

TODAY'S family

April 2026 Cuyahoga

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TIPS FOR CHOOSING A PRESCHOOL



Return of the Butterflies at the Cleveland Botanical Garden

Beginning April 1, 2026, the popular Return of the Butterflies exhibit returns to the Cleveland Botanical Garden, inviting visitors to step inside the lush Costa Rica biome and experience hundreds of newly emerged tropical butterflies up close as they flutter among vibrant flowers. Guests can also attend live butterfly releases Tuesday through Saturday at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Families with young children won't want to miss Caterpillar Craze on April 24–25 and May 1–2, when kids can learn about the butterfly life cycle and create their own caterpillar crafts in the Hershey Children's Garden (or indoors in Perennial Playspace if weather requires).

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Today's Family Magazine is distributed free of charge for families living in and around Cuyahoga County.

Cover Photo
Adobe Stock /By mitgirl

Nourishing the Neshama event

Gross Schechter Day School in Pepper Pike is thrilled to welcome Chef Ruhama Shitrit, the creative force behind RuhamasFood.com and many social media accounts for an immersive evening event. The program marks Ruhama's inaugural visit to Cleveland, and the first time our community will experience her world-class Israeli cuisine and benefit from her "wow" energy.

Nourishing the Neshama with Ruhama will be a unique benefit for Gross Schechter Day School on Sunday, April 26 and Monday, April 27. The two-night appearance will allow more of our community members to experience Ruhama in an intimate setting. The programs will be identical.

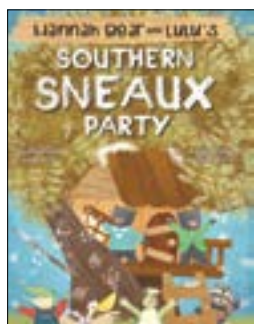
Ruhama, will lead a live, high-energy culinary demonstration, blending the art of Mediterranean cooking with soulful storytelling. "I can't wait to take you on my journey and inspire you to explore my love



of Middle Eastern flavors, Israel, our homeland, and the traditions that live in every dish," said Ruhama. Attendees can expect insider tips and tricks, reflections and meaningful connections to Israel and a chance to sample the recipes that will be on demonstration at the conclusion. An intimate

pre-event reception will be available for event sponsors and VIP ticket holders.

Tickets are on sale now at www.grossschechter.org/ruhama.



Hannah Bear and Lulu's Southern Sneak Party

By Julie Hooks

The air is crisp in the Honey Hollow Woods, and the sister cubs, Hannah Bear and LuLu, are busy getting ready for their big winter party. Excitement is everywhere—but not for everyone. Magnolia, the newest resident of the woods, is feeling homesick and missing her favorite part of the season: sneaux! Determined to make their

new friend feel welcome, Hannah Bear and LuLu spring into action with a heartwarming plan—and one magical ingredient that could make all the difference. Will they solve the conundrum and bring a little southern sneaux magic to the celebration? This cozy picture book is a joyful tale of friendship, creativity, and the magic of the season—with a sweet surprise ending that's sure to warm hearts of all ages.



Hop's Tales: The Kind Bunny

By Evelina Ruimy

Meet a bright and curious bunny who loves to learn, read, and play with friends. But when one pup gets in the way, this little bunny discovers something important about kindness, courage, and staying true to who you are.

This charming, rhyme-filled story takes young readers on a heartwarming journey about friendship, confidence, and what it really means to be

"cool." Through playful rhythm and an uplifting message, children will learn that kindness and being yourself are the greatest strengths of all. Perfect for storytime at home or in the classroom, this delightful tale encourages children to build empathy, celebrate differences, and believe in themselves.



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MIKE MORAN: Inducted into Ohio Basketball Hall of Fame in 2020; former head coach at John Carroll University w/ 459 career wins; guided JCU to 14 OAC titles, 12 trips to the NCAA Tournament & one Final Four appearance; former VASJ head coach where his teams won two state championships.

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MATT MORAN: Assistant coach at John Carroll University.

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TONY REDDING: Former head coach of girls at St. Martin de Porres.

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For sponsorship information contact
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216-763-1400 x 419 or
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Gross Schechter
DAY SCHOOL

Where is the rest of my cereal?

Shrinkflation and the mystery of the disappearing ounces

By Dan Miller
Today's Family Editor

Years ago I noticed the groceries in our house started disappearing faster.

At first, I blamed the kids. Teenagers are known to inhale cereal at an alarming rate. But eventually I realized something else was happening. The cereal wasn't vanishing faster—the box was getting smaller.

Welcome to the world of shrinkflation, the increasingly common practice of keeping the price the same while quietly shrinking the product.

It's the economic equivalent of ordering a large pizza and opening the box to discover it now feeds three people instead of five.

Honey, they shrunk the cereal box

If you've bought cereal recently, you may have noticed the boxes look about the same—but contain less.

Many cereals that once held around 19 ounces now hold closer to 18, and some standard boxes have dropped from about 10 ounces to under 8 over the years.

The boxes remain tall and colorful, of course. Manufacturers have mastered the art of what might politely be called "visual optimism."

From the front, it still looks like plenty of breakfast. From the top, it's more like two bowls and a handful of crumbs.

Parents now understand why the phrase "part of a balanced breakfast" was always followed by pictures of eggs, toast, fruit, and milk. The cereal alone clearly wasn't going to cut it.

The Goldfish situation

Take Goldfish crackers, a staple in lunch boxes everywhere.

The smiling little fish look the same as they always have, but the bags don't last nearly as long as they once did.

Some parents suspect the fish themselves may now be more "minnow sized."

Of course, the kids don't complain. Goldfish crackers remain wildly popular. They just require more bags to feed the same number of hungry swimmers.

The curious case of the disappearing candy bar

Candy bars may be the most obvious victims of shrinkflation.

Anyone who grew up in the 1980s or 1990s remembers candy bars that felt like a legitimate dessert. Today, many of those same bars seem... daintier.

Take Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. The familiar orange package still contains two cups, but longtime fans swear the cups themselves are a little smaller than they used to be.

Maybe our hands just got bigger over the years?

Or maybe the peanut butter cups went on a diet.

The same goes for classics like Hershey's Milk Chocolate Bar, which once tipped the scales at more than 2.5 ounces but now often weighs closer to 1.5 ounces in its standard form.

Apparently chocolate obeys the same laws as airline legroom: there's just a little less of it every year.



Quaker's Life cereal shrunk from 24.8 ounce to 22.3, and it was renamed from "giant" to "family" size – and the box actually got bigger! This is common for nearly all cereal brands. *Source: Business Insider*

When a pint isn't really a pint

Ice cream has also quietly joined the shrinkflation club.

For years, a pint of ice cream meant exactly what the name implied: 16 ounces.

But in 2009, premium brand Haagen-Dazs reduced its containers to 14 ounces while keeping the same familiar packaging.

The containers still look like pints. They just contain two fewer ounces of happiness.

Other brands followed with similar changes, proving that even dessert is not immune to the mysterious shrinking effect.

Paper towels

Shrinkflation isn't limited to food. It has quietly reached the cleaning aisle as well.

Paper towel rolls used to contain well over 100 sheets. Today many brands offer rolls with far fewer sheets—but they come with impressive-sounding labels like "Mega Roll," "Super Mega Roll," or "Family Roll."

Translation: the roll is smaller, but the name is bigger.

The math can get confusing quickly.

A "Mega Roll" might equal two regular rolls, except the regular rolls used to be bigger. So now a Mega

Roll might actually equal one and a half rolls from 15 years ago.

Somewhere, a marketing team deserves a trophy for that one.

The juice box question

Even kids' drinks haven't escaped shrinkflation.

Many familiar juice boxes that once contained about 6.75 ounces have quietly dropped closer to 6 ounces over time.

That may not sound dramatic, but across a week of school lunches those missing ounces add up.

Parents now face the difficult task of explaining why the juice box seems empty halfway through the sandwich.

The family strategy

The good news is that the grocery store still provides one helpful clue: the price per ounce printed on the shelf label.

That small number reveals whether the cereal box really is a good deal—or whether the crackers, candy bars, and juice boxes have quietly lost a few ounces along the way.

And if the groceries in your house seem to disappear faster than they used to, don't worry.

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It's just the incredible shrinking snack drawer.



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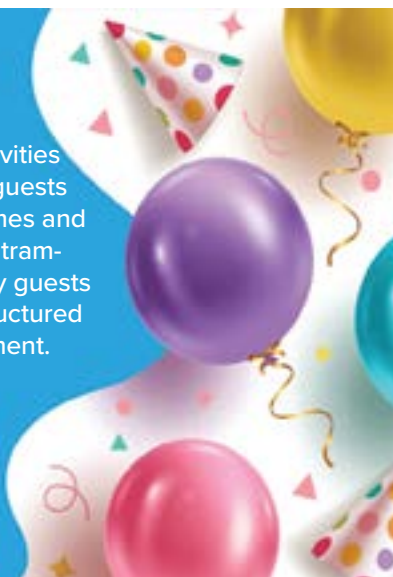
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The mystery of the moving holidays

Why Easter and Passover change dates every spring

Unlike holidays such as Christmas or the Fourth of July, Easter and Passover don't stay put on the calendar. One year they arrive in late March, and another year they don't appear until well into April.

For many families, it can feel a little random. Why don't these holidays just settle on a simple date like the first Sunday in April?

The answer turns out to involve the moon, ancient calendars, and a decision made nearly 1,700 years ago.

It starts with the Jewish calendar

The story begins with Passover, one of the most important holidays in the Jewish faith.

Passover follows the Hebrew calendar, which is based largely on lunar cycles. A lunar month lasts about 29½ days, which means a lunar year is about 11 days shorter than the solar calendar most of the world uses today.

To keep holidays aligned with the seasons, the Hebrew calendar occasionally adds an extra month. Even

with that adjustment, the holiday still shifts each year when translated to the modern Gregorian calendar.

Passover begins on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan, which falls shortly after the first full moon of spring.

How Easter is determined

Early Christians wanted Easter to remain connected to the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, which took place during Passover.

In the year 325 AD, church leaders meeting at the First Council of Nicaea established the formula still used today:

Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox.

That means three things determine the date:

- The spring equinox (around March 20 or 21)
- The first full moon after the equinox
- The first Sunday after that full moon



Because the moon's cycle doesn't line up perfectly with the calendar, Easter can fall anywhere between March 22 and April 25.

Could Easter ever be fixed to one date?

Over the years, there have been occasional proposals to give Easter a permanent place on the calendar. One commonly suggested option is celebrating it on the second Sunday in April.

A fixed date could make planning easier for schools, families, and even retailers preparing for the holiday season.

However, changing Easter would require agreement among many Christian denominations worldwide, including the Catholic Church, Protestant churches, and Orthodox churches. With so many traditions involved, a change has never gained widespread approval.



Why the dates can be so far apart

Because Easter depends on both the equinox and the full moon, the holiday can shift by several weeks from year to year.

That's why some years Easter and Passover occur close together, while other years they appear nearly a month apart.

Even in a world of digital calendars and carefully planned schedules, these holidays are still guided by traditions that began thousands of years ago. Long before smartphones sent reminders about egg hunts or family dinners, people looked to the sky to mark the seasons.

So the next time Easter or Passover seems to jump to a new date on the calendar, remember—it isn't random at all. The timing is simply following the same rhythm of the moon and springtime that people have watched for generations.

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and terminology. Children's classes must be taught with enjoyment and encouragement. Their progressive program begins with the preschool level to the preprofessional level.

All teachers are certified by exam through the National Organization of Dance Masters of America. Noreen is also a member of the Cecchetti Council of America, an organization dedicated to maintaining the standards and techniques of ballet training.

They are located at 750 Beta Drive, Mayfield Village. Call (440) 449-0240 or visit www.noreendancer.com for more information.



A NEW TODAY'S FAMILY ADVICE COLUMN!

LIVING WELL

with Rebecca Fellenbaum

Heartfelt advice to help you enjoy this time in your life.

Scan the QR code to learn more or write to Rebecca!



This month, I'm answering two questions about school, a topic that brings up a lot of emotions for both kids and parents. If you're frustrated over homework or wondering whether your child is getting the support they need, you're not alone.

Homework battles

Dear Rebecca: I'm really angry at my sixth-grade son for not turning in his homework. How much hand-holding should I be doing?

— Jason, *Shaker Heights*

Dear Jason: The age-old homework battle—relatable and challenging.

Before we jump to solutions, I'd like you to ask yourself: How do you feel? When our kids don't follow through on their responsibilities, it can trigger a range of emotions. You might feel frustration, embarrassment, fear about their future, or even worry that you're failing as a parent. What's coming up for you here?

Then, take a moment to consider what you might be making this mean about you or your child. While anger is a valid emotion—and can even be helpful—it's often tied to a story running in our minds. It might sound like: My child is lazy, irresponsible, or headed for trouble. When we notice that story, we can begin to separate it from the facts by asking, "What's actually true?"

Once you've separated the problem from your feelings and assumptions about it, you can get curious about what might be happening for your son. Homework struggles are rarely just about homework.

Consider a few possibilities:

- Is there a skills gap, like trouble organizing or knowing what he needs to get done?
- Does he need more help with the subject matter? Kids often avoid work when they feel behind or unsure of how to do it.
- Is he exhausted after a long day?
- Is he pushing for autonomy or attention (even negative attention

is still attention)?

- Has he lost motivation?

Instead of focusing on how much to hand-hold, try shifting into "investigation mode." A calm conversation might sound like: "I notice homework isn't getting turned in. What's going on?"

The truth is, you can't create intrinsic motivation for another person—even your child. What you can do is provide structure and support while allowing natural consequences to play a role.

The goal is support without rescuing. When you've worked through your initial frustration, you'll be in a better place to help your son understand what's getting in the way—and to work together on a solution.

And don't worry—I think you'll do just fine with the homework I've given you here.

When to step in

Dear Rebecca: How do I know when to advocate for my child at school? Sometimes I feel like she needs more help than she's getting.

— Jessica, *Willoughby Hills*

Dear Jessica: This is where your intuition as a parent matters. You're obviously concerned enough to ask me about it. I'd be curious to know who at school you've brought this up with.

In the Adult Chair® framework I teach, we often talk about the difference between reacting from fear and responding from our grounded self. If you're feeling anxious about your child's progress, pause and ask yourself two questions:

- What am I noticing that feels concerning?
- And what might my fear be telling me about this situation?

Separating facts from fears can bring clarity.

From there, start with open communication. Talk with your child about how school feels for them. Are they confused by the material? Embarrassed to ask questions? Feeling

overwhelmed?

Next, gather information from the school. Teachers often appreciate when parents approach with curiosity rather than criticism. You might say, "I've noticed my daughter seems discouraged about math. What are you seeing in the classroom?"

Sometimes struggles resolve naturally as kids mature or build new skills. But if something consistently feels off, advocating for additional support, tutoring, or evaluation is not overreacting.

You know your child best. When you combine that intuition with thoughtful communication and collaboration, you become a powerful partner in your child's education.

And perhaps one of the most valuable lessons your child learns along

the way is that when something isn't working, it's okay to ask for support.

About Living Well: We welcome your questions about parenting, mindfulness, wellness, and everyday life. Rebecca will share tools, tips, and heartfelt advice to help you feel understood, supported, and inspired to truly enjoy this stage of life with your kids and family. If you're wondering about it, chances are another parent is too — so don't be shy! Let's talk about it... and start Living Well. Scan the QR code above and submit your question for consideration for future columns.

Rebecca Fellenbaum is a certified somatic life coach, writer, and Cleveland-area mom who helps parents reconnect with themselves so they can enjoy their lives, kids, and families. Learn more at rebeccafellenbaum.com.




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When the power goes out, family time turns on

A spring storm left our house in the dark—but lit up a cozy night of pioneer-style family time

It's often said that April showers bring May flowers. And while springtime brings colorful blooms from what seemed like lifeless dirt just a few short weeks ago, it can also bring powerful storms. And those storms have the potential to knock out electric lines.

We're blessed to live in a time and place where the flip of a switch means illumination and the twist of the tap delivers water like magic. We don't have to think too much about it, it's just always there—until it isn't.

Where I live, we aren't connected to village or city water lines. Instead, we have a well, so when the electricity goes out, so does our water. Simply put, that means no water in faucets or for flushes. And while we can hook our fridge and freezer up to a portable generator to keep our food cold, we must resort to bottled water, hand sanitizer, wet wipes, and delayed flushes until the power returns.

During one spring storm season, my husband and I were at parent-teacher conferences at our kids' school. The girls were old enough to stay home by themselves, each busy in separate rooms of the house. While we were gone, a storm blew in. At school, there was no loss of power during

our meetings, but as we drove closer to home, we didn't see lights on in any of the homes we passed. When we got to our driveway, we saw that a small tree had been blown down, blocking our path to the garage. Our house was dark, just like the rest of the neighborhood. We found the girls huddled together in one room, wrapped in cozy blankets and eating granola bars.

While my husband cut the tree to clear the driveway, I found something simple to reheat on the grill. During our meal, eaten by candlelight, the girls recounted their harrowing tale of survival. "We felt like pioneers," they noted, relieved when we came to the rescue, just like Ma and Pa Ingalls would out on the prairie. The cozy lighting made for a quiet, screen-free evening as we read books by flickering candles, then circled the wagons to bed down for the night.

The electricity returned late that evening, and my husband and I ran around turning off lights, resetting clocks and flushing toilets. When the girls woke up the next morning, they were happy to return to the 21st century. But after going without modern conveniences even a short while, we each had a new appreciation for the things we



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often take for granted.

In a work environment, it's common for technical support staff to recommend shutting down a computer, then restarting it to resolve an issue. At home, a power outage can work in a similar way for us human machines. In fact, studies have shown that taking a break from screens can help improve mental and physical health, strengthen relationships, and encourage us to engage in offline activities. It can even increase the quality of our sleep, allowing our brains to 'reset'.

Whatever the weather, April can provide you with more opportunities to enjoy offline activities with your family—whether you're out on the prairie or at home in the suburbs. Hopefully, you won't need to lose power to give it a go.

Mommy CHRONICLES

By Stacy Turner



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CUYAHOGA COUNTY
Board of Developmental Disabilities

Cuyahoga DD serves more than 15,000 county residents of all ages and is primarily supported by a property tax levy last approved by voters in 2005.

Womankind to host free Spring Fling Community Resource Fair

Families and community members are invited to attend Womankind's Spring Fling Community Resource Fair, a free event designed to connect local residents with valuable programs, services, and support resources.

The event will take place on April 18, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Garfield Heights Civic Center. The fair is open to everyone and welcomes individuals, parents, caregivers, and children.

Attendees will have the opportunity to meet and speak with up to 50 vendors representing a wide range of fields, including health and wellness, education, parenting support, housing assistance, counseling, prenatal care, food resources, and more. The event is designed to make it easier for families to discover local services, ask questions, and gather information in one convenient location.

In addition to learning about com-

munity programs, visitors can take part in raffles offered by participating vendors, many of whom will be providing gift baskets or other donated items throughout the day.

The event is hosted by Womankind, a long-standing nonprofit organization that provides counseling, education, and support services to women, children, and families throughout Northeast Ohio.

Spring Fling is intended to be both informative and welcoming, giving families a chance to explore resources they may not have known existed while also enjoying a relaxed, family-friendly atmosphere.

ly atmosphere.

For more info on this event email info@womankind-cleveland.org. For more information about Womankind visit www.TodaysFamilyMagazine.com or scan the QR code to read our feature article on Womankind from the March issue.



31st annual Market at the Food Bank

Featuring Cleveland's most delicious cuisines and beverages

Tickets are on sale now for the Greater Cleveland Food Bank's premier event, Market at the Food Bank. The event is set to take place on Sunday, April 26, 6–8 p.m. at the Food Bank's Partner Distribution Hub. The signature event benefits the annual Harvest for Hunger campaign, a 21-county food and funds drive, coordinated by the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.

The event welcomes guests and donors behind the scenes of the Food Bank's 197,000 square-foot partner distribution hub, providing an exclusive look at how their contributions make the Food Bank's mission possible.

Hundreds of guests will spend the evening sampling superb cuisine and delicious drinks from over 25 of Cleveland's premier restaurants and beverage purveyors. There will also be a silent auction and bag pull, where guests can choose a surprise bag filled with at least a \$50 value. Guests will have the chance to walk away with fabulous restaurant and



unique entertainment packages.

General admission tickets to the event are \$150 per person and inclusive of all event food and beverage.

VIP tickets are \$250 per person and grants attendees access to all food and beverage as well as access to the party an hour earlier at 5 p.m., a first look at the auction, specialty cocktails, private lounge and seating, and live entertainment.

Visit www.GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org/Market today to purchase tickets.



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School of Film & Media Arts
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

5-DAY FILM CHALLENGE

June 7–12
Create a short film from start to finish
\$1,200 Day Program
\$1,600 Residential Program

FILMMAKERS INTENSIVE (2 WEEKS)

June 14–26
Directing, cinematography, editing and storytelling
\$2,400 Day Program
\$3,200 Residential Program

ACTING AND DIRECTING

July 13–17
Develop characters, story and screenplay
\$1,200 Day Program

ANIMATION

July 13–17
Animation from concept to screen
\$1,200 Day Program

Where play meets STEM

Exploring Snapology Cleveland

For many parents, finding activities that are both fun and educational can feel like a balancing act. At Snapology Cleveland, that balance is built into every program. Snapology combines hands-on play with science, technology, engineering, arts, and math—often without kids even realizing they're learning.

Snapology's Discovery Center in Beachwood offers camps for children who thrive in structured, instructor-led classes, and for children who prefer open-ended or themed creative play. At Snapology of Cleveland, both options are built into the full camp day! Experienced instructors guide campers through LEGO® building activities that introduce real engineering and technology in the mornings. Afternoons are reserved for LEGO® themed programming designed to promote creativity and problem-solving.

Snapology offers enrichment opportunities in schools, but when school is out, their vacation camps give kids the chance to dive deeper

into subjects that spark their interest, from Pokemon to amusement park engineering to robotics. Snapology camps provide a structured but fun environment where children can build, collaborate, and develop problem-solving skills alongside peers who share similar interests.

For families planning celebrations, Snapology's birthday party packages offer a different kind of party experience. Kids participate in guided building challenges and creative activities led by trained facilitators. Your Snapology facilitator handles setup and cleanup, making the process easier for parents while keeping children engaged throughout the event.

In addition to its on-site programs, Snapology partners with schools, community organizations, and youth groups throughout the region. Ultimately, Snapology's approach is rooted in a simple idea: children learn best when they are actively engaged in creating, experimenting, and solving problems. By turning



complex subjects into interactive play, the program helps build confidence, teamwork, and critical-thinking skills—qualities that extend far beyond the playroom.

For parents looking to introduce their children to STEAM concepts natural and exciting, Snapology offers a maker space where curiosity is encouraged, creativity is celebrat-

ed, and learning happens one brick at a time.

Snapology is located at 23645 Mercantile Rd., Suite H in Beachwood. For more information, call or text (216) 990-8988 or visit www.snapology.com/ohio-cleveland for a listing of classes, camps, and more.

~ By Dan Miller

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23645 Mercantile Road, Suite H
Beachwood
216-990-8988

www.snapology.com/ohio-cleveland

FREE Earth Day celebration event

Stop by Penitentiary Glen Reservation to celebrate Earth Day with activities for all ages. Earth Day is a global celebration and one day of the year that humans join in bringing awareness to the issues facing our planet. Actions, whether big or small, can help our planet as we work together to protect it 365 days of the year. Earth Day activities include:

- FREE event!
- Eco-fair with local conservation organizations
- Earth Day Marketplace with locally made merchandise
- FREE tree for each family
- Wildlife programs



- Games and crafts
- Shop in The Nature Store
- Miniature train rides (1 to 3 pm, weather permitting)

April 26, 2026 • Noon-4 pm
Penitentiary Glen Reservation
8668 Kirtland-Chardon Rd., Kirtland
www.lakemetroparks.com



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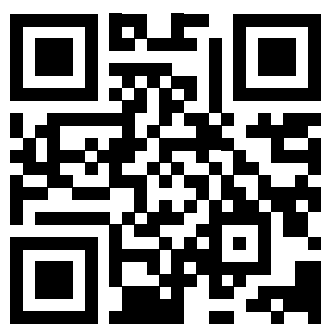


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Scan the QR code to join Girl Scouts today!

Questions? Contact GSNEO at 800-852-4474 or customercare@gsneo.org

*The Girl Scout Extended Year membership spans April 1, 2026 to September 30, 2027, followed by the annual membership year from October 1 to September 30, which requires yearly renewal.

girlscouts
of north east ohio

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Child Abuse Prevention Month

Raising awareness and taking action

Every April, communities across the United States observe Child Abuse Prevention Month, a crucial time dedicated to raising awareness, promoting prevention strategies, and supporting survivors of child abuse and neglect. Established in 1983, this month-long campaign serves as a reminder that protecting children is a shared responsibility that requires the collective efforts of individuals, families, and organizations.

Understanding child abuse and its impact

Child abuse encompasses various forms of maltreatment, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Each type of abuse can have long-lasting consequences on a child's development, emotional well-being, and future relationships. Studies show that children who experience abuse are more likely to face challenges

such as mental health disorders, substance abuse, academic struggles, and difficulty forming healthy relationships in adulthood.

The importance of prevention

Prevention is the key to reducing the prevalence of child abuse. By fostering safe, stable, and nurturing environments, communities can help children thrive. Key prevention strategies include:

- **Education and awareness** – Providing parents, caregivers, and community members with information on positive parenting techniques, child development, and the warning signs of abuse.
- **Strengthening families** – Offering support services such as parenting classes, family counseling, and economic assistance to reduce stressors that contribute to child maltreatment.
- **Community engagement** – Encouraging neighbors, schools,



and local organizations to play an active role in promoting child welfare and reporting suspected abuse.

- **Legislative advocacy** – Supporting policies that protect children's rights, fund child welfare programs, and ensure strict penalties for abusers.

Moving forward

While Child Abuse Prevention Month brings national attention to the issue, protecting children is a year-round responsibility. By continuing efforts to educate, support, and advocate, we can work toward a future where all children grow up in safe and loving environments.

So if you suspect something isn't quite right, or you're just concerned a family needs help, pick up the phone and call one of the numbers below. You can be a hero for a child by speaking up.

How to get involved

Everyone has a role to play in preventing child abuse. Here are a few ways individuals and communities can make a difference:

- **Wear blue:** The color blue symbolizes child abuse prevention. Many organizations encourage people to wear blue on specific days in April to show solidarity.
- **Spread awareness:** Use social media to share resources, statistics, and educational materials about child abuse prevention.
- **Volunteer:** Many child advocacy organizations and shelters welcome volunteers to help support at-risk children and families.
- **Report suspected abuse:** If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, report it to local child protective services or law enforcement. Early intervention can save lives.

Cuyahoga County
Children and Family Services
 (216) 696-KIDS or send an email to
 Protecting-Cuyahoga-Kids@
 jfs.ohio.gov

Lake County Department
of Job and Family Services
 (440) 350-4000 (then press 1)
 (440) 918-4000 (then press 1)

Geauga County
Job and Family Services
 (440) 285-9141



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Visit www.TodaysFamilyMagazine.com to access hundreds of family-related articles and events. Our site is keyword searchable and is mobile friendly. Whatever local family information you need, you will most likely find it at www.TodaysFamilyMagazine.com!





"I'm still going with our textbook. I don't care what Wikipedia says!"

Greater Cleveland Aquarium Spring Discovery Days runs through April 12

Have you noticed the bold split coloring of a Boesemani rainbowfish or watched a red cleaner shrimp wave its white antennae to invite passing fish in for a cleaning? Did you know cuckoo catfish rely on a remarkable egg-swapping strategy to raise their young, or that Northern clingfish use a suction-cup-like disc to hold fast in rushing water?

Greater Cleveland Aquarium highlights these and other diminutive animals during Spring Discovery Days, March 13 – April 12, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily. Animal encounters, small species shoutouts, a "Spot a Spotted" challenge, interactive Discovery Carts, a fill-in booklet and short videos are all part of this celebration of nature's hidden influencers and are included with regular Aquarium admission.

While standing beneath sandtiger sharks gliding through 230,000 gallons of saltwater is a defining Aquarium moment, Curator Ray Popik hopes Spring Discovery Days encourages guests to linger on some of the Aquarium's more understated standouts. Details like a clownfish's specialized mucus coating, the bristlenose pleco's suction-cup mouth, the bark-like texture of Vietnamese mossy frogs or the spade-shaped snout of



an Eastern spiny softshell turtle reveal how small features help animals navigate a big world.

"Our unique design makes those details easier to see," says Popik. Set on the ground floor of a historic brick powerhouse, the Aquarium's retrofit habitats feature floor-to-ceiling, overhead and 180- to 360-degree views that bring guests closer to the action.

Visit greaterclevelandaquarium.com or call (216) 862-8803 for more information.



**Cuyahoga County
Division of Children and Family Services**



**NATIONAL
CHILD
ABUSE
PREVENTION MONTH**

Strong communities with resources and support help foster healthy families and keep children safe.

Learn how community resources can help prevent crisis before it starts.

Visit
<https://hhs.cuyahogacounty.gov/familysupportresources>

Valley Art Center

Inspiring creativity in the heart of the Chagrin Valley

For more than 50 years, the Valley Art Center has served as a creative hub for families throughout the Chagrin Valley and surrounding communities. Located in the heart of Chagrin Falls, the center offers a wide range of classes, exhibitions, and community events designed to make the visual arts accessible to people of all ages and skill levels.

Each year, the Valley Art Center provides more than 400 classes, workshops, and summer camps for students ranging from young children to older adults. Beginners and experienced artists alike can explore drawing, painting, ceramics, jewelry making, mixed media, and more under the guidance of professional instructors. Small class sizes and supportive teaching help students build both technical skills and confidence in their creative abilities.

For children and teens, participation in art programs offers benefits that extend far beyond the finished project. Creative activities help young people develop problem-solving skills, patience, and the ability to think in new ways. Art also provides a valuable outlet for self-expression, allowing children to communicate feelings and ideas they may not yet have the words to explain. In an increasingly digital world, hands-on art experiences give kids a chance to unplug, focus, and create something uniquely their own.

The Valley Art Center also plays a significant role in showcasing regional talent. Its Bowen and Patron Galleries host nine exhibitions each year, featuring work from local and national artists as well as students and instructors. For young artists especially, seeing artwork displayed in a professional gallery setting can be both inspiring and affirming, reinforcing the value of creative expression.

Beyond classes and exhibitions, the center brings the community together through large-scale events such as Art by the Falls, a juried fine art and contemporary craft festival held annually in Chagrin Falls. The two-day outdoor event draws more than 160 artists and 20,000 visitors, offering families the chance to experience live music, hands-on activities for children, and a wide variety of art available for purchase. Events like this not only celebrate creativity but also support working artists and small businesses across the region.

Visitors can also explore the Valley Art/Shop year-round, where hundreds of original pieces created by local artists are available for purchase. From paintings and ceramics to jewelry, textiles, and photography, the shop offers one-of-a-kind gifts at a variety of price points. A portion of every sale directly supports the center's educational pro-



grams and community outreach efforts.

At the core of the Valley Art Center's mission is a commitment to inclusivity and community building. The organization works to ensure that art remains accessible to everyone by offering opportunities regardless of age, experience level, or background. Through classes, exhibitions, and partnerships with local schools and organizations, the center continues to foster an environment where creativity is encouraged and shared.

For families seeking meaningful, screen-free activities that build confidence and spark imagination, the Valley Art Center offers a welcoming space to explore, learn, and connect. Whether a child is experimenting with clay for the first time or a parent is rediscovering a long-forgotten passion for painting, the center provides opportunities for creativity that can last a lifetime.

Valley Art Center is located at 155 Bell Street in Chagrin Falls. For more information about classes, camps, exhibitions, and upcoming events, call (440) 247-7507 or visit valleyartcenter.org.

~ By Dan Miller

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www.universalmetalproducts.com





Tips for finding the right preschool for your child

Choosing the right preschool for your child is a significant milestone in their early development. The preschool years are crucial for laying the foundation for social, emotional, and cognitive growth. With so many options available, selecting the best fit can feel overwhelming. Here's a comprehensive guide to help you navigate the process and make an informed decision.

1. Understand your child's needs

Every child is unique, and their individual temperament, interests, and learning style should guide your decision. Some children thrive in structured environments, while others may prefer a more flexible, play-based setting. Consider your child's personality, strengths, and any special needs they may have when evaluating different preschools.

2. Research different types of preschools

There are various preschool philosophies and teaching approaches to consider:

- **Montessori** – Encourages self-directed learning and hands-on exploration.
- **Waldorf** – Focuses on creativity, imagination, and routine-based learning.



- **Reggio Emilia** – Child-led learning that fosters curiosity through projects and collaboration.
- **Play-based** – Emphasizes learning through play and social interaction.
- **Academic-focused** – Offers structured learning with an emphasis on early literacy and math skills.

Understanding these approaches will help you determine which aligns best with your child's learning style and your family's values.

3. Consider location and convenience

A preschool's location plays a vital role in daily logistics. A school that is too far may add stress to your routine. Consider whether you prefer a preschool near your home, workplace, or a trusted caregiver. Also, check their operating hours to ensure they align with your schedule.

4. Evaluate the curriculum and learning environment

When visiting potential preschools, observe the classrooms and curriculum structure. Look for a balance of structured activities and free play. Ask about daily routines, subjects covered, and how teachers encourage curiosity and critical thinking. Ask if they provide meals and snacks, are naps taken and how they handle discipline.

The classroom should be a safe, engaging space with age-appropriate materials that stimulate creativity and learning.

Continued on page 16

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PLUS

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April 19 | Solon Community Center

Email us for more info and to RSVP:
soloncampus@ivybrookacademy.com

Finding a preschool from page 15

5. Check teacher qualifications and student-to-teacher ratios

Qualified, caring teachers are essential to a positive preschool experience. Ask about teachers' credentials, experience, professional development opportunities and ongoing training. Additionally, a low student-to-teacher ratio ensures that children receive individual attention, helping them feel secure and supported in their learning journey.

6. Observe the school's atmosphere and culture

Visit the school and observe interactions between teachers and students. A nurturing environment with happy, engaged children is a good indicator of a well-run preschool. Pay attention to cleanliness, organization, and overall safety measures in place.

7. Inquire about safety and health policies

Children's health and safety should be a top priority. Ask about the school's policies regarding:

- Emergency preparedness
- Illness prevention and hygiene practices
- Food and allergy policies
- Background checks for staff
- Supervision during playtime and outdoor activities
- Required immunizations
- Sick child rules

8. Consider cost and affordability

Preschool tuition varies widely depending on the school type, location, and facilities. Create a budget and explore tuition assistance or scholarships if needed. Some public programs, such as Head Start, offer free or low-cost preschool options for qualifying families.

9. Ask for parent reviews and recommendations

Talking to other parents can provide valuable insights into a preschool's reputation. Read online reviews, join local parenting groups, and ask for recommendations from friends or family. First-hand



experiences can help you gauge the strengths and weaknesses of different schools.

10. Trust your instincts

While research and recommendations are helpful, trust your instincts when making a final decision. If a preschool feels right and aligns with your child's needs and your values, it's likely a great fit. If something feels off, continue exploring other options.

Finding the right preschool takes

time and careful consideration, but the effort is worth it. A positive preschool experience lays the foundation for a lifelong love of learning, social development, and emotional growth. By considering your child's needs, researching options, and visiting schools, you can confidently choose the best preschool for your little one.

~Article by Justin Daniels

~Photo: (boy) Adobe Stock/By GulArt

~Photo (girl): Adobe Stock/
By Oksana Kuzmina

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(440) 449-4242 ext. 102
www.corpuschristiacad.org

The Corpus Christi Academy prekindergarten program offers both full- and half-day options to meet the needs of your family. The half-day program is offered M–F from 8:15–11:45 a.m. and the full-day program is offered M–F from 8:15 a.m.–3 p.m.

Prekindergarten students will examine their world using a play-based approach that encourages critical thinking and builds confidence as the littlest Eagles learn to soar. Before-care and after-care options also available.

Creative Playrooms Montessori & Child Care Centers

www.creativeplayrooms.com
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

At Creative Playrooms Montessori & Child Care Centers, their mission is to offer the highest quality, learning environment for the successful development of the total child, in clean, modern, and safe facilities. This is

achieved through programs balancing individual experience, small group participation, and large group activities with nurturing, caring caregivers.

They believe that children carry within them the full potential of the person they will someday become. They are continually at the forefront of innovation program development and continue to set industry standards. Their goal is always to ensure that the best interest of the total child remains the single most important consideration.

They offer programs for ages 6 weeks to 12 years old; infant/toddler, nursery school, pre-kindergarten, Montessori program, chartered private kindergarten, before- and after-school programs, and summer camp. Some activities offered are swimming lessons in their indoor pool, computer labs, music, gymnastics, Spanish classes, and science. Their experienced cooks serve breakfast, snacks and hot lunches.

Ivybrook Academy

33625 Aurora Road, Solon
(440) 528-0884
www.ivybrookacademy.com/solon

Solon families will soon have a new standard for early childhood education. Ivybrook Academy is a private preschool that has a research-backed academic approach that's designed to cultivate a lifelong love of learning.

They believe that every child is uniquely capable and endlessly curious. By blending the hands-on discovery of the Montessori method with the collaborative, project-based exploration of Reggio Emilia, their curriculum meets children exactly where they are.

From 18 months to transitional kindergarten, their individualized curriculum ensures that each child develops independence, critical thinking, social intelligence, and creativity.

The journey begins this July with their half-day preschool summer camps for ages 2–6. They are now enrolling for the 2026-27 academic year.

Contact them at soloncampus@ivybrookacademy.com to secure your child's spot and discover the Ivybrook difference.

Montessori School of University Heights

23599 Cedar Road, Lyndhurst
(216) 200-5295
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

Help Your Preschooler Thrive



Enrolling Now

At Creative Playrooms, our preschool programs help young learners explore their world through a variety of age-appropriate activities. With both Montessori and traditional offerings available, preschoolers will develop fine and gross motor skills, problem solve, build emotional skills, and more.

- Serving children from 6 weeks to 12 years
- 6 locations in the greater Cleveland area

LEARN MORE

Schedule a tour and see what we're all about.

creativeplayrooms.com or call 440-349-9111



Montessori School of UH cont'd

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 a tour.



Beech Brook to host 5th annual "Bash for the Brook"

Beech Brook will host its 5th annual "Bash for the Brook" on Friday, April 24, 2026, at Huntington Bank Field. The event will raise funds to support the organization's mission of strengthening children and families across Northeast Ohio.

Beech Brook provides counseling, trauma-informed care, and family support services to thousands of children and families each year, helping them navigate mental health challenges and life transitions.

The event will offer guests a unique experience inside Huntington Bank Field, including behind-the-scenes stadium tours, interactive games, raffle prizes, and food and beverages.

Shaker Heights Schools Ludlow Early Learning Center

14201 Southington Road
Shaker Heights
(216) 295-4190
shaker.org/preschool

The Ludlow Early Learning Center, a newly renovated building within Shaker Heights Schools, is an International Baccalaureate preschool where young learners begin their educational journey as curious, confident thinkers. Rooted in inquiry and play-based learning, Ludlow encourages children to ask questions, explore interests and discover the world around them through hands-on experiences that build collaboration and problem-solving skills.

At Ludlow, nurturing the whole child is at the heart of everything they do. Classes support creativity and social-emotional development. Dedicated educators create a welcoming, inclusive environment where every child feels valued, while families partner with staff to build a strong sense of community.

Ludlow prepares children for a successful transition to kindergarten and a lifelong love of learning. The school is a Universal Pre-Kindergarten site supported by Invest in Children, accepts vouchers and offers scholarships and assistance to help make high-quality preschool accessible for families.

Learn more at shaker.org/preschool.

Family Kindness Festival returns April 26

30 inspiring nonprofits, 35 innovative students, and 30 area schools are joining together to celebrate the healing power of kindness at this FREE festival

Family Kindness Festival returns for another inspiring afternoon celebrating compassion, community, and connection. This year's festival will take place on Sunday, April 26 from 1-4 p.m. at a new location: Landerhaven at 6111 Landerhaven Dr. in Mayfield Heights.

Families from across Northeast Ohio are invited to gather for a joyful event designed to help children, parents and grandparents explore the healing power of kindness. The free festival will feature interactive activities, inspiring youth activists and entrepreneurs, hands-on projects, and opportunities for families to connect with nonprofit organizations that promote service, and community well-being.

Festival highlights will include:

- Inspiring, entrepreneurial students focused on giving back to their communities
- Community nonprofits and

organizations dedicated to those they serve

- Mobile blood drive
- Wigs for Kids Cut-a-Thon
- Hands-on give-back projects
- Interactive family experiences
- Entertainment—including, stilt walking, juggling and music
- Fun for all ages, featuring a video game arcade, henna tattoos, crafts galore, martial arts and face painting
- Ice cream and cotton candy for all

Families are encouraged to register in advance to secure their spot and receive event updates.

Event details

Who: Ideal for kids 6 and up but all ages welcome

Fee: Free to all!

For more information and to register, visit senderspediatrics.com/kindness



The Healing Power of Kindness

Enjoy Give-Back Projects, Strolling Entertainment, Games for all Ages, Ice Cream and so much more!

Inspiring Students

- Connect with inspiring local youth

Nonprofits & Organizations

- Learn about ways to get involved

Wigs for Kids Hair Cut-a-Thon

- Donate or cheer on those donating hair for kids experiencing hair loss

Crafts for a Cause

- Create crafts that support local charities

Exciting NEW Location!

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6111 Landerhaven Dr
Mayfield Heights, OH, 44124

NEW Crafts, Entertainment & Games!

- Face painting
- Photo booth
- Stilt walking
- Video game arcade
- Juggling
- Friendship bracelets



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senderspediatrics.com/kindness

Ideal for children ages 6 and up, but all ages are welcome!
(All children must be accompanied by an adult.)

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Family Kindness Festival is a project of the Senders Pediatrics Health Initiative, a federal 501 (c) (3) charitable organization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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"The most important period of life is not the age of university studies but the first one, the period of birth to age six. For that is the time when man's intelligence itself, his greatest implement is being formed."

Dr. Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind



THREE YEAR PROGRAM
BEGINNING AT AGE THREE

