

July 2022

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Fireworks  
Safety**

**Reader's Poll  
WINNERS**

**6 AWESOME  
Austin Theaters**

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**FOUND!  
Best Ice Cream Spots  
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**Summer FUN Guide  
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\*For patients of the Fetal Care Center  
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# July 2022

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By Jack Kyser

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



Cover Kid Jack is 4 years old and loves a good sparkler on the Fourth of July.

Photo by Karen Andrews at Jordan-Ashley Photography.

## 8 Awesome Austin Theaters



## 12 Readers' Poll Favorites



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

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

ANNETTE LUCKSINGER

*Lucksinger is a mom of two and author of the guidebook and app "Exploring Austin With Kids."*

One of my all-time favorite things about Austin has always been how enthusiastically it supports local businesses. These mom and pops make Austin unique, interesting and (dare I say) weird in such a way that sets us apart from any other city. For this reason, I always look forward to the July announcement of Austin Family magazine's Readers' Poll Favorites. Congratulations to all of the winners!

Continuing this month's theme of "Awesome Austin," our feature article highlights local theaters that host kid-friendly performances, camps and classes. The range of experiences to

be had on and off stage will surprise you – whether you are seeking classical theater, a laid-back outdoor family experience, classes for neurodivergent youth, voice classes, set design, family improv, summer camps or performances for the young crowd.

We also recognize that this summer has been exceptionally ... warm. To beat the heat, we set out to find the area's best ice cream. See the "Places To Go and Things To Do" section where we share our secret spots.

If you opt instead to hit the road for cooler climes, our education column offers some great road trip activities as well. As a bonus, each comes with an educational twist to keep young minds active and to prevent that summer slide.

Wherever your July takes you, have a Happy Independence Day and long summer days filled with family fun.

Annette

The advertisement is split into two parts. On the left is a yellow poster for SFC Farmers' Market. The poster features the SFC logo at the top, followed by "FARMERS' MARKET" in bold black letters. Below that is a wavy line, then a sun icon and "SUNSET VALLEY" in white, with "Toney Burger Center" underneath. Another wavy line follows, then "EVERY SATURDAY | 9 AM - 1 PM" in bold black, and "Shop from the best local farms, ranches, food vendors and artisans!" in a smaller font. At the bottom, there's a white banner with "sfcfarmersmarket.org" in black, and "We accept SNAP & WIC!" below it, followed by a row of dots.

On the right is a photograph of several white crates filled with a variety of colorful bell peppers, including red, green, purple, and orange ones.

# Austin IN ACTION

GO TO [AUSTINFAMILY.COM](http://AUSTINFAMILY.COM) FOR WEEKLY UPDATES OF AUSTIN IN ACTION NEWS

## Free Museum Admission



The Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum will offer free exhibit admission to military families all summer. The

museum will participate in the Blue Star Museums program, which provides free admission to the nation's active-duty military personnel and their families during the summer. Free admission for military families is available from Armed Forces Day on Saturday, May 21, to Labor Day, September 5.

## Summer Meal Program



Austin ISD is providing free breakfast and lunch for students at many schools throughout the summer. To receive a free, healthy meal, kids

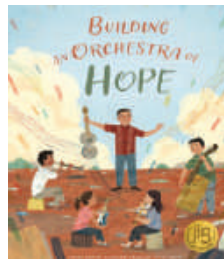
may simply visit the cafeteria at any participating site during designated service times. Children in the community under the age of 19 can enjoy these meals regardless of household income and without any registration or identification. Children do not have to be enrolled in AISD to receive a free meal.

To find a meal site, text FOOD or COMIDA to 304-304. Families can also call 2-1-1 to speak to an operator or visit [austinisd.org](http://austinisd.org). All sites will be closed July 4-8.

## New Picture Books

Local author Carmen Oliver has two new books coming out this fall. In "The Twilight Library," illustrated by Miren Asiain Lora, the Night Librarian transports forest bugs and animals to the land of imagination with her magical tales. "Building an Orchestra of Hope: How Favio Chavez Taught Children to Make Music From Trash," illustrated by Luisa Uribe, is a true story about a music teacher from Paraguay. He repurposes trash to build musical instruments for his students to play, lessening the hills of trash surrounding the community and offering hope for a better tomorrow.

You can now preorder both titles. "The Twilight Library" will be available Sept. 6 and "Building an Orchestra of Hope" will be available Oct. 25.



## Presidential Scholar

Seven Texas students were recently named the 2022 U.S. Presidential Scholars for their accomplishments in academics, the arts, and career and technical education fields. Siddh Bamb, a recently graduated senior from Liberal Arts and Science Academy in Austin, is one of the 161 students chosen nationwide out of the more than 5,000 qualifying candidates.

The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school

## by the numbers



**23 gallons**

of ice cream are consumed by the average American each year  
source: [census.gov](http://census.gov)



**\$1 billion+**

the amount Americans spend on fireworks each year  
source: [parents.com](http://parents.com)



**23 hours**

average time families spend on the road together over the summer  
source: [swnsdigital.com](http://swnsdigital.com)

evaluations and transcripts, as well as a demonstrated commitment to community service and leadership.

The Presidential Scholars Class of 2022 will be recognized for their outstanding achievement this summer with an online recognition program. Congratulations, Siddh!



Austin area high school senior Siddh Bamb was named a U.S. Presidential Scholar. Photo courtesy of Preetam Bamb.



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# Play it safe

product recalls

## Government Recalls Pajama Sets

Target has issued a recall for about 120,000 **pajama sets**, which fail to meet the federal flammability standards for children's sleepwear. This recall involves a children's two-piece, long-sleeved top and pant pajama set with the words "Dream Away" printed in metallic gold lettering on the shirt. The sets were sold at Target stores nationwide and target.com from October 2021 through March 2022 for about \$15. They can be returned to any location for a full refund. For those purchased online, consumers can contact Target to receive a prepaid label to return the item for a full refund. Known purchasers are being contacted directly regarding the recall.



*The US Consumer Products Safety Commission works to protect the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from more than 15,000 types of consumer products.*

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# Six Awesome Austin Theaters



ANDREA GENEVIEVE TOWNSON

*Genevieve Townson is a mom of three, adventurer and lover of breakfast tacos. Follow her family travel adventures on Instagram at @field\_trip\_fridays.*



Scottish Rite Theater.  
Photo credit Annette Lucksinger.



Whether you have extroverts on your hands who love to be center stage or introverts who adore a good story unfolding before their eyes, take a peek into Austin's theater scene.

Many of them offer children's shows, summer camps or improv to get the audience in on the act. While the theater can provide great entertainment, it also provides a welcome respite from the heat as you sit back in your air-conditioned seat or from a blanket spread on the hillside for an evening performance.

Here are several in the area that focus on family-friendly fun. Sit back, relax and enjoy the show!

## HISTORIC

### Austin Scottish Rite Theater

The Austin Scottish Rite Theater was built in 1871, making it Austin's oldest theater. Housed in the building used by the Scottish Rite Masons, it has retained its classic charm, even down to the centuries-old, hand-painted backdrops. The quaint theater is the perfect size for performances geared towards children, which it regularly stages. A few past performances (some of them bilingual) can also be streamed on demand, so kids can experience theater at home.

The Scottish Rite's summer camp offerings are equally fun, ranging from improv, puppetry and stage combat to advanced acting.

**Website:** [www.scottishritetheater.org](http://www.scottishritetheater.org)

**Parking:** Small lot on-site, nearby street parking or the Bob Bullock State History Museum garage.

### Paramount Theatre

Austin's most iconic downtown theater hosts a classic film series each summer that includes family-friendly titles and showtimes. Grab your tickets and popcorn. Then settle into this beautiful building while the whole family enjoys timeless films.

You can also watch your kids perform onstage for grand finales of the Paramount's summer camp programs. Professionally-trained staff of Camp Paramount teach voice lessons, acting, dance and production that lead to a final performance. Their Story Wranglers camp delves into comedic creative writing as campers explore story writing, songwriting, acting, plus costume and prop design. Camps take place at a rotation of local schools.

**Website:** [www.austintheatre.org](http://www.austintheatre.org)

**Parking:** For film showings, head to the 600 Congress Avenue garage to park. Purchase a parking voucher at the theater.

## OUTDOOR

### Zilker Hillside Theater

An Austin tradition since 1959, this outdoor theater offers free productions the whole family can enjoy. This season, the Zilker Theater Production company is proud to present Disney's "Newsies," the musical. Bring your blanket or small chairs to secure your spot for an

8:15 p.m. showtime on Thursday–Sunday evenings, running July 8–Aug. 13. Snacks and drinks are available onsite. You can also opt to pack a picnic or order takeout from your favorite Austin eatery.

**Website:** [www.zilker.org](http://www.zilker.org)

**Parking:** Free. Parking attendants will be on hand to help.

## Emily Ann

Celebrate 25 years of Shakespeare Under the Stars this August with the Emily Ann in Wimberley. This summer’s production features local middle and high school students working both on stage and off to bring two Shakespearian classics to life: “Romeo and Juliet” and “Taming of the Shrew.” Students perform and select an area of technical theater to work on – whether set construction, costuming or lighting – making this a unique, youth-focused theater experience.

**Website:** [www.emilyann.org](http://www.emilyann.org)

**Parking:** Free on-site parking.

## CLASSIC

### Zach

The Austin hills are alive with the sound of music! This summer, introduce the kids to Maria and the singing von Trapps in this family-friendly production of “The Sound of Music.” This beloved musical classic comes to life at the Topfer theater, where guests can enjoy traditional stadium-style seating or become part of the show. For a totally new, immersive experience, the theater will be transformed into a fun biergarten, with a limited number of seats available at a table onstage.

Performances run Wednesdays to Sundays, through July 24. While this is a great opportunity for kids to experience musical theater, note that children must be at least 3 years old to attend.

Do you have an aspiring actor or actress? The Zach also offers year-round camps and classes for kids of all ages. While most summer camps are full, you can sign up soon for fall classes.

**Website:** [www.zachtheatre.org](http://www.zachtheatre.org)

**Parking:** Parking at the Zach is \$10 per car, or find street parking along the Riverside Drive extension off of South Lamar.

## IMPROV

### Hideout Theater

Known for its entertaining improv performances, the Hideout Theater regularly presents Hideout Kids, an improv show for the whole family. These shows incorporate suggestions from the audience to inspire and influence the direction of the show. It’s a real treat! All shows are general admission, and all ages are welcome.

If you’re looking for a little more involvement, free family classes are scheduled once a month during the school year, which is another great chance to perform and make some great memories with your kids.

The Hideout Theater also offers a special teen intensive and a program for neurodiverse children as part of their Building Connections initiative. Improv classes pose a unique opportunity for kids to gain confidence, build social skills, practice life skills and have fun.

**Website:** [www.hideouttheatre.com](http://www.hideouttheatre.com)

**Parking:** The Hideout Theater is located downtown at Seventh Street and Congress Avenue. Metered parking is available in addition to pay lots and garages that run between \$8–\$15.



Zilker Hillside Theater

## On with the show!

Here are some other local theaters with family-friendly productions:

**The Chambers Theatre at Inspired Minds**  
[www.inspiredminds.art](http://www.inspiredminds.art)  
Buda, TX

**Pollyanna Theatre Company**  
[www.pollytheatre.org](http://www.pollytheatre.org)  
Boyd Vance Theatre, Carver Dance Studio,  
LBJ Library and The Long Center

**Austin Playhouse**  
[www.austinplayhouse.com](http://www.austinplayhouse.com)  
Austin Community College

**Austin Educational Theatre**  
[www.austinedtheatre.org](http://www.austinedtheatre.org)  
South Austin

**Georgetown Palace**  
[www.georgetownpalace.com](http://www.georgetownpalace.com)  
Georgetown, TX



## FAMILY MATTERS

BETTY RICHARDSON

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

**Q** My wife and I have three children ages 5, 9 and 12. My youngest doesn't have any special interests or hobbies yet. My middle child is interested in the guitar. The oldest finds bugs fascinating and loves playing lacrosse. I'd like to help them learn more about their interests, but it seems like it will be time consuming and expensive. What benefits do children get from pursuing their interests at a young age? What if we invest time and money only to have a child drop an activity for a totally different one? How can we best support them in a meaningful way?

VISIT [austinfamily.com](http://austinfamily.com)  
**¿Cómo Puedo Apoyar Mejor las Actividades de Interés de Mis Hijos?**

**A** There are many benefits to children following their interests. Here are just a few of them:

1. Children spend more time reading about things they're interested in, thus they become better readers.
2. Becoming more of an expert in an area of interest builds self-esteem.
3. Hobbies and interests can provide direction for future study or spare time relaxation in college and in life.
4. A good hobby can keep a child from being bored.
5. The areas one engages in during childhood sometimes become one's line of work in adulthood.
6. Supporting your children with a hobby can provide a bonding experience between child and parent.

To find out what a children's interests really are, you need only spend time with them and pay attention to what they want to do. Ask them what they are



# How Can I Best Support My Kids' Interests?

interested in. Have they talked about a certain sport, or a specific science topic or an activity that they like? As you mentioned, children may change interests, so pay attention to how dedicated they seem to a particular interest, such as doing magic tricks, photography or playing the guitar. You can increase your investment of time and money as your child demonstrates greater interest and commitment. I knew a girl who tried several sports until, as a teenager, she found golf and stuck with it.

You asked how to help your kids pursue activities that appeal to them.

**If you find that you can't support your children's interests with time and money, my number one rule is simple: Just don't get in their way.**

Let your children seek out ways to engage in what interests them most. They might try extracurricular activities at school or seek out kids with similar interests.

Here are some other ideas for helping your children cultivate their hobbies:

1. Schedule time for your children to talk about their interests.
2. Don't rush a child to choose any specific hobby.
3. Don't overschedule activities around an interest.
4. Be a role model. Share your hobbies with your children, but don't push them into having the same ones you do.
5. In so far as you can, give them the tools they need. For example, if a child wants to play an instrument, rent or buy that instrument and find a music teacher. If they are fascinated with birds, provide binoculars and birding books. If they are interested in cars, take them to car shows. Help them find people and clubs with a similar focus. Often you can find a museum, an after-school activity or an online site that will help your child learn more about a particular subject.

Thank you for these important questions. I hope you really enjoy and benefit from helping your kids explore their interests, alongside your own.

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## EDUCATION

**Charter School** – NYOS

**Child Care** – Stepping Stone Schools

**Montessori** – Austin Children's Academy

**Private** – Brentwood Christian School

**Public** – Rutledge Elementary School

**Special Needs** – Rosedale School

**Tutor** – Austin Learning Center

## FAMILY

**Birthday Party** – Master Gohring Kung Fu and Tai Chi

**Bounce House** – Altitude

**Children's Hospital** – Dell Children's Ascension

**Doula** – ATX Doula

**Birthing Center** – Austin Area Birthing Center

**Drop-in Child Care** – Ashley's Drop-In

**Indoor Play** – Indigo Play

**Ice Cream** – Amy's Ice Cream

**Children's Theatre** – ZACH Scott

**Festival** – ABC Kite Festival

**Kids Consignment** – Kid to Kid

**Kids Barber/Stylist** – Sharky's Cedar Park

**Kids Entertainer** – K8 & The Krushers

**Kid-Friendly Restaurant** – Hat Creek

**Kids Store** – Terra Toys

**Library** – Austin Central Library

**Pediatric Clinic Round Rock** – Treehouse Pediatrics

**Pediatric Clinic Austin** – Pediatric Associates of Austin

**Sitting Service** – Windsor Park Nannies

**Skating Rink** – Playland Skate Center

**Pediatric Dental Practice** – Central Park Pediatric

**Water Park** – Kalahari

**Kayak-Canoe-SUP Rental** – Texas Rowing Center

austin  
**Annual Family  
Poll Favorites  
2022**





**FAMILY**<sup>®</sup>  
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**Favorites!**  
**2022**



## CAMPS

- Adventure** – Sherwood Forest
- Day Camp** – Camp Doublecreek
- Skating** – Chaparral Ice
- Spring Break** – Cordovan Art
- Winter Break** – YMCA Twin Lakes
- Education** – Berkley 2 Academy
- Fine Arts** – Laguna Gloria
- Overall Fun** – Jump Gymnastics
- Overnight** – Camp Champions
- STEM** – Idea Lab
- Special Needs** – Williams Community School
- Sports** – Lonestar Soccer
- Music** – School of Rock

## PLACE TO LEARN

- Acting** – Kids Acting
- Art** – Cordovan Art
- Basketball** – YMCA
- Boating/Sailing** – Austin Yacht Club
- Cheerleading** – Tumble Tech
- Creative Writing** – Badgerdog Writing
- Dance** – Dance Discovery
- Equestrian** – Switch Willo
- Fitness** – YMCA
- Foreign Language** – Olas Spanish Immersion
- Golf** – First Tee
- Gymnastics** – Jump Gymnastics
- Martial Arts** – Master Gohring Kung Fu and Tai Chi
- Math Science** – Mad Science
- Music/Instrument** – Austin School of Music
- Climbing** – CRUX
- Swim** – Nitro Swim
- Volleyball** – Spike Frog



# FIREWORKS Do's & Don'ts

Each year, in the month surrounding the Fourth of July, nearly 300 people are seen daily in U.S. emergency rooms for fireworks-related injuries, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). There were about 15,600 injuries and at least 18 deaths in 2020 alone, an increase of 50% from the prior year. This is despite ongoing consumer education about the dangers of fireworks.

Males have a higher rate of injuries than girls, 70% to 30%, respectively, reveals the CPSC. Kids and young adults under the age of 20 account for roughly 50% of the injuries. That said, adults 20 to 44 years of age constitute 43% of fireworks-related injuries, indicating that even adults need more education on fireworks safety.

The Alliance To Stop Consumer Fireworks, coordinated by the National Fire Protection Association, urges the public to play it safe. Forego the use of fireworks and instead enjoy fireworks displays conducted by trained professionals. Although this seems like sound advice, it isn't a recommendation everyone will abide by.

So, keep in mind the following safety tips recommended by such organizations as The National Council on Fireworks Safety, Safe Kids Worldwide and the National Safety Council:

Abide by local laws regarding fireworks.

Read all of the information that comes with the fireworks before igniting them. If no information is available, research online.

Don't allow young children to handle fireworks. Sparklers heat up to 2,000 degrees and are responsible for serious injuries every year.

Always closely supervise older children using fireworks.

Have a hose or bucket of water nearby in case of fire or to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off.

Never try to re-light a firework that doesn't work. Wait 20 minutes, then soak it in a bucket of water.

Never shoot fireworks out of glass or metal containers.

Don't use homemade fireworks.

Wear safety glasses when shooting off fireworks.

Don't carry fireworks in your pocket.

Never aim fireworks toward another person or animal.

Light them one at a time and then move away quickly.

Don't drink or use drugs before or while igniting fireworks.

Let off fireworks only in clear areas and away from buildings and vehicles.

Keep fireworks stored in a cool place.

Keep pets and animals away from the sound of the fireworks.

Finally, camera phones, combined with the popularity of social media, have encouraged fireworks pranks. Kids, and even some adults, think they can safely prank a friend or family member by igniting a firework in close range. The risk of injury is high with these pranks. So, make sure children and teens understand the danger these pranks pose and that they shouldn't be attempted under any circumstance. This will help ensure a safe, happy Fourth of July for all.

## LIFELINES

KIMBERLY BLAKER

*Kimberly Blaker is a freelance writer. She also owns an online bookshop, Sage Rare & Collectible Books, specializing in out-of-print, scarce, signed and first editions and more at [sagerarebooks.com](http://sagerarebooks.com).*



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[www.austinparks.org](http://www.austinparks.org)

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884 Rikki Drive, Bandera  
www.texasHORSECAMPS.com  
830-460-8487

### Tuneful Tales

(formerly Children's Day Art Park)  
Austin Symphony is back this summer July 13, 20 and 27. Youngsters can visit the Instrument Zoo where they can see, touch and play the instruments, talk to Symphony musicians and hear them play their instruments, sing and clap along with the star of the show.  
Austin Public Library Central  
701 E. Cesar Chavez St.  
www.austinsymphony.org/education-community-concerts/aso-tuneful-tales  
512-476-6064

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# DOG DAYS



## SMART SCREEN TIME

BENJAMIN KRAMER

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

Well, we're in our dog days of summer – and PBS has dogs! Of course there's Clifford, Martha, and some of you may recall Wishbone, but there's also Suki ("Molly of Denali"), Hal ("Nature Cat"), and the legendary "Odd Squad" puppy episode. For a family-friendly scientific exploration, look up the episode "Dog Tales" from Nova.

The dog days refer to the prominence of Sirius, the Dog Star, during the summer months in the Northern Hemisphere. Spanish has a beautiful word, *La Canícula*, for the dog days. It comes from the Latin term *Canis Major* referring to the "Greater Dog" constellation. The Ancient Greeks marked its clear visibility as the onset of stifling heat and strange weather events. While the heat is a given, here's hoping that strange weather stays away!

The big message from Austin PBS for kids and families this summer is, "Look up!" As your family retreats from the heat and heads indoors, if you notice that everyone is looking down at their own screens, try yelling, "Look up!" Once they do, make eye contact and ask if you'd all like to do something together. Make popsicles, sing into a box fan, tell each other stories of when you were really, really cold. If you have a dog in your life, consider giving it a big hug. That won't cool you off, but you'll both be happier for it.

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# Beyond Bingo For Travel



## 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.*

There is nothing that strikes fear in the heart of a parent quite like a long car trip or plane flight with children. You can plan for temperature fluctuations by throwing a favorite hoodie in your bag or attacks of the “hangries” by stashing extra snacks, but you can’t make the travel time shorter. This summer, be prepared when you create a “Beyond Bingo” toolkit with some of the items described below. If you’d like to add a dose of learning to your fun, incorporate an “educational twist.” You’ll keep the kids engaged, learning and having fun, whether they’re trapped in row 24 or your own back seat.

### 1. Surprise bags

**The dollar store is your new best friend!**

Create surprise bags to pass out during various points of your trip by filling several brown paper sacks with

inexpensive toys and treats. I always tell my kids when to expect the bags to build anticipation – every hour and a half or with every state line crossed, for example. You can keep distribution spontaneous or based on when fidgeting reaches a crescendo too. Consider opening the items ahead of time so that you don’t have to deal with a packaging mess while traveling.

**Educational twist:** Connect your goodies to the trip to deepen kids’ knowledge of the places you’re going. Headed on a road trip through Oklahoma? A great starting point for a conversation could be a little deer figurine (for the state game animal) and a honey stick to snack on (for the state insect, the honeybee). If you’re flying, a chart of cloud types and characteristics along with a blank journal for recording observations and some colored pencils can turn your passenger into a budding (and occupied) meteorologist.

You can also tie the bags to specific destinations on your trip. Mark several spots on a map to encourage your children to practice their map reading skills as you drive. Or, if flying, mark your layover and destination cities so that your children will see how your trip fits into the geography of our country.

### 2. Beyond bingo

My kids always got super frustrated with pre-printed bingo boards. It’s impossible to find a skyscraper while driving across west Texas, and good luck finding a cow or a lake on a plane! Instead, download a free, blank bingo board from the internet and fill it in with items that will guarantee success. A small prize like a lollipop increases the excitement factor; and, if you need the game to last longer, the payout could come with a “blackout” (when every square on the board is marked off).

**Educational twist:** Teach concepts like landforms if you’re on the road; for plane trips, you can fill the board with challenging math problems.

### 3. Felt boards

Felt boards work some form of magic on little kids! You will be amazed by how long they can stay engaged by simply moving small felt figures around a felt board. The boards are easily purchased online, or, if you’re feeling crafty, you can create one yourself.

**Educational twist:** Purchase or create a set that will spark learning, such as an abundant underwater scene or a zoo-

themed board. If you make your own board, you can incorporate objects from your destination. Either way, there are rich conversations to be had about the items on your board.

#### 4. Travel size games

There are many games that offer travel sizes, making them perfect to stash in your bag. Games like Connect Four, magnetic checkers and tic-tac-toe can help the time fly by.

**Educational twist:** Up the brain power by choosing a more complex game like chess or one that your child has never played before like backgammon or Scrabble. Game playing has been shown to boost mathematical abilities. So, not only will your kids be happily occupied, they will be strengthening those neural pathways at the same time.

#### 5. Audio books and podcasts

The library is a great place to stock up on books on CD for long drives. If you have a device that plays audible books, you can also download some for the flight or drive, allowing your child to listen independently. Choose ones that are slightly below your child's reading level so that they are easy to follow despite food and bathroom breaks. Podcasts are another option that the whole family can enjoy. Try an episode or two ahead of time to ensure that it is one your child will actually like.

**Educational twist:** Choose a podcast or book designed to educate as well as entertain. For example, "Wow in the World," a top-rated podcast for kids and families, shares stories about the latest news in science, technology and innovation in cool and exciting ways.

#### 6. Arts and crafts

**Pipe cleaners.** Time will fly while your child makes bracelets, necklaces, figures and crazy sculptures out of pipe cleaners.

**Paper clips.** A box of large paper clips will keep your child busy stringing them together. Older children might try to spell words out of paper clips or create interesting structures. Choose a box of colored clips and you can incorporate pattern practice into the fun.

**Origami.** These folded works of paper art can look intimidating, but they can actually be easy and fun to make. Their small size makes them great for the car

or plane, and free, simple instructions can be found online.

**Educational twist:** While your kids have fun crafting away, they'll also be strengthening the smaller muscle groups in their hands. Better fine motor skills translate into improvements in writing stamina as well as into clearer, more controlled handwriting.

With just a bit of planning, your next trip will be nothing to fear. When choruses from the backseat of "are we there yet?" and "I'm bored" strike, you'll be prepared. Your kids will be happy, learning and engaged, and you might just get a moment to read that book that lives on your nightstand. Happy travels, parents!



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# July 2022

## calendar

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

Any family-friendly events can be posted at [austinfamily.com](http://austinfamily.com) and will be made live once approved. Certain restrictions apply.

### Fri 1

**Rhythm & Reels. 6 p.m.** A music and movie summer series every first Friday of the month. Music by The Lost Pines Band followed by movie "Captain America" (rated PG-13). FREE. [lakeway-tx.gov](http://lakeway-tx.gov).

**First Friday Event: Ukulele. 6:30-7 p.m.** Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Drive. [wblibrary.org](http://wblibrary.org).

### Sat 2

**Patriotic Festival. 8 a.m.** Kicks off with a run, petting zoo, kiddie train, carnival, food court, all kinds of eating contests, vendors, music and fireworks. Fisherman's Park, 1200 Willow St., Bastrop. FREE. [visitbastrop.com](http://visitbastrop.com).

**Kid's Day. 9 a.m. to noon.** Every first Saturday, kids can enjoy activities such as a petting zoo, barrel train, henna tattoos and face painting. July birthday kids are free. Dreamland, 2770 U.S. Highway 290, Dripping Springs. [dreamland.us](http://dreamland.us).

**Independence Family Scavenger Hunt. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Throw on your red, white, and blue for a family Independence Day themed scavenger hunt. FREE. YMCA Camp Moody. [austinyymca.org](http://austinyymca.org).

**Celebrate a Frontier 4th. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.** Our star-spangled Independence festival this year will feature an array of frontier fun with an 1800s cannon show and Wild West activities. Jordan Bachman Pioneer Farm, 10621 Pioneer Farms Drive. \$5 - \$8. [pioneerfarms.org](http://pioneerfarms.org).

**Bike Decorating for Red, White and Buda. 3:30-5 p.m.** It's almost time for the Red, White and Buda Parade. Join us at Buda Public Library to decorate your bike for the parade. Buda Library, 405 E. Loop St., Buda. FREE. [budalibrary.org](http://budalibrary.org).

### Sun 3

**CONTINUED:** Celebrate a Frontier 4th, see Sat 2.

### Mon 4

#### Independence Day

**July 4th Celebration. 8:30 a.m.** The parade will start at 8:30 a.m. followed by

a reception at Lakeway Activity Center. Lakeway Drive and 105 Cross Creek, Lakeway. [lakeway-tx.gov](http://lakeway-tx.gov).

**Sertoma July 4th Parade and Frontier Days. 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.** The parade and Frontier Days are back for 2022. Old Settlers Park, 3300 E. Palm Valley Blvd., Round Rock. [roundrocktexas.gov](http://roundrocktexas.gov).

**Red White and Buda. 9 a.m.** Starts off with bike parade, live music, vendors and fireworks. Buda Amphitheater, 204 San Antonio St. FREE. [budaamphitheater.com](http://budaamphitheater.com).

**2022 July 4th Celebration. 9 a.m.** Independence Day is the city's biggest celebration of the year. Come and enjoy Lakeway's famous old-fashioned July 4th celebration. Downtown, Lakeway Drive, Lakeway. FREE. [lakeway-tx.gov](http://lakeway-tx.gov).

**Sertoma's 4th of July. 11 a.m.** Live entertainment from noon to 10:30 p.m., featuring T. Cole and the Austin Party Band before and after the fireworks show. St. Gabriels Park, North College St. FREE. [visit.georgetown.org](http://visit.georgetown.org).

**Liberty Fest 2022. 3-11 p.m.** Leander's largest annual event includes live music, food, children's activities and a spectacular fireworks display. Lakewood Park, 2040 Artisan Springs Xng, Leander. FREE. [leandertx.gov](http://leandertx.gov).

**Independence Day Festival. 4-10 p.m.** Enjoy shopping with over 60 art vendors on the streets of Hill Country Galleria plus live music. Bring a blanket or chair to enjoy the show from the grassy lawn. FREE. Hill Country Galleria. [bit.ly/3n0Q9Lk](http://bit.ly/3n0Q9Lk).

**4th of July Celebration. 5-9:30 p.m.** This family-friendly celebration will feature live music, local vendors, food trucks, kids' activities and a fireworks show. Brushy Creek Amphitheater, 1001 CR 137, Hutto. FREE. [huttotx.gov](http://huttotx.gov).

**H-E-B Symphony Concert and Fireworks. 8 p.m.** An Austin tradition on the shores of Lady Bird Lake. Enjoy fireworks and music by Austin Symphony. Free on the shores, paid tables on Long Center patio. Vic Mathias Shores, 900 W. Riverside Drive. FREE. [austinsymphony.org](http://austinsymphony.org).

**Kyle's Independence Day Fireworks Show. 9 p.m.** Downtown Kyle. [cityofkyle.com](http://cityofkyle.com).

### Fri 8

**Family Fun Night. 6:30-8:30 p.m.** Enjoy food and refreshment, fun activities and more. Yonders Point, 3300 Pond Valley Road. FREE. [roundrockrecreation.com](http://roundrockrecreation.com).

**Movies in the Park. 8 p.m.** Bring the whole family for "The Karate Kid" (rated PG). Movie begins at sundown. Gregg Park Clark, 1301 Center Ave. FREE. [cityofkyle.com](http://cityofkyle.com).

### Sat 9

**Summer Performance: The Singing Zoologist. 3-4 p.m.** Join Buda Public Library in welcoming Lucas Miller. No registration is required but space is limited. Buda Library, 405 E. Loop St., Buda. FREE. [budalibrary.org](http://budalibrary.org).

### Wed 13

**Tuneful Tales** (formerly Children's Art Day Park). 10:30 a.m. Visit the Instrument Zoo to see, touch and play musical instruments; talk to Austin Symphony musicians and hear them play their instruments; sing and clap along with the show. Austin Public Library, 701 Cesar Chavez St. FREE. [austinsymphony.org](http://austinsymphony.org).

**Tween Scene. 4:30-5:15 p.m.** Weekly craft or activity for tweens ages 8-12. DIY Avocado fleece plush. Registration required. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pfluger St. [library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**The Masked Singer National Tour. 7:30 p.m.** An action-packed evening of song, dance and craziness. Bass Concert Hall, 2350 Robert Dedman Drive. [texasperformingarts.org](http://texasperformingarts.org).

### Fri 15

**Family Skate Nights. 7 p.m.** Ash Pavilion Skate Nights. Gregg Clarke Park, 1231 W. Center St., Kyle. [cityofkyle.com](http://cityofkyle.com).

### Sat 16

**National Snake Day. 1-3 p.m.** The City of Kyle Parks and Recreation Department invites you to participate in the National Snake Day event. Falcon Room in City Hall, 100 W. Center St., Kyle. Registration required. \$10 Kyle resident, \$15 non-resident. [cityofkyle.com](http://cityofkyle.com).



**Bad Art Night – All Ages.** 4–6 p.m. Wells Branch Community Library, 15001 Wells Port Drive. [wblibrary.org](http://wblibrary.org).

### Mon 18

**Terrence Taps Tap Dancing Show (all ages).** 4:30–5:15 p.m. Prepare to be amazed as Round Rock Public Library welcomes Terrence Taps – The Tap Dance Man – for two special performances. Round Rock Public Library, 216 E. Main St. [roundrocktexas.gov](http://roundrocktexas.gov).

### Wed 20

**CONTINUED:** Tuneful Tales (formerly Children’s Art Day Park), see Wed 13.

### Thu 21

**Cowboy Film.** 6–8 p.m. Williamson Museum, 716 S. Austin Ave. [williamsonmuseum.org](http://williamsonmuseum.org).

### Fri 22

**Family Fun Night Texas Luau.** 6:30–8:30 p.m. Enjoy food and refreshment, fun activities and more. Yonders Point, 3300 Palm Valley Rd. FREE. [roundrockrecreation.com](http://roundrockrecreation.com).

**Dive In Movie.** 8:30 p.m. Join the City of Kyle Parks and Recreation Department for the Dive In Movie showing of “Lilo & Stitch” (rated PG) at sundown. James Adkins Pool, 1100 W. Center St., Kyle. [www.cityofkyle.com](http://www.cityofkyle.com).

### Sat 23

**Summer Family Film Series: “Kubo and the Two Strings” (rated PG).** Noon to 1:30 p.m. Join us for a multi-sensory screening of a stop-motion animated samurai epic filled with unusual creatures, magic and peril. Bullock Texas State History Museum, 1800 Congress Ave. \$8 – \$12. [thestoryoftexas.com](http://thestoryoftexas.com).

**Summer Performance: Austin Reptile Show.** 2–3 p.m. Join Buda Public Library in welcoming Austin Reptile Show featuring live reptiles from around the world. Buda Library, 405 E. Loop St., Buda. FREE. [budalibrary.org](http://budalibrary.org).

### Mon 25

**Family Construction Zone (all ages).** 1:30–3:30 p.m. Head over to the Round Rock Public Library as we bring out the library’s giant collections of Lego bricks and blocks. Round Rock Public Library, 216 E. Main St. [roundrocktexas.gov](http://roundrocktexas.gov).

### Tue 26

**Teen Amigurumi Workshop.** 6–7:30 p.m. Learn the basics of amigurumi, the Japanese art of crocheting small stuffed creatures. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pflugger library.pflugervilletx.gov.

**Summer Teen Zen Zone (ages 13–18).** 6–8 p.m. Chill out at the end of Summer Reading with fun and relaxing activities. Preregister. Round Rock Public Library, 216 E. Main St. [roundrocktexas.gov](http://roundrocktexas.gov).

### Wed 27

**CONTINUED:** Tuneful Tales (formerly Children’s Art Day Park), see Wed 13.

### Thu 28

**Lego Robotics (ages 8–12 only).** 3–4 p.m. Build and explore with Lego WeDo robotic kits. Participants will use construction sets to assemble and program a moving pollinator and flower robot. Round Rock Public Library, 216 E. Main St. [roundrocktexas.gov](http://roundrocktexas.gov).

**Kids 5–8 Club: Clay Animals.** 3:30–4:15 p.m. Families with children 5 to 8 register to participate in an in-person activity. Pflugerville Public Library, 1008 W. Pflugger St. [library.pflugervilletx.gov](http://library.pflugervilletx.gov).

**Summer Family Night: Miniature Golf and Game Night.** 5–8 p.m. Join us for an evening of fun and games including a miniature golf course. All ages are welcome. No registration required. Buda Library, 405 E. Loop St., Buda. FREE. [budalibrary.org](http://budalibrary.org).



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# Happy Hula Hooping



To kick off July, my kids and I pick one new activity to try together for the month. Over the years, we've learned to play ukulele, climb the Grand Canyon and make cheese. After this summer, we have plans to be experienced cave spelunkers!

My favorite July was when we all learned how to hula hoop. My kids took to this activity right away. Our professional hula hoop teacher Kim, in her pink-sparkled pants and top, would effortlessly hoop around us, patiently saying, "Move your hips easily in a circle. Loosen your body and the hula will stay up right above your waist. Let the hoop be your safe circle."

By the second lesson, I was barely hooping. Meanwhile, my kids hooped circles around me (quite literally). They were expertly hooping, smiling, and even doing the jazz hands the teacher had taught.

I couldn't do jazz hands. My daughter,

seeing me struggle, said, "Mom, you can't do the jazz hands because you're too worried about how you might look dumb doing the jazz hands. Don't worry so much. Just put your hands in the air and shake them like you do when you're trying to get Gibson's and my attention. You know, the Mom-shake, like you do when you want us to clean our rooms and you hold your hands up in frustration. Just do that, but make your hands look happier."

I raised my hands with a smile, did the Mom-shake and my jazz hands were born.

In fact, I even got invited into the Inner Diva Hoop Troupe with those Mom-shake jazz hands. And when I'm not shaking them above my head, I can now play ukulele – while hula hooping.

Here's to jazz hands, July and this joyous ride called family!

## JUST FOR GRINS

NETTIE REYNOLDS

*Reynolds is a writer and playwright, proud mom of two and hula hooper. Find her on Twitter or Instagram @netreynolds.*

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# FOUND! The Best Ice Cream Spots in Austin

Photo by Karen Andrews at  
Jordan-Ashley Photography.

Each month, topics in this column alternate between cool, new places to go and a family-friendly thing to do at home. This month, cool off with a cone from one of the best ice cream parlors around.

Ice cream is my favorite, so for my birthday this year I asked my family to take me on an ice cream tour of Austin. Since there are so many options to choose from these days, we decided to narrow down our choices by culture. We tried Asian, Japanese, New Zealand, Italian, Mexican and American (imported from the great land of Ohio).



Japanese

## Asian

We tried OMG Squee for Asian-inspired style ice cream. This place is getting all the hype right now, thanks to an appearance on "Queer Eye." Be prepared to wait in a long line, unless you go at an off time. We tried the soft serve in the adorable fish cones. The ice cream was delicious, but the cones really stole the show! They are soft and chewy and you can just taste the love baked right in. I'm a huge matcha fan, and I really enjoyed that flavor. My kids loved the vibrant purple of the ube flavor (that tastes like vanilla). Their flavors rotate, so check before you go! 4607 Bolm Road, Suite A, Austin

## Japanese

We had to try DipDipDip Ice Cream for traditional Japanese-style soft serve as well. They have a cute counter next to DipDipDip Tatsu-Ya where you can just order the ice cream. It comes out beautifully in a dipped cone that's almost too pretty to eat! I tried the matcha flavor, which was bold and strong, just the way I like it. It even comes with a churro, if you'd like. 7301 Burnet Road, Suite 101, Austin

## New Zealand

Who knew that New Zealand had its own style of ice cream? Not me, until I tried Zed's Real Fruit Ice Cream. They use vanilla ice cream mixed with real fruit that comes as soft serve. The strawberry was our favorite. 1814 Harvey St., Austin

## Italian

Our favorite gelato spot in Austin is the cute little Dolce Neve. They make their gelato in-house, and they have such unique flavors like ricotta or honey and pistachio. Can you get more Italian than that? We love bringing visitors here after wandering around on South First Street. 1713 S. First St., Austin

## Mexican

Best Scoops is a great choice for Mexican ice cream near Austin. They have so many flavors, and they will let you sample as many as you'd like. I never would have tried Pine Nut, but it was actually delicious. They serve both ice cream and super yummy pops. You can't go wrong with this hidden gem tucked away in Round Rock. 402 W. Palm Valley Blvd., Round Rock

## ADDIE GROSS

Gross is the creator of "Austin Fun for Kids" (@austinfunforkids). She loves Austin and is a mom to three boys (ages 12, 10, 4).

## American (Ohio)

The best American ice cream we've found around Austin is actually in Cedar Park, and it comes all the way from Ohio. You may have heard of Graeter's Ice Cream, which has won awards for its black raspberry chocolate chip flavor. Scoop and Score imports flavors of Graeter's Ice Cream that will knock your socks off and are known for the unique way that they add chocolate to their ice cream. Rather than being like traditional "chips," they use enormous hunks of chocolate that have been melted down from a huge bar. (The video on this process is mesmerizing.) This is our #1 favorite spot for ice cream near Austin. 111 N. Vista Ridge Blvd., Suite 202, Cedar Park



American



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