

TODAY'S family

Dec2022/Jan2023 Cuyahoga

FREE!

**Experience
Gift Ideas**

**How to
balance
receiving
with giving**

**Beat the
January
blues!**

12 ideas to keep
the party going
throughout 2023

**Holiday events
& activities**

**Toy and
gift ideas!**

Scuba Claus

Greater Cleveland Aquarium

**Adopting a pet
at the holidays**

**Rudolph The Red
Nosed Reindeer:
The Musical**

Playhouse Square



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Preschool Open House

Thursday, January 26, 2023 | 6:30 p.m.

Catholic Schools Week Open House

Sunday, January 29, 2023 | 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

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

Thursday, February 2, 2023 | 8:30 a.m.

Education Fair

Thursday, March 9, 2023 | 5:30–7:00 p.m.



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TODAY'S family

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Happy Holidays

From Dan & Kim Miller
Owners, Today's Family Magazine



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JANUARY 15th



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Ages
6–17**

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Winter 2 Session

January 15– February 25, 2023

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- Cost: \$140 per six-week session
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Swinging Twisters is a 45-minute class designed for children 3 through 4 years of age. It begins with fun, fast-paced stretching and warm-ups. It introduces students to basic gymnastic positions and skills and utilizes appropriately-sized gymnastics equipment. Our gymnastics lesson plans keep kids moving, motivated, & challenged through proper safe progressions.

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- For questions or to book your class please email jsgymnastics@jsgymnastics.com.

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How to balance receiving with giving

By Sandi Schwartz

One of the key challenges of holiday time is that our children get so used to receiving oodles of gifts that they begin to expect that they will always get more and more. But have you noticed how quickly they lose interest with many of the toys they receive during the holidays? Showering our children with gifts every year can end up being detrimental if they become numb to the excitement of gifts, and if they only focus on the receiving side of the holidays. There are several ways that we can instill some balance so that our children learn to appreciate what they receive while also giving to others.

Express gratitude

Gratitude is one of the most important ways for us to get a happiness boost, providing us with so many wonderful psychological, physical, and interpersonal benefits. It improves our health, reduces stress,

and helps us focus on the positive aspects of life. Teaching our kids how to step back and be thankful for what they have will keep them grounded and help them realize just how lucky they are to be receiving toys and other gifts at holiday time.

When children choose from their own pile of toys, they gain a powerful hands-on experience to learn about that balance between giving and receiving.

You can encourage your kids to express their gratitude for the gifts they receive by writing thank you notes to friends and relatives. You can also go around the dinner table and invite everyone to say how grateful they are for each gift and why it is so meaningful to them. Finally, one of the most popular and effective ways to express gratitude is through journaling. It encourages our kids to acknowledge the



positive moments in their day, no matter how insignificant they may seem. Consider giving them their own gratitude journal this holiday season so they have the perfect place to record what they are thankful for, including their holiday gifts and other special moments throughout the year.

Learn that less is more

How many dolls does one little girl really need? If you dig through your children's old toys, you may be taken aback by how many of each item they actually have: multiple puzzles, games, cars, trucks, plastic figures, and art supplies. It never ends. When they are showered with too many presents, it reduces the interest value of each toy very quickly. According to Kim John Payne in "Simplicity Parenting: Using the Extraordinary Power of Less to Raise Calmer, Happier, and More Secure Kids," kids who are inundated with toys are so overwhelmed that they are unable to play by themselves and can even develop focus issues.

It is so important to teach our children how to pick and choose a few special gifts that they would like and to not go overboard. Parenting coach Carla Naumburg developed a fabulous poem to inspire the types of presents to give to children for the holidays that helps make each gift meaningful. This approach goes

beyond just the obvious toys that children typically want, allowing both parents and children to be more creative with gifts.

Something you want, something you need, something to wear, something to read. Something to see, something to spare, something to cook, something to share.

Choose experiences over stuff

Research over the last decade shows that experiences make us happier than possessions. Instead of always giving our kids gifts that they can hold in their hand, why not try a new experience that will provide them with a memory for a lifetime? It doesn't have to be an expensive family vacation to Disney World; it can be a simple activity close by that you can enjoy together. Here are some ideas that your kids will love:

- Enjoy nature by visiting a zoo or garden, going camping or hiking, or trying out skiing or snowboarding.
- Show them the excitement of the city by visiting historical monuments, exploring museums, going out to a fancy restaurant, or attending a concert or sporting event.
- Expand their knowledge by signing them up for an art class, music lesson, or dance class.

See **BALANCE** on page 6

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Telling my teens about Christmas in the 80s

By Katy M. Clark

“Feeeed the woooooorld. Let them know it’s Christmas time!” I sing a song from Christmas in the 80s in the car.

Out of the corner of my eye, I see my 13-year-old daughter look at me. She is unimpressed.

“Why is that even a Christmas song?,” she asks.

She has a good point. Amidst all the holiday songs of glad tidings and joy, it is a bit odd to hear a song about relieving famine in Ethiopia.

“This song was a huge deal in the 80s,” I reply. Then I explain how Bob Geldof mobilized the biggest pop stars of the decade to perform this song and how he used MTV to spur everyone, including a young teen (me!), to help.

I tell her how I purchased the 45 record of “Do They Know It’s Christmas?” by Band Aid and how the proceeds went to relief efforts. Then I remind her what a 45 record is. Next I try to convince her that

MTV was relevant and trendy when I was a young teen.

Christmas in the 80s

Talking about this iconic 80s Christmas song also prompts me to reminisce about the era and share my memories of Christmas in the “old days.” In the 1980s, I would spend hours flipping through catalogs to find my dream gifts. I circled what I wanted or folded down the pages. In my house, it was the Toys R Us Big Book, but some of my friends also had the Sears catalog.

One year, I wanted a Cabbage Patch doll for Christmas. My mom had to be determined and patient to make my dream come true because she had to physically go to a store, stand in line, and do her best impression of a linebacker to wrestle that toy off a shelf for me.

No, she couldn’t order it on the computer, because our family didn’t have a computer. I guess some wealthy folks may have had a Macintosh 84, but it wouldn’t have mat-



“I had to flip through the TV guide, find the show’s air date and time, and make sure I parked my butt in front of the TV so I could watch it the one time all season it came on.”

tered, because there was no Internet. Imagine that, a world without Amazon Prime.

I loved visiting the mall at Christmas, when it was brimming with shoppers and decorated to the hilt. When I was little, my mother would take me and my sisters to the mall to see Santa. When I became a teen, I still waved at Santa while shopping for stirrup pants at Express, dining on sausage samples at Hickory Farms, and buying Bananarama and Prince cassettes at Sam Goody.

Christmas in the 80s meant every gift was wrapped in wrapping paper at my house

Gift bags did not exist yet. My grandmother and aunt yelled at me if I ripped the paper when opening a gift. They would carefully save every scrap of holiday wrapping paper to reuse, year after year. They also used yarn ribbon, like Raggedy Ann’s hair, so that they could reuse that, too.

“Who’s Raggedy Ann?” my teen interrupts.

See **CHRISTMAS IN 80s** page 6



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December 2-4

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Balance from page 4

Give to those less fortunate

The holiday season can quickly turn into a shopping spree if we are not careful. But this is a particularly critical time of year to remember those who are not able to celebrate the holidays like we are with piles of gifts. December is the perfect time to clean out the playroom and practice some giving. Spend some time each year going through every nook and cranny to weed out the old toys before you bring in the new ones. Ask your children to collect piles of items to recycle, throw away, and donate. When the children choose from their own pile of toys, they gain a powerful hands-on experience to learn about that balance between giving and receiving.

After you do this exercise a few times, your kids will automatically realize that no matter what new gifts they receive, they will choose some that they no longer play with to give to children who may not get any presents at all. This is a habit that everyone can easily add to their holiday traditions.

You can also start to encourage your children to forgo a new gift or two to purchase items for those in need. Look for a holiday toy drive in your community to support and take your kids along with you to purchase the items and to deliver them to the charity.

Christmas in the 80s from page 5

Yikes. That's a story for another time.

I tell my daughter how I baked cookies from recipes written by my grandma's hand, rather than ones I found on TikTok. I still have those recipes. And prefer them leaps and bounds over anything I find online. I tell her I will pass them on to her one day.

80s Christmas movies

I never watched a Hallmark Christmas movie in the 1980s because there was no Hallmark Channel. And the holiday movies we watch as a family every year—like *Home Alone*, *Christmas Vacation*, and *Elf*—had not yet been filmed.

I watched *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, and *John Denver & The Muppets*. And it required some effort, too. I had to flip through the TV guide, find the show's air date and time, and make sure I parked my butt in front of the TV so I could watch it the one time all season it came on. There was no DVR or streaming service. If I missed the one airing, I had to wait another year to see it.

Just then "Frosty the Snowman" comes on the radio. I look at my daughter, who smiles back at me.

"I know this one, Mom," she says.

And then we start singing the timeless holiday classic.

Now if only Taylor Swift's cover of "Last Christmas" could come on so I could tell my daughter why the version by Wham! is the best. Because it's from the 80s, of course.



Wild Winter Lights returns to Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is again transforming into a winter wonderland this holiday season with Wild Winter Lights. In its fourth year, Wild Winter Lights will add over 1.5 million lights across holiday-themed areas including Candyland, Enchanted Forest, Starry Skies, Future for Wildlife Trail and Santa's Workshop, where guests can take photos with Santa Claus. Guests can again experience this year's Wild Winter Lights on foot or in their personal vehicle on select dates.

Additional highlights of this year's event include carousel rides, costumed characters, model train displays, ice carvers and the return of the dynamic light show featuring an enchanting 50-foot tree.

Wild Winter Lights runs from 5:30–10:30 pm on select dates through December 30.

Tickets are limited, and advance online reservations are strongly encouraged. Visit them online at FutureForWildlife.org/lights to reserve your spot.



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The Botanical Garden celebrates Cleveland's holiday magic

The Cleveland Botanical Garden's "Twinkle in the 216" event will celebrate the historic character of Cleveland's neighborhoods as they sparkle and shine to add warmth and joy to the cold winter months. The winter show runs through Saturday, December 31, 2022.

The indoor and outdoor gardens will pay a festive holiday homage to the beautiful blocks that knit neighborhoods, people, and plants and trees together. In the Ellipse, visitors will be greeted by postcard vignettes of iconic Cleveland landmarks and a stunning 20-foot-tall "living" tree built from live and dried plant material—a delightful background for holiday photos.

Guests seeking a holiday escape a little farther from home can enter the Madagascar and Costa Rica glasshouses, transformed in the spirit of the season with special horticultural displays, lights, and postcard vignettes referencing iconic towns within the spiny desert and cloud forest.

Visitors will be surrounded by



beautiful holiday plants and trees from evergreen conifers to poinsettias in shades of white, pink, and red. Popular traditions return including dozens of trees decorated by more than 30 affiliate garden clubs from northeast Ohio and candy-coated gingerbread houses assembled by bakers from across the community.

Be sure to get outside this year to experience a festive display on the terrace complete with various activities for the whole family. On weekends during the show and every day between Dec. 20–31, outdoor activities will include hot cocoa story time, marshmallow roasting, community crafts, and more!

Reserve your tickets in advance at holdenfg.org. Walk-up tickets will be available.

Schedule a Merry Meet & Greet at the Greater Cleveland Aquarium

Plus, see the shark-diving Scuba Claus!

Dive into holiday fun with Scuba Claus at Greater Cleveland Aquarium! Talk to the magical man in red while he's underwater with sharks, stingrays, eels and angelfish on his "nice list." Ask diving questions or share what you ho-ho-hope to see under your tree during Scuba Claus Merry Meet & Greet Days, Wed.–Fri., December 14–16, 5–7:30 pm, or Saturday & Sun., December 17 & 18, 8:30–10 am.

"Guests spend time exploring our fresh and saltwater galleries before ending their visit in the company of Scuba Claus," says Stephanie White, general manager.

All Scuba Claus Merry Meet & Greets include full Aquarium access, a seasonal I-Spy activity, an "I Saw Scuba Claus" pin, the unique opportunity to share "fish-mas" wishes with a Christmas icon and a digital photo of the memorable experience.

"If you have a family member who's nervous about visiting St. Nick, you might want to try meeting



Scuba Claus," says White, noting that although the interaction is live and in real time, the novelty of the situation and the significant wall of acrylic between the scuba-certified old pro and guests can change the dynamic and put young fans at ease.

Scuba Claus Merry Meet & Greets are limited capacity and only available with advance purchase. Tickets are \$24.95 for guests ages 13+, \$18.95 for children ages 2–12. Adult and child annual passholders ages 2+ can reserve tickets for \$5 each. Admission is always free for children younger than 2.

For tickets or details, visit greaterclevelandaquarium.com/event/scuba-claus.



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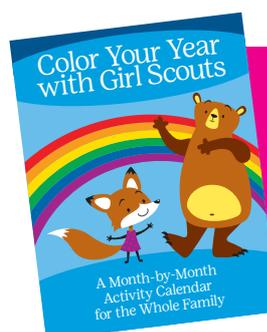
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Candy Land Gone to the Birds

Now through January 1, 2023 • 10 am–5 pm

Bring the entire flock back to Penitentiary Glen Reservation to experience a family-favorite holiday tradition—the childhood game of Candy Land — brought to life with an avian twist! It's all about birds, birds, birds as your adventure begins on a life-sized game board where YOU become the playing piece, moving from space to space through an enchanting holiday display of birds. Colorful habitats surround you, and familiar feathered friends are around every twist and turn.

While on your journey, stop at the pretend Wild Bird Clinic and try your hand at helping wildlife. At the very end, climb the bird tower and do some birdwatching, then slide down the spiral slide and play all over again!

But don't stop there — your visit continues with other fun activities at the Nature Center including special weekend programs, indoor and outdoor scavenger hunts, a holiday craft for kids, activity pages, wildlife programs, nature exhibits and more. A keepsake holiday key will be given



to each participant. Shop for unique nature-themed gifts at The Nature Store and relax with hot chocolate in Snowshoe Lodge. Snowshoe rentals are available weather permitting.

Each Saturday during the exhibit, from noon–3 pm, enjoy an outdoor campfire with s'mores and animal chats.

Special Candy Land Gone to the Birds is open 10 am to 5 pm daily through January 1. The exhibit will be closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve. Admission is free for all ages. Registration is not required.

Penitentiary Glen Reservation is located at 8668 Kirtland-Chardon Road in Kirtland.

For more info visit <http://goto.lakemetroparks.com/penitentiary-glen>.



Elf (the Musical)

December 2–30, 2022 at the Beck Center in Lakewood

Based on the beloved holiday film, this hilarious big-elf-living-in-a-small-world comedy follows Buddy the elf in his quest to find his true identity in a holiday-bedazzled New York City. Featuring songs written by the creator of Disney's Aladdin on Broadway and a book by writer of Annie, The Producers and Hairspray this feels and sounds like a sweet holiday treat for all ages. (Maple syrup not included.)

Individual tickets to each show can be purchased at beckcenter.org with ticket prices from \$38 (adults), \$34 (for seniors 65 and older) and

\$17 for students with valid ID, and \$12 for children between five and 12 years of age. A \$3 service fee per single ticket will be applied at time of purchase.

Curtain times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 2:30 p.m. Sundays. Preview performances are 7:30 p.m. the Thursday before opening night, with general admission seating for just \$10. Smart Seats® are available for each performance at just \$10 per person.

For more information on the 2022–2023 Professional Theater Season please visit beckcenter.org.

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical returns December 2–4



Photo credits: Timothy Norris

The critically acclaimed live stage show Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical returns this fall to entertain families at theatre stages across North America. The national tour featuring the “most famous reindeer of all” and his friends from the longest running and highest rated holiday television special will soar into Cleveland at Playhouse Square from December 2–4. Following seven successful years of touring and more than 600 performances, Rudolph and the holly jolly cast of characters including Hermey the Elf, Yukon Cornelius, and Bumble the Abominable Snow Monster — along

with the audience — will help Santa save Christmas.

For more information about the tour visit www.rudolphthemusical.com.

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical will play December 2 – 4 at the Connor Palace at Playhouse Square. Show times are Friday at 7:30 pm; Saturday at 11 am, 3 pm and 7 pm; and Sunday at 1 pm.

Tickets for all performances are available at playhousesquare.org or by calling 216-241-6000. Group orders of 15 or more may be placed by calling 216-640-8600.



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Find resources, community, and connection. For expecting parents and those with children birth to kindergarten age in Cuyahoga County.



Scan the QR code to join our community!



Learn something new in 2023 at Fairmount Center for the Arts

Fairmount Center for the Arts announces its next session of dance, fitness, music, theatre and visual arts classes and workshops. Starting on January 6, 2023, the winter/spring session brings award-winning classes for preschoolers through seniors as well as special one-day camps, events and workshops.

Current and prospective students are invited to learn more about Fairmount's offerings at the Winter Warm-Up on Saturday, January 7 from 10 a.m. to noon. Attendees can tour the facility, meet instructors, see dance performances by the student Fairmount Dance Company and Hip Hop Crew performing groups and enjoy art-making activities.

The winter/spring session brings several new offerings:

Adults will have a chance to explore new techniques and themes in drawing, watercolor, calligraphy, zentangle, bookmaking and ceramics classes. There will also be introductory classes in ballet and tap offered for adults looking to learn new dance skills.



Group youth music ensembles for vocalists and instrumentalists will give students a chance to perform in groups while receiving customized coaching.

The Fairmount Youth Theatre will produce the musical Kids Country. A special preparatory one-day audition workshop as well as a theatre intensive class focused on on-camera acting and singing for students age 12 and older will also be offered.

Saturday Youth Art Workshops give children ages 5 to 12 a chance to make their own handmade books, weave or paint.

Registration is currently open for all winter/spring classes. Scholarships and payment plans available. For program listings, call 440-338-3171 or visit fairmountcenter.org.



Photo credit: Mock Tuna

CircleFest brings holiday cheer to University Circle

The 28th Annual Holiday CircleFest, presented by University Circle Inc. (UCI), will take place on Sunday, December 4 in University Circle. The event ushers in an exciting season of family-friendly holiday activities in the neighborhood.

Wade Oval will bustle with activity from noon until 7 pm. A full schedule is below:

- Noon-7 pm – Skate on the fresh ice at The Rink at Wade Oval (free admission for Holiday CircleFest; tickets must be reserved online at universitycircle.org/rink).
- Noon-7 pm – Grab a bite to eat from one of Cleveland's famous food trucks.
- Noon-6 pm – Officers from the University Circle Police Department will be on Wade Oval accepting donations for the Cops in the Community program. Proceeds will be used to purchase hats, gloves, and scarves for local school children.
- 1-2:30 pm – Visit with Mr. Jingeling at The Rink at Wade Oval. As

Keeper of the Keys for Santa, Mr. Jingeling will be passing out 100 keys to his first visitors.

- 1-6 pm – Watch ice carvers transform solid blocks of ice into works of art at the top of each hour.
- 1-7 pm – Shop for everyone on your list at the outdoor Holiday Market.
- 1-7 pm – Enjoy a leisurely ride around Wade Oval in a horse-drawn carriage.
- 2-6 pm – Take photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus on RTA's Holiday Trolley.
- 5-7 pm – Explore fire displays and winter lanterns.

University Circle's museums, including The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Botanical Garden, Cleveland Museum of Natural History and Cleveland History Center will welcome guests and offer holiday exhibits, activities, performances and shopping.

For more information on Holiday CircleFest, visit universitycircle.org/holiday.



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– M.D. Theatre Guide



The Musical

DECEMBER 2-30, 2022

For tickets and info, visit: beckcenter.org



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Greater Cleveland Food Bank

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2022 Holidays: Permission granted

By Stacy Turner

When I dropped something off at my daughter's school, I noticed the secretary's office was chock full of festive fall decorations. File cabinets were covered with colorful leaves, pumpkins, mums, and scarecrows; office windows showcased autumn-inspired window clings galore. I complimented her décor, appreciating the cheeriness in the colorful space. She explained that she planned to keep the decorations up at school until Thanksgiving, sheepishly admitting she had already begun decorating for Christmas at home. As if it was wrong to do so. She explained that she has a lot of decorations and needs extra time to get them all out in time to enjoy throughout the season. As if she needed to justify her reasons.

Not that my opinion should matter, I noted that after how trying the last few years have been, if decorating early for the holidays gives her joy, then she should go all in. After all, we can all use a little Christmas (or Hanukkah, or even Festivus) right this very minute, no matter what the calendar says. I applauded her for decking her halls early and so thoroughly, if that gives her joy. We can all use more joy, don't you think?

Later on, I ran into a mom friend carrying two extra large, caffeinated drinks as she headed back to

work. She sheepishly admitted how unhealthy the mega dose of caffeine and sugar would be, but that it's been a rough week. I assured her that caffeine and sugar are pretty much the only things that keep me moving some days, so she wasn't getting any judgment from me. Often, it seems like being a wife and mom while working and maintaining sanity can take Herculean effort to keep all the balls in the air. If that super-sized, go-juice helps you make it happen, then drink up, mamma! After all, espresso may not be the answer, but it's worth a shot.

As we head into the holiday season, my gift to you is the full authority to bring joy to yourself and your family by whatever means necessary. Whether you put a Christmas tree in every room of your house or leave your home unadorned is completely up to you. If your holiday soundtrack means Nat King Cole, Michael Buble or Mariah Carey on repeat, or simply walking outdoors as silent snowflakes fall, it's your choice to make. Whether you embrace comfy sweaters, fuzzy socks, and spice-scented candles, or head someplace warm, beachy, and smelling of coconut, either way is the right way for you.

For years, I'd stress myself out trying to pick the perfect photos to create the ideal holiday cards. No matter what photos I chose, someone pictured would be unhappy with what they wore,



the expression on their face, or the way their hair looked that day. Often, I'd end up feeling super Grinchy long before I sat down trying to pen those warm holiday greetings to friends and family near and far. This year, I've given myself permission to forgo what began as a fun holiday activity, but over time developed into a pain in my butt. And this year, that's the right choice for me. But whether you choose to send perfectly curated holiday photo cards to everyone you know, buy ready-made cards, or send no cards at all, whatever you do (or don't do) is the right choice for you.

By the way, if you've got homemade sugar plums and trays of cookies still warm from the oven or you choose to buy holiday confections online or at the in-store bakery, either way is okay. And whether your holiday is low-key, rustic, or full of constant activities or tinsel, if you're spending time with the people that matter, then you're doing it right.

In case you need it, this is your permission to choose the best way to mark the holiday season this year. And since I'm not sending cards, I'll leave you with blessings and my hope that as one year closes and a brand new year begins, you're able to fully enjoy this season in whatever way you choose with the people that matter most.

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Beat the January Blues

How to keep the party going throughout 2023

By Katy M. Clark

After the excitement of ringing in the new year, many of us are faced with the January blues. The festive feel of the holiday season is gone and the winter days can be gloomy.

However, each month of the new year brings something to celebrate. Whether it's enjoying food, honoring animals, or just being silly, here are 12 unique and fun days to commemorate as you keep the party going long into the new year!

January 13

National Rubber Ducky Day

We celebrate the rubber ducky on January 13 after the date appeared circled on a calendar in a 1973 episode of Sesame Street. Spend the day counting, collecting, or just taking a bath (of course!) with your rubber ducky.

February 20

National Love Your Pet Day

Whether your family pet is a dog,

cat, or chinchilla, this day is all about giving extra love to the fur babies in your family. Or the ones with scales and feathers! You and your kids can pamper your pet with special treats, cuddles or new toys, while reflecting on the special bond you share.

March 3–4

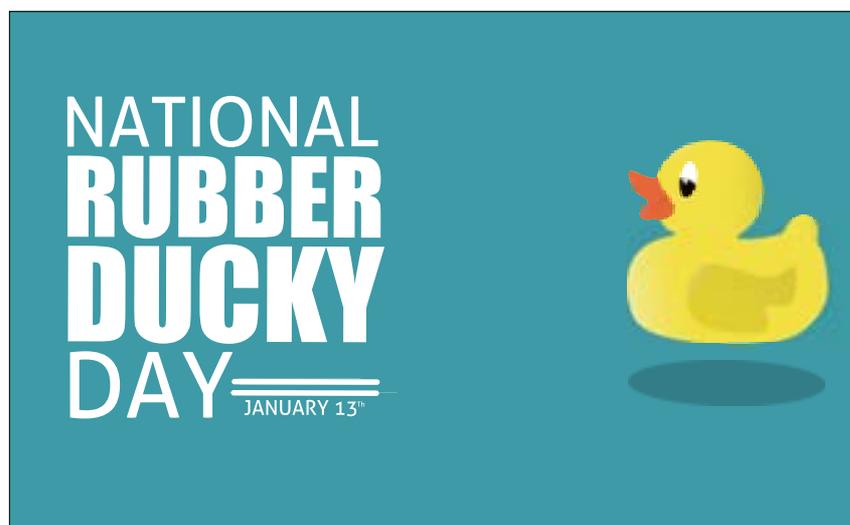
National Day of Unplugging

From sundown on March 4 to sundown on March 5, this 24-hour period aims to help families disconnect from technology and reconnect as people. Enjoy a device-free dinner party and put your phone away while the kids create a play or concert. Take this time to unplug, unwind, and relax.

April 9

National Unicorn Day

This day honors the most popular mythical animal worldwide. With a single horn protruding from its forehead, the unicorn represents magic, fantasy, and happiness. Learn about its appearances in ancient cultures like those of the Celts, Romans and



Persians. Then draw pictures, read books, and wear your favorite clothing item with the beloved creature.

flashlight in the sky to make your own, and enjoy the outdoors as you turn your gaze upward.

May 31

National Smile Day

Turn that frown upside down and smile! Flash a beautiful grin at home, at school, and in your neighborhood. Little ones can count how many smiles they see throughout the day on a clipboard while bigger kids can be encouraged to simply smile in order to brighten someone's day.

September 19

Talk Like A Pirate Day

Ahoy mateys! Spend the day talking like your favorite swashbuckler. Whether you don an eye patch, dig for buried treasure, or nosh on some chocolate gold coins, you and your kids will walk the plank to celebrate this day. Shiver me timbers!

October 5

National Do Something Nice Day

You and your family can show kindness in big and small ways on this day. Try giving compliments, holding the door open for someone, writing a letter to a relative, or paying for the order of the person behind you in line.

November 14

National Family PJ Day

Who doesn't want to spend the day in their favorite pjs? Put on your matched or mismatched pajamas and then sleep in or snuggle up. Get your pets in the game, too. If you're really planning ahead, now is the perfect time to snap that holiday card photo.

December 13

National Cocoa Day

Prepare to welcome winter by indulging in a cup of hot chocolate. Your family can learn about the origin of drinking cocoa, said to be started by the Mayans as early as 500 BC, or have a taste test to decide which is the perfect topping: marshmallows or whipped cream.

June 17

National Eat Your Vegetables Day

This day is all about making more vegetables a part of your healthy diet. However, if your kids balk at the idea of celebrating peas and carrots, then your family can honor June 17 in a sweeter way. It's also National Apple Strudel Day.

July 16

National Ice Cream Day

Did you know that President Reagan established the third Sunday of July as National Ice Cream Day back in 1984? Beat the summer heat and indulge in scoops from your favorite spot or try your hand at making your own. Your family can discuss favorite flavors or think up new ones to try.

August 8

Global Sleep Under the Stars Night

This night encourages everyone to spend a night under the stars. Pitch a tent or bundle up under blankets in the backyard or on your patio. Read books about constellations, shine a

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Everyone has a culture! This holiday season, young families are invited to explore the universal message of joy and peace across all faiths, cultures, and backgrounds through music, theater, art, and books.

Cultural organizations from across northeast Ohio will gather to share what they do to celebrate in winter. Enjoy a Hanukkah story performed by Mandel JCC's Playmaker's Youth Theater, hear Christmas music and poetry from Antioch Baptist Church's youth, hear readings of peace from the youth at Chagrin Valley Islamic Center, learn about kindness from Horvitz YouthAbility, and spend time in the multicultural story corner.

Double your fun with two new exhibits at the Great Lakes Science Center

Great Lakes Science Center is doubling the fun for families with kids of all ages when it opens a unique pair of hands-on special exhibitions, "Curious George: Let's Get Curious" and "Run! Jump Fly! Adventures in Action."

Perhaps no other character from children's literature better represents the Science Center's spirit of "Stay Curious" than Curious George. The little monkey with the insatiable curiosity has captured the imagination of millions of children and adults for more than 80 years. In this special exhibition, young children will enter the larger than life world of Curious George for a fun, and interactive math, science and engineering based adventure.

The Curious George exhibit inspires young children's natural curiosity as they explore early science, math and engineering concepts through hands-on interactive play. The immersive exhibit environment takes place in the neighborhood where Curious

George lives with his friend, The Man with the Yellow Hat. Guests will recognize familiar characters and places featured in the stories and the animated series as they navigate through a park, a sidewalk produce stand, construction site, mini golf course, farm and more.

In Run! Jump! Fly!, guests will rediscover the fun of being physically active in a noncompetitive environment. Families explore activities such as kung fu, surfing, snowboarding, yoga and climbing. Featuring the theme of action adventures popular in children's books and movies, the exhibition invites guests to jump into "Action Star Training" – play activities that build strength, coordination, balance and endurance.

Both exhibitions run now through Sunday, January 8, 2023 and are included with the price of general admission.

For more information, visit GreatScience.com.



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Helpful techniques to avoid worst-case scenario thinking

By Senders Pediatrics

Catastrophizing, known as worst-case scenario thinking, leads a person to overestimate and exaggerate the probability of bad things happening. The tendency to exaggerate negative outcomes and anticipate problems where they most likely do not exist is part of our biology. Our brains are designed to expect the worst. In prehistoric times, it served as a survival strategy because nobody knew where a saber-toothed tiger might be lurking. A “better to be safe than sorry” approach kept many people out of harm’s way.

Additionally, some people default to catastrophizing as a protective measure: “If I think the worst, and the worst doesn’t happen, I’ll feel relieved.”

Other times, we catastrophize because we’ve had a bad experience we didn’t see coming and want to make sure we are not blindsided in the future. But this type of thinking is often unhelpful, especially in parenting.

Worst-case scenario thinking triggers an internal alarm that signals danger! Your job is to discern if danger is imminent. For example, if you hear a fire alarm you immediately assess if there’s an actual fire, or if it’s a practice drill or a false alarm.

But rational thinking, especially when our children are concerned, is often easier said than done.

For example: A 4-year-old who grabs toys can lead a parent to project that he or she will mature into a social deviant.

Or a timid and reserved youngster who holds on tightly to a parent’s leg becomes a social recluse who lacks meaningful interpersonal rapport.

These scenarios are inaccurate and exhausting! When your mind turns remote possibilities into true probabilities, especially when they are unwarranted, it erodes a healthy connection between the adult and child (your biggest superpower) and compromises everyone’s well-being.

The problem is not that you have negative thoughts; it’s that you believe these thoughts are true.

Nobody can predict or prevent the future – and catastrophizing exists in the future! Below are some helpful techniques you can use to avoid worst-case scenario thinking.

- **Stay in the present:** The moment is what it is.
- **Focus on the facts:** Describe what is happening at this particular moment. Shift from thinking “what if” to thinking what is! Use descriptive commentary and avoid subjective commentary.
- **Act like a reporter:** Describe the situation, abstain from making judgments, and remove the emotion.
- **Think in shades of gray:** Catastrophizing is very polarized thinking. It transforms things

into this or that. Remember, most situations are nuanced and include varying degrees and gradations.

- **Poke holes in your thinking:** Identify other times when you resorted to “worst case scenario thinking” and it never came to fruition.
- **Discern facts from fear:** Facts are objective; fear is subjective.
- **Label your thoughts:** Instead of declaring a thought as a fact; “_____ is going to happen,” say, “I have a thought that _____ is going to happen.” Identifying your concern as a thought, instead of as a truth, can help you gain perspective.
- **Use your imagination wisely:** The power to choose what to imagine is yours. Use your child’s present situation to predict optimal future outcomes.

For example: The same 4-year-old who grabs toys will grow into a mature person who exercises a lot of agency and initiative. They know what they want — they are focused and intentional!

The reserved child who clings to their parent’s leg recognizes the importance of safety. Their caution enables them to make astute decisions and someday build a strong, safe and secure foundation for their own family.

For more access to helpful “bite-size” parenting and life wisdom, please follow Joan Morgenstern on Instagram @joan.morgenstern.



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Photo credit: Jim Marquardt

7 activities to try this winter at Lake Metroparks

Snowshoe the Parks: Have you ever tried snowshoeing? It's a great way to explore the outdoors and also has many health benefits. Lake Metroparks offers visitors opportunities to snowshoe on a variety of terrain throughout the park district. Girdled Road Reservation offers backcountry snowshoe trails, Chapin Forest Reservation offers nearly six miles of trails and Penitentiary Glen Reservation offers seven miles of trails.

Snowshoe rentals are available at Chapin Forest Reservation Pine Lodge Ski Center (first-come, first-served) and at Penitentiary Glen Nature Center (first-come, first-served).

Skiing Fun: Because Lake and Geauga counties are blessed with the best snowfalls in the state each year, cross-country skiing is a great way to get out and enjoy the parks! Lake Metroparks offers both groomed and ungroomed trails for skiers of all abilities.

Sled Down the Hills: Lake Metroparks offers a variety of winter activities for all ages, but by far, sledding is one of the most popular. The parks offer four different places to bring your family for a day of thrills upon whatever apparatus you choose to bring.

Hike the Trails under the Lights: Feel free to hike under the lights this winter at Chapin Forest Reservation. A mile of trail lights will be

turned on at the Arbor Lane Loop Trail (Hobart Road entrance) each evening from dusk until the park closes, regardless of ski conditions. If hiking and snow is on the trail, watch for skiers, respect groomed trails and do not walk in ski tracks.

View the Dunes: Have you ever seen the ice dunes along the Lake Erie shoreline? Visit one of their lakefront parks and discover what happens to the lake in winter.

Winter Bird Feeding: Many of our feathered friends fly south for the winter in search of food, but many stay right here in northeast Ohio. We also see some species in the winter only—these birds nest north of us and fly south to Ohio for their winter vacations.

Winter Camping: Have you ever thought about camping in the winter? Lake Metroparks offers winter camping at Girdled Road Reservation in Concord Township. It is a hike-in or ski-in site about ¾ of a mile into the Big Creek Valley. Enjoy this park in a new way from the comfort of your tent!

Cross-country ski and snowshoe rental equipment is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Equipment cannot be reserved. A driver's license is required as a deposit with all rentals.

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A new home for the holidays

If adopting a pet is on your list this year, here are a few things to keep in mind

By Ante Logarusic

The holiday season is upon us and we're all thinking about that perfect gift. Wish lists are shared and it should come as no surprise to many parents when a new puppy or kitten is right at the top of that list.

If you've been thinking about adding a new member to the family, there are some important things to keep in mind.

If adopting from a breeder, do your homework and ensure that the breeder is reputable. Don't be afraid to ask to see where and how the dogs are housed – the breeder should not object. That great deal you find online may be the result of a life of misery at a puppy mill. In addition to unknown health and behavioral issues that can develop at a mass breeding facility, these dogs can also be susceptible to genetic disorders.

A great alternative is adopting through a shelter and the reason is simple; when you adopt a shelter animal, you save a life.

Adopting a pet is a long-term commitment that shouldn't be taken lightly and it's a decision that should be made by the whole family. Your family needs to determine how responsibilities will be split up and most importantly, you need to ensure that your family has the time to give your pet the



love and attention that it deserves.

Everybody wants to have the cute puppy and cute kitten on Christmas morning with the bow on them, but families have to understand that this is a significant commitment and that they will need to spend time with the pet. A pet adoption should never be a surprise. When a family is ready to adopt a pet, all adults in the family should agree that the adoption is a good decision.

Your newest family member is going to be with you for quite a while so making the right choice matters. Some of the things to take into consideration include making sure your family's energy level is in line with your new pet's energy level. Puppies and kittens are incredibly cute but also re-

quire a lot of patience, training, and care. Messes will be made, and boundaries need to be set before poor behavior sets in.

Costs need to be weighed as well. Like humans, animals require medical exams and sometimes additional care to live a happy and healthy lifestyle. Another terrific benefit of adopting a shelter dog or cat is that the animals have been vetted and the initial round of wellness care has already been taken care of.

In some situations, older animals may be better suited and are often preferred. Seniors, as well as families with older children, will often gravitate towards an older pet because they have been trained and the commitment isn't quite as long.

"Our older pets are often adopted relatively quickly," says Lisa Ishee, external affairs director with Geauga County's Rescue Village. "Something about them tugs at people's heartstrings. People want to get them out of the shelter life and back into a loving home."

For many of us of a certain age, getting a dog was once as simple as taking a trip to the pound. These days, many organizations utilize adoption counselors to ensure that pets enter the right situation and are a good fit for the family. Counselors will work with a family to get an idea of

See *PETS* on page 19

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Pets from page 17

what they're looking for in a pet as well as assessing what kind of home they have to offer. They'll also spend time making sure that it's the right fit. Like humans, dogs and cats have unique personalities and some situations are better than others.

The worst situation is when a family and their new pet have bonded and have to be separated.

If you've checked all of the boxes and made the decision to move forward, keep in mind that any time is a good time to adopt. You'll be home for the holidays and that certainly helps, but experts agree that it takes about three months for a shelter pet to become completely acclimated to your environment and develop trust in your family.

The best thing you can do is establish a routine, define boundaries as well as positive reinforcement, and also give the pet the ability to have

some space as well as quiet time to itself as it adjusts to its new home.

Most local shelters post available animals on their websites and those can change daily. People are encouraged to visit often to see if their perfect pet becomes available. Shelters have different hours, fees, and rules in place. Some host regular visiting hours while others are done by appointment only. Be sure to visit their websites to learn more.

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“Quest for the Stars” exhibit now open at the International Women’s Air & Space Museum

The International Women’s Air & Space Museum (IWASM) is excited to announce the opening of its newest exhibit, “Quest for the Stars” (Quest). This project explores the experiences and impact of the women in the 1960s Woman in Space Program, a project not endorsed by NASA and commonly referred to as the Mercury 13, and women working within NASA itself in our early American space program.



Quest is the first step in the museum’s effort to update exhibits to enhance engagement, representation, and visual appeal while also providing greater accessibility. Learn about the Woman in Space Program participants, the first Native American female aerospace engineer, ‘hidden figures’ such as Katherine Johnson and Annie Easley, and the 1978 NASA astronaut class with the first six female astronaut selections. To provide a fuller understanding of their experiences, the exhibit highlights the unique periods in

which the women lived. Hear in their own words these women’s stories and engage with more content online thanks to the museum’s newly launched YouTube channel via the QR codes in the exhibit.

Located inside Cleveland’s Burke Lakefront Airport, exhibits are free of charge seven days a week from 8 am–8 pm. Guided tours are available M–F by appointment. Gift shop & offices open M–F 10 am–4 pm.

For more information, visit www.iwasm.org or call 216-623-1111. Closed for all major holidays and home games of the Cleveland Browns.

Northeast Ohio Girl Scouts to receive space badge after winning national contest

Have you ever dreamed of owning something that has been to space and back? After winning a national essay contest, this dream will become a reality for three northeast Ohio Girl Scouts when they receive a special badge that has been to space on NASA’s Artemis 1!

toward the goal of sending the first woman and the first person of color to the moon. The rescheduled launch of Artemis 1 took place early morning on Wednesday, November 16 and the capsule will return to Earth in six to eight weeks.

In early 2022, Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) sponsored the “Girl Scouts to the Moon and Back” essay contest to give Girl Scouts a chance to win a Space Science badge that’s actually been to space!

“We are over the moon for our three Northeast Ohio Girl Scouts,” said Girl Scouts of North East Ohio (GSNEO) CEO Jane Christyson. “Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) is one of four program pillars in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), which builds girls’ skills and encourages their interest in STEM. At Girl Scouts, we encourage our girls to reach for the stars to make their big dreams a reality.”

The national essay contest winners in Northeast Ohio are Evalina D. (Girl Scout Junior in Brecksville), Mary Rose G. (Girl Scout Daisy in Broadview Heights), and Clara W. (Girl Scout Cadette in Avon).

This mission is NASA’s first step

Join, volunteer, reconnect, or donate, by visiting gsneo.org.

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Treat your family to memories of a lifetime

If you're looking for great giving ideas for the animal lover on your list, look no further. The Cleveland Zoological Society suggests these four easy ways to give a gift that also gives back.

Zoo Babies Calendar

When you give a gift of \$125 to the ZooFund, you'll also receive a 2023 Zoo Babies calendar highlighting the little ones born at the Zoo the last few years. It's a great holiday gift for that special animal lover in your life. Available while supplies last.

Zoo Gift Membership

Give them a gift they can use all year long. Use the code BRIGHTTF online for a 15% discount code.

Support a Species — Tigers

Hard to find a gift for someone who has everything? Donate to the Support a Species program and give them a certificate and fact sheet



about Amur tigers. They'll appreciate the gesture and you'll be supporting our mission.

Shop at the Zoo Gift Shop

From plush to sustainably grown coffee, you can find an array of gifts and stocking stuffers for friends and family of any age. Members always receive a 10% discount, or shop during PNC Member Days (Dec. 11-17) and receive 20% off.

Click ClevelandZooSociety.org/holiday and cross a few people off your nice list!

Local Goodwill employee honored with Achiever of the Year award

If you happen to be donating clothing or housewares at Goodwill in Painesville Township, you may catch a smile and greeting from Samuel Majoros.

This cheerful employee was honored recently with the Achiever of the Year Award by Goodwill Industries of Greater Cleveland and East Central Ohio.

Sam was nominated for the award by Goodwill staff and by his teacher, Natalie Urbas. Urbas serves as



Sam Majoros

the RAVE job training coordinator for Riverside Local Schools. RAVE (Reaching to Achieve Vocational Excellence) provides job exploration and training for students with disabilities.

"When Sam came into the program he was shy, he was timid and not a very confident worker yet," explained Urbas. "The beauty of the program is that I get to see young people like Sam grow."

At first, Sam trained on a number of jobs at Goodwill through RAVE. He learned soft skills and job responsibilities. Eventually, he was

hired by Goodwill as an employee.

As a donor door attendant, Sam greets customers and helps to unload their donations. Then he sorts the donations into different categories, preparing the items to be priced and placed on the sales floor.

"In the beginning, I was nervous, but now I've developed over time to be more confident," Sam shared. "What I learned here at Goodwill is to be more mature and

responsible."

The local Goodwill employs nearly 700 people throughout the community. Donations and sales at area stores support a network of outreach programs including job training for people with disabilities and other barriers to employment, hot meal programs and even rape crisis services. Last year alone, more than 14,000 residents were supported by Goodwill mission programs.

"I do like to work with customers because I always make them happy by saying, 'have a great and inspiring day, and spread kindness,'" said Sam.

Join us for the best holiday party in town!

Deck THE House
PRESENTED BY THE CLEVELAND BROWNS

Help Providence House give the gift of care to children and families in crisis this upcoming year during a fun, festive evening full of holiday cheer!

Tuesday, December 13, 2022, 5:30 - 9:30 PM
Cleveland Browns Stadium

MIX AND MINGLE
with our honorary chairs, Cleveland Browns Legend Joe Thomas and Annie Thomas, and celebrity emcee, Andrea Veschio

ENJOY
holiday performances featuring the North Coast Men's Chorus, delicious food and cocktails, and the 2022 Ed Block Courage Award ceremony honoring a Cleveland Browns Player

BID
on our specially curated collection of exciting silent and live auction packages

DECK
your own house with one of our beautifully decorated trees

tickets provhouse.org/deckthehouse

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DollarBank

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Open through January 1
at Penitentiary Glen Nature Center
Exhibit open daily 10 am to 5 pm
Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas & New Year's Eve

A giant game board takes you on a fun birding adventure through a variety of colorful habitats.

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 LAKEMETROPARKS.COM



Grown-up Gift Ideas

Hoselink

Retractable Hose Reels
www.hoselink.com

Hoselink's new 50 ft. retractable garden hose reel is a compact wall-mounted unit featuring a high-quality spring-loaded hose that automatically rewinds on command. Its specially designed 'stop-anywhere' locking mechanism secures the hose at any length, preventing your hose from kinking and tangling.

To lengthen, simply walk the hose out and stop wherever you desire. When you've finished, lightly tug the hose to engage its automatic rewind system.

Contains everything you need to



get started:

- Hoselink's easy-to-use quick-connect hose fittings.
- Comfort 8-pattern flow control spray nozzle.
- 50 ft. high-quality PVC hose fitted with solid brass hose threads.
- 9/16" (14mm) hose diameter.
- 5.5ft leader hose.
- Bracket + installation hardware. (82 ft. reel is available!)



Allbirds

Women's Tree Breezers
www.allbirds.com

Crafted with silky-smooth eucalyptus tree fiber and a fitted collar, their ballet flat is breathable, and pleasantly cool thanks to fiber responsibly sourced from FSC® Certified forests.

The Brazilian sugarcane outsole is contoured and delightfully bouncy and is called SweetFoam™, which is made with the world's first carbon negative green EVA.

To create the insole, they layered castor bean oil, which emits less carbon than petroleum-based foam, and ZQ Merino wool for a cushiony, moisture wicking, and odor reducing insole. Available in a variety of colors.



Vitamix

Explorian® Series E310
www.vitamix.com

Explore how easy it is to make healthy, whole-food recipes at home. From appetizers to dessert, the 48-ounce container is ideal for blending medium batches for small family meals.

The ten variable speeds allow you to refine every texture with culinary precision, from the smoothest purées to the heartiest soups.

With the Pulse feature, layer coarse chops over smooth purées for heartier recipes, such as chunky pasta sauce or thick vegetable soups.

The powerful 2 HP motor can handle even tough ingredients to create high-quality blends.

Revlon

www.revlon.com



Revlon One-Step Blowout Curls

- 360° vented barrel evenly distributes heated air and is more gentle than plated heat.
- 1 1/4" triple ceramic-coated barrel smooths hair and reduces frizz.
- Detachable barrel locks in place and is easy to remove for storing.
- Four heat settings (low/med/high/cool).
- Cool tip and sleek handle for easy grip and control.
- 6' swivel cord for tangle-free styling.
- Root-drying concentrator to reduce dry time and prep hair for curling.



Revlon SmoothStay Coconut Oil Infused 1" Flat Iron

Visibly shinier, smoother hair is possible with the all-new SmoothStay straightener that features triple-coated ceramic plates infused with coconut oil for long-lasting results. Paired with ceramic tourmaline ionic technology for reduced static and frizz. Faster styling is made possible with heat-sensing technology that maintains heat evenly, while also decreasing heat damage.



Revlon Salon Long Lasting Curls 1" Curling Iron

- 1" barrel for medium curls and relaxed waves.
- Tourmaline ceramic coating for less damage and more shine.
- 425°F high heat, constant heat and 30 heat settings for long lasting curls and waves.
- Auto shut-off for safety.
- Tangle-free swivel cord.
- Soft-feel handle for comfortable styling.



Revlon Style and Go Retractable Cord Folding Handle Hair Dryer

Designed with the jet setter in mind, the folding handle and retractable cord make it perfect for easy storage and mobility. This on-the-go dryer is boosted with tourmaline ionic technology, and triple ceramic coating to protect your strands from over-styling, and deliver brilliant, natural shine at home or on the go. 1875 watts.

Dyson

www.dyson.com

Dyson V12 Detect Slim Extra™

Dyson's most compact, intelligent cordless vacuum featuring laser illumination to reveal microscopic dust you didn't even know existed.

Features include:

- The limited-edition Dyson V12 Detect Slim Extra is the only Dyson vacuum to come with exclusive new tools: the scratch-free dusting brush or awkward gap tool.
- New detangling technology on the Motorbar cleaner automatically detangles long hair and pet hair from the cleaner head as you clean.
- The Dyson V12 Detect Slim Extra also features a single-button power control, making cleaning an easier and more seamless experience.



Morphée

us.morphee.co

This portable device uses a simple three-key system with no screens or digital interfaces to select the optimal sleep-inducing program.

With the first key, choose from one of eight themed sessions to aid sleep, such as breathing, cardiac coherence (slowing the heart rate), napping, visualizations, and nature sounds.



With the second key, select one of eight training sessions per theme. The third key determines either eight- or twenty-minute sessions.

Finally, choose the voice of your audio guide. The rechargeable battery gives approximately one week's worth of daily listening, which can be heard via integrated speakers or personal headphones.

Also check out My Little Morphée for your children!

TOY & GIFT Ideas



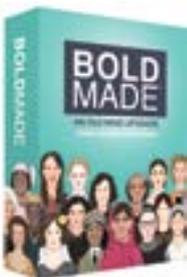
Taco vs Burrito

Ages 7+

Taco vs Burrito is the #1 most gifted card game on Amazon. This wildly popular and surprisingly strategic game was created by a 7-year-old and has taken the card game industry by storm. With over 600K games sold and over 12,000 five-star reviews, Taco vs Burrito sold a whopping \$5.6 million in 2021. It's perfect for kids, adults and families!

The battle to build the weirdest, wildest meal is on!

www.tacovsburrito.com



Bold Made

Ages 3+

Bold Made flips the script on traditional Old Maid by including bold women who made huge impacts on our world such as Malala Yousafzai, Temple Grandin, Ellen Ochoa, Roberta Bondar, Billie Jean King, Georgia O'Keeffe, Sally Ride, Maya Angelou, Amelia Earhart and many more. Bold Made also has a more aspirational goal of ending the game with the Bold Made card. The perfect way to have fun and learn about inspiring women at the same time.

www.boldmade.com



PLAYMOBIL Wiltopia Animal Care Station

Ages 4+

Set in the exotic and fascinating Amazon rainforest, play sets in this new theme are all about sustainability! WILTOPIA is made of no less than 80% recycled plastic. Kids can dive into this colorful play world that features six new play sets and over two dozen different animal sets! The message is about growing up in a place where animals and nature are appreciated and protected. The sets provide important educational

information about the diversity of our planet, animals, nature, geography and sustainability via online apps and QR codes — all of course with the fun and imagination of PLAYMOBIL.



GIGABOTS (Blip Toys)

Ages 5+

An exciting new take on action figures. This line of 13" fully articulated figures lets kids build, transform and battle — and then rebuild and battle over and over again. The point of difference: Each figure starts as a plastic capsule which not only has all the pieces needed to assemble the GIGABOT, but also becomes part of the build. It's the ultimate unboxing experience. Six figures in the line.



Cake-N-Bake Challenge (Hey Buddy Hey Pal)

Ages 4+

A totally different kind of action-packed family game with a delicious, rainbow-layer, foam cake as the center of attention! Object of the game is to, well, just be the fastest baker! Players will race to stack their cake slices based on the order on a game card. The first to correctly stack their cake wins a candle, and whoever collects six candles wins and gets to wear the included chef's hat. Also great for preschoolers learning their colors — plus no reading required!



Gund Drops: Holiday Series

Ages 3+

Drops are a gotta have 'em all line of soft, huggable and expressive 6" plush animals.

These cute, whimsical characters have different facial expressions,

oversized heads and tiny drop-shaped bodies filled with beans—you'll want to squish and collect them all! The new holiday series includes Ginny Ginger, the silly puppy; Benny Burr, the happy polar bear; and Webster Waddles, the cheeky penguin.



A Bundle of Sticker Fun!

www.workman.com

This bundle set comes with four great sticker books!

Paint by Sticker Kids: Zoo Animals

Find, peel, and place the sticker—and watch your animal paintings come to life!

Peel+ Discover: Oceans

Peel each sticker to reveal a fascinating fun fact.

EyeLike Stickers: Animals

Over 400 irresistible, reusable, and collectible stickers to mix, match and trade!

EyeLike Stickers: On the Farm

400 reusable, vibrant, full-color stickers including animals from cows to ducklings, farm-fresh fruits and vegetables, and scenes from the farm.



Geomag Mechanics Challenge Strike

Ages 8+

Learn about the amazing world of magnets and mechanical construction with a super fun game! Build the construction first, and then be ready for hours of fun either alone or in competition with others, where precision, timing and dexterity are the key to victory. With as many as 185 individual parts, both the construction itself and the subsequent gaming experience are challenging and educational for everyone involved.



Rubik's Race

Ages 7+

Shift, slide and solve! Rubik's Race is a fast-paced sequence board game designed to get your brain and fingers racing.

Shake the scrambler and take on your opponent head-to-head. Shift and slide the tiles to become the first racer to match the scrambler's 3x3 center cube pattern.

Skill, speed, and dexterity are the name of the game. Can you handle the pressure of the Rubik's Race?



Hungry Bins Learn To Recycle

Ages 3+

This STEM classification memory game is a great way to introduce children to recycling and composting! Kids will have fun discovering different types of materials and learning to recognize their respective collection bins.



Goki Toys Balancing Game - Chairs

Ages 3+

Sturdy in design and function, the Goki chair balancing game requires balance and skill. Who can stack all of the chairs before they tumble?

The 24 chairs are colorful, tactile and made from wood. This game can be played with one or more players.

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