paparella, the founder and executive director of Chair-ity, saw the struggle aged-out youth face once they are no longer financially supported by the foster care system. While some foster graduates are invited to remain with their foster family after the state of Ohio revokes its



A young mother and her daughter enjoying a sofa provided to them by Chair-ity.

financial support, others are very suddenly forced to find an apartment at 18 years old. Paparella’s goal is to ease the burden young people face when they are abruptly uprooted from their home and

forced to move into an unfurnished apartment. Many foster graduates do not even have the means to purchase a mattress to sleep on when they leave the system. Chair-ity acquires and redistributes furniture to foster graduates in need. Paparella and her team have been able to fully furnish many Ohio homes and apartments for those who are struggling. “We’re making a really big impact in areas that are overlooked and underserved,” says Paparella.

Jaz Robinson, Chair-ity’s program manager, explains that “this specific population of young adults kind of slips through the cracks.” While many programs exist to help children in foster care, few programs are actively working to solve the problems these same young people face when they have aged out of the system. “At 18, you are technically an adult,” says Robinson, “but the world is not that easy and straightforward.” While most people still rely on the support of their relatives as they gradually transition into adulthood, those who grew up in foster care may be very suddenly expected to take on the personal responsibilities of being an adult. “We try to fill

Continued on page 5



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Believe in Dreams celebrates 10 years of helping children to realize dreams

By Deanna Adams

We all have a story, and we all have a dream. And there is one organization based out of Beachwood whose mission it is to turn a negative into a positive.

Believe in Dreams is a nonprofit that fulfills the dreams of children who are economically disadvantaged and/or have survived a nonmedical adversity. For the past 10 years, it has been their mission to bring smiles to kids, ages 1–18, by providing them access to enriching opportunities and experiences, a connection with community, and hope for the future for them and their families.

The idea was born out of tragedy. In 2009, Cleveland entrepreneur and owner of the John Roberts Salons, John DiJulius III, lost his wife, Stacy, mother of his three sons. Faced with raising his three young sons, DiJulius thought of ways to make a difference in other children dealing with hardship and how he might bring joy

back to their lives. And so, he created Believe in Dreams in 2014.

“I started out as a volunteer because John needed help,” says executive director Katie Eichenauer, who is a social worker. “I was happy to help build on the program, and it grew pretty fast.” Their staff consists of other social workers and professionals, along with interns.

Some of the struggles the children may go through include the loss of a parent or another loved one, abuse, poverty, and homelessness. If a child is eligible, the only other requirement is that someone other than a family member must nominate them, which includes teachers or other professionals.

Eichenauer adds that the organization is not in competition with other agencies like them but rather works in collaboration with them. “We complement those other amazing works out there because we all share the same goals. To give children more opportunities that they



wouldn't have otherwise.”

Much of what they do develops through word of mouth and help from the community. When Kelly, mother of five, lost her husband four years ago, her children's ages were 11, 10, 7, 5 and 2. She hadn't heard of Believe in Dreams until one of her children's teachers called saying that each of her kids had been nominated to receive a dream.

“We live in such a great community,” says Kelly, who resides in Thompson. “When word got out about their dreams, the whole school decided to get involved.”

This meant a big surprise for the kids. “We live in a small house, so when it came time for the dreams to be announced, they ended up having it in the school cafeteria,” she says. “All the teachers rounded up the entire school, and when the kids walked in and they saw everyone there, including their dad's best friends, their eyes got so big. They were just shocked. It was particularly special because it was to be their first Christmas without their father.”

Among the things Kelly's children received included winter jackets and boots, gift cards for Peek 'n Peak Ski Resort and Busy Bees Pottery & Art Studio, much-needed dressers for the girls, a power wheels Jeep for the only boy, and a weekend at Kalahari Resorts in Sandusky.

“I was completely amazed at how much they did for my kids. It was a very emotional day for everyone. There were tears of joy and it gave them some good memories of that sad time in their lives.”

Best of all, the children learned

a life lesson that will last long after the dreams were completed. “They learned how good it feels when people do kind things, and that there are still reasons to smile. They now love giving back and doing things for others. They are very active with the alumni events, such as the annual BID 5K Race at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.”

Today, Kelly says her children, Makenna, 15, Aliza, 13, Alaina, 11, Stella, 9 and Lars, 6, are all doing well, and they now have some wonderful memories of that time, thanks to everyone involved with Believe in Dreams.

Lettie, who lives in Cleveland, is raising her granddaughter, along with her husband, after their daughter's death eight years ago when the girl was just 5. “Believe in Dreams is just a wonderful organization. I will say that when they contacted me, I was hesitant. We don't get outside help and didn't want anything extra or to take advantage, so when they asked I said, ‘let's keep it simple. A need instead of a want.’ So my granddaughter, who is now 12, received a laptop and she got a dance lessons package, which she really enjoys.”

Lettie noted several things that she likes about the agency. “There are no political or religions tied in, they help those from all walks of life. And it doesn't have to be an immediate tragedy, either, just something that altered a child's day-to-day life. Plus, they don't forget you afterward. They have an alumni program, which allows us opportunities to participate

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Believe in Dreams

from page 4

in their future events and give back to others in a tough spot.”

So far, the organization has fulfilled 775 dreams and hopes to keep moving forward. “We’re excited about our 10th anniversary,” Eichenauer says. “But we always need a little help from the community.”

In celebrating this milestone, they are currently asking those who can to help them turn 10 new “dreamers into believers” by donating \$10 or more, then share why they “believe in dreams” on social media. Their goal is to raise \$15,000 to fulfill 10 new dreams by the end of 2024.

For more information, see their website at www.believeindreams.org. Or call 440-484-2376. Believe in Dreams is located at 26300 Cedar Road, Suite 1105, Beachwood, Ohio 44122.

Photo provided by Believe in Dreams



Chair-ity from page 3

the gap that’s missing for these kids,” says Robinson, who explains that Chair-ity steps in to emulate a family member who would normally provide hand-me-down furniture.

Robinson highlights that there are layers to the issue of foster graduates lacking financial resources to reliably support themselves. “Seventy percent of women who age out of foster care are pregnant by 21,” explains Robinson. “This year alone, 50% of the young adults we served have children.” This means that the children of foster graduates are also being negatively impacted by a lack of financial support the foster care system once provided them as minors.

One particular family from eastern Cuyahoga County that was helped by Chair-ity was a young, single mother and her hearing-impaired daughter. With a lack of support from the government, this mother and daughter spent many nights couch surfing (staying with a series of different friends or relatives, sleeping somewhere temporary such as a couch, because you do not have your own place to live) before they



finally found stability in their very own apartment. One major problem foster graduates who are under 21 run into is being denied living space rentals because they do not have a co-signer. Luckily, the mother and her child were able to find an apartment complex that did not require a co-signer. This is where Chair-ity steps in to help and, through generous community donations, was able to fully furnish the family’s apartment.

This past week, a pregnant foster graduate from Lake County did not even have a mattress to sleep on. Chair-ity accommodated the young mother by ensuring she had a bed after her move-in date changed to a much earlier time. They were

desperate to give her this simple necessity many take for granted so she did not have to sleep on the floor before giving birth. The rest of the apartment was later furnished by Chair-ity. Robinson explains that owning a bed to sleep on is the basis of human dignity. For this reason, mattresses and bed frames are the only items that Chair-ity does not accept in used donations and instead are purchased brand new.

Chair-ity has pickup sites in Summit and Cuyahoga County. Most of the redistributed furniture is donated directly by members of the community. Monetary donations and donor purchases through Chair-ity’s Amazon wish list help the organization acquire additional furniture for those in need. “It takes a team effort,” exclaims Robinson. Everyone faces their own set of struggles as they come of age. Having limited access to basic home furnishings should not be one of them. Chair-ity is working to change that.

For more information or to inquire about donating, please visit <https://www.chair-ity.org>.

Photos provided by Chair-ity

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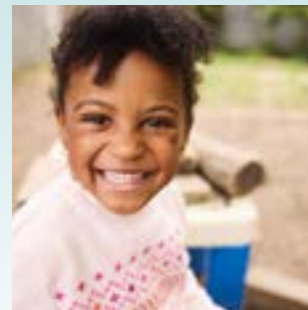
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Hanukkah

A story of resilience and miracles

Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, is one of the most widely celebrated Jewish holidays around the world. Held annually for eight days, typically in December, Hanukkah commemorates a historical event that occurred more than two thousand years ago, symbolizing the triumph of religious freedom, resilience, and the miracle of light. Though it is not as significant as some other Jewish holidays in terms of religious observance, Hanukkah has become a time of family celebration, symbolizing hope, endurance, and the Jewish spirit.

The historical background

The story of Hanukkah dates back to the 2nd century BCE, during a period when Judea was under the control of the Seleucid Empire, a Hellenistic kingdom that had arisen after the death of Alexander the Great. The Seleucid King Antiochus IV Epiphanes sought to impose Greek culture and religion on the Jewish population. He outlawed Judaism, desecrated the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, and even set up an altar to the Greek god Zeus within the Temple. This forced the Jews into a state of religious persecution, and many were forced to abandon their faith or face severe punishment.

In response to this oppression, a group of Jewish rebels

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known as the Maccabees, led by Judah Maccabee, rose up against the Seleucids in a battle for religious freedom. Against all odds, the Maccabees managed to defeat the much larger and better-equipped Seleucid army. They reclaimed Jerusalem and the Temple in 164 BCE.

The miracle of the oil

After the Maccabees liberated the Temple, they sought to rededicate it to God. One of the first tasks was to relight the Menorah, a then seven-branched candelabrum that symbolized the eternal light of God. However, when the Maccabees searched for oil to light the Menorah, they found only a small jar of consecrated olive oil—enough to last for just one day.

According to Jewish tradition, a miracle occurred. Despite the small amount of oil, the Menorah burned for eight days, allowing enough time for the priests to prepare and consecrate more oil for the Temple. This miraculous event is the basis for the eight-day celebration of Hanukkah, which is also known as the Festival of Lights.

The name "Hanukkah"

The name Hanukkah comes from the Hebrew word "chanukah," which means "dedication" or "consecration." It refers to the rededication of the Temple following its purification by the Maccabees. Hanukkah is sometimes also called the "Festival of Lights" because of the central custom of lighting the menorah to celebrate the miracle of the oil.

Hanukkah traditions

Over time, the celebration of Hanukkah evolved into a festival marked by joyous customs, family gatherings, and the sharing of food and gifts. One of the most important traditions is the lighting of the menorah, a nine-branched candelabrum, which represents the original menorah in the Temple. On each of the eight nights of Hanukkah, a new candle is lit, with the ninth candle, called the shamash, used to light the others.

Foods fried in oil, such as latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly-filled doughnuts), are popular during Hanukkah, symbolizing the miracle of the oil. The spinning of the dreidel, a four-sided top, is another well-known tradition, particularly among children. The dreidel game is typically played with coins, chocolate gelt (coins), or other small treats, and is believed to have originated as a way for Jewish children to continue studying the Torah secretly during times of religious oppression.

Gift-giving, although not part of the original religious observance, has become a widespread custom, especially in modern times. This tradition has been influenced in part by the proximity of Hanukkah to Christmas, which is widely celebrated around the world.

Hanukkah in modern times

Today, Hanukkah is celebrated by Jews worldwide, with festivities that vary according to regional customs and personal preferences. The holiday serves not only as a reminder of Jewish history and

the struggle for religious freedom but also as an occasion for Jewish families to come together in a spirit of unity and joy. It has become a celebration of Jewish identity, resilience, and continuity, particularly in the face of adversity.

While Hanukkah may not carry the same level of religious significance as holidays like Yom Kippur or Passover, it has grown in cultural importance, especially in Jewish communities outside of Israel. In recent decades, Hanukkah has become more visible in the public sphere, partly due to the increasing recognition of Jewish culture and religion worldwide. The lighting of public menorahs, concerts, and Hanukkah events are held in cities across the globe, helping to spread awareness and celebrate Jewish heritage.

Hanukkah is a holiday steeped in history and tradition. Its story—of the Maccabees' victory and the miracle of the oil—has resonated for over two thousand years, serving as a powerful symbol of resilience, religious freedom, and the enduring spirit of the Jewish people. Today, Hanukkah continues to be a time for families to gather, light the menorah, share meals, play games, and reflect on the values of faith, hope, and perseverance. Through its traditions and rituals, Hanukkah reminds us all of the power of light in times of darkness and the importance of standing up for one's beliefs.

~Article by Justin Daniels

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Take time to appreciate the good things in your life

By Stacy Turner

As the year ends, I've been making a conscious effort to slow down and notice. Taking time to be outside, I've noticed the subtle changes. The smell of the newly fallen autumn leaves, the organized chaos of a flock of starlings as the multitude move together like a current through the air, the warm sunshine on my face. More days pass by as leaves blanket the ground to prepare for the cold weather ahead. There's more dark nighttime, providing a better view of the stars. In the early morning hours, light illuminates bare trees in golds and pinks. Each day is different, with its mix of sunshine or clouds, frost or snowflakes. When viewed with fresh eyes, each day we're given is a gift. That's precisely why some wise soul called it the present.

With a little thought, it doesn't take much effort to incorporate little pockets of time to appreciate the beauty around us. It can be as simple as bundling up to drink a morning coffee or tea on the porch, fingers wrapped around the soothing warmth. Or taking a quick walk outside later to clear your head after a long day. These little breaks don't take a huge amount of time and can be squeezed into even the most hectic of days. And they can help recharge your battery, giving you the energy to tackle the rest of your day.

Being outside may not fix a problem you've been



dealing with but taking a break from it may help provide a different perspective. Sometimes it's helpful to talk through it with someone you trust. Talking about problems with people you trust is necessary and helpful. But studies have shown that the process of hanging on to and continually venting about the same issues or problems again and again may only serve to internalize those "poor me" feelings. That negativity running on a continuous loop in our heads can poison the way we see life.

Studies have shown that our minds seek out what we tell them is important. That's why when you've purchased a car of a certain make or model,

suddenly you see them everywhere. Basically, the brain is wired to look for what we tell it to see. If I continue to complain about that negative situation or person my brain will seek out evidence to support those negative thoughts and feelings, and to ignore anything that doesn't support those pitiful views. In the process, my brain won't notice the positive things. Unless I decide to make a change in what I decide is important.

It's suggested that we seek out and notice the positive experiences in our days no matter how small, instead of obsessing about the things that didn't go our way. Instead of keeping a running list of what went wrong, why not start a list of what went right? To help remind myself, I started a note in my phone entitled, "Good Things Are Always Happening to Me."

Each time I experience something that makes me feel good or brings me peace, I add it to my list. It seemed a little silly at first, but like any new practice, it soon became a habit. And eventually, scrolling through the list, those little moments of joy spread out like bright stars across a clear night sky, making me look up in awe and wonder. This simple practice has made a big difference in the short time I've been doing it. I encourage you to give it a try; I'd love to hear if it does the same for you.

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20 Reasons Why Christmas with Teens Rocks

By Katy M. Clark

“Ugh, I’m out of food coloring!” I cried, peering into the cupboard. It was the last thing I needed to finish the Christmas cookies.

Sigh. I’d already made enough runs to the store that I was on a first name basis with Sue, the cashier from checkout lane 6.

That’s when I turned to my teenage son, 17, sitting on the couch looking at his phone.

“Heeeeeey,” I said. “Could you go get me some food coloring?”

“Sure,” he replied. He sprang up, grabbed the car keys, and took off.

It was like I had my own Christmas elf! Which was a pretty awesome perk of celebrating the holiday season with older kids.

Indeed, as my teenage son and his sister have shown me as they’ve grown older, there are plenty of reasons why Christmas with teens rocks. Here are 20 of them:

1 A little bit of financial independence. You know what my son said when I offered him \$5 to pay for the food coloring? “That’s okay, Mom. I have money.” Now that’s a Christmas miracle!

2 Teens are sturdier. I no longer fear that my kids will break the heirloom ornaments, topple over while helping with the outdoor lights, or drop the china when setting the table for Christmas dinner.

3 Their palates have matured. Gone are the days of picky eating, like the Christmas dinner when my preschooler ate nothing but rolls and brown sugar meant for the sweet potatoes. As a teen he’ll eat almost anything. (Okay, he still loathes onions!)

4 Teens are more helpful with cooking and baking. They can chop the veggies and make the gravy. They can whip up extravagant dishes and desserts, whether because they are taking culinary classes or just want to emulate something they saw on TikTok.

5 Better yet, teens can clean the kitchen all by themselves when they are done. They don’t need supervision or nagging. Well, maybe a little bit of nagging.

6 I am no longer in charge of dressing them for the weather. Yup, gone are the days of wrangling them into winter gear a la Randy’s mom in

A Christmas Story. Of course, I hope my teenage son wears a coat, but if he doesn’t, that’s on him, not me.

7 Big kids care about tradition. Whether it’s putting out the sock snowman they made in first grade or using Grandma’s recipe to make molasses cookies, teens genuinely appreciate tradition and connection with loved ones and holidays in the past.

8 Teenagers are still kids at heart, just bigger. They want to leave a plate of cookies out for Santa. They pile in the car when it’s time for our family to drive around and admire holiday lights. Their faces still light up with joy when opening gifts.

9 We have retired the Elf on the Shelf. We had a good run, but nowadays I can sit back (a little bit!) and relish the real magic of the season, which is simply being together.

10 And I love being together with them. This is in stark contrast to the days when they were younger, we’d all be stir crazy by New Year’s and I couldn’t wait for school to start again. With teens I wish time would slow down so I could linger in these special days with them.

11 Christmas with teens rocks because I no longer fret so much about the gifts. I don’t stress about hiding presents or scramble to obtain that deeply desired yet widely unavailable toy. (Do not ask me about the lengths to which I went to get my kids Zhou Zhou pets one year!)

12 Teens are happy to receive clothes as gifts, too. Remember the pouty faces or whiny voices as youngsters when they opened gifts and discovered clothes? Now my son is stoked to get a hoodie and my daughter is giddy to see duds from her favorite store.

13 And if by chance my teens are disappointed by a gift? They are mature enough to handle it. It’s not like that time my three-year-old ran from the room crying when a toy did not work. I think that year’s very vocal disappointment still lingers in the ether.

14 Teens give better gifts, too. I know, I know, gifts are not the real meaning of the season. But while I treasure the drawings and painted rocks from yesteryear, it touches my heart when my teens give me a book they knew I wanted to read or a scarf they saw me admire.



15 They can wrap gifts themselves. My teenage daughter is masterful when it comes to using paper, tissue, and ribbon. She’s a big help with all the wrapping if I’m busy or just plain tired of doing it all myself. Plus, I don’t worry about her running with scissors anymore!

16 Their taste in holiday shows and movies is more palatable. Sure, I enjoyed watching classics like *Frosty the Snowman* when they were little. But not thirteen times in a row. Now my teenagers are just as excited as I am to watch grown-up movies like *The Holiday* or *Die Hard* that they never would have sat through as tots.

17 Teens can stay up late. Whether it’s watching our favorite movies together or going to the midnight Christmas Eve service at church, gone are the years when I had to hustle them to bed by a certain hour.

18 Teens sleep in on Christmas

morning. They no longer rouse the entire household at the crack of dawn to open gifts. Christmas morning with big kids has a decadent, tranquil feel.

19 Teens grasp the meaning of Christmas in a deeper way. I love that we have profound talks about faith this time of year. It touches my heart, too, when I see them donate jackets to the homeless or put their own money in the red kettles.

20 And the 20th reason why Christmas with teens rocks?

Because it is still the most wonderful time of year, no matter if they are five or fifteen years old. And it’s an amazing gift every day, but especially at Christmas, to be the one that my teens call Mom.

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

Photo: Adobe Stock / By JackF



Why I Stopped Explaining My Daughter's Size

By Gina Rich

My 5-year-old daughter is starting kindergarten this year. This fact elicits plenty of responses from people who don't know her well.

"Really? Kindergarten?"

"But she's so tiny!"

"Wow, she is small for her age. My son/daughter/cousin/grandchild starting 4K is at least a few inches taller than her!!"

I know these statements aren't meant to be malicious. But the words make me squirm like a nervous creature being examined under a bright light.

Yes, my daughter is tiny—she always has been, and likely always will be. Her size is due not only to genetics (our family is on the petite side) but also to some serious complications while she was in utero. In a nutshell, I got pretty sick during the pregnancy and my little girl had to subsist on a lot less nutrition than she needed. Fortunately, despite arriving nine weeks early, my daughter was healthy. After a battery of

tests and visits with fancy-sounding doctors over the years, we recently received this super formal medical diagnosis: She's probably just meant to be very small.

But knowing my child is healthy doesn't make me any less uncomfortable when people comment on her size. So I do what comes naturally when I feel defensive: I babble, almost apologetically, describing her precarious start to life and how she's never made it onto on a normal growth chart. I emphasize how our family is short in general. And, even though I know that petitiveness and strength are not mutually exclusive, sometimes I'll even slip in, "She's small, but tough!"

For some reason, I feel compelled to justify my child's size to a world in which virtually 100% of kids her age are taller than her. Maybe it's my way of dealing with the doubts and insecurities that these conversations bring up for me. Maybe I'm hoping my long-winded explanations can somehow distract me from the icky, unsettling mixture of guilt and wor-



ry that swims beneath my skin. A feeling that's always there, constantly churning, fueled by an endless supply of unknowns and "what-ifs."

Could I have done more to prevent my daughter's prematurity? Will she face future health challenges that the doctors didn't predict? Will the fact that she's so much smaller than her peers create limitations in her life, her relationships, her career?

My daughter seems to sense that size could be a thorny issue in her life. She proudly tells anyone who will listen, "I am 5 now." She bristles with indignation when her older sister calls her "baby." She's fully aware when someone is talking about her, and she's started to quiz me on these conversations. At the park one day, she scowled at me and asked, "What were you telling that lady, when you said I looked small for my age?"

She's caught me in my own bad habit.

This, more than anything, is why I have decided to just stop. I know I can't control what other people say, nor can I change my daughter's DNA or the course of events that compromised her early growth. But I can be mindful of my own attitude and help my daughter recognize that her intrinsic value and potential as a person have nothing to do with

physical size.

Among many other things, this means my daughter should never hear me discussing her appearance in a manner that suggests something needs to be apologized for, rationalized or explained away. As if there would ever be a reason to imply she doesn't measure up, that she's somehow not enough, just as she is. Admittedly, I'll always have concerns about my child's small stature—after all, worrying is practically part of my job description as a mom—but I'm realizing that I need to do whatever I can to avoid instilling these fears in my daughter. Because deep down, I know that size will only be a limitation if we treat it as one.

I want my daughter to know that I will always believe in her, and that it really doesn't matter one smidge whether she's in the first or the 100th percentile on the growth chart—she is strong, capable, and amazing. She isn't "small but tough;" she IS a tough, tenacious girl who also happens to be little.

So, these days, when the topic of kindergarten comes up, I try to keep my response simple. "Yes, it will be a big adjustment! We're all looking forward to it." I smile.

And my daughter smiles too.

Photo: Adobe Stock / The Little Hut

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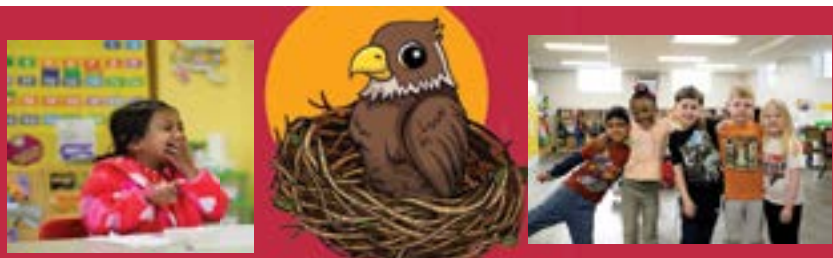
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Deck The House event raises money to support children in crisis

Providence House is excited to welcome the community to our 29th annual Deck the House benefit auction on Tuesday, December 10, 2024, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the City View Lounge at Huntington Bank Field.

This festive event is our largest fundraiser of the year to support our mission of keeping kids safe and families together by supporting them through crisis. In the last 5 years, 99% of our families have stayed together!

This year's Deck the House will be extra special:

- We're excited to welcome Bloomdaddy from iHeartMedia's WTAM as our celebrity host!
- We're celebrating the 25th anniversary of our Ed Block Courage Award honoring a Cleveland Browns Player selected by his teammates as an outstanding community role model with a ceremony sponsored by The Albert M. Higley Co.!
- We have an exciting selection of specially curated live and silent



Presentation of the Ed Block Courage Award in 2023.

auction packages and experiences available for bidding, including beautiful professionally decorated trees!

Tickets are on sale at provhouse.org/deckthehouse and all tickets include a delicious dinner, two drink tickets, valet parking, a guest gift, and a donation to Providence House!

Those who can't make it to our event can still participate in the silent auction online at the address above.

There are also various ways to support the children and families of Providence House this holiday season at provhouse.org/holiday!

Beck Center presents Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

Beck Center for the Arts is thrilled to present Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. Running December 6, 2024, to January 5, 2025, in the Senney Theater, this musical is guaranteed to bring the whole family together to enjoy all genres of music and a brilliantly colorful production. The 2024 production sold out and broke all box office records.

Featuring lyrics by Tim Rice and music inspired by Andrew Lloyd Webber, this musical delivers eye-catching choreography. Patrons go on the journey of the trials and triumphs of Joseph, the favorite son of father Jacob. If only his brothers agreed!

Ticket prices range from \$41 (adults), \$37 (for seniors 65 and older), \$20 for students with valid ID, and \$15 for children between five and 12 years of age. A \$3 service fee per single ticket will be applied at the time of purchase. Curtain times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 2:30 p.m. Sundays. Smart Seats



are available for each performance at just \$15 per person. Recommended for all ages (5 years old and older). For dates and times and to purchase tickets for Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, please visit beckcenter.org.

Beck Center for the Arts is a non-profit, performing arts and arts education organization. It is located at 17801 Detroit Avenue in Lakewood, just ten minutes west of downtown Cleveland. Free on-site parking is available.



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'Tis the season to give! The holiday season is a time that we are often asked to contribute financially to a variety of causes. At Goodwill, there is a tremendous need for donations, not necessarily money, but STUFF! One of the easiest ways to contribute to your community, while cleaning out those overflowing closets this season, is to consider a gift of clothing or housewares to your local Goodwill.

Cleaning out your closet and donating those items to Goodwill is also a way to demonstrate to your children the spirit of giving. Involving all members of the family in the giving process can create new traditions and introduce the kids to charitable giving.

What to give? Seasonal décor you won't be using. Clothes that don't fit any longer. And housewares you no longer use are all valuable donations to Goodwill stores. The stores will sell those donations and use the revenue from those products to support a network of 30 different mission programs. Goodwill mission programs include job training and



placement for people with disabilities and other barriers to employment, family strengthening programs, emergency services and more. Last year, donations to your local Goodwill provided support to more than 17,000 individuals in our community.

Locally, you can donate at Mayfield Heights, University Heights, Willowick, Painesville, and Chardon area locations. Have a lot to donate? Consider reserving a Mobile Donation Center. The 7' x 16' unit saves you multiple trips to the donor doors and can be reserved for up to seven days, free of charge!

For more information, log onto GoodwillGoodSkills.org or email donations@goodwillgoodskills.org.

Frost: An Ice-Capped Garden Experience open through Jan 5

Year two of northeast Ohio's most exciting winter show, Frost: An Ice-Capped Garden Experience, at the Cleveland Botanical Garden is just around the corner! This year, expect even more from this winter spectacular, including an expanded outdoor lighting display and decorated glasshouse biomes. Frost will transform the indoor and outdoor gardens creating an immersive new world for the holiday season.

New this year, in the glasshouses, visitors will meet Raine and Shine, spirits of the wet and dry seasons celebrating winter in other parts of the world. New displays and lights will guide people into the Spiny Desert of Madagascar and through the Costa Rica Cloud Forest, allowing them to meet plenty of new friends along the way.

In the outdoor gardens, an expanded holiday light trail will take visitors into more areas of the garden than ever before, including the newly renovated Hershey Children's Garden. Visitors will make their way through a dazzling moving light



tunnel, a rainbow-lit rose garden, and other over-the-top light displays and photo-ops.

In addition to these exciting new elements, visitors can expect returning favorites, such as dozens of creative gingerbread houses and festive trees and wreaths.

Wintry activities, interactive displays, an oversized slide, storybook trail and marshmallow roasting in the evenings are just the beginning. Kids of all ages will be immersed in the joy and wonder of the winter season!

Frost will open to the public November 23–January 5. Advance online ticket purchase is required. Prices vary by day of the week and entry time. Tickets now on sale at holdenfg.org.



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Understanding tummy aches in kids

Causes, symptoms, and remedies

Tummy aches are a common concern among parents, often causing worry and confusion. For children, experiencing stomach pain can be unsettling, both for them and for their caregivers. Understanding the causes, symptoms, and potential remedies can help manage these discomforts effectively.

Common causes of tummy aches

Dietary issues: One of the most frequent reasons for tummy aches in kids is related to their diet. Overeating, consuming too many sugary or fatty foods, or eating spicy meals can lead to discomfort. Food allergies or intolerances, such as lactose intolerance or gluten sensitivity, may also trigger stomach pain.

Gastrointestinal infections: Viral and bacterial infections can result in tummy aches, often accompanied by diarrhea and vomiting. Common culprits include rotavirus and norovirus, which are particularly prevalent in children.

Constipation: This is a widespread issue among children and can cause significant abdominal pain. Factors such as inadequate fiber intake, dehydration, or changes in routine can contribute to constipation.

Stress and anxiety: Children can experience tummy aches due to emotional factors as well. Stress from school, friendships, or family situations can manifest physically, resulting in stomach pain.

Appendicitis: While less common, appendicitis is a serious condition that can cause severe abdominal pain, often starting around the belly button and moving to the lower right side. It requires immediate medical attention.

Infections and other conditions: Other infections, such as urinary tract infections, or conditions like gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) can also lead to tummy aches.

Recognizing symptoms

Parents should observe the accompanying symptoms of a tummy ache. Common signs include:

- Cramping or sharp pain in the abdomen
- Bloating or a swollen stomach
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Fever
- Loss of appetite

While most tummy aches are benign, a child should see a doctor if the pain is severe, persistent, or accompanied by other concerning symptoms like high fever, blood in stool, or inability to keep food down.

Home remedies and relief

Many tummy aches can be managed at home with simple remedies:

Rest: Encourage your child to lie down in a comfortable position. Sometimes, resting can alleviate the pain.

Warm compress: Applying a warm compress or heating pad to the stomach can help relax the muscles and reduce pain.

Hydration: Ensure your child stays hydrated, especially if they are experiencing diarrhea or vomiting. Clear fluids like water or diluted electrolyte drinks can be beneficial.

Dietary adjustments: If the tummy ache is related to diet, consider adjusting what your child eats. Offer bland foods such as bananas, rice, applesauce, and toast (the BRAT diet) until they feel better.

Ginger or peppermint: Ginger tea or peppermint tea can help soothe an upset stomach. They have natural properties that can ease nausea and discomfort.

Encouraging fiber: If constipation is the issue, increasing fiber intake with fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can help. It's also essential to encourage regular bathroom habits.

Addressing stress: If emotional factors contribute to tummy aches, talk to your child about their



feelings. Encouraging relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or engaging in calming activities, can be helpful.

When to seek medical attention

If home remedies do not alleviate the pain or if your child exhibits severe symptoms, it is crucial to consult a healthcare professional. They can provide an accurate diagnosis and recommend appropriate treatments.

Tummy aches in children can stem from various causes, ranging from dietary indiscretions to emotional stress. By being aware of the symptoms and knowing when to seek help, parents can provide the right support to their children. With the right approach, most tummy aches can be managed effectively, allowing kids to return to their playful, energetic selves.

~Article by Justin Daniels

Photo: Adobe Stock / By peopleimages.com



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Country Lights Drive-Thru runs Nov. 30–Dec. 1, Dec. 6–8, 13–15, 20–22 and 27–29 with time slots at 6, 6:30, 7, 7:30, 8 and 8:30 PM. Advance tickets are required and sold online only at goto.lakemetroparks.com/country-lights-drive-thru.

Ticket cost is \$27.50 per carload (maximum of three drive-thru tickets per family or Farmpark membership). Visa, Mastercard and Discover payment only; Lake Metroparks gift cards are not accepted for ticketed



events. All ticket sales are final. No refunds, exchanges or adjustments. Lake Metroparks is not responsible for lost or stolen tickets.

Wooden toy kits will be available for prepurchase for \$5 each during purchase of carload ticket. Kits will be picked up at the event and taken home to assemble. Kits do not include paint or glue.

See website for more info.

Candy Land It's Wild in Ohio November 23–January 1

Fun for the whole family, the indoor holiday tradition continues as the Candy Land game comes to life, but with a natural twist, taking you on a colorful adventure as you discover what's wild in Ohio.

In addition, enjoy a themed craft, scavenger hunts, hands-on exhibits and much more! Shop at The Nature Store for unique nature-themed gifts and enjoy hot chocolate in Snowshoe Lodge.

Wild Weekends

Each Saturday, enjoy an outdoor campfire with s'mores from noon to 3 PM and animal chats at 1, 2 and 3 PM. On Sundays, experience meet-the-keeper chats in the Wildlife Yard at 1, 2 and 3 PM.

Candy Land It's Wild in Ohio begins November 23 and is open 10



AM–5 PM daily through January 1. The exhibit will be closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve. Admission is free for all ages. Registration is not required. Additional information can be found at www.lakemetroparks.com.

Penitentiary Glen Reservation is located at 8668 Kirtland-Chardon Rd. in Kirtland. For park info, visit lakemetroparks.com.

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Christmas Around the World

A global celebration of tradition and joy

Christmas is one of the most widely celebrated holidays around the globe, and while the spirit of goodwill, generosity, and family bonds unites people, the way Christmas is celebrated varies greatly across cultures. From religious customs to festive meals, unique decorations, and even the timing of festivities, every country brings its own flair to this joyous occasion. Let's explore how Christmas is celebrated in different corners of the world.

United States and Canada: A Mix of Traditions

In North America, Christmas is marked by a blend of traditions from various cultural backgrounds. In the U.S. and Canada, Christmas is celebrated on December 25, with homes decorated with Christmas trees, lights, and wreaths. Santa Claus, a figure inspired by St. Nicholas, plays a central role in the festivities, with children eagerly awaiting his arrival on Christmas Eve. Families often exchange gifts, enjoy festive meals,

and partake in seasonal activities like ice skating and attending holiday parades. A traditional meal might include roast turkey, ham, mashed potatoes, and pumpkin pie.

In Canada, especially in Quebec, Christmas traditions are influenced by French culture. The "Réveillon," a late-night feast on Christmas Eve, is a significant tradition, and it's common to attend midnight Mass beforehand. The "Christmas log," or "bûche de Noël," a yule log-shaped cake, is a beloved dessert.

Mexico: Las Posadas & Family Celebrations

In Mexico, Christmas celebrations begin on December 16 with Las Posadas, a reenactment of Mary and Joseph's search for a place to stay in Bethlehem. Over nine nights, families and communities gather to participate in processions, singing carols, and asking for shelter at various homes. The event culminates in a celebration with food, piñatas, and the exchange of gifts on Christmas



A family enjoys a colorful Mexican posada.

Eve, known as Nochebuena. The meal often features dishes like tamales, bacalao (salted cod), and ponche (a warm fruit punch).

Mass on Christmas Eve is followed by fireworks and music, and the festivities continue through the New Year with additional celebrations such as Día de los Reyes (Epiphany), when children receive gifts to commemorate the arrival of the Three Kings.

Germany:

Christmas Markets and Advent

Germany is often considered the birthplace of many Christmas traditions, and the Christmas season kicks off with the start of Advent. German towns and cities are famous for their Weihnachtsmärkte (Christmas markets), which offer handmade goods, mulled wine (Glühwein), and delicious treats like gingerbread

Continued on page 18

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Christmas around the world from page 17

cookies (Lebkuchen) and stollen (fruit bread). On Christmas Eve, families gather for a festive meal, which often includes roasted meats, potatoes, and various side dishes, followed by the opening of gifts.

In Germany, the Christkind (Christ Child) delivers presents, a tradition that is still present in many parts of the country, where children leave out their shoes to be filled with treats. Christmas Day is typically a quieter time for reflection, often spent with close family.

Italy:

La Vigilia and La Befana

In Italy, Christmas is celebrated with deep religious and family traditions. Christmas Eve, known as La Vigilia, is a time for a festive family meal, which traditionally involves eating fish and other seafood. After the meal, many Italians attend midnight Mass. On Christmas Day, families come together to share a hearty meal, often consisting of roast meats, pastas, and decadent desserts like panettone and torrone.

In southern Italy, the figure of La Befana, a kindly old witch, is a key

part of the Christmas season. According to legend, she visits children on the night of January 5, filling their stockings with sweets or coal depending on their behavior. This marks the celebration of Epiphany, which is a national holiday in Italy and officially closes the Christmas season.

Australia: A Summer Christmas

In Australia, Christmas occurs during the summer months, so the traditional cold weather festivities associated with the holiday are often swapped for outdoor barbecues and beach outings. While Christmas trees are still common, some families opt for Christmas celebrations on the beach, where they can enjoy Christmas ham, seafood, and salads in the sun. Christmas carols are popular, and in larger cities, there are annual events like the Carols by Candlelight concerts.

In many parts of Australia, Santa Claus is depicted in lighter attire suited for warm weather, and some areas even have “Christmas in July” celebrations to mimic the traditional cold-weather Christmas experience.

Japan: A Christmas for Couples

In Japan, Christmas is not a public holiday, but it has become a widely celebrated occasion, though with a unique twist. The holiday is primarily seen as a time for couples to celebrate their relationship, rather than a family-centered event. In cities like Tokyo, you’ll find elaborate Christmas light displays and decorations in shopping districts. One popular tradition is to enjoy a meal of KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken) on Christmas Eve, a custom that began in the 1970s due to an advertising campaign. Additionally, many people in Japan exchange gifts, though the holiday is more secular than religious.

Ethiopia: A Religious and Spiritual Celebration

In Ethiopia, Christmas is celebrated on January 7 according to the Eastern Orthodox Church calendar. The holiday is deeply religious, with a focus on church services, prayer, and fasting. On Christmas Eve, families attend midnight Mass, and the celebration continues with a large feast. Traditional Ethiopian dishes

such as doro wat (spicy chicken stew) and injera (flatbread) are commonly served. While gifts are exchanged in some families, the emphasis remains on the religious observances and community gatherings.

Christmas is a global celebration, yet it reflects the unique customs and cultural values of each country. From the warmth of family gatherings in Germany to the festive spirit of Mexico’s Las Posadas and the sun-soaked barbecues of Australia, Christmas is a time when diverse traditions come together to celebrate love, joy, and community. No matter where or how it is celebrated, the essence of Christmas remains the same: bringing people together in the spirit of goodwill and celebration.

Photo: Adobe Stock / By eve orea



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From cuddly plush versions of beloved species to sustainable jewelry and exclusive Zoo apparel, you'll find a unique array of gifts and stocking stuffers for loved ones of all ages at the Zoo's gift shop. Members always receive a 15% discount!

For more info on any of these holiday ideas, visit ClevelandZooSociety.org/holiday.

Sign up today for classes at Fairmount Center for the Arts

Children and families will find many ways to explore their creative side at Fairmount Center for the Arts during the winter/spring 2025 session. With offerings at both its Novelty main campus and its new space on Chardon Square, there's never been a better time to sign up.

Starting in January, Fairmount will offer a new Creative Arts Preschool for ages 3-5. Held Tuesday through Thursday mornings, the preschool will focus on a whole-child approach to learning literacy, visual arts, and dance. Families can sign up for a single seven-week session or multiple sessions, depending on their needs.

Fairmount's award-winning dance, music, theatre, and visual arts programs remain at the heart of its program schedule. In dance, students aged 3-18 can explore ballet, hip hop, contemporary, jazz, and tap. The Pop Choreography and Pop Chorus classes will focus on Disney favorites. Students can also explore music through a parent-and-child Itty Bitty Music class, or through private lessons in a variety



of instruments.

The growing theatre and visual arts programs offer a wide range of experiences, including productions and teen art classes. Homeschoolers can explore multiple arts through specialized fine arts programming on Mondays (Novelty) and Fridays (Chardon).

Registration is open now at fairmountcenter.org or by calling 440-338-3171. Save 5% off all classes, one-day camps, and private lessons before December 2 with code 'EarlyReg.'



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Preschool - 8



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Tuesday December 10 | Cleveland Browns Stadium City View Lounge | From 5:30 to 9:30 PM

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Purchase Tickets at provhouse.org/deckthehouse

Tickets include dinner, 2 drink tickets, valet parking, a guest gift & donation to Providence House!




Cleveland Museum of Natural History to celebrate grand opening

For more than a century, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History has encouraged visitors to look outward at the magnificent nature that surrounds them and inward at the connections that bind them to it. And this December, the Museum will reveal the most sweeping transformation in its history.

Their grand opening will take place from Friday, December 13, through Sunday, December 15, welcoming you to discover new galleries and completely re-imagined exhibits for the first time. The Museum's transformation features more than 375,000 square feet of new and expanded spaces and more than two acres of outdoor visitor areas. (If you consider the size of the average T.Rex, more than 900 of them would fit in the new and expanded spaces!)

The Museum's new Visitor Hall showcases some of their most iconic objects and specimens, including

Haplocanthosaurus (Happy), Balto, Dunkleosteus (Dunk), Lucy, the Moon rock, and more. This community space is free to all.

In addition, a general admission ticket will give you access to:

- Smead Discovery Center – a hands-on space for young learners
- 3D movies, now playing in Murch Auditorium
- The Thelma and Kent H. Smith Environmental Courtyard
- The live animal ambassadors in the Ralph Perkins II Wildlife Center & Woods Garden
- All current exhibits


Advance ticket reservations:

Both members and nonmembers can reserve or purchase tickets online at cmnh.org or by calling 216-231-4600. Advance ticket purchases are highly encouraged to ensure a smooth arrival experience.

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Wednesday, January 29
6:00–7:30pm

For more info email:
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Wild Winter Lights at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is transforming into a winter wonderland for the sixth consecutive holiday season with the return of Wild Winter Lights. This year's event features hundreds of dazzling displays along the holiday trail through Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

Wild Winter Lights features over 1.5 million lights across holiday-themed areas including Enchanted Forest and Santa's North Pole Lodge, where guests can take photos with Santa Claus. Enjoy a dynamic musical light show featuring an enchanting 50-foot tree. As part of the event, be sure to get your Golden Ticket with the purchase of a ride around Waterfowl Lake on Cleveland Metroparks Railroad.

Guests can again experience this



year's Wild Winter Lights on foot or in their personal vehicle on select dates at the Wild Winter Lights Drive-Thru Experience.

Wild Winter Lights as well as the Wild Winter Lights Drive-Thru Experience runs from 5:30–10:30 PM on select dates through Monday, December 30.

Tickets are limited, and advance online reservations are strongly encouraged. Reserve your spot at FutureForWildlife.org/lights.

Dogs! A Science Tail exhibit now open at Science Center

This richly interactive exhibition for humans opens Friday, November 8 at Great Lakes Science Center. Experience the extraordinary way a dog sees, hears and smells the world through fun and unique hands-on exhibits.

From lovable companions to loyal protectors, dogs have evolved over thousands of years from ancient wolves into the cuddly canines that live and work alongside us today. They can rescue us from peril, provide help to people in need, or offer a furry shoulder to lean on. Dig deeper into these incredible animals and how they communicate with each other – and with us!

Explore how science is helping us better understand our tail-wagging companions and what makes our relationship one of the most successful interspecies partnerships of all time. Train a virtual dog to heed your commands, clock your running speed against the world's fastest dogs, and unearth replica fossils of wolves and dogs to reveal their surprising similarities. Guests will also enjoy



walking an invisible dog through a neighborhood maze, listening to hidden sounds that dogs can hear but humans can't, playing a special game of "pup culture" Jeopardy, and exploring the various careers that involve these intelligent animals.

Don't miss this chance to discover how dogs have nuzzled their way into human society and into our hearts to become our loyal sidekicks and life-saving heroes.

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.

University Circle Inc. debuts Illuminate the Circle event

University Circle Inc. has announced the launch of Illuminate the Circle, powered by PNC, a new holiday tradition running from November 23 through January 26. Visitors can enjoy the vibrant, synchronized light displays until New Year's Eve, followed by tranquil white lights through January 26.

This inaugural program kicked off with a tree lighting ceremony on November 23. The ceremony, featured a 30-foot-high Christmas tree, live performances and activities for all ages.

"This is a milestone moment for University Circle," said Heidi Hudak, chief marketing and experience officer at University Circle Inc. "Our goal is to create a space that's warm, welcoming, and filled with holiday cheer, a place where visitors of all ages can come together and make memories."

Illuminate the Circle ties into the larger University Circle holiday programming, encouraging visitors to experience the lights while visiting the museums, galleries and other



attractions around the area. Whether attending a performance, visiting the renowned museums or simply strolling through Wade Oval, guests can extend their stay and immerse themselves in the holiday spirit.

"It's not just about the lights - it's about creating an atmosphere that brings people together," said Kate Borders, president of University Circle Inc. "Illuminate the Circle is designed to be a place for families and friends to connect and celebrate."

For more information about Illuminate the Circle, visit universitycircle.org/illuminatethecircle.



SAINT PASCHAL BAYLON CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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Preschool Open House

Thursday, January 23, 2025 | 6:30 p.m.

Catholic Schools Week Open House

Sunday, January 26, 2025 | 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Kindergarten Sneak Peek and Gr. 1-8 Q & A

Thursday, January 30, 2025 | 8:30 a.m.

Education Fair

Thursday, March 20, 2025 | 5:30–7:00 p.m.



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Holiday Toy Ideas



Smartivity Pinball Machine
Ages 6–12

Why visit an arcade when your kid can make their own wooden pinball machine in the playroom by following the easy step-by-step instructions? From learning about STEM concepts like levers and momentum, it is everything science and everything fun! No glue, no tools needed - elastic bands are used for joining mechanisms to design fun, learning games for kids. Easy to assemble, dismantle and reassemble with age-appropriate instructional manuals and videos. Available on Amazon.



Disney Junior Mickey Magnetic Tiles Train Set
www.tytanproducts.com

Discover the magic of Disney's Mickey with this magnetic tiles train set. Complete with characters, colors, and themes from these classic beloved friends.

From simple shapes to complex designs, this set offers the endless freedom to create and recreate and fosters a love for engineering and architecture. The magnetic tiles are made from premium, non-toxic materials, ensuring a safe play environment. They are built to withstand countless play sessions and their rounded edges minimize the risk of accidental bumps or scratches. The included workbook offers multiple play patterns and represents every aspect of STEM/STEAM education.



Disney Frozen Castle Magnetic Tiles 60 pcs Set
www.tytanproducts.com

With the Disney FROZEN Castle Magnetic Tiles Set, kids can build the castle of their dreams. Watch their imaginations soar as they embark on a journey of building and discovery with Elsa and Olaf as their guide!

The magnetic tiles are made from premium, non-toxic materials, ensuring a safe play environment. They are built to withstand countless play sessions and their rounded edges minimize the risk of accidental bumps or scratches.

Includes over 50 building tiles of different shapes, one four-pane window, four dry erase decals, three colored dry erase markers, 47 reusable stickers, and a powerful learning workbook, which offers multiple play patterns



PLAYMOBIL 50th Anniversary Knight
Ages 5–99

PLAYMOBIL turns 50 and this special occasion deserves a grand celebration. Since 1974, PLAYMOBIL figures have been delighting children worldwide, inspiring many imaginative adventures. The exclusive PLAYMOBIL Anniversary Knight on horseback, adorned in golden armor, with a lance and shield, and of course, the iconic PLAYMOBIL smile. Join the party and celebrate 50 years of storytelling. Available on Amazon.



StickiKubes Tubs
Ages 4+

StickiKubes are mini stacking cubes that stick to anything except fabric. Kids can use them to make their own custom 2D and 3D designs, as well as to decorate anything else in the house, office, or classroom! Comes with 125 cubes in 4 different bright colors. Convenient plastic tub for storage and easy cleanup. Available on Amazon.



Sticki Rolls Sticks Bands
Ages 5+

Every Sticki Roll on your bracelet is actually a ROLL of 10 holographic mini stickers that you can pull, tear and share! 70 total stickers in every pack, each with different cute, Kawaii characters! Decorate your stuff, share with friends and build your collection!

Sticki Rolls stickers are easy to pull off and share! Every Sticki Roll has a recyclable core that can be easily removed and replaced with new Sticki Rolls using our Quick-Grip clasp! Suitable for all ages 5 and up.

Sticki Rolls are made of holographic foil (not like normal stickers) so they don't leave marks or gunk, even after months of being stuck! They're even restickable, in case you want to swap Stickies from your notebook to water bottle!



Cake-N-Bake Challenge (Hey Buddy Hey Pal)
Ages 4+

Cake-N-Bake Challenge brings cooking show excitement to your home. This is a fast-paced, color-matching, cake-building game (now with new group play cards, new packaging and a lower price point) where the fastest baker wins! Using foam cake slices and icing cards, stack your cake correctly and watch out for Special Recipe Cards like the One-Hand Card or Candle Thief Card. Follow Group Challenge Cards together. Be the first to collect six candle cards to win the game — fun for all ages! Available on Amazon.



Marble Circuit
Ages 8+

MindWare's marble circuit is a multi-directional marble maze with 64 puzzling challenges. It's a logic, strategy, and brain game all in one! Choose a card to see your puzzle and place the multi-directional tiles on the board. Release the steel marbles to see if you land your targets. If you're off base, move the tiles until your marble circuits deliver a picture-perfect landing! It's logic, strategy and a brain game all in one!

- Develops problem solving and cognitive skills, spatial recognition and an understanding of cause and effect.
- Includes game board, 64 puzzle cards, 10 multi-directional tiles, 8 steel marbles and instructions. Single player game. Available on Amazon.



Holiday Toy Ideas



BIZYBOO Holiday Seek 'N' Find Busy Bags Ages 2+

Get into the holiday spirit with the all-new BIZYBOO Holiday Seek 'N' Find Busy Bags from Vango Toys! These mess-free, portable bags feature three adorable new characters—a cheerful Christmas Tree, Spirited Stocking, and a Sweet Snowman—each holding 30 hidden holiday-themed objects. Perfect for on-the-go fun, these busy bags combine festive cheer with the beloved toddler activity, making them an ideal stocking stuffer! Available on Amazon.



Hocus Pocus Magic Show Kit Ages 6+

This complete magic kit is packed with everything you need to become a magician! Learn the secrets of more than 20 tricks, from making objects disappear into thin air to performing time-tested card tricks. More than simply a box full of props, you'll also receive step-by-step video instructions ideal for beginner and seasoned magicians alike. Prepare to amaze friends and family with your newfound talents!

- Over 25 pieces included to perform more than 20 tricks
- Boost fine motor skills
- Ideal for use at home or in the classroom
- Box doubles as presentation case
- Includes online instructional videos

Available on Amazon.



Retro MagnaDoodle Ages 3+

Celebrating its 50th anniversary, this is where creativity meets nostalgia. The ultimate unisex retro magnetic drawing toy for creating fun artwork that erases like magic. The classic Magna Doodle, featured on the popular TV show "Friends," can be used to play games, draw pictures, write messages (secret erasable messages too!), and so much more. Includes drawing board, magic pen, and stamps.



KEVA: Structures 200 Plank Set Ages 5+

No glue or connectors required! Simply stack the precision-cut, solid pine KEVA planks to create buildings, monuments and geometric forms. It's the ideal activity to help kids gain an understanding of balance and proportion, as well as an interest in architecture, building and design. This kit features:

- 200 KEVA planks for free-form building and a 24-page, full-color idea booklet with build-out instructions.
- Simple building planks that put open-ended STEM play right in kids' hands!
- Gives kids first-hand experience with balance, leverage, geometry and principles of engineering
- No glue or extra supplies needed: just unpack and play
- Sturdy, long-lasting planks made from solid pine
- Idea booklet for building inspiration, or create your own designs

Available on Amazon.

Baby GUND Buttermilk the Cow



Age 0+
Buttermilk is a cow that uses music and movement to stimulate baby's senses and encourage tactile play. This

cute 12" stuffed animal features soft plush, embroidered details, and makes interactive play fun as it "talks" to little ones.

Buttermilk features two ways to entertain: song mode, where it sings "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," or play mode, with a fun game to teach baby animal sounds using mouth movements and wiggling ears. Press either hoof to sing or play.

GUND

Peek-A-Boo Cookie Monster



Ages 1+
Me want cookie! Cookie Monster is here as an adorable, super-soft 11" animated plush that comes to life with the press of a

button to transform playtime into a fun, interactive experience. Cookie surprises little ones with one of two play modes, using 13 silly phrases and sound effects from the show to bring their favorite moments home. This beautiful plush captures the iconic Sesame Street star in a seated position, smiling excitedly as he holds a giant chocolate chip cookie.

Using the switch located on his bottom, parents can make Cookie Monster spring to life to engage baby in an interactive game of peek-a-boo or teach them to count to ten! Cookie raises and lowers his arms as he clutches the giant cookie playfully and hides his face, surprising little ones each time.

All of Cookie Monster's details are embroidered and safe for ages 1 and up. Each plush requires three AA batteries (not included). Surface washable.



Big Heads Ages 6+

World Tech Toys, known for its expertise in the radio control vehicle market, introduces Big Heads, a lineup of kid-favorite characters that fly including Spider-Man, TMNT Leonardo, Optimus Prime, Captain America, Bumble Bee, and many more.

Each Big Heads features two propellers and an internal coaxial motor system, which keeps the toy stable as it hovers in the air. Big Heads respond dynamically to a player's hands when they try to "catch" them. Upon detecting a hand underneath via its patented infrared sensor, the motor speeds up and rockets the Big Head back into the air.

And, thanks to the lightweight yet durable material, it's always a safe and easy landing.

Big Heads includes an internal rechargeable battery and a USB charging cable. Simply plug it into any USB port for a quick recharge. This Walmart exclusive toy is available in-store and online.



Scentco Air Dough Bucket

Air Dough is the lightest, most amazing dough on Earth! The Air Dough Bucket contains 60 bags of colored Air Dough including 4 bags of glow-in-the-dark dough, 3 sculpting tools, and instructions!

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