

TODAY'S family

February 2025

Cuyahoga

FREE!

Building the perfect snowman

Humor essay

How to help
your teen
be more
productive

Peanut allergies

Causes and why they
are on the rise

Summer
Camp
Preview

Black History Month

10 Black inventors
and scientists who
shaped our world

PRIVATE
SCHOOL
GUIDE

CUYAHOGA • LAKE & GEAUGA COUNTIES



Today's Family BOOK — CLUB —

Here are a few of our February faves for your #TBR list! Enjoy these bookishly fun new releases that are filled with wonder, new adventures, and sweet friends.



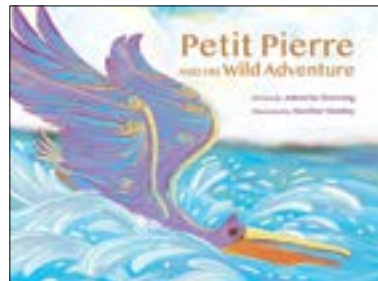
Sofia in Rome

By Maria Castellucci Moore
Readers will love following Sofia on this epic journey through Rome as she discovers the sights, smells, tastes, and sounds of the city that make her feel alive. What better place to discover new things and appreciate the smaller things than in the Eternal City? This second book in this traveling book series unites curiosity and wonder through exploring new places. Sometimes it's the littlest things that bring you the greatest joy.



Let it Glow

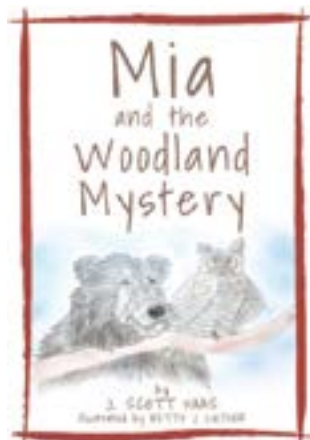
By Marissa Meyer
When Aviva Davis and Holly Martin meet at the holiday pageant tryouts for their local senior's center, they think they must be seeing double. While they both knew they were adopted, they had no idea they had a biological sibling, let alone an identical twin! The girls secretly trade lives, planning to stage a dramatic reveal to their families. Readers will enjoy this charming tale of sisterhood, family and holiday cheer as two virtual strangers swap homes causing lots of havoc.



Petit Pierre and His Wild Adventure

By Johnette Downing

Petit Pierre has made a home for himself on the coast where Louisiana meets Mississippi, and now it is time for him to learn how to plunge-dive. Brown pelicans typically pick up this behavior by watching others do it. Will a new friend help Pierre learn how to dive? Young readers will follow his progress and, along the way, find out more about Gulf of Mexico marine life. Parents will love lessons on perseverance!



Mia and the Woodland Mystery

By Scott Haas

Deep in the heart of the woods, an exciting mystery is afoot! Join a lovable bear, a wise old owl, and many of their other forest friends on an inspiring adventure filled with friendship and teamwork. As they unravel the mystery surrounding the people-family living at the bottom of their mountain, they show young readers that when we work together, we can accomplish anything. Readers will love this enchanting tale filled with animals, nature, and the power of friendship.

This list was compiled by Alysson Bourque, an award-winning, bestselling children's author and industry expert. All these books are available at Amazon.com.

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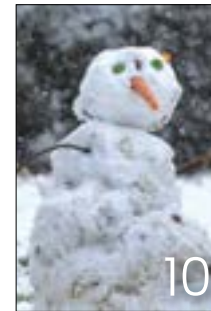
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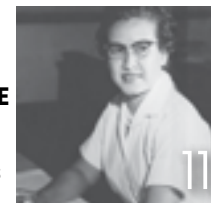
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Adobe Stock

Confessions of an ex Tooth Fairy

By Pam Molnar

Parents wear many hats – comforter, teacher, disciplinarian – but only a few of them are as fun as the Tooth Fairy. When I imagined our lives with children, I thought about my role as the Tooth Fairy. I knew which parts I would keep from my own childhood and dreamt of ways that I could make the character even more magical.

I remember the excitement of the Tooth Fairy's first visit to our house. She wrote a sweet note explaining how things worked in the Land of the Lost Tooth. Next to the note, my daughter found a silver coin left for a special first tooth and a new dollar bill saved for such an occasion. My daughter proudly showed her younger siblings what the Tooth Fairy had left for her. They all stared at the coin as if it was the Hope Diamond and my daughter placed it in her jewelry box for safe keeping.

As planned, the Tooth Fairy took the tooth back to the Land of the Lost Tooth and carefully placed it in an envelope with my daughter's name and the date. Mission accomplished.

Soon, our other children started losing their teeth. They got the same note, coin and treatment for their first tooth. Every tooth thereafter was collected before the Tooth Fairy retired for the



evening and each tooth was given the same care as the first one.

About five years after the Tooth Fairy's first trip to our house, something changed. She didn't leave notes anymore, she stopped putting dates on the envelopes and sometimes, she didn't come for the tooth until right before the kids woke up. One time, she left four quarters instead of a dollar bill. How lame! What happened to the magical character in my dreams?

When I discussed this with the Tooth Fairy in the bathroom mirror, all I heard were bad excuses – working mom, traveling husband, exhausted from carpools and coming up with dinner ideas. To make matters worse, she claimed that she was overwhelmed with the two extra kids we added

to her route. The Tooth Fairy even suggested that our kids were eating hard candy as they were losing teeth at an alarming rate. I was appalled!

Things went downhill from there. By the time my youngest child started losing his teeth, his sisters started working for the Tooth Fairy. She often came to our house unprepared and had to ask the girls to borrow singles to pay for their brother's tooth. At the end, a lost tooth would sit in the Tooth Fairy pillow for a couple of days. I lied for the Tooth Fairy and told my son, "You lost the tooth too late in the day and you weren't on her schedule last night" or "She sent me a text and said she was running behind and would pick the tooth up while you were at school." Sadly, my son believed me.

Until he didn't believe anymore and the Tooth Fairy was out of a job. At our exit interview, I asked the Tooth Fairy how she thought we did. She told me that the kids will remember the good things, like the silver coin and the notes. Yes, but what about the quarters and the forgotten teeth, I wondered. The Tooth Fairy told me that they will remember those, too. One day, they will be the one holding the wand and fairy dust and it will be a reminder that the Tooth Fairy is only human.

Pam Molnar is a former Tooth Fairy and mother of three.

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How to help your teen be more productive

By Cheryl Maguire

"It is eleven o'clock. You should go to sleep now."

"But I haven't finished my homework yet."

This common exchange between my 13-year-old daughter and me occurs more often than I care to admit. Even though she gets home at 2 p.m., she often procrastinates completing her homework until right before bedtime. She is also a repeat offender of waiting until the last minute to start research projects.

Being productive when completing homework or in a job is an issue for many teenagers who are easily distracted by electronics, socializing or other fun activities.

Put away devices

"The best tip for teens to improve productivity is to put their phone away. Our smartphones can be exceptionally useful tools, but they can also be exceptionally distracting," says Emily Price, author of the book, "Productivity Hacks: 500+ Easy Ways to Accomplish More at Work-That Actually Work!" Price wrote the book based on fifteen years of interviewing people ranging from low-level employees to CEOs. Price says, "Everyone and every company has a different approach to 'how to work.'"

Price recommends that teens put their phone in another room when they are trying to be productive. If they need their phone for homework, then she suggests using "Do Not Disturb" mode to limit the distracting sounds of a "pinging phone." She says, "Being disconnected for a few hours can make a tremendous difference to your productivity."

Have a dedicated workspace

Price also suggests a dedicated workspace. She says, "Having an 'office' or a place where you traditionally do your work can be great for a number of reasons. First, it can help put you in the mindset for 'work' when you sit down. Secondly, it can be a signal to other people in your home that you're busy working and shouldn't be disturbed."

"The most important thing when it comes to teens being productive in school and with homework or

any jobs is making sure that they are intrinsically motivated," says Maria Sanders, a licensed social worker and certified parent coach.

Have your teen create their own plan

Sanders explains that you can help your teen become motivated by allowing them to feel competent, connected and autonomous. She says, "It is important for teens to come up with their own plan of action of how they can be productive rather than having the parent dictate the best tips and strategies."

If a teen can be involved in their decision-making process of how to be productive then it is more likely that they will follow through with their work. While they are thinking of a productivity plan have them consider any obstacles or challenges that will be barriers to their productivity along with their strengths and resources.

Eat breakfast

Price and Sanders agree that starting the day by eating breakfast helps the mind to become more alert and provides energy to be productive in school. Since most teenagers get up early for school, eating breakfast can be a challenge. If this is an issue due to time, then Price suggests drinking a smoothie or eating a protein bar. She says, "Breakfast doesn't have to mean eggs and bacon, but it should involve enough calories to kickstart your metabolism and keep you full until lunch time."

Sanders explains that if your teen isn't eating breakfast then ask questions like, "Do you think skipping breakfast is working for you? Do you have enough energy during school?" These questions can help teens to feel part of the decision-making process and think about their choices.

Get enough sleep

Another key factor in being productive is getting enough sleep which is often an issue for most teens who like to stay up late and need to get up early for school. Price says, "One of the best things you can do to boost your productivity is to get enough sleep."

Price suggests that teens should



"Having an 'office' or a place where you traditionally do your work can be great for a number of reasons... it can help put you in the mindset for 'work' when you sit down...it can be a signal to other people in your home that you're busy working and shouldn't be disturbed."

not sleep in the same room as their phones which can disrupt or prevent them from going to sleep. She also says that taking a warm shower before going to bed can relax your muscles and prepare your body for sleep.

If your teen isn't getting enough sleep at night then Sander encourages parents to ask questions like, "Do you feel tired in the morning or during the day? How can you improve the amount of sleep you are getting at night?" These questions can help them to figure out a way to improve their sleep schedule.

Use a productive app

In Price's book, she recommends various apps that can help increase productivity. Some apps that she thinks teens would find beneficial are:

RescueTime: This app will track how much time you spend on certain websites and certain apps on your computer. You can use this information to be more aware of the time spent on social media and then change it by setting a timer when using social media if necessary, to be

more productive.

Just Read: is a Chrome extension that will remove things like flashy webpage styles, pop-up ads, and comments, and turn the article into a simplified text which helps to prevent distractions while reading.

Forest: This app grows virtual trees when you're not using your phone. When you launch an app or browse the Internet, the trees wither and die. Using this app will make you more aware of how much you're using your phone and encourage you to put it away so your virtual trees and productivity can grow.

Grammarly: This web and mobile app can read through the text you write and look for any spelling or grammar errors.

FocusWriter: is a minimalist word processing app for Windows, Mac, and Linux that forces you to focus on something you're writing by preventing you from doing other things on your computer. The app blocks programs and websites that might take your attention away from your writing, and it allows you to set timers to break up your work into sessions so you're not working too much at once.

• • • • •

When you take care of your physical health by having proper nutrition and sleep, then you can focus on two key factors to improving productivity which is motivation and preventing distractions.

Sanders says, "It is important to understand how powerful our children are when they are motivated."

Cheryl Maguire holds a Master of Counseling Psychology degree.



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5 things only a mom would say on Valentine's Day

By Cheryl Maguire

On Valentine's Day, long before your mommy days, you probably dined by candlelight in some swanky restaurant. Once you give birth to those sweet little munchkins, your meal is more likely to involve baby spit up or chicken nuggets. Besides the lack of a romantic dining experience you may also find yourself saying the following:

1. "Thank God this holiday doesn't entail elves, fairies, leprechauns or any other magical night creatures."

I'm not sure who came up with the brilliant idea of having "magical night creatures" but I can guarantee it wasn't a mom. At night moms are counting down the seconds until she can go to sleep. The last thing on a mom's mind is remembering to move an elf, retrieve a tooth or paint green leprechaun footprints on the floor. Plus, who would want to create a "leprechaun mess" knowing who will have to clean it up later—definitely not a mom! We have enough messes we already clean daily. So please don't create a magical "cupid" that comes in the night—we already have more magic than Harry Potter at our house—thanks but no thanks.

2. "I know you already have five Valentine's Day T-shirts but I couldn't resist buying another one. I mean what other time can you wear a shirt that says, 'Love-a-saurus' with an adorable red dinosaur on it?"

Valentine's Day kid shirts are adorable. And let's face it, your teen isn't going to let you dress them up in a "Love-a-saurus" shirt so I'm going to dress them up in as many as I can while I still can. Some of my favorites besides "Love-a-saurus" are "More Spice than Sugar," "I Choo-Choo Choose You," and "You Have a Pizza of My Heart."

3. "I just need about ten more hours on Pinterest to find the perfect Valentine's Day craft, cupcake and card."

Pinterest is a black hole that will suck all of the hours out of your day. Just when you think you found the perfect craft, cupcake or card to repli-



cate for the twenty-five kids in your child's class, you will see another one and then another one and before you know it the whole day is gone and you still haven't picked up a glue gun or spatula.

4. "Roses are red, violets are blue, I'll give you some candy if you go number 2—in the potty this time."

Oh, the joys of potty training on Valentine's Day! Enough said.

5. "I think a fair cut of your Valentine's Day school candy would be half since I wrote all twenty-five of your Valentine Cards."

Not only do you have to write each kid's name on the Valentine's card but then you have to lick each envelope and then put a candy or sticker on it. If you are lucky enough to have three kids that is seventy-five cards in one night since, of course, you waited until the night before to do this "work." Surely this warrants at least half of the candy take if not more—actually 60/40 is probably a fairer cut.

Once that Hershey kiss starts melting in your mouth, that hand cramp will be a distant memory—until next year.

Cheryl Maguire holds a Master of Counseling Psychology degree. She is married and is the mother of twins and a daughter.

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10 tips for choosing a summer day camp

Choosing the perfect summer day camp for your child can feel overwhelming with so many options available. A well-chosen camp provides children with a safe environment to learn, grow, and have fun, while also giving parents peace of mind. Here are some essential tips to help you navigate this decision and find the best fit for your family.

1. Identify your goals and priorities

Before diving into camp brochures or websites, take time to identify what you and your child hope to gain from the experience. Are you looking for a camp that focuses on academics, sports, arts, or outdoor adventures? Does your child want to make new friends or improve a specific skill? Clarifying these priorities will help narrow down your options and ensure you choose a camp that aligns with your expectations.

2. Consider your child's interests and personality

Each child is unique, and their preferences and personality should play a significant role in selecting a camp. For example, an introverted child might thrive in a smaller, quieter setting, while an extroverted child may enjoy a bustling camp with diverse group activities. Engaging your child in the decision-making process can also help them feel excited and invested in the experience.

3. Research camp options thoroughly

Begin your search by gathering recommendations from friends, family, and online reviews. Many camps have websites or social media pages where you can find detailed information about their programs, schedules, and staff. Look for camps accredited by organizations like the American Camp Association (ACA), which ensures they meet high safety and quality standards.

4. Assess safety and supervision

Safety is paramount when choosing a day camp. Check the camper-to-staff ratio and ensure it aligns with industry standards. Ask about staff qualifications, including background checks, certifications in first

aid and CPR, and relevant training. Inquire about the camp's protocols for handling emergencies, illnesses, and injuries.

5. Evaluate the schedule and activities

Review the daily schedule and activity options to ensure they align with your child's interests and energy levels. A good camp will offer a balance of structured activities and free time, catering to various age groups and skill levels. If your child has special interests, such as coding, dance, or swimming, look for camps with specialized programs in those areas.

6. Consider the location and hours

Logistics are an essential factor in choosing a summer day camp. Consider the camp's proximity to your home or workplace and whether the hours fit your family's schedule. Some camps offer extended care options, which can be a lifesaver for working parents.

7. Visit the camp in person

If possible, arrange a visit to the camp before enrolling your child. A tour allows you to see the facilities, meet the staff, and observe the environment. Pay attention to cleanliness, the condition of equipment, and whether the atmosphere feels welcoming and inclusive. This firsthand experience can provide valuable insights that you won't get from brochures or online descriptions.

8. Review costs and budget

Day camp fees can vary widely, so it's essential to understand the costs upfront. Ask about what the tuition covers and whether there are additional fees for meals, field trips, or supplies. Some camps offer discounts for early registration or multiple children, as well as financial aid for families in need.

9. Seek feedback from other parents

Talking to other parents who have experience with the camp can provide honest insights. Ask about their child's experience, the camp's strengths and weaknesses, and whether they would recommend it. Online parenting forums and



local community groups can also be valuable resources for reviews and recommendations.

10. Trust your instincts

Finally, trust your gut feeling. If something about a camp doesn't feel right, keep looking. The right camp should give you confidence in its ability to provide a safe, enriching, and enjoyable experience for your child.

Choosing a summer day camp is

an important decision that requires careful consideration. By identifying your goals, understanding your child's needs, and thoroughly researching your options, you can find a camp that offers a rewarding and memorable summer experience. With the right preparation, summer day camp can become a highlight of your child's year, fostering growth, learning, and lifelong memories.

~Article by Justin Daniels

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SUMMER CAMP PREVIEW

Jump Start cont'd

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Frosty fun: tips and tricks for building the perfect snowman

Picture this: a crisp winter morning, the yard blanketed in fresh snow, and you armed with nothing but determination and a carrot. Making a snowman is one of winter's greatest joys. It's an activity that combines creativity, engineering, and the occasional emotional breakdown when the carrot nose keeps falling off. If you're ready to build your frosty masterpiece, here's a humorous step-by-step guide to help you roll with it—literally.

Step 1: Dress for success

Before you step outside, remember: snow is cold. (Who knew?) You'll want to bundle up in layers that make you resemble a marshmallow. Add a hat, gloves, and sturdy boots—and if you're prone to overestimating your snow-tolerance, maybe pack a flask of hot cocoa. Bonus points if you look like a winter adventurer who's just conquered Everest.

Step 2: Scout the perfect spot

Not all snow is created equal. You'll want to find the elusive "Goldilocks" snow—not too powdery, not too icy, but just right for packing. If your yard resembles Antarctica's dry deserts or a melted slushie, you may have to settle for a very, very small snowman. (Think snow gnome.)

Step 3: Start rolling

Begin with a small snowball. Pack it tightly, then roll it across the ground. Snow will magically cling to it (as well as grass and mud), growing it larger with every turn. This is also where you discover that your yard isn't nearly as flat as it looks, and you'll spend half your time chasing your runaway snow boulder.

Pro tip: Avoid rolling near the dog's favorite spots unless you want your snowman to have a "unique" texture.



We all dream of making the perfect snowman, but sadly they typically end up looking like this fella.

Step 4: Stack with precision

After creating your three snowballs (small, medium, and XXL), it's time to stack them. This step requires the strength of a bodybuilder and the balancing skills of a circus performer. Don't worry if they're slightly lopsided—a wonky snowman has more personality. Plus, it'll match your posture after lugging those heavy snowballs around.

Step 5: Add features

Here's where your snowman comes to life—figuratively, unless you're working with some enchanted snow. Use a carrot for the nose, coal or buttons for the eyes, and sticks for arms. If you don't have coal lying around (who does?), improvise! Bottle caps, pebbles, buttons or cookies work too—though cookies may mysteriously vanish before the snowman's face is finished.

Don't forget a scarf and hat to keep your snowman stylish. Sunglasses? Sure, if he's cool enough. Remember, this is your chance to express your inner fashion designer.

Step 6: Celebrate (and mourn)

Step back and admire your creation. Take a million pictures for social media, because this moment is fleeting. Literally. Your snowman's lifespan depends on the weather and your neighbor's rogue snowball fight.

Optional: Give your snowman a name and backstory. For example, "Sir Frostington III, retired arctic explorer, now living his best life in suburban tranquility."

Step 7: Embrace the chaos

Building a snowman is as much about the process as the end result. Sure, you'll lose feeling in your fingers, your snowman might look more like a snow blob, and you'll find snow in places you didn't know it could get... but that's all part of the charm. The imperfections make it perfect.

So go ahead, channel your inner sculptor, and enjoy the frosty fun. After all, your snowman won't judge you—he's just happy to be here. At least until spring.

~Article by Janine Todd

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10 Black inventors and scientists who shaped our world

Throughout history, Black inventors and scientists have made groundbreaking contributions that have shaped our modern world. Despite facing systemic barriers, their achievements have paved the way for innovations in fields ranging from medicine to technology. Here are ten remarkable individuals whose work continues to influence our lives today.

George Washington Carver (1864-1943)

Often remembered as the "Peanut Man," George Washington Carver was an agricultural scientist and inventor who developed over 300 products from peanuts, including dyes, plastics, and gasoline. His pioneering work in crop rotation and soil conservation transformed agricultural practices in the southern United States, improving sustainability and food production.

Granville T. Woods (1856-1910)

Dubbed the "Black Edison," Granville T. Woods was an inventor who held more than 50 patents. His most notable invention was the multiplex telegraph, a device that allowed train stations and moving trains to communicate, significantly improving railway safety. His contributions to electrical engineering laid the foundation for modern communication systems.

Madame C.J. Walker (1867-1919)

Born Sarah Breedlove, Madame C.J. Walker was an entrepreneur, inventor, and philanthropist. She developed a line of hair care products specifically for Black women and became one of America's first female self-made millionaires. Her innovative marketing strategies and commitment to empowering Black women left a lasting legacy.

Dr. Charles Drew (1904-1950)

Dr. Charles Drew revolutionized medicine with his groundbreaking work in blood storage and transfusion. He developed methods to preserve plasma, leading to the establishment of large-scale blood banks during World War II. His innovations saved countless lives and

remain critical to modern medical practices.

Katherine Johnson (1918-2020)

A mathematician whose calculations were instrumental to NASA's space missions, Katherine Johnson broke barriers as one of the "Hidden Figures." Her work on trajectories and orbital mechanics enabled the success of missions like John Glenn's orbital flight and the Apollo Moon landing.

Percy Julian (1899-1975)

A pioneering chemist, Percy Julian synthesized important medicinal compounds, including cortisone and physostigmine. His work made these treatments more affordable and accessible, benefiting patients with conditions like arthritis and glaucoma. Julian's achievements in chemical synthesis have had a lasting impact on pharmaceutical science.

Dr. Patricia Bath (1942-2019)

Dr. Patricia Bath was an ophthalmologist and inventor who developed the Laserphaco Probe, a device used to treat cataracts with precision. She was also the first Black woman to receive a medical patent. Her advocacy for community ophthalmology helped bring vision care to underserved populations.

Mark Dean (b. 1957)

A computer scientist and engineer, Mark Dean holds three of the original nine patents for IBM's personal computer. His work on the ISA bus and color PC monitor has been instrumental in shaping modern computing. Dean's contributions underscore his role as a trailblazer in technology.

Dr. Mae Jemison (b. 1956)

Dr. Mae Jemison made history as the first Black woman to travel to space aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour in 1992. A physician, engineer, and NASA astronaut, Jemison's multidisciplinary career continues to inspire generations of scientists and explorers.



Katherine Johnson works with an adding machine and a celestial training device—a sort of globe-within-a-globe to help calculate space navigation—at NASA's Langley Research Center in 1962.

Garrett Morgan (1877-1963)

An inventor with a diverse portfolio, Garrett Morgan is best known for creating the three-position traffic signal and a safety hood, a precursor to the modern gas mask. His innovations improved public safety and have saved countless lives over the years.

These ten individuals represent just a fraction of the Black inventors and scientists who have profoundly influenced our world. Their perseverance, creativity, and groundbreaking contributions continue to inspire innovation and progress across generations.

~Article by Janine Todd
~Photo credit: NASA



The Little Gym's summer camps are full of fun, creative missions where kids will exercise their muscles, and imaginations! Plus, flexible scheduling allows you to sign up for several weeks, a single week or even just a day at a time!

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Photo credit: Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Winter Wonder Weekends at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is hosting their new Winter Wonder Weekends experience with enhanced shuttle service through the Zoo, free carousel rides and special programming and keeper chats each weekend now through March 2, 2025. The added amenities are designed to enhance the guest experience through the colder months.

In addition to extra weekend activities, the new “Zoo Loop” is now operating seven days a week from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. with enhanced shuttle service and added stops across Zoo grounds, including at the Welcome Plaza, African Elephant Crossing, African Savanna, Wilderness Trek, Circle of Wildlife Carousel, Primate, Cat & Aquatics and Australian Adventure. The Zoo Loop is designed to connect guests with several of the indoor buildings and experiences throughout the Zoo.

“While The RainForest is closed for the construction of Primate Forest, we’re excited to offer the new Winter Wonder Weekends experience with special keeper chats, enhanced programming and more at

no added costs for all of our guests,” said Dr. Chris Kuhar, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo executive director. “In addition, the Zoo Loop will provide improved transportation throughout the Zoo, connecting guests to the many indoor buildings through winter so guests can stay warm while still seeing and learning about all of their favorite animals.”

In addition to the Zoo Loop, rides on the heated Circle of Wildlife Carousel will be free seven days a week through March 2.

Ahead of each weekend throughout Winter Wonder Weekends, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo will announce a new series of exclusive opportunities. Each weekend will also have special keeper chats where guests can learn more about what it takes to care for wildlife around the world including tigers and primates. See their website for more details.

Winter Wonder Weekends will also include family-friendly crafts and activities.

Visit clevelandmetroparks.com/winterwonderweekends for more information.



Photo credit: CMNH

The Museum's Visitor Hall is free for all and displays some of their most iconic objects including Haplocanthosaurus (Happy) pictured here.

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

Come and see the transformation for yourself!

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 revealed the most sweeping transformation in its history.

New galleries and completely re-imagined exhibits await you. 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.

Dogs! A Science Tail exhibit now open at 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.

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. 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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gsneo.org/findcookies



Cleveland indie band Kultures plays on a sunny and brisk day at the 2024 Brite Winter festival. Visit www.kulturesmusic.com for more info on the band and their latest album, Dreamstacks, now streaming on Spotify and YouTube.

Enjoy live music, art and more at Brite Winter

A typical February evening on the West Bank of the Flats is pretty quiet. Not so much during Brite Winter. The nonprofit festival brings together people of all ages, incomes and backgrounds, allowing them to discover new music and art, enjoy their community, while helping them to embrace the cold winter months.

Spanning 16 years, three locations, tens of thousands of guests, hundreds of bands and artists, and temperatures as low as 8 and as high as 69 degrees—Brite Winter is the premier Cleveland event between New Year's Eve and St. Patrick's Day and a showcase for northeastern Ohio's artists, musicians, and creative culture.

The festival features three outdoor stages, a heated art and performance tent, fire pits, local food and beverages, and more.

This year's event takes place Saturday, Febru-

ary 22, 2025, from 1–11 p.m. with some indoor activities beyond that. Kid-friendly programming is concentrated from 1–4 p.m.

Tickets start at \$12. Kids under 12 get in free and can accompany their grownups into all ticketed spaces. Kids must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Brite makes an effort to be more accessible to people with mobility impairments with accessible parking, restroom facilities, and viewing platform for the main stage.

Doggies are welcome! They must be leashed and you need to pick up their poop, of course, but your very good boys and girls are welcome and sure to have a good time as well.

For a list of entertainment and to purchase tickets, visit their website at www.britewinter.com.



Just For Laughs



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What do you call an old snowman. Water.

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The rise of peanut allergies

Causes and detection in children

Peanut allergies have become a significant public health concern over the past two decades, with prevalence rates in children doubling in some Western countries. For instance, a 2020 study estimated that approximately 2.5% of children in the United States are now affected by peanut allergies, underscoring the growing scale of the issue. This rise has left many parents and researchers wondering about its underlying causes and how to identify if a child is at risk.

Why are peanut allergies increasing?

Several theories attempt to explain the surge in peanut allergies, often attributing it to a combination of environmental, dietary, and genetic factors.

1. Hygiene hypothesis: One of the leading theories is the hygiene hypothesis, which suggests that modern living environments are overly sanitized. Reduced exposure to bacteria and viruses during early childhood may prevent the immune system from developing properly, increasing the likelihood of allergic responses to harmless substances like peanuts.

2. Delayed introduction of allergens: Historically, parents were advised to avoid introducing peanuts and other allergens to infants until later in life. Recent studies, such as the landmark LEAP (Learning Early About Peanut Allergy) trial, have shown that this delay might have contributed to the rise in allergies. Early introduction, particularly between 4 to 6 months of age, has been shown to reduce the risk of developing a peanut allergy.

3. Environmental factors: Changes in diet and food processing, along with exposure to pollutants, might also play a role. Some researchers suggest that refined and processed foods could alter gut microbiota, influencing immune responses and increasing allergy susceptibility.

4. Genetic predisposition: Although genetics alone cannot account for the rapid rise in peanut allergies, children with a family history of allergies or eczema are more likely to develop them.

Signs and symptoms of a peanut allergy

Detecting a peanut allergy early can help prevent severe allergic reactions. Parents should be vigilant for symptoms, especially after introducing peanuts into their child's diet, as reactions often occur within minutes to a few hours of consumption. Common signs include:

Mild symptoms: Hives, redness around the mouth, or itching in and around the mouth and throat.

Digestive issues: Vomiting, diarrhea, or stomach cramps shortly after consuming peanuts.

Severe reactions (anaphylaxis): Difficulty breathing, swelling of the throat and tongue, dizziness, or a sudden drop in blood pressure. Anaphylaxis is life-threatening and requires immediate medical attention.

How to confirm a peanut allergy

If you suspect your child has a peanut allergy, consult a pediatrician or allergist for an accurate diagnosis. Common diagnostic methods include:

Skin prick test: A small amount of peanut protein is introduced into the skin to check for an allergic reaction.

Blood tests: These measure the presence of specific antibodies (IgE) associated with peanut allergies.

Oral food challenge: Under strict medical supervision, the child is given small amounts of peanut to monitor for a reaction.

Preventing and managing peanut allergies

Preventive measures, such as introducing peanuts early under pediatric guidance, can lower the risk of allergies. For example, pediatricians often recommend starting with peanut-based foods like diluted peanut butter or peanut-containing baby snacks, ensuring they are age-appropriate and safe for infants. For children already diagnosed, parents should:

- Avoid all peanut-containing foods and carefully read ingredient labels.
- Keep epinephrine auto-injectors (e.g., EpiPens) on hand.
- Educate caregivers and teachers



about the child's allergy and emergency protocols.

Can children outgrow a peanut allergy?

Some children can outgrow a peanut allergy, though it depends on the severity of their condition and individual factors. Research shows that about 20% of children with peanut allergies eventually become tolerant, often by early adolescence. Regular monitoring by an allergist, including

controlled oral food challenges, can help determine if the allergy has resolved. However, continued caution and medical guidance are essential.

The rise in peanut allergies is a complex issue influenced by modern lifestyles and dietary habits. By understanding the risks, symptoms, and preventive strategies, parents can better safeguard their children against this growing health concern.

~Article by Justin Daniels

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Love is in the air at Greater Cleveland Aquarium

Weedy seadragons' graceful dance moves help them match up with the perfect mate. Poison dart frogs make a distinctive trilling sound to attract that special amphibian. Red-eared sliders flutter their claws to impress a potential partner. Pheromones and fin biting both have roles to play in the nurse shark's biennial attempt to connect. Clearly love is in the air—and underwater—at Greater Cleveland Aquarium, so add a splash of romance to winter Friday, February 14–Monday, February 17, 2025.

Throughout “That’s A-Moray Weekend,” the Aquarium is offering all guests animal courtship facts, oversized animal pun Valentine’s Day cards and a little mood music in the galleries. Anyone who completes a love-themed animal activity sheet while visiting will be entered for a chance to win a gift shop basket, original artwork painted by one of the resident turtles and an annual pass. “Winning a membership will give you a year’s worth of opportunities to hold hands in the seatube, see the Aquarium’s young green and starry moray residents mature and birdwatch along the boardwalk,” says GM Stephanie White.

On Friday, February 14, Greater Cleveland Aquarium is staying open

an additional two hours (10 a.m.–7 p.m.) and adding an optional evening cash bar (5–7 p.m.) for anyone 21+ who would like to enjoy an adult beverage and a little more time to stroll the galleries. “Whether it’s for pre-dinner date cocktails or an after-work adventure with family or friends, mid-February is the perfect time to warm up indoors while connecting with the animals you adore and the people you love,” says White.

With the exception of Friday night cocktails, all That’s A-Moray Weekend activities are included with regular Aquarium admission which is \$19.95 (ages 13 and older), \$13.95 (ages 2–12) and free for passholders and children younger than 2.

And on Sunday, February 16, members can visit early (8:30–10 a.m.) for a special “We Love Our Passholders” morning that includes additional crafts, activities, diver appearances, photo opportunities and the chance to meet the Aquarium’s newest ambassador animals. Aquarium passholders must be logged into their accounts to secure \$2 advance tickets for this exclusive member event.

For more info call 216-862-8803 or visit greaterclevelandaquarium.com.

Girl Scout Cookies season is here!



Girl Scouts of North East Ohio (GSNEO) kicked off the 2025 Girl Scout Cookie season on January 13.

Girl Scout Cookie season is a beloved annual event when Girl Scouts and their troops rally their communities to support the world’s largest entrepreneurial program for girls.

Every box of cookies sold provides invaluable experiences for Girl Scouts such as service projects, troop travel, and summer camp for girls across the country.

Girl Scouts acquire a host of invaluable entrepreneurial skills by participating in the cookie program, including goal setting, money management, decision-making, people skills, and business ethics.

Each box of cookies sold allows Girl Scouts to develop an inextinguishable entrepreneurial spirit, gaining courage, confidence, and character as they conquer new feats and embark on new adventures.

Girl Scouts also obtain transferable life skills as they earn a variety of badges and awards, including Cookie Business badges, Financial Literacy badges, Cookie Entrepreneur Family pins, and Entrepreneur badges.

Unbox the Future is this year’s returning theme because with each box of cookies sold, Girl Scouts are doing so much more than just spreading sweet treats. Girl Scouts are learning how to be entrepreneurial powerhouses creating a more equitable future for themselves and the world!

“The Girl Scout Cookie Program is not simply about selling cookies. It’s a program that creates opportunities for Girl Scouts to learn, grow, and thrive,” said Jane Christyson, CEO of GSNEO. “From learning how to interact with customers to creating budgets and taking orders, participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program teaches Girl Scouts invaluable skills that they’ll need to succeed throughout their lives. Troops work together to set their cookie selling

goals, and use the proceeds towards programs and experiences for their troops.”

In 2024, more than 12,000 Girl Scouts participated in the Girl Scout Cookie Program in northeast Ohio, with over two million boxes sold.

This season, cookie lovers will enjoy the full assortment of Girl Scout Cookies, including Thin Mints®, Samoas®, Do-si-dos® and more.

How to purchase Girl Scout Cookies this year

- If you know a registered Girl Scout, reach out to her to find out how she’s selling cookies in ways that meet local and state safety protocols.
- Don’t know a Girl Scout? Visit gsneo.org/findcookies and submit a customer cookie request form to be connected with a local Girl Scout troop.
- Beginning February 21, consumers can enter their zip code into the Girl Scout Cookie Finder at www.gsneo.org/findcookies to purchase cookies online from a local troop for direct shipment.

Fun Facts

- Girl Scout Cookie sales kicked off in 1917 with cookies initially being home baked by girl members with moms volunteering as technical advisers.
- Girl Scout Cookies began being mass produced by bakers in 1936.
- Thin Mints, the most popular Girl Scout Cookie, were originally known as Cooky Mints and began being offered in 1939.
- Digital Cookie, the online ordering system, was launched in 2014.
- All Girl Scout Cookies are both kosher and Halal certified. There are vegan (Thin Mints) and gluten-free (Toffee-Tastic) varieties too!

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Upcoming Series: Healthy Relationships

Four-week series designed to strengthen communication and build nurturing connections

Beech Brook is proud to announce the Healthy Relationships Series, a transformative four-week program beginning this February. The series will take place on Saturdays, February 1, 8, 15, and 22, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Family Center, Carl B. Stokes Social Services Mall, 6001 Woodland Avenue in Cleveland.

This engaging, in-person program will be facilitated by Darnell Carter, offering participants the opportunity to develop critical skills for fostering and maintaining healthy and nurturing relationships.

What you can expect

- Interactive sessions: Explore key topics like enhancing communication, understanding your partner, and developing strategies to strengthen relationships.
- Supportive environment: Gain insights and tools tailored to parents and co-parents to promote family well-being.
- Added perks: Free child care during sessions as well as gift cards and certificates to all participants who complete the series.

"At Beech Brook, we believe that strong relationships are the foundation of a healthy family," said



Debra Brown, manager of parenting programs at Beech Brook's Family Center. "This series is designed to empower parents and co-parents with the skills and support they need to create nurturing environments for their families."

Registration information

Reserve your spot today by contacting Debra Brown at (216) 391-4069. For more details about the program, visit www.beechbrook.org.

Join them this February to take the first step toward building stronger, healthier connections for you and your family.

About Beech Brook

Since 1852, Beech Brook has been a trusted resource for Northeast Ohio families, providing a range of services to promote emotional health, support family stability, and empower the next generation. Learn more at www.beechbrook.org.

Cleveland Botanical Garden's Orchids: Love in Bloom opens February 14

Opening on Friday, February 14 and running through Sunday, March 30, fall head over heels for the enchanting beauty of orchids, a perfect celebration of love and romance.

This year's show will highlight the classic charm of love with vibrant displays of heart shaped arrangements and romantic backdrops. Romance blossoms with species like Dendrobium, Oncidium and Phalaenopsis in hues of pink, purple, and yellow. Guests will be surrounded by orchids throughout the indoor gardens and glasshouses, a dreamscape for flower lovers, and endless photo opportunities for all.

Displaying over 100 distinct types of orchids, Orchids: Love in Bloom will display more than 3,000 flowers from exotic blooms to well-known varieties.



Admission is \$20 per adult and \$14 per child ages 3–12 (free for children 2 and under).

The Botanical Garden is at 11030 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio. Indoor parking is available for a fee based on availability.

For complete details about Orchids: Love in Bloom including hours, special events and classes, visit holdenf.org.

~Photo courtesy of Holden Forests & Gardens



Great Big Home + Garden Show returns January 31–February 9

The Great Big Home + Garden Show is set to inspire homeowners with more than 475 exhibits at Cleveland's I-X Center, Jan. 31 to Feb. 9.

During the 10-day event, shop, compare and save with trusted local experts in kitchen and bath, landscaping, décor, flooring and more.

Find ideas to add to the curb appeal of your home's front entrance when you step into Doorway to Spring; explore six feature gardens in the Garden Showcase; and experience the latest home design trends as you walk through the JDM Homes Waverly Idea Home, Weaver Barns Backyard Oasis and Xtend Technologies Theater Barn. Also, don't miss HGTV's Mina Starsiak Hawk of Good Bones and Dave and Jenny Marrs of Fixer to Fabulous, who will be appearing on the main stage.

2025 Show Dates & Times

Fri, Jan. 31 • 10 a.m.–9 p.m.
Sat, Feb. 1 • 10 a.m.–9 p.m.
Sun, Feb. 2 • 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Mon–Thu, Feb. 3–6 • 10 a.m.–8 p.m.
Fri, Feb. 7 • 10 a.m.–9 p.m.
Sat, Feb. 8 • 10 a.m.–9 p.m.
Sun, Feb. 9 • 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Ticket Information

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

Visit GreatBigHomeAndGarden.com for a list of special events and to purchase a discounted ticket.



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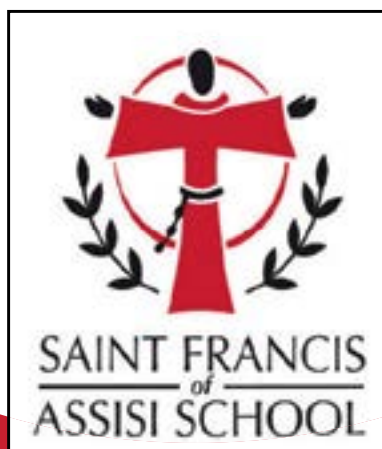


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Preschool - Grade Eight

Our school is committed to academic excellence through the Three Pillars of St. Francis of Assisi School—Faith, Education, and Community.

- Faith-based lessons, service projects, and community outreach
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- Student-led initiatives
- Academic competitions and clubs
- Families come from 21 cities
- STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, Math) integrated throughout the curriculum



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



PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

CUYAHOGA • LAKE & GEAUGA COUNTIES

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, 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** →



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PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

4. Is the staff credentialed and the school accredited?

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

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

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

6. Is the curriculum up to date?

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

7. Does the school provide transportation?

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

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

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

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

9. What is the school's reputation?

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

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

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

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

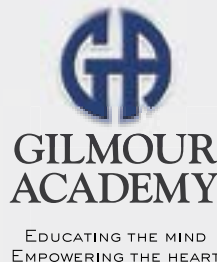
When you've narrowed your search to several schools, be sure to take the time for a personal visit. Talk with an administrator, take the tour and gather any written information they've prepared for prospective students. Discuss pertinent questions and voice any concerns you may have about your child's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

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



**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)



PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

Benedictine High School

2900 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.
Cleveland
(216) 421-2080
www.cbhs.edu

Benedictine High School has been a cornerstone of academic excellence and faith formation since 1927. Located in Cleveland, Ohio, Benedictine offers a transformative, all-boys Catholic education rooted in the Benedictine hallmarks: community, hospitality, humility, and integrity. Through rigorous academics, competitive athletics, and a vibrant arts program, students are empowered to excel in their pursuits while growing spiritually and emotionally.

The school's innovative Beacon Program and Pathways initiative guide students before, between, and beyond their high school years, fostering leadership, critical thinking, and a commitment to service. With personalized learning plans, leadership development through the Heroic app, and unique pathways in fine arts, technology, and business, Benedictine

prepares young men to thrive in college, careers, and life.

Join a brotherhood of tradition, faith, and success at Benedictine High School, where boys become Men of Benedictine and leaders in their communities.

Cleveland Montessori

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

Now celebrating its 30th year, Cleveland Montessori serves the Little Italy and Greater Cleveland community providing an education for life, celebrating diversity, growth and joy. Students from preschool–6th grade are met with respect and compassion as they strive to meet their individual potential in beautifully prepared classrooms that offer social, emotional and academic experiences encompassing the culturally rich University Circle area.

To arrange a tour of this charming school nestled in a historic building, please visit www.clevelandmontessori.org.

Corpus Christi Academy

5655 Mayfield Road, Lyndhurst
(440) 449-4244
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.



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. *cont'd on page 22* →

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(440) 449-4244

corpuschristiacad.org



Tours Available - Register Now!



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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.

**Please contact the school office
to schedule a tour.**



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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

Creative Playrooms cont'd

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 childcare professionals.

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

Gilmour Academy

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

Gilmour's Montessori Toddler and Preschool programs teach children how to learn.

Students then move seamlessly into Grades K-6, where they are provided endless possibilities to grow, with opportunities ranging from robotics to learning a new instrument each year, to service and nature-based learning.

Students then progress to the Middle and Upper Schools to expand on this foundation.

As an independent, Catholic school, Gilmour is rooted in its mission to educate the mind.

Hawken School

www.hawken.edu
Lyndhurst Campus
(Preschool–Grade 8)
5000 Clubside Road
(440) 423-2950
Gates Mills Campus
(Grades 9–12)

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

The Birchwood School of Hawken
(Preschool–Grade 8)

4400 West 140th Street
Cleveland
(216) 251-2321

The Mastery School of Hawken
(Grades 9-12)

11025 Magnolia Drive, Cleveland
(440) 423-8801

Hawken School is an independent, coed day school of nearly 1,600 students, toddler through grade 12, located on two campuses in the eastern suburbs of Cleveland, a campus on Cleveland's west side, and a campus in University Circle that is home to the Mastery School of Hawken,

which takes the school's problem-based programming to scale.

Hawken was founded in 1915 as an educationally progressive school, and 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 memories that last a lifetime. This is their green and gray family. Come discover all the ways you can create your extraordinary future.



PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

Lawrence School

www.lawrenceschool.org
Lower School Campus
 (Grades K–6)
 1551 E. Wallings Road
 Broadview Heights
 (440) 526-0003
Upper School Campus
 (Grades 7–12)
 10036 Olde Eight Road
 Sagamore Hills

Lawrence School is among the best schools in the United States for students with dyslexia and language-based learning differences. Lawrence provides a comprehensive elementary lower school program and an upper school program serving students in grades 7–12, which features specialized and personalized attention, organizational strategies and aids, mutual accountability, encouraged self-advocacy, and an engaged faculty of learners.

Students are at their best when learning differences are understood and accepted, appropriate accommodations are made available, and, most importantly, when their strengths as learners are defined, affirmed, and cultivated.

For more than 50 years, Lawrence School has been opening doors and changing lives by delivering academic excellence to northeast Ohio students with dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and ADHD.

Visit Lawrence School at one of these open house events:

Lower School

(Elementary to grade 6)
 Wednesday, March 12

Upper School

(Grades 7–12)

Thursday, March 13

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.
- 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.



little falcon

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at Saint Rita School



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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

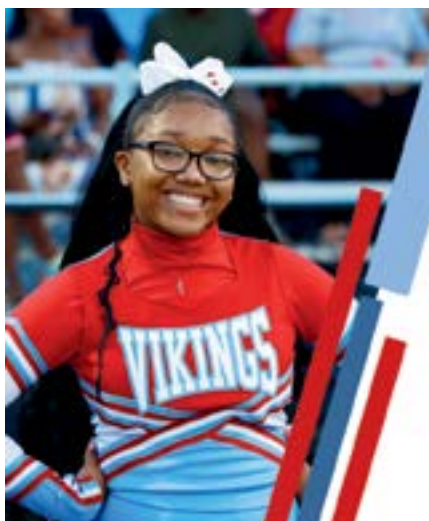
Saint Rita School offers K-8 Enrollment

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



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 HIGH SCHOOL
 Faith. Family. Future.

FEEL THE VIKING SPIRIT!

JOIN US AT OUR SPRING OPEN HOUSE:

Thursday, March 20
 6-8 PM

VASJ.COM/ADMISSIONS

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

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 sched-

uling a tour with the admissions team at ruffingmontessori.net.

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, 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, speech/language, intervention, and learning disability services.

Call to schedule a tour.



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- Junior Kindergarten
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Call: 440-349-9111



PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

St. 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 pre-school-8.

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, after-school 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 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 to 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 arbo-

benedictine
High School



Spring Open House

Wednesday, April 9

5:30pm - 7pm

Bengal For A Day Campus Visit:

Schedule YOUR time to experience Benedictine High School



For admission related questions, please contact **Mike Stircula** at admissions@cbhs.edu or **216.421.2080 ext. 325**.



PreK-Grade 6

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clevelandmontessori.org



HAWKEN: SCHOOL REDEFINED

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Plan your Open House visit this spring!

Early Childhood, Lower, and Middle School
Saturday, 4/5/25, 10:00 am, OPEN HOUSE
Toddler – Grade 8 | Lyndhurst Campus

Birchwood School
Sunday, 4/27/25, 2:00 pm, OPEN HOUSE
Preschool – Grade 8 | Cleveland-West Campus

Upper School
Saturday, 5/3/25, 1:00 pm, OPEN HOUSE
Grades 9 – 12 | Gates Mills Campus

Mastery School
Saturday, 4/26/25, 1:00 pm, OPEN HOUSE
Grades 9 – 12 | University Circle Campus

HAWKEN
SCHOOL



COEDUCATIONAL,
TODDLER – GRADE 12

hawken.edu

Lyndhurst Cleveland-West Gates Mills University Circle



**Lawrence
School**
Great Minds Don't Think Alike

**Opening Doors,
Changing Lives.**



OPEN HOUSE EVENTS:

Lower School
(Elementary-Grade 6)
Wednesday, March 12
9:00 - 10:30 AM

Upper School (7-12):
Thursday, March 13
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

LOWER SCHOOL BROADVIEW HEIGHTS | UPPER SCHOOL SAGAMORE HILLS
LAWRENCESCHOOL.ORG/VISIT

PRIVATE SCHOOL GUIDE

University School cont'd

return 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 admission event in April or schedule a family tour. Learn more at www.us.edu/visit.



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 their diversity, and it shows in their school pride and the family spirit that makes their Viking Village something truly special.

Learn more about VASJ by attending their upcoming open house on Thursday, March 20, 2025.

Inspirational Quotes for Students

"You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great." –Zig Ziglar

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing." –Walt Disney

"I think it's possible for ordinary people to choose to be extraordinary." –Elon Musk

"The best way to predict your future is to create it." –Abraham Lincoln

"You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem and smarter than you think." –A.A. Milne

"The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you." –B.B. King

"Teachers can open the door, but you must enter it yourself." –Chinese proverb

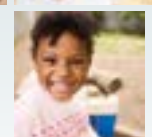
"Genius is 10% inspiration, 90% perspiration." –Thomas Edison

The Whole Child. Every Child. Your Child.

We are excited to share the Ruffing Montessori community with you. To schedule a personal tour, call the Admissions Office at 216.321.7571 or visit ruffingmontessori.net.

**Ruffing
Montessori School**

18 months–8th Grade • 3380 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights • ruffingmontessori.net



The History of Private Schools

Private schools have played a pivotal role in education for centuries, offering an alternative to public schooling systems and shaping academic, cultural, and social landscapes worldwide. Their origins, development, and impact highlight the diversity of educational approaches and the evolving priorities of societies throughout history.

The concept of private schooling can be traced back to ancient civilizations. In ancient Greece, education was primarily a private affair, with wealthy families employing tutors for their children or sending them to academies such as Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum. Similarly, in ancient Rome, wealthy families hired private tutors or sent their children to schools established by learned individuals. These early private institutions emphasized philosophy, rhetoric, and literature, reflecting the societal focus on developing leaders and thinkers.

During the Middle Ages, private education was largely dominated by religious institutions. Monastic schools, often linked to churches and monasteries, provided education to clergy and a select group of students. The rise of cathedral schools, such as those in Chartres and Paris, expanded the availability of education but remained exclusive to the elite. Religious instruction and classical studies formed the core curriculum.

The Renaissance brought renewed interest in classical education and humanism, leading to the establishment of private schools aimed at broader intellectual development. These schools catered to the children of nobility and the emerging merchant class, offering a curriculum focused on literature, mathematics, and the arts. The rise of private tutors and academies further underscored the role of wealth in accessing quality education.

The Industrial Revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries marked a turning point for private schools. As urbanization and industrialization progressed, private institutions began catering to the growing middle class, alongside traditional elites. During this period, private schools expanded their curricula to include science, engineering, and modern languages, reflecting the changing demands of an industrializing world. Prestigious boarding schools, particularly in Europe and the United States, became synonymous with elite education, fostering networks of influence among their alumni.

In the 20th century, private schools evolved to reflect broader societal changes. Progressive education movements led to the establishment of schools emphasizing individualized learning and creative approaches, such as those inspired by Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner. Private schools

also diversified in their missions, with some focusing on religious education, cultural preservation, or specialized programs for students with unique needs or talents.

Today, private schools continue to play a vital role in the global education system. They vary widely in mission, size, and cost, serving diverse communities and educational philosophies. Some focus on academic rigor and college preparation, while others emphasize religious instruction, arts, or sports. In developing countries, private schools often fill gaps left by underfunded public systems, providing opportunities for quality education.

The digital age has further transformed private education, with many schools adopting technology-driven learning and offering online programs. This adaptability ensures that private schools remain relevant in an ever-changing educational landscape.

The history of private schools is a testament to their enduring importance in society. From their origins in ancient civilizations to their modern-day diversity, these institutions have shaped the intellectual, cultural, and social fabric of communities worldwide. As education continues to evolve, private schools will undoubtedly play a crucial role in meeting the challenges and opportunities of the future.

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