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Contest runs through July 17th and a winner will be announced on July 20, 2020. AFM readers will judge from all photos entered, so get that camera out and start shooting.

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Upload your photos to www.austinfamily.com by clicking on "Summer Giveaway." NO LIMIT to the number of photo entries you can submit. To win, get your family and friends to go online and vote for your photo! The entry with the most votes wins a weekend at Gaylord Texan! (Only one vote per email)



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10

Eight Great Outdoor Games for Summer

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calendar

Because of changing event details and ongoing restrictions of some area venues due to COVID-19, the June calendar will not be published. If you have an event you would like us to know about or would like to see our current event listings, please visit www.austinfamily.com.

In every issue

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FILM REVIEW

 By Jack Kyser

Artemis Fowl

Read online at: www.austinfamily.com/films

Tune in:



Catch *Austin Family Magazine* live on "Good Day Austin" every Thursday morning and "Despierta Austin" monthly.

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Surviving Summer

As a child of the 70s and 80s, I had ample time to find creative ways to occupy my time. When I regale my son with tales about life before 24-hour TV, smartphones, and the internet, he just shakes his head and says, "Mom, I don't know how you survived."

Oh, I survived. I played with neighborhood kids: hide and seek, basketball, skateboarding, roller skating, running through sprinklers. With my school friends, we'd meet at a pool and have sleepovers. At home, I had to fight my way into watching a favorite program on our one and only TV. As the youngest of three sisters, I'd usually lose, so I spent a lot of time alone reading, listening to my albums on a turntable, recording songs from the radio on my tape recorder, playing with my guinea pigs, learning guitar, and writing stories.

Now, life is a lot simpler. It reminds me of my childhood in some ways. The neighbor kids are out and about more than usual, but now they're sticking closer to home for safety. They're keeping their distance and wearing masks, but still having fun. The drive to connect and play is so powerful— particularly at the beginning of summer. My son is getting screen fatigue, so when he's not playing virtual Dungeons and Dragons, he's going on long walks with the dogs, working with me in our vegetable garden, and helping his dad a lot more around the house. This is the silver lining.



EDITOR'S NOTE

JENNIFER HILL ROBENALT

Robenalt is an editor, content creator, creative writer, and mother.

I loved asking my dad about his childhood. He ran wild with his friends in the late 30s and early 40s. They played jacks and marbles, ran from house to house seeing what everyone's mothers were cooking, and did a lot of chores around the house and on their land. He was a country kid. "How did you survive without the Top 40 station and skateboards?" I was puzzled. Oh, he survived.

Happy Father's Day to all the dads out there spending more time with your kids. Remember... summer isn't canceled!

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AT-HOME LEARNING

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9-12 | 1pm-5pm

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Austin PBS

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product recalls

Recall Baby Swings, Sleepwear, Essential Oils



Swurfer has recalled about 3,000 **Kiwi Baby and Toddler Swings**. The plastic stopper on the bottom of the swing rope that holds the swing seat in place can detach, posing a fall hazard to the swing's occupant. Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled swings and contact the firm to receive instructions to repair the swings.

The firm has received six reports of the rope end detaching. No injuries have been reported. The swings were sold online at Swurfer.com, FlyBar.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com, and at independent stores nationwide from Oct. 2019 through March 2020 for about \$80. For more information, call Swurfer toll-free at 800-764-6784 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday. For further assistance, email productsafety@flybar.com or go online at www.swurfer.com and click on "Product Safety" under the "Quick Links" section of the website.



Stargate Apparel has recalled about 6,600 **Bunz Kidz Children's Sleepwear Sets**. The children's sleepwear sets fail to meet the federal flammability standard for children's sleepwear (which requires sleepwear to be either snug-fitting or flame resistant) posing a risk of burn injuries to children. The sleepwear sets consist of robes, tops, and pants and were sold in sizes 2 through 12. The 100% micro-polyester fleece robe and pants are white with a pink star print, and the top is pink with "Dream in Glitter"

printed onto the chest in gold. Consumers should immediately take the recalled sleepwear sets away from children and contact Stargate Apparel for a full refund. No injuries have been reported. The items were sold at Boscovs, Century 21, JC Penney, Macy's, Marshalls, TJ Maxx, and other stores nationwide and online at Amazon.com and Walmart.com from Aug. 2017 through Dec. 2019 for between \$24 and \$48. For more information, call Stargate Apparel toll-free at 866-351-0193 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET Monday through Friday. For further assistance, email recall@stargateapparel.com with "Product Recall" as the email subject or go online at www.stargateapparel.com and click the "Contact" link on the upper right-hand corner of the homepage for more information.



Jade Bloom has recalled about 6,400 **Wintergreen and Birch Sweet Essential Oils**. The products contain the substance methyl salicylate, which must be in child-resistant packaging as required by the Poison Prevention Packaging Act (PPPA). The packaging of the products is not child-resistant, posing a risk of poisoning if young children swallow the contents. This recall involves 1 mL, 10 mL, 60 mL, and 120 mL amber glass bottles

of Jade Bloom Wintergreen Essential Oil and 10 mL green glass bottles of Birch Sweet Essential Oil with black caps. The bottle's label displays the Jade Bloom logo, product name, and the volume amount of the bottle. No injuries have been reported. Consumers should immediately store the product in a safe location out of reach of children. The firm is directly notifying all known purchasers. Contact Jade Bloom for instructions on how to dispose of the products and receive a full refund or a store credit. They can be reached toll-free at 844-787-3645 (option 3) from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. MT Monday through Friday. For further assistance, email support@jadebloom.com or go online at www.jadebloom.com and click on "Recall Department" for more information.

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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AROUND

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Kids Entrepreneurship Competition

IDEA Tank for Kids 2020 is an entrepreneurship competition for kids ages 8-13. It is now open for submissions across the U.S. While usually taking place in person, this year's competition will take place online. Similar to Shark Tank, contestants pitch their ideas to a panel of judges. To get started, parents need to fill out a registration form or send a video of their child's pitch. The deadline to apply is June 25 at 11:59 p.m. CT. Finalists will be notified on June 26. The top 20 finalists will pitch to a panel of judges on June 30 at 3 p.m. CT over Zoom for five minutes. Up to 1,000 audience members will be able to watch the event on Zoom and vote for their favorite ideas. The audience favorite will win \$500, and the judges' favorite will win a \$1,000 grand prize. For information and to register, visit www.ideatankforkids.com.



Must-Do This

June

- Continue to practice social distancing and washing hands
- Dive into your summer reading list
- Celebrate Father's Day on June 21

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Texas Maskerade Party

Texas country music singer-songwriter legend Gary P. Nunn announced a new initiative, the Texas Maskerade Party, to encourage socially responsible ways for Texans to be in public and to support the state's Strike Force to Open Up Texas campaign.



In a recent press conference, Nunn said, "We've fought so many battles in this great state, and now we need to come together as Texans to fight one more- this virus. We can win this battle if we all come together and wear our masks."

Nunn was quick to stress that the campaign is not about politics but about Texans saving Texans. "It's about getting us back on the road, moving forward, and encouraging your fellow Texans to put their masks where their mouths are. Texans love their freedom, but with freedom comes responsibility - the responsibility to wear your protective mask to protect you, your family, your friends, your neighbors, your community - your fellow Texans."

Nunn said on a lighter note, "There's one thing that Texans really know how to do - it's how to throw a great party. We need to take it one step further and come together to protect our fellow Texans. We all hope this party doesn't go on forever, but while it does, let's do the responsible thing and take care of each other." For more information, visit www.texasmaskparty.org.

YMCA Austin

After closing its facilities on March 18 due to local and state orders surrounding the spread of COVID-19, the YMCA of Austin will reopen seven area branches on Mon., June 1. The reopening will be conducted under the guidance of state and local health authorities and will take place in phases.



In preparation for reopening facilities, the YMCA of Austin has been following guidelines from health experts and local officials to ensure all components of facilities, including fitness equipment and areas, locker rooms, child care, visitor areas, and office spaces, are cleaned and sanitized to meet the highest standards for hygiene and safety. The Y has also modified policies and programs to facilitate safe social/physical distancing practices.

The Y has taken an additional step by partnering with Code 4 Decon to deep clean the Southwest Family and East Communities YMCAs, which have been providing childcare for essential workers during the shutdown. The innovative Code 4 process includes cleaning of surfaces, applying a hospital-grade disinfectant, reducing future contamination by using a long-lasting Razor Antimicrobial Coating, and swab testing with ATP technology to maintain quality control.

The first phase of reopening will include the TownLake, Southwest, Northwest, Springs, Bastrop, and Hays Communities YMCAs. At the East Communities Y, the fitness center and swimming pool will be open, with the remainder of the facility housing summer camp. YMCA Camp Moody will be open for outdoor group exercise classes, family programs, and summer day camp. The North Austin Y will serve as a summer camp location through Aug. 1 to address the critical need for childcare among working families in the area.

Austin Y locations will be open to members for strength and cardio training, a limited schedule of group exercise classes and lap swimming, as well as limited hours. Also, the Y is implementing the following safety measures: Implementing branch capacity limits per state guidelines; conducting health screenings of all members at check-in; requiring the wearing of masks at check-in; establishing new social distancing markers throughout the facility and between equipment; and preparing new cleaning and operational protocols for staff.

In the coming weeks, the Y plans to expand services to include open swimming in pools and youth programs. Programs serving seniors and other vulnerable populations will remain paused indefinitely. YMCA Summer Day Camp will begin June 15 at 14 locations in Travis and Hays Counties, and possibly more sites added as facilities become available.

In the meantime, the Y will continue to offer a robust schedule of virtual programming, including live, interactive classes, and on-demand classes. Since the closure, Y members have participated in tens of thousands of virtual programs to stay active and engaged.

For more information about reopening, membership renewal and reactivation, and program registration, visit www.AustinYMCA.org.



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by the numbers



66.5%
Percentage of American libraries planning to offer online summer reading programs

Source: Schoollibraryjournal.gov



6
Minimum number of hours of sleep most people need for a healthy immune system

Source: Healthline.com



1972
Year Father's Day was made an official holiday by President Nixon

Source: Muchneeded.com

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THE Learning Curve

ALISON BOGLE

Bogle is an Austin-based freelance writer and mom of three.

Explore Summer Library Services

In the past, while the content of library materials might have been exciting, on the whole, libraries' reputations were that of serious, settled institutions. Today's libraries, however, are nothing like the archaic models of the past. Most are modern, forward-thinking organizations, which offer innovative programs and digital resources, in addition to traditional library materials. That has never been more apparent than right now when libraries are working quickly to overhaul their typical summer programming to fit our current reality of living in the time of a pandemic.

Austin Public Library

"We are definitely bracing for an unusual summer!" said Rachel Nguyen, communications director of the Austin Public Library. The Library is currently developing a completely new summer reading program, which will be entirely virtual. Summer readers will be able to select a program from the categories of early learners, youth, teens, and adults. From there, they will be directed to a page where their "quest," or virtual challenge,

will be listed. Users will download a "quest log" and will submit a form each time they complete a challenge. Submissions will receive virtual badges that can be inserted into the quest log.

Beyond the typical reading challenges, the quest log will include options for family experiences and other fun activities that patrons can easily do at home. The Library will also offer a traditional reading log option so that readers may track their reading similar to prior years, should they prefer a non-digital option. The Austin Public Library Summer Reading page can be found at austinsummerreading.com.

For students who need a little extra learning help over the summer to start the next school year off strong, the Austin Public Library will continue to offer its Brainfuse service. Brainfuse provides online, anytime tutoring for students in grades K-12, as well as for adult learners. Live tutors are also available every day from 2 p.m. – 11 p.m. The program offers a writing lab, test prep, and skill-building, a "live practice" language lab for learning

Spanish, and tutoring in Spanish for many subjects.

Austin Public Library librarians have also curated several activities listed under the "Boredom Busters" section of the website. Each Boredom Buster includes an online story, then some type of related activity, such as a science experiment or an art project. The Boredom Busters also include interesting facts, presented in fun ways, so that kids stay engaged and learning.

In the teen section of its website, the Austin Public Library provides links to Mango Languages, a service offering language lessons in over 70 world languages, access to 20 English as a Second Language/English Language Learner courses, and Mango Premiere Films, a film-based, language-learning tool. Teens can also sample the Hoonuit service to learn skills such as Adobe Photoshop, or how to interview for a job.

Cedar Park Public Library

The Cedar Park Public Library is also moving its Summer Reading Club

Challenge online, where it will be hosted on a new platform - Beanstack. Kids, teens, and adults can sign up and log reading minutes at <https://cedarparktexas.beanstack.org>.

The Library also plans to continue its performance offerings this summer but will be switching to a virtual format. Special performers and programs are already listed on the Cedar Park Library website online calendar, and the schedule will continue to be updated and expanded. A Summer Reading Kick-Off is planned for June 1 - 2. It will include a virtual book fair, in addition to performances by children's entertainers, Silly Sparkles, and African safari music by Elizabeth Kahura.

The Library's summer programming will conclude with Mini-Con, an annual "celebration of fandom in all its varieties," and will include patrons' favorite activities, as well as several new options. Mini-Con is scheduled for August 10 - 14.

Georgetown Public Library

Out of caution for patrons and employees, the Georgetown Public Library plans to offer its summer family programming virtually for at least one month. It may consider extending its virtual services into a second month. Library staff hopes to provide "grab and go" activities for kids and teens that can be picked up safely and completed at home. The Library is also looking into scheduling story times, science projects, and craft demonstrations virtually, but an official schedule has not yet been released.

Round Rock Public Library

The Round Rock Public Library's summer reading program will run from June 3 - August 1 and will include a summer reading challenge. At the time of the interview, Library staff were still determining how much of this summer's programming will be provided virtually. Up to date information can be found at www.roundrocktexas.gov/summerreading.

Summer brings the dreaded "summer slide," or the loss of academic knowledge or skills during the break from scheduled learning. This year, students are already entering into the summer behind where they might have been, had the school year not been disrupted by the need to remain at home and to learn online. Reading is

one of the best things that students can do to keep their skills fresh during the long summer break. Take advantage of all that Austin's and the surrounding area's libraries have to offer to help your child start out on the right foot this fall!



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8 Great Outdoor Games for Summer

BY TIFFANY DOERR GUERZON

ILLUSTRATIONS BY FRITZ ROBENALT



Get the whole family outside and burn some energy with these old-school outdoor games!

1 SACK RACE

Kids and grown-ups used to use large, burlap potato sacks. Those aren't as easily obtainable anymore, but you can purchase good quality burlap bags from coffee roasting companies or buy themed potato sacks from online party supply places like OrientalTrading.com. To play, have each child step into his or her bag, pulling the top edges up around the waist. They must race to the finish line by holding the sack up and jumping inside of the bag.

Fun Fact: First Lady Michelle Obama beat late-night comedian Jimmy Fallon in a sack race inside the White House on Feb. 8, 2012. She was promoting her "Let's Move" program for children.

2 THREE-LEGGED RACE

This race is more about cooperation than speed. Divide party guests into pairs and have them stand side by side. Then tie their inside legs together with a bandana and have them race on three legs. Have two adults stretch a

length of crepe paper across the finish line, and let the winning team break through the paper.

Fun Fact: Alistair and Nick Benbow of the U.K. ran the fastest three-legged half-marathon. The team finished in 1 hour, 37 minutes, and 53 seconds.

3 LIMBO

This game requires flexibility! Line the kids up in a single file. Two adults stand on either side of the limbo pole or stick and hold it up horizontally in front of the line. If you don't have a pole, use a pool noodle or broom. Start the music—any music with a strong beat will do. The object of the game is to pass under the stick by bending backward, without touching the stick or falling. Two adults start with the stick held high enough for the kids to walk underneath and then lower the stick a bit each time the first person in line comes around again. Keep going until the stick is too low for anyone to pass underneath without touching it. "Limbo Rock" is a great song for this game, from the album *Party Songs for Kids*.

Fun Fact: The Limbo originated in Trinidad as a ritual performed at wakes in the 1800s. It became popular in the U.S. in the 1950s.

4 CATCH THE TAIL ON THE DRAGON

Arrange kids in a single file line and have each hold onto the waist of the person in front of him. Tuck a bandana into the pocket of the last child in the line. The “head of the dragon” (head of the line) leads the line in chasing the “tail” (the last in line) as they try to grab the bandanna without anyone letting go of the person in front of them. The middle of the line attempts to keep the head from catching the tail. Once someone captures the bandana from the tail, the tail becomes the head, and everyone plays again.

Fun Fact: This fun game originated in China and is often played during Chinese New Year celebrations.



5 EGG-AND-SPOON RACES

Draw funny faces on hard-boiled eggs with a Sharpie. Party guests can then race while balancing their eggs on large spoons. It’s harder than it sounds! (Egg tossing is another classic older kids can try if any whole eggs survive the races.)

Fun Fact: Egg-and-spoon races were part of the festivities during Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012.



6 BALLOON STOMP

Use string to tie a balloon to one ankle of each child. Then tell the kids to run around trying to “stomp” or break everyone else’s balloon while keeping their own from getting popped. The last person with a full balloon wins!

Fun Fact: In ancient times, people made balloons from animal bladders.

7 CHARIOT RACE

For this game, you’ll need two old blankets or tarps. Divide kids into teams of at least three. One sits on the blanket while two teammates grab the front corners of it and run, dragging the “chariot” in a race against the other team. Play this game in three rounds, so that each team member gets a chance to ride the chariot.

Fun Fact: Chariot races were a popular event in the ancient Olympics. The chariots were small, two-wheeled carts pulled by teams of horses. Riding these carts was way more dangerous than riding a blanket!

8 OBSTACLE COURSE

Create your own obstacle course, tailored to the age and abilities of the group. Make this a fun game to wrap up the festivities by combining some of the previous games with a few new ones thrown in. For example, participants could ride a bike or trike around cones, hop a hopscotch course, jump a short distance in a potato sack, carry an egg on a spoon, and then walk a balance beam made of a 6-foot-long two-by-four laid flat on the ground.

Fun Fact: Obstacle courses are a mainstay of military training.

Tiffany Doerr Guerzon is a freelance writer and the mother of three children. She loves a good three-legged race.



LIFELINES

BRENDA SCHOOLFIELD

Schoolfield is a freelance medical writer based in Austin, TX.

Strengthen Your Immune System by Focusing on the Basics

We are all looking for ways to protect our families and ourselves from COVID-19. Currently, the only defense from this extremely contagious virus is prevention: wash your hands often, wear a mask, don't touch your face, practice social distancing, avoid crowds, and stay at home as much as possible. Should you or a family member become ill, a robust immune system is key to overcoming any illness. Now is a good time to strengthen our immune systems by focusing on the basics of a healthy lifestyle.

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

Our immune system is a complex network of cells, organs, proteins, and tissues that work together to protect us from foreign invaders, such as viruses, bacteria, parasites, cancer cells, harmful germs, and toxins. A properly functioning immune system removes foreign invaders from the body and clears the infection.

Some people have weakened immune systems that put them at higher risk of

illness. This includes people with certain medical conditions like diabetes, liver or kidney disease, and HIV/AIDS. People who have an autoimmune disease or are receiving chemotherapy or radiation therapy are also at increased risk. In older people, the immune system may respond more slowly and less effectively to prevent infection.

Adequate sleep, good nutrition, and regular physical exercise are the basics of a healthy lifestyle. Focus on these to strengthen your immune system.

MAKE SLEEP A PRIORITY

Too little sleep can cause health issues and weaken the immune system. Go to the Sleep Foundation's website at

Sleep.org to find out how much sleep each family member needs. Experts recommend the following:

- Make sleep a priority.
- Develop relaxing bedtime rituals for your children and yourself.
- Keep a consistent sleep schedule, even on weekends.
- Turn off screens well before bedtime and keep devices out of the bedroom.
- To help identify problems that need to be addressed, keep a sleep diary if sleep is an issue.

BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT YOUR FAMILY'S NUTRITION

Planning and preparing meals for a family is hard but critically important work. Don't leave your family's nutrition to chance. Be intentional about the food they eat. Our body needs a wide variety of nutrients in adequate amounts to maintain health and support the immune system.

A useful resource is the USDA's website ChooseMyPlate. There you can calculate

daily calorie requirements, see daily recommended amounts for each food group, then get resources to make an eating plan for your family. Kids will enjoy using the MyPlate app to help build healthy eating habits and earn fun badges. The website offers printable coloring sheets, a word scramble game, and videos for kids.

Involve your children in meal planning and food preparation. Not only will this help them improve their knowledge of nutrition in the short term, it will help build a foundation of proper meal planning and cooking skills for a healthy future. The ChooseMyPlate website has cooking videos designed to teach kids simple recipes.

Another way to improve nutrition is to eliminate junk food from your family's diet as much as possible. Sugary, processed,

and over-salted foods crowd out foods that build health. Junk foods are a primary cause of obesity and health problems. Teach your children to read food labels. Make a grocery store game out of comparing grams of sugar in snack foods. Take the total grams of sugar and divide it by 5 to calculate teaspoons. Fifteen grams of sugar may not sound like a lot, but it's equivalent to 3 teaspoons of sugar. That's half of the daily recommendation.

Many nutrients promote the normal functioning of the immune system. Some of these are prebiotics and probiotics, protein, zinc, B vitamins, vitamin C, vitamin D, omega 3 fatty acids, and antioxidant-rich foods. Be sure your family's diet includes foods that contain these nutrients. Before taking any supplements, consult a registered dietician or your healthcare provider.

MEET PHYSICAL EXERCISE TARGETS

Physical activity supports the immune system and improves cardiovascular health. Research has shown that exercise can reduce inflammation in the body and delay the onset of age-related immune system function decline.

Kids and teens should be active for at least 60 minutes every day. Adults need at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity (or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity) each week. Walking is one easy way to get the physical activity your family needs. Remember to keep a safe distance of at least 6 feet between your family and other people while walking outside.

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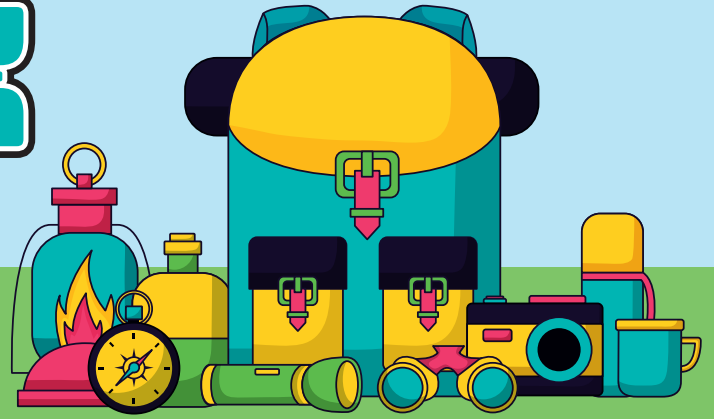
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SUMMER CAMP GUIDE



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Due to the pandemic, the statuses of summer camps are changing daily. Be sure to check out individual camp websites, or phone those you are interested in to get the latest information.

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2700 W. Anderson Ln., Austin
107 Ranch Rd. 620 S., Lakeway
512-299-5731, 512-299-5732,
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www.austinbilingualschool.com
Ages 2-11

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austinlibrary.org/creative-writing-camps/
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www.mycodingplace.com
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512-456-7543

3918 Far West Blvd. Ste. C, Austin,
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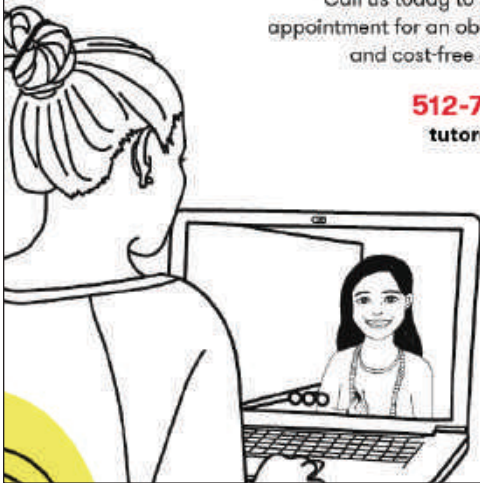
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www.tapestry.org
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www.techlab.camp
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www.ymcagwc.org/twinlakes
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FAMILY MATTERS

BETTY RICHARDSON

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

6 Secrets to Being “World’s Best Dad”

Q My wife and I have two boys ages 9 and 6 and we are expecting another child. During this time of COVID-19, I’m working from home. Of course, I’m spending more time with my boys and my wife. I want to be a great dad and role model for our boys. Do you have any tips?

A It’s a challenge and a blessing to have more time with your children. It’s certainly good for them. Research has shown that boys who have more time with their fathers tend to be less aggressive and more likely to stay out of trouble. Girls also express less socially unacceptable behavior when they have a positive and strong relationship with Dad.

Spending time with a child tells him that he is important. Children tend to feel valued and develop self-worth when they feel worthy of your attention. Spending time with your children also allows you to assess their talents and interests. Based on my many years working with fathers, here are tips from some of the best:

Patience: A good father has the patience to listen and learn from his child. If a child has a problem, Dad might ask, “What do you think would help?” Giving kids a chance to problem-solve gives them confidence. Patient dads can advise on more ways than one — and in more than one way — to find

a way to help a child understand. When a father is there to patiently lend support and guidance, this builds emotional trust.

Guidance: Good dads help their kids by being able to teach them life lessons. When a child makes mistakes or bad choices, a good dad steps in to help teach consequences without being punitive or judgmental. A dad in tune with his child can help her make better decisions. Dads who can say “I’m sorry” when he makes a mistake is also modeling a valuable life lesson.

Involvement: Some of the best dads I know have been very involved in leadership and skills-building organizations like Boy Scouts, sports teams, STEM groups, or just one-on-one supporting a child’s interests and talents. Coaching a team, attending recitals, finding professional mentors, traveling to interesting locations — involved dads keep kids excited about their potential.

Respect: Kids learn a lot about how to treat others by what a father models at home. A good dad respects his partner and does not argue in front of the children. He corrects the kids if they are speaking or acting disrespectfully toward their mother. This sends a message that the parents are working together. Also, a good father can show affection to his partner, as well as the children. Children feel more secure

when they see that Dad loves his partner as well as his children. It’s also important that divorced fathers show respect for the children’s mother.

Emotional Intelligence: Fathers who are striving to be better do not compete with their partners to be the best or favorite parent. They do not try to earn their children’s affection or love by giving them material gifts or bribing them to spend time with them. They work on themselves and prioritize personal development. Good fathers model important emotional skills like self-regulation, self-awareness, curiosity, optimism, resilience, empathy, compassion, and more.

Equity: Research shows that in households in which both parents work outside the home, mothers still do the majority of housework, child-rearing, and planning of family obligations and activities. And moms are exhausted. A husband’s relationship with his partner will likely improve when he shares in the household responsibilities. The children will learn that being part of a family means each person contributes to the greater good.

You could strive to be a “good enough” father, but I applaud you for wanting to be a great one. Happy Father’s Day!



BY KELLY GIN

Summer Splashing

As guidelines require people to social distance and shelter-in-place, the outdoors and nature has been calling louder than ever. Austin and the surrounding hill country offer endless opportunities for family adventures. The following family-friendly destinations provide safe and fun ways for your little and big adventurers to get outside and explore all that nature has to offer, including waterfalls, rivers, swimming holes, and hiking trails.

Milton Reimers Ranch Park

23610 Hamilton Road, Dripping Springs, TX 78620 www.parks.traviscountytexas.gov/parks/reimers-ranch/
Travel about 30 miles west of Austin to this gem of a Travis County park. Day use fees have been waived over the last several weeks, but there is typically a cash-only entrance fee (\$5 per person, children under 12 free). Dogs are allowed. You can spend hours exploring the trails and playing and swimming in the Pedernales River. The trails are wide and easy to follow up and down the river. It's a short hike from the main parking lot down to the river, but if you want to get away from crowds, you can hike along the Lower or Upper Canyon trails. From the parking lot, if you go left on the Lower Canyon trail for about half a mile, you'll be able to access some shallow water for playing. If you go right on the Upper Canyon Trail and turn to go down to the Lower Canyon trail for about 1.5 miles, you can find a deeper section of the river with some cliffs for jumping. There are over 13 miles of hiking and biking trails, but the Lower and Upper Canyon trail is very family-friendly with the best views. The shore along the river is a combination of rocks and sand, and kids can't get enough of the clear, flowing water.



Crockett Gardens and Falls from Cedar Breaks Park

2100 Cedar Breaks Rd, Georgetown, TX 78633 www.tpwd.texas.gov
You can drive about 30 miles north of Austin for one of the most memorable family hikes. The trailhead at Cedar Breaks Park will lead you down to the Crockett Gardens and Falls, which is approximately 5.5 miles total, there and back. There is an entrance booth, but no fee to use the hiking trails at this park. Dogs are allowed. The trail system is part of the longer San Gabriel Goodwater Loop that snakes around the banks of Lake Georgetown. About a mile into the trail, you can hike down to cliffs overlooking the lake, take photos, and even jump in to cool off. The final destination is well worth the long, easy hike. The trails are wide and well-shaded. At about 2.5 miles, you will encounter a sign that leads you to the Crockett Gardens and Falls via a narrower, grassy trail. The falls are green and gorgeous, and the kids will love playing in them and climbing up to the top. Kids will definitely want to wear water shoes and a swimsuit for this hike.

Sculpture Falls via the Barton Creek Greenbelt/Hill of Life Trail

1710 Camp Craft Rd., Austin, TX 78746, www.austinparks.org
This adventure is right in the heart of Austin and offers boundless trails and swimming holes for exploring. You may have to tolerate more people on this trail, especially on weekends, but there is plenty of amazing space to share. The trail is free, and dogs are allowed. There are multiple access points for the Barton Creek Greenbelt, but a favorite for an active family is the Hill of Life trail. This entrance has a challenging and somewhat steep descent on the way down and ascent on the way back, but it's well worth it and is an excellent way to exhaust your little adventurers. Kids will want to play in the water along the trail, but the real reward is the oasis you can find at Sculpture Falls, about 1.5 miles into the hike. This can be a popular spot, but if you go at the right time, early on a weekday, it can be very enjoyable. This out-and-back hike can take hours if you allow your hikers to stop and explore at multiple points. Be prepared with lots of snacks, water, and sunscreen.



Kelly Gin is a mom based in Austin, TX. Follow her family adventures on Instagram at [@hillcountryadventurekids](https://www.instagram.com/hillcountryadventurekids).

KIDZONE



In Plain Sight

"In Plain Sight" is the name of the game!

Groups can have fun with this simple memory game using interesting items from around the house.

Instructions:

- Pick out 10-15 random small items from different parts of your home. These can be anything from a paper clip to a porcelain figurine, as long as it's small and recognizable. We use little toys, collectible items, coins, and other cool objects.
- Arrange the items on a table and study them as a group. Players can look at objects for a few seconds, a minute, or more. Decide as a group.
- Then, each person takes a turn. While all the other players close their eyes, one player will remove one item from the pile of objects.
- When the other players open their eyes, they can guess which one item was removed. But keep your guesses to yourself until everyone has decided.
- Finally, the group reveals their guesses, and the person shows what they removed!
- Those who correctly guessed the item get a point.

Players can mix things up as well. For example, everyone may collectively choose an item to hide—like a shell or animal figure. Then, one person can keep her eyes closed and guess the object. If she gets it, she gets a point!

"In Plain Sight" is a fun game to play in rounds, and players can change items as much as they like for each round!



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JUST FOR GRINS

CATE BERRY

Cate Berry is a children's book author and mother of two based in Austin, TX.



Dad Directions

Summer came with a driver's license the year I turned sixteen. Thrilling, full of freedom. I hit the road. Unfortunately, I'd never paid attention to directions.

We didn't have Google. or GPS, I had my dad. He charted paths to the moon for NASA. The guy was a human map. It wasn't without a price, though. Our conversation went:

"Dad, quick directions to Putt-Putt mini-golf?"

"Yes. Well." (clears throat)

"It's a right off Brook Forest Drive, I think?"

"First, you'll want to get in the car."

"Dad—"

"Adjust your mirrors and seat position. Then engage the engine."

He kept motoring as my thoughts traveled from Duran Duran to Twizzlers to the stain on my choir uniform and finally looping back into his orbit. He hadn't gone far:

"... back up SLOWLY down the driveway, now moving towards the street, check your sightlines always scanning for pedestrians."

Instead, I scanned for a noose. I checked my Timex watch. Tapped my K-Swiss sneakers. Yanked my side ponytail waiting for the Brook Forest Drive part.

Meanwhile, I turned Dad's volume up and down in my brain, courtesy of The GoGo's.

"As you head into the street [We got the...] always monitoring the [beat, we got the...] and don't forget a quick head check [beat, we got the beat...] blind spot. [Yeah! We got the beat.]"

Of course, there's only so much a young girl can take.

"At this point, switch the gear safely into drive letting the brake pedal assist you with—"

"DAD. I know how to drive."

"Yes. Well. (clears throat) It's just that I'd like you—"

"Home by 10:30?"

"Safe."

Here's to all the dads out there fighting for our lives through boring us into submission. Thanks, Dad. Oh, and you'll be glad to know wearing a safety belt is the law now.

You're welcome.

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