

TODAY'S **family**

June/July 2026

Cuyahoga

Reserve Care **Walk to Remember**

June 14 at Cleveland
Metroparks Zoo

See page 19

Help Me Grow

Services for families from
pregnancy through the
early childhood years

Stars, Stripes & Stories

10 facts you may
not know about
the American flag

Fairs, Festivals & Events

Cleveland Orchestra

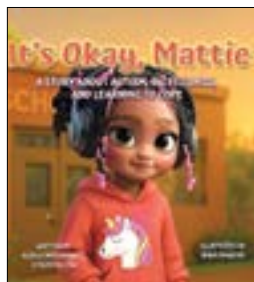
2026 Blossom
Summer Music
Festival

K9 Heroes 4 Heroes

Providing service dogs for local
veterans and first responders

ADHD

Is this just a phase
or something else?



It's Okay, Mattie

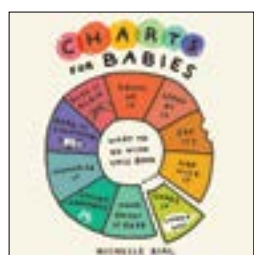
A Story About Autism, Big Feelings, and Learning to Cope

By Alisha Simpson-Watt

Meet Mattie—a bright, imaginative girl who sometimes feels the world a little differently. Because Mattie has autism, loud sounds, changes in routine, or missing her favorite breakfast can make her day feel overwhelming. After a tough day filled with big feelings, Mattie isn't sure how to cope, and she needs a little extra support to find her calm again.

"It's Okay, Mattie" gently shows children what autism can feel like while teaching empathy, understanding, and healthy coping skills. With relatable moments and supportive guidance, this story helps kids learn that big feelings are normal, and they have the tools to manage them.

Complete with caregiver tips and discussion prompts, this uplifting book reminds every child that they deserve to be seen, understood, and valued just as they are. Ages 4–8.



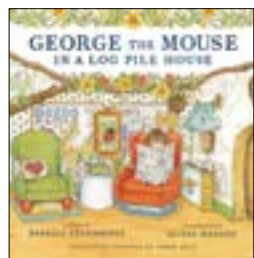
Charts for Babies: A Picture Book

By Michelle Rial

From Michelle Rial, the writer of viral favorite "Am I Overthinking This?" comes a quirky and delightful picture book exploring multiple early-learning concepts through simple graphic charts and graphs.

Little charts for big hearts! Through boldly illustrated timelines, pie charts, bar graphs, and Venn diagrams, young readers will learn about colors, opposites, shapes, feelings, and much more in this unconventional STEM picture book with the sweetest ending ever.

Michelle Rial's colorful, graphic style and infectious rhyming text make this a real off-the-charts read-aloud. Ages 2–5.



George the Mouse in a Log Pile House

By Rebecca Atanassova

Deep in a quiet garden, tucked within a carefully built log pile, lives a small mouse named George. His world is cozy, safe, and familiar—but George can't help wondering what lies beyond it. One day, guided by curiosity and courage, he

sets off on an adventure into the wide and wondrous world.

As George journeys farther from home than he ever has before, he encounters new places, unfamiliar sights, and unexpected friends. Along the way, he learns that the world is full of both beauty and uncertainty—and that even the smallest creature can be brave when it matters most. But when George finds himself far from everything he knows, he begins to wonder: how will he ever find his way back?

Told with warmth, simplicity, and heart, George the Mouse in a Log Pile House is a gentle story about exploration, resilience, and the meaning of home. It reminds young readers that it's okay to venture out, to be curious, and even to feel a little lost—because sometimes the journey itself helps us discover where we truly belong. Ages 3–7.

Happy Father's Day

contents

- 4 HELP ME GROW**
Services for families from pregnancy through the early childhood years.
- 7 LIVING WELL**
Today's Family advice column for parents and caregivers.
- 8 ADHD**
Is this just a phase?... or something more?
- 10 MOMMY CHRONICLES**
Reflections on graduation, adulthood, and the challenges every generation must face
- 11 DAD LIFE: THE FUNNY SIDE**
Lighthearted quips about fatherhood and family
- 14 FAIRS, FESTIVALS & EVENTS**
June–August
- 18 PARENT WIN/PARENT FAIL**
New feature where readers share real-life parenting stories
- 21 STARS, STRIPES & STORIES**
10 facts you may not know about the American flag
- 23 FIREWORKS, FATHERS & FOURTH OF JULY**
Humorous and heartfelt memories of fireworks, family, and growing up



TODAY'S family
Lake, Geauga & Cuyahoga Counties

Publisher/Advertising

Kim Miller

kim@todaysfamilymagazine.com

Publisher/Editor/Online

Dan Miller

dan@todaysfamilymagazine.com

Writers

Deanna Adams

Justin Daniels

Sophia Filipiak

Dan Miller

Stacy Turner



Subscribe to
our monthly
**EMAIL
NEWSLETTER**



Like us on
Facebook!

P.O. Box 7316
Eastlake, Ohio 44097
TodaysFamilyMagazine.com
440-223-0936



The opinions expressed in this magazine do not constitute an endorsement by the Today's Family Magazine® staff or our advertisers. All contributors and advertisers assume responsibility and liability for the accuracy of statements and claims in advertisements and press releases. **All readers assume responsibility for actions or decisions they may make as a result of reading this publication.** We reserve the right to refuse any advertising. Submission of articles does not guarantee publication. All submissions are subject to editing.

Copyright 2026
Direct Market Publishing, LLC
All rights reserved.

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

Cover Photo
iStock /LightFieldStudios

ANSWERING THE CALL AT HOME

How one local man is changing lives—
one service dog at a time

Article by Dan Miller • Photos courtesy of Joe Gionti

For Joe Gionti, a lifelong respect for those who serve—both in uniform and in our communities—was instilled early. Influenced by family, friends, and mentors who dedicated their lives to service, that sense of duty only deepened during his time at the Virginia Military Institute, where he watched classmates take the oath to defend the nation.

Though his own path ultimately led elsewhere, the desire to give back never left him. Years later, that calling took on new meaning in an unexpected way—through the bond with his own dog.

What began as personal training quickly turned into something more. Partnering with a veteran trainer at Ridgeside K9 Ashtabula, Joe immersed himself in canine behavior and service work, discovering not just a passion, but a purpose. That experience became the foundation for K9 Heroes 4 Heroes, a Northeast Ohio-based nonprofit dedicated to providing fully-trained service dogs to veterans and first responders at no cost.

To help bring his mission to life in a tangible way, Joe welcomed Loki, a Czech-line German Shepherd, into his family. More than a companion, Loki serves as both Joe's personal service dog and the organization's ambassador—offering a daily, visible example of the powerful role these dogs can play in restoring independence, confidence, and connection.

Today, K9 Heroes 4 Heroes is rooted deeply in the local community. From breeders in Ohio and nearby states to trainers across Lake, Ashtabula, and Medina counties, nearly every step of the process happens close to home. The dogs are ultimately placed with veterans and first responders throughout Northeast Ohio, creating a program that not only serves heroes—but strengthens the community around them.

Training a service dog is an inten-

sive process that typically takes nine months to a year, beginning when the dogs are still puppies and continuing until they are ready to live full-time with their handlers. It's a significant investment of time, expertise, and resources—one that can cost upwards of \$30,000 per dog. Through ongoing fundraising efforts, K9 Heroes 4 Heroes covers that entire cost, ensuring there is no financial burden on the heroes they serve.

What sets the organization apart is its commitment beyond placement. K9 Heroes 4 Heroes covers the cost of training, veterinary care, food, and equipment, while also providing ongoing support long after a dog is matched with its handler. What begins as an application often grows into something much more personal.

"They're not just participants—they become friends," says Joe's wife, Jody.

The impact of these service dogs is both immediate and far-reaching. For veterans and first responders living with PTSD, anxiety, or depression, the dogs provide constant companionship and emotional support. They can be trained to interrupt nightmares and flashbacks, offer a calming presence in stressful situations, and even alert their handlers to triggers in crowded or unfamiliar environments.

Beyond emotional support, these highly trained dogs assist with everyday tasks—retrieving items, opening doors, and providing physical stability. They also encourage routine, exercise, and social interaction, helping their handlers re-engage with the world around them.

"The veterans and first responders in our program are doing things they never thought they would do again," Joe explains. With their dogs by their side, many are returning to social settings, reconnecting with loved ones, and rediscovering a sense of normalcy.

For many, that transformation



Sarge and his dog Sage

brings something even deeper—a renewed sense of purpose. Families notice the difference too as their loved ones begin to reengage in everyday life and enjoy moments that once felt out of reach.

At the heart of it all is a deeper understanding of what these individuals face. PTSD, Joe explains, isn't something you can see—but it's something they live with every day. A service dog helps ground them, offers reassurance, and brings them back to the present when it matters most.

Balancing this mission with a full-time job isn't easy. Joe's days start early—often before 3 a.m.—and don't slow down after work. Evenings and weekends are filled with training, meetings, outreach, and communication with the organization's board. It's a demanding schedule, but one he never questions.

"Seeing the difference these dogs are making—that's what keeps me going," he says.

In a quiet but powerful way, Joe Gionti has found his own path to service—one that's changing lives across Northeast Ohio, one dog at a time.

Visit k9heroes4heroes.com or email Joe at joe.gionti@k9h4h.org to learn more.



Joe Gionti, K9 Heroes 4 Heroes founder, along with his personal service dog Loki.

How You Can Help

K9 Heroes 4 Heroes is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to providing fully-trained service dogs to veterans and first responders—at no cost to the recipient.

Each dog represents a significant investment, including:

- Professional training for dog and handler
- Veterinary care and boarding
- Equipment and training gear
- Ongoing support and maintenance training

Total cost per service dog: \$30k. Every dollar raised helps change a life. Donate today and be part of the mission.

Visit k9heroes4heroes.com



Help Me Grow

Supporting Ohio Families From the Very Start

Article by Dan Miller, Today's Family Editor

Photo credit: Adobe Stock / By sementsova321

Becoming a parent is exciting, rewarding, and sometimes overwhelming. From pregnancy through the early childhood years, families often have questions about development, parenting, and where to turn for support. That's where Ohio's Help Me Grow program comes in.

Help Me Grow is a statewide system of support overseen by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth. The program connects pregnant individuals, caregivers with new babies, and families of young children with developmental delays or disabilities to valuable services and resources designed to help children thrive during their earliest years.

One of the program's most widely used services is Home Visiting. Offered voluntarily at no cost, Home Visiting pairs families with trained professionals who provide guidance, encouragement, and support during pregnancy and throughout a child's earliest stages of development.

Home visitors can help families navigate everything from healthy pregnancy habits and infant sleep routines to soothing a crying baby and managing the everyday stresses of parenting. They also connect parents with local resources tailored to their specific needs.

Research shows the program can make a significant impact. Pregnant women who participated

in Home Visiting experienced 48 percent fewer low birth weight babies, and children involved in the program scored 25 percent higher on first-through third-grade reading and math achievement tests.

For children experiencing developmental concerns, Help Me Grow also offers Early Intervention services. Families concerned about delays in speech, movement, social interaction, or other developmental milestones are encouraged to seek support as early as possible.

Early Intervention services are available statewide to eligible children regardless of family income. Providers work closely with families to determine eligibility and develop personalized plans that support each child's unique needs. Services are often provided in familiar environments like the home or daycare setting, where children naturally learn and grow through everyday routines and experiences.

Research consistently shows that early support gives children the best opportunity for long-term success and can reduce the need for additional services later in life.

Help Me Grow also offers developmental screenings to help families track milestones from birth through age 5. Ohio families can access the free Sparkler: Play for Parenting app, which

includes built-in developmental screenings and personalized guidance from specialists. Since 90 percent of brain development occurs before age 5, these early screenings can play an important role in identifying concerns and supporting healthy growth.

Another important service is Family Connects Ohio, which provides free nurse home visits for families with newborns in participating communities. During these visits, registered nurses answer questions, offer reassurance, assess the baby's well-being, and help connect families to additional community support if needed. Visits may take place in the home or through telehealth.

In addition, Help Me Grow's online Community Resource Directory helps families locate local support services, including childcare resources, baby supplies, job training programs, adoption and foster care information, and much more.

Whether families need guidance during pregnancy, support navigating developmental concerns, or simply reassurance during the early years of parenting, Help Me Grow is designed to ensure Ohio families never have to face those challenges alone.

Visit www.helpmegrow.org, call (800) 755-GROW (4769) or email info@helpmegrow.org to learn more.



Department of Children & Youth

Help Me Grow



www.helpmegrow.org
(800) 755-GROW (4769)

Help Me Grow is a statewide system of supports that promotes the healthy growth and development of young children through pregnancy and early childhood programs and services.



Home Visiting

Home visitors provide growing families with **information and resources that support** the health of their baby and entire family.



Early Intervention

Concerned about a child's development? **Act early!** Services are provided where the child lives, plays, and spends their day.



Community Resources

Find local resources with Help Me Grow's interactive **Community Resource Directory** – a catalog of family support services.



Developmental Screenings

Families have access to the **Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screening tool** for FREE through the **Sparkler: Play for Parenting** app.



Newborn Home Visiting

Family Connects Ohio offers FREE, at-home nurse visits to families with newborns in participating communities.

Schedule your visit today!



Families can use their visit to get support with whatever they need, such as health checks; breastfeeding support; help scheduling doctor's appointments; getting access to newborn essentials; and much more.

WIN THIS DREAM HOUSE!

**FOR AS LITTLE AS \$25, YOU COULD BE
THE WINNER OF A BRAND NEW HOME!**

The 2026 Dream House will be built in Mentor, Ohio,
by Rick Osborne Jr. and Osborne Real Estate Services.
The Lake County YMCA is excited to bring you another
beautiful home, one that could soon be yours!

**Dream House Tours
July 2026**

**Final Drawing
August 2026**

**TICKETS
ON SALE
NOW!**



**Purchasing tickets will also enter you in a separate
drawing for a new 2026 Chevy Trailblazer!**

TICKET PRICE:

1 House Ticket = \$25

SAVE MORE WITH THESE SPECIALLY PRICED PACKAGES:

4 House + 1 Car Tickets = \$75

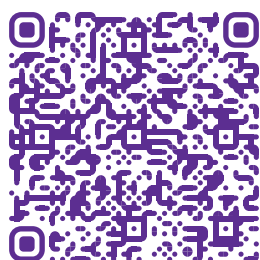
6 House + 4 Car Tickets = \$100

20 House + 14 Car Tickets = \$235

SUMMER SPECTACULAR: 12 House + 9 Car Tickets = \$135

DREAM BUILDER: 100 House + 50 Car Tickets = \$1000

**SPONSORED BY THE
CHEVY NETWORK
AND CLASSIC CHEVROLET**



www.lakecountnymca.org



Twilight at the Zoo

Presented by the Cleveland Zoological Society, this late
summer event is the organization's largest fundraiser of
the year and an annual tradition for many Clevelanders

On Friday, August 7, thousands
of Northeast Ohioans will head to
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo for an
evening of live music, food and drink
– all in support of the Zoo Society's
mission.

In its 32nd year, Twilight at the
Zoo presented by KeyBank is a staple
of the summertime festival season
and a can't-miss tradition for many.
More than a dozen local bands
play in iconic locations throughout
the Zoo, and partygoers can stop
by complimentary food and drink
stations as they stroll from stage to
stage. A VIP ticket option includes

premium cocktails and tasting plates
from a lineup of beloved Cleveland
chefs and restaurants.

The experience is unique to Twi-
light, and it is all for a good cause.
This event is the largest fundraiser of
the year for the Zoo Society, helping
support the nonprofit philanthropic
partner organization of Cleveland
Metroparks Zoo.

Tickets start at \$95 and include
cover charge, small bites, beer, wine,
and soda. All event details, band list,
and tickets can be found at www.clevelandzoosociety.org/twilight.



Wade Oval Wednesdays

20th Anniversary Season

June 17–August 19, 2026 • 5:30–8:30 p.m.

Family-friendly fun awaits you this summer at Wade Oval in Universi-
ty Circle. Enjoy ten unforgettable Wednesday nights of live music, food,
dancing, roaming entertainment and more — all for FREE! Bring a picnic or
purchase delicious treats from vendors on-site. Select museums are open late
on Wednesdays.

June 17– Councilman Conwell & The Footprints (Jazz)

June 24 – Apostle Jones (Soul/Covers)

July 1 – Carlos Jones (+) (Reggae)

July 8 – 1o1ón (Latin Rap)

July 15 – Old Skool (Covers)

July 22 – Hubb's Groove (Soul Funk R&B)

July 29 – Kor4 feat. K. Shanea (hip hop, soul, DC gogo)

August 5– Son Gitano (Latin Fusion Orchestra)

August 12 – Quenton Rubon Band (Funk/Rock/Blues)

August 19 – Da Land Brass Band (Jazz/Funk/Hip-Hop)



TODAY'S FAMILY ADVICE COLUMN

LIVING WELL

with Rebecca Fellenbaum

Parenting, stress, relationships,
family life—we all have questions.

Ask yours
anonymously or
with your name.
Selected questions
will be featured in an
upcoming issue of
Today's Family.



Summer Pressure Is Real

Dear Rebecca: I feel terrible saying this, but I'm not really looking forward to summer break. I love my kids, but I also like the structure of the school year, and summer feels overwhelming. It seems like other families plan these magical summers, and I already feel behind. How can I get excited about summer?

— Laura, Willoughby Hills

Dear Laura: Let's start with your first three words: I feel terrible. How do you know you feel terrible? Is there a physical sensation, belief, or feeling underneath those words? If you approach feeling terrible with curiosity, what is revealed? I recommend you sit with this and even journal about how terrible you feel.

To move away from that terrible feeling, let's also look at this from a both/and perspective: you love your kids, and you love the structure of the school year. Both can be true.

Next, let's look at your truth: summer feels overwhelming. By stripping away the story and shame around the overwhelm, you can address it head-on. What are some ways you can feel less overwhelmed?

You mentioned that you like structure. I'd encourage you to explore whether there are pieces of the school-year structure you can carry into summer. I print physical calendars for June, July, and August and put them on the fridge for everyone to see. I write in camps, vacations, and activities so we all know what's coming. In doing that, you may find there's more structure already built into your summer than you initially thought.

I also want to gently challenge your feeling of being "behind." Behind whom? You said it seems like other families plan magical summers. Do you really know if that's true?

Here's a radical idea: declare it! You say you want to get excited about summer. Get excited! Start with one thing that excites you. Ask everyone in your family to share a couple of

things they're excited about this summer. While it's not a good idea to bypass your challenges, declaring you're excited for summer goes a long way toward making that your reality.

And that can make for a magical summer break right there!

When Your Child Feels Rejected

Dear Rebecca: My son didn't make the team he really wanted, and I was surprised by how emotional I was about it. Of course, I hurt for him, but I also feel embarrassed, angry, and even compare him to other kids who made it. How do I handle this?

— Ariel, Solon

Dear Ariel: First, I want to acknowledge your honesty. Many of us have this experience, but not everyone admits it. We can learn a lot about ourselves when we allow our emotions instead of pushing them away or judging them.

You mentioned feeling hurt, embarrassed, and pulled into comparison. Let's unpack those.

The hurt makes sense. When our children are disappointed, we feel it too. We love them and want the best for them. It might help to talk to your son about his experience. Ask him, "How do you feel about not making the team?" Listening to him may help both of you process the hurt. You might be surprised by the perspective he already has on this. Our kids can be our greatest teachers.

Next, let's look at your embarrassment. Are you embarrassed for your son, yourself, or both? Have you attached a story to him not making the team? Does a part of you believe this means he's behind, excluded, or not good enough? Does it bring up feelings or memories from your own childhood?

This is where comparison can take over. Comparison is rooted in scarcity. It tells us there is only so much success, belonging, opportunity, or happiness to go around. That's when your mind starts scanning: Who

made it? What does it mean?

Your son not making this team does not define him or you.

I know it can sound simplistic to say "everything happens for a reason," especially in painful moments. But sometimes life redirects us toward something we didn't know would be better. Maybe this opens the door to another interest, another team, new friendships, more family time, or even resilience that you and your son are ready to develop.

When we have big feelings that are hard to process, we need to lean on people. When I face disappointment, I often call a friend and say, "Can you just listen to me talk this through?" Being heard is really helpful. Is there someone you can talk to?

Disappointment is part of life. Your ability to name these feelings

and reach out demonstrates what a thoughtful mom you are, and I know you can not only get through this but also grow through this. I'm cheering you on!

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

**Have a question
on your mind?
You're not the
only one!**

Submit your question
anonymously (or include
your name) and it may be
featured in an upcoming
issue of Today's Family.
Scan the QR code to ask.



A Summer Evening Entertainment Series

Enjoy an evening surrounded by nature at
Penitentiary Glen Reservation's outdoor amphitheater.

Friday, June 5 • 7 to 8:30 pm
Up 'Til 4
Concert: Folk rock

Friday, July 10 • 7 to 8:30 pm
Hip to That
Concert: Pop/rock/jazz

Thursday, June 11 • 7 to 8 pm
Storytime Puppet Theater
"Forest Fables"

Thursday, July 16 • 7 to 8 pm
Storytime Puppet Theater
"The Bee's Knees"



See the full schedule at lakemetroparks.com.

PHOTO BY RICK HERSHBERGER

Is this just a phase... or something more?

Understanding ADHD through a parent's eyes

Article by Dan Miller, Today's Family Editor



If you've ever called your child's name three times before they even look up, or watched them bounce from couch to floor to ceiling in the span of five minutes, you're not alone. Many parents and caregivers find themselves wondering: Is this just normal kid energy, or could it be ADHD?

In today's world, ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) is a term we hear often—sometimes too often, sometimes not soon enough. The truth is, every child gets distracted. Every child has bursts of energy. The challenge for parents is figuring out when those behaviors are simply part of growing up, and when they might signal something more persistent that deserves attention.

"That's my child"... or is it?

Picture this: It's homework time. Your child sits down, pencil ready. Within 90 seconds, they're tapping the table, asking about snack time, staring out the window, and suddenly remembering they "absolutely must" tell you about a dream they had three nights ago.

Or maybe it's the grocery store trip where your child can't stay in the cart, grabs items off shelves, talks nonstop, and seems physically unable to slow down—even when you're trying your best to keep things calm and contained.

Then there's the emotional side. Big feelings. Fast reactions. A missing toy or a simple "no" can turn into tears, frustration, or meltdown-level intensity that feels out of proportion to the moment.

For many parents, these moments come with a mix of love, exhaustion, and confusion. And often the question follows: Is this ADHD?

What ADHD can look like (and what it doesn't)

ADHD isn't just about energy or occasional distraction. Most children daydream sometimes, forget chores, or struggle to sit still in boring situations. That alone doesn't point to ADHD.

What professionals look for is a consistent pattern that shows up in more than one setting—home, school, activities—and affects daily life in a meaningful way.

Dr. Shelly Senders, CEO of Senders Pediatrics in South Euclid says, "ADHD isn't just a child being active or spirited. It's when attention and impulse control regularly interfere with learning, relationships, and everyday functioning. And when it is real, it is hardwired with a very distinctive brain biochemical profile. That is why the terms ADD and ADHD have been replaced with ADHD primarily inattentive, ADHD primarily hyperactive and ADHD combined. All three types have the same characteristic brain pattern and differ only in whether it is located in the thinking area of the brain, the movement area of the brain or both areas."

When it might just be... childhood

It's important to say this clearly: many behaviors that worry parents are actually developmentally normal.

A kindergartner who can't sit through a 30-minute dinner? Common.

A third grader who forgets homework occasionally? Very normal.

A child who gets overly excited, talks too much, or struggles to wind down after school? That's childhood.

The difference with ADHD is not occasional struggle—it's consistency, intensity, and impact over time.

When to start asking questions

If you and your child's teacher are noticing patterns like:

- Constant difficulty focusing, even on preferred activities
- Frequent impulsive behavior that leads to problems at home and school
- Ongoing struggles with organization, routines, or completing tasks
- Emotional reactions that feel unusually intense or hard to reset

...it may be worth having a conversation with your child's pediatrician.

Early conversations don't mean labeling a child. They simply open the door to understanding what kind of support might help them thrive.

Getting answers (without jumping to conclusions)

An ADHD evaluation typically involves input from parents, teachers, and healthcare providers. It's less about a single test and more about understanding patterns over time. Sleep, stress learning differences, anxiety, and especially excessive screen time can all influence attention and behavior—so a thoughtful evaluation looks at the whole child.

Dr. Senders says, "MRIs of the brains of patients with ADHD look virtually identical to those of those who are sleep deprived so before moving forward on an evaluation, always make sure that your child is getting an age-appropriate amount of sleep."

And importantly, even if ADHD is part of the picture, it's not a limitation on who a child can become. It simply helps explain how their brain works—and how adults can better support them. Moreover, at least 50% of children and adolescents with ADHD, outgrow the condition over time.

A final word for parents

If you're asking the question, you're already doing something important: paying attention.

Dr. Senders emphasizes the importance of taking a deliberate approach to diagnosis. "There are actually computerized electronic tests that have been developed to aid in diagnosis."

And remember that medication is not always the answer. Dr. Senders concludes, "Making the diagnosis helps the school develop programs such as a 504 plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that can help support your child in school without resorting to medication as the solution."

Whether your child is simply growing through a busy, messy, wonderful stage—or whether they need a little extra support—what matters most is that they feel seen, understood, and guided with patience.

Because in the end, every child is trying their best. And every parent is, too.

Senders Pediatrics is located at 2054 South Green Road in South Euclid. For an appointment call 216-291-9210 or visit senderspediatrics.com for more information.

THE
CLEVELAND
ORCHESTRA

BLOSSOM MUSIC FESTIVAL 2026

PRESENTED BY



THE J.M. SMUCKER Co.



CLEVELANDORCHESTRA.COM | 216-231-1111



Caps, Gowns & Changing Times

Reflections on graduation, adulthood, and the challenges every generation must face

In this season of graduations, I've been reflecting on my own graduation and the path that's led me where I am today. Surprisingly, in some ways, I wasn't so different from today's graduates. Years ago, when I wore a cap and gown, I received my diploma in the mail afterward—just like many graduates do today. At my state college, I think it was more of a way to make sure graduates had paid all their fees and behaved themselves during the ceremony, but that's a topic for another day.

When it was my turn to join the workforce, the economic landscape was bleak. Jobs in my chosen field were hard to come by, and like many of today's graduates, I felt the stress of student loan payments that would soon come due. Unlike today's graduates with email, LinkedIn profiles, and video calls, I pounded the pavement looking for work. After mailing countless resumes and interviewing for more than a few less-than-ideal jobs, I eventually lowered my expectations of finding "The Job" and instead found an opportunity to gain valuable experience—and a paycheck.

Building my work life slowly wasn't a choice, but simply step one on my path to adulthood. The economy was in recession, which brought its

own challenges and uncertainties. But in the days before cell phones and social media distractions, it may have been easier to focus more deeply on the people, tasks, and things that mattered most than it is today.

Many of today's graduates also carry the massive weight of college debt as they begin their careers. Experts note that young graduates face one of the toughest job markets in a decade, making good jobs difficult to find. Today's challenges are different from those of the past, as AI reshapes industries in real time, social media competes for attention, and misinformation spreads faster than truth. But when looking ahead, it's important to look back, because history provides valuable lessons.

When we do look back, we see that every generation is handed defining challenges: the Greatest Generation, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, Gen Z, and today's Generation Alpha. The future is something each of us helps create, regardless of the era we're born into. When we face uncertainty with faith and determination instead of surrendering to fear, we can navigate difficult times without losing our humanity.

As you embark on this season of graduations,



I hope you see a bit of yourself in today's graduates—in both the challenges they face and the accomplishments they've already achieved. And once you've made it through the long, boring ceremony, that's when the exciting part begins for all of us.

Mommy
CHRONICLES

By Stacy Turner



A Lifetime of Learning Starts Here!



Give your child a head start this fall! Our experienced educators are committed to creating an environment where children can thrive and learn.

- Engaging programs for children 6 weeks -12 years
- Creative play areas that spark imagination
- Healthy meals and snacks to fuel young minds
- A secure facility with a focus on safety



Creativeplayrooms.com
440-349-9111



Now Enrolling! Limited Spots Available.



Lighthearted quips about fatherhood and family

Being a dad means spending 20 minutes lighting the grill only for everyone to decide they want chicken nuggets instead.

Dads don't actually fall asleep on the couch. We're "resting our eyes" while monitoring the movie.

Nothing boosts a father's confidence quite like successfully carrying all the grocery bags in one trip.

A dad can sleep through thunderstorms, barking dogs, and emergency alerts—but will instantly wake up if someone touches the thermostat.

Every dad eventually becomes emotionally invested in lawn stripes.

Having kids means never knowing why the house is sticky... but accepting that it probably always will be.

A father's greatest fear is hearing: "Dad, come look at this," followed by complete silence.

Dads don't need instructions. We just need to assemble it incorrectly once first.

One of the most powerful sounds in nature is a dad yelling: "WE ARE NOT COOLING THE ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD!"

Every father reaches a point where he has a "good flashlight."

Dad fashion is buying a new shirt and wearing it for the next seven years.

Nothing makes a man feel more accomplished than successfully killing a spider while his family watches like he's defending the village.

Every dad eventually reaches the age where he owns "collectible" LEGO sets and suddenly understands why museums don't let children touch things.

theater

visual arts

music

dance

creative arts therapies

SUMMER CAMPS AND CLASSES FOR ARTISTS LIKE YOU!

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

BECKCENTER.ORG
216.521.2540



Beck Center
—FOR THE—
arts

BE A PART OF THE ARTS!

Heights Libraries Summer Reading Challenge

Families across Northeast Ohio are invited to dig into a summer filled with books, activities, and prizes during Heights Libraries' all-ages Summer Reading Challenge, "Unearth a Story," running June 1 through August 14.

Designed for readers of all ages, the annual program encourages children, teens, and adults to keep reading all summer long while participating in fun library activities and earning chances to win exciting prizes.

Youth participants (18 and under) earn digital raffle tickets by logging days spent reading, while adults (19+) earn entries based on books completed. Readers can boost their chances of winning by attending library programs, submitting book reviews, and completing bonus activities.

This year's dinosaur-themed adventure invites the entire community to read together while tracking collective progress toward a shared community reading goal. Along the way, participants will uncover a path

to "dino-tastic treasure" through interactive displays and entertaining video updates.

Children and teens can earn special rewards throughout the challenge, while supplies last:

Registration Prize: Select a free prize book to kick off the summer.

15 Days of Reading: Choose an ice cream voucher from Ben & Jerry's, Mitchell's Ice Cream, or Tommy's.

30 Days of Reading: Earn another free prize book and an invitation to an exclusive End-of-Summer Party for the whole family.

Readers can win a year of Mitchell's Ice Cream, memberships to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and Great Lakes Science Center, and gift cards to Dewey's Pizza, Phoenix Coffee, Cedar Lee Theatre, Blick Art Materials, or local independent bookstores.

Visit heightslibrary.org/challenge or stop by any Heights Libraries branch (Coventry Village, Lee Road, Noble Neighborhood, and University Heights) to join the 2026 Summer Reading Challenge.

UNEARTH A STORY™

2026 SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

May 31-Aug 10 • All Ages

Win exciting prizes on an epic reading adventure! Visit any Heights Libraries branch (Coventry Village, Lee Road, Noble Neighborhood, University Heights) or go to heightslibrary.org/challenge to get started.



2026 **YOUR**
SUMMER
SOUNDTRACK

**MAKE THIS
YOUR BEST
SUMMER YET**

**FREE
Healthcare
for all CMSD
Students**

STAY ACTIVE. KEEP LEARNING. HAVE FUN.

TURN UP THE VOLUME ON SUMMER LEARNING!

Your Summer Soundtrack is back and bringing the hottest opportunities of the season for students from current kindergarten through 12th grade. Created in partnership with Y.O.U., Starting Point, the Cleveland Public Library, GCRTA, and the City of Cleveland, this summer experience is packed with learning, enrichment, and real-world opportunities students will enjoy all summer long.



▶ TRACK #2

CMSD 2026 SUMMER LEARNING

Grades K-3 | June 9 - July 10

Sites: Albert Bushnell Hart, Campus International, Clark, Natividad Pagan International Newcomers Academy, Oliver H. Perry, Paul Dunbar, Riverside, Sunbeam

Pre-Algebra Boot Camp for rising 7 & 8

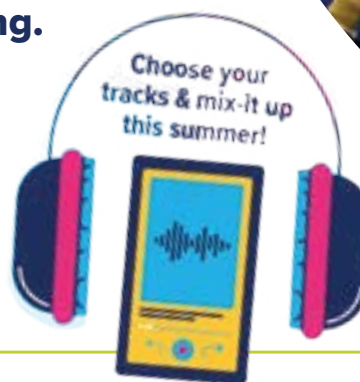
Graders | June 9 - July 10

Sites: High School sites below

High School | June 9 - July 10

Sites: Cleveland School of the Arts, Natividad Pagan International Newcomers Academy, Max S. Hayes

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!



▶ TRACK #3

2026 SUMMER CAMPS, SPORTS, ARTS & More

The City of Cleveland, Cleveland Public Library, Starting Point and a host of organizations are offering a variety of programs and opportunities for children and youth of all ages to have fun this summer!

Summer camps, sports and recreation, music and art, reading programs, STEM - these are just some of the 2026 Summer offerings available.

Sign up for summer programs today. **ChooseCMSD.org**





JUNE 2026

Art in the Village with Craft Marketplace

Saturday, June 6 • 11 am–6 pm
Sunday, June 7 • 11 am–5 pm

Legacy Village
25001 Cedar Road, Lyndhurst
www.artfestival.com/festivals
Immerse yourself in a harmonious blend of art, culinary delights, and family entertainment. This event boasts a diverse range of over 100 skilled artists exhibiting their creations across various mediums. Free admission.

Art by the Falls

Saturday, June 6 • 10 am–7 pm
Sunday, June 7 • 10 am–4 pm
Cleveland Metroparks Polo Field
41324 S. Woodland Road
Chagrin Falls
440-247-7507

www.valleyartcenter.org

Art by the Falls is a juried fine art and contemporary craft festival that draws 160+ artists and 25,000 attendees from across the country.

In addition to art to peruse and purchase, live music, kids' activities, culinary offerings, free trolley to town, art raffle, community art and unique photo ops provide non-stop entertainment. Free admission and parking.

Larchmere Rock the Blocks

Sunday, June 7 • noon–5 pm
Larchmere Boulevard, Cleveland
(One block north of Shaker Square)
216-509-4619

www.RockTheBlocks.info

Focusing on healthy activities and personal challenges throughout the day. Share your creative side by dressing up and participating in the parade of local flavor with kids, merchants and neighbors! Enjoy an ice cream social, live band & DJ entertainment at the Talent Stage, restaurants and food trucks, and shop with local and visiting vendors.

Legacy Live

Saturdays, June 13–September 5
5–8 pm
Legacy Village
25001 Cedar Road, Lyndhurst
216-382-3871

www.legacy-village.com/play

Jam packed schedule of live music, family entertainment, and special

events! Join in every Saturday for live music featuring a variety of genres, from pop, rock & Motown to blues, swing and everything in between. Free admission.

Parade The Circle and Circle Village

Saturday, June 13 • 10 am–4 pm
University Circle, Cleveland
216-791-3900

www.universitycircle.org

The day's festivities begin at 10 a.m. with Circle Village. Visitors are invited to immerse themselves in interactive activities offered by esteemed institutions such as The Cleveland Orchestra, Cleveland Botanical Garden, and The Music Settlement. Attendees can also enjoy culinary delights from local vendors and listen to live music.

The parade, which begins at noon at the north entrance of the Cleveland Museum of Art, fills Wade Oval with colorful costumes, towering puppets, floats, masks, and more created by local individuals and groups. Free admission.

Uncorked: Cleveland Wine Fest

Saturday, June 13 • 7–11 pm
Great Lakes Science Center
601 Erieside Avenue, Cleveland
uncorkedwinefestivals.com

Sip & savor over 100 wines & bubbies from across the globe. Plus, enjoy favorite local food trucks and full after-hours access to the museum's exhibits.

Early admission (\$85) is at 7 pm and includes an extra hour of tasting and museum access with bonus wine selections. General admission (\$70) is at 8 pm. Both tickets include all wine tasting with food sold separately. 21+ only.

Larchmere PorchFest

Saturday, June 13 • 1–10 pm
Larchmere Boulevard, Cleveland
(1 block north of Shaker Square)
www.larchmereporchfest.org

PorchFest is a free, family-friendly event featuring musicians from a wide variety of genres. There's something for everyone, including activities for kids.

You'll be "camping out" in neighborhood front lawns for 30-40 minutes at a time, so bring chairs or a blanket to sit on. If you want to see as many bands as possible, a bike is a great idea.

Larchmere Blvd. and Shaker Square have many restaurants to choose from. There will also be vendors and a food court for additional food options. You're welcome to bring food.

2026 Walk to Remember

Sponsored by Reserve Care
Sunday, June 14 • 8:30 am
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo
www.hospicewr.org/WTR

Form a team by inviting your family and friends to walk with you. Registration fee is \$30 and includes all-day Zoo admission + commemorative keepsake.

See page 19 for details.

Wade Oval Wednesdays

June 17–Aug. 19 • 5:30–8:30 pm
University Circle, Cleveland
www.universitycircle.org

Enjoy evenings of live music, food, dancing, roaming entertainment and more — all for FREE!

See page 6 for schedule.

Kirtland Strawberry Festival

Thursday, June 18 • 5–10 pm
Friday, June 19 • 3–11 pm
Saturday, June 20 • noon–11 pm
Kirtland Schools

9150 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland
www.kirtlandkiwanis.org

Each day, attendees can enjoy strawberry shortcakes, sundaes, supremes, and chocolate-covered strawberries. There will also be rides, entertainment including a DJ and local bands, lemonade from the Kiwanis, a food court, photo opportunity area, kiddie land entertainment, robotics demonstration, contests, and a crafts and commercial area. Free admission.

Fam Jam

Saturday, June 20 • 10 am–2 pm
Rock & Roll Hall of Fame
Outdoor Stage and Plaza
1100 Rock & Roll Blvd., Cleveland
216-781-ROCK (7625)

rockhall.com/event/fam-jam-2026
Special features include a performance by Mr. Jeff, balloon twisting with Flower Clown, and bubbies with Bubble Wanda. They will also collect instrument donations for the Center for Arts Inspired Learning and Hungry for Music, to support local music education programs. Free with RSVP. Museum admission sold separately.

Downtown Willoughby Cruise-In

Saturday, June 20 • 4–9 pm

One of Ohio's most popular auto & truck cruise-in returns with incredible vehicles, two band stages, a shady park, great food vendors, restaurants, pubs, wine spots, cafe's, and merchants of all kinds that are open during the event. Traffic is diverted around the downtown area so visitors may walk the streets, view the cars and trucks, and relax enjoying the day. Admission is free.

JULY 2026

Cain Park Arts Festival

Friday, July 10 • 3–8 pm
Saturday, July 11 • 10 am–8 pm
Sunday, July 12 • 11 am–5 pm
14591 Superior Rd., Cleveland Hts.
216-371-3000

www.cainpark.com

This free, three-day juried arts festival showcases artists whose mediums include wood, clay, glass, painting, jewelry, photography, sculpture, and more. Attendees can also enjoy live entertainment, an interactive mural painting for children of all ages, and a variety of food trucks and concessions.

Farmfest

Saturday, July 11 • 9 am–5 pm
Lake Metroparks Farmpark
8800 Euclid Chardon Rd., Kirtland
440-256-2122

www.lakemetroparks.com

Free admission!

This FREE, family-friendly event will provide a sampling of Farmpark's best programs and demonstrations. Meet the clubs that call Farmpark home, whether it's old engines, spinning and weaving, or beekeeping—all offer opportunities to get involved.

Visitors can enjoy food trucks, cooking demonstrations, a Science of Bread Making presentation by Reveille Bakery, learn about gardening in a small space, and discover how wool is transformed from the sheep to yarn with Raven Hooves Farm—plus much more.



More events on page 16



GYMNASTICS

for kids & adults!

Now in our 23rd year of helping gymnasts to reach their goals!

ADULT GYMNASTICS CLASS

Looking for a fun way to get fit, build strength, and learn something new? Our brand new Adult Gymnastics Class is here, and we want YOU to be part of it! Whether you're a complete beginner or have experience, this class is for everyone.

What you'll get:

- Flexibility training
- Conditioning exercises
- Basic skills & drills in tumbling, bars, balance beam, and vault

Why join?

- Fun & supportive environment with amazing coaches
- Meet classmates who are just as passionate as you are!
- Perfect for both nervous beginners and experienced adults who want to refine their skills

Thursdays 6:30–7:15 p.m.

COST: \$15 per class

SUMMER ADULT OPEN GYM

TIME: 7:15–8:15 pm

COST: \$10 per date or only \$5 when added to a class participation date

DATES: June 11, 18, 25; July 9, 16, 23, 30; August 6 & 13

Birthday Parties

Our coaches will tailor the party activities to the age of the birthday child. All guests are sure to enjoy our gymnastic games and equipment, including our 50 feet of trampoline and in-ground foam pit! Party guests will enjoy organized and loosely-structured instruction on the gymnastic equipment.

An hour of gym time and a half-hour of celebration time
\$195 for 10 children; \$20 for each additional child. JSG provides white paper plates, forks, tablecloths, napkins, and clean-up.



TWISTER PROGRAM: Ages 20 months–6 years old

FLIPS FOR GIRLS: 7–16 years old

GYM SKILLS FOR BOYS: 5–16 years old

ADULT GYMNASTIC CLASS: 18 years +

Specializing in beginners • Thursdays 6:45–7:45 p.m.

Call for Details!

SUMMER CAMP

June 8 – Aug 14, 2026

9:15 a.m. – 3 p.m.



- For ages 4–14, boys and girls, and all levels of gymnastics experience, from recreational to competitive gymnastics.
- Gymnastic camp at Jump Start is a great way to explore and experience gymnastics for the first time, learn new skills, or build a solid competitive base for the next season.
- Our philosophy at JSG is that gymnastics is for everyone, an excellent basis for physical fitness, and benefits coordination for every sport and children's health.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

WEEKLY or DAILY ENROLLMENT

\$300 per 5-day week or \$60 per day



AFTER-CARE OR YOUTH OPEN GYM

- For all ages
- Daily from 3–5 p.m.
- \$10 per day
- Preregistration required

Jump! Start Gymnastics
START HERE...JSG WILL GET YOU THERE

23700 Mercantile Road, Beachwood

(216) 896-0295

Website: jsgymnastics.com

Email: jsgymnastics@jsgymnastics.com

Fairs, Festivals & Events

Music in the Valley Folk & Wine Festival

July 11 & 12 • 10 am–4 pm
Hale Farm & Village
2686 Oak Hill Road, Bath
330-666-3711
www.halefarm.org

This weekend celebration showcases the history and evolution of folk music, featuring live performances throughout this historic site. Enjoy the rich blend of music, local food history, historical demonstrations, and Ohio wine tastings, all set against the beautiful backdrop of Hale Farm.

Admission: Children (3-12) \$10.10 (inc. fees); adult \$17.59 (inc. fees)

Lake County Fair

July 28–August 2
Lake County Fairgrounds
1301 Mentor Avenue, Painesville
www.lakecountyfair.org
General admission is \$12.

Two demo derbies, monster truck show, KOI dirt drag racing, truck and tractor pulls, 4-H live-

stock auction, K9 performance dogs, live entertainment, and more.

Solon Summer Festival

Sunday, July 26 • noon–6 pm
Solon Community Park
6679 SOM Center Road, Solon
440-248-5747

Live performances, food trucks and snack vendors, and children's activities, cardboard boat races, parade, pancake breakfast. Free admission.

AUGUST 2026

Twilight at the Zoo

Fri., August 7 • 7 pm–midnight
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo
www.ClevelandZooSociety.org
Spotlights local bands playing pop, rock, dance, swing, country and blues. Admission for all partygoers includes cover charge, small bites, complimentary beer, wine and soda. 21 & over.

Tickets start at \$95.

See page 6 for more info.

Cleveland Puerto Rican Parade and Cultural Festival

August 1–2 • noon–10 pm
Parade: August 3 • 11 am–noon
MetroHealth Main Campus
Medical Center - QUAD PARK
www.puertoricanparade.org
International music artists and groups, local food vendors and artisans, health & wellness screening, more. Free admission.

Meet the Machines

Sunday, August 16 • noon–3 pm
Legacy Village
25001 Cedar Road, Lyndhurst
www.legacy-village.com/play
This free, outdoor, family event encourages children to meet and explore construction equipment, emergency and service vehicles, and machines of all makes and sizes. Plus, enjoy live entertainment, activities and giveaways.



Rock The Block

Friday, August 21 • 6–11 pm
Saturday, August 22 • 2–11 pm
South Euclid Food Truck Park
4477 Rushton Rd, South Euclid
serocktheblock.com
A two-day festival of live music, food, and fun.

80th One World Day Festival

Sunday, August 30 • 11 am–6 pm
Cleveland Cultural Gardens
Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.
Parade of Flags, a naturalization ceremony, fun multicultural activities for children and adults and great ethnic food

EVENT CANCELLATIONS

The following events will not take place in 2026.

St. Francis of Assisi Festival

Mayfield Heights Unity Days

Cleveland Juneteenth Freedom Fest

Ss. Robert & William Parish Family Festival

CuyahogaDD.org

Life on YOUR terms

Call 216-736-2673
for Eligibility



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.

Stan Hywet Hall opens new exhibit

In celebration of America's 250th anniversary and Akron's 201st birthday, Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens will present The Families That Built Akron, a special exhibit that opened May 23, 2026.

Located in the dining room of the Manor House and included with regular Manor House admission, the exhibit explores Akron's history through the stories of the families and individuals who helped shape the city over the past two centuries.

Founded in 1825 along the Ohio & Erie Canal, Akron grew from a small canal town into one of America's fastest-growing cities during the rubber and tire boom of the early 1900s. Along the way, generations of residents helped build the community through local industry, small businesses, military service, and civic involvement.

The exhibit highlights the personal stories behind Akron's growth while encouraging visitors to reflect on their own family histories and the ways everyday people contribute to the fabric of a community.

Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens is a nonprofit historic house museum in



Akron. The 65-room Tudor Revival estate and 70-acre grounds were built beginning in 1912 by Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company cofounder F.A. Seiberling and his wife, Gertrude. Today, Stan Hywet is dedicated to cultural and educational enrichment through preservation and interpretation of the historic estate.

Make your visit even more special on Sunday, June 21, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with the 68th annual Father's Day Car Show. This year's event promises to be the most exciting yet, featuring a star-studded lineup of iconic Hollywood cars, and a brand-new Touch-A-Truck experience for the youngest guests.

For tickets and additional information, visit stanhywet.org.

The Cleveland Orchestra to perform with Itzhak Perlman at Blossom Music Center

The Cleveland Orchestra is excited to welcome legendary violinist Itzhak Perlman to Blossom Music Center on Thursday, July 9, as part of the 2026 Blossom Music Festival.

This summer performance marks Perlman's first appearance with The Cleveland Orchestra at Blossom since 1993, bringing a beloved guest back to the festival stage after more than three decades.

Perlman opens the all-Beethoven program by performing and conducting the composer's Romances, two lyrical and expressive works for violin and orchestra. Then, he conducts the dramatic Egmont Overture before leading the Orchestra in Beethoven's Symphony No. 7, a work celebrated for its rhythmic energy and sweeping spirit.

The concert continues The Cleveland Orchestra and Perlman's partnership, which began in 1966 and

spans Blossom Music Center, Severance Music Center, Carnegie Hall, and, most recently, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County earlier this year.

The 2026 Blossom Music Festival opens July 3 with a special program celebrating America's 250th anniversary. The season features a diverse

lineup of concerts including Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets on July 11 and 12, An Evening with Idina Menzel on July 26, Jon Batiste with The Cleveland Orchestra on August 20, and Summer in Vienna with Music Director Franz Welser-Möst on August 29.

Tickets are on sale now through the Severance Music Center Ticket Office by phone at 216-231-1111 or through clevelandorchestra.com. This concert is eligible for Blossom Lawn Ticket Books.



Adventure Zone

Family Fun Center

Geneva-on-the-Lake, Ohio

The close-to-home family fun entertainment center.

The perfect place for birthday parties, day camp excursions, company picnics & group outings!

Go online to reserve your date!

- Adventure Golf • Go-Karts • Bumper Boats • Batting Cages
- Rock & Rappelling Walls • Merry Go Round • Adventure Krawl
- Golf Cart Rentals • 100+ Game Arcade • Zip Zone Zip Line
- Snack Bar • Two Escape Rooms • Hammer Slammer

**NEW
for 2026!**

The Lottie Express: A little train for little people.
Bicycle Rentals: Begin Memorial Day Weekend.
The Original Jumping Pillow: A fun experience for all ages.



440-466-3555

www.AdventureZoneFun.com

BUY TICKETS NOW!



TWILIGHT
AT THE
ZOO
Presented by
KeyBank

Featuring live bands, food and drinks all against the backdrop of the Zoo at night, **Twilight at the Zoo presented by KeyBank** is Cleveland's most anticipated fundraiser. Don't miss this summertime favorite!

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7

1988
4LOCOS
ARMSTRONG BEARCAT
DISCO INFERNO
FACTION CLEVELAND
GRUNGE DNA
JOE BELL & THE
SWING LIZARDS

KC & COMPANY
ROBBING MARY
RUN AVRIL RUN
SIMPLE BAND (VIP PARTY)
SKIN & BONES
THE MADISON CRAWL
TWIN B PROJECT



CLEVELANDZOOSOCIETY.ORG/TWILIGHT



NO POWER AGAIN?

WELL IT'S NOT OVER!

You **CAN** Control When Your Power Comes On!

WITH GENERAC AUTOMATIC STANDBY GENERATORS

*Generac's Highest Reviews in Ohio.
Before You Sign Anything, Call Us!*

- Home or business
- Permanently installed on natural gas or propane
- 24/7 protection

GeneratorPros.com

Shepp Electric Co., Inc.
Sales, Parts & Service
877-423-9010



America's #1 Selling Generator

GENERAC | **POWER PRO PREMIER** | 

Powering You With Comfort and Security For Over 35 Years

Parent / Parent Win / Fail

Real-life parenting... the wins and the fails

Some days you feel like parent of the year. Other days... not so much. Tell us about it. The funny, the frustrating, the "did that really just happen?" moments.

We're collecting real stories from local parents—and yours might be featured.

Scan here. It takes less than a minute.

Short and messy is fine—we'll help shape it!



The Unexpected Parenting Win

Between work, practices, and nonstop schedules, I felt guilty that I wasn't giving my son enough attention. One night I apologized to him, and he looked genuinely confused. He said, "Dad, I just like hanging out with you in the car."

— Dad of three, Willoughby

Burnt Chicken, Perfect Night

I burned the chicken, overcooked the pasta, and almost ordered pizza out of embarrassment. Instead, we laughed about it, made ice cream sundaes, and ended up talking around the table for two hours. The kids still bring up our "fancy burnt dinner night."

— Pam, mom of two, Mayfield Village

Nature Wins Again

I planned a full day of wholesome family fun—zoo, picnic, playground, ice cream. Packed snacks, sunscreen, extra clothes... everything. By 11:15 a.m., one kid was crying, one was carsick, and I stepped in goose poop wearing flip-flops. We went home before lunch.

— Mom, Mentor

The Great Laundry Disaster

I made my daughter start doing her own laundry. Felt like a parenting milestone. Two days later, every single one of my white towels was pink. Apparently, lip balm also survived the wash and exploded in the dryer.

— Mom of two, Cleveland Heights

The Slime Incident

I said yes to slime. Glitter slime. Scented glitter slime. Three kids and four hours later, my dining room chair still sparkles when sunlight hits it just right.

— Mom of one, Concord Township

Caught Him Keeping the Photos

I made my son take a photo with me on the first day of school even though he rolled his eyes the entire time. Later that night, I overheard him telling his friend, "My mom does this every year." Turns out... he saved every picture.

— Single mom of one, Chardon

Walk to Remember celebrates 15 years of healing, hope and remembrance

Reserve Care invites families, friends and supporters to come together for the 15th annual ECHO Health Walk to Remember on Sunday, June 14, 2026, at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

For 15 years, Walk to Remember has offered the community a meaningful way to honor the memory of loved ones while supporting compassionate care for people facing serious illness across Northern Ohio.

The event brings together thousands of people for a morning of reflection, remembrance and connection. Participants walk in memory of someone special while helping Reserve Care continue providing comfort, dignity and support to patients and families throughout the region.

“For 15 years, Walk to Remember has created space for families and friends to honor those they carry in their hearts while helping ensure others receive the care and support they need during serious illness,” said Bill Finn, president and CEO of Reserve Care.

Formerly known as Hospice of the Western Reserve, Reserve Care continues the same nearly 50-year nonprofit mission with the same caregivers, same compassion and same commitment to the community.



EVENT DETAILS

- Date: Sunday, June 14, 2026
- Location: Cleveland Metroparks Zoo
- Registration: 7:30 – 10:00 a.m.
- Opening ceremony: 8:45 a.m.
- Walk begins: 9:00 a.m.

Walkers may choose a one-mile route or enjoy the zoo at their own pace. Registration includes all-day zoo admission.

Proceeds from the Walk to Remember help support grief support services, pediatric palliative care, expressive therapies and other unreimbursed programs provided by Reserve Care.

Visit reserve-care.org/WTR to register, sponsor or donate.

FAMILY FUNNIES

quick laughs for busy families

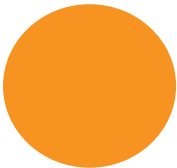


“I still want to be a cowboy.”

Graduation is the magical moment when parents realize they successfully spent 100 thousand dollars so their child could move back into the basement “just for a little while.”

Graduation is the one day teenagers willingly wake up early, dress nicely, and listen to adults talk for three hours. Parents still aren’t sure how it happened.

IT'S TIME TO WALK!



SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2026 • CLEVELAND METROPARKS ZOO

Together, we honor the people who continue to shape our lives and the memories that bring us comfort and joy.

Whether you walk in memory, in support or simply to be part of something meaningful, **you belong here.**



Register today and celebrate with us!
reserve-care.org/WTR

Add a **SPLASH OF WONDER to summer @CLEAquarium**



Celebrate sharks & rays during FIN FEST July 7 – August 11!

216.862.8803 | greaterclevelandaquarium.com



DID SOMEONE SAY 'SUMMER FUN'?



Then it must be the Funny Bus!



Call now for tickets! 216.404.7786



The Funny Bus Delivers Big Laughs

Comedians turn every ride into an unforgettable experience

The Funny Bus kicked off its fifth season in Cleveland this year and is ready to provide laughs and fun for locals and visitors alike. The award-winning, 90-minute comedy/city tour of Cleveland is anything but ordinary and guaranteed to provide a good time for date nights, group activities, bachelorette parties, or corporate team building events.

The real creative engine of the Funny Bus is the talented staff of comics that are committed to entertaining guests from start to finish. With a rotating staff of four comedians, guests can expect new material and perspectives even if they ride the Funny Bus every day.

Dar'Jon Bentley

Dar'Jon is a multi-hyphenated artist from Cleveland. His talents range from acting, comedy, writing, teaching, and, depending on how many drinks, even singing. When he's not performing, he is either at the gym or watching scary movies. Dar'Jon loves to talk about his culture, career, teaching, friends, and family. On top of seeing him do comedy, you can also see him on your TV screen as the Big Deal Dad or in your favorite regional theatre.

Sarah Vulpio

A Cleveland native who took a swing at living in the Windy City, Sarah returned to her roots to fulfill her dream of working on the Funny Bus. Off the bus, she's busy hanging with her cats, hogging the tanning bed at Planet Fitness, and telling jokes onstage to audiences of all ages

(just kidding—please do not bring your kids to her show). She will definitely make you laugh, but will also leave you wondering, “Um... is this girl okay?”

D'Jaay Brown-Johnson

Young, broke, and unapologetically gay, D'Jaay navigates adulthood by tackling the world one joke at a time, delving into the everyday struggles of growing up, juggling bills, and balancing relationships. His charm and ability to find humor in the mundane brings light to life's darker moments, creating a connection that leaves audiences laughing. D'Jaay has won comedy contests, produced shows across Cleveland, and graced the stage at many comedy clubs including Hilarities.

Julia Mary

Julia is a relentless tornado of comedic anarchy and a fearless force of nature. When she's not giving city tours on the Funny Bus in downtown Cleveland, you can find her doing local comedy shows, hanging out at home with her dog, or crying in a public bathroom. Some may describe Julia as “a bit much”, others would say she's “way too much” - either way she's guaranteed to make you laugh.

Tickets on the Funny Bus are only \$31 each and tours run from Wednesday through Sunday. Be sure to catch the special Halloween-Inspired Tours in October and the Holiday Lights & Laughs Tours in December.

For tickets visit www.funnybus.net/cleveland or call 216-404-7786.

Stars, Stripes & Stories



Betsy Ross Probably Didn't Design the First Flag

While Betsy Ross is often credited with sewing the first American flag, historians say there is little evidence proving the story. Much of the legend came from her grandson nearly 100 years later. Many historians believe Congressman Francis Hopkinson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, likely played a major role in designing the original flag.

Why Red, White, and Blue?

The colors were inspired in part by the British flag and other popular flags of the time. However, America later assigned its own symbolism to the colors: red for valor and bravery, white for purity and innocence, and blue for vigilance, perseverance, and justice.

A Teenager Designed Today's Flag

In 1958, 17-year-old Robert Heft designed a 50-star flag for a high school history project after hearing Alaska and Hawaii were expected to become states. He originally received a B-minus on the assignment, but his teacher later changed it to an A after Congress officially adopted the design in 1960.

One Flag Has Missing a Star

When Oregon became the 33rd state in 1859, a flag maker accidentally produced a version with only 32 stars. A few of those rare "missing star" flags still exist today and are now prized by collectors and museums.

The Flag Once Had 15 Stripes

After Vermont and Kentucky joined the Union, Congress briefly expanded both the stars and stripes to 15. That version inspired Francis Scott Key to write The Star-Spangled Banner during the War of 1812.

There's a Right Way to Fold a Flag

The traditional triangle fold is said to resemble the tricorne hats worn during the Revolutionary War. A properly folded flag displays only the blue field of stars.

Flags Fly 24 Hours a at Certain Locations

The American flag flies continuously at places like the White House, the U.S. Capitol, Fort McHenry, and the Marine Corps War Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.

The Moon Has American Flags on It

Apollo astronauts planted six American flags on the moon between 1969 and 1972. Scientists believe some may still be standing today despite decades of harsh lunar conditions.

The U.S. Flag Code Is Mostly Voluntary

The United States has an official Flag Code that outlines respectful ways to display and handle the flag. However, most parts of the code are considered guidelines and are not legally enforced for private citizens.

The Flag Has Changed 27 Times

Every time a new state joined the Union, stars were added to the flag. The current 50-star design became official in 1960 after Hawaii became a state.



The 171st LAKE COUNTY FAIR

July 28–August 2, 2026

www.lakecountyfair.org



2026 HIGHLIGHTS

SIX DAYS OF FAMILY FUN!

Featuring:

**TWO Demo Derbies
Monster Truck Show
KOI Dirt Drag Racing
Truck and Tractor Pulls
4-H Livestock Auction
Jungle Terry
K9 Performance Dogs**

**\$12
general
admission
includes
rides!**

SPECIAL PROMOTIONS

Wednesday, July 29 • Family Day
Families of four or more pay
\$10 per person including rides.

Thursday, July 30 • Kids Day
Ages 14 & under admitted FREE all day
when accompanied by an adult.
All-day ride wristbands only \$10.



Plan a family vacation this summer at Lakeside Chautauqua

Lakeside Chautauqua is a hidden gem tucked away on the Marblehead Peninsula just an hour west of Cleveland. It's the perfect family destination for a weeklong vacation, weekend getaway or day trip to Lake Erie.

Within the one-square-mile historic community, you'll find hundreds of unique Victorian cottages, a concert auditorium, an arts center, a historic waterfront hotel, a movie theater and much more.

Recreation & wellness

The perfect setting for recreation and wellness along Lake Erie, Lakeside offers sailing, kayaking, paddleboarding, miniature golf, shuffleboard, basketball, sand volleyball, pickleball and tennis. It also features several parks and playgrounds, a pool, splash park and lake swimming.

Accommodations

A variety of unique and charming accommodations complete the experience—from the historic Hotel Lakeside and Fountain Inn to weekly



cottage rentals, a campground and bed & breakfasts. View available accommodations at lakesideohio.com/stay.

Summer entertainment & events

Lakeside hosts an impressive list of family-friendly entertainers, keynote speakers and memorable events. To view the full schedule of events visit lakesideohio.com/calendar.

Admission & parking

Lakeside requires guests and residents to purchase a Chautauqua Pass and Auto Pass to enter the grounds during the summer programming season. Depending on the length of your stay, choose from a variety of Chautauqua Passes.

Visit lakesideohio.com or call (419) 798-4461 for more info.



SMALL MOMENTS, BIG MEMORIES

Celebrate Father's Day with 50% off admission at Greater Cleveland Aquarium

Add a splash of wonder to dad's weekend! Greater Cleveland Aquarium is celebrating special caregivers with parenting-themed activities, extended hours and 50% off admission for dads, stepdads, foster dads and grandpas on Father's Day Weekend (Saturday & Sunday, June 20 & 21, 2026, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.).

"With work, school and schedules, it can be hard to slow down and simply be together," says General Manager Stephanie White. "Sharing moments of curiosity and discovery without distractions creates space for real connection."

Whether it is watching a small Eastern spiny softshell turtle dash over for a treat during a habitat feeding, seeing a giant Pacific octopus shift colors or high-fiving a scuba diver as a 10 foot sandtiger shark glides overhead, the Aquarium offers up-close views and simple, memorable experiences families can enjoy side by side.

White adds that guests are often surprised to learn how different parenting looks in the underwater world. "For many aquatic animals, parenting is front loaded—focused on finding a mate, safeguarding eggs or ensuring survival rather than ongoing care after young hatch," she says. "Cuckoo catfish leave their eggs for other fish to raise unknowingly, poison dart frog parents carefully transport tadpoles to safe pools

one by one and weedy seadragon fathers carry fertilized eggs until they hatch—showing that there's no single 'right' way to be a parent in nature."

Father's Day Weekend activities are included with general admission (\$0–\$19.95 per person). Visiting dads receive 50% off their adult admission (available in person at the ticket counter only) with the purchase of another adult or child ticket on June 20 & 21.

Families looking for a gift that lasts longer than a single day can choose a year of undersea adventures with 10% off any level of Aquarium Annual Pass—available June 13–21 with code DAD26. Annual passholders enjoy unlimited return admission, free parking during visits, exclusive programming, discounted and free events, plus savings in the gift shop and on birthday parties.

Follow @CLEAquarium on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram in the days leading up to Father's Day for animal parenting facts, trivia giveaways and easy at home card and craft ideas.

Greater Cleveland Aquarium is located at the Nautica Waterfront District, 2000 Sycamore Street in Cleveland.

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



Waterfront hotel, shopping, dining, 700 ft. dock, pool and live entertainment ...
it's all in Lakeside.

EDUCATION ARTS RELIGION RECREATION

Lakeside has been a family vacation destination on the Lake Erie shoreline for more than 150 years. As one of the original Chautauqua communities, Lakeside has been a center of spiritual renewal, education, cultural arts and recreation. Make this the year you experience all Lakeside has to offer.



(866) 952-5374 • lakesideohio.com

Plan your family vacation, weekend, or day-trip today.



Subscribe to our monthly
EMAIL NEWSLETTER!

www.TodaysFamilyMagazine.com



Fireworks, Fathers & Fourth of July

Humorous and heartfelt memories of fireworks, family, and growing up

Article by Dan Miller, Today's Family Editor

Some of my earliest memories don't feel like they belong to a calendar—they belong to summer itself. Heat hanging in the air, screen doors slamming, and the distant promise of fireworks somewhere after dark.

For me, the Fourth of July has always been stitched together from a handful of vivid moments. One of the first takes place at Fairport Harbor Beach, when I was just a little boy attending fireworks with my family and the infamous tornado struck. I remember the sudden rain, the panic in the crowd, and my father rushing my mother, baby brother, and me into our '69 Pontiac Catalina. Dad told me to crouch on the floor of the spacious backseat while the storm raged outside. Even now, I can still picture the glow of brake lights reflecting off the rain-soaked pavement.

A few years later, when I was around 10 years old, my father somehow came into possession of a trunk full of fireworks. How he acquired them remains one of life's great mysteries.

Back then there were no fences between neighbors, so our backyards blended into one giant summer playground. Word spread quickly, lawn chairs appeared, and suddenly an impromptu Fourth of July party was underway. The dads handled the "serious" fireworks—Roman candles, bottle rockets, and M-80s, which we children believed were basically sticks of dynamite. Our role was far less dangerous but equally important: waving sparklers through the warm night air while trying not to burn holes in our sneakers. It felt magical.

Some years we celebrated at my aunt and uncle's house, where giant Fourth of July cookouts seemed to materialize effortlessly. My older cousins were the coolest people I had ever met. I was especially impressed by the elaborate chains they made from soda and beer can pull tabs that stretched across the basement ceiling like modern art. The next day, inspired beyond reason, I began building my own collection and strongly encouraged my father to increase his beer consumption for the good of the project.

Anyways, back to the celebration. Outside, the men would tie together long strings of firecrackers, attach

them to a telephone pole, and light them as the grand finale. In my childhood memory it lasted nearly an hour, though in reality it was probably closer to 30 seconds.

Then there's a gap in my Fourth of July memories—from my teenage years into adulthood—until I became a father myself.

My eldest was born on June 30, and we brought him home from the hospital on the Fourth of July. It was quite an introduction to the world. Fireworks exploded well into the night while my wife and I tried unsuccessfully to calm a newborn in a house without air conditioning. The windows had to stay open, which meant every boom sounded like it was happening directly in the nursery.

Before long, my wife and I had three children who were old enough to appreciate fireworks. Conveniently, my parents had a perfect view of the Eastlake fireworks from the end of their driveway. Dad grilled hot dogs while Mom prepared snacks, and we enjoyed the show without ever battling traffic. Eventually the fireworks moved locations, and my wife and I found ourselves loading blankets, snacks, and sleepy children into the car to watch from a dew-covered field behind the high school.

The kids eventually became old enough to wander off with friends before returning just in time for the big finale. I still remember the smell of sulfur lingering in the summer air, the thunderous booms rattling your chest, and the collective "ooohs" from the crowd as fireworks above and from neighboring cities sparkled across the horizon.

And of course, every neighborhood has that one guy.

The man who somehow transforms his driveway into a professional-grade fireworks show. Ours lived two streets over. His display featured towering aerial shells, vivid colors, and explosions loud enough to set off car alarms. To this day, I'd love to know what his annual fireworks budget looked like.

In recent years, it's mostly been just my wife and me watching from our backyard. The fireworks are now a couple miles away—still beautiful, though slightly less goosebump-inducing from a distance.



We recently moved to a new house in a new city, and I'm not even sure what our plans are this year. But writing this made me realize something I hadn't fully put into words before.

So many of my Fourth of July memories are really memories of my father.

I miss him.

And maybe that's what the Fourth of July becomes as we get older—not just fireworks and cookouts and neighborhood shows, but a quiet in-

ventory of the people who once stood beside us watching the sky.

Despite how divided things sometimes feel, I still hope that for at least twenty minutes this Independence Day, everyone pauses long enough to look upward together—struck by the same flashes of light, sharing the same brief sense of wonder.

Because for all its imperfections, the first 250 years of this country have still managed to light up a few pretty unforgettable nights.

Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine



Centennial Jubilee Speaker Series

Celebrating 100 years of prayer, reflection, and community

All are invited!

Free will offerings graciously accepted.

All events will take place 1–4 p.m.

June 13 – James Hickey
St. Bernadette

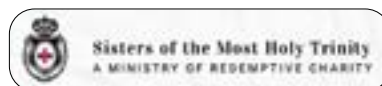
July 11 – Kathryn DeCapite
*Under Mary's Mantle:
A Marian Journey through
Lourdes and Fatima, and
the Heart of a Mother*

September 12 – Barb Ernster
*So That All May Believe –
The Miracles of Lourdes
and Fatima*

Outdoor Mass

May 3–October 25, 2026

Breakfast will be served in the St. Ann Dining Room every Sunday after 9:30 a.m. outdoor Mass.



Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Owned and operated by the Sisters of the Most Holy Trinity

21281 Chardon Road, Euclid

www.srstrinity.com

Convent: 216-481-8232 • Gift Shop: 216-481-0900

MONTESSORI

SCHOOL OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

FOUNDED 1968

WWW.MS-UH.ORG

23599 CEDAR ROAD | BEACHWOOD, OH

CALL FOR A PERSONAL TOUR
216-200-5295



"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

