

January 2023

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## New to Austin?

A Month-by-Month  
Guide

Parenting with  
Depression

The STAAR Test  
2023, What to  
Expect

Thyroid Awareness  
Month: What Parents  
Need to Know



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# January 2023 CONTENTS



## 8 **New to Austin?** A Month-by-Month Guide

## COLUMNS

- 7 **Family Matters.** Parenting with Depression  
Family Matters can be found in Spanish at [austinfamily.com](http://austinfamily.com)
- 10 **Lifelines.** Thyroid Awareness Month: What Parents Need to Know
- 14 **Learning Curve.** The STAAR test 2023, What to Expect
- 24 **Austin Then and Now.** Old Rock Store

## IN EVERY ISSUE

- 4 **Austin in Action.** News and Notes
- 6 **Places To Go and Things To Do.**
- 20 **Smart Screen Time.** What's Your Screen Resolution?  
Smart Screen Time can be found in Spanish at [austinfamily.com](http://austinfamily.com).
- 21 **Calendar.**  
Check [www.austinfamily.com](http://www.austinfamily.com) for daily updates.

## EXTRAS

- 12 **Education Guide**
- 16 **Camp Guide**
- 25 **Cover Kid Winners!**

## FILM REVIEW

By Jack Kyser

### The Fabelmans

Read online at: [www.austinfamily.com/films](http://www.austinfamily.com/films)

## TUNE IN



Catch Austin Family magazine live on "Good Day Austin" every Thursday morning.

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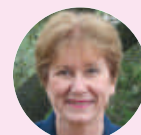
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BRENDA SCHOOLFIELD



**FAMILY MATTERS**  
DR. BETTY RICHARDSON



**SMART SCREEN**  
DR. BENJAMIN KRAMER



**FILM REVIEW**  
JACK KYSER



*MeaBella, four years old, loves to dance and cheer... She also loves family time and reading. Photo by Jordan-Ashley Photography.*

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

JESS ARCHER

*Archer is a writer, a mom of two kids and wife. She is the author of the memoir, Finding Home with the Beatles, Bob Dylan and Billy Graham.*

Eighteen years ago, this January, I moved from Philadelphia to Austin. I was jobless and single but restless for some adventures in the heart of Texas. Back then the sum of my Austin intel was that it's a city that loves live music. While that has continued to be true about Austin, so much has changed in the capital city. Eighteen years ago, there weren't any high-rise condos, there were fewer sleek bars and restaurants and definitely less traffic. But some great things have stayed the same about Austin, and our city is proud of that.

According to www.populationu.com about 120 people move to Austin every day. Maybe some of them know exactly what to expect from our bustling city, but on the off chance that some are as clueless as the younger version of me, this issue of Austin Family is for them.

This month in our feature article, funny writer/blogger, Catherine Parker gives us the whole dish on what to expect in Austin month by month. In a city with so much going on all the time, Catherine narrows it down to the essentials. Consider yourself an Austin expert after reading her piece.

For both veteran parents and new-to-Texas parents, this month, Alison Bogle provides an essential "what to expect" from the STAAR 2023 test. This is an important article because the STAAR test is changing in significant ways this year. Parents will want to read up and prepare their children as much as possible.

Whether you're the rare unicorn who was born and raised in Austin or, like me, just another transplant to Texas, we hope your love for Austin and all it has to offer grows in the coming year. Cheers to 2023 and another new beginning.

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# Austin IN ACTION

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## Kids Combat Food Insecurity

Many families experience food insecurity, making the holidays a great time to support local food banks. During the month of December, six Primrose schools across Austin donated 1,697 canned goods, 414 pounds of food and \$1,821 to five local charities throughout the Austin area.

This donation is a part of Primrose's Caring & Giving initiative which encourages children to complete age-appropriate household chores for allowance money to buy canned goods. This initiative fosters giving without expectation, a key component of the Primrose curriculum.

"Experience-based lessons of service and compassion are woven throughout our curriculum, which guide our teachers and families as they nurture good citizens in the classroom, in the home and in the community," said Jo Kirchner, CEO, Primrose Schools. "We believe by educating children to be service-minded and to give without expectation, we are working together toward a brighter future of caring, community-oriented citizens."



## Outstanding Counseling Programs in RRISD

Five schools in the Round Rock Independent School district were recently recognized for having outstanding counseling programs on campus. The counseling programs at Laurel Mountain and Spicewood elementary schools as well as Canyon Vista, Grisham and Pearson Ranch middle schools were named 2022 Lone Star State School Counselor Association (LSSSCA) Award Winners.



Five RRISD schools were recognized for outstanding counseling programs.

The award recognizes campuses for displaying dedication and demonstrating outstanding comprehensive counseling programs that are data-driven, focused on goal completion and aligned to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model. Recipients undergo a strenuous application process that culminates their year-long work of implementing the best practices of a comprehensive, developmental school counseling program.

## Santa Visits Premies in the NICU

For parents with a baby in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), the holidays can be a very emotional and extra stressful time of year. To bring some cheer to weary families and caregivers, Santa and Mrs. Claus made a special visit to the NICU at Ascension Seton Medical Center on December 12th. Santa and Mrs. Claus took special photos with the babies and visited with parents, nurses and doctors. They also hosted special activities and songs for the families and staff.



Baby's first visit with Santa

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## From North to South Austin: Two Fun Eateries

ANDREA GENEVIEVE TOWNSON

Andrea Genevieve Townson is a mom of three, adventurer and lover of breakfast tacos. Follow along with her family travels on Instagram at @field\_trip\_fridays

The post-holiday lull doesn't have to be so blue; there are plenty of activities and places to explore with the family around Austin, including these unique eateries. From way North Austin down to way South Austin, it's always fun to explore new culinary treats with kids.

### NORTH AUSTIN- DOMAIN THE DIRDIE BIRDIE

**10910 DOMAIN DR SUITE 120, AUSTIN, TX 78758**

**PRICES: \$\$\$**



One of Austin's newest restaurants, this is a fun place to take teens and tweens for a weekend meal or after-school adventure. The menu features small and large plates such as The Bird's Nest (blooming onion), Double Dirdie

Burger or the German Style Bratwurst. Try the snack plate called The Leader Board, which feeds two or four and features pimento cheese, roasted garlic hummus, whipped goat cheese, mixed nuts and toasted sourdough. Finish up with a round of indoor golf inspired by the Austin culture scene. The course includes miniature iconic landmarks like the Pennybacker Bridge, the state Capitol building and the bats seen on South Congress bridge.

Guests under 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult (21+) on the golf course, with at least one adult per every three minors. One round of golf (12 holes) costs \$18, regardless of the age of the player. *While reservations are not required, they are encouraged to secure your spot. Please note, children under 6 are not allowed at this location.*

### SOUTH AUSTIN The Thicket Food Park

**7800 S 1st St, Austin, TX 78745**  
**Prices range \$-\$**



This is a hidden gem for families in South Austin. There are a dozen flavorful food options including gourmet corn dogs, classic Italian, Indian, Mexican, a coffee bar, juice bar and much more.

Nestled among the Texas cedar trees, this is a great place to explore with other families for a Friday or Saturday night gathering. The best part of this food truck park is undoubtedly the ambiance. Once the sun sets, it feels like quintessential Austin to sit under the twinkling light and listen to the kids laugh and run around.

The parking lot is small, but the wide array of food options and open space makes up for it. Bring a ball or two, or let the children climb through the trees, adventure on the playscape or play a game of tag. You might also be lucky enough to experience some live music on the community stage during your visit. Check the Thicket calendar of events to learn more.

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# Parenting While Depressed

## FAMILY MATTERS

DR. BETTY RICHARDSON

*Richardson, PhD, RN, CS, LPC, LMFT, is an Austin-based psychotherapist.*

**Q** I'm the mother of two boys, ages six and eight. I've not been doing well as a parent because I'm depressed. My husband works a lot and is little help. I don't want to get dressed. I often go back to bed after the kids go to school. When I get up the house is a wreck with the sink full of dishes and dirty clothes piled everywhere. I don't have the energy to clean. My kids are undisciplined and totally out of control. For example, the boys took a hammer to their bedroom wall. Tell me what I need to do to get out of depression and become a well-functioning parent again.

**A** I'm going to tell you some of the things that have worked for my therapy clients over the years, including people who are currently working through their depression.

1. You need to see a mental health nurse practitioner or psychiatrist who can evaluate, diagnose and prescribe. He or she will most likely prescribe an antidepressant unless your depression stems from another source, such as cancer or endocrine problems. Scheduling and keeping a doctor's appointment can be challenging when you are depressed, so ask your husband or a friend to help you with the appointment arrangements.

2. Make a list of five things you want to accomplish during the day. Check them off as you do them. Each day make a different list of five after adding the undone tasks from the previous day. Short, manageable lists are best. Going to the nurse practitioner or doctor could be on the list.
3. Hire a high school student or babysitter to come be with the children after school or for portions of time when your kids are on school break. If you can hire someone to clean, do that too.
4. Depression can affect self-esteem, so it's important to work on that aspect of healing. Make a list of positive affirmations. Type up a list for yourself or just copy an internet set that suits you. Put the affirmation list on your bathroom mirror and in other easily accessed places such as your purse. Take a screenshot of the list with your phone and make that your home screen image. Examples: I am capable of being a good mother. I have a good sense of humor.
5. Practice converting negative thoughts to positive thoughts. For example: I'm never getting better is changed to "I am better" or "I can be better."
6. Journal. As you get to feeling better, journaling is a helpful thing to do. It's a practice that is promoted in United Healthcare magazine, Nov. 2022. The article cites a study by Penn State College of Medicine in 2018 that lists the benefits of journaling, which include reducing depression symptoms. Journaling provides an "opportunity for positive self-talk and to release negative thoughts."
7. Walk, run and exercise every day. A good number of people who run around Ladybird Lake are doing so to lift their mood.

To give up depression takes time and work. Lots of people have done it, and so can you.



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# New to Austin?



## A Month-by-Month Guide

CATHERINE PARKER

*Catherine Parker has a passion for travel that's driven her across North America. When not traveling, Catherine restores a pair of 100-year-old houses in the Austin area and writes for publications from U.S. News to her website, CarfulofKids.com.*

Welcome to Austin! We're happy you're here. Kick off your oxfords and slip on some flip-flops. Austin wears its laid-back vibe year-round and likes its fun al-fresco. It's a family and pet-friendly city that embraces, food, music and little bit of the weird. Read on for what to expect in Austin all year round.

### JANUARY

It's a new year in your new hometown. It's winter in Texas—which might mean anything, so keep an eye on your weather app. It could be 70° and glorious under a cloudless sky or it could be drizzling slushies. If it's the latter, the state will shut down. Buy milk and toilet paper. No one is going anywhere until the temp hits 40 (seriously).

#### Martin Luther King Jr. Parade

Celebrate the day off with a parade that runs from the University of Texas to the steps of the Texas State Capitol and ends at Huston-Tillotson University. At

Huston-Tillotson, attendees will enjoy a festival with food and local musicians. The Martin Luther King Jr. Parade and Festival will be collecting canned food for the Central Texas Food Bank. [www.mlkcelebration.com](http://www.mlkcelebration.com)

### FEBRUARY

#### Austin Marathon and Half Marathon

Lace up the runners to see some of Austin's iconic sites. Starting on Congress Avenue, participants will jog past the Capitol and more iconic sights. If this sound like too much for a Sunday morning, then register for the shorter, 5K. Costumes are welcome and there's live music along the way. [www.youraustinmarathon.com](http://www.youraustinmarathon.com)

### MARCH

You survived a weird Austin winter. Now it's time to celebrate.



#### Rodeo Austin

The entire state of Texas slaps on their

jeans and pulls on their boots for rodeo season, Austin included. Rodeo Austin is a fun family event that kicks off with the Cowboy Breakfast at the Long Center, complete with biscuits, gravy and cowboy coffee. For about two weeks, the Travis County Expo Center features rodeo competitions, a livestock show and big-name musical acts. [www.rodeoaustin.com](http://www.rodeoaustin.com)

### SXSW

Then there's SXSW (or "South By" as Austinites like to call it). This is the annual music, film and interactive conference and festival that has everyone in town renting out their spare bedrooms. The festival is not really family-friendly, though everyone knows its dates because downtown traffic and parking will be something you want to avoid. [www.sxsw.com](http://www.sxsw.com)

### APRIL

It is one of the most glorious months in Central Texas so get out and explore.



#### Wildflowers

The wildflowers are a sight to behold, and you don't have to go far. Drive down SH 130, east of Austin, or US 290 towards Fredericksburg for the best wildflower meadows. Most parents (fur parents included) pop their kids into a patch for an annual bluebonnet photo. Texas loves its state wildflower.

#### Sherwood Forest Faire

Hear ye. Grab the family and transport them east of Austin for some Medieval times and much merriment. The Sherwood Forest Festival offers artisans, live entertainment from falcons to puppet shows along with food and drink. Held in McDade about 35 miles east of Austin. [www.sherwoodforestfaire.com](http://www.sherwoodforestfaire.com)

### MAY

Austin will offer May flowers for sure and maybe some May rain. It is technically the wettest month of the year.



## Pecan Street Spring Art Festival

Way back, Sixth Street was named Pecan Street. This festival is a perennial favorite for its shopping and people watching. If you miss it in the spring, then hit it in the fall. [www.pecanstreetfestival.org](http://www.pecanstreetfestival.org)

## JUNE

It's the start of the summer season. So head to one of the Hill Country's natural swimming pools. Dip a toe into Barton Springs then branch out to the others. Though heads up before the toes go in, the popular swimming holes require reservations.

## Blues on the Green

SXSW and ACL are the big name shows with big-ticket prices. Blues on the Green is truly a local affair. For a handful of mid-week dates in the summer, everyone gathers in Zilker with a basket and a blanket for free live music. [www.acl-radio.com/blues-on-the-green/](http://www.acl-radio.com/blues-on-the-green/)



## JULY

It's time to check out those bats you've heard about. As summer Texans, the bats live in a hooked-up spot (rent free) with an amazing view of the Austin skyline. Camp out along Lady Bird Lake near the Congress Avenue Bridge at dusk. Or rent a kayak, canoe or SUP and float underneath them for a unique experience. As a bonus, Lady Bird Lake is an official Texas Parks and Wildlife Paddling Trail.

## AUGUST

It's hot. But not Vegas hot. The school kids will head back in the middle of the month. Try and fit in a fun activity before the school year controls the schedule.

## Zilker Summer Musical

Grab a blanket to enjoy an outdoor theater production at the Zilker Hillside Theater. The show starts as the sun sets from Thursday to Sunday. Free to enjoy. [www.zilker.org](http://www.zilker.org)



## SEPTEMBER

This is the month that those temps return to the two-digits.



**Austin Museum Day** encourages residents to visit a local museum with free admission. Dozens of museums participate and feature special events for the day. [www.austinmuseums.org/this-years-amd](http://www.austinmuseums.org/this-years-amd)

## Austin Chronicle Hot Sauce Festival

Nothing like sweat dripping down your face in the name of culinary adventure. It's a popular foodie festival in Austin and raises funds for the Central Texas Food Bank. [www.austinchronicle.com/hot-sauce/about/](http://www.austinchronicle.com/hot-sauce/about/)

## OCTOBER

Another glorious month in Austin so celebrate with an outdoor festival.



## ACL—Austin City Limits

This is headliner for October. The two-weekend musical extravaganza hosts everyone from A-listers to chart toppers. ACL first timers are surprised to find ACL fairly kid-friendly. Friday or Sunday is the better option if bringing the school-age kids. Grab those tickets early.

## Texas Book Festival

On the grounds of the Texas State Capitol, readers will delight in book signings, discussions and a cooking demonstration or two. The festival has thousands of books for sale in every genre, including children's book. [www.texasbookfestival.org](http://www.texasbookfestival.org)



## NOVEMBER

Color comes late to Central Texas and that means November is when the trees start to pop.



## ThunderCloud Subs Turkey Trot

Austin doesn't judge. Some start the holiday in stretchy pants and a beverage. Others lace up the runners and don a turkey hat. This five-mile race has been touted as the largest in Texas. Starts at the Long Center on Thanksgiving morning. [www.thundercloud.com/register-2/](http://www.thundercloud.com/register-2/)

## DECEMBER

The holidays are upon us and everyone heads to Zilker Park for its holiday extravaganza, The Trail of Lights. It's a walkable display of expertly wrapped trees ablaze in millions of lights. In-between the trees, guests will find lighted displays of everyone's favorite childhood characters. There are food trailers and live music. Please note, arrange for reserved tickets and parking ahead of time.

Afterwards, head to the lit-up Zilker Tree, an original moonlight tower from the 1890s.



Celebrate the season with a holiday performance, like the Austin Ballet's annual The Nutcracker. The Scottish Rite Theater (the oldest theater in Austin) offers holiday performances for kids too. [www.scottishritetheater.org](http://www.scottishritetheater.org)

That year went fast and hopefully you had fun. If you missed a to-do, don't sweat it, there's always the next year.



# THYROID AWARENESS MONTH: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

## LIFELINES

BRENDA SCHOOLFIELD

*Brenda Schoolfield is a medical writer and editor who lives in Austin. Sugar, her cocker spaniel and sometimes a rescue foster dog or two keep her company while she writes.*

January is thyroid awareness month. Most people know how important the heart, lungs, and kidneys are to our health. But have you considered the crucial role of the thyroid gland? The hormone released by this gland is integral to proper functioning of the heart, brain, other organs and muscles. In children, the thyroid hormone is essential for normal brain and nervous system development.

### Understanding the Thyroid Gland

The thyroid gland is shaped like a butterfly and is in the front of the neck. It makes a hormone called T4 that helps regulate energy levels and metabolism. If you have too much T4, many of your body's functions are sped up. Your heart beats faster. You may have weight loss (even with increased appetite), trouble concentrating, nervousness, shaky hands and insomnia. This condition is called hyperthyroidism.

On the other hand, if you have too little thyroid hormone or T4 in your body,

many of your body's functions are slowed down. Your heart beats slower. You may feel tired, depressed and unable to concentrate. Some people have increased sensitivity to cold, dry skin, hair loss or constipation. Others may gain weight or have a puffy face. This condition is called hypothyroidism.

The pituitary gland located in the brain helps regulate the amount of thyroid hormone in the body. To do this, it releases a hormone called thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH). If the thyroid gland isn't making enough T4, the pituitary gland produces more TSH as a signal to the thyroid gland to work harder. The reverse is true as well. If the thyroid gland is making too much T4, the pituitary gland produces less TSH as signal for the thyroid gland to slow down.

### Thyroid Deficiency in Babies and Young Children

In the United States newborn babies are routinely tested to see if their thyroid gland is functioning normally. Doctors

look for low levels of T4 and high levels of TSH to diagnose congenital hypothyroidism. Congenital means that the baby is born with the condition. About 1 in every 1700 newborns are found to have hypothyroidism according to the American Thyroid Association. Early diagnosis and treatment are particularly important because the thyroid hormone is necessary for normal growth and development. A review of the recent congenital hypothyroidism guidelines warns that "a deficiency during the first 3 months of life results in a marked decrease in intelligence" because brain growth requires thyroid hormone. Medical care for these children should include consultation with a pediatric endocrinologist. Screening at birth saves these children from severe developmental delays. Unfortunately, screening is not available for about 70% of newborns in the world.

The Endocrine Society cautions that some babies or young children can have congenital hypothyroidism even

though initial screening results were normal. Look for signs, such as yellowing of the skin and eyes, feeding problems, constipation, swollen belly, puffy-looking face, large thick tongue and excessive sleepiness. Contact your pediatrician right away if you notice worrying signs.

### Thyroid Problems in Older Children and Teens

Hypothyroidism is very common and occurs in about 1 in every 1,250 children according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Older children and teens usually have the same signs and symptoms of hypothyroidism as adults. Other signs specific to this age group noted by the Mayo Clinic are delayed appearance of permanent teeth, being shorter in height than normal, delayed puberty and poor mental development.

Hyperthyroidism is less common but does occur in older children and teens. Signs of hyperthyroidism may be mistaken for signs of other conditions. Keep notes on worrisome signs and talk to your child's pediatrician. A thorough discussion of signs and symptoms in addition to blood tests can aid diagnosis.

### Treatment for Low Thyroid

Management for thyroid deficiency is to replace the missing hormone with a synthetic thyroid hormone called levothyroxine. Dosing is adjusted by monitoring thyroid hormone levels in the blood. Many patients will need thyroid hormone replacement therapy their entire lives. For some babies the deficiency may be temporary; an endocrinologist should guide the decision to discontinue treatment.

Adults with hypothyroidism typically get blood tests to check hormone levels once a year. Children need blood tests more often because their bodies are growing. Babies with congenital hypothyroidism need to have blood tests every 1 to 2 months from birth to six months old then every 2 to 3 months thereafter. Their pediatrician should closely monitor growth, brain development and hearing.

## RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

Go to the  
American Thyroid Association  
website to learn more:

[www.thyroid.org/wp-content/uploads/patients/brochures/Hypo\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.thyroid.org/wp-content/uploads/patients/brochures/Hypo_brochure.pdf)

[www.thyroid.org/wp-content/uploads/patients/brochures/congenital-hypothyroidism-brochure.pdf](http://www.thyroid.org/wp-content/uploads/patients/brochures/congenital-hypothyroidism-brochure.pdf)

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\*2022 TEA  
\*\*2021 STARR Result

# Austin Family Magazine's EDUCATION GUIDE



PRIVATE SCHOOL	GRADES	LOCATION(S)	PHONE	WEBSITE
BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL	PreK4-12	North Austin	512-835-5983	<a href="http://www.brentwoodchristian.org">www.brentwoodchristian.org</a>
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL OF ST. MARY'S	PreK3-8	Downtown Austin	512-476-1480	<a href="http://www.smcschoolaustin.org">www.smcschoolaustin.org</a>
CHALLENGER SCHOOL	PreK-8	Avery Ranch	512-341-8000	<a href="http://www.challengerschool.com">www.challengerschool.com</a>
	PreSch-K	Pond Springs	512-258-1299	<a href="http://www.challengerschool.com">www.challengerschool.com</a>
	PreSch-K	Round Rock	512-255-8844	<a href="http://www.challengerschool.com">www.challengerschool.com</a>
HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	North Austin	512-246-4455	<a href="http://www.holyfamilycs.org">www.holyfamilycs.org</a>
KIRBY HALL SCHOOL	PreK4-12	Central Austin	512-474-1770	<a href="http://www.kirbyhallschool.org">www.kirbyhallschool.org</a>
PARAGON PREP	3 yrs-8	North Austin	512-459-5040	<a href="http://www.paragonprep.com">www.paragonprep.com</a>
REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL	15 mos.-Grade 8	North Austin	512-451-6478	<a href="http://www.redeemerschool.net">www.redeemerschool.net</a>
SAN JUAN DIEGO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	9-12	South Austin	512-804-1935	<a href="http://www.sjdchs.org">www.sjdchs.org</a>
SANTA CRUZ CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	Buda	512-312-2137	<a href="http://www.sccstx.org">www.sccstx.org</a>
ST. AUSTIN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-8	Downtown Austin	512-477-3751	<a href="http://www.staustinschool.org">www.staustinschool.org</a>
ST. DOMINIC SAVIO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL	9-12	North Austin	512-388-8846	<a href="http://www.saviochs.org">www.saviochs.org</a>
ST. GABRIEL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	West Austin	512-327-7755	<a href="http://www.sgs-austin.org">www.sgs-austin.org</a>
ST. HELEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK4-8	Georgetown	512-869-3244	<a href="http://www.shcslions.org">www.shcslions.org</a>
ST. IGNATIUS MARTYR CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-8	South Austin	512-442-8547	<a href="http://www.school.st-ignatiusorg">www.school.st-ignatiusorg</a>
ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC SCHOOL	K-8 and Montessori	North Austin	512-614-6622	<a href="http://www.slcsaustin.org">www.slcsaustin.org</a>
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK3-12	Taylor	512-352-2313	<a href="http://www.stmarystaylor.org">www.stmarystaylor.org</a>
ST. MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY	9-12	West Austin	512-328-2323	<a href="http://www.smca.com">www.smca.com</a>
ST. THERESA'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL	PreK-8	North Austin	512-451-7105	<a href="http://www.st-theresa.org">www.st-theresa.org</a>

CHARTER SCHOOL	GRADES	LOCATION(S)	PHONE	WEBSITE
BASIS Austin	K-8 expanding to 12	North Austin	737-263-5890	www.basisedtx.com/austin/
BASIS Pflugerville	K-8 expanding to 12	Pflugerville	737-263-5890	www.basisedtx.com/pflugerville/
BASIS Cedar Park (Opening August 2023, taking applications now)	K-9 expanding to 12	Cedar Park	www.enrollbasistx.com/ cedarpark/	
CHAPARRAL STAR ACADEMY	K-12	North Austin	512-989-2672	www.chaparralstaracademy.com
HARMONY SCIENCE ACADEMY – Austin	PK-8	North Austin	512-835-7900	www.hsaaustin.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCHOOL OF INNOVATION – Austin	PK-5	Southeast Austin	512-300-0895	www.hsiaustin.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE – Austin	6-12	Southeast Austin	512-693-0000	www.hseaustin.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCIENCE ACADEMY – Cedar Park	PK-5	Cedar Park	512-251-5000	www.hsacp.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCHOOL OF ENDEAVOR – Austin	PK-12	North Austin	512-284-9880	www.hspaustin.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCHOOL OF SCIENCE – Austin	PK-5	North Austin	512-821-1700	www.hssaustin.harmonytx.org
HARMONY SCIENCE ACADEMY – Pflugerville	6-12	Pflugerville	512-494-5151	www.hsapflugerville.harmonytx.org
NYOS	PreK-12	North Austin	512-583-6907	www.nyos.org
VALOR South Austin	K-12	South	512-646-4170	www.valoreducation.org/southaustin
VALOR North Austin	K-10 expanding to 12	North	512-646-4168	www.valoreducation.org/northaustin
VALOR Kyle	K-8 expanding to 12	Kyle	512-521-0600	www.valoreducation.org/kyle
VALOR Leander (Opening Fall 2023)	K-8 expanding to 12	Leander	512-729-0159	www.valoreducation.org/leander

KINDERGARTEN/PREK MONTESSORI DAY CARE/AFTER-SCHOOL	GRADES	LOCATION(S)	PHONE	WEBSITE
ASHLEY'S DROP-IN CHILD CARE	Infant-12 yrs.	North Austin	512-872-2755	www.ashleysplayhouseaustin.com
COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER	Infant-12 yrs.	North Austin	512-331-1442	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com
	Infant-12 yrs.	South Austin	512-288-8220	www.countryhomelearningcenter.com
EXTEND-A-CARE YMCA FOR KIDS	3 yrs.- 8	77 area campuses	512-472-9402	www.austinyymca.org/branches/ extend-care-ymca
KINDERCARE	6 wks.-5 yrs.	Anderson Mill	833-905-3276	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6 wks.-5 yrs.	Bergstrom Tech	512-386-5541	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6 wks.-5 yrs.	Brushy Creek	833-905-3276	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6 wks.-5 yrs.	Round Rock	512-244-4956	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6 wks.-12 yrs.	Emerald Wood	512-443-9515	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
Prodigy Child Development Center		NW Austin	512-835-2443	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
	6wks.-12 yrs.	South Congress	512-443-7765	www.kindercare.com/regions/austin
NICHOLSON EARLY CHILDHOOD	18 mos.-5 yrs.	NW Austin	512-243-6539	www.nicholsonececenter.com
SNAPDRAGON PRESCHOOL	3-5 yrs. (Must be potty trained)	North Austin	512-593-6226	www.snapdragonpreschool.com
SPICEWOOD COUNTRY SCHOOL	2-5 yrs.	North Austin	512-346-2992	www.spicewoodcountry.com
STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS	Infant-12yrs	17 locations throughout Austin	512-459-0258	www.steppingstoneschool.com

**See Private School listings for:**

- Holy Family Catholic School
- Kirby Hall School
- Redeemer Lutheran School
- Santa Cruz Catholic School
- St. Austin Catholic School
- St. Gabriel's Catholic School

- St. Helen Catholic School
- St. Ignatius Martyr Catholic School
- St. Louis Catholic School
- St. Mary's Catholic School
- St. Theresa's Catholic School

**See Charter School listings for:**

- Harmony School of Innovation
- Harmony Science Academy
- Harmony Science Academy

- Harmony School of Endeavor
- Harmony School of Science
- Valor South
- Valor North
- Valor Kyle

# The STAAR Test 2023

## What to Expect



### THE LEARNING CURVE

ALISON BOGLE

*Bogle is a writer living in Austin with her husband and three children. A former fourth grade teacher, she now enjoys writing about children and education. You can also catch her talking about articles from Austin Family magazine each Thursday morning on FOX 7 Austin.*

Texas public schools are required to participate in standardized testing to comply with federal and state law. The standardized test that Austin-area students take is called the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness program, or STAAR. Implemented in the spring of 2012 the STAAR was created to assess students' knowledge of the state standards which are required to be taught in public school classrooms. STAAR results are also used to rate schools and districts, and to identify when a school or district requires state intervention due to low student performance. Finally, students are required to pass certain STAAR end-of-course or (EOC), exams before they are eligible to receive a high school diploma.

#### STAAR tests are taken annually during the following grades:

- mathematics - grades 3-8
- reading/language arts - grades 3-8
- science - grades 5 and 8
- social studies - grade 8
- end-of-course (EOC) assessments for Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology and U.S. History

As a result of the passage of House Bill, HB, 3906 in 2019, the STAAR program has undergone a major redesign which will affect our kids as they test this spring. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) a state agency that oversees primary and secondary public education, has been working with a wide range of educational partners to determine the most effective way to implement the changes called for in HB 3906 and has released a summary of the changes to the public. The changes will affect all STAAR tests administered this school year, so it is important for parents to be aware of the changes:

#### Here are the main changes to the STAAR 2023 test:

- **new online question formats**  
HB 3906 specifies that no more than 75 percent of STAAR test points can come from multiple choice questions. This means that students will now interact with questions in new ways such as by answering in short or extended text, dragging and dropping responses to a given area such as a map or chart, selecting an answer from one or more drop-down menus, manipulating fraction

models, and drawing points, lines and other parts of graphs.

- **online testing and accommodations** One of the biggest changes to the STAAR test is that it will be administered completely online. TEA believes that online administration will allow for quicker results, accommodate the new test question formats and provide accommodations students might receive in the classroom. Online accommodations include: the ability to read aloud texts, questions and directions, access to online calculators if needed, and differentiated timelines and shortened sections.

For students who cannot test online, the state is allowing requests for "a special administration of an online assessment," in other words, a paper version of the STAAR. A request should only be submitted, however, if a required accommodation that has been documented in a student's individualized education program (IEP), individual accommodation plan (IAP) or 504 paperwork cannot be delivered



in an online format. TEA clearly states that requests for paper tests based on parent or student preference will not be granted.

- **cross-curricular reading passages**  
A cross-curricular reading passage is one that references content from another subject. While the cross-curricular passages on the reading/language arts test will include topics from other subject areas like social studies, science, math and more, the questions will only assess reading/language arts standards.
- **evidence-based writing assessment**  
Beginning this year, reading/language arts assessments will assess both reading and writing and will include an essay at every grade level being tested. The test will shift from a standalone prompt to requiring students to write a response to a reading selection. Students will be asked to write in one of three styles: informational, argumentative or correspondence, and will be graded on a 5-point scale, focusing on language conventions and idea development.

I spoke with several administrators, a curriculum specialist and several teachers to learn their opinions of the STAAR redesign. Unanimously, they felt that students have had a lot of practice with online learning and testing, thanks in part to Covid-19 related Zoom schooling, and didn't anticipate that an online format would be a problem. They felt very positive about the accommodations that would be available to students, particularly the way that speech-to-text and read aloud capabilities would help those who struggle with reading or writing. However, the greatest area of concern was the change in question formats. The tests will also be administered earlier this year and there was concern about how that would affect lesson pacing.

### What can you do to support your child?

- familiarize your child with the new question formats. TEA has provided paper samples that demonstrate what the new questions will look like at: [www.tea.texas.gov/](http://www.tea.texas.gov/)

- student-assessment/testing/new-question-type-paper-samplers
- help calm nerves by stressing that trying his or her best is what counts
- encouraging a good night's sleep the night before and a healthy breakfast the day of the test
- check in with your child's teacher for other ways you can offer support at home

The STAAR test is important, but ultimately it is just a snapshot of how your child performed at one time on one particular day. If you work with your child's teacher to support his or her learning and emphasize careful work above the actual score, you'll be giving your child their best shot at a successful testing experience.



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CAMP	AGES	WEBSITE	PHONE	LOCATION
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## Arts

<b>ART CAMPS OF CORDOVAN</b>	5-16	<a href="http://www.cordovanartschool.com">www.cordovanartschool.com</a>	512-275-4040	CP, NW SW
<b>BADGERDOG CREATIVE WRITING CAMPS</b>	9-18	<a href="http://austinlibrary.org/creative-writing-camps">austinlibrary.org/creative-writing-camps</a>	512-542-0076	A
<b>BEE CAVES ART FOUNDATION YOUNG ARTISTS</b>	5-12	<a href="http://www.beecavesartfoundation.org">www.beecavesartfoundation.org</a>	512-731-5868	WL
<b>DANCE DISCOVERY</b>	3-18	<a href="http://www.dancediscovery.com">www.dancediscovery.com</a>	512-419-7611	C, RR
<b>IMAGINE ARTS ACADEMY OF AUSTIN</b>	4-12	<a href="http://www.imagineartsacademy.com">www.imagineartsacademy.com</a>	512-892-1143	Multiple
<b>KIDSACTING SUMMER CAMPS</b>	4-18	<a href="http://www.kidsactingstudio.com">www.kidsactingstudio.com</a>	512-836-5437	18 Locations
<b>SCHOOL OF ROCK MUSIC CAMP</b>	6-18	<a href="http://www.schoolofrock.com">www.schoolofrock.com</a>	512-246-7625	RR, N, SW
<b>SYNERGY DANCE</b>	2 & up	<a href="http://www.synergydance.com">www.synergydance.com</a>	512-327-4130	WL
<b>UT RADIO-TELEVISION-FILM MEDIA CAMPS</b>	6-18	<a href="http://www.rtf.utexas.edu/camps">www.rtf.utexas.edu/camps</a>	512-471-6617	UT Campus

## Sports

<b>ATX KIDS CLUB</b>	4-12	<a href="http://www.atxkidsclub.org">www.atxkidsclub.org</a>	512-234-5437	S
<b>AUSTIN BOULDERING PROJECT CAMP</b>	5-12	<a href="http://www.boulderingproject.com">www.boulderingproject.com</a>	512-966-4476	S
<b>CAMP DOUBLECREEK</b>	4-14	<a href="http://www.campdoublecreek.com">www.campdoublecreek.com</a>	512-255-3661	PF
<b>CAMP SWITCH WILLO</b>	6-13	<a href="http://www.switchwillo.com">www.switchwillo.com</a>	512-920-0554	N
<b>CLUB Z</b>	5-12	<a href="http://www.zsclubhouse.com">www.zsclubhouse.com</a>	512-219-0700	NW, S, SW
<b>JUMP! GYMNASTICS</b>	3-10	<a href="http://www.jump-austin.com">www.jump-austin.com</a>	512-705-9659	S, C
<b>ROCK ABOUT CLIMBING</b>	9-18	<a href="http://www.rock-about.com">www.rock-about.com</a>	512-415-0804	Various climbing locations
<b>SPICEWOOD COUNTRY CAMP</b>	3 ½-10 ½	<a href="http://www.spicewoodcountry.com">www.spicewoodcountry.com</a>	512-346-2992	NW
<b>STEVE AND KATE'S</b>	4-12	<a href="http://www.steveandkatescamp.com">www.steveandkatescamp.com</a>		C
<b>YMCA AUSTIN</b>	4-14	<a href="http://www.austinyymca.org">www.austinyymca.org</a>	512-322-9622	Multiple

## Education

<b>CLUB SCIKIDZ</b>	4-15	<a href="http://www.clubscikidz.com">www.clubscikidz.com</a>	229-444-3231	C
<b>COUNTRY HOME LEARNING CENTER</b>	5-13	<a href="http://www.countryhomelearningcenter.com">www.countryhomelearningcenter.com</a>	512-288-8220	N
<b>ESTEAM LEARNING LABS</b>	K-18	<a href="http://www.esteemlearninglabs.com">www.esteemlearninglabs.com</a>	512-740-3024	RR
<b>FANTASTIC MAGIC CAMP</b>	5-12	<a href="http://www.magiccamp.com">www.magiccamp.com</a>	512-850-4677	C
<b>IDEA LAB</b>	5-13	<a href="http://www.austin.idealabkids.com">www.austin.idealabkids.com</a>	512-710-9654	C
<b>MAD SCIENCE</b>	4-12	<a href="http://www.austin.madscience.org">www.austin.madscience.org</a>	512-892-1143	Multiple locations
<b>STEPPING STONE SCHOOLS</b>	5-11	<a href="http://www.stepsingstoneschool.com">www.stepsingstoneschool.com</a>	512-459-0258	17 locations

## Nature

<b>NATUREVERSITY OUTDOOR SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP</b>	5-12	<a href="http://www.natureversity.org">www.natureversity.org</a>	512-461-9395	EC
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## Overnight Camps

<b>CAMP CHAMPIONS</b>	6-17	<a href="http://www.campchampions.com">www.campchampions.com</a>	830-598-2571	Marble Falls, TX
<b>CAMP EAGLE</b>	6-18	<a href="http://www.campeagle.org">www.campeagle.org</a>	830-928-7288	Rocksprings, TX
<b>CAMP HEART O' THE HILLS FOR GIRLS</b>	6-16	<a href="http://www.hohcamp.com">www.hohcamp.com</a>	830-238-4650	Hunt, TX
<b>CAMP STEWART FOR BOYS</b>	6-16	<a href="http://www.campstewart.com">www.campstewart.com</a>	830-238-4670	Hunt, TX
<b>SUGAR &amp; SPICE RANCH CAMP</b>	5 & up	<a href="http://www.texas-horse-camps.com">www.texas-horse-camps.com</a>	830-460-8487	Bandera, TX
<b>SUMMER AT SANTA CATALINA</b>	8-14	<a href="http://www.santacatalina.org">www.santacatalina.org</a>	831-655-9386	Monterey, CA

### LOCATIONS

N, C, S, E, W, NW, SW, EC for Austin locations

PF for Pflugerville

RR for Round Rock

CP for Cedar Park



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JUNE 19-23 Robots

JUNE 26-30 Olympic Stars  
JULY 5-7 Mystery Camp  
JULY 10-14 Rainforest Funfari  
JULY 17-21 Jurassic Journey

JULY 24-28 Pirates!  
JULY 31 - AUG 4 Shipwreck  
AUGUST 7-11 Mermaid Island  
AUGUST 14-18 Hawaiian Luau

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<b>Jump! North</b> 2117 W Anderson Ln North@jump-austin.com	<b>Jump! Domain</b> 10910 Domain Dr #112 Domain@jump-austin.com	<b>Jump! South</b> 6800 West Gate Blvd #111 South@jump-austin.com
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[www.CampStewart.com](http://www.CampStewart.com)      [www.HOHcamp.com](http://www.HOHcamp.com)



# SMART SCREEN TIME

DR. BENJAMIN KRAMER

*Kramer, PhD, is the director of education for Austin PBS.*



## What's Your Screen Resolution?

With the new year, everyone is talking about diet, exercise and making changes. I'm going to jump on that trend and ask you to consider your screen resolution – not the pixel count but your intentions for screen use in 2023.

Parents, older siblings, and other adults provide children important models for screen use. However, kids are keenly aware when older people are asking them to follow one set of rules but seem to be following another. For example, have you found yourself saying, "Turn that off and do something else" while you yourself were looking at a screen? You are not alone – we've all been caught in moments like this in our screen-filled, imperfect lives.

Here are some questions when thinking about your screen practices:

1. When you have a free moment, do you find yourself automatically checking text messages, email or social media? The next time that happens, look around to see if your kids are nearby and ask yourself, "Is there something I can do with them instead?"
2. If you spend your working days on screens, do you tend to use your non-

work screen time for entertainment? If that's the case, you know you're creating balance in your own screen life, but your kids may only see you in your leisure time. Show them how you use devices for work and ask them how they use screens for their own kinds of work – learning, discovering and creating.

3. Phones and tablets are great for consuming media, but it takes a bit of exploration to see how they can be used for creating media as well. Invite your kid to write and draw on their

screens, record their voices and take photos and videos.

4. Lastly, when we are reading from paper, it's obvious to those around us what we are doing. When we are reading from screens, it's not as clear. If you do most of your reading on screens, show your kids what you are reading, and introduce them to the remarkable world of e-book libraries, where millions of books and stories are available for them on their very own devices.



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Campus	Grades	Website	Phone
Harmony Science Academy - Austin	PK-8	hsaaustin.harmonytx.org	(512) 835-7900
Harmony School of Innovation - Austin	PK-5	hsiaustin.harmonytx.org	(512) 300-0895
Harmony School of Excellence - Austin	6-12	hseastin.harmonytx.org	(512) 693-0000
Harmony Science Academy - Pflugerville	6-12	hsapflugerville.harmonytx.org	(512) 251-5000
Harmony School of Science - Austin	K-5	hssaustin.harmonytx.org	(512) 821-1700
Harmony School of Endeavor - Austin	PK-12	hspaustin.harmonytx.org	(512) 284-9880
Harmony Science Academy - Cedar Park	PK-5	hsacp.harmonytx.org	(512) 494-5151

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# January 2023 calendar

Go to [austinfamily.com](http://austinfamily.com) for expanded listings.

Check our calendar online which is updated daily. Any family-friendly events can be posted at [austinfamily.com](http://austinfamily.com) and will be made live once approved. Certain restrictions apply.

## Sun 1

**2nd St District Holiday Window Walk.** 8 - 10 a.m. Austinites are invited to watch the storefronts of 2nd Street District businesses transform into decorative holiday scenes during the twelfth annual 2nd Street District, 214 Guadalupe St. FREE. [www.2ndstreetdistrict.com](http://www.2ndstreetdistrict.com).

**Teen Cozy Up with a Good Book: Winter Reading Challenge 2023.** 8 a.m. 'Tis the season for coziness. Grab a blanket, your fluffy socks and your favorite warm drink or snack. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**Bee Cave On Ice.** 10 a.m. Enjoy Bee Cave on Ice. Ticket includes skate rental and a 75-minute skate session. Hill Country Galleria, 12700 Hill Country Blvd. \$15. [www.hillcountrygalleria.com](http://www.hillcountrygalleria.com).

**2023 Polar Bear Splash.** 10 a.m. Take part in a Kyle tradition and make a splash into the new year on January 1st, 2023. 1100 W. Center St. [www.cityofkyle.com](http://www.cityofkyle.com).

**Ice Skating at The Long Center.** 6:30 - 9 p.m. This season we're making all your winter wonderland dreams come true with ice skating on the H-E-B Terrace. \$15 and up. The Long Center HEB Terrace. [www.thelongcenter.org](http://www.thelongcenter.org)

## Mon 2

**Fortlandia.** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fortlandia, our annual exhibition of secret hideouts, kicks off this fall in a new location, the Luci and Ian Family Garden. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave. \$8 - \$15. [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org).

**CONTINUED:** Bee Cave On Ice, see Sun 1.

## Tue 3

**LEGO Lab.** 4-15 - 5 p.m. LEGO lab in an indoor socially distanced workshop. Build LEGO Wedo 2.0 Robotics in an indoor, socially distanced workshop. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. [www.wblibrary.org](http://www.wblibrary.org).

**Pajama Storytime.** Put on your pajamas, grab a bedtime buddy, and join us for stories, songs and fun. Recommended for children 6 years and younger. Kyle Library, 550 Scott St. [www.cityofkyle.com](http://www.cityofkyle.com).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Wed 4

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Thu 5

**Storytime & Craft.** 5 - 5:30 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. [www.wblibrary.org](http://www.wblibrary.org).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Fri 6

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Sat 7

**Read to a Therapy Dog.** 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Read to Princess Buttercup Dump Truck or Bently, our reading therapy dogs from Divine Canines on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays from 11:30am-12:30pm. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. [www.wblibrary.org](http://www.wblibrary.org).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Sun 8

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Mon 9

**Storytime with Ms. Diane.** 10 - 10:30 a.m. For children up to age 5, storytime is filled with books, songs and fun, followed by a short, hands-on learning activity. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger Street. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**Family Night.** 6 - 6:45 p.m. Come for a fun-filled family night at the library. We schedule different activities such as crafts, special guests and more. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Tue 10

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; LEGO Lab see Tue 3; Pajama Storytime, see Tue 3.

## Wed 11

**Little Sprouts.** 10 - 11 a.m. Bring your little ones to the gardens for our weekly Little Sprouts preschool program tailored for children ages three to five years. Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave. [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org).

**Tween Scene.** 4:30 - 5:15 p.m. Monthly craft or activity for tweens ages 8-12. Registration is not required. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**Mario Kart 8 Tournament** (All ages). 6 - 8 p.m. Join us for a friendly, recreational competition of Mario

Kart 8. We'll play in the Game Room of the Rec. Center on the big screen! Pflugerville Recreation Center, 400 Immanuel Rd. [www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Thu 12

**Storytime & Craft.** 5 - 5:30 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. [www.wblibrary.org](http://www.wblibrary.org).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Fri 13

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

## Sat 14

**Drop-in & Discover.** 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Join us in the gardens on select Saturdays to play, learn and discover. Enjoy different themed family-friendly activities designed for all ages. Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave. [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org).

**Storytime & Craft.** 10:30 - 11 a.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Dr. [www.wblibrary.org](http://www.wblibrary.org).

**Second Saturdays.** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is a new craft each month and materials are provided. Bring the family. Laguna Gloria, 3809 West 35th St. FREE. [www.thecontemporaryaustin.org](http://www.thecontemporaryaustin.org).

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**Winter Pfest.** 2 - 4 p.m. Join us to celebrate winter in a fun-filled event. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

**Sun 15**

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

**Mon 16**

**MLK Day**

**Martin Luther King, Jr Walk.** 10 a.m. 31st Walk for peace, justice and equality

**Remember. Celebrate. Act.** [www.elgintx.com](http://www.elgintx.com).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

**Tue 17**

**Crafty Kids.** 4 p.m. Crafting with kids. Recommended for children 0-5 years old. Kyle Library, 550 Scott St. [www.cityofkyle.com](http://www.cityofkyle.com).

**Homeless and at Risk: Teens and Young Adults.** 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Presentation by PfISD about services available to students and young adults at risk for homelessness. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; LEGO Lab, see Tue 3.

**Wed 18**

**Tween Graphic Novel Book Club.** 4:30 - 5:15 p.m. Book Club for tweens ages 8-12. Attendees will receive a copy of graphic novel to keep. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Little Sprouts, see Wed 11.

**Thu 19**

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Storytime & Craft see Thu 12.

**Fri 20**

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

**Sat 21**

**Hooves and Read.** 1 - 2 p.m. Kids can practice their reading skills with miniature therapy horses. Recommended for Grades K - 2. Space is limited. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**Families Build a Bird Feeder.** 1 - 4 p.m. Registration required due to limited supplies for the craft. We are unable to take walkups. Gilleland Creek Pavilion, 700 Railroad Ave. [www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Read to a Therapy Dog, see Sat 7; Storytime & Craft see Sat 14.

**Sun 22**

**AFM 23rd Annual Summer Camp Fair. 12 - 4 p.m. Bring the entire family to this free, fun event where you can visit with camps as far away as California and as close as down the street. Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd. FREE. [www.austinfamily.com](http://www.austinfamily.com).**

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2.

**Mon 23**

**2023 Teen 2 Sentence Horror Story Contest.** 8 a.m. The Pflugerville Public Library invites teens to submit a piece of original writing for the 2023 Teen 2 Sentence Horror Story Contest. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

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**Family Night.** 6 - 6:45 p.m. Come for a fun-filled family night at the library. We will schedule different activities such as crafts, special guests and more. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Storytime with Ms. Diane, see Mon 9.

**Tue 24**

**Teen Craft Night: Soap Making.** 6 - 7 p.m. Teens ages 12-18 can create their own soap bars, with a variety of scents, colors and forms to choose from. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; LEGO Lab, see Tue 3.

**Wed 25**

**Super Smash Bros Ultimate Tournament** (all ages) 6 - 8 p.m. Join us for a friendly, recreational competition of Super Smash Bros Ultimate. We'll play in the game room of the Rec. Center on the big screen. Pflugerville Recreation Center, 400 Immanuel Rd. [www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.parks.pflugervilletx.gov).

**Cinderella.** 7:30 p.m. This enchanting Tony nominated musical fairytale will put a spell on audiences of all ages. In partnership with Deaf Austin Theatre and performed simultaneously in English and American Sign Language. \$25 and up ZACH Theatre, 202 S. Lamar Blvd., [www.zachtheatre.org](http://www.zachtheatre.org)

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Little Sprouts, see Wed 11.

**Thu 26**

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Cinderella, see Wed 25; Storytime & Craft, see Thu 12.

**Fri 27**

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Cinderella, see Wed 25.

**Sat 28**

**Kirby Hall School Open House.** 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Kirby Hall School is a private college-preparatory school located in Austin, where we educate and nurture young minds. 306 West 29th St. FREE. [www.kirbyhallschool.org](http://www.kirbyhallschool.org).

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Cinderella, see Wed 25; Storytime & Craft, see Sat 14.

**Sun 29**

**CONTINUED:** Fortlandia, see Mon 2; Cinderella, see Wed 25.

**Mon 30**

**Teen Hygge Night.** 6 - 7:30 p.m. Join us for a Teen Hygge Night. Teens ages 12-18 can come in for a night of cozy comfort. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**Family Night.** 6 - 6:45 p.m. Come for a fun-filled family night at the library. We will schedule different activities such as crafts, special guests and more. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [www.library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://www.library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**CONTINUED:** Storytime with Ms. Diane, see Mon 9.

**Tue 31**

**CONTINUED:** LEGO Lab, see Tue 3.

# Austin Then *and* Now

## Old Rock Store

### Then



Before it ever sold pizza or coffee, the limestone building at 6266 US-290 was once called the Old Rock Store, constructed in 1898. It was built by James A. Patton, a former Texas Ranger and often referred to as the unofficial mayor of Oak Hill. Since then, the building has been home to a post office, steakhouse, plant nursery, masonic lodge and an art gallery, just to name a few. In 1970, the building received its State Historical Survey Committee Official Historical Medallion. It later became home to Austin Pizza Garden for 27 years, but sadly became another casualty of COVID-19 restaurant closures. But before APG closed its doors, many employees reported hearing footsteps in a vacant upstairs party room after hours, when the restaurant was quiet.

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BRITTANY WILLIAMS

*Brittany is a writer and realtor in Austin where she loves exploring the city's green spaces with her husband, son and daughter.*

### Now



Haunted or not, the bright red awnings of what's now Madrone Coffee Co. will catch your eye as you enter its old gravel driveway. The Old Rock Store State Historical Medallion is secured onto the limestone façade next to the wooden entry door. Madrone Coffee Co. has made the building its own, but the integrity of the old architecture remains. The original fireplace is still just as inviting, begging you to grab a seasonal latte and cozy up. Pop over on a Saturday morning and catch Frida's Cocina food truck for breakfast or lunch and let the kids play on the playscape. The original Old Rock Store may be long gone, but a rich history is soaked into the limestone walls of this historic Austin landmark where past meets present.

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Alex



London



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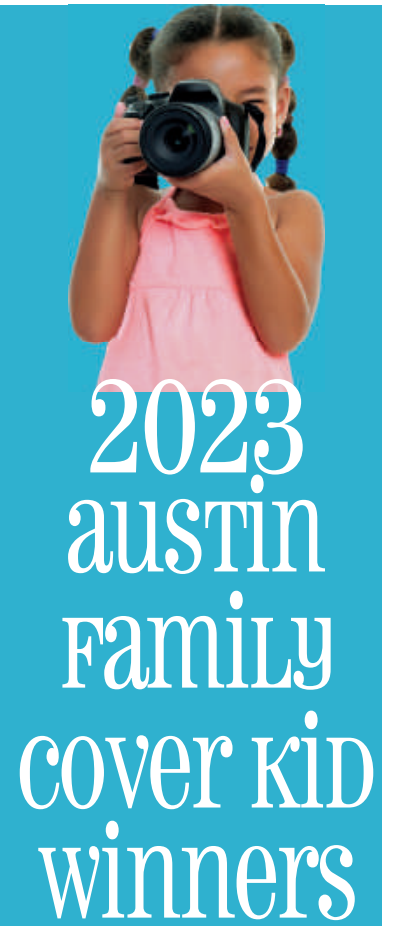
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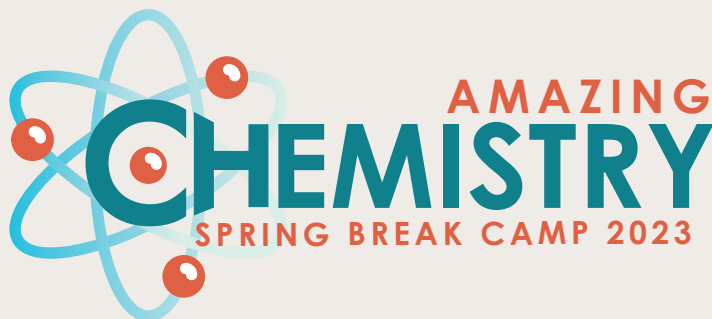
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